# Reports by Martin Pickford for Triton Alliance and Related Correspondence - 1970 and 1971

**Oak Island, Nova Scotia**

**Compiled by Les MacPhie, October 2014**

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**Notes:**
1. Hole 201 (also called Hole 201X) is 4 feet from Golder Hole 201 based on Dan Blankenship Report dated Dec 9, 1970. Hole 201 is intended to investigate conditions at 82 to 84 feet depth where Golder Hole 201 encountered metal in a split spoon sample. Golder Hole 201 is 97 feet north-northeast of Hole 10.
2. The reports by Martin Pickford are essentially consistent with the periodic reports by Dan Blankenship.
3. This letter to David Tobias is dated 1970. Based on the context of the letter, the 1970 date is considered to be an error and should be 1971.
During the period 26 Sept to 2 Oct I visited the Oak Island Site to familiarise myself with the localities of interest and with the work that was being done. The work consisted of excavations by hand in the Smith's cove area, in the coffer dam erected by Triton Alliance. Several structures were uncovered prior to my first visit, and these were:—

a) a large wooden structure which appears to be either a coffer dam or a wharf. Samples of the logs were obtained with a view to dating them using the method of dendrochronology. One hardwood board carried 240 rings, so it would appear that unless the exact location of the specimen were known, carbon 14 dating methods would be open to considerable doubt.

b) a long (100') structure of peeled logs running approximately at right angles to the seashore, which appears to be a slipway for small boats or perhaps a weir. This structure appears to be of similar age to the one described in a) above, as the wood has a similar appearance and state of preservation. This structure was excavated by hand and all sand from between the tops of the logs to the bottom of the logs was sifted. Several pieces of china, glass, and other artifacts were found, including some rubber combs, a pair of sunglasses and a small screwtop bottle. These may have washed into their present position some time after the structure was built.

c) A wooden box was discovered in one corner of the structure mentioned in a) above. It is approximately 2'x1 1/2''x9'' and is made of hardwood. One end of the box slopes inwards and on one side a hole has been drilled through the wall and has been plugged later with a rough wooden plug. The box was originally held together with square nails about 4 or 5 inches in length. These nails have rusted completely and all that remains now is a fragile rusty centre in the holes. Samples of the nail holes with the rust were collected for analysis.

These structures have been surveyed and plotted onto a map. It is interesting to note that they were built with their foundation members below the level of attack of wood-burrowing sea organisms. In every case the tops have been badly eaten into and partially to wholly destroyed.

The stratigraphy in the region of the two wooden structures was surveyed by me and the two profiles are given below.

The drill arrived 2 Oct and will begin operations as soon as possible.

Signed.  

R.. [Signature]  
5 Oct 1970.
Stratigraphy at ? coffer dam structure

Stratigraphy at ? shipway structure
I visited Oak Island on the 5th and 10th October. Work this week was mainly essential repair work on the coffer dam, causeway and road, and beginning operations with the hole-digger.

High tides combined with high winds on 3rd October caused damage to the coffer dam and it was evident that to save the dam repairs would have to be made. Heavy equipment was hired and repair work was completed by the 10th October. While the heavy equipment was on the island, it was considered necessary to utilise it to make improvements and repairs to the causeway and road. Expenditure on this work follows, totals given being approximate only.

Repair of Coffer-dam: - $1000.00
Causeway: - $400.00
Road: - $200.00
Total: $1600.00 approx.

The hole-digger started operations on Monday 5th October in hole location 10. The casing was pulled Monday and excavation started Tuesday. Unfortunately the earth was so loose that after thirty feet the sides of the hole began to cave in. While waiting for the casing to arrive, it was decided to move the digger to a location a few yards up the hill from hole 10. This hole was dug to 52 feet before the casing for hole 10 arrived. The digger was moved back to location 10 and with the casing in place excavation continued. Soon after passing the surface of the water table at 38'6", the digger encountered a large boulder which resisted all attempts to dislodge it. It has been decided to blast the boulder but this weekend being Thanksgiving Weekend noone with the required skill could be found. Therefore to save time the digger was moved back to the second hole and excavation continued there. As the digger is very mobile, only a few hours are needed for each move. The quality of the hole is very good, especially in undisturbed glacial till.

Two samples were obtained from a large birch tree growing on Frog Island. They carried about 170 growth rings which would place the centre of the tree at about 1200 AD. It is hoped that this specimen will be of use in determining whether the wooden structures mentioned in report No. 1. are the work of searchers or not. Meanwhile a search is being made for old Spruce and Haulock and as soon as the corer arrives, samples will be collected.
Analysis of 'sawdust' from between logs of 'slipway'.

