

# Transcript

## Editorial comments:

SP 12/83/12 f. 32r - 36v. William Herle to Lord Burghley.

## Address leaf:

[fol.36v]

[Superscription:] To the right honorable mi verey good Lord, the Lord of Burghley, her majesties Principall secretary &c. / att the Cowrtt

[Endorsement by unknown hand:] 18. nov. 1571. William Herl. Horneby the Customers

## Letter text:

[fol. 32r] I have bin earnestly sent for mi Lord by John horneby that is in the Cownter, since master Seres browght hym last to your L. who requestes me for the dutye I bere to the Q. majestie & to your L. & for the grett servyce that is ~~don to ether~~ to be don to ether of yow by his menes, that I wold move your L. that he might speke with yow ones more, to whom he will declare suche matter as noman can do butt hym self, discovering grett frawd & those verey secrett, which the Customers & officers have robbed the Q. majestie by, & whereof bothe their correctyon is to follow, & a good remedy for the tyme to com.

wherin having convinced me so highly I coud nott chuse of duty to present this his motyon to your L. which it may plese yow to consyder of accordingly. I have allso entred into som futher talke with hym of the state of these matters, who grettly doth condempne on Mathewes, that [1 word expunged] was joyned with Dawbney, to be an ignorant grosse fellow, a verey belly God & comune dronckard, wherin he sayth Dawbney consumed to maintayne his excesses to the som of 2500 li. & the servyce never a whytt prefferred therby; & that the sayd Mathew was the betrayer of the cawse from tyme to tyme to Smith the Customer, whose Gossip he is, having their secrett metyngs in Saint Georges filds, & therby had Mathew money of bothe sydes to mayntayne his lewdnes, & to abuse the good service that was pretended. And that his finall conclusyon was to have agreed Smith & Dawbney together, so practiseng to have obscured all the decyts that Smith had wrought, & to have turned the whole bront uppon Burd the other Customer, butt that this Horneby threttnd to shew this infidelity to your L. which was the only mene to bring hym into this troble, Mathew perswading to Dawbney that they had nomore nede of hym, therby wold have cavilled to have deprived ^hym^ bothe of his parte of the gayne & of the true comendacyon of his servyce. Butt the sayd Horneby affirmes that Dawbney had on C li. of Smith by the perswasyon of mathew, wisheng Smith to agre in tyme, lest ~~comyng~~ his fawts, comyng to your L. view & the rest of the Councell, were then unremediable & he undon for ever bothe in substaunce & credite, wherof Smith (he saith) was so aferd, namely lest your L. shold discover the gret disceyts & infinite robryes by this servyce, that he had don, that he offred to ~~me on C li~~ by Horneby on C li. by the yere to be payd hym by his Clerck, to surcesse these serches (as [1 word expunged] on nott hable to understand his own accomptes), that he wold give Dawbney vC li. in money [fol. 32v] & this was all that he was hable to do, otherwise he were as good to be comitted to the fleett with som whatt, as to be undon for ever, which he most hasard if th'extremity were used, Butt afterwards being somwhatt encoraiged by mathew (who was won by corruptyon & pollicye) to

supplant aswell Horneby as the seruyce, he fell of from these offers, determyned to abyde the end, as on assured by mathew that [1 word expunged] Horneby shold be clapt up, & so nothing produced against hym, ~~Beseching~~ wherin Horneby craves this consyderatyon, whatt good or proffitt Dawbney & mathew dyd in the comission before he cam unto them? seing as they had enjoyed the same about half a yere, & tyll he joyned in the case, nothing don at all, which may argue ether (he sayes, ether their skille, diligence, or sufficiencye ^accordingly^ [1 word expunged] ~~if he had nott his~~, they having spent a huge dele of money in so small a tyme prodigally to no proffitt att all, Butt he concludes that mathew hath betrayed the cawse hytherto, & so dyd he when Dawbney was a suter to your L. for the surveye of the custom inward, which was prevented by smith, having the admonishment from mathew, hoping that way to hyde the discredite that ~~otherwise~~ might followe unto hym: & yett may be discoverd throwly, if it so plese your L. for the Q. majesties grett proffitt & service, as he sayes./

