An Account of the Good Success and Good Voyage of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés by Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales (II)

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Note to the Reader. The Spanish edition and the English translation of Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales's *Memoria del buen suceso* / *An Account of the Good Success* are presented here as Parts I and II, respectively, each intended to be read independently by audiences with different linguistic backgrounds. Accordingly, certain materials—including brief biographical and bibliographical notices, portions of the introduction, and some editorial and translational notes—necessarily appear in both parts. This arrangement was preferred to a single article of more than seventy pages, which would have burdened Spanish-speaking readers with an unnecessary translation while requiring English-speaking readers to navigate a lengthy bilingual study. Presenting the edition and translation as separate but companion pieces in the same journal also allows readers to consult either text independently or to read both together, according to their interests and needs.

An Account of the Good Success and Good Voyage, by Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales (1527-1586), is one of the foundational texts of Spanish Florida and, more broadly, of the earliest phase of European colonization in what is now the continental United States. Written by the chaplain from Jerez de la Frontera who sailed with Pedro Menéndez de Avilés (1519-1574) on his celebrated expedition to the Americas, the work is a brief *memorial de servicios*[1] composed between July and September 1565. Across its mere eleven folios, it recounts the events of the first three months of the voyage, from the fleet's departure on June 28, 1565, to the killing of the French Huguenots on September 29 of that same year. Between those dates unfold ninety days marked by relentless activity: the perilous Atlantic crossing through hurricanes and storms, the claiming of the land in the name of the King of Spain, the first encounters with Native Americans, and above all the "good success" of Menéndez de Avilés: the capture of Fort Caroline and the subsequent execution of the French Lutherans in Florida.

Although it covers only a brief span of time, the *Account* stands alongside the principal eyewitness sources of what historian Eugene Lyon termed "the enterprise of Florida," the first three years during which Menéndez de Avilés conquered and consolidated Spanish rule in those lands. Setting aside the vast documentary record dispersed across archives worldwide and later secondary works, such as the narrative written in 1568 by Salamanca professor Bartolomé de Barrientos, the deeds of Menéndez de Avilés in Florida are preserved chiefly in three sources: the letters sent by the *adelantado* to the Crown between 1565 and 1568, the *Memorial* traditionally (but wrongly) attributed to Gonzalo Solís de Merás, and Mendoza's *Account*.[2]

Despite its importance, the *Account* has attracted little sustained critical attention. In Spanish it has never appeared as a standalone scholarly edition, but only embedded within broader documentary compilations devoted to Florida or to the discovery, conquest, and colonization of overseas territories. The two editions on which readers still rely both date from the nineteenth

[1] A *memorial de servicios* was a type of document in which an individual set out, in narrative form, specific services to the Crown in order to request a reward; as such, authors of *memoriales* are not writing history for its own sake, but instead building a case for a claim.

[2] The letters were edited by Ruidíaz (1893: II, 60-180) and Mercado (2002). For the *Memorial* attributed to Solís de Merás, I follow my edition and translation of the Ferrera manuscript (Solís de Merás 2017). On the erroneous attribution of the work to this author, see Arbesú (2023b).

century, and the substantial errors they contain have hardly troubled scholars, who have continued to cite them without questioning their fidelity to the original text. The English tradition fares no better: although the narrative has been printed—and reprinted—nine times (*Fig. 1*), largely due to the interest of U.S. historians, every version perpetuates major misreadings and interpretive distortions that remain uncorrected to this day.[3]

The same can be said of the critical reception of the *Account*. In the mid-nineteenth century, anthropologist Daniel G. Brinton offered what appears to be the first sustained appraisal of the work, reproaching it for its stylistic inelegance, lack of historical rigor, and an excessive messianic tone that, in his view, had only one goal: to further "the holy work of bloodshed." As the University of Pennsylvania professor concluded, Mendoza

> does not aim at elegance of style, for he is diffuse and obscure, nor yet at a careful historical statement, for he esteems lightly common facts, but he does strive to show how the special Providence of God watched over the enterprise, how divers wondrous miracles were at once proof and aid of the pious work, and how in sundry times and places God manifestly furthered the holy work of bloodshed. (1859: 33-34)

A century later, Father Matthew Connolly echoed this perspective, describing the narrative as a "forthright and ingenuous account of a major undertaking as seen through the eyes of a simple priest and loyal Spaniard" (1965: 311). Nor has the present century been free from unfavorable judgments: Charles Moore, for example, has argued that the author's (supposed) digressions "cast doubt on the historical certainty of his writings through their hyperbole and perceived poetic fiction" (2003: 105). Even sympathetic readers have tended to offer only faint praise, calling the *Account* "unusually interesting and amusing" (Connor 1923: 12) or "a strikingly human, often amusing document" (Connolly 1965: 310). Such assessments, however, underestimate the work's significance. The *Account* is far more than a merely "entertaining" narrative, as its contribution to the history of the conquest and colonization of Florida is fundamental.

In my view, the observations of these critics (all from the United States) do justice neither to the work nor to its author. Mendoza was certainly no "ingenuous" or "simple priest," as recently discovered documents make clear (Arbesú 2022 [2024], 2023a). On his mother's side he belonged to the powerful Mendoza lineage of Jerez de la Frontera, two officials from the city's *veinticuatría* were his godparents, and he ended his career as commissary of the Holy Office in León, Nicaragua, after having previously held various posts in the Cathedral of that town. Although his prose is plain and direct, it is neither "diffuse" nor "obscure," and in stylistic terms it differs little from other documents of the period.

What must be noted, however, is that the text is addressed, almost like an extended letter, to a person known to us only as "Your Grace" (*Vuestra Merced*), about whom we know little beyond the fact that he had dealings with the chaplain in Spain. The "*señor lector*" (as Mendoza also calls him) appears only occasionally throughout the narrative, most strikingly when an episode in Andalusia is recalled: "Your Grace will recall that, while the fleet was being assembled in that

[3] For the French and English translations, see below. The first Spanish edition appeared as "Relación de la jornada..." in the *Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y colonización de las posesiones españolas en América y Oceanía* (1865), and the second in Ruidíaz (1893). Further details on these two editions, as well as on the early transcriptions of the work, are provided in my new edition, published in this same journal alongside the present translation (Arbesú 2026). A recent, and rather poor, edition also appeared in 2020 as part of the catalogue of an exhibition on Pedro Menéndez de Avilés (Vega-Vázquez 2020).

land, I visited my lord general at Puerto de Santa María, and I said [to you] that he had shown me a letter signed by His Majesty King Philip." The relationship between the two is so close that Mendoza even omits certain details with the intention of recounting them later, when they "meet again," or states that he "shall recount [them] in due time." This could explain why the chaplain's style is more plain and direct than that of other contemporary chroniclers, though by no means diffuse, obscure, or lacking in elegance.

Likewise, the passages in which the author might be accused of historical inaccuracy are no different from those found in other contemporary works, for example, the *Memorial* attributed to Solís de Merás, where it is also necessary to compare and adjust events and dates in order to fit the broader narrative established by multiple sources. It is true, though, that the *Account* contains errors in several dates, mostly slips in correlating the day of the month with the day of the week (**Wednesday 5* for Thursday 5), along with one mistaken month (**July* for June) and a couple of events narrated one day later than they actually occurred. Yet with some corrections, everything recounted in the *Account* proves to be, as the author himself affirms in his closing declaration, "faithful and true."

We should also bear in mind that the work was written in Florida and that its process of composition was far more deliberate than might appear at first glance. On a previous occasion I suggested that the *Account* was probably written in three distinct stages: in late July, August, and September 1565 (Arbesú 2023c), since most of the references to the present day ("today," "yesterday," "tomorrow") appear toward the close of each month. The matter is, however, far more complex, for several days are described as "today:" July 20; August 5, 20, and 26; and September 7, 8, 19, 22, 24, and 29. Although many events seem to be recounted in the heat of the moment (for example, the immediacy with which the final days, from September 19 to 29, are narrated is striking), it is equally clear that several were written retrospectively. This is evident, for example, in the second paragraph of the narrative, where the author announces the date on which Florida was sighted a month later, or in the account of the capture of Fort Caroline, at which the chaplain was not present. From the references to the present day one may infer that Mendoza recorded data, events, and dates on the days indicated; yet it is beyond doubt that the narrative was subsequently arranged in order to compose the *Account* in the form in which it has come down to us.

There are three key aspects of the *Account* that deserve particular attention. The first and most important is the messianic character attributed to the entire enterprise, already evident in the title's reference to Menéndez de Avilés' "*buen suceso*" ("good success"). The term, marked by strong religious overtones, clearly alludes to the general's victory over the French at Fort Caroline. Mendoza himself confirms this when, speaking of the expedition against the Huguenots, he expresses his confidence that God will grant "good success to our general, as I firmly believe He will." Everything is thus presented as a confrontation between Catholics and Lutherans: the undertaking is "in the service of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother," Menéndez de Avilés is constantly "inspired by the Holy Spirit," weather conditions follow divine designs, miracles occur (such as the sighting of a comet or the timely arrival of a hurricane), and, ultimately, Mendoza makes clear that "the true credit for our triumph over the enemies of the Holy Catholic Faith belongs not to the strength of men, but to my God and His Mother."

Apart from placing the whole enterprise in the hands of the Divine Providence, Mendoza takes care to emphasize the general's qualities in order to present him as the man best suited to carry it out. His praise of Menéndez de Avilés is typical of such narratives: on the one hand he is portrayed as a great commander ("so experienced in the arts of war," "vigilant and resolute in the arts of war," "well versed in all matters, especially in the arts of war"), and on the other as a

"gentleman and devout Christian," the latter making it clear that only a man like Menéndez de Avilés could have undertaken such a holy enterprise. Endowed with a profound "zeal for the Christian faith," the general becomes the agent through whom God's enterprise in Florida is accomplished, its chief aim being, according to Mendoza, to prevent the spread of Lutheranism within Spain's American dominions. It is therefore no coincidence that the chaplain believes that "the greatest fruit of this campaign ... is the victory that Our Lord has granted us, so that His Holy Gospel may be planted and preached in these lands, where it was sorely needed for the redemption of the many souls that dwell here."

Finally, perhaps the most revealing feature of the narrative is the prominence Mendoza grants himself within it. As this translation makes clear, the text abounds in first-person references (more than thirty in barely eleven folios) and the chaplain inserts himself so insistently into events that the work sometimes reads less as an account of Menéndez de Avilés's "good success and good voyage" than as a record of Mendoza's own role in the Florida enterprise. There is scarcely an episode in which he does not figure prominently, from the storm that struck the fleet in the middle of the Atlantic to the massacre of the Huguenots on September 29. Mendoza dines with the captains and the general, moves among high-ranking officers, greets the Spanish troops upon their arrival in Florida and their return from the assault on Fort Caroline, learns first of the Spanish victory, and is key in securing the lives of the French prisoners who profess the Catholic faith. His eagerness for involvement extends even to matters of strategy, although, as Constantino Bayle dryly observed, "without offending prudence or courtesy, Menéndez had ample reason to prefer his own judgment to that of a cleric turned strategist" (1928: 67-68, my trans.).[4]

In this light, it is hardly surprising to read the statement he made twenty years later, on March 27, 1585, before the inquisitors Bonilla and Santos García of the Audiencia of Mexico. Seeking to obtain the post of commissary of the Holy Office in León de Nicaragua, which he ultimately secured, the proud chaplain did not hesitate to parade his most famous exploit, greatly exaggerating his own role in the enterprise. According to Mendoza, "if services rendered to God Our Lord and to His Majesty deserve reward, *I was the first man to plant the Holy Gospel in Florida and to expel the Lutheran French from it*" (Arbesú 2023a: 148, 154, my trans. and emphasis). Judging by his words, it seems that Philip II need not have sent Menéndez de Avilés and the rest of the Spanish soldiers to Florida at all, for the chaplain's mere presence would have sufficed to banish the Lutherans from the Spanish American dominions and to implant Catholicism among the natives of Florida.

In short, the *Account* is important for several reasons. First, it offers a unique and personal perspective on many aspects of the conquest of Florida. The chaplain's voyage, for instance, was not the same as that narrated by Menéndez de Avilés and the author of the *Memorial*, since they were aboard a different vessel. According to the three chroniclers, scarcely a week after departing Cádiz the flagship *San Pelayo* and a *patache* drifted away from the rest of the fleet. As a result, Menéndez de Avilés and the author of the *Memorial*, traveling on that ship, recount a crossing distinct from Mendoza's, who sailed aboard the *San Andrés*, the admiral's ship. Consequently, all the episodes between July 8 and August 10/13 (when both fleets reunited in Puerto Rico) are unique to the *Account*. Later, when describing the Spanish assault on Fort Caroline between September 16 and 24, Mendoza again provides an otherwise unattested perspective, since, unlike Menéndez de Avilés and whoever recorded that episode in the *Memorial*, he had remained in St. Augustine with Captain Bartolomé Menéndez.

[4] For further details regarding the key aspects of the *Account*, see Arbesú (2023c: esp., 142-46).