Sand, (quartz grains, feldspar grains, lithic fragments) - common.
Pine needles - common.
Fibrous material (probably bark fragments from nearby logs) - common.
Charcoal or carbonised wood - frequent.
Fine-grained wood fragments, (? sawdust) - common.

Analysis by M. Pickford.

On 5th October a 6"x6"x1" piece of coconut fibre material was found on the surface of the coffer dam wall. It contained a 1" piece of charcoal, and while it is possible that it arrived there naturally, it is more probable that it was dropped there by man while the coconut fibre was being worked for whatever purpose it was used. The sample is in the hands of Dan Blankenship.

Enquiries were made concerning Sable Island and the possibility of finding coconut fibre there. I talked with a geologist who worked there for a summer and who dug many trenches along the shore and inland. He did not recall having seen any coconut fibre or anything that might have been coconut fibre. However, he did not dig near any known wrecks and as he pointed out, he wasn't looking for fibres and may have overlooked some. Further enquiries are being made.

Enquiries about the box found in the "wooden coffer dam" structure have yielded no ideas on its use.

Copies to: - Mr Donald C. Webster.
Mr Daniel Blankenship.
Mr Kerry Ellard.
Dr H.B.S. Cooke.
Mr. G. Jennison
Mr. M.R. Chappell
Mr. David Tobias

Zelford
12 Oct 67
I visited Oak Island on October 12th, 15th, and 17th. Work proceeded very slowly this week for several reasons. The first was that large boulders hampered the digger and a man had to be brought in to blast. After that the digger broke a shaft in its clamp mechanism which had to be repaired. Soon afterwards another large boulder was encountered which caused a long delay. The result was that by Saturday afternoon the depth of the hole (location 10) was still only 35 feet. A lot of caving-in of the sides of the hole has been reduced by lowering the casing to within a couple of feet of the working surface.

In order to reduce time lost through boulders to a minimum it has been suggested that a small stock of dynamite be kept on the island. Once the boulder is removed the digger should be able to proceed without delay, even if other boulders are met. If however, a man has to be called each time the digger meets a boulder, time will be lost and unnecessary expense incurred.

The repair and improvement work on the road, causeway and dam was completed.

I visited Oak Island on October 19th, 22nd and 24th. Some headway was made this week but it was still proceeding slowly. Water was the main problem in hampering the work, it being virtually impossible to dig in more than about four feet of water. Thus the pump had to be lowered every hour or so for half an hour, then pulled out, before digging could continue. Other time consumers were the fitting and welding of casing and the digging of boulders and rocks from under the shoe of the casing to permit it to fall unhindered.

Table 1 is a resume of work carried out by the digger up till the 23 Oct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of hours</th>
<th>Depth of hole No. 10</th>
<th>Depth of hole No. 201</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 Oct</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>pulling casing</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>22 Oct</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Oct</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL HRS 154</strong></td>
<td> </td>
<td><strong>DEPTH 60</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
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COST OF DIGGER AT $50.00 per hr ——— $7700.00
COST OF CASING AT $20.00 per ft ——— $1080.00

**TOTAL COST** $8780.00
I have two comments to make concerning the operation of the digger.
The first is that its performance in loose gravelly earth saturated with water is not up to the standard I was led to believe. In consolidated clay and till without water it works well as shown by its record in hole 201. However, most of the holes to be dug in the future will be in the money pit area or similar conditions to the money pit area, so I can foresee much time lost to pumping and casing. It should not be necessary to send people down the shaft to ream out the hole below the casing before it can be lowered. This work should be done by the machine.
The second comment I have to make is that some agreement should be reached between the Statesman Mining and Triton Alliance as to when weather conditions are too bad to work. Saturday the 24th Oct, there was a particularly heavy rain and strong winds and working was not only unpleasant but was unsafe. All manner of high voltage currents are used from time to time and I find it extremely dangerous to have to handle equipment which may short out at any moment. Insurance considerations alone are worth considering in this respect. As the weather from now on will have every chance of getting worse, I think some arrangement should be agreed upon before much longer. Besides, work is slowed down considerably when the weather is bad.

26 Oct 1970

Dear Mr Tobias,

I haven't received a prospectus yet, so it is not quite clear as to what work is going to be done in the future. I wonder if a copy could be sent to me.

I hope things will improve when Dave gets a big pump working in the money pit area. If it lowers the water table enough work should really get a move on.

Yours Sincerely
Martin P. Ford
I visited the Island on the 27th and 31st October, during this week. Work progressed much the same as last week except that some large boulders required blasting in order to dislodge and break them. The depth of hole 10 on Saturday evening (31st) was 75 feet.

