



To: *Harry Cannon*

In The Capitol

September, 1966

Official Publication of the Florida Secretary of State

Volume IV, Number IX

Are We Selling History For A Handful of Coins?



GOLDEN HERITAGE---Scattered across the face of this treasure map is a handful of old Spanish coins which were recovered from a ship wrecked off Florida's coast in 1715.

13 Amendments On Ballot

A total of 13 proposed amendments to the Florida Constitution will be on the ballot in the general election November 8. Following is the order in which they will appear on the ballot and a brief summary of each amendment:

No. 1 (Article XVII) Provides that revision of the State Constitution as adopted by Convention shall be submitted to the electors at the next general election.

No. 2 (Article XII) Provides that the term of appointive Superintendent of Public Instruction shall be at the pleasure of the Board of Public Instruction provided that the board may enter into a contract of employment; specifies term.

No. 3 (Article VI, Section 1) Permits Florida residents to vote in national elections for President and Vice-President of the United States even though they have not yet fulfilled the residency requirements of electors.

No. 4 (Article XVII) Establishes the size of the official State Flag. This will make Florida's flag conform with the shape and size of most other states.

No. 5 (Article VIII) Provides for the consolidation of municipal and county governments in Hillsborough County.

No. 6 (Article V) Authorizes the Legislature to require County Judges to be members of the Florida Bar. The change, however, would be subject to local referendum.

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BY TOM ADAMS
Secretary of State

The Spanish fleet had sailed on July 27, proceeding northeasterly from Havana up the Bahama Channel. Three days later the skies darkened and the seas rose before the pounding winds of a hurricane. Of the eleven ships in the small convoy, only one, a French craft, survived.

More than a thousand persons died, and nearly fourteen million dollars worth of gold, silver, and other valuables was scattered along the offshore sands between what is now Stuart and Cape Kennedy.

This disaster in 1715 triggered one of the longest and bloodiest treasure hunts in nautical history. It is a hunt which continues today and a hunt which could destroy historical treasures far in excess of the value of the gold and silver coins which still lie hidden beneath the sands.

Of the original cargo of precious metals, about four million dollars worth was salvaged by the Spanish shortly after the sinking of the fleet. Pirates raided salvage camps later and made off with more than \$350 thousand in recovered coins.

SHIP DISCOVERED

In the summer of 1964, divers from Treasure Salvors Incorporated discovered the remains of one of these treasure ships south of the Fort Pierce Inlet and under the watchful eye of a State archaeologist recovered upward of a million dollars worth of gold and silver coins, jewelry, silverware, cannon shot, and other historic artifacts.

This by no means is the only wreck off Florida shores. As a matter of fact, another treasure fleet sank in the Keys in 1733.

Throughout Florida's 400-year history an estimated 1,200 to 1,800 ships of various nationalities have wrecked in State waters.

In addition to the monetary value of precious metals, these wrecks have scattered a wealth of history along our coastal waters. Actually, they represent but a small part of our history, but they point up the fact that Florida has the longest and richest history of any state in this Nation.

MIDPOINT IN HISTORY

Although the fleet disaster off the east coast occurred 61 years before the Declaration of Independence, it was about midpoint in Florida's experience with the western culture. Spanish shipping had been battling both the elements and pirates off Florida's coasts since the early 1500's.

Today the lure of the very same gold which brought scavenging pirates to our shores in days gone by is threatening the public's claim on the wealth of history embodied within the artifacts which remain beneath the sands of our coastal waters.

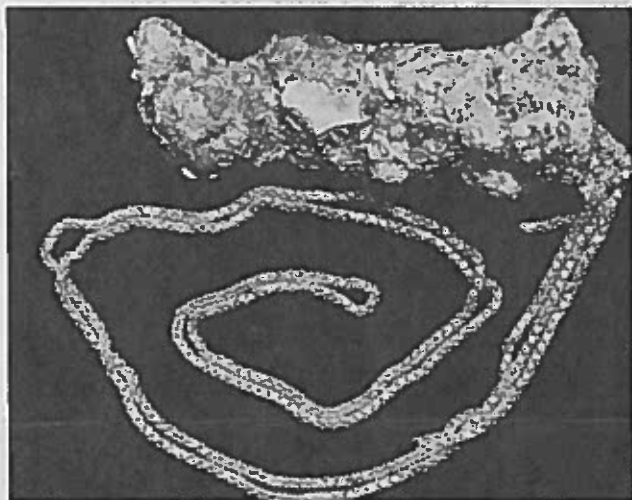
Currently, through the State Board of Antiquities, the State licenses salvage operators and leases them areas for search and salvage of historic shipwrecks. Their pay is 75 percent of the recovered materials. The State receives the remainder.

