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In His Majesty's Service

The Career of Captain Francisco de Cuéllar in the Armed Forces of the Spanish Monarchy (1578-1606)

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University College Cork

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that the thesis submitted is this candidate's own work and has not been submitted for another degree, either at University College Cork or elsewhere. To the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution.

Signature_____. Date._____.

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Abbreviations

AGRB	Archives Générales du Royaume, Brussels
AGRB SEG	Ibid., *Secrétairerie d'État et de Guerre* (with volume and folio)
AGI	Archivo General de Indias
AGI Contratación	
AGI Contaduría	
AGI Indiferente General	
AGI Escribanía	
AGI Patronato	
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
AGS CJH	Ibid., *Junta de Hacienda* (with *legajo* and folio)
AGS CMC	Ibid., *Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas* (with *época* - 1ª, 2ª, and *legajo*)
AGS CSU	Ibid., *Contaduría del Sueldo* (with *legajo* and folio)
AGS Estado	Ibid., *Secretaría de Estado* (with *legajo* and folio)
AGS GyM	Ibid., Guerra y Marina (with *legajo* and folio)
CSP	Calendar of State Papers
CSP Ireland	Ibid., Relating to Ireland, Elizabeth (with volume and page no.)
CSP Scotland	Ibid., Relating to Scotland and Mary Queen of Scots, 1547-1603 (with volume and page no.)
CSP Spain	Ibid., of Letter, Despatches, and State Papers relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain preserved in the Archive of Simancas (with volume and page no.)
HSA	Hispanic Society of America
HSA Altamira	Ibid., Altamira Collection (with box no., folder no., and document no.)

Glossary

alabarda: halberd, infantry weapon
alcancía: incendiary grenade, pot filled with flammable materials
alférez: company lieutenant or 'ensign'
arquebus: a handheld firearm, shorter and lighter than a musket
arquebucero: an infantryman armed with an arquebus
arráez: skipper of a boat
artillero: artillery gunner
ayuda de costa: monetary payment to alleviate penury, a form of welfare payment, upkeep
bala de cadena: artillery chain shot
bala de hierro colado: cast iron cannon shot
bala de navaja: razor shot
bala de punta de diamante: diamond point shot
bisoño: an untrained recruit
bomba: anti-personnel grenade
cabo de esquadra: corporal
capitán de mar y guerra: a naval capitain, captain of sea and war
carta: letter, letter of recommendation issued by the king or a senior commander
cédula: royal instruction, a commission
consejo: royal council (State, Indies, War, etc.)
consulta: document summarizing deliberations of a council pending royal approval
contador: accountant
contaduría: accounting department
cuerda; chord, for igniting a musket or arquebus charge
cuerpo de arma: body armour
empresa: enterprise or campaign
entretenido: a soldier or staff officer in receipt of a permanent monthly salary (*entretenimiento*)
Estado: State, a royal council
falconete: artillery piece firing iron shot between 1-3 lbs
fee: statement issued by an officer certifying a soldier's service
hacienda: Treasury (royal council), financial resources
Indias: Indies (the Americas)
jornada: expedition, campaign
licencia: document permitting travel or leave of absence
maestro de campo: commander of a *tercio*
mandato: a directive of a military commander
morrión: helmet
pagador: paymaster

patente: formal certification issued to a soldier conferring rank
pedrero: artillery piece firing stone shot
pertrechos: equipment, accoutrements
pica: pike, infantry weapon varying between 3m and 7.5m long.
Plomo: lead
polvóra: gunpowder
quintal: unit of weight, one hundredweight
reformación: amalgamation of understrength units to consolidate numbers and reduce costs
reformado: an officer who has lost his post through *reformación*
residencia: official review of a public office holder
rociada: a musketry volley
rodela: shield
sagento: sergeant
sacre: artillery piece firing iron shot weghing between 5-10 lbs
salvaje: savage, a term denoting rural dwellers in mountainous regions
sueldo: wages, salary
tercio: infantry regiment
veedor: military inspector
veeduría general: department of the inspector-general
visita: an inspection or investigation of a vessel or public department
Vuestra Magestad: Your Majesty
Vuestra Merced: Your Grace

Currencies

Spanish Currencies

maravedí: equivalent to 1/34 of a silver *real*. The *maravedí* was the base unit to value all other monies real or of account

1 real = a silver coin worth 34 *maravedíes*
1 ducat = 375 maravedíes or 11 *reales*
1 escudo = gold coin equivalent to 16 *reales*
1 castellano = 15 *reales*

200 ducats = 75,000 *maravedíes*

Low Countries accounts

Spanish gold escudo = 57 *pattards*
escudo = 2.5 *florines*
1 real = 5 *pattards*
florín = 20 *pattards*

Note on Dates

All dates in this work are given according to the New Style Gregorian Calendar introduced by Pope Gregory XIII in February 1581, and adopted by Spain in October 1582. Where dates are taken from English sources, using the Old Style Julian calendar (10 days behind the New Style), both dates are given. For example, 24 November in English sources will be rendered 24 November/4 December.

Note on Tanscriptions, Translations and Terminology

Personal names and placenames have been left in their original form in transcriptions, but modern English versions are used in translations. All texts have been transcribed in their original spelling. Capitalization is used here for all personal names and placenames. Punctuation and accents have been added to transcriptions to facilitate ease of reading. Likewise, abbreviations in the original documents have been rendered into full forms of their derivations in transcriptions and translations.

Transcription of Captain Cuéllar's letter (*Carta*) follows the Cruickshank and Gallagher edition of the text published in the work: Gallagher, P., and Cruickshank, D.W., *God's Obvious Design: Papers for the Spanish Armada Symposium, Sligo, 1588; with an edition and translation of the account of Francisco de Cuéllar*, London, 1990, pp. 200-21.

Introduction

'God blew and they were scattered.'[1]

So ran the motto of a Dutch medal struck to commemorate the successful outcome of the 1588 campaign against the much-vaunted Spanish Armada. While some losses were incurred during the fighting in the English Channel, the Armada set out for home largely intact. But it was the terrible losses in Ireland and Scotland during a storm-ravaged homeward voyage that proved its undoing. Mythologised as a landmark moment in European history, it is the fate that befell the shipwrecked crews that still resonates in Ireland. In many respects, the demise of the Armada on the west coast provides yet another layer in the shared associations that have linked Ireland and Spain through the ages. Ancient Irish legends point to Spain as the origin of some of the early settlers on the island, the Milesians.[2] When Captain Diego de Urízar was dispatched to Ireland on a reconnaissance mission in 1574, he was evidently aware of this tradition: 'They say in that kingdom [of Ireland] that their ancient origins were in Spain, from Galicia and Vizcaya. I told them that in Spain this was also understood.'[3] Today, popular mythology attributes the dark complexion of inhabitants in the west, 'the Black Irish', to the offspring of Armada survivors who came ashore in September 1588. The legend is fanciful. Nevertheless, its popularity serves to reinforce old Hiberno-Spanish affinities.

In recent times the story of one of the survivors, Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, has come to epitomize the Armada in Ireland. He was shipwrecked at Streedagh Strand, in County Sligo, on 20 September 1588, and his famous account (*Carta de uno que fue en la Armada de Ynglaterra y cuenta la jornada*)[4] of his experiences provides one of the most colourful narratives associated with the 1588 campaign. It depicts events that occurred mainly in the aftermath of the fighting in the English Channel. It is a very personal account, addressed to an unnamed acquaintance, about how he survived court-martial at sea, and then shipwreck in Ireland. Set predominantly in the modern counties of Sligo and Leitrim (the late medieval lordships of O'Connor Sligo and O'Rourke), and in the Ulster counties of Derry and Antrim (the territory of the O'Cahans and MacDonnells), it is a tale of survival as he wandered across Ireland and Scotland, before eventually reaching Flanders, during the

[1] Rodríguez-Salgado, M.J., *Armada 1588-1988: An International Exhibition to Commemorate the Spanish Armada*, Official Catalogue, London, 1988, exhibit no. 16.12, p. 276.
[2] Ó hÓgáin D., *The Lore of Ireland: An Encyclopaedia of Myth, Legend and Romance*, Cork, 2006, pp. 346-48.
[3] AGS Estado 828, f.106.
[4] Cuéllar, F. de, [1589] 1990, 'Carta de uno que fue en la Armada de Ynglaterra y cuenta la jornada', Translated in Gallagher, P. and Cruickshank D.W., *God's Obvious Design: Papers for the Spanish Armada Symposium, Sligo*, 1988, London, pp. 201-21.

summer of 1589. Besides its dramatic narrative, the *Carta* also offers an important snapshot of life in Gaelic Ireland at the end of the sixteenth century. We know from the text that Cuéllar was at Antwerp in early October 1589. But nothing more was known about the enigmatic captain; his life before the Armada, or what became of him subsequently.

Despite the recognition that has been accorded to him nowadays, it was only during the last century that Captain Cuéllar came to be associated with the turbulent events in Ireland. Indeed, for almost three centuries Captain Cuéllar was, to all intents and purposes, entirely forgotten. But the inclusion of the text of his *Carta* by Captain Cesáreo Fernández Duro in a publication of 1885, entitled *La Armada Invencible,* changed all that.[5] The two-volume work contained an assortment of documents associated with the Armada campaign, and appears to have presented Cuéllar's account in print for the first time. Throughout the century or so since then, his adventures in Ireland have become a familiar component of most publications that discuss the events of 1588. Soon after the Fernández Duro publication, English-speaking scholars such as J.A. Froude quickly recognised the significance of Cuéllar's account. Froude included a commentary on Cuéllar's experiences in his work on the Armada, declaring it an 'extraordinary narrative'.[6] He offered the following observation by way of introduction to his treatment of the account: 'a narrative which not only contains a clear account of the wreck of the galleons, but gives a unique and curious picture of the Ireland of the time.'[7]

Froude offered a synopsis of the account with brief remarks, but no translation. However, his work marked the first attempt to map out places and identify individuals mentioned by Cuéllar. Using his knowledge of the English State Papers he identified that Cuéllar was shipwrecked in County Sligo, something which was omitted by the captain from his account. He placed the shipwreck in Sligo Bay, where three Spanish vessels were known to have anchored. He suggested that Cuéllar set out for Killybegs in search of a Spanish ship he believed was collecting Armada survivors. However, he was unable to identify 'Manglana' as the Gaelic chieftain MacClancy, with whom Cuéllar sheltered for three months. Froude speculated that his stronghold lay on the shores of Lough Erne, but left it to 'local antiquaries [...] to identify the spot', an oversight later commentators would, indeed, rectify.[8] While the location was incorrect, he was right in drawing attention to the general neighbourhood. Rather perceptively, he suggested that Cuéllar's social observations may have been modeled on passages from earlier voyages of

[5] Fernández Duro, C. (ed.), *La Armada Invencible,* 2 vols., Madrid, 1884-5.
[6] Froude, J.A., *The Spanish Story of the Armada and other Essays*, New York, 1892, p. 69.
[7] Ibid., pp. 69-70.
[8] Ibid., pp. 75, 77.

discovery: 'as if he was writing of a fresh discovered island in the New World.'[9] Without elaborating, he considered Cuéllar's portrayal 'very like what was drawn by the intruding Saxon, and has been denounced as calumny', but conceded that Cuéllar was 'impartial, and rather liked his hosts than otherwise.'[10] After a brief rendition of his experiences in Scotland where, he noted, 'the Calvinist Lowlanders [of Edinburgh] showed them [Armada survivors] scanty hospitality', he ended his commentary with Cuéllar once more at sea off Dunkirk, and the ship he was aboard under attack by Dutch pirates. Froude concluded that 'Cuéllar came off luckily compared with most of his companions.'[11] His treatment, written energetically, announced Captain Cuéllar to the English-speaking world in dramatic fashion.

That work sparked a plethora of publications on the *Carta* during the 1890s, and interest in it has remained consistent since then. Given the Hiberno-Scottish setting, it was inevitable that it would come to the attention of Irish scholars. One year after Froude, Professor J.P. O'Reilly published a new commentary on the text and a first translation into English, which he presented to the Royal Irish Academy in February 1893.[12] O'Reilly recognised the value of having an English translation of the text when explaining his motivation to work on the document: 'I thought that a translation of it [*Carta*] might prove interesting to the members of the Academy, and possibly be of some service for the history of Ireland during the period in question [...] and which may serve as a term of comparison with other and better known accounts of the Irish of the period considered.'[13] In order to facilitate better understanding of the text, O'Reilly set out to identify the districts Cuéllar passed through. Following Froude's example, he resorted to existing published accounts, mainly the calendars of State Papers for Ireland, to verify where Cuéllar was shipwrecked. O'Reilly used an evocative portrayal of the Sligo wrecks from Woodmartin's *History of Sligo*, published in 1882 (before Fernández Duro's *Armada Invencible*) to set the scene:

> Sunset on a September eve saw three huge galleons blundering through the race between Tory Island and the Donegal Coast [...] dawn breaks slowly and reluctantly, and discloses to view the castellated hulls of those floating fortresses strewing the beach at Streedagh. Of their crews comparatively few succeeded in struggling safely to shore. Even within the last few years have been exposed to view war materials,

[9] Ibid., p. 75.
[10] Ibid., p. 77.
[11] Froude., *Spanish Story of the Armada,* p. 79.
[12] O'Reilly, J.P., 'Remarks on certain passages in Captain Cuellar's narrative on his adventures in Ireland after the wreck of the Spanish Armada in 1588–89, followed by a literal translation of that narrative', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, section C, Dublin, 1893, pp. 175–217.
[13] Ibid., pp. 175-76.

> stores, cannon balls encased in lead, and likewise bones of those mariners buried nearly three centuries before upon the strand.[14]

O'Reilly was drawing on firm local knowledge that three unnamed ships (now identified as the *Lavia*, *Juliana* and *Santa María de Visón*) lay in the vicinity of Streedagh Strand, over a century before their formal identification in 1985. He forensically examined the text, in conjunction with documentary and cartographic sources to map out the likely route Cuéllar followed in his account. In his opinion, Cuéllar passed through Grange village and moved north along the coast in search of 'señor de Ruerque' (Brian O'Rourke of Breifne) to whom he had been directed.[15] He interpreted the phrase 'haciendo norte por las montañas' to indicate he went in a northerly direction from Streedagh, according to the directions offered to him. O'Reilly took Cuéllar's estimation of distances at face value, something which created difficulty when trying to identify the settlements of the chieftains O'Rourke and MacClancy who provided shelter for him. O'Rourke's stronghold, he concluded, 'was in a village or town not far from the sea coast, and at about five to six leagues distance from the scene of the wreck, say about 15 to 18 miles from Derinish Island [adjacent to Streedagh Strand] counted along the sea coast.'[16]

Following Froude, O'Reilly reckoned that MacClancy's castle lay somewhere on Lough Erne (rather than Lough Melvin). When dealing with Cuéllar's wanderings along the north coast, he suggested Portrush or Coleraine as the likely site of the O'Cahan chieftain from whom Cuéllar sought assistance. He identified Bishop Redmond Gallagher as the Irish Bishop who provided transport to Scotland.[17] O'Reilly did not discuss Cuéllar's adventures beyond Ireland. Nevertheless, in conjunction with his translation, he gathered a substantial body of material in order to enable him to begin to populate and define the landscape described by Cuéllar.

Two years later, another rendition of the story was published by H.D. Sedgwick in London and New York.[18] However, it did not offer anything new by way of insight. Rather, it introduced an element of confusion into the story by claiming, incorrectly, that Cuéllar had addressed his letter to Philip II. In the same year, Hugh Allingham of Ballyshannon published an article in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* with the same stated intention as O'Reilly, to 'identify some of the places visited by Cuéllar while in Ulster.'[19] His treatment followed O'Reilly's methodology but he utilised his

[14] Ibid., pp. 177-78.
[15] O'Reilly, J.P., *Remark*s, p. 180.
[16] Ibid., p. 181.
[17] Ibid., p. 190.
[18] Sedgwick, H.D., *A Letter to his Majesty King Philip II of Spain*, New York, 1895.
[19] Allingham, H., 'The Spanish Armada. A Spanish Captain's Experiences in Ulster in 1588: A Reminiscence (With Notes)', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, Second Series, vol. 1, No. 3 (April 1895), pp. 178-94.

local knowledge to offer some new insights into the story. He suggested the small chapel at Staad, near Streedagh, as an abbey where Cuéllar sought refuge. He proposed Newtown (now Parke's castle), on the shores of Lough Gill, as the O'Rourke settlement visited by Cuéllar. Consequently, two potential alternative routes to that village were postulated: the valleys of Glenade and Glencar through O'Rourke territory, twenty miles to the southeast of where O'Reilly suggested it may have been. He positively identified Rosclogher, on the shores of Lough Melvin, as the MacClancy stronghold that hosted Cuéllar for three months. He then suggested that, on his departure for the north coast, Cuéllar followed a route 'round the coast of Donegal to Derry and from there to Dunluce.'[20] He supposed that Cuéllar crossed to Scotland with the assistance of MacDonnell.

Curiosity about Cuéllar's wanderings appears to have been confined solely to his Irish experiences. As with O'Reilly's treatment, Allingham opted not to venture a discussion of his subsequent travails in Scotland. Instead, he went on to examine Armada relics which were still accessible at that time. Allingham's work was notable for his pragmatic and cautious approach to Cuéllar's estimation of distances, and to his rendition of personal names and place-names. But he was forgiving of those idiosyncrasies: 'for any inaccuracies in his statements as to places, distances, etc. and allowing for a probable tendency to exaggeration, Cuéllar's narrative, corroborated, as it is, in all essential points by contemporary history, bears on its face the stamp of truth and authenticity.'[21] It was a positive conclusion to his investigations. In 1897, he had the article revised and republished under a new title, 'Captain Cuéllar's adventures in Connacht and Ulster, AD 1588,' in conjunction with a new translation of the *Carta* by Professor Robert Crawford of Trinity College Dublin.[22]

In the revised version, Allingham unjustly admonished Froude by implying that he had suggested that Cuéllar's ship had anchored off Ballyshannon.[23] This was unfair as Froude stated in his work that it had anchored in Sligo Bay.[24] In the preface to his translation, Crawford explained his interpretation of the phrase 'haciendo norte por las montañas': 'I originally translated [it] as "making for the north of the mountains"; but now prefer to render by the alternative reading: ''Making for the direction of the mountains''.'[25] This, he argued made logical sense given that

[20] Ibid., p. 190.
[21] Allingham, *A Spanish Captain's Experiences,* p. 190.
[22] Allingham, H., *Captain Cuellar's Adventures in Connacht and Ulster, AD 1588, to which is added an Introduction and complete translation of Captain Cuellar's narrative of the Spanish Armada, by Robert Crawford,* London, 1897.
[23] Ibid., p. 6.
[24] Froude, *The Spanish Story*, p. 70.
[25] Allingham, *Captain Cuellar's Adventures,* p. 40.

Cuéllar's destination, O'Rourke's village, lay to the south. Moreover, he pointed out, had Cuéllar followed a strictly northerly direction, he would have ended up in the sea.[26] He went on to discuss various interpretations of words and phrases by O'Reilly and Sedgwick in their translations and offered explanations for his presentation of alternatives. In particular, he debated Cuéllar's use of the term *salvaje* to describe the Irish. O'Reilly used the word 'native' rather than 'savage', but while Crawford admitted it conveyed a more pleasant tone than the harsh original, he believed that it 'does not convey the correct meaning of what Cuéllar had in view when he used the word *salvaje*.'[27] Lastly, Crawford rejected Sedgwick's assumption that the letter was written to the King of Spain, saying, 'I cannot find the slightest evidence in support of this assumption: on the contrary, everything in the letter would seem to contradict it.'[28] Allingham and Crawford succeeded in their endeavours, and their annotated translation has remained the most popular point of reference down to present times. However, by endowing Cuéllar with the honorific 'Don', they, perhaps unintentionally, afforded him a higher social status than his contemporaries would have acknowledged.[29]

Scottish interest in the text was exhibited in an article written by W.P. Ker in 1920.[30] He offered a brief synopsis of the narrative and introduced the text by stating that 'of all the stories of the Armada, there is none to beat Captain Francisco de Cuéllar's adventure in Ireland.'[31] Although the piece did not really offer anything new about the text, Ker's closing remarks have left us with one of the more pensive observations on Cuéllar and his account. He imagined Cuéllar sitting down to compose the *Carta* in Antwerp, observing:

> The curious thing is that he knows, and sets down in words, the same contradiction between reality and the description of reality that we feel to-day when we go through these old memoirs, and think that once the writers of them were toiling for their lives in the salt water, though their story now is scarcely more than a dream.[32]

Reference to Cuéllar and his account has now become a standard feature of most Armada histories but, after Ker, it was not until the 1960s that another detailed study of the text was published. On this occasion, the English author Evelyn Hardy used Cuéllar's narrative as the focus of her book, *Survivors of the Armada*, which

[26] Ibid., p. 41.
[27] Ibid., p. 43.
[28] Ibid., p. 44.
[29] Allingham, *Captain Cuellar's adventures,* p. 7.
[30] Ker, W.P., 'The Spanish Story of the Armada', in *The Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 17, No. 67 (April 1920), pp. 165-76.
[31] Ibid., p. 173.
[32] Ibid., p. 174.

she dedicated to the memory of the much-admired historian, Garrett Mattingly.[33] While she acknowledged the earlier treatments at the outset, Hardy felt that the narrative was 'still not so well known as it deserves to be: nor to my knowledge has it been edited fully with notes, and descriptions of the places mentioned.'[34] She recognised the value of the narrative, describing it as 'unique and valuable because of its revelations about conditions in Ireland, and the Irish in those still Gaelic days before the customs of their fathers had been extinguished by English government officials and colonists.'[35] She offered a new translation, by Frances Partridge, to which she added a wealth of annotation.

Hardy's endeavours, facilitated by the director of the Archivo General de Simancas, offered the first hint of Cuéllar's professional status at the time. Following a search of documents by him, in the section *Guerra y Marina*, an entry for Cuéllar was discovered in a muster pertaining to the galleon *San Pedro*, before its departure from Lisbon. The reference stated that Cuéllar was a salaried officer (*entretenido*), prior to his appointment to command the vessel, with a salary of 25 *escudos*, and attended by a servant (*criado*).[36] Hardy was also the first to speculate on Cuéllar's origins. She proposed that Cuéllar may have been from the town of Cuéllar in the province of Segovia. Her reasoning was based on his surname, and on his invocation to 'Our Lady of Ontañar', in the narrative. A shrine dedicated to the Virgin under this appellation, lies some forty miles to the south of the town. The combination of the two was suggestive of local ties.[37] Hardy offered a cursory treatment of his Scottish experience, consisting, in the main, of a general overview of Scotland and James VI. She did, however, remark upon Cuéllar's derogatory view of the Scottish king, but only to suggest that his opinion 'underestimated James' natural talent for duplicity and endurance.'[38] Nevertheless, Hardy brought an appreciation of the text to a new audience. Her work made a valuable contribution to our perception of Armada survivors in Ireland.

Another work of note in this regard was Niall Fallon's comprehensive research into Irish Armada wrecks, in which he devoted a chapter to Captain Cuéllar.[39] Unfortunately, Fallon did not supply references or footnotes for his work. But it is clear that he was familiar with Hardy's work as he reiterated her suggestion that the town of Cuéllar may have been the birthplace of the captain.[40] Otherwise, Fallon's chapter did not go beyond the earlier treatments.

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[33] Hardy, E., *Survivors of the Armada*, London, 1966.
[34] Ibid., p. 37.
[35] Ibid., p. 38.
[36] Ibid., p. 39.
[37] Hardy, *Survivors*, pp. 40-41.
[38] Ibid., p. 133.
[39] Fallon, N., *The Armada in Ireland*, London, 1978, pp. 106-26.
[40] Ibid., p. 106.

Two landmark events during the 1980s fostered further public awareness of Captain Cuéllar and his story. Firstly, in 1985, came the sensational identification by an English team of divers of the wreck-sites of the *Lavia*, *Juliana*, and *Santa María de Visón*, at Streedagh. The controversies that attended the fate of a number of cannon raised by the team caused a legal furore that ensured international media attention. Three years later, a veritable deluge of publications was released to commemorate the fourth centenary of the Armada campaign. Perhaps the most acclaimed was *The Spanish Armada* by Colin Martin and Geoffrey Parker. Their account featured Captain Cuéllar's tale, and his story has remained a permanent fixture in Armada histories since then. One interesting discussion of the *Carta* featured in the work of Felipe Fernández-Armesto.[41] Speaking of Cuéllar's views of the Irish, he observed: 'there seems to be obvious resonances of chivalric romance and of the pastoral novel in this passage, as well as a moral message not far removed from that of Montaigne's cannibals.'[42] Amidst international symposia, re-enactments (the RTE broadcaster Donncha O'Dualaing starred as the captain at a performance in Kinlough, Co. Leitrim), and dedications throughout the year, 1988 also saw a sign-posted 'de Cuéllar Trail' inaugurated that retraced the captain's supposed route across the landscape between Streedagh and the Antrim coast. With this initiative, the memory of Captain Cuéllar became firmly embedded in local lore.

Of greater significance for our understanding of the text, however, was the publication of a detailed study of the *Carta* published by Don Cruickshank and Patrick Gallagher of University College Dublin. Their work was published as part of the proceedings of an international Armada symposium held at Grange, in County Sligo, as part of the 1988 commemorations.[43] They produced the most authoritative Spanish edition of the *Carta*, based on two surviving manuscript copies, and corrected errors observed in the Fernández Duro transcription, the model for all previous English translations. To this they added an annotated English translation based on the amended Spanish version, postulated another possible route followed by Cuéllar from Streedagh to the O'Rourke stronghold, and identified Dromahair as O'Rourke's village.[44] In a short introductory essay, they analysed the two manuscript copies and concluded that one (now in the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid) was copied from the other (held by the Real Academia de la Historia). They speculated that the final page of the Real Academia manuscript may have been

[41] Fernández-Armesto, F., *The Spanish Armada: The Experience of War in 1588*, Oxford, 1988, pp. 255-63.
[42] Ibid., p. 261.
[43] Cruickshank, D.W., and Gallagher, P., 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', in Gallagher and Cruickshank, *God's Obvious Design: Papers for the Spanish Armada Symposium, Sligo, 1988*, London, 1990, pp. 195-247.
[44] Ibid., p. 234, fn. 44.

written by Cuéllar (although a comparison with documents discovered in the course of this research project known to be written by Cuéllar would suggest not). Cruickshank and Gallagher also offered a significant new piece of information about Cuéllar in bringing to light evidence that, before the Armada campaign, he had previously served in Brazil.[45] The Cruickshank-Gallagher edition of the *Carta* has been the primary point of reference for this study.

The most recent publication on Irish Armada wrecks, by Ken Douglas, features a commentary on Cuéllar's text as an appendix.[46] He has suggested, rather imaginatively, that the *Carta* was addressed to the Duke of Parma.[47] However, he overlooked the internal evidence of the text, which indicates a prior and on-going relationship between Cuéllar and the recipient of the letter. Cuéllar did not set foot in the Low Countries until 1589, and could not have had any contact with the Duke (a nephew of Philip II) until this time. All of his previous service was in the Atlantic sphere. Throughout this period, Parma was governor of the Spanish Netherlands. Therefore, unfortunately, we must discount the Duke as a plausible candidate for Captain Cuéllar's correspondent.

A journal article published in 2012, by the Spanish scholar, Rafael Girón de Pascual, offered the most substantial material to date about Captain Cuéllar.[48] It featured transcriptions of four documents pertaining to Cuéllar encountered in the Archivo General de Simancas. On that account, it represents the only other attempt (apart from this one) to document the career, and is the first published work to present documentary evidence for Cuéllar's military service. The article contained a brief outline of Cuéllar's career which, on some points, is at odds with the findings presented here. It also offered a suggested family background. During a personal meeting with the present author in November 2013, he agreed that his reconstruction of Cuéllar's family history contained errors. The present thesis will offer a different chronology for Cuéllar's career, and suggest an alternative personal background to that proposed by Girón.

Since 1988, public awareness of the Armada story in general has increased; Captain Cuéllar's tale has also gained more notoriety. There has been a blossoming of the story in the cultural sphere. At least two historical novels, published in the last ten years, feature Cuéllar's stay in Ireland.[49] In 2005, the author and broadcaster,

[45] Ibid., pp. 195-96.
[46] Douglas, K., *The Downfall of the Spanish Armada in Ireland*, Dublin, 2010.
[47] Ibid., p. 205.
[48] Girón de Pascual, R., 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar antes y después de la jornada de Inglaterra', in Estrella, A.J., and Lozano Navarro, J.J., *Actas de la XI Reunión Científica de la Fundación Española de Historia Moderna: Comunicaciones*, vol. II, Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2012, pp. 1051-59.
[49] Rooney, J.P., *Francisco and the Chieftain's Wife*, Drumlin, 2007; and Altrocci, P.H., and J.C., *Fraught with Hazard: The Heroic Saga of Shipwrecked Armada Survivors in Ireland*, 2015.

Dermot Somers featured a chapter on Cuéllar's experiences in a book of seven historic journeys across Ireland, selected, he explained, for their 'linkage of story and landscape.'[50] Somers was conscious of the juxtaposition of Cuéllar's thoughts on 'the native Irish *savage*', with those in other accounts of Spanish encounters the New World: 'writing as he was, in a century when Spanish conquistadores were exterminating native peoples of South America.'[51] Two independent theatrical productions based on the narrative have also been staged. In 2010, the playwright, Donal O'Kelly, produced *The Adventures of the Wet Señor*, an imaginative rendition of the story using traditional Irish music as a backdrop, which toured Ireland successfully. In 2013, he modified the script for an award-winning radio play *Francisco*. At this time, too, a theatrical production entitled *Shipwrecked*, directed by Eric Fraad, used Cuéllar's story as the vehicle for a musical drama that incorporated Renaissance music. Also in 2012, within the musical sphere, an acclaimed composer and harpist, Michael Rooney (TG4 Composer of the Year 2017), composed the *de Cuéllar Suite*, a traditional music arrangement featuring sixty musicians. That year he performed his composition at Grange, Co. Sligo, as the centre-piece of the local annual 'Celtic Fringe Festival', which also draws its inspiration from the narrative. In the realm of film, TG4 has commissioned an Irish language documentary entitled *Camino de Cuéllar*, which is set to air in 2017.

All told, the level of recent cultural activity generated by interest in the *Carta* has been quite extraordinary. And it has not been confined to Ireland. In Spain, interest has also been stimulated by a number of works. Besides the article by Rafael Girón, in 2010, the novelist José Luis Gil Soto published *La colina de las piedras blancas*, which features Captain Cuéllar among others.[52] In 2012, the travel writer and documentary maker, Miquel Silvestre, visited Ireland to produce and write, *La fuga del náufrago*, a book and documentary.[53] The following year, Spanish State broadcaster, TV España commissioned documentary makers to visit Ireland to film *Náufragos en Irlanda*, which aired in September 2013, and again in 2014. In 2015, the Barcelona-based journalist, travel writer, presenter and consultant for the TVÉ documentary, David Revelles Soriano, published *En los confines de Irlanda*, which traced his travels around Ireland in search of Captain Cuéllar and the Armada story.[54]

Amidst all of this interest, at home and abroad, a comprehensive look at the enigmatic captain's life and times seems long overdue. A number of questions prompted the motivation to seek out new information about Cuéllar for this study:

[50] Somers, D., *Endurance: Heroic Journeys in Ireland*, Dublin, 2005, p. 8.
[51] Ibid., p. 10.
[52] Soto Gil, J.L. *La colina de las piedras blancas*, Barcelona, 2010.
[53] Silvestre, M., *La fuga del náufrago*, Madrid, 2013.
[54] Revelles, D., *En los confines de Irlanda: Tras la leyenda de la Armada Invencible en Irlanda*, Barcelona, 2015.

What of his life beyond Ireland; what were his activities before the Armada campaign, and what became of him afterwards? They encompassed the primary goal of this research project: to present the first comprehensive study of his career. But what of the documentary evidence pertaining to him? As mentioned previously, this was limited to two manuscript copies of the text that are held in separate archives in Madrid: the Real Academia de la Historia[55], and the Biblioteca Nacional.[56] Despite the recent level of interest in him, the *Carta* appeared to contain the only known information about him. Everything that had been published about Cuéllar was limited to his shipwreck and refuge in Ireland. Essentially, as far as Cuéllar's career beyond the Armada campaign and Ireland, was concerned, this project started out with a blank slate. Therefore, the challenge of seeking out new information about him was very appealing. Any documentation that might be uncovered by archival research was going to be new material. During their investigations of the text, Cruickshank and Gallagher discovered a valuable clue about his activities before the Armada in a reference to him in the publication entitled *The Troublesome Voyage of Captain Edward Fenton 1582-83*.[57] The editor of the work, the English historian E.G.R Taylor, appended passages from an investigation into a clash with Fenton's expedition, in Brazil, by Spanish authorities, which mentioned Captain Cuéllar. She had found the document in the Archivo de Indias in Seville.[58] But that seemed to be the extent of knowledge about his military service beyond the Armada campaign. Consequently, the premise of this thesis is to document, as completely as possible, his life beyond Ireland.

Given the paucity of information about him a heavy emphasis was placed on archival research (over 15 months). Captain Cuéllar was a comparatively minor figure within the Spanish military, and all of the information about him that was uncovered proved to be widely dispersed throughout each archive. One initial goal of the research was to uncover personal information about Cuéllar: place and date of birth, family background, marital status, wills, etc. Preliminary investigations were undertaken at the Archivos de Protocolos Notoriales of Seville, Madrid, and Valladolid. Also, church registers housed in the diocesan archive at Valladolid and the parochial house at Torrelaguna, were examined. However, personal information proved elusive. Consequently, given the nature of the documentation that did surface, it was decided to place all of the emphasis on Cuéllar's military career. Research was conducted primarily at the Archivo General de Simancas, and the Archivo General de Indias, in Seville. Elsewhere, the State Archive of Belgium in Brussels yielded a small, but significant, number of documents that contained very

[55] Real Academia de la Historia, MS N-7, f.58-67.
[56] Biblioteca Nacional, MS 1750.
[57] Taylor, E.G.R. (ed.), *The Troublesome Voyage of Captain Edward Fenton 1582-83*, Cambridge, 1959, Addendum, Document 81, Interrogatories at St Vincent 8-9 February 1582/83, pp. 322-23.
[58] AGI Patronato 266, R.45, Andrés de Eguino,contador:encuentro con el corsario inglés, 1583.

useful information. Other archives visited included the Archivo General Militar in Madrid, the Library of the Hispanic Society of America in New York (Altamira Collection), and the Karpeles Manuscript Library (Medina Sidonia archive) at Santa Barbara, California.

Archival research proved a significant challenge. However, the time invested was rewarded with a rich haul of new documentation, which has made this study of Cuéllar and his times possible. One particular contribution of this study is the great wealth of original archival material that has been uncovered. Upwards of fifty individual documents pertaining to Captain Cuéllar's military service were recovered from the various archives. The range of document types uncovered pertained to most aspects of his career, and all contained substantial new information. These included: an inventory of his service papers, petitions (5), patents (3), mandates (2), commission nominations (4), *cédulas* (3), *consultas* (2), letters of recommendation (4), company muster lists (5) sundry receipts and payments (3), leave licenses (2), records of tribunals of enquiry (2), and salary payments, besides miscellaneous references to him in various files. Virtually of this documentation constituted new discoveries, though, in the intervening period, transcripts of four documents have been published by Rafael Girón in his article.[59] In addition to the core documents for this study, a rich diversity of other archival documentation is used throughout in order to better contextualize the information that has been gleaned about Cuéllar. Complete transcriptions and translations of ten documents that span the career are presented in the Appendix at the end of the work. The purpose of the Appendix is two-fold: to offer a selection of the most significant documents that inform us about Captain Cuéllar; among them are four petitions submitted by Cuéllar to royal councils; and to provide a representative sample of standard document types issued to soldiers during their careers. They all exhibit the linguistic formulae, conventions, and secretarial notation that habitually appear on documents of the period.

The document that proved to be the richest source of information for this study was an inventory of service papers (see Appendix Nine)[60] compiled in 1604, to accompany a petition (*relación de servicios*) submitted by Cuéllar to the Council of State (Appendix Eight).[61] In effect, Cuéllar sought to offer proof of his services to the crown, in return for which he hoped to receive a *merced* (reward) in the form of a pension. His service papers record lengthy and varied assignments.[62] The inventory cites sixteen separate documents, copies of which were evidently held by

[59] Girón de Pascual, R., 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar antes y después de la Jornada de Inglaterra', Anexo Documental, pp. 1055-59.
[60] AGS Estado 1704, f. 361, *servicio militar*, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar (see Appendix Nine).
[61] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, Francisco de Cuéllar, 31 March 1604.
[62] AGS Estado 1967, unfoliated, *Consulta*, 317, 21 June 1604.

the crown in 1604. It enumerates documents issued to Cuéllar by various agencies of the crown throughout the period 1581-1603. Although the inventory is not an exhaustive listing of papers, it is, nevertheless, highly significant in offering a condensed overview of Cuéllar's career from when he was made a captain. The inventory also proved very useful by serving as a guide for subsequent archival research, as it provided a checklist of important documents to search for; ten of them were subsequently recovered. Furthermore, as new documentation began to surface, information contained in the inventory was used as a reliable guide to resolve any inconsistencies of factual detail that emerged. Where uncertain or contradictory information emerged in some of the data contained in petitions submitted by Cuéllar, deference was accorded to the information contained in the service papers. This avoided erroneous assumptions being drawn based on misleading information submitted by Cuéllar in some of his later petitions, arising from faulty memory, or deliberate manipulation for his own purposes.

Equally revelatory, was Cuéllar's 1604 petition (Appendix Eight). Like the inventory of his papers, it offered a one-thousand-word overview (*relación de servicios*) of his career, this time in his own words, which contained additional information about his activities, including personal insights about events.[63] Much of this information was corroborated by the service papers, and by a letter of recommendation (of c. 460 words) on Cuéllar's behalf from Philip III to the viceroy of New Spain, in 1606.[64] However, the content of that letter seems, in fact, to have been drawn from the 1604 *relación*, as both err in claiming that Cuéllar spent time in Piedmont during 1598-1600. The service papers make it clear that he was there in 1592-93. Other important documents that are enlightening about Cuéllar's early military service, include petitions submitted to the Council of War in 1585 (Appendix Two)[65]; and the Council of the Indies, in 1586 (Appendix Three).[66] The latter petition was discovered together with a transcript of his original captain's patent, awarded in 1581 (Appendix One). Evidently, Cuéllar was required on that occasion to present his bona fides to the council before officials were satisfied about the legitimacy of his claims. While that requirement may have signified an irritating extra layer of bureaucratic red tape for Cuéllar, it provided a delightfully rich find for this study when it turned up in the Archivo de Indias. Likewise, the text of a *cédula* awarded to Cuéllar in 1600 by the Council of State, proved particularly informative.[67] In this instance, it revealed that, by 1600, Cuéllar had been in the military service for twenty-two years.

[63] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, *relación de servicios*, 31 March 1604.
[64] AGI Indiferente General 449, ff. 20-1.
[65] AGS GyM 171, f. 202, *memorial*, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 14 January 1585.
[66] AGI Indiferente General 2676, unfoliated, *memorial*, 'Sobre salarios del Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, Madrid, 21 de Junio 1586.'
[67] AGS Estado 1594, f.157, *cédula*, 'Al Conde de Lemos, Madrid, 27 de hebrero 1600.'

In this way, snippets of data that emerged from each individual document, contributed towards a gradual accumulation of information about the Captain and his career. Consequently, the great bulk documentation in this study is fresh, original, unpublished material. On the one hand, it has enabled a reconstruction of Cuéllar's life in the military; while at the same time facilitating, indeed, at times, guiding, the subsequent discussion about his career. Each document that surfaced during archival research highlighted different facets of the career, including positive and negative elements. For example, his inventory of papers refers to letters of recommendation issued by the Dukes of Parma, Savoy and Archduke Albert of Austria that commend his conduct[68]; a consulta of the Council of the Indies in 1605, referred to his qualities as a fine soldier: 'a parecido que por ser muy buen soldado y de servicio exercicio y espiriencia.'[69] Various documents depict him engaged in the mundane daily routines: organising equipment for his troops (see p. 126-27), mobilising troops (see pp. 121-22), collecting arrears of wages[70], etc. Conversely, at least one official dossier referred to him in very derogatory fashion as useless ('no vale nada').[71] All of these snapshots combine to provide a varied and colourful collage of his activities.

Following the reference furnished by Taylor led the Archivo de Indias in Seville, and access to the tribunal transcript of the incident in Brazil.[72] It transpired that this document contained c. 30,000 words; a rich body of material concerning the affair, and Cuéllar's role in it. Further searches in the Archivo de Indias produced an even more significant find: the record of a second investigation into the same incident, lodged by Cuéllar with the court of the Casa de Contratación in Seville.[73] This hearing, recorded through 50,000 words of transcript, contained a robust rebuttal by Cuéllar of the findings of the first tribunal. It also contained a lengthy deposition submitted by him that described what transpired, as well as testimony submitted by multiple witnesses that offered a forensic review of the affair. Together, these two transcripts provided a fascinating snapshot of both Cuéllar's activities, and the Spanish judicial system at work, as well as attendant problems associated with military discipline. Furthermore, they offered a platform to explore the prickly nature of dispute resolution within the military, the exigencies of decision-making in naval combat, and the fickle nature of planned operations at sea. Together with

[68] AGS Estado 1704, f. 361, *servicio militar*, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar (see Appendix Nine).
[69] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, Cámara de Indias, 4 de Junio 1605. 'it appears that he is a very good soldier of merit, skill and experience.'
[70] AGS CJH, leg.389, unfoliated, Relación de lo que se deve a los capitanes, oficiales y soldados que han venido de Flandes con certificaciones de lo que alcançan de sus sueldos.
[71] AGS, Estado 612, f.129.
[72] AGI Patronato 266, R. 45., Andrés de Eguino,contador:encuentro con el corsario inglés, 1583.
[73] AGI Escribanía 1069B. Pleitos de la Casa de Contratación, 'Francisco de Cuéllar con Andrés de Eguino, contador de la Armada destinada al Estrecho de Magallanes, sobre no haber perseguido con sus navíos a unos corsarios ingleses. Pendiente en 1584.'

Cuéllar's account of his court-martial in 1588 in the *Carta*, this rich vein of information comprised sufficient material to devote a chapter to the topic misconduct and military justice, which is contained in Chapter Five.

Elsewhere, most of Cuéllar's salary payments surfaced, through finds in Simancas (in the sections: Contaduría del Sueldo, Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas, Consejo y Junta de Hacienda) and in the Archivo de Indias (sections Contaduría, Contratación and Patronato). This documentation included two personal files that catalogued payments made to him throughout his period of service with the Enterprise of England (1587-88).[74] Given the comprehensive nature of Cuéllar's financial records, it seemed logical to include a discussion of the career from that perspective. In addition, a fascinating series of thirty or so *consultas* emerged, which recorded deliberations in the Council of the Indies concerning salary arrears for Cuéllar and colleagues who had returned from Brazil in 1584. The *consultas* span 1586, and in conjunction with his salary records, offered an opportunity to explore the pros and cons of Spanish royal bureaucracy from the perspective of the applicants: Cuéllar and his colleagues. Such a rich corpus of new archival documentation has facilitated a comprehensive appraisal of the career by this thesis. While assessing his military service within the broader context of soldierly life, the extensive data pertaining to Cuéllar will be complemented by a commensurate level of subsidiary documentation.

The present study comprises six chapters arranged in two sections. Part I (In His Majesty's Service), contains the first three chapters, which present a comprehensive overview of Cuéllar's military service. They will trace his career over the course of twenty-eight years (1578-1606), from the earliest evidence of his presence in the military until he left soldiering behind once and for all. Aside from Rafael Girón's short article, this has not been attempted before. The aim here will be not just to document his activities, but also to reflect on the strategic designs of the Spanish Monarchy, which shaped the context in which Cuéllar's military service was played out. Because so much has been written about the Spanish Armada of 1588, this study has not looked at that campaign in great detail beyond that required to examine Cuéllar's role. Similarly the conflict in the Low Countries is well documented and discussion is restricted to the campaigns in which Cuéllar participated. Greater coverage is afforded to the lesser known episodes: the expedition to Brazil and the Strait of Magellan (Armada de Magallanes) of 1581-84; the voyages of 1587 and 1602; and Cuéllar's stint in Piedmont (1592-93). His adventures in Ireland and Scotland will, of course, receive detailed attention. Discussion of Cuéllar's experiences in Ireland, and his letter, will attempt to build

[74] AGS CSU 284, ff. 324-26; 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar assiento y quenta particular que con él se tiene de lo que se le libra y paga a quent de sus sueldo.'; AGS CSU 275, unfoliated, 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar entretenido cerca de la persona del Marqués de Santa Cruz.'

upon and carry forward the sterling work of earlier scholars, similarly intrigued by his adventures. However, what distinguishes this study from previous work is the concentration on Cuéllar's activities beyond Ireland and how his military career evolved. His services for the Spanish crown will be emphasised, as will his role within the military institution of the period. All of the material pertaining to the career presented throughout will be new, unpublished documentation.

Chapter One will address the first decade of his service spanning the years 1578-1588. This phase of his career was devoted primarily to naval service, involving participation in five campaigns/expeditions. His experiences in Ireland and Scotland will be explored in Chapter Two. The purpose here is to contribute a new discussion of this episode. In contrast to earlier works discussed above, the emphasis will not be on identifying the routes he travelled, or to pinpointing specific locations. That work, for the most part, has already been done. Rather, attention will focus on adding the 'when' to the 'where' of events described the narrative, and thereby, anchor the account in a more closely defined chronological framework within its broader historical context. All previous commentators have recognised the cultural value of Cuéllar's social observations without necessarily evaluating what he said. This work will attempt such evaluation. Also a greater emphasis than heretofore will be placed on Cuéllar's ordeals in Scotland. The general plight of Armada survivors in Scotland has been discussed previously by Geoffrey Parker and Colin Martin in their work *The Spanish Armada*,[75] and in doctoral theses: by Concepción Saenz-Cambra,[76] and Cynthia Fry,[77] who kindly allowed me to consult the relevant chapter of her thesis prior to publication. Those works, as well as primary material from the Scottish State Papers and archive of Simancas, have been used to explore and assess Cuéllar's portrayal of his experiences in the Scottish capital.

Chapter Three will trace the latter part of his career (1589-1606). During this phase, land-based service predominated, and was carried out mostly with the Army of Flanders (1589-91 and 1594-98). Interspersed between two bouts of service in the Low Countries, was a twelve-month spell in Piedmont (1592-1593), with Hispano-Savoyard forces that confronted a French Huguenot incursion led by the Count of Lesdiguières (Francois de Bonne). A final stint of naval service saw Cuéllar return to the Atlantic sphere and a voyage with the Indies Guard. Thereafter he spent three years at court seeking new commissions before departure for the Americas with a letter of recommendation on his behalf from Philip III, addressed to the viceroy of New Spain, the Marquis of Montesclaros.

[75] Martin and Parker, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 224-28.
[76] Saenz-Cambra, C., *Scotland and Philip II, 1580-1598: Politics, Religion, Diplomacy and Lobbying*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2003.
[77] Fry C., *Diplomacy and Deception: King James VI of Scotland's Foreign Relations with Europe (c.1584-1603)*. Doctoral thesis, St Andrews University, 2014, pp. 81-95.

Part II ('Captaincy and Career') will consist of three chapters. In this section the discussion will be devoted to analysis of Cuéllar's career within the broader context of soldiering during the period. Cuéllar served as an officer for most of his career. As a captain he was a member of a cohort of officials whose responsibility was to recruit, maintain, and lead into combat the troops that comprised the armed forces of the Spanish Monarchy. Captains held an intermediary rank. They were neither part of the high command, nor members of the rank and file. However, they were an integral part of the military hierarchy, crucial in fact to its effectiveness. During the research process, as the body of documentation pertaining to him began to accumulate, new questions began to formulate: Given the quantity of new information uncovered about Captain Cuéllar, was there an opportunity to contribute something new to the knowledge of captaincy as a career in this period? How did Cuéllar's experiences and activities conform to, or differ from, established assumptions about military life? Can he be regarded as an exemplar of his profession? And if so, what insights about the life of the average military officer at that time might we garner from exploring his activities? Those questions prompted the formulation of the second objective of this thesis: to assess Cuéllar's career with a view to gaining a new perspective on the livelihood of a professional officer of the period. Topics such as recruitment, promotion, remuneration, *entretenemientos*, combat, interactions with the state, will provide a framework for Chapter Four as we examine Cuéllar's experiences, and look at captaincy as a distinct profession within the military.

Copious work has been done on sixteenth-century military history. Most notable are those of Geoffrey Parker,[78] Julio Albi de la Cuesta,[79] Rene Quatrefages,[80] and Fernando González de León.[81] Each work provides in-depth discussion of soldiering within the archetypal Spanish military units of the era, the *tercios*, and the most iconic military force of the period, the Army of Flanders. Other notable works consulted include Enrique Martínez Ruiz's comprehensive overview of the Spanish military in the early modern period,[82] and the recently published volume of essays for the *Historia Militar de España,* edited by Luis Ribot: *Edad Moderna II: Escenario Europeo*.[83] Key publications for discussion of livelihood on the high seas referenced

[78] Parker, G., *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road 1567-1659: The Logistics of Spanish Victory and Defeat in the Low Countries' Wars*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 2004.
[79] Albi de la Cuesta, J., *De Pavia a Rocroi: los tercios de infantería española en los siglos XVI y XVII*, Madrid, 1999.
[80] Quatrefages, R., *Los tercios españoles (1567-77)*, Madrid, 1979.
[81] González de León, F., *The Road to Rocroi: Class, Culture and Command in the Army of Flanders, 1567-1659*, Leidon – Boston, 2009.
[82] Martínez Ruiz, E., *Soldados del rey: los ejércitos de la monarquía hispánica (1480-1700)*, Madrid, 2008.
[83] Ribot, L. (ed.), *Historia militar de España: edad moderna II: escenario Europeo*, Madrid, 2013.

in the text will include the works of Pablo Emilio Pérez-Mallaína,[84] Carla Rahn-Phillips,[85] David Goodman,[86] and Jan Glete,[87] among others. And yet, ordinary soldiers of the period tend to be overlooked, in particular, a systematic study of captaincy is lacking. Lorraine White and María del Carmen Saavedra Vázquez in separate articles have noted the relative paucity of works that uses the soldier as a focus to assess the military.[88] This thesis will not attempt to emulate those works. Instead, by placing Captain Cuéllar at the centre of the study, it will seek to assess the military profession from the perspective of the individual, rather than the institution.

Cuéllar's career encompassed multiple theatres of operations, and numerous physical domains: urban and countryside, highlands and lowlands, land and sea; he served in both army and marine contexts, across many arenas. By following a career that incorporated both army and naval experience, the discussion of military service here will extend beyond the scope of single-discipline (marine or land-based) studies. Professional soldiering was very fluid in nature, which is reflected by this study. Furthermore, it will contribute to a neglected perspective of military life by placing Cuéllar within the cultural milieu of crown patronage and career progression in the officer corps. The discovery of petitions submitted by Cuéllar to state councils, and numerous *consultas* pertaining to Cuéllar and his colleagues, throw light on the processes and procedures that confronted individuals at court. The personal rule of Philip II was characterised by the concept of personal ties that bound the subject to the monarch, which was defined by the rituals of that relationship: attendance at court, the ideology of *merced*, the bureaucratic process, and compulsion for self-definition through written petitions as a means to recognition. This study will attempt to explore the nature of those relationships and how the working of crown bureaucracy under Philip II was experienced by applicants seeking preferment and reward.

One of the most intriguing topics that emerged from the wealth of new documentation discovered by this study was Cuéllar's disciplinary problems. He was twice embroiled in major controversy relating to allegations of misconduct, aside from minor misdemeanours. Indeed, as mentioned previously, the tribunal transcripts that were uncovered presented abundant material for an exploration of

[84] Pérez-Mallaína, P. (trans. Rahn-Phillips, C.), *Spain's Men of the Sea: Daily Life on the Indies Fleets in the Sixteenth Century*, Baltimore, 1998.
[85] Rahn-Phillips, C., *Six Galleons for the King of Spain: Imperial Defence in the early Seventeenth Century*, Baltimore, 1992.
[86] Goodman, D., *Spanish Naval Power, 1589-1665: Reconstruction and Defeat*, Cambridge, 1997.
[87] Glete, J., *Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650*, London, 2000.
[88] White, L., 'The Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers: Combat, Welfare and Violence', in *War in History*, January 2002, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 1-38; and Carmen Saavedra Vázquez, M. del, 'La vida del soldado', in Ribot, L. (ed.) *Historia militar de España: Edad moderna*, vol. II, *Escenario europeo*, Madrid, 2013, pp. 373-400.

his dispute with Andrés de Eguino. Equally intriguing were the circumstances of his court-martial by the Duke of Medina Sidonia in 1588. Unfortunately, the wreck of the *Lavía* in Ireland resulted in the loss of case documentation pertaining to Cuéllar's appeal against the charges brought against him. Therefore, the only detailed account of the episode is Cuéllar's version of events in the *Carta*. Nevertheless, it provides useful clues about what transpired. Given the ample scope of the material, it was deemed appropriate to devote Chapter Five to an exploration of the subject of misconduct, discipline and military justice, and to use Cuéllar's difficulties as the focus for that exploration.

Finally, the Conclusion will evaluate all of all of the findings of the study and offer a final assessment of Captain Cuéllar and his career. Ultimately, this study will seek to significantly expand our knowledge of Captain Cuéllar and his career. By placing a heavy emphasis on previously undiscovered documentation the study will present the first comprehensive account of his military service. Secondly, by utilising his activities, the study will focus on the experience of soldiering to illuminate various issues pertaining to that livelihood in general, and to the role of captaincy in particular.

Part I

Imperial Odyssey:
In His Majesty's Service 1578-1606

Chapter One

Early Military Service 1578-88

Soy, más, estoy. Respiro.
(I exist, more than that, I am here. I breathe)[89]

If the text of a royal *cédula*, addressed to the viceroy of Naples on behalf of Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, in 1600, is accurate, then it appears that he became a soldier in the late 1570s. The document runs as follows: 'Por quanto teniendo consideración a lo que el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar me ha servido de veynte y dos años a esta parte en las ocasiones y jornadas que en este tiempo se han offrescido por mar y tierra.'[90] The inference from that remark would be that he enlisted in 1578. Little did he know then how his career would unfold. He could not have anticipated when he enlisted that he would end up traversing much of the Spanish Empire: through Europe and the Americas, to Ireland and Scotland, and beyond. Throughout the twenty-eight years that this study will follow his whereabouts, Cuéllar would call himself a professional soldier, holding the rank of captain for most of that time. He saw action on both land and at sea in some of the most celebrated campaigns of the period. When we eventually lose sight of him in 1606, Cuéllar's travels will not yet have concluded. Our final glimpse will have him preparing to set out on the high seas once more; perhaps for the final time. The following three chapters will set out for the first time the story of Captain Cuéllar's military service in detail, and the tale that the documentation has uncovered suggests that it was a remarkable career.

References to his initial military service are vague. Documentation pertaining to this period is sparse and all we really have to go on are remarks made by Cuéllar in petitions he later submitted to royal councils. In 1585, he declared to the Council of War that he enlisted: 'El capitán Francisco de Cuéllar dice que él a sido soldado de Vuestra Magestad desde la edad y tiempo que lo pudo ser y después de aver estado en las yndias, y servido y halladose en toda la conquista de Portugal.'[91] The following year, he elaborated a little in a submission to the Council of the Indies: 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar diçe que a servido a V.La desde edad de quinçe años

[89] From the poem 'Más allá' by Jorge Guillén, *Cántico*, Madrid, 1936.
[90] AGS Estado 1594, f.157. 'Therefore, having regard to how Captain Francisco de Cuéllar has served me now for twenty-two years in the actions and expeditions, which during this time have taken place on land and sea.'
[91] AGS GyM 171, f.202. 'Captain Francisco de Cuéllar says that he has been a soldier of His Majesty since he was old enough to become one, and having been in the Indies he served and was present for all of the conquest of Portugal [in 1580].'

en su profesión militar en las yndias y otras partes.'[92] Those claims, and the remark above that he began his military service in 1578, appear to be substantiated by an entry for a soldier named Francisco de Cuéllar on the company roll of an infantry unit assigned to a royal galleon of the Indies Guard squadron, the *San Tadeo*, in February 1578. It seems that he enlisted, or was assigned to that galleon, at a time when it was moored in the harbour of Cartagena de Indias (modern Colombia). Therefore, based on those pieces of information, it appears our first glimpse of Cuéllar as a soldier occurs in the Caribbean, in early 1578. Throughout the next decade (1578-88), each of his subsequent assignments would be in the Atlantic sphere, mainly concerned with the security of the Carrera de las Indias (the route to the Americas); essentially, to maintain Spanish dominance of the high seas.

Strategic Context in 1578

During this period, there was increasing unease over corsair activity amongst Spanish possessions in the Americas. Twin concerns here were the security of coastal settlements, and control of the sea lanes to Spain. While Spain was officially at peace with France and England, Huguenot and English corsairs preyed incessantly on Spanish shipping in European waters, and in the Atlantic. There was not yet a dedicated High Seas fleet (Armada del Mar Océano) in being. But the Spanish crown did have a permanent escort squadron (Indies Guard) in the Atlantic, whose role was to provide security to Caribbean settlements and protect the annual treasure fleets that sailed to New Spain (Mexico) and Tierra Firme (north coast of South America).[93] Cuéllar enlisted in an infantry contingent assigned to this unit.

The Indies Guard existed independently of the two merchant convoys: the *flotas* of New Spain (Mexico) and Tierra Firme (the northern coast of South America: modern Colombia and Venezuela).[94] Until 1569, these convoys generally sailed to the Caribbean together, before dividing at the island of Dominica. A royal order of that year designated individual departures for the New Spain *flota* during the spring, and the Tierra Firme, usually in late summer/early autumn.[95] Each fleet had an armed escort of two vessels under the command of a Captain-General. Usually, they were selected from the two largest vessels of the convoy. These vessels were then assigned contingents of infantry and were supposed to carry up to twelve pieces of

[92] AGI Indiferente General 2676, unfoliated, *relación* directed to Secretary Ledesma, 1586; 'Captain Francisco de Cuéllar says that he served Your Excellency since the age of fifteen years in his military profession, in the Indies and other parts...'
[93] Alfonso Mola, M., and Martínez Shaw, C., 'Defensa naval de los Reinos de Indias', in O'Donnell, H., (ed.) *Historia militar de España: Edad moderna, I. Ultramar y la marina*, Madrid, 2012, pp. 123-7.
[94] Haring, C., *Trade and Navigation between Spain and the Indies in the Time of the Habsburgs*, Harvard University Press, 1918, p. 207.
[95] Castro y Bravo, F. de, *Las naos españolas en la Carrera de las Indias: armadas y flotas en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI*, Madrid, 1927, p. 53.

artillery.[96] Sometimes, but not always, the Indies Guard escorted the outward bound Tierra Firme *flota*, and usually, but not always, escorted the combined fleets on the homeward run from Havana to Sanlúcar. A stopover was routinely made in the Azores, a Portuguese colony, to replenish supplies, and to allow stragglers to catch up, before embarking on the last stage of the voyage back to Spain.

The Azores also served homeward bound Portuguese ships from the East Indies, and was therefore of great strategic importance to both the Spanish and Portuguese convoy systems. Both powers co-operated in maintaining their monopoly of trade and settlement in the Atlantic region beyond Europe. In times of war, an ambition of the enemies of Spain was to intercept the homeward bound treasure fleets, or to occupy the Azores and use it as a base for the same purpose. For this reason the Spanish Monarchy was highly sensitive to any threat by a foreign power either to its Indies fleets, or to the Azores, particularly after 1580, when Philip II annexed Portugal.

Cartagena was the squadron's main base while it was in the Caribbean. However, it could not monitor the entire region effectively. Policing corsair activity was a complex business. The task was extremely difficult because the Caribbean was a large expanse of water with numerous islands, besides widely dispersed mainland coastal settlements. Furthermore, seasonal weather patterns inhibited the ability of sailing ships to reach all areas at certain times of the year. Much of the corsair traffic that came to the islands was furtive, intent on contraband trade rather than aggressive hostile incursions. Black market trade with locals was expressly forbidden by the crown monopoly. Consequently, such transactions were carried out in remote locations, away from the prying eyes of royal officials. Under such circumstances reports of activity were often suppressed. Actually, royal officials were sometimes the worst offenders. Even the Indies Guard became notorious for its contraband activities, alienating merchants on both sides of the Atlantic in their disregard for normal rules and regulations. Given such a mix of vested interests the search for interlopers was like looking for a needle in a haystack.

In August 1578, Francis Drake famously sailed through the Strait of Magellan en route to the Pacific, but he was not the first English mariner to navigate Pacific waters. That 'accolade' fell to John Oxenham the year before. A protégé of Drake, Oxenham had accompanied him on earlier expeditions to the Isthmus of Panama. With the help of a community of escaped former slaves (Cimarrones) he transported sections of a small vessel across the Isthmus, which he then assembled. In early 1577, he proceeded to disrupt merchant shipping in the Gulf of Panama, albeit only briefly. Even more dramatically, Drake attacked Valparaíso and intercepted a treasure ship (*Cacafuego*) heading for Panama City. Oxenham was

[96] Castro y Bravo, F. de, *Las naos españolas*, p. 53.

subsequently caught, but Drake would go on to circumnavigate the globe, returning to Plymouth in 1580, where he was feted by the queen. Although the disruption they caused was limited, it was immediately recognised by Spanish authorities that the safety of the Pacific coast could no longer be taken for granted. Clearly, English mariners now possessed the will and ambition to compete with Spain, in both the Atlantic and the Pacific. But any nascent ambition in South America among English adventurers was, according to Andrews, 'ruined by lack of direction and divided purpose'.[97] English colonial enterprise would find greater expression and more success in its North American settlements. In Spanish circles realization that the Pacific was now vulnerable to aggressive interlopers willing to hazard the Magellan passage would lead to new debates about how best to protect the New World colonies. Proposals were drafted for the provision of permanent squadrons in the Pacific (*Armada del Mar del Sur*) and Caribbean (*Armada de Barlovento*), and significantly for Cuéllar, a scheme to fortify the Magellan Strait (the most southerly tip of South America).

Elsewhere, 1578 proved to be a pivotal year in European affairs. A series of events transpired that appeared to tilt the balance of power in geo-politics in favour of Spain. It would result in a major shift in the strategic outlook of Philip II, which ultimately influenced the course of Cuéllar's career over the course of the next twenty years. Throughout the 1570s, Philip II had been preoccupied by conflict with Ottoman Empire in the Mediterranean, and Dutch rebels in his possessions in the Low Countries. This meant that military force had to be committed on two, sometimes three fronts simultaneously. The financial expenditure on the military was such that in 1575, the royal treasury was declared bankrupt. Victory at Lepanto in 1571 had been short-lived, as was the occupation of Tunis in 1573, retaken by Ottoman forces the following year. Thereafter, the struggle in the western Mediterranean descended into stalemate. The situation in the Low Countries was worse. The decade had witnessed the collapse of royal authority, and by the end of 1577 Spanish *tercios* had been withdrawn from the region entirely. But the decade-long struggle was far from resolved. And a peace initiative agreed under the terms of the Perpetual Edict of February 1577 was already disintegrating.

In January, Don John of Austria, Philip's brother and Governor of the Spanish Netherland, achieved a notable victory over the Dutch at Gembloux.[98] It signalled the onset of a period in which Spanish forces began to reassert control over affairs in the region. In February, a truce was negotiated with the Sultan Selim III that

[97] See Andrews, K.R., *Trade, Plunder and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire 1480-1630*, Cambridge, 1984, p. 165.
[98] Parker G., *The Dutch Revolt*, London, 1985, p. 186.

ensured a cessation of hostilities with Ottoman forces in the Mediterranean.[99] The cease-fire, renewed subsequently, allowed Philip to redirect precious funds and military resources from the Mediterranean zone to the Low Countries. In October, John died of illness. But he was succeeded as Governor-General by Alexander Farnese (Duke of Parma, nephew of the King) who, during the course of the next decade would restore royal authority to the southern Spanish Netherlands. Geoffrey Parker encapsulated his qualities: 'Able and resourceful, rich and cultivated, subtle and shrewd, Parma excelled both in diplomacy and war.'[100] He would roll back rebel-held territory until the revolt was confined to the rebel heartland: the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. Meanwhile, another nephew of Philip II, King Sebastian of Portugal, died while on campaign in Morocco.[101] In the same month that Francis Drake navigated the Magellan Strait, he fell at the battle of Alcazarquivir. As Jeremy Black has pointed out, this battle had far greater ramifications than the much-celebrated battle of Lepanto for political developments in Western Europe, and the Iberian Peninsula in particular. Sebastian lost the battle, his life, and his army was decimated. The upshot of this defeat plunged the Portuguese kingdom into a succession crisis that ultimately led to loss of independence and annexation by Spain.[102] Sebastian had no heir and the candidate who succeeded him (Cardinal Henry) was aged and without issue also. Philip II, whose mother was a Portuguese princess, was the strongest of a number of claimants to the throne. When Cardinal Henry died in January 1580, Philip had already resolved to unify the Iberian Peninsula under his rule, which he achieved in a rapid military invasion later that year. Henceforth, with Portugal and its overseas possessions added to his Spanish empire, and with the most talented general of his era (Parma) commanding victorious Spanish forces in the Low Countries, Philip II could justifiably be regarded as the most powerful monarch in Christendom. Moreover, with one of his most talented diplomats, Francisco Álvarez de Toledo, reforming the governance of New Castile, increased revenues from the New World appeared to provide him with the financial wherewithal to achieve it.[103] There was a genuine concern among his opponents that Spanish hegemony in Western Europe was imminent. Against this, Philip's Dutch subjects in rebellion declared him deposed in 1581, while hard-line counsellors of Queen Elizabeth in England contemplated war, and a possible pre-emptive strike against Spain.[104]

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[99] Braudel, F., *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, vol. II, London, 1972, p. 1154.
[100] Parker, G., *Dutch Revolt*, p. 193.
[101] Lynch, J., *Spain under the Habsburgs*, vol. I, Oxford, 1965, p. 304.
[102] Black, J., *War and the World: Military power and the fate of continents1450-200*, New Haven and London, 1998, pp. 46-47.
[103] Merriman, R.B., *The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and the New*, New York, 1934, pp. 213-15.
[104] Parker, G., *The Grand Strategy of Philip II*, Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 169-71.

Early Years 1578-80

That then, was the political agenda that was unfolding when Francisco de Cuéllar first entered military life. The *San Tadeo* to which he was assigned was part of a flotilla of three galleons (*San Tadeo, San Andrés* and *San Bartholome*) and two frigates (*Santa Ana, Santa Isabel*) operating out of Cartagena under Miguel de Eraso. Overall commander of the Indies Guard was Eraso's father, Don Cristóbal de Eraso. He had arrived at Cartagena in mid-1576, with the entire squadron (thirteen vessels). The alarm caused by Oxenham's activities in the Gulf of Panama in early 1577, and reports of an upsurge of corsair activity among the islands, prompted him to leave Miguel in charge at Cartagena when he set out to escort the royal treasure and merchant *flotas* for Spain, later that summer.[105] During this time the flotilla performed patrols to reconnoitre Cuba and Jamaica and the islands of the outer Antilles.[106]

When Don Cristóbal returned to Cartagena in late 1578, his arrival coincided with the Drake scare (early in 1579), though there was no impact on the Caribbean side of the Panama Isthmus. Two galleys earmarked for permanent station in the Caribbean arrived with Eraso also. It was felt that galleys, with their shallow draft and ability to manoeuvre against the wind, would be more suited to the conditions on the *Tierra Firme* (modern Columbia and Venezuela) coast than the galleons. By then the *San Tadeo* had been decommissioned. An inspection at Cartagena in June 1578 had revealed the galleon's hull riddled with worm, which signalled the conclusion of its operational utility.[107] Its final voyage was to Jamaica to purchase supplies, after which it was dismantled at Cartagena.[108] The crew were then redistributed among the other vessels, presumably including Cuéllar. Nevertheless, the rest of the squadron resumed its normal duties. Later that summer the entire squadron escorted the royal silver and merchant convoys once more back to Sanlúcar de Barrameda, arriving in November. A storm of controversy attended the squadron's return to Spain, with a number of officials caught smuggling contraband silver (see pp. 163-64). No evidence has surfaced to suggest that Cuéllar was implicated in these activities.

Storm clouds of a different nature were already gathering along the frontier between Spain and Portugal by the end of 1579. It was clear that the ailing King, Cardinal Henry, would soon die. When he passed away in January, the succession to the Portuguese crown was open. In the meantime, Philip II had begun to mobilise

[105] AGI Contaduría 517.unfoliated; Cuentas Glosadas de Diego de Rivera 1578-1580. The five-vessel flotilla left in Cartagena under the charge of Miguel de Erasso 1577-78 consisted of the galleons *Santadeo*, *San Andrés*, and *San Bartholome*, and two frigates (*fragatas*) *Santa Ana*, and *Santa Ysavel*.
[106] AGI Contaduría 473; Chaunu, P. & H., *Seville et l'Atlantique*, vol. III, Librarie Armand Colin, 1955, pp. 235, 239.
[107] Gros, C., et al, *La Batalla del Mar Oceano*, vol. I, Madrid, 1988, Doc. 104.
[108] Ibid.

troops, and throughout the spring of 1580, preparations were hastened to invade Portugal that summer. Most of the Portuguese aristocracy acknowledged Philip's succession, but opponents rallied around the Dom Antonio Prior of Crato, who sought the crown for himself. Cuéllar claimed that he participated in the campaign, but he did not elaborate if it was with the main army, under the Duke of Alba, or with the large naval contingent assembled in southern ports under the Marquis of Santa Cruz.[109]

In June, Alba crossed the frontier with a force of around 24,000 infantry and 1,200 cavalry in what was, according to Carlos Ibáñez de Ibero, a virtual procession.[110] The only real resistance to the Spanish royal army occurred around Lisbon. On 7 July Santa Cruz departed Cádiz with a fleet of 56 galleys and 48 assorted sailing vessels, followed by his brother, Don Alonso de Bazán, with 6 galleys and 36 ships.[111] He secured control of the Algarve coast, assisting land forces under the Duke of Medina Sidonia, before moving on to Setubal.[112] There, he joined forces with Alba, and in a combined operation they succeeded in taking the town and its fort, which was defended by three galleons on 26 July.[113] One month later, Lisbon fell, with Santa Cruz capturing three galleys and an assortment of thirty-three galleons and ships assembled by Dom Antonio.[114] Cuéllar quite possibly served among the infantry component on one of the vessels in Santa Cruz's fleet, which would fit with his stint with the Indies Guard and his subsequent marine service. The Indies Guard had returned to Sanlúcar while preparations for Santa Cruz's fleet were underway in southern ports. So his transfer to a unit in that fleet would seem plausible.

Armada de Magallanes 1581-84

The Portuguese campaign gave Cuéllar his first experience of large-scale combat. On its conclusion, he claimed that he was preparing to transfer to Flanders when he was assigned to an expedition destined for the Strait of Magellan: 'y después de aver estado en las Yndias, y servido y halladose en toda la conquista de Portugal, estando a punto y de camino para ir a servir en el ejército de Flandes, Vuestra Magestad y los de su real Consejo de las Yndias, le nombraron por uno de los capitanes de la infantería de la armada que fue al estrecho de Magallanes.'[115] It was

[109] AGS GyM 171, f. 202, *memorial*, Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, 14 January 1585, (see Appendix Two).
[110] Ibáñez de Ibero, C., *Santa Cruz: primer marino de España*, Madrid, 1946, pp. 135-36.
[111] Ibid., p. 137.
[112] Altolaguirre y Duvale, D.A. de, *Don Álvaro de Bazán: Primer Marqués de Santa Cruz y Mudela*, Madrid, 1888, p. 504.
[113] Ibid., p. 504
[114] Altolaguirre y Duvale, *Don Álvaro de Bazán,* p. 504.
[115] AGS GyM 171, f.202, ''And after being in the Indies, he served and was present for all of the conquest of Portugal, and being about to go to serve in the Army of Flanders, his Majesty, and those

at this time that he was promoted to Captain, and entrusted with his first naval command.[116] The Magallanes expedition would prove a formative episode in his career as an officer, and a highly controversial one. He would gain crucial experience of the challenges posed to commanders in naval comabat, and significantly, how some battles continued to be fought through litigation once the guns ceased firing. Cuéllar's big promotion opportunity arose following a special junta that was convened by Philip II at Tomar in March 1581, to consider the defence of the Indies in the light of recent developments.[117] Having unified the Iberian Peninsula, Philip now had to consider the security of both Spanish and Portuguese overseas possessions in tandem. Drake's triumphant return to England in 1580, advertised the possibility of untold riches that awaited those prepared to endure the hazards of such a voyage. In October, Philip II's ambassador in London, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, had reported rumours of Drake's intention to make a return journey via the Magellan Strait, in which he was offering sevenfold returns for anyone investing in the expedition: 'This has so great an influence over Englishmen that everybody wants to have a share in the expedition.'[118] Indeed, Drake's success prompted speculators in England to float a rash of proposals for similar expeditions. From a Spanish perspective such reports were a cause for concern. If the Azores or Brazil were occupied by forces loyal to Dom Antonio in combination with aid from the French or English, then the threat to the safety of the treasure fleets of Spain, and by extension, its overseas possessions, was implicit. There was a view among Philip II's enemies that 'If you touch him in the Indies, you touch the apple of his eye, for take away his treasure which is his nervus belli, and which he hath almoste out of his West Indies, his olde bandes of souldiers will soone be dissolved, his purposes defeated, his power and strength diminished, his pride abated and his tyranny utterly suppressed.[119] To counterract this ambassador Mendoza was convinced that firm action would be necessary should more expeditions set out to emulate Drake. He advised the King:

> 'No foreign ship should be spared, in either the Spanish or Portuguese Indies, but that everyone should be sent to the bottom, and not a soul on board of them allowed to live. This will be the only way to prevent the English and French from

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of his royal Council of the Indies, nominated him for one of the infantry captains of the fleet that went to the Strait of Magellan.'

[116] AGI Indiferente General 2676, unfoliated, título de capitán, traslado bien y fielmente sacado corregido y conçertado, 22 de Marzo 1586 (see Appendix One).

[117] Pierson, P., *Commander of the Armada: the Seventh Duke of Medina Sidonia*, New Haven, 1989, p. 42.

[118] *CSP Spain*, III, Mendoza to Philip II, 16 October 1580, p. 55.

[119] Quoted in MacDermott, J., *England and the Spanish Armada: the necessary quarrel*, New Haven and London, 2005, p.140; see original in Hakluyt R. (Charles Deane ed.), *A Discourse Concerning Western Planting written in the year 1584 by Richard Hakluyt*, Cambridge, 1877, p. 59.

> going to those parts to plunder, for at present there is hardly an Englishman who is not talking of undertaking the voyage, so encouraged are they by Drake's return'.[120]

During the 1570s English interest in Brazil had begun to explore the possibility of establishing a presence in southern continent. A desire to emulate Spain and Portugal by establishing colonies in the peripheries of the America's, in lands so far unoccupied by those powers began to ignite the imaginations of adventurers. It was believed that only through a sustained programme of colonisation overseas that those with ambitions to rival the wealth and power of Spain could hope to achieve their aims. For encouragement they could look to the success of the French in Brazil, who had forged alliances with indigenous tribes in the northeast enabling them to sustain an on-going presence in the region despite the efforts of the Portuguese to eject them. Richard Grenville proposed one such enterprise which was rejected by Queen Elizabeth in 1574, when she concluded a trade agreement with Philip II. It was resuscitated to form the basis of the expedition which developed into Francis Drake's voyage of circumnavigation of 1577-1580. Grenville had proposed colonising of lands unoccupied by Spain south of the River Plate.[121] The River Plate estuary, a backdoor to the interior and to Peru was neglected by Spanish authorities for nearly forty years, after the initial settlement of Buenos Aires had been abandoned in 1541. During interrogation by Spanish authorities after his capture, John Oxenham declared that Grenville's project planned for the founding of 'a settlement on the River Plate and then pass the Strait and establish settlements wherever a good country for such could be found.'[122] In order for colonisation to take place a voyage of reconnaissance was necessary, and this was the premise upon which Drake departed from Plymouth in in 1577.

