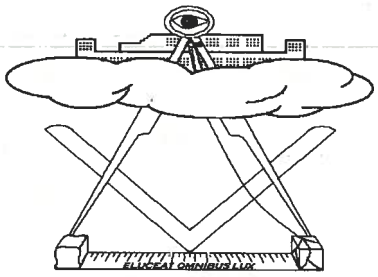
HONOLULU MASONIC



RESEARCH SOCIETY

Founded 2014
A Unit of Honolulu Lodge F&AM

Digging for Treasure?

They should have asked a plumber.

(Exploring the construction of the Oak Island Money Pit)

By Jim Moore
Member HMRS, Honolulu Lodge F&AM

It is unfortunate that so many treasure hunters are under the illusion that gold is at the bottom of the Oak Island Money Pit. Not only has an enormous amount of time and money been wasted in this pursuit, but the years of excavation has resulted in nothing less than the destruction of an engineering feat.

How can I be so sure there is no treasure? I base this on three observations, business, human nature and craftsmanship.

From a business perspective, it would take a sizeable amount of your booty to build something this elaborate, and during the lengthy construction, you would be vulnerable to theft, mutiny, murder, etc. The fact that the pit was actually completed would have meant that they were able to successfully store their treasure without the need of such a sophisticated safe.

Human nature tells me that pirates lived a high risk lifestyle and were rarely guilty of saving their money for retirement; Besides the fact that no self-respecting pirate would trust so many soles with the location of their gold. We are talking about thieves after all. (I use the plural "their" rather than Capitan Kidd because there is no greater democracy than a boat)

I dismiss the many other theories about this place based on my final observation, craftsmanship.

Whoever built this had a firm grasp of construction and especially hydrodynamics.

Pirates, being sailors, would have a grasp of the many properties of water, but for reasons listed above, I cannot count them among the groups of people interested in undertaking this. Anyone can dig a hole, but a 200'x 7' hole is a different story. With that said, this significantly reduces the candidates who undertook this obscure task.

The construction methods of 200-300 years ago also meant that this was an enormous time investment. Men working on it would have had to have been motivated by more than money.
During the construction, these men would not have been able to hunt and gather so they would have relied on others for sustenance. This collective effort is far beyond the monetary drive of man and leads me to the mystery of *who* rather than *what* is at the bottom of the dig; therefore, in order to deconstruct the mysteries, it is necessary to reconstruct the tomb.

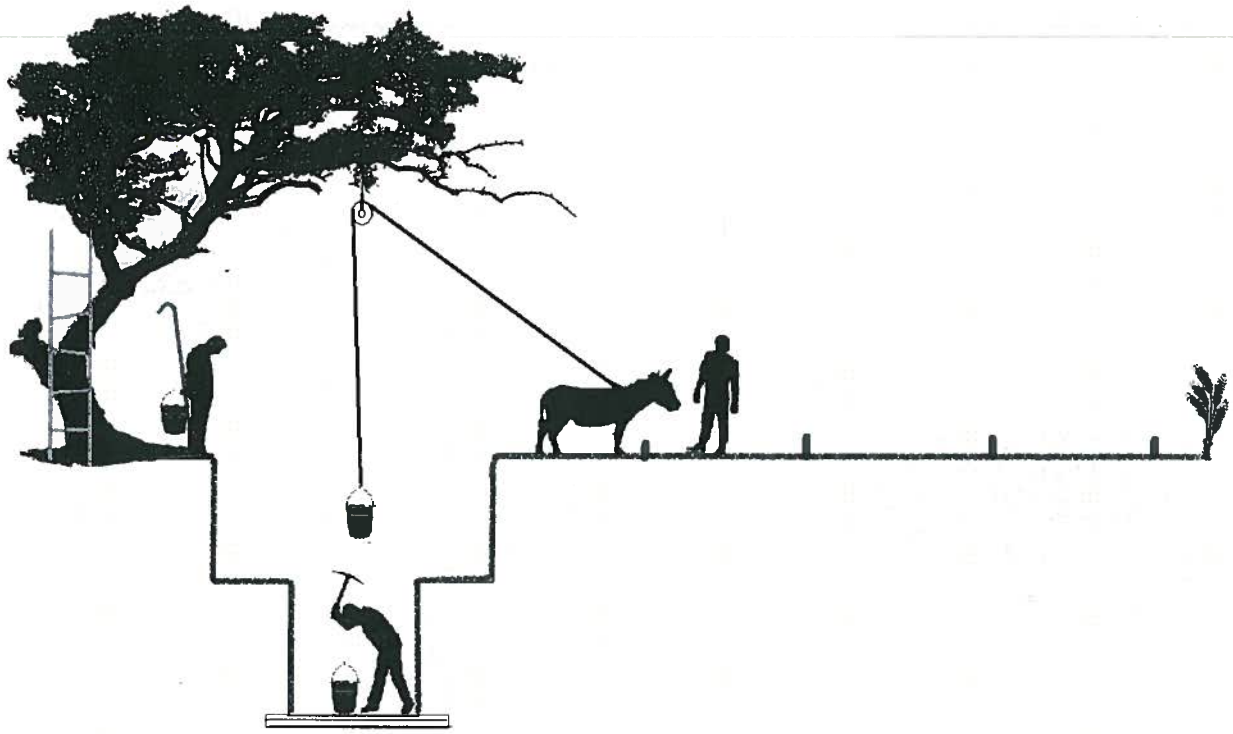
Tools needed:

- ✓ 3-Shovel
- ✓ 3-Pickax
- ✓ 250' line
- ✓ 6-buckets
- ✓ 1-12' ladder
- ✓ 1-Ax
- ✓ 1-Square
- ✓ 1-Level
- ✓ 1x1 Pulley
- ✓ 1-Plumb
- ✓ 1-24"gauge
- ✓ Pathagorean Theorem
- ✓ Shelter
- ✓ Cooking implements
- ✓ Boat or Barge
- ✓ Coconut husks

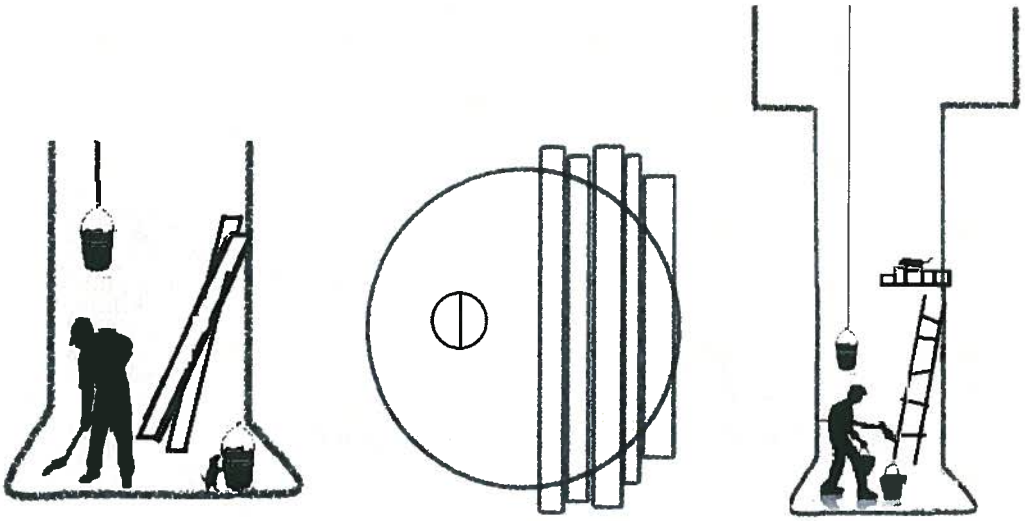
How to build it:

Ideally we need a crew of 3 on the job site at all times: a Digger, a Rigger and a Runner.
The Digger digs.
The Rigger runs the pulley.
The Runner hauls the fill.
If only two workers are available, the Rigger and Runner could combine jobs but the efficiency would be severely limited.
There is also a need for a mule, horse or ox for one simple reason.
As the pit gets deeper the combined weight of the bucket, dirt and rigging will be too great for one man to pull all day long. A block and tackle could be used to overcome the weight but would dramatically impede the pace of the excavation, not to mention the 100s of feet of extra line needed. A one to one pulley would be the most efficient.

