



1-17-1951

## Letter from Linda Grace Hoyer to John Updike, January 17, 1951

Linda Grace Hoyer

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January 17, 1951  
Benjamin's Birthday

Mr. Nulty -  
map room

Dear John:

Well, Benjamin is a ripe old two hundred and forty-five today and Ponce de Leon is a little more than twice as old as Ben. It just shows what a good man can do with a little persistence.

I was very happy with the information you got from Mr. Langmuir. It makes it possible for me to put the first two chapters in final form and I'm very busy doing that now. In making this copy I find myself being inspired to add rather than subtract so that what was nine pages becomes eleven and, if this strange miracle continues, it may not be too early to say that the book is finished, except for the final typing. (I just worked it out  $9 : 11$  as  $298 : X$  equals 364 pages or more than enough to meet almost all the publishers' minimum requirements.) Working with my flank to grandpa and the radio off is certainly better than facing him with the radio on. If I understood your relations with Mr. Langmuir I would know whether or not we ought to ask for another look into the old Spanish book. (I suppose it is in Spanish and beyond my ken even if I managed to get one of them through the Reading library.) But if you think it isn't an imposition, try to get the date, or approximate season of the battle of Olmedo that occurred sometime in 1467 between the followers of Henry and his half-brother Alfonso. There are two other things that would make me gay (if I knew them.) The Brittanica says, as I recall it, that Juan Ponce de Leon's family lived in San Servas in the province of old Leon. Could that be the place that is called Hervas on modern maps? If not, where was it? The other question is about Don Perez Nunez de Guzman. What relation existed, if any, between him and the wealthy Guzmans of Medina Sidonia? How old was he in 1465? Was he a scholar, student or teacher at the University of Salamanca? Since he is supposed to have taken Juan Ponce de Leon into his house as a page and befriended Ponce de Leon when he returned to Spain for the last time in 1514, we can assume that he was a man of considerable influence over a long period of years. I wrote to the Library of Congress about him, you remember, and they would not so much as admit that he ever existed. Or did they merely say that there are no known pictures of him. At any rate, I would like to know what there is to know about him before my "writer's imagination" makes a university professor out of him. Good luck! And nothing would make me happier than to send Mr. Langmuir a copy of Dear Juan. I shall try not to bother either one of you with this again.

Take care of your license and have it sent home. You will notice that your father had signed his name and used ink remover. Interesting? I thought so. *Walter*

R.B. Merriman  
rise of Spanish Empire  
vol II - 1918

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Bibliography on Spanish  
History  
Widener