
Document 1565R

Legazpi's voyage—Logbook of the French pilot Pierre Plin

Sources: AGI formerly 67-6-29 (from Papeles 1564-1608 brought from Simancas); transcribed by Muñoz on 7 February 1794; MN ms. 141, doc. 17, fol. 287-295; Col. de Navarrete, t. 17, doc. 12; Col. de Ultramar ii, footnotes on pages 352 and 373; transcript made by Robertson is in Newberry Library, Chicago, Ayer ms. 1391, Vol. 1, N° 1; cited in B&R Bibliography, p. 244.

Narrative of the voyage made from the port of Navidad to the Islands of the West [beginning] in the year 1564, on November 20th [by] General Miguel López de Legazpi.

On Monday, 20th of November 1564, I took the sun in the port of Navidad in 19° and 1/4. My meridian was just under 2 quarters [or] one half hour [of sun] one point to SW¹, I found myself 250 leagues from the diametral line passing through the Canary Islands 10 leagues west of the Island of Hierro.

Tuesday next, 21st of November. We departed from the port of Navidad to go to the Islands of the West. In accordance with the orders given to us by our Captain General, we headed SW. We were becalmed that day.

...	
[Dates]	[Latitudes]
22 November	16° 3/4
25 November	14° 3/4
27 November	14° 1/4

¹ Ed. note: Sorry, I cannot unscramble this text in a more meaningful way. The original says: ".que davame el meridiano dos quartos y m^a de ora escasos [de sol?] a la quarta al [del?] sudueste..." This varies slightly in similar expressions below. "One point to SW" may mean "in the SW quadrant" (of his astrolabe) instead. As far as the next sentence is concerned, this was an effort to estimate his longitude. The island of Hierro is one of the Canary Islands.

28 November 13° 2/3

Tuesday, 28th of November, I took the sun in 13° and 2/3. In 24 hours, we covered 30 leagues W 1/4 SW [= W by S] and SSW. On this day we saw a great multitude of birds as if we were near land but we did not see anything. My meridian was one quarter of an hour of sun taking one point to SW.

[29 November 13° 1/3

30 November 13°]

...

Friday, 1st day of the month of December. I did not take the sun because there were many showers... This night we lost the patache **San Lucas** on account of the fault of the pilot, as the Governor had warned him [not] to separate from the flagship. The captain of the San [Lucas] was Don Alonso de Arellano.

Saturday, 2nd of December... On this day we saw a large quantity of birds...

[4 December 11° 1/3]

6 December 10° 3/4

8 December 10° 1/4

9 December 9° 2/3

11 December 9° 2/3

13 December 9° 3/4

14 December 9° 2/3

16 December 9° 3/4

18 December 9°7'

19 December 9°

20 December 9°

21 December 9°

23 December 9° 1/4

24 December 9°12'

25 December 9°8'

26 December 9°

27 December just under 9°

28 December 9° 2/3

Thursday, 28th of December. I took the sun [at noon] in 9° and 2/3. At 6 a.m., I passed the island of **Los Reyes**¹ without seeing it. I passed below it by one third of a degree because it is in 9 degrees. The night before, they [i.e. the other pilots] and the Pilot Major took star sightings in 9 degrees and 1/3. They had the heading changed to W by S in order to reduce the latitude by 1/3 degree and hit the island in 9 degrees. I told them at the proper time that they would not take the sun at noon in 9 degrees, but they did not agree...

[30 December 9°]

1 Ed. note: The Wotje of Villalobos.

31 December	9° 1/3
1 January 1565	10° 1/3
2 January	10° 1/3
3 January	10° 1/2
4 January	10° 2/3
6 January	10° 1/4
7 January	10° 1/4

Monday, 8th of January. In 18 hours, we [had] covered 26 leagues [when] at 6 a.m. the *almiranta* fired a shot as a signal that they had seen land to the SW. We ran all day to the SW, thinking we would find the land which they said they had seen at 6 a.m. We covered 4 leagues. At noon, I took the sun in 10°. Until 6 p.m., we covered 4 leagues due south, with the wind being ENE. After we had seen nothing, we changed the heading to W by N.

[Discovery of Mejit]

Tuesday, 9th of January. We saw land at 6 a.m. At noon, we were next to it. I took the sun at noon in 10°9' according to the almanach from Mexico, and according to that from Spain in 10°. During the other 18 hours we covered 23 leagues on a W by N heading. My meridian was 3 quarters of an hour of sun equivalent to one point SW.

The Governor ordered that the island be named the Island of **Los Barbudos** because the Indians are bearded. The island is about 4 leagues in circumference. We found the settlement on the western side. We tacked back and forth in order to come to an anchor. We let go the anchor with two lengths of cable but we were unable to hold because the bottom was very deep and the ground bad. The frigate went. Ashore they found Indians who had as food supplies chickens, fish, yams, coconuts, bread whose nature could not be determined.

We tacked back and forth until 10 p.m. We found the current running NW and SW. We were waiting for the frigate. Once it had come, we proceeded due west with only the foresail, the wind being NE.

[Discovery of Ailuk]

Wednesday, 10th of January. At 7 a.m., we saw an island made up of many islets. At noon, we were next to it. It is 10 leagues in length N—S, 4 leagues E—W, 3 leagues SE—NW, and 5 leagues NE—SW. The islands are made like enclosures. We did not see any population nor found a place where to drop the anchor, although we came with the bowsprit over the land.