Butt demanding of Horneby som pertyculer knowledge, how he might be hable to prove this to your L. (a parsonaige of so grett gravity) who wold have nothing towched butt true matters, respectyng aswell that non shold be sclanderd, as ~~ye dyd~~ to have the Q. majestie well served; wherunto he answerd that among mani things there were these ~~spe~~ especiall, that the Customers did abuse the Q. grettly in matter of lycens, aswell of Bere as wyne, which lycences being frely granted without ether subsedy or imposte, the Customers were wont to selle to ani that wold cary bere over a lycens for the same, certeffyng to the Serchers by their warrant to permytt suche a on in suche a ship the transport of somani Tonnes of bere uppon suche a manes lycens (menyng a party that had a lycens, when as they were never ~~pr~~ privey therunto) [marginalia by Herle: ~~nor the same endorsed uppon ani lycens~~] wherby shall appere ^he sayes^ that they have deceved the Q. Majestie as untrue perjured officers (whatt cowntenance soever they cary otherwise of substantyall & religiows men) to the value of 17 or 1800. tone of bere yerely, never endorsyng ani pece of this uppon ani lycens [fol. 33r] butt still pretending lycens, when ani wold transport bere ^where non was^ which they ar to be charged with by their own warrants to the serchers, bi somani warrants in surplusage ^more^ as they have nott charged them selves in their [clere] accompte to th'exchecqwer, & the like maner in lycence, for imposte of wyne have they used, ether charging the same uppon speciall lycens, or uppon the lycens of noble men as their propartyon is to have gratis every yere./

Another poynt is, that in conferryng the Gaygers bookes with the Customers in matter for th'entrye of wyne, he fyndes the Q. majestie to have byn foully deceved sondry wayes, both under the names of rotten wyne & corrupt, v C. tonnes att a clap in this Port of London, & then colowryng the names of Gascoyn & frenche wyne, under a new devise of wyne of Navarra & highe Contrey wyne, by a speciall composityon bettween the merchant & Customer (he sayes) ‡ [marginalia by Herle: this hath bin a commune waye to deceve bothe the imposte & custom extremely] wheruppon collectyng those frawdres together, & beholding from tyme to tyme, whatt the som dyd aryse throwhowt all england to the Q. majestie by th'exchecqwer bookes for all wyne, he findes that when it was best, it was nott above ix M L li. & he is hable to prove evydently that this Port of London doth pay yerely for frenche & Gascoyn wyne more than xij M VC li. & then adding herunto all ~~the~~ Candia wyne, spanish wyne, Canaria, maderia & Renish wyne, your L. may best gesse the robbery that hath bin used he sayth, wherunto when I opposed, that ~~Gard~~ Gardiner having fermed the whole for viij M & odde, pownds & yett was undon therby, which made flattly against hym, he answerd that Gardiner was a negligent & a prodigall man, & of to esye beleeff, wherby he was deceved, for otherwise he tryed the other Portes of the Reallme [1 word expunged] (London

& the members of the same excepted) for asmuche as wold paye his rent clere, butt he concludes in this that the wayters & the Customers for matters comyng in, have used suche an obscurennes in the keping of their bookes, as thence is the most frawd & robrye growen, wherin he will shew your L. the waye how to redresse it hereafter for the Q. majesties singuler benefyte, the x M li. a yere thick [fol. 33v] butt specially if your L. wold procure a warrant from the Q. majestie to peruse the merchants bookes of the Cittye for xx yeres past, your L. shold se how mucche the Q. hath bin robbed, wherin, for a notable presydent herafter. Lastly he sayth for master Burds office of clothes owttward, he can prove that the Q. majestie is deceved of xx or xxx M. clothes a yere, that in effect the under officers ar bribed by the higher to se [1 word expunged] throw the fingers, & that the merchants findeng som favor & ease att the Customers hands, that they be for their own pertyculer, more addicted to the Customer than to the Prynce, as men the lothest of all other, to have these secrett misteryes discoverd, which is th'effect of that passed bettween us, ending with his humble reqwest, that when your goodnes wold, to vowchesaffe to here hym your self but on halff howre./

