

# Early Modern Europe, 1450–1789

CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF EUROPE, 2ND EDITION

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## Primary Sources

### CHAPTER ONE: EUROPE IN THE WORLD OF 1450

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### **1. Marco Polo's description of the city on Kinsay (modern Hangchow), c. 1300**

The Venetian merchant Marco Polo spent seventeen years at the court of Khublai Khan in China. When he returned to Europe, he dictated an account of his travels; many of his exploits are no doubt fanciful or embellished, but they provided impetus for Europeans to travel.

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/polo-kinsay.html>

### **2. John of Monte Corvino's report from China, 1305**

John of Monte Corvino, a Franciscan friar, was sent by the pope to the Mongol court at Khanbalik to convert people to Christianity and find allies against the Muslims. His letters provide information about China, and also about European preconceptions about the East.

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/corvino1.html>

### **3. Charter of Homage and Fealty, 1110**

The political system of medieval Europe was based to a great degree on personal ties of loyalty between individuals, rather than adherence to states as abstract entities. Such ties were often marked by ceremonies in which one individual swore loyalty to another, receiving in return a grant of land as a fief. In this French example, the Viscount of Carcassone swears loyalty (the phrase is "fealty and homage") to abbot Leo of the monastery of St. Grasse.

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/atton1.html>

#### **4. The Manner and Form of the Coronation of the Kings and Queens of England, 1385-1460**

Coronation ceremonies allowed for elaborate displays of royal power and wealth, and combined secular and sacred symbols. It is not always certain if every coronation followed the exact procedure outlined here, but the description captures late medieval ideals.

<http://www.chronique.com/Library/Knights/coronation.htm>

#### **5. Winter ceremonies and festivities in the city of Bristol, 1469**

Royal (and papal) coronations were the most elaborate ceremony in late medieval Europe, but smaller celebrations were often sponsored by guilds, city governments, confraternities, and other groups. This is a description of series of events held by the mayor and sheriff of Bristol in England.

<http://www.trytel.com/~tristan/towns/florilegium/community/cmevnt24.html>

## 6. Confronting an outsider, Porto, 1440

Cities were not always the harmonious community portrayed in the previous document. This is a city council resolution from the city of Porto in Portugal in 1440 in response to a petition asking for action to be taken against an outsider believed to be the root of many troubles. The record begins with a list of thirty-eight "good men", that is, upstanding [male] citizens many of whom were connected to one another through socio-economic rank and family ties, twenty-six of whom signed the petition. (J.A. Pinto Ferreira, ed. *Documentos e Memórias para a História do Porto, XL, "Vereações" Anos de 1401-1449* (Porto: Câmara Municipal do Porto, 1980), f.42-f.42v [91-93]. Translated by Darlene Abreu-Ferreira)

In the year of one thousand four hundred and forty on the tenth day of the month of June in the...city of Porto there were these good men that follow...

...and other good men neighbours and residents in the said city. It was resolved all together for the honor and benefit of the said city: For as much as it was said that those before them always lived very well and in great tranquillity, always serving the former Kings and likewise our Lord the King in peace and harmony and they are all residents of the city joined in lineage, kinship, and marriage. Now not long ago, Pedro Alvarez, a business agent originally from Galicia, came to live in this city. Pedro Alvarez created many quarrels between the residents of the said city, enticing one and another to make accusations and libels, through which some residents of the said city were imprisoned and ruined. Continuing in his maliciousness-- though he was told not to engage in such things--nevertheless he incited Alvaro Vaasquez de Sousa with the accusation that Branca Pirez, his wife, committed the sin of adultery against him with Luis Affomso, resident of the said city. He made this accusation himself undoubtedly [due to] malice. It was a great lie, for Branca Pirez never did such a thing nor even imagined

it, and even less that Luis Affomso. How many of these things we have to endure! They could in the future lead to revolt among those of the city. It was [thus] resolved that this Pedro Alvarez not live anymore among them, but go live outside of the city to remove the scandal. And that moreover they write to our Lord the King and to his council that they have ordered thus: that it be his will to not allow such a man to live among us, for if he could it would be a disservice and ruin to the city.

