

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:26,440

In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia is this treasure hunter about to claim his bounty?

2

00:00:26,440 --> 00:00:33,280

Was this ancient slab of Viking writing mean America was born in Minnesota?

3

00:00:33,280 --> 00:00:38,360

And could this coded book reveal the elixir of life?

4

00:00:38,360 --> 00:00:44,400

Mysteries from the files of Arthur C. Clarke, author of 2001 and inventor of the communications

5

00:00:44,400 --> 00:00:45,400

satellite.

6

00:00:45,400 --> 00:00:50,400

Now in retreat in Sri Lanka he ponders the riddles of this and other worlds.

7

00:01:16,400 --> 00:01:23,200

Like all old buildings the Dutch house near my home in Colombo hides many secrets and

8

00:01:23,200 --> 00:01:28,200

masked over three centuries since the days when the Dutch were the rulers of this much

9

00:01:28,200 --> 00:01:30,240

colonized island.

10

00:01:30,240 --> 00:01:35,360

Within these walls the Dutch stored this piece of paper which must have been classified

11

00:01:35,360 --> 00:01:37,200

as top secret.

12

00:01:37,200 --> 00:01:40,000

It's a treaty they signed with the local rulers.

13

00:01:40,000 --> 00:01:45,440

In the version the Dutch made public they agreed to destroy all the forts in the island

14

00:01:45,440 --> 00:01:51,440

but in this one which was for Dutch eyes only there's no mention of any such promise and

15

00:01:51,440 --> 00:01:56,320

the Dutch of course held on to the forts and to power.

16

00:01:56,320 --> 00:02:01,640

We wanted to read both versions of this treaty to find the truth of the matter but all of

17

00:02:01,640 --> 00:02:08,160

the world there are writings, inscriptions, coded communications, mysterious maps and

18

00:02:08,200 --> 00:02:15,040

weird manuscripts which are fascinated, obsessed and usually frustrated the experts who have

19

00:02:15,040 --> 00:02:18,160

tried to crack their secrets.

20

00:02:18,160 --> 00:02:23,440

In this fairy tale castle deep in the forests of southern Germany Kirsten Siever hopes to

21

00:02:23,440 --> 00:02:28,840

find the key to the world's most controversial map.

22

00:02:28,840 --> 00:02:36,800

But across the Atlantic in Washington DC Dr Bob McGee contests her solution to the mystery.

23

00:02:36,800 --> 00:02:41,520

They disagree over this piece of parchment known as the Vinland map.

24

00:02:41,520 --> 00:02:46,800

It's claimed to be the first documentary proof that the Vikings discovered America.

25

00:02:46,800 --> 00:02:51,120

In the far west this scrap of land can only be North America.

26

00:02:51,120 --> 00:02:55,160

Its outline matches the Newfoundland coast.

27

00:02:55,160 --> 00:03:04,160

But the map has been dated to 1440, 50 years before Columbus set sail.

28

00:03:04,160 --> 00:03:09,440

In the top left hand corner an inscription says that the map is based on information

29

00:03:09,440 --> 00:03:16,600

passed down from Viking explorers.

30

00:03:16,600 --> 00:03:23,000

On Columbus Day 1965 Yale University announced it had bought the map.

31

00:03:23,000 --> 00:03:25,000

An outcry ensued.

32

00:03:25,000 --> 00:03:32,000

From the first there were those who doubted the map's authenticity and demanded to know its history.

33

00:03:32,120 --> 00:03:39,120

But this man Lawrence Whitten who sold the map to Yale would not explain where it came from.

34

00:03:39,120 --> 00:03:48,720

Tests proved the parchment was medieval but scientists disagree about the age of the ink.

35

00:03:48,720 --> 00:03:53,440

Archaeologist Bob McGee rests his case on historical facts.

36

00:03:53,440 --> 00:03:56,800

He believes the map may well be genuine.

37

00:03:56,800 --> 00:04:01,600

The Norse were quite expert at navigating east-west across the Atlantic along single

38

00:04:01,640 --> 00:04:03,160

lines of latitude.

