

THE LINEAGE OF THE ADELANTADO FRANCISCO DE MONTEJO AND HIS WILL AND TESTAMENT

The ancestry and parentage of Francisco de Montejo, *Adelantado* of Yucatan, the origin and status of his House, the place of his birth and that of his death, the year in which he was born, and that in which he died have long been subjects of speculation and interest. Definite answers can be found to certain of the questions which have arisen, while for others no solution has appeared and they remain consigned to the realm of speculation.

It is impossible, given the dearth of original documents, to establish with certainty the ancestry and parentage of the *Adelantado*. The conventional account hitherto followed in the main is that set forth by JOSEPH PELLICER DE TOVAR, *Cronista Mayor* of the Crown of Castile, in a *memorial* drawn up and published in 1670 at the instance of Alfonso de Solís Valderrábano y Bracamonte, *Conde de Villanueva de Cañedo* and *Adelantado* of Yucatan,¹

¹ JOSEPH PELLICER DE TOVAR, *Memorial de la Calidad i Servicios de Don Cristóval Alfonso de Solís i Enríquez, Séptimo Adelantado de Yucatán, Señor de las Villas, i Lugares de Retortillo, Villar, Cemprón, Bernoy, i la Granja i sus Mayorazgos i Patronazgos: que pone en las reales Manos de la Magestad de la Reyna Nuestra Señora, Don Alonso de Solís Valderábano i Bracamonte, Octavo Adelantado de Yucatán, Conde de Villanueva de Cañedo, Hijo y Sucesor suyo en sus Estados, Mayorazgos, i Patronazgos, i Señor de la Casa de Solís en Salamanca* (Madrid, 1670).

for presentation to the Crown in support of a petition for a higher degree of nobility.²

In accord with the *memorial* of PELLICER DE TOVAR, the House of Montejo originated in and took its name from a town of Montejo in the Bishopric of Segovia, where its founders established themselves immediately after the final re-conquest of the district early in the eleventh century. From the town of Montejo the family moved to Salamanca at an unknown date, already possessing a blazon of arms and bearing the name of the place of origin, the latter "a clear indication of its noble status".³ The *Adelantado* descended in direct line from a certain Fernán Sánchez de Montejo, who lived during the reign of Alfonso VIII and that of Ferdinand III. Gregoria de Montejo, daughter of Fernán Sánchez de Montejo, married Baltasar de Montejo in Salamanca, and from this union came the families of the name Montejo in that city.⁴ The *Adelantado* was the son of Luis de Montejo, a *caballero* and a citizen of Salamanca, who had also a daughter named María de Montejo.⁵ Documentary evidence of a Luis de Montejo exists in the form of an obligation on the part of one Alfonso de Almaraz guaranteeing payment

² Petition of Alonso de Solís Valderrábano y Bracamonte, 1670, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid, Consejo, Títulos y Grandezas, Legajo 9271, Número 3: *Consulta* of the *Cámara de Castilla* conceding the Title of *Conde de Montellano* to José de Solís Valderrábano y Luzón, Sept. 11, 1681, A. H. N., Consejos, Legajo 4452: *Pruebas del Ex.^{mo} Señor D.ⁿ Joseph de Solís, Conde de Montellano*, A. H. N., Ordenes Militares, Legajo 7817: JOSÉ DE RÚJULA Y DE OCHOTORENA, and ANTONIO DEL SOLAR Y TABOADA, *Francisco de Montejo y los Adelantados del Yucatán* (Badajoz, 1931). pp. 63-119.

³ PELLICER DE TOVAR, f. 73.

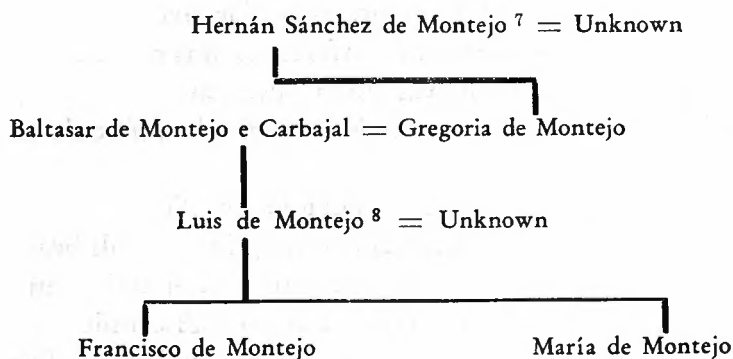
⁴ *Ibid.* In discussing the origin of the Montejo families in Salamanca, PELLICER DE TOVAR draws from DIEGO MESSÍA DE OVANDO, *Ovandina*, lib. ii, cap. xi, f. 313.

