

SHIPWRECKS OF BROWARD COUNTY*

by James Dean

Shipwrecks and silver bars, cannons and castaways are romantic words, not from "Treasure Island," but from the history of Broward County. Little has been published about the ships lost between 25°58' and 26°19' latitude and their role in south Florida history.

Until recently, no glamorous plate fleet wrecks, such as the 1715 Spanish fleet near Vero Beach or the 1733 fleet in the Florida Keys, have been found here. Yet, scattered references show that a surprising number of ships wrecked along the reefs and beaches of Broward County.

Wrecks of the 16th and 17th centuries are often Spanish. Known references seldom give accurate locations, however. Spanish navigation was far from an exact science, and early charts were inadequate. Convoys

known as flotas not only afforded greater protection, but shared the skills of the few available navigators.

Prior to the mid 1500s, the Spaniards used small caravels under 100 tons. A 50 ton ship would measure 35 to 40 feet; and a 100 tonner, 50 to 55 feet. Caravels were shallow draft, maneuverable and fairly seaworthy. Faster rowing galleys were tried, but they carried less cargo after water and provisions for the slaves had been loaded. Unsuitable for heavy seas, the galleys were discontinued.

By 1550, when large quantities of silver were reaching Spain and larger ships were needed, the galleon evolved. These ships could average 4 knots with a clean bottom. Their usual capacity ranged from 300 to 600 tons. By the late 17th century, however, some were as large as 1,200 tons. Massive fore and stern

castles made them top heavy and dangerous in storms.

Ships of this design were called galleons only when they were heavily armed. The treasure carrying flagship of a flota might have carried 70 bronze cannons of various calibre. Iron cannons were used on a galleon only if a scarcity of guns existed. The same 400 ton ship, converted for merchant use, might have carried only 10 or 12 iron cannons and was called a nao.

Smaller ships of 40 to 100 tons functioned as reconnaissance vessels in convoys and as advice boats between Spain and the New World. Such ships, whether caravel, pink, pinnace, sloop or other type, were called pataches.

*See "Behind the Scenes," inside front cover.

By 1564 two flotas were leaving Spain each year for the New World. They carried such tools as agricultural and mining implements, mercury, domestic animals, seeds, weapons and, as the colonists prospered, more luxuries and manufactured goods. Ballast often consisted of bricks or dressed stones which were used for buildings.

The Nueva Espana flota returned to Spain from Veracruz, Mexico, in July with cargoes of gold, silver and pearls from Mexico, and such priceless Far East treasures as porcelain, silk, spices, precious stones and worked gold. The latter crossed the Pacific on the Manila Galleons and were brought overland from Acapulco to Veracruz.

The Terra Firma flota left Cartagena, Colombia, in the summer. It was laden with Peruvian silver from the Potosi mines and with Colombian emeralds and gold. Both armadas met in Havana, re-provisioned and sailed in August. They used either the Old Bahama Channel through the Caicos Islands or the New Bahama Channel, up the coast of Florida. The latter was preferred because of its favorable Gulf Stream current.

Each flota had two heavily armed galleons. The largest was called the Capitana and the other, the Almiranta. The galleons and two armed pataches carried the king's registered treasure and protected the merchant ships, ranging in number from 10 to 20, that were carrying privately consigned goods or treasure.

In 1591 a third flota, the Armada de Terra Firma, referred to as the "Plate Fleet" or, more simply, "The Galleons," was added. Departure

times changed slightly. This flota had 2 pataches and from 8 to 12 galleons. These latter averaged 600 tons. All were carrying only royal treasure, were heavily armed, and were accompanied by a large number of merchant ships.[1]

In addition to the galleons, many individual Spanish merchant ships, called suenos, journeyed back and forth on an annual basis. They transported cargo and colonists. Due to a decline in silver production and the increase in the non-Crown contraband shipped to the colonies after 1650, the flotas became less frequent. By the 1700s, most Spanish-American colonists were buying goods from non-Spanish merchants. In 1778, the Crown declared free trade for all her colonies.

In the late 16th century non-Spanish ships became more numerous in the New World. These also sailed past Florida's east coast in order to return to Europe. Portuguese slave ships were common until 1640 when the Dutch and the English assumed control over the slave trade. French and British pirates and privateers appeared in the late 16th century. The Dutch began a salt trade around 1580 and, by 1600, were sending 200 ships a year. After the year 1625 English, Dutch and French colonies were established in the Caribbean and the Americas.

By the late 17th century, many non-Spanish ships were returning to Europe with cargoes of sugar, cotton, indigo, spices, lumber, tobacco and rum, as well as with gold and silver. Some sailed alone, others in small groups. American colonial ships became common in the 18th century.[2] When re-

turning to Europe, most ships used the New Bahama Channel and passed within a few miles of Broward County.

POSSIBLE LOCAL SHIPWRECKS.

One of the earliest accounts of Florida shipwrecks was written in 1575 by Don L'Escalante Fontaneda, who had been shipwrecked in 1545 in the Keys. He lived among the Tequesta Indians until his rescue in 1565, near Cape Canaveral. Fontaneda met survivors of other shipwrecks and knew that the Indians had slain many more. According to Fontaneda, the Indians ordered the Spaniards

to dance and sing, and as they did not understand, and the Indians themselves are very mean ... they thought the Christians were rebellious and unwilling to do so. And they would kill them, and report to their Cacique [chief] that for their meanness and rebelliousness they had been slain.[3]

Fontaneda wrote of other wrecks and survivors, naming owners and captains, and dated one shipwreck 1551. He shed light on some wealthy passengers and went on to say that

he that brought least was I, but with all I brought 25 thousand dollars in pure gold for my father and mother remained in Cartagena where they were Comenderos and served his majesty in those parts of Peru... and I and a brother were born. Thence they sent us to Spain to be educated when we were wrecked on Florida.[4]

Other ships were wrecked on the coast in 1545, 1547, and 1550. Their sites remain unidentified. Menendez, a Spanish conquistador, wrote that in 1565 he had

ransomed from among the Indians 32 persons, men and women, who had been slaves of the Caciques and Indians for 15, 18, and 20 years.[5]

Fontaneda continued

Other vessels had been lost, among them the Armada of New Spain, of which it was said the son of Pedro Melendez was General... the Indians armed themselves to go to the coast of Ais [south of Cape Canaveral], when he saw them go and return with great wealth, in bars of silver and gold, and bags of reals [sic], and much clothing ... I desire to speak of the riches found by the Indians of Ais, which perhaps were as much as a million dollars, or over, in bars of silver, in gold, and in articles of jewelry made by the hands of the Mexican Indians, which the passengers were bringing with them.[6]

