

‘Combined Operations: British Naval and Military Co-operation in the Wars of 1688-1713’

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Abstract

This thesis assesses British naval and military co-operation in the form of combined operations during the Nine Years War, 1688-1697, and the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713. The operational history of the joint actions is related and used to drive forward the determination of two inter-related themes. These are, how combined operations might be defined as an instrument of warfare during this period; and secondly, the place of such operations within the military component of Britain's wartime Grand Strategy. With respect to the former, previous definitions embodying the benchmarks of objectives and composition of force are set against the history and built upon to incorporate three further categories of definition: theatre of war, bureaucratic control and command structure. As a result, it is argued that no blanket definition for combined operations can be arrived at, but that any one of the five categories can provide insights into combined operations as an instrument of warfare. The second theme places the strategic objectives of these operations within the context of British war policy and explores their relationship to the 'Maritime' and 'Continental' strategic traditions. While it becomes clear that combined operations were thought to possess neither an independent nor a war-winning strategic capability, they do appear to have consistently filled a role in Grand Strategy which acted either simultaneously or separately in support of the naval and military strategic interests. With the categories for definition and a strategic role established for such joint army-navy ventures, the thesis concludes by considering whether during these wars there were any factors common to the more successful, and conversely to the failing, combined operations. Although a pattern or mould for a successful combined operation cannot be established, it is shown that the origins of the developed historical practice of this type of warfare - demonstrated to such effect later in the eighteenth century - can be traced to the two wars considered in this study.

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Abbreviations

<i>AC</i>	<i>An Cosantóir</i>
<i>AH</i>	<i>Analecta Hibernica</i>
<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>AL</i>	Admiralty Library
<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
<i>BL</i>	British Library
<i>CFKS</i>	Centre for Kentish Studies
<i>CHJ</i>	<i>Cambridge Historical Journal</i>
<i>CHR</i>	<i>Canadian Historical Review</i>
<i>CJH</i>	<i>Canadian Journal of History</i>
<i>C.-in-C.</i>	Commander-in-Chief
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Journals of the House of Commons</i>
<i>CSPC</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Colonial</i>
<i>CSPD</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
<i>CTP</i>	<i>Calendar of Treasury Papers</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>ESR</i>	<i>European Studies Review</i>
<i>GC</i>	<i>Great Circle</i>
<i>FR</i>	<i>Fortnightly Review</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
<i>HMC</i>	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<i>HT</i>	<i>History Today</i>
<i>IHS</i>	<i>Irish Historical Studies</i>
<i>IS</i>	<i>Irish Sword</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Modern History</i>
<i>JRUSI</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal United Services Institution</i>
<i>JSAHR</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research</i>
<i>LJ</i>	<i>Journals of the House of Lords</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Mariner's Mirror</i>
<i>NMM</i>	National Maritime Museum
<i>NRO</i>	Northamptonshire Record Office
<i>NS</i>	New Style
<i>NUL</i>	Nottingham University Library

<i>NYCD</i>	<i>New York Colonial Documents</i>
<i>PHSL</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London</i>
<i>PRO</i>	Public Record Office
<i>QQ</i>	<i>Queens Quarterly</i>
<i>SCFS</i>	<i>Seventeenth Century French Studies</i>
<i>SIQR</i>	<i>Studies - An Irish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>unf</i>	Unfoliated
<i>USNIP</i>	<i>United States Naval Institute Proceedings</i>
<i>WIH</i>	<i>War in History</i>
<i>W&MQ</i>	<i>William and Mary Quarterly</i>

Note on References and Dates

Quotations have been kept in the original except where a minor grammatical modification helped to clarify the sense. Contractions and abbreviations have been extended.

For the sake of brevity and simplicity, I have used the shorthand 'the Admiralty' when referring to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty and the later Prince's Council.

Foreign place names have not been anglicised, save for where there is a more readily understood convention e.g. Saragossa for Zaragoza.

In subsequent references to French Names I have dropped the 'de' save for when the names begin with a vowel. Thus, for example, the Comte de Tourville is subsequently referred to as Tourville, while Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville is subsequently referred to as d'Iberville.

Dates are in the Old Style, except for a handful of instances when to avoid ambiguity, or if the source has stipulated it, the New Style form is used. These have been appropriately identified by the abbreviation - NS. The year is taken to begin on 1 January.

Introduction

I: The Revolution of 1688 as a Combined Operation.

At only six old pence, *A New Map of Sea Coasts of England, France and Holland*, might have been shrewd investment for James VII & II in the late autumn of 1688. It would have provided him with an increased knowledge of the coastal topography to better defend his kingdom from the invasion by his daughter's husband and Stadholder of the United Provinces, William, Prince of Orange, which was completed within four days of the map being advertised.¹

On 1 November 1688, the Prince of Orange's military and naval force of three divisions comprising about 50 warships and less than half that again of fireships along with a transport flotilla of near 300 vessels with excess of 15 000 'fighting men'² on board made a second and successful egress from Hellevoetsluis in the River Maas. The fleet had previously set out on 19 October only to be forced back by a heavy lightning storm, thus prompting fears that possible losses and damage would make any future attempt doubtful.³ The whole fleet had though - save arguably for one fly-boat - made it back to the Dutch coast, albeit dispersed throughout a variety of ports.⁴ Gargantuan efforts were made within the following ten days to effect the necessary repairs, replace a good number of the horses that had suffocated when the holds in some transports had been secured at the start of the storm, and reassemble the fleet. Crucially, the Prince also held his nerve in the face of a renewed representation of doubts by his colleagues as to the sense of the operation at this late time of the year. That he did so was a tribute to the assiduousness of his preparations and a firm belief in the role he perceived for himself within the international states system as champion of a coalition of states to balance the power of Louis XIV's Catholic and absolutist France.

¹ *London Gazette*, No. 2395, 29 Oct. to 1 Nov. 1688.

² J. Carswell, *The Descent On England: A Study of the English Revolution of 1688 and Its European Background* (London, 1969), p. 170, uses 'fighting men' to denote the fact that the number does not just represent the rank and file but also officers and 'gentleman' volunteers.

³ NUL, PwA 2195, unf.: 'Verdeelinghe van's Landts Vloote'; NUL, PwA 2196, unf.: 'Liste van't Embarquement vande Iniuntiriem de Dragonders'; Carswell, *The Descent On England*, pp. 168-70, 170 n.*, 176-7; S.B. Baxter, *William III and the Defence of European Liberty, 1650-1702* (London, 1966), p. 237.

⁴ There seem to be differing views on whether any of the fleet were lost. Whittle, *An Exact Diary*, p. 22, and *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, ed. H. Ellis (Second Series, 1828), iv. 137: Letter CCCLXIII,

Prior to the Prince of Orange issuing the C.-in-C., Admiral Arthur Herbert, his orders on 6 October, there had occurred a debate amongst William's colleagues as to how the fleet should cross the Channel in order best to effect a landing. Burnet recorded that John Wildman was prominent in marshalling the arguments for a two phase crossing: the men-of-war would secure command of the sea, either by fighting the English fleet or hastening them back into port; then the transports would make a safe and unimpeded passage. The Prince however rejected this in favour of a one step crossing, with the warships and transports comprising one naval entity. In this respect, he was probably conscious of the potential for further delay that might occur under the two phase conception, recognising that the fleets might lie in sight of each other for sometime and that each day longer the army and horses were at sea reduced their capability.⁵ Implicit in this decision was William's - albeit unexpressed - desire to avoid engagement. Politically, it was important that he avoided the image of 'invader-conqueror', while it was also recognised that a campaign which set out to spill blood would most probably invoke recent memories of the Anglo-Dutch Wars and galvanise the English of whom it was said, 'our countrymen love no cause, nor man, so well as fighting'.⁶ William's decision for a single phase dash for the coast was however largely a product of the debate as to which English coast he was headed for and the exact landing site thereon.

Arthur Herbert's sailing orders were less than specific. There has always been a question as to whether the Prince knew himself, and kept his colleagues guessing in deference to operational secrecy; or whether he was also uncertain about his intentions when he set sail. It is easy to identify the factors which would influence such a decision; and the Prince's preparations did not omit compiling important information on the state of the country, including detailed information about the garrisons. Obviously, wherever the critical mass of King James's troops were would carry significant weight in any decision. This is clear from a survey of potential landing sites completed prior to sailing which stated that if disembarkation was to take place on the north-east coast then Yorkshire was the most southerly point at which it could be effected due to the strength of James's army in London and its immediate

27 Oct. 1688, both state that a ship was lost and yet Carswell, *The Descent on England*, p. 178, states that no ships were lost. He might, however, have been referring only to capital ships.

⁵ G. Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, ed. M.J. Routh (Oxford, 1833), iii. 324-5.

environs. This document was not however prescriptive, and another assessed coasts and sites as far apart as Tynemouth and Falmouth.⁷

Dr Clyve Jones has produced a most concise summary of the landing site question, by looking at how it was conceived on both sides of the Channel.⁸ His was an attempt to move the debate on from the Whig myth that the Protestant wind brought William to Torbay and Professor J.P. Kenyon's contention that political considerations - namely the need to avoid being dependent upon Thomas Osborne, earl Danby and his band of northern supporters including the Earl of Devonshire in Derbyshire and Lord Lumley at Durham - dictated the choice on the south-west coast. Dr Jones agrees with Professor Kenyon that William had decided prior to departure to proceed in that direction but suggests that his motives were as much military as political. Dr Jones argues that the need to avoid an engagement both at sea and at land (upon landing) meant that - to the extent that the wind would allow - William had decided upon the south or south-west coast.⁹

The relevant document is a memorandum of a meeting aboard Herbert's flagship on 1 November. The memorandum indicates that the discussions were partly counter-factual as the participants outlined various contingencies.¹⁰ Dr Jones views the important passage as that which deals with the point of disembarkation. He argues that, although no explicit landing site is mentioned, the fact that a southerly course was to be set evidences a decision by William for the south or south-west coast. The course was for 'de Hooffden' - (Dutch for the southerly part of the North Sea which stretches down around into the Channel) - and then to continue along the English coast to such places as Cowes, the Southampton river, Poole, and even as far as Exmouth.¹¹ However, arguably, Dr Jones derives more from the evidence

⁶ Buckingham, John Sheffield, Duke of, *The Works of John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, Marquis of Normanby and Duke of Buckingham* (fourth edn, 1753), p. 70.

⁷ NUL, PwA 2204, unf.: 'Instructie, Bij Sij Hoogheijt jejaren ainden Heer Arthur Herbert'; NUL, PwA 2082, unf.: Letter to Bentinck containing the numbers thought to be employed in the English Garrisons; NUL, PwA 2083, unf.: Document detailing the Governors/Commanders of different Garrisons in England; NUL, PwA 2185-6, unf.: Papers Relating to the State of England, 1688; NUL, PwA 2199, unf.: Paper Relating to the Fleet and Troops for Embarkation, 1688; *Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck*, ed. N. Japikse, ('s-Gravehage, 1927-1928), ii, no. 570, pp. 617-18: 'Memorie Van De Plaetsen, Die Bequaem Geoordeelt Worden In Engelandt', [?] Oct. 1688; E.B. Powley, *The English Navy in the Revolution of 1688* (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 20-1, 62.

⁸ Clyve Jones, 'The Protestant Wind of 1688: Myth and Reality', *ESR* iii (1973), 201-21.

⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 201-9.

¹⁰ *Correspondentie van Willem III en van Hans Willem Bentinck*, ii, no. 576, pp. 623-4: 'Memorie Met Den Luitenant-Admiraal-Generael Herbert En Den Luitenant-Admiraal Eversen', 11 Nov. 1688 [NS].

