



The Quest for the Queen's Jewels

Robert F. Marx

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At sunrise on July 24th, 1715, a convoy consisting of twelve ships set sail from Havana Harbor for the long voyage back to Spain. The convoy was composed of the five ships of the New Spain Flota, six ships of the Squadron of Tierra Firme, and a French ship named Grifon. After the convoy left Havana it made its way up the Bahama Channel. During the night of July 30 it was struck by a fierce hurricane that wrecked all the ships upon the coast of Florida, with the exception of the Grifon, which miraculously escaped. Over a thousand persons lost their lives. The Spaniards commenced salvage operations immediately along the beach of what is commonly known today as Florida's Treasure Coast, so named for the fabulous trove left behind on the wrecks, which continues to lure treasure hunters today. The Spanish salvage effort was quite effective, however, much remains to be found, including the dowry of the consort queen, Isabella Farnese, wife of King Philip V. Robert Marx relates this story to us with an incisive historic background, completed with contemporary details known to him through almost forty years of his own efforts to salvage the wrecks of the 1715 Plate Fleet. This edition also includes a complete reprint of the shipwreck listings found in his original *Shipwrecks in Florida Waters*, published in 1968 when Robert Marx took over operations for Real 8.

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