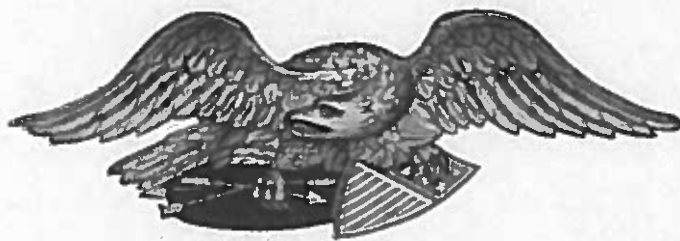


# AMERICAN HERITAGE



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# THE Tragic Dream OF Jean Ribaut

Half a century before Jamestown, a Huguenot sea captain planted the flag of France on America's South Atlantic coast. His hopes were as high as the odds against him

By SHERWOOD HARRIS

**B**y the year 1561 the mainland of North America had acquired a bad reputation, at least as far as Spain was concerned. In the three-score years following Columbus' electrifying voyage, several Spanish attempts to colonize the Gulf and Atlantic coasts had failed dismally. Ponce de León was dead from wounds suffered during an Indian attack in Florida. The ambitious De Soto now lay at rest beneath the wide waters of the Mississippi which he had discovered. Pánfilo de Narváez had disappeared in the Gulf of Mexico, the only survivors among his six hundred men being a handful of gaunt and naked wanderers who miraculously made their way to safety in Mexico (see "The Ordeal of Cabeza de Vaca" in the December, 1960, *AMERICAN HERITAGE*). Despite its early promise, this vast new country had produced no Eldorado, no Fountain of Youth, no short cut to the riches of the Orient. It was, in brief, far less attractive in every respect than Mexico and Peru.

And so on September 23, 1561, King Philip II of Spain declared the mainland off limits to further official Spanish efforts. It was almost inevitable that

Philip's decision would prove to be a tactical mistake. Though Spain was at peace with France at the moment, French pirates operating in the Florida straits were taking an alarming toll of the heavily laden treasure galleons bound for Spain. And Philip's ambassador in Paris warned that plans were afoot to plant a military outpost in Florida. But Philip apparently felt secure in the belief that if mighty Spain could not make a colony stick, France, beset by internal religious and political disorders, was hardly in a position to do better.

Had Philip known about, or been in a position to gauge the character of the man who was about to prove him wrong, he might have reacted differently. This man was Jean Ribaut, a bold French Huguenot sea captain in his early forties who had powerful friends in France and at the court of Queen Elizabeth in England. Ribaut was a man of deeds, rather than words; his only extant writings are contained in a short report of his first trip to the New World. But wherever he went, whatever he did, he moved men and caused things to happen. Thus four hundred years



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afterward we can get a clear impression of this remarkable adventurer and the events he set in motion.

On February 16, 1562, true to the Spanish ambassador's warning, Ribaut set out from Le Havre with two ships, a large sloop, and a company of some 150 sailors, arquebusiers, and adventurous young French Protestant noblemen and officers. This was, in effect, an expeditionary force sent out "to discover and view a certaine long coast of the West India," as Ribaut wrote in his single surviving manuscript, quoted here from the sixteenth-century translation printed in Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages*. If all went well, farmers and artisans and supplies would be sent later, thus establishing a permanent refuge in the New World for France's harried Huguenots. A successful colony would also act as a safety valve in relieving Huguenot political pressure on France's Catholic government, pressure strong enough at that moment to threaten civil war.

At daybreak on the morning of April 30, seventy-three days out from Le Havre, Ribaut's lookouts spotted a long, low, palm-fringed promontory some-

Ribaut first sighted land on April 30, 1562, at Cape François (Promontorium Gallicum, left), somewhere near modern St. Augustine, Florida. When this first landfall revealed no harbor, he continued north until he came upon a sizable stream which he called the River of May—known today as the St. Johns. There, in the scene depicted above, he was welcomed and feted by friendly Indians. (The artist, however, seems to have confused the River of May with another landmark not far to the south, the River of Dolphins [F(luvium) Delfinum]—most probably St. Augustine Inlet, a poor harbor, which Ribaut missed.) This and the engravings on the next six pages are by Theodore de Bry, and were first published at Frankfort in 1591. They are based on the work of Jacques le Moyne de Morgues, who accompanied Ribaut's lieutenant, René de Laudonnière, on the second French expedition to Florida in 1564. Le Moyne did some forty-two paintings which De Bry later acquired. Only one of them (see page 13) still exists.



