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que por no auer ~~de~~ <sup>paseados</sup> Vm. no aydo antes  
delegacion & Punto u desip. 1591.

Alonso de Bazán  
Fideicomis

Letter from Alonso de Bazán to Martín de Bertendona concerning three important prisoners from the captured English ship *Revenge*, 21 September 1591.

THE PAPERS OF  
MARTIN DE BERTENDONA,  
A BASQUE ADMIRAL OF SPAIN'S  
GOLDEN AGE, 1586-1604

*By C. R. BOXER*

**D**ESPITE THE REASSESSMENT of sixteenth-century Spanish history which has made such progress in recent years, and despite the wide circulation of the late Garrett Mattingly's deservedly popular *The Armada*, it is still often assumed that the Spanish navy counted for little or nothing after the disastrous *Jornada de Inglaterra* in the memorable year 1588.

The losses then sustained, both in men and in ships, were certainly very severe, but they were not fatal to Spain. Within a decade, Spanish naval power had recovered sufficiently to enable another almost equally powerful armada to be launched against England in 1596 and 1597. On both occasions the armada was dispersed by storms; but despite these and other maritime disasters, such as the destruction of a Spanish fleet in the Bay of Gibraltar by the Dutch in 1607, Spain still remained one of the leading naval powers of Europe down to 1639 at least. Spanish resilience must be given most of the credit for so many recoveries from repeated setbacks, but two other important factors which contributed to Spain's survival as a great maritime power may be mentioned here: first, the organization of the Dunkirk squadron, which dealt such devastating blows to Dutch shipping until the fall of that stronghold in 1646; and second, the singular toughness and the maritime skills of the inhabitants of the Basque provinces of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa.

These two maritime provinces were to Spain what Devon and Cornwall were to England, or Brittany and Normandy to France, or Holland and Zeeland to the Northern Netherlands—nurseries of successive generations of hardy seamen. During the years 1568-1648, when Spain was almost continually engaged in fighting on land and sea in one region or another around the globe, Basques were to be found in the forefront of the battles from Flanders to the Philippines. One of the leading Dunkirk corsairs, who went by the name of Michael Van Doorn, was in reality not a Fleming but a Basque, Miguel de Horna. It was a Basque seaman, Lorenzo de Ugalde, who with two old but stoutly built galleons, *Encarnación* and *Rosário*, drove away twenty-four Dutch warships from the Philippines in three successive actions during the year 1646. Nor would it be difficult to name many other Basque seamen, such as Juan Martínez de Recalde, Don Miguel de Oquendo and his son, Don Antonio de Oquendo, and Don Carlos de Ibarra, who distinguished themselves in sea fights against the French, the Dutch, and the Barbary corsairs. Less known is the man who forms the subject of this essay; but it will be seen that he, too, had a most distinguished naval career.

Some ten years ago, the late Mr. Bernardo Mendel acquired from the firm Granta of Almería, Spain, the papers of the Basque Admiral Martín de Bertendona, together with some related documents pertaining to his family and associates.<sup>1</sup> The extreme dates of these papers range from 1581 to 1667; but the bulk of them, and all those which relate

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<sup>1</sup> Lilly Library, Bertendona MSS. Prior to the sale, the firm had published a summary catalogue of these documents, *La Escuadra del Señorio de Vizcaya. Siglos XVI y XVII. Archivo del Almirante Bertendona. Boletín No 9, Suplemento* (Almería, n.d.).

directly to Bertendona, belong to the years 1586-1604. From these papers and from passing references to Bertendona in Cesáreo Fernández Duro's classic works on Spanish naval history, we can reconstruct his career in outline as follows:

