

American Minute with Bill Federer Persecution in Europe led to Settlement of America, & How the Pilgrims almost sailed to Guyana, South America

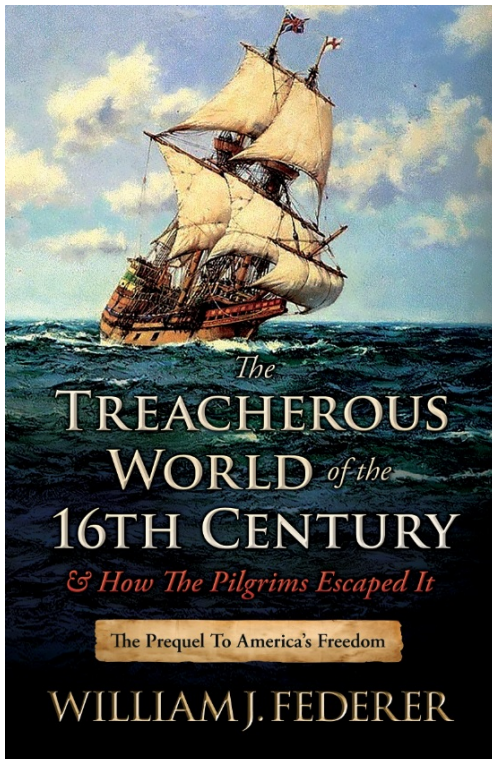
The Pilgrims fled from England to Holland in 1607.

When Spain threatened to invade Holland, the Pilgrims decided to flee again.



They considered sailing to **Guyana** in **South America**, as they heard of its tropical climate.

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[The Treacherous World of the 16th Century & How the Pilgrims Escaped It: The Prequel to America's Freedom](#)

William Bradford

wrote in *Of Plymouth Plantation*:

"Some ... had thoughts and were earnest for

Guiana ... Those

for **Guiana** alleged that the country was rich, fruitful, and blessed with a **perpetual spring**."



Why did the Pilgrims change their minds?

They were reminded of how close **Guyana** was to the "**Spanish Main**," the area of the **Caribbean Sea** controlled by

Spain, and how **Spanish soldiers** massacred the **French settlement of Fort Caroline, Florida**.

Spain had claimed **Florida** since **Juan Ponce de León's** exploration in 1512, reputedly looking for the **Fountain of Youth**.

Ponce de León named it **La**

Florida as he explored it during the season of **Pascua Florida** ("Flowery Easter").



In the following years, **Spaniards** explored and attempted settlements:

- 1516, **Diego Miruelo** explored the Tampa Bay area;

- 1517, **Francisco Hernández de Cordova** explored southwest Florida;

- 1519, **Alonso Álvarez de Pineda** mapped the Gulf of Mexico coast;



- 1519, **Ferdinand Magellan** set sail to circumnavigate the globe;
- 1521, **Ponce de León** attempted a settlement near Charlotte Harbor;
- 1521, **Pedro de Quejo & Francisco Gordillo** landed at Winyah Bay;
- 1521, **Hernán Cortés** conquered Aztec Mexico;
- 1525, **Pedro de Quejo** explored Amelia Island to Chesapeake Bay;
- 1526, **de Ayllón** explored the South Carolina coast and attempted the settlement of San Miguel de Gualdape near Sapelo Sound, Georgia. As

Dominican friars accompanied them, historians speculate the first Catholic Mass was celebrated in what would be the United States;

- 1528, **Pánfilo de Narváez** landed near Tampa Bay with 400 settlers. After eight years of long marches through swamps and shipwrecked rafts on the Texas coast, only five survived. Four returned to Mexico and Juan Ortiz was a captive of the Indians for 12 years;
- 1532, **Francisco Pizarro** conquered Peru's Inca Empire;

- 1539, **Hernando de Soto**, who had helped Pizarro conquer the Inca, landed in Tampa Bay. De Soto found Juan Ortiz, who related rumors of gold in Apalachee.