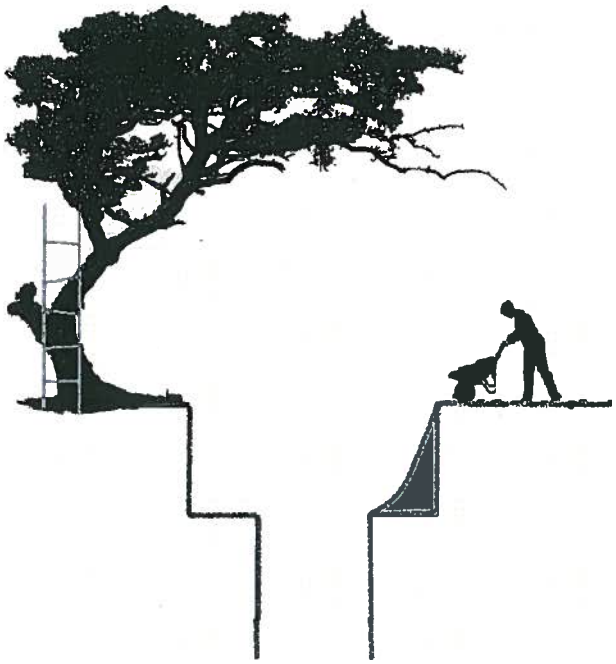
Start with a diameter that is wider than the main shaft to prevent debris from falling directly down the hole onto the Digger. In this case the initial 13' diameter will provide a about a 3' ledge around the 7' main shaft.
Build an A frame or use a tree to connect the pulley allowing for the refuge to be removed.
Dig to the first 10 ft and compact the soil around the top of the shaft.
Then start to dig the first section of the main shaft to a depth of 10'

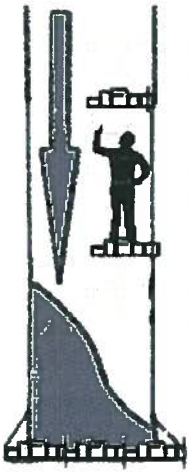


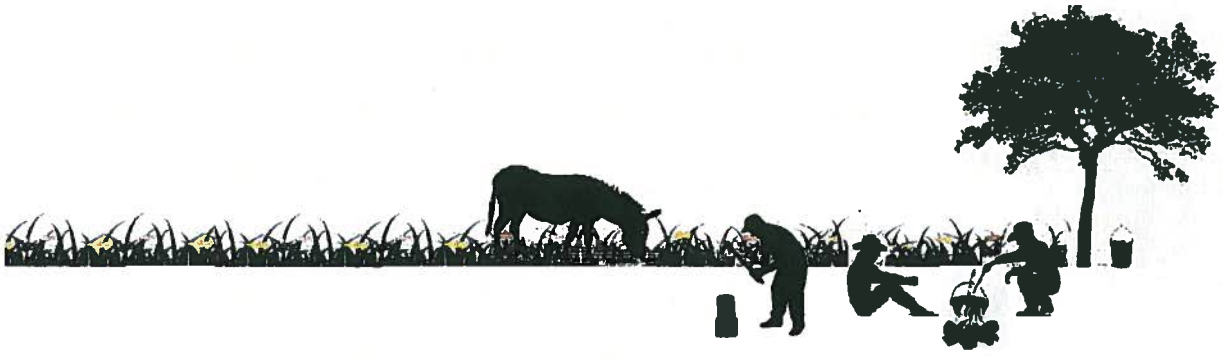
Once at 10' it is time to install half the platform to the base of the shaft.
This is done by digging wider than the 7' diameter allowing the planks to be set into the walls of the shaft.
Backfill is used to secure the timbers in place.
The timbers served 2 distinct purposes, holding the walls from collapse and providing support for a ladder to exit the shaft.
One side of the platform would be left open to pull up the buckets and to provide a way out with a ladder.



After the desired depth is achieved, about 200' in this case, it is time to backfill the hole.
The Digger would remain in the hole under a platform as the Runner and Rigger poured dirt back into the hole.
After the 10' portion of the hole was filled, the Digger would signal to the Runner to stop filling.
Timbers for the next level would be lowered into the shaft.
This new height would allow the Digger a level platform to smooth out the dirt and finish the timber flooring.
This process of working backwards would have continued until the shaft was filled to the height of the feeder tube. It was at this point that the coconut husks would be added.



