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**Margaret M. Condon and Evan T. Jones (eds.), ‘Bristol 1509-10: Particulars of account of Nicholas Browne, deputy butler, for prisage and butlerage,’ (University of Bristol, Research Data Repository, 2023)<sup>1</sup>**

## Introduction

The following annotated transcription records the collection of prisage and butlerage in Bristol during the accounting year commencing Michaelmas (29 September) 1509. Few, if any, butlerage accounts have been published in full and, in general, these exactions have received little scholarly attention.<sup>2</sup> This is one reason this account has been reproduced in its entirety and why it is preceded by a detailed discussion of the nature of prisage and butlerage, how the exactions were implemented, who collected them and how/why merchants sought to avoid prisage.

Beyond the record’s general value as an example of its type, the 1509-10 account is of special interest to the authors. First, it can be used to revise an incorrect dating of a fragmentary particulars of account for a Bristol customs controller, now shown to cover the period 29 September 1509 – 14 January 1510.<sup>3</sup> Second, both the deputy butler’s account and the customs account contain references to a short-lived ship called the *Matthew* of Bristol. Although the name may be familiar, this was *not* the famous vessel John Cabot employed for his 1497 expedition to North America. Rather, it was a replacement vessel that John Shipman of Bristol purchased when Cabot’s vessel, which Shipman almost certainly owned by 1503/4, went out of service. The new ship was a 100-ton vessel that had been commissioned by Shipman from a Basque shipyard in 1507.<sup>4</sup> Shipman seems to have retained the shipmaster of the original ship, William Claron, on its replacement.<sup>5</sup> He was master of the earlier *Matthew* on voyages to northern Spain and Bordeaux in the summer of 1504 and is recorded as

<sup>1</sup> The National Archives, UK [TNA], E101/85/11. This transcription is an output of the ‘Cabot Project’ (University of Bristol, 2009-). Some of the entries in this account relating to the evasion of prisage were published in: [J. Vanes \(ed.\), \*Documents Illustrating the Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century\* \(Bristol Record Society Publications, Vol. XXXI, Kendal, 1979\), 43](#). An incomplete and un-annotated version of fos. 1-4 was posted by Jones on a University of Bristol course website in 2004, mistakenly dating the document to 1510.

<sup>2</sup> The two most useful discussions are those of Matthew Hale (1609-1676), in [Francis Hargrave, \*A Collection of Tracts relative to the Law of England, from Manuscripts\*, Vol. I, Part III, Ch. II \(Dublin 1787\), pp. 116-31](#) and [N. S. B. Gras, \*The Early English Customs System\* \(OUP, 1918\), pp. 37-48](#); for the fourteenth century, see also M. K. James, *Studies in the Medieval Wine Trade* (Oxford, 1971). Despite a promising title, J. J. McCusker, ‘The wine prise and mediaeval mercantile shipping’, *Speculum*, 41 (1966), 279-96 is concerned with the nature of early medieval ships, rather than the exaction itself. Images of the audited accounts and particulars of account of the Chief Butler 1339-1487 (TNA, E101/79/1- E101/82/25) have almost all been published on [AALT](#). They include several files of subsidiary documents – often the only evidence for the names of deputy butlers within individual ports. The summary accounts 1323-1351 were enrolled on the Pipe rolls; those for 1431-1436 were included on the Foreign Account Rolls of the Exchequer (TNA, E364). Fifteenth-century accounts for butlerage (only) and for prisage and wine sales 1485-1500 were entered on the Enrolments of Customs Accounts (E356) and are calendared in the relevant volumes of Stuart Jenks (ed.), *The Enrolled Customs Accounts* (E372, E356, E364), List and Index Society, 12 vols, (2004-2013). Prise of wine in the port of Chester 1300-1554 is calendared from local records in K. P. Wilson, *Chester Customs Accounts 1301-1566* (Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, CXI (1969). The port lay outside central jurisdiction until the mid-sixteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> TNA, E122/165/1, described in current TNA finding aids as ‘2 Henry VIII’ (1510-11). This damaged document is being edited for e-publication by the present authors.

<sup>4</sup> [Evan T. Jones and Margaret M. Condon, \*Cabot and Bristol’s Age of Discovery\* \(Bristol, 2016\), p. 82](#).

<sup>5</sup> William ‘Glare’ in the prisage account (fo. 2r), in other records more commonly written ‘Claron/Clarou’. For 1503/4 see Evan T. Jones, ‘The *Matthew* of Bristol and the Financiers of John Cabot’s 1497 Voyage to North America’, *English Historical Review*, vol. 121 (2006), pp. 787-8, 792-3. The ship of 1507 was not known to Jones in 2006, but has since been documented in the course of research by the Cabot Project.

shipmaster of the second *Matthew* in both the butlerage account and the customs account of 1509-10.

Butlerage and the 'prise of wine' were ancient imposts on imported wine, collected in individual ports by 'deputy butlers' to the chief butler of England. The duties were collected separately from, and were additional to, the duty on wine known as 'tonnage', which was received by a port's customers. Based on later practice, it seems that the deputy butlers were given access to incoming ships before the wine was declared at the customs house.<sup>6</sup>

The prise of wine was first levied in the mid-twelfth century as a form of purveyance for the royal household. It predated the collection of the national customs duties that commenced in 1275. Prisage allowed the Crown to take one tun of wine from any ship entering England with more than ten tuns of denizen-owned wine and two tuns of wine from any ship carrying twenty tuns or more. By a convention that pre-dated the triple masted ships of the fifteenth century, one tun should have been taken before the mast, the other aft of it. Compensation was paid by the Crown at the rate of £1 per tun taken. This payment was later termed 'freight'.<sup>7</sup> The nature of the prise of wine meant that a vessel entering with nine tons of English-owned wine would *not* be subject to the exaction, while one carrying a hundred tons would still only lose two tuns. Wine taken as prise was in some cases dispatched to the King or to third parties by way of gift or payment.<sup>8</sup> In the account below, for example, eight tuns of the wine taken at Bristol were sent to the Carthusian priories in Coventry, Witham and Hinton.<sup>9</sup>

By 1500, wine taken at prise had long lost its importance as a major source of supply for the royal household. While the king could in theory do what he pleased with prise wine, in practice, the crown commonly accepted either a fixed 'rent' of £4 per ton or the actual profits from sales.<sup>10</sup> This was payable by the butler, who presumably sold the wine to retailers, such as vintners or tavern keepers, or to private households wealthy enough to buy by the barrel.<sup>11</sup> While there is some good evidence for sales of prise wine in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and while an accountant might be wise to have some wine in hand and cellared to meet an unexpected gift in kind mandated by the king, it also seems possible that, having marked a cask for the Crown, a composition could be reached with the merchant

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<sup>6</sup> See the 1565 'Book of Orders' as discussed in: B.Y., *A Sure Guide to Merchants, Custom-House Officers, &c. or the Modern Practice of the Court of Exchequer; in Prosecutions Relating to His Majesty's Revenue of the Customs ... by and Officer of the Customs* (London, 1730), p. 439.

<sup>7</sup> [Hargrave, \*A Collection of Tracts\*, pp. 116-31](#); Gras, *Early English Customs Systems*, pp. 37-47. It seems possible that the compensatory payment had come to be figured as 'freight' because the payment bore so little relation to the actual value of the wine but *was* enough to cover the customary freight cost from Bordeaux to England. By the early sixteenth century, the wholesale price of a ton of Bordeaux wine in Bristol was around £4-5, while the cost of freighting wine from Bordeaux was typically £1: James, *Wine Trade*, pp. 25-6, 140-6; Jean Vanes (ed.), *The Ledger of John Smythe, 1538-1550* (Bristol Record Society Publications, Vol. XXVIII, Bristol, 1974), pp. 35, 324.