The establishment of the *Armada del Mar del Sur* in Peru was one facet of the new Spanish strategy intended to protect Pacific settlements. Another was the scheme to fortify the Strait of Magellan, which had been initiated by the viceroy of Peru, Don Francisco de Toledo. In the aftermath of the Drake incursion he had commissioned Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa to embark on an extensive survey of the Strait to assess the most suitable location to establish a fortified settlement: 'so that the passage might remain closed and guarded against the enemies.'[123] The Strait was then believed to be the only sea channel that connected the Atlantic to the Pacific. Sarmiento then presented his findings to the King. The scheme called for the construction of two fortifications facing each other on either side of the Strait at its narrowest point. Each fort would house a garrison of two hundred soldiers, and

[120] *CSP Spain*, III, Mendoza to the King, 30 Oct 1580, p. 6.
[121] Andrews, K.R. 'Beyond the equinoctial: England and South America in the sixteenth century' in *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 10 (1981), pp. 8-9.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Markham, C.R. (ed.), *Narratives of the Voyage of Pedro Sarmiento de Gambóa to the Straits of Magellan*, London, 1895, p. 209.

would be supported by adjoining settlements populated by volunteer colonists.[124] It was hoped that a strong military presence at the Strait would effectively deny entry to the Pacific to any expedition attempting to repeat Drake's exploits. But it sought to establish a colony at the most remote outpost of Spanish dominions, in the harshest of physical environments. A substantial fleet would have to be assembled in order to transport the garrison, construction materials, munitions, supplies and one hundred colonists and their families to the Strait. The duke of Alba opposed the plan, regarding it as impractical. He considered a strong squadron operating along the coasts of Chile and Peru would be more effective and cost less.[125] The King, however, was attracted to the idea of fortifying the Strait.[126]

When the plan was ratified a broader consideration of the Spanish presence in South America was taken into consideration. Across a vast territory south of the River Plate estuary on the Atlantic coast, and in southern Chile facing the Pacific, Spanish control was nominal at best. Buenos Aires, abandoned decades earlier, had been re-established in 1580. It represented the only Spanish presence on the east coast. There was no other settlement between the River Plate and the Strait of Magellan. Likewise, Spanish control in Chile was uncertain and non-existent in the southern regions where native Araucanian Indians mounted fierce resistance to the newcomers. In preparing a major expedition to the South Atlantic the goal of the planners was to ensure Spanish control of all of South America, and to frustrate any ambitions her rivals might have of seizing strategic bases in Brazil, or colonizing the unoccupied lands south of the River Plate, or in southern Chile.

In March, Philip wrote to Mendoza, to inform him of his plans: 'I have accordingly ordered the formation of a fleet of 12 ships well-armed and found [sic], with 1,500 soldiers on board, besides the seamen, of whom there will be another thousand. The fleet will be fully armed with artillery and will carry stores for a year and a half, and will sail to the Indian seas for the purpose of keeping them clear and defending the coasts.'[127] Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa was appointed governor of the projected new settlement. It was his responsibility to establish the new colony and construct the fortifications. A new governor of Chile, Alonso de Sotomayor, sailed with the expedition. He had six hundred troops with him to undertake a renewed drive to subdue local populations and penetrate lands in southern Chile in order to complete Spanish control in the region. The Captain-General of the fleet, who had over-all command while the expedition was at sea, was Diego Flores de Valdés, an

[124] Markham, Narratives of the Voyage of Pedro Sarmiento, pp. 210-11; also, Pierson, *Commander of the Armada*, p. 42.
[125] Fernández Duro, C., *La armada española desde la unión de los reinos de Castilla y Aragon,* vol. II, Madrid, 1895, p. 358.
[126] Bobb, Bernard E., 'Pedro Sarmiento de Gambóa and the Strait of Magellan', in *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 17, No.3, (August 1948), pp. 272-73.
[127] *CSP Spain*, III, p. 87.

officer with fourteen years of escort duties with the Indies convoys. Once assembled, the *Armada de Magallanes* would transport the expeditions of Sarmiento and Sotomayor to their destinations. Its principal function was to patrol the Atlantic seaboard between Brazil and the Strait, and to defend those seas against all interlopers.

Zuleta Carrandi has described the enterprise as an exercise in power projection.[128] Through the enterprise Philip II sought to impress upon rival powers the extent of Spanish military endeavour and resources. However, it was plagued by delays and controversy from the start. To his dismay, Pedro Sarmiento was not given overall command of the enterprise, and when he was made aware of Diego Flores' appointment he renounced his commission and petitioned the King to return to Peru. Flores, for his part, was unenthusiastic. He recommended that the disgraced Don Cristóbal de Erasso should be appointed instead.[129] Both parties had to be persuaded to accept their appointments. While Sarmiento prepared plans for the settlement and organised the recruitment of colonists, Flores assembled the fleet at Seville. Most of the officers nominated for the expedition were selected from the ranks of the Indies Guard.[130] Cuéllar was not included on the original roster, but was subsequently assigned to the expedition, as he explained, only after others withdrew due to the extremely hazardous nature of the expedition: 'lo qual aceptó, aunque otros no lo quisieron, por los manifiestos peligros y trabajos que en la dicha jornada se ofrecieron.'[131] There were difficulties in recruiting. The enterprise was deeply unpopular, regarded within the seafaring community as a dangerous venture of 'much difficulty and little profit.'[132]

Despite these difficulties, by late September twenty-three vessels (five were incorporated from the Indies Guard) and some 3,500 personnel had been assembled for the voyage. When the fleet made an abortive attempt to depart, seven ships were lost and eight hundred members of the expedition drowned in a storm. Cuéllar had been given charge of an 80-ton royal frigate, the Santa Catalina, with a complement of forty-four soldiers and thirty sailors on board.[133] It survived the storm intact, and was one of the sixteen remaining vessels that reached Rio de Janeiro safely in March 1582. The onset of the southern winter when the expedition arrived meant that it would have to remain on the coast of Brazil for seven months

[128] Zuleta Carrandi, J., 'La fortificación del estrecho de Magallanes: un proyecto al servicio de la imagen de la monarquía', in *Revista Complutense de Historia de América*, 2013, vol. 39, pp. 153-76.
[129] Duro, Cesáreo Fernández, *La armada española*, vol. II, pp. 358-59.
[130] AGS GyM 118, f.325.
[131] Ibid., 171, f.202. 'He accepted although others declined due to the manifest dangers and hardships which the journey offered.'
[132] Markham, *the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, pp. 213-14.
[133] Ibid., p.221; also, *Coleccion de Documentos y Maniscritos Compilados por Fernandez de Navarrete*, Vol. XX, p. 323, doc. 23, 'Relacion de la gente de Mar y Guerra'.

before continuing to the Strait. During this period dissension and discord surfaced within the ranks. Some deserted and disappeared into the surrounding neighbourhood rather than face the bleak prospects that awaited them at the Strait. Sarmiento and Flores clashed over accusations of embezzlement of expedition supplies by Flores and a string of subordinates.[134] Sarmiento claimed officers were trading expedition supplies for personal profit. Among them was Captain Cuéllar, who, together with Captain Gonzalo Meléndez de Valdés, was accused of the illegal sale of wine. When confronted by Sarmiento, Cuéllar and Valdés purportedly claimed they had to do so in order to survive.[135] Nevertheless, Cuéllar had criminal charges lodged against him.[136] However, he would later claim that he was exonerated by a review (*visita*) when the fleet returned to Spain.[137]

In early November, the fleet set sail for the Strait. Initially, steady progress was made but, somewhere south of the River Plate estuary three weeks of heavy gales prevented the fleet from making any further headway.[138] One ship sank with all hands. Others were badly damaged. Forced to turn and run with the wind, it was resolved to make for the island of Santa Catalina (southern Brazil) in order to reassess. However, when a chance encounter with a small coastal trader brought news of an English expedition in Brazilian waters, a new sense of urgency descended on the situation. Two heavily-armed English galleons, accompanied by a smaller vessel, were reportedly intent on forcing a passage through the Strait. At Santa Catalina, Flores reorganized the fleet. He selected the six best sailing vessels of those that remained, with which to convey Sarmiento's colonists and their supplies to the Strait. Governor Sotomayor and his contingent were dispatched to Buenos Aires in three vessels, from where they were to march to Chile overland. Six vessels had received storm-damage, three of which had to be abandoned. The remaining three were allocated to Andrés de Eguino, inspector and paymaster of the fleet (Veedor y Contador), with orders to patrol the Brazilian coast as far as Rio de Janeiro. Eguino's flagship (*capitana*) was the 500-ton *San Juan Bautista*. Captain Rodrigo de Rada took charge of and vice-flag (*almiranta*), *Nuestra Señora de Begoña*, a 230-ton vessel. Captain Cuéllar was transferred to the third vessel, the 400-ton *Concepción*, and allocated one hundred soldiers.[139] If he were to encounter

[134] Markham, *the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa*, pp. 244-46.
[135] Sarmiento de Gamboa (ed., Rosenblat, Á), *Viajes al estrecho de Magallanes*, vol. I, Buenos Aires, 1950. p. 230. My thanks to Professor Carla Rahn-Phillips for drawing attention to the work.
[136] AGI Contratación 2933, unfoliated, Relación de los maravedíes que de resto de sus sueldos se deuen a la gente de guerra y mar de la Armada de su Magestad General Diego Flores que el año pasado de mill y quinientos ochenta y quarto vino del estrecho de Magallanes.
[137] AGS GyM 171, f.202.
[138] Markham, *the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, p. 250.
[139] Ibid., pp. 253-56.

the English, or any other interloper in those waters, he was instructed to attack.[140] On 13 January 1583, Flores departed for the Strait, while Eguino, Cuéllar and Rada bore northwards.

Eleven days later the English galleons were discovered, moored in the harbour at San Vicente. They were under the command of Captain Edward Fenton.[141] He had departed from England in May 1582 with an expedition that consisted of two hundred and thirty men in four ships. The flagship *Leicester* was a galleon of four hundred tons, carrying forty two pieces of artillery, the *Edward Bonaventure*, a galleon of two hundred and thirty tons, similarly armed, and two lesser vessels, the *Elizabeth*, and the *Francis*. The expedition was well-armed and supplied but lacked capable direction by its commanding officer. Fenton sailed first to the Cape Verde Islands and then made for the coast of Sierra Leone where he dallied until the end of September. In an encounter with Portuguese merchants he learned of a French expedition that had sailed for Brazil, and that Diego Flores had departed from Spain with his fleet for the Strait of Magellan.[142] Furthermore, it was known that Flores had not reached the Strait, but had been forced to winter at Rio de Janeiro. This was encouraging news for Fenton's men, who believed 'that they could pass through the Strait while Flores was wintering…'[143] Consequently, they resolved to make a run for the Strait of Magellan.[144]

On the morning of 1 December the expedition, now reduced to three vessels, reached the coast of Brazil. Landfall was made on the southern tip of Santa Catalina. Shortly afterwards, a small coastal trader bearing southwards was intercepted, from whose crew the English learned that Flores, with sixteen vessels, had departed for the Straits of Magellan, six weeks earlier.[145] This news left them with a dilemma about how to proceed. In a council the majority felt that it would not be possible to pass through the Straits without encountering the Spanish Fleet. Yet, they felt confident enough to press ahead. It was resolved that before attempting the passage of the Strait they would 'revictuall and furnish themselves either in the River Plate or, at San Vicente.' Following the advice of a Portuguese sailor, who cautioned against attempting to navigate the River Plate estuary in ships as large as the *Leicester* and *Edward Bonaventure*, Fenton decided to make for San

[140] Hakluyt R., *Principal Navigations*, vol. 11, p. 193-4; also, Markham, *The Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, pp. 253-6. Sarmiento claimed that Flores attempted to sabotage the expedition by claiming that the three vessels were no longer sea worthy and bribed the captains to support him.
[141] Taylor, E.G.R., *The Troublesome Voyage of Captain Edward Fenton 1582-83*, Cambridge, 1957.
[142] Taylor, *The Troublesome Voyage*, pp. 105, 203.
[143] Ibid., testimony of Juan Pérez (Richard Carter), pp. 234-35.
[144] Ibid., p. 110.
[145] Ibid., pp. 232-33.

Vicente.[146] Only the galleons reached the southern Brazilian port, as the bark *Francis* parted company shortly afterwards, making for the River Plate instead.[147]

Fenton's galleons entered the harbour on Sunday 20 January 1583, and remained there throughout the next four days as repeated attempts were made with locals to engage in trade. Despite Fenton's entreaties, local governor, Gerónimo Leitón, was reluctant. The large, heavily armed galleons caused anxiety. He explained that, as the Portuguese were now subject to the king of Spain, he had received specific orders not to engage with any French or English ships that might land on the coast. They had been warned of an English expedition making for the southern seas, and believed it to be Fenton's. Given the presence of the Spanish fleet in these waters, and their expected return to San Vicente in order to resupply, he refused permission to trade.[148]

A tense stand-off ensued as Fenton repeatedly sought to negotiate. Local anxieties were further heightened when he dispatched some of his crew ashore, to a strand adjacent to San Vicente, to wash clothes and carry out routine repairs to caskets and rigging. Damaged masts from both ships were dismantled and brought ashore. Fenton himself went to the strand in order to erect a forge and oven.[149] By doing so without Leitón's permission, locals suspected the English intended to take the town. They had anchored opposite two stone houses on the edge of the town, which Leitón later claimed, he believed, Fenton wished to convert into a fortified position to dominate the town.[150] This was the situation when Eguino's flotilla arrived at the harbour entrance at about four o'clock on the afternoon of 24 January.

The sudden appearance of three Spanish warships took the English wholly by surprise. This was not anticipated, as Fenton assumed that all of Flores' fleet would be at the Strait. It was immediately obvious to the Spaniards that the English galleons were not in a ready state for combat. Both were lacking masts and rigging, and most of their crews were on land. According to one witness, Pedro de Espinosa:

> 'entraron las dichas tres naos en el puerto de San Vicente y luego que entraron descubrieron en el dos galeones yngleses que estavan surtos y desaperejadas sin gavias y sin mastillos muy desaperçebidos y a lo que pareció después de aver dado fondo los dichos tres nabíos de armada que tenían la gente en tierra porque se enbarcaron seis o siete bateladas de yngleses que estaban en tierra.'[151]

[146] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. XI, p. 188.
[147] Taylor, *The Troublesome Voyage*, p. 120.
[148] Ibid., pp. 126-27.
[149] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, Vol. XI, p. 193.
[150] AGI Patronato 266, R.45, Andrés de Eguino,contador:encuentro con el corsario inglés, 1583.
[151] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question II, testimony of Pedro de Espinosa, 'The three ships entered the port of San Vicente, and on entry they discovered there two English galleons anchored and unrigged;

Captain Cuéllar later claimed he believed their capture would be a mere formality, given their state of disrepair, and the absence of crew from the galleons. Conditions appeared ideal; it was a bright sunny day, there was a tail wind blowing, and a high tide in the bay.[152] He described how he was eager to engage with the English and had the *Concepción* made ready for combat. However, Andrés de Eguino in the flagship *San Juan Bautista*, adopted a more cautious approach, ordering the three ships to drop anchor, and instructed Cuéllar, 'on pain of death', not to break the formation or to engage the English: 'me mando muchas beces publicamente con pena de la vida que diese fondo y no pasase más adelante'.[153]

At dusk (about 6-6.30pm) a council of war was convened on the *San Juan Bautista*, which Cuéllar attended, along with Rodrigo de Rada and other officers, including Captain Esteban de las Alas, who was also on the *Concepción* at this time.[154] It was agreed that the flagship *San Juan* would take the English flagship (*Galleon Leicester*), that Cuéllar's *Concepción* would tackle the vice-flag (*Edward Bonaventure*), with Captain Rodrigo de Rada and the *Begoña*, held in reserve. The attack commenced around nine o'clock, but by then the Spaniards had lost the element of surprise. The English had returned to their ships and were perpared for a fight. Moreover, weather conditions had changed; the wind had dropped, it was raining, and the tide had begun to ebb, making it necessary for the each vessel to deploy their skiffs, with teams of rowers, in order to tow them to their allotted positions. As Eguino's *San Juan* began to close with the *Galleon Leicester*, it was caught in strong eddies created by the discharge of the River Santos that emptied into the bay, so that the rowers could no longer force a passage. The San Juan's anchors were dropped. A brief verbal exchange ensued as the English demanded the Spaniards to identify themselves. When indicated they were from the Spanish fleet and sought to come alongside, the English began to cannonade the *San Juan*.[155]

Cuéllar's ship, the *Concepción*, following Eguino's, now had its progress impeded by the flagship. As it attempted to skirt around the *San Juan*, it was caught in the same swirling current and began to lose direction. The two lead Spanish ships began to

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without topsails and masts. Very unready, it appeared, because, after the three [Spanish] warships anchored, the people they had on land were embarked in six or seven skiffs [back to the galleons].

[152] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question III, testimony of Juan Rodríguez de Aguilera (pilot), 'De la tercera pregunta dixo que save que quando entró el dicho Andrés de Guino en el dicho puerto con las dichas tres naos pudo llegar de echo sin parar a embestir a el dicho enemigo por entrar como entró en el dicho puerto con biento en popa fresco.'

[153] Ibid., Deposition of Captain Cuéllar, 'He [Eguino] ordered me publicly, many times, on pain of death to drop anchor and not to pass ahead.'

[154] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question VIII, testimony of Captain Esteban de las Alas, 'De la Otava pregunta dixo que sabe y bio este testigo que aquella mesma tarde bien tarde el dicho contador Andrés de Guino hizo junta de capitanes y los llamó a su nao capitana donde acordó con ellos.'

[155] Ibid., Question VII, testimony of Juan de Esquivel.

impede one another. Alonso Moreno, a soldier on the *Concepción* claimed he heard the pilot of the *San Juan* yelling urgent instructions to the *Concepción* to drop anchor for fear that the English might set them alight: 'le dieron boces de la dicha nao capitana que el parece a este testigo fue el piloto diziendole dad fondo dad fondo por que nos quemaran estos perros')[156] The anchor was dropped and the *Concepción* came to rest in a position behind the *San Juan,* on its starboard side, away from the English galleons.[157] While it was possible for Cuéllar's soldiers to sweep the English decks with volleys of gunfire, he was unable to direct the ship's cannons against the enemy, screened as it was by the *San Juan*. The *Concepción* would remain isolated in this position for the rest of the night.

The encounter developed into a hard fought battle that continued into the following day. The Spanish ships took a heavy pounding from the English cannon, resulting in the loss of the *Begoña*, later that night, which sank after it was raked with cannon shot from the English galleons. With the two lead Spanish ships unable to close and grapple with the English galleons, Rodrigo de Rada had brought the *Begoña* forward to support the *San Juan*. Smaller and lighter than the other two vessels, the *Begoña* displayed greater manoeuvrability under the circumstances, and proved able to get in among the English. A sailor on the *Edward* described the 'vice-admirall' (*Begoña*) making towards the *Edward* before attempting to engage the *Leicester*, which had slipped its anchor to adjust its position. The guns of the *Edward* then opened up on the *Begoña* and 'to the other two that rid styll ahed of us.'[158] According to Fenton 'the fight grew hot on both sides and the Admirall (*San Juan*) and vice-admirall (*Begoña*) ready to board me divers times.[159] The *Begoña*, in its efforts to grapple with the *Leicester* became isolated between the two English galleons and found itself exposed to the full brunt of their cannon.[160] Luke Ward on the *Edward* concentrated his guns on the *Begoña*, and poured shot into it 'till I thought our powder spent in vaine to shoot at him, he was so torn, and broken down by us.'[161] Pierced at the waterline, the *Begoña* began to sink. As the stricken vessel settled on the bottom, those who were able to, made for the shore by swimmong or in the ship's boats. Submerged in ten fathoms, only its superstructure remained above water.[162]

About four in the morning, torrential downpours reduced visibility to zero, halting the fight temporarily until dawn, when the cannonade resumed. The English sought

[156] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question V, Juan de Guerta, 'they were shouting from the said flagship, it appeared to this witness that it was the pilot, yelling 'anchor, anchor, or these dogs will burn us!''
[157] Ibid., Question VII, testimony of Juan de Esquivel.
[158] Taylor, *The Troublesome Voyage*, pp. 263-65.
[159] Ibid, p. 269.
[160] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question VIII, testimonies of Juan de Esquivel and Cristóbal de Muro.
[161] Hakluyt, *Principal navigations*, Vol.XI, pp. 194-95.
[162] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XII, testimonies of Juan Rodríguez de Aguilera, Diego González Mazagan, and Juan de la Peña; Markham, *the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, p. 269.

to escape to open water. But, in order to do so, they had to manoeuvre away from their existing position deep within the harbour. Fenton arranged that the *Edward* would 'goe first and anker on their [the Spaniards] quarter.' The Leicester 'would follow, and anker on their bowes.'[163] Thereby they hoped to fully exploit their superior firepower. However, the English now found it was their turn to have their plans frustrated by conditions in the bay. The *Edward*, caught by the current, was unable to position itself where it intended. On the *Leicester*, the crew struggled with an anchor which had become snagged, and so failed to move into its allotted position. In the meantime, Cuéllar's *Concepcion* managed to extricate itself from behind the *San Juan* and was able to bring its guns into play.[164] Both Spanish ships directed their fire against the *Edward*, and another artillery duel commenced which continued in to the afternoon. With the *Leicester* immobile due to its snagged anchor, the *Edward* bore the brunt of the exchange. According to skipper, Luke Ward: 'There rid I alone, spending shot at them, and they both at me, foure houres, before our admiralls anker would come up, during which time I had some spoile done; but when our admirall came, she had her part, and eased me very well.'[165]

During this phase of the fight the *Concepción* was able to deploy its cannons to good effect. Two soldiers (Cristóbal de Muro on the *San Juan*, and Francisco Alonso on the *Concepción*) both noted musicians playing onboard one of the English ships. Alonso described how one chain-shot from the *Concepción* smashed on to the deck, killing three of them as well as six others, causing the music cease abruptly.[166] Another chain-shot was described ripping into the poop deck of the English 'flagship' (*Leicester*), damaging its upper works.[167]

Around midday the *Leicester* disengaged, withdrawing to the mouth of the harbour, leaving the *Edward* to fight alone. The crew of the *Edward* later accused those on the *Leicester* of being too inebriated to fight: 'the men of the galleon [*Leicester*] were droncke with a hogshead of wyne they had drancke, in the heat of the fight.[168] However, it also became apparent that *Edward* had sustained significant damage, and was in difficulty. It had lost its main spar, and had been holed a number of times at the waterline, and had begun to list to one side. As a result it could no longer use its cannons effectively.[169] Seeing a skiff depart from the *Edward* it appeared as if the English were abandoning ship. Cuéllar regarded this as an opportune moment to to take the enemy vessel by a boarding action. He hailed

[163] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, vol. XI, p. 196.
[164] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIII, testimonies of Tomás de Bareño and Cristóbal de Muro.
[165] Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations*, Vol. XI, p. 196.
[166] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIII, testimonies of Francisco Alonso and Cristóbal de Muro.
[167] Ibid., Question XIII, testimony of Juan de la Peña.
[168] Taylor, *The Troublesome Voyage*, p. 260.
[169] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIII, testimony of Juan de Guerta; Question XIV, testimony of Juan Rodríguez de Aguilera.

Andrés de Eguino to request permission, crying: 'señor contador aora el tiempo que bamos a abordar a el enemigo que está rrendido.'[170] Eguino allegedly declined, replying 'aora ya no es tiempo' ('now is not the time'), arguing that there was no longer sufficient depth of water in the ebbing tide to allow their ships to reach the enemy.[171] The *Edward* continued to face the Spanish ships for another hour, until its skiffs managed to tow it to the mouth of the harbour, where it rejoined the *Leicester*.[172]

While the Spaniards bickered, Gerónimo Leitón, watching from San Vicente, dispatched a canoe to Eguino with an offer of war canoes and men to assist in capturing the English galleon. Again, Eguino demurred, on the grounds that both the *San Bautista* and *Concepción* had sustained such damage that they would be in danger of sinking should they pursue the English into deep water.[173] He forbade Cuéllar from pursuing the English alone.[174] Instead, he requested Leitón to supply some pilots to guide them upriver to Santos in order to repair their damage in greater safety.[175] Cuéllar protested vociferously, believing it was still possible capture or sink the damaged English galleon. However, as soon as the pilots arrived the two Spanish ships withdrew, leaving the English unopposed.

Nothing further transpired. The following day, the English, having hastily patched up their damage, departed. In fact, Fenton aborted his expedition altogether and returned to England. He was subsequently placed under arrest by the queen for having returned without any profits.[176] At Santos in the aftermath, Cuéllar and Eguino engaged in a heated quarrel over the conduct of the engagement. Cuéllar blamed Eguino for squandering the advantages they had at the outset by acting too cautiously, pointing out that most of the English were ashore when they had first arrived in the harbour. On the other hand, Eguino accused Cuéllar of dereliction of duty by staying out of the firing line during the first night of the battle, by deliberately hiding behind his ship (*San Juan Bautista*). This, he contended, led to

[170] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIV, testimony of Tomás de Bareño, 'y que a este tiempo este testigo oyó a el dicho capitán Francisco de Cuéllar dezir más de diez veces aboces llamando a el dicho contador que todos le entendieron diziendole ''señor contador aora el tiempo que bamos a abordar a el enemigo que está rrendido.'' All of the witnesses questioned agreed that Cuéllar shouted words to this effect.
[171] Ibid, Question XIII, testimony of Juan de Guerta; Question XIV, testimonies of Juan Rodríguez de Aguilera and Tomás de Bareño.
[172] Ibid., Question XIV, testimony of Cristóbal de Muro.
[173] AGI Patronato 266, R. 45, San Vicente tribunal, Question IX, 'Yten, si sauen que la dicha nao capitana del dicho Andrés de Eguino, al tiempo que el enemigo se fue, quedó del mucho numero de valaços desaparejada de xarcia que se la cortaron toda y abierta por muchas partes por la lumbre del agua pasados ambos costados de tal manera que haziendose a la vela y salido del puerto se fuera al fondo y lo saven los testigos porque lo bieron.
[174] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Deposition of Captain Cuéllar; Question XV, testimony of Juan de Esquivel.
[175] Ibid., Question XV, testimonies of Juan Gudial and Tomás de Bareño.
[176] *CSP Spain*, III, p. 492.

the loss of the third Spanish ship (*Nuestra Señora de Begoña*) and the escape of the English. The upshot of this dispute led to Cuéllar's arrest on charges of insubordination. He and the pilot of the *Concepción* were incarcerated while command of the ship was given to Captain Rodrigo de Rada, who had survived the sinking of the *Begoña*. What transpired degenerated into a bitter legal battle.

Three tribunals resulted; the first was convened in Santos at Eguino's request. The results of which were used by Eguino to pin the blame for the loss of the Begoña on Cuéllar. Counter charges were brought against Eguino by Cuéllar. Later in the year, at Salvador, Diego Flores chaired an inquiry, but reserved judgement. Instead, he declared that the case should be heard by the Council of the Indies on the expedition's return to Spain. When that transpired the following year, Cuéllar immediately applied to the *Casa de Contratación* in Seville to have testimony on his behalf heard by a *Casa* judge, before the transfer of case documentation to Madrid. Ultimately, the case appears to have been finally resolved when Cuéllar was allowed to present himself before the Council of the Indies in Madrid, in September 1584. While the legal wrangle has been glossed over here, the vicissitudes of that case are dealt with in detail in Chapter Five (see pp. 169-78).

Unsuccessful in his attempt to enter the Strait of Magellan, Diego Flores returned to Brazil with the main expedition in April. He reached San Vicente convinced that Sarmiento's plan to settle the Straits was futile in the extreme: 'saying that it was impossible that it could be done, that Pedro Sarmiento was desperate, and that if he had known what that navigation was [like], although his Majesty had offered all he possessed, he would not have taken charge of it.'[177] His arrival in the port relieved Cuéllar's from his incarceration. However, he was not restored to command of the *Concepción*. Instead, he was transferred to the flagship, *San Cristóbal*. The fleet proceeded to Rio de Janeiro, arriving in early May, where it met with a relief convoy that had recently arrived from Spain. Diego de Alçega, commander of the flotilla, carried letters from the king for both Flores and Sarmiento. Sarmiento was encouraged to persist in his endeavors. With the addition of fresh provisions and extra ships, another attempt to reach the Strait was made feasible. Flores' correspondence informed of a French expedition thought to be heading for the Strait, but local intelligence indicated that French ships had landed in the Paraiba district of northeastern Brazil. In June, Flores departed for Salvador where the new governor-general, Manuel Telles Barreto, convinced him to participate in a joint expedition against the French. Local seasonal weather patterns dictated, however, that the enterprise could not be launched until March of the following year. Sarmiento remained in Rio with five ships and three hundred troops, to make another attempt, to complete the enterprise. He finally established his

[177] Markham, *the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, pp. 276-77.

colony in February 1584. But the environment proved too extreme. The settlement was short-lived and the fortifications were never constructed. Three years later one single survivor of Sarmiento's colony was picked up by a passing ship.

By early 1584, Governor Barreto had assembled a land-based force of over 3,000 men with which to descend on Paraiba. The Spanish ships were to provide the amphibious wing of a two-pronged assault aimed at eliminating the French and destroying the power of their allies, the Potiguar tribe. A successful military campaign would mark the onset of a new Portuguese expansion into the previously unsettled northeast.[178] Cuéllar later stated that he participated in the action in Paraiba: 'se halló allá en la conquista y entrepresa del puerto de la Parayba que es en la dicha costa del Brasil, el qual dicho puerto estaba ocupado de franceses que lo tenían muchos años atrás abía [sic] fortifciado y puesto en defensa como cosa suya.'[179] He most likely witnessed the action from the deck of the *San Cristóbal*.

Flores had five ships and two Portuguese vessels leant to him by the governor-general. Five French ships were discovered, wholly unprepared for a confrontation. Unlike at San Vicente, this operation was a success. One French ship managed to escape, but the other four were beached having their hulls careened. The Spaniards succeeded in capturing one of those intact, but the French set the other three alight before fleeing inland with their Indian allies. When local land forces arrived, Flores had the site fortified and named *Filipeia* in honour of Philip II. A company of Spanish troops was posted to the fort to bolster a mostly Portuguese garrison.[180] With the French routed Flores regarded his mission in Brazil as complete. He departed for Spain, while Governor Barreto pursued his campaign against the Potiguar. In July 1584, Flores brought seven vessels (including all five of the Indies Guard vessels) into Cádiz Bay. In August, Cuéllar presented his testimony to the Casa de Contratación, in Seville. The *Casa* forwarded his case to the Council of the Indies in Madrid. While no definitive judgement in the case emerged, it appears that Cuéllar was exonerated (see pp. 178-79).

Madrid and the Azores Voyage, 1584-87

Following their return to Spain, Cuéllar and most of the 'Magallanes' captains went to Madrid where they would spend almost three years unemployed at court. In his article, Rafael Girón suggested that throughout this time (1584-88) Cuéllar served

[178] Marley, D., *Wars of the Americas: A chronology of armed conflict in the new world*, p. 72.
[179] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, relación de servicios, 31 March 1604 (see Appendix Eight), 'And he was present there at the conquest and enterprise in the port of Paraiba, which is on the said coast of Brazil. The said port was occupied by French which many years earlier had been fortified and defended as if it were their possession.'
[180] Marley, D., *Wars of the Americas: A chronology of armed conflict in the new world*, p.72.

under the Marqués de Santa Cruz.[181] But this was incorrect. There is ample documentation that places him in Madrid until June 1587, when he was assigned to Lisbon. Cuéllar was initially bound up in litigation against Andrés de Eguino, but after the case was settled he joined his colleagues in petitioning the crown for wage arrears and new commissions in the fleets. This process descended into a tortuous administrative wrangle in the Council of the Indies as they sought remission of three years' salary earned in Brazil (see pp. 148-51). Throughout this period he had no income and was forced to seek a welfare payment (*ayuda de costa*) of 100 escudos so that he could feed and clothe himself.

In the broader political sphere, the years following the annexation of Portugal witnessed an escalation of tensions between Spain and England until conflict erupted in 1585. The Elizabethan regime had sought to counteract the alarming growth of Spanish power by covert assistance to Dutch rebels and unofficial endorsement of English corsair activity by the likes of Drake in Spanish territory. But by the mid-1580s posturing would descend into open aggression. Spain had already demonstrated the ability to respond robustly to threats in the Indies with expeditions such as the Magallanes assignment. But this paled by comparison with the demonstration of power displayed during the confrontation in the Azores with French-backed Portuguese rebels who refused to acknowledge Philip II as king. A powerful French fleet was defeated in the islands in 1582, which paved the way for a successful ground invasion of the main island, Terceira, the following year. It was an important strategic victory for Spain in the Atlantic, and vital for the security of the treasure fleets. Combined with a succession of victories for the Duke of Parma in the Low Countries, the possibility of Spanish ascendancy in European affairs was becoming an ominous prospect to Philip's opponents.

In 1585, the Duke of Parma captured Antwerp after a year-long siege. The situation facing the Dutch appeared critical; this prompted Elizabeth I to authorise substantial English military assistance under the Earl of Leicester. She then sanctioned Francis Drake to lead a powerful fleet to attack Spanish territory, first in Galicia, and afterwards in the Caribbean, where he laid waste to the towns of Santo Domingo and Cartagena de Indias. This served as a de facto declaration of war. Philip II became convinced that an enterprise against England was necessary for the long-term security of his interests in Europe and the Americas. Initial consultations with senior strategists, led to the formulation, in the summer of 1586, of a draft plan to land troops in England.[182] The Marquis of Santa Cruz was given the task of assembling a fleet at Lisbon destined to transport troops and a siege train, with a projected timetable to launch the invasion sometime in the second half of 1587.

[181] Girón de Pascual, 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar', p. 1053.
[182] Parker, *The Grand Strategy*, pp. 179-203.

By the summer of 1587, Cuéllar and his colleagues had been at court in Madrid for nigh on three years. In May, after advice from the Council of War, the King agreed to allocate positions for Cuéllar and six other Magallanes captains in the fleet at Lisbon, commensurate with the status or rank of each individual.[183] This initiative appears to be the context for Cuéllar's initial assignment to the Enterprise of England. On 21 June, he was awarded a commission (*cédula*) to serve as an *entretenido* (staff officer) under the Marquis of Santa Cruz.[184] His colleagues (Juan Gutiérrez de Garibay, Hernando Ortega Moreson, Gonzalo Meléndez, Alonso de las Alas, Pedro de Eguino, and Pedro de Esquivel) were also dispatched to Lisbon in this manner, at the same time.[185] Three weeks later, Cuéllar arrived at Lisbon, where preparations for the invasion were in disarray. Drake's notorious raid on Cádiz, his 'singeing the King of Spain's beard', had destroyed around 25 vessels and copious supplies assembled for the fleet. Drake then spent the next month or so, marauding on the Portuguese coast before sailing into the Atlantic, ostensibly in search of the incoming treasure fleet.[186] While he remained in Iberian waters traffic in and out of Lisbon was reduced to a trickle for fear of capture by the English. Preparations for the fleet consequently stalled.

Santa Cruz, meanwhile, hastily put together a task force (37 vessels and 5,000 troops) from ships already assembled at Lisbon. In July, he embarked for the Azores to rendezvous with the treasure fleet, and if possible, to intercept Drake. The safe return of that years's treasure fleet was of paramount importance as the silver remittances were essential to financing the enterprise. Cuéllar, among 149 other *entretenidos* assigned to the fleet, embarked on the Portuguese galleon, *San Luis*.[187] The task force reached the Azores without incident, and without sighting Drake's squadron. Documents indicate that while the fleet waited about the island of Terceira for word of the incoming *flota*, Cuéllar disembarked briefly in the port of Angra.[188] On 26 August, ninety-three vessels of the combined New Spain and Tierra Firme convoys and the escort galleons under Alvaro Flores rendezvoused with Santa Cruz. In total, the convoy was carrying seventeen million escudos of treasure: twelve million in private remittances and five million for the royal treasury.[189] With minimal delay Santa Cruz departed for Spain two days later.[190] As a precaution, he left Juan Martínez de Recalde in the Azores with ten vessels and instructions to await the appearance of returning Portuguese East Indiamen.

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[183] AGS GyM, 208, f.350, Lo que su Magestad resolvió en Aranjuez a 22 de Mayo 1587 sobre las consultas del Consejo de Guerra que aqui van.
[184] AGS GyM 206, f.273.
[185] Ibid., f.277.
[186] See Mattingly, G., *The Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, London, 1959, pp. 110-26.
[187] AGS Contaduría del Sueldo, Series 2, 278 pt 1, f.641.
[188] Ibid.
[189] AGS Gym 201, f.166.
[190] AGS GyM 214, f.111.

The treasure ships were safely conveyed to Sanlúcar, and Santa Cruz returned to Lisbon on 28 October. After three months at sea vessels required substantial repairs and refit, while the crews needed respite and rest. Juan Martínez de Recalde, when he arrived, believed the task would require at least two months.[191] In November, heavy gales lashed Lisbon, inflicting even further damage on ships and the loss of others. Any hopes that may have been entertained of launching an invasion of England in 1587, had been dashed. In December, with sickness spreading among units that were still embarked on their vessels, Santa Cruz received permission from the King to downgrade the fleet, and dispatch troops to winter quarters.

The Enterprise of England 1587-88

While the logistical effort continued in Lisbon throughout the winter, Cuéllar and the other Magallanes captains were overlooked for command of vessels. Instead, they were assigned to the *Veeduría General*, the central planning office which co-ordinated logistical operations for the fleet.[192] Effectively, this placed them under the jurisdiction of Inspector General Jorge Manrique. However, discontent with their lot apparently escalated into a minor controversy in Lisbon. It seems by the end of 1587, a cloud of doubt hung over the future participation of Captain Cuéllar and his colleagues in the coming Armada campaign. Dissatisfied with their 'pen-pushing' roles, Cuéllar and his colleagues evidently approached Santa Cruz seeking assignments more befitting their rank. Unwilling to accede to their requests, Santa Cruz cautioned them to resume their duties, or to forfeit the commissions. When they refused to do so, Santa Cruz, temporarily at least, annulled the commissions. It seems the captains may have set out for Madrid in the hope of having them reinstated by royal intercession. In a letter to the King in November, Santa Cruz explained the situation, and asked the king to make an example of them should they approach the court: 'A los siete capitanes de Magallanes que de aqui llevaron entretenimientos, no les señalo galeones quando llegaron porque estavan a proveídos. Aora, se los a señalado por ser de su profesión no lo an querido açeptar, y aunque les ha hecho dar que si no servían en aquello, les haría borrar sus plaças. No lo quisieron hazer, y por esta causa les ha borrado las plaças ydo pedidolos y que si acudieren por acá se haga demostración con ellos.'[193]

[191] AGS 202, f.171.
[192] AGS GyM 199, f.85.
[193] AGS GyM, 203, f.38, Santa Cruz to Philip II, 14 November 1587, Lisbon, 'The seven Magallanes captains who arrived here with commissions were not assigned galleons when they arrived because they had been provided for [with positions in the Veeduría General]. Now, they have indicated that being of their profession [captains of warships] they have not wanted to accept [the positions in the Veeduría General], and although I have informed them that if they did not serve in that [Veeduría General] I would have their commissions cancelled, they did not wish to do so, and for this reason their commissions have been annulled.'

Unfortunately, nothing more about this dispute has surfaced. We do not know how the King responded, but the captains, including Cuéllar, ultimately resumed their duties. They were at fault, yet there is nothing in Cuéllar's financial records to suggest that he was sanctioned at this time. Whatever transpired, it would seem that a resolution was reached in short order, possibly by referral to judicial officers assigned to the fleet. In the spring Cuéllar was tasked with mobilising infantry companies from winter quarters to their designated vessels. By then, the Duke of Medina Sidonia had been appointed commander, following the death, in February, of Santa Cruz. When the fleet finally set out, at the end of May, it comprised 130 vessels, with upwards of 30,000 soldiers and sailors.

By the time the Armada departed from La Corunna Cuéllar had been placed in charge of the galleon *San Pedro* (squadron of Castile). This squadron actually comprised the Indies Guard, renamed, and transferred to the Armada under the command of Diego Flores de Valdés (once again) to supplement the number of warships. It had been earmarked for Lisbon on its return from the Indies the previous year, but had been kept in Andalusia until April, to disguise the fact. When the fleet set sail from Lisbon Cuéllar had no defined role on the galleon, but during a reshuffle of personnel in the squadron at La Coruña, he was given command. By then, three others of the Magallanes captains were also in charge of galleons of the Castile squadron: Juan Gutiérrez Garibay (*Nuestra Señora de Begoña*), Gregorio de las Alas (*San Cristóbal*), Marcos de Aramburu (*San Juan Bautista*).

Very briefly, the plan of campaign, as ordained by the King, required the Armada to unite with elite troops under Parma in Flanders. They were to spearhead the invasion of England, with the fleet in a supporting role. In order to complete his mission, Medina Sidonia would have to negotiate waters controlled by the enemy, whose warships were better designed and better armed. The fleet was expected to sail to the Flanders coastline, on which Spanish forces did not possess a port adequate for receiving its heavy shipping. However, Parma's small troop barges could not leave port due to a close blockade by Dutch warships. This became a key stumbling block which would ultimately decide the outcome of the enterprise. Martín de Bertendona, commander of the Levant squadron, regarded the English warships as superior in armament and design. Adding these factors to the flaws of the Spanish campaign plan, he confessed 'we are sailing against England in the confident hope of a miracle.'[194]

If a draft of the projected battle formation reflected Medina Sidonia's dispositions in the English Channel, then Cuéllar's ship was assigned to the right wing, which consisted of twenty vessels under the command of Juan Martínez de Recalde, vice-

[194] Quoted in Parker and Martin, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 128.

admiral of the fleet.[195] The *San Pedro* was one of a number of principal warships on that wing, which included three Portuguese galleons; Recalde's *San Juan*, the *San Felipe*, and *San Mateo*; the *Santa María de La Rosa* (squadron of Guipúzcoa), and the *Gran Grifón* (squadron of the Hulks). They were subsequently part of an enlarged rear-guard of forty-three fighting-ships when the formation was reorganised.[196] Although the *San Pedro* is not mentioned in surviving reports of the fighting, it is likely that it was involved in the action that occurred in the vicinity of the ships mentioned above. In the *Carta*, Cuéllar mentioned that the San Pedro was heavily engaged in combat: 'en todas las ocasiones y rencuentros que tubimos con la armada del enemigo, de las quales salía siempre el galeón que yo llebaba muy maltratado, y muerta y herida mucha gente en él.'[197]

Ultimately, the 'Enterprise of England' failed to complete its objective. While Medina Sidonia got to within twenty miles of Dunkirk, he was unable to 'join hands' with Parma. The fleet was scattered by fire-ships at Calais, and the dispersed elements were then attacked by the English fleet off the Flemish port of Gravelines. Although they succeeded in regaining the formation, the fleet was driven into the North Sea, preventing any possibility of a rendezvous with Parma's invasion force. Any prospect of returning to the Narrow Seas was lost as prevailing winds blew it northwards towards Scotland. In total, the Spanish fleet lost six warships in action against the English, and many other vessels received substantial damage. It was left to the senior commanders to attempt to preserve the fleet, its crews and soldiers, and to return to La Corunna via the Atlantic route. As the Armada withdrew from the Channel, the English fleet maintained a close pursuit. As Cuéllar ruefully admitted: 'no sé como lo diga, se yba el armada del enemigo a nuestra cola hasta hecharnos de sus tierras.'[198] By then Cuéllar had been court-martialled and removed to the *Lavia*. Discussion of his court-martial (the first part of the *Carta*) is omitted from this section, but the affair will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. In the meantime, sailing instructions were issued, and the train of events that led to his shipwreck in Ireland were set in motion.

[195] Pierson, *Commander of the Armada*, p. 240.
[196] *CSP Spain*, IV, pp. 396-97.
[197] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'in all of the encounters which we had with the enemy fleet, in which the galleon I commanded was always badly damaged, with many dead and wounded.'
[198] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'I don't know how else to put it - the enemy's fleet kept on our tail until we were chased right away from his country [England].'

Chapter Two

Ireland: Among Savages 1588-89

> Creo se admirará Vuestra Merced viendo esta carta, por la poca seguridad que se puede aver tenido de que yo soy vibo [...] que Dios me a traydo a estos estados de Flandes, donde llegué abrá doce días con los españoles que escaparon de las naos que se perdieron en Irlanda y Escoçia y Setelanda, que fueron más de beinte, los mayores del Armada, en las quales benía mucha gente de infantería muy lucida, muchas capitanes, y alférez, maesos de campo y otros oficiales de guerra, muchos caballeros y otros mayorazgos, de todos los quales, que serían más de docientos, no escaparon cinco cabales, porque murieron aogados, y los que nadando pudieron benir en tierra, fueron hechos pedaços por mano de los ingleses que de guarnición tiene la reyna en el reyno de Irlanda.[199]

With these lines Captain Cuéllar began to recount his story of survival following shipwreck in County Sligo in September 1588. Of the many accounts that chronicled the ill-fated campaign of 1588, the Carta is one of the most remarkable. Much of the surviving documentation pertaining to the enterprise consists of letters, diaries or reports written at the time, or immediately afterwards. What sets the *Carta* apart is its difference. There are only fleeting references to the clashes with the English fleet. Instead, Cuéllar related events that occurred in the aftermath of the Battle of Gravelines, which led to his court-martial. By then, the Armada campaign was over as a military enterprise and the fleet had been blown into the North Sea. The sole remaining objective of the Duke of Medina Sidonia was to get the fleet back to Spain. When he composed the *Carta*, Cuéllar was at Antwerp. A year had passed since the return voyage had ended in catastrophe for so many Armada vessels on the west coast of Ireland. Thousands had lost their lives in what is considered the worst maritime tragedy to occur in Irish coastal waters.[200] Cuéllar was amongst those lucky enough to escape. He had since reached Dunkirk and had been inducted into the Spanish Army of Flanders along with many other survivors of vessels lost in Ireland and Scotland. By this time Cuéllar was an experienced professional soldier

[199] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 201, 'I'm sure you'll be amazed to receive this letter as it must have seemed most unlikely that I could still be alive [...] God brought me to these states of Flanders some twelve days ago with the Spaniards who escaped from the ships that were lost in Ireland, Scotland, and Shetland, more than twenty of them, the biggest in the Armada. Aboard these were many distinguished infantrymen, many captains and ensigns, many colonels and other officers, many gentlemen and other sons of noble families, out of all of whom, and there were more than two hundred at a guess, no more than five escaped unharmed; for most drowned, and those who managed to swim ashore were butchered by the English, whom the Queen keeps garrisoned in the Kingdom of Ireland.'

[200] Morgan H., *Shorelines Maritime Encyclopaedia*, forthcoming.

with over a decade of military service to his name, virtually all of which had been served as a marine officer. But his participation in the failed attempt to invade England proved to be a pivotal moment in his career.

By the time the *Lavia* arrived off the Irish coast Cuéllar was an officer in disgrace. On 10 August, two days after the climactic Battle of Gravelines, he had been placed under arrest and was court-martialed by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, on charges of insubordination. Initially, he was sentenced to death, but narrowly avoided execution after a successful appeal to the Judge-Advocate General of the fleet, who adjudicated in his favour (see pp. 186-87). Nevertheless, he remained under arrest and was transferred to the custody of the Judge-Advocate on the *Lavia*. Had the ship returned safely to Spain, Cuéllar may have been incarcerated, or condemned to the galleys. Instead, the ship fell victim to the rigours of the Armada's homeward voyage, and was wrecked, one of around twenty-six Armada vessels lost in Ireland. By an ironic twist of fate, however, shipwreck in Ireland granted Cuéllar his liberty. When he reached the Low Countries a year later, after a rambling trek across Ireland and Scotland, his career resumed along a very different path from that which he had previously followed. Meanwhile, we will pick up the *Carta* narrative at the point at which Cuéllar was transferred to the *Lavia*. The Armada was heading for home with the decision already having been taken by Medina Sidonia to lead the fleet by the Atlantic route, around Scotland and Ireland.

Voyage into the Atlantic

Sailing instructions for the journey back to Spain were circulated throughout the fleet on 13 August. Medina Sidonia cautioned the ships' pilots to avoid the Irish Coast, which was unfamiliar, and considered too hazardous to risk an approach. He warned 'take great heed lest you fall upon the Island of Ireland for fear of the harm that may happen unto you upon that coast.'[201] He expected to make landfall at La Corunna and later dispatched Baltásar de Zúñiga with instructions for the authorities in Galicia to have provisions gathered in preparation for the arrival of the fleet. In the *Carta*, Cuéllar made only a brief reference to the conditions of that voyage, stating:

> ... en la qual fuimos pasando todos grandes peligros de muerte, porque con un temporal que sobrebino se abrió de suerte que cada hora se anegaba con agua, y no la podíamos agotar con las bonbas. No teníamos remedio ni socorro ninguno, si no era el de Dios, porque el duque ya no parecía y toda la armada andaba desbaratada con el temporal.[202]

[201] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 50.
[202] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 203, 'We all found ourselves in terrible danger of death because of a storm which came upon us and opened her up so much that she took in more water every hour than we

The fleet successfully rounded Scotland, more or less intact, but according to Diego López, a soldier on the *Lavia* (company of Captain Rodrigo de Zárate), it had already fallen behind by the time Fair Isle was sighted.[203] A series of storms between 25 August and 3 September caused severe difficulty for many ships.[204] On 3 September, Medina Sidonia counted ninety five sail with the flagship.[205] Until it reached Santander eighteen days later, the flagship maintained contact with an ever diminishing number of sail. Upwards of forty of those that fell adrift ended up in Irish coastal waters, for which Dutch chronicler, Emmanuel Van Meteren, offered an interesting perspective:

> The residue of his [Medina Sidonia's] ships being about forty in number, and committed unto his Vice-Admirall [Juan Martínez de Recalde], fell neerer [sic] with the coast of Ireland, intending their course for Cape Clare [Cabo de Clara], because they hoped there to get fresh water, and to refresh themselves on land.[206]

Recalde's ship (*San Juan*) was one of those to take shelter in Ireland. He spent a number of days at anchor in Blasket Sound while efforts were made to secure fresh supplies of food and water. By then, the *Lavia* was one of those stragglers. Cuéllar claimed that it was joined by two other Levanters 'to help us insofar as they could,' but omitted to mention their names. López named them the *Juliana* and *Santa María de Visón* in a statement he made to officials when he returned to Spain. Other stragglers similarly combined for mutual assistance. The *Trinidad Valencera*, *Barca de Amburg* and *Castillo Negro* all also grouped together. Each appears to have been badly damaged, and leaking water. The *Barca de Amburg* sank in open water, but the crew had time to transfer to the other two vessels before it went under. Subsequently, the *Castillo Negro* disappeared without trace, presumed lost. Only the *Trinidad Valencera* remained afloat. According to Don Beltrán de Salto, it, too, was in danger of sinking. Therefore, a decision was made by the crew to head directly for the nearest land. It reached Kinnagoe Bay, on the northern most stretch of the Inishowen Peninsula, before running aground on a submerged reef. With the assistance of locals most of the crew managed to get ashore before it went down.

Terra Incognita

Dates are conspicuously absent in the *Carta*, and Cuéllar referred only briefly to the *Lavia's* arrival in Irish coastal waters:

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could get rid of with the pumps. There was no way out of this and no help for us, except that of God, because the duke [Medina Sidonia on the flagship, *San Martín*] was not now to be seen anywhere, and the whole Armada was dispersed by the storm.'

[203] AGS GyM 302, f. 29.

[204] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 418.

[205] Ibid., p. 411.

[206] Hakluyt, R., *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, vol. IV, New York, 1904, p. 230.

> Y no pudiendo doblar el Cabo de Clara, en Irlanda, con mal temporal, que sobrebino por la proa, fue forçado benir a tierra con estas tres naos, que, como digo, eran grandísimas, y dar fondo más de media legua de la tierra, donde estubimos quatro días sin probeer nada, ni aun lo sabían hazer.[207]

The identification of Cape Clear was erroneous. The County Cork headland was mentioned as a notable landmark in Medina Sidonia's sailing instructions. It is the most southerly landmark beyond which lay open water, but lacking charts of the Irish coast, positive identification was almost impossible as most of the pilots on the vessels that approached Ireland were unfamiliar with the coastline. Cuéllar evidently confused it with Erris Head, in North Mayo, which forms the south-westerly point of the greater Donegal Bay zone. Diego López identified precisely where in Ireland they had arrived. He stated 'entraron en una cala que llaman Esliga [Sligo].'[208] The *Lavia* and its companions were most likely spotted by locals on 14 September, near the headland of Ardneglass (Aringlass), some 15 miles west of Sligo.[209] Six vessels were observed together, probably the galleass, *Girona*, with two smaller unidentified vessels, and the *Lavia*, *Juliana*, and *Santa María de Visón*. The sheriff of Sligo (George Bingham) was informed how, on the following day, three vessels (the *Girona* and its attendants) followed the coastline across the bay northwards to Killybegs, while the other three (*Lavia, Juliana, Santa María de Visón*) moved to a more sheltered anchorage about Drumcliff bay in the barony of Carbury, close to Sligo harbour.[210]

According to Gaelic sources, two Mac-in-Persuin brothers, Brian and Andrew, and one Cormac O'hAirt (O'Hart) were with the vessels at Sligo.[211] Their presence might be explained by the likelihood of their being local fishermen, taken on board to assist the ships' pilots in unfamiliar waters, rather than having served in the fleet since its departure from Lisbon. The O'Hart connection is interesting. Drumcliff Bay was in O'Hart territory, which centred on the village of Grange, a mile from the coast and around ten north of Sligo. The clan was a prominent family in Carbury and vassal of the O'Connor chieftain, Lord of Sligo. They held a number of castles in the neighbourhood, including Bradcullen, Ardtermon and Lissadell.

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[207] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 204, 'Unable to make it round Cape Clear in Ireland because of the severe gale that sprang up on the bow, we were forced to head for land with these three ships [*Lavia*, *Juliana*, and *Santa María de Visón*] which, as I say, were enormous, and anchor more than half a league from the shore, and we were four days there, without achieving anything, nor did they know what to do.'
[208] AGS GyM 302, f.29. 'they entered a harbour called Sligo [Esliga].'
[209] *CSP Ireland*, IV, Preface p. xv.
[210] Douglas, K., *Downfall of the Spanish Armada*, p. 35.
[211] Hennessy, WM. (ed.), *The Annals of Loch Cé: A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from 1014 to 1590*, vol. II, Dublin, p. 489.

George Bingham forwarded what he had learned to his brother, Sir Richard, who was governor of Connacht. He in turn, included the report with another concerning vessels spotted off County Clare, in a dispatch to the Lord Deputy in Dublin:

> Even now I received this enclosed letter from the sheriff of Thomond, by which Your Lordship shall perceive some further news of strange ships: whether they be of the dispersed fleet which are fled from the supposed overthrow in the Narrow Seas, or new forces come from Spain directly, no man is able to advertise otherwise than by guess, which doth rather show their coming from Spain, both by these falling from the west, and the others which coasted along the north parts of Sligo, but I expect very present news either from the one place or the other, for by all likelihoods they mind to land.[212]

Cuéllar omitted to mention that contact was made with locals. So too, did Diego López. But that he was able to name the locality (*Esliga*) where the *Lavia* touched on the Irish coast implies that at some point he clearly had interactions with locals who told him the name of the location. At least one group was sent ashore to seek out supplies. According to locals who encountered them they claimed to be 'Frenchmen and not Spanish', but this ruse failed to dissuade locals that they were indeed, Spanish.[213] In contrast to what would transpire a few days later when the ships were wrecked, there does not appear to have been any mistreatment of the shore party. Nevertheless, the crews were in a hazardous predicament. Besides a shortage of provisions, the *Juliana*, according to Diego López, appeared to be in danger of sinking. He claimed that its crew was being transferred to the other two ships when the infamous 'great gale' swept over Ireland.[214]

Shipwreck

Although the *Carta* contains a graphic description of the near hurricane-force storm that struck the west coast, and the destruction it wrought, Cuéllar declined to mention when it occurred. Diego López, once again, provided those specifics. He stated the storm occurred 'on the eve of [the feast of] Saint Matthew, 20 September.'[215] Ken Douglas, in his work suggested that during the early part of the day an easterly breeze raised the prospect of reaching open water.[216] This idea appears to be supported by Edward Whyte, a clerk of the Connacht Council, who stated that 'three Spanish ships departed from the harbour of Sligo.'[217] However, they had not yet cleared Erris Head before the weather descended into what Whyte described as 'a most extreme wind and cruel storm, the like whereof hath not been

[212] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 29.
[213] Douglas, K., *Downfall of the Spanish Armada,* p. 36.
[214] AGS GyM 302, f. 29.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Douglas, K., *Downfall of the Spanish Armada*, p. 63.
[217] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 40.

seen or heard a long time.'[218] He too, stated that the storm occurred on 20 September. George Bingham was on the coast at the time, to check out reports of an Armada vessel most likely around Killala Bay (possibly the *Ciervo Volante*). He observed their attempt to depart, and then, caught by the impending gale, being blown back onto the coast:

> Perceiving that the wind changed contrary for the three ships that put out of the said bay [Sligo], and blew so strong a gale that they were like to be returned to the same road again, he [Bingham] made all haste he could back to attend the landing of the men in those ships or wreck of the same.[219]

Captain Beltrán de Salto, who was taken prisoner along with others from the *Trinidad Valencera* compiled a dossier on Armada vessels lost in Ireland while incacerated in Drogheda. His report astated that the *Lavia*, *Juliana* and Santa *María de Visón* were wrecked together: 'la nave *Santa María Bisón*, La nave *Labia*, La nave *Juliana* - se perdieron juntas habiendo estado en esta ysla dadas fondo muchos días por el mal tiempo y por un mal temporal que bino las içó dar al través anegaron todos los capitanes y oficiales que en ellas benían.'[220] Salto's brief report confirms Cuéllar's graphic account of the terrible storm that descended on the west coast: 'Bino tan gran temporal en trabesía, con mar por el cielo, de suerte que que las amarras no pudieron tener ni las belas serbir, y fuimos a enbestir con todas tres naos en una playa llena de arena bien chica, cercados de grandíssimos peñascos de una parte y de otra.'[221] The stricken ships were cast on to Streedagh Strand, a broad, sandy-bottomed, crescent-shaped beach, near the village of Grange, a few miles north of Sligo harbour. Cuéllar claimed that within an hour all three had broken up completely. From a vantage point on the poop deck of the *Lavia* he offered a compelling account of the appalling catastrophe as it unfolded:

> Digo que me puse en el alto de la popa de mi nao, después de aberme encomendado a Dios y a Nuestra Señora, y desde allí me puse a mirar tan grande espetáculo de tristeça: aogarse muchos dentro en las naos; otros, en echándose al agua, irse al fondo sin tornar arriba; otros sobre balsas y barriles, y caballeros sobre maderos; otros daban grandes boçes en las naos, llamando a Dios; echaban a la mar los capitanes sus cadenas y escudos; a otros arrebataban las mares y de dentro de las naos los llebaban; y como estaba bien mirando esta fiesta, no sabía qué hacerme ni qué medio tomar, porque no sé nadar, y las mares y tormentas eran muy grandes, y por otra parte bía la tierra y marina llena de enemigos que andaban danzando y

[218] Ibid., p. xvii.
[219] Quoted in Douglas, K., *Downfall of the Spanish Armada*, p. 63.
[220] AGS GyM 247, f.2. 'The ship *Santa María de Visón*, the ship *La Lavia*, the ship *Juliana* – were lost together having been at anchor in this island many days due to bad weather, and were sunk by a heavy storm that came, dragging down all of the captains and officers that came in them.'
[221] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 204, 'a huge gale hit us broadside on with waves reaching the sky that the cables couldn't hold and the sails were no use, so that we found ourselves with all three vessels hurtling ashore onto a beach of very fine sand, hemmed in at either end by tremendous rocks.'

> baylando de plaçer de nuestro mal, y que en saliendo alguno de los nuestros a tierra, benían a él ducientos salvajes y otros enemigos, y le quitaban lo que llebaba hasta dejarle en cueros vivos y sin piedad ninguna los maltratavan y herían, todo lo qual se vía muy bien de los rrotos navios, y no me parecía a mí nada bien lo que pasava en una parte y otra.'[222]

He went on to describe in succeeding paragraphs his frantic efforts to assist the Judge Advocate (Martín de Aranda) to escape the wreck. Perhaps Cuéllar felt honour-bound to reciprocate the favour shown to him by Aranda, whose adjudication during the court-martial had earlier prevented his execution. With the *Lavia* rapidly disintegrating the pair sought to use a loose hatch cover to float ashore. However, no sooner had they pushed away from the stricken vessel than they were engulfed by the storm surge. Aranda was swept off the board and dragged under by the surf. Cuéllar maintained his grip and was carried ashore. Severely battered and cut by debris in the water, he emerged from the surf alive, but covered in blood. He estimated that over one thousand perished with the ships, and that three hundred survived. On this point Diego López agreed with Cuéllar. In his statement to Spanish officials he declared that 'les sobrevino un grande temporal que todas tres dieron al través, en las cuales la parece que habría más de 1,300 hombres y que dellos sólo se salvarían los 300.[223] Curiously, Geoffrey Fenton, the Irish Secretary of State, who visited the site some weeks later to oversee the recovery of ordnance form the wrecks, also estimated that around eleven hundred perished at Streedagh.[224] Their calculations are at odds with the official muster records, which indicated a total of 918 soldiers and sailors on board the vessels (*Lavia* 342, *Juliana* 355, *Santa María de Visón* 221).[225] However, all three convey the extent of destruction and loss of life that occurred at Streedagh.

George Bingham, who reached the beach some hours after the ships were wrecked, claimed that he captured and executed 140 of the survivors. His claim is

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[222] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 204-5, 'I placed myself on top of the poop of my ship after commending myself to God and Our Lady, and from there began to observe the whole appallingly sad scene: many men drowned inside the ships, while others jumped into the water never to come up again; others were on rafts and barrels, or astride planks; others were shrieking in the ships, calling on God for help; the captains throwing their gold chains and gold coins into the sea; others were swept away by the waves which scooped them from right inside the ships. And as I was taking in this colourful spectacle, I didn't know what to do with myself, nor what move to make, because I can't swim, and there were huge waves and gale-force winds. Besides, I could see the coast and the beach full of enemies dancing and skipping about with glee at our misfortune. Indeed, when any of our men reached the shore, two hundred savages and other enemies went up to him and took everything he was wearing until he was left stark naked. In fact, survivors were pitilessly beaten up and wounded; and all of this could be plainly seen from the broken-up ships, and I didn't at all like what was happening in either place.'

[223] AGS GyM 302, f.29, 'he survived a great storm, in which all three [ships] went down. He reckoned there had been more than 1,300 men, of whom only three hundred were saved.'

[224] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 68.

[225] Martin C., and Parker, G., *La Gran Armada,* Barcelona, 2011, p. 451.

corroborated somewhat by three episodes described by Cuéllar. During his initial attempt to get away from Streedagh he discovered twelve dead Spaniards hanging in the ruins of a derelict church in the Streedagh/Grange neighbourhood (Staad according to Allingham). He assumed their deaths were caused English troops: 'por manos de los luteranos ingleses que en nuestra busca andaban para nos acabar a todos los que avíamos escapado de la fortuna de la mar.'[226] Shortly afterwards, he encountered a woman near Grange. She was driving some cattle away form the village and cautioned him to avoid it as it was occupied by Bingham's men. He heeded this advice and made his way back to Streedagh where he encountered two other survivors hiding in the dunes at the back of the strand. They told him of the executions they had witnessed: 'y contáronme las crueles muertes y castigos que avían hecho los ingleses a más de cien españoles que avían tomado.'[227]

An Important Savage Chieftain

In general, Cuéllar's recollections of what happened to him in the aftermath of the shipwreck are hazy and vague. There is an almost dreamlike quality to the passage of time during this phase of the narrative. He seemed uncertain about the sequence of events. This is understandable given the trauma that he experienced, but it makes for a somewhat confused narrative of the first days on land. Cruickshank and Gallagher pointed out that he described only one night spent in the vicinity of Streedagh, but then mentioned returning to the beach three days after the shipwreck.[228] Themes that dominate are a sense of disorientation, danger from hostile looters as well as henchmen of the Sheriff of Sligo who were rounding up survivors, and the severity of injuries which hampered Cuéllar's mobility. Although initially, he was left alone by the mob, Cuéllar claimed he was accosted on three occasions during the succeeding days by looters. During one instance he believed a local 'chieftain' intervened to protect him, but on two subsequent occasions he was assaulted and then plundered by thugs who robbed his possessions, until he was left curled up on the ground, naked and willing the onset of death: 'quedaba desnudo, en cueros, tan maltratado i con tanto frio. Pedí a Dios mui de beras me llebase adonde yo muriese confesado y en su gracia.'[229]

In between dodging crown troops, and looters, Cuéllar claimed he took time bury the bodies an officer colleague, and an aristocrat named Diego Enríquez, whom he referred to as, 'el Corcobado' (hunchback). For some reason Cuéllar felt compelled

[226] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 206, 'English Lutherans who were going about looking for us to finish off all of us who had escaped drowning in the storm.'
[227] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p.207, 'they told me about the cruel deaths and tortures which the English had inflicted on more than a hundred Spaniards they had taken.'
[228] Cruickshank and Gallagher, God's Obvious Design, p. 231, fn. 29.
[229] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 210, 'stripped to the skin and so cold and ill-treated, I earnestly begged God to take me to any place where I could die confessed and in His grace.'

to describe Enriquez's fate in great detail. He recalled that Enríquez, a group of Portuguese nobles and a Spanish aristocrat, 'the son of the Count of Villafranca',[230] escaped from either the *Juliana* or *Santa María de Visón*, by having themselves sealed into a decked, ship's boat with their valuables. Before it reached the shore, the boat was overwhelmed by the waves. When it was eventually washed onto the strand where it came to rest upside down, trapping the occupants within, all of whom perished. Cuéllar encountered Enríquez's corpse after it was dragged out of the boat by looters. Cuéllar identified Enriquez's body while beachcombing, and buried him to prevent the body being eaten by animals. Cuéllar, very deliberately, described at length, Enriquez's arrempt to save himself, and his own efforts to tend to Enriquez's remains and ensure he received a Christian burial.

But Enríquez's presence at Streedagh is puzzling. It has mystified some commentators, and led Allingham to incorrectly identify one of the ships at Streedagh as the *San Juan de Sicilia*. Don Diego Enríquez Téllez was the captain of the *San Juan de Sicilia,* but this vessel did not make landfall in Ireland. It sought refuge among the western Isles of Scotland and eventually dropped anchor in Tobermory Bay, on the Isle of Mull. The Enríquez of the *Carta* seems to have begun the campaign in command of the galleon *San Juan Menor* of the squadron of Castile.[231] According to Pedro Coco Calderón he was a son of the former viceroy of New Spain, Don Martín Enríquez de Almansa of Zamora.[232] Calderón stated that Enríquez was given charge of the squadron of Andalucía after the capture of Pedro de Valdés by the English. His death in the Streedagh wrecks was also noted by Beltrán de Salto.[233] He mentioned that Enríquez had replaced Don Diego Pimentel as *Maestre de Campo* (Colonel) of the *Tercio* (regiment) of Sicily, after Pimentel was captured by the Dutch after the Battle of Gravelines. But this still does not explain Enríquez's presence on one of the ships at Streedagh. It may be that Cuéllar was at pains to describe Enríquez's fate for his own ulterior motives; perhaps, a crude attempt to ingratiate himself with an influential family, while bringing them some consolation from knowing that, albeit in death, their loved-one had been cared for.

Thereafter, Cuéllar was directed towards Brian O'Rourke of Breifne, whom he described as 'un gran señor salvaje, muy grande amigo del rey de España, y que rrecojía y hazía bien a todos los españoles que a él se yban.'[234] In the aftermath of the great gale O'Rourke had declared his territory a place of refuge for Armada survivors. The principal O'Rourke castle at Dromahaire lies around thirty kilometres

[230] The Marqués de Villafranca was Alfonso Fernández de Córdoba y Figueroa (d. 1589).
[231] Pierson, *Commander of the Armada*. p.236; *CSP Spain*, IV, p.401; Martin and Parker, *La Gran Armada,* p.450.
[232] *CSP Spain*, IV, pp. 399, 445.
[233] AGS GyM 247, f.2.
[234] Ibid., p. 209, 'an important savage chieftain (and great friend of the King of Spain) who sheltered and welcomed all the Spaniards that went to him.'

inland from Streedagh, and could be reached by following one of a number of valleys that ran inland from the coast. Yet, despite the relatively short journey involved, Cuéllar may not have arrived at the O'Rourke stronghold until almost a month after he was shipwrecked. On heading inland he described three nights: one spent with the family of a 'Latin scholar', and two nights hidden in a barn near a lake shore with three colleagues. Thereafter, the timeline in the narrative blurred once more, as his quest for O'Rourke's village was interrupted by an interlude of indeterminate length spent with a family who looked after and tended to his wounds: 'aunque todos salbages, pero cristianos y caritatibos, donde, biendome uno que yo benía tan maltratado i erido, me llebó asu choça, i me curaba él i su muger i hijos, i no me dejó salir dela hasta que le paerció que pudiera bien llegar al billage donde iba.'[235] How long he remained with this family is unclear but it could have been anything from a day or two, to three weeks. When Cuéllar finally reached O'Rourke's stronghold, probably Dromahaire, the *Carta* hints that he stayed for only a day or two before moving on. O'Rourke was absent, Cuéllar suggested, resisting a hostile incursion by crown troops: 'porque el señor no estaba allí, que abía ido a defender una tierra que los ingleses le benían a tomar.'[236] Shortly afterwards Cuéllar, along with twenty others, departed for the coast, on foot of rumours that 'a large ship from Spain' was at the coast to collect Armada survivors.

O'Rourke's absence from Dromahaire, along with the report of a vessel on the coast, provides interesting clues about when Cuéllar was at O'Rourke's stronghold. Far from defending his territory against an English incursion, O'Rourke appears to have been seeking to raise a rebellion against the Crown regime in north Connacht. When one looks at external sources, this becomes apparent. In the aftermath of the storm of 20-21 September, Sir William Fitzwilliam, Lord Deputy of Ireland, issued a general proclamation to surrender, on pain of death, all Spaniards within four hours of receiving the order. O'Rourke, when he received the notice, was reported by Crown officials to have 'utterly refused to do so, but standing upon very undutiful terms after his [wonted] manner hath kept them about himself, and did new furnish them with weapons.[237] The most likely explanation for O'Rourke's subsequent actions are that he was aware of a large concentration of Spaniards at Killybegs (around 1,500-2,000 under Don Alonso de Leiva) and, regarding them as potential allies, sought to foment an uprising in conjunction with neighbouring Sligo clans, the O'Connors, O'Harts and O'Dowds.[238] Towards this end he instigated an

[235] Ibid., p. 211, 'though all savages, were Christian and charitable.' He admitted they 'dressed my wounds, and wouldn't let me leave until he [the husband] thought I was well enough to reach the village I was heading for.'
[236] Ibid., 'the chieftain [O'Rourke] wasn't there because he had gone off to defend a territory that the English were coming to take.'
[237] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. xxviii.
[238] Ibid., pp. xxviii, 55, 59.

attack on Ballymote castle, George Bingham's stronghold. The attack was first reported on 10/20 October by George Bingham in a letter to his brother, Sir Richard, most likely the day after the attack.[239]

The report of a ship at the coast was probably a reference to the galleass G*irona*, which was then at Killybegs, some 55 miles northwest of Dromahaire. It set sail for Scotland on 26 October, after rudimentary repairs were carried out, but it was wrecked two days later at Lacada point, near the Giant's Causeway on the Antrim coast. The *Carta* states that the vessel he sought had its mainmast and rigging badly damaged, was subsequently wrecked. Cuéllar believed two hundred drowned with the remining survivors all put to the sword by the English:

> 'porque era de la Armada y abía arribado allí con gran fortuna, y el árbol mayor y la xarçia mui maltratada y con temor de que no los quemasen o içiesen otro mal los enemigos, que lo procuraban con toda ynstançia, se izieron a la bela de aí a dos días, y con la gente que en ella benía t los demás que se recogieron, tornó a dar al trabés en la misma costa, se ahogaron más de doçientas personas, y los que salieron nadando los tomaron los ingleses y los pasaron todos a quchillo.'[240]

This does not correspond with the reported damage to the hull and rudder of the *Girona*, but in all other respects it echoes the fate of that vessel. However, an intriguing report in the Irish state papers, dated 14/24 October, described a vessel that was apparently towed into Donegal harbour (less than 40 miles from Dromahair) having lost its mainmast.[241] It reportedly carried horses and mules, which had been cast into the sea; a detail that is very evocative of some Armada transports. A number of hulks had indeed, carried pack animals, before casting them overboard off Scotland, in order to preserve water supplies for the voyge home. A potential candidate for that vessel is the urca *Santa Bárbara*. It was never accounted for among ships that returned to Spain, but survivors from this vessel are recorded among those who came out of Ireland.[242] Be that as it may, the close approximation of the reports in the Irish state papers, O'Rourke's activities, and the impending departure of a Spanish vessel at the coast, correspond quite closely with Cuéllar's narrative, and suggest that his stay with O'Rourke most likely occurred in mid-to-late October (sometime around 15th-25th).

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[239] Ibid., p. 55.

[240] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 212, 'she was an Armada vessel that had put into harbour there in a great gale, and with her mainmast and rigging badly damaged. And, fearing that enemies might burn her or do further damage-something they would have done with all dispatch-the crew prepared to sail two days later. But what with the numbers she was already carrying and others she had taken on board, she ran aground again somewhere along the same coast. More than two hundred men drowned and those who swam ashore were taken by the English and put to the sword.'

[241] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 63.

[242] AGRB SEG, Registre aux ordres 12, f.23v.

Following his departure from O'Rourke's village the narrative descended into the most perplexing episode of the entire account. Unable to keep pace with his colleagues, Cuéllar fell behind, became disorientated, and then lost altogether among the warren of valleys that criss-cross O'Rourke country. He encountered a disguised priest who directed him towards a nearby castle where, he was assured, he would find refuge. That meeting heralded a chance encounter shortly afterwards, with a blacksmith, who seemingly, lured Cuéllar to his home, which lay in a deserted valley. There he was overpowered by the blacksmith, and compelled to labour in his forge. This scenario endured for a week, until he was discovered by the same priest en route to the aforesaid castle, who ensured that Cuéllar was liberated and brought to the settlement of local chieftain, Tadhg óg MacClancy of Rosclogher. The episode is without doubt the least plausible in the *Carta*. It might be true, as is most of the account. But it is possible perceive within Cuéllar's depiction, heavy undertones of a morality tale in the manner of the wanderings of a lost soul in purgatory. If there was ever a sense of a providential wheel of fortune running through the narrative, then the blacksmith episode neatly presaged the next upturn of Cuéllar's luck at Rosclogher.

