

NOTA

LOPE DE VEGA REALLY DID EMBARK ON THE SPANISH ARMADA*

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«A perplexing lacuna in the story of Lope's life is the year 1588» wrote Rudolf Schevill in 1941 (Schevill 1941:65). He found particularly perplexing the question of whether or not *El Fénix* sailed with the Spanish Armada.

In 2015, RTVE attempted to fill this lacuna in episode 2 of their series *El ministerio del tiempo*. Using Fax, Skype and an Internet search, the “ministry” checks the embarkation lists of the Armada and is horrified to find that Lope de Vega has embarked on *San Esteban*, a ship that will be wrecked in Ireland, where the whole ship's company will die. The “ministry” manages to move him to *San Juan de Portugal*, but only «a última hora» because «Las listas de tripulación nos llegan a última hora». The scriptwriters came surprisingly close to the truth.¹

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1. *El ministerio del tiempo*, «Tiempo de Gloria» [2015], season 1, episode 2, script by Javier and Pablo Olivares, available at: <https://www.rtve.es/contenidos/el-ministerio-del-tiempo/ministerio_del_tiempo_guion_capitulo_2.pdf>. *San Esteban* ran ashore near Dunbeg, County Clare, on 20 September 1588: 300 of the men aboard drowned; 60 got ashore but were hanged almost immediately.

In 2008, in an article in this Journal, Antonio Sánchez Jiménez published a helpful list of texts in which Lope alluded explicitly to his Armada experience; but both there, and in his biography of 2018, *Lope: el verso y la vida*, Sánchez Jiménez concluded with regret: «No tenemos testimonios que no dependan de Lope ni de sus discípulos y que confirmen su participación en la Armada» (Sánchez Jiménez 2008:272-273 and 2018:86-91).

There is, however, at least one exception. Although Lope's name does not feature in any of the surviving lists of those aboard the fleet compiled by the government of Philip II, it appears in the «Relatione dei cavaglieri titulati et non titulati aventurierieri [*sic*] che sono imbarcati in Armata sino [*sic*] 10 di Maggio 1588»: a list compiled in Lisbon and later sent to Emperor Rudolf II by the Imperial ambassador, Count Hans Khevenhüller, and reproduced here in full for the first time. It contains the names of 179 *aventureros* (gentlemen adventurers who served without pay in the hope of glory). One of them is «Lope de Vega, de Madrid».²

Khevenhüller was one of twelve ambassadors at the court of Spain, based in Madrid: the other resident diplomats represented the Pope and the governments of Ferrara, Florence, France, Genoa, Lucca, Mantua, Parma, Savoy, Urbino and Venice. Although Khevenhüller's embassy was small—a secretary, two or three servants, and sometimes a courier—his intelligence was second to none. He had resided in Spain since 1574, longer than any other ambassador, and he was so fluent in Spanish that he wrote his dispatches partly in German (in Black Letter) and partly in Spanish (in *italics*). He obtained copies of key documents from other ambassadors, from spies in the royal chancery, and from Philip's sister (and Rudolf's mother), Dowager Empress María, to whom he paid regular visits. Thus a detailed report on the Armada's progress, sent to Rudolf on 14 September 1588, came from a document sent by Philip to inform María, who showed it to Khevenhüller. The ambassador also managed to prize state secrets from senior ministers. Thus in spring 1586 he passed on some news about Armada preparations “that the duke of Medina Sidonia told me just an hour ago” as he left a meeting of the royal council; and two years later he persuaded the duke's

2. Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, Vienna (hereafter HHStA) *Statenabteilung Spanien: Diplomatiscche Korrespondenz* Karton 11 ff. 373-376, «Relatione dei cavaglieri titulati et non titulati aventurierieri che sono imbarcati in Armata sino 10 di Maggio 1588».

special envoy to the king, Don Baltasar de Zúñiga, to brief him on why the Armada had failed.³

Khevenhüller conveyed his intelligence to the emperor in long dispatches, about 30 of them each year, often accompanied by supporting documents. His letters from 1588 survive today in two locations:

- HHStA, Vienna, *Statenabteilung Spanien: diplomatische Korrespondenz*, 11, Konvolut 7: The originals, partly cyphered, together with supporting documents;
- Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv, Linz, *Khevenhüllers Briefbuch IV*: A register of all the ambassador's outgoing letters to the emperor between 1584 and 1589.

The *Briefbuch* texts are uncyphered, making them easier to read than the originals, and a few include details and opinions omitted from the final version, as if the ambassador had second thoughts about them; but they omit the enclosures. Khevenhüller also kept a detailed "Secret Diary", now available in print both in German and in Spanish translation (Khevenhüller-Metsch and Probst-Ohstorff 1971; Veronelli 2001).

The «Relatione dei cavaglieri» was one of six detailed lists in Spanish and Italian concerning the Armada dated 14 May, which Khevenhüller obtained in one of two ways: either from a spy of his own in Lisbon, or from one of the Italian ambassadors in Madrid. The latter seems more plausible, given the relative size of the diplomatic corps in Madrid: whereas Khevenhüller's staff rarely exceeded six, the embassy of the duke of Mantua (probably the largest in Madrid) contained 14 or 15. Whichever the channel of acquisition, the document originated with an Italian in Lisbon because the last paragraph is written in the first person: «non [h]o potuto havere per memoria li nomi».⁴ The double error in the title —«aventurierieri» and

3. HHStA *Statenabteilung Spanien, Diplomatische Korrespondenz* 11, Konvolut 7/398, Khevenhüller to Rudolf II, 14 September 1588; idem, Konvolut 5/151-5, same to same, 26 April 1586; Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv, Linz, *Khevenhüllers Briefbuch IV*/320, same to same, 12 October 1588. Information on the Khevenhüller papers and embassy graciously supplied in letters from Christiane Thomas, Director of the HHStA, to Geoffrey Parker, 3 and 23 August 1989, and from Friedrich Edelmayer to Parker, 15 December 1989.