The narrative is also grounded in everyday experience. The chaplain lived among the soldiers, heard their confessions, and prepared them for death. His testimony preserves the expedition on the level of lived reality: the Atlantic crossing, storms and shortages, troop morale, devotional practices, encounters with Indigenous peoples, and the spiritual preparation preceding combat. The brief text thus functions less as a chronicle than as a campaign diary of the conquest. From his particular vantage point, Mendoza shows what the participants experienced and how they understood the meaning of events. Without the *Account*, many chronological and motivational details would remain uncertain and the episode would appear largely as an administrative act; with it, the founding of Spanish Florida becomes a human and intellectual experience, allowing us to reconstruct not only the conquest itself but also the mentality that made it conceivable.

For historians, Mendoza's work is indispensable because it serves as a counterpoint to the general's official letters and to the later *Memorial*. The chaplain's narrative often clarifies troop movements, qualifies decisions, and reveals motivations concealed by political rhetoric. No episode illustrates this better than the executions of French Lutherans, where the *Account* provides not only a description of what occurred but also the moral reasoning that determined the selection of prisoners. Without Mendoza, historians would possess chiefly a legal justification of events; thanks to him, they gain access to the mental and emotional world in which those events were interpreted.

The work is equally significant for religious history. Mendoza presents the expedition not merely as a military undertaking but above all as a providential mission in which warfare, pastoral duty, and doctrinal conflict are inseparable. Confession, preaching, and discernment of faith occupy as much space as marches or battles. The frontier thus appears as a theological arena where decisions of life and death are framed in sacramental and confessional terms. The text offers exceptional testimony of Counter-Reformation practice outside Europe and shows how religious identity structured behavior in situations of extreme uncertainty. It is one of the clearest documents for understanding how participants themselves perceived the conquest: not only as imperial expansion, but as a war of faith.

Although written in Spanish and centered on a Spanish expedition, the *Account* also belongs to the broader history of North America. It records the destruction of the French Huguenot settlement of Fort Caroline, the beginning of a sustained imperial rivalry along the Atlantic coast, and the founding of St. Augustine, the oldest continuously inhabited European settlement in what is now the United States. It thus documents one of the earliest episodes in North American history. The *Account* therefore occupies a place not only in Spanish colonial historiography but also in early American history, illuminating the intersection of religion, empire, and settlement.

Manuscript

The sole surviving witness of the *Account* is preserved in the Archivo General de Indias (Patronato, 19, R.17, ff. 1r-11v). The manuscript was written by Mendoza and bears his signature on the final folio. It was written somewhat carelessly, and the folios show tears and ink blots that affect some of the words. It was annotated in the sixteenth-century by a different hand, which inscribed at the top of the first folio the heading, "*Del viaje que hizo el Adelantado a la Florida año de [15]65,*" and also glossed in the margins the principal dates and events ("*20 de julio*," "*tormenta*," etc.). Folio 11v is blank, save for two shelf marks: the present one of the Archivo de Indias and that of the Archivo General de Simancas, where it used to be housed: "*Descripciones y poblaciones 8.*"

French and English Translations

The first translation of the *Account* (and the only one in French) was published in 1841 by Henri Ternaux-Compans in his *Voyages, relations et mémoires originaux*. This version, which would later exert a decisive influence on the English translations of the *Account*, suffers from a fundamental flaw: it was not made from the original manuscript, but relied instead on a copy of a copy. As I explain in the introduction to my Spanish edition (Arbesú 2026), the manuscript preserved at the Archivo de Indias was transcribed in 1783 by Juan Bautista Muñoz y Ferrandis as part of his project on the history of the New World. That transcription, which departs from the original in roughly thirty places, was subsequently copied by his friend Antonio de Uguina y Garay. Ternaux's French translation, based on Uguina's copy, therefore perpetuates the same erroneous readings and omissions introduced by these two intermediary witnesses.[5]

It is also clear that Ternaux occasionally struggled to make sense of the text, which led him at times to suppress words and expressions that he did not understand. Two examples from the opening folio help to illustrate this tendency. When Mendoza states that the remaining five vessels in the armada "have succeeded in staying together—praise be to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother *for the favorable weather*," Ternaux reduces this to the more general statement that the ships "*on fait un excellent voyage, grâce à notre Seigneur et à sa bienheureuse Mère*" (1841: 167). A similar truncation occurs when the chaplain describes a storm in which "all I did that night was hear my brother's confessions. *We lived in mortal dread as thunder crashed overhead* and the sea repeatedly swept across the deck from port to starboard," which Ternaux renders simply as "*je ne fis que confesser mes frères. Très-souvent la mer entrait par un côté du navire et sortait par l'autre*" (1841: 168).

More importantly, there are numerous cases in which the translation substantially alters the original readings. To cite only three examples: Ternaux's version suggests that only two men—"*le capitaine et le soldat*" (1841: 167)—rose up against the pilot of the shallop, whereas the Spanish text makes clear that the entire crew was involved: "the captain and the other soldiers." He further states that the admiral's ship reached Puerto Rico at approximately three in the afternoon, "*vers trois heures du soir*" (1841: 176), when in fact the arrival took place an hour earlier, "at about two o'clock in the afternoon." Finally, he asserts that there were two thousand French soldiers at Fort Caroline, "*car il y avait deux mille Français*" (1841: 191), when this figure is actually part of a rhetorical hyperbole: "even if as many as 2,000 Frenchmen should be found there" etc. The translation does, however, offer one genuine improvement: in addition to adopting Muñoz and Uguina's correction of the first problematic date to June 28, Ternaux also correctly observed that September 16, 1565, fell on a Sunday rather than a **Monday*.

The first, and by far the most influential, English translation of the *Account* was published by Benjamin F. French in the *Historical Collections of Louisiana and Florida* (1875). This version achieved such wide circulation that it has been reprinted at least six times since its initial appearance and is still commonly regarded as the standard English translation of Mendoza's work.[6] Yet, French's text is beset by serious problems, beginning with the fact that it is not based on the original manuscript, but rather on Ternaux's French translation, itself derived from a copy of a copy of the original (Mendoza → Muñoz → Uguina → Ternaux → French). Throughout his book,

[5] For the *Account*'s editorial history in Spanish, see my edition in this same journal (Arbesú 2026).

[6] Namely, in the following editions: Barnard Shipp (1881), *The Old South Leaflets* (1898), *The Library of Original Sources* (1907), Father Jerome's *They Came and Remained* (1964), the text published by the St. Augustine Foundation (1964), and the three paragraphs in Colbert (1997). See *Fig. 1*.

French repeatedly claims to have worked from the "original manuscripts" (most prominently on the volume's cover), but this assertion does not hold true in the case of the *Account*. Although he offers no explicit reference to the source used for this particular translation, he later states that his version of Hernando de Escalante Fontaneda's *Memoir* is based on "Ternaux Compans' French translation from the original memoir in Spanish" (1875: 234). A comparison of French's and Ternaux's texts confirms that the same indirect procedure was followed for Mendoza's narrative.

Beyond providing what has become the standard English version of Mendoza's account, French's principal contribution lay in recognizing that several dates in the narrative required correction, even if his interventions were not always accurate. He was right to amend the entries for June 28 and September 24, but he failed to correct July 4 and September 4, omitted altogether the paragraph corresponding to September 23, and introduced an error in his treatment of September 16 and 19.

The more serious issue, however, is the extent to which French's version departs from the original. Not only did it reproduce the errors already present in the Muñoz-Uguina transcriptions and in Ternaux's French translation, but it also introduced additional mistakes and misreadings of its own. More importantly, the liberties taken by Ternaux in rendering the text into French were compounded by the liberties French took in translating it into English, resulting in an account that diverges significantly from what Mendoza actually wrote. Among the most problematic features of French's version is his willingness to omit entire paragraphs at crucial points in the narrative. Notable examples include the suppression of the conversation concerning Gutierre de Valverde on August 25 and the elimination of the paragraph devoted to captains Patiño and Amaya on August 27, among many others. There are also numerous instances in which the original sense is distorted: the events of August 6 are displaced to the previous day (1875: 194-95); the name of the Los Santos archipelago is rendered unintelligible (1875: 197); the initiative to navigate north through the Bahama Channel is incorrectly attributed to Mendoza rather than Menéndez de Avilés (1875: 120); and the events of August 26 are shifted to August 20 (1875: 205), to cite only a few examples.

The second English translation (and the only one based directly on the original manuscript) was commissioned by John Y. Detwiler during a trip to Spain in 1925. The volume cited as *First Settlement in America: Diary of Mendoza* (1926) is, in fact, a compilation of clippings from the *New Smyrna Daily News* reporting on the journey and announcing the publication in English—"for the first time," according to the editor—of Mendoza's account. Detwiler, then Fish Commissioner of the State of Florida, had begun as early as 1887 to gather materials for a history of New Smyrna Beach, the city where he spent most of his adult life and where he ultimately died. One of his principal objectives was to prove that New Smyrna Beach was the true site of Pedro Menéndez's first landing in Florida. To support this claim, Detwiler traveled extensively throughout the state in search of relevant historical documentation. When the available local sources were exhausted, he resolved to undertake a journey to Spain in June 1925, at a time when he was, by his own account, more than eighty years old.

In Seville he located Mendoza's *Account*, whose narrative clearly impressed him. Lacking knowledge of Spanish, however, Detwiler was obliged to commission a translation of the document from a certain William Bradley, described only as "a very accomplished Spanish student and translator" (1926: n. p.). The translation Bradley sent to Detwiler a few months after his return to the United States is useful as a working draft, but it cannot be regarded as a proper edition of the text, since it was never formally prepared or published as such. Bradley himself explained that his aim was to adhere "as much as possible to the original wording in Spanish" (1926: n. p.); nevertheless, many of his renderings are linguistically strained or semantically distorted. Thus,

where Mendoza states that he spent the night hearing his brothers' confessions, Bradley writes that he "confess them my brothers;" when Mendoza preaches to the men throughout the night, Bradley has him "predicted to them all night;" when Menéndez de Avilés appoints eight new captains in addition to the four who had come from Spain, Bradley translates this as "without four less than left Spain;" and when the general resolves to sail north, Bradley renders this as his decision "to be lost towards the north."

There are also numerous instances in which the translation departs substantially from the original or even reverses its meaning. Bradley claims, for example, that "the tempest was not so high on Saturday as the previous night" (when in fact the storm was equally severe on both days); that the soldiers were armed with "half a dozen spears" (rather than stones); and that Menéndez's fleet remained in Puerto Rico for four days, "of which three were without rain" (whereas it rained during those three days), among many other inaccuracies.

It is obvious, then, that the translator was far less accomplished than Detwiler suggested, a conclusion reinforced by the hundreds of grammatical errors that permeate the text, with constructions such as "more hided themselves," "great amount of work putted on me," "I did not wanted to be spoken about," or "all the other Captains sworned him" (1926: n. p.). Ironically, the only English translation produced directly from Mendoza's original manuscript is also the least reliable, and it was never reprinted nor adopted in subsequent scholarship on early Spanish Florida.

The third (and final) English translation was produced by Edward W. Lawson, who relied on the most widely disseminated Spanish edition as his source text, the one published by Eugenio Ruidíaz y Caravia in *La Florida: su conquista y colonización por Pedro Menéndez de Avilés* (1893). This translation survives in two typewritten documents held in the Special Collections of the George A. Smathers Libraries (University of Florida): one preserved in a folder of the "Edward Lawson Collection" (Lawson 1955a), and the other included in a volume entitled *Letters of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and Other Documents Relative to His Career, 1555-1574* (1955b). Lawson's (unpublished) version was later taken up by Congressman Charles E. Bennett,[7] who introduced several revisions and published the text in 1964. The resulting Lawson-Bennett translation has the merit of correcting three of the seven problematic dates in the narrative (June 28, July 4, and September 16). Moreover, because Bennett collated Lawson's translation with Ternaux's and French's versions, he was able to amend a number of errors inherited from Ruidíaz, such as the claim that the fleet departed Puerto Rico at three in the afternoon (in fact, it sailed seven hours later). Nonetheless, Lawson's reliance on the poorest Spanish edition of the *Account* had serious consequences, and the translation ultimately reproduces most of the errors introduced by Ruidíaz.[8]

In addition to the errors inherited from the 1893 edition, Bennett's translation omits entire passages—most notably the dialogue between the Spaniards and the French admiral—and repeatedly alters the original readings. Thus, "*V. M.*" is expanded as "Thy Majesty" (*Vuestra Majestad*), when the context clearly indicates "Your Grace" (*Vuestra Merced*); the Virgin Islands

[7] See Bennet's letter to the University of Jacksonville (1961).

