

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:16,579

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:16,579 --> 00:00:21,104

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations, but not necessarily

3

00:00:21,104 --> 00:00:30,433

the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

4

00:00:30,433 --> 00:00:34,878

Beneath a strange old oak tree, the search began.

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00:00:34,878 --> 00:00:41,244

In 1795, three boys found a deep pit built a century before.

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00:00:41,244 --> 00:00:44,728

They were convinced it held something of immense value.

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00:00:44,728 --> 00:00:59,943

The clues uncovered were so tantalizing that men have been digging ever since.

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00:00:59,943 --> 00:01:11,755

Today, two centuries later, the search continues for the buried treasure of oak island.

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00:01:15,759 --> 00:01:24,768

One of the world's most elaborate treasure hunts is presently underway on oak island off the east coast of Canada.

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00:01:24,768 --> 00:01:33,778

In the 1600s, the waters of Nova Scotia were a haven for pirates, eluding British and Spanish pursuit.

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00:01:33,778 --> 00:01:41,786

Most searches have assumed the brilliant buccaneer, Captain Kidd, chose oak island to conceal a priceless treasure.

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00:01:41,786 --> 00:01:47,792

Others have expected to find Spanish gold plundered from Mexico and South America.

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00:01:47,792 --> 00:01:53,798

Still others believe the lost crown jewels of Marie Antoinette had been buried there.

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00:01:53,798 --> 00:01:59,804

As early as 1720, strange lights had been seen at night on the island's coast.

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00:01:59,804 --> 00:02:02,807

Two fishermen who went out to investigate vanished.

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00:02:02,807 --> 00:02:08,813

So for nearly a century after, everyone kept his distance from the uninhabited island.

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00:02:08,813 --> 00:02:12,817

The mainland farmers considered it taboo.

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00:02:12,817 --> 00:02:21,827

Finally, in 1795, three brave farm boys set out on an adventure which in search of has recreated.

19

00:02:29,835 --> 00:02:36,842

Daniel McGinnis, the leader, all of 18, was more fascinated than frightened by the specter of danger.

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00:02:36,842 --> 00:02:43,849

He convinced his two best friends to come out and see something peculiar he'd discovered the day before.

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00:02:43,849 --> 00:02:51,857

On an October morning, the island looked friendly, almost inviting.

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00:02:51,857 --> 00:02:54,860

Daniel took them to a great old oak tree.

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00:02:54,860 --> 00:03:01,867

Over a clear depression in the ground reached a curious bear limb which had been sawed off a long time ago.

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00:03:07,873 --> 00:03:14,881

The limb had obviously been used to hoist something very heavy.

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00:03:18,885 --> 00:03:19,886

Let's dig.

26

00:03:20,887 --> 00:03:23,890

It must be pirate treasure.

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00:03:23,890 --> 00:03:27,894

They planned to have it up and be home by lunch.

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00:03:28,895 --> 00:03:36,903

But they hit flagstones set in a circular pattern made of rock not found on the island.

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00:03:36,903 --> 00:03:41,908

This was the first of many puzzling barriers to their search.

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00:03:43,910 --> 00:03:48,915

Ten feet down, they struck what sounded like a wooden treasure chest.

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00:03:49,916 --> 00:03:59,927

But it wasn't instead a platform of very old logs set tight into the pit, caulked with ship's putty.

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00:03:59,927 --> 00:04:04,932

They also noticed pickaxe marks in the hard clay walls.

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00:04:04,932 --> 00:04:09,937

Clearly, they were re-excavating a very old shaft.

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00:04:09,937 --> 00:04:16,944

They were careful to be home by dark.

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00:04:24,952 --> 00:04:29,957

Days later, they got down to 20 feet and hit another log platform.

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00:04:29,957 --> 00:04:36,964

There was no way they could have known, but this wood has since been carbon dated to 1575,

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00:04:37,965 --> 00:04:42,970

the era of the Spanish conquest.

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00:04:42,970 --> 00:04:48,977

Weeks later, yet another layer at 30 feet and winter was coming.

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00:04:50,979 --> 00:04:57,986

With only picks and shovels, the boys had dug as deep as they could, but they weren't ready to give up.

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00:04:59,988 --> 00:05:04,993

They convinced their neighbors that what they had found could make them all rich.