⁵ PELLICER DE TOVAR, ff. 73-74.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

A

The Lineage of the *Adelantado* Francisco de Montejo
according to Pellicer de Tovar ⁶



⁶ Cf. Text.

⁷ Late twelfth century and early thirteenth century, or first part of the thirteenth century.

⁸ Late fifteenth century and perhaps early sixteenth century.

of 6200 *maravedís* received as a loan from Montejo and dated December 29, 1480.⁹

It is necessary to approach the statements of PELLICER DE TOVAR concerning the House of Montejo with extreme caution. Certain elements are true; others may be false. Consequently, the account may neither be accepted or rejected *in toto*. PELLICER DE TOVAR drew up the *memorial* in 1670 as a paid investigator expressly to prove the illustrious quality of the families from which Alonso de Solís Valderrábano y Bracamonte had descended, that greater privilege might be gained at the hands of the Crown. The *memorial* is hence subject to all the limitations inherent in a statement consciously dedicated to the glorification of the families concerned and of their individual members. No opportunity for overstatement and the suggestion of favorable inferences was overlooked, and it appears that such was upon occasion gratuitously created, with the result that it is exceedingly difficult to come by the truth.¹⁰

It is to be suspected that PELLICER DE TOVAR seized upon whatever records existed concerning individuals bearing the name Montejo to establish the origins, nobility, and antiquity of the line and employed them indiscriminately and without confirmatory documentary evidence. The assertion that Francisco de Montejo was a direct descendant of Hernán Sánchez de Montejo may be taken as little more than an expedient assumption. On the other hand, the investigator consulted and reproduced docu-

⁹ *Obligación otorgada por Alfonso de Almaraz el mozo, vecino de la ciudad de Salamanca, a favor de Luis de Montejo, su convecino, de pagarle seis mil y doscientos maravedís que le había prestado para socorrer sus necesidades para cuyo pago hipotecó la mitad de una bodega, cuba, y casa que su muger tenía en la calle de Juan del Rey de la misma ciudad, Salamanca, Dec. 29, 1480: PELLICER DE TOVAR, f. 73.*

¹⁰ Cf. AMALIO HUARTE Y ECHENIQUE, *Apuntamientos sobre el Adelantamiento de Yucatán* (Salamanca, 1919), pp. 5-6, for an evaluation of the *memorial* drawn up by PELLICER DE TOVAR.

ments concerning the Montejo family of Salamanca which had passed into the possession of the Solís. None of these papers, however, antedates the document of 1480 already cited. There existed a firm documentary basis for the statements of PELLICER DE TOVAR concerning the broader activities of the Montejo family subsequent to the time that Francisco de Montejo first gained prominence, but there appears to be little valid foundation for the assertion made touching the descent of the line.

The descendants of Francisco de Montejo through his legitimate daughter, Catalina, in petitioning privileges of the Crown posterior to 1670, set forth the descent of the line as delineated in the *memorial* prepared by PELLICER DE TOVAR. Seeking the title of *Conde de Montellano*, which was conceded on October 23, 1681, José de Solís Valderrábano y Luzón presented documents in which Francisco de Montejo was declared to have been of distinguished lineage, the son of Luis de Montejo, and the descendant of Fernán Sánchez de Montejo. It was claimed that the latter was a *caballero* of the period of Alfonso VIII, and that his *solar* was in the town of Montejo of the Bishopric of Segovia. Salamanca was declared to have been the *patria* of Luis de Montejo and of his family.¹¹

¹¹ *Consulta* of the *Cámara de Castilla* conceding the title of *Conde de Montellano* to José de Solís Valderrábano y Luzón, September 11, 1681, A. H. N., Consejos, Legajo 4452: RÚJULA and SOLAR, pp. 95-102. The exaggerated form of the documents supporting the petition presented by José de Solís Valderrábano y Luzón may be judged from the following extract concerning Francisco de Montejo: "... Por la calidad de su nacimiento era Noble (como los más gloriosos conquistadores de la América) de linaje muy conocido, hijo legítimo de Luis de Montejo, descendientes de Fernán Sánchez de Montejo, Cavallero nombrado en el Reynado del Señor D. Alonso el de las Navas; cuyo Solar es en la Villa de Montejo, en el obispado de Segovia; aunque el nacimiento, y la Patria del Adelantado y de su Padre fué Salamanca y todo sobra (aunq ilustra para la gloria de la Descendencia de aquellos Cristianos Argonautas, y Héroes tan superiores q quantos escribió y fingió la Gentilidad, que si Roma o Grecia los conociera, los adorava por sus Martes, y Neptunos, con más disculpa q a los suyos.) ...".

