

ACA, Cancillería, Reg. 1751 — Grant of *Cena Absentie* to Petrus de Sorribus

Document Summary

Field	Value
Document type	Royal grant (<i>concessio</i>) of a <i>cena absentie</i>
Issuer	Joan I of Aragon
Beneficiary	Petrus de Sorribus (Pere de Sorribes), royal sub-tailor (<i>subsartor</i>)
Grant	<i>Cena absentie</i> of 400 <i>solidi Barchinonenses</i> , payable annually on 1 January by the Commander and <i>probi homines</i> within the <i>vegueria</i> of Cervera
Date	Barcelona, 2 April 1387
Regnal year	First year of Joan I's reign
Notary/scribe	Franciscus ça Costa

Reconciled Latin Transcription

Nos Johannes dei gracia Rex Aragonum Valencie Maioricarum Sardinie et Corsice Comesque Barchinone Rossilionis et Ceritanie. Ad plurima et magna servitia per vos fidelem nostrum subsartorem Petrum de Sorribus nobis diversimode impensa et que impendere non desistitis debito indiviso respectu habentes et in remuneracionem eorundem ac pro sustentacione status vestri in dicto officio de voluntate nostra respondentes tenore presentis damus et concedimus vobis toto tempore vite vestre illam cenam absentie quadringentorum solidorum Barchinon[ensium] quam cenam Comendator et probi homines [place name] [?] infra vicariam Cervarie situati nobis quolibet sinon [?] in letles [?] suis prima die Januarii nobis tradere tenentur ac exsolvere suis dare [?]. Mandamus per eandem dictis Comendatori et probis hominibus et unicuique ipsorum presentibus et futuris quod de dicta cena absente quolibet anno dicto die vobis dicto pro dicto servicio dum vitam duxeritis in humanis et non alteri alii respondeant pagare et complere et non contraveniant quavis causa. Mandantes universis et singulis officialibus nostris vel dictorum officialium locum tenentibus necnon omnibus iusti[tiam a]gentibus [?] quod ad eandem cenam dictos Comendatorem et probos homines si necesse et requisiti fuerint suo tempore forcient et compellant. In cuius rei testimonium

presentem vobis fieri iussimus nostro sigillo pendenti roboratam. Data Barchinone secunda die Aprilis anno a nativitate Domini M^o CCC^o LXXX^o septimo. Regnique nostri primo. Franciscus ça Costa.

Annotated English Translation

We, Joan, by the grace of God King of Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia, and Corsica, Count of Barcelona, Roussillon, and Cerdanya.¹ Having due and undivided regard for the many and great services rendered to us in diverse ways by you, our faithful sub-tailor² Petrus de Sorribus (Pere de Sorribes),³ and which you do not cease to render, and responding to the remuneration of the same and for the sustenance of your status in the said office,⁴ by our will, by the tenor of the present [letter] we give and grant to you, for the whole time of your life, that *cena absentie*⁵ of four hundred *solidi* of Barcelona⁶ which *cena* the Commander and good men⁷ of [place name]⁸ situated within the *vegueria* of Cervera⁹ are required to deliver and pay to us each [year?]¹⁰ in their [terms?]¹¹ on the first day of January.

We command by the same [letter] the said Commander and good men and each of them, present and future, that from the said *cena absente*¹² each year on the said day they shall answer, pay, and fulfill to you — for the said service, so long as you shall lead your life among the living — and not to any other, and that they shall not contravene [this] for any cause.

[We further] command all and each of our officials or the lieutenants of the said officials, as well as all those administering justice,¹³ that they shall compel and force the said Commander and good men to [pay] the said *cena*, if it be necessary and they are required [to do so], in their due time.

In witness whereof we have ordered the present [letter] to be made for you, strengthened with our pendant seal. Given at Barcelona, the second day of April, in the year of the Nativity of the Lord 1387, and in the first [year] of our reign.¹⁴

Franciscus ça Costa.¹⁵

Footnotes

Unresolved Ambiguities

1. **Place name of the community:** The specific community within the *vegueria* of Cervera that owes the *cena absentie* has not been securely identified. The HTR reading "Tramatena" is unverified. Archival verification is essential, as this determines which community was fiscally affected by the grant.

