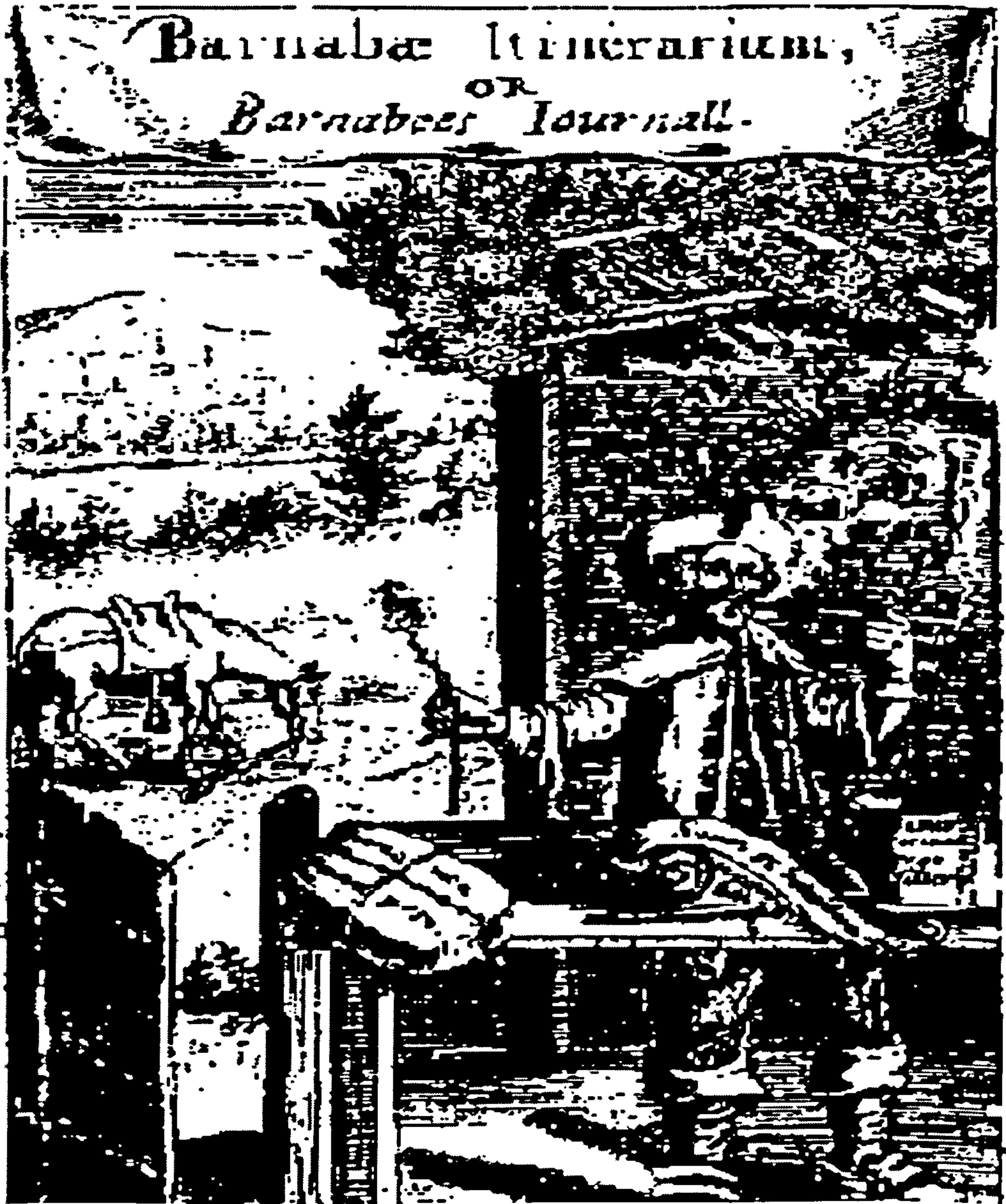


# HOW ENGLAND LEARNED TO SMOKE:

## The Introduction, Spread and Establishment of Tobacco Pipe Smoking in England before 1640

Anthony R. Rowley



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University of York  
Department of History  
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## Abstract of thesis

### How England Learned to Smoke: the introduction, spread and establishment of tobacco pipe smoking in England before 1640

This thesis examines the incorporation of smoking into late Elizabethan and early Stuart culture and society, politics and commerce. Drawing upon a rich variety of primary sources and adopting an interdisciplinary approach, it shows how the English encountered, evaluated and accommodated this new and controversial Amerindian activity. It emphasises the seldom recognised distinction between the European medico-botanical appropriation of tobacco poultices, infusions etc. and the English adoption of smoking as a recreation arguing that patterns of smoking were, from the start, inherently incompatible with ideas of the appropriate use of medicines. This incompatibility prompted medical and moral debates identifying smoking as the misuse of a powerful drug. This thesis argues for the first time that smoking spread, despite objections, not because it was medicinal but because it was culturally attractive, particularly to young men. As demand for tobacco rose, tobacco became increasingly important politically and commercially. This thesis examines the evolution of policies to control and profit from rising domestic demand for tobacco under James VI & I and Charles I. By 1640, the commodity craved by smokers had been embroiled in disputes about monopolies, taxation, the Virginia colonies and, with the unprecedented introduction of tobacco vending licences in the 1630s, even the royal prerogative. The thesis concludes with the first detailed nation-wide examination of the early retail trade in tobacco which unveils a mixed economy of small and large-scale tobacco trading supplying smokers in all corners of England with tobacco by the pound, ounce, pennyworth or pipeful. England had learned to smoke.



# Contents

Abstract of thesis .....	i
Contents .....	ii
Illustrations, figures and tables .....	iv
Abbreviations .....	vi
Acknowledgements .....	vii
INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 1 .....	21
<b><u>From the New World to the Old: The transmission of conceptions and uses of tobacco to England</u></b>	
Encounters with tobacco and smoking in the transatlantic world .....	25
The appropriation and spread of tobacco as medicine in Europe .....	34
The formation of the English tobacco ‘tradition’ .....	44
CHAPTER 2 .....	60
<b><u>Medical marvel or pernicious prescription? The influence of medical ideas about tobacco on the spread of smoking</u></b>	
Unlearned opinion and self-dosing: the adoption of tobacco as a non-prescription medicine in the ‘medical marketplace’ .....	63
‘Fuming’ discourses: the physicians join the debate .....	85
Chapter 3 .....	111
<b><u>Heavenly herb or devil’s device: The moral context of tobacco smoking</u></b>	
Chapter 4 .....	141
<b><u>How the English learned to smoke: The development and transmission of the culture and practice of smoking</u></b>	
Tobacco and sociability .....	144
A manly and gentlemanly recreation: the gendering of consumption .....	155
Women and tobacco .....	174

Learning to smoke: the interpersonal transmission of smoking skills and cultures .....	185
INTERCHAPTER .....	198
CHAPTER 5 .....	200
<b><u>The ‘Government’ of Tobacco: King James VI &amp; I’s regulation of the tobacco ‘business’</u></b>	
King James’s attempt to reduce tobacco consumption .....	204
The exploitation of revenues from Spanish tobacco .....	222
Competition from England and Virginia .....	231
Tobacco and the national interest .....	246
CHAPTER 6 .....	263
<b><u>Charles I’s regulation of the tobacco retail trade</u></b>	
The impetus for a tobacco retail licensing system .....	266
Initial moves towards implementation of the licensing system at local level ...	275
A centralising initiative: the shift to a licence by patent system .....	285
The ‘farming’ of tobacco vending licences .....	298
Reform and disintegration .....	312
CHAPTER 7 .....	329
<b><u>Competing Networks of Exchange: The distribution and retailing of tobacco in the 1630s</u></b>	
The licensed trade in tobacco: an overview .....	334
Licensed networks of supply .....	350
Supplying unlicensed retailers .....	370
The influence of Charles’s retailing regulations on the domestic tobacco trade	385
CONCLUSION .....	393
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	404



## Illustrations

<u>Title page to Richard Brathwait's 'Barnabee's Journall' (1638)</u>	Title page
<u>The Arms of the Tobacco Pipe Makers Company of London (1619)</u>	p. 145
<u>Title Page to the 'Melancholy Cavalier'(1654)</u>	p. 165
<u>Title page to Middleton and Dekker's 'The Roaring Girle' (1611)</u>	p. 176
<u>'The Armes of the Tobachonists' (1630)</u>	p. 397
<u>Untitled woodcut of smoking in a coffee house (1672)</u>	p. 402

## Figures

Fig. 1 <u>Regional distribution of tobacco-vending licences allocated before July 1636</u>	p. 347
Fig. 2 <u>The distribution of tobacco 'magnate' holdings in south-west England</u>	p. 352
Fig. 3 <u>Vending outlets for the <i>Margaret's</i> tobacco cargo of November 1634</u>	p. 356
Fig. 4 <u>Tobacco retail outlets controlled by the Wragge's of South Lincolnshire, 1634-8</u>	p. 361
Fig. 5 <u>Markets contested by Dowghty and the Reynolds in Norfolk</u>	p. 368
Fig. 6 <u>The trading sphere of Richard Cudlipp</u>	p. 374

## Tables

2.1	<u>Publications considering the medicinal value of smoking, 1595-1615</u>	p. 88
5.1	<u>Tobacco imports 1614-1621 (in lbs.)</u>	p. 203
5.2	<u>Revenue yield for the Crown from the impositions on tobacco</u>	p. 228
5.3	<u>Receipts of the new impositions on tobacco, Michaelmas 1627 – 1628</u>	p. 259
6.1	<u>Number of tobacco licences enrolled on the Patent Roll, 1633-41</u>	p. 288
6.2	<u>Exchequer Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing preserved in the Public Records Office.</u>	p. 300
7.1 & 7.2	<u>Cost of tobacco-vending licences purchased during the first full year of licensing</u>	p. 336
7.3	<u>Price of tobacco-vending licences for single locations only</u>	p. 337
7.4	<u>Locations costing more than £20 for monopoly control of tobacco-retailing</u>	p. 339
7.5	<u>Locations with no limit to the number of licences available prior to the establishment of the Tobacco Office in July 1637</u>	p. 341
7.6	<u>Distribution of tobacco retail licences by region and county, 1634-40</u>	p. 344
7.7	<u>Regional breakdown of numbers of tobacco-vending licences held by single individuals before July 1636</u>	p. 349
7.8	<u>Breakdown of licences sealed by Lord Coventry up to December 1634</u>	p. 351



## Abbreviations

APC	<u>Acts of the Privy Council of England.</u>
Covpprs	Coventry Papers, Birmingham Public Library.
CSP Colonial	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series.</u>
CSPD	<u>Calendar of State Papers Domestic.</u>
DNB	<u>Dictionary of National Biography.</u>
OED	<u>Oxford English Dictionary.</u>
PRO	Public Records Office.
RPCS	<u>Registers of the Privy Council of Scotland.</u>
RVC	<u>Records of the Virginia Company.</u>

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## Declaration

I declare that this thesis is all my own work and that it has not been previously published either in part or as a whole.



## **Introduction**

Tobacco is everywhere. It is grown in Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America in order to supply manufacturers with a raw material which, when processed, is distributed locally, regionally and, in the case of a few brands, globally. It is bought and consumed by millions of people around the developed and developing world. Tobacco-consuming customs vary. Some people chew or snuff it. Most smoke it through various types of pipes, wrapped in its own leaves as cigars or as the omnipresent cigarette. Whatever the mode of consumption, every society encountering tobacco has found a way to incorporate it within its culture. The first to do so were prehistoric Amerindians who found various uses for it in their disparate cultures. After Columbus the rest of the world followed suit. This thesis, exploring the introduction, spread and establishment of tobacco-pipe smoking in England before 1640, examines the integration of one way of using tobacco into a particular society at a particular time.

The first half of the thesis is primarily a history of smoking, not of tobacco. It shows how the English encountered, evaluated and accommodated an activity that entailed putting dried leaves from a faraway land ‘in a pipe set on fire and sucked into the stomacke, and thrust forth again at the nostrils’.<sup>1</sup> However, the early spread of smoking in England was not merely a social and cultural phenomenon. The supply of tobacco to fill consumers’ pipes was also politically and commercially important.

Consequently, the second half of the thesis examines the regulation and organisation

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<sup>1</sup> J. Gerard, The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes, Gathered by Iohn Gerarde of London Master in Chirurgerie (London, 1597), p. 287.

of the tobacco trade before 1640 with a particular emphasis on its retail rather than on the international wholesale trade.

A glance at modern anti-smoking campaigns shows how integral smoking has become to English society. Backed by undeniable scientific proof of its harmful nature, a vociferous anti-smoking lobby has sponsored the introduction and proliferation of no smoking signs, zones and days, nicotine patches, health warnings and advertising restrictions. While British governments gather in substantial revenues from tobacco and while multinational companies make vast profits, unregenerate smokers are 'quarantined' with their fellow outcasts outside offices, in smoking rooms or at the ashtray end of the pub table. Strenuous efforts are made to deter young people from taking up this social 'evil'. Despite all this, over one in five British adults still smoke. Indeed, 1998 saw the first rise in adult smoking for a generation with 500,000 new tobacco consumers taking up the activity.<sup>2</sup>

Recent efforts to curb smoking highlight the complex intersections that sustain it. The English relationship with tobacco stretches far beyond the physiological addiction of the individual. The smoker is at the centre of a mesh of relationships with the drug itself and with other smokers, anti-smokers, medical advisors, government regulators and tobacco suppliers. As Goodman argues, ideas of tobacco dependence must be considered in broad terms.<sup>3</sup> Governments rely on the revenue that tobacco generates as much as Amerindian shamans relied on its pharmacological properties, as much as early colonial producers and traders depended on the profits they could make from it

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<sup>2</sup> These figures were reported in L. Buckingham, 'One-in-Five Cigarettes are Bootlegged, Says Gallaher', *The Guardian*, 10 September 1999, p. 26.



and as much as consumers need it for the alleviation of symptoms of nicotine withdrawal. It is this 'multi-faceted structure of dependence' that has made tobacco 'so deeply entrenched throughout the world'.<sup>4</sup> This thesis examines the roots of this interdependence by considering the ways in which tobacco-smoking, unlike the consumption of other New World 'discoveries' such as sarsaparilla and guaiacum, became culturally, politically and economically important in late Elizabethan and early Stuart England. It offers a contribution to the 'fundamental work' on the history of tobacco which, as Goodman notes, 'remains to be done'.<sup>5</sup>

The history of tobacco and smoking in England before 1640 has nevertheless attracted considerable attention. Since 1595, when Anthony Chute's Tabaco (the first European tract exclusively about tobacco) was published, the origins of early English tobacco use have been sought and its nature and consequences assessed.<sup>6</sup> As Hilton has shown, brief stories of the origins of smoking often featured in Victorian and Edwardian gentlemen's magazines.<sup>7</sup> Such articles were of interest to smokers but they were also often defences of the activity at times when it was being attacked. Fairholt's Tobacco: its history and associations (1876), for example, presented a well-researched but highly partisan assessment of tobacco's place in English society. He argued that the herb became the solace and joy of Englishmen despite its critics and King James I's 'vicious', 'unjust' and 'unwarrantable persecution of the tobacco plant'.<sup>8</sup> In each case, and perhaps even for Brooks' The Mighty Leaf published almost a century later, the

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<sup>3</sup> J. Goodman, Tobacco in History (London & New York, 1993), p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> A. Chute, Tabaco: the distinct and severall opinions of the late and best Phisitions that have written of the divers natures and qualities thereof (London, 1595).

<sup>7</sup> M. Hilton, Perfect Pleasures: smoking in British popular culture 1800-2000 (Manchester & New York, 2000), Chapter 1.

early history of tobacco has been a story of the triumph of smoking over its detractors.<sup>9</sup>

In the 1920s and 1930s the history of tobacco began to attract the attention of economic and political historians. Consideration shifted from the relationship of the smoker with his tobacco and with critics of his habit to the relationship between the consuming country and its supplier. Rive and others collated figures for the transatlantic trade in tobacco.<sup>10</sup> Kingsbury and others began publishing primary sources about the early Virginia trade.<sup>11</sup> MacInnes presented a narrative of the early growth of the international tobacco trade while Craven presented a comprehensive analysis of the intricate politics of the Virginia Company of London.<sup>12</sup> Since then numerous studies have been made of particular companies and individuals engaged in the trade as well as of the trade in general. These have concentrated on the period after 1660 when more reliable importation figures are available.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1960s some economic historians began using the example of tobacco to argue that the rapid expansion of overseas trade after 1660 prompted the rise of British

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<sup>8</sup> F. W. Fairholt, Tobacco: its history and associations (London, 1876), p. 83.

<sup>9</sup> J. E. Brooks, The Mighty Leaf (London, 1953). See also G. L. Apperson, The Social History of Smoking (London, 1914); E. C. Corti, A History of Smoking (London, 1931); R. Walker, Under Fire: a history of tobacco smoking in Australia (Carlton, Victoria, 1984) and S. Gabb, Smoking and its Enemies: a short history of 500 years of the use and prohibition of tobacco (London, 1990).

<sup>10</sup> A. Rive, 'The Consumption of Tobacco Since 1600', Economic Journal 36 (supplement) (1926). See also S. Gray & V. Wyckoff, 'The International Tobacco Trade in the Seventeenth Century', Southern Economic Journal 7 (1940).

<sup>11</sup> S. M. Kingsbury (ed.), The Records of the Virginia Company, 4 vols. (Washington, 1906-35), and A. P. Newton (ed.), 'Lord Sackville's Papers Respecting Virginia, 1613-31', American Historical Review 18 (1922).

<sup>12</sup> M. MacInnes, The Early English Tobacco Trade (London, 1926); W. F. Craven, The Dissolution of the Virginia Company (New York, 1937).

<sup>13</sup> For example, see B. W. E. Alford, W. D. & H. O. Wills and the Development of the U. K. Tobacco Industry, 1786-1965 (Bristol, 1973); J. M. Price, Perry of London: a family and a firm on the seaborne frontier, 1615-1753 (Cambridge, Mass., 1992); J. M. Price, Tobacco in Atlantic Trade: the Chesapeake, London and Glasgow, 1675-1775 (Aldershot, 1995).



commercial and industrial primacy and amounted to a 'commercial revolution'. The earlier period was largely neglected. Davies, for example, argued that the period before 1640 was merely 'the period of preparation' for the 'commercial revolution' after 1660 that transformed England both socially and economically.<sup>14</sup> Unlike the 'significant' East India trade, Davies suggested that the American and West Indian colonies were of little commercial importance before 1640.<sup>15</sup> Such arguments hinged upon a definition of commerce as international trade and disregarded what was happening in the domestic market. The rise in domestic demand, affecting internal commercial structures and conditioning the relationship between colonial supplier and metropolitan consumer, was pushed aside as 'earlier, lesser but still important changes in industry and in the English economy as a whole, under the influence of developments in overseas trade'.<sup>16</sup>

This Atlantic-led history of the English economy was revised by the next two generations of English economic historians. Historians such as Thirsk argued that domestic trade and agricultural change were important stimuli to economic change.<sup>17</sup> More recently, Wrightson has emphasised the importance of the domestic economy. He argues that 'while overseas trade has an important place in the panorama of economic expansion . . . that expansion was led by a growing domestic market for goods and services'.<sup>18</sup> He argues that the term 'commercial revolution' has been

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<sup>14</sup> R. Davies, A Commercial Revolution, Historical Association Pamphlet no. 64 (1967), p. 3. For a fuller account see R. Davies, The Rise of the Atlantic Economies (London, 1973).

<sup>15</sup> Davies, Commercial Revolution, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>17</sup> Thirsk suggested that the English Civil War first alerted people to the importance (in terms of employment, mitigation of poverty and national economic well-being) of a domestic rather than international economic focus. J. Thirsk, Economic Policy and Projects (Oxford, 1978), pp. 138-9.

<sup>18</sup> K. Wrightson, Earthly Necessities: economic lives in early modern Britain (New Haven and London, 2000), p. 181. Wrightson notes that more of the merchant marine was engaged in overseas trade in 1580 than in 1660!

exaggerated and suggests that the later seventeenth-century was a period in which the 'initiatives of the early seventeenth century were consolidated and extended'.<sup>19</sup> 1660 is not a magic date. Long before then trade into London was growing dramatically with rising imports of silks and wines from the Mediterranean and Iberia as well as pepper, tobacco and calico from the East and West. The re-export trade in sugar, pepper and tobacco (goods sold in small quantities and quickly consumed) was already tapping potentially vast markets while markets for England's traditional exports of woollen cloth etc. were shrinking. As Wrightson has recognised, it was demand for tobacco that initially spurred rising production and made tobacco the key commodity in the birth of the North American trade. With continually rising demand across Europe, tobacco remained the 'backbone of the new trade' between the Americas and Europe.<sup>20</sup>

This thesis shows that, unlike other exotic imports such as tea, coffee and chocolate, there was considerable demand for tobacco in England and a consequently dramatic increase in supply before 1640. In 1616, when the first Virginian cargoes began to arrive, £44,369 worth of Spanish tobacco was imported<sup>21</sup> along with 1,250 lb. of Chesapeake tobacco sold by its growers for 27d.<sup>22</sup> In 1640, over a million pounds of Chesapeake tobacco left the plantations at a price of only 2.5d per pound.<sup>23</sup> This constitutes a thousand fold increase in imports from Virginia and a ten fold drop in prices over a single generation. Although in absolute terms the period after 1640 during which imports rose from one to many millions of pounds is the most striking,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 236-7.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 180.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> R. R. Menard, 'The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies, 1617-1730: an interpretation', *Research in Economic History* 5 (1980), pp. 157-161 appendix. Farm price.



this initial upsurge in supply to feed the domestic market is the key to understanding how tobacco gained such an important place in international trade.<sup>24</sup> England became a major tobacco exporter because of Virginia. Would Virginia have begun producing tobacco if smoking had not gained so fertile a niche in English society in the earlier period?

Beresford's 1955 analysis of tobacco vending licences in the 1630s stands out as one of very few political and economic studies of the domestic tobacco trade before the Civil War.<sup>25</sup> Little interest was shown in the movement and sale of tobacco and other consumables until recently when Cox, Styles and others offered insights into rising demand and networks of supply in their studies of retailing and distribution in the early modern period.<sup>26</sup> Styles identifies tobacco as one of a range of entirely new products (e.g. lead glass, watches, porcelain, mahogany) which prompted 'extraordinary and unprecedented innovations in English material culture' between 1550 and 1750.<sup>27</sup> Cox notes how shops and shopping evolved to accommodate such goods particularly in London (where potential consumers were concentrated) but also in provincial market towns and cities.<sup>28</sup> Such studies highlight the often intimate connections that existed between suppliers and consumers. They also suggest that the

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 1,092,873 lbs.

<sup>24</sup> Menard, The Chesapeake Tobacco Industry, p. 157-161 appendix. Based upon Menard's figures. Between 1640 and 1730 imports rose from c.1m lbs. @ 2.5d per lb. to c.41m lbs. @ 1d per lb. Figures include tobacco for re-export.

<sup>25</sup> M. W. Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences 1632-41', Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research 7 (1955).

<sup>26</sup> N. Cox, The Complete Tradesman: a study of retailing, 1550-1820 (Aldershot, 2000); J. Styles, 'Product Innovation in Early Modern London', Past and Present 168 (2000), pp. 124-169.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>28</sup> Cox, The Complete Tradesman, pp. 197-222.



introduction of new products hinged upon what Styles calls a 'process of negotiation' between the supplier and the consumer.<sup>29</sup>

Determining what the consumer wanted or, more precisely, why Elizabethan and Jacobean Englishmen wanted tobacco requires an understanding of how the English first encountered and accommodated this Amerindian novelty. This draws attention back to voyages of exploration and their consequences. Since the post war re-awakening of interest in English voyages of discovery and the colonisation of America, historians such as Quinn and Beer have examined the voyages to Virginia and the role of tobacco in imperial and commercial developments.<sup>30</sup> Many biographies of adventurers such as Drake, Raleigh and Harriot and narratives of the Roanoke voyages and the establishment of Virginia have been published.<sup>31</sup> More recently, the focus of transatlantic studies has shifted towards the analysis of the impacts of the New World on the Old and of the Old World on the New. Historians such as Pagden, Canny and Walvin have noted tobacco in their explorations of different aspects of this 'Columbian exchange'.<sup>32</sup> Tobacco was part of a migration of ideas and commodities initiating a globalisation of human society through the intersection of previously isolated cultures.

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<sup>29</sup> Styles, 'Product Innovation', p. 168.

<sup>30</sup> For example, D. B. Quinn, England and the Discovery of America 1481-1620 (London, 1974); G. L. Beer, The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1578-1660 (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1959).

<sup>31</sup> For example, J. W. Shirley, Thomas Harriot, Renaissance Scientist (Oxford, 1974); A. Smith, Virginia 1584-1607 (London, 1957); G. M. Thomson, Sir Francis Drake (London, 1976).

<sup>32</sup> For example, various chapters in N. Canny & A. Pagden (eds.), Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World 1500-1800 (Princeton, 1987); J. Walvin, Fruits of Empire: exotic produce and British taste, 1660-1800 (Basingstoke, 1997). For an early example of this approach to transatlantic studies see also A. W. Crosby, The Columbian Exchange: biological and cultural consequences of 1492 (Westport, Conn., 1973).

The 'migration' of tobacco consuming practices from the New World to the Old has been described by von Gurnet as a form of 'transculturation', an active process involving the re-moulding of Amerindian ideas about tobacco as they were incorporated into European culture and society.<sup>33</sup> Further anthropological studies of the social consumption of tobacco and other drugs illustrate how far the receiving culture determines the ways in which a new activity or commodity becomes a part of that culture. Black's study of the inhabitants of Tobi in the 1980s, for example, shows that tobacco use became integral to specific communal activities and local relationships, fusing with the rhythms of life on the island and becoming central to adult sociality.<sup>34</sup> Goodman's study of the use of soft drugs in Enlightenment Europe similarly suggests a 'Europeanization' of goods and ideas: 'an ongoing process of appropriation, development and definition which . . . began in the sixteenth century and reached its apogee in the eighteenth century'.<sup>35</sup>

Studies of English smoking have illustrated how entangled tobacco came to be in the fabric of English society. Most recently, Hilton's study of smoking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has shown how the cigar, cigarette and pipe functioned as expressions of social and gender identity and, in the depiction of characters such as Sherlock Holmes, quintessential Englishness.<sup>36</sup> However, no detailed assessment has yet been made of how patterns of tobacco use were absorbed into and re-moulded by

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<sup>33</sup> A. von Gurnet, The Transculturation of the Amerindian pipe/tobacco/smoking complex and its impact on the intellectual boundaries between 'savagery' and 'civilization' 1535-1935, unpub. PhD thesis, McGill University (1988).

<sup>34</sup> P. Black, 'The Anthropology of Tobacco Use: Tobian data and theoretical issues', Journal of Anthropological Research 40 (1984).

<sup>35</sup> J. Goodman, 'Excitantia or How Enlightenment Europe Took to Soft Drugs', in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy, A. Sherratt (eds.), Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology (London, 1995), p. 126.

<sup>36</sup> M. Hilton, Perfect Pleasures: smoking in British popular culture 1800-2000 (Manchester & New York, 2000).

late Elizabethan and Jacobean culture and society. One of the key questions this thesis seeks to answer is how and in what ways smoking became an English activity.

It is generally assumed that the initial impetus for English tobacco consumption was its use as a medicine.<sup>37</sup> As Stewart's survey of tobacco's inclusion in published medical texts shows, there was extensive acceptance of tobacco as a medicine in Europe from the mid-sixteenth century onwards.<sup>38</sup> Yet, as the London medical controversy of 1600-1610 examined by Harley suggests, tobacco smoking was not universally accepted as a medicinally valid activity.<sup>39</sup> The relationship between smoking and applying tobacco is more complex than is usually recognised. Even when considering Amerindian societies, the use of tobacco by a shaman for ritual or medicinal purposes must be distinguished from the offer of tobacco to European adventurers as a greeting and from its habitual consumption. The commodity may have been the same but the reasons behind and patterns of its use were not. This thesis argues that historians should distinguish between the acceptance of tobacco as a medicine and the spread of smoking. In England they had two distinct histories.

Furthermore, this thesis emphasises the distinctiveness of the history of tobacco use.

Walvin in particular has suggested that tobacco, tea, coffee, chocolate etc. had a broadly similar history as a commodity. He notes tobacco's Amerindian roots and then states that, 'like so many other exotic commodities, tobacco entered European usage

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<sup>37</sup> For example, Schlesinger suggests that Thomas Harriot became a heavy smoker because of advertisements of its medicinal efficacy (R. Schlesinger, In the Wake of Columbus: the impact of the New World on Europe, 1492-1650 (Illinois, 1996), p. 97). As chapter 1 will show, Harriot's own need to advertise tobacco as a product of Virginia and his direct contact with smoking Amerindians at Roanoke were perhaps more important.

<sup>38</sup> G. Stewart, 'A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco 1492-1860', Medical History 11 (1967).



to a fanfare of praise for its medicinal benefits and health-giving virtues. Doctors, apothecaries and men of science announced its wonderful effects'.<sup>40</sup> He goes on to say that 'what critics most disliked was the swift transformation of tobacco from exclusive to popular taste'.<sup>41</sup> From this passage it is easy for the reader to assume that these four stages (Amerindian, European medicinal, elite and then popular use) simply followed one from the other.<sup>42</sup>

However, as Shammas has noted, tobacco arrived earlier, spread faster and caused more controversy than tea or coffee.<sup>43</sup> As Goodman has recognised, the near simultaneous permeation of tobacco use through all classes set it apart from other exotic imports.<sup>44</sup> The relationship between therapeutic uses of tobacco and its elite and popular consumption needs clarification. Understanding how and why tobacco use spread so rapidly in England requires an examination of tobacco's introduction and dissemination as a medicine but also, more importantly, of the emergence of smoking as a pastime to be enjoyed. As Mintz and others have recognised goods have important personal and social meanings.<sup>45</sup> What did tobacco mean to an Elizabethan

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<sup>39</sup> D. Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy: Puritanism, James I, and the Royal Physicians', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 67 (1993).

<sup>40</sup> Walvin, *Fruits of Empire*, p. 70.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>42</sup> Such elements in the transmission of the use of goods, particularly consumable 'luxuries', across the social hierarchy is shown in various contributions to J. Brewer & R. Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993).

<sup>43</sup> C. Shammas, 'Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550-1800' in J. Brewer & R. Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), pp. 177-205.

<sup>44</sup> Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, p. 47.

<sup>45</sup> S. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power* (New York, 1986). See also T. H. Breen, 'The Meaning of Things: interpreting the consumer economy in the eighteenth century' in Brewer and Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods*, pp. 249-60.

cobbler or gentleman? As Campbell has suggested, commodities that caused controversy were not 'unthinkingly' consumed.<sup>46</sup>

This is not to deny that tobacco use was an important part of the changing patterns of ownership, consumption and cultural development after the Restoration that is often described as a 'consumer revolution'.<sup>47</sup> Tobacco consumption, particularly the rising popularity of snuff-taking in the eighteenth-century, may well have been an important aspect of the changing lifestyles and increasing accumulation of a 'world of goods' studied by historians such as Brewer, Porter, Weatherill and Shammaas.<sup>48</sup>

However, the spread of smoking in the early seventeenth century, long before the supposed emergence of a consumer society born of commercial and social change, casts doubt on these ideas of an eighteenth century 'consumer revolution'. As de Vries argues, the term 'consumer revolution' is a dangerous generalisation, ill-equipped to account for the emergence of a consumer society that was neither sudden nor specific to a particular location or time.<sup>49</sup> The desire to own and consume was more of a trend than a revolution. Nevertheless, studies of changing patterns of consumption provide a useful conceptual basis for considering the place of tobacco in the specific historical

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<sup>46</sup> C. Campbell, 'Understanding Traditional and Modern Patterns of Consumption in Eighteenth Century England: a character-action approach' in Brewer and Porter, Consumption and the World of Goods, p. 42.

<sup>47</sup> MacKendrick first suggested that there was a 'consumer revolution' in eighteenth century England. He argued that Josiah Wedgwood exploited aristocratic links to stimulate new wants and needs amongst an emulative middle class (N. McKendrick, J. Brewer, J. H. Plumb, The Birth of a Consumer Society: the commercialisation of eighteenth-century England (London, 1982). Ideas of 'consumer revolutions' persist. See, for example, T. H. Breen, "'Baubles of Britain": the American and consumer revolutions of the eighteenth century', Past and Present 119 (1988).

<sup>48</sup> Brewer & Porter, Consumption and the World of Goods; C. Shammaas, The Pre-Industrial Consumer in England and America (Oxford, 1990); L. Weatherill, 'Consumer Behaviour and Social Status in England, 1660-1750', Continuity and Change 1 (1986).

<sup>49</sup> J. de Vries, 'Between Purchasing Power and the World of Goods: understanding the household economy in early modern Europe' in Brewer and Porter, Consumption and the World of Goods, pp.



circumstances of the Elizabethan/Stuart transition and in the pre-civil war political and economic context.<sup>50</sup> When Raleigh first smoked his silver pipe he was parading an activity that few had ever seen before and using a substance that few had heard of. By the time he puffed his last pipe en route to the scaffold, poets were lambasting the stereotypical impoverished cobbler and the wastrel as well as the 'gentleman' for smoking. What can this tell us about Jacobean consumers and their world of goods?

The first chapter considers the initial transmission of tobacco and information about it to England. It asks why the English adopted New World smoking practices so enthusiastically. It suggests the answer lies in the collision of three factors in the 1580s. Firstly, ideas of tobacco as a medicinal resource were transmitted to England through the publication of learned European medical and natural historical accounts of its use. The 'wisdom' of the Amerindians was appropriated, evaluated and modified by people such as Nicholas Monardes who assimilated it into European therapeutics. Secondly, while English physicians were beginning to add tobacco poultices and infusions to their pharmacological inventory, English explorers were reporting and exhibiting the kinds of habitual smoking practices they had encountered and which they had adopted in order to pass the time and ameliorate their transatlantic hardships. The third factor, drawing the other two strands together, was English colonial ambition attuned to finding and advertising valuable and useful resources in the New World. When placed in an Amerindian-style pipe and lit, the physicians' drug became the adventurer's badge.

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106-7. De Vries argues that there was a household-based rise in demand which preceded the supply-side rises that made goods cheaper and more readily available.



Chapter two assesses contemporary perceptions of the medical validity of smoking. It argues that, while smokers claimed that their unregulated self-administration of tobacco smoke was 'healthful', physicians and others became alarmed by the increasingly widespread and indiscriminate misuse of a powerful medicine. Whatever the claims of smokers, the frequent ingestion of tobacco without regard to ailment or temperament lacked medical credibility. Above all, its use as a social activity was far from medical. By 1605, physicians were advising against smoking without prescription and warning of dire consequences for those who continued to do so. This chapter suggests that, instead of assuming that tobacco's applications as a medicine promoted its social use, historians should consider how lay and learned determinations of the physiological impact of tobacco both promoted *and* inhibited the spread of *smoking*, its most common mode of ingestion.

Chapter three examines the moral context of smoking. It argues that, initially, there was no moral controversy about tobacco. However, doubts about the religious and moral status of prominent smokers such as Raleigh and Marlowe and the conspicuous association of smoking with frequenters of alehouses and brothels prompted Puritans and others to redefine it as a vice. Public smoking seemed to exemplify lust, appetite, immoderation and waste. Smokers wasted their God-given health, contaminated social environments and displayed bad manners. Excessive tobacco abusers were condemned as foolish, godless and bestial, no better than the Amerindians from whom they had learned the habit. They impoverished themselves, their families and the state all for a

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<sup>50</sup> Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 47.

puff of Spanish smoke.<sup>51</sup> For those who were worried about their reputation, such sentiments represented a powerful disincentive to take up the tobacco smoking habit.

Chapter four suggests some reasons for how and why smoking continued to spread across the social spectrum and the realm despite medical and moral objections to it. It shows that tobacco and smoking acquired cultural meanings that made it attractive, particularly to young men. Smoking became fashionable in London society. It was a public activity conveying messages of status, gender and power. Like the consumption of alcohol and fine clothing, tobacco became part of a culture of conspicuous consumption that played a role in defining an individual's public persona. It was also an inherently social activity involving the common performance of specific rituals and the sharing of tobacco. This prompted the development of a smokers' culture, particularly in the alehouse, where ideas of fellowship and belonging thrived against a background of critics' complaints. Smokers did not smoke merely because they were addicted to the drug. They smoked because they liked it and enjoyed its social and cultural context.

There is a shift in emphasis in chapters five to seven from conceptions of smokers and smoking to the political and economic context of the supply of tobacco to consumers.

In the early twenty-first century, the relationship between tobacco smoking, 'big business' and government is both evident and familiar. Four hundred years ago no such relationships existed. The Elizabethan tobacco trade was an incidental and completely unregulated product of adventuring voyages to the New World. For

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<sup>51</sup> The first significant cargoes from Virginia arrived in 1617. Before this almost all tobacco was bought from Spain damaging the balance of payments. See chapter 5.

investors and skippers, tobacco seized from Spanish ships, acquired through barter with Indians or through trade at Spanish outposts provided a valuable consolation for failing to find gold. Growing demand for this, as yet, minority commodity combined with uncertainty and irregularity of supply to keep prices high. Beyond the constraints of chartered companies and distinct from the familiar trading patterns of more orthodox commodities like pepper, silk and cloth, tobacco remained speculative and of only marginal economic importance. Paying a duty of only 2d per pound, the political significance of the £8,064 worth of tobacco landed at London in 1603 did not extend beyond the arguments between advocates and opponents of smoking.<sup>52</sup>

By 1640, this situation had changed dramatically. A regulatory framework of unprecedented scale and scope had been constructed which imposed central authority over all aspects of the tobacco trade extending from the site of production to the pipe of the consumer. The principal site of production had become Virginia and prices had fallen. Varying and multiple taxes combined with this increased supply from English colonies and raised the political and revenue-generating importance of the grower, importer, retailer and smoker. A fundamental shift had occurred. Tobacco now generated substantial tax revenues and was the object of government policy and concern.

Chapter five examines the relationship between growing domestic demand and the evolution of government policy under James I & VI. It shows how, initially, the king's personal loathing for smoking inspired efforts to reduce tobacco consumption in

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<sup>52</sup> J. R. Pagan, 'The Growth of the Tobacco Trade Between London and Virginia, 1614-1640', *Guildhall Studies in London History* 3 (1979), p. 248. Figure taken from the Book of Rates.



England by raising taxes. This promoted smuggling but also set the scene for the development of policies to regulate and gain increasing revenue from the tobacco trade as it expanded. Competing business syndicates, often with close ties to influential figures in the government, vied for control over ever increasing volumes of trade. Royal and monopolist exploitation of trade was a hot political issue in Jacobean England. The tobacco trade was particularly controversial because, before 1616, almost all tobacco entering England came via Spain and thus harmed the balance of payments.

Competition from Virginia and from growers in England threatened both monopolistic control over the trade and government revenues. It also generated political and commercial tensions between merchants favoured by the Crown and the Virginia Company, many of whose investors were also uncooperative members of Parliament. During the political squabbles that punctuated the last six years of his reign, King James banned tobacco growing in England, restricted the import of Spanish tobacco, set quotas and prices for Virginian tobacco and instituted quality controls. By 1625 his regulations governed the production and movement of tobacco from the fields of his colonies to the wholesale markets of his kingdoms. This secured his revenues but also ensured that regular supplies of tobacco were available to fill the pipes of English smokers.

Chapter six details how Charles I attempted to extend control and to gain revenue from the trade by introducing tobacco retail licences in the 1630s. It explores the impetus for this policy. Charles attempted to place the retail trade in the 'responsible' hands of grocers, apothecaries etc., taking it away from alehouse keepers and from

disreputable individuals who might deal in illegal tobacco. The chapter investigates the local implementation and central administration of this directive and highlights the complex relationship between central and local authorities. It shows some of the problems Charles's prerogative policies generated in the late 1630s. Although it was apparently successful at first in creating hundreds of local monopolies of the retail tobacco trade, the licensing system was increasingly opposed after Charles farmed out its administration and enforcement to a monopolist in 1636.

Chapter seven concludes the thesis with a preliminary examination of the organisation and nature of the domestic trade in tobacco in the 1630s. It suggests that the licensing system may have prompted the creation of distribution and vending empires.

Individuals bought sole trading rights for many locations, sometimes securing control over a substantial geographical area. They competed with small-scale licensed and unlicensed local retailers. Despite Charles's prohibitions, alehouse keepers remained principal purveyors of tobacco and illegally grown tobacco continued to reach markets. Unlicensed retailers and their customers colluded to subvert restrictions on who could sell tobacco where. Overall, this analysis of the nation-wide retailing and distribution of tobacco indicates a mixed economy of tobacco vendors in the 1630s able to secure supplies of tobacco to sell to smokers in all corners of England by the pound, ounce, pennyworth or pipeful.

This thesis draws upon a rich variety of primary sources. Smoking made tobacco controversial, both medically and morally. This prompted polemical and academic discourses detailing the arguments that accompanied the early assimilation and dissemination of the activity. These include the views of King James presented in his



Counterblaste (1604). Smoking was, at least initially, expensive and conspicuous. This made it noteworthy for foreign visitors as well as account keepers and letter writers. The spread of smoking increased demand for tobacco, making it politically and economically important. Many high-level discussions about it took place, details of which can be found in records of the Privy Council and Parliamentary debates, Virginia Company minutes, royal proclamations and many other state and personal papers. The retail licensing system in particular spawned a host of records (including Exchequer Commissions of Inquiry) listing licensed and unlicensed tobacco traders and detailing disputes between traders.

Such records provide a solid foundation for reconstructing learned views on smoking and for exploring the political and economic context of rising consumption. However, they say relatively little about the cultural context of smoking or about the ways in which the habit first spread. Examining such matters necessitates the use of less traditional historical evidence and an interdisciplinary approach. Particularly in chapter four, literary sources (poetic and theatrical) are used extensively in order to access perceptions of the place of smoking in contemporary society and to identify the various meanings and associations it acquired. Such cultural sources cannot be denied their status as primary historical evidence. As Sharpe and Zwicker have noted, ‘what inspired the literary imagination also shaped the course of events’.<sup>53</sup> Combining literary depictions of smoking with anthropological and sociological insights provides a basis from which to speculate about why individuals decided to try smoking and how smoking practices were transmitted from one person to another.

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<sup>53</sup> K. Sharpe & S. N. Zwicker (eds.), The Politics of Discourse: the literature and history of seventeenth century England (Berkeley, 1987), p. 1. See also: K. Thomas, History and Literature (Swansea, 1988).



By exploiting different methodologies and drawing upon a wide range of administrative, polemical and cultural sources, this thesis aims to present a comprehensive examination of how, before 1640, tobacco became integrated within English culture and society, politics and commerce. It will touch on numerous aspects of the early modern world including morals and manners, cultural anxieties, the power of public opinion, the use of public/private space, the social context of early modern medicine and the relationship between the state and the individual. Like Clark's study of the alehouse or Kent's examination of the village constable,<sup>54</sup> this study of smoking will illuminate a single thread in the fabric of early modern society. In the process, it will attempt to offer new perspectives on different facets of the society that embraced and sought to control tobacco use. As a contribution to an already prolific literature of tobacco, this thesis simply seeks to reveal how England learned to smoke.

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<sup>54</sup> P. Clark, The English Alehouse: a social history (London, 1983); J. R. Kent, The English Constable, 1580-1642: a social and administrative study (Oxford, 1986).

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sentiment. However, as English consumers flocked to purveyors of medicines to buy their smoke in the late sixteenth century, other commentators noted the distinctiveness of English tobacco-consuming practices. In 1595 Anthony Chute wondered why European authorities on tobacco had so neglected consideration of ingesting tobacco as smoke through pipes ‘as we now use’.<sup>2</sup> While visiting London in 1598, the German lawyer Hentzner marvelled that ‘the English are constantly smoking tobacco and in this manner: they have pipes on purpose, made of clay’.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter explores how the English acquired information about tobacco and came to use it differently from mainland Europeans by tracing the transmission of information, modes of consumption and supplies of tobacco from the Americas to England. It examines how and why the English embraced tobacco pipe smoking. It identifies three strands in the assimilation of tobacco that intersected in England around 1586-7. Firstly, reports of Amerindians, African slaves, European sailors, adventurers and colonists smoking in the New World filtered through to England in translations of travellers tales and accounts of early English voyages of exploration. This identified smoking as a cultural curiosity. Secondly, European investigations identified medical uses for tobacco poultices, balms and infusions, prompting the transmission of pharmacological and botanical information about this powerful and versatile new medicine to England along with a few plants. This validated the substance but, importantly, not the smoking of it. Finally, direct encounters between the English and Amerindians, particularly at Roanoke, were widely advertised and

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Buttes, *Dyets Dry Dinner* (London, 1599), sig. [P5].

<sup>2</sup> A. Chute, *Tabaco: the distinct and severall opinions of the late and best Phisitions that have written of the divers natures and qualities thereof* (London, 1595), p. 3.



promoted positively. This stimulated the transmission of smoking practices to England where, with Raleigh's help and tobacco's medicinal repute, smoking was received with interest and influential approval. By examining how the English encountered, adopted and adapted ideas about tobacco from both Europeans and Amerindians, this chapter begins to explain why England proved so fertile a ground for an activity which entailed putting dried leaves from a faraway land 'in a pipe set on fire and suckt into the stomacke, and thrust foorth again at the nostrils'.<sup>4</sup>

Goodman has recognised that the 'historical trajectories' of tobacco's 'intellectual assimilation' as a medicine and its use by Europeans in the New World 'fused' in the 1570s. He argues that 'once this fusion occurred, the process of the exchange of tobacco across two cultures was completed'.<sup>5</sup> However, this does not explain why the English, rather than anyone else, pioneered pipe smoking and became tobacco's 'chief distributors around the world'.<sup>6</sup> Brongers suggests that the Dutch obsession with smoking originated in busy ports around the 1590s, particularly Amsterdam and Antwerp, where sailors passed on an activity they 'had been taught in the ports of England and the New World'.<sup>7</sup> Smoking did not become popular in France until the

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<sup>3</sup> F. W. Fairholt, Tobacco: its history and associations (London, 1876), p. 58. Hentzner's description of smoking was appended to a description of the bear-baitings. This is the first mention by a German of the non-medicinal use of tobacco.

<sup>4</sup> J. Gerard, The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes, Gathered by Iohn Gerarde of London Master in Chirurgerie (London, 1597), p. 287.

<sup>5</sup> J. Goodman, Tobacco in History (London & New York, 1993), p. 47.

<sup>6</sup> R. Mathee, 'Exotic Substances: the introduction and global spread of tobacco, coffee, cocoa, tea, and distilled liquor, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries' in R. Porter & M. Teich (eds.), Drugs and Narcotics in History (Cambridge, 1995), p. 26. Israel suggests that the Dutch were the first Europeans to develop a major appetite for tobacco but does not clarify the mode of consumption (J. Israel, Dutch Primacy in World Trade (Oxford, 1990), pp. 264-5).

<sup>7</sup> G. A. Brongers, Nicotiana Tabacum: history of tobacco and tobacco smoking in the Netherlands (Groningen, 1964), pp. 20-2. Brongers also suggests that foreign students passed on the activity. Von Gernet, though recognising that French consumption was not recreational until later, suggests French and English students at Leiden University were agents of dissemination (A. von Gernet, 'The transculturation of the Amerindian pipe/tobacco/smoking/ complex and its impact on the intellectual boundaries between "savagery" and "civilization" 1535-1935', unpublished PhD. thesis, McGill

seventeenth century, despite Jean Nicot's introduction of tobacco plants to French gardens in the 1560s and early French colonial endeavours. The Spanish, whose relations with Amerindians were most extensive and whose influence on the medicinal appropriation of tobacco was most celebrated, disregarded it as worthless. In the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, 'all Europe embraced tobacco as medicine' but 'only the English and Dutch also employed it in their everyday lives'.<sup>8</sup>

Traditionally, explanations for the phenomenon of English pipe smoking refer back to Raleigh. His involvement with transatlantic ventures, stories of his servant dowsing him with water to save him from the fire in his pipe and tales of his celebrated smoke before the scaffold make him an attractive mythical originator for what King James VI & I described as the 'Savage custome' of tobacco smoking.<sup>9</sup> Some are still content to accept this. Roy Porter, for example, in his compendious history of medicine, blandly proclaimed that tobacco 'was brought to England from the Americas by Sir Walter Raleigh'.<sup>10</sup> Yet, tobacco was well known across Europe long before he rose to prominence and smoking was a common sight in London before he set foot in the New World. A better candidate for the origin of English smoking would be the Roanoke expedition sponsored by Raleigh but this is equally susceptible to early modern myth-making. Quinn described the idea that the Roanoke colonists or Raleigh introduced smoking into England as 'one of those myths it appears almost impossible

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University (1988), p. 61). Price suggests that a thriving and prosperous trade in luxury goods, such as spices, made Antwerp the entrepôt of Europe by the mid-sixteenth century. When the Prince of Parma took control of the city in 1585, Amsterdam began its rise to prominence (J. L. Price, Culture and Society in the Dutch Republic During the Seventeenth Century (London, 1974), pp. 41-2).

<sup>8</sup> Von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 61.

<sup>9</sup> King James VI & I, A Counterblaste to Tobacco (London, 1604), sig. B2. King James is thought to have been referring to Raleigh when he condemned the originator of this 'Savage custome' as neither 'King, great Conquerour, nor learned Doctor of Phisicke'. Raleigh had a contemporary reputation among his friends as a healer.



to kill'.<sup>11</sup> To illuminate how the distinctly English tobacco 'tradition' emerged requires clarification and contextualisation of the role of Raleigh and Roanoke in the adoption and spread of smoking.

### Encounters with tobacco and smoking in the transatlantic world

The first reports about tobacco to reach English shores were in foreign accounts of the 'strange' people encountered by the first transatlantic explorers.<sup>12</sup> These circulated amongst an educated European readership fascinated by accounts of the New World. Amidst tales of hardship and descriptions of indigenous people was information about flora and fauna. Columbus, Vespucci and subsequent European voyagers were acutely interested in the plants used by those they encountered because they were seeking pepper, cinnamon, cloves and other spices which would make their westward approach to the riches of the Orient worthwhile.<sup>13</sup> These explorers had not expected tobacco and could not comprehend its relevance to them. They 'could only ever relate what they had seen back to a pattern of European conceptual expectations'. Tobacco 'fell through their conceptual "grid"' and was 'relegated to the "marvelous" or the "wondrous"'.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> R. Porter, The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: a medical history of humanity from antiquity to the present (London, 1997), p. 233.

<sup>11</sup> D. B. Quinn (ed.), The Roanoke Voyages 1584-90, 2 vols. (London, 1955), 1, p. 345fn.

<sup>12</sup> Further details of these first encounters with Amerindian tobacco use and early accounts of tobacco can be found in: Dickson, Panacea or Precious Bane: tobacco in 16th Century literature (New York, 1954); G. Stewart, 'A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco 1492-1860', Medical History 11 (1967); Fairholt, Tobacco: its history and associations.

<sup>13</sup> F. Guerra, 'Drugs from the Indies and the Political Economy of the Sixteenth Century', Analecta Medico Historica 1 (1966), p. 29. 'A survey of Columbus's correspondence shows that the search for drugs and spices provided one of the strongest incentives leading to the discovery of the New World'. Alvarez Chanea, a physician of Seville, accompanied Columbus on his second voyage seeking flora which resembled descriptions of cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger plants (pp. 48-9).

<sup>14</sup> A. Pagden, European Encounters With the New World: from Renaissance to Romanticism (London & New Haven, 1993), p. 10.



Andrew Perne<sup>15</sup>, for example, who owned a copy of Vespucci's Mundus Novus (1504), was able to read about Indians, 'beastly in appearance and bearing' who filled their jaws 'with a certain green herb which they chewed like cattle to such an extent that they could scarcely talk'.<sup>16</sup> It is unlikely that he wanted to imitate them. Tobacco was part of the 'otherness' of the New World, of interest perhaps, but of no significance to the Old. Like the cocoa beans Columbus brought back to Spain, such information was initially discarded as useless.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, from these travellers' tales, educated Europeans gained information about what ailments tobacco was used for and how it was prepared and applied. The Amerindians noted by Vespucci, for example, had prepared the 'green herb' by sprinkling it with a 'whitish flour like plaster' (perhaps lime). They chewed it to alleviate their thirst on an apparently freshwater-poor island.

Spanish, Portuguese and other explorers encountered tobacco everywhere.<sup>18</sup> It had assorted names: *cohobba*, *petum*, *picietl*, *vppowoc*, *yietl* and was used in many different ways. It was externally applied to wounds, chewed either alone or with other substances, inhaled as a powder or smoke through canes, smoked as rolled up leaves

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<sup>15</sup> Andrew Perne was born in 1519 and was an influential figure in Peterhouse College, Cambridge, between c. 1540 and his death in 1589. He was also Dean of Ely from 1557. Amongst his extensive collection of books on a variety of subjects were many texts which included information on tobacco by writers such as Benzoni, Doedens, Camerarius, De l'Obel and Pena. For details see Leedham-Green, Books in Cambridge Inventories 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 419-79. For details on the tobacco content of these texts refer to Dickson, Panacea or Precious Bane.

<sup>16</sup> Taken from a translation of the Cosmographiae Introductio (1505), quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> Matthee, 'Exotic Substances', pp. 26-7.

<sup>18</sup> 'Virtually every Amerindian society knew tobacco . . . from Canada's eastern woodlands to southern Argentina; from the Atlantic to the Pacific and stretching up the north-west coast towards the Aleutian Islands' (Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 24). For an account of Iberian colonisation of the Americas see L. N. McAlister, Spain and Portugal in the New World 1492-1700 (Oxford, 1984).

or stuffed into a reed or a pipe.<sup>19</sup> It had a multitude of recreational, spiritual and medicinal uses ranging from the alleviation of hunger, thirst and cold to the treatment of sores and wounds. It was offered as a tribute to the gods and employed as a gateway to the spiritual realm. There was thus no pan-American consensus about the readily available herb. Disparate Amerindian communities had developed their own distinct 'wisdoms' about it. Transient Europeans, passing through the New World while pursuing other agendas, viewed Amerindian tobacco use as a novelty which was as worthy of contempt as face and body painting or shamanism.

Curiously, the use of tobacco in shamanistic ritual was probably its most comprehensible aspect. In 1511, a published account drawn from the observations of the Catalan priest Friar Ramon Pané, who had remained on Hispaniola in 1493, described in detail the Tainos Indians' use of *cogioba* to cure the sick and communicate with spirits.<sup>20</sup> After ceremonial ingestion and a brief stupefaction, the shaman excitedly related what the spirits had told him about the outcome of a war or the cause of an illness.<sup>21</sup> The use of smoke and smells in worship had a familiar parallel in the Christian use of incense. More importantly, such Amerindian rituals were easily recognisable to Europeans as paganism. Writers and their readers could

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<sup>19</sup> Stewart, 'A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco', pp. 232-3. Such reed 'cigarettes' were noted by Jaun de Grijalva among the Yucatan Indians in 1518. No medicinal function was then or later recorded. The first mention of the use of a pipe was made by Jacques Cartier in his account of his voyage to Canada in 1535-6. The form of that pipe remains uncertain.

<sup>20</sup> This account by the historian and chronicler Pietro Martire d'Anghiera (alias Peter Martyr) is quoted in Dickson, Panacea or Precious Bane, pp. 23-4. Richard Eden translated this account into English in 1555.

<sup>21</sup> Goodman argues that, unlike other plants available to the shaman, tobacco was predictable and easily cultivatable. It provided a readily available source for short-term effects which were not life threatening - i.e. a safe and controllable trance (Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 24).

draw upon a literature and vocabulary dating back to the ancients to grasp this ‘most inclusive, unambiguous category of otherness’.<sup>22</sup>

The dispatch of missionaries to correct the errors of Amerindian spirituality and colonists to exploit resources or establish trading posts brought Europeans into closer proximity with the Amerindians. Unlike the explorers who drew their maps and moved on, these new inhabitants of the New World shared the same hardships as indigenous people and, inevitably, learned from them how to survive in this unfamiliar and often hostile environment. They had to make use of the same natural resources. One of these was tobacco. Europeans in the New World began to investigate it. Bernardino de Sahagún, a missionary in Mexico from 1529 to 1590, consulted Indian medicine men in Tlaltelulco about the use of *piciete* and *yietl*, two distinct forms of tobacco now classified as *Nicotiana Rustica* and *Tabacum*. A Spanish-educated Aztec Indian, Martinus de la Cruz, composed a manuscript herbal of New World plants in 1552 which incorporated coloured drawings and botanical descriptions alongside details of medicinal applications.<sup>23</sup>

While some Europeans in the New World investigated tobacco, others began to use it. As Pagden argues, Europeans became ‘Americanised’ by the shared hardships of the transatlantic crossing, the wilds of untamed regions and hostile circumstances. As well

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<sup>22</sup> M. Ryan, ‘Assimilating New Worlds in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 23 (1981), p. 525.

<sup>23</sup> Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, p. 31. The text Sagahun composed was written in Spanish and the indigenous Nahuatl language. It included information on using these plants individually, in combination with each other or with lime or salt for a range of illnesses. The manuscript herbal was entitled *Libellus de Medicinalibus Indorum Herbis*. Dickson underestimates the role of De la Cruz’s Spanish education in the construction of this text when she asserts that this work ‘owes nothing to foreign influences’. Such a catalogue of plants in a patently European format is an expression of the European botanical renaissance even if all the information arranged within it was pre-Columbian in origin.



as trying to mould the New World in their own terms, such men were 'also ultimately compelled, to some degree, to meet those whom they encountered on their own cultural terms'.<sup>24</sup> Tobacco was a part of this unanticipated cultural exchange.

Europeans in the New World had not 'gone native' but they had begun to assimilate information and activities for which they had found a use in their New World context.

There were numerous opportunities and reasons for those residing in the New World to start using and smoking tobacco. The curious might have tried it as a pastime, the distressed to alleviate their hardships, the trader as a greeting, the sick as a curative. In 1535 Spanish soldiers on Haiti were observed by Oviedo inhaling tobacco smoke through a tube possibly in pursuit of a cure for syphilis.<sup>25</sup> African slaves, enduring the same oppressions as their Amerindian counterparts, became avid smokers:

the Indians smoke tobacco for their pastime . . . to take awaie the wearines, and for to take lightsomnesse of their laboure . . . The blacke people that hath gone from these partes to the Indias, hath taken the same maner and use of the Tabaco, that the Indians hath . . . thei take it at the nose, and mouthe . . . I have seen them dooe it here [in Seville].<sup>26</sup>

By 1550 smoking was prevalent in Spanish, Portuguese and French colonial outposts.<sup>27</sup> When Sir John Hawkins visited Florida in 1564-5, habitual smoking by the

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<sup>24</sup> Pagden, *European Encounters*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>25</sup> Oviedo was at the Spanish Court when Columbus returned from his first voyage. He had no doubt about the origins of this disease 'common amongst the Indians, but not so dangerous in those lands as it is in our own'. De Vigo wrote that, in 'December, 1494, a malady of a hitherto unknown nature appeared in almost every part of Italy'. Others noted its arrival across Europe over the next few years. Recent studies on pre-1500 European and pre-Columbian Amerindian bones support the view that syphilis originated in the Americas. Other studies question this. The debate continues. For further information see: C. Quetel, *History of Syphilis* (Oxford, 1990); J. Arrizabalaga, J. Henderson, R. French, *The Great Pox: the French disease in Renaissance Europe* (New Haven, 1997).

<sup>26</sup> J. Frampton, *Joyfull Newes out of the Newe Founde Worlde . . . written in Spanish by Nicholas Monardes and Englished by John Frampton, Merchant*, (London, 1577), fol. 40.

French Huguenot refugees at the doomed colony of Fort Caroline (attacked by the Spanish soon after Hawkins' departure) attracted attention:

The Floridians when they trauell haue a kinde of herbe, dried, which with a cane, and an earthen cup in the end, with fire, and the dried herbs put together, do suck thorow the cane the smoke thereof, which smoke satisfieth their hunger . . . and this all the Frenchmen used for this purpose . . .<sup>28</sup>

Increasing use of tobacco by Europeans in the New World was made possible by the willingness of Amerindians to trade it.<sup>29</sup> In 1595, Drake's chronicler noted that, near Dominica where much tobacco was growing, 'most of our English and French men barter knives, hatchets, sawes and such like yron tooles in trucke of Tabacco'.<sup>30</sup>

However, as Mancall argues, 'native Americans often controlled the exchange of goods'.<sup>31</sup> For colonists, who had few metal tools and other desirable European manufactures to spare, this was not ideal. Some, most notably the Portuguese in Brazil, began to cultivate it for themselves, perhaps as early as 1534.<sup>32</sup> Achieving control over production and distribution was a key feature of the 'Europeanisation' of

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<sup>27</sup> Von Gernet suggests 1550 as the latest date by which colonial smoking had started (von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 25).

<sup>28</sup> Written by John Spark and published in R. Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, 12 vols., facsimile of 1598-1600 edition (Glasgow, 1903-5), 8, p. 57. This colony was established in 1562 as a trading post. Sparke noted that the Frenchmen were starving not because the area lacked victuals but because, 'they being soldiers, desired to live by the sweat of other men's brows' and only trade for food instead of growing it themselves. Like Harriot twenty years later, Sparke listed commodities that could be gained by agriculture in an area apparently devoid of immediate profit possibilities from silver and gold. Taylor argues that the 'ruthless Spanish massacre' of this colony 'put a stern closure on English colonising schemes for the time being' (E. G. R. Taylor, Late Tudor and Early Stuart Geography (London, 1934), pp. 23-4).

<sup>29</sup> French and then Spanish settlers in 1560s Florida eagerly traded with local Indians (P. C. Mancall, 'Native Americans and Europeans in English America, 1500-1700' in N. Canny (ed.), The Oxford History of the British Empire. Vol. 1: The Origins of Empire (Oxford, 1998), pp. 330-1).

<sup>30</sup> Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations 10, p. 228.

<sup>31</sup> Mancall, 'Native Americans and Europeans', p. 332.

<sup>32</sup> The Portuguese were cultivating tobacco in Brazil by 1534 and exporting it to the home country by 1548, perhaps initiating the growth of tobacco in the New World as an export crop (von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 32).



all exotic commodities.<sup>33</sup> With supplies at hand and both Europeans and Amerindians advertising its benefits, transatlantic mariners also became consumers. Inevitably those returning from the New World brought tobacco and their tobacco consuming habits back with them:

For you may see many sailors, all of whom have returned from there [America] carrying small tubes made of palm leaves or straws, in the end of which they have placed rolled up leaves or crumbled pieces of this plant; this they light with fire, and, opening their mouths wide and breathing in, they suck in as much smoke as they can; this way they say that their hunger and thirst are allayed, their strength is restored and their spirits are refreshed; they asseverate that their brains are lulled by a joyous intoxication, and that an unbelievable amount of moisture is generally expelled.<sup>34</sup>

Some scholars have argued that such encounters between tobacco smoking sailors and people who had never been to the New World spread smoking to Europe. Blackburn states that the 'taste for smoking, chewing or snuffing tobacco was brought back to Europe by seamen and adventurers'.<sup>35</sup> He argues that smoking 'spread from the Indians and the slaves to English, Dutch and French sailors, and from them to the European ports'.<sup>36</sup> However, it cannot be assumed that the people they met back home would understand, embrace or approve of such activities. Rudgely notes that 'the earliest known instance of the use of tobacco in England was in 1556, when a Bristol

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<sup>33</sup> J. Goodman, 'Exitantia or how Enlightenment Europe took to soft drugs', in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy, A. Sherratt (eds.), Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology (London, 1995), p. 129. Amongst other things, this ensured availability on a more regular and predictable basis (p. 126).

<sup>34</sup> From De l'Obel's Adversaria (1570-1), quoted in Dickson, Panacea or Precious Bane, p. 44-5. De l'Obel was inspired to seek out sailors with tobacco because he wished to find evidence for his contention that tobacco was not a henbane as many botanists were suggesting.

<sup>35</sup> R. Blackburn, The Making of New World Slavery (London, 1997), p. 19.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 149.



sailor caused a sensation by smoking in the street'.<sup>37</sup> His consumption would have been unintelligible to those who witnessed it. Despite all his maritime experiences, Hawkins' chronicler could not even name the 'kinde of herbe' he encountered at Fort Caroline. Hawkins reportedly returned with and publicised tobacco in England around 1565 but few were interested. Howes noted that it was 'not vsed by englishmen in many yeers after'.<sup>38</sup>

There were numerous opportunities for the English to encounter smoking sailors. Many leading merchants and sea-captains, especially men from the West Country, were closely connected with the Spanish maritime world. In the 1520s, Robert Thorne and Roger Barlow, backers of Cabot's voyages and propagandists for projects of discovery, were actively engaged in the trade to the Spanish Indies.<sup>39</sup> Trade with Spain might have brought tobacco and tobacco smoking sailors to English ports. As early as 1513, Spanish goods entering Bristol included spices from East and West such as aniseed, ginger, 'Brazil', pepper and liquorice.<sup>40</sup> Sailors in the Spanish flotillas anchored off Portsmouth during the visits of Philip II to England in the 1550s might well have smoked.<sup>41</sup> MacInnes speculated that 'some small quantities of tobacco probably reached England during the reign of Queen Mary as a result of the close

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<sup>37</sup> R. Rudgley, The Alchemy of Culture: intoxicants in society (London, 1993), p. 139. Rudgley does not cite the source of this information.

<sup>38</sup> Edmund Howes, writing in 1614, added that 'at this day, [it is] commonly vsed by most men and many women' (E. Howes, The Annales, or a Generall Chronicle of England, Begun by Maister Iohn Stow, and After him continued and Augmented with Matters Forreyne, and Domestique, Auncient and Moderne, unto the Ende of this Present Yeere 1614 (London, 1615), p. 948).

<sup>39</sup> G. Connell-Smith, Forerunners of Drake: a study of English trade with Spain in the early Tudor period (London, 1954), p. 198. They laded Spanish ships at Seville and were in close and regular contact with the Spanish maritime world (pp. 70-4).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix A, p. 211. 'Brazil' was a type of wood used as a dye.

<sup>41</sup> Philip II's interest in New World plants developed after he had left England. However, some of the sailors in his fleet may have already crossed the Atlantic or encountered those who had while escorting gold shipments etc. For details of Philip's year in England 1554-5 and further 5 months in 1557, see: G. Redworth, 'Matters Impertinent to Women: Male and Female Monarchy under Philip and Mary', English History Review (1997), pp. 597-613.

connection which at that time existed between England and Spain'.<sup>42</sup> Iberian sailors employed on English ships, such as Simon Fernandez, a Portuguese pilot who played a leading role in early English expeditions, might have introduced English mariners to it.<sup>43</sup> Despite all these opportunities, there is no evidence of any spread of smoking from ship to shore as a result of such contacts.

This was because tobacco smoking in Europe lacked a context. Colonial and maritime tobacco consumption derived directly from Amerindian practices. It had been re-fashioned and transmuted by experiential perceptions of its effects and uses. When the European transatlantic 'tribe' brought their 'wisdom' about tobacco back to their home ports, few would have been interested in alleviating fatigue, hunger and thirst by inhaling the smoke of a rare and expensive exotic commodity.<sup>44</sup> Rest, food and drink were more readily available prescriptions for such disorders. The 'joyous intoxication' sailors reported, probably merely the satisfaction of unrecognised cravings for nicotine, was unlikely to displace other more familiar intoxicants. Smoking may have made sense in the New World but there had to be a reason, a place in the European conceptual grid, before people in Europe would embrace it.<sup>45</sup>

Transatlantic sailors and adventurers alone could not instigate the spread of smoking to non-maritime Europe but they did facilitate it once it had begun. Sailors and

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<sup>42</sup> C. M. MacInnes, The Early English Tobacco Trade (London, 1926), p. 27.

<sup>43</sup> R. Lacey, Sir Walter Raleigh (London, 1973), p. 60.

<sup>44</sup> A detailed examination of the early arrival of samples of tobacco in Spanish and Portuguese ports remains beyond the scope of this research.

<sup>45</sup> Sahlins suggests the need for a process of 'commodity indigenization', finding meaning for a newly encountered commodity, before accepting and using it (M. Sahlins, 'Cosmologies of Capitalism: the trans-Pacific sector of "the world-system"', Proceedings of the British Academy 74 (1988), pp. 5-6). Goodman extrapolates from this and states that, to understand how tobacco was accepted in Europe, the 'European cultural context of the sixteenth century as well as the paths of cultural transmission' must be considered (Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 42).

explorers functioned as the conduits through which tobacco and other exotic substances, such as sarsaparilla and guaiac, crossed from the New World to the Old. Those returning from the seventy-four English expeditions to the Caribbean between 1585 and 1603 carried back and disseminated tobacco acquired through trade with Amerindians and Spanish colonists or seized from Spanish ships.<sup>46</sup> West Country sailors, who had been prominent in Anglo-Spanish trade, were at the forefront of such transatlantic voyages. It is probably no coincidence that, by the 1630s, the tobacco trade in Devon and Cornwall seems to have been exceptionally active (see chapter 7). When smoking had become popular, mariners were able to sustain nascent demand for tobacco and disseminate their patterns of consumption in English ports and coastal communities. However, in isolation, the dissemination of tobacco and patterns of consumption through encounters with smoking sailors was unlikely to extend far beyond the quayside.

### The appropriation and spread of tobacco as medicine in Europe

The ‘Columbian exchange’ that initiated smoking by Europeans in the New World and at sea had little to do with the English. Apart from the voyages of Cabot and the Newfoundland fisheries, few Englishmen had crossed the Atlantic let alone stayed there before 1585. By the time the English made the first tentative steps towards establishing a colony, another crucial development in the ‘transculturation’ of tobacco

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<sup>46</sup> Blackburn, Making of New World Slavery, p. 220. Drake’s fleets are not included amongst these 183 English ships engaged in 74 ventures. For accounts of these and other voyages see, for example, D. B. Quinn, New American World (London, 1979).



was far advanced.<sup>47</sup> Tobacco had been assimilated within the specific European conceptual framework of herbal pharmacology. By the mid-sixteenth century, an international effort was underway to 'retrieve the Greek materia medica' from what Andreas Vesalius called 'the perpetual darkness and silent night' of medieval errors.<sup>48</sup> Physicians and botanists were re-evaluating and classifying familiar as well as exotic plants in Dioscoridean terms.<sup>49</sup> This European herbal renaissance prompted Venetian authorities to instruct their citizens to look out for plants wherever they roamed.<sup>50</sup> It prompted some investigators to look towards the New World and tobacco. Phillip II of Spain, for example, sent his own physician to Mexico in 1559 to investigate the flora. Tobacco plants he brought back were cultivated in the royal gardens.<sup>51</sup>

In his herbal of 1553, published in Antwerp, Rembert Dodoens identified tobacco (incorrectly) as yellow henbane probably by direct study of a living *Nicotiana Rustica* plant. Dickson suggests that this stimulated claims that tobacco was evil.<sup>52</sup> It is more

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<sup>47</sup> Von Gernet considers acculturation an 'unfortunate term' because of its connotations of unilateralism. By using the term 'transculturation' he indicates a different 'cultural domain in which elements of the two groups in contact become part of the same interactive complex' (von Gernet, 'Transculturation', pp. 12-13). Here, the word transculturation is used to signify that Amerindian and European understanding of the medicinal use of tobacco was reshaped by contact whether by Amerindians and Europeans learning from each other or by Europeans bringing tobacco 'wisdom' from one Amerindian group to another by their various encounters.

<sup>48</sup> A. Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe 1500-1700', in L. I. Conrad, M. Neve, V. Nutton, R. Porter, A. Wear, *The Western Medical Tradition* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 253, 300. Physicians and their students were at the forefront of botanical research.

<sup>49</sup> This 'herbal renaissance' began around 1530 with the *Herbarum Vivae Eicones* of Otto Brunfels (See A. Arber, *Herbals: their origin and evolution* (Cambridge, 1953)). Before that, and for some time after, the first century AD Greek herbal of Dioscorides remained 'the standard work on materia medica in Europe' (B. Jackson, 'From Papyri to Pharmacopoeia' in F. N. L. Poynter (ed.), *The Evolution of Pharmacy in Britain* (London, 1965), p. 155). This was considered to be the 'repository of ancient wisdom that had been used by the great Galen' whose philosophies of medicine were in vogue in the sixteenth century (A. Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe', p. 301).

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303. Plants such as balsam and myrrh were rediscovered in this way.

<sup>51</sup> Matthee, 'Exotic Substances', p. 29.

<sup>52</sup> Dickson suggests that the resemblance to henbane provided critics of tobacco with another angle of attack but she surely overestimates this connection when she suggests that the identification of tobacco as henbane contributed to the belief that tobacco was evil (Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, p. 34). Plants with poisonous properties were of most use in a medical philosophy that considered all medicines to be poisonous if administered in incorrect proportions.

likely that this classification as a plant noted by ancient writers but unknown in sixteenth-century Europe assisted the acceptance of tobacco. Dodoens and others were forcing American flora and fauna into classical categories.<sup>53</sup> This was a means of understanding and establishing dominion over the natural world.<sup>54</sup> At this time, 'learned medicine was concerned with retrieving past knowledge rather than creating fundamentally new knowledge'.<sup>55</sup> Something western medicine had lost had now been recovered. Plucked from its New World context, stripped of its pagan associations and placed alongside the more familiar burre-weed and coltsfoot in botanical gardens and catalogues of plants, tobacco was ready for learned scrutiny. Many people began to investigate its medicinal potential prompting a pan-European dispersal of the tobacco plant and information about it.

Jean Nicot's role in spreading tobacco to France illustrates this.<sup>56</sup> While ambassador to Lisbon, Nicot was given 'a strange Plant brought from Florida'.<sup>57</sup> He grew it in his garden. One of his servants told him that it was a good cure for wounds. Nicot asked around and found others who claimed it was good for various skin conditions. He observed it being used successfully, most notably to heal a cook at his house who had 'almoste cut of his Thombe'. Frampton claimed that this particular incident made tobacco famous throughout Lisbon. People began to seek the 'Ambassador's herb' for

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<sup>53</sup> Pagden, *European Encounters*, p.10.

<sup>54</sup> Goodman considers this as an aspect of the 'Europeanisation' of exotic commodities. Botanists and physicians gave the new substances (tea, coffee, sugar, tobacco etc.) 'European meanings within the prevailing discourse' (Goodman, 'Exitantia', p. 131).

<sup>55</sup> Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe', p. 256.

<sup>56</sup> This account is drawn from Frampton's addition to Monardes text on tobacco (Frampton, *Joyfull Newes*, fols. 42-43v). Frampton reported that his informant in this matter was 'the first authour, inventer, and bringer of this herbe into Fraunce', i.e. Nicot himself. Goodman considers that Frampton's additions were translations from other texts (Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, p. 46).

<sup>57</sup> Frampton states that Nicot got the tobacco from the keeper of the prison but von Gernet suggests this is a translation error. The true source appears to have been De Goes, keeper of royal records at Lisbon, a relative of whom had travelled to the New World (von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 31). As with Raleigh, Nicot's role in tobacco's dissemination has been mythologised.



a range of ailments. Convinced of its miraculous power, Nicot sent some tobacco plants to King Francis II and Catherine de Medici of France and ‘to many other Lordes of the Courte, with the maner of governyng the same: and how to applie it’.<sup>58</sup> Nicot was not the first Frenchman to note tobacco. Andre Thevet, who returned to France from Brazil in 1556, described it in its Amerindian context.<sup>59</sup> However, it was Nicot who introduced it into the gardens of the French court, advertised its medicinal uses and gained the association of his own name with the new drug. A few years later in 1572 another French investigator, Jacques Gohory, wrote the first treatise specifically about tobacco.<sup>60</sup> He detailed five principal medicinal ways to use it (green leaves, distillation, ointment, oil, and compounded into a salt). In France, tobacco had been recognised as medicine and was being grown in botanical gardens far away from its New World context.

Academic interest in tobacco was also aroused in other parts of Europe. Conrad Gesner, botanist, physician and scientist, experimented with a leaf of the plant he had heard was called Nicotiana. Eager to investigate the poisons within it, he chewed it, smoked it, fed it to his dog and then enthused about its potential.<sup>61</sup> Gesner implored the donor of the leaf upon which he was experimenting to send a plant or seeds or

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<sup>58</sup> Brongers, *Tobacco in the Netherlands*, p. 23. Nicot had previously sent instructions for orange tree cultivation to the court.

<sup>59</sup> A. Thevet, *Singularitez de la France Antarctique* (Paris, 1558). Second edition at Antwerp also in 1558. This was translated into English by Thomas Hacket (A. Thevet, *The New Found World, or Antarctike . . . newly translated into Englishe* (London, 1568)).

<sup>60</sup> W. H. Bowen, ‘The Earliest Treatise on Tobacco: Jacque Gohory’s “Instruction sur l’herbe petum”’, *Isis* 28 (1938), p. 359. Gohory founded a botanical garden and laboratory near Paris in 1572 ‘the Lycium philosophical Sanmarcellin’ (p.349fn.1). Bowen supports the idea that Gohory gained most of his knowledge about tobacco from ‘his own observations or from conversations with his friends’. He adds that, in sixteenth century France, tobacco was considered a wonderful remedy but continental Europeans ‘were slow to recognize in the herb anything but a garden plant or a new source of medicine’ (pp. 360-3).

<sup>61</sup> Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, pp. 69-71. Gesner died soon after, before he could cultivate a plant of his own and continue his investigations.



even the remnants of a dead plant to him in Zurich, far from the Atlantic ports.<sup>62</sup>

Pietro Mattioli based his description on a plant sent to him in Bohemia from Italy by Jacopo Cortusi.<sup>63</sup> Such networks of academic exchange spread tobacco plants far and wide. As De l'Obel commented, if the tobacco plant could speak it

would reproach the more reckless detractors of botany for their inactivity, but it would congratulate intelligent investigators for their zeal, because of which, a few years ago, it [being brought] from the West Indies, became a dweller in Portugal, France, Belgium and England.<sup>64</sup>

By 1599, *Nicotiana Rustica* had become common in English gardens, 'where it doth prosper exceedingly, insomuch that it cannot be destroyed where it hath once sown it self, & it is dispersed into most parts of London'.<sup>65</sup>

Books generated by this medico-botanical assimilation of tobacco also circulated in England. Some had been translated into Latin and French making them accessible to a wider readership. English physicians such as Nicholas Simpson, John Hatcher and his son in law, Thomas Lorkin, owned copies of Dodoens' herbals and texts by Gesner.<sup>66</sup>

Lorkin also had a copy of Thomas Hacket's translation of Thevet's New Founde Worlde (1568) in his collection. Simpson, Hatcher and Lorkin were eminent Cambridge University dignitaries who could disseminate what they learned to the next

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 39. Mattioli was an important Italian herbalist and physician to Archduke Ferdinand and Emperor Maximilian II (p. 37).

<sup>64</sup> Taken from De l'Obel's *Adversaria* 1570-1, quoted in Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>65</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 284.

<sup>66</sup> Leedham-Green, *Books in Cambridge Inventories*, p. 492. Lorkin was born in 1528 and held the position of Regius Professor of Physic at Cambridge from 1564 until his death in 1591. His collection included medical books inherited from both Simpson and Hatcher. For more on Lorkin's books and connections between these individuals see C. Sayle, 'The Library of Thomas Lorkin', *Annals of Medical History* III. 4 (1921), pp. 310-23.

generation of English physicians. With an English edition of Dodoens' herbal, information from Europe about the tobacco plant and suggestions about its medicinal benefits became increasingly available.<sup>67</sup>

English access to European wisdom about tobacco was substantially increased in 1577 with the publication of Joyfull Newes out of the Newe Founde Worlde, an English translation of Nicholas Monardes' 1571 study of New World plants. John Frampton, a merchant trading to Spain, told his readers that he was offering knowledge to complement the supply of New World 'Hearbes, Trees, Oyles, Plants, and stones, etc.' which were already being transshipped to English physicians via Spain.<sup>68</sup> Monardes was a Spanish physician living in Seville, the centre for Spanish trade with the New World. Although he never crossed the Atlantic he did own a share in a slave ship and was perfectly placed to acquire plants to cultivate in his botanical garden.<sup>69</sup> He was widely acknowledged as the European expert on tobacco. Charles L'Ecluse translated Monardes' book into Latin in 1574.<sup>70</sup> There were also German, Italian and French editions. Frampton's English translation was reprinted in 1580 and 1596. It became a standard textbook for English physicians and herbalists.<sup>71</sup> Lorkin and Hatcher had copies. The Cambridge bookseller, John Denys, had two copies in stock in 1578.<sup>72</sup> As Guerra notes, Frampton's title signifies a very positive contemporary attitude to drugs

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<sup>67</sup> R. Dodoens, A Niewe Herball, or Historie of Plantes (London, 1578).

<sup>68</sup> Frampton, Joyfull Newes, 'title page'.

<sup>69</sup> H. Thomas, The Slave Trade: the history of the Atlantic slave trade 1440-1870 (London, 1997), p. 119.

<sup>70</sup> Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe', p. 307.

<sup>71</sup> Von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 47.

<sup>72</sup> Denys first appears in the records in 1565 as 'John Denosius, Frenchman and bookseller'. He had around 500 books in stock which are detailed in Leedham-Green, Books in Cambridge Inventories, vol. 1, pp. 326-40.



from America.<sup>73</sup> It is no surprise that the amateur healer and New World adventurer, Raleigh, consulted it.<sup>74</sup> Harriot reportedly took a copy of the book with him to Roanoke.<sup>75</sup>

Monardes' compendium of tobacco wisdom was distilled from both European and New World sources. Like his examinations of other substances from the East and West Indies, it followed the standard format for medico-botanical reporting: place of origin, physical description, properties and uses. He related that tobacco was first brought to Spain as an adornment for gardens.<sup>76</sup> By 1570, it had become a popular medicine in Seville: 'here in this Countrie, and in this City they know not what to doe, having cut or hurte themselves, but to run to the Tabaco, as a most redie remedie, it doth marveilous workes, without any neede of other Surgery'.<sup>77</sup> His more learned estimation showed that this '*sana sancta*' was much more than an antiseptic.<sup>78</sup> Included in a cornucopia of ointments and poultices, formulas and concoctions it could help physicians tackle a host of conditions ranging from chilblains to intestinal worms, from halitosis to gout.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Guerra, 'Drugs from the Indies', p. 51. As Guerra also points out, not all writers were so positive. There were strong arguments in favour of relying on home-grown substances.

<sup>74</sup> Raleigh had read Monardes (probably Frampton's translation). In his The Discovery of Guiana (London, 1595) he recites Monardes' cure for deafness - powdered armadillo horn. See A.M. Latham (ed.), Sir Walter Raleigh: Selected Prose and Poetry (London, 1965), p. 146.

<sup>75</sup> D. B. Quinn, New American World (London, 1979), p. 146.

<sup>76</sup> Frampton, Joyfull Newes, fol. 34.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 37v.

<sup>78</sup> The suggestion that tobacco was holy did not derive from reports of shamanistic consumption. Rather it was a reflection of the patronage connections of those who, having investigated its properties, were vaunting it as a miraculous curative herb. It is indicative of the role played by monarchs and high churchmen as patrons of New World adventure and recipients of the proceeds.

<sup>79</sup> The absorption of tobacco into existing remedies and the creation of new ones, its manipulation according to 16th Century medico-scientific method, its incorporation into herbal-pharmacopoeias, combination with and displacement of European medicinal plants could illuminate much about the underlying assumptions of medicine at this time. Inhaling smoke, for example, was not a particularly common form of medicinal ingestion prior to tobacco.



Monardes advocated the inhalation of tobacco smoke for ‘griefes of the brest’.<sup>80</sup> The smoke ‘beyng taken at the mouthe, doth cause that the [rotten] matter be put out of the brest’. William Harrison confirmed this kind of medicinal smoking:

In these daies [1573], the taking-in of the smoke of the Indian herbe called “Tabaco”, by an instrument formed like a litle ladell . . . is gretlie taken-vp & vsed in England, against Rewmes & some other diseases ingendered in the longes & inward partes, & not without effect. This herbe as yet is not so comon, but that for want thereof diuers do practice for the like purposes with the . . . yellow henbane, albeit not without gret error; for, althoughe that herbe be a souerene healer of old vlcers & sores reputed incurable outwardly, yet is not the smoke or vapour thereof so profitable to be receaued inwardly.<sup>81</sup>

Monardes was more ambivalent about Amerindian inspired use of tobacco and tobacco smoke. He credited Amerindians with introducing Europeans to its medicinal value.<sup>82</sup> However, he indicated that European uses of it had exceeded Amerindian knowledge. For example, he related how Puerto Rican Indians’ fear of Carib raiders’ poisoned arrows was mitigated by the Spaniards urging them to use tobacco juice and leaf pulp to cure their wounds.<sup>83</sup> Monardes also noted that Amerindians and Africans smoked tobacco to dispel weariness and reinvigorate themselves so they could return

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<sup>80</sup> Frampton, *Joyfull Newes*, fol. 35.

<sup>81</sup> Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, p. 132.

<sup>82</sup> The Spanish conquerors ‘beyng taught of the Indians, they did profite themselves of those thinges, in the Woundes whiche they received in their Warres, healyng themselves therewith’ (Frampton, *Joyfull Newes*, fol. 34).

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81. In this and other cases, Europeans were transmitting ‘wisdom’ from one part of the Americas to another. Von Gernet notes that tobacco was also traded around the New World by Europeans as a currency of exchange (A. von Gernet, ‘Nicotian Dreams: the prehistory and early history of tobacco in eastern North America’ in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy, A. Sherratt (eds.), *Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology* (London, 1995), p. 77). Additionally, information about and supplies of tobacco reached Asia and Africa through connections between transatlantic and other established trading routes. The Amerindian commodity thus became a global commodity, growing in the Philippines, India, Japan and West Africa by 1600 (Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, p. 37).

to their 'foolishe' dancing and awake refreshed.<sup>84</sup> He equated this behaviour with opium use in the East. He condemned Amerindian use of tobacco as a 'pastyme . . . to make them selves drunke withall' alongside its shamanistic applications as deceptions of the devil.<sup>85</sup> He equated the chewing of tobacco to alleviate hunger and thirst with the hibernation of bears who 'live without meate, or drinke, with onely cheweyng his pawes'.<sup>86</sup> In each case, Amerindian ways of using tobacco were fascinating but, as with travellers' tales, they were hardly relevant to his readers.

Ortiz suggests that tobacco could only enter European soil or habits after it had been transplanted into European consciousness.<sup>87</sup> Its assimilation within the European herbal pharmacopoeia and endorsement by physicians achieved this. Europeans had distilled and filtered the wisdom of diverse Amerindian communities and, as it seemed from their lofty Galenic perch, stepped beyond it and offered new insights. Tobacco was still a New World novelty but it had also become a recognised European medicine - a henbane, 'hot and drie in the seconde degree'.<sup>88</sup> It was a drug for a range of ailments which could be traded through established channels and end up in Buttes's 'Fumi-vendulus', the apothecaries shop.<sup>89</sup> Through Monardes and later texts, such as Gerard's Historie of Plantes (1597), the English knew about and, more importantly, 'understood' tobacco. Gerard even referred to yellow henbane (*Nicotiana Rustica*) as

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<sup>84</sup> Frampton, Joyfull Newes, fols. 40-40v. Monardes does not seem to have considered the labours of the day as the prime cause of the slaves' weariness.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 39.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 41v.

<sup>87</sup> Ortiz quoted in von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 15.

<sup>88</sup> This was Monardes' assessment (Frampton, Joyfull Newes, fol. 34v).

<sup>89</sup> Guerra, 'Drugs from the Indies', p. 51. The clarity of Monardes' presentation promoted increased demand for 'balms, sarsaparilla, guaiac, tobacco and other drugs imported from America'.



‘English tobacco’, another in a long list of names signalling the progressive assimilation of tobacco across European borders.<sup>90</sup> Tobacco had been ‘discovered’.

Europeans had thus found a reason to assimilate tobacco and a conceptual framework to determine its use. This had little to do with Amerindian tobacco consumption or the smoking of sailors. In Atlantic ports such as Lisbon, the use of tobacco to heal wounds had spread from ship to shore. It was already being used in this way before Nicot became interested in it. However, while learned evaluations extended this knowledge and disseminated it inland, smoking largely remained an oddity of transatlantic existence. Medico-botanical discourses on tobacco confirmed that, except for specific medical treatments, smoking belonged in the realm of the pagan where superstition and base appetite, not reason, reigned. Dependency could perhaps turn a physician’s administration of tobacco smoke into a regular prescription, but the communal smoking often exhibited by sailors to alleviate discomforts and experience ‘joyous intoxication’ still had little relevance in Europe. This was part of the New World experience beyond the cognisance of the uninitiated. Tobacco as medicine made sense. Smoking it in European public spaces still did not.

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<sup>90</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p.285. Gerard asserted that this type of ‘yellow henbane’ should only be used externally. ‘Right tabaco’, which he classified as ‘Henbane of Peru’, was much more versatile. Gerard apparently had some difficulty growing this. The catalogue of plants in his garden in 1596 includes yellow henbane but not ‘henbane of Peru’. Evidently successful by 1599, the year of the second edition of his book in which he extends his account, ‘Henbane of Peru’ is listed but not alongside the more common variety (B. D. Jackson, *A Catalogue of Plants Cultivated in the Garden of John Gerard in the Years 1596-1599* (London, 1876), pp. 3, 37 & 52).



## The formation of the English tobacco 'tradition'

When English colonial endeavours began with the scouting voyage of Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe to the Roanoke area in 1584, few encounters between Englishmen and Amerindians had been of sufficient duration for much significant cultural exchange. The sailors on Hawkins' and Drake's expeditions met and traded with people they encountered but did little else. They were looking for Spaniards to plunder.<sup>91</sup> Newfoundland fishermen had only 'sporadic and typically brief' contact with Amerindians.<sup>92</sup> When Amadas and Barlowe returned, they brought with them two captive Amerindians, Manteo and Wanchese, who caused a sensation in London.<sup>93</sup> Through these 'savage men', as King James called them, the first important steps in assimilating Amerindian culture were taken when Thomas Harriot learned a few words of Carolina Algonquian from them.<sup>94</sup> By then, tobacco was a renowned European medicine and a reputed New World palliative. As Ralph Lane and Thomas Harriot set sail for Roanoke in 1585, the stage was set for its use to become an English pastime.<sup>95</sup>

Between August 1585 and June 1586, the 108 Roanoke colonists seem to have quickly adopted the tobacco consuming habits of their 'hosts'. Indeed, it would have

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<sup>91</sup> Privateering became a significant motive for gaining a foothold in the New World when Spain began escorting treasure ships in convoys from Hispaniola. Attacking Spanish ships was much more profitable than developing colonies. The ships that took and brought back the Roanoke colonists exemplify this. After disembarking the colonists, Greville took prizes worth £10,000 while Drake, who gave them passage home, carried the proceeds of his raid on Santa Domingo (D. B. Quinn, England and the Discovery of America 1481-1620 (London, 1974), p. 295).

<sup>92</sup> Mancall, 'Native Americans & Europeans', p. 330. 'Their contacts with the native population were sporadic and typically brief trading encounters on board the English ships or on the shore'.

<sup>93</sup> K. O. Kuppermann, Roanoke: the abandoned colony (New Jersey, 1984), p. 17.

<sup>94</sup> 'With the report of a great discovery for a Conquest, some two or three savage men, were brought in, together with this Savage custome. Bute the pitie is, the poore wilde barbarous men died, but that vile barbarous custome is yet alive, yea in fresh vigor' (King James I, Counterblaste, sig. B2).

<sup>95</sup> Roanoke Island is in North Carolina. Virginia was a general name for the entire coast.

been surprising if Harriot, who spent much time with them, learning their language and investigating their culture, had not tried smoking.<sup>96</sup> Conversing with ‘priests’ about their religion brought him into close contact with the principal disseminators of tobacco use.<sup>97</sup> Tobacco was an integral part of male Amerindian culture which would probably have been offered and accepted as a bridge between the two groups of men facilitating the establishment of friendly relations.<sup>98</sup>

Upon their return to England, Harriot and others related their experiences. Harriot’s role had been to gather information and then disseminate it as part of the campaign for further colonial projects. Information about tobacco was a small part of this. The adventurers had not found precious metals to exploit or a route to the East. However, Harriot asserted that they had found a potential source of ‘Apothecarie drugs. . . and sundry other rich commodities’ which patient colonial development could make highly profitable.<sup>99</sup> Though not specifically listed as commercially important, tobacco had been one of the few items they had brought home after their hasty departure on Drake’s ships.

Harriot told how, having witnessed ritual and medicinal smoking of *vppowoc*<sup>100</sup> ‘through pipes made of claie’, the colonists began to:

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<sup>96</sup> J. Jacquot, ‘Thomas Harriot’s Reputation for Impiety’, Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London 9 (1952), p. 167. See also: J. Korbler, ‘Thomas Harriot (1560-1621) fumeur de pipe, victime du cancer?’, Gesnerus 9 (1952), pp. 52-4; J.W. Shirley (ed.), Thomas Harriot, Renaissance Scientist (Oxford, 1974).

<sup>97</sup> D.B. Quinn, ‘Thomas Harriot and the New World’ in Shirley, Thomas Harriot, pp. 38-40.

<sup>98</sup> In Amerindian societies, ‘any agreement or obligation sealed in the presence of tobacco, typically by passing the pipe, made it binding’ (Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 33).

<sup>99</sup> Letter from Lane to Hakluyt (3 September 1585) reproduced in A. Smith, Virginia 1584-1607 (London, 1957), pp. 29-30.

<sup>100</sup> Note the avoidance of the Spanish word ‘tobacco’. In Algonquian, ‘uppowoc’ appears to be a compound word meaning ‘they puff it’ (see D. B. Quinn (ed.), The Roanoke Voyages 1584-90 2 vols. (London, 1955), 2, p. 898).



suck it after their maner, as also since our returne, & have found manie rare and wonderful experiments of the virtues thereof . . . the vse of it by so manie of late, men and women of great calling as else, and some learned Phisitions also, is sufficient witnes.<sup>101</sup>

In these few lines, Harriot fused together the two key elements of tobacco's transmission from the New World to the Old. Tobacco functioned as an antidote to cold, hunger and thirst, punctuating the day and making the rigors of the New World more endurable. The colonists had developed their own smoking culture directly from Amerindian practices in the same way as other transatlantic Europeans. It was something 'we' did. Patterns of ingestion had developed which gave the consumption of the palliative a social dimension. However, it was also a substance that learned physicians and their wealthy patients had endorsed. Using the copy of Monardes' text that he took with him, he could have little doubt that the tobacco proffered by the Amerindians was already accepted as a versatile and potent medicine.<sup>102</sup>

Harriot and his fellow colonists needed to relocate their smoking to English social venues. Their consumption must have been influenced by physiological dependency by the time they got home.<sup>103</sup> Merging European medical approval with their Amerindian-style social ingestion enabled them to justify their continuing consumption to themselves and others. There had been reasons to smoke tobacco in the New World. There were reasons to continue to do so back in England. This

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<sup>101</sup> T. Hariot, A Briefe and True Report in Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations 8, pp. 363-4. Harriot's account is also reprinted in, Quinn, The Roanoke Voyages 1, pp. 317-387.

<sup>102</sup> Schlesinger suggests that Harriot became a heavy smoker because of advertisements of its medicinal efficacy (R. Schlesinger, In the Wake of Columbus: the impact of the New World on Europe, 1492-1650 (Illinois, 1996), p. 97). Schlesinger seems to suggest he was seduced by his own propaganda in this regard rather than convinced by European assessments of the drug and his own American experiences.

important fusion of ideas about tobacco as medicine and Amerindian practices gave a conceptual basis for the continuation of Roanoke-style smoking in England. It was, however, unlikely to stimulate its spread to healthy people who had never been to the New World.

Roanoke was an important turning point in the history of English smoking because of the reception the colonists received upon their return and the context in which their information about smoking was disseminated. Harley notes that tobacco became integral to a campaign for a Protestant foreign policy aimed at challenging the still growing empire of Spain. Amongst a select and influential group centred on ‘Our English Ulisses, renowned Syr Walter Rawleigh’, tobacco smoking became ‘a symbol of their colonial ambitions’.<sup>104</sup> Before Roanoke, smoking was either a medicinal activity prescribed by physicians for unhealthy people or an oddity of the New World.<sup>105</sup> After Roanoke, smoking was a self-medicating activity and an expression of laudable colonial aspirations. For investors and others who helped prepare the Roanoke expedition, tobacco offered a tangible ‘taste’ of the New World. This was a powerful motivation for the New World enthusiast to learn smoking from the New World veteran.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> As Goodman notes, it is ‘now irrefutable’ that tobacco is highly addictive, prompting regular and compulsive use to avoid symptoms of withdrawal (Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 5).

<sup>104</sup> D. Harley, ‘The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy: Puritanism, James I, and the Royal Physicians’, Bulletin of the History of Medicine 67 (1993), p. 29. Harley notes that the courtiers of late Tudor England used tobacco recreationally for this reason.

