

Date: 1555, August 13 – 1556, May 30. City of Santo Domingo.

Theme: A Portuguese ship arrived at the port of Santo Domingo, La Española, with a cargo of enslaved black Africans but without a Spanish shipping license; they were seized by the local colonial authorities and sold at an auction in Santo Domingo, and different social types from the city went to buy them.

Source: Archivo General de Indias, Justicia 103-A,F.3281R.- F.3283V.,F.3569V.- 3572R., 3607V.-3609R., CUNY DSI Dominican Colonial Documents Collection

[fo. 3281r.]

added to *licenciado* / + 3281 /  
maldonado's [record] \_\_\_\_ /

Very powerful gentlemen, /  
I Nicolás Alvares pilot and captain /  
of the vessel named Santo Anto /  
nio, which belongs to Francisco Carnero, se /  
cretary of the King of Portugal /  
which is anchored in this port, say /  
that I departed from Principe island, /  
which is close to Sao Tome, /  
with the ship loaded with /  
Blacks and sugar and ivory and /  
red wood, all on behalf /  
of the said Secretary to /  
take it to him to the city of Lisbon. /  
And following our sailing, /  
being at twenty degrees, /  
the said vessel was taking in so much water /  
since earlier, that we could not /  
outpace it and we were sinking since /  
we were going, as we were, close to the wind, and /  
to save our lives we were forced, while being at the /  
said twenty degrees, to leave the /  
route, and we arrived at this port /  
with the wind in our sails, where we have /  
arrived and brought in the said ship. And /  
now I would like to unload the /  
said Blacks and goods /  
and repair the said ship and, once done, /  
load it again and continue my /  
trip of Lisbon, where I sailed to /  
from the said island /

[fo. 3281v.] p I beg and plead to your highness  
that, considering the fortuitous /  
case and that we arrived at this port /  
in a forced manner and to save our /  
lives and to repair the said /  
vessel so we may sail /  
on it, of which I will give /  
a deposition if necessary, that you order /  
that a license be issued to me so I may /  
unload the said blacks and goods /  
on shore, and careen /  
the said ship so I /  
may load it again and /  
continue my trip. And I request /  
that justice is fulfilled /  
as well as the cost of it.

p Also, I say that the officials /  
of your highness sent their /  
servants to the said vessel and took /  
my *registro* and letters and /  
all the other documents /  
that I brought, which I /  
need to show before /  
the secretary. /

p I beg and plead with your highness /  
to order the said officials to /  
give me immediately the said /  
*registro* and letter that they /  
took away from me, and on this I request /  
justice. The *bachiller* Juan Carrillo. /

[fo. 3282r.]            That all the property be unloaded /  
                                 and put into the *Atarazanas*, /  
                                 and the blacks be reconciled between /  
                                 the owners and his majesty's /  
                                 officials in a house where /  
                                 they be held. And the owners themselves /  
                                 must cure them and care for them until /  
                                 something else is decided, writing /  
                                 everything in an inventory. /  
                                 And his majesty's officials /  
                                 must watch over the blacks /  
                                 until they give them enough /  
                                 guarantee. And likewise it /  
                                 must be inventoried the precautions /  
                                 they have taken. /

p    On August 13th of one thousand /  
         and five hundred and fifty /  
         and five years the gentlemen /  
         president and oidores, convened, /  
         issued the said decision. /

Very powerful gentlemen /  
I Nicolás Alvares, pilot and captain/  
of the vessel named Sant/  
Antón, say that the officials /  
of your highness are ordering me /  
to deliver to them the slaves that /  
I bring loaded on the said /  
vessel, as well as the other goods, /  
saying that they are lost  
for having arrived at this city /  
[...]

- [fo. 3523v.] p That within three days they must /  
inspect the account of what belongs to /  
the vessel with warning /  
that everything he is requesting will be given /
- r On May 30th of one thousand /  
and five hundred and fifty and /  
six years /
- r Narrative of the debts that /  
are owed to the treasury of /  
Francisco Carnero regarding the vessel Sant /  
Antonio, and of the blacks in it, /  
which is so that Nicolás /  
Alvarez begins to collect /
- |   |   |                           |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| r | Hernán sánchez Ale/<br>mán, left over /   | 4,147 pes <sup>o</sup> s/ |
| r | The <i>bachiller</i> Molina /<br>surgeon, left over /   | 60 pes <sup>o</sup> s /   |
| r | Rodrigo Peláez, left over/  | 580 pes <sup>o</sup> s /  |
| r | Captain Juan de Junco /   | 343 pes <sup>o</sup> s /  |
| r | <i>Doña</i> Aldonza Manri/<br>que, left over/   | 250 pes <sup>o</sup> s /  |
| r | The <i>bachiller</i> Bernaldez [Sebo?] /<br>left over /<br>four hundred and twelve <i>pesos</i> /<br>and two <i>tomines</i> , and from these /<br>sixty <i>pesos</i> must be rebated to him /<br>for what he has helped with in the /<br>lawsuits pertaining to this property / | 412 pes <sup>o</sup> s    |