¹¹ Jones, 'The Protestant Wind', p. 211.

than it bears. Undoubtedly the south and south-west coasts were strongly mooted as potential landing sites, but this was not to the exclusion of other options. Indeed, the contingent nature of the other decisions taken during this meeting also extended to the south-westerly option. This is a point that J.L. Anderson makes clear when he argues that the wind was the determining variable. He develops this further, arguing that too many historians have assessed the operation in purely naval terms by focusing on the general coastal area without looking at the operation's combined character. This put a premium on the effect of the weather conditions at the actual point of disembarkation in determining whether the landing would take place under a weather or lee shore.¹² Both J.L. Anderson and Dr Jones agree that the Dutch fleet's tack to the south on the night of 2/3 November did not represent, as Burnet states and Whittle implies, a change of mind by the Prince.¹³ Though, given the poverty of the contemporary evidence, J.L. Anderson's flexible argument is more appropriate. For what is certainly true is that the wind greatly shaped the two key moments of the naval crossing. Firstly, the strong easterly gale allowed the Dutch to proceed to the south and then along to the south-west coast, while the same wind trapped the English fleet, commanded by Lord Dartmouth, at the Gunfleet. Secondly, it was a change in the wind to the west which allowed the fleet to come safely to anchor in Torbay Bay under a lee shore, thus permitting a secure embarkation on the 5 November; a day redolent with positive religious symbolism for William.

While theoretically of equal importance, William's subsequent military operation was on this occasion of less interest. It comprised a near unimpeded march by William at the head of his force to London which he entered on 18 December in a commanding political and military position. No pitched battle occurred and little blood was shed aside from around 50 men killed at skirmishes at Wincanton and Reading.¹⁴ Three factors can perhaps be isolated as of significance in shaping the history of the land campaign in 1688. Firstly, the Prince was well prepared with detailed marching routes and plans where to quarter troops.¹⁵ Also, the

¹² J.L. Anderson, 'Combined Operations and the Protestant Wind: Some Maritime Aspects of the Glorious Revolution of 1688', *GC* ix (1987), 96, 99-107.

¹³ Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, iii. 325-6; Whittle, *An Exact Diary*, pp. 29-34.

¹⁴ Whittle, *An Exact Diary*, pp. 57-9, 68-9; HMC, *Seventh Report, Graham MSS*, p. 417: Grahame to [his brother] Preston, 21 November 1688; *The Portledge Papers*, eds. R.J. Kerr and I. Coffin-Duncan (London, 1928), pp. 50-2; Lapthorne to Coffin, 17 Nov., 11 Dec. 1688.

¹⁵ NUL, PwA 2207-11, 2214, unf.: Papers Connected with the Voyage to England of William, Prince of Orange and Marches of Cavalry, Nov. and Dec. 1688.

Prince made a similar effort on land as at sea to avoid a battle. A period of indecision at Exeter where he held up progress for ten days proved useful in allowing political support within the country to gather momentum; but of greater significance was William's decision at Salisbury over the course of two days (4 to 6 December) to proceed to Oxford rather than to seek to crush the King's army which had just been disordered by James's retreat. This decision is rarely remarked upon for it is correctly assumed that the significance of Oxford was as a gateway to securing the west, and that ultimately the Prince never went through the University town as the pace of events drove him directly on from Abingdon through the Thames Valley to London.¹⁶ Yet militarily, the decision was important, for to have proceeded otherwise would have led to a tactical repositioning of his army in order to fight. William must have recognised that this would serve no other purpose than to alter a strategy which had to that point proved effective. King James's pusillanimous decision to retreat from Salisbury and then his despairing order to his commander, the Earl of Feversham, to disband his army prior to his first attempt to flee the country, is the second significant factor which aided the Prince on his march. James may have been psychologically weakened by the desertion of senior members of his officer corps, including his most able Lieutenant-General, John Churchill. Certainly, the confidence of the Prince's camp as to the potential for disloyalty within the English army was such that Bentinck had even prepared a note on the towns to which deserting English troops were to be sent. However, above all else, the military campaign was never going to amount to more than a tense march if the King did not offer battle. Finally, as the Prince's army drew much of its power and supply from the lines of communication leading back to the fleet and which also kept open an exit route, the dispersal and disabling of the English navy by a storm on the 19 November when it neared the Dutch vessels was of critical significance for the security of the march upon London.¹⁷ It has been noted that there is a lack of awareness of this final point,¹⁸ yet it truly underscores the essential character of combined operations: the mutual support and interplay of the army and navy.

¹⁶ Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, iii. 330, 338-9, 550-1.

¹⁷ NUL, PwA 2212, unf.: Papers Connected with the Voyage to England of William, Prince of Orange and Marches of Cavalry, Nov. and Dec. 1688; HMC, *Dartmouth MSS*, iii. 57-9, 66-7: Journal of Captain Grenville Collins; Entry Book of Correspondence of Lord Dartmouth from the Fleet.

¹⁸ L.K.J. Glassey, 'Introduction', in L.K.J. Glassey (ed.), *The Reigns of Charles II and James VII & II* (London, 1997), p. 5.

II: British Warfare 1688-1713: William of Orange's Invasion as Pattern and Precedent.

Undoubtedly, the Prince of Orange's successful combined operation was a prelude and essential precipitant to the important constitutional and political watershed in the early modern history of the 'British' archipelago: an event that has been labelled the 'Glorious Revolution'. Though one might lay to one side the implication of the word 'glorious' that the Revolution was necessarily a positive and celebratory event, it is difficult to deny the radical nature of the changes which followed. Most obviously, with the flight of James from his kingdoms on 23 December, it produced a change in the monarch and recast Parliament to a strengthened position within the polity. These changes and the other alterations contained within the subsequent Revolutionary Settlement¹⁹ have ensured the operation's place within the enduring Whig historiography.²⁰

The historical narratives of these political and constitutional changes - content to afford the Prince's operation the role of harbinger and of trigger - ignore any potential significance for the military and naval history of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. To suggest otherwise is not to make a claim for the Prince of Orange in terms of originality in mounting such an operation for the occurrence of combined operations can be dated from Caesar's time.²¹ Rather, it points to the fact that the Prince's operation inaugurated a dual role for British warfare over the course of two 'World' Wars between 1688 and 1713, which requires explanation. Immediately it gave rise to a continental commitment and an increased emphasis on the primacy of the battlefleet. Both trends became manifest as orthodoxy throughout the Nine Years War, 1688-1697 and the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713; and yet, there also occurred throughout these wars several combined navy and army operational deployments.²² Such a bald analysis of the history of warfare may belie a more subtle and variegated role for combined operations as they

¹⁹ This is the label generally given to the legislation of the 'Convention Parliament' which sat from January to the end of February 1689 before declaring itself a Parliament, which was not dissolved till 6 February 1690.

²⁰ See for example Lord Macaulay, *The History of England From the Accession of James The Second*, ed. C.H. Firth (London, 1913-15), iii. 1304-12.

²¹ T. M. Molyneux, *Conjunct Expeditions: or Expeditions That Have Been Carried On Jointly by the Fleet and the Army, with a Commentary on Littoral War* (London, 1759), Part II, pp. 1-2; J. Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (Pimlico edn, London, 1994), pp. 255-7.

²² Obviously there were other wars during this period like the Great Northern War (1700-21), but the two identified are those in which Britain was a principal participant.

developed throughout this period. A step can be made towards determining this by considering two complimentary lines of enquiry which the Prince's operation gives rise to.

The suggestion that the operation has significance for military and naval history presupposes that in the late seventeenth century, combined operations were perceived as a form of warfare, just as an explicit naval deployment, a set piece land battle or counter-insurgency methods might be. Thus, the first line of inquiry will seek to arrive at an appropriate definition which comprehends all aspects of combined operational form, including strategic objectives and administrative base. The consideration of the distinctiveness of combined operations also requires an assessment of how they were conceived of as an instrument of warfare even if not deployed. Again the Prince of Orange's operation provides a springboard. By setting it within the diplomatic context, it will be possible to comprehend the role it fulfilled in the wider strategy of opposition to what the Prince perceived were the continental ambitions of the French King, Louis XIV. Hence, the second line of enquiry will comprise a strategic theme with an assessment of the role of combined operations as part of British war policy from 1688 through to 1713.

Together, these two themes cannot provide a comprehensive operational history of the two wars concerned with here; an operational narrative will however drive forward the determination of the themes to illustrate the perceptions of combined operations held by Britain's military and political elite from 1688 to 1713. An understanding of how successive ministries and their senior service personnel comprehended the operational form and strategic function of combined land and sea actions during wartime will help explain the dual role for British warfare (referred to above) inaugurated by the Prince of Orange's combined operation in 1688. In so doing, it will account for the increased British practice of this type of warfare in the wars following the 1688 revolution and, in addition to the development of its military form, the political motivations underpinning combined operations within war policy will be elucidated. In turn, this will raise the significance of combined operations as a strategic form of warfare, fulfilling a vanguard role in the imperial development of Britain as a world, and particularly Atlantic, power. The geographical scope and territorial breadth of Britain's first empire up to the loss of the American colonies in 1783 was secured and remained dependent upon the combined projection of land and sea forces. Significant advances in respect were undoubtedly made in the mid-to-late eighteenth century but it will be shown that these were

dependent upon the development of contemporary perceptions of this type of warfare earlier in the century. However, before these arguments can be advanced, it is necessary first to elucidate the two themes from which they will derive.

III: A Distinct Form of Warfare?: The Problems of Definition.

The presupposition that in 1688 a combined operation was considered a specific form of warfare should mean that it possess certain recognisable features when set against more orthodox forms. At first glance, it might be argued that there was no specificity in 1688 because the distinctive features of combination were actually illusory; that the navy was merely providing a taxi service to a body of troops which were then to undertake a standard military land campaign. This suggests a minimal level of administrative and operational interdependence for each service which the history of the invasion of November 1688 does not bear out. It does nonetheless, correctly demonstrate that definitions are central in the case for distinctiveness.

There is not a substantial body of historiography solely interested in combined operations for the period immediately concerned with here. This study hopes to make some contribution to filling that lacuna. Instead, taking their cue from J.S. Corbett's *England in the Seven Years War*,²³ historians have largely concentrated on assessing the combined operations of the second half of the eighteenth century, with the Elder Pitt's use of them as strategy proving of enduring interest.²⁴ Arguably, a product of this scholarship has been a distorted view of the history of warfare such that it is not considered odd to make the claim that it was during the Seven Years War, 1756-63, and the War of the American Revolution, 1775-83 that the British determined to achieve proficiency in the 'complex skills and techniques'²⁵ of this type of operation and that the methodology of this warfare originated then.²⁶ An attempt to revise this consensus has nonetheless begun. Professor Harding's *Amphibious Warfare in the Eighteenth Century* focuses on the disastrous expedition to the

²³ J.S. Corbett, *England in the Seven Years War: A Study in Combined Strategy* (2 vols., London, 1907; 2nd edn with introduction by C. Duffy, London, 1992).

²⁴ C. Duffy, 'Introduction', in Corbett, *England in the Seven Years War*, i, pp. v-xxxiv, provides a review of the subsequent trends in the literature and includes a useful bibliography.

²⁵ D. Syrett, 'The Methodology of British Amphibious Operations During the Seven Years and American Wars', *MM* lviii (1972), 269.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 269-80; D. Syrett, 'The British Landing at Havana: An Example of an Eighteenth-Century Combined Operation', *MM* lv (1969), 325-31.

West Indies conducted by General Wentworth and Admiral Vernon between 1740 and 1742, providing a reinterpretation of its failure from which more general points about amphibious warfare are advanced.²⁷ Most obviously this pushed the analysis into the first half of the eighteenth century; but also it includes a penultimate chapter which recognises a historical lineage of some length for combined operations like the failure of the plan to descend on the French coast in the summer of 1692 and the attack on Cádiz in 1702.²⁸ It is however Professor Harding's emphasis on the importance of definitions which is of particular interest for the argument concerning the distinctiveness of this type of warfare.²⁹

The first point to make is that linguistically the combined operational deployment of an army and navy can obviously be denoted as a 'combined operation', but that its generic combat term should be 'amphibious warfare'. This term though, as Professor Harding has made clear, lacks definitional exactitude and suggests only the participation of an army and navy of an undefined size and scale. It has already been made plain that this remains unsatisfactory; amphibious warfare so defined might merely comprise the navy providing a transport service. As this study concerns the history of an archipelago, this could therefore arguably cover all military and naval operations undertaken or, at least, mean that each had a dominant amphibious component.³⁰ It is thus unhelpful as a means of achieving a greater historical understanding of the component characteristics of a combined operation.