Barcia places this disaster in 1553. The number of ships is not stated, but a small ship did make her way back to Veracruz and 3 or 4 vessels arrived in Spain. The number of persons on board was more than a thousand.[7]

In addition, Torquemada wrote that

... in the year 1553 the flota that went from this country (New Spain) to the Kingdom of Castile was cast away on the coast of Florida, and many persons were lost with a large amount of riches.[8]

Later records stated that in 1554 three treasure bear-

ing naos of the New Spain Armada were driven against the coast "near present day Palm Beach." [9]

"Shipwrecks in Florida Waters," by Robert Marx, places these ships at 26°30', between Delray and Boynton Beach, in Palm Beach County. [10] They were the 220 ton SAN ESTEVAN, the SANTA MARIA DEL CARMEN, and the SANTA MARIA DE YCIAR. Most of the gold and silver were reported salvaged. The 1554 armada is believed to be the same armada cited by Fontaneda in 1553. The one year discrepancy is not explained.

In 1589 the New Spain Almiranta, with a large registered treasure, sank in deep



ABOVE: The wrecked schooner "Richmond" lies near the future entrance to Port Everglades; BELOW: The schooner "Richmond," her keel broken, lies beached after the 1926 hurricane Joseph W. Young is at the right. [Hollywood Historical Society]



water, possibly off Miami. [11] Marx, however, claimed that "it sank with a great treasure at the mouth of the Bahama Channel in very deep water." [12]

In 1591, of a fleet of 77 ships that left Havana, no less than 29 were lost, many off the coast of Florida. However, in order to bypass an English blockade, the registered treasure had been left behind in Havana and sent safely on to Spain on small fast zabras. Only private treasure and contraband would have been aboard the fleet. [13]

Riesberg states that, on July 17, 1595, the SANTA MARGARITA, a treasure laden galleon, was lost 20 miles southeast of Palm Beach, on a submerged reef. [14] Potter lists the SANTA MARGARITA, however, in a chapter on "ghost" wrecks that do not exist or are unsubstantiated. [15]

On April 2, 1632, the ALMIRANTA DE HONDURAS and an unidentified frigate, carrying cocoa, coming from Maracaibo, Venezuela, were wrecked, possibly near Miami, because an advice boat reported 2 ships aground "shortly after passing the head of the Florida Keys." [16]

Potter and others stated that 5 naos were wrecked, just north of Miami, with great loss of life, on September 27, 1641. [17] Marx, however, described the ships as 4 naos and 1 patache. The latter had been wrecked at 30° latitude, 5 leagues from shore. The almiranta of this fleet, the CONCEPTION, drifted southward onto the Silver Shoals, north of Hispanola. [18] This wreck was later salvaged by 18 year old William Phipps and again, more recently, by Burt Weber.

Marx did not state where

the four naos wrecked. The "north of Miami" location could well be Broward County. Marx also stated that other ships in the convoy were so damaged that they sank on the high seas.

According to records of Lloyds of London,

In 1769, the British merchant snow LEDBURY, Captain John Lorain, sailing from Jamaica to Bristol after being at sea nine weeks, was driven on shore about 15 leagues [1 league = 3.2 miles] northward of Cape Florida in a violent gale of wind on the 29th of September. [19]

But in the "Concise History of East and West Florida," Bernard Romans related how the

ship was thrown high and dry on a key named Key Largo, which was then named Ledbury Key. [20]

The Lloyd's location, 15 leagues north of Cape Florida, placed the wreck at about 26°28', near Delray Beach.

In "Shipwrecks in Florida Waters," Marx stated that the British ship FANNY, Captain Farquar sailing from Jamaica to Liverpool on March 7, 1782, ran aground to the northward of Cape Florida and broke up quickly. The people aboard her were rescued by a privateer from Nassau, and some of the cargo was also saved. [21]

The LEDBURY and FANNY are included as possible Broward wrecks until additional data is compiled.

In 1835 various wrecks were beached by hurricanes; although, with the exception of the GIL BLAS, little is known of them. [22]

Commodore Ralph Munroe, an expert on local salvage, wrote that

In 1883, the English steamer TREGURNO, bound Galveston to Liverpool ... was beached north of Hillsboro, and the EMILY B. collected \$1,100 salvage from her underwriters. [23]

It is not noted, however, whether the TREGURNO was pulled off the beach by the EMILY B.

On October 23, 1887, the barque VIRGIN DE LAS NEVIS, 366 tons, bound from Havana to New York, went aground 2½ miles south of Life-Saving Station #3, at present day Delray Beach. All 11 on board were saved. Records did not say that the ship was totaled; therefore, it could have been pulled off. [24]

Commodore Monroe wrote, in addition, that

In 1888 a bark bound from Bordeaux to Havana broke up in the Gulf Stream somewhere off Havana in a hurricane, and casks, kegs and barrels of wine washed up. Much claret, and inferior Madera, sweet port, mustard and candles were scattered from the Keys to Jupiter [in 1888]. [25]

KNOWN LOCAL SHIPWRECKS:

Sites Not Definitely Located.

In 1821 Florida passed from Spanish to American possession. That same year a ship of undetermined nationality, the SUPPLY, Captain Fisher, sailing from Jamaica to Havana, heading for the Cape Verde Islands, was lost off the coast of Florida, at latitude 26°20', during a heavy gale on January 26 of

that year.[26]

Although 26°20' is at Boca Raton Inlet in Palm Beach County, early charts were inaccurate in both latitude and longitude. One early 19th century chart depicted Hillsboro Inlet at 26°20'. Therefore, the remains of the SUPPLY could be in Broward County.

The "Gil Blas."

In September 1835 the Spanish brig GIL BLAS was driven aground by a hurricane in shallow water 9 miles north of New River.

The 200 ton, copper sheathed and copper fastened vessel was on her maiden voyage bound for Spain from Havana. The hull was not damaged and could have been re-floated. A stern anchor had been run out to keep her from going farther up on the shore.

The cargo of sugar and cigars was removed by William Cooley and placed in his New River storehouse.

On January 6, 1836, Cooley's family was massacred by Indians while he and other New River settlers were continuing to salvage the wreck.

Immediately afterwards, the settlers fled to Key Biscayne and took refuge at the Cape Florida Lighthouse.

On January 10, settlers boarded Cooley's large schooner and several smaller craft and left the poorly defended lighthouse for the safety of Indian Key. Upwards of 200 whites and slaves fled to Indian Key. There they encountered Jacob Hausman, a notorious wrecker merchant; and, with his mi-



litia of 40 to 50 islander seamen, they threw up fortifications.

