
Document 1621E

Letter from Licentiate Mesa to the King, dated Manila, end of 1621

Source: AGI 67-6-20; translated in B&R 20: 159-214.

Letter from Alvaro Mesa y Lugo to Philip III

Sire:

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...

[Of the three ships sent to Acapulco in 1621, only one made it]

Although the flagship of the two ships that were going to New Spain was wrecked, still in the advice-ship that he [i.e. the Governor] despatched later the Governor sent a huge quantity of goods. He sent in the *almiranta* which got away safely and took the lead, a person to look after and care for everything, namely, Don Fernando Falcon, whom he made captain of infantry, and to whom he gave great profits for that purpose. It is said that he had orders to look after everything, and to ship as much as possible to Spain; as also, because he must fear that it will be possible, on account of his great offences, for your Majesty to be informed of the great wealth that he has sent and his conscience will accuse him. Will your Majesty order those goods to be sequestered—as is said here, all that [he has], without taking account of the 130 or so boxes which, as is notorious in this city, he lost in the flagship.

This is added new to the letter that I sent in the ships of New Spain, of which this letter is a copy, and which I am sending by way of India.

1 Ed. note: This letter is undated but was sent from the convent of St. Dominic where the author had sought refuge after escaping from house arrest. It is mostly a copy of the original sent earlier in 1621 aboard the ship that was wrecked. The extract below is part of the new postscript.

Will your Majesty provide, etc.
Licentiate Don Alvaro Messa y Lugo¹

¹ Ed. note: He wrote another letter on 14 August 1622, saying that he had been released after having spent 15 months in jail and in retreat. He adds that the Governor had received bad news about the treasure he had sent care of Fernando Falcon. The small casket containing gold bars, jewels and pearls had been confiscated as contraband goods by the officials at Acapulco (who did not know who the real owner was) and that Falcon had fled to Peru with the rest.