

FRED L. BLAIR

GENERAL INSURANCE

PHONE 116

MG 1 Vol. 381

769

Hedden

MARITIME BLOCK.

AMHERST, NOVA SCOTIA

February 16, 1935.

Mr. Reginald V. Harris,
Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Dear Mr. Harris:

It was, indeed, a pleasure to me as well as a great satisfaction to read the opinion enclosed with your letter of the 14th. It so completely confirms in all details, what I have repeatedly claimed, that I could not be otherwise than gratified.

At different times during the last twenty years or more, several lawyers have looked into the validity of the lease in behalf of parties with whom I happened to be dealing. Their reports were all favorable, but in no instance was the matter so thoroughly investigated from all angles as has been done by you, and in no previous case was the title to the land searched.

In my letter of December 8 to you, I said: "if all questions are satisfactorily answered, it must certainly be presumed that the lease is invulnerable." You can, therefore, readily understand why I am so pleased. I now feel reasonably sure that nothing stands in the way of Mr. Hedden entering into an agreement whereunder he will solve the mystery of Oak Island before the fall of 1936, or prove it cannot be done. The only obstacle is the matter of securing rights from the property owners. *

Your report on the titles as they now exist is in accordance with what I was told in 1931 after the death of Mrs. Sellers. Subsequent to that - during the summer of 1932 - I understood Selwyn Sellers to say that he had purchased Mrs. Powers' share, but if he did, it would appear that he has not registered the transfer.

In this connection I gather from your remarks you are under the impression that the lots mentioned - 15 to 20 inclusive - comprise the whole island. As I understand it, they embrace the eastern end only. On examination of a sketch furnished me by the Mines Dept., I would judge the island to be about 120 acres in extent. Basing my opinion on Mr. Robertson's report, it would appear it was divided into twenty lots of approximately six acres each. The remaining lots - 1 to 14 - are now owned by three or more parties, one of them being Mr. Sellers, but in that portion we are not interested.

Referring to the third paragraph of page 4, of your opinion, John Smith did build a house near the pit site, and lived in it for years. The house had disappeared when I was first on the island, but the barn - perhaps not the original one - was standing

in 1916. This, of course, is not of interest to you and I mention it only as a matter of record.

I have not heard from Mr. Nixon since his letter of November 29, a copy of which I enclosed with mine to you of the following date. I did not reply to his letter.

On January 12, I wrote Selwyn Sellers as follows:

"I know it is not necessary to write you on the subject, but just for your information in case Mr. Nixon, who worked some at Oak Island last summer, should again approach you, I would hereby advise you that his agreement with me expired on the 1st of November last, and has not been renewed. He does not now possess any right to conduct operations of any nature at the island, under my lease."

Then I added that I was still open, as I had been in the past, to negotiate with him for a lease of that portion of the island on which operations for recovery of the treasure supposed to be there, have been conducted, or in the alternative, to consider leasing such additional portion as he might wish to rent. I also added that perhaps he would consider granting an option to purchase.

Not having heard from Mr. Sellers, I again wrote him on the 5th instant, but no reply to date and I have little hope of receiving any. This will be a matter for the consideration of Mr. Hedden and Mr. Grimm after they have digested your opinion. In the meantime I am not inclined to make any further move in that direction.

I am glad to note, too, that you confirm what I told Mr. Grimm, i. e., that it is not legally necessary to lease any additional areas from the Government. We should, I think, rather aim to secure the property rights.

However, I did make inquiries a short time since, and I find that without disturbing the present lease, it will be necessary to lease two forty acre claims in order to cover the territory at the pit site, from shore to shore. Nothing less than a forty acre claim can be applied for under the existing regulations. I had Nixon in mind when I made the inquiry. On his account it might possibly be wise to apply for the claims.

With kindest regards and thanking you for the copy of opinion, I am,

Yours very truly,