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g., the receipts in TNA, E101/82/10, 15, 18 (various ports).

<sup>9</sup> See below, fo. 4v. Edward IV's confirmations of the liberties of all three Carthusian priories was inclusive of earlier grants of wine annually from the port Bristol in return for prayers for the good estate of the king, *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1461-67*, pp. 156-8. Butlerage accounts from the reign of Henry VII indicate that he, too, continued with the alms of tuns of wine, e.g., TNA, E101/82/5, fos. 4v-5r.

<sup>10</sup> The two alternative arrangements were not interchangeable within any one account. Browne paid 'rent'.

<sup>11</sup> The 'rent' charge of £4 per ton was what was in practice paid on the bulk of wine (26 tons out of 36 tons) taken by the butler: fo. 5v. The balance was made up of eight tuns given in alms, and 2 tuns ascribed to ullage. One probable sale by Browne's predecessor, John Alston, given the occupation of the defendant (taverner) and the size of the alleged debt (£8), has left traces in a suit brought by Alston in December 1509: E. E. Rich, *The Staple Courts of Bristol* (Bristol Record Society, vol. 5 (1934)), p. 104.

owner once the wine had been landed at the quay.<sup>12</sup> In one of the returns listed below, the shipmaster of the *Mary Grace* of Bristol apparently refused to have wine removed, but finally agreed to make a monetary payment instead, perhaps on the grounds that this was customarily allowed.<sup>13</sup> Another reason for resistance might be that the ship was carrying higher value wine. The *Mary Grace* had come from 'San Lucas' (Sanlúcar de Barrameda in Andalusia), an area that had become an important source for Bristol's wine since the 1480s. In 1509, Andalusian wine could be sold in Bristol at £5 13s 4d, and Gascon wine at £4 13s 4d.<sup>14</sup> Both prices were higher than the standard 'rent' of £4 per ton payable by the butler to the crown. Yet the loss to the owner was greater when it came to Iberian wines.

Not all the wine taken or cellared would profit the Crown, even after the deduction of gifts and alms. It was accepted that merchants might expect to lose around ten per cent of a shipment to ullage (leakage from casks) during a voyage from Bordeaux to England.<sup>15</sup> In this account the deputy butler asked allowance for a relatively modest two tuns, approximately 5.6 per cent of the wine seized.<sup>16</sup>

Bristol prisage was subject to one further anomaly, unique to the port. From midday on the Saturday before Pentecost (the seventh Sunday after Easter) until Midday on the Saturday following, the prior of St James, Bristol, was entitled to the whole prisage of wines levied from any dutiable ship entering the port.<sup>17</sup> This meant that dates within which the entitlement arose could vary markedly from year to year.<sup>18</sup> At least four accounts from the reign of Henry VII show the prior being accorded his rights: but the issue was not relevant to the present account, because no wine arrived in Bristol during the seven days (hebdomada) of Pentecost, which this year fell 18-25 May 1510.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Casks would have been marked prior to shipment with the mark of the merchant owning the wine or goods. Archaeological evidence of such marks has been found, for example, on remnants of casks recovered from the fifteenth century 'Newport ship'. For a paper inventory of 1504 that includes merchant marks, Archives départementales de la Gironde, MS 3E 12209, fo. 185r; mark of the Bristol merchant John Shipman illustrated Condon and Jones, *Cabot and Bristol's Age of Discovery*, p. 82.

<sup>13</sup> fo. 3r. The butler's chief complaint in this instance seems to have been that the promised money was not in fact paid.

<sup>14</sup> TNA, E101/84/38. By the late 1530s the differential was even greater: in 1539 the Bristol merchant John Smythe sold Andalusian wine at £7 per tun, and Gascon wine at £4 10s.: [Jean Vanes \(ed.\), \*The Ledger of John Smythe, 1538-1550\* \(Bristol Record Society Publications, Vol. XXVIII, Bristol, 1974\), p. 324.](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Vanes, \*Documents Illustrating\*, pp. 85-6.](#) This, however, was only a rough average. The commercial ledger of the 1540s Bristol merchant, John Smyth, indicate that ullage on individual consignments could vary from zero to 25 percent: Evan T. Jones, *Inside the Illicit Economy: Reconstructing the Smugglers' Trade of Sixteenth Century Bristol* (Farnham, 2012), pp. 77. The length of the voyage, the soundness of the casks and the roughness of the sea passage were presumably key variables.

<sup>16</sup> Fo. 4v.

<sup>17</sup> Reg Jackson, 'St James's Priory', in Reg Jackson et al. (eds), *Excavations at St James's Priory, Bristol* (Oxbow Books, 2006), pp. 9-10. Some of this wine, at least, is likely to have been sold at retail at the important commercial fair held around the feast of St James, 25 July for which see: Joseph Bettey, *St James's Fair, Bristol, 1137-1837* (Avon Local History Association Books, no. 16, 2014). Bettey, following Bickley, confuses 'prise' with an *additional* levy of 3d on every tun, to be taken by the same privilege, for which there is, apparently, also some seventeenth century evidence. Bickley also wrongly translated the 'dolum' (tun) as a 'hogshead (a quarter tun)': Bettey, *St James's Fair*, pp. 11, 27; [Francis B. Bickley \(ed.\), \*the Little Red Book of Bristol, 2 vols, Bristol \(1900\), vol. 1, pp. 236-46.\*](#) On the medieval fair, see also [Peter Fleming, \*Time, Space, and Power in later Medieval Bristol\*, Bristol Record Society e-publications \(2023\) p. 135.](#)

<sup>18</sup> The date of Easter was governed by the lunar calendar, so that Whit Sunday, in turn, could fall as early as 10 May or as late as 13 June. That same shifting date was why the fair had been moved from its original Whitsun date to become fixed on the invariable feast of St James, the patron of the priory: Bettey, *St James's Fair*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>19</sup> TNA, E101/85/2, fo. 16v (1488 – 4 tuns); fo. 32r (1490 – 4 tuns); fo. 37v (1491 – 2 tuns); E101/84/18, m. 4 (1503 – 2 tuns); writ of non molestando in support, 5 June 1489, abstract E101/85/2, fo. 16v. This right continued even after the Reformation, passing to the city: Bristol Archives, F/Au/1/23, p. 285.

Butlerage was a separate but related impost on wine that only applied to alien merchants. By a charter of liberties of 1303, alien merchants were, amongst other things, granted commutation of prisage on wines. Instead, individual alien (non-denizen) merchants were required to pay a duty of two shillings, later known as ‘butlerage’, on every tun of wine they imported to England.<sup>20</sup> Both prisage and butlerage might be applied to a ship’s cargo. For example, if a ship entered with eighty tuns of denizen-owned wine and three tuns of alien-owned wine, two tuns of wine would be taken as prise, while butlerage of six shillings would be levied on the foreign-owned wine. This was due from the individual merchant to whom the wine belonged, or from his factor.<sup>21</sup>

The prise of wine was the source of much resentment in Bristol, over a long period of time.<sup>22</sup> In part this was because under ancient charters of privilege the exaction was not applied to wine imported by the free citizens of the city of London to London, or indeed, in theory, to any other port in the realm.<sup>23</sup> Similarly exempt were the ‘portsmen’ or ‘barons’ (freemen) of the Cinque ports, of which the most important for trade purposes were Dover and Sandwich. ‘Foreign merchants’, that is, denizens who were not citizens of London or portsmen of the Cinque Ports, were liable, where appropriate, to prise in those same ports. Southampton, as noted by Bristol’s sixteenth century merchants, was a much more recent addition to the list of exemptions.<sup>24</sup>

