

1985

Development of the Plan of Pensacola During the Colonial Era, 1559-1821

Robert B. Lloyd, Jr.



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

Lloyd, Jr., Robert B. (1985) "Development of the Plan of Pensacola During the Colonial Era, 1559-1821," *Florida Historical Quarterly*: Vol. 64 : No. 3 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol64/iss3/3>

DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN OF PENSACOLA DURING THE COLONIAL ERA, 1559-1821

by ROBERT B. LLOYD, JR.

THE plan of present-day Pensacola reflects the influences of such colonial powers as Spain, France, and Great Britain. While all shared a common debt to ancient Roman practices of city design, each culture had its own idea of city planning that developed from its own particular history. The imposition of these ideas on Pensacola, and the accommodations that each culture had to make for the preceding one, led to an interesting and unique plan.

Pensacola's first settlement began on August 14, 1559, when Tristán de Luna and his party sailed into Pensacola Bay. The Spanish expedition was composed of thirteen ships carrying 500 soldiers and over 1,000 civilians. Ample supplies were included for the colony. Enthusiastic about the harbor, de Luna believed it to be "the best port in the Indies."¹

According to Spanish law, the first duty of an expedition upon arriving at its destination was to find a suitable settlement site. De Luna wrote to the king of Spain that "the site which has been selected for founding the pueblo [town] is no less good, for it is a high point of land which slopes down to the bay where the ships come to anchor." The pueblo would thus "command a view of the anchorage."²

The pueblo, situated adjacent to the bay named Bahía de Santa María Filipina, was to be one of two settlements to secure the northern frontier of Florida against other European intervention. The other settlement, and the primary of the two, was to be Santa Elena (Port Royal) on the Atlantic coast. Only about eighty-five settlers—less than ten per cent of the total expeditionary force—were to remain in Pensacola; the rest would travel overland to settle in Santa Elena.

Robert B. Lloyd, Jr. graduated from Cornell University, and is on the staff of the Catawba Regional Planning Council in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

1. Charles W. Arnade, "Tristan de Luna and Ochuse (Pensacola Bay), 1559," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. XXXVII (January-April 1959), 214.
2. *Ibid.*

The plan of the pueblo of Santa María Filipina called for a church, monastery, and governor's residence fronting a central plaza, as prescribed by Spanish laws. One hundred lots were to be reserved for the families of the soldiers; the remaining forty would belong to the church and the government.³ A grid was to be used for the town's street layout. According to Spanish custom, the settlement might have had one side of the plaza open to the bay. Within a week of the expedition's arrival in the bay, disaster struck in the form of a hurricane. The colony grimly managed to survive for two years, but by July 1561 de Luna's expedition had completely withdrawn. A concurrent attempt to settle Santa Elena also had failed.

Stung by the cost and failure of the Florida colonization attempt, the Spanish crown was unwilling to attempt another settlement along the northern Gulf coast for nearly a century and a half. The plan of the 1559-1561 settlement had no effect on the layout of future settlements at Pensacola.

During the intervening years between the 1559 settlement attempt and the next effort at colonization late in the 1600s there was a significant development in Spanish planning theory and practice. This development influenced greatly the later layout of Pensacola. Spanish colonial planning, initially unregulated, became more precise over time. In 1513 King Ferdinand issued the first set of ordinances concerning city planning for the New World. These statutes undoubtedly affected the 1559 Pensacola settlement.⁴ Sixty years later, Phillip II issued a comprehensive set of ordinances called the Laws of the Indies which covered virtually everything pertaining to planning new settlements, including site selection, town layout, and political organization. The Laws were designed to promote maintenance and orderly expansion of both the spiritual and temporal aspects of the Spanish empire.⁵ Colonists unfamiliar with city planning concepts thus would be able to choose and develop a site with a minimum of stress and effort. The resultant settlement would be adapted to local conditions yet at the same time resemble native Spanish towns.

3. *Ibid.*, 213.

4. Dora P. Crouch, Daniel J. Garr, and Axel I. Mundigo, *Spanish City Planning in North America* (Cambridge, 1982), 38-39.

5. *Ibid.*, 23-27.

In 1681, under Carlos II, the ordinances were revised under the title, *Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de los Indios*. They contained over 3,000 laws in nine books dealing with New World development.⁶ The most important features of a Spanish settlement included the church and governmental buildings fronting a main plaza and a gridiron layout of streets. The revised ordinances directly influenced the layout and development of Pensacola under the Spanish.

The groundwork for the next Pensacola settlement proposal was laid during Juan Jordan's 1686 visit to Pensacola. The well-travelled pilot called it "the best bay I have ever seen in my life."⁷ Pensacola, although primarily viewed as a garrison to defend Spain's New World interests against other European powers, was also conceived by some as a base for a great Spanish colony in North America.

On June 13, 1694, due to the favorable review of Pensacola Bay given by the Sigüenza expedition of the year before, Carlos II ordered the viceroy to construct and occupy a presidio immediately. Meanwhile, Louis XIV of France, enjoying a break between wars, was also outfitting four vessels for an expedition to the Gulf coast.

When her intelligence sources discovered France's plans, a concerned Spain moved rapidly. On April 19, 1698, Carlos II made the fortification of Pensacola Bay a top priority item; the resources of the empire were quickly mobilized. Three ships with 357 men left Veracruz under command of Andrés de Arriola, arriving in Pensacola Bay on November 21, 1698. There they joined Juan Jordan, who had reached the bay four days earlier from Havana with a force of fifty men in two vessels.