[8] The first four lines of the manuscript are missing in Ruidíaz and Bennett (1964: 141); the nonexistent "*serpiente venenosa*" reappears here as "a poisonous reptile" (1964: 143); when Ruidíaz transcribes "*que no le perdiese habla* [*tabla*]," Bennet translates "so we could talk together" (1964: 145); the erroneous expression "they agreed to run it up on the land" (1964: 146) is due to Ruidíaz's misinterpretation of "*acordaron de dar tierras* (sic) *los caballos*;" the same goes for his translation of "the Captain pilot" (1964: 147), based on Ruidíaz's "*el capitán piloto*;" both texts omit the expression "*palabras formada*s" (1964: 149); the sentence "the general spoke with the rest of the captains and pilots" (1964: 152) follows Ruidíaz's (and Muñoz's) omission; the strange expression "we gave land to the French Almiranta" (1964: 153) is due to Ruidíaz's "*dávamos tierras* (sic) *el almiranta francesa*;" there is an omission in "general of all this land" (1964: 154) due to the source text "*por general* (*y adelantado de lo*) *de toda esta tierra*;" etc.

are described as "habitable" (1964: 144), although the original explicitly states that they are "inhabitable;" the phrase "*con más veinte y cuatro caballos*" is misread as "with more than 24 horses" (1964: 146); Menéndez's instruction that the remaining ships sail ahead of the flagship in order to avoid the sandbanks is reversed in Bennett as "all the vessels should follow the Capitana as leader and away from the danger of the banks" (1964: 147). Similar distortions affect the passage in which Mendoza explains how he deduced the general's strategy, as well as the account of the letter he received in Cádiz. Elsewhere, Bennett converts Menéndez's rhetorical exaggeration into factual statement—"despite the 2,000 Frenchmen being in port" (1964: 149)—misreads the dialogue concerning Gutierre de Valverde (1964: 150), and transforms the "five or six" cannon shots fired at a French vessel into casualties: "which carried off five or six men" (1964: 152). Likewise, the twenty-four cannonballs mentioned in the narrative are inexplicably converted into "20 guns of bronze," among many other similar inaccuracies.

In conclusion, while the need for a new Spanish edition of the *Account* is already evident, given that only two editions circulate and both date from the nineteenth century, the case for a new English translation is even more compelling. Although nine English versions of the *Account* are currently extant,[9] a close analysis reveals that only three are genuinely independent from each other (French, Bradley-Detwiler, Lawson-Bennett), and that only one (the unpublished Bradley-Detwiler version) is based directly on Mendoza's original text. The remaining ones are either adaptations and reprintings of French, itself far removed from the source, or translations derived from Ruidíaz's deeply problematic edition. For these reasons, a new English translation of Mendoza's *Account* is both necessary and long overdue.

Notes on the Translation

This translation of the *Account* is based on my Spanish edition, published in this same journal (Arbesú 2026). Consequently, all emendations introduced there, some of them essential for a correct interpretation of the text, are also incorporated here.

The *Account* does not pose extraordinary difficulties for the translator, although sixteenth-century syntax inevitably presents certain challenges. While modern Spanish already tends toward longer sentence structures than English, this tendency is even more pronounced in early modern prose, where extended and loosely articulated sentences are common. Additional obstacles include the frequent overuse of the conjunction "and," abrupt shifts in grammatical subject within a single sentence ("we … they"), and, in Mendoza's case in particular, the deployment of identical expressions for emphasis ("I thanked him for it and gave him thanks"). For these reasons, my primary aim has not been to replicate the original syntax mechanically. In order to offer a clear and readable English version, priority has been given to semantic transparency and natural English usage over strict adherence to original word order or phrasing. Units of measurement such as *quintal* (hundredweight) or *fanega* (bushel) have been left untranslated, since quantities are often expressed approximately and, in this context, rounded figures are more informative than precise modern equivalents. Numbers above 100 are given in numerals, not spelled-out.

As in the Spanish edition, it should be noted that all words in brackets constitute editorial interventions of my own and do not appear in the original text. This also applies to the dates marking the beginning of each new day, which do not appear in the original manuscript. A detailed explanation of changes and corrections to the dates can be seen in Arbesú (in press), where I have

[9] I am not taking into account the brief paragraphs included in George Fairbanks' *History and Antiquities of St. Augustine* (1858), reprinted later in *The Spaniards in Florida* (1868).

discussed at length the dates used by Mendoza as opposed to other eyewitness accounts (the letters written by Menéndez de Avilés, the *Memorial* attributed to Solís de Merás, the narratives of René de Laudonnière and Nicolas Le Challeux), to secondary sources, such as the 1568 narrative of Bartolomé de Barrientos, and to other contemporary documents.

Finally, a word on the title. The phrase "*Memoria del buen suceso y buen viaje*," which appears in the opening line of the narrative, poses interpretive difficulties even for modern Spanish readers, a circumstance that likely explains why most English translations have omitted it altogether. Several have instead adopted generic titles such as *Diary of Mendoza* or *Narrative by Father Mendoza Grajales*. In fact, the only two versions that attempt a translation—French (1875) and Bennett (1964)—derive it from Ternaux's 1841 French version, *Mémoire de l'heureux résultat et du bon voyage...* The resulting *Memoir of the Happy Result and Prosperous Voyage* is not in itself a bad choice; however, the expression "*buen suceso*" carries a distinct religious resonance that is central to Mendoza's narrative, in which Divine Providence is repeatedly invoked as an active historical agent. In its most basic sense, "*buen suceso*" refers to an event brought about through divine favor, whether by God or by His Mother, the Virgin Mary, who in early modern Catholic devotion occupies a role nearly equivalent to that of God Himself. In this case, the term points specifically to Menéndez de Avilés's victory over the Huguenots at Fort Caroline. Mendoza later employs the same expression when he affirms that God will grant Menéndez "*buen suceso*," that is, victory in the forthcoming engagement.

Although the expression is now archaic, it still survives in some English translations of the Bible (notably those descended from the 1560 Geneva Bible), as in Joshua 1:8: "thou shalt have *good success*."[10] In sixteenth-century English, however, it was a perfectly idiomatic expression, particularly in narratives of voyages, military expeditions, and providential history. In his account of Martin Frobisher's third voyage in search of the Northwest Passage, for example, George Best stated that his intention was "to advertise Her Majesty of his prosperous proceeding and *good success* in this last voyage" (1578). Similarly, Richard Hakluyt, a near contemporary of Mendoza who, like him, combined the roles of priest and explorer, offers abundant examples. In his celebrated *The Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589), the phrase appears repeatedly. Thus, in Sir George Peckham's account, Hakluyt writes that they could not hope "for *good successe* in the countrey of the savages" (28); describing the Virginia voyage of 1587, he refers to those "expecting *good successe* of the action" (417); and, recounting the exploits of Laudonnière's mutinous soldiers in Florida, he notes that "they did accomplish [it] with such *good successe* that in the morning, toward the breake of the day, about the five and twentieth of March, they arrived upon the coast of Florida" (558).[11] As such, I have chosen to retain it in the title as *good success*, however unusual it may sound to modern readers.

Finally, I would be remiss if I failed to acknowledge my profound gratitude to the friends and colleagues who generously read this English translation of the *Account* and enriched it with their thoughtful comments and invaluable suggestions: Anne Latowsky, Thomas Hallock, S. G. Fernández-Corugedo, and Jim and Nina Scott.

[10] See, for example, the 21st-Century King James Bible; American Standard Version; King James Version Letter Bible; English Standard Version; among others. Other versions read "you will succeed" or "you will be successful."

[11] Some additional examples. Reporting on John Hawkins's third voyage in 1567-1568, Hakluyt states that "considering the *good success* of this enterprise might highly further the commodity of our voyage, I went myself" (Beazley 1903: 94), and later on he mentions that, near the Azores Islands, they spotted a Flemish Hulk that came from Portugal, "which told us the joyful news of our Fleet's *good success*" (Beazley 1903: 291).

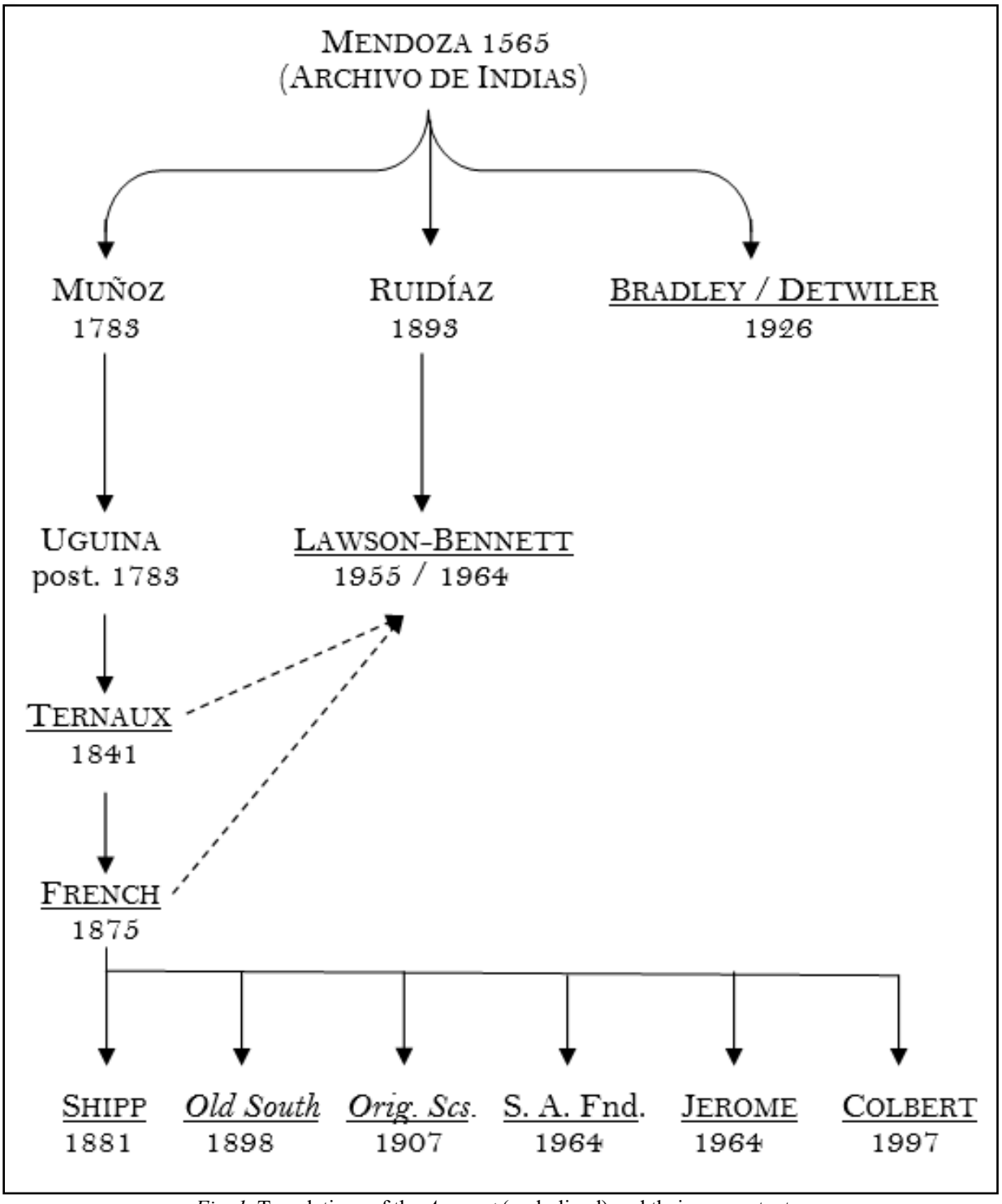


Fig. 1. Translations of the *Account* (underlined) and their source texts

AN ACCOUNT OF THE GOOD SUCCESS AND GOOD VOYAGE OF PEDRO MENÉNDEZ DE AVILÉS

Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales

An account of the good success and good voyage which Our Lord God was pleased to grant to the fleet that sailed from the city of Cádiz to the province and coast of Florida, of which the illustrious Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, Knight Commander of the Order of Santiago, was general.

[*Thursday, June 28*.] The fleet departed from the Bay of Cádiz on the morning of Thursday, June 28, 1565,[1] and reached the coast and provinces of Florida on August 28 of that same year.

[*Tuesday, July 3*.] Saling on with the fair weather that Our Lord God granted us from the day mentioned above, five days after our departure we came within sight of the islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura.

[*Thursday, July 5*.] Then, on Thursday, July 5,[2] we reached the Canary Islands, which lie 250 leagues by sea from Cádiz. We remained there for three days to take on fresh water and wood.

[*Sunday, July 8*.] Then, on the following Sunday, July 8, we set sail from the islands with eight warships. Following the general's lead, the vessels of the fleet set course to the islands of Dominica, which are a group of islands that are yet to be conquered, inhabited by Carib Indians.[3] However, misfortune would have it that our flagship and a *patache* drifted away from us the very night after we departed from the Canary Islands, and we in turn lost sight of them. We cruised the surrounding waters for two days in hopes of rejoining them, but without success. In view of this, our admiral[4] ordered us to steer a direct course toward Dominica, where we would either find the missing vessels or await their arrival.[5]

While sailing on this course, it happened that a shallop in which Captain Francisco Sánchez was traveling sprang a leak in its keel which the crew was unable to repair. They called for help, but to no avail. The pilot wished to stay on course with the other ships until they could reach land and repair the damage, but he was confronted by the captain and the other soldiers. Fearing they would drown, they drew their swords against him, demanding that he turn back toward land. The pilot was unable to do so because of the severity of the storm. At last they resolved to steer a quarter point to the southwest in search of land, and thus we left them and parted company, greatly distressed and worried at the thought of what might become of them.