Concerning the native city of Francisco de Montejo there can be no question. In his last will and testament, drawn up in Valladolid on August 16, 1553, when he felt death to be close, the *Adelantado* declared that he was a "natural de la ciudad de Salamanca destos reinos de Castilla".¹² This statement of Montejo effectively disposes of all doubt touching the place of his birth

Although Francisco de Montejo was born in Salamanca and there existed a Luis de Montejo who was a *vecino* of that city toward the close of the fifteenth century, it does not necessarily follow that Luis de Montejo was the father of the *Adelantado* as is claimed in the petitions for privileges placed before the Crown by his descendants and in the *memorial* of PELLICER DE TOVAR. The will and testament of a certain Juan de Montejo, an *escudero* and citizen of Salamanca, drawn up on November 10, 1519, and a codicil of October 26, 1519, throw the entire matter into question.¹³

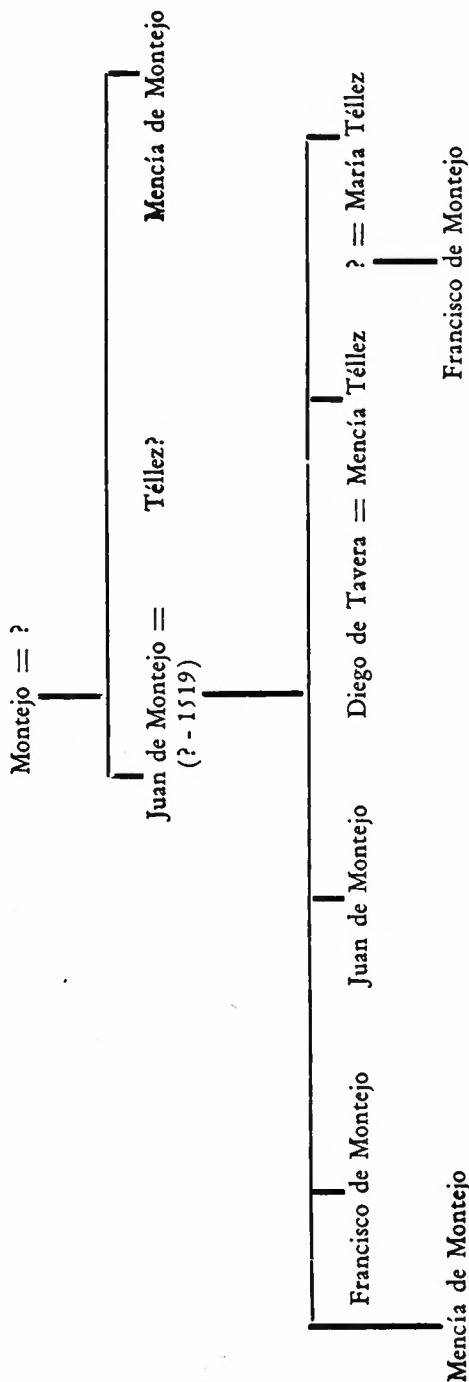
Juan de Montejo, whose wife was already deceased, had as legitimate children Francisco de Montejo, Juan de Montejo, Mencía Téllez, and María Téllez. He had also a natural daughter, Mencía de Montejo. His daughter María Téllez had a son named Francisco de Montejo. Juan de Montejo possessed *casas* and other property in Salamanca, he himself dwelling "entrada la Calle Cabrera." He also owned *casas* in the town of Tejada. In his will he stipulated that his legitimate daughter should dwell in the houses he owned in Salamanca until both of her

¹² Last Will and Testament of Francisco de Montejo, Valladolid, Aug. 16, 1553, Archivo de Protocolos, Valladolid, Legajo 128 (Escritanía of Francisco Cerón, Tomo II).

¹³ Last Will and Testament of Juan de Montejo, Salamanca, Nov. 10, 1519, Archivo Histórico (Archive of the Province of Salamanca), Salamanca, *Protocolos* of Pedro González, 1519; Codicil of Juan de Montejo, Salamanca, Oct. 26, 1519, Archivo Histórico (Archive of the Province of Salamanca) Salamanca, *Protocolos* of Pedro González, 1519.

