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A POLISH LORD'S TABLE

In old-Poland it was a magnate's duty to lay on sumptuous feasts for hundreds of guests. Indeed, in terms of opulence, Polish magnates sought to outdo the receptions at the royal court. The splendour of the table was held to testify to the host's social rank, and in impressing the people of that era, bringing in train friends and clients. The receptions of Jan Klemens Branicki (1689–1771), Voivode of Cracow region and grand Hetman of Poland, held at his residences in Warsaw and Białystok, were particularly famous.

All diarists agree that the Hetman's guests were received with "the splendours of the king's table" both in terms of food and drink. And they were not wrong in this, because he would make his luxurious food purchases largely from the same suppliers as the royal court. He would also take note of the culinary advice of the king's master chefs and he would send his own cooks to learn from them.

We do not know the recipes used by the Hetman's master chefs or whether they wrote them down. In the Białystok library there were two cookery books: *The Contemporary Cook* and *The Skills of the Master Chef*. We do not know whether these were Polish publications or possibly French or German, since the persons inventorising the library stock in 1772 frequently Polonised foreign language titles. The oldest Polish cookery book was Stanisław Czarniecki's *Compendium ferculorum*, first published in 1682, with at least three further editions following in the 18th century. Branicki, however, clearly subscribed to the newer culinary fashions. That is why in considering the methods of preparing dishes in the Białystok kitchen, I have used the

cookery book by Wojciech Wielądek, which was published in 1783, and which represented the sum total of experience of the French and Polish master chefs who plied their trade in the decades before its publication¹.

Branicki attached great importance to what was eaten at his table and made detailed enquiries into the kitchen's stores and their quality — irrespective of whether they came from his own estates or by outside purchase.

It was the Hetman's constant striving, as it was of other magnates, to secure for himself self-sufficiency in food to the greatest degree possible. This was sometimes pursued in defiance of climatic conditions — as witness the attempts to nurture a vineyard near Białystok. Hence the interminable efforts to increase and improve his livestock, the stock of fish in his ponds and rivers, and to have as close to hand as possible, reserves of wild game in the palace game reserve, setting up orchards, glass houses etc.

And yet, in spite of these efforts, despite the extent of the Hetman's estates, which should have abounded in most everything, there was always something that was lacking — which had to be supplemented by purchases from outside. Of course imported food stuffs were also bought. Hence the Hetman's continuous running correspondence on this subject with officials and merchants, thanks to which, we may build up a fairly detailed picture of what appeared on the Lord's table. However no master chef's or storekeeper's notes (insofar as they existed in the first place) have survived, which would have enabled us to ascertain the numbers of people sitting down to meals and what were the products used.

Sources refer to two main tables at the Hetman's manor: the Lord's table and the Marshal's (or Head Steward's) table. It is unknown which tables seated whom in the Białystok household. Obviously the hosts and their guests (of whom there were many, be it in Białystok or Warsaw), as well as certain courtiers no doubt, would sit at the Lord's table. Higher officials and possibly some of the artists working for the Hetman would sit at the Marshal's table.

¹ The central catalogue of ancient publications at the National Library in Warsaw does not list any of this work's editions. The edition kept at the Museum in Nieborów has been used as the reference source for this article.

Other tables must have also existed for the servants, seasonal craftsmen (those from Warsaw working in Białystok, or those brought in from Białystok to Warsaw to attend to maintenance and repairs).

Most probably, the food and drink served at these lower-ranking tables would have differed if not in terms of quantity then most certainly in terms of quality and in the way it was prepared. The Hetman was mainly interested in what he ate himself, therefore, the sources mainly tell us what was to be found on the Lord's table.

Flour was the easiest to obtain because of the three mills in Białystok and the supplies of wheat that could be called upon if need be from other Branicki possessions for making bread, cakes, Polish-style ravioli (*pierogi*), noodles etc. During the Hetman's sojourns in Warsaw, his own flour was brought in with him².

Each of Branicki's palaces (in Białystok, Choroszczka and Warsaw) had its own bakery. White bread for the Lord's table was baked there. If an important guest was to stay there in the Hetman's absence, he always reminded his servants to have the bread prepared according to the same recipe³. Therefore we assume that thus must have been a very good sort of bread that was not served at the other (lower-ranking) tables. The quality of the flour must have been satisfactory on the whole because the Hetman gave vent to his annoyance in only one letter when he noted: "Since arriving in Warsaw I have not eaten any bread. The flour you are sending is badly sifted, thick, dirty, and the first consignment was fusty. I have to buy flour at 70 *tyńfs* (a small Polish monetary unit of currency in circulation until the second half of the 18th century) a bushel"⁴.

Sometimes, in fact only on special occasions, such as the visit of the King or the Turkish legate, or the Hetman's or his wife's name-day, extra flour would be bought in Warsaw and despatched to Białystok. The Warsaw officials would then look especially for flour made by the millers of the Warsaw suburb of

² Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych — The Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw (henceforth AGAD), Archiwum Radziwiłłów (henceforth AR), K, file number (henceforth — f.n.) XXV/41, pp. 550–553, 11.09.1758; f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 96–98, 20.04.1761.

³ *Ibid.*, Supl. 15, pp. 25v, 20.02.1758.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Supl. 19, unpaginated (henceforth unp.), 1.11.1762.

Marymont, which was regarded as the best. It was, as they said, “extraordinarily” expensive, thus it was bought in small quantities, mainly from “a certain Walter”, known as the “Marymont baker”⁵. The Hetman would often send his own wheat (he spoke of two cart-loads which means there could have been no more than a few hundred kilograms), which was to be ground in the mills of Marymont and Piaseczno on the outskirts of Warsaw, where they knew how to make their flour particularly white⁶. We have found one reference to the import of two barrels of “English” flour *via* Gdańsk⁷. Unfortunately we do not know what made it so special that it was considered worthwhile importing from so far away.

It may be assumed that such flour was used for more delicate cookery not for plain bread.

The Hetman would always buy “Italian” macaroni although it did not always come from Italy. It mainly came from Gdańsk and Königsberg⁸. Five to twenty pounds of macaroni, both “thick” and “thin”, would be bought at a time. The purchases would be made twice a year, but we do not know the prices.

The Hetman would also replenish his stocks in the capital from time to time. The local merchants would sell vermicelli at two *tyńfs* a pound (in 1760). The Hetman would buy anything up to 20 pounds or so at a time. If there was no vermicelli available in town, Branicki would have it made to order, which implies that there must have been a craftsman with the equipment needed to make the macaroni⁹.

Macaroni was boiled in milk with added eggs, sugar, *bakalie* (Polish term for items typically added to fruit cakes such as almonds, raisins, nuts and figs etc.) baked in the oven.

The groats served in Białystok mainly came from the Hetman’s estates. “Grains of buckwheat”, as supplied by the Ukrainian estates, were a regular feature of the year’s Lenten provi-

⁵ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXIII/1, pp. 226–232, 20.06.1757; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 387–388, 9.06.1760; Amp. f.n. 91, Receipt of 14.02.1758.

⁶ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXIII/4, pp. 135–136, 21.12.1763.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Supl. 21, unpub., 17.08.1767.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Supl. 7, Purchase in Königsberg, p. 8, 8.01.1755, Supl. 21, Purchase in Gdańsk, unpub., 5.02.1767; Amp. 117, unpub., 1771.

⁹ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 357–359, 16.04.1760, and f.n. XXIII/3, 14.09.1761, pp. 273–4, 3.02.1762. Wielądko (1783, p. 305) wrote: “Macaroni is a pastry we have from Italy, though now we have very good macaroni made in Warsaw”.

sions¹⁰. Millet and barley were brought from the Tyczyn estates in Little Poland¹¹.

"Nuremberg groats" was the most popular in Warsaw¹² (we do not know what this name stands for), whereas one could buy one or two stones or pounds of barley in Gdańsk and Königsberg which probably came from local mills, not imported. Small amounts of "sago groats" acquired from the core of the sago palm as well as anything up to twenty stone of husked rice a year was also bought. There is one mention of rice being transported from Kamenec in Podolia¹³.

It should be explained that in times when potatoes were not yet known, groats — not used in the French cuisine — provided a basic form nourishment. That is why they were served at all the Hetman's tables. Obviously the better quality groats were chosen for the high table. This supposition would be supported by the relatively small amount of good quality groats bought, which would have been insufficient to feed the hundred or more regular diners at the Białystok palace.

Rice in the 18th century was considered a luxury good because of it being imported. It was regarded as having beneficial digestive properties as well.

Branicki paid more attention to ensuring a wide variety of vegetables on the table. He also tried to be self-sufficient in this field of provision as well. Well cared for kitchen gardens were made by the palaces in Białystok and Choroszcza whilst in Warsaw, where there was no space next to the palace, he leased a garden in the city from the local Warsaw townspeople. Vegetables were also grown in his Praga manor and Tarchomin, both on the outskirts of Warsaw.

In the Białystok greenhouses, (they already existed in the 1730s) and which, by the measure of the day "numbered over 50 windows", seedlings and early vegetables, such as lettuce and

¹⁰ AGAD. AR. Supl. 13, Register of Lenten provisions, p. 53v, 1757; Supl. 17, Specification of Lenten provisions, unpub., 1760; Amp. f.n. 91 unpub., 28.02.1762.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXII/9, pp. 43–45, 22.03.1744.

¹² *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, p. 338, 25.03.1750.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, unpub., 13.04.1742; Supl. 7, Purchase in Königsberg, p. 8, 8.01.1755, Supl. 16, Purchase in Königsberg, unpub., 23.02.1759; Supl. 19, unpub., 10.10.1762; Supl. 21, unpub., 15.05.1766, Register of Lenten provisions, unpub., 27.11.1766, unpub., 5.02.1767.

radish, would be cultivated so as to appear on the table by the end of February¹⁴.

The Hetman obtained seeds from abroad, probably most frequently from the Netherlands where horticulture was advanced. He would make these purchases with the help of the royal gardener, Thörrl, who was based in Warsaw, or Tepper, the Warsaw merchant and banker, who himself had a well-kept kitchen garden and orchard¹⁵.

If Branicki only but tasted some vegetable somewhere that he did not know, or one which he found particularly tasty, he would want it immediately, both on his table and in his garden.

Thus, for example, when in 1755, he was treated by someone in Warsaw to French sweet peas from the garden of the merchant Andrzej Riaucur, he immediately ordered his staff to find out where it came from and to place an order for its seeds — “from Paris itself” if necessary¹⁶. It turned out that it was not at all easy to get hold of such peas. Indeed, not only were they not obtained in time to be sown in the spring of 1755, they were still being awaited in the spring of 1756. The supply ordered from abroad by Riaucur was lost at sea in a storm, the order placed with Dulfus in Wrocław (Silesia) came late, and neither could they be obtained from the Missionary Fathers in Warsaw, whose monastery was famed for its abundant kitchen gardens. The longed-for peas were finally obtained in Wrocław in 1760. and even then, to sow the seeds on time, a mail coach was hired for their speedy dispatch and delivery¹⁷.

Gordon, the administrator of the Hetman's Cracow estates (horticulturally, a more advanced area of the country), sent his master artichokes every year. Branicki quickly came to the conclusion that it would be more practical for him to turn his hand to horticulture himself. He therefore ordered seeds to be sent to him, and having found out that it is much easier to multiply a plant from cuttings, he ordered Gordon to send him artichoke stumps. So, in March 1758, ten 600 of cuttings were sent down the Vistula river by special boat from Cracow to

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, K. f.n. Xxt/3, pp. 5–7, 12.02.1739; Supl. 14, pp. 26–27, 28.02.1758.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 2188–2190, 20.02.1755; f.n. XI/66, pp. 215–217, 28.11.1757; f.n. XXIV/22, p. 4, 22.03.1764.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Supl. 7/3, pp. 30v–31v, 22.01.1755.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Supl. 9/1, p. 366, 30.04.1760.

Warsaw, and hence on to Białystok by cart. Branicki introduced the plant not only into his kitchen garden there, but also in the neighbouring township of Choroszcza and nearby farms¹⁸.

We do not know whether this horticultural experiment succeeded; it could be that the Podlachia climate (*i.e.* in the Białystok region) was too severe for this plant which is more commonly associated with warmer countries. Artichokes, however, were cultivated successfully in one of the Hetman's Warsaw gardens.

Basing ourselves on mentions in the Hetman's correspondence with his retainers, as well as the annual purchases of seeds, it may be inferred that Branicki's kitchen had more or less everything that was known to horticulture at the time and could be cultivated in the Polish climate.

Among the cultivated vegetables more commonly consumed at the time, we may list white, red and Italian cabbage, carrots, parsley, celery, leek, kohirabi, swede, turnip, cucumber, cauliflower, onion, garlic, lettuce, radish. Rare vegetables, such as artichokes, Spanish carduus, asparagus, broccoli, chicory, spinach, salsepia, melons, and various herbs and seasonings such as marjoram, hyssop, basil, purslane and pimpinella¹⁹, were also grown, which were to be found only in the gardens of the richest people.

