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[GOVERNMENT OF
ENGLAND, 1341]

[GOUVERNEMENT
D'ANGLETERRE (1341)]

[Licence to the goldsmiths of
London to found almshouses for
men of their trade who have been
blinded by fire and the fumes of
quicksilver.] [1]

[May 1, 1341]

[Permission aux orfèvres de
Londres de fonder des hospices
pour les hommes de leur métier qui
sont aveuglés à cause du feu et de
la fumée du vif-argent.]

[1^{er} mai 1341]

[UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION]

[TRADUCTION NON OFFICIELLE]

*Pro Aurifabris Londoniæ [fumo
Argenti vivi cæcatis.]*

R^{EX} Omⁿib^us ad quos & cetera. Sa-
lutem.

Sciatis quòd cùm dilecti nobis aurifabri
civitatis nostræ Londoniæ nobis suppli-
caverint ut cùm quamplures Homines de
Mestero illo igne & fumo argenti vivi
cæcati

& quidam eorundem opere manuali adeò
consternati & diversis Infirmitatib^us op-
pressi & debilitati existant quòd ipsi se
ipsum juvare & sustinere non poterunt
nisi eis aliundè subveniatur

ac diversis homines civitatis prædictæ sta-
tui dictorum cæcorum consternatorum &
oppressorum compatientes diversa tene-
menta & redditus in eadem civitate usque
ad valorem viginti librarum per annum
hominib^us de communitate mestri prædicti
in auxilium sustentationis dictorum cæco-
rum consternatorum & infirmorum necnon
cujusdam capellani missam eiusdem in-

*For goldsmiths of London blinded
by quicksilver fumes.*

THE KING [2] to all to whom [these
presents shall come], Greeting.

Know ye that—

Whereas our beloved goldsmiths of
our city of London have beseeched us as
follows—

Whereas very many men of that trade
have been blinded by fire and fumes of
quicksilver,

And indeed some of them are shown to
be too confused for manual labour, and
reduced and disabled by various infirmi-
ties,

Therefore they will not be able to help
themselves or subsist unless relief is pro-
vided to them by others.

And various men of the aforesaid city,
in pity for the situation of the said blind,
confused and reduced men, will be dis-
posed to give and grant various tene-
ments and rents in the same city up to the
value of twenty pounds [3] a year to the
men of the fellowship of the aforesaid
trade to be possessed in perpetuity in aid
of subsisting the said blind, confused
and infirm men, and also for sending to

*Pour les orfèvres de Londres
aveuglés par la fumée du vif-argent.*

LE ROI [1] à tous à qui [les présentes
parviendront], Salut :

Sachez que—

Comme nos bien-aimés orfèvres de
notre cité de Londres nous ont suppliés
de ce qui suit :

Comme plusieurs hommes de ce métier
ont été rendus aveuglés par le feu et la
fumée du vif-argent,

Et quelques d'entre eux se sont révélés
trop troublés pour le travail manuel et
déchus et invalidés par diverses infirmi-
tés,

Par raison duquel ils ne pourront pas se
soigner ni se sustenter à moins qu'ils
soient subvenus par autrui.

Et divers hommes de la susdite cité,
compatissant à l'état des dits hommes
aveuglés, troublés et déchus, se propose-
ront de donner et concéder divers im-
meubles et redevances dans la même cité
jusqu'à la valeur de vingt livres par an-
née aux hommes de la communauté du
susdit métier pour les posséder à perpé-
tuité afin d'aider à la sustentation desdits
hommes aveuglés, troublés et infirmes,
ainsi qu'afin d'envoyer chaque jour aux

[1] [Rymer's *Foedera*, 1st ed., vol 2, part 2, p 1157; 2nd ed., vol v, p 246; 3rd ed., vol 2, part 4, p 98. Checked against the patent roll copy in the UK National Archives.]

[1] [Hardy, T. D. *Syllabus in English of Rymer's Foedera*, vol 1, p 320. (See also *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, Edw. 3, vol 5, p 221, available courtesy of Prof. G. R. Boynton's on-line project, University of Iowa Libraries: <http://sdr.lib.uiowa.edu/patentrolls/e3v5/body/Edward3vol5page0221.pdf>.)]

