

SMITHSONIAN MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS

VOLUME 81, NUMBER 4

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SATURIOUA, A TIMUCUA CHIEF
IN FLORIDA, 1564

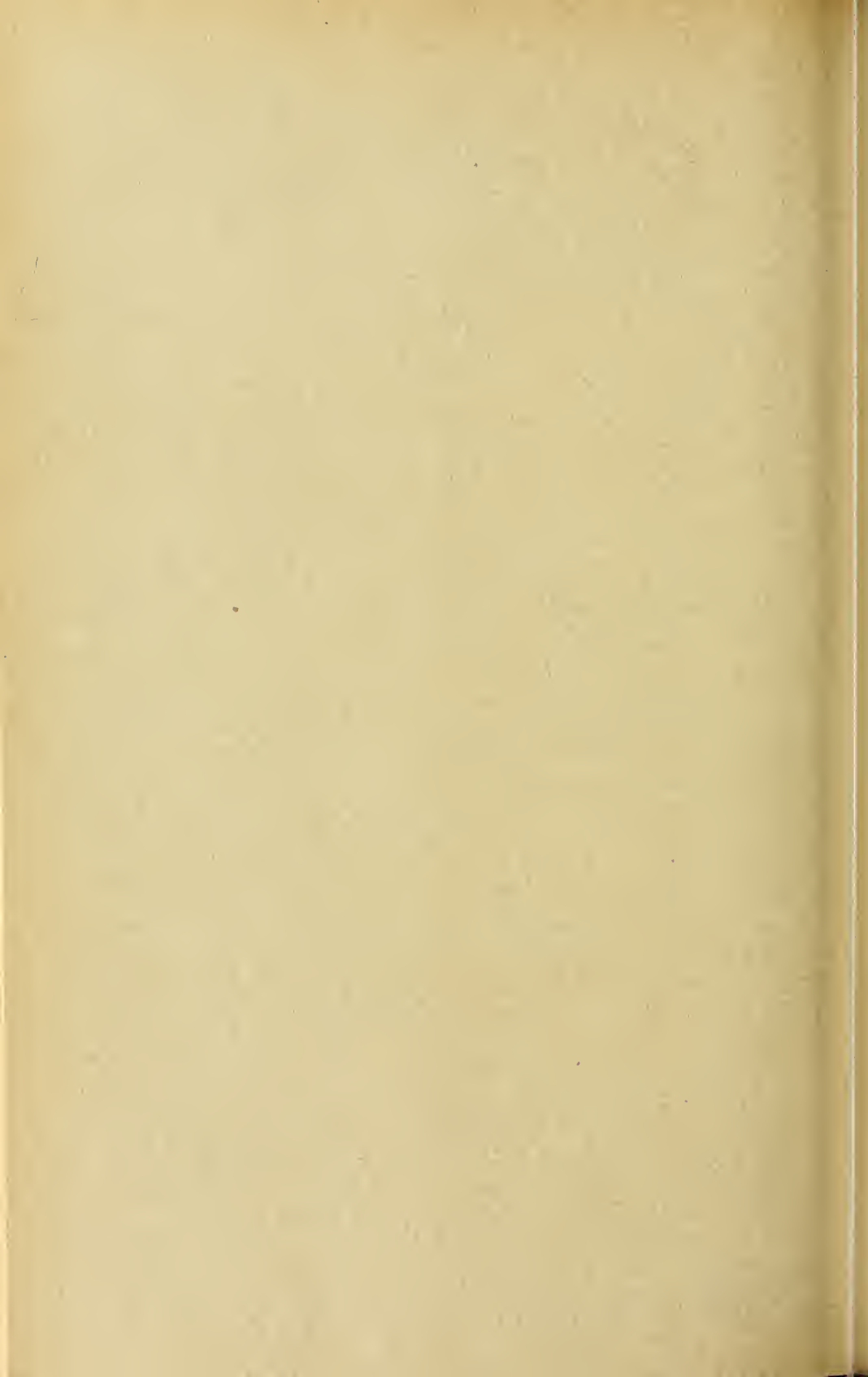
(WITH ONE PLATE)

BY
DAVID I. BUSHNELL, Jr



(PUBLICATION 2972)

