

*Analysis of Artifacts*

Item # 107

*Large granite rock with Roman numeral II plus inscriptions.*

WHO FOUND	Hedden Expedition
WHEN FOUND	1936
WHERE FOUND	Half buried in the sand along the beach at Joudrey's Cove
FIRSTHAND/ SECONDHAND	
REFERENCES	D'Arcy O'Connor's, "The Big Dig", Pgs. 90 - 91
LOCATION TODAY	
ODDITY FACTOR	
ASSESSMENT OF AUTHENTICITY	
COMMENTS	

digging for treasure in Canada.) Hedden also purchased a 1,000-gallon-per-minute turbine pump, the largest ever used on the island, to drain the pit. It was fed by 7,500 watts of electric power and proved more than adequate for the job.

Hedden kept a diary recording the summer's work. Some excerpts: "I arrived on Oak Island May 27, 1936. . . . Put in turbine pump. Ran the pump two hours and fifteen minutes and lowered the water seventy feet in the shaft, which would be one hundred feet below the deck head. I observed when the water was down to [that] level, an old shaft [the Cave-in Pit] was drained also, proving there is some clear passage between [the two]. . . . I also noticed that three other old pits are gradually becoming dried out since pumping operations [began]."

During the balance of the summer, the Chappell shaft was cleared and re-timbered to its original depth of 155 feet and then driven down to 160 feet. Some lateral probing was done at various levels, but the only discovery of any consequence was two large oak splinters found several feet to the east at a depth of 147 feet. From their state of decay and the location in which they were found, Hedden believed that "these splinters must be part of a box or an oak platform of logs which fell to that depth in the collapse" of the Money Pit in 1861. He concluded that the original Money Pit was probably slightly to the east of the Chappell shaft. He and his crew therefore left off work in September and planned to return the following spring to begin a new shaft in that location. This hole was to be large enough to allow pneumatic drills to be brought down and used for lateral drilling. The drill rods would extend out twenty feet in all directions from the shaft at vertical levels of two feet apart, beginning at the one-hundred-foot level and working as far down as necessary to locate the treasure.

Before leaving the island that summer, Hedden uncovered more coconut fiber six feet under the beach at Smith's Cove. He also made two other interesting discoveries.

One Saturday in July, while he was wandering along the beach at Joudrey's Cove on the island's north side, Hedden spotted a large granite rock half buried in the sand. He dug it out and discovered lettering etched into one of its flat surfaces. It bore the Roman numeral II and below that the letters

"GIN," which seemed to form only part of a word, as the rock had obviously been broken from a larger piece. He inquired around and from one of his local workers learned that a huge flat boulder bearing several inscriptions had been seen in the location sometime in the 1920s. It had been dynamited into many pieces and the ground under it excavated for a few feet in the hope that the rock covered a treasure deposit. Nothing had been found, and several of the inscribed pieces had been carried away by souvenir seekers. But Hedden's interest was particularly aroused when he was told that, although much of the inscription on the boulder had apparently been carved during the nineteenth century, one part of it had contained "strange symbols" which no one at the time could account for.

Hedden set his men to work exploring that part of the shoreline. In the next couple of days two more large rock pieces were discovered, one bearing the letter "W" and the other reading "S.S. Ross 1864." Hedden assumed Ross had been a worker with one of the search groups from the 1860s. (The "GIN" on the first piece may have been part of the name "McGinnis," as several generations of that family had lived on the island since 1795.) But then a fourth piece, weighing several hundred pounds, was found buried a few feet below the beach. On one of its flat sides was part of an inscription which was far more weathered than the others and totally unlike them.

These pieces were rafted around the island to the dock at Smith's Cove and then hauled by a team of horses up to Hedden's cabin. No two of the four slabs, all of which had irregular and jagged edges, fit together, and Hedden realized he was missing many pieces of the original boulder. His workers continued to search, but nothing more was found.

That the symbols predated the discovery of the Money Pit seemed quite possible. And perhaps people finding it later had dug up the boulder and on a whim had added their names to it. Neither Hedden nor anyone else could make any sense of the odd characters, and that piece of rock was left lying in front of his cabin. But in the 1970s these symbols would form part of some unusual theories about the origin of Oak Island.

Hedden's second discovery was less enigmatic, though its