According to Cooper Kirk, Broward County Historian, Cooley then

returned through heavy seas to the brig GIL BLAS, beached near Hillsboro Inlet. From this brig he returned with 2 brass cannons and ample balls; armament considered capable of repelling an Indian invasion. [27]

It is reported that other ships were wrecked in this hurricane. Kirk continued, [Major Francis L. Dade] had inspected the GIL BLAS cargo stored at the Cooley trading post on New River as he swung along the coast, inspecting the many wrecks beached by the hurricane. [28]

The military feared that the rampaging Indians would remove the 6 tons of lead that remained on the GIL BLAS, thereby prolonging the Second Seminole War.

Commander M.P. Mix aboard the United States Ship CONCORD lying at anchor at Tampa Bay, dispatched Lieutenant Thomas J. Lieb and midshipman Stanley and 19 enlisted men on July 6, 1836, aboard the schooner MOTTO, with urgent orders to proceed to Hillsboro Inlet and destroy the GIL BLAS... The MOTTO arrived at the GIL BLAS on July 23, [18-36], and according to a statement given by Lieutenant Lieb to Justice Cooley, 'did set fire to the brig GIL BLAS, that she might become covered with sand, and that all traces of her might be destroyed to prevent the

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF POSSIBLE LOCAL SHIPWRECKS.

- 1545: location unknown; listed by Fontaneda.
- 1547: location unknown; listed by Fontaneda.
- 1550: location unknown; listed by Fontaneda.
- 1551: location unknown; listed by Fontaneda.
- 1554: 3 naos from the New Spain Armada: SAN ESTEVAN, SANTA MARIA DE YCIAR, SANTA MARIA DEL CARMEN; location, possibly 26°20'.
- 1589: New Spain Almiranta: lost in deep water, possibly off Miami.
- 1591: at least 29 ships of fleet of 77 were lost sailing from Havana to Spain.
- 1595: SANTA MARGARITA: its existence has been challenged.
- 1632: ALMIRANTA DE HONDURAS and unidentified frigate: possibly near Miami.
- 1641: 4 naos from the New Spain Armada: carrying silver; north of Miami; location unknown.
- 1769: LEDBURY: British merchant snow; possibly near Delray Beach; location disputed.
- 1782: FANNY: British; north of Cape Florida; location unknown.
- 1835: various wrecks: beached by hurricanes.
- 1883: TREGURNO: steamer; north of Hillsboro; may have been pulled off.
- 1887: VIRGIN DE LAS NEVIS: barque; may have been pulled off.
- 1904: ZION: German barkentine; location unknown.

Indians ever getting from her any lead or other articles which would be of any use to them.' [29]

A shallow shipwreck site north of Hillsboro was investigated by the Marine Archaeology Advisory Council of the Broward County Historical Commission in 1977, under a research permit issued by the Florida Department of State. The site consisted of a portion of hull structure, a large copper tank and a long section of keel, nearby. The site had been worked by several treasure hunters prior to this investigation of 1977. A sketch map of a portion of hull structure was made in 1973 by Jerry Lee of Expeditions Unlimited.

The copper sheathed vessel had been burned. A coin found by Veronika Stalcup, who lives near the site, was dated 1824. The keel lies WNW in about 8 feet of water, with an anchor chain leading offshore.

These facts, plus the size and location of the ship, all support the theory that it is the remains of the GIL BLAS. However, no conclusive proof has been found since so little of the ship and none of its cargo remain. Future investigations will concentrate on locating the lead that was aboard the GIL BLAS.

Other Seminole War Shipwrecks.

During the 1835-1842 Second Seminole War, south Florida again became a deadly coast for castaways.

Led by Arpiaka, who was known as Sam Jones, swarming Seminoles raid-

ed ships from their headquarters on the New River ... During a gale on the night of September 7, 1838, the French brig COURIER de TAMPICO, bound from Havana to Bordeaux, drove ashore near New River Inlet, north latitude 26°. Saying that he killed only Americans, Jones spared the survivors because they were Frenchmen. During the same gale, the brig ALMA, bound from Portland, Maine, to the West Indies, foundered and landed near the French brig. Descending upon these unsuspecting survivors, Jones' warriors massacred all but three. A Dutchman successfully had hidden aboard the ship, and two Americans had escaped into the mangrove swamps near the inlet. Within days, a second gale swept ashore the schooners CAROLINA and CALDONIA near the other beached vessels. [30]

The reference to New River Inlet at 26° latitude in 1838 may be correct. The 1825 Tanner map shows the mouth of the New River near 26°2', below the Dania Pier, 4 or 5 miles south of the present location. The 1856 Ives map shows the mouth of New River at 26°, which is south of present day Hollywood Beach Boulevard. [31] Between 1887 and 1935 the river emptied near Bahia Mar, or Old Fort Lauderdale. The present Port Everglades Inlet has been used since 1928.

Life-Saving Stations.

Captain Dennis O'Neill discovered south Florida for

himself in 1871. Then, as a young man of twenty, O'Neill sailed aboard a schooner that was bound from Central America to Boston with a load of mahogany. The schooner was wrecked near what is known today as Hillsboro Inlet. O'Neill often told the story of his first landing in Florida. He recounted how he rode ashore on a mahogany log, through a school of sharks. [32]

In 1873 another Broward wreck showed the need for a life-saving station on this desolate coast.

An October hurricane wrecked a ship near what is today Hollywood, Florida. But, it was several weeks before the starving survivors were discovered accidentally ... and news of the sailors' plight reached Sumner Kimball, Superintendent of the United States Life-Saving Station in Washington. [33]

No further description of this vessel was given.

In 1876 Kimball ordered the construction of coastal houses of refuge, or life-saving stations, from just north of Daytona to Biscayne Bay. Station #3 was at Orange Grove, which is present day Delray Beach, 5½ miles south of Lake Worth. Station #4 originally was built near present day Sunrise Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, where the lumber washed ashore after being off-loaded from a schooner. In 1891 Station #4 was moved south on rollers to the mouth of the New River, near the site of the old Fort Lauderdale and present day Bahia Mar.

During the winter of 1885/1886, Professor Nathaniel Southgate Shaler of Harvard University and two students,

Quimby and Bean, were capsized in a sailing dory on Hillsboro Bar. They lost guns, instruments and belongings. [34] Their pilot was a man named Coman, keeper of the Fort Lauderdale house of refuge.