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00:05:04,993 --> 00:05:12,000

In the next few years, a doctor named Simeon Lins raised enough money for a major excavation.

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00:05:12,000 --> 00:05:19,007

Every 10 feet, they struck another log platform with layers of charcoal and ship's putty, all the way down to 90 feet.

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00:05:19,007 --> 00:05:25,013

If there were treasure, it was buried not in the pit, but in the pit.

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00:05:25,013 --> 00:05:30,018

The only way to find it was to find it was to find it.

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00:05:30,018 --> 00:05:39,028

Every 10 feet, they struck another log platform with layers of charcoal and ship's putty, all the way down to 90 feet.

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00:05:39,028 --> 00:05:45,034

If there were treasure, it was buried not only deep, but ingeniously.

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00:05:47,036 --> 00:05:52,041

It was late one day when they found the strangest clue of all.

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00:06:09,058 --> 00:06:16,065

They sensed they were onto something important, but the letters were like none they had ever seen.

49

00:06:16,065 --> 00:06:21,070

Was it a sign they were close to the treasure or a warning?

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00:06:22,071 --> 00:06:29,079

They worked very late that evening and finally probing at 98 feet heard the welcome sound of a large rock.

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00:06:29,079 --> 00:06:33,083

Night forced the halt.

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00:06:33,083 --> 00:06:40,090

Returning at daybreak, they fully anticipated being rewarded for what had become 8 years of hard labor.

53

00:06:40,090 --> 00:06:45,095

They were not afraid to go to the next level.

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00:06:45,095 --> 00:06:49,099

They were afraid to go to the next level.

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00:06:49,099 --> 00:06:57,107

Returning at daybreak, they fully anticipated being rewarded for what had become 8 years of hard labor.

56

00:07:07,117 --> 00:07:13,123

Their expectations were to be thwarted, however, by a diabolical trap that waited in the pit.

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00:07:19,130 --> 00:07:21,132

Fire!

58

00:07:30,141 --> 00:07:34,145

30 feet down, Guinness had fallen into water.

59

00:07:34,145 --> 00:07:39,150

At least 60 feet of water had somehow filled the pit during the night.

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00:07:40,151 --> 00:07:47,158

The treasure they had almost touched now seemed as far away as the moon.

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00:07:47,158 --> 00:07:53,164

Yet a half century later, the inscription on the stone would be decoded to read,

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00:07:53,164 --> 00:07:58,169

40 feet below, 2 million pounds are buried.

63

00:07:58,169 --> 00:08:03,174

This promise of wealth inspired the next search group.

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00:08:03,174 --> 00:08:10,182

When pumping failed to lower the water level, they sent down test drills.

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00:08:10,182 --> 00:08:16,188

Samples from the drill indicated two large chests encased in cement.

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00:08:16,188 --> 00:08:24,196

The men on the surface could hear loose metal rattling around inside the chests.

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00:08:25,197 --> 00:08:29,201

And then one small fragment came up.

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00:08:29,201 --> 00:08:32,204

The engineer wrote in his report,

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00:08:32,204 --> 00:08:36,208

Three gold links resembling an ancient watch chain.

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00:08:36,208 --> 00:08:41,213

For the first time, here was evidence of fabulous wealth.

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00:08:42,214 --> 00:08:49,221

In 1850, another search group noticed the water in the money pit rose and fell with the tides.

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00:08:49,221 --> 00:08:57,229

Exploring at nearby Smith's Cove, they discovered stone-lined drainage channels leading toward shore.

73

00:08:57,229 --> 00:09:05,238

And even more bizarre, tons of coconut husk fiber, like a blanket under the entire beach.

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00:09:05,238 --> 00:09:11,244

This giant man-made sponge kept ocean water flowing into the channels.

75

00:09:11,244 --> 00:09:16,249

But the nearest coconut tree was 2,000 miles away.

76

00:09:17,250 --> 00:09:24,257

Their hopes of blocking the water went out with the first tide.

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00:09:25,258 --> 00:09:34,267

Frederick Blair, a Nova Scotia insurance salesman, formed another search party in 1893.

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00:09:34,267 --> 00:09:39,272

Their worst suspicions were confirmed.

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00:09:39,272 --> 00:09:45,278

They found the stone channels led all the way from the beach to the money pit.

