

Shared Heritage: Joint Responsibilities in the Management of British Warship Wrecks Overseas



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Frontispiece illustration: Engraving of the sinking of HMS Guardian- published Dec 24th 1791, J & W Stratford, Holborn Hill- collection of John Gribble.

SHARED HERITAGE: BRITISH SHIPWRECKS IN FLORIDA

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SUMMARY

Florida's geographical position historically made the state strategically important to imperialistic nations looking to expand their New World influence. Britain and Spain, and even France, made efforts to settle and dominate colonial Florida through naval means. The maritime archaeological remains of these imperial endeavours are scattered around the state's shores. This paper describes British shipwrecks in Florida waters, some of which have been archaeologically investigated and some of which have been ravaged by treasure hunters. The State of Florida's strategies for managing these shipwrecks for the public benefit is explored, including innovative educational and heritage tourism programs.

Keywords: Florida, British shipwrecks, Archaeology, Public interpretation, Heritage tourism, Treasure hunting

The State of Florida's unique geographical position historically made the state strategically important to imperialistic nations looking to expand their New World influence by controlling Atlantic entrances to the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. Britain and Spain especially, and even France, made efforts to settle and dominate colonial Florida through naval means and the maritime archaeological remains of these imperial endeavours are scattered around the state's shores. Ships belonging to or contracted by the Crown or owned by private entrepreneurs wrecked on reefs, bars, and shoals, and as a result of hurricanes and tropical storms. This chapter describes British shipwrecks in Florida waters, some of which have been archaeologically investigated and some of which have been ravaged by treasure hunters. The State of Florida's strategies for managing these shipwrecks for the public benefit are explored, including innovative educational and heritage tourism programs. Issues related to the state's legalized commercial salvage of historic shipwrecks also are discussed with implications for future discoveries.

FLORIDA'S COLONIAL HISTORY

The peninsula of Florida projects from the southeast corner of North America, creating a geographical boundary between the Atlantic Ocean in the east and the Gulf of Mexico in the west. Immediately to the south the islands of the Greater Antilles stretch away into the Caribbean Sea. The largest island, Cuba, is located only 145 km (90 miles) from the peninsula forming the Straits of Florida, historically a navigational highway for discovery, settlement, commerce, and warfare. Thus, Florida became, from earliest European exploration, a maritime crossroads and, occasionally, an obstacle for unlucky or unwary vessels.

Spanish interest in the long peninsula began in 1513 with the voyage of Juan Ponce de León, who sighted unknown land and named it *La Florida* (Weddle, 1985: 38-54). Expeditions led by Pánfilo de Narváez in 1528 and Hernando de Soto in 1539, as well as a short-lived religious enterprise in 1549, revealed more of the land, although no permanent settlements were established (Weddle, 1985: 185-250). The first major colonization attempt was made in 1559 at present-day Pensacola on the Gulf coast. Led by Tristán de Luna, the colony of 1500 people was thwarted by a hurricane that sank most of the ships in the fleet and destroyed the colony's food and other supplies (Hudson, et al., 1989: 119-134; Smith et al., 1995; Smith et al., 1998). In 1564, approximately 200 French under René Goulaine de Laudonnière established a settlement at Fort Caroline near present-day Jacksonville on the Atlantic coast (Bennett, 2001). The Spanish responded in 1565 when Pedro Menéndez de Avilés attacked and burned the French fort, replacing it with a Spanish garrison he named St. Augustine – the first permanent European settlement in Florida and today the United States' oldest continuously occupied city (Lyon, 1976; Hoffman, 1990: 205-230). A second Spanish fort was successfully established at Pensacola in 1698, nearly 140 years after Luna's failed attempt (Bense, 2003). These two colonies consolidated Spanish control of the peninsula and ancillary settlements and religious missions began to appear in their wake (McEwan, 1993).