He was born at Bilbao on an unascertained date, of a family with maritime traditions and experience. His grandfather was captain of the ship which brought Emperor Charles V from Flanders to Spain (via England) in 1522. His father, Martín Ximénez de Bertendona, provided three ships when Philip II sailed from Spain to wed Mary Tudor, in one of which the King embarked for the voyage from La Coruña to Southampton (1554). A petition submitted by his heirs to the Crown in 1626 claims that Martín de Bertendona, "Knight of the Order of Santiago, served His Majesty as a captain of infantry, commander of squadrons of ships, and captain-general of the same for over fifty-eight years in his royal fleets," beginning his military and naval service when still very young ("desde muy moço"). This would place his birth at about the year 1530, since he died in 1604, and it is unlikely that his military service began before he was fifteen or sixteen years old. However that may be, the first firm date that we have is the year 1569, when he served with four ships belonging to his family in the squadron which brought Anne of Austria, Philip II's fourth wife, from Italy to Spain.

In 1574, Martín de Bertendona was a captain in the abortive armada which was mobilized in the Cantabrian ports, or "the Four Towns of the Sea," as they were called (Santander, Castro, Laredo, and San Andrés de la Barquera), with the object of reconquering Zeeland from the Dutch "Sea Beggars." This armada was prevented from

sailing by an outbreak of plague in September of that year, in which over 3,000 men died out of a total of some 12,000 who had embarked. The commander-in-chief, the *Adelantado* of Florida, Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, was among the dead, and the fleet of more than 200 sail dispersed immediately afterwards. Eight years later, Bertendona served in the first expedition of Don Alvaro de Bazán, Marquis of Santa Cruz, to the Azores, providing a "large ship and a pinnace" of his own, manned by 300 Biscayan sailors whom he had raised in Bilbao. During Don Alvaro de Bazán's final conquest of the Azores in 1583, Bertendona was entrusted with the command of the squadron that covered his rear and cruised off the coast of Portugal. When the great armada for "the enterprise of England" was being mobilized at Lisbon, Bertendona was placed in command of the "Levantine squadron" (*Naos Levanticas*) in that fleet. This was a somewhat heterogeneous collection of Italian and Dalmatian (Ragusan) ships, Bertendona flying his flag in the *San Juan* of Ragusa (Dubrovnic). When Philip II appointed Recalde as admiral (or second-in-command of the armada), the captain-general (or commander-in-chief), the Duke of Medina Sidonia, wrote to the King from Lisbon on 26 March 1588, suggesting that the command of Recalde's Biscayan squadron be given to his fellow Bilbaon, Martín de Bertendona, "who will be followed and obeyed with greater readiness by the sailors and volunteers of this squadron, since he is a Biscayan and from the same region as they are."<sup>2</sup> In that event, suggested Medina Sidonia, the command of the Levantine squadron could be given to Don Francisco de Leyva, who had served as admiral of the West

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<sup>2</sup> C. Fernández Duro, *La Armada Invencible* (2 vols., Madrid, 1884-85). I, 484-85, quoting Medina Sidonia's letter of 26 March 1588.

India fleet. The King did not, on this occasion, accept Medina Sidonia's advice; but it is worth noting that there are many allusions by the Crown, in its correspondence with Martín de Bertendona during the years 1586-1604, to the "pull" which he had with the Basques because of his origin and which he was repeatedly urged to use in order to help execute measures which the government at Madrid feared (often rightly) would prove unpopular with his fellow countrymen.<sup>3</sup> Prior to assuming command of the Levantine squadron, Bertendona had raised a force of 1,500 soldiers in Vizcaya, which he took to Lisbon for embarkation in the armada.

As Prof. Michael Lewis has pointed out in his book *The Spanish Armada* (1960), Bertendona was the only one of the six squadron leaders of the armada to return to Spain in his own ship and to be alive at the end of October 1588, since the two other survivors, Don Miguel de Oquendo and Martínez de Recade, had both died within a few weeks of their return. Bartendona was in the thick of the fighting in the English Channel, as attested by a certificate of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, which he secured—somewhat belatedly—on 18 December 1599. In the battle between Calais Roads and Gravelines on 8 August 1588, "the crew of one of the *urcas* [*hulks*] saw Bertendona's great carrack drive past, her decks a shambles, her battery guns silent, and blood spilling out of her scuppers as she heeled to the wind, but musketeers still ready in tops and on her quarter-deck as she came back stubbornly to take her place in the line."<sup>4</sup> In the homeward voyage "north-about" around Scotland

