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4 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1965

~~No~~ **Preserve It** ~~Notes~~

The romance has ended on Oak Island.

In place of picks and shovels and other slightly less primitive tools, which for nearly two centuries hopeful men from many countries have used in a long and so far fruitless search for Captain Kidd's buried treasure, now come the bulldozers, the 100-ton digging scoops, and the submersible pumps capable of ridding shafts of water at the rate of 110,000 gallons an hour.

If there is treasure under the ground on Oak Island, Californian petroleum geologist Robert Dunfield, director of this latest, most massively mechanized assault, will surely find it.

Evidently, Mr. Dunfield and his associates believe that there is treasure there — perhaps \$30,000,000 worth of it. Otherwise, he would hardly have been prepared to spend about \$43,000 on the project, a figure which includes, presumably, the cost of creating and subsequently demolishing a causeway to the island from the mainland so that his heavy equipment can move to the scene of operations under its own power.

We hope that Mr. Dunfield is right. This hope is prompted not so much because if the treasure is found, Canadian interests, including the island's owner, M. R. Chappell of Sydney, and the Canadian government, will benefit financially; but because the recent deaths of prospector Robert Restall, his son Robert, and two other companions on the island will seem not to have occurred entirely in vain.

It can be argued that if the treasure is found on the island and removed, it will no longer attract tourists. The cupboard will be bare. Yet it is also arguable that, even with the treasure gone, the fact that it was once there, and that Captain Kidd and his merry bunch of cutthroats besported on the island, will act as an irresistible tourist magnet.

What is important, therefore, is that, whether the mechanical grabs bring up gold, or merely sand and rock, the physical aspect of the island not be permanently changed for the worse. Whether Mr. Dunfield and his collaborators find what they are seeking, or join the long line of men for whom Oak Island has brought disappointment, the island must remain a place of beauty.

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