<sup>105</sup> One of the Raleigh myths states that Raleigh took his first smoke in Cornwood, South Devon in 1564 (C. A. Tatman, ‘The Clay Tobacco Pipe Industry in the Parish of Newington, Southwark, London’, in P. Davey (ed.), ‘The Archaeology of the Clay Tobacco Pipe’, British Archaeological Review, British series 239 (1994), p. 5). If true, this was more likely to have been inspired by travellers tales related by local mariners than advertisements of its European medicinal uses that were only just beginning to be published.

<sup>106</sup> Rudgley suggests, from his studies of diverse cultures’ use of intoxicants since pre-history, that: ‘seekers after scientific or poetic truth have. . . been among the first to experiment with new or little known psychoactive substances and have . . . acted as catalysts for social change’ (Rudgley, Alchemy of Culture, p. 145).



An upsurge in the publication of English books about the New World around this time further spread news of the new substance. Frampton's Joyfull Newes was joined by Sparke's account of Hawkins' voyages (published by Hakluyt in 1589), Thomas Harriot's celebrated A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (1588) and numerous other travellers' tales. These promoted a positive view of tobacco and advertised Amerindian ways of using it. Displays of smoking by influential figures, especially Raleigh, combined with enthusiasm for the New World to make smoking fashionable. The image of Raleigh and his silver pipe became iconic. It encapsulated the promise and achievements of the Roanoke expedition, England's only substantial colonial moment in the New World thus far. The Raleigh and Roanoke as originator myths were born. Contemporary recollections of the upsurge in smoking inevitably confirmed the pivotal role of Raleigh and the 'Roanokers' in bridging the gulf between smoking in the New and Old Worlds. As William Camden<sup>107</sup> put it, the Roanokers were

the first (that I know of) that brought at their returne into England, that Indian Plant called Tobacco or Nicotiana, which they vsed being instructed by the Indians, against crudities of the Stomack. And certes since that time it is growne so frequent in vse, and of such a price, that many, nay, the most parte, with an insatiable desire doe take of it, drawing into their mouth the smoke thereof, which is a strong sent, through a Pipe made of earth, and venting it out againe through their nose some for wantonness, or rather fashion sake, and other for healths sake, insomuch that Tobacco shops are set up in greater numbers than either Alehouses or Tavernes. And as one said

falsely, the bodies of such Englishmen, as are so much delighted with this plant, did seeme to degenerate into the nature of the Savages, because they were carried away with the selfe-same thing, beleeving to obtaine and conserve their health by the selfe-same meanes, as the barbarians did.<sup>108</sup>

Theodore Mayerne, chemical physician and chief contributor to the first London pharmacopoeia of 1618, was equally specific. He wrote in Harriot's case notes:

'primus ex Virginia innexit in Angliam usum fumi tabaci'.<sup>109</sup>

There is little evidence of how smoking spread from this or any other group of transatlantic adventurers to wider society. However, it is possible to speculate about how this happened. It is reasonable to assume that tobacco was a part of narratives of New World exploits and, if tobacco was available, that listeners might be encouraged to try it. Harriot's patron, Sir Walter Raleigh, and his friend, Christopher Marlowe, became confirmed smokers.<sup>110</sup> The Earl of Northumberland, an ardent supporter of colonial enterprises who later provided Harriot with a pension and accommodation in the grounds of Syon House, similarly embraced the activity.<sup>111</sup> Perhaps Richard

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<sup>107</sup> Camden was born in 1551 and died in 1623. He had witnessed the transition from a society that knew nothing about tobacco to one which had fully integrated tobacco into both social and medical realms. He was 36 when the colonists returned from Roanoke.

<sup>108</sup> Camden was writing of 1585. His *Annales Rerum Anglicarum* was published in Latin in 1615. This excerpt is taken from the translation by Abraham Darcie: W. Camden, *Annales of the Time and Royall History of the Famous Empress Elizabeth Queen of England, France and Ireland &c. . .* (London, 1625), Book 3, p. 107.

<sup>109</sup> R. C. H. Tanner, 'Henry Stevens and the Associates of Thomas Harriot', in Shirley, *Thomas Harriot*, p. 106. Details of others who knew Harriot after his return from Roanoke are given here including Sir John Harington and Sir Robert Sydney. Mayerne was a Huguenot who moved permanently to the court of James I in 1610 and joined the College of Physicians in 1616 (H. J. Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London* (Ithaca etc., 1986), p. 95). Furdell describes him as 'a pragmatic Paracelsian' (E. L. Furdell, *The Royal Doctors 1485-1714: medical personnel at the Tudor and Stuart courts* (Rochester N.Y., 2001), p. 106).

<sup>110</sup> Raleigh is reputed to have learned smoking from Harriot who had already assumed the role of teacher when he taught Raleigh about navigation. Harriot and Marlowe were considered to have led Raleigh astray (Jacquot, 'Harriot's Reputation for Impiety', p. 167).

<sup>111</sup> Northumberland was Harriot's friend (J.W. Shirley, *Thomas Harriot*, pp. 22-3). He was an avid smoker who frequently sent his servant to procure tobacco for him when at Syon House, residing in



Hakluyt (cleric and chronicler of the expeditions) or John Dee (the 'guru of Elizabethan exploration' who drew Harriot into the venture) tried a smoke 'Roanoke-style'.<sup>112</sup> Others who were willing to risk capital in the venture, such as William Sanderson (a London merchant married to Raleigh's niece and his link to the London merchant community), Sir Lionel Ducket and Sir Thomas Smythe, were probably offered and might have relished 'tasting' this sample of the New World.<sup>113</sup>

Such routes of dissemination were not confined to elite circles or London, where metropolitan and maritime worlds converged.<sup>114</sup> The sailors, soldiers, gentleman adventurers, carpenters, miners, cartographers, merchants and husbandmen who had been to Roanoke had kinship, guild, friendship and patronage connections to a disparate 'class' of potential tobacco smokers.<sup>115</sup> Before landing in the capital, the Roanoke adventurers had put in at Plymouth where Ralph Lane and others from Devon had connections.<sup>116</sup> Lane returned to Ireland to resume his military duties in 1592, possibly playing a role in spreading the activity to soldiers and others there, who

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London or locked in the Tower (G. R. Batho (ed.), Household Papers of Henry Percy, 9<sup>th</sup> Earl of Northumberland (1564-1632) (London, 1962), Camden Society 3<sup>rd</sup> series 93).

<sup>112</sup> Dee knew Raleigh since 1583 when Raleigh became his connection to the court. They dined together on 9 October 1595 at Durham House (J. O. Halliwell (ed.), The Private Diary of Dr John Dee and the Catalogue of his Library of Manuscripts (London, 1842), Camden Society 19, pp. 20-1, 54). At Raleigh's request, Hakluyt returned from his English Embassy in Paris to write A Discourse Concerning Western Planting (of people in a colony) publicising New World ventures (Lacey, Walter Raleigh, pp. 58-9). Other early associates in the enterprise are also noted here. While there is no direct evidence that Dee or Hakluyt smoked, it is evident that they had close connections with those most famous for doing so.

<sup>113</sup> Sanderson named his sons Raleigh, Drake and Cavendish as a sign of his enthusiasm for the 'westward enterprise' (Ibid).

<sup>114</sup> After Roanoke, Harriot is thought to have 'spent much time in London where excitement about the New World and the possibility of a Spanish invasion of England were intermingled' (Shirley, Thomas Harriot, p. 21).

<sup>115</sup> For details on colonists see Quinn, Roanoke Voyages, p. 130, 'Anonymous notes for the guidance of Raleigh and Cavendish'. When plans were being laid, it was envisaged that a 'potticaris' and a 'phisitien' would have a particular role in investigating medicinal plants. Well-armed soldiers were also needed to 'preuent the Inuasion of the Spanyardes'. The names of the adventurers and some brief biographical information are detailed on pp. 194-7.

<sup>116</sup> It was envisaged that 'su[m] of ye myners of Cornwall' would join the expedition (Ibid., p. 130). As chapter 7 will show, tobacco seems to have been particularly popular in the south-west.

in turn, transmitted it to their home counties.<sup>117</sup> The stories, tobacco and smoking practices of other transatlantic travellers might similarly be disseminated. From courtly circles to country estates as well as from maritime and martial environments to home towns and villages, smoking could spread rapidly and almost simultaneously across the social hierarchy.<sup>118</sup>

The experience of Roanoke had combined with the findings of European medicine and English colonial aspirations to provide a context for English smoking but supplies of tobacco were also needed for the activity to spread. While demand remained low, tobacco imported from Europe amidst a range of drugs for apothecaries' shops may have been sufficient. Apothecaries remained the principal purveyors of tobacco at least until 1598 when Ben Jonson wrote Everyman in his Humour.<sup>119</sup> However, war with Spain brought in other supplies directly from the New World. It was not only gold that was found on Spanish ships encountered by privateers. More importantly, as more English ships plied the Atlantic to plunder and explore, there were opportunities to trade directly for tobacco. Hawkins had noted the willingness of Amerindians to trade it in 1565. During Sir Robert Dudley's expedition for plunder of 1594-5, Indians from Trinidad offered 'most excellent Cane-tobacco' for trade.<sup>120</sup> Spanish colonists

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<sup>117</sup> J. W. Shirley, 'Sir Walter Raleigh and Thomas Harriot' in Shirley, Thomas Harriot. Raleigh and Harriot also had connections in Ireland, including Edmund Spenser, whose Fairie Queen includes the first English reference to tobacco. The expedition's artist John White retired to Ireland before 1593. Also, several of the colonists were Irish. (Quinn, Roanoke Voyages, pp. 194-7).

<sup>118</sup> Goodman argues that the near simultaneous permeation of smoking through all social classes is in sharp contrast to the downward percolation of tea, sugar and other commodities (Goodman, Tobacco in History, p. 47).

<sup>119</sup> B. Jonson, Everyman in his Humour, Quarto edition (London, 1601), Act III Scene V. First performed in 1598. When reprinted in the folio edition of his works (1616), Jonson replaced the word 'poticaries' with 'tobacco-seller'.

<sup>120</sup> Dickson, Panacea or Precious Bane, pp. 136-7. The Drake encounter occurred during his last voyage. Accompanying Dudley was Captain Thomas Wyatt who wrote that this 'Trindadian' tobacco, which soon became the most renowned and sought after in London, was called cane tobacco because of its superior quality.



‘had few qualms about smuggling, and were happy to sell tobacco, hides and skins to the Dutch and English’.<sup>121</sup> Although several years would pass before tobacco became the specific object of voyages or commercial investment, such forays gave Englishmen more direct access to supplies of tobacco.

By 1597 the trade in tobacco to England was significant enough to be taxed. In November of that year a dispute arose in Penryn, Cornwall, when Thomas Spaye refused demands that he paid the Queen’s penny per pound on £2,000 worth of tobacco landed from two ships.<sup>122</sup> At that time tobacco was too expensive for most people. However, for some, such as the Earl of Northumberland, who spent £52 14s 6d on ‘Tobacco and Pypes’ in 1597-8, the 35s or so per pound for tobacco was not a problem.<sup>123</sup> His gambling losses that year cost considerably more. Those who could afford it could probably find it. Like other luxury items tobacco often moved through personal contacts. Sir Robert Cecil, for example, wrote to Sir George Carew in December 1600: ‘I have sent you tobacco, as good as I could procure any, and for Venice glasses, My Lord Cobham would needs be your purveyor. I thank you for your Irish dogs . . .’.<sup>124</sup> On another occasion, Sir John Stanhope was the potential supplier: ‘I send you now no Tabacca, because Mr Secretary, Sir Walter, and your other friends have stored you of late; neither have I any proportion of it [that] is good, but only am rich in Aldermans Watses promises of plenty’.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, p. 148. McAlister suggests that: ‘since the weed could be grown in remote areas on small plots, it invited contraband trade’ (McAlister, *Spain and Portugal in the New World*, p. 166).

<sup>122</sup> MacInnes, *The Early English Tobacco Trade*, pp. 33-5. This is recorded because a dispute arose about whether duty should be paid on it.

<sup>123</sup> Batho, *Household Papers of Henry Percy*, ‘General Accounts for 1597-8’, p. 87.

<sup>124</sup> *CSPCarew 1589-1600*, pp. 484-6 (15 December 1600). ‘Letter from Sir Robert Cecil to Sir George Carew’.

<sup>125</sup> *CSPCarew 1601-3*, pp. 13-14 (26 January 1602). ‘Letter from Sir John Stanhope to Sir George Carew’.

The merger of European and Amerindian reasons to smoke, its spread from adventurers to wider society and the importation and dissemination of supplies of tobacco could have occurred anywhere in Europe after about 1570. If the colonists at Fort Caroline had made it home, New World smoking might have shared the renown of Nicot's miraculous herb in France. The 'Spanish slaughter' prevented the habit from spreading from this particular colony.<sup>126</sup> When Dutch trading interests prompted the establishment of colonies, smoking did spread to the Low Countries. However, in Spain, where medicinal use of tobacco was well known and tobacco was readily available from long established colonies full of smokers, Amerindian-style smoking does not seem to have spread significantly from ship to shore.<sup>127</sup> In England pipe-smoking was facilitated by the active promotion of positive views expressed by influential New World enthusiasts. The Spanish counterparts of people such as Raleigh and Northumberland wanted to distance themselves from, not emulate, their transatlantic cousins. Amerindians, Africans and colonists were smoking and chewing tobacco long before its pharmacological potential had been recognised. By the time it was, Spanish authorities already despised tobacco because of its association with Indians and Africans.<sup>128</sup> Oviedo, for example, was an overseer of mines who considered Amerindians to be 'slaves by nature'.<sup>129</sup> With such contempt for them and their culture, smoking would not look attractive.

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<sup>126</sup> Von Gernet, 'Transculturation', p. 29.

<sup>127</sup> The Caracas settlement, for example, was founded in 1567. By 1607, Caracas had developed a regular trade in agricultural products. 'Tobacco was the principal export' to Spain along with hides and sarsaparilla (J. Bieber (ed.), Plantation Societies in the Era of European Expansion (Aldershot, 1997), p. 129).

<sup>128</sup> Blackburn, Making of New World Slavery, p. 149.



Smoking by Spaniards in the New World was distinctly unEuropean.<sup>130</sup> It smacked of degeneration and disease.<sup>131</sup> Later it became a symbol of the growing divide between colonial and peninsular Spaniards. While asserting their Europeanness by importing goods, institutions etc., colonists inevitably became Americanised. Tobacco was part of the colonial identities which were gradually developing as colonists responded to shared circumstances by creating a 'shared basis for approved social behavior [sic]' which equipped them to 'interpret both contemporary events and developments and the social meaning of their own lives'.<sup>132</sup> Those whose roots remained firmly in Europe contrasted their metropolitan refinement with the perceived deviancy of the criollos' Spanish American identity and culture.<sup>133</sup>

In this regard, Roanoke proved crucial to perceptions of smoking in England both because of its success and because of its failure. The Roanoke colonists had encountered Amerindians. Despite the tensions that sullied their relationship towards the end, the most widely disseminated reports emphasised the possibility of positive ties with them. Some, such as Lane, carped about the Roanoke experience and the worthlessness of the hostile environment they encountered but it was Harriot's

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<sup>129</sup> Pagden, *European Encounters*, p. 56. Pagden contrasts the Oviedo perception of bestial Amerindians with the more sympathetic ideas of Bartolome de las Casas, the 'Apostle to the Indians'.

<sup>130</sup> Cultural exchange had never been an objective of those financing and embarking upon early New World expeditions. New Spain and its indigenous peoples were supposed to be made European by constructing churches and transposing familiar hierarchies, religious imperatives and economic ventures.

<sup>131</sup> As noted on p. 27, Oviedo determined that the Spanish soldiers who were smoking on Haiti were inflicted with syphilis. He considered both the supposed cure and the disease to be the fault of the indigenous people who were 'slaves by nature'.

<sup>132</sup> J. P. Green, 'Changing identity in the British Caribbean: Barbados as a case study' in Canny & Pagden, *Colonial Identity*, p. 214.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 82-3. Criollo denotes born in America. Spaniards born in the Indies were complained about in the same ways Indians were for dishonesty and envious emulation. This was intended as denigration but also explained 'cultural differences' that had grown between Criollo and peninsular Spaniards. The Criollo passion for smoking, especially by women in public, was particularly noted amongst 'deviations from what the peninsular Spaniards regarded as immutable cultural norms'.

account that was repeatedly republished.<sup>134</sup> He presented their culture as different but not necessarily deficient.<sup>135</sup> In England at this time, Amerindians were probably viewed more sympathetically because of English antipathy for their Spanish oppressors. This was a receptive environment for Harriot to describe them as ‘intelligent people who had devised a coherent, if primitive, civilisation’ and present ‘arguably the most sympathetic portrayal by any European of any group of Amerindians during the early modern period’.<sup>136</sup> Importantly, the early return of the Roanoke colonists, the disappearance of the next expedition and suspension of colonial activities until the establishment of Jamestown in 1607 limited the formation of an ‘English American’ identity and opportunities for Anglo-Amerindian conflict.<sup>137</sup> The colonists were there long enough to learn about smoking but not long enough to inspire prejudice or become prejudiced against it themselves.

The Roanoke colonists brought back with them one other crucial component in the spread of English smoking: the clay tobacco pipe.<sup>138</sup> L’Ecluse noted that:

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<sup>134</sup> The Roanoke colonists were divided in their views of Amerindians. Some, such as Harriot, viewed them sympathetically and suggested that positive ties, especially for trade, could be made with them. Others, most notably Lane, considered them to be in the way and to be feared. Mancall notes that the emphasis of most English writers was on the willingness of even hostile Amerindians to trade for food and tobacco etc. (Mancall, ‘Native Americans and Europeans’, p. 35).

<sup>135</sup> Canny suggests that indifference to the New World stemmed from a sense of exotic cultures being somehow ‘deficient’ (N. Canny, ‘England’s New World and the Old, 1480s-1630s’ in Canny, The Oxford History of the British Empire, 1, pp. 148-53).

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. Canny notes that the English were largely uninterested in the explorations of other Europeans until the 1580s when hostilities with Spain began. Canny also suggests that Harriot’s portrayal was deliberately generous because it coincided with a spate of criticism of Spanish treatment of Amerindians. Canny goes on to describe how attitudes towards the Amerindians changed, particularly after the massacre of 1622.

<sup>137</sup> With no colony established, their less friendly encounters with Amerindians, which had been subsumed by the need to make Virginia seem attractive at home, were not confirmed by too many disparaging reports of further Anglo-Amerindian tensions.

<sup>138</sup> Extensive archaeological work has been done on the form etc. of tobacco pipes, making them a useful dating tool for excavation sites. For more on English pipe-making, pipe forms etc. see various studies in P. Davey (ed.) in the British Archaeological Review, such as ‘The Archaeology of the Clay Tobacco pipe: Britain: The North and West, British Archaeological Review, British series 78 (1980).



the English returning from thence [Wingandecaow - the Indian name for Virginia] brought like [i.e. like the Indians] pipes with them, to drink the smoak of Tobacco; and since that time, the use of drinking Tobacco hath so much prevailed all England over, especially among the Courtiers, that they have caused many such like Pipes to be made to drink Tobacco with.<sup>139</sup>

These were not the first pipes. In 1577, Frampton told how the ‘inhabitants of Florida’ received tobacco at the mouth ‘through certain coffins, suche as the Grocers do use to put in their Spices’.<sup>140</sup> This equates with the ‘litle ladell[s]’ Harrison said were being used in England in 1573. There is much conjecture regarding the earliest pipes. Some claim that Broseley in Shropshire was the production site for ‘ladell’ shaped devices as early as 1570.<sup>141</sup> These may have already been used in a medicinal context for the suffumigation of other substances such as rosemary.<sup>142</sup> Another device with more clearly New World antecedents was the small tube used by the sailors witnessed by de l’Obel, a version of which was called a ‘tabac’ by indigenous West Indians.

Combining the bowl with the tube was an important technological development.

Whether made of silver, clay or a straw stuck in a walnut, such tobacco holding and smoke conveying tools facilitated the efficient movement of smoke from tobacco to body. Anthony Chute suggested in 1595 that, ‘the Indians vse to take this Tabacco in other maner of pipes than we, yet I thinke we shall not need to thinke our earthen or

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<sup>139</sup> Quinn, *Roanoke Voyages*, 1, pp. 345-6: L’Ecluse added this note to his reprint of Monardes’ work in 1605. Quinn, though asserting that Raleigh etc. merely popularised an already ‘established custom’, accepts that the colonists introduced the smoking pipe used on Roanoke Island as a model for English pipe-makers. John White’s drawing ‘their sittinge at meate’, includes an image of an Indian tobacco pipe which is ‘very like’ one excavated on Roanoke that ‘closely resembles some very early English examples’ (p. 430).

<sup>140</sup> Frampton, *Joyfull Newes*, fol. 44v.

<sup>141</sup> Tatman, ‘The Clay Tobacco Pipe Industry in the Parish of Newington’, p. 5.

<sup>142</sup> Gerard complained that smoking ‘English tobacco’ would ‘stupifie or dull the senses, and cause that kind of giddinesse that Tabaco doth, and likewise spitting’. He advocated that rosemary, thyme, ‘winter savorie’ or any other ‘herbe of hot temperature’ thus consumed would be more beneficial than this ‘doubtfull Henbane’ (Gerard, *Herball*, p. 285).

silver pipes more vnaprt than those which the Indians make of Palme leaves and such like.<sup>143</sup> Aubrey related the reminiscences of his grandfather that while some of the first English smokers had silver pipes, 'the ordinary sort made use of a walnutshell and a straw'.<sup>144</sup> It remains uncertain whether clay pipes were an Amerindian invention, as L'Ecluse suggested, or a derivative of them.<sup>145</sup> However, they were not accoutrements of European medicine.<sup>146</sup>

Tatman suggests that, 'clay pipes, perhaps based on the original American Indian version, must have soon been commissioned on the introduction of smoking to this country'.<sup>147</sup> He speculates that potters' workshops in London, such as Jacob Johnson's Aldgate pottery which flourished between 1571 and 1593, produced the first English clay pipes.<sup>148</sup> In the 1590s, a clay pipe making industry emerged to supply this vibrant market for a form of social consumption which had assumed a mantle of fashionability and adventure rather than ill-health.<sup>149</sup> By 1601, a tobacco pipe clay monopoly was established and, albeit in jest, was beginning to be questioned in Parliament.<sup>150</sup> Pipe making quickly became an important supplementary income for many people and important enough for the Westminster pipe makers to seek and acquire control over production. This prompted many pipe makers to emigrate to

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<sup>143</sup> Chute, Tabaco, pp. 15-16.

<sup>144</sup> J. Aubrey, Brief Lives (London, 1888), 2, p. 181.

<sup>145</sup> Amerindians consumed tobacco in many ways. In South America, cigars were most common. In North America, pipe-smoking dominated and had enormous symbolic value (Goodman, Tobacco in History, pp. 33-5).

<sup>146</sup> Brongers, Tobacco in the Netherlands, p. 33.

<sup>147</sup> Tatman, 'The Clay Tobacco Pipe Industry in the Parish of Newington', p. 6.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9. The first models may have been made by hand as 'some of the rare "little ladell" pipes known have stems of irregular thickness and mould lines are not always evident'.

<sup>149</sup> For details on the pipe-making industry see: A. Oswald, 'The Archaeology and Economic History of English Clay Tobacco Pipes', Journal of the British Archaeological Association 23 (1960). Oswald presents an extensive list of known pipe-makers from 1600. This identifies London, Bristol and Broseley as the almost exclusive sites of production until the Civil War. After the war, pipes were being made in many other locations.

<sup>150</sup> D. Dean, Law-Making and Society in Late Elizabethan England, (Cambridge, 1996), p. 90.



Holland to facilitate the upsurge in smoking there.<sup>151</sup> Later, in both England and Holland pipe making became an art form. Clay was the perfect medium for the individualisation of the tools of consumption.

Raleigh and the Roanoke colonists were not the first to note tobacco, find uses for it, smoke or import it but they did make an important contribution to the adoption and spread of smoking in England. As English transatlantic endeavours rose in the public consciousness, they sponsored the creation of the English tobacco 'tradition' which linked European medical advocacy for tobacco with the promotion of Amerindian-inspired patterns of smoking in an English context. In Spain tobacco was a medicine and something the dregs of the transatlantic world consumed without good reason. In England it was still a medicine but was also something 'noble' Amerindians, flamboyant adventurers and social and political role models smoked. The smoking habits and technology acquired by the English were celebrated for their New World associations rather than tainted by them. Smoking tobacco through clay pipes was perceived as a novel, fashionable and medicinally useful activity to be experimented with amongst friends.

It is generally accepted that encounters between Europeans and Amerindians in the New World impelled the transmission of information, goods and customs that were adapted and adopted or discarded by both sides. However, it is often assumed that once Europeans had assimilated ideas in this way they automatically transmitted those

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<sup>151</sup> For example, 26 June 1637, Edward Shelley 'borne in London Tobaco pipe maker aged 22' going to Holland 'to worke of his Trade' (C.B. Jewson (ed.), Transcript of Three Registers of Passengers from

ideas to their ports of origin and beyond. This chapter has shown that the reception of those ideas in Europe could be an important barrier to assimilation. In isolation, reports about smoking by Europeans as well as Amerindians in the New World did not promote smoking in Europe. There was no reason why it should have done. The medicinal appropriation of the drug made tobacco relevant in Europe and, as repeated renaming of the plant signifies, spread it 'farre and neare' but this bore little relation to patterns and modes of use emanating from the New World. Sailors and Europeans in the New World had learned to consume tobacco. Eminent doctors, their patrons and patients had 'discovered' its medicinal power. Most people beyond the Atlantic ports had probably never heard of it.

These two strands in the pan European assimilation of tobacco were pulled together by Harriot and others within the context of the enthusiastic promotion of English colonial projects. After nearly one hundred years of European encounters with tobacco, New World smoking practices had gained relevance on a European shore. Crucially, as the contemporary creation of the Raleigh and Roanoke myths indicate, this combination made smoking attractive to a few influential people whose ostentatious consumption attracted others. Within a decade of Roanoke 'the new habit of smoking . . . became, next to drinking, the most widespread vice of London'.<sup>152</sup> However, important differences between New World ways of using tobacco and European physicians' therapeutic uses of it remained. As the next chapter will show, conflicting views about the medicinal value of smoking spawned a heated debate.

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Great Yarmouth to Holland and New England 1637-9, Norfolk Record Society 25 (1954), p. 85).

<sup>152</sup> C. Brindenbaugh, Vexed and Troubled Englishmen 1590-1642 (Oxford, 1968), pp. 195-6.



## Chapter 2

### Medical marvel or pernicious prescription?

The influence of medical ideas about tobacco on the spread of smoking.

- Unlearned opinion and self-dosing: the adoption of tobacco as a non-prescription medicine in the ‘medical marketplace’
- ‘Fuming’ discourses: the physicians join the debate

O soueraigne *Tobacco*! That art a medicine for euery malady, a  
salue for euery sore: twill cure the *Dropsie*, the *Gowt*, the *Rhume*,  
the *Cold*, the *Ache of the heade*, a *Pin and Webbe in the heele*, it  
will make a woman that is barren to beare sixe children in one night;  
it is wonderful in operation, and they say it will make a leane man  
fatte, and a fatte man leane. But I know it hath made many wise men  
to become fooles, and it hath made some fooles againe to become  
wise men.<sup>1</sup>

As this satirical summary suggests, late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century England was marked by fierce debates about the medicinal value of tobacco. Some, drawing upon Monardes and other European authorities, identified tobacco as the long sought universal panacea. Others, often drawing upon personal experience, merely proclaimed it a remedy for everyday ills like headaches and colds. While advocates of tobacco enthused about its miraculous curative powers, critics exploited the most outlandish claims to mock them. This chapter will explore the nature and impact of this often heated debate to elucidate how ideas about tobacco’s effect on health evolved and how far they influenced the spread of smoking.

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<sup>1</sup> B. R[ich], Favltz Favltz, and Nothing Else but Favltz (London, 1606), p. 9.

Many scholars have argued that the identification of tobacco as a medicine was the primary reason for the spread of smoking in England. Goodman describes how the global tobacco rage of 1570-1620, which spread tobacco everywhere, was impelled by its medicinal uses.<sup>2</sup> Von Gernet states that humoral theories of medicine provided the 'ideological context which set the stage for rapid diffusion beyond the seaports'.<sup>3</sup> A perusal of early literature on tobacco seems to confirm this. Text after text offers assertions or critiques of its medicinal applications. However, as this chapter shows, smoking was the form of tobacco ingestion least approved by doctors. Unlike other largely uncontroversial applications of tobacco, it was rarely considered a therapy. Common experience of the effects of smoking not learned evaluations of its medicinal value, guided consumption. Understanding the spread of smoking in England requires an examination of the diffusion, not of tobacco, but of this particular way of ingesting it.

This distinction is seldom made. Social smoking is presented as having developed naturally from medical use of tobacco, the new 'wonder drug'. Lindemann states that tobacco, as well as tea and chocolate, 'soon' became more popular as 'forms of enjoyment than medicines'.<sup>4</sup> Goodman speculates that tobacco was used privately for medical reasons and publicly for recreation.<sup>5</sup> Such ideas implicitly suggest that doctors' tobacco prescriptions were distorted into widespread social smoking. As

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<sup>2</sup> J. Goodman, *Tobacco in History* (London & New York, 1993), pp. 37-55.

<sup>3</sup> A. von Gernet, 'Nicotian Dreams: the prehistory and early history of tobacco in eastern North America' in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy & A. Sherratt (eds.), *Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology* (London, 1995), p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> M. Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge, 1999), p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, p. 67. Goodman concludes that the taking of tobacco for medical reasons did not decline until the nineteenth century when distinctions between recreational and medicinal consumption were more clearly defined. He argues that, before then, both motives were part of the same objective of maintaining humoral balance (p. 85).



suggested in the introduction, this fits well with vague notions that exotic commodities were introduced as medicines, became elite luxuries and then spread to wider society as part of a ‘consumer revolution’.<sup>6</sup> However, this chapter contends that, in England, smoking was always distinct from the prescription and use of the range of tobacco poultices, salves, infusions, enemas and distillations that persisted in the physicians’ armoury until the nineteenth century. Smoking spread because of unlearned perceptions that it relieved minor ailments and could act as a general prophylactic. It did not derive from learned conceptions of its medicinal validity or physicians’ very limited prescription of tobacco smoke for specific diseases.

This chapter suggests that there were two phases in the formation of views about the medical validity of smoking in England. Firstly, between c.1586 and c.1600, when learned European commentary on tobacco often celebrated it as a powerful and versatile curative herb, lay people were taking up smoking.<sup>7</sup> Their experience of the effects of smoking led them to promote it as an enjoyable activity and as means of counteracting the effects of alcoholic and other excess. By extension, this prompted suggestions that smoking was a ‘healthful’ activity. However, the social context and unrestrained character of smoking raised concerns about its moral and medicinal propriety, and prompted suggestions that it was harmful. This led to a controversy about smoking in which both sides used learned assessments of tobacco to support

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<sup>6</sup> Mintz’s study of sugar suggests that this commodity was introduced as a ‘drug food’ then took on the ‘culturally useable’ character of a luxury. Its meanings changed when it spread to other groups in the social hierarchy and became an integral part of the British diet (S. Mintz, Sugar and Power (New York, 1985, pp. 96, 99, 154 etc.).

<sup>7</sup> Stewart’s analysis indicates that this was a particularly active period in the medical appropriation of tobacco. In Europe, thirty-eight books mentioning tobacco were published, sixteen of them in English (including another reprint of Monardes and a brief entry in John Florio’s, A World of Words, or Most Copious and Exact Dictionarie in Italian and English (London, 1598) which merely listed: ‘Tabacco, the precious hearbe Tabacco’). Out of a total of 254 diseases and other conditions reported as being treated by tobacco between 1492 and 1860, seventy-one (28%) were reported in this period. New

their contrary stances. Secondly, after 1601 physicians joined the public debate.

Unlearned opinion based on experience was scrutinised according to the principles and practices of learned medicine. Tobacco was re-evaluated. The physiological impact of smoking was assessed. In the ensuing public debate, learned and popular opinions about smoking clashed. Who would be the arbiter of value, the patient or the physician?

### Unlearned opinion and self-dosing: the adoption of tobacco as a non-prescribed medicine in the 'medical marketplace'.

At first, there was nothing particularly controversial about tobacco. Following the lead of European authorities such as Monardes, doctors merely added applications of the new and powerful drug to their repertoire of curative agents as they had with other exotic substances. The surgeons, William Clowes and John Banester, for example, included tobacco unguents, balms and gargles in their medical books of 1588-9.<sup>8</sup> They made no mention of smoking or of potential harm.<sup>9</sup> Edmund Spenser echoed this unquestioning acceptance of medicinal tobacco use when he alluded to the wondrous curative and antiseptic qualities of this 'soueraigne weede' in his Fairie Queene. The fairy Belpheobe, who had been taught about herbs by a nymph, gathered tobacco from the woods to cure Spenser's wounded squire, Timias. She 'pounded' it between two stones, squeezed the juice onto the wound and then used her scarf to bind it.<sup>10</sup> Such an

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formulae were devised and new tobacco treatments for eyes and ears were suggested etc. (G. Stewart, 'A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco 1492-1860', Medical History 11 (1967), p. 237).

<sup>8</sup> Clowes considered that 'Vnguentus Nicotianus' was 'a medicine not to be disprayed' (W. Clowes, A Prooved Practise for All Young Chirurgicalians (London, 1588), pp. [82-3]). Clowes was the queen's surgeon. Banester offered a recipe for 'a balme of Nicotian most fragrant and effectuall' and 'another also of excellent note for wounds with gunshot, ceasing paine, and concocting speedily' (J. Banester, An Antidotarie Chyrurgicall (London, 1589), pp. 9-10).

<sup>9</sup> Stewart, 'A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco', p. 237.

<sup>10</sup> E. Spenser, The Fairie Queen (London 1596), Book III, canto V, verses 32-33. For an examination of this isolated reference to tobacco see J. Knapp, 'Elizabethan Tobacco', Representations 21 (1988), pp. 26-66. Knapp identifies the squire, Timias, with Raleigh and his 'nurse' with Queen Elizabeth. Knapp's



unambiguously therapeutic use of a tobacco preparation, with the mediation of a trained healer for diagnosis and administration to cure a specific ailment, fully conformed to conceptions of medical propriety.

When Thomas Harriot published his account of Virginia, he listed tobacco alongside corn as one of the Virginian 'commodities for sustenance of life'. It was, he asserted, a preventative medicine which by purging 'grosse humors' and opening 'pores & passages... preserueth the body from obstructions'. He averred that the Indians did not suffer from 'greeuous' English diseases because tobacco 'preserved' their health.<sup>11</sup> Harriot claimed 'learned Phisitions' approved of this new drug but in fact he was advocating smoking it - something which experts such as Monardes had largely dismissed as a medicinally dubious Amerindian novelty. Without specifying a disease or suggesting any medical constraint, Harriot urged his readers to follow his 'rare and wonderfull experiments' by exploring the 'vertues' of smoking for themselves. Such unlearned self-administration of tobacco for vague and primarily prophylactic reasons lacked the specificity of diagnosis and action expected in Galenic medicine.

The contradiction between such empirical experimentation with smoking and learned medical dismissal of it was quickly recognised. When Anthony Chute, a minor poet, attempted 'to make knowne unto all men that which the most part did doubt of regarding tobacco pipe smoking', he felt compelled to explain why Monardes and

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failure to recognise the distinction between smoking and other forms of use leads him to suggest that the craze for smoking started much later in England than elsewhere (p. 32).

<sup>11</sup> T. Harriot, A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (1588) in R. Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, 12 vols., facsimile of 1598-1600 edition (Glasgow, 1903-5), 8, pp. 363-4. Speculation that Harriot did not list tobacco under merchantable commodities for reasons of commercial secrecy is unfounded. Publicists for colonisation needed to advertise not hide facts which might encourage investors.

others had not advocated smoking.<sup>12</sup> He cynically suggested that ‘hearing of so strange a maner of receiuing it [tobacco], as phisicke was neuer guilty to the vnderstanding of, they [physicians] thought it meet to preserue [pipe-smoking] in perpetuall concealment among themselues’.<sup>13</sup> Physicians had not invented tobacco pipe smoking, nor were they promoting it. Chute urged his readers to trust the wisdom of the Indians. They were ‘poore people’ from a land ‘where couetousnesse hath not taught the childe to cut his fathers throat for gaine, or to dissemble with any for profit’.<sup>14</sup>

Chute’s distrust of physicians, especially foreign ones, was conveniently suspended when he gave details of what he called ‘the seconde forme of reciuing this heabe’.<sup>15</sup> Presenting a range of tobacco distillations, infusions, ointments and poultices advocated by European authorities, he provided academic confirmation of the curative powers of tobacco. Tobacco worked because learned physicians said so. To validate smoking it, however, Chute turned to a ‘yonger Dr. who loues and hath made as farre trials of drinking *Tabacco* as any man that is found’.<sup>16</sup> As with Harriot, direct experience of its effects was being used to confirm the medicinal value of smoking. Placed side by side, this ‘try it and see’ evaluation of smoking harnessed the more learned and theoretical endorsement of tobacco, giving credibility to the new mode of ingestion through a tobacco-pipe.

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<sup>12</sup> A. Chute, Tabaco: the distinct and severall opinions of the late and best Phisitions that have written of the divers natures and qualities thereof (London, 1595), ‘The Printer to the Reader’, sigs. [A4]-[A4]v. Chute died suddenly before the publication of his book. This apparently preserved him from Thomas Nashe’s rebukes of his ‘smoakie society’. For additional information see R. Kane, ‘Anthony Chute, Thomas Nashe, and the First English Work on Tobacco’, Review of English Studies 7 (1931).

<sup>13</sup> Chute, Tabaco, pp. 12-13.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.



The tobacco-pipe was novel but inhaling medicinal fumes was not 'newe invented'. The 'receaving of smoake' was 'an old and well approved forme of medicine in many diseases'.<sup>17</sup> Hippocrates had advocated inhaling smoke from burning feathers or rotten shoes for female diseases.<sup>18</sup> 'Tussilago' (coltsfoot) smoke was commonly prescribed for 'ptisicke' (bronchitis) and asthma. 'Suffumigation' of a concoction involving leek seeds was a traditional remedy for toothache.<sup>19</sup> However, the self-contained, efficient and easily portable nature of the pipe made tobacco smoking unique. Consumers could sit back and imbibe instead of bending uncomfortably over a bowl. They could, as required and with minimal inconvenience, pull out their tonic and consume it wherever they happened to be. Thomas Platter noted in 1599 that those using this 'curious medicine . . . always carry the instrument on them, and light up on all occasions, at the play, in taverns or elsewhere'.<sup>20</sup> The tobacco-pipe made an undignified and usually private form of ingestion suitable to public circumstances.

Chute's 'yonger Dr' also offered an explanation of how smoking worked. First he offered reassurance that 'the power and vertue' of the green leaf survived the drying process because it 'retyres it selfe into the leafe'. This essence was then 'distilled and fetched out by fire'. When inhaled, the smoke conveyed the medicine to the distinct parts of the body. It acted like 'a lightening doth in corrupt ayre, clensing and

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<sup>17</sup> W. Barclay, Nepenthes, or the Vertues of Tabacco (Edinburgh, 1614), sigs. [A8]-[A8]v. Barclay gave 'ancient' examples 'because the matter of smoake taking is controverted and disputed'.

<sup>18</sup> The use of such medication persisted well into the seventeenth century (see M. S. R. Jenner, 'Civilisation and Deodorisation? Smell in early modern English culture' in P. Burke, B. Harrison & P. Slack (eds.), Civil Histories: essays presented to Sir Keith Thomas (Oxford, 2000), pp. 132-3).

<sup>19</sup> MacInnes relates that: 'Heroditus describes how the Scythians used hemp-seed for smoking . . . In England and in mediaeval Europe this method of treatment, particularly for bronchitis, was frequently used, coltsfoot being the herb most generally employed. It is clear, however, that the custom of taking smoke in this way was purely medicinal, in view of the surprise which the habit of smoking for pleasure aroused among the first European observers. In fact, the ancient and medieaval use of smoke was purely inhalation, nothing resembling a pipe being employed' (C. M. MacInnes, The Early English Tobacco Trade (London, 1926), p. 11).

purifieng [sic] it from all stenches and bad vapours'.<sup>21</sup> This mode of action was similar to other forms of medicinal ingestion. The tobacco smoke still acted by influencing corruption within the body. It just entered the body in a slightly different and more effective way. Smoking was the most efficient means of conveying tobacco's active ingredients into the blood stream and to the brain. The analogy with lightning suggested this power and immediacy. Smoking tobacco worked, and worked quickly. This was what people wanted when they bought medicines. Any who tried it would have to confirm that it had some impact on their body, whether or not it cured any particular ailment.

Suggestions about how tobacco smoke worked and precedents for medicinal inhalation made smoking more credible but it was the claims about its physiological effects and multitude of uses that made it famous. At this time, people regularly traded experiential insights into medicines and health. There was a strong sense, particularly in urban environments, that all lives were in danger through illness. Anxieties about health were a daily preoccupation.<sup>22</sup> In this context, tidings of a new and effective medicine could spread very quickly, especially when some reports suggested it was a miracle cure.<sup>23</sup> Dr Robert Bellamy, for example, told of his salvation from 57 years of 'fluxes' and digestive 'torments' following 'a few sippes' from the pipe of a 'godly grave preacher'. Smoking refreshed all his 'powers and faculties' and made him fitter in mind and body than he had been since wearing a

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<sup>20</sup> C. Williams (translator and ed.), Thomas Platter's Travels in England 1599 Rendered into English from the German (London, 1937), pp. 170-1.

<sup>21</sup> Chute, Tabaco, pp. 6-7.

<sup>22</sup> M. Pelling, The Common Lot: sickness, medical occupations and the urban poor in early modern England (London, 1998), p. 1. Pelling suggests that historians have underestimated such anxieties.

<sup>23</sup> As Croft notes, 'the steady expansion of the skills of reading and writing facilitated the spread of information' but, topical poems and ballads were more often memorized and sung than written down (P. Croft, 'Libels, Popular Literacy and Public Opinion in Early Modern England', Bulletin of the



damp shirt at the age of 12.<sup>24</sup> Such stories fed an information exchange that thrived on the currency of extraordinary news.

Smokers reported other less spectacular, but still important, effects of their smoking. Chute told his readers that ‘drinking’ tobacco in the morning would dispel ‘stinking breath, proceeding not from any great or dangerous infection’. He advised ‘receive[ing] it in good quantity down, so that it force to cough, and either fetch the corruption off the stomacke, which engenders it, or at least wise drieth it up, and so takes away the cause’.<sup>25</sup> For headaches, ‘proceeding of any cold or winde’, Chute proclaimed tobacco the most ‘soveraigne’ remedy. Smoking also offered the best relief for coughs and ‘rheume in the stomacke, head and eyes’. Echoing reports from transatlantic travellers, Chute told how smoking revived him ‘beeing tired and weary’ but cautioned that ‘beeing taken ouermuch, as sixe or seaven pipes full, it will procure a most profound sleepe’.<sup>26</sup> This made it a potential remedy for insomnia too.

As a breath-freshener, analgesic, indigestion remedy and general ‘pick-me-up’, smoking was a particularly useful tonic to have the morning after the night before. Tobacco would ‘preserue the health of man’ by repairing bodies which ‘immoderate

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Institute of Historical Research 68:167 (1995), p. 266). Claims about tobacco from books etc. could quickly spread by word of mouth, perhaps leading to further exaggerated claims.

<sup>24</sup> [R. Bellamy], A New and Short Defence of Tabacco with the Effectes of the Same and the Right Use Thereof (London, 1602), sigs. C2-C3. The name Dr Bellamy is inscribed on the copy in the Huntington Library. Harley suggests that the author was probably Robert Bellamy, who gained his medical degree in 1571 (D. Harley, ‘The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy: Puritanism, James I, and the Royal Physicians’, Bulletin of the History of Medicine 67 (1993), p.41 fn. 37). Bellamy wrote that, As ‘Maister D[octor] Marbecke’ (an esteemed fellow contributor to the tobacco debate noted later) could testify, he had endured many bodily discomforts throughout their time together at Oxford University. Indeed, Bellamy stated that he had abandoned a clerical career in favour of medicine in an attempt to cure himself.

<sup>25</sup> Chute, Tabaco, p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-11.

cups' of wine, ale and beer 'have turnd to fennes and marshes'.<sup>27</sup> In the alehouse, hot/dry tobacco smoke seemed the perfect compliment to cold/wet ale in caricatures of humoral balance.

All the foure Elements vnite,  
When you Tobacco take,  
For Earth, and Water, Aire and Fire,  
Doe a coniunction make,  
Your pipe is Earth, the fires therein  
The Aire your breathing smoke,  
Good liquor must be present too,  
For feare you chance to choake.<sup>28</sup>

Tobacco smoke offered a counter to the soporific effects of alcohol. Chute asserted that those 'that would never credit it, till they had made triall,' were impressed with the power of a single pipe of tobacco to dispel drowsiness.<sup>29</sup> Another commentator humorously suggested that tobacco's 'diuine breath' mixing with the effects of alcohol 'doth distill eloquence and oracle vpon the tongue'.<sup>30</sup> It could promote a friendly atmosphere and effectively 'cure' social discord. William Barclay considered tobacco 'the only medicament in the world ordained by nature to entertaine good

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<sup>27</sup> Anon., Wine, Beer, and Ale, Together by the Eares. A dialogue, Written first in Dutch by Gallobelgicus, and faithfully translated out of the original copie, by Mercurius Brittanicus, for the benefite of his nation (London, 1629) reproduced in J. H. Hanford (ed.), Studies in Philology 12 (January 1915), p. 41 lns. 622-25.

<sup>28</sup> S. Rowlands, 'The Devils Health-Drinker', in S. Rowlands, The Knave of Clubbs (London, 1609), sig. Fv. This pamphlet of poems about contemporary stereotypes was evidently popular as it was reprinted in 1611 and again in 1612.

<sup>29</sup> Chute, Tabaco, p. 8. This effect of smoking had been noted in reports from the New World and was later confirmed by physicians. For example, John Hall prescribed tobacco-induced sneezing for Leonard Kempson 'to remove Sleepiness' (J. Lane, John Hall and his Patients: the medical practice of Shakespeare's son-in-law (Worcester, 1996), p. 59).

<sup>30</sup> Wine, Beer, and Ale, Together by the Eares, lns. 568-9.



companie: insomuch that it worketh never so well, as when it is given from man to man, as a pledge of friendshippe and amitie'.<sup>31</sup>

While, as will later be shown, some condemned the lifestyles which created the need for the tobacco 'cure', others accepted and enjoyed them. Henry Buttes argued that hot/dry tobacco was a natural extension of an English diet which had been diversifying since the Fall. He reasoned that a progression had occurred 'from simplicitie and necessitie, to varietie and plentie, ending in luxury and superfluitie'. This had 'overflowne and drowned' English bodies in a 'deluge of a superfluous rawe humour, (commonly called Rheume)'. The drying power of tobacco was the 'antidot' which would preserve humanity from putrefaction.<sup>32</sup> Dr Roger Marbecke reasoned that the English were an island nation of 'great eaters' who 'are now become excessive great drinkers, not onely of Beere, and Ale, but also, of all kind of wine'. 'Idlennesse', 'royotous sports and pastimes, and loosennesse of living' engendered 'unnecessary humidities' in the body for which tobacco, though 'a later device', was better than all other known 'helps'. In earlier times, when 'they lived more orderly then, then we do now', tobacco had been unnecessary. For present disorders arising from diet, lifestyle and maritime proximity it was a Godsend.<sup>33</sup> Tobacco-pipe smoking had become a panacea for 'modern' living.

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<sup>31</sup> Barclay, *Nepenthes*, sig. A4.

<sup>32</sup> H. Buttes, *Dyets Dry Dinner* (London, 1599), 'Epistle Dedicatorie'. Pelling states that 'university physicians' like Buttes were demystifying Galenic medicine by entertaining their upper-class audiences with such mingling of food and medicine (Pelling, *The Common Lot*, p. 52).

<sup>33</sup> [R. Marbecke], *A Defence of Tabacco: with a friendly answer to the late printed Booke called Worke for Chimney-sweepers &c* (London, 1602), pp. 33-4. MacInnes mistakenly identifies the author of this text as Richard Browne, Clerk of the Green Cloth to whom the text was directed in a prefatory verse. However, an acrostic in the dedicatory verse clearly identifies the author as Marbecke.

Claims that smoking was an effective way to purge rheum from the head and stomach were easily proved. Smokers, 'as experience teacheth', were always 'spitting and avoyding fleame, immediatly after the taking of it'.<sup>34</sup> King James recognised the culpability of the tobacco in this. Others did not. Lord Herbert of Cherbury recounted how he sacrificed his sweetness of breath when, towards his 'latter time', he 'was forced to take [tobacco] against certain rheums and catarrhs'.<sup>35</sup> Rheum was a particular problem in winter when colds were a common complaint. Tobacco could relieve all the symptoms. Gerard noted that a morning pipeful was considered effective 'against paines in the head, stomacke, and grieffe in the brest and lungs: against catarrhes and rheums, and such as haue gotten colde and hoarsenesse'.<sup>36</sup> Tobacco was the best known remedy for 'waterish, cold, superfluous, Phlegmaticke matter'.<sup>37</sup> Traditionally, mucous in the nose and throat was voided by chewing mastic (a pale yellow gum resin) or taking 'sneezing medicines'. Smoking tobacco 'performeth . . . much more plentifully, and much more easily, then all they: and yet as safely too, as euery man doth see'.<sup>38</sup>

Smoking quickly became widespread and popular partly because it had successfully displaced traditional remedies in the relief of minor ailments and discomforts.

Goodman notes that, unlike tea and coffee, which substituted for commodities such as

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<sup>34</sup> King James VI & I, A Counterblaste to Tobacco (London, 1604), sigs. B4-B4v. King James argued that this was false reasoning. The 'waterie distillations' were caused by smoking itself, 'so are you made free and purged of nothing'. He considered that smoking was no more a cure for rheum than 'windie meates' were a cure for cholic.

<sup>35</sup> S. Lee (ed.), The Autobiography of Edward, Lord Herbert of Cherbury (London, 1906), p. 113. This entry is dated 1619. The author died in 1648. '1619: It is well known to those that wait me in my chamber, that the shirts, waistcoats, and other garments I wear next to my body, are sweet . . . which sweetness also was found to be in my breath above others, before I used to take tobacco, which, towards my latter time, I was forced to take against certain rheums and catarrhs that trouble me, which yet did not taint my breath for any long time'.

<sup>36</sup> J. Gerard, The Herball or Generall Historie of Plantes, Gathered by Iohn Gerarde of London Master in Chirurgerie (London, 1597), p. 288.

<sup>37</sup> Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, p. 30.



ale, tobacco substituted for other herbal panaceas.<sup>39</sup> Some people may have agreed with Timothie Bright, that only English cures were appropriate for English diseases, and have avoided using tobacco and other exotic drugs at all.<sup>40</sup> If they wanted to ‘stupifie or dull the senses’ or spit, they could use ‘rosemarie, time, winter savorie, sweete maricrome’ or ‘any other herbe of hot temperature’.<sup>41</sup> Gerard preferred these herbs ‘taken in smoke’ to the use of ‘English’ tobacco. Nevertheless, tobacco provided a safer and more effective alternative for those who could afford it. It was ‘less harmful’ and ‘less hot’ than other sneeze-inducing medicines such as lavender.<sup>42</sup> Crucially, ‘experience hath not shown it [tobacco] to be iniurous’.<sup>43</sup>

Such experience of the effects and effectiveness of smoking promoted it as a general health preserver not as a specific medicine for specific diseases. Chute’s liberal use of the drug extended to times when a person ‘finds himselfe not well disposed’ or, ‘beeing well, suspects that he hath surfaited, or something which he hath in his stomack, may make him ill’.<sup>44</sup> Tobacco did not cure, it relieved and pre-empted symptoms: ‘those leaves [of tobacco] do palliate or ease for a time, but neuer

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> J. Goodman, ‘Excitantia or How Enlightenment Europe Took to Soft Drugs’, in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy, A. Sherratt (eds.), Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology (London, 1995), p. 126.

<sup>40</sup> T. Bright, A Treatise Wherein is Declared the Sufficiencie of English Medicines for Cure of All Diseases Cured by Medicines (London, 1580). Bright was writing at a time when many new exotic drugs from East and West (tobacco, liquorice, sarsaparilla etc.) were beginning to be routinely brought into the country to fill apothecaries’ shelves. Views like his ‘challenged the hegemony of Galenic learned medicine . . . which claimed that its remedies (which now included those from America and India) applied universally right across Europe (A. Wear, ‘Medicine in Early Modern Europe 1500-1700’, in L. Conrad, M. Neve, V. Nutton, R. Porter, A. Wear, The Western Medical Tradition (Cambridge, 1995), p. 310).

<sup>41</sup> Gerard, Herball, p. 285.

<sup>42</sup> L. Ferrant, Traicte du Tabac en Sternutatoire (Bourges, 1655), p. 22. Ferrant was Professor of Medicine at Bourges University. Evidence of similar use of other exotic commodities as an alternative to indigenous drugs is also noted in Goodman, ‘Excitantia’, p. 134.

<sup>43</sup> Gerard, Herball, p. 288.

<sup>44</sup> Chute, Tabaco, pp. 10-11.

performe any cure absolutely'.<sup>45</sup> Von Gernet suggests that 'it is likely that the average man and woman who smoked . . . in this early period, took its curative properties seriously'.<sup>46</sup> However, apart from Dr Bellamy, whose miraculous recovery may have had more to do with stopping other medications than taking up smoking, the self-administration and self-dosing of tobacco was not really therapeutic. Tobacco smoking functioned on the border between health and 'unhealth'. It was a general medicine used imprecisely to help maintain all round well being. As smokers developed a physiological dependency that necessarily included the regular relief of withdrawal symptoms caused by nicotine deficiency.

The use of tobacco to prevent 'unhealth' extended to the prevention of two devastating and rapidly spreading diseases: the Pox and the Plague. Syphilis and the Black Death were specific diseases for which Galenic medicine seemed to have no answers. Contagion was beyond its humoral framework. Wear suggests that lack of success in treating these diseases 'stimulated a search for causes other than the imbalance of temperment'.<sup>47</sup> For sufferers, appeals to God were more useful than appeals to physicians. For those trying to avoid these diseases perhaps a new drug, which used one way or another seemed to treat most things and acted a little differently, would help.

The most distinctive feature of tobacco was its smell. Smells were understood to have a direct effect on the body by travelling through a permeable membrane into the

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<sup>45</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 287.

<sup>46</sup> A. von Gernet, 'The Transculturation of the Amerindian Pipe/Tobacco/Smoking/ Complex and its Impact on the Intellectual Boundaries Between "Savagery" and "Civilization" 1535-1935', unpublished PhD. thesis, McGill University (1988), p. 49.

<sup>47</sup> Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe', p. 261.



brain.<sup>48</sup> Stench and ‘bad airs’ were commonly believed to be the cause of diseases.<sup>49</sup>

‘Good’ and especially dry smells were considered useful in medicine. They strengthened and restored the spirits and could overcome bad ones.<sup>50</sup> Some argued that, like pomanders and perfumed water, tobacco smoke was an active environmental barrier to disease. It helped to ‘correct the air’ and to prevent ‘infection by scents’.<sup>51</sup>

In mainland Europe, the idea that tobacco smoke could cure or prevent the diseases suffered by ‘those which follow Venus way’ dated back to 1535.<sup>52</sup> In England, by 1600, they were not taken very seriously in learned circles. As noted later, tobacco was often associated with sex. Smoking was thus usually considered a companion to sexual impropriety not a cure for its consequences. Dr John Hammond, when attempting to prove that smoking caused sterility, argued that smoking dried up the excessive ‘spermatall humiditie’ of those ‘molested with a flux of seede, commonly called with vs the running of the reynes, and of the Phisition Gonorrhoea’.<sup>53</sup> Even learned advocates of tobacco considered this unlikely.<sup>54</sup> Poets satirically suggested

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<sup>48</sup> Jenner describes early modern conceptions of how smells worked on the body (Jenner, ‘Civilisation and Deodorisation?’, pp. 132-3).

<sup>49</sup> In 1580s London, ‘mayors and aldermen were preoccupied with the extirpation of stench and noisome air’ because of the risk of infection of the plague (Ibid., p. 131). The classical view was that pestilence originated in ‘bad airs’ (p. 133).

<sup>50</sup> R. Palmer, ‘In Bad Odour: smell and its significance in medicine from antiquity to the seventeenth century’ in W. F. Bynum and R. Porter, *Medicine and the Five Senses* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 61. Pipe smoking became a topos for smell in representations of the five senses (p. 64).

<sup>51</sup> John Josselyn (1672), quoted in Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>52</sup> Barclay, *Nepenthes*, ‘To his Very Worshipfull, and Deare Cousing, the Laird of Boine’, sig. [B7]v. Barclay playfully urges his cousin to ‘Tell what thou knowest’ about tobacco’s use in this regard ‘for to conceale were sin’. As noted in chapter 1, Oviedo saw Spanish soldiers smoking and attributed the tobacco’s use to seeking a cure for syphilis.

<sup>53</sup> Philaretus (pseudonym), *Work for Chimny-Sweepers or A Warning for Tabacconists, Describing the Pernicious Use of Tabacco* (London, 1601), sig. D3. MacInnes mistakenly identified ‘Philaretus’ as a London medical practitioner called Bushell who was the printer of the book (MacInnes, *The Early English Tobacco Trade*, p. 37). Harley convincingly identifies ‘Philaretus’ as John Hammond (Harley, ‘The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy’, pp. 38-9). Throughout this chapter *Work for Chimny-Sweepers* will be attributed to Hammond.

<sup>54</sup> Marbecke mockingly replied, ‘I for my part, haue as much labored, in the curing of that disease, as perchance most men haue, of our profession . . . But if I had thought . . . that Tabacco, had bene such a fellow . . . in the cure of that disease; assure your selfe, I would haue bene better acquainted with him then I am: & would haue giuen him right good entertainment’. He pointed out that the disease was

that 'gallants' should be drawn to tobacco as a cure for the pox.<sup>55</sup> Some may have believed this, or at least tried it in the absence of any other viable treatment. Many others retained an amused or contemptuous skepticism: 'As for curing the Pockes, it serves for that use but among the pockie Indian slaves. Here in England it is refined, and will not deigne to cure heere any other then cleanly and gentlemanly diseases'.<sup>56</sup>

Suggestions that tobacco smoke could cure sexually transmitted diseases continued to be made, usually with tongue firmly in cheek. For example, in Garfield's The Wandring Whore (1660), a tobacco 'cure' for a woman 'terribly pepper'd with herds of Crabblice' is described. Her friend tied her to the bed and,

lighting a pipe of Tobacco gave those many-footed vermin (arising from inbred Lechery) such a rout at her Cinque ports, by thrusting in the small end of his pipe into one hole, then into the other, blowing the smoke at the other end of his Pipe, that they never durst venture to inhabit those Continents since.<sup>57</sup>

This supposed cure came at a price for the person administering the tobacco smoke:

the smoke occasioned such a squirt, that the heat and fury thereof scalded this Gentlemans beard cleer away from his chin . . . since which mischance he could never endure peeping in wenches Arseholes, lest the next bout, they should piss his eyes out.<sup>58</sup>

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much more of a threat to propagation than the tobacco which tobacco's critic (above) had suggested would cure it (Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, p. 37).

<sup>55</sup> Sir John Davies suggested this in his catalogue of medicinal uses for this 'herbe of heavenly power'. Sir J. Davies, 'Of Tobacco', epigram 36 in A. B. Gossart, The Works in Verse and Prose (Including Hitherto Unpublished Mss) of Sir John Davies: for the first time collected and edited with memorial introductions and notes by the Rev Alexander B Grosart, 2 vols. (Blackburn, 1869), 1, p. 339.

<sup>56</sup> James I, Counterblaste, sig. C3.

<sup>57</sup> J. Garfield, The Wandring Whore. A Dialogue (London, 1660), p.7.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*



The 'French Pox', or 'English disease' if you were French, and other sexually transmitted diseases may have been a laughing matter but the plague was not. Jenner notes that 'in every plague epidemic in sixteenth and seventeenth-century London churchwardens invested in frankincense and other fumigants to burn in vestry rooms and churches'.<sup>59</sup> This communal response was informed by College of Physicians' official recommendations. Tobacco offered an alternative to rosemary, pomanders etc. for individual protection. The years 1592-3 were bad plague years. For example, in one week in July 1593, there were 149 deaths in London.<sup>60</sup> Chute attributed his survival to tobacco. He argued that there was no 'excellenter preservative' against this distressing and lethal scourge and claimed that, for every smoker who died in the London outbreak of 1592-3, sixty were saved unintentionally by 'extraordinarily receiving it [tobacco] amongst company'.<sup>61</sup> Such ideas persisted. Thomas Hearne reported that one Tom Rogers was whipped at Eton in 1721 for missing his morning smoke during the Marseilles plague scare.<sup>62</sup> If tobacco could not prevent plague, it might still alleviate symptoms. In 1644, the inhabitants of Potterne in Wiltshire paid £7- 9s for beer and tobacco 'for the use of the sicke people in the time of sickness'.<sup>63</sup>

Ideas that tobacco smoking would alleviate the symptoms of minor ailments, preserve health and prevent infection were being expressed by people like Chute and his smokers' circle who drew upon their experiences of its effects as part of a consuming lifestyle. It became a part of, as well as an antidote to, intemperate and luxurious consumption. Tobacco was one of many freely available medicines which could be

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<sup>59</sup> Jenner, 'Civilisation and Deodorisation?', p. 132.

<sup>60</sup> G. B. Harrison, *An Elizabethan Journal 1591-1594* (London, 1928), p. 253.

<sup>61</sup> Chute, *Tabaco*, p. 20.

<sup>62</sup> P. Bliss (ed.), *Reliquiae Hearnianae: the remains of Thomas Hearne M. A.* 2 vols. (London, 1869), 2, pp. 118-120. This incident reportedly happened in January 1721.

purchased in the unregulated 'medical marketplace' of early modern England where 'networks of information about cures and practitioners ramified across divisions of gender, age and class'.<sup>64</sup> With so many and varied uses, smoking quickly joined other popular, self-administered and freely available medicines which were 'consumed with irreverence' and often to excess.<sup>65</sup> Anyone who could afford it could go round to see 'Nicke the apotycary' or pop into 'Whites the apotycary against St. Ma[ry's]' to buy a piece of liquorice or a twist of tobacco.<sup>66</sup>

Tobacco for smoking was the ideal commercial drug. Apothecaries were often the first recourse of the sick. In the absence of authoritative judgement, European physicians' approval for tobacco could be invoked and rhetorically extended to endorse smoking. Tobacco was a 'universal' medicine able to tackle a wide variety of ailments. Smoking it was reputed to be effective. The 'giddinesse' experienced when trying it proved it 'worked'.<sup>67</sup> The skeptic had only to ask any smoker who regularly used it. They would have confirmed they felt better for it. Even restlessness and irritability had to be 'cured'. As dependency turned smoking into a daily necessity, new consumers would become frequent and regular purchasers of tobacco and pipes. The conspicuousness of smoking and the dispute about it advertised the new tonic, possibly leading others to seek its benefits. Combining potent and varied medicinal

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<sup>63</sup> B. H. Cunnington (ed.), 'Extracts from Quarter Session Rolls' in Records of the County of Wiltshire (Devizes, 1932), p. 155.

<sup>64</sup> Pelling, The Common Lot, p. 1. The term 'medical marketplace' was first coined by Cook (H. J. Cook, Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London (Ithaca etc., 1986)).

<sup>65</sup> Pelling, The Common Lot, p. 204. Pelling argues that such medicines may have been consumed as a sop for disadvantage and insecurity.

<sup>66</sup> Tobacco was not everyone's exotic of choice. John and Richard Newdigate, while students, bought a range of luxuries including liquorice and currants (V. M. Larminie (ed.), 'The Undergraduate Account Book of John and Richard Newdigate, 1618-1621' in Camden Miscellany 30, Camden Society 4<sup>th</sup> series 39 (1990), p. 190). They purchased tobacco from 'Whites the apotycary' for a visit from 'uncle Newdigate' on 3 June 1620: 'Item to Robin for I oz tobaco for your unckle ii s' (Ibid., p. 246). This particular purchase was evidently socially motivated.



action with self-administration, novelty and an absence of medical constraints, tobacco was a valuable extension to the apothecary's inventory.

Apothecaries had become particularly important as the source of medicines on demand where access to the traditional remedies of the family garden was limited.<sup>68</sup> They had also, along with Barber-surgeons, taken the initiative in 'the exploitation of plants from the new world'.<sup>69</sup> In 1590s London apothecaries increasingly stocked and customers increasingly demanded the 'Indian' drug. John Buggs, an apothecary who was prosecuted by the College of Physicians in the 1630s for advertising himself as a doctor, could 'prescribe' and sell tobacco for a host of ills. At hearings against him much of the evidence focussed upon whether he owned an apothecary shop or a tobacco shop.<sup>70</sup>

It was in the interests of all medical practitioners, including physicians, to give their customers and 'patients' what they wanted.<sup>71</sup> The health 'market' was highly competitive. Physicians were not seen as 'especially or uniquely qualified to treat

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<sup>67</sup> Gerard noted that both 'English' tobacco, which he called 'doubtfull Henbane', and 'Henbane of Peru' had this effect (Gerard, *Herball*, p. 285).

<sup>68</sup> Pelling, *The Common Lot*, p. 58. The right to dispense medicines was jealously guarded especially after 1590 when revision of the physicians' Statuta began. The garden at the College of Physicians, tended by John Gerard from 1588-9, was a particularly galling threat to their trade. Goodman argues that access to the goods of the countryside decreased as urbanisation increased and that the eighteenth century desire for ornamental gardens further reduced access to traditional medicinal plants (Goodman, 'Excitantia', p. 135).

<sup>69</sup> Pelling, *The Common Lot*, p. 53. Pelling suggests this initiative 'passed first to barber-surgeons and then to apothecaries'.

<sup>70</sup> Buggs was a member of the Society of Apothecaries from 1620. In 1630, the College of Physicians investigated his role in the death of a patient. At hearings against him it was claimed, amongst other things, that he was selling considerable quantities of tobacco while advertising himself as a doctor (A. Underwood (ed.), *A History of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London. Vol. 1, 1617-1815* (London, 1963), p. 305). Buggs had influential friends at court. The College pursued him for eight years and, despite five months imprisonment, Buggs continued to practice. The dispute was finally settled, not to the College's satisfaction, when Buggs gained a medical degree from Leiden University which enabled him to practice medicine legitimately (Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime*, pp. 87-8).

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1. Cook states that 'patients often controlled the medical relationship'.

illness' and 'competed on equal or disadvantageous terms with a wide range of other healers for the medical trade'.<sup>72</sup> In London, the voices of around 50 learned physicians were just one part of a cacophony of opinions about medicine and health exchanged between friends and family and through the agency of some 450 'lesser' medical practitioners.<sup>73</sup> Such practitioners joined custodians of popular 'wisdom', especially women, in suggesting and offering 'cures' to consumers who 'reserved the right to treat themselves'.<sup>74</sup>

The character of this medical marketplace was ideally suited to the dissemination of medical information and medicines. This is illustrated by the activities of quacks and others who assumed the status of physician. The 'empiricke', who 'hath no knowledge in Philosophy, Logicke, or Grammar: but fetcheth all his skill from bare and naked experience' was condemned by learned physicians.<sup>75</sup> Physicians admitted to the London College of Physicians took an oath to 'pursue vnlearned Empirikes and imposters'. These were active medical practitioners not people who merely told of their own experiences. They were said to exploit patients with wild claims about their own medical wisdom, the marvelous cures they had supposedly found and the miraculous medicines they could offer:

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<sup>72</sup> Lindemann, *Medicine and Society*, p. 195. This did not change until the nineteenth century.

<sup>73</sup> Wear estimates that in '1600, with a population of 200,000, London had 50 physicians affiliated to the College of Physicians of London, which represents a ratio of 2.5 per 10,000'. There were also 100 surgeons, 100 apothecaries and 250 mainly unlicensed practitioners (excluding midwives and nurses) who made a living in London. Combined this represented one 'medic' for every 400 of London's population (Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe', p. 233).

<sup>74</sup> Pelling, *The Common Lot*, p. 53.

<sup>75</sup> Eleazar Duncon, *The Copy of a Letter Written by E. D. Doctour of Physicke to a Gentleman, by Whom it was Published. The former part conteineth rules for the preservation of health, and preuenting of all diseases vntill etreme olde age. Herein is inserted the authours opinion of tabacco. The latter is a discourse of emperiks or vnlearned physicians . . .* (London, 1606), pp. 20-1. Author identified by contemporary hand on title page and in margin of first page of Huntington Library copy.



Large and strange talke, be it neuer so foolish and false, is pleasing to the multitude, but bare and naked truth, vttered in a few words, is lightly regarded. This allureth the common people to flocke to Empirikes and leaue learned Physicians.<sup>76</sup>

Dr Duncon, an Ipswich physician, complained that some of these false physicians actively advertised their services by procuring ‘popular fellowes which frequent Innes and Tauerns, to be trumpeters and sounders abroad of their praise, without any regard of truth’.<sup>77</sup> This was a medical marketplace where potential customers were used to the public vaunting and vending of cures and tonics without regard to the intricacies of medical theory. Claims about the benefits of smoking, if voiced often and loudly enough, would be heard and probably believed.

The determination by ‘patients’ that tobacco was beneficial for them and the unrestricted sale of it by apothecaries left little room for the physicians who sold advice. Chute suggested that physicians had intentionally dismissed smoking because popular access to tobacco and pipes threatened the ‘common detrement and hurt of their Art’.<sup>78</sup> Such easy access to tobacco and information about it similarly excluded unlicensed practitioners unless, like Buggs, they were also tobacco vendors. Whether effective against a particular illness or not, the belief that smoking could prevent and ameliorate disease relieved anxieties about health. At a time when minor ailments were believed possibly to be symptoms of more serious underlying diseases, both physicians and ‘empiricks’ depended upon such anxieties. They could only prescribe tobacco and collect their fees if they were consulted. Tobacco smoking was a practice

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>78</sup> Chute, Tabaco, p. 13.

that people liked for its 'healthful' effects and because it was enjoyable. It was readily available and, like the proverbial apple a day, it kept the doctor away.

Nor can the Scepticks, or Empiricks see  
This herbs great vertue, nature and degree:  
Who takes this med'cine need not greatly care,  
Who Galenists who Paracelsians are  
Nor need he seeke their Rosaries, their Summes,  
Their Secrets, their Dispensatoriums  
Nor fill his pocket with their costly bils,  
Nor stuffe his maw with their vnsau'ry pils,  
Nor make huge pitfals in his tender vaines,  
With thousand other more then hellish paines,  
But by this herbes celestiall qualitie  
May keepe his health in mirth and iollitie:<sup>79</sup>

In the adoption of tobacco as a 'healthful' tonic, the patient was the arbiter of value, not the physician. Tobacco was good for you because experience showed that it was.

Suggestions that tobacco smoking was 'unhealthful' similarly derived first from observing smokers, not theories of medicine. There was something distinctly 'unmedicinal' about the circumstances and context of consumption. Smoking was conspicuous partly because it had become an inherently social activity. It was most visible in public spaces where smokers sat 'drinking as well as smoking together . . . and it makes them riotous and merry, and rather drowsy, just as if they were drunk, though the effect soon passes'.<sup>80</sup> The sight of smokers taking a tobacco 'hit',

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<sup>79</sup> Sir J. Beaumont, The Metamorphosis of Tabacco, (London, 1602).

<sup>80</sup> Williams, Thomas Platter's Travels, pp. 170-1.



especially in the context of the alehouse, smacked of desire and pleasure rather than medical need.

‘Tabackians’, as Gerard called them, or ‘Tobacconists’ as they were more generally called, seemed obsessed with their drug. They were evidently misusing it which could not be good for either body or soul. They seemed ‘bewitched’ by it: ‘some vse to drinke it (as it is tearmed) for wantonnesse or rather custome, and cannot forbear it, no, not in the midst of their dinner, which kinde of taking is vnwholesome and very daungerous’.<sup>81</sup> There were appropriate and inappropriate times and reasons to smoke.

Vaughan counseled that:

Cane tobacco well dryed, and taken in a silver pipe, fasting in the morning, cureth the megrim, the toothache, obstructions proceeding of cold, and helpeth the fits of the mother. After meals it doth much hurt, for it infecteth the braine and the liuer.<sup>82</sup>

Chute complained that those using tobacco ‘extreamly’ were not just harming themselves. Their ‘abuse’ of the drug had generated reports of harmful effects which deterred some from using it for their health ‘who now remaining feared with examples, shunne it as an inconvenience, which els they had entertained as a publicke good’.<sup>83</sup> They were also wasting a valuable public resource. If they could be stopped, ‘hoarding Apothicaries might be glad to abate their prises of their mingle mangle’.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, pp. 287-8.

<sup>82</sup> W. Vaughan, *Naturall & Artificial Directions for Health Derived from the Best Philosophers, As Well Moderne, as Auncient* (London, 1600), pp. 26-7. Vaughan was a lawyer who, in this text, offered commonplace information on the health benefits of different foods and living arrangements. Wine, ale, spices, sugar, clean sweet smelling chambers etc. could all help people to maintain good health.

<sup>83</sup> Chute, *Tabaco*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18. Chute advocated a ‘penal law’ to punish those who wasted tobacco and complained about the scarcity and adulteration of good tobacco that wasters caused.

William Barclay later echoed these sentiments when he asked ‘the abusers of  
Tabacco’:

Why do you thus abuse this heavenlie plant  
The hope of health, the fewell of our life?  
Why doe you waste it without feare of want,  
Since fine and true Tabacco is not ryfe? <sup>85</sup>

To find early modern commentators suggesting that too much tobacco was bad for you should not be surprising. The maintenance of health, both moral and physical, depended upon moderation. Excessive eating, drinking or exercise was not considered good for body or soul. This did not mean smoking within appropriate limits was unhealthy. Gerard recommended a tobacco syrup ‘aboue this fume or smokie medicine’ but still accepted that ‘to take it seldome and that Phisically is to be tolerated and may do some good’.<sup>86</sup> Smoking by people such as Dr Bellamy was not being questioned. He took tobacco once a day by a warm fire in his private chambers and when he felt better he gradually reduced his consumption.<sup>87</sup> Such infrequent and inconspicuous use of tobacco for specific medicinal reasons contrasted strongly with the kind of consumption being witnessed in public spaces across London.

Smoking in shared spaces did not just effect smokers. Tobacco smoke billowed beyond the consumer and impinged on others. While smokers praised the ‘pleasing, fregrant, aromaticall smell’ of their ‘sweete’ medicine, others cried ‘fie, fie, how it

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<sup>85</sup> Barclay, *Nepenthes*, ‘To the abusers of Tabacco’, sig. [B6].

<sup>86</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 288.

<sup>87</sup> Bellamy, *A New and Short Defense of Tabacco*, sigs. [C4]v-D. Bellamy reduced his clearly medicinal consumption gradually to once every three months. Each time he smoked, he stayed in his chamber for up to three hours while the effects wore off.



stincks'.<sup>88</sup> People 'stoppe[d] their noses and mouthes with their hands or other meanes' to prevent themselves breathing in its manifestly harmful, lingering, 'vnpleasing and stincking s[c]ent'.<sup>89</sup> Social environments were being polluted. Tobacco smoke 'infect[ed] the aire' around meal tables.<sup>90</sup> Non-smokers did not want to share either the 'disease' or the 'cure' but they were forced to endure smoke which 'hath beene blowne out, if not through a pockie nostrill, yet (for the most part) through a snotty nose'.<sup>91</sup> While those who liked smoking claimed it was healthful, those who disliked it were expressing concerns that their own health and enjoyment were being directly threatened by it. If tobacco smelt bad to you, it probably was bad for you.

Perceptions that smoking was health-promoting clashed directly with perceptions that it was offensive and harmful. This made the new activity socially divisive and controversial. A rash of plays, epigrams and satirical poems articulated the contemporary debate. Some offered unrestrained praise for the new medicine: tobacco was a 'hearbe of heavenly power'.<sup>92</sup> Others condemned it unreservedly as a 'foule contagious, stinking Manbane weede'.<sup>93</sup> In Every Man in his Humour Ben Jonson parodied the debate with an altercation between Cob and his increasingly unwelcome guest, the smoking braggart Bobadilla.<sup>94</sup> He counterpoised Bobadilla's praise of the

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<sup>88</sup> Chute, Tabaco, p. 19.

<sup>89</sup> Philaretus, Work for Chimny-Sweepers, sigs. C2-C3.

<sup>90</sup> James I, Counterblaste, sig. D.

<sup>91</sup> B. Rich, The Irish Hubbub or The English Hue and Crie briefly pursuing the base conditions, and most notorious offences of the vile, vaine, and wicked age, no less smarting then tickling: a merriment whereby to make the wise to laugh, and fooles to be angry (London, 1618), p. 44.

<sup>92</sup> Davies, 'Of Tobacco'.

<sup>93</sup> John Taylor, 'Plutoes Proclamation Concerning his Infernall Pleasure for the Propagation of Tobacco' in J. Taylor, All the Workes of Iohn Taylor the Water-Poet. Being Sixty and three in Number. Collected into one Volume by the Author (London, 1630), p. 252.

<sup>94</sup> B. Jonson, Every Man in his Humour. As it hath beene sundry times publickly acted (London, 1601), Act iii, Scenes vi & vii. First performed in 1598. Cob's wife had sold his platters to buy the tobacco for Bobadilla. Harley identifies Cob as 'the voice of downright good sense' and notes that 'the habitual

medicinal power of his 'divine' and 'precious weed' with Cob's denunciation of 'roguish tobacco' which chokes and fills people with smoke and soot. The dispute is referred to Justice Clement, a physician, juxtaposing his authoritative and learned opinion with the protagonists' unlearned views. Reflecting the contemporary absence of clear medical advice, the physician offers a social rather than medical justification for smoking. He sends Cob to prison for abusing 'the vertue of an herb, so generally receiv'd in the courts of princes, the chambers of nobles, the bowers of sweet ladies, [and] the cabbins of souldiers'. When Cob objects, he is told not to 'stink'.<sup>95</sup>

### 'Fuming' discourses: the physicians join the debate

Ideas that tobacco was unhealthy coalesced around the commonplace notion that smokers' bodies, like chimneys, were being clogged up with soot. Chute's critics, for example, offered to 'hire an Irish man to chimney-sweep' his 'stomacke'.<sup>96</sup> The parallel was obvious. Smoke went in through the mouth and poured out through the nose. What it did in between needed investigating. Did it carry noxious humours out of the body or did it contaminate and 'dye' one's 'loungs in deepest blacke'?<sup>97</sup> There was an easy way to find out - a post mortem examination. Whether such specific examinations took place or not, people believed that the dissection of smokers had shown that tobacco did cause contamination. Thomas Platter reported: 'I am told the

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tobacco-taker was emerging as a stock figure on stage, alongside the deliberate bankrupt and the lustful actor' (Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy, p. 35). In this depiction of tobacco smoking, Jonson remains ambivalent about whether smoking is good or ill. There is no simple didactic judgement on either the substance or the activity. Instead he presents to his audience a concrete expression of the controversy itself through an entertaining representation of the response of fictional but familiar characters to tobacco.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., Act iii, Scene vii, lns. 51- 61.

<sup>96</sup> Chute, *Tabaco*, p. 19.

<sup>97</sup> R. Devereux, Earl of Essex, 'The Buzzeinge Bee's Complaynt' published in A. B. Grosart, The Poems of Thomas, Lord Vaux ... Edward, Earl of Oxford ... Robert, Earl of Essex ... and Walter, Earl of Essex ... For the first time collected, 4 vols. (Blackburn, 1870-1872), 2, p. 88.



inside of one man's veins after death was found to be covered in soot just like a chimney'.<sup>98</sup> King James asserted that tobacco made a kitchen of men's insides 'infecting them, with an unctious Soote as hath bene found in some great Tobacco takers, that after their death were opened'.<sup>99</sup> When Dr John Hammond opened the physicians' printed debate about smoking in 1602 he said nothing about such direct observations.<sup>100</sup> However, he still entitled his text Work for Chimny-sweepers: OR A warning for Tabacconists.

Hammond directed his text to a general readership. His was a 'dissenting voice', directly challenging such 'excellent Phisitions and men of singular learning and practise, together with many gentlemen and some of great accompt' who, 'by their daily use and custome in drinking of Tabacco, give great credit and authoritie to the same'.<sup>101</sup> He intended to show that neither their 'usual practise' nor the 'great authoritie' of Monardes could justify smoking, 'a thing so hurtfull and pernicious to the life and health of man'. He urged his readers to consider the evidence for themselves. This text inspired a scholarly and, at times, angry counter-disputation from Dr Roger Marbecke, Registrar of the College of Physicians and physician to the Queen.<sup>102</sup> His A Defence of Tabacco with a friendly answer to the late printed book

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<sup>98</sup> Williams, Thomas Platter's Travels, pp. 170-1.

<sup>99</sup> James I, Counterblaste, sig. D.

<sup>100</sup> Hammond was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and became a physician to King James I and Prince Henry, whom he attended during his last illness. He was admitted Fellow of the College of Physicians in May 1608. His son Henry became a noted theologian (W. Munk, Roll of the Royal College of Physicians (London, 1878), 1, p. 147). Furdell notes that he was born in London (E. L. Furdell, The Royal Doctors 1485-1714: medical personnel at the Tudor and Stuart courts (Rochester N.Y., 2001), p. 111).

<sup>101</sup> Philaretus, Work for Chimny-Sweepers, sig. A3.

<sup>102</sup> Roger Marbecke was educated at Oxford and became provost of Oriel in 1564. He became a Fellow of the College of Physicians around 1578 and was considered careful and diligent in his duties as Registrar of the College. He accompanied Howard on the expedition to Cadiz of 1596 and wrote an account of the action (manuscript in British Museum: A Brief and True Discourse of the Late Honorable Voyage into Spaine . . .). Having retained his position as royal physician after the accession of King James, he died on 5 July 1605. For further details see: A. G. W. Whitfield, 'Roger Marbecke – First Registrar', Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London, 15 (1981). Harley notes that

called Worke for Chimny-sweepers, &c. (1602) presented a point by point defence of the 'stranger' which had been 'so mightily accused . . . and now standeth vpon his triall, at the Barre'.<sup>103</sup> Numerous other physicians' texts evaluating tobacco followed which, alongside a proliferation of literary references to it and a Counterblaste from King James, considered the evidence. As the following survey of the printed medical debate shows, by 1615 a comprehensive English re-assessment of the drug had superceded learned European evaluations of it.

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Marbecke's own reluctance to 'drink' tobacco had been noted in a Star Chamber interrogation of 1598 (Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy, p. 39). Furdell mistakenly claims, despite the title saying it was an 'answer', that Marbecke's defense of tobacco was 'just the opening salvo in a prolonged debate' (Furdell, The Royal Doctors, p. 80).

<sup>103</sup> Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, pp. 8-9.



Table 2.1

Publications considering the medicinal value of smoking, 1595-1615.

(Theatrical and poetic texts representing tobacco during this period are not listed here)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Printing &amp; distribution details</u>
1595	Anthony Chute (poet)	<u>Tabaco: the distinct and severall opinions of the late and best Phisitions</u>	London by Adam Islip
1596	Nicolas Monardes (Spanish physician)	<u>Ioyful newes out of the new-found worlde [translated by J. Frampton]</u>	Printed by E. Alde, by the assigne of Bonham Norton <sup>104</sup>
1597	John Gerard (herbalist)	<u>The Herball, or generall historie of plantes</u>	London by [Edm. Bollifant for Bonham Norton &] Iohn Norton <sup>105</sup>
1599	Henry Butts (physician?)	<u>Dyet's Dry Dinner: Consisting of eight severall Courses: 1. Fruites . . . 8. Tabacco</u>	London by Thomas Creede for William Wood. Sold at 'West end of Powles, at the signe of Tyme'.
1600	William Vaughan (lawyer)	<u>Naturall &amp; artificial directions for health derived from the best Philosophers</u>	Printed by Richard Bradocke
1601 & 1602	John Hammond (physician) pseud: 'Philaretus'	<u>Work for Chimny-sweepers: OR A warning for Tabacconists. Describing the pernicious use of Tabacco . . .</u>	London by T. Este for Thomas Bushell. Sold at the 'great North dore of Powles'
1602	Roger Marbecke (physician)	<u>A Defence of Tabacco with a friendly answer to the late printed Booke called Worke for Chimny-sweepers &amp;c.</u>	London by Richard Field for Thomas Man
1602	[Robert Bellamy] (physician)	<u>A New and Short Defense of Tabacco with the effects of the same and the right use thereof.</u>	London by V.S. for Clement Knight. sold at 'Shop at the Signe of the Holy Lambe in Paules Church-yard
1604	[King James VI & I] <sup>106</sup>	<u>A Counterblaste to Tobacco</u>	London by R. B.
1606	[Eleazar Duncon] (physician)	<u>The copy of a letter written by E. D. Doctour of Physicke to a gentleman . . .</u>	Printed by Melchisdech Bradwood
1610	Edmund Gardiner (Physician)	<u>Triall of Tabacco wherein his worth if most worthily expressed. . .</u>	London by H. L. for Matthew Lownes to be sold at his shop at the 'Signe of the Bishop's head', 'Paules Church-yard'.
1614	William Barclay (Physician)	<u>Nepenthes; or the vertues of Tabacco</u>	Edinburgh by Andro Hart. Sold at Hart's shop on the 'North side of the high street'
1615	C.T.	<u>An advice how to plant tobacco in England . . .</u>	London by Nicholas Okes, 'sold by Walter Burre'

<sup>104</sup> The 1577 edition had been printed by 'Willyam Norton in Paules Churchyard'. Note in Huntington library copy states that 'Edward Alde dwelt without Cripplegate at the sign of the gilded cup'.

<sup>105</sup> Bracketed details appear on colophon not title page.

<sup>106</sup> This text was anonymous until 1616 when it was included in King James's collected works. However, his authorship was no secret.

Harley has emphasised the religious and moral context of this medical debate. He suggests that the Oxford-educated Marbecke was compelled to defend tobacco because Cambridge-inspired puritans had attacked it. Hammond had laid the foundation for his assault on tobacco at Trinity College in April 1597 with a doctoral thesis arguing that regular tobacco smokers were being dried out and poisoned by tobacco.<sup>107</sup> At about the same time, at Emmanuel College, his contemporary, Joseph Hall, a poet, puritan cleric and later a Calvinist bishop, was questioning tobacco in the context of the dereliction of hospitality. Contrasting tobacco with ‘the winde-pipes of good hospitalitie’, Hall complained that: ‘Nor halfe that smoke from all his chymneies goes/ As one Tobacco-pipe driues through his nose’.<sup>108</sup> Harley suggests that Hammond’s Work for Chimny-Sweepers and Hall’s poem both expressed Cambridge puritans’ indignation about superfluous luxury corrupting manners. Marbecke’s Defence of Tabacco thus seems a rebuttal of that moral agenda and an affirmation of the authority of ‘custom’ and the established order over assertions of the authority of ‘godly’ insight.

This may have been the background to the debate but, apart from a very brief digression into tobacco’s origins amongst the ‘diuels priests’ in America, its substance was a Galenic assessment of tobacco’s properties, uses and effects. The language of medicine was infused with the rhetoric of morality. A dispute about the medicinal validity of a medicine that was being publicly misused had to have a moral dimension. Diseases and their cures were considered God-given.<sup>109</sup> However, Hammond had

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<sup>107</sup> Harley, ‘The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy’, pp. 38-9.

<sup>108</sup> J. Hall, ‘Heic quærite Troiam’ in Virgidemiarvm. The three last Bookes of byting Satyres (London, 1598), p. 65.

<sup>109</sup> Wear notes the strong links between the clerical and medical professions (A. Wear, ‘Religious Beliefs and Medicine in Early Modern England’ in H. Marland and M. Pelling, The Task of Healing:



chosen to argue against the vice of smoking on medical, not moral, grounds.<sup>110</sup>

Marbecke's rebuttals seem more akin to the marking of a student's scholarly essay by a veteran of Elizabethan medicine than an expression of disdain for puritan agendas.<sup>111</sup> Hammond was attacking widespread smoking by attacking tobacco.

Marbecke was defending tobacco as a medicine and smoking as a healthful activity.

He did not seek to defend 'tobacconists': 'If his [Hammond's] meaning be, onely to condemne the abuse of Tabacco: in that I am readie to take his part, and will most willingly ioyne with him hand in hand'.<sup>112</sup> He wanted to prevent physicians losing a valuable new medicine because of doubts arising from its misuse.

Marbecke was particularly concerned that Hammond's text had disclosed medical secrets to the public. At this time, the College of Physicians was engaged in the completion of the Statuta Vetera, a set of rules to govern the activities of physicians, which stipulated that it was an offence to even divulge the name of powerful medicines, especially purgatives.<sup>113</sup> Hammond had detailed tobacco's 'venemous and poysoned nature'. Marbecke inveighed that, 'the times being so dangerous', such insights should not 'so rashly, and unadvisedly be opened, to the common people'.<sup>114</sup>

Hammond's contribution to the expanding canon of vernacular medical publications

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medicine, religion and gender in England and the Netherlands 1450-1800 (Rotterdam, 1996), p. 158). Wear also suggests that 'Calvinism was used by learned physicians for essentially conservative purposes' to prop up rather than reform medicine (p. 165).

<sup>110</sup> Hammond's choice of pseudonym, 'Philaretus', might suggest that, whatever the moral motives behind his text, he was determined to address the issues without rancorous moralising. A character called 'Philaretus', described as a scholar at Cambridge University, featured in a pamphlet, published in 1596, treating of the disparities between empty fame and learned opinion (R. Robinson[?], Vlysses upon Ajax. Written by Misodiaboles to his friend Philaretus (London, 1596)). This argued that it was better to use scholarly discourse than merely the critic's opprobrium to challenge offensive subjects. It is highly unlikely that there were two 'Philaretus' at Cambridge at the same time.

<sup>111</sup> As Wear points out, medical historians seem to have been induced by the English Protestant tradition to see the 'relationship between medicine and religion in sectarian and political terms' (Wear, 'Religious Beliefs and Medicine', p. 146). Medicine was a subject in its own right.

<sup>112</sup> Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, p. 5.

<sup>113</sup> For further details about the Statuta see Sir G. Clark, A History of the Royal College of Physicians (Oxford 1964), 1, pp. 173-81.

had not just offered a few home remedies. It revealed the nature and power of tobacco to all. His attack on smoking had also raised doubts about physicians' prescription of tobacco infusions and distillations etc. He had no more blemished tobacco than 'disgrace[d] other parts of Phisicke, which have deserved better, at your hands, than this'.<sup>115</sup>

Hammond and Marbecke's medical arguments about tobacco were primarily theoretical. However, both combined theory with direct observation, especially when considering smoking. Galenic physicians were not wholly averse to empirical knowledge. Marbecke argued against the commonplace that tobacco smoke bred 'blacke vapours in our bodies'. He urged Hammond to examine the throats of tobacco takers and 'prie into their noses . . . and I will lay what wager you will, that you shall find them as faire nosed gentlemen, and as cleane mouthed, and throated, as any men alive'.<sup>116</sup> Hammond's suggestion that tobacco hindered the absorption of water, drying up veins and arteries and ageing smokers prematurely was similarly countered with both theory and observational common sense. Marbecke urged Hammond to consult 'all the suckgrouts in London, and all the whole company of tiplers' who would testify that 'drinesse never hindered as yet, the receiving, and imbibing in of any good liquor'.<sup>117</sup> Harley argues that Marbecke repeatedly drew upon "the multitude of indifferent voices" most notably to decide the question of whether or not

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<sup>114</sup> Marbecke, *A Defence of Tabacco*, pp. 43-5.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63. In a departure from his usual tight disputation, Marbecke rambled through an assertion wrapped in a series of untidy analogies that blacksmiths, colliers and others who worked in smoky environments were not damaged inwardly by their outward filth and grime.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40. Marbecke did offer more reasoned arguments against such claims and asserted that tobacco was more likely to be beneficial in the avoidance of too much moisture than harmful 'in the procuring of too much drinesse'. Marbecke also maintained that Hammond's discourses on poisons and purges had merely illustrated the obvious fact that purging medicines required mollification. By Hammond's wide definition even stones qualified as poisons because they lacked nourishment. He also urged Hammond to tell vintners that their commodity was poisonous.



tobacco stinks' and that he 'beats the drums of order, social rank, and the weight of gentlemanly opinion'.<sup>118</sup> However, these were neither appeals to public opinion nor assertions of hierarchy. The Registrar of the College of Physicians was not proposing 'suckgrouts' and 'tiplers' as medical authorities. 'Indifferent voices' could perhaps evaluate the aesthetics of tobacco's smell, not its medical ramifications. Marbecke did not appeal to public opinion. He shared his opponent's contempt for it in all medical matters.

Hammond's learned assessment of tobacco showed that it was very dangerous. Equating tobacco's poisonous nature with the venom of a scorpion, Hammond scorned the indiscriminate use of it by smokers. By the 'large drinking thereof', consumers risked:

violent vomits, many and infinite stooles, great gnawings and torments in the guttes and inward parts, Coldnesse in the outward and extemall members, Cramps, Convulsions, cold sweats, ill colour and wannesse of skin, defect of feeling, sense & understanding, losse of sight, giddinesse of the head and brain, profound and deep sleepe, faintnesse, sowndings, and to some hastie and untimely death.<sup>119</sup>

Even if it did not kill it would do great harm. Hammond argued that tobacco's 'ferie' and 'immoderate' heat diminished the 'milde & unctuous warmth' of the body disrupting humoral equilibrium. It dried up natural 'temperate & moderate moisture', leaving behind a 'great store of crud & undigested humours'.<sup>120</sup> Hammond attributed the 'rewmes, Catarres, Coughes, spatterings, vomits, scourings, and such lyke'

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<sup>118</sup> Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', pp. 39-40.

suffered by smokers to the build up of such ‘flegmatic excrement’. Healthy humours were ‘dissipated, wasted, spent and cast forth of the bodie’ by ‘continuall spittings and coughings’ leading to ‘Consumptions... and decay of Spirits in the bodie’.<sup>121</sup> This humoral corruption extended to the ‘purest and finest part’ of the body’s moistures, the ‘sperme and seede of man’, making tobacco ‘an utter enemie to the continuance and propagation of mankinde’.<sup>122</sup> Those who smoked risked more than the ‘imputation of that disease [the ‘filthie pox’] upon them’.<sup>123</sup> Tobacco left a ‘bastard heat’ within the veins ‘Which spoyles the Infant, if the Wife concieves’.<sup>124</sup>

This first authoritative examination of the medicinal validity and physiological ramifications of smoking must have been warmly received by the anti-smoking faction of public opinion. It was intended to shock. Demand for it was evidently high. A second edition appeared the following year. The impact of its sentiments on smokers, especially those who believed that tobacco had been preserving their health, can perhaps be inferred from a slightly earlier Samuel Rowlands epigram:

A wofull exclamation late I heard,  
Wherewith Tabacco takers may be feard.  
One at the poynt with pipe and leafe to part,  
Did vow Tabacco worse then Death’s blacke dart:  
And prou’d it thus You know (quoth he) my friends  
Death onely stabbes the hart, and so life endes:  
But this same poyson, steeped India weede,

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<sup>119</sup> Philaretus, *Work for Chimny-Sweepers*, sigs. E2-E2v.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, sigs. C-C2.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Cv.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, sigs. D2-D3.

<sup>123</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. B2v.

<sup>124</sup> Sir W. Vaughan Orpheus Junior, ‘Three Hundred Thousand Pounds Yee Yearely Spend’ in *The Golden Fleece: Divided into three Parts, Under Which are discovered the Errours of Religion, the Vices and Decayes of the Kingdome, . . .* (London, 1626), p. 82. The allusion to bastardy is, of course, intended.



In head, hart, lunges, doth soote & copwebs breede.  
With that he gasp'd, and breath'd out such a smoke  
That all the standers by were like to choke.<sup>125</sup>

Marbecke readily accepted that tobacco, like all other medicines, contained 'some malignitie' that made it potentially dangerous. It was common knowledge that 'every poore simple in Phisicke... may lewdly be abused'.<sup>126</sup> Marbecke was unwilling to condemn a 'good thing' because of 'the abuse thereof'.<sup>127</sup> If eaten or excessively taken 'by infusion, or decoction, or otherwise, as a medicine' tobacco would be harmful as Hammond suggested but Marbecke thought 'none so mad, or so foolish, as to offend that way'.<sup>128</sup> Dismissing Hammond's catalogue of tobacco poisoning symptoms, Marbecke declared that a surfeit of wine was more likely to put people 'in this pickle' than smoking.<sup>129</sup> He lampooned his opponent's 'plod[ding] on' and, deploying his more finely honed rhetoric and understanding of medical theory, Marbecke demonstrated that tobacco was not a poison but rather more of an antidote to poisons.