De Soto seized Indians as guides. He crossed Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, the Great Smoky Mountains, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma, before dying in 1542 near the Mississippi;

- 1540, **Francisco Vázquez de Coronado** looked for the Seven Cities of Gold, exploring Mexico, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas,



Oklahoma and Kansas, viewing the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River;

- 1542, **Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo** sailed up the coast of California;
- 1559, **Tristán de Luna y Arellano** attempted to settle Pensacola Bay;
- 1561, **Angel de Villafañe** attempted to settle Santa Elena (Port Royal Sound).



Indian attacks, tropical storms, hunger, diseases, and failure to find gold, resulted in the **failure of Spanish settlements.**

Unfortunately, during this period, some Spanish conquistadors raided Indian villages, capturing and enslaving hundreds of natives.

The dominant aspect of these **Spanish conquests**

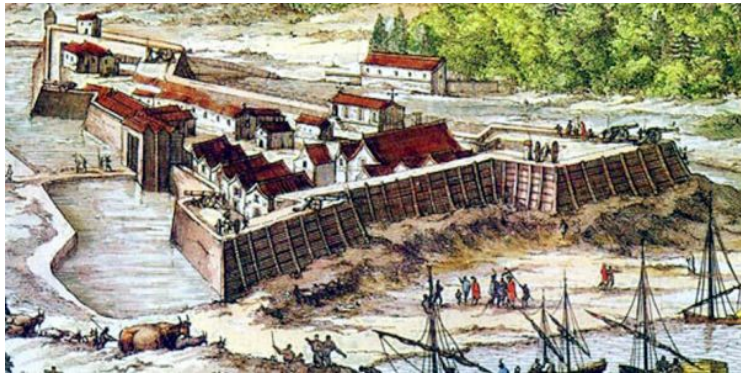
convinced the **Pilgrims** not to attempt to settle near Spanish-controlled territories, as



Pilgrim Governor William Bradford explained:

"... but to this it was answered, that it was out of question ... If they should there live, and do well, the **jealous Spaniard** would **never suffer them long**, but would **displant or overthrow them**, as he did the **FRENCH in FLORIDA.**"

The **French** had attempted a settlement in **Florida** in 1564 on the banks of **St. John's River**.



Though earlier, in 1534, **French** explorer **Jacques Cartier** mapped the shores of the **Saint Lawrence River**, the **French Fort Caroline** was the **first French settlement** in **area of present-day United States.**

Fort Caroline was founded by **French Protestant Christians** known as **Huguenots.**

Why did the **French Huguenots** sail to Florida to attempt a settlement?



They wanted to escape the **Wars of Religion** which had been ravaging **France** for over a century.

During this era in Europe, **whatever a king believed, his kingdom had to believe.**

There was **little freedom of conscience**, as governments dictated the religious beliefs of citizens and persecuted those believing differently.

Due to his contempt for the **Catholic Holy Roman Emperor Charles V** of Spain, **France's King Francis I** did the unimaginable - he made an alliance with the **Muslim Ottoman Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent.**



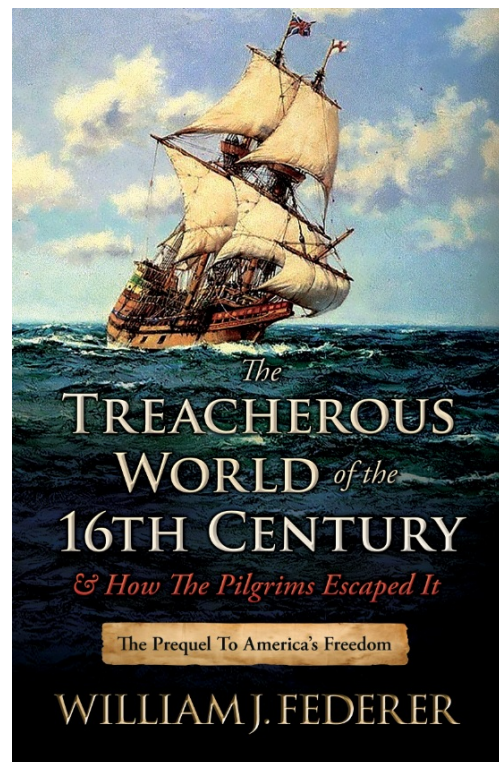
This was the **first time a European monarch** made such an alliance with a **Muslim power**, resulting in calls being made for **Francis I** to be excommunicated.