MacClancy's settlement lay on the shores of Lough Melvin, and provided, perhaps, the central episode of Cuéllar's Irish adventures. He was taken in by the villagers, and dressed by them, joining ten other Spaniards already there, most likely, in late October-early November. Of his stay with MacClancy's people Cuéllar provided a fascinating description of the local way of life, as he experienced it. He seems to have been accepted by the locals. At least, he portrayed a scenario in which he appeared the most popular Spaniard in the village, maintaining that he remained with them for around three months, while adapting to their way of life: 'Repáronme allí lo mejore que pudieron con una manta a su usança, donde me estube tres meses hecho propio salbaje como ellos'[243]

Social Observations

Some of the passages of greatest interest in the *Carta*, from an Irish historical perspective, are Cuéllar's depictions of Gaelic lifestyle. To an individual used to the cosmopolitan culture of Spain and its colonies, Ireland, its peripheral location, climate and society, clearly possessed a certain exotic mystery. But given his background, Cuéllar may not have felt the kind of culture shock other, less seasoned, travellers may have experienced. By 1588, a decade of participation in naval expeditions would have entailed exposure to different cultural settings in the Caribbean, Brazil, and the Atlantic islands (the Canaries, the Azores, and Cape Verde Islands). These previous experiences would have provided him with certain

[243] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 213, 'They dressed me up as well as they could with the sort of blanket that they wear, and I spent three months there [Rosclogher] becoming as much of a savage as the savages themselves.'

reference points with which to evaluate the lifestyle he encountered in Ireland. It may be that Cuéllar was familiar with accounts of Amerigo Vespucci, Cortés, Las Casas, del Castillo, or Cabeza de Vaca, which may have influenced his composition. Indeed, J.A. Froude and Dermot Somers likened it to something out of an earlier voyage of discovery. Fernández-Armesto regarded his description of life at Rosclogher as 'the most remarkable in the entire narrative, in which Cuéllar steps out of the character he has cast for himself and becomes an urban sophisticate marooned in a sort of pastoral idyll.'[244]

One observation that has been a consistent source of comment was is the use of the term *salvaje* (savage) to describe people at all levels of Gaelic society. This view was made explicit at the outset when he declared that he spent 'más de siete meses por montañas y bosques, entre salbajes, que lo son todos en aquellas partes de Irlanda donde noe perdimos.'[245] According to Evelyn Hardy, when Cuéllar described Brian O'Rourke of Breifne as a savage chieftain, he implied 'a savage who lives in the wilds, unconnected with any visible court or monarch.'[246] Allingham conceded the term was used 'to define what he considers their position in the scale of civilization as compared with his own country.'[247] Fernández-Armesto was less circumspect, saying 'when Spaniards called their hosts ''savages'' they meant exactly what they said.'[248] Cuéllar may have adopted a sense of superiority in his attitude towards the Irish. Nevertheless, he seems to have made a sincere attempt to describe objectively what he saw.

In Sebastián de Covarrubias' dictionary, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, 'salvaje' is defined as dwellers of remote locations: mountains or desert islands; depicted in art or literature hair-covered, bearded, and foliage-clad:

> 'Todo lo que es de la montaña, los pintores que tienen licencia poética, pintan unos hombres todos cubiertos de vello de pies a cabeça, con cabellos largos y barva larga, Estos llamaron escritores de libros de cavallería, salvajes. Ya podría acontecer algunos averse criado en algunas partes remotas, como en islas desiertas, aviendo aportado allí por fortuna y gastado su ropa, andar desnudos, cubriédolos la mesma naturaleza con bello para algun remedio suyo. Destos han topado muchos los que han navegado por mares remotos.'[249]

All of these traits resonate with the physical and cultural traits Cuéllar found among the Irish. Indeed, it accurately depicted his own particular situation. Rafael Girón

[244] Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada*, pp. 260-61.
[245] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 201, 'more than seven months travelling through mountains and woods, among savages, which all of them are in those parts of Ireland where we ran aground.'
[246] Hardy, E., *Survivors of the Armada*, p. 83.
[247] Allingham, *Captain Cuéllar's Adventures*, p. 13.
[248] Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada,* p. 262.
[249] Covarrubias Orozco, Sebastián de, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o espanola*, Madrid, 1611, p. 924.

has suggested that Cuéllar's perceptions were likely coloured by his previous experiences in Brazil, and that he may have seen parallels between the Gaelic Irish and indigenous Brazilian tribes: '¿Llamó ''salvaje'' a los irlandeses por su similitud a los indios brasileños con los que seguramente contactó en esta expedición? Es probable.'[250]

Moreover, Cuéllar was not alone among visitors to the island in using the term. Laurent Vital, a Flemish official, whose ship was forced into Kinsale during a storm in 1518, also described the inhabitants of rural or upland areas of Munster as 'savages'.[251] Other Armada crews also referred to encounters with *salvajes*. Benito Amador of the *Trinidad Valencera*, when reporting the fate of the *San Juan de Sicilia* in Tobermory Bay, in western Scotland, referred to the locals as 'savage people' ('gente salvaje').[252] Juan Gómez de Medina of the *Gran Grifón* spoke of sheltering in 'homes of savages' ('casas de salvajes') on Fair Isle, between Shetland and the Orkneys, north of the Scottish mainland.[253] Pedro de Robledo de Tapia, an official on *San Pedro el Mayor*, which spent a number of weeks anchored in a bay in north Mayo, also spoke of seeing 'houses of savages' ('algunas casas de salvajes'). And he described locals he encountered as 'people dressed in savage garb': 'gente en hábito salvaje'.[254] Captain Diego de Urízar claimed he was robbed by English and *salvajes* when arrived at Dungarvan to reconnoitre Munster in May 1574.[255] Urízar described Waterford as fortified with stone walls and seventeen towers, mounted with some small artillery pieces and manned by one hundred night watchmen for fear of the *salvajes* of the Earl of Desmond in the countryside. He concurred with Laurent Vital in identifying the Irish *salvajes* as confined to rural upland districts as distinct from the more urbane lowland town dwellers.

Savage Garb

Cuéllar remarked on the local dress of villagers he encountered at Rosclogher: Bístense como ellos son, con calças justas y sayos cortos de pelotes muy gruesos; cúbrense, con mantas y trayan hasta los ojos.' [256] His reference to 'blankets' was, of course, the famous woollen Irish mantle, considered characteristic of Gaelic Ireland. Worn by both men and women, it served as a robust outer garment or overcoat, and was commonly depicted with a shaggy collar and fringe, wrapped

[250] Girón Pascual, 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar', p. 1052.
[251] See Morgan H., and Convery D., Ireland 1518: Archduke Ferdinand's Visit to Kinsale and the Dürer Connection, Crawford Art Gallery Cork, 2015, pp. 79, 83, 88.
[252] AGS Estado 596, f.20.
[253] AGS GyM 246, f.295
[254] AGS GyM 245, f.188
[255] AGS Estado 828, f.106
[256] Cuéllar, Carta, p. 213, 'They [the men] dress accordingly, in tight hose and short loose coats of very coarse goat's hair. They wrap up in blankets and wear their hair down to their eyes.'

or draped around the body and extending to lower leg level.[257] When Cuéllar arrived naked at O'Rourke's settlement he was offered one: 'some savages gave me a squalid old blanket full of lice which I wrapped myself up in, and this made me feel a bit better.' Professional soldiers across Europe were noted for their ostentatious dress sense. We know that in Brazil one of Cuéllar's garments was a fine velvet jacket, which he offered as a prize to one of his artillery gunners for the accuracy of his shot against the English galleons (see p. 130-31). So, for a status-conscious captain, lost in what he considered was a wilderness, the costume of locals, and his wearing 'a squalid old blanket full of lice', prompted comparisons between the wild Irish and his sense of what was normal civilization. Conversely, Mairéad Dunlevy suggested that Cuéllar, attired in this manner, would not have caused a second glance by locals as, 'such nakedness, covered with a mantle was the unselfconscious dress of the impoverished.[258] At about this time, Sir William Herbert advocated official Tudor policy, when regarding it as something to be eliminated from Irish culture:

> The mantle serving unto the Irish as to a hedgehog his skin, or to a snail her shell, for a garment by day and a house by night: it maketh them, with the continual use of it, more apt and able to live and lie out in bogs and woods, where their mantle serveth them for a mattress and a bush for a bedstead, and thereby they are less addicted to a loyal, dutiful, and civil life.[259]

In other words, the utility of the garment precluded civility. Cuéllar, perhaps unwittingly, encapsulated such sentiment when admitting that he became 'as much a savage as the savages themselves' during his time at Rosclogher.

The leggings, the 'tight hose' (tight-fitting trousers) that Cuéllar remarked on were noted by McClintock as a common trait of Gaelic males depicted in John Derricke's *Image of Ireland*, who all wore 'trews and brogues.'[260] Likewise, the 'Kilcommon suit', discovered in a bog in county Tipperary and considered to be of late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century provenance, featured trews along with a jacket, cap and cloak. The jacket, as described by Dunlevy was woven from the fleece of a mountain sheep, or of normal wool with an admixture of some horse or goat's hair.[261] A number of points of similarity with Cuéllar can also be found in a description left by William Camden some decades later. He described the simple kern as similarly dressed in large linen tunics with wide sleeves hanging down to their knees, generally dyed with saffron, short woollen jerkins, simple close-fitting trews and a mantle or 'shaggy rug fringed and elegantly variegated, in which they

[257] Dunlevy, M. *Dress in Ireland*, London, 1989, p. 59.
[258] Ibid., p. 60.
[259] *CSP Ireland*, IV, pp. 192-3.
[260] McClintock, H.F., *Old Irish and Highland Dress and That of the Isle of Man*, Dundalk, 1950, p. 41.
[261] Dunlevy, *Dress in Ireland*, p. 57.

wrap themselves at night and sleep soundly on the bare ground.' The beauty of Irish women served as a pleasant distraction throughout Cuéllar's Irish travels. Of their attire, Cuéllar observed the following:

> Las más de las mugeres son muy hermosas, pero mal compuestas; que no bísten más de la camisa y una manta con que se cubren, y un paño de lienço muy doblado sobre la caveça, atado por la frente. Son grandes travajadores y caseras a su modo.' [262]

Their distinctive head-dress was something he noted, but which also drew comments from other foreign visitors. Lucas de Heere's illustration of c.1570, of a Gaelic woman in native dress, depicts her with a loose smock or chemise with an apron, mantle and head covering. Dunlevy regarded the mantle and patterned linen roll of the head-dress in that image as signifying social status and considered that her chemise (Cuéllar's 'shift') was most likely of soft, loosely woven, fine wool.[263] Susan Flavin has suggested that the survival of specifically Irish forms of female head-wear in Ireland throughout the upheavals of the period indicates, to some extent, resistance to a loss of self-definition experienced in other aspects of Gaelic society. They were a means of displaying, not only social position within a community, but simultaneously, female creativity and personal identity.[264]

Cuéllar's description of female dress in the northwest differs somewhat from Vital's observations at Kinsale. This was partly due to the seventy-year gap between the two accounts, but also to cultural differences between rural Gaelic Irish and urban Hiberno-English fashions. The townswomen of Kinsale displayed a greater degree of wealth and variety in the fabric of their adornment than that suggested by Cuéllar, though Vital too, remarked on the Irish linen head-dress: 'married women wear their finery, and linen head coverings; some yellow and others white.'[265] They tended to adorn their finery with 'silk needlework of different colours' and 'big belts decorated with beautiful buckles, some of gilded silver, also of copper, metal or brass, according to their rank.'[266] The fashion in Kinsale, among both males and females, for wearing their shirts open to the waist was not, apparently, replicated at Rosclogher. But this may be reflective of the different seasons in which these observations were made. Captain Cuéllar's sojourn at Rosclogher took place during the winter, while Vital visited Kinsale in June. The greater sumptuous display at Kinsale contrasts with the plain costume of the women of Rosclogher, most likely

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[262] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 214. 'Most of the women are very beautiful, but badly turned out: they wear no more than a shift, and a shawl that they wrap round themselves, and a piece of linen on their heads which is folded several times and knotted at the forehead. They work hard, and are good housekeepers, in their own way.'

[263] Dunlevy, *Dress in Ireland*, p. 59.

[264] Flavin S., *Consumption and Material Culture in Sixteenth-Century Ireland*, PhD Dissertation, Bristol University, 2011, p.78.

[265] Morgan, and Convery, *Ireland 1518*, 2015, p. 80.

[266] Ibid.

reflective of Kinsale's status as a prosperous Anglo-Irish trading port controlled by a wealthy, relatively cosmopolitan, merchant elite. Rosclogher was, by comparison, an isolated upland farming community, less wealthy, and possibly more conservative in outlook.

Strange as many aspects of Gaelic society may have seemed to him, there were still points of convergence between his own cultural values, and those of the Irish. He acknowledged a common religious bond with the people, something that was a significant to him. They may have appeared exotic, but they were Christians, even if their practice of Catholicism was not, perhaps, what he was used to in Spain. This common faith however, provided a camaraderie that facilitated the general acceptance of the strangers in the village. He admitted as much: 'A nosotro nos querían bien estos salbages, porque supieron que beníamos contra los ereges y que éramos tan grandes enemigos suyos.'[267] Cuéllar was widely travelled, having been to the Caribbean and Brazil, and stopping at the likes of the Cape Verdes, Azores and Canray Islands. He may have encountered indigenous peoples along the way, and may have read accounts that described the indigenous peoples of the Americas. This may have coloured his perception of Ireland and the Irish, and informed his usage of terms such as '*salvaje*'. The cultural context would be understandeable.

Yet, while the tone adopted by Cuéllar towards the the Gaelic Irish might be described as one of benign condescension, the Catholic affinities of the common folk he encountered, and knowledge of Latin by at least some of the population, endowed their portrayal, for whoever was to read the account, with at least rudimentary trappings of civility. Cuéllar listed three occasions on which he conversed in Latin with locals: a youth whose family sheltered him for a night near Streedagh, a priest in MacClancy country, and the Bishop of Derry. Crew members of the *San Pedro El Mayor* also communicated through Latin with locals when they made landfall: 'y alguna gente en avito de salvaje y los recivieron con banderas de paz y se fueron a la urca [*San Pedro el Mayor*] cinco dellos y les dizieron por la lengua Latina que con mucha seguridad podían hazer agua.'[268] Similarly, Juan de Nova, of the *Trinidad Valencera*, conversed with a Scot in Latin shortly after leaving Ireland, while Alonso de Leiva learned of the whereabouts of the galleass *Girona* from a Latin-speaking local.[269] Gaelic society may have been exotic, backward even, but politico-religious affinities with Spain, scholars educated through classical learning, Catholic clergy, holy Chritian relics, etc., all of this suggested a culture with

[267] Cuéllar, Carta, p. 214, 'These savages liked us Spaniards very much because they discovered we had come to fight the heretics and were such great enemies of theirs.'
[268] AGS GyM 245, f.188, Some people in savage garb received them [crew members sent ashore] with a flag of peace. Five of them came to the urca [San Pedro] and they said in Latin that water could be obtained in safety.'
[269] *CSP Spain*, IV, pp. 508, 510.

closer resemblance to European cultural traditions than the pagan realm of indigenous tribes of the New World.

Landscape

While reflecting on how landscape was protective of traditional lifestyles during the sixteenth century, Colm Lennon suggested that 'natural frontiers of mountain, bog and forest enclosed many communities in a way which reinforced cultural distinctiveness.'[270] This seems to have been the case in the northwest which Cuéllar noted for its rugged terrain. In some ways Connacht-Ulster was culturally different to other parts in Leinster and Munster. This was perhaps encapsulated in a casual remark by a townsman of Kinsale in conversation with the Fleming Vital, when he described the northwest as the 'Scotch Quarter'.[271] Whereas many Irish ports, Galway, Waterford, and Kinsale, among others, had close connections with Spain, the northwest looked to Scotland for its cultural, political, and economic ties.

Cuéllar repeatedly commented on characteristics of the landscape through which he passed, in particular, the mountains lakes and bogs, which he found bleak and difficult to traverse. This was something noted by other Armada survivors as well, who regarded the Irish countryside as barren and sparsely populated land. On the *Trinidad Valencera*, when it became apparent that the ship was in serious danger of sinking, one crewmember described the impression of arriving in a wilderness on reaching the northernmost tip of the Inishowen Peninsula: 'fue a la primera punta de yrlanda por la banda del norte por donde venían que es la peor tierra y menos habitada.[272] Similarly, when the *San Pedro El Mayor* arrived in North Mayo (possibly Broadhaven Bay) the harbour it entered drew comments from the crew of a sparsely populated region: 'saltaron en aquel puerto que es despoblado eçepto algunas cases de salvajes con una torre de la otra parte.'[273] The environs of O'Rourke country, according to Cuéllar, consisted of stretches of difficult terrain: 'de mal camino que abía, de lodo hasta la çinta.'[274] Further, after departing from Rosclogher he endured a twenty-day trek (c. one hundred miles) to the north coast, fuy caminando por montañas y partes despobladas con arto trabajo.'[275] While there were mitigating factors in delaying him - severe winter climate, security fears, and injuries that had become inflamed - the landscape could prove difficult for a fit individual even in good weather. The following summer (1589), John Garland, a servant of Sir John Perrot, followed a roughly similar route to Cuéllar's, but in the

[270] Lennon, C., *Sixteenth Century Ireland*, Dublin, 1994, p. 3.
[271] Morgan and Convery, *Ireland 1518*, p. 90.
[272] AGS GyM 244, f.147, 'the nearest point of Ireland, they came to the north part, which is the worst land and sparsely inhabited.'
[273] AGS GyM 245, f.188, 'unpopulated except for a few houses of savages, with a tower on the other part.'
[274] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 209, 'bad road, with mud up to the girth.'
[275] Ibid., p. 217, 'I went journeying through mountains and deserted places, with great hardship.'

opposite direction: from the O'Cahan stronghold at Castleroe to Leitrim castle in Breifne O'Rourke. He covered the distance in only three-to-four days, but complained that he 'was every day up to the girdle in water and bog.'[276] A few years later, the Lord Deputy, en route to Enniskillen in September 1594, marched through Breifne, describing the passage as 'long and difficult, as we were driven to cut through the waste, mountains, and bogs of O'Rourke's country.'[277]

MacClancy's territory, Cuéllar described as flooded as mountainous, 'las montañas, que las muy ásperas en aquella parte de Irlanda'[278]and marshy, 'que todas son anegadas y enpantanadas.'[279] From a military perspective, the Spanish authorities regarded Ireland as difficult, unsuitable terrain for conventional armies. This was echoed by the report of Spanish agents, Captains Cisneros and Medinilla, who were dispatched to Ireland in 1596. Asked if the land was suitable for transporting artillery, they replied 'no artillery could be sent from their land [the northwest - territories of O'Neill and O'Donnell] to any port which our [Spanish] fleet could go. It is very marshy.'[280] In the same year, *alférez* Alonso de Cobos also noted the landscape when he reached Donegal to negotiate with the Irish chieftains. He was aware that the O'Donnells had transported an artillery piece (recovered from an Armada wreck) from Donegal harbour to one of their castles. However, he conceded that, in general, the terrain was unsuitable: 'as the land is uneven, there are few points from where the artillery might be transported from those ports out fleet could quietly take.'[281]

While the landscape may have been considered unsuitable for Spanish military schemes, Cuéllar noted how MacClancy made the most of it for his security. He regarded the mountains and lakes as the source of his strength. They served as a formidable defensive barrier against incursions by outsiders. When threatened by the approach of the Lord Deputy's troops, it was to the nearby mountains with their livestock that the locals fled. Cuéllar based his decision to remain in Rosclogher castle on his estimation of the strength of the natural defences of the location:

> El castillo es fortísimo y muy malo de ganar como no le batan con hartillería, porque está fundado en un lago de agua muy profundo que tiene más de una legua de ancho por algunas partes, y de largo tres o quatro leguas, y tiene desaguadero a la mar, y aunque se acreciente de aguas bivas no puede entrar en él, por lo qual no se puede ganar este castillo por agua ni por la banda de tierra que ésta más cerca dél. Tanpoco se le puede hazer daño, porque una legua alrededor de la villa, que es poblada en

[276] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 235.
[277] *CSP Ireland*, V, p. 267.
[278] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 213, 'some of which are very rugged in that part of Ireland.'.
[279] Ibid., p. 214.
[280] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 621.
[281] AGS Estado 839, f.104, 'por ser la tierra fragossa ay pocos cavos por donde llebar la artillería destos puertos que quietamente pueden tomar nuestra armada.'

> tierra firme, es pantano asta los pechos que aun la gente no puede venir a ella si no es por beredas; pues vien considerado todo esto, nos determinamos decir al salbaje que le queríamos guardar el castillo y defenderle hasta morir. [282]

Besides, his estimation of the Irish landscape was in agreement with those of Spanish agents dispatched to the northwest in 1596, a time when Philip II was considering an expedition to Ireland. In their report, ensigns Domingo Jiménez and Cristóbal Montero cautioned that it would be very near impossible to transport artillery as there was a lack of bridges and the land was too marshy.[283] In fact, they reiterated this point later in the same report, very much echoing Cuéllar's comments: 'It is impossible to travel on the land, as you sink up to the knee, but it is all land that may be cultivated.'[284]

Buildings

Cuéllar's descriptions of the kinds of buildings he encountered across the northern half of the island seem to be consistent with both archaeological discoveries and contemporary depictions. There are references to castles (*castillo*), a blacksmith's forge or ironworks (*fragua*), and religious buildings (*iglesia, monasterio, abbadía, hermita*), most of which he noted were in ruins. The exception being Rosclogher, where mass was still celebrated, apparently on a weekly basis. In this vein, all of the clerics he encountered were dressed in secular clothing to avoid detection by agents of the crown. While describing other traditional buildings the terms he used were less clear cut. Four distinct terms were used to describe 'domestic' structures: *choça* (hut), *casiñas* (cabin), *casiñas de paja* (straw cabin), and *casas pagiças[pajas]* (straw house). They seem to have been used indeterminately without regard to specific function. The term most frequently used was *choça* (choza, hut). He used it to describe a variety of structures whether family homesteads, barns or agricultural outhouses. Curiously, there is a reference to begging for food at O'Rourke's 'hut' (*la choça deste señor de Ruerque*), which is a little surprising given chieftain's usual association with stone tower-houses at Newtown, Dromahaire and Leitrim. If Cuéllar had been directed to the principal O'Rourke castle at Dromahaire, it may be that he was referring to the free-standing feasting hall, which stood within the bawn, unattached to the tower-house. That said, the noted archaeologist of

[282] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 215, 'The castle is extremely strong and very hard to take unless it is battered by artillery, since it is founded in a very deep lake that is over a league wide in some parts, and three or four leagues long, with an outlet to the sea, through which it is not possible to enter the lake, even if its waters are swollen by tides. That is why this castle can be taken neither by water nor from the promontory which is closest to it. Neither can it be damaged because, for a league around the town, which is built on terra firma, lies a marsh that is breast-deep, so that not even the locals can reach it except by footpaths. Having weighed all this up, we decided to tell the savage that we wanted to hold his castle and defend it to the death.'

[283] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 626.

[284] Ibid., p. 627.

Medieval Ireland, Kieran O'Conor, has observed how dwellings of even the upper echelons of Gaelic society could be of an insubstantial nature.[285]

Of the homesteads at Rosclogher Cuéllar offered the following appraisal: Biven en choças echas de paja [...] que no tienen otra hacienda ni más menage ni ropa. Duermen en el suelo sobre juncos acavado de cortar y llenos de agua y yelo.'[286] In fact the only reference to domestic furniture was to sleeping on straw mattresses, 'durmiese en unas pajas', in the home of the young Latin scholar near Grange. Curiously, his descriptions of domestic housing in each of the Gaelic settlements he visited were varied. Grange village contained unas casiñas de paja, at Rosclogher the houses were 'choças echas de paja', while those at Coleraine were 'casas pagiças [*pajas*]'. All of the terms refer to either thatched huts or straw cabins, but whether or not Cuéllar intended to differentiate is difficult to ascertain. Hardy, following opinions expressed by Crawford, interpreted the 'casiñas de paja' at Grange to mean 'huts not merely thatched with straw but composed of it altogether' and the 'casas pagiças' of Coleraine 'thatched houses'.[287]

The settlement at Rosclogher, including the church and castle as described by Cuéllar, still survives, though the houses of the villagers have since disappeared.[288] There is general agreement among commentators that typical peasant dwellings tended to be round, one-roomed constructions, about five metres in diameter, with a central hearth, but usually without a chimney. A simple opening in the roof was usually sufficient to allow smoke to escape. Built from wood, wattle, earth and straw they could be erected and dismantled quickly. All of this is consistent with Cuéllar's summation of the dwellings he encountered. Although archaeological evidence is scant in this regard, two building types have been identified as typical of houses in Gaelic areas. A 'creat' was a small, circular one-roomed, windowless house constructed of post-and-wattle, covered with sods, and with a thatched roof. Another type, sub-rectangular in plan, had a similar wall construction, but the roof was supported by cruck-trusses that extended to ground level rather than on the slight walls.[289] Aalen, when discussing traditional house types in the west of Ireland, noted that seventeenth century maps of Ulster featured depictions of rural houses consisting of 'round or elliptical plans, with thatched ''saucer-shaped'' or hip roofs and central hearths.'[290] Based on such evidence, we might assume that the houses

[285] O'Conor, K.D., *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement in Ireland*, Discovery Programme Monographs No. 3, Dublin, 1998, p. 95.
[286] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 213-14, 'they live in thatched cabins [...] for they have no other property, furniture or clothes. They sleep on the floor, on freshly-cut rushes, full of water and ice.'
[287] Hardy, E., *Survivors of the Armada*, p.65; Allingham, *Captain Cuellar's Adventures*, p. 43.
[288] For a recent archaeological assessment, see MacDermot, J.J., and O'Conor, K., 'Rosclogher Castle: a Gaelic lordship centre on Lough Melvin, County Leitrim', in *Breifne* (No. 50, 2015), pp. 300-24.
[289] O'Conor, K.D., *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement,* pp. 95-7.
[290] Aalen, F.H.A., 'The Evolution of the Traditional House in Western Ireland', in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. 96, No. 1 (1966), p. 54.

Cuéllar saw were built from traditional construction methods with thatched roofs, and not structures composed entirely of thatch.

MacClancy's decision to abandon Rosclogher when he feared that it was about to be attacked by Sir William Fitzwilliam, was perhaps misunderstood by Cuéllar, who preferred to remain in the castle and prepare for a siege. In times of strife Gaelic chieftains commonly resorted to natural strongholds in mountains and remote areas with their livestock, rather than resist a powerful enemy within their settlement centres. This kind of expediency, along with the practise of transhumance in upland areas, reflected an 'emphasis on mobility', which, according to O'Conor, 'militated against the building of substantial dwellings.'[291]

Diet, Food and Agriculture

While the need to find safe, secure shelter in which to rest and recuperate from his ordeals was imperative for Cuéllar throughout his time in Ireland, hunger frequently dominated his daily circumstances. Initially, at least, the search for food governed his daily routine. While Cuéllar did not refer to a shortage of provisions on the *Lavia*, many Armada crews arrived on the Irish coast dying of starvation or thirst. While among the Blasket Islands, four or five crew members of the *San Juan de Portugal* were dying on a daily basis. The *San Juan* reportedly had 'but 25 pipes of wine and very little bread, and no water, but what they brought out of Spain, which stinketh marvellously, and their meat they cannot eat.'[292] In the aftermath of the shipwreck at Streedagh, Cuéllar spent the first couple of days trying to scavenge for bits of food washed ashore on the beach from the wrecks. He also ate wild berries and leaves when there was nothing else.

His first proper meal on land, given to him nearly three days after the shipwreck, consisted of oatmeal, milk and butter. A young boy was sent to him 'with a poultice of herbs to put on my wound, and butter, milk and a piece of oaten bread for me to eat.' This was staple diet of the common folk of the locality, and seems to have been a diet common to both Ireland and Scotland. Juan Gómez de Medina, of the *Gran Grifón*, commented that the diet of inhabitants on Fair Isle, where he was stranded, was also mostly oatmeal and butter, but supplemented by fish and mutton. During his time with MacClancy's people, Cuéllar noted how:

> No comen más de una vez al día, y ésa a de ser de noche, y lo que ordinariamente comen es manteca con pan de abena. Beven leche açeda por no tener otra bebida ;

[291] O'Conor, K.D., *The Archaeology of Medieval Rural Settlement,* p. 106.
[292] *CSP Ireland*, IV, preface, p. xxii.

no beven agua, siendo la mejor del mundo. Las fiestas comen alguna carne medio cocida, sin pan ni sin sal, que es su usança ésta.[293]

Local reliance on a single meal of oats and butter, agrees with Nicholls statement that this was the staple diet of Gaelic Ireland, until the introduction of potatoes.[294] Spanish agents, Jiménez and Montero, who were sent on a reconnaissance mission to Ireland in 1596, also noted the diet. They reported how Gaelic insurgents 'take with them on the march, butter, and milk for drink. This with herbs and a little oat bread suffices for them.'[295] Ensign Alonso de Cobos observed the consumption of oatmeal bread, which he thought, was poorly cooked ('mal cocido'). He described the process of cooking oatmeal cakes: 'el pan que toman en generalmente es de avena comen poco y mal cocido por que el modo de cocerlo es poner una llosa a calentar al fuego y estado bien caliente poner enzima una torta de esta arina y el calor de la piedra por un lado y el fuego por otro se cueze.'[296] Kenneth Nicholls echoed Cobos when he described the process in his classic work: 'the cakes – baked on an iron griddle or even, in case of necessity, on a hot stone.'[297] A preference for 'sour milk' (*leche açeda*), more likely buttermilk, over water was something Cuéllar evidently found intriguing, given that he reckoned the water of Lough Melvin to be 'the best in the world'. Alonso de Cobos also noted the local taste for buttermilk (again, *leche açeda*) adding that it was a leftover from which the cream (*nata*) had been extracted during the production of butter. Whereas Cobos remarked that wine and beer were consumed, Cuéllar made no reference to alcoholic drinks.

Red meat might have been reserved by the common folk for consumption on Holy days, but by contrast, for many survivors stranded in Ireland, it became their principal source of nourishment. Don Alonso de Luzón stated that horsemeat was sold to the crew of the *Trinidad Valencera* on the Inishowen Peninsula. Crew members of the *San Pedro el Mayor* managed to obtain horesemeat and pigs ('carne de yeguas y de puercos')[298] from the surrounding district. At Killybegs sheep and cattle were exchanged for arms and munitions, and even wine. An Irish soldier named Mateo Leonardo (Matthew Leonard), who sailed on *La Rata*, ended up at Killybegs with Don Alonso de Leiva. He stated that he and a servant of Fitzgerald were used as interpreters and mediators on behalf of the Spaniards and were sent

[293] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 213, They eat only once a day, and this has to be at night, and what they normally eat is oaten bread and butter. They drink sour milk for they have no other drink. And they don't drink water, though it's the best in the world. On feast days they eat some kind of half-cooked meat, with neither bread nor salt, for such is their custom.
[294] Nicholls, K.W. *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland in the Middle Ages*, Dublin, 2003, p. 133.
[295] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 626.
[296] AGS Estado 839, f.104. 'the manner of cooking it is to place a flat stone on the fire to heat and when sufficiently hot, place a cake of this flour on top and the heat of the stone on one side, and the fire on the other serves [to cook it].'
[297] Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicised Ireland,* p. 133.
[298] AGS GyM 245, f.188.

into outlying districts to obtain meat: 'el dicho Mateo y otro criado de Don Giraldo fueron embiados la tierra adentro a comprar carneros para Don Alonso y la galeaça se hizo la vela antes que bolviessen, por donde el dicho Matheo quedo en tierra con más de 50 españoles.'[299]

Livestock and dairy products are commonly regarded by observers as characteristic elements of the Gaelic economy, which was predominantly pastoral. References to herds of cattle abound in Cuéllar's text. Near Grange he encountered an old woman moving a small herd into woodland: 'topé una muger de más de ochenta años, bruta salvaja, que llebaba çinco u seis bacas a esconder en aquel bosque porque no se las tomasen los ingleses que avían venido a alojarse en su villaje.'[300] At Rosclogher he noted the only form of wealth in the village was the livestock: 'No tienen otro remedio sino retirarse a las montañas con sus mugeres y ganados, que no tienen otra hacienda ni más ni menage ni ropa.'[301] Again, on the shores of Lough Foyle, he stumbled upon two young lads who were minding cattle 'quando veo venir dos moços salbajes que benían a recojer sus bacas y llebarlas a lo alto de la montaña, donde estaban recogidas ellos y sus oadres con temor de los yngleses.'[302] Cuéllar also remarked upon the harvesting of oats that took place adjacent to a barn in which he and three other survivors had concealed themselves when searching for O'Rourke's territory. Butlin and others have commented on the importance of oats, particularly in the poorer soils of the northern half of the island.[303] In contrast to the reaping and storage of sheaves as portrayed by Cuéllar, Lennon described an alternate practice of burning the straw and chaff during harvest to leave the grain.[304]

Arms and Warfare

Weaponry and the distinctive nature of Irish conflict was something remarked upon by Cuéllar and others. It has been claimed, incorrectly, that Cuéllar described the Irish as poor soldiers.[305] He did not make any judgement about the efficacy of the Irish as soldiers. And while Ireland had not developed militarily in the same manner as armies on the continent, it had adopted the use of firearms. Even so, Irish warriors brandishing a motley selection of axes, bows and broad swords, not seen

[299] AGS GyM 310, f.195, 'The said Matthew [Mateo] and another servant of Don Gerald Fitzgerald were sent inland to buy meat for Don Alonso [de Leiva], but the galleass made sail before they could return, leaving the said Matthew and more than fifty Spaniards stranded [in Killybegs].'
[300] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 207, 'a woman of over eighty, a brute savage, who was, taking five or six cows to hide them in that wood to stop the English billeted in her village from seizing them.'
[301] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 214, 'All that these people can do is retreat into the mountains with their women and herds, for they have no other property, furniture or clothes.'
[302] Ibid., p. 218, 'when I saw two young lads coming to round up their cows and take them to the top of the mountain where they and their parents were sheltering for fear of the English.'
[303] Butlin, R.A., 'Land and People, c.1600', in Moody, T.W., Martin, F.X., Byrne, F.J. (eds) *A New History of Ireland Vol. III, Early Modern Ireland 1534-1691*, Oxford, 2009, p. 151.
[304] Lennon, C., *Sixteenth-Century Ireland: The Incomplete Conquest*', Dublin, 1994, p. 45.
[305] García Hernán, E., *Ireland and Spain in the Reign of Philip II*, Dublin, 2009, p. 235.

in common usage on European battlefields since the early sixteenth century, must have appeared quite eccentric to some of the more experienced professional soldiers who came ashore. By that time the Spanish military had long since replaced axes and billed weapons as standard infantry arms in favour of pikes and firearms such as the arquebus and musket.[306] Indeed, one notorious atrocity was attributed by English crown sources to the galloglass mercenary Melaghlin M'Cabb, who was reputed to have killed eighty Spaniards who came ashore, most likely from the *Ciervo Volante*, with his 'galloglass axe'.[307]

At Rosclogher, when he felt threatened by the proximity of Fitzwilliam's force, MacClancy presented Cuéllar and his comrades with six muskets, six arquebusses and other arms', to defend the settlement, as well as three or four boatloads of stones. In the dunes at Streedagh, Cuéllar encountered two armed men, one with a firearm, 'the other with a great iron axe in his hands.' The great gallowglass axe was a traditional weapon used by foot-soldiers in Ireland. But as firearms became more widespread in the late sixteenth century it was falling out of favour. Nevertheless, Brian óg, son of Brian O'Rourke of Breifne, who came to prominence in the conflict of the 1590s, was known by the soubriquet, 'na Samhthach' (of the Battle Axes).[308] Indeed, during their uprising in 1589, even though the Burkes had supposedly acquired a great quantity of munitions, powder and shot from Armada wrecks, they were still reportedly making gallowglass axes and other weapons.'[309] This indicates that even though firearms were sought after, the battle axe was still relied upon as a trusted weapon by fighting men in the region.

During his stay at Rosclogher Cuéllar claimed that he participated with MacClancy in night-time raids and cattle rustling against their enemies. This kind of activity typified many of the local conflicts in Gaelic Ireland. As the region descended into anarchy Cuéllar was left somewhat exasperated by events:

> Su mayor inclinación destos es ser ladrones y robarse los unos a los otros, de suerte que no pasa día sin que se toque al arma entre ellos, porque sabiendo los de aquel casar que en éste ay ganados o otra cosa, luego bienen de mano armada de noche y anda Santiago y se matan los unos a los otros; y sabiendo los ingleses de los presidios quién a recogido y rovado más ganados, luego bienen sobre ellos a quitarselos.'[310]

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[306] See Oman C., *A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century*, London, 1999.
[307] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 40.
[308] *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. VI, p. 1887.
[309] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 145.
[310] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 214, 'What these people are most inclined to is thieving and robbing one another; so that not a day passes among them without a call-to-arms, because as soon as the people in the next village find out that in this one there are cattle or anything else, they come armed at night and all hell breaks loose and they slaughter one another. And as soon as the English from the garrisons find out who has rounded up and stolen the most cattle, they are sent to seize them.'

The scene is an interesting portrayal of the kind of guerrilla-style of warfare engaged by Irish warlords. Particularly the activities of the recently-installed crown garrison in Sligo. It echoed earlier reports conflict in the region when Brian O'Rourke rebelled against the crown during the early 1580s. Crown papers and Gaelic annals both record devastating examples of such raids carried out in Breifne by crown forces under the then Sheriff of Sligo, kinsman and rival for the chieftaincy of Breifne, Brian MacTeigue O'Rourke.[311]

His inference, 'not a day passes among them without a call-to-arms', suggests an anarchic society, in which the fabric of society was in a state of constant strife, as neighbouring clans made war on one another on a daily basis. While the sincerity of Cuéllar's observations are not in question, his assertion that 'in this kingdom there is neither justice nor reason, so that everyone does as he pleases', must be put into context. It echoes other similar statements by Spanish agents in Ireland, and even Laurent Vital's report seventy years earlier. But all were, of course, very familiar with, indeed part of, a highly developed state infrastructure under the Spanish monarchy. Although Gaelic Ireland lacked a central bureaucracy and was only gradually becoming assimilated into the Tudor state, Gaelic lordships had evolved their own systems through complex overlapping networks and layers of traditional and kinship relationships.[312] There was an internal order, perhaps not so obvious to an observer with a different cultural perspective.

Cuéllar was correct in identifying the tensions that existed between the likes of O'Rourke and MacClancy, and the Crown regime. There were underlying political and religious tensions. But if we are to consider his comments within the broader political context of the region, then it must also be pointed out that Connacht had enjoyed comparative peace during the two years before the Armada crisis. The Crown had a provincial regime in place in Connacht. The governor, Sir Richard Bingham, was a military officer whose brief was to enforce conformity to a programme of administrative and social reform that the Tudor regime was attempting to implement in that part of Ireland for the first time. Many Gaelic chieftains, O'Rourke and MacClancy included, regarded such reforms as a threat to their traditional powers and way of life. This inevitably generated tensions between them and government officials. In the midst of this, the Armada crisis erupted during the autumn and winter of 1588, the net result of which, led to a scramble for treasure, hysteria, and a clampdown by crown forces. These upheavals proved sufficient to destabilise the region, resulting in clashes between Gaelic leaders and provincial officials, precisely during the time that Cuéllar spent at Lough Melvin. By the spring of 1589 most of Connacht was in revolt. The anarchy that Cuéllar

[311] *CSP Ireland*, II, p.308; *Annals of Loch Cé*, vol. II, pp. 441-43.
[312] See Nicholls, K.V., *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, Chapter 2; Morgan H., *Tyrone's Rebellion: The Outbreak of the Nine Years War in Tudor Ireland*, London, 1993, Part II: Ulster Overlords.

described reflected this breakdown of civil order across the region. It could be argued, these upheavals were caused as much by the sudden arrival of the Spaniards as by the alleged inclination of the Irish for lawlessness.[313] Nevertheless, Cuéllar's observations are significant because the region was on the cusp of sweeping political and social change that came about after the collapse of Gaelic resistance to Crown authority in the early seventeenth century, and the onset of a programme of plantation, which introduced new settlers in subsequent generations.

Stand and Deliver

Armada survivors who spent prolonged spells with clans in Connacht and Ulster through the winter of 1588-89, found themselves embroiled in a region in which civil order was beginning to break down. Not least among them was Captain Cuéllar. In the aftermath of the Armada crisis Connacht descended into turmoil. The hysteria that attended that episode left the region in an agitated state throughout the winter of 1588. By springtime, underlying tensions, heightened by food shortages and the upheavals of the Armada crisis provoked a series of uprisings.

Many of those who fled to Brian O'Rourke chose to remain with him. He broke out in revolt in the spring of 1589 and continued to defy the crown until his territory was devastated and he ejected in 1590. He appears to have been one of the first chieftains to seek to exploit their military know-how and attempted to introduce continental methods of fighting to his own forces. Within weeks of their being granted sanctuary on his lands, O'Rourke had armed them with pikes and armour recovered from the Streedagh wrecks. They were still with him in 1590, when twenty-four soldiers were reportedly drilling local forces in Spanish-style military techniques.[314] Tadhg óg MacClancy, who was killed during that onslaught, had fourteen Spaniards serving him.[315] Elsewhere, in Mayo and Galway, twenty Spaniards were noted accompanying the rebellious Burkes. Others reported that they, the Joyces, and O'Flaherties 'were joined in rebellion through the earnest persuasion of a Spanish priest, who absolves them freely.'[316] He was identified as Don Andreas de Argotte, a Spanish friar, who promised 'that the King of Spain's forces shall come presently'.[317] By then, however, Cuéllar had departed the region, but not before he faced off at Rosclogher, or so he claimed, with a sizeable crown force under none other than the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Sir William Fitzwilliam.

[313] Uprisings in Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim, during 1589 have been attributed to heightened tensions caused by the Armada crisis. See O'Dowd, M. *Power Politics and Land: Early Modern Sligo 1568-1688,* Belfast, 1991, pp. 37-9.
[314] *CSP Ireland*, IV., p. 410.
[315] Ibid., p. 333.
[316] Ibid., p. 144.
[317] Ibid., pp. 144, 219.

One of the key episodes in the *Carta* was the claim that Cuéllar and eight colleagues held out in MacClancy's castle in defiance of a large force under Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam's for seventeen days, in December 1588. The episode is contentious because, although there is corroborating evidence for Fitzwilliam's presence in the neighbourhood, there is no admission by him of a failed attempt to seize a local castle occupied by Spaniards. Cuéllar's is the only account of what transpired. There was no reference to the affair by Fitzwilliam in his report of his progress in the region.[318] He set out for the northwest in November 1588, crossing into Connacht at Athlone. Here he was accompanied by the governor of Connacht, Sir Richard Bingham. They proceeded together to Ballyshannon, on the River Erne, where, after a brief stop at Sligo, they arrived on Friday 24 November/4 December. At this point, Bingham turned back with his contingent having reached the limit of his jurisdiction (The Erne marked the natural boundary between Connacht and Ulster).[319] From Ballyshannon, Fitzwilliam wrote to Lord Burghley apprising him of his journey thus far.[320] En route, he had taken time to view the wreckage of the *Lavia*, *Juliana*, and *Santa María de Visón*, still strewn on the strand at Streedagh:

> As I passed from Sligo, having then gone 120 miles, I held on towards Bundrowes [in the county of Leitrim], and so to Ballyshannon...I went to see the bay where some of those ships wrecked, and where, as I heard, lay not long before 1,200 or 1,300 of the dead bodies.... there lay as great store of the timber of wrecked ships as was in that place which myself had viewed, being in mine opinion (having small skill or judgment therein) more than would have built five of the greatest ships that ever I saw, besides mighty great boats, cables, and other cordage answerable thereunto, and some such masts for bigness and length, as in mine own judgment I never saw any two could make the like.[321]

While Fitzwilliam proceeded along the coast, he noted how most of the inhabitants fled inland: 'all the country and cattle [had] fled into the strong mountains and fastness of the woods in their own countries and neighbours adjoining, as to O'Rourke, O'Hara, the M'Glannaghies, Maguire, and others.'[322] Fitzwilliam summoned Sir Owen O'Gallagher to him before moving upriver to Belleek.[323] Cuéllar's account appears well informed regarding the size of Fitzwilliam's expedition and the route that it followed until it reached Ballyshannon:

> '[el] gran governador de la reyna que estaba en la villa de Dublín, y caminó luego con mill y setecientos soldados en busca de las naos perdidas, y de la jente que abía escapado, que serían pocos, menos mill hombres que sin armas y desnudos andavan

[318] *CSP Ireland, IV*, pp. 92-98.
[319] Ibid., pp. 95-6.
[320] Ibid., p. 75.
[321] Ibid., p. 93.
[322] Ibid., p. 94.
[323] *Calendar of Carew Manuscripts*, vol. III, London, pp. 89, 153.

> en tierra por las partes donde cada nao se avía perdido, y a los más dellos coxió este governador y luego los aorcaron, y hacía otras justicias, y a los que sabía que nos amparaban, ponía en prisión y los hacía todo el mal que podía, de suerte que nos hacía mal deste linaje y prendió tres o quatro señores salbajes que tenían castillos y en ellos habían recogido algunos españoles, a los quales unos y otros tomó en prisión, y caminó con ellos por todas las marinas asta llegar a la parte donde yo me perdí , y de allí caminó la buelta del castillo de Manglana, que así se llamaba el salbaje con quien yo estaba..[324]

At this point Cuéllar described how MacClancy and his people prepared to evacuate Rosclogher that one Sunday after mass, which might imply that Fitzwilliam set out for Belleek on Sunday 6 December. It is quite likely that he was informed that Spaniards were being sheltered by MacClancy. Ballyshannon and Belleek, both lie within five miles of Lough Melvin. Therefore, an approach to Lough Melvin could have been made with relative ease from either place. Cuéllar resolved not to join the locals in running for the nearby mountains, but instead, suggested to eight colleagues, also at Rosclogher, to join him in the castle and defend it against the enemy. It was a brazen gesture, but a calculated one:

> Y pues el salbaje sentía tanto desmanparar su castillo, alegremente nos metiésemos, los nueve españoles que allí estávamos, en él, y le defendiésemos hasta morir, lo qual podíamos hacer muy bien, aunque binieron otros dos tantos poder más del que venía, porque el castillo es fortísimo y muy malo de ganar como no le batan con hartillería, porque está fundado en un lago de agua muy profundo que tiene más de una legua de ancho por algunas partes, y de largo tres o quatro leguas.'[325]

The so-called 'siege' as related by Cuéllar consisted of the enemy force sitting on the north shore of Lough Melvin some four hundred yards from the castle, without artillery and well out of effective musket range, for seventeen days. When called upon to surrender, Cuéllar boasted: Respondímosele muy a nuestro gusto, y de

[324] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 214-5. 'The great governor of the queen, who was in the city of Dublin set out at once with seventeen hundred soldiers in search of the shipwrecks and the people who had escaped, who were few, less than a thousand without arms and naked, wandering the land in areas where each had been lost, and most of these this governor caught and afterwards hanged he inflicted other penalties too, and imprisoned the people he found sheltering us, doing them all the injury he could, so this journey cost us dear. And he seized three or four savage chieftains who had castles where they had sheltered some Spaniards, took both parties prisoner, and marched them along the entire coastline until he came to the part where I was wrecked. From there he turned in towards MacClancy's castle, for that is the name of the savage I was with.'

[325] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 215, 'As the savage [MacClancy] was so upset about abandoning his castle, I argued that all nine of us Spaniards should get inside it and defend it to the death. This we could do very well, even against another couple of forces the size of the one that was coming, because the castle is extremely strong and very hard to take unless it is battered by artillery, since it is founded in a very deep lake that is over a league wide in some parts, and three or four leagues long.'

nuestro castellano [MacClancy].'[326] The blockade ended when severe gales and a blizzard forced the English to withdraw.

Because there was no reference by Fitzwilliam to MacClancy or Rosclogher in his correspondence, question marks remain about Cuéllar's account. That Fitzwilliam should have attempted a blockade of Rosclogher in the manner described by Cuéllar, seems implausible. The winter season was unfavorable. Moreover and a seventeen-day operation (c.6-23 December) does not accord with the timeframe of his subsequent itinerary (stops at Donegal, Strabane and Dungannon), with a return to Dublin on 23 December/2 January 1589.[327] However, it may be that a detachment of troops was sent by him to reconnoiter the place, and to summon the Spaniards to surrender. This might explain the appearance of troops on the north shore of Lough Melvin, and the interactions described by Cuéllar. Fitzwilliam's only reference to hunting down Spaniards was made in his letter to Burghley from Ballyshannon, when he admitted that the task of rooting out Armada survivors still in the region would be difficult:

> I am proceeded in my journey against the remain of Spaniards left straggling in the north parts of this realm, who I understand are in number 400 or 500 dispersed in poor estate into divers parts, and yet so favoured and succoured by the country people, as it will be hard to hunt them out, but with long time and great labour.[328]

Later, in his official report Fitzwilliam indicated that he adopted a more conciliatory approach to survivors by proclaiming an amnesty to those willing to surrender voluntarily: 'by offering unto them the Queen's mercy, rather than to suffer them to abide there, after which 20 came in, and as I hear many of the rest are coming in as they are able.'[329] Beltrán de Salto confirmed this in his dossier when stating that Fitzwilliam received instructions from London to offer an amnesty to Armada survivors. At the time he compiled his report he reckoned seventy to eighty had voluntarily submitted.[330]

Documentation from the Simancas archive, however, seems to lend some credence to Cuéllar's assertion that crown forces appeared before Rosclogher. In January 1589, an Irish merchant from Waterford was questioned on arrival at Santander by local officials for any news concerning Don Alonso de Leiva in Ireland.[331] Many such reports were compiled by Spanish authorities during the winter of 1588/89 as they sought to discover how many men and vessels had been stranded in Ireland. They

[326] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 241, 'We answered him in a way which pleased both us and our castellan [MacClancy].'
[327] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 92.
[328] Ibid., p. 76.
[329] Ibid., p. 93.
[330] AGS GyM 247, f. 2.
[331] AGS GyM 245, f. 61.

have to be treated with some caution as most were second or third-hand accounts, and contained hearsay, or information that had been distorted by successive retelling. The informant in this instant made a statement based on information he claimed he received from an Irishman who had served with Alonso de Leiva. He related accurately that Leiva, on *La Rata Santa María Encoronada*, had run aground in Connacht, and that he subsequently transferred to a second vessel (*Santa Ana*), which also ran aground in the north of Ireland. The informant went on to relate how the Viceroy of Ireland (Fitzwilliam), on being told that the chieftain O'Rourke had sheltered Alonso de Leiva and his Spaniards, marched to the northwest to demand their surrender, which was rebuffed. O'Rourke and the Spaniards were reputedly holding out on an island, which the Viceroy attempted to reach, but could not do so because bridges that provided access to the island had been dismantled. Such a statement, involving the viceroy in a confrontation with Spaniards who were holding out on an island in O'Rourke territory, is interesting. Numbers were exaggerated, and details blurred, and it is easy to see how O'Rourke and MacClancy may have been confused in the retelling. But the statement concurs with O'Rourke's aid to Spaniards, his refusal to surrender them, Fitzwilliam's expedition into the northwest, and Cuéllar's claim that Fitzwilliam appeared before Rosclogher on the shores of Lough Melvin. Perhaps Cuéllar's version of what transpired at Rosclogher was a faithful rendition of events.

Journey into Ulster

After Fitzwilliam proceeded into Tirconnell, Tadhg óg MacClancy and his people descended from the mountains. According to Cuéllar he was delighted:

> El qual luego que tubo nueba que el ynglés era retirado, se bolvió a su billa y castillo y se aquietó y sosegó por entonçes haçiendonos mucho regalo. Nos confirmó muy de veras por muy leales amigos, ofreciéndonos quánto hera suyo para que nos sirviésemos dello, y los principales de sus tierras ni más ni menos; a mí me dava una hermana suya para que me casase con ella. Yo se lo agredecí mucho y me contentaba con una guía para que me guiase a parte donde yo hallase embarcación para Escocia.[332]

One abiding theme that develops through the narrative and which motivates Cuéllar's desire to leave Rosclogher was the prospect of finding relative safety in Scotland. His 'marriage predicament' may have been a trigger that prompted him to move on, though of greater concern was the threat issued by MacClancy's son that

[332] Cuéllar, *Carta*. pp. 216-17, 'As soon as he got the news that the Englishman had withdrawn, came back to his town and castle, calmed down and relaxed now, and regaled us with all kinds of things. He solemnly confirmed us as very loyal friends, offering us whatever was his for our use, as did the principal men of his territory. To me he gave a sister of his so that I should marry her. I thanked him very much for the offer, but said I'd be happy enough with a guide to direct me to some place where I might find a boat to take me to Scotland.'

Cuéllar might be forcibly detained to prevent his departure. Nevertheless, he and four companions succeeded in departing without hindrance ten days after Christmas. They made their way into Ulster, and onwards to the north coast. Cuéllar did not reveal the route they followed, merely stating that their journey took them across mountainous terrain: 'fuy caminando por montañas y partes despobladas con arto trabajo.'[333] After twenty days on the road they reached the place where Don Alonso de Leiva had perished: Lacada Point, a few miles from Dunluce castle. It is about one hundred miles from Rosclogher to Dunluce. Such a timeframe would suggest an average daily distance covered of only five miles. Allingham, in his commentary, believed that Cuéllar followed a coastal route via Donegal and Derry.[334] Perhaps this might explain why it took three weeks to reach the Dunluce area, but it seems a less likely alternative to a more direct route through the Sperrins.

One impediment to the group's mobility may have been Cuéllar's lingering injuries. He did not offer this as an excuse, but by the time he reached the north coast he said that he was 'hardly able to move because of an injury in one leg', which suggests that the wounds he received at Streedagh had flared up once more. Even so, the group must have been able to cover more than five miles each day and, although it is not mentioned in the text, it was likely that shelter was provided for them at various points en route. Cuéllar and his companions made their journey in the depths of winter, at the coldest, darkest time of year, when the days were at their shortest. Under those circumstances adequate food and shelter were imperative. Cuéllar mentioned that in the neighbourhood of Lacada Point he was invited by locals into their homes where he was shown items salvaged from the *Girona*.

Unable to find a Scotland-bound vessel, the condition of his injured leg became Cuéllar's most pressing concern: 'a este tiempo me cargó gran dolor en la pierna, de suerte que en ninguna manera me podía tener sobre ella.'[335] Again, sympathetic locals intervened to offer him shelter and treatment for his wounds. On this occasion, he claimed sympathetic local women conveyed him to homesteads in nearby hills: 'unas mugeres so dolían de mí y me llevaron a unas casiñas que tenían en la montaña, y allí me tubieron en la montaña más de mes y medio muy guardado y me curaron de suerte que se me çerró la erida.'[336] This period of convalescence seems to have occurred during February-March. When his mobility

[333] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 217, '[they] went journeying through mountains and deserted places, with great hardship'.
[334] Allingham, *Captain Cuellar's Adventures*, p. 25.
[335] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 217, 'I got such a terrible pain in my leg that I couldn't support myself on it'.
[336] Ibid., pp. 217-18, 'a few women took pity on me and took me to some cabins of theirs on the mountain, and kept me there safe for more than a month and a half, and dressed my wound so well that it healed over.'

improved, Cuéllar returned to seek out the local O'Cahan chieftain, whose stronghold at Castleroe was situated upriver form Coleraine on the Bann. O'Cahan, however, refused to see him. Cuéllar believed it was because he had given an assurance to Fitzwilliam not to assist Armada survivors: 'no me quiso oyr ni ber, porque decían que abían dado la palabra al gran governador de la reyna de no tener en su tierra ningún español ni dexarle andar en ella.'[337]

At this point, another curious episode, as if in the form of a comic interlude, embellished Cuéllar's stay in the Castelroe-Coleraine neighbourhood. He described making the acquaintance of some local girls whose home he began to frequent: 'y allí abía unas moças muy hermosas, con las quales yo tenía much amistad, y entraba en su casar algunos ratos a conbersación y parlar.'[338] One evening while on a visit with them he was accosted by two English soldiers who sought to make him their prisoner and take him to Dublin. Cuéllar did not resist, but pointed out that because of his injuries he could not make the journey by foot, so the soldiers sent for a horse. While they waited, Cuéllar alleged the soldiers began to romp with the girls: 'y empeçaron a retoçar con las moças.'[339] Making the most of the opportunity that was offered by their distraction, Cuéllar claimed the mother of the house signalled to him to make his escape. He did so by high-tailing it back into the hills.

Cuéllar was now on the run, with English troops beginning to fan out into the surrounding area to track him down. Yet once again, locals came to his aid by directing him towards a bishop who was actively assisting fugitive Spaniards to escape to Scotland: 'Tenía doce españoles consigo para los hacer pasar en Escocia.'[340] The bishop in question was Redmond O'Gallagher, Bishop of Derry, a noted Spanish sympathiser. In early 1586, when the first rumours that the King of Spain was assembling a large fleet at Lisbon began to circulate, a diversionary expedition was believed to be earmarked for Ireland. The Dublin government believed 'that the pretended Bishop of Derry was the chief instrument therein, having travelled into France, Spain, and Scotland; and being now again gone abroad with great assurances for the effecting of it'.[341]

O'Gallagher was from the prominent south Donegal clan. He had been educated at the Franciscan monastery at Donegal and served as Bishop of Killala before being appointed to the See of Derry in 1568. In 1575, he had also been given responsibility for the vacant See of Armagh, which was subsequently granted to

[337] Ibid., p. 218, 'he would not hear nor see me because he had given his word to the great governor of the Queen not to keep any Spaniard in their territory, nor let him move around in it'.
[338] Ibid. 'and there were some very beautiful girls there, with whom I became rather friendly, and I used to call to their place occasionally, for company or a chat.'
[339] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 218.
[340] Ibid., p. 219, 'he had twelve Spaniards with him with the object of getting passages to Scotland'.
[341] *CSP Ireland*, III, p. 11.

Bishop Edmund Magauran in 1587. As Bishop of Derry, O'Gallagher possessed two residences: a house in Derry, and one at Fahan, on the west side of the Inishowen peninsula by the shore of Lough Swilly.[342] He maintained correspondence with all of the Catholic lords of Ulster, but had close associations with the O'Dogherty's, Lords of Inishowen. O'Gallagher was noted as a frequent visitor to Sean óg O'Doherty at Illagh.[343] But by early 1589, O'Dogherty, and another of O'Gallagher's associates, Conor O'Devanny (Bishop of Down and Connor), had been taken captive and imprisoned in Dublin castle.[344] Therefore, it might be presumed that he was not at his normal residence in Derry. Burt castle was then occupied by O'Donnell's 'Composition' troops under Major Kelly and the Hovenden brothers (close associates of the Earl of Tyrone), and it was unlikely that he was at Illagh given the massacre of *Trinidad Valencera* survivors that had transpired there. Therefore, one potential location for where Cuéllar encountered Gallagher may well have been the residence at Fahan. The shoreline location on Lough Swilly would prove convenient for the discreet procurement of a vessel for Scotland.

According to Cuéllar, when they met O'Gallagher was dressed in civilian clothing and in hiding. He had already assisted survivors from the *Trinidad Valencera* prior to the group Cuéllar found sheltering with him.[345] During this time he claimed they conversed, most likely in Latin, about the bishop's hopes to bring about Spanish military intervention in Ireland: 'y habló conmigo en algunas cosas tocantes a la perdida de aquel reyno, y cómo su Magestad le restauraría, y que él avía de venir a España lo más presto que pudiese en desembarcándome en Escoçia.'[346] Cuéllar's belief that Gallagher intended to travel to Spain appears to have been accurate. Gallagher subsequently left Ireland, but whether he actually travelled to Spain is uncertain. In the spring of 1590, he was in Scotland where he sought to establish a league between the 'Spanish Party' there and those in Ireland who favoured Spanish intervention.[347] Cuéllar remained with O'Gallagher for six days, by which time a small vessel was procured to transport him and eighteen others to Scotland. He had survived his Irish ordeal. Perhaps five hundred or so escaped altogether, around one tenth of those who had reached the coast.

[342] Bonner, B. 'Reamonn O'Gallachóir Bishop of Derry', in *Donegal Annual,* vol. IX (no.1, 1974), p. 46; Devlin, C., 'Some Episcopal Lives' in Jeffries H.A., and Devlin C., *History of the Diocese of Derry from Earliest Times*, Dublin, p. 124.
[343] Bonner, 'Reamonn O'Gallachóir', p. 46.
[344] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 63.
[345] Ibid, p. 44.
[346] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 219, 'He also talked to me about some matters concerning the loss of that Kingdom, and how His Majesty would restore it, adding that he himself was to go to Spain as soon as he could after I reached Scotland.'
[347] *CSP Scotland*, X, p. 266.

The King of Scotland is a Nobody

Sometime in April 1589, Cuéllar embarked for Scotland in a small open vessel along with eighteen others. They were the latest of a steady trickle of Armada survivors to leave Ireland. During the previous October, Sorley Boy MacDonnell had arranged the transport of between sixty and eighty survivors of the *Trinidad Valencera* and *Girona*.[348] They were followed by a group of fifteen, whose crossing was facilitated by Thomas Carleill, warden of Carrickfergus castle.[349] During the second week of February eighteen Spaniards were given passage, again by Sorley Boy.[350] About the same time a group of nine Armada men were reported passing through Strabane for the coast after setting out from Donegal.[351] Cuéllar's group arrived after an eventful three-day journey in heavy weather, apparently having been blown northwards among the Western Isles. Glasgow was the most likely destination, though they may have called into any port on the Firth of Clyde. The first contingent had been brought to Ayr, where they had been treated well by local burghers, who supplied food, accommodation and even pairs of shoes for those who were barefoot.[352]

In contrast to his lengthy account of his Irish adventures, Cuéllar's description of his time at Edinburgh was very brief. Nevertheless, it is an intriguing passage, not least for the low opinion he exhibited of James VI: 'el rey de Escoçia no es nada ni tiene authoridad ni talle de rey, y no se muebe un paso ni come un bocado que no sea por orden de la reyna.'[353] Such disdain was predicated on naive expectations of the benevolence of the Scottish crown. Hearsay in Ireland hinted that 'the King of Scotland welcomed all the Spaniards who put into the ports of his Kingdom, clothed them and provided boats so that they could get back to Spain.' However, he was dismayed by the conditions he experienced in Edinburgh. Left destitute to roam the streets, he and others were subject to confrontations by local mobs in an altogether hostile atmosphere in the city:

> Que nos apodavan y llamavan 'idólatras y malos christianos que adoráis ymágenes y al papa, ahorcado sea el papa y [...] para la missa'. Éstas y otras mill herejías nos decían, y si alguno respondía algo, cargavan sobre él mill [...] matallo, y no podía vivir ni estar en tan mal reyno y con tan mal rey.[354]

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[348] AGS Estado 596, f.20; also, *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 508.
[349] Martin and Parker, *Spanish Armada*, p. 224.
[350] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 132.
[351] Ibid.
[352] Parker & Martin, *Spanish Armada*, p. 225.
[353] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 220, 'The King of Scotland is a nobody and has neither the authority nor the bearing of a king; and he doesn't budge an inch or eat a morsel unless by order of the Queen.'
[354] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 220, 'They called us names and shouted, 'Idolaters and bad Christians, who adore images and the Pope! The Pope be hanged! [...] for the Mass!' They said these and a thousand other heretical things to us, and if any of us answered back, a thousand ruffians would

All of this Cuéllar blamed on the Stuart monarch, and the influence the English queen had over him. But the rumours of generous treatment to survivors that had so raised his expectations were, in fact, true. As we saw above, the residents of Ayr proved sympathetic, and the survivors were subsequently 'guided by men sent from one gentleman to another, until they arrived in Edinburgh, where the King was.'[355] On arrival in the city lodgings, food and clothes were provided, before passage was arranged on Scottish merchant vessels bound for Le Havre.[356] Portuguese pilot, Antonio Martínez,[357] and Juan Lázaro,[358] both of the *Trinidad Valencera*, who were among this group testified to the good treatment they received at the behest of the King before they were ferried to France. Four hundred or so survivors of the *Gran Grifón*, which ran aground on Fair Isle in the Shetlands, were similarly accommodated when they arrived in November.[359] The King entertained their commanding officer, Juan Gómez de Medina, and issued instructions to the provost and corporation of the city to provide assistance.[360] Some £95 1*s* 6*d* Scottish was outlaid on food and clothing for the Spaniards, which were supplemented by voluntary contributions.[361]

The Scottish King was, nominally at least, an ally of England. Much of his foreign diplomacy in the two decades before he succeeded to the English throne was guided by his desire to gain recognition of his candidacy in England.[362] The treaty of Berwick, signed in July 1586, set out the terms of a mutual defence alliance between the two countries. At the height of the Armada crisis James VI openly declared his support for England. But this was little more than rhetoric, announced only at the last minute. In the lead up to the Armada campaign agents of Spain and England both canvassed his support. During the spring Colonel William Sempill and Lord John Maxwell were despatched from Paris by Spanish ambassador to the French court, Bernardino de Mendoza, in the hope of cultivating support for a diversionary attack on England that would draw crown troops northwards once the Armada had been launched.[363] In July, Sempill submitted Spanish proposals that consisted of a pension of 100,000 ducats, in return for which James was requested to renounce his rights

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pounce on him to kill him. It was impossible to live or even be in such a dreadful kingdom with such a bad king.'

[355] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 509.

[356] *CSP Scotland*, IX, p. 624.

[357] AGS GyM 244, f.261.

[358] AGS GyM 262, f.5.

[359] *CSP Scotland*, IX, pp. 638, 656.

[360] Ibid., p. 656.

[361] Saenz-Cambra, C., *Scotland and Philip II, 1580-1598: Politics, Religion, Diplomacy and Lobbying*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2003, p. 136, fn. 781.

[362] Fry C., *Diplomacy and Deception: King James VI of Scotland's Foreign Relations with Europe (c.1584-1603)*, Doctoral thesis, St Andrews University, October, 2014.

[363] Brown, K., 'The Making of a Politique: The Counter Reformation and the Regional Politics of John, Eighth Lord Maxwell', in *The Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 66, No. 182, part 2 (October 1987), p. 165.

to the crowns of England and Ireland. Once the invasion commenced 12,000 troops and funds would be sent along with an ambassador to deal with issues of war or peace.[364]

Aware that James had entertained offers from Spain, the English ambassador, anxious to ensure Scottish co-operation, belatedly entered in to a bidding war. Asheby offered formal recognition of James as Elizabeth's successor, an English dukedom, an annual pension of £5,000 and personal guard, and troops to patrol the border region.[365] A delighted James enthusiastically declared himself an enemy of Spain and offered to Elizabeth 'my forces, my person and all that I may command to be employed against yon strangers in whatsoever fashion and whatsoever means as may best serve for the defence of your country.'[366] Unbeknownst to James and Asheby, the Armada had already been chased away from the English Channel. When the special envoy he requested from London to ratify the agreement, arrived in September [New Style], James was stunned to learn that Elizabeth had refused to honour Asheby's promises.[367] Furthermore, Asheby was severely reprimanded by Sir Francis Walsingham for his 'great oversight in the offering to the King', which produced a grovelling apology from the ambassador.[368] The upshot of this apparent *volte-face* by the Tudor monarch, according to Cynthia Fry, was a move by the Stuart King away from a reliance on England, to a more pro-Catholic, and pro-Spanish demeanour in his foreign relations, most notable in the 'Spanish Blanks' affair of four years later.[369] More immediately, she suggested, his toleration of the presence of upwards of 1,000 Armada survivors in and around Edinburgh could be regarded as a diplomatic ploy: 'rather than being an embarrassment, James was using the survivors as a diplomatic tool to remind Elizabeth of his value, and to advertise the same sentiment to Spain.'[370]

Indeed, Sir William Asheby noted a sudden lethargy in the willingness of the King to comply with further English demands. Asheby had requested the arrest of a number of Irish nobles who had served on the *Gran Grifón* with Juan Gómez de Medina. Their participation in the Armada had amounted to an act of treason against their sovereign, Queen Elizabeth, for which Tudor officials sought to have them extradited and put on trial in an English court. This precipitated their hasty departure with Medina in January 1589, when he departed for Spain in a boat provided by the Earl of Bothwell. Medina explained his sudden flight so that he

[364] Saenz-Cambra, C., 'Colonel William Sempill of Lochwinnoch (1546-1630): A Strategist for Spain', in *Tiempos Modernos*, 13 (2006/1), p. 7.
[365] *CSP Scotland*, IX, p. 589.
[366] Fry, *Diplomacy and Deception*, p. 83, fn. 9.
[367] Ibid., pp. 84-9.
[368] *CSP Scotland*, IX, p. 596.
[369] Fry, *Diplomacy and Deception,* pp. 86-89.
[370] Ibid., p. 88.

could intercede with Philip II for the repatriation of the men he left behind.[371] The Irish he brought with him rather than risk their arrest. Asheby, monitoring events at the Stuart court, admitted that although the King went through the motions of complying with his request: 'his commandment would take no effect, such friends and favour thei [sic] did find here of divers of the nobilitie, to harbour and convey them secretly away.'[372] Yet, when Medina reached Spain he claimed it was James VI who secretly ordered the procurement of the vessel that enabled their prompt departure.[373]

If resentment at the diplomatic snub by Elizabeth motivated James' tardiness regarding the Spaniards and Irish renegades in his kingdom, Cuéllar's rather dismissive appraisal of the Scottish King was fuelled by the fallout from the diplomatic machinations at street level. Even though Cuéllar's view of the state of affairs is at odds with Fry's assessment of the diplomatic 'game' that was afoot, that he formed a contrary opinion based on his experiences is understandable. Indeed, while his portrayal of James VI might be considered unduly biased, his account of his experiences in the Scottish capital appears to be a fair reflection of the situation in the streets. He cannot have been privy to the ulterior motives of the diplomatic manoeuvrings of the Stuart monarchy but it is reasonable to assume that his version is an honest account from his perspective. Besides, it could be said that he encapsulated, albeit in a highly ironic manner, the conundrum faced by James VI in his pursuit of legitimacy for his claims to the English throne: that Queen Elizabeth held the 'whip' in their relationship. While constrained to co-operate with the Queen, the only means of leverage he felt that he had over her for the embarrassment she had caused him the previous year was to tolerate the presence of the Armada survivors in his country.

Diplomatic inertia clearly had an adverse effect on the unwitting 'pawns' in this royal spat: the Spaniards loitering around Edinburgh. Cuéllar became convinced that if it was not for the intercession of the Catholic nobility, the Spaniards would have been forced to endure much harsher conditions:

> no hiço bien a ninguno ni dio un real de limosna, pasando la mayor necesidad del mundo que pasavamos 600 españoles que a aquel reyno binimos, en el qual estubimos más de seis meses desnudos, así como nos vinimos de Irlanda y de otras partes que allá acudían a buscar su remedio y viaje para España. Antes creo que estava ya muy persuadido por parte de la reyna de Inglaterra para que nos entregase a ella, y si no acudieran los señores y condes cathólicos de aquel reyno (que los ay muchos y muy grandes cavalleros), a favorecernos y a hablar por nosotros al rey y en

[371] Martin and Parker, *Spanish Armada*, p. 225.
[372] *Cal Scottish Papers*, vol. IX, p. 679.
[373] AGS GyM 246, f.295.

los consejos que sobre esto se haçían sin duda fuéramos vendidos y entregados a los ingleses.' [374]

While substantial numbers of Spaniards remained in Scotland, the potential for intrigue with pro-Spanish Catholics was a cause of concern for the pro-English faction at court, and the Tudor administration in London. Asheby noted warily: 'their captains are looked for in this city.'[375] Anecdotes such as that reported by Thomas Fowler probably didn't help matters. He attended a dinner hosted by the Earl of Bothwell, whose guests included four Spanish captains. The conversation inevitably turned to a renewal of the English enterprise. Fowler related 'but would God you heard the combat by words that they fought with us, especially the earl, the Spaniards and Captain Haggertson...and England was conquered even there with words only; but yet all was in parting put up as table talk.'[376] Cuéllar alleged that the Catholic nobles to be rid of James VI: 'y así ay grandes dissensiones entre los señores y él y no le tiene[n] buena voluntad por lo poco que él, deseando mucho verle acabado y que la mag[esta]d del rey nuestro s[eño]r entre en él, y ponga en pie la yglesia de Dios, que tan destruyda allí la tienen.'[377] This, however, was an overstatement of Scottish affairs. The Catholics did not wish to depose their King but were willing to resort to the Spanish monarch to aid them regain control in the kingdom for the Catholic cause.

Letters signed by Earls of Huntly, Morton, and Lord Claude Hamilton, were sent to Philip II urging him to renew his invasion of England by way of Scotland. They assured him of their co-operation in any future enterprise, appealed for a force of 6,000 troops for Scotland, and offered to seize the King and force him to convert to Catholicism.[378] They wanted change but did not offer the crown of Scotland to the Spanish King as the Irish would do during the 1590s. James, for his part, appears to have been content to tolerate a certain level of intrigue in so far as it would provoke anxiety in London, but he was quick to clampdown on dissent if it threatened to escalate. The contents of these letters, when they were intercepted

[374] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 219-20, 'Not a penny did he [James VI] give in alms, though the six hundred of us Spaniards who came to that Kingdom suffered the direst privations. We were more than six months there, as naked as when we arrived from Ireland and other places, trying to get help and a passage to Spain. I think, rather, that he had by then been persuaded by the Queen of England to hand us over to her; and if the Catholic lords and counts of that kingdom – for there are many, and very important gentlemen – had not come to help us and speak to the King on our behalf, and in the Councils which met to discuss this, we should certainly have been betrayed and handed over to the English.'

[375] *CSP Scotland*, IX, pp. 641.

[376] *CSP Scotland*, IX, p. 670.

[377] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 220, 'and so there is much dissension between him [James VI] and his lords, who bear him no good will for doing so little, they want to be shut of him, and that His Majesty, our king, take over to restore God's church, which is in such a parlous state there.'

[378] Saenz-Cambra, C., 'Colonel William Sempill of Lochwinnoch (1546-1630): A Strategist for Spain', in *Tiempos Modernos*, 13 (2006/1), p. 10-11.

by English agents, alarmed London and prompted the English ambassador to suggest that warships should be stationed at Newcastle or Berwick as a precaution. He also pressed once more for the removal of the Spaniards, but the King offered a less than convincing excuse for their continued presence:

> The chiefest stay hath been their want, that they are not able to pay their passage; and partly fear they have to be intercepted by England. But better it were to give them free passage than that they should make their abode in these parts where they find too many well willers; especially all papists and discontented person.[379]

Nevertheless, James did take action against some of his wayward nobles. Edinburgh was put on a state of alert 'for the King's defence, while Huntly, a royal favourite, and Hamilton were arrested for treason.'[380] Both were subsequently released. Huntly, having regained his liberty proceeded to threaten rebellion in the north during April. But James made a show of force that culminated in the 'Brig o Dee' affair, in which Huntly, unwilling to engage in battle against the King, submitted. Whether or not the earlier exhortations for Spanish intervention had prompted this escalation, aside from the so-called 'table talk' at Bothwell's dinner party, there is no evidence that any of the Armada contingent in Scotland engaged in conspiracy.