Self-sufficiency in terms of vegetable supply was in principle satisfactory. Supplementary supplies of artichokes were bought in the Cracow region even later, when they were already being cultivated on the Hetman's estates. At times of great gatherings of guests, asparagus was brought in from Warsaw, and once, a small supply of "Toruń turnips" was delivered by rafts on their return journey from Gdańsk. Also, once, there was an onion shortage in Białystok and that was because of the visit of the Turkish envoy and his retinue, who proved to be much taken by this vegetable, to the extent that 40 garlands more had to be brought in from Warsaw²⁰.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. VI/8, pp. 326–328, 7.01.1758, pp. 281–282, 28.01.1758, pp. 301–303, 25.03.1758; Supl. 14, p. 69v, 29.03.1758; Supl. 17, unsp., 09.1759; Supl. 21, unsp., 21.04.1766.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. X/18, pp. 531–535, 17.03.1752; Supl. 8, pp. 26v–27v, 12.11.1755; Supl. 13, Foreign seeds, p. 49v, 1757; K, f.n. XXIV/22, Thoell to JKB, p. 4, 22.03.1764.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Supl. 7, pp. 91v–93v, 16.03.1755; K, f.n. X/18, pp. 1203–1206, 24.03.1755; f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 164–167, 29.08.1761; f.n. XXIII/4, p. 124, 14.12.1763.

Vegetables were carefully preserved for the winter in special "garden buildings". Root vegetables were stored in sand²¹. However, there are no surviving records of any vegetables being dried, although it was a common method of preserving them at the time. Cabbage — whole heads and in shredded form — was pickled²². Unfortunately, there is a lack of information as to what sort of vegetable dishes were made. We know from the cookery books, however, that raw vegetables were almost never eaten (with the exception of raddish). Even lettuce was often served boiled.

Much worse than vegetables, was the situation with fruit supplies. The Hetman planted orchards in Białystok, Choroszcze and Wysokie Stoki. There were orchards in his other estates, with fruit trees being planted near his manor in Praga (right-bank suburb of Warsaw).

New fruit trees from the Netherlands, Dresden, Wrocław and Warsaw were systematically introduced into the orchards. A tree nursery was also set up in Wysokie Stoki. More than a dozen varieties of apple and pear trees were planted, almost every year apricot and peach trees were planted which, despite being protected by straw for the winter, and by specially constructed protective covers, they frequently died. Thus the need for the continual planting of replacements.

Also bought were plum trees, mulberry bushes, quinces and cherries²³. They did not always prove good choices. For example, expensive cherry trees were brought in from Königsberg on the strong recommendation of a merchant who described them as being of an exceptional type, but which bore "fruit as from ordinary cherries", much to Branicki's annoyance²⁴. The gardens were typically surrounded by gooseberry and black-currant borders.

Branicki, like other magnates at the time, also hankered after a vineyard. Indeed, he had one planted in Wysoki Stok on the hillside by St Roch's church. The intention was to make wine, but

²¹ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXX/90, pp. 1–6, 14.10.1756.

²² *Ibid.*, f.n. IX/49, K, pp. 52–54, 7.02.1757.

²³ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXXIV/58, p. 59, 19.10.1738, p. 60, 22.10.1738, pp. 87–88, 22.10.1741; f.n. XX/15, pp. 4–5, 27.08.1743; f.n. XXI/3, pp. 35–37, 26.10.1748; f.n. X/18, pp. 531–535, 17.03.1752, p. 551, 16.04.1752.; f.n. XXX/9, p. 225, 18.11.1756, f.n. XXIII/2, KS to JKB, pp. 59–61, 9.04.1759; f.n. XXII/17, p. 63, 15.02.1763.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, f.n. IV/10, p. 40, 5.09.1758; Supl. 15, unpp., 13.09.1758.

the harvests were poor and the grapes were small and frequently fell to the ground due to wind and rain. He persevered with various types of vines, but the Podlachia climate proved too inhospitable for them. So, although their cultivation was continued, it does not seem as if any real use came out of the fruit²⁵.

Good and varied fruit was yielded by the garden leased in Warsaw. The annual Lenten provisions from the Ruthenian/Ukrainian estates included apples and pears. Several of these fruit types were also supplemented annually with purchases in Warsaw — from the royal gardener and from merchants. These fruits were sold not by weight but by the piece. Part of them were unmistakably local, some however came from imports. For example, we may find a mention of merchants expecting the arrival of Italian apples at 24 *tyńfs* for 60 pieces. For comparison: the very popular Polish apples of the time, known as *burszówki*, cost 8 *tyńf* for 60 pieces²⁶. In the course of trips to Hungary to buy wine, Hungarian apples would also be bought while they were at it²⁷.

The purchase of these fruits took place primarily in September and October, that is at the time they were picked, and later, around Christmas and the New Year, when visitors gathered in Białystok. Hence the conclusion that they knew how to preserve fruit better in Warsaw. Despite numerous precautions (packing in barrels with chaffe, even sewing them into feather beds) fruit would arrive in Białystok frost-bitten on more than one occasion.

When in season, peaches would be bought by the resident housekeeper in Warsaw. It must have been very difficult to get hold of them because no more than a dozen or two would be sent to Białystok at a time²⁸.

Particularly beautiful and rare types of fruit were used for decorating tables during receptions. Probably, they were eaten raw. In face of the difficulties with storing fresh fruit over a longer period of time, some of it was dried. And so, the Lenten provisions

²⁵ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXI/3, pp. 68–70, 7.12.1752, pp. 90–92, 22.10.1753; Supl. 10, pp. 113v–114, 18.10.1756; K, f.n. XVII/12, pp. 174–176, 4.10.1756. The memoirist T. J. Chamski mentions that in the Tyszkiewicz family's estate of Pontemoń, "(vine) cuttings were covered by manure or straw for the winter, or covered with earth".

²⁶ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 242–245, 3.11.1759.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Supl. 7, p. 12, 12.01.1755.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. X/18, p. 196, 9.09.1749.

sent over from the Ukrainian estates would always include dried plums, pears and apples, from which were made soups, or which were added to groats etc. Fruit was also processed to make jams. Apple and plum jams came from the Ukrainian estates in churns; they were also made in Tarchomin near Warsaw, Tyczyn in Little Poland and most probably in Białystok as well²⁹.

Insofar as the preparation of fruit paste required greater skills, the cooking of jams was the task of the confectioner only. This was the main preserve of the palace confectioner in Białystok, who was supplied by the local orchards.

In the summer of 1760, possibly in connection with a poor fruit harvest in Białystok, or possibly because Branicki was going to spend autumn in the capital, the Białystok confectioner was sent to Warsaw, to cook the appropriate amount of jam. But even in Warsaw it was difficult to buy fruit.

The confectioner Szuszkowski searched for fruit in Nowolipie (a suburb of Warsaw), and in Góra Kalwaria, a small town not far from Warsaw. For a pannier³⁰ of black cherries he paid 3 to 6 *tyńfs*, the price of "green" plums (presumably greengages) and ordinary black ones was not recorded. However, the confectioner came to regard the cooking of gooseberry jam as too expensive because of having to employ people to remove the pips (one would have thought there should be no shortage of hands to work at the Hetman's court!). In total, the confectioner made twenty jars of black cherry jam, nineteen of greengage, eight of black plum, as well as two big bottles of black cherry juice and three "drawers of dried black cherry jams" (that is candied fruit)³¹.

The Białystok confectioner was also sent to Tyczyn on occasion to make jams on the spot from fruit from local orchards there. He also made so-called quince cheeses (that is marmalade cooked for a prolonged period, which was spread on baking tins, slightly dried in the oven, and then cut into pieces); it was a favourite titbit of the time, chewed and washed down with a glass of vodka. Supplementary quinces were bought in Warsaw; they were brought over from the Ukrainian estates and even from

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 91, unsp., 28.02.1762; K. f.n. IX/49, pp. 13–14, 14.04.1755.

³⁰ It is difficult to guess how heavy a pannier (*przetak*) of cherries was, because no two panniers were the same, and it can only be surmised that it could not have been more than a couple of kilograms.

³¹ AGAD, AR, K. f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 404–406, 28.06.1760, pp. 426–431, 14.07.1760, pp. 432–434, 16.07.1760, pp. 468–469, 8.09.1760.

Hungary, where this fruit, due to greater exposure to the sun than in Poland, tended to be better³².

Occasionally, the Hetman would ask the royal confectioner in Warsaw to make him some jam. Then Szuszkowski would supply him with apricots from the Warsaw gardens³³.

Ready-made jams were difficult to get on the home market. Warsaw merchants hardly ever had this product while those from Cracow advised their would-be customers to have them brought over either from Gdańsk or Vienna³⁴.

Citrus fruits would also put in an appearance on the Hetman's table. A small proportion of them came from the Białystok orangeries. In bumper harvest years, the yield of "good and beautiful" oranges and lemons reached even several hundred fruit. Figs and almonds also bore fruit³⁵. Probably, though there is no direct confirmation for this — the pineapples grown in the hot-houses also proved a success.

Every year, oranges and lemons were bought in Gdańsk and Königsberg. From Gdańsk the fruit was dispatched by land because the wheat barges returning downstream took too long. It was customary to buy from several dozen to three hundred pieces of each fruit, and from time to time, several dozen Spanish oranges which were bitter and had thick peels especially suitable for cooking in sugar³⁶. Limes (*citrus medica*) were also bought for the same purpose, which were a variety of lemon with large fruit and very aromatic peel.

When the stocks of citrus fruits bought from the ports ran out, several dozen fruit would be bought in Warsaw, and sometimes, in Tykocin if the local merchants thought to bring them in³⁷.

³² *Ibid.*, Supl. f.n. 19, unsp., 20.10.1762; Supl. 21, unsp., 29.09.1766, unsp., 6.10.1766, unsp., 20.07.1768.

³³ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXX/1, p. 26.07.1766.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 117–119, 31.05.1749; f.n. VII/8, pp. 430–431, 15.07.1760.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, f.n. 91, unsp., 27.10.1747.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, f.n. 109, pp. 11, 22.10.1769; f.n. 117, Purchase in Gdańsk, unsp., 13.04.1742, 1771; Supl. 6/2, p. 18, 13.05.1754; Supl. 8/1, Purchase in Gdańsk, pp. 351 v, 26.04.1755; K, f.n. IV/47, pp. 28–30, 5.06.1760. In the 1751–1755 period, 925,000 lemons were imported to Poland *via* Gdańsk, and in 1756–1760, the total was 910,080.

³⁷ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXXVI/121, pp. 29–32, 15.04.1751, f.n. X/18, pp. 69–79, 29.03.1749, pp. 1239–1242, 26.05.1755; f.n. XXIII? 1, pp. 117–120, 20.01.1757; Supl. 21, unsp., 15.06.1768.

These fruits were eaten raw, they were used as additions to various dishes (meat ones as well), to decorate serving platters, also perhaps — depending on the recipe book — pieces of orange were dipped in batter and fried like doughnuts. Citrus juice was used instead of vinegar, also as salad dressing, and with oysters. This juice was also used — not without reason — as an anti-cold medicine, hence when “her ladyship got the fever”, Branicki ordered his servants to search for lemons throughout Warsaw and to dispatch them to Białystok post-haste on horseback. The fruit did not reach the patient in the best of shape since the careless rider squashed them in the course of his ride³⁸.

In Gdańsk, Königsberg, Kamenec and Lwów, several pots of citrus juice from each would be bought annually, while for the needs of the confectioner, several or several dozen pounds of orange peel cooked in sugar.

In 1766, the Hetman's agent in Paris, a certain Matiss who made large and varied purchases for Białystok at the time, reported that he bought twenty three bottles of “orange flower water” and that he has a guaranteed steady supply³⁹. This was an extract with a strong aroma which was added to desserts.

Raisins (described as “small” or “big”) were regularly bought in Gdańsk and Königsberg — more often than not, five stone of each type. Since these purchases were made usually twice a year (once in Gdańsk and once in Königsberg), it was easy to calculate that they were used at the rate of about 250 kilos per annum which seems rather a lot. It is true that at the time raisins were also used for more than just sweet bakery products, because they were also added to meats and fish, as well as taken separately, as a sweetmeat. We can however assume that they went not only onto the master's table but also at least onto the Marshal's one as well.

Almonds were also bought in large quantities, from several to ten stone of sweet ones at a time, and considerably less (half a stone) of bitter ones, used for marzipan, and even “almond shavings” (presumably for washing with). Apart from being used as additives to cakes and dishes, soups and orgeat were also made out of almonds.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Supl. 8/1, p. 17v, 29.05.1755.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. LIX/ 81, pp. 1–3, 18.01.1766.