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<sup>3</sup> Some typical instances in BM 1016, 1020, 1026, 1040, 1043, 1057, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Garrett Mattingly, *The Armada* (1959), p. 333.

and Ireland, Bertendona in his battered flagship was placed with Recalde in the rearguard, and it was one of the only two warships in the Levantine squadron which got safely back to Spain at the end of September or beginning of October.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike his luckless commander-in-chief, and unlike his two compatriots, Oquendo and Recalde, both of whom died of chagrin and despair within a few days or weeks of their return, Martín de Bertendona was not a whit disheartened by the harrowing experiences which he had undergone. As early as 7 November 1588, we find the King writing to Bertendona, thanking him for his spontaneous suggestions about the best way in which to mount another invasion of England and asking him to elaborate a detailed plan for the royal consideration. Unfortunately, there is not a copy of this plan among Bertendona's papers in the Lilly Library, but it very likely exists somewhere in the Spanish archives. Bertendona had brought his leaky flagship around from Ferrol to La Coruña for repairs and refitting. She was still there when the expedition of Drake and Norris attacked that naval base in May 1589. The attack was repulsed with some difficulty, largely because of Bertendona's stubborn defense of a strategic islet in the harbor; but he had the mortification of being compelled to burn his flagship in order to avoid certain capture by Drake in the *Revenge*. He vowed to be revenged for his humiliation, and two years later he was. Virtually every English schoolboy of my day and generation learned by heart Tennyson's famous *Ballad*

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<sup>5</sup> C. Fernández Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, II, 326-27, "Relación de le que ha sucedido á la nave Ragazona Capitania de los Levantiscas," in Ferrol and La Coruña.

*of the Revenge*, and I daresay a good many Americans likewise know that sonorous poem beginning:

*"At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,"*

with its epic description of the immortal fight between "the one and the fifty-three," in September 1591, when

*"Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built gal-leons came,*

*Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;*

*Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame."*

But not Bertendona. It was he who first grappled the *Revenge* when it looked for a moment as if the English ship would make her way through the Spanish fleet; and he clung on, though suffering heavy casualties, until the *Revenge* was a dismasted and battered hulk. When she finally surrendered, despite the entreaties of her badly wounded commander to

*"Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!"*

*Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!"*

it was because of Bertendona that she struck, although this credit was also claimed by Dom Luis Coutinho, commanding a Portuguese *urca* which had likewise been closely engaged.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Revenge. A ballad of the Fleet" has gone through countless editions including those in Tennyson's *Collected Works* since its first publication in 1880. It contains a good deal of poetic license, as Sir John Knox Laughton pointed out long ago in his article on Sir Richard Grenville in the *DNB*. Of the fifty-three ships, a large proportion were victuallers intended for the relief of the homeward-bound *flota* from the West Indies. Not more

Among the Admiral's papers in the Lilly Library is a personal letter of congratulation from the Spanish commander-in-chief, Don Alonso de Bazán, written aboard the flagship *San Pablo* on 10 September 1591. It is accompanied by another, dated eleven days later, in which Don Alonso states that he is sending Bertendona the only three "persons of importance" found among the prisoners: the captain of the *Revenge*, the pilot, "and another gentleman" (Sir Richard Grenville having died of his wounds aboard the *San Pablo* shortly after the action). With true Castilian courtesy and *pundonor*, Don Alonso de Bazán tells Bertendona in this note that he has treated these prisoners very well aboard his own flagship and that he expects Bertendona to do the same. That he did so is clear from the extract published in Appendix I on page 21. There is also an auto-graph letter from the influential secretary of state, Don Juan de Idiáquez, dated 21 December 1591, conveying his own and the King's congratulations. No less interesting are the sailing orders and fighting instructions issued by Don Alonso de Bazán to the captains of his armada, dated "aboard the flagship *San Pablo*, in the Gulf of the Mares, 200 leagues from Spain and bound for the island of Terceira, on the 22 August 1591," and they do not seem to have been published. As is well known, the *Revenge*, together with a number of other ships, foundered in a storm not long after her capture, and it is not clear what (if any) reward Bertendona finally received. But it would seem from a marginal note on Idiáquez's letter of congratulation that the Admiral either