The expedition immediately began constructing a fort under the direction of the Austrian Jaime Franck, who was considered the best engineer in the New World. Franck's presence in Pensacola indicates the significance of the site to Spain's security. Work on the fort progressed quickly, and not a moment too soon, for on January 26, 1699, the French arrived. Anchoring just outside the harbor entrance, the French expedition, now numbering five ships and 200 men under the command of Pierre le moynes d'Iberville, asked permission to enter the bay.

6. Ibid.

7. James R. McGovern, ed., *Colonial Pensacola* (Pensacola, 1972), 13.

Arriola politely denied entrance, and the French, anxious not to provoke hostilities, moved on and eventually settled Biloxi.

With the French threat temporarily removed, the Spaniards returned to building their fort, to be christened San Carlos de Austria. Problems developed immediately. Sand dunes and strong winds alternately undermined or buried the fort. The structure itself, a four-bastioned wooden stockade, was always rotting. Franck despaired of making the fort capable of withstanding attack.⁸ There were also problems with the cannon, which did not have sufficient range to prevent enemy ships from entering the harbor. In an attempt to seal the harbor from attack, a battery was built on Santa Rosa Island at the mouth of the bay.

The presidio itself was of standard Spanish design. The Royal Presidio of Monterey, California, dating from about 1771, was almost an exact duplicate in both scale and design.⁹ The palm-thatched huts of the settlement, built in and around the presidio, were a constant source of fire danger.

Impressed soldiers and convicts did little to improve the quality of early Pensacola society. During the first Spanish period, the population of Pensacola remained fairly constant at around 200, including several women. The post was considered such a hardship area that it was difficult to encourage immigration to the area.¹⁰

Spanish fears of continued French designs on the area were well founded. On May 13, 1719, a French force from Mobile captured the battery on Santa Rosa Island. The next day French forces entered the harbor in three ships and began firing on the fort. Realizing the hopelessness of defending a rotting fort, the Spaniards surrendered. They were allowed to embark for Cuba, where they immediately prepared a counterattack. On August 14, 1719, an expedition from Havana retook Pensacola, but another French force recaptured the fort and held it until late in 1722, when they returned it to Spain as part of the peace treaty of the War of the Quadruple Alliance.

8. Jaime Franck to Martin de Sierra Alta, February 19, 1699, 61-6-22/10, Archivo General de Indias, Seville (hereinafter AGI, with appropriate dates).

9. Crouch, Garr, and Mundigo, *Spanish City Planning*, 252-53.

10. William B. Griffen, "Spanish Pensacola, 1700-1763," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXVII (January-April 1959), 247.

When Don Alejandro Wauchope, the new Spanish commander, arrived in Pensacola on November 25, 1722, there was not much left of the settlement. The only remaining structure was a palm-thatched hut which served as shelter and fortification.

Wauchope's orders were to build a canal across Santa Rosa Island and thus scuttle the bay by lowering its water level. When this ludicrous proposal failed, a new presidio was constructed on the sand-bar island, manned by 150 troops. The official settlement was then transferred from the mainland to the island.

By February 1723 the settlement was well under way. Barracks, an 800-square foot warehouse, and about forty other wooden structures had been constructed. A British map and a Spanish engraving show the new town strung out along the sand bar in a regular grid pattern.¹¹ While the settlement was oriented towards the bay, it lacked a protective stockade. This was due, no doubt, to its insular location. The fort was built east of the settlement, scarcely a defensive position. For the most part, the plan follows the ordinances detailed in the Laws of the Indies. The settlement appeared to display aspects of both a presidio and a pueblo. Although in theory this was not possible, in actuality the mixing of several different types of settlements was fairly common. Little else is known about the settlement of Santa Rosa Punta de Sigüenza, even though its development was fairly extensive.

On November 3, 1752, a severe hurricane struck and completely destroyed Pensacola. After the storm, survivors scattered throughout the bay area. Some moved to the blockhouse and Indian mission of San Miguel, located on the mainland a few miles east of old Fort San Carlos, while others built a new blockhouse and remained on Santa Rosa Island.

Pensacola continued in a state of disarray until 1757, when the new governor, Don Miguel Román de Castilla y Lugo, finally arrived after being delayed by shipwreck. He designated Fort Miguel, the present site of Pensacola, as the new presidio of Pensacola. Threats of Indian attacks caused the commander to build a wooden stockade which was larger than the one con-

11. "Plan of the Harbor and Settlement of Pensacola," Vertical file: "Maps 1763-1781," Pensacola Historical Museum, Pensacola, Florida (hereinafter PHM, with appropriate file designation). See "View of Spanish Town of Pensacola Bay, 1743," Vertical file: "Maps 1723-1762," PHM.

structed in 1698.¹² Inside were a church, warehouse, barracks, and a few other buildings.

Trade and mutual assistance developed between Mobile and Pensacola. During the next three years Spanish jurisdiction was extended to over thirty leagues from Pensacola. Two Indian pueblos, Escambe and Punta Rosa, were aggregated to act as buffers against the natives. Three haciendas were also developed.¹³

This expansion was in line with Spanish law; a settlement was to include both the town and the surrounding countryside. The layout of Pensacola was similar to that of the earlier mainland settlement: emanating from the east and west gates of the centrally-located stockade, roads ran parallel to the bay for a short distance. Small palm-thatched huts occupied the lots alongside the roads.

In 1761 an Indian uprising wreaked havoc on the settlement. The two Indian pueblos and the haciendas were burned, and for a while Pensacola itself was threatened. Although the effects on the pueblo were devastating, the Spaniards immediately began rebuilding, and by the time of the British occupation two years later there was much improvement. Most of the structures in Pensacola were new.