Marbecke recognised a flaw in Hammond's thesis. Like popular advocates of smoking, Hammond had jumbled together claims about smoking and other ways of using tobacco. Again learned evaluations of tobacco had been rhetorically extended to

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<sup>125</sup> S. Rowlands, 'A Wofull Exclamation Late I Heard', epigram 18 in S. Rowlands, The Letting of Hymovrs Blood in the Head-Vaine. With a new Moriffco, daunced by seauen Satyres, vpon the bottome of Diogines Tubbe, (London, 1600), sig. B4v. This book was reissued in 1607 as Humours Ordinarie.

<sup>126</sup> Bellamy, A New and Short Defense of Tabacco, sig. B.

<sup>127</sup> Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, pp. 6-7.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16. The consequences of such abuse would be readily apparent. Hammond had related that: 'It is as yet fresh in memorie, that divers yong Gentlemen, by the daylie use of this Tabacco, have brought themselves to fluxes and disenteries, and of late at Bath a Scholler of some good accompt and worshipfull calling, for his humours being sharpened and made thin by the frequent use of Tabacco, most miserably ended his lyfe, being then in the verie prime and vigour of his age' (Philaretus, Work for Chimny-Sweepers, sig. D).

<sup>129</sup> Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, p. 49.

smoking, this time to show that it ‘worked’ too well for general use. Having proved that tobacco was a deadly poison, Hammond had to explain why so many smokers seemed to suffer no ill effects. Marbecke baited him for concluding, despite the title of his book, that ‘the fume of it is not any matter, of great importance, or able to make any great impression . . . , to do any good, or ill at all’.<sup>130</sup> If the ‘receiving of it [tobacco smoke], at the mouth, or snuffing it up by the nostrills, can neither profite nor hurt much’ then Hammond’s concerns about its dangerous purgative effects were similarly redundant.<sup>131</sup> Marbecke asserted that, when properly administered, tobacco’s amazing purgative power was a boon to physicians not a cause for concern: ‘a fine edged, cutting knife’ was more useful to a doctor than a ‘dull penny whittle’.<sup>132</sup> Anyway, he reminded Hammond, tobacco was mostly consumed as smoke and ‘it is well knowne, that, by that way, it worketh none of those [purgative] effects’.<sup>133</sup> It merely induced spitting which was either an unsightly and medicinally irrelevant response or a benign yet marvelously effective new and gentle way to purge.<sup>134</sup>

For most people, the Hammond/Marbecke dispute settled nothing. Their academic evaluations of tobacco merely presented both critics and advocates of tobacco with detailed medical arguments to support their own particular stance on the subject - if they could understand them. When Dr Bellamy published his New and Short Defense of Tabacco with the effectes of the same: and the right use of (1603) he offered clarification and guidance. He dismissed the intricacies of the Marbecke/Hammond dispute ‘as not pertinent’. Having perused Hammond’s ‘bitter, invective, and

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<sup>130</sup> Philaretus, Work for Chimny-Sweepers, sig. E3.

<sup>131</sup> Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco, p. 16.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.



patheticall' attack and Marbecke's 'milde, modest, and apologeticall' defence, Bellamy concluded that the protagonists largely agreed. Much of their unnecessarily 'serious dispute' centred upon questions like 'whether Tabacco do purge . . . one, or more humors at once, by chance, or by choice' which Bellamy considered less important than the obvious fact that it worked.<sup>135</sup> It was however, essential that people knew how to use it safely.

Bellamy's response to the debate was not 'slight' as Harley describes it.<sup>136</sup> Academic physicians may have dismissed the insights of an aged provincial physician but Bellamy was not directing his text to them. His views were informed by his personal experience of smoking and his skills as a physician, not the complexities of humoral theory. Bellamy confirmed that tobacco was beneficial because he had tried smoking himself, found it effective, imposed a strict medical regimen and been cured. He asserted that tobacco smoke must be used 'considerately and respectiuey, not, phanatically, phantastically, insolently, excessiuey' but reasoned that anyone could 'safely without danger, I say (not feede,) smell, touch, taste, and take, of our renowned Tabacco, without annoy'.<sup>137</sup> Smoking was just one of many different and valid medicinal uses of tobacco. 'Taken (by pipe) in fume', perhaps with the addition a grain of aniseed oil to improve its smell and taste, it would 'draine up all superfluous moisture... open up all the sluices, conduites, pipes and passages' throughout the body. Chewing small pieces and swallowing the juice would stimulate an 'olde tumbling, heaving, reaching and flinging' of offensive matters. Steeping a

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<sup>134</sup> Barclay praised tobacco for adding spitting to the familiar and ancient purgative methods of 'phlebotomie, vomition, purging by the stool, by urine, & by sweating' (Barclay, *Nepenthes*, sig. [A6]v).

<sup>135</sup> Bellamy, *A New and Short Defence of Tabacco*, sig. B. Bellamy intimates in his introductory comments that he was educated at Oxford at about the same time as Marbecke.

<sup>136</sup> Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', p. 40.

leaf in white wine or Rhennish overnight would 'give a mighty purge'. Applying ashes would heal 'green wounds, ulcers, and old sores of all sortes'.<sup>138</sup>

Bellamy's advice and recipes for the safe and appropriate use of tobacco for wholly medicinal reasons may have reassured those who, perhaps on physicians' advice, were using tobacco to cure an ailment. It did not address the widespread use of it as a preventative medicine and general panacea as had been advocated by Chute and asserted by those who needed justification for their habitual consumption. The public debate continued. King James VI & I, the self-appointed physician of the nation, decided to make his authoritative contribution.<sup>139</sup> His Counterblaste, which will be considered further in chapter 3, left little doubt that chronic self-dosing of tobacco smoke was bad, medically and particularly morally, for the smoker, his family, society and the nation. He accepted that, when 'wisely prepared and discreetly ministered' by physicians, use of the drug could be valid. However, like Marbecke, Hammond and Bellamy, he condemned its widespread and unrestrained social use.<sup>140</sup> James presented his own crude and archaic medical evaluation but the thrusts of his attack were the certainties of his moral stance and his contempt for 'popular error'.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Bellamy, A New and Short Defence of Tabacco, sig. B3v.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, sigs. D2-D3. Bellamy asserted that when applied 'by fume, infusion, syrup, electuary, or by way of extraction', 'our renowned Tabacco' was a boon to physicians only surpassed by the 'transcendent medicine' of God's blessing.

<sup>139</sup> To remedy disorders of the state, including tobacco, it was the responsibility of the King '(as the proper Phisician of his Politicke-body) to purge it of all those diseases' (James I, Counterblaste, sig. A3v).

<sup>140</sup> Marbecke's continuation as royal physician after James's accession may have been partly due to his elevated position in the College of Physicians. However, his advocacy for tobacco was strictly for medical reasons so there was no fundamental conflict with the king's views.

<sup>141</sup> King James was 'unable to distinguish between natural temperaments and pathological imbalances' and employed 'an inappropriate meteorological analogy' to disprove that smoking dried up rheum,



Hammond had offered his readers 'sollide Reasons and true Experience' to 'counterpease' unfounded opinion.<sup>142</sup> King James determined to assault directly the 'monstrous absurditie' of false reasoning and 'mistaken experience' that seemed to underpin the epidemic of unrestrained smoking.<sup>143</sup> Just because you got better soon after taking tobacco did not mean tobacco cured you. Just because smokers' deaths were attributed to some other disease did not mean tobacco had not killed them: 'olde drunkards thinke they prolong their dayes, by their swine-like diet, but never remember howe many die drowned in drinke before they be halfe old'.<sup>144</sup> Only a fool would ignore the wisdom of learned medicine and give credence to common opinion:

what foolish boy, what sillie wench, what olde doting wife, or ignorant countrey clowne, is not a Physician for the toothach, for the cholicke, and divers such common diseases? Yea will not every man you meet withal, teach you a sundry cure for the same, and sweare by that meane either himself, or some of his neerest kinsmen and friends was cured? And yet I hope no man is so foolish as to beleve them.<sup>145</sup>

Despite James's intervention, learned views and popular perceptions of the medicinal value of smoking continued to merge and clash. Moral arguments could confirm that smoking for the wrong reasons was bad but could not determine if smoking was beneficial as a prophylactic or as a therapeutic form of medicinal ingestion. The conflation of learned and unlearned views about tobacco and smoking had left plenty of scope for smokers to justify their consumption, anti-smokers to condemn them and

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contradicting both Hammond and Marbecke (Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', p. 44).

<sup>142</sup> Philaretus, *Work for Chimny-Sweepers*, sig. [A4]v.

<sup>143</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. Cv.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. C2.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. Cv.

new consumers to try it. If anything, the medical debate of 1601-4 merely confused people.

There was an evident disjunction between what physicians had to say and popular experience. All the physicians had clearly indicated that tobacco was a potent and potentially dangerous medicine. Yet the common experience of smoking was that indiscriminate use, even excessive use, did not appear to do any physical harm. Anti-smokers asserted that smoking contaminated bodies but, as Marbecke had noted, there was no external evidence of this. All it seemed to do was force out moisture and phlegm which was surely a good thing. Any regular smoker would confirm that they felt better with it than without it. Important people, including clerics and doctors, smoked and considered it beneficial.

While uncontrolled smoking continued to spread, the dispute over tobacco defied resolution. In 1610 Edmund Gardiner attempted to settle the medical side of the argument with his Triall of Tobacco. Introducing his subject, Gardiner noted that there had been 'no treatises so often divulged, so greatly discoursed of, and presented to the eies of the world (especially of late time) as those, that discourse of Indian Tabacco'.<sup>146</sup> This public debate was characterised by 'hard hold and rough reasoning on both sides'. Gardiner determined to take the 'golden meane' between the 'extreames' of 'disgacefull and dispightfull words' and 'loftie glorious tearmes'

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<sup>146</sup> E. G[ardiner], The Triall of Tabacco Wherein, his Worth is Most Worthily Expressed; as, in the name, nature, and qualitie of the sayd hearb; his speciall vse in all physicke, with the true and right vse of taking it . . . (London, 1610), sig. B. This text was reprinted in its entirety in 1611 as part of Phisicall and Approved Medicines, as well in meere simples as Compound . . . With The true vse of taking that excellent Hearbe Tabacco, aswell in the Pipe by fume, as also in Phisicke, medicine and Chirurgerie (London, 1611).



previously applied to 'this Simple'.<sup>147</sup> Gardiner's evaluation of tobacco was directed towards fellow physicians and a highly educated readership. Nevertheless, he expected the 'byting stings' of tobacco's critics and 'queasie stomacked Tobacconist[s]' as well as of colleagues protective of their professional secrets.<sup>148</sup> The general public as well as learned physicians had an interest in the outcome of this trial.

Chute had proclaimed that there was 'nothing that harmes a man inwardly from his girdle upward, but may be taken away with a moderate use of Tabacco'.<sup>149</sup> Hammond had argued that, just 'as no one kinde of diet can fit all sorts of bodies: So no one kinde of remedie can aptly be applied to all maladies, no more then one shooe can wel serve all mens feet'.<sup>150</sup> Gardiner accepted the lessons of experience. He acknowledged that, 'Wee know indeed by practise, that an infinite number of diseases are cured by Tabacco . . . from the crowne of the head to the verie feete'.<sup>151</sup> However, he tempered experience with learning and echoed Seneca's warning that 'in diseases there is nothing worse or more dangerous then vntimely giuing of medicines'.<sup>152</sup> King James had noted that 'Medicine hath that vertue that it never leaveth a man in that state wherein it findeth him; it makes a sicke man whole, but a whole man sicke'.<sup>153</sup> Gardiner considered tobacco a powerful and versatile medicine but argued that, in common with all other medicines, it should be specifically administered by the learned to treat a specific illness not taken randomly by all sorts of people. As

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., sig. A3v.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., sigs. A2v-A3.

<sup>149</sup> Chute, *Tabaco*, p. 19.

<sup>150</sup> Philaretus, *Work for Chimny-Sweepers*, sig. B3v.

<sup>151</sup> Gardiner, *Triall of Tabacco*, sig. [B4]v.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., sig. D3.

<sup>153</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sigs. C3-C3v.

Bellamy had suggested, the 'rash and inconsiderate use thereof' was likely to yield 'due deserved harme' rather than 'hoped for help'.<sup>154</sup>

Hammond had decried smoking 'without respect of times, persons, sexe, age, temperment and disease'.<sup>155</sup> Gardiner agreed and offered a humoral framework to guide physicians' prescriptions. He considered season to be particularly important. In spring 'to take it without difference and immeasurably as some abusers doe, must needes doe hurt'. In the summer only those 'spitting Tabacconist[s]' who were bewitched by the drug would consider tobacco 'holesome'. However, in the autumn tobacco could be taken safely though 'not too often' and 'with great warinesse & advise of the learned'. In winter tobacco was 'a noble medicine' 'fit to be used' to combat colds etc.<sup>156</sup> Gardiner would evidently have approved Sir Roger Aston's sentiments when, in November 1607, he entreated: 'we must have a pipe of "tobaccoo" this cold weather'.<sup>157</sup>

Alongside general advice on seasonal suitability, Gardiner offered advice on who could safely use tobacco. Galenic therapeutics were highly individualised.<sup>158</sup> Each patient had a unique complexion that had to be considered before prescribing tobacco. Gardiner advised that people of a dry complexion, by nature or through illness, must 'banish Tobacco farre from them, as a thing most pernicious' to their 'thin and chollerick bodies' because it would make them even drier.<sup>159</sup> Conversely, for those of

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<sup>154</sup> Bellamy, *New and Short Defence*, sig. D4.

<sup>155</sup> Philaretus, *Work for Chimny-Sweepers*, sig. B3.

<sup>156</sup> Gardiner, *Triall of Tabacco*, sigs. D4-E1.

<sup>157</sup> M. S. Giuseppi (ed.), *Calendar of Manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury Preserved at Hatfield House* (London, 1933), HMC 25:19, p. 330. Letter from Sir Roger Aston to the Earl of Salisbury, 19 November 1607.

<sup>158</sup> Lindemann, *Medicine and Society*, p. 88. Lindemann also notes that 'diseases were unique to individuals' in humoral thinking (p. 9).

<sup>159</sup> Gardiner, *Triall of Tabacco*, sig. E.



'moist constitutions', prone to 'sluggishness and slouth', tobacco was good because it diminished cold and moist humours.<sup>160</sup> This confirmed common perceptions that smoking could invigorate. Such recommendations about who should or should not smoke emphasised the role of the physician in determining the complexion of the patient and the suitability of the tobacco 'cure'. This would ensure the apothecary's customer remained the physician's patient. It would also prevent disruption of humoral balance which could lead to death 'before either Nature urge, Maladie enforce, or Age require it.'<sup>161</sup>

Gardiner's determination that smoking was harmful to hot/dry people especially in summer and good for cold/moist people especially in winter seems clear. However, Galenic medicine was highly interpretive, and not just in terms of defining an individual's constitution. There was no consensus about how tobacco interacted with humours. Marbecke had described Hammond's suggestion that the humours of healthy people could be damaged by tobacco as 'but a meere imagination'.<sup>162</sup> He argued that the 'familiar, and pleasing heate' of tobacco, like warm water added to hot, would even reduce the heat of youthful cholera.<sup>163</sup> Bellamy considered tobacco 'comfortable and commendable, for most men of any age, degree, constitution, or condition soever' but urged 'chill youths' to avoid it.<sup>164</sup> While physicians traded their humoral theories, common observation of the effects of smoking presented more straightforward guidance. C.T., for example, told his readers how to grow tobacco but cautioned that smoking:

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid., sig. Ev.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., sig. F3.

<sup>162</sup> Marbecke, *A Defence of Tabacco*, p. 20.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>164</sup> Bellamy, *New and Short Defence*, sigs. D-D2. However, as already noted, the level of use he advocated was very small and the duration of treatment was brief.

destroies all our youth that take it without cause, and every houre of the day, it makes them tender and not able to endure the aire, it makes them dull and sleepy, brings them to the rhume and tooth-ake, marres their teeth, except they cleanse them often, begets them a drouth, and consequently a desire to drinke: yea and an entrance to drunkennesse it selfe.<sup>165</sup>

Physicians may have been uncertain about the impact of smoking on the young but even the Indians ‘forbid it the children, till they have taken wives and have had children, as wee in England were wont to forbid maides and yong men the use of Wine’.<sup>166</sup>

Physicians’ difficulty in reaching a consensus about the impact of smoking reflects the difficulty they had placing tobacco within a humoral framework. Tobacco’s apparent versatility defied explanation. Hammond considered it ‘absurd and phantastical’ to:

minister one & the same remedie to contrary & repugnant affects, hot & cold, dry and moist, emptie and repleat, acute and cronicall. Which for the more part haue deeper rootes, and are of longer continuance, than can sodenly be blowne away with a puffe of a smokie Tabacco pipe . . . And yet these Tabacco fauorits hold no disease so incurable but that in some measure it receiueth either cure or ease by this Tabacco.<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> C.T., An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England: and how to bring it to colour and perfection, to whom it may be profitable, and to whom harmfull. . . with the danger of the Spanish tobacco (London, 1615), sig. [C4]. He also argued that tobacco should be avoided by, among others, pregnant women and husbands who wanted to be fathers.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., [C4]v. The drinking of wine by women and young men was not actually forbidden but was generally not recommended.



If tobacco's properties and effects did not easily conform to Galenic principles, perhaps other ideas could better explain it. When considering tobacco's apparently contrary qualities, Barclay, though a Galenist, drew a parallel with the alchemical staple, quicksilver. He reasoned that both tobacco and mercury had a dual nature and that both purged by generating 'slavering'. He considered that:

Tabacco is hote, because it hath acrimonie, it is cold because it is narcoticke and stupefactive, it maketh drunken, and refresheth, it maketh hungrie and filleth, it maketh thirstie, and quenchest thirst . . . I durst be bold to say, that Tabacco is the Mercure of vegetals, and Mercure is the Tabacco of minerals.<sup>168</sup>

Such ideas, like Chute's lightning metaphor to explain how tobacco worked, suggested chemical action and Paracelsian reasoning. Paracelsus had explored peasant remedies through experimentation and chemical reasoning in his search for cures.<sup>169</sup> Perhaps plebeian insights into tobacco and reasoning that did not focus on humours could better explain the new substance. As Pelling notes, Paracelsian philosophies accorded well with those who took the initiative in developing therapeutic uses for New World plants and minerals.<sup>170</sup> Curative power was identified with the action of single substances on specific diseases rather than the complex balancing of humours. Divorced from considerations of age, gender, season or complexion, medicines became available to a wider market, making Paracelsian medicine a commercial as

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<sup>167</sup> Philaretus, *Work for Chimny-Sweepers*, sigs. B3v-[B4].

<sup>168</sup> Barclay, *Nepenthes*, sig. [A7].

<sup>169</sup> For a brief outline of the life and work of Paracelsus see: Wear, 'Medicine in Early Modern Europe', pp. 310-13. For a fuller account see: O. P. Grell (ed.), *Paracelsus: the man and his reputation, his ideas and their transformation* (Leiden, 1998). For a study of the influence of Paracelsian ideas on scientific thinking see: A. Debus, *The English Paracelsians* (London, 1965); A. Debus, *The French Paracelsians: the chemical challenge to medical and scientific tradition in early modern France* (Cambridge, 1991). Lindemann notes that Paracelsus's ideas were entwined with mysticism (Lindemann, *Medicine and Society*, pp. 75-6). Tobacco's shamanistic background would thus probably not deter followers of his philosophy.

well as intellectual success. Smokers who ignored the injunctions of physicians were not necessarily doing so without foundation.

Some people probably welcomed learned advice to guide their consumption. Those who chose smoking as the remedy for a minor ailment would not want to provoke some worse disease by doing so. However, others were evidently not heeding learned advice and continued to smoke without restraint. All physicians agreed with King James that this kind of smoking was bad. Gardiner noted that ‘Tabacco is a fantastical attracter, and glutton-feeder of the appetite, rather taken of many for wantonnesse, when they haue nothing else to doe’.<sup>171</sup> He particularly disapproved of ‘our huff-snuffe Tabacconists, that misspend the flowre of their youth in this smoaking vanity’.<sup>172</sup> Barclay offered his Nepenthes; or the Vertues of Tabacco (1614) to his nephew and ‘the common sort of people’ in an attempt to ‘reforme the harme which proceedeth of the abuse’.<sup>173</sup> His pamphlet was ‘a meet piece for tipplers at tavemes’, rather than a scholarly discourse, intended to counsel smokers ‘to continue with discretion in the practise of this precious Plant’. Similarly, the author of An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England (1615) recited parts of Gerard and Monardes ‘word for word, for the common good of all poore people’ who could not afford such texts.<sup>174</sup> Smokers were being advised not to use tobacco irresponsibly.

Opinions varied about when and how often it was suitable to smoke. ‘Whether the frequent fumigation of nicotiana exotica be wholesome for the health’ was the

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<sup>170</sup> Pelling, The Common Lot, pp. 33-4.

<sup>171</sup> Gardiner, Triall of Tabacco, sig. F3.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Barclay, Nepenthes, sigs. [A]v-A2v. Barclay promised his printer that his next work would be on a more ‘scholasticall subject’. King James’ response to the spread of smoking to Scotland will be discussed in Chapter 5.



question disputed during the Oxford 'Physic Act' attended by the king in 1605.<sup>175</sup> Hammond and Marbecke had disagreed about whether a daily pipeful or even 'the often and frequent use' of tobacco exceeded conceptions of 'moderation'. Gardiner suggested that, because smokers built up a resistance to tobacco, there was little difference between taking it often or seldom.<sup>176</sup> A morning smoke, 'for commonly men which use it not idely, find that at that time it doth them most ease', was usually considered the most medically valid.<sup>177</sup> Special concern was often expressed about the combined impact of smoking with food and drink.<sup>178</sup> Gerard and Vaughan advised that smoking after meals would infect the brain and liver.<sup>179</sup> C.T. warned that 'those that take Tobacco with wine, do absolutely alter the propertie of it, & make it the Artificer of many ill accidents and diseases'.<sup>180</sup> Taken before meals smoking might 'stirre the appetite' but taken with alcohol between meals it would provoke infirmity and infertility. The Earl of Devonshire who drank the best wines 'plentifully but never in excess' and 'took tobacco abundantly' was evidently at risk.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> C.T., An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England, sig. C2.

<sup>175</sup> G. B. Harrison, A Jacobean Journal, (London, 1946), p. 227. The debate took place on the morning of 29 August 1605. The day after the debate, Hammond's Cambridge degree was incorporated as an Oxford degree (Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', p. 46). Sir William Paddy, a renowned smoker, argued against tobacco. Paddy had been educated at Leiden, licensed by the College of Physicians in 1590 and knighted by King James in 1603. Furdell describes Paddy as 'a pragmatic Paracelsian like Mayerne' (Furdell, The Royal Doctors, p. 105-6).

<sup>176</sup> Gardiner, Triall of Tabacco, sigs. E3v-[E4]. Gardiner argued that 'accustomed evils are the lesse hurtfull or offensive' and so considered frequency of consumption as unimportant.

<sup>177</sup> Chute, Tabaco, pp. 10 & 18.

<sup>178</sup> Sinclair notes that food and tobacco were often mentioned in seventeenth-century doctoral disputations (H.M. Sinclair, 'Oxford Medicine', in A. Debus (ed.), Medicine in Seventeenth-Century England (Berkeley, 1974), p. 372).

<sup>179</sup> W. Vaughan, Natural & Artificial Directions for Health, pp. 26-7. In Galenic philosophy, the heart, liver and brain were the 'principal members', the most important organs (Lindemann, Medicine and Society, p. 69).

<sup>180</sup> C.T., An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England, sig. [C4]. God had given this herb for the poor Indians who had no wine but a diet of fruits, and a hot watery climate. In the rather different European climate, where salt and so forth were available, tobacco smoke was not necessary at all without some condition requiring its power of rectification.

<sup>181</sup> Harrison, A Jacobean Journal, pp. 295-6. This was part of an obituary for the Earl of Devonshire written soon after his death on 4 April 1606.

Objective measurements of how often people smoked were allied with subjective assessments of why they did so. The 'generall use' or 'daily use and custome in drinking of Tabacco' was considered 'untimely and vulger'. Excessive consumption was identified with 'wanton' rather than medical motives. 'Idle' use (without purpose), excessive use (beyond need) and abuse (wrong use) denoted departures from standards of medicinal propriety. These terms were part of an expanding vocabulary of denunciation that culminated in the pejorative label 'tobacconist'.<sup>182</sup> Such consumers, usually viewed in the context of their intoxication, indulgent luxury and vanity, had crossed the ill-defined line between desire and need. Physicians could conveniently exclude them from their arguments and evade suggestions that their advocacy for tobacco was condoning such reprehensible behaviour.

To explain why so many were smoking so much, some suggested that the 'continuall' custom of smoking induced an enfeeblement that only more tobacco could alleviate. James called this tobacco's 'bewitching qualitie' and equated it with alcohol dependency: 'many in this kingdome have had such a continuall use of taking this unsaverie smoke, as they are not able to forbear the same, no more than an olde drunkard can abide to be sober, without falling into an uncurable weakenesse and evill constitution'.<sup>183</sup>

Though addiction was not understood in any modern sense, it was postulated that tobacco had narcotic and addictive properties as early as 1536.<sup>184</sup> Gardiner urged that

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<sup>182</sup> The term 'tobacconist' was current at this time to describe an enthusiastic regular consumer of tobacco rather than a tobacco vendor. It was a term of abuse as much as a stereotype of character.

<sup>183</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. C3v.

<sup>184</sup> Stewart notes that most medicinal uses of tobacco are not addictive. Nicotine dependency, the physiological (i.e. non-habitual) element in tobacco addiction was not explicitly recognised at this time (Stewart, 'A History of the Medicinal Use of Tobacco', p. 241). However, perceptions of addiction, which cannot be assumed from modern conceptions of it, were expressed in terms of tobacco



smokers determined to quit 'must not sodainely leave it, but by degrees' because of the physiological impact of withdrawing tobacco from a body which had become accustomed to it.<sup>185</sup> Nonetheless, some smokers remained confident that they could 'quickly quite ridd' themselves of their tobacco habit. Travers Knyvett told his grandmother he would quit 'if ye Tabacco I have sometimes taken be a iust grievance to any'.<sup>186</sup>

Goodman asks: 'when did the underlying reason for tobacco consumption change from therapy to recreation?'<sup>187</sup> This chapter has shown that enjoyment of the effects of recreational smoking generated unlearned perceptions that smoking was 'healthful'. In the streets, alehouses and apothecary shops of London, where commercial imperatives and the pursuit of pleasure coalesced with unlearned medical wisdom, smoking had become popular as a remedy for common ailments and as an antidote to modern living. However, the uncontrolled character of patterns of consumption, its novelty and the context of use raised concerns that it was harmful. Tobacco 'drinking' became tied into arguments about health and luxurious excess prompting a fierce debate and satirical exchanges about whether it was pernicious or wonderful.

Learned ideas from Europe about the curative value of tobacco in general were harnessed to the debate. This prompted an English re-evaluation of the drug which

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'bewitching' its users and smokers being 'slaves' to the drug. It was recognised as a habit, which once begun, 'can by very few, be quite forsaken' (George Wither, 'A Meditation Whilst He Was Taking a Pipe of Tobbacco' in *Miscellaneous Works of George Wither* (Printed for The Spenser Society 1872 — 1877), p. 100). Addiction will be further explored in chapter 3 in its moral context.

<sup>185</sup> Gardiner, *Triall of Tabacco*, sig. F.

confirmed the medicinal validity of tobacco and suggested appropriate levels and patterns of smoking to tackle specific ailments. This enhanced the popular repute of smoking. By 1615, Chute's breath-freshener and hangover medicine had come to be seen as a remedy for the 'hellish torment of the teeth' and digestive obstructions.<sup>188</sup> Tobacco smoke no longer merely dried up rheum, it cured 'dropsie'<sup>189</sup> and made 'the grosse and soggy, to be leane'.<sup>190</sup> The 'healthful' recreation was still criticised as inappropriate use of a medicine, but it had also become a therapy.

This confirmation of the inherent dangers of smoking combined with validation of its medicinal efficacy placed limits on smoking which, if heeded, would have made it a valuable medical resource for the sick rather than a general pastime for the healthy. Conspicuous and immoderate smoking in social venues remained wholly inconsistent with medical motives or medicinal patterns of consumption. Nobody complained about wanton application of tobacco poultices or consumption of tobacco infusions for the pleasures of the purge. Many continued to question the propriety of smoking. The extravagant and disorderly abuse of this powerful medicine by many smokers, regardless of their humoral status, was entirely inconsistent with Galenic ideas about balance, moderation and individually tailored restraint. The physicians had implicitly validated popular self-administration of a morning pipeful but popular patterns of smoking, where tobacco merged with food, alcohol and entertainment in social

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<sup>186</sup> B. Schofield (ed.), *The Knyvett Letters*, Norfolk Record Society 20 (1949), p. 22. Between 1610 and 1614 Travers wrote to his grandmother, Lady Knyvett, regarding his smoking and 'liberall' spending at college. It is not known if he did give up smoking.

<sup>187</sup> Goodman, *Tobacco in History*, p. 59.

<sup>188</sup> Davies, 'Of Tobacco'.

<sup>189</sup> Barclay considered 'Hydropsie' as 'one of the ordinarie customers that commeth to crave health at the shop of Tabacco' (Barclay, *Nepenthes*, sig. B2v). He advocated holding tobacco in the mouth and taking 1-2 pipefuls daily as an appropriate dose.

<sup>190</sup> Marbecke, *A Defence of Tabacco*, p. 21. Marbecke considered this the long pursued objective of many learned men and 'one of the greatest praises, that can be devised'. He wasn't really accepting this idea but mocking his opponent for taking such ideas seriously.



venues, were placed beyond the bounds of medicinal propriety. The physicians judged that smoking a little could be virtuous but smoking a lot was clearly pernicious.

It is generally assumed that tobacco's use as a medicine automatically and inevitably promoted rising consumption. This chapter has shown that the influence of medical ideas about tobacco could have also inhibited the spread of smoking. Ideas that smoking was 'healthful' may have encouraged people to try it. Ideas that it was harmful must have deterred them. Recreational smoking spread despite physicians' prohibitions not because of their approval. Stephen Smith told his kinsman, Sir Hugh Smith of Long Ashton, Gloucestershire, that he had not sent him any tobacco because 'I suspect your phisitions have disswaded you from the use of it'.<sup>191</sup>

Physicians' unanimous condemnation of the profligate, gluttonous and foolish consumption of 'tobacconists' had set the smoker apart from the patient. Consumers were judged and had to judge their own consumption against the standards set by the physicians. Those who smoked immoderately risked their health. Those who smoked immoderately in public risked even more. Recreational smoking had little if any medical credibility. Physicians had determined that tobacconists' salvation lay beyond the bounds of medicine. As the next chapter shows, moralists had much to say about the chances of tobacconists being saved.

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<sup>191</sup> J. H. Betty (ed.), 'Calendar of the Correspondence of the Smyth Family of Ashton Court', Bristol Records Society Publications 35 (1982), p. 59.

## Chapter 3

# Heavenly herb or devil's device:

## The moral context of tobacco smoking

Thou hell-bred lump of sin, infernall drink,  
Pernicious, damn'd, soule-fascinating stink,  
Time's great consumer, cursed child of hell,  
Scum of perdition, sprung from Pluto's cell:  
Thy barbarous nature likes no soile so well,  
As where the Devill and his Pagans dwell.  
Bewitched then are those that stand up for thee,  
Till they have grace t'abandon and abhor thee.<sup>1</sup>

These lines from Robert Chamberlain's 'Meditations divine and morall' illustrate the religious and moral controversy that surrounded the spread of smoking in England.

While, as noted in the last chapter, physicians debated whether tobacco was medically good or ill, clerics and other moral commentators argued about the consequences of smoking for the soul and society. Some proclaimed tobacco a holy herb made available by God for the benefit of Man. Others described it as a disgusting invention of the devil, nurtured by his barbarian disciples in the New World, which was now corrupting and bewitching Christians who should know better.

This chapter examines the moral debate about tobacco and explores how smoking became entwined with wider moral issues. It demonstrates that smoking carried changing moral messages. These were signalled in waves of publications feeding the debate about smoking as it became more widespread. In 1588 when Harriot published

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<sup>1</sup> R. Chamberlain, 'On Tobacco' in Nocturnall Lucubrations: or, Meditations Divine and Morall (London, 1638).



his account of Roanoke, smoking was deployed as an advertisement for the laudable endeavour of establishing an English Protestant colony in the New World. However, before James acceded to the English throne, some commentators were already emphasising its pagan origins and suggesting that smoking was religiously suspect. This combined with doubts about the medical value of smoking and its increasing visibility in social arenas to prompt many commentators to link smoking with self-indulgence, wastefulness, drunkenness and moral laxity. It became a new target in the ongoing campaign to reform manners and save the nation from sin.

The first European commentaries on tobacco presented its moral status in a clear and unequivocal manner. It was a 'divine' herb, a substance of heavenly power. It was quickly accommodated within European medicine. Some may have wondered why God had placed such a marvellous plant so far away, but none doubted that its discovery was a blessing from the Almighty. Indeed, it was a blessing often disclosed to and disseminated by God's agents on earth: the priests, missionaries and church dignitaries who sought to Christianise the New World. As noted in chapter 1, Friar Ramon Pané was one of the first to observe the use of tobacco around 1496 and the Spanish missionary-priest, Bernardino de Sahagún, similarly noted the medicinal use of tobacco in Mexico in the 1530s. The Portuguese Jesuit, Luis de Goes, is believed to have been the first to transmit tobacco plants and seeds from Brazil to Portugal sometime before 1548.<sup>2</sup> André Thevet, a Franciscan monk who returned to France from Brazil in 1556, included a woodcut of medicinal use of tobacco smoke in his account of his travels.<sup>3</sup> The Cardinal of Lorraine, a friend of Jean Nicot (one of

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<sup>2</sup> See S. A. Dickson, Panacea or Precious Bane: tobacco in 16th Century literature (New York, 1954), pp. 78-9.

<sup>3</sup> Thevet's book was published in 1557 and entitled Les Singularitez de la France Antarctique. It was translated into Italian in 1561 and into English, by Thomas Hacket as The New Found Worlde in 1568.

tobacco's most celebrated investigators), advertised the inhalation of snuff in the French court, inspiring the designation 'l'herbe du Grand Prier' for powdered tobacco.<sup>4</sup> The combination of such clerical endorsements with subsequent confirmation of its curative powers by herbalists and physicians prompted a 'language of tobacco' which emphasised its holy and sacred nature.<sup>5</sup> All medicines were considered to be part of God's bounty placed on earth for the use of man. A plant that seemed to cure everything had to be a gift from God.

The elevation of tobacco to the status of divine medicine necessarily distinguished 'authorised' ways of using tobacco from unchristian ways of using it. Any consumption which did not conform to European expectations about the use of medicines could be considered suspect. Europeans who habitually punctuated their day by snuffing, chewing or smoking tobacco without any apparent therapeutic reason were misusing God's bounty. Their adoption of activities born of pagan and heathen mentalities also smacked of spiritual degeneration. Monardes, for example, denounced its use as a 'pastyme', alongside its shamanistic use, as a deception of the devil.<sup>6</sup> Using tobacco in Amerindian ways should have held little attraction for 'good' Christians. Yet, in the New World, it became commonplace and even began to intrude into Christian worship. Catholic authorities in Mexico reacted quickly when they discovered that communicants were smoking during Mass. In 1575 smoking was prohibited in any place of worship in Spanish America.<sup>7</sup> In 1588 the Roman College of Cardinals forbade priests from smoking or snuffing tobacco 'even under the guise

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<sup>4</sup> J. E. Brooks, *The Mighty Leaf*. (London, 1953), p. 125. Snuff-taking seems to have been particularly popular in France. Catherine de Medici apparently used snuff to cure headaches.

<sup>5</sup> Goodman says that this language of tobacco attracted medical and popular attention to the plant. J. Goodman, *Tobacco in History* (London & New York, 1993), p. 48.

<sup>6</sup> J. Frampton, *Joyfull Newes out of the Newe Founde Worlde . . . written in Spanish by Nicholas Monardes and Englished by John Frampton, Merchant* (London, 1577), fol. 39.



of medicine' before celebrating Mass.<sup>8</sup> Such moves may have arrested the 'Amerindianisation' of Christian spirituality in the New World but similar practices found their way into churches in Europe. In 1642, following a complaint by the Dean of Seville that the entrance to his church was being defiled by tobacco juice, Pope Urban VIII threatened both clergy and congregation with excommunication if they smoked, chewed or snuffed tobacco in church.<sup>9</sup> This threat of eternal damnation was occasioned by more than the bad manners of consumers or the medicinal ambiguity of their consumption.<sup>10</sup> It signified concern that the uncontrolled use of tobacco was polluting the physical environment of the church and diminishing the sanctity of holy service. Tobacco may have been a divine gift but it could have no place in Christian worship or spirituality.

In Protestant England, moral and religious attitudes to tobacco similarly changed over time. Initially, as noted in chapter 1, tobacco was viewed against a backdrop of antipathy towards Spain and the quest for an English Protestant empire in the New World. Knapp argues that when Raleigh and his associates exhibited the new activity at court in the late 1580s and early 1590s, they presented it as evidence of the superior morality of English transatlantic endeavours. No doubt disappointed by the lack of gold in Virginia, propagandists such as Hakluyt described the Queen's new territory in terms of its fruitfulness. Virginia was a 'promised land' where goods such as spices and silks could be produced to make England more self-sufficient. Unlike the Catholics who merely plundered, English colonists would thrive by working for and harvesting God's bounty. Tobacco was advertised as an important part of this. Like

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<sup>7</sup> Dickson, *Panacea or Precious Bane*, pp. 149-50. Dickson suggests that this regulation was aimed at the Indians in the congregation.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154. Innocent X issued another anti-smoking bull in 1650.

man from heaven, it had sustained the Roanoke colonists and would sustain those who came after them. Following the example of the Amerindians, those engaged in this Protestant crusade could stay healthy and endure hardships by smoking tobacco. Knapp suggests that, at this time, tobacco was not merely a physiological aid to colonial ambition. It symbolised the whole endeavour. The Spanish had become slaves to their own quest for gold. Tobacco smoke signified the ability of the English to step beyond such crass and earthly concerns and create value from something trivial. It illustrated that anything was possible. This was a powerful message for Raleigh and his Queen to convey. Both had risen to highest prominence beyond the expectations of their birth. Despite its inauspicious beginnings, Virginia could still become great.<sup>11</sup>

Such positive views about tobacco initially characterised smoking as an appropriately Christian activity. The versatility and apparent effectiveness of tobacco as a medicine seemingly confirmed the divine nature of the substance. Smoking offered compensation and consolation. John Beaumont described tobacco as 'the sponge that wipes out all our woe' enabling 'present griefs and sorrowes past' to be put aside.<sup>12</sup> Merging approval of medicinal tobacco use with perceptions of the ethereal virtues of smoking made the new activity attractive. Smoking was novel but neither unchristian nor improper. The Bishop of London, Richard Fletcher, a court favourite and close associate of Archbishop Whitgift, evidently saw little conflict between Christian ethics and tobacco smoking. He was a confirmed smoker and reputedly died while puffing his pipe in June 1596.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Brooks, *The Mighty Leaf*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>11</sup> J. Knapp, 'Elizabethan Tobacco', *Representations* 21 (1988).

<sup>12</sup> Sir John Beaumont, *The Metamorphosis of Tabacco* (London, 1602), lns. 1007-1012.

<sup>13</sup> D.N.B. s. n.



However, those who questioned the moral and religious propriety of Raleigh and his circle soon cast doubt on the religious propriety of smoking. As the mythical originator of English smoking, Raleigh was an icon for tobacco. His moral stature and that of tobacco were connected. As one critic put it, tobacco was 'first brought into England by some man of little vertue, and afterwards brought into custome by those of lesse wit'.<sup>14</sup> Harley notes that the association of smoking with the Raleigh circle promoted the link of tobacco with irreligion. Shortly before his death in 1593, Raleigh's friend, Christopher Marlowe, was accused of saying that the tobacco pipe would have been a better vehicle for the administration of the sacrament than that devised by Christ.<sup>15</sup> In 1594, Raleigh's lieutenant at Portland Castle was accused of using pages of the bible to dry his tobacco.<sup>16</sup> The implication of tobacco in such accusations of blasphemy and impiety identified smoking as potentially ungodly and reprehensible. With English colonial projects stalled after the 'lost colony' of 1588 tobacco seemed to symbolise what was wrong with people like Raleigh rather than what was right with an assertive Protestant foreign policy.

By the late 1590s perceptions of the moral status of smoking were being sharpened by direct observation of smokers as well as by Raleigh's fall from favour. As has been shown, widespread smoking in public spaces prompted a dispute about the medicinal validity of smoking. It also inspired moralists to offer their evaluations of the

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<sup>14</sup> B. Rich, The Irish Hubbub or The English Hue and Crie briefly pursuing the base conditions, and most notorious offences of the vile, vaine, and wicked age, no less smarting then tickling: a merriment whereby to make the wise to laugh, and fooles to be angry (London, 1618), p. 40-1.

<sup>15</sup> Report by Richard Barnes on the irreligion of Christopher Marlowe quoted in D. Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy: Puritanism, James I, and the Royal Physicians', Bulletin of the History of Medicine 67 (1993), p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> Cerne Abbas investigations into Dorset atheism, 1594 - quoted in Ibid.

supposedly 'divine' medicine and the new activity. Tobacco and smoking became the focus of a series of pamphlet denunciations, which can be divided into three phases.

In the first phase, from 1595 to 1603, moral concerns were closely tied to the ongoing medical enquiry. Perceptions of the moral status of tobacco seem to have depended upon physicians' assessments of the appropriate use of the drug. Social smoking was condemned for its associations with alcohol, fashion, luxury etc. but smokers claimed medicinal motives for their consumption. Were these motives valid? At what point did necessary and appropriate medicinal smoking become unnecessary and excessive smoking? In his Tabaco (1595), Anthony Chute assured his readers that smoking was healthy but acknowledged that excessive users of tobacco 'hath changed the good into a bad effect, since euerie extreme vertue is a vice'.<sup>17</sup> Yet his alehouse consumption attracted criticism from people who objected to the smell and from the prolific anti-puritan pamphleteer Thomas Nashe who described Chute's pamphlet as a 'Commedie' and mocked the 'smoakie societie' of his literary rivals Chute, Gabriel Harvey and Humphrey King, the 'King of Tobacconists hic & ubique'.<sup>18</sup> Work for Chimny-sweepers (1601), though primarily a medical text, offered a clear moral message. Tobacco was an invention of the devil with little if any medical validity. Other medical writers, notably Roger Marbecke, defended tobacco from such accusations but offered no justification for its uncontrolled and unnecessary misuse.

The second phase, from 1604 to 1614, was marked by the intervention of the king and a hiatus in the printed dispute. Harley suggests that James's Counterblaste (1604) changed the balance of the tobacco debate, not because of the power of his arguments

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<sup>17</sup> A. Chute, Tabaco: the distinct and severall opinions of the late and best Phisitions that have written of the divers natures and qualities thereof (London, 1595), p. 4.



but because of the moral status of kingship. He argues that James's medical assertions 'gained force by being interspersed with moral edicts'.<sup>19</sup> The Counterblaste was primarily a moral rather than medical attack, which also widened the focus of the smoking debate. While arguing that smoking was both physically and morally harmful for the individual, James emphasised its damaging impact on the nation. He argued that 'Peace and wealth hath brought forth a generall sluggishnesse, which makes us wallow in all sorts of idle delights, and soft delicacies, The first seedes of subversion of all great Monarchies'.<sup>20</sup> Smoking, like 'negligent and lazie' clergy, 'prodigall' nobility and 'covetous' lawyers, was a national concern requiring the attention of the king and 'Phisition' of the nation. After the Counterblaste, no other substantial work on tobacco was published in England until 1615, apart from Edmund Gardiner's academic Triall of Tabacco (1610).

In the third phase, between 1615 and 1618, five new tobacco texts appeared as well as a reprint of the Counterblaste as part of James's Works.<sup>21</sup> The first was a pamphlet entitled An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England . . . with the danger of the Spanish tobacco (1615).<sup>22</sup> This guide for consumers gave information about growing, curing and using tobacco but emphasised how foreigners, especially the Spanish, contaminated and adulterated the tobacco they sold to the English. He suggested that Bermuda and Virginia could supply 'excellent' tobacco. Around this time, the first Virginian crops were being planted. In 1616 two 'godly' texts were published which offered extensive condemnations of smoking. Further reflecting disquiet about

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<sup>18</sup> T. Nashe, Nashes Lenten Stuff, (London 1599), Dedication.

<sup>19</sup> Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', pp. 43-4.

<sup>20</sup> King James VI & I, A Counterblaste to Tobacco (London, 1604), sig. A3v.

<sup>21</sup> For details on the publication history of the Counterblaste see: J. Craigie (ed.), Minor Prose Works of King James VI & I, Scottish Text Society 18 (1982), pp. 205-216.

<sup>22</sup> C.T., An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England: and How to bring it to colour and perfection, to

Spanish sources of supply, Joshua Sylvester, in his Tobacco Battered and the Pipes Shattered, described tobacco as ‘This Spanish Cobweb’ and noted that tobacco imports ‘yeerly costs (they say, by Audit found)/ Of better Wares an hundred Thousand pound’.<sup>23</sup> John Deacon’s Tobacco Tortvred, or, the Filthie Fume of Tobacco Refined, while partly using tobacco as a vehicle for a sweeping denunciation of ‘ungodly’ behaviour, also considered the wider consequences of smoking. He deemed tobacco ‘most pestiferous to the publike State’ and suggested it had been implicated in the Gunpowder plot and other social disorders.<sup>24</sup> Richard Brathwait’s The Smoaking Age or The Man in the Mist: with The Life and Death of Tobacco (1617) was less strident but nevertheless explored how smoking was corrupting English society and morals.<sup>25</sup> In 1618, Barnaby Rich’s social commentary, The Irish Hubbub or The English Hue and Crie, was published posthumously which included an attack on smoking and the sins with which it had become associated.<sup>26</sup>

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whom it may be profitable, and to whom harmfull. . . with The Danger Of The Spanish Tobacco (London, 1615).

<sup>23</sup> J. Sylvester, Tobacco Battered and the Pipes Shattered (London, 1616), lns. 557 and 814-5. Joshua Sylvester (1563-1618) published various editions of his translation of Du Bartas and several other texts, many of which seem to have been designed to please influential people (see, for example, Monodia (London, 1594), an elegy to the wife of Sir John Branch, Lord Mayor of London). He also published Lachrimae Lachrimarum or The Distillation of Teares Shede for the Untymely Death of the Incomparable Prince Panaretus (London, 1612), a collection of poems mourning Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales. More will be said of Sylvester’s life and work later.

<sup>24</sup> J. Deacon, Tobacco Tortvred, or, the Filthie Fume of Tobacco Refined: shewing all sorts of Subiects, that the inward taking of Tobacco fumes, is very pernicious unto their bodies; too too profluous for many of their purses, and most pestiferous to the Publike State (London, 1616). John Deacon (flourished 1585-1616) was a puritan minister who preached at Ridlington, Rutland, in the 1580s (see: J. Deacon, A Verie Godlie and Most Necessarie Sermon, Ful of Singular Comfort for so Manie as See Their Sundry Sinnes (London, 1586). He also wrote A Treatise Intituled: nobody is my name, which beareth everi-bodies blame wherein is largely laied forth the lawfull bounds of all buying and selling (London, 1587). This text and another entitled Dialogicall Discourses of Spirits and Divels (London, 1601) are, like Tobacco Tortured, presented in the form of a dialogue. In 1601-2, Deacon and a fellow preacher, John Walker engaged in a vituperative printed dispute about demonic possession with John Darrell (see: J. Darrell, A Survey of Certaine Dialogical Discourses: written by Iohn Deacon, and Iohn Walker, concerning the doctrine of the possession and dispossession of divels wherein is manifested the palpable ignorance and dangerous errors of the discoursers . . . by Iohn Darrell minister of the gossell (England?, 1602).

<sup>25</sup> R. Brathwait, The Smoaking Age or The Man in the Mist: with The Life and Death of Tobacco (London, 1617). Richard Brathwait (1588? – 1673) wrote numerous books considering the morality of contemporary society. For further information on Brathwait see DNB s. n.

<sup>26</sup> Rich, The Irish Hubbub, pp. 8-9, 28-9, 37-47. Barnaby Rich ((1540-1617) was a soldier who served in France, the Low Countries and Ireland. He wrote numerous texts about his military experience such



After 1618, moral condemnation of tobacco, particularly by ‘godly’ pamphleteers, subsided. As chapter 5 will show, political and economic imperatives had risen to the fore. With the fate of Virginia and competing commercial interests at stake, medical and moral considerations were overshadowed by disputes about who would control and profit from the English obsession with tobacco. Tobacco had re-acquired its mantle of colonial importance.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, moral concerns continued to be voiced. In each of his proclamations concerning tobacco, James reiterated his opposition to social smoking and made efforts to suppress it. In an annex to his Proclamation Concerning Alehouses of January 1619, for example, James ordered that a licensed alehousekeeper ‘shall not utter nor willingly suffer to be uttered, drunke, taken, and tipleed any tobacco within his said House, Shop, Cellar, or other place’.<sup>28</sup> In the Parliamentary debates of 1621 Mr Carye, Sir Henry Poole, Sir Jerome Horsye and Sir Guido Palmes urged that the whole tobacco trade be banished. Palmes complained that ‘All kinde of men [were] infected with it’ and that it was ‘high time to banishe it’.<sup>29</sup> Sir Peter Freshwell agreed but argued that the benefits of tobacco to the Virginia colony, ‘so brave and necessary a business’, outweighed such concerns.<sup>30</sup> Apart from an evident moral agenda in every royal proclamation about tobacco until the Civil War, this was effectively the last salvo in the polemical condemnation of tobacco on moral grounds until after the Restoration. In 1633 when William Prynne

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as Riche His Farewell to Militarie Profession (London, 1581) and A Souldiers Wishe to Britons Welfare (London, 1604). Later he produced numerous pamphlets questioning social mores such as Faults Faults and Nothing Else But Faults (London, 1606) and The Honestie of this Age (London, 1614). Rich was vehemently anti-Catholic.

<sup>27</sup> This was not merely a symbolic importance as in the 1580s and 1590s. As a cash crop with an apparently insatiable demand on the English market, tobacco promised funds for the cash-strapped Virginia Company. Tobacco was the potential saviour of Virginia.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Notestein et al. (eds.), The Commons Debates of 1621 7 vols. (New Haven, 1935), 7, p. 320.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, pp. 75-8.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

lambasted popular culture in general and playhouses in particular in his Histriomastix, he barely mentioned tobacco.<sup>31</sup>

Although there were significant differences between the various phases of the debate, they also shared important themes. The first common trope concerned the diabolic and heathen origins of tobacco. Work for Chimny-sweepers, for example, asserted that tobacco was ‘first found out and inuented by the divell, and first used and practised by the divels priests, and therefore not to be used by us Christians’.<sup>32</sup> This subverted conceptions of the new medicine as ‘divine’. Roger Marbecke responded by defending Amerindian spirituality. He argued that their priests used tobacco to ‘cleare the braines’ and enter into trance-like states, not to become ‘beastly’ or to commune with the devil. They, like the ancient philosophers, lacked a ‘right’ understanding of God and any knowledge of Christ, but the best of such ‘Infidels’ might still be ‘reckened among the fellowship of those his true servants’ and be saved by an omnipotent and infinitely merciful God.<sup>33</sup> Marbecke acknowledged that the shaman might abuse tobacco to deceive his people or even to worship the devil (a question Marbecke leaves to others to judge) but tobacco itself could not be blamed for this. Besides, nothing in Scripture or doctrine proscribed the use of imports from other non-Christian lands, not even from the ‘professed enemies of Christ’, the Turks. If used appropriately, he asserted that there was no conflict between Christian teachings and this God-given medicinal resource. Edmund Gardiner concurred. He countered the assertion that those who abhor the devil should shun his herb by appealing to

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<sup>31</sup> W. Prynne, Histriomastix (London, 1633). In ‘To the Christian Reader’, for example, Prynne lists a catalogue of vices including ‘wanton fashions’, ‘excessive laughter’ and ‘long hair’. Tobacco does not appear in this list at all despite the often-noted connection of smoking with stage plays etc.

<sup>32</sup> Squeezed between ten pages on the poisonous nature of tobacco and eight pages on how it provokes melancholy, the author of Work for Chimny-Sweepers presented a page and a half detailing the barbarous roots of tobacco.



nature: 'the divell did not finde it, but Nature gave it, and Nature doth nothing in vaine'.<sup>34</sup> He assured his readers that tobacco had to be 'a plant created by God' because of its undoubted medicinal power, even if the exact nature of that power remained uncertain.

Most moral commentators accepted this. As Sylvester put it in his opening line: 'Whatever God *created*, first, was *good*'.<sup>35</sup> Even James accepted that tobacco had some medicinal validity when used appropriately as directed by a physician. Nevertheless, tobacco was often described as 'heathenish', 'pagan', 'barbarian', 'savage', 'devilish' etc. Smokers were repeatedly accused of descending to barbarity or worshipping the devil. James traced the origins of the 'vile custome of *Tobacco* taking' and the moral degradation it engendered to the 'base corruption and barbarity' of Indians.<sup>36</sup> He marvelled that Englishmen wanted to imitate 'the barbarous and beastly maners of the wilde, godlesse, and slavish Indians, especially in so vile and stinking a custome?' Perhaps, he exclaimed, we should all start walking about naked, prize trinkets above gold and 'denie God and adore the Devill, as they doe'.<sup>37</sup> Sylvester, dismissed Amerindians' tobacco use as the result of 'silly Strangers' savage ignorance'.<sup>38</sup> They knew no better. He condemned Englishmen for knowingly descending to their level:

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<sup>33</sup> R. Marbecke, A Defence of Tabacco: with a friendly answer to the late printed Booke called Worke for Chimney-sweepers &c. (London, 1602), sigs. H2-H3.

<sup>34</sup> E. Gardiner, Triall of Tabacco (London, 1610), sig. B3.

<sup>35</sup> Sylvester, Tobacco Battered, ln. 1.

<sup>36</sup> James I, Counterblaste, sig. B1.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. B2.

<sup>38</sup> Sylvester, Tobacco Battered, ln. 44.

(though in *Inde* it be an Herbe indeed)  
 In *Europe* is no better than a Weed:  
 Which, to their *Idols, Pagans* sacrificize,  
 And *Christians* (here) doe well-nigh *Idolize*:  
 Which taking, *Heathens* to the Divels bow  
 Their Bodies, *Christians* even their Soules do vow<sup>39</sup>

Moralists also regularly condemned the wastefulness of smoking. Tobacco may not have been evil if used ‘when due cause requires’.<sup>40</sup> At any other time it was drug abuse and wasteful. That alone was a bad enough sin. Moralists campaigned against all forms of wasteful and luxurious consumption whether of excessive clothes, expensive imported foods or any other commodities deemed unnecessary.<sup>41</sup> If tobacco was indeed a valuable medicine, English smokers were turning this blessing into a bane by ‘Usurping (right-lesse, thank-lesse, need-lesse) here,/ In wanton, willfull, wasteful, lustfull Cheer’, this particular part of ‘Earth’s plenteous Crop’.<sup>42</sup> Smokers were not just wasting tobacco, they were squandering their health, wealth, time and even the ‘sweetnesse’ of their breath on this ‘stinking smoke’.<sup>43</sup> Each of these were gifts from God which were being ‘wilfully corrupted’ for the sake of a plant evidently designed for the different climate, soil and circumstances of the other side of the world. All the ‘tobacconist’ gained was an empty and wasted life as he wandered around his venue of degeneration ‘like a blinde Mill-horse round/ In the same Circle,

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., lns. 33-8.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., ln. 19.

<sup>41</sup> Porter notes the dual meaning of consuming as an active verb suggesting taking in and as an intransitive verb indicating being consumed, wasting. Until the later eighteenth century excessive consumption rather than nutritional deficit was deemed to create ‘consumptions’ - i.e. a little of something fortifies but too much enfeebles (R.Porter, ‘Consumption: disease of the consumer society?’ in J. Brewer & R. Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, 1993), pp. 58-91). The evils of luxurious consumption continued to feature throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See, for example, E. Jones, *Luxury, Pride and Vanity, the Bane of the British Nation Wherein is Shown the Prodigality and Profuseness of All Ranks, and Conditions* (London, 1736).

<sup>42</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 10-13.

<sup>43</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. D1v.



on the selfe same ground;/ Forgetting how daies, months, and yeers do passe;/ No more regarding, then an Ox or Asse'.<sup>44</sup>

The recognition of tobacco's medical potency tied in with smokers' claims that they were somehow trapped by their own consumption. As noted in chapter 2, James attributed this to some 'bewitching qualitie' in the tobacco.<sup>45</sup> Physicians tended to agree. In accord with the adage 'habitum, alteram naturam', the 'continuall custome' of smoking seemed to induce an enfeeblement which only more tobacco could alleviate.<sup>46</sup> Sylvester described tobacco as:

Th' *Infidel*, usurping FAITH's Possession;  
That *Indian Tyrant*, onely *England's* Shame.  
Thousands of *Ours* here hath Hee Captive taken,  
Of all Degrees, kept under slavish Yoak.  
Their *God*, their Good, *King*, Countrey, Friends forsaken,  
To follow *Folly*, and to feed on *Smoak*.<sup>47</sup>

The idea that tobacco compelled smokers to smoke did not excuse them doing so. Sylvester had himself once been 'demi-Captive' to the drug 'as millions are, too-wilfull foolifi'd'.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, he averred that no wise, God-fearing and loyal subject of England would continue to 'Beslave himselfe to a dead Vegetall'. Whether the result of foolishness, general moral weakness or outright immorality, the addiction

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<sup>44</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 676-9.

<sup>45</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. C3.

<sup>46</sup> The author of *Work for Chimney-sweepers* and others noted this. Most commentators agreed that the body seemed to get used to tobacco and miss it when it was gone.

<sup>47</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, 'to the right honourable Sir George Viliers...'. Sylvester called upon the Earl of Buckingham, 'St. GEORGE our *Generell*' to help repel this '*Heathen*' foe 'that *Christian* FAITH defame'.

<sup>48</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 29-30.

was the fault of the addict. In 1619, while arguing that one must actively try to live up to the precepts of the Lord's Prayer, James asserted that:

to refuse obedience because it is against our minde, is like the excuse of the Tobacco-drunkards, who cannot abstaine from that filthy stinking smoake, because, forsooth, they are bewitched with it. And this is an excuse for any sinne, they will not leave it, because they cannot leave it; but the truth is, because they will not leave it.<sup>49</sup>

The similarities and close connections between alcohol and tobacco abuse were often noted. James declared smoking 'a branche of the sinne of drunkenesse, which is the roote of all sinnes'.<sup>50</sup> He argued that the qualities most admired in tobacco were 'strength of the taste, and the force of the fume'. Like the drunkard, the smoker would begin with weak tobacco and progress, by custom, to stronger until even the strongest could no longer satisfy: 'is not this the very case of all the great takers of Tobacco?'<sup>51</sup> This spiral of increasing dependency, like the drunkenness with which it associated, smacked of godlessness. Harley suggests that 'alehouse materialism' was the closest thing Puritans could find to the insidious and alarming 'phantom' of atheism.<sup>52</sup>

Sylvester identified 'Blasphemers, Ruffians, Athiests,/ Damn'd Libertines' as most fit to be Tobacconists.<sup>53</sup> Such irredeemable smokers joined 'Roarers' in epitomising obsessive carnal appetite and chronic recourse to the sins and vanities of the alehouse and brothel. They were the dregs of society, the 'lewdest, loosest, basest, foolishest,/ The most unthrifty, most intemperate,/ Most vitious, most debauched, most desperate'

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<sup>49</sup> King James VI & I, Meditation on the Lord's Prayer (London, 1619), pp. 76-7.

<sup>50</sup> James I, Counterblaste, sig. C4.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', pp. 31-2. For perspectives on atheism in the early modern period see: M. Hunter and D. Wootton (eds.), Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment (Oxford, 1992) and M. Hunter, 'The Problem of "Atheism" in Early Modern England', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series 35 (1985).

<sup>53</sup> Sylvester, Tobacco Battered, lns. 397-8.



people.<sup>54</sup> They were characterised by violence and irreligion: ‘None more forgetfull is,/ Of God and Good, then are Tobacconists’, none ‘More apt to wrath, to wrangle, and to braule;/ To give and take a Great offence for Small’.<sup>55</sup>

Smoking by drunks, brothel frequenters and the irreligious appeared ‘well-beseeming’.<sup>56</sup> It was one among many vices. However, many moral commentators considered smoking not merely as a feature of degenerate and lustful lives but as a spur to them. James asked smokers: ‘can you neither be merry at an Ordinarie, nor lascivious in the Stewes, if you lacke Tobacco to provoke your appetite . . . lusting after it as the children of Isreal did in the wilderness after Quails?’<sup>57</sup> In the Parliamentary debates of 1621, Guido Palmes argued that ‘tobacco undoes men in ther bodies and estates, drawes them to drinke and continue at it’.<sup>58</sup> Sir Peter Freshwell agreed and pointed out that ‘Tobacco is the cause of drunkenness, drunkenness of idleness, idleness of beggery, so Tobacco of beggery’. Tobacco was particularly insidious because it seemed to actively inflame lust and inspired those who might otherwise lead virtuous lives, to follow a bestial path towards:

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<sup>54</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 285-7.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, lns. 630-9.

<sup>56</sup> ‘For, if a Swearer or a Swaggerer,/ A Drunkard, Dicer, or Adulterer,/ Prove a TOBACCONIST, it is not much:/ ‘Tis suitable, ‘tis well-beseeming Such’ (*Ibid.*, lns 370-3).

<sup>57</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. C4.

<sup>58</sup> Notestein, *The Commons Debates of 1621*, vol. 5, pp. 75-8.

. . . prodigall excess,  
Vain Words, vain Oaths, Dice, Daring, Drunkenness,  
Sloath, Jestings, Scoffing, turning Night to Day,  
And Day to Night; Disorder, Disaray;  
Places of Scorn and publick Scandall haunting;  
Persons of base and beastly life frequenting.<sup>59</sup>

Tobacco's place in such spirals of degeneration seemed to be confirmed by the extraordinary spectacle of the 'last smoke' before execution. Raleigh's smoke before ascending the scaffold for his own execution in 1618 reportedly 'scandalised' 'some formall persons'.<sup>60</sup> What role could tobacco have at this profound moment when the soul was about to be released from its corporeal constraints? Perhaps the condemned were trying to avoid death, or at least the rigors of execution, by the foolish misuse of a medicine. Samuel Rowlands perhaps alluded to this in his topical poem: 'Tobacco carted to Tyburne'. Wryly commenting that 'the smoaking did his choaking little good', Rowlands suggested that the condemned man smoked 'To purge his head against his heeles did shake'.<sup>61</sup> Though some believed that tobacco inspired courage, others would have considered it absurd to medicate the body with tobacco at a time when only the well-being of the soul mattered.<sup>62</sup> There was possibly a more metaphysical reason behind such consumption. John Chamberlaine may have been alluding to this when he told Dudley Carlton about 'certain mad knaves that tooke

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<sup>59</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 666-71. Lake argues that 'godly' disdain for such 'ungodly' lifestyles divided society (P. Lake, 'A Charitable Christian Hatred: the godly and their enemies in the 1630s' in Durston and Eales (eds.), *The Culture of English Puritanism, 1560-1640* (Basingstoke, 1996)).

<sup>60</sup> Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', p. 31.

<sup>61</sup> S. Rowlands, 'Tobacco Carted to Tyburne' in *More Knaues Yet? The Knaues of Spades and Diamonds* (London, 1613?). Samuel Rowlands was probably referring to an incident during the execution of a Flemish murderer.

<sup>62</sup> The suggestion that smoking could dispel fear or even 'cure' cowardice was often satirised. Beaumont mused about 'How many Cowards base and recreant,/ By one pipes draught were turned valiant' (Beaumont, *The Metamorphosis of Tabacco*, lns. 1043-4).



tabacco all the way to Tibern as they went to hanging'.<sup>63</sup> Apparently by way of explanation, he continued 'I have here sent you some verses that go under the name of the Lord of Essex when he was in disgrace, but I cannot warrant them to be his, nor made at that time'<sup>64</sup>. These verses were probably 'The Buzzeinge Bee's Compaynt', the only poem attributed to Essex which includes references to tobacco and which used it to symbolise the transience of life.

What thoughe thou dye my loungs in deepest blacke?  
A morninge habite sutes a sable harte:  
What thoughe thy fumes, sound memorys doe cracke?  
Forgetfulnes is fittest for my smarte.  
O vertuous fume, let it be graued on oke  
That words, hope, witts, and all the world, is smoke.<sup>65</sup>

Sharpe's examination of last dying speeches showed how executions were framed by ceremony and ritual and that all participants were expected to play their part.<sup>66</sup> Both the common criminal and the fallen nobleman were expected to show 'great penitency and remorse of conscience'. Those not following the penitent formula were regarded as 'abnormal and reprehensible'.<sup>67</sup> The 'last smoke' attracted attention because it subverted expectations of the 'good death'. Instead of dying in faith focussed upon Christ, the gallows smoker was exhibiting an apparently insatiable attachment to the

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<sup>63</sup> S. Williams (ed.), Letters Written by John Chamberlaine During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, Camden Society (1st series) 79 (1861), reprinted by AMS Press, London 1968, p. 25. John Chamberlaine (London) to Dudley Carleton (attending the Governor of Ostend), 20/10/1598. No names were given, nor details of the crime(s) committed. It was only the tobacco consumption that had made this incident newsworthy.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. It was not usual for Chamberlaine to make such an enclosure.

<sup>65</sup> A near identical poem is attributed to John Lyly. R. Devereaux, 'The Buzzeinge Bee's Complaynt' in Rev. A. B. Grosart (ed.), The poems of Thomas, Lord Vaux ... Edward, Earl of Oxford ... Robert, Earl of Essex ... and Walter, Earl of Essex ... For the first time collected. 4 vols. (Blackburn, Printed for private circulation 1870 – 1872), 2, p. 88, lns.73-8.

<sup>66</sup> J. Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches: religion, ideology and public execution in seventeenth century England', Past and Present 107 (1985), pp. 146-8.

worldly pleasures of tobacco.<sup>68</sup> A final opportunity for prayer, contrition and repentance was being squandering on the idle pleasures of the pipe. Sharpe notes the report of one observer in the early eighteenth century that the condemned at Tyburn went to their deaths 'either drinking madly, or uttering the vilest ribaldry, and jeering others, that are less impenitent'.<sup>69</sup> Gallows-bound smokers in the early seventeenth century were perhaps similarly perceived. If, as George Ferebe wrote in 1614, 'the end of a man perfectly trieth a man', then smoking on route to the gallows could be interpreted as a confirmation of the debauched lifestyle, characterised by vicious and luxurious excess, which probably led the condemned to their inevitable fate.<sup>70</sup>

The parallel between smoking and hanging was obvious and often exploited. The title page of Work for Chimny-sweepers bore the inscription 'better be chokt with English hemp, then poisoned with Indian Tabacco'. Joshua Sylvester saw a 'great Sympathy' between tobacco and hemp:

For, in them Both, a *strangling* vertue note,  
And both of them doe worke upon the Throte;  
The one, within it; and without, the other;  
And th'one prepareth Work unto the tother;  
For, There doe meet (I mean at *Gail* and *Gallowes*)

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp.152-5. Recognising the limitations of his sources, Sharpe notes that 'defiance at the gallows was unlikely to be permitted and even less likely to be reported' (p. 164).

<sup>68</sup> R. Houlbrooke, 'The Puritan Deathbed c. 1560-1660' in C. Durston and J. Eales (eds.), The Culture of English Puritanism 1560-1700 (Basingstoke, 1996), p.125. From his examination of W. Perkins, A Salve for a Sicke Man: or a treatise containing the nature, differences and kindes of death; as also the right manner of dying well (1610?), Houlbrooke identifies three things expected of a Christian near death: firstly to die in faith by praying, repenting and giving thanks; secondly, to die readily as God's will; finally to willingly give ones soul to God as a faithful keeper.

<sup>69</sup> Sharpe, 'Last Dying Speeches', p. 165. Sharpe describes this early 18<sup>th</sup> century observer as 'jaundiced' but recognises that there are no accounts of the vast majority of executions. There must have been many who were less serene and sanguine about their fate than those so often featured in the gallows literature.

<sup>70</sup> G. Frerbe, Lifes Farewell. Or a Funerall Sermon. At the funeral of John Drew gentleman (London, 1615), p. 27.



More of these beastly, base *Tobacco-Fellowes*,  
Then else to any profane Haunt doe use  
(Excepting still *The Play-house* and *The Stewes*)  
Sith 'tis their common Lot (so double-choaked)  
Just Bacon-like, to be *hang'd up* and *smoaked* <sup>71</sup>

The association was complemented by the equation of tobacco smoke with the fires of hell. For James, the 'blacke stinking fume' of tobacco resembled 'the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomelesse'.<sup>72</sup> This became a stock metaphor to illustrate the moral dangers of smoking and probable fate of smokers. It seemed particularly appropriate for those who were evidently not among the elect. Sylvester suggested that it made such irredeemable smokers better able to endure 'Hell's sulph'ry *Smoak*'.<sup>73</sup>

Some moralists argued that the consequences of smoking and its associated vices were not limited to the body and soul of the individual smoker. James noted how Englishmen were 'wondered at', 'scorned and contemned' by foreigners because of their obsession with tobacco.<sup>74</sup> C.T. noted that the Spanish slaves who anointed tobacco bound for England with unwholesome juices referred to those juices as 'sauce for Lutheran dogges'.<sup>75</sup> As tobacco increasingly came to be discussed in economic terms it was argued that Englishmen were not only making themselves seem foolish, but that their purchases of tobacco were swelling the coffers of Catholic Spain. English commodities were being frittered away on smoke. The scarcity of coin was an

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<sup>71</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 143-152.

<sup>72</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. D2.

<sup>73</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, ln. 88.

<sup>74</sup> James I, *Counterblaste*, sig. D2.

<sup>75</sup> C.T., *An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England*, sig. B.

important element in the Commons debates about tobacco in 1621.<sup>76</sup> Sylvester urged the suffocation of smoke sellers and tobacco merchants with their own smoke as punishment for costing the realm so much.<sup>77</sup> Barnaby Rich calculated that the ‘masse of money [that] is yeerely blowne away in the Tobacco-pipe’ was enough to ‘giue a yearely reliefe to 2000 thousand poore people that doe now swarme in Citties, Townes, and Countries, crying out but for a peece of bread’.<sup>78</sup> He condemned smokers because they were willing to pay £2 for their tobacco but would not even give 2d. to such ‘poore creatures that God himselfe hath recommended vnto vs to bee comforted, cherished, and relieued’. He railed at the prodigality of smokers who neglected their Christian and moral duty by locking their doors to the poor while they opened them wide to ‘ambitious pompe, excessiue pride, and needlesse ryot’.

It was not only the desperately poor who suffered. John Deacon argued that the cost of tobacco exceeded the slender spending power of smokers. He reckoned that ‘a yeoman, an Husbandman, an Artificer, a Trades-man, a Tinker, a Shoemaker, or a Cobbler’ wasted 3s 4d per week for the ounce they consumed.<sup>79</sup> Instead of properly supporting their families, smokers were forced to sell their possessions, their property or even the tools of their trades to support their habit. This waste of money and goods was compounded by the waste of working hours in the alehouse alternating between pot and pipe and other vices, such as whoring and gambling.<sup>80</sup> Smokers thus inflicted

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<sup>76</sup> See chapter 5.

<sup>77</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns. 811-15.

<sup>78</sup> Rich, *The Irish Hubbub*, pp. 46-7.

<sup>79</sup> Deacon, *Tobacco Tortvred*, p. 62.

<sup>80</sup> Brathwait considered time wasting particularly sinful: ‘shall Time be spent in nothing, being the precioust of all things, but in smoake and vapour, the lightest and trivialst of all things?’ Time weeps. Tobacco use is about idleness. Tobacco is ‘a deluder of Novices with smoake and vanity; a dissolver of states; a weakener of spirits; an enfeebler of strength; an effeminator of youth; and a bessoter of Age. . . to all States so generally pernicious’ (Brathwait, *The Smoking Age*, p. 172).



'needlesse poverty' on their families.<sup>81</sup> Such traders should have been the foundation of a healthy state. Instead, the corrupting influence of tobacco lead them towards 'retchlesse roguerie' or beggary and maintenance 'upon publike charge'.<sup>82</sup> Sylvester similarly complained that tobacco made 'Thousands daily into Beggery sink/ Through Idlennesse; in wilfull Debt for Drink'.<sup>83</sup>

For those of higher status, the consequences were even worse. Deacon reckoned that a 'man of great place' spent £100 p.a. on 100 gallons of smoke while 'Gentleman of meaner condition' squandered £40 p.a. for 40 'pottles of stinking flames'. For them, smoking was the 'Trojan horse-bellie' of a range of expenditures, including alcohol, prostitutes, fancy clothes, expensive lodgings and 'sumptuous buildings', all of which diminished wealth.<sup>84</sup> Such spending was entirely unnecessary and could have dire consequences. Sylvester suggested that wasting money on tobacco led to the sale of lands or, more insidiously, 'the mercillesse inclosing of severall grounds, the insatiable inhaunsing of incomes and fines, the excessive racking and raising of rents' etc. all to the detriment of their tenants.<sup>85</sup> The Midland riots of 1607 had shown what disorders this could provoke.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> This was not just about money. King James viewed it as a 'contempt of God's good giftes, that the sweetnesse of mans breath . . . should be willfully corrupted by this stinking smoke' and a great 'iniquitie' and inhumanity that husbands force their wives either to corrupt their own breath by smoking or be forced to endure living in 'perpetuall stinking torment' (James I, Counterblaste, sig. D1v). Deacon conveyed the effects of smoking on the family in a melodramatic child's cry to his 'dad' about the misery he had brought them to (Deacon, Tobacco Tortured, p. 74).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66 & 83.

<sup>83</sup> Sylvester, Tobacco Battered, lns. 754-5.

<sup>84</sup> Deacon, Tobacco Tortured, pp. 79-80.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>86</sup> For details of the enclosures of 1607 see: J. E. Martin, 'Enclosure and the Inquisitions of 1607: an examination of Dr Kerridge's article "The Returns of the Inquisitions of Depopulation"', Agricultural History Review 30 (1982), pp. 41-8. See also J. E. Martin, Feudalism to Capitalism: peasant and landlord in English agrarian development (London, 1983), J. Roberts, 'Enclosure and Riot from 1575', Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries 38 (1998), pp. 110-6 and J. R. Wordie, 'The Chronology of English Enclosure, 1500-1914', Economic History Review, 2nd Series 36 (1983), pp. 483-505.

Loss of wealth was accompanied by loss of reputation. Those who should have been pillars of society were 'shamefully blemished'. They were 'pointed at by all sorts of people . . . in the open streets, and too too reproachfully termed a tippling Tobacconist, a swaggering swil smoke, a sodden headed Asse, a fantastical foole'.<sup>87</sup> The smoker was mocked for being skilled at turning a 'shilling into nine-pence' and being able to effect a 'retrogradation, beginning directly where his ancestors ended, and never giving over before he come where they first began'.<sup>88</sup> Having lost both wealth and status, such 'fume-suckers' had little choice but to 'resolve upon desperate courses for the daily supply of their present wants'.<sup>89</sup> They might take menial jobs to survive (having no trade), become dishonest or even 'directly . . . aime at the publike good of the State'. Deacon considered the Gunpowder plotters a perfect example of this. He claimed that they were mostly 'beggerly Bankrupts, and men of very base condition' who, as 'proffessed Tobacconists', had fallen from smoking to tippling to whoring to 'Court-like braving' to prodigal exhausting of their estates to 'excessive want' to 'a wofull malcontented condition' and eventually to their attempted treason. Religion was just a front. Their 'intollerable wants', which became too heavy a burden, had motivated their attempted overthrow of the state!<sup>90</sup> Sylvester similarly connected tobacco smoke with the '*smoak of Powder-Treason, pistols, knives, / To blow up Kingdoms, and blow out King's lives*'.<sup>91</sup>

Such claims about the evil consequences of smoking for the individual and the state were part of the wider campaign to reform manners. To puritans and others who wanted to suppress disorderly behaviour and reform society, tobacco could act as a

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<sup>87</sup> Deacon, *Tobacco Tortvred*, p. 64.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81-2.



motif for the wide range of sins they sought to attack. Deacon acknowledged that he was using tobacco fumes as ‘a most lively represent’ of ‘other smokelike vanishing vapours’.<sup>92</sup> His text was an attack on tobacco but also on the elements within society who had most readily embraced it. Smoking epitomised the ‘foule and shamefull disorders’ of excessive appetite, neglect of Christian duty, profligacy, lethargy etc.<sup>93</sup> By lambasting smokers, James, Sylvester, Deacon and other critics sought to deter people from taking up the habit and bring those who had not been wholly corrupted to their senses. Sylvester stated: ‘*Wee shoot at manners, Wee would save the Men*’.<sup>94</sup> While leaving irredeemable smokers to their inevitable fate, he urged ‘those *that yet will yeeld*’ to ‘*turn agen/ from Th’ Idol-Service of their Smoakie Zeal,/ To serve their GOD, their KING, their Common-weal*’.<sup>95</sup>

Such language which portrayed smoking as a pagan activity that corrupted manners, provoked immoderate and wasteful consumption and threatened the moral, if not actual, state of the nation might suggest that smoking was a ‘godly’ issue. Indeed, Harley postulates that criticism of smoking originated in Cambridge, ‘breeding-ground of Puritan ministers’.<sup>96</sup> He argues that the association of tobacco with the supposed irreligion of Raleigh and alehouse culture sponsored the medical attack on tobacco and gave puritans ‘a new topic to vary the traditional diet of attacks on brothels and alehouses’.<sup>97</sup> This accords with perceptions of Puritanism as a reforming ideology spearheading campaigns against irreligious behaviour, drunkenness, sexual

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<sup>91</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, lns.187-8.

<sup>92</sup> Deacon, *Tobacco Tortvred*, ‘Epistle Dedicatorie’, sig. \*\*2[v].

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. \*\* 3.

<sup>94</sup> Sylvester, *Tobacco Battered*, ‘To My Reverend and Worthy Friend, Mr William Loe, Batchelor of Divinity’.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Harley, ‘The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy’, p. 33.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

immorality etc.<sup>98</sup> The 'godly' minority 'eschewed conspicuous consumption' on clothes and 'good fellow meetings'.<sup>99</sup> Their opposition to smoking seems both inevitable and definitive.

Harley further suggests that puritan opposition to smoking was confronted by an anti-puritan advocacy of it. He detects a sectarian divide in the medico-moral debates of 1602-03 between Cambridge puritans, claiming their authority directly from God, and Oxford anti-puritans, championing the established order of Church and State. He suggests that 'conservatives such as Marbecke were alarmed that Puritanism threatened the whole hierarchy of status because its claims to truth and authority did not depend upon political power but rather upon moral superiority'.<sup>100</sup> Thus, tobacco had to be defended because puritans had attacked it. This accords with Collinson's description of Puritanism as 'only one half of a stressful relationship'.<sup>101</sup> It supports ideas that relations between Christians in early modern England were polarised, sponsoring a 'clear divide between the godly and the ungodly, the puritans and the profane'.<sup>102</sup>

However, the tobacco dispute suggests that this divide was far less clear than is often supposed. It should not incautiously be assumed, merely because some puritans condemned tobacco, that this was a puritan issue. Puritans were not the only people to consider themselves righteous or to define their world in terms of Christ and Satan.

Smoking, especially to excess, was condemned by moralists of many theological

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<sup>98</sup> As Wrightson and Levine have shown, puritan-inspired campaigns against irreligious behaviour, drunkenness, sexual immorality etc. could influence local government. (K. Wrightson & D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling 1525-1700* (New York, 1979)).

<sup>99</sup> Lake, 'A Charitable Christian Hatred', p. 158.

<sup>100</sup> Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', p. 40.



hues. As noted above, Catholic authorities in Europe reacted against smoking. Chute's smoking, in the company of the Cambridge academic Gabriel Harvey, was criticised by the anti-puritan pamphleteer, Thomas Nashe. The author of Work for Chimney-sweepers and those who rose to tobacco's defence agreed that smoking without medical constraints was bad. King James, a devout Calvinist who had little patience for puritans, was the key figure in political and polemical effort to suppress smoking. Also, as Harley acknowledges, Oxford University, 'where Puritanism had never been dominant', took the lead in objecting to inappropriate use of tobacco after the king had attended the Oxford medical debates of August 1605.<sup>103</sup> The ecumenical character of opposition to smoking supports Spufford's view that campaigns against vice and attempts at social control were not the exclusive preserve of the puritan.<sup>104</sup> Puritans may have been at the forefront of attacks on smoking because they were inspired to challenge such activities openly in the streets but they were not alone in their opposition to many aspects of popular culture, including the widespread abuse of tobacco.

There are also suggestions that at least a few people who could be described as puritans became smokers. According to Work for Chimney-sweepers, a 'Scholler of

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<sup>101</sup> P. Collinson, The Birthpangs of Protestant England (London, 1988), p. 143. Collinson argues that this is one of the reasons Puritanism defies definition.

<sup>102</sup> P. Lake, 'A Charitable Christian Hatred', pp. 152-7.

<sup>103</sup> Harley's generalised identification of Cambridge with anti-smoking must be questioned when so many from Cambridge smoked. Injunctions against smoking at Trinity Hall (*alma mater* of the probable author of Work for Chimney-Sweepers) during the king's visit in 1614 suggest that at other times smoking was as common there as everywhere else (Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy', p. 32).

<sup>104</sup> M. Spufford, 'Puritansim and Social Control' in A. Fletcher & J. Stevenson (eds.), Order and Disorder in Early Modern England, (Cambridge, 1985). Spufford warns against the perception of puritans in power enforcing their ideas on a mass of promiscuous plebeian villagers (pp. 43-4). She also gives examples of non-puritan campaigns against popular culture and offers reasons other than piety for reform, such as the pragmatic need to challenge an upsurge in bastardy to keep the poor rate down (pp. 48-50).

some good accompt and worshipfull calling' smoked himself to death in Bath.<sup>105</sup>

When Dr Bellamy related his first encounter with tobacco he emphasised that it had been a 'certain godly grave preacher' who 'earnestly intreated, and at length with much adoe, enduced' him to 'harpe upon his instrument'.<sup>106</sup> John Deacon later hinted that smoking clergy were neglectful clergy when he related the 'pitifull' case of Parson Digbie at Peterborough of late: who (having excessively taken Tobacco in a tipping house) did instantly fall downe starke dead in the open streets'.<sup>107</sup>

Nevertheless, some who considered themselves 'godly' had at least tried tobacco. As noted above, Joshua Sylvester had been a smoker once. He had sought patronage at King James's court believing it would be 'free of vice and full of virtue'.<sup>108</sup> Perhaps while still 'demi-captive' to the drug he was trying to distinguish himself from typical court flatterers asserting his wish to 'play the Preacher, not the Parasite'.<sup>109</sup>

The different waves of moral denunciation suggest that the intensity of puritan criticism of smoking rose and fell depending upon how controversial tobacco was and upon relations with the king. When questions were being asked about the medical validity of tobacco, smoking attracted strident moral condemnation. As Platter noted in 1598, London 'preachers cry[ed] out on them [smokers] for their self-destruction'.<sup>110</sup> When the king issued his Counterblaste in 1604, puritans became

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<sup>105</sup> Philaretus (pseudonym), Work for Chimny-Sweepers, sig. D.

<sup>106</sup> R. Bellamy, A New and Short Defence of Tabacco, sig. C2.

<sup>107</sup> Deacon, Tobacco Tortvred, p. 43.

<sup>108</sup> J. Doelman, King James and the Religious Culture of England (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 25-6. In the introduction to his translation of du Bartas, Sylvester, seeking patronage as a court poet, praised James for his own translations of parts of this text. Sylvester received a pension from Prince Henry from 1608 until the prince's death in 1612 (pp. 37-8). Doelman notes: 'in the middle years of his English reign, James deliberately fostered a loose community of scholars dedicated to the task of defending Protestantism in its English form against both Roman and more radically Protestant positions' (p. 103).

<sup>109</sup> J. Sylvester, Bartas his Divine Weekes and Workes Translated and dedicated to the Kings Most Excellent Majestie by Iosuah Sylvester (London, 1621), 1, p. 72.

<sup>110</sup> C. Williams (translator and ed.), Thomas Platter's Travels in England 1599 Rendered into English from the German (London, 1937), pp. 170-1.



remarkably quiet on the subject. The only moralising pamphleteer mentioning tobacco in the decade following the Counterblaste was Barnaby Rich who was a retired soldier, not a puritan cleric. He mocked smokers claims but determined to ‘let these fantasies passe’ as he pursued his assault on Catholicism.<sup>111</sup> This was a period when relations between the king and the puritans were poor because of the appointment of Richard Bancroft as archbishop of Canterbury at Hampton Court. Also, the king’s detestation of puritans was well known.<sup>112</sup> The Counterblaste had been an indictment of smoking but also of the English culture that seemed to have so readily embraced it. Puritans seem to have declined to join the king in his crusade against it at this time.

In 1616-18, when questions were being asked about the economic cost of tobacco, several anti-smoking texts were published. Deacon dedicated his diatribe against smoking to ‘the most potent, learned, and religious prince, James’.<sup>113</sup> Sylvester, in his Tobacco Battered and the Pipes Shattered, praised ‘*Our ALCIDES (though at Peace with men,/ At war with Vices)*’.<sup>114</sup> He applauded ‘the LABOURS of his *Royall* hand,/ where *Piety* and *Prudence* (joyntly) stand’ and urged the king to deter smoking by using ‘the *Trident* of some sharp *Edict*,/ Severe enacted, executed strict’ or ‘at the least, impose so deep a *Taxe*/ On all these *Ball, Leafe, Cane, and Pudding-packs*:/ On Seller, or on Buyer, or on Both’.<sup>115</sup> By this time, the appointment of George Abbot to the see of Canterbury had prompted ‘a more relaxed, conciliatory approach’ towards ‘those who refused to accept all of the ceremonial and liturgical elements of the

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<sup>111</sup> B. Rich, Favltz Favltz, and Nothing Else but Favltz (London, 1606), p. 9.

<sup>112</sup> In his text, Basilikon Doron (London, 1603), James summed up his view of puritans: ‘and to end my advice . . . cherish no man more than a good pastor, hate no man more than a proud Puritan’ (last paragraph at the end of book 2).

<sup>113</sup> Deacon, Tobacco Tortvred, ‘Epistle Dedicatorie’, sig. \*2.

<sup>114</sup> Sylvester, Tobacco Battered, lns. 764-6.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, lns. 776-82.

Elizabethan Settlement'.<sup>116</sup> This and James's more rigorous enforcement of recusancy laws in 1616-18 seem to have encouraged puritans to follow the king's anti-smoking banner.<sup>117</sup> Deacon, for example, suggested that 'those our late traitorous Recusants' were but 'beggerly Bankrupts' whose fall began with tobacco.<sup>118</sup> In 1618, the Book of Sports deeply offended puritans.<sup>119</sup> The outcry against tobacco subsided again.

The moral condemnation of tobacco, like the medical debates, may have convinced some to quit but ultimately failed to break the English attachment to smoking. Neither moralist, physician nor king could deter those 'smoky gallants, who hauing long time glutted themselues with the fond fopperies and fashions of our neighbour Countries' now looked to the Indies for their novelties.<sup>120</sup> This was despite political and polemical efforts to curb consumption and break the cycle of degeneration inspired by tobacco abuse. Smoking was vaunted by some as the divine saviour of English decadence. It was tied in with and seemed to characterise lifestyles centred upon excessive consumption of luxurious foreign foods, chronic recourse to alcohol and general idleness. The objections of those who considered tobacco 'the corrupter of Cities', 'depraver of youth' and possibly even 'the dissolution of all!' would continue

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<sup>116</sup> George Abbot, who was more sympathetic to moderate puritan reformers, succeeded Bancroft in 1611. For the rest of the reign, 'most Jacobean puritans saw little reason to engage in sustained agitation against James' church or government' (Collinson, The Birthpangs of Protestant England, pp. 4-5).

<sup>117</sup> Questier notes that the period 1607-1618 was characterised by intense conversion activity in England (M. Questier, Conversion, Politics and Religion in England 1580-1625 (Cambridge, 1996), pp.102-3). He detects a surge of conformity between 1612 and 1615 in response to more rigorous enforcement of recusancy laws and, in the aftermath of the gunpowder plot, more people being forced to take the Oath of Allegiance (pp. 137-48). This assault on Catholicism at a time when puritans were being better tolerated provided an opportunity for the puritans to briefly join king James in his crusade against smoking.

<sup>118</sup> Deacon, Tobacco Tortvred, pp. 81-2.

<sup>119</sup> Collinson, The Birthpangs of Protestant England, p. 16.

<sup>120</sup> Philaretus, Work for Chimny-Sweepers, sig. Aiii.



to be voiced but demand for tobacco continued to rise.<sup>121</sup> Despite warnings of spiritual and national peril, tobacco remained 'the Ale-knights armes, the Beere brewers badge, the Carousers crest, the Drunkards darling'.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Brathwait, The Smoaking Age, pp.176-7.

<sup>122</sup> Deacon, Tobacco Tortvred, p. 57.

## Chapter 4

# How the English learned to smoke:

## The development and transmission of the culture and practice of smoking

- Tobacco and Sociability
- A manly and gentlemanly recreation: the gendering of consumption
- Women and tobacco
- Learning to smoke: the interpersonal transmission of smoking skills and cultures

Chapters two and three have shown that there were many reasons not to smoke in Elizabethan and Jacobean England. This chapter examines why and how people learned to smoke despite high prices, Spanish sources of supply, physicians' cautions and the disdain of the king. It considers the spread of smoking as a cultural 'event'. It shows that the smell of tobacco smoke became a common feature of alehouses, where 'drinking' tobacco became a part of the intoxicating culture of alcohol consumption. In this context, recreational smoking gained a range of connections and associations that made it seem attractive, particularly to men.

This chapter argues that smoking was a gendered activity. It became integral to rituals of male social interaction. It offered opportunities to display fellowship, physical strength, dexterity, fashionability and taste. It conveyed ideas of manliness and, for some, of gentlemanliness. Critics complained that it was a waste of money and time but many people, including the young who were finding their place within the adult social world, clearly considered it an enjoyable way to pass time. The connections of



smoking with aspects of male identity and sociability conditioned how smoking by women was perceived. Smoking women, like drunken women, risked far more than their male counterparts in 'the competitive arena of social display'.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter draws upon literary depictions of smoking to reveal the cultural contexts and lure of smoking. As a conspicuous and controversial new activity, smoking attracted attention and attempts to define, understand and determine its meaning. Few poets found words to rhyme with tobacco but many sought a place for it among their verses. The use of literary evidence for historical analysis is, of course, problematic. Such sources are infused with ambiguity, irony, metaphor and allusion. However, the imaginative is a cultural product that offers insights into the perceptions and conceptions of writers and their audiences. Verse was an integral part of political discourse. Stock scenes, images, words and phrases can illuminate much about shared values and associations amidst the audience.<sup>2</sup> The topical works of poets such as Samuel Rowlands and playwrights such as Jonson and Dekker were commentaries on contemporary society that reflected and could influence social and political events. As Sharpe argues, 'fictions were not seen as retreats from reality, but an engagement with it in order to mediate higher truths'.<sup>3</sup> Being 'thus neere, and familiarly allied to the time' literary texts cannot be denied their status as primary historical evidence.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A. Sherratt, 'Alcohol and its Alternatives' in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy, A. Sherratt (eds.), Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology (London, 1995), pp. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup> See: K. Thomas, History and Literature (Swansea, 1988) and K. Sharpe & S. N. Zwicker (eds.), The Politics of Discourse: the literature and history of seventeenth century England (Berkeley, 1987).

<sup>3</sup> K. Sharpe, The Personal Rule of Charles I (New Haven and London, 1992), p. 222. Sharpe continues, 'representations were not regarded as distortions of subjects but mirrors . . . names were things; external countenances announced inner qualities'.

<sup>4</sup> Jonson promoted a single reading of his texts because he did not like being misinterpreted (note the 'poetasters' row about people reading their own meanings into texts). Jonson's characters are not necessarily fictional so contemporary meanings are implicated in his plays. For fuller insights into Jonson's realism and an examination of the relationship between his art and the world he described see J. Haynes, The Social Relations of Jonson's Theatre (Cambridge, 1992).

Combined with sociological and anthropological insights, literary representations make possible an investigation of cultural ‘events’ that are barely discerned in the conventional canon of historical records.

The use of literary material necessarily directs attention towards London, the principal locus of English literary output at this time as well as the primary site of tobacco pipe production and use.<sup>5</sup> This limits conclusions about the spread of smoking beyond the metropolis. However, as a centre of fashion, a social venue for provincial elites and a magnet for ambitious young men, London exerted its influence far beyond its geographical bounds.<sup>6</sup> Smoking may have been introduced to provincial communities by many routes but its cultural accommodation and thus its enduring hold on English society was strongly influenced by opinions, patterns and cultures of consumption emanating from London. In 1599 Henry Buttes slighted ‘Yorkers’ who were content with ‘bald Tabacodocko’ by distinguishing them from the ‘Middle-sex or Londoner’ who preferred ‘a pipe of right Trinidado’.<sup>7</sup> London was the principal source both of tobacco and of judgements of its value.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Archaeological evidence shows London as the centre of the pipe making trade at the start of the seventeenth century but little direct evidence of such activity survives for the 1590s. See the ongoing series studying tobacco pipe finds in P. Davey (ed.), The Archaeology of the Clay Tobacco Pipe, e.g. XIII, ‘The Clay Tobacco Pipe in the Parish of Newington, Southwark, London’ (1994). For an overview see A. Oswald, ‘The Archaeology and Economic History of English Clay Tobacco Pipes’, The Journal of the British Archaeological Association 23 (1960).

<sup>6</sup> See: L. C. Orlin (ed.), Material London ca. 1600 (Philadelphia, 2000) and F. J. Fisher, London and the English Economy, 1500-1700 (London, 1990).

<sup>7</sup> H. Buttes, Dyets Dry Dinner (London, 1599), ‘Epistle Dedicatory’.

<sup>8</sup> London was the principal location for tobacco and other New World imports until after the civil war when Bristol, Glasgow and other outports began to dominate the colonial trade. See, for example, J. M. Price, Tobacco in Atlantic Trade: the Chesapeake, London and Glasgow, 1675-1775 (Aldershot, 1995). The importation of tobacco to these outports was hampered under King James and King Charles by regulations forbidding landing tobacco anywhere but London. These are considered in chapters 5 and 6.



## Tobacco and Sociability

In 1604, King James complained that ‘a man cannot heartily welcome his friend now, but straight they must bee in hand with *Tobacco*’. He recognised that tobacco had ‘become in place of a cure, a point of good fellowship’.<sup>9</sup> The accommodation of smoking within rituals of greeting and its role in affirming companionship bore little if any relation to medicinal tobacco use. Such social and recreational smoking could not bridge the gulf between the lord and the servant but, as with Amerindian use of the calumet or ‘peace-pipe’, it brought the consumers together through the common experience of its effects. Those who refused the offer of tobacco were deemed ‘peevish and no good company’.<sup>10</sup> Those accepting it signalled their affability and mutual regard. Such ideas were conveyed in the motto of the Tobacco Pipe Makers Company of London, “let brotherly love continue”.

