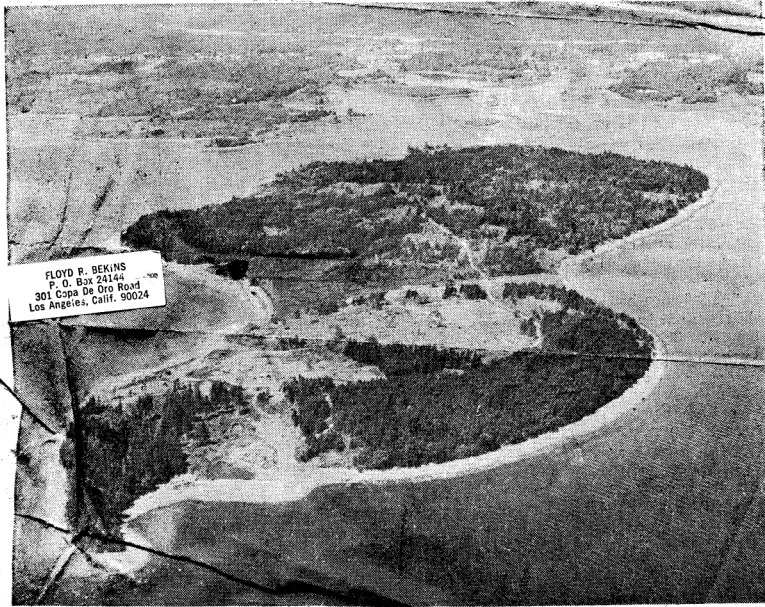


# Los Angeles

LARGEST CIRCULATION IN THE WEST, 1,036,911 DAILY, 1,226,132 SUNDAY

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SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 20, 1974



FLOYD R. BEKINS  
P. O. Box 26144  
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Los Angeles, Calif. 90024

Oak Island, scene of a treasure hunt dating back to 1795. The latest diggings are in the foreground.

## IN SEARCH OF ELUSIVE BOOTY

### Honeycombed 'Treasure' Island Lures Gold Diggers On and On

BY CHARLES HILLINGER  
Times Staff Writer

OAK ISLAND, Nova Scotia—There never has been a treasure hunt in history so mysterious, so enduring, so costly.

It has been going on for 180 years on this tiny island off Nova Scotia's coast.

No one knows the value of the cache, if indeed one exists, but speculation puts it as high as \$30 million.

Some treasure hunters believe Capt. William Kidd buried his booty on the island in the late 1600s.

Others are convinced that it was here that Henry Morgan stashed his shipload of riches after he sacked Maracaibo and Panama in the 1670s.

There are those who think Oak Island may be the place referred to by Edward (Blackbeard) Teach when he declared before being beheaded in 1718:

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

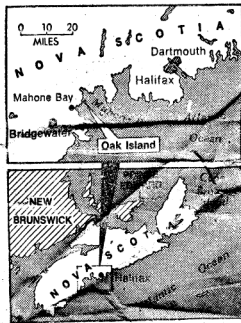
The search since the beginning has been serious.

Engineers, geologists and scientists from Canada and the United States have headed up numerous groups that spent months and years poking holes deep into Oak Island in the endless hunt.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt as a young man was a partner in a 1909-1910 expedition to find "the buried treasure of Oak Island."

For the past five years a syndicate of Canadian and American businessmen have spent \$500,000 drilling holes and shafts on the 1/2-mile long, 3/4-mile wide island.

What intrigues searchers is a labyrinth of apparently man-made tunnels and chambers beneath the island's surface. Engineers say it would take an army of men at least two years to construct an under-



ground network as complex as that which honeycombs Oak Island.

Little in the way of evidence of buried treasure, however, has been unearthed since the search began in 1795.

So far a piece of parchment, a couple of bone or ivory whistles, links of gold chain, pieces of milled metal and hand-hewn timbers, and tons of coconut fiber matting have been unearthed, but that's enough to keep the interest alive.

It began in the summer of 1795 when three teen-age boys discovered a strange saucer-shaped depression beneath an oak tree and started digging. Nine years later those boys joined a syndicate that dug the first treasure hole, called the Money Pit.

Every 10 feet, to the 90-foot level, timber platforms were encountered. Coconut fiber matting were encountered. Coconut fiber was used in the Caribbean area as dunnage to protect ship cargoes. Its presence here led to spec-

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