

## THE POLO PARTY SUFFER LOSS IN TREBIZOND $\neq$ MARCO POLO

All seems to have gone well with the overland journey home till they reached Trebizond on the Black Sea. There, thanks to the researches of Professor G. ORLANDINI, we now know, or may feel fairly sure, that the party got into trouble and suffered serious loss. In the will of Maffeo, dated 6 February 1309 (1310), we read: "I wish to make known to my executors that I have satisfied the aforesaid Marco Polo my nephew with regard to those 500 *pounds* which he lent me to be given by me as a loan to the aforesaid Nicolo Polo [my nephew] as I said before, namely with regard to half of a set jewel which is in the house belonging to me, and with regard to the three tablets of gold which were from the magnificent Chan of the Tartars, and in addition with regard to those three hundred and thirty-three and a third *pounds* which were due to me out of those thousand *pounds* which the aforesaid Marco Polo received from the lord Duke and from the Commune of the Venetians for part of the loss inflicted on us both by the lord Comnenus of Trebizond and in the territory of the same lord Comnenus and also in other affairs of ours. And I testify that with regard to all other accounts which I have to make with the aforesaid Marco Polo I have satisfied him in full and in future I ought to have the third part of all which shall in any way

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west and of the rivers at Cacanfu and Quenlinfu, no river or canal is mentioned without a reference to the number of boats which sail upon it. These boats are specified as carrying merchandise or, in one or two cases, troops. Boats were also used, where no road existed, for couriers (p. 246), and on the Lake at Quinsai for pleasure parties (p. 331). Official or private travelling by boat (except at sea) is not once mentioned. There were then, as in more modern times, official post-stages both by water and by road, and the Tan-yang post-house at Cinghianfu had stables for eighty horses and kept thirty boats (cf. *TP* 1915, p. 671). The Chinese then as in recent years would commonly travel in house-boats, but Mongols may have felt more at home on horseback or in carriages. And Marco tells us specially about the roads also. From Coigangiu "one goes" into Mangi by a causeway, and he even says that "one cannot come into the province except by this causeway", to which Z adds "unless it is entered by sailing" as it had been, according to R, by Baian's troops (p. 314). When he describes the construction of the Canal for the purpose of grain transport, he does say that thus "one goes" by water all the way to Cambaluc, but immediately adds that "they can also go by land", and describes the road (p. 322). At Quinsai he expatiates on the excellence of the roads—"so are all the ways and the causeways of all the province of Mangi paved so that one can ride there quite cleanly" (p. 334). Thus as far as his own words will show we may suppose that Marco Polo must have been equally familiar with the roads and with the waterways, and perhaps used them both; and further guidance will be found in the Notes on the Proper Names in volume III, by seeing whether the places named were on the water or the land route, when the two routes did not coincide. Fifty or sixty years later Marignolli, if we may believe him, travelled from Cambaluc to Quinsai and Zaitun with two hundred horses (*Wy* p. 530.)