

CoOI S12 E13 Caissons Ho!

Aired February 25, 2025

Synopsis by Jan Anderson

Money Pit

The team is welcoming Vanessa and ROC equipment to the island, who will be working with Soletanche Bachy Canada. The team plans to place 7-foot caissons at several locations to a depth of over 200 feet if needed. The first location will be directly above where they believe the Chappell Vault is located. This year, ROC will be using an 18.5-ton hammer grab to remove the spoils. The next day, everyone meets in the Money Pit for the naming of the first caisson of the year. Rick tells the group that the name of this caisson will be True Believers, and Doug marks it TB1. Rick then asks Katya to start the oscillator. The next day, Marty stops by the Money Pit to see how things are going. Vanessa tells him they are at a depth of about 87 feet. The hammer grab pulls out some wood and beams. Terry tells them that one piece of wood could have been used as a support beam. The next piece of wood Terry looks at is hand-cut and tapered. Katya scans the spoils before they are sent to the wash plant. She gets a hit and pulls out a large spike. Rick arrives, and they tell him they found a lot of wood at 91 feet and a log with limbs cut off of it. Rick then looks at the spike and says it is definitely wrought iron and is extremely heavy. Rick wants to take the spike to Emma for testing.

Swamp

Rick, Alex, Katya, and Billy are continuing work in the swamp. Rick pulls out a board from the “steps” recently found in the northern part of the swamp, and he and Alex discuss the size of the boards and the fact there are no nails. As Billy pulls away more dirt to continue looking for more boards, Rick notices a piece of shaped wood that was buried 3 feet deep in the dirt. The group examines the piece and agrees that Laird should take a look at it. The next day, Alex, Katya, and Billy continue to search for more clues near the wooden structure. Alex finds another board and digs until he finds the end. When he reaches the end of the board, there is a rock at the same level. Alex wants Billy

to scrape it off and see if there is a rock platform. Billy pulls away the dirt and finds a large rock and another one that is even lower. Alex decides to call Dr. Spooner to look at the feature. Dr. Spooner arrives, and Alex asks him to determine if the rocks were placed. Dr. Spooner feels it is a similar construct to the stone road.

Lot 5

Jack joins Fiona and Todd, who are continuing work on the excavation of the round feature on Lot 5. They are trying to determine if a gap in the rocks is an entranceway. This area is also the only part of the structure where Money Pit soil has been found. Soon after Jack begins working, Fiona finds a small hinge. The two discuss if it was from a small door or from a chest. Later, Todd unearths what looks like a diamond or piece of cut glass. Fiona says it should go to the lab to be scanned.

Wash Plant

Rick, Billy, and Scott arrive at the wash plant, where spoils from the Money Pit will be separated and washed. Once separated, the piles will be searched for treasure and artifacts. The next day, a group is sorting through the spoils from TB1. Derek Couch finds an artifact and calls Charles over to take a look. Charles decides to text Rick to come take a look at the artifact. Rick arrives and takes a look at the piece, and it will be sent to the lab for analysis.

Lab

Carmen has arrived to examine a metal artifact recently found on Lot 1. Rick gives Carmen a brief history of the item. Carmen tells them the pin is very old and was beaten out from a blob of iron. He also tells them the fibers in the spike are not consistent all the way through, and if it came from a piece of round stock, it would have been after 1760. Rick asks what this would have been used for, and Carmen tells them it would have been used to grab and hold on to something as you move it. It would have been something like a boulder. He also tells them the bend in the pin indicates it was under stress. Carmen asks Emma about the metallurgy, and she tells him it is from a blast

furnace and made of high-temperature iron. She then tells them there is some manganese in it, but it is not consistent throughout the entire piece. She also tells them the metal is not clean enough for her to put it in the 1600s, so she says she would put it in the mid-1700s. Carmen says he thinks it is from the early 1700s, possibly 1720-1730. The next day, the team meets in the lab to hear information about the glass gemstone found on Lot 5. Emma tells the group the glass contains a concentration of lead, which you wouldn't see in modern glass. She also describes the composition as a "really clean, really controlled composition." Laird then tells them it is flint glass. He tells them the glass was ground up and then pressed into a mold. The process was developed in France in the early 18th century by French jeweler Georg Fredrich Strass. He added bismuth, thallium, and lead to ground-up glass powder and developed a paste-like substance that was heated and poured into a mold to create an artificial gemstone. Laird then tells them that French high society was wearing this type of jewelry. Emma tells them that 1734 was the introduction of this type of crystal. Emma also tells them that this piece has 10% more lead in it than glass from the mid to late 1700s. Marty mentions that it fits in the timeline for the duc d'Anville's expedition.