Edible chestnuts would reach Warsaw from Western Europe in late autumn. In the two to three months that they were on sale, they would be bought at several pounds at a time. We do not know their price, though on one occasion Branicki observed that a pound of chestnuts should not cost more than four or five *szóstaki* (a small unit of currency)⁴⁰. Chestnuts were eaten cooked, sometimes with icing.

The Hetman also bought olives in Gdańsk and Königsberg. From time to time small quantities of "Parisian olives" were additionally purchased in Warsaw. Branicki did not leave it entirely to the judgement of his housekeeper and ordered that before making the transaction the olives should be tasted by the royal cook so that he might confirm that they were tasty. When in 1768 the banker and merchant Riaucur died in Warsaw, the Hetman's main concern was "to find out if the deceased had left any first rate olives..., since he ordered them from Paris annually"⁴¹. We do not know if the olives bought were salted or marinated, because the Hetman only stressed that they should be "fresh" (meaning not spoiled in look as well as taste). They were eaten as nibbles and also as additions to dishes.

Olives were used in the Hetman's kitchen. Most often, they were ordered from Gdańsk and Königsberg merchants, but Lenten provisions from the Ukrainian estates also came into play, so no doubt they were obtained in Lwów. Moreover, supplementary purchases were made from the merchants of Warsaw.

Various types of olives could be found on the market stalls of the time: "Genoan", "Florentine" (that is, Italian), Spanish ones and "Provençal" from France. The Hetman would get this latter variety when making other purchases in Paris from the same supplier who supplied the court at Versailles.

From Gdańsk and Königsberg, several to over a dozen pounds of olives of every type were typically brought over. They were also bought "by the bottle" and "by the tub". The Hetman,

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 78, Accounts, unp., 1731; f.n. 117, Purchase in Gdańsk, unp., 13.04.1742, 1771; K. f.n. XI/66, pp. 401–402, 3.10.1759; Supl. 7/3, Register of purchase in Königsberg, p. 8, 8.01.1755; Supl. 16, Register of purchases in Königsberg, unp., 23.02.1759; Supl. 17, unp., 23.02.1759; Supl. 17, unp., 26.11.1759; Supl. 21, unp., 28.11.1767.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, Notes on purchases in Gdańsk, unp., 13.04.1742; Supl. 7, Purchases in Königsberg, p. 8, 8.01.1755; Supl. 21, Purchase in Gdańsk, unp., 5.02.1767; unp., 10.01.1768, 31.01.1768.

in his dispositions to his officials, exhorted them to ensure that the olives they selected were "beautiful and white". Some extra special olive oil might on occasion have been sent on to the Hetman by the royal cook, who would distil it himself⁴². Most probably, oil from home-grown plants was also used in the kitchen, but we only have one reference on this topic, namely that the Hetman was to be supplied with poppy seed and bechnut oil from Tyczyn⁴³. Oil from both these plants was highly regarded in the kitchens of the time.

Olive oil and cooking oil in fasting periods was used to garnish dishes. Although every year Branicki was to request of the Papal nuncio a dispensation for him and his court for the period of Lent, but it did not include Fridays and Saturdays, Ash Wednesday, *Suchedni* (special days of abstinence) and Holy Week. Probably, fasts were observed on Fridays throughout the year⁴⁴.

Olive oil was also used as a dressing, which may be deduced from the condiment sets consisting of little bottles for olive oil and vinegar and mustard pots. Meat was marinated in olive oil, vinegar and dressings, to give it a crispy texture.

We have very few references to mushroom consumption. The surrounding forests must have been a source of abundant supply when in season. Dried mushrooms were bought from Białystok stall-holders. They also came with Lenten provisions. The sought after delicacy was truffles, which are very rare in Poland. We do not know whether they grew in Białystok forests. In any event the Hetman bought (maybe in Bohemia) two specially trained dogs which were able to sniff them out under the forest's carpet of fallen leaves. They were brought to Białystok *via* Cracow by some "hermit", who received money from the Hetman's official for the continuation of his journey.

In principle, garnishes known popularly as spices or groceries, were purchased by Branicki from the merchants of Gdańsk and Königsberg. The master cook and confectioner were instructed to calculate their supplies so that those bought in winter in Königsberg lasted the first half of the year, and those bought

⁴² *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, unp., 13.04.1742, 1771; Supl. 11, Passport... to Königsberg, p. 109v, 27.01.1757; Supl. 21, unp., 5.02.1767; K, f.n. LIX/81, p. 2, 18.01.1766; f.n. XXIII/ 4, pp. 294–396, 3.11.1766.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Supl. 21, Lenten provisions, unp., 28.11.1767.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, AbzB, f.n. 126.

in June, when wheat was rafted down to Gdańsk, lasted the second half⁴⁵. Lists of required ingredients were made up much earlier and they were handed to the officials delegated to do the shopping. A thousand to one thousand six hundred *zlotys* were spent on the half yearly shopping⁴⁶. If in spite of this, the groceries ran out during the year, they would be supplemented by Warsaw merchants⁴⁷.

When a transport of such groceries, properly packed in wooden churns, arrived in Białystok, the Hetman would appoint several officials who — under the master cook's watchful eye — would assist in unpacking the delivery, in re-weighing the products and recording them in the inventory⁴⁸.

Several detailed shopping lists have survived which reveal the products brought in from Gdańsk and Königsberg⁴⁹. Due to these we know quite precisely the seasonings and garnishes of the dishes at the Hetman's court though the deciphering of the names used at the time is most problematic. Black pepper was bought in the largest quantities, because several stones at a time (that is, several dozen kilo). A great deal of ginger — about three stones — was also bought at a time. About a stone or a half of ordinary caraway seed would be bought or some other type which was called Venetian.

Other seasonings were used in much smaller quantities: several pounds each of white pepper, "kubeba" (a pepper-like plant), cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, saffron. Besides these spices, used at the time both in meat and fish dishes, and for sweetmeats and cakes (excepting of course pepper, though even a pinch of it would be added to honey cakes), a number of ingredients was bought for the needs of the palace confectioner, who made, in any case, according to custom then, not only all sorts of sweet things but also pastries etc. The confectioner therefore would use several

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Supl. 7/3, p. 5v, 8.01.1755.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 91, Receipts, unsp., 31.05.1741, 26.06.1744, 23.06.1759; K. f.n. XXII/17, pp. 6–8, 6.06.1742, pp. 18, 20, 23.06.1746, pp. 28–29.06.1747, pp. 34–36, 24.07.1748, pp. 6–8, 6.06.1742, pp. 18, 20, 23.06.1746, pp. 28–29, 29.06.1747, pp.34–36, 24.07.1748.

⁴⁷ AGAD, AR, Amp. f.n. 91, unsp., Invoices for 1761, 1762, 1769.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, K. f.n. XXXIV/58, JKB to Kurdwanowski, p. 110, 19.04.1754.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, unsp., 7.05.1742, 1771; Supl. 7, Purchase in Königsberg, pp. 8–8v, 8.01.1755; Supl. 8, Purchase in Königsberg, pp. 91–92, 20.12.1755; Supl. 9, Purchase in Gdańsk, pp. 31–33, 21.04.1759; Supl. 16, Purchase in Königsberg, unsp., 23.02.1759; Supl. 21, unsp., 5.02.1767.

pounds each of cardamom, seeds from ginger-type plants known as paradise seeds, which were added to cakes and sweet beverages, aniseed, pistaccio nuts and what was called Venetian turpentine, that is juice obtained from the incision of a pistaccio tree bark, vanilla, essence of aniseed, and essences from various types of lemons known as "citron", "cedro", and "bergamota" (*citrus bergamium*).

Isinglass, that is fish glutine (a sort of gellatine) was also bought for use in making jellies and for the clarification of liquids.

Since desserts at the time, and especially cakes, were adorned with intricate scaffolding made of sugar, to make these decorations one needed not only sugar, but also the glutinates obtained from various tropical plants known colloquially as "Arabic gum", "Dragant gum" and "Gutta gum".

Sugar products were given various colourings, hence pandering to the needs of the confectioners various dyes were obtained (a quarter pound each of each sort). Some of them (*berlinerroth*, *berlinerblau*, *engltschroth*) were probably dyes made out of assorted South American tree dyes, which were widely applied in the dyeing processes of the time. "Venetian indigo" was a blue dye from the Indian indigo plant, while red and blue litmus, was obtained from litmus plants. "Coccynele" — a red animal dye obtained from the Mexican cochineal (*Coccus cacti*) insect was also used as indeed were the mineral dyes: cynober (vermillion), *kolnscherede* (some type of clay dye). Plant and animal dyes were not dangerous to health, but there can be some reservations as to mineral ones. Decidedly inadvisable was the distilled verdigris (copper carbonate alkaline), a dye of bright green used to colour dishes, was in constant use in the Białystok confectionery selection. Its harmfulness to health was only realized in the mid-19th century.

We do not know, however, what the regularly purchased sponge (half pound a time) was needed for by the confectioner, as well as the half pound of "prime powder" (this was not icing sugar, which is mentioned separately). It could be that the sponge was used to help impregnate certain dishes with dyes, and the powder (acquired most often from wheat flour or rice) was used to sprinkle decorations imitating snow, which was fashionable at that time. French chefs were particularly adroit in thinking up "imitation snow" as table decorations.

Several reams each of "ordinary" and somewhat thicker "kitchen" paper were bought for the kitchen and the confectioner. Moulds were made out of it for pastries and small cakes. Curl-paper for tying round the legs of cooked poultry, all sorts of decorations were cut out, which decorated the platters. In the course of cooking, glowing charcoal would also be put under the lid of the pot. What was often done was that under it, the food in the pot would be covered with thick paper. As Tremo, King Stanisław August's cook, was to write, "the tin-plating of a lid melts and drips in drops onto the paper. Without the paper, the tin would fall into the food which would not only spoil the taste but could also sometimes harm one's health". In turn, from the leaves of silver and gold foil thus acquired could be made decorations usually for the so-called "high table" at feasts.

Coming back to seasonings, let us mention also the "fresh small capars", that is the flower buds or fruits of the Mediterranean plant *Caparis spinosa*. They had a sharp, slightly bitter taste, and were marinated in vinegar or preserved in olive oil. This delicacy made its appearance in Poland in the late Jagellon period, along with the intensified influence of Italian cuisine. Capars were taken as a starter or as a garnish for meat dishes and sauces. Several to several dozen pounds of capars would be bought at a time for the Hetman's kitchen during each trip to Gdańsk. In 1765, a pound of capars cost 96 *zlotys* in Gdańsk⁵⁰.

In Warsaw "Parisian" mustard would occasionally be acquired, but it is difficult to say whether it really was brought over from France, or whether it was simply given that name.

Wine vinegar on the other hand was imported from Western Europe. Made from wine gone sour, it was used for marinades, as well as for generous flavourings of dishes (sweet-and-sour was the taste preferred in Polish cuisine then). It was traded by the merchants of Gdańsk and Königsberg, as well as Warsaw. For the needs of the Białystok kitchen two or three barrels of this vinegar would be bought.

Sugar cane was used for sweetening dishes. It was bought in Gdańsk and Königsberg. Traders of the time offered three types of this sugar — molasses (a worse type of sugar that was badly refined), "kanar" (a well refined powdered sugar) and *kandysbort*

⁵⁰ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXII/17, p. 74, 2.11.1765.

(a thick–crystallised sugar). Molassis was exclusively used in the Hetman's kitchen (several dozen stones a year) and it was added to meat and fish dishes. On the other hand, in the confectionery, besides molasses (used probably with cake baking and maybe in making jams) several stones each of the remaining sorts was used. They served to make sugar decorations, and also to sweeten coffee which, out of preference, was taken very sweet at the time. We do not know however whether tea was sweetened, and possibly it was not because it was taken more as a medicine.

Since we are dealing with hot beverages let us add that coffee was avidly consumed at the Hetman's court. Over a hundred pound and, indeed, much more, of "prime coffee" would be bought during each trip to Gdańsk and Königsberg. In 1771 in Gdańsk itself a total of 890 pounds of coffee was bought⁵¹ (which would make about 356 kilograms or almost a kilo a day). In the course of the year, supplementary supplies of coffee — from several to several dozen pounds, would be purchased in Warsaw, especially from the warehouse known as "Pod Lewkiem" and even from Białystok stall-holders⁵².

Traders offered several types of coffee: Martinique, Turkish, Levantine, Dutch. Branicki would instruct his official dispatched to Gdańsk to select the best Levantine coffee "because when it is good, it differs in no way from the Turkish". The most sought after variety was Turkish "de Mocca", but this was not always available in Gdańsk⁵³.