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than twenty sail were warships, and of these not more than fifteen were engaged with the *Revenge*. "That was sufficient. The truth in its simple grandeur needs no exaggeration."

claimed or was offered, among other things, "a gold chain with a whistle worth 100 ducats."

The capture of the *Revenge* in 1591 set the seal on Bertendona's fame as one of the great fighting seamen of Spain's Golden Age. His reputation was further enhanced by his participation in the naval and military campaigns which followed the Spanish capture of Blavet in Brittany in 1592. This gave the Spaniards an advanced naval base (though not a very good one) in the mouth of the English Channel, something which King Philip's finest admirals had been urging him to secure ever since the struggle with England had moved from a "cold" to a "hot" war. The position of the Spaniards at Blavet was, nevertheless, extremely precarious, since they were then at war not only with Elizabeth I of England but also with Henry IV of France. In the years 1592-94, Bertendona successfully ran several convoys of troops, supplies, and money from the northern ports of Spain to Blavet, "with such good management and good fortune that His Majesty was delighted thereat, and was very well served thereby, and he wrote him as much in his royal letters."

During the decade of the 1590's, Bertendona was also busy raising levies of seamen and soldiers in his native province of Vizcaya, as well as in building a number of galleons under contract for the Crown. In this, he was following in his father's and grandfather's footsteps, since both of them were shipbuilders as well as shipowners and ship charterers. He took a prominent part in the mobilization of King Philip II's last armada against England, which was painfully assembled at Ferrol in 1596 under the command of the *Adelantado-Mayor* of Castile, Don Martín de Padilla, Conde de Santa Gadea. The Earl of Essex's sack of Cádiz

in July of that year, though a great blow to Spanish pride and morale, to say nothing of the material losses in shipping and stores which were then incurred, had been more than offset from the strategic point of view by the Spanish occupation of Calais, which the Archduke Albert, governor-general of the Spanish Netherlands, had seized in the previous April. With Blavet and Calais in his possession, Philip's new armada posed in some ways an even greater threat to England than had its ill-starred forerunner of 1588. But it was not ready to sail until too late in the season and was dispersed by storms soon after it had left Ferrol at the beginning of November.

Nothing daunted, next year Philip tried again. The armada was painfully reassembled at Ferrol, and the ships and men lost in the previous abortive voyage were replaced. Philip's plan was that the Adelantado's armada, after picking up troops and galleys from Blavet, should proceed directly to Falmouth and seize that port as a bridgehead for a set-piece invasion of England in the following spring. Whatever chance of success this plan had was ruined by the fact that the Adelantado was again unable to leave Ferrol until too late in the season. He finally left in October with a fleet of some 136 sail, carrying nearly 9,000 soldiers and 4,000 sailors. Its objective had been kept a profound secret from the English, who had no inkling of its approach until some stray Spanish ships were sighted in the Channel. But before the main body reached Blavet, the armada was struck by a storm from the northeast and dispersed, without meeting the homeward-bound English fleet which was returning from an abortive expedition to the Azores and was hit by the same storm.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Julian S. Corbett, *The Successors of Drake* (1916), pp. 212-27, "Philip's Last Armada." C. Fernández Duro, *Armada Española*,