Theorists of warfare are generally of little help in seeking a working definition of combined operations. Few theoretical treatises on combined operations as amphibious warfare appeared before the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Colonel Charles E. Callwell began to publish his work.³¹ There was one exception to this trend namely, Thomas More Molyneaux, who had his work on what he termed 'Conjunct Expeditions' published in the year that Britain conquered Canada by taking Quebec through a combined operation.³² While this text is singularly instructive, its historical treatment is based

²⁷ R. Harding, *Amphibious Warfare in the Eighteenth Century. The British Expedition to the West Indies, 1740-1742* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1991).

²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 150-97.

²⁹ Harding, *Amphibious Warfare*, pp. 1-2.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ His principal historical-theoretical works on amphibious warfare are C.E. Callwell, *The Effect of Maritime Command on Land Campaigns Since Waterloo* (Edinburgh, 1897) and C.E. Callwell, *Military Operations and Maritime Preponderance: Their Relations and Interdependence*, ed. C.S. Gray (Annapolis, Maryland, reprint, 1996).

³² Molyneaux, *Conjunct Expeditions*.

almost wholly on naval sources and thus overlooks the army's input. Consequently, it tends to conceive of amphibious warfare as merely an appendage of naval strategy which in turn does not provide a firm ground from which to establish the lineaments. This is a trend detected in other theoretical treatises such as P.H. Colomb's work on naval warfare; a thoroughgoing Mahanite text³³ in its promotion of seapower, it conceived combined operational success to be solely determined by regional sea command.³⁴ In this genre, J.S. Corbett's *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* should be considered an anomaly. Its rejection of a purely naval strategy, in favour of a maritime strategy which did not dismiss the use of armies as part of a continental commitment meant that Mahan's contempt of combined operations, was eschewed.³⁵ Instead, amphibious warfare was written of positively as a central component of British combat.³⁶ Overall though, the significance of these works (and in particular Corbett's) for amphibious warfare lies mainly in its role within strategy which will be treated in this study but does not in the first instance provide a working historical definition of combined operations.

One person's definition entails another's omission, however. Drawing on an explanation by the sailor-scholar, Admiral Richmond, Professor Harding argues for its

³³ That is a text following the notion that 'command of the sea' was the principal end of naval warfare as outlined in A.T. Mahan, *The Influence of Seapower Upon History 1660-1783* (New York, reprint of 5th edn 1894, 1987).

³⁴ P.H. Colomb, *Naval Warfare. Its Ruling Principles and Practice Historically Treated* (2nd edn, London, 1895); A. Gat, *The Development of Military Thought: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 207-11.

³⁵ J.S. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, ed. E.J. Grove (Great Britain, reprint, 1988), pp. 15-30; J.T. Sumida, *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan Reconsidered* (Washington D.C. and London, 1997), p. 45.

³⁶ Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, pp. 15-87, 280-304. The first citation relates to Corbett's discussion of the theory of war in which the importance of the interdependence of army and navy within a maritime strategy, through to its role in 'unlimited' and 'limited' wars, is emphasised. With reference to the latter, pp. 60-71, Corbett argued that combined operations were the standard 'limited' war-making methodology. Corbett stated that this methodology might involve the taking of territories - the limited object of the war - or alternatively it might mean a development of Clausewitz's notion of 'war by contingent', and thus demonstrate that Britain possessed great potentiality in 'limited' interference in an 'unlimited' continental war through her amphibious capability. The second citation refers to a more practical outline of methods of exercising combined command. See E.J. Grove, 'Introduction', in Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, pp. xxiv-xxix; B.D. Hunt, 'The Strategic Thought of Sir Julian S. Corbett', in J.B. Hattendorf & R.S. Jordan (eds), *Maritime Strategy and the Balance of Power* (London, 1989), pp. 110-35; G. Till, 'Sir Julian Corbett And The British Way In Naval Warfare: Problems of Effectiveness And Implementation', in K. Neilson & E.J. Errington (eds), *Navies and Global Defence: Theories and Strategies* (London, 1995), pp. 23-50; and D.M. Schurman, *The Education of a Navy: The Development of British Naval Strategic Thought, 1867-1914* (London, 1965), pp. 147-84; Gat, *The Development of Military Thought*, pp. 218-25.

broadening so as to define amphibious warfare by both objectives and composition of force.³⁷ However, the contention is that this approach omits elements of the historical experience of combined operations during the two wars considered within this study. Specifically, it excludes some operations - such as the attack on Toulon in 1707 - because they did not involve a self-contained land force launched from the sea; and, despite Professor Harding's original emphasis on the composition of the force, the definition does not seem to cover operations undertaken by a body of troops whose function was ambiguous in the late seventeenth century.³⁸ While the current Royal Marines' oldest battle honour on their Colours is the conquest of Gibraltar in 1704, that was undertaken by their third mutation of form since the Restoration when a pattern had first emerged of raising regiments for 'sea service' in emergency which were then subsequently disbanded. These troops were commonly referred to as 'Marine Soldiers', and were mustered and paid as standard infantry privates when on shore. Yet, they were quickly to come under the administrative and operational direction of the Lord High Admiral and could aspire to be Able Seamen. Indeed, a permanent Corps was not established until 1755 and it is only from the late 1730s that scholars date the beginning of the resolution of the Marines' functional and doctrinal ambiguity. Nonetheless, their earlier equivocal status - as either land soldiers, *de facto* seamen or as a wholly new group of servicemen - means that operations undertaken solely by them in conjunction with the navy could be considered as a combined army-navy venture.³⁹

An alternative way forward might be to keep the dual feature of Professor Harding's definition - objectives and composition of force - but consider whether the historical narrative of the operations yields additional categories of definition. Indeed, *prima facie* three categories seem of particular significance. When analysing types of warfare, it is appropriate to understand in conjunction how the operation reached the point of deployment (or indeed failed to reach that point), and its performance and fulfilment of objectives when deployed. Thus, the administrative process which produced the combined operation, including especially the concerns of the developing early modern bureaucracy, should be addressed. Alone among

³⁷ Harding, *Amphibious Warfare*, pp. 1-2.

³⁸ Anon., *A Letter to a Member of Parliament Concerning the Four Regiments Commonly Called Mariners* (London, 1699); Anon., *A Short Vindication of Marine Regiments, in Answer to a Pamphlet Entitled, A Letter to a Member of Parliament, Concerning the Four Marine Regiments* (London, 1699).

³⁹ AL, MSS 121/XVI: Corbett's Naval Precedents, Marines; A.J. Marini, 'Parliament and the Marine Regiments, 1739', *MM* lxii (1976), 55-65.

the theorists, Callwell touched upon this to an extent in his final chapter in *Military Operations and Maritime Preponderance*, but unfortunately the focus was in-theatre as opposed to prior planning.⁴⁰ Secondly, the manner in which the governments sought to regulate the in-theatre relationship between the two services would not only have shaped contemporary perceptions of combined operations but also their historical development. It would seem probable therefore that the structure of operational command would emerge as an important additional category of definition. And lastly, as the form and function of any combat situation is largely contingent upon the in-theatre environment, the exigencies of the war theatre in which the combined operations were deployed will need to be considered in any attempt to arrive at a definition for this type of warfare.

This study aims therefore to treat not only the first elements of the definition - objectives and composition of force - but draw from the narrative other categories with a particular focus placed upon the bureaucratic processes, the structure of command, and the in-theatre environment.

IV: The Role of Combined Operations in Grand Strategy.

The second theme emerges from the diplomatic context of William III's operation and to an extent provides an explanation for the chosen period. As has already been noted, it could never be argued that combined operations are unique to 1688-1713 but, paradoxically, William's army-navy descent on the English coast in 1688 might be explained by events upon the European continent which did not embrace amphibious warfare.

Contemporaries and historians have considered that William's Declaration published on 30 September 1688, despite only setting forth his concern for Anglicanism and English political liberties, was a cloak for his own continental aspirations.⁴¹ This turns on an assessment of the wellsprings of Louis XIV's foreign policy since the beginning of his personal rule in 1661, which had been directed towards the need for France to gain a secure frontier with the states of central Europe. The historical debate centres upon whether Louis's ambition derived from a warmongering desire to assert *la gloire*; or, alternatively, on

⁴⁰ Callwell, *Military Operations and Maritime Preponderance*, pp. 431-44.

⁴¹ Sir James MacKintosh, *History of the Revolution in England in 1688* (1834), pp. 692-702; *Works of John Sheffield*; for historians favouring this interpretation see for example G. Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power: Late Stuart and Early Georgian Britain, 1660-1722* (London, 1993), pp. 246-7; D. McKay & H.M. Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815* (New York, 1983), p. 44.

whether the vulnerability and defensive concerns of national security dictated the extension of France's perceived natural geographical frontiers.⁴² Professor Hatton has been credited with rescuing Louis from the moral opprobrium central to the argument which emphasises the pursuit of *la gloire* as part of a conscious policy. In this respect, French vulnerability to the Habsburgs since the Peace of Pyrenees (1659) is cited along with a fluid international states system that responded to the type of personal statecraft or kingship inherent to *la gloire*.⁴³

Recent scholarship has aspired to a more balanced interpretation, though not by splitting the difference between the two interpretative extremes. Instead, a synthesis has been sought by suggesting that one can trace a critical evolution in Louis's foreign policy. It is now argued that the policy can be divided into three discrete phases. The first period covering 1661-1675 was characterised by the pursuit of *la gloire*; the second phase from 1675-1697 was dominated by defensive concerns and the final period, 1697-1714, was consumed by the hoary question of the Spanish succession.⁴⁴ The merit of this interpretation is its coherence in that *la gloire* and a defensive national security posture are not mutually exclusive. It also explains, though not necessarily resolves, the paradox at the heart of the second phase whereby defensive ends were sought by aggressive means. The significant point for those who attribute William's combined operation to England in 1688 to his continental ambitions is that the Dutch Prince's formative experience had been marked by such conflicts as the War of Devolution of 1667-1668 and of the Dutch War, 1672-1678/9. During both, France sought increased territory principally at the expense of the United Province's security. Furthermore, William had also seen that the advent of peace did not mean that Louis was territorially satisfied; nor that peace would necessarily result in the alleviation of the insecurity felt by those states on the French eastern frontier. The period 1679-1684 heralded the implementation of the French monarch's *réunion* policy - a policy of territorial aggression which Louis sought to justify with reference to the diplomatic vagueness and inconsistencies of the treaties of Westphalia (1648) and Nijmegen (1679) underpinned by French military

⁴² J. Black, 'Louis XIV's Foreign Policy Reassessed', *SCFS* x (1998), 199-212; R.M. Hatton, 'Louis XIV: Recent Gains in Historical Knowledge', *JMH* xlv (1973), 279-80; J.A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714* (London, 1999), pp. 27-32; J.H. Shennan, *Louis XIV* (London, 1997), pp. 32-3; P. Sahlins, 'Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries Since the Seventeenth Century', *AHR* xcvi (1990), 1423-52.

⁴³ J. Black, 'Louis XIV's Foreign Policy Reassessed', pp. 199-205; Hatton, 'Louis XIV: Recent Gains', pp. 279-80.

⁴⁴ Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714*, pp. 32-41.

power.⁴⁵ Accordingly, Louis is portrayed as aiming for France to be the hegemonic European power and William as seeking to thwart that development. William understood however that the military and demographic resources of the United Provinces were insufficient to position him in the vanguard of the opposition to France. Hence, the French King's invasion of the Rhineland and the Palatinate in September 1688 - a product of his failure to secure the election of the French candidate to the Archbishopric of Cologne and his frustration that the Truce of Ratisbon (1684) had not been made a permanent settlement⁴⁶ - can be described as the opportunity for William to descend on England in order to hitch that country's resources to the conflict against France.⁴⁷ This interpretation of the 'Glorious Revolution' is strengthened by William's subsequent action, namely, that on acceding jointly to the English Crown, William brought England into the defensive coalition against France. The pre-existing League of Augsburg formed in 1686 comprising the Empire, Spain and several German Princes evolved to become the Grand Alliance with the addition of England, the United Provinces and Savoy. This continental alliance founded in the nascent balance of power diplomacy as an instrument to regulate state relations and principally to balance French power remained the bedrock of policy through to the death of Queen Anne in 1714. Indeed, the Grand Alliance was reconstituted in 1701 to deal with the perceived threat posed to European peace on the death of the childless Spanish King, Carlos II. Then a culmination of events saw Louis break the Second Partition Treaty (1700), aggressively promote and defend French interests throughout the Spanish Empire arguably using his grandson - the new Spanish King, Philip V - as cipher, while threatening Bourbon domination of west central Europe by issuing Letters Patent which declared that Philip (as Duc d'Anjou) retained his right to succeed to the French throne. Louis further inflamed Anglo-French relations by his recognition of the late King James's son, the Old Pretender, as James III, thus contravening the spirit and letter of the Treaty of Rijswijk (1697) which had settled the last war. Meanwhile the Emperor, seeking to reclaim Milan and other areas of northern Italy which he

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 161-71.

