

Connoisseurship, Consumption, Company andJames Brydges, first Duke of Chandos, 1700-15Abstract

As a public official and private collector between 1702 and 1713, James Brydges (later first Duke of Chandos) occupied two distinct but mutually reinforcing worlds. Previous studies of his collecting and connoisseurship have suggested that the process fed off existing personal connexions and contacts, but close attention to his conduct suggests that they also fed back into these connexions, helping to reinforce the private networks that Brydges used to carry out public business. This applied even to relatively mundane cultural artefacts, especially wine, and was amplified even further by the social context or company in which these items were consumed, which offered opportunities to articulate personal connexions and mutual obligations. This often produced a net benefit for the public service, suggesting that the process of state formation, as well as the nature of connoisseurship, collecting, consumption and company in this period, would benefit from fundamental reassessment.

In June 1712 in London, the Hon. James Brydges, later first duke of Chandos, received a letter from Jacob Senserf, his agent in Rotterdam. This told him that Senserf had recently dined with several mutual friends, as well as Brydges' cousin Humphrey Walcot, who had only just arrived in the Low Countries. 'We were merry, and remembered you more than once', Senserf noted, reinforcing the compliment further by stressing that it had been done, in a way that did credit to their good taste, 'in good champagne and claret'. Recent studies of eighteenth century commerce have emphasised that this was entirely typical behaviour for contemporary merchants, helping to consolidate mutual trust. Yet Brydges was also Paymaster of the Forces Abroad, charged with paying Britain's troops in Europe during the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13), and Walcot had been sent over to Rotterdam as his deputy-paymaster or agent, and this carefree sociability seems out of step with the new 'bureaucratic' codes of conduct that supposedly underpinned more effective British fiscal-military state structures during this period. This article will argue that the process of cultural consumption was in fact closely embedded in wider private and officials networks, making it necessary to reconsider how cultural artefacts were obtained and used in Britain during this time, as well as the nature of state formation.

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Recent work on eighteenth-century commerce has emphasised the centrality of networks and networking to every aspect of trade. Commodities, credit and information flowed along informal sets of interlocking connexions, but in an era of slow communications this created 'principal-agent problems', where the principal (i.e. the merchant) could not directly supervise his agents and their activities. Formal

regulation, including legal sanctions, were often inadequate except as last resorts, and thus Francesca Trivellato, David Hancock and others have recently argued that merchants generally also employed informal incentives and sanctions to regulate behaviour, exploiting the obligations created by kinship and friendship, which was generated in turn by the exchange of correspondence, civilities, favours and, in particular, gifts.¹ Merchants also purchased artwork, mostly through agents such as relatives and friends, but this has usually been treated as an aspect or outcome of their shift from mercantile to genteel culture, rather than an element of their ongoing business relations; 'collecting art, like building houses', argues Hancock elsewhere, for example, 'reflected, enhanced and reinforced the[ir] ... emerging gentility'.² Whatever the reasons, all of these approaches generally seem to argue that this process of collecting fed off these networks rather than feeding back into them.

By the same token, Konrad Jonckheere and Helen Jacobsen have suggested that contemporary British diplomats and officials such as Brydges similarly exploited their official contacts overseas in the early eighteenth century to collect paintings, sculptures, tapestries and other artistic objects, either as expressions of genuine artistic interests or for similarly prosaic aims of social and cultural advancement.³ Buying artwork was fraught with problems though, not just financial and logistical but also aesthetic, since principals needed to trust their agents when it came to matters such as quality and provenance. Jonckheere argues that, just as regiments employed trusted military agents or *solliciteurs-militair* to handle their business, Brydges and others had to employ trusted cultural agents or *solliciteurs-culturel* (in Jonckheere's words) to purchase their artwork for them, as well as luxury goods such as textiles, porcelain and furnishings.⁴ The trust already inherent in public or official networks was

therefore simply translated directly into private trust: 'in my view', Jonckheere concludes, 'this network of cultural agents was grafted onto the existing web of *solliciteurs-militair*', to the extent that private outlays were not distinguished from public expenditures in their ledgers.⁵ As with mercantile networks, historians have tended to examine how these networks contributed to the process of cultural self-fashioning without addressing how the acts of appreciating, collecting and consuming these goods and others then affected the networks through which they were procured.

This is, arguably, indicative of an entrenched fixation with the manufacture and consumption of both elite and mundane goods at the expense of the networks that supplied them, described by Helen Berry more than a decade ago as 'the almost total failure on the part of historians to consider *how* goods were acquired ... [and] the social interactions (in addition to the economic means and processes) which were required to procure them'.⁶ In recent years this has begun to change, with studies of merchandising and retailing by David Hancock, Francesca Trivellato, Jon Stobart and others which emphasise the social embeddedness of the informal commercial networks that assembled and distributed material goods.⁷ Importers of Madeira wine into North America, for example, went to great lengths to stimulate a culture of 'wine hospitality', which bonded together private sociability with connoisseurship, conduct, company and consumption into a mutually-reinforcing relationship aimed ultimately at selling more wine.⁸ Particular attention was paid to taste, with retailers and importers feeding back reports on changing tastes to growers and exporters. Stobart suggests that consumers and retailers were similarly alive to the relative quality or taste of sugar, tea, coffee, rum and other groceries, and the battle waged between the East India Company and free traders in the late eighteenth century over the quality of

tea suggests that this was fed back to buyers in turn.⁹ Yet neither address how the processes surrounding consumption, including factors such as taste (in some cases, quite literally) and modes of consumption, affected these networks.

Reassessing the connection between mercantile networks and collecting also has wider implications for the history of British state formation during this period. Until relatively recently, it was also broadly accepted that the consolidation of state power during this period was achieved by extensive bureaucratic reforms, which created new administrative hierarchies of fiscal and military officers regulated by formal, rational sanctions and incentives. Of late, though, it has become clear that private mercantile networks remained crucial to the fiscal-military state, especially as contractors, but recent research has argued that private (and often commercial or entrepreneurial) networks survived even within bureaucratic state structures such as the Pay Office, where Brydges built up interlocking sets of informal connexions between overseas officials, bankers, financiers and military agents in order to execute public policy.¹⁰ Yet without direct formal regulation, Brydges can only have relied on unofficial sanctions and incentives to manage his networks, in order to build up the trust noted above. This suggests that the behaviours noted above, where that officials used (or abused) their official position to build up their private collections, and which historians have generally argued undermined rather than strengthened the state, by distracting officials from the business of projecting state power, urgently needs to be reconsidered, in order to gauge their real impact, and how objects became purveyors and symbols of power.