[2] [King Edward 3]

[1] [le roi Édouard trois]

firmis singulis diebus pro animabus omnium defunctorum juxta ordinationem inde faciendam celebraturi dare & concedere dispoſuerint imperpetuum habenda dum tamen iidem homines de dicta comunitate licentiam a nobis habuerint competentem

velimus eis hujusmodi licentiam concedere gratiosè

Nos piam intentionem dictorum hominum de civitate predicta commendantes concessimus & licentiam dedimus pro nobis & hæredibus nostris quantum in nobis est hominibus de comunitate predicta quod ipsi tenementa & redditus in eadem civitate usque ad valentiam viginti librarum per annum juxta verum valorem eorundem de hominibus civitatis illius in auxilium sustentationis cæcorum confternatorum infirmorum & capellani predictorum acquirere possint sibi & successoribus suis de comunitate meſteri predicti ex causis supradictis habenda imperpetuum Statuto de terris & tenementis ad Manum mortuam non ponendis edito seu aliquo alio statuto vel ordinatione in contrarium factis non obstantibus dum tamen per inquisitiones inde in formâ debitâ capiendas & in cancellariâ nostrâ vel hæredum nostrorum ritè retornandas compertum sit quod id fieri poterit absque dampno & præjudicio nostri & dictorum hæredum nostrorum ac alterius cujuscumque

such infirm men a certain chaplain each day to celebrate mass for the souls of all the deceased according to an ordinance made in that behalf.

Provided, however, that such men of the said fellowship must first have a competent licence from us,

It is our will that a licence of this kind be graciously granted to them,

For the abovesaid causes, We, commending the pious intention of the said men of the aforesaid city, do grant and give, for us and our heirs, in so far as authority lies in us, a licence to the men of the aforesaid fellowship that they shall be able to acquire from the men of the same city such tenements and rents in that city, up to the value of twenty pounds [3] a year according to the true value of the same, to be possessed in perpetuity by them and their successors in the fellowship of the aforesaid trade in aid of subsisting the aforesaid blind, confused and infirm men, and the chaplain.

The statute enacted against putting lands and tenements into mortmain or any other statute or ordinance providing to the contrary notwithstanding;

Provided, however, that it must first be proved by inquests to be taken in due form, and rightly returned in our Chancery or in that of our heirs, that this may be done without damage and prejudice, neither to us nor to our said heirs, nor to any other person whatsoever.

tels hommes infirmes un aumônier qui célébrerait la messe pour les âmes de tous les morts conformément à une ordonnance édictée à cet égard.

Tant toutefois que tels hommes de ladite communauté auront la permission compétente de nous.

Nous voulons qu'une permission de ce genre soit leur concéder gracieusement.

Aux susdites causes, nous, louant l'intention pieuse des dits hommes de la cité susmentionnée, concédons et donnons, pour nous et nos héritiers, selon notre autorité, la permission habilitant les hommes de la susdite communauté du susdit métier et leurs successeurs à acquérir des hommes de la même cité tels immeubles et redevances dans cette cité jusqu'à la valeur de vingt livres par année d'après leur vrai valeur, pour les posséder à perpétuité afin d'aider à la sustentation desdits hommes aveugles, troublés et infirmes, ainsi qu'afin d'envoyer l'aumônier.

Nonobstant le statut édicté contre la possession des terres et immeubles en mainmorte ainsi que tout autre statut ou ordonnance faite à ce contraire.

Tant toutefois qu'il sera préalablement déterminé, par des enquêtes dûment procédées et bien rapportées auprès de la chancellerie de nous ou de nos héritiers, qu'on pourra le faire sans détrimement et préjudice ni de nous et nos dits héritiers, ni de quelconque autre personne.

[3] [In 1341 the English pound represented 10.41 troy ounces of silver. The modern (2022) Canadian price of silver is \$28.33 per troy ounce. So that pound equates to Can\$295 in silver, and £20 would be like Can\$6,000. A more elaborate comparison can be made based on prevailing income levels (GDP per capita) in England in 1341. Nominal GDP is estimated at £4.28M to 4.69M; divided by a population estimated at 4.59M (a few years before the Black Death depopulation); so average or mean GDP per capita was roughly £1. Compare with Canada in 2022, about Can\$70,000. This suggests £20 in 1341 would be more like Can\$1.4M today—a very substantial annual revenue to support this care home for afflicted goldsmiths.]

in cujus &c

[teste Rege apud Westmonasterium] primo die maii

per breve de privato sigillo & per finem decem marcarum solutarum in hanaperium

In witness, etc.

Witness the King, at Westminster, the first day of May [1341].

By writ of privy seal, and by a fine of ten marks paid in the hanaper [4].

En foi de quoi, etc.

Témoin le roi à Westminster le premier jour de mai [1341].

Par mandat sous le sceau privé avec un tarif de dix marks reçus à l'hanaper. [2]

[4] [A fine was not a penalty but simply the fee paid to obtain this licence. The "hanaper" was the financial department of the Chancery. A mark was 2/3 of a pound. Ten marks was thus £6.66; which would be Can\$2,000 in silver today; but based on relative incomes (GDP per capita) more like Can\$500,000.]

[2] [hanaper = le bureau de la chancellerie anglaise qui s'occupait des finances.]