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[1] The manuscript reads "July," but the month is clearly intended to be June. As Mendoza himself relates, the fleet departed from Cádiz on June 28, but, after encountering adverse winds, was forced to return and anchor near the Castle of San Sebastián in Cádiz. It set sail again on the following day, June 29, exactly as the *Memorial* records. For a detailed discussion of the chronology, see Arbesú (in press).

[2] The manuscript reads "Wednesday, July 5," although no such date existed. The correct reading must therefore be either Wednesday, July 4, or Thursday, July 5, but only the latter accords with Mendoza's calculations.

[3] Columbus reached Dominica, in the Lesser Antilles, on a Sunday (November 3, 1493), from which the island derives its name. A rendezvous had been arranged in the Canary Islands with the fleet commanded by Esteban de las Alas, which sailed from Asturias and Biscay. When he failed to arrive on schedule, Menéndez resolved to proceed to the Antilles, leaving instructions for the squadrons to regroup in Puerto Rico or Havana. The eight vessels under Menéndez's command were the flagship *San Pelayo*, the galley *La Victoria*, the brigantine *La Esperanza*, the caravel *San Antonio*, and four shallops—*La Magdalena*, *La Concepción*, the *San Miguel*, and the *San Andrés*. Mendoza traveled aboard the latter, which was the admiral's ship (Lyon 1974: 101).

[4] The admiral is Diego Flórez de Valdés. Cfr. *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 50, 67, 72, 75).

[5] The fleet now sails in two groups: on one hand, the flagship and a *patache*; on the other, the remaining six vessels (Menéndez, Letter of 13 Aug., f. 1r). Mendoza's account, written from aboard the admiral's ship, now diverges from the narratives of Menéndez and the author of the *Memorial*, who were sailing aboard the flagship.

[*Friday, July 20*.] The remaining five ships have succeeded in staying together, praise be to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother for the favorable weather. Yet today, at about ten o'clock in the morning of Friday, July 20, a fierce storm began to strike us, and around two hours into the night it turned into a hurricane, the most violent and terrifying that the crew had ever witnessed. The wind and the waters raged with such fury, and the sea rose so high, that it seemed it would swallow us alive.[6]

Such was the confusion and fear experienced by the pilot and the rest of us at the prospect of our destruction that I resolved to preach to my brothers and comrades, setting before them the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His justice and mercy. I applied myself to this task with such diligence that all I did that night was hear my brothers' confessions. We lived in mortal dread as thunder crashed overhead and the sea repeatedly swept across the deck from port to starboard. With no place to take shelter—the only covered space being filled with supplies of biscuit, water, and wine—some 120 of us remained standing on deck.

We found ourselves in such extreme peril that it became necessary to lighten the ship. Barrels of water were cast into the sea, along with the ship's hearth, seven stones used for grinding grain, and much of the ship's ropes and rigging. Yet all this proved in vain, and the vessel continued to founder. The admiral then resolved to throw all the chests overboard, but the soldiers wept so inconsolably that they all but compelled me to kneel before him and beg him not to do it. I urged him instead to place his trust in the boundless mercy of God, and, as a good Christian, he followed my counsel and allowed the chests to remain on board.

[*Saturday, July 21*.] When Jesus Christ granted us the light of morning, we felt as though life itself had been restored to us; for although the storm raged on Saturday with the same violence as on the preceding night, the return of daylight brought us comfort. Yet when night fell once more and we were forced to endure the same trials, once again we believed we would perish.

[*Sunday, July 22*.] Throughout that night I continued preaching to the crew, urging them to place their trust in Our Lord. Your Grace may well imagine the relief we felt when the sun rose on Sunday.

[*Monday, July 23*.] The storm persisted through Sunday until noon on Monday, when Our Lord God, showing compassion and mercy towards us, finally commanded the raging sea and violent winds to be calm. It should be noted that when the tempest first struck, the five vessels were still sailing together;[7] yet that same night, driven apart by the fury of the hurricane, we lost sight of one another. We did not see each other again until three days later, when one morning we sighted a ship that we later recognized as belonging to our own company, though at first we feared it was French.

[*Sunday, August 5*.] We were so utterly exhausted and our minds so unsettled by what we had just endured that the pilots were unable to regain the proper course. Finally, however, guided by the hand of the Holy Spirit, they ordered that we steer west, a quarter point to the southwest, and today, Sunday, August 5, the feast of Our Lady of the Snows, we came into sight of the islands of La Désirade.[8] As we drew nearer to these islands, we were hit by heavy rain and gale-force winds, driving us instead toward the island of Dominica, which is inhabited by Carib Indians.

[6] The chroniclers, traveling in separate fleets, give different dates for the hurricane. Mendoza dates it to July 20-23, whereas the *Memorial* situates it within thirty days of departure (Solís de Merás 2017: 39). Menéndez offers no precise date, but reports that they were approximately 300 or 350 leagues off the Florida coast (Letter of 13 Aug., ff. 1r, 3r).
[7] The fleet was reduced to five vessels, for Captain Sánchez's shallop had drifted apart from the remaining six.
[8] La Désirade (Sp. *La Deseada*) is a small island east of Guadeloupe in the Lesser Antilles. Aug. 5 marks the Feast of Our Lady of the Snows, a Marian devotion widely observed in Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Spanish America.

[*Monday, August 6*.] We entered the harbor on Monday, at about nine o'clock in the evening. As soon as we dropped anchor, our captain ordered that a boat be manned and equipped. The sailors took some jugs with them and went ashore to fetch fresh water, of which we stood in great need. An Italian servant of mine went with them. While walking through the woods in search of water, and by the light of a bright moon, he discovered a turtle at the foot of a tree, the largest and most formidable the men had ever seen. When it first began to move, they believed it to be a serpent or some other deadly creature, like a viper, and they fled back toward the shore where they had their boat. However, since there were six of them, it seemed to them that they were failing in their duty, and so they armed themselves with oars and other sticks and returned to the spot where they had first seen it, recognizing that it was indeed a turtle, as I have said. They approached it and, with their oars and with all the diligence they could muster, tried to turn it onto its back. The turtle attempted to escape toward the sea, but in the end it was no match for them: they captured it, secured it by one of its legs, and brought it aboard the ship.

It required six men to cut it open another day. In its belly were more than 500 eggs, similar to those of a hen, each with its own yolk and white, though round and as large as the balls that children use in their games. Its flesh, especially when roasted, both looks and tastes like veal. These turtles grow up and live in the sea but at night come ashore to sleep; when they carry eggs, as this one did, they deposit them on land and cover them with earth. After some time, the young hatch and make their way into the sea, where they grow to maturity.

[*Tuesday, August 7*.] On Tuesday morning the lord admiral ordered that a boat be fitted out and manned, and sent some sailors ashore to gather wood and water. He told me that I was at liberty to go ashore as well, though he cautioned me to be mindful of my actions. So eager was I to set foot on land that I gave little thought to the dangers that might await us. I summoned an Italian servant of mine and asked him to bring with him half a dozen shirts and other soiled garments. I gave him a piece of soap and instructed him to wash them on shore, which he did with great diligence. I also had fifty jars filled with excellent water that I found higher up the slope and sent them back to the ship.

While my servant and four other men were occupied with washing clothes, I walked toward some rocks along the shoreline and amused myself by gathering shellfish, which were abundant there. When I raised my eyes, I saw three men descending the side of a small hill. As we were in enemy territory and these men were almost naked, I immediately assumed that they were Carib Indians. I ran at once, as swiftly as I could, to rejoin the others and had them come out and arm themselves with half a dozen stones. We advanced cautiously toward them, drawing closer little by little until we could make out their words. They cried out that they belonged to our own company, which brought me no small relief, given the danger we believed ourselves to be facing.

The matter was as follows. After I had gone ashore with the others, the admiral had forbidden any additional men to disembark. Yet so eager were these poor fellows to reach land that five soldiers, judging the distance from ship to shore to be slight, resolved to swim across and join us. In fact, the distance was far greater than it appeared, and the current so strong that two of the five were drowned. The remaining three made their way on foot over the small hill to where I was. Because they were nearly naked, I took them for Caribs lying in ambush. I then had them fill more than 100 large jars with water and gather a great quantity of firewood. We returned to the ship that same evening, at about four o'clock.

[*Wednesday, August 8*.] Within the hour we were favored with such fair winds that by dawn on Wednesday morning we found ourselves near the island of Montserrat,[9] which lies some thirty-

[9] Montserrat is to the northwest of Guadeloupe and La Désirade, in the Lesser Antilles.

five leagues from where we departed. It should be noted that the distance between [Gran] Canaria and the island of Dominica previously mentioned is 800 leagues. Beyond these lie many other islands known as The Saints; another is called Guadeloupe, and others The Virgins.[10] This last group of islands extends to more than 200 leagues in circumference and consists of very rugged land, unfit for habitation.

[*Thursday, August 9*.] On Thursday, August 9, at about noon, we came into sight of the island of San Juan de Puerto Rico. When night fell, our pilot, fearing the many sandbanks that surround both the island and its port, ordered the sails to be lowered so that we might remain at anchor and avoid drifting.

[*Friday, August 10*.][11] At dawn, the wind picked up a bit. We unfurled the sails, and under clear skies and to all of our delight, we entered the port of Puerto Rico on Friday, the feast day of the blessed Saint Lawrence, at about two o'clock in the afternoon. Once within the port, we discovered that the flagship and the *patache* that had previously been separated from us were anchored there. On both sides there arose loud cries of rejoicing, giving thanks to the Lord for allowing us to find one another and be reunited. It would be impossible for me to describe the scene in full. The captains and the ensign immediately came aboard to greet us, and we celebrated with provisions and other items that they had brought with them.[12]

That same day, the lord admiral and I went ashore to pay our respects to the lord general, who received us most warmly and showed us such kindness that it would take long to recount. When the general noticed that I had not been present at dinner that evening—since he had not invited me—he sent for me the following day and, after providing me with lodging in a good house, asked that I dine with him daily. I was deeply grateful and expressed my thanks accordingly. We remained in that port for four days, three of which were marked by continuous rain.

[*Wednesday, August 15*.] On the fifth day, which was Wednesday, August 15, the feast of Our Lady, we embarked at about ten o'clock in the morning.[13] In this town we lost more than thirty men, among them three of the seven priests who had accompanied us, who deserted and fled. They could be found neither dead nor alive, a circumstance that caused great distress to the lord general and to me alike, for it added considerably to the burden of my labors.

It is true that while we were in this port I was offered a chaplaincy, with a *peso* in alms for each mass celebrated and no shortage of such services throughout the year. I declined the offer, both because I did not wish to become the subject of the same criticisms I heard leveled against others, and because this was not a place in which one might easily prosper. Moreover, I trust that Our Lord will reward me for the labor I have undertaken in this campaign, since my sole intention is to serve God and Our Lady, His Blessed Mother.

Those who have prospered here have done so chiefly through cattle. Some possess 20,000 or 30,000 head of cattle, as well as an equal number of mares, each valued at forty *pesos* in clipped

[10] The Saints: Terre-de-Haut and Terre-de-Bas, south of Guadeloupe. The Virgins: the Virgin Islands (US and UK).
[11] The feast of St. Lawrence is celebrated on August 10, which in 1565 did fall on a Friday. However, the date of the *San Andrés*'s arrival in Puerto Rico is problematic, since Menéndez makes no mention of it in his letter of August 13, yet in his letter of August 15 he states that the *San Andrés* arrived two days earlier, that is, on August 13. It should also be noted that Mendoza does not record any events between August 11-15, which makes his calculations suspect..
[12] The flagship had arrived in Puerto Rico on August 8. Both fleets are now rejoined.
[13] August 15 marks the feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. The fleet's departure from Puerto Rico on that date is confirmed by Menéndez (Letter of 10/11 Sept.). The squadron consisted of the *San Pelayo*, the *San Andrés*, the shallop *San Miguel*, the galley *La Esperanza*, and one additional vessel (Lyon 1974: 106).

coin, equivalent to some 120 Spanish *reales*.[14] The mares are inexpensive, however, because there is little use for them beyond breeding colts or serving in place of donkeys. As for the cattle, only their hides yield any profit, since the animals themselves are of little value for other purposes, and a single hide fetches no more than eleven or twelve local *reales*. I mention this because they attempted to persuade me to remain in this town, where Mr. Valverde[15] and I paid eight of these local *reales* for a single *azumbre*[16] of wine, and not a very good one at that. We therefore laid in provisions for the voyage, including oranges, limes, potatoes, excellent jerked beef, and sugar cane. We also ordered a dozen beef tongues and several cured tenderloins. We did so because, when we reached this port, I learned there of the hardships one is likely to encounter at sea.