The dory beached and Steve Andrews, of Orange Grove Life-Saving Station #3, met them with an ox team and took them to Lake Worth.

Coman was rewarded with a good position with the United States Geological Survey. Professor Shaler later issued a report called "The Topography of Florida, 1890."

Late 19th Century Shipwrecks.

On September 7, 1887, the 271 ton barque ALEXANDER NICKELS, out of New York City, bound from Matanzas, West Indies, to Boston with a cargo of sugar, was lost 1½ miles south of New River. The vessel was worth \$8,000; the cargo, \$37,500. Total loss was \$45,500. There were six men on board, one of whom was lost. [35]

In a bad storm on October 10, 1894, the British barkentine GEORGIE, Captain Paul LeBlanc, suffered total loss when it went ashore 2 miles north of Hillsboro. [36]

On May 26, 1899, the steamer COPENHAGEN of Glasgow, Scotland, Master Hones, 3297 tons, ran aground 6 miles north of Fort Lauderdale Station #4. The ship was worth \$250,000; the cargo, \$12,550. All cargo was lost; all 26 on board were saved. [37]

Comodore Ralph Munroe of Coconut Grove shed additional light. The cargo of coal was unloaded by the centrifugal pumps of the Merrit and Chapman Wrecking Company, formerly the Coast Wreck-

ing Company. "The COPENHAGEN was unloaded, patched up, pumped out, and ready to pull off. Then came a wire from Merritt and Chapman, 'Abandon COPENHAGEN and send outfit to New York.' The Hoboken fire had left a number of ships sunk at the piers. It was more important to Lloyds [of London] to do immediate work in New York than to save the remnants of the COPENHAGEN, and her frames still lie on the Hillsboro Rocks" four miles south of the Hillsboro Inlet. [38]

Another bit of COPENHAGEN lore came to light in Cooper Kirk's oral history interview with Elizabeth H. Warren, an 85 year old pioneer who had lived in Pompano Beach. She recalled that the crew of the grounded ship had brought ashore articles to sell and that her father, Isaac Hardy, bought the ship bell. It was so heavy that 2

men were required to move it. The bell was hung in his farmyard and was used to call his sons in from the fields until it was stolen. [39]

Shortly after the COPENHAGEN went aground, the English tramp steamer, ST. OSWALD, Captain Curtis, bound from Baltimore to Vera Cruz with 3,800 tons of coal went aground south of New River. It was floated free. [40]

The Merrit-Chapman Wrecking Company was awarded approximately \$20,000 for pulling off the ship. [41]

20th CENTURY SHIPWRECKS.



According to Eugene E. Wil-
ey,

James B. Vreeland, Jr.,
who was an 8 year old
boy when he came to the
house of refuge (#4) with

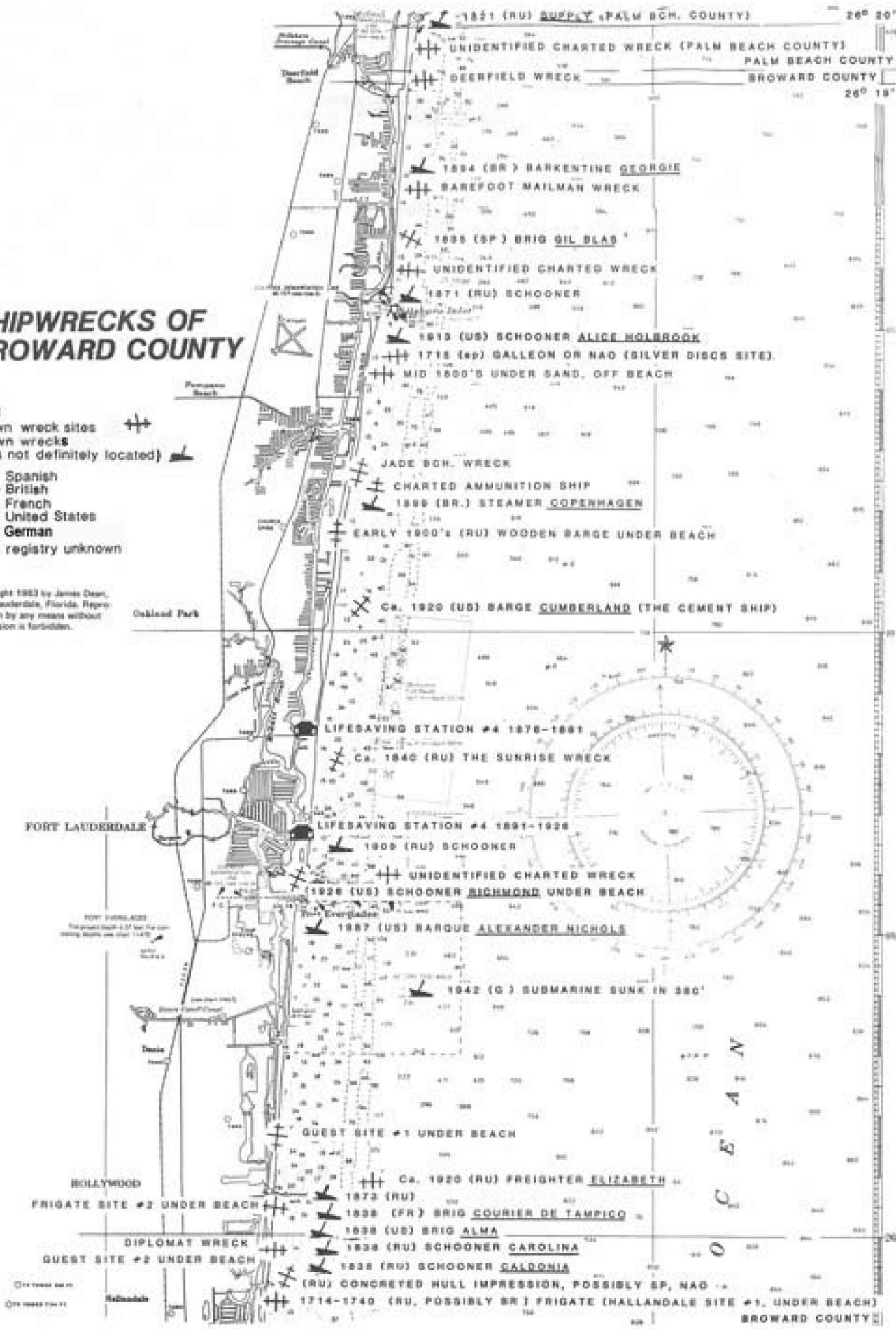
A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF KNOWN LOCAL SHIPWRECKS.

