

## 1: Mel Fisher's Treasures - Historic Shipwreck Recovery

*Nuestra Señora de Atocha* (Spanish: *Our Lady of Atocha*) was a Spanish treasure galleon and the most widely-known vessel of a fleet of ships that sank in a hurricane off the Florida Keys in

In less than a century, Spanish conquistadors and priests, driven by ambition, patriotism and religious fever, had conquered ancient civilizations, located gold and silver mines of untold wealth, and established important colonies throughout much of the Western Hemisphere. Thus was begun an era of power, conquest and piracy, all financed by the silver, gold and jewels which came to be known as the "Treasure of the Indies. Columbus himself used the harbor at Portobello, Panama as early as 1499. Other expeditions founded Havana in 1519, established Panama City in 1519, and found Cartagena in 1533. Four more major cities, all of which had colonial mints, came into being with the Spanish capture of Mexico City in 1521, and the founding of Lima in 1535, Santa Fe de Bogota in 1538, and Potosi in 1545. As the Spanish empire spread, the established native societies were vanquished. Aztec, Inca and Maya civilizations all fell in the 16th century, as did countless smaller groups of Indians. Most were enslaved as menial laborers, although many native craftsmen did practice their trade under Spanish rule. Most important, though, were the deposits of gold, silver, emeralds and other precious commodities discovered in the New World. The mountain above Potosi soon proved to be the richest silver mine in history, producing 60 million pounds of gold and silver in just 50 years. Emeralds poured from the Muzo and other districts in Columbia, pearls from Venezuela. More gold came from Mexico, and still other riches arrived enroute to Spain from the Philippines. To handle this enormous volume of treasure, several different fleets annually sailed the various oceans to gather the riches of these far-flung lands. The Manila Fleet off-loaded fine china, silk and porcelain at Acapulco for shipment across to Veracruz on the Gulf coast. Gold and silver from Mexico City was also sent to Veracruz, where the New Spain Fleet called to transport all the accumulated treasure to Havana. Also to Cuba came the Honduras Fleet carrying indigo and other agricultural products. From there the riches were carried across the Isthmus to Portobello. First stopping in Cartagena for gold and emeralds, this convoy called at Portobello for the treasure of the South Seas Fleet before continuing on to Cuba. All the various treasure fleets came together at Havana, usually in July, then combined into one great Tierra Firme Fleet for the arduous journey to Spain. The Atocha was the almiranta of the fleet, positioned where her fast speed and 20 bronze cannons could adequately shepherd the clumsy merchant ships. The security of the bullion-laden Tierra Firme Fleet was of major importance. Not only did independent pirate ships lay in wait for the rich galleons, but England had also begun a fierce campaign to divert as much of the Spanish wealth as possible. Privately owned warships, operating under the authority of the English government, were often successful in capturing these fabulously rich ships. Built in a Havana shipyard, the Atocha was specifically designed as a guard galleon for the treasure fleets. Her modern accommodations and the security of her armament made her the choice of nobility, government officials and wealthy merchants. As these passengers came aboard for the return voyage to Spain, the ship became severely overcrowded. The Santa Margarita was also a new ship, purchased in Cadiz. While she was carrying fewer well-to-do passengers than the Atocha, and thus less personal treasure, her cargo did contain substantial quantities of gold and silver bullion. Due to numerous delays, the 28 ships of the Tierra Firme Fleet finally left Havana harbor for Spain on September 4, more than a month behind schedule. By Tuesday, September 6, running before the unrelenting pounding of gale-force winds, five ships of the fleet were swept toward the Florida Keys. Three seamen and two black slaves were the only survivors of the ill-fated Atocha. When rescued by a launch from the merchant ship Santa Cruz, they related the last hours of the galleon. With her foremast gone and the sails tattered, the high stern castle caught the wind and sped the doomed ship backwards through the towering seas. Suddenly lifted high on a wave, the Atocha smashed violently down onto a reef, ripping great holes in her hull. Most of those aboard were below decks, with the hatches securely fastened, taking shelter from the storm. Unable to escape in time, crew and passengers were carried to their deaths when the ship quickly sank. Only five men who had lashed themselves to the rigging were saved. The Santa Margarita was more fortunate. Dismasted and drifting out of control, she grounded on a sandbar just three miles from where the Atocha sank.