By the summer of 1589, the prolonged presence of the Spaniards in and around Edinburgh polarised local sentiments. While there was inertia on the diplomatic level, political tensions had escalated at street level. James VI's ministers urged that the Spaniards be sent away. But while the King was willing to have them embarked, the Scottish royal coffers were in an almost permanent state of penury. The large numbers that had congregated caused unease, and soon Protestant ministers 'began to speak plainly in the pulpit about them.'[381] With groups of Spaniards loitering about the capital, Leith, Burntisland and Kircaldy, areas that were predominantly Protestant, there was an increasing likelihood of antagonism towards the Papist Spaniards and the kind of violent confrontations described by Cuéllar.[382]

Letters of Safe Conduct

By then, diplomatic tensions had begun to rise also. The English were pushing for the main body of men to be shipped as soon as possible 'rather than let them disperse here ready to work mischief.'[383] In London, intelligence suggested that Parma intended to send assistance to the Scots Catholics.[384] Three English warships

[379] Cal Scottish Papers, vol. IX, p. 705.
[380] Ibid., p. 709.
[381] Saenz Cambra, *Scotland and Philip II,* p. 136, fn. 779.
[382] Ibid., p. 139.
[383] *CSP Scotland*, IX, p. 709.
[384] AGS Estado 597, f.50.

were dispatched to patrol the approaches to Edinburgh and to bring an end to the rumour and intrigue surrounding the Spaniards. In June, their captains were put ashore at Leith, and presented James with an outline of Her Majesty's concerns and a request that the Spaniards be removed from his kingdom at the earliest convenience. The King of Scots and his ministers agreed, but they claimed to have no money to transport them. Asheby advocated retaining the captains as ransom as a means of covering the cost of shipping. Ultimately, it was diplomacy that resolved the predicament of Armada survivors in Edinburgh. Cuéllar credited the diplomatic overtures of the Duke of Parma for the eventual repatriation of the Spaniards. About this time he offered to pay the costs of transport and proposed a payment of 5 crowns for each Spaniard conveyed to Flanders, but stipulated that safe-conduct would first have to be granted by Elizabeth.[385] However, the price demanded by shipping agents was 10 shilling per head, and they too, sought English guarantees of safe passage before undertaking the journey. Any journey to Flanders would involve sailing the entire length of the English east coast. In November, poor weather had forced the ships carrying the first contingent out of Edinburgh to coast along the English shore, and on two occasions they had been forced to shelter in English ports. In the second port local officials tried to impound the ships when they learned there were Spaniards onboard. The ships were detained for three weeks until guarantees of safe passage from Queen Elizabeth allowed them to proceed.[386]

Before the English ships departed, an incident at Leith threatened to derail the whole process of repatriation. A confrontation between a group of Spaniards and some of the English sailors resulted in one of the English (a trumpeter) being stabbed to death.[387] Before any guarantees were handed over the English demanded the arrest of those responsible. However, the Spaniards declined to identify them, and the situation remained deadlocked for a month.[388] In mid-July the English ambassador received certificates of safe passage from London but was instructed not to hand the guarantees over until 'satisfaction be had for the murder of the trumpeter.'[389] By early August, four ships belonging to Scottish merchants, William Napier and George Thurbrand, had been contracted by Parma, and were ready to sail from Leith. Still, the English were demanding satisfaction over the murdered sailor. His killer had not been apprehended, so they demanded that two or three officers be stayed from leaving Edinburgh. The licence of safe passage had not been presented, and the Spaniards were warned they could take their chances

[385] Saenz Cambra, C., *Scotland and Philip II,* p. 138, fn. 793.
[386] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 509.
[387] Martin and Parker, *Spanish Armada*, pp. 248-49.
[388] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Burghley, June 20/30, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp114-129).
[389] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Walsingham, July 14/24, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp114-129).

on the high seas without them: 'If they meet English or Dutch ships without safe conduct they will get their desserts.'[390]

Eventually, Antolínez and Legoretta relented, and left one man with the provost of Edinburgh. They explained the guilty man was now on the run somewhere in Scotland. As a gesture of good faith they handed over another poor unfortunate 'whereof, this Spaniard shall be answerable at the King's will in the custody of the Magistrate.' Satisfied, the English ambassador handed over the passports. On 26 July/5 August Asheby reported that the four ships had departed Leith for Dunkirk the previous day.[391] In all, 660 Spaniards were embarked, of whom 260 were 'sick, lame and miserable.'[392] However, not everyone wished to travel. Some were content to remain in Scotland and serve in the houses of the families that had accommodated them, preferring a 'life at ease in this country than to follow the wars in Flanders in want and danger.'[393] Shortly after their departure 80-100 men of the San Juan de Sicilia, who had been with the MacLeans of Mull for the previous ten months, arrived in Edinburgh too late to take passage.[394] They would remain in the city for a further three months before transport was arranged for their departure.

Attack of the Sea Beggars

One year after his courtmartial in the North Sea, Cuéllar found himself sailing through the same stretch of water where the ordeal had transpired, but in the opposite direction. This time he was heading towards Dunkirk. The small convoy proceeded southwards along the English coast without incident. It put in at Yarmouth for shelter during adverse weather, where the Queen's passport was respected by the local authorities. According Van Meteren, the boats and their passengers 'were there stayed for a time until the Councels pleasure was knowen; who in regard of their manifold miseries, though they were enemies, wincked at their pasage.'[395] The voyage resumed until the harbour of Dunkirk came into view. Then a squadron of the notorious Dutch 'Sea Beggars', suddenly pounced on the

[390] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Walsingham, July 22/August 1, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp114-129).
[391] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Burghley, July 26/August 5, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp114-129).
[392] Saenz-Cambra, *Scotland and Philip II,* pp. 139-40.
[393] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Burghley, July 26/August 5, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp114-129).
[394] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Burghley. July 31/August 10, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp114-129).
[395] Van Meteren, E. 'The miraculous victory achieved by the English Fleete, under the discreet and happy conduct of the right honourable, right prudent, and valiant lord, the Lord Charles Howard, Lord high Admirall of England...', in Hakluyt R. (ed.), *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation,* vol. IV, p. 232.

unarmed merchantmen. According to Martin and Parker, the Dutch were expecting the convoy, having been tipped off by English officials.[396] They attacked, forcing the defenceless ships to run for the shallows in a desperate attempt to escape. Once again, Cuéllar provided a graphic description of what transpired:

> Quiso Dios que de quatro bajeles en que veníamos, se escaparon los dos y enbistieron en tierra donde se rompieron e hizieron pedaços, y el enemigo, biendo el remedio que tomávamos de enbestir en tierra, nos dio una brava carga de artillería, de suerte que nos fue forçado echarnos a nado porque no nos acabasen allí. De el puerto de Dunquerque no nos podían socorrer con las barcas, porque el enemigo las cañoneaba bravamente; por otra parte abía mucha mar y viento de norte. Allí nos vimos en grandíssimo aprieto de perdernos todos. Con todo, nos echamos a nado sobre maderos. Hahogáronse unos soldados y un capitán escoçés. Yo salí en tierra en camissa sin otro género de ropa y en Dunquerque me socorrieron unos soldados de Medina [del Campo] que allí estavan.[397]

According to the Duke of Parma, who related the incident in a letter to Philip II, nine Dutch warships attacked the convoy. In an attempt to escape the cannonade, three of the vessels deliberately ran aground outside Dunkirk harbour, enabling most of those on board to reach the shore unharmed. The fourth, and largest, was taken by the Dutch. Despite the protestations of the ship's captain, who presented the English letter of safe-conduct, the Dutch claimed they were not bound by any English commitments. According to Parma, they proceeded to throw overboard 240 of the rank and file, but spared ten individuals for ransom. Those who had already succeeded in reaching the shore managed to drag twenty survivors from the water. Outraged by the attack, Parma authorized Spanish-backed privateers based at Dunkirk and Niuewpoort to make retaliatory raids against Dutch shipping, declaring 'someday they would pay for their evil deeds.'[398] At Edinburgh, word evidently reached the city of the attack at Dunkirk because, when they finally departed for Spain in November, the remnants of the crew of the *San Juan de Sicilia* opted for the Atlantic route home, as they 'cast about the north of Scotland for fear of interception by Hollanders.'[399]

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[396] Martin, and Parker, *Spanish Armada*, p. 228.

[397] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 221, 'God willed that of the four boats in which we were sailing two escaped and were run aground where they broke to pieces; and the enemy, seeing that our plan was to run aground, gave us a heavy discharge of artillery, so that we were forced to jump overboard to avoid being killed where we stood. From the port of Dunkirk they couldn't come to rescue us with boats as these came under constant enemy bombardment. Besides, there was a high sea and northerly wind. Nevertheless we cast ourselves afloat on planks. Some soldiers and a Scottish captain were drowned. I got ashore in my shirt with no other clothes of any kind and in Dunkirk was helped by some soldiers from Medina who were there.'

[398] AGS Estado 597, f.53.

[399] *CSP Scotland*, X, William Asheby to Burghley & Walsingham, November 18/28, 1589 (https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/scotland/vol10/pp186-206).

Cuéllar reached the Low Countries as he had arrived in Ireland: clinging to flotsam in the hope of saving himself. He ended the *Carta* by stating that Spanish forces had meted out retribution on the Dutch for the attack at Dunkirk: 'ya ellos lo van pagando, porque los nuestrs had degollado más de 400 olandeses que an cogido después acá.'[400] The incident he referred to occurred at the town of Heel in early September. Military operations by the Army of Flanders at that time focused on Isle of Bommel. Incapacitated by sickness, the Duke of Parma had delegated command of the field army to Count Charles Mansfelt. He laid siege to Heel, which was defended by a garrison of five hundred Dutch troops. When the town surrendered the defenders were given terms, but it seems Mansfelt, somehow lost control of the troops. After the Dutch lay down their arms they were massacred.[401] Cuéllar's gloating over this incident provided a rather grim ending to his narrative. But we must remember that he was inured to suffering and cruelty in an age when the concession of mercy during military engagements was frequently regarded as superfluous, rather than a virtue. At last in Spanish-held territory once more, Cuéllar set down his recent experiences in writing.

[400] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 221, 'they are paying for it now, because our lot have beheaded more than four hundred Dutchmen who were captured here since.'
[401] AGS Estado 597, f.56; also, Coloma C., *Las guerras de Los Estados Bajos*, Reprint, Madrid, 2010, p. 276.

Chapter Three

Later Career: 1589-1606

The Duke of Parma and Paris 1589-91

Captain Cuéllar arrived in Flanders in mid-to-late August 1589. He arrived destitute. In the *Carta*, he descibed how he was helped out of the water by soldiers of the local garrison wearing nothing but a shirt: 'Yo salí en tierra en camissa sin otro género de ropa y en Dunquerque me socorriero[n] unos soldados de Medina que allí estava[n].'[402] He admitted he was a pitiful sight: 'Fue lástima vernos entrar en la villa otra vez desnudos en carnes.'[403] Cuéllar and most of the other Armada survivors were inducted into the Army of Flanders, with which he would serve through much of the following decade. The military treasury released funds to clothe, feed, and rearm the new arrivals, most of who were in a ragged state given their recent ordeals. On 10 September, Cuéllar was issued two months wages (50 *escudos*), ostensibly for this purpose.[404] In a letter to the King in November, Parma stated that 300 of those who reached Dunkirk were granted a period of convalescence before returning to active service, and that 'all were serving well.'[405] We know from the *Carta* that Cuéllar was sent to Antwerp, perhaps, as Parma intimated, to rest and recuperate. Most likely, he stayed in the large fortified citadel on the southern edge of the city, which housed the largest Spanish garrison in the Low Countries. On 25 October, he was summoned to Binche, where he was assigned to the Duke's general staff.[406] Commensurate with this appointment he received a monthly salary of 40 escudos. Henceforth, for the next eighteen months, he would serve under the preeminent general of his day, and accompanied him on one of his most celebrated campaigns: the relief of Paris in 1590.

Prior to the 1588 campaign, Parma had been poised to strike into the heartland of the Dutch revolt (Holland and Zeeland). However, Philip II prioritised the 'Enterprise of England', and then the affairs of France, which stymied Parma's plans. Geoffrey Parker noted that 1588 marked a turning-point in the conflict in the Low Countries: it 'fatally weakened the prestige of Philip II and put an end to Parma's impressive string of victories.'[407] In 1589, Philip's carefully orchestrated schemes in France

[402] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 221, 'I got ashore in my shirt with no other clothes of any kind and in Dunkirk was helped by some soldiers from Medina who were there'.
[403] Ibid., 'we were a pitiful sight entering the town, stark naked once again.'
[404] AGS CMC 2ª época, 879. Payments to *entretenidos* in the Army of Flanders 1585-90.
[405] AGS Estado 597, f.75.
[406] AGRB SEG, Registre aux Ordres No. 12, f.120, *mandato*, El Duque de Parma y Plasencia, 25 de Octubre 1589 (see Appendix Five).
[407] Parker, *Dutch Revolt*, p. 221.

began to unravel also. The death of Henry III paved the way for the Huguenot, Henry of Navarre (as Henry IV), to succeed to the throne. Desperate to prevent his accession and maintain the status quo, Philip diverted funds and troops from the Low Countries. Consequently, the last decade of Philip II's reign was marked by a concentration of available forces along the southern frontier with France, and a regression of the Spanish position against the Dutch. Maurice of Nassau succeeded in winning back the entire Northern provinces until, by the late 1590s, the frontier between Dutch and Spanish-held territory conformed pretty much to the modern boundaries between Holland and Belgium.

Victory for Henry IV over the Spanish-backed Catholic League at Ivry, in March 1590, raised the prospect that Paris, held by the Catholic League, would fall to French royalist forces. Possession of Paris was a key element in the power struggle. If the capital fell to Henry, Philip II feared, it would lead to the collapse of his alliance with the League, and end his influence over affairs in France. Consequently Parma was instructed to lead 20,000 troops to Paris with all haste.[408] He had already been compelled by the King to send 1,800 troops into France the previous year, many of whom fell at Ivry. Parma was opposed to open intervention in France on the grounds that it would squander, without gain, Spanish arms, and invite an offensive by the Dutch.[409] Lynch displayed little sympathy for the Spanish King's position on the 'French question'. He regarded Philip II's priorities in France as surrendering the security of the Netherlands to a policy of imperialism.[410]

Notwithstanding Parma's reservations, field operations against the Dutch were suspended. Count Mansfelt was left in charge at Brussels while in August, Parma hurried south. We know that Cuéllar accompanied him. But we don't know precisely what his role was during the campaign. He merely stated subsequently that he was at the relief of Paris, and the taking of Lagny and Corbeil.[411] When Parma reached Meaux (22 August), his force consisted of 13,500 infantry and 3,500 cavalry.[412] He had hoped to follow the north bank of the Marne towards Paris, but found his way blocked by the French royal army at Chelles. Instead, he moved upriver to Lagny, which commanded a stone bridge across the river. The town was taken by storm on 5 September, following a brief bombardment. Most of the 800-1,000 defenders appear to have been killed, though Carlos Coloma claimed that half of the garrison survived and was allowed to depart.[413] Parma was able to cross the Marne unmolested. Outflanked, Henry IV withdrew. The way to Paris lay open and the first relief supplies for the beleaguered populace began to reach the city.

[408] Ibid., p. 226.
[409] van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse*, vol. V, pp. 285-86.
[410] Lynch, J., *Spain under the Habsburgs*, vol. I, pp. 31-32.
[411] AGS Estado 1692. unfoliated, Memoriales de partes de Estado, 31 March 1604.
[412] Ibid., Estado 598, f.112.
[413] Coloma, *Las guerras de los Estados Bajos*, p. 313.

With the siege lifted, Parma had succeeded in his principal aim. But French royalist garrisons still held strategic towns around the capital, notably Corbeil, south of the city on the Seine. Therefore, Parma moved to seize it with the intention of opening the river as an artery of supply.[414] Corbeil had a garrison of 2,000 men,[415] which held out for over three weeks until it was finally taken on 16 October.[416] Parma then entered Paris to a rapturous reception. But he did not stay. Eager to return to Brussels, he left a 3,000-strong garrison, and set out from Meaux for Brussels, on 3 November, with around 6,000 foot and 3,000 cavalry. He arrived in Brussels on 4 December with 3,000-4,000 men, having left a further 4,500 with the League in northern France.[417]

Piedmont and Savoy 1592-93

In the spring of 1591 (7 March), Cuéllar was granted a three-month leave of absence to return to Spain.[418] His leave licence cited a generic line 'pressing and just causes', which excused him to travel to Spain: 'Haviendo representado el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, entretenido que ha cerca de nuestra persona las forçozas y justas causas que le mueven a dar una vuelta a España por cosas de su particular y pedidonos licencia para ello.'[419] Most likely, this was prompted by notification of settlement of salary arrears owed to him since the Magallanes expedition (see p. 141). Parma authorised a letter of commendation on his behalf, which advocated a royal reward (*merced*) in lieu of exemplary service.[420]

As events transpired, Cuéllar would remain away from Flanders until 1594. He was in Madrid in October, when applying to the Council of War for his *merced*, and for compensation for wages lost due to his shipwreck in Ireland.[421] He did not receive compensation (secretary of the council, Esteban de Ibarra, forwarded his petition to Lisbon).[422] The issue of a *merced* was referred to the Council of State and after a six-month interval he was eventually awarded a commission that stipulated he be given charge of an infantry unit in Flanders when occasion should arise.[423] During

[414] Ibid., p. 316.
[415] Van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse*, V, p. 300.
[416] Coloma, *Las guerras de los Estados Bajos*, p. 319.
[417] van der Essen, *Alexandre Farnèse*, V, pp. 309-10.
[418] AGRB, SEG, 13, f.69, *licencia*, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 7 de Março 1591.
[419] Ibid.
[420] AGS Estado 1704, f.361, 'y carta para su Magestad en su recomendación en que dize el duque [de Parma] que el dicho capitán se perdió en Irlanda yendo en la dicha armada de Inglaterra y pasó a Flandes donde sirvió con mucha satisfación y supplica a su Magestad le haga merced en su pretensiones.'
[421] AGS GyM 345, f.35.
[422] With thanks to Professor Geoffrey Parker for identifying Ibarra's rubric.
[423] AGRB, SEG, no.15, f.307, El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 30 de Abril 1592; 'Saved que el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar nos ha hecho presentación de una cédula de su Magestad dirigida al señor Duque de Parma del tenor siguiente.'

the intervening period Philip II had written to consult Parma about the award.[424] This apparent indecision on the part of the King is interesting. Perhaps there were qualms about Cuéllar's competency given that his court-martial during the Armada campaign had been reported to the king. Philip had been briefed on the affair by Balthasar de Zúñiga, at the request of Medina Sidonia.[425] Nevertheless, Parma evidently signalled his approval, and on 30 April 1592, the award was made which included a monthly salary (*entretenimiento*) of 30 escudos.[426] During this spell it is likely he also visited Seville, in order to collect arrears owed to him for service in Brazil from the Casa de Contratación. A *cédula* had been draughted to that effect in 1590, which sanctioned the release of funds to him.[427]

Departure from Spain

Cuéllar most likely set out for Flanders once more, sometime during mid-to-late summer of 1592. It is clear that his intention was to travel via the 'Spanish Road' (Barcelona to Genoa, and onwards to Flanders).[428] And it is quite possible that he tagged on to the entourage of Don Pedro Enríquez de Guzmán, Count of Fuentes who was dispatched to Flanders at this time. Fuentes' journey took him from Barcelona to Nice, where he was entertained by the Duke of Savoy (Charles-Emmanuel), son-in-law of the Spanish King, and then on to Genoa.[429] His stopover with the duke was ostensibly a courtesy call, but he had been instructed by Philip to urge him to return to his capital at Turin.[430] Charles-Emmanuel was ambitious and harboured schemes to carve for himself an enlarged independent Savoyard kingdom by annexing neighbouring territories. In 1590, he had intervened in the civil conflict in Provence, on behalf of the Catholic faction, having already occupied Saluzzo, a French enclave on the eastern slopes of the Alps.[431] He also engaged in conflict with Geneva, a former dependency, and now the independent citadel of Calvinism. Philip II, however, was unenthusiastic. In the meantime, the duke's position in Provence had become untenable. Philip felt compelled to assist him with around 3,000 troops to bolster Chambéry and outlying garrisons in Savoy. Even so,

[424] Ibid., 'se le hago de treinta escudos de entretenimiento al mes en el entretanto que si le probee una compañía de infantería española sobre que se os escriví a parte.'
[425] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 404.
[426] AGRB, SEG, no.15, f.307, El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 30 de Abril 1592.
[427] AGI Contratación 2933. Papeles de Armada 1567/88, unfoliated, *cédula*, Aranjuez, 23 de Mayo 1590.
[428] Parker, *The Army of Flanders*, pp. 70-90.
[429] AGS Estado Milan 1271, f.19.
[430] Ibid., f.20.
[431] Leathes, S., Prothero, G.W., and Ward, A.W. (eds), *The Cambridge Modern History*: vol. 1, 1934, pp. 414-15.

he had overstretched his resources in Provence, leaving Savoy vulnerable to attack from either Geneva or Dauphiné.[432]

From early in 1592, Spanish officials had intelligence that the Duke of Lesdiguières (François de Bonne), the resourceful Huguenot commander in neighbouring Dauphiné, might move to reclaim Saluzzo for the French crown.[433] Spanish authorities at Milan and Madrid repeatedly called for the Duke of Savoy to return to Turin, fearing his absence invited a hostile incursion. In September those fears were realised, as Lesdiguières' troops crossed over the Montgenèvre pass into Piedmont. They rapidly gained control of adjacent valleys, and set about the capture of two strategic towns in Piedmont: Bricherasio and Cavour. Possession of these towns would leave enemy units within striking distance of both Turin and Saluzzo.

Belatedly, Charles-Emmanuel had consented to return to Turin, but his entourage was still en route when Huguenot troops began to file through the mountain passes. Reports of the crisis in Piedmont reached Fuentes at Alessandria.[434] The gravity of the situation temporarily deflected him from his journey. He hastily rounded up troops from local garrisons and set out in search of the duke's entourage. He encountered it at Carmagnola and accompanied the duke for the remainder of the way to Turin.[435] Shortly afterwards, Fuentes resumed his journey to Brussels. If Cuéllar had, as it were, 'hitched a ride' with Fuentes, then this would place him in the vicinity, precisely at the critical moment in Turin. This scenario would provide the context for Cuéllar's claim that he was conscripted by the Duke to assist in the conflict in Piedmont.[436] His service papers stated that:

> que pasando el dicho capitán [Cuéllar] a Flandes el año de 1592 le mandó el Señor Duque de Saboya que se quedare a servir en el ejército de su cargo como lo hizo sin sueldo señalandose con mucho valor en todas las ocasiones y esto mismo consta por una carta que el dicho Duque escrivió al Conde de Mansfelt [en Flandes].[437]

Some of Cuéllar's later documentation muddied the waters somewhat on this point. For whatever reason, he misleadingly implied in a submission to the Council of State, in 1604, that he served in Piedmont during the years 1598-1600.[438] It was a puzzling claim to make, the reason for which is unclear. The discrepancy misled

[432] AGS Estado 1269, f.28.
[433] AGS Estado 1270, f.59.
[434] AGS Estado 1271, f.120.
[435] Ibid.
[436] AGS Estado 1704, f.361, papeles de servicio, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar.
[437] Ibid. 'The said captain [Cuéllar] on passing to Flanders in the year 1592, was enjoined by the Duke of Savoy to remain and serve in the army under his command, which he did with outstanding valour on all occasions, without any salary assigned to him, and the same was stated in a letter which the said Duke [of Savoy] wrote to Count Mansfelt [in Flanders].'
[438] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, Memoriales de partes de Estado, relación de servicios, 31 March 1604, (see Appendix Eight).

Rafael Girón, who accepted the statement at face value, and consequently, projected an incorrect chronology for Cuéllar in his article. However, Cuéllar's service papers were clear that he was in Piedmont during 1592-93.[439]

Military Operations 1592-93

The crisis in Piedmont revolved around the seizure of Bricherasio and Cavour by Lesdiguières. Crucially, the French incursion had failed to reach Carmagnola, the principal town in Saluzzo. If Lesdiguières had hoped to reclaim Saluzzo for France he failed. Instead, the struggle that ensued would revolve around control of the eastern alpine valleys leading into Piedmont, and the garrisons at Bricherasio and Cavour. Again, Cuéllar did not specify his role, but we know that he was with the army throughout this period. In November, attempts to dislodge the French from Bricherasio failed, while efforts to relieve Cavour, then under siege, also fell short; the town fell to the French on 6 December.[440] Lesdiguières installed a 500-strong garrison and then retired to Grenoble for the winter.[441] In the spring, Rodrigo de Toledo took charge of operations. He replaced Antonio de Olivera who was ill, and moreover, had fallen foul of the Duke of Savoy. The objective for 1593 remained the recovery of the two towns, but the joint strategy agreed with the duke also aimed at wresting control of the alpine valleys that led into Piedmont from France in order to isolate the garrisons from their supply lines.

In early May, the fort of Exilles, which commanded the Dora Riparia valley (west of Turin), surrendered after a short siege. Rumours suggested that the Duke of Savoy had secured the handover with a bribe.[442] Shortly afterwards Toledo was killed in an ambush at Salbertrand while leading an ill-advised patrol further up the valley. His death caused a month-long disruption to operations.[443] Antonio de Olivera was brought back as commander of the field army and continued limited operations in the lower Chisone and Pellice valleys adjacent to Bricherasio. He then moved against Cavour. The town was situated on open ground, five miles southwest of Bricherasio. But it lay adjacent to a 160m high conical, rocky outcrop, the Rocca di Cavour, which dominated the landscape. It provided the defenders with a strong natural defensive position, impervious to artillery. Initially, there was optimism for a speedy conclusion when a water cistern and some flour mills were destroyed.[444] But atrocious weather conditions hampered operations. Incessant rain led to

[439] AGS Estado 1704, f.361, *papeles de servicio*, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 'Una fee del Gobernador Antonio de Olivera del año de 1593, en que dice que pasando el dicho capitán a Flandes el año de 1592, le mandó el señor Duque de Saboya que se quedare a servir en el ejército de su cargo, como lo hizo.'
[440] AGS Estado 1270, f.13; also, Estado 1271, ff.111, 113, 119, 129.
[441] Ibid., Estado 1271, f.74.
[442] Ibid., Estado 1273, f.147.
[443] Ibid., Estado 1272, f.111.
[444] Ibid., Estado 1272, f.183.

widespread sickness and desertion. By the end of August there were hardly sufficient troops to enforce the blockade. Soon Olivera was reduced to only 1,500 troops, 193 cavalry, and six captains fit for service.[445]

Ultimately, political developments in France overtook events in Piedmont. Earlier in the year, Henry IV had declared his intention to convert to Catholicism. In July, Don Jusepe de Acuña, Spanish ambassador to the Duke of Savoy, received word that a six-month truce with the Catholic forces had been negotiated.[446] This encouraged Charles-Emmanuel to seek a cessation of hostilities in his territory also. Moreover, word reached Olivera that the Mont Cenis Pass had been occupied by Lesdiguières.[447] Mont Cenis was the principal pass connecting Piedmont and the Maurienne valley, the central artery through Savoy. On 31 August, after consultation with his principal officers, Olivera conceded that he could no longer mount an effective blockade, nor present a viable force should Lesdiguières attempt to relieve Cavour.[448] When three days later, rumours suggested 6,000 French were ready to march, a truce was agreed and the besieging force was withdrawn.[449]

Return to Flanders

The truce signalled the end of Cuéllar's service in Piedmont. Documentation does not indicate precisely when he departed, but the most plausible explanation is that he accompanied the *tercios* of Don Agustín Mexía and the Marquis of Trevico, which transferred to Flanders, via Piedmont-Savoy, at that time. The Duke of Savoy provided a letter of recommendation, in addition to a certificate (*fee*) signed by his commanding officer, Antonio de Olivera, which verified Cuéllar's service in the region.'[450] His subsequent return to Brussels in early 1594, coincided with the arrival of Archduke Ernest of Austria as Governor-General. In March, Cuéllar's commission of 1592 was endorsed,[451] and his salary (*entretenimiento*) accredited in the account book of Paymaster-General, Don Gabriel de Santesteban (20 March 1594).[452] Although the endorsement made no reference to the letters supplied by the Duke of

[445] Ibid., Estado 1273, f.186.
[446] AGS Estado, 1273, f.143.
[447] Ibid., Estado 1273, f.161.
[448] Ibid., Estado 1272, f.191.
[449] Ibid., Estado 1273, f.186.
[450] AGS Estado 1704, f.361, Una fee del Gobernador Antonio de Olivera del año de 1593, en que dice que pasando el dicho capitán a Flandes el año de 1592, le mandó el señor Duque de Saboya que se quedare a servir en el ejército de su cargo, como lo hizo sin sueldo señalándose con mucho valor en todas las ocasiones, y esto mismo consta por una carta que el dicho duque escrivió al Conde de Mansfelt.'
[451] AGRB SEG, 15, f.307, *cédula*, El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 30 de Abril 1592, 'Saved que el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar nos ha hecho presentación de una cedula de su mg dirigida al señor Duque de Parma del tenor siguiente.'
[452] AGS Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas (CMC), 2ª época, 840, unfoliated, payments to *entretenidos* 1590-95.

Savoy and Antonio de Olivera, it is clear that Cuéllar presented them. On foot of their testimony, Ernest instructed that Cuéllar's wages be backdated to 24 May 1593, presumably, to compensate him for the unpaid service he rendered in Piedmont.[453]

War on two fronts: The Low Countries 1594-98

Over the course of the next four and a half years Cuéllar remained in the Low Countries and resumed service with the Army of Flanders. There is no evidence that he was given charge of an infantry company, as per the *cédula* of 1592. But from his documentation it is clear that he served with the field army on each campaign, principally as a staff officer. The period was tumultuous. Parma's death in 1592 had left a void in the army high command leaving rival commanders (Mansfelt and Fuentes) to vie for control.[454] The arrival of Archduke Ernest was intended to resolve this dilemma, but his untimely death in 1595 served only to create further uncertainty. Nevertheless, the Count of Fuentes, who took charge of operations until the arrival of Ernest's replacement and younger brother, Cardinal Archduke Albert, in early 1596, was a capable military commander. Under his direction the army achieved notable victories in 1595, which continued the following year when the Archduke Albert, arrived as Governor. In later documentation Cuéllar enumerated the successful campaigns in which he served. He highlighted seven enterprises in which he participated during the years 1594-96. All except the siege of Hulst (1596) were fought in northern France, or along the southern frontier of the Spanish Netherlands. They included: La Capelle (1594), Le Catelet, Doullens, Cambrai (1595), Calais, Ardres, and Hulst (1596).[455] Failed ventures were omitted. It is clear from this that Cuéllar participated with the field army during each campaign season, though without elaborating on the part he played.

The focus of operations remained directed towards France, but Spanish influence in French affairs was at an end. Following his conversion to Catholicism, a groundswell of support for Henry IV was apparent when, in March, royalist supporters in Paris opened the city gates to his troops, allowing the royal army to enter. The Spanish garrison was permitted to withdraw unmolested. The truce, which had been agreed in the previous July, remained in effect until April. Thereafter, hostilities resumed.

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[453] AGRB SEG, 15, f.307, 'Por tanto yo os ordeno y mando que en conformidad de lo que su Magestad manda por la dicha su real cédula le asenteys y hagáis buenos en los libros de vuestros officios al dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar los dichos treinta escudos de entretenimiento al mes sirviendo en la infantería spañola de los quales ha de gozar desde veinte y quatro de mayo del año passado de 1593.'

[454] Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, p. 230.

[455] AGS Estado 1692. unfoliated, relación de servicios, 31 March 1604 (see Appendix Eight); 'y sirvió en todas las ocasiones en que en aquel tiempo se ofrecieron en los dichos estados [los pays bajos], y también sirvió en las guerras de Francia, y se halló en el socorro de Paris y entrepesas de las villas de Leyni, Corbeli, Lacapela, Xatelete, Dorlan, Cambray, Cales y Ardias, y en el sitio de la villa de Hulst.'

Possessed of his capital Henry sought to consolidate his position in northern France where a succession of towns declared for him. The royal army marched into Picardy, against Doullens, Noyon, and then Fertemilón.[456] In June, Henry took Laon, which fell to him despite Spanish attempts to send relief.

At Brussels, it is likely that Cuéllar approached Count Mansfelt with the Duke of Savoy's letter of recommendation (which was addressed to Mansfelt). It was he who had command of the field army at the outset of the 1594 campaign. Cuéllar served at La Capelle, which Mansfelt seized in April. Although there is no mention by Cuéllar of the attempted relief of Laon in any of his memorials, it is probable that he participated in the operation before it fell to Henry. Shortly after this Mansfelt resigned his position and departed for Prague. Cuéllar remained with the army as temporary command passed to Agustín Mexía. Following the fall of Laon, two important towns, Amiens and Cambrai, declared for Henry IV.[457] Of particular concern was the garrison at Cambrai, the governor of which, Jean de Monluc (Seigneur de Balagny), was directing disruptive cavalry sorties across the provinces of Artois and Hainault. The need to curb this activity determined Spanish operations to the end of 1595. In late September, Mexía resolved to blockade the town.[458] However, it was late in the season, and Fuentes, in a letter to Philip II, expressed concern at his lack of troops (8,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry).[459] Mexía kept the army before Cambrai until the end of November. But having exhausted his provisions without achieving a breakthrough, he withdrew the troops to winter quarters.

Henry IV formally declared war on Spain in early 1595. This declaration simply formalized, on a diplomatic level, an already existing state of affairs, as Henry was effectively in conflict with Spain since 1589. As Braudel pointed out, Henry accused the Spanish King of daring 'under the pretext of piety, to interfere openly with the loyalty of the French towards their natural Princes and sovereign Lords.'[460] Henceforth, until the Treaty of Vervins in 1598, the frontier region between the Spanish Netherlands and France was to become a contested zone. Henry's declaration of war prompted a short-lived invasion of the Duchy of Liege by the Dutch[461], and an incursion, by the French, into Luxembourg.[462] The ill-starred Archduke Ernest died at this time, but the Count of Fuentes was declared interim governor, and he immediately took control of the situation. The Dutch were beaten back, and reinforcements were dispatched to Luxembourg against further French

[456] AGS Estado 608 f.23; also, Coloma, *Las guerras de los Estados Bajos*, p. 436.
[457] AGS Estado 608, f.155.
[458] Coloma, *Las guerras de los Estados Bajos,* p. 459.
[459] AGS Estado 608, f.244.
[460] Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*, vol. II, pp. 1216-17.
[461] Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, p. 231.
[462] Coloma, *Las guerras de los Estados Bajos*, p. 469.

incursions. When Fuentes took charge of the field army for the summer campaign, his ultimate objective was to take Cambrai, described by Esteban de Ibarra as 'the key to the frontier.'[463] He was somewhat fortunate in that Henry IV was then reasserting royal authority in his eastern provinces. In June, victory over a Spanish force at Fontaine-Française assured the recovery of Dijon and Lyon and their hinterlands.[464]

In order to isolate Cambrai, Fuentes first seized Le Catelet and Doullens. It was felt that this would leave Artois secure from enemy activity. Furthermore, control of Doullens would leave a swathe of countryside south to the River Somme available for forage. This would require reduced escorts, and leave more men available to concentrate on siege operations around Cambrai.[465] Cuéllar claimed he participated throughout this campaign, probably once more in Fuentes' entourage. Le Catelet surrendered after a brief siege on 26 June.[466] Doullens fell on 31 July, but only after two assaults on the city walls had been repulsed. The siege of Doullens was notable for the rout of a French relief force under the Duke de Bouillon near the town on 24 July, which effectively sealed the town's fate.[467] Once Spanish troops forced their way into the town the entire garrison, including civilians, was put to the sword with cries of 'Remember Ham' ('Recordad Ham'), whose Spanish garrison had been massacred by the French some weeks previously.[468] In October Cambrai capitulated after an unexpected twist. Although by 29 September entrenchments had progressed sufficiently to allow bombardment of the walls to commence,[469] an insurrection by civilians inside the town allowed the Spaniards to enter peaceably.[470] Subsequent parleys with governor Balagny (now confined to the citadel) led to his surrender on 9 October.[471] Previously a thorn in the sides of Artois and Hainault, Cambrai now formed an important bastion in the defence of the southern Spanish Netherlands.

In many respects the strategic situation was transformed in 1596. Spain faced a triple alliance of France, England and the Dutch combined. Philip II's grand strategy, condemned by Lynch as a 'reckless pursuit of dynastic ambitions', had brought upon the Spanish monarchy 'war with three powers'.[472] However, the Archduke Albert's arrival as Governor-General, with funds, 3,000 Spanish infantry, and cavalry, galvanised the army. He had resolved to renew pressure on the Dutch

[463] AGS Estado 610, f.102.
[464] Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World*, vol. II, p. 1212.
[465] AGS Estado 609, f.48.
[466] AGS Estado 609, f.44.
[467] AGS Estado 609, f.48.
[468] Motley, J.L., *History of the United Netherlands*, vol. III, p. 315.
[469] AGS Estado 609, f.217.
[470] AGS Estado, 610, f.134.
[471] AGS Estado, 609, f.164.
[472] Lynch J., *Spain under the Habsburgs*, vol. I, p. 334.

through concerted action against their merchant marine. He targeted Calais as ideal for the deployment of galleys to challenge for control of the sea lanes off the Flanders coast.[473] By then Henry IV had returned to northern France. Too late to save Cambrai, he laid siege to La Fère, the last Spanish garrison south of the Somme.[474] At a council of war in Valenciennes in early April, Albert decided to sacrifice the town in favour of an attempt on Calais.[475] In a well-executed feint, he had detachments move south-eastwards from Valenciennes, as if to march on La Fère, while a 6,000-strong advance guard under his second-in-command (*Maestre de Campo General*), Marshal Rosne, make a rapid descent on Calais. Rosne executed his orders perfectly. The Rysban fort, overlooking the town, and key to control of the harbour, was taken by surprise. Its small garrison surrendered to him without a struggle (9 April).[476] In the meantime, Albert followed with the main army (15,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry).[477] Thereafter, the town fell with comparative ease. The main town was occupied (15 April) after a two-day bombardment, which left the French garrison restricted to the citadel.[478] A parley led to a six-day truce, at the end of which Governor Vidosan consented to surrender if a relief force was not forthcoming.[479] Seaborne relief was foiled by artillery fire from the Rysban.[480] But when, on the morning the truce expired, the defenders refused to surrender, Albert had his artillery fire on the citadel. The wall was breached, and in the assault that followed, most of the garrison was slaughtered, including Vidosan.

Shortly afterwards, strongholds at Guisnes and Hames and Ardres (strongly fortified with a 1,000-strong garrison) were seized, which consolidated control of the region. Thereafter, operations on the French frontier petered out. David Buisseret, remarked: 'the Spaniards were content with their acquisitions of Calais and Ardres, and the king [Henry IV] with his recovery of La Fère, neither wished to undertake a fresh siege, which might lead to the defeat of the besiegers by the enemy's mobile army.'[481]

Determined to move now against the Dutch, Albert had rebel-held Ostend and Hulst reconnoitred.[482] He decided on Hulst, as he lacked the resources to tackle the heavily fortified Ostend. Hulst (population 1,000) was situated on a small island, and strongly garrisoned under Count Everard Solms. Its defences were strengthened by a system of forts that guarded the main approaches, and sluices.

[473] AGS Estado 611, f.9.
[474] Buisseret, D., *Henry IV: King of France*, London, 1984, p. 60.
[475] AGS Estado 611, f.63.
[476] AGS Estado 610, f.58.
[477] Motley, J.L., *History of the United Netherlands*, vol. III, p. 346.
[478] AGS Estado 611, f.24.
[479] Ibid., 610, f.58; Estado 611, f.24.
[480] Motley, *History of the United Netherlands*, vol. III, pp. 346-47.
[481] Buisseret, *Henry IV*, p. 62.
[482] AGS Estado 611, f.105.

Siege operations lasted around one month and were costly in terms of losses. The defenders mounted a stiff resistance, sallying from the town on numerous occasions to disrupt entrenchment works and inflict casualties. By 16 August, however, the trenches had progressed sufficiently to concentrate batteries along on two stretches of wall. Initial demands by Albert to surrender were refused, whereupon he instructed engineers to begin to mine the ramparts.[483] Following a second round of talks on 18 August, Solms agreed to yield. Albert granted generous terms to the defenders who were permitted to evacuate the island. Nevertheless, the extent of his casualties precluded Albert from further operations that year. He sent the troops into quarters with pay admitting they had 'suffered more in this siege than in either of the two before.'[484]

The 1596 campaign was momentous, and seems to have been fortuitous for Cuéllar, particularly during the siege of Hulst. Earlier in the year, Esteban de Ibarra (Secretary for State and War) had described him in an official dossier of officers, as useless 'no vale nada'.[485] But Cuéllar participated at Calais and Ardres, and on 30 July, mid-way through operations at Hulst, he was appointed to Albert's personal staff.[486] The appointment was accompanied by an increase in salary to 40 escudos. It was a curious moment to make such an award. Did Cuéllar merit this by some sterling piece of service? There is no indication of this in the text of his patent, yet the timing of the award is suggestive of gallantry. The success of the campaign marked a high point. When in November, Philip II announced his third bankruptcy. Treasury funds through 1597-98 dried up, which stymied Albert's plans, and caused widespread mutinies in the army due to lack of pay. Moreover, overtures were initiated between Albert and Henry IV towards a peace accord.

The following year, 1597, was marked by contrasting fortunes in the field. In January, a Spanish force caught in line of march, was surprised and routed by the Dutch near Turnhout. It was a severe blow to the army's morale. In France, however, Amiens was captured by an audacious stratagem in March, whereby Spanish troops disguised as civilians surprised the local garrison, seized a gate, and ushered an assault force into the town.[487] The seizure of Amiens, a key fortification on the River Somme only three day march from Paris, threatened to undo Henry IV's strategic deadlock. Paris was threatened once more. Henry recognised the urgency of the situation and gathered a force to retake the city. The French army laid siege to the town throughout the summer, resisted by 4,000 Spanish infantry and 1,000 cavalry. Albert sought to lead a relief force but it failed to break the

[483] AGS Estado 611, f.112.
[484] AGS, Estado 612, f.45.
[485] Ibid., Estado 612, f.129.
[486] AGRB SEG, 16, f.157, *Mandato*, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, Data en San Nicolas a 30 Julio 1596.
[487] Motley, *History of the United Netherlands*, vol. III, pp. 435-36.

French lines and he was compelled to withdraw. The Spanish garrison capitulated on 19 September.[488]

Cuéllar was silent about the events of 1597. However, it would seem apparent that as he was attached to Albert's personal staff, then he probably participated in the effort to relieve Amiens. He omitted to mention it in subsequent memorials, most likely, because it was a failure. It was a bad year all round, as he received no pay. Indeed, Amiens would mark the last occasion on which Cuéllar campaigned with the Army of Flanders. Through the following winter and spring the army was rocked by mutinies.[489] In the meantime, substantive negotiations were conducted with the French King, who was eager for peace. This was eventually signed on 2 May 1598 at Vervins, much to the dismay of his allies, the English and Dutch. Under the agreement the territorial boundaries reverted to that agreed under the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis, which entailed, most significantly, the return of Calais to France.[490]

Return to Spain 1598-1600

Following the treaty with France, Cuéllar was released from Albert's entourage. The travel license cited private matters as the pretext: 'Haviendo nos representado el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar entretenido cerca de nuestra persona lo que importa yr a Spaña a negocios particulares suyos que se le ofrecen en ella.'[491] A licence was granted on 5 August 1598, along with a letter of recommendation from Albert, which advocated a *merced* as recompense for his 'lengthy and worthy service.'[492] By December Cuéllar was back in Madrid, where he and fifty-six other officers and *entretenidos* recently discharged from Flanders, had congregated. They submitted bonds from the army treasury in Flanders to the Council of Finance that certified arrears of wages. Cuéllar's stipulated that he was owed 784 *escudos* and 34 *reales* (nearly two years' wages).[493] At this time the royal administration was undergoing a major transition following the death of Philip II, and the accession of his son, Philip III. Prolonged festivities to celebrate the joint royal marriage ceremonies at Valencia of Philip to Margaret of Austria, and Albert to Isabel, meant that the new King was away from Madrid for much of the year. Of the *merced*, nothing transpired for Cuéllar until early 1600, when he was awarded an *entretenimiento* (salaried

[488] Buisseret, D., *Henry IV*, p. 67.
[489] Parker, *Army of Flanders*, pp. 254-55.
[490] Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World,* vol. II, p. 1222.
[491] AGRB, SEG, Registre aux Ordres no.18, f.161v, 'having presented to us reasons requiring him to go to Spain to attend to private matters that have arisen there.' See Appendix Seven.
[492] Ibid., also, AGS Estado 1704, f.361. 'carta de su Alteza supplicando a su Magestad que le haga merced por lo mucho y bien que ha servido.'
[493] AGS CJH 389, unfoliated, Relación de lo que se deve a los capitanes, oficiales y soldados que han venido de Flandes con certificaciones de lo que alcançan de sus sueldos.

position) as adjutant (*entretenido*) to the Count of Lemos, viceroy of Naples, with a monthly salary of twenty-five *escudos*.[494]

Armada de Barlovento 1601-02

Although Naples appeared an attractive posting, Cuéllar did not take up the position. Instead, he remained at court. The most plausible explanation is that he became aware of plans for the formation of a new amphibious unit intended for permanent station in the Caribbean, the Armada de Barlovento. He later declared to the Council of State that before he departed from court to take up his position in Naples he recieved instructions to participate in the proposed new squadron:

> y estando el dicho capitán de partida para servir el dicho entretenimiento sin hacer ninguna súplica sobre ello se le tornó a mandar otra vez por orden de Vuestra Magestad y del Consejo de las Indias que fuese a servir con una compañía de infantería y un galeón en la armada que el año de [1]601 mandó aprestar para yr a las yslas de Barlovento. [495]

Evidently, the prospect of command of an infantry company and a galleon (with all of the associated scams) was more appealing to him than a spell in Italy. It would appear that he had some foreknowledge of these plans and had remained at court in the hope of obtaining a commission.

Debate about a Barlovento squadron had been on-going since the mid-1590s.[496] It was another spin on the debate twenty years earlier at Cartagena, regarding galleys or galleons. After initial success, the galley squadron had lapsed due to lack of proper oversight, despite an annual budget of 20,000.[497] An escalation of activity by English, French, and Dutch corsairs in the region, induced the crown to consider, once more, permanent deployment of galleons in the Caribbean. Deliberations were lent greater urgency by reports of predations against settlements along the eastern coastline of *Tierra Firme* (Venezuela). In particular, large numbers of Dutch vessels were sailing to Punta de Araya to extract salt from vast salt pans in a shallow lagoon close to the shore. Such were their numbers that the local governor of Cumaná was powerless to do anything other than monitor their activities.[498] Throughout 1600-1601, war cabinet (Junta de Guerra) proposals for a taskforce to

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[494] AGS Estado 1594, f.157.

[495] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated. 'being about to depart to serve for the said position [in Naples], without [prior] entreaty, he was instructed by His Majesty, and the Council of the Indies in turn, to serve with a company of infantry and a galleon, in the fleet, which in 1601, was ordered to prepare to go to the Windward Isles [Barlovento].'

[496] AGS Estado, 202, unfoliated. *Relación sumaria de lo que ha passado sobre la fundación y despacho de la armada de la guarda y de las yslas de barlobento*.

[497] Torres Ramírez, B., *La Armada de Barlovento*, Seville, 1981, p. 1.

[498] Varela Marcos, J., *Las salinas de Araya y el origen de la Armada de Barlovento*, Caracas, 1980. pp. 69-79.

confront the interlopers coalesced into a scheme to establish a squadron of six galleons and two *pataches* for permanent station among the Windward Islands (las yslas de Barlovento), the outer islands of the Caribbean, with a warehouse facility and magazine at Puerto Rico.[499] In January 1601, following reports of renewed incursions by the Dutch around Cumaná, instructions were formulated to dispatch the new 'Armadilla de Barlovento' to accompany Indies Guard squadron, under Captain General Don Luis Fajardo to clear the region: 'Por consulta de ocho de henero [la Junta de Guerra] se dio quenta a su Magestad de las urcas de Olanda y Gelanda que yban a la Punta de Araya por sal y se resolvió que para castigarlas fuesen juntas la armada del avería [armada de la guarda] y la armadilla [de Barlovento].[500]

In March, Don Luis Fernández de Córdoba y Sotomayor, an aristocrat and veteran of the 'Enterprise of England' was made Captain-General. Cuéllar was among six captains chosen for positions from twenty nominees.[501] On 22 April, a royal patent conferred on him a captaincy 'de mar y guerra' with a salary of 40 *escudos* per month (a substantial increase on the 25 *escudos* for Naples).[502] Besides his captaincy, Cuéllar received two further nominations for the rank of Sargento-Mayor (second-in-command to a Maestre de Campo) in the Armada de Barlovento, and also the Indies Guard. However, he was overlooked by the King in both instances.[503]

Six galleons and two smaller dispatch vessels (*pataches*) comprised the squadron. But plague in Seville, problems with finance, difficulties with recruitment, and poor condition of ships prolonged preparations.[504] It transpired that the Armada de Barlovento would not sail in 1601. In fact, plans to establish the unit in the Caribbean were shelved. Instead, the squadron was kept in being, but reassigned escort duties as an additional contingent of the Indies Guard. The infantry companies, Cuéllar's included, were dispatched to winter quarters, and then summoned the following spring. The fleet sailed in May, with Cuéllar assigned to

[499] AGS Estado 202, unfoliated. *Relación sumaria de lo que ha passado sobre la fundación y despacho de la armada de la guarda y de las yslas de barlobento*, 'by a consulta of 8 January [the Junta de Guerra] gave his Majesty an account of the urcas of Holland Zeeland that go to the Punta de Araya for salt and it was resolved to dispatch the Indies Guard and the Armadillo de Barlovento together to chastise them.'

[500] AGS Estado 202, unfoliated. Relación sumaria de lo que ha passado sobre la fundación y despacho de la armada de la guarda y de las yslas de barlobento.

[501] AGI Indiferente General 2535, unfoliated, Cámara de Indias, 10 de Marzo 1601, 'para la armadilla de las yslas de Barlobento convi[ien]e se provean seys capitanes de experiencia que lo sean de la infantería y gente de mar de cada navío y los que se pretenden ser ocupados en esto los que se ofrescen son...'

[502] AGI Patronato 293, N.23, R.36; also, Indiferente General 2510 Libro 1.

[503] AGI Indiferente General 2535. unfoliated, Cámara de Indias, 10 de Marzo 1601, 'para sargentos mayores de la armada de la carrera de las Indias y de las yslas de barlobento.'

[504] AGI Indiferente General, 1117, unfoliated; Herrera to Philip III, Seville, 3 May 1601; also, Don Bernardino de Avellaneda to Philip III, Seville, 1 April 1601.

the 800-ton flagship, *San Juan Bautista* on what proved to be a routine voyage.[505] Fine weather prevailed for most of the cruise to Cartagena. A month-long stopover to collect silver consignments from Panama City proceeded without incident. In August, the squadron rendezvoused with the New Spain fleet (commanded by old colleague, Juan Gutiérrez Garibay) at Havana. Intermittent storms blew during the homeward run. But nevertheless, the fleet arrived safely in Cádiz harbour on 8 December.[506]

Once again, the infantry were sent to winter quarters while the ships were refitted in readiness for a spring departure in 1603. In February they were recalled to muster and issued seven weeks pay, which was overseen by the Duke of Medina Sidonia.[507] Four understrength companies were disbanded, including Cuéllar's (by this time his company was reduced to 53 troops).[508] The troops were then distributed among the remaining three companies. Cuéllar and the other disbanded captains were dismissed (*reformado*). It was highly ironic that fifteen years after being court-martialed by the Duke, Cuéllar should ultimately be discharged from the military by him. The dismissal clearly wrankled and he referred to it subsequently in a submission to the Council of the Indies as a wilful decision by Medina Sidonia: 'Vuestra Magestad le proveyó por capitán de uno de los galeones de la armada de la guarda de la carrera de las Indias el qual le quitó el Duque de Medina Sidonia sin causa ni demérito suyo.'[509]

End of Career 1603-06

Following his discharge Medina Sidonia issued Cuéllar with a licence to attend court (which had since transferred to Valladolid). In 1604, an application to have his *entretenimiento* in Naples reinstated was reviewed by the Council of State. Cuéllar argued on the premise that his departure to Naples had been deferred by the crown to participate in the Barlovento enterprise. He composed a lengthy memorial that detailed his services to the Crown. Again, his frustration at Medina Sidonia's treatment of him surfaced in the text. He claimed that having served honourably under Don Luis de Cordóba for two years his discharge was unwarranted:

> lo reformaron y quitaron su compañía luego que bino de las Indias con la dicha plata sin causa ninguna solo pára se la dar y acomodar con ella otras personas que en

[505] AGI Indiferente General 1118, unfoliated. '*La armada que este año de mill y seis cientos y dos fue a las Indias por el oro y plata de su magestad y particulares...*'
[506] AGI Indiferente General 1118, unfoliated. 'La armada que este año de mill y seis cientos y dos fue a las Indias por el oro y plata de su magestad y particulares...'
[507] AGS GyM 618, f.282-283.
[508] AGS GyM 618, f.283.
[509] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated. Cámara de Indias, 4 June 1605. 'Your majesty provided him with a captaincy of one of the galeons of the Indies Guard, from which he was removed by the Duke Medina Sidonia without cause or fault of his own.'

> calidad y servicios no merecieron más que él de lo qual a recibido muy grande agrabio y sin razón por cuya causa está al presente mui pobre desacomodado y reformado más a de un año. [510]

He requested that the *entrenimiento* be augmented from twenty-five to thirty ducats, and also that he be awarded a pension.[511] The council reinstated the position at Naples, including the five ducat increase, but declined to award an additional pension.

But curiously, Cuéllar again, opted not to go to Naples. Once more, he remained at court to pursue other opportunities. It may be that he drew the salary surreptitiously through an intermediary or attorney in Naples, but this seems unlikely. In the following year he twice featured among candidates nominated for marine commissions. In April 1605, he was one of thirteen officers considered for six captaincies vacant in the Indies Guard.[512] The other five candidates had been colleagues under Don Luis de Cordóba in 1602. All five were accepted; Cuéllar was not. This was a mixed blessing, because later in the year, Cordóba, and much of his squadron, would perish in hurricane-force storms in the Caribbean. In May, Cuéllar again featured on a list of candidates, this time for the position of *entretenido* to the vice-admiral (*almirante*) of the New Spain *flota*. At this time, the admiral and vice-admiral of the *flota* escorts were allowed one *entretenido* each, chosen by the Council of the Indies from a list of suitably qualified nominees.[513] The role offered a salary thirty *escudos* per month, equivalent to the Naples *entretenimiento*. However, this position offered far greater scope for progression, as these *entretenidos* were effectively being groomed for future command of fleets. In the event of the *almirante's* death (or should the vice-admiral replace the Captain-General), the *entretenido* was to assume his duties.[514] While on paper Cuéllar had the most extensive record of all four candidates, it was the least experienced individual, Juan de Amezqueta, who was selected by the King.[515]

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[510] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, 31 de Marzo 1604. 'After coming from the Indies with the said [royal] silver, instead of rewarding him, or showing the said Captain Francisco de Cuéllar any favour, he was dismissed [reformado], his company taken from him for no reason other than to give it to, and settle it on, others whose qualities and services were no more worthy than his, by which he was greatly insulted and wronged. The upshot is that he is at present very poor, inconvenienced and left discharged [*reformado*] for more than a year.'

[511] Ibid.

[512] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated. Cámara de Indias, 5 de Abril 1605, Nobramiento de personas para seys plaças de capitanes de otras tantas compañías del tercio que sirve en la armada de la carrera de las Indias.

[513] AGI Indiferente General 2535. unfoliated, Cámara de Nueva España: personas para las placas de entretenido acerca de las del General y Almirante de la flota que ha de hir este año a la Nueva España, 4 de Mayo 1605.

[514] AGI Indiferente General 2535, unfoliated, personas para las placas de entretenido...

[515] Ibid.

Evidently disillusioned by the downturn in his fortunes, and having waived the option of Naples, Cuéllar resolved to abandon military life altogether. Only weeks after his last nomination he applied to the Council of the Indies for a license to depart for New Spain, which he qualified by stating that he had relatives (*deudos*) living there. [516] The immediacy of the application following the unsuccessul nomination suggests a snap decision. Or else, Cuéllar was determined one way or another, to go to New Spain. Pleading penury, he requested a subsistence grant (*ayuda de costa*) to cover the costs of the journey, declaring that he had exhausted his financial resources while at court: 'por averse consumido y gastado en dos años que ha que espera ser acomodado de manera que ha llegado a estrema necesidad sin tener ningún remedio.'[517] The council provided three hundred ducats (equivalent to an annual salary for his rank). It was reluctant, however, to issue a travel license. After scrutinising his service record the councillors felt it would be far better if a position were found for him to remain with the military:

> Y visto en la cámara a parecido que por ser muy buen soldado y de servicio exercicio y espiriencia no es justo darle liçencia que pide pues se ofreçieran ocasiones en que pueda ser de provecho en que Vuestra Magestad se sirva dél y a que hasta aora no a sido ocupado en cosas de su profesión.[518]

However, nothing further transpired. In March 1606, Cuéllar was granted permission to depart for New Spain. A letter of recommendation was drafted in the King's name, addressed to the viceroy of New Spain (Marquis of Montesclaros). It acknowledged that after three years unemployed at court he was very poor, and instructed that a position be provided 'que le proveays y ocupeys en cargos y officios de mi servicio que sean según su calidad suficiencia y méritos en que son honrradamente me pueda servir.'[519]

That royal instruction offers us our final glimpse of Captain Cuéllar in this overview of his career. We may assume that he travelled to New Spain, and hope that he acquired a role 'commensurate with his status, competence and merits.' The following year, 1607, an audit office of the Royal Treasury authorised a payment to

[516] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, *Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar*, Cámara de Indias, 4 de Junio 1605.
[517] Ibid. '[he has]used up and spent [his resources] in the two years that he has been waiting to be assigned [a new commission], to the extent that he had been reduced to extreme necessity without having any remedy [for his plight].'
[518] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, *Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar*, Cámara de Indias, 4 de Junio 1605. 'and the view of the chamber is, as it appears that he is a very good soldier of merit, skill and experience, it is not right that he be granted the license he requests as there will be occasions in which he may be put to use if Your Majesty should so be served by him, although as of now he has not been occupied in the matters of his profession.'
[519] AGI Indiferente General 449 f.20-21. 'commensurate with his status, competence and merits, so that he may be able to serve me honourably.'

him of around foty-four escudos (15,014 *maravedíes*).[520] This amount represented outstanding arrears still owed to him from the campaign of 1588. However, by then he had probably already departed for the New World. What became of Captain Cuéllar subsequently, awaits further research.

[520] AGS Contaduría del Sueldo 275, unfoliated, El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar entretenido cerca de la persona del Marqués de Santa Cruz.

Part II

Captaincy and Career

Chapter Four

Live to Fight Another Day: Captaincy and Career in the Military

> Out of every one hundred men, ten shouldn't even be there, eighty are just targets, nine are the real fighters, and we are lucky to have them, for they make the battle. Ah, but the one, one is a warrior, and he will bring the others back.[521]

Captain Cuéllar's period of military service coincided with the era of Spanish imperial power at its height, when for a time mastery of Europe appeared a distinct possibility. With dominions scattered across Europe, Africa, the Far East, and the Americas, royal propagandists could justifiably boast that the King of Spain presided over 'an empire on which the sun never set.'[522] The story of Cuéllar's career reflects this expanse of dominion and military commitments. But a rendition of the campaigns and expeditions in which he participated merely offers only one aspect of the career. What if we shift the emphasis away from an external view of the military operations to consider the internal mechanisms of life in the military? What were the commonplace concerns of his life as a soldier? More particularly, what were his concerns as an officer? While contemplating the increasing impact of war on society across Europe during the Renaissance period, J.R. Hale was moved to consider 'how far there emerged a notion of the soldiery as constituting a separate element within society.'[523] With that in mind, sufficient documentation pertaining to Cuéllar's activities has survived to afford a discussion from this perspective. The following assessment of his military service will, therefore, encapsulate issues mainly pertaining to captaincy, its place within the military institution, and its affiliations with the crown.

An Officer and a Gentleman?

Commentators largely agree that the rank of Captain held a particular prestige for Spaniards. Ignacio and Iván Notario López described it as 'the most attractive rank in the public imagination.'[524] According to Rodríguez Hernández 'to obtain a captaincy conferred a reputation on a soldier and the social status of an hidalgo,

[521] Attributed to Heraclitus.
[522] Parker, G., *Imprudent King: A New Life of Philip II*, Chicago, 2014, p. 14.
[523] Hale, J.R., *War and Society in Renaissance Europe 1450-1620*, Phoenix Mill, 1998, p. 127.
[524] Notario López, I. & I., *The Spanish Tercios 1536-1704*, Oxford, 2012, p. 15.

which was no small matter, and the reason why so much was expected of them.'[525] Cuéllar served in the rank and file for only three years following enlistment. Thereafter, he forged most of his career as an officer. His rank therefore occasioned an elevated status to which he became accustomed. This distinction entailed a fundamental difference in outlook, routine, and relations with military institutions and the crown, from that of a private soldier.

Captaincy bestowed authority of command over the basic army unit, the infantry company. By the late sixteenth century a typical Spanish company had evolved a clear chain of command with the captain in charge, seconded by an ensign (*alférez*), a sergeant (*sargento*), and two or more corporals (*cabo de escuadra*), depending on the size of the unit, who were assigned squads of around twenty-five troopers each.[526] Cuéllar was awarded his captaincy within a marine context, which entailed exclusive command of an individual vessel. While technically an infantry captain, his patent designated him a *capitán de mar y guerra*, which conferred authority over both contingents on board the vessels he commanded: soldiers and sailors.[527] A typical company on land comprised, in theory, 250 troops. In reality 150 was closer to the average size. At sea the dimensions of a vessel determined the number of troops on board.

Most officers began their career in the rank and file. This applied to Francisco de Cuéllar also. When he became a soldier voluntary enlistment was the normal practice in Spain. Intending recruits were usually accepted between the ages of twenty and forty-five, though in the 1590s this was reduced to eighteen. It was a very simple process. Anyone contemplating life in the military could approach recruiting officers who periodically visited designated towns. After a cursory physical appraisal those who were accepted had articles of war read to them and the rules of conduct they were obliged to observe.[528] Each recruit (*bisoño*) had personal details entered into a company roll along with a physical description. And that was it; a civilian became a soldier. For example, Cuéllar's entry on the company record of the *San Tadeo* reads as follows:

> Francisco de Cuéllar, soldado, natural de Tor de Laguna, hijo de Gabriel de Cuéllar, hedad de veinte un años, de buen cuerpo, moreno de rostro, sin señal en la cara.[529]

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[525] Rodríguez Hernández, A.J., *Breve historía de los ejércitos:Los tercios de Flandes*, 2nd ed., Madrid, 2015, p. 74.

[526] León, F. González de, *The Road to Rocroi: Class Culture and Command in the Spanish Army*, Leiden, 2009, p. 16.

[527] AGI Indiferente General 2676, unfoliated, Este es un traslado bien y fielmente sacado corregido y concertado con un título y provisión rreal original de su magestad rrefrendado de Antonio de Erasso su secretario que al las espaldas tenía otras firmas su thenor de lo qual es el que se sigue.

[528] Parker, G., The Soldier', in Villari, R. (ed.), *Baroque Personae*, Chicago, 1995, p. 34.

[529] AGI Contaduría 526, f.9, La Gente de Guerra del Galeón San Tadeo Capitana de la Armada de su Magd de la guarda de las indias MDLxxviii [1578] años; 'Francisco de Cuéllar, soldier, native of Tor de

René Quatrefages has suggested that the Spanish infantry was, in large part, populated by the *hidalgo* class of lower nobility.[530] Although Irving Thompson accepted that the Spanish nobility did, indeed play a prominent role in the armed forces, his investigations refuted this assertion. In a survey of newly formed infantry companies (3,500 recruits) covering the period 1575-1628, he concluded that the typical recruit (*bisoño*) of the period was most likely a commoner, average age around 22 years, usually single and unemployed.[531]

Very little personal information emerged in Cuéllar's case, but there was nothing to indicate that he was born into a family of noble status. Nowhere was he referred to as a 'Don' or any other honorific title, only by his rank. We know from the *Carta* that he maintained on-going correspondence with an individual, who he appeared to regard as well-informed, possibly connected in some way to the royal court or the military. Ever since Duro published the *carta* in *La Armada Invencible* in 1883, it has generally been assumed that he was from the town of Cuéllar in the province of Segovia (150kms northeast of Madrid, 50kms southwest of Valladolid). Evelyn Hardy remarked upon this possibility in her treatment of the letter. She regarded Cuéllar's invocation to Our Lady of Ontañar during the shipwreck at Streedagh as a significant clue in support of his coming from the vicinity of Cuéllar. She identified a shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Hontañares, about forty miles from the town.[532] Hardy qualified her suggestion by explaining: 'This supplication of de Cuéllar's in what he thought was the hour of his death would therefore seem to be linked with his birth or boyhood.'[533] Cruickshank and Gallagher further developed this idea. They identified Ontañar as a possible corruption, or misspelling by a later scribe who copied the manuscript, of Our Lady of El Henar, patroness of Cuéllar, whose shrine lies six kilometres from the town.[534] Both suggestions were interesting interpretations, but no documentation was ever discovered to provide confirmation.

In his 2012 article, Rafael Girón Pascual discounted the notion that his family name indicated Cuéllar's place of birth. He explained 'the surname Cuéllar is found widespread across Castile and during the period in which we are dealing the surname rarely indicates place of birth.'[535] He went on to suggest that Cuéllar may have been born in Valladolid in 1562, to Pedro de Cuéllar and Doña Bernardina de

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Laguna [Torrelaguna], son of Gabriel de Cuéllar, aged twenty-one years, of good build, tanned complexion, without a mark on his face.'

[530] Quatrefages, R., *Los tercios españoles (1567-77*), Madrid, 1979, pp. 295-97.

[531] Thompson, I.A.A., 'El soldado del Imperio: una aproximación al perfil del recluta español en el Siglo de Oro', in *Manuscrits*, 21, 2003, p. 36.

[532] Hardy, E., *Survivors of the Armada*, p. 40.

[533] Ibid., p. 41.

[534] Cruickshank D., and Gallagher, P., 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', in *God's Obvious Design: Papers for the Spanish Armada Symposium, Sligo, 1988*, London, 1990, p. 195.

Girón Pascual, 'El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar', p. 1053.

Cavero, a maidservant of the Ana de Mendoza, the Princess of Éboli.[536] This individual was named Francisco Cavero de Cuéllar. The princess fell from grace in 1579 through her association with the disgraced former secretary of Philip II, Antonio Pérez, which led to her arrest. According to Girón, Bernadina then moved to Extremadura, to live with her son, Luis de Cuéllar, who was appointed vicar to Jérez de los Caballeros shortly afterwards.[537] This, he explained, might account for Cuéllar's use of certain expressions, 'casares', 'casiñas', etc., in the *Carta* that are typical of the Extremadura-Leon regions.[538] Cruickshank and Gallagher also picked up on this trait. They regarded 'he repeated use of 'casiña' as an alternative to 'choza' ('hut'), suggests contact with NW Spain, or with sailors from those parts.'[539] However, Francisco Cavero de Cuéllar was a separate individual from Captain Cuéllar. A document, on which he featured as a witness, placed him in Pastrana (80 kms east of Madrid) in August 1581, a time when Captain Cuéllar was recruiting troops in Andalusia.[540] Therefore, Francisco Cavero de Cuéllar and a birthdate of 1562 in Valladolid must be discounted as pertaining to Captain Cuéllar.

Elsewhere, Captain Cuéllar's hometown was given as Medina del Campo, not Torrelaguna as stated on the *San Tadeo*.[541] Cruickshank and Gallagher noted his mention of the town in their supposition that he may have been born somewhere in the region: 'the fact is that the only other references in his letter to places in Spain [Medina del Campo and Our Lady of Ontañar] could be taken to support the possibility that he really was born in north central Castile.'[542] Alternatively, it may even be that Cuéllar was actually from one of the colonies.[543] He stated in at least two submissions to royal councils that began his career in the Indies, which seems to be corroborated by the presence of the Francisco de Cuéllar on the galleon *San Tadeo*. At the end of his career he returned to the Indies. And in a submission to the Council of the Indies, he claimed there were relatives (*deudos*) of his living in New Spain, which suggests links to the colonies, if not a colonial background.[544] Unfortunately, lacking further evidence the question of his birthplace remains unresolved.

We know that he could read and write; important attributes for a potential captain given the level of administration the role required. But from their analysis of the

[536] Ibid., pp. 1053-54.
[537] Ibid., p. 1054.
[538] Ibid.
[539] Cruickshank and Gallagher, 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', p. 199.
[540] Dadson, T.J., and Reed, H.H., *Epistolario e historia documental de Ana de Mendoza y de la Cerda princesa de Éboli*, Madrid, 2013. p. 436.
[541] AGI Contaduría 531-A, f.452.
[542] Cruickshank and Gallagher, 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', p. 195.
[543] With thanks to Dr Hiram Morgan for the suggestion.
[544] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, *Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, Cámara de Indias*, 4 June 1605.

Carta, Cruickshank and Gallagher concluded: 'that the author's level of educational attainment was not very high.'[545] Even so, we know from the *Carta* that Cuéllar could speak Latin. In 1586, Cuéllar claimed that he was only fifteen when he enlisted, which may supports Cruickshank and Gallagher's assumptions. But if he did enlist at the age of fifteen, then it contradicts the given age (twenty-one years) of the individual on the *San Tadeo*. However, this claim to youthful enlistment poses its own problems considering that Cuéllar was made a captain only three years later. Yet, teenage recruits were a feature of the service. In his autobiography, Captain Alonso de Contreras claimed that he enlisted at the age of thirteen when he ran away from home to join the army in 1595. He described how he was given a special dispensation, which stated 'let him be enrolled even though he is not of military age.' Moreover, Contreras reckoned that many other 'children' had joined the ranks. Irving Thompson, who surveyed 3,500 recruits in twenty nine companies formed in the years 1575, 1587, 1624-28.[546] He found that the given age of over forty per cent of new recruits consisted of youths up to the age of twenty years.[547] Youngsters were a normal part of maritime crews. Waifs and strays were frequently rounded up and put on board vessels where they served as apprentice mariners (*pajes*). The officer who replaced Cuéllar on the *San Pedro* in 1588, after his court-martial in the North Sea was a nephew and namesake of the renowned commander, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. He claimed that he first served at the tender age of nine.[548] Cuéllar's background unfortunately remains vague, which perhaps, merely serves to add to his mystique.

Captaincy: Requirements

In his study of the Army of Flanders high command, Fernando González de León observed how 'friend and foe alike agreed that the *tercios* (or regiments) of Flanders...were led by some of the best officers in Europe.'[549] Conventional wisdom attributed this to the selection procedures that were in place to select officers with the appropriate qualities. Normal ascent to a captaincy was usually achieved by promotion through the minor ranks of corporal (*cabo de esquadra*), sergeant (*sargento*), and ensign (*alférez*). Ordinarily, they were around thirty years old and single. González de León pointed out that under the Duke of Alva 'heavy emphasis was placed on an officer's service and expertise.' Appropriate preparation for senior command, he argued, could only be achieved by progression through the lower ranks, thereby gaining a thorough education of each rank and role.[550] Sancho de

[545] Gallagher and Cruickshank, 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', p. 199.
[546] Thompson, I.A.A., 'El soldado del Imperio: una aproximación al perfil del recluta español en el Siglo de Oro' in *Manuscrits*, vol. 21, 2003, pp. 17-38.
[547] Ibid., p. 36.
[548] AGS GyM 530 f.275.
[549] González de León, *The Road to Rocroi*, p. 2.
[550] Ibid., p. 64.

Londoño, who served under Alba, echoed these views in a treatise published in 1594: '[candidates should be] chosen from the most suitable and able of those in the military profession; known by those who choose them or by sufficient references from credible individuals of the same profession.'[551] However, in the opinion of Albi de la Cuesta 'there was no standardized system for promotion, which depended, above all, either upon merits or influence'.[552]

Captaincies were the gift of the King and were mostly conferred at court. Frequently though, he simply ratified the recommendations of a senior commander who had already promoted an officer in the field. Appointments frequently preceded a new levy of troops, a campaign, or a naval expedition with candidates selected from a list of nominations submitted to the Council of State, War, or Indies.

Under Philip II attempts were made to formulate a set of criteria for the selection of captains. The Council of State recommended that a candidate should have served at least six years as a private soldier, another four as ensign, or at least ten years in the ranks without any form of promotion.[553] Individuals with outstanding qualities who did not have the requisite length of service could be considered for a captaincy if the King received an appropriate commendation on their behalf from a senior ranking officer. Likewise, during the course of a campaign a commander had the authority to place a soldier or ensign in charge of a company if the individual in question had the requisite qualities through their actions even though they might not have the requisite length of service: 'Que si algún soldado particular o alférez huviere hecho o hiziere algún caso muy señalado en la guerra, aunque no tenga tantos años de servicio en ella, como esta dicho, pueda ser proveydo de compañía con que el General, e baxo cuya orden sirviere, avisse dello a su Magestad y de las partes y calidad que tiene y el servicio señalado que huviere hecho antes de darle la compañía.'[554] But the Crown had to be notified of any appointments. A twin-track approach was permitted for the nobility. In 1592 the King ordained: 'if there is a noble (*cavallero*) among the infantry who possess the said qualities although not having served the stipulated time, if he has been a soldier for four years, or partook in a campaign of note you can recommend him for captain.'[555] Although merit was often the defining criteria, appointments were also based on other considerations as well, political, patronage and even nepotism.

[551] Londoño, S. de, *Discurso sobre la forma de reducir la Disciplina Militar a mejor y antiguo estado*, Madrid, 1594.
[552] Albi de la Cuesta, J., *De Pavía a Rocroi: Los tercios de infantería española en los siglos XVI y XVII*, Madrid, 1999, p. 62.
[553] AGS Estado 2219, f.27.
[554] Ibid.
[555] AGS Estado 1270, f.5.

Cuéllar's rise to a captaincy appears to have been somewhat meteoric. It was rather unconventional on at least two counts: his apparent youth; and his relative lack of experience. He was promoted after only three years of service. Furthermore, he seems to have skipped the minor ranks entirely. This is where his claim that he was fifteen years of age when he enlisted becomes problematic. It seems highly unlikely that he was awarded a captaincy at the age of eighteen. Even if he was twenty-one when he enlisted (the given age on the *San Tadeo*) this still meant that he was only twenty-four when he was promoted, far younger than the recommended age. Then again, youthful officers were not unknown. Captain Estevan de las Alas took charge of the Indies Guard galleon, *Santiago el Menor* in 1576, aged only twenty-three years.[556] He later served with Cuéllar in Brazil. In his case, family connections were an undoubted factor; He too, was related to Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. Could it be that Cuéllar may have had a well-placed patron looking after his interests?

So what was the context that led to Cuéllar's promotion? He did not feature among the original list of twenty candidates nominated for the 1581 expedition to the Magellan Strait (most nominees were officers of the Indies Guard).[557] At least eight of those candidates declined to participate. In 1585, Cuéllar claimed that on the conclusion of the Portuguese campaign he was preparing to depart for Flanders when he received his nomination for a captaincy with the Armada de Magallanes: 'y servido y halladose en toda la conquista de Portugal, estando a punto y de camino para ir a servir en el ejército de Flandes, Vuestra Magestad y los de su real Consejo de las Yndias, le nombraron por uno de los capitanes de la infantería de la armada que fue al estrecho de Magallanes, lo qual aceptó, aunque otros no lo quisieron por los manifiestos peligros y trabajos que en la dicha jornada se ofrecían.'[558] His claim was corroborated in a *consulta* of the Council of the Indies of May 1581, in which two officers, Captain Francisco de Nevares and *alférez* Martín Ochoa de Lecoya (both of the Indies Guard), were offered commissions, as 'those already proposed have not accepted [theirs].'[559] A fourth individual received a captaincy at this time: *alférez* Juan Gutiérrez Garibay, who also had many years' service with the Indies Guard. In fact, Garibay had served under Captain Nevares on the frigate *Santa Catalina* during 1577-78 (the vessel subsequently assigned to Cuéllar in 1581).[560] So it seems that Cuéllar was one of a number who received captaincies because there

[556] AGI Contaduría 503, Lista de Gente de Mar y Guerra 1575-78.
[557] AGS GyM 110, f.287.
[558] AGS GyM 171, f.202, '[he] served in the conquest of Portugal, he was about to depart to serve in the Army of Flanders, when His Majesty and the [members of the] Council of the Indies nominated him as one of the captains of infantry of the fleet that went to the Strait of Magellan, which he accepted, though others refused due to the manifest dangers and difficulties that the said expedition posed.'
[559] Heredia Herrera, A., *Catálogo de las Consultas del Consejo de Indias*, Tomo I (1529-1591), Madrid, 1972, document no. 864, p. 319.
[560] AGI Contaduría, legajos 478-A, and 517.

was a shortage of officers willing to participate in what was, ultimately, an unpopular and hazardous endeavour. Moreover, another noticeable trait in this instance seems to be the numbers with previous experience of service with the Indies Guard, which seems to strengthen the supposition that Cuéllar's initial service was with the unit. Cuéllar's promotion, therefore, appears opportunistic.