- 1821: SUPPLY: unknown nationality; 26°21' latitude; possibly Palm Beach County.
- 1835: GIL BLAS: Spanish brig; north of Hillsboro.
- 1838: COURIER DE TAMPICO: French brigantine; about 26°.
- 1838: ALMA: American brigantine; about 26°; survivors massacred by Indians.
- 1838: CAROLINA: schooner; about 26°.
- 1838: CALDONIA: schooner; about 26°.
- 1871: Mahogany wreck: schooner; near Hillsboro.
- 1873: wreck: near Hollywood.
- 1885-86: capsized dory: Hillsboro bar; lost guns, instruments.
- late 1800s: Brown's silver bar wreck: location unknown.
- late 1800s: Jennings' privateer: iron guns; location unknown.
- 1887: ALEXANDER NICKELS: 271 ton American barque; 1½ miles south of New River, Fort Lauderdale.
- 1887: GEORGIE: British barkentine; 2 miles north of Hillsboro, possibly the same as the Barefoot Mailman site.
- 1899: COPENHAGEN: 3297 ton steamer; Glasgow, Scotland; 6 miles north of Life-Saving Station #4, 4 to 5 miles south of Hillsboro.
- 1909: schooner: near house of refuge, Life-Saving Station #4.
- 1913: ALICE HOLBROOK: 772 ton American schooner; 8 miles NNE of Life-Saving Station #4.
- 1942: German submarine, sunk in 380' of water off Dania Pier.

SHIPWRECKS OF BROWARD COUNTY

- KEY:**
 known wreck sites 
 known wrecks (sites not definitely located) 
 SP - Spanish
 BR - British
 FR - French
 US - United States
 G - German
 RU - registry unknown

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his father, remembered the hurricane of 1909 which wrecked a Key West bound schooner near the house. The entire crew reached the house in safety and stayed at the house until they were picked up and transported home. He recalled another boat that was wrecked carrying railroad ties bound for Cuba [probably the ALICE HOLBROOK]. The ties were strewn all up and down the beach.[42]

On April 19, 1913, the four masted schooner ALICE HOLBROOK ran aground on a reef 8 miles NNE of Fort Lauderdale station #4. It was 772 tons, registered New York City, bound Baltimore to Matanza, Cuba, under the direction of Captain Ellis, and carried a cargo of railroad ties. It also was reported to have been carrying coal. The captain stayed at Hillsboro Lighthouse for several weeks, hoping to salvage his ship, but it was destroyed in a second storm one week la-

ter. Thomas Knight was the lighthouse keeper at that time.[43]

World War II.

World War II again brought tragedy to our shores. While the land war was a continent away, the sea war was at our door. German submarines patrolled the shipping lanes offshore and torpedoed ships within a few miles of the beach. Some crippled ships reached shallow water before sinking. Little appeared in newspapers, however, due to government censors.

Harold A. Wayne was a Fort Lauderdale charter boat captain from 1938 to 1978. He recalls that, in early 1942, some private vessels were used for patrol duty and that their captains were given a Coast Guard rating. Mr. Wayne, who elected to not donate his boat to the government, continued charter fishing during the War.

The War was brought home in December 1942 when radio-equipped Navy Grumman fighter bonkers and PBY amphibious planes apprehended a Nazi submarine on the surface and sank it in 380 feet of water, directly off Dania Pier.

Navy frogmen cut a hole in the wreck several days later and removed the ship's papers. German survivors were brought ashore in Fort Lauderdale and were treated at Broward General Hospital.

After a Navy boat hit an obstruction in 1943 or 1944, the Navy initiated a policy of blowing up shallow water wrecks which were hazardous to navigation. Their success is one reason why there are few, identifiable 20th century shipwrecks off our coasts.

A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF KNOWN LOCAL SHIPWRECK SITES.

1. 1715 Silver Discs, 1715; Pompano; worked by Sea Labs Exploration, Inc.; silver discs, dated 1714, were uncovered.
2. Barefoot Mailman wreck: copper sheathing; cannons and cannon balls; raised in the 1950s. Possible silver samples and a figurehead found in the 1920s.
3. Stone hull impression, off Hollywood.
4. Deerfield wreck: sailing ship; north of Deerfield Pier.
5. Hallandale site #1: 1714-1740; under beach; possibly British; cannons and artifacts recovered.
6. Diplomat wreck: Hallandale site #2; believed to be part of the ship at Hallandale site #1.
7. Jade beach wreck: ballast pile, wood planking, copper sheathing.
8. Pompano: mid 18th century wreck, dated by John Brandon.
9. GIL BLAS: 1835; Spanish brig; copper sheathing; probable site is north of Hillsboro.
10. Fort Lauderdale wreck, off the Birch Estate, near Sunrise Boulevard, also called the Sunrise wreck, about 1840.
11. wreck on chart: unidentified.
12. Guest site: zinc ballast bars; 1.7 miles north of sewage outfall, 4 to 6 blocks south of Howard Johnsons, under the beach.
13. Guest site #2: bottles and clay pipes; under the beach, off Jackson Street, south of the Hollywood Beach Hotel, Hollywood, Florida.
14. wooden barge: early 1900s; under the beach at Wharf Restaurant, Lauderdale-By-The-Sea.
15. Ammunition ship: (on chart); live .50 calibre ammunition was found.
16. Cumberland: barge, the Cement ship; circa 1920; on chart.
17. RICHMOND: schooner; 1926; under sand at Point of Americas.
18. ELIZABETH: freighter, the China wreck; circa 1920; believed destroyed by the United States Navy.

KNOWN LOCAL SHIPWRECK SITES.

18th Century Wreck Sites.

The Silver Discs Site.

The vicious hurricane of 1715 sent the combined New Spain and Tierra Firme Armada to the bottom near Sebastian Inlet and Vero Beach. These wrecks were especially rich because war had delayed the fleet for one full year.

Ten ships carrying gold and Spanish silver cobs, (coins cut from silver bar stock and stamped), were lost during that hurricane.

In 1960 Kip Wagner announced the discovery of Spanish coins along the coast of Florida, in the vicinity of Sebastian Inlet.

The Real Eight Company and Treasure Salvors, Inc., eventually found and salvaged 7 of these ships. The other 3 never were found. It is presumed that they are strewn at other points along the east coast of Florida.