A meeting was held on Tuesday evening in Dartmouth with Mr Blankeneship, Mr Coles, Mr Davis and myself in attendance. We discussed steps to be taken with regard to the rate of work of the digger on the island. Mr Coles made notes but I will write down the major points.

1) Water was acknowledged to be a major factor in the slowing down of the digging. Ways were discussed of reducing the water level in the hole. A large gas-driven pump is pumping near the Hedden Shaft but does not have a large effect in hole 10. It appears that it may be necessary to drill a hole near hole 10 and pump from there. Implications of the contract between Statesman mining and Triton Alliance were examined as well as implications of conversations held before the contract was signed. It was agreed by those who had held conversations with members of Statesman mining, that they were led to believe that the digger was capable of performing much better than it has on the Island.

2) Boulders were of secondary importance in slowing down work. It was pointed out that Statesman mining examined the Island with the express purpose of determining digging conditions, and that their report to Triton Alliance, based on the examination, was that it could dig between 3' and 5'/hr with their digger. It is argued by Mr J Berry, that he did not know that there were so many boulders in the till on the Island.

3) Thirdly, it was pointed out that advancing of the casing was slowing down the rate of progress, because it was necessary to ream out the hole below casing, manually. It was also mentioned that a slight modification to the digger would most likely solve the problem, but that Mr Berry had not seen fit to make the modification. It was further made clear that Statesman mining had ordered 27" casing when quite clearly this size was too large for the digger to handle efficiently. Other methods of oversizing the hole were discussed as well as other methods of driving casing using the digger as a hammer and it was mentioned that a set of jars attached to the digger would greatly speed up that process.
Mr Davis spent some days on the Island making measurements in the churn drill holes.

Mr Tobias visited the Island on Saturday to see first hand what the problems were. He suggested two methods of speeding up progress. The first was to drill a hole near hole 10 and pump water from there. The second was that we should or could use smaller casing which would not need an oversized hole, and thus we would do away with reaming of the hole altogether.

[Signature]
2 Nov 1970
Bowmaster drilling was called in Monday to drill a hole adjacent to Hole 10 to enable pumping to be carried out closer to the excavation. The Hole was drilled and cased to bedrock because very little water was encountered on the way down, and pumping was started with Bowmaster's airlift. Water was pulled down significantly in the Money Pit area but very little effect was noted in Hole 10. Thus without bailing it was not possible to dig. The following thoughts come to mind.

a) Move the digger to another hole until hole 10 water problem is solved.  
b) Try to connect the water in hole 10 with the deep strata where the pump is located.

c) If b) fails try drilling another hole to about 120'; and make an artificial connection by blasting. Then pump from 120'.

d) Try any other ideas which might come to mind, if b) and c) fail, including the possibility of trying a different locality near hole 10, for the digger.

The situation at present is as follows:

When Bowmaster drilled his hole last week his bit was blocked by a piece of slaggy looking metal at between 120 and 135 feet. It is approximately 1" x 3/4" x 1/2" and might be part of a casting. Dr Cooke thought it looked like the part of a cast of a cannon ball which is formed in the filler neck of the mould and which is discarded when the cast is removed from the mould. It is with Mr Blankenship.

Total cost of Bowmasters Hole including pumping was approximately $1200.00.
Interim Report.

A meeting was held Wednesday, 11 Nov. 1970 on Oak Island, attended by Mr. D. Tobias, Mr. D. Blankenship, Mr. J. Davis and Mr. M. Pickford.

The following resolutions were made.

1) A drill hole to 125' depth should be sunk as close as possible to hole 10x, a pump should be installed and pumping started. It may be necessary to blast the bottom of the hole to make contact with hole 10x.

2) The pump in hole 205 should be left where it is and pumping should continue.

3) A pump should be installed near the Money Pit and pumping should be started.

4) The digger should remain over hole 201 and continue digging, until the water problem in hole 10x is solved.

5) The above should be carried out as quickly as possible.

Notes made by Martin Pickford.

Copies to Mr. D. Tobias
Mr. D. Blankenship
Mr. D. Webster

[Signature: Martin Pickford]

12 Nov 70
As of Sunday evening (22nd) the following situation was apparent, on Oak Island:

- **a)** Hole 10x. Still at 80', with water to approx 40' and a definite connection with Bowmaster's new hole at approx 140'.
- **b)** Hole near 201. Still at 78', with water in it at approx 60'. No apparent connection with hole 10x, but there may be one.
- **c)** Bowmaster's new hole. Depth of hole 165'. Depth of casing 112'.
  Casing diam. 12''. Casing appears to have broken, so it has been decided to sink 7'' casing inside the 12'' casing and beyond to a depth at which the good connection with hole 10x is made. The pump will then be installed and pumping commenced.