There was comended the last daye unto me a wallown, whose name is frawncs franckard, a verey symple man bothe in habite & speche, who offers [1 word expunged] ij singuler poynts towching the making of sallt: th'one is according to the maner of Zeland to make sallt of salt, yett with this advantaige, that where they employe viij bushelles, he will with the self same fire, nomber of work men, & expencs, do that with iij bushelles that they do with viij. The other [1 word expunged] poynt is that he doth verey assuredly promis to make sallt of sallt water only, to furnissh the whole Reallm bothe abowndantly & good chepe, so as there shall nether be nede of frawnce nor Portingale for Sallt, of which motyon, conseving more assurance ~~of it~~ then ever I dyd of ani of these inventyons before, I was bold to present the same to your L.: by sir Thomas Smith, according to mi dutye & zele unto yow. wheruppon he wrytt a lre to master Osburne by your L. appoyntment to conferre with the party, which hath bin don on fryday last by ij severall tymes, where was present master osburne master wight man, master Cavallcant, master goodwyne, by whom after long debatying of the matter, it was agreed that mi party shold putt into wryteng whatt his demands were & wheruppon he wold firmly grownd, presentyng the same to them tomorrow next in the after noone, wherby taking from him ani hope [fol. 34r] that ani more money wold be disbursed ether uppon the prooff that he shold make first, or uppon the worke that shold followe, though the prooffe dyd fall owtt even as they cowd wishe for, which being somwhatt hard to this pore man, he stode uppon this, that he desired to have the on moytye of the Privilege for hym & his frynds, & wold be content thatt the Lords & they of the Privilege in disbursing a sufficyent stock for the grettnes of the worke, shold be allowed by hym in the partycyon, th'one moytye of all the chargs that might appertayne to the worke, wheruppon they demanded of hym ~~why~~ why he shold demand ani parte of the Privilege, he sayd for his invention for without the inventyon the privilege wer nothing, & was first granted for th'inventyon sake, which being attempted mani wayes, & with grett charges sowght to be perfected, that hitherto it was undon, therefore if they & the Lords had the inventyon, he sowght nothing of the privylege, butt was to departe as he cam: Butt in case they had it nott, that then the privilege were to be bestowed uppon those that cowd ~~not~~ use it, as to the end, that it was first given for, not depriving the reallm & the Prince of so grett a Scyence & so inestimable a proffitt & trespure as wold grow therof, bi keping the Privilege styll unused, & that otherwise he knew not how to gett ani money to putt so grett a matter in worke, being to high a charge for hym, bothe to be the deviser of the worke, & withall to be the travayler for the money, wherin I to qwallefye the matter somwhatt, for that I sawe ether syde how it was bent, I offred that if they wold give me leve to travayll with som merchants before hand, using

words that suche a skillfull man had the Privilege allredy granted hym, that haply I might do som good therin, which they were well contented with & I do indevor with whatt discretyon I may to bring som perfectyon therunto, having brought this stranger allredy to this frame, that he hath talked with a wellthy man of his Contrey, who gives hym good hope to furnish hym after the proof made & the privilege ones granted, with ani some that **[fol. 34v]** shalbe nedefull to the worke, so as this stranger resolves to make ij offers tomorrow to master osburne & the rest, The first is, that having the moytye of the Privilege, he wilbe contributor to hallf the Chargs, mary then the Lords uppon the prooff that he makes, shall furnish the money or stock that shalbe nedefull for the worke, without mencyoneng or restitutyon of their losses paste) ~~or elles if the whole yett byeng of~~ ^[ ... ]^ them ^for^ suche implements of vesselles, tooles, howses, & suche necessaryes, as remayn in the places where the workes have bin. Or elles if the whole Privilege may be granted to hym for certayn yeres, & for those that he most joyne with [marginalia by Herle: for that merchants wold dele with their eqwalles] ~~hym,~~ he will erect within hallf a yeres space ij C kettelles & will bynde hym sellf to make the store of sallt, which shall suffice abowndantly bothe for England & Ireland att resonable prises, & if this proportyon for bothe Reallmes do reqwire to the number of a M kettelles or vesselles, he shall furnish them by the ayd of his frynds, giveng to the Lords for every kettell xiiij a daye throughout the yere aswell wynter or somer duryng the Privilege aswell sonday & holydaye that they worke nott, as on the workedaye it self \* [marginalia by Herle: in this poynt me thinckes he offers further than I know how he may esely performe [1 word expunged] ], byndeng hym self further to mayntayne ij C vesselles att lest contynually, or asmani as shall serve ~~the Reallme~~ bothe the Reallmes, in whom I fynde suche assurance of his scyens ^to mi pore judgement^ & suche sincerenes in the rest, as if your L. vowchesave to talke with hym, he shall secretly revele unto yow the misteryes & depth of his inventyon, & he shalbe rated even as your L. will prescribe, of whose worthynes his is throwly instructed, & this is the som of that matter./