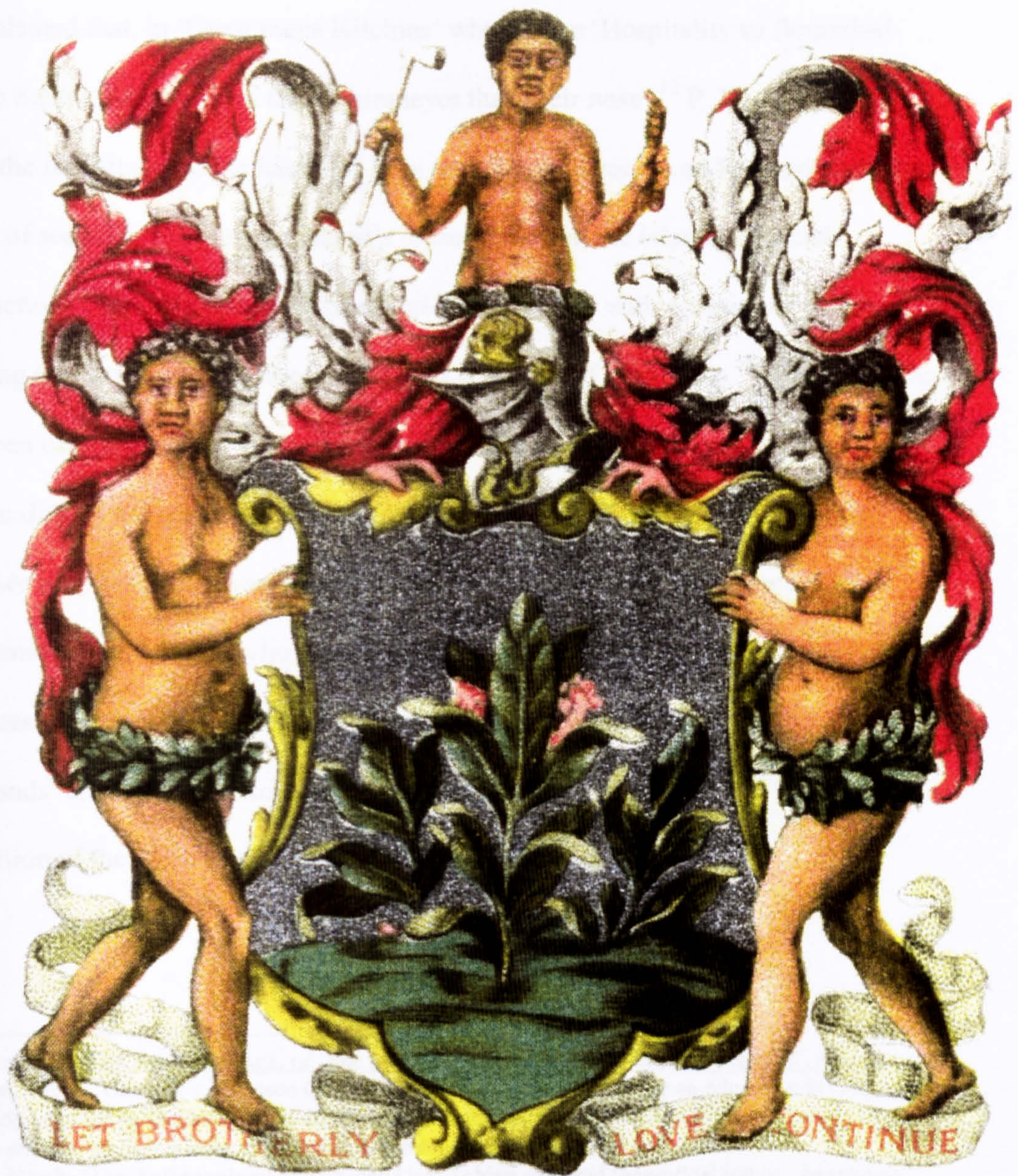
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<sup>9</sup> King James, A Counterblaste to Tobacco, (London, 1604), sig. Dv.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



The Arms of the Tobacco Pipe Makers Company of London (1619)<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Prichard, 'Tobacco Pipes of Bristol and Their Makers', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society 45 (1924), pp. 167-8. The motto, though probably referring to brotherhood within the Company, does have wider reverberations.



The use of tobacco in greetings was often seen to subvert traditional ideas about hospitality by displacing more wholesome expressions of welcome. Richard Brathwait complained that, in 'Great mens Kitchens' where once 'Hospitality so flourished . . . Lesse Smoake comes from their Chimneyes than their nose'.<sup>12</sup> P. W. Black's work with the inhabitants of the island of Tobi shows how tobacco can become central to ideas of sociability. When the island's tobacco ran out, the islanders' social interactions changed because in greetings they were left with a choice of offering nothing (too little) or food (too much) as expressions of hospitality.<sup>13</sup> As a third option between offering nothing or food to a guest, tobacco enabled the early modern English host to display his generosity while avoiding the more difficult decisions about whether supplying food was appropriate and, if so, what to supply. Some, like Rowlands' 'Poore Slaue' who was 'to tobacco mightily adicted' may have been driven by necessity 'to reape,/ Tobaccos praise for want of other meate'.<sup>14</sup> Others, like Rowlands' archetypal 'tobacconist' Thraso, offered tobacco instead of food as an exhibition of their liberality and sophistication to valued guests:

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<sup>12</sup> R. Brathwait, The Smoaking Age, or, The Man in the Mist: with The life and death of Tobacco (London, 1617), 'Chaucer's Incensed Ghost'. Richard Brathwait, who after an education at Oxford and Cambridge arrived in London around 1610, despised tobacco and 'tobacconists'. The analogy of the kitchen with the smoker's nose or pipe was commonly used.

<sup>13</sup> P. W. Black, 'The Anthropology of Tobacco Use: Tobian data and theoretical issues', Journal of Anthropological Research 40 (1984), pp. 475-503. Black's focus is on the social and cultural aspects of tobacco use on Tobi. All Tobians, including women, are heavy smokers. All their tobacco is imported. Black found that Tobian society is highly differentiated into networks of deference, power, responsibility and obligation with tobacco at its heart. He concludes that, as a symbol of sociability, tobacco has no equivalent for casual interactions.

<sup>14</sup> S. Rowlands, 'A Poore Slaue Once with Penurie Afflicted' in Hymors Antiquae Faces (London, 1605), reproduced in F. O. Waage (ed.), Uncollected Poems by Samuel Rowlands (facsimile), (Florida, 1970), p. 136. Rowlands' work, much of which contributes to the rogue literature of the time, often employs tobacco-related images to depict diverse contemporary stereotypes in a humorous form and convey images of the social manifestations of penury and social pretensions of the semi-literate lower 'middling sort'.

When Thraso meets his friend, he swears by God  
Vnto his Chamber he shall welcome be:  
Not that hee'le cloy him there with rost or sod,  
Such vulgar diet with Cookes shops agree:  
But hee'le present most kinde, exceeding franke,  
The best Tabacco that he euer dranke

Such as himselfe did make a voyage for,  
And with his owne hands gatherd from the ground  
All that which other fetch he doth abhor,  
His, grew vpon an Iland neuer found,  
Oh rare compound, a dying horse to choke,  
Of English fier, and of India smoke.<sup>15</sup>

On one level, this poem illustrates how tobacco could enable the host, with minimal difficulty, to discharge his duties (assuming the host did not make a special journey for it to the New World). However, the irony, particularly of the second stanza, casts doubt on the superiority of tobacco over food as a social lubricant. Thraso's dubious assertion that he personally gathered this exceptional tobacco from 'an Iland neuer found' is completely undermined by the allusion to its choking qualities. Like Brathwait and others, Rowlands was questioning but also confirming the intrusion of tobacco into social encounters.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, whether commentators approved or not, the guest/host intersection was a potent location for tobacco in a society

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<sup>15</sup> S. Rowlands, 'When Thraso Meets His Friend, He Swears by God', epigram 3 in The Letting of Hymovrs Blood in the Head-Vaine. With a new Moriffco, daunced by seauen Satyres, vpon the bottome of Diogines Tubbe (London, 1600).

<sup>16</sup> Among others who commented upon this was Joseph Hall, a future Calvinist bishop, who, as noted before, particularly bemoaned tobacco's role in the decline of hospitality. This is examined in D. Harley, 'The Beginnings of the Tobacco Controversy: Puritanism, James I, and the Royal Physicians', Bulletin of the History of Medicine 67 (1993), pp. 33-4. Harley translates one of Hall's comments: 'while the lifted nostrils smoke deeply, the kitchens have evidently gone cold'.



concerned about the failure to live up to conceptions of an earlier 'golden age' of generosity and social responsibility.<sup>17</sup>

Ideas of tobacco as an alternative to food were prefigured in reports from the New World identifying it as an appetite suppressant. Chronic food shortages in the 1590s probably gave such claims a particular resonance.<sup>18</sup> Starving Londoners could evidently not afford tobacco but the upsurge in smoking at a time when food was scarce attracted comment. Jonson, for example, directly counterposed the extravagant wastefulness of smoking with suggestions of its nutritional value. His character, the inveterate smoker Bobadilla, boasts about the quality and quantity of tobacco he consumes and then immediately attempts to prove its divine nature by claiming that the 'fume of this simple' alone could sustain a man without food for twenty-one weeks.<sup>19</sup> In the New World, where tobacco was plentiful and food was scarce, tobacco may have had seemed apposite as a dietary supplement. In England it did not.

At the English meal table, tobacco was more often a complement to food than an alternative to it. Many considered tobacco an aid to digestion. In Henry Buttes' Dyets Dry Dinner, tobacco was proclaimed as an 'antidote' to excessive humoral 'wetness'

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<sup>17</sup> For an exploration of the early modern hospitality 'problem', see F. Heal, Hospitality in Early Modern England (Oxford, 1990) and 'The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England', Past and Present 102 (1984).

<sup>18</sup> There were poor harvests in the mid-1590s and a food riot in 1595. For details on the recent debate about the impact of these shortages see M. J. Power, 'London and the Control of the "Crisis" of the 1590s', History 20 (1985), pp. 371-385 and 'A "Crisis" Reconsidered: social and demographic dislocation in London in the 1590s', London Journal 12 (1986), pp. 134-145. Archer questions the idea of crisis and examines reasons why the social fabric of London failed to 'ignite' (I. Archer, The Pursuit of Stability: social relations in Elizabethan London (Cambridge, 1991). For other perspectives on early modern London society see also P. Griffiths and M. S. R. Jenner (eds.), Londinopolis: essays in the cultural and social history of early modern London (Manchester, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> B. Jonson, Everyman in his Humour, Quarto edition (London, 1601), Act III Scene V. This play was first performed by the Chamberlaine's men in 1598. Jenner notes the currency of ideas about living on smells (M. S. R. Jenner, 'Civilisation and Deodorisation? Smell in Early Modern English Culture' in P.

due to over-eating. Buttes presented tobacco as an alternative to alcohol for those indulging in his feast of fruits, flesh, fish and white-meats. It was the culmination and completion of a sumptuous consuming experience. It symbolised the generosity of the host, the sufficiency of his table and his concern for the well-being of his guests. It was “good food”, which Mintz reminds us is a ‘social not a biological matter’.<sup>20</sup>

In the alehouse, where all were guests of the Vintner, tobacco was associated, not with food, but with the most prevalent psychoactive substance in early modern England - alcohol.<sup>21</sup> Most historians acknowledge that the social context of early tobacco consumption was the tavern but offer little explanation of why this is the case.<sup>22</sup> The most obvious answer is that the relationship between inebriant and stimulant fell within the ideological context of humoral medicine. It is possible that some smokers viewed their consumption in terms of the obvious Galenic conjunction of hot/dry tobacco and cold/wet ale. Indeed, tobacco ‘drinking’ was often seen as an ‘antidote’ to alcohol inebriation. Thomas Bastard suggested that ‘He that will in the mid’st of dronkenesse,/ Learne how he may miraculously be fresh . . .’ should turn to tobacco

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Burke, B. Harrison & P. Slack (eds.), Civil Histories: essays presented to Sir Keith Thomas (Oxford, 2000).

<sup>20</sup> S. Mintz, Sweetness and Power (New York, 1986), p. 8.

<sup>21</sup> P. Clark, The English Alehouse: a social history 1200-1830, (London, 1983). Clark clearly distinguishes between different alcohol outlets in terms of the clientele, accommodation and entertainment offered, commercial connections and range of commodities available. In Yorkshire, according to the 1577 Privy Council survey detailed in chapter 3, there were 239 inns, 23 taverns and 3674 alehouses (many of which would have been unlicensed) which Clark estimates at one outlet per 87 inhabitants. In London the ratio may well have been considerably lower. Although tobacco was most likely a feature of taverns and inns rather than alehouses in this very early period, the term alehouse will continue to be used in this chapter to denote any alcohol-drinking establishment.

<sup>22</sup> A. von Gernet, ‘Nicotian Dreams’ in Goodman et al., Consuming Habits, p. 76. Von Gernet says ‘it is no wonder, perhaps’ that this is the case but, like so many others, does not explain why or what this can tell us.



to 'vanish his disease'.<sup>23</sup> By suppressing appetite and postponing sleep, tobacco could also enable the consumer to carouse longer without the sobering intervention of food.

However, in the cultural context of the alehouse, tobacco 'drinking' really had little to do with ideas of humoral balance. Here, other imperatives, such as taste, availability, pleasure or social expectation governed consumption. Experiencing the physiological effects of smoking, especially when combined with alcohol, was primarily about leisure. Tobacco was a mind and mood altering substance with intoxicating effects of its own. It provided entertainment, enjoyment and opportunities for casual sociability in an environment geared towards personal gratification and the pursuit of pleasure. Pot and pipe were not just located together. They were part of the same arena of social interaction and individual experience. Although not the only site of smoking, the alehouse was probably the most important and certainly the most controversial and most commented on.

As Peter Clark has shown, the often crowded 'public house' was an economic and social gathering point as well as the location of a common culture of intoxication. It was relatively 'neutral' territory in a hierarchical society, a public space where 'traditional constraints on behaviour had less force'.<sup>24</sup> People of different trades, economic means and social status intersected in an environment geared towards relaxation, casual interaction and inebriation. In an atmosphere of diminished social exclusivity, a Falstaff could consort with a Prince Hal. Altered states of consciousness

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<sup>23</sup> T. Bastard, *Chrestoleros. Seuen bookes of Epigrames written by T. B.* (London, 1598), Epigram 20. Thomas Bastard was a satirist and divine from Dorset who was forced to leave Oxford in 1591 for, amongst other things, 'being much guilty of the vices belonging to poets' (DNB s. n.).

<sup>24</sup> Clark, *The English Alehouse*, p. 115. Clark states that hierarchical distinctions remained, possibly dictating the choice of establishment or part of establishment frequented.

were expected in taverns, inns and alehouses (legal and illegal).<sup>25</sup> In such venues tobacco joined small and strong beers, ale, perry, cider and, in more ‘up-market’ establishments, wine, as part of a diet of intoxicants, the imbibing of which was predominantly determined by questions of affordability and taste. The quality of tobacco may have varied depending upon one’s pocket, but the performance of conspicuous rituals of pipe and tobacco preparation and lighting remained the same for all. Tobacco ‘drinking’, regardless of status, was about fun and relief from the mundane and work-a-day worlds beyond the alehouse door.<sup>26</sup>

Around 1600 tobacco was probably most readily available in the larger taverns with a more affluent but not necessarily more reputable or exclusive clientele – the sorts of establishments frequented by minor poets such as Chute and notorious carousers such as Marlowe. As smoking became more common, it spread more widely to lesser establishments and less fashionable areas enabling anyone able to afford an adventurous palate to experiment with it. Those frequenting the alehouses of Clerkenwell in 1608, for example, may have encountered Joan Woodshawe who was described as a prostitute and tobacco seller.<sup>27</sup>

Buying a pipe of tobacco was a spending choice. Coming out of funds already ‘allocated’ to the ‘luxury’ of intoxication, tobacco bought by the pipe-full was little different to ale bought by the pot-full. With the beginning of Virginian production around 1616, prices fell and ever more tobacco was imported making availability and

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<sup>25</sup> Goodman suggests that, ‘Which states of consciousness have been encouraged, tolerated or forbidden have been culturally and politically specific’ (Goodman et al., *Consuming Habits*, preface).

<sup>26</sup> ‘Drinking’ tobacco was a popular and widespread idiom for smoking during this period.

<sup>27</sup> J. C. Jeaffreson, *Middlesex County Records* (Middlesex County Record Society, 1887) 2, p. 72. The details of her indictment are noted later.



cost less of a problem. Goodman suggests that falling prices and greater availability spurred more widespread smoking.<sup>28</sup> In 1621 Barnaby Rich noted that a man might have ‘his pot of ale, his pipe of tobacco and his pocksy whore and all for his 3d’.<sup>29</sup>

The location of tobacco in the socio-cultural ‘melting-pot’ of the alehouse provides the most convincing explanation for the rapid spread of tobacco consumption to different levels of society more or less simultaneously. Especially in the London alehouse, the uniqueness of which has not yet been sufficiently explored, tobacco encountered a wide-ranging, fluctuating and adventurous market. Visiting gentry, overseas travellers and unemployed young men from the counties gave alehouses, especially in the City and West End, a more cosmopolitan character. Particular venues like the Mermaid, which was frequented by Ben Jonson and his fellow literati, drew people with common interests together. As Ben-Amos’s examination of autobiographies of the period shows, the alehouse was also central to youth leisure and sociability.<sup>30</sup> Across the country, the local alehouse, whether a fine Tavern or a small drinking-den, was ‘a place where many servants and apprentices, both male and female, congregated to pass the time in drinking, playing cards, talking and just “being merry”’.<sup>31</sup> Sharing a common and often small venue for leisure and recreation, young and old, apprentice and master sought entertainment from the same activities. ‘Urban

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<sup>28</sup> J. Goodman, *Tobacco in History* (London & New York, 1993), p. 64.

<sup>29</sup> B. Rich, *The Irish Hubbub or The English Hue and Crie briefly pursuing the base conditions, and most notorious offences of the vile, vaine, and wicked age, no less smarting then tickling: a merriment whereby to make the wise to laugh, and fooles to be angry* (London, 1618), p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> I. K. Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England* (New Haven, 1994), pp. 191-200. Ben-Amos notes that there were no specific youth institutions to facilitate a distinct youth culture in this period (pp. 205-6).

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192. Even religiously inspired youths frequented alehouses. Ben-Amos notes that Roger Lowe, a devoted Presbyterian who often attended prayer and religious meetings went to the local alehouse seven times in September 1663 to drink, talk and play (drawn from W. L. Sachse (ed.), *The Diary of Roger Lowe of Ashton in Makerfield, Lancashire 1663-74* (New Haven, 1938), pp. 28-36).

apprentices were especially notorious for their habits of drinking, playing dice and cards, and gambling'.<sup>32</sup> Tobacco smoking was just another pastime on offer to all these customers.

The prevalence of smoking amongst the young is suggested by frequent references to the dangers of smoking by the young. As noted in chapter 2, one commentator warned in his smokers' handbook that 'it destroys all our youth that take it without cause, and every hour of the day' particularly because the thirst it provoked made them want to drink more alcohol.<sup>33</sup> William Vaughan considered tobacco 'so hurtful and dangerous to youth' that he wished tobacco to be known by the name of 'Youths-bane'.<sup>34</sup>

Young people's susceptibility to smoking was heightened by the framework governing the transition from childhood to adulthood in early modern England. Many adolescents moved away from the family home, often from a rural to an urban environment, to take up an apprenticeship or enter service. Servants in particular but also many apprentices frequently changed job or employer. This 'spacial mobility' increased opportunities to connect with adults as well as other adolescents.<sup>35</sup> Ben-Amos argues that this mobility 'tended to encourage conduct and habits of mind more

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Clark similarly notes that the alehouse was a venue for young people with time on their hands (Clark, *The English Alehouse*, p. 127).

<sup>32</sup> Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England*, p. 193.

<sup>33</sup> C.T., *An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England: and How to bring it to colour and perfection, to whom it may be profitable, and to whom harmful. . . with The Danger Of The Spanish Tobacco* (London, 1615), sig. [C4]. This was the concluding sentiment of the text. This passage is quoted in this thesis on p. 101.

<sup>34</sup> W. Vaughan, *Naturall & Artificial Directions for Health Derived from the Best Philosophers, as Well Moderne, as Auncient* (London, 1600), p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> Ingram has particularly noted the 'spacial mobility' of the young (M. Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England 1570-1640* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 354-65). He has also highlighted that 'the young, especially mobile youngsters including servants' were 'as prominent an object of reform' as the poor (M. Ingram, 'The Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England' in P. Griffiths, A. Fox and S. Hindle (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1996), p. 75).



closely associated with adults and adult life'.<sup>36</sup> With periods of unemployment and irregular patterns of work it also left many young people with time on their hands.<sup>37</sup> Young people who had not been able to secure a stable full-time position were perhaps the most likely to visit the alehouse at times when most people were working. There they were likely to encounter the 'tobacconists' moral commentators warned against who idled away their lives on the dubious pleasures of the pipe, pot and punk. Rich noted that alehouses and other venues where tobacco could be bought were 'almost never without company, that from morning till night are still taking of tobacco'.<sup>38</sup> While encountering new circumstances, experiences and people, adolescents were bound to encounter the new smoking activity. They were also perhaps particularly prepared to embrace it.

Especially in London, hundreds of densely packed taverns, inns and alehouses shared the same streets and an overlapping clientele. The tobacco habit flourished in places like Little Britain Street, where the Bishop of Durham and his family 'supped' in close proximity to 'One Jackson, who . . . died suddenly . . . from the smoke of tobacco, which he took insatiably'.<sup>39</sup> The social milieu of the alehouse intersected with other venues of entertainment such as the theatre and brothel, providing further opportunities for smoking to be enjoyed and observed. As noted in chapter 1,

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<sup>36</sup> Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England*, p. 206. She also suggests that this mobility diminished the prospects of an emerging youth culture by undermining 'the potential for strong and durable alliances between young people themselves'.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193. Ben-Amos suggests that, compared with adults, young unmarried people were likely to spend more time in a range of diversions and recreations.

<sup>38</sup> B. Rich, *The Honestie of this Age* (London, 1614), pp. 25-6.

<sup>39</sup> *CSPD 1601-03*, p. 136. Carleton (London) to Chamberlaine (Knebworth), 29 December 1601.

Carleton mentions these two unconnected incidents in a long letter. Jackson's fate, reported amidst news of an earthquake, a robbery, and a miraculous recovery, had been ascertained when surgeons had 'opened' him.

Hentzner witnessed smoking while visiting the London bear-garden in 1598.<sup>40</sup> At around the same time, Thomas Platter noted that,

In the ale-houses tobacco or a species of wound-wort are also obtainable for one's money, and the powder is lit in a small pipe, the smoke sucked into the mouth, and the saliva is allowed to run freely, after which a good draught of Spanish wine follows. This they regard as a curious medicine for defluations, and as a pleasure, and the habit is so common with them, that they always carry the instrument on them, and light up on all occasions, at the play, in the taverns or elsewhere, drinking as well as smoking together.<sup>41</sup>

By 1614, when Rich commented on the omnipresence of smoking, such scenes were probably as common in the East End and in provincial towns as they were in the more fashionable venues of Elizabethan London.

### A manly and gentlemanly recreation: the gendering of consumption

As a greeting, an expression of hospitality and a component of alehouse sociability, tobacco smoking had become a prop of social interaction. It signalled ideas of fellowship, generosity, sharing and, particularly in the alehouse, a willingness to indulge in the communal experience of tobacco's effects for fun and as a part of the pleasures of intoxication. The successful intrusion of smoking into such social 'moments' may be partly attributed to the action of chemicals within tobacco smoke which, for the regular smoker, replace craving with feelings of euphoria, calmness and

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<sup>40</sup> Hentzner's comment on smoking was noted on p. 21.

<sup>41</sup> C. Williams (translator and ed.), Thomas Platter's Travels in England 1599 Rendered into English from the German (London, 1937), pp. 170-1. Platter said the smokers he witnessed took tobacco 'so abundantly because of the pleasure it gives'.



well-being which diminish the stress of human interaction. However, these physiological effects, like addiction, only provide a reason for continuing to smoke. To explain how tobacco 'found' its social position and why people started to smoke requires consideration of the cultural associations forged between tobacco and the society encountering it. In the late Elizabethan and early Stuart capital, the predominant cultural link was with maleness.

From the beginning, English encounters with tobacco consumption which was not mediated by physicians were almost exclusively between men. All the Roanokers were men. They had learned to smoke from a tribe that associated tobacco use with exclusively male activities<sup>42</sup>. In Roanoke and while at sea they developed their own English, but purely male, tobacco culture which they then passed on to Raleigh and others who paraded it as a symbol of political ambition. These early smokers were not just men. They were exciting, adventurous and distinguished men whose military and maritime exploits and willingness to hazard their lives, for public as well as private good, confirmed their manliness. None of Shakespeare's characters smoked but many of them displayed the aggressive militarism, the martial and heroic qualities of such men.<sup>43</sup> From these antecedents, certain styles of smoking became linked to conceptions of masculine virility and aggression.<sup>44</sup> Such smoking probably appealed most to the more 'cavalier' elements in society.

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<sup>42</sup> Hugh-Jones suggests that the delineation of tasks in pre-industrial cultures often entails separate male/female patterns of consumption. See S. Hugh-Jones, 'Coca, Beer, Cigars and Yage: meals and anti-meals in an Amerindian community', in Goodman et al., *Consuming Habits*, pp. 47-66.

<sup>43</sup> Headlam-Wells details such connections and links ideas of 'courage-masculine' to militant Protestantism in Shakespeare's plays (R. Headlam-Wells, *Shakespeare on Masculinity* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 7-9). For further perspectives see also: B. R. Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford, 2000); A. Shepard, *Marlowe's Soldiers: rhetorics of masculinity in the age of the Armada* (Aldershot, 2002) and E. Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: honour, sex and marriage* (London, 1999).

<sup>44</sup> Raleigh asserted that he had never beheld 'more manly' people than the Orinoco tribesmen he encountered in 1595, who traded canoes for Trinidad tobacco 'in the excessive taking whereof they

This link persisted. It was, for example, exploited for comic effect by the author(s) of a Cambridge play entitled Wine, Beer, and Ale Together by the Ears, possibly written for performance before King James around 1625, which suggested a military analogy with smoking.<sup>45</sup> The character 'Ale' tells his fellow inebriants that:

I haue heard him [Tobaco] reported a soldier, and once being in company with a knap-lack man a companion of his, I obtained a cobby of his military postures, which put downe the pike and pot-gun cleane, pray obserue 'em.

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Take your seale.      | 13. Elbow your pipe.            |
| 2. Draw your box.        | 14. Mouth your pipe.            |
| 3. Vncase your pipe.     | 15. Giue fire.                  |
| 4. Produce your rammer.  | 16. Nose your Tobacco.          |
| 5. Blow your pipe.       | 17. Puffe vp your smoake.       |
| 6. Open your box.        | 18. Spit on your right hand.    |
| 7. Fill your pipe.       | 19. Throw off your loose ashes. |
| 8. Ramme your pipe.      | 20. Present to your friend.     |
| 9. Withdraw your rammer. | 21. As you were.                |
| 10. Returne your rammer. | 22. Cleanse your pipe.          |
| 11. Make ready.          | 23. Blow your pipe.             |
| 12. Present.             | 24. Supply your pipe.           |

Exercise this discipline till you stinke, defile the roome, offend your friends, destroy your liuer and lungs, and bid adiew to the world with a scowring fluxe.

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exceed all nations' (W. Raleigh, The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Empire of Guiana (London, 1596), p. 41).

<sup>45</sup> Wine, Beer, and Ale, Together by the Eares. A dialogue, Written first in Dutch by Gallobelgicus, and faithfully translated out of the original copie, by Mercurius Britannicus, for the benefite of his nation (London, 1629) reproduced in J. H. Hanford (ed.), Studies in Philology 12 (January 1915). A second edition 'much enlarged' appeared in 1630 and another in 1658 entitled Wine, Beer, Ale and Tobacco Contending for Superiority. Hanford's analysis suggests that purely English allusions and puns along with the absence of any Dutch original indicate that this text is 'an original product of English wit'. Internal evidence indicates that this Cambridge 'debate play' was probably written between 1624 and 1626. Hanford speculates that the tobacco passage may have been added for a performance before King



Some commentators humorously suggested that tobacco did not merely confirm manliness, it conferred it. Sir John Beaumont, in his encomium to tobacco, mused about:

How many Cowards base and recreant,  
By one pipes draught were turned valiant  
And after in an artificiall mist  
Haue ouerthrowne their foes before they wist. . .<sup>46</sup>.

Critics of tobacco, drawing upon medical arguments, countered that tobacco actually made men effeminate. It damaged health and diminished the prospects of fatherhood: 'It breeds a wheezing in a narrow breast . . . A bastard heat within the veines it leaues,/ Which spoyles the Infant, if the Wife conceiues'.<sup>47</sup> James considered it the 'greatest sinne of all' that smokers made themselves unfit for military service because of their obsessive need for tobacco. He argued that smokers would not be able to travel far without seeking 'a reekie cole' to 'kindle' their tobacco. They would be unable to endure the rigors of war, the lack of food, drink and sleep, if they could not even endure a lack of tobacco. Referring back to the Amerindians, James asserted that tobacco was 'accounted so effeminate among the Indians themselves, as in the market

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James at Cambridge in 1625 which was never given due to the king's ill health (the tobacco passages, tacked on at the end, have little relation to the context) (pp. 6-7, 19-20).

<sup>46</sup> Sir John Beaumont, *The Metamorphosis of Tobacco*, (London, 1602). Beaumont was mocking such claims but, by doing so, confirmed their existence.

<sup>47</sup> Sir William Vaughan Orpheus Jr., 'Three Hundred Thousand Pounds Yee Yearely Spend', Lns. 15-18 in *The Golden Fleece: Divided into three Parts, Under Which are discovered the Errours of Religion, the Vices and Decayes of the Kingdome, and lastly the wayes to get wealth, and to restore Trading so much complayned of* (London, 1626), p. 82.

they will offer no price for a slave to be sold, whome they finde to be a great *Tobacco* taker'.<sup>48</sup>

Contrary perceptions of smoking as manly and as effeminate indicate that tobacco had become entangled in debates about gender. Amussen argues that 'the gender system defined a set of relationships conditioned by difference'.<sup>49</sup> That difference was not necessarily biological. As Butler has argued, gender is a matter of performance and an aspect of the creation of social norms.<sup>50</sup> Gilmore's conclusion that masculinity is constructed and defined in different ways by different cultures suggests that it always is.<sup>51</sup> Frequent depictions of cross-dressing characters, particularly in Shakespeare's comedies, suggested to audiences the extent to which clothing and behaviour rather than biology signalled gender.<sup>52</sup> Alongside a host of books on how to be a man and gentleman in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, this suggests that 'masculine identity was understood to be a social construction long before post-structuralist theory made an issue of the fact'.<sup>53</sup> The assertions of critics that smoking was unmanly was a direct assault on smokers whose use of tobacco had become as integral to the display and performance of their manliness as their belt buckle, sword and boasts of sporting or martial feats.

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<sup>48</sup> King James, *Counterblaste*, sig. C4v.

<sup>49</sup> S. D. Amussen, 'Gender, Family and the Social Order 1560-1725' in A Fletcher & J. Stevenson (eds.), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 207.

<sup>50</sup> J. Butler, *Gender Trouble, Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, 1990).

<sup>51</sup> D. Gilmore, *Manhood in the Making: conceptions of masculinity* (New Haven, 1990).

<sup>52</sup> L. Gowing takes a somewhat more physically defined position. See L. Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: women, words, and sex in early modern London* (Oxford, 1996) and L. Gowing, 'Ordering the Body: illegitimacy and female authority in seventeenth-century England' in M. J. Braddick and J. Walter (eds.), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: order, hierarchy and subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 43-62.



Criticism of smoking, especially when it raised questions about the smoker's manliness, could provoke an aggressive response.

Great Captaine Gracelesse stormes, protests, and sweares,  
He'le haue the rascall Poet by the eares,  
And beate him, as a man would beate a dog,  
That dares once speake against this precious fogge.<sup>54</sup>

The threat of violence was itself a confirmation of brute masculine power. When a smoker encountered someone who 'dares dispraise Tobacco,/ while the smoke is in my nose', it was the smoker not the tobacco which was under attack.<sup>55</sup> The smoker, who had adopted tobacco as part of his male identity, must have recognised the threat to his reputation from critics who repeatedly emphasised the foolishness, moral and physical weakness of tobacco abuse. Whether positively or negatively, being 'the smoker' defined and probably still defines an identity.

The association of tobacco with manliness made smoking particularly attractive for some adolescent males. While learning whatever trade they were apprenticed to they were also learning how to present themselves as adults. In all societies, past and present, the transition between childhood and adulthood seems to be characterised by the desire of teenagers to be accepted within the adult world. In many cases tobacco plays a part in this. Black notes that, on Tobi, youngsters learned the 'sharing component of smoking behaviour', both as individuals eager to achieve the status of

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<sup>53</sup> B. R. Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 39-40. Smith states that 'Shakespeare's comedies often invite the conclusion that masculinity is more like a suit of clothes that can be put on and taken off at will than a matter of biological destiny' (pp. 3-4).

<sup>54</sup> J. Taylor, 'Giuen at our Palace at Gehenna', Lns. 15-18 in *All the Workes of Iohn Taylor the Water-Poet. Being Sixty and three in Number. Collected into one Volume by the Author: With sundry new Additions, corrected, reuised, and newly Imprinted* (London, 1630), p. 253.

<sup>55</sup> S. Rowlands, 'The Deuils Health-Drinker' in *The Knave of Clubbs*, (London, 1611).

adult and as facilitators of adult smoking (passing a light, fetching pipes etc).<sup>56</sup> Hilton notes that Victorian anti-smoking campaigners determined that boys smoked to be like men. Rather than claiming tobacco was effeminate, these campaigners challenged ideas that smoking was manly by advertising the manliness of non-smoking athletes, footballers and soldiers.<sup>57</sup> Studies of adolescent smoking in the twentieth century suggest similar connections between perceptions of the activity and the aspiration to be seen as an adult.<sup>58</sup> The adolescent is eager 'to be affirmed by his peers, and is ready to be confirmed by rituals, creeds, and programs'.<sup>59</sup> In the seventeenth-century alehouse, as now, smoking was a matter of ritual. The controversy surrounding it made it a matter of creed.

Of course, many young people would have joined the anti-tobacco lobby and rejected smoking in favour of other activities. Ben-Amos notes that autobiographies of non-conformists show that many young people 'discovered' religion and joined sects during their adolescence.<sup>60</sup> Many became politically active, campaigning and even rioting against prostitutes and brothels or, particularly in 1640-1 against the government.<sup>61</sup> Nevertheless, the centrality of the alehouse to youth culture suggests

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<sup>56</sup> Black, The Anthropology of Tobacco Use.

<sup>57</sup> M. Hilton, Perfect Pleasures: smoking in British popular culture 1800-2000 (Manchester & New York, 2000), pp. 91-2. See also chapter 7, 'Juvenile smoking and "the feverish anxiety to become a man"'. Hilton notes that the problem of juvenile smoking was a particular target of anti-tobacco propaganda in the nineteenth century. He also relates that Baden-Powell frequently told his scouts that smoking made them unfit for soldiery.

<sup>58</sup> For insights into modern adolescence see: J. Coleman and L. B. Hendry, The Nature of Adolescence (London, 1999) and B. Lloyd, Smoking in adolescence: images and identities (London, 1998).

<sup>59</sup> E. Erikson, Childhood and Society (New York 1963) quoted in Hilton, Perfect Pleasures, pp. 158-9. Black's study of Tobi offered similar findings (Black, The Anthropology of Tobacco Use).

<sup>60</sup> Ben-Amos, Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England, pp. 184-191.

<sup>61</sup> Many have noted the association of London apprentices with disorder. Smith details how 'dishonest and rowdy apprentices were frequently portrayed on the London stage' in plays such as Eastward Ho (S. R. Smith, 'Communication: The London apprentices as seventeenth-century adolescents', Past and Present 61 (1973), pp. 150-5). Ben Amos notes that London apprentices were notorious for riotous activities, sports etc. but 'they also harassed prostitutes, attacked brothels and assaulted foreign traders or gentlemen and their serving-men'. She calculates that, in 1604-1641, there were twenty-four such



that many young people would have sought acceptance within the alehouse 'community' by drinking and smoking. As Andrew Sherratt argues, smoking was an inherently inter-personal activity performed amidst the social politics of the adult world. It came to 'embody notions of status and value, as well as conceptions of identity and belonging, whether actual or desired . . . in the competitive arena of social display'.<sup>62</sup> In some circles, smoking may even have functioned as a sort of 'rite of passage' into local male sociality.<sup>63</sup> This may not have been limited to the young. King James noted in 1604 that 'divers men very sound both in judgement, and complexion, have bene at last forced to take it [tobacco] also without desire, partly because they were ashamed to seeme singular'.<sup>64</sup>

In Everyman in his Humour, Jonson depicted an encounter between the 'bogus' gentleman and smoking braggart, Bobadilla, and the young Stephano. Bobadilla urges his potential protégé to learn how to smoke and be a man like him. He boastfully displays of the remnants of seven pounds of the finest Trinidado tobacco that he bought only a week ago. His willingness to share and the quantity and quality of the tobacco he consumes are assertions of his generosity, powers of discernment and manliness. His smoking defines his maleness both in the supposed refinement of his palate and the physical strength required to consume so much so quickly. Claiming to

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riots (Ben-Amos, Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England, p. 183). It is important to note that apprentices, especially in London, were drawn from different strata of society. Paupers may have been expected to become workmen and sons of gentlemen to become merchants etc. but they often shared common experiences and outlooks. See also P. Griffiths, Youth and Authority: formative experiences in England, 1560-1640 (Oxford, 1996).

<sup>62</sup>A. Sherratt, 'Alcohol and its Alternatives' in Goodman et al., Consuming Habits, pp. 12-13.

<sup>63</sup> Ben Amos considers such rites of passage marking the end of the transition to adult life by marrying and setting oneself up in business (Ben-Amos, Adolescence and Youth in Early Modern England, Chapter 9). With apprenticeships lasting many years and many people not marrying until their late twenties, it is likely that other less fundamental changes, perhaps including smoking and drinking, marked the transition to adult society.

<sup>64</sup> King James, Counterblaste, sigs. D-Dv.

have been to the Indies, Bobadilla then recites a catalogue of curative functions to justify smoking. When Cob intervenes and criticises 'roguish tobacco', such reasoned arguments are put aside as Bobadilla beats him with a cudgel.

In this scene, Jonson is questioning contemporary perceptions of the relationship between smoking and maleness. This is a satire directed at those who wanted to be seen as more than they really were through a puff of a pipe or an empty boast. When challenged, such characters had little else but violence and bluster to support their assertions of status. After the altercation, Stephano is again urged by Bobadilla's fellow smokers, Matthew and Ed Kno'well, to try tobacco. Declining to do so, Stephano nevertheless asserts: 'as I am a gentleman, and a soldier, it is divine tobacco'. In this way, Stephano deflects attention from his unwillingness to smoke by linking his own manly credentials with the tobacco, thereby affirming the manliness of smoking and of the smokers in his company.<sup>65</sup> However, as the audience must have recognised, the young hero humours the smokers but does not join them. In an ensuing discussion about military credentials, Stephano's honest representation of himself stands in stark contrast with Bobadilla's exaggeration of his own martial experience. Stephano does not wish to blow this kind of smoke either.

Regardless of Jonson's stance on the subject, this scene and many poems illustrate how tobacco was associated with physical maleness and male social interaction. However, smoking was also connected with the private and contemplative side of men's lives. Hilton notes how smoking was central to the depiction of the masculine

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<sup>65</sup> B. Jonson, Every Man in his Humour, Act iii Scene vi.



identities of literary action heroes such as Bull-dog Drummond and James Bond.<sup>66</sup>

Similarly, smoking by Sherlock Holmes was central to the depiction of his intellectual powers.<sup>67</sup> Numerous seventeenth-century poets expressed this connection between smoking and thinking when they claimed that tobacco was an aid to creativity and learning. George Daniel, for example, considered tobacco a 'Nurseing flame' to 'fire the Braines'.<sup>68</sup> Rowlands' melancholy knight could not concentrate on his solitary writing without a continuous supply of tobacco to 'perfume' his brain.<sup>69</sup> Joseph Beaumont, reluctantly averred that tobacco was a friend to students 'if us'd with sober Reason'.<sup>70</sup>

Such ideas expanded the allure of smoking to individuals whose identity centred upon their mental rather than physical attributes. Critics countered that smoking damaged the memory and corrupted mental processes. Like drinking, gaming and whoring, it was just one of those vices to which poets seemed particularly susceptible. Richard Brathwait, invoking Chaucer's ghost, completely rejected the idea that 'no Poets Genius could be ripe/ without the influence of Pot and Pipe'.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, the connection persisted. In later debates about tobacco, the smoking of men such as Hobbes and Newton was paraded as evidence that tobacco mobilised creative and intellectual talents for the good of all.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Hilton, *Perfect Pleasures*, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 17-20.

<sup>68</sup> G. Daniel, 'To the Reader', Lns. 35-6, in A. B. Grosart (ed.), *The Poems of George Daniel ... From the original mss. in the British Museum: Hitherto unprinted* (Boston, Lincolnshire, 1878), p. 128.

<sup>69</sup> S. Rowlands, *The Melancholie Knight* (London, 1615), p. 29, Ln. 562.

<sup>70</sup> Joseph Beaumont, 'Tobacco', in *Eloise Robinson* (ed.), *The Minor Poems of Joseph Beaumont* (London, 1914), p. 71, Ln. 57.

<sup>71</sup> R. Brathwait, *The Smoaking Age*, 'Chaucers Incensed Ghost', Lns. 13-14.

As noted in chapter 3, solitary and contemplative smoking was also associated with the melancholy side of life.<sup>73</sup> As this image below suggests, even the ‘cavalier’ might have cause to ‘thaw his griefs’.<sup>74</sup>

Title Page to the ‘Melancholy Cavalier’



*The Description of the Piece.*

View here the Picture of a Cavalier,  
 Tobacco being all his Table-cheer;  
 His Sword is broken, kicking at a Crown, (down,  
 Shews his High thoughts, which cannot yet come  
 But like the *Palme*, the more deprest, aspires  
 To thaw his griefs at Great *Apollo's* Fires;  
 Where prying Angells, in the *Muses* praise,  
 Do Crown his Temples with immortall *Bayes*.



*The Melancholy Cavalier,*  
 OR,  
 FANCY'S MASTER-PIECE.  
 A Poëm by J. C.



Printed for C. R. in the year, 1654.

Cavaliers’ and adolescents who smoked conspicuously may not have been overly concerned about moralists’ denunciations of smoking. However, gentlemen had to take account of how their smoking might impact upon their reputation. As many have

<sup>72</sup> Hilton, *Perfect Pleasures*, p. 30. Such claims were made to counter suggestions that smoking impaired memory which were first expressed around 1600 and were again used by the anti-tobacco movement of the nineteenth-century.

<sup>73</sup> See Beaumont and Devereaux quotes on pp. 113, 126.

<sup>74</sup> J. C., *The Melancholy Cavalier or Fancy's Masterpiece* (London, 1654), title page. This is a post Civil War reprint of Samuel Rowlands *The Melancholie Knight*.



noted, the title of gentleman was no longer limited to those of good birth and high social standing in the early modern period.<sup>75</sup> It was also conferred upon those who had been ‘advanced by desert, eyther by service in the field, or by any other vertuous endeavour, ending to the generall good of the commonwealth’.<sup>76</sup> Both the gentleman born and the gentleman by desert were expected to live up to ideals of virtue and moderation. Conspicuous consumption of tobacco could cast doubt on both.

By 1600 merchants, lawyers, physicians and others of ignoble birth were gaining or assuming the title of ‘gentleman’.<sup>77</sup> This broadening of ideas about who could be a gentleman diminished the exclusivity of the title. It also prompted the publication of handbooks on how to become a gentleman, such as Henry Peacham’s The Complete Gentleman (1622) and Richard Brathwait’s The English Gentleman (1630). These books, as well as the plays of Shakespeare, presented ‘gentleman’ as ‘a status to which many men could aspire – or at least *imagine* themselves aspiring’.<sup>78</sup> People of independent means and those who could assert some distance between themselves and those engaged in trades or waged labour could all claim themselves to be gentlemen by adopting manners and modes of dress and behaviour which conformed to expectations of a gentleman.

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<sup>75</sup> According to Barnaby Rich, the heralds defined a gentleman by blood as a man ‘descended from three degrees of Gentry, both by father and mother’. B. Rich, Roome for a Gentleman, or the second part of faults, (London, 1609), sig. D. See A. Bryson, From Courtesy to Civility: changing codes of conduct in early modern England (Oxford, 1998).

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., ‘To All Those Gentlemen, That are Worthily So Reputed’.

<sup>77</sup> Smith argues that conceptions of what constituted a gentleman had, by then, evolved in response to the emergence of a wealthy class whose status derived from the acquisition of capital rather than the inheritance of land (Smith, Shakespeare and Masculinity, p. 58).

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., pp. 59-60.

As the literature of the period shows, the title gentleman became a matter of controversy partly because such superficial fashion and display rather than virtuous deeds or ancestry seemed to have become the mark of gentlemanliness. Fashion seems to arise in societies undergoing adjustments between social classes, as the vehicle for competition and clarification of the social hierarchy.<sup>79</sup> In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as Hilton has shown, tobacco often featured in magazines that reflected and promoted conceptions of gentlemanly civility. The kind of tobacco smoked and the means of ingestion (clay or more elaborate pipes, cigars and the mass produced cigarette) were potent indicators of identity and status.<sup>80</sup> In the early seventeenth-century, many complained that fashions such as smoking were mere vanity but in a society where rich merchants vied for eminence against impoverished gentry they were much more than that. Like sumptuous fabrics, the smell of tobacco smoke was imbued with 'crucial public meanings' conveying 'messages of power, status, hierarchy and gender'.<sup>81</sup> By wearing the latest ruff or pulling out a silver tobacco box, people were announcing their wealth and sophistication and asserting a social status not necessarily due to them.

Those 'counterfeit' gentlemen who 'usurp the name & title of gentlemen, that are lately crept out of a thatcht house, or from the dunghil. . . that have neither petigree,

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<sup>79</sup> There is a vast literature of fashion through the ages. See, for example: S. Scholz, *Body Narratives: writing the nation and fashioning the subject in early modern England* (London, 2000); A. F. Sutton, 'Order and Fashion in Clothes: the King, his household and the City of London at the end of the fifteenth-century', *Textile History* 22 (1991), pp. 253-76; A. Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: fashion in England and France, 1750-1820* (New Haven, 1995) and S. J. Vincent, "'When I am in Good Habit": clothes in English culture c. 1550-1670', unpub. PhD thesis, University of York (2002).

<sup>80</sup> Hilton, *Perfect Pleasures*, p. 27. Hilton also suggests that the varying price of different kinds of tobacco created 'hierarchies of taste'.

<sup>81</sup> R. Porter, Book review of C. Classen, D. Howes & A. Synnott, *Aroma: The Cultural history of Smell* (New York, 1995) in *Journal of Social History* 29 (Summer 1996) p. 969-70. This was a comment about smells in general not tobacco in particular. The Sumptuary Law that had restricted types of clothing to particular levels of the social hierarchy lapsed in 1604.



virtue, or honesty' were a prime target for poets, playwrights and polemicists.<sup>82</sup> In Every Man Out of His Humour (1599) Jonson mocked such 'Mushrompe Gentlemen,/ That shoot up in a night to place and worship' for using tobacco like the latest fashionable clothes to distinguish themselves and gain attention in London society.<sup>83</sup> The social ambition of people like Cornelius, 'who sits o're the stage,/ With the Tobacco-pipe now at his mouth'<sup>84</sup> attracted the same kind of condemnation as 'Poore-tankard-slaues? who think them selues as great/. . . and spend and drinke Tobacco with the best'.<sup>85</sup> For both, the moderation and self-control expected of a true gentleman was singularly lacking. The excessive consumption of such 'gallants' and 'gulls that would be gents' symbolised their profligacy, naiveté and the lack of strength of character.

Tobacco had become a focus of debates about virtue, fashion and social mobility. Surely the 'true' gentleman would turn away from this novelty which was increasingly a common feature of plebeian sociality and identity. Henry Parrot hoped that widespread use of tobacco by people of all classes would make smoking quickly go out of fashion:

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<sup>82</sup> B. Rich, Roome for a Gentleman, 'To all those Gentlemen, that are worthily so reputed'.

<sup>83</sup> B. Jonson, Every Man Out of his Humour. A Comicall Styre acted in the yeere 1599 (London, 1616), p. 93. Act i Scene ii, lns. 130-1. Three of the eight principal male characters in this play are smokers - a courtier, a 'tobacconist' and a 'gull'.

<sup>84</sup> E. Guilpin, 'Of Cornelius' in Skialetheia. Or, A shadowe of Truth, in certaine Epigrams and Satyres (London, 1598). Haynes notes that, at popular plays dealing with social issues familiar to the audience, the playing space and the seating space often overlapped (J. Haynes, The Social Relations of Jonson's Theatre, p. 68).

<sup>85</sup> C.G.Gent, The Minte of Deformities (London, 1600), lns. 337-42.

The humour of Tobacco (and the rest,  
wherein our gallants tooke their chiefe delight:  
Is dayly had (me thinkes) in lesse request,  
and will (I feare) in time be worne out quite.  
For now ech Pesant puffes it through his nose:  
As well as he that's clad in veluet hose.<sup>86</sup>

He was wrong. The use of tobacco by this large pool of 'wannabe' gentlemen extended the demand for tobacco and its social profile. Smoking became a feature of every alehouse and public venue as well as of 'the courts of princes, the chambers of nobles, the bowers of sweet ladies, [and] the cabbins of soldiers'.<sup>87</sup> Those who had, or claimed to have, no such social ambition could criticise the inappropriate consumption and personal degradation of characters such as John Davies' Fvmosus who 'drinckes no ownce that costs him not a Crowne, . . . [but] when his Crownes do faile, he pawnes his Cloake,/ Sith (like a Chimney) hee's kept sound by Smoake'.<sup>88</sup> They could not deter them or those who enjoyed their company.

For many smokers, the consumption of tobacco merged with other aspects of their consuming lifestyles. William Petre, for example, probably purchased tobacco at the 'Katt and Fidle' and the 'Three Tonnes' while gambling at primero with 'the boys'.<sup>89</sup> In 1601 his purchase of tobacco is first noted in his household accounts. By 1607, the year after Parrott published his poem, Petre was regularly buying tobacco and pipes.

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<sup>86</sup> H. Parrot, 'The humour of Tobacco (and the rest)', Epigram 85 in *The Mouv-Trap* (London, 1606).

<sup>87</sup> Jonson, *Every Man in his Humour*, Act iii Scene vi.

<sup>88</sup> Davies, 'Of Fumosus the Great Tobaccanist', Epigram 148 in *The Scourge of Folly*.

<sup>89</sup> *Account Book of William Petre 1597-1610*, Essex Records Office T/A174 (transcript of Folger ms. 1772.1), fol. 24r & 32v. Petre does not appear to have been a very successful gambler as the losses recorded in the household accounts show. Although some tobacco purchases are noted, particularly after 1607, most are probably left undistinguished under vague headings such as drinks in ordinaries, purchases in London or groceries.



His accounts show that on 3 February 1607 he paid 4s 5d 'for Tobacco and pipes at London'.<sup>90</sup> The following month the cost of his smoking was just part of a larger bill for 'lace and stuffe for koates . . . wine . . . bootes and shoes . . . Tobacco and other charges'.<sup>91</sup> On 14 April he bought 'boote hose. Sockes. Tobacco: horse meat . . . at London'.<sup>92</sup> On 14 May he paid for 'spanish satin to make Petre a suit, silk, lace, taffitta, Tobacco, horsemeate & other charges in London'.<sup>93</sup> Such expenditures, combining the cost of tobacco with clothing and visits to London, continue throughout the accounts. Tobacco may have been expensive but for many smokers it was just one amongst many expensive items to buy.

When Parrott suggested that smoking by the lower orders would make tobacco less fashionable he failed to understand that those who already smoked would probably continue to do so for reasons of habit, dependency and lifestyle rather than pure fashion. The smoker's attachment to his tobacco was more physiologically grounded than his attachment to last year's hat or coat. Besides, rising demand for tobacco and pipes had prompted the importation and manufacture of a range of goods which still gave opportunities for the display of powers of taste and discernment or the exhibition of wealth. A gentleman, true or 'wannabe', could have easily distinguished his consumption from that of the peasant with his plain clay pipe and cheap, possibly English grown, tobacco. Raleigh reputedly used and gave away silver pipes. Later, pipes bought from a thriving and expanding pipe-making industry were individualised

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., fol. 95v. Petre bought tobacco from various sources but often from one Humphry Cliffe.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., fol. 96r. Entry dated 30 March 1607.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., fol. 97r.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., fol. 97v.

with crests or initials.<sup>94</sup> The qualities of different types of tobacco offered further opportunities for individual and collective determinations of what constituted good ‘tickling geare’.<sup>95</sup>

The most prized tobacco was that deemed ‘sweete’, yielding a ‘pleasing, fregrant, aromaticall smell’.<sup>96</sup> There was a great deal of choice:

Leafe, Pricke, Role, Ball, Pudding, Pipe, or Rope.  
Brasseele, Varina, Meavis, Trinidado,  
Saint Christophers, Virginia, or Barvado;  
Bermudas, Providentia, Shallowcongo,  
And the most part of all the rest (Mundungo).<sup>97</sup>

Such names might have alerted consumers to the processes involved in tobacco production or the tobacco’s path from exotic places to the alehouse table. They may have given the smoker an opportunity to impress those around him with his knowledge of tobacco types and the sophistication of his palate. Those who asserted such distinctions could easily be satirised. Thraso’s tobacco from ‘an Iland neuer found’ and Bobadilla’s ‘right Trinidado’ illustrated the emptiness of claims of refined judgement about the quality and rarity of tobacco. Their assertions that they had

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<sup>94</sup> There are many studies of tobacco pipe shapes and pipe marks. See, for example, D. Atkinson and A. Oswald, ‘London Clay Tobacco Pipes’, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 3<sup>rd</sup> series 32 (1969). Marks initially seem to have been maker’s marks but by 1620 some pipes began to carry marks indicating particular public houses. Few decorated pipes have been found that can be dated to the seventeenth century and those that have are probably Dutch in origin. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries extravagantly decorated pipes became common.

<sup>95</sup> Some tobacco, particularly the medicinal Rustica varieties could be purchased via the apothecary but, for connoisseurs, only tobacco from the New World had the ‘kudos’ and reputation necessary for consumption in the competitive social realm where strength, ancestry and quality of both the person and the tobacco mattered most.

<sup>96</sup> R. Marbecke, *A Defence of Tabacco* (London, 1602), p. 27.



personally been to the sites of production similarly lacked substance. Nevertheless, smokers could have used their particular type of tobacco to distinguish themselves from other smokers as well as from non-smokers. Smoking tobacco from a faraway place may have signified a desire to be seen, not only as a man and gentleman, but as a man of the world whose personal horizons stretched far beyond the mundane urbanity of his present circumstances.

In 1599 Thomas Platter noted that ‘the herb is imported from the Indies in great quantities, and some types are much stronger than others, which difference one can immediately taste’.<sup>98</sup> He also related that smokers ‘perform queer antics when they take it’.<sup>99</sup> The use of tobacco in the public spaces of London quickly prompted the development of smoking tricks that exhibited the skills of the accomplished smoker:

then let him shew his seuerall tricks in taking it. As the *Whiffe*, the *Ring*, &c. For these are complements that gaine Gentlemen no mean respect, and for which indeede they are more worthily noted, I ensure you, then for any skill that they haue in learning.<sup>100</sup>

Jonson’s character Sogliardo, ‘an essentiall clowne. . . so enamour’d of the name of a Gentleman, that he will haue it though he buyes it’, took instruction in ‘the most Gentlemanlike use of Tabacco’ from Signior Whiffe. Whiffe’s advertisement offered training:

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<sup>97</sup> John Taylor, ‘The Complaint of M, Tenter-hooke the Proiecter, and Sir Thomas Dodger the Patentee’ in The Works of John Taylor the Water Poet not included in the folio volume of 1630, The Spenser Society (London, 1870).

<sup>98</sup> Williams, Thomas Platter’s travels in England 1599, pp. 170-1.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> T. Dekker, The Guls Horne-booke (London, 1609), p. 25.

first, to give it [tobacco] the most exquisite Perfume: then, to know all the delicate sweet Formes for the Assumption of it: as also the rare Corollarie and practise of the Cuban Ebolution, EVRIPVS, and Whiffe; which hee shall receiue or take in here at London, and evaporate at Vxbridge, or farder, if it please him.<sup>101</sup>

Both manliness and gentlemanliness could be asserted by adroit displays of forceful expulsion of smoke, rapid inhaling and exhaling and by holding the smoke in for as long as possible. 'Professor' Whiffe assured his new pupil that after 'one fortnight' these 'sleights in Tabacco' would enable him to 'take it plausibly in any Ordinarie, Theatre, or the Tilt-yard if need be'.

The function of such theatrical representations of smoking was to mock the stereotypical would-be gallant for comic effect. Ostovich notes that the Paul's Walk scene in which this tobacco reference occurs was readily recognisable to Jonson's audience both in terms of the familiarity of the place and the bustle of hucksters and show-offs.<sup>102</sup> The audience watched the 'characters titillate themselves with exercises in one-upmanship and flattering imitation, in bids to acquire position, prestige or privilege'.<sup>103</sup> The 'crude *nouveau-riche* Solgiardo' wearing a 'costume too elegant for his manners' is repeatedly mocked.<sup>104</sup> Like Bobadilla's boasts about the fine tobacco that he could not really afford, Sogliardo's proposed purchase of smoking skills

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<sup>101</sup> Jonson, *Every Man Out of His Humour*, Act iii Scene iii, lns. 43-9.

<sup>102</sup> H. Ostovich, "'To Behold the Scene Full': seeing and judging in *Everyman out of his Humour*", in M. Butler (ed.), *Re-presenting Ben Jonson: text, history and performance* (Basingstoke, 1999), p. 76. Ostovich argues that this venue, spanning the first six scenes of Act III, is a showcase for the humours that were introduced before it and that suffer reversals after it (p. 78). For another perspective on this play see K. Donovan, 'Forms of Authority in the Early Texts of *Everyman Out of His Humour*' in Butler, *Representing Ben Jonson*. For an insight into the place of the St Paul's area in contemporary culture see also: R. Gair, *The Children of Paul's: the story of a theatre company, 1553-1608* (Cambridge, 1982).

<sup>103</sup> Ostovich, 'To Behold the Scene Full', p. 78.



conveys the lack of substance behind the inherently false public image of these characters. These were not gentlemen. They were fakes for the audience to recognise and laugh at.

Nevertheless, such theatrical devices could only work by connecting with the audience's perceptions of smoking in the real world. The smoking tricks may have seemed absurd, even to smokers who were watching the play, but they had foundation in observations of contemporary culture. Smoking did not have to be ostentatious.

However, as Marcia Vale has noted: 'a fairly typical sight must have been that of the gayer blades of London and the court, gallantly glad, a long clay pipe in one hand, a tankard before them, playing at cards and dice in the ordinaries with musicians and "drabs" in attendance'.<sup>105</sup> Theatrical and literary depictions of smoking were fiction, but fiction born of fact.

### Women and tobacco

Goodman argues that 'there is little sense in seventeenth-century tobacco literature of any prohibition of tobacco use by gender'. He presents possible medicinal reasons for women to use it and depictions of smoking women by French and Dutch artists to illustrate that smoking women were not necessarily viewed with opprobrium. He suggests that our own gender assumptions rather than any historical evidence prompts uncertainty about this.<sup>106</sup> However, the transmission of recreational smoking from

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>105</sup> M. Vale, The Gentleman's Recreations: accomplishments and pastimes of the English gentleman 1580-1630 (London, 1977), p. 139.

<sup>106</sup> Goodman, Tobacco in History, pp. 61-2. Goodman argues that, apart from references to pregnant women, 'no conclusive proof exists that points to any proscription against anyone of whatever age, gender or social class consuming tobacco' until the nineteenth century.

Amerindian males through the Roanokers and Raleigh and into facets of male sociability and display suggests that smoking may have been rather differently received in female society.<sup>107</sup> The identification of tobacco with manly characteristics and as an almost necessary accomplishment for a gentleman indicates that the tobacco smoking habit was at first a predominantly male preserve. For women to smoke publicly tobacco had to cross the transatlantic cultural chasm and negotiate the turbulent waters of sexual politics.

The different way in which men and women smoking was represented and probably perceived is illustrated in the sharp contrast between Jonson's depiction of smoking men and his only depiction of a smoking woman. His female smoker is Ursula, a 'pig-woman' who sells alcohol and tobacco at Bartholomew Fair (first performed 1611). She lives up to her epithet. Her nature is expressed in many ways including an exchange where she complains that the arms of her chair prevent her sitting comfortably because she is too fat. Her appetite is only satisfied by liberal quantities of ale and tobacco. While she barks orders to her tapster, her moral status is detailed by Overdo, a puritanical magistrate, who notes that Ursula 'hath been before me, punk, pinnace, and bawd' many times over the last twenty-two years.<sup>108</sup> Her sexual 'dishonesty' is complimented by her commercial dishonesty as she details how she adulterates half a pound of tobacco with a quarter pound of coltsfoot and then sells this mixture for threepence a pipeful. Bobadilla and Sogliardo are merely false gentlemen and fools. Ursula is a grotesque.

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<sup>107</sup> Cartier's account reported Indians smoking tobacco from a hollow piece of wood or stone and noted that 'onely men use of it' (R. Hakluyt, The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, 12 vols., facsimile of 1598-1600 edition (Glasgow, 1903-5), 8, p. 242). Similarly Thevet stated that 'the women use it by no means' (A. Thevet, The New Found World, or Antarctike . . . newly translated into Englishe [by Thomas Hacket] (London, 1658), pp. 49-50).



Middleton and Dekker's The Roaring Girle or Moll Cut-purse (1611), which was modelled on Mary Frith (born in 1592), offers another depiction of a smoking woman. From the illustration on the title page, tobacco appears to be central to the construction of her character. This is a woman who has assumed the manners and garb of men. A woman who is apparently ready to drink tobacco or draw a sword with any rogue.<sup>109</sup>

Title page to Middleton and Dekker's 'The Roaring Girle' (1611)

# The Roaring Girle

OR  
*Moll Cut-Purse.*

As it hath lately bene Acted on the Fortune-Stage by  
the Prince his Players.

Written by T. Middleton and T. Dekker.



Printed at London for Thomas Archer, and are to be sold at his  
shop in Pops head-pallace, neere the Royall  
Exchange. 1611.

<sup>108</sup> B. Jonson, Bartholomew Fair (1611), Act iii Sc. ii Lns. 69-70.

<sup>109</sup> A. F. Kinney (ed.), Rogues, Vagabonds and Sturdy Beggars (Massachusetts, 1990), p. 19. By the time of this depiction, tobacco had already gained a reputation as part of the debauched lifestyle of London rogues and their victims.

However, as the prologue makes clear, Moll is no ordinary 'roaring girl'. She is not one of those women who roar 'at midnight in deepe Tauerne bowles', 'sweares, stabbes, giues braues,/Yet sells her soule to the lust of fooles and slaues' and 'whose pride,/ Feasting, and riding, shakes her husbands state'. 'None of these Roaring Girles is ours'.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, as the play unfolds, it becomes clear that Moll's assumption of male attire is a protective measure to mask her sexuality and protect her virtue. Her apparent 'masculine womanhood' is actually an expression of her 'heroicke spirit' in the face of adversity.<sup>111</sup> Despite the image of the title page, when offered tobacco (the quality of which a coterie of male characters had already negotiated) she is reluctant to smoke. Goshawke offers her the pipe and she says 'I cannot stay'. Forced to try it and give her judgement she dismissively says 'Yes faith tis very good tobacco, how do you sell an ounce, farewell'.<sup>112</sup> Her lack of enthusiasm for the tobacco reinforces the idea that her virtuous womanhood has not been compromised by her close association with men and her performance, for that is all it is, of masculinity.

Although both Ursula and Moll are characters drawn by men, they do offer insights into how smoking by women was generally perceived. In both cases, tobacco is presented as unwomanly. Barnaby Rich considered 'the excellent ornaments of modesty, of sobrietie, of bashfulnes, of silence, of chastitie' to be the qualities of a good woman.<sup>113</sup> Tobacco could neither advertise nor enhance those qualities. Indeed, the association of public smoking with alcohol and the alehouse, with ostentatious male display and morally suspect 'gentlemen' made it wholly inappropriate for

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<sup>110</sup> T. Middleton & T. Dekker, *The Roaring Girle or Moll Cut-Purse* (London, 1611), 'Prologus'.

<sup>111</sup> Ralph Trapdoor tells Moll he is offering to be her servant because of 'the loue I beare to your heroicke spirit and masculine womanhood' (Act ii, Sc. i, lns. 320-21).

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, lns. 177-8.

<sup>113</sup> Rich, *Roome for a Gentleman*, sig. C.



women who valued their reputation. Perhaps loud and obnoxious women, such as Ursula, could be expected to smoke as part of their drunken and promiscuous lifestyles. They were seen as little different to men in many respects. However, for the virtuous Moll, hiding beneath her male attire, smoking was inappropriate and unwelcome.

Although the above representations suggest a generally negative view of female smoking, it is important to note that most anti-tobacco tracts seldom even mention public smoking by women. It does not appear to have been an issue. However, many condemnations of tobacco do depict morally corrupt women as facilitators and exploiters of men's desire for the drug.<sup>114</sup> Rackin argues that 'in life as on stage, masculine women were regarded as whores'.<sup>115</sup> Whores were certainly regarded as closely connected with tobacco. Parrot's Cures for the itch (1626), for example, included the lines: 'Sardinios wife Tobacco sells for fashion,/ But keepes a house of other occupation.'<sup>116</sup> Joseph Swetnam warned his readers that 'women have a thousand waies to entice thee'.<sup>117</sup> Tobacco was perhaps a new one. That was certainly suggested by the husband of a tobacco-hating wife in a poem by Rowlands. He claimed to have been in a 'Baudy house but twice' to 'see some fashions'. While there, a 'loose bodyed' woman 'gaue vs good Tobacco, sweet, and strong,/ And of meere kindnesse

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<sup>114</sup> There were certainly many women engaged in the tobacco retail trade. As chapter 7 will show, many women bought licences to sell it in the 1630s and, in a serving capacity, often supplied it to alehouse customers. Women were similarly prominent in the brewing and baking trades (D. E. Underdown, 'The Taming of the Scold: the enforcement of patriarchal authority in early modern England', in A. Fletcher and J. Stevenson, Order and Disorder in Early Modern England (Cambridge, 1985), p. 123).

<sup>115</sup> P. Rackin, 'Historical Difference/Sexual Difference' in J. R. Brink (ed.), Privileging Gender in Early Modern England (Ann Arbor, 1993), p. 43.

<sup>116</sup> H. Parrot, 'Trahens Officina' in Cvres for the Itch. Characters. Epigrams. Epitaphs. By H. P. (London, 1626).

<sup>117</sup> J. Swetnam, The Araignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women, (London, 1619), p. 15.

sung a bawdy Song.<sup>118</sup> Some brothels may have even advertised themselves by hanging a tobacco pipe over the door.

Doth a tobacco pipe hang before the dore,  
'Tis a sure signe within ther is a whore<sup>119</sup>

Court records frequently note the association between tobacco and 'bad' women. On 15 March 1608, Joan Woodshawe of Clerkenwell, was accused of attacking two 'seafaring men' with a rapier. The records stated that 'she is a very noted whoare and selles tobacco'.<sup>120</sup> Widow Anne Pearce of London was accused of selling tobacco and keeping a disordered house.<sup>121</sup> At sessions in October 1616, Susan Fisher of Charterhouse Lane, London, spinster, was presented before the 'Jury of Annoyances for keeping ill rule in her tobacco shop'.<sup>122</sup> Elizabeth Grutter was described as 'a tobacco woman' and was indicted for 'keeping a disordered house and entertaining men's servants in the time of Divine Service'.<sup>123</sup>

This association between tobacco and moral disorder probably originated with the morally corrupt men who frequented such establishments. It combined with ideas that tobacco could cure sexually transmitted diseases and the pipe's phallic symbolism to

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<sup>118</sup> S. Rowlands, A Crew of Kind Gossips, All Met to be Merrie: complayning of their husbands, with their husbands answers in their owne defence (London, 1613), lns. 961-2.

<sup>119</sup> R. C[orbett], 'Against Gluttony, Drunkenness and Tobacco' in J. M. Cowper (ed), The Times' Whistle: Or a Newe Daunce of Seuen Satires, and other Poems: by R. C., Gent. Now first edited from MS. Y. 8. 3, in the Library of Canterbury Cathedral (London, 1871), p. 72, lns. 2255-6. This poem has been attributed to Corbett (1582-1635), an anti-puritan cleric who, in his early years, had been renowned for his convivial lifestyle and practical jokes in London Taverns in the company of Jonson and others. He was a celebrated wit at Oxford and later became Bishop of Oxford and then Norwich.

<sup>120</sup> Jeaffreson, Middlesex County Records 2, p. 72.

<sup>121</sup> W. Le Hardy (ed.), Calendar to the Sessions Records, Middlesex Sessions Records New Series 1, 1612-14 (London, 1935), pp. 202-3. Anne Pearce was one of two women listed among nine tobacco sellers in High Holborn and Grey's Inn.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 1616-18 (London, 1941), p.24.



make public smoking distinctly unattractive to respectable (i.e. non-promiscuous) women. The sexual innuendo of the lines: 'My Mistris hates Tabacco,/ but well she loues the Pipe' is unmistakable.<sup>124</sup> In the brothel, in the mistress's chamber and perhaps in the intimacy of private moments between lovers, tobacco seems to have passed from the hand of the woman to satisfy a desire of the man. There are several poems that suggestively depict tobacco in this way. For example, in one of the numerous poems by John Davies which include references to tobacco, the consort swims to his mistress past various delicious obstacles:

Then, if I found a Pan-cake in my way,  
It (like a Plancke) should bring me to your Kayes:  
Which hauing found, if they Tobacco kept,  
The smoke should dry me well before I slept.<sup>125</sup>

Such suggestive allusions must surely have deterred the potential smoker who was concerned about her reputation.

As Mendelson and Crawford have shown, women were usually defined by their relationship to men.<sup>126</sup> The maid was either virgin or whore. The 'good' wife centred her life on the private sphere of the household waiting to service her man while the

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p. 336. It was common in these records for a male tobacco vendor to be described as a 'tobacco man'.

<sup>124</sup> T. Deloney, 'Sprinks Being Asked What Meates His Mistris Loued' in Strange Histories, or, Songes and Sonets, of Kings, Princes, Dukes, Lordes, Ladyes, Knights, and Gentlemen. Very pleasant either to be read or songe. . . (London, 1607).

<sup>125</sup> Davies, 'The Author Louing These Homely Meates Specially, viz: Creame, Pan-cakes, Butterd pippin-Pyes (laugh good people) and Tobacco; Writ to that worthy and vertuous gentlewoman, whome he calls Mistrisse, as followeth' in Davies, The Scourge of Folly, pp. 260-1.

<sup>126</sup> S. H. Mendelson and P. Crawford, Women in Early Modern England 1550-1720 (Oxford, 1998), pp. 65-71.

‘bad’ wife gossiped and cuckolded her husband in public.<sup>127</sup> The widow was either a helpless figure requiring support and solace or a sexually voracious harridan.

‘Academic theories and popular beliefs both constructed women as secondary or ‘other’ in relation to man’.<sup>128</sup> The connections forged between smoking and male society, including supplying tobacco to the men, thus made public smoking by women anomalous and inappropriate. Women smoking negated the difference that defined men and women. If smoking was manly, it was automatically unwomanly.

Stereotypes of the ‘good’ woman and perhaps a general antipathy by some commentators for the stench of tobacco smoke prompted depictions of women as ardent tobacco haters. In Dekker’s The Honest Whore, for example, a customer proffers tobacco to Bellafonte who, like Moll, is not as lacking in womanly virtue as she appears to be. She declines, ‘Fah, not I, makes your breath stinke, like the pisse of a Foxe!’<sup>129</sup> This brief exchange shows that it was considered acceptable, maybe even desirable (perhaps for medical reasons), for prostitutes to smoke. It also exemplifies the most common perception of the relationship between women and tobacco, their antipathy towards it. King James considered it a ‘great contempt of God’s good giftes, that the sweetnesse of mans breath, being a good gift of God, should be willfully corrupted by this stinking smoke’.<sup>130</sup> He pitied the ‘delicate, wholesome, and cleane complexioned wife’ of a smoker who was forced either to ‘corrupt her sweete breath’

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<sup>127</sup> Warnicke notes that ‘in sermons and treatises ministers warned women, whether they were puritan or conformist, to remain in the household and to go into public areas only rarely’ (R. Warnicke, ‘Private and Public: the boundaries of women’s lives in early Stuart England’, in Brink, Privileging Gender, p. 129).

<sup>128</sup> Mendelson & Crawford, Women in Early Modern England, p. 71.

<sup>129</sup> T. Dekker, The Honest Whore (London, 1604), Scene vi.

<sup>130</sup> King James, Counterblaste, sig. Dv.



with tobacco or 'resolve to live in a perpetuall stinking torment'.<sup>131</sup> Other writers offered similar conceptions of 'refined' women's hatred of tobacco:

Fye, out vpon't, it makes a filthy smell,  
My nose likes a Sir-reuerence as well:  
I thinke a thousand times I do complaine,  
And tell my husband that he should refraine  
This making of a Chimney of his nose:  
He had a breath as sweet as any Rose,  
Before he vsed this same scuruy tricke,  
But now if I do kisse him I am sicke.<sup>132</sup>

Even women who furnished their husbands with tobacco apparently did so under sufferance, perhaps leading to tensions between husband and wife:

Then for a Candle and a Pipe hee'le call:  
A Trencher Whore, let there a Rush be got,  
Some Paper, make the Fire-shouell hot,  
A Knife, some Match, and reach a little Wyre,  
A Tinder-box, fetch me a coale of Fyre.  
Why heeres a stirre, what woman can endure it?  
And yet this life I haue (Gossips) assure it,  
But now and then I fit him in his kinde,  
When any smoaky stufte of his I finde:  
For when I meete with his Tobacco Box,  
I send it to the Priuie with a Pox.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., sig. D2.

<sup>132</sup> Rowlands, *A Crew of Kind Gossips*, lns. 725–32. 'Sir-reuerence' refers to human excrement as in Greene's *Ned Browne* (1592): 'His face . . . and his Necke, were all besmeared with the soft sirreuerence, so as he stunk' (quoted in OED).

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., lns. 738–48.

It is important to emphasise that men wrote all the above accounts of the relationship between women and tobacco, including the court records. They thus strongly indicate what men thought women should feel about tobacco. Nevertheless, they should not be dismissed out of hand. Women may have shaped and, in a patriarchal society, were certainly influenced by such views. When James expressed pity for the suffering of the smoker's wife or Rowlands depicted a wife's distaste for the smell, they were expressing a view that women did not and should not like tobacco. Not liking tobacco smoke at all seems to have been considered the norm for refined and moral women.

Despite all this, it is possible that some women, including those who were not necessarily disreputable, may have enjoyed smoking tobacco. James rationalised this by arguing that smokers' wives were 'forced' to smoke so they could become inured to the smell. Like Ursula, some women may have considered smoking necessary to 'hold life and soul together'.<sup>134</sup> Wiesner has noted that there were and are many differences between women according to social class, geographic location, rural or urban environment, marital status, health, wealth, number of children and so forth.<sup>135</sup> With such diversity, it is unlikely that all 'good' women hated tobacco or that all female smokers were either 'bad' or reluctant consumers. Howes noted that, in 1614, tobacco was 'commonly vsed by most men, & many women'.<sup>136</sup> Thomas Biggs, a Nottinghamshire surgeon, petitioned the Privy Council in May 1620 to be allowed to harvest a crop of tobacco he had sowed before the ban on it. He complained that his profession did not afford him sufficient maintenance so he had planted an acre of

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<sup>134</sup> Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair*, Act ii Sc. ii ln. 178. Ursula's salvation entailed consuming both ale and tobacco.

<sup>135</sup> M. E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 7.

<sup>136</sup> E. Howes, *The Annales or Generall Chronicle of England, begun first by Maister Iohn Stow, and after him continued . . .* (London, 1615), p. 948.



tobacco 'because of late times it is so much practised in the county by ladies and other gentlewomen'.<sup>137</sup>

However, the fact that smoking by women was seldom mentioned in poems, plays or polemical tracts suggests that it remained inconspicuous. Smoking in private for medical reasons, by men as well as women, may have become as habitual and compulsive as public smoking but it was less controversial, or at least not so noticeable. Medicinal use of tobacco, especially if restricted to Jonson's 'bowers of sweet ladies' or other private places, lacked the associations and moral overtones of social and communal smoking. This was especially so if the tobacco was used in ways other than smoking. Tobacco had been hailed as medicine able to make one thin. Lithgow related that tobacco was taken by women as 'Phisick at their Nose' or which 'Mixt with perfumes, and Oyles, sweet Seeds, and snuff,/ They swallow downe, in gluts'.<sup>138</sup> The purgative effects of such a concoction would be valuable to women whose metabolism or appetite did not well equate with their wished for bodily shape.<sup>139</sup>

Public smoking remained too risky for most women. Puritans and other custodians of public morality were all too eager to condemn women 'that are most audacious, that are most shameles, that are uncivill, and what shall I say, that are many wayes more

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<sup>137</sup> CSPD 1619-23, p. 149. MacInnes misreads this and suggests that Biggs was short of work because of the 'ladies' rather than that the 'ladies' wanted the tobacco (C. M. MacInnes, The Early English Tobacco Trade (London, 1926), p. 80).

<sup>138</sup> W. Lithgow, Scotland's Welcome to Her Native Sonne, and Sovereigne Lord, King Charles . . . (Edinburgh, 1633), lns. 968-72.

<sup>139</sup> The use of tobacco to stay slim is apparently still a motive for many teenage girls to take up smoking.

masculine then men'.<sup>140</sup> Even those women who had their own social ambitions and personal desires which necessitated stepping beyond the constraints of place and puritan ideals of the 'good wife' may have found tobacco unattractive. For most of the wives and daughters of England, the social realm presented opportunities to engage with men, not to become them. Tobacco did not affirm femininity nor was it considered an attribute of a gentlewoman. There was no cultural reason for a woman to want to smoke publicly. As outlined above, there were pressing cultural reasons not to.

### Learning to smoke: the interpersonal transmission of smoking skills and cultures

The first experts on smoking were the Amerindians. They taught sailors and adventurers such as Thomas Harriot to smoke in a New World context. Upon their return, these men imported their transatlantic pioneers' tobacco culture into the new environments of their own various spheres of social interaction. They taught others, such as Raleigh and Marlowe, to smoke. Through their association with this 'taste' of the New World, tobacco acquired meanings connected with power, status and ambition. As others (who had probably never seen an Indian) learned to smoke in social venues, tobacco acquired new meanings by association with the idle, unproductive pleasures of London's social milieu. In that environment, each new smoker could become a new teacher enabling the activity to spread quickly across the social spectrum. This was not a passive process. Each stage in the progressive dissemination of smoking and the culture of smoking entailed the 'face-to-face'

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<sup>140</sup> Rich, Roome for a Gentleman, sig. C.



transmission of skills and information. It required the presence of an experienced smoker and someone curious enough and motivated enough to want to try it.

Otherwise, like the Tobi islander who first bought tobacco to his community from a passing ship, the tobacco would be discarded having gone mouldy because nobody had any idea how to use it.<sup>141</sup>

It is important to note that tobacco is a drug that has physiological and psychological effects. The active ingredients of tobacco sponsor numerous biochemical changes in the mind and body of the 'tobacco-drinker'. Neurones are activated. Epinephrine and dopamine are released. Over fifty different compounds, many with hallucinogenic properties, interact with the body's chemistry. The external repercussions of this include changes in respiration, heart-beat and skin colour and, particularly for the first few 'whiffes', feelings of nausea and dizziness. The novice, encountering these effects for the first time, might find them less than pleasant as John Davies' "tobacco-taking horse" did when a 'gamesome wagg' filled its mouth with 'Tobaccos fume':

. . . finding it (belike) his smell offend,  
He puft it out againe, (exceeding well!)  
While from his Eies the Teares did downe descend;  
And made a mouth as he thereat did mews,  
Or els, as he were ready prest to spue,  
Who cannot laugh at this, bidd mirth adue.<sup>142</sup>

How did the novice become a smoker after this unsatisfactory and probably choking experience? Howard Becker's study of the 'face-to-face' transmission of marihuana

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<sup>141</sup> Black, *Anthropology of Tobacco Use*, p. 480.

<sup>142</sup> Davies, 'Of a Tobacco-Taking Horse', Epigram 108 in *The Scourge of Folly*.

consumption (another psychoactive substance which is ingested as smoke), suggests a three stage process leading from the first experimental ingestion to the 'creation' of a drug user.<sup>143</sup> Firstly, the novice must learn the mechanics of ingestion. Although the intricacies of pipe and tobacco preparation may come later, he must be taught how to keep the tobacco alight and how to 'whiffe' it successfully enough to experience the same effects as accomplished consumers whilst avoiding choking and watery eyes. Secondly, the novice must mentally interpret the experience and determine what the effects are. This might involve the expert relating what one is supposed to feel (e.g. suppressed appetite, invigoration etc.). Finally, for recreational use to develop from this satisfaction of one's curiosity, these effects must be redefined as pleasurable.

The shared experience of alcohol consumption, characterised by fellowship and reciprocal behaviour as well as intoxication, offered the perfect (but not the only) environment for this process. The experienced smoker, perhaps like Davies' 'honyed Robin, mine olde Camerado', might animate 'some other friend to take it:/ Which friend (between) he plyeth with the Pot'.<sup>144</sup> At the end of the social event, the novice has learned how to smoke and how to enjoy the tobacco/alcohol conjunction. When he '(lisp)ing) swears, it tith righ Trinithatho,/ Ath ere wath tipth' he may not be able to distinguish between the effects of the two substances but he will have traversed Becker's three stages and be willing and able to continue the activity on another occasions.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> H. Becker, *Outsiders: studies in the sociology of deviance* (London, 1963), Ch. 3.

<sup>144</sup> Davies, 'Of Taking Tobacco', Epigram 199 in *The Scourge of Folly*.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*



In a similar scene, depicted by Rowlands, the smoking 'education' of a visitor to town is again conducted in the alehouse. The 'Cheater', a 'tobacconist', invites the 'Countrey Clowne' to have a drink in a nearby tavern:

Quoth Cheater [to vintner], Bring me here a Pipe of smoke  
To purge my Rhume, by spetting to forsake it.  
Gentleman (quoth the Clowne) would I could take it.  
Sayes he, I'lle teach thee, (doe obserue me heere)  
To take Tobacco like a Caualiere.  
Thus draw the vapor thorow your nose, and say,  
Puffe, it is gone, fuming the smoke away.  
The Gull, that would be a Tobaconist:  
Had cup, or pipe, continuall in his fist,  
Vntill with puffe, 'tis gone, his sences shrunke,  
And he was got by practice, Claret drunke.<sup>146</sup>

While the novice continues to practice until 'Oh braue,/ The very whiffe, most dainty now I have', the veteran slips away stealing a goblet and leaving his pupil to answer for it and the bill. Though his 'education' proved to have been dearly bought and his first experience of tobacco tainted by this breach of fellowship, the visitor would have taken home with him the knowledge of how to derive pleasure from smoking. Perhaps more significantly, he would also have learned that the cultural context of tobacco consumption was alongside alcohol in the intoxicating and 'Caualiere' atmosphere of the alehouse.

If the 'Countrey Clowne' decided to continue to smoke, he would have been available in his own locality to teach others the communal, sharing experience he had enjoyed

prior to being duped. His alternation of pot and pipe could have initiated a new 'smoking group'. He might have 'exported' the activity to other social contexts or come to value the experience of the solitary pipe, perhaps while reading, enjoying quiet moments of reflection or to pass away an idle moment. As habit and addiction began to shape consumption, he might have become a regular user and eventually a veteran 'tobacconist' whose desire for tobacco necessitated access to a regular source of supply.

Although this chronology of increasing and spreading consumption is highly speculative, it does conform to King James's perceptions of the intrusion of tobacco into people's lives and society as a whole. His complaint that people began smoking because others around them smoked identifies the established smoker as a principal agent of spread.<sup>147</sup> His condemnation of smokers for using tobacco at all times and in all places, particularly at the meal table, indicates that smoking escaped the bounds of whatever context it was first encountered.<sup>148</sup> His idea of a spiral of addiction from weak to strong tobacco parallels the progression from infrequent to chronic smoking.<sup>149</sup> Some smokers may have kept the habit to themselves and restricted their use to specific times and places. Others clearly did not place such limits on the extent or context of their consumption as James's rhetoric of tobacco's disorderly use and consequences illustrates.

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<sup>146</sup> S. Rowlands, 'Instructions Giuen to a Countrey Clowne' in *A Paire of Spy-Knaves* (London, 1620?).

<sup>147</sup> King James, *Counterblaste*, sigs. D-Dv. Gentlemen taking it 'because they were ashamed to seeme singular'.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. C3 'should it be used at al times?'. Sig. D 'Surely Smoke becomes a kitchen far better then a Dining Chamber'.



Back in the alehouse, supplies of tobacco would probably come from the vintner. As chapter 7 will show, alehouse-keepers and their wives were the principal purveyors of tobacco. The tobacco could be bought and consumed communally. Mirroring the practices learned by the Roanokers and confirming the ‘sharing component of smoking behaviour’, the pipe was often passed around the table.<sup>150</sup> Rowlands alluded to this when he wrote, ‘Take the rare hearbe that growes on India ground,/ (In Tauerne and in Alehouse so renown'd)/ Smoke noses with the same from one to tother’.<sup>151</sup> The tobacco could also be bought for or brought to the group by one individual creating relationships of obligation and reciprocity:

Come into any company,  
Though not a crosse you haue,  
Yet offer them Tobacco,  
And their liquor you shall haue.<sup>152</sup>

A hierarchy of consumption probably influenced the group dynamic.<sup>153</sup> The owner of the tobacco (the ‘host’) might have dictated the order and frequency of consumption of those who on other occasions supplied the substance, occasional consumers and the beginner (the ‘honoured guest’ perhaps). In Every Man in his Humour, Bobadilla functioned as the host, supplying tobacco to his fellow smokers Ed Kno’well and Matthew as well as offering it to the potential new group member, Stephano.

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid., sig. C4. ‘No man likes strong headie drink the first day . . . but by custome is piece by piece allured . . . So is not this the very case of all the great takers of Tobacco? Which therefore they themselves do attribute to a bewitching quality in it’.

<sup>150</sup> Black saw much evidence of tobacco sharing on Tobi. Indeed, the only complaints voiced about smoking related to the failure to share when supplies ran low (Black, Anthropology of Tobacco Use, p. 492).

<sup>151</sup> Rowlands, The Melancholie Knight, p. 7, lns. 119-121.

<sup>152</sup> Rowlands, ‘The Devils Health-Drinker’ in The Knave of Clubbs (London, 1611), lns. 17-20.

<sup>153</sup> See Hugh-Jones, ‘Coca, Beer, Cigars and Yage’ for anthropological insights into such hierarchies of consumption.

Caricatures of 'tobacconists' repeatedly emphasise the eagerness of the person with the tobacco to share and both seek affirmation of the tobacco's quality from fellow smokers and introduce new ones to the activity.<sup>154</sup> In such congregations of smokers the engagement in a common activity based on a shared substance would have encouraged the development of a group identity which, though not necessarily excluding the non-smoker, would have distinguished those who did from those who did not.

This group identity was heightened by the controversial nature of the activity. Smokers were under attack because of perceptions of the medical invalidity and immoral nature of smoking. As Becker notes, the 'possession of one deviant trait may have a generalised symbolic value, so that people automatically assume that its bearer possesses other undesirable traits allegedly associated with it'.<sup>155</sup> James argued that smokers should 'be ashamed, to sit tossing of Tobacco pipes, and puffing of the smoke of Tobacco one to another . . . to exhale athwart the dishes, and infect the aire, when very often, men that abhorre it are at their repast'.<sup>156</sup> Others similarly expressed their distaste. Rich complained about the spitting and the bad manners of those who forced others to endure the contaminating smoke that billowed from their 'snotty' noses.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Alongside Jonson's *Bobadilla* see also Dekker's *Asinius Bubo*. This dubious character seeks the approval of Horace who is more interested in own his poetry. He then offers a smoke to Crispinus and Demetrius when they enter. Asinius assures them 'tis right pudding I can tell you; a Lady or two [presumably not respectable women], tooke a pype full or two at my hands, and praizde [sic] it for the Heauens' (Dekker, *Satiriomastix*, Act i Sc. ii Lns 43-64).

<sup>155</sup> Becker, *Outsiders*, p. 33.

<sup>156</sup> King James, *Counterblaste*, sig. D.

<sup>157</sup> Rich, *The Irish Hubbub or The English Hue and Crie*, p. 44. Rich's objections are noted on p. 82.



By accepting the offer of a smoke, the novice had taken sides in this dispute. While perhaps choking his way through his initiation into the 'brotherhood', he had affirmed his fellowship within the group by validating the activity. To continue to smoke entailed the acceptance and adoption of shared attitudes and opinions. These served to 'excuse' recreational smoking both externally, by deflecting criticism of the pastime, and internally, as a 'self justifying rationale . . . to neutralise conventional attitudes . . . [and] furnish the individual with reasons that appear sound for continuing the line of activity he has begun'.<sup>158</sup> Here the assertions of medicinal efficacy, so often and loudly voiced by 'tobacconists' like Bobadilla, become comprehensible. What better justificatory rationale could there be for tobacco-drinking than, "I smoke because it is good for me"?

Smokers had to withstand ridicule as well as more forthright criticism. 'Tobacconists' and those who used smoking for social effect were particular targets. In a farcical scene set in a private chamber at 'Hornes Ordinarie', Jonson's character, Whiffe, teaches the false gentleman Sogliardo advanced smoking tricks. Unfortunately for Sogliardo, a keyhole breaches his privacy and allows other 'gallants' to watch their new recruit learning 'the Patoun, the Receipt Reciprocall and a number of other mysteries, not yet extant'. They saw him:

sit in a chair, holding his snout up like a sow under an apple-tree, while the other opened his nostrils with a poking-stick, to give the smoke a more free delivery. They had spit some three or four score ounces between 'em, afore we came away.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Becker, *Outsiders*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>159</sup> Jonson, *Everyman Out of his Humour*, Act iv Scene iii, Lns. 75-84. The 'Receipt reciprocal' probably refers to some kind of intimate smoke sharing activity rather than merely the passing of the

This rather extreme image of the learning-to-smoke experience could not have endeared Jonson's audience to tobacco. Indeed, Every Man in his Humour and Every Man Out of his Humour, were revived for performance before King James's court, where depictions of smokers as profligate fools and false gentlemen and of the activity as unnatural and ridiculous would have found favour. However, this image was also fun. Whatever mockery the novice smoker faced from his fellow smokers was part of the experience, an experience even the most ardent smokers probably had when they first learned to smoke. Such humour functioned to create a symbolic equality between smokers. Regardless of their actual status, when gathered around the tobacco-pipe, smokers had much in common.

For some smokers, negative opinions, ridicule and the pejorative label of 'tobacconist' could be avoided by ensuring that consumption remained moderate, controlled and inconspicuous. Perhaps this explains why the entreaty of a Mr E. Reynoldes of Enfield to his brother to 'remember me' if you 'got any good tobacco yet amongst your friends' carried the rider, 'if you buy any I will not take it'.<sup>160</sup> Purchasing tobacco was a step further down the road to being a tobacconist than the, albeit prompted, receipt of a gift. Becker suggests that the occasional user of a psychoactive substance takes a step towards regular use when he gains access to a regular supply. Smoking when tobacco is available is very different from making sure it is always available to feed one's habit.

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pipe back and forth. The 'Patoun' remains uncertain but Gifford suggests this particular reference alludes to moulding the tobacco into 'some fantastic or fashionable form for the pipe' (OED).

<sup>160</sup> CSPD 1598-1601, p. 336 (6 January 1601), E. Reynoldes (Enfield) to Owen Reynoldes (Westminster). Other motives may also have been at work here. For example, the exchange may have



While becoming a regular and accomplished smoker, the novice would have also encountered facets of an evolving tobacco consuming culture in the alehouse and elsewhere. There was a language of tobacco that, as noted before, identified different types from different locations and provided a qualitative vocabulary. Bobadilla's 'right Trinidado' could also have been divine, rare, pure, costly, sweet or strong. Such words described the tobacco but also the refinement, connections and prosperity of the consumer. Using such words, the novice could have engaged in the negotiation of which particular 'brand' of tobacco was better or worse than another. The question whether tobacco 'stincke or no' was a matter of taste and discernment between smokers as well as a point of contention with anti-smokers who had their own set of adjectives for tobacco ('roguish', 'base', 'beastly' etc.). Barclay reported that those who 'trafique daily with Tabacco' judge 'finest' tobacco by its 'sharpe aromaticke smell', and the way it 'tickleth the tongue with acrimonie'.<sup>161</sup>

The words 'right' and 'pure' were particularly important because low quality tobacco was often adulterated to make it saleable. Barclay warned that greedy merchants 'apparell[ed] European plants with Indian coats' installing 'them in shops as righteous and legittimate Tabacco'.<sup>162</sup> He advised against tobacco from Florida which had been ill kept, badly cured, negligently transported and 'sophisticate[d]' with 'blacke spice, Galanga, aqua vita, Spanish wine, Anisseedes, oyle of Spicke and such like'.<sup>163</sup> C. T. similarly warned that the black colour of tobacco praised by 'our Shoppe-keepers' was

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symbolised a relationship without pecuniary involvement or perhaps a previous unsatisfactory transaction was being alluded to.

<sup>161</sup> W. Barclay, *Nepenthes, or the Vertues of Tabacco*, (Edinburgh, 1614), sig. B.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. A4v.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, sig. [A5].

the result of additives such as ‘saltwater, the dregges or filth of sugar, called malasses, of black honey, Guiana pepper, and leeze of wine’. He told his readers to beware of rolled tobacco because ‘rotten, withered, & ground leaues’ were placed in the middle of better leaves, disguising the poor quality of the tobacco. He advised smokers only to use natural ‘deepe yellow’ coloured tobacco.<sup>164</sup> Despite his warnings Spanish tobacco remained the favourite of the wealthy and discerning smoker.

With so many possibilities for sharp practice, where and from whom one should buy and not buy tobacco, and how much to pay became important. This was especially the case if the quality of the tobacco was a reflection on the individual. The novice had to learn and the veteran had to know ‘in what state Tobacco is in towne, better then the Merchants, and to discourse of the Potecaries where it is to be sold’.<sup>165</sup> As Dekker informed his readers, the accomplished smoker needed ‘to bee able to discourse whether your *Cane* or *Pudding* be sweetest, and which pipe has the best boare, and which burns black, which breaks in the burning, &c’.<sup>166</sup> Such practical and cultural information distinguished those who knew from those who did not.

Black argues that the ‘highly repetitive and stereotypic behaviour’ that characterises tobacco ingestion, combined with the generation of a physiological state to which the individual assigns culturally constituted meaning and the penetration of tobacco into

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<sup>164</sup> C.T., An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England, sigs. A4 -B. C. T.’s warnings against Spanish tobacco were part of the growing concern about the economic costs of smoking to the nation and efforts to improve tobacco cultivation in Bermuda and begin it in Virginia around this time.

<sup>165</sup> Dekker, The Guls Home-booke, p. 25.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.



social patterns makes tobacco 'an extremely potent substance'.<sup>167</sup> In early modern England, this combination of factors enabled smoking to become attractive and widespread. Tobacco pipe smoking required the adoption of routines and rituals of pipe care and preparation. It acquired a range of cultural meanings and became an integral part of male sociability and of the sociality of alcohol. On Tobi, tobacco became important in the exhibition of deference, power, responsibility and obligation. In the English alehouse it became an expression of fellowship, status, generosity and social identity.

Although there was still much room for the tobacco habit to spread, smoking had acquired a complex of often conflicting associations and meanings which appealed to some and repelled others. A tobacco culture had developed which, though it would continue to change over time and in different contexts, supplied a language, an opportunity for the display of taste and discernment and, most crucially, a large pool of 'teachers'. Smoking had come to be seen as an integral part of adult sociability, a common activity spanning both elite and popular culture.

The choice to smoke or not was a social decision. For women it was particularly loaded. Whatever the claims or counterclaims about its medicinal impact, the spread of smoking was conditioned by the identities of those who already smoked and the social context and relationships within which the activity took place. Taste, discernment and social display were not the exclusive preserve of those higher up in the social hierarchy. They probably never had been. All this, combined with peer pressures and the desires of the young for adulthood spurred continuing and

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<sup>167</sup> Black, *Anthropology of Tobacco Use*, pp. 496-7.

expanding consumption of tobacco. Tobacco imports rose dramatically from negligible and unrecorded amounts in 1590 to over 16,000 lbs. in 1602-3 and over 55,000 lbs. in 1615-16.<sup>168</sup> With falling prices as Virginian cargoes began to arrive, imports and consumption rose ever higher as more and more people found a place for tobacco in their everyday lives.

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<sup>168</sup> In 1602-3, when the medical controversy was most intense, 16,128 lb. of tobacco was officially imported into London (PRO SP14/9/1). Rive, speculating on quantities which may have entered through other ports, suggests that annual English consumption was up to 25,000 lb. at this time (A. Rive, 'The Consumption of Tobacco since 1600', The Economic Journal, Jan. 1926, p. 57). Smuggling, informally traded tobacco belonging to mariners and that grown in apothecaries' gardens must also be considered in any assessment of the prevalence of smoking at this time. In a table of English imports and exports of tobacco 1603-1702, drawn from a variety of sources, Grey and Wyckoff show steadily rising imports over the whole period which far exceed the amounts being re-exported. In 1678, for example, over 14 million lbs. was imported into London, of which only 5.4 million lbs. was re-exported (S. Grey & V. J. Wyckoff, 'The International Tobacco Trade in the Seventeenth-Century', Southern Economic Journal 7 (1940), pp. 18-24). Shamma considers tobacco to be the first of the mass consumed 'groceries' and notes that per capita consumption rose to 1 lb. around 1670 (C. Shamma, 'Changes in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550-1800' in J. Brewer & R. Porter (eds.), Consumption and the World of Goods (London, 1993), p. 179).