The remaining ships of the Tierra Firme Fleet returned to Havana to report the terrible loss. Quickly a decision was made not to send the remaining ships to Spain that year, but instead to concentrate in salvaging as much as possible from the two sunken galleons. Much of the cargo from the Santa Margarita was brought up during an intensive recovery operation lasting more than four years. Through the centuries the wreck of this famous galleon was reported as being off the "last Key of Matecumbe. For more than a decade intensive search operations were conducted, costing millions of dollars. During this time Fisher also suffered a personal loss when his son and daughter-in-law perished in the sinking of their recovery vessel. To date, items valued at hundreds of millions of dollars have been recovered. The pieces in this sale, belong to numerous private parties, represent some of the results of several years of salvage operations on the Atocha. Included in this "Treasure of the Indies" are tons of silver and gold ingots from Potosi, emeralds from Columbia, copper from Cuba, and numerous rare artifacts from a little-known era of Spanish history. Lost for centuries, this immense trove is finally being dispersed throughout the world, thanks to the labor and dreams of premier treasure hunter Mel Fisher. Piles of ballast stones are visible to either side of the silver, with olive jars and additional cargo piled atop the stones.

### 2: Atocha and Margarita Story - Mel Fisher's Treasures

*Few succeed as well as Treasure of the Atocha, written by the archaeological director of the underwater "dig" that is recovering both intellectual and monetary treasures from the Atocha, a Spanish galleon that sank off the coast of Florida in*

CM Burns Estimated Value: For the return voyage the Atocha was loaded with a cargo that is almost beyond belief – 24 tons of silver bullion in ingots, 1,000,000 pesos of silver coins, copper ingots, gold bars and discs, chests of indigo, bales of tobacco, 20 bronze cannon and 1,000 pounds of worked silverware! To this can be added items being smuggled to avoid taxation, and unregistered jewelry and personal goods; all creating a treasure that could surely rival any other ever amassed. On September 23, 1622, as the fleet passed near the Florida Keys, a Hurricane fell upon them. With their sails and rigging reduced to shreds, and masts and tillers battered or broken, the ships drifted helplessly toward the reefs – all five ships were lost, the Atocha being lifted high on a wave and smashed violently on a coral reef. She sunk instantly, pulled to the bottom by her heavy cargo of treasure and cannon. Of the people aboard the Atocha, only five survived! Spanish salvage boats sped to the scene as soon as the storm abated and easily found the wreck. Her hatches and gun ports, however had been securely sealed against the storm, and divers could not get into the hull. Spanish Treasure Routes Click to Enlarge By the time the salvagers returned with the heavy tools and explosives needed to break in, the ship was gone. A second hurricane had dismembered her and buried her remains in the churning sands. For five decades, the Spanish searched relentlessly for the Atocha, but she had vanished without a trace. The Atocha and her treasure remained undisturbed for over years, time and events slowly erased memories of the ship and its name eventually vanished from the lips of all but a few treasure seekers and historians. These documents, like the treasure itself, were to lay in obscurity waiting for the right set of circumstances centuries later. The Hunt for the Atocha The twentieth century was a period of tremendous technological advancement; for the Atocha, one of the most significant occurred in when a French naval lieutenant named Jacques Cousteau developed the self-contained underwater breathing apparatus, or SCUBA for short. It allowed divers to remain underwater for extended periods of time, something the Spanish salvors were not able to do in This highly publicized salvage operation, conducted by Real Eight Corporation, ignited an unprecedented interest in Spanish colonial shipwreck salvage, which remains strong to this day. It was this event that drew people such as Mel Fisher into the industry and onto the path of the Atocha. Lyons found a report about the initial salvage operations of the Atocha. Fisher figured that if he could find the Margarita, he could also find the Atocha. The new research suggested that past exploration had been about one hundred miles off the mark. The Atocha had evidently gone down in the Marquesas, some twenty miles from Key West. The new information kicked the hunt into high gear. From then on, Fisher and his crew lived a roller coaster cycle of highs and lows. This verified that Fisher was close to the major part of the wreck site. But the jubilation over the find was short-lived. Three days later, Dirk, his young wife, Angel and diver Rick Gage all drowned when the Northwind capsized. The Atocha yielded a bonanza that was unmatched by any previous ancient shipwreck. The treasure would continue to rise from the sea for years to come. Among the items found on the wrecks were a fortune in gold, silver bars, and coins destined for the coffers of Spain; a solid gold belt and necklace set with gems; a gold chalice designed to prevent its user from being poisoned; an intricately-tooled gold plate; a gold chain that weighs more than seven pounds; a horde of contraband emeralds – including an impressive The estimated value of million dollars beats the Atocha by million.