Work was slow last week because of breakdowns of Bowmaster's Drill Rig, breaking of casing which had to be pulled and replaced, and because of a very bad hail storm on Saturday. Bowmaster's hole should be completed today (23rd) or tomorrow and as soon as it is ready the pump will be installed.

The casing arrived from Montreal and will be installed as soon as possible. While the digger was idle, certain parts were replaced, eg bushings. The work was completed Friday.

[Signature]

23 Nov'70
Pumping was started in Bowmaster's hole near 10x on Sunday. To Tuesday evening the water level in hole 10x had not dropped at all, despite the fact that 150 gallons per minute of water was being pumped. The water coming out of the hole is salty.

Progress in hole 20lx is still slow, the depth being 82'6" on Tuesday evening. Apparently, some boulders were encountered and of course the water had to be pumped every few hours. The hole should be completed by Thursday evening (3 Dec) if all goes well.

Samples were collected from Bowmaster's hole as it was being drilled. Table 1 shows the content of 'foreign' material.

Table 1
Assorted slivers of wood two of which look as though cut by an axe.
Assorted sea shells (Litorina sp)
1 piece plane glass? window glass?
1 piece of slag like material.
1 piece of dull grey metal? lead or zinc? to be tested.
1 curved thorn? Rose?
1 piece of plastic binding tape as used to bind dynamite.
Various fibrous materials, probably bark of a tree.

 Samples with Mr D. Blankenship.

[Signature]
2 Dec '70.
The Hole no 20½ being excavated by the digger was completed on the 6th Dec at a depth of 88'. I went down the hole to examine the walls for any signs of 'foreign' material and as far as I could tell everything from the casing down to the bottom of the hole was natural. In addition to this I had the last few feet of the hole properly excavated and the material collected and I washed the material myself. The only foreign material present was some pieces of steel which undoubtedly came from the digger, and some fibres from a rope used to raise and lower the pump.

There was a large amount of water fountaining up from the bottom of the hole and this water was brackish to salty. It may have been coming up one of the original churn drill holes (perhaps no. 201).

The digger is going to move on to hole 10x after it has pulled the casing from 201. It will then continue to dig in hole 10x.

The recent heavy snow fall may slow down the work as about 12" has gathered in places. A heavy tide washed parts of the causeway away so that only narrow cars can pass, so it may be necessary to repair it.

[Signature]
8 Dec 70
The digger moved onto hole 10x on Monday 7th December having left the casing in hole 201, to save time. After pumping the hole dry, the digger commenced excavating, but as soon as it became necessary to drop the heavy rock-breaker down the hole, the cable drum broke, rendering the machine useless. The drum was removed and sent to the repair shop for rebuilding. This took until Monday 14th Dec. It will take a day to refit and then the machine will be able to continue digging.

Work was hampered by very bad weather and heavy snowfalls, and high tides. The tides were so high that parts of the causeway were removed necessitating extensive repairs. These have been underway for four days now and should be completed in another day.

The digger will be worked as hard as possible to make up for the lost time caused by the breakage.

[Signature]

15 Dec 70
Only six days work were done using the Statesman rig because of very low temperatures and heavy snows. High tides broke or partially washed away the causeway on several occasions and each time, it was repaired.

To date the Statesman rig has worked a total of forty eight days and thus they have thirty days to work. In this time they have excavated a total of 169' in two holes, one of 80' the other of 89'. The rig has now left the Island.

There are two possibilities for completing the programme of drilling. The first is to get Bowmaster to drill a 24" diam. hole while the other is to use a large diam churn drill. The former is faster but more costly than the second.

Mr Blankenship is now trying to get cost estimates, and time estimates on the systems suggested above.

Mr Blankenship and myself went to Bridgewater on 29th Dec to obtain an injunction against Statesman Mining, to prevent them from leaving the Island. It has since been decided to let them go and to try alternative methods of reaching the targets.

At present there are two pumps working on the Island, both of which are near hole 10x. However no effect is made on hole 10x at all. A drop of 10 feet in hole 10x once might be attributable to tide level changes acting through an open channelway, or to some other mechanism; but it seems fairly certain that there is no connection between either of the pumping holes and hole 10x.
Mr Blankenship managed to hire a churn drill from Mr H. Verge of Halifax at the rate of $15.00 per Hour. He was set up on the Island ready to work by Saturday evening, although he was waiting for a 24" bit to arrive from New Brunswick. To save his waiting around till the bit arrived it was decided to use his machine on hole 20lx drilling with a 20" bit, and to deepen it by 20 ft.

