



Figure 1. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9f/Floride_francaise_Pierre_du_Val.jpg

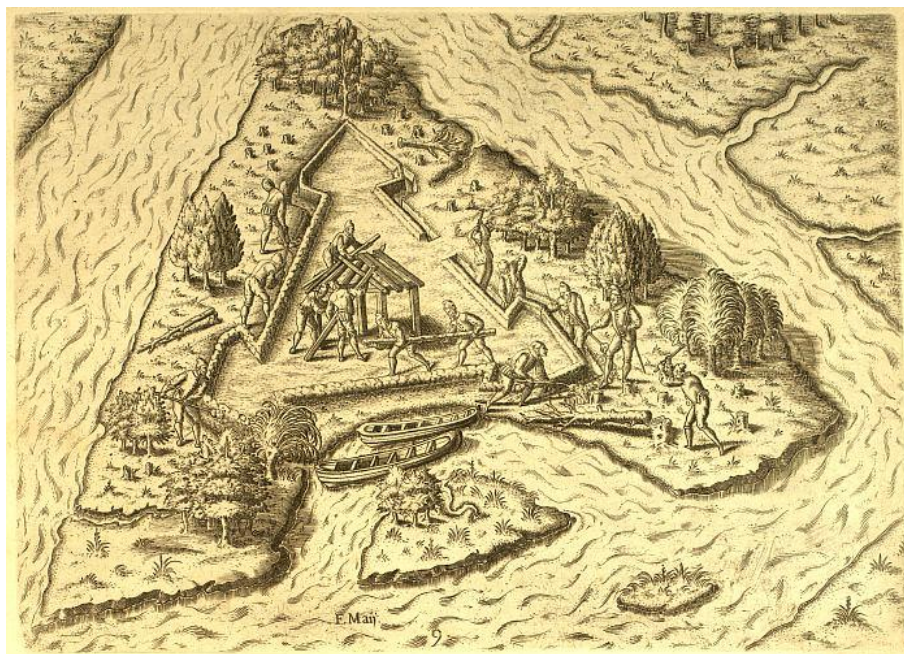


Figure 2. Fort Carolina. <https://fcit.usf.edu/florida/lessons/lemoyne/lemoyne1b.gif>

(Perhaps) the first Thanksgiving

In 1562, Jean Ribault, a naval officer under Admiral Gaspard de Coligny and a Huguenot, began a voyage to the land that is now southeastern United States. He established a colony on Parris Island, South Carolina called Charlesfort. The settlement failed in part because, like the colony at Roanoke Island, it could not be resupplied in a timely fashion due to of the Wars of Religion in France.

Then a second attempt at colonization was made in 1564 under René de Laudonnière. He had been Ribault's second in command on the first voyage. The second voyage left France on April 22, 1564, arriving at the mouth of the Saint John's River in June for the purposes of establishing a settlement called Fort Caroline. The group arrived two months later in June 1564.

René de Laudonnière kept a diary and wrote a memoir entitled "*L'histoire notable de la Floride située es Indes occidentales...*" about the voyage and the building of Fort Caroline (now near Jacksonville, Florida). The memoir was published twelve years after Laudonnière's death in 1586. Laudonnière wrote that on June 30, 1564, the Huguenots set aside a day of Thanksgiving.

..... Le lédemain
sur la plane, ie commanday que l'on sonnast
une trôpette, à fin qu'estans assemblez nous
rendilsions graces à Dieu, de nostre arriuee
fauorable & heureufe. Là nous chantasmes
louanges au Seigneur, le suppliant vouloir
par sa sainte grace, continuer son accoustu-
mee bonté, enuers nous ses pauures serui-
teurs, & déformais nous ayder en toutes nos entreprises,
si que le tout rctournast à sa
gloire,& à l'aduancement de nostre foy.

("f" changed to "s" where appropriate. Did not change "u" to "v".)

On that day on the beach, I commanded us to sing aloud (like a trumpet), to ends that we assembled render thanks to God, of our arrival felicitous and happy. There we sang Praise the Lord, begging him By his holy grace, continue his accustomed kindness, we ourselves his poor servants and deformed ones in all our undertakings, so that the whole returned to its Glory, and the advance of our faith.

The establishment of Fort Caroline struggled as well but eventually was resupplied by Jean Ribault in September 1565. But the Spanish were determined to reclaim this area of Florida and kill all the heretics. On September 20, 1565, Fort Caroline was attacked and destroyed. Perhaps 25 to 40 persons escaped including Laudonnière. The remaining men were killed, and women and children spared. The survivors boarded ships commanded by Ribault. A hurricane drove the ships south and destroyed them on the barrier islands of the Florida coast. Ribault and the remaining Huguenot soldiers and colonists were killed for heresy at Matanzas Inlet under the orders of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, later Governor of Florida under the Spanish King Philip II.

Text: https://archive.org/details/lhistoirenotable00laud_0 page 44b.
Translation my own. Corrections appreciated.