

# Relations between o. henry's life and the story "buried treasure"

[Life](#)



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O. Henry was born on September 11, 1862, as William Sydney Porter in Greensboro, North Carolina. Porter's father, Argentina Sidney Porter worked as a physician (Read print, 08). Unfortunately, Porter's mother died when he was aged three and was therefore raised by his grandmother and aunt. Porter was an enthusiastic reader but he discontinued school at the age of 15 years. He started working in a drug store and later on a ranch in Texas.

He then went to Houston where among other jobs he worked as a bank clerk. Money was found to be missing from the bank he was working in and he was required to stand trial but he fled to avoid trial. He returned to Austria when he heard that his wife was in her death bed in 1897. He was convicted of embezzlement of funds although their questions arose over his guilt. He was jailed in 1898 till 1901. He wrote his first works in Penitentiary at Columbus, which marked his career start as an author.

In his work, "Buried Treasure", there are various aspects of O. Henry's life that are related to the story. It is indicated in his biography that he wrote about the life of ordinary people in New York City (On-line literature, 08). In the story, he says that his idea of a happy home is an eight-room house in a grove of live oaks by the side of charcoal on a Texas prime, a piano, an automatic player, and ponies. This reflects the wishes of most ordinary people.

Another fact in the author's life that is related to his work on the buried treasure is his education. O. Henry dropped out of school at the age of 15 years old meaning he never attained his college education. This is reflected in the story as he reveals now and again his contempt for a college education.

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This is brought forward by his attitude towards Goodloe Banks who is a young man from college. O. Henry wrote that Goodloe Banks ran to books, manners, culture, rowing, intellect, and clothes while he was more into baseball and Friday-night debating societies and more by way of culture and good horseback ride (Classical reader, 08). O. Henry clearly brings out the fact that education is not always the key as the character Goodloe Banks is portrayed as educated but his education does not lead him to the treasure. Goodloe's education is portrayed to be for exploitation as the character Ed exploits him to get to the buried treasure in this case Miss May Martha Mangum.

Porter's father, Algernon Sidney Porter, was a physician. Although a lot is not said about him, O. Henry at some point could be referring to him in the story 'Buried Treasure'. In the story, May Martha's father is said to be a man behind whiskers and spectacles. He is an etymologist. Scientists in the story are said to be apt to be absent-minded. Algernon Sidney Porter is obviously in the same category of scientists and therefore O. Henry could be indirectly referring to him as absent-minded.

Finally, in the book 41 stories, Porter is said to have gone to Texas primarily for health reasons and worked on a sheep ranch and lived with a family that had close ties with Porter's family in North Carolina (O. Henry, 84). Porter gathered knowledge of ranch life which he describes in the story 'Buried Treasure'. In the story, the character, Ed, is said to want to retire to a ranch with three thousand heads of cattle in Texas.

**Works Cited List:**

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