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Other Miscellany

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- 2.
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Non - Responsive

What are the Beale Ciphers, and are they a hoax?

Non - Responsive

- 1.

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- 2.

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string couldn't appear by chance, but feels there must be an explanation; Gwyn (sci.crypt expert) is unimpressed with this string.

5.

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Non - Responsive



Intro to Cryptology FAQ

POC for this page is Non - Responsive

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3.

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4. What are the Beale Ciphers, and are they a hoax?

(Thanks to Jim Gillogly for this information and John King for corrections.)

The story in a pamphlet by J. B. Ward (1885) goes: Thomas Jefferson Beale and a party of adventurers accumulated a huge mass of treasure and buried it in Bedford County, Virginia, leaving three ciphers with an innkeeper; the ciphers describe the location, contents, and intended beneficiaries of the treasure. Ward gives a decryption of the second cipher (contents) called B2; it was encrypted as a book cipher using the initial letters of the Declaration of Independence (DOI) as key. B1 and B3 are unsolved; many documents have been tried as the key to B1.

Aficionados can join a group that attempts to solve B1 by various means with an eye toward splitting the treasure:

The Beale Cypher Association
P.O. Box 975
Beaver Falls, PA 15010

You can get the ciphers from the rec.puzzles FAQL by including the line:

send index

in a message to netlib@peregrine.com and following the directions. (There are apparently several different versions of the cipher floating around. The correct version is based on the 1885 pamphlet, says John King <kingj@hpcc01.corp.hp.com>.)

Some believe the story is a hoax. Kruh [KRU88] gives a long list of problems with the story. Gillogly [GIL80] decrypted B1 with the DOI and found some unexpected strings, including ABFDEFGHIIJKLMMNOHPP. Hammer (president of the Beale Cypher Association) agrees that this