Mr Verge advised against digging in hole 10x with a 20" bit because it is very difficult to dig with a larger bit afterwards. However, as soon as the 24" bit arrives the machinery will be moved to hole 16x (a four hour job) and digging will start immediately.

Pumping was continued after one of the pumps was raised a few feet, but there was still no difference in hole 10x. Mr Verge assures us though, that he can dig in water, because he has to keep the hole bailed out as part of the method of removing cuttings from the hole.
Work on the Island progressed well this week despite very cold temperatures and fairly high winds. The churn drill, drilled 31 feet in about 5 working days. The hole 201x is now to a depth of 120 feet. All cuttings were collected and washed with the recovery of several slivers of wood which Mr Blankenship has kept.

We are still waiting for the delivery of the 24" bit from Prince Edward Island, which is causing a hold up now, on restarting on hole 10x. As I mentioned in the last report, there is little point in drilling with a 20" bit in hole 10, because when a change is made to a 24" bit, it is apparently difficult to drill and takes as long as drilling from scratch.

The continued pumping has had the required effect on hole 10x as the hole is now dry. Hole 201x has had its water lowered too by the pumping, although it is not dry. The churn drill can drill in deep water with no problem.

I feel confident that barring accidents, the programme will now progress very favourably, and more encouraging results will be coming forth.
Work progressed well this week even though the weather was poor, and bedrock was reached on Saturday, at a depth of about 170 ft. It has been decided to use the hole as a pumping station in the future, so it will be cased to prevent sloughing-in of the sides.

The large bit is now in Halifax, where it will be built up to 27" diameter. This build up will take two days approximately, and as soon as the modifications are made the bit will be sent down to Oak Island and work will begin immediately on Hole 10x.

A few more slivers of wood were recovered from hole 20lx, and Mr Blankenship is keeping them. It is hard to decide what they mean, whether they represent wood buried at the time of the glaciation, or whether they were emplaced later, the slivers are small and not very diagnostic.

The pumps are keeping hole 10x dry, and are lowering the water even in the Money Pit area. There definitely appear to be two distinct layers of water with little or no interconnection.

The churn drill has averaged from 40 to 50 feet per week, so if all goes well we should reach the area of interest in hole 10x within a fortnight.
The large bit was finally delivered to Halifax where it was built-up to 26 1/2". This work took longer than expected and the bit will be on the Island by Feb 1. Work will then begin immediately on hole 10x. In the meantime work was continued on hole 20lx and 100 feet of 12 inch casing was installed. This will be left in place until a large capacity pump can be installed. The 12" casing is telescoped inside of the 25" casing and has been lowered so that the 12" casing extends down to bedrock at about 170 feet. An 8 1/4" pumping bowl will easily fit inside this arrangement.

All cuttings from hole 20lx were washed but only a few slivers of wood were recovered. Significantly, two of these slivers appear to have been cut with an axe. There is not enough wood to warrant dating by the Carbon 14 method.

The weather has improved somewhat allowing more work to be done, and if this improvement continues an increase in output should be apparent. It is hoped that the churn drill will reach 135' in hole 10x by the 7 Feb. It is proposed to drill this distance without casing. If something of interest appears casing will be lowered so that someone can go down the hole to examine the evidence in situ. It may be necessary to lower smaller casing should the 27" casing become lodged. Mr Blankenship is working on this eventuality, so that should a stoppage occur, the remedy will be ready to apply without excessive loss of time. All cuttings will be washed for evidence.

[Signature]

1 Feb 1971
Oak Island Exploration. Feb 8th to Feb 15th 1971.

FEB 18 1971

Work progressed well this week despite some very bad weather, and hole 10k was at a depth of 115 feet by Saturday evening. There was a lot of sloughing so it was necessary to case the hole as it was dug and this caused some delays but as the hole must be cased in any case, it was not considered a waste of time. The casing was pounded in and went surprisingly easily considering the length of time it had been sitting in the hole. We do not anticipate having to use the 25" casing as outlined in an earlier report.

Some small slivers of wood were recovered but were probably not very significant. Also a periwinkle shell was recovered.

The drill averaged about six feet per day so at this rate it should reach the 125 foot level by Tuesday evening, the 16th Feb and the 135 foot level by Thursday evening, the 18th Feb.

