

OCEANS OF WINE

Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste

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STRONG NETWORKS OF WEAK TIES: IMPORTING AND WHOLESALING WINE IN EARLY AMERICA

Taking the waters at a fashionable New York spa in 1816, the Savannah wine trader Robert Mackay wrote to his wife, Eliza, in amazement: "What will this immense Country come to in the End, when at this early day, all the Luxuries of the World appear to have become necessary to the people for their common comforts?"¹ Importer and purveyor of Madeira, Port, and Claret, Mackay was one to comment, for men like him provided the luxuries—a lot of them.

In the seventeenth century, European wines were commonplace in Atlantic diets—maybe not a staple, yet not a rarity, either. Some were expensive, in time coming to be regarded as luxuries, others almost as cheap as beer. Most drinkers bought wine from tavern keepers. Some bought it from retailers or wholesalers, who imported directly from overseas suppliers, as did those who were wealthy enough. Supply chains were short and fairly simple; there were few intermediaries between wine exporters and consumers. By the nineteenth century, European wine was regarded as a necessity. Europeans and Americans—as the European-descended population of the colonies and former colonies now referred to themselves—had been aggressively settling the interior regions of North and South America for over a century, carrying wine and the custom of drinking it with them. Drinkers' links to wine distributors were now longer and more indirect. Wine importing was dominated in the major American cities by dedicated importers and wholesalers, "merchants," who had become the principal suppliers of wine and spirits to storekeepers and tavern proprietors; some of them had begun to specialize in particular product lines. Although a few wealthy people continued to import directly from Europe—it was seen as a marker of status—for the most part even retailers had foregone direct importing in favor of buying from importers.

In parallel with the development of opportunistic, capitalistic exporters in Madeira who built sophisticated intercontinental networks for their businesses, a group of importers and wholesalers with similar characteristics arose on the American side of the Atlantic to be their counterparts. Approaches to business diffused around the Atlantic world like the goods being traded. The American importers and wholesalers increased their connective capacities by building networks of customers, suppliers, and competitors on the basis of "weak" connections. The Americans, however, had the advantage that they could usually meet their customers in person. Because of this they constructed specialized spaces for displaying their wares and meeting and courting customers. This chapter teases out who the American importer-wholesalers were in British America and the early United States and how they did their business; the next discusses their principal customers: the tavern keepers and retailers who distributed wine to the drinkers of urban and inland America.²

"ALL THE PEOPLE" THERE "ARE TRADERS"

In calling someone a "merchant," contemporaries usually meant to distinguish him from a "retailer."³ Over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, merchants' economic and social roles developed in every substantial English-speaking port; the word came to refer to those who imported European, African, and Asian goods into America, exported American goods to Europe, and undertook ancillary finance, storage, and wholesaling tasks.⁴ Yet, with respect to any individual, the distinction was not always as clear to contemporaries as it has been to historians, since many individuals held a number of occupations. To seventeenth-century observers, "all the people" in America "are traders."⁵ Even by the middle of the eighteenth century, "merchant" was still a portmanteau occupation. The greater, more extensive "interests and material accomplishments" of the "few eminent merchants" (some called them "greater merchants") of places like New York distinguished them from "other colonists whose lives were shaped by city commerce" ("lesser merchants"). Yet, both groups occupied themselves with imports and exports, and both groups often sold directly to consumers.⁶ In a city like Philadelphia, they constituted "a large occupational group embracing both wealthy traders and many petty capitalists who lived no more sumptuously than a successful cooper or grocer."⁷

The merchants in Anglo-America were men. In New York, for instance, women "were never officially designated merchants, granted a freemanship as such," nor have any records of a female importer or wholesaler been discovered, although women were shopkeepers and artisans. Merchants were, by and large,

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"new" men, newcomers with unimpressive backgrounds. Entry to the group was easy, compared to entry into British and European merchant communities. Ease of entry was facilitated by the fact that business was precarious: failure through loss or bankruptcy was common, and the sons of successful merchants were often lured into landownership as a more socially desirable activity. These men congregated with other merchants at the heart of the city; they clustered their houses and places of business next to one another. New York importers in 1700 lived and worked along the East River, for the most part, where they enjoyed easy access to the city's main wharves; nearly a century later, they were either still there or had moved a few blocks to Queen, Dock, and Smith streets and Hanover Square. They were also comparatively wealthy: "merchant" was the wealthiest occupation on the 1789 New York tax lists, with £1,870 current in assessed wealth per person on average, compared to storekeepers (the thirteenth wealthiest, with £645) and tavern keepers (the twenty-ninth wealthiest, with £240).⁸

The cohort of merchants who imported and wholesaled wine at any particular time was small. In the last third of the seventeenth century, only a handful of Boston firms and individuals, like John Hull and Thomas Jefferies, actively traded wine. They engaged in a direct, bilateral commerce, exchanging area fish and wood for wine, usually from the Canaries and the Azores, although occasionally from Madeira.⁹ Even in the early years of the eighteenth century, only ten Bostonians advertised importing or wholesaling wine. They sold by the pipe, barrel, or quarter-cask—or more vaguely by the "parcel." Only the vendue master and one other trader distributed "per gallon" or bottle. In addition, twenty-nine sea captains imported wine into Boston and probably engaged in wholesaling, too. Their voyages usually traced a circuit, either Boston, Europe, and the Wine Islands or Boston, the Wine Islands, and the Caribbean, and returned via another North American port.¹⁰ Their interest in wine was opportunistic; they were generally more interested in higher-value commodities. Jacob Leisler of New York was fairly typical in his trading activities and the range of his interests. Leisler imported wine, whale oil, tobacco, slaves, salt, and pantiles. On at least one occasion, he sent one of his own vessels to the Azores, but this was rare, for he preferred to import wine on other men's ships. He was also a tapster and imported wine for his tavern alongside the wine he brought in for wholesalers and other retailers. Accounts for his mother-in-law Marritje Jans, Reinier Willemse, John Tatham, and a company of militiamen under his command reveal him selling large quantities of Madeira, Malmsey, Canary, and Fayal at the time of his "rebellion" in 1689–91.¹¹

For parts of the eighteenth century, port records for New York and Boston survive that allow a more detailed look at the wine-importing communities. They

show a few individuals importing the bulk of the wine and a great many others small quantities, presumably for their own use or that of their families. The New York Customs House ledgers from 1703 to 1709 record fifty-two arrivals of forty ships containing 1,935 pipes of dutiable wine consigned to ninety men: 95 percent of the wine was Madeira or "wine" noted as coming from Madeira. Three men—Stephen DeLancey, Abraham De Peyster, and Thomas Wenham—paid duty on 58 percent of the wine. Each of them imported more than 220 pipes; the fourth largest importer paid duty on only 94 pipes. Ten importers paid duty on 25 pipes or more; together, they handled just over three-quarters of the wine. Most merchants were small, occasional traders of wine. Of the ninety men who paid duty on wine, sixty-seven did so in only one year, and thirty-nine did so on two pipes or fewer over the seven-year period. The merchants among them traded dry goods, wines, spirits, and furs. Englishmen dominated. While over a quarter of the ninety bore Dutch surnames, only DeLancey and De Peyster stood among the top ten importers.¹² While they are not exactly comparable, New York's Naval Office Shipping Lists for 1715–22 show a larger number of traders responding to a growing market. Some 4,600 pipes were imported, and 130 traders owned shares in wine cargoes, anything from a sole (with the trader importing or receiving the lot), the most popular, to a seventh (sharing it with six others). Stephen DeLancey remained the largest importer; Abraham De Peyster was fourth largest. But many more traders were serious importers; by this time the top ten traders imported less than half the total. DeLancey's share was less than 14 percent.¹³

Naval Office Shipping Lists have also survived for Boston and Salem for 1714–19. While the import records are sketchy, their companion export registers are more complete and show the major Anglo-American ports beginning to support a reexport trade in wine. In 1716–19, just over half of the wine imported into Boston and Salem was reexported to colonies from Nova Scotia to Surinam. The average reexport lot was only about three pipes, considerably smaller than the typical import shipment. The market structure of reexporting was similar to that of importing: a few traders seem to have reexported regularly or in largish volumes, alongside a substantial fringe who exported once or twice in small quantities. In these five and a half years, 160 sea captains took 560 pipes away from Boston and Salem. The four largest reexporting captains left with 29 percent of the total; thirty-six "important" reexporters together took 73 percent. Of the twenty masters recorded as importing wine into the colony's two main ports, five also appear among the exporters, including Richard James, the largest recorded exporter.¹⁴

By midcentury, wine trading had become a much bigger business. The group

of wine traders had grown dramatically, and so had the volumes imported and reexported. Many of the New York manifest books from 1743 to 1760 have survived, as have the Naval Office Shipping Lists for Boston and Salem from 1752 to 1765. In these years, 653 individuals or partnerships imported 8,400 pipes of wine into New York; 17 of them were women. Some 110 merchants accepted consignments of 5,400 pipes of wine imported into Boston and Salem; none was a woman (figure 7.1). The quantity of wine imported into Anglo-America seems to have fallen substantially in the early 1750s, but a spurt in trading occurred halfway through the Seven Years' War and continued into the next decade. Interestingly, in these years (1757–63), reexports considerably outpaced imports (figure 7.2). It is unlikely that the traders had enough wine in storage for this to represent a drawing-down of inventories. In 1759, for example, exports were 700 pipes greater than imports. It is more likely that they had procured wine illegally, a supposition that supports the Crown's contention late in the war that smuggling was out of control. If the degree of smuggling was great, this means our evidence for the volumes of wine traded is only partial; true imports of wine into Anglo-America must have been substantially greater.¹⁵

The structure of wine importing and wholesaling communities did not change as dramatically as the size. Importing continued to be dominated by a small number of principal traders, with a much larger number of secondary and tertiary participants (table 7.1). The largest importers, recorded as importing a hundred pipes or more, brought in more than one-third of New York's wine and more than a half of Massachusetts'. On the other hand, the substantial fringe of importers—more than half of all importers in New York's case—who brought in fewer than two pipes each accounted for only 4.4 percent of imports. For purposes of analysis, one can isolate a group of "important" importers in each colony: those who imported eighty pipes or more over the period plus the most frequent importers. In New York, fifty-six "important" men brought in just under two-thirds of the wine; in Massachusetts, thirty "important" men brought in just over two-thirds.¹⁶

Only a few merchants might have been recognized as carrying on a trade in wine, focusing on it more than on other items, inasmuch as they persistently imported and reexported over a number of years. Eleven Massachusetts traders were among both the major wine importers and the major wine reexporters. By far the most important was Richard Derby. He was the largest importer and the largest reexporter as well as the most frequent, importing in eight of the thirteen years and exporting in ten of them. Most traders were small, however. Of the 110 merchants recorded as importing, only 19 imported in more than one year. Exporting was considerably less concentrated than importing. There were almost

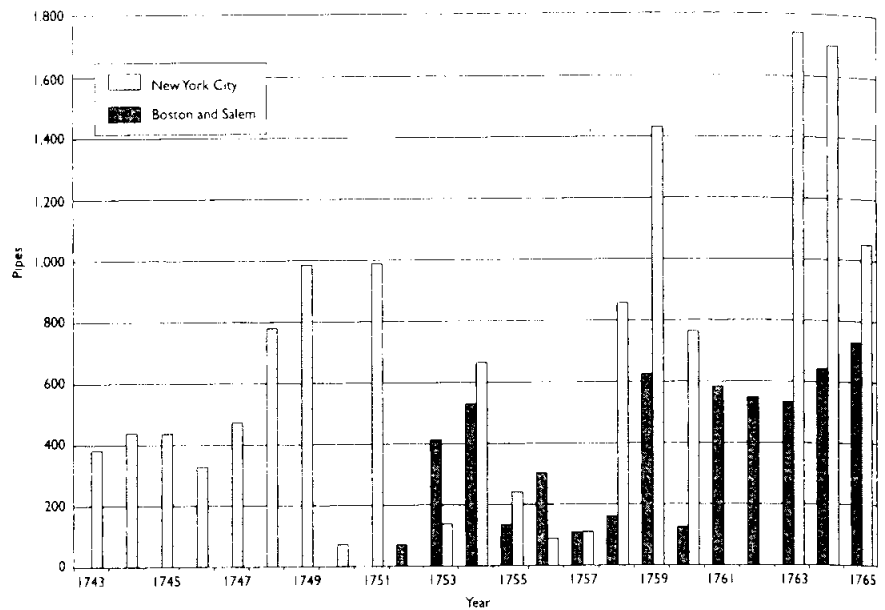


Figure 7.1. Massachusetts (Boston and Salem) and New York City wine imports, 1743–1765. New York's Manifest Books show imports into the city for forty-seven quarters over the period from the second quarter of 1743 through 1751 and the third quarter of 1754 through the third quarter of 1760. Many of the manifests have been burned or damaged by fire and severe discoloration. When in doubt, a quantity of one pipe was assigned the importation. There were eighty-seven importations on twenty-nine vessels for which the name of the person paying the duty was unclear. The most seriously ravaged records were those from 1757 to 1759. The Massachusetts NOSL are extant for forty-seven quarters for Boston and forty-five quarters for Salem over the thirteen-year period from the last quarter of 1752 through the third quarter of 1765.

To make data comparable from year to year, data have been interpolated in the quarters where there are gaps; the interpolation is a product: (average percentage of imports for that quarter) \times (volume of imports for that year).

Sources: New York Naval Office Shipping Lists, 1743, 1748, 1751, 1753–55, 1763–65, CO 5/1226–1228, Massachusetts Naval Office Shipping Lists, 1752–65, CO 5/849–851, National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, England; New York Manifest Books of Entries, 1743–51, 1754–60, New York State Library, Albany.

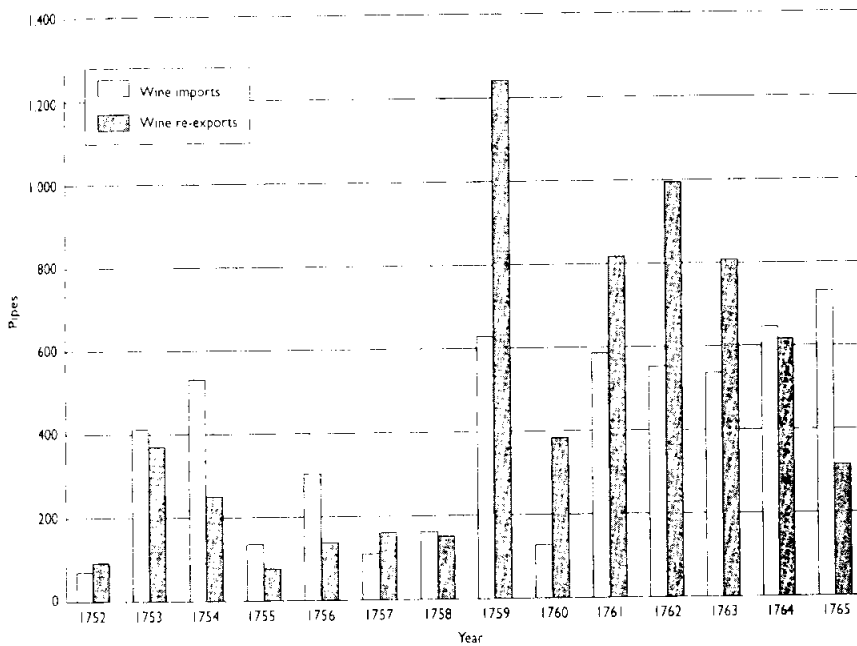


Figure 7.2. Massachusetts (Boston and Salem) wine imports and re-exports, 1752–1765.
Sources: See source note for figure 7.1.

three and a half times as many people recorded exporting as importing; the nine exporters who each took away a hundred pipes or more collectively exported less than one-third of the wine shipped out. More exporters than importers traded regularly, and a much larger fraction of them exported in small quantities: 100 of the 357 traders exported in more than one year; 118 of them exported fewer than two pipes.

