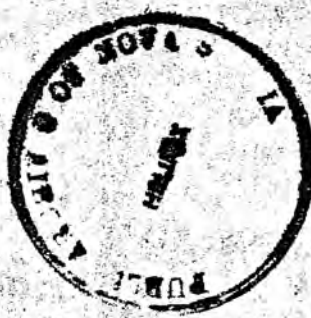


Hamilton Correspondence re Oak Island

Item	Date	Description	Page No.
1	Sept 1, 1938	Letter to F. L. Blair from RJH (R. J. Harris) regarding Hedden and Hamilton	1 and 2
2	August 30, 1939	Copy of Letter to Hedden from Hamilton (left side of page slightly cropped)	3
3	November 16, 1939	Letter to Frederick L. Blair from Hamilton Attachment – Work Carried on at Oak Island (Summer 1939)	4 and 5
4	1950	Hamilton notes to Harris regarding manuscript of book by Harris (left side of pages slightly cropped)	6 and 7

Compiled by Les MacPhie - March 21, 2015

Hamilton



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MGI Vol. 381

Sept. 1 1938

F.L. Blair, Esq.,
Amherst, E.S.

Dear Mr. Blair:-

I have been away on a long holiday and on my return find your letter of August 6th. Yesterday I had a call from Mr. Hedden who came to Nova Scotia last week and I read parts of your letter to him.

There need be no difference of opinion between you and Hedden over this matter. He agrees entirely with you as to two party control. Hamilton will not enter into the picture at all in case of dispute, and clause 12 of the original agreement of March 1st as to arbitration will stand. I am sending you a copy of this agreement. It is to be attached and form part of the memorandum signed July 15th extending its terms and signed by you and Hedden.

As to the agreement dividing the proceeds recovered, this has now been signed by Hedden and Hamilton, but I have Hedden's authority to change it in any reasonable way to suit your wishes. I enclose two copies of it and I would ask you to indicate specifically in what way you think it should be changed. I have yet to draw an agreement with regard to the writing of the book.

Hedden tells me that during the past few weeks they have been drilling laterally at a depth of 119 feet. Some of the probes have been horizontal and others at varying angles. Several of the probes at 119 feet encountered very old oak in the area immediately north of the Chappell pit and west of the large shaft. Hedden believes these oak fragments are remains of the 1850 timbers of the pit which collapsed at that time. If so they point directly to the location of the original money pit. They also opened the seventy-five foot pit between the cave-in pit and the shore and found it in excellent condition down to fifty-five feet, and found a tunnel leading out from it towards the shore. This also seems



to have something to do with the 1850 operations. Chappell has told Hedden of entering this pit and the tunnels that lead out from it, one of which goes into the money pit about four hundred feet away.

Recently in Connecticut, Hedden discovered a 98 year old man named Captain Vaughan, who was born on the Island and who had worked as a boy in the 1850 operations. He gave him some interesting information which we can use when we come to writing the story.

? The Plum Island operations have collapsed with no discovery whatever.

With kindest regards, I am,

Faithfully yours,

RJH

August 30th, 1939.

Dear Mr. Hedden:

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13-29

My reason for not writing sooner to you was that there was a lack of news. Each day I expected to find something that would be of importance. I was at the pencil. The typewriter needs fixing and I ran out of ink writing checks.

The pumping pit (your first one) was in a very bad condition. We spent five weeks re-timbering it. The timbers had become unlocked in one corner due to settling. It was re-timbered from the 148th Ft. level up to about the 115th. Then again from 60 ft. up to 40 ft. and some around the top joist below the deck.

We started yesterday morning to run a tunnel out at the 117ft level in the Northeast corner of the big pit. The tunnel aiming Westward into the square bounded on one side by the pump pit and on another by the side of the big pit. They went out slightly over four feet the first day. Dry hard digging so far.

In the sand-filled pit we ran out of sand the first day and ran into hard blue clay. We put in cross braces and some new timbers as we went down. At 35 feet we found a tunnel that aimed at the sink hole pit. It was partly filled with a few broken timbers. We cleaned it out and re-timbered it in spots. It gradually curved around and ended just under the caved-in place at the side of the path.

Digging further down another tunnel was reached in the shaft. This one is directly below the first but ran out at an angle in the direction of your bin. We did not clean this one out. Further down another tunnel was reached. It ran straight out toward the path. This tunnel was 45 feet below the timber. It stopped 5 feet below tunnel. Tunnel was filled and mouth boarded up. Timber bad. Bent and broken but not rotten. All timbers in all tunnels were unlocked, cut with an up and down saw.

