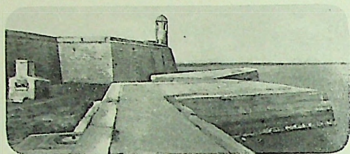


Visit the *Two Oldest Historical Relics in the United States*

1638



1756

FORT MARION NATURAL MONUMENT

Open daily, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Guides in Attendance



OLDEST HOUSE

On St. Francis Street

Make No Mistake, Ask for This Street

PROPERTY AND HOME OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM AND LIBRARY CONNECTED

Open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Guides on Duty



Pedro Menendez de Aviles

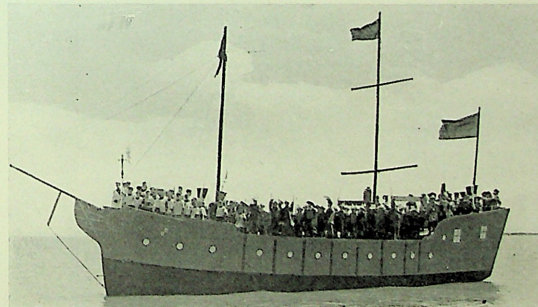
PEDRO MENENDEZ DE AVILES; naval commander; born in Aviles, Asturias, Spain, in 1519. He distinguished himself in privateering enterprises against the Moors and French; became captain-general in the navy; commanded the fleet which carried Philip II to England, 1554; the one which brought him reinforcements to Flanders, 1557, and that in which he returned to Spain, 1559. Was twice general of the West Indian fleet, and acquired great wealth by his voyages; was imprisoned and fined for alleged irregularities in 1560, but regained favor, and in 1565 was named governor of Cuba and Florida, with the agreement that he should colonize the latter country. His preparations were hastened by the news that French Protestant colonies had been established on the Florida coast, and he sailed from Cadiz, June 29, 1565, with eleven vessels and over 1,500 men. After some preliminary skirmishing with the French ships, Menendez founded St. Augustine (now the oldest city in the United States), September 8, 1565. Larger reinforcements were received from Spain, and the colony prospered. Menendez made several voyages to Spain to bring over colonists and supplies, and he was active in the government of Cuba. In 1573 he finally returned to Spain

and was given command of the immense fleet Philip was preparing against England and the Netherlands, but died soon after at Santander, September 17, 1574.

Founding of St. Augustine from account by Mendoza, Chaplain of the Expedition:

"On Saturday, the 8th, the general landed with many banners spread, to the sound of trumpets and salutes of artillery. As I had gone on shore the evening before, I took a cross and went to meet him, singing the hymn *Te Deum* Lauramus. The general marched up to the cross, followed by all who accompanied him, and there they all knelt and embraced the cross. A large number of Indians watched these proceedings and imitated all they saw done. The same day the general took formal possession of the country in the name of his Majesty, and all the captains took the oath of allegiance to him, as their general, and governor of the country.

De Meras, another eye-witness, and Bariantos, a friend of Menendez, describe "a solemn mass in honor of Our Lady, before possession of the country was celebrated. A map of St. Augustine and its key state that this was held on the land north of the present chapel of De La Leche; the chapel 'Nombre de Dios' was built on the site of this ceremony (map of date, 1764)."



The Approach of the Caravel

Isabella de Castile



ISABELLA OF CASTILE, daughter of John II, King of Castile and Leon, and his second wife, Isabella of Portugal. She married October 19, 1469, Ferdinand V, King of Aragon, surnamed "The Catholic." After the death of her brother, Henry IV, in 1474, she ascended the throne of Castile. After the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile were thus once more united, Ferdinand and Isabella assumed the royal titles of Spain. She was always present at the transaction of state

affairs and insisted that her name should be placed beside that of her husband in public ordinances. The conquest of Granada, after which the Moors were entirely expelled from Spain, was in a great degree her work; and the encouragement she gave Columbus, when everybody else doubted the feasibility of his plans, assisted him to the discovery of America. The broadness of her political vision and the strength of her character were chiefly responsible for the foundation of Spain's greatness.