Contemporary New York records show a wine business that was slightly more concentrated than that which prevailed in Massachusetts. Few merchants were in the market for the entire period. The four largest traders show the variety in the time pattern of trading. New York's largest importer, Lawrence Reade, did not get started in the business until 1754, although he then imported in all but one year from 1754 to 1760, averaging more than 100 pipes per year when he did import. The second largest trader, George Foliot, traded in only three years; he is among the largest traders because he imported 388 pipes in five shipments in 1759. David Van Horne was the most frequent importer into New York; he imported wine in twelve of the sixteen years for which some records have survived. John Beckman began importing in 1749, and imported in eight of the last

Table 7.1. Market share of wine imports, 1743-1765

City	Importers of				Total importers
	100 pipes or more	20 pipes or more	2 pipes or less	"Important" importers	
New York City (% market share)	17 (39)	75 (71)	349 (4.4)	56 (60)	652
Boston and Salem (% market share)	14 (51)	60 (94)	13 (0.3)	30 (67)	110

Sources: See source note for figure 7.1

ten years for which there are data. But Beekman's presence among the largest importers is due not to the regularity of his importing but to the fact that in two years, 1755 and 1759, he imported more than 100 pipes. In 1755, he accounted for more than 40 percent of the wine imported into New York. (In six of the sixteen years, the market share of the largest importer was over 25 percent.) Each of these four men imported more than 250 pipes. Family groups were important, apparently more so than at the beginning of the century. The large Van Horne clan, six of whom imported some wine, collectively brought in 5 percent of the total, four Beekmans 4 percent, and the Livingstons 3 percent. (At least eight and possibly as many as eleven Livingstons imported wine; it is difficult to be certain because of similar names within the family.) A few women, like Cornelia Rutgers and Madeleine Debrosses, served as importers, probably as a way of making investments and securing some financial independence from their fathers, brothers, or husbands.¹⁷

What do we know about the kind of person who traded wine on the eve of the Revolution? Consider the nearly four hundred individuals who distributed wine in Massachusetts between 1752 and 1765. Of these, nearly half worked and lived in Boston, and of them nearly half left evidence of how they described their occupation. Four dozen and some described themselves as merchants—importers and wholesalers. It is impossible to determine whether these men acted on their own account or as agents of Madeirans: no formal agency relations have surfaced, although a dozen maintained regular correspondences with Madeira houses. Some fourteen of the merchants were also retailers, while two more were also tavern keepers and innkeepers. At midcentury, importers and wholesalers could still wear several hats.¹⁸

The four dozen ably ordinary. Many city itself. Several in Scotland, and of birth of most century—high-born into families of commerce. The Joseph Lee was like Nathaniel F. Arnold Welles, they were members. Few appear to have been going to discover secondary education. He did at the South attended Harvard university in Boston. In the region, wine merchants professed traditional the realm of politics a wedge in Boston both sides of the can be ascertained in the 1760s which directly from Massachusetts. The remainder of Loyalist positions in the light of their wealth were enjoyed a significant whom records of wealth, roughly time, they owned of three ships. Especially as the Revolution estated valued that year. Although merchants and

The four dozen and some Boston wine merchants at midcentury were remarkably ordinary. Many appear to have been born in the city's vicinity, if not in the city itself. Seven are known to have been born in Britain—one in Ireland, two in Scotland, and four in England—and, given what is known about the place of birth of most people—little—and the extent of migration in the eighteenth century—high—this is certainly a minimum. Many also appear to have been born into families of middling rank with some previous connection to overseas commerce. The wit Joseph Green was the son of a sea captain, for instance, while Joseph Lee was the son of a shipbuilder. Many were sons or nephews of merchants, like Nathaniel Bethune, the son of the trader George Bethune, or Samuel and Arnold Welles, the sons of the merchant Samuel Welles. Only three merchants were members of commercial dynasties spanning three or more generations. Few appear to have received extensive education. Although it would be surprising to discover Boston's merchants did not receive some form of primary and secondary education before they went into the countinghouse, as Joseph Green did at the South Grammar School, most did not attend college: only seventeen attended Harvard, and none went to Yale. None attended an Inn of Court or a university in Britain, or took the Grand Tour in Europe. In the realm of religion, wine merchants remained firmly fixed in Boston's establishment. Nearly all professed traditional creeds: two-thirds Congregational and a third Anglican. In the realm of politics, they ran the gamut. The revolutionary agitation that drove a wedge in Boston's and Salem's dynamic commercial society found them on both sides of the major issues of the day: of the ones for whom a political stance can be ascertained, two-thirds opposed the general trend of imperial legislation in the 1760s which, among other things, imposed a duty on wine imported directly from Madeira and the Azores, and supported the war effort as "Patriots." The remainder declared themselves to be "Friends of the Government" and took Loyalist positions. Only three are known to have remained neutral, although, in the light of the silence of so many, the number was likely much greater. Only in their wealth were wine merchants extraordinary. Most importers and wholesalers enjoyed a significant degree of comfort. In 1771, the Boston wine traders for whom records have survived owned, on average, £544 sterling in assessed taxable wealth, roughly twice the amount owned by the average taxpayer. At the same time, they owned, on average, 172 tons of shipping, the approximate equivalent of three ships. None went bankrupt, although many fell on hard times, especially as the Revolution advanced. In 1774, wine merchants on average died with estates valued at £2,068 sterling, four times the wealth of Bostonians probated that year. Although the socioeconomic dimensions of Boston's non-wine-trading merchants and of merchants in other Anglo-American port towns have not been

studied enough to allow detailed comparisons, the information we have suggests that Boston's wine merchants were a cross-section of the town's trading class, and probably representative of wine merchants throughout Anglo-America. From unimpressive families but ambitious and with a few connections, they pursued opportunities and entertained risk with a vigor less common among members of the established merchant community. Indeed, at the outset, all they really had were their connections, and these they used with alacrity to open up new areas of trade.

For the years during and after the Revolution, the evidence is less complete, as port registers of entries and clearances have not survived. Many of the records compiled by Crown officers were destroyed at the time; similar records were not always kept by the new states; many of those that were kept have been destroyed or lost. The New York merchant community in the revolutionary era can be divided into two groups: those working before the war, from 1768 through 1775; and those working during it, from 1776 through 1783. In the earlier period, among the 173 advertisers selling liquor in the city, there were 47 "merchants," another 46 wholesalers (some of whom also managed retail operations), and 44 retailers (not including the retailing wholesalers). Surprisingly, neither importers nor wholesalers suffered during the war in terms of the size of their cohort: 387 different sellers advertised wines and spirits, including 52 merchants, 196 wholesalers and wholesalers/retailers, and 76 retailers. In an equal amount of time (eight years), under very different economic circumstances (British occupation, the need to service Britain's army and a burgeoning Loyalist population), the number of enterprisers advertising wines and spirits more than doubled. Less easy to quantify but not insignificant was the growth in the numbers of foreigners, especially Portuguese, who moved to New York after 1783 and began importing and wholesaling there.¹⁹ No import and export records survive for the 1765-1800 period to facilitate a reconstruction of the top ten distributors' share. But Alexander Mings's 1815 *New-York Price Current* affords a final glimpse of the structure of his city's merchandising. In that year, there were 137 importers listed, including importers, wholesalers, retailers, and auctioneers. Most were clustered at the island's tip, not far from the East River. But firms were now as common as lone enterprisers. The top ten—7 percent of the cohort—took half of all wine imports.

Boston's postrevolutionary wine-trading community likewise cast much the same profile that it had before the war.²⁰ It was still local, maritime, and middling in origin, small in size, and geographically concentrated. Advertising in the 1807 *Boston Gazette* were eighteen wine importers and wholesalers in the city, alongside thirty retailers, and most of the eighteen also dealt in spirits. The wine im-

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porting and wholesaling cohort had declined from the numbers in the 1760s, but it was small then, and it was small in 1807. Those who traded wine were still based in the central commercial zone. More than half of the operations spread out along seven different wharves; some sixteen lay on Long Wharf and another eight on India Wharf. Established religions and established ideologies predominated, although no great issue like independence rose to test the divisions.²¹

Interestingly, some specialization had emerged. Five of the eighteen merchants focused consistently on wine. Nathaniel Bartlett was one who styled himself a "wine merchant." From a store beneath the Old South Meeting House, he sold a full range of wines and spirits, which he kept "constantly" and sold for cash: "Choice O.P. Madeira, Lisbon, Sherry, Vidonia, Port, Claret, Malaga, Wines—free from adulteration. Old Cognac Brandy—Holland Gin; Old Jamaica Spirits, and all other kinds of LIQUORS—London Porter; Philade. Do.; 600 dozen best Bottled CIDER; 20 hhds and bbls Cider, for family use; Strong Beer—first chop Havana CIGARRS, much approved of." All these goods were available as "cheap as at any other place in town." James Dennie focused on wine, spirits, and related items in a store on Broad Street, where he stocked Sherry, Catalonia, Claret, stout, and sugar, while his brother Thomas Dennie kept a more extensive selection of wines and spirits as well as corks, jugs, lead, bottle baskets, and bottle cases at his wholesale store a few blocks away on Merchant's Row: "Best Old London Particular Madeira imported from the first houses in Madeira," other Madeira, Tent, Fayal, Lisbon, Port, Vidonia, Sherry, Malaga, Bordeaux Claret, De Grave, and Cape wines, Cognac and Bordeaux brandy, Holland gin, Jamaica spirits, Antigua rum, arrack, London porter, brown stout, cherry brandy, and "a general assortment of Bottled Liquors." Israel Munson and Cornelius, Coolidge, & Co. likewise focused on the wholesaling and retailing of wines and spirits to the near exclusion of other goods. The *Boston Directory* of 1807 listed two wine wholesale stores—one run by David Bradlee, Merchant's Row, and another by his brothers Thomas and John Bradlee, on the south side of the market. Still, self-styled "wine and spirit merchants" remained something of a rarity; most advertisements placed by wine importers listed wines and spirits alongside "a variety of goods too tedious to mention."²²

DIRECT IMPORTS BY CONSUMERS

To appreciate the work of Anglo-American importers and wholesalers, it helps to understand the consumers who did not buy from them but instead enjoyed a direct relationship with wine-trading houses on Madeira or another wine-producing area. Nearly two-thirds of Newton & Gordon's consignees in 1770—

72 were individuals ordering for personal consumption, although their orders comprised less than one-third of the volume. For the Leacocks the story was the same. In 1763–65, 56 percent of their consignees were direct purchasers, but they took only 17 percent of the wine. In every case for which there is a full record of shipments by exporters, direct purchases constituted over half of the orders. On the receiving end, “private persons” went “much . . . in[to] ordering single pipes of wine . . . for their own use,” and the large number of small importers in the import records confirms this.²³

Direct importing was most important in plantation colonies with few cities and few and bad roads, and where the richest inhabitants lived along wide, navigable waterways. Such proprietors preferred annual standing orders, which ensured them a regular supply, usually of a better quality of drink, without repetitive correspondence. Exporters also favored such orders, as they constituted a reliable draw. Regular customers were treated with deference; when stocks ran short in Madeira, standing orders were filled first, regardless of the fact that they were usually smaller.

The riverine communities of Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas were perfect for direct supply. William Byrd and his cousin Colonel Harrison, both of whom owned shares in vessels that traded between Virginia and Madeira, imported directly for their own consumption at the beginning of the eighteenth century. So casually as to suggest routine in 1733, Colonel William Randolph Jr. asked for two pipes of wine from Hayward & Chambers of Madeira, and Sir John Randolph sent to James Pope for a similar lot. Many Virginia planters in the 1760s depended on their relationships with Dr. Richard Hill, himself an erstwhile tobacco planter; in his words, he “cleaned up” by answering their private orders. Even as late as 1803, by which time so much else distribution-wise had changed, Virginia planter John Wickham’s wine book shows him buying directly from four different Madeira houses for his capacious James River cellar. All these planters generally took one or two pipes each year to fill their cellars and satisfy their drinking and medicinal needs. The distance between settlements and the paucity of retail outlets in their respective colonies explain regular private orders.²⁴

Similarly, Caribbean colonists often bought direct. In the second half of the eighteenth century, John Leacock’s house shipped nearly two-thirds of its “private orders” to planters, merchants, and officials living in the West Indies. Newton & Gordon sent more than half of its private orders there before, during, and after the Revolution. For Caribbean buyers, the choice of a supplier was more influenced by blood relationship than it was for North American consumers. Leacock’s older brother William and other relatives settled in the Leeward Islands,

and they called on John in Madeira; Leacock's firm never sent less than seven-tenths of its private orders to the eastern Caribbean. Newton & Gordon, too, was patronized by a myriad of relatives, schoolmates, and friends living in Jamaica, in addition to Samuel Johnston, a brother of its London benefactor and agent. The firm never sent less than three-quarters of all its private orders to the island.

Communities bound by religious ties, such as the Quakers and Catholics, also turned to fellow or former believers for buying direct. Although his own religiosity had lapsed, Richard Hill made the most of Quaker connections, as did the exporter George Lawrence. Both called on Friends throughout the years they were building their Madeira businesses. In reverse, Quakers wanting wine approached Lawrence and Hill more readily than they would non-Quakers, introducing themselves on that basis alone.²⁵

Direct supply was a largely elite phenomenon: the Hancocks of Boston, Browns of Providence, Beekmans of New York, Carters of Virginia, and their ilk routinely ordered two to four pipes from Madeira each year in the 1750s and 1760s. Most of it was for their personal consumption. They also frequently procured a pipe or two of "the very best Madeira wine" for friends and colleagues. The merchant prince Thomas Hancock of Boston bought some wine as a gift for his colony's governor. His nephew John Hancock did the same in 1767, ordering wine for its treasurer and two pipes for his friends John and Jonathan Amory, wealthy merchants who had no ties to Madeira's houses. The "Best Company" deserved a regular quality supply, and that came only direct.²⁶

In addition to ordering for their own accounts, individual buyers also procured wine for others—merchants and retailers, and also friends and people of influence. In 1704, for instance, the mayor of Philadelphia, Richard Hill, the uncle of the Madeira exporter, ordered several pipes of Madeira from the island exporters Miles & Richbell for Timothy Kayzer of London, and Isaac Norris Sr. ordered seven pipes of Madeira for other Philadelphians, even as he ordered twenty-five pipes for himself. The merchant could either charge the others a commission to cover the costs of handling, as Norris did, or absorb those costs in the interest of friendship, as Hill did.²⁷

THE BUSINESS OF WINE IMPORTING AND WHOLESALING

Importers' and wholesalers' most valuable contribution to connecting Madeira producers to American consumers was building contacts with suppliers, fellow traders, and customers and sharing products, services, information, and credit with them. Wine merchants maintained networks of traders in Europe and elsewhere who needed North American products and who could supply European

goods wanted by Anglo-American customers. They built such networks to satisfy local needs, generally calling on one supplier for one product, although, in order to capitalize on shifts and opportunities as they arose, they also maintained relationships with other suppliers of different products. Only toward the end of the eighteenth century did American merchants import the same product from a number of suppliers. In addition, they drew upon networks of peers at home. A pipe of wine might go through several importers' and wholesalers' hands before it wound up in a retailer's tavern or shop or a family's cellar. The fluidity and openness of the personal, voluntary, and nonhierarchical networks they built allowed them to forge new connections quickly and use them creatively.

Before the early nineteenth century, there was seldom enough business to specialize by commodity or type of goods, so merchants traded whatever they could. "To be a merchant . . . in 1660 meant to be engaged, wholesale and retail, in the exchange of a great variety of goods, to be ready to accept payment in all sorts of unexpected commodities and currencies, always to be seeking new markets in which to sell new kinds of goods and new kinds of goods to satisfy new markets." Related to buying and selling was the oversight of goods: unloading and loading ships, storing and monitoring cargo before sale, and transporting goods to buyers. While the daily operations of a large London countinghouse might have been left to junior partners or clerks to manage, American businesses were small enough that senior partners seldom delegated important oversight activities to underlings. After acquiring some capital, these entrepreneurs integrated downstream, buying shares in ships and cargoes. This pattern persisted through the launch of the new Republic. By then, a few wet goods, dry goods, and provisions merchants had become savvier and begun to specialize in the commodities or regions they traded with. Still, they remained the exception, and their business practices did not differ significantly from the generalists.²⁸

The experience of John Van Cortlandt, a grandson of the patriarch of Van Cortlandt Manor and, in his own right, a prominent New York sugar refiner and general merchant, provides an example of a trader who opportunistically found his way into the business of wine importing and wholesaling and then aggressively used his networks to pursue it. From his "sugar house" on a corner of Trinity Churchyard, Van Cortlandt managed a far-flung commodity empire that encompassed England, Europe, the Wine Islands, settlements in Africa, the West Indies, and the Chesapeake and mid-Atlantic regions of North America. He turned to wine because it promoted his sugar trading and rum manufacturing. From time to time, he ordered Madeira or accepted some either as freight or on consignment as a way of making his West Indian voyages more profitable. He exchanged the wine in the Caribbean for sugar and molasses, which he re-

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fined, distilled, and sold in New York. If he could not sell all the wine to Caribbean planters and merchants, he sold it alongside his rum to New Yorkers. Either place, wine was in demand among retailers, householders, and medicos.