Prisage was also a source of friction because the duty was both open to outright evasion and to forms of avoidance of uncertain legality.<sup>25</sup> For instance, a ship entering with ten tuns of English-owned wine might claim that one tun belonged to a foreign merchant. Instead of losing a whole tun of wine, the cargo would be subject to a mere two-shilling butlerage payment on the single tun of ‘foreign owned’ wine. While this was illegal and risked a charge of ‘colouring’ in the Court of Exchequer, such frauds were relatively easy to perpetrate.<sup>26</sup>

Beside outright evasion, Bristol merchants enjoyed a particular geographic advantage when it came to avoiding the prise of wine. A wine ship could be unloaded in Chepstow or

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<sup>20</sup> Gras, *Early Customs Systems*, pp. 42, 257-64, esp. p. 262. The same commutation had been granted to the men of Aquitaine the year before, and was offered to denizen merchants in 1303 who, however, refused it. That might have been because the cost of butlerage could have exceeded the cost of prisage on shipments of over 80 tons.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, *Mary Jamys* (4 Feb.), fo. 4r, in which wine in excess of 20 tuns was owned by denizens, and 9.25 tuns by an ‘alien’, i.e. a man of foreign birth, whether or not resident in England.

<sup>22</sup> See, for instance ‘A petition from the town of Bristol, c.1530’ [Vanes, Documents, pp. 29-30](#).

<sup>23</sup> The claimed privilege of Londoners to be free from prise in other English ports was subject to repeated legal dispute. Indeed, the claim of John Pollard ‘of Bristol’ to be exempt as a ‘freeman of London’ on his import of malmsey into Bristol remained unresolved at audit in 1509. The deputy butler, however, who had seized the wine, was exonerated: TNA, E101/85/8. In contrast, the claims to exemption of two Londoners importing wine into Bristol 1514-15 seem to be legitimate, E101/85/28. See also Hargrave, *Collection of Tracts*, pp. 127-9.

<sup>24</sup> [Vanes, Documents, pp. 29-30](#); Hargrave, *A Collection of Tracts*, pp. 118-9, 121, 125-31; Margery K. James, ‘The fluctuations of the Anglo-Gascon wine trade during the Fourteenth Century’, *The Economic History Review*, vol. 4 (1951), pp. 171-2; J. S. Davies, *A History of Southampton, partly from the MS of Dr. Speed*, Southampton (1883), pp. 159, 219-20; 22 Hen. VIII c. 20: [Statutes of the Realm, iii, p. 352](#).

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of the various types of avoidance and evasion practiced in relation to prisage in Bristol during the sixteenth century: Evan T. Jones, *Inside the Illicit Economy*, pp.186-92. For an alleged example, see [Vanes, Documents, p. 42](#). The eminent lawyer Sir Matthew Hale (1609-1676) cited historic cases to distinguish between intentional fraud, when prisage was due, and necessity, when a merchant split his cargo because of the unavailability of shipping: Hargrave, *Collection of Tracts*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>26</sup> For a 1577 description of the ‘practises and devises used...to defraude her Majestie of prizage’, [Vanes, Documents, pp. 43-44](#). For allegations of complicity between Bristol customs officers and merchants to avoid paying prisage during the 1590s: TNA, SP12/267/39; SP12 274/57. First discussed in: [Oliver Dunn, ‘The Petitions of Thomas Watkins against Customer John Dowle 1598 – 1600’ \(BA Thesis, Bristol, 2006\)](#).

Newport in Wales, which lay just a few miles across the Severn from Avonmouth, or in havens of southern Wales such as Swansea, Cardiff, Tenby, and Haverford West, all of which regularly traded with Bristol. Neither prisage nor tonnage were collected in Wales in this period and if the cargo was split and dispersed over several ships into small consignments of nine tuns or fewer before being dispatched to Bristol, no prise would be payable since each vessel would be carrying less than ten tuns of wine. Disputes about whether prisage was leviable in such circumstances were common in the later sixteenth century, and had surfaced periodically in the reign of Henry VII.<sup>27</sup>

The hostility to prisage and the ways in which it was implemented is reflected in the 1509-10 account. It includes three instances in which the deputy butler, or rather his servant(s) acting in his name, faced obstruction. On the *Mary Grace*, the master allegedly refused to allow the deputy butler to mark any wine for prise, while on the *Mary Tower* the owner of a tun of wine marked for prise took it away by 'by force' to his own house and refused to either pay his due or allow the deputy butler possession. Most seriously, on the *Barbara*, the master, the ship owners, and the purser acted in concert and allowed only one pipe (half a tun) to be marked for the king as prise. The deputy butler claimed that the purser, with the alleged encouragement of William Lane, one of the owners, threatened, and perhaps used, violence against his servant to prevent him from doing his duty on the deputy's behalf.<sup>28</sup>

In 1509-10, Bristol's deputy butler was Nicholas Browne, a prominent local merchant and a major shipowner for at least twenty-five years.<sup>29</sup> In a survey of January 1513 he was said to be the sole owner of the *Margrett*, of 110 tuns, and of two smaller ships, the *Mawdelen* and the *Mary Radclyf*.<sup>30</sup> Two of these ships, the *Margrett* and the *Mawdelen*, figure in the account, with the *Mawdelen* (Magdalen) carrying between ten and nineteen tuns of wine and the *Margrett* twenty tuns or more.<sup>31</sup> Unlike the customers, whose trading activities were strictly regulated and mostly prohibited in law, the deputy butlers in the various ports were not debarred from foreign trade. With occasional exceptions, such as the appointment of Thomas Croft in the ports of Bristol, Exeter, and Dartmouth in 1483, the deputies were appointed by the Chief Butler and not directly by the Crown, although the Crown was the ultimate beneficiary of the revenues, in money and kind, collected in butlerage and prisage in the port.<sup>32</sup> Browne succeeded John Alston as deputy butler in Bristol from Michaelmas (29

<sup>27</sup> For a 1526 legal case that revolved around this issue: E. A. Lewis and J. C. Davies (eds.), *Records of the Court of Augmentations Relating to Wales and Monmouthshire* (Cardiff, 1954), pp. 144-45.

<sup>28</sup> Fos. 3r, v. One thing that emerges from this document, and from the personal accounts of the Bristol merchant John Smyth, is that a 'tun' could be either an actual physical object – particularly true perhaps of Gascon wine – or a unit of account, aggregated from the smaller physical casks of a pipe (half a tun) or a hogshead (quarter of a tun). For accounting purposes, the continental butt, although marginally smaller, was taken to be the equivalent of the English pipe or half a tun.

<sup>29</sup> Wendy Childs summarises his early mercantile career, noting his growing wealth and his involvement in Iberian trade: [Wendy R. Childs, \*Anglo-Castilian Trade in the Later Middle Ages\* \(Manchester, 1978\), pp. 207-9.](#) He served as sheriff of Bristol 1495-6, and as mayor 1499-1500. In 1509-10 he was also constable of the Bristol staple, Rich, *Staple Court*, p. 103.

<sup>30</sup> Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', pp. 794-5. Margaret of Antioch was a popular late medieval devotion, but the name Margaret was also that of Browne's third wife. He left a quit rent to 'Our Ladye Church of Racclyff' (St Mary Redcliffe) - although the payment could have arisen from his prior lease of a storehouse: TNA, PROB11/19, fo. 25r, will of Nicholas Broune. An older ship, the *Nicolas/Nicolas Broune*, had been given his own first name.

<sup>31</sup> Fos. 2v, 3v.