*Leaving the River of May, Ribaut explored along the Atlantic coast and on May 17 put into a harbor he called Port Royal (Portus Regalis, at left) in present-day South Carolina. Here his men built Charlesfort, near the present Marine "boot camp" on Parris Island. Ribaut returned to France for more colonists and supplies, leaving a volunteer garrison behind. These men (right) raised no food and soon "found themselves in such extremity" that they were forced to appeal to friendly Indians "to succour them in their necessity." Finally giving up hope of ever seeing Ribaut again (he had first become involved in the Catholic-Huguenot wars, and later found himself in an English jail), they built a small boat and set out for home. After travelling more than 3,000 horror-filled miles, they were rescued at sea and taken to Le Havre, fed up with the New World.*

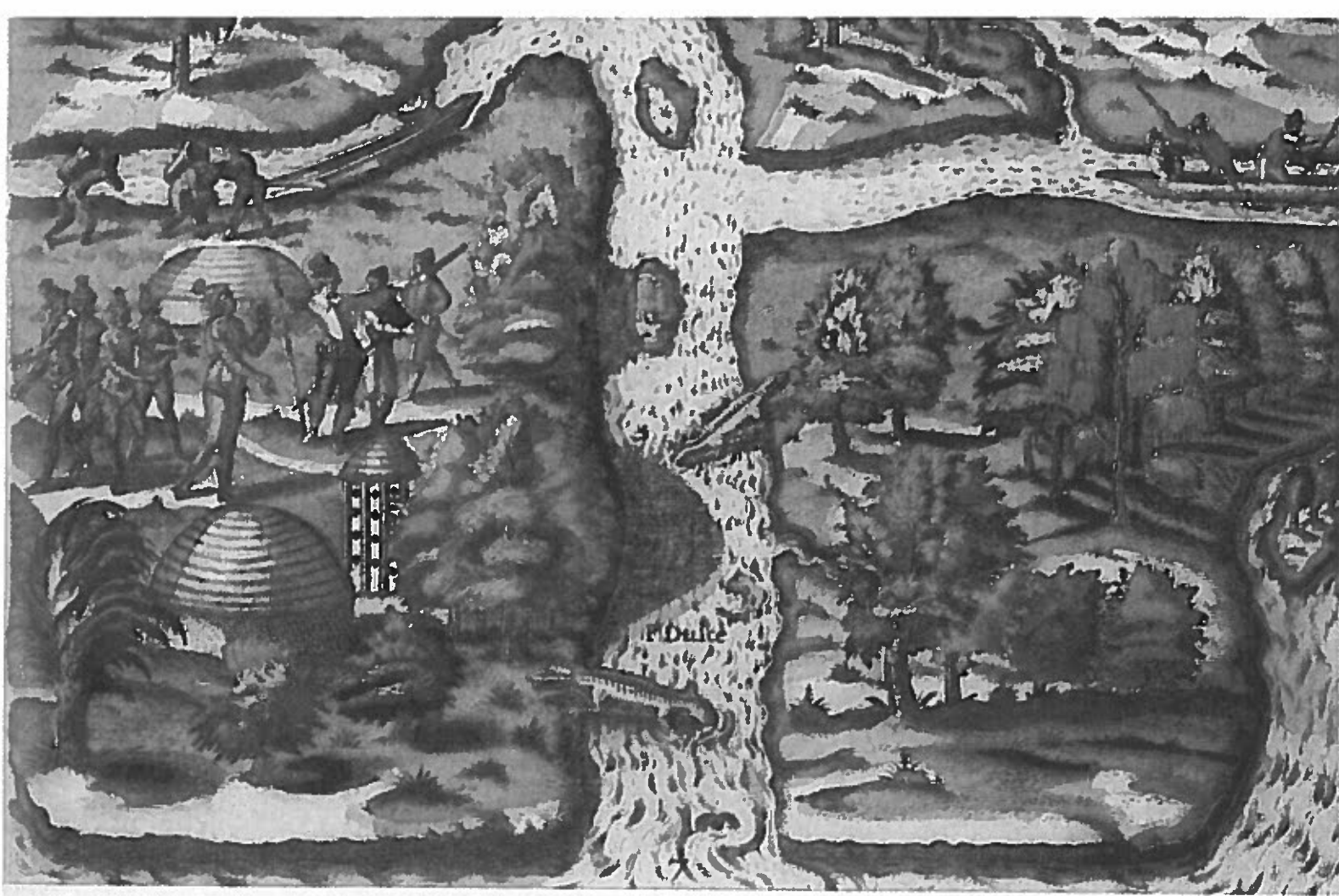
where in the vicinity of present-day St. Augustine, Florida. Ribaut anchored and lowered his pinnaces to explore. The small boats returned shortly after noon with the news that they had found no harbor for the ships. Ribaut weighed anchor and headed north, naming his first landfall in the New World Cape François, in honor of his native land.