## 7. Jacques de Vitry on Student Life at Paris, ca 1225

Universities were established in Europe from the twelfth century onward; by 1500 there were over 50. Shortly after their founding, they were already being criticized for not providing true learning. These are comments of Jacques de Vitry (c. 1160-1240), a church official and historian who had studied at the University of Paris in its early years, but was highly critical of university life. (From *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, vol. 2, no. 3 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, no date), pp. 19-21)

Almost all students at Paris, foreigners and natives, did absolutely nothing except learn or hear something new. Some studied merely to acquire knowledge, which is curiosity; others to acquire fame, which is vanity; others still for the sake of gain, which is cupidity and the vice of simony. Very few studied for their own edification, or that of others. They wrangled and disputed not merely about the various sects or about some discussions; but the differences between the countries also caused dissensions, hatreds and virulent animosities among them, and they impudently uttered all kinds of affronts and insults against one another.

They affirmed that the English were drunkards and had tails; the sons of France proud, effeminate and carefully adorned like women. They said that the Germans were furious and obscene at their feasts; the Normans, vain and boastful; the Poitevins, traitors and always adventurers. The Burgundians they considered vulgar and stupid. The Bretons were reputed to be fickle and changeable and were often reproached for the death of Arthur. The Lombards were called avaricious, vicious and cowardly; the Romans, seditious, turbulent, and slanderous; the Sicilians, tyrannical and cruel; the inhabitants of Brabant, men of blood, incendiaries, brigands and ravishers; those of Flanders, fickle, prodigal, gluttonous, yielding as butter, and slothful. After such insults, from words they often came to blows.

I will not speak of those logicians, before whose eyes flitted constantly “the lice of Egypt,” that is to say, all the sophistical subtleties, so that no one could comprehend their eloquent discourses in which, as says Isaiah, “there is no wisdom.” As to the doctors of theology, “seated in Moses’ seat,” they were swollen with learning, but their charity was not edifying. Teaching and not practicing, they have “become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal,” or like a canal of stone, always dry, which out to carry water to “the bed of spices” They not only hated one another, but by their flatteries they enticed away the students of others; each one seeking his own glory, but caring not a whit about the welfare of souls.



University students listen to a lecture, from a 1385 Italian manuscript at the Glasgow University Library: <http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/treasures/boethius.html>

## 8. The day of a university student, Belgium 1476

Though many of the books that university students studied are well known, documents that describe a normal day in the life of a university student are not common. The following is an ordinance for the University of Louvain in 1476, issued by the duke who had jurisdiction over the university and indicating the way in which the student was supposed to work at that institution. (From Hastings Rashdall, *The University of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895), Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 766)

The tutors shall see that the scholars rise in the morning at five o'clock, and that then before lectures each one reads by himself the laws which are to be read at the regular lecture, together with the glosses .... But after the regular lecture, having if they wish, quickly heard mass, the scholars shall come to their rooms and revise the lectures that have been given, by rehearsing and impressing on their memory whatever they have brought away from the lectures either orally or in writing. And next they shall come to lunch . . . after lunch, each one having brought to the table his books, all the scholars of the Faculty together, in the presence of a tutor, shall review that regular lecture; and in this review the tutor shall follow a method which will enable him, by discreet questioning of every man, to gather whether each of them listened well to the lecture and remembered it, and which will recall the whole lecture by having its parts recited by individuals. And if watchful care is used in this one hour will suffice.