CITY OF WASHINGTON
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When it became known in Europe that a new continent had been discovered beyond the sea, that the lands reached by Columbus and his companions did not form part of Asia but were a new and distinct region, wonder was aroused as to the sort of people who were to be found in the strange and unknown country. So great was the interest thus manifested that many narratives of early voyages contain accounts of the natives encountered along the coasts and some refer, all too briefly, to the manners and customs of the *Indians*, a term erroneously applied to the inhabitants of the New World. Many records are preserved of natives having been taken to Europe by the explorers. It is written that when the Cabots—first to reach the continent of North America—returned to England in the year 1497, they carried three of the strange people from the newly discovered lands, and that four years later Cortereal compelled others to return with him to Europe. Likewise when Jacques Cartier reached France in 1535, after exploring the great River St. Lawrence, he had on board his small vessel a native chief taken in the wilderness. This tends to prove that many were eager to learn about the people who lived in the mysterious region far to the westward, beyond the sea. With this evidence of interest in the people of the New World it is difficult to believe that pictures were not made of them: sketches or paintings to portray their peculiar customs, strange ornaments and dress, and frail habitations. But no drawings are known to have been made during the voyages of the Cabots, of Ponce de Leon, Varrazano, Narvaez, de Soto, or Cartier. No proof that any pictures of Indians of North America were made during the first half of the sixteenth century has been discovered. And although the account of the voyages of Cartier, as presented by Ramusio, is accompanied by several crude illustrations, there is no evidence to indicate that the drawings were made by a person who had visited Canada. Thus it would appear that not until the year 1564, when the French expedition led by Laudonnière set

sail from Havre de Grace for the Land of Florida, did an artist accompany an expedition for the definite purpose of making drawings to be taken back to Europe. Consequently Jacques Lemoigne de Morgues, artist, who accompanied Laudonnière, made the earliest known pictures of Indians of North America. Many sketches were undoubtedly made by the artist during the eventful year he remained in Florida but only one original example of his work can now be traced, this being a drawing of the great chief Saturioua who claimed the land on which the French erected Fort Carolina.

JACQUES LEMOYNE DE MORGUES

Very little is known of the life and career of the artist who accompanied Laudonnière to Florida. He appears to have been a man of culture and learning. He was a Huguenot and seems to have been known personally by Charles IX. He prepared a brief Narrative of events in Florida which was printed by Theodoro de Bry, in the year 1591, as the second part of *Grand Voyages*. Together with this text were the engraved reproductions of 42 drawings made by Lemoigne revealing scenes in Florida, the natives, their habitations, and events of interest.¹ To quote from the English translation of Lemoigne:

“Charles IX, King of France, having been notified by the Admiral de Chatillon that there was too much delay in sending forward the re-enforcements needed by the small body of French whom Jean Ribaud had left to maintain the French dominion in Florida, gave orders to the admiral to fit out such a fleet as was required for the purpose. The admiral, in the mean while, recommended to the king a nobleman of the name of Renaud de Laudonnière; a person well known at court, and of varied abilities, though experienced not so much in military as in naval affairs. The king accordingly appointed him his own lieutenant, and appropriated for the expedition the sum of a hundred thousand francs.” The Narrative continues: “I also received orders to join the expedition, and to report to M. de Laudonnière . . . I asked for some positive statements of his own views, and of the particular object which the king desired to obtain in com-

¹ Two works have been quoted in preparing these notes:

- a. History of the First Attempt of the French to Colonize the Newly Discovered Country of Florida. By Rene Laudonnière. In Historical Collections of Louisiana and Florida. By B. F. French. New York, 1869.
- b. Narrative of Le Moyne, an Artist who accompanied the French Expedition to Florida under Laudonnière, 1564. Translated from the Latin of De Bry. Boston, 1875.

manding my services. Upon this he promised that no services except honorable ones should be required of me; and he informed me that my special duty, when we should reach the Indies, would be to map the seacoast, and lay down the position of towns, the depth and course of rivers, and the harbors; and to represent also the dwellings of the natives, and whatever in the province might seem worthy of observation: all of which I performed to the best of my ability, as I showed his majesty, when, after having escaped from the remarkable perfidies and atrocious cruelties of the Spaniards, I returned to France."

The three vessels of the expedition sailed from Havre de Grace April 20, 1564. Their first stop was at the Canaries, thence they sailed to the West Indies. At one island, "called Dominica, we watered. Making sail again, we reached the coast of Florida, or New France as it is called, on Thursday, June 22." They had arrived off the mouth of the River of May, the present St. Johns. Soon ascending the stream a few miles they selected a site where Fort Carolina was erected.