Several silver discs dated 1714 have been recovered, under Florida permit E#-19, from a wreck off Pompano by Sea Labs Exploration, Inc. This and other information suggest that the vessel might be one of the missing 1715 ships. Potter calls this the Silver Discs site. [44]

There are other indications of early Spanish wrecks in Broward's waters. Robert Marx, in a later book, "Buried Treasure of the United States," stated that

about a mile north of Fort Lauderdale at Hillsboro Rocks, many Spanish silver coins from the late 16th century washed ashore during strong northeast storms. In 1967, a fisherman accidentally found a beautiful jewel-stud-

ded sword handle, which he sold for \$15,000. [45]

In 1969 Bill Hald found a 13 foot stockless anchor in 85 feet of water, deeply embedded in a reef off Hallandale. One fluke was bent, as though it had held a ship during hurricane force winds before being lost. Large stockless anchors of this type typically were used by Spanish galleons in the 17th and 18th centuries. The anchor has been at Hald's Fort Lauderdale home since he raised it in 1973.

Commodore Munroe wrote about beachcomber Old Man Brown who had a small solitary house on New River Sound, not far from the south end. No date was given, just a reference to the early days of Biscayne Bay, i.e., possibly the 1880s.

Walking the beach after a hurricane, Brown found two bars of metal exposed by the cutting away of the sand, which he took to be lead. Shortly, after, in Key West, he sold them as lead, and soon after, heard that they were really silver. Hastening back to the New River, he found that the surf had already covered the spot with sand so deeply that he could find nothing more. [46]

This find stirred considerable interest, and a treasure hunting expedition was financed by a Carolinian named Jennings. The whole affair got into the papers with a solid page in the "New York Sunday Herald." While searching the New River area, this group did find the timbers of a second wreck, an old

privateer surrounded by cast iron guns. Several of these were recovered and mounted as decorations in the lake front wall of the Clarke property in Palm Beach, which now occupies the site of "Cap" Dimmick's old hotel, the Coconut Grove House. [47]

No location was given for this wreck.

Munroe stated that Jennings's group eventually got on the timbers of [Brown's] wreck, and actually found some curiosities and a few coins, but never recovered anything of substantial value. [48]

A probable location is given by Munroe's statement, There was a small canal cut during the Seminole War between New River and Hillsboro, by which one could go quite near to Hillsboro Rocks, where Brown was said to have picked up his bars. [49] This would be in the vicinity of Pompano Beach. Brown's silver bars may have been part of the cargo from the Silver Discs wreck.

The Barefoot Mailman Wreck.

This wreck, located directly off the Barefoot Mailman Hotel, possibly is an 18th century wreck. It is buried deep in sand under 12 feet of water and has been worked heavily in the past.

While diving at the site in the mid 1950s, Dwight Miller found hull structure, a cannon ball clump and several cannons which were salvaged and displayed at Ancient America, a former museum on Federal Highway. Sil-

ver coins also were found.

A 1941 newspaper article discussed an interesting wreck which could be the Barefoot Mailman site. It described a salvage attempt in the late 1920s of a supposed galleon just north of Hillsboro. The ship was buried deeply in sand, under 20 feet of water.

The JESSIE B. SHAW, a Merrit-Chapman-Scott steam tug, blasted a hole in the sand with its prop wash. A caisson was built around the site and long power drills bored into the wreck. Silver shavings were reported on the drill flanges. By afternoon a sudden, northeaster prevented divers from going down in the caisson, and the project was abandoned. [50]

The sea reburied her prize and another shipwreck mystery slipped back beneath the Broward sands.

A Lasting Impression.

In the 1960s Robert Little, Sr., found an interesting impression of a keel and its frames, 70-80 feet long, in the coquina rock off Hollywood. Apparently, sand and coral had concreted around the hull and had created a perfect mold after the wood had disintegrated.

The site is in a sand valley 25-30 feet deep, between two coral ridges. It lies about ½ mile offshore, south of Hollywood Boulevard.

Little believes that it is either a nao or another very early ship.

Two large ringed anchors, in the Spanish style, were found south of the hull, near a concreted outline that may conceal cannons. The smaller anchor had a severely bent shank.

Little theorizes that the anchors may have been lost and the cannons jettisoned

WENT ASHORE

"Ackworth" Went Ashore But Was Released By The Wreckers

The smack "Ada" came in the port yesterday afternoon from Elliot Key with the report that the large English tramp steamer "Ackworth," of West Hartlepool, Eng., and bound from Cardiff to Vera Cruz with coal, was ashore on Triumph Reef, ten miles south of Fowey Rock light and in need of assistance.

The yacht "Louise" was at once made ready and with several dozen spades and picks went to the rescue. The workers with their boats, twenty-five or more in number, had already gotten wind of the steamer being on the reef and swarmed about her like bees. As soon as the "Louise" arrived they, with members of the crew, set about removing the cargo from the bow or forepart of the ship, for the purpose of lightening her up.

After working at night and dumping about two hundred tons of the coal overboard, the "Ackworth" was enabled to get off the reef this morning about 5 o'clock. An examination showed that she had suffered little or no injury, after which she sailed on her way.

The "Ackworth" is a very large steamer 3,000 or more tons and went on the reef early Monday morning. Fortunately the sea was light and she rested easy until extricated. It is said that her master made a contract with the wreckers to remove her for \$10,000 and that he paid this amount to them before sailing.

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as the ship was driven north to its final grave.

The Deerfield Wreck.

The Deerfield wreck is north of the Deerfield Beach pier. A keel with a large bronze gudgeon pin was found.

An excellent magnetometer survey covering this area was undertaken by Marty Melach in 1976 or 1977. Copies of the survey are at the Deerfield Beach City Hall and at the Florida Atlantic University Department of Ocean Engineering.

There were several good magnetometer 'hits,' but only an iron grating and dead-eyes have been found at this wreck.

The Hallandale Wreck.

In the fall of 1960, while spearfishing in 15 feet of water off the Hallandale beach, two high school seniors stumbled upon the remains of an old shipwreck. One of the students, Jim Ward, is presently a member of the Marine Archaeological Advisory Council of the Broward County Historical Commission. The other student was Jim Spoons of Hollywood.

This shipwreck was located approximately 150 feet south of Hallandale Beach Boulevard. Upon initial observation, the wreck revealed at least 10 to 12 cannons, one anchor, and some ballast rock and decaying timbers. Subsequent searches in this and adjacent areas uncovered numerous small artifacts such as cannon and musket balls, grapeshot, cannister shot, spikes and other metal hardware and ship's fittings.

Lacking the financial re-

sources to implement an appropriate salvage expedition, Jim Ward consulted with his employer, Dave Bellack, who owned a dive shop at Hollywood Beach. Bellack, together with Ward, Spoons and members of the Hollywood Reef Raiders Dive Club, then made application to the trustees of the Florida Internal Improvement Fund for a permit to salvage artifacts from the shipwreck.

