

---

## Documents 1565U

---

### **Legazpi—Documents regarding the provisioning of the fleet, dated May 1565**

#### **U1. Evidence gathered by the officials of the Royal Treasury of the Islands of the West (about the bad state of the supplies and equipment found in the fleet)**

*Sources: AGI Patronato 1-1-1/27. Col. de Ultramar, iii, doc. 44, pp. 305-318.*

At the island of Çubu [sic] in the western Philippines belonging to His Majesty on the 23rd day of the month of May of the year 1565, there appeared before the Most Illustrious Miguel López de Legazpi, Governor and Captain General for His Majesty for the discovery of the Islands of the West, the officials of His Majesty and before me, Hernando de Riquel, government notary, they presented the following petition:

Most Illustrious Sir:

We, the officials of the Royal Treasury, declare that we must make an inquiry into the inadequate supply of sails, rigging, iron, pitch, tar and other very necessary things that this fleet carried, being so important for its proper provisioning and outfitting and in order to record this for His Majesty and for the gentlemen of the Royal Audiencia of New Spain.

We beg your Lordship to order this inquiry and witnesses to appear before us to be examined in line with the tenor of this petition and to this end we implore the justice of your Lordship.

(Signed) Guido de Lavezares. Andrés Cauchela. Andrés de Mirandaola.

Having been seen by his Lordship, he said that he ordered the petition be accepted and witnesses presented by the Royal officials be examined without any exception for seniority. This acceptance was remitted to me, the said notary, signed by his name, Miguel López.

Passed before me, Hernando Riquel, government notary.

And after the above-said, on this same 23rd day of May of the year 1565, the said officials of His Majesty presented as witnesses for the said inquiry Captain Juan de la Isla and Pilot Major Estéban Rodríguez and Jaime [Martinez] Fortún, pilot of the *almiranta* galleon, and Rodrigo Espinosa, who was pilot of the ship San Juan, and Martín de Ibarra, master of the flagship galleon, and Juan María, master of the *almiranta* galleon, and Francisco de Astigarribia, boatswain of the flagship galleon, and Master Pedro de Guevara, blacksmith. From them and from each one of them, I, the said notary, took and received an oath in legal form, and they did so to God and to the Holy Mary, using the sign of the Cross, after which each one of them physically raised their right hand, and under the said oath promised to tell the truth and at the end of same they made their declarations and depositions in the following form and manner, before me, Hernando Riquel, government notary.

## U2. Deposition of Estéban Rodríguez

The said Estéban Rodríguez, Pilot Major, having been sworn in and asked what goes on and what he knows about the content of the above-mentioned petition, he said that what he knows is that the ships of the fleet of His Royal Majesty were despatched from the port of Navidad very much lacking necessities such as **seamen**, of which there were very few and they were inexperienced and, if it had not been for the soldiers who helped to manage the sails, this witness knows what problems they would have had with the voyage and even doubted that the ships would have reached this far. In addition, the said ships came with a lack of **pitch**, that they carried only a small amount that has already been spent on the sides of the flagship, that the other ships are without it. In addition, the ships came without any **tar**, something that is very necessary for the rigging and cables and other ship equipment, and that none of the ships remaining here at this island<sup>1</sup> have none of this necessary thing. This witness knows what little **iron** the said fleet carried, given that there came only about 40 quintals of it and this practically useless because much of it cannot be worked as it is so bad. In addition, the said ships came with a lack of **strapping iron** because the small amount they carried was thick and most of it for bolting. In addition, few [spare] **sails** were brought and those were useless because the supplementary [?] ones that were sent to the port of Navidad were few and were used up for sails, so that the spare sails carried were in very poor condition. The said ships came without any spare **rigging** and what they did carry was mostly untarred; most of it was used at the port of Navidad to launch the ships, so that none of it was useful as it was already broken and worn. That is why the ships are in great need of the said rigging. As for **cables**, few were brought along and some of them had been meant for caulking, for lack of tar in the port at the time the fleet was despatched. As

---

1 Ed. note: The flagship San Pedro was to leave to return to New Spain the following week, with this document being in the mail pouch.

for the **anchors** that the ships carried, some of them were in excess of what the ships needed and others were broken. In addition, this witness knows that there is a need in the ships for some **flags**, some chamber-type **falconets** and some heavy long-range pieces [of artillery].