The Treaty of Paris in 1763 transferred the Floridas to Britain. That year the Spaniards departed from Pensacola with hardly 800 persons, including 100 Christian Indians. A few went to Havana, but the majority left for Veracruz.

During the sixty-five years of its existence, Pensacola had remained essentially a military garrison manned usually by about 200 soldiers. There were few families, and the ratio of men to women was very high. Other than the site location, no permanent physical record remains of the first Spanish period.

On August 1763, Colonel Augustín Prevost arrived in Pensacola, which had been designated as the capital of the newly-organized crown colony of West Florida. Accompanying him was the third battalion of the Royal American Regiment. British opinions of Pensacola were far from flattering. The town consisted of about 100 deteriorating huts encircled by a dilapidated stockade. Brush had been allowed to grow too close to the struc-

12. "Plano del Presidio de San Miguel de Panzacola, September 2, 1763, PHM.

13. Griffen, "Spanish Pensacola," 260.

ture, and the place was in a shambles. However, British appraisals of the area's natural resources were favorable.¹⁴

On October 21, 1764, George Johnstone arrived in Pensacola as the first civil governor, and he immediately set about developing the town. The first order of business was to straighten out the land problems which had arisen when the departing Spaniards had sold lots to speculative British settlers. Johnstone's idea was to disallow nearly all the claims— both real and spurious— on the grounds that the Spanish titles were invalid. Speculators were given preference at later lot sales as compensation for their loss.¹⁵

Elias Durnford, provincial surveyor, was directed to draw up a plan for Pensacola. Durnford was a twenty-five-year-old British engineer who had served with distinction during the Seven Years War. Through family connections he had secured the job as engineering officer and surveyor in West Florida. An excellent draftsman, Durnford had a strong background in the methodology of colonial city development, which he applied in designing the plan of Pensacola. His plans and sketches of Havana, Cuba, were of such quality that a number of them were engraved by order of the king.¹⁶ The town surveys for Natchez, Campbelltown, and parts of Mobile all followed the original pattern laid down by Durnford for Pensacola. Thus his influence on town planning along the Gulf coast was considerable.¹⁷

In a letter written January 15, 1774, Durnford described the plan of the settlement: "The town of Pensacola is regularly laid out in oblong squares, on the side of the Bay, over against which shipping anchor, from a quarter to a mile distance. The longest streets of the town are about three-quarters of a mile in length, and the cross streets which are at right angles, in length a little more than one-quarter of a mile. The streets are 90 feet, 80 feet or 40 feet wide. The squares for building are divided into twelve Lotts, each 80 feet on the front, by 170 feet [deep]; towards the Country are low swamplands laid out in Garden Lotts about

14. A more complete account of British development of Pensacola's plan can be found in Clinton N. Howard, *The British Development of West Florida, 1763-1769* (Berkeley, 1947), 6-19.

15. *Ibid.*, 31.

16. Leora M. Sutton, "Information About the English Government House that Stood at the site of Old Christ Church," PHM (acquisition number 75.5.14).

