

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

The exploration of the New World and the eventual founding of St. Augustine grew out of the Renaissance, the "re-awakening" of interest in art, music, literature, science, exploration, and learning of all kind. When the Turks captured Constantinople in 1453, the learned men there fled west to Italy. The invention of the printing press made the written word more readily available, and ideas spread throughout Europe. One of these ideas was Protestantism, a major cause in the clash between the French and Spanish in Florida.

What was happening in Europe in the years leading up to the Spanish explorations in the New World? What was happening during other periods in Florida history?

EUROPE

- 1454: Gutenberg perfects printing with moveable type
- 1469: Marriage of Ferdinand & Isabella, uniting Spain
- 1480: Spanish Inquisition begins
- 1492: Spain pushes Moors out of Granada after 800 years and expels Jews from Spain
- 1503: Da Vinci paints "Mona Lisa"
- 1509: Henry VIII becomes king of England; African slave trade with the New World begins
- 1517: Martin Luther nails his 95 Theses to the church door, launching the Protestant Reformation
- Coffee introduced into Europe
- 1519: Magellan begins round-the-world voyage
- 1558: Elizabeth I becomes Queen of England
- 1570: Spanish introduce potato to Europe
- 1572: St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in France-- Hundreds of Huguenots killed by Catholics
- 1588: The defeat of the Spanish Armada by Sir Francis Drake
- 1590: Shakespeare writes his first play
- 1611: King James Bible written
- 1649: King Charles I of England is beheaded; Oliver Cromwell becomes "Lord Protector"
- 1661: Louis XIV builds Versailles
- 1666: The Great Fire of London
- 1685: Johann Sebastian Bach born
- 1701-1714: War of Spanish Succession
- 1756-1763: Seven Years War (French and Indian War in North America)
- 1789: French Revolution begins
- 1808: Napoleon invades Spain

While art and science were flourishing in Europe, explorers from Spain and other European countries were seeking wealth and land in the New World.

AMERICA

- 1492: Columbus' first voyage to America
- 1497: Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot), an Italian hired by England, lands in North America.
- 1513: Ponce de Leon explores Florida
- 1519: Cortés conquers Mexico
- 1521: Ponce de León fatally wounded in Florida by Indians
- 1532: Pizarro explores Peru
- 1534: Jacques Cartier explores the St. Lawrence River for France.
- 1539: DeSoto begins four-year exploration of North America
- 1543: The survivors of the DeSoto Expedition arrive in Mexico after wandering for 2000 miles
- 1562: Jean Ribault explores coast of Florida and founds Charlesfort on present-day Parris Island, SC
- 1564: Laudonnière establishes Fort Caroline on the St. Johns River on land claimed by Spain
- 1565: Pedro Menéndez founds St. Augustine; French attempt to attack, but are blown off course and wrecked; French massacred.
- 1569: First wooden watchtower built at Matanzas Inlet
- 1582: Spanish settle Santa Fé (New Mexico)
- 1585: Raleigh's unsuccessful colony at Roanoke (present-day NC)
- 1586: Drake sacks and burns St. Augustine
- 1607: Jamestown Virginia founded by English
- 1608: Quebec founded by French
- 1614: Dutch establish Nieuw Amsterdam colony (later New York)
- 1619: First African slaves arrive in North America
- 1620: Plymouth Plantation founded by Pilgrims in Massachusetts
- 1622: The Spanish treasure ship Atocha sinks in a hurricane 25 miles off present-day Key West
- 1668: English pirate Robert Searles sacks St. Augustine
- 1670: Charles Town (SC) founded by British
- 1672: Construction begins on Castillo de San Marcos
- 1686: Pirates capture Matanzas Watchtower
- 1692: Salem Massachusetts witch panic and trials
- 1695: Castillo construction completed
- 1702: Gov. Moore of Charles Town attacks St. Augustine
- 1704: Cubo Line built as inner defense line in St. Augustine
- 1715: Entire Spanish treasure fleet for that year sunk off southern Florida coast in a hurricane.
- 1732: George Washington born in Virginia