Then, in 1764, he took a dramatic step, taking advantage of Britain's reform of its empire in the wake of the Seven Years' War. Parliament passed the Sugar Act, imposing unprecedented Crown duties on wine from Madeira and the Azores when imported directly into the British colonies after September 1764. Learning of the legislation well before it went into effect, Van Cortlandt commanded his factor in Virginia to hire a ship, load it with grain, and consign it to Newton & Gordon in Madeira. He chose Newton & Gordon largely on the basis of having worked with Thomas Newton a few years before in New York. Van Cortlandt asked the firm to dispose of the grain to "best advantage" and "remit the net proceeds in good Madeira wine"; in addition, he asked it to send several pipes of "good old wine" for his family's use. He also advised Newton's house to ship to New York "as much . . . good New York & London wines," since he could find buyers. The vessel arrived in Manhattan well before the legislated deadline. Van Cortlandt sold thirteen of the nineteen pipes to four prominent citizens at his small store near the North River: Peter DeLancey, Nicholas Bayard, Henry Beekman, and Patrick McDavitt. None were family members, but they were all family friends and one was an occasional business partner. Moreover, they were all competitors, part of New York's wine-importing "class": Bayard and Delancey imported extensively between 1743 and 1760 and, although Henry Beekman had not, four other Beekmans had.²⁹

Pleased with the results, Van Cortlandt ordered another ship to Madeira the following year, to be laden with Virginia corn or, if that was unavailable, New York wheat. The corn came through and this voyage turned a profit as well. The success spurred him to seek out other, larger wine ventures, in which he owned one-third or half of the return cargo of Madeira, sharing it with competing merchants. In 1767, he dispatched a vessel with 3,500 bushels of corn; but the ship suffered mishap and bad weather, forcing him to reroute it to the Caribbean. Not one easily thwarted, he authorized two more Madeira voyages in 1771. In less than a decade, Van Cortlandt backed sixteen voyages to Madeira in addition to selling wine consigned to him by Madeira exporters and other American entrepreneurs. Once he had found suppliers who would reliably tender wine, competitors who would trade with him in New York, and customers who would turn to him for products other than sugar, he combined them to smooth out his Atlantic trading. Suppliers, peers, and customers were his greatest assets. Without them, he could not expand, shift, and adapt as the larger Atlantic marketplace evolved around him.³⁰

NETWORKS OF SUPPLIERS

To manage their businesses, merchants maintained correspondences with customers and suppliers in Britain, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. Wine importers and wholesalers established relationships with Madeira exporters to obtain wine from them. Variations on the business relationship emerged, depending on who managed it and assumed the risks. The risks were substantial. A cargo owner could lose the cargo to piracy or privateering, as did Isaac Norris Jr. when some of his ships were taken by privateers during the War of Jenkins' Ear, brought into Havana, and stripped of their goods. He could also lose the venture to nature, the most common obstruction. Ice on the Delaware and East rivers and in Boston Harbor—threatening from December through March—could bring shipping to a halt in the winter months, causing “a general stagnation of business,” and leave “the price of everything . . . unsettled.” Disease stopped traffic. The smallpox that devastated the northeastern colonies in 1752, which “deter[red] all cuntry people of coming to market,” deprived the importers and wholesalers of outbound cargoes as well as of customers for wine. Similarly, the yellow fever that struck Philadelphia in 1792 prompted officials to bar incoming vessels and impose a quarantine on ships already lying in the harbor.³¹

The most common business arrangement was for the importer-wholesaler to accept wine on consignment from an exporter. In this case, the exporter bankrolled the voyage, provided the shipping, and bore the risk. Sometimes the merchant was responsible for selling the wine, but other times the exporter had already sold the wine and it came with instructions for delivering it. The importer, as agent or consignee, managed the unloading and sale or delivery of the wine, charging the consignor for expenses incurred and a commission for services rendered. The considerable wine merchant Abraham De Peyster did much business this way in the early 1730s when he accepted Madeira from the exporters Walter and Robert Scot and John Day, with the understanding that it would be delivered according to the exporter's instructions.³²

As American merchants became more familiar with oceanic trade and better capitalized, they began ordering wine on their own accounts, financing voyages and assuming the risks and the profits. In 1703–08, William Trent Sr. kept at least six vessels plying the waters between Philadelphia and Madeira, carrying grain and flour to Madeira and returning with wine supplied by Miles & Richbell, despite the War of Spanish Succession that was then raging in Europe. Each year, he sent one or two of his ships. He coordinated his dispatches with other merchants, renting the cargo space in halves, thirds, or quarters. Trent owned at least one of the vessels outright, a ship that he and Isaac Norris Sr. had designed for a

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bilateral trade in Pennsylvania flour and Madeira wine. Later, in the 1720s, with his son and the Madeiran Richard Miles, the elder Norris used a sloop he owned to shuttle between Philadelphia and Madeira, making at least seven such voyages between 1724 and 1727. Similarly, Gerard Garret Beekman concerned himself in a New York-to-Madeira sloop during the 1740s and 1750s. Like Trent, Norris, and Beekman, most substantial American importers and wholesalers who were interested in the trade engaged in one or two such investments in the course of their careers. The control over oceanic distribution that ownership imparted—no longer were they at the mercy of other merchants who might delay, or shady or irresponsible captains who might imperil the cargo—was valuable enough to outweigh the risk of losing the wine through seizure or shipwreck.³³

The interests of the Americans and Madeirans became most heavily intertwined in joint ventures, which increased in frequency as the eighteenth century advanced. When the Norrises offered Miles & Richbell a share in a vessel two years after its launch, they also offered the Madeirans the assurance of future business. Joint ownership helped the chronically cash-poor Norrises, who “want[ed] money in Madeira and could not so easily . . . forepay in England.” Joint vessel ownership led to joint cargo ownership and importation. Sharing helped the Madeirans, too. The Pennsylvania legislature had reduced duties on wine imported on vessels owned two-thirds by colonists; the proposed joint venture allowed Miles & Richbell’s wine to enter at the reduced rates.³⁴

From the Seven Years’ War onward, American merchants grew more aggressive in “managing” suppliers. Rather than accepting what was consigned them, they began to specify the amount, grade, and quality of wine. Gerard Garret Beekman once requested a wine that the Hills had sent to his neighbor, “as fine a parcel of wines as e’er come to this market.” Such requests did not always achieve their ends, so even more specific requests were sent. In sending John Searle “a small bottle” with some “yellow rich sweet” Madeira that had been sent to a friend, Beekman insisted that Searle procure him a pipe of the same. By the 1760s, American tastes were developing and differentiating, and American importers demanded that Madeirans send them the wine that would sell in their particular locality. Some good-quality wine arrived in New York in 1764, for instance, but it was “neither old nor high coloured enough” for the market; neither tavern keepers nor retailers would “buy any wine” that was for domestic use, since neither could “afford to let it lay by.” Philadelphia merchant John Baynton insisted the islanders supply an erstwhile partner who had moved to Jamaica. He ordered them to send “good old Madeira Wine . . . mellowed by being long at sea [and] in a warm climate” for his own private consumption and the “very best London old wine of a light amber color” for his firm’s sale account. He in-

structed the wine be "kept on board the vessel" until its arrival in Philadelphia. As they became more demanding, American importers grew more willing to alter long-standing supply relationships to get what they preferred. When Beckman began trading wine in a big way in the 1750s, he did not merely continue with the house his forebears had used; instead, he asked three houses—Hill, Lamar, & Hill, Chambers, Hiccox & Chambers, and Searle Brothers—each to ship him two pipes of the best London wine so that he "may judge who ships the best."³⁵

Despite entrepreneurial aggressiveness, enduring supply relationships were grounded in trust. Because of the distances and delays, the reliability of a correspondent to deliver goods, provide information, and pay debts—and to be truthful—had to be established, in many cases beforehand. American wine importers and wholesalers who did not go themselves or send supercargoes had to delegate to others at the point of shipment the selection and packing of the commodity; trusting them was a critical business decision. An independent, on-the-spot delegate knew more "about the quality gradations," the supplier's financial state, and "which of their goods" was "best suited" for overseas travel and marketing. But that delegate could also take advantage of his superior information. So reliance upon suppliers was still extremely critical. The rules for exchange were usually malleable, even for the highest-quality wines, to which the most rigid rules of exchange attached. Leniency was usually allowed to trusted importers and wholesalers. "It was not our custom to ship best wine in large quantities," wrote John Searle in 1763, but his firm always complied with a request from "a trustworthy friend." New York's Peter Stuyvesant sent 600 *pistareens* to Scot, Pringle & Scot in 1757. He hoped there would "be enough to purchase a pipe and half of ye very best," but if not, he asked the firm to "advance a small" amount of wine, reminding them, by recounting a decade of history, that they could "depend on having" their money "very soon." Stuyvesant had to trust Scot, Pringle & Scot to send him "ye very best," or anything at all. Scot, Pringle & Scot had to trust Stuyvesant to grant him credit.³⁶

Once trust was established, importers and suppliers generally remained allies. Few Americans bought from more than one supplier in any period; only very late in the eighteenth century, due to the growing competition among islanders and their unprecedented disregard for factory pricing, did it become common for importers to buy from more than one supplier at the same time.³⁷ In the early decades of the eighteenth century, William Trent Sr., Isaac Norris Sr. and Isaac Norris Jr. remained loyal to Richard Miles's various firms in Madeira. They approached other firms for wine only in special circumstances. On one occasion, Isaac Sr. had a personal if unexplained falling-out with Miles and struck deals with Benjamin Bartlett, Vasconcelos de Bettencourt, and Francisco Luis de Va-

concelos. But the displeasure was short-lived, and the breach repaired. Isaac Jr. wandered from the Miles fold only once. Even so, serious concern over performance could drive a wedge between firms. At midcentury, Samuel Galloway dispensed with Richard Hill Sr.'s services on the suspicion that Hill had not worked hard to sell Galloway's wheat. The most common cause of rupture was the inability of a supplier to provide enough wine or accept all of the barter goods tendered.³⁸

On the other hand, few Americans restricted themselves to dealing in one kind of wine. Seventeenth-century merchants imported French wine until the onset of England's anti-French wars and the passage of laws aimed at destroying the power of Louis XIV. They acquired Azores and Canary wines until Britain blocked Spanish imports during the War of Spanish Succession. Geographically blessed like Madeira, Canary was the second most easily obtained Atlantic wine, with Azorean wine running a close third. As early as the 1680s, Jamaica importer-wholesalers handled wines from Malaga as well as Madeira. North Americans sold wines from the Canaries and Azores as well as Madeira between the 1690s and 1710s.³⁹ By the middle of the eighteenth century, importers had further diversified their suppliers. Philadelphia's Baynton, Wharton & Morgan corresponded with Lamar, Hill, Bisset in Madeira for Madeira, but they also bought Port from Holdsworth, Olive & Newman in Oporto, Lisbon from Mayne & Co. and Parr & Bulkeley in Lisbon, and generic Portuguese from Lampriere Brothers in Faro. During the mid-eighteenth century before the American Revolution, most suppliers hailed from Portugal and the Wine Islands. American merchants seldom traded with either the French or non-Canary Spaniards.⁴⁰ During that conflict, however, commercial ties to Spain and France were substituted for those to Britain. American merchants returned to Portuguese suppliers after the war, yet they also maintained their new correspondences with Havre de Grace, Bordeaux, Jerez, and Cadiz. Willing, Morris & Swanwick made this shift, importing Château Margot and Cognac through Bordeaux while replenishing its stocks of Madeira and Canary. In the early nineteenth century, Claret and Sherry were as easy and cheap to procure as Madeira and Port, and it was a rare import firm between Halifax and Kingston that did not simultaneously deal with L'Orient, Nantes, Bordeaux, Cognac, Porto, Lisbon, Cadiz, Funchal, and Tenerife.⁴¹

NETWORKS OF PEERS

In addition to their networks of suppliers, Anglo-American merchants traded among themselves. Unlike those of the Caribbean sugar merchants, North American peer wine networks remained commercial; not until much later and well into any particular relationship did they evolve into a common political

stance. Wine importers and wholesalers appealed to their peers to get wine when they did not have enough, or to sell it when they had too much. Most trading was close to home: a merchant would take a pipe or two from a competitor whose stock was not selling in town. Importers also acquired wine from merchants in other ports, particularly wines like Mountain or Bordeaux that were never easily acquired and always in short supply. When Jonathan Dickinson of Philadelphia could not find "any good wines" around him in 1718, he applied to his "particular friend" Stephen DeLancey in New York. The traffic between Philadelphia and New York was always active but, as the eighteenth century advanced and coastwise connections throughout America improved, port-to-port assistance occurred farther afield.⁴²

Importers and wholesalers supplemented buying and selling among their competitor "friends" by opportunistically trading with others. One day in 1748, needing some good wine to sell to a regular customer, Gerard Garret Beekman found Claret "by chance" "in two Persons' hands"; he later found more on the street, on the carts of two draymen. This almost accidental mode of procurement is hard for us to recapture, because so much of it went unrecorded; but it was common. Similarly opportunistic but better recorded was the kind of trading that ensued when merchants used each other as agents, as when, in 1763, Eleazer Trevett in Newport sent Beekman some Fayal to sell for him. The wine was unsaleable in New York, however, being new and not colored. "Fortunately, a Vessel" bound for Halifax weighed anchor in New York with instructions to approach the merchant William Francklin and secure eight pipes of Fayal. When Beekman heard the news, he "Immediately Apply" to Francklin and sold him the liquor—"as they was[,] without filling up, tho' they wanted from 2 to 3 gallons each[,] at £17 round[,] which was the most" he "could obtain."⁴³

Glutted markets were among the most persistent vexations merchants complained of, and they took it upon themselves to move their stocks rather frequently. Much of this was classic arbitrage: low prices in one place and high prices in another prompted them to ship the wine to the higher-price markets. Not only could the wine be profitably sold in the new port, it could also give "an advance to the remaining quantities" in the original market. When some wine proved unsaleable in Maryland, for example, John Searle instructed Samuel Galloway to order "any vessel" to proceed to the Caribbean so that "the wines may be trucked there for rum, &c., which in the end would probably be attended with good profit & a more speedy sale [than] at Maryland." Given the ease of transport and communication, both of which improved over the eighteenth century, Madeira wine could be kept in motion until it found a market.⁴⁴

But not always profitably. Sometimes importers and wholesalers could not

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move their cities' surpluses because other cities were also glutted. Such a case arose in Halifax in 1754 when it had a surfeit of Fayal.⁴⁵ Worse, they might move the wine and still not be able to sell it in the new market. Very early in the century, Isaac Norris Sr. sent a ship to Madeira, where it took in as much wine as it could stow, and then directed it to New York, where Rip Van Dam was to sell ten pipes. But Norris's wine did not sell well there, the tastes of the place differing from those of Philadelphia. Later in the century, New Yorker Peter Stuyvesant tried selling Robert Tucker's wine in New York. Stuyvesant gave it "all . . . assistance" in his power, but Tucker's captains' stay in New York was so short that Stuyvesant was obliged to sell "to a disadvantage." Peers could generally be relied upon to shift product between ports, to seek greater profit, but there were limits to their abilities.⁴⁶

Merchants also bought and sold wine at auction, where city vendue masters hawked the wares of failing enterprises. As successive commodity gluts buffeted the American market after the Seven Years' War, many took advantage of the vendue. It was not problem-free, of course. In 1785, for instance, most wine consignments to New York were disposed of at public vendue, although at "little or no profit." But it was still better than holding the wine in inventory, with the cost of capital and storage included. The situation was different for buyers, for the prices were good. Beekman often bought at vendue, especially when he was buying for customers in adjacent colonies. The problem with auctioned wines was that, "generally," they were "very low" in quality. Worse, the quality was difficult to ascertain. They were generally "put up 5 and 6 [barrels] in a lott"; as a result, one sometimes procured "a very good cask among them," but that left four or five "very indifferent."⁴⁷

Trade among distributors eventually grew great enough to support brokers who negotiated the transactions. Appearing on the scene in the years following the Seven Years' War, they proliferated rapidly after the War of Independence. Some brokers accepted fees for matching buyers to sellers and vice versa, while others—in a more advanced operation—bought from sellers, held on to the goods as inventory, and sold from a "broker's store," usually "cheap for cash." Whatever the particular setup, the goods so managed were general, much as were an auctioneer's goods. Boston's Edmund Quincy Jr. characteristically announced the sale of two pipes of Madeira alongside large quantities of sugar, beef, and other goods in 1764, while Philadelphia's William Smith offered old Lisbon, dry goods, sugar, and ginger. The broker's main task was "to maintain a 'market' in a particular product." He collected goods and news "from retailers or other potential customers" with whom he had close ties. He then tried to "transform that information" or possession "into purchasing actions directed at com-

peting" merchants. The contribution to commerce of brokers like Robert Ross and Peter Lohra of Philadelphia lay not just in receiving "to sell on commission on all kinds of merchandise"—and there was no broker who consistently advertised who did not at some point in his advertising history before 1800 dispose of wine—but also in "knowing what goods will be needed sometime in the future and placing anticipatory orders, in judging where that desire for goods will be largest or strongest, and in directing the flow" there.⁴⁸

NETWORKS OF CUSTOMERS

The most important asset of any importer and wholesaler was his customers. In contrast to their supply networks, wine merchants' customer networks were extensive. A mid-sized American trading house needed between ten and thirty regular customers as a base for its sales, for most customers did not rely on only one source. Urban merchants normally dealt with customers in their own towns, but they also supplied backcountry retailers, dispensers, and householders. As a particular merchant or firm succeeded, the lines to customers stretched far along the coast and deep inland along rivers.⁴⁹ The principal customers included wine-related artisans—vintners who blended the wine, cellarers who blended and stored it, and coopers and bottlers who packed it—as well as lesser merchants, storekeepers, shopkeepers, innholders, tavern keepers, and consumers. American enterprisers built associations with their customers in much the same way Madeira exporters were doing—through conversations and flexible terms—although their networks were simpler. As the decades passed, customer expectations of performance grew, and the importers' and wholesalers' approach to them became more complicated and nuanced: more prepared, more restless and competitive, more investigative and solicitous, and more buoyant (because more heavily capitalized). One manifestation of their more aggressive outreach to customers is the premises they constructed for displaying their wares and for entertaining and soliciting customers.