17. Howard, *British Development of West Florida*, 33.

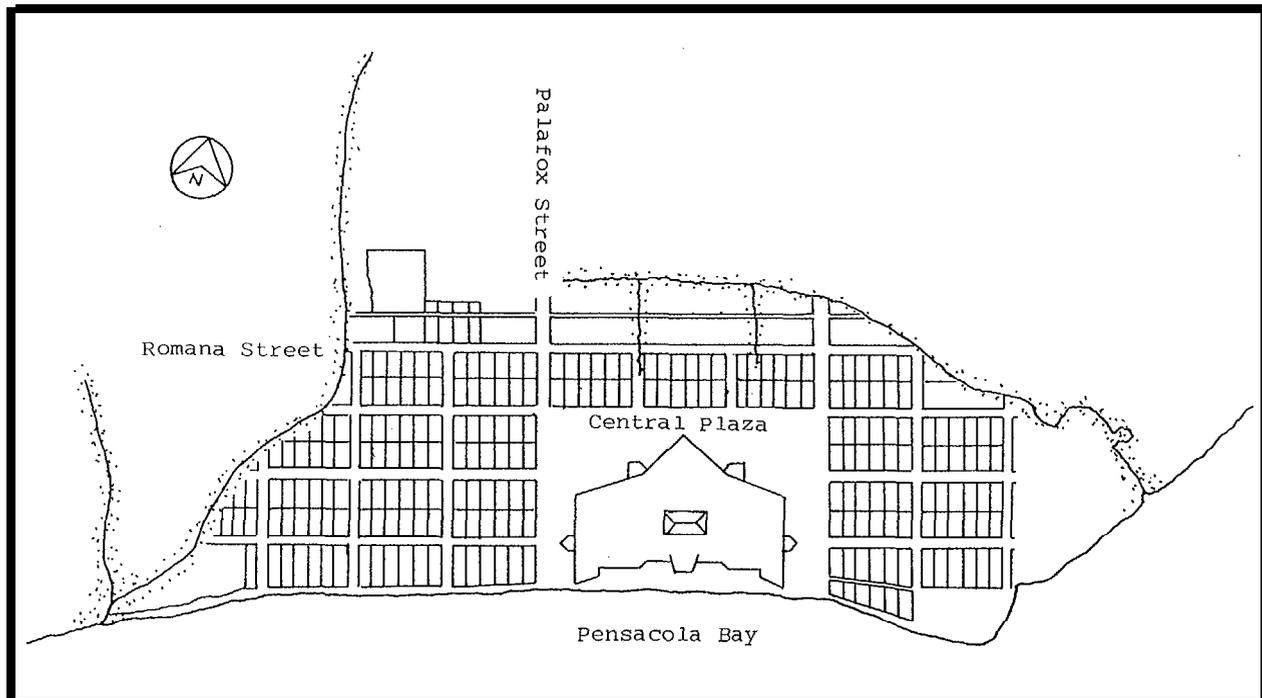


Figure 1: Elias Durnford Plan for Pensacola, 1765

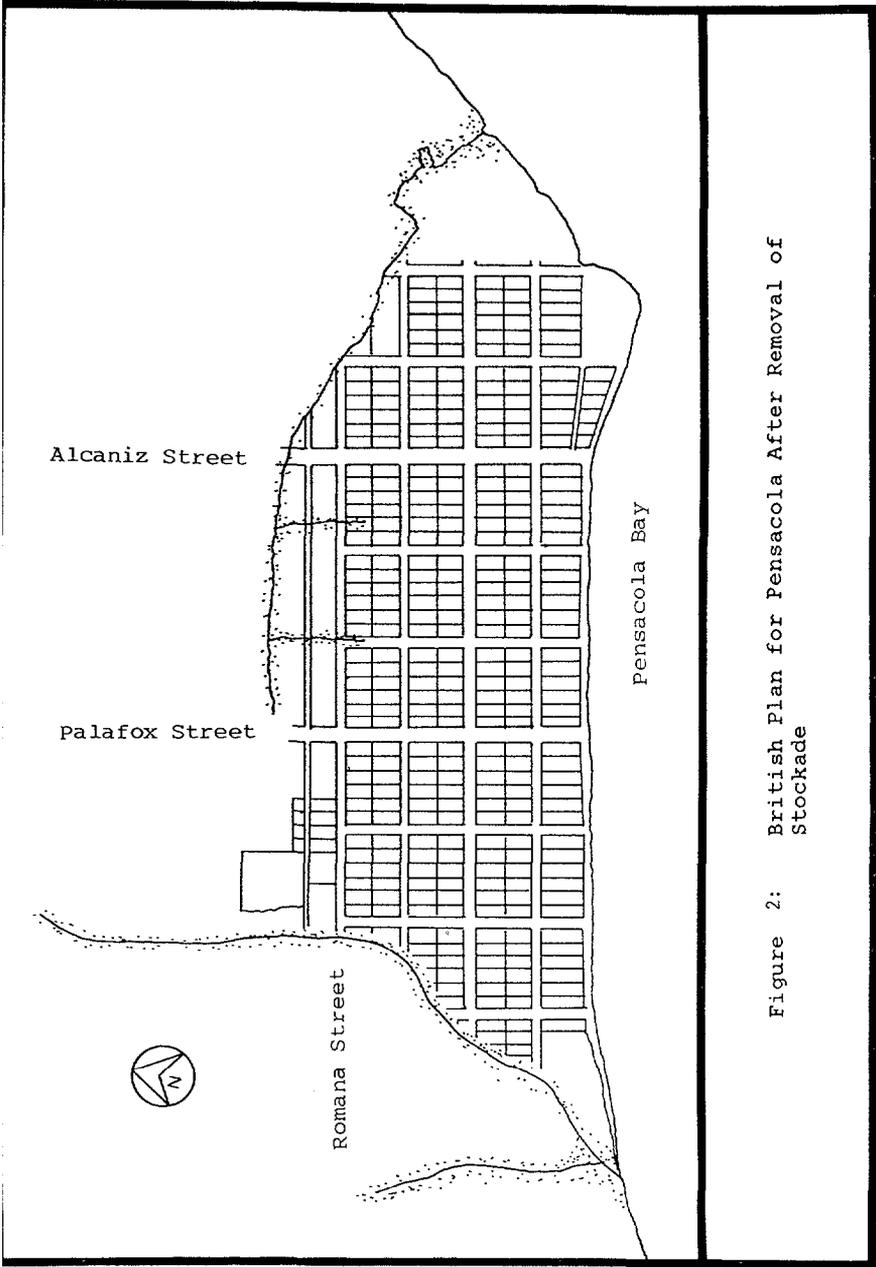


Figure 2: British Plan for Pensacola After Removal of Stockade

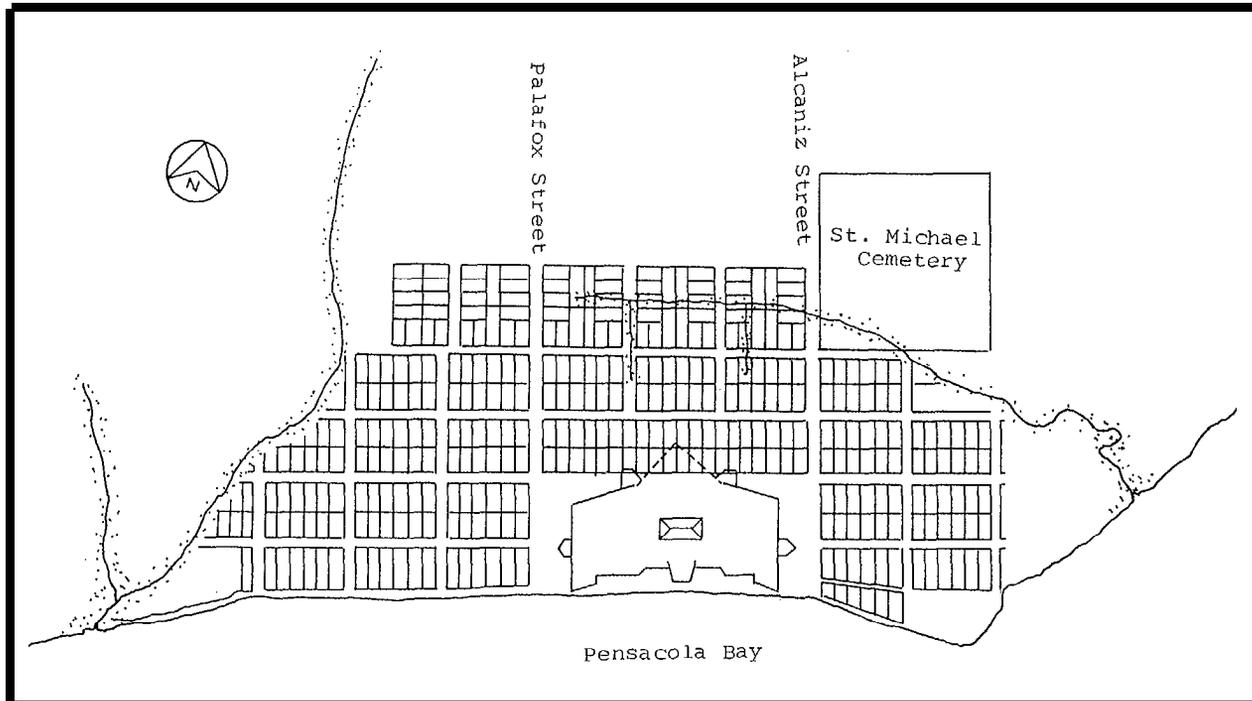