Toward evening on the first day, still heading north along the coast with "unspeakable pleasure," Ribaut perceived "a leaping and a breaking of the water, as a stream falling out of the lande into the Sea." He anchored and spent the night there, restlessly awaiting the dawn so he could go ashore and explore what was apparently the mouth of a large fresh-water river.

"The next day, in the morning, being the first of May, wee assayed to enter this Porte," Ribaut continued. Apparently the curious Indians who came to see what was going on had as yet suffered no misfortunes at the hands of white men, though Spanish ships had visited the east coast of Florida before. The Indians showed Ribaut the best places to beach his boats and welcomed him by exchanging gifts. The women

and children, shy at first, soon gathered in great numbers, bringing with them evergreen boughs which they spread out on the sand for their chief and his visitors to relax upon while they tried to communicate.

In keeping with the month and the mood of his reception, Ribaut named his discovery the River of May. (We know it today as the St. Johns, that fascinating stream that flows north from Florida's lake country, past the seaport of Jacksonville, and on out to the ocean past the aircraft carrier docks at Mayport.) Ribaut spent two days exploring the mouth of the May and in planting one of two stone columns he had brought with him to stake out France's claim to this part of the New World. Replenishing the ships' supplies was no problem; the Indians on the north shore soon began competing with a different tribe on the south bank to see which could outdo the other in hospitality. They plied Ribaut and his men with fresh fish, oysters, crabs, lobsters, beans, meal cakes, fresh water—Ribaut's account at this point reads much like that of a man who was pretty well fed up with two and a half months of shipboard fare.



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Lured on by vague Spanish reports of a mighty "River Jordan" farther north, Ribaut left the May and pushed on up the coast past the sounds and rivers of Georgia. These he extravagantly named after the great waterways of France: the Seine, the Somme, the Loire, and so on.

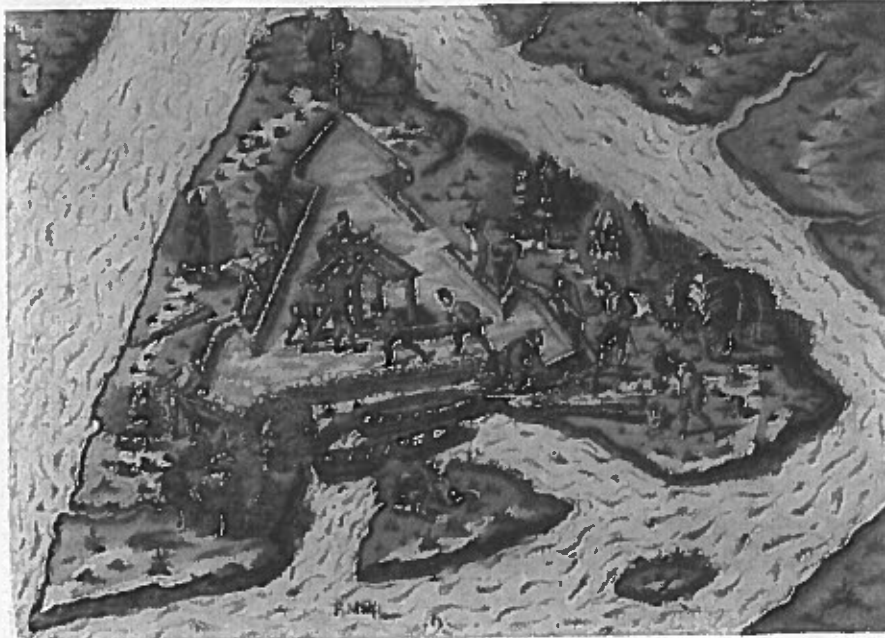
As the expedition passed the present Georgia-South Carolina border around the middle of May, "great fogges and tempests" overtook them. The two ships were forced to head for the safety of deep water. The pinnaces, working in closer to shore, lost contact with their mother ships, but when the storm cleared a day later, they raced out to join forces again, excitedly reporting that they had ridden out the gale in a harbor bigger and more beautiful than any encountered so far.