This article therefore seeks to reassess the history of early modern collecting and consuming, on the one hand, and state formation, on the other, by considering their interaction and overlap in the early eighteenth century, as seen through the networks of James Brydges, mainly during his time in public office between 1705 and 1713. He is a particularly apt subject for such a study, not only because his papers survive in such abundance at the Huntington Library but also because he was both an important public official and a noted private connoisseur and collector, although these two aspects have invariably been treated in total isolation. Recent work by Konrad Jonckheere and Susan Jenkins, and the older biographical study by Collins and Muriel Baker, have all confirmed that he should be taken seriously as a cultural patron and collector, but these works have not always satisfactorily linked the process of collecting with his public office.¹¹ At the same time, other historians have analysed certain aspects of his career as a politician¹², electoral manager¹³, public official¹⁴, financial speculator¹⁵, commercial investor¹⁶, property developer¹⁷ and scientific patron¹⁸, but his cultural credentials have been treated as incidental to these roles, especially his public duties. Yet close attention to his letters suggested that they were intimately connected, at least during his time at the Pay Office, since the overlapping practices of connoisseurship, consumption and conviviality provided one of the most effective ways for him to reinforce the informal networks that ran through the Pay Office and made it an effective instrument of public policy.

As a result, this article will be divided into three main sections. The first will explore the overlap between connoisseurship (or taste) and collecting, demonstrating that Brydges applied aesthetic judgement to a wide range of commodities sourced by his agents, ranging from garden ornaments to snuff boxes, who used this as an

opportunity to advertise their trustworthiness, in both aesthetic and financial terms, helping to consolidate public linkages with private trust. The second section will explore the overlap between connoisseurship and the act of consumption, and how gifts of high-quality wine or snuff were similarly used to advertise judgement and discernment, as part of a wider private gift economy that could, crucially, be translated *back* into the public service. Finally, the third section will highlight how conviviality, 'healths' and the context of consumption further consolidated this overlap. Thus, rather than simply hijacking public networks for their private ends, Brydges and his agents could use these nuanced personal transactions to reinforce the underlying trust between public agents, and even to pull formerly unassociated parties into the public service.

-II-

During this period, Brydges was chiefly exceptional mainly for the range and extent of his collecting and connoisseurship, rather than the mere fact of it. As Helen Jacobsen has shown, between 1660 and 1714 many well-born British diplomats acquired artworks of all sorts from overseas, both to create suitable public personas but also out of a genuine interest and aesthetic sensibility.¹⁹ As an ambitious man on the make, Brydges was naturally concerned to cultivate an appearance of gentility and wealth that might help him gain office, though this sat happily with his genuine appreciation for all sorts of artwork, which encompassed sculpture, tapestries and engravings as well as portraiture.²⁰ However, like most other collectors and connoisseurs, he often had to purchase these through networks of local agents or *solliciteurs-culturel*, depending on their artistic and aesthetic judgement as well as

their honesty and integrity in the more mundane matters of buying, packing and shipping the artwork. Trust was necessary because these items were valuable in cultural as well as monetary terms; 'a clever client', Jacobsen notes, 'knew that gifts were about more than economic value: they should also further the stature and distinction of his patron.'²¹

'Good personal contacts and confidentiality were essential', Jonckheere therefore concludes, '...[since] the pre-financing of political, military and cultural investments for the foreign princes and aristocrats by agents was a matter of trust'.²² As a result, officials in England mobilised their existing public agents, who were generally men they already knew or trusted, to purchase artwork on their behalf. Diplomats used their secretaries or diplomatic agents, for example, while the perennial bureaucrat William Blathwayt used his contacts at Board of Trade and the War Office to procure exotic American hardwoods and vast amounts of Dutch artwork, tapestries and goods.²³ As Jonckheere has shown, Brydges used his contacts from the Pay Office for similar ends.²⁴ The linchpins were John Drummond and Walter Senserf, merchants in Amsterdam and Rotterdam respectively, who supplied financial and commercial assistance to the army in the Low Countries, but also dispatched large amounts of artwork and other luxuries from Europe.²⁵ More pieces were bought by Sir Matthew Decker, his trusted banker and stockbroker, and after the war he bought further paintings in Paris through Drummond, Decker and other former agents such as Anthony Hammond and Richard Cantillon, as well as sculptures, tapestries, drawings, books, and other expensive cultural artefacts requiring close aesthetic judgement. The responsibilities that Brydges placed in his public agents in purchasing such items eloquently shows how deeply he trusted their private obligations to him.

The same was also true, though, of other cultural artefacts that are not normally associated with connoisseurship or refined aesthetic taste, from textiles and other material goods down to consumables; as Jonckheere notes elsewhere, 'the elite trade in luxury goods, the political expenses of foreign princes, the financing of the military and the Dutch *haute finance* were fused'.²⁶ In April 1710, for example, Brydges asked his agent in Turin, the diplomat William Chetwynd, to secure fashionable Genoese damask and velvet for the bed, hangings and chairs of two rooms at Canons. 'Still the most highly prestigious and expensive in Europe', according to Jacobsen, this fabric would advertise his taste to anyone he visited, but he trusted Chetwynd so strongly that he was prepared to leave the choice of colour entirely to him, 'whom I know to have an excellent fancy'.²⁷ Chetwynd was hesitant, replying that 'everyone has a different genius for colour [and] I could wish you would name your favourite one', but Brydges' trust was unshakeable, and he repeated in September that he 'question[ed] not but your fancy will be approved by everyone who sees it'. He also asked Jan Hallangias, the *solliciteur-militair* for the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel and one of his own most trusted agents, to secure 10,000 delftware ceramic tiles from Amsterdam for decorating his houses.²⁸ Hallangias, however, doubted his own judgement and wished that Brydges 'had been more particular about the tiles ... it was necessary to know Your Honour's pleasure what sort of blue paintings were most acceptable, if figures of men, beasts, flowers, etc.' For Brydges at least, financial honesty and commercial integrity were thus indistinguishable from aesthetic judgement, even if his agents were less sure.

By the same token though, aesthetic judgement translated into wider trust. Clothing was likewise a key marker of both wealth and taste, but buying the necessary textiles forced Brydges to trust the aesthetic judgement of his agents.²⁹ He relied heavily, for example, on Henry Cartwright, the deputy-paymaster in Antwerp, who supplied lace for shirts in 1707 and 1708, and in 1712 he demanded both lace and a dozen pairs of ruffles, in the latest fashion, to be sent home.³⁰ His counterpart in Amsterdam, Benjamin Sweet, was asked in 1713 to purchase fine cloth for shirts and a large bolt of silk for a waistcoat.³¹ Yet these requests served as a barometer for wider levels of trust. Despite some initial suspicions, Brydges gradually developed a separate connection with Sweet's clerk George Murray, asking him to choose lace for his wife in 1708 and again in 1710.³² The following year, he entrusted Murray's wife Mar with a particularly important commission, to choose a large bolt of silk for his wife's manteau or petticoat, 'not too rich but genteel and handsome'.³³ These commissions implied particular trust in the honesty and aesthetic judgement of the Murrays, and was strong enough to survive a breach with Sweet in 1712, since George Murray went on to serve as one of Brydges' agents in the Mediterranean between 1712 and 1713.³⁴