B

The Family of Juan de Montejo, *escudero* and *vecino* of Salamanca, as indicated by his Last Will and Testament, drawn up in Salamanca on November 10, 1519 and a *Codicilo* of October 26, 1519¹⁴



¹⁴ Cf. text. In his testament Juan de Montejo refers to a *sobrino*, Juan de Grado.

brothers, or either of them, should return to the city, and granted permission to occupy the houses possessed in Tejada to a sister, Mencía de Montejo, a *vecina* of that town. After disposing of certain possessions in detailed articles, some of the belongings being given to the grandson, Francisco, he bequeathed all other property to his legitimate children. He designated the Monastery of San Francisco in the city of Salamanca, which held the tomb of his wife, as the place in which he should be interred.¹⁵

The members of this group coincide precisely with those of the family from which the *Adelantado* came, as is indicated by documents of the sixteenth century, and it is almost beyond the realm of possibility that two or more branches of the House of Montejo in Salamanca could simultaneously meet such a requirement.¹⁶ The *Adelantado* Francisco de Montejo had a brother named Juan de Montejo who served as his agent in Mexico and as a lieutenant in Honduras, and Francisco de Montejo, the *Sobrino* of Yucatecan history, was born between the years 1517 and 1519.¹⁷

It may not be without significance that the sons were

¹⁵ Last Will and Testament of Juan de Montejo, Salamanca, Nov. 10, 1519, Archivo Histórico (Archive of the Province of Salamanca), Salamanca, *Protocolos* of Pedro González, 1519: Codicil of Juan de Montejo, Salamanca, Oct. 26, 1519, Archivo Histórico (Archive of the Province of Salamanca), Salamanca, *Protocolos* of Pedro González, 1519.

¹⁶ Cf. *Probanza* of Francisco de Montejo el Mozo, Mérida, 1563, Archivo General de Indias de Sevilla, Patronato 65-2-1; Testimony of Francisco de Montejo the *Sobrino*: "Preguntado por las preguntas generales dixo que es de edad de quarenta y cinco años poco mas o menos e que es este testigo sobrino del dho adelantado de montejo hijo de una hermana suya y primero ermano del dho don fran^{co} de montejo que hace esta probança..." Cf. also Rújula and Solar, p. 184.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* A number of *probanzas* for which Francisco de Montejo the *Sobrino* gave testimony, through his statements concerning his age, fix the date of his birth within the years 1517 and 1519. These *probanzas* are in the Archivo General de Indias en Sevilla.

absent when Juan de Montejo drew up his will, as Francisco de Montejo was at the time returning to Castile as *procurador* of Cortés and Villa Rica before the sovereign. Moreover, Montejo inherited property in Salamanca, which he sold to obtain funds to aid in financing the *armada* which he organized at Seville in 1527 for the conquest of Yucatan.¹⁸ Nor is the statement of PELLICER DE TOVAR that the *Adelantado* had a sister named María de Montejo to be ignored in the light of the fact that one of the two legitimate daughters of Juan de Montejo was named María.

While the information available tends toward the conclusion that the *Adelantado* was the son of Juan de Montejo, the evidence yet remains confused to such an extent that a categorical statement on the subject cannot be made. Nowhere in the large volume of available documents which he originated or with which he was directly concerned did the *Adelantado* make mention of his parentage. His petition for admission to the Order of Santiago, which perforce would have indicated his lineage in great detail, does not appear to be available. The effort of the *Adelantado* to secure the habit of Santiago, it should be noted, was unsuccessful.¹⁹

The place of origin of that branch of the House of Montejo from which the *Adelantado* came is the subject of controversy, since there exists no specific valid evidence to indicate any one town to the exclusion of others. In Castile there were branches of the Montejo family in the provinces of Salamanca and Burgos, and others existed in Extremadura.²⁰ One point, however, appear reasonably

¹⁸ Montejo to the Crown, Gracias a Dios, Dec. 26, 1545, A. G. I., Guatemala 9. Cf. also OVIEDO, lib. xxxii, cap. ii.

¹⁹ Cf. El Adelantado D.ⁿ Franc.^o de Montejo. . . con D.ⁿ Pedro de Alvarado. . . 1533, A. G. I., Justicia 1005-3-1.