Ribaut crossed the bar of this new discovery on May 17, 1562. Describing it as "one of the fayrest and greatest Havens of the worlde," Ribaut named the harbor Port Royal. One of his lieutenants, a young nobleman named René de Laudonnière, echoed the awe of the French seamen as they sailed into the magnificent bay: "the depth is such . . . that the greatest

shippes of France, yea, the Arguzes of Venice may enter in there."

Ribaut's soldiers and sailors were not the first white men to visit Port Royal. As near as we can tell from conflicting accounts of his voyage, Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón of Santo Domingo had come this way with a Spanish expedition in the 1520's. In honor of the saint's day on which the harbor was discovered, he had christened it St. Helena, a name that still survives among the Sea Islands of the South Carolina coast. And a year before Ribaut's arrival, a Spanish expedition under Angel de Villafañe had explored the area under orders from King Philip II to find a suitable place for a permanent colony. But Villafañe turned in such a negative report that his voyage served only to hasten Philip's decision to forget about the mainland.

After exploring the broad reaches of the Port Royal harbor and its tributaries, Ribaut concluded that the country was even fairer than that surrounding the River of May. "Wee founde the Indians there more doubtfull and fearefull then the others before," he wrote. "Yet after we had been in their houses and con-



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*With Ribaut languishing in prison, Laudonnière arrived at the River of May in 1564. The Indians received him hospitably, and the chief's son, Athore, showed Laudonnière a pillar Ribaut had previously erected. "On approaching," Le Moyne wrote, "[the French] found that these Indians were worshipping the stone as an idol." In the single surviving Le Moyne painting, this scene is depicted at right. Back at the mouth of the May, Laudonnière laid out a site for a new defense point (left), which he called Fort Caroline. The next day, Le Moyne reported, "after offering prayers to God and giving thanks for their prosperous arrival, they all went briskly to work . . . some to dig the earth, some to make brushwood fascines, some to put up wall. Every man was engaged with spade, saw, axe, or other tool; and so diligently were they that the work went rapidly . . .*

gregated with them, and shewed curtesie . . . they were somewhat emboldened." Ribaut planted his second stone column and summoned his men to his flagship to discuss their next move.

"I thinke there is none of you that is ignorant of how great consequence this our enterprize is, and also how acceptable it is unto our yong King," he began. Reiterating the point that all who heeded him would be highly commended to the French court, Ribaut then asked for volunteers to stay in Port Royal while he returned to France for reinforcements. "You shalbe registred for ever as the first that inhabited this strang[e] countrey," he concluded.

Ribaut was apparently overwhelmed with volunteers. He picked roughly two dozen soldiers to remain behind and retained all his sailors for the return voyage to France. At the request of the men who were to stay on, Ribaut built a fort which he named Charlesfort in honor of his sovereign, Charles IX. Ribaut stocked it with food and left cannon, arquebuses, and ammunition with the soldiers. On June 11 the two ships departed, Ribaut indulging a bit in his

favorite sport of river exploring before heading east for France. He promised to return in six months with more colonists and supplies.

At this point Ribaut concludes his account of the first French settlement in America. He was fated never to see his tiny colony again. For when he reached France the political tides had turned against the Huguenots. Civil war had broken out, embroiling the Protestant citizens of Ribaut's native Dieppe in a series of battles with the Catholic forces of the government. Ribaut fought alongside his townsmen, and when the city capitulated in October of 1562 he fled to England.

**T**here he tried to interest Queen Elizabeth in supporting his colony. An expedition was arranged under the notorious entrepreneur Thomas Stukely, but Ribaut became suspicious of his motives. Fearing that Stukely might force the colony to swear allegiance to England, Ribaut secretly decided to back out of the deal and make off to France with some of the ships that had been readied for the



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voyage. The plot was discovered. Seized before he could make good his escape, Ribaut was thrown into prison for two years.

The colony at Port Royal prospered at first. The site Ribaut had chosen could hardly have been better. Temperate in climate and healthy, the country surrounding Port Royal abounded in wildlife of staggering variety. Even today a few minutes' walk across the tidal flats at any time of the year will produce a meal of oysters and clams; the woods are full of deer, wild turkeys, and other game. As Ribaut noted in his report, "there is so many small byrdes, that it is a strange thing to bee seene." Port Royal, in short, was "one of the goodliest, best, and fruitefullest countreys that ever was seene."

