

Discovered shipwreck a Columbus Day treasure?

KEY WEST, Fla. (AP) — It's been 400 years since Columbus sailed with ships that became part of every American youngster's school history. The Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria. Now, just in time for Columbus Day 1990, treasure hunters think they may have found the wreck of the Pinta.

Olin Frick and John Gasque, two Key West treasure hunters, aren't totally convinced the ship they found in 30 feet of water off the remote Turks and Caicos Islands in the Bahamas is the Pinta.

But scientists say an iron cannon and a crudely formed lead cannon ball removed

from the wreck appear to be from the 15th century.

And historical records indicate the Pinta was one of the few ships in the vicinity of the islands when it went down in 1492 or 1500.

Next month, backed by a wealthy Dallas investor, Frick, Gasque and a team of 23 divers and archaeologists plan to return to the site to recover the remains of the ship.

"We plan to go over the wreck very, very carefully," Gasque said. "We will recover everything that we can find — right down to the last ballast stone."

"Like all archaeological work, we may

not be able to come up with absolute proof that it is the Pinta," Gasque said of the wreck, which he and his partner first spotted three years ago. "But if we find nothing to contradict it, we think the weight of the evidence will be awfully convincing."

Christopher Columbus took the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria — all wooden sailing ships — on his maiden voyage to the New World in 1492. The Santa Maria is known to have been destroyed after running aground in December 1492, but the fates of the Nina and the Pinta were not known.

The Nina accompanied Columbus on his

four later voyages to the Americas and then disappeared from historical record.

The Pinta, too, slipped into obscurity, until Frick and Gasque got some help in researching a wreck.

From records of journeys in the Spanish archives and a 500-year-old tax report, historian and National Geographic consultant Eugene Lyon has reconstructed the last journey of the Pinta. He says evidence indicates one of the Pinta's owners, Vincente Pinzon, was making a return trip to the New World around 1499 or 1500.

According to Lyon, Pinzon island-hopped

for about six months in search of slaves and riches before a hurricane sank two vessels in his fleet of four.

Lyon says survivors variously reported the ships went down near "Barbosa," "Barboles," "Bavaca" and "Babeque."

Lyon now says he'll try to locate records of a lawsuit between the Pinta's owner and the tax collector of Seville. He says the records would list the fleet's cargo, enabling positive identification through artifacts recovered from the sunken vessel.

Phillie fever

The Phillies dug down deep and came up with a dramatic 8-7 win over the Astros to take the NL pennant.

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Jets soar

The Jets re-discovered their ground game and won their first Sunday, while the Giants blew a big lead and lost.

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The Journal-News

Monday, October 13, 1980

A Gannett Newspaper Serving Rockland County

25 cents

Police seek common link in bombings



Officials survey bomb damage at New York's Turkish Mission, one of four sites hit in major cities.

Was 'Son of Sam' case shut with undue haste?

Second of four parts.

By MAURY TERRY and M. J. ZUCKERMAN Staff Writers

Months before David Berkowitz pleaded guilty to murdering six people and wounding seven, branding himself as the lone "Son of Sam," authorities had reason to believe the 24-year-old Yonkers man may have been lying and that he had accomplices in a conspiracy that

stretched from New York to North Dakota.

Yet rather than actively pursue significant leads while they were still fresh, police and prosecutors decided, in effect, to take Berkowitz at his word.

Authorities in the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office and the New York City Police Department marked the "Son of Sam" case closed after conducting what can only be described as a half-hearted probe.

Among the information in the hands of Brooklyn authorities when they accepted David Berkowitz's guilty plea were a series of reports from police in North Dakota indicating that John Carr — the son of the Yonkers man who Berkowitz claimed was his "master" — had told several people, including his therapist, that he was a friend of Berkowitz and was hiding out to avoid being questioned about the "Son of Sam" case.

Had Brooklyn officials bothered to pursue those February 1978 reports, they would have learned from North Dakota police that Carr was reported to have intimate knowledge of the "Son of Sam" murders and that he told friends that, if New York authorities caught up with him, he would be "fried in the electric chair."

Gannett Westchester Rockland Newspapers has obtained copies of the February 1978 reports and several other documents included in police case files that, while not absolute proof of a conspiracy, are compelling reasons for doubting Berkowitz's May 8, 1978 confessions and guilty plea to being a lone assassin.