## 9. The *Carmina Burana*

The *Carmina Burana* are a group of several hundred anonymous medieval poems, most of them in Latin, that satirize and criticize various social groups, or extol the joys of love, drinking, and gambling. Most of them seem to have been composed in university towns, and were designed to be sung, though we don't know the tunes. In 1937 they were put to music by the German composer Carl Orff; the Orff version can be heard at: <http://www.anthea2.freeuk.com/carminaburana/>

### ***In taberna quando sumus***

### ***(When we are in the tavern)***

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| In taberna quando sumus     | When we are in the tavern,              |
| non curamus quid sit humus, | we do not think how we will go to dust, |
| sed ad ludum properamus,    | but we hurry to gamble,                 |
| cui semper insudamus.       | which always makes us sweat.            |
| Quid agatur in taberna      | What happens in the tavern,             |
| ubi nummus est pincerna,    | where money is host,                    |
| hoc est opus ut queratur,   | you may well ask,                       |
| si quid loquar, audiatur.   | and hear what I say.                    |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Quidam ludunt, quidam bibunt,  | Some gamble, some drink,                        |
| quidam indiscrete vivunt.      | some behave loosely.                            |
| Sed in ludo qui morantur,      | But of those who gamble,                        |
| ex his quidam denudantur       | some are stripped bare,                         |
| quidam ibi vestiuntur,         | some win their clothes here,                    |
| quidam saccis induuntur.       | some are dressed in sacks.                      |
| Ibi nullus timet mortem        | Here no-one fears death,                        |
| sed pro Baccho mittunt sortem: | but they throw the dice in the name of Bacchus. |
| Primo pro nummata vini,        | First of all it is to the wine-merchant         |

|                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ex hac bibunt libertini;           | the libertines drink,               |
| semel bibunt pro captivis,         | one for the prisoners,              |
| post hec bibunt ter pro vivis,     | three for the living,               |
| quater pro Christianis cunctis     | four for all Christians,            |
| quinquies pro fidelibus defunctis, | five for the faithful dead,         |
| sexies pro sororibus vanis,        | six for the loose sisters,          |
| septies pro militibus silvanis.    | seven for the footpads in the wood, |

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Octies pro fratribus perversis, | Eight for the errant brethren, |
| nonies pro monachis dispersis,  | nine for the dispersed monks,  |
| decies pro navigantibus         | ten for the seamen,            |
| undecies pro discordantiibus,   | eleven for the squabblers,     |
| duodecies pro penitentibus,     | twelve for the penitent,       |
| tredecies pro iter agentibus.   | thirteen for the wayfarers.    |

|                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Tam pro papa quam pro rege | To the Pope as to the king        |
| bibunt omnes sine lege.    | they all drink without restraint. |

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Bibit hera, bibit herus,     | The mistress drinks, the master drinks,      |
| bibit miles, bibit clerus,   | the soldier drinks, the priest drinks,       |
| bibit ille, bibit illa,      | the man drinks, the woman drinks,            |
| bibit servus cum ancilla,    | the servant drinks with the maid,            |
| bibit velox, bibit piger,    | the swift man drinks, the lazy man drinks,   |
| bibit albus, bibit niger,    | the white man drinks, the black man drinks,  |
| bibit constans, bibit vagus, | the settled man drinks, the wanderer drinks, |
| bibit rudis, bibit magnus.   | the stupid man drinks, the wise man drinks,  |
| Bibit pauper et egrotus,     | The poor man drinks, the sick man drinks,    |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| bibit exul et ignotus,       | the exile drinks, and the stranger,     |
| bibit puer, bibit canus,     | the boy drinks, the old man drinks,     |
| bibit presul et decanus,     | the bishop drinks, and the deacon,      |
| bibit soror, bibit frater,   | the sister drinks, the brother drinks,  |
| bibit anus, bibit mater,     | the old lady drinks, the mother drinks, |
| bibit ista, bibit ille,      | this man drinks, that man drinks,       |
| bibunt centum, bibunt mille. | a hundred drink, a thousand drink.      |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Parum sexcente nummate        | Six hundred pennies would hardly                                    |
| durant, cum immoderate        | suffice, if everyone  |
| bibunt omnes sine meta.       | drinks immoderately and immeasurably.                               |
| Quamvis bibant mente leta,    | However much they cheerfully drink                                  |
| sic nos rodunt omnes gentes   | we are the ones whom everyone scolds,                               |
| et sic erimus egentes.        | and thus we are destitute.  |
| Qui nos rodunt confundantur   | May those who slander us be cursed                                  |
| et cum iustis non scribantur. | and may their names not be written in the book<br>of the righteous. |