Having no knowledge of the events that were to prevent their commander from returning on schedule, however, the men at Charlesfort made no provision to live off the land. Fortunately, they were on good terms with the local Indians. Continuing with the story of the Port Royal settlement from the point where Ribaut leaves off, René de Laudonnière writes: "their

virtualles beganne to waxe short, which forced them to have recourse unto their neighbors . . . which gave them part of all the virtualles which they had, and kept no more unto themselves [than] would serve to sow their fieldes."

As the fall of 1562 wore on without sight of a sail, the stores of the nearby Indian tribes began to run low because of the additional burdens placed on them by the colonists. The natives retired deeper into the woods to forage on roots and nuts and whatever game they could kill. At this point a disastrous fire broke out at Charlesfort, consuming almost all the Frenchmen's remaining supplies. For a time they were able to sustain themselves by trading knives and trinkets with more distant tribes, "but misfortune or rather the just judgment of God would have it," wrote Laudonnière, "that those which could not bee overcome by fire nor water, should be undone by their owne selves."

When Ribaut departed for France he had placed the garrison under the command of Captain Albert de la Pierria, a soldier of long experience who seems to have



Like their predecessors at Charlesfort, the French at Fort Caroline depended for their food supply on the Indians, whose agricultural methods Le Moyne portrayed at left. "When the ground is sufficiently broken up and levelled," he wrote, "the women come with beans and millet, or maize. Some go first with a stick and make holes, in which the others place the beans, or grains." They then sought shelter in the forest for the winter, harvesting late in the spring. Eventually the Indians rebelled against the French demands, however, and under a chief named Holata Outina (right) attacked Laudonnière's men. Outina "used to march with regular ranks . . . himself walking alone in the middle of the whole force, painted red." It was a grim portent of the Spanish attack which in September, 1565, destroyed Fort Caroline, dashing the brave hopes of Jean Ribaut.

been something of a martinet. As the problems of survival in the New World became more urgent, the Captain dealt more and more severely with his men. He hanged a drummer named Guernache for a "small fault"; then, because of some unrecorded misdemeanor, he banished a soldier named La Chère to a tiny uninhabited island nearby. Though the Captain promised La Chère food and water, he failed to keep his word. The other soldiers mutinied, killed the Captain, and rescued the starving La Chère. Returning to Charlesfort, they resolved to build a boat in which to return to France. The six months were up, and Ribaut had not returned.

In all the annals of the sea there is nothing quite like the voyage of this handful of French soldiers back to their native land. Though Ribaut's men probably did not realize it, the distance from Port Royal to Le Havre is approximately 3,500 miles.\* Ribaut had

\* In 1789 Captain William Bligh covered 3,618 miles in an open boat in forty-three days following the famous mutiny aboard *H.M.S. Bounty*, but Bligh had a sturdy boat and an unusually capable and well-disciplined crew.

taken all his sailors back with him to France. Thus the Charlesfort garrison had no real idea of the magnitude of the voyage they were about to attempt. Nor did they really know much about building a boat. With the aid of friendly Indians, no doubt happy to learn that they were about to get rid of the insatiable soldiers, Ribaut's men nevertheless put together a vessel they deemed seaworthy. Its seams were caulked with pine resin and Spanish moss; its sails were patched together from shirts and sheets. Not surprisingly, one of the party, a youth named Guillaume Rouffi, elected to remain at Charlesfort rather than take his chances on the open sea in so crude a boat.

René de Laudonnière, who interviewed the survivors of this remarkable voyage, estimated that the soldiers were well along their way across the wintry Atlantic when they had their first setback. "After they had sayled the third part of their way, they were surprized with calmes which did so much hinder them, that in three weekes they sailed not above five and twentie leagues," he wrote. They rationed their remaining food, each receiving twelve grains of mill a day.





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"Yea, and this felicitie lasted not long," Laudonnière continued. "For their victuals failed them altogether at once: and they had nothing for their more assured refuge but their shooes and leather jerkins which they did eat . . . some of them dranke the sea water, others did drink their owne urine: and they remained in such desperate necessitie a very long space, during the which part of them died for hunger."

**T**he calm that plagued them now gave way to a storm. "As men resolved to die," they settled down in the bilges to await the end. One man, however, still had his wits about him. He convinced his comrades that if the wind continued blowing from the same quadrant, they would sight land in three days. The storm abated, but by the end of three days no land had appeared.