This, of course, offers adventuresome salvors an opportunity to exploit old shipwrecks, and it does offer the State some historic and monetary reward, but it is, at the best, a questionable

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An intricate gold chain from the 1715 treasure ship.

way for the State to record and recover the historic value and significance of these wrecks. Only a few of these wrecks are of commercial value to salvors, but many of historic significance will be destroyed in the search for the few.

For this reason, the Commission on Antiquities recommended the reserving of three of the more historically significant areas for scientific archaeological exploration. The Board of Antiquities, however, defeated this idea in a four-to-two vote. Consequently, much of our heritage is thrown open to commercial exploitation and the public's opportunity for a systematic scientific exploration of our history is lost.

The discovery of the Spanish treasure ship two years ago, while stirring tempest in search and salvage rights, nevertheless accented the romance and color of Florida's long and fruitful heritage.

NUGGET OF INTEREST

The search for ships and cargoes of the exploration and colonial day has sparked an interest in our heritage. One little nugget of interest which has sifted to the surface is a life-saving romance which predates the Pocahontas and Captain John Smith courtship in the Virginia Colony by nearly a century.

Only 15 years after Ponce de Leon stepped on Florida soil to claim it for the King of Spain, Juan Ortiz reported that his life

had been spared after a beautiful Indian girl interceded in his behalf.

Actually, however, the arrival of the western culture does not mark the beginning of our heritage. Rather, it is simply a new chapter. The inhabitation of Florida has been traced back to 8,000 B.C. A succession of Indian cultures existed before Spanish, French, and English ships began plying our coasts.

The Seminoles are the last in this line of succession, coming originally in the 1750's.

Little is known of the earlier cultures, but more is being learned each day. One village, dating back to around the time of Christ, is being recreated near Crystal River. Other evidences of these past civilizations have been found in and around Warm Mineral Springs and other areas of the State.

FIRST STRIKE

Few people know that an Indian chief called the first labor strike in the new world. Nearly a century before the united appeal of journeymen printers in 1778 for higher wages in New York, the earliest collective labor effort reported by the U.S. Labor Department, an Apalachee Indian chief called his tribe off two Spanish construction jobs in protest to working conditions.

Again in 1777 a dispute between Italian emigrants and the sponsor of their colony, Andrew Turnbull, was arbitrated by the English Governor. As a result of this collective bargaining, the Italians were freed from their bonded service, and most of them resettled in St. Augustine.

Truly, Florida has a past unrivaled by any other state. The

value of this history has no real monetary or statistical measure. Since we have a major tourist industry, there is great commercial value in our history. The restoration of historical sites, the public display of artifacts, and the dramatization of historic events certainly offer monetary returns for the State and thus should furnish many material benefits to our people.

The greatest value, however, is in the experiences of the past. From this documented experience we learn the mistakes and their consequences. Thus, we can better understand the present and have a foundation for decisions for the future.

For these reasons, it is important that we explore our history, understand our heritage, and salvage the remnants of the past. We, too, must provide the means for preserving the history we are making today.

BARTERED HERITAGE

It is my hope that history will not record that we bartered a wealth of our heritage for a handful of shiny coins, nor that we neglected the archives of today simply because we were not willing to save them for the future.

We in Florida must move toward the development of adequate and farseeing programs in historic restoration, archaeological recovery, and archival preservation.

Commercial Code Booklets Available

Booklets explaining the filing procedures under the Uniform Commercial Code are available without charge from the Uniform Commercial Code Division of this office.

The code, which is an updating of Florida statutes relating to commercial transactions to bring them in line with modern business practices, will become effective on January 1, 1967.

Forms necessary for filing under the code may be acquired from the business form supplier or printer of your choice, however, a proof of your form will have to be approved by the Uniform Commercial Code Division to insure that it will conform with the established filing system.



Florida's long and colorful history is valuable for the future.