A pound of coffee, depending on the sort, cost two to five *zlotys*. As a curio it is worth adding that Dutch coffee was often bought not in pounds but in *oka* (a Turkish measure of volume — 1.2847 kg), while Turkish coffee would be sold in pounds. We do not know if the beans bought were already semi-roasted, and probably they were not because coffee tended to be roasted at home directly before being consumed.

Tea, as noted earlier, at least still in the late 1750s was mostly regarded as a medicine. In a letter to his servant Szuszkowski, the Hetman recommended: "*herbam thee* for common people; that is to say, send one pound over for the sick". For himself, by proxy of Feliks Bekierski, the commander of the Białocerkiew stron-

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Amp. Sygn 117, Receipts, unsp., 1771.

⁵² *Ibid.*, f.n. 91, Receipts, 15.03.1769.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, *ibid*, Supl. 21, unsp., 30.04.1767, K. f.n. XIII/52, pp. 19–20, 15.05.1767.

ghold, the Hetman had China tea — “premium with flower” — obtained from Russian merchants from across the river Dniepr.

Branicki's wife also drank chocolate, the favourite drink of the *grande dames* of the time.

A couple of pounds of chocolate were bought at a time in Gdańsk (paying six *zlotys* twelve *groszy* per pound), and on one occasion, the Hetman had a “trunk” of chocolate brought over from Vienna⁵⁴. Chocolate was also most probably served to guests during his pleasure trips to Wysoki Stok, because the palace there had a special “burner” for heating it up.

Let us go over to food of a more basic kind, that is that which comes from animals. In accordance with the culinary preferences of the day, beef would be the most frequent meat to appear on the Hetman's table. Oxen, for the most part, came from his own stock. Barely a few source documents speak of buying Ukrainian oxen in Warsaw. But animals were not bred exclusively for meat. Young oxen were used for their pulling strength for field work and only after a certain time were they set aside for fattening. The fattening up of such “exhausted” oxen presented numerous problems. One of Branicki's officials wrote for example that “I fear and do not expect that there will be any use of their meat worthy of your table upon your arrival, because although I will attend to them and feed them well, before they recover after the work they had been put to, they will not start to put on weight immediately”⁵⁵. Thus Branicki frequently complained that: “no way can I eat this meat, nor can it be placed on my table, because the oxen are both small and over-worked; they are old, their skin is almost invariably tough... I said many-a-time to have at least a hundred oxen out in pasture and to feed them well for my table”⁵⁶.

From the estates lying further afield, oxen were driven to Białystok, while preceding every stay of the Hetman in the capital, oxen and pigs would be driven from Białystok to Warsaw. They were fattened in cowsheds by the manor in Praga suburb, and at the property rented in Tarchomin in the neighbourhood of Warsaw⁵⁷.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, Receipts, unsp., 13.04.1742, 1771; K, f.n. X/18, pp. 305–308, 15.02.1750, f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 296–298, 22.05.1762.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXV/41, pp. 120–123, 30.10.1753.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Supl. 8/4, pp. 191 v, 10.11.1755

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. IX/49, pp. 4–6, 17.09.1754, pp. 55–57, 13.02.1757; f.n. XXV/41, pp. 199–202, 27.10.1754, pp. 550–553, 11.09.17 58; f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 85–88, 8.04.1761; Supl. 5/4, pp. 2v–3, 5.12.1753; Supl. 19, unsp., 4.02.1763.

There are no surviving records concerning calves earmarked for slaughter, though veal must have been regarded as among the tastiest of meats since the Hetman recommended that it be served during the sojourn in Białystok of the Royal Prince Charles, and since the Chamberlain of the Prussian court, von Lehn-dorff was entertained with dinner consisting of ten courses of veal. "A quarter" of veal was also given by the Hetman to the Italian singers — whose skill Branicki greatly valued — for their journey from Białystok to Warsaw⁵⁸.

Pigs were also bred, of course, on the Hetman's estates. Most often they were fattened near the manor house breweries and distilleries, where the waste in alcohol production provided much nutritious feed. Of the estates situated further afield, "sheets of back fat"; (two "sheets" were obtained from each pig) was supplied to Białystok as well as leaf fat (meat of the bone and bacon from the back of the pig), sausages, smoked heads, legs and tripes. "Inferior" products were given to the soldiers stationed at the palace and the seasonally employed craftsmen⁵⁹. On the other hand, better "smoked stuffs", hams first and foremost, would go to the master's table.

We have few mentions of mutton being eaten. In Tarchomin castrated rams known as "skops" were specially fattened for the master's table⁶⁰. Sheep were shepherded here from the more outlying farmsteads belonging to the Hetman. During great feasts the ancient custom of "roasting the lamb" was observed.

The manor's slaughterhouse in Białystok was at the back of ulica Zamkowa. There, the slaughter of animals for the kitchen's needs took place. The manor also had its own smokehouse which was (as from 1755) in a shed meant for boat repairs. Part of this shed was partitioned off as a smokehouse, and a special chimney built in accordance with the Hetman's instructions⁶¹.

Every year at the beginning of winter, more than a dozen, indeed, several dozen fatted animals would be slaughtered. Beef was designated for what was called *pektelfleische*, which meant

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Supl. 14, p. 25v, 20.02.1758, K. f.n. XXIII/4, KS to JKB, p. 362, 8.05.1767.

⁵⁹ AGAD, AR, K, Supl. 5/4, pp. 2v-3, 5.12.1753; Supl. 7/2, pp. 51v, 18.10.1754; Supl. 8/4, p. 18, 2.11.1755; Supl. 9/1, Register of items sent from Biliłówka, p. 56, 17.03.1756.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Supl. 6/3, pp. 6v-7v, 22.05.1754; K, f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 96-98, 20.04.1761.

⁶¹ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XVII/12, pp. 72-75, 9.10.1775.

that: raw meat was sprinkled with salt, saltpeter would be brought over from Gdańsk, pepper, spices, and it would all be stuffed tightly into wooden barrels, with their lids being weighed down with stones. Horsemeat was marinated in similar fashion. Pigs were slaughtered for pork fat, ham, sausages etc. Also in late autumn, about a hundred geese and ducks apiece would be slaughtered which would be smoked. From the butchers in the Hetman's towns of Tykocin, Orla, Choszcza, Białystok came tongues for smoking. The smoking process was supervised by the main master cook himself, since the others did not know "how to prepare smoked meats in a civilised manner"⁶².

Despite huge stores of his own, some smoked item or other would constantly be bought in addition. In Warsaw smoked pork fat (at one *tynf* a pound), tongue, hams (twelve *tynfs* for a big one)⁶³. The resident housekeeper in Warsaw constantly stressed in any case that it was difficult to get hold of hams in the capital. It was also difficult to find somebody who would undertake "to do some smoking" during the Hetman's stay in Warsaw. A "woman from the suburb Leszno" was finally found who did this for a living, but not only did she refuse to accept the offer of employment, but also "she refused to divulge the method by which she prepared smoked fish and *pektelfleische*"⁶⁴.

On several occasions, Branicki had smoked meats brought over from Hamburg (the German towns were famous at the time for their excellent smoked meats) *via* Gdańsk. When the consignment reached Warsaw, he issued very detailed instructions on how it was to be stored on arrival. Pieces of meat were to be hung up in the room provided "so that the wind would go through", while the window was to be covered by grey canvass to protect the sight against prying eyes "because some good-for-nothing might put a ladder up to the window and cause some damage"⁶⁵.

Of the smaller animals, rabbits were eaten at the Hetman's court. A rabbit farm was set up in Białystok in 1748. Still earlier,

⁶² *Ibid.*, f.n. XXV/41, pp. 77–88, 17.10.1752, p. 335, 5.11.1755, pp. 243–350, 13.11.1755; Supl. 8/4, pp. 59v–60v, c. 1.12.1755.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 193–195, 9.09.1749; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 163–164, 22.08.1759, f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 49–56, 9.03.1761; Supl. 12, pp. 28v, 2.08.1757; Amp, f.n. 91, Invoice of the merchant Laurenty, unsp., 25.04.1761.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 333–336, 18.10.1761.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Supl. 17, unsp., 19.01.1759, K, f.n. XI/66, pp. 420–421, 21.01.1760, f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 305–306, 4.02.1760.

Branicki wanted to buy a particularly good variety of “grey rabbit” in Gdańsk. Unfortunately, as his agent reported to him, “he will not get grey rabbits either here or in Holland, only in England from where they do not let out live ones under pain of confiscation of the ship which tried to take them aboard”⁶⁶. It therefore probably ended up in settling for some domestic variety.

Poultry dishes were among the favourites. I have already mentioned smoked duck and goose. Chicken were roasted. They were bred in farmsteads belonging to the nobility, but they also formed part of the dues from tithed serfs. Fowl and capons were specially fattened so that the meat was crispy.

The dish regarded as typical of Polish cuisine in the mid-18th century was roast turkey. It must have been served at the Hetman’s table but the only mention concerning turkeys speaks of them being bred in Tarchomin⁶⁷.

Besides domestic animals, meat also came from game. For the needs of the Hetman’s kitchens there were culls of deer in the Hetman’s game reservation. If the Hetman were to just arrive from Warsaw, he would order the slaughter of animals on the Tuesday to Wednesday night, so that the cart carrying them from Białystok would make it to the capital by Saturday⁶⁸. Evidently they were meant for Sunday feasts. At times when Branicki stayed longer in Dubno, game was also sent there. Such consignments could only be despatched in the colder months, that is in autumn and winter, when, in any case, meat from game was at its best. On the other hand, in spring, a different delicacy would be sent to Warsaw — freshly laid pheasants’ eggs. Game birds — pheasants, wild ducks from the park’s canals, snipe, fieldfares and thrushes were also sent out packed in fir branches. Sometimes the transports were very big, for example a fallow deer, a roe deer, sixty snipes, thirty eight hazel grouse, twelve ducks or “a boar and a great sow”, seven rabbits, twenty eight wild partridges (that is, not from farm stock), ten black grouse, wood grouse, six pheasants, a hundred and fifty waxwings, or a fallow deer, five roe deer,

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXI/3, pp. 35–37, 26.11.1748; f.n. XXII/17, pp. 32–33, 29.12.1747.

⁶⁷ AGAD, AR, Supl. 19/2, Stock take at farm, pp. 80v–81, 25.07.1756.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXXIV/58, pp. 68–70, 18.09.1788.

^{68a} *Ibid.*, f.n. XV/11, pp. 27–28, 4.12.1755; f.n. XXX/90, pp. 38–40, 2.02.1758, pp. 61–63, 18.03.1758; f.n. IV/10, pp. 76–78, 3.10.1760, pp. 92–95, 15.12.1760, pp. 103–104, 7.05.1761, pp. 202–204, 1.10.1763.

four hazel grouse, nineteen skylarks, would be loaded onto a cart^{68a}. These consignments did not always arrive in the best of shape. It happened that the game, as the Hetman angrily wrote to his official, was "crushed, slimy and half rotten, because so much beast and fowl, and further pressed down with awning by the peasants, was loaded onto one cart and which on warm October days was prone to go off⁶⁹.

When in season, Branicki was also sent several dozen brace of fieldfares by his officials in Cracow estates⁷⁰.

Insofar as hunting expeditions were organised in Białystok in autumn and winter, in Warsaw there were no set hunting periods to enable animals to reproduce, and the Hetman's resident housekeeper assured him that in spring, during his stay in the capital, he may have whatever game he wished (roe deer, hare, snipe, and other bird) in the nearby forests belonging to General Mokronowski or the Radziejowskie forests, as long as he sent hunters with a pack of hounds from Warsaw⁷¹.

Some of the animals hunted down would be given by the Hetman to family and friends as gifts. He also sent — as made by the Białystok pastry cook — pates from wild game fowl⁷². Pates at the time consisted of whole cooked birds on a bed of mince meat, all sealed and cooked in pastry.

Fish frequently appeared on the Hetman's table. Branicki, as was his habit, wanted to ensure that his estates could themselves provide the widest selection of fish possible. In Białystok he had carp in the park's canals, in the scenic valley he set up a trout farm, in the "freshly dug" ponds nearby tench, crucian carp and pike were kept. The Hetman also tried to farm pike-perch. In 1755 the fry was to have been brought over from Prussia⁷³ but probably nothing came of it because three years later in spring the Hetman placed an order for thirty to forty live pike-perch with Warsaw fishermen, and to find out how to safely transport them to Białystok⁷⁴. It transpired however, that in the fishermen's opi-

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Supl. 19, unsp., 11.10.1762.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXI/22, pp. 5–6, 30.12.1748, p. 8, 5.02.1749, pp. 9, 9.02.1749, pp. 38–40, 30.12.1751, pp. 71., 12.1752.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 92–94, 14.04.1761.

⁷² *Ibid.*, f.n. XXIII/1, pp. 324–327, 5.12.1757; pp. 524–527, 18.10.1758; Supl. 15, unsp., 6.12.1758; Supl. 21, unsp., 28.11.1766.

