

Letters Patent to John Cabot (1496)

Dieses Dokument vom 5. März 1496 ist eines der ersten Entdeckerpatente überhaupt, ausgestellt nur vier Jahr nach demjenigen von [Columbus](#). Es gab dem italienischen Händler *Giovanni Caboto* nach Bekanntwerden von *Columbus'* Entdeckung die Lizenz, eine Westpassage nach Asien zu suchen. Nach einem erfolglosen Versuch 1496 erreichte er im Juni 1497 Nordamerika, das er für einen Teil Asiens hielt. Für eine weitere Reise mit sechs Schiffen erhielt er im Februar 1498 ein zweites Patent.

Der hier abgedruckte Text basiert auf der englischen Übersetzung, die mit dem [lateinischen Original](#) abgedruckt ist bei: *Francis Newton Thorpe (Hrsg.)*, *The Federal and State Constitutions Colonial Charters, and Other Organic Laws of the States, Territories, and Colonies Now or Heretofore Forming the United States of America. Compiled and Edited Under the Act of Congress of June 30, 1906, Band 1, Washington 1909, S. 45-47.* Für die Textarbeit gibt es eine [Unterrichtsfassung](#).

The Letters Patent of King Henry VII Granted unto John Cabot and his Three Sons, Lewis, Sebastian and Sancius for the Discoverie of New and Unknown Lands

Henry, by the grace of God, king of England and France, and lord of Ireland, to all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting.

[1] Be it known that we have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant for us and our heiress to our welbelovéd John Cabot citizen of Venice, to Lewis, Sebastian, and Santius, sonnes of the sayd John, and to the heires of them, and every of them, and their deputies, full and free authority, leave, and power to saile to all parts, countreys, and seas of the East, of the West, and of the North, under our banners and ensignes, with fine ships of what burthen or quantity soever they be, and as many mariners or men as they will have with them in the sayd ships, upon their owne proper costs and charges, to seeke out, discover, and finde whatsoever isles, countreys, regions or provinces of the heathen and infidels whatsoever they be, and in what part of the world soever they be, which before this time have been unknowen to all Christians:

[2] We have granted to them, and also to every of them, the heires of them, and every of them, and their deputies, and have given them licence to set up our banners and ensignes in every village, towns, castle, isle, or maine land of them newly found. And that the aforesayd John and his sonnes, or their heires and assignee may subdue, occupy and possesse all such townes, cities, castles and isles of them found, which they can subdue, occupy and possesse, as our vassals, and lieutenants, getting unto us the rule, title, and jurisdiction of the same villages, townes, castles, and firme land so found. Yet so that the aforesayd John, and his sonnes and heires, and their deputies, be holden and bounder of all the fruits, profits, gaines, and commodities growing of such navigation, for every their voyage, as often as they shall arrive at our port of Bristoll (at the which port they shall be bound and holden onely to arrive) all maner of necessary costs and charges by them made, being deducted, to pay unto us in wares or money the lift part of the capitall gaines so gotten. We gluing and granting unto them and to their heires and deputies, that they shall be free from all paying of customer of all and singular such merchandise as they shall be free from all paying of customes of all and singular they shall bring with them from those places so newlie found.

[3] And moreover, we have given and granted to them, their heires and deputies, that all the firme lands, isles, villages, townes, castles and places whatsoever they be that they shall chance to finde, may not of any other of our subjects be frequented or visited without the licence of the foresayd John and his sonnes, and their deputies, under payee of forfeiture as well of their ships as of all and singular goods of all them that shall presume to saile to those places so found. Willing, and most straightly commanding all and singular our subjects as well on land as on sea, appointed officers, to give good assistance to the aforesayd John, and his sonnes and deputies, and that as well in arming and furnishing their ships or vessels, as in provision of quietnesse, and in buying of victuals for their money, and all other things by them to be provided necessary for the sayd navigation, they do give them all their helpe and favour. In wittnesse whereof we have caused to be made these our lettres patents.

Wittnesse our selfe at Westminister, the fifth day of March, in the eleventh yeere of our reigne.

Letters Patent für John Cabot (1496)

Henry [VII ...]