Francis I was originally tolerant of Protestants, but he soon turned to



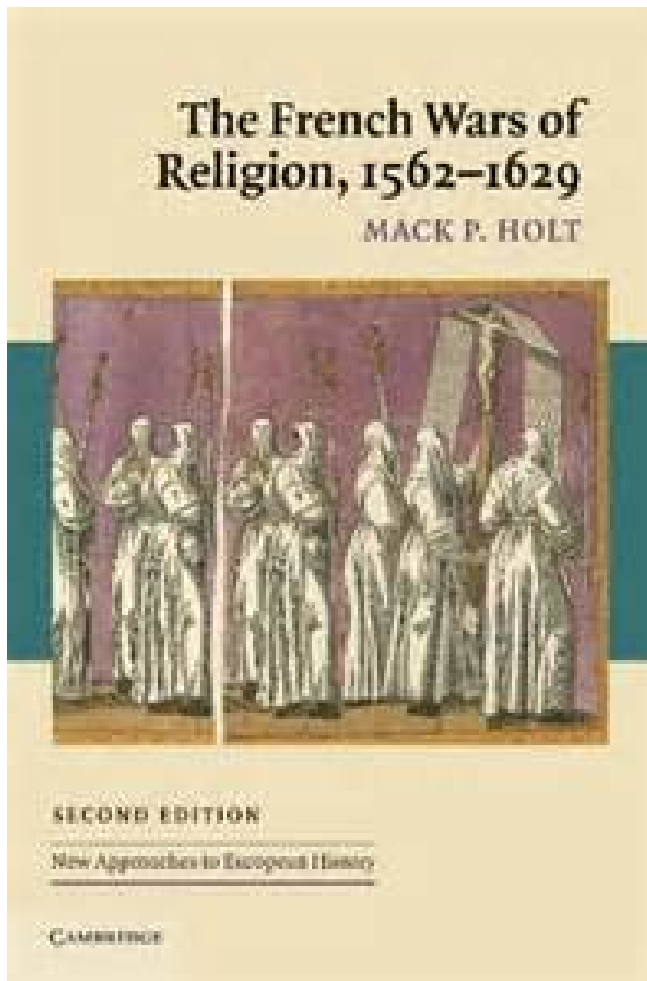
aggressively persecute them, having thousands killed in the **Massacre of the Waldensians of Mérindol** in 1545.

[The Treacherous World of the 16th Century & How the Pilgrims Escaped It: The Prequel to America's Freedom](#)



Religious persecutions increased in **France** with battles and tragedies such as the **Massacre of Wassy** in 1562,

the **St. Bartholomew's Day massacre** in 1572, instigated by the queen consort **Catherine de' Medici**.



The Edict of Nantes in 1589 provided some relief until it was officially **revoked by King Louis XIV** who resumed persecution with the **Edict of Fontainebleau** in 1685.

Government persecution against **Huguenots** for their religious beliefs increased after the **assassination of King Henry IV** on May 4, 1610.

When **Louis XIII** became the **French king** in 1610, he had as his **Chief Minister, Cardinal Richelieu**.

Cardinal

Richelieu consolidated State power, crushed dissent, confiscated lands, and laid the ground-work for **the creation of an absolute monarchy in France.**



Cardinal Richelieu destroyed the castles of the princes, dukes, and lesser aristocrats so they could not rebel.



Cardinal Richelieu imposed burdensome taxes, censored the press, and had such a broad network of internal spies spying on citizens that it is considered the origin of the modern secret service.



Arresting and executing his political rivals, **Cardinal Richelieu** was portrayed as a power-hungry villain in Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* (1844).