Bertendona's participation in the abortive armada of 1596-97 did not discourage him any more than had his grim experiences in 1588. In February 1598, he took a force of 4,000 men in some forty ships to Calais, running the gauntlet of the English, Dutch, and French fleets and adverse weather in the Bay of Biscay and in the Channel. His feat caused great, if temporary, alarm in England; and the alarm would have been still greater if Bertendona had been allowed to carry out the offensive operation which he planned. Within a few weeks of his arrival at Calais, he wrote to the Archduke Albert proposing that he should "give a Saint-James" (*dar un Santiago*) to the English by raiding some of their south-coast ports and destroying such shipping as he found in the harbors. The Archduke replied on 5 April 1598, categorically forbidding any such enterprise, "owing to certain inconveniences." Although the Archduke did not elaborate, it seems more than likely that he did not wish to antagonize the English unduly, since he was then engaged in secret and confidential negotiations with Burghley over the possibility of peace.

However that may have been, Bertendona's idea was not a new one, and its feasibility was pointed out by Don Diego Brochero, another of the creators of the revived Spanish navy, a few years earlier. Brochero had argued that since the Spaniards and Italians were unable to prevent the Barbary corsairs from making frequent raids and descents on the kingdom of Naples, "despite all the infantry, cavalry, galleys and watchtowers" of which the defenders disposed, how much easier would it be to raid the unprotected, unfortified, and unsuspecting English coast. The only attack

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III (1897), 180, states that out of a total of eighty-four sail which formed the nucleus of the armada at Ferrol, sixty-four were foreign ships; Bertendona papers, BM 1043-BM 1047.

which the Spaniards actually mounted along these lines was a foray led by Carlos de Azemola, who, with four galleys stationed on the Brittany base of Blavet, raided the Cornish coast in July 1595, burning the small towns of Mousehole, Penzance, and Newlyn.<sup>8</sup> Though completely successful, this modest raid could not be compared with such larger English achievements as Drake's destruction of the shipping at Cádiz in 1587, or with the capture and sack of that port nine years later by the Earl of Essex at the head of an Anglo-Dutch expeditionary force.

The Spanish capture of Calais had, however, induced Henry IV of France to make serious overtures for peace with Spain. The treaty was secretly signed at Vervins in May 1598, to the exclusion of both English and Dutch. By the terms of this document, all places in Picardy and Brittany which the Spaniards still held were to be given up to the French. Blavet and Calais were both evacuated, and Bertendona returned to Spain with several hundred of his men overland through France as far as Nantes, having sent his ships around to Dunkirk by order of the Crown. Back in Biscay, Bertendona renewed his shipbuilding program and busied himself with raising sailors to man the squadron of Vizcaya, which he had commanded since the reorganization of the Spanish navy after the armada of 1588. His papers in the Lilly Library contain many interesting details about the building, formation, and upkeep of this squadron in the years 1599-1604. As mentioned above, the Crown and its ministers at Madrid relied heavily on Bertendona's prestige and influence with the Basques of Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa to

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<sup>8</sup> C. Fernández Duro, *Armada Española*, III, 92, for the Spanish raid on Cornwall in July 1595, which most English historians refrain from mentioning.

induce them to accept the heavy burdens which this rebuilding and reorganization of the navy entailed. He was also closely connected with the similar program that was being carried out in the Asturian and Galician ports.

The English raids on Cádiz and La Coruña in 1587-96 naturally made the Spaniards nervous that they might make similar attacks elsewhere. In 1589-90, the Crown repeatedly cautioned Bertendona to be on his guard against English attempts to burn the galleons that were being built or refitted at Portugalete, Pasajes, and elsewhere, either by direct attack or else by saboteurs disguised as foreign sailors. The growing shortage of Spanish sailors and the ever-increasing need for them are likewise reflected in numerous dispatches from the Crown to Bertendona in the years 1589-1604. In February 1590, the Crown approved of Bertendona's efforts to recruit sailors from the French Basque port of St. Jean de Luz. Shipwrights and caulkers were likewise in short supply, and the Crown urged Bertendona to send some of the latter from Vizcaya to the armada in Ferrol, "as there are none whatever in that place nor for many leagues around it, nor are there any to be had from Portugal." In another dispatch written at the end of April 1590, the Crown ordered Bertendona to secure all the pilots he could lay hands on and to send them around to Ferrol forthwith, "owing to the want of this kind of men in the armada." In July of the same year, he was told to train some sailors as gunners "in the school that there is for them," though the site of this naval gunnery school unfortunately is not mentioned.