And, while different conclusions may be drawn as to the veracity of the information provided to authorities and the exact meaning of the material, the documents strongly buttress the argument that Brooklyn prosecutors erred by closing their files without fully investigating the case.

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By The Associated Press

Terrorist bombings in four of the world's major cities injured five people and left police puzzling over possible links between unfamiliar anti-Turkish and anti-Swiss groups.

Two bombs went off Sunday in London, and one each in Los Angeles and New York. A fifth explosion occurred early today in Paris. There were no fatalities.

Anonymous callers said the explosions in the United States and one of the London blasts were the work of Armenians angry over treatment by Turks. Other callers said anti-Swiss groups were responsible for the second London explosion and the one in Paris.

London police said the two bombings there could be related, although different groups claimed responsibility. The blasts went off minutes apart and a police spokesman said it would be an "extraordinary" coincidence if they were not related.

"But we are not sure about anything at all," said a Scotland Yard spokesman who asked not to be identified.

In New York, four people were hurt, none seriously, when an unoccupied car blew up in front of the Turkish Mission to the United Nations just after 3 p.m. EDT, police said.

At about the same time in Los Angeles, an explosion in front of a Hollywood travel agency owned by a Turkish immigrant shattered windows in several nearby buildings. Bill Pennington of Liverpool, England, who was driving a pickup truck past the building, suffered minor cuts.

The blast, he said, "blew my truck right across the street."

Minutes later, an unidentified man called news outlets in Los Angeles and said a group called "Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide" was responsible for the Los Angeles and New York blasts.

The bombings, he said, were "in

retaliation for the slaughter of Armenian people by the Turks and for the harassment of Armenians by Turkish people in America."

In a massacre that began in 1915, Turks killed an estimated 1.5 million Kurds and Armenians. The Kurds have been conducting a guerrilla campaign in Turkey, Iran and Iraq to win a homeland.

Police said they had never heard of the group.

In London, an unidentified caller said a group called "The Armenian Secret Army" was responsible for an explosion at the Turkish Airlines Office and was protesting the Turkish government's "bloody action" against Kurds and Armenians. The Kurds have been conducting a guerrilla campaign in Turkey, Iran and Iraq to win a homeland.

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Both sides hoping today's talks end Clarkstown strike

By LEN MANIACE Staff Writer

After a week of preparatory negotiations, striking Clarkstown teachers and district officials go to the bargaining table this afternoon for a meeting both sides hope will produce a contract settlement ending the eight-day walkout.

None of the 24 issues dividing the teachers and the district was settled during a four-and-a-half-hour meeting Sunday evening, but both sides said it went as expected.

Union and district negotiators met with a new state mediator to familiarize him with the issues. That mediator, Homer Laflue, director of the New York City office of the state Public Employment Relations Board, is to join Martin Scheinman, who has mediated the talks since an impasse was reached in August.

The specter of an extended strike still looms if a tentative agreement is not reached by Tuesday morning.

and union officials from other districts and Rockland Community College Sunday night pledged support to their striking colleagues in dollars and on the picket lines.

But Susan Margison, president of the Clarkstown Teachers Association, said she is optimistic an agreement can be reached at today's meeting, now set to begin at 3:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Motor Inn in Nanuet. The session is expected to run well into Tuesday morning, when both sides said they would like to see teachers return to the classroom.

"There is no reason that a settlement can't be reached," Ms. Margison said.

Negotiators for the district took a similar view.

"I am still hopeful for a settlement," said Foster Hildebrand, the district's chief negotiator. Ben Board of Education President William Griffin and (V. Press)

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Special Photo: Robert Sciarra

Columbus parade

The Pearl River Cadets are on home turf as they march down Central Avenue in Pearl River Sunday during the county's seventh annual Columbus Day Parade. An estimated 2,000 people

lined the parade route. In Nyack meanwhile, some 10,000 people jammed village streets seeking bargains as merchants brought their wares outdoors for a street sale. Story, picture - B1.

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County exec debate Tuesday

A public debate on the merits of the proposal to change Rockland County's form of government is to be held Tuesday night at Spring Valley High School at 8 p.m.

The debate is being sponsored by The Journal-News and the League of Women Voters. The forum will focus on the county proposition that goes to voters on Nov. 4, calling for adoption of a county charter and creation of the post of Rockland County executive.

The debate will be one of three being sponsored by this newspaper and the League. Other debates are scheduled to be held Oct. 21 at North Rockland High School in Thiells and Oct. 28 at Nyack High School.