Especially in the first century of wine trading, most sales were small, even to retailers. Masters of such exchanges, William Trent Sr. and Alexander Paxton of Pennsylvania procured sixty pipes of Madeira from Miles & Richbell in 1709. As soon as customs officials authorized unloading, Trent and Paxton commenced sales. They sold the first pipe on November 3 and another seven days later. Thereafter, sales quickened. Half of the pipes were sold between January and March, in fifty lots to thirty-seven buyers. The buyers all lived in Philadelphia City and County and paid in cash; three were women. Only two bought more than a pipe; those two bought two pipes each.⁵⁰ Three decades later, a few customers of the Norrises took larger quantities and more speedily, but most transactions were

still small. One ship owned by the Norrises, the *Bona Vista*, brought thirty-four pipes from Richard Miles (who owned three-eighths of the vessel); it landed part of its cargo at Barbados, exchanging it for sugar and molasses, before returning to Philadelphia with the rest of the wine. Back home, in just under a month, the firm sold twenty-seven pipes to thirteen Philadelphians, mainly storekeepers and tavern keepers. Only two purchasers bought more than two pipes: the proprietor of the Crown tavern took three, and a storekeeper seven.⁵¹

Abraham De Peyster of New York was another merchant who traded in wine, and his much fuller accounts give us a rare glimpse into the extent of customer networks. De Peyster sold wine and spirits as a complement to other goods throughout the greater New York City area, and he owned or held shares in at least seven New York/Madeira vessels. From 1723 to 1733, De Peyster acquired more than forty-seven pipes of Madeira from four island houses, plus one New York importer, and he sold eighty-eight pipes, the difference made up by incidental purchases in New York and drawing down his stocks. Some twenty-four identifiable New York City inhabitants bought almost two-thirds (fifty-five pipes) of his sales; ten transactions involved anonymous buyers who paid cash. The rest went to those who worked or lived along the two main roads going down the Jersey coast toward Philadelphia. One customer was significant: Perth-Amboy tavern keeper William Maxwell took ten pipes of wine in April 1728, and half of another cargo the next month. But for Maxwell's custom, which persisted for a decade, out-of-town purchasers were all De Peyster's relatives or friends, who seldom bought more than a pipe for personal use.⁵²

Importers and wholesalers became more aggressive at the time of the Seven Years' War, not only acquiring wine for established customers but also undertaking speculative ventures. One sees this at work in the operation that Philip Cuyler devised for the supply of the British and colonial forts in western New York. Early in the conflict, with a partner and a factor, Cuyler built four bateaux and filled them with goods needed at Fort Oswego, on Lake Ontario, north of present-day Syracuse. The cargo included Madeira, which was a favorite of the officers, as well as rum, sugar, molasses, tea, coffee, chocolate, butter, pepper, tobacco, and dry goods. But Cuyler could not survive with soldiers as his only customers. He had family ties to Albany and Schenectady (his father, several siblings, and cousins lived there), so he focused some attention on the upper reaches of the Hudson and the Mohawk. For similar reasons, he cultivated buyers in Rhode Island, where his wife's family lived, and in New Jersey, where friends had settled. Cuyler made use of his family ties and extended them to associates far beyond.⁵³

The Seven Years' War was a watershed in wine wholesaling for many more

merchants than Cuyler. Wine-drinking settlers began pushing into the new western territories with a renewed vigor in the 1750s and 1760s, and suppliers stretched their distribution lines to meet them. At the same time, the number of individuals engaging in importing and wholesaling back east rose, increasing the competitive pressure on merchants in the port towns, much as the "mushroom" merchants were increasing the pressure on exporters in Madeira at the same time. The rise in merchants led to increased efforts to please customers, by calling on them, offering packages of goods they wanted, tailoring the wine to their tastes, and extending credit. One detects this new commercial aggressiveness in the circuits that merchants made during and after the Seven Years' War. Urban importers and wholesalers, who for the most part had been content to wait for customers to come to them, started visiting surrounding counties and towns in search of business. The Philadelphian George Morgan was one of the merchants who redrew his map of interest. Unlike his older partners before him, he took a tour of the New England colonies in 1764 to drum up sales. A few years later, he floated down the Ohio and as far west as Kaskaskia doing the same.⁵⁴

To meet with success, importers and wholesalers had to provide a full range of services: accepting, inspecting, tasting, repairing, handling, and storing the liquor; transporting it to customers; securing payment; exporting the customer's goods; and providing customers with contacts among traders in other goods. They began to take care of quality, packaging, and price—all matters that had previously been dictated or handled by European exporters.⁵⁵ They became obsessed with the wines customers desired. A type of wine might go out of fashion. In New York in the 1750s, Claret was in "no demand" and there was "very little Burgundy or French wines"; Sherry, likewise, was "in very little esteem"; Madeira and Canary, on the other hand, were the "chief wines drunk." Merchants therefore stocked them first. Or, the taste might put consumers off. When buying in bulk, customers usually tasted the wine they were considering. They shunned sour wine. They also disliked new wine, which possessed a rough flavor. When they could not return ill-tasting wines to Europe, merchants doctored them, making them sweeter or darker, depending on the palate to be satisfied. In some markets, richer, darker hues were valued and accordingly would "sell much sooner," as would white wines that were blended with Tinta or "red, to color them." If wines were "new and not coulered," they would be "the very poorest articles you can send to this market and will not sell" except "at a very poor rate."⁵⁶

Extending the effort to draw customers into their fold, merchants also allowed better—meaning more liberal—terms of credit. "A real scarcity of money, plaguing all of Anglo-America, often obstructed consumers' wine purchases; so,

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too, did the suspect nature of locally issued paper money. Barter goods like fish, beeswax, wheat, and corn were acceptable as payment, but only for lesser wines. For better grades of wine—and over the course of the eighteenth century the quality of wine was improving—cash alone sufficed. But cash was scarce. The situation forced the merchants into what they felt was an excessive but unavoidable “commercial liberality”: when money was scarce, they offered customers more relaxed credit terms, from three to nine months; when cash was at hand, they discounted their prices for cash payment. The traders of Anglo-America negotiated such policies with care, taking into consideration individual cases and relationships, but over time their liberality became a required feature of the wine trade.⁵⁷

THE SITES OF WINE TRADING

Wine importers and wholesalers needed places to meet suppliers, competitors, and customers, to handle and store their liquor and its paraphernalia, and to keep letters and accounts tracking their increasingly complex businesses. These were their residences, countinghouses, and warehouses. In mid-eighteenth-century parlance, a “countinghouse” usually denoted a “room appropriated by traders to their books and accounts,” although over time the room and building became conflated. American countinghouses did not differ much from British ones, except that they were usually smaller, a reflection of colonial merchants’ smaller operations. In the last half of the eighteenth century, an established but not grand importer’s or wholesaler’s home, office, and store occupied a three- or four-story brick building. The ground floor was devoted to business, with a semipublic reception room and work area in front and a more private room for the merchant or partners in back. Private quarters lay above. Greater merchants might separate the functions architecturally, residing in one building and working in another, although unmarried partners and clerks usually lived in the countinghouse.⁵⁸

Wine merchants’ countinghouses had discursive and display uses as well as practical ones. They stood open to the public: customers, suppliers, competitors, and friends could come by. There merchants could conduct intimate conversations and forge personal relationships. Their furnishings revealed the accoutrements of the trade and their expertise, as well as their place in society. One of the most important aspects of display was the degree of separation between business life and private life. Most enterprisers did not have the wherewithal to own multiple establishments, and so their residences doubled as workspaces. Small- and midscale merchants usually lived behind or above their offices. If successful, a merchant could own or lease a separate residence, testifying to his entry into the

subcommunity of elite merchants. But even then he could not separate from trade completely, for the greater merchants still usually kept an office in their dwelling and a warehouse of sorts in their cellar or backyard.⁵⁹

BUILDINGS

Three increasingly grand buildings built or occupied by Philadelphia wine importers and wholesalers suggest the role that architectural space played in connecting merchants to their networks in a decentralized Atlantic commodity marketplace.⁶⁰ The wine importer Samuel Neave's house on South Second Street near the corner of Spruce Street was built in 1760. It is probably the most representative of the three as it was neither undeniably grand nor stridently Georgian. The house was originally thirty by forty-four feet with three and a half stories above a raised basement that served as cellar, a three-bay front, a brick facade with marble trim, a pedimented frontispiece, and a single-story gabled lean-to wing in the rear (figure 7.3). A fourteen-foot-square verandah and pantry connected the main house to a long, narrow (thirty-five by eighteen feet) outbuilding, with a kitchen below and nursery above. At the back of the property lay a greenhouse and a stable. Inside, the house's layout adhered to the fashionable London side-hall townhouse plan. In many respects, Neave's house was similar to the more genteel homes of its day. What marked it as the home of a merchant was the ground-floor store at its front and the counting room office behind.⁶¹

Another merchant who dabbled in wine, Charles Stedman, built a house a few blocks away on South Third Street, between Spruce and Walnut, several doors down from the house occupied by William Byrd III. Stedman's house was by design more sociable, set farther away from the wharves. It had many elements in common with Neave's: three and a half stories, a three-bay front of brick trimmed with stone, a Doric frontispiece and fanlight, a three-story lean-to in the rear, and a gabled roof; it was also laid out in the side-hall townhouse plan (figure 7.5). Yet it was grander. It boasted a high Georgian style, in contrast to the simpler vernacular style of Neave's house, and at thirty by fifty feet was larger. Each of the two floors had three rooms, trimmed with wainscoting and cornices. A slanting wooden bulkhead provided street-side access to Stedman's cellar, which by the 1760s was a necessity for a gentleman. From the front walk, one saw not a storefront or display window, but three floors with twelve-over-twelve sashes on the first- and second-story windows, eight-over-eight sashes on the smaller third-story windows, dentilled cornices decorating the facade, and arched dormers on the top floor. Lead spouts and electrical rods made by Benjamin Franklin graced the residence.⁶²

Stedman made his house more of a familial preserve by erecting a separate

two-story office building in back where he met customers. But even one as ambitious and successful as he could not easily separate social and business pursuits; in fact, he worked out of both spaces. The fairly traditional residence in front appears elegant and removed from the cut and thrust of everyday business, but that has more to do with changes that the city has undergone in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When the merchant moved in, it sat on the edge of a busy commercial zone, easily accessible to customers. Even at a leisurely pace, it took Stedman only six minutes to walk to the closest wharf and another eight minutes to get to the London Coffee House.

Three blocks from Stedman's home and two decades after Stedman built it, the importer and scion of the Madeira house Henry Hill erected a residence on South Fourth Street in the new Federal style. Hill bought the property in 1782 (it was previously the home of wine merchant George Meade) and in the ensuing years rebuilt and refurbished it. This insecure and obsessive trader—a birthright Quaker who attended Meetings but never joined any Meeting and had some sort of stutter—occupied the existing two-story brick house on the property and tirelessly managed the construction of something new. With a profusion of high-style English detail, the latter met “the general approbation of those of good taste,” even if it did not lie “in the best part of the City”⁶³ (figure 7.7). It boasted a Flemish bond brick facade and a front entrance that demanded attention. It was larger than Stedman's and Neave's at forty-eight by fifty-one feet, with three and a half stories set atop a raised basement and a three-bay front. Hill imported the large front fanlight from London. He decorated the cornice with acanthus leaves and fret-band motifs, and inserted a reedlike band between the double doors and stairs—both all the rage in London. Inside, he introduced a commodious center-hall floor plan. The entrance, tiled in black and white Italian marble squares, led to a handsome carved staircase with mahogany rails. He added white marble fireplaces and decorated them with floral, foliar, and shell motifs and putti. He placed elaborate acanthus motifs on the ceilings.

By the time the house was ready to occupy, Hill was more a man of parts—a fixture in Pennsylvania society, a director of the Bank of North America, and an ardent Federalist partisan—than a man of commerce. From his home office, Hill could differentiate his treatment of customers: he could decide how intimate and deferential to be . . . or allow them to be. To gain greater familiarity, he could share wine, spirits, tea, or something more substantial with them in addition to transacting business. He could invite some people into his home office and, in extraordinary circumstances, into his home; others he did not.

Despite his gestures toward Georgian serenity, Hill did not eschew the cut and thrust of commerce, the source of his wealth and power. The house was an

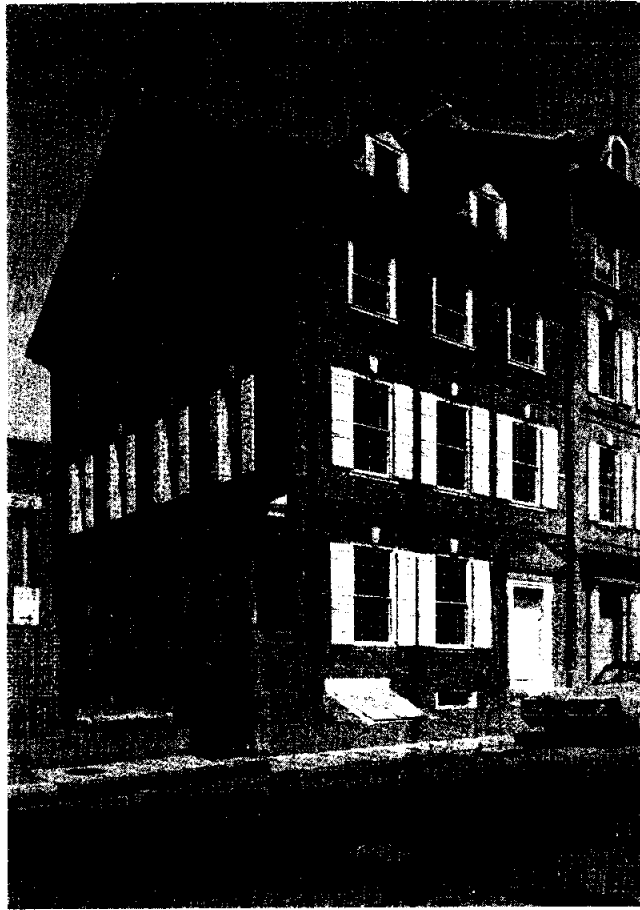


Figure 7.3. Front facade of Samuel Neave house,
Philadelphia, built c. 1760.

Source: Courtesy of The Library of Congress—
Historic American Buildings Survey, Washington, DC.

important site for his firm's wine trading, as it was for his political maneuvering. He installed a large working cellar, which was accessible, along with his private study, through a door opening off a side street. In the cellar, he stored and displayed wine he and his partners brought from Madeira, and he offered samples to correspondents, neighbors, generals, and fellow club members who came to taste the wine that bore the brand of "Hill's Madeira." His last mention in Philadelphia's newspapers occurred in an announcement postponing the "Sale of Madeira Wine" that was to be held in this very space.⁶⁴

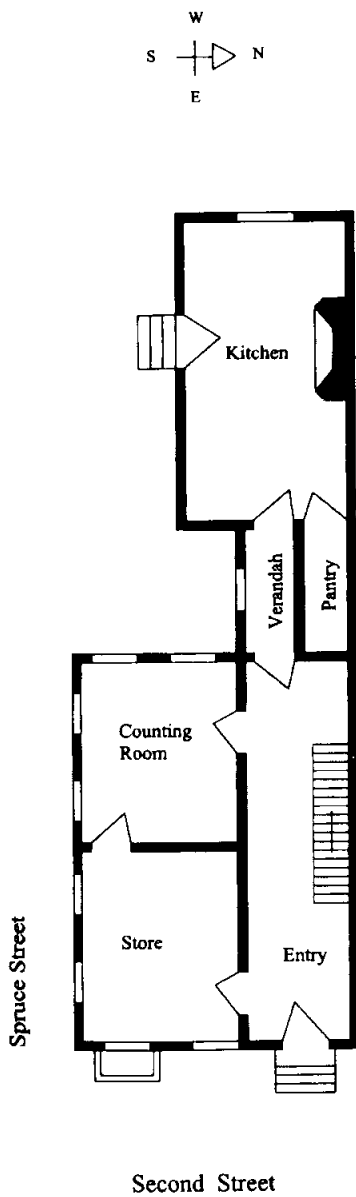


Figure 7.4. First-floor plan of Samuel Neave house, Philadelphia, built c. 1760. Source: Based on Insurance Policy Minutes, August 5, 1760, The Philadelphia Contributionship, The Contributionship Companies, Philadelphia. Drawn by Donald Buaku.

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Figure 7.5 Front facade of Charles Stedman house,
Philadelphia, built 1765.

Source: Courtesy of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia.

CELLARS

Storage was essential to merchants, and wine merchants needed it more than most; so it became a mark of the wine trade. By itself, a 110-gallon wine pipe was a sizeable beast. Six or twelve such creatures took up a large amount of space. A cellar or "a large vault" under the street before one's house was a common feature of dwellings, countinghouses, and warehouses in European and American cities. Sometimes it extended under the entire house; sale announcements singled out "a commodious cellar under the whole" as worthy of notice. Henry Hill and Samuel Neave had their own. Others rented cellar space if they did not have it, or if theirs was not capacious enough, under the Exchange (as in

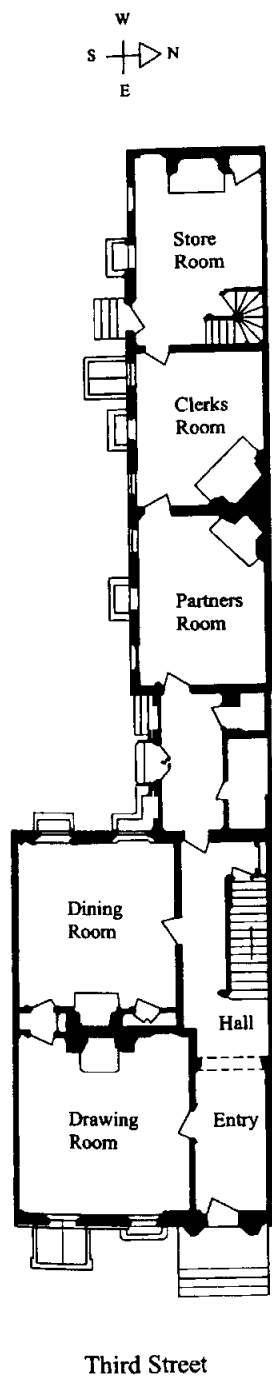


Figure 7.6. First-floor plan of Charles Stedman house, Philadelphia, built 1765.
 Source: Based on Nicholas B. Wainwright, *Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia: The House and Furniture of General John Cadwalader* (Philadelphia, 1964).
 Drawn by Donald Buaku.