### 3: The Lost Treasure of the Atocha - Guerrilla Explorer

*Treasure Of The Atocha Mel Fisher was the leading force in the search for the treasure of the galleons. His struggle to find the lost treasure has been a*

It would be another half a century or more before the chief cities of colonial North America; Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, were to be founded. Colonists were granted huge tracts of land to grow tobacco, coffee and other products for export to the mainland. Trade with the colonies followed a well-established system. Beginning in and continuing until , two fleets a year were sent to the New World. The ships brought supplies to the colonists and were then filled with silver, gold, and agricultural products for the return voyage back to Spain. The fleets sailed from Cadiz, Spain early in the year, following the approximate route that Columbus had taken years before. Here, the ships were unloaded and the cargo of silver and gold brought aboard. For the return trip the divided fleets reassembled in Havana, then rode the Gulf Stream north along the coast of Florida before turning east when at the same latitude as Spain. The treasure fleets faced many obstacles; the two greatest of which were weather and pirates. It was well known that the hurricane season began in late July, so for this reason the operation was timed for an earlier departure. For protection against pirates, each fleet was equipped with two heavily armed guard galleons. The lead ship was known as the Capitana. The other galleon, called the amaranth, was to bring up the rear. Treasure from Lima and Potosi was still arriving by mule train from Panama City, a port on the pacific side of the Isthmus. It was late August, well into the hurricane season, before the fleet arrived in Havana. As a military escort, the Atocha carried an entire company of 82 infantrymen to defend the vessel from attack and possible enemy boarding. Unfortunately, firepower could not save her from the forces of nature. On Sunday, September 4th, with the weather near perfect, the decision was made to set sail for Spain. The twenty-eight ships of the combined fleet raised anchor and in single file set a course due north towards the Florida Keys and the strong Gulf Stream current. The Atocha, sitting low from its heavy cargo, took up its assigned position in the rear. By evening the wind started to pick up out of the northeast growing stronger through the night. At daybreak the seas were mountainous and for safety most everyone was below deck seasick or in prayer. Throughout the next day the wind shifted to the south driving most of the fleet past the Dry Tortugas and into the relatively safe waters of the Gulf of Mexico. With their sails and rigging reduced to shreds, and masts and tillers battered or broken, the ships drifted helplessly toward the reefs. All five ships were lost, the Atocha being lifted high on a wave and smashed violently on a coral reef. She sunk instantly, pulled to the bottom by her heavy cargo of treasure and cannon. The next day, a small merchant ship making its way through the debris rescued five Atocha survivors still clinging to the ship mizzenmast. They were all that were left of passengers and crew. Salvage attempts began immediately. The Atocha was found in 55 feet of water with the top of its mast in plain view. Divers, limited to holding their breath, attempted recovery but were unable to break into the hatches. They marked the site and continued searching for the other wrecks. The Rosario was found in shallow water and was relatively easy to salvage, but the other vessels could not be located. When they returned, the wreck was no where to be found and salvage attempts over the next 10 years proved futile. However, the Santa Margarita was discovered in and much of her cargo salvaged over the next few years. But, time and events slowly erased memories of the Atocha. These documents, like the treasure itself, were to lay in obscurity waiting for the right set of circumstances centuries later. The twentieth century was a period of tremendous technological advancement. For the Atocha, one of the most significant occurred in when a French naval lieutenant named Jacques-Ives Cousteau developed the self-contained underwater breathing apparatus, or SCUBA for short. It allowed divers to remain underwater for extended periods of time. It was this event that drew people such as Mel Fisher into the industry and onto the path of the Atocha. After participating in the fleet salvage operation, Mel formed a company called Treasure Salvors and began searching in earnest for the much talked about Atocha. His effort over a sixteen-year period from to is a book in itself. But, in short lead to the discovery of the Santa Margarita in and the Atocha on July 20, , her hull lying in 55 feet of water, exactly as recorded by the first salvagers in