2. "**sinon**" (transcription line following *quolibet*): This word does not correspond to standard Latin and may be a variant or garbled reading of *anno*. The expected formula is *quolibet anno*. Needs archival verification.
 3. "**in letles suis**": This phrase is unresolved. The most plausible formulaic candidates are *in terminis suis* (in their terms) or *in tallis suis* (in their tallies), but neither matches the transcribed letterforms cleanly. Archival verification is required.
 4. "**suis dare**" at the end of the first clause: The syntax of the close of the grant clause is not entirely smooth. This may be a formulaic closing (e.g., *consueverunt dare* = "were accustomed to give") that has been partially garbled in transmission or reading.
 5. "**iusti[tiam a]gentibus**": The exact reading of this phrase in the enforcement clause remains uncertain. Alternatives include *iusticias regentibus* (those governing the justiceships) or *iustitiam agentibus* (those administering justice).
 6. **Identity of the Comendator**: Whether this refers to the head of a military-religious commandery (Hospitaller, Santiago, etc.) or to a lay *comendador* holding a fiscal command requires further contextual identification, likely dependent on resolving the place name.
1. Standard intitulation of Joan I, reflecting the full composite titles of the Crown of Aragon. The listing of Majorca and Sardinia follows the established formula after the reincorporation of Majorca (1349) and the ongoing claims in Sardinia. ↩
 2. *Subsartor*: a subordinate officer in the royal household responsible for tailoring and textile work. The prefix *sub-* indicates a deputy or assistant to the chief tailor (*sartor maior*). The office carried a defined place in the household hierarchy and would have provided regular access to the royal household. ↩
 3. Petrus de Sorribus (Pere de Sorribes). The prosopographical identification requires further verification. The surname Sorribes is attested in fourteenth-century Catalan documentation, particularly in the regions around the central Catalan counties. ↩
 4. *Pro sustentacione status vestri in dicto officio*: "for the sustenance of your status in the said office." This formulaic phrase frames the grant not as a gift but as compensation necessary to maintain the recipient's standing in his official capacity — a standard justification for royal pensions and grants tied to household offices. ↩
 5. *Cena absentie* (also *cena absens*): a fiscal imposition originally associated with the king's right to hospitality (*cena*) when visiting towns and communities within his domains. The *cena absentie* was the commuted monetary payment owed in lieu of actually providing the king's table when the king did not visit — hence "of absence." By the late fourteenth century, these payments had become fixed annual fiscal obligations frequently reassigned as pensions or grants to royal servants and creditors. The grant effectively redirects the community's payment from the royal treasury to the named beneficiary. ↩

6. *Solidi Barchinonenses*: the *sou* of Barcelona, the standard money of account in Catalonia. 400 *solidi* = 20 *lliures* (pounds) of Barcelona, a modest but not negligible annual pension for a household officer of intermediate rank. ↵
7. *Comendator et probi homines*: "the Commander and good men." The *Comendator* likely refers to the head of a local commandery (possibly a Hospitaller or Templar successor community), while *probi homines* designates the leading men or municipal councillors of the community. Together they represent the fiscal authority responsible for collecting and remitting the *cena*. ↵
8. The place name of the community owing the *cena* remains unresolved. The HTR reading "Tramatena" has not been confirmed; it may represent a garbled toponym within the *vegueria* of Cervera. Archival verification is needed. ↵
9. *Vicaria Cervarie*: the *vegueria* (administrative district) of Cervera, in central Catalonia. Cervera was a significant royal town and administrative center in the fourteenth century. ↵
10. The word transcribed as "sinon" is uncertain. The expected formula would include *anno* (year): "quolibet anno... prima die Januarii" = "each year on the first day of January." It is possible that *sinon* is a garbled or variant reading of *anno*, but the manuscript is difficult at this point. Flagged for archival verification. ↵
11. The phrase transcribed as "in letles suis" is uncertain and does not correspond to standard Latin vocabulary. The expected formulaic context would suggest something like *in terminis suis* (in their [appointed] terms) or *in talliis suis* (in their tallies/installments), either of which would describe the schedule or form of payment. The manuscript is difficult here and archival verification is required. ↵
12. *Cena absente*: variant ablative form of *cena absentie*, used interchangeably in chancery Latin. ↵
13. The phrase tentatively read as *iusti[tiam a]gentibus* — "those administering justice" — is partially uncertain. The reference is to local judicial officials who, alongside the king's own officers and their lieutenants (*locum tenentes*), are charged with enforcing the grant by compelling the community to pay if necessary. ↵
14. Joan I acceded to the throne on 5 January 1387 following the death of Pere III (IV). A document dated 2 April 1387, *regnique nostri primo*, is consistent with Joan I's first regnal year. The grant falls in the early months of the reign, during the period of initial patronage and redistribution of offices and revenues to loyal household servants. ↵
15. Franciscus ça Costa: the chancery scribe or notary responsible for this document. The surname ça Costa (with the Catalan preposition ça < Latin *citra*) is a common Catalan toponymic surname. ↵