⁷³ *Ibid.* K, f.n. XVII/12, pp. 114–117, 11.12.1755.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Supl. 14, pp. 100v–101, 19.04.1758.

nion, such a transport was only possible in autumn. The Hetman returned to the question of having pike–perch brought over from Prussia in 1763, when he ordered the preparation of special barrels for the fry. They were to be lined with white, pre-soaked in water by textile of thick cotton⁷⁵. The idea was to protect the fish from being tossed against the hard staves during the transportation, while the material had to be soaked presumably to rinse out the alum used in end-use finishes in weaving, because it could have been harmful to the fish.

It seems that pike–perch did not acclimatise to the Białystok weather because we find no subsequent references to their being harvested.

On the other hand fish ponds of the Ukrainian and Ruthenian estates were thriving. Thus, Białystok would receive over a dozen barrels of “salted fish”, several “tubs” of pike, a barrels with fish stomachs and spawn, and several dozen stone of beluga, and over a dozen *oka* of caviar from the Ruthenian estates. A part of these products was bought by way of supplementary purchases at the Lwów fairs⁷⁶.

From Bilińówka in the Ukraine, several barrels of salted carp and sturgeon would be sent each year to Białystok or straight to Dubno where the Hetman frequently spent his winters⁷⁷.

Pike, perch, crucian carp, eels and tench caught by anglers in the river Narew would be sent to Warsaw by the rivers Narew, Bug and Vistula. For this rafting, Branicki would furnish raftsmen with a special passport⁷⁸. When the rivers were frozen he would order the fish to be “sliced and salted” so as to be able to send them to Warsaw by road⁷⁹.

One winter in Warsaw, Branicki tasted a dish made out of frozen trout, hailed it as very good, and immediately ordered his Białystok officials to harvest trout from the ponds by the score, to freeze them with the help of snow and despatch them to the capital. The cold weather did not keep, however, and while the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. VI/59, pp. 28–29, 29.11.1763; f.n. IV/10, pp. 196, 17.10.1763.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, f.n. VII/40, pp. 26–27, 18.01.1750; f.n. III/59, p. 37, 27.12.1752; Amp. f.n. 91, Receipts, unpubl. 02.1762; Supl. 17, Specification of Lenten supplies from Ruthenia, unpubl. 1760; Supl. 21, Register of Lenten supplies from Mościsk, unpubl. 27.11.1766.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Supl. 8/4, pp. 19v–20v, 10.10.1755.

⁷⁸ AGAD, AR, Supl. 12, Passport, p. 85, 18.09.1757.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Supl. 11, pp. 31v–33, 29.12.1756.

trout was still fresh upon arrival, they had defrosted, hence they were never sent in that way again⁸⁰.

The biggest problems annually were had with getting hold of beautiful live specimens of fish for the Hetman's name-day in June. The catches of the fishermen of Tykocin, who had the duty to supply fish to the Białystok palace for Fridays and Saturdays all year round⁸¹, were evidently insufficient since already in advance, live sturgeon were ordered from Warsaw fishermen who worked in the vicinity of Zakroczym⁸². The delivery of these fish to Białystok in a condition fit for consumption was no small problem. The mail coach left the capital before evening and with a rapid change of horses, they had a chance of reaching Białystok by the following evening. Experienced fishermen advised to have the fish gutted, "put stinging nettles inside, or to slice them up for cooking and salted in the vessel in which it is to be sent on"⁸³.

When the catch failed, smoked or marinated sturgeon, which was available from Warsaw traders, had to satisfy the need. It happened, however, that even the traders had limited supplies to the extent that "they don't want to sell even up to a pound, saying that they only have a little available, and placed it at the disposal of the royal court"⁸⁴.

Branicki would also regularly buy sea fish — primarily in Gdańsk and Königsberg, but also in Warsaw. Every year the corn barges returning from Gdańsk would be laden with barrels of herring, of which in any case only a small quantity would reach his Lordship's table, most of them being sold in the inns belonging to the manor, hence designated to feed soldiers, craftsmen etc.⁸⁵

At the Gdańsk market one could find assorted types of herring: Dutch, Swedish, Nordic, Scottish. The Hetman seemed to prefer the Dutch sort, but made do with others if need be. Annual purchases both in Gdańsk and Königsberg included several, possibly more than a dozen, stone of *kablou* — the

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Supl. 14, pp. 8v-9, 19.02.1758, pp. 39v-40, 8.03.1758; K, f.n. XVII/12, pp. 214-215, 23.02.1758; f.n. XXX/90, p. 45, 23.02.1758.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXXVI/121, p. 40, 26.05.1751.

⁸² *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 1085-1090, 3.06.1754.; f.n. XXIII/1, pp. 47-48, 19.06.1756; Supl. 21, unpp., 29.05.1766.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Supl. 9/2, pp. 17v-18, 17.06.1756; K, f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 116-117, 19.06.1761.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 77-79, 2.05.1759.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, sygn. IV/47, p. 32, 5.06.1760.

codfish, a some scores of "plaice from Riga", smoked and marinated salmon, lampray, Dutch cod by the piece, *certa* (a salmon-like fish found in coastal waters), red herring, over a dozen stone of stockfish (dried cod), and also rarities from warmer waters — like anchovies, that is small herring-like fish caught in the vicinity of Sardinia, which were marinated or preserved in oil⁸⁶.

An overseas rarity that was gladly bought by the Hetman in the winter (when they were not in danger of spoiling) were oysters. They were supplied mainly by the merchants of Gdańsk and Königsberg⁸⁷.

Oysters in shells were grilled, with a red hot iron blade being dragged across the shell surface; they were considered to be ready when the shells began to open themselves⁸⁸. The greatest demand for oysters would come roundabout Christmas time when they were served in Białystok during the Christmas eve dinner.

Besides oysters, Branicki would also buy other edible sea foods, because we can find references to "barrels of shell fish" being ordered in Gdańsk⁸⁹.

On the other hand, little information has survived regarding dairy produce and eggs consumption habits. For sure, eggs were used in the kitchens of the period at a far greater rate for cakes and desserts, than present day recipes would recommend. In those days, only very "eggy" cakes were regarded as really tasty.

In his lordship's farmsteads, chickens were commonly kept. Evidently they supplied sufficient numbers of eggs because we do not encounter any records that would suggest that there was ever a shortage and that additional supplies had to be bought. The only mention concerning eggs (not counting the already mentioned pheasant eggs) was noted in the Hetman's correspondence with his officials in 1761, where he speaks of having 720 of eggs delivered from his Konstantyn estates to the palace in Warsaw⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, Receipts, unsp., 13.04.1742; f.n. 91, unsp., 25.05.1759; Supl. 8/4, Purchase in Königsberg, pp. 91–92, 20.12.1755; Supl. 21, unsp., 28.11.1768; K, f.n. XXII/17, pp. 6, 15.02.1763; ZazPB, f.n. 325, Various letters, unsp., 4.01.1744; Wielądko, 1783, pp. 212–213.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, Supl. 11, Passport for Captain Lindsay to Königsberg, pp. 109v, 27.01.1757; Supl. 21, unsp., 5.02.1767.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Supl. 11, p. 119r v, 2.02.1757; Wielądko, 1783, p. 228.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Supl. 21, unsp., 5.02.1767.

⁹⁰ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXIII/3, pp. 96–98, 20.04.1761.

We know next to nothing about milk, cream and soft young whitecheese consumption. Besides ordinary cows kept in the Białystok cowsheds, Branicki, like other magnates at the time, in his case in the 1750s, bred high-yield milch cows which had been brought over from the Northern Netherlands. He had a special Dutch-style habitat built, employing a Dutch dairymaid for good measure, to pasture and make Dutch-style dairy products. She was to supply cream for coffee "for the ladies", soft cheeses and above all "fresh butter" for the everyday needs of the Hetman's table. Dutch livestock however, did not adapt well to the different climatic conditions; several head went down altogether, and the survivors gave little milk. It does not seem that there was any greater profit from this source in the years that followed either⁹¹.

Also in Tarchomin several milk cows were kept "for milk to go with the coffee, for the kitchen, and for the fresh butter" that were all needed at the palace in Warsaw⁹².

Butter — which was used not only for spreading on bread but also for frying, seasoning, baking — was evidently in great demand in the Hetman's kitchen because what was supplied by the Białystok farm and Tyczyn estates was insufficient⁹³.

Thus, butter supplies would come to both Białystok and Warsaw, from the Ruthenian estates. The Hetman constantly reminded his officials to speed up the butter supplies "because it is the most needed (commodity) above all else". He was also angered by the fact that evidently they disregarded his orders as to how the butter was to be made: that which arrived was no good and old, while "beautiful butter could be preserved for a year and more, usually keeping its freshness"⁹⁴. As for the method of preserving butter delivered to Warsaw and stored in the palace cellars, we find the following description in a letter of one of the Hetman's servants: "Butter has been taken from all churns to a depth of a finger and a half, in which, having made bore holes, a salted water solution has been filtered in through a clean cloth,

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, f.n. XVII/12, pp. 118–120, 13.12.1755; pp. 133–136, 8.01.1756; f.n. XXX/90, pp. 61–63, 18.03.1758.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Supl. 6/3, pp. 9–9v, 22.05.1754.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXII/9, pp. 42–45, 22.03.1744; f.n. VI/59, p. 1, 8.11.1762.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Supl. 6/3, p. 4, 20.05.1754; p. 24v, 5.06.1755; Supl. 11, p. 67lv, 29.12.1756; Supl. 21, unsp., 4.04.1767.

and I ordered that the mould be wiped off the churns. The butter taken has been rinsed several times in clean water and salted"⁹⁵. Probably, part of the butter designated for longer preservation was re-melted.

Butter supplies for his own estates were insufficient, thus more was always being bought in the vicinities of Białystok and Tykocin. The stewards from the Ruthenian and Ukrainian estates were ordered to buy up butter in their parts of the country, particularly in Jarosław, which was renowned for its good dairy produce. "Only make sure that the one doing the buying knows what he's doing", urged the Hetman in 1767, when he assigned as much as 900 *zlotys* for the purpose⁹⁶.

Butter was also bought in Warsaw. In winter barges would come up from Jarosław and the merchants from there would trade in butter in the store houses on the Vistula. In summer butter was supplied to the capital by owners of the local farms who in the opinion of the Hetman's cook were frequently not too honest because they would put fresh butter on top in the churns, "but when we demanded that they be tested with the help of a sampling rod", it turned out that underneath it was old, "even green". Butter from Royal Prussia could also be bought in Warsaw⁹⁷. Branicki most eagerly sought "May butter" (that is from when the cows would be herded out to pasture in the meadows). It was regarded as having the best taste, the most suitable for long-term preservation, and even possessing medicinal properties "because of the herbs that the cows would ingest with their food at that period of year". The Hetman ordered that it should be bought in the vicinity of Gdańsk "since Mr Reokur (Riaucur) gets his from there every year and he cannot praise it enough, with regard to how good, fat and long-keeping it is"⁹⁸. Occasionally, butter would also be bought in Grudziądz. In December 1765, 176 churns, each weighing 33 pounds and at 2 *zlotys* 24 *grosze* each, were purchased. In the opinion of his official, it was expensive, but prices would always rise in winter⁹⁹.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. X/18, pp. 15–18, 3.01.1749.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Supl. 5/4, pp. 2v–3, 5.12.1753; Supl. 21, unpp., 24.04.1767.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 163–166, 9.08.1749; f.n. XXIII/1, pp. 81–83, 9.08.1756, pp. 85–87, 1.08.1756; f.n. XXIII/4, pp. 464–469, 2.05.1767.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, f.n. XXXVI/139, p. 12, 15.05.1763; Wielądko, 1783, p. 301.

⁹⁹ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXIII? 34, p. 1, 21.12.1756.

Branicki also ordered, through the merchants of Gdańsk, small quantities (a dozen or so pounds at a time) of butter from Holland¹⁰⁰.

At the Hetman's court white and soft cheeses must have been eaten because they were commonly consumed at the time. A favourite dish was for example a hot beer soup with bits of white cheese in it. We know that the production of these cheeses took place in the Białystok "Dutch farm".

Hard (yellow) cheeses were still a rarity in Poland at the time, but magnates and nobles willingly bought them. Branicki would annually have brought from Gdańsk several pieces of cheese shipped in from the Northern Netherlands, and also local "cheeses from Żuławy" stressing that one should be with caraway seed¹⁰¹.

In autumn they would send from Białystok for rennet "Limburg cheeses" from Royal Prussia. His agent found out on the spot that the cheeses "were still too young" (not mature), so he brought back only four to sample, and a further score or so to be taken in winter. Warsaw merchants also traded in Limburg cheese (charging one ducat a piece). Branicki constantly reminded his officials that they should be on the look out for it and send it on to Białystok whenever possible¹⁰².