### 4: Welcome to [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com) by Forecastle Treasures, Inc.

*Mel Fisher's Treasures is the source for authentic shipwreck treasure and one-of-a-kind treasure jewelry. The immensity of the Atocha's treasure is staggering. What was only a dream instantly became an undeniable reality.*

With it was carried the wealth of an empire; Silver from Peru and Mexico, gold and emeralds from Colombia, pearls from Venezuela. Each ship carried its crew, soldiers, passengers, and all the necessary materials and provisions for a successful voyage. The following day, the fleet found itself being overtaken by a hurricane as it entered the Florida straits. By the morning of September 6th, eight of these vessels lay broken on the ocean floor, scattered from the Marquesas Keys to the Dry Tortugas. In them were the treasures of the Americas, and the untold stories of scores of Spanish sailors, soldiers, noblemen, and clergy. For additional protection, she bore the name of the holiest of shrines in Madrid. She had been built for the Crown in Havana in and was rated at tons, with an overall length of feet, a beam of 34 feet and a draft of 14 feet. She carried square-rigged fore and mainmasts, and a lateen-rigged mizzenmast. She had made only one previous voyage to Spain, during which her mainmast was burst, and had to be replaced. For the return voyage, Atocha was loaded with a cargo that is, today, almost beyond belief -- 24 tons of silver bullion in ingots, ,00 pesos of silver coins, copper ingots, gold bars and discs, chests of indigo, bales of tobacco, 20 bronze cannon and 1, pounds of worked silverware! To this can be added items being smuggled to avoid taxation, and unregistered jewelry and personal goods; all creating a treasure that could surely rival any other ever amassed. Only five -- three sailors and two slaves -- survived by holding on to the stump of the mizzenmast, which was the only part of the wrecked galleon that remained above water. Rescuers tried to enter the drowned hulk, but found the hatches tightly battened. The water depth, at 55 feet, was too great to allow them to work to open her. On October 5th a second hurricane came through, and further destroyed the wreck of the Atocha. For the next 60 years, Spanish salvagers searched for the galleon, but they never found a trace. It seemed she was gone for good. In , Mel Fisher and his Treasure Salvors crew began a relentless, sixteen year quest for the treasure of the Atocha. This verified that Fisher was close to the major part of the wrecksite. In , his son Dirk found five bronze cannon whose markings would clinch identification with the Atocha. Only days later, Dirk and his wife Angel, with diver Rick Gage, were killed when one of the salvage boats capsized. Yet Fisher and his intrepid crew persevered. By , they had found a significant portion of the remains of the Santa Margarita -- with a fortune in gold bars, jewelry and silver coins. Because the material had lain on the ocean floor for three and a half centuries, much of it was in an extremely unstable state; immediate preservation treatment was required to prevent its destruction after it left its saltwater tomb. Among the items found on the wrecks are a fortune in gold, silver bars, and coins destined for the coffers of Spain; a solid gold belt and necklace set with gems; a gold chalice designed to prevent its user from being poisoned; an intricately-tooled gold plate; a gold chain that weighs more than seven pounds; a horde of contraband emeralds -- including an impressive . With the treasure, and perhaps ultimately more important, were countless articles that provide insight into seventeenth-century life, especially under sail: Approximately , people visit the Key West museum annually to marvel at them -- and applaud the triumph of the human spirit that their recovery represents.