The French again attempted to stake a claim in Florida when, from 1719 until 1721, they occupied the presidio at Pensacola as a result of hostilities stemming from the War of the Quadruple Alliance, although the treaty at war's end returned Pensacola to Spain (Weber, 1992: 166, 171; Hoffman, 2002: 186). The 1763 Treaty of Paris ending the Seven Years' War resulted in Spain relinquishing control of its Florida colonies to Britain (Weber, 1992: 199). British forces immediately occupied the Spanish forts at Pensacola and St. Augustine, enlarging and strengthening the fortifications and surrounding towns. British control lasted only 20 years, however, until the end of the American Revolution in 1783 when Florida was returned to Spain (Weber, 1992: 269). This Second Spanish Period lasted until 1821, when Florida became a Territory of the United States. Statehood followed in 1845 and continues to the present day, although the Confederacy controlled Florida, with the exception of a couple of isolated forts, during the American Civil War from 1861 until 1865 (Wynne and Taylor, 2002).

These many nations recognized the value of holding Florida as a means of dominating an important maritime crossroads. Circular currents in the Gulf, the narrow passage of the Straits of Florida, and the powerful northerly flowing Gulf Stream along the east coast all were utilized by maritime states. Some of the vessels that sailed Florida waters, however, never reached their destinations.

BRITISH SHIPWRECKS IN FLORIDA

Although the British held Florida for only 20 years, from 1763 until 1783, maritime traffic was heavy between England's Caribbean and North American colonies, and from the homeland and the rest of the empire. Even before British forces were officially stationed in

Florida, British warships patrolled the waters surrounding the peninsula during voyages to and from England. Treacherous reefs, storms, and mischance resulted in more than a few British ships inadvertently remaining in Florida.

HMS *Winchester*, a 60-gun 4th-rate built in 1693, was returning to England from Caribbean service as part of the West India Squadron in 1695. With most of her crew dead or dying of disease, probably yellow fever, she strayed into shallow water and wrecked on the Carysfort Reef of the Upper Florida Keys (Straight, 1988). *Winchester's* cannons were discovered and salvaged in the 1930s by local fishermen who thought they had found a treasure ship; certainly never conserved, these cannons now are likely only lumps of rust. Today, the remains of HMS *Winchester* are located within John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, where they are a popular diving attraction and are protected from further salvage (McCarthy, 1992: 20-23).

HMS *Looe*, a 44-gun frigate built in 1741, was sailing at night through the Straits of Florida in 1744 with a captured Spanish ship when both vessels ran aground on a reef in the Keys, now called Looe Reef (Singer, 1998: 68). All hands survived and swam to a near-by island, from which they eventually escaped; *Looe's* captain destroyed the ship before leaving to prevent the Spanish recovering her guns (McCarthy, 1992: 40-43). An early treasure hunter and shipwreck salvor named Art McKee, nicknamed "Silver Bar" McKee, raised *Looe's* cannons in the 1950s at a time when cannons and anchors from many historic Keys shipwrecks were being identified and raised. Today, some of these artefacts still may be seen in front of dive shops and strip malls along highway A1A, the Keys Overseas Highway, slowly rotting away.

During the British Period of Florida's history, vessels were lost near the major towns of Pensacola, capital of British West Florida, and St. Augustine, capital of British East Florida. Three of these ships have been discovered and archaeologically investigated, shedding light on this short but significant era of the state's history.

In 1988, children playing on the beach of a small, sandy island in Pensacola Bay alerted archaeologists, who were performing a survey of the island, to the presence of timbers in the shallow water near shore (Bense, 1988). The timbers proved to be part of an historic shipwreck and the site was dubbed the Deadman's Island Wreck after the island where it was located. The following summer, the University of West Florida held its first academic underwater archaeology field school at the site, under the direction of Dr. Roger Smith, Florida's State Underwater Archaeologist with the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research (Smith, 1990). Students performed 12 weeks of investigations, partially exposing the site, recording timbers, and recovering artefacts (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: The timbers of the 18th-century British Deadman's Island Wreck are visible in the shallow water of Old Navy Cove, Pensacola Bay (photo courtesy of the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research).