[Signature] 15 Feb 1971
Work progressed well this week and by Saturday the hole 10x was at 134 feet and the casing to 126 feet. Pumping was still lowering the water appreciably but it was difficult to say to what depth exactly. Mr Blantsenship ran some tests on Sunday to find out exactly how low the water can be pumped. The importance of determining this depth, is to find out whether it is possible to send a man down the hole to examine the bottom and sides.

Several pieces of wood, glass, metal and shells as well as some grass roots were recovered during the salvaging operations. One piece of metal looks very similar to metal found in hole 10 last year. Two pieces of bottle cap were also found. The glass was of two kinds, one being transparent green with worn edges while the second kind was an opaque light green. The opaque glass was also noted during work on Smith's Cove, and it seems that there is good evidence to support the theory that this Hole 10x is directly connected with Smith's Cove. The sea shells and the bottle caps add weight to this idea. However, this connection may be some distance below the point where the pieces were recovered, as water rushing up the original hole 10 may have carried them upwards. One piece of wood had an oily looking surface and smells very strongly of creosote. Two small pieces of bone were also recovered, as well as plastic tape from the dynamiting that Mr Blantsenship did last year. This tape provides strong evidence of the ability of the water rising up hole 10 to carry materials. The dynamiting was done at a very much lower level than the point of recovery of the tape.

The drilling is at present halted while plans are made to examine something hard at the bottom of the hole. The best way to examine the bottom is to send a man down, but this plan depends on the dewatering of the hole. It may become necessary to put a pump down hole 10x to empty the last few feet of water. Alternative plans have been suggested including coring from the surface and grab sampling from the surface, but none of these will prove entirely satisfactory, even if they are successful. Lowering a TV camera may or may not work depending upon the water problem.

Once it has been determined, what the hard layer is at 134 feet, the drilling will proceed to the next point of interest. It is felt that points of interest should be examined on the way down because chances to examine them later may not arise. Thus some time may be spent as each area of interest is encountered.
Work continued on hole 10x this week with the drill slowly working its way through coarse sandy material which kept flowing into the hole. The casing was advanced to 140 feet to try to stop the flow of sandy material but it was still coming in. It is proposed to carry on driving the casing until better digging conditions prevail. I think that the sandy material is coming from Smiths Cove, as it is very similar in many respects to the sand on the beach there, and contains shells, grass and grass roots, slivers of wood, pieces of glass (three kinds) and bottle tops. There were also some pieces of foil-like metal similar to the metal recovered last year, and about two feet of wire in pieces of two different gauges. One type of wire is similar to baling wire of which there is a lot on the island, and the other pieces are thicker. (3/40ths and 1/8th inches diam respectively).

In addition we have recovered several pieces of plastic piping which probably comes from one of the holes nearby, which were used to measure water levels. The hole must have drifted about three feet for it to be in line with 10x.

There seems then to have been little of direct import to us at the 135 foot level apart from some foil-like metal which in all probability came from deeper down the hole. A look at the drill records leads me to suspect that the source of the metal lies at about 165 feet plus or minus, and I think that efforts should be concentrated on reaching that objective. If of course something of interest crops up before that depth, we will examine it in detail before progressing.

By the 13th March the hole 10x was at a depth of 168 feet and the casing was at 160 feet. At 167 feet plus or minus, large quantities of wood were brought up by the bailer, most of it being Spruce-like. There was also a piece of brown glass with sharp edges, some plastic tubing, blasting wire, seashells and some grass.

It is proposed to try to obtain some large pieces of wood with a grappling iron today and tomorrow, and also the magnet will be employed to try to get some metal if there is any. It is also suggested that the time is approaching where it will be necessary to send a man down the hole to examine the bottom. For this it will be required to dry the hole, and plans are under way for doing this.

The machine broke down and was out of commission for several days, but is now functioning properly again. The pumps continue to work, except that we had some problems Saturday with the electric pump. It will be fixed today.

The samples of Iron and glass have been dispatched to Dove and Kerry Ellard respectively.

By the end of this week we should have a good idea of what is the source of the wood mentioned above, which may be coming from one large log or perhaps off several small pieces of wood. Most of the wood is chewed up by the drill before we get it and it is difficult to see any cut marks and so on if there are any.

[Signature] 15 Mar, 71
Oak Island Exploration. 15 to 22nd March 1971.

Work this week consisted mainly of trying to obtain samples from the bottom of the Hole 10x. Firstly, a magnet was lowered down the hole but no samples were recovered. Continued bailing recovered wood, seashells and some dynamite wire. A grab bucket was made and attached to the bottom of the bailer to try to recover some large pieces of wood, but there was some difficulty in getting the device to operate properly. It did recover small pieces of wood however, and was modified over the weekend to make its operation more positive.

