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## Mining for Nephite Gold

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Blaine Bills  
Logan, Utah  
December 3, 2018

## “Mining for Nephite Gold”

### Supernatural Religious Legend

#### **Informant:**

Blaine Bills, is my dad, he is currently 49 years old. He grew up in the Nephi, Spanish Fork area with his parents and two siblings, Duane and Cathy. Both of his parents and his brother have since passed away. He went to school at Dixie for the first two years of his schooling, and then moved to Logan to go to USU for the rest. He got his degree in industrial hygiene, but has also gone through the police academy, and has been working for the state of Utah as an adult probation and parole officer for 23 years.

#### **Context:**

I first heard this story, after watching a BuzzFeed Unsolved video called “The Treacherous Hunt of Forrest Fenn.” It was about treasure that an old man had hidden, to give himself a legacy. He published documents with clues, making a high stakes treasure hunt. I watched the YouTube video on the TV, with my dad in the room. For the first half, he was just half watching with his phone pulled out. After a while, however, it seemed to grab his full attention and he put his phone away to watch it with me. After the video was finished, he told me this story. A story that I had him repeat a couple months later for this piece of folklore. I interviewed him, sitting on the couch in our TV room, with the recorder on my phone turned on. He was relaxed, reclining in his chair. His dog, a Chihuahua, was on his lap, and my dog, a small poodle mix was wandering around the room. You can hear his Chihuahua grunt towards the beginning of the recording.

#### **Text:**

I-I, used to work at the prison, like in 1995. I was [uh] the safety officer at the prison and I had prisoners that worked with me. One of the prisoners was [uh] a kind of a LDS church historian, he did a lot of research on like history of the church and things. And he told me a story about [uh] the dream mine. It’s a, it’s a [takes pause] there was a bishop I think in Payson area of Utah, in maybe the turn of the century, that had a dream, like one day like he, I think he was working out in the field, and just kind of went unconscious. And so he had a dream that he knew where like the Nephites had hidden their gold. It was in a, like a, they had buried it in a mine. Back in church his- like a long long time ago. They had buried the Nephite gold in this mine. In his dream he saw kind of where it was. And where the story about the guy that worked at the prison from, that he told the story about [uh] West mountain, like a little mountain kind of by Utah lake and on top of the mountain there’s a like rock that had a hole drilled out of it, it looked

like it was native American or long, it was really old. The hole that was drilled through the rock was pointed at the same place where this [uh] Mormon bishop [uh] had said that the dream mine was. So many people believe this bishop that he sold stock, in the [uh] It was the dream mine stock and you for so much money could buy stock in this mine where all this gold was supposed to be. And so he sold a lot of stock and they dug and dug and dug and to this day they hadn't found the gold. But if you look, if you go down the freeway along the Southern Utah, outside of Salem, there's a like a three story building on the side of the mountain, that's what they built over the dream mine.

**Texture:**

Telling the story, my dad was very relaxed, probably even tired. He had worked a twelve hour overtime shift at the chapel of a prison, the night before, and had still done his usual eight hour work shift, the day after. He had told this story before, and I had told him that I would interview him about it. He had plenty of time to think about what he was going to say. After the story was finished we talked about other treasure hunts like this, some where people have died. We tried to determine if the value of the treasure was worth all the time spent on finding it, or the lives ultimately lost. We decided that it wasn't.