Be it knowen that we have given and granted [...] to our welbeloved John Cabot citizen of Venice [...] full and free authority, leave, and power to saile to all [...] countreys [...] under our banners and ensignes [...] upon their owne proper costs and charges, to seeke out, discover, and finde whatsoever isles, countreys, regions or provinces of the heathen and infidels whatsoever they be, and in what part of the world soever they be, which before this time have been unknowen to all Christians:

We have [...] given them licence to set up our banners and ensignes in every village, town, castle, isle, or maine land of them newly found. And that the aforesayd John and his sonnes [...] may subdue, occupy and possesse [...] as our vassals, and lieutenants, getting unto us the rule, title, and jurisdiction of the same villages, townes, castles, and firme land so found. Yet so that the aforesayd John [...] be holden and bounder of all the fruits, profits, gaines, and commodities growing of such navigation, for every their voyage, as often as they shall arrive at our port of Bristoll [...] all maner of necessary costs and charges by them made, being deducted, to pay unto us in wares or money the fifth part of the capitall gaine so gotten. [...] they shall be free from all paying of customes [...].

And moreover [...] whatsoever [...] they shall chance to finde, may not of any other of our subjects be frequented or visited without the licence of the foresayd John and his sonnes [...].

LETTERS PATENT TO JOHN CABOT

1496, MARCH 5, LETTERS PATENT OF KING HENRY VII

Pro Johanne Caboto & Filiis suis super Terra Incognita Investiganda

Rex omnibus, ad quos &c. Salutem.

NOTUM SIT ET MANIFESTUM quòd Dedimus & Concessimus, ac per Præsentes Damus & Concedimus, pro Nobis & Hæredibus nostris, Dilectis Nobis *Johanni Cabotto* Civi Venetiarum, ac *Lodovico, Sebastiano, & Sancto*, Filiis dicti *Johannis*, & eorum ac cujuslibet eorum Hæredibus & Deputatis, plenam ac liberam Auctoritatem, Facultatem & Protestatem Navigandi ad omnes Partes, Regiones, & Sinus Maris Orientalis Occidentalis, & Septentrionalis, sub Banneris Vexillis & Insigniis nostris, cum Quinque Navibus sive Navigiis, cujuscumque Portituræ & Qualitatis existant, & cum tot & tantis Nautis & Homini-bus, quot & quantis in dictis Navibus secum ducre voluerint, suis & eorum propriis Sumptibus & Expensis.

Ad inveniendum, Discooperiendum & Investigandum quascumque Insulas, Patrias, Regiones sive Provincias Gentilium & Infidelium, in quacumque Parte Mundi prositas, quæ Christianis omnibus ante hæc tempora fuerunt incognitæ.

Concessimus etiam eisdem & eorum cuilibet, eorumque & cujuslibet eorum Hæredibus & Deputatis, ac Licentiam dedimus Affigendi prædictas Banneras nostras & Insignia in quacumque Villa, Oppido, Castro, Insula seu Terra firma a se noviter inventis.

Et quòd prænominati *Johannes* & Filii ejusdem, seu Hæredes & eorum Deputati quibuscumque hujusmodi Villas, Castra, Oppida & Insular a se inventas, quæ Subjugari, Occupari & Possideri possint, Subjugare, Occupare & Possidere valeant, tanquam Vasalli nostri & Governatores, Locatenentes & Deputati eorundem, Dominium Titulum & Jurisdictionem eorundem Vallarum, Castrorum, Oppidorum, Insularum, ac Terræ firmæ sic inventarum, Nobis acquirendo;

Ita tamen ut ex omnibus Fructibus, Proficuis, Emolumentis Commodis, Lucris & Obventionibus, ex hujusmodi Navigatione provenientibus, præfati *Johannes* & Filii, ac Hæredes & eorum Deputati teneantur & sint obligati Nobis, pro omno Viagio suo, totiens quotiens ad Portum nostrum Bristolliaë applicuerint, ad quem omninò applicare teneantur & sint astricti, deductis omnibus Sumptibus & Impensis necessariis per eosdem factis, *Quintam Partem totius Capitalis Lucri sui facti* sive in Mercibus sive in Pecuniis persolvere;

Dantes Nos & Concidentes eisdem suisque Hæredibus & Deputatis ut ab omni Solutione Custumarum omnium & singulorum Bonorum ac Mercium, quas secum report arint ab illis Locis sic noviter inventis, Liberi sint & Immunes.