The electric pump was pulled because its electrical circuit was overloading and it is thought that water has leaked into the cable. This pump is the one which will be used in hole 10x when someone goes down the hole to examine the bottom, so it would have been pulled anyway.

Warm days midweek allowed the ground to unfreeze and there was substantial slumping and caving at the surface by hole 10x. The holes were filled with gravel, as the churn drill began to tilt over. The immediate danger appears to have been averted.

The position at present is that the bottom of the hole is at 169 feet and the casing is at 160 feet. The last seven feet of the hole keep filling with sandy clay and constant bailing is needed to keep the hole open. In the sand are found sea shells and occasional pieces of glass as well as the wood. My opinion is that this sandy material might be beach sand that is working its way downwards from the beach towards hole 10x, and that as we clear the material out we make room for more sand to filter in.

The drill operator thinks that we are still in a wood horizon, and the large quantities of wood we are recovering appears to substantiate his idea.

Pending success with the grab bucket, we are making plans to send a man down the hole for a direct examination. For this we will have two pumps outside hole 10x, one to 145 feet and the other to 200 feet or so, and a third pump in hole 10x itself. It is felt that this arrangement will successfully dry the hole.
Drilling and bailing continued this last week and by Saturday the hole was at 174 feet and small chunks of gypsum were brought up indicating that we were approaching bedrock. More wood, chain fragments, foil-like metal fragments, sea-shells, glass, blasting tape, and other pieces of 'foreign' matter were also brought up. The metal bars which were bolted onto the churn drill to keep it centred in the hole came loose and opened up under the casing. The pieces may have wedged into loose material but there is a possibility that they have opened up into a cavity. It is almost impossible to tell at the depth at which we are drilling unless we dry the hole and use the TV camera or send a man down. The presence of the wood, metal, sea-shells and so on warrant a closer look as there are definitely a lot of unnatural features about this area.

Mr Thurston arrived at the Island on Saturday and reported on his activities. He also took several photos and predicts that he will find some chests between low and high tide lines on the beach. He said that if he proved wrong in dowsing the chests on the beach he would not bother any more with Oak Island. At any rate it will not be very expensive to prove one way or another, whether he is right.

29 March 1971
Oak Island Exploration. April 5 1971.

Hole 10x is down to 180 feet, about 5 or 6 feet into bedrock, and the casing is down to 160 feet. Inside the 27" casing is a length of 25" casing which was put to the bottom of the hole because the 27" casing would not go any deeper. There are two holes near the top rim of the 25" casing to allow for attachment of cables should it be necessary to remove the casing. This method actually allows quite appreciable flexibility as the lower casing may be removed without too much bother.

More samples of metal foil, wood, dynamite wire and sea-shell were recovered and significantly, these remains are recovered in fresh cuttings from the hole. The sand and gravel which fills the hole overnight is usually barren. This indicates that the evidence is coming from below the present level of the drill.

We are still awaiting word on the pump, which is essential should we need to send a man down hole 10x. If it arrives this week it can be pressed into use immediately as the horizon which contained all the wood should really be inspected.

There were some minor delays last week but all still functions well and footage will be made, perhaps to 220 feet by the end of this week.

[Signature]
5 May 1971
Oak Island Exploration. April 4th to 11th.

Hole lox is down to a depth of 200 feet with the 25" casing sunk in the bedrock at 178 feet. The hole has now entered the gypsum and anhydrite rock below the glacial till. The bailer is still bringing up foreign matter such as wood, seaweed, leather (from a glove) glass (Sussex bottle), seashells, pieces of rag, and so on. Now that the casing is seated in bedrock we should have sealed off any material in the till, so it may be that these pieces or some of them are coming from the rock, perhaps in cavities, or that they have come from the surface either accidentally or purposely.

Friday the bit on the churn drill broke in half leaving about 2 tons of metal down the hole. Parker Kennedy, the operator was making a fishing tool on Saturday and hoped to have the bit out by Saturday evening. Once the bit is out it will take a day or two to repair it, so the earliest we can proceed with drilling will likely be Wednesday.

One day was lost due to bad weather on the 3rd of April.

The causeway has suffered some erosion and is now too narrow to allow a large truck to cross, although cars find no difficulty. The surface will have to be widened and resurfaced before the churn drill can be removed from the Island.

This will be my last report as I will be starting my summer employment in Manitoba next week.

[Signature]
Mr. Martin Pickford,
9 Kennedy Drive, Apt. 34,
Dartmouth, N.S.

Dear Martin:

Thank you for coming to Montreal the other day and we are pleased to confirm the following arrangements vis a vis your services and the Oak Island Project.

