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Genealogy

One of my passions is genealogy. It is a passion passed down to me by my family. My parents, especially my mother, always told me stories about our ancestors and how we descended from prominent lineages. My maternal Carlo family, I was told, participated in the founding of the town of Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico in 1771, while my paternal Sotomayors also enjoyed prestige in Moca, Puerto Rico. My great-aunt Rogelia "Yeya" Soto(mayor) Méndez was an avid genealogist who traveled to multiple parishes in Puerto Rico in search of records of distant ancestors. My grandfather, Antonio "Toño" Soto(mayor) Méndez while visiting family in Spain during the 1980s did an ancestral pilgrimage to Pontevedra, Galicia where our distant Sotomayor ancestors come from. Noting this Galician heritage, my father as a child gained the nickname "Gallego" (the Galician). To me, as an historian, genealogy is a fascinating intellectual puzzle that combines the search for distant ancestors and my urge to learn as much as I can from their lives and time periods they lived in.

My passion for genealogy splinters into other diverse fields such as history of the early modern and colonial Caribbean and Latin America, onomastics, anthroponymy, genetics, heraldry, and medieval history among many others. In this section, I outline my direct ([agnatic](#)) paternal genealogy, which is composed of three main lineages: Sotomayor, Lugo, and Pereira. I have been involved in the deep study of genealogy since 2003, and with the complicated but very useful field of genetic genealogy since 2013. My ancestors have been in the island of Puerto Rico since early in the European colonization in the 16th century, my indigenous ancestors well before that.

While the following genealogy traces only my paternal ancestry, I have tracked most of my four grandparents' ancestors, with more or less success, back to the 18th century and beyond. Like in many other societies, it is rather difficult to document genealogies past the 19th and 18th centuries. Being true to my Caribbean heritage, my ancestral background is very diverse. Though most of my ancestry is of European background, autosomal genetic and documented data show that I have some 13% Native American ([Taíno](#)) and some 5% [West African](#) (Togo/Benin/Mali/Senegal) ancestry. My maternal ancestry, Carlo, is of Italian background, particularly from Genoa, in the [Liguria](#) region. The following genealogy contains brief information of each individual with links for further information.

For more information on the research process that supports this genealogy, see my [Publications](#) section of this website, particularly the articles, "Genetic Genealogy..." and "Blood and Paper."

Grandfather - Don Antonio "Toño" Soto Méndez (1913-1989): Born in Moca, Puerto Rico, but moved to San Juan in the 1930s. A self taught certified pharmacist, he owned a pharmacy in Santurce, becoming later an entrepreneur in the business of photographic equipment. He married **doña Esperanza Mora Vidal** and had two children, my father Antonio and Carla. Esperanza Mora Vidal was descendant of Juan Mora y Romero, from San Juan del Puerto, Huelva. Don Toño was the son of:

Great-Grandfather - Don Alberto "Tito" Sotomayor (1879-1967): Born in Moca, Puerto Rico, he was a landowner in Moca and merchant with businesses in Moca and Aguadilla. He married **doña Yldefonsa Méndez Cortés** and had 13 children: Carla, Rogelia, Ismael, Antonio, Florermina, Tomás, Esther, Clara, Ana, Reinaldo, Juan, María, and Genoveva. Yldefonsa was a descendent of the Méndez family from Moca, one of the foundig families of the town in 1772. He was a son of:

2nd Great-Grandfather - Don Alberto "Tito/Papá Soto" Sotomayor (c.1841-1935): Born in Moca, Puerto Rico, he was a landowner in Rocha, Moca. An educated and highly religious man (prayed three times a day, and the local priest gave mass in his country home), he donated the lands to establish a school in the Rocha neighborhood. It is said that he also fought with the Spanish during the Spanish-American War of 1898. He married his first cousin **doña Magdalena Sotomayor y de Torres**, daughter of don Eduardo de Sotomayor, one of the richest men in Moca and doña Rosa María de Torres. With "Lena" he had 9 children: Alberto, Pablo, Ramón Calixto, Juan, Desiderio, Carlos, Josefa, Alejandrina, and Margarita. He was a son of:

3rd Great-Grandfather - Don Juan de la Cruz de Sotomayor (1818-1862). Born in Moca, Puerto Rico, he was a landowner and part of the last generation of slave owners in Puerto Rico. Two of his brothers, don Eduardo and don José Antonio Abad, were listed in 1853 as two of the richest men in Moca. Unlike his relatives, he had a short life, dying at the early age of 44. He married **doña Balbina Tirado y Lorenzo de Acevedo**, a direct descendant of *alférez* don Pablo Tirado, *ayudante* Andrés Tirado, and *sacristán mayor* don Francisco de Rivas. Also a

granddaughter of *regidor* and alférez real of Aguada don Martín Lorenzo de Acevedo, rich landowner and slaveowner and *teniente a guerra* and Mayor of Moca. With doña Balbina he had 10 children: José Ramón, Ramón Alberto, Silverio, Catalino, Juan de la Cruz, Balbina, Josefa, Julia, Juan Antonio Demetrio, and María Dolores. He was a son of:

4th Great-Grandfather - Sergeant Don Alberto de Sotomayor (c.1771-1851). He was born in San Sebastián del Pepino, just west of Moca and was also a landowner. In the 1840s he owned two slaves, probably for domestic service. He belonged to Moca's urban militias as Sergeant. Married **doña María Dionisia Ximénez** on 1798 in Moca and had 13 children: Juana Paula, Juan Calixto, Eduardo, Gregorio, José Benito, Juana Nepomucena, Julián, José Antonio Abad, Manuel de Jesús, Dionisio, José Enrique, and María Dionisia. María Dionisia Ximénez was a descendant of sergeant Cristóbal Ximénez Calderón and relative of captain Pedro Ximénez. He was a son of:

5th Great-Grandfather - Don Juan de Sotomayor (-after 1821). Born in Aguada, in 1821 he appears as having the *fuero* as a member of Aguada's infantry and cavalry units. At least four of his sons belonged to the urban militias: Juan Mártir, Alberto, Francisco, Marcos, and Eusebio. He married **doña Serafina de Lugo** and had 10 children: Juan Mártir, Juan Francisco, Alejandro, Alberto, Marcos, Serafina, Rosalía, Brígida, Gregorio, and Eusebio. Doña Serafina was a descendant of the noble Lugo Sotomayor lineage, and as such 4th cousin of her husband Juan.

6th Great-Grandfather - Captain Juan de Soto de las Cuevas Hernández (1681-1791). Juan was born in 1679 in Aguada according to his death record (now lost) from June 6, 1791 in Moca. However, in 1709 he declared to have been born in 1681. In 1707 he declared to be a landowner in Moca. He was *alcalde* de la Santa Hermandad in San Germán in 1707 and a captain of Aguada's militia in 1721. He married **doña Rosa Lorenzo de Acevedo**.

7th Great-Grandfather - Captain Manuel de Soto de las Cuevas (1645-aft.1702). Manuel is recorded as being *alférez* in 1683 and a captain in Aguada in 1690, 1691, and a "teniente y capitán a guerra" 1702, and 1704. He died after 1707. He married **Andrea (Hernández) de la Cruz**. An official declaration from his cousin *ayudante* Isidro de la Cruz de Soto (de Figueroa) from 1691 indicates that he was the grandson of Capt. Juan de Lugo Sotomayor I.

8th Great-Grandfather - Captain Juan de Lugo Sotomayor II. He was a captain and held the elected position of *alcalde ordinario* (Mayor) in San Juan in the 17th century. The position of *alcalde ordinario* in the New World were reserved and given to those that descended from the conquistadors and early colonizers. He married Ana Franquez in 1644 in San Juan's Cathedral, and their descendants used the surnames Soto de las Cuevas, Franqui de las Cuevas, and Sotomayor in Aguada. He remarried in 1665 to Da. Ana de Avendaño. He was a son of:

9th Great-Grandfather - Captain Juan de Lugo Sotomayor Topete (c.1575-after 1645). Born in San Juan, he was a Captain in the Spanish army in Puerto Rico, San Juan Mayor (*alcalde ordinario*), and an *hidalgo*. He was a key figure in the successful defense of San Juan during the Dutch attack by Admiral Boudewijn Hendricksz on 1625. He married **doña Luisa Velázquez**, daughter of Captain Baltazar Velázquez and **doña Juana Bautista**. One his daughters, doña Isabel de Lugo Sotomayor married Captain Alonso Menéndez de Valdés, son of Governor don Diego Menéndez de Valdés and doña Elena de Valdés, of the noble Asturian House of Valdés. He was a brother of Capt. Guillermo de Lugo Figueroa and Capt. Diego de Figueroa de Lugo. He was a son of:

10th Great-Grandfather - Captain Pedro Mexía de Lugo (1543-1594). Born in Tenerife, Canary Islands, he was a Captain, Councilman (*regidor*), *alcalde de la Santa Hermandad*, and Mayor (*alcalde ordinario*) of San Juan, Puerto Rico. He married **doña Isabel de Sotomayor**, who was been identified as a daughter of Hernán Pérez (*regidor perpetuo*) and doña María del Rincón. This branch of the Sotomayors also descended from the Soutomayor lineage from Galicia. The origins of this very noble lineage go back to Mem Paes Sorred, who was given by King Alfonso VII the Lordship over the valley of Souto after fighting bravely at the conquest of Almería in 1147 (as part of the Second Crusade), which he named SOUTO MAIOR. Mem Paes was the son of Paio Sorred, who had also fought bravely at the conquest of Toledo in 1085 (considered a proto-crusade). All noble Sotomayors descend from this main branch. The Sotomayors held titles such as Duques de Sotomayor, Duques de Béjar, Condes de Belalcázar, Marqueses de Mos, Condes de Caminha, Marqueses de Arcos, Marqueses de Tenorio, Condes de Crecente, Viscondes de Vilanova de Cerveira, Marqueses de El Carpio, among many more. He was a son of:

11th Great-Grandfather - Captain Juan Benítez Pereira de Lugo (c.1504-aft.1545). Born in Tenerife, he served as Captain in the Spanish army and as *regidor* also in Tenerife. He submitted a last will and testament in La Orotava (Tenerife) on November 18, 1545. He married **doña Elvira Mexía de Figueroa**, daughter of Juan Pérez de Zorroza and Francisca Mexía de Figueroa. Elvira was also a granddaughter of Pedro Mexía de Figueroa, conquistador of Gran Canaria, La Palma, and Tenerife (Canary Islands). *Regidor* and *Alcalde Mayor* of Tenerife. She was also a descendant of Gonzalo Mexía (Messia, Mejía), Administrator of the Order of Santiago and a close relative of Lorenzo Suárez de Figueroa, Maestre of the Order of Santiago. He was the son of:

12th Great-Grandfather - Captain Pedro Benítez de Lugo "El Tuerto" (-1506). Born in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Cádiz, he was a conquistador and one of the original six *regidores* of Tenerife, appointed by the adelantado don Alonso Fernández de Lugo, his uncle, in 1497. Nicknamed "El Tuerto" (the one-eyed one), he was a tall, fearsome warrior, who was both greatly feared and admired by his enemies. He was known to have personally saved the life of the Adelantado don Alonso de Lugo in battle. He married **doña Ana de Lugo**, his first cousin, daughter of Pedro Fernández de Lugo, Justice of Seville, and doña Isabel de las Casas. He was a son of:

13th Great-Grandfather - Admiral Juan Benítez Pereira. Born in Jerez de la Frontera, Juan Benítez Pereira was Lord of Montillos, Knight of the Order of the Christ, and an Admiral in the Spanish Armada during the 15th century. From his marriage with **doña Inés de Lugo**, sister

of the *adelantado* don Alonso Fernández de Lugo, comes the "[Benítez de Lugo](#)" lineage, one of the first and most important aristocratic families in the Canary Islands. His and his wife's remains laid in the family mausoleum in the [Convent of Santa María](#) in Sanlúcar de Barrameda, now extinct. Both doña Inés and don Alonso Fernández de Lugo were children of don Pedro Fernández de Lugo Señorino and doña Inés de las Casas. He was a son of:

14th Great-Grandfather - Captain General Rui Pereira. Named Captain General of both the Spanish and Portuguese fleets by the monarchs of both kingdoms. He fathered Juan with [doña Leonor de Mosquera y Moscoso](#), who belonged to another Galician lineage that used the compound surname "Mosquera Moscoso." He was a son of:

15th Great-Grandfather - Dom Diogo Álvares Pereira (-1385). Probably born near Braga, Portugal, dom Diogo was Knight Commander of the Order of Santiago and Lord of [Morgado de Vilharigues](#), and fathered Rui Pereira with [doña María Benítez Suazo](#). Died at the [Battle of Aljubarrota](#), along with his brother dom [Pedro Álvares Pereira](#), fighting for the Spanish claim of the Portuguese throne during the [Portuguese crisis of 1383-1385](#). Diogo was the brother of [Dom Nuno Álvares Pereira](#), Count of Barcelos, Ourem and Arraiolos, Constable of Portugal, and defender of Portuguese independence against the Spanish forces at Aljubarrota. After retiring from his Condestable position, dom Nuno renounced all of his titles and riches and became a monk under the name of Nuno de Santa María. After his death, multiple miracles were attributed to his intercession. On April 26, 2009 he was canonized as Saint Nuno de Santa María. Dom Duarte Pio de Braganza, current heir to the Portuguese throne, descends from Nuno's daughter, Beatriz. Dom Diogo was a son of:

16th Great-Grandfather - Dom Álvaro Gonçalves Pereira (?-1375). Born in Braga, he was Grand Prior of the Order of Saint John (aka [Knights Hospitallers](#)) in Portugal. He fathered Diogo Álvares with [dona Marinha Domigues](#). A man of great authority, he was a *privado* (trusted man) of the kings [Dom Afonso IV](#) "The Brave", [Dom Pedro](#) "The Just, The Cruel", and [Dom Fernando](#) "The Handsome" of Portugal. Fought at the [Battle of Río Salado](#) in 1340, which ended further Muslim invasions of the Iberian Peninsula. His sepulcher lies at the [Fortress-Monastery of Flor da Rosa](#) in Crato, Portugal. He was the son of:

17th Great-Grandfather - Archbishop Dom Gonçalo Gonçalves Pereira (c.1280-1348). 97th [Archbishop of Braga](#). He helped Queen [Isabel of Aragon](#) settle the quarrels between her husband [King Denis](#) "The Farmer King" and their son, the future Afonso IV of Portugal. In 1338 he was King Afonso's ambassador to the Crown of Castile, arranging peace between the two kingdoms. He also participated in the famous Battle of Río Salado. For more on Dom Gonçalo in Portuguese, read [here](#). He fathered Álvaro Gonçalves with [dona Teresa Pérez Vilariño](#). Dom Gonçalo was a son of:

18th Great-Grandfather - Count Dom Gonçalo de Pereira "O Liberal" (1250-1298). Earl and *Rico-homem* (*Rico-hombre* in Spanish, high noble) of Portugal, III Lord of [Quinta de Pereira](#), Grand Commander of the Order of the Hospitallers. He was a known to be a benevolent and generous lord. Once, having 32 horses, he gave them away to different people, only to buy them back that same day and gave them away to other people. He married [dona Urraca Vázquez de Pimentel Novaez y Silva](#). He was a son of:

19th Great-Grandfather - Dom Pedro Rodrigues de Pereira. (13th century). Governor of [Viseu](#) and [Trancoso](#). Trusted knight of Kings [Afonso II](#) "The Fat", [Sancho II](#) "The Pious", and [Afonso III](#) "The Boulonnais" of Portugal, and considered part of the Royal House. He married [dona Estevainha Rodrigues de Teixeira](#), daughter of [dom Henrique Mendes, Lord of Teixeira](#). Dom Henrique was a Rico-homem in Portugal. Dom Pedro was a son of:

20th Great-Grandfather - Dom Rui Gonçalves de Pereira. Rico-homem of Portugal, Lord of [Pereira](#) and first to use the family name "Pereira." Lord of the [Castle of Lanhoso](#). He married [dona Sancha Henriques de Portocarreiro](#), III Lady of Portocarreiro, daughter of dom Henrique Fernandes Magro (Rico-hombre and Lord of Soalhães) and dona Ouroana Raimundes de Portocarreiro, II Lady of the Tower of Portocarreiro. From this marriage also descends the powerful [House of Portocarrero](#) in Spain. Dom Rui was a son of:

21st Great-Grandfather - Dom Gonçalo Rodrigues da Palmeira (c.1079-after 1154). Lord of Palmeira, Lanhoso, Basto, Refoios, Pavia and Baltar. Chamberlain ([Majordomo](#)) of [Queen Teresa of León](#) in 1114 (mother of Portugal's first king, [Afonso "The Conqueror, The Founder, The Great"](#)). He was the first of this family to move from Galicia to Portugal, already there in 1110. Historian Anselmo Braamcamp said that he left for Portugal feeling the King's fury after dom Gonçalo attacked another knight by slicing him with his sword from the shoulder to the waist. In Portugal, he founded the [Monastery of Santa Cruz](#) in Coimbra and aided in the [conquest of Lisbon](#) in 1147 as part of the [Second Crusade](#). He married [doña Fruilhe Afonso](#), daughter of [Count Afonso Nuñez](#), of Celanova (Galicia), Rico-hombre, and Granddaughter of Nuño Vázquez, Count of Celanova and one of the most powerful magnates in Galicia, and countess doña Fronilde Sanches, great-granddaughter of [King Bermudo II of León](#). He was a son of:

22nd Great-Grandfather - Admiral and Count Don Rodrigo Froilaz de Traba (?-April 6, 1133). (aka Rodericus or Roderici Froilaz) [Admiral](#) of Galicia, Rico-hombre and Count, and Lord of [Trasancos](#). His domains covered the lands from [Pontedeume](#) to [Ortigueira](#). His body lies in the [Monastery of San Martín de Jubia](#), along with his wife, [doña Guncina González](#). Dom Rodrigo belonged to the [House of Traba](#), a family that held the [County of Trastámara](#), from which the Royal [House of Trastámara](#) in Spain and many other Royal families throughout Europe descend. Brother of [Don Pedro Froilaz de Traba](#), a prominent member of Galician/Asturian high nobility, even known as *imperator in orbe Galletiae* ("emperor in the ambit of Galicia") and founder of multiple aristocratic lineages, including the Fernández de Temes (or Fernández de Córdoba). He was a son of:

23rd Great-Grandfather - Count Don Froila Bermúdez (1045-1091). (aka Froila Uermuniz de Trascanos o Froilani Petriz Vermudiz). Don Froila was a prominent member of Galician high nobility, serving during the kingdoms of [Don Fernando "The Great" of Castile and León](#),

Don García II of Galicia, and Don Alfonso VI of León and Castille. Participated in numerous battles against the Moors in the Iberian Peninsula and was a devoted patron of the Monastery of San Martín de Jubia and founder of the Monastery of San Pelayo de Genroso in Cascas. His wife, **Doña Elvira de Faro**, was daughter of Count Don Menendo Bermúdez de Faro and Countess Doña Ilduara Gutierrez de Aranga, the latter a relative of the Traba family. Don Froila's body rests in peace in San Martín de Jubia. He was a son of:

24th Great-Grandfather - Don Bermudo Froilaz. He married **Doña Lupa Rodríguez**, and both are buried in the Monastery of San Martín de Jubia.

25th Great-Grandfather - Don Manido Gutierrez. We don't know much of him, but José López Sangil in *La nobleza altomedieval gallega: La familia Froialz-Traba*. Noia: A Coruna, Editorial Toxosoutos, 2002, has him as father of Bermudo and son of Gutierre Froilaz.

26th Great-Grandfather - Count Don Gutierre Froilaz. Count in Galicia.

27th Great-Grandfather - Count Don Froila Gutierrez (c.895-after 943). (aka *Froilanem*) He appears as *astoricensis comes* (Count in Asturias) in 941, and as such was a close ally of King Ramiro II. He married **Doña Sarracina** and inherited some of the lands from his father and uncle Don Arias. He was a fierce protector of the Monastery of Celanova, where he became a monk after the death of his wife. He was a son of:

28th Great-Grandfather - Count Don Gutierre Menéndez (c.870-933). (aka *Gutier Menendiz comes*) With his wife **Doña Ilduara Eriz**, he fathered, among others, Froila and Saint Rudesind (San Rosendo). One of the most powerful magnates of his time, he held the titles of six countships in Galicia. Doña Ilduara was another devoted supporter of monasteries and convents in Galicia, among them the Convent of Villanueva, where she died in 958. She was the daughter of Galician magnate and Count of Lugo Don Ero Fernández and Doña Adosinda. Don Gutierre was a son of:

31st Great-Grandfather - Count Don Hermenegildo Gutiérrez (c.850-912). (aka *Ermegildus maiordomus, domne Ermesende comitis*) Count of Oporto and Conqueror of Coimbra (later Portugal) in 878. A prominent figure in Galician/Asturian aristocracy of the 9th and 10th centuries, Don Hermenegildo held vast territories in Galicia and the County of Portugal, and belonged to the court of King Alfonso III as his Mayordomo Mayor (High Steward). He married **Doña Ermesinda Gatones**, granddaughter of King Ramiro of Asturias (790-February 1, 850). Cousin of King Alfonso III "The Great" (848-910). His daughter Elvira married King Alfonso's son King Ordoño II of León. Don Hermenegildo was a son of:

32nd Great-Grandfather - Count Don Gutierre Aloítez. He married **Doña Elvira**. Various Galician noble lineages and Royal dynasties descend from this couple including the Aloítiz, Osorio, Traba, Odróñez, Trastámara, Eriz, and Betótiz among others. He was the son of:

33rd Great-Grandfather - Count Don Aloito (c.790-after September 1, 818). (aka *Aloitus comes*) Don Aloito was a Count in Asturias and/or Galicia. Based on the prominence of his son and grandson, Aloito was a distinguished member of 9th century Asturian/Galician high aristocracy. Based on my genetic results (SNP DF41+), Gutierre was of Atlantic European ancestry.