## Interchapter

In the next three chapters, there is a change of emphasis from the social, intellectual and cultural contexts that influenced the spread of smoking to the commercial and political context of the supply of tobacco. In Elizabethan England demand for tobacco had exceeded an erratic supply. In December 1600, Alderman John Watts of London wrote to Sir Robert Cecil,

According to your request, I have sent the greatest part of my store of "tobaca" by the bearer, wishing that the same may be to your good liking. But this tabaca I have had this six months, which was such as my son brought home . . . At this present there is none that is good to be had for money.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, on 5 April 1601, Sir William Browne wrote from Flushing, Holland, 'I have sent your Lordship [Sir Robert Sydney] a little tobacco of my small store that is good; there is a great quantity, butt none good, els I would have sent more'.<sup>2</sup> In elite circles, money was seldom an issue when it came to the supply of tobacco. The drug was often distributed as a gift. In December 1598, Sir William Browne sent a roll of tobacco to Sir Robert Sydney as a gift from one 'Monscheron'.<sup>3</sup> Sydney similarly sent tobacco to Lady Pembroke and Lord Herbert.<sup>4</sup> Often the tobacco was solicited. In July

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<sup>1</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Calendar of Manuscripts of the Marquis of Salisbury preserved at Hatfield House 24 vols. (London, 1883-1976), 10, pp. 416-17.

<sup>2</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Palace 6 vols. (London, 1934-1966), 2, p. 516.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 359.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 432, 434, 437. Lady Pembroke requested the tobacco be sent 'speedily', presumably for Lord Herbert who claimed tobacco offered the only relief from headaches. On 9 February 1600, Sydney was told 'The tobacco for Lady Pembroke is delivered. Lord Herbert is well amended'.

1600, Browne wrote to Sydney that 'Mr Roger Mannors desires you will send him for a token, a ball of tobacco, high trinidado'.<sup>5</sup>

As has already been shown, smoking was not the exclusive preserve of the rich. There were plenty of consumers to buy up the cheaper tobacco. As smoking continued to spread, more regular supplies of larger amounts of tobacco would be required. By the time James acceded to the throne, increasing demand for tobacco across the social spectrum had attracted the interest of merchants seeking to profit from the new commodity and of government policy makers. Tobacco had become less of a novelty and was set to become the focus of social and financial regulation which is explored in the second part of this thesis.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 475.



## Chapter 5

# The 'Government' of Tobacco:

## King James VI & I's regulation of the tobacco 'business'

- King James's attempt to reduce tobacco consumption
- The exploitation of revenues from Spanish tobacco
- Competition from England and Virginia
- Tobacco and the national interest

It is ironic that King James VI & I, who proclaimed his hatred of smoking in the Counterblaste of 1604, presided over the period in which tobacco became institutionalised in Britain and her New World colonies. When he acceded to the English throne, the tobacco trade was unregulated and of little political or commercial significance. Revenue from tobacco was minimal.<sup>1</sup> Trading was piecemeal and informal with tobacco being imported as a supplementary cargo by ships trading with Amerindians and Spaniards or filtering through from European markets.<sup>2</sup> There was no Virginia colony.<sup>3</sup> As this chapter shows, by the time of his death in 1625 the

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<sup>1</sup> The first importation figures for tobacco relate to 1602. This suggests that the revenue and commercial importance of tobacco were beginning to be recognised before Elizabeth's death. However, the first efforts to implement new arrangements and raise more revenue from this expensive commodity came with the revision of the Book of Rates after King James's accession.

<sup>2</sup> As indicated in chapter 1, Drake's chronicler had noted that, near Dominica, where much tobacco was growing, 'most of our English and French men barter knives, hatchets, sawes and such like yron tooles in trucke of Tabacco'. In another instance those returning from Weymouth's scouting mission of 1605 along the coast of Virginia 'brought tobacco of very excellent quality' back with them after trading with the 'savages' (G. B. Harrison, A Jacobean Journal (London, 1946), p. 217).

<sup>3</sup> The first colonising fleet set sail for Virginia in December 1606. Another followed in 1609 which was shipwrecked on Bermuda and set up a colony there. A further expedition was launched to Guyana in 1608. For a brief exploration of Jacobean colonial enterprises see: L. B. Wright, 'Colonial Developments in the Reign of James I' in A.G.R. Smith (ed.), The Reign of James VI and I (London, 1973), pp. 124-139 and D. B. Quinn, 'James I and the Beginnings of Empire', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 2 (1974), pp 135-52. For a fuller account of early English ventures see D. B. Quinn, England and the Discovery of America 1481-1620 (London, 1974). There is a vast literature available on various aspects of early English colonisation. See, for example, N. Canny, 'England's New World and the Old, 1480s-1630s', J. C. Appleby, 'War, Politics and Colonisation', or J. P. Greene,

tobacco trade had become big business, subject to a range of regulations and prohibitions. The Virginia colony had been established and its survival was underpinned by the production of vast quantities of tobacco to supply British markets and an emerging export trade.<sup>4</sup> Crown revenues from tobacco had increased dramatically through the levying of customs, impositions and other duties and through the sale of monopoly rights to prominent merchants who competed for control of the trade. Taxes and monopolies were particularly contentious issues in Jacobean parliaments as were relations with Spain, the principal supplier of tobacco until the 1620s. Tobacco thus became politically as well as commercially important.

This chapter examines this dramatic transformation. The evolution of policies to regulate, control and gain revenue from tobacco can be divided into four phases. In the first, from 1604-1608, James instituted an enormous hike in taxes. Though part of the wider culture of impositions early in his reign, this chapter argues that this measure was not solely directed towards revenue generation. The publication of the Counterblaste at around the time the tax was introduced suggests that the tax was at least partly intended to reduce demand for tobacco. However, this “new imposition” highlighted the revenue potential of tobacco, promoted smuggling and attracted opposition from the same group of merchants whose campaign against the imposition on currants culminated in the celebrated Bate’s case.<sup>5</sup>

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‘Identity in the British Caribbean’, all in N. Canny & A. Pagden (eds.), Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World 1500-1800 (Princeton, 1987). See also, N. Canny (ed.), The Oxford History of the British Empire 1 (Oxford, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> The tobacco trade’s rise to prominence in Virginia is detailed in numerous texts dealing with the early stages in the establishment of British overseas interests. See, for example, G. L. Beer, The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1578-1660, (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1959).



In the second phase, from 1608 to 1618/9, private interest competed with the public purse over the exploitation of revenues from tobacco imported from Spain. Initially, while Salisbury was Treasurer, arrangements for the collection of the impost strongly favoured the customs farmers. Consequently, the crown gained little revenue from tobacco despite considerable increases in the amounts being imported. After Salisbury's death this situation changed. With the advice of a Treasury Commission and the services of Lionel Cranfield, the king reviewed the administration of tobacco customs as part of a general review of government finances. New arrangements were put in place securing a greater share of revenues for the Crown. New 'projects' were also introduced which further increased King James's profits from and control over both tobacco and the pipes in which it was smoked.

The last two overlapping phases, 1619-1621 and 1621-5, saw the spread of cheaper tobacco produced in Virginia and England. This generated little or no revenue for the Crown and competed with Spanish tobacco for a share of the market. James consequently forbade the growing of tobacco in England, limited imports from Virginia and sold 'sole importation' rights to influential courtiers and merchants. He thus bolstered his revenues from the more expensive and heavily taxed Spanish tobacco. The rapid rise of Virginian imports and the impact of limiting Virginia imports in 1621 are evident from the totals set out in table 5.1.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For a detailed examination of the Bate's case see: P. Croft, 'Fresh Light on Bate's Case', *Historical Journal* 30 (1987), pp. 523-39.

<sup>6</sup> There is no way to assess how much tobacco was imported without paying duties.

Table 5.1

Tobacco imports 1614-1621 (in lbs.)<sup>7</sup>

<u>Date</u>	<u>London</u>		<u>Outports</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Virginia &amp; Bermudos</u>	<u>Spanish</u>	<u>Virginia &amp; Bermudos</u>	
1615	100,926	0	1,351	0	102,227
1616	56,925	2,300	1,406	200	60,831
1617	45,279	18,839	1,797	0	65,905
1618	57,058	49,518	8,371	150	115,097
1619	119,634	45,764	8,493	0	173,791
1620	97,149	117,981	12,248	1,040	228,418
1621	159,873	73,777	14,520	0	248,170

The economic cost of purchasing so much tobacco from Spain and the needs of Virginia, particularly after the Jamestown massacre of 1622, caused a policy shift.<sup>8</sup>

From 1623 onwards Virginian tobacco was given primary access to the marketplace at the expense of the Spanish. From then on, Virginia's fortunes and the king's revenues were linked through tobacco. When the king assumed direct royal control over the Virginia colony and its tobacco in 1624, the misocapnic (smoke-hating) monarch became the greatest tobacco overlord the world had ever seen.

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<sup>7</sup> Figures taken from 'An abstracte of what Spanish Virginia and Bermudos Tobacco hath bin imported into the Porte of London and the Out-Ports from Michaelmas 1614 to Michaelmas 1621' reproduced in A. P. Newton (ed.), 'Lord Sackville's Papers Respecting Virginia, 1613-31', American Historical Review 17 (1921), p. 526. There are various, often conflicting estimates for volumes of trade in this period. However, since these figures come from a single contemporary source endorsed by the Lord Treasurer they are probably the most reliable.

<sup>8</sup> The massacre particularly affected outlying settlements such as the Berkeley plantation (J. E. Gethyn-Jones, 'Berkeley Plantation, Virginia', Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society Transactions 94 (1976), pp. 10-11.



## Phase 1: King James's attempt to reduce tobacco consumption

On 17 October 1604 King James instructed his Treasurer, the Earl of Dorset, to direct customs officials to levy an additional duty of 6s 8d on every pound of tobacco.<sup>9</sup> With the recently revised Book of Rates listing leaf tobacco as a drug costing 6s 8d per pound, this 'Commissio pro Tabacco' instituted a 100% hike in prices.<sup>10</sup> Previously, with tonnage and poundage amounting to 6d per pound, duties on tobacco had constituted only 7% of its value on entry.<sup>11</sup> With little warning, tobacco importers now had to pay a total of 7s 2d per pound to move their goods from the docks. Inevitably, this price rise filtered through to consumers, pushing retail prices towards £1 per pound.<sup>12</sup> Some observers welcomed this move. On 30 October 1604 Lord Say and Sele wrote 'worthily upon the unnecessary weed of tobacco is a noble in the pound imposed'.<sup>13</sup>

This new tobacco tax was one of many 'new impositions' introduced by the king in the early years of his English reign in order to gain extra revenue without parliamentary approval. The most contested of these was the imposition on currants, the legality of which was disputed in the Bate's case of 1606. There were precedents

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<sup>9</sup> T. Rymer, *Foedera* 20 vols. (London, 1704-32), XVI, p. 601 'The Commissio pro Tabacco' (17 October 1604).

<sup>10</sup> The more expensive 'cane' and 'pudding' tobacco was valued at 10s/lb. (A. von Gernet, 'The Transculturation of the Amerindian Pipe/Tobacco/Smoking/ Complex and its Impact on the Intellectual Boundaries Between "Savagery" and "Civilization" 1535-1935', unpublished PhD. thesis, McGill University (1988), p. 182). The Earl of Dorset revised the Book of Rates, which had not changed since the reign of Mary Tudor (R. Lockyer, *The Early Stuarts: a political history of England 1603-1642* (London, 1989), p. 75).

<sup>11</sup> The standard rate of duty was 5% of the value of the commodity being taxed. Beer notes that tonnage and poundage amounted to 2d per pound before the new tax (Beer, *Origins of the British Colonial System*, p. 108). However, this was the duty prior to the revision of the Book of Rates at the beginning of James's reign.

<sup>12</sup> A. Clark (ed.), *Aubrey's Brief Lives* 2 vols. (Oxford, 1898), 2, p. 181. Aubrey reported: 'I have heard some of our old yeomen neighbours say that when they went to Malmesbury or Chippenham market, they culled out their biggest shillings [i.e. least clipped] to lay in the scales against the tobacco'.

<sup>13</sup> HMC *Salisbury* 16, p. 339. Lord Say and Sele to Viscount Cranborne.

for English monarchs levying additional customs on specific goods. Both Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I had made use of small-scale impositions.<sup>14</sup> However, James's more substantial and widespread impositions were an innovation because, unlike his predecessors, James increased taxes beyond the 'necessities of a protective policy . . . expressly in order to increase the revenue of the Crown'.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the judges' ruling in the Bate's case that the king did have absolute power to control imports and exports, the new impositions were, like monopolies, frequently challenged as being contrary to the good of the subject and a hindrance to trade. In the parliamentary debate on impositions of 1610, Lord Treasurer Salisbury conceded that they should only be levied 'upon such commodities as in the use of them were grown to great excess'.<sup>16</sup> Despite this concession, enough controversy remained for continuing challenges against all impositions. For example, in April 1614, a first reading was given to a bill which declared illegal any impositions 'upon merchants and other subjects of the realm, and upon their wares, goods and chattels'.<sup>17</sup>

The imposition on tobacco imports was perhaps less controversial than other impositions because, as the Counterblaste made clear, James wanted to restrict access to tobacco for the good of his subjects and his new kingdom.<sup>18</sup> Like whale fins (for women's clothing), he considered it a 'wasteful, needless and unprofitable'

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<sup>14</sup> For example 19 September 1573, Elizabeth introduced an imposition on sweet wines from Spain and the Levant (J. R. Tanner, Constitutional Documents of the Reign of James I (Cambridge, 1960), p. 244).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Tanner argues that James and Cecil 'had no reason to doubt that they possessed the legal power to levy impositions'.

<sup>16</sup> S. R. Gardiner (ed.), The Parliamentary Debates 1610, Camden Society 81 (1862), appendix B pp. 156-7. See also Tanner, Constitutional Documents, pp. 243-264 and E. R. Foster (ed.), Proceedings in Parliament 1610 2 vols. (New Haven and London, 1966).

<sup>17</sup> Lockyer, The Early Stuarts, pp. 156-7.

<sup>18</sup> Acting for the good of the subject gave the monarch a moral right to do things that might otherwise be deemed unacceptable.



commodity.<sup>19</sup> Revenue generation would still have been important but the publication of the king's tract opposing smoking only a few days before the introduction of the new tobacco tax suggests a deeper rationale behind this particular imposition.

As has been shown, the Counterblaste leaves no doubt that James wanted to deter popular misuse of the drug. By making tobacco so expensive, the new tax diminished the prospect of 'inappropriate' smoking spreading amongst the 'baser sort'. It might also have made the 'better sort' re-think their misuse of the drug. This tax was not, as Fairholt suggested, merely punitive in nature.<sup>20</sup> It formed part of a strategy, familiar to modern smokers, to wean Englishmen off a commodity detested by their ruler.<sup>21</sup>

James could have prohibited tobacco instead. In many realms smoking was banned, sometimes under pain of mutilation or even death.<sup>22</sup> George Sandys, brother of the influential parliamentarian Sir Edwin<sup>23</sup> featured below, witnessed a Turk being conducted through the streets of Constantinople in 1610 mounted backwards on an ass with a tobacco-pipe driven through the cartilage of his nose for the crime of smoking.<sup>24</sup> Brooks notes that, before 1610, authorities in Japan ordained harsh punishments for those who continued to smoke partly because it was a habit

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<sup>19</sup> HMC Salisbury 19, p. 486. The example of the size of the duty on tobacco was used to justify a similar duty for whale fins in 1607.

<sup>20</sup> F. W. Fairholt, Tobacco: its history and associations, (London, 1876), p. 83. Fairholt considered that James wrote 'viciously' about tobacco, and, quoting Brodigan's Treatise on the Tobacco Plant (London, 1830), described the tax as an 'unwarrantable persecution of the tobacco plant' and James's orders as 'unnecessary and unjust'.

<sup>21</sup> Beer states that the tax had the 'avowed purpose of checking the importation of what, in his opinion, was a most obnoxious drug' (Beer, Origins of the British Colonial System, p. 108).

<sup>22</sup> For details on policies towards tobacco across Europe see: S. Gray & V. Wyckoff, 'The International Tobacco Trade in the Seventeenth Century', Southern Economic Journal 7 (July 1940).

<sup>23</sup> For a detailed biography of Sir Edwin Sandys see T. K. Rabb, Jacobean Gentleman: Edwin Sandys, 1561-1629 (Princeton, 1998). Tyacke questions whether Sandys was always the great Parliamentarian he is reputed to have been (N. Tyacke, 'Sir Edwin Sandys and the Cecils: a client-patron relationship', Historical Research 64 (1991), pp. 87-91).

<sup>24</sup> Noted in Fairholt, Tobacco: its history and associations, p. 79.

introduced by foreigners.<sup>25</sup> In China, the use of tobacco was deemed heinous enough to warrant the decapitation of importers. The Mogul emperor of Hindustan and his brother the Shah of Persia banned smoking. In Russia, in 1634, smoking was prohibited because the Patriarch determined that it was a deadly sin. Persistent offenders were to be executed.<sup>26</sup> Although less aggressively punished, laws and edicts against smoking proliferated across Europe in the first half of the seventeenth century. In Sicily, the pipe was declared illegal. In Denmark, Sweden, parts of Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Hungary attempts were made to prohibit smoking, prevent tobacco cultivation and inhibit its importation.<sup>27</sup>

If so many other rulers were willing to try to prohibit smoking by edict, why did King James not attempt to do so in England in 1604? Harrison suggests that James could not ban tobacco because of its validity as a medicine. He argues that ‘the 17<sup>th</sup> century belief that tobacco smoking was the abuse of a powerful therapeutic agent both provided a rationale for restricting its consumption and limited the way in which this could be accomplished’.<sup>28</sup> By making tobacco expensive and lambasting recreational smoking, James possibly could have deterred the ‘unnecessary’ use of tobacco without depriving physicians of their powerful new medicine.<sup>29</sup> While seeking to deter smoking in general, the new tax was not intended to prevent ‘Persons of good

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<sup>25</sup> J. E. Brooks, *The Mighty Leaf* (London, 1953), pp. 75-6.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-80.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> L. Harrison, ‘Tobacco Battered and the Pipes Shattered: a note on the fate of the first British campaign against tobacco smoking’, *British Journal of Addiction* 81 (1986), p. 557.

<sup>29</sup> King James’s *Counterblaste* (London, 1604) condemned widespread use of tobacco but also, albeit grudgingly, did accept that tobacco was potentially beneficial if properly administered by a physician to cure a specific ailment (sig. B3v).



Callinge and Qualitye' using tobacco appropriately as a 'Physicke to preserve Healthe'.<sup>30</sup>

By contrast and despite such considerations, James did opt for a policy of prohibition in Scotland in 1616. Having been 'credibl[i]e informed that the use, or rather abuse, of taking tabacco . . . ane weade so infective as all young and ydill personis ar in a maner bewitched thairwith', was spreading rapidly in the land of his birth, he banned it.<sup>31</sup> In an Act published at the Market Cross, Edinburgh, on 27 May 1616, he complained that tobacco was 'a speciall motive of thair [young Scotsmen] often meitingis in tavernis and alehousis, lascivious spending of thair moneysis, and neglecting of thair other lauchfull affaires'.<sup>32</sup> For the good of his subjects, he determined to prevent any 'deeper rutting' of 'this abuse' by forbidding the importation or sale of any tobacco in Scotland by any 'merchantis, thair factoris and servandis, maisteris of schippes, with thair marineris and sailleris, and all utheris his Hienes subjectis, and all strangeris . . . and all and everie persone or personis whatsomever'.

This was not a 'preposterous enactment'.<sup>33</sup> The Act ordered that half the proceeds from the sale of confiscated tobacco should go to the crown and half to those who had seized it.<sup>34</sup> This provided a strong incentive for the diligent interception of illicit

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<sup>30</sup> Rymer, *Foedera*, XVI, p. 601. 'Commissio pro Tobacco'.

<sup>31</sup> There does not seem to have been any smoking in Scotland when James left there in 1603. However, tobacco had been imported into Scotland at least since 1612, when the Book of Rates listed the price of tobacco imports as £16 (£1. 6s. 8d. sterling) per lb. for leaf and £18 (£1. 10s. sterling) per lb. for cane, pudding or bale.

<sup>32</sup> *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland 1613-1616* (henceforth *RPCS*), pp. 516-7.

<sup>33</sup> The view of J. H. Burton, the editor of the *RPCS* (*Ibid.*, p. lxxiv).

<sup>34</sup> Customs officials were given authority to confiscate all the illicit tobacco they found, which they could keep for their 'propper use' provided that, on a yearly basis, they delivered half its value to the Scottish Exchequer.

cargoes and a source of revenue for the Crown.<sup>35</sup> The tobacco still might have reached Scottish consumers but the importer would have gained nothing. By making the importation and sale of tobacco a risky venture, further mercantile investment in the trade could have been deterred. The cycle in which merchants bought tobacco, sold it at a profit and then re-invested that money in ever more cargoes would have been broken by the flow of tobacco profits into royal coffers. Successful interception of cargoes would have reduced the number of merchants willing to engage in what had been declared an illegal trade. Additionally, the emergence of a powerful pro-tobacco merchant's lobby, like the one centred on the Virginia and Somers Islands Companies in London, would have been impeded.<sup>36</sup> Demand in the ports would have outstripped supply leaving insufficient surplus tobacco for smoking to spread to other, inland and rural, communities where King James feared that tobacco might even exacerbate clan tensions.<sup>37</sup> Prices would have risen, pushing tobacco beyond the reach of most Scots.

James further made arrangements to enforce his ban. In November 1616 he issued a commission to Captain William Murray 'for selling and homebringing of tobacco for xxi yeiris', making him the only person in Scotland authorised to land and dispose of confiscated tobacco.<sup>38</sup> This was not a nullification of the Act. It was a means of

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<sup>35</sup> If James had enacted this legislation for fiscal reasons, he need not have been so generous to the discoverers of the illicit tobacco. James demanded the 'onlie just half' of the forfeitures.

<sup>36</sup> For insights into the Scottish economy see T. M. Devine and G. E. Lythe, 'The Economy of Scotland Under James VI: A revision article', *The Scottish Historical Review* 50 (1971). For more general information on Scotland see also J. Wormald (ed.), *Scotland Revisited* (London, 1991).

<sup>37</sup> James believed that tobacco was implicated in the 'quarrellis and debaitis betuix youthes of good birthe and parentage' which threatened wider bloodshed (*RPCS 1613-1616*, pp. 516-7). At this time, the Privy Council of Scotland was most concerned about the illegal carrying of firearms. James was strongly concerned about violent disorder and, in February 1614, issued a proclamation forbidding challenges and duels.

<sup>38</sup> *RPCS 1613-1616*, p. 659 (14 November 1616). The editor of the *RPCS* identified Captain William Murray as Captain David Murray, commander of the king's ship *The Charles* and a favourite of James. Sir Gideon Murray, another important figure in James's Scottish administration, was also involved in deliberations about tobacco in Scotland. 'William' Murray was probably a relative of these influential men.



implementing and enforcing its injunctions. Murray's effective monopoly over Scotland's tobacco depended upon the interception of cargoes and the prosecution of tobacco importers and vendors. Exactly two months after the issue of Murray's commission, the first twenty prosecutions for contravention of the Act were brought to the Privy Council of Scotland. At twenty-six Privy Council hearings between 14 January 1617 and 4 October 1620, 227 individuals, 19 of them women, faced charges.<sup>39</sup> Defendants were summoned from Edinburgh and Leith (122), from the northern shore of the Forth of Firth (11), from Dundee (9) and Perth (43) on the Tay, and from the principal northern ports of Arbroath (5), Montrose (20) and Aberdeen (17).<sup>40</sup>

James's Scottish prohibition ultimately failed mainly because of collusion between Murray and tobacco importers whose mutual interests depended upon facilitation rather than reduction of the tobacco trade.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, James's Scottish tobacco prohibition must initially have seemed viable. Royal proclamations were commonly used to dictate government policy. They expressed the will of the king and could be enforced through the courts and the Privy Council. Monopoly was the most effective

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<sup>39</sup> Fines and confiscations prior to 8 January 1618 are not detailed in the RPCS. Between 8 January 1618 and 4 October 1620, 83 people who had been absent from their hearings were charged £150 sterling each totalling £12,450. 52 others attended and confessed to the importation or sale of £284 worth of tobacco. There is no record of how many of these fines were actually paid or how many of the defendants came to terms with Murray. Some defendants were subjected to 'hornings' and the confiscation of their goods.

<sup>40</sup> One place, 'Futie', has not been identified. While Edinburgh dominated export markets, each of these east-coast ports had grown through the exploitation of goods and markets not monopolised by the capital. Aberdeen, Dundee and Perth in particular, the only Scottish towns besides Edinburgh with a population over 5,000, remained the natural markets for extensive hinterlands.

<sup>41</sup> Recognising this complicity, on 4 February 1619, the Commissioners of his Majesties 'rents' had ordered the levy of a custom duty on all tobacco entering Scotland, effectively taxing Murray's monopoly. Murray died in 1621. In July 1622, King James acknowledged that the 'shiftis and subtilities' of tobacco importers had, despite his efforts, 'universallie filled' the country with what had become 'commoun mercheandice'. In November 1622, he abandoned prohibition and permitted the issuance of import licences (by the heirs of Captain Murray) subject to custom duties being paid (RPCS 1622-1625, pp. 28-30, 102-04, 189-92).

tool of trade control available to the early modern state. As those who campaigned against monopolies in the Commons pointed out, the private gains of the monopolists were at the expense of the subject who, as well as possibly suffering inflated prices for substandard goods, was debarred from engaging in the trade themselves.<sup>42</sup> James's concerted attempt to prohibit smoking in Scotland promised short-term revenue gains from confiscated tobacco and the prospect of guiding the trade into decline by constricting supply.

If prohibition was the best policy for Scotland in 1616, why did King James not attempt this in England in 1604? This was, after all, what he wanted. In January 1604 Sir John Harington had a conversation with the king about tobacco in which James reportedly said that 'no learned man ought to taste it, and [that he] wished it forbidden.'<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, the king may have re-considered this while finalising his Counterblaste. In this text and elsewhere, James assumed the role of physician to the body politic. He argued that it was his responsibility to apply medicines and effect a cure for the corruption, prodigality, luxurious idleness and civil disorderliness he saw around him.<sup>44</sup> The solution to such problems was reform and regulation. Tobacco 'abuse', like drunkenness, was the fault of the consumer not the substance. To 'cure' drunkenness he prescribed the suppression of illegal alehouses. To 'cure' unnecessary

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<sup>42</sup> This was an angle of attack used by Sandys, a staunch advocate of free trade, in 1621. Lockyer notes that the dubious legality of monopolies was highlighted in 1602 with the case of Darcy vs Allen in which the judges resolved that monopolies were 'inherently prejudicial to the subjects' welfare' (Lockyer, The Early Stuarts, p. 190). King James faced challenges to his monopolies in the Commons debates of 1610, 1614 and especially 1621. For an examination of the issues raised by conflict between the needs of the state for money and of its citizens for liberty see D. H. Sacks, 'The Paradox of Taxation: fiscal crises, parliament, and liberty in England, 1450-1640' in P. T. Hoffman and K. Norberg (eds.), Fiscal Crises, Liberty, and Representative Government, 1450-1789 (Stanford, 1994), pp. 7-66.

<sup>43</sup> Harrison, A Jacobean Journal, p. 95 (5 January 1604). Harington and the king also discussed witchcraft, books and religion at this meeting (L. Aikin (ed.), Memoirs of the Court of King James I (London, 1822), 1, pp. 287-88).



smoking he prescribed a combination of high prices and the publication of his own medical and moral arguments against it. By 1616 when the Scottish prohibition was introduced, it was evident this prescription did not work.

There were also more pragmatic reasons to dismiss prohibition as an option. On the international front, it would perhaps have been particularly impolitic to ban a Spanish commodity at a time when negotiations were being conducted to conclude a formal peace between the two countries.<sup>45</sup> In 1621 when the Commons debated a proposal to ban tobacco imports from Spain, opponents of it were quick to point out that the ninth article of the 1604 treaty explicitly proclaimed freedom of commerce.<sup>46</sup> On the domestic front, a royal prohibition on tobacco imports would have been singularly insensitive at a time when many feared that James would attempt to undermine the common law and replace it with a more authoritarian system.<sup>47</sup> In these early months of his English reign such fears would have been exacerbated by an arbitrary royal pronouncement curtailing the right of his new subjects to choose whether or not to buy and consume a particular commodity merely because he did not like it.

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<sup>44</sup> King James, Counterblaste, sig. A3v.

<sup>45</sup> Croft describes this treaty as 'a diplomatic balancing act' which, within 18 months, had become increasingly unstable (P. Croft, 'Serving the Archduke: Robert Cecil's management of the Parliamentary session of 1606', Historical Research 64, p. 291).

<sup>46</sup> W. Notestein, F. Relf and H. Simpson (eds.), Commons Debates, 1621 7 vols. (New Haven, 1935), 2, pp. 293-7. Rabb notes that during the debate the treaty was read out (Rabb, Sandys, p. 232). By 1616, when King James introduced his Scottish ban, this article had already been breached by a prohibition on importing Spanish pepper and exporting ordinance to Spain. Claims that Spaniards had pillaged English merchants similarly undermined this part of the treaty.

<sup>47</sup> Lockyer states that 'there had been fears when James came to the English throne that he would attempt to undermine the common law, which enshrined constitutional conventions, and try to replace it with a more authoritarian system' (Lockyer, The Early Stuarts, p. 59).

King James was a strong advocate of royal absolutism.<sup>48</sup> In 1607, he boasted: 'this I must say for Scotland, and may truly vaunt it; here I sit and govern it with my pen; I write and it is done; and by a Clerk of Council I govern Scotland now, which others could not do by the sword'.<sup>49</sup> Though an exaggeration of the extent of his authority, these were the words of a long-established king whose 'general success in Scotland is not seriously questioned'.<sup>50</sup> His policies had 'established' this 'position of authority craved after by his predecessors'.<sup>51</sup> In England, however, his reign was just beginning. He may have considered that he had a divine right to rule but, as an experienced king, he was already aware of the political realities of kingship.<sup>52</sup> To secure his English throne, he had to recognise of the apparent 'sanctity' of common law and, at least in public, accept its constraints.<sup>53</sup> King James repeatedly emphasised that he would 'never hereafter . . . alter or innovate the fundamental laws, privileges and good

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<sup>48</sup> For details of King James's kingship and writings see: J. Wormald, 'James VI and I: two kings or one?', *History* 68 (1983); A. G. R. Smith (ed.), *The Reign of James VI and I* (London, 1973); D. H. Willson, *King James VI & I* (London, 1959) especially Chapter 6, 'The Great Schoolmaster of the Realm: England'. See also A. Fraser, *King James VI of Scotland I of England* (London, 1975); W. Ferguson, *Scotland's Relations with England: a survey to 1707* (Edinburgh, 1977); J. P. Somerville, 'James I and the Divine Right of Kings: English politics and continental theory' in L. L. Peck (ed.), *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 55-70; L. L. Peck, 'Monopolizing Favour: structures of power in the early seventeenth-century English court', in J. H. Elliott and L. W. B. Brockliss (eds.), *The World of the Favourite* (New Haven and London, 1999); I. Carrier, *James VI and I, King of Great Britain* (Cambridge, 1998) and R. Lockyer, *James VI and I* (London, 1998).

<sup>49</sup> Willson, *King James VI and I*, p. 313. The Scottish Parliament was rigged. Executive power lay with the king's appointees to the Privy Council.

<sup>50</sup> A. G. R. Smith, 'Introduction' to Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, pp. 1-2. Smith notes that King James VI had only limited success in bringing the Highlands under control. Nevertheless, he had made significant changes to the Kirk, strengthened the power of the bishops and quelled dissent and conflict amongst the political elite. Perhaps partly because of a series of good harvests in Scotland between 1600 and 1620, this period is generally characterised as happy and well governed.

<sup>51</sup> Devine and Lythe, 'The Economy of Scotland Under James VI', p. 105.

<sup>52</sup> Guy argues that the perception of James as a consistently absolute and divine monarch is outmoded. By 1610, he had publicly propounded a thesis of a mixed polity created by kings which 'stood closer to the assumptions of late-Elizabethan political thought than those of the 1630s' (J. Guy, *Politics, Law and Counsel in Tudor and Early Stuart England* (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 304-5). See also: Somerville, 'James I and the Divine Right of Kings'.

<sup>53</sup> An anecdote about James's first encounter with the constraints of English law (during his progress from Scotland to London in April 1603) illustrates the potential consequences of this for England. As he entered Newark, he heard that a criminal had been caught and ordered his immediate execution. His English counsellors were aghast and informed him that, in England, judges and the law decided such matters (G. P. V. Akrigg, *Jacobean Pageant* (New York, 1978), p. 15).



customs of this kingdom'.<sup>54</sup> As he later admitted, 'for a king of England to despise the common law, it is to neglect his own crown'.<sup>55</sup>

When James inherited the English throne, he also inherited the hopes, expectations and prejudices of wealthy and influential courtiers. To some of them, particularly Elizabeth's Secretary of State, Robert Cecil, he owed a debt for their role in his accession.<sup>56</sup> Others, particularly Raleigh, were deemed enemies. The allegiance of many more remained uncertain and depended upon the favours or slights they received. All constituted a complex web of personal affiliations and animosities underpinned by extensive patron/client relationships spanning the Tudor to Stuart transition and reaching down through the institutions of government.<sup>57</sup> James needed to harness the energies of enough of these diverse but interconnected individuals to gain the control nominally conferred upon him at his accession.<sup>58</sup> By 1618-19 James was secure enough to order Raleigh's execution and deny Englishmen the right to grow tobacco on their own land. However, at the start of his English kingship, when rival merchant groups were lobbying for favour and when some plotters were even

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<sup>54</sup> Statement made to James's first English Parliament (Commons Journals 1, p. 180). Later in 1610, King James rationalised the differences between communities in the first stage of their creation as political entities and those, like England, which were 'settled in civility and policy' (Lockyer, The Early Stuarts, pp. 59-61).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> J. Bruce (ed.), The Correspondence of James VI of Scotland with Sir Robert Cecil and Others in England, Camden Society Old Series 78 (1861). There are numerous texts examining the politics and nature of Cecil. See, for example, P. Croft, 'The Religion of Robert Cecil', Historical Journal 34 (1991); P. Croft, 'Can a Bureaucrat Be a Favourite? Robert Cecil and the strategies of power' in J. Elliot and L. Brockliss (eds.), The World of the Favourite (New Haven, 1999); A. Haynes, Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, 1563-1612: servant of two sovereigns (London, 1989).

<sup>57</sup> For more information on patronage networks etc. see L. L. Peck, Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England (London, 1993).

<sup>58</sup> A prohibition risked more widespread alienation at a time when James required co-operation and acceptance. James had to tackle religious discord and battle for acquiescence in Parliament, where the failure of his repeated efforts to unite his Crowns provided ample evidence of the limits of his authority. For insights into Anglo-Scottish relations and other aspects of James's English and Scottish reigns see: B. Bevan, King James VI of Scotland and I of England (London, 1996).

willing to blow up Parliament to depose him, he was perhaps wise not to try to prohibit smoking.<sup>59</sup>

James's commitment to English customs, laws and practices did not prevent him from pursuing unpopular objectives such as the Spanish peace treaty and the union of his English and Scottish crowns. Nor did it inhibit him from selling honours or issuing monopolies and impositions on an unprecedented scale. Though still controversial, the 6s 8d/ lb. tobacco imposition was a safe option. To the wealthy, accustomed to extravagant spending on a variety of luxuries, it would have been of little consequence. Though deterring excessive consumption, it would have 'allowed' occasional, particularly medicinal, smoking. It was a policy enforceable at the dockside where individual, not widespread, non-compliance might have been contained. There was no reason to expect the tax to provoke a particularly hostile response. Even after the Bate's case had raised questions about the legality of impositions in general, James's chief minister, Robert Cecil, believed that impositions were widely accepted. He considered that opposition to them was limited to 'a small minority of endlessly complaining, grasping merchants and a few lawyers.'<sup>60</sup>

It is too cynical to suggest that the tobacco tax was merely a device to justify a new revenue-raising scheme. If it had been, it would have given James a vested interest in facilitating and, indeed, extending the tobacco trade. Nevertheless, there were revenue

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<sup>59</sup> Besides, if a ban was imposed and then disobeyed, particularly behind closed doors, communal smoking would attract an air of conspiracy. If smoking was, as James believed, the epitome of those 'idle delights' which were 'the first seedes of subversion of all great Monarchies', such secrecy might make those seeds grow and be potentially dangerous (King James, *Counterblaste*, sig. A3v).

<sup>60</sup> P. Croft (ed.), 'A Collection of Several Speeches and Treatises of the Late Lord Treasurer Cecil and of Several Observations on the Lords of the Council Given to King James Concerning his Estate and his Revenue in the Years 1608, 1609, 1610', *Camden Miscellany* 29 (Camden 4<sup>th</sup> series) 34, 1987), p. 260.



benefits from the new imposition. In 1602, some 16,128 lb. of tobacco had been landed in London.<sup>61</sup> At the new rates, the 6s 8d imposition would have generated over £5000 in addition to the normal customs duty of £134.

Responsibility for collecting tobacco duties was initially delegated to Thomas Lane and Phillip Bold.<sup>62</sup> By May 1605, Robert Bromeley, merchant, had undertaken to pay £2000 per year to farm the impost.<sup>63</sup> As Ashton has shown, Stuart governments favoured this kind of arrangement because it offered distinct benefits to the crown.<sup>64</sup> Large sections of the administration were farmed out because, as Braddick argues, 'the crown received a steady income, and the farmers had an incentive to improve the yield'.<sup>65</sup> With the advantage of knowing in advance what revenue would be received, the crown could borrow from the City or request advance payment of rents.<sup>66</sup> Peculation, corruption and payment of customs collectors became the farmers' problem. A customs farm could possibly yield more for the crown than direct administration while still generating considerable profits for the farmers themselves.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> PRO SP14/9/1, 'Statement of the Quantity of Tobacco Brought into the Port of London, During the Year Ending Michaelmas, 1603'.

<sup>62</sup> CSPD 1603-1610, p. 159 (19 October 1604). The new duty came into effect the following day.

<sup>63</sup> It is not clear whether Bromeley was acting independently or on licence from Lane and Bold. Letters Patent nullifying the grant to Lane and Bold, dated 20 April 1609, indicate that Bromeley and others then officially took over the collection of the impost but other sources (used below) show he had already been doing so since 1605 and that Masterson and Wade had taken over the monopoly in 1608. For a brief list of Jacobean documents relating to tobacco see Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621, 7, pp. 450-461.

<sup>64</sup> R Ashton, The Crown and the Money Market 1603-40 (Oxford, 1960), chapter 4. The establishment of the 'Great Farm' in 1604, entrusting almost all aspects of customs collection to businessmen, signalled a shift (which can be traced back to Elizabeth) away from direct central government administration.

<sup>65</sup> M. J. Braddick, State Formation in Early Modern England c.1550-1700 (Cambridge, 2000), p. 251. Rival syndicates were eager to bid for farms so rents could be re-negotiated.

<sup>66</sup> Lord Treasurer Dorset advocated that James 'lease the administration of the Customs duties to private individuals, in order to produce a certain instead of fluctuating revenue' (Lockyer, The Early Stuarts, p. 75).

<sup>67</sup> Braddick notes the benefits of farming customs etc. to syndicates of merchants because the government 'could not create a network of officers to undertake these tasks, neither could it offer remuneration sufficient to remove the temptation to corruption'. However, profits largely went to private individuals not the crown (Braddick, State Formation in Early Modern England, pp. 250-2).

For Bromeley, however, the tobacco impost farm was a disaster. In 1606 he was desperate to be freed of ‘this unprofitable farm of tobacco, wherein I have spent so much time and money to so small purpose that it has almost been my undoing’.<sup>68</sup> He reported that,

when he first entered into the action of tobacco, with hope to have done the King service, even then he wrought his own overthrow. For it was no sooner known upon the Exchange that he was the dealer in that action, than forthwith his credit decayed.

Bromeley had perhaps failed to realise how difficult it would be to collect the duty. On his behalf, Sir George Carewe wrote to Robert Cecil, then Viscount Cranbourne. He reported that ‘Mr Bromeley finds himself much aggrieved in his business of tobacco by the obstinacy of certain persons who refuse to obey the proclamation [ordering the tax] and determine to stand with him in law’.<sup>69</sup> It was a ‘grievous hindrance’ to Bromeley that ‘John Eldred and Richard Hall, of London, merchants, and others who have brought in tobacco of late refuse to pay the imposition, and combine to oppose his Majesty’s grant’.<sup>70</sup>

This refusal to pay the levy was a calculated move by an important group, the Levant merchants, who were also campaigning against the imposition on currants. Harrison has suggested that the questionable status of tobacco made a legal challenge to this particular imposition less likely.<sup>71</sup> However, the challenge of Eldred and other Levant

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<sup>68</sup> HMC *Salisbury* 18, pp. 382-83. Robert Bromeley to the Earl of Salisbury.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 17, p. 180. Sir George Carewe to Viscount Cranborne (soon after elevated to Earl of Salisbury).

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* Richard Hall gained an abatement of his tobacco impost charges in February 1610 (PRO SP14/52/54). How this relates to his dispute with Bromeley remains unclear.

<sup>71</sup> Harrison, ‘Tobacco Battered’, p. 556.



merchants had nothing to do with ideology. They had themselves levied an imposition on currants before 1603.<sup>72</sup> Having lost this profitable position, they began a campaign against the current levy in 1604 with ‘sporadic quayside challenges’.<sup>73</sup> As with tobacco, they refused to pay and urged the collectors to take them to court. For currants, this strategy culminated in the case against John Bate who was arrested at the docks on 2 April 1606 while supervising the unloading of another cargo.<sup>74</sup> A few days later, several members of the Levant Company, including Eldred, complained about the levy and Bate’s arrest in the Commons.<sup>75</sup> For tobacco, Eldred was the key figure. In 1607 his continuing refusal to pay the imposition on tobacco was referred to the Court of the Exchequer.<sup>76</sup>

Croft suggests that, since 1604, ‘as with currants, many merchants had refused to pay up, or merely offered composition’ to the tobacco impost collector and points to Eldred’s prosecution as the ‘key case’ in the enforcement of the tobacco imposition.<sup>77</sup> If so, it did not bode well for enforcement. In 1606 Bromeley reported that, though Eldred owed £1,100 for the tobacco he had imported, Bromeley had been ‘ordered to

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<sup>72</sup> R. Ashton, *The City and the Court 1603-1643* (Cambridge, 1979), pp. 90-3. Ashton argues that the Levant Company opposed impositions, particularly on currants, for pragmatic business reasons rather than on principle. As their opponents were quick to point out, the Levant Company had not been advocates of free trade when they held an Elizabethan Charter giving them advantages in trade. Their objections to the current imposition in particular centred on the fact that it diminished the value of the new charter for the company issued in 1605.

<sup>73</sup> Croft, ‘Fresh Light on Bate’s Case’, p. 531.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 532-4. Bate had paid the tonnage and poundage but not the new tax for which he owed £896 3s. Croft shows how the imposition was particularly damaging to his business because he was a merchant who almost exclusively dealt in currants. He had imported a quarter of London’s total annual currant imports between September 1605 and April 1606 while adamantly refusing to pay the imposition of 5s 6d per hundredweight.

<sup>75</sup> D. H. Willson (ed.), *The Parliamentary Diary of Robert Bowyer 1606-1607* (New York, 1971), pp. 118-9.

<sup>76</sup> *CSPD 1603-10*, pp. 208, 219. The ‘Statement addressed to Lord Chief baron of the Exchequer, of the cause between the Farmers of Tobacco and John Eldred, who refuses to pay the imposts on tobacco which he has imported’ is noted on p. 393. Ashton describes Eldred as one of the ‘London bigwigs’ of the Levant Company (Ashton, *The City and the Court*, p. 91). In the London port book for exports of 1609, Eldred is listed as a Levant merchant trading to Spain (PRO E190/14/7).

take £40 or nothing'.<sup>78</sup> Eldred appears to have successfully evaded paying the full levy. This may be partly attributed to the influence he had at court.<sup>79</sup> His later business interests included a patent for collecting customs on tin and pewter and he also took a leading role in the purchase of Crown lands. In many cases, Eldred worked in alliance with Arthur Ingram whose connections at court are noted below.<sup>80</sup>

Connections at court were becoming increasingly important in the administration of the tobacco impost. In 1607 Richard Masterson and Thomas Wade took over the farm as trustees for a business syndicate that included Sir Lionel Cranfield and Sir Arthur Ingram.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps they would have been better able to exact payment from people such as Eldred. The tobacco impost farm was still potentially profitable. If effectively enforced, the syndicate would have recouped their rent to the king from the 6s 8d duty on first 6,000 lbs. of tobacco intercepted. After expenses, whatever else they collected was clear profit.

However, by 1608 the impost farmers were still failing to make a profit. James could have been well satisfied with the results of his initiative if this had been because less tobacco was being imported but there is no evidence of this. Instead of guiding the

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<sup>77</sup> Croft, 'Fresh Light on Bate's Case', pp. 531-2. A statement about the controversy between the farmers of the tobacco impost and John Eldred survives in PRO SP14/28/143.

<sup>78</sup> HMC Salisbury 18, pp. 382-83. This was probably a ruling from the Privy Council rather than the Court of Exchequer.

<sup>79</sup> Eldred had failed to pay a debt of £165 for the imposition on 30 butts of currants in 1605 but his arrears of currant impositions were cancelled by royal command in 1605, in view of his contributions to the upkeep of the Constantinople ambassador (*Ibid.*, p. 532 fn. 28).

<sup>80</sup> Eldred's tin monopoly is referred to in CSPD 1603-10, p. 469 (November 1608). His role as a contractor for lands begins in 1609 and continues into the 1610s (His early deals are referred to in *Ibid.*, pp. 523, 545, 560, 590, 595, 614-5, 643). John Eldred led the syndicate buying crown lands from James in 1609 (R. W. Hoyle (ed.) The Estates of the English Crown (Cambridge, 1992), p. 23.

<sup>81</sup> F. Dietz, 'The receipts and issues of the Exchequer during the reigns of James I and Charles I', Smith College Studies in History (Northampton, Massachusetts, 1928), 13, p. 154 fn. 22. The money was entered into Treasury accounts in 1607.



tobacco trade into decline, James's policy had merely encouraged widespread evasion of duties. This link between 'stealing' and price was noted by Sir Edwin Sandys who suggested in the Commons debates of 1621 that the price of tobacco should be fixed at 8s per pound because keeping prices low deterred smugglers.<sup>82</sup>

Some importers may have landed their cargoes in the smaller outports or elsewhere, evading both the new imposition and usual customs duties. In smaller, but still significant, quantities sailors and travellers could easily evade customs and feed tobacco into their own informal trading networks. Even when cargoes were intercepted there was no guarantee that duties would be paid. Some merchants who, if unchallenged, would have imported their tobacco surreptitiously, decided to abandon their tobacco rather than pay the duties.<sup>83</sup> This caused particular problems that are illustrated in a document of uncertain date and authorship entitled 'The motives why the patent of tobacco ought to cease'.<sup>84</sup> This argued that the king gained no profit because 'the imposition is so great, and men adventure so much to steal the custom'. Large quantities of tobacco were seized but 'by long lying [in the Customs House] grows nothing worth'. The money actually received for imposition 'hardly' defrayed the costs of searching for tobacco and of pushing suits for seizure through the Exchequer. The author concluded that,

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<sup>82</sup> Commons Journal 1, pp. 578-9. This assertion was made at a time when tobacco prices were falling and the Virginia Company needed to keep them up because they had promised the planters a fixed amount for their produce. More will be said of Sandys and tobacco later.

<sup>83</sup> Beer, Origins of the British Colonial System, pp. 108-9.

<sup>84</sup> HMC Salisbury 21, p. 287. In the Salisbury papers this is dated as '1610?' but it must relate to the problems faced by either Bromeley or the Masterson/Wade syndicate in 1606-08. Its content suggests Bromeley as the most likely author in 1606.

The merchants are hurt by losing the goods, many poor mariners undone, and I have much tobacco left on hand which will take no money. The King loses, for he answers the farmers for the great custom 6d. on every pound for that tobacco which lies there and rots, and yields nothing to him or me.

In 1608 Masterson and Wade complained that the impost they collected was far more than the value of most tobacco being imported and requested permission to surrender the farm unless the impost was lowered. James acquiesced and reduced the impost to a more reasonable shilling per pound which merchants such as John Eldred would have been more willing to pay.<sup>85</sup> Around the same time, despite the Crown's victory in the Bate's case, the impost on currants was reduced to 3s 4d per hundredweight.<sup>86</sup> These reductions brought both currants and tobacco into conformity with other impositions. The successful defence of the principle of impositions in the Bate's case had cleared the way for changes that were being considered in the scope of impositions. The king and Cecil, now Earl of Salisbury, had decided to expand the levying of impositions to a further 1,400 articles, yielding a possible £60-70,000, with the introduction of a new Book of Rates in 1608.<sup>87</sup> They needed to avoid the kind of legal challenges and concerted opposition that had been led by Eldred and Bate for tobacco and currants.

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<sup>85</sup> Masterson and Wade surrendered their grant on 9 December 1608. The impost was reduced to 12d per pound on 20 July 1609 and re-granted to the Masterson and Wade syndicate (Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621, 7, p. 451).

<sup>86</sup> Croft, 'Fresh Light on Bate's Case', p. 537.

<sup>87</sup> M. Prestwich, Cranfield: politics and profits under the early Stuarts (Oxford, 1966), pp. 30-1. Croft calls the tobacco and currant impositions of 1604 'stalking horses for what was to follow' and suggests that Treasurer Dorset was seeking a justification for these new impositions in 1605 (Croft, 'Fresh Light on Bate's Case', p. 532). However, it seems more likely that Dorset's efforts were directed towards opposition to the currant and tobacco impositions and that the Crown's victory in the Bate's case, confirming the king's right to levy such taxes, prompted the expansion of impositions to so many other commodities. This conforms with Salisbury's assertion, in the Parliament of 1610, that Dorset proposed the new impositions to fill up the coffers in early 1607, soon after the Bate's verdict in November 1606.



The tobacco and currant levies thus became part of a more general taxation strategy for a wide range of imports that affected all merchants rather than disadvantaged a potentially recalcitrant few. That the duty on tobacco dropped by 5s 6d per pound while that on currants only dropped by 2s 2d per hundredweight perhaps indicates the more complex motives behind the initial high tobacco tax. Crucially, by reducing the impost to 1s per pound James implicitly acknowledged that tobacco was a commodity that was here to stay. He had effectively abandoned financial deterrence as a way of saving the English from their obsession with smoking.

### Phase 2: the exploitation of revenues from Spanish tobacco

Having failed to persuade the English to quit smoking through reasoned argument, royal example and taxation, James appears to have lost interest in tobacco over the next few years. Indeed, he appears to have left all such matters in the hands of his newly appointed Treasurer, the Earl of Salisbury.<sup>88</sup> Smith suggests that the years up to 1612 were the happiest of the reign because 'his deficiencies in administration were concealed to some extent by the labours of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury'.<sup>89</sup> With Salisbury at the helm, arrangements to maximise profits from the tobacco impost were quickly put into effect. Even at a shilling per pound, the levy yielded significant sums.

However, only a small proportion of these potential revenues reached the royal coffers. The arrangements Salisbury made were particularly generous to the farmers who collected the duties and their sponsors. In 1608 the tobacco impost generated

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<sup>88</sup> Cecil, Elizabethan Secretary of State and Chief Minister to James I, became the Earl of Salisbury in 1605. In 1608, he added the post of Lord Treasurer to his Mastership of the Court of Wards.

£752 which is probably a fair reflection of the duties paid on legally imported tobacco at 1s/lb.<sup>90</sup> The following year, Salisbury reduced the annual rent for the tobacco farm to £100. In 1610, it rose to £200 and stayed at or below that level until 1616 yielding only £1,300 over an eight-year period.<sup>91</sup> While the Crown gained these meagre revenues, the farmers shared out tidy profits. In 1615, for example, 102,277 lb. of Spanish tobacco was officially imported.<sup>92</sup> From this, the impost farmers would have collected £5,113 17s.

This primacy of private over public gain was not unusual.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, it was an integral part of a pattern of fiscal policy formation predicated on the assumption that ‘projects’ for advancing crown revenues were wholly compatible with the pursuit of private gain. Cramsie has argued that a ‘projecting mentality’ was the conceptual basis of Jacobean government finance.<sup>94</sup> The tobacco impost farm was essentially a ‘project’. As with other schemes, such as Alderman Cockayne’s ‘new draperies’, it was tied in to a network of patronage and shared commercial interest stretching from the person who administered the ‘project’ to the minister or courtier who sought the king’s permission to implement it.<sup>95</sup> Cramsie argues that ‘projects embodied the competing

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<sup>89</sup> Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, p. 4.

<sup>90</sup> Dietz, ‘The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer’, p. 154 fn. 5. Importation figures for this period are scarce but if the tax had been applied to the 16,128 lb. imported in 1602, the impost farmers would have collected £806 8s.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 135, 138-9. £100 was paid in 1609, 1614 and 1616. £200 was paid in 1610-13 and 1615.

<sup>92</sup> See table 5.1 above.

<sup>93</sup> Braddick argues that, ‘if there was ambiguity in the relationship between private benefit and public service in relation to officeholders, this was far more manifest in the case of trading companies’ (Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England*, p. 40).

<sup>94</sup> J. Cramsie, ‘Commercial Projects and the Fiscal Policy of James VI and I’, *Historical Journal* 43 (2000), pp. 346-7. This entrepreneurial mentality had been a feature of crown finance since the 1580s but it took centre stage under King James whose personal style of kingship, in contrast to government by Privy Council under Elizabeth, gave relatively easy access to those who wanted to influence policy formation.

<sup>95</sup> For an examination of Cockayne’s project see J. D. Gould, ‘The Cockayne’s Project’, *Economic History Review* 2nd series 7 (1954), pp. 81-90; A. Friis, *Alderman Cockayne’s Project and the Cloth Trade: the commercial policy of England in its main aspects, 1603- 1625* (London, 1617).



forces of patronage and governance, private gain and public good'.<sup>96</sup> As the farming of the tobacco impost under Salisbury's auspices shows, private gain could all too easily take precedence over public good.

Salisbury, though acclaimed by some as a reforming Treasurer, used his position to make enormous profits from his business interests.<sup>97</sup> For example, when renewing the lease on his silk farm in 1610, Salisbury used an agent to gain a new lease for nineteen years on the same terms as his original 1601 lease. In 1601, his profits from this amounted to £434. By 1610, they had risen to around £7000 p.a.<sup>98</sup> It was the Treasurer, not the Crown, that reaped these rewards. While financing his extravagant building program at Hatfield from such personal interests, he was somewhat less successful with the royal finances. As Prestwich put it, 'when Salisbury died Hatfield in all its grandeur stood complete, but the Crown had a debt of £500,000 and a deficit of £160,000'.<sup>99</sup>

The agent Salisbury had used to secure his new lease on the silk farm was Arthur Ingram, a notorious speculator and Controller of the Port of London who was often involved in such negotiations. Peck describes Ingram as 'one of several merchants who became the well-paid middlemen between courtiers and the great merchants and

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<sup>96</sup> Cramsie, 'Commercial Projects and Fiscal Policy', p. 346.

<sup>97</sup> Peck considers Salisbury to be the 'ideal type' of 'modernising bureaucrat' in early modern England who sought to change archaic funding arrangements yet 'amassed a gigantic income' from his offices, payoffs, customs farmers and pensions (Peck, Court Patronage and Corruption pp. 155-6). See also Prestwich, Cranfield, p. 19.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>99</sup> M. Prestwich, 'English Politics and Administration 1603-1625' in Smith, The Reign of James VI and I, p. 150. The particularly bad state of the finances should not wholly be attributed to Salisbury's venality. He had made efforts to check expenditure making him unpopular with some. Also, his proposals for fiscal reform to re-endow the crown were rejected by the Parliament of 1610.

built up their own landed estates out of the profits'.<sup>100</sup> Through his connections with Salisbury, Ingram furthered his own and Salisbury's interests. Salisbury granted Ingram the alum monopoly, causing considerable controversy. Through Ingram, Thomas Howard, the Earl of Suffolk, secured the currant farm on advantageous terms. He shared the profits with Salisbury.<sup>101</sup> As noted above, Ingram's business interests also included tobacco and his business associates included his friend, the successful merchant and future Lord Treasurer, Lionel Cranfield. Braddick notes that monopolies and patents 'created vested interests hostile to reform'.<sup>102</sup> These were powerful vested interests to have taken control over the taxing of the burgeoning tobacco trade.

There can be little doubt that the Ingram/Salisbury connection played its part in keeping tobacco revenue low. Indeed, Ingram told Cranfield that, after speaking with Salisbury about the tobacco farm he believed that 'a course [would be] taken that will content us'.<sup>103</sup> If Ingram was, as Prestwich suggests, 'perhaps the most unscrupulous tycoon of the age', Salisbury and Cranfield were fully implicated in his shady dealings.<sup>104</sup> All three operated 'in the frontier region between commerce and government finance'. Their wealth 'illustrates how much the Crown lost by collusion between corrupt politicians, rapacious courtiers, and a venal civil service'.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption*, p. 156. For more on Ingram see, A. F. Upton, *Sir Arthur Ingram, c. 1565-1642: a study of the origins of an English landed family* (Oxford, 1961).

<sup>101</sup> Croft, 'Fresh Light on Bate's Case', pp. 528-9. Croft suggests that Suffolk was 'one of Salisbury's few friends' and, although the farm was issued only in Suffolk's name, there is compelling evidence that Salisbury shared the profits with him.

<sup>102</sup> Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England*, p. 250.

<sup>103</sup> Quoted in Prestwich, *Cranfield*, pp. 24-5.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.



After Salisbury's death in 1612 accusations abounded about his venality and the parlous state of government finances was subjected to deeper scrutiny. Northampton, a principal figure in the Cockayne project, was considered to be the most likely replacement for Salisbury but he urged a proper accounting of the Treasury books before he would take over.<sup>106</sup> James accordingly set up a Treasury Commission to assess Crown finances and suggest solutions to the pressing fiscal crisis. Although the king did appoint a new Treasurer, the Earl of Suffolk, the creation of the Treasury Commission marked a turning point.<sup>107</sup> In 1613, while critics attacked Suffolk for his inefficiency and corruption and others of the Howard faction were embroiled in the Overbury scandal, the Treasury Commission went to work and reported directly to the king. For a brief period, projects were scrutinised by a committee rather than pushed through by a single individual with the ear of the king.<sup>108</sup>

Ashton suggests that 'the reforming activities of the Treasury Commissioners reduced the expenses of government departments and achieved a 'general improvement in all departments of the royal finances'.<sup>109</sup> This must be partly attributed to the fact that the Commissioners, especially Sir Francis Bacon, recognised the potential of 'the tough and energetic business consultant and administrator', Lionel Cranfield.<sup>110</sup> On their

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<sup>106</sup> For an examination of Northampton's fitness for the post of Treasurer see: L. L. Peck, Northampton: patronage and policy at the court of James I (London, 1982) and L. L. Peck, 'Problems in Jacobean Administration: was Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, a reformer?', Historical Journal 19 (1976). Northampton hated Cecil (Croft, 'The Religion of Robert Cecil', p. 42).

<sup>107</sup> Suffolk gained the position in place of his uncle Northampton who had died.

<sup>108</sup> The Treasury Commission reintroduced the kind of mediation that had characterised Elizabeth's formation of policy through the Privy Council, at least until Buckingham rose to the fore.

<sup>109</sup> Ashton, The Crown and the Money Market, p. 92.

<sup>110</sup> Prestwich details the particular role of Cranfield in bring down the expenses of the king's household by various means including having fewer courses at mealtimes and reducing money spent on clothing by over £20,000 per annum (Prestwich, 'English Politics and Administration', pp. 155-6). His business

recommendation, the king employed him to investigate the laxity of customs farming under Salisbury.<sup>111</sup> Cranfield suggested various reforms and advocated abandoning the term 'imposition' because of its obvious connotations. Unlike 'Leapfrog' Ingram, as John Holles derisively referred to him, Cranfield was successfully making the transition from commercial middle-man to government servant.<sup>112</sup> Once part of the syndicate which spectacularly kept tobacco profits out of Crown hands, Cranfield divested himself of various commercial ties and directed his efforts towards customs farming and government service.<sup>113</sup> In 1614, he created a rival 'ghost' syndicate for the Great Farm forcing the current syndicate to up their bid at renewal to £140,000 per annum and a loan of £18,000 for seven years. In 1615, he directed his attention to the tobacco farm. In recognition of his services, Cranfield gained the Mastership of Requests and in 1619, a place on the Treasury Commission.

Tobacco had first appeared on the Treasury Commission agenda in December 1613 when it was proposed that the king should 'resume into his own hands the grant of sole importation of tobacco'.<sup>114</sup> The estimated revenue yield from this, after re-granting it to an agent for half the profits, was £7,000. In March 1615 the tobacco farm was accordingly re-allocated.<sup>115</sup> The new farmers were given the right to collect the impost, which had risen to 2s per pound around this time, for ten years in exchange for £3,500 in the first year and £7,000 p.a. thereafter. They were granted

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acumen and contacts, when employed for the benefit of the Crown must have brought similar benefits to the public purse.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p. 152. In 1613, Cranfield was appointed surveyor-general of the customs.

<sup>112</sup> Ingram's appointment as Cofferer of the Household was voided following complaints by other courtiers. See 'Letter to Lord Norris' of 1615 cited in Peck, Court Patronage and Corruption, p. 229 fn. 72.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>114</sup> CSPD 1611-18, p. 214.

<sup>115</sup> To Edmund Peshall and Edward White.



‘sole power to import tobacco and to name persons for selling the same’ but had to accept the proviso that the arrangement could be cancelled at six month’s notice ‘if found prejudicial to the State’.<sup>116</sup> Cranfield was determined that the king should retain some measure of control over the administration of his tobacco revenues.

Table 5.2

Revenue yield for the Crown from the impositions on tobacco<sup>117</sup>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Revenue (£)</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Revenue (£)</u>
1604	--	1615	200
1605	--	1616	100
1606	--	1617	1,111
1607	2000	1618	1,807
1608	751	1619	7,378
1609	100	1620	2,850
1610	200	1621	1,700 <sup>118</sup>
1611	200	1622	18,064 <sup>119</sup>
1612	200	1623	--
1613	200	1624	--
1614	100	1625	--

<sup>116</sup> PRO SP39/5/3-4 (29 March 1615).

<sup>117</sup> Figures drawn from Dietz, ‘The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer’. It is difficult to gain a clear picture of the revenue from this imposition because of the inconsistency of accounting practices and incompleteness of surviving sources. A line indicates no record surviving that details this particular part of the revenues separately.

<sup>118</sup> Estimated by doubling half year figure.

<sup>119</sup> This abnormally high figure probably includes advance payment for some of the subsequent years when no revenue yield is noted.

As table 5.2 shows, the new impost farmers were not particularly successful. Revenues still failed to meet expectations. Receipts of the Exchequer show that in the years ending Michaelmas 1617-18, tobacco generated revenues of £1111-9s-2d and £1807-11s-6d respectively.<sup>120</sup> James exercised his proviso and, in April 1618, re-granted the office of collecting the tobacco impost 'for life' to Abraham and his son John Jacob.<sup>121</sup> Abraham Jacob was an experienced officer who had served successfully in the administration of numerous farms including the Great Farm.<sup>122</sup> The influence, connections, authority and expertise he brought to the task had the desired effect. In 1619 revenue from tobacco imports climbed to £7378-12s-5d. As a sign of the future importance of tobacco revenues to government finances, this exceeded the revenue generated by silks and lawns, impositions on 'seacoals' or the controversial currant farm. Only the farm of the alum works exceeded tobacco as a revenue generator with an income of £8,700 that year.<sup>123</sup>

As well as reviewing and reforming existing arrangements, the Treasury Commission considered a wide range of revenue-raising projects. Prominent among them were Cockayne's scheme to dress and dye cloth and Keymer's plan to build a vast fishing fleet to rival the Dutch, both of which were enthusiastically pushed forward by Treasurer Suffolk.<sup>124</sup> Other less exciting but ultimately more successful schemes were also proposed and put into effect. In 1618 James issued a patent to Philip Foote of London granting him the sole privilege of selling tobacco-pipe clay for twenty-one

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<sup>120</sup> Dietz, 'The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer', p. 137.

<sup>121</sup> CSPD 1611-18, p. 353 (17 April 1618).

<sup>122</sup> Ashton, *The Crown and the Money Market*, p. 93.

<sup>123</sup> Dietz, 'The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer', p. 139. The 'Great Farm', collecting tonnage and poundage on a wide range of key imports, was of a different order to these single commodity levies.

<sup>124</sup> Cranfield was the most outspoken critic of Cockayne's scheme (Cramsie, 'Commercial Projects and Fiscal Policy', p. 361).



years.<sup>125</sup> In May 1619, for a rent of £100 p.a., Francis Nichols, Jasper Leake and Philip Eden gained the right to charge importers to ‘garble’ (view and put a seal of legitimacy upon) their tobacco for thirty years.<sup>126</sup> This kind of inspection was already established practice for spices and other products to protect the consumer from adulteration. In July 1619 Articles of Incorporation were granted to the tobacco-pipe makers of Westminster, enabling them to suppress the production of cheaper pipes across the country.<sup>127</sup> In 1621 James increased the duties on tobacco imported into Ireland and raised the tax on the importation of tobacco-pipes to 2s. per gross.<sup>128</sup> Some ideas were not carried through. For example, a proposal to derive revenue by licensing an estimated 6,000 London and 12,000 provincial tobacco retailers was shelved until Charles’s accession.<sup>129</sup>

All of these measures were controversial not only because they increased the cost of smoking but also because they were restrictive. In successive Parliaments right up to the Civil War the monopolies over pipe clay and pipe-making featured in lists of grievances about trade restriction and monopolies in general. Thirsk notes that projectors’ schemes could be about making money, employing the poor or exploring the far corners of the earth.<sup>130</sup> Many of them were monopolistic. In the 1610s making money was the first priority but such minor monopolies also gave James and later

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<sup>125</sup> CSPD 1611-18, p. 557 (24 July 1618).

<sup>126</sup> CSPD 1619-23, p. 47 (25 May 1619). This was followed by a proclamation enforcing this on 10 October 1619 (p. 92). For a chronology of events in the establishment of projects for tobacco importing, garbling, pipe clay and pipe making see Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621, 7, Appendix B.

<sup>127</sup> CSPD 1619-23, p. 67 (30 July 1619). The pipe-making monopoly was rescinded in 1640. By 1650, pipes were being legitimately made in places such as York and Hull (see Robert Shafto, Pipe Making in York (London, 1992)).

<sup>128</sup> CSPIreland 5, p. 316 (8 February 1621). Tobacco pipes had been taxed in Ireland since at least 1614.

<sup>129</sup> M. W. Beresford, ‘The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences 1632-41’, Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research 7 (1955), p. 129.

<sup>130</sup> J. Thirsk, Economic Policy and Projects (Oxford, 1978), pp. 1-2.

Charles I a small measure of control over many aspects of trade from the boiling of soap to the sale of thread and production of sword blades.<sup>131</sup>

Though arrangements changed over time, all aspects of the tobacco-pipe smoking business were being regulated by named individuals who depended upon the Crown for the continuation of their privileges. Under Lord Treasurer Salisbury tobacco revenues had barely registered in the Receipts of the Exchequer while the customs farmers, including Cranfield, reaped the rewards with little if any sense of accountability to the king. With Cranfield's guidance, the balance had shifted. The king expected much from his tobacco farm and it was the farmers' responsibility to meet those expectations. There was still plenty of scope for private gain from collecting tobacco duties and running tobacco-related industries (i.e. supplying pipe clay and making pipes) but the Crown would have its share.

### Phase 3: Competition from England and Virginia

Unfortunately for James the tobacco customs revenue of over £7,000 for the year ending Michaelmas 1619 was not repeated in 1620. Revenue fell back to £2,850 and in 1621 amounted to only £1,700.<sup>132</sup> This collapse was caused by fundamental changes in the supply of tobacco. The vast majority of the duties so successfully

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<sup>131</sup> Dietz lists a number of 'sundry' and 'miscellaneous' farms which were established under King James and King Charles (Dietz, 'The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer', p. 155 fns 42, 49). Some of them seem ridiculous examples of an unrestrained projector culture: e.g. 'stones on the seashore to make iron', 'weighing hay and straw'. Others reflect the alliance of the entrepreneurial with the inventive: e.g. 'the new engine to pump water out of mines', 'sole making of newly devised axle-trees of metal for coaches'. The amounts of revenue involved were often very small: e.g. in 1621, the sword blade farm yielded £2 10s; in 1624, the farm of Castile soap yielded £10. The garbling of tobacco was one of the more profitable minor farms yielding £50 in 1622.

<sup>132</sup> Dietz, 'The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer', pp. 139-40.



collected by the Jacobs in 1619 were levied on tobacco from Spain, which had been the principal source of tobacco since the 1590s. After the London treaty of 1604 King Philip II had prohibited tobacco sales by colonial outposts to maximise his exploitation of the English market that, in the absence of any real alternative and as a matter of preference, demanded a constant supply. In 1618 relations with Spain were transformed by the outbreak of war in Europe.

Smith notes that 'once the Thirty Years War had broken out, James failed to appreciate the significance of the changed international situation'.<sup>133</sup> He was a peace-maker and, as Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, must have assured him, this war did not really involve England at all even when the lands of his son-in-law were invaded by Spanish forces in autumn 1620. Many Englishmen felt differently. This war of Catholic against Protestant reinvigorated incipient anti-Spanish sentiment. It also threatened a return to the disruption of trade that had caused such economic difficulties in the wake of the Armada. Perhaps with this in mind, early in 1619, Henry Somerscales negotiated with Gloucestershire landowners and others in preparation for his latest entrepreneurial venture - large scale tobacco cultivation in England.<sup>134</sup> In May, he sought a royal patent to formalise his rights.

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<sup>133</sup> Smith, *The Reign of James VI and I*, p. 16.

<sup>134</sup> See J. Thirsk, 'New Crops and Their Diffusion: Tobacco-growing in seventeenth-century England' in C. W. Chalklin and M. A. Havinden (eds.), *Rural Change and Urban Growth 1500-1800* (New York, 1974), pp. 76-103. Thirsk details the partnership in this venture between Somerscales (a lawyer from Lincolnshire) and John Stratford (a native of Gloucestershire and member of the London Salter's Company with many business interests). See also: J. Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales: regional farming systems* (Cambridge, 1984), ch. 6.

As Thirsk has shown, this and similar projects promised jobs for the poor and substantial rewards for the projectors.<sup>135</sup> It could have potentially rejuvenated agricultural areas where poverty was rife. English tobacco could have easily undercut the high prices paid for Spanish tobacco and would have taken many customers away from suppliers of imported tobacco, especially if consumers had accepted that it was a better product. This was an argument advanced in An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England . . . with The Danger of the Spanish Tobacco (1615). Contrasting ‘naturall’ tobacco, the kind bought directly from the Indians, with the ‘harmefull mixtures’ supplied by the Spanish, its author urged Englishmen to grow and cure their own tobacco. He argued that smokers would not only get cheaper tobacco, they would also get better tobacco with all the strength, flavour and wholesomeness of the pure Amerindian product.<sup>136</sup> In many ways growing tobacco in England was the perfect project. It would even have been of benefit to the overall economy by directly reducing reliance on an expensive foreign import.

The displacement of foreign commodities with those produced by Englishmen was a principal motivation for the greatest Jacobean project – the settlement of Virginia.

When Harriot advertised the virtues of Virginia in 1588 he comprehensively proclaimed its potential for the production of a wide range of goods. The colonists who set out in 1607 to establish Jamestown did so on the backs of subscribers to the Virginia Company whose investment in the project would bear fruit only when

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<sup>135</sup> See J. Thirsk, ‘Projects for Gentlemen, Jobs for the Poor: mutual aid in the Vale of Tewkesbury, 1600-1630’ in P. McGrath and J. Cannon (eds.), Essays in Bristol and Gloucestershire History (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1976), pp. 141-169.

<sup>136</sup> C.T., An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England: and How to bring it to colour and perfection, to whom it may be profitable, and to whom harmfull. . . with The Danger Of The Spanish Tobacco (London, 1615).



Virginia did.<sup>137</sup> With ever rising demand for tobacco and high prices it was perhaps inevitable that Englishmen in the New World would try their hand at producing it. In 1612 John Rolfe experimented with West Indian tobacco seeds in Virginian soil. Two years later the first barrels of Chesapeake tobacco reached London.

In 1616 amidst complaints about the unwholesome adulteration of Spanish blends, Pocahontes arrived in London with the first substantial cargo, some 2,300 lbs. of Virginian tobacco.<sup>138</sup> Though still dwarfed by Spanish imports, tobacco from English commercial plantations had begun to arrive.<sup>139</sup> Over the next few years the trickle became a flood. In 1619 more than 20,000 lbs. of tobacco was imported from Virginia. In 1626 500,000 lbs. flooded English and European markets.<sup>140</sup> These increasing cargoes prompted a rapid upsurge in shipping to Virginia from one ship per year in 1614 to 1616, to five in 1617, six in 1618, fourteen in 1619 and an average of nineteen per year in 1620 to 1623.<sup>141</sup> As well as these Virginian supplies, more tobacco was being grown in the English Caribbean, the 'Somers Islands'. A few years

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<sup>137</sup> For a comprehensive history of the Virginia Company see: W. F. Craven, The Dissolution of the Virginia Company (New York, 1937). To survey documents see S. M. Kingsbury (ed.), The Records of the Virginia Company 4 vols., (Washington, 1906-35) (henceforth RVC) and A. P. Newton (ed.), 'Lord Sackville's Papers Respecting Virginia, 1613-31', American Historical Review 17 and 18 (1921-22). This chapter barely scratches the surface of the complexities of the Virginia Company's factions and business dealings.

<sup>138</sup> Sir Thomas Dale wrote to Sir Ralph Winwood that the ship he had returned from Virginia on also carried 'some ten or twelve of that country, among whom the most remarkable person is Pocahontes . . . married to one John Rolfe, Englishman' (CSP Colonial 1574-1660, p. 17). A further 200 lbs was landed at outports (see table 5.1).

<sup>139</sup> J. R. Pagan, 'The Growth of the Tobacco Trade Between London and Virginia, 1614-1640', Guildhall Studies in London History 3 (1979), p. 248.

<sup>140</sup> A. Rive, 'The Consumption of Tobacco since 1600', Economic Journal 36 (1926), p. 58. For an account of the rapid rise in Virginian production see: E. S. Morgan, 'The First American Boom, Virginia 1618-1630', William and Mary Quarterly 28 (1971). Unlike table 1 which details tobacco imported into England, these figures are drawn from sources related to the production of tobacco. The higher figure for 1619 in table 5.1 is partly due to cargoes from Bermuda.

<sup>141</sup> R. R. Menard, 'The Tobacco Industry in the Chesapeake Colonies, 1617-1730: an interpretation', Research in Economic History 5 (1980), p. 129.

later, while Virginian production continued to rise, crops also began to be harvested in Maryland.<sup>142</sup>

For James's tobacco revenues, the production of tobacco by Englishmen was a potential disaster. There could be no import duties on tobacco grown in England. Any attempt to tax it would have been far more difficult to enforce than a dockside collection. Virginian tobacco was liable to import duties but the articles of the Virginia Charter placed limits upon this. Until 1619 no duties could be levied at all. After 1619 tonnage and poundage had to be paid but, as the members of the Virginia Company well knew, the Charter limited it to a maximum of 5% of the value of the imported tobacco and guaranteed freedom from impositions 'in perpetuity'.<sup>143</sup> If prices had remained high every pound of Virginian tobacco imported would have yielded 6d but would have displaced a pound of Spanish tobacco that would have yielded four times that amount. Competition from this cheaper tobacco might not have affected the luxury end of the market where 'Trinidado', 'Varinas' and other Spanish tobaccos were still considered to be the best but it would have affected the emerging mass market where price was more important. Even without wartime disruption of the Spanish trade monopolists' profits and the Crown revenues dependent upon them would not have risen with rising demand. Indeed, they probably would have declined.

Fortunately for the king, English-grown tobacco posed as much of a threat to Virginian tobacco as Virginian did to Spanish. The expenses of the colony,

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<sup>142</sup> For an examination of Virginian tobacco production later in the colonial period see J. M. Price, 'The Beginnings of Tobacco Manufacture in Virginia', *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 64 (January 1956). For the early period considered in this chapter, however, Price reports that 'virtually nothing is known'.



transportation costs and customs duties made Virginian tobacco more expensive than tobacco grown in an English field. Soon after Somerscales had applied for his patent, the Court of the Virginia Company convened to discuss it. After consulting with the Attorney-General, Sir Edwin Sandys (Company Treasurer<sup>144</sup>) reported on 26 May 1619 that the patent was 'very preiudiciall' to the Company and advised that action should be taken to 'prevent and stopp the proceeding of it'.<sup>145</sup> A delegation was chosen to lobby at the Attorney General's house the following morning. A letter was ordered written to Somerscales desiring him to be there.

Throughout the summer the matter remained unresolved. In November the Virginia Company determined to petition the Crown directly. Though concerned that it might 'be a scandall for Virginia' to argue that the colony 'could not subsist w[i]thout that weed', the Company determined to be 'humble suitors for an inhibic[i]on' of English tobacco growing.<sup>146</sup> This plea for protection for Virginian tobacco production should have had little chance of success because it was directed to a king whose hatred for tobacco was well known. He would not have wanted the colony to be built wholly upon smoke.<sup>147</sup> The king's own ambitions for the colony focussed upon more 'worthwhile' endeavours such as silk production, vine planting and iron mining.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> G. L. Beer, The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1578-1660 (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1959), p. 110.

<sup>144</sup> Around this time Sir Edwin Sandys, whose politics had made him a long-standing enemy of the court, had taken over as Treasurer of the Virginia Company. His predecessor and rival, Sir Thomas Smythe was a friend of the court. Smythe retained control of the smaller Somers Islands Company.

<sup>145</sup> RVC 1, pp. 219-20.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 258. To counter this scandalous inference, plans for the production of 'good' commodities were noted in the petition. Over the next few years, despite various protestations, very little was achieved in Virginia apart from increasing the quantities of tobacco produced.

<sup>147</sup> Both James and Charles complained about the failure to diversify on numerous occasions.

<sup>148</sup> King James actively supported schemes to diversify Virginia's economy. He despatched silk worms and mulberry bushes, at his own expense, but to no avail. He also commissioned and wrote a preface for a book entitled His Majesty's Gracious Letter . . . Commanding the Present Setting up of Silk Works and Planting of Vines in Virginia (1622) which was to be supplied to English colonists (L. B. Wright,

However, this petition presented James with a potential 'carrot' to offer the Virginia Company in exchange for concessions on their part. Perhaps the Company would be willing to sacrifice their cherished exemption from impositions to prevent competition from growers in England.

James also had a 'stick'. It is surely no co-incidence that, in July 1619, the collectors of tobacco duties refused to release the crop from Virginia unless a 12d. per pound duty was paid. This negation of chartered rights was a serious challenge to Sandys and his associates who desperately needed the proceeds from the sale to pay for their rapid expansion programme. Tobacco was the key to making Virginia prosperous and keeping the Virginia Company afloat.<sup>149</sup> The Company applied to the Attorney-General and Cranfield for redress but both were conveniently 'out of Towne'. While the tobacco perished in the warehouse, Jacob remained adamant that he be paid before any tobacco was moved even when threatened with a £2,500 suit for damages. The Company offered to leave half of the tobacco with the impost collectors until the matter was settled but Jacob still refused. Despite their clear rights in this matter, they could not get their tobacco out of the customs house.

On 17 November Sandys reported that he had been advised to bring the Virginia Company's complaint about Jacob 'deteyninge a wholl years harvest' before the Privy Council where they 'should be sure to receive all the right that might be'.<sup>150</sup> On 6 December, after delays due to Jacob being absent, the Privy Council ordered the

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'Colonial Developments in the Reign of James I' in A.G.R. Smith (ed.), The Reign of James VI and I (London, 1973), p. 135.

<sup>149</sup> 'Sandys persisted in his policy of rapid population growth in the face of fiscal uncertainties' (Rabb, Sandys, p. 354).

<sup>150</sup> RVC 1, p. 272.



release of the impounded 20,000 lb. of tobacco and other tobacco expected soon from the Somers Islands to Sandys and the Virginia Company. In exchange, the Company 'had submitted themselves to pay such duties . . . as shalbe adjudged by us [the Privy Council] to be due unto you in justice'.<sup>151</sup> This brought Jacob to the council table where the whole matter was discussed at length.<sup>152</sup> On 23 December the Company finally gained their goods and began to arrange for the sale of their tobacco.

Also in December moves had been made to prepare for a ban on the growing of tobacco in England. The College of Physicians certified that 'tobacco grown in England and Ireland is much more unwholesome than that imported from countries where it grows naturally'.<sup>153</sup> Building upon this, a royal proclamation was drafted which forbade the planting of tobacco in England and Wales for health reasons, because it misused the soil and because it encouraged the spread of smoking 'into the county parts of the kingdom'.<sup>154</sup> As in Scotland, James appears to have hoped that he could still prevent the spread of smoking from urban centres to other, as yet, uncontaminated parts of his realm. The proclamation was ready to pass under the Great Seal on 30 December.

On 8 January 1620 the Court of the Virginia Company discussed Jacob's customs demands and voted that their original charter had to be upheld so they would not pay the additional duty demanded by Jacob. Indeed, it was decided that, because the tobacco was now worth a maximum of 5s per pound, they would not be willing to pay

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<sup>151</sup> APC Colonial 2, pp. 27-8.

<sup>152</sup> RVC 1, pp. 281-84.

<sup>153</sup> PRO SP14/111/109. Noted in CSPD 1619-23, p. 107.

more than a total of 3d per pound in customs, 5% of its value. Such assertions of Charter rights were quickly brushed aside when Sandys reported that the proclamation against English tobacco 'resteth to be proclaymed till the Company have deliuered their Answere w[hi]ch is expected att ye Counsell Table this afternoone'.<sup>155</sup> The 'bargaine' was set. If the Virginia Company conformed to 'his Ma[jes]t[ys] demaund' that they pay 12d per pound, he would grant them the 'gracious fauour' of banning their principal competitor. In agreeing, the Company specified that they were paying 3d. as was required by Charter and a further 9d for five years 'in Consideracion of the displantinge of English Tobacco'.<sup>156</sup> The Lords of the Privy Council, perhaps unwilling to officially connect these two matters, determined that such niceties should be 'passed ouer on both sides'. As the Company members immediately recognised, the failure to distinguish between the two components of the 12d duty effectively meant that the new rate would be 'expected forever as a duty due from the Company to his Ma[jes]ty'. This was certainly what the king and his impost collectors had in mind.

This deal between the Virginia Company and the king had transformed the situation. With the 'stick' of detaining the 1619 Virginia crop and the 'carrot' of a prohibition on English growing James had successfully circumvented the Virginia Charter to gain 12d from every pound of Virginian tobacco regardless of how low the price fell. He had also technically prevented cheap and readily available English tobacco swamping the market at no advantage to the Treasury at all. At a stroke he had pulled an

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<sup>154</sup> 'A Proclamation to Restraine the Planting of Tobacco in England and Wales'. J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations I: royal proclamations of King James I, 1603-1625* (Oxford, 1973), pp. 457-60.

<sup>155</sup> *RVC* 1, p. 291.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 292-4.



uncooperative Virginia Company, the farmers of the tobacco impost and the Crown together under a common and mutually profitable purpose: the continuing importation of tobacco from the New World. To this end, they would work together to suppress English growers. In March 1620 the Virginia Company hired Henry Mansell as 'intellegencer' to seek out tobacco which was 'pryvatly planted' in England. Jacob 'p[ro]mised' to prosecute offenders in the king's court of Star Chamber.<sup>157</sup>

These new arrangements were satisfactory for Crown revenues and profitable enough for the Virginia Company and the customs farmers but they were a disaster for English growers. Although frequently disobeyed, the ban on English-grown tobacco put Somerscales and other growers out of business. The threat of legal action was a serious deterrent. Thomas Biggs, a surgeon who had planted an acre of tobacco in Nottinghamshire to supplement his income, sought pardon from the Privy Council because he had found himself 'liable to danger' for having done so.<sup>158</sup> Despite the legal arguments of Edward Coke in the Parliament of 1621, that the ban on growing tobacco in England was 'against the Lawe and libertie of the subject', the prohibition persisted.<sup>159</sup> Those who defied James and, in later years, Charles and Cromwell by continuing to grow tobacco, did so at their peril.

Tobacco growers in England were not the only losers. Merchants who traded in Spanish tobacco faced declining sales in a marketplace which would be dominated by a cheaper and, if the curing process could be improved, more popular alternative.

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid., pp. 327-8. For every successful prosecution, Mansell was to receive 10s.

<sup>158</sup> CSPD 1619-23, p. 149 (May 1620).

<sup>159</sup> Coke repeatedly interceded to question the legality of outlawing tobacco growing in England. See Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621, 2, pp. 293-7; 3, pp. 8-12; 5, pp. 73-4, 75-8, 262-3, 331, 525-9.

Indeed, to help this happen, the irrepressible Somerscales, a person 'very skillfull in curing that Plant', offered his services to the Virginia Company to make their tobacco 'more profitable then itt is'.<sup>160</sup> For the Spanish merchant tobacco grown in England had never been much of a threat.<sup>161</sup> English tobacco was reputedly of a poor standard and tended to supply only local markets. Their profits came from London markets which then fed along to provincial urban centres. Virginia tobacco was landed in London and in direct competition for that huge market.<sup>162</sup> Almost before the ink had dried on the agreement between the king and the Virginia Company, moves were underway to place limits on the importation of Virginian tobacco. On 5 April 1620 Sir Thomas Roe, acting upon a referral from the king, led a delegation of merchants to petition the Privy Council for a patent for 'the sole importation of tobacco' for seven years at an annual rent of £10,000.<sup>163</sup>

Sir Thomas Roe was a seasoned traveller, skilled diplomat, courtier and active ally of Frederick, the Elector of the Palatine and his queen, James's daughter, Elizabeth.<sup>164</sup> He was also an influential but not wealthy investor in the East India and Virginia Companies. On his return to England from India in 1619 Roe determined to take a more active role in the Virginia Company and was one of the four people James

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The Commons Journal notes that he was content to let Virginia have the tobacco but 'will not consent to have the Subject hindered from planting it here' (Commons Journal, 1, p. 581).

<sup>160</sup> RVC 1, pp. 364-5.

<sup>161</sup> For information on the conduct and organisation of the trade with Spain and the varying fortunes of the Spanish Company see: P. Croft (ed.), The Spanish Company, London Record Society 9 (1973).

<sup>162</sup> Clay notes that particularly rivers but also a few improved roads linked the main provincial towns to London where industry and distributive trades were concentrated (C. G. A. Clay, Economic Expansion and Social Change: England 1500-1700 (Cambridge, 1984), 1, p. 200).

<sup>163</sup> APC 1618-20, p. 171 (5 April 1620).

<sup>164</sup> M. Strachan, Sir Thomas Roe 1581-1644: a life (Salisbury, 1989). Strachan details the support Roe tried to rally support for Fredrick and Elizabeth after they had decided to accept the Bohemian crown and consequently incurred the wrath of Spain (pp. 118-120). These events were at the centre of the outbreak of the Thirty Years War.



proposed to replace the Sir Edwin Sandys as Treasurer in May 1620.<sup>165</sup> James despised Sandys because of his outspoken criticism of impositions, projects and monopolies in all the parliaments of his reign. Roe's allegiance lay with the Smythe faction which, with the king's approval, had controlled the Company from its inception to Sandys take-over in 1619.<sup>166</sup> Despite James's instruction to the Company to 'choose the Devil if you will, but not Sir Edwin Sandys', Sandys was re-elected.<sup>167</sup>

As well as getting involved in the politics of the Virginia Company, Roe had renewed his business connections when he returned to England. Perhaps because he was a smoker and was well thought of at court, Roe quickly became involved with a group of London merchants who were seeking an absolute monopoly over the purchase and sale of tobacco in England.<sup>168</sup> These merchants were led by the tobacco customs farmer, Abraham Jacob, and the wealthy deputy governor of the Levant Company, Nicholas Leate. In 1619, while Jacob was refusing to release the Virginia Company's crop, this syndicate had offered the king an increased annual rent if he extended duties to Virginian as well as Spanish tobacco.<sup>169</sup> The deal struck between the king and the Virginia Company in January 1620 had made this possible. Hence, in April the offer was laid before the Privy Council.

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<sup>165</sup> M. J. Brown, *Itinerant Ambassador: the life of Sir Thomas Roe* (Lexington, 1970), pp. 109-111. The others were Sir Thomas Smythe, Sir Maurice Abbot and Alderman Johnson.

<sup>166</sup> Rabb suggests that relations between Smythe and Sandys were not as consistently hostile as is sometimes suggested (Rabb, *Sandys*, pp. 329-30).

<sup>167</sup> Brown, *Itinerant Ambassador*, p. 111. This was in large measure a snub at King James's attempt to influence the decision which had been deemed a breach of chartered rights.

<sup>168</sup> When in India, Roe wrote to a friend in London requesting some tobacco be shipped to him. He asked for tobacco that was 'sweet, but not very strong, some four or five pounds, not exceeding 12s the pound' (W. Foster (ed.), *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615-1619* (Oxford, 1926), p. 311).

<sup>169</sup> *APC Colonial 1613-18*, pp. 32-33.

Over the next two months factional infighting paralysed the Virginia Company. As well as the election of the new Treasurer, disputes arose about how the Company could best profit from their tobacco. The tobacco withheld from them by Jacob had deteriorated and tobacco prices were falling. Alderman Johnson, a wealthy merchant and close ally of Smythe, was the principal figure in the administration of the 'Magazine' through which colonial imports and exports flowed.<sup>170</sup> At a meeting at Smythe's house on 5 May 1620 Johnson offered to buy the tobacco at a price that would give the Company a profit of only 4d per pound. Some suggested burning the 'old and defective' tobacco rather than accept so low an offer. However, after a show of hands the offer was accepted and it was agreed that the next crop would be 'putt into the hands of some trustie man to sell itt to ye vttmoste benefitt of the Adventurers'.<sup>171</sup> While the Virginia Company squabbled over their tobacco, arrangements for Roe's monopoly of the trade were put in place.

On 3 July 1620 James issued a 'Proclamation for restraint of the disordered trading for Tobacco'.<sup>172</sup> Complaining that 'divers Tobacconists, and other meane persons' had been trading in tobacco 'upon unmerchantlike conditions' to the detriment of English trade, he determined to place the tobacco trade in the hands of 'able persons'. The Court of the Virginia Company interpreted this as a proclamation 'against the generall & vnlymited importacion of Tobacco' which would 'tend to the vtter ouerthrow and destruccion of both Plantations'.<sup>173</sup> They asked Lord Southampton to intercede and he reported that the king 'was pleased to affirme that itt was never his meaninge to graunt

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<sup>170</sup> The Magazine had been set up as a separate company within the company when the colony seemed doomed through lack of funds to supply the needs of the colonists. This Magazine controlled the price and movement of tobacco from the producers.

<sup>171</sup> *RVC* 1, pp. 342-3.

<sup>172</sup> Larkin and Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 1, pp. 481-84.



any thinge that might be preiudiciall' to them.<sup>174</sup> Further meetings followed but to no avail. For an annual rent of £16,000 Roe, Jacob and their associates had gained monopoly control of all tobacco entering England.<sup>175</sup> The new monopolists immediately confirmed the king's assertion that they would show concern for the colonies by allowing them to supply 55,000 lb. of tobacco in total to the English market. This was less than half the quantity imported that year.<sup>176</sup>

Sandys called an 'Extraordinary Courte' of the Virginia Company to discuss this. The Company could have determined to set limits on production to stay within this target. Instead they responded robustly by passing the entire allocation to the smaller Somers Islands Company. The Virginia Company resolved to import no tobacco in the next year and to rely upon the king's concern for the colonists to secure their survival. This was no grand suicidal gesture. There were other markets to exploit, particularly in Flushing and Middleburgh in the United Provinces. Trading with Holland promised to be far more lucrative than bringing tobacco into England where multiple duties ate into profit margins. By November 1620 negotiations with representatives of the Dutch government were far advanced. Exports to Middleburgh would be liable to only a 1/2d per pound levy. James's new arrangements were inadvertently stimulating an export trade in Virginian tobacco which the king would later seek to benefit from by ordering all tobacco to be landed in England first.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> RVC 1, p. 398. Both the Virginia & Somers Islands colonies.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., pp. 402-3. Henry Wriothesley, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Southampton, was an ally of the Sandys faction who had been involved in English ventures overseas since 1605 when he helped equip a scouting voyage to Virginia.

<sup>175</sup> APC 1618-20, pp. 171 & 175. Their proposal for a 7yr patent for sole importation of tobacco had been accepted in principal in April 1620.

<sup>176</sup> In 1620, 117,981 lbs. of tobacco had been imported into London. See table 5.1 above.

<sup>177</sup> 'Order of the Privy Council. Directing that tobacco and all other commodities from Virginia shall be first landed in England and the king's customs paid before being taken to any foreign country' (CSP Colonial 1574-1660, p. 26).

By the end of 1620 James had managed to increase his tobacco revenues despite the threat posed by tobacco grown in England and Virginia. His control over the dispensation of monopolies and patents had given him leverage to use against both the Virginia Company and the customs farmers. To stop Somerscales's patent for growing tobacco in England the Virginia Company was willing to negotiate away some of its chartered rights. To secure rights over all tobacco imported into England the customs farmers were willing to pay £16,000 rather than the £10,000 they had initially offered. As with Cranfield's 'ghost syndicate' for the Great Customs of 1614, competing business interests (this time real ones) had been successfully exploited to increase Crown revenue significantly. As was often the case in the allocation of monopolies, the bigger purse and better connections of the wealthier London merchants had won the day but so had the king. The balance between public good and private gain had shifted significantly since Salisbury's tenure as Treasurer. Additionally, the patent to Roe and his associates had introduced a further element of trade control – restraint through quotas.

The losers in all of this were the English growers and Virginia Company members whose access to markets for their tobacco had been significantly curtailed. Growers in England could only sell their tobacco illegally. Virginia Company profits from tobacco were limited and, perhaps worse, were controlled by a group who were both commercial and political rivals. However, Sandys and his associates were not yet beaten. They had another reason for rejecting the monopolists' quota limiting how much tobacco they could bring in. As Chamberlain reported to Carleton, 'A parliament is spoken of, but will avail little, for while the prerogative is grown a "noli



me tangere”, impositions and patents are so grievous that they must be complained of; amongst them are those for tobacco, which will stifle the Virginia plantation’.<sup>178</sup>

Linking the tobacco monopoly with other monopolies ‘of like nature’, Sandys would seek redress in the Court of Parliament and perhaps overturn decisions made in the corridors of commercial and courtly power.

#### Phase 4: tobacco and the national interest

When Parliament finally met in April 1621 unlimited quantities of tobacco could be imported from Spain, Virginian tobacco had been effectively edged out of the market and English tobacco had been banned.<sup>179</sup> This was good for Crown revenues because of the higher taxes levied on Spanish tobacco and the willingness of businessmen to pay high prices to control it. It was good for the health of the nation because it prevented cheaper tobacco flooding the market and promoting the further spread of smoking. It was good for the colonies because, while allowing them a short-term profit to get out of financial difficulty, it inhibited the development of a tobacco monoculture. However, as many had recognised, these arrangements were also directly contrary to the national interest because the tobacco trade with Spain was costing the realm vast sums of money.<sup>180</sup> English manufactures were being exchanged

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<sup>178</sup> CSPD 1619-23, p. 186 (28 October 1620).

<sup>179</sup> For a detailed account of the transactions of this Parliament and the Parliament of 1624 see: Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621. For additional perspectives see: R. Zaller, The Parliament of 1621: a study in constitutional conflict (Berkeley, 1971) and R. E. Ruigh, The Parliament of 1624: politics and foreign policy (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1971).

<sup>180</sup> The uneconomic exchange of English goods for Spanish smoke had been made worse because, as noted previously, King Phillip II of Spain had restricted direct trading with his colonial outposts. Seeking maximum profit from the English attachment to their tobacco, the Spanish suppliers were setting high prices.

for Spanish tobacco instead of Spanish bullion at a time when Spanish soldiers were attacking Protestant princes.

Contemporary economic ideas drew a direct parallel between national wealth and the balance of foreign trade. National wealth, usually identified with the availability of bullion, was diminishing with every pound of Spanish tobacco imported. With smoking continuing to spread, the problem was getting worse. In 1614 £29,708 worth of Spanish tobacco had reached London.<sup>181</sup> By 1621 many were echoing Sylvester's condemnation of 'TOBACCO-*Mungers*, Bringers-in of it' because of their trade, 'Which yeerly costs (they say, by *Audit* found)/ Of better Wares an Hundred Thousand Pound'.<sup>182</sup> It was the government's duty to remedy this. There was, after all, an alternative. The guiding ethos behind English exploitation of the New World had always been that colonies would 'furnish England with supplies hitherto obtained from aliens'.<sup>183</sup> This provided the impetus for schemes such as the Earl of Warwick's proposed 'Association for the West Indies' which aimed at supplying the goods which the East India Company paid so much bullion for.<sup>184</sup> Apart from tobacco, the Virginia colony had been singularly unsuccessful in this regard. It had yielded little if any of the commodities (e.g. silk, drugs, spices, minerals) that were the currency of international trade. When Sir Edwin Sandys advocated the primacy of Virginian

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<sup>181</sup> Pagan, 'Growth of the London and Virginia Tobacco Trade', p. 248.