⁴⁶ This Truce was a twenty year agreement between France and the Emperor, certain German Princes and Spain to accept the continued French occupation of Lorraine, her hold on Strasbourg and the reunion lands. See Shennan, *Louis XIV*, p. 37, and Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714*, pp. 191-9.

⁴⁷ McKay & Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers*, pp. 43-5; Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp.17-20; or most famously due to her concentration on this argument, L. Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution: The Role Played by the William of Orange in the Revolution of 1688* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1954).

considered Imperial territory, had increased the tension by sending in an army of occupation even before the Grand Alliance had been signed. As a check to this, French troops were soon acting in proxy for the new Spanish King's army.⁴⁸

The relevance of this brief synopsis of William's motives in 1688 set against the current historiography on Louis XIV's foreign policy emerges from a consideration of the concept of Grand Strategy. This is a relatively modern analytical focus for scholars and it is viewed as multi-layered concept applicable in peace as well as war. In the analysis of war, it is used to denote the coherent direction of the instruments of state power and resources, including less quantifiable elements such as national morale, towards the immediate military objectives but also with a view to the type of peace that is sought.⁴⁹ Under these precepts, the armed force of a state has a dual role: a constituent element of the Grand Strategy but also an active means of its implementation. In peacetime, that second role would be reduced to one of potentiality and threat. Some have counselled against the use of strategy as a means to explain the history of warfare, arguing that it has a reductive effect through seeking such an explanation by a 'system of essentials'.⁵⁰ Analytically this prematurely links two issues: the understanding of one particular strategy and the subsequent derivation of universal principles from it. It seems quite correct to be chary of this link for although one sympathises with J.S. Corbett's view that these principles should properly be looked upon as a fertilising agent of judgement, their pretensions to universality can obscure the shading in the historical picture if the principles are derived from one age only to be applied crudely to another. This should not mean however that contextual strategy is dismissed wholesale as a means of enquiry in the history of warfare. It has also been suggested that the method is anachronistic because unalloyed strategy was an unknown concept before the nineteenth century. There might be some foundation in this charge with reference to the period concerned with here in the sense that the protagonists did not use the jargon laden language; but that did not mean that they did not face a series of options or make certain decisions - political, economic and military - as to how they would prosecute the war. The culmination and interplay of these decisions

⁴⁸ Thomson, 'Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 140-61; Baxter, *William III*, pp. 379-401.

⁴⁹ P. Kennedy, 'Grand Strategy in War and Peace: Towards a Broader Definition', in P. Kennedy (ed.), *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (London, 1991), pp. 1-7; P. Kennedy, 'Grand Strategies and Less-Than-Grand Strategies: A Twentieth Century Critique', in L. Freedman, P. Hayes, & R. O'Neill (eds), *War, Strategy, and International Politics: Essays in Honour of Sir Michael Howard* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 227-9.

formed Grand Strategy. To assess the choices made as to the direction of the state's armed force is to outline that element of Grand Strategy. And, as has been noted, to do so should provide for a greater understanding of a more germane strategic theory associated with it.⁵¹ The question to be posed is that, while recognising William's continental aspirations which inaugurated a committed British presence in the European theatre at the head of a coalition against France, what form in pursuance of the Grand Strategy did warfare take?

The older orthodox military and naval histories of this period stick to their own in explaining the warfare of Grand Strategy.⁵² The former concentrate on the set piece land battles best exemplified by Marlborough's famous four victories over Louis XIV at Bleenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), Oudenarde (1708) and Malplaquet (1709) with the main historical debate focused on the tactical minutiae of military manoeuvre and engagement.⁵³ The navalists seek to demonstrate the period's significance in the establishment of British supremacy at sea, usually tacking between the respective merits of the *guerre d'escadre* and the *guerre de course*.⁵⁴ More modern works have continued to emphasise the distinctiveness of land and naval operations, while recognising that an island power must seek a blend; this though was usually meant to signify no more than an attempt to achieve appropriate and proportional priorities between the land and sea.⁵⁵ Combined operations as amphibious warfare are almost always condemned as a strategical subordinate either directly or by implication.

⁵⁰ J. Keegan, *The Mask of Command: A Study of Generalship* (London, 1999), p. 2.

⁵¹ Keegan, *The Mask of Command*, pp. 1-11; H. Strachan, 'Soldiers, Strategy and Sebastopol', *HJ* xxi (1978), 305; Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p. 10; H. Strachan, *European Armies and the Conduct of War* (London, reprint, 1992), pp. 2-3, 6.

⁵² I recognise that this statement is to an extent counter-factual because not all the older histories would have been written recognising the concept. The key difference lies in their perception of writing the history of war strategy in the round, solely in terms of the direction of armies and navies instead of as an elemental part of a larger whole known as Grand Strategy. The impact of this perception with regard to the older histories is clearly difficult to calculate. Nonetheless, it is arguable that their analysis of war strategy as a whole could be substituted as the constituent part in Grand Strategy.

⁵³ See for example, Sir John Fortescue, *A History of the British Army* (London, 1910), i. 397-553; H. Delbruck, *The Dawn of Modern Warfare* (transl, Bison edn, London, 1990), pp. 302-3.

⁵⁴ See for example, Sir William Laird Clowes, *The Royal Navy. A History From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London, 1898), ii. 253-417, 418-534. *Guerre d'escadre* is naval warfare as a clash of battle fleets; *guerre de course* is naval warfare directed against commerce. For a concise description of each see Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714*, pp. 93-102, and for a more evolutionary treatment see R. Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650-1830* (London, 1999), pp. 37-120; G. Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power 1688-1697: From Guerre D'Escadre to the Guerre De Course* (The Hague, 1974), pp. 5-8.

There have been some noteworthy exceptions to this trend.⁵⁶ Generally though, for this period, these have focused upon British pretensions to become a Mediterranean power or on the extension of overseas possessions.⁵⁷ Such works have provided the student with a much clearer understanding of the role of combined operations in Grand Strategy and have crucially highlighted the personal commitment to this type of warfare displayed by William III and Marlborough as the principal directors of the armed force element of Grand Strategy during the two wars considered in this study. A further historical debt is also owed to these histories through their raising of the profiles of other naval and army commanders such as Admiral Sir George Byng and James Stanhope, who rose to prominence through being closely concerned with such operations. Nonetheless, due to the geographical exclusiveness of such literature with its focus on the Middle Sea and the Americas, it seems to fall short of being a full analysis of the role of combined operations within Grand Strategy.

Hence, with the first line of enquiry seeking to establish the occurrence and distinctiveness by definition of combined operations as amphibious warfare, there will be a concomitant illumination of their role in Grand Strategy. This will challenge the focus of the orthodox histories and develop with more wide ranging evidence some of the themes of those works which proved the exception. From this it will be shown whether the mode of warfare which William adopted to invade Britain in order to make good his continental ambitions actually came to fulfil a consistent role in Britain's Grand Strategy at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

⁵⁵ P. Padfield, *Maritime Supremacy and the Opening of the Western Mind: Naval Campaigns that Shaped the Modern World 1588-1782* (Pimlico edn, London, 2000), p. 158; J. Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army During the Nine Years War, 1688-1697', *JSAHR* lxxii (1995), 73-98.

⁵⁶ C.T. Atkinson, *Marlborough and The Rise of the British Army* (London, 1921); J.H. Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne 1702-1708* (London, 1938). Although obviously army-centric the former recognises and stresses Marlborough's understanding of naval warfare and covers the combined operations in which he was involved well and the latter despite oddly stopping in 1708 when there were still four more years of war at sea, covers the main set-piece combined operations in some depth.

⁵⁷ See for example, J.S. Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean: A Study of the Rise and Influence of British Power Within the Straits, 1603-1713* (London, 1904), ii. 143-315; J. Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy, 1692-4', *CHJ* ix (1947-1949), 268-92; S.F. Gradish, 'The Establishment of British Seapower in the Mediterranean, 1689-1713', *CJH* x (1975), 1-16; C.R. Phillips 'Navies and the Mediterranean in the Early Modern', and H. Coutau-Begarie 'Seapower in the Mediterranean from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century', in J.B. Hattendorf (ed.), *Naval Policy and Strategy in the Mediterranean: Past Present and Future* (London, 2000), pp. 3-28, 30-47; C.T. Atkinson, 'Queen Anne's War in the West Indies: Parts I & II, Jamaica and the Windward Sphere', *JSAHR* xxiv (1946), 100-9, 183-97; N.T. Moses, 'The British Navy and the Caribbean, 1689-1697', *MM* lii (1966), 13-40.

The two thematic lines of enquiry will be applied to the two wars which form the separate chapters of this study. The subdivision therein is dictated by the character of each wars' theatres. Perforce, both chapters will contain a colonial theatre sub-section, though only the chapter on the Nine Years War will consider Ireland; while the incidence of operations in the Mediterranean, including those on the Peninsula, during the Spanish Succession War means it will form a sub-section in that chapter. The end of each chapter will present some conclusions on the two lines of enquiry based upon the foregoing descriptive and analytical narrative. Essentially this will be a historical progress report to show at each stage throughout the period 1688-1713 the extent to which a definition of combined operations had been arrived at so that its distinctiveness as a form of warfare can be rated; and also to demonstrate the scope of such operations within the armed force component of Grand Strategy. These strands will be brought together in a final section, which will consider the reasons for the success of only some of the operations. The historical detail will allow for certain conclusions to be drawn about the perceptions of the form and the deployment of combined operations during the period 1688-1713. These will focus upon their strategic emergence alongside Britain's post-1688 continental commitment and also upon their operational articulation by the political and military elite. At a broader level, this analysis of some 25 years of operational experience should prompt comment on the existing interpretation of warfare. Firstly, the orthodox view of largely static warfare (naval or military) punctuated by the set piece battle might seem less relevant as Britain moved to a more mobile conception of war. Secondly, where before Britain's development and deployment of combined operations as a practice of warfare has been established in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, it might now be possible to locate the substantive wellsprings of this practice in an earlier period. In turn, this should also push back to the early eighteenth century the nascent contemporary comprehension of the type of warfare in early modern history which proved germane to Britain's imperial extension. 1688, as a military and naval event, combined with British involvement in both the Nine Years War and the War of the Spanish Succession can therefore begin to assume a primary role in Britain's emergence as the preponderant world power in the eighteenth century.

Chapter 1

The Nine Years War, 1688-1697.

Section I: Combined Operations and the Reconquest of Ireland During the Nine Years War, 1688-1697.

I.i Ireland as a Theatre of War.

In the wake of King James's second (and successful) flight to France on 23 December 1688, elections were held for a Convention Parliament that was to determine England's future monarch, who would also be the monarch in Ireland by virtue of legislation in Henry VIII's time. One contemporary pamphlet outlined why Ireland should rightly be considered as part of a wider English dominion and, thus, accept the Convention's resolutions. More significantly, the pamphlet also told of the atrocities allegedly then being committed against the Protestants in Ireland, and of the significant military commitment which the author believed would be required to reclaim the island for whoever was to occupy the English throne.¹ Well before the formal offer of the crown to the Prince of Orange and Mary in England, the fight to obtain Ireland's recognition of the 'Glorious Revolution' had already begun.

Ireland had descended into a state of violent confusion when news of the Revolution filtered through. Unlike Scotland which - despite the efforts of the Presbyterians in the south-west - initially turned to the constitution in the form of the Convention of the Estates, in Ireland the spectre of the 1640s held sway with rumours of invasions and of Protestants and Roman Catholics massacring each other. That as a result, a greater number of Protestants fled to England through the winter of 1688 was principally due to the continued presence of James's Lord Deputy, the Earl of Tyrconnell. A strict Roman Catholic, Tyrconnell had been appointed by James in February 1687 to push forward plans to enhance the Crown's authority by allowing his co-religionists amongst the 'Old English' to occupy civil and military office. Numerous Protestant soldiers, justices, judges and even whole town corporations were turned out; and, as preparations were made for a Parliament which looked likely to threaten the

¹ R. Coxe, *Aphorisms Relating to the Kingdom of Ireland, Humbly Submitted to the Most Noble Assembly of Lords and Commons at the Great Convention at Westminster* (London, 1689).