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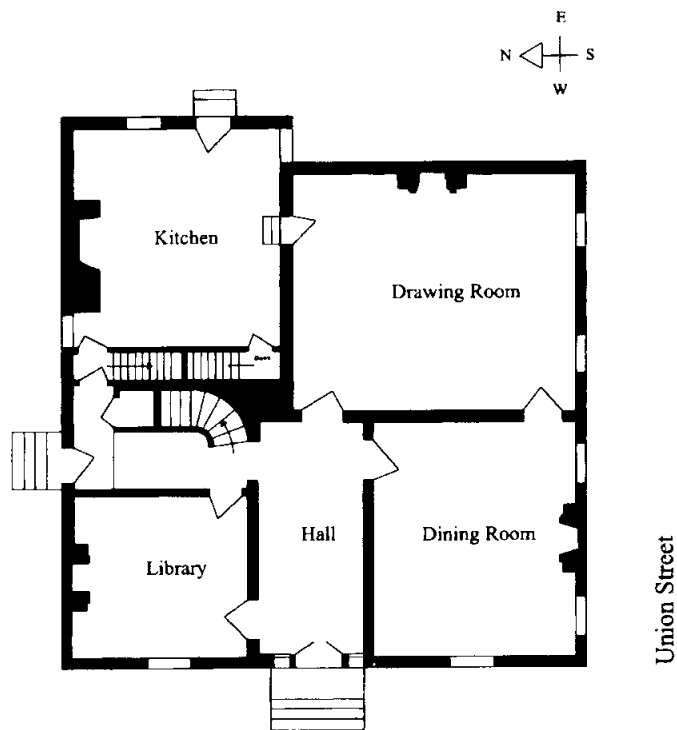


Figure 7.7. Front facade of Henry Hill house, Philadelphia, built 1783–1787.

Source: Courtesy of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Charleston) or a under a competitor's house. Although he had his own, Neave needed more space; so he rented "convenient CELLARS for Wine Stores, under the Dwelling House of Doctor MORGAN," a few blocks from his own counting-house. As the wine-trading business grew, resort to rented cellars grew more frequent. A good cellar needed to be dry and either hot or cold, depending on the wine stored. One New York cellar in 1773 was deemed particularly suitable for Madeira, which needed heat, because it was "half above ground," half below, and so benefited from the sun shining on it "most of the day." Toward this end, many subterranean cellars were heavily plastered. A good cellar was also sturdy: heavy, usually two-inch planking on floors withstood the wear and tear of moving heavy barrels around, while liming them softened the contact of wood upon wood. It should also be fireproof and, above all, commodious.⁶⁵

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Figure 7.8. First-floor plan of Henry Hill house,
Philadelphia, built 1783-1787.

Source: Based on materials kept by The Society for the
Preservation of Landmarks. Drawn by Donald Buaku.

As the eighteenth century advanced, demand for more and more varied wines, increasing competition among retail outlets, and growing awareness of wine maintenance increased the amount of wine wholesalers kept in inventory—some kept upward of several hundred pipes—and this required that a larger part of the premises be devoted to storage. When Henry Hill rebuilt the house on South Fourth Street in Philadelphia in the 1780s, he added an arched wine cellar in its basement to store his firm's Madeira imports. In the same decade, the merchant John Deas Jr. installed a shelf-lined wine cellar under the whole of his new countinghouse on East Bay Street in Charleston. Some importers and wholesalers dedicated special buildings to wine storage. Charleston wine and dry

goods wholesaler Thomas Simons in 1805 kept his stock—nearly 675 gallons of ten kinds of wine and five kinds of spirits—in one of the outbuildings behind his main house, in addition to a much larger cache of wine-filled pipes he stored in a warehouse nearby.⁶⁶

Wine merchants and customers alike viewed cellars and warehouses as evidence of the scale of the business and the knowledge and skill of the businessman. They became proud possessions. In the years preceding the Revolution, one wholesaler and importer in Philadelphia invited the public into his cellar to select “wine at very reasonable prices.” Another firm likewise directed interested buyers to the cellar it had rented “under the Friends’ Meeting [House] in Pine Street,” where they would find wines “Just Imported” from France and Italy. Charleston importers boasted about the capacities and capabilities of their “very good” cellars. There merchants displayed different types of wine and spirits and the paraphernalia for blending and packaging them. One needed the full range of wine containers, from pipes, hogsheads, and quarter-casks down to bottles, to be ready to sell “from a quart to any quantity,” and the full range of vintners’ tools to perfect or improve the blend. In the cellar customers could find the wine “ready packed” or have it mixed and casked or bottled before their arrival. The cost of a wine cellar was considerable, but by 1800 no importer or wholesaler of any expectation could trade without one. It became the *sine qua non* of a competitive wine-trading operation.⁶⁷

INTERIORS

Little is known about how merchants’ houses and offices were outfitted—odd, given their prominence in the early American cityscape. A contemporary English watercolor depicts a single room with several chests; account books and ledgers grace shelves; clerks work on slope-front desks; and pigeonhole cabinets line the wall behind. A contemporary American sketch from 1795–1805 (figure 7.9), perhaps of Stephen Girard’s Philadelphia countinghouse, shows much the same: a space suffused with light, with a large fireplace, unadorned walls, and the clerks separated from visitors by a rail. It is safe to assume that most business spaces were not so grand, not lit by such a large Palladian window, and not so uncluttered.⁶⁸

Probate inventories fill out the rather sketchy picture, confirming the separation between business and personal lives.⁶⁹ A typical counting room or countinghouse contained the wherewithal for business. Most obvious were correspondence materials: writing desks, stools, candlesticks and candles, pencils, pens, ink and inkstands, sand and pounce boxes, paper in several qualities, and ac-

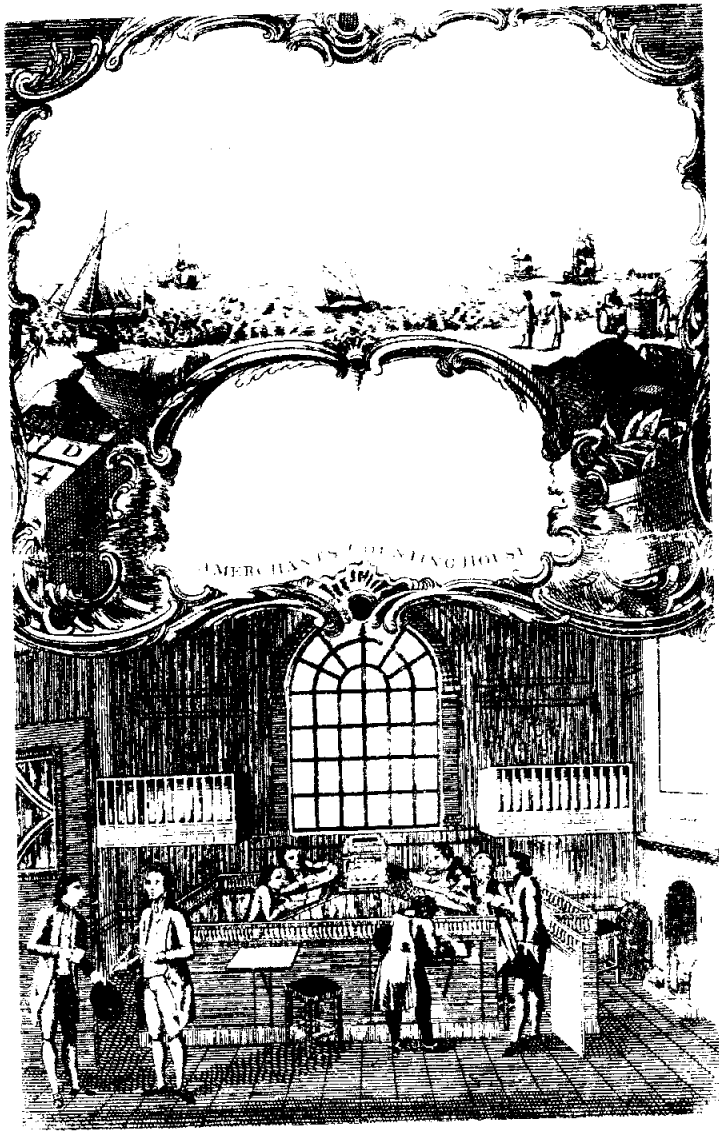


Figure 7.9. *A Merchants Counting House*, by Alexander Lawson, c. 1795-1801, possibly of Stephen Girard's countinghouse in Philadelphia.
Source: Courtesy of The Library Company of Philadelphia.

count books. Newspapers and magazines kept the occupants abreast of news. Here, too, one found tools of the wine merchant's calling. Charleston commission merchant John Walter Gibbs, who traded heavily in wine in the late 1780s from a countinghouse behind his residence, kept a wine crane for siphoning wine, a hand pump, funnels, measures of various quantities, a mortar and pestle for pulverizing fining agents, and weights and scales for weighing them. Carpenters' tools for breaking down, repairing, and reassembling casks were also a necessity. Since hours were long, personal needs intruded into the workspace, and the office served as a second kitchen and shed at times, with coffee mills, coffeepots, teakettles, cheese toasters, wine and rum containers, corn mills, and a full array of rakes, hoes, and spades. Assigned to the countinghouse were at least one clerk, perhaps two, and a slave. The artifacts and occupants "convey a sense of the command of the human and material resources" needed to carry on interimperial exchange and local sales.⁷⁰

Countinghouses were not always so plain and utilitarian. When the Charleston wine wholesaler Thomas Simons died in March 1805 at the age of forty, fully engaged in trade, the contents of the large front room on the ground floor of his 13 Legare Street residence show that he used it not only for conducting business—bookkeeping, negotiating, and some displaying and selling—but also for reading, dining, and sleeping. This room was dominated by two hundred books set in a case; scattered around them were two spyglasses, a portable writing desk, and a straw floor covering. Such elements were the stuff of overseas trade. But in his letters, Simons said he desired to make his customers and suppliers feel "at home," and thus more willing to do business and cooperate with him. So the room where Simons entertained and dunned customers was also the dining room and game room, with six Hogarth prints, a pair of dining tables, fourteen straw-bottom chairs, a small tea table, two sideboards, a wine cooler, two knife cases filled with knives, and a backgammon board. The room "offered an important venue for face-to-face negotiations, where the competitive culture of trade coincided with hospitality," even as it served as a family dining room. It allowed Simons to display familiarity and equality, should he deem it fruitful, "render[ing] personal and private experience sensible in the larger situation" of an ever-shifting commercial world.⁷¹ At his death, the room also contained three beds, three mattresses, three pillows, two bolsters, four basins, a basin stand, a looking glass, and a medicine chest. Simons's final illness may have forced him to remain on the ground floor, which would account for sleeping and medicinal articles not usually associated with the countinghouse. In the yard behind the residence, an outbuilding housed wine containers, carpenters' tools, barnyard animals, and garden implements. The dividing line between professional and

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personal in Simons's world was at best imprecise—and he liked it that way, for it allowed him to expand his trade.⁷²

Countinghouse rooms sent a number of messages to those who entered. They expressed the merchant's *bona fides*: he had a cellar, wine to sell, and tools for treating and tasting the wine. These implied, although not always correctly, that the importer or wholesaler understood the arts of wine. They expressed his commercial success: an office, a clerk (or, better, two clerks), a separate back room, a stockpile of wine, and a cellar and warehouse suggested that the merchant was good at his business. They expressed his allegiance to merchants' habits and norms: a countinghouse in a central location at the heart of the city's commercial zone, easy to get to, and usually open. Most houses with clerks stayed open from 5 or 7 in the morning to 9 at night. "Constant attendance" was these merchants' watchword. Rows upon rows of ledgers showed that they kept written records in an orderly fashion; this inspired confidence that they treated customers diligently and lawfully. Being invited deeper into the countinghouse conveyed a message of intimacy to the customer. Being ushered into the back room was an honor, even greater if merchant and client later removed to the living quarters of the house. These were small spaces but they conveyed subtle variations on the themes of professional skill, allegiance, and respect—all the better because they were automatic and in the background—supporting the merchants' conversations with customers, competitors, and suppliers and fixing the integument of their trade.

BAYNTON'S NET

Many of the ways that wine importers and wholesalers constructed and maintained connections in a decentralized and porous transimperial economy are summed up in the work of the firms founded by Peter Baynton. Born in Philadelphia in 1697, Baynton entered the world of business in the 1720s; the dynasty he founded spanned much of the eighteenth century. He married a Charlestonian. At least as early as 1721, he captained a coastwise trading vessel that shuttled between Philadelphia and Charleston, selling wood and lime to planters in Carolina and acquiring rice and rum for Pennsylvanians. After his first wife died, he married a Philadelphia woman in 1723 and settled there the following year. Baynton imported and sold sugar, rum, clothes, sea provisions, whale oil, and "sundry European and West India Goods" from a small house at the lower end of Front Street. Like any West India sugar trader, for that is how he styled himself, he also offered wine. He traded small volumes, usually Canary, although he occasionally offered Madeira, Claret, Florence, and generic "wine." In 1728–31, for instance,

he sold 386 gallons to twenty-two customers, all but two of whom lived and worked in the city. Few buyers were related to him by blood or marriage. Baynton had two large customers in these years: James Sykes, an assemblyman for Newcastle County, who bought 160 gallons of Canary, and Edward Hatton, who bought 110 gallons of Madeira and 25 gallons of Florence. Like other importers and wholesalers, Baynton also retailed wine. Aside from Sykes and Hatton, his customers took smaller amounts, on average 4.6 gallons of wine over four years, and half of them bought two gallons or less. All but two chose Canary, although that may simply reflect that Baynton, like other wholesalers, sold what he had on hand and did not buy more until he had depleted his stock.⁷³

When Peter drowned in the Delaware River in 1744, his eldest son, John, inherited the business. John Baynton's trade focused more on the import and sale of wine than his father's. During the late 1750s, he began investing in various ad hoc general merchandising voyages to Newfoundland and Jamaica, in company with Peter Bard. They eventually parted ways, and John joined forces in 1758 with a more prominent merchant, Samuel Wharton, to sell a "large and neat assortment" of imported "European and East Indian goods" "very cheap" "for Ready Money, or short Credit."⁷⁴ Baynton & Wharton and its successor built and deployed links to eastern suppliers, local competitors, and western customers.

John Baynton and his partners aggressively built new bridges to suppliers. Noting that his firm dealt "pretty constantly in Madeira wine" and had done so from the time of his father, Baynton proposed to Madeira suppliers Lamar, Hill, Bisset & Co. that he and his partners "frequently address" the Madeirans on condition that they would "in like manner make the correspondence nearly-reciprocal." By this, Baynton meant that the exporters should "from time to time" consign to his firm in Philadelphia parcels of their wine, which would be "as well disposed of" by it as by any firm there. At the close of the Seven Years' War, Baynton became even more adventurous and issued a volley of proposals. He asked Lamar, Hill, Bisset & Co. to join him in buying a vessel or two, but the Madeirans squelched this idea. He next proposed that the exporters supply his firm with as much wine as the Americans "could advantageously vend" — in essence, that the Madeirans grant him an exclusive agency contract, cutting off his competitors in Canada. This would, he argued, aid Philadelphians eager to break into the Newfoundland fish trade. The scheme probably sank, as there is no subsequent mention of it, and the Hills continued to export to Canada. But Baynton & Wharton was not checked. It strove "to engross the future" of the Atlantic wheat trade two years later, proposing to "ship as much from hence as all other persons whatsoever" to the Hill firm. Multiply rebuffed, Baynton & Wharton and its successor, Baynton, Wharton & Morgan, started searching for more

supportive correspondents and alternative supply systems that involved cooperating with competitors in Philadelphia.⁷⁵

The lure of the frontier and an interest in western and Indian trade turned the partners' attention inland, even as they were scheming to engross the trade in Atlantic wine. Baynton & Wharton sold provisions to the troops at Quebec in 1760 and at Forts Pitt and Detroit two years later. When the firm's erstwhile apprentice (later junior partner) George Morgan became a senior partner in 1763 (he would marry John Baynton's daughter the next year), the newly reconfigured firm of Baynton, Wharton & Morgan returned to the possibilities of supplying frontier customers. From 1763, when it opened a store at Fort Pitt, the small, residential countinghouse and store on Philadelphia's Water Street served as the center of a widening, well-financed web of commerce. By 1765, the firm had committed to an "Illinois Bubble" that Morgan concocted with the Indian agent and fur trader George Croghan. The Fort Pitt store supplied people at the head of the Ohio River for over five years with everyday necessities — clothing, wine, and spirits to whites and liquor, jewelry, and weapons to Indians. Eager to push into undominated markets, the firm began supplying travelers on the Ohio and Mississippi from three additional stores, near Fort Kaskaskia, near Fort Chartres, and in the shadow of the Cahokia Court House, and that work quickly dwarfed provisioning Fort Pitt and its environs. The firm drew on suppliers as far east as Amsterdam and as far north as Boston; by 1766 it had brought roughly £40,000 sterling in goods to "the several Posts in the Indian Country" that supplied soldiers and civilians. For five years during the 1760s, the Fort Pitt store stood as the most significant provisioning post for the Ohio Valley journey, remaining dominant by placing agents in the western field and insisting upon constant reports from them on how commodities such as Madeira fared.⁷⁶

Merchants were, with rulers, "the critical agents for the articulation of the supply and demand of commodities" in Anglo-America and elsewhere.⁷⁷ The transatlantic wine merchants were critical agents of articulation in the movement of Madeira wine from grape to table. Their networks had a particular geometry, characterized by one major link across the Atlantic for each product they imported and a multitude of links to customers, most of whom were nearby. Until late in the eighteenth century, the American-side merchants usually maintained relationships with one Madeira house at a time, using them to sell American grain, fish, and furs to Europe and to supply them with wine for resale in the towns and on the frontier of the New World. They dealt with houses in other places for other goods, including other wines and liquors. Exclusivity in a relationship arose from two sources: trust and lack of competition among the

Madeira exporters. Oceanic distances required trust. Building it with a correspondent took time and effort; as long as Madeira exporters adhered to Factory prices a single supplier was enough. This system began to fray as the nineteenth century approached and competition among Madeira exporters encouraged them to compete on price. By this time, Americans imported a greater variety of wines, and they were able to deal with several Madeira exporters to take advantage of the price competition.