The Governor ordered that it be named the Islands of **San Pedro** and **San Pablo**. I took the sun off the south part of the island in 10° and 1/4, according to the

almanach from Mexico, and according to that from Spain 17 minutes.¹ My meridian was $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour of sun which are equivalent to one point SW. In 24 hours, we covered 20 leagues due west. Having passed the island, we headed W by S.

[Discovery of Jemo]

At 6 p.m., we were next to a small island which the Governor ordered should be named the Island of **Los Pajaros** because they were many [birds]. It has a reef extending for 2 leagues to ENE. There are 9 leagues from the Island of San Pedro and San Pablo to the Island of Pajaros.² The wind was NE.

...	
[11 January	10°]
12 January	just over 10°

[Re-discovery of Wotho]

Friday, 12th of January. I took the sun in just over 10°. At 4 p.m., we coasted from one end to another an **island** [Wotho] made up of islets. Its southern part looks like an enclosure. Its circumference is 12 leagues. In 28 hours, we covered 44 leagues due west. The Governor ordered the island to be called **Las Hermanas**. The wind was ENE.

...	
13 January	10°13'
14 January	10°7'

[Discovery of Ujelang]

Sunday, 14th of January. I took the sun in 10°7'... At 6 p.m., we saw an **island** [Ujelang] which bore SSW. In 6 hours, we [had] covered 10 leagues. We lowered the topsails and the whole night we luffed with the lower sails in order to reconnoiter it in the morning. The wind was ENE.

Monday, 15th of January. We tacked back and forth on the north side of the island. We tried hard to let go the anchor but we could not do so, at the point of the island. It is a bank shaped like a box. On the same northern side [of] the point [island?], the point of the bank runs E—W for 6 leagues. It is very dangerous on top of the bank itself for the whole of these 6 leagues. There are 6 islets bearing NW—SE. This is uninhabited land. Within the hour, we steered due west.

I took the sun at noon in 9° and $\frac{2}{3}$. I found that the northern point of the island [then] bore due east.³ In 6 hours, we had covered 7 leagues due west. The wind was E by N.

[16 January	9° $\frac{3}{4}$]
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1 Ed. note: Be that as it may, Monsieur Plin was not consistent, having been $\frac{1}{3}$ degree too low at Mejit, and now $\frac{1}{3}$ degree too high.

2 Ed. note: The actual distance is about 6 leagues, that is, $\frac{1}{3}$ of a degree.

3 Ed. note: As the islet of Kalo is at 9°50', his estimate was only 10 minutes too high.

17 January	just under 10°. Heading changed to NW.
19 January	12° 1/4
20 January	just under 13°
21 January	13°

Guam stopover

Monday, 22nd of January. At 11 a.m., we saw land bearing NW 7 leagues away. In the last 23 hours, we had covered 16 leagues on a W by S heading. We steered to NW to make the island and at 6 p.m. we were near it. We then coasted it and ran all night tacking off the WSW part of the island.

Tuesday, 23rd of January. At 7 a.m., we dropped anchor in the SSW part, next to a point that runs southward. On the south side, there is also an islet [Cocos] one league offshore which has a reef that ends up at the big island; the canoes pass on top of it. The SE—NW coast has a small islet one stone's throw [from the shore]¹—nothing can pass through there—being separated by the sea, 3 leagues to the SW.² There are 4 islets inside a bay that is very good to anchor in.³ The NW—SE coast is 6 leagues in length.⁴ The other part of the island runs NE for 9 to 10 leagues, that is, the part that I was able to see.

We remained here for 11 days, occupied in exploring the land and taking on fresh supplies because it is good and populated. At this island, I took the sun's elevation ashore, by order of the Governor, in 13°2' according to the almanach from Spain, and according to the almanach from New Spain in 13°12'. At the southernmost point, I found the meridian one quarter of an hour of sun that I took in the SW quadrant. **This island is called Goan.**

Saturday, 3rd of February. At 6 a.m., we set sail to pursue our route. We covered 7 leagues due west in 12 hours. The southern part of the island bore due east. The wind was calm, NNE and NE.

Sunday, 4th of February. I took the sun in 13° and 1/3...

...
Tuesday, 13th of February. At 7 a.m., we saw the Philippines. At noon, I took the sun in 12° and 1/3, almost 1/4... At 7 p.m., we anchored in 35 fathoms among the islands in the Bay of Cibabao, sheltered from the westerly breezes. That same day marked the end of the voyage from the port of Navidad to the Island of Tandaya.

1 Ed. note: Possibly Agrigan Island in Ajayan Bay at the eastern end of Cocos Lagoon.

2 Ed. note: Probable error for SE, or NW, if linked with the words that follow. The lack of punctuation in the original text makes it difficult to properly link words to make meaningful sentences here.

3 Ed. note: A probable reference to Umatac Bay, and the rocks off Fort Santo Angel.

4 Ed. note: He means from Cocos to Facpi Point.

nor nordeste, Sur Sudueste, conosaõ Se Ser esta tiza una delae
yslas quedizen de los ladrones La ysla es desta figura —

Esto nose descubrio .



Sketch map of Guam and flying proa by pilots Martinez and Martín. *Sketches copied from the logbook of the pilots of the almiranta San Pablo. The captions are translated as follows. On top is part of a journal entry: "NNE-SSW. This island was recognized as one of those called the Ladrones. The island looks like this." Written upside down off Umatac are the following remarks: "Surgidero y agua = anchorage and water" and "This anchorage is in 13 degrees and 1/5." The flying proa bears the captions: "Sails of palm" and "Counterweight of the ship to windward, they almost always sail on the bowline ." (From AGI, Mapas y Planos, Filipinas, 2)*