Restoration land settlement, those who returned to England spoke of the steady eclipse of Protestant Ireland.²

Nonetheless, there is also evidence to suggest that on receiving news of the King's flight, Tyrconnell sought calm and initially thought of negotiating with the Prince. This was the impression subsequently given in depositions by several Irish Protestants to the enquiry of the House of Lords into the miscarriages in Ireland. More immediately, on the Irish Solicitor-General, Sir John Temple's recommendation, William concluded that the Lord Deputy would prove receptive to an emissary and the cavalry officer convert, Richard Hamilton, was sent to demand Tyrconnell's submission.³ This tactic did not, however, have universal support. Danby spoke out against it, arguing instead that a display of preponderant force in the form of a squadron would more likely induce Irish quiescence; and, indeed, underlying his point was an accurate assessment of the probable reason for Tyrconnell's apparent even-handed reaction to the Revolution.⁴ Since September, when James had ordered half the Irish army to England to shore up his defences, the Lord Deputy had lacked the necessary troops to secure the whole country; and, in the febrile atmosphere attending news of the Revolution, he had obviously struggled to contend with both the endemic banditry and the pockets of militant Protestant resistance which were emerging as organised 'associations' for the Prince. In the short-term, Danby's opposition proved apposite for, once in Ireland, Hamilton treacherously never asked for Tyrconnell's sword and instead urged resistance to William.⁵

² HMC, *Ormonde MSS* NS, viii. 356: 'A Diary of Events in Ireland from 1685 to 1690'; *The Life of James the Second*, (ed.) J.S. Clarke (London, 1816), ii. 94-8; W. King, *The State of the Protestants of Ireland Under the late King James's Government* (3rd edn, London, 1692), pp. 1-110 provides the most wide-ranging account of this sense of Protestant eclipse and, despite the author's unalloyed prejudice, the text affords an insight into the likely views of many contemporary Irish Protestants. See also, J. Miller, 'The Earl of Tyrconnell and James II's Irish Policy, 1685-1688', *HJ* xx (1977), 803-23; Sir Charles Petrie, *The Great Tyrconnell: A Chapter in Anglo-Irish Relations* (Ireland, 1972), pp. 143-53; P.W. Sergeant, *Little Jennings and Fighting Dick Talbot: A Life of the Duke and Duchess of Tyrconnell* (London, 1913), ii. 353-72; J.G. Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1691* (London, 1969), pp. 19-43; J.C. Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland 1603-1923* (new edn, London, 1981), pp. 139-141; C. Rose, *England in the 1690s* (Oxford, 1999), pp. 210-11.

³ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1691*, pp. 48-52; HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, pp. 137-44: Depositions by the following: Mr John Phillips; Sir Robert Colvill; Mr Luke King; Sir Richard Rivers; the Archbishop of Dublin.

⁴ A. Browning, *Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds, 1632-1712* (Glasgow, 1944), ii. 159-61: 'Memorandums att my first coming out of the North to the Prince att St James'.

⁵ P.G. Melvin, 'The Irish Army and the Revolution of 1688', *IS* ix (1969), 288-307 & 'Irish Troop Movements and James II's Army in 1688', *IS* x (1970), 87-105; HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, p. 141: Deposition of the Archbishop of Dublin; HMC, *Ormonde MSS* NS, viii. 356-9: 'A Diary of Events in Ireland from 1685 to 1690'; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1692*, pp. 48-52; H. Murtagh, 'The War in Ireland, 1689-1691', in W.A. Maguire (ed.), *Kings in Conflict: The Revolutionary War in Ireland and Its Aftermath, 1689-1750* (Belfast, 1990), p. 65.

Positive judgements of Tyrconnell's character have been used to bridge the credibility gap between his actions in 1687-8 and his apparent neutrality at the time of the Revolution,⁶ but these largely founder upon the clear indications given in the first months of 1689 that he was actually intent upon securing Ireland for James. Large numbers of Catholic troops were raised; Protestants were disarmed; a leading Protestant nobleman, Mountjoy, was sent to Paris to be arrested under false pretences; officers from France were received in Ireland to assess what help Louis XIV might give; meanwhile the ever increasing army - albeit mainly comprised of ragged and raw recruits - tightened Tyrconnell's control across the whole country.⁷ Informed of Hamilton's treachery and kept abreast of the other developments by the Protestant refugees, William concluded in the spring that only a military force could bind Ireland to the Crown. On 8 March, Parliament was informed of his intention to dispatch an army of 20 000 men. The King also resolved to send Richard Hamilton's nephew, James, to the Governor of Londonderry, Robert Lundy, with the latter's commission, arms, money, and encouragement; while preparations were to begin for the immediate dispatch of two infantry regiments as relief for the north.⁸ William had, however, acted too late, for as he revealed his intentions, the exiled King James had already begun his sea crossing from Brest to Ireland with a French expeditionary force led by several French Generals. Also embarked aboard the squadron was a considerable amount of war supplies, though a detachment of up to 5000 troops was not to sail until a second convoy left Brest three weeks later. On 12 March, James landed at Kinsale and within a fortnight he had reached Dublin for the summoning of a Parliament which was designed to provide a sense of constitutional propriety to his enterprise.⁹

⁶ For example, Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1691*, pp. 48-52, is complimentary towards Tyrconnell, claiming on p. 50 that he 'played a difficult hand with skill', and on p. 52, that his was essentially a 'tentative approach' which would have succeeded if William had engaged the Irish problem before James landed.

⁷ HMC, *Ormonde MSS* NS, viii. 14: Mountjoy to Ormonde, 10 Jan. 1689; HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, pp. 180-2: Letter from Mr W. Howell to Sir Robert Southwell, 3 Mar. 1689; Letter from Edward Boyle, Bishop of Cloyne to Henry [Compton], Bishop of London, 4 Mar. 1689; *The Journal of John Stevens*, ed. R.H. Murray (Oxford, 1912), pp. 60-1, 60 n.1; King, *The State of the Protestants*, pp. 119, 123-31; *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux en Irlande 1689-1690*, ed. J. Hogan (Dublin, 1934), p. 6: 'Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au Sieur de Maumont, Maréchal de camp, 16 février 1689' [NS].

⁸ W. Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England* (London, 1809), v. 163-4; HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, pp. 161-2: 'The humble Representation of several of the Nobility and Gentry of the Province of Munster', read on 20 Feb. 1689; G. Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry* (London, 1689), in P. Dwyer, (ed.), *The Siege of Londonderry, in 1689* (Republished 1893 edn, London, 1971), p. 14; PRO, ADM, 1/5247, p. 13: Minute at Whitehall, 27 Feb. 1689.

⁹ Anon, *A Full and True Account of the Landing and Reception of the Late King James at Kinsale* (London, 1689); *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux*, pp. 22-5: d'Avaux à Seignelay, 16 mars 1689 [NS]; d'Avaux

It was largely at Louis XIV's behest that James had gone to Ireland. Although England had not yet officially declared war, the French King viewed the country as an ideal diversionary theatre in which to embroil William away from French military action in Europe. His war minister, Louvois, had disagreed but his opposition probably had more to do with his personal contest with the minister for the navy, Seignelay, for Louis's preferment: clearly Seignelay had more to gain from conflict in a theatre that would necessarily rely upon the navy. Even so, Louvois reportedly had little faith in the Jacobites' commitment, of which James's initial lethargy as he settled in at St Germain-en-Laye stood as testimony. Early expeditionary planning did not assume that James would lead the force in person. Nonetheless, the exiled King did appreciate that the local context of the conflict between Louis and William held the potential for him to reclaim the throne by securing Ireland, and then using it as a springboard for entering England via Scotland where potent opposition to William was also emerging.¹⁰ To that end, the first task which faced the Jacobites once in Dublin was to eliminate those centres of Protestant resistance in the north which - after Richard Hamilton's successful sweep through eastern Ulster in March during which he defeated Mount-Alexander's Protestant band at the 'break of Dromore' and advanced north through Coleraine to fall down into county Tyrone, east of the River Foyle - were concentrated in Londonderry and Enniskillen.¹¹ The battle for Ireland had clearly been joined.

The current military historiography of the war in Ireland embraces two complications. The first - and a theme well outside the scope of this study - has been its entry into the modern political lexicon as propaganda for both sides of a religious divide.¹² The second pertains to the many excellent scholarly studies of the conflict.¹³ These tend, understandably,

au Roy, 23 mars 1689 [NS]; *AH*, xxi, nos. 42, 68, pp. 18-19, 29-30: 'Instruction pour M. de Maumont, 16 février 1689' [NS]; [Louvois] à Bouridal, 10 mars 1689 [NS]; S. Mulloy, 'The French Navy and the Jacobite War in Ireland, 1689-1691', *IS* xviii (1990-1992), 22-4.

¹⁰ *AH* xxi, nos. 24, 51, pp. 10-11, 22-3: 'Mémoire concernant un projet du Roy d'Angleterre sur l'Irlande, 31 janvier 1689' [NS]; [Louvois] à Maumont, 23 février 1689 [NS]; *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux*, p. 52, 61: d'Avaux à Louvois, 4 avril 1689 [NS]; d'Avaux au Roy, 16 avril 1689 [NS]; Mulloy, 'The French Navy and the Jacobite War in Ireland, 1689-1691', pp. 18-23; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland, 1685-1691*, pp. 58-62.

¹¹ HMC, *Eighth Report, Talbot de Malahide MSS*, pp. 493, 496: Tyrconnell to Hamilton, 14, 17 Mar., 3 Apr. [1689]; *The Montgomery Manuscripts: (1606-1706)*, ed. G. Hill (Belfast, 1869), pp. 279-81; HMC, *Ormonde MSS* NS, viii. 361-3: 'A Diary of Events in Ireland from 1685 to 1690'.

¹² R. Cathcart, 'Ireland and King Billy: Usage and Abusage' *HT* xxxviii (July 1988), 41-5; J.G. Simms, 'Remembering 1690', *SIQR* lxiii (1974), 231-42.

¹³ For example, J. Childs 'The Williamite War, 1689-1691', in T. Bartlett & K. Jeffrey (eds), *A Military History of Ireland* (Great Britain, 1996), pp. 188-210; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland, 1685-1691*; Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland, 1603-1923*, pp. 139-49; Murtagh, 'The War in Ireland, 1689-1691', pp. 61-91.

to concentrate on the three land campaigns with their attendant naval manoeuvres, but this can diminish the importance and understanding of alternative forms of warfare, and, especially, of the combined operations mounted to relieve Londonderry and to capture the Munster ports of Cork and Kinsale. Although the former admittedly does not lack treatment (a considerable amount of which suffers from the first complication mentioned above)¹⁴ it has rarely been considered within an amphibious context; while the latter operations can be interpreted to shed light on the perceptions and reality of combined operations as an instrument of warfare during the Nine Years War.

I.ii: The Relief of Londonderry, May-July 1689.

The two regiments first sent out by the King to the north of Ireland were not precisely embarked upon an active combined operation. The navy was involved, but merely to provide the transports and a small convoy whose captains were subordinate to the regiments' colonels - Cunningham and Richards. Moreover, they were restricted to landing at Londonderry and helping with its defence only if the city remained in Protestant hands; otherwise they were to try entering either Carrickfergus or Strangford. Though again, if access was closed off, a landing was not to be forced and the troops were to be returned to Liverpool.¹⁵ In the event, as the enemy force had not fastened all the approaches to Londonderry, Cunningham and Richards were able to enter the town on 16 April to attend a Council of War called by Governor Lundy. This Council determined that due to insufficient resources the town could not be held and the regiments would not be required. With Carrickfergus and Strangford in Jacobite hands, Cunningham and Richards returned to England.¹⁶

The Williamite sources denounce Lundy's conduct as treacherous inasmuch as he had recommended to a Council whose membership was ignorant of the conditions within the town

¹⁴ For example, a Williamite perspective can be found in the contemporary accounts by G. Story, *A True and Impartial History of the Most Material Occurrences in the Kingdom of Ireland during the Last Two Years, Part I* (2nd edn, London, 1693), pp. 4-5 and *A Continuation of the Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland* (London, 1693), pp. 4-5 and also in the modern monograph by C.D. Milligan, *History of the Siege of Londonderry* (Belfast, 1951). A contemporary account from the Jacobite perspective can be found in *A Jacobite Narrative of the War in Ireland, 1688-1691*, ed. J.T. Gilbert (Dublin, 1892), pp. 62-9, 75-81, 83-5; while a more modern version can be read in H. Belloc, *James The Second* (London, 1934), pp. 238-50.