4. Archivio di Stato, Mantua, *Archivio Gonzaga*, 601, unfol., bishop of Aquino to the duke of Mantua, 7 January 1588, noting proudly that his diplomatic establishment was somewhat larger than

«sino» instead of «fino»— suggests that it was either transcribed or translated in haste, no doubt because the document was what we would today call “classified.” The fact that no Italian would write «sino» instead of «fino» suggests that the scribe was a non-Italian, perhaps someone employed by Khevenhüller in Madrid to copy important documents obtained by his Italian colleagues.

The magnificent collection of Armada documents, *La Batalla del Mar Océano* (hereafter *BMO*), published a Spanish translation of the document, with all the names and affiliations (*BMO*: IV/2, 392-395).⁵ The same volume also printed other lists concerning the fleet compiled at much the same time, including the most famous of them: a 44-page pamphlet entitled *La felicísima Armada que el rey don Felipe Nuestro Señor mandó juntar en el puerto de la ciudad de Lisboa*, published on 9 May 1588.⁶

The pamphlet listed 135 *aventureros*, «los cuales llevan 456 criados para tomar armas», whereas the «Relatione» forwarded by Khevenhüller stated that the 179 named *aventureros* brought with them «550 servitori». The discrepancy is easily explained: given the amount of data contained in the pamphlet, and the time required for preparation and printing, it must reflect the state of the fleet some days earlier (for example, the infantry totals reflect those recorded in a muster held on 19 April), whereas the «Relatione» was dated 10 May, and its postscript stated that «some more arrived between 10 and 14 May 1588, whose names I cannot remember, but none were noblemen». This no doubt explains why «Lope de Vega, de Madrid» did not appear on earlier lists of «aventureros»: he arrived «a última hora».⁷

On 18 May the Tuscan ambassador in Madrid forwarded to his master in Florence a subsequent list of the «Signori ventureri» aboard the fleet, but it included only 76 Spaniards, all beginning with «Don» —roughly similar to the «cavaglieri titulati» of Khevenhüller’s list— followed by separate categories for Germans (2),

the others in Madrid. Some other ambassadors probably obtained copies of the «Relatione» forwarded by Khevenhüller, but I have not located them.

5. Unfortunately the volume gives the wrong call number: the «Relatione» is at ff. 373-376, not «ff. 363-71». Moreover, *BMO* translated «*non [h]o potuto havere per memoria li nomi*» as «no se ha podido conocer su nombre».

6. An online copy of the original is available at: <<https://purl.pt/14857/1/index.html#/16/html>>; *BMO* [IV/2:298-308] contains a transcript.

7. Compare *BMO* [IV/2:79-80], «Relación de los aventureros», Lisbon, 1 April 1588, compiled by Veedor-General Don Jorge Manrique, which listed 70 «caballeros aventureros», with 188 «criados suyos que puedan tomar armas», and ended «Después de haberse cerrado esta relación, se han presentado los caballeros siguientes».

English (6) and Irish (5): a total of 89 names. The absence of «Lope de Vega, de Madrid» from this later document, therefore, does not invalidate the «Relatione» obtained by Khevenhüller.⁸

It is regrettable that Khevenhüller's list does not specify the ship on which each *aventurero* sailed (like the list in *La felicísima Armada*), but that does not contradict Lope's own claim in the «Prólogo» to *La hermosura de Angélica*, first published in 1602, that he had started work on it «sobre las aguas entre jarcias del galeón San Juan» (ed. M. Trambaioli, p. 185). Although the Armada included eight ships called *San Juan*, only one was designated a galleon: *San Juan de Portugal*, built in Oporto between 1581 and 1583 and commanded by Juan Martínez de Recalde, *Almirante General* of the Armada. At 1,050 *toneladas*, it was one of the largest ships in the fleet and it left Lisbon with 321 soldiers aboard. Four sources support Lope's claim that he was one of them —albeit three of them occur in allusions to his Armada service elsewhere in his own literary works.

In *La Dragontea*, composed in 1597-1598 and based on historical sources, Lope claimed that some information about his subject, Sir Francis Drake, came from:

Soldados de la nave en que yo iba
a Inglaterra aquí me han contado,
que en ocho años de prisión esquivaba
que en la corte de Londres han pasado.

(*La Dragontea*, ed. A. Sánchez Jiménez, vv. 4859-4863)

This is entirely plausible because, on his way back to Spain, Recalde steered *San Juan* into Blasket Sound, Count Kerry, in September 1588, and he remained there for two weeks repairing the damage to his ship and taking on supplies. He also sent some soldiers and sailors ashore, but local English forces captured them, executing some and sending others to London for ransom. After their release, they would no doubt have welcomed the chance to share experiences with their former shipmate.

In part 2 of his *Filomena* (1621), Lope repeated his claim that he had worked on *Angélica* during the Armada campaign:

8. Archivio di Stato, Florence, *Mediceo del Principato*, 4919/339-339v.

Contra la selva Caledonia entonces
 iba la armada del monarca hispano;
 seguí las gavias y banderas rojas,
 sin espantarme tronadores bronces,
 fuerte invención del alemán Vulcano,
 supuesto que pasé varias congojas.
 Allí canté de Angélica y Medoro
 desde el Catay a España la venida,
 sin que los ecos del metal sonoro
 y de las armas el furioso estruendo
 perturbasen mi Euterpe,
 sirviendo el mar de arroyo sonoro,
 como en los prados fértiles corriendo,
 que se transforma en cristalina sierpe [...]