Despite the manifold frustrations over men, money, and supplies, which are clearly documented in this correspondence, the work of rebuilding and reforming the Spanish navy went steadily forward. In 1598-99, twelve fine new

galleons were built in Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa alone, several of them at Portugalete by Bertendona and his associates under contract with the Crown. Unfortunately, the terms of the contract are not among these papers; but the progress of the work, and the arguments over its financing, can be followed in some detail. Bertendona must have been rather unpleasantly surprised when, at the end of 1599, he received orders to let the Portuguese authorities choose six of the best of them for transference to that Crown for use in the *carreira da India*. This order was repeated in January 1600, but the hand-over at Lisbon was not actually completed until the beginning of March.

In 1601, the government at Madrid decided to send Bertendona with reinforcements for Flanders; but the expedition was cancelled when the Archduke Albert wrote that the Dutch had heard of this project and were lying in wait with a large fleet to intercept him. Before this sailing was countermanded, Don Juan de Idiáquez, the Basque minister and secretary of state who was in high favor at the court of Madrid, wrote to the Basque secretary of the Archduke Albert, commanding Bertendona to his good graces in warm terms. "The General Bertendona is one of those who have most honestly served His Majesty with courage and goodwill; and for this reason, and because he is bringing what he does, and moreover knows Basque (*tras ello saber Bascuense*), he deserves a warm welcome. Furthermore, he is a very good friend of mine; and for all these reasons, this letter of introduction is sincerely meant and is not just a formal compliment." This letter is an interesting example of the "Old Boy network" that functioned among the Basques in high government circles, just as it did in other

places where they congregated in considerable numbers, including Potosí and the Philippines.<sup>9</sup>

In 1603, Bertendona was again busily employed in superintending the building of another twelve galleons on contract for the Crown in northern Spain, nine of them under his immediate eye in Portugalete (Vizcaya). His papers of this period are full of exhortations, warnings, and occasionally even of reprimands from the Crown, which constantly urged that the work should be speeded up "without losing a day or an hour." He was authorized to buy masts and spars from a French merchant of St. Jean de Luz, pending the arrival of others already ordered from Germany; guns for this squadron were bought from Saint Malo and from Lisbon. Manning difficulties continued to be a major problem. A scheme submitted by Bertendona in 1598, with the object of encouraging the development of the maritime population, does not seem to have been implemented by the Crown. It is interesting to note that King Philip III, usually (and rightly) accused of being so slack and unbusinesslike in contrast to his father, could likewise deluge subordinates with exhortations and complaints when he felt it necessary to do so. To Bertendona's representations on the shortage of sailors in July 1597, Philip II had retorted ". . . And the greater the shortage of sailors which you say exists in that seigniory [Vizcaya], the more should you strain every effort

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<sup>9</sup> For the importance of Don Juan de Idiáquez, Estevan de Ibarra, and other Basque correspondents of Bertendona who held influential positions at the court of Madrid, see I. I. Thompson, "The Armada and Administrative Reform: The Spanish Council of War in the Reign of Philip II," *The English Historical Review*, LXXXII (1967), 698-725.

to find them and muster them, something which I confidently commend to your zeal, diligence and good care.” In March 1604, when the Dutch were reported in strength off the Portuguese coast, King Philip III wrote to Bertendona that the need to raise seamen in Vizcaya was greater than ever: “ . . . in which it is vital that you should employ your utmost efforts (*hagays vuestro hultimo esfuerço*), making use of your friends and relatives, and of the prestige which you have in your native region, for the present crisis is one in which you can most distinguish yourself, since it is so much for the good of my service.”

