

Gilbert D. Hedden

May 14, 1967

1219 N. George Street, Kissimmee, Florida 32741

Mr. Robert Gay
PO Box 311
Armdale, Halifax,
Nova Scotia, Canada.



Gay

Dear Mr. Gay:

Your interesting letter concerning Oak Island and my operations at the site, received. You seem to be mainly interested in any answers I can give to certain questions concerning the story and I shall try to give you the best answers I can. I do not know just why you had written me off as departed for I have been referred to by name in several articles on Oak in the last few months. Actually I am just past 70 and very much alive and active. In fact within the past two months I have had several phone calls from Canada requesting information and my knowledge of various locations and conditions at the site. These came from a group working at the site at the present time in an endeavour to explore by drilling with a new type of core-drill. Reg. Harris was my attorney in the area for several years when I was actively engaged in recovery work. Now, as to your questions.

Chum drill

Triton

1. "What did I mean when I told Harold Wilkins that at the end of the legend I found a dump or an arrow". This question requires a rather complex answer. Some time, about 1937, a book appeared, written by Wilkins, in which there was reproduced a copy of a map, purported to have been drawn by Kidd. On it was the legend "Thirty East, and/by seventeen West, thirty Southwest, fourteen North" or something to that effect, as I do not have the exact quote here. We had already noted a drilled stone near the site of the Money Pit, and we were very much surprised to note in Wilkins chart some twenty points of resemblance to Oak Island. Laying out the legend as a template, using a rod as the unit of measurement, we soon discovered a second drilled stone near the shore of Smith's Cove, and the line of thirty Southwest led us to a triangle laid on the surface of the ground, with heavy Beach Stones. I just changed my mind and seem to recollect that it was seven East and/by eighteen West. The triangle had a pointer line from the base to its apex, pointing directly to the Money Pit and we later discovered that it indicated True North.

I later visited Wilkins in England and found that the chart was purely the product of his imagination and had been roughly copied from a map of the island of Tierra Del Fuego. He had no explanation of the source of the legend and could not explain why it had disclosed three markers on Oak Island that almost exactly fitted the dimensions given. He hopefully suggested that he had seen it on some chart in the British Museum. I was taken to the owner of the Kidd map, found that he possessed three different ones, only one of which I considered authentic and unaltered. The only connecting item were the words "Start from Centre of Triangle", inscribed on the border margin of the map, though no triangle or location was indicated. A Latitude and Longitude were given. I was permitted to obtain a tracing and brought the tracing back with me. I was offered all the maps for a payment of \$10,000.00 which I answered by saying that I had the Island and had no need of the charts. I believe that Kidd learned of a valuable cache and of its rather general location, but, I am thoroughly convinced that he never located the island or knew exactly where it was. Wilkins was a rather crack-pot writer of the common variety of "letters to the Editor" strain. So much for the Wilkins story. The only fact is that the drilled stones and the triangle were located with the aid of the legend on Wilkins fictitious map. I do not know the connection or how it originated with Wilkins but they were

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Mr. Robert Gay obviously markers set at the time of the original work.

harris?
Chappell?

2. Yes, I knew Nolan, had no use for him or his ideas and finally had to bar him from the island. (G.P. NOLAN)

3. The only place you can get a copy of the traced Kidd map is either from Harris or from Mel Chappell in Sydney as all of my records were forwarded to Canada when I retired and moved to Florida. The traced map has no resemblance to Oak and the legend on it is incomplete and inadequate for any application to the site. There were no signs or markings of any nature on the maps, though one had another legend obviously inked in at a later date in an attempt to make it more valuable. All that any of them really contained was a crudely drawn outline of an island. The latitude and longitude have escaped my memory but I recall that they indicated figures that were used when a full 360 degrees was used.

4. There were many marked stones on the Island when I owned it and all that I located were obviously chiselled by visitors of more recent date. I date the original work as about 1630 and I am convinced that the engineer who made the original lay-out had no intention of making a recovery in his life-time but intended to leave it for future generations. I can also add that the original work was not too complicated and that I could duplicate it on the other end of the island in one summer season of work with no more than fifty men and using the same tools then available. It was the early amateur efforts that render recovery almost impossible today. I am sorry to say that the rocks you have removed are a very cold trail and have nothing to do with the original work - in fact some were made by my own men to intrigue visitors at the site.

5. I do not know of Captain Keede. If you mean Kidd I know of his entire history and have copies of some of his correspondence. Captain Cult, I do not know and never heard of. I do not and did not know any Herman Westhaven, though there were many people from all over the world who wrote me of clues, theories and maps and wanted only transportation to Nova Scotia to effect full recovery.

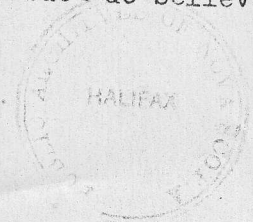
6. The anchor, an early French variety was not found on Oak. The ring in the rock is entirely legendary as far as I could ascertain. It was most certainly not there in 1934 to 1938.

7. I have no record of anyone working on the island in 1921. Mel Chappell worked there in 1931 with his father, one of the drill operators in 1897. He put down a shaft which I later used as a pumping pit, but discovered nothing other than the fact that he was somewhat South of the original shaft.

8. I have more information on Oak than anyone now alive and in all my research I never had even one rumor of the recovery or removal of one chest. In fact the best records of the original cache indicate three or perhaps four Oak containers.

9. I know nothing of J. A. Wagner of San Francisco. Nor do I know of any pilot named Joe Smith of St. Margarets Bay, though there is a very interesting story of St. Margaret's Bay and of a chart connected with the area. There is even the story that the chart was inscribed in a language supposed to be Yiddish though it was never seen except at a distance, and the owner and user left the area after one season and disappeared somewhere in the South.

Your Post Script. I do not believe that Kidd had very many eggs as you put it, or put very much of anything in any basket. I am very certain that Kidd had nothing to do with the construction on Oak but I do believe that he learned of it



and gambled his life, or offered to, for an attempt to find it. He may have known of the originator but the only clue that he is known to have left refers to Deer Island, Maine, which has been excavated from one end to the other without success.

No, Oak was constructed before Kidd was born and was not intended to be discovered until about 1900. The original one who conceived the idea and did the work underestimated human progress by a bit over 100 years.

I have not been at the site since 1950 and I know it has now changed considerably. I am glad to hear from you and will be very glad to try and answer any other questions you may propose but do not base your hope of riches on Oak for it is my present estimate that the story could only be proved or disproved with an investment of about two years work and a sum of at least \$200,000. Good Luck and good hunting.

Sincerely,

(Sgd.) Gilbert D. Hedden.



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