(*La Filomena*, ed. A. Carreño, segunda parte, vv. 900-913)

Next, in his «Égloga a Claudio» of 1632, Lope mentioned his service «entre la gente castellana» with «el arcabuz al hombro», when:

Joven me viste, y vísteme soldado
 cuando vio los armiños de Sidonia,
 la selva Calidonia
 por Júpiter airado [...]

(«Égloga a Claudio», ed. F.B. Pedraza
 and P. Conde Parrado, vv. 19-22)

This, too, is entirely plausible. Everyone aboard *San Juan* would have seen «la selva Calidonia» as they sailed around the Atlantic archipelago: one eyewitness noted that «The land that we sighted here, at the latitude of 60 degrees, is very high».⁹

The fourth supporting source is a statement by Juan Pérez de Montalbán, Lope's first biographer, in *Fama póstuma* (1636): that his hero had served in the Armada campaign along with his brother until «en una refriega que tuvieron con ocho velas de holandeses le alcanzó una bala, y murió en sus brazos» (ed. E. Di Pastena, p. 21). Recalde's *San Juan* played a prominent part in all the major battles of the Armada campaign. In the first fight on 31 July 1588, «the entire English fleet» sailed by in line

9. Entry for 18 August 1588 from the «Diario» of *San Juan de Portugal*.

ahead and fired perhaps 300 rounds at the ship. In the last fight, on 8 August, enemy warships encircled Recalde and «fired over a thousand rounds into us, as well as much arquebus and musket fire» —which means that the engagement took place at very close range. According to a survivor, 15 men aboard *San Juan* died in the first encounter and 25 in the last: one of them could well have been Lope's brother.¹⁰

None of these casualties died at the hands of «ocho velas de holandeses», however, because no Dutch ships took part in the battles: only English galleons bombarded *San Juan* and other Armada ships. So why did Montalbán write «holandeses»? Perhaps he got his facts wrong (*Fama póstuma* contains many errors; see Di Pastena 2001:lviii-lix), or perhaps in the heat of battle Lope could not distinguish between English and Dutch warships; but the error may have been deliberate. When Montalbán wrote in 1636, Spain was at peace with England and trying to secure her help in the ongoing war against the Dutch. Substituting «holandeses» for «ingleses» therefore made good political and diplomatic sense.

How long did Lope stay with the Armada? In *La Filomena* (1621), he mentioned that he disembarked at Coruña:

Volví desde los blancos albiones
a la Torre famosa del tebano,
donde puso el romano
eternas inscripciones [...]

(*La Filomena*, ed. A. Carreño, segunda parte, vv. 920-923)

San Juan de Portugal visited Coruña twice during the Armada campaign: once between 19 June and 22 July 1588, to carry out repairs and take on new supplies, and again in October after the campaign ended. To which of these visits did Lope refer? Three considerations suggest that he stayed on till the end. First, Medina Sidonia and Recalde both took strict measures to prevent desertions throughout the first stay in Coruña. Second, Lope could have seen neither «los blancos albiones» nor «la selva Caledonia», nor yet heard «los ecos del metal sonoro / y de las armas el furioso estruendo», unless he had remained on the ship. Third, Jesús Vil-

10. *BMO* [IV/4:134-135], entries in Recalde's «Diario», from 31 July and 8 August 1588; The National Archive, Kew, *State Papers* (hereafter *TNA SP*) 63/78/153-6, examinations of Emanuel Fremoso and Emanuel Francisc, 22 September 1588; *ibid.*, f. 145, examination of Pieter O'Carr, 20 September 1588 (both dates new style).

lalmanzo has discovered in the archives of Valencia a sworn deposition by Lope in 1590 referencing the «cuatro meses que estuvo sirviendo a Su Majestad en la Jornada de Inglaterra» (Jiménez 2021:17).

When *San Juan* left Coruña again on 22 July, she carried more soldiers than before: a total of 387. Only 207 of them lived to see Coruña again when the ship returned «at nightfall» on 7 October.¹¹ It happens that two surviving sources are eloquent about the experience of the men aboard *San Juan*: the interrogations by English officials of four members of her crew captured while it sheltered in Blasket Sound in southwest Ireland; and a «Diario» kept on the orders of Recalde.

The “examinations” of the four mariners survive in The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) in Kew, near London. According to a Portuguese sailor captured in Blasket Sound, the ship was «manie times shot through», and one «mast is so weak by reason of the shott in it as they dare not abide anie storm nor to bear such sails as otherwise thei might do». Another Portuguese seaman told his captors that while the ship lay anchored in Blasket Sound «There died four or five every day of hunger and thirst». He added: «There are 80 soldiers and 20 of the mariners sick and [some of them] do lie down and die daily, and the rest —he says— are very weak». A third captured seaman, a Fleming, told his captors that «Of 500 souldiers thear are 200 dedd: 20 slayne in the fight with the queen’s shipes, the rest dead of sicknes».¹²

These details complement a «Diario» kept on Recalde’s orders by «un soldado» aboard *San Juan*, beginning on 22 July and ending on 7 October: in effect a ship’s log.¹³ The «Diario» is today a bound «pliego» containing nine folios written in a clear, even hand. It occasionally refers to future events (for example, an entry for 31 July ends «as will be stated later on»): in its current form, therefore, it does not represent a daily compilation. Nevertheless, the day after he returned to Coruña, Recalde entrusted the

11. *BMO* [IV/4:125], muster of the soldiers aboard *San Juan*, 8 October 1588, listed 407 soldiers, but 149 of them belonged to companies that had originally embarked on other ships. Recalde rescued them from these ships in Blasket Sound.

12. TNA *SP* 63/78/156, examination of Francisc, 22 September 1588, new style. These and the examinations of three other captives from *San Juan* were forwarded to the government in London by the officials in Ireland who wrote them down. There may have been others, but if so they perished in the «Four Courts Fire» that destroyed the archives of Tudor Ireland in 1922.

13. Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereafter AHN), *Ordenes Militares*, 3512 expediente 34, «Relación hecha por un soldado en la Almiranta San Juan». *BMO*, IV part 4, 134-40, published my transcription of this document, and an English translation appeared in Geoffrey Parker, with Andrew Mitchell and Lawrence Bell [2004]. All quotations in this Note come from the English translation.

«Diario» to the same «soldado» who had written it, with orders to deliver it to the king. Therefore, the surviving fair copy must have been made either in the 24 hours after *San Juan* anchored, or else (more likely) in the latter stages of the voyage.¹⁴

It is tempting to think that Lope was the «soldado» who acted as Recalde's amanuensis, because in 1583 and 1584 he had «oído matemáticas en la Academia Real, y el astrolabio y esfera allí mesmo, y esto lo ha oído de dos o tres años a esta parte» (Tomillo and Pérez Pastor 1901:46).¹⁵ This would explain the precise wind directions and latitudes that occur in the «Diario»; but the script does not seem to be that of Lope (Image 1).

Nevertheless, the existence of the «Diario» in both a rough and a fair copy indicates that at least Lope had time to compose—or start composing—*La hermosura de Angélica*

[...] en una jornada de mar, donde con pocos años iba a ejercitar las armas, forzado de mi inclinación, ejercité la pluma, donde a un tiempo mismo el general acabó su empresa, y yo la mía. Allí, pues, sobre las aguas, entre jarcias del galeón San Juan y banderas del Rey Católico, escribí y traduje de Turpino estos pequeños cantos [...]. (ed. M. Trambaioli, pp. 185-186)

We may speculate on how and where El Fénix found the time to «ejercitar la pluma». Like other Armada survivors, when he recalled his service Lope stressed the horrors of the English attacks between 31 July and 8 August, and the terror of the storms that struck the fleet in late August and September as it rounded Scotland and Ireland; but according to the «Diario», *San Juan* enjoyed either calm or «very fine weather» between 19 and 28 August, which allowed those aboard to marvel at the «Northern Lights» at night («We saw in the heavens certain signs like comet tails: they lasted about two hours»). Then between 15 and 28 September they anchored in Blasket Sound, and although a tropical cyclone battered the ship for two terrible days, there were also days of calm. Finally, *San Juan* enjoyed a rapid

14. *BMO* [IV/4:118], Recalde to Martín de Idiáquez, Coruña, 8 October 1588: «También envió un diario que ha hecho un soldado, que yo no he estado para ello, y al presente con cuatro días de calentura y sangrado. *De él entenderá vuestra señoría menudamente lo que quisiera saber*» (Italics added).

15. «Confesión de Lope de Vega», 9 January 1588.

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Relacion del viaje que se a hecho desde que la armada salio del puerto de la Coruña hasta el castiellon san Juan almirante general de la armada de S. M. el Rey. Puerto

~ Viernes a los Veinte y dos de Julio dia de la Magdalena por la mañana salio toda la armada de S. M. el puerto de la Coruña a las once y dos tercias de la tarde por aver caído el viento surgió toda ella a las once y dos tercias de la tarde de S. M. el día sábado Veinte y tres de S. M. en amaneciendo que se hizo a las once con viento su sueste y para proseguir a S. M.

~ Martes a los 26 de dicho día de Santa Ana. fuimos en calma a las once y tres cuartos de la tarde que nos entro viento norte y corrimos con el a las once y tres cuartos de la tarde que nos pusimos mar al traves por causa de aver mucho viento. y este día fuimos a medio día la luna y estante de ella. Una estrella

~ Jueves en amaneciendo a las once y tres cuartos de la tarde que nos pusimos a proseguir a S. M. con quatro naos menos que estano he se agoraron de la capitana y entre ellas las quatro galeras por S. M. de ocio tiempo y por aver caído corrimos a S. M. con el mismo viento con poca vela y por aguardar las naos y faltaban

~ Viernes a los Veinte y nueve de S. M. como a las tres oras de la tarde llegamos a S. M. de yn y la tierra ya juntarnos con las naos. Enos faltaban excepto las quatro galeras y la nao cap. de la escuadra de Juan mirez de Recal de y este día amaynadas todas las velas a las once y dos tercias de la tarde de S. M. en amaneciendo que seguimos la derrota la buestrá de glemua a las once y tres cuartos de la tarde que nos a tomar las velas por causa de aver tanto viento del enemigo a sotavento y por ser tarde y no perder el viento y las teníamos a S. M. de la escuadra. Ninguna fuera de parecer de S. M. general no se tomaran las velas a las once y dos tercias de la tarde de S. M.

~ Domingo a los 31 de S. M. en amaneciendo descubrimos al enemigo en frente de glemua y nos pare el viento eran a las once y tres cuartos de la tarde ya grande

A. H. N.
Órdenes Militares
04-3512, Exp 34

Image 1: Archivo Histórico Nacional, Órdenes Militares, legajo 3512 expediente 34.

passage back from Ireland to Coruña in the first week of October. If the «soldado» could write his «Diario» in these conditions, Lope could have penned some verses.

A closer study of the surviving documents, and some artifacts connected with the Armada, reduces somewhat further the «perplexing lacuna» in Lope's life in 1588.

