

stones. Ten feet lower, they came to a tier of logs, which had evidently been imbedded in the pit for a very long time. They continued the excavation to a depth of fifteen feet further, but finding the labor very severe, and the results in a pecuniary sense rather unsatisfactory, they decided for the time to abandon the work.

Fifteen years were allowed to elapse, and the enterprise was resumed; this time by a number of persons from the neighborhood of Truro, Colchester County. Clearing out the pit to the point where their predecessors had stopped, the new company worked downwards, and soon discovered a second tier of logs, corresponding with those found by McInnis and his associates. Ten feet still lower down, they found a layer of charcoal, and at the distance of another ten feet, still downward, a layer of putty. Below this, they discovered a flagstone about two feet long and one foot wide, with a number of figures and letters upon it, rudely cut. This remarkable stone, which, however, threw no light upon the main object of the search, is still preserved, it is said, by the descendants of Mr. Smith.

At the distance of ninety eight feet from the surface, the operators struck "a hard impenetrable substance," which some supposed to be wood, "but others called it a chest." Night coming on, the workmen now desisted, in the full conviction that the next day they would be rewarded for all their toils and anxieties, by the possession of untold riches. Alas! for the vanity of human calculations and hopes. The dawn of the next morning found the pit flooded with water to the depth of sixty feet.

It would be tedious to recount, in detail, every event connected with the Oak Island affair. The narrative already alluded to informs us that the company, nothing daunted by the sudden flow of water in the pit, proceeded, shortly afterwards, to erect a pump ninety feet long; and that before the water reached the surface of the ground, the pump burst. Work was then abandoned for the winter, but in the following spring, the same company returned, and at the distance of ten feet from the first pit or shaft, sank another, to the depth of one hundred and ten feet. From the bottom of this second shaft they proceeded to tunnel

towards the first, or what they called the old pit; but when within two feet of it, the sides gave way and the water rushed in so rapidly that the workmen narrowly escaped being drowned.

The results so far described, seem to have exhausted the patience and the pecuniary resources of the Oak Island adventurers of that day, and during an interval of fifty years, nothing further in the way of exploration was attempted.

Fifty years constitute an important period in the history of any part of North America. During the time now referred to, the country in the neighborhood of Oak Island had been cleared, new settlements had sprung up in every direction, and the greater part of those who had been actors in the transactions narrated, had passed away from the turmoil of earthly pursuits.

The traditions, however, still lived, and in the summer of 1848 a second company of persons left Truro, fully as hopeful and sanguine as their predecessors; and destined, it appears, to be not a whit more successful. They cleared the old pit, only to find that it filled up with water as fast as they pumped it out; the operation being quaintly described by the narrator as equivalent to taking "soup with a fork."

Resolved not to be baffled, the workmen now obtained a set of mining augurs and commenced boring the bottom of the pit—the augur passing down through a box constructed for the purpose.

Some curious results followed. At a depth of 98 feet from the surface, an augur attached to a chisel, cut through a square log about six inches, when it dropped a foot and struck a piece of oak timber, four and a half inches thick. After this, the augur passed through some unknown substance for about twenty inches, at which time, says the historian of the enterprise, "a sharp metallic sound" resembling the "worming of a bar of iron through a cask of nails," greeted the ears of those employed. Twenty inches lower down, wood was again found, and after that, the same kind of mineral obstruction, and of corresponding thickness.

Whether the unknown substance was "metallic" or otherwise, the operators did not succeed in bringing any of it to the