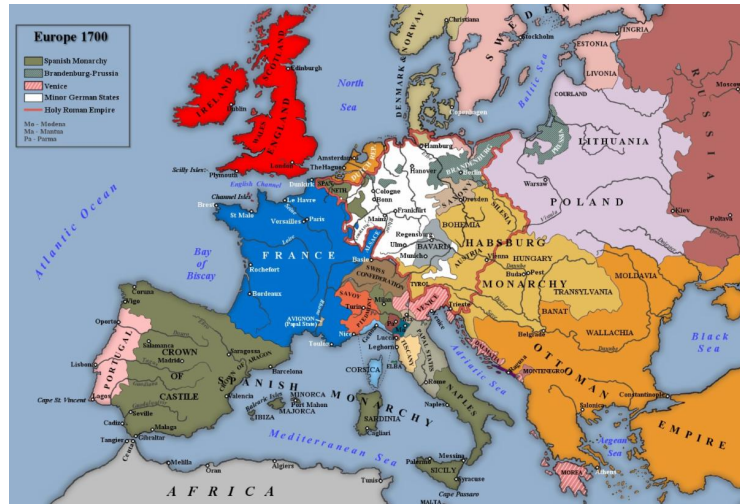
Cardinal Richelieu's strengthening of the **French state** led to the **absolute rule of Louis XIV -- the "Sun King,"** who is credited with

saying "It is legal because I wish it"; and "L'État, c'est moi" ("I am the state").

Louis XIV reigned over 72 years (1643-1715), longer than any major monarch in **European history**.

France's power led to the eventual **bankrupting** and decline of the powerful **Spanish-Austrian Habsburg Dynasty** and **Holy Roman Empire** in **Europe**.

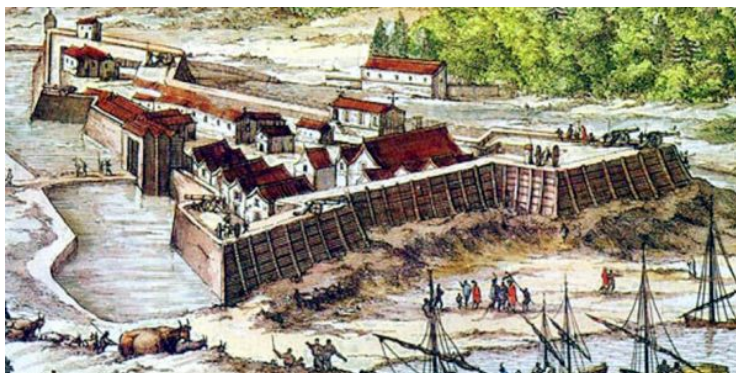
During the **Europe's religious wars**, indefensible injustices were committed by both sides.



Though millions tragically died in these wars, the numbers are dwarfed when compared with the **hundreds of millions** killed in **atheistic**



genocides, socialist/communist purges, racial expulsions, ethnic cleansings, abortions, and Islamic jihads.



Commemorating the **French Huguenots** and their attempt at seeking religious freedom in America, **Rep. Charles E.**

Bennett sponsored a bill on September 21, 1950, to

establish the **Fort Caroline National Memorial**.

In 1989, **Rep. Charles E. Bennett** recited the history:



"The 425th anniversary of the beginning settlements by Europeans ...

renamed from **Fort Caroline** to **San Mateo**, to **San Nicolas**, to **Cowford** and finally to **Jacksonville** in 1822

...

... Three small ships carrying **300 Frenchmen** led by **Rene de Laudonniere** anchored in the **river** known today as the **St. Johns** ..."



Rep. Bennett continued:

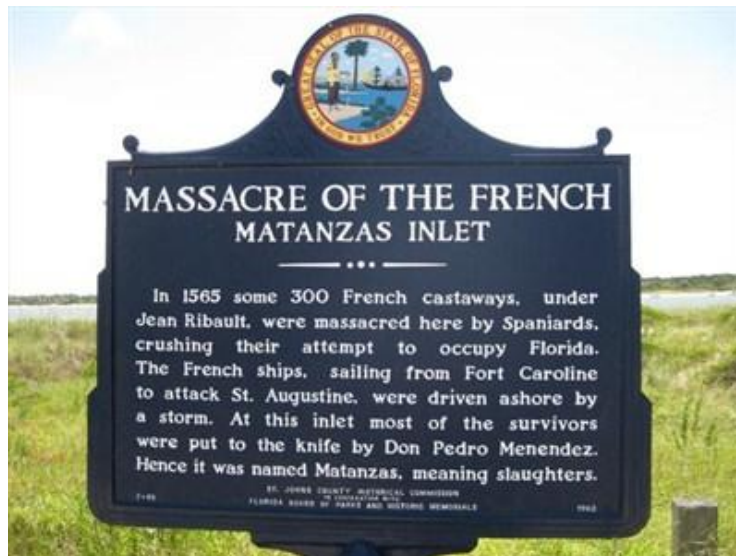
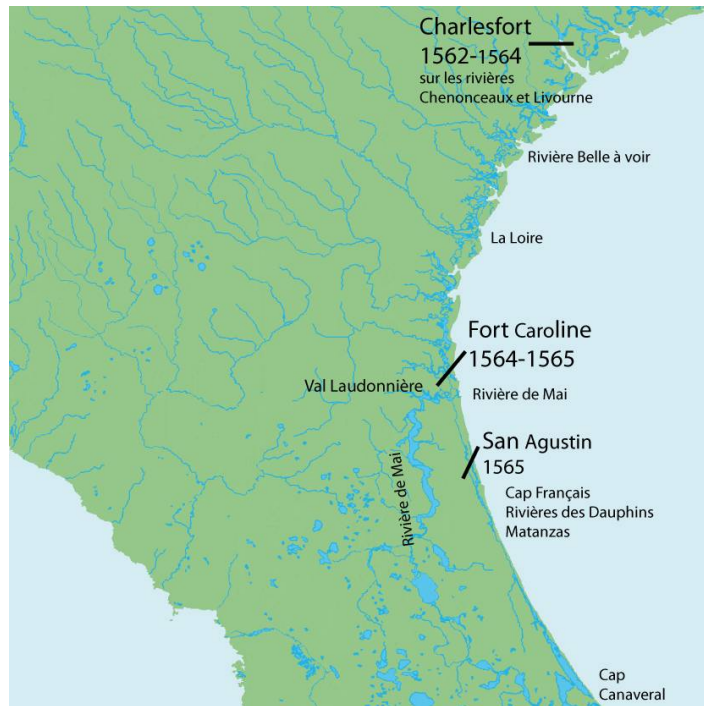
"On June 30, 1564, construction of a **triangular-shaped fort** ... was begun with the help of a local tribe of **Timucuan Indians** ...

Home for this hardy group of **Huguenots** ...

their strong religious ... motivations inspired them."

The French Christian Huguenots in Florida set a day of Thanksgiving and offered the first Protestant prayer in North America on JUNE 30, 1564:

"We sang a psalm of Thanksgiving unto God, beseeching Him that it would please Him to continue His accustomed goodness towards us."



Rep. Bennett related the colony's unfortunate end:

"Fort Caroline existed but for a short time ...

Spain ... captured ... the fort and ...

slaughtered most of its inhabitants in September of 1565."

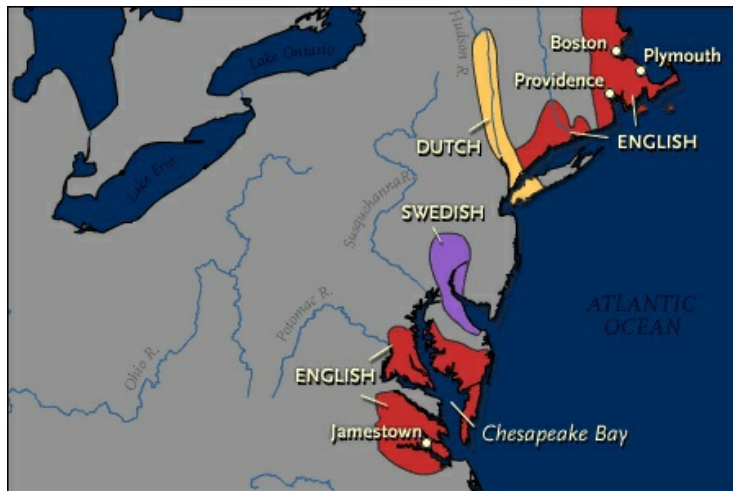
The Spanish Governor of Florida, Don Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, then founded St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565 -- the first permanent