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00:09:45,278 --> 00:09:50,284

No wonder they could never pump it dry.

81

00:09:55,289 --> 00:10:02,296

The last charge seemed to blast through into a subterranean cavity.

82

00:10:02,296 --> 00:10:06,300

They hoped this had finally stopped the flow of water.

83

00:10:06,300 --> 00:10:14,308

To check the results, they poured concentrated dye into the money pit and kept a close watch on the shoreline.

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00:10:14,308 --> 00:10:21,315

The dye came up, but to their amazement, on both sides,

85

00:10:21,315 --> 00:10:24,318

of the island.

86

00:10:24,318 --> 00:10:33,327

They finally realized the entire island had been engineered to continually flood the money pit.

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00:10:35,329 --> 00:10:40,335

By the end of the 19th century, it's recorded that two workmen had died

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00:10:40,335 --> 00:10:46,341

and the diabolically designed money pit still kept its secret.

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00:10:47,342 --> 00:10:54,349

The next century would bring even more provocative clues and greater tragedy.

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00:10:57,352 --> 00:11:03,358

For 300 years, Oak Island has been a focal point for greed and curiosity.

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00:11:03,358 --> 00:11:11,366

Since Daniel McGinnis discovered the money pit, men have spent more than \$2 million digging for the treasure.

92

00:11:11,366 --> 00:11:13,368

Unsuccessfully.

93

00:11:19,374 --> 00:11:27,383

Perhaps as intriguing as the treasure itself is the question, who took such elaborate means to conceal it?

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00:11:27,383 --> 00:11:31,387

Maybe Blackbeard had Oak Island in mind when he boasted,

95

00:11:31,387 --> 00:11:36,392

I've buried my treasure where none but Satan and myself can find it.

96

00:11:37,393 --> 00:11:42,398

Before he could recover it, however, he met an untimely death.

97

00:11:45,401 --> 00:11:49,405

All that coconut fiber suggests South America.

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00:11:49,405 --> 00:11:57,413

One theory holds that a Spanish galleon wrecked on Oak Island had to conceal a fortune in Mayan or Inca gold.

99

00:11:57,413 --> 00:12:03,419

Others believed the lost crown jewels of France were buried here.

100

00:12:03,419 --> 00:12:11,427

When Marie Antoinette was guillotined, it's known that her lady in waiting escaped across the Atlantic to Nova Scotia.

101

00:12:11,427 --> 00:12:16,432

One search party in 1909 was convinced of this theory.

102

00:12:16,432 --> 00:12:23,440

Among the diggers, a young lawyer on his summer vacation, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

103

00:12:23,440 --> 00:12:29,446

Recent scholarship, however, has proven the jewels never left France.

104

00:12:30,447 --> 00:12:38,455

In 1937, Gilbert Headin, a New Jersey millionaire, came upon what appeared to be an authentic treasure map.

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00:12:38,455 --> 00:12:47,464

In an obscure book called Captain Kidd and His Skeleton Island, he found a map that curiously resembled Oak Island.

106

00:12:47,464 --> 00:12:52,469

But more important, it included specific bearings and measurements.

107

00:12:53,470 --> 00:12:58,475

Amos Noss worked for Headin that year.

108

00:12:58,475 --> 00:13:04,481

He recalls how they studied the kid map and searched the underbrush south of the money pit.

109

00:13:04,481 --> 00:13:10,488

I went to pick him a shovel and I went down, boy, it was hot.

110

00:13:10,488 --> 00:13:14,492

Fly mosquitoes and things, Father.

111

00:13:14,492 --> 00:13:21,499

But anyhow, I went around, he told me it was in 50 feet or so.

112

00:13:21,499 --> 00:13:24,502

Where he thought it was.

113

00:13:24,502 --> 00:13:26,504

So I kept trying and trying.

114

00:13:26,504 --> 00:13:30,508

Finally, I stuck a rock, two or three rocks.

115

00:13:30,508 --> 00:13:32,510

I kept trying with the pick, you know.

116

00:13:32,510 --> 00:13:39,517

I tore up the sod, which was about, I don't know, well, four or five inches over the top of the stone.

117

00:13:39,517 --> 00:13:41,519

And I uncovered the thing.

118

00:13:41,519 --> 00:13:44,522

I went up one side and I knew I had something then.

