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The news of the destruction of Ft. Caroline on September 20, 1565, and the execution of Ribaut and his followers was received with indifference by the French Court but Dominique de Gourgues, a friend of Ribaut, organized an expedition of vengeance, not informing his men of his destination until the ship was within three miles of the Florida coast. With the cooperation of the Indians under their Chief, Saturiba, he captured Ft. San Mateo in the spring of 1568 and on the spot where the garrison of Ft. Caroline had been executed, he hanged his Spanish prisoners, inscribing on the tablet of pine the words: "I do this not as unto Spain, but as to traitors, robbers and murderers." Feeling unable to attack St. Augustine, de Gourgues returned to France.

The Spanish settlements experienced many vicissitudes. In 1586 St. Augustine was almost destroyed by Sir Francis Drake and it also suffered severely by an attack of Capt. John Davis in 1665. Not until the last decade of the 17th century did the Spaniards attempt to extend their settlements beyond the east coast.