At home in the New World, the importers and wholesalers cultivated a range of customers. They particularly sought out tavern keepers and storekeepers who bought larger quantities, but most continued to sell by retail to individuals as well. These relationships were usually local, so buyers could see their suppliers face-to-face. They transacted business on the street, in coffeehouses, and in lawyers' chambers, but the most important venues for encounters with customers were the merchants' countinghouses, which were designed as "conversation spaces" to personalize the exchange. A countinghouse often had a back room, more private than the front, furnished with chairs, a dining table, a tea table, decanters, wineglasses, tumblers, biscuits, nuts—and wine. The room could be devoted to business or co-opted by family socializing. Inviting customers into this and other private rooms allowed merchants and customers to step out of their customary commercial roles and inject a personal tone that solidified relationships. From there the wine was dispersed into the country and into consumers' hands.

- Its Closing Stages Ensuing upon the Treaty of 1810* (Lisbon, 1940), on Lisbon's association; and John Delaforce, *The Factory House at Oporto* (London, 1990). On the Factory at Madeira, see British National Stock Account, December 31, 1774, packet 1, bundle 1, English Factory Records, Blandy's Head Office, Funchal; John Marsden Pintard to Elias Boudinot, May 25, 1784, folder 41, Boudinot Correspondence, ABS; Cossart, *Madeira*, 27–28, 35, 116. On annual "donations," which protected "against any attacks of the Inquisition" by keeping foreigners on good terms with the government, as well as funded sick or shipwrecked seamen and pensioned "such of its own body as shall have . . . declined in their circumstances," see Blandy, *Copy of Record*, 1–3; João Antonio de Sá Pereira to the Count of Oeiras, April 30, 1768, caixa ii, no. 318, AHU; Staunton, *Authentic Account*, 73–74.
46. Newton & Gordon to Thomas Newton, December 26, 1760, December 1761, January 22, 1762, vol. 2, fols. 256, 393, 413, to Alexander Johnston & Co., January 21, 1761, vol. 2, fol. 266, Francis Newton to Thomas Gordon, February 5, 1792, vol. 14, fol. 91, NGL. On adherence and the consequences of opposition to price-fixing, see Francis Newton to George Spence, September 4, 1755, vol. 1, fol. 173, Newton & Gordon to Thomas Newton, February 11, 1763, vol. 3, fol. 96, to Moore & Johnston, July 27, 1777, vol. 6, fol. 253, to Francis Newton, January 10, 1787, vol. 9, fol. 348, to Francis Newton, December 24, 1789, vol. 12, fol. 201, NGL.
47. This and the following paragraph draw upon John Bisset to —, February 15, 1721, SP 89/90/39, H. Frankland to William Pitt, January 14, 1761, SP 89/54/1, and Order from the Portuguese King, January 3, 1761, SP 89/54/9, NA-UK; British National Stock Account, 1774 & 1807, bundle 1, English Factory Records, Blandy's Head Office, Funchal; Newton & Gordon to Johnston & Jolly, October 23, 1763, vol. 3, fol. 230, NGL.
48. Newton & Gordon to Thomas Gordon, September 30, 1789, vol. 12, fol. 151, NGL; Minutes, bundle 1, English Factory Records, Blandy's Head Office, Funchal; Blandy, *Copy of Record*, 3; Francis Newton to Newton & Gordon, March 9, 1792, bundle 6, box 1791/92, CGP-Guildhall.
49. For Colson, Smith & Robinson's refusal and eventual payment, see Minutes, November 6, 1806, bundle 1, packet 6, English Factory Records, Blandy's Head Office, Funchal; Blandy, *Copy of Record*, 3. A native — Manoel Henriques de Oliveira — vexed the Factory throughout the 1780s and 1790s, as well, but the Factory had less sway over the Portuguese. William Johnston to Thomas Gordon, September 14, 1785, vol. 9, fol. 84, Thomas Murdoch to Thomas Gordon, June 5, 1794, vol. 15, fol. 467, NGL; Francis Newton to Thomas Gordon, March 9, 1792, box 1791/92, bundle 6, CGP-Guildhall.
50. In contrast to some of their product innovations that were contemporaneously recognized as novel.

CHAPTER 7. STRONG NETWORKS OF WEAK TIES

1. Walter C. Hartridge, ed., *The Letters of Robert Mackay to His Wife* (Athens, GA, 1949), 238.
2. The few surviving letter books and account books kept by merchants working in non-

English-speaking markets do not lend themselves to comparison to the mountain of material left by Anglo-American distributors. At this point the evidence that has surfaced does not suggest significant differences in distribution activities.

3. On the English-language background of the uses of "merchant," see Hancock, *Citizens*, 9-10. Cf. John Weever, *Ancient Funeral Monuments* (London, 1631), 341; *The Character and Qualifications of an Honest Loyal Merchant* (London, 1686), 1, 6; John Kersey, *Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum*, 1705 (Menston, England, 1969), s.v. "merchant"; *Guardian*, September 25, 1713; Daniel Defoe, *Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (London, 1724), 1:124, *The Complete English Tradesman* (London, 1726), 1:7-8; *A General Description of All Trades* (London, 1747), 140; R. Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (London, 1747), 284-85. Cf. Richard Grassby, *The Business Community of Seventeenth Century England* (Cambridge, 1995), 8-11; David H. Sacks, *The Widening Gate* (Berkeley, 1991), 125-26; Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution* (Princeton, 1993); Perry Gauci, *The Politics of Trade* (Oxford, 2001), 8-9, 20-23, 34-35; Jacob M. Price, "What Did Merchants Do? Reflections on British Overseas Trade, 1660-1790," *Journal of Economic History* 49 (1989): 282; Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730* (Berkeley, 1989), 34.

On merchants in the Portuguese world, and a similar evolution in meaning, see David G. Smith, "The Mercantile Class of Portugal and Brazil in the Seventeenth Century: A Socio-Economic Study of the Merchants of Lisbon and Bahia, 1620-1690" (PhD diss., University of Texas, Austin, 1975), 16-18; A.J., *A Compleat Account of the Portuguese Language* (London, 1701), Notícia geral do comércio (c. 1767), Codex, fol. 3, in Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, Seção de manuscritos, cited in Lugar, "Merchant Community," 32-33; Jorge M. Pedreira, draft MS on Lisbon merchants.

4. Bernard Bailyn, *The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1955), ix; Phyllis W. Hunter, *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780* (Ithaca, 2001), 3.
5. Nicasius de Sille to Maximilliaen van Beeckerke, May 23, 1654, in I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island, 1498-1909* (New York, 1922), 4:148-49. See also "Secretary van Tienhoven's Answer to the Remonstrance of New Netherland," November 29, 1650, in Edmund B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany, 1856), 1:422-23.
6. Matson, *Merchants and Empire*, 3-4, 334n5; Robert M. Druvor, "The New York Commercial Community: The Revolutionary Experience" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1975), 14, 32.
7. Leila Sellers, *Charleston Business on the Eve of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 1934), 49; Stuart Stumpf, "The Merchants of Colonial Charleston, 1680-1756" (PhD diss., Michigan State University, 1971), abstract and 46-51, 69-73; Nuala Zaehdieh, "The Merchants of Port Royal, Jamaica, and the Spanish Contraband Trade, 1655-1692," *WMQ*, 3rd ser., 3 (1986): 570-93.
8. "The Discontented Group," *Massachusetts Magazine*, February 1790, 68; Doerflinger, *Vigorous Spirit*, 57, 58, 62, 68; Gary B. Nash, "The Early Merchants of Philadelphia:

- The Formation and Disintegration of a Founding Elite," in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Richard S. and Mary M. Dunn (Philadelphia, 1986), 338, 350; Druktor, "New York Commercial Community," 14-18, 21; Bruce M. Wilkenfeld, "The Social and Economic Structure of the City of New York, 1695-1796" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1973), 11, 49, 53, 169.
9. For seventeenth-century merchants, see John Hull Letter Book, 1670-83, vol. 1, fols. 87, 117, 123-24, vol. 2, 437, 508, AAS; Jeffries Family MSS, vol. 1, fols. 54, 76, 78, 103, 106-10, MHS; Mereness, *Travels in the American Colonies*, 10-11.
 10. For this analysis, a wholesaler of wine is an individual who handled large quantities (no less than quarter-casks), managed bulk sales, and referred to having imported the goods or brought them from the vessel; a retailer, on the other hand, generally listed small quantities, usually mentioned a shop, often insisted on cash, and sometimes thanked customers - something a wholesaler never did. Problems arise when wholesalers also retailed from stores. Fuller analysis appears in David Hancock, "Markets, Merchants and the Wider World of Boston Wine, 1700-1773," in *Entrepreneurs: The Boston Business Community, 1700-1850*, ed. Conrad E. Wright and Kathryn P. Viens, (Boston, 1997), 62-95.
 11. AHR 9 (1904): 524; Governor Edmund Andros to Commissioners of Trade, March 1, 1678, in Peter R. Christoph and Florence A. Christoph, eds., *The Andros Papers, 1677-1678* (Syracuse, 1990); Peter R. Christoph, ed., *The Dongan Papers, 1683-1688*, part 2 (Syracuse, 1996), *sub* 1683; Bond, no. 1059, JLP; Kingsland Deposition, June 8, 1689, NYHS; Reinier Willemsse Account, 1680, no. 1024, John Tatham, October 30, 1689, no. 1394, Stephen Van Cortlandt to Edward Randolph, December 22, 1688, no. 0996, JLP; Peter R. Christoph, ed., *The Leisler Papers, 1689-1691* (Syracuse, 2002), 473-523; Edmund B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documentary History of the State of New York* (Albany, 1850): 21-250, and *Colonial History of the State of New York*, 3:572-96; John Miller, *A Description of the Province of the City of New York . . . 1695*, ed. John G. Shea (New York, 1862), 50-51, 108-12; Frederic De Peyster, ed., *The Life and Administration of Richard, Earl of Bellomont* (New York, 1879), 16-21, ii, xiii.
 12. The customs ledgers record ships arriving with dutiable wine in January-June 1703, March-November 1704, April-November 1705, March-November 1707, June-October 1708, and March-April 1709. It is possible that the 1704, 1705, and 1707 records are complete, since Atlantic shipping slowed considerably during the winter. But 1703, 1708, and 1709 records are incomplete and 1706 is missing. Julius M. Bloch, Leo Hershkowitz, et al., eds., *An Account of Her Majesty's Revenue for the Province of New York, 1701-1709* (Ridgewood, 1966).
 13. NOSL for New York, 1715-22, CO 5/1222-23, NA-UK.
 14. NOSL for Boston and Salem record no entries in 1714 and 1715, one in 1716, two in 1717, nine in 1718, and eight in 1719. No ships or masters are recorded as entering the ports more than once; these NOSL do not record consignees' names. The thirty-six "important" exporters were the twenty-five who exported at least five pipes over the 5 1/2 years, plus eleven who exported less than that but did so in more than one year.
 15. The numbers of traders in New York and Massachusetts are not strictly comparable. The New York Manifest Books appear to have cataloged every importer for each ship

arrival. The Massachusetts NOSL record only one consignee per shipment; this is almost certainly a shorthand—few shippers could fill the entire hold of a ship. The quantities of wine should be comparable, however. On ways to increase the stock of wine through “smuggling”—shipping it as vinegar, declaring and paying duty on only a portion of a cargo of it, and, most notoriously, failing to declare and pay duty on any of it—problems for the British Empire from 1763 through 1781, see *Boston Gazette*, December 28, 1768.

16. In Massachusetts, the thirty “important” importers are the twenty who imported at least eighty pipes, plus nine who imported less than that, but did so in more than one year, plus Nathaniel Balstone, who imported sixty-five pipes in 1752, a more than 90 percent market share for that year. In New York, the fifty-six “important” importers are the twenty-four who imported at least eighty pipes, plus thirty-two who imported at least ten pipes, but did so in at least four years. The definition of “important” is somewhat arbitrary, used only to give the reader a sense of the data. A complementary analysis of the Massachusetts import data is given in Hancock, “Wider World,” table 1, p. 69.
17. This difference, however, may be partially attributable to the way the data were recorded. Similar results are obtained by analyzing the New York NOSL, which for the purposes of cohort reconstruction are probably less complete a listing given the kind of information being recorded. The NOSL for 1763 and 1764 detail ninety-four separate enterprisers importing wine into the city. In these two years, 3,406 pipes of wine were imported; each importer averaged 36 pipes at a rate of 18 per year. Half and third shares were most popular. In these two years, the top ten importers took in only 36 percent of the total, with none of them taking more than 5.1 percent, usually in no more than two ships.
18. The results of the following analysis are set out and analyzed in greater detail in Hancock, “Wider World,” 62-95; the following paragraphs draw upon its material. A database of vital statistics and social activities of 383 Massachusetts merchants in the NOSL was constructed, amplified with information found in the Thwing Index at the Massachusetts Historical Society and the various reference works and manuscript collections cited in the notes that follow. To the 383 were added 9 individuals and firms not directly engaged in shipping—Chase & Speakman, Nathaniel Cossin, Andrew Craigie, Samuel Fletcher, William Hunt, John Moore, Poole & Clarke, Edmund Quincy, and Jonathan Williams—who advertised in newspapers or whose business records have survived. For 105 of the 198 who worked and lived in Boston, some indication of primary activity was ascertained. Some 48 of the 105 were “merchants.” *Boston News-Letter*, and *Boston Weekly Advertiser*, 1758 and 1765; Amory Letter Books, Amory Papers, LC; Edmund Quincy (1703-1788) Papers, MHS; Bossenger Foster Day Book, 1780-83, AAS.
19. Numbers are derived from Dructor, “New York Commercial Community,” appendices A and C, as well as tables II-7, V-14, pp. 29, 171. Confusing in Dructor’s discussion is an inconsistent distinction between “selling records” and “commodity dealers.” When necessary, recourse should be made to the data in his appendices, rather than in his tables. Appendix F details wine shipped into New York City during the war: forty-

three vessels arrived from Madeira and other places with wine; usually, from eight to ten ships entered each year, with the exception of 1778, 1781, and 1782, when only one or two did. On the foreign merchants trading in New York, see *Daily Advertiser*, February 27, 1786, February 4, 1794; *Minerva*, and *Mercantile Evening Advertiser*, July 15, 1796; *New-York Gazette*, December 24, 1799; *Mercantile Advertiser*, 1800; *New-York Price Current*, August 27, 1803.