Figure 3: First Spanish Subdivision of 1807-1808. Plan includes subdivision of portion of area occupied by stockade, capping of open-faced blocks, and provision for St. Michael's Cemetery.

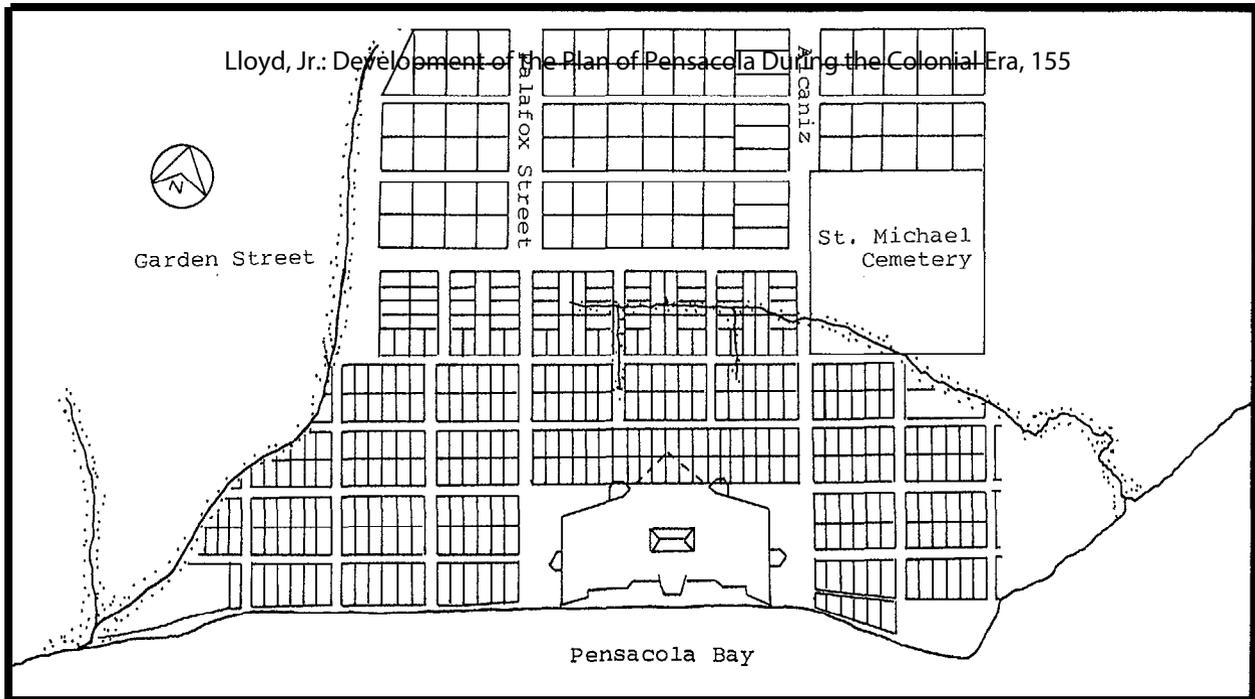


Figure 4: Spanish Platting North of Durnford Survey. The former British garden lots were subdivided into eighty-eight lots in 1809.