If Cuéllar's candidacy for a captaincy ran contrary to the normal criteria, two colleagues who possessed ideal profiles were the aforementioned Juan Gutiérrez Garibay, and Captain Esteban de Legorreta. Both rose through the lower ranks and subsequently rose to high command. Cuéllar had a close association with Garibay over the course of a decade (1578-1588). Both served in the Indies Guard, the Armada de Magallanes, and Squadron of Castile in 1588. Moreover they were both assigned to the Portuguese galleon, *San Luis*, during the Azores voyage of 1587. Garibay was a good deal older than Cuéllar, around thirty-two years old when he received his captaincy in 1581.[561] By then, he had fifteen years' experience as a soldier. After an initial spell of garrison duty in Florida he transferred to the Indies Guard where he was promoted to sergeant, and then to *alferéz* by Don Cristóbal de Eraso in 1576.[562] After 1588, Garibay continued as a naval officer and during the 1590s he was raised to the rank of Captain-General. He became a celebrated commander, and completed sixteen successful trans-Atlantic crossings in charge of Tierra Firme and New Spain *flotas* between 1592 and 1613.[563]

Esteban de Legorreta, on the other hand, rose to prominence during the Armada campaign.[564] He served on the *Gran Grifón* of Juan Gómez de Medina, which was wrecked at Fair Isle. His path crossed with Cuéllar's in Edinburgh in 1589, where he (Legorreta) and Captain Patricio Antolínez were left as senior acting officers in the city following Medina's sudden departure for Spain. They acted as intermediaries in negotiations for the repatriation of Armada survivors. They and their companies survived the attack on the convoy before Dunkirk and entered service under the Duke of Parma. However, in Lisbon in January 1588, Legorreta held the rank of *alférez* in the company of Captain Gonzalo de Muxía. He had a decade of service behind him in Italy, Flanders and Portugal.[565] When Muxía died, Legorreta was promoted in his stead before embarking on the *Gran Grifón*.[566] He subsequently spent most of the 1590s in the Low Countries, initially in charge of an infantry company, and when that was disbanded, he was assigned to Archduke Albert's

[561] In 1576 his given age was 27 years. AGI Contaduría 499, Gente de mar y guerra fragata Santa Catalina 1576-78.
[562] Pérez-Mallaína, P.E., 'Juan Gutiérrez Garibay. Vida y hacienda de un general de la Carrera de las Indias en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI', In *Revista de Indias*, vol. LXX, no. 249, 2010, p. 328.
[563] Ibid., p. 321.
[564] AGS GyM 213, f.202.
[565] Ibid.
[566] AGS CSU 276-1, f.645

general staff (alongside Cuéllar). He was subsequently raised to the rank of Maestre de Campo and latterly served with the Armada del Mar Océano until his death in 1607.

Recruitment of Troops

The first task of any new infantry captain was to find recruits for his company. Martínez Ruiz calculated that over the course of the century 1560-1660 (although demand fluctuated) an average of 9,000 new recruits from Spain was required annually to replenish Spanish units in the army and marine.[567] Despite the longevity of his career, Cuéllar recruited troops on only two occasions: in 1581, and 1601-02. In 1588, the *San Pedro*, already had its complement of crew before Cuéllar took charge. In the Low Countries he served predominantly as a staff officer, which did not involve command of troops.

Recruitment during the reign of Philip II, was crown-controlled and in theory, a tightly regulated affair. Captains were authorised by the crown to recruit a company within a defined period and designated area, and were issued with royal commissions to do so. Company quotas were usually two hundred and fifty recruits, though in the later sixteenth century recruiters usually experienced great difficulty in securing this number of recruits. Recruitment districts were mostly limited to royal domains within Castile and Aragon. According to Rodríguez-Hernández, by the early seventeenth century there were fifty districts demarcated by the crown for recruitment purposes.[568] Districts under seigniorial and ecclesiastical jurisdiction were usually exempt, and were only resorted to on occasions of exceptional circumstances (for example, the Enterprise of England) and after consultation between the crown and proprietor.[569] Frank Tallet considered recruitment by royal commission advantageous over other methods of recruitment (i.e. private contracts agreed with military entrepreneurs) in that it ensured control over the numbers of troops raised, and where and when they were recruited.[570] Parker, in his study of the Army of Flanders concurred, observing that 'all power remained in royal hands, vested in the Council of War in Spain, and in the Captain- and Governor-General in the Low Countries.[571] Outsourcing of recruitment to private contractors was to be a feature of the seventeenth century, but during Captain Cuéllar's tenure recruitment by royal commission prevailed in Spain.

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[567] Martínez Ruiz, E., *Soldados del Rey: Los ejércitos de la monarquía hispánica (1480-1700)*, Madrid, 2008, pp. 85-86.
[568] Rodríguez-Hernández, A.J., 'Los hombres y la guerra. El reclutamiento.' In *Historia militar de España: edad moderna II: escenario europeo*, Madrid, 2013, pp. 191-92.
[569] Marchena Fernández, J., 'Las levas de soldados a Indias en la Baja Andalucía. Siglo XVII' in Torres Ramírez, B., Hernández Palomo, J.J., *Actas III de las Jornadas de Andalucía y América*, Andalusia, 1985, p. 100.
[570] Tallet, F., *War and Society in Early-Modern Europe, 1495-1715*, London, 1992, p. 70.
[571] Parker, G., *The Army of Flanders*, p. 29.

A captain usually set up in the largest town in a given district. Upon arrival he presented his commission to local magistrates. Once the papers were found to be in order they were obliged to provide the captain with lodgings (a vacant building or a room at a local inn) within the town.[572] The captain then unfurled his company banner and dispatched a drummer around town to notify the local populace. Junior officers (*alférez* and *cabo de esquadra*) were frequently dispatched to outlying districts. Ordinarily, they were expected to complete their recruitment in a locality within twenty-one days. If they delayed any longer recruits tended to desert at a higher rate than they could be replaced. Newly-raised units were then conducted to their point of embarkation, often in tandem with others, by a designated commissary responsible for arranging accommodation and supplies in towns along the route. Cuéllar fulfilled such a role in 1588, when overseeing the transfer of infantry units from winter quarters in districts outside Lisbon to their designated vessels.[573]

Actually, In 1581 Cuéllar was authorised by the Council of the Indies to recruit personnel (July-August) before he received his official captain's patent (September). Treasury accounts show that he acquired a new company banner (*bandera*), and a drum (*caja de atambor*) for the task, for which he was reimbursed 11,220 *maravedíes* (twenty *escudos*, ten *reales*).[574] One of the privileges of captaincy was the liberty to choose the colour and insignia of a company banner. According to Albi de la Cuesta, company colours were perceived to possess 'a character almost sacred'.[575] In battle they served as a rallying point for units. At sea they identified the commander of each vessel. A captain's first task on obtaining a banner was to have it blessed.[576] The next task was to appoint junior officers. In 1581 Cuéllar appointed five: one *alférez*, one *sargento*, two *cabos de esquadra*, and a drummer (*atambor*). In 1601, he had eleven junior officers in his company, including 5 *cabos de esquadra*.[577] But the size of the company on that occasion (181) was far greater than the forty-eight soldiers and twenty-five sailors of his first command on the 80-ton, *Santa Catalina*. On that occasion he was assigned to Don Luis de Córdoba's 800-ton flagship, *San Juan Bautista*.

For the Magallanes expedition he appears to have recruited in the town of Écija (ninety kilometres northeast of Seville). Curiously, three of his junior officers (two

[572] Parker, 'The Soldier', p. 33.
[573] AGS Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas (CMC), 2ª época, 482, unfoliated, Cuentas de Juan de Huerta, pagador de la jornada de Inglaterra, año de 1587.
[574] AGI Contratación 2933.unfoliated.Papeles de armada 1567-88, unfoliated, *cédula*, Aranjuez, 23 de Mayo 1590.
[575] Albi de la Cuesta, *De Pavía a Rocroi,* p. 62.
[576] Ibid., p. 62.
[577] AGI Contratación 2973.unfoliated, Relación de la infantería que se halló en los galeones y navíos del armada conforme a la muestra que se les tomó en 13 de mayo 1602.

cabos and a drummer) came from Écija.[578] It is quite likely that they (Juan de Aguilar, Alonso Morejón and Melchior de los Reyes) facilitated the process, given that in all likelihood, Cuéllar was a stranger to the locality. A further eleven of the forty-four recruits hailed from the neighbourhood. Coincidentally, Écija was the hometown Don Cristóbal de Eraso, who had commanded the Indies Guard when Cuéllar first enlisted.[579] Twenty-four companies, in total, were raised for the Magallanes expedition, distributed around various catchment areas in the region around Seville: Carmona, El Arajal, Los Palacios, Lebrija, Santillana, and Utrera, as well as Écija.[580] Other units were raised further afield: Córdoba, Toledo, Jaén, Úbeda, and Baeza, and even Medina del Campo in north central Castile.

Some recruiting officers were sent to their home localities to utilize their local connections in order to gain recruits. Two of Cuéllar's fellow captains in 1581, Domingo de Avendaño and Rodrigo de Rada, were dispatched to the north coast to enlist sailors. Avendaño came from Manurga (south of Bilbao), while Rodrigo de Rada was from Rada in Navarre.[581] Similarly, in 1586, at the outset of preparations for the 'Enterprise of England', Andrés de Eguino (Cuéllar's nemesis in Brazil) was appointed to recruit soldiers and sailors his home district of Bergara (Guipúzcoa).[582] He raised one hundred and forty two soldiers and twenty-five sailors for Juan Martínez de Recalde's squadron and claimed that he 'used all of his possible connections among friends and relatives in Vizcaya, the mountain [districts], and other parts, at great cost to his own resources.'[583] Recruitment of sailors for royal warships was always difficult. Salaries were less than on merchant vessels and often paid in arrears. By the end of the summer of 1581 officials of the Casa de Contratación (the body with administrative oversight of the expedition) resorted to impressment to fill their quotas. Commissaries descended on coastal communities to round up experienced sailors and dispatched them under guard directly to Sanlúcar, where they were compelled to participate in the expedition.[584] Accounts submitted by Licentiate Altamiraño, the commissary charged with the task, revealed that forty-one individuals were coerced in this manner from towns such as Huelva, Palos, Moguer, San Juan del Puerto and Redondela.[585]

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[578] AGI Contaduría, 531-A, f. 452-53.
[579] Pérez-Mallaína, P.E., 'Servir al Rey o la familia. El proceso contra el general de la carrera de Indias Don Cristóbal de Eraso', in Aqusolo Vegas, J., et al, *Sucesos curiosos en la Andalucía del Antiguo Régimen*, Tomo II, Seville, 2010, p. 305.
[580] AGS GyM 116, f.244.
[581] AGI Contaduría 503, f.9, Lista de gente de mar y guerra 1575-78, 'la dicha gente de guerra del galeón Santadeo',
[582] AGS GyM 186, ff.35, 239.
[583] AGS GyM 187 f.143.
[584] AGI Contratación 4297, 'Memorial de las costas que yo, el Licenciado Altamirano, a hecho en levantar la gente de mar por commissión de los señores Presidente y juezes desta casa de la Contratación de Sevilla, y son las siguientes.'
[585] Ibid.

Mobilisation

Aside from the uprisings in Granada and Aragon, the conquest of Portugal, and brief incursions by English marauders (1585, '87, '89, '96), the Spanish mainland under Philip II remained otherwise free of conflict. Consequently, military service for the most part, was performed abroad. Extensive movements of troops from recruiting grounds to embarcation ports for both amphibious and land-based units became an all-too familiar sight along the highways of the Iberian Peninsula. In 1581 around three thousand soldiers, sailors, and colonists were assembled in Sanlúcar de Barrameda.[586] Once the infantry units were raised, officials were assigned to supervise their transfer to the port: Don Cristóbal de Eraso - Carmona; Don Alonso de Leiva - El Arajal; Don Pedro de Santillán - Los Palacios; Don Diego de Maldonado – Lebrija; Don Francisco de Godoy – Santillana; Don Gabriel de Montalvo – Utrera.[587] Each company was instructed to congregate at Utrera (40kms southeast of Seville), and to proceed from there to Sanlúcar.[588] From Écija, Cuéllar's unit had a transit of around four to five days (approximately 150 kms).

If the 1581 expedition was considered ambitious, it was dwarfed by preparations put in place for the 'Enterprise of England'. Initial plans required 14,000 troops for the fleet in Lisbon. To this end, the *tercios* of Naples and Sicily (1,500 troops each) were earmarked for transfer from Italy. The towns, cities, and *señoríos* of Andalusia offered to raise fourteen companies (3,500 recruits). They were granted the privilege of nominating captains. A further thirty companies (7,500 recruits) were to be raised from the usual crown-designated recruitment districts across Castile.[589] This special levy for the Armada was to be made in conjunction with a separate recruitment drive to raise twenty-eight companies (6,000-7,000 recruits) for garrisons in Italy.[590] When the Armada finally set sail at the end of May 1588, some 18,539 troops had been assembled, comprising 176 individual companies.[591]

Captain Luis Ramírez was one of nineteen captains transferred from Flanders to Spain in early 1587 to ensure that a cohort of experienced officers took charge of newly raised units destined for Lisbon. He is of interest as he twice crossed paths with Captain Cuéllar and they ended up together on the *Lavia*. His tale is instructive of the process of mobilisation. On arrival in Madrid, he received his patent on 16 May 1587[592], which authorised him to raise 250 troops in the district of Fuensalida, Oropesa and Orgaz (west of Toledo).[593] His *conducta* (royal certification) specified

[586] Markham, C.R. (ed.), *Narratives of the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, p. 222.
[587] AGS GyM 116, f.244.
[588] Ibid., 116, f.243.
[589] Herrera Oria, *La Armada Invencible*, pp. 1-4.
[590] Ibid.
[591] AGS GyM 221, f.158.
[592] AGS CSU 2ª época 279, f.597.
[593] AGS GyM 216, f.207.

the itinerary he was to follow, and scheduled a two-week transit to Alcantará, on the Portuguese border, from where he would proceed downstream by barge on the River Tagus to Lisbon. Thirteen towns en route were designated as stopovers.[594] They varied in size between two hundred households (Cebolla, Aldeanueva de Barbarroya) and 1,500 households (Garrovillas de Alconétar). Intervals between them averaged three leagues, extending to four leagues on the longest stages (Almaraz to Jaraicejo, Torrejón el Rubio – Talaván, and Garrovillas de Alconétar – Alcántara). A two-night stay was scheduled at Jaraicejo (700 households), roughly midway on the itinerary, in order to provide for one rest day. Ramirez does not appear to have fulfilled his quota of recruits. He probably raised no more than 150 recruits, one hundred and four of whom were still with him when a muster of the company was taken at Alcántara.[595] Nevertheless, on 14 July, two days later than originally scheduled, he departed from Fuensalida. He arrived in Alcántara, a fortnight later, where the troops transferred to barges.

When the fleet stood down for the winter, infantry units (Ramírez included) were sent to winter quarters outside Lisbon. The following spring, they were recalled to Lisbon. And it was then that Ramírez encountered Captain Cuéllar for the first time, when he was assigned to oversee the transfer to infantry units to their designated vessels, a task that occupied Cuéllar for one week.[596] Ramírez was assigned to the *Lavia* along with the company of Captain Rodrigo Ortiz de Zárate of the *tercio* of Naples.[597] They remained aboard throughout the campaign until they were joined once more by Cuéllar (now under arrest) on 11 August. Most of those recruits (including captains Ramírez and Zárate) perished at Streedagh on 20 September.

During troop mobilisation communities were obliged to provide food, accommodation, and transport for the company baggage and accoutrements. For example Ramírez's *conducta* specified that host communities were required to provide *cama y servicio*: bed and utensils (vinegar, olive oil, salt, candles etc.).[598] Food was usually included. Items of transport were also requisitioned to carry company equipment. The burden of obligations fell upon the local peasant class as *hidalgos* and the clergy could claim legal exemption through ancient privileges.[599] The commissary's task was to arrange accommodation with local officials. On arrival each day, tokens were distributed to the troops to be presented to householders. Tokens served as sureties that the host would receive compensation from the

[594] AGS GyM 216, f.207.
[595] AGS GyM 216, f.206.
[596] AGS CMC, 2ª época, 482, unfoliated, Cuentas de Juan de Huerta, pagador de la jornada de Inglaterra, año de 1587.
[597] González-Aller Hierro et al, *La batalla del Mar Océano*, vol. IV. Part 2, doc. no. 5052, pp. 287-308.
[598] AGS GyM 216, f.207.
[599] Vassberg, D., E., *The Village and the Outside World in Golden Age Castile: Mobility and Migration in Everyday Rural Life*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 106.

crown at some unspecified future date. The troops were prohibited from demanding extra provisions or money from their hosts. Any damage was supposed to be paid for by the perpetrators. Invariably, the passage of troops through towns caused great upheaval in host communities to a greater or lesser extent. Too often, raucous behaviour, theft, and even violence and rape against civilians was perpetrated by troops in transit through such localities. Don Gabriel de Montalvo who oversaw the transfer of units to Sanlúcar complained about the 'usual crimes and disorders' of the 'Magallanes' units during their transit.[600] But sanctions were rarely enforced and, as Thompson proclaimed, 'the coming of a company of soldiers was awaited with the same trepidation as a hurricane.'[601]

Active Service

Having raised a body of troops and succeeded in getting most, if not all, to their destination the role of a captain began in earnest. At the outset, it was the captain's responsibility to ensure that his troops were properly housed, armed and equipped. As we have seen, during mobilisation civilian populations were expected to accommodate infantry units during recruitment and during their transit across the country. The same procedures were applied when units were dispatched to the Low Countries along the strategic troop corridor known as the Spanish Road.[602] Units sent to Flanders served either in the field army or on garrison duty in towns across the region. Large centres such as Antwerp or Cambrai contained large citadels capable of housing substantial garrisons, but in smaller centres the local citizenry bore the burden of supporting the troops.[603] In Andalusia infantry units of the Indies Guard were frequently dispersed to winter quarters in the surrounding region for prompt muster the following spring.

Seven infantry companies (around nine hundred troops) were recruited in 1601 for the projected Armada de Barlovento enterprise. When the scheme was dropped they were kept in being to serve as the infantry contingent under Don Luis de Córdoba as an additional unit of the Indies Guard squadron in 1602. This entailed a necessity to provide accommodation until the following spring, when they finally departed on their voyage to the Caribbean. In a list of service papers compiled for Cuéllar in 1604, there were references to various written orders issued to him by the Marquis of Montesclaros and the Duke of Medina Sidonia. Those orders contained instructions pertaining to the accommodation of his troops: 'diversas ordenes del Duque de Medina [Sidonia] y del Marqués de Santa Cruz tocantes al

[600] AGS GyM 116, f.243.
[601] Vassberg, *The Village and the Outside World,* p. 106.
[602] Parker, *Army of Flanders*, pp. 70-91.
[603] Ibid., pp. 140-41.

alojamiento de su compañía.'[604] We do not know where his company was accommodated in 1601, but when he returned from his tour of duty in 1602, lodgings were assigned to the troops in Utrera, Villamartín, Alcalá de Guada and Coronel, communities located within 2-3 days march of Sanlúcar.[605] However, tensions between troops and host communities led, on occasion, to violence. About this time, citizens of Guillena refused to accommodate the company of Captain Pedro de Zúñiga (squadron of Don Luis Fajardo). An angry mob confronted the unit on the outskirts of town and began to pelt stones at them. In the ensuing riot one soldier was killed and 3-4 injured. Zúñiga removed his troops to Las Dos Hermanas where further disturbances occurred. Locals took up arms there, and another soldier was killed along with several injured. Zúñiga and his men were forced to seek sanctuary in the local church.[606] Reciprocal violence occurred when troops were not paid. Sometimes *socorros* (small advances) were allocated, but when no pay was forthcoming, discontent led to violent disorder, damage to properties, and desertion.[607] During the winter of 1602 Cuéllar's troops received no pay. In the *relación* he submitted to the Council of State in 1604, he was at pains to demonstrate to authorities that he had succeeded in maintaining discipline among the troops under his charge during this time:

> recibió por su causa ningún daño ni menoscabo ni se consintió hacer ni tampoco ubo persona que en los aloxamientos ni tránsitos por donde anduvo con la dicha su compañía y con otras que hay a su cargo se quejare en de aber recibido daño ni maltratamiento como todo a constado al dicho consejo de las Indias por la visita y residencia que mandó tomar a los capitanes de la dicha armada de los galeones.[608]

However, he was powerless to stop his men from deserting. When the troops were mustered in February 1603, he retained only 55 of the 181 troops that comprised his unit nine months earlier.

While a captain did not necessarily train the men in his unit, that role fell to the *sargentos* and *cabos*, he was required to ensure that members of their unit were adequately armed. An inventory of the *San Pedro*, when Cuéllar was in charge in

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[604] AGS Estado 1704, f.361.
[605] AGS GyM 618, f.283.
[606] AGS GyM 581, f.179.
[607] AGI Indiferente General 1119, Officials of the Casa de Contratación to Philip III, 14 January 1603, Seville.
[608] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, Memoriales de partes de Estado, 31 March 1604. 'No damage was caused or harm done on account of him, nor did he allow it to be done, nor was there any individual in the lodgings or places that he marched through with his said company, or with others under his command, who complained about any harm done, or ill-treatment received, as was made clear to the said Council of the Indies by the visita y residencia [customary inspection and review] of the captains of the said squadron of the galleons [of the Indies Guard, which it ordered to be carried out.'

1588, reveals the kind of array of infantry armour and weaponry to be found on-board a royal warship:[609]

Armour
100 helmets (*morriones*) 24 sets of body armour (*cuerpos de armas*)
30 shields (*rodelas*)

Weaponry
130 arquebuses 60 muskets
25 pikes (*picas*)
12 halberds (*alabardas*)
Anti-personnel munitions:[610]
12 grenades (*bombas*)
30 incendiary grenades (*alcancías* - pots filled with flammable materials)

These were the standard infantry weapons used by soldiers of the period. The company that Cuéllar recruited for the 1602 voyage was a *compañía de arcabuceros* (arquebus company), which entailed a higher proportion of firearms than a regular infantry unit. In May 1602, shortly before departure for the Caribbean, a muster of his troops onboard the flagship, *San Juan Bautista*, revealed that Cuéllar's company comprised 181 troopers, of whom twenty-two were musketeers (thirty according to a muster in December);[611] the remainder were predominantly armed with harquebuses. Cuéllar had twice the usual complement of musketeers usually assigned to a regular-sized infantry unit (ordinarily fifteen per company). This may have been due to the influence of fleet commander Don Luis Fernández de Córdoba who favoured a higher proportion of musketeers in his units. Córdoba seems to have been something of a reformist. He had served under the Duke of Medina Sidonia as an *entretenido* on the San Martín in 1588, and had clearly observed some of the failings of the fleet on that occasion. After he was raised to the rank of Captain-General in 1601, and until his death four year later, he voiced his opinion on many aspects of fleet management in dossiers submitted to the crown. In February 1605, he sent to the King a nine-page report that outlined changes he believed should be introduced. Among them he suggested that the numbers of marine infantry in his squadron be increased by twenty-five per cent 'due to the large numbers that die on such a long voyage'.[612] He also felt that the complement

[609] AGS GyM 221, f.148.
[610] AGS GyM 221, f.152.
[611] AGI Contratación 2973, unfoliated, Relación de la infantería que se halló en los galeones y navíos del armada conforme a la muestra que se les tomó en 13 de Mayo 1602.
[612] AGS GyM 647, f.429.

of musketeers per company should be increased from fifteen to twenty-five 'because the enemy does not fight with any other weapon.'[613]

Two dockets signed by Cuéllar provide a tantalising cameo of the kind of routine administration associated with the preparation of a unit prior to active service. They related to weapons provision for the musketeers in his company prior to departure of the fleet in 1602. The first pertained to a contract drawn up with the skipper (Martín Pérez) of a small fishing bark, to collect a requisite number of firearms and associated accoutrements from the military arsenal in Cádiz.[614] At this time the San Juan Bautista was at anchor nearby in Cádiz Bay. Pérez delivered eight cases of muskets and harquebuses. He was then tasked with the transport of two troopers to the jail at Sanlúcar. They were under arrest on the flagship and had been condemned to serve in the galleys, presumably following a court-martial. There they would be picked up by galley officials. Six ducats was the agreed price. But Cuéllar advanced only twenty-four *reales*, claiming lack of funds. A bond was drawn up whereby the remaining forty-two *reales* were to be released by the paymaster of the fleet when Pérez reached Sanlúcar. Cuéllar sanctioned the payment as follows:

> Yo, Francisco de Cuéllar, capitán de ynfantería Española, por el Rey, Nuestro Señor, y del Galeón *San Juan Bautista*, y de la gente de mar del, certifico oy miércoles que se contaran treinta del mes de Abril bino a este dicho galeón el arráez, Martín Pérez, con su barco en el qual trajo ocho cajones de armas, mosquetes y arcabuces, y los demás pertrechos, y para que dello conste di esta que es fecha la [sic] el dicho galeón, a 30 de Abril de 1602 años.[615]

Pérez proceeded to Sanlúcar the same day where the outstanding amount (forty-two *reales*) was released to him on presentation of the bond. Later that year, when the squadron returned from its voyage, each captain was obliged to account for weapons received on the instructions of the captain-general, Don Luis de Córdoba. In compliance, Cuéllar certified the quantity of weapons ha had acquired from the arsenal:

> Digo yo, el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, que reciví del maestre del galeón *San Juan Bautista*, capitana de la Real armada de la guardia de Yndias, ocho mosquetes con sus frascos y veinte y dos arcabuces para armar los soldados visoños de mi compañía, de los quales mosquetes y aracabuces dare quenta todas las beces que me sea pedida, y

[613] AGS GyM 647, f.429.
[614] AGI Contratación 3660. Cuentas de Pagadores de Armada 1601/02, unfoliated.
[615] Ibid., 'I, Francisco de Cuéllar, Captain of Spanish infantry for the King, our lord, of the galleon San Juan Bautista, and of its mariners, certify that today, Wednesday 30 April, skipper [*arráez*] Martín Pérez, came to this said galleon with his boat in which he carried eight cases [*cajones*] of firearms, muskets and harquebuses, and the rest of their accoutrements [*pertrechos*], and I gave him [twenty-four reales] as stated [above], dated on the said galleon, 30 April 1602'

por verdad lo firme de mi nombre, fecho en Sanlúcar, a 22 Dicembre de 1602. Francisco de Cuéllar.[616]

Besides offering a glimpse of Cuéllar, the dockets above offer us a brief glimpse of the kind of interactions that existed between the military and civilian service providers. The brief transactions hinted at in the dockets above suggest a mishmash of logistical support, fiscal arrangements, and even transport of prisoners when required. While these appear to have been ad hoc arrangements, they were nevertheless integral to the daily routines of fleet preparation. Above all, they illustrate the requirements of bureaucratic administration: everything had to be accounted for.

Once at sea, Cuéllar, as a Capitán de Mar y Guerra (Captain of mariners and troops), had overall responsibility for those on-board. While some officers may have been 'hands on' in their approach to their commands, the daily routine of a capitán de mar y guerra was mainly supervisory and administrative. The master of the ship and the pilot were responsible for navigation and directing the sailors on board. All three were critically important to the effectiveness of a royal warship. Therefore, a good working relationship between a captain, the ship's master and the pilot were important. Good communication was essential as misunderstandings could have dire consequences. During the 1588 campaign Cuéllar blamed the pilot of the *San Pedro* (Andrés de Valenzuela) for moving the galleon ahead of the fleet, albeit in order to carry out urgent repairs, without informing him after Cuéllar retired to his cabin to rest. Cuéllar was subsequently made made responsible for the galleon's failure to respond to the flagship's urgent instructions to resume its place in the formation, which led to his court-martial (see pp. 181-83). By contrast, former captain and colleague, Juan Gutiérrez Garibay demonstrated an ability to skilfully manage an entire fleet when he took charge of the Tierra Firme *flota* in 1597. Returning to Spain with ten million *pesos* in treasure, Garibay received warning that upwards of one hundred and fifty English and Dutch corsairs were lurking among the Azores. Yet, he succeeded in leading the fleet safely into the harbour at Angra, and slipped away once more, undetected after heavy weather had scattered the enemy vessels. Garibay managed to bring the fleet back to Sanlúcar without loss of a ship or treasure, a feat for which he was lauded.[617]

[616] AGI Contratación 2973, Papeles de Armada 1602/03, unfoliated, 'I, Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, state that I received from the master of the galleon *San Juan Bautista*, flagship of the royal fleet of the Indies Guard, eight muskets with their accoutrements [*frascos*] and twenty-two arquebuses to arm the recruits [*bisoños*] of my company, of which muskets and arquebuses I will give account every time I am requested to do so, and truthfully [in certification of the truth of this statement] I sign my name, dated in Sanlúcar 22 December 1602, Francisco de Cuéllar.'

[617] Pérez-Mallaína, 'Juan Gutiérrez Garibay', pp. 330-31.

Rations

A petty officer had direct responsibility under the captain's supervision to manage on-board provisions. Each crew member was issued with a ration book, which recorded receipt of daily provisions. Rations were considered payment in kind, so at the end of a voyage they were accounted for as part of the salary and were deducted from cash payments to individuals. For example, Cuéllar received eighty-two rations during the voyage to the Azores in 1587, which had a monetary value of six *escudos*, eight *reales*, twenty-five *maravedíes*.[618] Similarly in 1588, he received rations between 10 April and 20 September, calculated at two *escudos*, five *reales* per month, which amounted to thirteen *escudos*, three *reales*, and eleven *maravedíes* of his salary for that period.[619]

Typical daily rations during the 1588 campaign were as follows: 1 ½ pounds of biscuit, olive oil, a quarter pint of vinegar, three pints of water for all purposes, one quart of diluted wine (equivalent of one bottle). This was supplemented by cheese, salt pork, chick peas, and tuna or cod, issued on specific days: Sundays and Thursdays - six ounces of salt pork; Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays - six ounces of dried tuna or cod.[620]

Command and Control of warships: Infantry Captains v Sea Captains

Under normal circumstances the captain's principal role was to oversee the management of shipboard affairs, and to maintain order and discipline. As on land, if sanction were required for misdemeanours, it was the captain who dealt initially with the transgressor. The most serious crimes were usually referred to the captain-general of the fleet.[621] The two prisoners on the *San Juan Bautista*, mentioned above, were almost certainly men from Cuéllar's unit. While he most likely had them placed under arrest, there was a judicial officer in the person of a Judge Advocate to arbitrate serious misdemeanours. Ultimately, Don Luis de Córdoba would have had the last word on their fate and it was most likely he who condemned them to the galleys.

In combat, of course, the captain assumed overall command. But whether it was appropriate to have a military officer in charge instead of a dedicated sailor was, at times, contentious. Debates over the jurisdiction of military captains on board warships were recurrent. According to Rahn-Phillips, 'whether they should have jurisdiction only over the ship and its crew (*capitanes de mar*, or Sea Captains) or

[618] AGS Contaduría del Sueldo (CSU) 284, f.324.
[619] Ibid.
[620] AGI CSU 278_1, f.543-44.
[621] Rahn-Phillips, C., *Six Galleons for the King of Spain: Imperial Defence in the early Seventeenth Century*, Baltimore, 1992, p. 126.

over the ship and all on board (*capitanes de mar y guerra*) including the infantry, was still a major debate in Spain in 1629.'[622] The high reputation of Spanish infantry officers, according to Glete, was a factor in conveying upon them command of navy vessels over the heads of dedicated mariners.[623] In the aftermath of the failure of 1588, and shortly before he died of illness, Juan Martínez de Recalde composed a dossier for the king, which outlined his thoughts on why the campaign failed. One of his criticisms was the policy of appointing young, inexperienced infantry captains to command royal warships. He urged that 'the companies commanded by young inexperienced captains should be dissolved and that strict measures be taken that only veteran and proven soldiers should command, because the captains of the ships failed to do their duty for fear of them.'[624]

Don Luis Fernández de Córdoba raised similar concerns in 1602, when pointing out in a submission to the Council of the Indies in April that some of the captains, de mar y guerra' were not experienced sailors: 'de los siete capitanes [eligidos] para governar la gente de guerra y mar de la armada de su cargo [Don Luis de Córdoba], y que algunos de los eligidos no son marineros, y que esto es de grande inconviniente para la seguridad de la hazienda que en esta armada se a de traer.'[625] Córdoba wished to have experienced mariners in charge of sailors and navigation, leaving the *capitanes de mar y guerra* in charge of the soldiers only. Philip III, however, was unmoved by the proposal. He instructed the council 'no se introduzga lo que no se ha acostumbrado y ordenese prisissamente a don Luys de Córdova que parta sin ninguna más dilación.'[626] Shortly afterwards, Córdoba's concerns were lent credence when, on 1 May, Medina Sidonia wrote to the King from Sanlúcar having seen Córdoba's fleet prepare to depart. He uttered serious misgivings: 'esta armada que lleva a cargo Don Luys de Córdova de 40 años que me sé acordar y he tratado despachado harta cantidad dellas y de flotas no he visto de todas maneras cosa tan abenturada a perderse por confusión y sin aber personas de govierno.'[627] Such comments are unsettling given that Cuéllar was one of the captains in

[622] Ibid., p. 123.
[623] Glete, J., *Warfare at Sea, 1500-1650*, London, 2000, p. 52.
[624] Parker, G., 'Anatomy of Defeat. The Testimony of Juan Martínez de Recalde and Don Alonso Martínez
de Leyva on the failure of the Spanish Armada', *Mariner's Mirror*, XC (2004), p. 320.
[625] AGI Indiferente General 747, unfoliated, *Consulta*, Consejo de Indias, 4 April 1602, 'of the seven captains selected to command the soldiers and sailors of the fleet under his charge, some of them were not sailors, which could prove a great inconvenience to the security of the treasure this fleet has to carry.'
[626] Ibid. 'do not introduce what is not customary, and order Don Luis to depart swiftly without any more delay.'
[627] AGI Indiferente General 1118, Copia de carta del Duque de Medina Sidonia para su Magestad su fecha en Sanlúcar a primero de Mayo 1602, unfoliated, 'This fleet of Don Luis de Córdoba, of the forty years that I can remember that I have dealt with and overseen the dispatch of so many of such fleets and flotas, I have not seen one, which in all manners and matters, was so hazardous and muddled for confusion, and without capable people (*personas de govierno*).'

question. While he was not singled out in this regard, that he was among those dismissed the following spring, causes unease.

Combat

Combat represented the ultimate test of an officer's qualities. On royal warships, it was the Captain's responsibility to ensure that at the moment of engagement with an enemy his vessel was in proper fighting order; that the troops under their charge were prepared and motivated for the task in hand. This entailed that all on board knew their roles and were arrayed appropriately. Officers were expected to lead by example from the front. This was where their status and reputation was established. A good officer understood that the men would look to him for leadership. Two of the most significant moments in Cuéllar's career were the naval engagements at San Vicente in January 1583, and the 1588 campaign in the English Channel. Each presented very different challenges. The 1583 affair was a limited engagement involving five vessels, whereas the 1588 campaign featured two substantial fleets.

Testimony submitted to the Casa de Contratación at Seville in 1584 regarding what transpired at San Vicente depicts Cuéllar's conduct in a combat situation. While it was slanted in his favour, it is nevertheless useful, as it offers an impression of what was expected of an officer. Juan de la Peña stated Cuéllar had the ship ready for combat on arrival at the harbour 'y se puso a todo punto de guerra entendiendo que fueran sin parar a abordar a el dicho ynglés y este testigo entendió siempre dél mucha voluntad y determinacion de hazerlo.'[628] Corporal Diego González Mazagán stated 'the said Captain Cuéllar roused his crew with great animation and gave them good encouragement by offering money and prizes to the one who did best, and to the first to enter the ship of the enemy he would give the best garment of his.'[629] Alonso Moreno elaborated further by stating that Cuéllar offered 'a velvet jacket of his and fifty escudos [more than the basic annual salary of a private soldier] to the first to enter the enemy ship.'[630]

Captain Esteban de las Alas, who was on the *Concepción* with Cuéllar at the time, stated that prior to the commencement of the action Cuéllar had 'all of the artillery

[628] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question V, testimony of Juan de la Peña, 'and he [Cuéllar]put all on a combat footing on the understanding that they were going without hesitation to board the said English [galleons] and this witness always recognised the strong will and determination [Captain Cuéllar had] to do so.'

[629] AGI Escribanía 1069B. Question IX, testimony of Diego González Mazagan, 'el dicho capitán Cuéllar yba con mucho ánimo y boluntad apercibiendo su gente y dando les buenas esperanças y ofreciéndoles dineros y premios a el que mexor lo hiziese y a él que primero entrase en la nao del enemigo por parte le daría el mexor bestido que tenía de su persona.'

[630] Ibid. Question IX, testimony of Alonso Moreno, 'ofreciéndoles un bestido de terciopelo que tenía y cinquenta escudos a el primero que entrase en la nao del dicho enemigo.'

loaded with cannonballs, and all of the rest of the troops (*gente de guerra*) armed and placed in their positions where each was to fight, and in this ordered manner sought to come alongside the said English vice-admiral.'[631] Although initially, the *Concepción* was unable to direct its artillery salvoes against the English, eight witnesses stated that Cuéllar had the troops arranged to face the enemy so as to fire in two or three volleys (*rociadas*).[632] In doing so, he seems to have been following standard procedure in concentrating fire against the enemy to maximum effect. In her acclaimed work '*Six Galleons for the King of Spain*', Carla Rahn-Phillips explained that with an enemy ship alongside, the soldiers would be arranged in two ranks, one firing from the side of the ship while the other retreated to reload. Half of those firing were to aim at the rigging of the enemy vessel and the other half at the gun ports.[633]

Among documents published by Fernández Duro in *La Armada Invencible*, is a document that details the combat arrangement of infantry on-board Medina Sidonia's flagship, the *San Martín*.[634] It serves as a template for infantry deployment on a vessel to maximise its fighting capability. The flagship, a 1000-ton vessel, had 302 troops on board. The majority were distributed in the fighting positions on the fore (*castillo*) and aft (*alcázar*) castles, and in the waist on the main deck (*plaza de armas*) between the two castles. Each squad was split into two sections to defend port and starboard sides. The Duke, with the royal standard, took station on the poop deck (on the *alcázar*). Veterans were placed in the central waist of the main deck (*plaza de armas*). Medina Sidonia described it as 'the most honourable and important post in the entire galleon...because all [who] fight [here] defend and attack the enemy with the valour and spirit that is expected of their character.'[635] The remainder were assigned to the gun deck (*primera cubierta*) and second deck (*segunda cubierta*), similarly arranged in two sections. Those on the gun deck were expected to assist in the discharge of the artillery under the supervision of artillery officers (*artilleros*). Sharpshooters were placed high up in the fighting tops of the fore- and main-masts, and around the external gallery (*corredor*) beneath the poop deck that ran around the stern at the level of the captain's cabin. While we do not have a record of Cuéllar's troop dispositions in 1588, it would be reasonable to

[631] ibid. Question V, testimony of Captain Estevan de las Alas'cargada toda la artillería della con balas e toda la demás gente de guerra con armas prestas e sueltos en sus lugares donde cada uno abía de pelear y ansi yban con horden de barloar la nao almiranta del dicho ynglés.'

[632] Ibid. Question X, testimony of soldiers Francisco Alonso:' y quando pudo ofender al enemigo el dicho Capitán Cuéllar lo hizo e le tiró mucha arcabucería e mosquetería en dos rociadas que le dio y esto responde [a la pregunta]'; and Juan de Guerta: 'y dio a el enemigo dos o tres rociadas de acrcabucería e mosquetería y esto save de la pregunta.'

[633] Rahn-Phillips, C., *Six Galleons for the King of Spain*, p. 147.

[634] Fernández Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, pp. 44-51.

[635] Ibid., 'por ser de los puestos más honrosos y de importancia de todo el galeón [...] para que todos peleen, defienden y ofendan al enemigo con el valor y ánimo que se espera de sus personas.' pp. 46-47.

assume that throughout each day of action in the English Channel they resembled the arrangement on the flagship.

By contrast, the clash at San Vicente was a brief two-day affair. While both conflicts developed into artillery duels, there is little doubt that had there been boarding actions, victory would most likely have gone to the Spanish vessels. The heavy reliance on marine infantry would have been advantageous. But in an artillery duel the tables were turned. Martin and Parker have demonstrated through their analysis of surviving inventories of Armada ships that the Spanish warships had inadequate artillery for the kind of tactics favoured by the English.[636] Unfortunately, we lack an inventory of the guns used by the *Concepción* at San Vicente, while the *San Juan Bautista* carried 20 pieces in 1602, they were not specified.[637] However, we are fortunate that detailed inventories for the *San Pedro* have survived. Records show that the artillery and munitions it carried consisted of the following:[638]

Artillery: Twenty-six guns of different calibres.

20 bronze pieces:
5 *sacres* (5lb shot) 11 *falconetes* (1½ lb, 2lb and 3½ lb shot)
3 *pedreros* (8lb, 11lb, 13lb shot) 1 *esmeril*

6 iron pieces:
3 (unspecified) x 1lb shot 3 *sacres* x 8lb shot

Munitions:
Total 455 iron shot (unspecified).[639]
40 mixed shot (*cadena*, *navaja*, *punta de diamante*)

Gunpowder (38 *quintals*, 64lbs)
Total Cord: 25 *quintals*, 33lbs.[640]
Total lead: 19 *quintals*, 57lbs.[641]

An inventory compiled in November 1588, after the ship returned to Santander, revealed the following quantities still in the ship's magazine: powder (twenty-one *quintals*), lead (six *quintals*), cord (fourteen *quintals*).[642]

What can we garner form this data? The *San Pedro's* armament fired an assortment of seven different calibres, which is consistent with Parker's findings among other

[636] Parker, *Grand Strategy*, pp. 252-62.
[637] AGI Contratación 2973, unfoliated, 'Relación de la artillería, pólvora y municiones...'
[638] Data incorporated from two reports: AGS GyM 221, ff.148, 152.
[639] Combined totals from AGS GyM 221, ff.148, 152.
[640] Ibid.
[641] Ibid.
[642] AGS CSU 2ª 278-2, f.880-81.

ships. Only four guns fired shot of between 8-13lbs, adequate for inflicting superficial damage on an opponent but inadequate for sinking ships. Three were *pedreros*, whose stone shot tended to disintegrate on impact. While quantities of cannon shot was not included in the Santander inventory, around half of the powder, half the match (for igniting the priming pan of muskets and arquebuses), and two-thirds of the lead was consumed (either as musket balls or to plug damage to the hull from incoming enemy shot). If we assume that Cuéllar was truthful that the *San Pedro* was heavily engaged in the fighting, at least some of the time, those figures indicate that half of the artillery munitions were expended. This also conforms to Parker's findings for other vessels: its ammunition was by no means exhausted. The *San Pedro* may have inflicted casualties on opposing vessels through a combination of musketry and artillery fire, but there was little likelihood that serious damage was inflicted on enemy vessels. By contrast, English ships that fired on the *San Pedro* inflicted structural damage. Cuéllar admitted: 'el galeón San Pedro, en que yo benía, recibió mucho daño con muchas balas muy gruesas que el enemigo metió en él por muchas partes, y aunque se remediaban luego lo mejor que podía ser, no dejó de quedar algún balazo encubierto, de suerte que por allí hacía mucha agua.'[643] It was a testament to the durability of the galleon that it and all but one of its sister galleons of the squadron of Castile succeeded in returning home.

At San Vicente, it is likely that the *Concepción* had fewer guns than on the *San Pedro*. Yet, according to witness testimony, it appears to have at least competed adequately against superior English armament. Juan de Esquivel, who survived the sinking of the *Begoña*, and was rescued by a skiff from the *Concepción*, described Cuéllar directing the ship's artillery: 'y este testigo entró en la nao *Conceción* [sic] y bio que el dicho Capitán Cuéllar peleaba con su artillería muy bien e hazía mucho daño al enemigo.'[644] By that he probably meant that Cuéllar was working in concert with his gunners. Just how much damage was inflicted on the enemy is debateable, but some shots were clearly effective. Juan de la Peña described one shot in particular that struck one of the English flagship (galleon *Leicester*): 'y con un tiro de la mura con bala de cadena que la dicha nao *Concepción* tiró a la capitana ynglesa le derribo parte de la popa y le hizo mucho daño y entonçes el dicho capitán Cuéllar

[643] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'the galleon San Pedro, the one I was on, was badly holed by very large cannon balls which the enemy fired into her in several places, and though the damage was soon repaired as well as it could be, some of it remained undetected, and in those places a lot of water got in.'

[644] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIII, testimony of Juan de Esquivel, 'this witness entered the said *Concepción* and saw that the said Captain Cuéllar fired his artillery very well and did much damage to the enemy.'

prometió un bestido al artillero que tiró la dicha pieça.'[645] Another witness (Francisco Alonso), possibly referring to the said shot, remarked wryly, 'it was public knowledge that one round fired with a chain shot killed three musicians of the English and six other persons and none played any more music.'[646] Participants in the action claimed that up to eighty of the English were killed during the clash, though this is not corroborated in English versions of what transpired. It is interesting though that the shots that caused most comment among the Spaniards, and for which Cuéllar rewarded his gunner, were shots directed against the upper works of enemy ships, and those that swept the enemy decks. By contrast, the English in that fight concentrated their efforts on piercing the hull at the water line, damage which caused the *Begoña* to sink.

The Role of an *Entretenido*

Much of the latter part of Cuéllar's career was spent as a staff officer on land, concerned more with administration and logistics than with command of troops in the field. When he was assigned to Lisbon, in June 1587, he was conferred with the status of *entretenido cerca de la persona* to the Captain-General (Marquis of Santa Cruz, and subsequently, Duke of Medina Sidonia). Although he was given charge of the *San Pedro* for the 1588 campaign, Cuéllar remained an *entretenido* for, more or less, the next eleven years. He served both the Duke of Parma and the Archduke Albert in this capacity. In the meantime, the royal *merced* of 1592 reaffirmed his status. But what were *entretenidos*, and what was their intended role?

The term was wide-ranging and of a rather ill-defined nature. The title derived from the salary they received (*entretenimiento*). Essentially, it implied a salaried officer without command of a unit. It was common practice in the army to have a certain number of *entretenidos*, or captains without a unit of their own (*reformados*), attached to a commander's entourage. Among army secretarial staff there were *entretenidos de la pluma* (of the quill). In a marine context Philip II made provision for the admiral and vice-admiral of each float to have one *entretenido* each serve them as adjutants. His instructions stipulated they should have 'ability and skill in navigation and knowledge of the matters of the Indies route (*Carrera de las Indias*).'[647] In 1605, Cuéllar was nominated but overlooked for such a role. But the category of interest in this instance is the *entretenido cerca de la persona*, which applied to Cuéllar. As Fernando González de León explained:

[645] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIII, testimony of Juan de la Peña, 'a chain shot which the said ship *Concepción* fired at the English flagship downed part of the poop and did much damage and so the said Captain Cuéllar promised a garment to the gunner that fired the said piece.'
[646] Ibid. Question XIII, testimony of Francisco de Alonso, 'fue cosa pública e notoria que de un tiro que se tiró con bala de cadena les mató a los dichos yngleses tres músicos e otras seis personas e nunca más tocaron la música.'
[647] AGI Contratación 3263-A, *cédula*, San Lorenzo, 28 Aug 1584.

> The Captains General gathered around themselves large numbers of officers eager for financial, social and career patronage and eventually the Captain General presided over a sizeable household and staff of dozens of hand-picked *entretenidos* who were supposed to help him in the performance of his military and bureaucratic duties.[648]

While he acknowledged they contributed technical and bureaucratic assistance to the commander, he considered their role as subsidiary: They were 'used primarily as couriers [...] never led troops in the field and only very seldom entered the high command.[649] Hernández regarded *entretenidos* as 'usually persons of illustrious blood and good family [...] or military veterans who, for their experience had been awarded the post, all serving very close to the military apex, exercising varied functions and connections.[650] Ricardo González Castrillo suggested they 'constituted a special category, composed of individuals of noble birth and ancestry, placed in the entourage of the captain-general.'[651]

Cuéllar was not an aristocrat; neither did he appear to have any personal connection to senior commanders he served under. He was, however, an officer with experience, twice awarded *entretenimientos* by Philip II, and twice by Philip III. In fact, the text of the royal *cédula* that conferred the award in 1587, highlighted his experience: 'por la plática y espiriencia que tiene de cosas de guerra y el buen çelo con que se emplea en las cosas de mi servicio os encargo y mando le tengais por mi encomendado para ocupalle en las que del se ofrecieren conforme a su calidad que dello me terne por servido.'[652] Possession of a royal *cédula* bound senior officials to recognise this and accommodate him (in the case of Santa Cruz and Archduke Ernest). Moreover, Parma and the Archduke Albert assigned him to their personal entourages on their own initiatives.

In the main, Cuéllar's experiences seem to conform to the general appraisals of commentators. The 1588 campaign aside, most of his duties appear to have been of an administrative/logistical nature. Assigned to the galleon *San Luis* for the 1587 voyage to the Azores, his role, most likely, was to liaise with senior officers on board. He did not have jurisdiction over the troops or crew, so the natural assumption is that his duties revolved around general administration. This probably explains his purpose in going ashore at Angra during the fleet's brief stopover in the

[648] González de León, *The Road to Rocroi*, p. 31.
[649] Ibid., p. 31, fn. 69.
[650] Rodríguez Hernández, *Los Tercios de Flandes*, p. 97.
[651] González Castrillo, R., *El arte militar en la España del siglo XVI,* 2000, p. 95, fn. 59, 'Los entretenidos constituían una categoría especial, formada por individuos de noble cuna y prosapia [...] situados en el contorno del Capitán general.'
[652] AGS GyM 206, f.273, 'and being satisfied as to his familiarity with, and experience in matters of war, and the zeal with which he has conducted himself in matters of my service, I charge and order you by my commendation, to accept him by my commendation and to occupy him in whatsoever matters as may arise according to his abilities.'

port. At Lisbon he was one of 110 *entretenidos* assigned to the *veeduría general* (the main planning/logistical centre).[653] It co-ordinated the assembly of troops, crews, supplies provisions and armaments for the fleet. By the spring of 1588, their numbers had risen to 218.[654] While in theory, Cuéllar was a staff officer to the captain-general, in practise he was under the inspector-general (*Veedor*) of the fleet, Jorge Manrique. It was in essence, a glorified desk job, which may explain why he and his colleagues (the 'Magallanes captains') became so disgruntled with their lot. As we have seen above, one of his duties was to oversee the embarkation of companies of the 'captains of Flanders' (nineteen) from winter quarters to their designated vessels.

In the Army of Flanders Cuéllar served in large entourages under the Parma, Fuentes and the Archduke Albert. Albert's general staff consisted of forty-three *entretenidos*. According to Julio Albi de la Cuesta their typical duties were as follows:

> Although at times they were criticised, they could be exceptionally useful for reconnoitring an enemy army... carrying messages to leaders with whom there was correspondence, conducting regiments of nations (that is, not Spanish), attending musters, carrying orders, entrusted with intelligence [sorties], attending construction of earthworks [*fábricas*], trenches and batteries, and above all, not to leave the person of the Captain-General, and of the protection of his banner [*guión*].[655]

Given the frequency that mutinies plagued the army during the 1590s, acting as intermediary between the high command and mutineers was another task assigned to *entretenidos*. In 1598, Captain Esteban de Legorreta was dispatched to negotiate with the mutinous garrison at Ardres, among others.[656] Although González de León has pointed out that they did not necessarily take charge of infantry units, they often participated in combat. Cuéllar and at least three other colleagues took charge of galleons in 1588. During sieges they frequently volunteered to lead a storming party where their example served to bolster the troops following. If, and when, they survived that ordeal a reputation as a soldier of renown was guaranteed. Many *entretenidos* were 'mentioned in dispatches' following successful sieges. No specific reference surfaced for Captain Cuéllar, though the circumstances of his elevation to the Archduke Albert's entourage during operations at Hulst (30 July 1596), may indicate valorous service around that time.

On the negative side, there remains the derogatory comment, most likely made by Esteban de Ibarra in a dossier of officers assigned to the high command, which

[653] AGS GyM 199, f.85.
[654] Anonymous, *La Felicissima Armada*, Lisbon, 1588.
[655] Albi de la Cuesta, *De Pavía a Rocroi*, p. 74.
[656] AGS Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas 2ª época 876, ff.327-8.

described him as useless ('no vale nada').[657] We know that Ibarra was familiar with Cuéllar; his *rúbrica* featured twice on Cuéllar's 1591 petition to the Council of War (concerning his shipwreck in Ireland). While the remark cannot be taken as a definitive judgement about Cuéllar's abilities as an officer, it is disconcerting; an uncomfortable reminder that Cuéllar may not have been of the highest calibre. Moreover, it fits a discernible pattern with Cuéllar: an unfortunate tendency to discord powerful individuals. It adds another instance to his catalogue of antagonism with high ranking officials, a list that featured Andrés de Eguino, the Marquis of Santa Cruz, Don Francisco de Bobadilla, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and now, it seems, Esteban de Ibarra as well.

Military Salaries

Remuneration and reward in the military was both tantalising and illusory. Many enlisted harbouring notions of the wealth and booty they hoped to acquire on campaign. However, few soldiers retired rich from the armed forces. Low salary levels and the sporadic manner in which they were paid ensured that. It must be remembered that as a captain, Cuéllar's earning potential was far greater than those who served in the lower ranks, but even he retired penniless. We are fortunate that most of his wage receipts for the period 1581-98 have survived. The tale that his financial record tells provides an alternative perspective on his life in the military.

Army Income

A simple pike-man (*pica seca*) starting out in Flanders earned three *escudos* a month. Records show that infantry serving in the Indies Guard during the 1580s were in receipt of four *escudos*.[658] It provided a subsistence income: enough to live on, but no more. Many commentators acknowledge that military pay compared unfavourably to those of general labourers. But Hernandez has pointed out that soldiers received pay for seven days each week and on holy days.[659] Promotion through the ranks brought a commensurate increase earning potential: corporal (*cabo de escuadra*) - six *escudos*, sergeant (*sargento*) - eight *escudos*, and ensign (*alférez*) - fifteen *escudos*.[660] For private soldiers who did not rise through the ranks, experience and valorous service increased their earning potential too. Bonus payments (*ventajas*) were awarded to armoured pikemen (*coseletes*) and arquebusiers, while musketeers received three additional *escudos* each month. Company captains were usually authorised to distribute thirty *escudos* in bonus

[657] AGS Estado 612, f.129.
[658] AGI Indiferente General 2676, unfoliated, Expedientes de individuos que sirvieron en las armadas y flotas 1573-88.
[659] Rodríguez Hernández, *Los tercios de Flandes*, pp. 147-48.
[660] Albi de la Cuesta, J., *De Pavía a Rocroi*, p. 78.

wages (*ventajas*) among the men (of between one-three *escudos* each). The distribution of those awards was at the captain's discretion. Depending upon the integrity of the officer they could be used to attract experienced veterans (*soldados aventajados*), or abused for personal gain. Cuéllar's company in 1601-02 contained seventeen *aventajados*.[661]

Juan Salmon de Camarga was one such *soldado aventajado*. He twice received *ventajas* for valour: two *escudos de ventaja* from the Duke of Parma after he was injured during an assault on Antwerp in 1585, and a decade later, the Count of Fuentes cited his bravery at Cambrai when awarding him three bonus *escudos*.[662] *Alférez* Juan de Angulo Montesinos was awarded five bonus *escudos* for twice undertaking hazardous reconnaissance missions at Calais at the behest of the Archduke Albert.[663] Captain Don Cristóbal de Salinas, like Cuéllar, served in the Armada campaign, in Piedmont and at the taking of Calais, Ardres and Hulst in 1596. Before he was promoted to captain, Salinas was a *soldado aventajado* in receipt of ten bonus *escudos*, a salary greater than that of the basic wage a sergeant.[664]

Cuéllar's annual salary as a captain on the *Magallanes* expedition was two hundred ducats (220 *escudos*), a six-fold increase on the basic salary of a private.[665] That alone might explain why a captaincy was such a coveted rank. His maximum earning capacity was as an *entretenido* under the Duke of Parma and the Archduke Albert, when he was paid forty escudos a month (the highest pay grade awarded to a captain). However, the award of an *entretenimiento* was only one element in the equation, how and when it was paid by the military treasury was quite something else. This is where the scope of Cuéllar's records is interesting. We can scrutinize the progression of his career from the perspective of its financial history.

Cuéllar's Financial History

Cuéllar's financial records consisted of four distinct salary phases:

1: the Magallanes salary (1581-84),
2: the Enterprise of England (1587-89),
3: two periods of service in the Low Countries (1589-91, and 1594-98).
4: income received at the end of his career

[661] AGI Contratación 2973.
[662] AGS GyM 529, f.121.
[663] Ibid.
[664] AGS GyM 1975, f.432.
[665] AGI Indiferente General 2676, unfoliated, Expedientes de individuos que sirvieron en las armadas y flotas 1573-88, Cuéllar's Captain's patent specified 75,000 *maravedíes* (two hundred ducats).

There were also substantial stretches when he was without an income (while at court 1584-87, 1598-1600, 1603-1605), or was simply not paid (Ireland and Scotland 1588-89, Piedmont 1592-93, Indies Guard 1601--02).

1: Magallanes Salary 1581-84.

When he was issued with his captain's patent for the Magallanes expedition, Cuéllar was awarded an annual salary of 200 ducats. In total, he received 192,970 *maravedíes* (c.514 ducats) for his time in Brazil. In other words, he was paid for just over two years of the three years he served. The shortfall in salary arose due to his arrest after the San Vicente affair, which curtailed the remainder of his salary (Andrés de Eguino, of course, was the fleet accountant). The cash was issued in three instalments:

1: September 1581 - a four-month advance: 880 *reales* (eighty ducats).[666]
2: June 1586 - a subsistence payment (*ayuda de costa*): 37,500 *maravedíes* (one hundred ducats).[667]
3: May 1590 - settlement of outstanding arrears (most of his salary). Intended for issue in two instalments, but most likely collected by Cuéllar as a single payment in 1591 - 124,970 *maravedíes* (c.333 ducats).[668]

What is noteworthy about this salary is the length of time (six years) that elapsed after his return to Spain before Cuéllar received most of his earnings. Everything bar the initial four-month advance was paid in arrears. An *ayuda de costa* (subsistence payment) was only issued after a prolonged stint at court and numerous applications to the Council of the Indies (see p. 150).

2: Enterprise of England 1587-88

Contrary to the difficulties of the *Magallanes* salary, the wage account for the 'Enterprise of England' revealed prompt and consistent payment of wages. When assigned to Lisbon he was awarded a monthly salary of twenty-five *escudos*.[669] Personal files were created for *entretenidos*, Cuéllar included.[670] This file recorded all of his salary receipts, and shows that between July 1587 and September 1588 he received six cash payments and two payments in kind (food rations):

1: 82 rations received during voyage to the Azores – six *escudos*, eight *reales* and twenty-five *maravedíes*.
2: 28 October 1587 – seventy-eight *escudos*, six *reales*.
3: 16 January 1588 - seventy-five *escudos*.

[666] AGI AGI Contaduría 531-A, f. 452-53.
[667] AGI Contratación 2933, Papeles de Armada 1567/88, unfoliated.
[668] Ibid.
[669] AGS GyM 206, f.273.
[670] AGS Contaduría del Sueldo (CSU) 284, f.324

4: 21 March 1588 - fifty *escudos*.
5: April 1588 – fourteen *escudos* (advanced payment for escort of infantry from winter quarters).
6: May 1588 – fifty *escudos*.
7: 2 June 1588 – twenty-five *escudos*.
8: Payment in kind – thirteen *escudos*, three *reales* and eleven *maravedíes* (for rations received 10 April to 20 September).

Total wage account 12 July – 20 September: 312 *escudos* five *reales* and two *maravedíes*.
Outstanding arrears (settled in March 1607): forty-four *escudos*, one *real* and thirty *maravedíes*.[671]

The 'Armada' account is interesting because the period 1587-88 represents a time of relative financial security for Cuéllar. We know that he arrived at Lisbon with a page (*criado*) whom he had to provide for.[672] What happened to the individual after Cuéllar's arrest remains unknown. Cuéllar stated in the *Carta* that he carried forty-five *escudos* in cash, stitched into his doublet, and wore a gold chain worth 1,000 *reales* (sixty-two *escudos*, eight *reales*). These were ultimately stolen from him in Ireland. If we assume that, the purchase of the gold chain represented not just personal adornment, but a cash conversion into portable wealth. Then it appears that Cuéllar retained a monetary value (107 *escudos*, eight *reales*) on his person, corresponding to less than half of the cash payments he had received (292 *escudos*, 6 *reales*). If so, it implies that during the course of the previous nine months: 28 October 1587 (first salary instalment) to 21 July 1588 (departure from La Coruña), he spent around 185 *escudos* on living expenses and other sundry costs. If the basic cost of living for an average private soldier amounted to c. forty-two *escudos* per annum, then, barring settlement of accumulated debts, it appears Captain Cuéllar engaged in something of a spending spree in Lisbon before he set out on the Armada campaign.

3: Flanders Salary 1589-91 and 94-98
Shortly after he reached Dunkirk, Cuéllar was awarded fifty *escudos* (10 September), which was remitted a fortnight later.[673] Each soldier that arrived was awarded two months' salary, ostensibly to clothe and rearm themselves.

Assignment to Parma's personal entourage entailed a monthly salary of forty *escudos*.[674] Over the course of the next eighteen months (to March 1591) however,

[671] AGS CSU Serie 2, 275, unfoliated, el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar entretenido cerca de la persona del Marqués de Santa Cruz.
[672] Hardy, *Survivors of the Armada*, p. 39.
[673] AGS CMC, 2ª época, 879. Payments to *entretenidos* in the army of Flanders 1585-90.

he received only two salary payments: 3 October 1590 - forty *escudos*, and 18 Jan 1591 – 100 *escudos* (a total of 140 *escudos*).[675] The 3 October payment would suggest that he received cash while the army was in France, entrenched about Corbeil. The second, larger instalment, was remitted after Parma returned to Brussels. When he departed for Spain, his wage account was in arrears by a considerable 580 *escudos*.[676] However, collection of his Magallanes arrears provided a decent financial windfall (124,970 maravedíes, around 333 ducats).[677]

Cuéllar did not receive another salary payment until May 1594, when he received one hundred *escudos*, which was part-payment of arrears originally authorised by Parma, and endorsed by the new Governor-General, the Archduke Ernest.[678] The intervening period, of course, was spent in Spain and Piedmont. Three further instalments (29 July, 2 Sept 1594, 11 Jan 1595) under his new *entretenimiento* (30 *escudos* a month) yielded 391 *escudos*, which actually left him over-paid for the previous twelve months. But it would be another three years before he received his next payment, despite his appointment to Archduke Albert's personal staff. We can only assume that during this period he must inevitably have fallen into debt. Crown bankruptcy at the end of 1596, led to a collapse of military finances in the Low Countries. Salary payments resumed as peace was agreed with France. Cuéllar received two payments in March-April, 1598 (220 florines), and a further lump sum of 200 *escudos* in July.[679] When he returned to Spain later that year, the Council of Finance reimbursed arrears of 784 *escudos* 34 *reales*.[680] While this was another financial windfall, Cuéllar was still short-changed from what he should have received by around 500 *escudos*. A loss of earnings he would never recover.

4: End of career

That was the final salary payment that we have recorded for Cuéllar. He subsequently passed up on two *entretenimientos* (twenty-five and thirty *escudos*) awarded in Naples (1600 and 1604). He appeared to have secured a better income (30 *escudos*) with his captaincy of 1601-02, under Don Luis de Córdoba. But his commission ended prematurely when he was dismissed in 1603, without, apparently, having been paid. Unable to secure further employment over the next three years he was hardly exaggerating in claiming penury when he applied to the

[674] AGRB SEG Registre aux Ordres, No.12, f.120.
[675] AGS CMC, 2ª época, 840.
[676] 18 months @ 40 *escudos* per month = 720 *escudos*.
[677] AGI Contratación 2933. Papeles de Armada 1567/88, unfoliated, *cédula*, Aranjuez, 23 de Mayo 1590
[678] AGS CMC 840 Accounts of Pagador General Gabriel de Santesteban.
[679] AGS CMC 2ª época 877, Cuentas del Pagador Jerónimo Walter.
[680] AGS Consejo de Hazienda (CJH) 389, unfoliated, Relación de lo que se deve a los capitanes, oficiales y soldados que han venido de Flandes con certificaciones de lo que alcançan de sus sueldos.

Council of the Indies for financial support in 1605.[681] The *ayuda de costa* (300 ducats) was the last payment we have on record for him. It is probable that he had already left for Mexico when the 1588 account was finally settled in March 1607.

Military Officers and Crown Patronage

Ultimate recourse for captains who sought redress in their affairs revolved around the person of the King. The royal court became the focus for all ranks involved in litigation, salary arrears, new commissions, or reward for valorous or long service. This is evident from the volume of petitions and entreaties submitted by military personnel. The petitions represent a continual stream of individuals who travelled to Madrid in the hope of remuneration or preferment. Others, having little if any prospects of advancement away from the military and lacking the means to support themselves, gravitated to Madrid in the hope of a pension, or simply because they had nowhere else to go. Rodríguez-Hernández has estimated that 'at any given time there were no more than four hundred active professional Spanish infantry captains in all of the Spanish possessions, although the number of reformed captains (inactive, without a commission) could easily multiply that number by four or five.'[682] Captain Cuéllar was no different in this regard. But one distinctive trait that emerged form his documentation was the inordinate length of time he spent at court. Between 1584 and 1606, this amounted to more than nine years (1584-87, 1591-92, 1598-1601, 1603-06): fully one third of his career was consumed while seeking arrears of wages and/or new commissions from the crown. Yet he does not appear to have been an exceptional case. It seems appropriate, therefore, to devote some attention to the nature of the relationship between soldiers and the crown, and to look a little closer at those interactions.

Royal Court and State Capital

During the reign of Philip II the Spanish monarchy evolved along different lines to that of his father, the Emperor Charles V. Philip was not the warrior king that his father had been. He led his army in person on only one occasion, at St Quentin in 1557. Philip II established a permanent capital at Madrid (in 1561) where he remained for the majority of his reign. During this time Madrid experienced a rapid population growth from a modest 10,000, to 90,000 by the end of the sixteenth century.[683] In the words of Elliott it became 'an artificial city of courtiers and bureaucrats, deriving its rather febrile prosperity from the profits of empire which flowed into it from all over the world.'[684] The establishment of a fixed capital was

[681] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, Cámara de Indias, 4 June 1605, 'Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar.'
[682] Rodríguez-Hernández, *Los tercios de Flandes*, pp. 73-74.
[683] Elliott, J.H., *Spain and the Wider World 1500-1800*, Chicago, 2009, p. 257.
[684] Elliott, J.H., *Spain and its World 1500-1700,* Chicago, 1989, p. 18.

regarded as fundamental to addressing the administrative requirements of a growing global empire. As Merriman explained:

> [Philip] was thus able to concentrate on the details of administration with an intensity which had been quite out of the question for his perpetually travelling father. The energies which Charles had spent on foreign campaigns Philip believed to have been largely wasted [...] Such matters, in his opinion, should be delegated to professional soldiers, always provided, of course, that they kept as constantly and closely in touch with Madrid and never deviated a hair's breadth from the instructions that he sent them.[685]

The royal court lay amidst a warren of corridors, chambers and offices in the Alcázar of Madrid. It served a dual role as royal residence and seat of government.[686] Philip II's mode of governance was bureaucratic. He eschewed personal audiences in favour of written communication. The King reigned in comparative seclusion, working at his desk in Madrid, or the Escorial, on a constant stream of paperwork which gave rise to the soubriquet 'The Paper King' (*el rey papelero*).

One of the main domestic concerns of the monarchy throughout Philip's reign was the retention of royal authority. If patronage was the key to retention of power, then it was essential that the King sat at the apex of the system. Within the military hierarchy private soldiers were bound to their superior officers. Senior military command therefore engendered significant power and influence. Many officers who rose to senior command did so under the tutelage or guidance of a senior commander: Alva, Pedro Menéndez, Santa Cruz or Parma. The King, however, ultimately ratified all appointments. For some there was in effect, a dual allegiance at play. The King sanctioned most of the awards granted to Cuéllar during his career. Yet, the highest salary grades he attained were awarded by Parma and the Archduke Albert. Ultimately, however, power emanated from the centre. Authority rested with the Crown. Senior military commanders could not, and were not, accorded the kind of power and influence that might supersede royal authority. The King had only to refer to his books of classical history to heed many a cautionary tale of the Caesars and their legions. The ambition harboured by Don John of Austria (his brother) for a kingdom of his own was a case in point. As a result, Philip II was wary of his senior commanders and even Parma was recalled when Philip feared his authority was being questioned.[687] The King's sense of personal rule, therefore, influenced and moderated his relationship with the armed forces.

[685] Merriman, R.B., *The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and the New*, vol. IV, New York, 1934, pp. 410-11.
[686] Elliott, J.H., *Spain and the Wider World*, p. 261.
[687] Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, p. 230.

Ultimately, it was the King upon whom Cuéllar depended for progression in his career.

Service Papers

If the concept of *servicio* (service to the monarch) and *merced* (royal favour in return for services) lay at the heart of the relationship between Spanish monarchs and their subjects, then there were reciprocal obligations. Soldiers risked their lives for the crown. In return, it was expected that the crown would honour that service by concession of favours (*mercedes*) to deserving recipients. However, in order to be considered for a *merced* soldiers had to be able to demonstrate their bona fides. Evidence of this resided in official documentation: a soldier's Service Papers (*papeles de servicio*). This comprised certification issued by the crown or superior officers that attested a soldier's rank, where he served, and for how long. It was essential that soldiers retain their papers; either among personal effects, or on deposit with an attorney. Without them, soldiers had nothing to verify the credibility of their claims. We are fortunate that a catalogue of Cuéllar's service papers was compiled by a notary in support of an application he submitted to the Council of State in 1604.[688] It provides an example of the types of documents retained by soldiers as evidence of their service. Among those possessed by Cuéllar were as follows:

- ***Cédula*:** A royal document issued on behalf of the King that authorised monetary payments, and commissions. Cuéllar received at least eight from the Councils of War, State, Indies and Finance.
- ***Patente*:** Certification verifying Captaincy. Cuéllar received four: 1581, 1587, 1601 and 1602 .
- ***Mandato*:** An award made by senior Military Commanders Cuéllar received two: from Parma (1589) and Archduke Albert (1596).
- ***Carta*:** Letter of recommendation issued by a senior commander or the King for exemplary service. Cuéllar received four: 1591 (Duke of Parma); 1593 (Duke of Savoy); 1598 (Archduke Albert); 1606 (Philip III).
- ***Fee*:** A certificate issued by a superior officer that verified rank and duration of service with a unit. Cuéllar received one: 1593 (Antonio de Olivera[689]).
- ***Licencia*:** A certificate issued by a commander that authorised a travel permit to attend court or for leave of absence. Cuéllar received three: 1591 (Duke of Parma), 1598 (Archduke Albert), 1603, (Duke of Medina Sidonia).

[688] AGS Estado 1704, f.361.

[689] Antonio de Olivera was an officer with fifty years of service. He was senior Spanish commander of troops Savoy-Piedmont from 1590 until 1593, when he was made Governor of Alessandria. Previously he had been *teniente-general* (second-in-command) of the Spanish light cavalry in Flanders). Had Parma reached England in 1588, Olivera was designated to take charge of Spanish troops in the Army of Flanders under the overall command of the Count Mansfelt (AGRB SEG Registre aux ordres 11, ff.2-3).

- ***Conducta*:** Issued to captains prior to a recruitment drive. They specified the number of soldiers to be levied (usually 250 recruits), the designated recruitment district, duration of enlistment, and route to destination. Cuéllar received two *conductas*: 1581 and 1601 (though no documentary evidence for them has yet surfaced).

In essence, service papers provided a soldier's curriculum vitae. Combined with petitions they form the core body of information about a career. Their importance might be attested by the example in 1588, of Don Alonso de Luzón of the *Trinidad Valencera* after he was taken captive at Illagh. He requested Sir Geoffrey Fenton 'to make for him a true certificate as to his behaviour and captivity' so that he could present the document to certify his conduct when he was finally ransomed in 1590.[690] According to Enrique García Hernán, one experienced soldier, Gómez Freire de Andrade, 'always kept a detailed account of his exploits and made sure to compile eye-witness statements which certified as much...with a view to bettering his career prospects.[691] Francisco de Peredo's papers, submitted to the Council of War in 1598 attested that he had served for thirty-two years, as a private soldier and *alférez*.[692] His senior commanders included the Duke of Alba (1566), the Marquis of Santa Cruz (Terceira campaign 1582-83), and Don Francisco de Bobadilla during the 1580s. In the 1590s he served, like Cuéllar, at La Capela, Chatelet, Doullens, Calais, Ardres, and Hulst. Peredo was cited for numerous acts of valour in at least twenty-five separate actions. Among these were: the seizure of an enemy-held tower with a squad of six soldiers during the siege of Maastricht; in the Terceira campaign he was among the first wave of assault troops that stormed the beaches on Faial (1583); in Flanders, he led a perilous five-day mission behind enemy lines to reconnoitre the defences of St Gertruidenberg. All for ten *escudos* bonus pay on top of his salary as an ensign. These exploits were attested by at least five superior officers. Unfortunately, nothing comparable surfaced in Cuéllar's records, though Antonio de Olivera did testify to outstanding valour in Piedmont.

Family members frequently retained a soldier's service papers, which might be used to apply for a pension or *ayuda de costa* for dependents in lieu of a deceased soldier's services to the crown. It is not unusual to encounter petitions of widows in the papers of the various councils. For example, in 1589 Doña Maria de la Cueva petitioned the Council of War for remittance of the wages owed to her husband, Doctor Santander de Escalante. He had served with Don Alonso de Leiva during the 1588 campaign, and had died in Ireland.[693] Another application that came before

[690] *CSP Ireland*, IV, p. 101.
[691] García Hernán, E., *Ireland and Spain in the Reign of Philip II*, Dublin, 2009, p. 183.
[692] AGS GyM 529, f.121.
[693] AGS Contaduría del Sueldo (CSU) 198-1.

the Council in 1602, was submitted by Irishwoman, Catalina Cavello (Catherine MacCaghwell). She requested an *ayuda de costa* following the death of her husband, Juan Pérez de Olmedo, in La Coruña. They had married in Ireland after he was shipwrecked in 1588. Thereafter, Olmedo had served the Earl of Tyrone until the defeat of the Irish at Kinsale. Afterwards, the pair escaped Ireland for La Coruña, where Olmedo was assigned to a local garrison with a bonus pay (*ventaja*). Following his death Catalina was awarded an *ayuda de costa* of 100 ducats in lieu of Oledo's services, which she used to return to Ireland.[694]

Bureaucratic Process

Some commentators have stated that Cuéllar's *Carta* was written to Philip II,[695] or that it was written as a means of securing payment of wages for his time with the armada. This is incorrect. There was an established process administered by the state councils in Madrid with defined procedures for an individual to apply for outstanding wages. Official contact between the individual and the state was directed through the royal councils. A petition (*memorial*) constituted the principal medium of discourse, submitted to the relevant council. For Cuéllar these were predominantly the Councils of State, War, Indies, and Finance. Composition of a petition was itself bound by clear protocols, which had to be followed if the document was to be accepted. They were ordinarily addressed either to the King, or to the secretary of a specific council. Until 1586, etiquette prescribed that the King was addressed with the initials S.C.R.M. (Sacra Católica Real Magestad), or 'His Holy Catholic Royal Majesty'. Thereafter, Philip II adopted the title 'Lord' (*Señor*).[696] Council secretaries were key individuals in the process. Only they could guarantee the arrival of a plea on the King's desk. As Ciarán O'Scea explained: 'their position enabled them to obstruct the paper route to the king. In effect, the officials who controlled the paper route wielded considerable power.'[697]

Written in the third person, stating the name and rank of the applicant at the outset, a *memorial* presented a concise outline of the soldier's military service, and concluded with an entreaty for the rewards an applicant hoped to receive. Citation of specific campaigns and superior officers served under, with reference to accompanying certification was important. Allusion to combat wounds was also regularly included as was reference to penury. Occasionally, personal details featured, particularly if other family members had also served in the armed forces.