Every year, before the Hetman's name-day, Italian parmesan would be bought in Warsaw. Branicki recommended that a piece of parmesan should be taken from each of the Warsaw shops dealing in this good, and delivered to General Mokronowski for sampling, so that he may choose the best. On occasion, parmesan would be brought over from Königsberg¹⁰³. Grated parmesan would be sprinkled over meat and fish dishes and slices of toast.

Finally a curio: in 1759 a "Frenchman" from Warsaw offered Branicki "a tinned cheese" with an explanatory note that it is "Un fromage de Rocquefort bien conditionné pesant 11 livres" for 77

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Supl. 21, unsp., 5.02.1767, JKB to Matuszewicz, unsp., 18.04.1767; K, f.n. XIII/52, pp. 7–10, 28.04.1767.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Supl. 5/4, Recording of purchase in Gdańsk, p. 5, 14.10.1753; Supl. 8/1, Purchase in Gdańsk, p. 35, 26.04.1755; Supl. 21, Registry of purchase in Gdańsk, unsp., 30.09.1766; K, f.n. XVII/12, pp. 100–104, 26.11.1755; Amp, f.n. 117, Purchase in Gdańsk, unsp., 1771.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, K, f.n. IX/40, pp. 24–26, 19.10.1752; Supl. 9/1, pp. 2–3, 31.03.1756; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 309–312, 4.02.1760, pp. 321–322, 13.02.1760.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Supl. 7/3, Register of purchase in Königsberg, p. 8, 8.01.1755; Supl. 8/2, pp. 41v–42v, 12.06.1755; Supl. 21, unsp., 21.05.1767.

*tyńfs*¹⁰⁴. Unfortunately we do not know whether this cheese, incrustated with mould, was to his Lordship's taste.

To finish with cheeses, it should finally be added that on one occasion, an official sent to the Hetman for sampling "two churns of Hungarian *bryndza*" — cheese of ewe's milk¹⁰⁵.

It is now time to move on from food to drink. Tea and coffee has already been mentioned. However, the basic beverage at the Hetman's court was beer. Primarily, it came from his own breweries. Naturally, it was brewed in Białystok, and also in Warsaw when Branicki stayed there. It would seem that initially, one of the capital's breweries was hired — for example in 1750, it was the brewery "with all vessels" situated in the district of Solec, which belonged to the Deputy Chancellor of Lithuania, Michał Fryderyk Czartoryski.

The Hetman's brewer brought the necessary malt over from Białystok, water was taken from the Vistula, and it was in that river that the beer barrels were washed. From every brewing session, over a dozen barrels of "good beer" and several "inferior" ones would be obtained. However, this beer turned out to be not so tasty, which the brewer blamed on "the bad water" of the Vistula¹⁰⁶. In subsequent years a small brewery was started up at the manor in Praga suburb, or in Tarchomin, which was supervised by the Białystok brewer who would be sent out in advance. He would make light beer (over a dozen barrels) and brown (several barrels from every brewing session).

These beers were then taken post haste to the palace cellars so that they could stand and settle¹⁰⁷.

The Hetman held in high regard the very fashionable strong beer imported from England at the time. He bought it annually in Gdańsk by the barrel, or a few hundred bottles at a time¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, K, XXIII/2, p. 286, 17.12.1759.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, f.n. VII/8, pp. 131–134, 6.01.1756.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 278–285, 10.01.1750, pp. 286–292, 24.01.1750, pp. 315–320, 28.02.1750.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, Supl. 6/4, p. 5v, 1.08.1754; K, f.n. IX/49, pp. 1–3, 9.09.1754, pp. 100–102, 11.09.1757; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 468–415, 6.09.1762; ZazPB, f.n. 308, unsp., 8.10.1757.

¹⁰⁸ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXII/17, pp. 24, 10.09.1746; f.n. V/39, pp. 9–11, 28.08.1753; Supl. 5/4, Purchase from Gdańsk, p. 5, 8.09.1753; Supl. 8/3, Purchase from Gdańsk, p. 16v, 18.08.1755; Supl. 9/1, pp. 13–14, 8.04.1756; Amp, f.n. 117, Purchase in Gdańsk, unsp., 1771.

An English bottle of beer at the time, made of fairly thick glass, contained about 1.136 litres.

Transport usually gave a fair sized headache. Barrels of beer would be loaded onto the corn barges returning from Gdańsk; they would be covered over with branches and frequently sprinkled with water to prevent the beverage going flat. Bottles were packed in big baskets, several dozen to over a hundred per basket, and they were also sent by waterway unless there was a hurry in which case it went by coach. Part of the bottles would break along the way, which would give rise to suspicions that maybe the beer had rather been drunk by its escort¹⁰⁹.

Insofar as beer was treated as an everyday beverage put on all tables, wine was destined primarily for the Lord's and Marshal's table, although now and then craftsmen were treated to it as well. But it represented a form of distinction or encouragement to work faster.

The Hetman stocked up primarily with two types of wine: Hungarian, as drunk by way of long-standing tradition in Poland, and French wines which were just then becoming fashionable. Wines from other regions of Europe were drunk only sporadically.

There is no way of calculating the quantities of wine bought in the course of a year because the surviving data is fragmentary. We know even less about the daily, monthly or annual consumption rates of wine at the court. Only a reconciliation concerning barely eleven days of August 1771 is all we have. The Hetman who died on October 9, 1771, was already ill by then and probably did not entertain larger numbers of guests. Wine was therefore probably drunk only by the householders. In the course of those eleven days "26 pots of drink were issued" to the Lord's table¹¹⁰ (about two a day), that is about 98 litres. If the consumption rate for those eleven days were to be taken as typical (and almost certainly, it was not typical), then we would have to assume that the annual wine consumption rate at the Hetman's court was about 3,300 litres. With certainty, in the years that the Hetman conducted a lively political activity, a lot less of it was consumed. It is worth mentioning that wine was also used as a condiment for various dishes, with fish and meat being cooked in it, and

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, Supl. 9/1, Register of purchases from Gdańsk, pp. 31–33, 21.04.1756; K, f.n. XXIII/1, pp. 65–68, 19.07.1756.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Amp, f.n. 92, Alcohols, wines for the Lord's table, unpp., 18–28.08.1771.

sauces flavoured with it. Most of the wines served at the Hetman's table came from Hungary. Often, Branicki would send one of his officials to make big purchases there on the spot.

Wines from "overseas", primarily French, were purchased in Gdańsk and Königsberg. In Gdańsk, the Hetman's suppliers were the merchants J. B. Rottenburg, Hans Preyss, and in particular Steiff, who continuously intermediated in all of Branicki's purchases. He would take delivery of the cargoes of alcohols from France and Holland addressed to him (in particular the tasty wines from Spa of the Liege province) straight from the ships. Knowing that the abbot of Oliwa had "exceptional Burgundy wines", the Hetman urged him to find out the better beverages by "sussing out" from the abbot's servants where they were bought and buy them there himself¹¹¹. Despite good relations with Gdańsk merchants, the Hetman did not fully trust them. "Try to attend to your purchases in Gdańsk well" — he wrote to Ciecierski, the marshal of Białystok palace, who had been sent out there — "especially with the wines, because last year you chose different ones from the ones the merchants loaded onto the ship. Whatever you choose, put a seal on it, then they won't be able to swap it"¹¹².

Overseas wines were also continuously bought in Warsaw. Some of them were earmarked for the Warsaw residence, for when he stayed there, while the rest would be despatched to Białystok. During the transportation of wine in summer, the barrels would be covered with brushwood, or branches and regularly sprinkled with water to preserve them from turning sour.

Branicki did not employ his own cellar man in the capital, and only sent over the one from Białystok over to Warsaw from time to time. That is why, everyday care over alcohol stocks was in the hands of successive resident housekeepers in Warsaw. Lichomski, and only he, kept the keys to the cellars, and was obliged to be present when wine was to be issued. Barrels and *antaty* (quarter barrels) were put on racks with their taps sealed to prevent theft. If the barrels leaked a little, the slit would be filled with a mixture of resin and ash. Barrels that were to be kept longer periods, had to be filled up to their brims; if they had been started, then usually their contents was poured into bottles. If

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, Supl. 8/3, p. 17 I v, 18.08.1755.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, Supl. 19, unp., 9.05.1763.

this could not be done (for example, due to a lack of bottles), they would try to fill some smaller container to the top, choosing the same type wine. But it happened that when some French wine was added to old Hungarian wine, the mixture, regrettably, would have to be regarded as "ordinary". A so-called *lagier*, that is thick sediment, would form at the bottom of barrels left to stand for protracted periods. Once the wine was poured out, new wine would be poured onto this sediment as a result of which, the new wine would acquire a better flavour¹¹³.

Stronger alcohols would be consumed as well, of course, at the Hetman's court. Typically this would be vodka. His lordship's distilleries would supply these to the tables of the courtiers and servants alike. This would either be pure vodka or aniseed flavoured — which was most popular at the time¹¹⁴.

The Lord's table — it would seem — would be served with considerably better types of spirits produced in Gdańsk, or from abroad, which was sold there. They were purchased at the "Pod Łososiem" ("At the Salmon") store which enjoyed wide renown in the XVIIIth century, especially for its exquisite liqueurs. The Hetman could not have been their greatest fan because his purchases were fairly modest; indeed, in the Białystok cellar's inventory of 1772, there were only two pots of French spirits (that is, just under seven litres).

For example, in 1753, a hundred flasks of cinnamon rye vodka, four pots of cinnamon-flavoured spirit obtained from distilled wine, two pots of "Ratafia" (a sort of liqueur made with assorted fruits, sometimes also with herbs) and half an *ankier* (a cask containing 37.45 litres) of French spirit. In other years, small amounts of orange flavoured vodka, "persico" — vodka made on peach stones, juniper or even celery vodka, would be purchased. Most of these vodkas were sold in decorative flasks packed of 4 or 6 to a case that was specially made for them.

Some flavoured vodkas were also bought in Warsaw (for example, in December 1766, orange flavoured vodka was ob-

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. X/18, pp. 485–491, 15.01.1751, pp. 492–495, 29.01.1752, f.n. XXVIII/182, pp. 4–5, 9.12.1745, pp. 8–9, 30.12.1745, pp. 19–22, 16.12.1745.

¹¹⁴ For more information regarding the popularity of aniseed vodka in 18th century Poland, see Z. Guldón, L. Stępkowski, *Przyczynki do uprawy anyżu i handlu nim w Polsce w drugiej połowie XVIII w. (On the Growing and Trading with Anis in Poland in the Second Half of the 18th C.)*, "Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej" 1983, z. 4, pp. 441–446.

tained from “the confectioner of the Grand Marshal of the Crown”, that is Franciszek Bieliński who died on 8.10.1766¹¹⁵. Most of these vodkas were probably sweet. One reference speaks of cinnamon liqueur being obtained from Louneville (for 18 *tyńfs*), from Jean Claudel, a French merchant operating in Warsaw¹¹⁶. The Hetman also bought small quantities of Hungarian spirit — known as “The Hungarian Queen’s” — an aperitif made with rosemary petals, which had medicinal properties ascribed to it¹¹⁷.

However, mead was probably not made in Białystok. There is not even one mention on this topic in the sources, although every year, the Hetman’s wife would take delivery of several barrels of honey from the Białystok apiaries — the forest beehives in the Tykocin region, and from the Ukrainian estates¹¹⁸. It could be that it was used as a sweetener in dishes and baking.

It should also be mentioned that Branicki would obtain mineral water from Selters in Nassau, Germany, for his wife Izabela. It is difficult to say if she took it more as a medicine than as a drink or not. We know that contemporaneously, Selters water, for example, was served mixed with champagne. This purchase would be attended to for the Hetman by the merchants of Gdańsk and Warsaw. Some fifty to sixty bottles would be bought at a time¹¹⁹.

Finally, salt should be mentioned. Every year some 300 to 350 barrels of salt would be bought from the salt mines of Zakocim (as mined at Bochnia or Wieliczka). A barrel of salt at the time weighed 260 to 320 kg and cost thirty to forty odd *tyńfs*. On occasion small quantities of salt (several barrels) maybe for the needs of the palace in Warsaw, would be bought at the salt spray chamber in Praga. Here there were also purchased what was called *batwany zielone*, that is salt in large blocks¹²⁰. Of

¹¹⁵ AGAD, AR, Amp. f.n. 78, Trade in the Brancki estates, Receipts, unsp., 1731; K, f.n. XXVIII/3, pp. 2–4, 28.05.1759; Supl. 5/4, Purchase in Gdańsk, p. 5, 14.09.1753; Supl. 21, unsp., 16.06.1760, 8.12.1766; K, f.n. XXIII/4, pp. 235–236, 18.06.1766, pp. 3090311, 10.12.1766.