¹⁵ PRO, ADM 3/1, pp. 1, 3, 6, 13, 17: Board Minutes, 9, 12, 14, 21, 27 Mar. 1689; HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, pp. 170-1: 'Orders and Instructions for Col. John Cunningham, and upon his death or absence Col. Solomon Richards or the Officers in Chief with the regiments whereof they are Colonels', 12 Mar. 1689.

¹⁶ Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 15-16; J.G. Simms, 'Notes: The Garrison of Carrickfergus, 1689', *IS* vi (1963-1964), 118-19.

and of the inhabitants' temper, a course of action amounting to surrender.¹⁷ Certainly as Governor and Chair of the Council, and as one possessed of a superior command to the newly arrived Colonels, Lundy was powerfully placed to control proceedings. Moreover, he had been positively ordered to defend the town which was said to benefit from strong fortifications built upon a natural defensive aspect.¹⁸ Even if the strength and maintenance of the walls since the conflict of the 1640s is moot, it is undeniable that Londonderry's position on the west bank of the River Foyle, which discharges through Lough Foyle into the open sea, was well placed for a sea-based supply line. With posts on the river bank and occupation of Culmore Fort situated some four miles down-stream where the river met the Lough, there remained a reasonable prospect that the supply route could remain open and to have rejected the assistance of troops which might have undertaken these tasks was, militarily, an act of folly. Nonetheless, Lundy had to grapple with the other realities of his position that more appropriately cast him as a defeatist than a traitor.¹⁹ High ground rose to the west and east of the town, providing ideal sites for the besieging batteries; while the garrison's ability to sally forth was obviously prevented by the river to the east, with marshland providing a significant obstacle on the west. More importantly, just as the two regiments from England were arriving in Lough Foyle, separate Jacobite forces under Hamilton and Rosen had rendezvoused at Strabane to force a passage across the River Foyle. On 15 April, this was achieved when the Protestant forces raised from Londonderry and the surrounding areas were put to flight by Hamilton at Clady and by Rosen at Lifford. Back inside the walls that the Council had decided were indefensible, Lundy either sought or was offered (depending upon the political interest of the source) terms which arguably held out the prospect of safety for the town's inhabitants.²⁰ By 17 April, the town under Lundy's leadership faced the possibility

¹⁷ Dwyer (ed.), *The Siege of Londonderry, in 1689*, pp. 85-8: A letter from Colonel Walker, giving a full account of the treachery of the late governor of Londonderry, [n.d.]; Story, *A Continuation of the Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland*, p. 4; Milligan, *History of the Siege of Londonderry*, pp. 102-7.

¹⁸ HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, pp. 162-3, 171: 'Instructions to our trusty and well-beloved Lieut.Col. Lundy', 21 Feb, 1689; 'Instructions for Robert Lundy Esq.', 12 Mar. 1689; HMC, *Ormonde MSS*, ii. 318-19: Report by Lord Dartmouth and Thomas Phillips on the fortifications in Ireland (Ulster), 24 Mar. 1686; C.D. Milligan, *The Walls of Derry: Their Building, Defending, and Preserving, Part I* (Londonderry, 1948), pp. 79-82.

¹⁹ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland, 1685-1691*, p. 101, makes this judicious judgement of Lundy.

²⁰ J. Fitzjames, *Memoirs of the Marshall Duke of Berwick* (London, 1779), i. 44; *AH* xxi, nos. 186-8, pp. 87-90: 'Relation de cequi s'est passé au passage de la Rivière de Fin, 29 avril 1689' [NS]; 'Article d'une lettre écrite par le Roy d'Angleterre à Monsieur de Roze, 29 avril 1689' [NS]; Maumont à Louvois, 29 avril 1689 [NS]; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 13-16; J.G. Simms, 'The Siege of Derry', *IS* vi (1963-1964), 224; Milligan, *History of the Siege of Londonderry*, pp. 115-16.

that there would be no siege and if the Governor’s conduct lacked implacable courage then - provided the Jacobites could be trusted to honour any agreement - it perhaps represented a rare instance of humanity in this conflict.

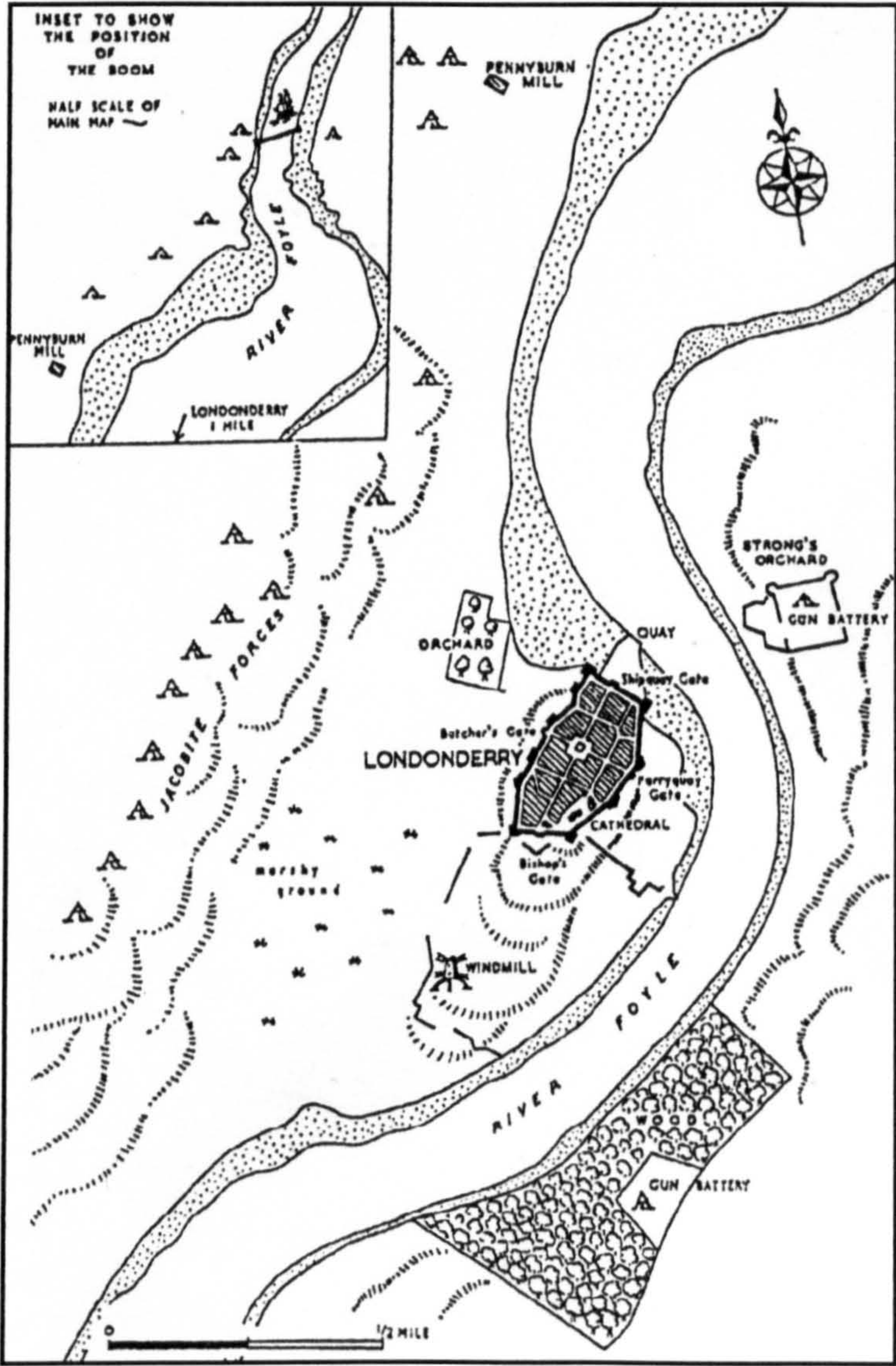


Fig. 1: The Siege of Londonderry.

Differing perceptions of trust were to determine the course of events over the following days. While at Omagh with Rosen’s detachment, James had decided not to proceed onwards to Londonderry; but on his return to Dublin a dispatch from the Duke of Berwick reached him which indicated that a personal appearance before the town might indeed bring it to surrender quickly. Anxious to force the campaign’s pace, James immediately turned back,

despite d'Avaux's arguments to the contrary. The exact course of events when he arrived again in Londonderry's environs on 18 April remain unclear due to the disagreement of the Jacobite sources as to whether James alone decided to proceed with a sizeable force to the heights overlooking the town, or whether Rosen was complicit in this advance.²¹ The important historical point is that the inhabitants of the town perceived that by this action the Jacobites had transgressed a commitment made by their vanguard that no troops would come within four miles of the town while terms were being considered. Lundy's approach was thus laid threadbare and the Jacobites were viewed as an untrustworthy rabble who could not be relied upon to guarantee peace. Consequently, the summons sent by James was rejected as shots were exchanged; meanwhile, Lundy was unofficially replaced as Governor by Major Baker and the clergyman, George Walker.²² The town had resolved to defend itself and the siege of Londonderry had effectively begun.

While James and Rosen returned to Dublin leaving Hamilton and Maumont in command, the Jacobites pulled back to establish headquarters at St Johnstown and then began fastening the access points to the town in preparation for the advance of their siege works. Notably, Culmore Fort at the mouth of the River Foyle was captured ensuring that the Jacobites were well placed to cut off the sea-based supply route which, in the absence of an interior relief army, was the town's main hope for succour. This allowed Hamilton - now in sole command as a result of Maumont's death during a skirmish for Pennyburn Mill at the rear of Culmore - to dispose his besieging force of 4000 men on either side of the town. The majority closed in from St Johnstown and Carrigan heights on the west, while two regiments with some mortars were posted on the other side of the river: one in Strong's Orchard directly opposite Londonderry and the second in a wooded area to the south. In these early stages, the town with some 7000 defenders overcame their immediate topographical disadvantages to mount several effective sallies. Indeed, the Jacobites were badly galled holding Pennyburn Mill, but more significantly they were denied the important post of Windmill Hill. The capture of this elevation just 500 yards from Bishop's Gate, which was the only one of the town's four gates to be additionally protected by a ravelin, would have

²¹ *A Life of James the Second*, pp. 332-3; *A Jacobite Narrative*, p. 62; *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux*, pp. 101-6, 109-13; d'Avaux au Roy, 27 avril, 6 mai 1689 [NS]; *AH* xxi, no. 190, pp. 91-2; Pusignan à Louvois, 5 mai 1689 [NS].

provided an ideal location on which to position batteries against the defenders' strong point and close in the siege.²³ Nonetheless, even if General Ramsay had been successful at Windmill, it is arguable whether Hamilton could have exploited the opportunity due to his lack of heavy siege ordnance. Indeed, such was his dearth of equipment, that it has been provocatively questioned whether the action at Londonderry should be labelled a 'siege'; the word 'blockade' has been, instead, suggested as more appropriate.²⁴ Rosen's correspondence, once back at Londonderry in June, leaves little doubt that the Jacobites considered their operation hindered by this general lack of war supplies. By default, blockade was effectively all the Jacobites could enforce, and their chief engineer at Londonderry, Massé, considered it a poor blockade to boot. Undoubtedly, though, the inhabitants of the town considered themselves besieged and this was significant in strengthening their resolve.²⁵ Notwithstanding, throughout May the realisation that only a relief operation sent up the River Foyle could prevent Londonderry being secured for James became common ground for Jacobites and inhabitants alike.