Recognising the overlap between connoisseurship, collecting and trust, agents seem to have taken particular care to advertise their taste and discernment by purchasing other items, including animals, that they judged Brydges would like. In November 1707, for example, Brydges praised one of his agent in Barcelona for his recent gift, and agreed that it was 'the finest feathered bird I ever saw, and speaks the most'.³⁵ The following year he asked another agent in Barcelona, the deputy-paymaster John Mead, to secure some horses for his stables.³⁶ Mead took several years over this, noting to his uncle in July 1711 that he had purchased the horse two years ago, but had been

‘for some time in suspense whether he was worthy of Mr Brydges’ acceptance, an accident happening to him... but my Lord Duke of Argyll and several others being extremely taken with him ... I was persuaded to come over this difficulty by their approbation.³⁷ The value of the gift was therefore enhanced by the care that Mead had taken, while his own discernment as a judge of horseflesh was arguably subtly reinforced by noting that others of higher social standing had approved of his choice. When his deputy-paymaster Thomas Morrice sent some Barbary hens – a species of guinea fowl – from Portugal in 1710, Brydges tellingly praised them as ‘a great ornament to my garden, and admired by all who see them’, highlighting the importance of these choices being appreciated and approved by others.³⁸

Even during the war, Brydges also used his contacts in Paris to procure decorated snuffboxes, which had become fashionable accessories in their own right by the early eighteenth century, particularly in France, where their manufacture had become, as Jordan Goodman has noted, ‘a nexus of creative forces involving artists and artisans.’³⁹ The practice of taking snuff allowed consumers to advertise their connoisseurship of snuff-boxes and snuff-taking, which acquired its own refined rituals, as well as their judgement of snuff itself, which was often mixed with flavourings, colourings and essences, and could be of varying quality.⁴⁰ Sending a pound of Brazilian snuff from Portugal early in 1709, for instance, Charles Medlycott emphasised to Brydges that it was ‘a commodity very scarce to be got here good, they have so many ways and tricks to mix it’, and the comment served to highlight the quality of his present and the excellent of his own judgement.⁴¹ Clearly Brydges was receptive to such connoisseurship, since he complained later that year to Medlycott, who was acting as commissary of the stores in Lisbon, that a further shipment was

required, '[because] that you sent before hath quite lost its flavour, and is turned as brown as a nut'.

Aesthetic judgement and private trust therefore infused Brydges' public networks, feeding off existing connexions and extending downwards even to relatively mundane items that were, quite literally, consumed.⁴² Besides snuff, his agents in Lisbon sent him 'sweet waters' or perfumes, which, as Holly Dugan has shown, were equally as subject to aesthetic judgement during this period.⁴³ Brydges commented on the quality of one shipment in 1707, and Medlycott noted in 1709 that his own supplies were 'double distilled, and the best that I could get'. His agent in the Baltic, Francis Stratford, similarly sent Brydges 'our own Hamburg manufactures as smoked beef, hams and old Hock', advertising his own taste and judgement by noting that he had returned home too late to send sturgeon of good quality.⁴⁴ The following year he repeated that it was not yet the season for smoked beef, 'but you shall be sure of a provision of the first that is fit to be sent away'. These letters all hint at the importance of connoisseurship in the consumption of these goods, however ephemeral, though unfortunately not enough letters survive to judge how they fitted into this wider economy of connoisseurship and consumption that Brydges was creating with his public and private networks.

-III-

Fortunately, though, Brydges and his household consumed vast enough quantities of wine to demonstrate the operation of this wider economy, particularly how the trust arising from the connoisseurship that informed consumption could then be redirected

back into public business. Wine was enjoyed as an intoxicant and social lubricant, as well as a marker of political allegiance, but also, as noted above, as an aesthetic experience that allowed participants to exhibit their sophistication, judgement and connoisseurship.⁴⁵ Helen Jacobsen notes that, for this earlier period, 'knowledge of the correct way to consume such wines was ... important, and transformed a common Italian commodity into a prized luxury'.⁴⁶ Brydges in particular was something of a connoisseur of wine by 1713, and thus was well-placed to monitor the quality of the gifts he received; some wine sent by a hospital contractor in 1713, for example, was 'but very indifferent, by no means worth the trouble I have been at in getting it out of the Customs House', but four years later he asked the merchant William Mead – apparently a relative of John Mead – to procure twelve dozen bottles of Canary wine, specifying that it be 'excellently good, and rich in the mouth'.⁴⁷ This section will show that the quality of the wine sent was as important to Brydges as the quantity, and that this not only reinforced private networks but sometimes redirected them into public service. By the same token, his own agent Charles Medlycott used gifts of wine and snuff, whose quality he consciously advertised, to reinforce his own private networks, in order that he could more effectively carry out his public duties. The following section will therefore build on Sara Pennell's insight that even ephemeral goods such as wine were themselves a transient form of material culture, and thus 'important "containers" of and for consuming' that are worthy of study in their own right, as well as for their impact on wider personal connexions.⁴⁸

The exchange of wine lubricated connections between every branch of Brydges' networks in Europe. Thomas Morrice sent several hogsheads of Portuguese wine as gifts practically every year between 1707 and 1711.⁴⁹ Charles Medlycott promised in

1710 that 'if the next vintage proves good, [I] will send you some wine of this country, which will be to your liking'.⁵⁰ Agents such as Sweet, Cartwright and Stratford sent parcels of wine as gifts, or acted as his agent for larger orders, illegally smuggling a shipment of French wine into the country in 1707 by concealing it in Hungarian casks.⁵¹ The next year Brydges hired Drummond to supply the British prisoners in France, and used this opportunity to procure parcels of French wine from his agents in Paris and Bayonne.⁵² Jan Hallangias offered to secure 'some good wines from Liege' in July 1707, though his confidence in his own judgement failed him here too, and he was forced to ask 'which Your Honour loves most, champagne, burgundy or Hermitage'.⁵³ Initially Walter Senserf only transhipped wine bought for Brydges by other agents such as Stratford, but he too began to purchase consignments for Brydges directly, sending over three hogsheads in August 1710 just after the new tory ministry came to power, adding that Brydges would now be 'extremely well provided to drink the health of old and new ministry, or old and new Parliament'.⁵⁴

Because the quality of the wine mattered as much as the quantity, the agents took particular pains to advertise their judgement. Morrice noted in 1710 that 'the wines last vintage proved the worse than have been known, but I hope the two casks sent you will be as good as I hope, being the very best that could be had'.⁵⁵ Medlycott likewise noted that 'the wines this year are scarce and few good, 'tis the best I can get and hope will arrive safe and prove to your likening [sic]', as indeed it did.⁵⁶ The year before, Decker similarly reinforced his own standing by writing that he had purchased a quantity of 'the best old hock that is, not only in Holland but I may say in Europe. Mr Drummond and other friends have tasted, and all judge that they never found any better'.⁵⁷ The same could work in reverse. At some point in 1707, Drummond

introduced Brydges to Gilbert Black, a Scottish wine merchant in Rotterdam and a long-standing private contact.⁵⁸ Initially their contact was purely commercial, and Brydges even asked Sweet to comment on the prices that Black had charged him, but by September 1711 his trust in Black's judgement was absolute, and he therefore urged Black to send over 100 flasks of champagne and burgundy, sight unseen and worth about £100, if he judged them to be 'extraordinary good'.⁵⁹ As trust increased, Black was also slowly drawn into Brydges' official financial networks, and by July 1711 he began to play an important role in supplying money for the army.⁶⁰

