

Commission from Doge Giovanni Mocenigo to Bartolomeo Minio,  
appointing him Captain of the Flanders Galleys.  
1485, April 12.<sup>1</sup>

Salary for the voyage 600 golden ducats, with which, besides servants, he is to keep a clerk, priest, notary, an admiral -- for which board, and not his pay, he is alone responsible -- and two physicians. The salaries of the captain, musicians [trumpeters], physicians and others to be paid as usual by the masters. For the present year, each galley to have (at the cost of the galleys) 30 good arbalast men [crossbowmen] from 20 to 50 years of age, with a monthly salary of 19 livres -- each livre containing for light "solidi" -- and galley rations as usual, like the oarsmen; with the understanding moreover, that amongst the said arbalast men there be included four noble youths for each galley, and no more; the which noblemen to be boarded by the masters of the galleys, who are also to pay them their full salaries going and returning, according to the act passed in this matter. Amongst the aforesaid stipendiaries, the masters to take with them one competent adviser for each galley, with a monthly salary of 10 ducats in money, to be paid by the masters who are to board them; the said adviser to be in lieu of one of the arbalast men appointed to each galley,

On the day of his arrival at Sluys the captain to engage a courier for Venice, and inform all the merchants that they may write if they please, dispatching him on the morrow at the farthest, with news of the date of his entry into port; to send a second courier in like manner after a fortnight's interval.

On the homeward voyage each galley to bring 120,000 weight of light goods, under penalty, &c.; and the masters in Flanders or England to obtain from the merchants 80,000 weight of copper and tin for each galley and no more. The merchant shippers of the said tin and copper to be paid four ducats for each 1,000 weight avoirdupois.

With the first freight, money received by the captain, he is to purchase "in the west" four pieces of ordnance for each galley; to be given to the arsenal on the return.

The masters to be at liberty to remain one month and half more than usual between Bruges and London, and to touch on the outward voyage at Palermo and Messina.

On his departure from Flanders and return to England, the captain to remain either at Sandwich or Southampton for 90 days. To be at liberty to touch at Alicant or not; and on the homeward voyage he has also the option of touching at Pisa and Talamone, and of sending thither one or more galleys. .

The masters, before being confirmed by the Senate, to deposit at the Accountant's Office one half of the money required for the usual presents made in the Signory's name to the King of England [Richard III] and the Duke of Burgundy [Philip the Handsome]; the other half to be disbursed on their return, under penalty, &c.

Should the galleys be detained at Sluys by the ice beyond the term assigned them, the extra days to be deducted from those appointed for the stay in Hampton, provided always that the merchandise be disposed of. within the said term.

On the voyage toward Venice, the galleys to touch at the usual ports; and on the way, both out and home, should the masters deem it advantageous, they are allowed to go to Malaga and Almeria; though should the country be at all in a disturbed state, the captain alone to decide thereon : if they go, they may remain three days in each of those places. When in the waters of Almeria, the captain to dismiss the galley which is to return by the Barbary ports, touching at One, Oran, Tunis, and the other places for which it may have goods, remaining but three days at

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1 Rawdon Brown, *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts* (London, 1864) , Vol. 1: #492. The translation is Brown's. Brown's editing is in parentheses. My editing is in brackets.

each; shipping all goods along the coast, either from port to port, or for Venice, exacting the same freight money as the Barbary galleys, and receiving it at the same date.

The master of the aforesaid galley forbidden to take from any Venetian subject more than 25 ducats freight money for each thousand weight of cloth. The goods of Venetians to be shipped before those of foreigners; and first of all the galley to load for Barbary. If unable to obtain a full cargo for that district, she may then take the entire surplus freight of the other galleys bound for Venice; and after touching at the Barbary ports she is then to go to Syracuse.

Term of payment for the freights of cloths and wools, 16 months from the day of the arrival of the galleys at Venice; for tin and wrought pewter, 8 months; for all goods loaded in Malaga, Majorca, and Sicily, 6 months.

On making the island of England, the captain to dismiss the two galleys bound to London; and should there be more spices for Sluys than contained in the two galleys destined for that port, in that case one of the two London galleys, namely, the one which does not carry the [vice] captain, to go to Sluys, and after loading the spices return to London as customary of late years. The galleys, on going to any place in England, not to load or unload any thing soever under penalty of 500 ducats, &c.; and under the like penalty the captain is bound to go to Sluys, for the avoidance of such peril as incurred by the galleys of late years.

The London galleys being dismissed, the captain is then to go with the others to Sluys, there to remain for 60 days, those of arrival and departure not included; and on their expiration, he is to proceed either to Sandwich or Hampton, as shall seem best to him; and in the port thus selected he is to remain and load for 60 (sic) days, and then return to Venice. Ten days before departure from England, the masters to unship the windlasses; and no longer load anything, under penalty of 500 ducats; and in like manner the sailing masters and "comiti," and all the other stipendiaries are prohibited from going to London; with the exception of: the admiral when directed by the captain for matters concerning] the galleys, under penalty; &c.

Of the two London galleys, one to be chosen either by agreement or lot, to return by the coast of Barbary; shipping first of all in England fine cloths and merchandise, save that neither copper nor tin, nor vessels of those metals, are to be imported into Barbary; under penalty of 500 ducats, &c.

The masters both in Flanders and England, and also at all intermediate ports, on their return, to load all such goods as shall be brought them for Venice, until the very last hour of their departure (sic); which goods, if left behind for the sake of taking others for the intermediate ports, or on any other account, they to make good the loss incurred by such rejection, and pay the arsenal the freight which will be deducted from their "bounty." The consuls both in London and Bruges to keep account of all merchandise presented for Venice; and on the homeward voyage, the captain, in Flanders, England, and all other places; is to keep account, with the "writer's assistant" and his chaplain, of all goods presented for Venice, whether, shipped or not; and this note he is to consign to the Signory on his arrival.