London's knowledge of the unfolding events at Londonderry was uneven. As the preparations for the dispatch of Cunningham and Richards were reaching completion, the King decided to send an additional two regiments – Major-General Kirke's²⁶ and Sir John Hanmer's - to aid the defence of the town. Although many of the transports for these regiments were ready from 10 April, the convoy had still to depart when news came through in late April of the impending return of Cunningham and Richards. Initially, this was thought to signify that Londonderry was lost and some supply ships which were just about to depart were ordered to stay. Shortly thereafter came the accurate report that the troops had been sent away while the town remained in loyal Protestant hands. Furious, William focused his

²² C. O'Kelly, *Macariae Excidium, or The Destruction of Cyprus*, ed. J.C. O'Callaghan (Dublin, 1850), p. 33; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 16-19; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland, 1685-1691*, pp. 99-100.

²³ *AH* xxi, no. 189, p. 90: Pusignan à Roze, 1 mai 1689 [NS]; *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux*, p. 117, 160: d'Avaux à Louvois, 6, 18 mai 1689 [NS]; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 9-10; 20-2; Berwick, *Memoirs*, i. 48-52; *A Jacobite Narrative*, pp. 63-4.

²⁴ Simms, 'The Siege of Derry', pp. 221-2, 232-3, discusses this point.

²⁵ *AH* xxi, nos. 244, 254, 263, pp. 168, 175-7, 182-3: Roze au Roy d'Angleterre, 6, 15 juin 1689; Roze à Melfort, 29 juin 1689; *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux en Irlande (1689-1690), Supplementary Volume*, ed. J. Hogan (Dublin, 1958), nos. [B] I, IV, pp. 34-5, 37-8: Roze à d'Avaux, 18, 28 juillet 1689 [NS]; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, *passim*; Story, *A Continuation of the Impartial History*, pp. 3-4; S. Mulloy, 'French Engineers with the Jacobite Army in Ireland, 1689-1691', *IS* xv (1982-1983), 223.

displeasure into ordering four regiments to be sent to the town and wrote to the garrison about his determination to provide for their relief.²⁷

Within a couple of days, this decision gained a sense of urgency and a specific operational context when the King's tactical and strategic position in Ireland suffered a reverse. On 1 May, off Ireland's south-west coast, Admiral Herbert had engaged the French squadron commanded by Châteaurenault.²⁸ Although the result of the ship battle was ambiguous, Châteaurenault had managed to escort the supply vessels with troops and provisions aboard safely into Bantry Bay for unloading. In the short term, the Williamite resistance in Ireland faced an augmented and better provisioned Jacobite force whose strategic presence, more importantly, seemed secured by an open sea-based supply route from France.²⁹

Given these circumstances, it was fortunate that the preparations previously completed for the aborted dispatch of Kirke's and Hanmer's regiments required only augmentation to make ready the new force for departure. As these two regiments were still at Liverpool, they were chosen to be sent, while the other half of the force could be swiftly supplied by the two returned regiments. Cunningham and Richards were not however to be afforded a second chance at Londonderry and they were relieved of their colonelcies, to be replaced by William Stuart and Sir George St George.³⁰ Colonel Trelawny was put in charge of the remaining organisation of this force, including hiring the transports and procuring the

²⁶ There are many variations in the spelling of both Percy Kirke's forename and surname. I have adopted the versions in the *DNB* (London, 1909), xi. 214.

²⁷ *CPSD, 1689-1690*, pp. 77, 80: Nottingham to Herbert, 25 Apr. 1689; Nottingham to the Officer, or Commander-in-Chief, and Magistrates of Londonderry, 28 Apr. 1689; PRO, ADM 3/1, pp. 13, 16, 22-3, 30: Board Minutes, 21, 26 Mar., 6, 16 Apr. 1689; HMC, *Twelfth Report, House of Lords MSS, 1689-1690*, pp. 172, 174-6: At the Committee [for the Affairs of Ireland], 18 Mar., 5, 6, 8 Apr. 1689; 'Instructions to Peirce Kirke, Esq', 3 Mar. 1689; 'Instructions to Sir John Hanmer', 3 Mar. 1689; HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 201, 203-5: Nottingham to Herbert, 19, 25, 30 Apr. 1689.

²⁸ There are various spellings of Châteaurenault. I have adopted the one given in the *Dictionnaire de Biographie Française* (Paris, 1959), viii. 778.

²⁹ *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, ed. J.K. Laughton (London, 1889), pp. 37-8; S. Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ed. G. Callender (London, 1918), i. 21-2; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, ed. C.R. Markham (London, 1895), pp. 7-8; J. Burchett, *A Complete History of the Most Remarkable Transactions at Sea* (London, 1720), pp. 416-17; C. de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française vi. Le Crépuscule du Grand Règne L'Apogée de La Guerre de Course* (Paris, 1932), pp. 47-52; P. Le Fevre, 'The Battle of Bantry Bay, 1 May 1689', *IS* xviii (1990-1992), 1-12; Mulloy, 'The French Navy and the Jacobite War in Ireland, 1689-1691', pp. 24-5.

³⁰ PRO, WO 4/1, p. 133: Schomberg to Trelawny, 1 May 1689; PRO, WO 5/5, p. 150: Order to Major-General Kirke and Colonel Trelawny, 2 May 1689; SP 44/166, p. 37: Commissions for Sir George St George to be Colonel of Colonel Richards Regiment of Foot and for Colonel William Stuart to be Colonel of Colonel Cunningham's Regiment of Foot, 1 May 1689.

provisions. This arrangement may have been a consequence of the increasingly fractious relationship which had emerged between the General Officer-in-Command, Percy Kirke, and the Navy Board's local officers when he had been previously overseeing the intended departure of his and Hanmer's regiments. Or, more likely, it reflected the fact no naval captain was to hold a senior or joint command in the crossing to Londonderry. In that respect there was little difference between Kirke's Instructions and those which governed the early supply of troops. However, on this occasion it was positively prescribed that Kirke was to ensure the entry of his troops into the town if it remained in Protestant possession.³¹ If faced with a loyal town but with its access barred, Kirke was to fight his way in. There had been no such implication arising from Cunningham's and Richards's Instructions and this, in part, provided the combined operational context as distinct from a straightforward transportation procedure. The other contributory factor was the significant naval input when Kirke's convoy joined Captain Rooke's Irish station squadron. Since the engagement at Bantry Bay, Rooke had been plying the northern reaches of the Irish sea with orders to give countenance to any action to reduce Ireland. His subsequent disposal of his small squadron in support of Kirke completed the amphibious operational context for the relief of Londonderry.³²

Kirke's squadron of three men-of-war and some 24 auxiliary vessels eventually left Hoylake on 30 May, though with only three out of the four regiments aboard. St George's men had been billeted separately at Chester and were to have embarked from there, but it would seem that some confusion occurred over the number of transport vessels required. During the crossing, the wind proved variable and, at one stage, Kirke was forced into Ramsey Bay on the Isle of Man. This caused a four day delay but he managed to complete the rendezvous with Rooke's squadron at Red Bay off the Antrim coast on 8 June. The combined force then sailed on a north-westerly course but again encountered veering winds which caused a further four day delay near Rathlin Island, some six leagues from Lough Foyle. Kirke, nonetheless, used this time to garner intelligence on the access to Londonderry

³¹ SP 44/166, pp. 32-7: 'Instructions for Our Trusty & Welbeloved Piercy Kirk Esq.', 29 Apr. 1689; 'Instruction for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Charles Trelawny Esq.', 29 Apr. 1689; Warrant to Commander of Ship -----, 29 Apr. 1689; Warrant to Ships hired by Colonel Trelawny, 29 Apr. 1689; PRO, WO 4/1, pp. 128-9: Blathwayt to Kirke, 5, 6 Apr. 1689; PRO, ADM 1/3558, f. 115: the Navy Board to the Admiralty, 15 Apr. 1689, and enclosure, f. 115: Anderton to the Navy Board, 12 Apr. 1689.

³² HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 209, 212, 219-20: Rooke to Nottingham, 11 May, 1, 20 June 1689; Anon, *The Life and Glorious Actions of the Right Honourable Sir George Rooke*, K^t (London, 1713), pp. 3-10.

by dispatching a yacht up the Lough. It brought back the dispiriting news that the French had made attempts to blockade the river, though there was no confirmation about the nature of the obstacle.³³

Spurred on by news of the relief expedition, the French had blocked the access up the River Foyle by placing a boom across a narrow part of the river just above Brookhall. The naval officer, Pointis, had taken responsibility for this task and rather incautiously boasted of its strength, though he also indicated that additional security would be provided by the construction of a second boom up-river. It has been shown that the first boom sank and that only the second - constructed from fir wood instead of the heavier oak - remained in place. Even if Pointis's description is unreliable, the second boom, with heavy gun redoubts at each end, was a formidable obstacle, particularly as the natural shelter of the Lough would hinder a vessel building up any momentum with which to strike it.³⁴ This was how it seemed to Kirke's Council of War, which met in the period after his ships and the three smallest vessels from Rooke's squadron had come to anchor just over a mile below Culmore Fort on 16 June. The Council concluded that the river was impassable and resolved to await reinforcements before attempting a descent elsewhere on the coast.³⁵ This decision was condemned by contemporaries and subsequently by historians as a prelude for weeks of inactivity³⁶ but, within the context of Kirke's command of a combined operation, the charge is unjustified.

Shortly after the Council's decision to await reinforcements, Kirke began to consider alternatives to the passage up the river which, although they might not immediately relieve Londonderry, could put pressure upon the Jacobites. There was also the pressing need to exercise his soldiers who had been aboard ship for nearly a month and now faced an indefinite period of inaction. The *Bonadventure*, the *Greyhound* and the *Kingfisher* ketch were sent to

³³ Anon, *A Particular Journal of Major Gen. Kirk's Voyage from Leverpoole, to his Safe Arrival at London-Derry* (London, 1689); HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 212: Rooke to Nottingham, 1 June 1689; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 25-6; *The Life and Glorious Actions of the Right Honourable Sir George Rooke, K'*, pp. 3-5; *CSPD, 1689-1690*, pp. 219-20: Schomberg to the King, 11 Aug. 1689; K. Ferguson, 'The Organisation of King William's Army in Ireland, 1689-1692', *IS* xviii (1990-1992), 64 n. 9.

³⁴ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 231, 233: Nottingham to Schomberg, 27 July 1689; Nottingham to the King, 2 Aug. 1689; *CSPD, 1689-1690*, pp. 147-5: Pointis to [the King of France?], 13 June 1689; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 26-7.

³⁵ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 219-20: Rooke to Nottingham, 20 June 1689; Martin-Leake, *A Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 26; Anon, *The Life and Glorious Actions of the Right Honourable Sir George Rooke, K'*, pp. 4-5; Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp. 226-8, includes the minute of the Council of War held on 19 June.

³⁶ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 233: Nottingham to the King, 2 Aug. 1689; Simms, 'The Siege of Derry', pp. 230-1; Murtagh, 'The War in Ireland, 1689-1691', p. 69 Milligan, *History of the Siege of Londonderry 1689*, pp. 229-34.

reconnoitre Inch Island in Lough Swilly. Located north-westwards from Londonderry, Inch Island could provide a bridgehead through county Donegal and allow Kirke to establish a line of communication with the other remaining centre of Protestant resistance at Enniskillen and, more importantly, to threaten the Jacobite rear. On 28 June the *Bonadventure* reported back and four days later - at a post-dinner Council of War held aboard the *Swallow* - it was resolved that Rooke and Colonel Stuart would lead an operation to capture Inch Island. By 10 July, Stuart's detachment of some 600 troops had landed at two different points on the island and within six days a bridgehead to the mainland had been secured with gun redoubts on either side of the passage, supported by the *Greyhound* and the *Kingfisher* ketch. This success allowed Kirke to bring a majority of the remaining troops up out of Lough Foyle and to land them on Inch Island. Although the absence of any opposition, and the fact that it did not subsequently give rise to further action, may subsequently have provided grounds for dismissing this operation, this was certainly not Rosen's attitude at the time. The French General clearly saw the danger for the Jacobites of being caught in a pincer between Kirke from the north and the Enniskilleners from the south.³⁷

Rosen's fears were grounded in the lack of progress with the siege. On his return to Londonderry, he had tried to force the pace onwards and extra equipment was brought up to facilitate a heavier bombardment of the town. However, a second attempt to take Windmill Hill in the first week of June had been bloodily rebuffed as was the assault led by the Earl of Clancarty on 28 June against the bastion at Butcher's Gate. Even Rosen's primitive attempt at psychological warfare by driving a number of captured Protestants under the walls failed, when the garrison replied in an equally savage manner by manufacturing a gallows on the walls accompanied by the threat to kill the prisoners held inside. At these macabre events, Hamilton, with whom Rosen had an uneasy relationship, ordered those under the walls to be released. Jacobite prospects brightened slightly in July with the tentative beginnings of negotiations with the garrison but the inhabitants, although in severely straitened circumstances, had been cheered by the arrival of Kirke (even if in Lough Swilly) and

³⁷ Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, p. 28: Major General Kirk's Letter to Mr. Walker; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 26; Anon, *The Life and Glorious Actions of Sir George Rooke, K'*, pp. 5-6; *AH* xxi, no. 239, pp. 159-61: Fumeron à [Louvois], 1 août 1689 [NS]; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1691*, p. 110; Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp. 233-5.

therefore procrastinated.³⁸ In effect, by mid-July, the Jacobites hoped that the town would capitulate due to starvation before Kirke could make an attempt up-river with the relief.