39

00:04:03,160 --> 00:04:07,440

The latitude of locations would be the type of information which we can see being very

40

00:04:07,440 --> 00:04:12,560

carefully passed on to later generations of sailors.

41

00:04:12,560 --> 00:04:16,240

This information would have been available to European map makers at the time.

42

00:04:16,240 --> 00:04:20,280

If we look at the latitudes of the Vinland configuration on this map and compare them

43

00:04:20,280 --> 00:04:24,720

with those of Europe it's quite remarkable how they do line up.

44

00:04:24,720 --> 00:04:29,040

If we look at the southern tip of Vinland and go across to Europe we come to Brittany

45

00:04:29,040 --> 00:04:31,840

or the northern end of the Bay of Biscay here.

46

00:04:31,840 --> 00:04:37,240

If we look at a modern map across here from the northern end of the Bay of Biscay and

47

00:04:37,240 --> 00:04:42,160

go west we find that it matches almost exactly the southern tip of Newfoundland.

48

00:04:42,160 --> 00:04:47,360

The northern tip of Newfoundland matches with about the south coast of Ireland.

49

00:04:47,360 --> 00:04:52,440

If we go back to the Vinland map and look at this first big inlet and measure across

50

00:04:52,440 --> 00:04:56,800

to Europe we find that it matches with the south coast of Ireland.

51

00:04:56,840 --> 00:05:01,120

This configuration from Bay of Biscay up to the south coast of Ireland correlates very

52

00:05:01,120 --> 00:05:06,720

nicely with the island of Newfoundland.

53

00:05:06,720 --> 00:05:10,160

It's known that the Vikings did reach North America.

54

00:05:10,160 --> 00:05:15,000

In the 1960s archaeologists found the remains of their settlement.

55

00:05:15,000 --> 00:05:18,800

To McGee the dates are everything.

56

00:05:18,800 --> 00:05:24,000

Now if a forger had drawn this map back in the 1920s or 1930s and wanted the latitudes

57

00:05:24,080 --> 00:05:28,520

to match up with what they thought at that time the North had known the island of Vinland

58

00:05:28,520 --> 00:05:32,720

would have been placed much further south because it was fairly commonly accepted that

59

00:05:32,720 --> 00:05:38,000

Vinland would have been somewhere down Cape Cod the mid-Atlantic states perhaps.

60

00:05:38,000 --> 00:05:44,320

Whereas since that time all archaeological evidence and most scholarly evidence now concludes

61

00:05:44,320 --> 00:05:47,480

that Vinland must have been the island of Newfoundland or the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

62

00:05:47,480 --> 00:05:52,480

Well north of where it used to be thought to be and exactly where it is shown on the Vinland map.

63

00:05:55,000 --> 00:05:59,160

McGee's theories are thought small beer in the varier.

64

00:05:59,160 --> 00:06:03,440

Kirsten Siever is quite sure that the map is a fake.

65

00:06:03,440 --> 00:06:05,480

It would be like the virgin birth.

66

00:06:05,480 --> 00:06:08,800

It has no tradition behind it.

67

00:06:08,800 --> 00:06:14,480

It has no reality around it.

68

00:06:14,480 --> 00:06:16,240

It would not.

69

00:06:16,240 --> 00:06:18,560

It cannot be.

70

00:06:18,560 --> 00:06:22,160

Siever is convinced she knows who forged the Vinland map.

71

00:06:22,160 --> 00:06:25,680

A Jesuit priest who died here at Wolfhead Castle.

72

00:06:25,680 --> 00:06:29,200

Only he fitted the profile of the forger.

73

00:06:29,200 --> 00:06:32,480

The person had to be interested in maps.

74

00:06:32,480 --> 00:06:36,120

Secondly he or she had to be fluent in Latin.

75

00:06:36,120 --> 00:06:46,720

Thirdly the person had to know where all the bones of contention lay buried when it came to the Vinland voyages.

76

00:06:46,720 --> 00:06:51,760

In the 1930s father Joseph Fisher was a world expert on maps.

77

00:06:51,760 --> 00:06:57,440

He devoted his days to teaching history until the Nazis closed his college.