### 5: Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society and Museum in Key West, Florida

*From the Atocha shipwreck, the Atocha gold and emerald cross, the Mel Fisher museum in Key West, FL Find this Pin and more on Treasures of the Atocha by Tori Collett. Atocha Treasure recovered from the Spanish treasure ship the 'Atocha'; pendant in gold with emeralds c.*

Click here for more details. Bill Pearson and Atocha. We have over 34 years of experience in the salvaging and selling of treasure coins and artifacts. In , Bill founded Forecastle Treasures, Inc. Forecastle Treasures has been on online since early - one of the first treasure coin dealers on the web. Now, our primary business is the wholesale of Atocha and other treasure coins to jewelry stores throughout the U. However we reserve the rare Atocha two reale and other rare Atocha coins for online sale to benefit our many customers who have supported us over the last 25 years. We have been told that some of our prices are higher than other online sellers on some coins in each grade. We urge you to compare the quality of the coin that you see, not just the grade. This resulted in many grading mistakes. We strive to pick the best Atocha coins in each grade. It pays to compare, but we feel you will find us the best everytime! Atocha coins in all grades are discounted from the Mel Fisher Museum prices and are certified by Mel himself. Enjoy owning and wearing a "piece of history" provided by a well-known and experienced dealer. You can shop with confidence in the quality and authenticity of each Atocha piece, as well as, all other pieces. Each treasure piece is unique! Most have been struck by hand, and they come in a variety of shapes. Rarely are the details or design fully legible. Our hand-crafted jewelry designs have been created to compliment the uniqueness of each one-of-a-kind treasure. Therefore, no one else will own a treasure piece exactly like yours!

### 6: Story Of Atocha Shipwreck With Pirate Mel Fisher In Key West Florida

*A tiny portion of the hoard of treasures that were eventually found in the wreck of the Nuestra Senora de Atocha. Credit: Mel Fisher Treasures. The mission to find the Atocha and her treasure became the fixation of a chicken farmer turned deep-sea diver named Mel Fisher, who searched doggedly for the treasure for 16 years from*