Brydges also acted to some extent as a broker or intermediary, whereby the wine then flowed through his hands to his domestic networks in England to support his political and administrative position. 'A small parcel of wine', for example, helped to secure promotion in the customs service for '[a] countryman ... [and] a friend to me in my elections', while sixty flasks of claret and burgundy were sent to a local Herefordshire notable, and further amounts were sent to a potential electoral opponent at Bishop's Castle in 1710.⁶¹ When the tory ministry came to power in September 1710, gifts of wine were used to build links with new ministers, and Brydges accordingly charged his agents in the Low Countries with an 'affair of importance'; to secure ten dozen bottles of burgundy and champagne for the new secretary at war.⁶² His own agents also made separate gifts of wine to other patrons and friends who were generally part of Brydges' own personal circles. Henry Cartwright had been secretary to Brydges, Henry St John and Thomas Coke in 1702 as commissioners of accounts, for example, and sent eight hampers of champagne home in May 1707 to be distributed to between Brydges and Coke, '[and] I hope that it will prove extraordinary good'.⁶³ The next year he procured further casks of champagne, and three casks of burgundy from Dijon

in February 1711, all of which he assured Brydges were extremely good, and were to be distributed by Brydges to Coke and St John as well as himself.

As principal, agent and intermediary, Brydges therefore sat squarely within a wider economy of informed exchange which exploited public connections for private ends but also served to reinforce and consolidate them. This dynamic can be seen even more clearly in the correspondence of his agent, Charles Medlycott, who used gifts of wine and snuff to reinforce his private and public positions in both Lisbon and London. 'I have sent to my patrons many presents', he noted in February 1710, '[and] few of them prove well through the roguery of one or other', but he persisted, because these gifts were crucial.⁶⁴ Having left his children in the care of Mr William Whitfield, rector of St Martin's Ludgate in London, he shipped over in April a hogshead of 'the best red wine this country affords' and a basket of chocolates, noting '[we have] different palates, I send[ing] for mine out of England, you from Portugal'.⁶⁵ In return Whitfield helped out Medlycott by finding him a new clerk in July 1711, and acting as one of his sureties for £1,000 in December 1711 when Brydges demanded that his agents provide him with security for the honest discharge of their duties.⁶⁶ Further gifts of Indian and Italian damask, and 'a hogshead of the best Banabar, which I hope will arrive safe ... for 'tis extraordinary wine', went to his patron George Nevill, first Baron Abergavenny, a mid-ranking whig politician who not only promised to provide a church living for Medlycott's son but also kept Medlycott abreast of the political changes occurring at home.⁶⁷

Other gifts went to his brother James, a tory politician who handled Medlycott's public and private business and lobbied Brydges several times on his brother's behalf;

'if I succeed, I shall acknowledge and own your favours', Medlycott wrote to James on one occasion, 'and will send you wine yearly'.⁶⁸ His other brother, Thomas, was less helpful, but when Medlycott needed to lobby the War Office he used the same techniques. 'If you are so fashionable to take snuff ... I have sent you ... a pound of the best Brazil, just come from thence', he wrote to his brother, '[and] as 'twas formerly very scarce, so 'twas esteemed an acceptable present among you great people'.⁶⁹ The War Office proved particularly tardy when it came to giving orders about how the remaining clothing was to be disposed of, and so Medlycott made a further gift to the deputy-secretary Samuel Lynn in August 1713 of 'two chests of the finest and best Brazil sugar this country affords ... [and] 2 pounds of the best burnt snuff and 6 quart-bottles of orange-flower water'.⁷⁰ Learning from his earlier experience with Brydges, noted above, he explained to Lynn that he had sent only two pounds of snuff, since any more would have gone off before it could be used.

Medlycott reserved his most extensive gifts, though, for Brydges and his deputy-paymaster William Sloper, who had failed several times to pay over Medlycott's salary to his goldsmith-banker. To ease these delays Medlycott sent a pound of 'best Brazil snuff' to Sloper in November 1710, via his brother-in-law Col. Thomas Vesey, as well as a hogshead of good Banabar wine and a further hogshead of Laverdie in January.⁷¹ Such gifts proved fruitless though, because Medlycott had aligned himself with the whig faction amongst the British fiscal-military officials in Lisbon, whereas Vesey had thrown his weight behind Thomas Morrice and the tory faction, and was writing poisonous letters to his brother-in-law, and Brydges, behind Medlycott's back.⁷² This was only a private inconvenience, but when Medlycott was elevated to deputy-paymaster of the Gibraltar garrison in April 1712 he feared that this

mysterious animosity would obstruct his public duties, and he therefore asked his brother James to resolve the matter. 'The headman of that office Mr Sloper (I have sent him several presents), for what reason I know not, but on all occasions, I believe, has opposed my interest', Medlycott told him in April 1712, 'which, as you pass, by discoursing with him, you'll easily find out, [since] 'tis very necessary we should have a right understanding together'.⁷³

On occasion Medlycott's gifts were also highly politicised. Conditions in England between December 1713 and January 1714 were particularly fraught, as the tory ministry tried to push through the French Commerce Bill, which would remove the high duties placed on French wines by the former whig ministry.⁷⁴ To flatter tory officials such as Wyndham, Sloper and Lynn, Medlycott sent hogsheads of Calcavella wine, '[a] very good, rich white wine, which I am told at present are the wines most preferable ... I heartily wish it may prove to your liking, and you[r] health and pleasure in drinking it'.⁷⁵ To Charles Robartes, second earl of Radnor and another mid-ranking whig patron, he similarly presented a hogshead of Laverdie, 'having heard your Lordship commend these country wines, which have this year proved good ... Better has not crossed the sea this year'.⁷⁶ However, to burnish his political credentials with Thomas Wharton, first marquess of Wharton, who had led the attack on the French bill, he wrote that he had heard that 'these country white wines are at present a fashionable drink, especially among those worthy opponents of the French bill', and therefore sent a hogshead of 'the best Calcavellas (being neat and pure) ... which I beg you'll do me the honour to accept, though but a small acknowledgement for the many favours you were formerly pleased to confer on me'.⁷⁷ The gifts of wine

were therefore consciously embedded into a much wider context, possessing symbolic qualities that went beyond their mere monetary value.