Lemoynes was in Fort Carolina September 20, 1565, when it was attacked and taken by the Spaniards. He fled and wandered through the swamps several days before meeting Laudonnière and some fifteen others who had escaped the massacre. Later they reached the mouth of the river, boarded one of the small ships and made sail for France, "ill manned and ill provisioned. But God, however, gave us so fortunate a voyage, although attended with a good deal of suffering, that we made the land in that arm of the sea bordering on England which is called St. George's Channel."

Now to quote from Laudonnière's record.

The first of the three ships to return to France departed from Florida July 28, 1564. About November 10, 1564 "Captain Bourdet determined to leave me, and to return to France." During the summer of 1565 the French were visited by the English Admiral Hawkins.

Laudonnière, with his small party including the artist Lemoynes, sailed from Florida September 25, 1565. "About the 25th of October, in the morning, at the break of day, we descried the *Isle of Flores*, and one of the *Azores*, where, immediately upon our approaching to the land, we had a mighty gust of wind, which came from the north-east, which caused us to bear against it four days; afterwards, the wind came south and south-east, and was always variable. In all the time of our passage, we had none other food saving biscuit and water." About November 10, 1565, they reached the coast of Wales and landed, having been carried out of their course and thus failed to reach France. They had landed at Swansea. Laudonnière then wrote:

“For mine own part I purposed, with my men, to pass by land; and, after I had taken leave of my mariners, I departed from *Swansea*, and came, that night, with my company, to a place called *Morgan*, where the lord of the place, understanding what I was, staid me with him for the space of six or seven days; and, at my departure, moved with pity to see me go on foot, especially being so weak as I was, gave me a little hackney.

“Thus I passed on my journey—first to *Bristol*, and then to *London*, where I went to do my duty to M. de Foix, which, for the present, was the King’s ambassador, and helped me with money in my necessity. From thence I passed to *Calais*, afterward to *Paris*, where I was informed that the king was gone to *Moulins*, to sojourn there; incontinently, and with all the haste I could possibly make, I got me thither, with part of my company.”

Lemoyne was probably one of the company, and it may have been at this time that he revealed to the king the work he had done in Florida.

How long Lemoyne continued to live in France is not known but later he crossed the channel and resided in London. He was a Huguenot and for that reason may have sought safety in flight. During 1587 Lemoyne was in London, in the service of Sir Walter Raleigh, when he was visited by De Bry in the endeavor to purchase his papers relating to the expedition to Florida, but as has been written: “Lemoyne resisted all persuasions to part with his papers. After Lemoyne’s death De Bry bought them of his widow (1588), and published them in 1591.”

What became of Lemoyne’s drawings is not known. Possibly those secured by De Bry were taken to Frankfort and there copied by the engravers, later to be lost or scattered. No example of the artist’s work is in the British Museum, London; the Louvre, Paris; or the Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

It may be suggested that Lemoyne’s connection with Sir Walter Raleigh influenced the latter in sending the English artist John White to Virginia, in 1585. White’s instructions were quite similar to those received by Lemoyne some twenty years before. Their work was of the same nature.

SATURIOUA RE DELLA FLORIDA

Saturioua was a Timucua chief whose tribe claimed and occupied territory on both sides of the St. John River, from its mouth inland for some distance as well as up and down the coast.

During the summer of 1564, while Fort Carolina was being constructed by Laudonnière, "several chiefs visited our commander, and signified to him that they were under the authority of a certain king named Saturioua, within the limit of whose dominions we were, whose dwelling was near us, and who could muster a force of some thousands of men."

Saturioua soon desired to see the work being done by the French and visited the site chosen for the fort. "He sent forward, however, some two hours in advance of his own appearance, an officer with a company of a hundred and twenty able-bodied men, armed with bows, arrows, clubs, and darts, and adorned, after the Indian manner, with their riches; such as feathers of different kinds, necklaces of a select sort of shells, bracelets of fishes' teeth, girdles of silver-colored balls, some round and some oblong; and having many pearls fastened on their legs. Many of them had also hanging to their legs round flat plates of gold, silver, or brass, so that in walking they tinkled like little bells. This officer, having made his announcement, proceeded to cause shelter to be erected on a small height near by of branches of palms, laurels, mastics, and other odoriferous trees, for the accommodation of the king." And soon the great chief arrived, "accompanied by seven or eight hundred men, handsome, strong, well-made, and active fellows, the best-trained and swiftest of his force, all under arms as if on a military expedition." The meeting proved one of great interest to both French and Indian. Laudonnière made known to Saturioua that he had been "sent by a most powerful king, called the King of France, to offer a treaty by which he should become a friend to the king here, and to his allies, and an enemy to their enemies; an announcement which the chief received with much pleasure. Gifts were then exchanged in pledge of perpetual friendship and alliance." The Indians soon departed, but the French hastened with greater energy the completion of the fort.