119

00:13:44,522 --> 00:13:50,528

I got to the point that it was none any further, so I came back on the other side and I had the body he was looking for.

120

00:13:50,528 --> 00:13:54,532

Noss had uncovered a large triangle of stones.

121

00:13:54,532 --> 00:13:59,538

George Bates was on the survey crew that rushed to the island to check out this discovery.

122

00:13:59,538 --> 00:14:05,544

Would the stone triangle correlate with the kid map?

123

00:14:05,544 --> 00:14:10,549

They sighted from boreholes found in two large boulders.

124

00:14:10,549 --> 00:14:16,555

Then they took exact readings from the map which used the old English system of rods.

125

00:14:16,555 --> 00:14:25,564

18 west and by seven east on rock, 30 southwest, took them precisely to the stone triangle.

126

00:14:25,564 --> 00:14:29,568

Then 14 north tree.

127

00:14:29,568 --> 00:14:32,571

The triangle pulled the stone tree.

128

00:14:32,571 --> 00:14:34,573

North tree.

129

00:14:34,573 --> 00:14:39,578

The triangle pointed exactly due north towards the money pit.

130

00:14:39,578 --> 00:14:49,589

This seemed to confirm that the kid map did mean that Tresley was in the vicinity.

131

00:14:49,589 --> 00:14:52,592

Then events took a bizarre turn.

132

00:14:52,592 --> 00:14:57,597

The book's author came forward and claimed that he had fabricated the kid map.

133

00:14:57,597 --> 00:15:04,604

Was he trying to conceal his sources or was the correlation between the map and Oak Island really an incredible coincidence?

134

00:15:04,604 --> 00:15:12,612

Because if that were the case, the money pit itself could be a complete hoax.

135

00:15:12,612 --> 00:15:18,618

Montreal journalist Darcy O'Connor is considered the leading expert on the Oak Island enigma.

136

00:15:18,618 --> 00:15:22,622

I have seen the coconut fiber that has been brought up.

137

00:15:22,622 --> 00:15:29,629

I have seen reports by the Smithsonian and by independent botanists stating it's definitely coconut fiber.

138

00:15:29,629 --> 00:15:35,635

I have seen carbon dating results that Triton has gotten showing that it's several hundred years old.

139

00:15:35,635 --> 00:15:38,639

That it's not glacial wood they're finding under the ground.

140

00:15:38,639 --> 00:15:44,645

The metal they're finding is pre-1750 and it's coming deep from under the ground.

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00:15:44,645 --> 00:15:48,649

So there's no possible way it's a natural phenomenon or a hoax.

142

00:15:48,649 --> 00:15:54,655

Someone was there at some time and I can only assume to bury something of great value.

143

00:15:54,655 --> 00:16:03,664

92 year old Mel Chapel bought Oak Island in 1950 because he's also convinced of the existence of a treasure.

144

00:16:03,664 --> 00:16:08,669

He's intrigued by what his father discovered in the money pit in 1897.

145

00:16:08,669 --> 00:16:18,679

Well, when his chisel drill that they were using encountered at around 153 feet,

146

00:16:18,679 --> 00:16:24,685

what appeared to be stone or concrete for a few inches, then underneath wood,

147

00:16:24,685 --> 00:16:31,693

and they pulled the chisel drill up and put on an auger and bore it through five inches of wood.

148

00:16:31,693 --> 00:16:34,696

The chips came up and when they pulled up the auger,

149

00:16:34,696 --> 00:16:39,701

this little fuzzy stuff was on the screw of the auger

150

00:16:39,701 --> 00:16:44,706

and when they washed it out and painted it up and straightened out,

151

00:16:44,706 --> 00:16:46,708

it turned out to be this piece of parchment.

152

00:16:48,710 --> 00:16:53,715

Mel Chapel preserved this fragment of parchment no larger than a dime.

153

00:16:53,715 --> 00:16:56,718

Clearly, there is writing on it.

154

00:16:56,718 --> 00:17:00,722

Such clues have sustained belief in a buried treasure.

155

00:17:04,726 --> 00:17:11,733

And my opinion and his opinion was that it is of immense value, whatever it is.

156

00:17:11,733 --> 00:17:18,741

In 1959, Chapel leased treasure trove rights to Robert Restall and his wife Mildred.