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[694] AGS GyM 614, f.284. With thanks to Dr Hiram Morgan for the translation of the Cavello surname.
[695] Sedgwick, H.D., *A letter to his Majesty King Philip II of* Spain, New York 1895.
[696] Parker, *Imprudent King*, p. 286.
[697] O'Scea, C., 'The role of Castilian royal bureaucracy in the formation of early-modern Irish literacy', in Thomas O'Connor, T., and Lyons, M.A. (eds), *Irish communities in early modern Europe*, Dublin, 2006, pp. 204.

Applications were initiated by the submission of a memorial in the secretariat of the relevant council by the petitioner or a representative.[698] It was registered by a notary who might add to whom the petition should be directed, generally the secretary of the relevant council. Details of the petition (name of applicant and summary of petition) were then added to a list that scheduled all of the petitions to be heard by the council on a given date in the order in which they were to be heard. A duplicate listing was placed on the council door on the day of the hearing and featured the name of the notary who would notify the petitioner of the council's resolution. Ordinarily, the resolution of the council produced a *consulta*, which was submitted to the king for his decision, though he might still request further information. If an immediate decision was reached the petition was either granted or refused and the *consulta* was returned to the council secretary. If granted a royal *cedula* was drafted which authorised the award in the King's name with instructions for the relevant body. The formal document was then presented to the petitioner.

The process appeared straightforward. In practice, it could be tortuous. The experience of the 'Magallanes captains' at court for three years (1584-87) illustrates the shortcomings of the system. Their context revolved around efforts to reach a settlement of salary arrears for the expedition in Brazil, and to obtain new commissions to return to service with the fleets. The story was played out through a series of *consultas* drafted in the Council of the Indies throughout 1586-87. Around twenty officers had made their way to Madrid in September 1584. Cuéllar, too, travelled to the capital. However, bound up in litigation with Andrés de Eguino, he initially remained under arrest until the case was heard in the Council of the Indies.[699] As far as can be ascertained, Cuéllar appears to have been exonerated in that case (see pp. 178). Afterwards, he joined his colleagues in petitioning the crown for salary arrears and the award of new commission. Towards the end of 1584 Cuéllar submitted the first of at least three petitions to royal councils in the hope of recompense from the crown; without satisfaction. His initial effort was a very brief composition, amounting to only a few lines:

'Francisco de Cuéllar que sirvió de capitán del Armada que fue al dicho estrecho [de Magallanes]. Suplica se le mande pagar el suyo y que Vuestra Magestad le ocupe en su servicio en la primera occasión que ubiere en flotas o armadas.'[700]

[698] The procedure outlined in this paragraph follows O'Scea, 'The role of Castilian royal bureaucracy', pp. 233, and Cadarso L., *El documento real en la época de los Austrias*, Cáceres, 2001, pp. 66-100.
[699] AGI Escribania 1069B; AGI Indiferente General 1097, unfoliated, Andrés de Eguino to Philip II, 14 October 1584.
[700] AGS GyM 171, f.197, 'Francisco de Cuéllar, who served as captain of the fleet that went to the said Strait [of Magellan], beseeches that [his Majesty] order that he be paid his [arrears] and that his Majesty occupy him in his service on the first occasion that arises in the flotas or fleets.'

That effort did not conform to the established protocols and was left unattended in the council secretariat. All of his subsequent submissions conformed to the established format. Cuéllar reapplied to the Council of War, in January 1585,[701] and then to the Council of the Indies, in March 1586.[702] But nothing transpired until later that summer. The delay might be explained by the King's official visit to Aragon and his daughter's marriage to the Duke of Savoy, in Valencia, which kept him away from court until March 1586. While important business of state was not neglected during this time, it appears that other minor administrative tasks, such as miscellaneous petitions were not addressed. In the meantime, in October 1585, fourteen 'Magallanes captains' had been offered a subsistence grant (*ayuda de costa*) of 100 ducats each by the Council of the Indies (an advance payment pending full settlement of arrears). Neither Cuéllar, nor colleague Juan Gutiérrez Garibay, was included in that offer. However, secretary of the council of the Indies, Antonio de Eraso, admitted a *relación* by Garibay which indicated that those grants had been administered based on out-dated documentation. Garibay informed the council that its documentation contained names of officers who were initially assigned to the expedition, but who did not participate: 'Agora el capitán Juan Gutiérrez de Garivay me ha hecho relación que por no aver hecho el viaje todos los capitanes contenidos en la dicha cédula suso yncorporada él fue nombrado por capitán para hazerle en lugar de uno dellos y sirvió de tal capitán el dicho viaje en uno de los navios de la dicha armada como havía constado en mi consejo de las Yndias.'[703] Both Garibay and Cuéllar were late appointees to the expedition, and therefore did not feature on that listing. Garibay's *relación* was accepted and endorsed by Eraso, which entitled him to the *ayuda de costa*, but Cuéllar would have to reapply and establish his credentials in order to qualify. This provided the context for a submission by Cuéllar on 22 March 1586, which was accompanied by a notarised copy of his original Captain's patent transcribed by a clerk in the secretariat, and verified by witnesses.[704] Cuéllar's memorial on this occasion explained his predicament:

> y al presente esta pobre y con mucha necesidad por aber más de año y medio que está en esta corte esperando que Vuestra Excelencia le haga merced y ocupe en su Real servicio y para que pueda más perseberar suplica a Vuestra Excelencia le haga merced de darle alguna ayuda de costa y mandar que se le pague enteramente el sueldo que se le debe y ganó en la dicha jornada por razón de aber servido en ella

[701] AGS GyM 171, f.202 (see Appendix Two).
[702] AGI Indiferente General 2676. Expedientes de individuos que sirvieron en las armadas y flotas 1573-88, unfoliated.
[703] AGI Contratación 4792, unfoliated, *cédula*, Monzón, 12 October 1585.
[704] AGI Indiferente General 2676. Expedientes de individuos que sirvieron en las armadas y flotas 1573-88, unfoliated.

> tres años el dicho oficio de capitán en dos navíos de aquella armada, nombrados la fragata *Santa Catalina* y *Nuestra Señora de la Concibción*.[705]

His petition and those of eleven colleagues were considered by the Council of the Indies on 5 April. In its *consulta*, the council advocated payment of all outstanding salaries, not just to the officers, but to all of the Magallanes crews. Nonetheless, before he authorised payment the King requested a report that itemised individual payments, as well as the overall cost to the Crown.[706] This instruction was forwarded to the Casa de la Contratación in Seville, the body with administrative oversight. When the council reconvened in May, the matter was raised again. Concern was expressed that action should be taken to remedy the plight of the Magallanes crews. However, the requisite report had not yet been received. Dissatisfaction with the situation was palpable:

> y porque como muchas vezes el consejo lo ha referido a Vuestra Magestad esta gente padece estrema nececidad, y los capitanes y oficiales ha más de veynte meses que están aquí aguardando su paga, consumiéndose y perdiendo el tiempo que pudieran ocupar en servicio de Vuestra Magestad por ser muy útiles.[707]

Again, Philip II requested specifics on what was to be paid. Indeed, the report, compiled by Andrés de Eguino (auditor of accounts for the fleet), was seen by the Council when it sat on 14 June. Cuéllar's arrears, according to Eguino, amounted to 28,553 *maravedíes*, only a portion of what was actually owed to him.[708] The following year it would be augmented to 155,470 *maravedíes*, but this was still short of the 192,970 *maravedíes* calculated by royal auditors who authorised his final settlement in 1590.[709] At this time only eight officers (including Cuéllar and Garibay) remained at court. Four had secured posts under General Álvaro Flores who sailed to the Caribbean following Drake's attacks on Santo Domingo and

[705] AGI Indiferente General 2676, '[he is] at present is poor and in great necessity, having been at this court for more than a year and a half waiting for Your Excellency to grant him a favour (*merced*) and occupy him in His royal service so that he can continue [to serve]. He beseeches His Excellency to grant him a favour by awarding a maintenance grant (*ayuda de costa*), and instruct that he be paid entirely the wages that are owed and earned in the said expedition by reason of having served in it three years in the said rank of captain in two vessels of that fleet, named the frigate *Santa Catalina*, and *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción*'

[706] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no.3.

[707] AGI Patronato 33, N.3, R. 65, no.7. 'Because, as the council has many times referred this [matter] to His Majesty, these people are suffering extreme necessity. The captains and officials have been here for more than twenty months awaiting their pay, consuming [funds] and losing time they could be occupying in his Majesty's service, as they are very capable.'

[708] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no.8.

[709] AGI Contratación 2933, Papeles de Armada 1567/88, unfoliated, cédula, Aranjuez, 23 de Mayo 1590.

Cartagena. 'The rest', according to the Council, 'being very poor and penniless, have gone to their homes.'[710]

When the itemised report of what was owed to the captains finally arrived the Council deemed it appropriate to pay immediately, half of the arrears and to desptch the captains to the fleets. For the ordinary rank and file, the Council was in a quandry as to how to raise the requisite funds:

> y al consejo parece que se les podría dar a buena quenta la mitad de lo que así se les deve para poderse socorrer, y yr a servir y para lo demás que se deve a la gente de guerra y mar el consejo no sabe en que se puede librar sino es en officios vendidos y vacantes de plaças de audiencias de las Indias.[711]

It all seemed haphazard. But the King approved the council's proposal, and *cédulas* were drafted on 3 July that instructed *Casa* officials in Seville to remit half of the respective salaries to each recipient. In the meantime, the issue of Cuéllar's *ayuda de costa* was addressed (2 June), with a *cédula* that authorised payment of the 100 ducats issued on 19 June.[712] It must be remembered that in the midst of these administrative shenanigans, preparations for the most daring undertaking of Philip II's reign, the 'Enterprise of England', were initiated at Lisbon. Yet the King was still hovering over the minutiae of wages for a defunct expedition.

Remarkably, when the captains presented their documentation to officials in Seville they were rejected on the premise that the Casa had not received direct instruction from the King.[713] Furthermore, it transpired that none of the offices in the Indies had been sold, nor had that year's treasure consignment arrived. The upshot of this was that none of the earmarked funds were available. The captains were forced to turn tail and return to Madrid to seek redress once more.

At the end of August, in response to appeals by two of the captains, Gregorio and Alonso de las Alas, the King merely replied 'make it so' (*hagase assi*).[714] A joint petition by the others in October stressed that 'for more than two years we have resided at this court begging Your Majesty to favour us by occupying us in his service, and to command that we be paid the wages we earned in the said

[710] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no.8, 'los demás por estar muy pobre y gastados se han ydo a sus casas.'
[711] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no.8, 'and the council believes that half of what is owed to them, should be given to them to relieve them, and [enable them] to go to serve [His Majesty]. For the rest, what is owed to the soldiers and sailors the Council does not know what [funds] it can release but through the sale of offices and vacant positions in the audiencias in the Indies.'
[712] AGI Contratación 2933, Papeles de Armada 1567-88.
[713] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no. 9.
[714] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no. 14.

expedition'.[715] They explained that although his Majesty had sanctioned payment of half there wages, the officials of the Casa in Seville had refused to comply:

> Visto por Vuestra Magestad, nos mandó dar su real cédula, su fecha en tres de Julio deste presente año, en que se nos libro la mitad de lo que nos debía en lo que abía en ser en reales en los que abían venido en estas ultimas flotas de Tierra Firme y Nueva España en la Casa de la Contratación de la ciudad de Sevilla con la qual socurrimos al Presidente y oficiales de la dicha *Casa*, los quales después de aberla visto no la quisieron cumplir socurrimos. A vuestro real Consejo de las Yndias a dos meses en el qual no se nos a dado respuesta ni resolución ninguna. Nuestra neçesidad es tanta quanto no se puede encarecer. Suplicamos a Vuestra Magestad mande tomar resolución en nuestra paga que padeçemos estrema necesidad.[716]

By now the King was also exasperated by the situation. He replied that he had already offered a resolution to a *consulta* of 25 September.[717] That document has not surfaced. But the Council of Finance had received instructions from him on 21 September that 'the Captains and Pero Díaz (Chief Pilot) [should] come to Rodrigo Vázquez (President of the Council of Finance) who has my order as to what should be done.[718]

Through November and December 1586, *cédulas* were drafted for a number of officers, though Cuéllar was not included.[719] Vázquez and the Council of Finance would deal with numerous petitions relating to Magallanes salaries over the course of the next year.[720] Eventually the arrears were settled. But Cuéllar, as we have seen previously, would have to wait until 1590. The affair did not reflect well on royal bureaucracy. It highlighted shortcomings in the system, and those of the King who, as Geoffrey Parker pointed out, allowed himself to be distracted by such comparative trivia, when it could easily have been delegated. [721] Given that they were subject to the whims of the monarch, it becomes easier to see how Cuéllar and his like could end up spending such extended periods at court, through no fault of their own.

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[715] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no.19, 'Decimos que a más de dos años residimos en esta corte suplicando a V Md fuese servido de hacernos merced de ocuparnos en su servicio, y mandar que se nos pagase el sueldo que en la dicha jornada ganamos.'

[716] AGI Patronato 33, N.3, R.65, no. 19. 'Your Majesty, seeing [our petition], instructed that we be given his royal cédula, dated 3 July of this present year, in which half of that which is owed to us would be released in *reales* in the House of Trade in Seville, from those that came in the latest flotas of Tierra Firme and New Spain, so that we might be succoured. The President and officials of the said House, after seeing [the *cédula*] did not wish to comply to succour us. [We referred this] to your Royal Council of the Indies, and for two months they have not given us any reply or resolution. Our necessity is such that we can no longer put up [with this situation]. We beg Your Majesty to command a resolution in [the matter] of our pay in which we are suffering extreme necessity'

[717] Ibid., no.19.

[718] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 65, no. 16.

[719] AGS Consejo y Junta de Hacienda (CJH) 231.

[720] AGI Patronato 33, N. 3, R. 66, Nos 2 – 9.

[721] Parker, *Imprudent King,* p. 75.

Chapter Five

Power, Lies and Corruption: The Pitfalls of Military Discipline

> ...and it is based on 'Godfather's' experience that this [insubordination] breeds like a yeast infection. Every time an order is questioned, every time dissension is allowed to state its case, there is a corresponding decrease in overall morale. I can't have people questioning the orders of a superior officer...Back channel grumbling is unacceptable, gentlemen, unacceptable![722]

While those sentiments were expressed by an American officer in a fictionalized portrayal of modern conflict (the 2003 invasion of Iraq), they represent the attitudes of commanders across the ages. Given what has emerged about Captain Cuéllar's relations with some of his superior officers, it is safe to assume that he would probably have recognised the tenor of those remarks. In his *carta*, he bragged that he had a 'record of service to the King as a good soldier and loyal subject on all occasions.' It was an image that he consistently presented in all of his petitions to the crown throughout his career. In this he was typical of all soldiers who approached the royal court in the hope of remuneration or reward. A characteristic trait of all service papers in the archives of royal councils is the absence of any suggestion that their owners may have transgressed in their conduct or that they were sanctioned for misbehaviour during their careers.

True enough, among Cuéllar's papers were letters of recommendation written by the Dukes of Parma and Savoy, and the Archduke Albert that attested commendable service. Yet, we know from his *Carta* and other documents that he was not always a model soldier or exemplar of good behaviour. In fact, Cuéllar's military service was marked by some notable controversies. In 1583, he was arrested for blatant insubordination towards his superior officer, Andrés de Eguino after their clash with English corsairs at San Vicente. He was arrested again in 1588, on similar charges, for which he was initially sentenced to death. On at least one occasion during his career he faced allegations of pilferage, not to mention other occasions in which misbehaviour drew the censure of powerful officials: from the Marqués de Santa Cruz while at Lisbon and from Esteban de Ibarra (secretary of State and War) during his time in Flanders. Santa Cruz sought to have Cuéllar and his fellow 'Magallanes' officers castigated for disruptive behaviour when it appeared that they would not be given command of vessels for the Enterprise of England. Ibarra went so far as to describe Cuéllar as 'useless' ('no vale nada').

[722] Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen 'Godfather' Ferrando, U.S. Marines 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, *Generation Kill*, HBO Films, Home Box Office, Inc., 2008, episode 4.

Cuéllar's disciplinary problems, such as the incident in Brazil alongside that of 1588, provide an opportunity to explore a less celebrated facet of the Spanish military of the period: the thorny problems of misconduct and military justice. This chapter will investigate the circumstances surrounding Cuéllar's difficulties and discuss his experiences within the general context of disorder, discipline, and justice in the military.

The Armed Forces and Military Justice

During the course of the sixteenth century, as the armed forces of the Spanish monarchy expanded and evolved into a permanently established professional body, so the need arose for a defined set of rules and regulations to govern conduct. This was important for the regulation of internal discipline within units, and also in the conduct of relations between the military and civilian populations. The first representative body in Europe to enshrine military rules and regulations in permanent legislation was the Dutch States General when it passed a code of conduct in 1590 containing eighty-two articles.[723] It was not until 1603 that the first royal penal code for the military was issued in Spain by Philip III. Borreguero Beltrán described it as an attempt at reform to eradicate corruption and lapsed discipline that had by then become engrained in the army.[724] The Edict was not successful and in 1611 another ordinance modified the original, which in turn, was followed by another edict in 1613. Nevertheless, systematic regulations (*ordenanzas*) had begun to be implemented at the end of the fifteenth century under the Catholic Kings, Isabella and Ferdinand. *Ordenanzas* promulgated at the outset of the Italian wars, in 1496, 1497 and 1503, defined the organization of units, their composition, weaponry, which included sanctions for absence from the ranks and misconduct.[725] Charles V's ordinance of 1536 configured the *tercios* of Naples, Lombardy, Sicily and Malaga, composed of pike and shot. The *tercios viejos* symbolised the modernization of the Spanish infantry and underpinned the armed forces as the principal model of organization until the eighteenth century.[726]

Internal discipline was regulated by a variety of measures, but judicial authority ordinarily resided within the chain of command. González de Leon has discussed the retention of the *modo militar* (the military way) within the high command of the Army of Flanders during the initial decades of the revolt in the Low Countries.[727] *Modo militar* enshrined three basic tenets essential for the effective regulation of

[723] Hale, J.R., *War and Society*, p. 169.
[724] Borreguero Beltrán, C., 'El ejército del Rey' in Ribot, L. (ed.), *Historia militar de España: edad moderna*, vol. II, *Escenario Euopeo*, p. 133.
[725] Serradilla Ballinas, D., 'Las Ordenanzas' in *Historia de la Infantería Española: La infantería en torno al Siglo de Oro*', Ediciones Ejército, Madrid, 1993, pp. 257-59.
[726] Borreguero Beltrán, 'El ejército del rey', pp. 122-24.
[727] González de Leon, F., *The Road to Rocroi,* pp. 107-08.

permanent armed forces: authority, justice and discipline. A Captain-General of the army or fleet had the power to impose disciplinary measures and to adjudicate in tribunals involving cases that arose from within the forces under his command. Directives (*bandos*) were issued by commanders to maintain discipline during campaigns. Charles V famously issued rules of conduct before his campaign of 1552, as did the Duke of Medina Sidonia before the Enterprise of England set sail from Lisbon. While serving as viceroy of Naples and Captain-General of the Army of Italy, the Duke of Alba issued ordinances to better regulate discipline the discipline of the forces under his command.[728] Over time such instructions coalesced to produce a recognisable code of conduct.

Punishment of transgressions was often subjective and depended on the character of individual commanders. The Duke of Alba was well known for his rigorous use of capital punishment. During the course of the conquest of Portugal he executed more soldiers for crimes than were killed in combat.[729] In general, Spanish field commanders were noted by contemporaries for their harsh discipline. Sixteenth-century French soldier-author, Blaise de Monluc observed 'in my time I have always seen the Spaniards to be severe punishers of those who through cowardice or baseness surrendered or lost their fortresses.'[730] The death penalty could be imposed for a wide variety of offences including: desertion, mutiny, disobedience, breaking ranks, sleeping on watch, abandoning the colours, unlicensed plundering and rape of civilians.[731] But as Tallet observed, commanders reserved a wide degree of discretion in the use of such drastic punishment. On the Indies fleets deserters when apprehended were generally returned to their vessel. Some were condemned to galley service, while a six months unpaid service on the same vessel was occasionally considered sufficient punishment.[732] We have already seen in Chapter Three how Captain Cuéllar dispatched two unfortunates to the galleys. Geoffrey Parker has shown how selective punishment of deserters was preferable to mass execution of men who abandoned the colours. Although deserters were in principle condemned to death, 'the army often commuted the extreme sentence to three strokes of the lash.'[733] From the outset recruits were made aware of the rules of conduct and sanctions imposed for misbehaviour. On enlistment the recruiting officer apprised them of articles of war which he swore to uphold.[734]

[728] Montserrat Alsina, S., 'El ejército real y la jurisdicción de guerra: Estado de la justicia militar en España durante el reinado de la casa de Austria', in *Revista Española de Derecho Militar,* vol. 21, 1966, p. 29.
[729] Albi de la Cuesta, *De Pavía a Rocroi*, pp. 171-74.
[730] González de León, *The Road to Rocroi*, p. 107.
[731] Tallett, F., *War and Society*, p. 123.
[732] AGI Contaduría, legajos 468 & 517.
[733] Parker, *The Army of Flanders,* p. 184.
[734] Parker G., 'The Soldier', p. 33.

Abuse of Privilege

Spanish historian Martínez-Ruiz has discussed how, in tandem with the establishment of permanent units, the concept of military law and jurisdiction gradually evolved towards the idea of a privileged status for soldiers.[735] This implied that cases involving military personnel were heard by military judges in military courts with the ultimate court of appeal, the Council of War in Madrid. This led to frequent discord with civilian authorities because military jurisdiction (*fuero militar*) existed independently of ordinary civil courts. On active service a combination of experience, discipline and harsh codes of exemplary punishments (as well as a collective honour code within units) succeeded in maintaining rudimentary standards of behaviour. But away from theatres of conflict, not least in Spain, the constant ebb and flow of new recruits and returning veterans at times engendered serious problems for the civilian population. When the threat of sanctions on soldiers decreased, instances of disorder rose. Lorraine White described soldiers who returned from conflict zones as: a 'threat to society, for he was armed, lived by, and was habituated to violence, and his prime function was to kill.'[736] Their apparent immunity from sanction by civil law courts at times led to undue levels of disorder and criminality by military personnel within civilian society. Contemptuous of civilian authority individuals and groups acted with impunity right up to the precincts of the royal alcazar in Madrid. Hale recognised the problems of assimilating soldiers back in to civilian society when he observed 'a bad soldier promised to be a bad citizen.'[737]

Many unemployed soldiers congregated in Madrid, sometimes for extended periods. Aside from their numbers, the extraordinary growth of the capital's population led to concerns over provisioning, public order and efforts by the authorities to curb access to the court.[738] In 1587, while Cuéllar was in the capital there were concerns at court that many good soldiers were being reduced destitution while they waited on new commissions, resorting to religious institutions around Madrid for food and accommodation:

> Por ser tanto el número de los soldados que pretendían compañías anque dado muchos dellos sin ser proveídos los quales se hallan en tan extrema necissidad por el mucho tiempo que a que estan pretendiendo que se sabe que es en estremo lo que padecer y que algunos muy honrados por no tener otra forma de poderse sustentar

[735] Martínez Ruiz, E., Los soldados del rey: Los ejércitos de la monarquía hispánica (1480-1700), ACTAS, 2008, pp. 930-37.
[736] White, L., 'The Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers: Combat, Welfare and Violence', in *War and Society*, January 2002, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 35.
[737] Hale, *War and Society*, pp. 140-41.
[738] Elliott, J.H., *Spain and the Wider World*, p. 266.

> sean reduzidos a yr a comer en los monasterios, todos o la mayor parte an servido mucho y muy bien y son hombres que bastan a dar una victoria.[739]

It was a problem that would perplex the authorities indefinitely. In 1568, Philip II had expressed his concerns to the Duke of Alba at the multitude of soldiers arriving at court from Italy and the Low Countries and the inconvenience this entailed. He resolved that in future the Crown would only dispense favours to those whom his senior commanders recommended for rewards:

> para remedio dello ordenaros como por la presente os ordenamos que ay se dé a entender a los capitanes officiales y soldados que nos sirven en este ejército que de aquí adelante no vengan a este corte para effecto de pedir merced ni recompensa de sus servicios sino que quando alguno pretendiere algo por este respecto acud [...] para que informandoos de sus servicios y pretensiones nos aviséys de sus méritos y de la merced que se les huviere hecho [...] pues por esta vía tenemos siempre cuydado de gratificarles y hazer los la merced que ellos meresceren que en esta conformidad se ha dicho aquí a los soldados que a la presente se hallan en esta corte.[740]

Henceforth, a soldier could only gain access to the court if he was issued with a formal pass (*licencia*) by a senior commander: We can see this process in operation through the licences Cuéllar received from The Duke of Parma (1591), The Archduke Albert (1598), and the Duke of Medina Sidonia (1603).[741] Even so, despite this application of this procedure the problem of soldiers in the capital continued to pose a dilemma, not least because of their anti-social behaviour.

Again, coinciding with Cuéllar's sojourn at court, the King's secretary, Mateo Vázquez, proposed a reform of public order in the capital in 1586.[742] He was concerned by itinerant travellers who had relocated to Madrid from other towns and cities in large numbers. And he was appalled by what he considered to be dissolute behaviour that had become prevalent within the city confines, and at court.[743] The influx of homeless and destitute people into Madrid posed an ongoing dilemma, which was aggravated by the number of unemployed soldiers who came to court without licences. Despite reform initiatives by the likes of Vázquez, anti-social behaviour remained a recurrent problem into the reign of Philip III. One anonymous treatise composed in 1598, remonstrated against criminal behaviour habitually committed by military personnel around the capital.[744] Unemployed soldiers were depicted brazenly parading through the streets in gangs (*cuadrillos*),

[739] AGS GyM 208, f.330. *Consulta*, Madrid, 15 de Mayo 1587.
[740] AGS Estado 2219, unfoliated, Philip II to the Duke of Alba, 31 May 1568.
[741] All mentioned in AGS Estado 1704, f.361.
[742] HSA Altamira, Box 7, Folder II, doc no. 25, Mateo Vázquez to Conde de Barajas, 10 July 1586.
[743] AGS GyM 538, f.236.
[744] Ibid.

on occasion, leaving a trail of robbery, murder and rape (*forçar mugeres*) in their wake.[745] Contemptuous of local municipal authority, they had little fear of arrest by the local constabulary (*alguaciles*) because of the *fuero militar*, which exempted military personnel from the civil jurisdiction. The 1598 treatise enumerated blasphemy, gambling on dice, and 'rigged' card games (*naipes falsos*) as habitual vices. Card-sharks (*fulleros*) were a problem in and around court.[746] Some enterprising captains got in on the act by using their boarding houses (*casas de posada*) as ad hoc gambling dens, proceeds from which could yield extraordinary returns within days. By renting out tables some were able to make a month's wages (25-40 escudos) a day. In this way, one captain reputedly netted four thousand ducats when he was supposed to be recruiting troops.[747] Such behaviour was not confined to the capital; it was replicated across Spain in towns and localities as units were moved from recruiting grounds to ports for service abroad. Hale encapsulated the problem succinctly when stating that 'military service induced a restlessness and criminality that every country found it difficult to reabsorb.'[748]

Reform Measures

From mid-century the administration of military justice became more specialised with the appointment of university-trained judges (*letrados*) as auditors. They were assigned to units both on land and at sea. In 1580 Martín de Aranda was appointed by the King as Auditor-General of the armed forces in Portugal. He performed this role he performed until 1588, when he was transferred to serve in the same capacity in Medina Sidonia's fleet. Towards the end of that campaign he would become central to the outcome of Cuéllar's court-martial. Don Gabriel de Montsalvo, the auditor assigned to the Magellan fleet, however, did not appear to have any involvement the case involving Cuéllar and Andrés de Eguino in Brazil.[749] At the same time existing courts of appeal retained their jurisdiction. Within the Indies fleets, cases were frequently referred to the Casa de Contratación in Seville, from where a final court of appeal resided in the Council of the Indies in Madrid. Also, in the absence of the Captain-General or auditor, a complainant could refer to the authorities of the port where the ships were moored.[750] All of these expedients were used in the tribunals involving Captain Cuéllar. In Brazil, Andrés de Eguino resorted to the governor of San Vicente, Gerónimo Leitón, because Captain-General Diego Flores de Valdés was with the rest of the expedition sailing for the Strait of Magellan. When the fleet returned to Spain, Cuéllar applied to the Casa de

[745] AGS Gym 538, f.236
[746] Ibid.
[747] Ibid.
[748] Hale, *War and Society*, p. 44.
[749] Markham, C.R., *Narratives of the Voyages of Pedro Sarmiento*, p. 222.
[750] Pérez-Mallaína, P., *Spain's Men of the Sea,* p. 206.

Contratación to hear his case. In 1588, Martín de Aranda was called on to arbitrate his court-martial.

In the army, more so than within the fleets, the expanding role of legal personnel occasionally led to a clash of jurisdiction with commanders. Sancho de Londoño, a former Maestre de Campo and author of a famous treatise on military discipline was reluctant to cede authority to the auditors. To guard against any dimunition of the authority of the Maestre de Campo he sought to ensure that the auditors ('que no son letrados') remained deferential to their will.[751] Despite these reservations, by the mid-1580s the Duke of Parma had recognised a need for reform of military justice in the army. His *ordenanzas* of May 1587 defined the role of the auditor. Henceforth, judicial affairs in the military were to be administered by trained professionals, with an auditor assigned to every *tercio*.[752] An important proviso, however, ensured that senior commanders continued to retain their authority over the sentencing of offenders with the jurisdiction to overrule the decision of an auditor. Although Parma's *ordenanzas* were promulgated for the Army of Flanders their precepts were quickly adopted by the armed forces in general and are considered to have formed the basis for modern Spanish military law.[753]

Checks and balances were introduced by the crown to guard against administrative fraud and malfeasance. Judicial reviews of officers' accounts (*visita*) and audits of the administrations of viceroys and governors appointed by the King (*residencia*) were intended as essential measures to impose administrative discipline. Review procedures were also utilised during inspections of incoming Atlantic fleets from the Americas to assess the officers of those fleets. In two petitions Cuéllar specifically referred to the findings of the *visita y residencia* conducted when the *Armada de Magallanes* returned to Spain. He referenced this in order to attest that no charges of malfeasance had been brought against him, that 'he had given a good account [of two ships he had commanded] and of all the rest of his responsibilities as appears in the report of the *residencia* which was taken of the officials of the said fleet.'[754] However, according to Thompson the review procedures were generally long drawn out and ineffective. He claimed 'the effect [of judicial reviews] was almost the reverse of what was intended. The corrupt knew what was coming and took care to cover themselves; the unsuspecting innocent, surprised by the calumnies of their enemies, were caught unprepared and defenceless.[755]

[751] Londono, S de, *Discurso sobre la forma de reducir la disciplina militar a mejor y antiguo estado*, Brussels 1589, p. 22.
[752] Beltrán Borreguero, 'El ejército del Rey', pp. 139-40.
[753] Ibid., p. 140.
[754] AGS GyM 171, f.202, AGI Indiferente General 2676, Expedientes de individuos que sirvieron en las armadas y flotas 1573-88, unfoliated.
[755] Thompson, I.A.A., *War and Government in Habsburg Spain 1560-1620*, London, 1976, p. 58.

While regulations and procedures were developed to regulate everyday activities within the ranks and arbitrate in dispute resolution, military authorities were, nevertheless, faced with an inordinate challenge to maintain order and discipline. Problems existed that, at times, blighted the performance of the military and inhibited its effectiveness. Most debilitating was the frequency of mutinies that plagued the Army of Flanders. Lack of pay was the primary cause of the frequency of mutinies in that theatre of operations during the latter part of the sixteenth century. Intermittent payment, frequent delays and prolonged uncertainty (extending to years) over how much, and even if, a percentage of what was owed to soldiers was going to be redeemed by the authorities. This was an on-going source of tension between senior commanders and long-suffering rank and file. Geoffrey Parker in his influential study noted that 'between 1573 and 1607 over forty-five mutinies occurred in the Army of Flanders, almost half of them after 1596.'[756]

There is no evidence that Captain Cuéllar was involved in any such altercations. In fact, in Chapter Three we saw how he was at pains to point out to the Council of State that he succeeded in maintaining discipline among his troops when among civilian populations. Throughout most of his time in the Low Countries his status as a staff officer (*entretenido cerca de la persona*) meant that as he was attached to the high command he was somewhat removed from the regular units of the army. Nevertheless, such institutional disobedience, for whatever reason appears to have been more a characteristic of land-based units than of those that served with the navy. Instances of mutinous behaviour in the high seas fleets seem to have been few and far between. This, according to Pérez-Mallaína was most likely down to the development of the administrative machinery of the Carrera de las Indias.[757] As we shall see, the Casa de Contratación in Seville gave Francisco de Cuéllar a prompt hearing in 1584, when he sought to have charges brought against Andrés de Eguino in their bitter legal dispute.

However, when unrest did manifest itself among naval contingents, it usually occurred on land. The return of the Magallanes expedition to Spain in 1584 is a case in point. Lack of wages was the root cause of the problems that were encountered by officials of the Casa de Contratación in Seville when six hundred or so personnel, virtually destitute and owed around three years arrears arrived in Cádiz in urgent need of remuneration.

When word reached Madrid that Diego Flores had brought his fleet to anchor at Cádiz, the King instructed that the infantry on board should be immediately transferred to a squadron assembling under Juan Martínez de Recalde.[758] This

[756] Parker, G., *The Army of Flanders*, pp. 253-55.
[757] Pérez-Mallaína, *Spain's Men of the Sea,* p. 211.
[758] AGI Contratación 5168. Officials of Casa de Contratación to Philip II, Seville, 27 July 1584.

decision, in itself, was unwise. The survivors of Flores' expedition had endured a protracted voyage to the south Atlantic that had been hazardous in the extreme. Half-starved, penniless and clothed in old tattered rags that barely covered their nakedness, the crews required rest, recuperation, and reimbursement of their wages, not immediate redeployment. Officials of the *Casa* recognised this, remarking upon 'the toil and effort they had in such a long voyage in which they have suffered such hunger, exposure, and risk to their lives.'[759] While it transpired that some were to embark on galleys bound for a rendezvous with returning Indies flotas, the majority congregated in Seville as they had not yet received any of their wages. There they earnestly implored *Casa* officials to provide them with at least a basic subsidy so that they could feed themselves while they awaited payment. Discerning their distress the *Casa* 'resolved to dispense to each [crew member] for their assistance one *real* a day from His Majesty's treasury to whom we beg approval and command that this be paid because the shame of their nakedness and poverty is great.'[760] This stipend was insufficient, however, to both clothe and feed the men.[761] An increasing tone of urgency became apparent in the correspondence of the *Casa* as failure to settle the wage account provoked discontent among the troops who refused to comply with repeated entreaties that they embark with Recalde's squadron.[762] At the end of September gangs (*cuadrillas*) of soldiers were reportedly roaming around the city.[763] Two months later, *Casa* appeals to Madrid included instances of violence in their reports:

> y toda la gente de mar y guerra y dueños de las naos estan aquí y padecen mucha necesidad por no tener de donde hecho socorridos para comer y vestirse ni los dueños de las naos para pagar sus deudas [...] y todos juntos en general y en particular bienen a esta cassa todos los días a hazer ynstancia aquí se les pague supplicamos a Vuestra Magestad mande resolverse con brevedad en que se les pague con que se escusar los eçesos daños que la gente de mar y guerra hazen en esta ciudad.[764]

By the end of the year, most of the Magallanes officers were at court applying directly to the Council of the Indies, the Council of Finance, and any other Council that would accept their petitions, for settlement of what was owed to them. During this time Cuéllar was embroiled in litigation with Andrés de Eguino (see pp. 169-79).

[759] AGI Contratación 5168, f.293.
[760] AGI Contratación 5168, f.292.
[761] AGS GyM 165 f.185.
[762] AGI AGI Contratación 5168, f.298.
[763] AGS GyM 166, f.91.
[764] AGI Contratación 5168, f.318. 'Sailors, troops and ship owners are all here and suffering great hardship for not having the wherewithal to feed and clothe themselves, or the ship owners to pay their debts [...] and all together, in general and in particular, they come to this house [Casa de Contratación] every day to request they be paid. We beseech Your Majesty to command in haste a resolution in which they can be paid so as to end the violence and damage that the sailors and soldiers are doing in this city.'

Meanwhile, the rank and file engaging in riotous behaviour in Seville simply lacked the resources to go to the capital. Perhaps, a reminder that the lot of the common soldier was something of a universal experience across the divide comes from a terse report of a Spanish agent in London that describes riots over pay in the aftermath of the Counter-Armada of Drake and Norris in 1589. In a curious echo of events in Seville the account described how 'soldiers who came to London from the fleet to ask for their pay, finding they could obtain no satisfaction, attempted to raise a tumult in the town, which they tried to burn and sack. This forced the Queen to come from Richmond to Greenwich, and she issued stringent orders for the arrest of the soldiers.'[765]

Disorders that arose from the infamous mutiny of 1576 led to one of the most notorious outrages committed by Spanish troops in the Low Countries as mutineers ran amok in Antwerp.[766] They have been discussed in detail by Geoffrey Parker, who described them as essentially a collective response to the harsh realities of military life.[767] While mutiny was considered symptomatic of harsh conditions and financial deprivation, the roots of endemic corruption, embezzlement and contraband sale of provisions lay in opportunistic greed. They were vices that remained ingrained in most branches of the military despite measures put in place in an effort to circumvent that problem.

Private Enterprise: Contraband

If the American colonies were seen by colonists as the land of opportunity, then the ports of the Caribbean provided enticing commercial prospects for a profit-eager military officers as well as enterprising businessmen. Royal warships of the Indies Guard and the escorts of the merchant fleets were forbidden from carrying merchandise for sale. But inevitably, black market sale of contraband goods became a widespread practice among the military officers of the Indies fleets. This was where Francisco de Cuéllar spent his formative years as a soldier. No doubt he was exposed to such practises, and as we shall see, he was not immune to their temptations. Captain-General Don Bartolomé Villavicencio alleged that captains on an Indies run could make up to 15,000 *escudos* on a single voyage through black market activities.[768] Pedro Vique de Manrique, commander of the galley squadron that was assigned to Cartagena de Indias in 1578, boasted in correspondence with acquaintances that given a free rein with the vessels at his disposal he could expect to earn up to 40,000 ducats from private sales.[769] When one considers those profits against a captain's average salary of 25 escudos a month, or even that of a Captain-

[765] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 558.
[766] Parker, G., *The Dutch Revolt*, p. 178.
[767] Parker G., *The Army of Flanders*, pp. 157-76.
[768] Castro y Bravo, F de, *las naos en la carrera de las Indias,* p. 99.
[769] Ibid., p. 234.

General (3,000 per annum), it is easy to see the temptation. Many rank-and-file soldiers, who enlisted for a voyage, did so in order to abscond on their arrival in the Indies. Some were then employed by officers of the unit they had abandoned to serve as their agents in Indies ports for the sale of the unregistered goods that were smuggled on their vessels. The practice was rife in the galleons of the Indies Guard. Even the renowned admiral Pedro Menéndez de Avilés spent time behind bars for carrying contraband. Concerned by the extent of the abuses practised, and the disorder it induced, Philip II felt compelled to write to the officials of the Casa de Contratación in Seville in late 1581, instructing them to curb such activity.[770] But it was an impossible task.

By the late 1570s the Indies Guard was notorious for its corrupt practices. So much so, that the mercantile community, which financed the unit through the tax (*averia*) on the sale of their goods in the Indies, had been become alienated. Such was the distrust of merchants that, at Nombre de Dios in 1576, they refused to have their private silver remittances transported by the galleons, insisting instead that they load the treasure onto private vessels which the galleons were to escort to Spain.[771] At the time that Cuéllar appeared in Cartagena, the port seems to have been a hub of racketeering by certain members of the unit. The period coincided with Don Cristóbal de Eraso's tenure of command (1576-79). He used his position to appoint four sons, relatives and associates to captaincies within the unit. Two of his sons, Francisco and Gonzalo served as *almirantes*. Under Eraso, the squadron was run in a manner that in some respects resembled something of a family-run business.

Vessels were loaded with merchandise and secretly dispatched from the Canaries to Cartagena, while ships of the fleet frequently transported wine and other merchandise to other ports in the region. Sometimes goods were dispatched to New Spain under the guise of sending dispatches to the viceroy.[772] The squadron's account books show the hire of various warehouses at Cartagena during the period 1577-79, ostensibly for the storage of supplies and rigging.[773] But according to eyewitnesses they were used by Eraso as outlets for the sale of wine, oil, cloth and other merchandise, with small vessels bought or hired to transport the goods elsewhere.[774] Pedro Lopez de Trébino a merchant and citizen of Cartagena testified to the local governor, Pedro Fernández de Busto, how he was conducted by soldiers to two warehouses to sample and purchase wines.[775] During the same tribunal Erasso's son Gonzalo, and subordinate officers such as Andrés de Eguino, Diego de

[770] AGS GyM 118, f.302.
[771] Chaunu, P., and H., *Seville et l'Atlantique*, vol. III, Librarie Armand Colin, 1955, p. 225.
[772] AGI Justicia 959, ff.1021-1032.
[773] AGI Contaduría 517, Cuentas Glosadas de Diego de Rivera 1578-1580, ff.333, 337.
[774] AGI Justicia 959, ff. 663-668, Testimony of Luis Peréz. Maestre de la nao nombrado *San Antonio* que fue de aviso desde la ciudad de Cádiz el año pasado 1578.
[775] Ibid.

la Rivera, Captain Gutiérrez de Palomares (each of whom would later serve with the Armada de Magallanes) were all implicated in these activities. Cuéllar served with all of these individuals in Brazil.

Efforts by local authorities to curb the unit's activities proved ineffective; when threatened with inspection by local officials, Eraso forestalled by pulling the squadron out of Cartagena.[776] According to Luis Pérez, Eraso resorted to intimidation of officials to prevent another attempted inspection for unregistered goods.[777] Pérez had arrived in Cartagena with despatches form Spain, but Eraso had him, and the pilot of his vessel, imprisoned on suspicion of forwarding correspondence intended for him, to the local governor. Pérez later testified that it was well known that Eraso filled local warehouses with wine, cloth, olive oil, barrels of soap etc, for sale.[778] In July 1579, Eraso obstructed Governor Busto's inquiry into the squadron's activities by absconding from the city to his flagship, along with, Andrés de Eguino (recently appointed as fleet accountant) in order escape Busto's jurisdiction, and prevent access to the fleet's accounts. He then defied an order for Eguino's arrest on a charge of contempt of court by his failure to co-operate with the enquiry. Captain Palomares was brought before the tribunal to answer questions, but he merely refuted allegations that he, or soldiers he commanded, were involved in orchestrating sales of merchandise from local warehouses.[779]

Reports inevitably reached Spain. One whistle-blower who informed on Eraso's activities was a cleric named Zambrano. Eraso railed against him in a letter to the viceroy of Peru for, he alleged, spreading false rumours.[780] However, allegations submitted to the authorities by disgruntled officers of the Indies Guard, alienated by his blatant nepotism in appointing sons and associates to senior positions, were more difficult to refute. Captain Gutiérrez de Solís was one such officer.[781] However, he would later suffer retribution for doing so (see pp. 180-81). While Eraso had been able to defy the efforts of local commissioners in the Indies, mounting evidence against him in Spain ensured that he was powerless to prevent royal officials boarding and inspecting his ships when he returned to Spain, in late 1579. Silver bars valued at 160,000 escudos were discovered stashed throughout his flagship. Eraso was not alone. A number of officers were also caught, albeit with smaller stashes. The *visita y residencia* that ensued produced eleven folders of

[776] Hoffman, P., *The Spanish Crown and the Defense of the Caribbean, 1535-1585: Precedent, Patrimonialism, and Royal Parsimony*, Baton Rouge, 1970, p. 133.
[777] AGI Justicia 959, ff.663-668. Testimony of Luis Peréz.
[778] Ibid.
[779] AGI Justicia 959. ff.1021-1032.
[780] La *batalla del Mar Océano*, vol. I, Doc no. 120, Don Cristóbal de Eraso to Viceroy of Peru, 15 May 1579.
[781] AGI Indiferente General 1096, Captain Gutiérrez de Solís to Philip II, 24 January 1582.

documentation.[782] Remarkably, given the enormous fraud involved, Eraso was not harshly punished by the King. He was stripped of his command, but was not arrested, nor even fined.[783] He was compelled to pay tax on his silver hoard, but otherwise retained a substantial amount of the wealth he had accummulated through smuggling, and remained active in naval affairs. In 1582 he served with the Marquis of Santa Cruz at the battle of San Miguel in the Azores.

During the months that followed other individuals caught with contraband silver were treated equally leniently, when ordered by the Council of the Indies to pay levies on the bullion, varying between one sixth, and half the value of the contraband. One individual, Don Francisco de Maldonado, even had the tax he had to pay remitted from one half to one third of the value.[784] Other named individuals included Rodrigo and Pedro de Rada both of whom would cross paths with Cuéllar during the Magellan expedition.[785] In 1580, Rodrigo de Rada served under Diego Flores de Valdés, when he took charge of the squadron. When it returned to Spain late that year, Rada was caught once again with contraband silver to the value of five hundred ducats. On that occasion he was committed to the royal prison in Seville.[786]

This was the cultural environment to which Francisco de Cuéllar was exposed during his formative years in the military. Throughout the decade after enlistment to 1588, he was closely associated with the same cadre of officers of the Indies Guard under various nomenclatures (Indies Guard 1578-79, Armada de Magallanes 1581-84, squadron of Castile 1588). Therefore, it is not surprising that Cuéllar may have adopted the habits of his colleagues. There is at least one documented instance for which he was charged with criminal behaviour; he was caught selling provisions in Brazil that had been earmarked for Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa's settlement in the Strait of Magellan. Cuéllar was accused by Sarmiento of pilferage, along with another Captain, Gonzalo Meléndez de Valdés. Both admitted to having done so, but claimed it was necessary in order to survive.[787] Even so, Cuéllar had criminal charges brought against him for with the illegal sale of a barrel of wine.[788] Yet, he claimed he was exonerated by inspectors when the fleet returned to Spain: 'It can be seen by the *visita y residencia* that was taken of the captains and officials

[782] AGI Justicia legajos 959-969.
[783] Pérez-Mallaína, P.E., 'Servir al rey o la familia', pp. 312-13.
[784] Heredia Herrera, *Catalogo del las consultas*, no. 771, p. 280.
[785] Ibid., *consulta* no. 757, p. 276; no. 760, p. 277; no. 771, p. 280.
[786] AGS GyM 109, f.395.
[787] Sarmiento, *Viajes al Estrecho*, vol. 1, p. 230.
[788] AGI Contratación 2933, Relación de los maravedíes que de resto de sus sueldos se deven a la gente de guerra y mar de la Armada de su Magestad General Diego Flores que el año pasado de mill y quinientos ochenta y quarto vino del estrecho de Magallanes: 'Al Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar no le está echa su cuenta por razón de la su proceso criminal que contra él se causó y por una pipa de vino.'

of the said Armada de Magallanes, which resulted in no blame being attached to me whatsoever.'[789] Despite Cuéllar's protestations to the crown, it seemed apparent that he was guilty of criminal behaviour. So the motives of the *visitador* in dropping the charges might be questioned. Perhaps Cuéllar was not above bribery either?

Although he was guilty of illegal sales of provisions, no other charges have surfaced to allow us to ascertain if Cuéllar engaged in the other usual vices of captains (embezzlement of soldiers' wages, falsifying muster returns in order to pocket surplus wages etc). In fact, he seldom had the opportunity to do so. Normal procedure in the army was to issue wages to the captain, who dispensed the money to his troops. Although Cuéllar served as a captain for more than two decades he recruited troops on only two occasions during his career: for the expedition to the Magellan Strait in 1581, and again in 1601-02, while serving under Don Luis de Córdoba. Most of his service in Flanders was conducted on the general staff of the Duke of Parma, and later to the Archduke Albert, thus, opportunities for fraud usually associated with command of companies were not available to him. On the occasions when he was in charge of troops, wages were simply not paid until he was either dismissed from his command (1583), or the company itself was disbanded (1603). When in 1581 a four-month advance in wages was paid to the crew of the Magallanes expedition the money handed directly (*en mano propia*) by officials of the Casa de Contratación.[790] However, in 1602, he may also have engaged in a scam in which fellow captains were implicated. Shortly before the fleet set sail the infantry contingent was reinforced by troops that had only recently returned from the Caribbean under General don Luis Fajardo. This was an unpopular and ill-advised expedient as Fajardo's troops, worn down by the trials of their recent voyage, required a period of recuperation. But because of the difficulty in recruiting troops in Andalusia at that time, it was deemed necessary to incorporate them into Córdoba's fleet. The men were reluctant to go and reports circulated that the men were effectively 'ransomed' off Córdoba's ships by the captains, presumably with cash they had received for the voyage just completed: 'de los 390 soldados que entregue a el general don Luis de Córdoba se an quedado muchos y es público que los rrescataron por dineros los capitanes'.[791]

Dereliction of Duty? The Case v Andrés de Eguino

Petty criminality was one thing, but a charge of dereliction of duty in the face of the enemy was something much more serious. This was what constituted Cuéllar's first

[789] AGS GyM 171, f.202.
[790] AGI Contaduría 531-A, f.453.
[791] AGI Indiferente General 1118, unfoliated, Don Luis Fajardo to Philip III, 11 May 1602, 'of the 390 soldiers who were transferred to General Don Luis de Córdoba many have left and it is known that the captains 'ransomed' them for money.'

brush with authority in Brazil, when he clashed with his superior officer, Andrés de Eguino, during and after their encounter with English galleons in the harbour of San Vicente in 1583. Eguino had him arrested for insubordination and the subsequent legal dispute is intriguing because it resulted in three separate hearings before it was finally referred to the Council of the Indies in 1584. Eguino sought to place the blame on Cuéllar for the loss of one ship (*Nuestra Señora de Begoña*) and the escape of the English. He regarded Cuéllar's failure to properly position his ship so as to engage the enemy, at the outset of the action, as critical. Captain Cuéllar clearly had questions to answer, but when the fleet returned to Spain his counter-claims and new testimony, previously suppressed, raised concerns over Eguino's qualities as an officer. However, before examining the case of Cuéllar versus Eguino, a minor spat between two of the highest ranking servants of the state, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Santa Cruz, might serve to illustrate how rapidly matters of reputation and litigation could become so intertwined. Coincidentally, Cuéllar would subsequently serve under both individuals, after Medina Sidonia replaced Santa Cruz as commander of the Armada in 1588.

Personal rivalry, it seems, fed into this spat, which flared up in early 1582. At that time Medina Sidonia held the post of Captain-General of Andalusia while Santa Cruz was Spain's highest ranking naval commander and was preparing a fleet to sail to the Azores to suppress French-backed rebels who were opposed to Spanish rule. The pair had co-operated successfully in the Algarve during the annexation of Portugal, when Santa Cruz's fleet provided support to the Duke's land-based force as it advanced along the coast.[792] However tensions between them arose after the loss of two galleys in Cádiz harbour during the summer of 1581, for which Medina Sidonia was considered responsible. They were wrecked under his direction after he deployed during bad weather.

In a letter to Medina Sidonia in January 1582, Santa Cruz admonished him lightly for deploying the galleys in adverse weather, and rather glibly pointed out that he would have 'wished to have them to hand for the voyage that His Majesty has commanded him...'[793] Galleys made superb close-support vessels for infantry landing craft during ground assaults, as Santa Cruz would demonstrate at Terceira in 1583. Nevertheless, his jibe was needlessly condescending, an exercise in point-scoring over the foremost grandee of Spain. Petty jealousies were at play, and the high-minded Duke of Medina Sidonia was vexed by what he felt was a slight on his reputation. He forwarded a copy of the letter to the Philip II's personal secretary, Gabriel de Zayas, with instructions to show its contents to the King and then addressed a separate letter to the King to protest innocence. He demanded that a tribunal be convened to investigate the matter. If he should be found culpable then

[792] Pierson, *Commander of the Armada*, p. 34.
[793] HSA Altamira, Box 7, Folder I, no.16, Santa Cruz to Medina Sidonia 24 January 1582.

he would pay the cost of the vessels. And if not a tribunal, he implored the King, then at least grant him licence to come to court to respond to Santa Cruz.[794] Unsurprisingly, Philip II was bemused. On reading the offending letter he was unable to see where Santa Cruz had caused such an affront to the Duke admitting, 'I don't think that the Marquis' letter says as much as the Duke thinks.' He instructed Zayas simply to ensure that the pair resolved their differences between themselves.[795]

Medina Sidonia's immediate inclination to resort to a judicial process over a trivial jibe is instructive. Reputation and the law were paramount. While the context of the quarrel between Cuéllar and Eguino was very different, the same cultural sentiments are apparent in the resolve of both parties to resort to litigation to defend their reputations. Both disputes involved the loss of warships, but that of Cuéllar and Eguino arose out of a military operation that had gone spectacularly wrong. In the case of Cuéllar and Eguino each considered the other culpable in their affair. Having started out as a dispute over a military operation, testimony submitted in the case would touch on broader issues including abuse of power and obstruction of justice. When the expedition returned to Spain Cuéllar submitted testimony against Eguino that claimed he attempted to fabricate testimony and intimidate potential witnesses willing to testify on his behalf. More sinisterly, he also alleged that Eguino had sought to orchestrate Cuéllar's death and that of the pilot of the *Concepción*, Juan Quintero, rather than face the unpalatable accusations against his conduct that Cuéllar sought to bring before the authorities: 'y particularmente prendió a Juan Quintero piloto de la dicha mi nao que por los malos tratamientos de la prisión en que fue puesto murio dentro de tres días después de metido en ella y por muchos días procuro hacerme padecer de muerte.'[796]

Eguino had charge of three ships when he surprised two heavily-armed English galleons commanded by Captain Edward Fenton at San Vicente in February 1583. Initially, it appeared as if all the Spaniards had to do was sail across the harbour in order to board the enemy ships, most of whose crews were onshore and powerless to intervene. However, Cuéllar would allege that the opportunity was squandered through hesitancy and mismanagement. A delay of some hours before the Spaniards launched their assault, allowed the English to return to their vessels and prepare for combat. And when the attack finally commenced after nightfall, they were able to utilize their superior artillery to greater effect. Hampered by strong currents in the bay the Spanish ships became disordered. Forced to anchor, Andrés de Eguino's lead vessel, the *San Juan* seems to have impeded the *Concepción* of

[794] HSA Altamira, Box 1, Folder I, no.43, Medina Sidonia to Philip II, 8 February 1582.
[795] Ibid.
[796] AGI Escribanía 1069B, unfoliated, testimony of Captain Cuéllar.

Captain Cuéllar. When the smallest of the three vessels, the *Nuestra Señora de Begoña* of Rodrigo de Rada, managed to close with the English, it became trapped in a cross-fire and sank after its hull was breached in numerous places along the waterline. Although a torrential downpour during the early hours temporarily suspended the engagement, hostilities resumed after sunrise and continued until mid-afternoon when the two surviving Spanish vessels eventually broke off the action. The English, also having suffered significant damage, succeeded in reaching open water and departed the region shortly afterwards.

Responsibility for the outcome rested ultimately with the commanding officer, Andrés de Eguino. It was clear that a succession of errors had transformed an advantageous position to capture the English into a situation where they inflicted substantial damage on his ships, and then escaped. Eguino would have to justify his actions while explaining the circumstances of the loss of the *Begoña*. It was a privately owned merchantman that had been embargoed in Seville by the authorities to serve in the expedition. And a lawsuit would inevitably follow as the owners sought compensation for their loss from the Crown.[797] More worrying for Eguino were the questions he would have to answer concerning the sequence of events that led to the escape of the English. At Santos, in the immediate aftermath of the encounter, Cuéllar was outspoken in his criticism of Eguino. He regarded the decision to withdraw to Santos as shameful, exclaiming 'I complained to God and the world of such ineptitude and half-heartedness',[798] which most likely inflamed emotions that were already fraught. Cuéllar may have even triggered the dispute by calling into question Eguino's decision-making from the outset. He claimed Eguino rebuffed a number of requests made by him to attack the English at the outset, and later, to instigate boarding actions when it became apparent that one of the English ships was listing and in serious difficulty.

Eguino, in turn, sought to blame Cuéllar for the loss of the *Begoña* and the escape of the English. He claimed Cuéllar deliberately avoided engagement with the English throughout the initial hours of the battle by having the *Concepción* anchor behind Eguino's ship. In doing so, the Concepción was not exposed to the enemy cannon. By remaining in that position throughout the night, he forced the *Begoña*, which had been held in reserve, into the fray in support of the flagship. He considered this the cause for the Begoña's loss, and believed that when the *Concepción* finally joined the action the following morning the opportunity to seize the English galleons had already been lost. Cuéllar was clearly inexperienced as an officer, only having received his captaincy shortly before the fleet departed. Eguino as senior officer had the authority to accuse him of incompetence, dereliction of duty, and even cowardice for failing to ensure that the *Concepción* engaged with the enemy

[797] AGI Contratación 2933, ff. 4-10.
[798] AGI Escribanía 1069B, unfoliated, testimony of Captain Cuéllar.

at the outset. Moreover, Cuéllar's protestations were such that they called Eguino's authority into question, and amounted to insubordination. So he had Cuéllar arrested along with the pilot of the *Concepción*, Juan Quintero. They were placed under guard and confined to quarters with orders not to leave the ship on pain of death.[799] Command of the *Concepción* was then assigned to Captain Rodrigo de Rada who had survived the sinking of his ship, the *Begoña*.

It seems to have been commonly accepted among other crew members that there was already bad blood between the pair before the San Vicente affair.[800] Under the circumstances, with both parties furiously accusing the other, a tribunal of enquiry became inevitable. In fact, four inquiries would be held in an effort to resolve the dispute. Archival research uncovered two transcripts, those at San Vicente, and the Casa de Contratación (House of Trade) in Seville. Transcripts from the others have yet to come to light. Nevertheless, the information that has surfaced throws light on the course of the battle, and on how the subsequent dispute escalated.

Inquiry at San Vicente

An inquiry into the affair was instigated by Eguino and chaired by the governor of San Vicente, Gerónimo Leitón. Proceedings were conducted over two days at the office of notary Antonio de Sequera, in Santos.[801] Leitón, of course, also had a vested interest in agreeing to the proceedings. Prior to the battle, the English had been in the port for four days and on at least on two occasions encouraged local officials to engage in trade.[802] Leitón used the inquiry to explain his conduct while the English were present as local authorities were expressly forbidden to trade with foreign vessels, particularly English and French interlopers. Eguino submitted fourteen questions that he wished to be asked of six prominent citizens from the locality. Although Geronimó Leitón was a military man, none of the witnesses had a military background but had observed the encounter from the shore. They consisted of local officials, plantation owners, and prominent locals.[803] Francisco de Cuéllar and Juan Quintero were present to witness the proceedings, but they did

[799] AGI Escribanía 1069B, unfoliated, testimony of Captain Cuéllar.

[800] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XVIII: Yten si saven que el dicho Francisco de Cuéllar a sido siempre desfavorecido y a tenido falta de amigos porque como el dicho contador Eguino hera en esta sazón cabo de las dichas tres naos todos le obedecían ansi capitanes como la demás gente de mar y guerra y en las ynformaciones que hizo contra el dicho capitán Francisco de Cuéllar y era parte y juez y buscaba el mismo por su persona los testigos apremiando a muchos dellos para que jurase contra el dicho capitán [...]y si an oydo dezir que el dicho contador examinó muchos testigos y les dezía lo que abían de dezir en su favor y contra el dicho capitán Cuéllar y ansi pudo probar contra él todo lo que quiso y fue su boluntad'; Question XIX: 'Yten si saven que el dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar a recebido muchos agravios por causa del dicho contador [Eguino] que como poderoso y superior en esta dicha ocasion le a echo...'

[801] AGI Patronato 266, R.45, Andrés de Eguino,contador:encuentro con el corsario inglés, 1583.

[802] Taylor, *The Troublesome Voyage*, pp. 263-65.

[803] AGI, Patronato 266, R.45, Andrés de Eguino,contador:encuentro con el corsario inglés, 1583.

not make statements. Indeed, none of the crews involved in the encounter were called to testify. Questions asked of respondents concerned the threat posed by the English, the conduct of Eguino and Leitón, if Cuéllar's ship had deliberately sheltered behind Eguino's flagship, and if they believed the outcome could have been avoided had Captain Cuéllar complied with the orders he had been given?

The heavily armed English galleons were a cause of comment. Witnesses admitted anxiety at their presence in the harbour. Their responses exonerated the actions of both Eguino and Leitón. They agreed that Leitón had done all in his power (without provoking hostilities) to prevent the English taking possession of the port, and that Andrés de Eguino had shown resolve in the fighting. They were more circumspect concerning Cuéllar and the role of the *Concepción*. Most were unable to offer a definite opinion when asked: 'If they know, believe and are certain that had the said ship, *Concepción*, helped that night against the enemy according to the orders given to Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, the ship *Begoña* would not have been lost, nor the English escape'?[804] Instead, they demurred by stating that they had 'heard it said what was contained in the question ('digo que este testigo a oydo dezir lo contenido en esta pregunta'). Leitón, however, submitted a lengthy statement explaining his view of the sequence of events in the port. He offered a more definitive opinion of what had transpired: 'y es cierto que si la noche pasada diera fondo donde la abía de dar y ayudar a al dicho Andrés de Eguino ny la dicha nao *Begoña* se perdiera ny el galeón ynglés capitana se fuera.'[805] The findings inferred that Captain Cuéllar was culpable for the loss of the *Begoña*. Nonetheless, it was apparent that Cuéllar provided a convenient scapegoat for the two senior officials (Eguino and Leitón) to deflect attention away from their conduct in the affair.

When Diego Flores arrived at San Vicente in April, he required an explanation for the incident. Cuéllar was released from confinement and transferred to the flagship, *San Juan Bautista*, where he remained until the fleet returned to Spain. Although Eguino could present the transcript of the inquiry chaired by Leitón, Cuéllar's protests prompted another inquest, this time chaired by Flores. This took place in the latter part of the year at Salvador. Records of the proceedings have not surfaced but information later submitted at Seville indicates that Cuéllar called on witnesses from among the crews that had participated in the action to testify on his behalf. Flores declined to offer a verdict but, instead referred the case for consideration to the Council of the Indies in Madrid, when the fleet should return

[804] AGI Patronato 266, R.45. 'Yten, si sauen creen y tienen por cierto que si la dicha nao *Conceción* ayudara contra el enemigo aquella noche conforme a la orden que se avía dado al capitán de ella, Francisco de Cuéllar, no se perdiera la nao *Begonia* ny se fuera el ynglés.'

[805] AGI Patronato 266, R.45, Gerónimo Leitón, 'He was certain that 'if it [the *Concepción*] had anchored that night where she should have done, and helped the aforesaid Andrés Eguino, the *Begoña* would not have been lost and the English flagship would not have got away.'

to Spain.[806] However, some credence was given to Cuéllar's accusations as Eguino was also put into custody.

Flores' reluctance to adjudicate appears to have been a personal trait. Three years earlier, while in command of the home-bound Tierra Firme-New Spain flotas, he was requested by the commander of the New Spain flota (Juan de Velasco) to offer a verdict on a case that had arisen aboard his flagship. Crew members who had enlisted at San Juan de Ulloa for the return journey to Spain (heedless of the fact that they were English), had attempted to abscond in the ship's boat as the convoy approached the Azores. They had hoped to find a ship at Terceira that would take them to England. Velasco considered hanging them, but when asked for his opinion, Flores preferred to leave the adjudication to the court of the Casa de Contratación in Seville once they reached Spain.[807] It would seem that he applied the same logic at Salvador.

When they returned to Spain in July 1584, Cuéllar and Eguino prepared statements for the Council of the Indies at once. They drafted petitions in Flores' presence the day after the fleet docked in the Bay of Cádiz, which displayed their mutual antagonism. Cuéllar refuted Eguino's accusations:

> el qual me acusava [Eguino] e ynputaba diziendo que yo [Cuéllar] deserbí a su Magestad e otras palabras feas e ynominios al todo lo qual niego y le tengo probado muy al contrario y ser él quien dessirvió a su Magestad y contra quien resulta mucha culpa por muchas causas como mas largamente le consta a Vuestra Senoría por el dicho pleito.[808]

On the other hand, Eguino defended his arrest of Cuéllar and was angry that Flores had not prosecuted him. Furthermore, he was exasperated that he, too, had then been arrested by Flores:

> como del dicho proceso consta yo [Eguino] servía su Magestad como soy obligado y el dicho capitán [Cuéllar] aber cometido muchos y atroces delitos por los quales y por el libelo ynfamatorio que me puso debiendo Vuestra Senoría aver él castigado exemplarmente, no lo a echo antes le dexa e permite andar libre de la prisión en que

[806] AGI Escribanía 1069B, 'el qual dicho proceso la determinación del dicho general Diego Flores la a remitido al real Consejo de las Yndias.'
[807] Hakluyt, R. *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English* Nation, vol. IX, London, 1904, p. 462.
[808] AGI Escribanía, 1069B, 'Accusations and imputations [of Eguino] in saying that I [Cuéllar] had failed in my duty to his majesty and other ignominious and offensive words, all of which I refute and have proved to the contrary, and that it was he [Eguino] who failed in his duty to his Majesty, and to whom much blame is due for many reasons, as he demonstrates at length to Your Lordship in the said lawsuit.'

yo tan justamente le tenía y a mi mandado me prender de echo y contra derecho tan ynjustamente mayormente no siendo ya juez.[809]

He further requested the arrest of two other officials from the *Concepción*, Arturio de Bilbao (ship's master) and Tomás de Bareño (bosun) for crimes he alleged they committed on the night of the engagement with the English. It was perhaps, an indication that Cuéllar's was not the only dissenting voice against Eguino's version of events. Each party requested that costs be awarded to them. In Cuéllar's case he demanded 1,500 ducats.

However, before the lawsuit was taken to Madrid, Cuéllar applied to the Casa de Contratación at Seville to be allowed to present evidence in the matter. This appears to have been a move to ensure that his evidence would receive a fair hearing, as he feared manipulation of the process by Eguino and his associates. If Cuéllar's evidence was accepted by the court of the *Casa*, it would become a matter of public record, and could bolster his position when the case was heard before the council. Eguino objected to this on the grounds that the *Casa* had no jurisdiction in the affair, as the case had already been referred to Madrid. The *Casa* functioned under the auspices of the Council of the Indies, but all courts jealously guarded their own jurisdictions and status in hearing cases,[810] and it would appear that Cuéllar, or whoever was advising him, was aware of this. The objection was not upheld, and Cuéllar was allowed to present his evidence.

In general, the legal system was laborious and slow. However, lawsuits arising from disputes on the Carrera de Indias could be resolved with surprising rapidity. Judges of the *Casa* tended to react promptly when cases were brought before them involving contract disputes, particularly non-payment of salaries to ordinary seamen on merchant vessels. Pérez-Mallaína has highlighted instances in which *Casa* tribunals led to incarceration of ships' masters within a matter of days if they failed to honour contracts to employees.[811] As we saw in Chapter Three, the Crown was less judicious in settling the claims of crews from the armadas. But when Cuéllar brought his case to the Casa, he was given a prompt hearing. Proceedings commenced on 11 August, just over three weeks after the fleet returned to Spain. However, attempts by the court to obtain documentation contained in the fleet's official papers pertaining to the case were met with obstruction. Chief notary of the fleet, Pedro de Rada, was responsible for the papers. But he claimed they were in

[809] AGI Escribanía 1069B, 'As the said suit [inquest at San Vicente] states I served his majesty as I was obliged/beholden and the said captain having committed many appalling crimes for which, and for the defamatory libel that he put on me, Your Lordship [Flores] should have punished him exemplarily. It wasn't done, rather he was left and permitted to walk freely from the prison in which I had justly placed him, and in fact, my arrest was unlawfully and unjustly ordered there being no judge.'

[810] Thompson, *War and Government*, pp. 45-46.

[811] Peréz-Mallaína, P.E., *Spain's Men of the Sea*, p. 201.

the possession of Diego Flores. Despite a magistrate's writ that threatened incarceration should Rada fail to produce the required documentation, the court only succeeded in acquiring the petitions of the protagonists, witnessed by Flores in Cádiz Bay, which confirmed the case had been referred to Madrid. When these were examined the *Casa* judges relented. They instructed Rada to ensure the papers were kept secure for their transfer to Madrid. He was to submit them to the Council of the Indies within fifteen days, and to present certification of having done so to the *Casa* within a further fifteen days, or incur a fine of one hundred ducats. The wrangle illustrates the kind of tensions that prevailed elsewhere between military hierarchies and civilian courts.

Whilst the quarrel over case documentation continued, the task of collecting testimony had already begun. Cuéllar formulated twenty questions to be asked of witnesses. However, there was a marked difference in the substance of his questions, from those presented by Eguino at first tribunal. Eguino had focused on the threat posed by the English and the efficacy of preventing their seizure of the Brazilian port. But Cuéllar concentrated on the sequence of events between the arrival of the Spaniards at San Vicente, and their withdrawal upriver to Santos on the following afternoon. He posed more questions about the affair and was much more specific in how they were framed. This resulted in clear and more substantive testimony about what had transpired. Not surprisingly, many of the witness statements reflected poorly on Eguino's conduct (Cuéllar's intention), and by the same token, offered a robust defence of Cuéllar's behaviour. Furthermore, they were all crew members that had served on each of the ships involved in the action. The first deponent, Captain Alonso de las Alas, was questioned before notary Juan Sánchez de Frías, and a judge of the *Casa,* Licentiate Vanegas on 11 August. His testimony proved somewhat ambivalent. Regarding what had transpired he resorted to a well-known maxim of seafarers to mitigate the confusion that reigned at the outset of the clash by explaining that 'the affairs of the sea were never certain': 'por ser las cosas de la mar ynciertas.'[812] Indeed, he needed only hark back to his own experiences six years earlier when he became embroiled in a controversy of his own having been arrested and prosecuted for attacking and looting a Spanish merchantman, ostensibly in the belief that it was a corsair.[813] Over the course of the next fortnight sixteen others provided testimony. Not all attended willingly. Court orders were issued to summon three reluctant mariners to appear. But only one could be found, Clemente de Herrera y Rojas, who was the final witness. His testimony was presented on 25 August.

[812] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question III, testimony of Captain Estevan de las Alas.
[813] Pérez-Mallaína, P.E., *El hombre frente al mar: Naufragos en la carrera de Indias durante los siglos XVI y XVII*, Seville, 1996, p. 128.

As might be anticipated, there was a general agreement as to Cuéllar's behaviour during the affair (the witnesses were, after all, appearing on his behalf). All stated his desire to engage the enemy, the readiness of his ship for combat, and his encouragement of the crew with offerings of money and clothes for those who excelled in the fighting.[814] They described how, on two occasions how he requested permission to engage in boarding actions which were denied by Eguino.[815] Opinions on weather conditions in the harbour, and how they affected the manoeuvrability of the Spanish ships on the night of the assault, indicated that blame could not be laid on either party for the difficulties they encountered when attempting to close with the English. The outgoing tide, the strength of the current from the river, and the lack of wind, made the two larger Spanish ships unmanageable, and rendered it impossible for teams of rowers in the ships' boats to tow them into position, particularly after they came under fire from the English ships.[816]

On the other hand, Eguino's decision-making was questioned. Concerning his decision to drop anchor on arrival in the harbour, witnesses agreed that there had been ideal opportunity to capture the English galleons with relative ease.[817]

[814] AGI Escribanía 1069, Question V, 'Yten, si saven que pues el dicho contador no quiso abordar lo dexara hazer del Capitán Cuéllar, y no le mandara dar fondo como se lo mandó muchas veces, llegara con la nao nombrada *Nuestra Señora de la Concepción*, que traya a su cargo, con buena determinación y apercibo [apercibimiento], puesta la dicha su nao en arma cargada toda la artillería con balas, y los soldados, e toda la demás gente de guerra con sus armas prestas y puestos en sus lugares donde cada uno avía de pelear.'; Question IX, testimony of Juan Gudial, 'De la novena pregunta dixo que save y bio este testigo, que la propia noche que se yba de acuerdo a enbestir a el dicho enemigo, el dicho Capitán Cuéllar yba animando su gente e prometiéndoles un bestido de terciopelo que tenía a el primero que entrasen en nabío del enemigo.'; Question IX, testimony of Alonso Moreno,' el dicho Capitán Cuéllar yba apercibiendo su gente y dándoles buenas esperenças ofreciéndoles un bestido de terciopelo que tenía y cinquenta escudos a el primero que entrase en la nao del dicho enemigo.'

[815] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIV, '[...] y si saven y es notorio que en esta buena coyuntura el dicho Capitán Cuéllar dixo e rrequiró a el dicho contador llamándole muchas beces a boces que todos lo entendieron para que se fuese a abordar y tomar la dicha capitana ynglesa diziéndole a[l] senor contador 'aora es tiempo que bamos a abordar este enemigo que esta rendido y no se nos puede yr' y si saven que le rrespondieron con mucha tibieça como haziendo burla y si entienden que si el dicho contador se llegara en esta tercera ocasión a el dicho enemigo u lo dexara hazer a el dicho Capitán Cuéllar fuera tomada la dicha capitana ynglesa con mucha facilidad por estar tan maltratada y arruynada como en esta sazón se bio.'

[816] Ibid., Question X, testimony of Captain Estevan de las Alas, 'De la décima pregunta dixo que lo que save de esta pregunta, es que yendo a el dicho contador Andrés de Eguino delante con su nao capitana para hazer lo que se abía acordado, y enbestir al enemigo aviendo llegado muy cerca de la nao capitana ynglesa con quien abía de abordar, no lo hizo, porque le faltó el biento y la mar comencó a baciar con mucha corriente, e por esta causa tornó segunda vez a dar fondo, junto a el dicho ynglés'; Question X, testimony of Juan Gudial, 'y llegando cerca del enemigo dio fondo y entiende este testigo que lo hizo por no poder pasar adelante por la mucha corriente.'

[817] Ibid., Question III, 'Yten, si saven que quando entró el dicho Andrés de Eguino en el dicho puerto con las dichas tres naos pudo llegar derecho sin parar a enbestir a el dicho enemigo por entrar como entró en el dicho puerto con biento fresco.'; Question IV, 'Yten, si saven como es verdad que si el dicho Andrés de Eguino no diera fondo ni perdiera tan buena coyuntura como tubo a el entrar del dicho puerto hiziera lo que era obligado a el servicio de su Magestad y tomara los dichos galeones yngleses sin ninguna duda atento que las dichas tres naos de la harmada heran muy poderosas y

Precisely why there was five-hour interval between the discovery of the English ships in the harbour and the onset of the attack was not addressed. Secondly, of Eguino's refusal to close with the English galleon that was in difficulty, witnesses claimed that it could have been captured had a boarding action been sanctioned.[818] Eguino believed the extent of damage to his ships, and low water levels in the harbour made it too hazardous to approach the stricken ship. At this time the tide was low and had just begun to rise.[819] The most contentious decision, however, was the order to withdraw to Santos, leaving the enemy unopposed in the harbour. It was unanimously criticized as a bad decision. Some claimed it caused disquiet among the crews, and among townspeople in San Vicente who had watched the events unfold from the shore.[820] There were suggestions that Eguino was unduly influenced by the master and pilot of his ship, that their reluctance to engage with the English swayed his cautious demeanour. Some alleged that afterwards, Eguino blamed them for the failure of his own ship to close with the English, denouncing them as 'traitors and degenerates without honour': 'llamandoles de traydores y de malos hombres que le avían quitado su onra.'[821]

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benían bien artilladas y pertrechadas de muchas municiones e gente de mar y guerra, y si saven que en perder tan buena ocasión como ubo de prima ynstancia desirbió el dicho contador a su Magestad y se dexo de tomar el enemigo?'

