

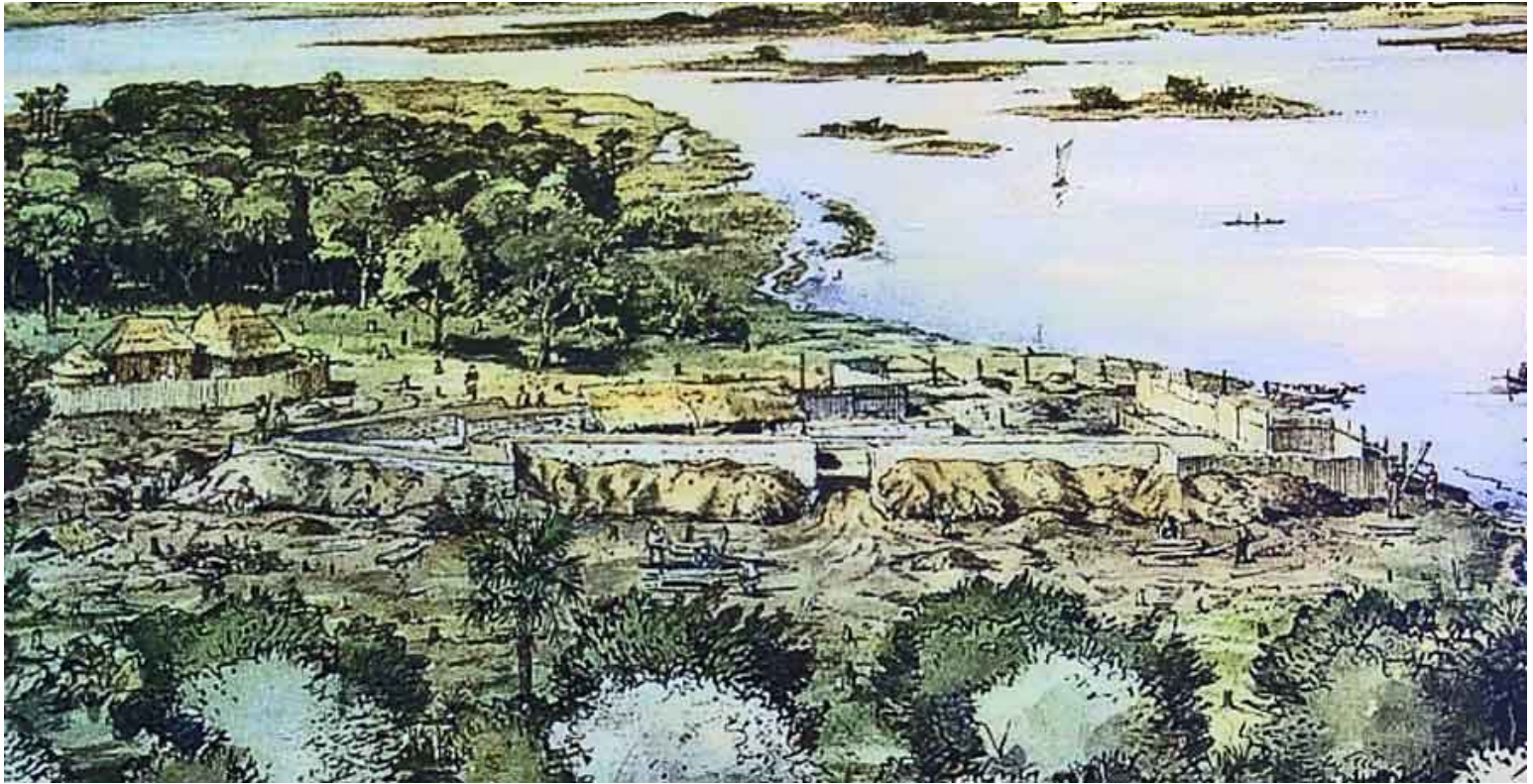
FORT CAROLINE

Wars and battles recorded in history have had an impact on political and cultural life. Some have determined the fate of a civilization; some have changed boundaries and others the politics and even the culture of people affected. Strategy, technology, time, culture, politics, the persistence of the warring parties, and even the weather have determined the outcome of many wars and battles.

Florida's Fort Caroline National Memorial plays a fascinating part in American history. It was one of those battles that had untimely consequences. It was a short-lived the battle that took place in 1564, fought by France and Spain. It was the first European confrontation between two countries to gain control over the land in the New World.

Fort Caroline/La Caroline was located on the mouth of the St. Johns River in Florida. Before the fort and settlement was built, an expedition into the area by Jean Ribault preceded the fort. Ribault left France in 1562 to explore that territory. In 1564, Rene de Goulaine de Laudonniere who had accompanied Ribault had the fort and settlement built. It was named after France's King Charles IX.

