

Analysis of Artifacts

Item # 86

Three pieces of wire which was copper

WHO FOUND The Truro Company

WHEN FOUND 1849

WHERE FOUND Brought up by the auger from the fifth drill hole into Money Pit at about 100'

**FIRSTHAND/
SECONDHAND**

REFERENCES James McNutt's 1867 account
D'Arcy O'Connor's, "The Big Dig", pg. 19

LOCATION TODAY

ODDITY FACTOR

**ASSESSMENT OF
AUTHENTICITY**

COMMENTS

states that "three pieces of wire which was copper were brought up by the auger" from the fifth hole.

If the workers couldn't physically get to the pit's watery bottom, they now had at least some idea of what was below the platform at ninety-eight feet: There appeared to be at least two large oaken chests filled with something metallic and laying one on top of the other at a depth of between 100 and 104 feet, after which there was another wooden platform spread across the pit at about the 105-foot level. Below that, in the seven additional feet they had drilled, the clay was loose, indicating that the Money Pit had originally been dug even deeper.

Shortly after these encouraging results, the Truro Company sank several more exploratory holes into the bottom of the Money Pit. The reported findings were basically the same as before. But now an element of intrigue comes into the story. John Pitbladdo, a mining engineer from Truro, was the foreman on this crew and was in charge of examining the drill-core samples that were brought to the surface. One day, John Gammell, a major shareholder in the Truro Company, happened to be on the site and saw Pitbladdo take something off the end of the drill, examine it closely, and then slip it into his pocket. Gammell later said he asked Pitbladdo what he had found, but was told he would have to wait until the next Truro Company board meeting when Pitbladdo would show it to all the directors.

Pitbladdo never showed up at that meeting; in fact, he was never seen on the island again. But he presumably had found something that convinced him there was treasure in the Money Pit. Nova Scotia provincial records show that on August 1, 1849, John Pitbladdo and an associate, Charles D. Archibald, who was manager of the Acadia Iron Works at Londonderry, Nova Scotia, applied to the lieutenant general of the province for a license to dig for treasure on Oak Island. They received permission several days later, but their license was limited to "ungranted and unoccupied lands on Oak Island." The two men then made a determined but unsuccessful attempt to purchase John Smith's land.

Nothing more came of Pitbladdo's scheme to get control of