The overlap between public and private trust can also be seen in the relations between Brydges made to his own allies and agents, in which gifts of cider were the unlikely instruments. Sixteen dozen bottles or two hampers were sent, for example, to James Stanhope, the commander-in-chief of the allied forces in Spain, in 1708.⁷⁸ Three years earlier Drummond had sent over a parcel of wine to Brydges from Amsterdam, but had asked him 'not [to] think of any payment, further than some of your own country cider, when you have nothing else to think on'.⁷⁹ Other gifts went to various *solliciteurs-militar* in Amsterdam, to Brigadier George Wade in Barcelona, and to Thomas Morrice in Lisbon, the last likewise in return for the wine that Morrice had earlier sent out.⁸⁰ The quality of the gift remained crucial. Brydges' letter to Stanhope in 1708 stressed that 'I have taken the liberty to send you the best cider I could get', and recalled that 'when I was in Flanders [in 1705 or 1706] it was very acceptable in the camp, and I presume the heat of the climate where you are will not render it less so there'.⁸¹ Like his own agents, such as Medlycott, Brydges therefore sought to build close private links with key fiscal-military figures who could assist him in his public business, not only by sending cider for consumption but also by embedding it within a much wider cultural matrix of connoisseurship and (in this case, very literally) taste.

Indeed, cider probably carried very specific resonances. Since the 1650s the production of fruit- or grain-based alcohol had been seen as a patriotic act of import substitution, which provided employment for English brewers and distillers rather

than French or Spanish vintners.⁸² Despite his own flagrant disregard for such matters when it came to buying his own wine, sending cider allowed Brydges to make a strong statement about his own personal patriotism. Moreover, English cider production was centred in the southwest of England, including his own county of Herefordshire, so his gifts suggested a direct personal involvement in the process of selection, akin to the care taken by his agents when it came to local wine or snuff. Difficulties in the production of cider during this period also meant that quantities also remained low and the quality uneven, so by presenting high-quality cider to his favoured contacts Brydges was making a powerful statement about the care he had lavished on the selection, transport and storage of this notoriously temperamental drink.⁸³ The consumption and appreciation of alcoholic beverages such as wine and cider thus both exploited and reinforced the public networks run by Brydges and his agents, helping to solidify the private connexions that made them run so effectively.

-IV-

There are also indications that the specific modes of consumption were crucial to this process, and that public connexions could be reinforced further by conviviality and sociability, in part because they then offered opportunities to display the connoisseurship described above. This supports Sarah Pennell's conclusion that the study of 'physical and imaginary consuming 'spaces' offers historians of consumption many provocative, productive lines of investigation', but so far it has largely been impossible to examine such issues at the actual point of consumption.⁸⁴ Historians have also tended to focus on new beverages, such as tea, coffee and chocolate, rather than wine, and on their material culture rather than conduct.⁸⁵ Yet, in their studies of

alehouse culture, Phil Withington and Mark Hailwood have shown how the acts of consumption were linked to wider social and political networks, and thus the power of company as an analytical concept 'that is comparative; that recognises the structural factors impinging on social interaction; and which is sensitive to the contingencies and immediacies of particular moments'.⁸⁶ Approaching Brydges' letters with these issues in mind, it is clear that private sociability and company helped to reinforce the informal linkages that underlay his public networks, with these particular forms of conviviality replacing the 'coffeehouse sociability' that Brian Cowan has shown Brydges enjoyed as a younger (and less public) man between 1697 and 1702.⁸⁷

The practice of offering frequent 'healths' or toasts was particularly important, helping not only to improve mutual sociability, as some historians have emphasised, but also apparently to consolidate the connexions between various agents by stressing their shared obligations and loyalty to Brydges, especially when meeting for the first time.⁸⁸ When Henry Cartwright arrived in Holland in October 1706, for example, he was introduced by Francis Stratford to Walter Senserf, Abraham Romswinkel and John Drummond, who told Brydges the following month that 'I was with some other good friends of yours very handsomely entertained yesterday at The Hague by Captain Cartwright, where your health was not forgot', and he therefore pledged, among other things, to serve Cartwright 'in everything that may be in my power with that affection and heartiness which I owe to your friendship and recommendation'.⁸⁹ As noted at the start of this article, when Humphrey Walcot was sent out in June 1712 he was similarly wined and dined by Drummond, Senserf and several others, helping to integrate him into local networks.⁹⁰ 'We were merry and remembered you more than once in good champagne and claret', Senserf noted, killing two birds with one

stone by stressing that the compliment had been done in a way that also did credit to their taste. Another friend was offered a diametrically opposed but perhaps equally flattering compliment in 1702, when he heard that several friends had repeatedly drunk his health, 'to the no little hazard of our own, the wine being very bad'.⁹¹

Two other facets also emerge, albeit with slightly less clarity, from Brydges' letters. The first is that company and conviviality could also provide a suitable setting for the exchange of more material goods. Repeating watches were widely seen as demonstrating the best of British workmanship, and on several occasions Brydges sent them as gifts to important foreign contacts, such as Padre Alvaro Cienfuegos, the Spanish ambassador to the Portuguese Court, who had employed Brydges as his military agent in Britain.⁹² It was carried to Lisbon by Brydges' nephew Thomas Townsend, who reported back that he had met with Morrice and other agents to present the watch to Cienfuegos, where they had dined and drunk Brydges' health.⁹³ Conviviality was thus apparently intended to contextualise and reinforce what was already a value-laden gift. The second is that Brydges was clearly aware of the resonances underlying acts of conviviality, since he went to some lengths to meet important agents when they came to England and toast the health of others. 'Mr Murray's father was so kind as to eat a bit of mutton with me', he noted to Sweet in May 1710, for example, '[and] you may be sure we did not fail your health'.⁹⁴ A year later, he wrote to Drummond that he would shortly dine with Decker and several other friends, all concerned in some way with the Pay Office, 'where we shall not fail your health, nor our wishes we had you with us'.⁹⁵ The links between of toasting and trust were thus widely appreciated on both sides.

By the same token, failures of sociability or conviviality could reveal or amplify breaches in the trust that held private networks together. Hallangias noted in November 1707 that he had fallen out with Sweet, due to his impossible behaviour, and this had become clear 'when yesterday Mr Cardonnel and several English gentlemen did me the honour to take a dinner at my house; Mr Sweet only found or made excuse to be absent'.⁹⁶ When Brydges' nephew James Leigh arrived in Portugal in 1709 he found Charles Medlycott and Thomas Morrice were already violently at odds, and in search of allies to undermine the other.⁹⁷ Sociability and hospitality, albeit blatantly self-interested, proved the decisive factor in helping Leigh choose sides. He complained to Brydges that he had been snubbed when waiting on Morrice – 'I do not say amiss in waiting on him, for he has either no chairs or fears spoiling them, for he never asked me to sit down, or dine with him' – although Morrice claimed in his letters that he had frequently dined with Leigh 'and offered him the convenience of his lodging, entertainment and all other things he might have occasion of'.⁹⁸ On the other hand, Leigh also noted that 'Mr Medlycott has been always very civil to me, he would never let me lodge anywhere but in his own house', and therefore took Medlycott's side in the contest.