<sup>182</sup> J. Sylvester, Tobacco Battered and the Pipes Shattered (about their Ears that idely Idolize so base and barbarous a Weed; or at least-wise over-love so loathsome Vanitie) (London, 1616), lns. 813-6. These 'better wares' were still, of course being imported so, as the Parliament of 1621 recognised, the real loss was in bullion making tobacco an important cause of the lack of coinage.

<sup>183</sup> Beer argues that banning Spanish tobacco was 'a logical outcome of the prevailing economic ideas' (Beer, Origins of the British Colonial System, p. 116).

<sup>184</sup> During the parliamentary speeches of February 1621, Thomas Carew noted that there were many ways to export money but apparently none to bring it in. As a solution he stated 'we want a West Indies' (J. C. Appleby, 'An Association for the West Indies? English plans for a West India Company 1621-29', The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History 15 (1987), pp. 213-241, p. 217).



tobacco over Spanish his arguments were ‘strictly in conformity with the tenets of mercantilism’ and the objectives of colonisation.<sup>185</sup>

Sandys was well prepared when the Parliament of 1621 met.<sup>186</sup> On 22 February 1621 the Courts of the Virginia and Somers Islands Companies had resolved to petition the Commons about the king’s pro-Spanish tobacco policies which, they believed, would lead to ‘the vtter destrucc[i]on and overthrowe’ of both plantations.<sup>187</sup> Sandys enlisted the help of Edward Bennett, ‘a leading City merchant’<sup>188</sup>, who wrote a treatise detailing the damage to the English economy inflicted by the importation of tobacco from Spain.<sup>189</sup> Between February and April 1621 Sandys lobbied MPs to support a ban on the importation of all Spanish tobacco. Many MPs held interests in the colonial companies. Many more would have supported measures challenging monopolies, offering an easy solution to a pressing economic problem and parading anti-Spanish sentiment.<sup>190</sup> With Sir Edwin Sandys formally leading the attack in the House the interests of Virginia would have been voiced loudly and were likely to have been heard sympathetically.

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<sup>185</sup> Beer, Origins of the British Colonial System, p. 115 fn. 1.

<sup>186</sup> For details on this debate see Notestein, Common Debates, 1621. For an analysis of Sandys role see Rabb, Sandys, pp. 230-36.

<sup>187</sup> RVC 1, pp. 442-3.

<sup>188</sup> Bennett was involved in colonial projects and traded with Virginia throughout the period (R. Brenner, Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London’s Overseas Traders, 1550-1653 (Cambridge, 1993), p. 143).

<sup>189</sup> E. Bennett, A Treatise Deuided into Three Parts, Touching the Inconueniences, That the Importation of tobacco Out of Spaine, Hath Brought into this Land viz 1. In the first is shewed how treasure was vsually brought into this land. 2. In the second, what hath and doth hinder the bringing of it. 3. In the third, how to remedie the one, and the other (London, 1620). Bennett’s seven page tract stated that ‘the maine decay of Trade, and the chiefe cause that hindereth the importation of Bullion out of Spaine is Tobacco, for there is consumed by all computation, yeerely in this land, three hundred thousand weight’ which cost the realm ‘a hundred thousand Pounds’. Short of a total prohibition, Bennett argued that tobacco did not actually grow in Spain and that Virginian colonists were just as capable of growing quality tobacco as Spanish ones. On 12 April, Sandys successfully gained a free membership of the Virginia Company for Bennett in appreciation of his efforts on the Company’s behalf (RVC 1, p. 446).

Reporting for a sub-committee back to the Grand Committee looking into economic affairs on 17 April 1621 Sandys listed five causes for the general decay of trade and shortage of coin. Of these, only the importation of Spanish tobacco spawned any heated debate.<sup>191</sup> Unsurprisingly, the sub-committee had resolved that the best remedy for this was to ‘supply Tobacco out of Virginia, and the Summer Islands; and to prohibit all other Tobacco’.<sup>192</sup> Informed that ‘1,000 Weight of Tabacco [was] spent every Day in England’, the Grand Committee unanimously resolved that Spanish tobacco be banned. The following day the tobacco question was opened for debate before the whole House.

The veteran parliamentarian Sir Edward Coke argued that if Virginia was allowed to plant tobacco then people in England should be allowed to do so too: ‘for if badd, badd in all, if good, lett England allso plant’.<sup>193</sup> This revival of the threat of competition from growers in England was followed by challenges to the legality, according to treaties with Spain, of restricting the movement of a particular commodity. While some expressed concern about retaliatory restrictions by the Spanish, others backed Sandys and Virginia. Then Cranfield shifted the debate by urging that they ‘banish all Tobacco, in respect of the Decay of Trade, and Coin by it;

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<sup>190</sup> For an exploration of anti-Spanish sentiment at this time see: C. S. R. Russell, ‘Sir Thomas Wentworth and Anti-Spanish Sentiment 1621-1624’ in J. F. Merritt (ed.), The Political World of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, 1621-1641 (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 47-62.

<sup>191</sup> Commons Journal 1, p. 579. The others were falsification of perpetuannaes (a durable woollen fabric), unskilful commodity dealing by those who should restrict themselves to retailing, custom free sugar imports and impositions on customs duties.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621, 3, pp. 8-12. Coke also asserted that rules on the disposition of tobacco could only be set by an Act of Parliament or by a Privy Council resolution while Parliament was in session.



and the Spoiling of the Subjects manners by it'.<sup>194</sup> This prompted a number of MPs to argue for a total prohibition.<sup>195</sup>

This unexpected and calculated interjection in favour of total tobacco abolition by the king's representative put the Virginia lobby on the defensive. Sandys wanted an unequivocal resolution against foreign tobacco. The abolitionists and their opportunistic new allies insisted upon a broad resolution against tobacco in general. Sandys was forced to compromise and accept an inclusive 'Act for Restraint of the inordinate Use of Tobacco'.<sup>196</sup> When the bill 'concerning Tobacco' was finally passed on 25 May Sandys and the committee had been forced to concede that Roe and his fellow monopolists could continue to restrict imports until 1 October 1621 and sell Spanish tobacco for a full year after that. A further concession to those who championed the rights of English growers granted liberty for tobacco to be grown in England for the use of the planter but not for sale. Nevertheless, this bill was a recognition that Virginian and national interests depended upon the ending, as soon as practicable, of reliance on the Spanish tobacco trade.

The tobacco bill threatened the interests of the Spanish merchants who traded in tobacco, the customs farmers who levied the duties on it and the Crown which could not afford any diminution of its revenues at all. However, as Sandys well knew, the

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<sup>194</sup> Commons Journal, 1, p. 581.

<sup>195</sup> Cary urged the Commons 'to banish Tobacco generally, and help Virginia by some other means'. Towerson suggested that 'except we banish all Tobacco, Spanish Tobacco will be brought in as plentifully as now'. Sir Guy Palmes stated 'that Tobacco hindereth all the Kingdom in Health, and otherwise – To banish all' (Ibid., pp. 579-81 and Notestein, Commons Debates, 1621, 3, pp. 8-12). The allegiances of different contributors to this debate could repay further study. For example, Towerson was deputy governor of the Merchant Adventurers. However, here it is only necessary to outline the broad components of the debate.

<sup>196</sup> The Roe/Jacob patent was due to expire that October.

king not the Parliament would have the final say. Would James be willing to moderate his ban on English growers and lose the revenues from what had become a profitable monopoly all for the benefit of a political opponent whose hold on the Virginia Company and presence in parliament were undesirable? It was unlikely. It was more probable that the bill would be denied Royal Assent and that Sandys would be arrested. It was and so was he.<sup>197</sup>

With little prospect of relief from the impositions and trade restrictions of the monopolists, the financial crisis within the Virginia Company continued to worsen. Allegations and counter allegations of mismanagement of the colony heightened tensions between the Sandys faction and those who supported the king's choice for Treasurer, Sir Thomas Smythe. To make matters worse, the Privy Council ordered that all Virginian tobacco had to be landed in England before re-exportation.<sup>198</sup> Despite repeated protestations, even tobacco exported to the Netherlands, or exchanged directly for cattle in Ireland would now be subject to English customs and monopolist inspection. Despite his assurances, James seems to have been largely unconcerned about the tribulations of the Virginia colonists. They could grow large quantities of good quality tobacco.<sup>199</sup> The Company could ship it to England. However, despite the lucrative market in England, only negligible profits filtered through to the colonists and the Company. Revenue considerations and monopolist interests in England apparently still held primacy over their needs.

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<sup>197</sup> See C. Thompson, 'The Reaction of the House of Commons in November and December 1621 to the Confinement of Sir Edwin Sandys', *Historical Journal* 40 (1997).

<sup>198</sup> *APC 1621-3*, p. 73.

<sup>199</sup> It functioned as their currency in the payment of wages and purchase of necessities.



However, circumstances were changing again. Cranfield's influence in the formation of government policy had been strengthened by his promotion in 1621 to the position of Lord Treasurer. At Court the close alliance of the king's son and his favourite, Prince Charles and the Duke of Buckingham, was beginning to overshadow other factional interests. With increasing prospect of war with Spain and continuing economic difficulties, the unlimited importation of Spanish tobacco was becoming untenable. On 14 December 1621 Cranfield accordingly wrote to Buckingham suggesting that the farmers of the tobacco impost should only import 60,000 lbs. of Spanish tobacco and that no restraint should be put on imports from Virginia and the Bermudas.<sup>200</sup> This was a complete reversal of the policy constructed prior to the Parliament of 1621. Limiting the importation of Spanish tobacco would inevitably diminish the profits of the customs farmers and thus the Crown.

The reason for this policy shift is uncertain. Perhaps the undeniable logic that the profits of Roe and his associates were at the expense of the wider economy had finally been recognised by policy makers. 'That private interest should unquestionably yield to public welfare was the cardinal doctrine of mercantalism'.<sup>201</sup> Perhaps Sandys' arguments for Virginian tobacco had been accepted earlier in the year but could only be acted upon when divorced from his assertions against monopolies in general. Whatever the case, government policy was already shifting towards Sandys' position when dramatic news arrived that pushed Virginia towards the top of the government's list of priorities. On 22 March 1622 Indians swept through the colony killing 347 men, women and children and capturing others. The 'lost' Roanoke colony of 1587 had

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<sup>200</sup> Beer, *Origins of the British Colonial System*, p. 122 fn.5. It seems more likely that this was an attempt to get Buckingham's support for this policy shift than the implementation of a directive from

stifled interest and investment in colonial ventures for a generation. This disaster threatened nothing less. Efforts to persuade investors and potential colonists of the wonderful prospects in Virginia could not counter such widely advertised danger from the 'savages'. While recriminations abounded about who had left the colony in so weak a defensive position, James took action to preserve his overseas possessions from imminent collapse. Arms from the Tower were quickly despatched.<sup>202</sup> James also took renewed interest in the election of Virginia Company officers and in the financial affairs of the Company.<sup>203</sup>

Sandys was re-elected again. Although the king would have preferred to do business with the Smythe faction, Cranfield made a private overture to Sandys about re-allocating the contract for sole importation of tobacco into England and Ireland to the colonial companies. He was willing to offer this monopoly which 'might redound to the great benefitt of the Plantac[i]ons' in exchange for a 'valuable rent' to the king.<sup>204</sup> To save the colony, James was willing to grant a profitable concession to his political opponents so long as his revenue was not diminished. This was a viable alliance of interests because both the king's revenues and the survival of the Virginia Company depended upon keeping tobacco prices high. The king wanted £20,000. Beer calculates that this would have required tobacco prices of nearly 6s per pound.<sup>205</sup> Since 1618 the Virginia Company had been trying to establish a minimum selling

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the king.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>202</sup> Newton, 'Lord Sackville's Papers', pp. 503-5. (July 1622). The king granted the Virginia Company arms and armour 'of his majesties princely gift and bountie, without anything to be paid for the same'.

<sup>203</sup> *RVC* 2, pp. 35-6.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>205</sup> Beer, *Origins of the British Colonial System*, p. 127 fn. 1.



price while prices continued to fall to as low as 2s per pound.<sup>206</sup> There was evidently enough common ground for James and his most vociferous critic to do business but were Sandys and his anti-monopolist associates willing to become monopolists themselves?

The answer was yes.<sup>207</sup> Sir Arthur Ingram, who had also been present at the meeting between Cranfield and Sandys, advised Sandys that it would be less dangerous to the Company to pay for this privilege 'in specie' rather than in money. For the tobacco rich, money poor Virginia and Somers Islands Companies these were 'easy terms'. For the king, this signified a willingness to become a tobacco trader. He would no longer be merely taxing English fools who smoked. He would be supplying tobacco to them. A few days later Sandys told Cranfield that it was 'not impossible' that the Companies would agree to surrender a quarter of their tobacco to be 'discharged of all other burdens'.<sup>208</sup> Cranfield suggested a third and that the old customs of 6d per pound might have to stand. He recommended that Sandys consult with the Companies and assured him that 'he would helpe to bringe the matter to a reasonable composic[i]on and such as might be no great burden to the Companie'.<sup>209</sup> Although somewhat wary and eager to scrutinise the implications of the offer, the Court of the Virginia Company voted to 'entertayne this Proposition' by 'unanimous consent'. A committee of the two Companies was chosen to discuss the matter further and consult with Cranfield.

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<sup>206</sup> RVC 2, p. 56.

<sup>207</sup> Rabb states that Sandys 'leadership of the Virginia Company reveals him both at his best and at his worst' (Rabb, Sandys, p. 327). This decision to abandon principle and accept control over a monopoly seems to confirm this.

<sup>208</sup> RVC 2, p. 37.

The Virginia Company decided to delay the sale of tobacco recently arrived from Virginia until negotiations of the contract were agreed.<sup>210</sup> At an extraordinary court on 29 June 1622 Sandys detailed his progress.<sup>211</sup> Cranfield had agreed twelve of the fifteen conditions set by the Company representatives. These included extending the ban on growing tobacco to Ireland, restricting the importation of tobacco from Spain and setting a maximum retail price of 10s per pound (which would diminish the profitability of remaining Spanish supplies). Additionally, it was suggested that Sandys and his supporters would gain a more favourable hearing before the king in the continuing factional disputes within the Companies. In exchange, Cranfield asserted that the king had to receive revenue from tobacco of at least £20,000 per annum as well as the normal duty of 6d per pound. This entailed the surrender to the king of a third of all tobacco and agreement that the Company would have to pay all freight costs.<sup>212</sup> The companies would also have to accept the continuation of the patent for garbling which added a 4d tax to every pound of tobacco. Probably as a sop to leading merchants who were losing their control of the trade with these new arrangements and possibly to accommodate wealthy smokers who preferred it, Cranfield also insisted that the Virginia Company import a specified minimum amount of tobacco from Spain.

In the face of heated objections at a packed meeting of the Virginia Company on 1 July 1622, Sandys reminded members that if they did not accept the tobacco contract some one else would. He argued persuasively to accept Cranfield's terms. Each contentious item was voted upon as a choice between yielding to the king's demand or

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., p. 56.



abandoning the contract all together. Two days later, with only one dissenting hand raised, the Company agreed to accept the terms of the contract. By November contract negotiations were well advanced. The only question remaining was what type of Spanish tobacco would be imported, poor quality or best Varinas.

All seemed set. Then, on 20 November Ingram wrote to the Company that the contract would go ahead only if the Companies agreed to certain new propositions 'w[i]thout any further variac[i]on at all', discussion of which 'had so longe kept their L[ordshi]ps in Counsell'.<sup>213</sup> After a debate they concurred deeming the bargain with the king 'not as good meat well sawced but of a porc[i]on necessarie for their health'.<sup>214</sup> Assuming their acquiescence would conclude the deal, attention shifted to the practicalities of officers and facilities to administer the monopoly.

The conclusion of the tobacco contract between Cranfield and the Virginia Company had revived the fortunes of the investors. With a minimum of £40,000 per annum anticipated as the Company's share of tobacco revenues, the colony could be adequately supplied. However, it also revived disputes within the Company. On 4 December John Wrote, an erstwhile supporter of Sandys, questioned the proposed salaries for the officers who would administer the system and raised doubts about the value of the contract to the planters.<sup>215</sup> An acrimonious dispute ensued in which Wrote challenged the whole manner in which Sandys and his allies pushed through the

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-64.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> *RVC* 2, pp 138-40.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>215</sup> It was argued that it was especially bad for those who had financed their own colonial efforts and whose tobacco did not belong to the company. Details on Wrote's interjection and its consequences are in Rabb, *Sandys*, pp. 363- 79.

contract and governed the Company. Alderman Johnson and others of the Smith faction concurred. The argument raged late into the night and rumbled on into February 1623 without resolution. On 24 February 1623 Sir John Wolstenholme<sup>216</sup> and others who had previously held the patent for collecting duties, suggested before Lord Treasurer Cranfield (now the Earl of Middlesex) that the contract should not proceed. With the backing of Alderman Johnson and his allies, they argued that both the king and the planters would be better served by retaining the 12d per pound customs.<sup>217</sup> Both sides in the dispute petitioned the king and Privy Council about the contract and allegations of mismanagement. In April, with agreement evidently unattainable, the king peremptorily dissolved the contract.

Over the next few months, disputes between the rival factions in the Virginia Company became increasingly violent. Chamberlain reported that the Earl of Warwick and Lord Cavendish had quarrelled so much that they had ‘crossed the sea to fight’ and that others were quarrelling in the streets and on the Exchange.<sup>218</sup> With the Company unable to govern its own affairs in England there was little prospect of them offering the necessary support to the colonists whose relations with the Indians remained hostile. The tobacco planters were becoming desperate. In December 1622 they petitioned the king urging him to make tobacco a Crown commodity.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> For biographical information on this wealthy customs farmer and merchant see DNB and F. Armitage, ‘Sir John Wolstenholme, a Merchant Adventurer of London’, Home Counties Magazine vol. 14 (1912).

<sup>217</sup> RVC 2, pp. 297-8.

<sup>218</sup> CSPD 1623-25, p. 30, Chamberlaine to Carlton, London (26 July 1623). Another casualty of the continuing disputes was Cranfield who had made many enemies in the Company who later used accusations about his double-dealing to help bring him down.

<sup>219</sup> This petition from the ‘ancient planters and adventurers in Virginia, on behalf of themselves and the rest of the poor distressed planters there’ complained that ‘after the freight, customs, and duties on tobacco are discharged, it is of no value and they are like to perish unless protected’. They urged the king to ‘make tobacco his own commodity and settle the price and quantity to be yearly taken from the Colony, so that they may in future plant some real commodity’ (CSP Colonial 1574-1660, p. 35). This



In July 1623 the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General formally reported their agreement with James 'that the Virginia patent was flawed and could be revoked'.<sup>220</sup> Legal proceedings were instituted and, in May 1624, the Company was finally dissolved. 'Thereupon it was determined to start upon an entirely new basis, and instead of renting or farming the monopoly to private individuals, to erect a governmental monopoly for the direct benefit of the exchequer'.<sup>221</sup> On 2 July 1624 Solicitor-General Heath was instructed to make a contract between the crown and the planters 'for all their tobacco to be delivered for the King's use'.<sup>222</sup> The terms offered were beneficial to the producer (around 3s per pound for up to 400,000lbs) but revenue for the crown would be guaranteed by securing high prices from the consumer.<sup>223</sup> That revenue could have been considerable. In July 1624 it was reported that the profits for the Crown from the importation and sale of 300,000 lbs. of Virginia tobacco, 100,000 lbs. of Somers Islands tobacco and 50,000 lbs. of Spanish tobacco was £93,350.<sup>224</sup>

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was calculated to please the king who had made his dissatisfaction with Virginia only producing tobacco clear.

<sup>220</sup> Rabb, Sandys, p. 380.

<sup>221</sup> Beer, Origins of the British Colonial System, p. 134.

<sup>222</sup> CSPD 1623-25, p. 290.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.* (£15 per hundredweight). Beer estimates that, by this time, tobacco's true value was only around 8d per pound (Beer, Origins of the British Colonial System, p. 252). Menard presents a range of prices for 1623-4 of between 8d and 28d per pound (R. R. Menard, 'A Note on Chesapeake Tobacco Prices, 1618-1660', The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 84, p. 405). Nevertheless, the terms noted in a rough draft of a proposition for the king's 'pre-emption of tobacco' suggested that planters would be paid 2s 6d, 3s or 3s 6d for different grades of tobacco to a total of 400,000 lbs. (Historical Manuscripts Commission 8<sup>th</sup> Report (1881), part 2, p.45). The date of this note, May 1623, suggests that plans for the king to buy all the tobacco were being considered soon after the planters petition of December 1622 and before an answer had been received from legal officers regarding the possible dissolution of the Virginia Company.

<sup>224</sup> CSP Colonial 1574-1660, pp. 68-9.

In subsequent years, the tobacco trade returned to private hands. However, as table 5.3 shows, the impost on tobacco continued to yield significant revenue with varying sums being levied depending upon the type and quality of the tobacco.

Table 5.3

Receipts of the new impositions on tobacco, Michaelmas 1627 - 1628<sup>225</sup>

<u>Quantity (lbs)</u>	Type	Duty per lb.	£	s	d
<b>London</b>					
253,198	Virginian	6d	6,329	19	0
159,635	Bermudan	3d	1,995	9	9
7,251	Bermudan	6d	181	5	6
28,793	Brazilian	6d	719	16	6
57,963	Spanish	18d	4,347	4	6
<b>Outports</b>					
107,056	Virginian	6d	2,676	8	0
9,000	Virginian	3d	112	10	0
1,111	Bermudan	6d	27	15	6
15,620	Bermudan	3d	195	5	0
21,670	Brazilian	6d	541	15	0
11,395	Spanish	18d	854	12	6
672,692	<b>Totals</b>		17,982	0	3

<sup>225</sup> Table drawn from summary of accounts of John Jacob, impost farmer, reproduced in N. Williams, 'England's Tobacco Trade in the Reign of Charles I', *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 65 (1957), p. 414. No similar record survives for James's reign but the distinctions between types and qualities of tobacco were likely to have been standard practice at least since Jacob took over the collection of the impost.



As the new 'overseer' of Virginia, James issued orders direct to the Governor of the colony to control the production, quality and movement of tobacco. The Governor was specifically cautioned not to permit the sale of any tobacco to the 'Hollanders, who are now freighting ships for that trade'.<sup>226</sup> All tobacco had to come to England first. In September 1624 and again in March 1625 James issued proclamations restricting tobacco imports to those from the colonies.<sup>227</sup> In November 1624 the king's commissioners for Virginia recommended appointing Edward Bennett and Edward Ditchfield, and four other London merchants to mark and seal legally imported tobacco.<sup>228</sup> These men were later appointed to act as the king's agents 'to receive the Tobacco of those Colonyes at and for such Prices as we have agreed to give for the same'.<sup>229</sup> Although these arrangements still caused controversy, the importation of tobacco into England had become an integral part of colonial policy directly administered by the Crown for the greater good of Virginia and thus England as well as for the benefit of the Treasury. The importation of small quantities of Spanish tobacco was often still allowed but Virginian tobacco had effectively supplanted Spanish as Sandys had advocated in 1621. James had even agreed to reinvest some of his tobacco revenues into Virginia, principally for security measures. The colony was, after all, going to be built on smoke.

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<sup>226</sup> CSPD 1623-25, p. 290 (July? 1624).

<sup>227</sup> 'A Proclamation Concerning Tobacco' and 'A Proclamation for the Utter Prohibiting the Importation and Use of All Tobacco Which is not of the Proper Growth of the Colonies of Virginia and the Summer Islands'. Hughes and Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 1, pp. 600-06, 626-33.

<sup>228</sup> CSPD 1623-25, p. 356. Edward Bennett appears to be the same person approached by Sandys in 1620-21 to help with the campaign against Spanish tobacco. Ditchfield wrote a defence of the new arrangements: E. Ditchfield, *Considerations Touching the New Contract for Tobacco, As the Same Hath Beene Propounded by Maister Ditchfield, and Other Vndertakers* (London, 1625).

<sup>229</sup> Rymer, *Foedera* XVI, pp. 668-72.

Throughout the four phases in the development of tobacco's commercial, political and regulatory context, the role of the king was of paramount importance. His attempts to tax tobacco out of fashion in England with the 6s 8d imposition raised the commercial profile of the commodity and highlighted the possibilities of exploiting it for private or public profit. After 1612 tobacco revenues increased as the king and his advisers, particularly Cranfield, sold the right to collect duties and established importing monopolies for substantial rents. Between 1618 and 1621 James was able to take advantage of competition between the customs farmers and their backers, the Virginia Company and English growers to further increase his revenues and consolidate his authority over this particular trade. After Parliament had resolved that Spanish tobacco was harming the balance of trade and argued for the colonial product, James permitted other amendments to his arrangements that further strengthened his hold over tobacco.

Reacting to and manipulating events, James's stewardship of the tobacco trade culminated in the constriction of supplies of Spanish tobacco, the prohibition of all English-grown tobacco and the facilitation of a thriving trade in Virginian tobacco. This 'battle of the brands' had not been fought on the taste buds of consumers. It had been fought amidst the politics of the Court, the Virginia Company and the Parliament. It had intersected with wider disputes about relations with Spain, monopolies, impositions and declining trade. The belief in the 1620s that tobacco could both save the Virginia colony and gain revenue was effectively an economic and political vindication. By 1625 James was at the centre of a regulatory framework governing the production and movement of tobacco from the point of production in his colonies to the wholesale markets of his kingdoms and beyond. His proclamations and orders fixed quotas and prices, governed quality control and even the production



of tobacco pipes. Such measures ensured that regular supplies of Virginian tobacco would be available to fill the pipes of millions of smokers. The author of the Counterblaste had become the tobacco king.

## Chapter 6

# Charles I's regulation of the tobacco retail trade

- The impetus for a tobacco retail licensing system
- Initial moves towards implementation of the licensing system at local level
- A centralising initiative: the shift to a licence by patent system
- The 'farming' of tobacco vending licences
- Reform and disintegration

When Charles acceded to the throne in March 1625 he quickly announced his intention to continue his father's policies towards tobacco. In A Proclamation Touching Tobacco which passed the Great Seal on 12 April, he confirmed that the arrangements announced a month earlier would be rigidly enforced.<sup>1</sup> The Crown would retain its control over tobacco from the point of production in Virginia and the English Caribbean to the wholesaler in England. Those who, 'intending onely their private gaine', continued 'secretly, and by stealth, to import and utter great quantities of [prohibited] tobacco' would be prosecuted.<sup>2</sup> In 1634 Charles attempted to extend further his control over the trade with the introduction of tobacco vending licences. This chapter considers this regulatory policy from its inception to its collapse in the months leading up to the Long Parliament. Examining the balance between moral and

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<sup>1</sup> J. F. Larkin (ed.), Stuart Royal Proclamations, 2: Royal Proclamations of King Charles I, 1625-1646 (Oxford, 1983), pp. 11-12. The earlier proclamation prohibiting all except colonial tobacco had passed the Great Seal on 7 March 1625 (J. F. Larkin and P. L. Hughes (eds.), Stuart Royal Proclamations, 1: Royal Proclamations of King James I, 1603-1625 (Oxford, 1973), pp. 626-33). By this time, with James's health failing, Charles and Buckingham had already assumed a prominent role in the formulation and administration of policy. Charles's proclamation, drafted about two weeks after King James's death, was thus probably a straightforward continuation of policy.

<sup>2</sup> Larkin, Stuart Royal Proclamations 2, p. 11. Charles noted that another smuggled load had crept in since the James's death.



financial priorities in the construction of royal policy, it relates tobacco regulation to wider debates over Charles's rule. It argues that it was the centralisation of enforcement and administration arrangements in the late 1630s, rather than perceptions of its inherent legitimacy or fairness, that garnered increasing hostility towards this particular policy of the Personal Rule.<sup>3</sup>

Beresford noted that the tobacco vending licence system illustrates 'the paternal and the pickpocket' in Charles's policies. Nonetheless, he presented the introduction of tobacco vending licences as an 'indirect, clumsy and unpopular method of raising indirect taxes on articles of popular consumption' masquerading as an attempt to improve morals by proclamation.<sup>4</sup> This familiar perception of Charles's Prerogative Rule suggests that tobacco licensing was an ill-conceived, inefficient and necessarily contentious policy designed solely to exploit. It implies that, if guided by a Parliament, the king would not have done this.

Sharpe notes that 'the proclamations and Council registers of the 1630s are dominated by orders regulating processes of manufacture, merchant companies and incorporations'. However, he argues that even in the case of tobacco 'it would be cynical to assume that only fiscal considerations motivated the desire to regulate and control'.<sup>5</sup> This chapter argues that, in order to gain a fuller picture of the policy, the

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<sup>3</sup> Fielding notes that recent work highlights the difficulties in establishing contemporary attitudes to the Personal Rule because of 'historians mistakenly seeking ideological opposition to the regime in official sources covering the administration of policy in the localities where it was not appropriate for such opposition to be expressed' (J. Fielding, 'Opposition to the Personal Rule of Charles I: the diary of Robert Woodford, 1637-41', *Historical Journal* 31 (1988), p. 777). However, as this chapter illustrates, such official sources do highlight points of contention and the impact of government initiatives.

<sup>4</sup> M. W. Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences 1632-41', *Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research* 7 (1955), p. 128.

<sup>5</sup> K. Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), p. 245.

Personal Rule should not be viewed as an undifferentiated whole. Licensing tobacco vendors, one of a raft of early policies regulating the Caroline economy, was initially a viable and largely uncontroversial way to regulate the tobacco trade. As Aylmer and Sharpe contend, Charles's rule without Parliament was not characterised by scant respect for the law.<sup>6</sup> His use of prerogative powers to order conformity to his wishes about tobacco was tempered by careful regard for local autonomy and potential legal challenges. Through his Privy Council and the tobacco commissioners, the king oversaw the successful introduction of a system of licensing by patent that created hundreds of local tobacco vending monopolies and cartels across the country, providing a network of outlets for legitimate supplies of tobacco. This united the interests of the Crown, which sought to preserve its customs revenue, and the licensed trader, whose profits depended upon the suppression of unlicensed outlets. Additional revenue was raised but, more importantly, the licensing system engaged local people in the battle against those selling tobacco from illegal sources.

However, this system relied heavily on the willingness of individuals to join the scheme and the ability of central authorities to administer and enforce it in every parish. Many traders continued to sell tobacco without a licence. There were plenty of customers. Many smokers persisted in buying their tobacco where and from whom they chose according to price, quality and type of tobacco on offer rather than from an 'authorised' vendor merely because he or she held a royal patent. Charles needed to

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<sup>6</sup> Aylmer considers it to have been one of the king's main strengths 'to use the existing legal system for the enforcement of his policies' (G. E. Aylmer, The Personal Rule of Charles I (London, 1989), pp. 21-23). Sharpe says that Charles I 'quite genuinely' claimed that his 'intention was ever to govern according to the law and not otherwise' (Sharpe, The Personal Rule of Charles I, p. 932).



take away this choice by effectively suppressing unlicensed traders. As this chapter shows, by 1636 it was evident that more pro-active measures were needed to compel a greater uptake of licences and enforce conformity to the regulations. In 1637 Charles 'farmed out' the licensing scheme, creating the kind of over-arching monopoly held in contempt by many. This had political consequences. Efforts to enforce licensing were passively, then actively, resisted by unlicensed tobacco retailers and their customers. Despite subsequent attempts to reform the way the 'Tobacco Office' functioned, the licensing scheme disintegrated before the Long Parliament met.

### The impetus for a tobacco retail licensing system

The central element in Charles's policies towards tobacco was the connection established in the early 1620s between the interests of the English tobacco-producing colonies and those of the crown. Apart from a limited amount of Spanish tobacco imported under licence from the king,<sup>7</sup> it was forbidden for 'anyone to import, buy, sell, or use any tobacco which is not the growth of Virginia or of the Sommer Islands'.<sup>8</sup> All legitimately imported tobacco was purchased at the docks on the king's behalf at prices agreed between a committee of the Privy Council and investors in the 'late' Virginia Company.<sup>9</sup> In August 1627 Charles reiterated his prohibitions and commanded that 'no tobacco shall be imported from English colonies without licence

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<sup>7</sup> In July 1627, publicly 'condescending to the immoderate desire of taking tobacco', Charles permitted the importation of 50,000 lbs. of Spanish tobacco per annum for his 'own particular use' (CSPD 1627-8, p. 58). This was in response to an application by Philip Burlamachi and William Anes to act as the king's agents in this venture. The licence to import it had been issued in October 1626 (CSPD 1625-6 p. 576).

<sup>8</sup> CSPD 1625-6, p. 71 (9 April 1625).

<sup>9</sup> APC 1625-6, p. 23 (11 April 1625). The Earl of Dorset, Lord Cavendish and Lord Sheffield (who had been members of the Virginia Company) were appointed to arrange terms for the purchase of tobacco

under the Great Seal, and when imported shall be sold to Royal Commissioners appointed in that behalf, from whom only tobacco may be bought'.<sup>10</sup>

According to this system, legitimate supplies of tobacco were guided through a series of checks from the producer to the wholesaler. The governor of Virginia was required to check the quality and quantity of tobacco leaving the colony and to ensure that it was all bound for England.<sup>11</sup> When the tobacco arrived in London, Sir John Wolstenholme or one of the other customs farmers was notified and the tobacco was moved to the Customs House where it was again inspected and weighed. Duties were paid, the tobacco was stamped and then purchased by the king's commissioners who sold it on to merchants, like Matthew Craddock and Thomas Stone, who in turn supplied the retailers.<sup>12</sup> Legitimate tobacco was thus clearly identifiable. It carried an official stamp, was available at a price reflecting the payment of duties and could ultimately be traced back to the Customs House.

These arrangements could only be circumvented with the express permission of the Privy Council who heard petitions from traders in the outports and suppliers of

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from Virginia along with the Solicitor General, Nathaniel Rich and Sir John Wolstenholme (customs farmer). They were instructed to confer with investors in the 'late' company of Virginia.

<sup>10</sup> CSPD 1627-8, p. 289 (9 August 1627). For details on how much tobacco was being imported and by whom in 1627-8 see: N. Williams, 'England's Tobacco Trade in the Reign of Charles I', The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 65 (1957).

<sup>11</sup> On 13 May 1625, King Charles confirmed that, following the collapse of the Virginia Company, the Crown would henceforth govern the Virginia colony. This included the production and movement of tobacco. He instructed the Governor to check both the quantity and quality of tobacco leaving the colony. For the better encouragement of the planters, the tobacco would be purchased by the king's agents at a fixed price ('A Proclamation for Settling the Plantation of Virginia'. Larkin, Stuart Royal Proclamations 2, pp. 26-9).

<sup>12</sup> Craddock was engaged in trading to and from Virginia, Barbados and Massachusetts Bay. He was also a key figure in the Virginia/England/Levant tobacco re-export trade in 1637. Stone was one of the partners engaged in the St Kitts plantation as well as the Virginia trade. See R. Brenner, Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653 (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 155, 169, 184-8. For the relationship between such individuals and the finances of the king see also: R. Ashton, The City and the Court, 1603-1643 (Cambridge, 1979).



isolated cargoes of tobacco from other sources. For example, in 1627 the owners of a cargo in the *Temperance* sought permission to land their tobacco at the Southampton customs house so they could sell it, buy supplies and return to Virginia without delay.<sup>13</sup> The Privy Council also heard disputes about ownership and customs duties and issued warrants to seek out 'forbidden tobacco' and seize it 'for the King's use'. Throughout the late 1620s and 1630s, Henry Somerscales and others were granted warrants to seek out tobacco grown in England.<sup>14</sup> Gabriell Marsh (Marshall of the Admiralty), Sir James Bagg (Vice Admiral of Devon) and others were ordered to intercept and seize illicit cargoes.<sup>15</sup> Regulations governing the importation of legitimate tobacco brought order to the trade and facilitated the collection of customs. However, to be fully effective and to ensure that both the crown and importers made their profits, the surreptitious movement and sale of illegal tobacco had to be stopped.

Despite the issue of warrants and orders to intercept shipping, large quantities of illicit tobacco continued to reach English markets. Some came from Virginia and the English Caribbean and was allegedly of poor quality or intended for export markets.<sup>16</sup> More came from Spanish and Portuguese colonies and from the Channel Islands.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *CSPColonial 1574-1660*, p. 87. The ship's captain, William Saker, refused to allow them to off-load.

<sup>14</sup> Henry Somerscales, noted in chapter 5, petitioned for a warrant to seek out illegal crops claiming that 'his whole estate had been expended in finding out the mystery of planting and curing tobacco, now prohibited by the late proclamation' (PRO SP16/2/232). Somerscales also asked for permission to sell any tobacco he seized on the king's behalf.

<sup>15</sup> On 16 June 1630, the Privy Council gave Gabriel Marsh a warrant to intercept a particular ship. The Privy Council stated that, 'Whereas we are informed that there is a ship lately come from Virginia laden with tobacco, belonging to one Samuel Vassal, and hath been anchored three or four days in Tilbury with purpose to defraud his Majesty of his customs'. They instructed Marsh to bring the ship to the Customs House (*APC June 1630- June 1631*, pp. 19). Similar orders were issued to Bagg in April 1631 (*Ibid.*, pp. 255, 291).

<sup>16</sup> Re-exportation qualified the merchant for a partial rebate on duties but, with attempts to restrict the amount of tobacco grown, Dutch factors were still routinely receiving cargoes direct from Virginia. To stop this and other illicit landings of tobacco in England, Charles ordered that all tobacco had to be initially landed in London.

<sup>17</sup> The Privy Council specifically required that tobacco grown in the Channel Islands be destroyed on 1 March 1631 (PRO SP16/186/10).

Once landed, it was very difficult to find. When the customs farmers complained about Walter Rue's 'secrett conveying into the Kingdom of Spanish tobacco', his house was searched but the tobacco was already gone.<sup>18</sup> Tobacco grown in England was the most elusive. Henry Somerscales, whose warrant to search out illegally grown tobacco was issued in September 1626, had been an English grower himself and so should have been well qualified to find it.<sup>19</sup> He and his deputies were authorised, with the assistance of Justices of the Peace as necessary, to take £100 bonds from offenders but little was achieved. In July 1627 the king issued further warrants to destroy tobacco growing in and around 17 Worcestershire and 39 Gloucestershire towns and villages.<sup>20</sup>

Local landowners', Justices' and constables' complicity in such illegal cultivation inhibited effective implementation of such warrants.<sup>21</sup> As Thirsk has shown, gentlemen's profits and investments, not to mention local jobs were at stake. In places such as Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, tobacco had become essential to the local

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<sup>18</sup> APC June- December 1626, p. 183 (14 August 1626). In his house they 'discovered severall inducements of suspicion' that the tobacco had just been moved. Rue was called before Star Chamber to answer for this.

<sup>19</sup> On 2 September 1626, Somerscales promised not to grow tobacco again (APC June- December 1626, p. 246). For biographical information on Somerscales and further details on English growers see J. Thirsk, Economic Policy and Projects (Oxford, 1978) and J. Thirsk, 'Projects for Gentlemen, Jobs for the Poor: Mutual Aid in the Vale of Tewkesbury, 1600-1630' in P. McGrath and J. Cannon (eds.), Essays in Bristol and Gloucestershire History (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1976), pp. 141-169.

<sup>20</sup> APC January- August 1627, pp. 409-10 (10? July 1627). Warrants issued to William King also included one for Wiltshire.

<sup>21</sup> Thirsk identifies connections between speculators and local landowners, particularly the influential Tracy family, who rented out land for tobacco cultivation (Thirsk, 'Projects for Gentlemen, Jobs for the Poor'). In July 1634, members of the Tracy family were prominent on a list of local officials ordered by the Privy Council to destroy local tobacco crops (PRO PC2/44/109-10). More will be said about tobacco growing in England in chapter 7.



economy.<sup>22</sup> Although historians rightly reject the idea that early modern Englishmen were narrowly parochial in their worldview, the persistence of tobacco growing in England, despite the repeated efforts of Charles and later Cromwell to suppress it, suggests that the needs of Virginia and the Treasury weighed less heavily than local needs.<sup>23</sup> Local officials were ‘caught between their obligations to their neighbours and their duties to the nation’.<sup>24</sup> As William King reported in 1631, lack of co-operation and ‘many great affronts’ prevented him from stopping local people gathering in their tobacco. They were, he added, ‘daily bring[ing] it to London by secret ways, and sell[ing] it for [i.e. representing it as] Virginia and Bermudas tobacco’.<sup>25</sup>

Cope notes that during the 1630s ‘the provision of revenue and the protection of authority seemed to be the paramount concerns’ of Charles’s government.<sup>26</sup> Illicit tobacco thus represented a considerable loss of revenue for the king and a direct snub to his authority. It also severely damaged the profits of those who traded in legally imported tobacco, the price of which had to reflect the various duties paid. With tobacco flooding the market from all directions, there was intense and, legitimate traders argued, unfair competition at the retail end of the supply chain. At the beginning of Charles’s reign, the ‘apothecaries, grocers, and other retailers of tobacco in an about London’ complained that ‘Lewd persons, under the pretence of selling tobacco, keep unlicenced alehouses, and others barter with mariners for stolen

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<sup>22</sup> E. Adlard, *Winchcombe Cavalcade* (London, 1939) has particular information on tobacco growing in this area. An anonymous text entitled *Harry Hangman’s Honor: or Gloucestershire Hangman’s Request to the Smokers or Tobacconists in London* (handwritten date 11 January 1655) was part of a continuing effort to keep tobacco growing in the area despite Cromwell’s armed attempts to quash it.

<sup>23</sup> For example, Sacks questions the idea, derived from local studies, of a political world where ‘obstructive localism’ often prevailed over ‘national interest’ (D. H. Sacks, ‘The Corporate Town and the English State: Bristol’s “Little businesses” 1625-1641’, *Past and Present* 110 (1986), p. 69).

<sup>24</sup> Sacks, ‘The Corporate Town and the English State’, p. 73.

<sup>25</sup> *CSPD 1631-3*, p. 224 (1631?).

<sup>26</sup> E. S. Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments 1629-1640* (London, 1987), p. 145.

[smuggled] and uncustomed tobacco, to the disadvantage of the petitioners'.<sup>27</sup> In 1630, the Privy Council received another petition on behalf of the London Grocers' Company and the Virginia merchants urging the introduction of tobacco retail licences to rectify this.<sup>28</sup> By harnessing moral concerns about the unrestrained use of tobacco to their commercial interests, they presented restricting the trade to 'safe hands' as a moral as well as economic imperative.<sup>29</sup>

This alliance of London grocers and Virginia merchants was a formidable lobby.<sup>30</sup> As Brenner has shown, merchants trading to the New World were a new group of increasingly affluent and influential traders.<sup>31</sup> Many of these 'new merchants' shared Puritan sympathies with the grocers and, especially when Parliaments met, wielded significant political power.<sup>32</sup> Their commercial and political opponents were the traditional favourites of the court: the customs farmers and the merchants of the chartered companies whose economic dominance was threatened, but not yet eclipsed by Brenner's 'new' merchants. In the matter of tobacco, both sides agreed on the need

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<sup>27</sup> CSPD 1625-6, p. 204 (1625?).

<sup>28</sup> PRO SP16/180/32. The proposal was directed to secretary Dorchester. Connections between these two groups would repay further study.

<sup>29</sup> See chapter 3.

<sup>30</sup> Ward shows that the influence of London trade guilds in the seventeenth-century reached far beyond the administration of their trade. See J. P. Ward, Metropolitan Communities: trade guilds, identity and change in early modern London (Stanford, 1997). See also J. P. Ward, 'Godliness, Commemoration and Community: the management of provincial schools by London trade guilds' in M. C. McClendon, J. P. Ward and M. MacDonald (eds.), Protestant Identities: religion, society and self-fashioning in post-Reformation England (Stanford, 1999), pp. 141-57.

<sup>31</sup> Brenner identifies three distinct groups of merchants at this time. There were those primarily trading to the Mediterranean and the East who were displacing but, nevertheless held much in common with, the Merchant Adventurers whose trade centred upon cloth etc. to Europe and the Baltic (Brenner, Merchants and Revolution, p. 51). These 'company merchants' competed with a group of 'new' merchants whose primary interest lay in colonial trade with the New World.

<sup>32</sup> Brenner suggests that, in the late 1630s, the 'new merchants' remained committed opponents of the crown in both metropolitan and national politics. Coward questions whether these 'new merchants' were as radical or as unified as Brenner seems to suggest (B. Coward, Review of Brenner's book, The London Journal 20 (1995), pp. 81-2).



for regulation. Sir Endymion Porter, a courtier, smoker and monopolist<sup>33</sup> criticised the Grocers' scheme because it merely gave control over the lucrative London trade to the grocers, leaving 'ye remote Countries' unreformed.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, his counter-proposal concurred that the tobacco retail trade needed to be reformed. Whatever the private interests of the rival petitioning groups, the solution they advocated was to regulate retailing by issuing licences. Both petitions were referred to the legal officers of the Privy Council.

King James's Treasury Commission had considered a similar course of action in 1613 when Captain Grice, a projector connected with the London Perfumers' Company, had suggested a scheme to licence some 6,000 London and 12,000 provincial retailers. Grice proposed limiting the sale of tobacco to licensed retailers who would each be charged £5 plus £1 per year rent for the right to trade.<sup>35</sup> Beresford suggests that this was 'only a projector's pipe-dream' because there were not enough shops or consumers to make it worthwhile. It is also possible that, at a time when efforts were directed to securing crown revenue from the customs on Spanish tobacco and any form of trade restriction was particularly controversial, Grice's scheme may have seemed unnecessary and perhaps even politically unacceptable.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For a biography of Porter see: G. Huxley, Endymion Porter: The Life of a Courtier 1587-1649 (London, 1959). Porter was part owner of the unpopular soap making patent of 1631 and many other ventures including the salt monopoly and fen drainage schemes. He was also a smoker. During his embassy to Brussels in 1634, his expenses included 12s for a pound of tobacco (Ibid., p. 221). See also D. Townsend, Life and Letters of Mr Endymion Porter (London, 1897).

<sup>34</sup> PRO PC2/41/526-8. Other signatories to the petition were Thomas Jay, whose involvement in the later enforcement of licensing is noted below, and Philip Warwick who had opposed the Sandys faction in the Virginia Company. Beresford suggests that Porter argued that the grocers sought only to secure the lucrative London trade for themselves (Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 129).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> See chapter 5.

By 1625 the influx of Virginian supplies and prohibitions on growing tobacco in England had transformed the politics of tobacco and the priorities of the king. James had recognised that informal networks trading in illegal tobacco were undermining his efforts to control supply and collect customs. He had complained that mariners and others 'doe so privily hide and conceale' tobacco and, 'either by themselves, or others by them to that purpose imployed, carry the same by small quantities to the houses or shops of Our subjects' to 'sell or proffer the same to bee sold'.<sup>37</sup> He had urged those offered such tobacco to report the offenders. Through Star Chamber and the Court of Exchequer he had resolved to prosecute and punish 'as well the importers of such Tobacco as the buyers, sellers, spenders, receivers and concealers thereof'.<sup>38</sup> Charles's scheme to regulate tobacco retailers was thus a logical extension of royal tobacco policy. With the apparent backing of the entire merchant community and respectable London shopkeepers, licensing also seemed politically acceptable.

On 6 January 1631 Charles issued a proclamation 'concerning Tobacco'.<sup>39</sup> He declared the tobacco trade a matter 'much concerning Us in Our honour and government' and complained that repeated attempts to control where tobacco was coming from were being persistently ignored. Despite his and his father's efforts, 'great quantities' of tobacco were still being grown in England. Poor quality tobacco from English colonies and 'an incredible quantity of Brasill and Spanish Tobacco' was still being imported and harming colonial interests. Customs duties were being evaded.

Merchants were 'unthriftilly vent[ing] the solide commodities of Our owne

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<sup>37</sup> 'A Proclamation for the Utter Prohibiting the Importation and Use of All Tobacco, Which is not of the Proper Growth of the Colonies of Virginia and the Summer Islands, or One of Them' (2 March 1625). Larkin and Hughes, Stuart Royal Proclamations 1. pp. 626-33.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



Kingdomes' in exchange for 'smoake'. Harnessing the support of the Virginia merchants and the 'Retailers and Sellers of Tobacco in and about Our Cities of London and Westminster', Charles had determined to act.

The protection of the honour of his government, his revenues, the economy and the colonies were not the only reasons for tackling this problem. Charles also complained that the 'bodies and manners of Our people' were being corrupted by 'so vaine and needlesse a Commoditie, which ought to be used as a Drugge onely, and not so vainely and wantonly as an evill habite of late times hath brought it unto'.<sup>40</sup> This complaint was not mere rhetoric. As has been shown above, many had noted the 'evils' of smoking, its impact on the health of the consumer's body and soul and its wider social consequences. Like his father, Charles considered it a responsibility of kingship and government to act for the good of the commonweal by upholding moral values, securing conformity and suppressing disorder.<sup>41</sup>

King Charles initiated a wave of reform measures at the start of his Personal Rule. In January 1631 to facilitate a moral reformation of the realm, he issued the new Book of Orders described by Langeluddecke as an 'unprecedented formalization of administrative mechanisms'.<sup>42</sup> Charles required local officials to submit certificates detailing progress in campaigns against vagrants, illegal alehouses and recusants.

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<sup>39</sup> 'A Proclamation Concerning Tobacco' (6 January 1631). Larkin, Stuart Royal Proclamations 2, pp. 307-10.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Unlike James, Charles took ideas that the court was a model for dress, behaviour and values very seriously. Charles insisted upon high standards of morality and civility and promoted ideas of the court as an example of virtue for the realm in the 1630s (Sharpe, The Personal Rule of Charles I, p. 209).

<sup>42</sup> H. Langeluddecke, "'Patchy and Spasmodic"? The Response of Justices of the Peace to Charles I's Book of Orders', English Historical Review 113 (1998), p. 1231. See also B. W. Quintrell, 'The Making of King Charles I's Book of Orders', English Historical Review 95 (1980).

Combining local action with royal proclamations he sought to reduce behaviour which was perceived as a threat to the peace, wealth and security of the realm. The suppressing of unrestrained smoking, especially by those who could not afford it, was part of a royal policy aiming at social order. James's concerns of 1604 were just as valid in the 1630s. Could Charles succeed where his father had failed in the rectification of this particular aspect of public order and morality? He was willing to try.

### Initial moves towards implementation of the licensing system at local level

When the king referred the petitions of 1630-31 to the two Chief Justices and Attorney General Noy, he was seeking legal authority to interfere with existing trading practices. This was a necessary step in a body politic underpinned by conceptions of the sanctity of ancient precedent and the rule of law. Without the consent of Parliament, Charles intended to restrict his subjects' liberty to trade. He had to be prepared for any legal challenge this might provoke. The Crown's right to levy additional customs on new commodities, impositions, had been challenged in law and was still disputed. Vested interests made such matters politically charged. Many vociferous opponents of Crown policies were investors in ventures such as the Virginia Colony and Providence Island Company.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps more importantly, the successful implementation of a nation-wide licensing system required the co-operation

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<sup>43</sup> K. O. Kupperman, Providence Island 1630-1641: the other Puritan colony (Cambridge, 1995). Kupperman states that this venture was backed by the 'most substantial lay puritans in England' (p. ix). Connections between these ventures is illustrated by the activities of William Woodcock. Woodcock was 'chief executive' of the Providence Island Company and a substantial importer of Virginia tobacco



of sheriffs, justices of the peace, mayors, aldermen and burgesses who were particularly sensitive about central government intervention at the expense of local autonomy.<sup>44</sup> Some of these local officials, particularly the grocers and apothecaries amongst them, would have been tobacco traders themselves. They were unlikely to want to or be able to execute the orders of the king if the legality of those orders was in question.

When his legal advisors reported back to the Privy Council in April 1632, they advised that licensing tobacco vendors was, as the petitioners had suggested, the best means of preventing the 'great abuse and excesse' occasioned by unregulated trading. It would also enable the king to 'ordaine that a definate quantity be yerely brought into the Realme', simultaneously restricting access to tobacco and keeping prices high.<sup>45</sup> However, on the legality of a centrally orchestrated regulation of who could trade, they could only report that, so long as the king's intention was the good of his subjects, 'Wee know noe law to ye contrary'.<sup>46</sup>

This was enough. Following the advice of the judges, Charles instructed county justices of the peace and the mayors, sheriffs and aldermen of towns and cities to help reform the 'greate disorder' of the 'ungoverned' tobacco retail trade.<sup>47</sup> For the 'comon

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(Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, p. 158). The Port Books show he imported 164,000 lbs. of tobacco into London in 1638 (PRO E190/41/5).

<sup>44</sup> Aylmer suggests that, 'in the localities, the will of the central government depended for its execution on the voluntary co-operation of a hierarchy of part-time, unpaid officials' (Lord and Deputy Lieutenants, sheriffs, JPs etc). 'Without their co-operation the central government was helpless' (G. E. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: The Civil Service of Charles I 1625-42* (London, 1974), p. 7).

<sup>45</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 130.

<sup>46</sup> PRO PC 2/41/527-8. The judges recommended requiring certificates from local authorities and sending out letters accordingly.

<sup>47</sup> On 9 July 1632, a letter from Privy Council to the Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen of York regarding tobacco licensing was read by York Corporation prior to drawing up response. The letter was

good', they were instructed to 'advisedlie consider how manie well use the trade within your jurisdiction & liberties & to make choice of honest and fitt persons' to be given licence. The delegation of such administrative action to provincial authorities was the usual way for central government dictates and regulations to be implemented at local level across the realm. It followed established patterns for the issue of alehouse and wine vending licences, and the supervision of the grain trade in time of dearth.<sup>48</sup> In the case of tobacco, certificates were to be sent to the Privy Council detailing names and trades of potential licensees in each locality.

As laid out in the Book of Orders, constables were key officials in the implementation of government directives at local level. They were required to report to Quarter Sessions about a variety of matters including recusancy, illegal alehouses and tobacco planting. In the counties, responsibility for were determining where tobacco could be 'most conveniently vented' was often delegated to them.<sup>49</sup> For example, justices in the Yorkshire hundred of Agbrigg to the south of Leeds, wrote to the constables of Wakefield, Almondbury and Huddersfield, instructing them to consult with local traders and report back at the Quarter Sessions.<sup>50</sup> The certificates they submitted were then forwarded to the Privy Council in July 1632. The constables of Almondbury

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dated Whitehall 30 April 1632 (York City Archives, York Corporation House Book, B35 fols. 174-175).

<sup>48</sup> Amongst the lists of tobacco licences issued in Coventry Papers (now held in Birmingham Public Library, DV907/604015), the first licence noted is written on the same sheet of paper as a wine licence. Henceforth the tobacco documents from the Coventry Papers will be cited as 'covpprs.'

<sup>49</sup> On the role and functioning of constables see J. R. Kent, The English Constable, 1580-1642: a social and administrative study (Oxford, 1986). Sharpe also considers the role of constables in law enforcement at local level. He argues that, 'ultimately. . . the maintenance of the king's peace and the functioning of the system of law enforcement depended upon the energies and efficiency of the unpaid parish constable' (J. A. Sharpe, Crime in Early Modern England, 1550-1750 2nd. edition (London, 1999), p. 34).

<sup>50</sup> CSPD 1631-3, pp. 390-1. Constables returned their certificates to JPs who forwarded them to the Privy Council on 26 July 1632.



proposed two mercers and an oildrawer.<sup>51</sup> Those from Huddersfield reported that two people who had 'sold some little quantity' voluntarily agreed to 'quite give it [tobacco vending] over'. They named a single mercer 'because so little tobacco is used in their town'.<sup>52</sup> In Wakefield, two grocers and four alcohol vendors were nominated.<sup>53</sup> In Norwich the constables returned 'their warrants concerninge Tobacco' to the Mayoral Court in May 1632, less than a month after the instructions from Whitehall.<sup>54</sup>

In some places, civic authorities decided who would be nominated to vend. Such an exercise of civic power was not unusual. Trade guilds, ordinances governing markets and the issuing of alehouse licences already imposed such restrictions at local level. Besides, Charles had instructed local authorities 'advisedlie' to consider their nominations. In the City of York, after 'som consideration', twenty-one individuals were named (5 apothecaries, 14 grocers, 1 widow milliner and a chapman from Tadcaster). Corporation members who planned to continue their own tobacco trading, such as Stephen Watson and William Todd, seem to have been content to share the trade with those who held no civic power but not with everyone.<sup>55</sup> No alehouse keepers were listed, yet six years later over a hundred alehouses illegally selling tobacco in York were identified.<sup>56</sup> The Reading Corporation determined to forward the names of 'Apothecaries & Grocers keepinge shopps, and noe others', thereby

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. Other Yorkshire returns detailed three retailers in Halifax, six in Bradford and one in 'Eland' (PRO SP16/222/2).

<sup>53</sup> CSPD 1631-3, pp. 390-1.

<sup>54</sup> W. L. Sachse (ed.), Minutes of the Norwich Court of Mayoralty, Norfolk Record Society 15 (1942), p. 244.

<sup>55</sup> York Corporation House Book, B35, fols. 174-175.

<sup>56</sup> PRO E178/5793, Exchequer: King's Remembrancer: Special Commission of Inquiry into Unlicensed Tobacco Retailing in Yorkshire.

excluding stall-holders, alehouse keepers, tailors etc.<sup>57</sup> In Cambridge the vice-chancellor of the university used his right to nominate individuals for the right to vend tobacco as an opportunity to exercise patronage.<sup>58</sup>

It is not possible to gain an overall picture of this nomination process (who was nominated by whom, the extent of approval for regulating the trade etc.) or of the level of returns submitted to central authorities. Local records of the receipt of central government dictates and responses to them are not extant or are incomplete for many areas.<sup>59</sup> Langeluddecke calculates that approximately 13,000 certificates on a range of issues should have arrived at Westminster from English counties between the issue of the Book of Orders in 1631 and the end of the Personal Rule in 1640.<sup>60</sup> Only 1,400 survive in the Public Records Office, most of which were sent in 1631. This may be because, as Morrill and Fletcher suggest, justices ignored or boycotted the Book of Orders and other government instructions that seemed to infringe local autonomy.<sup>61</sup> Alternatively, as Langeluddecke shows, the loss of documents rather than a poor response may explain why little more than 10% of anticipated certificates can be found.<sup>62</sup> In the case of tobacco licence nominations, very few records survive but there

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<sup>57</sup> J.M. Guilding (ed.), Diary of a Corporation, Reading Records III: 1630-1640 (London 1895), p. 119. Entry dated Tuesday 12 June 1632.

<sup>58</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 132.

<sup>59</sup> Leicester Borough records give the names and trades of nine of its citizens nominated to trade (H. Stocks (ed.), Records of the Borough of Leicester 1603-88 (Cambridge, 1923), p. 268). Exeter City records note the instruction to nominate vendors and the return of the list of names of approved persons but the list of names is missing (J. Wylie (ed.), Report on the Records of the City of Exeter, Historical Manuscripts Commission 73 (London, 1916), p. 195). A more comprehensive survey of local records, printed and manuscript, is required to gain a more detailed picture.

<sup>60</sup> Langeluddecke, 'The Response of Justices of the Peace to Charles I's Book of Orders', p. 1237.

<sup>61</sup> J. Morrill, The Revolt of the Provinces: the people of England and the tragedies of war, 1630-1648 (London, 1999), pp. 21-2. A. J. Fletcher, Reform in the Provinces: The Government of Stuart England (New Haven, 1986), p. 57.

<sup>62</sup> Langeluddecke, 'The Response of Justices of the Peace to Charles I's Book of Orders', pp. 1236-8. Further research into local records of Petty and Quarter Sessions rolls and City Council minute books could yield more information but only the response from the Yorkshire hundred of 'Agbrigg' noted above seems to have survived amongst the State Papers in the PRO.



is no reason to question Charles's assertion in October 1633 that he had received much support for his proposed 'reformation' of the 'disorderly' trade in tobacco.<sup>63</sup>

Charles's 'consultation' process was not an empty gesture. The certificates returned to the Privy Council were the culmination of discussions involving several layers of the local administrative and judicial hierarchy. As Aylmer noted, 'one of the king's main strengths was his ability to use the existing legal system for the enforcement of his policies' and to garner sufficient support at local level to implement them.<sup>64</sup> Those who would be required to enforce his policies had played their small part in defining the future nature of the trade in their own localities. For example, Stephen Watson of York, who became Sheriff during the first year of licensing, was ideally placed to enforce the system.<sup>65</sup> Corporation members, justices and constables, the administrative and judicial backbone of local government, had effectively endorsed Charles's restrictive endeavours. As the clerk of the Privy Council pointedly noted, when he sent back a list of those approved for continued retailing in York, those named were 'persons recommended to us [the Privy Council] by you the officers of the said Citty'.<sup>66</sup>

In April 1633, after a year of local consultation and nomination, replies from the provinces were collated.<sup>67</sup> In October the Privy Council returned the names of those approved back to the localities with a reminder that that the purpose of the restrictions

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<sup>63</sup> 'A Proclamation for Preventing of the Abuses Growing by the Unordered Retailing of Tobacco' (13 October 1633). Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 2, pp. 387-9.

<sup>64</sup> Aylmer, *Personal Rule of Charles I*, p. 23.

<sup>65</sup> *York Corporation House Book*, B35 fols. 174-175.

<sup>66</sup> *York Corporation House Book*, B35 fols. 222b & 223. This letter from the Privy Council to the Corporation was entered into the city council minutes on 21 October 1633.

was to protect the consumer from unreasonable prices and harmful merchandise of poor quality. Local authorities were instructed to 'give publique notice' that the restrictions would come into force at the next feast of Candlemas (2 February 1634). In Reading, the corporation agreed to announce the names of those authorised to sell by placing notices 'uppon severall postes in the Towne, with wordes of prohibition that none other shalbe suffred to sell any Tobacco . . . within this Boroughe'.<sup>68</sup> Placed alongside Charles's 'Proclamation for Preventing of the Abuses Growing by the Unordered Retailing of Tobacco', these local notices carried the force of central authority.<sup>69</sup> Although there is no record of anyone complaining about the impending restrictions, it seems unlikely that everybody was content. For example, those identified locally as 'irresponsible' traders had probably not been consulted and were thus automatically excluded from the proposed arrangements.

The proclamation of October 1633 was as much a justification of Charles's actions as an assertion of his will. It recited the evils of tobacco and the consultations that had preceded the new regulations. Charles attributed his and his father's failure to suppress smoking to the lack of any restraint of the 'quality' or 'number of those that should sell Tobacco by retaile'.<sup>70</sup> He argued that licensing was necessary to stem the 'evill consequences' of 'immoderate use' of tobacco, not as a medicine but 'to satisfie the inordinate appetite of a great number of men and women'. The licensing policy was thus part of a wider moral agenda. Following the advice of his Privy Council and harnessing the co-operation of local officials, Charles was not just trying to preserve

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<sup>67</sup> The letter from the Privy Council to York Corporation requiring information was dated April 1632. The reply from Yorkshire JPs was endorsed in April 1633 (CSPD 1631-3, pp. 390-1).

<sup>68</sup> Guilding, *Diary of a Corporation*, p. 200. In York, the Corporation instructed the Sheriff's courts to make the announcement (York Corporation House Book, B35 fols. 222b & 223).

<sup>69</sup> Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 2, pp. 387-9.



his customs revenue. He was also attempting to reform a social disorder. Irresponsible vendors supplying irresponsible consumers were to be stopped for “the good of all”.

The tobacco retail trade and thus smoking in general would be put ‘in good order’ by limiting the allocation of licences to ‘men of sufficiency’ and ‘meetnesse’. Charles’s tobacco vending restrictions had considerable moral as well as political authority.

Bolstered by the apparently positive initial response to his proposed regulation of the tobacco trade, the king decided to take his reformation one step further. His proclamation and policy attempted to weaken the connection between alcohol and tobacco. As chapter 4 showed, the conjunction of pot and pipe was an integral part of the culture of smoking. To critics of smoking, the prevalence of smoking in alehouses was of particular concern. It was often claimed that tobacco actually provoked drunkenness. ‘Bewitching’ tobacco drew people into the alehouse and encouraged them to linger there.<sup>71</sup> Alehouses were a particular focus for excessive consumption and thus wholly inappropriate for either the orderly sale or the moderate and medicinal use of tobacco. Charles complained that ‘Victuallers, Taverners, Alehouse-keepers, Tapsters, Chamberlaines, Hostlers and others, of the meanest condition have promiscuously used to regrade<sup>72</sup> the same [tobacco] as allurements to other naughtinesse, keeping therein no Assize, to the prejudice of the rest of His Majesties loving Subjects’.<sup>73</sup> Such moralised rhetoric illustrates Charles’s desire to excise tobacco from what he saw as the morally reprehensible contexts in which smoking

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Chapter 3 examined perceptions of what king James called tobacco’s ‘bewitching qualitie’ (King James VI & I, *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (London, 1604), sig. C3).

<sup>72</sup> To buy and sell again in or near the same market, thus unnecessarily raising the price, was a criminal offence.

<sup>73</sup> Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 2, pp. 387-9.

had become so commonplace.<sup>74</sup> It was this non-puritan anti-alehouse moralism rather than concern about his revenue that prompted Charles to deny tobacco retail licences to all alcohol vendors.

This must have been excellent news for the London Grocers' Company who had petitioned for a licensing system to prevent incursions into what they considered to be their trade by 'lewd' unlicensed alehouse keepers.<sup>75</sup> It was a cruel blow to people such as the four Wakefield alcohol vendors who had been nominated in 1632. They were summarily ejected from a scheme that was, in part, justified by their nomination. The local determination of their fitness to trade had been arbitrarily overridden.

Stopping alehouse-keepers selling tobacco was also a blow to the cohesion of the whole licensing policy. It would not stop alehouse customers wanting to smoke it. As chapter 7 will show, banning alehouse sales merely encouraged widespread evasion of the regulations. Even 'responsible' victuallers, such as Francis Thackham of Reading, would seek ways in which to continue to supply their customers. As members of the Reading Corporation suggested, though deprived of a licence in his own right, Thackham could still 'procure' permission to sell tobacco from his brother Thomas who was a mercer.<sup>76</sup> As Cope argues, throughout the Personal Rule local leaders, though 'hesitant to engage in activities that might smack of outright defiance of royal authority', did carefully calculate their moves.<sup>77</sup> As in this instance, where the

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<sup>74</sup> Politics and morality were closely linked in Charles's thinking. See: K. M. Sharpe, 'Private Conscience and Public Duty in the Writings of Charles I', *Historical Journal* 40 (1997).

<sup>75</sup> CSPD 1625-6, p. 204.

<sup>76</sup> Guilding, *Diary of a Corporation*, p. 199. The impending restrictions were discussed at a meeting of the Corporation on 23 October 1633.

<sup>77</sup> Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments*, p. 3.



Reading political elite subverted the king's intentions while ostensibly obeying his orders, local leaders often 'appear more compliant than they were'.<sup>78</sup>

Such evasions of the ban on alcohol vendors selling tobacco, with or without the collusion of local authorities, must have been widespread. Exchequer Commissions of Enquiry into unlicensed dealings later showed that, despite piecemeal efforts to stop them, alehouse-keepers remained key but unlicensed purveyors of tobacco.<sup>79</sup> As with tobacco growing, local needs could easily override central government injunctions especially when those injunctions went against local ideas of what was fitting.<sup>80</sup> Such localism was heightened by the fact that many economic restrictions emanating from London seemed to be expressly geared towards benefiting the capital at the expense of the provinces. For example, in the 1630s a London soap monopoly severely damaged Bristol's thriving soap making industry.<sup>81</sup> In 1619 the charter granted to the pipe makers of Westminster stifled Bristol's emerging tobacco pipe making industry.<sup>82</sup> Unless pushed, why would Bristol and Gloucestershire authorities harm their own local economies by suppressing soap and tobacco production for the benefit of

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> See table of Exchequer Commissions of Inquiry below and chap 7.

<sup>80</sup> See K. Wrightson, 'Two Concepts of Order: justices, constables and jurymen in seventeenth-century England' in J. Brewer and J. Styles (eds.), An Ungovernable People? The English and their law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (London, 1980), pp. 21-46.

<sup>81</sup> Bristol soap-makers had suffered as a result of policies in the 1630s. The combination of an impost on soap imports and a patent prohibiting soap making outside London had practically destroyed their industry and led a dozen soap makers to prison for not paying the impost (Sacks, 'The Corporate Town and the English State, p. 103).

<sup>82</sup> It did not necessarily stop it entirely. One Samuel Lewis, for example, was described in 1624 as a smith and a tobacco pipe maker (Bristol Apprentice Enrolment Books, Bristol Records Office, BRO 04352 (25 March 1624)). From 1597, when tobacco pipes first feature in records of Bristol's trade, there were many cargoes exported to Ireland. The London pipe making monopoly was rescinded in 1640 and, after 1652, when the Bristol Tobacco Pipe Makers Company was formed, Bristol became a leading centre of pipe production with pipe makers concentrated in the St Michael's and St James's areas of the city. See, R. Price, R. Jackson and P. Jackson, Bristol Clay Pipe Makers (Bristol, 1979).

monopolistic Westminster soap makers and Virginia merchants?<sup>83</sup> Similarly, in areas such as Wakefield where alcohol vendors were considered fit to sell tobacco, little effort was made to stop them doing so. By provoking such collusive non-compliance Charles's bid to modify consumer behaviour by forbidding alcohol vendors to hold licences undermined the entire system. Most importantly, it pushed the arena in which tobacco was most demanded and most disorderly outside his regulatory framework.

### A centralising initiative: the shift to a licence by patent system

Letters to provincial authorities in October 1633 authorised specific individuals to vend after 2 February 1634. However, in January these 'licences' to trade were effectively nullified when the Lord Treasurer and other Privy Councillors were commissioned to compound for fines and rents from those to be licensed.<sup>84</sup> This was the first indication that the right to vend tobacco would have to be purchased directly from central authorities. It was proposed that licences would be granted to appropriate people for a payment of 40s in the first year and 6s 8d per annum thereafter.<sup>85</sup> Even if the sums required exceeded administrative costs, this does not seem an excessive price to pay for the economic privilege of being an authorised trader. It was, after all, considerably less than had been suggested some twenty years earlier by Captain Grice.

To administer the licences the 'form of a Graunt' was prepared under the sign manual in which a blank was left for fees to be inserted, suggesting either that the cost of

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<sup>83</sup> The soap boiling patent, like tobacco vending patents, was not as effective as might have been hoped because, despite numerous proclamations, illegal activity persisted (Huxley, Endymion Porter, p. 204).

<sup>84</sup> PRO SO3/10 (January 1633/4).

<sup>85</sup> CSPD 1633-4, p. 479.



licences had yet to be finalised or that some price differentiation was being considered.<sup>86</sup> The Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Lord Coventry, received a mandamus instructing him to affix the seal to licences granted.<sup>87</sup> This legal and administrative mechanism was to be facilitated by the establishment of an office for granting licences for the sale of tobacco. Thomas Meautys, an experienced administrator and Clerk of the Council, was appointed Receiver of Fines on Tobacco Licences.<sup>88</sup> In November Edward Carne, who had been the Receiver of the compositions for knighthood since 1631, and his brother William, a senior official in Chancery, were employed to collect the rents.<sup>89</sup> As Aylmer has shown, such individuals constituted a 'controlling system inside central government'.<sup>90</sup> Through subordinate officials such as Meautys and the Carne brothers, the central executive of the king, his Secretaries of State and Privy Council, could monitor and govern the dispensation of licences.

These last minute changes fundamentally altered the basis upon which licences would be granted. Central authorities would not merely endorse the lists of people approved for vending by local negotiation and nomination. Licences would have to be bought

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<sup>86</sup> See tables 7.1 and 7.2 below.

<sup>87</sup> PRO SO3/10. The commissioning document sent to Lord Coventry survives in the Birmingham Public Library, DV887/602204/321.

<sup>88</sup> Aylmer notes that 'Thomas Meautys was descended from Henry VII's French Secretary. However, he owed his Clerkship of the Privy Council, 1622-c.1642, not to his ancestry but to his having been confidential man of business to Sir Francis Bacon for ten years or more before entering the king's service' (Aylmer, *The King's Servants*, p. 78). For further information on Meautys' career and offices see *ibid.*, pp. 156-7, 164-7, 204, 221, 291-4. Meautys had many offices. He sat in four out five parliaments of the 1620s. He held a small office in Chancery, was Receiver of Fines on tobacco licences and Muster Master-General of England' (a particularly important post with the Bishop's wars of 1638-40). He still sought more offices including a patent to oversee and enforce the clearing up of offal and other offensive remains by the London butchers.

<sup>89</sup> They were to receive a fee of £200 per year plus 1% 'portage' (1% of all money collected) for collecting the rents. For the period from 4 November 1634, when their office was granted, until 12 June 1635 rents totalled £6042-16-3. This would yield them over £60 portage in addition to their fees. By September 1635, over £27 more was similarly due to them (*CSPD 1635*, p. 399). For further details on the Carnes of Glamorganshire see Aylmer, *The King's Servants*, pp. 318-9.

individually by direct application to central government. In his October proclamation Charles had reserved the right to allow ‘other persons . . . from tyme to tyme’ to be appointed.<sup>91</sup> There had been no suggestion that locally approved vendors would be required to seek royal approval individually. This was a massive and unparalleled centralisation. Local authorities were often required to report to central government or apply for local privileges but this ambitious licensing scheme required individual rather than collective application. The concession of such individual privileges had never been attempted on such a scale. The granting of monopolies had always entailed a few individuals taking control over an aspect of national trade on behalf of the state, minimising the state’s supervisory role. The tobacco vending licence system would entail hundreds of traders in the villages, towns and cities of the realm being granted the right to sell tobacco.

On 13 March 1634 Charles issued another proclamation ‘restraining the abusive venting of Tobacco’.<sup>92</sup> This claimed that many of those who had been named as tobacco vendors had sought to confirm their vending status in law with ‘Letters Patents of Licence’. ‘A letter patent under the Great Seal was the most formal and public kind of missive from the King’.<sup>93</sup> Some had evidently recognised the potential economic benefits of the impending restrictions and wanted to get their money’s worth. Arguing that this change would enable controls on quantities to be introduced later on and probably with an eye to his revenues, Charles had agreed to this. By March over a hundred such patents had already been granted at varying prices,

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<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>91</sup> York Corporation House Book B35, fols. 222b & 223.

<sup>92</sup> ‘A Proclamation Restraining the Abusive Venting of Tobacco’ (13 March 1634). Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 2, pp. 414-6.

<sup>93</sup> Aylmer, *The King’s Servants*, p. 16.



averaging about £8 each and yielding over £1400 in revenue.<sup>94</sup> As the swelling of the Patent Rolls in the Public Records Offices reveal, hundreds more would follow.

Table 6.1

Number of tobacco licences Enrolled on the Patent Roll, 1633-41.<sup>95</sup>

<u>Regnal Year</u>	<u>Separate licences</u>
March 1633-1634	39
March 1634-1635	1,462
March 1635-1636	427
March 1636-1637	164
March 1637-1638 <sup>96</sup>	209
March 1638-1639	235
March 1639-1640	56
March 1640-1641	1

This new approach offered particular benefits to the Crown as well as to those who gained the patents. Instead of rubber-stamping lists of vendors recommended by local authorities, the king's officials were negotiating individual contracts with tobacco retailers. Each patent constituted a public/private partnership dependent on the king's continuing favour. Crucially, the patents were also local monopolies rather than just permissions to vend. Applicants were buying the legal right to be the only tobacco trader or a member of a small cartel of licensed traders in particular towns and villages across England and Wales. Granting sole trading rights to particular individuals was an effective and familiar means of regulation. As with other monopolies (e.g. silks, currants, wine, tobacco-pipe clay), the monopolist would control their particular

<sup>94</sup> Covprps 2 notes that the 199 licences that passed the Great Seal before the end of March 1634 raised £1603-10-0 in fines and would yield the same in annual rents. The PRO Index to the Patent Rolls (re: rolls C66/2624 and C66/2630) shows that all but 19 of the 199 purchased their patents before 13 March. The other 19 purchased theirs on 20 March. A detailed analysis of price differentiation and revenues generated, some of which revises Beresford's calculations, is presented in chapter 7.

<sup>95</sup> Reproduced from Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 131.

<sup>96</sup> From 1637 to 1640, Goring's 'Tobacco Office', examined below, issued the licences.

segment of the trade for their own profit while the crown merely collected its rents.

The licensed tobacco trader would be able to identify interlopers and suppress them by making them his agents or prosecuting them through Star Chamber. This would potentially reduce the number of outlets for illegal tobacco. If the king desired changes to the trade, such as price fixing or the introduction of quotas, they could be implemented with little administrative effort through the licensee, at least in theory. The king, not the leaders of local communities, became the source of the licensee's authority. The licensee became a potential instrument of social control independent of local sources of social power.

In terms of revenue generation, the licence by patent approach was certainly the best option. The local nomination system announced in October 1633, like the allocation of alehouse licences, would have raised little revenue for the Crown. Grice's 1613 proposal of a £5 fine and £1 annual rent and the levying of 40s fine and 6s 8d rent proposed in January 1634 would have raised considerably more. However, after the first year of a licence, when only a nominal fee was levied, revenue would decline dramatically. The licence by patent option offered much more. It was an opportunity to acquire a monopoly and so encouraged speculative investment.<sup>97</sup> For projectors and speculators, restriction was synonymous with opportunity. With alehouse keepers excluded from the scheme, this was a great opportunity. Whether by acting as 'middlemen', supplying alehouse keepers with tobacco and permission for continued vending, or as retailers, directly supplying customers, those who acquired licences were guaranteed an advantageous position in a thriving market. This raised the prospect of competition for licences, perhaps between local traders and speculative



outsiders. As Sir Edwin Sandys, an ardent anti-monopolist, realised in the early 1620s when negotiating the tobacco-importing contract, it was better to buy a monopoly than let someone else have it.<sup>98</sup> Competition for licences made possible the levying of higher fees and the levying of the same fee every year to the current licensee or his potential rivals eager to succeed him. This scheme was potentially much more lucrative for the crown than the standard rent and nominal renewal fees originally envisaged.

The way that tobacco licensing changed from a system with low revenue yield to one with high revenue possibilities fits neatly with conceptions of Charles as a grasping monarch devising onerous exactions upon his subjects for ‘tyrannical’ reasons. Alternatively, it shows how Charles’s carefully considered policies could be suddenly, and often unwisely, changed at the last moment. The successive shifts in policy between October 1633 and March 1634 were not co-ordinated or consistent enough to have been part of some grand plan. Charles claimed that applicants for licences, eager for legal confirmation of their rights, inspired the final shift to patents. This is probably true. The first forty-one licences on the patent rolls were dated 5 March 1634. The next forty-two were dated 1 March and 27 February. This may be an administrative anomaly but could also indicate that the shift to patents occurred a few days after the first licences had been issued.<sup>99</sup> Perhaps the revenue potential of the tobacco patents had not been recognised before then.

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<sup>97</sup> Thirsk, Economic Policy and Projects.

<sup>98</sup> For details of Sandys negotiations for the ‘tobacco contract’ on behalf of the Virginia Company see chapter 5 and T. K. Rabb, Jacobean Gentleman: Edwin Sandys, 1561-1629 (Princeton, 1998).

<sup>99</sup> Further research is required to determine if the first patentees were particularly influential individuals. By date, the first licence was issued on 27 February 1634 to one Reginald Brumskill of Richmond in Yorkshire (PRO Index to the Patent Rolls). The first licence entered on the patent roll, however, went to Thomas Coningsbie of Worcester who bought monopolies over Worcester and Coventry for £40 each.

In 1637, Charles asserted that the profits licensees could anticipate amply justified the revenue consequently accruing to the Crown.<sup>100</sup> Many agreed with this sentiment in 1634 and rushed to acquire licences. Money flowed in. On 20 March, the tobacco commissioner Charles Franckland informed Richard Harvey that ‘the licences to retail tobacco are likely to prove a good business; a great number have paid fines already, amounting to £3,000, and the city of London yields now, above 40 of them having compounded that day’.<sup>101</sup> On a single day, 29 March 1634, ninety licences were granted, raising £697-6-8. Two days later another fifty-five licences yielded a further £434-10-4.<sup>102</sup> In April licences were reported to be going well in Oxford.<sup>103</sup> Retailers were ‘queuing for their licences’.<sup>104</sup> Wentworth was so impressed that he considered a licensing scheme for Ireland.<sup>105</sup> By July 1,217 licences had been issued generating over £8,000.<sup>106</sup> By the end of March 1635 the Exchequer had received a total of £16,762 from tobacco licensing.<sup>107</sup> In the year to Michaelmas 1636 tobacco licences generated £12,458, Ship Money raised £23,323, forest fines produced £9,014 and knighthood fines had declined to only £91.<sup>108</sup> None could doubt the success, in terms

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Beresford states that the first licensee was one Henry Shelley and gives his translation of the text of this licence (Beresford, ‘The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences’, p. 131). However, the licence in question was the first licence sealed by Lord Coventry on 19 March 1634 not the first to appear on the Patent Rolls.

<sup>100</sup> Part of recital of background to the issue of the grant to Goring quoted in Beresford, ‘The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences’, p. 136.

<sup>101</sup> CSPD 1633-4, p. 518 and PRO SP16/263/20. In the same letter, Franckland also reported that ‘fines for buildings are like to raise a good sum’.

<sup>102</sup> Covprs 5, 7 & 8.

<sup>103</sup> Beresford, ‘The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences’, p. 132.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

<sup>105</sup> W. Knowler (ed.), The Earl of Strafforde’s Letters and Dispatches; with an Essay towards his Life, by Sir George Radcliffe; from the Originals in the Possession of his Great Grandson, thomas, Earl of Malton (London, 1739), vol. 1, pp. 206, 230.

<sup>106</sup> Covprs 2. This includes the yield from the first 199 licences issued. See chapter 7 for an analysis of the allocation and relative cost of licences.

<sup>107</sup> PRO SP16/291/97. This figure includes initial rent on all licences issued to that point plus renewal fees on all licences issued prior to the end of March 1634, the most active phase of licence acquisition.

<sup>108</sup> F. Dietz, ‘The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer During the Reigns of James I and Charles I’, Smith College Studies in History 13 (1928), pp. 146-9. Dietz records that tobacco licensing generated £9,320 between March and September 1634, £8,919 the following year and £12,458 in the year to Michaelmas 1636. This final figure equates with Beresford’s calculation, by totalling up licences noted



of revenue generation, of the licence by patent approach to regulating the tobacco retail trade.

The shift to a centralised patent system was financially and administratively successful but created problems because it diminished local involvement in and support for regulating the trade. There is evidence of local reluctance to buy licences which was only overcome by the intervention of individuals who relished the prospect of controlling the local trade. In Exeter, a thriving commercial centre, only George Brayne came forward to buy one of the eight licences designated for the city. In December 1634 he then purchased sole vending rights there for £133-6-8. This extraordinary monopoly did not last. Four months later eight individuals sought and were granted Exeter licences for £16-13-4 each.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, one John Hanson purchased sole vending rights for Oxford City and university for £50 on 19 March 1634.<sup>110</sup> This was despite the fact that in January of that year it had been decided locally that two barbers named Wrench and Collins and two mercers named Fairbeard and Brandreth would be the only people allowed to sell tobacco in Oxford.<sup>111</sup> On 22 April Hanson's monopoly was superseded by the grant of five consecutive licences at £10 each, including one for Hanson.<sup>112</sup> In villages, towns and cities where an individual or shared monopoly was available, those who wanted to trade had either to

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in the Coventry Papers, that the first 1,928 licences (i.e. those issued up to March 1636) brought in a total of £12,460 (Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 131).

<sup>109</sup> Covpprs 40, 48. Brayne was not amongst the new licensees. His extensive tobacco vending licence holdings are considered in chapter 7.

<sup>110</sup> Covpprs 4.

<sup>111</sup> F. S. Boas (ed.), *The Diary of Thomas Crosfield* (London, 1935), p. 69.

<sup>112</sup> Covpprs 14. Whether Hanson had always intended to share his monopoly or was forced to do so following complaints by other traders remains uncertain. The Privy Council granted permission for the vice-chancellor of Oxford to nominate appropriate people to be licensed in October 1634 (PRO PC2/44/153-4).

buy a licence to secure their right to do so or to accept becoming dependent upon and answerable to others who had.

In Cambridge the purchase of licences on a first come first served basis placed the local tobacco trade in the hands of individuals who were considered locally to be unfit. Edward Farley, John Priest and Edward Trott were granted licences until the vice-chancellor of the university complained that they were unfit to keep the licences they had obtained 'in regard of their condition and calling'.<sup>113</sup> The tobacco commissioners responded by rescinding the earlier licences and issuing six new ones, presumably to the five apothecaries and one grocer that the vice-chancellor declared fit replacements because they were 'willing to afford all just favour and respect to the Universitie'.

In London and its environs, Norwich and York there was no limit on the number of licences available and so no monopoly was available. This made York licences less attractive. Those who had been nominated to vend in 1633 were in no hurry to join a system that Sharpe suggests 'contemporaries clearly saw as financially motivated'.<sup>114</sup> Of the twenty-one individuals who were announced as vendors for York at the Sheriff's court in 1633, only twelve subsequently bought licences priced at £6-13-4 each.<sup>115</sup> The apothecary, Robert Harrison, was the first on 24 May 1634. Three other nominees purchased them on 19 June 1634, two more in July and September. The

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<sup>113</sup> PRO PC2/44/153-4. (5 October? 1634).

<sup>114</sup> Sharpe says this about the commissions to grant licences for the sale of tobacco and to investigate the abuses of buildings in London which were issued around the same time (Sharpe, The Personal Rule of Charles I, p. 120).

<sup>115</sup> Comparison between York Corporation House Book, B35, fols. 222b & 223 and covpprs.



remaining six, including Stephen Watson (Sheriff 1634-5), waited until 1635 before they acquiesced.

Apart from the milliner, Dorothy Taylor, and the Tadcaster chapman, Rowland Wilkinson (who bought a licence as sole trader for his home town at the lower price of £2 instead), those who were nominated but declined to take York licences were all described as grocers.<sup>116</sup> This is significant because at a meeting of the York Merchants Company in April 1634 members gathered to ‘take some course for taking licence of his Ma[jes]tie & his comissioners for selling Tobacco by retayle w[it]hin this Citty & County soe as the Citizens may be well used therein’.<sup>117</sup> What they determined to do is unrecorded but the calling of the meeting signifies local efforts to seek a collective response to the introduction of the patents before any in the city applied for one. Perhaps the seven grocers who subsequently purchased licences did so through some agreement with the seven who did not. That the meeting did not result in the immediate purchase of a series of licences for the city suggests that this was an occasion when local leaders met to calculate their response and temper the impact of a central government initiative rather than to effectively implement it. Perhaps they hoped that this new project of tobacco would ‘vanish into smoke’.<sup>118</sup> For the Crown, anticipating revenue of almost £140 from twenty-one York licences at £6-13-4 each, such lack of co-operation seemed no great problem. By the end of 1635 another eight individuals who had not been named in 1633 had purchased licences for the city.

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> York Corporation House Book, B35, fol. 239b. On 4 April 1634, the deputy governor informed the corporation that he and the governor would call this meeting.

<sup>118</sup> Quoting Phelps MSS, DDPH 212/12, Cope notes that, when Attorney General Noy died in April 1634, some thought that ‘the project of sope will be washed and wiped away, that of buildings will fall, that of tobacco vanish into smoke, That of feull be plukt up by the roots . . . That of Taverns have the verie memorie of yt drowned in cupps of wine’ (Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments*, p. 144).

The willingness of individuals who had not been nominated by local leaders to take licences may have been good for revenue but it introduced the potential for conflict between local traders and interlopers clutching their patents. The dispute over the licence for Warrington in Lancashire between William Gerrard and Robert Massey illustrates this.<sup>119</sup> Gerrard was born near Warrington but was working as a London grocer when the licensing scheme started. He had not been particularly successful and was struggling to ‘ma[i]ntayne his family’ and so decided to become a licensed tobacco trader instead.<sup>120</sup> In March 1634 he paid £4 for a licence for Leigh in Lancashire.<sup>121</sup> In May he bought another for Warrington.<sup>122</sup> This prompted complaints from Robert Massey, a tobacco-pipe maker in that town who had been nominated locally as a suitable vendor in October 1633. When patents began to be issued, Massey had been told, presumably by central authorities, that unless he ‘passe[d] his Pattent presently’ he ‘must lose his Composition’.<sup>123</sup> Living so far from London, by his estimate some ‘sevencore miles’ away, Massey made arrangements for another to buy the licence for him.<sup>124</sup> However, through what the tobacco commissioners later judged to be unfair acquisition, ‘the Partie who was intrusted to compound for him tooke out the lycense in the name of Will[ia]m Gerrard’ instead. By virtue of his

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<sup>119</sup> The dispute between these men is detailed in covpprs 88, 89 and 89a. Little is known about them. Warrington parish registers identify William Gerrard as a gentleman and Robert Massie as a tobacco-pipe maker (A. Spark (ed.), *The Parish Registers of Warrington*, Lancashire Record Society 70 (1933), pp. 207, 276). However, there are numerous references to both names in this period so specific identification is not possible. There must have been at least two Robert Masseys in Warrington at this time and there is no confirmation that the William Gerrard noted in the Registers is the same person who described himself as an unsuccessful London grocer in his petitions to Lord Coventry.

<sup>120</sup> These details are set out in Gerrard’s petition to Lord Coventry, 27 February 1637 (covpprs 89).

<sup>121</sup> Covpprs 5:48 (29 March 1634). At the same time, a probable relative named Peter Gerrard bought the next licence recorded for Kirkham in Lancashire. Both Peter and William Gerrard had earlier purchased two licences each. These are listed in the *PRO Index to the Patent Rolls*.

<sup>122</sup> Covpprs 22:24.

<sup>123</sup> Covpprs 89.

<sup>124</sup> It is unclear whether the threat of losing his trading rights or knowledge of Gerrard’s desire for the Warrington licence prompted this.



proximity to London Gerrard had been able to manipulate events so that he, rather than the person already trading in Warrington, secured that particular licence.

Exploiting his licence to the full, Gerrard then offered Massey ‘an equall benefitt of the said lycense’ for £10 per year (‘being as much as the said Gerrard payes for the whole Towne’) on the understanding that ‘no other but they two should be suffered to sell Tobacco there w[i]thout both theire consents’. This arrangement was compromised when Gerrard then ‘lycensed many others to sell under him in the said Towne, taking Rents of them to his owne use’.<sup>125</sup> Because Gerrard’s authority over Warrington’s tobacco trade derived from the king rather than local authorities, Massey appealed to central government for redress. Over the next few years Lord Keeper Coventry and the Tobacco Commission received petitions from both parties and held numerous hearings to settle the dispute.<sup>126</sup> This was just one dispute amongst many which demanded the attention of central authorities.<sup>127</sup> When patentees demanded that action be taken against unlicensed dealers, it was the Privy Council and Star Chamber rather than local magistrates who were required to act. The central administration was fully capable of issuing the licences but, while it gathered in the cash from hundreds of would-be monopolists, its capacity to manage and enforce them was yet to be fully tested.

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<sup>125</sup> Robert Massey was not averse to exploiting the opportunities licensing offered. In September 1634 and May 1635, he bought two licences in his own name for Great Bubworth and Runcorn in Lancashire (covpprs 32:4, 18:2).

<sup>126</sup> At a hearing in February 1637, Gerrard claimed that Massey, ‘knoweinge that he hath noe other meanes or livelyhood’, sought the ‘ruine’ of Gerrard’s wife and family who relied upon his patented rights over Warrington. He asserted that, for three years, he had ‘duly paid the Rent and p[er]formed all this Covenante on his part, and furnishd the Country with good Tobackoes and att an easie rate, for the likeinge of all his Ma[jes]t[ie]s subiects within the said parrish’. The Commissioners nevertheless ruled in favour of the local man because Gerrard had gained his patent ‘dishonestly’ and had infringed Massey’s rights by ‘indirect dealing’. Further petitions to Lord Coventry and the Earl of Manchester followed.

<sup>127</sup> Some of the other disputes are detailed below.

The line of communication between local officials and the Privy Council was crucial to Stuart government.<sup>128</sup> In his study of Bristol Sacks noted that through the mayor and aldermen, the crown had a 'direct and continuous link to the city government upon which both the city and the Privy Council frequently relied'. This tie between civic and national institutions was only reinforced when the king summoned a parliament.<sup>129</sup> The licence by patent system by-passed rather than exploited this link. Nevertheless, the Tobacco Commission, a sub-committee of the Privy Council, did attempt to manage the system with a sensitivity to local opinion. The commissioners often exhibited a flexible approach to locally inspired alterations so long as crown revenue was not diminished. Despite their tardy acquiescence, the local interests of people such as Massey and the Exeter licensees seem to have been generally upheld. The tobacco commissioners attempted to arbitrate and resolve disputes to the satisfaction of local traders, drawing local people into the scheme and perhaps smoothing away objections to it. In Warrington, Exeter, Oxford and York, tobacco traders who had not joined in the rush to acquire licences in early 1634 did still become part of Charles's new regulatory scheme. The tobacco vending licence system did inhibit free trade for the benefit of a few but it was not an example of a distant Stuart administration siding with clients of influential courtiers against the country. The successful implementation of this tobacco licensing system nation-wide depended upon the forging of contractual relationships between the crown and individuals who had probably never met a courtier.

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<sup>128</sup> Cope argues that 'the Privy Council's close association with the monarch and its broad range of administrative and judicial responsibility meant that, whether or not a Parliament was sitting, people looked to it for help' (Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments*, p. 145).

<sup>129</sup> Sacks, 'The Corporate Town and the English State', p. 87.



This contract between individual tobacco retailers and the crown, whether reluctantly or enthusiastically entered into, placed obligations on both parties. The licensee was required to pay a fee and expected to identify unlicensed traders in his or her area. The Crown was obliged to act against unlicensed traders and to enforce the rights that the licensee had purchased. Responding to licensees' complaints, the Tobacco Commission accordingly issued warrants for the arrest of those who continued to trade without either a licence or the permission of the local licensee. In March 1634 (the first month of the scheme) the 'commissioners for the tobacco business' sought warrants to arrest 109 named persons in various counties who were continuing to sell without licence.<sup>130</sup> This may have been to inspire licence acquisition and to confirm that those who refused to comply would be prosecuted. Significantly, these unlicensed traders had already been summoned but had refused to appear to answer for their continued unlicensed trading. Very few of them subsequently bought licences and none of them until more than a year later.<sup>131</sup> Enforcement was evidently going to be far more difficult than affixing the Great Seal to a patent.

### The 'farming' of tobacco vending licences

By 1636 the foundations of the licensing system were firmly established. An efficient administrative mechanism had been constructed for the allocation of licences. The Tobacco Commission provided a forum for appeals and authority for enforcement.

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<sup>130</sup> PRO SP16/263/83. This document was signed by Franckland and Blande. Most of these individuals must have been identified by those purchasing licences who sought from the start of their monopolies to assert their rights by expelling their unlicensed competitors.

<sup>131</sup> Richard Cudlipp paid £2 for South Sydenham and John Drewe paid £6-13-4 for Barnstaple both on 25 May 1635). Thomas Gresham, one of three offenders listed for Gloucester, subsequently bought a licence for the city of Gloucester for £6-13-4 on 20 May 1634. Only two others with common names coincide with persons with licences recorded amongst the Coventry Papers.

Licensing generated revenue and, in areas where licensees' rights were not infringed by unlicensed competitors, progress was being made to meet the objective of bringing order to the tobacco trade. Hundreds of people had bought licences and were paying renewal fees while assuming responsibility, or rather taking control, over the tobacco trade in their local area. Importantly, there was no legal challenge to the new arrangements. As with the movement of tobacco from the colonies to the wholesaler, an efficient and uncontested mechanism had been established giving the king control over the legitimate trade in tobacco.

However, as with persistence of smuggling and illegal growing, no adequate mechanism had been established to tackle those who continued to trade in contempt of central government regulations. As previously noted, suppressing illegal supplies of tobacco had been a principal motivation for regulating retailing. If wholesalers were only allowed to sell to licensed retailers then unlicensed traders could only deal in illicit tobacco. If every village, town and city had a licensee to identify unlicensed traders then those traders could be prosecuted. If illegal retailers were suppressed effectively, Charles would be able to funnel set quantities of legitimate tobacco through authorised outlets and deny outlets for illegitimate tobacco. He could thus preserve his customs and begin his reform of the nation.