157

00:17:18,741 --> 00:17:23,746

They gave up their careers as circus daredevil to move to the island

158

00:17:23,746 --> 00:17:29,752

where Restall was convinced he would find the treasure and make a fortune for his family.

159

00:17:30,753 --> 00:17:34,757

He had no wealthy backers and no elaborate equipment.

160

00:17:34,757 --> 00:17:40,763

But his obsession carried him and his two boys through six years of backbreaking toil.

161

00:17:42,765 --> 00:17:47,770

Restall and his older son would work all day and talk about pirates all night.

162

00:17:49,772 --> 00:17:53,776

They became driven, mesmerized by the prospect of treasure.

163

00:17:54,777 --> 00:17:58,781

Mrs. Restall recalls their isolated life.

164

00:17:58,781 --> 00:18:02,785

Well, you had to draw your water from a pond.

165

00:18:02,785 --> 00:18:06,790

Of course, no electricity, no radio, no television.

166

00:18:06,790 --> 00:18:09,793

We had settling lamps.

167

00:18:09,793 --> 00:18:13,797

And we had a gas stove for cooking.

168

00:18:13,797 --> 00:18:15,799

And that's it.

169

00:18:15,799 --> 00:18:20,804

I was closer to my boys because of our isolation

170

00:18:20,804 --> 00:18:25,809

and I would have been living on the mainland, not mother and sons.

171

00:18:25,809 --> 00:18:28,812

We all became friends to one another.

172

00:18:33,817 --> 00:18:36,820

August 17th, 1965.

173

00:18:36,820 --> 00:18:40,824

An old pump was draining a 27-foot shaft.

174

00:18:40,824 --> 00:18:46,830

No one knows for sure, but deadly carbon monoxide may have collected in the pit.

175

00:18:46,830 --> 00:18:51,835

Robert Restall was starting down when he suddenly became dizzy.

176

00:18:53,837 --> 00:18:58,843

Bobby thought his father had suffered a heart attack and rushed down to save him.

177

00:19:01,846 --> 00:19:07,852

Two other workmen failed to realize what was wrong and also toppled in.

178

00:19:07,852 --> 00:19:09,854

Now to get up and be careful, be careful.

179

00:19:09,854 --> 00:19:13,858

The autopsy report read, death by drowning.

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00:19:14,859 --> 00:19:20,865

Though Restall now lives alone, still within sight of Oak Island.

181

00:19:20,865 --> 00:19:27,872

The time I was up in the cabin and I know it was after lunch and I was expecting my husband to come up any time.

182

00:19:29,874 --> 00:19:38,883

And Rick came back to the cabin, passed the one that I was in and went to his own cabin, the one he shared with his brother.

183

00:19:39,884 --> 00:19:47,893

And I thought that was rather odd. Why would he do that? Why wouldn't he come in and tell me that my husband would be up soon or something?

184

00:19:47,893 --> 00:19:54,900

And I waited a few minutes and then went down and by then it was all over.

185

00:19:56,902 --> 00:20:02,908

And that's when I learned that my husband and son and two other men were dead.

186

00:20:03,909 --> 00:20:09,915

I have an idea that he thinks at least at that time he thought he was pretty close.

187

00:20:09,915 --> 00:20:14,920

What he thought and what it was, I don't know. He didn't tell me. I didn't ask.

188

00:20:19,925 --> 00:20:25,931

Three days after the Restall tragedy, a California mining conglomerate moved in.

189

00:20:26,932 --> 00:20:37,944

The death toll had reached six. Disregarding the local legend that one more must die, this company and its successors continue the search.

190

00:20:40,947 --> 00:20:47,954

After 300 years, the secret of Oak Island has eluded all the resources of modern technology.

191

00:20:48,955 --> 00:20:50,957

But treasure hunters persist.

192

00:20:52,959 --> 00:21:01,968

The present company has dug down to 230 feet and is prepared to spend three million dollars scooping out the entire end of the island if necessary.

193

00:21:03,970 --> 00:21:13,980

Whether it's one man with a pick and shovel or a giant corporation with dynamite and bulldozers, an unflagging obsession has drawn treasure hunters to Oak Island.

194

00:21:13,980 --> 00:21:21,988

Whoever conceived and executed the fiendish money pit so far has managed to outwit them all.

195

00:21:44,011 --> 00:22:00,027

Thank you.