

CoOI S12E7 It's All Your Vault

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Synopsis by Jan Anderson

Research Center

Rick is meeting with Scott, Doug, and Steve to discuss the next borehole. Last week, the team found what they thought was a collapsed tunnel at about 98 feet. The team found a large section of wood while drilling borehole D.5-7.4. This was after Dr. Spooner told the team that groundwater testing was no longer detecting the source of precious metals in the Baby Blob. Testing did reveal that it was appearing more than 40 feet to the southwest. Rick asks to look at the 3D model of that area to help determine where to put a caisson. Based on Steve's information, the team will begin drilling the next borehole at E.75-5.6. Later, Gary arrives with his daughter Katya, who will join the team as a metal detectorist for the next couple of weeks. After introductions, Rick tells Katya that he wants her to start working at Smith's Cove, where the team is searching for the flood tunnels.

Smith's Cove

Craig, Billy, Jack, and Katya are continuing the work at Smith's Cove to find the flood tunnels and the vertical shaft. Katya and Jack begin searching for artifacts, and they soon get a hit. Jack unearths a large piece that they will take to the lab to be scanned. As Billy continues to dig, Craig notices a beam that Billy has exposed with the last scoop he removed. Billy then tells Craig that there are three vertical beams going up the side. Craig thinks it could be a shaft. Billy continues to dig and pulls out a piece of wood that is notched on one end. Then, the group notices more pieces of wood. They will continue to dig. The next day, Rick and Scott arrive to check on the progress of the possible shaft found yesterday at Smith's Cove. They are told that nothing more has been found that could be evidence of a shaft or flood tunnels. The trench is about 40 feet deep, and the excavator has reached its maximum depth. Rick says for now, they are done at Smith's Cove.

Lot 5

Laird, Peter, and Ethan are on Lot 5, where Laird is working in an area he refers to as an “annex” to the main area of the foundation. They have removed some large stones that were lining the area last year, allowing Laird to try and expose the north wall. Helen, Moya, and Jillian are working in another area when Helen finds part of a TD pipe stem. She calls Laird to take a look. TD stands for Thomas Dormer, an English pipemaker from the mid-1700s.

Lot 4

Jack and Gary are on Lot 4, metal-detecting spoils from the stone foundation on Lot 5. Gary soon gets a hit, and Jack digs out a button. Gary begins searching again and gets another hit. This time, they pull out a small lead ball that will go to the lab for testing. They begin scanning the area and again get a hit that turns out to be a small piece of silver. Gary says it looks hammered. Jack sends a text to Helen about the piece of silver. Helen arrives and agrees it appears to be a piece of silver that is possibly a cut coin.

Money Pit

The next day, work is continuing on borehole E.75-5.6; Leighton brings over a core sample from 109 feet to be examined. This borehole is 11 feet southwest of where the team found evidence of a nine-foot-high tunnel last week. Terry and Charles examine the sample, and Terry says the sample appears to be in situ. Charles then notices pieces of wood at 109 feet. The next core sample is brought over, and it contains blackened wood. To the team’s knowledge, there are no tunnels in this area. A core sample from 123 feet is brought over, and it contains more wood. Later another core sample from 149 feet is brought over, and it contains a lot of wood. Terry says it looks like a plank, then a beam, and then another plank, and he thinks it is collapsed. Terry then notices what looks like concrete and explains limestone could be confused with concrete. Peter then points out what they have just found, and Craig says it matches up with the description of the Chappell Vault found in 1897 by Fredrick Blair and William Chappell at a depth of 153 feet. Rick soon arrives after being notified of the find.

The Lab

Rick, Scott, and Gary are meeting with Laird and Emma to hear the testing on artifacts found yesterday. Emma tells them the XRF scans show the hammered silver contains a high aluminum content, which indicates it is modern. She then tells them that the lead ball is interesting. The lead ball is pitted and is pure lead. Emma says she does not see any alloying elements, which would indicate it is not modern. Emma tells them she thinks it pre-dates the 1700s. Other items found in the same area that have been dated to before the 1700s include the scalloped disc and the starburst button.