<sup>32</sup> *Cal. Patent Rolls 1476-1485*, p. 465. Croft was appointed deputy butler in these ports 'during pleasure' in association with William Catesby. The same letters patent of 16 August 1483 named Francis, Lord Lovell, as Chief Butler. In 1475 Croft had been appointed by letters patent as deputy in the havens of Exmouth and Topsham, *Cal. Patent Rolls 1467-1477*, p. 548.

September) 1509.<sup>33</sup> He retained office until Michaelmas 1514, just over two years before his death.<sup>34</sup>

Sir Robert Southwell, to whom Browne delivered both his accounts and his receipts of specie, had been appointed Chief Butler by Henry VII 12 November 1504. He was reappointed by Henry VIII, and held the office until his death in 1514. As a councillor of Henry VII, he was one of the leading figures in the establishment of a conciliar court of audit, afterwards the Court of General Surveyors.<sup>35</sup> As such, he would have been present at the audit of Browne's account and it was to his servant, John Groce, that Browne handed over £96 16s 6d in cash, leaving £29 0s 8d to be carried over as arrears into his next account, an arrangement permitted by the court.<sup>36</sup> The monies, after deduction of any further general expenses pertaining to central administration, would then have found their way into the king's coffers at Westminster or the Tower of London, the treasuries under the oversight of John Heron, Treasurer of the Chamber to both Henry VII and Henry VIII. The Exchequer's audit of the accounts of Southwell's predecessor as chief butler, John Fortescue, made posthumously, had found numerous omissions and anomalies, and in Henry VII's last decade the accounts of the deputies were removed from direct Exchequer control and audited by Southwell and his colleagues, with the assistance of Exchequer auditors, under Henry VII's oversight.<sup>37</sup>

The final page of the account, fo. 6r, is not in Browne's hand but is a summation of the account as it evolved at audit. It is written in Latin, which was a common accounting convention. The information would have been further condensed when Southwell himself rendered his own account as Chief Butler. The page is headed by the name of the port and the date, the latter given as the second year of Henry VIII. A likely explanation for this is that the account was classified as being for the second 'Exchequer' year, the first being the shorter 'year' from 22 April 1509 to Michaelmas 1509, for which Alston had been responsible. Other abstracts are more helpful, noting that Browne's account was for the year *finiente* (finishing) Michaelmas 2 Henry VIII (29 September 1510).<sup>38</sup> Despite its messy appearance, the account proceeds in a logical order from charge to discharge. It was based largely on the summaries provided by Browne himself at folios 4v-5r of his particulars. In the edition below, the Latin transcript of fo. 6 is followed by an English translation.

Folio 6 is a draft. It begins with the 'Onus' or charge, that is the receipts for which Nicholas Browne had declared himself responsible at the end of the accounting year. It presents the same information, expressed as both tuns of wine and as money/impost equivalents, but was less generous to the accountant. The charge thus includes the 4.5 tuns that Browne had declared himself unable to collect as prisage, but for which, although the figure was not stated, the Crown was due £18.<sup>39</sup> The inclusion of revenues due but uncollected was standard accounting practice, and left Browne responsible for collecting the

<sup>33</sup> TNA, E101/85/12 fo. 1r. Alston had held the office since 1506, TNA, E101/84/27.

<sup>34</sup> TNA, E101/85/16, fo. 1v; E101/85/22, fo. 2r; E101/85/28. Died December 1516; PROB11/19, fo. 25r. His patent of office may have expired with the death of the chief butler, Sir Robert Southwell, in 1514.

<sup>35</sup> *Cal. Patent Rolls 1494-1509*, p. 420; Steven Gunn, *Henry VII's New Men and the making of Tudor England* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 11, 68-72; not in *ODNB* but many useful details in Gunn, *New Men*, passim; J. A. Guy, 'A conciliar Court of Audit at work in the last months of the reign of Henry VII', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol. 49 (1976), pp. 289-96. Although dated, W. C. Richardson, *Tudor Chamber Administration 1485-1547* (Baton Rouge, 1952), pp. 249-56, remains useful.

<sup>36</sup> Fo. 6r.

<sup>37</sup> See, e.g. the privy seal of November 1503 halting exchequer process against the London deputy, William Holybrand, because he had been ordered to account annually before the king and his council, and to pay his receipts into the king's chamber: TNA, E159/282, Recorda, Mich 19 Hen. VII, rot. 38d.

<sup>38</sup> TNA, E101/85/12, fo. 1r.

<sup>39</sup> Fos. 4v, 6r.

debt – although he might hope at some future stage for pardon of such arrears. The account noted, as a deduction in Browne’s favour, the (notional) value of eight tuns delivered to the three Carthusian houses, and reduced the *Onus* accordingly, as had been true of Bristol accounts of the preceding centuries. In language that echoes Exchequer practice, Browne as accountant petitioned directly for allowance of freightage on those same eight tuns. This reduction, hallowed by precedent, was allowed.<sup>40</sup> It has to be assumed, although it is not documented here, that Browne had paid over the compensation ‘freight’ money to the original merchant owners of the wine or to the pursers of the ships on which the wine had been carried.<sup>41</sup> There is no mention of a deduction for ullage. Since the relevant entry in Browne’s particulars has been marked with a form of ‘Nota Bene’, and his total struck out, it was probably disallowed – although a scribbled note in the lower gutter of the account reduced the supposed receipts *pro rata* by the claimed amount.<sup>42</sup> There is no mention either of his claims for cellarage and cooperage, although in variable amounts such claims had been allowed prior to 1500, nor of his fee of 100s per annum.<sup>43</sup> Yet all three elements had been allowed to John Alston the previous year.<sup>44</sup> An addition to the summary, in the hand of one of the conciliar auditors, allowed Browne a ‘reward’ of £6 13s 4d.<sup>45</sup> This, in the language of the time, would have been additional to a fee.<sup>46</sup> Taken with the £8 for freightage, this reduced the outstanding debt from £145 10s 6d to £125 17s 2d. Browne himself had calculated his debt at the lesser figure of £96 16s 6d. This was the amount he handed over in cash on 9 October 1510 to John Groce, Southwell’s servant. As noted above, according to the auditors that left an outstanding balance of £29 0s 8d. This sum was carried over as arrears for the following year.<sup>47</sup>

There is no certain way of determining from this account whether Browne had cellared the bulk of priseable wine with the intention of sale to a third party or in surety for the payment of prise, or whether he reached a direct composition with the affected merchants/pursers/masters. The latter course would have entailed the merchants retaining or regaining physical possession, while paying at least the ‘rent’ at Crown rates so that Browne could meet his obligations. Any sale price above the level of the rent would presumably have been retained to Browne’s own profit, or recompensed him for disallowed expenses or losses. The notion of prise as ‘rent’ is a useful equivalence – it was invariable as a due to the Crown whatever the actual value of the wine. If the money could not be paid immediately, an intermediate strategy might have been for the deputy butler to take physical possession of the wine as security, on the understanding that it would be released on payment.

Lastly, it may be noted that the prise of wine clearly had the potential to be highly unpredictable from a merchant’s point of view, in that there was no way of knowing whether their wine, or that of another merchant, would be taken to prise. Later legal commentary suggests that the losses to an individual merchant could be ameliorated by sharing the value of wine seized between those merchants shipping.<sup>48</sup> Alternatively, a shipowner might agree at

<sup>40</sup> In all ports freightage at 20s per tun could be claimed as a part of the deputy’s costs on wine given in alms.

<sup>41</sup> An account of Thomas White, Browne’s successor as butler, is more explicit, describing the 20s per tun as the ‘acquittance or freightage’ (*acquietacione sive ffrectagio*) paid over to merchants for the eight tuns of wine taken as prise and given as the king’s alms: TNA, E101/85/41.

<sup>42</sup> Fos. 4v, 6r.