- [fo. 3524r.]
- |   |                                      |   |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| r | The <i>relator</i> Bernaldez/        | cc xx pes <sup>o</sup> s /  |
| r | Don Juan de Guzmán/                  | cc lxx pes <sup>o</sup> s/  |
| r | Ana Márquez portera, comes to /      | c lxxx <sup>o</sup> pes <sup>o</sup> s/                               |
| r | Juan de Chaves, left over /          | xxviii <sup>o</sup> pes <sup>o</sup> s                                |
| r | Doña Isabel Manrique,/               |   |
|   | left over/                           | xlv pes <sup>o</sup> s iii t <sup>o</sup> mines /                     |
| r | Rodrigo de Herrera, left over/       |   |
| r | Hernando de Moronta,/                | lvi pes <sup>o</sup> s t <sup>o</sup> mines /                         |
|   | who was warrantor of this/           |   |
|   | property, it was given to him and he |   |
|   | owes, as per/                        |   |
|   | a deed where he confesses /          |   |
|   | that it is Francisco /               |   |
|   | Carnero's, he owes /                 | iiUcclxxviii <sup>o</sup> pes <sup>o</sup> s v t <sup>o</sup> mines / |
| r | Alonso Hernandez Mel/                |   |
|   | garejo/                              |   |
- r Very powerful gentlemen, I Alonso /  
Hernández Melgarejo, say /  
that I presented a narrative /  
of the debts that were owed from the /  
auction of Francisco Carnero/  
so that according to it an order /  
were given to Nicolás Alvarez, /  
and in the said narrative it said /  
that *bachiller* Bernaldez owed, /  
as left over, three hundred and fifty/  
and one pesos, and by a mistake of /  
the notary who copied the account, /  
no deduction was made from the said amount /  
of what he has paid to me, which is /  
[...]

[fo. 3569r.]

After the above said, in the said /  
city of Santo Domingo of the Española/  
island of the Indies of the Ocean Sea, /  
on twenty one days of the month of August, year/  
of the birth of our lord and savior/  
Jesus Christ of one thousand and five hundred and fifty /  
and five years, in the presence of me, Lope /  
Amando, notary of his majesty, and of the witnesses /  
mentioned below, appeared in person /  
the *contador* Alvaro Cavallero and the treasurer /  
Alonso de Peña, and the *factor* Juan del Junco, /  
officials by his majesty, and they said that, /  
in compliance with what was decided and ordered by /  
the gentlemen president and oidores of this Royal /  
Audiencia and Chancillería, they wanted /  
to mandate that a charge was collected upon /  
the blacks that had arrived at the port of this city /  
on the vessel name Santo /  
Antonio, of which Nicolao Alvarez , Portuguese,  
was pilot and captain,  
that arrived here coming from the island of San /  
Tomé and from the island of Principe, which belong to the /  
lordship of the King of Portugal. And for /  
this, they left from the Audiencia and /  
Chancillería and went down to the river and port /  
of this said city to see the said blacks /  
and deliver them to the said pilot Nicolao Alvarez /  
and to the *maestre* of the said vessel, provided that they offer /  
more safety about the said blacks so that they /  
could take them out on shore and take care of them /

[fo. 3569v.]           and give them food in a house /  
                              or two of their choice that /  
                              they would be more satisfied with, /  
                              provided that they could not /  
                              sell them or alienate them without a license /  
                              from the gentlemen president /  
                              and *oidores* of this royal *audiencia* /  
                              or theirs as officials /  
                              of his majesty. And while being /  
                              in the said river and port of this /  
                              city, they had all the said blacks /  
                              taken out of the said vessel for /  
                              count and inventory as /  
                              it had been mandated. And they /  
                              saw it with their own eyes and /  
                              in their presence they counted /  
                              all the said blacks that came /  
                              in the said vessel and went /  
                              by a fortuitous case to this said port. /  
                              Present were Nicolás /  
                              Alvarez, pilot and captain /  
                              of the said vessel, and Alonso Eanes, maestre /  
                              and Pedro González, notary, and Juan /  
                              Francisco and Juan Estevez. Also /  
                              they found that in the said vessel /  
                              there were the following blacks, both /  
                              from the cargo as well as from Francisco Carnero, /  
                              secretary of the king of Portugal, /  
                              [...]