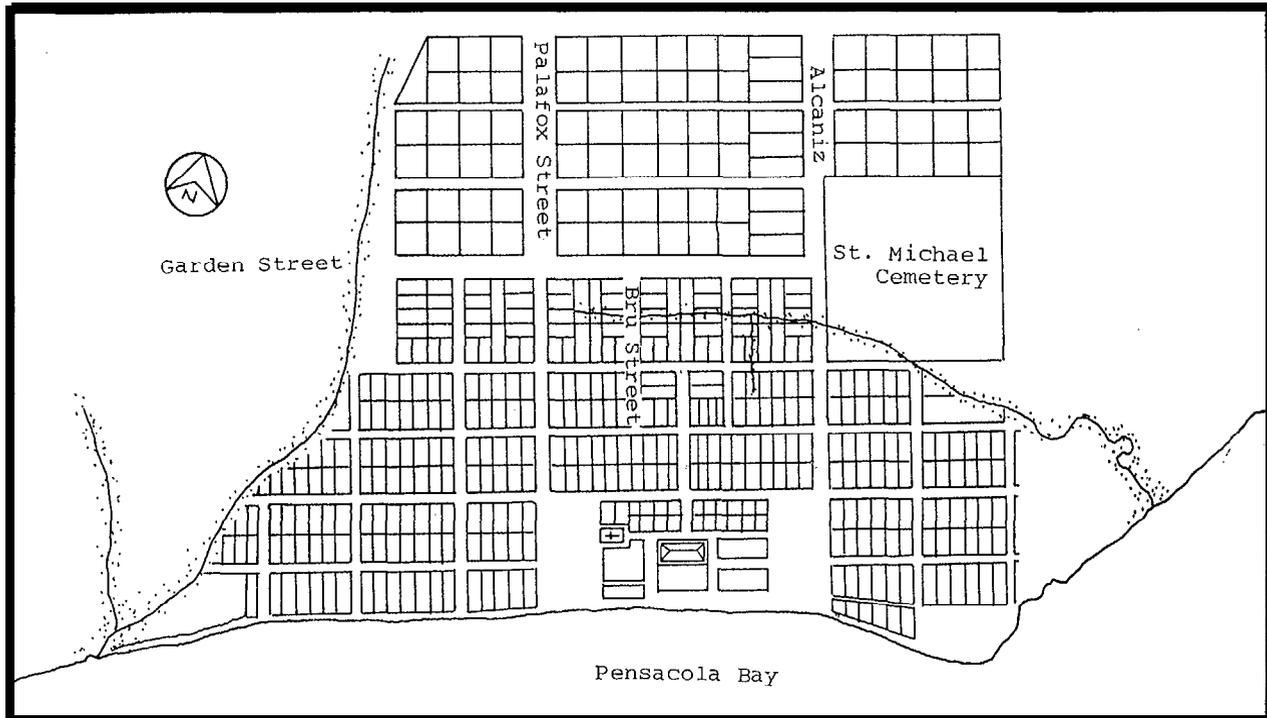


Figure 5: 1813 Subdivision of Central Military Plaza. Stockade was demolished and land platted into approximately thirty-two lots. Two open squares, Seville and Ferdinand, were created at this time. This subdivision gave downtown Pensacola its basic form.

one-fourth of a mile wide out of which issue two small Brooks which supply the town with water."¹⁸

In the center of the town was a large plaza, some thirty acres in area, facing the bay. In the middle of the plaza was a stockade of cypress stakes about ten feet high. This was flanked by strong-houses of pine planks joined to the stockade on each corner. Within the enclosure the principle buildings were the house of the governor, the barracks for the garrison, and several storehouses.¹⁹

The grid layout of the city had been so designed that when the stockade was no longer needed, the exterior streets could be extended into the central plaza. When this was done, all the buildings formerly located in the stockade would be perfectly centered in the new blocks. Similarly, the grid could be extended out from the original survey. Thus, according to British plans, Pensacola was eventually to have a simple grid pattern. The design was similar to plans for several tidewater towns in Virginia.²⁰

The British, in contrast to the Spanish, had much more latitude in the design and implementation of their plan for Pensacola. As set forth in the minutes of the Council of February 3, 1765, the terms for settlement list only ten prescriptions in a mere two and one-half pages.²¹

Among the demands made on would-be property owners was the payment of a quitrent of six English pence on each town lot. Furthermore, a lot was to be enclosed by a fence and contain a livable house of not less than fifteen by thirty feet, with at least one brick chimney. Petitioners were divided into five groups on the basis of ability to improve the land. Lots were allocated by a lottery.²²

As commerce between the British and the Spanish developed, Pensacola grew. Illegal trade and Pensacola's status as a colonial capital ensured it some measure of prosperity. Mean-

-
18. Elias Durnford, Report to the British Government, January 15, 1774, Vertical file: "Pensacola-History-British (1763-1781)," PHM.
 19. Joseph Purcell, "A Plan of Pensacola and its Environs in its Present State, 1778," Vertical file: "Maps 1781," PHM.
 20. For additional background see John W. Reps, *Town Planning in Frontier America* (Princeton, 1969), 106-44.
 21. Transcription of a Council held at Panzacola, February 3, 1765, Vertical file: "Pensacola-History-British (1763-1781)," PHM.
 22. *Ibid.*

while, several local economic ventures were developing. Local clay deposits soon supplied a thriving brick-making industry. The rich muck in the swamps was highly prized for rice production. Trade in furs, fish, and indigo helped bring money into the area. Surveyed by Durnford in 1767, and in use by 1770, a road from Pensacola to Mobile helped stimulate even more trade. The prospering colony began receiving immigrants from Louisiana and British colonies on the Atlantic coast.²³

Overseas events soon affected Pensacola dramatically. In 1779 Spain and France declared war on Great Britain. The Spanish governor of Louisiana, Bernardo de Gálvez, chose this opportunity to seize Natchez, Mobile, and Pensacola. After fierce fighting, on May 9, 1781 the British forces at Pensacola surrendered to de Gálvez. Thus, after only eighteen years of control, British rule of Pensacola ended. Nevertheless, the changes made by the British in the town's plan would form the basis for the present-day city.