Some of the most valuable cargo, as well as a company of infantrymen to protect it, and its crew and passengers are packed into the galleon, ready to return to Spain. Much depends on the arrival of this floating caravan. Spain is on the edge of bankruptcy: The Atocha and the other ships will carry the gold and silver to Spain so the king can pay his creditors and prop up the teetering economy. Some of the treasures of the Atocha: Photo by Shane F. The ships should have sailed weeks earlier, but had to wait for silver and other valuable goods to arrive from Peru. Now the fleet will be beginning its journey at the start of hurricane season. Fleet officials debate if it is still safe for the ships to set sail. The decision is a difficult one. If the fleet does not leave for Spain, the ships will stay docked for months, which might be ruinous for king and country “and costly to the merchants and their idle cargo. Urgency trumps caution, and the fleet departs for home. After just one day on the open seas, the decision to set sail will prove to be a historic disaster. The riches of the New World on display: A gold chain and emeralds from the Atocha. On the morning of September 5th, high seas and ferocious winds lash the Atocha and the other ships. The fleet has sailed into a hurricane, and by nightfall, the stormy seas claim several ships. On the second day, the Atocha, rudderless and without its foremast, helplessly careens towards a reef along the Florida Keys. A massive wave smashes it against the rocks and drags it to the bottom. Of the people on board, five survive. Retrieving the lost riches of the Atocha and the Santa Margarita is so important that a salvage effort is immediately ordered. Some of the cargo from the Santa Margarita was recovered but Mother Nature intervenes: Two more hurricanes strike, and the Atocha and her riches are scattered across the ocean floor. After 60 more years of searching, the Atocha and the other ships are declared lost. American treasure hunter Mel Fisher has an audacious idea: Piecing together historical accounts, and chasing rumors, Fisher spends 16 years scouring the seafloor between the Florida Keys and Dry Tortugas. Discoveries come in tantalizing bits and pieces: GIA described the emeralds as transparent to translucent and from medium to dark tones of green to slightly bluish green. The gemologists believe that a fine precipitate of seawater may have seeped into surface breaking fractures in the emeralds, causing a chalky yellow-green fluorescence. Trapped liquid believed to be seawater located between the emerald and its setting is partially responsible for its dark appearance. A few pieces of jewelry recovered during salvage operations and seen by GIA include an emerald brooch that was determined to be slightly less than 24K gold with a deep yellow color. The rosary consists of an ornately carved cross set with nine cabochon emeralds, and prayer beads possibly made out of wood that disintegrated but the gold bell caps remain. The gold chain, one of many recovered from the wrecks, shows draw lines on its links. It is thought that gold was worn as jewelry to avoid taxation; when needed, individual links could be removed from the chain and used as currency. A spoon with an intricately carved handle showed spectacular craftsmanship was also examined. Its recovery provided gemologists and historians with a unique window into this colorful time. Thirsty for more information about emeralds?

### 7: Atocha Coins, Atocha Treasure Coins Recovered by Mel Fisher

*The following account detailing the ill-fated voyage of the Nuestra Senora de Atocha and her sister ship the Santa Margarita from Havana to their final resting place at the bottom of the ocean off the coast of Key West, Florida was written by archeologist R. Duncan Mathewson III and can be found in his book, Treasure of the Atocha.*

The following account detailing the ill-fated voyage of the Nuestra Senora de Atocha and her sister ship the Santa Margarita from Havana to their final resting place at the bottom of the ocean off the coast of Key West, Florida was written by archeologist R. An exciting adventure story of the search and discovery of what is proving to be the most fabulous treasure wreck of all time can be found in the book section of this site. Taxes on goods shipped from Central and South America by Spanish merchants enabled Spain to defend its Western Hemisphere claims against the English, French, and Dutch, and to extend its empire halfway around the world into the South Pacific. The Atocha and its sister ship, Santa Margarita, are tragic milestones along this broad commercial highway called Carrera de Indias by the Spanish that carried Europe on a journey from isolation to world domination. Not only were the colonies prime consumers of goods produced in Spain; the conquests initiated a torrent of valuable agricultural goods, precious metals and high-quality gems that pulsed through the veins of Spanish mercantile shipping and back to the mother country. From 1492 to 1700, approximately six billion to eight billion dollars of gold and silver were mined in the Spanish American colonies. During this time, the ratio of gold to silver shipped to Spain was about one to ten. This wealth drastically changed the course of European history, raising Spain to a position of world dominance. When year-old Philip IV ascended the throne in 1621, he inherited an empire that controlled vast territories on four continents, a mission to purge Europe of the growing threat of Protestantism, and a huge national debt. The trade with the Indies, and the taxes and revenues the Crown derived from it, were the financial lifeline which kept the Empire-and its staunch defense of Catholicism-afloat. The threats to this lifeline were legion. The Dutch openly attacked the Indies fleets. Called the Casa de Contratacion, it functioned both as ministry of commerce and official school of navigation. A clerk, or escribano, accompanied each vessel and maintained the official record of all cargo loaded and unloaded: To discourage smuggling, the Crown decreed in 1565 that smugglers would forfeit their contraband and pay a fine of four times its value. Naval officers convicted of smuggling could be sentenced to several years as a galley slave. To minimize losses to armed raiders, Spain required all merchant ships to sail in convoys, which were protected by escort ships known as galleons. The galleons were a special type of warship, up to a hundred feet long and rigged with square sails. And the galleons were heavily armed, mounting huge bronze cannons. Although slower than the quick brigantines and sloops favored by pirates, the galleons possessed immense firepower. Still, perhaps five percent of the silver and gold mined by Spain in the New World was lost at sea or confiscated by pirates. In addition to the galleons sailing among the merchant ships in convoy, two strong galleons -a capitana, which led the group, and an almiranta, which brought up the rear-provided extra protection against English, French, and Dutch raiders. The convoys sailed from Spain in early spring and, upon arriving in the Caribbean, dispersed into groups to pick up heavy consignments of Royal treasure from various ports in the colonies. Each fleet, or flota, had a specific destination. The cargo was then transported overland to Veracruz, on the east coast of Mexico. The Honduras fleet called at Trujillo for valuable indigo dye. When things went according to plan, all fleets met in Havana, Cuba in July to assemble the cargo for the voyage back to Spain. The bulk of the gold and silver was usually carried by the large, heavily-armed galleons, while the smaller merchant ships transported agricultural products. Spain was still the preeminent power in the world. However, her position of power was badly slipping as the crucial stages of the Thirty Years War unfolded. The year before, Spain had ended a year truce with her rebellious Dutch provinces. The Dutch had joined with France, openly attacking Spanish naval and merchant vessels. Although the treasure fleet had sailed in 1628, money in the treasury was dangerously low. Collected taxes and royal proceeds accumulating in the Americas were desperately needed. It was paramount that the fleet successfully make the long and dangerous voyage. It might even convince them to extend more badly needed funds for the war effort. Despite the urgent need, the fleet could only begin its voyage in late spring or early summer. The