Tunnel at 45 feet led outward to a sand streak in which there was a large rock. Timbering stopped just before the rock. Two posts were in place. The old timbers all cut to fit were in a neat pile on the rock. We put them into place and continued the tunnel another five feet into very hard blue clay. Careful measurement showed the sand streak in the first tunnel, the sand streak in the second tunnel, the sink hole, the money pit and your stakes at shore marking the water course, to be all lined up perfectly.

The sand streak extended upward as far as we could poke with a bar. Outward toward the beach and toward the money pit and downward but not in either the other two directions. The streak was well defined and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. We started shaft in the floor of the tunnel and have got down about 11 feet. In that path we had some sand, beach gravel, small stones and blue clay. It is very dry down there and must be good drainage. At about six feet level in inner shaft we found a flat stone that my men liked to sit on, it made a good seat. During the time we were digging around this stone the deck man noticed tobacco in the bin and remarked that the diggers were chewing a lot. Next day I asked Charley Angille who was digging, if he had put tobacco in the tub. He said no that he did not have any. A careful check-up showed that no one had chewed that day. Looking over the muck pile I recovered several pieces. It was old fashioned leaf tobacco. Later that day some more was uncovered. This I am sure about as I took some pieces directly out of the solid clay. The first half hour out it smelled like a good Havana cigar that has lost most of its smell.

At 10 feet we found a few bits of wood and twigs. I am sure it was worked over by man. I believe it is an old trench, dug from the top down to flood the money pit. If it is we should soon reach the water course as we are 82 feet below the deck of the money pit. The water course at the pit end is 93 feet down and may have a pitch in it.

Work in the "gopher hole" at the shore as Pop Carroll calls it has slowed down a lot as the hoist had to be moved to the big pit, but I am keeping at it with a hand winch. I will write Blair as soon as I get a few minutes time

Hamilton

Hamilton

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ERWIN H. HAMILTON

CONSULTING ENGINEER

TELEPHONE
RAYMOND 9-2000

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
181ST. STREET & UNIVERSITY AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Chap *XV*

November 16, 1939.

Mr. Frederick L. Blair
Maritime Avenue
Amherst,
Nova Scotia, Canada.

Dear Mr. Blair:

I am sorry that I didn't write to you sooner. I saw Mr. Hedden the other night for the first time in several months. He told me that he had been so busy that he was unable to send you any details concerning the work on Oak Island. I am enclosing a copy of a brief report describing the work that was carried on this summer. As you will see from it, I was unable to do very much direct searching for the Treasure. Most of the work consisted in repairing the pump shaft which was threatening to collapse at any moment. I am also enclosing a set of blueprints showing both the drillings made in 1937 and those that I made in 1938. Along with these blueprints you will find a typed description of what the drillings showed. You will probably notice that there is no description for the last few holes drilled. I, unfortunately, allowed Mr. Hedden to have the originals. He had promised to make up copies for me. Somehow or other, he lost one sheet of the originals.

I hope that it will be possible for me to accomplish much more this coming summer than I was able to accomplish in the past two summers. Of course, there is always the possibility that the War may interfere altho as far as I know at the present moment, this is not the case.

I had made all plans to visit you and discuss the work last September but was called back to the University sooner than I had expected and was unable to do this. Perhaps I may be able to visit you before the work at the Island gets under way next Spring and at that time can discuss with you the advisability of certain schemes which I have in mind.

I trust that you are enjoying good health and that I may have the pleasure of talking with you in the very near future.

Sincerely,

Erwin H. Hamilton

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EHH:C/enc.

XVI
E. Hamilton
Report

WORK CARRIED ON AT OAK ISLAND (SUMMER 1939)

After the pump was installed and operating it was found that considerable of the timbering in the 12 x 12 shaft was either broken or had become unlocked in the corners thus rendering the shaft liable to collapse. During the first five weeks this shaft was re-timbered starting at the 145 ft. level and timbering it solid with 6 x 6 sawn spruce up to the 120 ft. level. Again starting at the 90 ft. level, it was timbered with hewn spruce up to approximately the 60 ft. level. This latter was more or less in the form of braces and solid timbering used only where old timbering was actually broken and in a dangerous condition. In all upwards of 10,000 ft. of timber was used in this operation.