In *Fama póstuma*, Montalbán asserted that Lope «Salió de Madrid, atravesó toda la Andalucía, llegó a Cádiz y pasó a Lisboa» (ed. E. Di Pastena, p. 21). This seems unlikely. The Alcaldes de Casa y Corte released Lope from their prison on 8 February 1588 with a sentence of two years of «destierro» from Castile, followed by another eight years of «destierro» from the Court and a radius of five leagues around it. Seven years later, Gaspar de Porres stated on oath before one of the Alcaldes that as soon as Lope received his sentence, «salió de la dicha cárcel [y] se fue desde esta corte a la ciudad de Valencia, que es fuera del reino, porque este testigo le acompañó desde esta corte a la dicha ciudad de Valencia, yendo en compañía de Claudio Conde» (Tomillo and Pérez Pastor 1901:7).¹⁶

An entry in the «Libro de matrimonios» of the church of San Ginés in Madrid three months later suggests that Lope had returned to the Villa y Corte because:

En diez días del mes de mayo, año de mil y quinientos y ochenta y ocho años, se desposó, con licencia y mandamiento del señor Vicario General de esta villa de Madrid, Lope de Vega e Carpio, vecino de esta villa, y en su nombre, y por su poder bastante, Luis de Rosicler, con doña Isabel de Alderete [also known as Isabel de Urbina]. (Tomillo and Pérez Pastor 1901:236)

Since Lope had already obtained a «licencia y mandamiento» from Juan Bautista Neroni, Vicar-General of Madrid (the capital's senior cleric, since Madrid formed part of the archdiocese of Toledo), he presumably obtained it in person in Madrid, the home of both Isabel and Luis de Rosicler, his brother-in-law. But when?

Lope could have requested a «licencia» and signed the «poder» for his brother-in-law to represent him at any time after his release from prison on 8 February, but it seems unlikely that he would do so three months ahead of the marriage. In such cases, Neroni received and approved an «Expediente matrimonial» with details of

16. Evidence of Gaspar de Porras, 22 April 1595.

the genealogy and other details of the parties and then issued a «Partida» approving the marriage (the document quoted above, copied into the *Libro de matrimonios* of San Ginés.) Unfortunately both documents concerning Lope's case appear to have disappeared, along with most other documents before 1595, from the Archivo Diocesano of Madrid; but it seems likely that he asked Neroni for his «licencia» in late April or early May 1588. Since the journey from Madrid to Lisbon took a minimum of four days, Lope must have obtained his «licencia» and signed his «poder bastante» no later than 6 May 1588.¹⁷ Since Lope later petitioned for a royal pardon «porque durante el dicho destierro a cosas forzosas que se le ofrecieron, entró en esta corte y otras partes en quebrantamiento de él» (Tomillo and Pérez Pastor 1901:80),¹⁸ it is tempting to think that he broke his «destierro» in order to arrange his marriage to Isabel, and that he obtained his «licencia» to marry her by proxy shortly before he left for Lisbon on 6 May. If so, he did not join his new wife until after he returned to Spain in October.

The archives of Madrid contain one more mysterious document from 1588 concerning Lope and his wife. The first volume of the *Ymbentario general de las causas criminales que se hallan en el Archivo de la Sala de los Señores Alcaldes de la Casa y Corte de Su Majestad*, compiled in the mid-eighteenth century, contains the tantalizing entry: «Lope de Vega, Ana de Atienza y Juan Chaves, alguacil, sobre el rapto de Doña Ysabel de Alderette».¹⁹ The entries in the *Ymbentario* for 1588 begin at folio 110 and end at folio 137, each terse entry summarizing a «causa criminal» contained in legajos 31 to 37 of the series. Legajo 37 once contained 33 «causas», and «el rapto de Doña Ysabel de Alderette» is number 26, between folios 135 and 136, just ahead of another entry concerning a playwright: «Luis de Vergara por haber tomado unas comedias a un autor de ellas» (number 29).²⁰ Unfortu-

17. «Partida de casamiento» on 10 May 1588 from Parroquia de San Ginés, Madrid, *Libro Primero de Matrimonios*, f. 231v. Gaspar de Quiroga, Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, appointed Neroni his vicario eclesiástico in Madrid on 14 August 1585. Later that year, Neroni granted a marriage license to another celebrity: Eleno/a de Cespedes, who later appeared before the Inquisition because of a dispute about his/her gender (Soyer 2012:57-65).

18. Petition by Lope de Vega, 1596.

19. AHN *Consejos* libro 2783, «Ymbentario general de las causas criminales que se hallan en el Archivo de la Sala de los Señores Alcaldes de la Casa y Corte de Su Magestad», Tomo 1, f. 135v. Entries from Legajo 38, for 1589, begin on f. 138. Tomillo and Pérez Pastor [1901:163-197], noted the entry concerning Lope.

20. Teresa Ferrer Valls [2005] did not record this in her essay on Vergara.

nately the entries in the *Ymbentario* for 1588 are undated, and the corresponding «causas criminales» are now missing, so we do not know whether the Alcaldes filed them in chronological order, and if so whether they did so according to either the date of the complaint or the date of the offence (in which case the «rapto» took place after Lope returned from Coruña); or according to some other organizing principle. Unless the «causa» itself is discovered, it does nothing to fill the «perplexing lacuna in the story of Lope's life» in 1588.