The site consisted of the lower port side of a small vessel constructed of white oak (Finegold, 1990: 26). Artefacts collected included a leather shoe sole, ceramics, wine bottle glass, a well-preserved wooden cleat, copper sheathing tacks, and a uniform button belonging to a member of the British 60th Regiment of Foot (Smith, 1990: 111). This button proved a valuable clue to the wreck's nationality and possible identity.

The 60th Regiment of Foot was stationed in Pensacola from 1776 to 1781 and saw action in the Battle of Pensacola (Bense, 1988: 17). The 60th Regiment uniform button, discovered lodged in a knothole in a lower hull timber of the Deadmans' Island Wreck, indicated a British connection for the vessel. Historical research revealed that the area of Deadman's Island long was used as a careening ground, with deep water close to shore and a shallow, gently sloping sandy beach. During British occupation of Pensacola, two vessels were careened on the island, then called Old Navy Cove, and proved to be too damaged to be repaired. They were stripped of useful items and abandoned where they lay; the Deadman's Island Wreck is one of these ships. The two candidates for the Deadman's Island Wreck are HMS *Florida* and HMS *Stork*. Both sloops-of-war, the 14-gun *Stork* was purchased by the Royal Navy in Jamaica in 1777, and the patrol schooner *Florida* was fitted out in Jamaica in 1778 (Rea, 1981: 196-197; Morgan, 1986: 120-121). The Deadman's Island Wreck showed evidence of severe damage, its garboard strake split along nearly the entire length – a grave enough injury to render the sloop unseaworthy and, together with the 60th Regiment button, strong circumstantial support for the Deadman's wreck to be either *Stork* or *Florida*. Artefacts from the Deadman's Island Wreck were conserved and placed on display

in a local community centre where they remain today. Sadly, the year after the wreck was investigated, timbers from the Deadman's wreck were pulled loose and scattered on the beach by ill-informed vandals looking for non-existent treasure (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: Planking from the Deadman's Island Wreck was ripped up and tossed on the beach by vandals (photo courtesy of the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research).

During a subsequent survey of Pensacola Bay to identify the remains of historic watercraft, a second shipwreck was discovered near the Deadman's Island Wreck on the same stretch of beach. Named the Town Point Wreck for the northern end of the island, the ship was investigated in 1993 by archaeologists with Southern Oceans Archaeological Research, Inc. (Morris and Franklin, 1995). The vessel was similar in size to the Deadman's wreck and contained artefacts from the same time period and cultural affiliation, including ceramics, case bottle glass, lead shot, a gunflint, and wooden rigging components (Morris and Franklin, 1995: 46-50). The hull itself showed evidence of extensive repair (Morris and Franklin, 1995: 52). Archaeologists are confident that both HMS *Stork* and HMS *Florida* have been found, although questions remain about which wreck is which ship.

A wreck dating to the British Period in east Florida also has been investigated and positively identified. The transport sloop *Industry* ran aground on the St. Augustine bar in 1764 while attempting to enter the harbour with a cargo of supplies for the newly British fort. When Spanish troops evacuated the town and its fort of Castillo de San Marcos in 1763, they took everything of use or value with them, leaving the town without cannons for defence or tools for maintenance. *Industry* was chartered to bring this necessary equipment and was loaded with eight cannons, boxes of axe heads, mill stones, ammunition, and artificer's tools

(Franklin, 2005). The wreck was discovered in 1997 during a submerged cultural resource survey of the historic port conducted by Southern Oceans Archaeological Research, Inc. Investigations revealed cannons still in position as they were loaded in the hold, as well as wooden crates and boxes full of tools and other supplies. A Texas A&M University PhD dissertation was written on the site by Dr. Marianne Franklin (2005), and an exhibit of recovered materials is on display at the St. Augustine Lighthouse Museum. Unfortunately, as with the Deadman's Island Wreck, the wreck of *Industry* was damaged by vandals and thieves who illegally removed two of the cannons; to date, the guns have not been recovered nor have the culprits been apprehended.