Bertendona did indeed employ his *hultimo esfuerço*, but the result was fatal to him. Already a sick man, with his naturally strong constitution undermined by fifty-eight years of active service for his king and country, he brought the new galleons of Vizcaya around to Lisbon in the summer of 1604, but he could go no further. In a letter signed in a trembling hand, which he wrote to the King on 4 September 1604, he announced that the precarious state of his health had compelled him to disembark and that he had handed over the command of the squadron to his son-in-law, Gaspar Olarte de Orozco. A few days later he was dead, and the Crown of Castile had lost a good and faithful servant who had been largely responsible for the rebuilding of the Spanish navy after the year 1588.

Martín de Bertendona’s heirs claimed in 1626 that, because he had “only concerned himself with serving and never with asking,” he had never received any reward from the Crown. This was probably an exaggeration, since Bertendona was certainly a Knight of St. James, though I cannot say when this distinction was conferred upon him. However, it is clear from his papers that the Crown was

often in arrears with his pay and salary (as it was to thousands of others), and in 1591 he was still agitating for payment of his services in 1588. The nine galleons which he contracted to build in Vizcaya in 1602-03 evidently landed him and his family deeply in debt. He was continually pressing the Crown for installment payments that were due under the terms of his contract and which were allegedly in arrears; but in April 1604, the Crown politely but firmly rejected his requests, claiming that it had already paid more than its share. Probably the loss of four of these nine galleons by shipwreck off the coast of France, on New Year's Day 1607, contributed to the financial ruin of his family and associates as much as anything else. The new commander of the Vizcayan squadron in that year, Don Antonio de Oquendo, petitioned the Crown to change the squadron's name to that of *Guipúzcoa*, since he was a native of that province. His request was supported by two influential Guipúzcoans who were *Secretarios del despacho* at Madrid, Martín and Antonio de Aróstegui, but it was vehemently opposed by Olarte and other Vizcayan relatives and descendants of Bertendona. After much lobbying and backstairs intrigues between these two Basque factions, the Crown compromised by ruling that the ships from the northern coast of Spain should form the squadron of Cantabria, thus including both Vizcaya, Guipúzcoa, and the "Quatro Villas de la Mar."<sup>10</sup>

As indicated above, these papers do not form the complete record of Admiral Bertendona's services. There is virtually nothing on his early years, and there are very few letters from him. But the collection is very rich in letters

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<sup>10</sup> C. Fernández Duro, *Armada Española*, III, 323.

which he received, particularly during the years 1589-1604, although there are some obvious gaps, the year 1601, for example, being represented by only two documents. Research in the archives of Spain, particularly at Madrid, Simancas, and Bilbao, would no doubt fill in many of the missing pieces; but the collection at present obviously forms the cornerstone of a book or a Ph.D. dissertation on Martín de Bertendona. Prof. Lewis, in his perceptive character sketches of the Spanish sea commanders in the "enterprise of England," observed of Bertendona: "His is a more shadowy figure than the others, and perhaps less colourful, though he had been considered important enough to guard the sea-approaches to Spain and Portugal when the main forces went to the Azores in 1583."<sup>11</sup> Thanks to his papers preserved in the Lilly Library, we can now see Martín de Bertendona as a less shadowy and a more substantial figure in his own right. We also learn from these papers that his elder son emigrated to America, where he became a prosperous miner before he died, although it is not stated whether this was in Mexico or Peru. The second son followed the naval tradition of his family and died while serving in the *Armada Real de la Mar Oceano* at Ferrol. At present, Martín de Bertendona does not even rate an entry in the voluminous *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo-Americanana*, better known by the publisher's name, *Espasa Calpe*. If this essay induces someone better qualified than I am to give Martín de Bertendona his rightful place among the maritime heroes of Spain's Golden Age, it will have served its purpose.

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<sup>11</sup> M. Lewis, *The Spanish Armada* (1960), pp. 44-45.