Alongside connoisseurship and consumption, company and conviviality were therefore integral parts of the processes that sustained public networks by building informal connections between what otherwise potentially deracinated individuals. Under one of Brydges' predecessors, for example, consumption and company helped to build what seems to have amounted to an *esprit de corps*. Richard Jones, earl of Ranelagh, was Paymaster-General of the Forces between 1685 and 1702 and a notorious rake and *raconteur*; he was later described as 'a great epicure and

prodigious expensive ... a bold man and very happy in jests and repartee'.⁹⁹ On several occasions in 1691 he joked with another official that his deputy-paymaster was so busy with work that '[he] hath no time to pursue his usual employments of whoring and drinking', and that his cashier 'lay last night in the Round House at Finsbury, being found by the Watch drunk and with a whore, walking – or, rather, reeling – thereabouts at two in the morning. So that you see what a virtuous office I have'.¹⁰⁰ This raucous sociability was less restrained than the more dignified, but hardly less liquid, conviviality supported by Brydges and his circle, but there was also an essential or underlying similarity, since both no doubt helped to strengthen the informal linkages that knit together superficially bureaucratic administrative hierarchies.

-V-

Although Brydges left the Pay Office in August 1713, and never returned to a major public office, he remained embedded within the informal networks that he had built up between 1705 and 1713, making his extensive financial and commercial investments through former deputy-paymasters and agents. For example, although Henry Cartwright left his official orbit there was a continual interchange of public services and private favours, including a gift of snuff and eggs in August 1726.¹⁰¹ 'The first I take to be extraordinary good of the kind', Brydges wrote, 'and the latter will be a very great curiosity of they can be brought to hatch'.¹⁰² He also kept up a friendly correspondence with overseas agents such as Jan Hallangias, exchanging news and political opinions as well as gifts, such as wine and Westphalian hams in 1717, and when Hallangias died in 1732 his widow approached Brydges about buying

Hallangias' wine cellar.¹⁰³ The unofficial networks that Brydges had used for Pay Office business between 1705 and 1713 therefore existed independently of his public office, and survived for long afterwards, even after formal structures had been removed and as partisan coherence and solidarity declined in importance.

These networks survived in part because they continued to serve the common interests of Brydges and his clients, but also evidently because the shared experiences of connoisseurship, consumption and conviviality or company had helped to build a strong network of weak ties. As Trivellato and others have pointed out, the exchange of gifts helped to build informal obligations between parties and promoted the mutual trust that overcame principal-agents problems. This article has argued that connoisseurship informed and reinforced this process, whether the objects in questions were commissions or gifts, because shared taste and aesthetic judgement helped to consolidate mutual trust. The mutual trust created by informal administrative connexions supplied *solliciteurs-culturel* to Brydges, but successful consumption and connoisseurship – and his agents went to great lengths to demonstrate this – fed back in turn into these connexions and helped to reinforce them. Connoisseurship also informed the process of consumption, and the particular intensity with which agents stressed the quality of the wine they had consumed, or the company they had enjoyed, appears to have served to reinforce mutual trust further

All this suggests that the connections between connoisseurship, consumption and company on the one hand, and early modern networks – whether commercial or administrative – on the other, deserve to be reassessed. Historians have charged public officials such as Brydges with holding back the consolidation of British state

power during this period by hijacking bureaucratic structures for their own private ends and distracting agents from the public service. Yet if the continued extension of state power depended on building mutual trust, shared obligations and an *esprit de corps* between principals and agents, as has been argued elsewhere and touched on here, then the contribution of collecting and connoisseurship cannot be ignored.

Indeed, even the role that they placed within mercantile networks should be reassessed. Although both merchants and officials clearly did not collect artwork, textiles, food, wine and other consumables or material goods simply for the sake of consolidating their private networks, *how* they chose to collect them is as important as *why*, since the choices they made helped to shape the patterns of their connoisseurship, collecting, consumption and company.

ENDNOTES

¹ See Aaron Graham, 'Review Article: mercantile networks in the early modern world', *Historical Journal* 56, no. 1 (2013).

² David Hancock, *Citizens of the world: London merchants and the integration of the British Atlantic community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 347-51.

³ Koenraad Jonckheere, *The auction of King William's paintings (1713): elite international art trade at the end of the Dutch golden age* (Philadelphia: J. Benjamins Pub. Co., 2008); Koenraad Jonckheere, 'The "Solliciteur-Culturel": some notes on Dutch agents and the international trade in art and applied arts', *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 24, no. 2 (2008); Helen Jacobsen, *Luxury and power: the material world of the Stuart diplomat, 1660-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴ For the concept of the solliciteur-culturel, see Jonckheere, 'Solliciteur-Culturel', 167-71.

⁵ Jonckheere, *Auction*, 217; Jonckheere, 'Solliciteur-Culturel', 176-8.

⁶ Helen Berry, 'Polite consumption: shopping in eighteenth-century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser. 12 (2002): 376-7. [Emphasis mine]

⁷ See David Hancock, *Oceans of wine: Madeira and the emergence of American trade and taste* (London: Yale University Press, 2009); Francesca Trivellato, *The familiarity of strangers: the Sephardic diaspora, Livorno, and cross-cultural trade in the early modern period* (London: Yale University Press, 2009); Jon Stobart, *Sugar and spice: grocers and groceries in provincial England, 1650-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁸ Hancock, *Oceans of wine*, 337-84; See also Paul Duguid, 'Networks and knowledge: the beginning and end of the Port commodity chain, 1703-1860' *Business History Review* 21, no. 2 (2005): 109-18.

⁹ Stobart, *Sugar and spice*, 50-63, 217-21; Hoh-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, *The management of monopoly: a study of the English East India Company's conduct of its tea trade, 1784-1833* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).

¹⁰ Roger Knight and Martin Wilcox have written, for example, of the importance of the 'contractor state' in the early nineteenth century: see R.J.B. Knight and Martin Wilcox, *Sustaining the fleet, 1793-1815: war, the British Navy and the contractor state* (Woodbridge, 2010), 210. For Brydges, see Aaron Graham, 'Public service and private profit: British fiscal-military entrepreneurship overseas, 1707-12', in *War, entrepreneurs and the state in Europe and the Mediterranean, 1300-1800*, ed. Jeff Fynn-Paul (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 87-110 and, in more detail, Aaron Graham, *Infinite money:*

corruption, party and government in Britain, 1702-13, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2015).

¹¹ C. H. Collins Baker and Muriel I. Baker, *The life and circumstances of James Brydges, first Duke of Chandos, patron of the liberal arts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949), 65-92; Susan Jenkins, *Portrait of a patron: the patronage and collecting of James Brydges, 1st Duke of Chandos (1674-1744)* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Jonckheere, *Auction*, 132-4.

¹² E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley, and D.W. Hayton, *History of Parliament: The Commons, 1690-1715*, 5 vols., *History of Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the History of Parliament Trust, 2002). vol. iii, 377-83

¹³ R. G. Schafer, 'A by-election in a Rotten Borough', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (1954): 397-405; Clyve Jones, 'James Brydges, earl of Carnarvon, and the 1717 Hereford By-Election: a case study in aristocratic electoral management', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (1983): 310-20.