<sup>43</sup> Cellarage was paid at set rates that varied from port to port, whereas cooperage seems to have been paid *pro rata* and varied from year to year.

<sup>44</sup> TNA, E101/85/8.

<sup>45</sup> Possibly but not certainly in Sir Robert Southwell’s hand.

<sup>46</sup> By this date the standard fee, enhanced from the rates applicable in 1485, was £5 per annum. Browne had claimed it (fo. 5r), and it is not obvious why it was omitted from the account.

<sup>47</sup> Browne’s payments in 1512 included arrears, but it is unknown whether further allowances had been made, TNA, E101/85/16, fo. 2.

<sup>48</sup> Hargrave, *Collection of Tracts*, p. 120.



the outset to compensate any affected merchant for their loss – in effect factoring the prisage cost into the freighting agreement. For instance, in 1549 the Bristol merchant John Smyth credited George Winter of Bristol for the freight of 33.5 tons of sack wine that Smyth had imported on Winter's ship, the *Hart*.<sup>49</sup> The same personal account then records a debit to Winter of £4 8s 6d for 0.5 tons taken to prise. From this it appears that Winter had undertaken to reimburse at market value any merchants who had wine taken as prise.

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<sup>49</sup> Vanes, *Ledger*, pp. 102-3. A similar credit was made to Thomas Harrys, who reimbursed Smyth for wine taken as prise on his ship, the *Mary Conception*, pp. 228-9. Smyth's ledger suggests that compensation for wine taken to prise was always set at the market value, with prise wine being treated as a 'sale' in his wine accounts: Vanes, *Ledger*, pp. 107, 118, 159, 185, 249, 266, 285, 291, 308.

## Editorial Practice

The transcript observes the orthography of the manuscript, except that proper names, including months and names of ships, have been capitalised for clarity, whatever the practice of the scribe. Extensions of abbreviations and editorial interventions are italicised. We have preserved the roman numerals of the manuscript, including the terminal long ‘i’, rendered as a ‘j’, but for more complex totals we have transliterated the sums into roman numerals in footnotes to the text.

The basic principles when reading the roman numerals are summarised below:

Number followed by number of equal or lesser value – add.

Small number followed by larger number – subtract small number from greater number.

Small number with larger number superscript – multiply.

j = 1	
ij = 2	ADD
ijj = 3	
iiij = 4	
v = 5	
vj = 6	
vij = 7	
viiij = 8	
viiij <i>or</i> ix = 9	ADD <i>or</i> SUBTRACT [10 minus 1]
x = 10	
xj = 11 (etc)	ADD
xx = 20 (etc)	ADD
xl = 40	SUBTRACT [50 minus 10]
l = 50	
lx = 60 (etc)	ADD
lxxx <i>or</i> iiij <sup>xx</sup> = 80	ADD <i>or</i> MULTIPLY [4 multiplied by (10+10) = 4 x 20 = 80]
c = 100	
cc <i>or</i> ij <sup>C</sup> = 200 (etc)	ADD <i>or</i> MULTIPLY [2 x 100]
D = 500	(Increase value of D by addition C or a smaller number)
M <sup>l</sup> = 1000	
M <sup>l</sup> M <sup>l</sup> M <sup>l</sup> <i>or</i> iij <sup>M<sup>l</sup></sup> = 3000	ADD <i>or</i> MULTIPLY [3 x 1000]

D and M<sup>l</sup> are usually upper case. C may be either upper or lower case. l (50) is usually but not invariably lower case.

Scriptum apud Bristol M<sup>l</sup>M<sup>l</sup>xxiiij<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Written at Bristol 2023.

**Transcription***fos. 1r, 1v* [Blank]*fo. 2r*      Prisage & Butlarage Anno primo Regis Henrici viij<sup>i</sup>  
in portu Bristol<sup>51</sup>**Bristowe**      The accompte of Nicolas Broun<sup>52</sup> depute  
of Sir Robert Suthwell knyght<sup>53</sup> cheff Butler of  
Englond from the Feste of Seynt Mighell  
the Archaungell<sup>54</sup> in the Fyrst yere of the Reign  
of kyng Henry the viij<sup>th</sup> untill the same  
Feste then next ensuyng / that is to say  
for one hole yere<sup>55</sup> /

Fyrst the Mary Kateryn<sup>56</sup> Henry Hart master  
cam from Burdeux<sup>57</sup> the xxvij day of October  
receivid oute of her

ij ton wyn

The Mathewe<sup>58</sup> William Glare master cam from  
Burdeux the xxvij day of October receivid  
oute of her

ij ton wyn

The Anne of Saltashe<sup>59</sup> Robert Rowlowe master  
cam from Burdeux the xxx<sup>ti</sup> day of October  
receivid oute of her

ij ton wyn

The Kateryn of Berkley<sup>60</sup> Mores Bocher master  
com from Burdeux the xxx<sup>ti</sup> day of Octobre  
receivid oute of her

ij ton wyn

The Christofer<sup>61</sup> Robert Avyntre master cam from  
Luxbon<sup>62</sup> the xv<sup>th</sup> day of Novembre  
receivid oute of her

ij ton wyn

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<sup>51</sup> This heading, and the enlarged marginalium ‘Bristowe’ are later additions, although probably in the hand of the accountant. The single dating is at first sight confusing when compared with the audited account at fo. 6r. The accountant *began* his account in Henry VIII’s first year as king but at audit, counted in ‘Exchequer years’ it could be classed as the second year – with the ‘first year’ being the six month period from Henry VIII’s accession 22 April 1509 to Michaelmas, 29 September, 1509.

<sup>52</sup> See Introduction.

<sup>53</sup> Sir Robert Southwell. See Introduction.

<sup>54</sup> 29 September.

<sup>55</sup> This heading, which is in the main hand of the account, firmly dates the account to 29 September 1509 [1 Henry VIII] to 29 September 1510 [2 Henry VIII].

<sup>56</sup> A Bristol ship of c. 130 tons burden: Jones, ‘Matthew of Bristol’, pp. 786, 794.

<sup>57</sup> Bordeaux, France.

<sup>58</sup> Of Bristol, but a different and larger vessel from that employed in John Cabot’s discovery voyage of 1497: [Jones and Condon, Cabot, p. 82](#). See also above ‘Introduction’.

<sup>59</sup> Saltash, Devon.

<sup>60</sup> Either ‘of Berkeley’ (Glos), a ‘creek’ of the port of Bristol, or in the ownership of the local family of the same name.

<i>fo. 2v</i>	The Trenyte <sup>63</sup> John Warr owner cam from Burdeux the Fyrst day of Decembre receivid oute of her	ij ton wyn
	The Edward <sup>64</sup> John a Mayn master cam from Luxbon the xvij <sup>th</sup> day of Decembre receivid oute of her	ij ton wyn
	The Magdalen John Sorre <sup>65</sup> master cam from Andolosia <sup>66</sup> the vij <sup>th</sup> day of January receivid oute of her	ij ton wyn
	Item received of the same master for Butlarage of ij ton wyne	iiij s <sup>67</sup>
	The Margarett of Bristowe <sup>68</sup> Evan Danyell master com from Seynt Lucas <sup>69</sup> the viij day of Januare received oute of her	ij ton
	Item receivid of Jamys Dirham for Butlarage of iiij ton pipe in the same shipp at ij s the ton <sup>70</sup>	ix s
	The Jhesus <sup>71</sup> Richard Savere master receivid oute of her ij ton wyne she com from Burdeux the ix <sup>th</sup> day of January	ij ton wyn
	The Pietate John Dischayne master <sup>72</sup> com from Seynt Lucas the ix <sup>th</sup> day of January received oute of her	ij ton wyne

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<sup>61</sup> Otherwise the *Mary Cristofer*: a Bristol ship of c. 110 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', pp. 786, 794.