They also corresponded with Mendel Peterson, Curator of Marine Antiquities for the Smithsonian Institute, in order to gather information regarding the preservation of metal artifacts recovered after long term submersion in salt water. Per Peterson's directions, Jim Ward constructed preservation tanks and purchased chemicals and supplies for the restoration of the cannons and other artifacts.

With the full knowledge of the Internal Improvement Board in Tallahassee, the group initiated the removal and preservation of small artifacts from the wreck site.

In December 1960 the group approached officials from the City of Hallandale and sought permission to bring the anchor and six of the cannons onto Hallandale's beach with the assistance of a tow truck and 400 feet of cable. Permission was granted by Robert F. Williams, Hallandale City Clerk. However, when the cannons and anchor were brought onto the beach, the Hallandale Police Department, acting under Williams' direction, confiscated the 6 cannons and anchor. The divers were threatened with arrest if they interfered with the confiscation.

The cannons and the anchor were then removed to the

Hallandale city garage where the preservation process consisted of nothing more than 30 days submersion in fresh water and several coats of Rustoleum paint. The chemicals and preservation tanks purchased by Jim Ward were offered to the City of Hallandale, but they were refused. Improper preservation accounts for the current state of surface deterioration on both the cannons and the anchor.

Fortunately, the other artifacts, those that escaped confiscation by the City of Hallandale, were properly preserved and are in excellent condition. These are in the possession of Jim Ward. Among them is a small swivel

gun. He intends to donate these artifacts at a future date to the people of Broward County.

As a result of the Hollywood/Hallandale Beach restoration project, the wreck now is covered by several feet of sand. It is believed that as many as 6 additional cannons and numerous artifacts remain at the wreck site.

Other artifacts removed during the 1960-1961 salvage include a brass drawing compass, approximately 4" long, and a lead seal from Barry Brothers of London, England, which produces Cutty Sark whiskey.

Correspondence with Barry Brothers has revealed that

BELOW: 1962, royal crest is visible. Six Hallandale cannons are in open storage prior to being mounted on carriages at Hallandale City Hall. At that time the cannons had the same appearance as when they had been lost 200 years earlier. [Jim Ward] ABOVE RIGHT: 1982, anchor from the same Hallandale wreck undergoing restoration at the Marine Archaeology Advisory Council Preservation Lab in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Anchor is being lifted into vat. Note: Shank was already bent when found off the Hallandale beach in 1962. Bill Raymond is at the right. BELOW RIGHT: 1962, royal crest with "G.R.," (George Rex) visible. Crest first was used in the year 1714. The cannon was made in England. Note: the English broad arrow, below the crest, was used on all crown property. [Jim Ward]





the use of this seal was discontinued about 1740. A date or marking on one of the cannons is 7-1-1709. Mendel Peterson believes that this was a casting date, although controversy surrounds this opinion. This cannon bears the crest and initials of George Rex. In his book "Treasure Diver's Guide," John S. Potter indicates that this seal was in common use on English guns after 1714.[51] Thus, the wreck could date between the years 1714 and 1740.

Mendel Peterson also stated that the ballast rock was characteristic of the type carried on English ships. This, along with the English cannon and lead seal, has led to speculation that the ship probably was British. However, this cannot be stated as fact since the same ship could fly under many flags during this period of history.

At the time of the cannon confiscation, Hallandale City Clerk Williams, a history buff, stated to the press that the shipwreck was a relic of the War of Jenkins' Ear.* Although this possibility exists, there is no factual basis for his statement.

Furthermore, it is doubtful that a naval battle would have sunk a ship so near the beach, in water barely deep enough to float her. A hurricane, however, commonly drives ships over the reefs and sinks them near the beach.

According to Jim Ward, there is a second wreck site located approximately 1/2 mile north of the Hallandale



*In 1739 a British seaman named Jenkins was captured by the Spanish, who cut off his ear. The ear, which Jenkins had preserved, was shown before the English House of Commons, which declared war on Spain. This brief war became known as the War of Jenkins' Ear.

site, directly off the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood. Because the ballast, timbers and metal fittings are identical to those at the Hallandale site, Ward believes that this is a part of the same wreck. This site also was covered by the 1979 beach restoration project.

In January 1982, the Hallandale City Commission approved the necessary funds to properly restore and preserve the anchor and 6 cannons that had been confiscated in 1960. Ironically, it recently was discovered that the State of Florida had awarded a salvage permit to Jim Ward, Dave Bellack and the other finders. Unfortunately, however, they never were notified of this action. Thus, the artifacts remained with Hallandale. [52]

The Lago Mar Cannons.

In 1957 John Noyes and Bob Davis, Fort Lauderdale divers, located and raised 8 cannons off Lago Mar, about ½ mile north of Port Everglades. Lying in two rows of four, these had been on a hard bottom in 45 feet of water. There was no bottom profile, ballast or other wreckage. One cannon has been cleaned of coral, but not preserved, and is on display at Ocean World in Fort Lauderdale. A second, similar cannon is coral encrusted and immersed in the porpoise tank there. John Noyes believes that the others are the same size. The Marine Archaeology Advisory Council proposes to treat these cannons when funds become available.

The cleaned cannon is not loaded but is open to the touchhole. The encrusted cannon appears the same. The

bore of the cleaned cannon measures 6.0 centimeters, i.e., 2.75" inside the corrosion, and 7.75 centimeters, i.e., 3.1" at the largest point. Thus, the guns are 2, 3 or 4 pounders. The length is 111 centimeters, or 43.5". The absence of other artifacts indicates that they could have been jettisoned by an endangered vessel.

Although no inferences are drawn to Broward County, "In March 1741 the HMS WOLF, a 14 gun sloop, Captain's name not given, was wrecked on the East Coast of Florida. These British War sloops generally carried 8 regular iron cannons and 12 swivel guns, also called patereroes, which were counted as half a gun." The WOLF is noted only because of its probable number of cannons. [53]

The Jade Beach Wreck.

Another old wreck lies off the Sea Watch Restaurant in Pompano, in 12 to 15 feet of water. Local diver Tom Holland has reported a ballast pile in a north-south direction. Below this is copper sheathed hull planking, amazingly well preserved and held by copper nails.

Holland has found handmade bronze spikes. Ballast stones were coconut sized or smaller.

Local divers have named this the Jade Beach wreck, after an earlier name for the beach adjacent to the site.

19th CENTURY WRECK SITES.