78

00:06:57,440 --> 00:07:05,360

Taken under the wing of Wolfhead's prince and princess, he spent his last years in the bosom of their family.

79

00:07:05,360 --> 00:07:08,760

He left some vital clues.

80

00:07:08,760 --> 00:07:13,200

Here at Wolfhead Castle they have many of Father Fisher's letters.

81

00:07:13,200 --> 00:07:20,000

His handwriting is of course of great interest if we want to pin the Vinland map on him.

82

00:07:20,000 --> 00:07:29,200

As you can see it's a very impatient handwriting with a very characteristic D.

83

00:07:29,200 --> 00:07:30,320

Like that.

84

00:07:30,320 --> 00:07:33,600

It's full of strong lateral strokes.

85

00:07:33,600 --> 00:07:42,000

The D that you see in this letter is so similar to the D that you see in this map.

86

00:07:42,000 --> 00:07:46,800

That for starters it is an interesting coincidence.

87

00:07:46,800 --> 00:07:52,560

You will also see that he writes on paper with line guides.

88

00:07:52,560 --> 00:07:59,840

The more tidily written legends such as the one at Vinland are written with a line guide exactly.

89

00:07:59,840 --> 00:08:04,640

Two millimeters apart that is not a medieval form.

90

00:08:04,640 --> 00:08:10,080

Father Fisher would not have thought that it was wrong to make such a map.

91

00:08:10,080 --> 00:08:19,120

Because he was convinced that such a map in some form had existed, I believe he decided to fill in the gap.

92

00:08:19,120 --> 00:08:28,960

Essentially he made the map he'd been looking for all his life.

93

00:08:28,960 --> 00:08:32,640

I'd like to see a solution to the mystery of the Vinland map.

94

00:08:32,640 --> 00:08:38,400

It's more important than simply deciding whether university wasted good money on a fake.

95

00:08:38,400 --> 00:08:44,800

If it's genuine the map would banish myths and illusions of geographical history.

96

00:08:44,800 --> 00:08:49,680

It would not only show how much of America the ancient Norse explored.

97

00:08:49,680 --> 00:08:55,280

It might also mean that Christopher Columbus didn't come across the New World by chance,

98

00:08:55,280 --> 00:08:59,120

but actually knew where he was going.

99

00:08:59,120 --> 00:09:03,840

But perhaps there's another answer to the mystery of how far the ancient Norse explorers

100

00:09:03,840 --> 00:09:05,840

penetrated America.

101

00:09:05,840 --> 00:09:14,640

It's to be found in a weird inscription which brings the tourists from far and wide to a small town in Minnesota.

102

00:09:14,640 --> 00:09:18,240

Alexandria cherishes its links with Scandinavia.

103

00:09:18,240 --> 00:09:23,920

It's where in the 19th century many immigrant Swedes made their home.

104

00:09:23,920 --> 00:09:28,640

The Tans museum boasts an extraordinary tourist attraction.

105

00:09:28,640 --> 00:09:33,760

This stone slab is covered with rooms, the lettering of the ancient Norse.

106

00:09:33,760 --> 00:09:41,120

Translated it says that a party of Vikings were attacked by Indians and forced to flee to their longboats.

107

00:09:41,120 --> 00:09:45,520

The date carved into the stone is 1362.

108

00:09:45,520 --> 00:09:48,640

The people of Alexandria have a proud boast.

109

00:09:48,640 --> 00:09:53,200

They believe the Vikings visited their hometown and left their calling card.

110

00:09:53,200 --> 00:09:59,520

I will show you the rune stone that was found near Kensington, Minnesota.

111

00:09:59,520 --> 00:10:02,960

It proves that the Vikings were here.

112

00:10:02,960 --> 00:10:08,480

The stone was found in 1898 by a Swedish immigrant called Olaf Oman.

113

00:10:08,480 --> 00:10:12,240

He said he found the slab buried in the roots of a tree.

114

00:10:12,240 --> 00:10:18,720

The discovery brought fame to the Oman family, but some people doubted the story of the find.

115

00:10:18,720 --> 00:10:21,360

They suggested it was Oman's own work.