Despite great strides, the Pensacola reacquired by the Spanish was hardly an impressive sight in 1781. The town maintained the physical appearance it had taken on during British domination, occupying a strip of territory about a mile in length along the bayfront and extending inland about a quarter of a mile. On the north it was bounded by a swamp, and on either side by two small streams.²⁴ The town was still within the bounds of the original Durnford survey, signifying only a relatively modest growth in population.

After the British garrison and settlers left Pensacola, fewer than 300 people (mostly Canary Islanders and French Creoles) remained. The once lucrative British trade in lumber, naval stores, skins, and indigo collapsed with the return of Spanish rule. Outlying British plantations were abandoned, and Pensacola became even more dependent on outside supplies. However, American entrepreneurs began migrating to West Florida, and a prosperous trade in deerskins, cotton, and lumber soon developed under a benign Spanish rule.

During the early 1780s Spanish authorities in Pensacola suggested relocating the site of the settlement due to its deterio-

23. Howard, *British Development of West Florida*, 36-37.

24. Bernardo de Gálvez, Map inset in José Porrúa Turanzas, *Diario de las Operaciones Contra la Plaza de Panzacola, 1781* (Madrid, 1959).

rating condition and its vulnerability to British and American attacks. They chose the site of the old 1698 Fort San Carlos because of its defensibility. Don Joaquin de Peramas, a military engineer, planned the new town.²⁵ In a 1784 plan he proposed a gridiron of rectangular blocks, 440 by 210 feet in dimension, with twenty lots each. Four streets, each about forty feet wide, were included in the plan. The plaza, enclosed on three sides, was open to the shore in accordance with Spanish concepts of planning. The town was to be surrounded initially by a wood stockade, but as the settlement grew a more permanent wall with bastions would replace it.²⁶ The proposal for relocating the settlement site was rejected by the Spanish Crown in 1788 due to lack of funds. However, the plan to rebuild Fort San Carlos was approved, and a small village, San Carlos de Barrancas, grew up next to the fort.

Shortly after 1800 the first subdivision of Pensacola took place. A section of land was detached from the central plaza, divided into lots, and sold at public auction. The fact that this subdivision took place where it did reveals the decrepit condition of the stockade. The new lots were located in the northern part of the structure. In 1806 the Spanish Intendant Juan Ventura Morales held the sales invalid, but the subdivision remained, for reasons unknown. In 1807 Morales ordered an official survey of that section of land.²⁷

As capital of Spanish West Florida, Pensacola assumed greater strategic importance with the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. The Louisiana Purchase, which did not include Pensacola, extended the length of the Mississippi valley and west to the Rocky Mountains. The first burst of Spanish enthusiasm for planning occurred under Governor Vincente Folch between 1807 and 1809. During that time "the Town being in the greatest disorder and confusion in relation to lots and streets, their dimensions and directions, it was ordered to make an examination . . . determining the dimension of all the lots and streets,

25. F. de Montequin, "Maps and Plans of Cities and Towns in Colonial New Spain," (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1974), 792-93.

26. Joaquin de Peramas, "Plano de Fuerte de San Carlos, October 20, 1784," Vertical file: "Maps 1781," PHM.

27. Lyle N. McAlister, "Pensacola During the First Spanish Period," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, XXXVII (January-April 1959), 301-02.

giving names of these, correcting as far as possible the defects [in the plan]."²⁸

In the years since the 1781 Spanish occupation of Pensacola, there had developed land problems due to title disputes, encroachments of buildings onto streets and lots, disrepair of the stockade, and land pressures on unsurveyed areas of the pueblo due to population growth. The Spanish ayuntamiento (municipal government) focused its attention on solving these land problems and adapting the English plan to Spanish concepts of town layout.²⁹

Vincente Sebastian Pintado was the surveyor responsible for nearly all the resurveying in Pensacola. Governor Vicente Folch originally retained him as a special adviser on the town resurveying. Lieutenant Colonel Gilbert Guillemarde, assisted by a townsman, was to have resurveyed the town on behalf of the ayuntamiento. However, Guillemarde died early on in the project, leaving the work to be completed by Pintado. Pintado was surveyor general of the province, and as such was entirely at the king's service. This meant that he was responsible to the governor, but could be "loaned" to the ayuntamiento for the project. He appeared well versed in Spanish concepts of city planning, as he knowledgeably cited the *Recopilación* in his explanation of the town survey.

Late in 1807 and early the following year, the ayuntamiento requested Guillemarde and Pintado to resurvey and close off blocks that under the English had been only partially surveyed. This would straighten out the titles of individuals who owned the partially-surveyed land. These open-ended blocks existed at the fringes of the pueblo, particularly on the north side and along the bayfront. When this area was relatively unpopulated land ownership was not a concern, but as the population increased there was a need to resurvey the open-faced blocks and clarify land titles. Provision was also made for St. Michael's Cemetery so that "it may answer the pious ends for which it was granted."³⁰

28. Vicente Pintado, "Summary of Pensacola's Resurvey to His Majesty of West Florida, October 26, 1814," Miscellaneous manuscripts file, box 5, folder 4, PHM.

29. Based on letters written by Pintado, Governor Vicente Folch, and the ayuntamiento, from 1807 to 1814, Miscellaneous manuscripts file, box 5, folder 4, PHM.