Atlantic is hospitable to sailing ships only a few months each year. Winter storms in the North Atlantic made the trip to the Americas dangerous if taken before early spring. And from June to October, the South Atlantic routes traveled by the convoys on their journey back to Spain from Havana were racked by hurricanes. Lashed by mammoth seas, ships ambushed by a hurricane could neither steer nor sail. They could merely run in front of the wind and hope it blew itself out before the ship was swamped or her hull was torn open on a shallow coral reef. The later in the summer the fleets sailed from Havana, the more likely they were to encounter a major hurricane. This year, the flotas left Spain separately: There, 16 smaller vessels fanned out to pick up goods from around the Caribbean while the Guard galleons sailed to Cartagena, Colombia to unload their outbound cargos, arriving on June. Finding that much of the silver and gold to be shipped back to Spain had not yet arrived at the port for loading, the Guard galleons sailed for Portobello, joining the Tierra Firme fleet there on July 1. The commander of the Guard fleet, the Marquis of Cadereita, was told that 36 Dutch warships were at the Araya salt-pans on the north coast of South America. For extra protection he commandeered a privately owned galleon, Nuestra Senora del Rosario, to his Guard fleet, bringing it up to its full authorized strength of eight ships. The ships left Portobello, arriving back in Cartagena on July. After receiving more cargo, they sailed for Cuba on August 3. The New Spain fleet had collected its cargo in Mexico and waited in Havana for the rest of the fleets. Now, as the most dangerous part of the hurricane season neared, its commander impatiently requested permission to sail for Spain. The Marquis assented, but directed that the bulk of the bullion shipped back under the protection of the big cannons of the Guard fleet. The Marquis split his fleet into two parts. He would sail in the capitana, the lead ship, Nuestra Senora de Candelaria. The Atocha had been built in the Havana shipyard and, sure to bring her good luck, was named for the most revered religious shrine in Spain. This strong ship was to be the almiranta, sailing last to protect the slow, lumbering merchant ships in the rear of the flota. On September 5, the fleets were overtaken by a rapidly-moving hurricane. As dawn streaked the horizon, it brought dread to the more experienced sailors. The gale force winds, rising out of the northeast, quickly increased. The gusts raked the surface of the northward-flowing Gulf Stream, piling up huge seas in front of the ships. Aboard the Atocha, the chief pilot lit a lantern as clouds and rain blackened the sky. Ahead, the lead galleons were already out of sight. The merchant ships sailing close by the almiranta were themselves hidden by rain as the storm swept by. Crewmen scrambled into the rigging to take in sail. Frothing green water roared across the deck. Just before darkness, a veil of spray closed around the seasick passengers and crew of the Atocha. They watched in horror as the tiny Nuestra Senora de la Consolacion, wallowing in the mammoth seas, simply capsized and disappeared. That night, the wind shifted, coming out of the south. The hurricane now hurled the fleet north toward the Florida reef line. Beyond the reefs of the Straits of Florida, they rode out the winds in the safe, deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico. At least four ships, including the Atocha and Santa Margarita, were swept headlong into the Florida Keys. Near a low-lying atoll fringed with mangroves, foot rollers carried the Margarita across the reef, grounding her in the shallows beyond. As she crossed the reef, her commander, Captain Bernardino de Lugo, looked to the east. There he saw the Atocha. With crew and passengers huddled, praying below deck, the Atocha approached the line of reefs dividing safe, deep water from certain death. The frenzied crew dropped anchors into the reef face, hoping to hold the groaning, creaking galleon off the jagged coral. A wave lifted the ship, and, in the next instant, flung it down directly onto the reef. The main mast snapped as the huge seas washed Atocha off the reef and beyond, trailing her broken mast. Water poured through a gaping hole in the bow, quickly filling the hull with water. The great ship slipped beneath the surface, finding bottom 55 feet below; only the stump of the mizzenmast broke the waves. Of the persons aboard, drowned. Three crewmen and two black slaves clung to the mast until they were rescued the next morning by a launch from another fleet ship, the Santa Cruz. The lost ships of the treasure fleet lay scattered over 50 miles stretching from the Dry Tortugas eastward to where the Atocha slipped beneath the water. About people perished along with a total cargo worth more than 2 million pesos.