<sup>62</sup> Lisbon, Portugal.

<sup>63</sup> A Bristol ship: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

<sup>64</sup> Of Bristol of c. 100 tons, but probably the ship earlier known as the *Edward* of Gloucester, Susan Flavin and Evan T. Jones, *Bristol's Trade with Ireland and the Continent 1503-1601* (Bristol Record Society, 61, 2009), pp. 36-7, 110-11, 128. For the tonnage, Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

<sup>65</sup> The same master, otherwise 'Surre' and thus possibly in origin from the Azores, brought the *Mawdelen* of Erreterria, Spain, into Bristol in 1512-13 and 1517: TNA, E122/21/1, fos. 1v, 3v, 19v, 29r (on one occasion 'junior'); Flavin and Jones, *Bristol's Trade with Ireland and the Continent*, pp. 129, 132. The 'Magdalen' may thus be the *Mawdelen* of Erreterria. Similarly, prisage of 2 tuns, plus butlerage for 5 tuns belonging to Surre himself, was levied by Browne as deputy butler when the *Mawdelyn* of 'Rendre' (Erreterria), sailing from San Lucar, entered the port under Surre in January 1514: TNA, E101/85/22, fo. 1v.

<sup>66</sup> Andalucía, a region of southern Spain.

<sup>67</sup> This entry for butlerage is an insertion in the same hand. As an alien Sorre paid butlerage on his own import of wine. The payment for prisage indicates that the ship carried at least 20 tons of wine belonging to denizen merchants – most likely Bristol ones who had chartered the vessel.

<sup>68</sup> See Introduction.

<sup>69</sup> Sanlúcar de Barrameda.

<sup>70</sup> The payment of butlerage indicates that Dirham was an alien. See also 8 February.

<sup>71</sup> Otherwise the *Jesus Bonaventure*, and a Bristol ship of c. 136 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', pp. 780, 785-6.

	Item received of the same <i>master</i> for Butlarage of vj ton wyne at ij s the ton <i>summa</i>	xij s
<i>fo. 3r</i>	The Mary Tower <sup>73</sup> com from Seynt Lucas the ix <sup>th</sup> day of Januarij received oute of her my <i>seruaunt</i> markid a noder ton of wyne in the same shipp of one John Halles of Bristowe / <i>notwithstanding</i> by Force he causid it to be caried to his howis & so I can gett nothing of hym therfor	j ton wyn
	The Trenyte Grace <sup>74</sup> cam from Burdeux the xiiij <sup>th</sup> day of January received oute of her	ij ton wyn
	The Mary Grace otherwise callid the Mary Moton <sup>75</sup> com from Sent Lucas the xv <sup>th</sup> day of January Jamys Henne <i>master</i> / the same shipp was ij ton priseable / And the same <i>master</i> wold nott suffer me to mark eny wyne in the same shipp / And one John Numan thelder <sup>76</sup> of Bristowe Bocher was suerty <sup>77</sup> that the same prise wyne shold be paid in mony Notwithstanding I can not gett it	
	Item receivid of Martyn Depyne for butlarage of xlvj ton wyne that com in the Mary Lotyday <sup>78</sup> that com from Burdeux the xv <sup>th</sup> day of January at ij s the ton <i>summa</i>	iiij li. xij s
<i>fo. 3v</i>	The Barbara of Bristowe <sup>79</sup> Davy Non <i>Master</i> com from Seynt Lucas the xxij day of January received oute of her And the same shipp was prisable ij ton howe be it I coude gett no more / For William Lane & William Geffreis owners of the same shipp & the forsaid <i>master</i> & the purser wold not suffer	a pype wyn <sup>83</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Name of the master variably written in the Bristol customs accounts of 1512-13, but in association with the same vessel, the *Pietate* of Hondarribia (MS 'Fountrabi'): TNA, E122/21/1, fos. 21v, 23v, 29r; so too in Browne's butlerage account of 1513-14, under 5 April, TNA, E101/85/22, fo. 2r.

<sup>73</sup> A Bristol ship of c. 130 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 786. Master for this voyage Walter Coke, TNA, E122/165/1.

<sup>74</sup> A Bristol ship of c. 80 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

<sup>75</sup> An older great ship, the *Mary Grace* of Bristol, was rebuilt in the 1470s, and, as a Bristol ship, was part owned by one Ralph Moton in the 1480s; but no ship of either name appears in the Bristol customs accounts for 1492/3, 1503/4, or 1512/13, nor in a survey of Bristol shipping of 1513. It would be surprising if the ship of 1510 were still the fifteenth century vessel.

<sup>76</sup> 'thelder' (i.e. the elder) interlined with caret.

<sup>77</sup> 'suerty': 'surety'; i.e. gave a bond, either written or verbal, that acknowledged the debt and probably included a financial penalty in the event of non-payment.

<sup>78</sup> Loctudy, Brittany, France.

<sup>79</sup> c. 110 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

	me to mark eny more in the shipp / And the same purser by the Maytenaunce <sup>80</sup> & setting a work of the forsaid Lane / had Nerhand <sup>81</sup> mischevid <sup>82</sup> my <i>seruaunt</i> he beyng aboute his besynesse aboard the same shipp	[blank]
	Item received of <i>Christofer Britan</i> for Butlarage of a ton oute of the same shipp <sup>84</sup>	ij s
	The Magdalen of Bristowe <sup>85</sup> Thomas Mailard <i>master</i> com from Burdeux the viij <sup>th</sup> day of February receivid oute of her	j ton wyn
	The Elisabeth Bonaventure <sup>86</sup> John Bolen <i>master</i> <del>com</del> com from Burdeux the viij day of February received oute of her	ij ton wyn
	Item received of Jamys Dirham <sup>87</sup> for Butlarage of ix ton pipe out of the same shipp <i>summa</i>	xix s.
fo. 4r	The Mary Jamys <sup>88</sup> Richard Bluett <i>master</i> com from Burdeux the viij <sup>th</sup> day of February received oute of her	ij ton wyn
	Item receivid of Jamys Dyrham for Butlarage of ix ton hogshhead oute of the same ship <i>summa</i>	xviiij s vj d
	The Thomas of Lynne <sup>89</sup> com from Burdeux the viij <sup>th</sup> day of February received oute of her	ij ton wyn
	The Mary Cradok <sup>90</sup> com from Seynt Lucas the vij <sup>th</sup> day of Marche receivid oute of her	ij ton wyne

<sup>83</sup> Half a tun. Given the point of departure, this was probably the slightly smaller butt, the typical cask of the wines of southern Iberia. For accounting purposes Bristol's customs officers had long equated it to the 'pipe'.

<sup>80</sup> The great legist Edward Coke in 1628 pithily defined maintenance as 'Maintenance..signifieth in Law, a taking in hand, bearing vp or vpholding of quarrels and sides, to the disturbance or hindrance of common right.' (*OED*). See also Introduction.

<sup>81</sup> Nearhand: 'nearly, almost', *OED*.

<sup>82</sup> Mischieved: 'injured, hurt, wounded', *OED*.

<sup>84</sup> i.e. a Breton, first name Christopher, who as an alien paid butlerage on a tun of wine imported on the *Barbara*.

<sup>85</sup> See Introduction.

<sup>86</sup> A known Bristol ship, otherwise the *Elizabeth* of c. 100 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

<sup>87</sup> The payment of butlerage indicates that Dirham was an alien.

<sup>88</sup> Listed as a 'smale vessel' in a survey of Bristol shipping in 1513, and so probably under 60 tons burden: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

<sup>89</sup> King's Lynn, Norfolk.