Another ship from the British Period in Florida awaits discovery. HMS *Mentor*, a 24-gun sloop-of-war, was built in 1778 as an American privateer called *Who's Afraid* (McCarthy, 1992: 44-47). Seized by the British, the vessel was renamed and sent to Pensacola to help hold the fort against Spanish aggression during the American Revolution. Realizing the small ship could not be of assistance, the British commander in Pensacola had *Mentor's* guns removed to the fort and sent the disarmed vessel up the Blackwater River, a tributary of Pensacola Bay, in an attempt to prevent it falling into Spanish hands (Servies, 1982). While up the river, a sudden squall capsized the sloop and she subsequently burned and sank; *Mentor's* crew escaped into the surrounding forest. The wreck has not, to date, been found, although the sloop's ballast of pig iron should make its location by magnetometer readily apparent and the vessel is high on the University of West Florida Nautical Archaeology Program's list of targets. As a ship directly involved in the Revolutionary War Battle of Pensacola, HMS *Mentor* is significant for American, as well as British, heritage.

FLORIDA'S TROUBLE WITH TREASURE

The State of Florida is in the unusual, and unfortunate, position of allowing the commercial salvage of some of its historic shipwrecks. This situation is the result of several factors; the primary relating directly to the state's unique geography that resulted in several treasure-bearing fleets wrecking on its coasts. The *carrera de Indias*, the system of yearly fleets carrying goods between Spain and her New World colonies, routed ships from Mexico and South America to Cuba and then through the Straits of Florida and along the east coast following the Gulf Stream, before turning east at the latitude of Bermuda to head to Spain (Andrews, 1978). In 1622, 1715, and 1733, Spanish plate fleets en route to Europe wrecked on Florida's shores, all as a result of hurricanes. The 1622 fleet crashed into the small islands of the Dry Tortugas to the west of the Keys, the 1715 fleet was pushed onto the east coast, and the 1733 fleet ran aground on the reefs and shoals of the Keys. Immediately after the disasters, Spanish authorities sent salvage crews to recover the cargos, including silver coins, gold bullion, Chinese porcelain, and the spices and exotic goods of the New World. Although the Spanish salvors were extremely successful in their efforts and much was raised to be shipped on to Spain, not everything from the wrecked ships could be recovered.

With the development of accessible self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) in the 1950s, the wrecks of these fleet ships began to be discovered and early

treasure hunters hurried to plunder the sites. With the growth of underwater archaeology as a science and proof that good archaeological methods could be followed underwater, state officials worked to prevent further damage to submerged cultural remains and to use state historic preservation laws to protect the sites. Nevertheless, historic shipwrecks still were viewed by much of the public as places to be mined for personal gain, rather than as finite, non-renewable resources for understanding the past. The popular media continue to foster the myth of sunken treasure chests and galleons loaded to the gunnels with gold, and often depict modern-day treasure hunters as adventurous entrepreneurs. The result is that commercial salvage is allowed at some historic shipwreck sites in Florida waters, and the salvors are monitored and managed by state-employed archaeologists – a situation that archaeologists deem to be unethical and salvors feel is limiting to private enterprise.

Current commercial salvage, as practiced in Florida, is based on admiralty law, descended from ancient law of the sea, which provided an incentive for captains to go to the aid of vessels in peril on the sea. A captain who put his own vessel in danger by assisting a foundering ship could expect to receive part of the proceeds of sale of the cargo in compensation. In this way, lives were saved and cargo was rescued to be returned to commerce circles. Although admiralty law never was intended to be applied to historic shipwrecks, attorneys for treasure hunters successfully persuaded United States courts that the historic cargos could be “rescued” and returned to the economy. In this way, commercial salvors placed admiralty arrests on historic shipwrecks which gave them title and right to the wrecks. This practice persisted until passage of the federal Abandoned Shipwreck Act (Pub.L. 100-298; 43 U.S.C. 2101-2106) in 1988 provided states with a means of preventing the arrest of heritage resources; however, shipwrecks already claimed under admiralty law when the Act was passed were “grandfathered in” and still are held under arrest. Although the State of Florida no longer allows the arrest of newly discovered historic shipwrecks, salvage contracts on the “grandfathered” wrecks still are allowed by law and likely will continue to be used by commercial salvors until the state law is changed.