[818] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Questions XIV: 'Yten, si saven que a el tiempo que el dicho enemigo Se yba huyendo a la mar se quedo la dicha su capitana ladeada y ligada muy a la banda parecía estar en seco muy cerca de las dichas naos del contador y frontero dellas muy maltratada [...] y si saven y es notorio que en esta buena coyuntura el dicho Capitán Cuéllar dixo e rrequiro a el dicho contador llamandole muchas beces a boces que todos lo entendieron para que se fuese a abordar y tomar la dicha capitana ynglesa diziendole a[l] señor contador 'aora es tiempo que bamos a abordar este enemigo que esta rrendido y no se nos puede yr.'; Question XV: 'Yten, si saven que en lugar de yr a el dicho contador a abordar y pelear con el dicho enemigo y tomarle la dicha su capitana y enbiandole el governador del dicho puerto a ofrecer socorro de canoas y gente de guerra para el efeto no lo quiso hazer antes ynbio a pedir a el dicho gobernador que le ynbiase pilotos del dicho puerto para ausentarse con las dichas naos de armada.'

[819] Ibid. Testimony of Cristóbal de Muro (Q. XIV): 'y bio que entonces el dicho Capitán Cuéllar dixo a el dicho contador Andrés de Eguino que aquella hera muy buena ocasión y tiempo para hir a tomar aquella nao y aborda esa porque no podía jugar la artillería y el dicho contador rrespondio tibiamente que ya no le parecía ser tiempo para hir a lo susodicho por estar las naos abiertas y ansi biendo el dicho ynglés que no le fueron a abordar.'; Pedro de Espinosa (Q.VII): 'e por ser el tiempo contrario y el agua que a benia abaciando torno a surgir y lo propio hizieron las otras dos naos de su compania por no perderse.'

[820] Ibid., Question XVII: 'Yten, si saven que a toda la gente ansi de la armada como a la del dicho puerto les parecio mal y muy feo el ausentarse a el dicho contador y dar lugar al enmigo para que se quedase en el y a derecase e rreparase los dichos sus galeones sin contradicion ninguna.'

[821] Ibid., Question VIII, testimony of Juan Rodríguez de Aguilera, 'tiene declarado en la pregunta a este testigo oyo dezir a el piloto de la dicha nao del dicho Andrés de Guino a Pedro Texón Osorio escrivano rreal y a otras personas que el dicho contador se quexava de al maestre e piloto del dicho su navío y de otras personas por que le abían aconsejado que no abordasen con las naos del enemigo.'; Question VIII, testimony of Juan de Esquivel, 'y que este testigo oyo dezir otro día siguiente a caba laga maestre y a otras personas que el dicho contador se abía quexado del y de Martín de goçueta, maestre de la dicha nao capitana, llamandoles de traydores y de malos hombres que le avían quitado su onra y quellos avían sido causa de que no se tomara el dicho yngles.'; Question VIII, testimony of Alonso Moreno, 'y que este testigo oyo dezir que el dicho contador

The bosun on the *Concepción* claimed that Eguino's ship, the *San Juan*, was not ready for combat on arrival at San Vicente, which influenced his reluctance to immediately engage. The men were not armed and the powder for the cannons had not been distributed. It appears that the ship had problems with stability in the heavy seas of the south Atlantic, as the ship's two heaviest cannon, which should have been positioned in the prow, had been placed in the hold to serve as ballast.[822] He intimated that these guns were not re-positioned prior to the engagement. The Spanish posture in naval combat during the period encouraged warships to concentrate their heavy artillery at the front of the ship. The broadside, as used by the English, was not encouraged as it was believed that it exposed a greater part of the ship to enemy cannon. Consequently, the preferred tactic for ships in combat was a straight or crescent line abreast, where all ships in a fleet could deploy their artillery without being impeded.[823] If Spanish warships sought to fight 'head on' with an enemy, then Cuéllar, through his witness, clearly sought to cast aspersions on Eguino by implying that he had lost the opportunity to capture the English at the outset because he could not deploy his ship's main armament.

Much more damning however, were allegations against Eguino's behaviour towards Cuéllar after he had placed him under arrest. Cuéllar claimed that until he was released from confinement by Diego Flores, he and Juan Quintero were forced to endure treatment that was unduly harsh. A soldier on the *Concepción*, Francisco Alonso, alleged that Eguino deliberately withheld food rations from them.[824] Cuéllar claimed such were the harsh conditions imposed by Eguino that Quintero died shortly after the hearing at San Vicente, and that Eguino was attempting to orchestrate his death as well.[825] Witnesses further testified that before the tribunal at Salvador, Eguino took various measures to manipulate the process in his favour. Accusations surfaced that intimidation, bribery of witnesses, and fabrication of evidence had taken place.[826] One respondent was bullied by Eguino into providing

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Andrés de Eguino se quexava de su piloto e maestre e de otras personas diziendo que le avían quitado su onra, e esto responde a la pregunta.'

[822] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question IV, testimony of Tomás de Bareño, 'e oyo a lo dizen en esta ciudad que el dicho contador Andrés de Guino les babalas dos piecas de la mura alastre y la gente sin dales poluora ni mecha ni balas y que para este efeto abía dado fondo.'

[823] Parker, *Grand Strategy*, p. 257.

[824] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIX, testimony of Francisco Alonso: 'y lo prendio [Capitán Cuéllar] e tubo preso en la misma nao y le mandaba que no saliese della so graves penas y le quito los moços de su serbicio y aun no se le dava tan enteramente la rración como se le avía de dar y le hazía otras bejaciones de que este testigo no se acuerda.'

[825] AGI Escribanía 1069B, deposition of Captain Cuéllar, 'y particularmente prendió a Juan Quintero, piloto de la dicha mi nao, que por los malos tratamientos de la prisión en que fue puesto murió dentro de tres dias después de metido en ella, y por muchos días procuro hacerme padecer de muerte.'

[826] Ibid., Question XVIII, 'Yten si saven que el dicho Francisco de Cuéllar a sido siempre desfavorecido y a tenido falta de amigos por que como el dicho contador Eguino hera en esta sazón cabo de las dichas tres naos todos le obedecían ansi capitanes como la demás gente de mar y guerra y en las

false testimony. Another admitted that his testimony in support of Eguino had actually been dictated by him, while he threatened others that he would remove their teeth should they testify against him.[827] All of the witnesses identified the chief clerk of the fleet, Pedro Texón Osorio as a friend and implicit ally of Eguino. It was he who compiled witness statements. He was accused of fabricating testimony, and of doing so in the knowledge that that some of the men could neither read nor write.[828] Although the principal legal argument in the case had revolved around conduct during the encounter with the English, and culpability for the outcome, the judges of the *Casa* were presented with a catalogue of abuses that questioned his character as an officer. In his own deposition, Cuéllar requested that Eguino be condemned in the most exemplary fashion under military law and demanded 1,500 ducats in compensation and costs:

> condene al dicho Andrés de Eguino en las penas establecidas por derecho y rigor de la diciplina militar contra los que en casos tan graves dessirven a su rey y Señor y

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ynformaciones que hizo contra el dicho Capitán Cuéllar hera parte e juez y buscaba el mismo por su persona los testigos apremiando a muchos dellos para que jurasen contra el dicho capitán y si saven quel escrivano de la dicha causa hera muy amigo del dicho contador y el dicho escrivano se xactava dello en todas las partes que se allava si an oydo dezir que el dicho contador examinó muchos testigos y les dezía lo que abían de dezir en su favor y contra el dicho Capitán Cuéllar y ansí pudo probar contra todo lo que quiso y fue su boluntad.'

[827] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XVIII, testimony of Juan Rodríguez de Aguilera: '[...] porque no osaba nadie favorecelle [Capitán Cuéllar] por lansa del dicho contador y que en las ynformaciones que el dicho contador hizo contra el dicho Capitán Cuéllar él buscaba los testigos y los ablaba y que este testigo bio que a un mançebo que se llama Ribera que bino por alférez de la nao almiranta le llebaba a dezir susodicho contra el dicho Capitán Cuéllar que porque dezía que no sabía nada yba enojado con él y lo llebaba por fuerça y que save que el escrivano ante quien se hazía la dicha ynformación hera muy amigo del dicho contador Andrés de Eguino.'; Question XVIII, testimony of Francisco Alonso, 'y ansimismo save por cosa cierta e notoria que el escrivano ante quien se hazían las dichas ynformaciones que se llamaba Fulano Texón hera muy amigo del dicho contador y el dicho escrivano se xactava de ello e oyo dezir publicamente que el dicho contador por su persona examinó en presencia del dicho escrivano algunos de los testigos y que los apremiaba y amedrentaba mediante lo qual entiende este testigo y tiene para que el dicho contador Andrés de Guino probaría y aberiguarya contra el dicho Capitán Cuéllar todo lo que quisiese y fuese su voluntad respeto de ser cabeça de toda la gente y que todos le obedecían y hazían lo que les mandava y esto responde de la pregunta.'; Question XVIII, testimony of Cristóbal de Muro: 'y el dicho contador estando en el puerto de los Santos le oyo dezir este testigo amenaçando a algunos soldados que avían dicho sus dichos en favor del dicho Capitán Cuéllar que le abía de hazer quitar los dientes jurando contra el dicho contador falsamente y ansí el dicho Capitán Cuéllar no podía allar testigos que quisiesen dezir sus dichos en esta negocio y esto rresponde a esta pregunta e no otra cosa della.'

[828] Ibid., Question XVIII, testimony of Juan de Esquivel. 'De las diez y ocho preguntas dixo que este testigo oyo dezir a muchos soldados que abían dicho susodichos contra el dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar en especial a Xpoval [Cristóbal] de Cuevas y a otros que no se acuerda de sus nombres que no abían dicho algunas cosas de lo que están a escrito en sus dichos por que ellos no savían escribir ni leer y que el dicho escrivano lo pondría por ser amigo del dicho contador y que esto responde a la pregunta.'

> cometen tan atroces delitos y en los daños que se me an rrecrecido que son de más de mill y quinientos ducados sobre lo qual pido justicia y costas.[829]

Early the following year Cuéllar submitted a memorial to the Council of War seeking arrears of wages, claiming to have spent one thousand ducats of his own resources in supporting himself during his time in Brazil. The claim for damages may have been an opportunistic attempt at recouping personal funds, given that his wages had been suspended following his arrest (by Eguino who was also fleet accountant).

Case documentation was forwarded to Madrid and, by order of the *Casa*, Cuéllar was placed under the custody of a constable (Gerónimo de Maldonado), who was to convey him to Madrid to appear before the Council of the Indies. Maldonado was obliged to provide official confirmation of Cuéllar's hearing. Failing this, he was liable for any potential fines awarded against Cuéllar.[830] No definitive ruling in the case has come to light, so we do not know for sure what transpired at the council hearing. But, it appears from a letter written by Eguino to the King in mid-October, that Cuéllar had appeared before the council by then, probably in September. Eguino requested a licence to attend court so that he could present his argument to the King:

> Y a supplicar a Vuestra Magestad mandase ver el proceso que cause contra el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar sobre la ocasion [que] en el puerto de Santos y San Vicente del Brasil se me ofreció con dos galeones yngleses para que Vuestra Magestad entienda mi verdad y justicia porque con siniestra relación no la quieran escurecer – an me la negado por la razón que a Vuestra Magestad escriven.[831]

The refusal of *Casa* officials to grant him a licence to attend court is a clear sign of their disfavour; Perhaps resentful of Eguino's objections to their jurisdiction in the case, or because of the nature of the testimony against him. But his anxiety to appear before the council would also suggest that Cuéllar may have received a favourable hearing. Neither party appears to have been sanctioned in the matter.

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[829] AGI Escribanía 1069B, depostion of Captain Cuéllar, 'Condemn Andrés de Eguino to the established punishment by law and the rigor of military discipline as against those in serious cases who fail their king and lord and commit such atrocious crimes, and for the damages I received, which are more than one thousand five hundred ducats, for which I beseech justice and costs.'

[830] AGI Escribanía 1069B, '[...] mandaban e mandaron que el dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar se a entregado por preso a Gerónimo Maldonado para que dentro de treinta dias lo lleve e presente por tal en el rreal Consejo de las yndias, y dentro de otros quince dias y ubil [ubiese] testimonio de aberle presentado, obligándose de ansy lo cumplir, e no lo haziendo pagará lo jusgado e sentenciado contra el dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar con más mill ducados.'

[831] AGI Indiferente General 1097, Andrés de Eguino to Philip II, 14 October 1584. 'Your Majesty to order the case [that I brought] against Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, concerning the incident [with two English galleons that occurred] in the port of San Vicente and Santos in Brazil, to be reviewed, so that Your Majesty may understand how truth and justice lie with me, and so that no attempt may be made, through malicious report, to obscure that truth, which they have denied to me for the reason they write to you about], [but which] because of the sinister report [of Captain Cuéllar] they they have refused me [a license to come to court].

On the basis of the competing testimonies, the reaction of royal officials, and Eguino's letter to the king, it seems that Cuéllar's testimony was vindicated, and that he was exonerated.

Internal Conflict: Abuse of Power

Eguino's treatment of Cuéllar may have been ruthless, but arbitrary punishment of subordinates was not uncommon. Some officers were notorious for such behaviour. Lorraine White found that 'a culture of violence permeated military society both on and off the battlefield. At times the violence shown by a soldier to the enemy was directed with equal vehemence towards his companions in arms.'[832] The Army of Flanders was noted for a propensity among officers to inflict informal punishments: casual blows and beatings, without formal charges being brought. Tallet, for instance, cites negotiations between mutineers and the authorities in 1574 during which the mutineers requested that henceforth no man should be given corporal punishment without due trial.[833] Pérez-Mallaína has cited similar examples of arbitrary beatings of crewmen at sea.[834] A colleague of Cuéllar, Captain Juan de Peña Garay, who commanded a galleon during their 1602 voyage, was stripped of his captaincy for flagrant abuse of subordinates.

In this case, water supplies on Garay's vessel, the *San Mateo*, had become exhausted during the latter stages of the return leg to Spain. This was brought to the attention of Don Luis de Córdoba during a council on the flagship, and he duly arranged for surplus containers (*botijas peruleras*) to transfer from his and other vessels to remedy the situation. However, as the supplies were brought aboard, some crew members on the *San Mateo* seemingly sought to access the water barrels to quench their thirst. On doing so they were allegedly set upon by Garay and two subordinates (an *alférez* and sergeant) who threatened to kill them while striking them with the flats of their swords.[835] The crew may have stepped out of line in order to obtain the water, but according to witnesses, the severity of the attack was unwarranted. It was said that the sailors were beaten to such an extent that they were forced to defend themselves.[836] The uproar that resulted on deck was such that Don Juan Maldonado, the departing governor of Havana who was on board as a passenger, was called from his cabin to intervene. Although order was restored, the actions of Garay and his subordinates caused deep resentment among

[832] White, L., 'The Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers: Combat, Welfare and Violence', in *War and Society*, January 2002, Vol. 9, no. 1, p. 33.
[833] Tallett, *War and Society*, p. 126.
[834] Pérez Mallaína, *Spain's Men of the Sea*, pp. 191-221.
[835] AGI Indiferente General 1118, Testimonies of Captains Juan Martínez de Irureta and Bernardo de Paz, Juan Bautista de la Rentería (Maestre de Plata), Martín de Berrasolta (ship's master). 'les avían dado de cintarazos a algunos marineros.'
[836] Ibid., 'y trataron los tan mal que los avían obligado a defenderse.'

the crew. Once Córdoba was informed of what had transpired he issued a written order to transfer command of the *San Mateo* to Maldonado.

Remarkably, Garay refused to comply, claiming he had received his patent from his majesty the King, implying that Córdoba did not have the authority to dismiss him. Further he demanded one thousand five hundred ducats from Maldonado for having accommodated him in the ship's main cabin.[837] It was rank insubordination by Garay which only compounded his earlier transgressions. Nothing further transpired from the confrontation during the remainder of the voyage, but when the fleet reached Spain, Córdoba had the fleet Auditor-General, Don Gerónimo de Soto, convene a tribunal to investigate the matter. Four officials of the *San Mateo* were called as witnesses and all concurred as to what had transpired. Transcripts of the proceedings were sent to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, to whom Córdoba deferred in his capacity as *Capitán-General del Mar Océano y Andalucía*, and to the King. It was left to the King to decide what punishment was warranted by Garay's behaviour. However, Garay was still in charge of his company in February the following year when the troops were mustered prior to the 1603 voyage. But when Medina Sidonia disbanded some of the companies in order to redistribute their soldiers, Garay, along with Captain Cuéllar, was among the captains dismissed from service.

As was apparent in the vindictive behaviour of Andrés de Eguino towards Cuéllar, officers too, could suffer abuse at the hands of superiors. This was the experience of Captain Gutiérrez de Solís, who had served numerous years in the Indies Guard, and like Cuéllar, had been awarded a commission to serve in the Armada de Magallanes. However, he claimed he was prevented from participating in that expedition, because of the malevolence of his former commanding officer, Don Cristóbal de Eraso. It will be remembered that Solís had been a whistle-blower against Eraso's illegal activities in the Caribbean. In 1581, Solís had been assigned to the *María de Jesús* for the voyage to the Strait of Magellan. However when the fleet was scattered in a storm shortly after departure, his ship lost its main mast and ran aground on the Arenas Gordas, west of Cádiz. Although damaged, the ship was still salvageable, and having solicited help from locals, Solís succeeded in re-floating the vessel, and brought it into port without further loss of crew or contents.

However, by the time the fleet re-embarked once more in December, Solís was in prison. He and seven of his soldiers had been arrested on the orders of the president of the Casa de Contratación, Doctor Santillan, ostensibly for having abandoned his ship and royal treasure that it contained, and was lodged in the jail in Seville pending a sentence of ten years in the galleys. Solis appealed to the King

[837] Maldonado and his entourage had been accommodated on the *San Mateo* at Havana by Córdoba, who claimed he had no room for them on his flagship.

from jail in January 1582, claiming that he had been wrongfully arrested: that Santillan had been acting on the instructions of Don Cristóbal de Eraso, who was his relative. Eraso had powerful connections within the administration. He was related to Antonio de Eraso, secretary of the Council of the Indies. Solis believed that Eraso was seeking revenge for the accusations he had brought against him. He claimed Santillán was harassing him and obstructing his petitions to the *Casa*. Solis beseeched clemency from the King for his own sake and seven other soldiers jailed with him; all veterans, each with more than a decade of service.[838]

A rejoinder from Santillán was sent to the King that claimed Captain Solís and his subordinates had committed 'muchos excessos e ynsolencias y robos'. He admitted to prosecuting Solís on the allegations of one Martín de Lora (a retainer of Don Cristóbal de Eraso).[839] Lora asserted that Solís was negligent in abandoning his ship, which had prompted Santillán to arrest and prosecute him. Solís' allegations of partisanship by Santillán were probably genuine, and could be applied to Martín de Lora as well. A resolution in the case did not surface but Santillán held the legal imperative and it is most likely that Solís was compelled to serve his sentence. Eraso, it would appear, had the last laugh.

Exemplary Punishment: Court-Martial in the North Sea

Of all the transgressions for which a soldier might be sanctioned, those that drew the most rigorous punishment usually occurred on campaign. Cowardice or dereliction of duty in combat, when the risk to control of territory or the integrity of a military force was greatest, more often than not resulted in a death sentence. Pedro Vique de Manrique's failure to prevent the sack of Cartagena by Francis Drake in 1586 led to his public execution in Seville. Cuéllar was lucky to emerge from the controversy with Eguino relatively unscathed. Yet remarkably, on the next time he experienced combat, in 1588, identical charges were brought against him in the aftermath of the Battle of Gravelines. Undoubtedly, the court-martial in the North Sea marked the lowest point in his career. It almost cost him his life.

On this occasion he was randomly selected out for summary punishment, along with another officer, by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, after a mass breach of discipline threatened to compromise his authority over the Armada. While the context on this occasion differed markedly from his earlier spat with Andrés de Eguino, there were similarities in the circumstances of his arrest. Ultimately, Cuéllar's galleon, the *San Pedro*, failed to comply with the Duke's order to resume its place in the battle formation when an English attack on the rearguard of the

[838] AGI Indiferente General 1096B, Captain Gutiérrez de Solís to Philip II, 24 January 1582.
[839] AGI Indiferente General 1096B, President and Judges of the Casa de Contratación to Philip II, 30 April 1582.

fleet seemed imminent two days after Gravelines. A number of eyewitness accounts of the court-martial survive, but frustratingly, there is a divergence of opinion about what actually transpired. Crucially, Medina Sidonia did not commit to writing his version of events. In a campaign diary he sent to the King he broke off from his report of the events of that day and merely inferred that something sinister had occurred. He described the apparent intention of the English fleet to engage the rearguard and how the flagship 'fired the signal of three guns at intervals, to order the rest of the Armada, which was under full sail, to shorten sail and stand by for the rearguard and flagship. What was done in these circumstances by our armada will be related by Don Baltasar de Zúñiga.'[840] As most, if not all of the official documentation pertaining to the case was kept on the *Lavia*, we can assume it was lost when the ship was wrecked in Ireland. Cuéllar's account of what took place remains the most detailed account available. Naturally, given his own partiality in the case it must be treated with caution. But, in conjunction with the other statements, it is possible to explore the circumstances of the case.

On 10 August, the Armada was in the North Sea. The failure to defeat the English fleet, or to rendezvous with Parma, had rocked morale. Geoffrey Parker has shown how, in the aftermath of the Battle of Gravelines, surrender to the English was considered.[841] Although in a council of war, Alonso de Leiva urged a return to the English Channel, he admitted privately to Juan Martínez de Recalde that he dreaded the prospect of facing the English fleet again.[842] The principal fighting ships had taken a pounding during the last engagement. Two ships had been lost, many had sustained substantial damage, and the whereabouts of two galleons (the *San Mateo* and *San Felipe*) were unknown. In danger of sinking they had been forced to run for the Flanders coast. Despite these losses however, the fleet was intact and it was imperative for Medina Sidonia that it remain so. Southerly winds were pushing the fleet northwards away from the proposed rendezvous with Parma, and would do so for a number of days. Therefore, Medina Sidonia believed the most prudent course to take was to return to Spain via the Atlantic. He justified this decision by declaring that the principal fighting ships no longer had sufficient ammunition for another major engagement.[843] Throughout the morning of 10 August the English appeared to hold off their pursuit. In the *Carta*, Cuéllar claimed they appeared content to give a wide berth to the rear elements of the Armada.[844] Regarding this as a favourable opportunity to carry out repairs, many ships moved to the front of

[840] Herrera Oria, 1929, p. 247.
[841] Parker, G., The Spanish Armada Almost Surrendered', in *Military History Quarterly*, 18(4) 2006, p. 86-92.
[842] Parker, G., 'Anatomy of Defeat', p. 321.
[843] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 393.
[844] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'se yba el armada del enemigo a nuestra cola hasta hecharnos de sus tierras y q[uan]do lo ubo hecho , se quedó del todo, que fue a diez del dicho [Agosto], y bisto que el enemigo se quedava, algunos nabíos de nuestra armada adereçaban y remendaban sus daños.'

the formation. Cuéllar claimed that the pilot of the *San Pedro*, seeing other vessels moving forward, brought his ship forward also 'by something like two miles' in order to work on the damage: 'un piloto mal hombre que yo traya, sin decirme nada, dio belas y salió delante de la capitana cosa de dos millas.'[845] It was the first opportunity to do so since Gravelines, and many vessels had suffered substantial damage that caused dangerous leaks, which affected their sailing capability. All were aware of the consequences of falling behind. However, many ships moved forward simultaneously, which diminished the rear-guard noticeably. According to Medina Sidonia, three galleasses and twelve principal fighting ships were all that remained in the rear.[846]

Sometime later, the English piled on sail, and closed once more in an apparent attempt to engage the Spanish rear-guard. In his campaign diary, Medina Sidonia stated: 'in the afternoon the violence of the wind abated, and the enemy came under full sail towards our rearguard.'[847] It was a tactic they had employed the previous day when the Armada was perilously close to running aground on the Zeeland sandbanks.[848] On that occasion, with the wind seemingly blowing the Armada to certain destruction, the English had maintained a safe distance. Now, it appeared they intended to press home their attack on the weakened rear-guard. As intimated by Medina Sidonia, warning shot issued from the flagship signalling the fleet to stand-to, and for fighting ships to resume their battle station. When there was no response, the signal was repeated, and then issued a third time when it became apparent that the order was being ignored. The English manoeuvre, however, was a feint, 'a brag countenance' as the English Lord High Admiral described it, and the threatened attack never materialised. The English ships fell back out of cannon range before an artillery exchange took place.

For Medina Sidonia on the flagship, the fact that so many ships had disobeyed his instruction was alarming. It represented a dangerous breach of discipline, which suggested disaffection towards his leadership. By then, differences of opinion had indeed led to serious divisions between various senior commanders. Medina Sidonia was an excellent administrator, and a courageous general, but he lacked experience of naval combat. Diego Flores, on whom he relied as senior naval advisor, had proven very cautious, and was unpopular throughout the fleet. His appointment had been made by order of the King, but it was a decision that was criticized.[849] When the Armada first entered the English Channel some squadron

[845] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 202-03, 'a pilot, a bad man who was with me, without telling me anything, put on sail and moved ahead of the flagship by something like two miles.'
[846] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 404.
[847] Ibid.
[848] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 403.
[849] Parker, *Grand Strategy*, p. 264.

commanders favoured aggressive tactics from the start. These were led by Recalde and Alonso Martínez de Leyva (commander-designate should Medina Sidonia fall). Medina Sidonia decided against a pre-emptive strike against Plymouth, when many senior officers believed an attack would be advantageous in order to trap the English fleet in port, before it could take to the sea. A number of other key decisions subsequently alienated squadron commanders from those on the flagship. Subordinates with greater naval experience such as Recalde, Oquendo and Bertendona, who felt they were being excluded from tactical decision-making, opposed the strategy (the King's), which they regarded as lacking initiative. Later in the week, Medina Sidonia chose not to attempt a landing on the Isle of Wight, but to anchor off Calais before joining forces with the Duke of Parma. In the opinion of some senior officers this decision doomed the Armada.[850] However, it was Diego Flores' advice to Medina Sidonia to abandon a damaged vessel (*Nuestra Señora del Rosario*) after the first day of combat that alienated many officers. When the *Rosario* fell behind Flores counselled the Duke not to risk the security of the fleet by waiting for it. The outcome caused widespread disquiet.

After the battle of Gravelines, many officers had little faith in the decision-making capacity on-board the flagship. Miguel de Oquendo encapsulated the disdain for Diego Flores when, with the fleet trapped between the English and the Zeeland sandbanks, his ship pulled alongside the flagship. In reply to Medina Sidonia's call for his estimation of their predicament, he retorted, 'Ask Diego Flores. As for me, I am going to fight, and die like a man. Send me a supply of shot.'[851] Private correspondence between Recalde and Alonso de Leyva reveals growing anxiety among the squadron commanders that they would be named culprits for the failure.[852] Some took the precaution of writing down personal accounts of the campaign, in order to defend themselves against accusations they feared could be directed towards them. Writing the *Carta* a year later, Cuéllar displayed some of this resentment by disparaging Medina Sidonia's generalship by referring sarcastically to 'the usual disastrous outcome of his [Medina Sidonia's] encounters with the enemy.'[853]

It was in such an atmosphere that the events of 10 August took place. Faced with a potentially catastrophic breakdown in discipline, Medina Sidonia ordered his officials to identify the offending captains.[854] Twenty officers were then summoned to the flagship, where an impromptu court-martial took place. He questioned two captains of vessels that had been closest to the *San Martín*, why they had not

[850] Parker, 'The Spanish Armada Almost Surrendered', pp. 89-90.
[851] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 446.
[852] Parker, Anatomy of Defeat, pp. 314-47.
[853] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'porque aun demás del ruin suceso que tubo siempre con el enemigo...'
[854] Fernández Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, II, p. 396.

reacted to his command when they heard the signal shots. In reply, they admitted they believed the flagship was about to go under and had fled for safety.[855] This sentiment was highlighted later in a special report commissioned by the King to investigate the conduct of the Armada. Its author, Juan de Cardona, noted that in the aftermath of Gravelines, discipline within the fleet had deteriorated significantly, as many thought only for their own safety, and of returning to Spain.[856] In order to stamp out disaffection, Medina Sidonia condemned the guilty officers to death. According to Alonso Vanegas, all twenty captains were to be executed.[857]

In the *Carta*, Cuéllar recollected that, having been summoned to the flagship, he had not yet arrived when Medina Sidonia delivered his verdict. He claimed that he was stopped *en route* and informed by others conveying the Duke's decision that he was to be put to death. Cuéllar proceeded to the *San Martín*, but when he arrived on deck Medina Sidonia had retired to his cabin, apparently distraught at receiving word of the fate of the *San Mateo* and *San Felipe*. He stated that while he appealed for clemency, the Duke's staff 'refused to listen to me or to many gentlemen who intervened on my behalf.'[858] It appeared that in his absence, Maestre de Campo, Francisco de Bobadilla, had taken control of affairs. With a dramatic flourish, Cuéllar described his reaction to the conviction, exclaiming 'pensé rebantar de coraje, diciendo que todos me fuesen testigos de tan gran sinrazón como me hacían, aviendo yo serbido tan bien como se bería por escrito.'[859] Essentially, Cuéllar lodged a formal appeal against the sentence.

While there was evident hostility towards Bobadilla in Cuéllar's account, it must be said that Bobadilla acted fairly and observed due process by referring his appeal to the Judge Advocate General, Martín de Aranda. Curiously, there is no mention in the account of Diego Flores' presence on the flagship at this time, even though he was senior naval adviser and well acquainted with Cuéllar. Unfortunately, the documentation concerned with San Vicente does not shed any light on the personal relationship between the pair. Given their previous history it is curious that Cuéllar did not refer to him. Perhaps Flores was one of 'the many gentlemen' who made representations on his behalf. Of course, at the time that Cuéllar wrote the *Carta*, Flores had been made the scapegoat for the failure of the Armada, and was imprisoned in Burgos. That he chose not to make any disparaging remarks about Flores, might indicate that he retained some esteem for him.

[855] Fernández Duro, La Armada Invencible, II, pp. 407-08.
[856] Herrera Oria, *La Armada Invencible*, pp. 351-55.
[857] Fernández Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, II, p. 396.
[858] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'No me quisieron oyr, ni a muchos caballeros que por mí intercedieron.'
[859] Ibid., p. 203, 'I thought I would burst with indignation, and called on all to witness the great injustice that was being done to me, since I had served so well, as would be confirmed in writing.'

Inquiry of the Judge Advocate

While we no longer have the official records of the tribunal, it is quite clear from the *Carta* that a formal judicial process was set in motion. As Judge Advocate, it was within Martin de Aranda's remit to investigate the case. He had been assigned to the *Lavia* with a team of roughly twenty officials under him. These consisted of a chief assistant (a licentiate named Magaña), four notaries, six military police, a jailer and six guards, and other unnamed officials.[860] It may be inferred from the *Carta*, that the process, probably convened on the *Lavia*, was similar to the inquiries at Seville and San Vicente. Cuéllar requested a copy of the order against him. Testimonies were then collected on the *San Pedro* to verify his conduct as 'a good soldier and loyal subject on all occasions and in all the action we saw with the enemy fleet.' Cuéllar strenuously claimed his innocence. He stated that when his ship vacated its position in the rear-guard, he was asleep and unaware of what was occurring, as the pilot acted without his permission. It was a standard procedure for senior officials to take charge of the night watch, when the ship was at its most vulnerable, and to sleep in the early part of the day.[861] Moreover, Cuéllar was hardly exaggerating when he claimed 'que avía diez días que no dormía ni paraba, por acudir a lo que me era necessario.'[862] Clearly, very few in the fleet had adequate sleep during the previous ten days. Cuéllar stated that Aranda, after questioning him, ordered a report to be drawn up. It might be assumed that a list of questions concerning Cuéllar's character and conduct during the campaign was prepared, as well as questions concerning what had transpired when the *San Pedro* failed to respond to the signal from the flagship. Witnesses from the *San Pedro* would then most likely have been brought before the Judge Advocate, and his notaries on the *Lavia*.

When the report was complete Aranda offered a verdict in his favour. Aranda then wrote to Medina Sidonia to explain why he felt Cuéllar should not be executed. It is possible that he also forwarded a transcript of the report. Cuéllar stated that he too, wrote a letter to the Duke: 'y juntamente yo le escribí un billete al duque tal, que le hiço pensar bien el negocio.'[863] This is consistent with the inquiry at Seville, where Cuéllar submitted a detailed testimony defending his actions that ran to six pages.[864] Although Aranda recommended clemency, the final verdict still rested with Medina Sidonia. He stipulated that if the Duke upheld the death sentence on

[860] Herrera Oria, *La Armada Invencible*, p. 389.
[861] Rahn-Phillips, *Six Galleons for the King of Spain*, p. 121.
[862] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202, 'I had been ten days on the go without a wink of sleep, because I was doing my duty.'
[863] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 203, 'At the same time I wrote the Duke a statement so that it made him think again about the business.'
[864] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Deposition of Captain Cuéllar.

Cuéllar, he would require a written order, signed by him, in order to carry out the execution. The *Carta* then states that Medina Sidonia relented and endorsed the Aranda's judgement. The death sentence on Cuéllar was remitted, as it was for the other captains. Instead, according to one eyewitness, some of the accused were condemned to the galleys, while other 'soldier-officers' were merely stripped of their commands.[865] One poor unfortunate, Don Cristobal de Ávila, captain of the urca *Santa Bárbara* was executed. He was hung from the yardarm of a pinnace and his corpse was then paraded around the fleet as a warning against any further lapse of discipline. This was military justice in its starkest form. But it reflected the perils that the Armada faced, and the absolute imperative for the senior commander to retain control.

Cuéllar intimated in the *Carta* that he was 'freed' after the verdict. But he was not restored to the *San Pedro*. Instead, on 14 August the Duke issued a patent that confirmed Pedro Meléndez de Valdés as captain of the galleon.[866] Cuéllar fell into the latter category of 'soldier-officers' who were stripped of their commands. He remained on the *Lavia*, effectively in the custody of the Judge Advocate until it was shipwrecked in Ireland. It was a remarkable turn of events that he had found himself accused of a breach of discipline and facing legal sanctions for a second time. We do not know if Cuéllar was the only officer to challenge the decision of the court-martial, the loss of the *Lavia* ensured loss of the Judge Advocate's papers, so we don't know if other captains followed suit. Under the circumstances, that he was able to appeal the decision and defend himself successfully in 1588, was a consequence of the experience he had acquired some years earlier during the case with Andrés de Eguino. Regardless of his qualities as an officer, legal dexterity and a talent for rhetoric may have been the principal reasons why Cuéllar was shown clemency, and the other condemned man, Don Cristóbal de Ávila, was not. While it may be that he was unlucky to have been singled out for execution, it would be equally true to suggest that he was extremely fortunate to have the death sentence overturned. More ruthless commanders such as Santa Cruz or the Duke of Alba may not have been as inclined to clemency as Medina Sidonia.

Cuéllar's disciplinary problems prompted Cruickshank and Gallagher to observe: 'we might say that to be accused of dereliction of duty once is a misfortune; to be accused of it twice is carelessness.'[867] But while Cuéllar's record in naval combat was ambivalent (on land he appears to have fared much better), and his criminal misdemeanours petty, his transgressions were insignificant when compared with abuses committed by military personnel elsewhere. The brutal nature of life in the

[865] *CSP Spain*, IV, p. 447.
[866] AGS CSU 288, unfoliated, *patente*, Pedro Meléndez [de Valdés], capitán del galeón *Santiago* [sic] [*San Pedro*] de Castilla, fecha en el galeón real a 14 de Agosto 1588 años, Duque de Medina Sidonia.
[867] Cruickshank, and Gallagher, 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', p. 196.

military engendered a multitude of behavioural and social ills that at times inhibited the effectiveness of the army, and proved detrimental to civilian society. 'Military life', lamented Jan Willem Wijn, 'apparently fostered licence rather than piety, and this was certainly one of the reasons for the army's bad reputation in most countries.[868] At times the judicial arm of the military appeared ill equipped, even powerless to stem the levels of abuse. Nevertheless, whatever his misdemeanours, Captain Cuéllar's experiences of military justice served him well, and in 1588, saved his life.

[868] Wijn, J.W., 'Military Forces and Warfare 1610-48' in Cooper, J.P. (ed.) *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. IV, Cambridge, 1970, p. 206.

Conclusion

A life less ordinary: Captain Cuéllar - exemplar of his profession or a cautionary tale?

> Y así, considerando esto, estoy por decir que en el alma me pesa de haber tomado este ejercicio de caballero andante en edad tan detestable como es esta en que ahora vivimos; porque aunque a mí ningún peligro me pone miedo, todavía me pone recelo pensar si la pólvora y el estaño me han de quitar la ocasión de hacerme famoso y conocido por el valor de mi brazo y filos de mi espada, por todo lo descubierto de la tierra. Pero haga el cielo lo que fuere servido; que tanto seré más estimado, si salgo con lo que pretendo, cuanto a mayores peligros me he puesto que se pusieron los caballeros andantes de los pasados siglos.[869]

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, himself a former soldier, used his fictional knight errant, Don Quixote, as his mouthpiece in the passage above to expound upon the particular hazards of soldiering in the age of gunpowder. The passage is an extract from Don Quixote's memorable *Discourse on Arms and Letters*, as he ponders a topical debate of the time about whether soldiering was a superior vocation to one devoted to study and script. In doing so, he juxtaposes the aspirations for accomplishment and reward with the impediments that had to be faced: years of unpaid service; the discomfort of sleeping rough, half-starved on campaign; the terrors of close-quarter combat; the gnawing fear of being blown up by an enemy mine. All are enumerated as part and parcel of the soldier's lot. He concludes that the valour of arms was the greater calling, although compared with men of letters soldiers were scarcely rewarded for the perils they faced: ¿cuán menos son los premiados por la guerra que los que han perecido en ella? Sin duda, habéis de responder, que no tienen comparación, ni se pueden reducir a cuenta los muertos, y que se podrán contar los premiados vivos con tres letras de guarismo. Todo esto es al revés en los letrados; porque de faldas, que no quiero decir de mangas, todos tienen en qué entretenerse; así que, aunque es mayor el trabajo del soldado, es mucho menor el premio.'[870] Through Don Quixote, Cervantes offered a frank

[869] Cervantes, Miguel de, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, Francisco Rico (ed.), Madrid, 2004, Part I, Chapter 38, p. 397, 'And when I think about this I am tempted to say that it grieves me to the depths of my soul that I ever took up this profession of knight-errantry in such a detestable age as this one in which we are living, because even though there is no danger that can strike fear into me I am concerned when I think that gunpowder and lead might deprive me of the opportunity to make myself famous all over the face of the earth by the might of my arm and the blade of my sword. But let heaven do what it pleases, for I shall be more highly esteemed, if I accomplish my aim, for having exposed myself to dangers greater than ever were faced by knights errant of centuries past.' (Cervantes, Miguel de, *Don Quixote*, trans. John Rutherford, London, 2003, p. 358.)

[870] Cervantes, *Don Quijote*, ed. Rico, I, 38, p. 395.., '[...] how many men have been rewarded by war, compared with those who have perished in it? You will have to reply that there is no comparison, and there is no counting those who have died, while those alive and rewarded can be reckoned in

portrayal of military service. Of course, he was writing from personal experience: injury from gunshot wounds at the battle of Lepanto and then captivity in Algiers, curtailed his military career.

Valour of Arms

One might wonder what Captain Cuéllar would have made of Don Quixote's *Discourse* had he read Cervantes' masterpiece. Surely, he would have found the passage evocative of his own experiences. All of the scenarios described would have been familiar to him, as they were to most veteran soldiers, and by the end of his career, Cuéllar was acquainted with most facets of soldiering. In the debate over the superiority of arms or letters, there would be little doubt that he would have agreed with Cervantes' assertions on two counts: firstly, in return for the physical toll soldiering demanded, he would, no doubt, have agreed that soldiers were not adequately recompensed for their services. After all, by the end of his career Cuéllar was left destitute, reliant upon the crown for a welfare hand-out to make ends meet. Secondly, Cuéllar could recall from bitter experience altercations with the military's 'men of letters', masquerading as men of arms – the administrators (the Duke of Medina Sidonia, Andrés de Eguino), bureaucrats (Esteban de Ibarra), and notaries (Pedro de Rada) – who impacted negatively on him and his career. Twice those confrontations (the fall-out with Eguino, and Medina Sidonia's court-martial) had almost cost him his life. As we saw in Chapter Four, his career progression was reliant upon the bureaucrats at court, in particular council secretaries, through whom applications to the crown had to pass before they reached the council table. Ultimately, Cuéllar might claim that bureaucracy failed him, as he was left for years on end waiting in vain for the administrative process to function. Having risked his life on multiple occasions across many arenas that spanned much of the Spanish Empire; having commanded troops and warships in combat in some of the most celebrated campaigns of the period, he had virtually nothing to show for all of his efforts. By 1605, Cuéllar's fading hopes for recognition at court, sought through his carefully composed memoranda finally ebbed away, prompting his search for a new life across the Atlantic. The letter of recommendation addressed to the viceroy of New Spain, granted to him by Philip III, was scant compensation.[871] But at least it offered hope that he might obtain a position under Montesclaros that was commensurate with his status as an officer.

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three figures. It is the very opposite with men of letters, because on their salaries, let alone on the payments on the sale, they can make ends meet well enough. So although the soldier's hardships are greater, his reward is much smaller.' (Cervantes, Don Quixote, trans. Rutherford, I, 38, pp. 356-57).

[871] AGI Indiferente General 449, ff. 20-20v, *cédula*, Al Marqués de Montesclaros, Virrey de Nueva España, recomendándole al capitán Francisco de Cuéllar (see Appendix Ten).

Regardless of Cuéllar's opinion on the merits of arms or letters as a career choice, his story is enlightening for the insights it offers into the military profession. In Part I, we documented the career in three phases. Chapter One: early naval service during the decade 1578-1588; Chapter Two: Ireland and Scotland, 1588-1589; Chapter Three: later career, 1589-1606. Until the Armada campaign of 1588, all of Cuéllar's assignments were with Atlantic fleets: the Indies Guard, and its derivatives: the Armada de Magallanes and Squadron of Castile. Following his shipwreck, the Irish episode marked a crucial hiatus for Cuéllar that transformed the career path he had been following thus far. Whereas all of his efforts until 1588 were directed to furthering his career in the Atlantic sphere, after Ireland, most of the following decade saw him dedicate his energies to land-based campaigns in the Low Countries, France and Piedmont. Following his return to Spain in 1598, Cuéllar had one further stint at sea, in 1602. In 1606, his vocation as a military man ended when he swapped the soldierly profession for a new life in the Americas.

The first ten years of Cuéllar's military service were both eventful and contentious. His attainment of a captaincy, only three years after his enlistment, appears mercurial. We ascertained in Chapter Four that he did not meet the normal requirements expected of a candidate for promotion. He was elevated to his captaincy without undertaking the usual ten years of service, or ascent through the non-commissioned ranks of corporal (*cabo de esquadra*), sergeant (*sargento*) and ensign (*alférez*) (see pp. 114-17). It seems that Cuéllar was in the right place at the right time and displayed a commendable willingness to face the hazards of a highly dangerous expedition baulked at by others. It might be that he had served with distinction during the Portuguese campaign. Alternatively, he may have had a well-placed acquaintance within established court circles, through whom his prospects of a captaincy nomination were enhanced. We saw how most of the officers of the Armada de Magallanes were drawn from the Indies Guard. For that reason his previous service with the Indies Guard must have been a contributing factor to his promotion. It provided him with appropriate, if somewhat brief, experience for the role he was to undertake as a naval officer (*capitán de mar y guerra*).

The award of captaincies to individuals who lacked the requisite experience or aptitude was a source of ongoing debate within the military community, in both army and navy. Regulations had been formulated in an effort to ensure a high calibre of candidate, but in practice their selection could be haphazard and arbitrary. It is clear that extenuating circumstances, whether for reasons of patronage or expediency, led to appointments of individuals who did not meet official criteria. Cuéllar's difficulties in Brazil might have been regarded by critics of the status quo as strengthening the argument for strict observance of appointments based on experience. Cuéllar had gained unwanted notoriety for his nasty spat with the Inspector and Comptroller (*Veedor y Contador*) of the fleet, Andrés de Eguino.

Their dispute erupted as a result of the rather chastening outcome of their clash with the English galleons at San Vicente. It was Cuéllar's first hostile encounter in charge of a warship. The fallout from that incident led to Cuéllar's arrest by Eguino for insubordination, and the subsequent legal tribunals that we explored in Chapter Five. In some respects, the Armada campaign mirrored his experiences in Brazil. He took charge of a royal galleon of the Squadron of Castile, but again ended the campaign under arrest when he was among twenty officers apprehended following an incident of mass insubordination. He and a second officer were then separated out for exemplary punishment, by the Duke of Medina Sidonia, or Don Francisco de Bobadilla, who officiated on his behalf. His court-martial marked the most testing moment of his career. Nevertheless, his successful appeal against the death sentence set in train a series of events that culminated in his subsequent shipwreck in Ireland, and a decisive turning point in his career.

When he reached Spanish-held territory in 1589, Cuéllar opted for service under the Duke of Parma in the Army of Flanders, rather than return to naval service where his reputation had been sullied. He had little if any prior experience of land warfare before he served under Parma, but the decision proved propitious. His Low Countries stint represents the most successful phase of his military service. Throughout the 1590s his conduct appears to have been exemplary, drawing favourable testimonials from Parma, the Duke of Savoy, Antonio de Olivera, and Archduke Albert. Moreover, the monthly salary of forty ducats granted to him by both Parma and Albert represented the highest salary a captain could earn. However, there does remain the disparaging reference to him as 'useless' ('no vale nada') in an official dossier of staff officers attached to the Army of Flanders high command. Lacking context, the remark is difficult to interpret precisely. But, it seems to substantiate suggestions elsewhere that Cuéllar was an individual who polarised opinion. Witness testimony in his case against Eguino suggests that Cuéllar had few friends, or was at least ostracised by Eguino's faction, while in Brazil.[872] The campaigns, in the Low Countries, France and Piedmont saw his participation in momentous campaigns, most notably Parma's relief of Paris in 1590, Fuentes' operations in 1595 that led to the seizure of Cambrai, and Archduke Albert's arrival in 1596, which galvanised the army to take Calais and Ardres from the French, and Hulst from the Dutch. It may be that a singular piece of service by Cuéllar around Hulst may have prompted Albert to appoint him to his personal entourage by way of reward during operations to take that town.[873]

[872] AGI Escribanía 1060B, Qustion XIX, 'Yten si saven que el dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar a sido siempre desfavorecido y a tenido falta de amigos porque como el dicho contador Eguino hera en esta sazón cabo de las dichas tres naos todos le obedecían ansi capitanes como la demás gente de mar y guerra...'

[873] AGRB SEG Registre aux Ordres 16, f.157, mandato, Capitán Francisco de Cuélar, 30 de Julio 1596.

Following the Treaty of Vervins in 1598, Cuéllar's service with the Army of Flanders concluded. The next seven years, which marked the final segment of his career, proved a frustrating denouement. The period was dominated by two extended spells of inactivity at court, interspersed by two years of employment. Initially, he was occupied in preparing for the abortive attempt to establish an 'Armada de Barlovento' squadron in the Caribbean. When that plan was shelved, the flotilla that had been assembled was reconstituted as a component of the Indies Guard under Don Luis De Córdoba. A single tour of duty in 1602 to collect the royal silver consignment was completed in routine fashion, without incident. But his commission under Córdoba was terminated abruptly early in 1603, when his infantry company was disbanded during reorganization (*reformación*) of the squadron's infantry contingent. Ironically, it was the Duke of Medina Sidonia who dismissed him; the commander who had sentenced him to death in 1588, and whom he, in return, had denigrated in the *Carta*. If the individual to whom Cuéllar addressed his account was, indeed, well connected, and circulated copies of the *Carta* within his social network, it may be that Medina Sidonia became acquainted with Cuéllar's depiction of him. If so, it would not have been surprising, then, if he dismissed Cuéllar just to put him in his place. In any event, Cuéllar was forced to resort to court once more, and although nominated for a number of positions, he failed to secure any new appointment with the fleets. Strangely, when awarded an *entretenimiento* in Naples, which he applied for twice (1600 and 1604), he declined to go to Italy on both occasions. That is an anomaly for which the documentation fails to provide a satisfactory explanation. Although he explained to the Council of State that his appointment by the Council of the Indies to the Barlovento enterprise prevented him taking up the post,[874] there was no explanation for not taking up the commission in 1604. Ultimately, Philip III's letter of recommendation brought down the curtain on any further participation by Cuéllar in the military.

Despite receiving nominations for prestigious posts (*sargento mayor* of the Indies Guard, and adjutant (*entretenido*) to the vice-admiral of the New Spain *flota*), in the Atlantic fleets, Cuéllar's aspirations to progress were ultimately frustrated. In June 1605, only weeks after his final rebuff, he applied for leave to relocate to New Spain where, he claimed, he had relatives.[875] Harking back to Don Quixote's discourse on Arms and Letters, and the ideology of valour and reputation that underpins it, Cuéllar's aspiration to achieve similar prestige in his career proved to be an elusive, fallible ambition. Overall, his career was a success, but the anti-climactic decline of

[874] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, *relación de servicios*, 31 March 1604 (see Appendix Eight); 'y estando el dicho capitán de partida para servir el dicho entretenimiento sin hacer ninguna réplica sobre ello, se le tornó a mandar otra vez por orden de Vuestra Magestad y del Consejo de las Indias que fuese a servir con una compañía de infantería y un galeón en la armada que el año de [1]601 mandó a prestar para yr a las yslas de Barlovento.'

[875] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, Cámara de Indias, 4 de Junio 1605.

the final years stands in marked contrast to his rapid ascent in the early part of his career. The penury he suffered at the end is given added poignancy when one compares his fate to the stellar rise of two colleagues he served with during the 1580s and 1590s: Captains Juan Gutiérrez Garibay and Esteban de Legorreta. Both progressed to high command; Garibay became a naval admiral (c*apitán general*), while Legorreta was raised to a regimental *maestre de campo*. We do not know Legorreta's financial circumstances at the end of his career, but Garibay became extraordinarily wealthy.[876]

In another of Cervantes' works, *El Licenciado Vidriera*, the title character, Tomás de Rodaja, turned his back on years of dedicated study as a man of letters to seek fame and fortune as a soldier in Flanders. Knowing how his own career had unfolded, would Cuéllar have regarded the switch as a worthwhile endeavour? Would he have lauded, Tomás de Rodaja, or scoffed at him? After all, Cuéllar's quest for distinction in the military was latterly abandoned, when the prospect of a position in the colonial administration of New Spain offered the hope for a better future for him. Might he instead, on receipt of Philip III's letter of recommendation, have felt the kind of embittered resentment articulated by the Duke of Alba, who famously declared: 'kings use men like oranges, first they squeeze the juice and then throw away the peel.' The contrasting fates of Cuéllar and Garibay exemplify the precarious nature of soldiering. However, Garibay's success was exceptional. The vast majority of those who became captains did not progress to higher ranks. Therefore, taking into consideration all that has emerged about Captain Cuéllar, we can justifiably regard his career as more typical of a military officer of the period.

Executive Office

Although his early ascent to a captaincy was not the norm, thereafter, for the most part, Cuéllar's activities as an officer conformed to those expected of his rank. On at least two occasions he recruited troops according to the prescribed methods. In each instance, he recruited in Andalusia. In 1604, Cuéllar proclaimed that he had succeeded in maintaining strict discipline among the troops under his direction during their transits through towns, and in winter accommodation, citing official reports in support of this claim.[877] Given the regular upheaval caused to communities across Spain the by ill-discipline and dissolute behaviour of infantry units, this piece of information reflects well on his qualities as an officer. As well as overseeing the transit of troops that he recruited, he was also tasked, in 1588, with overseeing the mobilisation of multiple units from winter quarters to designated vessels. In Chapter Three, we saw how, in late 1593, he participated in the transit of

[876] Pérez-Mallaína, P.E., 'Juan Gutiérrez Garibay. Vida y hacienda de un general de la Carrera de las Indias en la segunda mitad del siglo XVI.' In *Revista de Indias*, vol. LXX, no. 249, 2010, pp. 319-44.
[877] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, relación de servicios, 31 March 1604 (see Appendix Eight).

substantial Spanish and Italian contingents (5,086 troops in total)[878] along the 'Spanish Road' to Flanders. All of this activity points to an accumulation of experience in dealing with the various logistical challenges associated with troop mobilisation.

It is apparent from the documentation relating to Cuéllar that captaincy entailed a variety of different roles. Indeed, a hallmark of his career was his adaptation to changeable circumstances. Besides taking charge of infantry units and warships, he spent much of his career as an *entretenido*, a general staff officer. *Entretenidos*, to gauge from Cuéllar's experiences, were employed in logistical and administrative support roles within a range of contexts: assignment to senior commanders and/or army general staffs, central logistical planning offices (Veeduría General), and personal entourages of regional governors (see pp. 134-37). They also performed ancillary roles when assigned to specific units or warships. During the build-up to the 1588 campaign, he was one of a number of *entretenidos* assigned to the Portuguese galleon, *San Luis*, in order to give general assistance, and then to the *San Pedro*, before being given command of that galleon at La Coruña. In the Low Countries, Cuéllar does not appear to have been assigned to any specific unit. On his return to Flanders in 1594, the endorsement[879] of his *cédula* and associated *entretenemiento* categorised him within the Spanish infantry, but nothing more specific emerged in that regard. Although, on two occasions towards the end of his career, he would be awarded *entrenemientos* to serve as adjutant under the viceroy of Naples, he spurned both commissions, in favour of naval appointments.

Besides the logistical and administrative support undertaken as *entretenido*, and routine administration in the management of infantry, and marine units, paperwork and record-keeping duties required officers to possess at least rudimentary levels of literacy and numeracy. Literacy, in fact, was integral to a captain being able to function effectively. Although the ability to read and write was not cited as a prerequisite for appointment, nevertheless, there must have been an implicit acceptance that it was an essential requirement. We know that Cuéllar could read and write. In their study of the *Carta*, Cruickshank and Gallagher concluded that his writing style was that of one whose 'schooling was rudimentary, stopping short of lessons in grammar.'[880] However, they may have underestimated Cuéllar's proficiency. Besides the *Carta*, this study recovered eight samples of texts written by him from the archives. Five were petitions he submitted to the Councils of War, State, and the Indies (see p. 147, and Appendices Two, Three, Six, Eight); two were

[878] Parker, G., *The Army of Flanders*, pp. 237-38.
[879] AGRB, SEG, Registre aux Ordres 15, f.307 cédula, El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 30 de Abril 1592, 'Saved que el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar nos ha hecho presentación de una cédula de su Magestad dirigida al señor Duque de Parma del tenor siguiente.'
[880] Gallagher and Cruickshank, 'A Note on Cuéllar and his Letter', p. 199.

samples of routine administrative paperwork pertaining to the management of his infantry company (see p. 126-27). The remaining text was a six-page deposition that he submitted to the Seville tribunal in 1584.[881] Those texts reveal an individual cognizant of the conventional rhetorical forms and modes of address expected in official applications.

The earliest petition that we have, from late 1584 (see p. 147), did not exhibit the standard form or etiquette. The contrast between that application and his second, submitted shortly afterwards, in January 1585 (Appendix Two), might suggest that the services of a professional notary were acquired, to consult with, or to draft the text of Cuéllar's petition for him to then copy. Whether or not, such a transaction was repeated for each subsequent application would really have depended upon Cuéllar's aptitude. It might be that there were generic templates in circulation, which he used repeatedly as a guide when composing his applications. In any event, the surviving petitions provide evidence that he was proficient in written composition. His handwriting exhibits a neat, legible, hand. The material in each instance is well organised and structured, and in particular, in his Seville deposition (*información*)[882], and 1604 *relación* (Appendix Nine). On the one hand, these documents offer lucid and cogent accounts, from his perspective, of what transpired at San Vicente; on the other, they provide a succinct summation of his career. In the 1604 *relación*, his obvious attempt to re-jig the chronology of his military service reveals an individual conscious of the importance of the written text in presenting his service record to the best effect, in order to induce reward. In effect, he became practised at defining a self-image for the authorities, which he anticipated would persuade the crown to grant to him much-coveted *mercedes*.

His comparison in the *Carta* of his experiences in Ireland with adventures from tales of chivalry suggests that he was familiar with popular literature of the time: 'y porque Vuestra Merced, se ocupe un poco después de comer, como por vía de entretenimiento en leer esta carta, que casi pareçerá sacada de algún libro de caballerías, la escribo tan larga para que Vuestra Merced vea en los lances y trabajos que me he visto.'[883] The assumption from that remark is that he had read at least one of those tales, but we cannot be certain that he did so. It may be that he was familiar with such stories from hearing them read in social settings. Cuéllar also claimed to be conversant in Latin, citing three instances in which he communicated with Irish people in that language. Did he receive his knowledge of that language

[881] AGI Escribanía 1069B. Pleitos de la Casa de Contratación, 'Francisco de Cuéllar con Andrés de Eguino, contador de la Armada destinada al Estrecho de Magallanes, sobre no haber perseguido con sus navíos a unos corsarios ingleses. Pendiente en 1584.'
[882] Ibid.
[883] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 206, 'And it is so that you may while away the time after dinner reading this letter by way of entertainment (for you will almost think it taken from some book of chivalry) that I write at such length so that you may see what trials and tribulations I have experienced.'

through oral transmission or book-based education? Might knowledge of Latin further reinforce the notion of his reading ability? When one considers in tandem, all of the surviving samples of his writing, apparent acquaintance with popular literature and Latin, his literacy proficiency appears more than adequate for the requirements of his office.

Exercise of Arms

Away from the challenges of administration and bureaucracy, by the end of his career Captain Cuéllar had considerable experience of combat on land and at sea. On land, campaigns entailed for the most part, siege operations. Two sieges considered typical of the age were those conducted at Antwerp (1584-1585) and Ostend (1600-1604). They frame the period of Cuéllar's service in the region (1589-1598). He participated in at least twelve attempts to seize walled towns and fortified positions in France, Piedmont, and the Low Countries; ten of which were successful. The two failed efforts occurred in Piedmont, at Bricherasio and Cavour. On four occasions he was involved in attempts to relieve towns under siege (Paris in 1590, Cavour in 1592, Laon in 1594, and Amiens in 1597); Paris was the only successful relief attempt. The lengthy timespan of the sieges at Antwerp and Ostend contrasts with all of the sieges Cuéllar witnessed, which were generally concluded with operations of comparatively short duration. Rapid gains were made by Parma (Lagny and Corbeil), Fuentes (Le Catelet, Doullens, and Cambrai), and Archduke Albert (Calais, Ardres and Hulst), in their campaigns of 1590, 1595 and 1596, in promptly executed operations (see pp. 91-92 and 98-101). There were various reasons for these results. Some towns were battered and stormed successfully (Lagny and Corbeil in 1590; Doullens in 1595; Calais in 1596). Others capitulated through negotiated settlement (Cambrai in 1595; Hulst in 1596), or bribery (Exilles in 1593). Amiens (in 1597) was surprised by stratagem and was taken before any effective resistance could be mounted by the defenders. Most of the places taken were much smaller than the likes of Antwerp and Ostend, possessed smaller garrisons, or lacked the all-important *trace-italienne*; the architecture that defined the artillery fortresses of the age, which Geoffrey Parker has argued, had a profound effect on the conduct of war during the period.[884] Their relatively thin stone walls simply could not resist the firepower of the 'detestable' gunpowder artillery denounced by Don Quixote. We do not have any documentary evidence from his time with the Army of Flanders to suggest that Cuéllar participated in any pitched battles on open ground. Only two such clashes occurred during this time: near Doullens (July 1595), where a relief force of 3,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry under the Duke de Bouillon was routed by Fuentes; and at

[884] Parker G., *The Military Revolution: Military innovation and the rise of the West 1500-1800*, Cambridge, 1996, p. 175.

Turnhout (January 1597), when a Spanish marching column was surprised and routed by Dutch cavalry before it could deploy in battle formation. Both clashes were, however, limited in scale.

At sea, we know that Cuéllar fought on two occasions: the clashes at San Vicente (1583) and in the English Channel, in 1588. They were the only occasions on which we know for sure that Cuéllar commanded troops and vessels in action. He served on at least four different classes of gun-carrying sailing ships (*galeón*, *galeaça*, *fragata*, *nao*), and twice engaged in new-style artillery duels in Brazil and the English Channel. Naval warfare presented very different challenges to those encountered on land. As a result, naval combat was a specialised discipline. The deployment of troops on a warship was very different to the way in which units were organised on land: sharpshooters were dispersed in squads around the ship to optimise all-round defence, while the best fighters were earmarked for close-quarter engagements between opposing teams of boarding parties. For artillery also, the challenge was different. The roll of a vessel due to wave motion entailed a higher degree of difficulty than on land. From both an offensive and defensive standpoint, Spanish combat strategies tended to favour close-quarter engagements involving boarding actions and superior infantry numbers to overwhelm and capture enemy vessels. In fact, naval tactical doctrine, in general, adopted by Spanish fleets was quite conservative. The navy was comparatively slow to fully exploit the firepower of gunpowder artillery. There seems to have been a reluctance to adopt the tactics of manoeuvre and artillery salvo as the primary form of engagement (as favoured by the English), even after the effectiveness of those tactics was noted in 1588. At San Vicente, when the initial Spanish attempt to close with the English galleons failed, an artillery duel did ensue, in which both surviving Spanish ships incurred considerable damage from the English guns. But in return, at least one of the English ships also appears to have received significant damage from Spanish fire. Witness testimony at the Seville tribunal described how a number of rounds fired from the *Concepción* inflicted structural damage and casualties on its opponents. When he was unable to utilise the *Concepción's* cannon, Cuéllar sought to maximise his infantry's firepower by deploying the troops on deck in two-to-three ranks in order to sweep the decks of English galleons through ordered volleys (*rociadas*) of gunfire.[885] For Captain Cuéllar, the action at San Vicente served as a precursor to the much larger engagements that took place in the English Channel. The tactics engaged by both sides were the same, and the outcome was also similar. Only a handful of Armada vessels were sunk by enemy fire, but numerous ships suffered

[885] AGI Escribania 1069B, Question X, testimony of soldiers Francisco Alonso:' y quando pudo ofender al enemigo el dicho Capitán Cuéllar lo hizo e le tiró mucha arcabucería e mosquetería en dos rociadas que le dio y esto responde [a la pregunta]'; and Juan de Guerta: 'y dio a el enemigo dos o tres rociadas de acrcabucería e mosquetería y esto save de la pregunta.'

heavy damage, which was to have fatal consequences during the return voyage to Spain.

Command and Control

The defining quality of captaincy was its leadership role. Emblematic of this function was the ability to inspire troops to perform in combat. This entailed a capacity to instil discipline and morale, more often than not, by example. Given his disciplinary problems and how adept he seemed to be in using the judicial process to his advantage, after his court-martial it may have appeared to some of his peers that Captain Cuéllar had entered the wrong profession. He undoubtedly had failings as an officer. While there was sufficient evidence in both of his judicial cases to argue against culpability, the similarities in both are indicative of certain patterns of behaviour, and potential flaws in his makeup. Either Cuéllar was unlucky, or it may be that he lacked authority over the mariners on his ships. He was, first and foremost, a soldier, and possibly ignorant in matters of navigation. And it was well known that tensions between soldiers and sailors on Spanish warships could be inflammatory. In Chapter Five we saw how the treatment meted out by one of Cuéllar's officer colleagues (Juan de Peña Garay) to sailors during the 1602 voyage, incited a riot on-board the *San Mateo* (see pp. 179-80). In the *Carta*, Cuéllar made negative comments about the pilot of the *San Pedro*, labelling him 'un piloto mal hombre'.[886] However, there is nothing to suggest that he subjected subordinates to the kind of derisory abuse exhibited by Peña Garay. The difficulties Cuéllar encountered may have arisen from a lack of experience as a sea captain, which reflects on the debate mentioned earlier about regulations that defined the appointment of appropriate candidates for captaincies. While Cuéllar and most of his colleagues in the Indies Guard had a background of naval service, their career paths usually followed an ascent through the infantry contingent on-board rather than as dedicated mariners. There was a natural inclination to appoint infantry officers to overall command, which reflected Cuéllar's appointment as a 'capitán de mar y guerra', but therein lay an inherent weakness in the system. Mariners tended to be overlooked for positions of command on royal warships. There was no guarantee that an infantry officer, even after years of naval service, was knowledgeable in matters pertaining to navigation.

That is not to suggest that Cuéllar lacked the attributes of a fine infantry officer. While still mindful of the 'no vale nada' comment, there are indications in the witness testimony from Seville and in the *Carta* that hint at positive attributes. Witnesses who were present in the action at San Vicente described how Cuéllar had the *Concepción* ready for combat on arrival at San Vicente, in contrast to Andrés de

[886] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 202.

Eguino. Although he was overruled, he sought to exploit the disarray of the English on their sudden arrival by immediately taking the offensive. Witnesses described the orderly manner in which he deployed his troops and ensured that they had adequate supplies of powder and bullets. Cuéllar seems to have attempted to galvanise his troops prior to the fighting, exhorting them to engage with the enemy. We have already mentioned how he utilised his infantry to direct mass volleys of gunfire across the English decks, but testimony also described him working in concert with his artillery gunners (see pp. 133-34). Captain Esteban de las Alas, who was on the *Concepción* at the time, was candid in his statement:

> Save y bio él que la propia noche que se yba enbestir a el dicho enemigo el dicho capitán Cuéllar yba armado apercibiendo su gente y dándoles buenas esperanças e animándoles y mandando a el piloto lo abordase con el enemigo lo qual save este testigo porque yba dentro de la dicha nao como tiene dicho.[887]

We also saw how he offered monetary rewards and his best velvet jacket to soldiers who excelled in the fighting. Hew Strachan, in his study of European land warfare from 1700 to the modern era, enumerated ten 'immutable principles of war', which, he suggested, 'serve as a check-list for a subaltern suddenly faced with the command of a company.'[888] Albeit in a naval context, Cuéllar's actions at San Vicente seemed to conform to at least three of Strachan's maxims: '*The offensive*, which is the strongest form of warfare as it affirms morale and only it can lead to victory'; '*Surprise*, whether physical or psychological, in order to ensure moral superiority over the enemy'; and lastly: '*Morale*, without which no troops will carry out even the best plans.'[889] Whether the outcome of the affair at San Vicente would have been any different had Eguino adopted Cuéllar's attitude, we cannot know for sure, but all of the witness testimony at Seville agreed that the opportune moment to defeat the English arose at the outset. Cuéllar reacted accordingly, and appropriately. Elsewhere, in Chapter Two (pp. 61-62), we saw Cuéllar thinking as a military officer should, when explaining his decision to remain within MacClancy's castle and resist an anticipated attack by Fitzwilliam's troops. Cuéllar evaluated his chances by reading the lie of the land and adjudged it to be in his favour; marshy terrain, position of Rosclogher castle in a lake, the winter season; all combined, he believed, to reduce the possibility of a direct assault by the enemy. Cuéllar gambled that the landscape would prevent the enemy from deploying artillery. One single cannon placed nearby on the southern shore of the lake would have rapidly reduced Rosclogher castle to rubble. But Fitzwilliam did not have any artillery with him. Cuéllar's claims about what transpired at Rosclogher are intriguing, but unless new material emerges to substantiate his account, we will never be sure if he was

[887] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question IX, testimony of Captain Esteban de las Alas.
[888] Strachan, H., European Armies and the Conduct of War, London and New York, Reprint, 1998, pp. 1-2.
[889] Ibid.

truthful in his assertions. However, what is significant in this instance is his thought process. At Rosclogher, Cuéllar appeared to be thinking and acting in a manner appropriate to his rank.

Rule of Law

Naval combat tended to end badly for Captain Cuéllar. In contrast to the commendations he received for his service on land, the two major blots on his record revolved around controversies that erupted in Brazil, and in the North Sea. They cast a dark shadow over his career and raise questions about his qualities as an officer. But also, they provide for us fascinating insights into the darker side of military life. In the *Carta*, Cuéllar was acutely aware of the negative impact the court-martial placed on his reputation, which is why he set out a robust defence of his actions and to explain what transpired from his perspective. This echoed the vigorous defence his actions before the Seville tribunal. In tandem with the questions he formulated for the witnesses, his own deposition offered a forensic examination of what transpired in the harbour of San Vicente from the arrival of the Spanish to the departure of the English. We are fortunate that transcripts survive from that tribunal, as well as the first inquiry convened by Andrés de Eguino, at Santos. From them we have derived a rich source of information with which to explore a number of topics arising from the case: how the encounter with the English played out; the perceived behaviour of the main protagonists; the principal grievances of each party; importantly, what transpired in the aftermath of the clash. Discord over decision-making at pivotal moments ultimately lay at the heart of the dispute, with Captain Cuéllar, perhaps, objecting too strenuously to the cautious strategy adopted at the outset by Eguino. When it became apparent that Cuéllar's vocal criticism threatened to undermine his authority, Eguino set about ensuring that he was identified as the scapegoat.

Some of the most startling revelations to emerge from the transcripts of the Seville tribunal concern the ruthlessness with which Eguino sought to ensure that witnesses testified in his favour (see pp. 176-77). His actions present a classic case of abuse of power: employing fabrication of evidence, bribery, and intimidation in an effort to manipulate the system in his favour. Despite all of its faults and failings, it is a sign of the authority of the Spanish judicial system that Captain Cuéllar was permitted to submit his testimony to the Casa de Contratación, despite strenuous objections from Eguino's faction. It was a trait also noted by Pérez-Mallaína in his work.[890] Given Eguino's efforts to prevent him from doing so, that Cuéllar was able to have his voice heard and, as it would seem, be vindicated in Madrid, suggests

[890] Pérez-Mallaína, P., *Spain's Men of the Sea*, pp. 200-01, while Pérez-Mallaína highlighted the prompt response of the Casa de Contratación to the appeals of sailors in matters of wage disputes with ship master's of the *flotas*, the same principal seems to have been applied in Cuéllar's case.

that the judicial system was based upon sound fundamentals. Cuéllar also benefitted from the workings of the judicial system in 1588, when he successfully appealed his death sentence to the Judge Advocate General. While the context was slightly different, the charges against Cuéllar were almost identical to those brought by Eguino.

Essentially, Cuéllar was accused of failing to place his ship in his allotted place in the fleet formation (the rearguard) at a moment when it appeared the rearguard was about to be attacked. That the anticipated attack did not materialize was immaterial; failure to obey the express orders of Medina Sidonia in that moment was interpreted as rank insubordination, tantamount to jeopardising the integrity of the fleet. Consequently, the *San Pedro* was identified as one of twenty that failed to obey orders, and Cuéllar was held to account. However, it would appear that the legal grounding, if not the military experience, Cuéllar had received arising from his service with the Armada de Magallanes, enabled him to contest the decision, and to succeed in having the order overturned on appeal. Nevertheless, we also saw how the judicial system itself, was not immune from manipulation by vested interests. Where Andrés de Eguino failed, more powerful interests prevailed. One of Cuéllar's colleagues, Captain Gutiérrez de Solís, was arrested on trumped up charges brought by adherents of Don Cristóbal de Eraso, whose relatives served as Secretary of the Council of the Indies (Alonso de Eraso) and President of the Casa de Contratación (Doctor Santillán). Eraso bore a grudge against Solís for testifying in support of allegations of corrupt practices committed by him while commander of the Indies Guard (see pp. 180-81).

In Chapter Five, we used Cuéllar's disciplinary problems as the basis for a broader exploration of ill-conduct associated with the military. Dissolute behaviour by infantry units in transit, and sometimes the bands of unemployed soldiers that congregated at court, impacted negatively on the civilian population in Madrid and towns across Spain, as well as in active war zones. According to the soldier, Francisco de Valdés, 'the day a man picks up his pike to become a soldier is the day he ceases to be a Christian.'[891] It is a statement that neatly condensed all of the ills engendered by a military livelihood into a single line. John Elliott considered the problem of corruption as not limited solely to the military. He regarded it as more of a societal problem. He laid a significant portion of blame for this on the Spanish crown. A policy of parsimony in remuneration, institutionalised corruption within state councils, compounded by a frequent inability to secure the necessary finance to pay troops regularly contributed to the problems of disorder and dissent that became characteristic of military service.[892] Among the offenders was Captain

[891] Parker, G., *Success is Never Final: Empire, War and Faith in Early Modern Europe*, New York, 2002, p. 150.
[892] Elliott, J.H., *Imperial Spain*, pp. 180-181.

Cuéllar, who was sanctioned for straying from the prescribed standards of behaviour on more than one occasion. He was accused in Brazil of engaging in petty larceny by pilfering wine from fleet provisions to sell on the black market. Although criminal charges were brought against him, he was not convicted of the offence. In 1602, although he was not named, a number of Indies Guards captains were accused of extorting money from troops in return for permission to abandon their units prior to embarkation (see p. 165). Geoffrey Parker agreed in principle with Elliott that delinquency was a pervasive problem that affected society: 'soldiers soon came to exhibit the same *picaresque* values that invaded Spanish society in the late sixteenth century: idleness, brutality and bravado, the thirst for gambling, the urge to deceive.'[893] While Cuéllar's transgressions were far from the worst, they demonstrated that he was not immune from the venality that soldiering tended to induce.

Remuneration and Reward

In relation to financial recompense for his services, Cuéllar's mixed fortunes were commonplace. His salary records reflect the intermittent way in which the Spanish crown paid its troops - a perennial problem for soldiers who sometimes served for years without pay. This state of affairs contributed in no small measure to the unremitting penury highlighted by Cervantes in Don Quixote's *Discourse*. There were some long stretches during his career when Captain Cuéllar did not receive any pay. Between September 1581, when he received a four-month advance of wages (eighty ducats) when setting out with the Armada de Magallanes, and October 1587, when he was given the first instalment of wages at Lisbon, Cuéllar received no wages. The only payment was an *ayuda de costa* (June 1586) of one hundred ducats awarded by the crown to all of the officers who returned from Brazil (see p. 139). His arrears for that expedition were not settled until 1590, six years after the expedition concluded. Similarly, from January 1595 to March 1598, he received nothing from the military treasury in Flanders. Those arrears were duly remitted at court, when he returned to Madrid in late 1598, but he claimed that during his final phase of active service (1601-02), he received no salary payments at all.[894] Not until 1605 did he finally receive another welfare payment (*ayuda de costa*) of three hundred ducats from the Consejo de Indias to alleviate his penury.[895] On the other hand, there were spells during which Cuéllar did receive prompt payments. His salary for participation with the 'Enterprise of England (July 1587-September 1588), was, for the most part, paid in regular three-month instalments (see pp. 139-40). By the time he was shipwrecked in Ireland, his wage account was

[893] Parker, G., *The Army of Flanders*, pp. 153-54.
[894] AGS Estado 1692, unfoliated, relación de servicios, 31 March 1604 (see Appendix Eight).
[895] AGI Indiferente General 748, unfoliated, Que por los servicios y apretada necessidad en que se halla el capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, Cámara de Indias, 4 de Junio 1605.

only two months in arrears, which corresponded to the period of the campaign after the fleet departed from La Corunna in July 1588. During the first year (1594) of his second spell in Flanders he also received prompt payments, but thereafter, for the rest of his career, he was reliant upon back-pay or welfare payments. On three occasions, there were sizeable lump-sum payments that left him, for a while at least, flush with cash: in 1591 (124,970 *maravedíes*, around 333 ducats)[896], in 1598 (784 *escudos* 34 *reales*)[897], and the *ayuda de costa* conceded in 1605 (300 ducats). The story of Cuéllar's career from the perspective of his wage receipts is one of fluctuation between privation and extravagance.