In addition, they did not bring more than two **small boats**, one new and the other old, and the ships would need some. They also came with a lack of **twine** for the sails, and of **gunners** as few of those came and they were very badly experienced. For this reason, it is very necessary that some be sent. In addition, the said fleet brought too few tallow **candles** because aboard the flagship, one month after departure, there were no more tallow candles to use. In addition, the fleet lacked **food** supplies such as bacon, cheese, beans, chick-peas, and fish; there was too little of each and of not much use because it was too old, and so on with all the other food items brought by the ships of the fleet, except bread and water.

The above-said was declared to be the truth. The ships of the fleet came with all of those things missing, such things being so important and necessary to their good provisioning. This is what he knows and declares under oath, and he signed it with his name, and he said that he was 31 years old.

(Signed) Estéban Rodríguez.

Passed before me, Hernando Riquel, government notary.

1  
...

### U3. Letters from the Royal officials to the Royal Audiencia of Mexico, dated Cebu 28 May 1565 (enclosing a list of required supplies)

*Sources: AGI 1-1-1/23 & 1/24, n°24 (list to be found in 1-1-2/24); Col. Ultramar, ii, pp. 359-365 (without the list); B&R 2: 183-195, 333.*

Most Powerful Sirs:

As your Highness<sup>2</sup> must have already learned through the despatch carried by Bachelor Martinez, we set sail for these Islands of the West on the 20th of November 1564. In compliance with your Highness' command, we shall relate what is happening in them with all faithfulness and diligence.

Since your Highness will find an account of the voyage made by us, in the relation given by the pilots who come with the fleet, we shall say no more about it, except by way of reference. We shall only relate the events which concern the service of God, our

---

1 Ed. note: There were similar, but not so encompassing, declarations made by the other witnesses, in the following order: Martín de Ibarra, Francisco de Astigarribia, Juan María, Pedro de Guevara, Jaime Martínez, Rodrigo de Espinosa, and Juan de la Isla.

2 Ed. note: Apparently addressing the President of the Audiencia in particular.

Lord, the service of His Majesty, and the increase which his royal treasury can derive from these parts.

We reached these Philippines on the 13th of February 1565. From the day of our arrival here until now we have found not one friend nor one people who submits to His Majesty. The reason for this was disclosed to us after we had sailed about in this archipelago for two months, namely, that the Portuguese who are in the Moluccas came to an island called Bohol, where we remained 37 days, and there committed the following mischief: after they had made peace with the natives and given them to understand that they came to trade with them, they called together one day as many natives as they could; and while the latter, thinking themselves safe, were trading with them, the Portuguese gave a war-signal and killed 500 people, capturing 600 more whom they took to the Moluccas as slaves. This has caused us great anxiety, because the natives, having received such cruel treatment, were so frightened that whenever they saw a sail they ran to the mountains; and, if any of them remained, it was to tell us that they desired none of our friendship. Thus from the day we arrived until now, we have suffered much hardship. We stopped at an island where Magellan's men were killed, and there the people received us somewhat peacefully; but the following day, after they had placed in safety their wives and children, they said that they did not wish to give us in exchange for our goods anything of what we had asked, namely, their provisions. As we have just said, they declared that not only they would not give us anything, but that they were willing to fight us. Thus we were forced to accept the challenge. We landed our men and disposed the artillery of the ships, which were close to the houses of the town, so that the firing of the artillery from the said ships and the arquebuses on land drove the enemy away; but we were unable to capture any of them, because they had their fleet ready for the sea.

They abandoned their houses, and we found in them nothing except an image of the child Jesus, and two culverins, one of iron and one of bronze, which can be of no service to us; it is believed that they were brought here at the time of Magellan. We rejoiced, as all Christians ought in like case; for we saw that the Lord had been pleased to place us under his protection and grant us prosperity and favor. We beseech him to guide us in his service and to preserve us in that of His Majesty.

As far as we have seen, in all the places to which we have thus far been, we think that His Majesty could turn them into great kingdoms and seigniories, if your Highness send us the supply of men, arms, ammunition, and artillery; for in our present condition we need everything, and find ourselves in the midst of many and warlike peoples who, on account of the Portuguese, have declared war against us throughout the whole of the archipelago.