Lope may have hoped that volunteering for service on the Armada would persuade Philip to reduce his «destierro». Several aristocratic miscreants did the same after the king called upon all noblemen to repair to Lisbon and join the Armada in March 1588. Juan Téllez-Giron, marqués of Peñafiel and later second duke of Osuna, gained his release from prison in the castle of Turégano when he promised to serve as an «entretenido» on the galleon *San Marcos de Portugal*. Antonio Luis de Leyva, prince of Ascoli and according to rumour (almost certainly false) Philip's illegitimate son, traded his «destierro» for brawling in the streets of Madrid for a place on Medina Sidonia's flagship.²¹

Another nobleman connected to Lope tried unsuccessfully to gain royal favour by serving on the Armada: Antonio Álvarez de Toledo, fifth duke of Alba. In February 1588 he went to Lisbon despite an express order from the king «de no salir de Alba y su tierra ... [por] no dejar sucesión en su casa» (*BMO*, IV/1, 66). Despite writing passionate appeals from Lisbon on 2 and 19 March for a royal change of heart, the duke evidently obeyed because his next letter —again begging the king to relent— was written from Alba de Tormes. El Fénix would later join him there.²²

The «Relatione» printed here contains one other entry related to Lope: among the *aventureros* listed on the first page is «D. Tomas Perenotto, sobrino del Cardenal de Granvelle», better known to historians as Jean Thomas Perrenot de Granvelle, the Cardinal's universal heir, and to Hispanists as «Don Bela» of *La Doro-*

21. For details on these, and other Castilian noblemen behaving badly before joining the Armada, see Colin Martin and Geoffrey Parker, *The Spanish Armada. A new history*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2022, chapter 1.

22. *BMO* [IV/1, 66 and 217, and IV/2, 161] Philip to Alba, 22 February, 14 March and 13 April 1588; *ibid.*, [IV/1, 149 and 246, and IV/2, 160], Alba to Philip, 2 and 19 March and 12 April 1588.

tea, whom Lope claimed replaced him in the affections of Elena Osorio. Perrenot brought with him to Lisbon «13 criados» and boarded the huge Genoese carrack *La Rata Santa María Encoronada*, where he served beside Don Alonso de Leyva, appointed to command the troops from the Armada tasked with landing in England. Instead, Perrenot and Leyva drowned together when the galleass *Girona*, to which they had transferred, sank off Dunluce in northern Ireland on 28 October 1588. We can be sure of Perrenot's fate because in 1968 underwater archaeologists found on the *Girona* wreck site a gold ring engraved «Madame de Champagney 1524»: it had been made for Jean Thomas's grandmother, Nicole Bonvalot, the year she married. Elena Osorio never saw her admirer again.²³

Perhaps other undiscovered sources—or more Internet research by the *Ministerio del Tiempo*— will further reduce the «perplexing lacuna in the story of Lope's life» in 1588. For the moment, however, thanks to the «Relatione dei cavaglieri» forwarded to Emperor Rudolf II by Count Khevenhüller, we now know that when the galleys towed the galleon *San Juan de Portugal* down the Tagus on 29 May 1588, the last ship to join the rest of the Armada anchored off the coast of Portugal, «Lope de Vega de Madrid» was aboard.²⁴

23. Tomillo and Pérez Pastor [1901:125-135] argued convincingly that «Don Bela» was Jean Thomas Perrenot. He was rich because, just before his death in 1586, Cardinal Granvelle named him his universal heir. *BMO* [IV/2, 299], «Relación» of aventureros aboard the fleet dated 9 May 1588 specified that «Don Tomás Granvela» and his «13 criados» had boarded *La Rata*.

24. *BMO* [IV/1, 469], Medina Sidonia to Philip II, 29/30 May 1588, postscript, noted that *San Juan* was the last ship to get to sea.

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ANNEX

Facsimile reproduction of the *Relatione dei cavaglieri titulati et non titulati aventurierieri che sono imbarcati in Armata sino 10 di Maggio 1588*. HHStA *Statenabteilung Spanien, Diplomatische Korrespondenz* Karton 11 ff. 373-376.

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1588

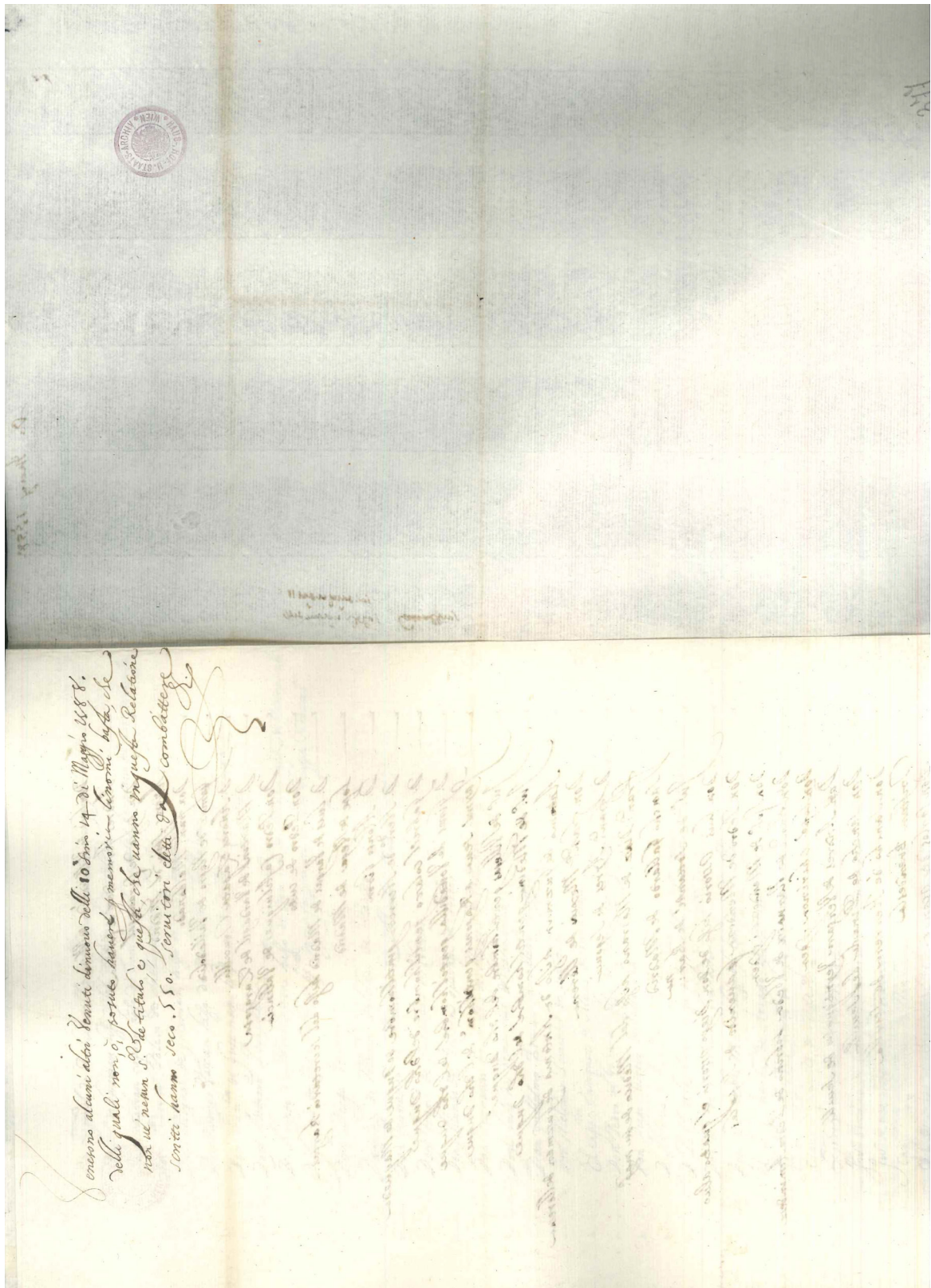
Relatione dei cavalieri titolati, et non titolati Auenturieri, ch'essono imbarcati
in Armata sino .10. di Maggio 1588.