## **10. Thomas à Kempis, (1380-1471) *The Imitation of Christ***

Thomas à Kempis was a monk and mystic, whose writings offered people a way of approaching God through individual devotion. Kempis did not break with the church, but his writings, particularly the *Imitation of Christ*, became very popular with lay readers who were often critical of the institutional church and dissatisfied with their local clergy. The book has remained a popular devotional guide since it was written, with thousands of editions in many languages. These are the first two chapters. The entire text can be found at:

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/kempis/imitation.all.html>

### ***Imitating Christ and Despising All Vanities on Earth***

HE WHO follows Me, walks not in darkness," says the Lord. John 8:12. By these words of Christ we are advised to imitate His life and habits, if we wish to be truly enlightened and free from all blindness of heart. Let our chief effort, therefore, be to study the life of Jesus Christ.

The teaching of Christ is more excellent than all the advice of the saints, and he who has His spirit will find in it a hidden manna. Now, there are many who hear the Gospel often but care little for it because they have not the spirit of Christ. Yet whoever wishes to understand fully the words of Christ must try to pattern his whole life on that of Christ.

What good does it do to speak learnedly about the Trinity if, lacking humility, you displease the Trinity? Indeed it is not learning that makes a man holy and just, but a virtuous life makes him pleasing to God. I would rather feel contrition than know how to define it. For what would it profit us to know the whole Bible by heart and the principles of all the philosophers if we live without grace and the love of God? Vanity of vanities and all is vanity, except to love God and serve Him alone.

This is the greatest wisdom—to seek the kingdom of heaven through contempt of the world. It is vanity, therefore, to seek and trust in riches that perish. It is vanity also to court honor and to be puffed up with pride. It is vanity to follow the lusts of the body and to desire things for which severe punishment later must come. It is vanity to wish for long life and to care little about a well-spent life. It is vanity to be concerned with the present only and not to make provision for things to come. It is vanity to love what passes quickly and not to look ahead where eternal joy abides.

Often recall the proverb: “The eye is not satisfied with seeing nor the ear filled with hearing.” Try, moreover, to turn your heart from the love of things visible and bring yourself to things invisible. For they who follow their own evil passions stain their consciences and lose the grace of God.

### ***Having a Humble Opinion of Self***

EVERY man naturally desires knowledge; but what good is knowledge without fear of God? Indeed a humble rustic who serves God is better than a proud intellectual who neglects his soul to study the course of the stars. He who knows himself well becomes mean in his own eyes and is not happy when praised by men.

If I knew all things in the world and had not charity, what would it profit me before God Who will judge me by my deeds?

Shun too great a desire for knowledge, for in it there is much fretting and delusion. Intellectuals like to appear learned and to be called wise. Yet there are many things the knowledge of which does little or no good to the soul, and he who concerns himself about other things than those which lead to salvation is very unwise.

Many words do not satisfy the soul; but a good life eases the mind and a clean conscience inspires great trust in God.

The more you know and the better you understand, the more severely will you be judged, unless your life is also the more holy. Do not be proud, therefore, because of your learning or skill. Rather, fear because of the talent given you. If you think you know many things and understand them well enough, realize at the same time that there is much you do not know. Hence, do not affect wisdom, but admit your ignorance. Why prefer yourself to anyone else when many are more learned, more cultured than you?

If you wish to learn and appreciate something worth while, then love to be unknown and considered as nothing. Truly to know and despise self is the best and most perfect counsel. To think of oneself as nothing, and always to think well and highly of others is the best and most perfect wisdom. Wherefore, if you see another sin openly or commit a serious crime, do not consider yourself better, for you do not know how long you can remain in good estate. All men are frail, but you must admit that none is more frail than yourself.