1733: James Oglethorpe establishes Savannah
 1738: Spanish grant freedom to slaves who escape to Florida; They establish Fort Mose
 1740: Oglethorpe attacks St. Augustine
 1740-42: Fort Matanzas built
 1741-1743: Oglethorpe makes several attempts against Fort Matanzas
 1742: Battle of Bloody Marsh--Spanish repulsed by British at Frederica on St. Simon's Island, Georgia
 1754-1763: French and Indian War
 1764: Florida becomes English colony by treaty (First Treaty of Paris)
 1769: Minorcans arrive at New Smyrna Plantation
 1776: American colonies declare independence from England
 1779: Spain enters war in support of the American colonies
 1783: American Revolution ends; Spain regains Florida (Second Treaty of Paris)
 1809: Abraham Lincoln born
 1815: Battle of New Orleans--last battle of War of 1812
 1818: Andrew Jackson illegally invades Florida and seizes fort at San Marcos de Apalache, south of present-day Tallahassee
 1819: Simón Bolívar secures independence of Columbia from Spain
 1821: Florida becomes a US territory; Fort Matanzas taken out of service
 1822: Brazil gains independence from Portugal
 1823: Monroe Doctrine
 1825: Castillo renamed Fort Marion for Francis Marion, Rev. War hero
 1837: Osceola is imprisoned at Fort Marion (the Castillo) during Second Seminole War
 1845: Florida admitted to the Union as the 27th state
 1861-1865: Civil War; St. Augustine in Union hands from March 1862
 1874: Present St. Augustine Lighthouse completed
 1886: Apache Indians imprisoned at Ft. Marion (the Castillo)
 1888: Henry Flagler opens the Ponce de Leon Hotel in St. Augustine
 1899: Spanish-American War
 1911: Florida East Coast Canal (Intracoastal Waterway) west of Fort Matanzas is dredged
 1912: Flagler's Florida East Coast Railroad reaches Key West
 1927: Bridge of Lions completed
 1942: Congress returns the name "Castillo de San Marcos" to Fort Marion

LATER EVENTS AND RESTORATION AT FORT MATANZAS

By the late 1700s Fort Matanzas needed repairs. A little work was done, but Spain knew her days in Florida were numbered. Soon this gallant little fort would sit lonely and deserted for nearly 100 years, significant only as a curiosity.

1797: Pump on the cistern is replaced; new entry ladder built
 1801-1810: New gun deck floor poured, interior walls plastered, second floor which had caved in near chimney was partially repaired
 1811-1819: Cracks appear on tower parapet; foundations undermined by water; Recommended that garrison sleep in tents, not in fort
 1821: Spain turns Fort Matanzas over to the United States
 1853: Lt. Henry W. Benham examines Fort Matanzas and makes drawings; declares Fort Matanzas obsolete
 1872: Henry Fenn visits Fort Matanzas and makes sketches for the book *Picturesque America*
 1916: US Congress allots \$1025 for the stabilization of Fort Matanzas
 1924: President Coolidge names the Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas as National Monuments
 1929: The sentry box (garita) is re-built
 1935: Docks are built on Anastasia and Rattlesnake Islands; Water erodes the SE corner of the fort revealing wood foundations
 1936: The Castillo and Fort Matanzas are transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service
 1938: Tower vault reconstructed and tie rods replaced
 1940: Retaining wall built to south and east of fort
 1956: Dock on Rattlesnake Island is rebuilt; miscellaneous masonry repairs done.
 1968: Original 8-pounder cannons placed on replica carriages and installed at Fort Matanzas
 1972: Regular ferry service begins
 1978: Iron rods removed and replaced by rods made of rust-resistant stainless steel
 1996: Furnishings placed in rooms
 1999: Two replica 6-pounder cannon installed; Chimney reconstructed
 2001: New dock built on Anastasia Island side