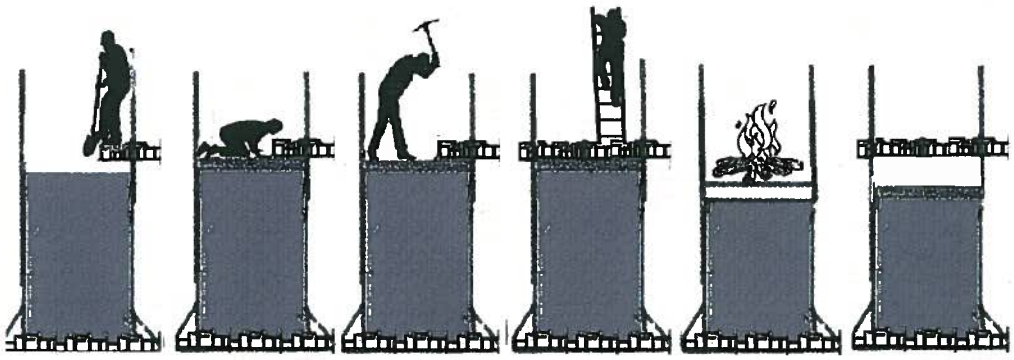


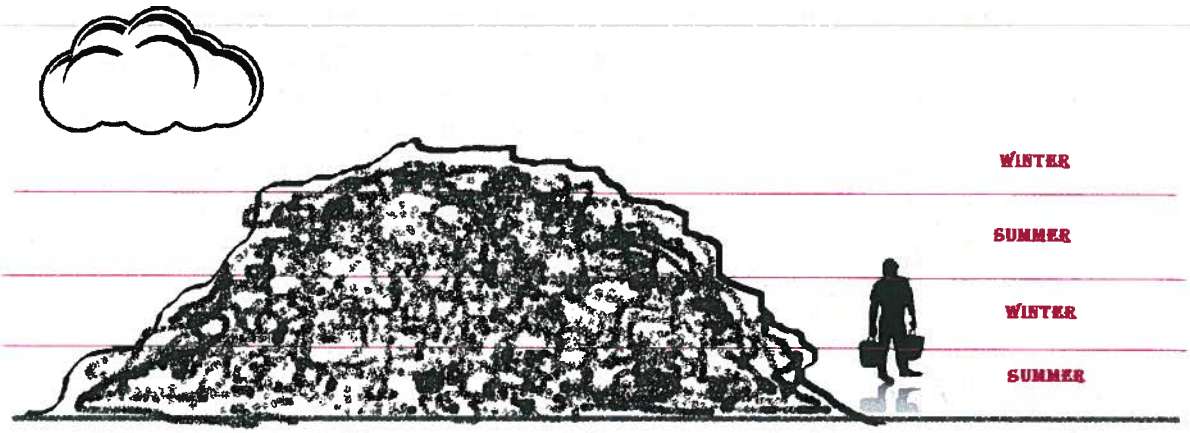


There seems to be a lot of confusion about the use of this material, but in the reconstruction of this scenario the use becomes clear. If you have ever had the unfortunate opportunity to excavate clay with hand tools, you will discover that the most difficult challenge to overcome is the tenacity of clay sticking to everything. Each step is hindered by the weight of this material clinging to your feet. Every shovel full is burdened by the slag left on the blade, therefor; I am most inclined to believe that the husks served the very simple purpose of keeping the mud off of the workers feet while they finished the platforms. A thick layer of husks would have insulated the diggers feet from the elasticity of the mud allowing them to work uninhibited.

All of the material that was excavated would have sat outside exposed to precipitation for the duration of the dig. What once came out as dry dirt would be returning as mud. Since we don't see the husks until 50', this makes me believe that they may have started to fill the hole with rain/ice soaked mud but finished with the dryer material. The dryer fill would have compacted easier and would not have needed the husks. At 40', charcoal was discovered. A fire could have been used to thaw out the dirt or meld ice after a frost allowing for work to continue. This is consistent with working year round. The fill may have started in the winter when there would have been more snow and precipitation; Continued through the dryer summer months and finished in fall.

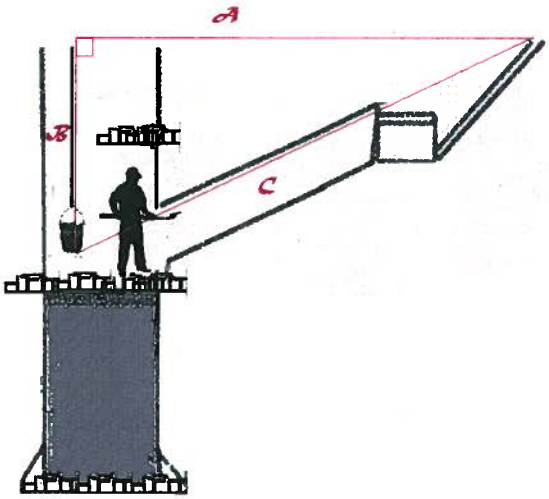
It was correctly observed that the space between the timbers and coconut husk was created from the dirt settling. This would also be consistent with the moisture leaving the fill and saturating into the walls of the pit. (On a side note, this is the key to determining the age of construction. How long does it take 10'x7' column of saturated oak island dirt to settle to a depth of 2'?)