## 11. Religious Bequest, Denmark, 1415

People's religious interests and concerns were often mirrored in wills. This is a will from Denmark in 1415, in which an urban woman leaves bequests to religious institutions and persons in three cities, reserving the largest bequest, valuable urban property, for the cathedral of St. Lawrence, the archiepiscopal cathedral of medieval Denmark. (Testamenter fra Danmarks Middelalder indtil 1450. Udgivne for Det kongelige danske Selskab for Fædrelandets Historie og Sprog af Kr. Erslev. (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1901). Translated by Grethe Jacobsen and Pernille Arenfeldt)

### ***Will of Katrina Laurensdatter, wife of Laurens Jensen. 1415.***

In nomine Domini, amen. I, Katerina Laurensdatter, wife of Laurens Jensen, have a body that is not well but a soul that by the help of God is well; with the will of my dear husband and several of our true friends I now bequeath the goods that God has lent me accordingly:

First I donate to the Church of St. Lawrence in Lund, half of a stone house, situated in Malmø, which yields 3 solid marks in yearly income, which house I lawfully and honestly inherited from my parents, whose names were Lasse Skytte and Katerine Laurenses, on the condition that a memorial mass be said in aforesaid church for me and my aforesaid parents after the fest of St. Canute the King [July 10]. One mark of the annual rent of aforesaid stone house to be distributed thus: the cannon is to have 3 shillings, the bell-ringer 2 "grot", and the rest goes to the building of the church.

Item I donate 3 marks in Scanian money to my parish church of St. Olaf. Item for my confessor, Master Benedict Jensen, priest, 1 silver spoon. Item every monastery in Lund 4 "grot". Item Mistress Benedicte in the convent 1 shilling. Item for the monastery, parish church and Holy Spirit Hospital in Landskrona each 4 shillings. Item the Black Friars in Helsingborg 4 "grot".

Item my sister a red tunic with a black sleeve with metal ornaments. Item my sister's daughter Estrid a red cape and a hood with metal ornaments.

This is my will and final desire which I ask my dear husband, Laurens Jensen aforesaid, and Peder Saxtorp, esquire, to fulfil for the benefit of my soul which I trust them to do and to answer to God.

For further witness the seals of honest men who are Master Benedict, my confessor, Sire Peter in Resløf and Peder Saxtorp, esquire aforesaid, have been attached to this.

Datum Agård, Billeberg parish, anno domini 1415, crastino visitacionis beate Marie virginis gloriose.



## 12. Ordinance of the Spurriers' [Spurmakers'] Guild of London, England 1345

Production of most commodities in late medieval cities was handled by craft guilds, which had grown up in most European cities beginning in the twelfth century to regulate production and forbid nonmembers to work at the craft. The following is a very typical guild ordinance, setting out many aspects of training and limiting the length of the work day. (James Harvey Robinson, editor and translator, *Readings in European History*, vol. 1 (Boston: Ginn, 1904), pp. 409--411.)

Be it remembered, that on Tuesday, the morrow of St. Peter's bonds, in the nineteenth year of the reign of King Edward III, the articles underwritten were read before John Hammond, mayor, Roger de Depham, recorder, and the other aldermen; and seeing that the same were deemed befitting, they were accepted and enrolled in these words.

In the first place, that no one of the trade of spurriers shall work longer than from the beginning of the day until curfew rings out at the church of St. Sepulcher, without [ i.e. outside of the city gate called] Newgate; by reason that no man can work so neatly by night as by day. And many persons of the said trade, who compass [know] how to practice deception in their work, desire to work by night rather than by day; and then they introduce false iron, and iron that has been cracked, for tin, and also they put gilt on false copper, and cracked.

And further, many of the said trade are wandering about all day, without working at all at their trade; and then, when they have become drunk and frantic, they take to their work, to the annoyance of the sick and all their neighborhood as well, by reason of the broils [fights] that arise between them and the strange folk who are dwelling among them. And then they blow up their fires so vigorously, that their forges begin all at once to blaze, to the great peril of themselves and of all the neighborhood around. And

then, too, all the neighbors are much in dread of the sparks, which so vigorously issue forth in all directions from the mouths of the chimneys in their forges.

