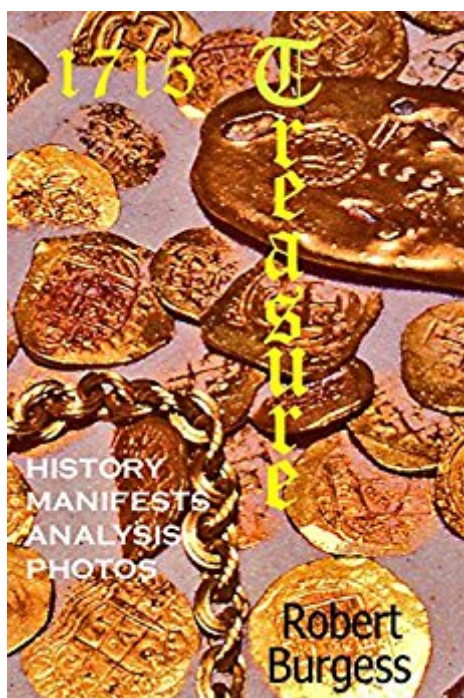


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1715 TREASURE: History, Manifests, Analysis, Photos



Synopsis

On July 24, 1715 a Spanish treasure fleet of ten frigates sailed from Havana carrying a cargo of 14 million pesos in gold, silver and jewels. In the Florida Straits near present day Cape Canaveral the fleet ran into a hurricane. The storm battered the ten ships unmercifully. One after another the vessels ran aground and were torn apart by the storm. Tons of iron cannons, bars of silver, chests of silver coins and gold doubloons were scattered over the sand and lime rock bottom as the ships slowly disintegrated. Over 700 people lost their lives in the tragic event. Survivors were eventually saved, and Spanish salvors recovered some of the treasure. But the bulk of it was lost for the next 250 years. In the early 1960s people began finding odd-shaped pieces of corroded metal on the beaches opposite the wrecks. Many were skipped back to sea. Until one curious fellow named Kip Wagner found that these odd blackened lumps were actually corroded silver coins. With a friend named Kip Kelso he did some research and soon realized there was a lost treasure fleet and all it carried scattered for miles along Florida's southeast coast. Wagner formed a company named Real Eight obtained an agreement to salvage the treasure with the State of Florida overseeing the operation and getting 25 percent of all finds. Thus began the biggest treasure hunt of the century. Author Robert Burgess and State Marine Archaeologist Carl Clausen in charge of the recovery program wrote the definitive book on the history of the fleet and the treasure recovery. In this e-book by Robert Burgess, he reveals information about the treasure and its recovery that was purposely not available to the public at that time. One aspect had to do with the computer generated scatter patterns of treasure recovered from certain of the wrecks. That pattern touched certain beaches for over a mile. This meant that all beach finds were treasure trove or finders keepers, while everything in the water out to the three-mile limit belonged to Florida and the lease holders. In time most of the treasure was recovered and salvors such as Mel Fisher moved to Key West to look for the treasure galleon Atocha, which he finally found. Meanwhile beach combers continue to find treasure on the beaches opposite the 1715 wrecks. Author Burgess provides us with a brief history of this treasure fleet and in over 200 color photographs made during this period of treasure recovery he shows us the treasure and how it was found. Included in the text he takes us diving on one of the least damaged wrecks and later provides a translation of the 1715 fleet's manifests detailing how much treasure these ships carried. Finally there is a wonderfully detailed analysis of Florida's treasure finds and what the markings on gold coins, bars and ingots tell us about their age, quality and origin. Readers will be interested to note exactly how much treasure was carried by the combined fleet, and how much the state recovered after division. Because all these riches were scattered from Sebastian Inlet to Fort Pierce, coins and

other invaluable artifacts will be appearing on these beaches for an untold number of years to come. And like one trio of skin divers looking for lobsters and finding instead a golden glove tray in shallow water just offshore, no one knows where or for how long these items will keep appearing. The tray which became a centerpiece for the treasure display at Tallahassee's Florida Museum was appraised at \$23,000. The lucky finders were given that value from the state's portion of gold coins. Beaches opposite these sites are still turning up these kinds of finds, but no one talks about them for obvious reasons. Burgess takes us to those hotspots. (Bring along your waterproof metal detectors.)

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I really can't recommend this. There are much better pirate and treasure related books out there.

Great to have access to this information on my portable device - one of the best writers on the subject.

interesting and informative

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