This history of treasure hunting in Florida led to the codification of commercial salvage in the laws of the state. The Florida Historical Resources Act, Chapter 267 of the Florida Statutes, was specifically written to allow the commercial salvage of historic shipwrecks (see Rule 1A-31), although historical and archaeological resources on state-owned or controlled lands, including submerged lands, are protected from unauthorized disturbance, excavation, or removal of artefacts and the state is mandated to manage these resources for the public benefit. Despite commercial exploitation of archaeological sites being unethical and contrary to public benefit, the State of Florida allows the salvage of certain shipwrecks and the dispersal of recovered artefacts into private collections. The Bureau of Archaeological Research, part of the Florida Department of State’s Division of Historical Resources, administers and manages the Exploration & Salvage Program by strictly regulating the industry and the companies engaged in salvage, including requiring them to sign a performance contract, hire an archaeologist, and submit periodic reports of activities. The state may also retain up to 20% of artefacts recovered on behalf of the people of Florida on

whose property the material was found. Much of the shipwreck material claimed by the state can be seen on public display in facilities such as the Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee, the state capital.

The result of allowing commercial shipwreck salvage in Florida is that British shipwrecks are subject to this law and may become the targets of treasure hunters. For example, the British merchantman *Spring of Whitby* currently is held under a salvage contract. Built in 1801, she wrecked in 1809 or 1810 on Florida's east coast very near the wrecksite of a Spanish ship called *San Martín* that sank in 1618 (Singer, 1998: 140). *San Martín* was carrying coins and several have been recovered from the area, although some confusion exists regarding whether the coins come from *San Martín* or *Spring of Whitby*, extending largely from the poor record-keeping practices of the commercial salvors. Little information pertaining to *Spring of Whitby* is available and no reports of investigations have been produced.

The Case of HMS *Fowey*

The shipwreck with perhaps the most influence on Florida's approach to British vessels in its waters, and to treasure hunting in the state in general, is HMS *Fowey*. *Fowey* was a 5th-rate warship of 44 guns, built in 1744. In 1748 the ship bilged on a reef, in an area now called Fowey Rocks, in the Upper Keys and was lost. The wreck site was identified by National Park Service archaeologists in the 1970s during a survey of Biscayne National Park, near Miami (G. Fischer, 2008, pers. comm.). Despite the site's identification as a British warship, an admiralty arrest was attempted in 1979 by a treasure hunter who thought the site was a Spanish galleon. The case went to court and, in 1983, the United States won the case to prevent an admiralty arrest and subsequent salvage of the wreck. The court decision constituted a landmark in United States historic preservation case law. The judge determined the remains of HMS *Fowey* were an archaeological site, and not a ship in terms of admiralty salvage. Further, the site was determined not to be in marine peril and therefore did not need to be rescued by the salvor, a major tenet of admiralty law and legal salvage. Rather, the wreck of *Fowey* was found to be public property and part of United States' heritage which should be managed in the best interests of the public rather than privately salvaged and sold for profit (G. Fischer, 2008, pers. comm.; Skowronek and Fischer, 2009).

While HMS *Fowey* is undeniably the property of the British government as a Crown warship, the National Park Service was found to have 'constructive possession' of the wreck site because it is located in a national park and is a park resource. The National Park Service also has jurisdiction for the wreck site's protection and management because it is imbedded in the federal submerged lands of Biscayne National Park. This on-going jurisdiction is sufficient, in the opinion of the court, to deny unwanted salvage (G. Fischer, 2008, pers. comm.).