With regard to the storm already mentioned, it appears that the flagship lay much closer to land when the hurricane struck and consequently suffered severe damage. The crew were making their final confessions and fully expecting death at any moment. A powerful gust tore away the foremast together with its sail and rigging, casting it into the sea; and because much of the rigging remained fastened to its fittings, the ship listed so violently that on two separate occasions the sail of the topmast was seen submerged beneath the water. In addition to this, the hurricane carried away part of the hull and the topmast itself, which is the highest structure of the vessel. When they realized that the ship was lost and could no longer be navigated, they allowed it to drift, keeping it as best they could against the waves, until God, in His mercy, permitted them to reach this same port, where the damage has since been repaired as well as circumstances allowed.[17]

In this same port of San Juan of Puerto Rico the lord general purchased a ship in order to transport fifty men whom the King had ordered to be levied on this island, along with twenty-four horses that were bought here. But on the very day we sailed from the port, the ship began to take on water and was in such danger that they were forced to throw overboard many of the things they were carrying in order to save the people aboard. Seeing that his was of little help, they resolved to throw the horses overboard, and twenty-three of them were cast into the sea and killed, with only one reaching this land of Florida alive. And this is how they were saved.[18]

On this same day, the lord general dispatched a large vessel to the city of Santo Domingo with orders to take on board the 400 men who had been assembled there by command of His Majesty and to return with all possible haste to the port in which we now find ourselves. It should also be noted that, before the fleet departed from Spain, His Majesty had sent three separate caravels as dispatch vessels to Santo Domingo and Havana at different times, each bearing His Majesty's instructions concerning the actions to be taken upon our arrival. Among many other important items, the second of these caravels carried a considerable number of sealed parchments and letters detailing our plans and arrangements. It appears that, as this caravel approached the island of La Mona,[19] which belongs to Santo Domingo, it was attacked by a French vessel (of those same Frenchmen who are now our neighbors) and forced to surrender. They boarded it, seized all

[14] The old silver *peso* (approximately 27 grams, or 1 ounce) was valued at eight reales. As Lawson has noted (1955a: n.p.), this coin was frequently clipped, thereby reducing its worth. The *pesos* circulating in Puerto Rico appear to have been especially debased, since 40 *pesos* should have amounted to 320 *reales* rather than the 120 reported by Mendoza.
[15] Later on we are told that Gutierre de Valverde is a relative of Mendoza. According to Lyon, a few months later Valverde will be "a key figure in spreading the infection of mutiny" at St. Augustine and San Mateo (1984: 49).
[16] *azumbre*: approximately two liters, or half a gallon.
[17] For Menéndez, "the storm was so great and the winds so strong that they tore all the masts and sails, except the topmast ... it lasted two nights and a day" (Letter of 13 Aug.). Cfr. *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 39).
[18] Menéndez mentions twenty horses (Letter of 13 Aug.); later on he agrees with Mendoza when he states that only one horse made it to Florida (Letter of 10/11 Oct.).
[19] La Mona is the third largest in the group of islands around Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

the papers, and read all the reports and orders concerning the conquest of Florida. They took away all the documents, along with whatever else they thought fit, and then told them to go on their way to Santo Domingo to deliver their messages, for they themselves were headed to Florida to warn their own people, and that they expected to arrive in Florida just as quickly as the caravel would reach Santo Domingo. After this, each vessel went its own way.[20]

[*Friday, August 17*.] On Friday, August 17, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, we came into sight of the island and territory of Santo Domingo. Trusting in his fortune and in God's mercy, our general ordered the admiral's ship to steer northward through a highly dangerous channel that, to this day, no one has attempted to cross. The admiral was saddened by this decision, as were the rest of us, but there was nothing we could do but comply with the general's orders. From the moment we entered the channel we encountered violently turbulent waters. Because we entered at an angle and were forced to contend with the powerful surge of the sea, the waves rose so high that they seemed ready to overwhelm us at any moment. The admiral asked me to console the soldiers with prayers and words of encouragement, which appeared to ease their fears, though we were compelled to endure these same trials throughout the entire night.[21]

[*Saturday, August 18*.] On the morning of Saturday, [August] 18, we took comfort in the rising sun. As we sailed on, we encountered shoals in the open sea, where the waves themselves were breaking, and all the pilots cast their sounding lines to test the depth, finding four fathoms in some places and even less in others. Within two hours, before nightfall, we sighted a low, uninhabited island called Aquana.[22] It was God's will that both the shoals and the island appeared to us by daylight, so that we might see them clearly and avoid their dangers—by the permission of God and His Blessed Mother—; for had this occurred at night, we could scarcely have escaped being wrecked upon one of them. Perceiving the peril, and realizing that none of the pilots in the fleet knew this coast or its navigation, they decided to strike sail near the island, since they dared not proceed by night for fear of being lost.

[*Sunday, August 19*.] At dawn on Sunday, August 19, the first vessel to set sail was the admiral's ship aboard which I was traveling, since the captain and pilot in command were skilled in navigation. They drew alongside the flagship and warned the lord general that the route he had chosen was dangerous. He nonetheless ordered them to proceed according to his instructions, [which they did,] as did the other captains and pilots, and further commanded that they maintain the course already described. In view of the constant perils they faced, owing to the many shoals encountered along the way, this decision caused great distress among the men.

That same day we came into sight of an island called Capuana,[23] which, like the previous one, was low-lying, uninhabitable, and surrounded by numerous hazardous shoals. Once again God granted that we approach it in full daylight, so that we might guard ourselves against its dangers. Toward evening, near nightfall, the admiral's ship drew alongside the flagship. The admiral and his pilot held a long conversation with the lord general, attempting to dissuade him and insisting that the course he had set was unsafe. Yet the lord general, persisting in his resolve, ordered that during the coming night all the vessels should sail ahead of the flagship in order to shield it from the sandbanks. Nevertheless, so great was the general dissatisfaction at being forced

[20] The capture of the vessel is confirmed by Menéndez (Letter of 13 Aug.).

[21] At this point Menéndez decides to change his plans and sail straight to Florida, without going first to Havana and Santo Domingo to gather additional men, or wait for Esteban de las Alas. Cfr. *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 39).

[22] It is not clear which island Mendoza has in mind. See next footnote.

[23] The islands of Aquana and Capuana are difficult to identify, although it is very likely that they correspond to the two islands called Inagua—which on some early maps appear as *Auiana* and *Amuana*, with variant spellings—or even to Mayaguana (identified as *Magacana*), all of them located in the southernmost part of the Bahamian archipelago.

to navigate these unfamiliar waters that, once night fell, all the vessels dropped back and allowed the flagship to lead the way. If the flagship alone wished to press forward through these seas, then the flagship would have to be the one to guide the fleet to safety, not the others.

[*Monday, August 20*.] At dawn on Monday, August 20, all the ships lay at anchor. Fearing the shallows, the flagship had cast anchor at midnight, and the remaining vessels had followed its example. That morning, with the return of daylight, we discovered yet another low-lying island directly ahead of us. From this point onward navigation became somewhat easier (at least with regard to the sandbanks, which now appeared less frequently), and for this reason we felt a measure of reassurance.

[*Sunday, August 19*.] Yesterday, which was Sunday, a boat from the flagship came alongside [the *San Andrés*] in the morning, carrying several gentlemen who were friends of mine. They brought word that the lord general had appointed eight new captains, in addition to the four who had come with us from Spain, each provided with ensigns and sergeants. Each captain was to be assigned fifty men, along with a number of horsemen to reconnoiter the land. We all received this news with great satisfaction, and this was how it came about.

[*Monday, August 20*.] Later that same Monday, at about nine o'clock in the morning, the admiral's ship drew alongside the flagship to render the customary salute. The lord general then ordered our captain to distribute weapons to all the soldiers so that they might clean them and keep them ready for use.[24]

When I saw the lord general persist so resolutely in maintaining the course already described, I reflected upon the matter and, although he had shared his intentions with no one, I was able to discern the reasoning behind his decision. Your Grace will recall that, while the fleet was being assembled in that land, I visited my lord general at Puerto de Santa María, and I said [to you] that he had shown me a letter signed by His Majesty King Philip reporting that, on May 20 of that same year,[25] seven vessels carrying 700 men and 200 women had departed from France. Later, in San Juan de Puerto Rico, we also learned that the French had seized the dispatch vessel I mentioned earlier.

Taking into account the severe damage the sea had inflicted upon our fleet, and the fact that in Puerto Rico the only vessels at his disposal were four of the ten ships that had sailed from Cádiz, together with the single ship purchased there to transport horses and the newly recruited troops, none of them particularly well equipped, the lord general, skilled as he was in the art of war, understood that the French would be lying in wait at ports farther along the route: Monte Cristi, Havana, or Cape Canaveral,[26] all situated along the same coastline and directly on the passage to Florida. This was all the more likely given that the enemy had seized the dispatches outlining our plan to assemble our forces in Havana. Since we had already lost several ships and were scarcely in a position to defend ourselves, he therefore resolved to steer northward in order to avoid a direct encounter with the French, entering the Bahama Channel, as he in fact did, from the opposite side, a maneuver that amounted almost to returning toward Spain by another route. In this way he would leave the enemy to windward, should they be waiting for him.

When I shared these reflections with the lord admiral and the pilot [of the *San Andrés*,] they both agreed that I was right, for there was no other plausible explanation for his decision to

[24] The preparations for the landing in Florida are detailed in the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 41).
[25] The date of Jean Ribault's departure varies from May 18-22, 1565.
[26] Monte Cristi is located to the north of present-day Dominican Republic. In the manuscript, Cape Canaveral is referred to as the *cabo de las Cañas*.

abandon the usual route by way of Havana. As I have indicated, it was the letter he showed me at Puerto [de Santa María] that allowed me to understand it.

[*Sunday, August 26*.] We continued along the course he had chosen, encountering, as I have already noted, many dangerous shoals along the way, until today, Sunday, August 26, when Our Lord was pleased to bring us safely near two islands known as the Bahamas. These lay opposite one another, and the waters between them were so shallow that the waves broke visibly upon the sandbars in the middle of the sea. The general ordered all the pilots to take soundings in order to determine the depth. That same day, a vessel that we had purchased in Puerto Rico ran aground in barely two and a half fathoms of water. The crew feared that it would be unable to get out, but it soon swung to windward, broke loose from the sandbank, and managed to rejoin us.

Later that day, in the late evening, our flagship—one of the largest vessels in use at the time—encountered waters so shallow that its keel struck the seabed violently on three separate occasions. The crew believed the keel to be damaged and feared that the ship would founder. Yet, since this enterprise was undertaken in the service of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, it was freed by two powerful waves that struck it from astern, and shortly thereafter it found itself in six fathoms of water, then ten, and finally twelve. In this manner we at last reached the mouth of the Bahama Channel, which we entered that same Sunday at about midnight.

[*Monday, August 27*.] That same day we had endured several heavy showers and had enjoyed little wind, but once we entered the channel God granted us a fresh breeze, which lasted until nine o'clock the following morning, which was a Monday, when it fell calm once more. When the lord general saw that we were unable to make headway, he sent a boat from the flagship carrying half a dozen jugs of wine and several other provisions. Upon seeing the boat dispatched, the lord Captain [Andrés López] Patiño and the lord Captain Diego de Amaya[27] (the chief pilot with whom I had once taken breakfast in Jerez) requested permission from the lord general to come aboard and visit me, which he readily granted. We spent the entire day together, [and I entertained them] as best I could.

[*Saturday, August 25*.] Before the events just described, on Saturday, August 25, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, the lord general came aboard our ship. He brought with him several weapons intended for the landing in Florida: two large culverins, two demi-culverins, and two bombards, together with powder and cannonballs. Once his vessel had been properly equipped, he sat down and outlined the course of action we were to follow upon reaching the port occupied by the French. His entire strategy rested on launching a direct assault, even if as many as 2,000 Frenchmen should be found there. Some approved of this plan, while others opposed it, but I will not dwell on the matter, for it would take too long to recount. I myself opposed it and appealed to his conscience, reminding him of the 1,000 souls entrusted to his care and urging him to keep them safe. Afterward we discussed other matters that would likewise require too much space to relate, and so I shall pass them over, God and His Blessed Mother willing, until we meet again.

That same Saturday, once the discussion was over, the lord general called me aside and said to me:

—Someone has mentioned to me that there is a relative of yours here.

I replied:

—Yes, my lord.

—Had I known this when I appointed the captains, I would have chosen him, but I was unaware of his presence until you asked Diego de Amaya to inform me.

[27] For Patiño and Amaya, cfr. *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 35, 36, 51, 56-58, 60-62, 74, 75, 80, 81, 86-88, 102, 133). The latter was the admiral of the fleet after Diego Flórez Valdés and Pedro Menéndez Marqués.

At that time, he still had to assign a sergeant's post in the company of Captain Mójica,[28] a gentleman of distinction.

—Accept this post until something better presents itself.

I asked for his hands so that I might kiss them, and directed Mr. Valverde to go and thank him in person. The lord general was pleased with the man's disposition, for Mr. Valverde—now a sergeant and officer of His Majesty—not only deserves this appointment, but will, I am confident, prove diligent in the discharge of his duties whenever occasion requires. Should he give a good account of himself and perform well in this post, he may in time be promoted to captain, a prospect I intend to support and bring about, should I live to see it.