116

00:10:23,760 --> 00:10:33,200

The Oman farm where the rune stone was found is preserved for posterity by the town.

117

00:10:33,200 --> 00:10:39,520

Grandson, Lalard Kolberg, won't hear a word against Olaf Oman.

118

00:10:39,520 --> 00:10:44,080

My grandfather was an honest man and he was a hard-working man.

119

00:10:44,080 --> 00:10:52,560

The Kensington rune stone is a true Viking stone found by my grandfather on the Oman farm.

120

00:10:52,560 --> 00:10:59,280

And it would be to add that my grandmother was a very religious person.

121

00:10:59,280 --> 00:11:02,320

So they can't say that my grandfather buried that stone.

122

00:11:02,320 --> 00:11:05,600

There's no way because he was not educated enough to do things like that.

123

00:11:07,920 --> 00:11:10,480

Einar Bakker remembers Oman from childhood.

124

00:11:12,480 --> 00:11:15,200

Well, he was a real honest man as far as I'm concerned.

125

00:11:15,680 --> 00:11:19,440

He didn't listen for practical jokes of any kind.

126

00:11:19,440 --> 00:11:21,760

I'm sure he would not sit in a carver rock like that.

127

00:11:21,760 --> 00:11:25,440

I'm positive it was genuine as far as Oman was concerned.

128

00:11:27,600 --> 00:11:32,240

But in Lanso Meadows, Newfoundland, where it's known the Vikings landed,

129

00:11:32,240 --> 00:11:35,920

Norse expert Bergetta Wallace is skeptical of Oman's claims.

130

00:11:37,120 --> 00:11:42,160

With the help of stone mason Nathaniel Patey, she is conducting a runic test.

131

00:11:42,160 --> 00:11:53,920

When I first saw the Kensington rune stone, one thing that struck me as very unusual

132

00:11:53,920 --> 00:11:56,480

was the very, very long inscription.

133

00:11:57,120 --> 00:12:03,200

Normally a rune stone only says so and so erected this stone in memory of so and so.

134

00:12:03,200 --> 00:12:03,920

But that's it.

135

00:12:05,360 --> 00:12:09,600

When I saw that the runes were cut into a weathered surface,

136

00:12:09,680 --> 00:12:12,000

but the runes themselves had not weathered.

137

00:12:13,360 --> 00:12:17,440

It suggested to me immediately that they were quite recent.

138

00:12:18,160 --> 00:12:22,560

Runemarks, as we know them from Scandinavia, were all done with a pick hammer

139

00:12:23,280 --> 00:12:28,400

that makes a U-shaped, much more uneven cross-section.

140

00:12:28,400 --> 00:12:32,480

This was a very clear, straight, V-shaped cut.

141

00:12:33,360 --> 00:12:36,960

Bergetta suspected the runes were carved with a modern chisel.

142

00:12:37,840 --> 00:12:44,160

So I went and got one and lo and behold, they fit perfectly in size.

143

00:12:44,160 --> 00:12:50,880

All the upright ones had been made with a regular North American one inch chisel.

144

00:12:52,400 --> 00:12:56,720

Bergetta's research in Sweden uncovered secrets from Oman's past.

145

00:12:57,200 --> 00:12:59,200

They strengthened the case against him.

146

00:12:59,920 --> 00:13:06,320

Oman has been portrayed as a simple and rather dumb farmer who couldn't even in his wildest

147

00:13:06,320 --> 00:13:09,120

dreams have thought of something like a rune stone.

148

00:13:09,120 --> 00:13:14,560

But he was very interested in history and read very deep philosophical things.

149

00:13:14,560 --> 00:13:22,400

He wrote poetry and a very little known fact is that Oman was not a farmer to begin with.

150

00:13:22,400 --> 00:13:23,760

He was a stone maser.

151

00:13:24,080 --> 00:13:30,080

I think that the Kensington stone is proof not that the Vikings went to Minnesota,

152

00:13:30,080 --> 00:13:36,560

but that Minnesota had a very large Scandinavian immigrant population in the 19th century.

153

00:13:40,160 --> 00:13:44,160

When you're dealing with the runes, it's always wise to be wary.

