Analysis of Artifacts
Item # 39

Partially burned piece of oak found at same depth of approx 5' below surface

WHO FOUND	The Truro Company
WHEN FOUND	1850
WHERE FOUND	Adjacent to Smith's Cove drains
FIRSTHAND/ SECONDHAND	
REFERENCES	R.V. Harris Pg. 29 citing Robert Creelman
LOCATION TODAY	
ODDITY FACTOR	
ASSESSMENT OF AUTHENTICITY	
COMMENTS	

ebbed large rivulets gushed along the beach as from many bubbling springs. Or, as the report on the operations records, "gulched forth water like a sponge being squeezed." A few minutes shovelling proved beyond doubt that their theories were correct, for on removing the beach sand and gravel to a depth of about three feet, they found a layer, about two inches thick, of a brown, fibrous plant (coconut fibre) exactly like that previously found in the Pit, and below it a layer of four or five inches of decayed eel-grass or kelp, and still farther down a compact mass of beach rocks, free from sand and gravel. Tons of this tropical fibre were removed and piled in stacks like haycocks along the shore.

Though it had evidently lain below the surface of the beach for very many years, the fibre was in a remarkable state of preservation. The further discovery was also made that this peculiar condition extended for 145 feet along the shore and from low- to high-water mark—a giant man-made sponge!

A Coffer-Dam Built

To investigate these significant conditions, it was considered necessary to build a coffer-dam to hold back the tide and enclose a portion of Smith's Cove. On the completion of this work (which should have been more strongly built, and have enclosed more of the water area), further excavations were made, when it was found that the clay which had formed the original beach had been removed and replaced by the beach rocks mentioned above.

Still further excavation led to the amazing discovery of five well-constructed box drains formed of flat rocks, with the sides of the drains about eight inches apart and covered with flat stones. These drains stretched out like the sticks of a fan or the fingers of a hand, converging to a common point, centre or funnel intake at high-water mark. With the exception of these flat stones, which had been used to construct the five drains, the other stones had evidently been thrown in promiscuously.

The account in the *Colonist* of January 2, 1864, states:

In investigating the drains, they found that they connected with one of larger dimensions, the stones forming which had been prepared with a hammer, and were mechanically laid in such a way that the drain could not collapse. There were a number of tiers of stones strengthening the higher part of the drain, on the top of which was also found a coating of the same sort of grass as that already noticed. Over it came a layer of blue sand, such as before had not been seen on the Island, and over the sand was spread the gravel indigenous to the coast.

Having laid bare the large drain for a short distance into the bank, they found it had been so well made and protected that no earth had sifted through the arch to obstruct water passing through it.

They then attempted to follow the inward direction of the drain, in search of a perpendicular shaft, but on account of the surrounding soil being so soft, and so much saturated with water, it was given up as impracticable.

Half of the area enclosed by the coffer-dam was completely excavated up to the shore line and indicated a depth of five feet for the original work. Robert Creelman's account says that in making this excavation "a partially burned piece of oak wood was found." There was evidence of planned engineering of nearly professional standard.

When the work had reached this stage, an unusually high tide, which occurred along with a storm, overflowed the top of the dam; as it had not been constructed to resist such pressures (as when a very high tide came in and receded), it was carried away, leaving the exposed workings full of sand.

It was at once evident that the fan-wise drains were the outwork and starting point of the tunnel by which the waters of the Atlantic Ocean were conveyed to the bottom of the Money Pit, and that, unless the inlet could be blocked or some gate formed or constructed across the intake of the water tunnel, operations in the Pit would be very difficult if not impracticable.