Archaeological investigation at the *Fowey* site has been conducted by the National Park Service, Florida State University, and the State of Florida (Skowronek, et al., 1987;

Skowronek and Fischer 2009). Currently, HMS *Fowey* is the only historic shipwreck in Florida waters that is off-limits to divers, snorkelers, and other visitors, due to continual problems with looting at the site. As a matter for consideration and debate, because HMS *Fowey* is the property of the United Kingdom and is entitled to sovereign immunity, should UK laws that prohibit diving on historic shipwrecks without a government license be applicable in this case?

PUBLIC ACCESS AND HERITAGE TOURISM AT HISTORIC SHIPWRECKS

The state of Florida has found, in recent years, much success in shipwreck preservation through promoting public access to and stewardship of historic shipwrecks (Scott-Ireton, 2003, 2007). Florida is the top diving destination in the United States and the state's clear, warm waters and variety of marine resources annually draw hundreds of thousands of divers and snorkelers from all over the world. Because patrolling all shipwreck sites is impossible for law enforcement, the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research launched an intensive public education campaign to teach diving visitors the importance of shipwreck preservation for research and for enjoyment. Over the years, the message that shipwrecks and other submerged cultural resources are heritage sites to be conserved rather than "treasure mines" to be consumed has been stressed through educational literature, magazine articles, television programs, museum exhibits, public lectures, and training workshops. Although problems with looting and vandalism are not entirely solved, the message seems to be getting through to divers who now understand shipwrecks should be conserved as part of the marine environment. In particular, dive shops and charter boat operators have begun to realize that if they allow divers to take "souvenirs" from their local shipwrecks, then soon nothing will be left, people will no longer want to visit, and they will have lost a vital part of their economic foundation.

By promoting historic shipwrecks as attractions for heritage tourism, archaeologists and submerged cultural resource managers can tap into a culture of stewardship and reverence for the ancient to help preserve the sites for the future. One program in Florida that is immensely successful and popular is the state's Underwater Archaeological Preserve system. These are historic shipwrecks around the state that are interpreted as "museums in the sea" for divers and snorkelers (www.museumsinthesea.com).

Florida's Shipwreck PRESERVES

USS MASSACHUSETTS

1 The Spanish-American War-era battleship USS Massachusetts was scuttled for target practice in the emerald-green waters off Pensacola in 1921.

Ura de Lima

11 Part of the ill-fated 1715 Spanish Fleet wrecked off Florida's east coast, *Ura de Lima* became the state's first Underwater Archaeological Preserve in 1987.

Georges Valentine

10 The Italian lumber bark, *Georges Valentine* wrecked in 1904 offshore of the House of Refuge near Stuart, scattering her cargo of mahogany lumber on the beach.

SS Tarpon

2 The merchant steamer SS Tarpon filled the Gulf Coast for over 30 years before she was lost in a gale off Panama City in 1937.

Lothfus

9 The wreck of the Norwegian bark, *Lothfus*, sunk during a storm in 1868 near Boynton Beach, was dynamited to salvage the valuable cargo of lumber.

SS Copenhagen

8 The steamship SS *Copenhagen*, wrecked in 1903, took in clear blue water off Pompano Beach and is home to a variety of marine life.

Vamar

3 Admiral Richard Byrd used this steamer in his Antarctic expedition of 1926-30 and named her *Eleanor* in honor of his mother; later sold and re-named *Vamar*, she sank off Port St. Joe in 1942 under mysterious circumstances.

City of Hawkinsville

4 The turn-of-the-century paddlewheel steamer *City of Hawkinsville* ran aground in the Suwannee River, a storybook ghost ship identified by oysters and sponges.

Half Moon

7 Half Moon, originally constructed in Germany, was a German racing sloop before being used as a floating casino in Miami and later wrecking in a cove near Key Biscayne.