¹¹⁶ AGAD, AR, Amp. f.n. 111, unsp., 15.11.1759.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, K, f.n. XXIII/1, pp. 226–232, 12.07.1757, pp. 404–406, 28.06.1760; Supl. 12, pp. 12c–13, 13.07.1757.

¹¹⁸ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. XXVI/74, p. 4, 1.10.1737; f.n. XXIII/4, pp. 427–430, undated; Supl. 11, p. 31v, 29.11.1756.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, f.n. X/18, pp. 860–862, 20.06.1753; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 102–106, 18.06.1759; f.n. XXII/17, pp. 80–81, 20.05.1766; Amp. f.n. 117, unsp., 2.03.1764.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 91, *passim*.

course these huge amounts of salt were not used up in the palace kitchens alone, but sold in the Hetman's inns, distributed in his estates, intended for livestock. But it is also true that in the kitchens of the time, the use of salt was markedly greater than it is today (amounting to about 12 kilo per person per year). It also served the purpose of preserving meat, fish, dairy produce, fats, mushrooms etc.

Looking at all these victuals heading for the Hetman's court, one could conclude that in his culinary preferences, Branicki moved along with the spirit of his age. Although it seems that he preferred traditional Polish dishes, strongly seasoned with roots, and put Hungarian wine above French, he also greeted gladly all culinary innovations and novelties: tea, chocolate, hard cheeses, new types of vegetables, and even molluscs and oysters.

Let us take a look at the cookery book of Wielądko, which included suggestions for various combinations of meals. It will enable us — at least roughly — to imagine what was served at the time and how.

Here's a suggestion for a dinner for fifteen to twenty people consisting of four courses. A "course" meant more than one dish, but their full complement would be placed on the table in one go (platters were not used for serving at the time) with the participants then able to select the dish/combination of food that suited them best.

Wielądko recommended as a first course to serve broth with rice and potage (that is, thick vegetable soup) in tureens as a first course. On four big plates would be set out four different side-dishes: boiled ox tongue in sauce, pancakes stuffed with beef tripe, sausage of rabbit meat, lamb chops. While on four platters a dish of mutton tail with rice, pate stuffed with cooked snipes, six cooked pigeons in butter sauce, two cooked chickens with truffles.

A piece of beef in sauce, with fried bread and roast calf in savoury sauce would arrive with the second course.

The third would consist of twelve dishes, some of which would be sweet. Roast fowl, set out on four separate platters, would include: young chicken or a bigger fowl, three cooked partridges, eighteen cooked thrushes or larks, cooked duck. Cooked chicory in sauce and also cooked beetroot with chervil would be served as salad dishes. Starters would be cold and hot. Cold starters

would include pate baked in pastry and a sweet, butter "Saubadzki" flan. Hot ones would be items like pancakes and cream, cooked truffles in a fish sauce, artichokes and sweet small tarts.

The fourth course was the dessert: at either end of the table would be placed two silver or porcelain baskets with fresh fruit or two glass dishes with fruit lightly fried in sugar, at the four corners — various stewed fruits: apple, mixed fruit, quince and chestnuts¹²¹. Also, two platters with gofers, a plate of small sweet noodles, sponge cake, grapes as well as a plate with hard cheese, would all be served.

Dinner consisting of the above mentioned dishes could be served at the Hetman's table. All the ingredients therein were available in the Białystok kitchen, while the master cooks, confectioners, and pastry cooks (as discussed in chapter II), were, no doubt, quite skilful, and well able to prepare everything properly.

They had at their disposal a whole army of helpers to hand, and a great backup force further afield. In Białystok the kitchen outbuilding, situated in the left wing of the palace, contained, on the ground floor, a large room with a big uncovered central kitchen area with a pump bringing up running water, a larder with chests and cupboards for various products. In the neighbouring "sideboard room", there were great sideboards filled with cutlery and silver crockery, special tables for silverware storage and maintenance. Further down there was the so-called "treasury", a strong room in which presumably the most valuable food articles were kept.

In the "outbuilding behind the kitchen", separated off from the kitchen outbuilding by a yard, there was the "herbal root treasury" for seasonings, the "pastry-making place" with a big lime wood work table, a chamber with a fitted cupboard for drying cake and pastry, a bakery, a separate "cooker for cooking sugar" and confectioner's, where complicated sugar decorations were elaborated at long tables, and finally the chamber with a cupboard "for storing sweetmeats".

At the Choroszcza residence outhouse, there were in fact two kitchens — one contained a "brick stove divided in half" (no doubt a brick partition wall separated off the open fire part intended for

¹²¹ At the time, stewed fruit salads were made in a different way to the way they are made today: lightly cooked fruit was strained and then covered with a thick sugary syrup.

setting up a spit and grill), "six small trivets by the fire with iron rods inside" (that is grills on which dishes were fried in frying pans). In the second kitchen were "two chimneys next to which there were eleven iron rod grills". Next to that was the bakery and larder with pegs for hanging up meats, a chopping block, and also a confectioner's with a "bulging chimney stack". All these premises were furnished with big tables, numerous cupboards and shelves.

The palace kitchens in Warsaw were also extensive. In the kitchen itself there was "a great stove with iron rods" and sixteen trivets "with small rods". Next to that was a cooker for the dishwashers, a confectioner's, where apart from tables stood "great lock-up cupboards" for keeping the more precious ingredients. Further down, there was a larder with windows either side to allow "the passage of wind", which was also furnished with cupboards and tables (of which one served for "drying out flour"), a pastry/pate-making area and a bakery.

In the main parts of the kitchens where, among others, meats were roasted on spits, the fuel was not coniferous wood whose resinous smells could pervade the food, but alder. Trivets with rods were heated by charcoal. Its glowing embers would also be put on top of the baking dishes in the bread ovens with cakes and pastries, so as to make them brown nicely on top. Charcoal, produced in special earthen ovens, was used up in large amounts. For example, during the Hetman's sojourns in the capital, some two cartloads a day would be used. This fuel was kept under lock and key and issued only to the "principal cooks"¹²².

Certain products requiring cooler conditions were stored in the palace cellars (olive oil, dairy produce, wine vinegar). Each residence also had its own separate cold store. In Białystok it was situated in the game reservation, in Choroszcza it was under one of the garden summerhouses, and in Warsaw, the "wooden cold store" stood somewhere in an out-of-the-way palace lean-to. The best ice for preserving was considered to be that which came "after the new moon in March". However, just in case, if the pre-spring period were to turn out to be warm, some ice was collected up earlier. Ice would be covered with a thick coating of salt to help make it last. In the capital the Hetman, when or if he

¹²² AGAD, AR, Supl. 9/23, p. 80, 29.08.1756; Supl. 12, pp. 89v-90, 22.09.1757; K. f.n. XVIII/12, pp. 264-267, 2.11.1758.

ran out of ice himself, would be helped out by “the great and imposing” cold store of the merchant Riaucur¹²³.

Dairy produce, meats, fish, etc., were all kept in the cold stores over summer. Ice also served as a cooling agent for beverages, jellies and desserts. However, it does not seem as if ice cream made it to the tables at the Hetman’s court even though it had become a favourite delicacy towards the end of the XVIIIth century. Amid the rich array of equipment to be found in the kitchens, there is not one utensil which could possibly serve for whipping ice cream. Sorbets, that is sweetened fruit juices, on the other hand, were frozen in moulds.

The Białystok kitchen was equipped with a large number of pots and pans. A considerable proportion of them in fact went with the Hetman on his numerous travels¹²⁴.

Both larger and smaller spits, supported on so-called “wolves”, were used for cooking meats. They would be turned manually by a crank. During the cooking process, iron or copper oven pans would be put under these spits to collect the dripping fat.

Other vessels consisted of various sizes of frying pans with lids (in the Białystok kitchen there were well over a hundred of them), big pots for boiling and heating up water, tubs with strainers for preparing fish, frying pans, numerous moulds and tin trays for baking cakes and pastries, all sorts of cake-pans and tins with and without lids, small moulds for cakes, “iron-grids for gofers”. There were also iron shovels which would be heated in the fire and then “pulled across” the baked pastry to give it “lustre”, strainers, straining spoons and stirring spoons etc. Separate charcoal or alcohol heated trivets (or hot-plates) served for warming up dishes set out on platters. It is worth noting also that there was such an installation as “a new tub with a filter for purifying water”.

The confectioners used copper pots “for frying” and others “for sponge-cakes” (cakes cooked in fat somewhat reminiscent of cream puffs), and “for caramel”. There were also “tin sheet trays for cakes”, copper “jars for freezing” (we presume beverages, sorbets etc), pots for cooking chocolate, mortars for seasonings, “candy moulds” for making sweets, frequently medicinal ones, for example with mallow, and also tin moulds for quince cheeses.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, Supl. 11, p. 119v, 2.02.1757, k, f.n. X/66, pp. 26–28, 14.03.1754, pp. 416–419, 14.01.1760; f.n. XXI/3, pp. 5–64, 15.02.1752.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, f.n. XI/66, pp. 309–310, 4.03.1759.

It would appear that most of the copper vessels for the kitchen and confectioners' were bought from Gdańsk craftsmen who were famous for such products¹²⁵. They must have already worked to certain templates and specifications since with orders for saucepans, the Białystok master cook would specify them by reference to a number (from one to nine). In Gdańsk, other utensils such as "tubs, casks, vessels" would also be bought. "Iron (sic.) for the confectioner to make candies" came from that city too. Finally, that city would also supply tin-spoon strainers, serving spoons, mortars, copper coffee pots and tin teapots.

But kitchen utensils could also be bought in Warsaw. For example, in 1767, Branicki instructed his newly appointed master cook to obtain from the merchants there twelve saucepans and three pots¹²⁶.

"Flowers and clusters for the confectioner" were also bought in Warsaw for 256 *złottes*.

In accordance with the custom of the time, the Hetman paid particularly close attention to the table's appearance. Custom required that the so-called service, that is vessels and ornaments serving primarily as decorations, were placed in the middle. And Branicki had several such services. The most precious ones included "the new silver «Augsbergian service», that is from Augsburg, Bavaria. The baroque silver vessels made there, belonged to his most prized ones, and not only his for they adorned many a royal or aristocratic European palace. The Białystok service consisted of a silver salver on four legs with a "corpus" consisting of a basket supported by two figurines holding bunches of grapes and flowers, two griffins and four "cast bouquets". These silver flowers could be taken out and replaced by four candlesticks.

In Białystok, there was also a "small service in the Augsburg style that was made broken up in parts" and two silver plinths with flowers "of Augsburg craftsmanship".

The "silver Saxon service" was also used for centrepiece table display, which consisted of a plinth, on which was set out,

¹²⁵ It was not only the magnates, but also the affluent nobility that bought copper vessels in Gdańsk. Old vessels were taken for tin-plating, as well as for melting down and recasting to Gdańsk.

¹²⁶ AGAD, AR, Amp. f.n. 117, Receipts, unpub., 7.05.1771; K, f.n. XXVIII/32, pp. 3-5, 19.05.1763; Supl. 21, Register of purchase in Gdańsk., unpub., 3.09.1766, unpub., 22.10.1767.

probably at various levels, two baskets for lemons, four for capars and olives, two mustard pots and sugar bowls apiece. The goldsmiths of Saxony excelled in this type of handiwork, an example of which was the gold coffee service of Augustus the Strong which is now on display at the Gunes Gewolbe Museum in Dresden.

Besides silverware, tables were also decorated with small porcelain figurines of people and animals. The fashion for them was successfully launched by the porcelain manufacturers of Miśnia which supplied large quantities of these ornaments to royal and aristocratic households. Branicki, a regular Miśnia customer in Warsaw, had sixty one such "brightly painted figurines", all on the subject of hunting. They represented marksmen, Amazons, deer, lynx, boar, game birds, hunting dogs, as well as Turks who provided an oriental motif that was much in vogue at the time. They could be freely arranged on the table to depict various scenes.

There were also "white figurines" in Białystok. The vogue for white ornaments to go with services — subsequently picked up by other porcelain manufacturers — was started in the second half of the XVIIIth century in Sevres, where the manufacturers could not cope with the technical problems of making coloured figurines. We do not know where the Hetman's sixty odd figurines came from, whether they were French or from Miśnia. Unfortunately, they have been described very imprecisely, and we only know, for example, that among them were to be found two figures of Hercules on plinths. Both porcelain services included in their sets also several dozen "flower vases".

The Hetman also had — at the Warsaw palace — a "mirror service". Such an item was rare even in rich households, not to mention in those of the lesser nobility. It was no mere pane of mirrored glass girded by a small silver balustrade, on which were placed various figurines, but a great tableau consisting of several dozen mirror glass panels framed by silver-plated brass, and filled by over 200 assorted glass ornaments such as plinths, pillars, porticoes, vases etc. We do not know which glass works they came from.