154

00:13:44,160 --> 00:13:51,280

In 1953, Swedish actually started to build a small town in the Netherlands.

155

00:13:51,280 --> 00:13:58,560

In 1953, Swedish experts announced they'd found an inscription dating back almost a thousand years.

156

00:13:59,360 --> 00:14:03,200

But the translation soon revealed a very different story.

157

00:14:03,200 --> 00:14:08,720

The message actually read Joe Dokes went east 1953.

158

00:14:09,280 --> 00:14:10,640

He discovered Europe.

159

00:14:10,640 --> 00:14:11,520

Holy smoke.

160

00:14:16,880 --> 00:14:19,920

In the Blue Ridge mountains of Virginia, there may be gold.

161

00:14:20,800 --> 00:14:27,120

Coated clues left in 1822 by a man called Thomas Beale have drawn hundreds of treasure

162

00:14:27,120 --> 00:14:28,640

hunters to Bedford County.

163

00:14:30,560 --> 00:14:35,840

Albert Atwell believes his detector can find precious metals buried deep underground.

164

00:14:36,640 --> 00:14:41,520

I came here looking for the Beale treasure 148 times in the last six years.

165

00:14:41,520 --> 00:14:46,160

And I've hunted all four different directions and I've tried to break the codes,

166

00:14:46,240 --> 00:14:47,680

tried to locate the treasure by it.

167

00:14:48,560 --> 00:14:50,080

So maybe one day we'll find it.

168

00:14:51,760 --> 00:14:56,400

I'm going to keep looking forward in my spare time practically every weekend or at least five

169

00:14:56,400 --> 00:14:59,760

times a summer because I still believe it's here. It's going to be fine.

170

00:15:02,480 --> 00:15:04,560

Albert is not the only treasure hunter.

171

00:15:06,160 --> 00:15:09,760

Sergeant Cooper of the Sheriff's Department knows this only too well.

172

00:15:10,080 --> 00:15:20,080

Beale treasure is a nuisance and it's part of our job, you know, just more or less take care of the

173

00:15:20,080 --> 00:15:26,800

complaints. One man called in that someone had dug six or seven holes on his property.

174

00:15:26,800 --> 00:15:33,360

It was another incident where a man called that someone dug where his cattle was at.

175

00:15:34,640 --> 00:15:38,080

If the cows would have fell in it, he would have lost some cows.

176

00:15:40,720 --> 00:15:46,640

I mean, it was one incident where they was digging up a cemetery at a local church.

177

00:15:46,640 --> 00:15:51,680

I arrested a man and a woman plus this small dog. I had to put in the dog pound.

178

00:15:54,800 --> 00:16:00,560

In the early 1800s, Thomas Beale is said to have found gold, silver and precious jewels on a trip

179

00:16:00,560 --> 00:16:05,840

out west. Three ciphers tell where he hid the treasure in his native Virginia.

180

00:16:06,800 --> 00:16:12,320

The seemingly incomprehensible lists of numbers are thought to say where it's buried,

181

00:16:12,320 --> 00:16:19,040

somewhere in these hills. Code breaking has become a community hobby.

182

00:16:19,040 --> 00:16:21,760

Farmer Jimmy Luck thinks he might have the answer.

183

00:16:23,360 --> 00:16:29,840

I've been working with Cheyenne Indian from Colorado for good many years and he deciphered the code

184

00:16:30,160 --> 00:16:36,400

and all the information we get of the code we have found and has led us to a certain spot

185

00:16:36,400 --> 00:16:42,320

to where we think the treasure is buried. We are 90 percent sure, maybe a little more,

186

00:16:42,960 --> 00:16:48,160

that we're in the right spot. All Jimmy needs now is the landowner's permission to dig.