Unfortunately for the king, there were too many 'ifs'. Charles's administration had not been able to prevent fields full of tobacco being grown in England. Its chances of intercepting tobacco passing between individuals were minimal. As chapter 7 will show unlicensed traders had many ways to evade the licensee. Nevertheless, the initial success of the licensing scheme suggested that it could still work and might, in its own



right, become a reliable source of extra-parliamentary income for the crown. In the mid-1630s crown revenue was growing well.<sup>132</sup> Revenue from tobacco vending licences was a significant part of this growth.<sup>133</sup> All that appeared to be needed were more active measures to fill vacant licences and suppress illegal traders. Charles thus re-invigorated his licensing policy by instructing the Court of Exchequer to issue Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing and by delegating the management and sale of licences to a ‘farmer’.

Table 6.2

Exchequer Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing preserved in the Public Records Office.<sup>134</sup>

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>PRO reference (E178)</u>
Northamptonshire	June 1636	5557
Gloucestershire	August 1636	5315
Devon & Cornwall	February 1637	5239
Northamptonshire	February 1637	5557
Worcester City	February 1637	296
Devon & Cornwall	August 1637	5239
Devon & Cornwall	September 1637	5239
Durham	March 1638	5284
Carmarthen	June 1638	5933
Yorkshire	September 1638	5793
Devon & Cornwall	September 1638	5239
Norfolk	October 1638	5534
Oxfordshire	October 1638	5594
Devon & Cornwall	November 1638	5239
Northamptonshire	February 1639	5557
Northamptonshire	April 1639	5557
Sussex	July 1639	5685
Pembroke	August 1639	5932
Devon & Cornwall	September 1639	5239
Devon & Cornwall	November 1639	5239

<sup>132</sup> Aylmer, *Personal Rule of Charles I*, p. 18.

<sup>133</sup> ‘By common consent at the time, and among subsequent historians, the greatest single novelty in financial policy’ was the regular levying of Ship Money in peacetime to inland and well as coastal counties (Aylmer, *Personal Rule of Charles I*, p. 18).

<sup>134</sup> Reproduced from Beresford, ‘The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences’, p. 133.

Aylmer notes that ‘royal commissions served the early Stuarts as investigating and advisory bodies’ which in many cases ‘can be fairly regarded as extensions of conciliar government’.<sup>135</sup> There were many of them.<sup>136</sup> Sacks notes that Bristol suffered a ‘plague of commissions in the 1630s’ which were perceived as a threat to local economic privileges.<sup>137</sup> The Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing, the findings of which will be explored in chapter 7, had authority to summon and question witnesses and alleged offenders but not to prosecute them. Like the commissions sent out in February 1636 to inquire into depopulation, prosecutions had to be conducted in Star Chamber.<sup>138</sup> In this prerogative court the Privy Councillors and the two chief justices functioned as judges dispensing ‘quick justice’ which often entailed taking large bonds to guarantee future conformity and imposing substantial fines.<sup>139</sup>

While the Exchequer commissioners began to gather evidence, rival groups in London were bidding to take over the administration of the licensing system. At a meeting of the Committee for Trade in July 1636 Lord Treasurer Windebancke noted that the farmers of the tobacco impost had lost £1,081 because ‘there is less tobacco spent since the licences, by a third part’.<sup>140</sup> It is more likely that this was because licensing had exacerbated smuggling by pushing unlicensed vendors towards illegal sources of supply. The ‘Spanish merchants’ (i.e. merchants trading to Spain who were importers

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<sup>135</sup> Aylmer, *The King’s Servants*, p. 22.

<sup>136</sup> E.g. commissions to investigate the ‘wrongful’ enclosure of open fields and common lands, and others determining whether ‘forest fines’ were due (Aylmer, *Personal Rule of Charles I*, p. 17).

<sup>137</sup> Sacks, ‘The Corporate Town and the English State’, p. 102.

<sup>138</sup> Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments*, p. 141.

<sup>139</sup> Aylmer, *The King’s Servants*, p. 39. Aylmer also notes that ‘very few of the spectacular fines imposed [by Star Chamber] were levied in full’ (p. 64).

<sup>140</sup> *CSPD 1635-6*, p. 551 (11 August 1636). Windebanck’s notes on the meeting of the Committee for Trade that discussed the Spanish merchants offer to farm the vending licences. It is not possible to confirm if tobacco imports had declined as suggested due to a lack of surviving sources for the period 1629 to 1637. Gray and Wyckoff present no data for this period despite their detailed examination of



of the limited amounts of Spanish tobacco allowed by the king) wanted to take over both the impost farm and the licensing system, thereby gaining control over the trade in Virginia tobacco from ship to retailer. They offered £12,000 per annum to 'farm' the licensing system and £11,000 for the tobacco impost (note licences were considered to be worth more than the impost at this time). Windebancke immediately recognised the potential risks: 'this new offer may introduce a novelty, and so shake the business, whereas now it is not questioned'.<sup>141</sup> These words of warning were not a prophetic pronouncement of the impact this might have on the allocation of licences. They expressed concern that giving the Spanish merchants control over Virginian tobacco would reawaken the squabbles that had been so troublesome in the 1620s.<sup>142</sup>

The Committee for Trade then entertained a counter-offer from the Earl of Norwich, George, Lord Goring, father of the celebrated Royalist commander. Goring's interest in tobacco dated back to at least 1624 when he assisted in settling the contract for Virginia tobacco.<sup>143</sup> He was one of the current farmers of the impost. Since 1635 he had been seeking control over all tobacco entering England. He argued that the king could gain an extra £20,000, in addition to customs and licence revenue, by effectively acting as a merchant himself, buying rather than merely regulating the buying of imported tobacco.<sup>144</sup> Goring evidently believed there was still more money to be made out of the tobacco trade for him and his king. As with the Spanish merchants' bid,

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London and outport Port Books and other sources (S. Gray and V. Wyckoff, 'The International Trade in Tobacco in the Seventeenth Century', *The Southern Economic Journal* 7 (1940), pp. 1-26).

<sup>141</sup> *CSPD 1635-6*, p. 551 (11 June 1636).

<sup>142</sup> See chapter 5. On the relationship between the crown and the various customs farmers see: R. Ashton, *The Crown and the Money Market 1603-1640* (Oxford, 1960).

<sup>143</sup> Secretary Heath recommended him to Buckingham in this regard on 2 August 1624 (*CSPD 1623-5* p. 320).

<sup>144</sup> Goring's proposition that king should have sole pre-emption of tobacco worth £20,000 as well as licence revenue and customs was considered by Windebanck and the Lords of the Treasury on 4 April

Goring was connecting control over tobacco entering England with control over its sale to consumers. To secure the vending licence 'farm' he offered £10,000 in the first year and £20,000 p. a. thereafter 'over and above the present revenue'.<sup>145</sup> He was given a week to formally make this offer. In a marginal note, Windebancke calculated that in seven years this would yield an additional £120,000.

Goring was a court favourite of both James and Charles. He was a major monopolist whose empire included farming licences to export butter and to manufacture gold and silver thread. In the 1630s 'offices were heaped upon him, and he was engaged in many of the king's most oppressive schemes for raising money'.<sup>146</sup> One commentator described him as the leader of the monopolists:

Because there must be some great man (as a captain-projector) to lead some on and hearten others, Sir George Goring leads up the march and dance with the monopoly of tobacco and licensing of taverns, setting some up, where and as many as he pleased, and this done by a seal appendicular to an office erected by him for that purpose, as if authorised by a law; besides all this he hath pensions out of the pretermitted customs; insomuch as I have heard it most credibly reported that his revenue was 9,000*l.* per annum all of these kinds.<sup>147</sup>

After several months of negotiation agreement was reached that Lord Goring and his partners would pay £11,000 annual rent (approximately the current annual yield) and

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1635 (CSPD 1635, p. 8). This was presumably a power that Goring expected to be profitably delegated to him.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> DNB, s.n.

<sup>147</sup> 'Osborne's Memoirs' in Sir W. Scott (ed.), The Secret History of the Court of James I, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1811), 2, p. 41 and quoted in DNB.



two-thirds of all money taken above this amount to the crown.<sup>148</sup> The king was determined to take a full share of the anticipated profits. Beresford argues that 'it was from the fines for compounding with offenders that the real profit was expected'.<sup>149</sup> However, when interlopers were identified in an area where there was already a licensee with sole trading rights, compensation was due to the licensee not Goring. For example, in 1638 when Goring determined that Samuel Newton, a mercer, was guilty of unlicensed vending in Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire, Goring ordered him to pay £20 compensation to the local patentee.<sup>150</sup> It was, after all, that person's rights that had been infringed and profits that had diminished. The real profit for Goring could only come from 'compounding with', that is selling licences to, tobacco traders in locations where nobody had yet come forward to acquire one or where there was no limit on the number of licences available.

There was plenty of scope for Goring and his agents to increase the uptake of licences. If Grice's 1613 estimate that there were 6,000 tobacco retailers in London was correct there were thousands of pounds to be made selling £10 licences there. Though in some counties large numbers of licences had been purchased, most notably in Devon and Cornwall, very few had been purchased in others. For example, by December 1637 only 42 licences had been issued for Cumberland and Westmoreland combined.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 136. The patent is recorded in PRO C66/2770, no. 1. Goring's partners in this venture were Sir Drue Deane, Sir John Latch and his son, George Goring. The details of this patent (dated 22 June 1637) were sent to Lord Coventry (Birmingham Public Library DV894/602993/161).

<sup>149</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 136.

<sup>150</sup> CSPD 1638-9, p. 192 (31 December 1638). Newton was found guilty by Goring and his associates of selling without licence and was ordered to pay patentee of Ashby £20 'which he peremptorily refuses to pay'. Goring sought help from the Privy Council.

<sup>151</sup> Estimate drawn from covpprs. There may have been a few additional licences for these areas amongst the 199 patents issued before Lord Coventry began recording them.

Very few licences had been issued for Wales. There were still many places, such as Manchester, where licences lay vacant.<sup>152</sup> Despite this, Goring never managed to achieve the kind of rush for licences that heralded the start of the system. As table 6.1 above shows, almost 2,000 new licences were entered on the patent rolls between 1634 and 1636. Goring's efforts between 1637 and 1639 yielded less than 500.

Goring's relative lack of success in issuing new licences reflects the fact that earlier licence acquisition had been driven by those who voluntarily joined the scheme, sometimes forcing other traders in their area to do so. Only 164 new licences were issued in the year prior to Goring's patent being issued. The Stuart administration was structurally incapable of forcing compliance nation-wide. Officers of the Privy Council could take money, issue and register grants but they could not seek out unlicensed traders. As the authorising body the Privy Council was already required to settle disputes, such as that between Gerrard and Massey, which took time that it could not afford to waste. There were a host of other and more important matters to occupy their attention.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, Goring's patent stated that the main reason that the Privy Council had delegated responsibility for licensing to him was because it was too busy to deal with it.<sup>154</sup>

On 16 March 1637 powers were devolved from the Privy Council to Lord Goring and six other tobacco commissioners, including Charles Franckland and Samuel Bland who had been active members of the earlier Tobacco Commission. William Hawkins,

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<sup>152</sup> In October 1637 two out of four possible licences were issued for Manchester at £6-13-4 each (covpprs. 94:2, 97:6).

<sup>153</sup> A survey of the Privy Council Registers and Calendars of State Papers leaves little doubt that this key institution of central government spent considerable time dealing with individual petitions and a host of minor matters.



solicitor to the Earl of Leicester wrote a week later, 'I hear that my Lord Goring hath taken to farme the rents and fines for Tobacco licenses, at a rent agreeable to the profitts of the last yeare'.<sup>155</sup> Goring and his associates were authorised to summon, 'try' and bind over offenders.<sup>156</sup> From premises in Tower Street, London, Goring's 'Tobacco Office' began to exercise its authority and prerogative powers. However, it soon became apparent that Goring's time and patience was going to be expended on the profitless task of upholding licensees' rights rather than issuing new licences.

As the records of the Tobacco Office do not survive it is hard to assess how many disputes Goring had to settle. However, Goring and his associates often had to seek Privy Council help to uphold their authority. Privy Council records show that unlicensed traders often held the authority of licensees and of the Tobacco Office in contempt. Disputes could rumble on for years. For example, on 31 October 1637 John Spurdans, patentee of Daventry, reported Martin Wigston, ironmonger, of the same place, to the Tobacco Office. With a suit pending in the Court of Exchequer, Wigston requested a hearing before Goring and his associates. Witnesses testified that Wigston had traded without licence for two or three years. 'By way of arbitrament', the commissioners ordered Wigston to pay Spurdans £50 compensation.<sup>157</sup> Wigston then challenged the Tobacco Office by telling the Privy Council that he held a licence for a place near Daventry. The commissioners reported back that this was untrue according

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<sup>154</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 136.

<sup>155</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Palace 6 vols. (London, 1934 -1966), 6, p. 96. He later noted the comprehensive scope of Goring's influence: 'his Lordship is a farmor of all duties upon Tobacco and one of the farmors of the great Custome farme' (p. 123).

<sup>156</sup> Patent Roll 12 Chas 1 part 13 number 1 cited in Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 135.

<sup>157</sup> From a summary of events given on 21 May 1639, it appears that Goring told the Privy Council about this on 6 November 1637 (CSPD 1639, pp. 201-2).

to the 'receiver's book'.<sup>158</sup> Wigston then challenged the judicial competence of the Tobacco Office. He claimed that Goring had intimated to him that, if the case was brought before the commissioners, 'he should not be damnified thereby'. Goring stated that this was untrue and considered this suggestion of his dishonesty 'a foul aspersion and disgrace to the commissioners'.<sup>159</sup>

In May 1639 Wigston was still refusing to pay. Goring referred the matter back to the Privy Council. Wigston was summoned on 28 May and ordered to enter into a bond of £500 'neither directly nor indirectly' to sell tobacco in Daventry or anywhere else. Having done so he would be discharged from paying the £50 'set upon him by the commissioners'. Spurdans was then free to pursue any action against him 'by law' if he so desired.<sup>160</sup> This bond was duly made the following day.<sup>161</sup> Through his opportunistic defence Wigston had continued to trade without a licence for almost two years. Goring's authority had been successfully flouted and, when the matter was finally resolved, the Privy Council had not upheld his ruling. The Daventry patentee, Goring, and the king had earned nothing.

This was not an isolated case. In 1637 Goring similarly set a £5 fine upon one Edward Grigge of London for selling tobacco without licence since 1634.<sup>162</sup> In April 1638, the Tobacco Office informed the Privy Council of his continued trading and refusal to pay his fine even though it amounted to only half the annual rent expected from

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<sup>158</sup> When Goring took over, he was given the register book of William and Edward Carne which listed all the licences issued prior to the establishment of the Tobacco Office (Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', pp. 137-8).

<sup>159</sup> CSPD 1639, pp. 201-2.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., p. 216 (24 May 1639).

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., p. 230 (25 May 1639).



licensees.<sup>163</sup> On 23 May the Privy Council declared him a 'delinquent' who had sold 'great quantities' of tobacco without licence. His refusal to submit to the Tobacco Office was declared a contempt of the Privy Council. Grigge was ordered to pay the fine and enter into a bond not to vend in future. If he refused these orders he was to remain in custody and the messenger was to 'acquaint the Board with his refractoriness at their next meeting'.<sup>164</sup> As in the Wigston case, the authority of the Privy Council, unlike that of Goring, was effective. Gregge entered into a £100 bond two days later.

It is probable that in many unrecorded cases Goring's authority forced conformity and settlement. By 1638 licensees and, presumably, the Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing had identified and reported many unlicensed retailers to the Tobacco Office. Goring summoned offenders from all over the country. However, many refused to appear. Those who did often, 'in contempt of our commission and order, . . . departed without submitting thereunto'.<sup>165</sup>

To add to Goring's woes the price of imported tobacco collapsed in 1638. While not directly affecting the administration of the licensing system, this presented particular problems for Goring and for the king's tobacco policy. In the spring of 1638 Charles had concluded arrangements 'to buy and take into Our own hands and managing all

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<sup>162</sup> CSPD 1637-8, pp. 102-3. He was ordered not to sell tobacco again without getting a licence. No further information about Grigge has been found.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p. 381 (26 April 1638). A similar case also noted here centres upon Nathaniel Extill of London who refused to pay a 20 noble fine for selling without a licence. He was then in a messenger's custody 'but he regards it not'.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., p. 449 (23 May 1638).

<sup>165</sup> CSPD 1638-9, p. 160 (10 December 1638). William Hide and William Stubbs were ordered by the tobacco office to pay 40s each in compensation to the Clink patentee for selling without licence and were instructed to only sell tobacco bought from him in future or not at all. The commissioners appealed to the Privy Council to take action against them.

Tobacco from henceforth' as Goring had advised.<sup>166</sup> On the king's behalf, Goring had bought 1.6 million lbs. of tobacco for 8d per pound in March.<sup>167</sup> Later that year, with over 3 million lbs. flooding the market, 4d was considered a generous offer.<sup>168</sup> Charles and Goring could only recoup their £50,000 investment if the Tobacco Office could guarantee the necessary markets. With 'Office tobacco' costing twice the going rate this was not going to be easy.

The king's assumption of pre-emptive control over tobacco had significant political consequences. Firstly, royal finances were beginning to deteriorate and, with plans being laid for the impending Scottish expedition, were set to deteriorate further.<sup>169</sup> Ship Money receipts were declining and, with disappointing returns from the Great Customs Farm, crown revenue had declined by over £60,000 in 1637.<sup>170</sup> Revenue from the tobacco retail-licensing scheme was not rising as had been hoped. Indeed, with tobacco prices falling and too much tobacco available, Goring would have to force retailers more rigorously to take licences to prevent a fall in the tobacco component of his revenues. As is shown below, this made tobacco licensing increasingly unpopular, drawing the whole policy and the authority of the king into question.

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<sup>166</sup> 'A Proclamation Concerning Tobacco' (14 March 1638). Larkin, Stuart Royal Proclamations 2, pp. 600-04.

<sup>167</sup> G. L. Beer, The British Colonial System, 1578-1660 (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1959), pp. 158-9. Beer suggests that this price was intentionally high to encourage the planters who had seldom received more than 2d per pound over the previous two years.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.* Rive presents figures from official documents showing that 1.5m lbs. of tobacco was imported in 1637, 3.1m in 1638, 1.4m in 1639 and 1.3m in 1640. He suggests that the particularly high figure for 1638 may be partly due to 'the presence of Sir John Pennington with a man-of-war in the Channel, with instructions to take bond of masters to take their ships to London' (Rive, 'Tobacco Consumption Since 1600', pp. 60-1).

<sup>169</sup> In 1639, issues of the Exchequer for 'the Army in the North Parts' totalled £162,893. In 1640 this rose to a staggering £570,069 (Dietz, 'The Receipts and Issues of the Exchequer', p. 166).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.147-9. In 1636 cash receipts by the Exchequer had totalled £498,387. In 1637 they fell to £432,221. A corresponding drop in issues of the Exchequer did cancel out this drop in receipts but falling revenues were nevertheless of concern.



Secondly, since the establishment of the Goring's Tobacco Office, the relationship between the king and the tobacco merchants had deteriorated. Charles was clearly unhappy with the way the Virginia merchants were conducting their business. In a standard complaint for regulation he complained that profit-hungry merchants had been buying cheap tobacco and 'sophisticating' it with 'rotten fruits, stalks of Tobacco, and other corrupt ingredients'.<sup>171</sup> He argued that such bad tobacco was lowering the price of better quality tobacco and harming the prospects of Virginia planters. He determined that his efforts to control the source and quality of tobacco imports had failed because 'fit, diligent and able Agents have not hitherto been employed in these Our services, to see Our purposes deduced into Act'.<sup>172</sup> Further research is required to unravel the full political dimensions of this but, crucially, the people Charles was criticising were Brenner's 'new merchants', men who were often ideologically opposed to both Goring's monopolistic interests and the king's Prerogative Rule.<sup>173</sup> The Virginia merchants must have been stung by this royal incursion into their tobacco business and this explicit criticism of their integrity.

With so much over-priced tobacco to dispose of, Goring became more aggressive in his enforcement of tobacco vending licences. Samuel Newton of Ashby-de-la-Zouch complained to the Privy Council in January 1639 about his mistreatment by Goring

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<sup>171</sup> Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 2, p. 601.

<sup>172</sup> Explicitly linking the 'better encouragement' of the planters with the successful regulation of 'the trade and sales of Tobacco here at home', Charles determined to set prices and control the movement of tobacco from ship to retailer.

<sup>173</sup> Some of the 'company merchants', who had used their capital to become substantial tobacco importers would have also had little regard for the new arrangements. By the 1630s, men such as Matthew Craddock and William Pennoyer 'were among the first to link the American tobacco commerce directly with the Levant' by importing and then re-exporting Virginian tobacco (Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, p. 169).

and his agents. He had refused to pay £20 compensation to the local patentee as ordered by Goring because he had only sold tobacco bought from the deputy of 'one Hurd', ironmonger of London and patentee at Ashby.<sup>174</sup> When the deputy left town Newton offered to buy the licence from Hurd but the latter responded by laying a complaint before the tobacco commissioners. Despite his previous compliance with the regulations and his willingness to buy a licence, the messenger Tobias Knowles and his servant George Lee had aggressively enforced the warrant issued by the Tobacco Office. They had refused Newton's offers of security for his appearance and treated him very badly. Transported by foot over 100 miles 'like a vagrant', kept in isolation and threatened at gunpoint, Newton, the unlicensed local trader considered himself the victim, not Hurd, the absentee owner of the licence.<sup>175</sup>

With Charles's aid Goring also began pursuing a more aggressive policy towards the allocation of licences. He and his associates petitioned the king for increased powers. In December 1638 William Watts, messenger of the Chamber, was given a warrant to aid the Tobacco Office by taking 'refractory persons' into custody on direct authority from the Privy Council.<sup>176</sup> Additionally, Charles gave the Tobacco Office authority to grant licences 'to his Ma[jes]ties best advantage. . . as they in their judgements shall find best for his Ma[jes]ties service & the advancement of his revenewe'.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> *CSPD 1638-9*, p. 332 (18 January 1639) Nathaniel Hurd was a major trader with licences for numerous locations in Staffordshire, Derbyshire and elsewhere. See chapter 7.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.* They allegedly told him that they could kill him with impunity. Newton presented an affidavit with his petition specifically stating that, on 21 December 1638, George Lee, assaulted and threatened him.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187 (24 December 1638).

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170 (14 December 1638).



Even before he was granted wider powers to fill vacant licences, Goring had started actively selling licences with little regard for local interests or existing licensees' rights. In July 1638 he sold sole trading rights for Norwich to William Jhanns, probably a London merchant, for £120 p.a.<sup>178</sup> Those previously holding Norwich licences were to be 'forthwith suppressed from selling or retaying Tabacco there'.<sup>179</sup> The former licensees asked for time to consider their response but Goring, Franckland and Blande convinced the Privy Council that this was merely a ploy to 'delude' the commissioners and to 'defeate' Jhanns. The Privy Council confirmed Jhanns's patent and ordered that the former patentees (John Osbourne, Robert Dey, William Lambert, Richard Lambert, Daniel Dover and Henry Hearne) surrender their licences, be taken into custody and brought before the Council within fourteen days for continuing to trade. This may be an isolated case. Nevertheless, it shows that Goring was willing and apparently able to displace local licensees in favour of an 'outsider' through whom he could sell his tobacco.

### Reform and Disintegration

In 1639 Goring's more strident 'management' of tobacco licence allocation and enforcement coincided with a groundswell of disaffection with royal government.

Cope argues that 'until 1639 most people elected to grumble rather than to take more

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<sup>178</sup> Numerous licences were issued in the name of William Jhanns. Alongside a probable relative, George Jhanns, and one other person, he shared a monopoly over Derby (covpprs 59:29). The name William Jhanns also appears on licences for a few villages in Derbyshire and Warwickshire (covpprs 49:7, 11:36), Lowes in Sussex (covppr 13:31) and London (covppr 16:15). In the latter case, he is described as William Jhanns of Bartholomew Lane, London. It is uncertain whether all these licences relate to the same person. There is a William Johannes, merchant, mentioned in Brenner.

<sup>179</sup> Details of this first phase in the dispute between Jhanns and the Norwich traders are in PRO Privy Council Register (facsimile) (London, 1968), 4, p. 603.

daring action'.<sup>180</sup> Going to war without issuing writs of summons was a departure from custom that gave people 'cause for questioning their trust in him'.<sup>181</sup> Though less important than matters of defence and religion, the king's tobacco licensing policy and the Tobacco Office implementing it were increasingly questioned and challenged. This was an inopportune time for Goring to more actively assert and be perceived to abuse prerogative powers.

Indeed, even the Privy Council seems to have determined that Goring had exceeded his authority or at least that his actions could not be justified in law. When the erstwhile licensees of Norwich appealed against the ruling in favour of Jhanns and Goring, the Privy Council reversed its decision. After a long debate in March 1639, the Privy Council ruled that, provided that they agreed to compensate Jhanns in full, including for his costs in prosecuting his case, the Norwich licensees were to 'enjoy theyr former Pattents'.<sup>182</sup> The 'great quantity' of tobacco which Jhanns had sent to 'furnish' the city was to be assessed by 'two sufficient Grocers, or others skillfull in that commodity, to be indifferently chosen by consent of the parties'. If 'marchantable' the Norwich licensees were obliged to purchase it from him. Once all of this was done, Jhanns was instructed to surrender his patent. In future, so long as the king's rent remained constant, the licensees could determine the number of persons licensed to sell tobacco in the city as they saw fit. The tobacco would still be sold but Goring's right to interfere in the Norwich tobacco trade had been severely curtailed.

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<sup>180</sup> Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments*, p. 212.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

<sup>182</sup> *Privy Council Register* 5, p. 123. Initially, there was no limit to the number of Norwich licences available. After the dispute with Jhanns, it was determined that there would be seven licences available for £17-02-10 each, raising all but 10s of the £120 paid by Jhanns.



Two days after their ruling in the Norwich case the king and his Privy Council met to discuss how to tackle 'diverse insolent and disorderly persons' who refused to obey the authority of the tobacco licences. Attorney General Sir John Bancks was ordered to consider what course, besides imprisonment, they could take to bring such 'refractory' persons into submission.<sup>183</sup> Reporting back two weeks later, Bancks advocated solving this problem, not by instituting harsher penalties, but by reforming the licensing system. He proposed new rules to govern and regularise the allocation of licences. The measures he advocated represented a step back towards the local determination of who should sell tobacco. Goring was being reined in.

Bancks suggested that additional licences should not to be granted where the inhabitants had taken the full number available and that people living where they traded were to 'bee preferred before any other'.<sup>184</sup> Outsiders, such as Jhanns, would no longer be able to flood a local market by virtue of a supposedly vacant licence. Traders such as Samuel Newton of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, who wanted to be the licensed trader in their own areas, would have priority over people like Nathaniel Hurd who held many licences and used deputies to manage the trade for them. Local people controlling local trade had been the ethos behind licensing before the shift to the centralised licence by patent system. Successful enforcement required the presence of the licensee and a positive relationship between him and local consumers and authorities. Licensees such as Hurd and Jhanns had connections in London that had enabled them to buy licences. In Ashby and Norwich, where they were stealing the trade from others, they had few friends.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., pp. 166-7.

Bancks also determined that alcohol vendors should be allowed to buy licences. This negated the central tenet of the moral agenda underpinning the licensing system. As noted above, Charles considered alehouses wholly inappropriate places for the use, let alone sale, of tobacco. He refused to allow any alcohol suppliers, even the most respectable, to retail tobacco. In December 1635 he rejected a petition from the London Vintners Company seeking permission for its members to vend tobacco.<sup>185</sup> However, by 1639 it was evident from the findings of the Exchequer Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing that alehouses were at the heart of the illegal and unlicensed trade in tobacco. Following Bancks' advice, Charles relented and effectively abandoned his moral reformation for the sake of fiscal imperatives made all too pressing by the war with the Scots. To make the licensing system more effective and thus preserve and possibly increase his revenues, he granted Goring permission to sell licences to alcohol vendors.<sup>186</sup>

Bancks also addressed concerns that the Tobacco Office was abusing its authority to benefit vested interests at the expense of local traders. He asserted that licensees should not be bound to buy their tobacco from a particular source (i.e. Goring). They should be free to buy their stock 'att the best rate they can agree'.<sup>187</sup> To avoid any conflict of interests and ensure administrative propriety, Bancks further advocated that messengers and officers concerned with the administration and enforcement of the system be debarred from holding licences.<sup>188</sup> These stipulations suggest that the Tobacco Office was perceived to be corrupt and more concerned with lining the pockets of its officials than bringing order to the trade. A regulatory policy that had

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<sup>185</sup> CSPD 1635, p. 545 (9 December 1635).

<sup>186</sup> Privy Council Register 5, pp. 166-7.



proved to be so difficult to enforce without local co-operation could not afford such a reputation.

Finally, Bancks urged the issue of another proclamation confirming licensees' rights and detailing the overall benefits of the licensing system. This was duly issued on 25 March. It clearly identified smuggling and illegal growing with unlicensed trading. It reported that, because 'divers of Our loving Subjects' had taken licences 'to sell and utter forrain Tobacco by Retail', crown revenues had been boosted and 'many inconveniences' prevented.<sup>189</sup> Those 'ill affected persons' still vending without licence, especially those in London who were putting out 'false reports and rumours' that the licensing policy was about to be scrapped, were to be prosecuted. Charles was not willing to have his policy impaired by their 'wilfull opposition'. Roving peddlers and 'other interlopers' were particularly warned not to trade in tobacco even 'under colour or pretext of giving Tobacco'.<sup>190</sup> Those licensed to sell from particular locations were ordered not sell their wares at fairs and markets in other areas. Adding another specific prohibition on the growth, sale or purchase of 'English Tobacco' which 'is dayly sold and uttered to Our people', Charles demanded that local constables and justices enforce all his orders.

Given time, these reforms could possibly have defused hostility towards licensing and, particularly by allowing alehouse keepers to join the scheme, increased the uptake of

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid. Those holding them were to surrender either their licences or their offices.

<sup>189</sup> 'A Proclamation Concerning Tobacco' (25 March 1639). Larkin, *Stuart Royal Proclamations* 2, pp. 670-3. According to this proclamation, licences would henceforth be more specific about exactly who could sell where. 'Forrain' = overseas, that is, Virginia and Somers Islands.

<sup>190</sup> That tobacco was given away free or with pipes etc. was a recurrent claim of those questioned by the Exchequer Commissions of Enquiry into unlicensed dealing. See chapter 7.

licences. Every new licence allocated would have meant one less unlicensed trader to prosecute. However, it was already too late. Charles's Prerogative Rule was losing legitimacy. The sale of licences, like the raising of Ship Money, was considered by many to be an extra-parliamentary tax not a justifiable way to improve the state "for the good of all". Goring's 'tobacco court', like Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, infringed individual liberties. Cope suggests that, between the first Bishops' War and the Long Parliament, 'the focus of politics shifted from particular complaints to the condition of England'.<sup>191</sup> The controversy over tobacco vending licences illustrates how, in this context, a particular complaint could progress from passive non-compliance to open defiance and even concerted action within a community.

As early as October 1638 Augustine Dawney, an unlicensed retailer in the precincts of St Katherine's, Middlesex, was actively campaigning against John Langdon, the licensed retailer there.<sup>192</sup> Langdon testified that Dawney had persistently sold tobacco without licence and 'encouraged others to do the like, and has very much depraved petitioner, and disparaged the patent'. He had even made a collection amongst unlicensed dealers in the area, 'undertaking to overthrow the petitioner's patent'. Dawney urged everyone to trade freely and even initiated a prosecution against the justice of the peace who had committed him in response to Langdon's complaint.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Cope, *Politics Without Parliaments*, p. 213.

<sup>192</sup> *CSPD 1638-9*, pp. 58-9 (17 October 1638). This is probably the Precinct of St Katherine's by the Tower.

<sup>193</sup> Langdon calculated that he had lost £300 through Dawney's actions and was thus unable to pay the £20 rent for his licence. Langdon further complained that he had been unable to trade at all for three weeks because Dawney, who was the local constable, had shut up his house 'pretending that it was infected with the sickness'. Dudley Carlton and Secretary Nicholas investigated this last accusation. They heard testimony that Dawney had rightly quarantined Langdon's house because Langdon had thrown out a plague-carrying servant.



By mid-1639 such open defiance of licensees' rights became more widespread. In New Buckenham, Norfolk, John Dowghty, a local tailor, had used many tricks surreptitiously taking customers away from the licensee for the village. By 1639 he was openly selling tobacco on New Buckenham Common, telling the licensee personally that he did so 'in dispight of him'.<sup>194</sup>

Individuals who were refusing to comply with the demands of local licensees and the Tobacco Office were given a major boost when, only two weeks after the proclamation heralding the reformed system, another proclamation was issued which seemed to contradict it. This proclamation of 9 April 1639, voiding numerous patents deemed contrary to the good of the nation (or perhaps legally indefensible) was probably an attempt to show the king's willingness to reform his administration and thus to diminish domestic criticism at a time of war. It included an ambiguous reference to the voiding of a tobacco patent. Bancks considered that the proclamation had been 'plain enough' in declaring void the patent held by Henry Spiller, Abraham Dawes and others regarding defrauding of tobacco customs.<sup>195</sup> However, many took this to mean that the Tobacco Office and the entire licensing system had been revoked. All the careful measures taken in March had been undermined by what Charles described as a 'wilfull misunderstanding'.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> More details on this complex dispute in chapter 7.

<sup>195</sup> CSPD 1639, p. 203 (21 May 39). Bancks wrote to Nicholas from Gray's Inn saying 'though the proclamation be plain enough, yet I pray you draw an order of explanation, that this was the commission [to be voided] and no other intended'. The patent being repealed had been granted on 11 March 1635 to 'discover and prosecute those who since 9 April 1625 have concealed any customs for tobacco' including the prosecution of those buying and selling illegal tobacco (Birmingham Public Library DV892/602756/161). The repeal of this patent may have been because, in this latter respect, it overlapped with Goring's jurisdiction.

<sup>196</sup> Privy Council Register 4, p. 398.

Whether ‘tobacco dealers up and down the country rejoiced’, as Beresford asserted, cannot be verified.<sup>197</sup> However, some certainly took advantage of the confusion or, perhaps the opportunity to appear confused. Charles complained that ‘tobacco is sold w[i]thout licence in divers parts’ and licensees ‘forbeare to pay their Rents’.<sup>198</sup> Goring and his fellow commissioners were being yet again and even more forcefully ‘disesteemed’. Goring alleged that unlicensed dealers in Newington Butts, who were being prosecuted through the Tobacco Office by Thomas Brewer, the local patentee, seized upon the April proclamation to deflect attention away from their ‘delinquencies’.<sup>199</sup> Dismissing their claims that Brewer sold contaminated tobacco at inflated prices, Goring asserted that these ‘prejudiced persons’ had ‘stirred up others to sell’ tobacco in the confusion following the proclamation.<sup>200</sup> They were, he believed, part of a larger ‘conspiracy’ to over throw the patents entirely.

Other proceedings against unlicensed dealers were similarly interrupted. John Coy, for example, had, with the assistance of the Finsbury Headborough and ‘by vertue of the Lord’s warrant’, seized the tobacco of Thomas Curtis. Curtis responded by procuring a warrant from Justice Gibbs for Coy’s arrest on the grounds that Coy’s right to seize the tobacco had been invalidated by the April proclamation. The uncertainty had,

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<sup>197</sup> Beresford, ‘The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences’, p. 140.

<sup>198</sup> CSPD 1639, pp. 230-1 (25 May 1639).

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 142-3 (9 May 1639). Goring sought Privy Council help against them. Brewer claimed he was unable to pay his rent because of this. Goring ordered compensation (different amounts between £2 and £10) paid to Brewer. All the accused ‘departed without submitting’, holding the tobacco office in contempt.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 220, 237, 334-5. Having been forced to attend the Tobacco Office upon forfeiture of substantial bonds to the Privy Council, the ‘defendants’ claimed that Brewer had himself sold tobacco to those he accused ‘at several times at the rate of 16s per pound not worth 6s, at the rate of 14s not worth 2s, and at 6s not worth 6d’. Brewer was further accused of vending tobacco contaminated with dirt and coal dust in sealed packets.



possibly with the collusion of Justice Gibbs, been exploited to place the local licensee in prison while the unlicensed dealer regained his tobacco.<sup>201</sup>

There is evidence that it became increasingly common for unlicensed dealers to respond to prosecutions by initiating counter-suits and laying complaints against their accusers' sharp and illegal practices. For example, John Bailye of Wombwell (licensee for Darfield and Wathe parishes) was indicted at West Riding Quarter Sessions for selling 'naughtye tobacco at unreasonable rates' following 'sundrye complaintes'.<sup>202</sup>

Preventing such abuses had been one of the justifications for licensing vendors. In January 1640 Marmaduke Sharpe (licensee for Wetherby, Spofforth & Boroughbridge) was similarly indicted because he 'doth sell and vent badd tobacco and unwholesome, and att unreasonable rates'.<sup>203</sup> Both were accused of using warrants from the Tobacco Office to 'exact' money 'unduly'. Further research is required to determine the full extent of such actions but, at least in some areas, it seems to have become a common feature of tobacco disputes.

Uncertainty generated by the April proclamation, real or contrived, probably combined with perceptions that the Tobacco Office was unable to enforce the patents, led to a more general rejection of Goring's authority. On 23 May 1639 Goring referred the cases of 22 'delinquent' traders from Middlesex, Essex, Buckinghamshire and

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid., pp. 149-50 (10 May 1639).

<sup>202</sup> In court and upon oath it was stated that Bailye sold his tobacco at 20d/oz when, in the nearby market town of Barnsley, better tobacco was sold for 6d/oz. The Quarter Sessions deferred to the Tobacco Office for a determination of how Bailye's customers could best get 'releife' rather than how Bailye's patented rights could be upheld (J. Lister (ed.), *West Riding Sessions Records 1611-42*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 54 (1915), p. 198). Thomas Addye and George Swinden were assigned to attend to the referral to the commissioners.

<sup>203</sup> *The West Riding Sessions Rolls*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 5 (1879), p. 401. 'Sundrye papers sealed with his sealle' were produced in court to illustrate the poor quality of the tobacco he was selling at the extraordinary price of 30s per pound.

Surrey to the Privy Council. All ‘obstinantly refuse to obey . . . using many reproachful speeches against us, and cry down the patents, pretending you will do nothing against them’.<sup>204</sup> Such widespread and open defiance of royal authority was potentially dangerous at a time when an unpopular war was being prosecuted in the North. The tobacco commissioners urged the Privy Council to arrest the delinquents, ‘whereby the commission may be freed from scorn and contempt, to the prejudice of the whole business, which otherwise must of necessity fall to the ground’.<sup>205</sup>

The king and Privy Council attempted to shore up the licensing system. They determined that non-appearance before the commissioners was a direct ‘contempt of council’ and issued warrants to arrest offenders.<sup>206</sup> They gave Goring permission to sell licences in London and its suburbs at lower prices ‘and to such a number as’ he and his associates ‘thinke fitt’, so long as total revenue did not decline.<sup>207</sup> ‘Referees’ were instructed ‘to consider of the best means to settle that business and to redress the clamour and disturbance therein’.<sup>208</sup> Another proclamation was issued confirming that the licensing system was to continue.<sup>209</sup> It was all to no avail. On 16 December 1639 the Tobacco Office sought warrants to arrest 134 persons across England and Wales

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<sup>204</sup> CSPD 1639, pp. 212-3 (23 May 1639).

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> Throughout August, while Charles was trying to solve his Scottish problems, orders and warrants ‘upholding the King’s revenue about licensing retailers of tobacco’ continued to flow from the Privy Council.

<sup>207</sup> Privy Council Register 4, p. 602 (18 August 1639). Goring was perhaps hoping to draw vociferous unlicensed dealers in London into the system by offering cheaper licences. He may also have been forced to take such action to lower existing rents because licensed dealers rights were evidently not being upheld while so many were openly defying the restrictions.

<sup>208</sup> CSPD 1639, p. 469 (August 1639).

<sup>209</sup> Privy Council Register 4, p. 590 (11 August 1639). The Privy Council instructed the Attorney General to draw up the proclamation.



‘who refuse to appear upon the commissioners’ summons’, some of whom were licensed traders who had defaulted in the payment of their rents.<sup>210</sup>

By January 1640 disorder in the tobacco ‘business’ seemed on the verge of becoming a direct threat to social order. The Privy Council was informed of two incidents in London where disputes about licences had taken a violent turn. The first incident concerned Rowland Baskefield, a Fleet Street grocer, who had been imprisoned for three weeks and forced to pay 50s in fees for unlicensed dealing. Upon release, he initiated an action in the Exchequer against Alexander Easton, the messenger who had enforced the local licence holder’s rights. While Easton was in the North arresting other unlicensed dealers, the Exchequer upheld Baskefield’s complaint. Baskefield went to Easton’s house with a sergeant and, having been refused access, broke down the door in pursuit of the £14 damages he had been awarded for false imprisonment. With a crowd flocking around the door and threatening to take similar action against Easton, Easton’s wife paid the money that had been demanded ‘with a great deal of disgrace’.<sup>211</sup>

The other incident was the culmination of a long-standing dispute between the rival traders in Stepney. The Tobacco Office, with the assistance of the Privy Council, had repeatedly tried to mediate between the different parties since 1637.<sup>212</sup> By 1639

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<sup>210</sup> CSPD 1639-40, p. 165 (16 December 1639).

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., pp. 244-5 (2 January 1640). The Privy Council later questioned Easton who urged that the warrants be amended so that those who compound with their accuser after warrants were issued for their non-appearance may be discharged (p. 297).

<sup>212</sup> Here, the Tobacco Office had renegotiated arrangements to settle long-standing disputes between local licensees so they ‘might jointly trade together and licence all others’ only with majority consent and for the benefit of the ‘whole society’. In one such instance, on 25 December 1637, the Stepney patentees gave Peter Boddam of Upper Shadwell a licence to vend for 30s fine and 7s 6d per quarter (CSPD 1637-8, p. 38).

Goring had come to conclusion that one Thomas Pennington and his allies were attempting to 'overthrow his Majesty's patents and to undo the patentees'.<sup>213</sup> Several opponents of licensing had been forced to take licences but had then deputed all and sundry, effectively making the licences worthless. Goring believed this to be 'but a plot in these times to overthrow the whole' and so began proceedings against those deputies.

The Stepney licensees who wanted their rights upheld initiated prosecutions in a local court. In January 1640 they complained to the Privy Council claiming that the local Justice, an associate of Goring's named Thomas Jay who was proceeding on their behalf against unlicensed traders, had been 'utterly discouraged' through intimidation and legal obstruction. Jay had been instrumental in 'preparing and prosecuting the proposition to have the trade of retailing tobacco driven by such only as should be licenced'.<sup>214</sup> When Goring took over he had petitioned for a post weighing merchants' goods at the docks.<sup>215</sup> He was an excellent target for those who wanted to question the validity of the whole licensing policy.

Jay's prosecution of one George Stanton brought matters to a head. Jay had imprisoned Stanton, a 'principle delinquent' in unlicensed dealings in Stepney. Thomas Pennington, despite his earlier prosecution by the Privy Council, urged 'divers persons, some unconnected with the sale of tobacco, 'so to scandalise' and frighten Justice Jay that he bailed Stanton without taking a bond. This encouraged others to continue retailing without licence. Pennington and his accomplices then

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<sup>213</sup> This view was expressed before the clamour following the April proclamation.

<sup>214</sup> Jay had been a signatory to Endymion Porter's petition of April 1632 (PRO PC2/41/526).



allegedly beat the servants of the patentees 'as they have gone along the road' and were generally harassing them. The patentees asked that 'exemplary punishment be speedily inflicted on these disturbers of the peace' by the Privy Council. While the patentees sought redress the unlicensed traders initiated their own legal proceedings against Justice Jay claiming partiality in his rulings.<sup>216</sup>

Stanton was clerk to Justice Nathaniel Snape of Stepney as well as being a tobacco retailer. Snape and another J.P., William Gibbs (who had previously backed the unlicensed dealer against the patentee in Finsbury), advised Stanton to bring actions of trespass against Jay. In a hint of legal rivalry, Jay attributed this advice to his rival justices' jealousy because the patentees always referred such cases to him. Jay's ordeal was exacerbated when 'a multitude of these delinquents', all facing similar charges and urged on by Stanton and Pennington, delivered 'divers scandalous petitions' against him to Lord Keeper Coventry and Chief Justice Bramston. About eighty people attended the subsequent hearing alleging 'many false and bold' matters against Jay including claims that he gave high damages in tobacco licence cases and shared the proceeds with the patentees. Throughout, George Stanton, a 'principle delinquent', took every opportunity to 'vilify and menace' Jay.<sup>217</sup>

In Stepney licensing divided the community between upholders of the king's authority and those who actively opposed his licensing policy. Tobacco licensing was tapping into undercurrents of general disaffection with the king's policies and individuals who were attempting to uphold them. There was plenty of scope for the interconnected

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<sup>215</sup> CSPD 1636-7, p. 573 (29 November 1637).

<sup>216</sup> CSPD 1639-40, pp. 411-2 (31 January 1640).

disputes to rumble on through the courts. With the prospect of a parliament looming and expectations that monopolies and prerogative powers would be challenged, there was little chance that licensees in Stepney or anywhere else would be able to assert effectively the king's authority delegated to them through their patents. Everyone was waiting to see what the Parliament would do. Edward Joslyn, threatened with prosecution by a licensee named Allen, noted that 'in regard the Parliament was then approaching, the said Allen forbore execution' of his action against him.<sup>218</sup>

The peremptory dissolution of that Parliament in May 1640 merely delayed the inevitable. The Tobacco Office remained impotent while unlicensed traders openly defied their licensed rivals. Goring reported to the Privy Council in July that the entire system was collapsing. A deluge of complaints to the Tobacco Office, the Privy Council and the short-lived parliament had made it almost impossible to continue managing the system. Revenue was drastically reduced: 'His Majesties rents upon that business are very much decayed and likely to be utterly lost and the promiscuous sale of Tobacco to returne into use'.<sup>219</sup> Lord Keeper Coventry, the Lord Treasurer and Chancellor of Exchequer Cottington were instructed to consult with legal officers to 'examine the true state of the sayd business and what grievances . . . may be found and how to be releived'.<sup>220</sup>

At end of July 1640 the Grocers' Company of London and the Virginia planters petitioned the king, beseeching him to recall the licences and make the trade 'free as

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Lords MSS no. 175 quoted in Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 142.

<sup>219</sup> Privy Council Register 8, p. 611.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.



heretofore'.<sup>221</sup> . As Beresford notes, this was a complete reversal of their 1632 position.<sup>222</sup> The removal of restrictions on alehouse keepers selling tobacco had perhaps made licensing less attractive for them. However, there were larger issues involved. The Grocers' petition appealed for free trading as a general principle of right action. This was a rallying cry for opponents of monopolies. They argued that the pretence of regulating the commodity and raising revenue for the crown had been used to enrich a few at the expense of the many who had a right, as subjects of the kingdom, to trade freely. Goring was clearly principal among the few.

On 23 November 1640 the Long Parliament considered the Grocers' petition alongside others from patentees requesting that their patents should be upheld. However, this was one of many monopolies and so was not given particular attention. Strafford's Irish tobacco monopoly had been debate three days earlier.<sup>223</sup> He was a far more important target than Goring who, along with other monopolists, was expelled from the House. Nevertheless, 'both Commons and Lords continued to receive petitions from those who had been fined, imprisoned, bound over or vexed' by the Tobacco Office 'whose general powers to act as a judicial organ were questioned in the same months that the prerogative courts as a whole were being attacked'.<sup>224</sup> Though not formally abolished, tobacco licensing was completely invalidated by the general parliamentary assault on monopolies, 'illegal' enforcement of royal edicts and

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<sup>221</sup> Ibid., p. 671.

<sup>222</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 141.

<sup>223</sup> The twelfth article against Strafford was that he had 'ingrossed the whole trade of tobacco [in Ireland] to himselfe and made a monopoly of it' (W. Notestein (ed.), The Journal of Sir Simonds D'Ewes (New Haven, 1923), p. 405). In March 1641, Sir John Temple informed the Earl of Leicester that accounts seized from Lord Strafford showed that he and his partners had collected a staggering £200,000 from the Irish tobacco monopoly over a two year period in which they paid the king only £14,000 (HMC De L'Isle, 6, p. 389).

<sup>224</sup> Quoted in Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 141.

the infringement of individual rights. It had effectively collapsed anyway. There was little need to formally abolish it.<sup>225</sup>

In many respects a tobacco retail licensing system had been an appropriate response to the perceived problem of disorderly trading. Licensing gave Charles and his central government a potential means to suppress illegal tobacco and curb its excessive use. However, the shift to a licence by patent system, partly because of its initial success, made the issuing of licences important in its own right. It also made central rather than local authorities the arbiter of who was fit to vend in particular locations. When everyone who wanted a licence had bought one, the Privy Council and the Tobacco Office were unable to force widespread compliance from those tobacco traders who refused to buy licences or submit to the authority of those who had.

1637 proved to be a turning point in Charles's tobacco licensing policy. Indeed, as Sharpe argues, that year 'appears in many ways to have been the turning point in the history of the personal rule'.<sup>226</sup> This was the year that Ship Money was challenged in the courts and Prynne, Burton and Bastwick were punished. Charles's policies were becoming increasingly unpopular and arousing increasing hostility. At this time, Goring's attempts at more rigorous enforcement heightened latent hostility to the

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<sup>225</sup> Beresford notes that G. L. Beer cited two cases of tobacco licences in 1645 and 1646 and suggest that licences were thus 'still taken seriously' (Ibid., p. 142). This seems unlikely. Without any prospect of enforcement, particularly during the war, there would have been no incentive for a tobacco retailer to buy a licence voluntarily. Besides, in 1643, Parliament's Excise Ordinance had been introduced which superseded the vending licences by taxing the retail of all tobacco. Indeed, tobacco was the first commodity listed. The duty on foreign tobacco was initially set at 4s per pound. That for Virginian and for tobacco 'made in this land' was 2s per pound (C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait (eds.), Acts and Orders of the Interregnum, 1642-1660 (London, 1911), 2, pp. 202-08).

<sup>226</sup> Sharpe, The Personal Rule, p. 769.



licensing scheme. Particularly in the aftermath of the first Bishop's War, Goring's Tobacco Office became yet another focus for opposition to the king's authority. For those engaged in the tobacco trade and perhaps some of their customers, tobacco vending licences were a concrete example of the kind of monopolistic and essentially tyrannical structures of commerce and government that were the primary target of those taking their seats in the Long Parliament.

Compared with matters of religion, the tobacco vending licence system was not particularly important. However, unlicensed traders had successfully rejected his right to restrict them illustrating that royal policies could be challenged. Also, despite its ultimate failure, the six years of Charles's regulations generated records which, as the next chapter shows, provide an unrivalled insight into the organisation of the retail trade in the 1630s.

## Chapter 7

# Competing Networks of Exchange:

## The distribution and retailing of tobacco in the 1630s

- The licensed trade in tobacco: an overview
- Licensed networks of supply
- Supplying unlicensed retailers
- The influence of Charles's retailing regulations on the domestic tobacco trade.

Chapter 6 showed that Charles's licence by patent policy for regulating tobacco retailing ultimately collapsed because unlicensed retailers did not comply. Particularly in 1639-40 this non-compliance became entangled with the politics of monopoly and royal prerogative. The Stuart administration was unable to enforce its patents effectively partly because the centralised allocation of licences diminished the participation of local authorities in the scheme. As this chapter shows, it was also because tobacco-vending licences were often purchased, not by local retailers who sold ounces, 'pennyworths' or pipefuls of tobacco to their customers, but by the middlemen who supplied them. Using licences to gain control over segments of the domestic trade, local and sometimes regional tobacco 'overlords' competed with each other and with unlicensed traders to supply alehouse keepers, mercers etc. whose right to trade freely had been curtailed by the regulations.

This was a fundamental shift in control of internal trade. In the early modern period retailers determined where they would buy their stock often on the basis of



recommendation and networking.<sup>1</sup> Retailers were not tied to any particular supplier and, indeed, routinely used different suppliers for different goods. For example, in the 1590s William Wray of Ripon, mercer, bought goods from about twenty different suppliers in Ripon, Beverley, York and Norwich as well as from local producers.<sup>2</sup> Some retailers 'chose to use several suppliers in order to encourage them to compete against each other' for the retailer's custom. This pattern continued well into the eighteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Tobacco retail licences offered tobacco wholesalers an opportunity to reverse this situation and force retailers into exclusive relationships on their own terms. As this chapter shows, a few individuals bought many licences which secured and expanded tobacco distribution and vending 'empires' stretching from the docks to large numbers of towns and villages.

It is unlikely that Charles had any idea of how his licensing policy would effect trading relationships. Mercantile reasoning identified the balance of international trade as the determinant of national prosperity. There was little reason for the king or his councillors to consider how goods moved through various hands from the importer to the consumer.<sup>4</sup> In the 1630s economic thinkers 'gave only a sideways glance at internal distribution at the wholesale level and, if they looked at the retail sector at all, it was more often than not to heap suspicion and abuse on the shopkeeper'.<sup>5</sup> Such disregard of the complexities of inland trade in this period still persists. As Cox notes,

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<sup>1</sup> Cox notes that 'recommendation and networking played an important role in the supply side of the business' (N. Cox, The Complete Tradesman: a study of retailing, 1550-1820 (Aldershot, 2000), pp. 186-7).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> From Wray's accounts (Ibid., p. 186).

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Munn divided trade into three categories: essentials, desirables and unnecessarys. For most observers, tobacco was definitely in the latter category (T. Munn, Discourse of Trade (London, 1621)). As chapter 5 showed, tobacco was initially condemned as an expensive and unnecessary import from Spain which adversely affected the balance of trade. By 1630, the more beneficial exchange of Virginian tobacco for English manufactures and the development of a tobacco export trade had reversed this situation.

historians tend to dismiss early modern retailing and distribution as rudimentary, ‘a primitive precursor of what was to come’ in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.<sup>6</sup> She argues that this gives ‘an entirely false picture of a dynamic and flexible system well adapted to serve’ consumers. Charles’s arbitrary sale of sole trading rights to whoever would pay for them (so long as they were not alcohol vendors) was too blunt an instrument to regulate adequately the interdependencies between various middlemen and retailers that constituted this system of domestic commodity supply.

In her examination of shops and shopping 1550-1750, Cox shows that, below the level of great merchants and wholesalers, goods moved to the final user through a diverse group of retailers. These ranged from itinerant chapmen and ‘producer-retailers’ to fixed shop retailers, some of whom supplied goods wholesale to ‘lesser’ retailers as well offering a wide range of goods to consumers. Clarkson suggests that ‘retail shops supplied with goods by wholesalers appeared in the larger towns in early 17<sup>th</sup> century, dealing in tobacco, spices and imported groceries’.<sup>7</sup> Noting that there were seventy-two licensed retailers of tobacco in Wiltshire in 1637, he argues that such high value commodities were particularly tradable because they ‘could be broken down into small quantities and transported easily from the point of import to shopkeepers in various parts of the country’. Chartres’s examination of the marketing of agricultural produce shows that the early modern period was also characterised by the rise of entrepreneurs who specialised in supplying retailers in disparate parts of the realm. He argues that ‘the growth in activity, number, and relative power’ of these ‘middlemen’ sponsored ‘the marked transition between 1600 and 1750 to a nationally integrated

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<sup>5</sup> Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, p. 18.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44. Cox presents a survey of the recent historiography of retailing (pp. 11-14).

<sup>7</sup> L. A. Clarkson, *The Pre-Industrial Economy in England 1500-1750* (London, 1971), p.138.



market'.<sup>8</sup> This examination of the tobacco retail trade in the 1630s shows how such retailers and middlemen intersected in the supply of one particular commodity to cities, towns and villages across England and Wales.

This investigation of the domestic tobacco trade is made possible by a wealth of documentation generated by the licensing system between February 1634 and November 1640. All licences issued from March 1634 to the establishment of Goring's Tobacco Office in March 1637 are detailed in the papers of Thomas Lord Coventry.<sup>9</sup> Various state papers, particularly the Exchequer Commissions of Enquiry into unlicensed dealing (listed in chapter 6), offer insights into local competition between rival licensees and between licensees and unlicensed traders who continued to retail tobacco surreptitiously. These rich sources provide a unique opportunity to examine the nature and scope of distribution and retailing in a period noted for its lack of sources.<sup>10</sup> Cox, for example, recognises the successful penetration of tobacco into the market but states that 'very little is known about how tobacco was introduced' because only 'wisps of evidence' survive for the period before 1660.<sup>11</sup> The sources generated by the licensing system may not illuminate how tobacco first became available in markets across the realm but they can present a snapshot of the structure of the tobacco trade in England before the Civil War. They can also shed light on the

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<sup>8</sup> J. A. Chartres, 'Food Consumption and Internal Trade' in J. A. Chartres (ed.), Pre-Industrial Britain (Oxford, 1994), pp.187-8. Chartres also suggests these middlemen were responsible for investment of venture capital and stimulating the development of a commercial infrastructure particularly by sponsoring transport change through river navigations etc.

<sup>9</sup> The papers of Lord Keeper Coventry are held in the Birmingham Public Library Birmingham Public library (DV887/602204/321). In this text, entries will be cited as follows - covprsr. document number: item number(s).

<sup>10</sup> Willan stated that 'none of the sources available for the study of shops and shopkeepers in this period gives any detailed picture of the distribution of shops throughout the country' (T. S. Willan, The English Coasting Trade, 1600-1750 (Manchester, 1967), p. 59). Cox says networking between retailers is particularly hard to see in period before 1660 (Cox, The Complete Tradesman, p. 163).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

inter-relation between government regulation and economic organisation at a time when retailing was becoming increasingly diverse and economically more important.

However, this chapter presents only a preliminary analysis of the information available. As Cox notes, 'the retailing sector is a large and complex subject'.<sup>12</sup> The intricacies of the nation-wide supply, distribution and retailing of tobacco cannot be fully detailed in a single chapter. Beginning with a national overview of the licensed trade, this chapter examines variations in the cost of licences, regional uptake and the relative prominence of multiple licence holders. It does not present a detailed county by county breakdown of who was trading where or offer a nation-wide survey of distribution networks and retailing outlets. Similarly, by focussing on the organisation of the tobacco retail trade in a few select locations, this chapter offers examples of the kind of trading relationships and networks established for the movement and sale of tobacco in 1630s England not a comprehensive analysis of the whole domestic tobacco trade.

Throughout this analysis the identification of the individuals concerned is, at best, sketchy. This is because most of the middlemen and retailers who dealt in tobacco for domestic consumption appear to have been lesser players in civic politics. The great merchants of places such as London or Bristol examined by Brenner and Sacks were seldom directly involved in the domestic market.<sup>13</sup> Most of the people who bought licences to sell tobacco were not these merchants or even the 'considerable dealers' described by Defoe, that supplied 'wholesalers, who bring and take off from the

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 15. Cox looks at fixed shop retailing but excludes alehouses as part of the early modern retailing net.

<sup>13</sup> R. Brenner, Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653 (Cambridge, 1993). D. H. Sacks, The Widening Gate: Bristol and the



merchants all the foreign goods which they import'.<sup>14</sup> They were more likely to be the 'tradesmen in the country' identified by Defoe, who 'convey and hand forward these goods, and our own also, among the country tradesmen' in every corner of the kingdom and those 'country tradesmen' themselves who, in turn, supplied the retailer who supplied the customer. Identifying the people operating at the lower end of this trading chain would require further detailed research in local archives.

### The licensed trade in tobacco: an overview

Before examining how licensing affected the organisation of the tobacco retail trade in particular areas, it is worth considering the nation-wide scale and scope of licensing. The following analysis derives from the 129 documents relating to tobacco licensing in Lord Coventry's papers preserved in the Birmingham Public Library. Each document comprises lists of names, dates when the licences were sealed, location(s) licensed, how many other licences were available for that location and the annual cost of the licence. These details are not recorded for the first 199 licences issued but those licences passing the Great Seal after 19 March 1634 are recorded in full. This record appears to be most complete for the year beginning March 1634, the first full year and most active phase of licence allocation. For that period Beresford counted 1,462 licences in the patent rolls and there are 1,461 licences recorded in the Coventry papers.<sup>15</sup> This provides a reliable data set comprising 1,461 licences issued

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Atlantic Economy, 1450-1700 (Berkeley, 1993). In a place like Bristol, where strident measures were taken to separate retailing from 'merchanting', no overlap should be expected.

<sup>14</sup> D. Defoe, The Complete English Tradesman (1726) quoted in Cox, The Complete Tradesman, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup> M. W. Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences 1632-41', Yorkshire Bulletin of Economic and Social Research 7 (1955), p. 131.

for 1,855 locations generating £8,597-13-4 in rents.<sup>16</sup> After the establishment of Goring's Tobacco Office in July 1637 the record is less complete. The patent rolls record 291 licences for the years 1638-40. Only 132 are recorded in the Coventry papers.

The first question to be considered is the cost of licences. Beresford estimates that the average cost of a licence was £5.<sup>17</sup> However, this estimate does not give an accurate picture of the cost of a right to trade in, or monopolise the trade of, a particular location. Many licences specified two and occasionally three vending locations. As the following tables show, fully a third of licences costing £4 were for two locations.

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<sup>16</sup> The following calculations are derived from analysis of the licences summarised in covprs 2 which constitutes a complete record of all licences issued in 10 Charles I (year ending March 1635).

<sup>17</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 138.



Tables 7.1 and 7.2

Cost of tobacco-vending licences purchased during the first full year of licensing<sup>18</sup>

Table 7.1

<u>Cost of licence</u>	N <sup>o</sup> of licences	%
£2 or less	186	12.7
Over £2 and up to £4	419	28.7
Over £4 and up to £6	237	16.2
Over £6 and up to £8	317	21.7
Over £8 and up to £10	230	15.7
Over £10	72	5

Table 7.2

<u>Cost of right to vend per location<sup>19</sup></u>	N <sup>o</sup> of locations	%
£2 or less	754	40.7
Over £2 and up to £4	293	15.8
Over £4 and up to £6	232	12.5
Over £6 and up to £8	304	16.4
Over £8 and up to £10	214	11.5
Over £10	60	3.1

Total rents due                      £8597

Number of licences                      1461

Average cost per licence              £5.88

(approx. £5-17-4)

Total rents due                      £8597

Number of locations licensed        1857

Average cost per location            £4.63

(approx. £4-12-4)

Table 7.2 shows that £2 or less was the price of a right to vend in over 40% of locations. This had been the standard ‘fine’ proposed in early February 1634 before the shift to a licence by patent system when potential licensees began ‘compounding’ with the tobacco commissioners for sole control over, rather than just access to markets. The vice-chancellor of Cambridge University described this process as ‘free

<sup>18</sup> Year beginning 19 March 1634. Deleted licences are excluded. In the case of licences which were ‘upgraded’, rather than that changed hands, only the later licence features in these calculations (e.g. In Plymouth eight licensees offered to pay £12-10-0 each in November 1634 to secure the trade between them, superseding earlier arrangements for 10 licences at £10 each). Licences that changed hands during this brief period will inevitably introduce a minor margin of error as they are counted twice in the pricing analysis.

<sup>19</sup> Many licences listed two or more locations. In such cases the overall cost of the licence is divided equally between those locations. E.g. a licence for two locations costing £4 is counted as two licences at £2 each. This introduces a further margin of error because, for example, a licence costing £12 could represent one location at £10 and another at £2 but in these calculations it would be considered as two locations at £6 each.

bidding'.<sup>20</sup> Individuals who sought a monopoly of the tobacco trade in market towns or cities had to pay considerably more than £2. As the following table shows, a system of price differentiation developed.

Table 7.3

Price of tobacco-vending licences for single locations only (not necessarily monopolies)

<u>Cost of licence</u>			<u>N° of licences</u>
<u>£</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>d</u>	
1			3
1	10		1
2			168
2	10		40
3			17
3	06	8	50
4			41
5			173
6			24
6	13	4	266
7	10		3
8			18
9			1
10			211
11	02	3	4
12			1
12	10		8
13	06	8	16
15			3
20			15
26	13	4	2
30			1
40			1
50			1
66	13	4	1

<sup>20</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 132. The vice-chancellor used this expression when complaining that 'unfit persons' had gained licences because of this in October 1634. His real concern may have been that an area of potential patronage, which he had exercised in 1633, had been denied him because of the changed arrangements.



Table 7.3 presents a breakdown of the 1,069 licences in the data set that only specified a single location. Although the scale of charges varied considerably, four prices stand out. Licences for 16% of locations, mostly villages and their associated parishes, cost £2 each. Apart from a few isolated cases this was the base price for a licence. Another 16% of locations cost £5. Some of these were small towns such as Rugby and Droitwich, while others were places such as Stratford-upon-Avon and Marlborough where a few people shared the monopoly. 25% of licences cost £6-13-4. Many of these covered market towns, such as Penzance, Shepton Mallet or Bradford. Others were for larger towns such as Nottingham or Bath where monopoly rights were again shared or places such as Southwark or Stepney where no limit was placed on the number of licences available. A further 20% cost £10 each, over half of which granted non-monopolistic access to London markets.

Individuals who sought sole trading rights over larger towns and cities effectively bought up all the licences for those locations. Evesham, Preston, Abingdon, Derby, Maidstone and Warwick could have been allocated to two licensees for £10 each, three for £6-13-4 or four for £5. However, in each of these places one individual bought the whole monopoly for £20. Twelve out of thirty-two locations with a total rent required of £20 went to such monopolists. Some people were willing to pay more. Sole vending rights over Colchester cost Philip Alen £66-13-4.<sup>21</sup> This was, however, exceptional. As the following table shows, in the vast majority of places where the crown demanded more than £20 tobacco retailers shared the local monopoly. In the case of Exeter, where George Brayne attempted to gain sole trading rights in December 1634, local traders necessarily joined forces to buy up the city's

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<sup>21</sup> Covpprs 8:1. Licence was issued on 2 April 1634.

quota of licences and keep an interloper at bay.<sup>22</sup> A similar attempt by John Hanson to seize a monopoly of tobacco retailing in the city and university of Oxford for £50 on 19 March 1634 was also rebuffed by local traders. On 22 April 1634, Hanson's licence was cancelled and five new ones at £10 each were bought simultaneously.<sup>23</sup> In both instances, the aspiring city 'tobacco baron' bought one of the new licences and shared the local monopoly.

Table 7.4

Locations costing more than £20 for monopoly control of tobacco-retailing

<u>Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>N° of licences available</u>	<u>Cost per licence</u>			<u>Total value of location</u>		
			£	s	d	£	s	d
Bristol	Gloucestershire	20	10			200		
Newcastle on Tyne	Northumberland	20	10			200		
Chester	Cheshire	20	06	13	4	133	06	8
Exeter	Devon	8	16	13	4	133	06	8
Ipswich	Suffolk	10	10			100		
Plymouth	Devon	8	12	10		100		
Gloucester	Gloucestershire	12	06	13	4	80		
Salisbury	Wiltshire	10	08			80		
Bath	Somerset	15	05			75		
Barnstaple	Devon	10	06	13	4	66	13	4
Cambridge <sup>24</sup>	Cambridgeshire	6	11	02	3	66	13	6
Colchester	Essex	1	66	13	4	66	13	4
Hull	Yorkshire	10	06	13	4	66	13	4
Yarmouth <sup>25</sup>	Norfolk	13	05			65		

<sup>22</sup> The Brayne monopoly offered the crown the same revenue as they could get if all licences were taken and was probably only permitted because licence uptake was low. Little is known about Brayne but Cope notes that 'Exeter merchants vigorously defended their economic privileges against the Londoners' (E. Cope, *Politics without Parliaments, 1629-1640* (London, 1987), p. 146).

<sup>23</sup> Covpprs 4:12, 14:33-7.

<sup>24</sup> University and city.

<sup>25</sup> Only two licences were initially issued for Yarmouth at £10 each. On 24 January 1635, the price dropped to £5 each and sixteen were issued.



Table 7.4 continued

<u>Location</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>N° of licences available</u>	<u>Cost per licence</u>			<u>Total value of location</u>		
			£	s	d	£	s	d
Newark	Leicestershire	8	06	13	4	53	06	8
Northampton	Northamptonshire	8	06	13	4	53	06	8
Winton	Hampshire	8	06	13	4	53	06	8
Canterbury	Kent	5	10			50		
Lincoln	Lincolnshire	10	05			50		
Oxford	Oxfordshire	5	10			50		
Reading	Berkshire	10	05			50		
Taunton	Devon	10	05			50		
Crowforme	Somerset	3	15			45		
Coventry	Warwickshire	1	40			40		
Halifax	Yorkshire	4	10			40		
King's Lynn	Norfolk	6	06	13	4	40		
Stamford	Lincolnshire	8	05			40		
Newark on Trent	Nottinghamshire	6	06			36		
Totnes	Devon	6	06			36		
Bury St Edmonds	Suffolk	5	06	13	4	33	06	8
Nottingham	Nottinghamshire	5	06	13	4	33	06	8
Dover	Kent	3	10			30		
Durham	Durham	6	05			30		
Grantham	Lincolnshire	6	05			30		
Gravesend	Kent	1	30			30		
Chichester	Sussex	1	26	13	4	26	13	4
Macclesfield	Cheshire	4	06	13	4	26	13	4
Ripon	Yorkshire	8	03	06	8	26	13	4
Welles	Somerset	4	06	13	4	26	13	4
Boston	Lincolnshire	5	05			25		
Ely	Cambridgeshire	5	05			25		
Marleborough	Wiltshire	5	05			25		
Newbury	Wilts	2	12	10		25		

Table 7.4 shows that the principal seaports were valued at £100-£200.<sup>26</sup> Lesser ports such as Hull, river ports such as Gloucester and principal towns such as Oxford and Cambridge cost a total of £50-£80. Many other substantial urban centres from Durham to Kent cost more than £20 each. As noted above and listed in table 7.5 below, in some places, particularly metropolitan areas, there was initially no possibility of gaining a monopoly of the tobacco trade.

Table 7.5

Locations with no limit to the number of licences available prior to the establishment of the Tobacco Office in July 1637

<u>Location</u>	<u>Cost per licence</u>		
	£	s	d
London	10		
Norwich	10		
York	06	13	4
Westminster	06	13	4
Southwark (Surrey)	06	13	4
Clerkenwell (Middlesex) <sup>27</sup>	06	13	4
Whitechapel (Middlesex)	06	13	4
Shoreditch (Middlesex)	06	13	4
Holborn (Middlesex)	06	13	4
Stepney (Middlesex)	06	13	4
Smithfield outside Barrs (Middlesex)	06	13	4
Savoy in Duchy of Lancaster (Middlesex)	06	13	4

<sup>26</sup> As Willan notes, places such as Bristol, Plymouth and Exeter acted as centres for the distribution of groceries (Willan, The Coasting Trade, p. 105).

<sup>27</sup> After Goring took over, many of these unlimited locations in the environs of London had limits placed on the number of licences available or a portion of the free trade area contained within a monopoly. For example, in March 1637, Thomas Jenny purchased a monopoly over St James Clerkenwell for £36 (covppr 91:1).



When Goring took over he revised the arrangements for some of these places. For example, in response to a request from Stepney licensees complaining about widespread unlicensed retailing, he made Stepney a shared monopoly between nine individuals for £11-02-3 each in November 1637 (total value £100-00-3). In Norwich, Goring granted a monopoly of the city's tobacco retail trade to William Jhanns for £120. As noted in chapter 6, by 1638 tensions over licensing were particularly marked in Stepney and Jhanns' monopoly had provoked appeals to the Privy Council from the previous Norwich licensees.<sup>28</sup>

The cost of licences, ranging from the £2 village to the £200 shared monopoly in Bristol or Newcastle, offers a guide to contemporary ideas about the relative size of retail markets across England in the 1630s. Tobacco was a consumable commodity which, if not smuggled or grown illegally, had to be imported into London and then transported to local retailers along established internal trade routes to market towns and their hinterlands. Exeter, with its Butcher Row and Shambles and numerous markets for fish, corn, cloth, wool and yarn could apparently expect enough customers coming to town to warrant a rent of over £130.<sup>29</sup> Reading, a market town with perhaps two thousand residents, was considered a large enough market for a £50 rent.<sup>30</sup>

Atherstone in Warwickshire was only worth £2.

The Coventry papers give no indication of licensees' occupations but other sources related to licensing suggest that most people who sold tobacco locally were also

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<sup>28</sup> It is not possible to accurately gauge how many Stepney residents had already taken licences by then because many may have been among the first 199 licences issued. Licences for the London area are particularly prominent in the first months of licensing.

<sup>29</sup> J. A. Chartres, *Agricultural Markets and Trade, 1500-1750* vol. 3 of J. Thirsk (ed.), *Chapters from the Agrarian History of England and Wales* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 29.

engaged in other retail activities. In Leicester, for example, two mercers, two grocers, two ironmongers, a fishmonger and a hosier were identified as possible tobacco retailers.<sup>31</sup> In other places, such as Reading, ‘Apothecaries and Grocers keepinge shopps’ were considered the most reliable people to sell tobacco.<sup>32</sup> There are suggestions that retailing tobacco was sometimes a primary occupation. For example, John Loveday of Atherstone was described as a ‘tobaccoman’ in 1635.<sup>33</sup> However, as will be seen, the person holding the licence was not necessarily the person retailing the tobacco. The Atherstone licence was ‘owned’ by Nathaniel Hurd, licensee for a total of twelve Midlands locations.<sup>34</sup> It remains uncertain whether supplying tobacco was Hurd’s principal occupation or just one of many trading activities that he was engaged in. Nevertheless, it seems likely that individuals who invested heavily in the acquisition of tobacco retail licences considered tobacco a very important element of their business.

An examination of the number of licences issued in different regions of England suggests a broad correlation between the presence of markets and the uptake of licences.

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<sup>30</sup> Chartres lists Reading alongside numerous other places such as Newbury, Faversham and Tamworth which, with populations of six hundred to two thousand people were characteristic of Tudor England (Ibid., p. 27).

<sup>31</sup> H. Stocks (ed.), *Records of the Borough of Leicester 1603-88* (Cambridge, 1923), p. 268

<sup>32</sup> As noted in chapter 6, at the start of the licensing scheme the Reading Corporation determined to only forward the names of such traders (J.M. Guilding (ed.), *Diary of a Corporation, Reading Records III: 1630-1640* (London 1895), p. 119 Entry dated Tuesday 12 June 1632).

<sup>33</sup> Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, p. 206.

<sup>34</sup> Covppr 26:35.



**Table 7.6**

**Distribution of tobacco retail licences by region and county 1634-40<sup>35</sup>**

<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>N° of market towns<sup>36</sup></u>	<u>N° of licences sealed by Lord Coventry</u>		<u>N° of licences in E159/477<sup>37</sup> (1637)</u>
			<u>Before July 1636</u>	<u>overall</u>	
North-east	Durham	7	36	42	25
	Northumberland	8	15	17	11
	Yorkshire	54	109	129	92
North-west	Cheshire	13	32	36	33
	Cumberland & Westmorland	31	37	42	47
	Lancashire	24	46	60	59
East Midlands	Derbyshire	10	36	38	33
	Leicestershire	9	24	31	29
	Lincolnshire	37	56	71	63
	Northamptonshire	13	28	37	34
	Nottinghamshire	15	33	33	28
West Midlands	Herefordshire	9	22	25	21
	Shropshire	18	28	33	33
	Staffordshire	19	33	42	46
	Warwickshire	17	37	44	33
	Worcestershire	11	34	40	29

<sup>35</sup> Account has been taken of licences cancelled and re-issued.

<sup>36</sup> Number of market towns c.1500-1640 drawn from Chartres, Agricultural Markets and Trade, pp. 161-2.

<sup>37</sup> Drawn from Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 138. There is a considerable discrepancy between Beresford's figures, drawn from E159/477 (a schedule of licensees' names apparently drawn up in 1637 when Goring took over) and the totals drawn from the Coventry papers. This could be due to licences that were cancelled, not renewed or submitted to but not yet returned from Lord Coventry. In many cases the figures broadly tally (e.g. Sussex, Lincolnshire). However, in others, most notably London, they do not. This may partly be attributed to errors made when E159/477 was created. It may also suggest that renewal rates in London were low. However, the apparent absence in this source of any record of licences for Dorset or Westminster suggests that the record may be incomplete. In a few cases (e.g. Rutland and Staffordshire), the figure in E159/477 is higher than the total for all Coventry papers which could be due to inconsistent determination of county boundaries or licences issued before March 1634 which are not detailed in the Coventry papers. A detailed comparative study from these two sources, drawing upon patent roll entries and accounting for locations licensed as well as numbers of licences issued is required to clarify this.

Table 7.6 continued

<u>Region</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>N° of market towns</u>	<u>N° of licences sealed by Lord Coventry</u>		<u>N° of licences in E159/477 (1637)</u>
			<u>Before July 1636</u>	<u>overall</u>	
East Anglia	Bedfordshire	31	12	17	15
	Cambridgeshire	33	33	36	33
	Hertfordshire	10	28	29	35
	Huntingdonshire	2	10	12	11
	Norfolk	8	104	129	97
	Rutland	8	1	1	4
	Suffolk	20	90	103	74
London area	London	-	136	151	84
	Middlesex	-	94	119	119
	Westminster	-	27	29	-
South-east	Berkshire	12	24	29	24
	Buckinghamshire	15	18	24	20
	Essex	27	67	78	48
	Hampshire	21	32	38	-
	Kent	33	58	73	90
	Oxfordshire	13	30	35	29
	Surrey <sup>38</sup>	10	44	51	58
	Sussex	21	41	53	44
South-west	Cornwall	25	105	113	116
	Devon	45	153	167	162
	Dorset	21	50	55	-
	Gloucestershire	34	88	98	92
	Somerset	39	92	106	101
	Wiltshire	23	73	86	72
Wales	All counties	57	103	125	73
	Total	809	2075	2477	2063

In surveying these figures, it is important to note that populations and markets were not evenly distributed throughout the realm. Rutland cannot be directly compared with Devon or Yorkshire. 'Few counties had the even distribution [of markets] of

<sup>38</sup> Includes twelve Southwark licences.



some eastern counties like Essex or Kent'.<sup>39</sup> Some counties were relatively thinly populated. 'Sussex had fewer centres of population than Shropshire, but rather more market towns', 'Cumberland had very few centres of population' but it nevertheless had 'a good number of market towns'.<sup>40</sup>

Further research is required to assess how the presence of larger towns with multiple licences (noted in table 7.4), other demographic differences between counties as well as the decline or rise of various Tudor and Stuart markets affect the calculations. Nevertheless, broad patterns are discernible. With a few notable exceptions, particularly Durham, Cambridgeshire, Devon and Cornwall, the ratio of licences sealed before July 1636 to market towns is within the range 1.5 to 2.5. Licence acquisition was particularly high in the London area and in a few counties, especially Yorkshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Devon, Cornwall and Somerset. In other counties such as Buckinghamshire, Staffordshire and Northumberland it was particularly low. Such contrasts could, as Beresford seems to suggest, be an indication that smoking was particularly prevalent in some areas and less prevalent in others.<sup>41</sup> Chartres follows Beresford in concluding that, because London and Middlesex accounted for over 10% of licences issued and 16% of rents, the distribution of licences 'clearly indicates' that London was the site for a 'concentration of fashion and wealth'.<sup>42</sup> However, his analysis of statistics on the sale and consumption of drink suggests that the concentration of spending power in the capital was actually considerably higher with Londoners consuming 40% of beer and half of imported spirits. It is perhaps a leap

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<sup>39</sup> 'The distribution of markets in England before the Restoration was uneven' (Cox, The Complete Tradesman, p. 45). Cumberland, extending over about a million acres, was served by only 15 market towns. Lancashire, slightly larger had about thirty.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>41</sup> Beresford suggests that the high numbers of licences for Cornish villages shows that the habit spread quickly from sailors (Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 139).

<sup>42</sup> Chartres, 'Food Consumption and Internal Trade', p. 174.

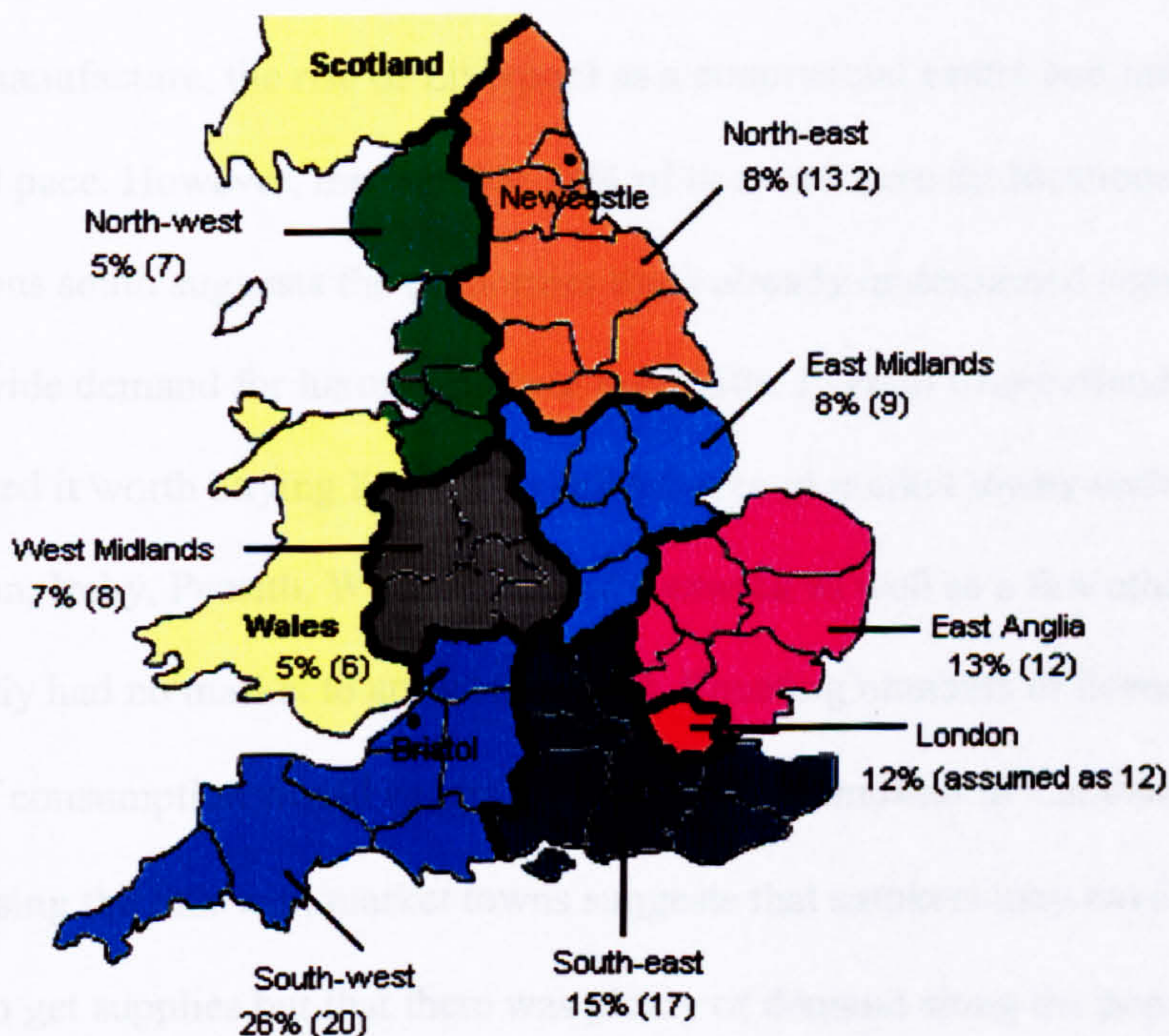


too far to assume that the purchase of tobacco-vending licences is indicative of the 'relative magnitude of consumption' as Chartres and Beresford suggest, especially in the absence of any evidence of per capita consumption in different areas.<sup>1</sup> As fig. 1 shows, the purchase of licences correlates with the number of market towns which was often a matter of geography and demography or a reflection of different models of settlement in different areas, not necessarily a measure of levels of consumption.<sup>2</sup>

**Fig. 1**

**Regional distribution of tobacco-vending licences allocated before July 1636<sup>3</sup>**

Bracketed figures indicate percentage of all provincial markets in each region according to Chartres. To compensate for the immense market of London and its environs, these figures have been adjusted by a factor of 0.88 (assuming that 12% of licences equates with 12% of markets which is probably a considerable underestimate).



<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Cox, *The Complete Tradesman*, pp. 45, 48-51.

<sup>3</sup> Proportions drawn from table 7.6 above.



Apart from the North-east where Durham's ratio of licences to markets was abnormally high (5.14) skewing the figures and the South-west where competition between rival multiple licence holders (detailed later) was particularly fierce, a direct link between the numbers of market towns and of tobacco retail licences issued seems likely.

Fig. 1 also suggests a North/South divide in the uptake of tobacco vending licences. 66% of licences issued between 19 March 1634 and July 1636 went to individuals trading south of a line roughly drawn between the Wash and the Severn estuary. This corresponds with the dividing line noted by Coleman for the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries between the rich south and northern/midland counties.<sup>46</sup> Later in the seventeenth and early eighteenth-centuries northern and midland wealth grew as textile manufacture, the rise of Liverpool as a commercial centre and industrialisation gathered pace. However, the fact that 34% of licences were for locations outside the prosperous south suggests the economies there already underpinned significant nation-wide demand for luxury goods in the 1630s. Even in Cumberland individuals considered it worth buying licences to sell tobacco in market towns such as Carlisle, Brampton, Ireby, Penrith, Workington and Keswick as well as a few other places that apparently had no market to attract outsiders. Equating numbers of licences with levels of consumption would suggest there were few smokers in Cumberland. Recognising the link with market towns suggests that smokers may have had to travel further to get supplies but that there was plenty of demand along the populous coastal strip and even in the midst of the Cumbrian Mountains (i.e. in communities using Keswick markets).

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<sup>46</sup> D. C. Coleman, The Economy of England 1450-1750 (London, 1977), p. 9.

The divergence between numbers of market towns (20%) and licences (26%) in the South-west, where a quarter of licences were allocated, suggests another factor influencing the uptake of licences. The following table suggests that this factor may have been the proportion of traders in a particular area who bought multiple licences.

Table 7.7

Regional breakdown of numbers of tobacco-vending licences held by single individuals before July 1636

<u>Region</u>	<u>Total N° of licences</u>	<u>Numbers of licensees holding numbers of licences<sup>47</sup></u>										
		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>Over 10 licences</u>
North-east	149	110	10	5	1							
North-west	105	55	13	2		1						Towson (13)
East Midlands	173	132	13	2	1	1						
West Midlands	149	78	15	3	1	1	1		1	1		
East Anglia	269	156	21	4	7		2			1	1	
South-east	306	193	22	10	2	2		1				Broadnay (14)
South-west	548	241	29	16	11	5	1	4	2			Cale (13) Richards (22) Sharrock (27) Wilcock (22)
Totals	1699	965	123	42	23	10	4	5	3	2	1	6

<sup>47</sup> Where a licensee holds licences crossing regional boundaries his/her holdings are noted for the region where most of the licences are valid. A small number of single licence holders have been omitted from the figures because they were licensed to trade in two locations in different regions. London and Wales are also excluded from this table.



Table 7.7 shows that across all regions 57% of the 1,184 individuals who bought tobacco-vending licences before July 1636 bought only one licence. There is considerable regional variation but the south-west stands out both in absolute numbers of licences allocated and because only 44% of licences went to single licence holders. This lower proportion of single licence holders is matched by a correspondingly high number of multiple licence holders in this area. Four of the six individuals who held more than ten licences and half of those who bought four or more licences were trading in the south-west. This indicates a more competitive tobacco wholesale trade in this region and suggests that competition between these 'wholesaling tradesmen' to control segments of the tobacco trade may have been a factor in the particularly pronounced uptake of licences, particularly in Devon and Cornwall.

### Licensed networks of supply

In Devon and Cornwall competition for licences appears to have been fierce from the moment licences became available. As the following table shows, nationally, 90% of those who bought licences in the first nine months of the scheme bought control over only one or two locations.

Table 7.8

Breakdown of licences sealed by Lord Coventry up to December 1634.<sup>48</sup>

Number of people holding licences for 1 or 2 locations	965	90%
Number of people holding licences for 3 or 4 locations	64	6%
Number of people holding licences for 5 to 10 locations	27	2.5%
Number of people holding licences for more than 10 locations	15	1.5%
	<hr/>	
	Total	1071
		<hr/>

However, in Cornwall 50 out of 114 licences sealed by Lord Keeper Coventry in this period were acquired by Matthew Sharrock, John Wilcock and the Norsworthy family (Edward, John, William, Francis and Francis junior). Across the Tamar in Devon and on to Somerset, Nathaniel and John Richards, Henry Stone and George Brayne kept the magnate to minor trader ratio unusually high. As fig. 2 shows, it was the close proximity of the trading activities of these tobacco ‘magnates’ that impelled such abnormally high levels of licence acquisition.

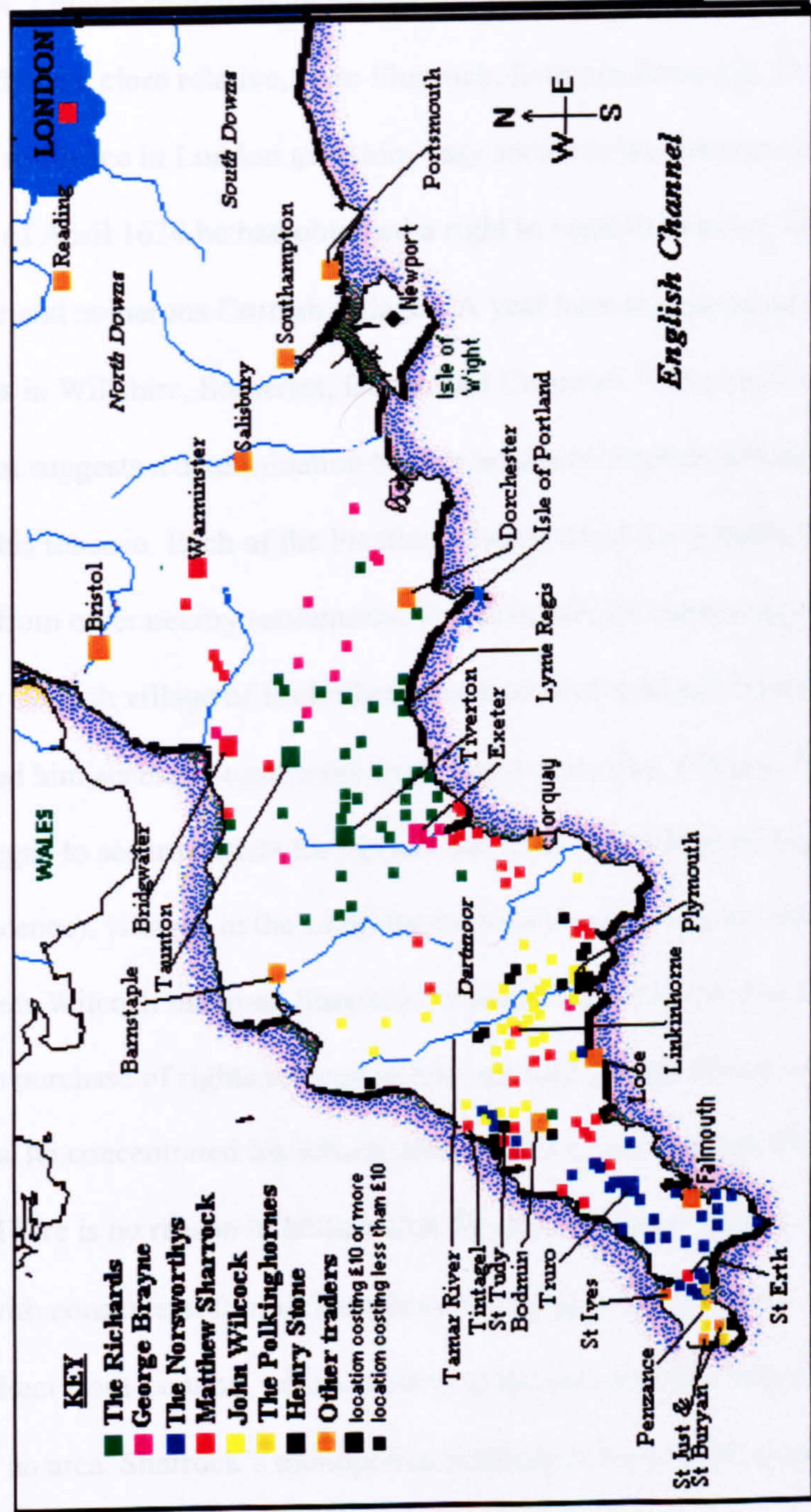
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<sup>48</sup> This excludes the first 199 licences granted which are not listed amongst the Coventry Papers. A margin of error is inevitable because of similarities and variant spellings of names. However, individuals can be largely distinguished from one another by referring to the location of licences and sequences of purchases.



Fig. 2

The distribution of tobacco 'magnate' holdings in south-west England<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Information for this map was taken from analysis of all licences recorded amongst the Coventry Papers. While this constitutes a complete record of licences from late March 1634 to early 1637, many of those issued after the establishment of Lord Goring's Tobacco Office (see later), are excluded. Further omissions are due to uncertainties about place names (some have changed, others have not been located). These omissions, which could be rectified by further extensive research of patent rolls etc., do not detract from the general pattern of licence acquisition as shown. The distribution of 'minor' traders has not been included. Note: George Brayne no longer held Exeter as a monopoly when he began to accumulate his holdings in Somerset. Also, the Tavistock licence (discussed below) changed hands in October 1634.



The key to understanding the pattern of licence distribution in fig.2 is the enthusiasm with which Matthew Sharrock embraced the tobacco licence 'market' that opened in March 1634. Little is known about him except that he lived in St Lawrence Lane, London and had a close relative, John Sharrock, living in Exmouth, Devon.<sup>50</sup> Sharrock's residence in London gave him easy access to the tobacco commissioners. By the end of April 1634 he had obtained a right to vend in London, monopolies in Warminster and numerous Cornish villages. A year later he possessed 27 licences for 47 locations in Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall.<sup>51</sup> Sharrock's pattern of procurement suggests a determination to gain access to markets across the region for the sale of his tobacco. Each of the locations licensed had the potential to supply customers from other nearby settlements. For example, his monopoly over tobacco sales in the Cornish village of Linkinhorne, one of twelve he purchased on 28 March 1634, gained him access to customers from a host of nearby villages. When John Wilcock began to secure outlets for his tobacco in the hinterland of Plymouth (where he held a licence), villages in the Linkinhorne area were among his first acquisitions. In some areas Wilcock mirrored Sharrock by acquiring access to district markets through the purchase of rights to vend in one selected village. However, around Linkinhorne he concentrated his efforts, probably in a bid to curtail Sharrock's activities. There is no reason to believe that this part of Cornwall was exceptionally 'blessed' with consumers. It must have been the presence of Sharrock's tobacco, probably direct from London, which motivated the procurement of so many licences in so small an area. Sharrock's monopolies similarly threatened the domination of the

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<sup>50</sup> His London residence is specified in one of the first licences he bought giving him the right to sell tobacco in London (covppr 7:17). His relationship with John Sharrock is inferred from the fact that consecutive licences were issued to Matthew and John on 27 March 1634 (covppr 5:7, 8). It is unlikely that men of identical surnames would have coincidentally met in the 'queue' for licences. Indeed, it is likely that Matthew purchased John's only licence for him.



tobacco retail trade in southern Cornwall by the Norsworthy family. On the same day that he secured Linkinhorne Sharrock purchased the St Erth licence. Less than a month later the Norsworthys responded by gathering licences in the nearby villages of Lelant, Ludgvan and St Hilary.

Sharrock's substantial investment in licences and the apparently responsive nature of licence acquisition by the Norsworthys and John Wilcock suggests that these men were already substantial tobacco traders before licensing began. It seems unlikely that Sharrock would have invested £23-06-8 in the first few days of licensing to gain access to customers in London, a licence for John Sharrock and a monopoly over Warminster, Wiltshire, if he did not already have distribution networks in place for those locations. Similarly, the concentration of licences by Wilcock and the Norsworthys in villages around Linkinhorne and St Erth seems more characteristic of protecting market share than expanding it.

Specific evidence of prior trading is scarce but a comparison of the names of people who imported tobacco into London in 1627-8 and licensees does show that a number of importers bought licences for retailing.<sup>52</sup> For example, John Bardwell of Gracious Street, Anthony Wyatt of St Bartholomews and Reynold Parker of London all imported tobacco in 1627-8 and then bought licences to retail tobacco in one or more locations. The family names of several tobacco importers coincide with the family names of some of the largest tobacco vending licence holders, most notably Stone,

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<sup>51</sup> He also held a further two licences amongst the first 199 licences issued which are not recorded in the Coventry Papers.

<sup>52</sup> N. J. Williams, 'England's Tobacco Trade in the Reign of Charles I', Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 65 (1957), pp. 403-49. Williams describes this record of tobacco imports for 1627-8 (PRO E190/32/8) as 'quite unique' (N. J. Williams, 'The London Port Books', Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society 18 (1955), p. 20).