On other matter I beseche your L. even by that duty I owe yow (for I have no erthly hope nor refuge butt your L. only, & in this request mi pore creditt stands moste) that yow wold vowchesave for the cawse of R. Smithes suretyes to be a mene of th'enstallment, wherin the suretyes have had som further hope of me then I wold they had butt the whole is deryved from your L. ^& I confidently deppend therof. Again^ [Antony] Mylldmay semes to som **[fol. 35r]** of them, the willingest in the world that it were ended, only he wold nott be towched in that. that the suretyes shold be ^to^ weke for the payment of the Q. majestie yett this is true that parte of them be ded & som other to the number of 18. in all, ar not hable to discharge their dett to the Q. majestie [1 word expunged] so as the Q. majestie shall apparently have ^grett^ losse if it be nott enstalled, & the poreman R. Smith (who gave xvij C li for his office, without peny restored agayn) be utterly undon. where ^as^ by th'enstallment the suretyes shall putt in good land to paye iij Cli. ^a pece^ nott only for the whole 3900 li. that they be bownd severally in , by a C li a pece (as though non of the other suretyes were ether dede or decayed, butt allso for vj C li more, for the which ys non bond att all, & so the whole dett enstalled to the Q. majestie is 4500 li. & to have good land for the assurance of the same, which reqwires your honorable expedityon, & it will do me more credyt by your L. mene, than I can expresse & yett good service ~~to the~~ don to the Q. majestie but if som grace be nott used to them spedily (having remayned here all this ~~ty~~ terme) they ar presently to be comitted all to the fleet, & executyon to go against them, which will discredite & undo them extremely, & som of them be officers in the Cowrt, the worse hable to do their dutye otherwise as they shold do, craving humble pardon for this boldnes I use to your L. but for that I love mucche, mani things (I hope humbly) as may ~~to~~ be forgiven me. And lastly I wold putt your L. in remembrance, that I have John Wright styll with me, on waye to obeye your

comandement which I esteeme as mi lyfe) & another waye that for myne own discharge & for mi dutye to the Q. majestie I wold have hym furth comyng to justeffye those things that he hath avowched wherin he ~~continues~~ contynues with gretter vehemencye that J. S. is here to kille the Q. majestie which makes me ferefull to have hym absent, & yett I am threttned diverse wayes to be slayne, butt I prefferre my dutye to ani lyfe, only it greves me that [1 word expunged] the sayd J.S. hath of sclandered **[fol. 35v]** me sondry wayes to the Erle of Hartford & to the whole Cowrt wherin I desire juste purgatyon, & then will I be knowen upright bothe in religion to God & zele to mi Prynce, wherwith most humbly I desire [1 word expunged] to your L. helth of your sicknes & conqwest in all your noble procedings. This sonday the xviiij. of november 1571 in London. in haste. Your L. most humblye. W. Herlleli.

[Postscript:] The same John Wright hath stode me in to bring hym to mi Lord Riches, to master Bushes to your L. to Richemond & to [fede] hym otherwise 14 or 15 li./