Some days passed and the time arrived when Saturioua desired to test the sincerity of the French. "The chief sent messengers to M. de Laudonnière, not only to confirm the league which had been made, but also to procure the performance of its conditions, namely, that the latter was to be the friend of the king's friends, and the enemy of his enemies; as he was now organizing an expedition against them." A vague, ambiguous reply was received by the messengers and by them carried to Saturioua. The great chief then visited the fort, accompanied by a large number of men. He attempted to have the French go with him on his expedition against his enemies farther up the river but they declined. "Failing, however, to obtain what he

wished, he set out on his expedition with his own men. While these affairs were in progress, M. de Laudonnière sent his second ship, commanded by Pierre Capitaine, to France."

Saturioua, surrounded by his chiefs and warriors, preparing to start on the expedition, was the subject of a drawing by Lemoyné, one engraved by De Bry, but the description of the picture as given by the artist is really more complete than the reference just quoted.

The description of the engraving, given by De Bry, was evidently prepared by Lemoyné himself. The English translation is now quoted :



FIG. I.—Ceremonies performed by Saturioua before going on an expedition against the enemy. From De Bry, 1591.

" It is mentioned in the account of the second voyage that the French made a treaty of friendship with a powerful chief of the vicinity, named Saturioua, with agreement that they were to erect a fort in his territory, and were to be friends to his friends, and enemies to his enemies; and, further, that on occasion they should furnish him some arquebusiers. About three months afterwards, he sent messengers to Laudonnière to ask for the arquebusiers according to the treaty, as he was about to make war upon his enemies. Laudonnière, however, sent to him Capt. La Caille with some men, to inform him courteously that he could not just then supply any soldiers, for the reason that he hoped

to be able to make peace between the parties. But the chief was indignant at this reply, as he could not now put off his expedition, having got his provisions ready, and summoned the neighboring chiefs to his aid; and he therefore prepared to set out at once. He assembled his men, decorated, after the Indian manner, with feathers and other things, in a level place, the soldiers of Laudonnière being present; and the force sat down in a circle, the chief being in the middle. A fire was then lighted on his left, and two great vessels full of water set on his right. Then the chief, after rolling his eyes as if excited by anger, uttering some sounds deep down in his throat, and making various gestures, all at once raised a horrid yell; and all his soldiers repeated this yell, striking their hips, and rattling their weapons. Then the chief, taking a wooden platter of water, turned toward the sun, and worshipped it; praying to it for a victory over the enemy, and that, as he should now scatter the water that he had dipped up in the wooden platter, so might their blood be poured out. Then he flung the water with a great cast up into the air; and, as it fell down upon his men, he added, 'As I have done with this water, so I pray that you may do with the blood of your enemies.' Then he poured the water in the other vase upon the fire, and said, 'So may you be able to extinguish your enemies, and bring back their scalps.' Then they all arose, and set off by land up the river, upon their expedition."

Laudonnière wrote regarding these happenings: "About two months after our arrival in Florida, the *Paracoussy* Saturioua sent certain Indians unto me to know whether I would stand to my promise, which I had made him at my first arrival in that country: which was, that I would show myself friend to his friends, and enemy unto his enemies; and, also, to accompany him with a good number of harquebuses, when he should see it expedient, and should find a fit occasion to go to war." Laudonnière declined to join his forces with those of Saturioua and the latter departed on the war-like expedition without the promised aid of the French. Laudonnière then continued his narrative: "The ceremony which this savage used, before he embarked his army, deserveth not to be forgotten; for, when he was sitting down by the river's side, being compassed about with ten other *paracoussies*, he commanded water to be brought him speedily. This done, looking up into heaven, he fell to discourse of divers things, with gestures that showed him to be in exceeding great choler, which made him one while shake his head hither and thither; and, by and by, with, I wot not what fury, to turn his face towards the country of his enemies, and to threaten to kill them. He oftentimes looked upon the sun, praying him to grant him a glorious victory of his enemies; which, when he