By reason thereof it seems unto them that working by night should be put an end to, in order to avoid such false work and such perils; and therefore the mayor and the aldermen do will, by the assent of the good folk of the said trade and for the common profit, that from henceforth such time for working, and such false work made in the trade, shall be forbidden. And if any person shall be found in the said trade to do the contrary hereof, let him be amerced [fined], the first time in forty pence, one half to go to the use of the Chamber of the Guildhall of London, and the other half to the use of the said trade; the second time, in half a mark [80 pence] and the third time, in ten shillings [120 pence], to the use of the same Chamber and trade; and the fourth time, let him forswear the trade forever.

Also, that no one of the said trade shall hang his spurs out on Sundays, or on any other days that are double feasts; but only a sign indicating his business; and such spurs as they shall so sell, they are to show and sell within their shops, without exposing them without or opening the doors or windows of their shops, on the pain aforesaid.

Also, that no one of the said trade shall keep a house or shop to carry on his business, unless he is free of the city [a citizen]; and that no one shall cause to be sold, or exposed for sale, any manner of old spurs for new ones, or shall garnish them or change them for new ones.

Also, that no one of the said trade shall take an apprentice for a less term than seven years, and such apprentice shall be enrolled according to the usages of the said city.

Also, that if any one of the said trade, who is not a freeman, shall take an apprentice for a term of years, he shall be amerced as aforesaid.

Also, that no one of the said trade shall receive the apprentice, serving man, or journeyman of another in the same trade, during the term agreed upon between his master and him, on the pain aforesaid.

Also, that no alien of another country, or foreigner of this country, shall follow or use the said trade, unless he is enfranchised before the mayor, aldermen, and chamberlain; and that, by witness and surety [guarantee] of the good folk of the said trade, who will go surety for him, as to his loyalty and his good behavior.

Also, that no one of the said trade shall work on Saturdays, after nones [about 3 pm] has been rung out in the city; and not from that hour until the Monday morning following.



Guild houses, Antwerp. Both craft and merchants' guilds often built houses for holding ceremonies and celebrations, and sometimes used them to store merchandise or hold courts to resolve disputes among members.

### **13. Ordinance of the white-tawyers' guild, London, 1346**

Along with organizing and regulating work, and providing job security, guilds also provided their members with a social identity, complete with a meeting place and often an array of activities only loosely associated with a profession. The ways in which guilds sought to increase a sense of community among their members can be seen in the following ordinances for the white-tawyers guild in London. White-tawyers were persons who prepared skins into leather with salt, alum, and other substances, giving it a white surface (Edward P. Cheney, editor and translator, *Translations and Reprints from the Original Sources of European History*, vol. 2, no. 1(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, n.d.), pp. 23-25.)

In honor of God, of Our Lady, and of All Saints, and for the nurture of tranquillity and peace among the good folks the megucers, called white-tawyers, the folks of the same trade have, by assent of Richard Lacer, mayor, and of the aldermen, ordained the points under-written.

In the first place, they have ordained that they will find a wax candle, to burn before our Lady in the church of Allhallows, near London wall.

Also, that each person of the said trade shall put in the box such sum as he shall think fit, in aid of maintaining the said candle.

Also, if by chance any one of the said trade shall fall into poverty, whether through old age or because he cannot labor or work, and have nothing with which to keep himself, he shall have every week from the said box 7 pence for his support, if he be a man of good repute. And after his decease, if he have a wife, a woman of good repute, she shall have weekly for her support 7 pence from the said box, so long as she shall behave herself well and keep single.

And that no stranger shall work in the said trade, or keep house for the same in the city, if he be not an apprentice, or a man admitted to the franchise of the said city.

And that no one shall take the serving-man of another to work with him, during his term, unless it be with the permission of his master.

