

*Analysis of Artifacts*

Item # 148

*Anchor Fluke*

WHO FOUND	M.R. Chappell
WHEN FOUND	1931
WHERE FOUND	Chappell Shaft
FIRSTHAND/ SECONDHAND	
REFERENCES	M.R. Chappell's Book Furneaux's, "The Money Pit Mystery", pg. 76 D'Arcy O'Connor's, "The Big Dig", pgs. 68 & 69
LOCATION TODAY	
ODDITY FACTOR	
ASSESSMENT OF AUTHENTICITY	
COMMENTS	Apparently lost from Andover Museum

(No. 21) which became known as the 'Chappell' shaft, twelve ft. by fourteen ft. to the south-west of the shaft excavated in 1897, and also to enclose shaft No. 12. As the digging proceeded, evidence of early operations came to light: at 127 ft., a pick; at 123 ft., an axe head, resembling an Acadian axe, and estimated to be 250 years old, its edge tempered and not rusted, although the rest of it was badly corroded; at 116 ft., an anchor fluke, a bit of oak under a piece of granite, measuring four ft. by four ft., and which needed to be broken by blasting; at 127 ft., part of a miner's seal-oil lamp, and at 130 ft. and 150 ft., further pieces of granite.

These discoveries perplexed Blair, who recorded his thoughts:

'From 116 ft. six in. to 155 ft., the earth in over half of the shaft was much disturbed. How these articles reached a depth of from ten to seventeen ft. lower than any searcher ever reached, is a question that must be answered.

'These tools, I believe, belonged to searchers who worked there many years ago, and had fallen from a much higher level to where found. Both (the axe and the pick) were in perpendicular position and in soft, disturbed or filled ground.

'The only reply that I can think of is that there existed an open space into which they fell when the Pit collapsed years ago, and at that time the Pit had been opened only to eighty-six ft., hence these tools may have fallen as much as thirty-five ft. or more.

'At about 150 ft. we commenced to uncover broken up pieces of stone, the nature of which no person here can identify. They have the appearance of the so-called cement which was drilled through in previous years, and yet it does not resemble it in all respects. These stones first appeared in the disturbed portion of the Pit, a chunk or two, and gradually spread over the whole area.

'As the men worked deeper, the bottom became largely covered with this stuff in broken pieces, and Mr. Stevenson, the miner in charge of the actual work, says they appear just as if they had been dumped or dropped from a higher point. At the present level, the bottom of the Pit is covered with this stuff, and it seems as if we are in a bed of it that may extend considerably deeper. The water comes through under the shoe at the bottom on one side, and a few feet up the wall as well as at the bottom on the opposite side.

built a campsite on the island and lived there for the next six months.

Mel Chappell, who was a member of the Engineering Institute of Canada, consulted with several prominent mining engineers on the best type of shaft to use. The consensus was that an open-timbered pit would be the most practical. A centrifugal pump with a capacity of 450 gallons per minute was purchased to drain the shaft. It was powered by electricity, which was routed to the island through a submarine cable from the mainland. This marked the first time that electric power had been used in the search.

The plan was to sink a new shaft down into the chamber that had been drilled through in 1897. The first problem the workers faced was in determining exactly where to dig. No work of any consequence had been done on the island since 1909, the year in which Bowdoin dynamited and ripped out much of the cribbing in the Money Pit. Over the years, the pit had caved in, and by 1931 its location could only be estimated from memory and by the general depression of the earth in that area. They therefore decided to dig a relatively large pit (known as the Chappell shaft) twelve feet wide by fourteen feet long that would almost surely strike at least part of the center of the original Money Pit.

Shortly before his death in 1980, Claude Chappell told me: "When we first went [to the island] Uncle William staked out where we should put down the pit, and eventually we started it. Blair came out and said, 'You're about six feet from where you should be.' 'Well,' Uncle William said, 'we can't shift the head [of the shaft] now, but when we get down there we can look around.'"

Actually, the center of the Chappell pit was probably slightly southwest of the original Money Pit, with its northern end taking in one corner of the original pit. Most of the digging was done through previously worked soil. They encountered salt water, but the pit was kept dry with the large electric pump.

On their way down the workers came across tools and a lot of timber from earlier searchers' shafts. They also found an old anchor fluke at 120 feet, which, according to Mel Chap-

pell, "was imbedded in the clay on the side [of the pit] and wasn't rusted." He said the anchor fluke was of an ancient design and that it may well have been an original artifact. (Blair had it in his home for many years, but it disappeared shortly after his death in 1951.)

Neither the Money Pit nor any immediately adjacent shaft had ever been excavated to more than 113 feet; so the old tools found below that depth in the Chappell shaft had somehow sunk from where they'd been left. But the question of what had happened to the metal, wood, and cement encountered between 126 and 171 feet by the drillers in 1897 remained unanswered. Apart from searchers' tools, the only interesting discoveries in the Chappell shaft were large chunks of what was believed to be either granite or concrete. Blair, in a report to William Chappell late that summer, offered the following explanation:

I am convinced that down to 150 feet at least, one end of your pit was over the edge of what once was an open chamber. Due to the collapse of supports, etc. above, this chamber has been filled with broken ground or clay, through which the water being pumped has passed. Tons and tons of clay have passed out with the water this summer, and the gravel and other solids keep settling down to solid bottom as the work progresses. The wall of this chamber, undermined possibly by water, has broken down in the vicinity of our pit, and perhaps it is some of that [granite or concrete] wall we have taken out.

By that time Blair and William Chappell realized they were dealing with a dog's breakfast in the depths of the Money Pit area. This had been created by several collapses and reopenings of the Money Pit, the sinking of at least ten shafts within thirty-five feet of the pit, and lateral tunneling at several levels all around it. Add to that the effect of billions of gallons of water flowing into and being pumped out of the same area, and the total result could only be a confused subterranean soup stirred by a succession of searchers over those past 136 years.

On October 14 the Chappell shaft was down to 155 feet, deeper than any previous diggers had ever been. From there they drilled into the bottom and determined that the disturbed