"Wherefore in this extreme dispaire certaine among them made this motion that it was better that one man should dye, [than] that so many men should perish: they agreed therefore that one should die to sustaine the others," said Laudonnière. They drew lots and

executed the loser. Ironically, this was La Chère, the soldier who had survived the unreasonable banishment. They divided La Chère's flesh among themselves — "a thing so pitiful to recite, that my pen is loth to write it," Laudonnière said.

Before it became necessary to resort to cannibalism a second time, land was sighted, and the survivors were picked up by an English barque. Among its crew was a Frenchman who had been on the first voyage to Port Royal, but who had returned to France with Ribaut. He recognized his emaciated compatriots and saw to it that they were well treated.

Throughout the rest of 1563 and on into early 1564, Guillaume Rouffi, the man who had mistrusted the crude boat, was France's sole representative on the mainland. In June, 1564, he was carted off to Havana by Don Hernando de Manrigue de Rojas, who had been sent out belatedly to get rid of the Charlesfort garrison.

Now the Atlantic Coast reverted to its native state. England had not yet put in a colonizing appearance. The failure of the Charlesfort colony had somewhat

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## The Tragic Dream of Jean Ribaut CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

vindicated Philip II's decision to de-emphasize the mainland, and Spain made no further serious efforts to gain a permanent foothold there.

But in France, meanwhile, the Truce of Amboise granted the Huguenots a temporary breathing spell. Unable to forget the allure of the New World with its promise of a Protestant haven, Huguenot leaders began making plans to send out another expedition. Since Ribaut was still imprisoned in England, the leadership of the second voyage to America passed to Laudonnière, the observant and articulate chronicler of the first trip. On April 22, 1564, he departed from Le Havre with a fleet of three ships. Like Ribaut's first voyage, Laudonnière's was essentially military in character. Of the 300 people accompanying him, 110 were sailors, 120 were soldiers, and the rest were artisans, servants, and page boys. There were also four women aboard and, as might have been expected, this caused trouble.

Laudonnière raised the coast of Florida on June 22, then proceeded to the River of May, where the Indians greeted him like a returning prodigal. To Laudonnière's amazement, they had carefully tended the stone pillar erected by Ribaut two years earlier; more, they had been worshipping it. "Wee found the same crowned with crownes of Bay, and at the foote thereof many little baskets full of Mill which they call in their language Tapaga Tapola," Laudonnière wrote. "Then when they came thither they kissed the same with great reverence and besought us to do the like, which we would not denie them, to the ende we might drawe them to be more in friendship with us."

Laudonnière explored the coast to the north, but turned back before reaching the abandoned site at Port Royal. He decided to make his permanent headquarters with the friendly savages at the mouth of the May River. Here he built a sizable compound which he named Fort Caroline.

Despite the happy homecoming, Laudonnière's problems at Fort Caroline soon began to accumulate almost faster than he could handle them. Within three months of his arrival he was stricken with a fever, probably malaria, that sapped him of his strength throughout his stay in Florida. Several mutinies broke out. One group of dissident settlers tried to poison Laudonnière; when this plot failed they attempted to blow him up by placing a keg of gunpowder under his sickbed. A short time later, two shallops that the sailors had recently built were stolen by mutineers, who then embarked on a career of piracy.

Laudonnière aggravated his situation by making the

same basic error that the garrison at Charlesfort had made: he relied too heavily on the generosity of the Indians. When winter came, the modest granaries of the neighboring tribes were exhausted; the Frenchmen had to forage for roots and bargain with distant peoples to stave off starvation. Inevitably, the Indians rebelled against these constant demands. Under the leadership of a powerful chief named Outina, they finally attacked a French foraging party, killing two and wounding twenty-two others.

With some justification, Laudonnière attributed his difficulties to the lack of support from home. "For if wee had bene succoured in time & place, & according to the promise that was made unto us, the warre which was between us and Outina, had not fallen out," he complained. "Neither should wee have had occasion to offend the Indians, which with all paines in the world I entertained in good amitie."

Reports of the unrest at Fort Caroline had meanwhile reached the homeland via a French ship that had called there in the fall of 1564. Distance seems to have magnified the bill of particulars against the unfortunate Laudonnière; he was reported to be living in sin with one of the four women on the expedition and was said to be acting like a tyrant, even trying to set himself up as king.

