

PENSACOLA IN THE RENAISSANCE ERA

Pensacola is said to be America's First Settlement. Colonization efforts began here in the late 1500's which falls into the Renaissance time period. The end of the Renaissance is typically given as the year 1600, or the end of the reign of Elizabeth I of England.

The Renaissance is typically thought of as a period of enlightenment and scientific achievement after the Medieval period. The recovery of Europe from the destructive Black Plague broke long standing social customs and people were able to improve their standards of living. Possibly the greatest improvement was literacy. By learning to read and write, an increased flow of ideas and knowledge allowed people to use technology to better their conditions.

With the discovery of the New World, the natural inclination of the time would be one of conquest and the claiming of territory. The expedition of Tristan de Luna brought colonists to the Gulf Coast, and specifically to the Pensacola area. Although this colony did not survive, artifacts have been found which record their presence.

Things to think about:

What made the Pensacola area a good place to start a colony?

Who were the natives?

What was the journey like for the colonists?

Why would people want to become a colonist?

Why did the first settlement fail?

What should have been done to ensure the survival of the colony?

What were the European governments trying to do?