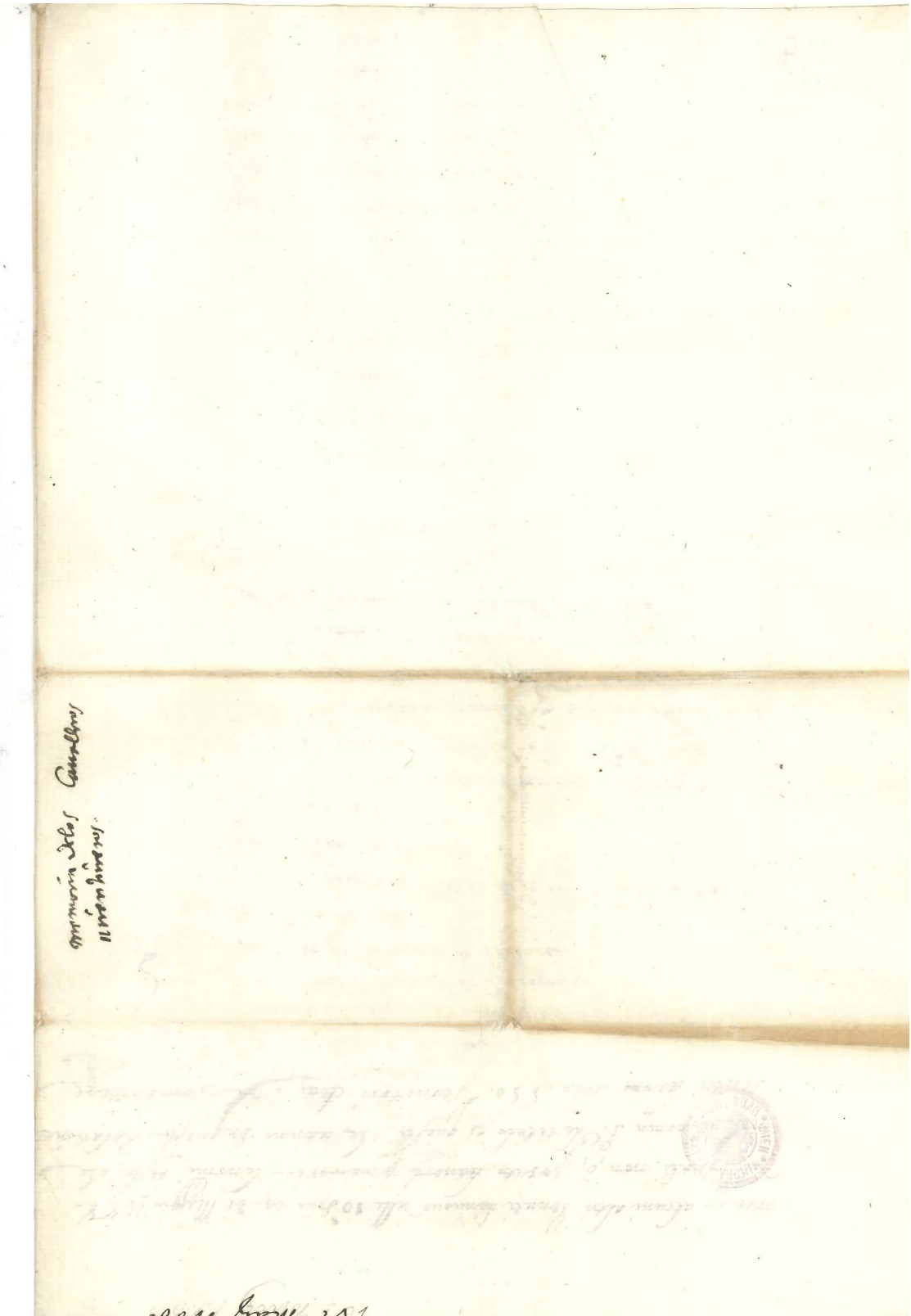
Principe d'Ascoli
 Marques de Legua fiel
 Marques de Borlangu hermano del condestable de Castilla
 Marques de Jarres curado de Duque de Savoia
 Conde de Felues
 Conde de Tordes y su hermano
 D. Gaston de Moncada mayorazgo del conde d'Aycaña
 D. Pedro de Zuniga hijo del Marques de Villa fuente
 D. Ber: de Velasco hermano del condestable de Castilla
 D. Diego Pacheco hermano del Marques de Villena
 D. Henrique Enriquez de Guzman hermano del Marques de las Navas
 D. Garcia de Cardenas hermano del conde de la Puebla
 D. Gomez Zapata hijo del conde de Parafas Presidente de Castilla
 D. Diego Enriquez hijo de D. Fadrique Enriquez comendador mayor d'Alcantara
 D. Balduar de Zuniga hermano del conde de Monte Rey
 D. Diego Giron hermano del Duque d'Oruna
 D. Luis Porco ferrero hijo del conde de Medellin
 D. Lorenzo de Mendoza hijo del conde d'orgaz
 D. Aluano de Mendoza Primo del dho Conde
 D. Luis de Cordova hermano del Marques d'Avaymo nec
 D. Felipe de Cordova hermano del Marques del Carpio
 D. Pedro Enriquez hermano del Marques de Villa nueva
 D. Fran: Manrique hermano del conde de Tordes
 D. Fran: Pacheco Primo del conde d'oro sea
 D. Ger: Corces hijo del Marques del Valle
 D. Alonso de Parafasal sobrino del marques d'Almazan
 D. Pedro de Mendaza sobrino del mismo
 D. Pedro Puerto ferrero hijo q' fue general de la goleta de la boca del Rey
 D. Feliz Aries hijo del conde de Espuna enortro
 D. Geronimo de Portugal Primo del conde Felues
 D. Rodrigo Lasso y Kins del abito d' S. Yago sobrino del mare de campo d' Gabriel Nino
 D. Garcia de Toledo Primo del Duque de feria
 D. Ju: de Guzman sobrino del marquez del Valle
 D. Tomas Peronzo sobrino del con de Granuello
 D. Antonio Manriquez sobrino del Duque de naxera
 D. Rodrigo Manrique Primo del dho Duque de Naxera
 D. Antonio Manrique hermano del conde del Orna del conde