Jean Ribaut, now out of prison and back in France itching to return to America, was commissioned to lead a third expedition to Florida and take over command from Laudonnière. He left Le Havre on May 10, 1565, with five vessels carrying some 600 soldiers, laborers, women, and children. Unlike the two previous expeditions, this was a full-fledged colonizing effort. Commanding one of the ships in Jean Ribaut's train was his son Jacques, like his father a captain in the French Navy.

Unknown to the French, there was trouble ahead. Two months after Ribaut left Le Havre, a Spanish force departed from Cadiz under the command of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, one of the ablest admirals in the Spanish fleet. His destination was also Florida, and his orders directed him to find out "whether there are on said coast or country, any settlers who are corsairs, or of any other nations not subject to us." If this proved to be true (and Menéndez knew it was, for the intelligence pipeline between Spain and France was working better), he was bluntly ordered to "cast them out by the best means that seems to you possible." Though the two countries were still at peace, a battle fought in far-off Florida could be diplomat-

ically swept under the rug if it proved to be embarrassing in Europe.

After dawdling for a considerable length of time to explore more rivers, Ribaut arrived at Fort Caroline on August 28. Here at last was the succor the ailing Laudonnière had been longing for. But events set in motion three years before by the first French inroads into what Spain considered her exclusive territory were now rapidly moving to a climax. A week after Ribaut's arrival, six Spanish warships appeared off the coast near the mouth of the May River.

Though Ribaut was on shore, the men aboard his ships cut their anchor chains and put to sea. The Spaniards gave chase, but were rapidly outdistanced by the smaller, faster French vessels. As the Spanish ships headed back toward the coast, the French fleet shadowed them, found they had put into St. Augustine's harbor, some thirty-five miles to the south, and then reported back to Ribaut.

Always the man of action, Ribaut ordered all able-bodied men at Fort Caroline aboard his ships to pursue the enemy. Laudonnière protested that this would leave him defenseless against an overland attack, but Ribaut was now in command. On September 10, leaving two ships behind, he set sail to attack Menéndez, who meanwhile had disembarked his forces at St. Augustine and begun to fortify his position.

Among the many things discovered in the New World—tobacco, corn, pumpkins, turkeys—most history books fail to make note of the hurricane. Peculiar to the east coast of North America (and to the east coast of Asia, most of which was *terra incognita* in 1565), the hurricane posed problems that the European seaman was totally unable to cope with. Its portents—high cirrus "mare's-tails" in the sky, the ominous calm, the first fitful, nervous gusts—had not as yet been related to the ferocity that was likely to follow. Once caught in a hurricane with its contradictory winds and mountainous waves, the most experienced and able European sailors were in a realm that had existed heretofore only in the imaginations of madmen. Shortly after Ribaut made his first contact with the Spanish at St. Augustine, a hurricane struck.

The great tempest wrecked three of his ships. With great difficulty, he and 600 of his men made it to shore near the harbor, where the Spanish fleet had safely ridden out the storm. Though Menéndez did not yet know of the extent of the catastrophe that had befallen Ribaut, he surmised that the French fleet had been badly scattered.

After a swift overland march, Menéndez attacked Fort Caroline early on the morning of September 20. Routed out in their nightshirts, Laudonnière's small garrison were unable to put up any effective resistance

and fled through the marshes in an attempt to reach the two ships that, anchored in the river, had survived the hurricane. By nightfall the Spanish had killed 132 Frenchmen without suffering a single casualty. The survivors were few: Laudonnière, the artist Le Moyne, the woman who had caused Laudonnière so much grief, and eighteen or twenty others. They were taken aboard the two ships, one of which was commanded by Ribaut's son, and hastily set sail for France.

Meanwhile Jean Ribaut and his men, stranded on the hot Florida beaches without food, water, or arms, began to surrender a few at a time. They were asked, "Are you Catholics or Lutherans, and are there any who wish to confess?" All but a few remained stout Huguenots to the bitter end and they were led out behind the dunes and summarily executed. On October 10 Ribaut himself and the last remnants of his force capitulated. They too were put to death. For an epitaph on his unknown grave, the remarkable Ribaut might have had the words of his executioner, Pedro Menéndez: "The King of France could do more with him with fifty thousand ducats, than with others with five hundred thousand; and he could do more in one year than another in ten, for he was the most experienced seaman and corsair known."

And so ended France's ill-starred attempts to colonize the east coast of what would become the United States. Now the die was cast: the departure of the French from Fort Caroline marked the beginning of the pattern that was to shape North America for all time.