Hurd and Wilcock.<sup>53</sup> In other cases, importers of relatively small quantities can similarly be linked to retailing (e.g. Alice Bigges, importer 1627-8, and John Biggs, licensee for Whitechapel from April 1634).<sup>54</sup> Outside London, Richard Tapper, who bought licences for Plymouth and a couple of other places, had imported four hogsheads of Virginia Tobacco on the *John* of Plymouth in 1631-2.<sup>55</sup>

The link between importing and retailing tobacco is confirmed in a petition to the Privy Council of November 1634.<sup>56</sup> John Wilcock, Richard Tapper and Henry Stone (who were all licensed for Plymouth and other locations) along with William Harris (possibly supplying Nicholas Harris, another Plymouth licensee with numerous holdings) requested permission to land a cargo of St Christophers' tobacco from the *Margaret* directly at Plymouth. They pointed out that they held over £200 worth of licences for 'divers towns' in Devon and Cornwall. The Privy Council rejected their petition and insisted that the cargo be despatched to London first. As fig. 3 shows, whether landed directly or after a detour to London, this cargo could quickly be fed into a widely dispersed set of markets.

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<sup>53</sup> For example, Thomas Stone of the Haberdashers' Company of London turned to tobacco planting from the later 1620s and 'soon became one of the leading importers of Bermuda tobacco' (I. W. Archer, The History of the Haberdashers' Company (London, 1991), p. 51).

<sup>54</sup> Williams, 'England's Tobacco Trade in the Reign of Charles I', p. 424 & covppr 9:35. On 21-22 March 1628, Alice Biggs imported 190 lbs of Virginia tobacco on the *Elizabeth* of London.

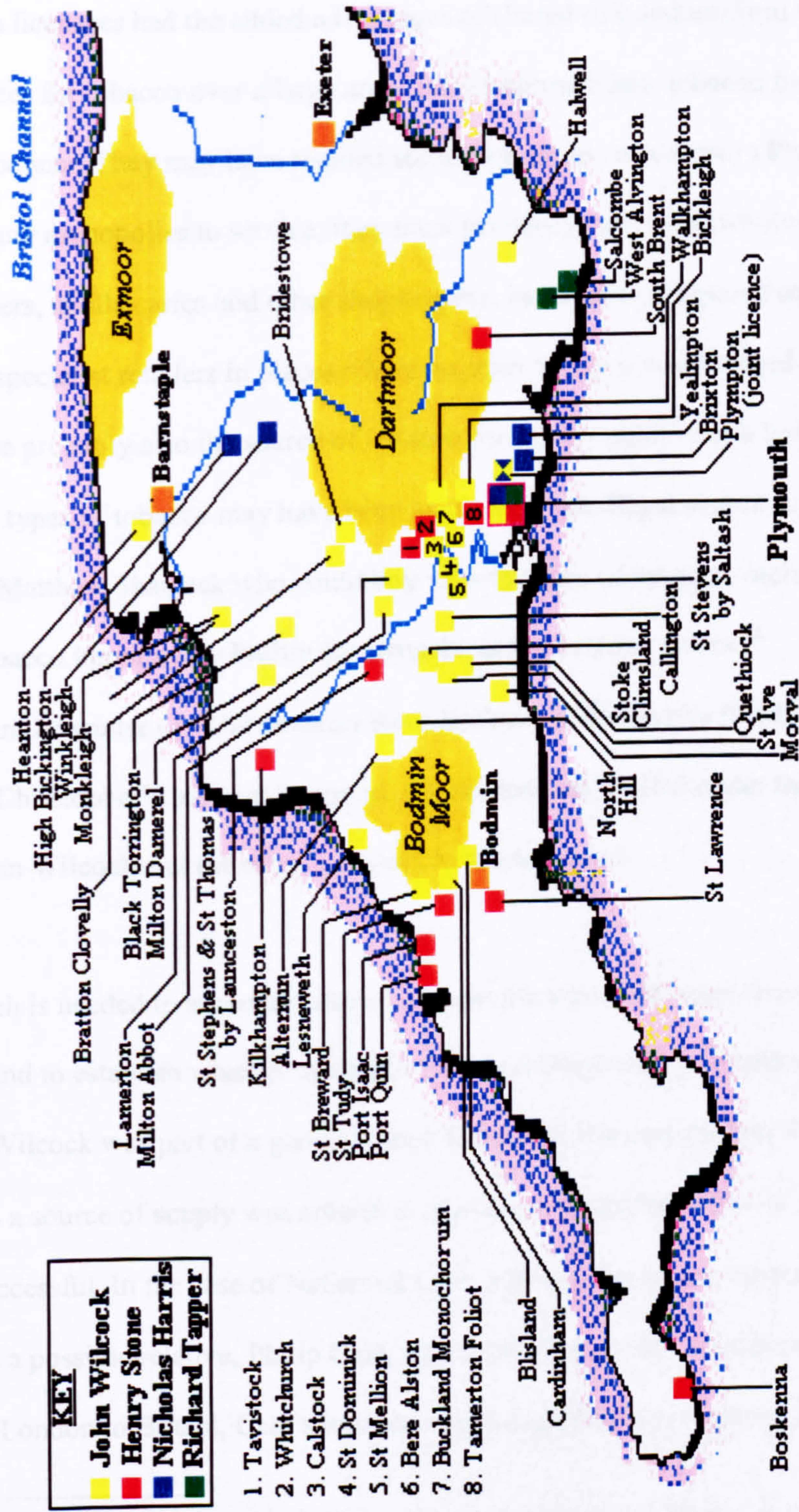
<sup>55</sup> PRO E190 948/5, 'Exeter Port Book 1631-2'.

<sup>56</sup> CSPD 1634 pp. 300-1.



Fig. 3

Vending outlets for the *Margaret's* tobacco cargo of November 1634<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Only outlets purchased prior to November 1634 are shown. Nicholas Harris, Henry Stone and John Wilcock were subsequently granted further licences.



The example of the *Margaret* indicates that tobacco traders were not always in active competition. By combining in the procurement of stock for their vending outlets, these Plymouth licensees had the added advantages of shared risk and uniform type, quality and prices for tobacco over a large area. They imported their tobacco from the New World producer. They may have retailed some directly to customers in Plymouth but, with so many monopolies to service, they must primarily have been wholesalers supplying grocers, apothecaries and other shopkeepers, innkeepers, chapmen and perhaps a few specialist retailers in places where no other tobacco was allowed to be sold. They were probably also the source of tobacco for other single licence holders in the area. Other types of tobacco may have been available from illegal sources or, via London, from Matthew Sharrock who could buy various types of tobacco, including the Spanish tobacco imported by Phillip Burlemachi, at the London docks.<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, in the winter of 1634 smokers from Bodmin to Barnstaple filled their pipes with St. Christopher's tobacco imported, distributed and retailed under the auspices of John Wilcock and the other investors in the *Margaret*.

Further research is needed to ascertain where other people who held retail licences got their tobacco and to establish whether the kind of vertical integration of markets attempted by Wilcock was part of a general trend. However, it seems evident that good access to a source of supply was crucial if an extensive retailing network was going to be successful. In the case of Nathaniel Cale, a Bristol merchant, tobacco may have come via a possible relative, Philip Cale, who held a licence for Westminster.<sup>59</sup> Shipped from London to Bristol, Cale's tobacco could supply retailers and their

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<sup>58</sup> Phillip Burlemachi was the king's agent in the importation of Spanish tobacco. There is no way of knowing who this tobacco was sold to and subsequently wholesaled and retailed.



customers in a host of Gloucestershire and Somerset towns and villages by river and road.<sup>60</sup> Nathaniel Cale's vending empire, began with the purchase on 27 March 1634 of a share in the trade of Wells in Somerset.<sup>61</sup> Two days later he was one of five people who purchased consecutive licences for Bristol<sup>62</sup> and also bought a half share in the trade of Cirencester.<sup>63</sup> Over the summer he bought vending rights for three Gloucestershire villages.<sup>64</sup> Then, on 24 November, Cale dramatically increased his holdings, spending £37 on the purchase of a licence as one of fourteen for Bath and as sole trader in six other locations in various counties.<sup>65</sup> At the same time Nathaniel Cale junior secured a family monopoly of Cirencester and bought the last available share in Wells increasing Cale influence there.<sup>66</sup> Further acquisitions in 1635-6 added four more monopolies to his portfolio.<sup>67</sup> In total, Nathaniel Cale and his son invested £82-19-10 per year to secure considerable vending rights in large towns and cities as well as a number of competition free outlets. This gave them access to customers over a wide geographical area. Perhaps more importantly, Cale tobacco was available to supply those who came to town seeking stock for their own licensed or unlicensed outlets in the areas around Bristol, Cirencester, Bath and Wells.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Nathaniel Cale was a soapmaker who became a Bristol City Alderman in 1644, was purged from the city government in 1645 as a delinquent and took office as Mayor in 1662-3 (Sacks, The Widening Gate, pp. 292, 299).

<sup>60</sup> Willan describes Bristol as a mini-London which in the first half of the seventeenth century shipped a range of goods including iron, nails, leather, soap, sugar, candles, wine, beer and tobacco to ports on the Severn, South Wales and South-west England (Willan, The Coasting Trade, pp. 167, 172).

<sup>61</sup> Four licences were available at £6-13-4 each (covpprs 5:25).

<sup>62</sup> There were twenty available at £10 each (covpprs 7:46).

<sup>63</sup> Cost £10 (covpprs 7:48). Edward Freeman bought the other immediately after Cale (covpprs 7:49).

<sup>64</sup> Slimbridge (covpprs 22:3); Button and Barton Regis (covpprs 30:37).

<sup>65</sup> Bath £5; Chipping Sodbury & Caveshsam £10; Shepton Mallet & Cheltenham £13-6-8; Twyford & Malmesbury £8-13-4 (covpprs 39:53, 58, 60-1).

<sup>66</sup> These licences were allocated amongst Nathaniel Cale senior's acquisitions on that day (covpprs. 39:55, 59). Presumably Edward Freeman voluntarily surrendered his licence for Cirencester. In Wells, John Hill had purchased the first licence on 19 March (covpprs 4:26). William West and Nathaniel Cale purchased theirs consecutively on 27 March (covpprs 5:25-6) which suggests prior agreement.

<sup>67</sup> Bedminster £2, Tymby £6-13-4, Westbury £2 & Bishops Cleeve £2-10-0 (covpprs 52:7; 70:1, 11; 81:13).

<sup>68</sup> Nathaniel Cale's extensive tobacco trading in this area casts doubt on Sacks's suggestion that 'only tiny quantities of Spanish and Virginia tobacco found their way to the city' in the 1620s and 1630s

Similar empires or at least spheres of influence were constructed across the country. In Staffordshire and neighbouring counties the Hurd family held licences for up to fifty different locations.<sup>69</sup> Edward Hurd had been an importer of tobacco into London in 1627-8.<sup>70</sup> He held many licences including Rotherham and Newcastle-under-Lyme. In the North-west, Thomas Towson acquired licences totalling £47-6-8 for eighteen locations between 1634 and 1636.<sup>71</sup> In Yorkshire, John Digby was the biggest trader. Richard Edwards<sup>72</sup> and John Wolvin in Wales and Henry Broadnay in the South-east had similarly extensive holdings. In most cases these tobacco-vending licence empires evolved over time and included disparate locations. This suggests that licensing not only formalised existing trading networks but also underpinned the expansion of those networks. Government regulation was, by granting trading privileges, influencing the evolution of the tobacco trade, at least at wholesale level.

The use of licences to secure and expand a network for selling tobacco is clearly shown in the case of the Wragge family in Lincolnshire. James Wragge began accumulating a cluster of licensed outlets with the acquisition of a monopoly of tobacco retailing in Spalding in April 1634. Three months later consecutive licences

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(Sacks, *The Widening Gate*, p. 248). Direct shipment from overseas was not the only route through which tobacco could arrive in Bristol.

<sup>69</sup> The pattern of licence acquisition confirms that these widespread holdings and these individuals are related. For example, on 23 July 1634, near consecutive entries indicate the acquisition by Nathaniel, John and Edward of monopolies in Staffordshire, Middlesex and Warwickshire locations (covpprs. 26:35, 37-40, 47). On 25 November, amongst four Hurd licences entered, consecutive licences gave John control over Darley and Castleton in Derbyshire and Edward control over Bawtry and Blythe in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire (covpprs. 39:25-6). Another possible family member, Humphrey Hurd, who only held one licence for Surrey locations has been omitted from this account.

<sup>70</sup> Williams, 'England's Tobacco Trade in the Reign of Charles I', pp. 425-29. In 1627-8 he imported a total of 4,151 lbs of Virginia tobacco in the *Hopewell* and the *James*.

<sup>71</sup> The first two licences were bought consecutively on 22 April 1634 (covpprs 15:20/21) and quickly followed by another on 28 April (covpprs 17:12). The remainder were acquired gradually at erratic intervals over the next two years (covpprs 25:7; 32:29; 39:13; 58:5; 60:5, 8; 78:6; 80:12).



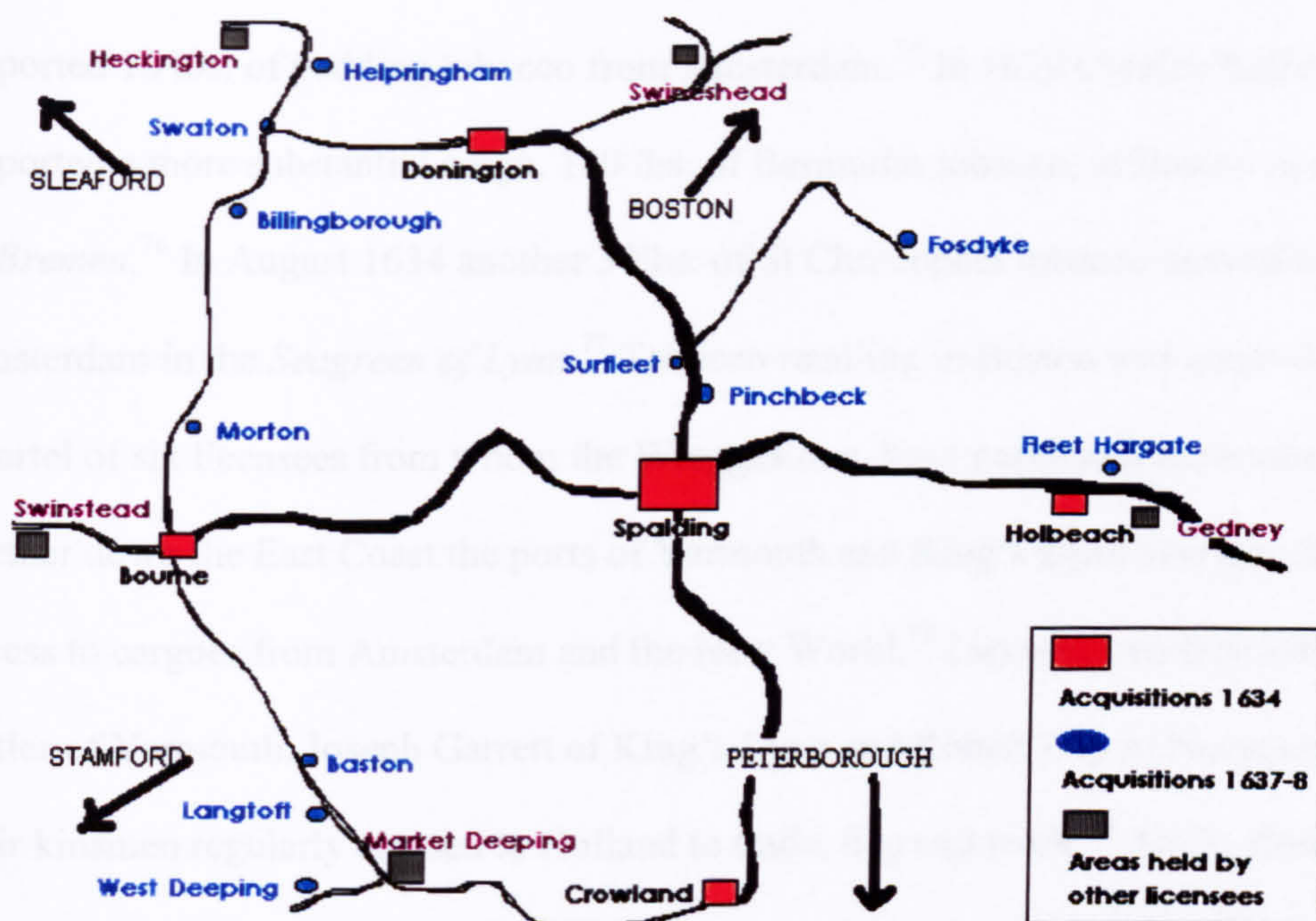
purchased by James Wragge junior and Nicholas Wragge added monopolies over the market towns of Crowland, Donington, Holbeach and Bourne, each about ten miles from Spalding, to the family portfolio. This created a vending area without any rival licensees centred on Spalding and encompassing numerous smaller settlements within a radius of about a hundred square miles. Later, perhaps as a consequence of Goring's efforts to fill vacant licences, James Wragge purchased further monopolies over places without markets to expand and shore up the borders of his exclusive trading sphere. He purchased licences to the north-west keeping the Heckington and Sleaford licensees at bay. To the south-west he acquired West Deeping, Langtoft and Baston constraining the activities of the Market Deeping licensee and perhaps 'stealing' some of his trade. To the east he added Fleet Hargate, depriving the Gedney licensee of access to the markets around and beyond Holbeach. By selective licence acquisition James Wragge had carved out a secure and cohesive tobacco vending empire. Through further acquisitions he had defended and extended it.

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<sup>72</sup> Although this is a common name, especially in Wales, analysis of the patterns of licence allocation and geographical spread indicates a Richard Edwards as a significant multiple licence holder amongst other single licence holders.



Fig. 4

Tobacco retail outlets controlled by the Wragge's of South Lincolnshire, 1634-8

The Wragges probably got their tobacco via the coastwise trade from London. As Willan points out, the East Coast was particularly well served in this regard.<sup>1</sup> Willan suggests that 'the coastwise trade in tobacco followed much the same lines as that in wine, despite the fact that the tobacco came largely from across the Atlantic and the wine from Europe', because they both had to be shipped from centres of importation –

<sup>1</sup> Willan, *The Coasting Trade*, p. 111. In the year ending December 1628, 352 'coastwise' cargoes of miscellaneous goods left London 75% of which were bound for East Coast ports (Ibid., p. 143). Willan also notes that, for example, 321 shipments passed through Great Yarmouth in the year ending December 1638 supplying various goods to 196 different merchants (Ibid., p. 46). This illustrates that large numbers of people were involved in the port to port trade on a small scale many of whom may have shipped only one cargo per year. Tobacco was a seasonal crop arriving in London at a specific time of year. It was thus likely to be bought and shipped to people such as the Wragges as a single cargo.



principally London.<sup>74</sup> However, despite the regulations some may have come from the New World via Holland. Boston, a few miles to the north-east of Donington, was a thriving port where tobacco had been landed at least since 1617 when William Storie imported 10 lbs. of pudding tobacco from Amsterdam.<sup>75</sup> In 1629 Charles Kellowe imported a more substantial cargo, 180 lbs. of Bermudas tobacco, at Boston in the *Cat of Bremen*.<sup>76</sup> In August 1634 another 30lbs. of St Christopher tobacco arrived from Amsterdam in the *Seagreen of Lynn*.<sup>77</sup> Tobacco retailing in Boston was controlled by a cartel of six licensees from whom the Wragges may have purchased their tobacco. Further down the East Coast the ports of Yarmouth and King's Lynn also provided access to cargoes from Amsterdam and the New World.<sup>78</sup> Licensees such as John Butler of Yarmouth, Joseph Garrett of King's Lynn and Robert Dey of Norwich or their kinsmen regularly crossed to Holland to trade, live and work.<sup>79</sup> Anglo-Dutch connections in this area were extensive. Many East Anglian tobacco pipe-makers travelled to Holland to ply their trade.<sup>80</sup> Other licensees, such as Richard Lambert of Norwich, were directly involved in the carrying trade from London.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 106-8. Willan gives no details of the amounts shipped in the 1630s but notes that, in the year ending December 1683, over three million pounds of tobacco was shipped from London to places ranging from Newcastle to Liverpool.

<sup>75</sup> R.W.K. Hinton (ed.), *The Port Books of Boston 1601-40*, Lincoln Record Society 50 (1956), p. 145. William Storie imported prunes, sugar and 10lb of pudding tobacco from Amsterdam to Boston on 26 September 1617.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 189 (3 October 1629) Charles Kellowe imported 180lb of Bermudas tobacco but did not pay the duties upon it until 4 months later.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 235 (28 August 1634).

<sup>78</sup> It is important to note that Great Yarmouth was connected to the substantial city of Norwich by water throughout this period (Willan, *The Coasting Trade*, p. 129).

<sup>79</sup> C.B. Jewson (ed.), *Transcript of Three Registers of Passengers from Great Yarmouth to Holland and New England 1637-9*, Norfolk Record Society 25 (1954). 22 May 1637: Samuel Butler (of Yarmouth 'singleman') aged 19 going to Holland 'to by Some Commodites and so Retorne in 2 mounthes' (p. 33). 25 May 1638: John Butler (of Yarmouth 'Tayler') aged 52 going to Holland 'to see friendes & retorne in 3 monthes' (p. 63). 24 January 1639: several young men going over to Holland 'under Captayne Garretts Companye' (pp. 75-6). Many entries for the name Dey or Day (pp. 43, 51, 64 etc.). A Robert Dey of Norwich, butcher, was often fined for offences against market regulations (see Sachse, *Norwich Mayoralty Court*, pp. 15, 167-8, 174).

<sup>80</sup> E.g. 31 March 1637, George Seaburn of Gt Yarmouth 'tobacco-pipe maker aged 43 yeares and John Davies: his Sarvant aged 21' going to Holland 'there to inhabett and remaine'; 15 April 1637, Robert Parish of New Buckenham 'Tobacco pipe maker aged 25' and his wife Elizabeth going to Rotterdam 'there to inhabitt'; 26 June 1637, Edward Shelley 'borne in London Tobaco pipe maker aged 22' going

In Norfolk there were several traders holding a number of licences such as John Matchet who bought four licences for seven locations to the south of Norwich in April 1634, dominating the trade over a significant area.<sup>82</sup> However, despite apparently ready access to supplies of tobacco in this area, not all attempts to 'buy' a network for exclusively supplying tobacco to retailers and customers were successful. Another trader named Sigismund Jolly bought seven licences for fourteen locations on the same day in July 1634 and a further two licences for another four locations a month later. This vending empire cost a total of £41 and covered an extensive area to the north and west of Norwich. Unlike the Wragges in Lincolnshire, who extended their empire once their first few acquisitions had proved successful, Jolly attempted to secure monopoly control over a large area instantly. He failed to get it. The spread of his holdings was too vast for the kind of cohesive and exclusive control achieved by the Wragges. Perhaps other licensees, such as Richard Bell who held a single licence for Aylsham, and the local dominance of Norwich markets offered consumers too many nearby alternatives to Jolly's tobacco.<sup>83</sup> After his first year of trading, Jolly's empire collapsed. In March 1636 licences for seven of Jolly's locations were bought by George Jhanns, already the holder of a monopoly over Derby, who was better placed to exploit them perhaps through connections with William Jhannes of Bartholomew Lane, London.<sup>84</sup> William Jhanns may have been the William Johanns

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to Holland 'to worke of his Trade' (Jewson; Passengers: Yarmouth to Holland and New England, pp.17, 36, 85).

<sup>81</sup> Richard Lambert was prosecuted in July 1633 for breaching regulations governing his trade. In January 1634, Lambert and two other 'London carriers' promised before the Mayor henceforth to 'performe their Caryages in goeing forth & Comeinge home' as ordered in local statutes (Sachse, Norwich Mayoralty Court, pp. 88 & 117). Richard Lambert also held sole tobacco vending rights from 5 June 1634 for Catton and Norwichthorpe adjoining Norwich (covpprs 23:7).

<sup>82</sup> John Matchet bought his licences on 10, 22 and 26 April 1634 (covpprs. 11:13, 15:14, 16:8 & 12).

<sup>83</sup> Richard Bell purchased his licence for Aylesham on 17 June 1634 (covpprs. 27:37).

<sup>84</sup> George Jhanns holdings included Dickleburgh previously held by Peter Wales. The relationship between George Jhanns and William Jhanns remains unclear.



noted as a tobacco importer in 1627-8.<sup>85</sup> As noted above, William Jhannes attempted to secure a monopoly over the trade in Norwich in 1638 which would have made the Jhannes family the principal traders of the whole area. Holding licences was not automatically profitable but, by 1636, there were people with extensive tobacco trading interests eager to pick them up when they became available.

While some traders looked to expand their control over or access to retail markets for their tobacco others seem to have been content to maintain a relatively small scale vending 'empire'. For example, Fortunate Catlyne bought only two licences, neither of which were monopolies, for London and Launceston in Cornwall.<sup>86</sup> It is impossible to determine whether Catlyne, who must have lived in London because there was no other reason to hold a licence there, supplied tobacco for his fellow monopolists in Launceston or in competition with them. Francis Bate who bought a licence in September 1634 for Godmanchester and Fenstanton near Huntingdon seems to have been content to control tobacco retailing within these nearby communities.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, Richard Prisoe of Lancashire bought consecutive licences for Dalton-in-Furness and Ulverston, four miles away, in April 1634.<sup>88</sup> His £8 investment secured vending rights over a significant geographical area between and around these two locations. His licence acquisition may have inspired John Nutt to secure his rights over nearby Pennington to prevent Prisoe's tobacco dominating all the markets in this area.<sup>89</sup> In each of these cases there is little to suggest that licensing prompted an expansion of trading activities except for the fact that alehouse keepers had been

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<sup>85</sup> Williams, 'England's Tobacco Trade in the Reign of Charles I' pp. 425-46. Johannes imported 1,302 lbs of Virginia tobacco in the *Hopewell*.

<sup>86</sup> He shared the Launceston monopoly with William and Francis Couch.

<sup>87</sup> Francis Bate bought his licence for Godmanchester and Fenstanton on 19 September 1634 for £4 (covpprs. 32:8)

<sup>88</sup> Richard Prisoe's licences were bought for £4 each on 18 April 1634 (covpprs. 16:36, 37).

banned from holding licences. In a monopolised area this should have guaranteed profits from small-scale wholesaling as well as direct retailing.<sup>90</sup>

It cannot automatically be assumed that individuals who acquired many licences over a period of time were attempting to expand their trading sphere. This is illustrated by the case of Peter Crittal of Faversham in Kent. He bought his first licence for £20 to secure the trade in Faversham in May 1634. This was a substantial market on its own. In July he paid a further £4 to acquire licences for nearby Bolton by Faversham and Lynstead. In March 1635 another £4 secured Sheldwich, three miles to the south. In December 1637 he paid £2 for Oare a mile north.<sup>91</sup> This successive expansion of licences created a buffer to keep other traders away from Faversham. This becomes clear with Crittal's final acquisition in January 1638 of a licence covering Ospringe and Preston, immediately adjacent to Faversham. No licence had been held for Preston before but Ospringe had been held since September 1634 by Henry Broadnay, a speculative investor who had spent £73-6-8 on twelve licences for eighteen disparate locations in the south-east during the first six months of licensing.<sup>92</sup> Broadnay had not been seeking a cohesive and secure market. His licences for isolated outposts in Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Hertfordshire suggest an interloping strategy making supplies of Broadnay tobacco available to consumers and retailers as an alternative to that being offered by local traders. In this context Crittal's

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<sup>89</sup> John Nutt bought his licence for the village and parish of Pennington on 15 November 1634 (covpprs. 38:7).

<sup>90</sup> Prisoe and Nutt may have already supplied tobacco to local alehouses in which case licensing merely guaranteed that they continued to do so. However, as is shown below, alehouse keepers did not necessarily get their tobacco from the nearest source or the local licensee who was supposed to control the area in which the alehouse was situated.

<sup>91</sup> Peter Crittal's acquisitions are listed as covpprs. 10:29, 25:17, 49:11, 106:12, 109:11.

<sup>92</sup> Broadnay purchased his first licence on 27 March (covpprs 5:3) and another four on 31 March (covpprs 8:40-2, 48). Another was acquired in May (covpprs 10:17), four more on 10 July (covpprs 25:9, 14, 16, 37) and the last two on 19 & 20 September (covpprs 32:23, 28). These waves of



acquisitions seem to have been intended to keep rivals, specifically Broadnay, away from the environs of Faversham. This gave him greater control over the tobacco trade in one small area but did not make Crittal tobacco more widely available elsewhere. Apparently inadvertently, Crittal did expand his market share when he bought the licence previously held by Broadnay because the licence for Ospringe included a monopoly of the trade in Bethersden over twenty miles to the south of Faversham. If licensing had continued Crittal may have become a regional as well as local 'tobacco baron'.

Competition between rival licensees could be intense. In Norfolk, for example, there was a battle for customers between two tobacco retailer/wholesalers that probably predated and then spanned the duration of the licensing system. Simon Reynolds and his son were among the first to apply for licences in March 1634. In consecutive licences Simon Reynolds junior secured sole vending rights in Attleborough for £4 and his father, New Buckenham for £6.<sup>93</sup> As soon as he discovered this John Dowghty, a New Buckenham tailor, resolved to 'use a tricke to take awaye some of Reynold's gaine by sellinge tobacco neere New Buckenham'.<sup>94</sup> Within three weeks of Reynold's patent Dowghty purchased a £2 monopoly for adjacent Old Buckenham and a further £10 monopoly over Wymondham about fifteen miles away.<sup>95</sup> Presumably leaving the exploitation of the Wymondham market to an agent, Dowghty focussed his attention on supplying his New Buckenham customers. At first he tried to lure customers away from Reynolds by sending his maid to sell tobacco near New Buckenham castle but

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acquisition gave him access to fourteen locations in Kent, two in Sussex and one each in Hertfordshire and Middlesex.

<sup>93</sup> These purchases were made on 29 March 1634 (covpprs 7:30, 31)

<sup>94</sup> This was the testimony of Dowghty's neighbour and of a customer of his wife to the Norfolk Commission of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing in November 1639 (PRO E178/5534 Deposition of Jane Ostler).

with little success. Revising his strategy, he hired a 'calves house' for £4 that was 'within fowerty yards of the borrough of New Buckenham' and about a mile from the village of Old Buckenham. As Anne Pearson reported, he hired this building within 'a wites cast of new Buckenham', openly admitting that he would 'nowe sell tobacco in dispite of Reynolds nose'.<sup>96</sup> Within six months of opening this 'shopp' by the Colefield gate Dowghty gloated that he had already taken £20 profit away from his rival.

In November 1639 Dowghty's trading activities were investigated by the Commission of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing.<sup>97</sup> Deponents told how Dowghty arranged with his customers that they should go to his house in New Buckenham to place their orders but that the money and tobacco would not change hands there. Having decided on the purchase, the customer would stroll down to his 'shopp' where his 'agents', Katherine Lee and Anne Graye, would conclude the exchange. Others reported that Dowghty sometimes used children to deliver the tobacco. Throughout the hearing Dowghty's customers repeatedly emphasised that the 'shopp' was in Old Buckenham and that, although the tobacco was weighed and sometimes even paid for at Dowghty's house, delivery always occurred at the 'shopp'. These deponents were fully aware of the anomaly that Dowghty was exploiting. Further profiting from his Old Buckenham licence, Dowghty also supplied customers from nearby Banham to the south and the forty or so customers at Thomas Page's alehouse at Carlton Rode to the north. Simon Reynolds junior tried to limit Dowghty's activities in March 1636 by buying a licence for Carleton and Bunwell to the north but with little effect.<sup>98</sup> So long as he did not

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<sup>95</sup> These licences were purchased on 19 April 1634 (covpprs. 13:39, 41).

<sup>96</sup> PRO E178/5534 Deposition of Anne Parson.

<sup>97</sup> PRO E178/5534.

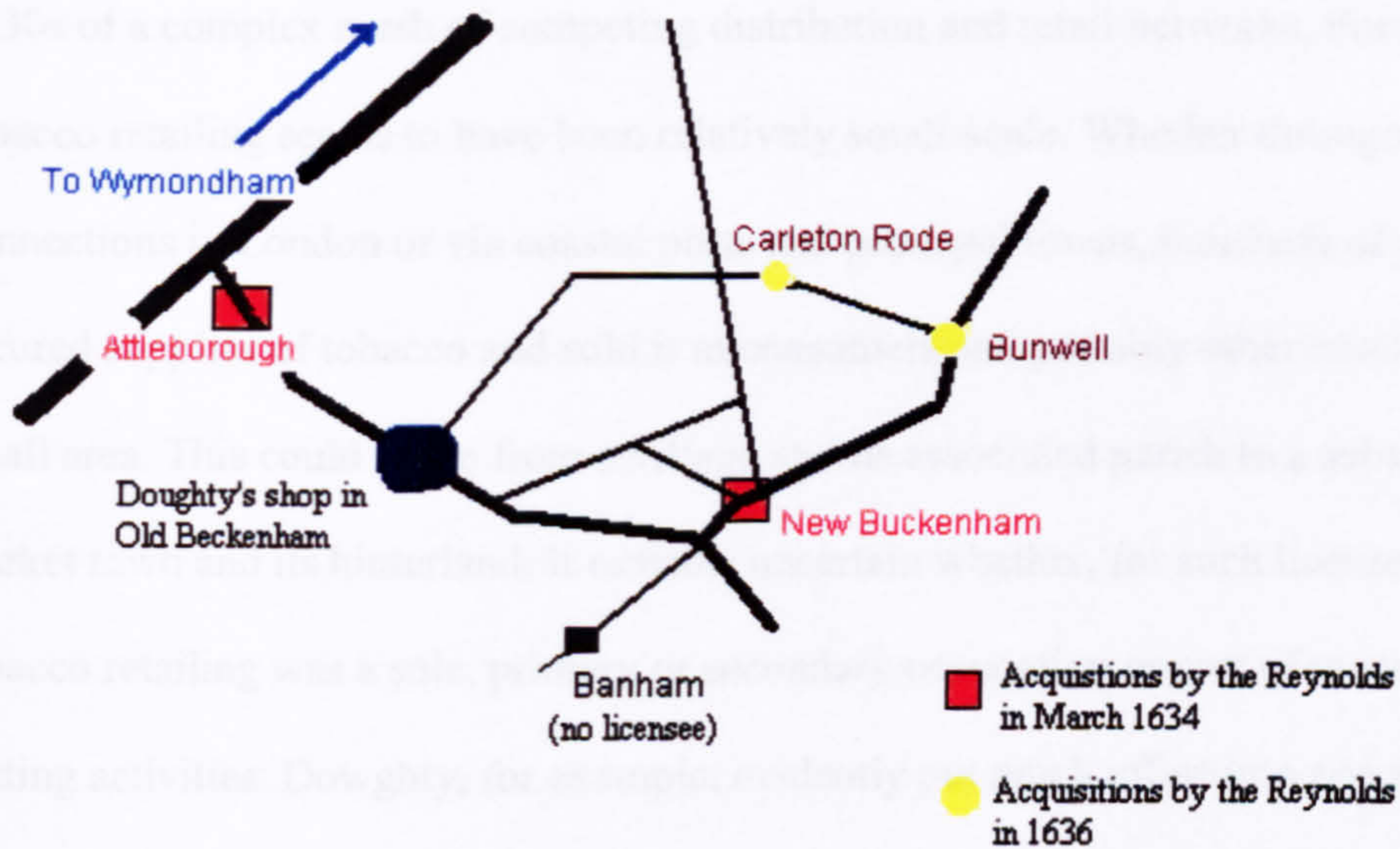
<sup>98</sup> The licence for Carleton and Bunwell was bought for £4 on 7 March 1636 (covpprs. 75:1).



actually sell tobacco in New Buckenham, Banham or Carleton Rode, Dowghty remained technically within the scope of his £2 licence for Old Buckenham.

**Fig. 5**

Markets contested by Dowghty and the Reynolds in Norfolk



Dowghty's example illustrates how profitable relatively small-scale tobacco vending could be. Each licensed location had the potential to become a trading node for the area around it especially if the licensee could build relationships with a nearby alehouse keeper and customers from the surrounding area. Most licences went to people such as Oliver Day of Bletsoe in Bedfordshire and Margaret Craford of Neston in Cheshire who paid £2 to secure the tobacco trade in just a single location.<sup>1</sup> Further research in specific locations is required to determine the extent of the markets they secured, especially the number of alehouses they could have supplied and the location

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Craford bought her licence on 19 September 1634 (covpprs. 32:15). Oliver Day bought his on 25 May 1635 (covpprs. 55:2).



of their nearby competitors. Nevertheless, it seems likely that their £2 investment yielded profits that, as Charles suggested in 1637, amply justified the revenue consequently accruing to the Crown.<sup>100</sup>

The diverse patterns of licence acquisition outlined above suggest the presence in the 1630s of a complex mesh of competing distribution and retail networks. For many, tobacco retailing seems to have been relatively small-scale. Whether through connections in London or via coastal ports and principal towns, hundreds of people secured supplies of tobacco and sold it to consumers and possibly other retailers in a small area. This could range from a village and its associated parish to a substantial market town and its hinterland. It remains uncertain whether, for such licensees, tobacco retailing was a sole, primary or secondary occupation or part of more general trading activities. Doughty, for example, evidently put much effort into and gained significant profits from tobacco selling but he was described as a tailor. Peter Crittal considered his tobacco business worth the investment of additional money for further licences to defend it from competitors but may have also had other trading interests in the area. Seven of those who bought licences for York were mercers for whom tobacco was just one part of their trade, albeit a particularly profitable one if they were willing, however reluctantly, to buy licences for it.

Alongside these independent retailers were people who sold tobacco supplied and distributed by a small number of wholesalers who 'owned' retailing rights over numerous locations. These retailing/wholesaling empires could be geographically defined and cohesive as in the case of the Wragges or the Norsworthys. They could

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<sup>100</sup> Part of recital of background to the issue of the grant to Goring quoted in Beresford, 'The Beginning of retail Tobacco Licences', p. 136.



also be disparate, providing access to customers over a large area as in the case of Sharrock and Broadnay. In some cases, specifically John Wilcock but perhaps also William Jhanns and others, the importer was also the wholesaler and controlled the retailing sites as well. Price and Clemens estimate that, in the 1670s, seven tobacco importing firms controlled 30% of the supply of tobacco.<sup>101</sup> This is perhaps foreshadowed in the way tobacco was traded in the 1630s. Particularly in the south-west but also in other parts of the country, segments of the tobacco trade were beginning to be concentrated in a few hands. The introduction of vending licences did not start this process. Wilcock and others who bought large numbers of licences in the first few weeks of the scheme cannot have created the necessary networks of supply and distribution so quickly. Importers and the wholesalers who bought tobacco from them must have already had established connections with retailers. However, licensing did perhaps formalise those arrangements and make them exclusive. This enhanced the prospects for profits and diminished risk borne of competition.

### Supplying unlicensed retailers

For those with single licences and those with retail licence empires the investment in licences had to be assuaged by selling more tobacco, selling it at higher prices or both. This necessarily entailed suppressing the influx of tobacco from other sources perhaps by absorbing or breaking pre-existing arrangements between local retailers and customers. In cases where the licensee was merely securing a market they already dominated this was probably relatively easy.<sup>102</sup> Local alehouse keepers and others who sold small quantities of tobacco could be 'deputised' to sell tobacco supplied by

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<sup>101</sup> J. M. Price and P. G. E. Clemens, 'A Revolution of Scale in British Overseas Trade: British firms in the Chesapeake trade, 1675-1775', *Journal of Economic History* 47 (1987), pp. 2-4, 10.

the licensee (who may have already been the local source of the drug). In cases where the licence was granting rights that infringed upon the trade of others, taking advantage of patented rights could be considerably more difficult as Reynolds discovered in New Buckenham. Licensing created illegality. When Reynolds bought his patent it became illegal for Dowghty to continue to sell to his customers in New Buckenham.

Nevertheless, Dowghty managed to retain a share of the New Buckenham market, having spent considerably less on his licence, by selling his tobacco at a lower price. He exploited the relationships he had forged with his New Buckenham customers who, whether inspired by 'customer loyalty', disaffection for Reynolds or simply price differences, chose to buy his tobacco.<sup>103</sup> Though technically not breaching his rival's patent, the private arrangements Dowghty made and the 'shop' he established denied Reynolds the exclusive access to New Buckenham smokers that he thought he was buying in 1634. There was little Reynolds could do. There was nothing to stop customers choosing where to buy their tobacco so long as they were willing to travel outside Reynolds' jurisdiction. However, Reynolds did have a clear case against one of Dowghty's regular customers: Thomas Page who was illegally retailing Dowghty tobacco in his alehouse. Particularly after Simon Reynolds junior had acquired a monopoly over this location in 1636, Dowghty was feeding tobacco directly to an illegal outlet. When the Commission of Enquiry into unlicensed dealing investigated Reynolds' complaints this was duly noted but Dowghty not Page was their primary

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<sup>102</sup> If Nathaniel Hurd was already supplying tobacco in Atherston before licensing, the 'tobacco man' John Loveday may not have been concerned that Hurd bought the retailing licence there and little would have changed except possibly a rise in prices.

<sup>103</sup> Cox notes the importance of personal relationships between retailer and customer (Cox, The Complete Tradesman, chapter 4).



target. Dowghty's complicity in sustaining this illegal outlet was merely offered as evidence of his more generally subversive trading activities.

The use of a single village licence to sell large quantities of tobacco over a wide area despite the restrictions is particularly well illustrated in the trading activities of Richard Cudlipp and son in the area around Tavistock. In the first months of licensing John Wilcock secured sole rights over Whitchurch, Lamerton and Milton Abbot. Tavistock was initially acquired by another Plymouth patentee and then transferred to local resident, George Doidge.<sup>104</sup> In March 1634 Richard Cudlipp was among the first whose arrest was sought for continuing to trade without a licence. Cudlipp's Tavistock customers initially continued to purchase tobacco from Cudlipp and his two 'agents' as they had before the prohibitions. However, in May 1635, probably as a result of continuing pressure to legitimise his activities, Cudlipp eventually paid £2 for sole vending rights in South Sidenham.<sup>105</sup> He then colluded with his Tavistock customers to continue to supply them. Like Dowghty, Cudlipp arranged for his customers to go to his house in Tavistock to sample the tobacco, agree quantities and prices and weigh the goods. Then, as was repeatedly stated before the Commission of Enquiry into unlicensed trading in the area, Cudlipp, his son or servant would go with the customer to South Sidenham where delivery and payment occurred, legitimately concluding the transaction.<sup>106</sup> As in New Buckenham, customers did not have to travel all the way to the village. A jurisdictional anomaly, originating in the ownership by the Tremaynes of both North and South Siddenham, entailed the

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<sup>104</sup> Henry Stone acquired the Tavistock licence in July 1634 for £6-13-4 (covpprs. 24:3). Doidge took it over in October 1634 (covpprs 34:1). There is no record of a dispute between Stone and Doidge.

<sup>105</sup> Cudlipp's licence for 'South Sidenham alias Suddenham Damborne' was purchased on 25 May 1635 (covpprs. 55:10). A. K. Johnston's *Royal Atlas of Modern Geography* (London, 1897) identifies the village as South Sydenham but it is now known as Sydenham Damerel.

intrusion of a swathe of the Lifton Hundred across the Tavistock Hundred (see fig. 6). Consequently, a short walk along the Launceston Road technically placed the sale beyond the limits of Doidge's monopoly.<sup>107</sup>

This particularly incensed Doidge because many of those who 'usually fetch[ed] Tobacco' in this way were unlicensed dealers in Tavistock who then resold it by the pennyworth. Cudlipp and Doidge also competed for other nearby markets. Apparently on behalf of John Wilcock, Doidge supplied tobacco for Milton Abbot, Whitchurch and Lamerton. He also sold tobacco for resale in Marystow and Lydford.<sup>108</sup> From 1637, Cudlipp attempted to 'solicite and importune' customers in those and other areas within and outside the Tavistock Hundred. The keeper of Lydford Castle and the Whitchurch Chapman, Nicholas Heydon were 'solicited in private' but rejected his offers of cheaper tobacco.<sup>109</sup> Others did not. Cudlipp junior urged Anne Lacey of Milton Abbot 'to take some to sell'. Phillip Harte of the same, usually a Doidge customer, bought one pound. Oliver Maynard took 6 lbs. back to Marystow with him. From his home in Tavistock and his son's house in South Sidenham, Richard Cudlipp was using a single £2 licence to become a dominant trader in the area. Doidge could not complain too much. Andrew Dodridge of Launceston regularly travelled to Tavistock to buy tobacco that he claimed he then dispersed to his neighbours 'at the same rate' as he paid for it. Both Cudlipp and Doidge supplied him and helped him undermine the trade of the Launceston patentees.

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<sup>106</sup> PRO E178/5239 Depositions of Richard Cudlipp, merchant aged 40 and his son Richard, merchant aged 20 both of Tavistock. Also William Edgcombe, Emma Tailor and others.

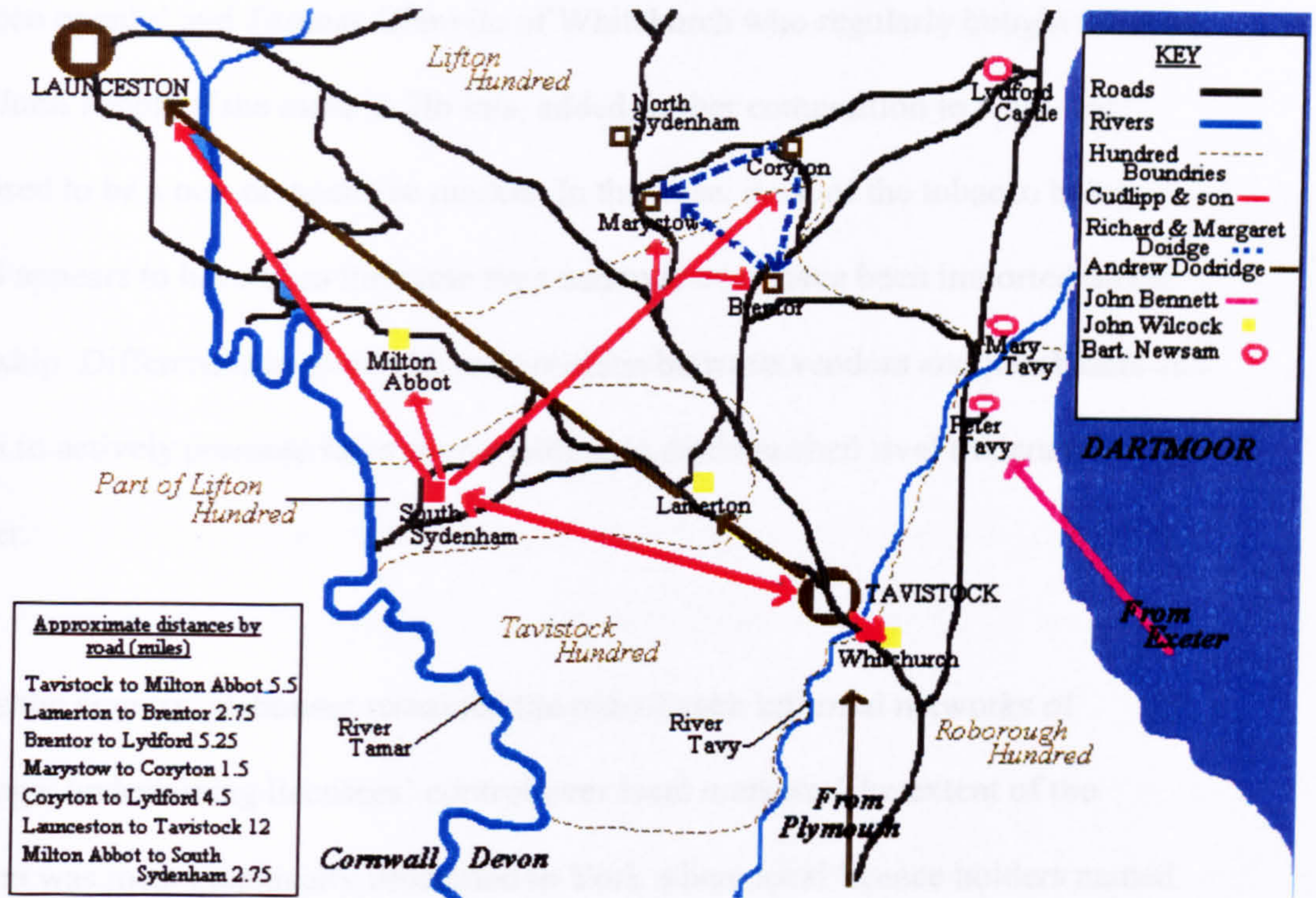
<sup>107</sup> Oliver Maynard, among those who testified to this procedure, took delivery from Richard Cudlipp jnr. 'neere unto Mr Tremayne's Kilne'. Millhill quarry, in the Lifton 'incursion' closest to Tavistock, seems a likely location for this type of industrial facility.

<sup>108</sup> Peter Tavy & Mary Tavy, Lydford and Stowford to the north were monopolised by Bartholomew Newsam from 17 December 1634 (covpprs. 35:4, 11).

<sup>109</sup> Heydon and his wife testified to getting their tobacco from a variety of sources but mainly from Peter Ely and George Doidge. They then resold it.



Fig. 6

The Trading Sphere of Richard Cudlipp<sup>1</sup>

Cudlipp's extensive trading on the basis of a single £2 licence was eventually limited, not by successful prosecution, but by other unlicensed dealers operating in the area. Cudlipp testified that he had, between 1634 and 1638, sold over 1000 lbs. of tobacco from London and Plymouth. When he approached Richard and Margaret Doidge<sup>2</sup> in Coryton he encountered a couple who had sold as much over the same period as him. In Coryton, Marystow and Brentor, they sold 'to anyone that would buy it'. They did buy 60 lbs. from Cudlipp at 2s-3d/lb and Cudlipp managed to sell small amounts in

<sup>1</sup> This map is derived from Benjamin Donn's maps of Devon 1765. Tavistock was a borough town with an M.P. Sydenham, Milton Abbot, Lamerton, Brentor, Coryton, Marystow, Peter Tavy and Lydford were all markets for nearby villages. 1 furlong = 1/8 miles. Distances marked on map converted using this.

<sup>2</sup> Despite the probable kinship between the Coryton and Tavistock Doidges and connections with the importer John Wilcock, these individuals purchased their tobacco from a variety of sources. Six months earlier, Margaret also bought about 15 lbs. from 'Mr Blackallers servant of Exon [Exeter] living at Robert Tickells in Tavistocke' (PRO E178/5239 Deposition of Margaret Doidge of Coryton).



those three locations, but there was little room for further sales. Other unlicensed dealers, such as widow Fawson of Tavistocke who 'doth every markett day sell Tobacco openly' and Thomas Glanvile of Whitchurch who regularly bought tobacco from John Nicoll of the same in 2lb lots, added further competition to what was supposed to be a non-competitive market. In this case, most of the tobacco being traded appears to have been the same type and may even have been imported on the same ship. Differences in price, the relationships between vendors and purchasers and efforts to actively promote sales over a wide area distinguished rival traders from one another.

Across the country, alehouses remained the nub of such informal networks of exchange, undermining licensees' control over local markets. The extent of the problem was most graphically illustrated in York where local licence holders named 140 unlicensed vendors in the city in 1638.<sup>112</sup> All but eight were identified as tipplers, innholders, victuallers or vintners. In Micklegate alone, there were thirteen places where the alcohol consumer could acquire tobacco from an unlicensed vendor. This scale of non-compliance to Royal authority was a direct result of Charles's last minute decision to prohibit alcohol vendors from holding licences in their own right. This move could not change consumer behaviour. The alehouse remained the principal venue for smoking and thus for demand for tobacco. Denied access to licences but facing daily demands for tobacco, alehouse keepers had little reason to adhere to the licensing arrangements and every reason to secure supplies of tobacco. Some, for example, George Dickinson of Killinghall in Yorkshire, who supplied his alehouse

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<sup>112</sup> PRO E178/5793. The fact that local York licensees named these individuals does not necessarily mean they had not bought their tobacco from a local licensee. Rivalries between licensees, particularly about the re-sale of tobacco in such circumstances, were rife. This made it difficult to distinguish those with permission to retail from those without.



customers with tobacco from his son in Wapping, used kinship ties to get their tobacco and vend it without local permission.<sup>113</sup> Many more seem to have just continued to buy from those who had supplied them prior to the prohibitions, whether or not they had a licence for the alehouse's location.

Both the licensed trade and its unlicensed shadow became focussed in the alehouse. Substantial profits were available for those who could supply them on a regular basis. Local licensees might play this role but often licensees from other areas and those with no licence at all would intercede. For example, William Edgecombe, a Tavistock chandler, was one of many who 'usually fetch[ed] Tobacco' from Cudlipp by the pound and then returned to Tavistock to re-sell it by the pennyworth. Amongst those he supplied was his mother who, making no distinction between this and tobacco from the local licensee, sold it again to her alehouse customers.<sup>114</sup> Similarly, in the Luddenham area of Yorkshire where there was no licensee, it was well known that John Jinkinson 'doth usually sell and serve all the brewsters therabouts with Tobaccoe'.<sup>115</sup>

A few, like Eleanor Langford of Peter Tavy, asserted that they bought from the local licensee and 'none else' while surreptitiously receiving supplies from elsewhere to sell 'from her house . . . by retail for a profit'. Much of her stock came from John

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid. Deposition of George Dickson, tipler, aged 55 and William Wardman, aged 52. Wardman deposed that he once saw eleven rolls of tobacco at Dickson's house which 'to his beste estimation' weighed 100 lbs. all of which he believed had come from Dickson's son and was then sold in his house.

<sup>114</sup> PRO E178/5239 Deposition of Agnes Doidge of Tavistock, aged 50. Agnes Doidge stated that she had 'several times' got tobacco from her son William Edgecombe which she sold on again. The relationship between Agnes and the Coryton Doidges remains unclear.

<sup>115</sup> PRO E178/5793 Deposition of Richard Langley, aged 30. Jinkinson's extensive trading was also noted in depositions by William Suckliff, Robert Lacey and Simon Inghram of Luddenham. John Horle of nearby Soreby deposed on 25 September 1638 that he had been buying from Jinkinson for over three years. John Jinkinson confirmed that he had been selling tobacco daily for four years.

Bennett of Peter Tavy who, despite claims that he only gave it to his friends and ‘hath never made any benefitt thereof’, received 8 lb. at a time from Roger Gibbs of Tavistock. Gibbs was a weaver who bought his tobacco from John Lavers when he attended Exeter market. Though Lavers held a licence for Exeter and could quite properly sell to Gibbs, the tobacco he supplied meandered through numerous hands until bought by customers in an alehouse miles away in Peter Tavy.<sup>116</sup>

The difficulties of identifying who should or should not trade and the importance of supplying alehouses is illustrated in the case of Durham. In November 1639 the Bishop of Durham became involved in a dispute between Thomas Tunstall, an Alderman who held three of the licences for Durham, and customers of three other tobacco retailers (Goodhier, Ayrson and Cookeson) who held the remaining licences for the city.<sup>117</sup> Tunstall’s rivals only sold tobacco from their shops and houses without specifically giving permission for anyone to sell on their behalf. Tunstall authorised anyone who bought from him to resell the tobacco and then challenged anyone he found who was selling tobacco they had not bought from him. The Bishop noted that people who bought small packets of tobacco from a licensed dealer considered themselves automatically authorised to resell it. Nevertheless, Tunstall initiated prosecutions against them leading to summons to appear before Goring at the Tobacco Office in London. When the matter was investigated Tunstall admitted that he took this action because he was struggling to pay his rent. The apparent failure of

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<sup>116</sup> PRO E178/5239 Deposition of Roger Gibbs, weaver aged 60.

<sup>117</sup> Tunstall officially only held one licence. The other two, in the names of Elizabeth and Ralph Tunstall, had been purchased on 2 February 1636 (covpprs 73:12, 13).



his business was a direct result of the fact that the vintners and alehouse keepers of Durham bought the tobacco they sold from the other patentees, not from Tunstall.<sup>118</sup>

Intentionally or unintentionally rival licensees were supplying tobacco to illegal vendors. Those unlicensed tobacco sellers gained equal benefit from any improvements in the regularisation of supply and enhancement of distribution fostered by the requirements of major traders to supply their customers. Alehouse keepers would have had no difficulty procuring one or two pounds of tobacco per week despite the fact they were not supposed to trade at all. Those selling tobacco without the permission of the local licensee offered a range of excuses for doing so. When questioned by the Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing many testified that it was their wives not they who supplied tobacco to their customers. It had been, after all, alehouse keepers not their wives that Charles had prohibited from tobacco retailing. When their wives were questioned some confessed to selling the odd pennyworth but, from Devon to Yorkshire, almost all asserted that they normally gave the tobacco away with drinks. If true, this was the worst possible outcome for Charles. What better incentive could there be for more frequent and lengthy visits to the alehouse than free tobacco? However, this type of evasion was probably widely used to legitimise overtly illegal trading. On one occasion when Doughty sold to a customer on Reynolds' territory he clearly specified that he was charging for the pipes he supplied not the tobacco to put in them.<sup>119</sup> In June 1634 the Privy Council instructed Middlesex Justices to help enforce the patents of Jeremy Turpin and others against 'great numbers of unlicensed tradesmen [who] daily sell tobacco in that parish

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<sup>118</sup> CSPD 1639-1640, pp. 89-91 Bishop Morton of Durham to Sir Henry Vane (12 November 1639). The Bishop's view on the matter was annexed to Privy Council records of a discussion of this matter (Ibid., p. 139).

<sup>119</sup> PRO E178/5534 Deposition of William Ostler, glover.

[St Giles in the Fields]'. They complained that unlicensed vendors used the 'pretence of giving away the same' to 'contemn and elude' the rights of the licensed dealers.<sup>120</sup>

Such evasive tactics and open defiance of licensing depended upon the relationship between vendor and customer. As depositions to the Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing clearly show, unlicensed vendors and their customers were often firmly allied against the local patentee. Some refused to name who they bought tobacco from. Orenge Shepheard of Plymouth readily confessed that she had 'at sondry tymes bought severall p[ar]cells of Tobacco' of about 50 lbs. weight, but claimed to have no idea who she bought it from or sold it to. One parcel of tobacco she bought on behalf of a 'friend of hers whose name she knoweth not'.<sup>121</sup> Her trading activities, probably involving relatively small quantities of tobacco smuggled in by sailors, was continuing in the shadow of John Wilcock's vending empire and the trading networks of the other nine Plymouth licensees. Orenge Shepheard was just one of many who offered little co-operation or information to the Commissions of Inquiry. Across the country people refused to attend the hearings. At the Ferrybridge inquiry, for example, ten of the seventeen people called to give evidence failed to appear.<sup>122</sup> Some openly expressed their contempt for local licensees. In one instance, angry citizens of Helston actively defended the individuals who sold them tobacco by disrupting the hearings before the Commission of Inquiry.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> CSPD 1634, p. 98. The magistrates were instructed to place offenders in gaol, take bonds and compensation.

<sup>121</sup> PRO E178/5239 Deposition of 'Orenge the wife of Thomas Shepheard of Plymouth aged ffortie yeares or thereabouts'.

<sup>122</sup> The Barton constable reported that nine people had refused to appear, the Crost constable reported four. In Mansfield one person gave evidence and four refused.

<sup>123</sup> Beresford, 'The Beginning of Retail Tobacco Licences', p. 133.



Such widespread evasion of the licensing regulations was impossible to stop because of the way in which licences had been allocated. As chapter 6 showed, the scheme proposed in 1632-3 had centred upon local enforcement of locally determined rights to vend. The shift to a centrally orchestrated licence by patent system in early 1634 gave little reason for local authorities to enthusiastically seek to enforce it. This was especially so if the unlicensed retailers were not considered locally to be the 'irresponsible' persons Charles was supposedly targeting. In some cases, those who should have done the enforcing were themselves victims of the new arrangements. Oswestry, for example, was reportedly left 'without government' in 1634 when two bailiffs, an Alderman and two constables were 'apprehended by warrant' and brought, in custody, 140 miles over 6 weeks to answer for unlicensed dealing.<sup>124</sup> Even when an unlicensed retailer was challenged the local licensee could get little redress. William Finch, licensee for Kingston upon Thames and Hampton parish, complained that James Lambe was illegally selling tobacco from a tent outside Hampton Court when the king was in residence. Sir William Belcher was instructed to draw up a warrant but, even outside the gates of the Royal Court, unlicensed dealing continued to thrive because Lambe gave the tobacco to other tent holders to retail for him.<sup>125</sup>

To prevent unlicensed dealing, some licensees determined to limit access to wholesale tobacco. Anne Battyn of Compton Gifford assured the Devon enquiry into unlicensed dealing that those holding licences only sold large quantities to their fellow licensees.<sup>126</sup> She testified that she and her husband had sold five to six hundredweight 'to sondry persons, all to Patentees in Devon and Cornwall'. She did have doubts

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<sup>124</sup> CSPD 1634, pp. 395-6. 1634 Wm. Cowper, Henry Blodwell (bailiffs), Arthur Ward (Alderman), John ap Richard and Hugh Edwards (constables), all of Oswestry, claimed they had done nothing wrong and petitioned the Privy Council for compensation.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p. 396.

about one transaction with ‘a lame man in Totnes . . . who said he was a Patentee but whether he were or not she knoweth not, neither doth she knowe his name’. Other deponents from Plymouth, including the mariner Walter Jagoe, similarly testified that they only sold tobacco to patent holders. This would not prevent the tricks of traders such as Cudlipp and Dowghty that so confounded their rivals but it could be considered a step towards the kind of structured and exclusive internal control over who sold tobacco where that Charles had intended. Allied with measures to control the source of tobacco by landing all tobacco at London, suppressing smuggling and destroying crops growing in England, it would have clearly distinguished the legal and organised trade from its illegal shadow.

However, the connections between consumers and their unlicensed suppliers were already founded upon open or barely concealed subversion of the regulations. This facilitated the distribution of illegally grown or imported tobacco in the same sort of way that the contents of the poacher’s pouch found a buyer. Few seem to have had any particular moral aversion to dabbling in the ‘black market’ in tobacco. In this regard there seems to have been a strong parallel with the sort of collusion that facilitated widespread smuggling in the eighteenth century despite the efforts of Excise-men. Only the licensees and the government seemed to consider unlicensed tobacco dealing a ‘real’ crime especially as efforts at enforcement were so weak. It was only a small step from evading the local licensee to smoking smuggled or illegally grown tobacco. The surreptitious sale of tobacco in alehouses and by unlicensed vendors was as well suited for the distribution of tobacco from illicit sources as it was for legally imported tobacco. Indeed, if denied access to legitimate

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<sup>126</sup> PRO E178/5239 Deposition of Anne Battyn.



supplies, unlicensed dealers would have little choice but to seek illegitimate sources of supply.

Small scale smuggling from Europe and the New World was rife in ports up and down the country. As noted above, tobacco shipped from Virginia to Holland could easily find its way to English consumers along the East Coast. Despite repeated efforts, tobacco crops continued to find their way onto the market from isolated fields in numerous counties. Much illicit tobacco was intercepted. In 1636 'a great quantity of English tobacco brought up to London from Gloucestershire was ordered to be seized'.<sup>127</sup> Much more was not. With tobacco entering the market from so many different retailers and people conspiring to buy and sell tobacco surreptitiously, it was easy for wholly illegal tobacco to find a buyer. Personal contacts, local markets, fairs, itinerant traders and alehouses offered a range of outlets for whatever tobacco was available. For example, in 1636 William Palmer of Tewkesbury was accused of selling tobacco without licence on two occasions. In one instance he sold 8-9 lbs. of 'outlandish' (presumably colonial) tobacco to Henry Tracy Esq. for 4s 6d per pound. On another occasion he sold 40 lbs. of English tobacco to 'someone from Worcester' for 8d per pound.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> PRO PC 2/47/185. On 30 April 1635, the Privy Council had tried to stop English tobacco growing in alliance with mayors etc. (PRO PC 2/44/544). This initiative evidently failed again if so much tobacco was still harvested the following year. For information on tobacco growing in Gloucestershire see J. Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects* (Oxford, 1978) and J. Thirsk, 'Projects for Gentlemen, Jobs for the Poor: Mutual Aid in the Vale of Tewkesbury, 1600-1630' in P. McGrath and J. Cannon (eds.), *Essays in Bristol and Gloucestershire History* (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 1976), pp. 141-169. In the 1640s and 50s, tobacco growing employed hundreds of itinerant and low income workers.

<sup>128</sup> PRO E178/5315 Deposition of Thomas Bicke.

Thomas Coningsbie of St John's Street, Worcester, the holder of the first patent issued, should have been the only source of tobacco in Worcester.<sup>129</sup> In the midst of so many tobacco growing areas there seems to have been little he could do to prevent the resale of this and other illegally grown tobacco to those who should have been exclusively his customers. He certainly could not seek support from members of the local Corporation. They were actively campaigning to have his monopoly of Worcester's trade declared null and void. Coningsbie had instigated a Commission of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing in the city in February 1637.<sup>130</sup> This had focussed tensions and prompted attempts to 'impeach the valliditye' of Coningsbie's patent by indictment against him and his agents at the Quarter Sessions on the grounds that, not being freemen of the city, they had no right to keep 'open shop or use any trade' in the city.<sup>131</sup> The Privy Council heard the dispute in December 1638 immediately after considering the Norwich traders vs. Jhanns case. The Privy Council decided that 'most of the cittyes & Corporate Townes within the kingdome have beene left to Forainers & are quietly enjoyed by them and their deputies'.<sup>132</sup> They ordered the mayor and magistrates to withdraw all indictments and proceedings against Coningsbie and not to hinder his trading from either his shop or his deputies. With such tensions in evidence, city authorities would have had little impulse to defend Coningsbie's interests against the incursions of locally grown tobacco fed through illicit channels.

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<sup>129</sup> Coningsbie bought this licence on 5 March 1634 before administrative systems had been put in place. As noted before, the first 199 licences are not amongst the Coventry Papers but the names of those who bought them are recorded on the Patent Rolls and listed in PRO C66/2624. Tobacco growing was most prolific and enduring in the Midland counties especially Gloucestershire and Worcestershire.

<sup>130</sup> PRO E178/296.

<sup>131</sup> Facsimile of the Register of the Privy Council preserved in the PRO (London, 1968), vol. 4, pp. 604-5 (14 December 1638). Thomas Coningsbie may not have been a freeman of Worcester but members of the Coningsbie family did live in the local area. Humphry Coningesby of Ullenhall, gentleman, left a will in 1591. Nicholas Coningesby of Morton Baggot, gentleman, left a will in 1635 (E. A. Fry, A Calendar of Worcester Wills and Administrations Preserved in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Worcester (Hertford, 1904), 1, p. 335 & 2, p. 154).



The availability of illegally grown tobacco in different parts of the country and the effectiveness of efforts to keep it off the market requires further investigation. However, in Gloucestershire at least, English tobacco sold by unlicensed retailers seems to have had a significant share of the market despite concerted efforts at suppressing it. In 1627 the Privy Council had issued warrants for the destruction of tobacco crops in and around 39 Gloucestershire towns and villages including Winchcombe, where officials tore up the warrants and the sheriff and magistrates refused repeated orders to take action.<sup>133</sup> Specific enquiries had been made about one alleged grower the year before but the bailiffs of Winchcombe reported that they ‘cannot hear nor find that John Ayers had grown any tobacco’.<sup>134</sup> On 8 May 1634 one John Eyers purchased a licence for Winchcombe and the market town of Moreton-in-Marsh for £9.<sup>135</sup> Moreton-in-Marsh was half way between Worcester and Oxford on the London road. If Eyers was the alleged local grower he could have used these locations to sell tobacco grown in Winchcombe fields locally and to a considerable passing trade. All he needed was the co-operation of local authorities. Significantly, the person approached by the Privy Council to suppress local growing was Sir John Tracy whose probable kinsman Henry Tracy was noted above for buying tobacco from an unlicensed dealer in Tewkesbury.<sup>136</sup>

Tewkesbury was another place listed in 1627 as the site of tobacco growing. As the local licensee, Thomas Crumpe, complained, it was also the site of considerable unlicensed tobacco selling.<sup>137</sup> Depositions to the Gloucestershire Commission of

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> *APC January- August 1627*, pp. 409-10 (10? July 1627).

<sup>134</sup> In August 1626, the instructions to suppress tobacco growing were sent to Sir John Tracy who reported back accordingly (*CSPD 1625-6*, p. 412).

<sup>135</sup> *Covprs 20:1*.

<sup>136</sup> PRO E178/5315 Deposition of Thomas Bicke.

<sup>137</sup> Thomas Crumpe had been the local licensee in since March 1634.

Inquiry into unlicensed dealing identified Thomas Sweeper and John Beale, local alehouse keepers, a weaver named Robert Crabbe and John Slaughter as the principal offenders.<sup>138</sup> Crumpe attempted to suppress his unlicensed competitors by obtaining a Privy Council warrant against Crabbe and the wives of John Slaughter and another illegal dealer named Brush but its execution by Richard Turberville, a local baker who was then constable, was largely ineffective. Mrs Brush promised not to trade any more and presumably kept that promise. Turberville claimed that he could not find the other 'delinquents'. Such half-hearted local enforcement kept both local growing and illegal vending alive in this area. When later questioned by the Commission of Inquiry about his own purchase of tobacco from unlicensed traders, Turberville explained that he and others bought from unlicensed sources because they did not like the 'office Tobacco (meaning the Patentees Tobacco)'.<sup>139</sup> The use of the word 'office' to describe the tobacco is perhaps indicative of the probable source of Crumpe's tobacco – Goring's Tobacco Office in London.

### The influence of Charles's retailing regulations on the domestic tobacco trade

The introduction of tobacco retail licences was intended to place the sale of tobacco in the 'safe hands' of responsible traders. It seemed to present wholesalers and retailers who dabbled in wholesaling with the opportunity to secure non-competitive markets for the sale of their tobacco. As the above examples show, this exclusivity of supply seems to have been seldom achieved. Rival licensed traders such as Dowghty and Cudlipp employed a variety of strategies to gain access to customers outside the limits

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<sup>138</sup> PRO E178/5315. Depositions of Margaret Hughes, Christopher Little, Thomas Bicke and others.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. Deposition of Richard Turberville.



of their licences. In some areas, most notably in the South-west, tobacco suppliers competed by acquiring licences for adjacent markets. This gave consumers a choice that diminished the control of suppliers. Smokers in St Mabyn (see fig. 2), for example, could buy Virginian and perhaps legally imported Spanish tobaccos out of London from Sharrock's agent there. Alternatively, they could travel four miles east to Blisland and buy St Christopher's tobacco imported by Wilcock and sold by his agent there. The same tobacco from the same ship was available from Henry Stone's agent in St Tudy three miles to the north. In St Breock four miles to the west, the Norsworthys might offer tobacco from a different source, perhaps shipped in their own boat.<sup>140</sup> Six miles to the south-east in Bodmin market Nicholas Bond, the local monopolist, might present further options.<sup>141</sup> Even if all of these licensees were selling the same tobacco, there may have been differences in price or quality or perhaps a particular buyer/seller relationship determining where a customer bought their tobacco.

The consumers of St Mabyn were at the centre of a complex of competing licensed traders seldom matched anywhere else in England and Wales but they were not the only ones to have a choice. In other areas consumers could buy from the local licensed retailer, other licensed retailers further afield or from a local unlicensed dealer selling the same tobacco at a lower price or perhaps English grown or smuggled tobacco at a considerably lower price. As depositions to the Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing show, attempts by licensed retailers to limit

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<sup>140</sup> In 1626 Francis 'Norsworthy' was listed as owner of the Hope of Truro (burthen 30 tons, no ordinance) (T. Gray (ed.), Early-Stuart Mariners and Shipping: the maritime surveys of Devon and Cornwall, 1619-35 (Exeter, 1990), p. 74).

<sup>141</sup> Nicholas Bond, a minor trader, controlled Bodmin from 29 March 1634 for £13-6-8 per year (covprs. 7:57). Any or all of the magnates in this area or his own associates in London could have supplied him with his stock.

consumer choice were often tacitly and sometimes vigorously resisted. Turberville said he did not like the local licensee's tobacco. Robert Howsall of Sherburn, who bought his tobacco from Pontefract and Leeds, declared that he would never buy from the Sherburn licensee, Buffet, 'while he lives'.<sup>142</sup>

Consumer hostility towards licensees may not have been as widespread as the sources suggest. The Commissions of Inquiry into unlicensed dealing were directed only to places where there was a problem. Licensees and those who sold tobacco on their behalf may well have had good relationships with their customers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that often 'shopping was combined with social intercourse'.<sup>143</sup> Tobacco was a commodity particularly well suited to social circumstances. If the tobacco retailer was also a 'tobacconist', i.e. a smoker, the sale could be punctuated with the sampling of a shared pipeful. Doughty's New Buckenham customers came to his house to try the tobacco probably engaging in negotiations of its flavour and strength as well as of its price. Many deponents to the Commissions of Inquiry pointed noted that they had been buying tobacco from the person being investigated for many years. Whether or not the retailer was authorised to sell tobacco, such relationships could persist and, indeed, be strengthened by an outsider's attempts to break them.

As noted in chapter 4, the quality, strength and variety of tobacco was an important element in the culture of smoking. A pipe of 'right Trinidado' was highly prized and suggested distinction and a refined palate. 'Bald Tabacodocko' was far less

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<sup>142</sup> PRO E178/5793 Deposition of Robert Howshall.

<sup>143</sup> Cox, The Complete Tradesman, p. 133.



desirable.<sup>144</sup> Before the advent of licensing consumer choice had been significantly curtailed as a result of regulations dictating where tobacco came from. After the Virginia massacre of 1623 James had prohibited the importation of tobacco from anywhere other than Virginia and the British West Indies. The range of tobaccos from different areas in Spanish and Portuguese America which had undergone different curing processes and were flavoured both by the soil in which they had grown and by the addition of various, often unsavoury, additives were declared illegal. This ban was lifted soon after but, for the good of the colonies, only a relatively small quantity of heavily taxed Spanish tobacco was allowed to land in London each year for the luxury end of the market. Some Spanish tobacco may have been smuggled in from Spain or distributed to the provinces but, for most consumers, it was either not available or far too expensive.<sup>145</sup>

Consumers still had a choice even if they did not have access to English tobacco.

Although the vast majority of tobacco came from Virginia, significant quantities of tobacco were shipped from Bermuda and St. Christopher. Smaller amounts came from other Caribbean islands such as Nevis and possibly, after 1630, Providence Island.<sup>146</sup>

This tobacco arrived in England without having been sophisticated with molasses or other substances as Spanish tobacco had been. This was partly because the campaign to promote Virginian tobacco over Spanish of 1617-1623 had emphasised that Virginian tobacco was 'natural' and uncontaminated.<sup>147</sup> This reputation was

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<sup>144</sup> See H. Buttes, *Dyets Dry Dinner*, (London, 1599), 'Epistle Dedicatory'.

<sup>145</sup> Spanish tobacco was taxed more heavily before leaving Spain and upon arrival in England. It then passed through Burlemachi's hands presumably with further inflation of its price making Spanish tobacco very expensive.

<sup>146</sup> It is known that tobacco was grown on Nevis and Providence Island at this time but no record of imports from those locations has yet been found in the port books.

<sup>147</sup> See, for example, C.T., *An Advice How to Plant Tobacco in England: and How to bring it to colour and perfection, to*

strengthened by royal orders to check the quality of the tobacco preventing planters mixing stalks and ground leaves in with 'good' tobacco and the unwholesome mixing of tobacco with other substances.<sup>148</sup> The importation of tobacco of a supposedly standard and unsophisticated quality did not protect the consumer from the unscrupulous retailer who sought to maximise his profits.

When consumers had a choice of who to buy from this was not a problem. If the tobacco was no good or excessively priced they could go elsewhere. When licensees asserted their monopoly rights they were attempting to take away this option.

Unlicensed retailers who relied upon a collusive relationship with their customers needed to retain customer loyalty by supplying good tobacco at reasonable rates. As various complaints noted in chapter 6 show, monopolists were not always so concerned about their customers. Opponents of the licensees Thomas Brewer (Newington Butts), John Bailye and Marmaduke Sharpe (both of Yorkshire) complained about excessive prices and poor quality, often contaminated merchandise. Brewer and Sharpe retailed their tobacco in sealed packets depriving customers of the opportunity to view the tobacco before purchase. These sealed packets were an unpopular innovation. John White of Ellingtons Ambo in Yorkshire asserted that he would never buy from Marmaduke Thompson, licensee of Massam, 'soe longe as he sold Tobaccoe in sealed papers'.<sup>149</sup>

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whom it may be profitable, and to whom harmfull. . . with The Danger Of The Spanish Tobacco (London, 1615).

<sup>148</sup> 'A Proclamation Concerning Tobacco' (14 March 1638). J. F Larkin (ed.), Stuart Royal Proclamations 2: Royal Proclamations of King Charles I, 1625-1646 (Oxford, 1983), pp. 600-04.

<sup>149</sup> PRO E178/5793 Deposition of John White. Depositions were taken at Massam on 1 October 1638. Many Massam deponents stated that they bought most of their tobacco from Ripon rather than the local licensee.



The sale of tobacco in sealed 'pennyworth' packets seems to have coincided with, and may have been a development arising from, the introduction of tobacco vending licences. There is no mention of such standardisation and commodification of tobacco before 1638. It was perhaps a consequence of a different kind of tobacco trading relationship that evolved out of the government restrictions. Licensees had invested in tobacco licences and sought profits from supplying all consumers in their areas. Unlike the grocers, apothecaries and alehouse keepers who used to buy and sell tobacco freely as a part of their wider trading activities, these licensees were evidently willing to sacrifice customer loyalty for increasing volume of sales. Multiple licence holders and possibly some single licence holders seem to have been acting as 'professional' tobacco suppliers who bought tobacco wholesale, processed and packaged it and then distributed it for local sale in small quantities through impersonal transactions. The alehouse keeper was no longer supposed to offer his customers a pipe of tobacco but he could sell them a pack of Sharpe's. Ideas of variety were becoming associated with the individual who packaged the tobacco rather than where the tobacco originally came from.<sup>150</sup>

Although the collapse of the licensing system in 1639-40 brought a return to free trading in tobacco, the use of standardised sealed packets persisted as part of a general trend in the development of retailing for what was becoming mass markets. Tobacco was usually imported in barrels. Preparing it for retail entailed removal of stalks, perhaps additional drying and shredding, and then, for the large-scale vendor, the production of pre-weighed packets of ready to use tobacco. As Cox notes, apprentices in the 1680s could spend much of their time 'packaging up new goods like sugar and

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<sup>150</sup> Further research would be needed to discover if Thomas and Marie Wills, who shared a monopoly of Sherbourne in Dorset with William Thornton were the initiators of the Wills tobacco empire.

tobacco, as well as prunes and nails'.<sup>151</sup> Retailing, after all, was about selling small quantities to large numbers of people. By 1710 the grocer William Stout was employing an extra member of staff for his shop who was skilled in rolling and cutting his tobacco.<sup>152</sup>

The various patterns of distribution of tobacco to domestic markets were another feature of the domestic tobacco trade that was possibly altered by the licensing scheme. Price and Clemens estimate that in the 1670s there were almost 600 tobacco importers and, as noted before, that seven firms controlled 30% of the supply.<sup>153</sup> A further 30% was in the hands of small retailers. Though inconclusive, the evidence presented above suggests a strong link between importing, wholesaling and retailing tobacco. In the 1630s the proportions may have been different, partly perhaps because of the demand that all tobacco be landed at London, but correspondingly large and small-scale distribution networks were in active competition with each other to move those imports. This kind of competition had become a feature of the grain trade between 1580 and 1638 with competitive supply networks emerging where 'small men' were taking a slice of the market from big firms.<sup>154</sup> Licensing retailers gave particular advantages to the substantial trader who wanted to secure outlets for large quantities of tobacco. It also gave the smaller trader an opportunity to protect his smaller markets from the likes of John Wilcock, Matthew Sharrock and James Wragge even if protecting them from other smaller traders became impossible. After 1640 small and large traders probably continued to supply tobacco to the same markets. Their networks of deputies or agents may no longer have been exclusively tied to them but retailers still had to buy their tobacco from somewhere. So long as

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<sup>151</sup> Cox, The Complete Tradesman, p. 217.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Price and Clemens, 'A Revolution of Scale in Overseas Trade', pp. 2-4, 10.



people wanted to smoke there would still be opportunities to make a tidy profit from the distribution of tobacco.

In conclusion, it must be noted that the problems which incapacitated and ultimately led to the collapse of the licensing system centred on the diverging interests of people selling large quantities of tobacco by wholesale and retail on one side and small-scale retailers and their customers on the other. Local retailers, especially alehouse keepers and others who sold tobacco as just one part of their retailing activities, chose their supplier often without regard to the supposed rights of the local licensee. The customers of unlicensed traders similarly chose who they bought their tobacco from. In many places it may have been the local licensee. In others such as Massam or Newington Butts it most certainly was not.

Further research is required to assess how the six years of tobacco retail licences affected the way tobacco was traded. It may be that in most villages etc. the same person sold tobacco before, during (either legally or illegally) and after the licensing system. Nevertheless, this analysis has shown that by the 1630s there were competing wholesalers and retailers across the realm ensuring that smokers' pipes were filled. By their efforts, using or in despite of government restrictions, consumers continued to have a choice about where and from whom to buy their goods. This shows an incredibly wide availability of tobacco and diffusion of smoking in all corners of England and Wales. In the 1590s tobacco was an expensive new commodity the consumption of which was centred in London. By the 1630s there was a nation-wide demand for it and there were nation-wide networks of supply to meet that demand.

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<sup>154</sup> Chartres, 'Food Consumption and Internal Trade', p. 249.

## Conclusion

This thesis has argued that smoking in England began with the synthesis of Amerindian smoking patterns, European medical approval for tobacco and English colonial ambition. Harnessing medical views about other ways of using tobacco, smokers justified (to themselves and others) the New World activity that they paraded in English social contexts. As the fashion spread, unrestrained smoking by all and sundry, without regard to temperament, season or time of day, sponsored a medical debate about it. Its prevalence in alehouses and the close association of pot and pipe identified smoking with drunkenness and disorder. Smoking thus acquired and carried a range of moral messages that could impinge upon reputation. In poems, plays and polemical tracts smoking became a site for debates about appropriate consumption, virtue, fashion and social mobility.

The thesis suggests that smoking continued to spread rapidly throughout the social hierarchy despite medical and moral objections because a culture of smoking emerged that made it appealing to many people, particularly 'cavalier' young men. It was fun, part of the social experience, drawing men together through the common appreciation and performance of an activity. The apprentice and labourer may not have shared their pipe with eminent smokers such as Raleigh, Sidney or Cecil but they enjoyed the same pastime and endured the same criticism.<sup>1</sup> Later, when commercial and political imperatives brought vast quantities of Virginia tobacco to the domestic market, they may even have been smoking tobacco from the same source, albeit perhaps tobacco of differing qualities.

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<sup>1</sup> Of course the level of criticism suffered did depend upon who the smoker was. Moral commentators were particularly scathing about smoking by the 'lower orders' who should have had neither time nor money to waste on this superfluous luxury.



As smoking spread, tobacco became commercially and politically important. King James constructed a regulatory framework to govern the tobacco trade and gain revenue from it. He also oversaw the establishment of Virginia as the principal source of tobacco for the domestic market. By the 1630s tobacco from across the Atlantic, by the pound or pennyworth, was as readily available as locally brewed ale. Charles's tobacco vending licence scheme, a moral as well as fiscal measure, attempted to bring order to tobacco distribution and retailing. This policy failed and brought disrepute to the Personal Rule, particularly after its administration and enforcement was 'farmed' by Lord Goring. Nevertheless, by 1640 both a culture of smoking tobacco and an infrastructure for supplying it were well established. The importance of tobacco, particularly as an export crop, may have increased after the Restoration but the English relationship with tobacco had matured long before then.<sup>2</sup>

In 1720 merchants campaigned against a proposed increase in taxes on tobacco, arguing that changes to the existing arrangements threatened a trade 'so useful to our Commerce at home and abroad'.<sup>3</sup> They claimed that any rise in prices would encourage smuggling, prompt more tobacco growing in Holland, Germany etc. and 'occasion the lessening the Consumption' of tobacco merchants' most important customers – 'the poorer sort of labouring People [that] are the greatest Consumers'.<sup>4</sup> Loss of markets would encourage Virginians to turn to manufacturing their own

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<sup>2</sup> Goodman states that 'by the beginning of the eighteenth century, European consumption of tobacco was supplied principally by Virginia (almost 80 per cent) and the rest mostly by Brazil' (J. Goodman, 'Excitantia or How Enlightenment Europe Took to Soft Drugs', in J. Goodman, P. Lovejoy, A. Sherratt (eds.), *Consuming Habits: drugs in history and anthropology* (London, 1995), p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> Anon, *Reasons Humbly Offered for not Doubling the Subsidy on Tobacco from Virginia and Maryland, &c.* (London?, 1720). This two page tract listed eleven reasons not to increase tobacco taxes.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, reasons IV, I and III respectively.

clothing etc. instead of growing tobacco, causing a decline in shipping and reducing the colonial market for English manufactures.<sup>5</sup> Tobacco and the mass of smokers who laid out their money for it had become integral to the colonial and British economy. A hundred years earlier, when encouraging diversification in the colonial economy and reducing the tobacco consumption of the 'poorer sort' were government policy, such arguments could not have been advanced.

James I and Charles I hated tobacco but their policies towards it initiated an enduring relationship between government, merchant and planter. Tobacco became and remained the mainstay of Virginia throughout the early modern period, prompting investment and generating Crown revenues. As a major tobacco producer, England was well placed to exploit overseas markets when smoking became more widely popular around the world. Export markets in Holland and the Levant opened in the 1620s and 1630s. Others followed and further boosted the economy. In 1695 'Merchants and Planters Trading to, and Interested in the Plantations of Virginia and Maryland' argued for increasing the trade in tobacco to Russia. They reported that

His Czarist Majesty Himself, and the Great Men of his Court do already take Tobacco, and it is certain if the Trade were open, (that they might have it upon as easy Terms as our People in England,) the Czar would grant a Liberty to Import it into his Dominions, where the People would be very forward for the Consumption of it.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., reasons VII-IX. According to this tract, two hundred ships were engaged annually in the tobacco trade in 1720.

<sup>6</sup> Anon, Further Reasons for Inlarging the Trade to Russia Humbly offer'd by the Merchants and Planters to, and Interested in the Plantations of Virginia and Maryland (London?, 1695). This was primarily a call for free trade to Russia.



Supplying Russian smokers had great economic potential. Campaigners for free trade to Russia argued that ‘there might be consum’d yearly 20,000 hogsheads’ there.

Growing extra tobacco would boost the slave trade.<sup>7</sup> Transporting it would boost shipping.<sup>8</sup> Preparing it for export would ‘Imploy about Ten thousand poor People’ in England. In 1620 English consumption of Spanish tobacco had been harming the balance of payments. The policies of the 1620s and 1630s (particularly limiting Spanish imports and banning growing in England to favour Virginia) had laid the foundations for tobacco to become a great boon to the Treasury, to English commerce and to the balance of payments.

This political and economic vindication of tobacco was not a consequence of thriving international markets but of efforts to supply and control the domestic market.

Englishmen’s desire for the pleasures of tobacco, or perhaps their need for it, was the engine of change. Increases in supply may have made tobacco cheaper and widened access to it but it was the constantly rising demand, even when tobacco was expensive, that had made it a viable cash crop for Virginia in the first place.

By examining the multifaceted integration of smoking into English culture and society this thesis has shown the contexts of that rising demand. It has suggested that the deliberations of physicians and the condemnations of moralists influenced how smoking was viewed. Smoking persisted despite warnings of mortal and moral peril. It has explored how tobacco found a niche in English society particularly around the alehouse table but also in a male culture conditioned by conceptions of manliness and

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. It was estimated that £160,000 worth of slaves would be needed to produce the necessary tobacco. These slaves would ‘consume yearly above Twenty thousand pounds sterling in goods carry’d from England’.

gentlemanliness. Smoking was a fashion that ‘bewitched’ some people and attracted others to try it. By 1630 a well-developed culture of smoking had emerged in England that gave the activity a range of associations. As the following illustration shows, some humorously suggested that ‘the smoaky crew:/ With oathes and smoake, all in a room close sitting,/ With huffing, puffing, snuffing, spawling, spitting’ was enough of a cohesive social group to warrant a crest of their own.<sup>9</sup>

‘The Armes of the Tobachonists’ (1630)



<sup>8</sup> Ibid. ‘It will employ yearly 40 Sail of Ships (of Two hundred Tuns each) to the Plantations, and ten or twelve more to Russia, which Ships will employ 1500 Seamen’.

<sup>9</sup> Anon., The Armes of the Tobachonists (London, 1630), British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings, Satirical Print 113.



The Armes of the Tobachonists is similar in form to The Arms of the Tobacco Pipe Makers Company of London (1619).<sup>10</sup> However, in place of a growing tobacco plant, the later print shows ‘a man reuerst proper improperly’ from whose ‘backe side, [smoke] very freely vents’. Instead of an Amerindian child holding a twist of tobacco and a pipe rising above a knight’s helm, the tobacconist’s crest displays a ‘Mores head’ rising above a ‘full Tauerne looking-glasse’. Amerindian supporters are replaced by chimney-sweepers with brushes in hand.

The moral of The Armes of the Tobachonists reiterates many of the complaints made about smoking in the early seventeenth-century.

The *Sable field* resembles hells blacke pit,  
Whereas the Diuells in smoake and darknes sit:  
The *man reuerst* shewes men, or beast indeed,  
that doate to much vpon this heathen weed,  
Who smoake away their precious Time and Chinke,  
And all their profit is contageous stinke:  
The pipes and fume vnto vs disclose,  
How it leades coxcomes dayly by the nose;  
The match or halter in the goblins pawes<sup>11</sup>  
Portends the fatall period of the lawes:  
That those that wast themselues in ayre and smoake,  
May to the hangman leaue both coate and cloake,  
The Moores head shewes, that cursed Pagans did,  
Devise this stinke, long time from Christians hid:  
The *Topfull pispot* shewes the vaine excesse,  
Of men orecharg’d with fume and drunkennes,  
The Mantells shewes these fellowes mighty skill,

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<sup>10</sup> See p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> Above the undignified smoker.

That can turne mony into vapours still:  
The *Tassells* at the end depending here,  
And haue these vertues very hot and deare,  
Are like to *Whores* that often hang vpon,  
*Tobaconists*, till all their mony's gone:  
By the *Supporters*, wisdom wisely notes,  
Tobaconists wants sweeping in their throates.

This range of associations with hell, heathens, hangmen and whores as well as the complaints about waste, vain excess and contamination had nothing to do with tobacco's use as a medicine. As this thesis has argued, smoking was distinct from the other ways of using it which physicians continued to advocate. In the late 1650s, as in 1600-1615, recreational smoking was contrasted with medicinal and health-preserving tobacco infusions etc.<sup>12</sup> Dr Everard noted that most tobacco from the plantations went to people who used it

only for their own drinking, and cannot abstain from it. Sea-men will be supplied with it for their long voyages: souldiers cannot want it [i.e. be without it] when they keep guards all night . . . Farmers, Plough-men, Porters, and almost all labouring men plead for it . . . and very many would as soon part with their necessary food, as they would be totally deprived of the use of Tobacco . . . Scholars use it much and many grave and great men take Tobacco to make them more serviceable in their callings . . . In a word, it hath prevail'd so far that there is no living without it.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> W. R. of Grays Inne Esq., Organon Salutis an Instrument to Cleanse the Stomach: as also divers new experiments of the virtue of tobacco and coffee, how much they conduce to preserve humane health (London, 1657), for example, advocated the use of tobacco stalks and infusions for toothache and gout. Dr Everard presented a brief history of tobacco, details on how it grows and is prepared and a range of unguents, balsams, liniments etc. (G. Everard, Panacea, or the Universal Medicine (London, 1659)).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. Everard dedicated his book to tobacco merchants. He argued that the tobacco trade had created millions of jobs (sig. A3-A3v).



Everard argued that such widespread use of a strong medicine was dangerous and stated that he would ‘counsel no man to take it, who doth not stand in need of it, and those that do, to use it with that moderation required in the use of all things’.<sup>14</sup> Dr Maynwaringe argued that tobacco caused scurvy in smokers and rickets in their children. He noted that ‘Tobacconists, whom custome hath confused, and brought them to delight in it, are willing to be perswaded and deluded, that is good and wholesome, at least harmless’. He ‘discommend[ed] the use of Tobacco by smoking it, as an injurois Custome’ but ‘highly applaud[ed] it, as very medicinal, being rightly used’, for example, in unguents for ulcers.<sup>15</sup>

In the 1670s the dangers and consequences of smoking continued to be voiced. The Womens Complaint Against Tobacco (1675) argued that husbands ‘smoaking that Infernal Indian Weed’, ‘fuming that stinking unnatural, destructive Devil’ was the bane of many women’s lives.<sup>16</sup> It made their men’s breath stink and their throats parched leading them to ‘drink excessively to quench the inflammation thereof, till at length they become drunk, then are they fit for all manner of debauchery, which is the ready road to destruction’.<sup>17</sup> Smokers neglected their wives and, by smoking, diminished their reproductive potency. This text concluded with a declaration that ‘no man under the Age of fifty years old, shall at any time, or upon any occasion whatsoever, take, smoak, or draw into his Mouth the smoak of this cursed stinking Weed called Tobacco’.<sup>18</sup> At least according to this text, smoking for pleasure

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., sig. [A6].

<sup>15</sup> Dr Maynwaringe’s tobacco comments from his book about scurvy were included in J. Hancock (fl. 1638-1675), Two Broad sides Against Tobacco (London, 1672), pp. 12-18. This text, discussed below, was republished as The Touchstone, or, Trial of tobacco, whether it be good for all constitutions with a word of advice against immoderate drinking and smoaking (London, 1676).

<sup>16</sup> Anon., The Womens Complaint Against Tobacco, or, An excellent help to multiplication (London?, 1675), pp. 1-2.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

remained the predominantly male preoccupation, holding little if any attraction for respectable and refined women, that it had been since the Roanokers' return from the New World.

There seems to have been very little new to say about smoking in the latter half of the seventeenth-century. When John Hancock published his Two Broadsides Against Tobacco (1672)<sup>19</sup> he included the views of Dr Everard and Maynwaringe (noted above) but the bulk of the book was merely a reprint of King James's Counterblaste and Sylvester's Tobacco Battered and the Pipes Shattered. He agreed with James that tobacco 'may be good, and Physical, and healthful, being moderately and but seldom taken; but for men to take ten or twenty Pipes in a day in all Companies, Morning, Noon and Night, before and presently after Meals; this is a strange way of taking Physick'.<sup>20</sup> He agreed with Sylvester that 'if men were so wise for their own good, both in Body, Soul, and Estate, as to handle a good Book, either of Divinity, or of Morality, half so often as they do a Pipe of smoke, it would be better for them in all respects, more precious time and money would be saved'.<sup>21</sup> Like the contributors to the Jacobean medical and moral debates, he told smokers to 'take warning therefore you that love Tobacco, that you do not exceed in using too much of it, making a god of it' and expected 'no better, but to be counterblasted by the black and foul mouths of many Tobacconists, and common Tobacco-smokers for endeavouring to pull down their great Diana'.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Hancock, Two Broadsides Against Tobacco, This book was dedicated to 'all Taverns, Inns, Victualling-Houses, Ale-houses, Coffee-houses, Strong-water-shops, Tobacconists-shops, in England, Scotland or Ireland'.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 'Epistle Dedicatory'.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 62, 66.



As the following illustration from Hancock's book suggests, there was perhaps one significant change in the socio-cultural context of smoking. Tobacco had found a new drink with which to be associated.

Untitled woodcut of smoking in a coffee house<sup>23</sup>



<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

The presence of a Turk and an African in this illustration signify the global context of English consumption in the second half of the seventeenth-century. Turks consumed Virginia tobacco and supplied the coffee on the shelf above.<sup>24</sup> Africans served coffee and grew the tobacco on the shelf above them. English smokers lay between, crowned by the 'Armes of the Tobachonists' of 1630. The exotic was becoming familiar, expected. Widespread consumption of tobacco had led the way.

In 1590 few in England had ever seen tobacco let alone used it. By 1640 it was a much debated, heavily regulated and widely consumed commodity familiar to all. During these fifty years smoking had become an English pastime and, because of Virginia, tobacco had become an English commodity. English colonial success in Virginia, Bermuda and St Christopher relied upon continuing demand for tobacco in English and, increasingly, in European markets. Commercial ties had been forged between planters and importers, wholesalers and retailers to move the tobacco thousands of miles from the fields where it grew to smokers' pipes. Government regulations had been introduced to control the production and distribution of tobacco and generate revenue from it. Governments, businessmen, colonists, retailers and consumers had all come to depend upon it. That 'multi-faceted structure of dependence' noted by Goodman had emerged.<sup>25</sup> England had learned to smoke.

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<sup>24</sup> As noted in chapter 6, merchants such as Matthew Craddock were re-exporting Virginia tobacco to the Levant by the 1630s.

<sup>25</sup> J. Goodman, Tobacco in History (London & New York, 1993), p. 14.



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