The Hetman's tables were also decorated with confectionery constructions, which may be deduced by looking at the "wooden moulds for «dregants». Sugar ornaments were made in them

which were held together by special plant resin. It would emerge from descriptions of those moulds, that they served to make architectural elements (porticoes, pillars etc) and garden motifs (summer houses, clumps of bushes, trees, outdoor vases etc).

During great feasts, people would seek to surpass one another in terms of opulence of table decor, enlivening it with all sorts of mechanisms. Apparently in Białystok, on Branicki's namesday, a stream of Tokay would flow down the Hetman's table along a crystal channel and on it would sail a fleet of twenty four ships filled with sweetmeats and dried fruit preserves. Although the source reference for this comes from the end of the XIXth century, and has not been supported by any earlier source references whatsoever, its veracity cannot be excluded. There were enough mechanics and artists at the Hetman's court to think up such decorations.

The Hetman had varied tableware, which included several hundred silver vessels, plates of various sizes, platters, bowls, tureens large and small, oil and vinegar cruet sets with small glass carafes, mustard pots which were gold-plated on the inside, sugar bowls, and also candlesticks and candelabra made to match this set. There were also numerous assorted cutlery sets (including strainer-spoons for olives, tongs for asparagus, "bent potage spoons", ebony-handed cutlery, several dozen knives, forks and spoons with porcelain handles "of Viennese make".).

Besides this tableware, there was the "dresser silver" which was intended for serving tea and coffee prepared in the dressing room, including trays of different sizes, on which were set out pots and jugs, decorative strainers, sugar bowls, and a small tub for washing cups. There were also assorted trivets and stoves for warming up water (for example "with heart-shaped lamp on four legs", or one "with a lamp, alembic, pincers and ebony handle" — a prototype of the later samovars).

This silver tableware must have been used everyday while particularly precious items were kept in the "treasury", possibly only for the most important occasions, for example "a silver trivet from the king of Sweden" (perhaps a trophy won by the Hetman's grandfather Stefan Czarniecki?), or gold vessels encrusted with precious stones, such as goblets and baskets.

The origins of most of these vessels are unknown. Towards the end of the 1730s, when the Hetman's taste was not so refined

yet, lids to bowls, for example, were made by Białystok sheet metal workers, but possibly not from silver. Most probably some part of the vessels came from the goldsmiths' workshops of Gdańsk. There, at any rate, the Hetman ordered a silver "*kaffe* service" for Ludwik Cieszkowski, the castellan of Sochaczew, to whom he promised that he would have copies made of the same vessels that he had received from the castellan. Certain items, for example, cutlery components, were made by Warsaw goldsmiths.

In the second half of the 18th century, silver dining services were already being pushed out of fashion by the more modern porcelain sets. His lordship had rather a lot of it. The most expensive undoubtedly included several hundred Chinese vessels. Sometimes, however, it is difficult to distinguish which were truly used on a daily basis and which merely served as ornaments.

Branicki had three chests with drawer-type fitments — the biggest of which contained white Chinese porcelain vessels with gold-leaf: four pots of different sizes for tea and coffee, a flask for dry tea, a sugar bowl, six cups and saucers, two little rinsing dishes, and apart from, this six gold-plated silver spoons and two pairs of silver tongs for sugar. Two other chests contained similar 'Miśnian' coffee services (one "white, generously gold-leafed", the other "white, gold plated and painted".)

It seems, however, that the Hetman never ordered for himself in Miśnia a grand and great dinner service, such as the one owned by his great political rival, Minister Henryk Bruhl (the so-called Swan service). Branicki clearly preferred to buy Miśnia porcelain by the piece, being best pleased to choose his vessels with the same pattern of "blue flowers", in the most popular onion-shaped set, which was manufactured for years.

The Miśnia manufacturing centre, commencing in the 1730s, had its warehouse in Warsaw in which the Hetman would make his purchases — of numerous assorted plates (both shallow and deep), baskets for oranges, mustard pots, sugar bowls, mugs, cups (preferably without ears because "ears will quickly break off and the cups will become unusable"). This was a shopping pattern repeated almost annually. In fact, his lordship was not always satisfied, because frequently it would emerge that only "rejects were left in the warehouse" or that there is an insufficient number of vessels. Losing patience, Branicki thus tried to order

vessels direct from Miśnia, but the delivery took so long that he did not try the experiment again. It happened that when before a big gathering of guests on his namesday Branicki needed particularly many plates, and was unwilling to pay for them (at the rate of five *tyńfs* per plate), he would resort to a low-down — not to say dishonest — ruse. Namely, he would request the vessels' despatch from the warehouse to Białystok on a "return within 10 days if not satisfied" basis. In the meantime he would entertain his guests with the help of this crockery, after which he would calmly send it back to Warsaw paying only for the breakages¹²⁸.

The Hetman also gladly bought porcelain from Vienna. These transactions he would make with the help of the Warsaw banker Tepper, who in fact traded in other knick-knacks, such as china from Strasburg¹²⁹.

Large amounts of crockery (from several to several dozen) would be bought by the Hetman also in Gdańsk and Königsberg. It would appear these were cheaper wares commonly referred to as "ordinary" though sometimes as "ordinary first-rate". Some of them were Gdańsk-made: painted clay or china plates, and some were "shallow Dutch knick-knacks". The origin of the remainder was not mentioned¹³⁰. Possibly this crockery was meant for the second (lower-ranking) table.

Among the abundant glassware, numbering several hundred maybe even over a thousand pieces, there was a preponderance of chalices and glasses: large "toasting" ones adorned with coats for arms, cut and gold-leafed, which came in various shapes and sizes (including tall and very slim "sticks"). There were also similarly decorated smaller glasses for wine, vodka, water, there were also many decanters and carafes, decorative flasks, and also a traveller's chests with eight square-shaped flasks of different sizes. It may have come from Gdańsk, where in 1755 the Hetman

¹²⁸ AGAD, AR, K, f.n. X/18, pp. 632–637, 21.08.1752, pp. 860–862, 20.06.1753, p. 1188, 20.02.1755, pp. 1280–1283, 25.08.1755; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 153–156, 13.08.1759; f.n. XI/66, pp. 503–504, 4.12.1760; Supl. 5/2, pp. 35 i v, c. 8.08.1753; Supl. 9/1, pp. 52v–53, 29.04.1756.

¹²⁹ Tepper brought over a china set from Strasburg in 1749 for Lady Katarzyna Mniszech and promised to get an identical one for Branicki without delay, AGAD, AR, K, f.n. X/18, pp. 257–260, 6.12.1749.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, Supl. 6/2, p. 18, c. 13.05.1754; Supl. 16, Register of purchases in Königsberg, unpub., 23.02.1759; Supl. 21, Purchase in Königsberg, unpub., c. 30.05.1766, unpub., 5.02.1767, unpub., 10.02.1768.

bought a chest with square bottles filled with *ratafia*. There were also numerous beer glasses. Some of this glassware was called "Nalibockie", therefore from Prince Radziwiłł's glass works at Naliboki, where the magnates gladly made their purchases.

In the Warsaw palace there were vaguely described "cut glass tableware with the 'Griffin' coat of arms, packed" in a large chest. Probably it was the model of this service "with Griffins" that was kept hidden in the attic at the Białystok palace. The Hetman also placed orders for glass vessels at the Lubaczow glass works belonging to the Sieniawskis. For example, in 1755 this glass works made for him, for 114 zloties, sixty glasses, forty five water jugs of varying sizes, four decanters for vinegar, thirty six flasks, twelve demi-johns and eighty two glasses "according to the models provided" (some of which were described as "thick and dwarf-like" — presumably stumpy). That very same year a large consignment of glass tableware (168 pieces — glasses for shorts and long drinks, carafes, were bought by the Hetman in Warsaw just before his namesday.

There was little by way of tin tableware in Białystok — only a hundred pieces: plates, platters, salad bowls and tureens. Most of these vessels were described as "old", "with holes", thus they were no doubt vessels for lower ranking officials and craftsmen. But still in the middle of the century, the Hetman would buy in Gdańsk vessels made of English tin, which he described as the best, and intended "for the sideboard"¹³¹. It should be added that these vessels, made out of relatively soft metal, were easily damaged, thus they were frequently given to tinsmiths for melting down and re-making into new ones.

Despite the enormous supplies of all types of vessels, they were still not always sufficient for certain receptions. For example, when in the autumn of 1752, King Augustus III was to visit Białystok, Branicki, unable to buy a sufficient number of plates and other vessels for desserts and fruit salads etc., requested if he could borrow some from the royal court, while, from his brother-in-law, Sedlinicki¹³², he borrowed the silver tableware (four great bowls, sixteen platters and salvers, sixteen side plates, cutlery etc).

¹³¹ AGAD, Supl. 8/3, pp. 16 l v, Purchase in Gdańsk, 18.08.1752.

¹³² *Ibid.*, Supl. 4, pp. 37–38, 13.09.1752; K, f.n. XX/1, pp. 224–226, 30.07.1752, pp. 421–424, undated.

However we know little about the table coverings. Tablecloths and serviettes, from Gdańsk and Holland, were initially bought by the Hetman in Gdańsk. Evidently he was unhappy with them because he sought to find out where the duchess of Mazovia, Konstancja Poniatowska, bought hers. The latter replied that she was not surprised that he was dissatisfied since Gdańsk tablecloths are too narrow for the Hetman's "ample tables". She disclosed that she herself used "patterned" Saxon tablecloths (an 'elbow' of which cost four *tyńfs*, and a seviette — 2). She knew, however, that the Lithuanian *podkomorzy* (estate manager-cum-local magistrate/justice of peace), Jan Karol Mniszech, used Gdańsk tablecloths, albeit specially ordered wider ones. We do not know whether the Hetman took advantage of this advice.

It is worth adding that there had to be big supplies of tablecloths in magnate households at the time because it was customary to change them with every dish, as fresh plates and platters were laid out. In effect, this meant four or five changes per dinner. Probably, so as not to destroy the intricate decoration at the centre of the table, clean tablecloths were laid either side. Of course, that was done at the high table, the most exclusive table. The marshal's tables were covered with one tablecloth, and their ends, covered in grey canvas, for the lowest ranking participants (hence, the Polish expression to be "at the grey end" means to be last in the pecking order or to bring up the rear).

Morning or after dinner coffee was served on smaller tables covered with more ornate tablecloths.

Finally one further commodity albeit not of the edible type must be mentioned, and which the Hetman continuously had brought over from both Gdańsk and Warsaw, was tobacco. Most often it was Dutch tobacco bought in rolls or per "stick"¹³³.

We have one reference to the purchase in Warsaw of clay pipes and pipe stems, but we do not know whom they were for, it could be for the Hetman, at any rate in his Białystok bedroom there was a "Turkish pipe stem"¹³⁴. Branicki owned a grand total of thirty five snuff boxes. Many of them were very expensive trinkets: gold, encrusted with diamonds, decorated with coloured

¹³³ *Ibid.*, Amp. f.n. 117, unsp., 1742; Supl. 5/4, pp. 33v-34, 26.12.1753; f.n. XI/66, pp. 38-41, 18.04.1757, pp. 274, 18.12.1758; f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 242-245, 3.11.1759, pp. 404-406, 28.06.1760.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, K. f.n. XXIII/4, pp. 257-259, 3.09.1766.

enamel, cameos, miniatures, numbers, most frequently described as Parisian. There were also tortoise shell snuff boxes, "Chinese lacquered" ones, paper ones with gold "rings", or other decorations, amber ones, "stone" ones, porcelain, etc. No doubt many of them were gifts received by the Hetman from other magnates (the most expensive one was from the King of France). The custom of presenting snuff boxes to each other was very widespread at the time. Branicki also gave them to his friends and supporters.

The Hetman had most problems with a Warsaw goldsmith of name unknown, who undertook to make an exceptionally ornate snuff box. For many months it was impossible to persuade him to finish it until driven to the point where his patience was exhausted, Branicki ordered that "This swindler is to be brought to the palace (in Warsaw) together with the snuff box, and there, he is to be locked in a separate room with sentries posted at the door, so as to better exert the ultimate methods of persuasion that will induce completion of the work"¹³⁵.

It is worth adding that the Polish diarist Jędrzej Kitowicz, in his description of customs at the time of Augustus III, based his picture of ancient Polish feasts on the basis of those which he attended at Branicki's.

(Translated by Antoni J. Bohdanowicz)

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, Supl. 4/1, pp. 25 f v, 11.04.1752, p. 39v, 24.04.1752; Supl. 9/2, pp. 10-10v, 10.06.1756; K, f.n. XXIII/2, pp. 94-95, 28.05.1759, pp. 97-99, 4.06.1759, pp. 102-105, 18.06.1759; Amp, f.n. 87, unp., Receipt of 26.08.1763.