

EXCERPTTHE ATLANTIC ADVOCATEOCTOBER, 1965Pages 38-39FILE: ~~██████████~~
HOAX

After visiting Oak Island and studying its history I suspect that the whole mystery is due to a natural phenomenon; that the legendary treasure is non-existent and the mysterious people w. o were supposed to have buried it merely a figment of the imagination, and I do not believe that there is any evidence of human workmanship on Oak Island, prior, that is, to 1795.

There is, however, plenty of evidence to show that an agency other than man has been at work on Oak Island; namely the wind, the sea and an age-old upheaval of the earth's crust.

The south coast of Nova Scotia is extensively faulted. Many deep fissures running inland from the sea are common in that area. There is strong evidence of such a fault on Oak Island, extending along the artificial beach, the tunnel, and directly through the "money-pit". Over many thousands of years debris, washed in by high tides and heavy seas, could have accumulated in this fault until it has completely filled it up.

I believe that what the original discoverers found when they landed on Oak Island in 1795 was not a treasure site, but only a sink hole caused by slumping in the debris in the fault. Several feet wide, this filling would be softer than the surrounding ground, and give the impression that it had been dug up before.

As the treasure hunters dug on down and found layers of logs, tropical fibres and cement, they assumed that these had been put there by man. Yet the logs were roughly laid without fastenings of any kind. They still had bark on them, and bore no signs of human workmanship. Storms and high tides, and fluctuations in the sea level relative to the land which took place from time to time over the years could have forced the logs into the fissure and arranged them roughly in layers.

The tropical fibre could have come from the Gulf Stream which passes very near Nova Scotia. Strong gales could have blown the fibre onto the shore, where it would become trapped in the fissure in the same way as the logs.

The cement, considered one of the most important clues, was probably a natural cement. This can be formed in the ideal conditions within a fault. Clay and angular pieces of stone can be bonded by a natural cementing agent such as iron oxide, which forms a breccia almost impossible to distinguish from cement. That found in the pit was sent to a laboratory for analysis, and the report that came back stated only that it "resembled man-made cement".

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The treasure hunters jumped to some hasty conclusions from the curved splinters and the jerky action of the drill, but the action of the drill would be the same, and the splinters brought to the surface would be curved, whether they came from the side of a cask or the side of a log.

The "masses of loose metal" the drill revolved in could as well have been masses of loose stones. No trace of gold or silver were ever found on the drill, with the exception of the three links of the gold chain, which cannot be produced today, nor can any eyewitnesses be found who claim to have seen them since. The parchment fragment is still in existence, but it could quite easily have blown into the pit, or been dropped in by a member of a previous expedition. Or, and this could account for the gold chain as well, it could have been planted by a prankster from the town of Chester on the mainland. There are rumours to the effect that the people of Chester, who never believed in the treasure anyhow, have more than once amused themselves by dropping "evidence" in the "money-pit". //

It was thought that the removal of the flat stone at the ninety-five-foot level had caused the flood of water into the "money-pit". This assumption was made, as earlier pointed out, forty years after the "money-pit" first flooded, because someone remembered the markings on the stone. And when we consider the markings, they could have been other-than human writing. Possibly they were a series of tracks left by a worn eons ago when the stone was soft mud, or scratches left by a glacier, or a freak of crystallization. Graphite in solution, for instance, will often crystallize on a fractured surface in patterns resembling writing.

There is no proof that the tunnel leading to the beach was built by man. No timbers or other material were found that could have been used to shore up the sides. It seems more likely that the tunnel is merely a continuation of the fault dipping out to sea. Although choked with rubble when found it would still admit the passage of sea water, and flood the "money-pit" further inland.

The artificial beach is also strongly suggestive of a fault crossing the island and branching as it runs out to sea. Below the high water mark the fault would trap such debris as eel grass and the tropical fibre, and beneath these the heavier stones. The tides, flowing in and out of the fault, would arrange this debris in a fan-like pattern converging on the land side.

A fault may dip at any angle. The one of Oak Island would be close to the verticle, and at the one hundred and fifty-three foot level the drill apparently penetrated the footwall and passed out of the "money-pit".

When my husband and I visited Oak Island my father was with us. He was a civil engineer and geologist with fifty years experience with Dosco iron mines. He spotted the fault at once. It is not difficult to see how such a fault could give the impression of being man-made, and treasure hunters are ever prone to jump to romantic conclusions. In this case it may well be that imagination and a natural structure aided by wind and sea have conspired to create a legend of buried treasure that has endured for over a century and a half.

If this sounds fantastic, consider for a moment the alternative; that a group of people prior to 1795, using primitive equipment, buried a treasure one hundred and fifty feet below the surface of the ground, far below sea level, built a vault of timbers and cement to protect this treasure, and dug a tunnel one hundred

yards to the ocean with a flooding system controlled by a small flat stone.

Certainly there is geological evidence of a fault on Oak Island in the vicinity of the "money-pit". That this fault is responsible for the tunnel, the artificial beach and the findings in the "money-pit" seems to be the most realistic theory so far advanced. A geological survey would provide the answer, and would seem to be the logical step to take next for anyone sincerely interested in solving the mystery. It might well save much more wasted money and heartbreak and surely Oak Island has exacted full measure of these in the past.