

Dispelling the myth of Golden Pool?

Many years ago, in the summer of 1948, I, along with two other boys from the village, Nick Linden and John Martin both good friends of mine, were swimming in the river Torridge by the old mill and being covered in horsefly bites. We decided to cross to the further side and walk across the meadow to Golden Pool where rumour has it, (and the boys both assured me it was definitely true), that the pool was 'bottomless' and that during the time of Oliver Cromwell the people from the village had put all their gold in a crock and lowered it into the deepest part of the pool intending to hide it till after the civil war. Unfortunately, when the time came to retrieve it they were unable to locate it and it was lost forever.

Still wearing our swimming costumes, with thoughts of untold riches on our minds and for a dare, (like an idiot), I decided to jump into Golden Pool to see just how deep it was and if possible search the bottom for the illusive crock of gold. Taking a deep breath I jumped and when I opened my eyes under the water it was dark and murky and I could see no further than a few centimetres. My feet soon touched the bottom, reaching down I groped around in the darkness but all to no avail, the river bed was littered with dead branches. With my feet touching the bottom and my arm held above my head my hand was above the river, so dispelling for ever the 'bottomless pit' part of the myth. I would estimate that at that particular time it was less than two metres deep, I surfaced and passed this information on to the others whereupon Nick Linden jumped in and joined me in searching for the illusive gold. Did we find the lost crock of gold? Or did Oliver beat us to it? Perhaps it's still there; all I will say is we all three left the village a few years later.

Well I'll leave you to make up your own minds.

Bill Baker