<sup>90</sup> Not a Bristol ship as such, although Bristol is likely to have been a convenient 'home port' for purposes of trade. Master on voyage out Robert Power, E122/165/1. Both the *Mary Cradock* (c. 200 tons) and another ship, the *Anthony Cradock*, belonged to (Sir) Matthew Cradock of Swansea and served Henry VIII in the French war of 1513, with mariners being sent from Wales to join the ships at Bristol: *Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, i, nos. 1727, 2217, 2842, 3148. Another of Cradock's great ships, the *Matthew Cradock* of c. 240 tons, similarly served, for which e.g. *Letters and Papers Henry VIII*, i, 1661. When the *Mary Cradock* entered Bristol 13 January 1513

	The Mary Kateryn <sup>91</sup> com from Burdeux the xiiij <sup>th</sup> day of May receivid oute of her	ij ton wyn
	The Trenyte of Bristowe <sup>92</sup> com from Rochell <sup>93</sup> the xxix <sup>th</sup> day of Juyll & had in her but vij ton wyne <sup>94</sup> of a Gaskens <sup>95</sup> callid Angerott Carsuzan & receivid of hym for Butlarage of euery ton ij s <i>summa</i>	xiiij s
fo. 4v	<i>Summa totalis</i> of all those wynes that I haue received prisage of is	xxxvj ton pipe
	<i>Summa totalis</i> of all those wynes that I can nott get the prysage of is	iiij ton pipe
	These be the wynes of the kynges gifte <sup>96</sup>	
	Fyrst deliuerd to the Charterhous <sup>97</sup> of Wittam <sup>98</sup>	j ton wyn
	Item deliuerd to the Charterhous of Henton <sup>99</sup>	iiij ton wyn
	Item deliuerd to the Charterhous of Coventre <sup>100</sup>	iiij ton wyn
	<b><i>Summa viij ton</i></b>	
	<i>Summa</i> as is beforsaid of the Prisage wynes by me received	xxxvj ton pipe
	Of the which I ask allowaunce of the forsaid wynes gevyn by	

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(again from San Lucar) the ship carried over 140 tuns of wine, as well as other typical southern imports: TNA, E122/21/1, fos. 7r, v – and would have been liable to just 2 tuns in prise. For (Sir) Matthew Cradock (c. 1468-1531) [Dictionary of Welsh Biography](#).

<sup>91</sup> Second entry from Bordeaux. See 27 October.

<sup>92</sup> c. 136 tons: Jones, 'Matthew of Bristol', p. 794.

<sup>93</sup> La Rochelle, France.

<sup>94</sup> This is late in the year for the wine trade. The ship was probably carrying salt in bulk from the bay of Bourgneuf or the Ile de Rè and perhaps also small quantities of woad and rosin. Cf. Flavin and Jones, *Bristol's Trade with Ireland and the Continent*, pp. 179, 183, 189 for summer voyages in 1517 with salt as the main, or sole, cargo.

<sup>95</sup> Gascon.

<sup>96</sup> See introduction for further discussion of these gifts.

<sup>97</sup> Charterhouse: a Carthusian monastery.

<sup>98</sup> Witham, Som. Also known as 'Witham Friary'.

<sup>99</sup> Hinton, Som.

<sup>100</sup> Coventry, Warwickshire.

	the kyng as will appere by acquitaunces <sup>101</sup>	viiij ton
**102	And also I ask allowaunce for the Olage <sup>103</sup> of all the same wyne <b>Summa x ton</b> <sup>104</sup>	ij ton
<i>fo. 5r</i>	And so this accountaunt chargith hym self <i>with</i> xxvj ton pipe that he hath received of prise wyne after iiij li. <sup>105</sup> the ton <i>summa</i>	ciiij li.
	And also he chargith hym self <i>with</i> the Butlarage mony of iiij <sup>xv</sup> tons <i>hogshead</i> <sup>106</sup> wyne at ij s the ton <i>summa</i>	viiij li. x s vj d
	<i>Summa totalis</i> that this accountaunt chargith hym self <i>with</i> of prisage & butlarage mony is	cxij li. x s vj d <sup>107</sup>
	Of the which he askith to be allowid for the Freyght of the foresaid viij ton <sup>108</sup> geyn as it is aforsaid by the kyng	viiij li.
	<i>Item</i> for Celerage <sup>109</sup> of all the same wyn	xl s
	<i>Item</i> for hopage <sup>110</sup>	xiiij s
	<i>Item</i> for this accountauntes fee <sup>111</sup>	v li.

<sup>101</sup> Acquittances (receipts): not extant, but for other examples, including a receipt of 1476 from the prior of Hinton to Thomas Croft, deputy butler in Bristol, see e.g. TNA, E101/82/15.

<sup>102</sup> Entry highlighted in margin with single vertical struck through with three cross-hatches.

<sup>103</sup> Ullage: the loss of wine by leakage through the cask.

<sup>104</sup> This sum appears to have been deleted by a single line through the 'x'.

<sup>105</sup> This is the standard 'rent' generally applied in prisage accounts for tuns taken at prise. It was then recalculated, as here, to money owed by the butler/deputy butler to the Crown.

<sup>106</sup> 85.25 tuns of wine.

<sup>107</sup> £112 10s 6d sterling.

<sup>108</sup> Compensation paid for wine taken at prise. In Bristol and other ports the sum was regularly allowed to the deputies as an outgoing for wine given by the king in alms, always at the rate of £1 per tun. See also Introduction.

<sup>109</sup> Celerage: i.e. the costs of storing the wine in a cellar. This is an increase on the 30s allowed on Bristol accounts before 1500.

<sup>110</sup> 'Hoopage' or cooperage: the costs of making or repairing casks etc: *OED*. A chief butler's account of 1486/87, TNA, E101/82/5 fo. 8v included, for example, under the heading of cooperage at Bristol, 252 hoops for pipes (1 pipe is 0.5 tons) at a penny a piece (21s in total). The unnamed deputy also paid for fifteen 'barres' at a penny a piece (transverse pieces of wood making fast the head of a wine cask, *OED*). That year, 29 tuns (58 pipes) were taken in prise.

<sup>111</sup> This was the annual fee or, in modern parlance, salary, due to Browne as deputy butler to Southwell in the port. The fee was augmented by the 'reward' of £6 13s 4d allowed to Browne at the completion of the audit of his account (fo. 6r). Similar payments, albeit for different amounts, were allowed to the customers and



*Summa totalis* of all the same  
allowaunces in mony is

xv li. xiiij s

And so restes due upon this  
accountes by this accountaunt

iiij<sup>xx</sup> xvj li. xvj s vj d<sup>112</sup>

fo. 5v

[*Blank*]

[*contd. over,*  
*p. 17*]

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controller in the port, comprising a long-since standardised 'fee' and then a much larger discretionary but customary 'reward', the latter allowed only at the successful completion of audit.