187

00:16:49,120 --> 00:16:54,880

It is really frustrating to know where it is and not have your hands on it because after so many,

188

00:16:54,880 --> 00:16:59,760

after the years you worked on it and tried so hard to find it and you think you've come up with it,

189

00:16:59,840 --> 00:17:05,200

and then somebody just cuts you off from it. We'll keep on working to find the treasure as long

190

00:17:05,200 --> 00:17:11,920

as we're here. I think someday we'll be able to dig at the place we think the treasure's buried at

191

00:17:12,480 --> 00:17:20,560

and come up with a goal. Beale's cryptic ciphers have been scrutinized by one of the world's

192

00:17:20,560 --> 00:17:26,960

leading experts and writers on code breaking. Dr. Stephen Matias has tried to put himself in

193

00:17:26,960 --> 00:17:33,680

the mind of Thomas Beale. He believes he knows how the cipher was concocted.

194

00:17:35,600 --> 00:17:43,920

The key that I have come up with is a 10 by 10 key. The alphabet in this key consists of letters,

195

00:17:44,480 --> 00:17:50,800

some syllables, some words and common phrases that would have appeared in Beale's messages.

196

00:17:51,600 --> 00:17:58,000

Matias admits that his key depends on intelligent guesswork, his code breaking experience

197

00:17:58,000 --> 00:18:02,880

and common sense. After much trial and error, he believes he's on the right track.

198

00:18:04,160 --> 00:18:12,560

So for example, the number 21 refers to the letter in row number two and column number one,

199

00:18:12,560 --> 00:18:20,640

which is the letter T. Number 17 refers to the letter A that appears in row one and column seven.

200

00:18:21,040 --> 00:18:27,200

And if you continue in this manner and decipher each of the numbers, you get a message that reads,

201

00:18:27,920 --> 00:18:38,560

take the road to Finn Castle. The vault is beneath a big round stone with the initials T.J.B.

202

00:18:40,160 --> 00:18:46,400

But Matias's ingenious work may yet be in vain. The Beale ciphers could be a hoax.

203

00:18:46,800 --> 00:18:55,040

If Beale ever existed and if the treasure ever existed, I feel confident that the solution method

204

00:18:55,040 --> 00:19:02,560

that I'm proposing will be the method shown to lead to an actual decipherment of paper number one

205

00:19:03,520 --> 00:19:07,040

and will be the basis for leading to the treasure.

206

00:19:16,400 --> 00:19:29,120

Some can't afford to wait. Albert has hired a back home.

207

00:19:46,400 --> 00:19:48,400

I

208

00:19:55,360 --> 00:20:02,160

were hopeful that the Beale treasure could be right here more than likely it is here. We have to dig and find out.

209

00:20:07,120 --> 00:20:11,280

If we don't find it here today, we'll go back to work on the codes and buy

210

00:20:11,280 --> 00:20:15,680

better equipment and then hunt somewhere else. I'm never going to give up hunting for the treasure

211

00:20:15,680 --> 00:20:17,520

until somebody finds it or I do.

212

00:20:27,680 --> 00:20:34,800

At Yale University, one building stands out from all the rest. The Bynackie Library is a forbidding

213

00:20:34,800 --> 00:20:43,280

place. Susan Santeris knows it well. This library does mean a lot to me. As a child,

214

00:20:43,280 --> 00:20:47,760

I came here and saw all the books. Of course, you couldn't touch anything or breathe in there.

215

00:20:48,480 --> 00:20:54,480

And then as an undergraduate student, I spent hours and hours of my life. I still remember

216

00:20:54,480 --> 00:21:00,960

every one of them pouring over a particular manuscript that was there and trying to make

217

00:21:00,960 --> 00:21:08,240

some sense of it. The Wojnich manuscript is an exquisite book first heard of in Prague in the

218

00:21:08,240 --> 00:21:15,440

1600s. The writing seems unintelligible, but the weird illustrations point relentlessly to a hidden

219

00:21:15,440 --> 00:21:23,520

meaning. Theories include a medieval herbal guide, an astrological handbook, or even the elusive

220

00:21:23,600 --> 00:21:30,160

recipe for the elixir of life. Only one man has claimed to be close to the answer.

221

00:21:31,440 --> 00:21:39,760

Robert Brumbauer was a classics professor at Yale. He died in 1992, but his fascination

222

00:21:39,760 --> 00:21:43,600

with the Wojnich lives on in his children, Robert and Susan.

