

[ADMINISTRATIO ANGLIAE, 1393] [GOVERNMENT OF ENGLAND, 1393]

[1] **Licencia perquirendi ad manum mortuam—ac etiam prima Corperatio [Ipsius] [2] Mistere**

[f. 9v] **R**icardus dei gracia Rex Anglie et Francie et Dominus Hibernie Omnibz ad quos presentes littere pervenerint salutem Sciatis quod cum dominus E nuper Rex Anglie Avus noster ad profecucionem Aurifabroz Civitatis nostre London' sibi suggerencium quamplures homines de mestero illo igne et fumo argenti vivi cecatos et quosdam illoz opere manuali adeo consternatos et diversis infirmitatibz oppressos et debilitatos extitisse quod ipsi se ipsos juvare et sustinere non potuerunt nisi eis aliunde subveniretur ac diversos homines Civitatis predictae statui dictoz cecoz, consternatoz et oppreſsoz compacientes diversa tenementa et redditus in eadem Civitate usque ad valorem viginti libraꝝ per annum hominibz de comunitate mesteri predicta in auxilium sustentacionis dictoz cecoz consternatoz et infirmoz necnon cujusdam Capellani missam eiusdem infirmis singulis diebz pro animabz omnium fidelium defunctoz juxta ordinacionem inde faciendi celebraturi dare et concedere disposuisse per litteras suas patentes et per finem decem marcaꝝ concessisset et licenciam dedisset pro se et heredibz suis quantum in ipso fuit hominibz de comunitate predicta quod ipsi tenementa et redditus in eadem Civitate usque ad valenciam viginti libraꝝ per annum juxta veram valorem eozdem de hominibz Civitatis illius in auxilium sus-

[f. 9r]

Licence for making purchases in mortmain—and as well the first incorporation of the trade itself [2]

Richard by the grace of God King of England and France and Lord of Ireland, to all whom these present letters may reach, Greeting.

Know ye that whereas Lord Edward, lately King of England, our grandfather, on a proceeding brought by the goldsmiths of our city of London informing him that

very many men of that trade were shown to be blinded by fire and fumes of quicksilver, and some too confused for manual labour and reduced and disabled by various infirmities so that they were not able to help themselves or subsist unless relief were to be provided to them by others, and

various men of the aforesaid city, in pity for the situation of the said blind, confused and reduced persons, were disposed to give and grant various tenements and rents in the same city up to the value of twenty pounds a year to the men of the fellowship of the aforesaid trade

in aid of subsisting the said blind, confused and infirm persons, and

also for sending to such infirm persons a certain chaplain each day to celebrate mass for the souls of all the faithful deceased according to an ordinance to be made in that behalf,

he, for himself and his heirs, granted by his letters patent, and for a fine of ten marks, gave a licence in so far as authority lay in him, to the men of the aforesaid fellowship that they should be able to acquire from the men of that city tenements and rents in the same city up to the value of twenty pounds a year according to the true value of the

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[1] Copied from a copy of the original charter in the Goldsmiths' Company's Register of Deeds, fo. 9v-9r, kindly provided by the company's archivist. In this edition, restored abbreviations are shown in italic superscript; ꝑ is the so-called "long" s; ʒ = "us"; ʒ = "rum". Another transcription is in *The Register of the Goldsmiths' Company—Deeds and Documents*, c. 1190 to c. 1666, edited and translated by Lisa Jefferson (Woodbridge, & Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2022), Volume II [originals], p 7. Also, another copy "is found at the National Archives on the C 66/336 roll, m. 6. The beginning ("*Rex, omnibus ad quos &c salutem*") and the ending ("*Teste R.*" without the year number) are different, as again the copy in the Register will have been done from their own issued charter, where the name "Scarle" will have appeared at the end."

[2] This reading is just a guess; the original lettering is baffling. In fact, Lisa Jefferson leaves this word blank.

[1] *The Register of the Goldsmiths' Company—Deeds and Documents*, c. 1190 to c. 1666, edited and translated by Lisa Jefferson (Woodbridge, & Rochester: Boydell & Brewer, 2022), Volume III [translations], pp 7-8. "This charter is found at the National Archives on the C 66/336 roll, m. 6."