[*Monday, August 27*.] On Monday, August 27, as we sailed near the mouth of the Bahama Channel, Our Lord showed us a sign in the heavens. At about nine o'clock at night a comet appeared almost directly above us, toward the rising sun. It shone so brightly that one might have taken it for the sun itself. It moved westward—that is, toward Florida—and its brilliance endured long enough for the Creed to be recited twice. As sailors often do, we took it as a favorable omen.

[*Tuesday, August 28*.] At daybreak on Tuesday, August 28, there was not the slightest breath of wind. Never since the beginning of our voyage had we been so completely becalmed, and our ship lay about a league and a half from the flagship and the rest of the fleet. We were all worn out, and I myself was growing weary of praying to God and His Blessed Mother for fair weather, when, at two in the afternoon, my God, in His mercy, sent us so strong and fresh a wind that we were able to come alongside the flagship under full sail.

Let me relate something else, which I take to be a miracle. While we lay becalmed, and even after we had rejoined the other vessels, none of the pilots knew where we were, and some even claimed that we were 100 leagues from Florida. Yet that very evening, thanks be to God and to the prayers of His Blessed Mother, we sighted land. We drew closer and closer, seeking to determine what coast it was, and anchored about a league offshore; the other vessels did the same. To our great relief, we found ourselves in Florida, and not far from our enemies. That evening, the general summoned all the pilots aboard the flagship to deliberate on our next course of action.[29]

[*Wednesday, August 29*.] The following day, [August] 29, at first light, the flagship and the rest of the fleet weighed anchor and sailed along the coast in search of our enemies or of a suitable harbor where our men might disembark.

[*Thursday, August 30*.] On Thursday, August 30, contrary winds compelled us to drop anchor. For the next four days we were unable to make any headway, either because the winds remained adverse or because the calm was so complete that we could not move at all. Throughout this time, we lay at anchor about a league and a half from shore, while strong currents prevented us from drawing near to the flagship, which was about a league ahead of us.

[*Friday, August 31 / Sunday, September 2*.][30] Because this land has so few recognizable landmarks and its coast is so flat and low, none of the pilots knew how to reach the port, nor did

[28] According to Menéndez (Letter of 10 Sept.), the captain was Fernando de Móxica; in the duplicate of the same letter, written on 11 Sept., he changes it to Francisco de Móxica. Muñoz (1783: f. 289v), *Colección* (1865: 456), and Lyon (1974: 456) transcribe the name as "Mexía."

[29] The date on which the Spaniards first sighted Florida presents certain difficulties. The general states that the first land they saw, on August 25, was Cape Canaveral, whereas both Mendoza and the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 217) proceed directly to St. Augustine on August 28. Moreover, Mendoza states that on August 26 they were still off two islands known as the Bahamas. For a detailed discussion of these problems, see Arbesú (in press).

[30] Another problematic date. On the basis of the temporal references, one would be inclined to think of Aug. 31; however, when the episode is compared with Menéndez's letters and the *Memorial*, the correct date would more likely be Sept. 2. See next footnote.

the two French prisoners we were bringing with us, even though they had come from that very place. For this reason, my lord general ordered some of the captains to go ashore with fifty arquebusiers. They lit many fires in order to provoke the Indians, hoping to entice them to approach and investigate, but the Indians, being so untamed, paid no heed, and no one appeared. Seeing this, our men pushed inland. Four leagues from the coast they came upon an Indian town, where they were warmly received. The inhabitants gave them good food, embraced them, and asked for some of their belongings. The soldiers were so generous that they gave them many of the items they carried, and in return the Indians presented them with two pieces of gold, of low quality, it is true, yet sufficient proof that they possess it and use it in trade. This was confirmed by the Frenchmen we had with us, who had long dealt with them. The Indians wished to celebrate with the Christians and asked them to remain there that night, but they declined, for they were eager to bring this good news back to our general.

[*Saturday, September 1 / Monday, September 3*.][31] On the morning of Saturday, September 1, after hearing this favorable news, our general resolved to go ashore and walk to where the Indians were. He brought with him many items—linen, knives, mirrors, and the like—in order to win their goodwill and persuade them to reveal the location of the French port. One of the two French prisoners I mentioned earlier was able to speak their language. Through him they told us that we had left the French behind us, about five leagues away, precisely at the place where God had first granted us sight of land. The reason we had missed them was that we had not sent anyone to reconnoiter the coast; had we done so, we would have discovered them at once and taken them by surprise.

[*Tuesday, September 4*.] On Tuesday, September 4, our fleet departed from the place mentioned above and sailed northward along the coast. Later that same evening,[32] about two hours before sunset, we sighted four French vessels at the mouth of a river.[33] When the two fleets were about two leagues apart, our flagship closed ranks with the rest of the armada, which consisted of four other ships besides itself, and ordered them to draw nearer. The general then conferred with the captains and pilots and decided that our admiral's ship, together with a shallop, should engage the French admiral's vessel, while our flagship, again assisted by another ship, was to attack the French flagship. In my judgment, both of these French ships were large and formidable. All those on our side, trusting in the general's diligence and ...,[34] followed the lead of the flagship in good order and with high spirits. Yet our general, so experienced and accomplished in matters of war, neither fired upon them nor inflicted any harm. Instead, he sailed straight toward the French flagship and cast anchor scarcely eight paces from it. The other vessels stood to windward, in close ranks. By then it was two hours after sunset, and throughout all this time not a single word had been exchanged between the two sides. Never in my life had I witnessed such prolonged silence.

Seeing this, the general resolved to open parley with the French flagship, which lay nearest to his own. He called out:

—Who are you?

They replied:

—[We are from] France!

[31] Even though Mendoza specifies a date (Saturday, Sept. 1), Menéndez suggests he disembarked two days later (Letter 10/11 Sept.), which agrees with the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 42-43).

[32] In the manuscript, "Later, on *Wednesday* evening," but the events correspond to Tuesday. See Menéndez (Letter of 10/11 Sept.). Notice that the next date mentioned by Mendoza is, indeed, Wednesday morning.

[33] The St. Johns River. Three of the four French vessels are *La Trinité*, *L'Émerillon*, and *La Perle*.

[34] The word is illegible in the manuscript.

—What, then, brings you into the lands of King Philip? Withdraw at once and leave it in my charge; if you refuse, consider carefully what you choose to do.

They then asked in turn:

—What is the name of the general of this fleet?

And they were told:

—Pedro Menéndez de Avilés.

Our general replied that he likewise wished to know the name of their general, and they replied that it was the great Mr. Gasto.[35] While these words were being exchanged, the French flagship sent a boat to their admiral's vessel. The messenger delivered his errand so discreetly that we could not hear it, though we did hear the French admiral's reply, which was:

—I am the Admiral, but I would sooner die!

From this we concluded that he had been urged to surrender for want of men.

Yet scarcely had these words been spoken when the French cut their moorings, cast them into the sea, set the foresail, and made off, passing close by us. Upon seeing this, our admiral's ship immediately gave chase to the French admiral's vessel, calling out:

—In the name of King Philip, shorten your sails!

Their answer was insolent.[36] Thereupon our admiral ordered a shot to be fired from a demi-culverin. The ball struck it amidships, so that I thought it must surely have been sunk. We pursued them for some time and again commanded them to shorten sail. They replied:

—We would rather die!

—Then fire!

A second shot was discharged from the demi-culverin, and in all it was struck five or six times. Yet these devils, so expert in seamanship, handled their ship with such skill that we were unable to take any of them, nor did we succeed in sinking any of their vessels, despite the fire from our ship and from the flagship. The only prize we secured that night was a large boat they had left behind, which has since proved most useful to us. Throughout the night the flagship continued in pursuit of the French flagship, while we chased after the admiral's ship.

[*Wednesday, September 5*.] At dawn on Wednesday, September 5, we were struck by severe weather. The storm was so violent that we feared our vessels would be swamped. Because our ships were small, we did not dare to beat out to sea against the wind, and instead turned toward the coast. Our three vessels cast anchor about a league and a half from shore, but the wind and the swell were so strong that one of our two mooring lines parted. We implored God that the other might hold fast, for it alone stood between us and being driven ashore and wrecked.

Since the storm struck our flagship while it was still at sea in pursuit of the enemy vessel, hoping to overtake it, and because of its great size, it had neither the time nor the ability to turn back to our assistance, leaving us exposed to imminent danger from the enemy.

That same evening, about sunset, we sighted a sail on the horizon. Believing it to be our flagship, we took great comfort; but as it drew nearer we realized it was the French admiral's ship that we had chased the night before. We were convinced that it would bear down on us, yet it did not dare to do so, and instead dropped anchor about a league from us, closer to the shore. That night our other two vessels lay anchored beside us. The pilots went by boat to confer with the admiral and determine our course of action for the following morning.

[35] In the original, "*el gran señor gasto*." The other sources correctly identify the general as Jean Ribault. See Menéndez (Letter of 10/11 Sept.) and the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 46-46).

[36] The *Memorial* is more explicit: "Let this and that be for King Philip and for Pedro Menéndez, and if you are a brave man, as they say you are, come now and do not wait until tomorrow" (Solís de Merás 2017: 46).

Assuming that the storm had either wrecked our flagship or driven it 100 leagues out to sea, we resolved that, at first light, we would weigh anchor and withdraw in good order to a river lying to leeward of the French, where we might disembark and build a fort to defend ourselves until reinforcements could arrive.

[*Thursday, September 6*.] At daybreak on Thursday, September 6, we bore down on the French admiral's ship lying at anchor nearby. When we were already so close that we were on the verge of capturing it, we sighted another vessel on the horizon. Thinking it to be one of ours, we continued our approach; but as we drew nearer, we recognized it as the French flagship, the one that our own flagship had been pursuing. Finding ourselves thus hemmed in by the two enemy vessels, we resolved instead to pursue the flagship, choosing this course as a matter of strategy, so that they might not attack us, for we had no desire to give them the advantage of waiting for us.

By this small stratagem we managed to make our escape and set sail in search of the river and harbor already mentioned, where we found our flagship and another vessel, which—thanks be to God and His Blessed Mother—had likewise put in there. Two[37] companies of men landed: one under the command of Captain Andrés López Patiño and the other under Captain Juan de San Vicente, a gentleman of great distinction. The Indians received them cordially and assigned them a large house on the riverbank belonging to a local chieftain.

Immediately, Lord Captain Patiño and Captain San Vicente, as industrious and diligent as ever, ordered the men to dig a moat around the house and to raise a terreplein of earth and fascines,[38] which are the only means of fortification available in this land, where not a single stone is to be found. As of today, the date of this writing, we have inside twenty-four bronze guns, the smallest weighing more than twenty-five *quintales*,[39] and our fort lies some fifteen leagues from that of the enemy. So great were the efforts that these two fine captains made with their ingenuity that, using only the fingernails of their soldiers, without any other tools, they managed to fortify themselves for defense, in such a way that when the general disembarked he was astonished at what they had accomplished.

[*Saturday, September 8*.] On Saturday, September 8, the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady of September,[40] the lord general disembarked amid artillery salutes, the unfurling of banners, and the sound of trumpets and other instruments of war. Since I had come ashore the previous day, [*Friday, September 7*,] I went out to meet them, bearing a cross and singing the hymn *Te Deum Laudamus*.[41] The general and his men proceeded directly to the cross, knelt upon the ground, and kissed it. Many Indians were present at these ceremonies and imitated all that they saw us do.

That same day the lord general formally took possession of the land in His Majesty's name, and all the captains swore allegiance to him as general and *adelantado* in all matters pertaining to this territory. When this was done, he pledged to employ all his authority for the benefit of the captains, and especially for Captain Patiño, who has served Our Lord and his king with great fidelity in this campaign. In my judgment, he deserves to be richly rewarded, for it is to his diligence and tireless labor that we owe this fort we now possess, in which we can hold out until

[37] The manuscript reads *three*, a figure contradicted by the lines that follow. Compare Menéndez's account: "with the first 200 soldiers I sent *two* captains ashore: Juan de San Vicente, brother of Captain San Vicente, and Andrés López Patiño" (Letter of 10/11 Sept.), and the *Memorial*: "he sent them off with *two* captains" (Solís de Merás 2017: 47).
[38] *fascines:* bound sticks with mud.
[39] *quintal*: roughly equivalent to 100 lbs.
[40] Sept. 8 is the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary.
[41] *Te Deum Laudamus* is one of the oldest and most important Latin Christian hymns of thanksgiving and praise, traditionally used in solemn religious and civic ceremonies; it opens with the famous line: *Te Deum laudamus, te Dominum confitemur* ("We praise you, O God; we acknowledge you as Lord").

the reinforcements we presently expect from Santo Domingo and Havana arrive. At present we have some 600 fighting men in the fort; the French have roughly the same number, or perhaps somewhat more. I have advised the general not to launch another attack until the end of winter, for the surest way to overcome our enemies is to allow the men to rest and to await the reinforcements. Yet he is so resolute in his course that I do not know whether he will heed this counsel.