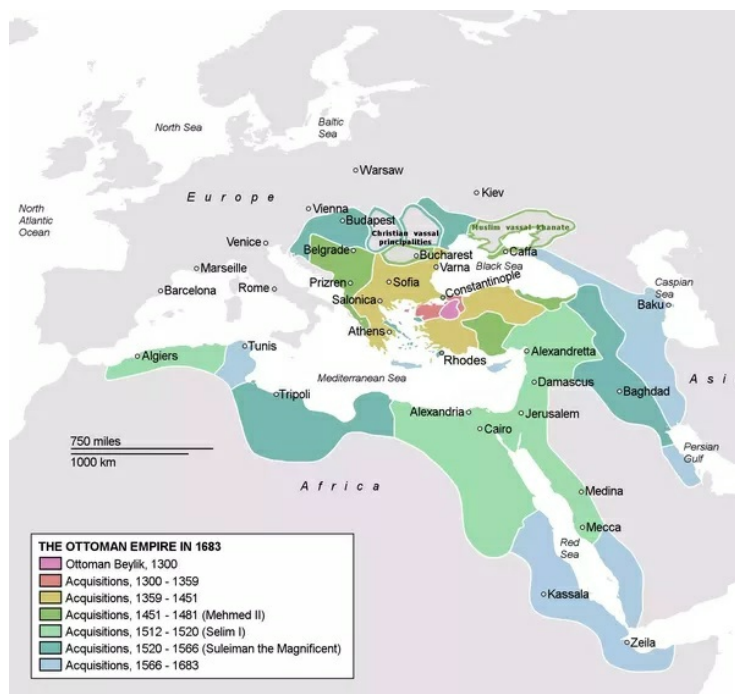
settlement in North America.

After the **Spanish**, the early settlements in **North America** were:

- 1607 - **English Colony of Jamestown**;
- 1608 - **French Colony of Quebec**;
- 1620 - **Pilgrim Colony of Massachusetts**;
- 1624 - **Dutch Colony of New Amsterdam (New York)**; and
- 1638 - **Swedish Colony of New Sweden (Delaware & New Jersey)**.



Ottoman Sultans considered **attempting colonies** in the New World, but the **destruction of their Ottoman navy** at the **Battle of Lepanto** by **Spain** and the **Holy League** in 1571 ended **Islamic expansion westward**, though Islam continued to colonize into **Africa** and the **Far East**.





In 1571, **Spain** sent its **Armada** to crush the **Reformation** in **Holland** and **England**, but it was destroyed by a **hurricane**.

Adam Smith wrote in *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776:



"The **Spaniards**, by virtue of the first discovery, **claimed all America** as their own, and ... such was ... **the terror of their name**, that the greater part of the **other nations of Europe were afraid** to establish themselves in any other part of **that great continent** ...

But ... the **defeat** ... of their **Invincible Armada** ... put it out of their power to obstruct any longer the settlements of the **other European nations**.

In the course of the 17th century ... **English, French, Dutch, Danes, and Swedes** ... attempted to make some **settlements in the new world**."

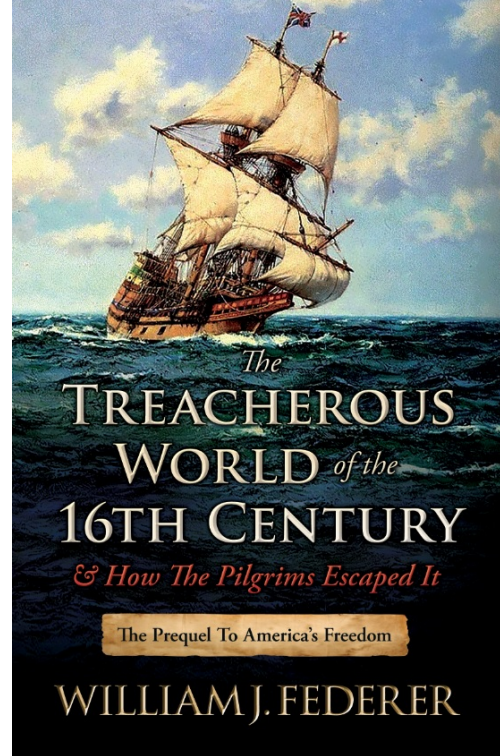
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