Your remuneration will be $75.00 per week plus 10¢ per mile travelling and we would request that your services commence immediately in order to familiarize yourself with the project as much as possible before heavy operations commence this October 1st.

We would expect that you will devote at least two days per week.

a) Your responsibilities would be to report and document all activities, sending reports to:

Mr. Donald C. Webster,
Helix Investments Limited,
401 Bay St., Suite 2400,
Toronto, Ont.

Mr. Daniel Blankenship,
c/o Oak Island Motel,
Martin's Point,
Lunenber Co., N.S.

Mr. Kerry Ellard,
c/o 6200 Grande Allee,
St. Hubert, P.Q.

This reporting should be done at least once a week.

b) You would be representing the participants inasmuch as it would be your responsibility to see that the duly approved plans of the project were followed through as originally approved and formalized—and that any deviations from these formally-approved plans would be reported immediately.
c) Budgets prepared by a Budget Committee will be sent to you for each particular phase of these approved plans and it would be your responsibility to see that the plans were proceeding according to and within the allotted budget. Any deviations in this respect would be reported immediately.

d) To report anything else of consequence, positive or negative, of which those investing should be made aware.

e) In respect to the above outlined responsibilities, it would be expected that you would work in close harmony while on the site, with the Field Project Manager, who happens to be one of our key participants namely, Daniel Blankenship.

We look forward to working closely with you in what we hope will be an interesting and pleasant project.

Yours very truly,

David Tobias.

cc: Mr. M.R. Chappell
    Mr. D.C. Webster
    Mr. G. Coles, Q.C.
    Mr. D. Blankenship
    Mr. K. Ellard
Dear Mr. Tobias,

I received your letter last Friday and have great pleasure in accepting employment with you on the Oak Island Exploration Project, under the terms quoted in your letter.

In general, I will visit the Island every Monday, Thursday, and Saturday, except on the odd occasion where I might be needed elsewhere, in which case I will make up lost time either on Wednesdays or Sundays. In any case, I will inform Mr. Blankenship of any change in my schedule in advance.

I have now visited the Island and met Mr. Blankenship, who has familiarised me with what he is presently doing and what has been done in the past. In particular, he showed me a large structure made of wood which resembles either a coffer dam or an odd wharf, and another structure nearby which may be the roof of a tunnel or a slipway for small boats. Both structures have a number of peeled logs which I feel could very profitably be dated by the method of Dendrochronology. We might at least be able to determine whether we are uncovering searcher material or original material. Apparently, there are a few trees in the neighbourhood which may be up to five hundred years old. A section of a tree that old would admirably cover the period of activity at Oak Island, assuming that all concerned only used local trees in their structures. I am getting hold of the necessary information and tools anyway.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Wickford.
Mr. Martin Pickford,
Halifax, N.S.
Dear Martin:

Am terribly rushed, but enclose note with cheque from Gordon Coles. Please contact him and submit all bills and statements directly to his office, with a copy to me.

Dan says that he has a section of a tree for dentochronology... will try to see if Louisbourg has someone who can do it for us cheaper than Brock U.

Salud,
2nd November, 1970.

Mr. Martin Pickford,
9 Kennedy Dr., Apt. 34,
Dartmouth, N.S.

Dear Martin:

Thanks very much for picking me up and delivering me to the Halifax airport.

I really enjoyed the day on Saturday including the drive to and from Oak Island.

Hope I will have the chance to reciprocate your hospitality when you next come to Montreal.

Kerry will be sending you a copy of all pertinent information on the project thus far. In the meantime, I would appreciate your sending me the original copy of the Seychelles article.

Yours very truly,

David Tobias.
Dear David,

This is to thank you personally for all you have done for me.

My contact address during the Summer is:

50 ARCO EXPLORATION CO OF CANADA LTD,
Suite 2300, 44 King St W
TORONTO, ONT.

Phone 368-7993.

At Summer’s end I will probably be off to England to study for my Master’s Degree;

With reference to the wood at 165’ in Hole 10X, I have been pondering on what you said as regards its age. I have come to the conclusion that there are 3 possible answers.

1. Wood was placed in position by man
2. Wood came from seashore down a natural cavity along with seashells, rolled glass etc. (unlikely given from the quantity of wood)
3. Wood was dropped down hole, either deliberately or accidentally (we found a glove down the hole for example)

Without going down the hole and examining the area, first hand.
it will be very difficult to decide which suggestion is correct.

My phone number at home, should you wish to contact Gill, is 469-0328.

Regards to Mrs Tobias, and the children,

Yours Sincerely

Martin Pickford.