[2] I am translating the Late Latin word *mesterum* as "trade". Lisa Jefferson uses "mistry". Although that is correct—"mistry" is indeed in the *Shorter OED*—it is described as an archaism and a clearer sense of the meaning for modern readers is "trade" or "craft", cognate with French « *métier* ». *Mesterum*, *mistry* and *métier* all derive from ancient Latin *ministerium*, meaning an activity or function typical of servants. Despite the similarity in spelling, the word "mystery" has an entirely different meaning and etymology, coming from Latin *mysterium*, Greek *μυστήριον* or *musterion*, meaning a secret matter or ceremony.

tentacio^{nis} cecoꝝ confternatoꝝ infirmoꝝ et capellani predictoꝝ adquirere possent habendi sibi et successoribz suis de comunitate mestri predicti ex causis supradictis imperpetuum statuto de terris et tenementis ad manum mortuam non ponendis edito seu aliquo alio statuto seu ordinatione incontrarium factis non obstantibz prout in litteris predictis plenius continetur. Jam quia homines mestri predicti nobis humiliter supplicaverunt ut cum dicte littere patentes ipsius Avi nostri pro eo quod nulla persona capax in eisdem nominatur non dum execute existant nec executioni valeant commode mancipari, velimꝫ eis de remedio in hac parte graciose providere Nos ad premissa considerationem habentes de gracia nostra speciali et pro viginti marcis quas homines mestri predicti nobis solverunt in hanaperio nostro concessimus et licenciam dedimꝫ pro nobis et heredibz nostris hominibz ejusdem mestri quod ipsi decetero unam Comunitatem perpetuam de se ipsis habeant et quod Comunitas illa singulis annis eligere possint quatuor Custodes de hominibz Comunitatis predictae ad superintendend' regend' et debite gubernand' mestrum et comunitatem predictam ac omnes et singulos homines eozdem imperpetuum Et ulterius de uberiori gracia nostra concessimꝫ et licenciam dedimus pro nobis et heredibz nostris quantum in nobis est eisdem custodibz et Comunitati quod ipsi tenementa et redditus cum pertinentiis in Civitate predicta et suburbiis ejusdem ad valorem viginti libraꝝ per annum adquirere possint et habere sibi et successoribz suis in auxilium sustentacionis hujusmodi cecoꝝ confternatoꝝ et infirmoꝝ comunitatis mestri predicti ac pro sustentacione cujusdam capellani missam eisdem infirmis singulis diebz pro animabz omnium fidelium defunctoꝝ juxta ordinationem ipsoꝝ Custodum et Comunitatis in hac parte faciend' celebraturi imperpetuum statuto predicto aut statuto in ultimo parlamento nostro apud Westm' inde edito seu eo quod tenementa et redditz

same, in aid of subsisting the aforesaid blind, confused, infirm persons and the chaplain, to be possessed in perpetuity by them and their successors in the fellowship of the aforesaid trade for the abovesaid reasons, notwithstanding the statute enacted against putting lands and tenements into mortmain, or any other statute or ordinance made to the contrary, as appears more fully in the aforesaid letters.

Now since the men of the aforesaid trade have humbly beseeched us that whereas those said letters patent of our same grandfather have not been carried into effect, since no capable person is named in them and they cannot be properly executed, we wish of our grace to provide a remedy for them in this matter.

We, in consideration of the premises, of our special grace and for twenty marks which the men of the aforesaid trade have paid to us in our Hanaper, grant and give licence, for us and our heirs, to the men of the same trade

that they from henceforth may have a perpetual fellowship of themselves and

that that fellowship shall have power each year to elect four wardens from among men of the aforesaid fellowship to superintend, regulate, and duly govern the trade and fellowship aforesaid and all and singular the men thereof in perpetuity

And further of our bountiful grace we grant and give licence, for us and our heirs, as far as in us lies, to the same wardens and fellowship that they shall be able to acquire and hold for themselves and their successors, tenements and rents with appurtenances in the aforesaid city and its suburbs up to the value of twenty pounds per year, to aid in subsisting such blind, confused and infirm people of the fellowship of the aforesaid trade and for subsisting a chaplain sent to these same infirm people to celebrate mass each day for the souls of all the faithful deceased, according to an ordinance of the same wardens and fellowship to be made in that behalf,

notwithstanding the aforesaid statute, nor the statute enacted in our last parliament in Westminster, nor that the aforesaid tenements and rents are held from us in free burgage.

predicta de nobis teneantur in liberum burgagium non obstantibz Dum tamen *pro* inquisitiones inde in forma debita capiendas et in Cancellaria nostra vel heredum nostrorum rite retornandas compertum sit quod adquisicio hujusmodi fieri possit absque dampno et *preiudicio* nostri et heredum nostrorum ac alterius cujuscumque In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes Teste me ipso apud Wynton' sexto die Februarii Anno regni nostri sextodecimo ~ per ipsum Regem ~ Scarle.

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

In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters to be made patent,

Witnessed by myself at Winchester the sixth day of February in the sixteenth year of our reign.

By the King himself.
Scarle. [3]

[3] "John Scarle was a king's clerk and Keeper of the Chancery Rolls."