¹⁴ John Sperling, 'Godolphin and the organization of public credit, 1702-1710' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 1955), 130-66; Godfrey Davies, 'The Seamy Side of Marlborough's war', *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1951): 21-34; Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 44-61.

¹⁵ Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 206-20, 337-64; Antoin E. Murphy, *Richard Cantillon: entrepreneur and economist* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 73-82, 125-7, 175-83.

¹⁶ Matthew Mitchell, '"Legitimate commerce" in the eighteenth century: the Royal African Company of England under the Duke of Chandos, 1720-1726', *Enterprise and Society* 14, no. 3 (2013): 544-78; William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom's debt: the Royal African Company and the politics of the Atlantic slave trade, 1672-1752* (2013), 165-72.

¹⁷ Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 221-35, 296-336; R. S. Neale, *Bath 1680-1850* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 130-49; P.G.M. Dickson and John Vincent Beckett, 'The finances of the Dukes of Chandos: aristocratic inheritance, marriage, and debt in eighteenth-century England', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 64, no. 3-4 (2001), 315-34.

¹⁸ Larry R. Stewart, *The rise of public science: rhetoric, technology, and natural philosophy in Newtonian Britain, 1660-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 320-3.

¹⁹ Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 65-90, 119-230. See also Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: lives, culture and conquest in the East, 1750-1850* (New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 2005) for a later period.

²⁰ For his early career, see Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 1-41.

²¹ Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 68-9.

²² Jonckheere 'Solliciteur-Cultural', 184.

²³ Gertrude Ann Jacobsen, *William Blathwayt: a late seventeenth century English administrator*, Yale *Historical Publications: Miscellany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932), 61-3; Lisa Jardine, *Going Dutch: how England plundered Holland's glory* (London: HarperPress, 2008), 260-2; Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 88, 102-3.

²⁴ Jonckheere, 'Solliciteur-Culturel': 162-80; Jonckheere, *Auction*, 215-20.

²⁵ Jonckheere, *Auction*, 134-5, 139-50; Jonckheere, 'Solliciteur-Culturel', 161-71; Jenkins, *Portrait*, 138-40; Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 75-81; Aaron Graham, 'Partisan politics and the British fiscal-military state, 1689-1713' (Unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2012), 152-3, 203-5, 233-8.

²⁶ Jonckheere, 'Solliciteur-Culturel', 171-9.

²⁷ H[untington] L[ibrary, San Marino, California; Stowe Papers], ST57 vol. v, 66, 241; vii, 184-5, 251; HL ST58 vol. vii, 223; Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 92-104, 176-9; Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 65, 125.

²⁸ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 81-2; iv, 11; HL, ST58 vol. iii, 121, 149, 158; Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 65, 217, 447. For Hallangius, see Graham, 'Partisan politics', 197, 200, 210.

²⁹ For an overview of consumption, clothing, fashion and display, see Maxine Berg, *Luxury and pleasure in eighteenth-century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 249-57; Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 4-8.

³⁰ HL, ST57 vol. i, 65; ii, 48; HL, ST58 vol. ii, 42; Graham, 'Partisan politics', 196-7, 201-2.

³¹ HL, ST57 vol. ix, 147, 191.

³² HL, ST57 vol. ii, 82; iv, 159.

³³ HL, ST57 vol. v, 164. On the cost of silk, see Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 177-9.

³⁴ HL, ST57 vol. vii, 49; x, 51; HL, ST58 vol. xi, 259; xii, 243-5, 268-9; Graham, 'Partisan politics', 215-6, 233-4.

³⁵ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 149.

³⁶ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 72; HL, ST58 vol. iii, 4. For his interest in horses, see Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 99, 129, 202-4.

³⁷ HL, ST58 vol. ix, 258.

³⁸ HL, ST57 vol. iv, 93

³⁹ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 128; HL, ST58 vol. i, 12; Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in history: the cultures of dependence* (London: Routledge, 1993), 66, 73-4.

⁴⁰ Carol Benedict, *Golden-silk smoke: a history of tobacco in China, 1550-2010* (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 2011), 113, 115-7; Goodman, *Tobacco*, 68-75, 81-4.

⁴¹ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 173; HL, ST58 vol. iii, 237; vii, 42; xi, 141.

⁴² For other examples of consumables and cultural resonance, see Tory Bickham, 'Eating the empire: intersections of food, cookery and imperialism in eighteenth century Britain', *Past and Present* 198 no. 1 (2008), 71-109, and the correction in Stobart, *Sugar and spice*, especially 55-9, 193, 269.

⁴³ HL, ST57 vol. i, 228; ii, 82; iii, 62; HL, ST58 vol. ii, 43; iii, 237; Holly Dugan, *The ephemeral history of perfume: scent and sense in early modern England* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011).

⁴⁴ HL, ST57 vol. i, 98; ii, 83. For the continued importance of food gifts, as part of the wider gift economy, see Felicity Heal, 'Food gifts, the household and the politics of exchange in early modern England', *Past and Present* vol. 199 no. 1 (2008), 41-70.

⁴⁵ Motoko Hori, 'The price and quality of wine and conspicuous consumption in England 1646-1759' *English Historical Review* cxxiii, no. 505 (2008), 1457-9, 1463-6; Charles Ludington, *The politics of wine in Britain: a new cultural history* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 96-9, 209-10; Hancock, *Oceans of wine*, 337-92.

⁴⁶ Jacobsen, *Luxury and power*, 64, 68, 123-4, 126, 188.

⁴⁷ HL, ST57 vol. ix, 53; xv, 25; Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 176, 188-93; Ludington, *Politics of wine*, 100-3.

⁴⁸ Sara Pennell, 'Consumption and consumerism in early modern England' *Historical Journal* 42, no. 2 (1999), 561-2.

⁴⁹ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 13, 157, 172; iv, 36, 93, 147; HL, ST58 vol. ii, 43, 149; v, 239; vii, 236; Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 188.

⁵⁰ HL, ST58 vol. iv, 58-9; Graham, 'Partisan politics', 281-4.

⁵¹ HL, ST57 vol. i, 42-3, 109; ii, 42, 102, 159, 191, 195; HL, ST58 vol. i, 71, 73, 81, 86-7, 98, 107, 157; ii, 257; vii, 207.

⁵² HL, ST57 vol.; HL, ST58 vol. iv, 33, 151-2, 159, 210-11.

⁵³ HL, ST58 vol. ii, 20.

⁵⁴ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 109; iii, 99, 131, 258; iv, 11, 63, 88, 177, 231; HL, ST58 vol. i, 81, 107; vi, 180; ix, 43

⁵⁵ HL, ST57 vol. iv, 36; HL, ST58 vol. vi, 117.

⁵⁶ HL, ST57 vol. iv, f. 34; HL, ST58 vol. v, 234, 239

⁵⁷ HL, ST58 vol. iv, 97.

⁵⁸ HL, ST58 vol. i, 46, 92; N[ational] A[rchives of] S[cotland, Edinburgh, UK], GD24/1/464/A/26, 31, 38. Drummond also introduced Black to other mutual contacts such as Henry Watkins: B[ritish] L[ibrary, London, UK], Add[itional] MS 38852 f. 69.