[*Sunday, September 9*.] God and His Blessed Mother worked yet another great miracle in our favor. On the day after the general disembarked at the fort, he confided to us his concern that his galleass, accompanied by only one other vessel, lay at anchor a league offshore, unable to enter the port because of the great sandbanks. He feared that the French might come upon them and inflict damage. No sooner had this thought occurred to him than he set out at once with fifty men for his galleon and dispatched one of the three shallops we had left in the river to bring the men and provisions from the galleass into port.

[*Monday, September 10*.][42] On the following day the shallop drew alongside the galleass. More than 100 men embarked, loaded it with as many provisions as it could carry, and then made for the port. Yet when they were about half a league from shore, before reaching the sandbar, the wind fell so completely that they were left utterly becalmed and unable to make any headway. They therefore resolved to drop anchor and remain there through the night.

[*Tuesday, September 11*.] At daybreak the tide began to rise, and the pilot of the shallop weighed anchor in an attempt to cross the sandbar. But once the growing light allowed them to see clearly, they discovered that two French vessels, which had come in search of them during the night, lay close astern, directly behind our ship. Since our men were unarmed, had the French attacked upon sighting them, they would have seized a rich prize and carried off our provisions.

When our men realized, in the full light of dawn, that these were French ships, they began to pray to Our Lady of Consolation, who was in Utrera,[43] begging her to grant them a breath of wind with which to escape their pursuers, who were already bearing down upon them. And it seemed as though She herself hastened to their aid, for at that very moment a gentle gust arose, enabling the shallop to cross the sandbar just as the French were making their approach. Their vessels, being large and the water around the bar exceedingly shallow, were unable to follow. Thus, in this manner both our men and our provisions were brought safely into port.

As the day grew brighter, we sighted, in addition to those two vessels, four more enemy ships lying somewhat farther offshore. These were the same vessels we had found in their port on the night we surprised them, as I have already recounted. Laden with men and artillery, they had come with the intention of attacking the two ships we had left anchored at sea, the galleon and its companion.

Against this threat Our Lord provided us with two remedies. The first was that, around midnight of that same night, after we had already brought ashore the men and provisions mentioned above, our galleon and the other vessel slipped away unseen by the enemy. One returned to Spain, while the other was sent to Havana to bring back the soldiers gathered there. Thus, the French were prevented from capturing either ship.

[*Wednesday, September 12?*] The second remedy, and the one that gave us the greatest consolation, followed on the next day. We were struck by so violent a storm and hurricane that the

[42] The date is confirmed by Menéndez: "I wrote to Your Majesty from the galleon *San Salvador* on Sept. 10, which was the day it left this port ... within the hour, while I was crossing the bar in a shallop, together with two boats loaded with artillery and munitions, the four French galleons we had attacked came upon us" (Letter 15 Oct.). The action takes place at midnight, between Sept. 10 and 11.

[43] Utrera, in the province of Seville, is but one of the many places where the Virgin of Consolation is worshipped.

French must surely have perished at sea, especially since, when the tempest broke, they were along the most treacherous coast I have ever beheld. If our own vessels, the galleon and its companion, were spared, it was because they had sailed at midnight and were by then more than twelve leagues out to sea when the storm hit, far enough to ride it out until God granted them calmer weather.[44]

Our good general, being so experienced in the arts of war and so fiercely opposed to the French (particularly these, given all that was at stake), took note of these circumstances and summoned his captains. He declared himself resolved to take 500 men and march against the French fort. Most of the captains opposed this course, as did I and another priest (for both of us had been admitted to the council), yet he persisted in his determination to carry out the plan.

[*Sunday, September 16*.] On Sunday,[45] September 16, he set out with 500 men supplied with arquebuses and pikes, each soldier carrying a twelve-pound sack of bread and a wineskin for the march. They were accompanied by two Indian chieftains, bitter enemies of the French, who were to serve as guides and show us the way. From what these Indians said and the signs they had given us, we believed the enemy fort to be no more than five leagues distant; yet once on the road it proved to be more than fifteen, and along wretched paths, exposed to the burning sun.

[*Wednesday, September 19*.] Nevertheless, according to a letter we received today, [Wednesday,] September 19, from the lord general, it seems they have covered the entire distance. He reports that they were forced to pass through very dense forests, that every body of water they crossed was at least knee-deep, and that tomorrow, Thursday, [September] 20, they intend to fall upon the enemy fort at daybreak. His resolve and zeal deserve praise, yet I wish he showed greater caution, for in this matter it would be better to secure his aims more surely and in greater service to His Majesty, who has so much at stake here. Since the departure of our men, we have endured the worst weather and the most terrible storms I have ever witnessed. May His Divine Majesty remain with us and sustain us, for Heaven knows how greatly we stand in need of His aid.

Today, on the evening of Wednesday, [September] 19, we sent out from the fort twenty men carrying provisions of bread, wine, and some cheese. Yet the rains have been so heavy that I do not know whether they will succeed in reaching my lord general and his army. I trust in my God that He will provide, so that we may exalt His Holy Catholic Faith and bring about the defeat of these heretics.

[*Saturday, September 22*.] After we had celebrated mass in honor of Our Lady, and since it was a day of fasting, today, on the morning of Saturday, September 22, we priests asked the lord admiral to send some sailors to catch fish for our sustenance. When these men reached the place where they intended to cast their net, they saw a man standing on the beach. They went ashore and approached him. He raised a flag as a sign of peace. Upon drawing nearer, they realized that he was one of the French enemies, and they seized him and brought him back to our camp.

The man was greatly frightened and began to weep, convinced that we meant to hang him. I asked him whether he was a Christian.[46] He replied that he was and recited some prayers. On this account I comforted him and assured him that he had nothing to fear, provided that he answered truthfully whatever questions were put to him. He promised to tell the truth.

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[44] Laudonnière places the hurricane on Sept. 10: "*le dixiesme de septembre, il survint une tempeste si grande*" (1853: 194); LeChalleux, on Sept. 11: "*le mardi, onzième de septembre, à huit heures du matin ou environ … se leva un tourbillon de vent qui continua longtemps, avec grosses pluies, éclairs et tonnerres*" (1566: 25-26); the *Memorial* does not specify a date (Solís de Merás 2017: 47-48), and Menéndez seems to agree with Mendoza. Speaking about Sept. 10, he says that "within two days they were struck by a fierce storm and hurricane" (Letter 15 Oct.).

[45] The date of Menéndez's departure for Fort Caroline has been the subject of some debate. Mendoza errs in identifying it as **Monday*, Sept. 16, since that day fell on a Sunday; but the date appears to be otherwise accurate.

[46] By *Christian*, Mendoza means Catholic, as he will also do in the last episode of the *Account*.

When asked where he came from and what he was doing, he said that he was one of the Frenchmen from the fort and that, about eight days earlier, his general had sent him and fifteen others aboard a frigate to reconnoiter our port and spy on us. Obeying these orders, they had sailed along the coast until they reached the mouth of our port, when the Lord our God sent upon them a violent hurricane and storm. They attempted to put out to sea in order to escape both the port and the tempest, but the seas were so heavy and the winds so fierce that they were unable to do so. Instead, they were driven to the mouth of a river four leagues to the south of us, where the frigate was wrecked and five of their number were drowned.

By the following morning the Indians fell upon them, attacked them, and killed three more with clubs. This man and another managed to escape by fleeing into the woods and hiding in a pit. Afterwards, on the following day, they resolved to make their way back toward the sea. Wading through the water up to their necks, they reached the mouth of this river yesterday, Friday, [September] 21, the feast of Saint Matthew. His companion decided to cross the river in order to return to their fort by that route, which is in fact an easy way back. But as the river is very wide and the waters were at that moment extremely rough, I am certain that he drowned. He added that he has neither seen nor heard anything further of his other companions.

At once we dispatched ten men, both soldiers and sailors, to search for the remaining Frenchmen and to recover the frigate, which will be of great use to us.

He reported that there were some 700 men in the fort, of whom a third or more were Lutherans, and that they had two ministers who preached to them the doctrines of the Lutheran sect. He also said there were eight or ten Spaniards in their camp, three of whom had been found living among the Indians, their bodies tattooed in the native fashion and clothed in garments made of skins. These men had come from a ship wrecked on the coast and, since no other vessel had touched there for a long time, they had remained with the Indians, some even taking wives among them. He added that [the French] possessed a number of cows, sheep, and swine for breeding.

He said that their fleet had arrived less than twenty days before ours, and of all the artillery and munitions they had brought they had landed only a portion, including 200 *quintales* of biscuit, 200 *fanegas* of wheat,[47] some meat, and some other things. We were glad to hear this, for if the Lord our God grants good success to our general, as I firmly believe He will, we shall make good use of what they have. More welcome still was the news that they had sent out four ships with more than 200 men in search of us, and that none had returned. This can only mean that they were wrecked at sea, for after their departure they were struck by two separate storms, the most violent I have ever witnessed.

That same Saturday, at about noon, when the lord admiral heard the French prisoner's report and learned that a frigate lay aground, he sent out a boat with ten men, both soldiers and sailors, and ordered them to equip themselves and proceed to the site in order to refloat the vessel and bring it back. The men obeyed, but upon reaching the place where the frigate lay they were confronted by a great number of Indians. There they also saw the bodies of fifteen dead Frenchmen—the crew of the frigate—and, fearing that the Indians might likewise shoot at them with their arrows, they resolved to withdraw and return.

[*Sunday, September 23*.] On Sunday,[48] September 23, the admiral, displeased that the ten men had returned without the frigate, ordered another boat to be fitted out. Taking a dozen men with him, he sailed upriver to reconnoiter the surrounding land and to see whether any Indian settlements lay nearby. By good fortune he found a passage leading to the mouth of the river where

[47] A *fanega de trigo* equals approximately 1.6 bushels of wheat.
[48] In the original, **Monday*, but Sept. 23 was a Sunday. See next footnote.

the frigate had run aground. They went ashore and walked some distance until they came upon it. When the Indians realized that they were Spaniards, they received them kindly and assisted in refloating the vessel.

[*Monday, September 24*.] On Monday morning,[49] at about nine o'clock, they returned to our port with the frigate. As soon as I recognized them, I ordered the bells to be rung and celebrations to be held throughout the camp. The frigate is of great value to us, for it is comparable to a fifteen-bench galliot and can be put to many useful purposes.

News of great rejoicing, worthy of record

[*Monday, September 24*.] That same Monday, about an hour after the admiral had returned with the frigate he had been looking for, we saw a man coming toward us, crying out at the top of his voice. I was the first to go to him to learn what news he brought. He embraced me with great joy and exclaimed:

—Victory! Victory! The French port is now ours!

I promised him a reward for the good news and fulfilled my promise as best I could.

In the chapters above I have already recounted how, against the counsel of many, our good general resolved to take 500 men and march against the French by land, as indeed he did. And since this enterprise was undertaken in the service of my Lord Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, the Holy Spirit enlightened the thoughts of our good general, guiding him so that he would achieve a great victory and secure our safety.

As my lord *adelantado* has ever been so vigilant and resolute in the arts of war, and has rendered so faithful an account of himself in every charge entrusted to him by His Majesty, so too has he not failed—nor will he ever fail—in this enterprise, which is of such consequence to the Crown. He has displayed a zeal and skill unmatched by any prince in the world, speaking personally with captains and soldiers alike and granting them many favors. His resolute spirit heartened and encouraged them, and his words alone were enough to move any soldier to fight like a Roman.

Yet, in order to fully appreciate the full measure of this victory, I wish to recount certain particulars of what transpired in this campaign, so that it may be plainly seen that the true credit for our triumph over the enemies of the Holy Catholic Faith belongs not to the strength of men, but to my God and His Mother.

[*Sunday, September 16*.] I have already recounted in a previous chapter how, on the 16th day of the present month of September, our good general set out for the enemy fort with 500 men—arquebusiers and pikemen—accompanied by two Indian chieftains to guide the way. The march

[49] Once again, the dates do not align. In the original, the day is given as **Tuesday*. According to Lyon (1974: 124), Menéndez and his men departed from Fort Caroline (San Mateo) on Sept. 23. None of the sources, however, specify an exact date, although Mendoza agrees with the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 63) that the journey from the fort to St. Augustine took three days. This would place Menéndez's departure on Sept. 21 (or early on Sept. 22), one day after the capture of the fort. The difficulty arises from a series of chronological errors in the *Account*, which states that the admiral set out with several men in search of the frigate on **Monday*, Sept. 23, and that they returned the following day, **Tuesday*, at nine in the morning. A few lines later, however, Mendoza claims that Menéndez returned to St. Augustine on that same day, which he now identifies as Monday, Sept. 24. The most plausible resolution is to assume that the first expedition to recover the French frigate left on Saturday, Sept. 22; that the second expedition, led by the admiral, departed on Sunday, Sept. 23 (rather than the erroneous **Monday*); and that it returned on Monday morning, not **Tuesday*, at around nine o'clock. This way, both men would have made it back to St. Augustine on Monday, Sept. 24, three days after departing from San Mateo.

took them three days. The reader will readily understand that, from the very first day the general and his soldiers departed from this port, they were forced to wade through waters that rose to their chests, and to swim across three rivers. They accomplished this in the following manner: those who knew how to swim crossed first, fastened their pikes together, and helped the others pass through the water.

