
Document 1591B

Letter from Viceroy Velasco to the King, dated Mexico 24 February 1591

Sources: AGI Fil. (1564-1608) Legajo 2; Colección de Navarrete, tomo 18, doc. 49, fol. 278 et seq.

Year of 1591: Letter written to the King by the Viceroy of Mexico, Don Luis de Velasco, on 24 February 1591, about various points regarding the despatch of Philippine ships and their navigation and commercial relation with New Spain, etc.

Sire:

Aboard the first advice ship that I despatched, in a letter dated 23 December of the last year of '90, which I wrote to Y.M. regarding the things and navigation of the Philippine Islands, I advised Y.M. of their condition, that the galleon **Santiago** had come into the port of Acapulco but that the galleon [sic] of Marshall Gabriel de Rivera was missing; however, it did enter the port on the 19th of the month of January of this year. It was successful considering the delay and sickness of the people aboard, and the lack of supplies; it came right on time to supply some of the deficiencies due to the loss and lack of merchandise aboard the [Atlantic] fleet.

In chapter 12 of this same letter of 23 December, I said: that, given that the galleon **Santiago** had come with much damage and needed to be careened, and there was not enough time to have it sail back this year [1591] and I would make use of Don Juan de Gama's ship for this voyage, but later on, I made an effort to find out if the galleon could sail and the keel having been exposed it was found out that, with the light maintenance that was done to it, it is now ready and manned for sailing. It will sail, God willing, at the beginning of March.

I have been given to understand that Don Juan de Gama's ship, and another belonging to Baltasar Rodriguez were to have made the voyage, but it did not appear that they

would be sufficiently outfitted or accomodated to be able to sail, as Y.M. will notice from the information and remarks enclosed herein.

With this galleon **Santiago**, I am despatching another small ship whose name is **San Ildefonso**, which belongs to Y.M., and it came from the islands on this present voyage;¹ it is of 80 tons burden. Aboard both of them are going 224 soldiers, not counting the other officers, seamen and the religious.

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May God keep Y.M.

Mexico 24 February 1591.

Don Luis de Velasco

1 Ed. note: The interpretation is that the Viceroy bought it from its previous owner, Gabriel de Rivera.

2 Ed. note: The same captains were to return to Manila, without any change of command, in their respective ships, says the Viceroy. He repeated much the same information in his letter of 25 May 1591 (AGI 58-3-11).