**The list of the things which this camp needs accompanies this letter.** Your Highness will order that they be supplied with great speed and diligence, for without them we shall incur great peril, and the camp will have no means of support; but with them we shall attain what His Majesty desires.

As your Highness probably knows, we brought no stamps for the royal fifths of His Majesty, so that some articles of gold which were found in graves of these heathens have not been marked. In respect to this and all other articles which were found and delivered to us, we have done our duty. The General ordered that the persons who found anything should deposit all such articles until your Highness shall command otherwise. We beg your Highness to order that the right measures be taken in this case; also in regard to the fifths, and the procedure which must be adopted in these regions in all matters pertaining to the service of His Majesty and other duties. A general edict was published that any person obtaining gold, pearls, jewels, and precious stones, should lose all, unless they are registered in the register of His Majesty, for lack of the said stamps with which to mark the fifths. We notify the officials residing in that city [Mexico], so that in case anything should appear that is not noted in the register, they shall take the necessary steps in regard to it.

The samples of gold, cinnamon, and wax were found in a port called Butuan, where we, the treasurer, and the factor, went by order of the General to investigate a certain report which we had heard concerning things to be found in the island of Beguendanao [Mindanao]. We found the aforesaid port, and in it two Moro junks which were trading there. According to orders received, we made peace with the lord of the said port, and gave him the message and the present which the General sent him. We gave him to understand that with his pleasure we were going to trade in his land, and that we would favor and protect him in everything in the name of His Majesty. He answered us through the Moros, who acted as interpreters, that he was pleased with our offers. We learned that the Moros felt very uneasy about the embassy, and we think that they influenced the said ruler and the natives by their vile designs. We were obliged to trade with them because they gave no opportunity to the natives to trade with us. The said Moros demanded in exchange for their goods, nothing but *tostones*, and it was agreed that for each weight of gold six of silver should be given. At this rate we bartered for the samples of gold, wax, and cinnamon, which we send to His Majesty and to your Highness. The money belonged to some deceased persons, a memorandum of which we send to the officials of the royal treasury.

We beseech His Majesty, and your Highness in his royal name, that, inasmuch as the said Moros and others take all the gold, pearls, jewels, precious stones and other things of which we have no information, thus injuring the natives, both by giving us no opportunity to plant our holy faith among them, and by taking the said gold, they should, if they continue the said trade, lose their property and be made slaves, for they preach the doctrine of Mahomet. This matter, as well as the necessary supplies to be sent for our aid, your Highness will order to be looked after with great diligence; because all that we ask for in the [following] list is of great necessity in our present critical condition. May your Highness add and send whatever may seem best to you, so that we may be able to accomplish in these regions what His Majesty desires. There is great need of the Christian religion among these natives, as well as of the men and other things asked for in the list.

May our Lord keep the most powerful persons of your Highnesses, and cause you to prosper with larger kingdoms and seignories.

From Çubu 28 May 1565.

Most Powerful Sirs:

From the faithful servants of your Highnesses, who very humbly kiss your most powerful feet, with all humility.

Guido de Lavezares

Andrés Cauchela

Andrés de Mirandaola.

#### **U4. List of the required supplies and munitions to be sent from New Spain to His Majesty's camp at the port of Çubu.**

Memorandum of things—not just articles for barter, but arms and military supplies—which are necessary, to be provided immediately from New Spain in the first ships sailing from the said New Spain to these Philippine Islands; of which the following articles must be speedily furnished:

Articles

##### **Firstly, for the fortress which is to be built:**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 12 pieces of heavy artillery, and among them culverins and reinforced cannon and swivel-guns.....   | 12  |
| 50 more bronze <i>versos</i> [small culverins], of the type brought from Spain with spare chambers.....   | 50  |
| 20 falconets with spare chambers.....   | 20  |
| One dozen new scaling ladders.....  | 12  |
| Balls for the artillery and the molds for making them.....  | --- |
| 200 quintals of powder.....   | 200 |
| 50 quintals of fuses.....   | 50  |
| 200 quintals of lead.....   | 200 |
| 50 quintals of saltpetre.....   | 50  |
| 30 quintals of rock sulphur.....  | 30  |
| 300 arquebuses (not of the worthless supply there in Mexico); and with them some with flints, all with horn powder-flasks (large or small) together with their molds and gear, which are to be in good condition..... | 300 |
| 100 corselets with their fittings.....  | 100 |
| 200 <i>morions</i> and helmets.....   | 200 |
| 50 coats-of-mail, of rather heavy mail.....   | 50  |
| 100 tapir hides.....  | 100 |
| 100 white blankets for light and serviceable body armor.....  | 100 |
| 300 pikes with their iron points.....   | 300 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| 50 cavalry lances.....  | 50  |
| 50 good broadswords, of which there is a great need.....  | 50  |
| 12 foreign gunners, because those we brought with us are of little<br>account.....  | 12  |
| 300 able-bodied soldiers who are to remain here (a third or half of them<br>to be marines).....                           | 300 |
| On dozen carpenters to build the vessels which must be built here....   | 12  |
| 2 blacksmiths with their forges and tools.....  | 2   |
| 4 pairs of bellows with their tubes.....  | 4   |
| 12 negroes for these forges, and among them 4 sawyers.....  | 12  |
| 1 or 2 gunsmiths to make arquebuses and locks for them.....   | 2   |
| 2 other locksmiths.....   | 2   |
| 50 quintals of tow.....   | 50  |
| 1 surgeon and a physician, with their drugs; and 2 other barbers, because<br>only 1 remains here.....                     | 4   |
| 300 good shields.....   | 300 |
| 200 quintals of wrought iron plates, not as it comes from the mine....  | 200 |
| 30 quintals of the finest steel.....  | 30  |
| 100 tanned cow-hides.....   | 100 |
| 300 pick-axes.....  | 300 |
| 200 iron shovels.....   | 200 |
| 1 royal ropemaker, who is in Mexico.....  | --- |
| 100 Venetian sail-cloths.....   | 100 |
| 10 quintals of sailmaker's twine.....   | 10  |
| 2 bales of paper.....   | 2   |
| 4 balances divided into three parts.....  | 4   |
| 6 weights for large balances.....   | 6   |
| 50 horn lanterns.....   | 50  |
| 200 fanegas <sup>1</sup> of salt.....   | 200 |
| 200 casks of wine.....  | 200 |
| 100 casks of vinegar.....   | 100 |
| 200 casks of oil.....   | 200 |
| 500 arrobas <sup>2</sup> of sugar.....  | 500 |
| One dozen barrels of raisins and almonds, since by not having brought<br>them the men have suffered great privations..... | 12  |
| 10 large hogsheads of flour.....  | 10  |
| Blankets for the men.....   | ... |
| Shirts in quantity.....   | ... |
| Doublets in quantity.....   | ... |

---

1 Ed. note: Worth 1.5 U.S. bushel, or 55-56 litres.

2 Ed. note: One arroba is equal to 1/4 quintal, or to 12 litres or 25 pounds.

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Breeches of woolen cloth and linen in quantity.....   | ---   |
| Hempen sandals in quantity.....   | ---   |
| Cowhide shoes in quantity.....  | ---   |
| Hats.....   | ---   |
| All in quantity for military supplies.  |       |
| <b>For barter, the following:</b>   |       |
| 2 bolts of Valencian scarlet cloth, with odds and ends.....   | 2     |
| Item, 7 bolts of Toledo scarlet cloth.....  | 7     |
| 6 cases of headdresses.....   | 6     |
| A great quantity of beads, blue, green, and yellow; 10 strings of each color.....   | 30    |
| 2 pieces of crimson velvet.....   | 2     |
| 3 dozen colored hats.....   | 36    |
| 1 case of large gilded coins for [use on] the coast of China.....   | 1     |
| 2 bales and 2 boxes of linens.....  | 4     |
| 2 quintals of <i>Muzavetas</i> [muslins?].....  | 2     |
| 4 pounds of fine coral of all sorts.....  | 4     |
| 3 quintals of glass (1 blue).....   | 3     |
| 1 thousand bundles of glass beads, green and yellow.....  | 1,000 |
| 500 dozen hawks' bells.....   | 500   |
| Coins and small bars of fine silver for trade with China.....   | ---   |
| 6 large caldrons for pitch.....   | 6     |
| 2 large caldrons, such as are used for bucking linen; but they must be large and very strong, because they are to be used in making saltpetre | 2     |
| 1 thousand sail needles.....  | 1,000 |
| 200 hogsheads with hoops of iron.....   | 200   |
| 2 saddles with long stirrups, with colored velvet trimmings, and all rivets, bits, and stirrup-irons to be gilded.....                        | 2     |
| 2 cavalry saddles with colored trimmings, all to be of good quality....   | 2     |
| 6 gilt swords with daggers of good quality which are for the lords of the coast of China and for those in the islands of Japan.....           | 6     |

All of the aforesaid goods should be sent as soon as possible, on the first ships that sail, for all these things are very necessary, that we may maintain ourselves in these parts.