²⁰ RÚJULA and SOLAR, pp. 13-14, 36-48.

certain; the House originated in one of the several towns and villages of the name of Montejo.²¹

Whether one of the two towns of Montejo in the district of Segovia, as claimed by PELLICER DE TOVAR, whether the village of Montejo in the jurisdiction of Alba de Tormes, as is suggested by DE RÚJULA Y DE OCHOTERENA and DEL SOLAR Y TABOADA,²² or yet another place was the ancestral home of the House of Montejo is problematical. The fact that branches of the Montejo family were definitely established in Salamanca as property-holders and members of the lesser nobility in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries would perhaps render most plausible the assumption that the *lugar* of Montejo in the jurisdiction of Alba de Tormes, close by the city, was the original home of the family.

The status of the House of Montejo as one of the lesser nobility is established with certainty, as the family possessed a blazon of arms before the *Adelantado* achieved prominence in the Indies. Upon the petition of Montejo, the original arms of the family were altered by the Emperor in a decree of December 8, 1526, the heraldic symbols of the new blazon being based upon incidents of

²¹ Cf. *Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada Europeo-Americana* (Barcelona, Espasa, 1912-1930), Vol. 36. The towns and villages of the name Montejo listed in this encyclopedia are as follows:

1. Montejo, Province and Diocese of Salamanca and Jurisdiction of Alba de Tormes.
2. Montejo de Arévalo, Province of Segovia.
3. Montejo de Bricia, Province of Burgos.
4. Montejo de Cevas, Province of Burgos.
5. Montejo de la Sierra, Province of Madrid.
6. Montejo de la Vega de la Serrezuela, Province and Diocese of Segovia.
7. Montejo de Licerias, Province of Soria.
8. Montejo de San Miguel, Province of Burgos.

²² RÚJULA and SOLAR, p. 37.

service performed in New Spain.²³ From all evidence at hand, it is clear that the family of Francisco de Montejo, while of noble status and possessing certain property, was not wealthy or influential.

Given the absence of accurate data, the date of the birth of the *Adelantado* is uncertain. Baptismal records for the period in which Montejo was born are not known to exist in Salamanca, and in the various *probanzas* for which he gave testimony the *Adelantado*, contrary to formal practice, did not state his age. Two bases of estimate are available, however, the statement of BERNAL DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO that Montejo was about thirty-five years of age when he accompanied Cortés to New Spain,²⁴ and the assertion of his daughter-in-law, Andrea del Castillo, that he was eighty years of age at his death.²⁵ Montejo died in 1553,²⁶ and with that year definitely established as the basis of calculation, the year of his birth according to the age given by DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO would be about

²³ *Cédula* granting a new Blazon of Arms to Francisco de Montejo, Granada, Dec. 8, 1526, A. G. I., Indiferent General 421; Sociedad de Bibliófilos, *Nobiliario de los Conquistadores* (Madrid, 1892). The arms granted to Montejo in the *cédula* of Dec. 8, 1526 are reproduced in colors in this work. In his will Juan de Montejo declared himself to be an *escudero*.

²⁴ BERNAL DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO, *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España* (México, 1904), Cap. ccvi. The statement concerning the age of Montejo made by DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO might conceivably be interpreted to mean that he was about thirty-five when he first came to the Indies, although from the context it appears reasonably certain that the soldier-historian referred to the time of the Cortés expedition. If DÍAZ DEL CASTILLO should have meant that Montejo was about thirty-five when he went to Darién with Pedro Arias de Avila, his year of birth would become *circa* 1479.

²⁵ *Probanza* of Andrea del Castillo, Mérida, 1568, A. G. I., México, 974, cap. XIII: "...el dicho adelantado (murió) en los Reynos de castilla... siendo hombre de edad de ochenta años..." This *probanza* has been published in *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación*, México, Tomo IX, N° 1, pp. 99-147 (copy in the Archivo General de la Nación, México, Archivo del Hospital de Jesús, Legajo 264, Expediente 4.)

²⁶ *Cf. Infra.*

1484 and according to that given by Andrea del Castillo about 1473. The figures given by the soldier-chronicler and Andrea del Castillo, it is clear, are patently but rough approximations. Under the circumstances it is logical to assume that the age stated by the daughter-in-law is the more accurate and that Montejo was born about 1473.