[fo. 3570r. ]

3570

to whom the vessel is said to belong, and /  
[it?] also says that the said blacks /  
were loaded at the Principe island /  
which is of the said Francisco Carnero , /  
that this falls within the lordship /  
of the King of Portugal and all /  
the said blacks were written /  
in an inventory in a narrative /  
as it was mandated by /  
the said gentlemen president and *oidores* /  
in the following fashion, /  
in the presence of the said gentlemen officials /  
of his majesty and the officials /  
that gave them as account: /

r                    r    firstly, /  
                          ninety seven black, /  
                          slaves, males and females, /  
                          tall and short, /  
                          with a very thin female /            xcvii  
                          slave who had nothing /  
                          but the bones, and could /  
                          not stand by herself nor /  
                          walk, which /  
                          are from the cargo of the /  
                          said Francisco Carnero,  
                          secretary /  
                          of the king of Portugal /  
                          and they come under his  
                          care /

[fo. 3570v. ]

- |   |   |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| v | Also one piece that is /<br>a black woman of the said <i>maestre</i> , /<br>because of three pieces /<br>that there were, two already /<br>died since he entered the port /<br>of this city of Santo Domingo. / | i                       |
| v | Also eleven pieces belonging to /<br>the pilot, males and females, /<br>large and small /   | x i                     |
| v | Pedro González, notary of the /<br>said vessel, two pieces of blacks /<br>were counted as his /   | ii                      |
| v | Also they counted three /<br>pieces of Bartolomé Riberos /<br>sailor of the said vessel./   | iii                     |
| v | Also two pieces were counted /<br>of Pero Yanes,<br>sailor of the said vessel.  | ii                      |
| v | Also twenty four pieces /<br>of blacks, males and females,<br>large and small /<br>were counted /<br>of Juan Estevez, sailor /<br>from the said vessel. /   | xx<br>iiii <sup>o</sup> |
| v | Also counted were another /   |                         |





[fo. 3572r.]            eight pieces that died /  
                              at the said port after/  
                              they entered it since four/  
                              days ago up to now. And all /  
                              the ones that stayed alive have /  
                              now been taken out, which are those that /  
                              were counted in front of the said/  
                              gentlemen officials of his majesty, /  
                              and there are no others, and that this is /  
                              true under the oath /  
                              they took.

- v And then the said officials /  
of his majesty said /  
that because the said blacks /  
will be better and will be better /  
cured and cared for under the /  
power of the said pilot and maestre /  
of the said vessel and escrivano and /  
other officials, since they trade them /  
and bring and have brought them, and so /  
that they are not lost nor there be bad /  
care [of them], that the said pilot and maestre /  
and escrivano, and Juan Francisco [maestre?] /  
and Juan Esteves take them /  
and receive them into custody, and oblige themselves /  
to care and cure them as it /  
is convenient, and that they will not sell them /  
[...]

[fo. 3607v. ]

in one hundred and eighty pesos to be paid /  
in cash, the said ones being present. /

clxxx<sup>o</sup> pes<sup>os</sup>  
/

r This day another black woman was auctioned /  
of cooked quince-like color who is a creole /  
ant has no mark, and she was sold to /  
Fernán Sánchez Alemán for two hundred /  
and three *pesos* to be paid in cash /

cc iii pes<sup>os</sup> /

r This day another black woman, old , /  
of cooked quince-like color, who is of the /  
said wife of Francisco Carnero and has /  
the mark of the f. on the left arm. /  
She was sold to Juanes Dendoy in two/  
hundred and fifty pesos of gold to be paid/  
on credit during three months, the said ones /  
present./

c l pes<sup>os</sup> /

This day was auctioned another /  
young black girl, mangy and scabby and small, /  
and she has the mark of the f, to Juan /  
de Chaves, tailor, for two hundred *pesos* ,/  
of gold to be paid in cash, the said /  
being present. It happened before me, Lope  
Amado, *escrivano*./

cc pes<sup>os</sup> /

[...]