## APPENDIX I

"The English men that were left in the ship, as the captain of the soldiers, the Master and others, were dispersed into divers of the Spanish ships that had taken them, where there had almost a new fight arisen between the Biscaines and the Portingales; while each of them would have the honour to have first boarded her, so that there grew a great noise and quarrel among them, one taking the chief ancient, and the other the flag, and the captain and everyone held his own. The ships that had boarded her were altogether out of order, and broken, and many of their men hurt, whereby they were compelled to come into the Island of Terceira, there to repair themselves: where being arrived, I and my chamber fellow, to hear some news went aboard one of the ships being a great Biscaine, and one of the twelve Apostles, whose Captain was called Bertandono, that had been General of the Biscaynes in the fleet that went for England. He seeing us called us up into the gallery, where with great courtesy he received us, being as then set at dinner with the English captain [William Langhorne] that sat by him, and had on a suit of black velvet, but he could not tell us anything, for that he could speak no other language, but English and Latin, which Bertandono also could a little speak. The English captain got licence of the governor that he might come on land with his weapon by his side, and was in our lodging with the Englishman that was kept prisoner in the island, being of that ship whereof the sailors got away, as I said before. The Governor of Terceira had him to dinner and showed him great courtesy. The Master likewise with licence of Bertandono came on land, and was in our lodging, and had at the least ten or twelve wounds, as well in his head, as

on his body, whereof after that being at sea, between Lisbon and the Islands he died. The Captain wrote a letter, wherein he declared all the manner of the fight, and left it with the English merchant that lay in our lodging, to send it to the Lord Admiral of England. This English captain coming unto Lisbon, was well received, and not any hurt done unto him, but with good convoy sent to Setubal, and from thence sailed into England, with all the rest of the Englishmen that were taken prisoners.”\*

## APPENDIX II

The nature of this article precludes a detailed consideration of the documents relating to Gaspar Olarte de Orozco and Don Diego de Barrundia, 1604-67, which complement those of Martín de Bertendona in this collection, but among them is one which I cannot resist mentioning. This is a document signed by Don Lope de Hoces y Cordoba, captain-general of the *Armada Real* homeward-bound from Brazil, and dated on the high seas (*en alta mar*), 8 September 1635. The sight of this bold signature serves to recall his heroic death in the battle of the Downs, 21 October 1639, which, rather than the defeat of the earlier armada in 1588, marked the end of Spain as a great naval power. When the Dutch returned to the Downs three days after the

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\* *John Huighen van Linschoten his Discours of voyages into ye Easte & West Indies* (London: John Wolfe, 1598), ch. 99. There are two copies of this work in the Lilly Library, as well as one of the original Dutch edition of 1596. Cf. also the objective account of the last fight of the *Revenge* by A. L. Rowse, *Sir Richard Grenville of the ‘Revenge’* (London, 1937), pp. 303-20, which has been frequently reprinted.

battle, the culminating point of which had been the destruction of Don Lope de Hoces' flagship, the great galleon *Santa Tereza* by fireship attack, the victorious Admiral M. H. Tromp told an English eyewitness:

“ . . . how that Don Lope de Hoces, the commander of that ship, and his company did show themselves brave soldiers, for her lower ordnance continued playing upon them when the fire was at their topmast’s head. Also he said that they saved of the Spaniards that leapt overboard near 70 men, who did certify him, that Don Lope, albeit he was a man of above 70 years of age, and had his arm shot off in the beginning of the fight, yet he continued upon the upper deck, encouraging of his men to fight it out unto the last, until the fire seized upon him, whose death he did much lament.”\*

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\* A memorable seafight penned and preserved by Peter White, one of the IIII Masters of Attendance in England’s Navy . . . or a Narrative of all the principal passages which were transacted in the Downs in the year 1639, between Antonio de Oquendo Admiral of the Spanish Armada and Martin Van Tromp, Admiral for the States of Holland (London, 1649), pp. 49-50. There is a copy of this very rare pamphlet in the Lilly Library, and I have modernized the spelling in my citation. Don Lope de Hoces lost an arm not in this battle, incidentally, but in an earlier one.