one in pit
While the above operations were being carried out in the pump pit, the sand-filled pit on the shore was excavated and revealed three separate tunnels running out from it, the uppermost one starting at approximately 40 ft. in the North corner and running out diagonally in the general direction of the sink hole. The next lowest one started directly beneath this first and ran out diagonally in the general direction of Western Shore. The lowest tunnel ran out directly from the South side of the shaft. The uppermost one and the lowest one were fully excavated and retimbered, the middle one was not investigated. Both the uppermost and the lowest tunnel went out a distance of from 25 ft. to 30 ft. and ended in what appeared to be disturbed ground. Checking up on the surface with the direction taken by the two tunnels and the length of them, they both terminate on a straight line that would pass thru the sink hole and the so-called money pit on the hill. At approximately the end of the lowest tunnel, a 3½ ft. x 4 ft. shaft was started and was carried down approximately 18 ft. The earth encountered in sinking this shaft gave every evidence of having been disturbed by man at some time. At a depth of approximately 12 ft. an appreciable quantity of old-fashioned leaf tobacco was found. Just before terminating work for the summer and after this work in the pit at the shore had been suspended for some time, we discovered that surface water entering the main shaft ran thru the lowest tunnel, ran down into the inner shaft and disappeared from the bottom. Obviously, the inner shaft must be either close to a ditch or some water course which connects directly with the pump shaft on the hill.

After the timbering in the pump shaft was completed, work was started on a 4 ft. x 5½ ft. tunnel at the 115 ft. level in the 12 x 24 ft. shaft. This tunnel started out in the square included between the large shaft and the pump shaft and ran in a general southerly direction just outside the pump shaft. At approximately 21 ft. the tunnel was turned thru 90 deg. and ran along the outside of the southerly side of the pump shaft. Work was terminated for the season after 19 ft. of this latter section of the tunnel had been completed. Timbering in this tunnel consisted of 2" planks run lengthwise and braced every 20 inches with 7" x 7" hewn spruce timber.

1. No lease of machinery from Heddon existed. I bought some equipment and leased some from Sprague & Henwood of Scranton, Pa. And also hired an expert diamond driller from them.
2. 58 holes in all not 13 were drilled.
3. Better leave out the \$6,800.
4. In the Hedden pit #22 not the Chappell pit.
5. Mr Hedden was not present. In fact he was never on the Island from June 1938 until July 1949. =
6. No tunnel leads out from shaft #4 toward shore. A tunnel leads southward toward the cave-in pit and intersects a tunnel running from the money pit to the shore.
7. Hedden did no work except to clean it out & replace bad timbers in the Chappell pit so that he might use it for a pumping shaft.
8. Two shafts near the shore. In the first, or one nearest the shore, at 35 ft down a tunnel was found etc. "

9. Omit this sentence and the remainder of the page. And in its place add:-
"The first shaft which was completely filled with sand and only sand was found to be ~~only~~ 45 ft deep. (about 40 ft below high tide.) At 35 ft. a tunnel lead out in a southward direction approximately parallel with the shore line. It was cleaned out and found to be ~~only~~ about 15 ft long.

At the 45 ft level or approximately the bottom of the shaft another tunnel was found leading out in the same direction as the one immediately above it. However this one went out some ten feet further or about 25 ft from the shaft. After repairing this tunnel and extending it a few feet further a shaft was dug downward at its end. After many difficulties this shaft finally was put down some 11 feet. Just before stopping this work a large flat stone not native to this level was found and along side of it some old fashioned leaf tobacco. The latter was in good condition. Someone must at some time have been at this level, but how?" This shaft was in a sand & gravel

streak about three and a half feet wide that appeared to run in a direction from the core to the money pit.

3) Omit.

1) This branch curved and went around the cave-in pit.

Further clearing out of the tunnels showed that the tunnel running from the money pit toward the shore ended directly under the cave-in pit. The appearance of the end of the tunnel indicated a hurried discontinuance of the work and that the branch tunnel was put in as a means of overcoming difficulties at the cave in pit location.

2) Everything indicated that it was a few feet, perhaps five feet to the south of the original location. Or in other words the correct location was between the Chappell & Hedden shafts. (M.C.) 6

3) No difficulty was experienced with the pump. Difficulty was experienced with electrical power failure due to str.

- 4.) In 1942 a 8' x 8' shaft was sunk in the middle southern half of the Hedden shaft down to 168 ft.
- 7.) Analysis showed the water flowing in the water course to have a slightly greater specific gravity than a sample taken at the same time in the adjacent core.
- 6.) During the operations in 1942 several drill holes were put down into the area between the Chappell and the Hamilton extension of the Hedden shafts. At a depth of some twelve feet below the bottoms of the two shafts a large amount of granite and other stones of a kind not native to this depth were encountered. (Only limestone should be found at this depth)
- 7.) During 1943 strong platforms were put into the Chappell, Hedden, and one shaft near the shore. All were located just above the normal water level in each pit. All three shafts were also decked over at the surface. All equipment was removed from the island and put in storage at Chester.
- 7.) Better leave out. It isn't so.

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