The *Adelantado* died in his natal city of Salamanca on the *Día de Nuestra Señora* in September of 1553.²⁷ In the summer of that year he believed himself to be at the point of death while at the Court in Valladolid seeking the determination of his *residencias* and prosecuting his suits before the Crown, and on August 16 he drew up a last will and testament.²⁸ On the following day he caused two codicils to be drawn up.²⁹ In his will the *Adelantado* directed that he be interred in the church of the Monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Merced in Valladolid. Recovered to a certain degree, Montejo was able to journey to Salamanca, and reached that city on or before August 31, when he caused a third codicil to his will to be drawn

²⁷ Alonso Maldonado to the Crown, Santo Domingo, April 14, 1554, A. G. I., Santo Domingo 71; "... el adelantado don fran.^{co} de montejo mi suegro fallecio fin de el año pasado ...": Doña Catalina de Montejo to the Crown, Santo Domingo, April 14, 1554, A. G. I., Sto. Dom. 71: Last Will and Testament of Francisco de Montejo, Valladolid, August 16, 1553, Archivo de Protocolos, Valladolid, Legajo 128: Codicil to the Last Will and Testament of Francisco de Montejo, Salamanca, August 31, 1553, Archivo Histórico (Archive of the Province of Salamanca), Salamanca, Protocolos ante Pedro Calderón, Años de 1552-1553: Francisco Mirones (?) to the *Cabildo* of Santiago de Guatemala, Valladolid, October 16, 1553, Archivo Municipal of Guatemala City, Cartas de Ciudades y Villas; "El adelantado montejo fue dios serbido de llebar al cielo murio dia de nra señora en set^o en Salamanca y yzo dios muy gran md en sacarle de tanto trabaxo como tenia en este consejo que creo md en ser tan buen onbre como era le fatigaran..."

²⁸ Last Will and Testament of the *Adelantado* Francisco de Montejo, Valladolid, August 16, 1553, Archivo de Protocolos, Valladolid, Legajo 128.

²⁹ Codicils to the Last Will and Testament of the *Adelantado* Francisco de Montejo, Valladolid, August 17, 1553, Archivo de Protocolos, Valladolid, Legajo 128.

up. In this third codicil he requested burial in the Church of San Benito in Salamanca in the sepulchre of Juan Alvarez Maldonado and of his ancestors.³⁰ Just as the parish records for the year of the birth of Montejo are not known to exist, so there are none available which record his death. It seems probable that he was entombed, as he requested, in the Church of San Benito.³¹

Claims more modest than those made on behalf of the Montejo family were set forth concerning the lineage of Beatriz de Herrera, wife of the *Adelantado*. PELLICER DE TOVAR states that Beatriz de Herrera was the only daughter and sole heiress of Juan Alvarez de Castañeda and his wife Beatriz de Herrera and that she was the Señora of the "Casas and Heredamientos" of the hamlet (*lugar*) of Frades in the jurisdiction of Salamanca.³² The documents supporting the petition of José de Solís Valderrábano y Luzón enlarged upon the position of the line, declaring that Beatriz de Herrera was "a woman of great quality" and the "only daughter and heiress of Juan Alvarez de Castañeda and Doña Beatriz de Herrera, both bearing names and being of lineage which carried the highest prestige in Castile."³³ Beatriz de Herrera, as the *Adelantado*,

³⁰ Codicil to the Last Will and Testament of the *Adelantado* Francisco de Montejo, Salamanca, August 31, 1553, Archivo Histórico (Archive of the Province of Salamanca), Salamanca, Protocolos ante Pedro Calderón, Años de 1552-1553. The Juan Alvarez Maldonado concerned was quite probably the father of Alonso Maldonado, husband of Catalina de Montejo. The father of Alonso Maldonado bore the name Juan Alvarez Maldonado. Cf. RÚJULA and SOLAR, pp. 66-67. It is not clear whether in referring to *antepasados* the *Adelantado* meant the ancestors of Juan Alvarez Maldonado or his own.

³¹ There was in 1933 no trace of the tomb of the *Adelantado* Francisco de Montejo above ground in the Church of San Benito, although a *cura* was in possession of vague information that members of the Montejo family had once been interred in the edifice.

³² PELLICER DE TOVAR, ff. 73-74.

³³ *Consulta* of the *Cámara de Castilla* conceding the title of *Conde de Montellano* to José de Solís Valderrábano y Luzón, Sept. 11, 1681. A. H. N., Consejos, Legajo 4452.

was of the lesser nobility, both the houses of Castañeda and Herrera being of that rank.³⁴ She was a *natural* of Seville, and it appears that she died in the City of Mexico about the year 1560.³⁵

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³⁴ RÚJULA and SOLAR, p. 64.

³⁵ Excerpt from the Last Will and Testament of Beatriz de Herrera, drawn up in México, July 5, 1560, included in a *Protocolo* of Catalina de Montejo, México, September 26, 1565, Archivo de Notarías, México, Tomo 3, 1562-1565.