Another factor that contributed in no small measure to his uncertainty of future income was the flawed nature of the crown bureaucracy. The perennial shortage of funds to pay troops was compounded by logjams within government administration. We saw in the final section of Chapter Four (pp. 144-48) how efforts to recoup arrears of wages earned in Brazil entailed three turgid years of bureaucratic wrangles, as if Cuéllar and his colleagues had descended into an administrative maze, lost within the corridors of power. The episode highlights how so many routine administrative issues were compounded by Philip II's insistence on retaining personal control in all matters of government, the most glaring example being his insistence on receiving reports that itemised all of the amounts owed to each officer. A matter that could easily have been delegated to any number of competent officials was unnecessarily complicated, and left to linger, unresolved, for seven years. These delays impinged unreasonably on soldiers' careers as they were made to wait indefinitely on the crown bureaucracy to process individual applications. A consequence of this predicament, in Cuéllar's case, was a loss of salary earnings incurred by attendance at court, which amounted to a staggering nine years of his career. This was an unexpected find for this study; one that was not restricted to Captain Cuéllar either. And it transpired at a time when Spain was heavily engaged on multiple fronts, when the need for soldiers under arms was unprecedented. If we adjudge Cuéllar to have been, on the whole, a decent soldier, eager to ply his trade, then we have to take to task the system that was in place for not utilising him effectively. It may be that this situation was exacerbated for officers rather than the rank and file, because their cohort was heavily oversubscribed by comparison. It may have suited the crown to have a large pool of officers on hand at any given moment. But this scenario was also counter-productive. As alluded to above, it fostered anti-social behaviour and corruption among idle soldiers who congregated in the capital in growing numbers while waiting for resolution of their affairs at court. The cyclical nature of these

[896] AGI Contratación 2933, Papeles de Armada 1567/88, unfoliated, *cédula*, Aranjuez, 23 de Mayo 1590.

[897] AGS Consejo de Hazienda (CJH) 389, unfoliated, Relación de lo que se deve a los capitanes, oficiales y soldados que han venido de Flandes con certificaciones de lo que alcançan de sus sueldos.

circumstances fostered an inherent corruption while on active service as well, as officers sought to capitalise financially, by whatever means available, to compensate for uncertain pay, and the prospect of being cashiered at the next muster; initiating the next cycle of unemployment.

Within this flux, the documentation offers us some glimpses of Cuéllar's efforts to foster a personal image commensurate with the status of his rank; one that conforms to the military's propensity for flamboyant conspicuous consumption. In a nod to fashionable custom, in Brazil, Cuéllar had various pages in his service on the *Concepción*; perhaps a hint of elevated social pretensions following his promotion to captain? In any case, Eguino had them all dismissed when he arrested Cuéllar, and put them to work as labourers on the construction of a new fort at San Vicente.[898] When assigned to Lisbon, he brought with him, more modestly, a single page. In the *Carta* he described his clothing as the typical ensemble of shirt (*camisa*), doublet (*jubón*) and linen breeches (*calçones de lienço*).[899] In Brazil, it was noted that he also possessed a fine velvet jacket ('un bestido de terciopelo que tenía').[900] For personal adornment he wore a gold chain, worth, he claimed, one thousand *reales*, and a scapular of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity ('unas reliquías que yo llebaba de mucha estima en un habitillo de la Sanctíssima Trinidad')[901], both of which were stolen from him in Ireland. In his petition of 1585, Cuéllar claimed that during his time in Brazil he spent over one thousand ducats for his upkeep.[902] The expedition lasted for almost three years, which, by inference, would suggest that he expended an average of 330 ducats each year. If true, this would suggest a degree of extravagance that was untenable, given that his annual salary amounted to only two hundred ducats. It might also imply that Cuéllar sustained this lavishness through illicit entrepreneurial activities on a more grandiose scale than the criminal charge for pilfering a single barrel of wine might suggest (see p. 32). Alternatively, if the claim was an exaggeration, then he would not have been the first, or last, to submit an inflated expense claim to his employer. All in all, even though these are only brief glimpses, there is sufficient evidence for us to regard Cuéllar as a man of his time, with all of the social and cultural foibles of the period. As a captain he had attained a social status commensurate with that of an *hidalgo*, a minor noble: He liked to dress fashionably and had pages to attend him; he was educated to a certain level, could pass as a good Catholic, if not a particularly devout or pious one, and was conversant in at least one genre of the popular literature of the day. His adopted livelihood was arduous, uncertain, and dangerous, where long spells of privation

[898] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question XIX, testimonies of Juna de Guerta and Francisco Alonso, 'le quitó los moços de su servicio y le dezía a el dicho capitán [Cuéllar] que lo abía de hazer yra trabaxar a el fuerte que allí se hazía.'
[899] Cuéllar, *Carta*, pp. 206, 208.
[900] AGI Escribanía 1069B, Question IX, testimonies of Juan Gudial and Alonso Moreno.
[901] Cuéllar, *Carta*, p. 208.
[902] AGS GyM 171, f.202.

were interspersed with short periods of cash-rich affluence. Such a livelihood lent itself to bouts of hard-living and high-spending; extravagances usually associated with the perceived dissolute lifestyle of soldiers.

The *Carta* and Ireland

In Chapter Two, we saw how Cuéllar survived in Ireland through an ability to adapt to a variety of different circumstances. His year-long trek from County Sligo to Edinburgh culminated in a deliverance of sorts, when he reached the Spanish Netherlands, in August 1589. During a period of recuperation at Antwerp he composed his *Carta*, the extraordinary account of his survival among the Gaelic Irish. Nothing else like it emerged from the Armada campaign. It is a fascinating text, and one of the elements that makes Captain Cuéllar such an interesting character to research and study. Most surviving Armada documentation consists of formal reports, official statements by survivors to crown officials, or diaries composed at the time. They tend to describe the conduct of the campaign, the condition of Armada vessels that returned to Spain, the numbers that were lost en route, the whereabouts of survivors, etc. Cuéllar's account, for the most part, is somewhat disconnected from the actual campaign, as he commenced his account after the climactic battle of Gravelines. Even so, it offers a unique insight into the Armada experience from the perspective of one who became stranded in Ireland, one of the lost souls of the Armada. His manner of relating the ordeals of survival is harrowing, as much for today's reader, as for those whom Cuéllar envisaged reading it. As a contemporary account its content was newsworthy, and there was an appetite in Spain for news from abroad. During the later sixteenth century, printed news pamphlets, *relaciones de sucesos*, were popular. According to Henry Ettinghausen, they were 'virtually the only form of printed news produced in Golden Age Spain' and had their origins in precisely this kind of account: 'the letters of missionaries and businessmen and in the dispatches of soldiers and diplomats scattered across a world.'[903] Most newsworthy, he pointed out, were 'victories, whether Spanish or not, against Spain's enemies; and the activities of the monarchy, especially royal visits.[904] The 1588 campaign was perhaps exceptional, due to the scale of the fleet and the numbers of nobility that participated. Research by Mercedes Agulló y Cobo has shown that at least six printed pamphlets were circulated that reported on the precursor to the Armada campaign: the Spanish invasion of the Azores in 1582-83.[905] At least three separate publications survive from coverage of the 1588 campaign.[906] Given its topicality, it is not surprising that

[903] Ettinghausen H., 'The News in Spain: *Relaciones de sucesos* in the Reigns of Philip III and IV', in *European History Quarterly*, Vol.14, no.1, January 1984, pp. 1-2.
[904] Ibid., p. 3.
[905] Agulló y Cobo, M., *Relaciones de Sucesos I: Años 1477-1619*, C.S.I.C., Madrid, 1966, pp. 25-26.
[906] Ibid., p. 28.

copies were made of the *Carta*, and that two ended up in separate archives in Madrid

The account of the shipwreck is a remarkably vivid passage; one of a series of memorable episodes recounted with dramatic flourishes that seems characteristic of Cuéllar. Many of his recollections were evidently seared into his memory; others seem hazy, as if the passage of time, or the trauma he experienced, diminished his ability to recall events. Some commentators have been sceptical of the text's authenticity: American director, Eric Fraad, who used Cuéllar's story as the medium for a theatrical production that incorporated Renaissance music, was initially suspicious. In a documentary entitled 'Náufragos en Irlanda', broadcast in Spain in 2013 and 2014, he admitted that when he first read the document he believed that it was a fraud, that Fernández Duro, who published it in the 19th century, must have written it himself.[907] Neil Hanson, the author of an Armada history wondered 'if the incessant catalogue of disasters, near misses and miraculous escapes that he recounts can really all have happened to one person in so short a compass of time?'[908] Felipe Fernández-Armesto qualified his acceptance of the letter's authenticity by acknowledging that it would be difficult not to be sceptical of Cuéllar's claims. He conceded that 'in short, the letter would be hailed as a masterpiece of literary contrivance, were its basic framework not verifiably true. It is hard to resist the feeling that the author must have modified the narrative to give it universal significance and to make of it a mixture of fable, satire, parable, epic and cautionary tale.'[909]

Our study found that where the narrative can be referenced against the historical record, it accords very well with established accounts. The presence of English troops at Streedagh is confirmed by the reports of Crown officials, as are the activities of O'Rourke and MacClancy in sheltering Armada survivors. A lack of corroborating material for certain episodes has resulted in a lingering suspicion of, if not contrivance, exaggeration; most notably, the purported stand-off with Fitzwilliam's troops at Rosclogher. Nevertheless, while there is no other account of the siege of Rosclogher, the Lord Deputy's force was certainly in the vicinity of Lough Melvin and Cuéllar's estimation of the size of that force was accurate. Cuéllar's commentary on the Irish landscape, people, and culture, reveals a talent for social observation, which also stands up to scrutiny. The descriptions of Gaelic life, individuals and locations are accepted by most commentators as accurate, as are the depictions of diet and clothing. Fernández-Armesto regarded his description of life at Rosclogher as 'the most remarkable in the entire narrative, in which

[907] See also online feature http://www.vulgo.ie/features/the-making-of-shipwrecked-by-eric-fraad/
[908] Hanson, N., *The confident hope of a miracle: the true history of the Spanish Armada*, London, pp.422-23.
[909] Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada*, p. 256.

Cuéllar steps out of the character he has cast for himself and becomes an urban sophisticate marooned in a sort of pastoral idyll.'[910] Although it was not intended as a military assessment of Ireland, the *Carta* conforms to the prevailing Spanish military view of the Irish landscape as a harsh and poor land. His depiction of the inhabitants as warlike savages ('salvajes') likewise conveys the impression of a society that existed beyond the rule of law. The *Carta* has an enduring appeal, not because of outstanding literary qualities: it cannot be considered a work of literature. It remains popular because it contains such an entertaining mixture of intrigue, danger, and adventure, as well as the curiosity Cuéllar exhibited in his commentary about the exotic lifestyle of the savage 'others' (the Gaelic Irish), whose way of life was to be utterly transformed within a generation.

Cuéllar compared his experiences to those in knightly romances. The comparison, however, is slightly misleading. The *Carta* is not a tale of chivalry. In many respects it was at odds with the genre, and even subverted some of its central tenets. The most famous knightly hero, the aristocratic Amadís de Gaula, was a loyal vassal of his monarch who set out to win new kingdoms for the king and personal glory for himself. According to Ramón Sánchez, 'Amadís reflected the monarchical world view.'[911] Captain Cuéllar, undoubtedly, also regarded himself as a loyal servant of Philip II and most likely viewed the conquest of England as a potentially glorious chapter for the nation, and for him personally. All of this would be consistent with the knightly romances, and indeed, with the chronicles of the conquistadors. But the tenor of the *Carta*, and many of Cuéllar's pronouncements in the text, ran contrary to the established sentiments of the romances. At the outset of the account, the Armada had already failed, which was immediately at odds with the aspirational quest of any knightly tale. What transpired in the *Carta* was a tale of personal survival that owed nothing to the failed 'Enterprise of England'. Furthermore, the aristocrats, the social elite, were portrayed as hapless, despite their wealth and social distinctions, and perished, almost to a man in Ireland. It was left to the commoners and the rank and file who survived, to bury them. This was exemplified by Cuéllar's treatment of Diego Enríquez. Thus the *Carta* was at odds with the aristocratic tenor of the literature it claimed to mimic. In fact, the principal Spanish aristocrats in Cuéllar's tale, exemplified by Medina Sidonia and Francisco de Bobadilla, were the villains. Moreover, the king of Scotland (James VI) was portrayed as 'a nobody'. Within a monarchical world view such a depiction of kingship was distinctly anti-establishment. When one takes into account Cuéllar's altercations with officials of higher standing than himself, such sentiments, perhaps, are consistent with an individual who had a propensity for

[910] Fernández-Armesto, The Spanish Armada, pp. 260-61.
[911] Sánchez, R., 'The First Captivity Narrative: Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's 1542 Relación', in *Proceedings of the II Conference of SEDERI* (1992) p. 265.

insubordination. From that point of view it contains a valuable insight into the state of morale in the fleet after the battle of Gravelines, in particular, the reported atmosphere of alienation towards Medina Sidonia's entourage on the flagship.

There were at least three palpable considerations that prompted Cuéllar to write his account: firstly, he wished to inform his acquaintances in Spain that he was still alive; secondly, having survived an ordeal that was, without doubt, extraordinary, he felt a compulsion to tell his story knowing that it was remarkable tale. Having already swapped stories with other survivors along the way, by the time he reached Antwerp, it may be that he was encouraged to set down his tale, assured that the people back home would be fascinated with what he had to say. Lastly, and perhaps most significantly, Cuéllar sought to defend his character. He believed his reputation had been unjustly sullied by the court-martial. He accused Medina Sidonia and the Don Francisco de Bobadilla of treating him dishonorably, and he used the outcome of his appeal to castigate them in a high-minded, moralistic manner. In Chapter Five, we saw how the initial decision to execute him was not personal, merely a random selection to stave off potential mutiny in the fleet by condemning two accused in an exemplary manner, rather than execute all who were guilty of a mass insubordination. Nevertheless, the tone of self-righteous indignation with which he related that episode, is sufficient to suggest that it was important to Cuéllar to present his side of the story, to set the record straight.

Old Soldiers Never Die

In 1951, General Douglas MacArthur was dismissed as commander of American forces in Korea. Shortly afterwards, he addressed a joint meeting of both houses of Congress in Washington. Bidding farewell, he closed his speech by recalling the lyrics of a popular First World War melody:

> I still remember the refrain of one of the most popular barrack ballads of that day which proclaimed most proudly that old soldiers never die, they just fade away. And like the old soldier of that ballad, I now close my military career and just fade away, an old soldier who tried to do his duty as God gave him the light to see that duty.[912]

MacArthur's final words, rather fittingly, sum up the way in which Captain Cuéllar's military service concluded. After participating in the defence of Spanish interests abroad for nearly three decades, a most tumultuous period, Cuéllar's largely successful career as a professional soldier slowly receded into obscurity. We do not know his ultimate fate; he merely fades from the pages of history in possession of a personal reference from the King of Spain. Overall, Captain Cuéllar comes across as an officer who was very competent in some aspects of his profession, but with

[912] His speech is presented online at http://www.thisdayinquotes.com/2011/04/old-soldiers-never-die-they-just-fade.html

notable shortcomings in other areas. The demands of his office required him to be resourceful and adaptable in changeable circumstances. Captaincy necessitated a broad skill-set, demanding proficiency in administrative and human resource management, leadership, and combat techniques. As we have seen Cuéllar's military service incorporated a broad scope of experiences. Through his experiences we have come to see how precarious the prospects of a career officer could be. Because of the diverse nature of his activities he has served as an ideal focal-point for an exploration of his profession. His experiences have proven to be instructive on many topics: troop mobilisation, promotion, remuneration, combat, military justice; bureaucracy, and so on. The shortcomings of his conduct might be regarded as a weakness, his failure to attain high command rendering him insignificant in comparison with senior commanders who achieved power and influence. But the outcome of Cuéllar's career is more indicative of the majority who enlisted. Therein lies his value for the present investigation.

Captain Cuéllar set out to achieve renown as a soldier through, as Don Quixote proclaimed in his discourse on arms and letters, personal feats of arms: 'por el valor de mi brazo y filos de mi espada.' On the evidence of the documentation uncovered by this study, his feats of arms achieved a measure of notoriety, though not always how he envisaged they would be. During the course of his career, Cuéllar also dabbled in the world of letters, when, besides the formal texts that were submitted to state agencies, he composed his *Carta*. Its survival through later manuscript copies also testifies to an element of notoriety, due, in part, perhaps, to his inflammatory remarks about some of the luminaries of the day. Don Quixote may have underlined the differences between the domains of arms and letters, but as we have seen with Captain Cuéllar, they were closely intertwined. As much as Cuéllar's identity was bound up with the ideals of martial prowess, his career progression was ultimately dependent on the discourse of letters to succeed. And there is a certain irony how, after all of his endeavours, it was the written word that should have the biggest influence on his career, and how we remember him: firstly, written depositions saw to it that he was exonerated for his conduct in Brazil, and led to the annulment of his death sentence in 1588; secondly, Cuéllar, through his *Carta*, might well have unwittingly engineered the premature end to his career if it was the case that Medina Sidonia took exception to what he had written, fifteen years earlier; lastly, it is only because of the publication of the *Carta*, by Fernández Duro, and not his feats of arms as a soldier that we have become acquainted with Captain Cuéllar and his enthralling career.

Appendix

Introductory Notes

In this section transcriptions and translations of ten of the most significant documents relating to Captain Cuéllar's military service are presented. Spanish transcriptions are offered first, followed by English translations. The documents are presented in the chronological order in which they were originally composed. They serve two purposes: on the one hand, they provide new samples of texts written by, or composed on behalf of, Cuéllar; on the other, the selection represents examples of types of standard documentation that was issued to soldiers. Their texts exhibit the formulas and conventions that were typically used in the documentation of the period. Four of the appended documents were composed by Cuéllar (Appendices Two, Three, Six, and Eight); the others were issued to him by various agencies. In effect, these appendices offer an alternative overview of Cuéllar's career.

Appendix One: consists of a transcription of the royal patent that bestowed Cuéllar with his captaincy. Philip II sanctioned the award in Lisbon, on 6 August 1581, while preparations for the Armada de Magallanes to embark for Brazil were progressing at Seville. The patent was drafted at the behest of Antonio de Eraso, secretary of the Council of the Indies, in Seville, on 1 September, on receipt of instructions from the king to that effect. It was endorsed by seven officials of Seville's Casa de Contratación, and witnessed by Cuéllar's future nemesis in Brazil, Andrés de Eguino, in his capacity as inspector and comptroller of the fleet. The original document did not surface during archival research. This certified transcript of the patent was discovered, together with a petition which Cuéllar submitted to the Council of the Indies in 1586 (Appendix Three). Later in his career, Cuéllar received two other similar patents: the first, he received when assigned to the proposed Armada de Barlovento in 1601; secondly, in 1602, he was re-issued with a new patent when the Barlovento scheme was shelved and the assembled flotilla re-constituted as a new component of the Indies Guard.

The text opens with a highly formulaic rendition of Philip II's titles, real and notional. Cuéllar's status as a *capitán de mar y guerra* is clearly specified by the text. This designation conferred authority of overall command on the vessel, over both complements of sailors and soldiers. The wording is explicit on this point, and on the requirement for all parties to observe Cuéllar's rank as captain. This provision, however, may relate as much to concern for the observance of royal authority as for that of the individual identified by the document. Another

significant detail in the text for this study was the stipulation that Cuéllar receive an annual salary of two hundred ducats, and its equivalent in the standard denomination for financial accounting: 37,500 maravedíes. This figure represented the lowest rate of remuneration Cuéllar was to receive as a captain.

Appendix Two: this document consists of a *memorial* composed by Cuéllar and submitted to the Council of War in January 1585; the second of at least three petitions submitted by him during the period 1584-86, requesting salary arrears. The earliest of his petitions held in Simancas was submitted by him to the Council of War in late 1584 (see p. 147). It did not conform at all to the usual protocols and conventions, and was not processed by the secretariat. Cuéllar composed the persent document in early 1585 and submitted it, once again, to the Council of War. This time it conformed to established precepts. The text offers a brief outline by Cuéllar of his career to date. We are told that he began his career in the Indies and participated in the conquest of Portugal, but the main emphasis is on his participation in the Armada de Magallanes expedition (1581-84). Cuéllar highlighted the difficulty of the expedition and that the financial cost he incurred (one thousand ducats) while participating in the expedition impoverished him. While the claim was probably truthful, financial poverty was also a common rhetorical device in most petitions of this nature. Secretarial notation indicates that the petition was redirected to Alonso de Eraso, secretary of the Council of the Indies; the council to which Cuéllar should have addressed his petition in the first instance. However, the document did not leave the War secretariat. A lack of any further notation suggests that the document remained untouched until it was subsequently filed in the Simancas archive among other papers pertaining to the Council of War. Failure to process this application might be explained by a certain level of disruption caused by Philip II's departure for his state visit to the kingdom of Aragon shortly after its submission. The king did not return to Madrid until March 1586.

Appendix Three: after a fourteen-month interval (March 1586), Cuéllar re-applied for the salary arrears, adding a new request for financial support (*ayuda de costa*) as he had, by then, been at court for eighteen months without an income. His application coincided with the return of Philip II to Madrid. On this occasion, he submitted a new petition to the Council of the Indies. In support of his claim, Cuéllar enclosed a certified transcript of his captain's patent (Appendix One). This was necessary because his name had not featured on the original listing of officers assigned to the Magallanes expedition (see p. 116-17). In most respects, the current petition closely resembles the form and content of the previous submission (Appendix Two). On this occasion, Cuéllar mentioned that he enlisted in the military at the age of fifteen; an interesting detail that does not feature elsewhere. Scribal notation on the document indicates that the petition was processed in the secretariat. Cuéllar had addressed the application to Secretary Juan de Ledesma,

but the clerk who reviewed the application directed it, instead, to Licentiate Diego Garcías, another official within the secretariat. The petition was accepted for consideration, and was included on the agenda for the council meeting of 21 June 1586. Councillors approved Cuéllar's request, which was noted by the secretary on the document, along with the date and resolution to pay Cuéllar his arrears and the *ayuda de costa*.

Appendix Four: addressed to the Marquis of Santa Cruz, this royal *cédula* sanctioned the assignment of Cuéllar as an adjutant to Santa Cruz (*entretenido cerca de la persona*) in Lisbon. Dated 21 June (exactly one year after his latest petition was sanctioned by the Council of the Indies), it was endorsed (*refrendada*) by Andrés de Alava, secretary of the Council of War (for the marine), and countersigned (*señalada*) by Don Alonso de Vargas. The language used on the document is standard formulaic rhetoric. A similar template framed the text of another *cédula* drafted on the same day for six 'Magallanes' colleagues, also despatched to Lisbon to serve under Santa Cruz as *entretenidos*.[913] Curiously, while Cuéllar was issued his own personal commission, his colleagues (including Captains Juan Gutiérrez Garibay and Alonso de las Alas) were issued with a joint certificate. The assignment signalled the end of Cuéllar's lengthy sojourn at court, initiating his departure for Lisbon, and his fateful participation in the 'Enterprise of England' the following summer. The document was an important find, providing us with a significant date, but it does not offer any broader insights into Cuéllar's military service.

Appendix Five: this mandate (*mandato*) was drafted at Binche at the behest of the Duke of Parma on 25 October 1589. It was one of two that Cuéllar received during his service in the Low Countries. The other was issued to him by Archduke Albert in 1596. Both mandates authorised Cuéllar's appointment as staff officer within Parma's and Albert's personal entourages. In this instance, Parma used his authority as Captain General of the Army of Flanders to mandate the induction of Cuéllar, and some hundreds of other Armada survivors, into the Army of Flanders. We know from his *Carta* that Cuéllar was at Antwerp on 4 October, so we may assume that he was summoned to Binche, Parma's private residence, for his appointment. Like the *cédula* in Appendix Four, the document is brief. The the language used in the text is, again, formulaic and succinct. It acknowledges that Cuéllar served in the Armada of 1588, that he was shipwrecked in Ireland, and subsequently reached the Spanish Netherlands from Scotland. However, the reference is devoid of detail, or dates. One important detail was the salary specification that went with the position. A monthly stipend of forty *escudos* represented the highest remuneration Cuéllar was to receive during his career. The

[913] AGS GyM 206, f. 277.

document is significant in that it provides us with details of Cuéllar's assignment to Parma's entourage, and salary details. Within the broader context of his military service, this document represents a decisive turning point for Cuéllar; the moment in which he left behind the disgrace of the Armada court-martial and began the process of rebuilding his career within Spain's elite land force, and in the service of the greatest general of his generation.

Appendix Six: in March 1591, Cuéllar was granted a leave of absence to return to Spain. By October he was at court where he applied for salary arrears he claimed were owed to him from the 1588 campaign, and a *merced* recommended by Parma. As it transpired, less than two months wages were outstanding on his account, which would not be reimbursed to him until 1607. He had more luck with the *merced*, which was granted by the king through the Council of State (see p. 92). This document, submitted to the Council of War, activated those petitions. It survives in a poor state of preservation, with much of the right-hand side of the sheet having disintegrated. This has impinged on the text, though it has been possible to infer the missing text from what remains, which is noted in the transcription presented here. The handwriting is neat and legible, and clearly discernible as Cuéllar's. Following the pattern of his earlier memorials (Appendices Two and Three), Cuéllar offered a typically brief synopsis of his service in the 1588 campaign though, for obvious reasons, there was no mention of the court-martial. Instead, he emphasised the rigours of his ordeals in Ireland and Scotland, using this as the pretext to claim recompense for lost earnings and just cause for the receipt of a *merced*. There is his, by now familiar, allusion to financial hardship arising from his service in the king's name. Marginal scribal notes inserted in the War secretariat mirror the pattern of his 1586 petition. On this occasion, the rubric of Secretary of War, Esteban de Ibarra, identified his administrative oversight of the application. Ibarra noted the council's resolution to forward the request to Don Alonso de Bazán (Captain-General of the reconstituted elements of the Armada) at Lisbon, including instructions to draft a *cédula* instructing Bazán to review Cuéllar's account and pay him fairly what was owed to him. When the document was drawn up satisfactorily Ibarra endorsed the conclusion of the application.

Appendix Seven: the most concise inclusion in this selection of documents is this license issued to Cuéllar by Archduke Albert that sanctioned his return to Spain in 1598. It is more or less identical in form to an earlier license of Parma's that granted a notional three-month leave of absence to him in 1591. The significance, in this instance, is that this text marked the end of Cuéllar's service in the Low Countries. Although brief, it was greatly valued for providing a firm date (5 August) to establish when Cuéllar's tenure with the Army of Flanders concluded. Besides citing a generic 'private matters' as the reason for Cuéllar's departure, the text does not offer any further insight. Otherwise, it illustrates the rather nondescript nature of a typical

leave-license issued to soldiers. Without them, however, individuals absent from their units could be accused of desertion.

Appendix Eight: of the four documents written by Cuéllar presented here, his *relación de servicios*, composed in 1604, is the most comprehensive. Submitted to the Council of State (for Italy), and directed to its secretary, the Count of Villalonga, it differs from his earlier *memoriales* in that it provides a much more extensive outline of his career. Here we have a veteran with lengthy service seeking recognition from the crown for his services in their entirety, rather than, as in 1585, 1586, and 1591, requesting recompense following specific operations (ie. the Magallanes expedition and 1588 campaign). Cuéllar sought to have an *entretenimiento* awarded to him in 1600, re-granted, and increased to forty *escudos*; the rate of remuneration he had received from Archduke Albert, and the highest that could be paid to him as a captain. He also sought an additional, unspecified income or pension [*renta*].

Whereas, the 1586 and 1591 petitions run to three hundred, and two hundred and forty words respectively, the 1604 *relación* amounts to nearly one thousand words. In contrast to his earlier memorials, Cuéllar omitted any reference to his initial service in the Indies. Instead, the account opens with his participation in the conquest of Portugal. Thereafter, he related his career from the award of his captaincy, through the Magallanes expedition and subsequent campaigns, to his final voyage in 1602, with Don Luis de Córdoba, and dismissal from that unit. The latter section of the account is interesting. Cuéllar informs us that throughout his service under Don Luis de Córdoba (1601-02), he received no pay. Further, he was at pains to demonstrate the care and diligence he exhibited in ensuring the troops under his charge maintained strict discipline at all times, which he reinforced by referencing the official review (*visita y residencia*) of his performance at the end of the 1602 tour of duty. This exemplary behaviour, he believed, should hae been rewarded, but instead, in his opinion, he was unjustly dismissed. Cuéllar was clearly aggrieved. Echoing the kind of sentiments exhibited in the *Carta*, and in his testimony to the Casa de Contratación in 1584, he hinted at vested interests behind his dismissal; inferring that he was dismissed in order to make way for other, apparently well-connected individuals, of lesser ability than he.

The 1604 *relación* is an intriguing document. While there are some very interesting personal asides, the arrangement of the text raises some questions as to the accuracy of some of its details. Of the Magallanes expedition Cuéllar chose to highlight his participation in the rout of the French in Paraiba in 1584, rather than the clash with the English at San Vicente. As in the 1591 petition, he described the great hardships he endured in Ireland and Scotland; exaggerating the ordeal somewhat by claiming that he was lost for a year and a half (the *Carta* covers a

twelve-month period). He then claimed to have served in Flanders for ten years, which is not strictly true. His two stints with the Army of Flanders lasted, for at most, six years, spread over ten years, interspersed by his return to Spain in 1591, and subsequent stint in Piedmont with the Duke of Savoy. Curiously, and perhaps for effect, he chose to place this service after the conclusion of his service in the Low Countries, claiming that he served there for two years (1598-1600). Again, this is not true; this study has accounted for no more than a twelve-month period in Piedmont, during 1592-93, which was corroborated by his service papers (Appendix Nine). It must be stressed that Cuéllar did not invent any fictitious achivements or postings, or lie about his career; he merely opted to use a little poetic license in his relación in order to pad out and rearrange the various episodes of his career in a manner that would present his services for better effect.

In the last paragraph, Cuéllar requested that his service papers be reviewed once more, as had been done in 1600, something which, he stated would corrobate his claims. This led to an inventory of service papers compiled by clerks in the council secretariat. Most likely, it was included with the *relación* when it was forwarded to the council for consideration. Cuéllar submitted the document on 31 March 1604, and dealt with by the council on 1 June. A *consulta* was then forwarded to Philip III for his decision.[914] The king consented to an increase of the original *entretenimiento* by five *escudos* (from twenty-five *escudos*, to thirty), and not the extra fifteen Cuéllar hoped to receive. The request for an additional pension was ignored. The outcome was noted by the council secretary on Cuéllar's original petition, and when a *cédula* was drafted to authorise the award, he inscribed his endorsement ('queda hecha') terminating the application. Later, both documents (*relación* and service papers) were transferred to the Simancas archive; but, although they were filed among the papers of the Council of State, at some point in the intervening period, they were categorised as distinct documents, and placed in separate *legajos*. The service papers are presented consecutively below.

Appendix Nine: uncovering Cuéllar's inventory of service papers provided an unexpected windfall for this study. As already stated in the Introduction (see pp. 12-13), the service papers inventory remains the most significant single source of information about Cuéllar's career. The document is a simple listing of various papers issued to him by various state agencies between 1584 and 1603. However, it is not a definitive listing. Sixteen individual documents are listed, ten of which were recovered during archival research; three of them are presented here (Appendices Four, Five, and Seven). Outstanding documents mentioned by the inventory, but not recovered, included: the letters of recommendation by Parma, the Duke of Savoy and Archduke Albert; the certificate of Governor Antonio de Olivera; various

[914] AGS Estado 1601, unfoliated, *consulta*, Napoles, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, 1 June 1604.

orders issued to him Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Montesclaros; the licence issued to Cuéllar by Medina Sidonia that sanctioned his attendance at the royal court, which enabled his submission of the 1604 *relación*. Nevertheless, the brief synopsis of each documented contained in the inventory contains a veritable goldmine of information. Every line of text reveals something new about Cuéllar's whereabouts and activities. Taken as a whole, the service papers offer a chronological framework for the career, indicating most of his major assignments between the years 1581-1603. Importantly, the inventory provides a firm and reliable point of reference from which to compare information taken from various petitions by Cuéllar that were recovered. Some of these, as we have seen above, are not wholly accurate.

Appendix Ten: the last significant document presented here is Philip III's letter of recommendation on Cuéllar's behalf to the viceroy of New Spain, the Marquis of Montesclaros. It, effectively, marks the end of the paper trail uncovered for this study. Given the nature of the text and the comprehensive manner in which Cuéllar service record was described for Montesclaros, it suggests the likelihood that Cuéllar departed for Mexico shortly afterwards. Composed in March 1606, the letter runs to about half the length of the 1604 *relación* (just under five hundred words). Most of the text is devoted to another overview of Cuéllar's military service. In fact, the 1604 *relación* appears to have served as the template from which the information contained in this letter was copied. The same chronology for the career that we observed in the *relación* is followed here, including the erroneous statement that Cuéllar's service in Piedmont took place during 1598-1600. Even so, the document is of great interest, not least because it depicts the King interceding on Cuéllar's behalf. The text confirms that by early 1606 Cuéllar had been at court for three years, that he had no income, and was financially destitute. The most interesting facet of the letter, however, is the instruction to Montesclaros to provide a position for Cuéllar within his colonial administration. This detail holds out the possibility that Cuéllar settled in Mexico, or perhaps even followed Montesclaros to Lima when he was transferred to the viceroyalty of Peru, the following year. However, investigation of that eventuality falls beyond the scope of this study.

Appendix One

AGI Indiferente General 2676.
Título de capitán, copia hecha en Marzo de 1586.

Este es un traslado bien y fielmente sacado corregido y conçertado con un título y provisión rreal original [1 Septiembre 1581] de su Magestad rreferendado de Antonio de Erasso su secretario que a las espaldas tenía otras firmas su thenor de lo qual es el que se sigue.

Don Phelipe, por la gracía de Dios, rey de Castilla, de León, Aragón, de las dos Sicilias, del Hierusalem, de Portugal, de Navarra, de Granada, de Toledo, de Valencia, de Galiçia, de Mallorca, de Sevilla, de Cerdeña, de Córdova, de Córçega, de Murcia, de Jaen, de los Algarves, de Algeçira, de Gibraltar, de las Islas de Canarias, de las Indias orientales y ocidentales, yslas y Tierra Firme del Mar Océano, Archiduque de Austria, Duque de Borgoña, de Bravante, y Milán, Conde de Abspurg, de Flandes, y de Tirol, y de Barcelona, Señor de Vizcaya, y de Molina, etc.

Por quanto para algunos efectos tocantes a nuestro servicio y al bien y seguridad de las nuestras Indias, havemos mandado juntar cierta armada de navíos en el río de Sevilla, y en otros puertos del Andalucía, y proveydo por nuestro Capitán General della a Diego Flores de Valdés, caballero de la orden de Santiago, el qual la está aprestando, y porque combiene señalar capitanes que, debajo de su disciplina y govierno, nos sirban en la dicha jornada cada uno en el navío que le fuere señalado, acatando lo que vos Francisco de Cuéllar, nos havéis servido y esperamos nos serviréis por la presente, os eleximos y nombramos por capitán de la gente de mar y guerra de uno de los navíos de la dicha armada qual os fuere señalado por el dicho Capitán General, y para que en el podáis usar y uséis el dicho ofiçio en los casos y cosas a él anexas y conçernientes, según y de la manera que hasta aquí lo han usado, y al presente lo usan los demás capitanes de navíos de semejantes armadas, y mandamos al dicho general, Diego Flores de Valdés, y a su lugarteniente, almirante, y a otros oficiales, capitanes, soldados, gente de mar y guerra de la dicha armada, y a los nuestros virreyes, presidentes, e oydores de las nuestras audiencias reales de las dichas nuestras Indias, governadores, y otros qualesquier jueçes y justicias dellas, que os ayan y tengan por nuestro capitán del dicho navío, y de la gente que en el andubiere, todo el tiempo que durare la dicha jornada, que usen con vos el dicho ofiçio en los casos y cosas a él anexas y concernientes, según se hace y se deve hazer con los demás capitanes, y que os guarden todas las preheminencias que por raçón del dicho ofiçio os deven ser guardadas sinque os falte cosa alguna, y que en ello no os pongan ni consientan poner dificultad ni contradición que por la presente, os damos poder para usar y exerçer el dicho ofiçio, casso que por ellos o alguno dellos a él no seáis resçivido, y

es nuestra voluntad que ayáis y llebéis de sueldo cada un año con la dicha plaça, ducientos ducados, que balen setenta y cinco mill maravedíes, los quales mandamos a los nuestros oficiales de la dicha armada que os los den y paguen desde el día que con esta, nuestra provisión, os presentaredes ante el dicho nuestro capitán general della en adelante todo el tiempo que sirbieredes el dicho officio, según y a los tiempos que pagaren a los demás capitanes, gentes de mar y guerra de la dicha armada, y que asienten esta nuestra provisión.
En los nuestros libros que han de tener y sobrescripta, y librada dellos, la tornen originalmente a vos, el dicho Francisco de Cuéllar, para que la tengáis por vuestro título. Dada en Lisboa, a seis de Agosto de mill y quinientos y ochenta y un años.
Yo el Rey.

Yo, Antonio de Eraso, secretario de su Magestad Católica, la fiçe scribir por su mandado, Licenciado Diego Gasca de Salazar, Licenciado Alonso Martínez Espadero, Licenciado Don Diego de Zúñiga, el Doctor Lope de Bayllo, el Licenciado Ynojossa, Registrada Pedro de Ledesma, Cançiller San Joan de Sardeneta, tomose la razón desta provisión real de su Magestad en los libros de su real hacienda en Sevilla, a primero de Septiembre de mill y quinientos y ochenta y un años. Andrés de Eguino.

Corregido y conçertado fue este dicho traslado con el dicho título y provisión rreal original que está en poder del dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar en la villa de Madrid, a veynte dos días del mes de Março de mill y quinientos y ochenta y seis años. Siendo presente por testigos Niculás de Medrano, y Pedro Sarmiento, y Francisco de Bergas, estantes en esta corte, e yo, Gaspar de Castro, escrivano real de su Magestad público en su corte, rresidente en ella. Fuy presente y fiçe mi signo.

En testimonio de verdad
Gaspar de Castro

AGI Indiferente General 2676
Document Type: Captain's Patent, certified copy made in March 1586 (originally issued September 1581).

This is a transcript well and faithfully made, corrected and matched with an original deed and original royal provision of His Majesty endorsed by Antonio de Eraso, His secretary, which on the back has other signatures, the tenor of which is as follows:

Don Philip, by the grace of God, King of Castile, of Leon, Aragon, the two Sicilies, of Jerusalem, Portugal, Navarre, of Granada, of Toledo, of Valencia, of Galicia, of Mallorca, of Seville, of Sardinia, of Cordoba, of Corsica, of Murcia, of Jaen, of the Algarves, of Algerciras, of Gibraltar, of the Canary Islands, of the Indies of the East and the West, of the islands and mainland [*Tierra Firme*] of the Ocean Sea, Archduke of Austria, Duke of Burgundy, of Brabant and Milan, Count of Habsburg, of Flanders, of Tyrol and Barcelona, Lord of Vizcaya and of Molina, etc.
Inasmuch as, for certain purposes touching our service and the good and security of our Indies, we have ordered to be assembled a certain fleet of ships in the River of Seville, and in other ports of Andalusia, and appointed as our Captain-General of it, Diego Flores de Valdés, knight of the Order of Santiago, who is making it ready, and because it is necessary to appoint captains who may serve us under his discipline and direction in the said expedition, each one in the vessel to which he may be appointed, with due regard to how you, Francisco de Cuéllar, have served us, and hoping that you will serve us by these presents. We choose and appoint you captain of the sailors and soldiers of whichever one of the vessels of the said fleet to which you may be appointed by the said captain-general. And so that you may use the said office in the cases and affairs pertaining and related thereto, in keeping with the manner in which it has been used up to now, and is at present used by the other captains of ships of such like fleets, and we order the said General Diego Flores de Valdés and his lieutenant, vice-admiral and other officers, captains, soldiers and sailors of the said fleet, and to our viceroys, presidents and magistrates of our royal courts of the said our Indies, governors, and whatsoever other judges and justices of them, that they regard and accept you as captain of the said vessel, and of its crew, for the entire duration and time of the said expedition that, with respect to you, and all the cases and affairs pertaining and related to it, they treat the said office as is and must be done in the case of the other captains, and that they observe all the rights of precedence that, by reason of the said office, they must observe in your respect, without fail in anything, and that they should not present, or allow there to be presented, any difficulty or contradiction to you in your exercise of it. By these presents, we give you the power to use and exercise the said office in the event that you are not accepted in it by them, or by anyone of them. And it is our will that as a salary for each year with the said position you should have and receive two hundred ducats, which are worth seventy five

thousand maravedíes, which we order our officials of the said fleet, to give and pay you from the day you present yourself with this our provision before our said Captain General henceforth for the whole time that you serve in the said office, in accordance with, and at the same time as payment is made to the rest of the captains, sailors and soldiers of the said fleet. And that this provision should be entered in our books which they must have, and be given a summary heading [*sobrescripta*] issued from them, the original should be returned to the said Francisco de Cuéllar, so that you may have it as your deed. Issued in Lisbon on 6 August 1581.
I, the King.

I, Antonio de Eraso, secretary of His Catholic Majesty, had it drawn up by His order. Licenciate Diego Gasca de Salazar, Licenciate Alonso Martínez Espadero, Licenciate Don Diego de Zúñiga, Doctor Lope de Bayllo, Licenciate Inojossa, Registrar Pedro de Ledesma, Chancellor San Joan de Sardeneta, verify the authenticity of this royal provision of His Majesty in the books of his royal treasury, in Seville 1 September 1581, Andrés de Eguino.

This transcript was corrected and verified against the said original deed and royal provision which is in the possession of the said Captain Francisco de Cuéllar in the town of Madrid, on 22 March 1586, in the presence of witnesses Nicholas de Medrano, Pedro Sarmiento, and Francisco de Bergas, present in this court. And I, Gaspar de Castro, royal clerk of His Majesty and public [notary] resident in His court, was present and append my signature thereto.

In witness of the veracity thereof,
Gaspar de Castro

Appendix Two

AGS Guerra y Marina 171, f.202.
Petición (memorial), 1585.

[marginal notes]
El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, A xiiii de Enero 1585.

Al Secretario Antonio de Erasso.[915]

S. C. R. M. [Sacra Católica Real Magestad]

El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar dice que él a sido soldado de Vuestra Magestad desde la edad y tiempo que lo pudo ser, y después de aver estado en las Yndias, y servido y halladose en toda la conquista de Portugal, estando a punto y de camino para ir a servir en el ejército de Flandes, Vuestra Magestad y los de su real Consejo de las Yndias, le nombraron por uno de los capitanes de la infantería de la armada que fue al estrecho de Magallanes, lo qual aceptó, aunque otros no lo quisieron, por los manifiestos peligros y trabajos que en la dicha jornada se ofrecían, en la qual ha gastado más de mill ducados para aberse podido sustentar en que, está empeñado, biene enfermo y pobre, y al presente, está con mucha necesidad, suplica a Vuestra Magestad sea servido mandar que se le pague el sueldo que se le debe, o que se le dé alguna parte dél, como se a hecho con otras personas de la dicha armada que por su precisa necesidad los a socorrido vuestro real Consejo de Hazienda, en lo qual recivirá grande bien y merced.

Otrosí, suplica a Vuestra Magestad sea servido mandarle ocupar en lo primero que se ofreciere en las flotas o armadas de las Yndias, conforme a su calidad y oficio, pues de más de lo que a servido y gastado. Se berá por la visita y residencia que se a tomado a los capitanes y ministros de la dicha armada de Magallanes no a resultado culpa ni cargo alguno.

[915] Antonio de Eraso (d. Feb 1586), secretary of the Council of the Indies (1568-85),

AGS Guerra y Marina 171, f.202.
Petition, 1585.

[marginal notes]
Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, 14 January 1585.
To Secretary Antonio de Erasso.

Holy Catholic Royal Majesty

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar says that he has been a soldier of Your Majesty since the age and time that he was able to [become one]. And after being in the Indies, he served and was present for all of the conquest of Portugal, and being about to go to serve in the Army of Flanders, his Majesty, and those of his royal Council of the Indies, nominated him for one of the infantry captains of the fleet that went to the Strait of Magellan, which he accepted, although others did not [do so], due to the manifest danger and hardship that the said voyage offered, in which he expended more than a thousand ducats in order to sustain himself, [as a result of which] he is impoverished, sick, and poor, and at present is in great distress. He implores his Majesty, if he be served, to order that he be paid the salary that is owed to him, or be given part thereof, as has been done for other individuals of the said fleet who, for their particular needs, have been assisted by your royal Council of Finance, by which he would receive great benefit and favour.

Furthermore, he beseeches, if his Majesty is served, to instruct that he be occupied, at the first opportunity that arises, in the *flotas* or fleets of the Indies, corresponding to his rank and office, besides what [he has already] served and spent. One can see that, by the inspection and review which was taken of the captains and officers of the said Armada de Magallanes, no blame or charge resulted on his account.

Appendix Three

AGI Indiferente General 2676 , Petición (memorial), 1586.

[Cover sheet]

[marginal notes]

1586, sobre salarios del Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar

Traslado de título de capitán

[Secretarial notation]

El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar

Suplica se le mande pagar su sueldo del tiempo que sirvió en el armada del Estrecho y que se le haga merced de alguna ayuda de costa, y de los cien ducados que se mandó dar por una vez a cada uno de los capitanes que fueron aquella jornada al tiempo que salieron de estos reynos.

Al señor Licenciado Diego Garcías

hagase quenta con él y paguele lo que se le debe y los cien ducados
En Madrid a 2 de Junio de 1586.

Muy Poderoso Señor,

El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar diçe que a servido a Vuestra Excelencia desde edad de quinçe años en su profesión militar en las Yndias y otras partes, y que últimamente, sirvió en la jornada del estrecho de Magallanes con una compañía de soldados de que fue por capitán por orden y provisión de Vuestra Excelencia en la qual pasó muchos trabajos, y gastó la poca hazienda que tenía, y al presente esta pobre y con mucha necesidad por aber más de año y medio que está en esta corte, esperando que Vuestra Exelencia le haga merced y ocupe en su Real servicio, y para que pueda más perseberar suplica a Vuestra Excelencia le haga merced de darle alguna ayuda de costa y mandar que se le pague enteramente el sueldo que se le debe y ganó en la dicha jornada por razón de aber servido en ella tres años [en] el dicho oficio de capitán, en dos navíos de aquella armada, nombrados la fragata *Santa Catalina*, y *Nuestra Señora de la Concibción* [sic], de los quales dió buena cuenta y de todo lo demás que fue a su cargo como parece por un testimonio de la residencia que se tomó a los oficiales de la dicha armada de que hace presentación juntamente con otro traslado del dicho título y provisión que por Vuestra Excelencia le fue dado para el dicho efecto.

Otrosí, pide y suplica a Vuestra Excelencia mande se le dé cédula para que se le paguen los cien ducados de ayuda de costa de que Vuestra Excelencia le hiço merced por una vez quando fue a servir en la dicha jornada, como se a dado a los capitanes que sirvieron en ella, en lo qual recivirá mucho bien y merced. Francisco de Cuéllar

AGI Indiferente General 2676, Petition (memorial), 1586.

[Cover sheet]

[marginal notes]

1586, concerning the salary of Captain Francisco de Cuéllar.

Transcription of a designation of captaincy

[secretarial notation]

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar

He requests that he be paid his wages for the time he served in the Armada of the Strait, and that he be granted a favour of some financial upkeep [ayuda de costa] and the once-off payment of one hundred ducats that was ordered to be given to each of the captains that went on that voyage at the time of their departure form these kingdoms.

To Licentiate Diego Garcias

Sort his account and pay what is owed to him, and the one hundred ducats.

Madrid, 2 June 1586.

Most Puissant Sire,

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar says that he has served his Excellency since the age of fifteen years in his military profession in the Indies and other parts, and that lately, he served in the voyage to the Strait of Magellan with a company of soldiers of which he went as captain by order and provision of his excellency, in which he endured great difficulties and spent the few resources that he had, and at present he is poor and in great distress for having been at this court for more than a year and a half waiting for Your Excellency to award him a favour and occupy him in his royal service in order that he might persevere further [on his Majesty's behalf]. He beseeches his Excellency to grant him a favour by granting him some living allowance *[ayuda de costa*] and order that the salary be paid in its entirety that he is owed and earned in the said voyage by reason of having served in it [Armada de Magallanes] three years in the said rank of captain in two vessels of that fleet named, the frigate *Santa Catalina*, and *Nuestra Señora de la Concibción* [*Concepción*] of which he gave good account and all the rest that went with his charge [position] as appears by the testimony of the review [*residencia*] that was taken of the officers of the said fleet, which he presents together with a transcription of the said title and provision [of captain] given to him by his Excellency for the same effect.

Furthermore, he asks and beseeches his Excellency to grant him a royal order [*cédula*] by which they will pay him the one hundred ducats of allowance [*ayuda de costa*] which his Excellency granted him as a once-off favour when he went to serve on the said voyage as has been given to the captains who served in it, by which he would receive great benefit and favour. Francisco de Cuéllar.

Appendix Four

AGS Guerra y Marina 206, f.273.
***Cédula*, 1587.**

21 de Junio 1587.

Al Marqués de Santa Cruz en recommendación del Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar.

En teniendo consideración a lo que el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar me a servido y a la boluntad que muestra de continuallo, y que lo ba a hazer en esa armada, le he mandado señalar veinte y cinco escudos de entretenimiento al mes cerca de Vuestra persona, y por tener satisfación suya, por la plática y espiriencia que tiene de cosas de guerra, y el buen çelo con que se emplea en las cosas de mi servicio, os encargo y mando le tengáis por mi encomendado para ocupalle en las que del se ofrecieren conforme a su calidad que dello me terne [sic] por servido.

De Madrid a 21 de Junio 1587.
Yo el Rey.

Refrendada del Secretario Andrés de Alva, señalada de Don Alonso de Vargas.

AGS Guerra y Marina 206, f.273.
***Cédula*, 1587.**

To the Marquis of Santa Cruz recommending Captain Francisco de Cuéllar.

In consideration of how Captain Francisco de Cuéllar has served me, and the willingness he has shown to continue to do so in this fleet, I have instructed that he be assigned to your staff with a monthly salary of twenty five escudos, and being satisfied as to his familiarity with, and experience in matters of war, and the zeal with which he has conducted himself in matters of my service, I charge and order you by my commendation, to accept him by my commendation and to occupy him in whatsoever matters as may arise according to his abilities and I shall consider myself served thereby.

Madrid, 21 June 1587.
I, the King.

Endorsed by Secretary Andrés de Alva, Countersigned by Don Alonso de Vargas.

Appendix Five

AGRB Secretaire d'Etat et de Guerre, Registre aux Ordres no.12, f.120r. Mandato, 1589.

El Duque de Parma y Plasencia.
Illustre veedor y contadores, ut supra. Saved que teniendo consideración a la calidad del Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar y al buen zelo con que, después de aver venido serviendo a su Magestad en su real armada, y perdidose en ella en la costa de Yrlanda el año passado de ochenta y ocho, ha passado últimamente de Escocia a estos estados a continuarlo y emplearse en las occasiones que por acá se fueren offresciendo, para que tanto mejor lo pueda haber conforme a las buenas partes que concurren en su persona nos hemos contentado de señalarle cerca de la nuestra quarenta escudos de entretenimiento al mes, como por tenor de la presente se los señalamos por tanto le haréys el assiento dellos en los libros de vuestros officios desde que se perdió en la dicha armada en adelante para librárselos según como y quando a los demás que tal es nuestra voluntad. Fecha en Binze a 25 de Octubre 1589.

AGRB, Secretaire d'Etat et la Guerre (SEG), Registre aux Ordres no.12, f.120 recto. Document Type: Mandate.

The Duke of Parma and Plasencia.
Illustrious inspector and auditors, ut supra. Know that in consideration of the character of Captain Francisco de Cuéllar and the great zeal with which, while serving in His Majesty's royal fleet, and having been lost on the coast of Ireland in the past year of 1588, he has lately passed from Scotland to these States to continue his service and employ himself in whichever occasions which there should arise, and so that he might all the better do so, and as the good qualities concurring in his person deserve we have been content to assign him to our own person [with] a monthly salary of 40 escudos, which, as set out in these presents, we assign him, so that you shall therefore enter them in the books of your offices from when he was lost in the said fleet onwards, to release those [funds] as and when is done for the others, which is our intent. Dated in Binche, 25 October 1589.

Appendix Six

AGS Guerra y Marina: Legajo 345, f.35
Petición (memorial), 1591.

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El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar

[Sinopsis]
Suplica humillmente a Vuestra Excelencia mande que de qualquier dinero que obiere se le pague el dicho sueldo porque es muy poco, atento que biene muy pobre y enpeñado por los muchos gastos y costas que a hecho para salir de los reynos de Irlanda y Escocia donde se perdió hasta benir a hesta corte sin que para ello se le aya dado ningún socorro ni ayuda de costa.

[Resolución]
que se le dé cédula para Don Alonso De Baçán que le haga fenecer su consulta y pagarle lo que justamente pareciere deber sele.

[Aprobación] Lo proveydo.

[main text]
Muy Poderoso Señor,
El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar dice que fue sirviendo a Vuestra Excelencia con [...][veinte cinco escudos] de entretenemiento al mes en la armada que el Marqués de Santa Cruz juntó en el río de Lisboa para la jornada de Y[nglaterra], en la qual asistió siempre hasta que se perdió en el reyno […] [de Irlan-]da, donde a estado más de siete meses desnudo pasando […] triste vida entre los salbajes de aquel reyno y de a[llí] […] al de Escocia con gran peligro, donde también estubo d[iez] meses muy maltratado y con mucha necesidad y p [...] esperando poder pasar en los estados de Flandes a […] [conti]nuar allí sus servicios como lo hizo muy a costa de su per[sona] y hacienda, y aora ultimamente a benido con licencia […] [y car]ta del Duque de Parma para Vuestra Excelencia de que a hecho presentación, pide y suplica a Vuestra Excelencia humillmente sea servido hacerle merced mandando que se le pague el sueldo que […] [se le] debe del tiempo que sirvió en la dicha Armada, de quales q […] [uier] dineros que obiere atento que biene pobre y con mucha […] [ne]cesidad por las muchas costas y gastos que a hecho en salir de los dichos Reynos donde se perdió hasta benir a esta corte sin […] que se le aya dado

para ello ningún socorro ni ayuda de costa que […] en ello recivirá mucho bien y merced de Vuestra Excelencia.

AGS Guerra y Marina 345 f.45. Memorial.

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[….] denotes damaged and missing text.
[*of Ireland etc* **]** denotes inserted text.

19 October1591.

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar

[Summary] He humbly beseeches Your Excellency to order that, out of whatever money may be available, he be paid the said wages which is very small, considering that he is very poor and in penury because of the many expenses and costs he incurred in order to leave Ireland and Scotland where he was lost until he came to this court, without being given any succour or maintenance for it.

[Resolution] that he be given a *cédula* for Don Alonso de Bazán [in order] to have his *consulta* closed and to see that he is paid what would appear to be rightly owed to him. [*Rubric of Esteban de Ibarra*]

[Endorsement] - implemented. [*Rubric of Esteban de Ibarra*]

[Main Text]
Most Puissant Sire,
Captain Francisco de Cuéllar says that he was serving Your Excellency with a monthly salary of [*twenty five escudos*] in the armada that the Marquis of Santa Cruz assembled in the River of Lisbon for the expedition to [...] [*England*], in which he was always present until he was lost in the kingdom... [*of Ireland*], where he remained for more than seven months, naked and enduring [....] unhappy life among the savages of that kingdom, and from there [...] [*he went*] to Scotland at great risk, where he was [....] [*ten*?] months in a wretched state and in great necessity and [...] waiting to be able to pass over to the States of Flanders to [...] [*continue*] his service there, as he did at great cost to his [...] [*person*] and resources, and now has lately come with a license [...] [*and letter*] of the Duke of Parma for Your Excellency which he has presented he asks and humbly beseeches Your Grace that he be pleased to grant him a favour ordering that he be paid the wages that [...] [are] owed to him for the time he served in the said fleet, from whatever money may be available, considering that he is very poor and in great [...] [*necessity*] for the many costs and expenses he has incurred in leaving the said kingdoms where he was lost until he came to this court [...], without him being given any aid or maintenance, which [...] for thereby he will receive great benefit and favour from Your Excellency.

Appendix Seven

AGRB Secretaire d'Etat et de Guerre, Registre aux Ordres no.15 (Mar 1598-Apr 1599), f.161v.
Licencia, 1598.

[marginal note] Licencia, Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar.

Haviéndonos representado el Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, entretenido cerca de nuestra persona, lo que importa yr a Spaña a negocios particulares suyos que se le ofrecen en ella, y suplicadonos le mandasemos conçeder licencia para ello, lo hemos tenido por bien por tanto por tenor de la parte ordenamos y mandamos. Datt en Bruselas a 5 de Agosto de 1598.

AGRB, Secretaire d'Etat et la Guerre (SEG), Registre aux Ordres no.15, f.161v.
Document Type: Licence, 1598.

[Marginal Note] Licence: Captain Francisco de Cuéllar

[Main text]
Captain Francisco de Cuéllar, staff officer to our person [Archduke Albert], having presented to us reasons requiring him to go to Spain to attend to private matters that have arisen there, and beseeched us to order the concession of a licence to him for this, we have thought good therefore as set out in these presents, to so order and instruct. Dated in Brussels, 5 August 1598.

Appendix Eight

AGS Estado 1692 unfoliated
Petition (relación de servicios), 1604.

[Portada]
[Notas marginales]
[Sinopsis]
Pide acrecentamiento de los 25 escudos de entretenimiento al mes
que tiene en Nápoles desde el año [1]600.

[Notación adicional]
Dentro va la relación y licencia del Duque de Medina Sidonia por reformado. [rubric]

Señor
El Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar
A 31 de Março 1604,

Al Conde de Villalonga [rubric]

[Resolución] Acrecentarle 5 escudos y no ha lugar la renta.

[aprobación] queda hecha

Señor,
El capitán Francisco de Cuéllar dice que a veinte y tres años que su Magestad del rey nuestro señor, que aya gloria, después de aberse hallado y servido en la conquista del reino de Portugal le dio una compañía de infantería española y un galeón con la qual sirvió tres años en la armada que fue al estrecho de Magallanes y costa del Brasil el año de quinientos y ochenta y uno, se halló allá en la conquista y entrepresa del puerto de la Parayba que es en la dicha costa del Brasil, el qual dicho puerto estaba ocupado de franceses que lo tenían muchos años atrás abía [sic] fortifciado y puesto en defensa como cosa suya, y después de venido en España se bolbió a enbarcar otra vez por orden de Vuestra Magestad y de su real Consejo de la Guerra con veinte y cinco escudos de entretenimiento al mes que se dieron cerca de la persona del Marqués de Santa Cruz, y nabegó y sirvió con él mucho tiempo hasta que el dicho Marqués murió, y luego seucesibamente se enbarcó otra vez en la armada que fue a Ynglaterra el año de quinientos ochenta y ocho, y sirvió en ella hasta que se perdió con la nao en que iba en los reynos de Irlanda y Scocia donde anduvo perdido más de año y medio, herido, desnudo y cubierto de yerbas, y muy mal tratado de los enemigos y erejes que abitan en las montañas y tierras ásperas de aquellos reinos, y de allí con mucho peligro y riesgo de su vida por estraños

caminos y aventuras pasó a servir a Vuestra Magestad a los estados de Flandes donde a estado diez años, sirviendo con quarenta escudos de entretenimiento al mes cerca de la persona del Duque de Parma y del señor Archiduque Alberto en el qual se halló y sirvió en todas las ocasiones que en aquel tiempo se ofrecieron en los dichos estados y también sirvió en las guerras de Francia y se halló al socorro de París, y entrepresas de las villas de Leyni, Corbeli, Lacapela, Xoctelete [sic], Dorlan, Cambray, Cales, y Ardias, y en el sitio de la villa de Hults [sic], y después de todo esto se halló en Ytalia, y sirvió más de año y medio a su costa en la guerra de Piamonte y Saboya como todo consta por los papeles de sus sevicios los cuales se vieron cuatro años a en el Consejo de Estado y en recompensa de ellos sin hacerle otra merced y ni más acrecentamiento se le dieron veinte y cinco escudos de entretenimiento al mes cerca de la persona del Conde de Lemos, virrey de Nápoles, y estando el dicho capitán de partida para servir el dicho entretenimiento sin hacer ninguna réplica sobre ello, se le tornó a mandar otra vez por orden de Vuestra Magestad y del Consejo de las Indias que fuese a servir con una compañía de infantería y un galeón en la armada que el año de [1]601 mandó a prestar para yr a las yslas de Barlovento la qual se detuvo en aprestar y poner en orden cerca de un año y después no tubo efecto y en este tiempo dicho capitán se gastó y enpeñó porque en todo él no tubo sueldo ni se le dio ningún socorro ni ayuda de costa, solamente se le mandó que con la dicha compañía y galeón que se le dio para Barlovento se embarcare y fuese a Tierra Firme en compañía de los demás galeones que yban por la plata y llebó a su cargo al general don Luis Fernández de Córdoba el año del 1602, lo qual hiço el dicho capitán y se embarcó en la capitana de los dichos galeones con su compañía de arcabuceros y sirvió el dicho viaje con mucho cuidado y diligencia sin tener ningún aprovechamiento ni grangería en la real hacienda de Vuestra Magestad, recibió por su causa ningún daño ni menoscabo, ni se consintió hacer, ni tampoco ubo persona que en los aloxamientos ni tránsitos por donde anduvo con la dicha su compañía y con otras que haya a su cargo se quejase de aber recibido daño ni maltratamento como todo a constado al dicho Consejo de las Indias por la visita y residencia que mandó tomar a los capitanes de la dicha armada de los galeones, y en lugar de aber premiado y hecho alguna merced al dicho Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, lo reformaron y quitaron su compañía luego que bino de las Indias con la dicha plata sin causa nunguna solo para se la dar y acomodar con ella otras personas que en calidad y servicios no merecieron más que él, de lo qual a recibido muy grande agrabio y sinrazón por cuya causa está al presente mui pobre, desacomodado, y reformado más a de un año.

Suplica a Vuestra Magestad humillmente sea servido de mandar que en el dicho Consejo de Estado se buelban [sic] a ver otra bez los papeles de sus servicios pues son de tantos años como a dicho, y se berá por ellos, y que se le haga merced de acrecentarle los dichos veinte y cinco escudos de entretenimiento que se le dieron

para Nápoles tanto tiempo a de los quales no pudo goçar por aber estado ocupado y sirviendo en las armadas por orden de Vuestra Magestad como dicho tiene y que se le lleguen a 40 y que asímismo y juntamente le haga Vuestra Magestad merced de mandarle dar alguna renta o pinsión en la parte que Vuestra Magestad fuere servido para con que pueda bibir y entretenerse en el ynter que Vuestra Magestad le hace dicha merced.

AGS Estado 1692 unfoliated.
Petition (relación de servicios), 1604.
[Cover Sheet]
[marginal notes]
[Synopsis]
Requests an increase of the 25 *escudos* of monthly salary which he had in Naples since 1600.

[Supplementary notation]
Enclosed within is a *relación*, and license of the Duke of Medina Sidonia for having been cashiered. [rubric]

Sire
Captain Francisco de Cuéllar
31 March 1604,

To the Count of Villalonga. [rubric]

[Resolution]Increase it [*entretenimiento*] by 5 *escudos*, and the income [pension] is not necessary.
[Endorsement] – effected.

[Main petition]
Sire,
Captain Francisco de Cuéllar says that twenty-three years ago his Majesty the king, our lord of glorious memory, after having been present and served in the conquest of the kingdom of Portugal, granted him a company of infantry and a galleon with which he served three years in the fleet that went to the Strait of Magellan and coast of Brazil in the year 1581. And he was present there at the conquest and enterprise in the port of Paraiba, which is on the said coast of Brazil. The said port was occupied by French which many years earlier had been fortified and defended as if it were their possession. And after coming to Spain he re-embarked once more by order of his Majesty and his royal council of war, with a monthly salary of twenty-five escudos about the person of the Marquis of Santa Cruz. And he sailed and served with him at length until the said Marquis died, and then successively

embarked again in the fleet that went to England in the year 1588. And he served in it until he was lost along with the ship in which he went in the kingdoms of Ireland and Scotland, where he was missing for more than a year and a half, injured, naked and covered with foliage, and very badly treated by the enemies and heretics that inhabit the mountains and wastelands of those kingdoms. And from there, with great danger and risk to his life, by extraordinary ways and aventures, he reached the states of Flanders, where he served his Majesty for ten years; he served with a monthly salary of forty escudos about the person of the Duke of Parma and his Lordship, the Archduke Albert. He was present and served on all of the occasions which in that time transpired in the said states. He also served in the wars of France and was present at the relief of Paris, and the seizure of the towns of Lagny, Corbeil, La Capelle, Le Catelet, Doullens, Cambrai, Calais and Ardres, and in the siege of the town of Hulst. And after all of this he was present in Italy, and served for more than a year and a half at his own cost in the war of Piedmont and Savoy as is stated in his service papers, which were viewed four years ago in the council of State. And in recompense of these [services] without granting him any other favour nor [monetary] increase, he was granted a monthly salary of twenty-five escudos about the person of the Count of Lemos, viceroy of Naples.[916] And the said captain, being about to depart to serve this commission, without any entreaty about it, he was sent back again by instruction of his Majesty and the council of the Indies in order to serve with a company of infantry and a galleon in the fleet, with in the year [1]601 was ordered to prepare to go to the Windward Isles, which he was detained preparing and putting in order for about a year or so, to no effect, and during this time the said captain expended [his finances] and was impoverished, because in all, he did not receive any salary nor was given financial assistance; He was merely ordered with the said company and galleon, which he was given for the windward Isles, to embark for Tierra Firme in company with the rest of the galleons that were for the Windward [enterprise]. He embarked and went to Tierra Firme in company with the other galleons that went for the silver under the charge of Don Luis Fernández de Córdoba in the year 1602, which the said captain did, and he embarked in the flagship of the said galleons with his company of arquebusiers [musketeers]. He served in the said voyage with great attention and dilligence, without any use, or exploitation of, his Majesty's royal treasure. No damage was caused or harm done on account of him, nor did he allow it to be done, nor was there any individual in the lodgings or places that he marched through with his said company, or with others under his command, who complained about any harm done, or ill-treatment received, as was made clear to the said Council of the Indies by the inspection and review [*visita y residencia*] of the captains of the said squadron of the galleons [Indies Guard]. And in place of granting some reward to

[916] Fernando Ruiz de Castro Andrade y Portugal, 6th Count of Lemos (1548-1601). Viceroy of Naples 1599-1601.

the said captain, Francisco de Cuéllar, he was dismissed and removed from his company after coming from the Indies with the said silver, without any cause other than to give [his commission] and accommodate other individuals, who in quality and service did not merit such, by which he received great insult and injustice in consequence of which he is at present very poor, cashiered and inconvenienced for more than a year.

He humbly beseeches his Majesty, if he be served, to order that in the said council of State they return to view, once again, his service papers, which amount to as many years as was stated and can be seen by them, and that he be granted the favour of an increase of the said twenty-five escudos of salary which was awarded to him for Naples in that time, though he was unable to benefit from it as he was occupied and serving in the fleets by order of his Majesty, as he has said; that it [the salary] should amount to forty [escudos], and that likewise and also, his Majesty grant him the favour of an award of some income or pension wherever his Majesty would be served, so that he would be able to live and entertain in the interim, until his Majesty may grant him the said favour.

Appendix Nine

Estado: Legajo 1704, f. 361. Servicio Militar.

Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar
Presenta una certificación de los contadores del Consejo de Indias por donde consta que sirvió con una compañía de infantería en la armada de Magallanes desde el año de 1581 hasta el de 1584.

Una cédula de su Magestad del ano 1587 de 25 escudos del entretenimiento que le señalaron para la Armada de inglaterra.

Un mandato del Duque de Parma del año del 1589 señalándole 40 ducados del entretenimiento al mes cerca de su persona y licencia del dicho duque con que vino el año de 1591 y carta para su Magestad en su recomendación en que dize el duque que el dicho capitán se perdió en Irlanda yendo en la dicha armada de Inglaterra y pasó a Flandes donde sirvió con mucha satisfación y supplica a su Magestad le haga merced en su pretensiones.

Otra cédula de su Magestad de 30 ducados del entretenimiento que se le señalaron en Flandes el año de 1592 en el ynter que se le diese una compañía de infantería.

Una fee del Gobernador Antonio de Olivera del año de 1593, en que dice que pasando el dicho capitán a Flandes el año de 1592, le mandó el señor Duque de Saboya que se quedare a servir en el ejército de su cargo, como lo hizo sin sueldo señalándose con mucho valor en todas las ocasiones, y esto mismo consta por una carta que el dicho duque escrivió al Conde de Mansfelt.

Un mandato del Señor Archiduque Alberto del año de 1596 acrecentándole 10 ducados sobre los 30 del entretenimiento al mes que tenía por su Magestad .

Presenta asímismo licencia del señor Archiduque con que vino a España el año de 1598 y carta de su alteza supplicando a su Magestad que le haga merced por lo mucho y bien que ha servido.

Otra cédula de su Magestad de 25 escudos del entretenimiento que se le señalaron en Nápoles el año 1600.

Una patente de su Magestad del ano de 1601 de capitán de infantería y galeón de la armada de Barlobento y otra del año de 1602 para la armada del cargo de Don Luis de Córdoba.

Diversas órdenes del Duque de Medina [Sidonia] y del Marqués de Montesclaros tocantes al alojamiento de su compañía y licencia del dicho duque del año passado de 1603 para venir a la corte a sus negocios por aver sido reformado.

AGS Estado 1704, f.361. Military Service Papers.

Captain Francisco de Cuéllar

Presents a certificate from the auditors of the Council of the Indies, which states that he served with a company of infantry in the Magellan fleet from 1581 to 1584.

A commission of His Majesty issued in the year 1587 for 25 *escudos* of salary assigned to serve in the fleet for England.

A mandate of the Duke of Parma issued in the year 1589 assigning him a monthly salary of 40 ducats as a staff officer, and a licence [*licencia*] of the said Duke with which he came [to court] in the year of 1591, and a letter of recommendation [*carta*] for His Majesty, in which the duke says that the said captain was lost in Ireland while serving with the said 'Fleet of England', and that he passed to Flanders where he served very satisfactorily, and beseeches His Majesty to look favourably on his requests.

Another commission of His Majesty in the year 1592, which assigned to him a salary of 30 ducats in Flanders, and [instructed that] in the interim a company of infantry was to be given to him.

A certificate from the Governor [of Alessandria] Antonio de Olivera in the year 1593, which states that the said captain, on passing to Flanders in the year 1592, was enjoined by the Duke of Savoy to remain and serve in the army under his command, which he did with outstanding valour on all occasions, without any salary assigned to him, and the same was stated in a letter which the said Duke wrote to Count Mansfelt.

A mandate of his Grace, Archduke Albert, in the year 1596, which increased the monthly salary of 30 ducats he had of his Majesty, by 10 ducats.

He presents likewise, a licence from His Grace, the Archduke [Albert], with which he came to Spain in the year 1598, and a letter [*carta*] of his Grace beseeching His Majesty to reward him for his many and good services.

Another commission of His Majesty in the year 1600, which assigned a salary of 25 *escudos* to him in Naples.

A patent of his Majesty in the year 1601, designating him captain of Infantry and of a galleon in the Windward Fleet, and another in the year 1602 for the fleet commanded by Don Luis de Córdoba.

Sundry orders [issued by] the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Montesclaros pertaining to [the assignment of] accommodation for his companies. And a licence of the said Duke [of Medina Sidonia] in the past year 1603, to attend to his affairs at court having been discharged.

Appendix Ten

AGI Indiferente General 449 ff. 20-21.

[Note in margin] Al Virrey de la Nueva España en su rrecomendación del Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar.

El Rey,
Marqués de Montesclaros, pariente, mi virrey, gobernador, Capitán General de la Nueva España, o a la persona, o personas a cuyo cargo fuere el gobierno della. Por parte del Capitán Francisco de Cuéllar, se me ha hecho relación que me a servido desde la jornada de Portugal en diversas partes y ocasiones por mar y tierra, y particularmente en la Armada que el año de ochenta y uno fue al estrecho de Magallanes con una compañía de infantería y un galeón, en cuyo paraje padeció grande travajos, y haviendo venido a estos reynos fue a servir, y lo continuó mucho tiempo, cerca de la persona del Marqués de Sancta Cruz con veinte y cinco escudos de entretenemiento al mes hasta que murió, y el año de ochenta y siete [sic] fue a la jornada de Inglaterra con el Duque de Medina Sidonia donde servió hasta que la nao en que yba se perdió en Irlanda y Escocia, y estuvo allí más de año y medio padesciendo muchos travajos y herido de los enemigos, y desde allí con mucho riesgo passó a servir a los estados de Flandes, y se detubo en ellos por horden del Duque de Parma más de onze años, hallándose en todas las ocasiones, asaltos, y empressas que en aquel tiempo se offrecieron en ellos, y en el Reyno de Francia, y se halló al socorro de Paris y en la pressa de la villa de Cales, Dorlan, y Cambray, y después de esto vino a España con licencia y carta del serenísimo Archiduque Alberto, y de camino passando por Italia sirvió otros dos años sin sueldo, paga, ni ayuda de costa, en la guerra de Piamonte y Savoya, como consta va por recaudos que se presentaron en mi Consejo de Cámara de Yndias supplicándome atento a ello, y que ha tres años que esta en mi corte, y hasta aora no se le ha hecho merced, por lo qual y no haver sido gratificado está muy pobre. Os manda se la hiziésedes vos en mi nombre, y le ocupáredes conforme a su calidad y servicios, y porque teniendo consideración a lo sobredicho tengo voluntad y es justo que el dicho Francisco de Cuéllar recivá merced y favor, os mando que le tenga y en particularmente por muy encomendado y que le proveáys y ocupéys en cargos y officios de mi servicio que sean según su calidad, suficiencia, y méritos, en que honrradamente me pueda servir y tener aprovechamiento, y en lo demás que se le offreciese le ayudaréis, honraréys, favorezcáys, que en ello me serviréys. Fecha en Madrid, a veynte y seis de Março de mill y seiscientos y seis años.
El Rey.
Refrendada de Juan Ruiz de Contreras, y señalada de los de la cámara.

AGI Indiferente General 449 ff. 20-21.
Letter of Recommendation from Philip III to the Viceroy of New Spain (Marquis of Montesclaros), 26 March 1606.

[Marginal Note]
To the Viceroy of New Spain in recommendation of Captain Francisco de Cuéllar.

I, The King,
Marquis of Montesclaros, cousin, and my viceroy, governor and captain-general of New Spain, or the person or persons responsible for its government. A report has been made to me concerning Captain Francisco de Cuéllar stating that since the campaign of Portugal he has served in various places and junctures, by sea and land, and particularly, in the fleet that in 1581 went to the Strait of Magellan. [He served] with a company of infantry and a galleon, in which he suffered great hardship, and having come to these kingdoms, went to serve, and remained at length, about the person of the Marquis of Santa Cruz with a monthly salary of 25 escudos until he [Santa Cruz] died. And in 1587 [sic], he went on the expedition to England with the Duke of Medina Sidonia, where he served until the ship [in which he sailed] was lost in Ireland and Scotland. And he was there a year and a half suffering great hardship being wounded by enemies. And from there, at great risk, he made his way to serve in the States of Flanders, and stayed there by the order of the Duke of Parma more than eleven years, being present at all occasions, assaults and enterprises that took place during that time. And in the Kingdom of France, he was present at the relief of Paris and in the capture of Calais, Doullens, and Cambrai. And after this, he came to Spain with a licence and letter from his Most Serene Highness Archduke Albert, and on the way, passing through Italy, he served another two years without pay or upkeep in the wars of Piedmont and Savoy, as is stated in papers presented to my Council Chamber of the Indies beseeching me to address the matter. He has been three years in this my court, and up until now he has not been granted any favour, for which reason, and not having been recompensed, is very poor. I order that in my name you should reward him and occupy him according to his ability and service, and because having regard to the aforementioned, it is my will and just that the said Francisco de Cuéllar receive thanks and favour. I order that you accept him as highly commended and that you provide him with, and occupy him in, whatsoever posts and duties in my service in accordance with his quality, ability, and merits in which he may serve me honourably and usefully and in all other matters that may arise he should be helped, honoured and favoured for you will serve me thereby. Dated in Madrid, 26 March 1606.
I, the King.
Endorsed by Juan Ruiz de Contreras, and signed by those [members] of the chamber.

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