<nationalparks.org> <nps.gov>



The battle at Fort Caroline was ordered by King Philip II of Spain. He had learned that the French had established a fort in Florida with Huguenots (French Protestants). Spain's fort 39 miles south of Fort Caroline, was St. Augustine. The battle's scenario was "movie-like." It included a chase at sea, a hurricane, a wrecked fleet, a depleted fort unable to protect it from attackers, a quick takeover, short food supply, and an ultimate surrender. Spanish General Pedro Menéndez de Aviles oversaw removal of the French in Florida. <nps.gov>

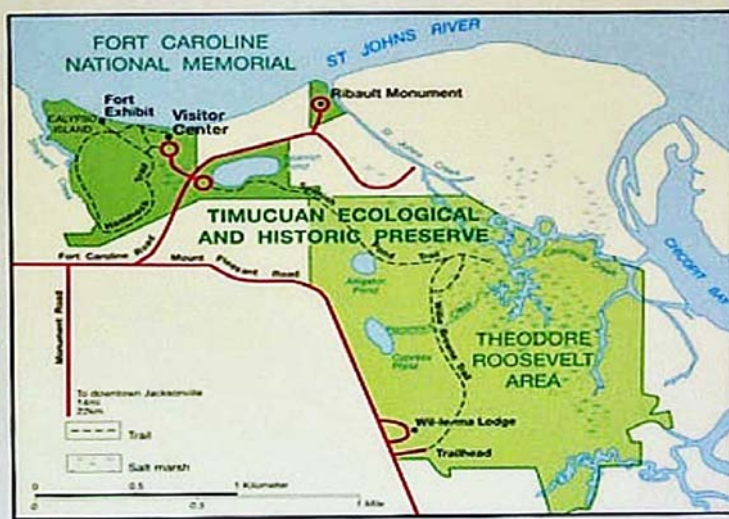
The Native American Timucua tribe helped the French in the settlement's development. The Timucua were made up of several semi-nomadic tribes that occupied today's southern Georgia and northern Florida. Though they spoke the same language, they were not unified. Timucua's were hunter-gatherers as well as agriculturalists. Their presence in the area dates to 3,000 BC. The tribal name Timucua is believed to have come from the Spanish pronunciation meaning lord or chief. The population of the Timucua were numbered as high as 300,000 people. <legendsofamerica.com>

The Spanish founded St. Augustine in 1565. They did not treat the Timucua in a very friendly manner. The Spanish attempted to Christianize them and claim more of their lands. They also seized foodstuffs and forced men and women into uncompromising situations. <legendsofamerica.com>

There were accounts of several battles where many Timucua were killed and forced to change their lifestyle. By 1595 the Timucuan populations was also suffering from diseases brought by the Europeans. <legendsofamerica.com>

The British interactions during the early 17th century found the remaining Timucua fighting on the side of the Spanish. They now faced the British with the help of other aligned tribes who became British allies. By the end of the French and Indian War, the Timucua faced extinction. It is believed the remaining Timucua either migrated with the Spanish to Cuba or became part of the Seminole Indians. <legendsofamerica.com>

The Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve consists of 46,000 acres within the city limits of Jacksonville, Florida. It was named to honor the tribes that inhabited the St. Johns River valley for thousands of years. The area began as a National Park in 1950, but the Preserve was not established until 1988 by an act of Congress. The site has over 200 archeological sites including Fort Caroline and the Kingsley Plantation. The Preserve is under the auspices of the National Park Service, but it also includes private, city, state and federal ownership and involvement.



Fort de la Caroline

(The Spaniards made a horrible, tragic slaughter of our forces, no great was the anger and hatred they had for our nation. They tied with our another to see if we could best out the threats of our people...)

1861, an American engraving
Drawing by J. Sullivan

Juan Ribault arrived at La Caroline on August 28, 1605, with reinforcements for the failing colony. The Ribault's heels were a Spanish Florida fleet on capturing the French. Escaping two captives, Ribault sailed south to defend the Spanish. A violent storm wrecked his fleet.

Assuming that La Caroline was now vulnerable, Spanish commander Pedro Menéndez ordered an overland assault. A French trader sold 500 Spaniards through the jungle and swamp to capture the poorly guarded French colony. The Spaniards killed 143 French colonists, but spared 50 women and children, Laoulonnière, le Moyse, and 40-50 others escaped into the woods and eventually back to France. Only one Spaniard died.

Swampy terrain, a French fort led by Jean Ribault de la Caroline, captured by Fort de la Caroline (now called Fort Marion) in April 1605. The French were helped by the Spanish and captured the fort. The Spanish sailed home and the Spanish were captured the fort about 1605.


The Building of la Caroline

"Every one of us—noblemen, soldiers, workmen, sailors—worked hard to get our post ready to shelter us from the weather and protect us against enemies."

Jacques le Moyne,
1564, in *Caroline* colonist and artist

Measuring a piece of ground in the shape of a triangle, the colonists laid out their fort and settlement. Using shovels, cutting hooks, and hatchets, they cleared the site of trees. The fort and storage barns were erected quickly, with other buildings soon to follow.

The first guardhouse, built in the center of the fort, stood too high and was blown over by fierce winds. Baking ovens were placed outside the fort to keep fire away from the fort's powder magazine. Once the common buildings were completed, the colonists set to work building their homes.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_Caroline, and <https://www.nps.gov/timu/learn/nature/natural-resources.htm>.