And if any one of the said trade shall have work in his house that he cannot complete, or if for want of assistance such work shall be in danger of being lost, those of the said trade shall aid him, that so the said work be not lost.

And if any one of the said trade shall depart this life, and have not wherewithal to be buried, he shall be buried at the expense of their common box. And when any one of the said trade shall die, all those of the said trade shall go to the vigil, and make offering on the morrow.

And if any serving-man shall conduct himself in any other manner than properly towards his master, and act rebelliously toward him, no one of the said trade shall set him to work, until he shall have made amends before the mayor and aldermen; and before them such misprision [misconduct] shall be redressed.

Also, that the good folks of the same trade shall once in the year be assembled in a certain place, convenient thereto, there to choose two men of the most loyal and benefitting of the same trade, to be overseers of work and all other things touching the trade for that year; which persons shall be presented to the mayor and aldermen for the time being, and sworn before them diligently to inquire and make search, and loyally to present to the said mayor and aldermen such defaults as they shall find touching the said trade without sparing anyone for friendship or for hatred, or in any other manner. And if any one of the said trade shall be found rebellious against the said overseers, so as not to let them properly make

their search and assay, as they ought to do; or if he shall absent himself from the meeting aforesaid, without reasonable cause, after due warning by the said overseers, he shall pay to the Chamber, upon the first default, 40 pence; and on the second like default, half a mark [80 pence]; and on the third one mark [160 pence]; and on the fourth, 20 shillings [240 pence], and shall forswear the trade forever.

Also, that if the overseers shall be found lax and negligent about their duty, or partial to any person for gift or for friendship, maintaining him or voluntarily permitting him to continue in his default, and shall not present him to the mayor and aldermen, as before stated, they are to incur the penalty foresaid.

Also, that each year, at such assemblies of the good folks of the said trade, there shall be chosen overseers, as before stated. And if it be found that through laxity or negligence of the said governors such assemblies are not held, each of the said overseers is to incur the said penalty.

Also, that all skins falsely and deceitfully wrought in their trade which the said overseers shall find on sale in the hands of any person, citizen or foreigner, within the franchise shall be forfeited to the said chamber, and the worker thereof amerced in manner aforesaid.

Also, that no one who has not been an apprentice, and has not finished his term of apprenticeship in the said trade, shall be made free of the same trade; unless it be attested by the overseers for the time being, or by four persons of the said trade, that such person is able and sufficiently skilled to be made free of the same.

#### **14. Petition to the king and queen, Denmark c. 1487**

This petition was made to the Danish king and queen by an anonymous widow around 1487. The petitioner, the widow of the royal saddle maker, planned to carry on her late husband's workshop and explained that she needed some money and cloth for a cape, as she intended to travel to Germany in search of a journeyman. It was a regular practice of the royal court to import Dutch woollen cloth to use as partial payment of wages. This widow was not asking for charity, but rather a loan for a reasonable purpose: a cape of this cloth would signal a respectable, well-off woman, making her journey easier and likely more productive. (Original in the Danish National Archives, Copenhagen, Sign. RA. Reg. 108A. Pk. 1. 1487. Printed in *Danske Magazin*, ser. 4., vol. 1 (1864), p. 183. Translated by Grethe Jacobsen and Pernille Arenfeldt)

I would like to beg you, gracious Lord, to lend me 30 marks, so that I may buy leather and other things I need for orders of Your Grace. Many of [the] saddles have to be repaired and your marshal has ordered a new saddle. Four new horse collars for my Gracious Lady's horses have been made and your marshal talked about two more collars. I will repay you the money if you would help me now. I have borrowed and pawned from good people, and I would like to pay them back, and I would like to travel to Germany with Your Grace's permission to inquire if I could get a good journeyman, one who can do all kinds of work. And I ask you, Gracious Lord, that you would consider my poverty and let me benefit from the fact that my poor husband has been your servant, so that you will give me five yards of cloth of the good kind for a cape. For God's sake, I ask your Grace to let me know...