20. The same can be said of Philadelphia. The number of wine importers and wholesalers trading there rose. Philadelphia city and county merchants advertising wine in the newspapers grew from one in 1730 to twenty-five in 1764. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, August 29, 1729, October 14, 1731, August 22, 1734, June 5, July 3, 1735, December 2, 1736, 1764 (passim). After the Revolutionary War, the import and wholesale wine market continued to grow, although by what rate is unclear—because, inexplicably, merchants appear to have shied away from advertising with the gusto they had before the conflict. Some sense of growth is recorded in the “Registers of Duties Paid on Imported Goods” for 1781–87, 6 vols., RG 4, PSA, which lists 380 different individuals and firms plying a trade in the commodity, and most of these were importers and wholesalers. Finally, *Poulson’s Daily American Advertiser* carried advertisements for thirteen wine importers and two wholesalers, and twelve importer-wholesalers in 1815, when just over three-quarters of wine advertisers were involved in importing and wholesaling. Almost 90 percent of the traders lived and worked within six blocks of the Delaware and four blocks of Market Street. Wine traders increased at a slower rate than did merchants in general. Included was the Portuguese importer Teles de Menezes who acted as the agent for Madeira exporter Dona Guiomar de Sá Vilhena in 1776–89. The size of Philadelphia’s larger overseas trading community grew dramatically after the founding of the colony in 1680: from 8 merchants trading overseas in 1690, the group had soared to 230 by 1756, 335 by 1775, 514 by 1785, and 1,023 by 1814. Nash, “Early Merchants”; Constables Returns for 1775, Philadelphia City Archives; Doerflinger, *Vigorous Spirit*, 17, citing Francis White, *The Philadelphia Directory* (Philadelphia, 1785); Kite’s *Philadelphia Directory for 1814* (Philadelphia, 1814).
21. The eighteen *Boston Gazette* advertisers are distinguishable from store- or shopkeepers as not mentioning a store or shop, and as advertising sales in large containers (like pipes). In all, the *Boston Directory* for 1807 listed 385 merchants, 125 storekeepers and shopkeepers, and 19 innkeepers and tavern keepers. *Boston Directory*, 40–41. Of the eighteen importers and wholesalers advertising in the newspapers, as opposed to being listed in the directory, thirteen worked upon the wharfs—seven on Long, and three on India. See also Gayle E. Sawtelle, “The Commercial Landscape of Boston in 1800: Documentary and Archaeological Perspectives on the Geography of Retail Shopkeeping,” 2 vols. (PhD diss., Boston University, 1999), fig. 4.3.
22. *Columbian Centinel*, July 12, 1806, January 14, 1807; *Boston Gazette*, January 26, 1807; *Repertory*, April 14, December 4, 1807; cf. *Federal Gazette*, and *Philadelphia Evening Post*, December 11, 1793, where an insurance broker was combining such work with importing Madeira.
23. In 1782–85, 70 percent (238 of 342) of Newton & Gordon’s consignees were private buyers; they took 29 percent of the wine. In 1797, 73 percent (35 of 46) of the Lea-

- cocks' purchasers were buying for personal consumption; they took 23 percent of the volume. Similarly for the extended Hill firm; in 1762-67, 58 percent of all consignees were ordering it for personal consumption. There are no later statistics for the Hill firm. Newton & Gordon, Bills of Lading books, CGP-MWC; Leacock Bills of Lading Books, Leacock Papers; Lamar, Hill Inventories, folders 1-4, Hill-EWS. One might think the Revolution and the problems it raised with Americans' repayment of debts owed to European and Madeiran creditors might have induced a decline in direct sales, but just the opposite seems to have happened.
24. William Byrd, *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712*, ed. Louis B. Wright and Marion Tining (Richmond, 1941), 5, 98; John Howard March to Thomas March, November 1815, March Letter Book; John & Charles Carter to Hayward & Chambers, November 10, 1733, John & Charles Letter Book, 1732-82, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville; Robert Pringle to Andrew Pringle, February 10, 1743, in Edgar, *Letter Book of Robert Pringle*, 2:501; Henry Laurens to John Knight, June 26, 1755, in *Laurens Papers*, 1:271; *Carter Diary*, 2:671-72, 824; John Wickham Commonplace Book, 1803-38, *sub* August 22, 1804, VHS.
 25. John Cadwalader of Philadelphia received individual shipments from Lamar, Hill, Bisset & Co. and John Leacock, although when stocks ran low he also approached local Philadelphia merchants Meredith & Clymer, storekeepers George Meade, and tavern keepers: Charles Carroll to Lamar, Hill, & Bisset, October 10, 1772, December 30, 1785, March 14, 1786, March 23, 1789, April 9, 1792, April 15, 1795, October 15, 1798, April 21, 1802, to Wallace, Johnson & Muir, March 20, 1783, Charles Carroll of Carrollton Letter Book, 1771-1833, fols. 19v, 83, 98, 110, 122, 123, 130v, 136v, 62v, NYPL.
 26. Thomas Hancock to Walter & Robert Scot, December 2, 1737, Thomas Hancock Letter Book, 1735-40, to Richard Hill, November 24, 1750, Thomas Hancock Letter Book, 1750-62, HBS; Invoice from Richard Hill to Thomas Hancock, March 5, 1747, Boston Public Library; John Hancock to Lamar, Hill & Bisset, January 20, November 12, 1767, Hancock Business Papers, HBS. After the Revolution, Lamar, Hill & Bisset resumed shipping two pipes per year to Hancock. Cf. *Laurens Papers*, 2:89, 111-12, 3:22, 151, 5:136-37, 167, 193, 643, 6:440, 7:196-97, 207, 268, 295-96, 295-96, 307, 11:303.
 27. Isaac Norris Sr. to Miles & Richbell, May 22, December 22, 1703, February 22, 1703-4, Isaac Norris Sr. Letters, 1702-4, Norris of Fairhill Papers, HSP.
 28. Bailyn, *New England Merchants*, 100. See also Doerflinger, *Vigorous Spirit*, 76-77. The best overviews are Price, "What Did Merchants Do?"; Hancock, *Citizens*. On daily operations in a London countinghouse, see Jacob M. Price, ed., "Directions for the Conduct of a Merchant's Counting-house, 1766," *Business History* 28 (1986): 132-50; Hancock, *Citizens*, chap. 3.
 29. John van Cortlandt to Newton & Gordon, February 8, 1764, John van Cortlandt Letter Book A, 1762-69, fol. 84, NYPL. For a discussion of Van Cortlandt's general merchandising, see Harrington, *New York Merchant*, 11-12, 29, 59-60, 77-79, 88, 90-92, 148, 209-10. See also New York Manifest Books of Entries, 1743-1751, 1754-1760, NYSL.
 30. John Van Cortlandt Ledger D, NYPL.

31. Isaac Norris Jr. to Pantaleão Fernandes, April 25, December 24, 1741, Norris Letters, HSP; Gerard Garret Beekman to John Channing, January 12, 1749, to William Beckman, June 6, 1752, *Beekman Papers*, 1:72, 143; Isaac Norris Sr. to Richard Miles, November 25, 1717, Norris Letters, HSP; Hewes & Anthony to Brown & Benson, February 10, 1787, March 19, 1788, Brown Papers, box 173, folder 7, box 173, folder 9, JCBL. On one merchant arriving in Madeira and securing a supplier because he and the exporter John Searle were both natives of New York, see James Jarvis to De-Neufville & Son, December 26, 1779, Jarvis Letters, Connecticut State Library, Hartford.
32. Abraham De Peyster Account Book, October 17, 1730, fol. 132, box 2, no. 4. and passim, NYHS.
33. William Trent Ledger A, 1724-31, Norris of Fairhill Papers, vol. 13, fols. 29, 74-75, 98, 123-24, HSP; Gerard Garret Beekman to Robert Shaw & William Snell, January 20, 1749, *Beekman Papers*, 1:74.
34. Isaac Norris Sr. to Richard Miles, May 29, 1707, Isaac Norris Sr. Letters, 1706-9, Norris of Fairhill Papers, vol. 7, fol. 70, HSP; William Trent Sr. Ledger, 1703-8, fols. 90, 107, HSP; Isaac Norris Sr. Ledger, 1709-40, Norris of Fairhill Papers, vol. 15, fols. 228-229, HSP.
35. Gerard C. Beekman to John Searle, June 3, 1764, to Eleazer Trevett, October 10, 1764, to Hill, Lamar & Hill, January 15, 1759, to David Barclay & Sons, 1758, *Beekman Papers*, 1:466, 474, 328, 337.
36. John Searle to Samuel Galloway, August 29, 1763, box 1, folder 5, Galloway Papers, NYPL; Peter Stuyvesant to Scot, Pringle & Scot, 1757, 1759, Peter Stuyvesant Letter Book, 1757, NYHS. On the use of captains to buy wines, see Gerard Garret Beekman to George Spencer, May 25, 1753, *Beekman Papers*, 1:176. On the use of supercargoes, see Isaac Norris Sr. to Miles & Richbell, and to Nicholas Braddock & Joseph Hamerton, December 1, 1705, April 4, 1706, Isaac Norris Sr. Letters, 1704-6, Norris of Fairhill Papers, vol. 6, fols. 117, 119, 151, HSP; Gerard Garret Beekman to George Spencer, July 1752, *Beekman Papers*, 1:145; John Codman to John Searle & Co., March 18, 1788, Codman & Smith Letter Book, 1785-89, John Codman III Papers, SPNEA. See also Mathias, "Risk, Credit and Kinship," 15-35; Zahedieh, "Credit, Risk and Reputation," 63-70; Mark Casson, *Entrepreneurship and Business Culture: Studies in the Economics of Trust* (Aldershot, 1995), and *The Economics of Business Culture: Game Theory, Transaction Costs, and Economic Performance* (Oxford, 1991); Zuscovitch, "Networks," 243-63.
37. Baynton, Wharton & Morgan Papers, PSA; William Lee Letter Books, 1783-86, VHS; box 13, folders 165-70, 174-75, 177, John Codman III Papers, SPNEA.
38. Isaac Norris Sr. to Benjamin Bartlett, December 7, 1717, Isaac Norris Letters, HSP; Lamar, Hill, Bisset & Co. to Samuel Galloway, March 8, 1763, Galloway Family Correspondence, vol. 6: 1762-64, Galloway-Maxcy-Markoe Family Papers, LC.
39. Brailsford Papers, C 9/177/28, C 9/293/50, C 110/152, NA-UK; Jefferies Letters, vol. 1, fols. 54, 76, 78, 103, 106-10, Jefferies Family MSS, MHS; W. H. Whitmore, ed., *A Volume relating to the Early History of Boston, Containing the Aspinwall Notarial Records from 1644 to 1651* (Boston, 1903), 75, 107-10, 158, 178, 180, 210, 212, 242-45,

- 248, 254, 260, 292-96, 349, 358, 363-64, 375, 397, 419; George F. Dow, ed., *Records and Files of the Quarterly Courts of Essex County, Massachusetts* (Salem, 1911), 2:203, 392-93; *Suffolk Deeds*, vol. 6 (Boston, 1892), 64, 87, 89, vol. 8 (Boston, 1896), 182, 195, 248, 429; "Cuthbert Potter's Journal," in Newton D. Mercness, *Travels in the American Colonies* (New York, 1916), 10-11.
40. Thomas & John Lampriere to Baynton, Wharton & Morgan, May 7, 1764, Baynton, Wharton & Morgan Papers, PSA; Thomas Wharton Ledger A, 1752-56, fols. 35, 104, HSP; Francis & Relfe Invoice Book, 1759-61, HSP.
41. Letters to and from Willing, Morris & Swanwick, 1783-85, Willing, Morris & Swanwick Papers, MG 134, PSA; *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser*, May 1, 1793, 1; Andrew Clow Letters, 1784-90, boxes 1-2, Simon Gratz Collection, HSP; John Hamilton & Nathaniel Drew Ledger, 1805-7, fols. 41, 102, HSP; *Beekman Papers*, 3:1058, 1068, 1109; box 13, folders 165-70, 174-75, 177, John Codman III Papers, SPNEA. Confirming evidence is found in advertisements on the pages of the *Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser*, 1810-15, when forty-five different traders placed 140 different wine advertisements: "wine" and Port were each listed in 31 percent of the ads, Madeira 30 percent, Catalonia 17 percent, Sherry and Claret each 15 percent. Lesser wines included Lisbon, Tenerife, Spanish, Mountain, Benicarlo, Malaga, Marsala, Muscat, Vidonia, French, Champagne, Barsac, Vin de grave, Naples, and Sicily.
42. Jonathan Dickinson to Richard Miles & Co., November 26, 1718, Dickinson Letter Book, fol. 225, Tench Francis Invoice Book, 1759-61, HSP.
43. Gerard Garret Beekman to Thomas Marshall, January 7, 1754, to Cunningham & Schoals, October 21, 1754, to Eleazer Trevett, May 11, 1763, to James Clark, August 20, 1764, to Thomas Clifford, December 7, 1761, to Alexander Keith, February 16, 1785, *Beekman Papers*, 1:200, 230, 240, 244, 436-37, 472, 395, 3:1055-56.
44. Isaac Norris Sr. to Miles & Richbell, December 1, 1705, May 23, 1706, Isaac Norris Letter Book, fols. 117-19, Isaac Norris Sr. Letters, 1704-6, HSP; Abraham De Peyster Account Book, fols. 69-85, April 1, May 14-October 21, 1728, NYHS; John Searle to Samuel Galloway, May 19, 1764, box 1, folder 7, Galloway Papers, NYPL.
45. Gerard Garret Beekman to Townsend White, July 27, October 21, 1754, *Beekman Papers*, 1:218, 229.
46. Jonathan Dickinson to Richard Miles, November 17, 1716, Dickinson Letter Book, 1715-21, fol. 106, LCP; Peter Stuyvesant to Robert Tucker, April 14, 1757, March 14, 1758, Peter Stuyvesant, Copy Book of Letters, 1751-63, NYHS.
47. Gerard Garret Beckman to Townsend White, August 13, 1753, August 5, 1754, to John Channing, May 9, 1747, March 29, 1748, April 14, 1757, *Beekman Papers*, 1:184, 219, 45, 17-18.
48. *Boston Post-Boy*, July 23, 1764; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 10, 1766; *Boston Gazette*, November 7, 1768; *Pennsylvania Evening Post*, January 6, June 24, 1783; *Independent Gazetteer*, January 21, 1783, March 11, 1784; *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 29, 1783; *American Herald*, September 3, 1784; *Independent Journal*, April 20, 1785; *Columbian Herald*, March 7, 1785. James E. Vance Jr., *The Merchant's World: The Geography of Wholesaling* (Englewood Cliffs, 1970), 31.
49. Dennis J. Maika, "Commerce and Community: Manhattan Merchants in the Seven-

-); George F. Dow, ed., *Massachusetts* (Salem, 1911), 89, vol. 8 (Boston, 1896); and D. Mereness, *Travels* . . .
- organ, May 7, 1764, *Boston* . . .
edger A, 1752-56, fols. 31 . . .
5. Willing, Morris & Swanwick, *Advertiser*, May 1, 1793, 1; *Advertisement*, HSP; John Hamilton *Beekman Papers*, 3:1058, 1059; John Hamilton III Papers, SPNEA. Codman & Co. agents of the *Royal Gazette* and other traders placed 140 barrels of wine listed in 31 percent of the accounts. Claret each 15 percent. Less . . .
Benicarlo, Malaga, Marsala, . . .
rave, Naples, and Sicily. . .
r 26, 1718, Dickinson Letter Book, 1:1055-56.
7. 1754, to Cunningham . . .
3, to James Clark, August 10, 1754, to Peter Keith, February 16, 1754, Dickinson Letter Book, 3:1055-56.
8. May 23, 1706, Isaac Norris Letters, HSP; Abraham De Peyster Account Book, 1728, NYHS; John Searle to Mather Papers, NYPL.
9. October 21, 1754, *Beekman Papers*, 1:184, 219.
10. 1766; *Boston Gazette*, 1766, 5; June 24, 1783; *Independent* . . .
sylvania Packet, July 29, 1783; *Columbian* . . .
al, April 20, 1785; *Columbian* . . .
Merchant's World: The Geographical . . .
11. Merchants in the Seventeenth Century" (PhD diss., New York University, 1995), 83, 91, 93, 96. On agents, see October 3, 1787, MS Houghton bMS Am 1649.9, HSP.
50. Account, November 10, 1708, William Trent Sr. Ledger, 1703-8, fols. 229-31, HSP. After expenses were deducted, the transaction was worth £197 6s. 3d. There was no prior transaction involving Paxton and Trent, although Paxton brought in brandy in December 1706, and earlier listings of wine in 1704 and 1705, although these were not imported by Paxton and Trent. *Ibid.*, fols. 19d, 174, 181, 217.
51. Norris of Fairhill Papers, vol. 13, ledger A, 1724-31, fols. 75, 98, HSP.
52. Abraham De Peyster Account Book, 1723-33, box 2, no. 4, Frederick Ashton De Peyster Manuscripts, NYHS.
53. Philip Cuyler Letter Book, 1755-60, NYPL. On Cuyler, see Harrington, *New York Merchant*, 241.
54. Max Savelle, *George Morgan: Colony Builder* (New York, 1932), 7; Charles Carroll to Wallace, Johnson & Muir, March 20, 1783, Charles Carroll of Carrollton Letter Book, 1771-83, fol. 62v, NYPL; Ludlow & Gould to Elias Hasket Derby, April 26, 1787, Elias H. Derby Letters, box 11, fol. 6, JDPL; John Codman III to John Searle III & Co., April 6, 1789, Codman Papers, SPNEA.
55. Gerard Garret Beekman to John Channing, May 9, 1747, November 30, 1747, March 29, 1748, November 26, December 13, 1750, *Beekman Papers*, 1:18, 36, 45, 75, 135.
56. Gerard Garret Beekman to Townsend White, October 8, 15, 1753, January 17, 1755, November 6, 1762, May 3, 1763, to Ebenezer Flagg, n.d., to James Searle, March 15, 1760, to Solomon Townsend, April 27, 1761, to Eleazer Trevett, May 5, 1763, *Beekman Papers*, 1:189, 190, 244, 422, 436, 281, 356, 376, 436; Jonathan Dickinson to Richard Miles, Jonathan Dickinson Letter Book, 1715-21, fols. 101, 109, HSP.
57. Isaac Norris Sr. to Miles & Richbell, May 22, 1705, Isaac Norris Letters, HSP; Gerard Garret Beekman to John Searle, September 24, 1763, *Beekman Papers*, 1:446; Hewes & Anthony to Brown & Benson, March 19, 1788, box 173, folder 9, Brown Papers, JCBL.
58. Johnson, *Dictionary*, s.v. "counting-house"; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 22, 1762. For London countinghouses, see Hancock, *Citizens*, chap. 3.
59. With regional variations, one finds similar structures in other American port towns. On Charleston, see Martha Zierden, "A Trans-Atlantic Merchant's House in Charleston: Archaeological Exploration of Refinement and Subsistence in an Urban Setting," *Historical Archaeology* 33 (1999): 75; Richard N. Côté, "Fine Wine and Thoroughbreds: The Friendship of Thomas Jefferson and Col. William Alston," *Journal of the American Wine Society* 28 (Winter 1996): 112-14. The large double house (after 1791 occupied by William Alston) at 27 Lower King Street, built by Miles Brewton about 1769, had not only a cellar but also a large attic with three distinct spaces, one of which was used as a wine storage space. See also the three-story brick double house (45 feet by 50) at 116 Broad Street, built in 1763, in Martha Zierden and Kimberley Grimes, "Investigation of Elite Lifeways through the John Rutledge House" (Charleston Museum, 1989). 8 and 10 Bedon's Alley provided extra service and storage space for Scots merchant Adam Tunno, whose main house and office were a block to the east. The merchant James Cunningham had a countinghouse on the first floor and a residence