**List of articles needed by the said fleet for the galleys which are to be built here for His Majesty.** The list is as follows:

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Firstly, 4 hawsers of 120 fathoms each, [weighing] 5 quintals each | 20 quintals |
| 2 large cables of 80 fathoms each, each weighing 6 quintals.....   | 12 quintals |
| 6 hawsers of 130 fathoms each, each weighing 3 quintals.....       | 18 quintals |
| 2 more large cables, of 120 fathoms each, each weighing 10 q. .... | 20 quintals |
| Item, common sails for rigging.....                                | 30 quintals |



|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| We need 100 quintals of cordage of all sorts.....   | 100 quintals     |
| 2 grapnels, each weighing 4 quintals.....   | 8 quintals       |
| 4 anchors, each weighing 5 quintals.....  | 20 quintals      |
| 6 grapnels, each weighing 3 quintals; 5 or 6 more weighing<br>5 or 6 arrobas each.....                        | 33 [sic] arrobas |
| 4 grapnels of 3 arrobas each.....   | 12 arrobas       |
| 12 French saws.....   | 12               |
| 4 frame saws.....   | 4                |
| 6 hand-saws.....  | 6                |
| 2 grindstones.....  | 2                |
| 500 pieces of canvas from Tehuantepec for sails.....  | 500              |
| 100 quintals of tar.....  | 100              |
| 50 quintals of pitch.....   | 50               |
| For <i>sallotes</i> ropes which are necessary, 4 pieces of 150 fathoms each,<br>each weighing 3 quintals..... | 12 quintals      |
| 4 hawsers of 100 fathoms each, each weighing 4 quintals.....  | 16 [quintals]    |
| 2 workmen, oar makers, to make oars from the local wood.....  | 2                |
| 200 pulleys; with both eyes and sheaves.....  | 200              |
| 100 quintals of grease.....   | 100 [quintals]   |
| 200 sheep-skins with the wool on <sup>1</sup> .....   | 200              |
| All this cordage to be agave and hemp.....  | ---              |
| Also 2 anvils of 2 arrobas each.....  | 2                |
| Also 2 small ones from 6 to 7 pounds.....   | 2                |
| 1 anvil.....  | 1                |
| 2 screws for filing [boring?].....  | 2                |
| A half-dozen boys for iron working.....   | 6                |
| 3 or 4 bellows-pipes for forges.....  | 4                |
| 100 heavy coats-of-mail.....  | 100              |
| The powder and fuse which have been asked for.....  | ---              |
| Likewise 3 or 4 pairs more of bellows are asked for.....  | ---              |
| 12 more negroes.....  | 12               |
| 200 more iron axes shod in Mexico.....  | 200              |
| 200 mattocks.....   | 200              |
| 100 more pieces of Tehuantepec and Venetian canvas.....   | 100              |
| 1 pair of large fishing-nets which may come in the hogsheds mentioned<br>above.....                           | 2                |
| Ear-rings, glassware, and fine coral.....   | ---              |
| The coins and bars of silver, just as they have been asked for.....   | ---              |
| The pitch caldrons, because those that were made in Mexico were worthless ---                                 | ---              |
| 1 dozen caldrons with 3 compartments.....   | 12               |

---

<sup>1</sup> Ed. note: They were used at the end of sticks to spread the pitch and grease.

4 syringes, and the cupping glasses and the lancets which are likewise  
ordered..... ---

Sail-needles with large holes..... ---

Workmen who understand ship-building..... ---

6 cables for the flagship, or 14 or 16 quintals each..... ---

The steel that is asked for<sup>1</sup>..... ---

[Endorsement]: "List of articles which are required for His Majesty's camp situated  
in the port of Çubu of the West."

---

<sup>1</sup> Certain shapes and sizes of steel spikes are specified, with drawings to illustrate in quantities of 5, 6, 40, and 50 thousands respectively.