After the departure from Flanders of these present galleys, all merchandise, of which the conveyance is conceded to them exclusively and which shall be sent to Venice (by other means) within two months from that time, either by land or water (in case the galleys have not their full cargo), to pay full freight to the Signory, for the benefit of the arsenal, whose masters to receive one "soldo" per "livre," for all sums thus collected by them. All goods from England likewise brought by land or sea to pay the like freight to the said galleys until the departure of the next galleys for England.

The physician not to receive more than seven ducats per month.

On the outward voyage, the masters not to stay in any place beyond the limited number of days, and on the homeward voyage less, under penalty of 100 golden ducats for each day, to be deducted from the bounty; the captain keeping account of these days under oath.

Notice to be given of all these clauses to the consuls at Bruges and in London, that they may endeavour to obtain the payment of full freight to the Signory for all merchandise.

Prohibition against shipment in the holds, or in their berths by the masters, officials, or oarsmen, of cloths called Verui (*sic*) Santone, Lowestoft, Bastards, Serges, and Furs (*varij-vairs*). The cloths called "Bastards," Lowestoft, white "Gotifaldi," wools, and block tin, to be loaded for Venice alone, and not for intermediate ports.

The masters to give the crews, arbalast men, and comrades three months' pay in England, at the rate of 38 pence per ducat. One month's loan to be made at the same rate; and any further advance to be charged at the exchange of the day. On payment of these moneys in England, the "writers" of the galleys forbidden to receive more than one penny from each man.

Prohibition against stowing on deck either chests or wrought pewter; nor may currants or molasses be stowed in the hold.

Gross spice to pay freight at the rate of four ducats; small spice and Levant sugar, five ducats; cottons, raw and spun, 12 ducats, currants, lambskins, and undressed hides, 18 ducats; wax of every sort, 10 ducats; dressed hides, 10 ducats for every 1,000; paper, one ducat and a half for every bale containing 12 reams; silks of every sort, 20 ducats per thousand-weight Troy (*mier sotil*). Foreign fustians may be imported under the usual restrictions. Cloths valued at 25 ducats and under, half a ducat per piece, and of higher value, one ducat; household utensils, half a ducat per 100; and should anyone smuggle raw silk, or cloth of silk, or pass them as spices, substituting one sort of merchandise for another, the goods to be forfeited.

The freights of merchandise and goods loaded for the intermediate ports to belong to the masters; but all goods loaded in Flanders, Malaga, England, and Sicily, whether on deck or below, to pay freight to the Signory.

Each of the masters on his safe return to Venice to receive from the Signory a bounty of 3,500 golden ducats of the unappropriated moneys of the Jews, which, the debentures being liquidated, may not be dispersed or employed for any other purpose than that. bounty, under penalty of 1,000 ducats to anyone acting otherwise; he paying the sum from his own purse, and being proclaimed a thief in the hall of Grand Council. Each of the masters is at liberty to proceed against those who shall make any motion to the contrary. The masters to receive also for the aforesaid bounty 3,500 ducats of the three and two per cents. from the Signory, and all the freights (on goods loaded for the immediate ports) on the homeward voyage.

Each of the masters to disburse 400 ducats as a loan eight days after receiving the galleys from the masters of the arsenal, under penalty of 1,000 ducats. This loan to be repaid them from the proceeds of the auction and the emendations (*emendi*); and, should the price paid by them at the auction exceed the loan, they may deduct it from the bounty derived from the two and three per cents.; the masters of the arsenal being bound, under penalty, to expend the loan on nothing but the outfit of the galleys, and the captain or the majority of the masters being present when the moneys are disbursed, and keeping careful and particular account of their application that they be not employed for any other purpose.

On the opening of the bank of the Flanders galleys the masters to deposit the instalments of pay required for the crews, arbalast men, and stipendiaries. The masters forbidden to engage men for the voyage, instead of by the month, or to compound with them in any way, under penalty, but the crews to be paid like those of the galleys bound to Syria. No vessel at Venice to load for Flanders, or be "put up" for that voyage from the day of the decree (28 April 1484) until two months after the period assigned to the galleys for their departure (15 July 1484); ships bound to Candia or from Candia to Flanders or England to be at liberty to continue their voyages, but not to load currants or others goods of which the Flanders galleys had the monopoly. Should the captain incur expense for the reception of personages of rank or others, he is to give a note of it in writing to the masters, and should he not do so, its payment to be optional with them, provided the captain allege no just impediment. The galleys to convey

the Republic's ambassadors and envoys, and ammunition, and all other things belonging to the Signory to any ports made on the voyage, free of passage money or freight.

Each of the masters to give the arsenal 50 ducats for the dry docks, and 10 ducats for the purchase of houses, also 200 lbs. white-wrought wax, on their return, to the Procurators of St. Mark's Church. The presents for the King of England, and the Duke of Burgundy, to be paid with the first moneys derived from the averages on goods, one half on going, the other on returning; and as Sluys and Bruges were blockaded by the Archduke Maximilian, by land and sea, the inhabitants of those places being in revolt against him, the Senate authorized the captain of the Flanders galleys, Bortolomeo Minio, on the 29th April 1485, to take them either to Antwerp or Middleburg; the masters being forbidden to claim any indemnity on this account.

Ducal Palace, 12 April 1485.

*[MA illuminated volume of 163 pages: on parchment, part in Latin and part in Italian, being the original commission drawn up by order of the Doge and Senate.]*<sup>2</sup>

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2 The manuscript of the commission has so far not been traceable.