Et insuper Dedimus & Concessimus Eisdem ac suis Hæredibus & Deputatis, quòd Terræ omnes Firmæ, Insulæ, Villæ, Oppida, Castra, & Loca quæcumque, a se inventa, quotquot ab eis inveniri

contigerit non possint ab aliis quibusvis nostris Subditis frequentari seu visitari, absque Licentia *prædictorum Johannis & ejus Filiorum*, suorumque Deputatorum, sub Pœna Amissionis tàm Navium sive Navigiorum quàm Bonorum omnium quorumcumque ad ea Loca sic inventa Navigare præsumendum;

Volentes & strictissimè Mandantes omnibus & singulis nostris Subditis, tàm in Terra quàm in Mare constitutis, ut *præfacto Johanni & ejus Filiis ac Deputatis* bonam Assistentiam faciant, & tàm in Armandis Navibus seu Navigiis quàm in Provisione Commeatûs & Victualium pro sua Pecunia emendorum, atque aliarum Rerum sibi providendarum, pro dictâ Navigatione sumendarum, suos omnes Favores & Auxilia impartiantur.

In cujus &c.

Teste Rege apud Westmonasterium, quinto die Martii.

PER IPSUM REGEM.

Rymer's *Fœdera*, Vol. XII., pp. 595, 596.

Also, H. Harisen, *John Cabot the Discoverer of North America*, p. 313.

*The Letters patents of King Henry the seventh granted vnto Iohn Cabot and his three sonnes, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sancius for the the discoverie of new and vnknownen lands.**

HENry, by the grace of God, king of England and France, and lord of Ireland, to all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting.

Be it knowen that we haue giuen and granted, and by these presents do giue and grant for vs and our heires, to our welbeloued Iohn Cabot citizen of Venice, to Lewis, Sebastian, and Santius, sonnes of the sayd Iohn, and to the heires of them, and euery of them, and their deputies, full and free authority, leaue, and power to saile to all parts, countreys, and seas of the East, of the West, and of the North, vnder our banners and ensignes, with fīue ships of what burthen or quantity soeuer they be, and as many mariners or men as they will haue with them in the sayd ships, vpon their owne proper costs and charges, to seeke out, discover, and finde whatsoever isles, countreys, regions or prouinces of the heathen and infidels whatsoever they be, and in what part of the world soeuer they be, which before this time haue bene vnknownen to all Christians: we haue granted to them, and also to euery of them, the heires of them, and euery of them, and their deputies, and haue giuen them licence to set vp our banners and ensignes in euery village, towne, castle, isle, or maine land of them newly found. And that the aforesayd Iohn and his sonnes, or their heires and assignes may subdue, occupy and possesse all such townes, cities, castles and isles of them found, which they can subdue, occupy and possesse, as our vassals, and lieutenants, getting vnto vs the rule, title, and iurisdiction of the same villages, townes, castles, & firme land so found. Yet so that the aforesayd Iohn, and his sonnes and heires, and their deputies, be holden and bounden of all the fruits, profits, gaines, and commodities growing of such nauigation, for euery their voyage, as often as they shall arriue at our port of Bristoll (at the which port they shall be bound

* Richard Hakluyt, *Principale Navigations*, (1509).

and holden onely to arriue) all maner of necessary costs and charges by them made, being deducted, to pay vnto vs in wares or money the fift part of the capitall gaine so gotten. We giuing and granting vnto them and to their heires and deputies, that they shall be free from all paying of customes of all and singular such merchandize as they shall be free from all paying of customes of all and singular they shall bring with them from those places so newlie found.

And moreouer, we haue giuen and granted to them, their heires and deputies, that all the firme lands, isles, villages, townes, castles and places whatsoever they be that they shall chance to finde, may not of any other of our subjects be frequented or visited without the licence of the foresayd Iohn and his sonnes, and their deputies, vnder payne of forfeiture as well of their ships as of all and singular goods of all them that shall presume to saile to those places so found. Willing, and most straightly commanding all and singular our subjects as well on land as on sea, appointed officers, to giue good assistance to the aforesaid Iohn, and his sonnes and deputies, and that as well in arming and furnishing their ships or vessels, as in prouision of quietnesse, and in buying of victuals for their money, and all other things by them to be prouided necessary for the sayd nauigation, they do giue them all their helpe and fauour. In witnesse whereof we haue caused to be made these our lettres patents. Witnesse our selfe at Westminster, the fift day of March, in the eleuenth yeere of our reigne.—

SECOND CABOT PATENT

REFERENCES

Letters Patent. February 3, 1498.

Latin text in Harrise, John and Sebastian Cabot. (1896.) pp. 393, 394.

In English—

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Biddle, Richard. A Memoir of Sebastian Cabot. (Phila., 1831.) pp. 74, 75.

Beazley, John and Sebastian Cabot. pp. 95, 96.