*His mantra continues to inspire the search for the rest of the treasure from the Nuestra Senora de Atocha and the Santa Margarita, the Spanish galleons that sank during a hurricane on September 6.*

### 9: The Sunken Treasure of the Atocha

*The Atocha and her treasure remained undisturbed for over years, time and events slowly erased memories of the ship and its name eventually vanished from the lips of all but a few treasure seekers and historians.*

*Goal-focused interviewing Partners: human beings, too Book of acid Guide to Criminal Law for North Carolina Everyday Americans Becoming a Global Family Listening and talking : advice givers Communications-from office whispers to the internet Wouldnt Change a Thing Blueprint ing for welders 9th edition Tariff-based differentiated services networks Engel v. Vitale (1962) International monitoring procedures Cardiorespiratory physiotherapy adults and paediatrics 5th edition A study on cosmic radio noise, by D.H. Menzel. Scandal and satisfaction (832-834) The norton anthology of american literature 1865 to present 2004 honda vtx1300c service manual Prayer altars john mulinde Boys Over Flowers, Vol. 30 (Boys Over Flowers) Picturesque Brittany . War Peace (Konemann Classics) Short history of modern Egypt The designer guide to vhdI peter j ashenden Nutritional management of infants and children with specific diseases or other conditions Arthur Cooper a Methods for analysis of nonlinear elliptic boundary value problems Rise of global delivery services The Swiss Family Robinson (Unabridged Classics) Geodynamics applications of continuum physics to geological problems Systems, stability, and statecraft Curriculum yellow pages Hardy Boys Mystery Stories (Hardy Boys) Baseball, popcorn, apple pie, liberty Sexual assault : the limits of blame and shame Fort drum blue book War part II. Or, Europe on five massacres a day A Business of My Own? Research ethics and being a responsible researcher Part one : The commission for preaching. The reasons for preaching Human physiology sherwood*