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Don Luis de Villalobos de Toledo
 Alonso Fernandez de Cordova
 Don Diego de Cerqueira
 Andres Jimenez de Madrid
 Don Juan Malvarado
 Gomez de Leyva de Valladolid
 D. Alonso Cajasso (muerto)
 D. Martin de Rodas de Compostela
 Don Pedro Cebalinos de Valencia
 Don Pedro de Cuba
 D. Luis de Surpes de Madrid hijo del secretario Lopez.
 Lope de Vega de Madrid
 D. Alonso Jimenez
 D. Don de Heron general ombre de Duque de Mayno
 D. Gabriel Calaco general ombre de D. B. Duque
 D. Juan de Sordilla general ombre de L. Duque
 Cornejo Juan a Regener general ombre de L. Duque
 Jul. de Nolas general ombre del Rey Duque
 Jul. de M. general ombre del Rey Duque
 Alonso de Guzman hijo de Alonso de Guzman de Herrera
 Don Juan de Mexico de Herrera
 D. Juan de Torres de Segovia
 Francisco de Merano hijo del Merino de su maj.
 Francisco Galardo de Madrid
 Jul. de Sosa de bar.
 Don Luis Alonso hijo de Don Diego Alonso el quarto alca
 Don Pedro de Mendoza y su alcaide de las Indias
 Don Jul. de Mendoza de bar.
 Don Juan de Narvaez de Veda sobrino de Don Alonzo de
 Diego de Chirino de bar.
 Don Alonso de Herrera y su hijo de Sevilla
 Don Sancho de Herrera de Sevilla
 Don Sancho de Herrera de Sevilla
 Tristan Biondella
 Don Carlos de Osonor.

Don Diego de Robles nieto de Alonzo y su hijo de su maj.
 Don Jul. de Guzman hijo de Don Jul. de Guzman de Toledo
 Don Sebastian Capota hijo de Don Gabriel Capota hermano del conde de Sanluis
 Don Pedro de Toledo de Salamanca
 Don Miguel de Guzman hijo de Don Pedro de Guzman
 Don Rodrigo Vazquez hijo de Don Pedro de Vazquez
 Don Juan de Guzman hijo de Don Pedro de Guzman
 Don Alonso Jimenez
 D. Alonso de Mendoza hijo de Don Jul. de Mendoza de Madrid
 D. Juan de Corrada hijo de Don Juan de Corrada en la de Felipe Anzezi
 Don Diego Vazquez
 Damian de Mesa nieto de Alonzo
 Don Fernando de Anzezi de Madrid
 Don Juan de Guzman de Toledo
 Don Alonso de Villanueva de Toledo
 Don Fernando de Toledo de Toledo
 Don Luis de Sosa de Toledo
 Don Guillelmo Torres Cuellar de Toledo
 Don Melchor Tomel de Guzman
 El cap. Enriquez de Toledo de Toledo
 Don Pedro de Guzman hijo de Don Pedro de Guzman de Toledo
 Don Diego Torres de Toledo
 D. Alonso de Toledo de Toledo
 D. Pablo de la Torre hijo de Don Pablo de la Torre de Madrid
 Don Luis de Mella de Toledo
 Don Jul. de Mella hijo del conde de Mella
 El cap. Juan de Arago de Toledo
 Ger. de Castellani nieto de Lope de Vega de Compostela
 Claudio Guzman de Madrid
 Don Jul. de Osonor de Madrid
 Jul. de Osonor de Compostela y su hijo de Guzman
 Jul. de Osonor de Madrid
 El cap. Jul. de Osonor de Osonor
 Don Rodrigo de Mendoza de Toledo de Toledo





memoria de las Cavallos
11 de noviembre