- above at 5 Bedon's Alley, in 1740-45. Other houses included Isaac Mazyck's home (constructed c. 1783) at 86 Church Street, the John Deas Jr./Adam Tunno house (c. 1780-87) at 89 East Bay Street, with a stone cellar the importers used for storing their wine, and James Gordon's home (c. 1792) at 87 East Bay Street. Jonathon Poston, *The Buildings of Charleston* (Columbia, 1997), 54, 61, 76-77, 102-3.
60. William J. Murtagh, "The Philadelphia Row House," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 16 (December 1957): 12-13. For early eighteenth-century examples, see Philadelphia Wills and Inventories, bk. D, nos. 292 (John McComb Jr., 1723), 302 (Thomas Masters, 1723), 309 (Caleb Jacob, 1724). Cf. Elizabeth Spera, "Building for Business: The Impact of Commerce on the City Plan and Architecture of the City of Philadelphia, 1750-1800" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1980), 90-93, 143-45, 165-67. Although she does not analyze the countinghouse/residence type closely, her commentary is helpful.
61. The shell of the house of Samuel Neave still stands at 272-74 South Second Street, on the northwest corner with Spruce. Insurance Policy Minutes, August 5, 1760, the Philadelphia Contributionship, the Contributionship Companies, Philadelphia; Report 1349, Historic American Buildings Survey: Pennsylvania, LC; George B. Tatum, *Penn's Great Town*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia, 1961), 157, fig. 14; Richard J. Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved: Catalog of the Historic American Buildings Survey* (Philadelphia, 1976), 21. Other combined houses and offices occupied by Philadelphia merchants are recorded in Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved*, 26, 76-77, 93-94: 518-20 Front Street; 620 Arch Street (Historic American Buildings Survey: Pennsylvania, LC, 1483, 25 by 65 feet, demolished 1965); 628-30 Arch Street (1965); 113 North Water Street (1963); 525 Quarry Street (1960); 113-15 Summer Street (1968); 117 North Sixth Street (1959); 113 Spring Street (1973).
62. Charles Stedman (1713-84) and his older brother Alexander Stedman (1703-94) were natives of northern Scotland. Charles owned and captained ships trading between London and Rotterdam. Charles and Alexander settled in Philadelphia in the late 1730s and 1740s, respectively. Charles working as a captain and storekeeper from 1737, and Alexander as a storekeeper from 1746. They provided a large share of the German immigration shipping in the 1750s and 1760s, and probably began trading wine in the 1760s to offset their losses in the immigration trade. They were partners of Stiegel's Manheim iron- and glassworks. On Charles Stedman's house, now 244 South Third Street, see Historic American Buildings Survey, PA-1359, LC; Nicholas B. Wainwright, *Colonial Grandeur in Philadelphia: The House and Furniture of General John Cadwalader* (Philadelphia, 1964), 6, 10, 88-89; Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved*, 25; George B. Tatum, *Philadelphia Georgian: The City House of Samuel Powel and Some of Its Eighteenth-Century Neighbors* (Middletown, 1976), 4-6, 64; Mutual Assurance Company, *The Architectural Surveys* (Philadelphia, 1976), 27-29; Marianne Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers* (University Park, 1999), 70, 89. Charles Stedman put the house up for sale in 1766 and sold it to Samuel Powel in 1769. Charles remained loyal to Britain, serving in its army. Despite being captured twice, he stayed in Philadelphia, where he died in 1784 and was buried at Christ Church. Edward Hogan, *Prospect and Check on the Next Directory* (Philadelphia, 1795), 127.
63. Lamar & Biss
64. Hill bought t
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63. Lamar & Bisset to Henry Hill, July 10, 1787, vol. 10, fol. 17, Hill-JJS(A).
64. Hill bought the Meade/Pemberton house for £3,700 Pennsylvania current money. On Hill's house, see Historic American Buildings Survey: Pennsylvania, LC, 1334; George Roberts, "Dr. Physick and His House," *Pennsylvania Magazine* 92 (1968): 67-86; Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved*, 15-16; Amy Henderson, "321 South Fourth Street" (master's thesis, University of Delaware, 1997). See also Henry Hill to Joseph Pemberton, January 16, 1782, Pemberton Papers, vol. 36, p. 62, fol. 7, HSP; Lamar & Bisset to Henry Hill, February 26, 1785, vol. 9, fol. 109, June 1, 1785, vol. 9, fol. 132, July 10, 1787, vol. 10, fol. 17, Hill-JJS(A); Robert Lamar Bisset to Henry Hill, May 1, 1787, box 1, Hill-EWS; Mary Lamar to Henry Hill, February 21, 1787, box 1, folder 1, Hill-SACS; *Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser*, January 30, 1799; Richard Lamar Bisset, *Journal*, April 19, 1801, box 32, item 2882, Research Collection, Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia.
65. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 20, June 25, 1747, March 6, July 19, 1753, December 9, 1756, February 15, December 6, 1759, December 3, 1767, October 5, 1774, July 2, 1783, October 19, 1796; *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, August 3, 1767; *Claypoole's American Daily Advertiser*, January 30, 1799, March 13, 1800; *New-York Gazette*, May 21, 1764; *Rivington's New-York Gazetteer*, December 16, 1773; *South-Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*, October 26, 1784; *Independent Chronicle and the Universal Advertiser*, January 19, 1792; *Columbian Centinel*, July 5, 1794. Two large Southwark row houses had typical cellars. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 23, 1762. One advertisement describes a house at 78 Walnut Street with cellars laid with lime, floored with two-inch planks, and plastered; its two brick arched stables, with "excellent lofts over them," were also laid with lime and two-inch planks. Together, they held two hundred pipes. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 19, 1796; cf. March 3, 1747, September 27, 1750, April 5, 1753, June 6, 1754, March 18, 1755, June 1, 1757, February 25, 1762, April 12, June 21, 1764. A cellar was usually a subterranean structure, but "cellar" was often interchangeably used with "store." *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 29, 1756.
66. Poston, *Buildings of Charleston*, 54, 61, 76-7, 102-3; Major Thomas Simons, merchant, Charleston, March 30, 1805, Charleston City, Probate Inventory, vol. 353, no. 10, SCDAH. Warehouses were increasingly necessary as merchants built up large inventories of aged wine and spirits. Knowledge of warehouses is thin, grounded in evidence dating almost entirely from the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century period. The impermanent nature of many early American building materials and the needs of modern transportation systems have led to their dismantling or destruction. A few have survived in Philadelphia, and these suggest that warehouses commonly possessed large brick constructions, multiple stories (two and a half or three), gambrel (sometimes gable) roofs, double doors on first and second floors, hoist tackles, rectangular plans, open stairs to upper floors, and longitudinal partitions. Webster, *Philadelphia Preserved*, 18, 33, 40-41, 63 (Penrose's warehouse, Southwark, 1797; a warehouse, 105 DeLancey Street, early 1800s; Beck's warehouse, 18-20 South Delaware Avenue, 1805; a warehouse, 329 South Water Street, 1810; Latour's warehouse, 508 South Water Street, 1817-18); *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 26, 1749, November 3, 1763.

67. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 23, 1762, April 12, June 21, 1764, December 3, 1767, October 5, 1774.
68. Even the superb study by Bernard Herman pays little attention to business spaces, preferring to discuss the merchants' townhouses as private homes. *Town House* (Chapel Hill, 2005), 33-76. A possibly English watercolor was in the possession of Francis Randolph of New York as late as 1966, and is badly reproduced in Mary R. M. Goodwin, "The Colonial Store" (unpublished MS, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 1966), 223a. Cf. *The Sequel* (1733), a satirical print showing a merchant's or banker's inner and outer room, in Frederic G. Stephens and M. Dorothy George, eds., *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum* (London, 1978).
69. Insurance surveys say nothing about furnishings. Probate inventories do not say much more, perhaps because the space (or at least its contents) remained the property of surviving partners. Still, what they include is suggestive. The information that can be culled from inventories largely documents early nineteenth-century offices. Earlier offices remain dim, yet no reason has surfaced to suggest they changed dramatically from even earlier offices. For indications of floor plan and furnishing, see the Massachusetts colony and state probate inventories for Suffolk and Hampshire Counties at the Massachusetts State Archives, Boston: James Griffin, dry goods merchant, Boston, 1766; Samuel Wentworth, sugar and coffee merchant, Boston, August 14, 1767; Enoch Brown, cloth and wine merchant, Boston, 1784; Daniel Sargeant, merchant, Boston and Gloucester, July 14, September 15, 1806; Edward Alexander, wine and spirits merchant, Boston, November 24, 1806; Joseph Cutler, merchant, Boston, December 18-19, 1806. For Kingston and Port Royal, Jamaica, see Robert Ingram, of Port Royal, November 19, 1701, bk. 5, pp. 147-50; Samuel Ivers, July 14, 1807, bk. 109, p. 52; James Dryken, August 14, 1807, bk. 109, pp. 65-67; John Burrowes, September 25, 1807, bk. 109, pp. 116-18, IRO.

The problem with most probates is that they list real estate, merchandise, and furniture, but do not always itemize goods and furnishings by room. Massachusetts and Jamaica inventory takers routinely differentiated rooms, but New Yorkers did not. Somewhat helpful are the following inventories at the New York City Municipal Archives—New York City Inventories, 1783-1844: Ephraim and Isaac Cock, merchants, April 25, 1796, C156; Joshua Green, merchant and shipowner, September 30, 1797, G111; Unnamed Partner of Nootnagel, Schwartz & Rogers, September 1, 1799, UN 22. Similarly, Charleston inventory takers only occasionally distinguished rooms: W. Laserris, October 13, 1741, 10:QQ104; W. Scott, May 1, 1765, 11:W269; G. Bedon, January 4, 1769, 15:X428; D. Stoddard, February 10, 1770, 16:Y187; J. Chapman, February 13, 1770, 16:Y214; T. Gadsden, March 16, 1770, 16:Y255; T. Carher, June 22, 1771, 17:Z1; Robert & Stott, September 29, 1772, 18:Z270; N. Swallow, April 13, 1773, 19:Z326; J. Wilson, wine merchant, December 28, 1773, 19:Z444; J. Fowler, October 29, 1772, 18:C179; A. Michie, September 13, 1774, 20:AA30; Major T. Simons, March 30, 1805, 353/10; J. Callaghan, August 1, 1807, 438/46—all at SCDAM.

70. Herman, *Town House*, 35. John Walters Gibbs was a German who had moved to Charleston before the Revolution. He aided the British during their occupation of the

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town, and for that reason was placed on the list of Loyalists whose estates were to be confiscated. *Royal Gazette*, March 20, 1782. In 1783, he petitioned for relief, and the petition was granted, whereupon he announced reentry into "commission business." The Assembly thought him "a Character beneath the attention or Resentment of this House"—more a victim of his own "buffoonery" than a turncoat. Robert Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution* (Columbia, 1987), 286-88. Gibbs sold wine, property, horses, and slaves for others, first from 11 Queen Street and later from 45 Church Street, where he died in 1789. In 1785, he seems to have joined with William Graham in Graham & Gibbs. *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, September 16, 1783; *South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*, December 20, 1783, January 17, 1784; *Charleston Evening Gazette*, October 1, 5, 1785; *Columbian Herald*, March 31, August 18, 1788; Probate Inventory, 1789, book B, fols. 191-94, SCDAH. Gibbs's 1789 countinghouse constituted 15 percent of the value of his probated estate. Cf. the similar house and office of general and wine merchant John Callaghan. Probate Inventory, August 1, 1807, vol. 438, n. 46, SCDAH.

71. Herman, *Town House*, 71, 5.

72. Major Thomas Simons, merchant, Charleston, March 30, 1805, vol. 353, n. 10, SCDAH. Cf. *Charleston Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, January 21, 1786; *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, February 18, 24, 1792, December 30, 1794, February 16, 1795, January 4, March 21, 22, May 26, November 15, 19, 1800, March 12, 1803, July 3, July 30, 1804, January 7, 29, March 22, April 2, 3, June 15, 1805. Simons (1765-1805) was a member of one of the founding Huguenot families of Carolina and the son of the extremely wealthy planter Maurice Simons (1744-85). Inheriting his father's immense wealth when Maurice Simons died in a duel in 1785, he commenced trading at 2 Gaillard's Wharf in 1792, where, like his father, he performed factor and wholesale services. Besides two city lots, he owned at the time of his death a schooner, forty-seven slaves, a farm on the city's outskirts, a 477-acre plantation, and a share in another 200-acre plantation. Robert Simons, *Thomas Grange Simons III, His Forebears and Relations* (Charleston, 1954), 10, 26, 36, 77-84.

73. *American Weekly Mercury*, December 7, 1732; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 6, 1731, February 8, 1739, November 19, 1741. Peter was born in 1697, the son of Benjamin and Mary Baynton. His activities are recorded in Peter Baynton Letter and Account Book, 1721-26, HSP; Peter Baynton Ledger, 1728-31, Baynton, Wharton & Morgan Papers, PSA. He drowned on February 22, 1744, when a schooner on which he was sailing to Burlington sank in the Delaware; with him died a former apprentice who had married his niece. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 1, 1744. His business fell to his twenty-two-year-old son John (1722-73), who commenced trading from the Front Street countinghouse. Compare the father's 1728-31 business to the son's trade in 1754-60: in the later period, John, who had married the daughter of the wine merchant Peter Chevalier, sold more wine and spirits to at least fifty-one different individuals, almost all of whom were Philadelphians, including four women. John's wholesale and retail business favored wine: in 1754 and 1755, it constituted 63.8 percent of all sales, in contrast to rum, 33.6 percent, and spirits, 1.9 percent. John sold to bigger fry: those who bought wine took away roughly thirteen gallons from each transaction. If one

- removes from this group the large-scale wholesalers and retailers who bought a pipe or more, the average falls between one and four gallons per transaction. John Baynton's Journal (incorrectly labeled "Peter Baynton's Journal" unless it was the journal of John's younger brother, Peter Jr., 1754–60, HSP.
74. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 25, February 1, 1759.
75. John Baynton to Hill, Lamar & Hill, August 24, 1759; January 15, 1761; June 26, 1762; Baynton, Wharton & Morgan Papers, PSA; Baynton & Wharton to Lamar, Hill, Bisset & Co., August 4, December 8, 1759, fols. 156, 194; Baynton & Wharton Letter Book, 1758–60, HSP.
76. On the Baynton firms, see *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 17, November 15, 1760; August 16, 1761; November 10, 1762; February 28, 1765; April 12, June 18, 1768; October 5, 1774; Baynton & Wharton Letter Book, 1758–60, 1761, HSP; Baynton, Wharton & Morgan to Henry Whyte, February 16, 1766; Baynton, Wharton & Morgan Papers, PSA; Savelle, *George Morgan*, 4–5.
77. Appadurai, "Commodities and the Politics of Value," 33.

CHAPTER 8. THE WET GOODS BUSINESS

1. In the present study, I group tavern keepers and their ilk (proprietors of inns, alehouses, coffeehouses, dramshops, grogshops, punch houses, porter houses, beer houses, and the like) among retailers. Whatever the distinctions, they all sold goods in small quantities to ultimate consumers. The differences between retailers and wholesalers were evident in England by 1640. They were reflected in the fees (called premiums) paid to have one's son trained as an apprentice. In the early seventeenth century, London wholesalers charged between £20 sterling and £100 to take on apprentices, although in desirable trades they could get from £200 to £300; over a century later, they ranged from £500 to £1,000 sterling in the City. Retailers always charged less, although their fees also rose in the period 1640–1815. Startup capital for overseas importers, exporters, and wholesalers in the 1600s ranged between £400 and £1,000 sterling, whereas that for shopkeepers seldom exceeded £20. The quantities they sold sometimes distinguished wholesalers from retailers. In pre-revolutionary Pennsylvania, a trader who sold twenty gallons or more in a single transaction was considered a wholesaler, and below that a retailer. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 26, 1772. However, that which divided them was not always clear or critical. Richard Grassby, "Social Mobility and Business Enterprise in Seventeenth Century England," in *Puritans and Revolutionaries. Essays in Seventeenth-Century History Presented to Christopher Hill*, ed. Donald Pennington and Keith Thomas (Oxford, 1978), 364–66, and *Business Community*, 64–72, 83; I. K. Ben-Amos, *Adolescence and Youth in Early-Modern England* (New Haven, 1994), 87–88.
2. Earle, *Making of the English Middle Class*, 44–45. J. A. Chartres makes a similar point: "Leeds: Regional Distributive Centre of Luxuries in the Later Eighteenth Century," *Northern History* 37 (2000), 117.
3. Apart from Chartres, only a few scholars have looked in any depth at the distribution of consumer goods. Hoi-Cheung Mui and Lorna Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in*