⁵⁹ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 114; v, 239; HL, ST58 vol. iii, 59, 78; x, 43-4.

⁶⁰ Graham, 'Partisan politics', 206, 237.

⁶¹ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 41, 120; HL, ST58 vol. v, 232.

⁶² HL, ST57 vol. viii, 245.

⁶³ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 42; HL 58 vol. i, 157; ii, 257; vii, 207.

⁶⁴ N[orthamptonshire] R[ecord] O[ffice, Northampton, UK], [Cockayne MS] C/2922, Medlycott to Servoise, 17 Feb. 1710 ns; Medlycott to Whitfield, 1 Feb 1710 ns; Medlycott to William Hamilton, 24 Jan 1711 ns.

⁶⁵ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Whitfield, 1 Feb, 17 and 28 Apr 1710 ns.

⁶⁶ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Whitfield, 20 July and 16 Oct 1711 ns; Medlycott to James Medlycott, 29 Dec 1711 ns.

⁶⁷ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Whitfield, 1 Feb 1710 ns; Medlycott to Lord Abergavenny, 20 June 1710, 11 July 1710, 16 Jan 1711, 8 June 1711, 19 Apr 1712 ns; Medlycott to Le Hunt, 20 May 1711. See also HL, ST58 vol. iii, 31. For Abergavenny (also known as Baron Bergavenny), see Geoffrey S. Holmes, *British politics in the age of Anne*, 2nd ed. (London: Hambledon, 1987), 425.

⁶⁸ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to James Medlycott, 1 Feb 1710, 17 Jan 1711, 26 Nov 1711, 29 Dec 1711 ns.

⁶⁹ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Thomas Medlycott, 7 Nov 1712 ns; Medlycott to Warner, 7 Nov 1710 ns; Medlycott to James M, 17 Jan 1711, 12 Apr 1712 ns

⁷⁰ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Lynn, 24 May 1712, 26 Aug 1713, 8 Sept 1713, 11 Oct 1713 ns; Medlycott to James Medlycott, 22 June 1713.

⁷¹ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Warner, 7 Nov 1710 ns; Medlycott to Sloper, 9 Nov 1710, 17 Jan 1711.

⁷² Graham, 'Partisan politics', 283-5.

⁷³ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to James Medlycott, 22 Apr 1712 ns.

⁷⁴ Perry Gauci, *The politics of trade: the overseas merchant in state and society, 1660-1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 234-70; John V. C. Nye, *War, wine, and taxes: the political economy of Anglo-French trade, 1689-1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), especially pp. 20-59

⁷⁵ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Lynn, 16 Dec 1713 ns; Medlycott to Wyndham, 29 Dec 1713, 2 Jan 1714 ns; Medlycott to Sloper, 20 Jan 1714 ns.

⁷⁶ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Radnor, 21 Jan 1714 ns. For Radnor, see Holmes, *Politics*, 226, 265, 431.

⁷⁷ NRO, C/2922, Medlycott to Wharton, 29 Dec 1713 ns. For Wharton, see Holmes, *Politics*, 240-1.

⁷⁸ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 77, 80-1; HL, ST58 vol. iii, 224.

⁷⁹ HL, ST58 vol. i, 46. See also HL, ST57 vol. iv, 147; HL, ST58 vol. vii, 239. In 1721 he presented forty dozen bottles of cider to Henry Davenant for purchasing pictures for him in Italy, as well as twenty dozen of ale, two dozen of citron water, and six bottles of Irish whiskey: Baker and Baker, *Chandos*, 81.

⁸⁰ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 80-1; iii, 109, 164, iv, 147; HL, ST58 vol. v, 146; vii, 239. Brydges had earlier attempted to set up a private arbitrage network with Wade: see Graham, 'Partisan politics', 251.

⁸¹ C[entre for] K[entish] S[tudies, Maidstone, UK], Stanhope MS, U1590/O138/2, Brydges to Stanhope, 25 Sept. 1708.

⁸² John Chartres, 'No English Calvados? English distillers and the cider industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', in *English rural society, 1500-1800: essays in honour of Joan Thirsk*, ed. John Chartres and David Hey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 322-30; Vittoria di Palma, 'Drinking cider in paradise: science, improvement and the politics of fruit trees', in *A pleasing sinne: drink and conviviality in early modern England*, ed. Adam Smyth (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2004), 161-77. See also above n. 74.

⁸³ Chartres, 'No English calvados?', 313-22, 330-40.

⁸⁴ Pennell, 'Consumption and consumerism', 555-7.

⁸⁵ Brian W. Cowan, *The social life of coffee: the emergence of the British coffeehouse* (London: Yale University Press, 2005); Phil Withington, 'Company and sociability in early modern England' *Social History* 32, no. 3 (2007), 292.

⁸⁶ Withington, 'Company and sociability', 297-307. For Hailwood, see Mark Hailwood, *Alehouses and good fellowship in early modern England* (London: Boydell & Brewer, 2014).

⁸⁷ Cowan, *Social life of coffee*, 108-10.

⁸⁸ For discussions of the overlaps between toasting, sociability and trust, see Peter Clark, *British clubs and societies 1580-1800: the origins of an associational world* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 163-4, 226-7; Hancock, *Oceans of wine*, 349-55, 387-9.

⁸⁹ HL, ST57 vol. i, 40, 56; HL, ST58 vol. i, 101-2, 103.

⁹⁰ HL, ST58 vol. xii, 70, 80, 119. Amanda Lahikainen has suggested to me that Senserf might merely have made this up, to fulfil the expectations of politeness, and that this nevertheless shows the strength of such expectations in relations between Brydges and his agents.

⁹¹ BL, Add. mss 38852 f. 6r.

⁹² HL, ST57 vol. iii, 109; HL, ST58 vol. iv, 223; Berg, *Luxury and pleasure*, 155-8. For Cienfuegos, see Graham 'Public service', 91, 102-8.

⁹³ HL, ST57 vol. iv, f. 76; HL, ST58 vol. vii, 155.

⁹⁴ HL, ST57 vol. iii, 236.

⁹⁵ HL, ST57 vol. v, 125.

⁹⁶ HL, ST58 vol. ii, 164-5.

⁹⁷ Graham, 'Partisan politics', 279-88.

⁹⁸ HL, ST57 vol. ii, 172, 173; HL, ST58 vol. iv, 1; vi, 6, 66; vii, 110; x, 39.

⁹⁹ Cruickshanks, Handley, and Hayton, *Hist. Parl. 1690-1715* vol. iv, 520-7.

¹⁰⁰ T[rinity] C[ollege] L[ibrary], Dublin, Ireland], MS 749 nos. 43, 107, 562.

¹⁰¹ HL 57 vol. xxviii, 26, 40; xxix, 102; xxix, 128, 235; xxxi, 286-7; xxxii, 125, 162; xxxiii, 173, 206; xxxiv, 14; xxxv, 205.

¹⁰² HL 57 vol. xxviii, 259

¹⁰³ HL 57 vol. xiv, 400; xxix, 277; xl, 151.