

# Summary: First Colonies

## The French Come to Florida

By the mid-1500s, Spain had rich colonies in Mexico, South America, and the Caribbean. France wanted colonies too. In 1562, France sent Jean Ribault to start a colony in Florida. Most people in France were Catholics, but Ribault was a Huguenot. Huguenots were Protestants.

Ribault landed near present-day St. Augustine. He built a fort. The Huguenots stayed at the fort while Ribault sailed to France to get supplies. Ribault could not return to Florida right away. The Huguenots tried to return to France.

In 1564, France sent soldiers, settlers, and artisans to Florida. Their leader was Rene Laudonnière. The French settlers landed near the St. Johns River. They built a fort called Fort Caroline. The settlers arrived too late to plant crops. So, they traded supplies for food with the Timucua Indians. After a while, the settlers ran out of food. France sent Ribault to take control of the new colony. The settlers stayed.

## Spain Claims Florida

Spain did not want France to colonize Florida. In 1565, the king of Spain sent Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and an army to take control of Florida. In Florida, Menéndez set up camp in an Indian village. Later, that village became St. Augustine.

The Spanish began to build a fort. The French decided to attack. Ribault's soldiers sailed towards St. Augustine, but a storm wrecked many of their ships. Menéndez found out that many French soldiers were caught in the storm. He attacked Fort Caroline and easily defeated the soldiers there. Spain took control of Florida.

The Spanish settlers built houses in St. Augustine. They learned to grow crops from the Timucua. Menéndez built forts along the Atlantic coast. The forts guarded the settlements and protected Spanish treasure ships from pirates. Menéndez also sent priests to convert American Indians to the Catholic religion.

### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**colony** *noun*, a settlement ruled by a distant country

**artisan** *noun*, a person who makes useful things such as tools, pottery, and clothing

### After You Read

**REVIEW** Why did the colonists trade with the Timucua? Circle two sentences that tell the answer.

**REVIEW** How did Menéndez help Spain gain control of Florida? Underline the sentence that tells what Menéndez did after he found out the French soldiers got caught in the storm.