In 1979-80 John Brandon's Marine Archaeological Research and Salvage Company briefly examined a shallow water site off Pompano.

Within 200 yards offshore he found dead-eyes, ballast stone, iron ballast bars, spikes and other items in a trough that ran toward the beach.

Maximum water depth was about 15 feet, with wreckage extending almost to the beach. The site is under 6 or 7 feet of sand. Good magnetometer 'hits' were recorded.

Brandon identified the site as mid 19th century and did no excavation after dating the site.

The Sunrise or Fort Lauderdale Wreck.

In 1957 John Noyes discovered a wreck on the Hillsboro Ridge in 12 to 18 feet of water, just over ½ mile off the Birch estate, south of Sunrise Boulevard in Fort Lauderdale. From this wreck he raised bronze spikes; brass tacks; small ballast rock; a marlin spike with a square point; a brass hinge, doorknob and padlock; broken wine and champagne bottles; pottery shards; coal; and a sounding lead, which is now on exhibit at the Chicago Planetarium.

More important were a sextant marked "W. Hogg, London," a silver spoon marked "P. Barnes & Co., London," and a number of Spanish coins dated between 1777 and 1839. The 1839 coin is a 4 reale and is marked "Isabel 2 Por La Graza De Dios La Const." It was punched at the top with a square hole which, possibly, had been made by the marlin spike.

Also found was an object that appears to be a brass canon ball mold used to cast a 2 pound, 2½" ball. This may be the same size ball as had been used by the cannon now

at Ocean World.

That cannon was found 1½ miles to the south of the Sunrise wreck. Protruding from the sand is about 10 feet of mast, made of a hard wood and unaffected by shipworms. Attached to the mast is an iron band, 15 to 18" in diameter.

Calling it the Fort Lauderdale Wreck, Potter wrote While surveying wreck sites, Colonel Frank F. Tenney's team located a wreck yielding many interesting artifacts and a number of Spanish coins dating from 1772 to 1816. The January 1965 moratorium on leases prevented Colonel Tenney from obtaining rights to the site, and the recoveries were turned over to the State.[54]

Hollywood Wrecks.

In 1979 Rick Guest, a Hollywood lifeguard, reported a wreck 75 yards off the beach in 6 to 8 feet of water. The site was directly off the lifeguard stand at the end of Jackson Street, 4 blocks south of, what was then, the Florida Bible College which now is under restoration as the Hollywood Beach Hotel.

The date of the wreck is unknown. However, Guest found a clay pipe, shaped like a corn cob, and a wine bottle. Guest, a bottle collector who dated the bottle from a period between 1870 and 1903, believes that it was free blown in a turn mold. On the keel was a rectangular metal box and a pile of anchor chain with links 6" by 3" or 4". The wreck was covered by sand during the 1979 beach restoration.

Guest reported a second

site one mile further north, i.e., 4 to 6 blocks south of Howard Johnsons Restaurant. It was 50 yards offshore and consisted of zinc-lead alloy ballast bars that weighed from 28 to 35 pounds each. He recovered 15 or 20 bars and at least that many still were visible. Since then, this site also has been covered by beach restoration sand. Analysis of a bar shows it to be 96% zinc and 4% combined lead and iron, the latter less than 1%.

20th Century Wreck Sites.

An early 20th century wooden barge is buried under the beach at Lauderdale-By-The-Sea.[55]

In 1979 the Marine Archaeology Advisory Council, under the direction of State Underwater Archaeologist W. A. Cockrell, excavated timbers under the beach, 100 yards north of Anglin's Pier. Its heavy, rectangular construction and an absence of sailing rigging led Cockrell to determine that it was a turn-of-the-century barge. The timbers still remain under the beach.

Offshore from the Sea Watch Restaurant, in 25 to 30 feet of water, on the outside of the Hillsboro Ridge, lies a steel ship. Quite large, it is parallel to the reef and has steel frames that protrude 10 feet above the bottom.

Across the reef and inside the ship can be found .50 calibre ammunition. Thus, it has been dubbed the Ammunition ship. However, the ammunition may be from World War II aerial target practice, and the wreckage could be the remains of the steamer COPENHAGEN, which sank in 1899.

The CUMBERLAND is believed to be a barge that possibly sank prior to the dredging of Port Everglades between the years 1925 and 1928.

It lies ½ mile off the Ocean Manor Hotel on the Galt Ocean Mile, ¼ mile south of the Lauderdale-By-The-Sea city line on the Hillsboro Ridge, in 10 feet of water. Marine Archaeology Advisory Council member John Noyes has recovered the brass nameplate from the ship. It was carrying cement in barrels which have been found as far south as Oakland Park Boulevard. It also has been called the Cement ship and was used as a naval aerial target during World War II.

While excavating in 1970 or 1971 for the Point of Americas Condominium, immediately north of the Port Everglades Inlet, the schooner RICHMOND was uncovered beneath the sand. Don Sears, from the University of Florida at Gainesville, identified it and stated that it had been lost during the 1926 hurricane.[56]

Off Hollywood, in 60 to 80 feet of water, near 26°1' latitude, lies the remains of the freighter ELIZABETH. On nautical charts it is depicted as a blue area, i.e., as an obstruction that rises to within 30 feet of the surface.

Local divers report that it was visible, from the surface, in the 1950s. It has been called the China wreck because of its cargo.

The ELIZABETH was dynamited and completely destroyed by United States Navy divers, however. During the Hollywood/Hallandale beach restoration project conducted in 1977-78, Sub-Oceanic Consultants, Inc., could find no trace of it.

CONCLUSION.

Shipwrecks are archaeological time capsules. Each one represents an arrested moment in history, often not recorded in any other way.

One purpose of this article is to stimulate public awareness of the rich heritage that lies off Broward's shores. Due to improper preservation techniques and/or inadvertent removal by people who are unaware of their historical significance, many artifacts already have been lost.

As additional research uncovers new facts and more wrecks, it is hoped that this data will enhance our understanding of local history, not result in the destruction of its artifacts.

Such efforts, like the cannon restorations by the Marine Archaeology Advisory Committee, are commendable. However, additional public involvement is needed in order to locate new sites, to preserve those artifacts that already have been removed, and to protect the ship wrecks that still lie off our coast.

Like Treasure Island, Broward County's Gold Coast holds secrets of galleon gold and silver pieces of eight. Her real treasure, however, is 300 years of unwritten history in the wood and the iron and the lives that have been lost offshore. BL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Broward County and its surrounding waters is great. A future article will deal with cannons and anchors that are on display in the county.

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