Regina

5 The Cuban lumber barge, *Regina*, loaded with 250,000 gallons of molasses, wrecked in a gale off Bradenton Beach in 1948.

San Pedro

6 A ship of the 17th Spanish Fleet that carried the golden bars from sea, and its treasure from Hispaniola to the Florida Keys.

Florida's Underwater Archaeological Preserves are living museums in the sea interpreted for the public so that citizens and visitors may learn more about Florida's maritime heritage. Please dive our shipwrecks with care and respect and remember to "take only pictures and leave only bubbles!"

Figure 3: Florida's Underwater Archaeological Preserves are interpreted for divers and snorkelers through brochures, underwater plaques, a website, and this poster (image courtesy of the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research).

Eleven Preserves currently have been established, all through partnerships between state archaeologists and local communities for research, promotion, and on-going management; more Preserves are in process. By providing a means of education through recreation, the Preserves help teach diving visitors about the importance of shipwrecks as parts of our common maritime past and as tangible remains of the United States' multicultural heritage.

Because public education is an enormous task and no one group can hope to accomplish the mission alone, partnerships for outreach have proven extremely effective in Florida (Scott-Iretton, 2008). Organizations including the Florida Public Archaeology Network (www.flpublicarchaeology.org), the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research (www.flheritage.com), the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program (www.staugustinelighthouse.com/lamp.php), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Sanctuaries Maritime Heritage Program (<http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/maritime/welcome.html>) work together to develop and implement outreach programs targeted to Florida's diving citizens and visitors. Local dive shops, SCUBA clubs, and avocational organizations, such as Florida's own Maritime Archaeological Research & Conservation, Inc. (MARC) team (www.marinearcheology.org), are vital components of outreach initiatives and are incorporated into research projects, educational program development, and management strategies.

MANAGING A SHARED MARITIME HERITAGE

British shipwrecks in Florida's waters are rare and significant relics of the state's, and the nation's, colonial and early American history, as well as remains of England's imperial endeavours. To date, British shipwrecks have been managed by State of Florida administrators based on state law and regulation that govern all historic shipwrecks located on Florida's sovereignty submerged lands. These laws, in most cases, provide for adequate protection while allowing legitimate scientific research and much information has resulted from archaeological investigations at the Deadman's Island Wreck, Town Point Wreck, HMS *Fowey*, and the *Industry* site. The legal pursuit of treasure hunting and salvage in Florida, however, means that British ships discovered in future may be subjected to commercial exploitation. Although the case of HMS *Fowey* provides a solid precedent for preservation, British ships located outside of federal jurisdiction or in other circumstances, or brought to court in front of a less preservation-minded judge, may not fare so well.

The success of public education strategies designed to stress the historical and cultural importance of shipwrecks, rather than any intrinsic value of their cargos, is recognized by the governments of both Florida and the United Kingdom. Popular programs such as the UK's Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology Dive Trails (www.hwtma.org.uk) and Florida's Underwater Archaeological Preserves indicate the public's interest in learning about, preserving, and visiting historic shipwrecks. The growth of heritage tourism provides an economic incentive for shipwreck preservation that is entirely separate from the dubious value of salvaged material. With common goals of protection and education, perhaps Florida and the UK can also become partners in management of their shared heritage. If UK administrators made clear to Florida government officials that British-owned shipwrecks are not eligible for commercial salvage and, as vessels entitled to sovereign immunity, were not to be disturbed except where explicit permission was granted (for example, for research purposes), then Florida's submerged cultural resource managers would be able to better protect British vessels in state waters.

While UK regulations that restrict visitation at historic shipwrecks likely would not be feasible in Florida, due to the vast numbers of divers and snorkelers who live in and visit the state, certainly a partnership for protection and outreach would serve both governments. In addition, a successful scheme for management could serve as a model for other locations and for other administrators. Perhaps a shared management approach is the answer for a shared heritage.

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