30. Pintado to Spanish intendant, March 1, 1808, PHM.

In 1809 Pintado surveyed the first planned expansion of Pensacola north of the old Durnford survey. The legal aspects of the expansion were discussed by the ayuntamiento, consulting the Recopilación for proper procedures. In a letter to the ayuntamiento dated November 21, 1809, Pintado outlined his plan which would divide the former British garden plots into eighty-eight lots of one arpent (.85 acres) each. The garden lots were an important aspect of Spanish planning. The area surrounding a pueblo was dedicated to agricultural production. According to Intendant Morales, the number of garden lots must equal the number of residential town lots. The British had made the same requirement. Morales was also responsible for the renaming of Pensacola's streets. The planned expansion was not extended farther north because the slope of the hill of St. Michael (North Hill) made agriculture difficult.

The plan itself contained three major streets: Palafox, on the west, which was tripled in width; Alcaniz, on the east, which was also tripled in width to 180 feet; and the major east-west artery, Garden Street. The widening of the streets might be explained as Pintado's intent to make them major boulevards, which they have become. Tarragona Street, midway between Palafox and Alcaniz, was later extended north, through the garden lots. There were two other east-west streets: Chase and Gregory.

The expansion of the pueblo into the swampy area north of Durnford's survey made it necessary to deal more comprehensively with the drainage system. Pensacola's inhabitants used the two streams which formed the eastern and western boundaries of town for washing and drinking water. By this time, environmental degradation of the streams was occurring, primarily due to overbuilding in the vicinity of the streams. The problem had been dealt with partially in 1808 by reserving a few lots bordering the eastern stream, but in 1811 the ayuntamiento ordered that all lots immediately adjacent to the streams be reserved for public use in a natural state. In addition, the ayuntamiento decided to maintain the east-west ditch that ran near Garden Street and close to the newly-created garden lots, linking the two streams. Built during British rule, the ditch served to drain the swampy land and maintain the flow of water through the streams.

In September 1810, the physical appearance of Pensacola

was described in an article that appeared in the *St. Louis Gazette*. The writer counted three main east-west streets and five smaller cross streets. On the main street, parallel to the bay, stood about 130 houses. The other two parallel streets also had about 130 houses. All except one were of wood, each having one story and a porch. The exception was the brick former residence of the British governor. The town maintained a spacious appearance due to the number of empty lots.³¹ Apparently, despite the land subdivisions, the appearance of Pensacola had not changed much since the British had left.

With the outlying parts of the pueblo properly surveyed, the ayuntamiento turned its attention to the interior central plaza. In 1813 Pintado surveyed the central plaza, and by the end of the year the ayuntamiento had approved his plan. Pintado, although he was aware of Durnford's original plan for the subdivision of the central plaza (in one letter he called the plan primitive), chose to survey an original layout. This is due to the differing cultural ideas of a Spanish pueblo, and the fact that encroachments had seriously affected the original survey. It is also possible that Pintado wished to be somewhat more creative than the original plan allowed. The surveyor showed considerable skill in subdividing the military plaza, which had formerly contained the stockade.

The central plaza was subdivided into approximately thirty-two lots. Pintado originally planned three open squares: Plaza Ferdinand, Seville Square, and a third square two blocks due north of the old officers' barracks. The third square was planned in classic Spanish style with roads intersecting at all four corners of the square, and two roads bisecting at its midpoint.

The church and important government buildings were to have been built on part of the third square, but two residents held title to two small lots on the western side, preventing the planned construction. In 1807, in order to obtain complete title to the lots which formed the square, the ayuntamiento decided to tear down one of the houses and buy the other one for use as a parish house.³² Apparently the homeowners successfully resisted the order to move, for six years later the ayuntamiento ordered Pintado to close the section of Bru Street that bordered

31. McAlister, "Pensacola," 306-07.

32. Vincente Folch to Juan Ventura Morales, September 3, 1807, box 5, folder 4, PHM.

on the square on behalf of the landowners. This action benefited the landowners even further by giving them more land. A new site for the church had been found bordering Plaza Ferdinand, at the present site of the city hall.

Church Street was created to connect the eastern Seville Square and the western Plaza Ferdinand at approximately their midpoints. In one letter Pintado mentions that the crossaxial street was planned for "the sake of regularity and symmetry."³³ The two squares were formed from that part of the Military Square just east and west of the walls of the old stockade.

At the new site a Roman Catholic church was built on the median of Church Street facing west on Plaza Ferdinand. That aspect of the plan was very likely modelled after the Bienville plan of New Orleans, which showed similar arrangement for the church. Furthermore, the cross street (Tarragona) dead-ended at the site of the former officers' barracks. This large building was located midway between the two new squares, exactly in the geographical center of town. Had the original church square been retained, Tarragona would have directly linked the officers' barracks with that square.

The plan was both aesthetically beautiful and extremely practical. Spurred by Pensacola's status as capital, the central plaza subdivision was a remarkable use of Spanish planning, modified by French design ideas and adapted to an essentially British town layout.

In order to prevent future occurrences of street and property encroachments by landowners of the type that had caused the shifting of Baylen Street eighty feet to the east, the ayuntamiento also ordered that any new lot being built upon must first be surveyed by the city surveyor. The ayuntamiento, having at last straightened out the land problems, in 1814 provisionally divided the pueblo into four barrios or wards.

In November 1813, the ayuntamiento rewarded Pintado for his effort with several choice pieces of land in the garden lots along what is now Gregory Street. The widow of Guillemarde was also compensated by the ayuntamiento for her husband's work.

33. Pintado, "Field Notes of Resurvey, December 1, 1813," box 5, folder 4, PHM.

During the next few years, as Spanish control of Pensacola continued to falter, West Florida came under increasing American pressure for annexation. In a ceremony in Pensacola on July 17, 1821, Andrew Jackson presided over the transfer of West Florida from Spain to the United States. Thus ended the colonial era of Pensacola's city layout.