

BLAMING SCIENCE AND NATURE

What's a scientific explanation? What are natural explanations?

Science may explain the mystery. Nine barrels were empty. They were made of red oak. The rest were made of white oak. Red oak is more **porous**. Porous means having tiny holes. Air or water can get through. So, alcohol could've leaked out. It **evaporates**. This means it turns to fumes. Steel bands are on the barrels. They might have hit each other as the ship moved. This would cause sparks. This could lead to an explosion. This may

have scared the crew. Briggs could've put them on a lifeboat. He might have wanted them to stay away for a little bit. But the lifeboat drifted away.

Captains wouldn't abandon their ships unless they had to.