223

00:21:48,400 --> 00:21:52,000

They find it hard to leave their father's notes untouched.

224

00:21:53,520 --> 00:21:56,960

Well, the first thing that hits you when you see it is it should be something that you could just

225

00:21:56,960 --> 00:22:02,320

pick up and read with just a bit more effort. The illustrations are beautiful and vivid.

226

00:22:02,320 --> 00:22:08,640

There's a combination of scientific work and there's a humor to it that that's very arresting.

227

00:22:10,480 --> 00:22:15,600

Together, Susan and her father identified 14 distinct characters in the Wojnich.

228

00:22:16,240 --> 00:22:20,080

Some seemed close to our own writing. Others quite strange.

229

00:22:20,800 --> 00:22:24,800

Brumbauer's inspiration was to use numbers to translate the manuscript.

230

00:22:25,440 --> 00:22:27,920

With Robert, he began to construct a key.

231

00:22:29,680 --> 00:22:32,560

Father tried several possible arrangements.

232

00:22:33,840 --> 00:22:40,720

Came out with this one, which turned out to work the best. Now in this box,

233

00:22:40,720 --> 00:22:45,600

you see that one number represents any one of these three letters.

234

00:22:45,840 --> 00:22:50,400

Matching numbers to the Wojnich characters was much more difficult,

235

00:22:50,400 --> 00:22:53,120

but the family had a stroke of luck.

236

00:22:54,720 --> 00:23:00,640

One of the most important clues helping to match the characters in the manuscript with numerical

237

00:23:00,640 --> 00:23:09,520

values is a set of marginal notes on one of the folios of the manuscript that appear to be arithmetic

238

00:23:09,520 --> 00:23:16,560

problems. The discovery of these equations was a watershed. Brumbauer used them to help

239

00:23:16,560 --> 00:23:22,560

confirm his suspicions. He thought he could now understand some of the Wojnich characters

240

00:23:22,560 --> 00:23:31,200

and fill in his code-breaking key. He tested his ideas on the lettering beside one of his favorite

241

00:23:31,200 --> 00:23:39,120

pictures. If you take the letters that are in here or the squiggles, the scrolls,

242

00:23:39,840 --> 00:23:50,800

they look like this. Pi A2. Each one of those being a distinct form. If you then ascribe to them

243

00:23:50,800 --> 00:23:58,960

the numerical values that appeared on the chart that my father developed, you have seven, five,

244

00:23:58,960 --> 00:24:06,400

seven, seven, five, two. One of the possible readings of it, the only one, is pepper. And

245

00:24:06,400 --> 00:24:11,840

interestingly enough, this actually looks very much like a pepper. My father had a feeling,

246

00:24:11,840 --> 00:24:16,880

he could read more and more of it, but it remained slow going. He read bits and pieces here and there,

247

00:24:16,880 --> 00:24:23,280

he read labels, he read some of the star maps. Then he began reading pages, but as he went,

248

00:24:23,280 --> 00:24:27,920

some of it was almost distressing in its ambiguity because toward the end of some pages,

249

00:24:27,920 --> 00:24:32,640

he thought that perhaps the author lapsed into a kind of gibberish. Does that mean that perhaps

250

00:24:32,640 --> 00:24:38,720

the code needed adjusting or that the author was performing a major hoax on the reader?

251

00:24:39,520 --> 00:24:46,480

We've deciphered enough to show that underneath is a very heavily padded or repetitive message,

252

00:24:46,480 --> 00:24:53,680

which either conceals a second level message or perhaps doesn't conceal anything.

253

00:24:54,560 --> 00:25:03,600

The mysteries in this program show the extraordinary lengths to which people will go when they want

254

00:25:03,600 --> 00:25:10,880

to keep secrets. And we've even more secrets to keep today. As we exchange information by computers,

255

00:25:10,880 --> 00:25:17,280

telephone lines and satellites, the more we need uncrackable codes to make sure that our messages

256

00:25:17,360 --> 00:25:24,080

are read only by the people they're sent to. So these puzzles from the past may one day help

257

00:25:24,080 --> 00:25:33,200

to guide us on the information superhighway.