had done, by the space of half an hour, he sprinkled, with his hand, a little of the water, which he held in a vessel, upon the heads of the *paracoussies*, and cast the rest, as it were, in a rage and despite, into a fire, which was there prepared for the purpose. This done, he cried out, thrice, *He Thinogoa!* and was followed with five hundred Indians, at the least, which were there assembled, which cried, all with one voice, *He Thinogoa!*”

These events transpired during the latter part of August, 1564.

SATURIOUA—DRAWING BY LEMOYNE

The original drawing now reproduced for the first time, is in crayon—black and sanguine. It bears a legend in Italian which reads: *Saturioua Re della Florida nell' America Settentionale in atto di andare alla Guerra*. Translated it is: “Saturioua King of Florida in North America in the act of going to war.” This evidently shows the chief immediately after the completion of the ceremony mentioned on preceding pages. He has grasped his spear but continues to hold the wooden bowl containing water.

Details are revealed in the drawing with great clearness. Several of these may be explained by quoting from Lemoyne's notes attached to various sketches reproduced by De Bry. Describing the peculiar ear ornament represented as being worn by Saturioua, Lemoyne wrote: “All the men and women have the ends of their ears pierced, and pass through them small oblong fish-bladders, which when inflated shine like pearls, and which, being dyed red, look like a light-colored carbuncle.” Tattooing was practiced extensively and “all these chiefs and their wives ornament their skins with punctures arranged so as to make certain designs. . . . Doing this sometimes makes them sick for seven or eight days. They rub the punctured places with a certain herb, which leaves an indelible color.” But the strangest of their customs, “For the sake of further ornament and magnificence, they let the nails of their fingers and toes grow, scraping them down at the sides with a certain shell, so that they are left very sharp. They are also in the habit of painting the skin around their mouths of a blue color.” Elsewhere Lemoyne wrote: “They let their nails grow long both on fingers and toes, cutting the former away, however, at the sides, so as to leave them very sharp, the men especially; and, when they take one of the enemy, they sink their nails deep in his forehead, and tear down the skin, so as to wound and blind him.”

Such were some of the strange and curious customs of the people of Florida more than three and one-half centuries ago.



Size 10 by 7 inches

SATURIOUA



Unfortunately the history of this very interesting drawing, now in the author's collection, is not known; however, it is possible to reach certain conclusions regarding its origin. The legend is in Italian and this offers a clue as to the time the picture was actually made.

The youthful Charles IX was King of France in 1564, the year of the French expedition under Laudonnière to Florida, but all were dominated by the Queen-mother, Catherine de' Medici, surrounded as she was by groups of Italians who had accompanied or followed her to France. Italian was spoken at the French Court.

Lemoynes had accompanied the expedition to Florida for the purpose of preparing a series of drawings and sketches, these, as he himself wrote: "I showed his majesty, when, after having escaped from the remarkable perfidies and atrocious cruelties of the Spaniards, I returned to France." And it may be assumed that all such work, when exhibited at Court, bore legends written in Italian. The drawing of *Saturioua Re della Florida*, may have been one of the sketches thus displayed.

It is not possible to determine exactly when the drawing was made. Knowing the manner in which the artist escaped from Fort Carolina the night it was taken by the Spaniards there is no reason to believe he was able to save any drawings. All his possessions appear to have been abandoned and lost.

The event of *Saturioua* starting for war, the subject of the drawing now reproduced, occurred late in August, 1564. Little more than two months later, early in November, the second of the French vessels returned to France. Undoubtedly it carried dispatches and various papers relating to the progress of affairs in the Colony, and quite likely sketches and drawings by the artist of the expedition, Lemoynes, were included with the official reports. The drawing of the chief with whom the French were then in contact, and who claimed the region in which they had settled, may have been sent to France at that time. Again it is suggested that the picture may have been made after Laudonnière and his small party, including Lemoynes, had returned to Europe but before they had reached Moulins and met the king.

The fact that the legend on the drawing is in Italian, not French, would seem to prove beyond doubt that it was so written for the benefit of Charles IX, the Queen-mother, and their Italian followers and associates.