<sup>112</sup> £96 16s 6d sterling.

fo. 6r<sup>113</sup>**Bristoll**Anno *Secundo* Regis Henrici viij<sup>ui</sup><sup>114</sup>

Onus Nicholai Browne occupatoris ibidem hoc Anno videlicet	<i>prisagij- xlj dolia</i>	<i>Unde liberavit priori domus Cartusiensis de Witham j dolum Hynton ij-ijj dolia Couentre iiij dolia in toto / viij dolia</i>	Et <i>Remanentur</i>	<i>xxxiiij dolia precij dolum iiij li</i>	Cxxxij li
	<i>Buttleragij j hoggeshed</i>	<i>iiij<sup>xxv</sup> dolia j hoggeshed</i>	<i>Cust' iuxta Ratam ij s de dolio</i>		<i>vij li x s vj d</i>
		<i>Summa Receptarum</i>	<i>Cxl li x s vj d</i>	<i>De quibus</i>	
<i>Respectatur</i>	<i>petit pro frectagio dictorum liberatum locis Relegiosis –</i>	<i>viiij<sup>to</sup> doliorum ut supra</i>			<i>vij li</i>
<i>Et in riguardo datum dicto computanti etc</i> <sup>115</sup>					<i>vj li xiiij s iiij d</i>
		<i>Summa Reprisarum</i>	<i>xiiij li xiiij s iiij d</i>		
		<i>Et debet</i>	<i>Cxxv li xvij s ij d</i>	<i>De quibus</i>	
<i>Liberavit Johanni Groce seruienti Roberti Southwell militis ix<sup>uo</sup> die Octobris anno secundo Regis Henrici viij<sup>ui</sup> per billam Debet – xxix. li viij d</i>	<i>Quem onerantur in compoto de anno proximo sequenti</i>				<i>iiij<sup>xx</sup>xvj li xvj s vj d Et hic Eque</i>
<i>[In the gutter at the foot of the page]</i>					
<i>debet Cxxxij li x s vj d</i>					

<sup>113</sup> The whole of this page, including insertions, additions, and deletions, is in more than one hand, probably none of them being that of the accountant. See Introduction.

<sup>114</sup> See Introduction, p. 6, for the reason why the account is recorded under the 'second year'.

<sup>115</sup> The reward given to the accountant (Browne). Entered in a different hand.

fo. 6r **TRANSLATION**

<b>Bristol</b>	In the second year of King Henry the Eighth				
Charge <sup>116</sup> of Nicholas Browne the occupier there this year, to whit	Of prisage 40 tuns	Out of which he delivered to the priors of the Charterhouses of Witham 1 tun, Hinton 3 tuns, Coventry 4 tuns, in total 8 tuns	And there remains	33 tuns, price the tun £4	£132
	Butlerage	85 tuns 1 hogshead <sup>117</sup>	Customed at the rate of 2s the tun		£8 10s. 6d.
		Sum [ <i>total</i> ] of receipts	£140 10s 6d	From which	
[ <i>margined</i> ] Respited to him <sup>118</sup>	He asks for ‘freightage’ <sup>119</sup> of the said 8 tuns delivered as above to religious houses –				£8
And in reward given to the said accountant etc.					£6 13s. 4d
		Sum [ <i>total</i> ] of allowances	£14 13s. 4d.		
	And he owes	£125 17s. 2d.	From which		
Delivered to John Groce, servant of [ <i>Sir</i> ] Robert Southwell, knight, the 9 <sup>th</sup> day of October, in the second year of King Henry VIII <sup>th</sup> , by bill <sup>120</sup>					£96 16s. 6d.
He owes – £29 0s 8d. Which is charged in the account for the next year					And it balances here <sup>121</sup>
[ <i>In the gutter at the foot of the page</i> ] He owes £132 10s. 6d. <sup>122</sup>					

<sup>116</sup> Lit. ‘burden’ (=Onus). Common in accounting, the *Onus* of an accountant was the total dues for which he was held responsible during the stated period of account including, if relevant, arrears from a previous account. The *OED* is unhelpful, but cf. under ‘onus’.

<sup>117</sup> Hogshead: a quarter of a tun (c. 60-64 gallons).

<sup>118</sup> i.e. allowed by the auditor as an expense and deducted from the total owed.

<sup>119</sup> See the Introduction, p. 2, for the specialist meaning of ‘freightage’ in the context of prisage.

<sup>120</sup> Documented by a written bill (i.e. receipt) from Groce/Southwell, specifying the amount, £96 16 s 6 d, the payee, and the reason for the payment.

<sup>121</sup> i.e. arrears of £29 0s 8d carried forward to the account of the following year, and this account balances.

<sup>122</sup> i.e. total receipts minus £8 freightage for the wine for the Carthusians. The annotation is not part of the formal account.

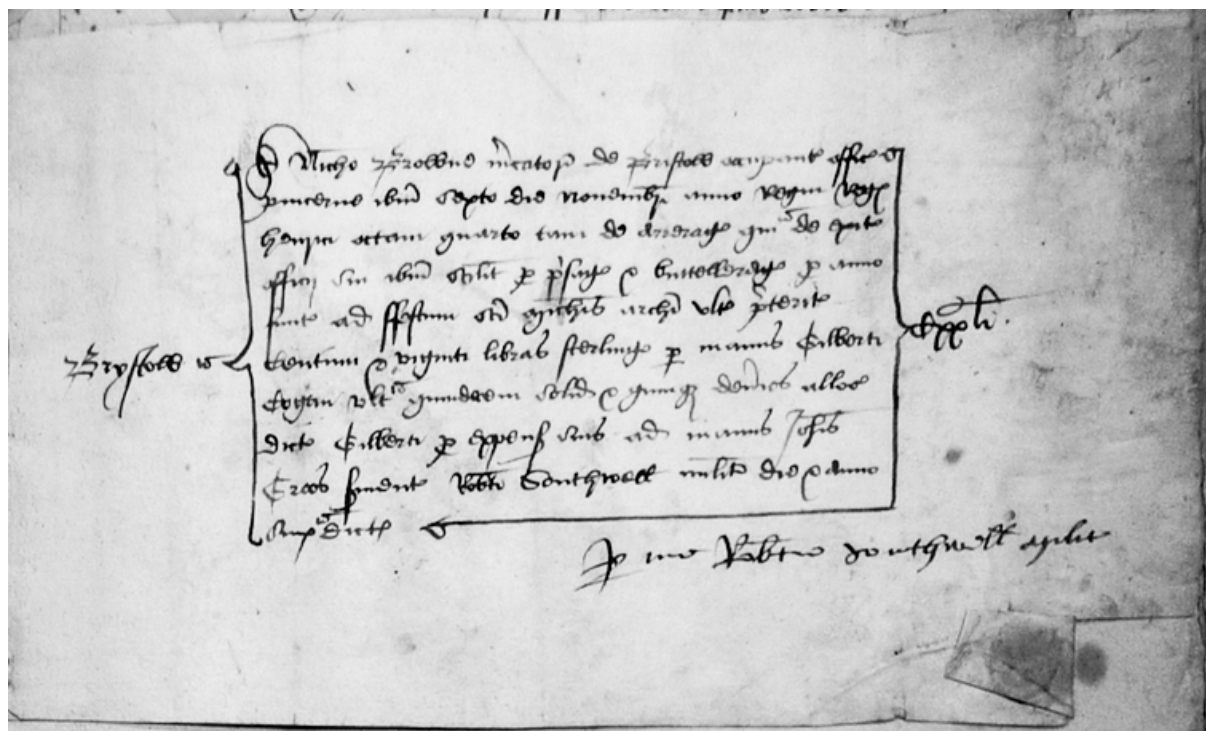
fos. 6v-8r [Blank]<sup>123</sup>

fo. 8v [title of brief]

**Bristoll**

prisagium et Butteleragium  
De anno regni regis Henrici viij<sup>ui</sup>  
**Secundo**<sup>124</sup>

Fig. 1: Example of a 'bill' pertaining to a later butlerage account for Bristol: Receipt from Sir Robert Southwell for £120. The money was handed over 6 November 1512 by Gilbert Cogan (on Browne's behalf) to John Groce (Groos), servant of Southwell: TNA, E101/85/16, fo. 2. Signed and sealed by Southwell.



<sup>123</sup> Watermark clearly visible at fo. 7v: hand, emerging from cuff, with four-petalled flower between two middle fingers.

<sup>124</sup> Bristol: Prisage and Butlerage for the second year of the reign of King Henry VIII.