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Money Pit!

Loot Lures Family To Treasure Isle

By JEFFREY LAWRENCE

Robert Restall gave up his job to look for buried treasure. He also gave up his comfortable home. Then he took his family to live with him in a shack on a lonely island where temperatures often dip to 10 below zero.

"I know it's uncomfortable," Restall admits, "but I need my family to help me dig. There's treasure worth many millions buried here and we are going to find it. There'll be time enough for comfort after that."

Since childhood, 56-year-old Robert Restall has been fascinated by stories of treasure buried on tiny, uninhabited Oak Island, a half mile off the coast of Nova Scotia, Canada.

Oak Island was a favorite haunt of pirates who sailed the Spanish Main during the 17th century.

Local fishermen believe the island contains the famous Captain Kidd's treasure.

Many others believe the island holds the wealth of the Aztec or Inca Indians, who hid their treasure before Europeans destroyed their civilization.

A raiding party of Vikings who disappeared after plundering the Mediterranean area has also been mentioned as the possible hiders of treasure.

Other theories point to Oak Island as the burial place of the *royal crown jewels of France*, which dropped from sight during the French Revolution.

The Oak Island treasure story began in 1795, when three hunters found a depression in the island's sandy soil.

They dug down 10 feet and found a solid oak platform.

Diggings over the next nine years uncovered similar platforms at each 10-foot level down to 90 feet.

The searchers dug down as far as 98 feet, but then water flooded the shaft up to the 32-foot level.

Treasure hunters discovered the water was coming in through a system of tunnels that fanned out into the bay.

During the next 164 years more than 20 expeditions spent \$2 million dollars trying to unlock the secret of the "money pit" and

...And Dreams of Buried Gold and Jewels Keep 'Em Digging

get at the \$150 million in treasure they believed was buried there.

In 1909, an expedition led by the late Franklin D. Roosevelt sank mining drills 170 feet and the drills showed they had passed through oak chests and gold and silver coin.

In 1959 Restall bought treasure-hunting rights from the island's owner, M.R. Chappell, and quit his \$150-a-week job as a plumbing contractor in Hamilton, Ontario.

He went alone to Oak Island, floating his car, an air compressor and drilling equipment out on a raft. He built a tarpaper shack

to live in.

In the spring of 1960 he returned to his home in Hamilton, sold it to buy more equipment and went back to Oak Island with his wife, Mildred, and their two sons, Robert, 21, and Ricky, 11.

"Then we just dug and dug," Restall said. "When the shaft began to flood, we pumped it dry."

But soon the water was coming in faster than the Restalls could pump it out.

"I knew I had to find out exactly where the water was coming from and block up the entrance," Restall explained.

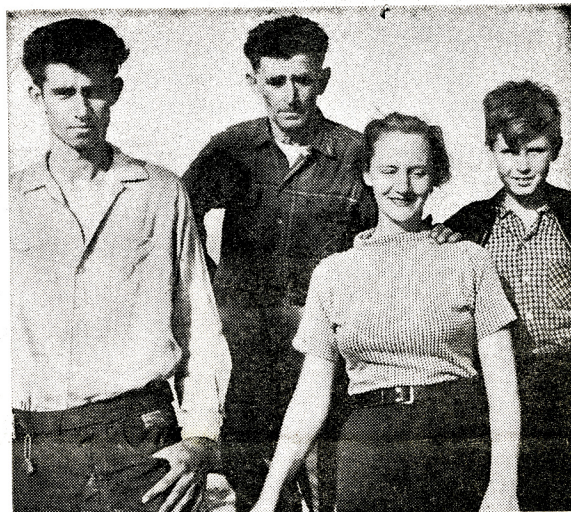
So, for the next two years, Restall and his family dug dozens of tunnel shafts, trying to locate the source of the water.

Then, last July, Restall found a rock with the year 1704 chiseled into it. Near the rock he found the main entrance to the water tunnel — at the low tide mark on Oak Island's shore.

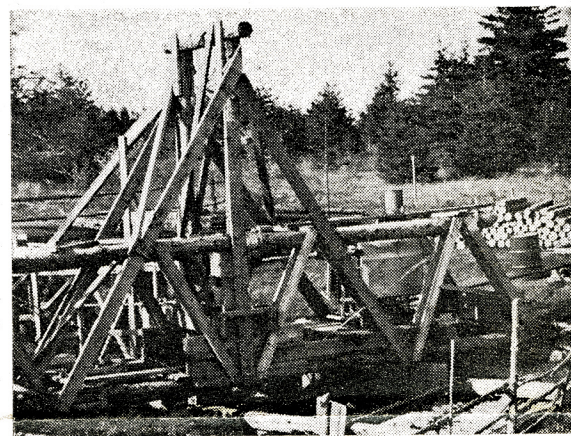
Restall traced the tunnel to where it fans out into other water tunnels.

"This is the key to the treasure," he said. "All I have to do now is block off the water tunnels, pump out the money pit shaft and count my riches."

Restall has invested over \$18,000 in his treasure hunt so far,



FAMILY of treasure hunters: Robert Restall is flanked by sons, Robert Jr., 21 (left), Ricky, 11, and wife, Mildred.



PUMPING EQUIPMENT was set up by Restall to get water out of the money pit.

and he says he is certain he will find the treasure soon.

His wife admits the hunt can't end soon enough for her.

"I have faith in Robert," she said, "but I've been a reluctant treasure hunter from the beginning."

"I've spent two freezing winters here. This is my third. I've had to do all the cooking and teach Ricky by correspondence courses."

"I haven't even seen another

woman to speak to for over a year."

But whenever the loneliness of the island depresses his wife, Restall perks up her spirits by talking about comforts they'll have after the hunt is finished.

"Even after paying the taxes and giving a share to the island's owner we'll be millionaires a dozen times over," he said.

"Not even my wife can stay depressed with that kind of money in sight."

Girl, 12, Called Poetic Genius, Is Just Copycat

Twelve-year-old Cynthia Baugh fooled millions of people with her poetry. She handed in her poem, "The Bulldog and the Bird," as homework at her Nottingham, England, school.

The teacher thought it was so good that she submitted it for competition in the Nottingham Poetry Society's annual contest.

Cynthia won \$5 and became the heroine of her school.

A magazine editor praised the girl's "good approach and skillful use of rhyme."

Then, last November 22, the poetry society got Cynthia to read her poem over the radio.

Millions heard the verses and believed a genius had been discovered.

But two young sisters in a country cottage weren't fooled, and Cynthia's fame ended abruptly.

Valerie Brighthouse, seven, and her sister, Janet, 12, heard Cynthia and told their mother: "We

know that poem."

They dug out an old poetry book and found the verses under the title: "Dignity and Purity."

Their mother told the radio station and the poetry society.

Cynthia confessed: "I didn't write it. I found it in a book and copied it."

She was taken to school and stood shamefaced before her 400 classmates as her teacher told them what she had done.

And her mother said, "Cynthia's prize money will have to be returned. We were going to use it to buy her a poetry book."

The head of the poetry society, Mrs. Winifred Riley, said, "The whole affair has made us look very silly."



DATED ROCK, found near tunnel that Robert Restall believes is key to treasure, is held by Mrs. Restall.