[*Wednesday, September 19*.] In this way they pressed on until the night of Wednesday, [September] 19,[50] when they found themselves at about a distance of a quarter of a league from the enemy fort. They spent the entire night in a swamp, with the water rising up to their waists.

[*Thursday, September 20*.] At daybreak they learned that Captain Andrés López Patiño and Captain Martín Ochoa had already gone forward to reconnoiter the fort.[51] However, when they were on the point of attacking, they realized that most of the men were greatly weakened by the water they had endured, both from the heavens and from the earth.

Yet that same Thursday morning, as soon as the growing light allowed them to see clearly, our good general, together with his son-in-law Pedro de Valdés[52] and Captain Patiño at his side, launched the assault upon the fort with such resolve that it seemed as though they had suffered no hardship at all. Seeing this, the rest took heart and followed them; not a single man held back. It must be noted that the enemy did not perceive their approach until they were already upon them. Since it was early morning and rain was pouring down from the storm, most were still in their beds; some rushed out almost naked, others wearing nothing more than a shirt. They cried out:

—I surrender, my Lord!

Despite this, 142 men were slain.[53] The rest, up to 300, scaled the walls: some fled into the woods, others boarded the vessels they had left in the river laden with valuable goods. Thus, they captured the fort in less than an hour, without suffering a single casualty on their side, not even one man wounded.

There were six vessels in the river. They seized a brigantine and a galliot, though the latter had not yet been completed; they also took another vessel that lay aground, from which a great quantity of cargo had been unloaded. Thinking that we were to come by sea, the French had stationed two of the remaining three vessels at the mouth of the sandbar to defend the entrance, while the third lay closer to the port, laden with wine and other goods. This last ship refused to strike its colors and instead made sail. They fired upon it with one of the cannonballs found in the fort and sent it to the bottom, yet it lies in such a place that neither the vessel nor its cargo will be lost.

They found many items, and some of great value, among the spoils of war: 120 fine corselets, 300 pikes, numerous arquebuses and helmets, many excellent garments, large quantities of linen, textiles, kersey, and other fine cloth, 200 pipes of flour, much biscuit and butter, some sheep and swine (though not many), three horses, four asses (two of them female), 200 *fanegas* of

[50] The original reads *eighteen*, but the correct date is Wednesday, Sept. 19.

[51] Ochoa's encounter with a French soldier is narrated in the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 55-56). Later on, in a different episode, we are told that he was killed by the Indians (Solís de Merás 2017: 144).

[52] Pedro de Valdés y Menéndez de la Bandera (1544-1615) was both Menéndez's nephew and his son-in-law. He was the son of Juan de Valdés, the general's own brother, and was married to his cousin Ana Menéndez, the general's oldest daughter. See the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 35, 192-193 *et passim*).

[53] For the attack on Fort Caroline, see the *Memorial* (Solís de Merás 2017: 36, 54-60), which dates the assault to Sept. 21. It took place, however, on Sept. 20, as confirmed by Mendoza, as well as by Menéndez (Letter of 15 Oct), by the account of Antonio García Vasalenque written some thirty years later (Ruidíaz 1893: II, 615), and even, from the opposing side, by Laudonnière (1853: 197). As for the French casualties, Menéndez concurs with Mendoza's overall figures, though he distributes the losses over two days: 132 on the first day and a further ten on the following day.

wheat, a furnace, a flour mill, and many other things which, God willing, I shall recount in due time, so as not to be overly lengthy.

Yet the greatest fruit of this campaign, in my judgment, is the victory that Our Lord has granted us, so that His Holy Gospel may be planted and preached in these lands, where it was sorely needed for the redemption of the many souls that dwell here.

They also discovered many Lutheran books and numerous decks of cards, some bearing on their backs the image of the Host and the Chalice, others showing saints carrying crosses, all of them mocking and ridiculing the teachings of the Church. Among those who perished was a Lutheran who, besides having 1,000 other evil traits, had been a noted cosmographer and necromancer, and he had once been a friar.

[*Monday, September 24*.] Today, Monday, the 24th day of the present month, at about the hour of vespers, our good general arrived with fifty infantrymen. All were utterly spent and worn down. As soon as I learned this news, I hastened to my house to put on a surplice and a new cassock, the finest I possessed, and, taking a crucifix in my hand, I went out some distance to meet him before he reached the port.

Even before he reached us, he, being a gentleman and devout Christian, knelt down together with all those who accompanied him, giving heartfelt thanks to Our Lord for the great favors received. My companions and I then went before him, singing in procession, so that he was welcomed by us with great rejoicing, and we in turn by him.

So great is his zeal for the Christian faith that all these labors are a kind of repose to his spirit. Indeed, it seems to me that, considering what he has endured, no human strength could have borne the like. Yet his burning desire to serve Our Lord by overthrowing and destroying this Lutheran sect, enemy of our Holy Catholic Faith, greatly lightens his fatigue.

If I were to speak at length of his brother, Captain Bartolomé Menéndez,[54] whom he brought with him, I could scarcely bring my account to an end. He is no less zealous in exalting our Holy Catholic Faith and in obeying the commands of his good brother, our general. Indeed, when the lord general set out to attack the enemy, he entrusted to him the charge of all the men and defenses of this fort, as though he were his very person. During the entire time that his brother was absent, marching against the enemy and engaging them in battle, he labored with such tireless diligence that I never once saw him undress or lie down to rest. By night he busied himself setting sentinels on every side, both by land and by sea; by day he and his soldiers devoted themselves wholly to the defense of the fort. And on the many nights when the alarm rang through the camp, he was always the first to appear in full armor, ready to serve God and his king. The words he spoke in his brother's absence were enough to hearten his men and raise their spirits, urging them to fight like Romans, even when provisions were scarce.

If one were to recount the hardships and terrors we endured at sea, this captain showed such courage that his mere bearing was a source of comfort and encouragement to many pilots and sailors, strengthening them to perform their duties in the most perilous moments. And whenever it was necessary to climb the ratlines to the highest mast in order to save those under his charge, he was always the first to do so. Yet I shall not prolong my narrative with the other deeds I have seen this good man do, though they are truly worthy of record.

If you were to ask me also about the camp master, he is a gentleman of great distinction, the son-in-law of the lord general and a close kinsman of the Archbishop of Seville. Though scarcely more than twenty-five years of age,[55] he is of graceful bearing, personable, resolute, and

[54] The *Memorial* confirms that Menéndez left him in charge of St. Augustine (Solís de Merás 2017: 50, 73).
[55] Pedro de Valdés, who was actually twenty-one years-old.

industrious, and well versed in all matters, especially in the arts of war. For this reason, the lord general has always kept him at his side. When the enemy fort was attacked and taken, this young gentleman was among the first to charge, fighting beside his father-in-law, and in the ensuing combat he distinguished himself as one of the bravest. Seeing how valiantly he had conducted himself, the lord general resolved, upon returning to our own fort, to leave him as governor of the one taken from the enemy. He has carried out this charge with such diligence that in a short time he and his men have strengthened its defenses, digging a moat around it and erecting a bastion toward the sea, so that even if half of France were to come against it, they would scarcely be able to provoke him.

[*Friday, September 28*.] Last Friday, September 28, 1565, after the events already recounted, while the lord general was resting and taking some repose from the many hardships he had endured, some Indians came to our camp. By signs they informed us that a French vessel lay wrecked and stranded on the coast to the south. At once our good general ordered his admiral to equip a boat, take fifty soldiers, and proceed downriver toward the sea to ascertain the truth of the matter. About two hours after this had been done, the lord general sent for me; and, being of such resolute spirit, especially in matters touching this enterprise, he said to me:

—Mendoza, it seems to me that I was wrong not to have gone with those men.

I replied:

—Your Lordship acted wisely; and had Your Lordship wished to do otherwise, I and the rest of Your Lordship's servants would have prevented it, in order to spare you the dangers which might have befallen you.

Yet the more I sought to dissuade him, the less his spirit would yield, until at last he declared that he would go after them.[56] He ordered me and some captains who were present to accompany him, so that in all we numbered about twelve men. We took a boat and set out in pursuit of our company, bringing with us two Indians as guides, and sailed downriver toward the sea in search of the enemy. When we reached the mouth of the river, we went ashore and marched more than two leagues across rough and broken terrain, our good general always leading the way, often wading through water up to our knees.[57]

Upon reaching the coast we continued for another three leagues along the shore in search of our men. It was about ten o'clock at night when we found them, and we were all greatly rejoiced at this meeting. From that place we could discern the fires the enemy had kindled. In order to determine what should be done against them, our good general sent two soldiers to cross the broken terrain and reconnoiter the position and strength of the enemy. The soldiers went and, after some two hours, returned to report that the enemy were on the other side of the river and that we could not come at them. The lord general then dispatched two soldiers and four sailors to the place where we had left the boats, ordering them to bring them out to sea so that we might cross over to the enemy camp. Eager to reach the river before dawn, he immediately commanded the men to advance, and once there we concealed ourselves among the rocks, together with the Indians who accompanied us.

[56] The sources diverge in their accounts. Menéndez agrees with Mendoza that on Sept. 28 the Indians warned him of the presence of several Frenchmen to the south. Yet, in his letter of 15 Oct., Menéndez states that he set out with 50 soldiers and sighted the French the following morning, whereas Mendoza relates that those 50 first departed with the admiral and that the general followed much later with 12 additional men. The *Memorial* stands apart: "some Indians arrived [on Sept. 28] and told him by signs that four leagues away there were many Christians ... That evening the *adelantado* took with him forty soldiers, and after midnight he arrived near that inlet" (Solís de Merás 2017: 64).

[57] In the original, the water is up to their *pañetes*, a kind of underwear that reached from the waist to the knees.

[*Saturday, September 29*.] At daybreak on the following day we saw many of the enemy along the riverbank, gathering shellfish for their sustenance. Shortly thereafter, we saw them raise a battle flag. Upon this sight, our good general spoke as though inspired by the Holy Spirit:

—Gentlemen, I have resolved to parley with these Frenchmen, for they may be so broken that they will choose to surrender without a fight. I will cast off these garments, dress as a sailor, and take with me this Frenchman (who was one of those we had brought from Spain).

No sooner had he spoken than he went forward and called out to the enemy. One of them swam across the river to confer with the general. He recounted at length their hardships and misfortunes, saying that they were utterly lost and that it had been ten or twelve days since they had tasted bread. He also confessed that all, or at least most, of them were Lutherans.

The lord general sent him back to his companions with word that if they refused to surrender and lay down their arms, he would put them all to the sword.

A French gentleman, a sergeant,[58] came in reply from the enemy camp, bearing the message that they were willing to surrender and give up their weapons on the condition that their lives be spared. After much parley between him and our good general, the latter answered that he would give them no such assurance. Rather, they were to hand over their weapons and place themselves at his mercy. In this way, if he chose to spare their lives, they would owe it to his clemency; and if he chose to take them, they could not claim that he had failed to keep his word.

Given that they had no other course open to them, he returned to his camp. Shortly thereafter, they all came forward, surrendered their weapons and banners to His Lordship, and placed themselves at his mercy. When His Lordship saw that they were all Lutherans, he condemned them all to death. But since I am a priest, moved by human compassion,[59] I begged him to grant me a favor: that those among them whom we might find to be Christians[60] should not die. This was granted to me. Upon inquiry, we found ten or twelve such men, whom we brought back with us. The rest were put to death as Lutherans and enemies of our Holy Catholic Faith.

All the above took place on Saturday, the feast day of Saint Michael, September 29, 1565.

The number of Lutherans who perished there was one 111, not counting the fourteen or fifteen men whom we took prisoner.[61]

And I, Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales, chaplain to His Lordship, bear witness that all the aforesaid is faithful and true.

Francisco López de Mendoza Grajales.

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[58] For Menéndez, the first French soldier was a pilot and the second one a lieutenant of Laudonnière (Letter of 15 Oct.). Mendoza only states that the second one was a sergeant. For the *Memorial*, there were two different crossings by a Frenchman who spoke Spanish "very clearly, because he was a Gascon from Saint-Jean-de-Luz" (Solís de Merás 2017: 65), followed by three different crossings by a French captain.

[59] *moved by human compassion*: In the original, "*y tener entrañas de hombre*" ("endowed with the entrails of a man"). The expression resonates with Biblical imagery: mercy, compassion, and forgiveness are conceived as arising from the bowels, and Jesus himself is said to have loved "with the bowels" of a man. As Bartolomé de las Casas writes in his *History of the Indies*, "Who could endure such inhuman cruelty if he were endowed with a heart of flesh and the entrails of a man?" (Bk. II, ch. XLIII). For the concept, see Martínez-Gayol (2017).

[60] As before, by *Christians* Mendoza means Catholics.

[61] The sources disagree on the number of Lutherans killed. The *Memorial* is confusing, as it reports 208 soldiers, of whom only eight were spared (Solís de Merás 2017: 68). Menéndez aligns more closely with Mendoza's figures: he states that there were 140 soldiers and that 130 were killed (Letter of 15 Oct.).

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