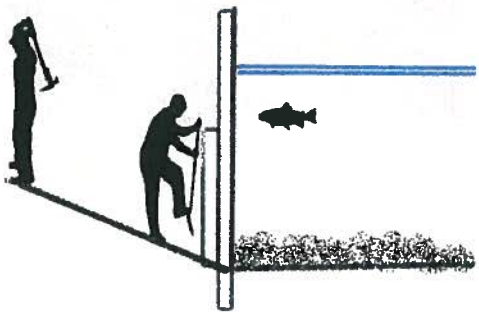




We know that the Oslow Company was able to successfully dig to a depth of 98' without water intrusion which leads me to the conclusion that this is the depth of the inlet tube.
Since we know the depth of the shaft and the distance to the shore, we can use the Pythagorean Theorem to determine the hypotenuse (or distance needed to dig to the shore).
A 90° angle at the top of the shaft will insure that we can also determine the angle of the dig
179' @ 57°
A=(distance to shore at low tide) ,B=(depth of shaft), C= length of dig to shore
$150'^2 x 98'^2 = C^2$
179' to the shore.

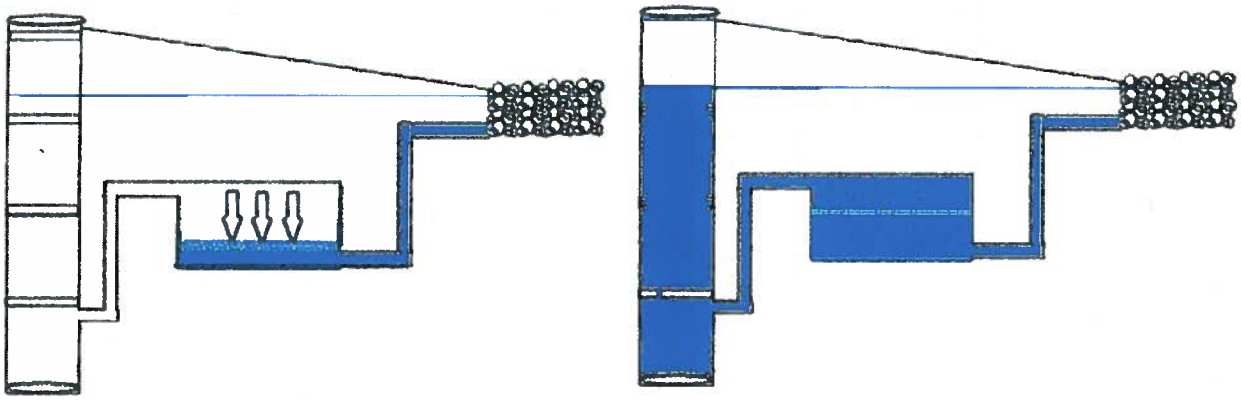
This would also coincide with the building of the coffer dam at the shore.
The dam would allow the construction of the Pee Traps.





The Turo Co, discovered the Pee Traps near the shore but interpreted them as "peculiar vents". This error in observation was the demise of their efforts as well as those who succeeded them. This detail of the structure is the means to understanding the mechanics of the pit.

The Pee Trap is constructed below sea level (thus the need for the coffer dam) with the surface aria of the inlet pipe smaller than the surface aria of the trap. As long as there is positive air pressure from the shaft, in conjunction with the gravity pushing down on the water in the trap, the pressure will hold back the entire Atlantic Ocean. The air space above the standing water in the trap acts a lot like a piston and thus pushes the water back up the feeder tube. This design is also self priming with the ebb and flow of the tide so the trap is always filled. This maintenance free design will work with the highest of high tides and the lowest of low tides until the seal is broken.



In order to discover all the mysteries, the shaft must be excavated.
So how do you excavate now that the traps have been compromised?
The entire shaft must be turned into a Trap.
Cap the shaft with a room and restore positive pressure.
Apply air pressure with a compressor and pump the water into an open vessel within the room.
When the vessel is full, seal it and relive the water from the vat. This will insure that you always maintain the positive pressure on the surface area of the well.
When the water is removed, apply positive air pressure to the empty vessel until it is the same as the room. Repeat the process until the shaft is dry.
Don't forget to cap all the other holes that have been dug.
The tricky part is working in this environment.
It's like scuba diving so a separate chamber is needed to decompress.