Under Pedro Menéndez, the Spanish settlement at St. Augustine took hold; Spain was to dominate Florida until she ceded it to the United States in 1821. As a precaution, the Spanish twice attempted to establish outposts at the site of Ribaut's first settlement at Port Royal, but as their influence began to wane and the

CULVER PICTURES



The massacre of Ribaut, in a nineteenth-century engraving

English began to push farther south from Virginia, these forts were abandoned, leaving as their only legacy "tabby," a kind of concrete the Spaniards had learned to make from oyster shells; copied by the English, it may still be seen in the foundations of the older homes of the lower South Carolina coast.

The French, following the lead of Jacques Cartier, now shifted their attention to Canada and began pushing down the Mississippi Valley and up from New Orleans. Today the only testaments to their dramatic moves to colonize South Carolina and Florida are two monuments, one at the site of Fort Caroline on the St. Johns River near present-day Jacksonville, the other on the seaward tip of Parris Island, South Carolina, home of the famous U.S. Marine Corps "boot camp," where Charlesfort is believed to have stood. (The exact location of Charlesfort is still much disputed. Evidence recently unearthed suggests that it may have been on nearby Port Royal Island—Ed.)

A few place names—monuments of a less formal nature—tell a different story. Ribaut's "fayrest and greatest haven" in South Carolina is still known as Port Royal. And down on the east coast of Florida, an inlet near St. Augustine is still called Matanzas. In Spanish the word means slaughter, and near here lie the bones of Jean Ribaut, a man who might have altered the course of American history were it not for a hurricane.

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*Port Royal and its environs are home country to Sherwood Harris, who was raised in nearby Beaufort, South Carolina. Mr. Harris, formerly a member of the Saturday Evening Post's Washington bureau, resigned in 1960 to devote his time to free-lance writing.*

*For further reading: Jean Ribaut, Together with a Transcript of an English Version in the British Museum, by Jeanette Thurber Connor (Florida State Historical Society, 1927); The Land Called Chicora, by Paul Quattlebaum (University of Florida Press, 1956).*

## *The Strike That Made a President*

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eligible for a sinecure: a directorship in some life insurance company or the peace of the First National Bank.

Storrow and the members of the Citizens' Committee spent a baffling weekend trying to locate the Governor. They themselves wanted no open break with the police. Their compromise plan, approved by Mayor Peters, would have allowed an unaffiliated union. If the men would call off their strike there would be no disciplinary action taken against the leaders, and the various other grievances would be submitted to an impartial board. The counsel for the union urged the membership to accept. If the Governor and the Commissioner had agreed, they would undoubtedly have done so. But Curtis declined to accept any solution "that might be construed as a pardon of the men on trial." On Monday morning he suspended the nineteen police leaders.

Peters, as fluttery and ineffectual as ever, scurried about trying to find some last-minute solution, although by now he was convinced that the strike was unavoidable. As mayor he had the right in an emergency to call out the units of the State Guard within the Boston area. Characteristically, he was not aware of this.

Coolidge returned suddenly to his office on Monday afternoon in a testy mood; at about the same time the police were voting, 1,134 to 2, to strike on the following day at five o'clock. Monday evening Coolidge

had dinner with Storrow, Peters, and several members of the Citizens' Committee in a private room of the Union Club. Before the dinner Storrow and Peters begged the Governor to sponsor the compromise plan as the last hope of averting the strike. He refused. Finally they asked him to mobilize three or four thousand troops of the State Guard. He maintained that the situation could be left safely in Curtis' hands. In spite of the overwhelming vote to strike, Curtis still felt that the majority of the police would remain loyal to him.

Meanwhile, after a series of calls from Peters, the adjutant general, Jesse Stevens, decided that a certain amount of preparation might be wise after all and sent out verbal orders for the State Guard's only mounted squadron to assemble at the Commonwealth Armory. Coolidge learned of this minor mobilization several hours after the Union Club dinner. Knowing by politician's instinct that to call out the militia prematurely is political suicide, he telephoned Curtis and angrily started for the Armory.

With a pale and silent Curtis just behind him, Coolidge strode through the Armory arch. A hundred or so troopers were standing about on the lower floor and stared in surprise at their irate Governor, who quaked at the commanding officer, Major Dana Gallup, "Who told you people to come here? Go home!" With that he stalked petulantly up the stairs to the orderly room, followed by Gallup and Curtis.