It would seem that the decisive factor was a letter Kirke received from Londonderry's governors Walker and John Michelburne who had replaced Major Baker following his death from disease in June. This correspondence reinforced previous pleas emphasising the town's dire need which were emotionally focused upon alarming images of dog and cat forming the inhabitants' staple diet. More importantly it claimed (falsely) that the Jacobites had removed their ordnance from Culmore Fort and that the boom was broken. Encouraged by this news Kirke returned to Lough Foyle with three heavily laden merchantmen determined to relieve the town. Preparatory to this Kirke asked Rooke to provide naval support for the riverine operation. Then patrolling in the Irish sea, Rooke received Kirke's letter on 22 July and immediately sailed for Londonderry in the *Deptford* along with Captain Leake's *Dartmouth*.³⁹ An alternative interpretation of these circumstances highlights London's increasing impatience with Kirke which led the King to positively order that an attempt be made to break the boom. Undoubtedly, William did believe Kirke's assessment of the boom's strength to be a guess and he considered it reasonable that his General make at least one attempt up-river; but by agreeing in principle to despatch reinforcements if the boom remained intact, he demonstrated some sympathy with Kirke's alternative amphibious strategy. More significantly, E.B. Powley has shown that the order from London did not reach Kirke until after he had decided to return to Lough Foyle.⁴⁰

In earlier correspondence about the difficulties he foresaw in getting through to Londonderry, Kirke had stressed the fact that the strategically placed Culmore Fort was held

³⁸ HMC, *Eighth Report, Talbot de Malahide MSS*, p. 494-5: Melfort to Hamilton, 7 June, 4 July 1689; King, *The State of the Protestants*, pp. 196-8; *A Jacobite Narrative*, pp. 79-80; *A Life of James the Second*, pp. 365-6; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 25-6, 29-34; Milligan, *History of the Siege of Londonderry 1689*, pp. 203-11.

³⁹ Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp. 238-40 includes a copy of the letter of 19 July to Kirke from Michelburne and Walker; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry*, pp. 88-92: Walker to 'Sir' [Kirke?], 26 June 1689; Morney, Lirnes, and Gbrastanes to 'Sir' [Kirke?], 26 June 1689; Walker, Baker, Michelburne, Fortescue, Morrison, Strong, and Davys to 'Sir' [Kirke?], n.d.; HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 233-4: Rooke to Nottingham, 2 Aug. 1689; Anon, *The Life and Glorious Actions of the Right Honourable Sir George Rooke, K^t*, pp. 6-7.

⁴⁰ Macaulay, *The History of England*, iii. 1519, 1519 n. 2; Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1691*, p. 111 claims that Kirke's return to Lough Foyle was a product of both Walker's letter and the King's order; Dwyer, *The Siege of Londonderry in 1689*, pp. 208-9: Schomberg to Kirke, 3 July 1689; *CSPD, 1689-1690*, p. 199: Schomberg to the King, 26 July 1689; Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp. 250-2.

by the Jacobites.⁴¹ Although Kirke had been told that the guns had been withdrawn, he could not be certain and, therefore, in this attempt up the Foyle, the *Dartmouth* was to draw the fire from the fort and the other gun batteries possibly mounted nearby, while the two merchantmen – the *Mountjoy* and the *Phœnix* – along with the *Swallow*'s long-boat, would proceed up-river in an attempt to break the boom. On 28 July, Captain Leake ably executed this task and the other vessels – taking advantage of a northerly wind – safely passed by. However, just as they approached the boom – which they found still intact – the wind dropped and only the *Mountjoy* hit the obstacle with any force. Nonetheless, her momentum was not sufficient to take her clean through and she rebounded on to the nearby bank, effectively leaving her a sitting target for the Jacobites swarming nearby. With the *Mountjoy*'s Master dead, the crew combined the recoil from the discharge of the vessel's guns with a rising tide to refloat. Meanwhile, the sailors in *Swallow*'s long-boat had set about the boom with their axes and cutlasses, considerably weakening the structure. When the *Phœnix* made a run against the boom, she was able to break clean through and was then shortly followed by the other victualling ships; provisions and troops could now be landed at the town's Shipquay Gate.⁴²

A timely English combined operation had relieved Londonderry and opened the sea-based supply route. Despite a desultory attempt to continue their fire from the trenches, within a couple of days the French raised the siege and retreated towards Dublin.⁴³ It is difficult to add to Simms's judgement that this operation had been 'an astonishing feat' in dead calm conditions and under such close range fire, though at the time the defenders' resolve was equally commended.⁴⁴ Approximately a month after the relief of Londonderry, the London book-seller, Richard Lapthorne, wrote to his Devon correspondent, Richard

⁴¹ HMC, *Frankland-Russell-Astley MSS*, pp. 72-3: T[homas] F[rankland] to his father Sir William [Frankland], 22 June 1689.

⁴² HMC, *Eleventh Report, Appendix Part vi, Hamilton MSS*, nos. 184, 185, pp. 185-6: From Major Gen. Kirke announcing the partial relief of Derry, 29 July 1689; Copy of a letter from Capt. Rooke, 2 Aug. 1689; Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp. 247-50 includes a full transcript of the original manuscript version of no. 184 above; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 27-9; T. Witherow, *Derry and Enniskillen in the Year 1689: The Story of Some Famous Battle-Fields in Ulster* (3 edn, Belfast, 1885), pp. 200-8; Walker, *A True Account of the Siege of London-Derry 1689*, pp. 37-9.

⁴³ *Négociations de M. Le Comte D'Avaux*, pp. 373-5: d'Avaux à Louvois, 10 août 1689 [NS]; *AH* xxi, no. 242, pp. 164-6: Fumeron à [Louvois], 13 août 1689 [NS].

⁴⁴ Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685-1691*, p. 111; BL, Egerton 3380, p.1: Shrewsbury to Walker and Michelburne, 16 Aug. 1689.

Coffin, that Ireland had received a 'death wound in order to its reduction'.⁴⁵ In many respects, this was quite correct. In conjunction with the notable successes over the Jacobites around Enniskillen, and in particular the defeat of Mountcashel at Newton-Butler, the north had been secured for William. He could now land his army of 20 000 men to effect the conquest of the whole isle; while the prospect that the Irish and the Scots might combine their resistance at this moment seemed unlikely, especially since the death at Killiecrankie of the Scottish Jacobite, Viscount Dundee. Nonetheless, the wound would fester for a further two years before proving fatal, and during that time a second combined operation undertaken against south Ireland was, militarily, to prove as significant as the one recently completed in the north at Londonderry.

I.iii: The Capture of Cork and Kinsale, September-October 1690.

The progress of the war in Ireland since securing the north of the country in the summer of 1689 had not been an unqualified success for William. He had appointed Marshall Schomberg, to command his army in the country but, after landing with the troops at Belfast in June 1689, Schomberg only advanced as far as Dundalk. There he encamped for the winter but the site was so ill-chosen that great numbers of the troops died of sickness.⁴⁶ Frustrated, William crossed to Ireland for the following years campaign and at the beginning of July 1690, defeated James at the battle of the Boyne.⁴⁷ Undoubtedly this battle caused James to flee his former kingdoms again and allowed William to capture Dublin; however, the Jacobites were not yet a spent force and they still held towns and territory in the west and south of the country. After the Boyne, a Jacobite rendezvous had been effected at Limerick where the leadership resolved to defend the line of the River Shannon. William did flirt with possible peace initiatives, but it quickly became clear that their political cost in England would be too great; and military necessity then drove him forward to besiege Limerick. It was in front of this town's walls that William's 1690 campaign in Ireland ground to a halt. The progress of the siege through August was slow, hampered not only by poor weather but also by the ambush of his siege train at Ballyneety by the mercurial Irish Cavalry officer, Patrick

⁴⁵ *The Portledge Papers*, p. 61: Lapthorne to Coffin, 24 Aug. 1689.

⁴⁶ Sir John Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland* (2 edn, London, 1773), ii. 29-31, 40-3, 45-8, 51-7; Schomberg to King William, 20 Sept., 6, 8, 12 Oct., 4 Nov., 26, 27 Dec. 1689; J. Childs, 'A Patriot for Whom? "For God and For Honour": Marshall Schomberg', *HT* xxxviii (July 1988), 46-52; J.G. Simms, 'Schomberg at Dundalk, 1689', *IS* x (1971-1972), 14-25.

Sarsfield. Although an assault was launched in late August, over 2000 troops were lost without the walls being breached and it was then clear that the siege would have to be raised.⁴⁸

Contributing to William's difficulties in Ireland throughout the summer was England's unsettled state since Tourville's naval victory over Torrington at the battle of Beachy Head. From the end of June, the French unquestionably had command of the channel and there were grave fears in England that Louis would exploit this circumstance to mount an invasion. Queen Mary and the Council left in executive control of the country by William during his absence urgently requested that he return home and bring with him regiments to bolster England's defences. The King agreed to transfer up to a total of ten regiments from Ireland and Flanders but he did not himself return immediately; and, when in late July he did make to leave Ireland, his desire to direct the siege of Limerick caused him to change his mind at the last moment. In the event, aside from a brief landing at Teignmouth during which the town was burnt, the French missed the opportunity to exploit their sea command but there still remained much unease in London.⁴⁹ It was therefore unsurprising that when the commander of the troops in England, the Earl of Marlborough, proposed an expedition to capture the southern Irish ports of Cork and Kinsale, he met a frosty reaction.

Marlborough's concern with Ireland had been motivated by his perception that William's efforts were spluttering to a standstill in front of Limerick and his appreciation of the strategic benefit that might accrue from capturing the principal ports of entry for French supply. By requesting some 5000 troops which he would lead in an assault against these ports with the navy providing support, Marlborough recognised amphibious warfare's potential to reinvigorate stalemated military circumstances - a quality of his generalship which was to be more fully developed when he commanded the Grand Alliance's armies during the War of the Spanish Succession. Support was only forthcoming, however, from Secretary Nottingham and Admiral Russell, and the Executive Council resolved to reject his proposal

⁴⁷ HMC, *Leybourne-Popham MSS*, pp. 274-6: 'Autobiography of Dr George Clarke'.

⁴⁸ de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 67-79; Childs, 'The Williamite War, 1689-1691', pp. 201-5; Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland 1603-1923*, pp. 145-7; Ferguson, 'The Organisation of King William's Army', pp. 71-2; J.G. Simms, 'Williamite Peace Tactics. 1690-1691', *IHS* viii (1953), 303-23; J.G. Simms, 'The Siege of Limerick 1690', in E. Rynne (ed.) *North Munster Studies: Essays in Commemoration of Monsignor Michael Moloney* (Limerick, 1967), pp. 308-14.

⁴⁹ Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland*, ii. 125-31, 144-50: the Queen to the King, 2, 3, 6, 22, 24 July 1690; W.S. Churchill, *Marlborough: His Life and Times* (Sphere edn, London, 1967), i. 274-6; Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History 1660-1783*, pp. 181-7.

on the grounds of the lateness of the year and the reduction it would cause in England's home defence. The Queen, though with no great personal liking for Marlborough, did acknowledge that the Council had not been unanimous and sent the plan to William for his decision. Despite opposition from his fellow Dutch generals, the King promptly wrote home his approval.⁵⁰

William's crucial support of Marlborough's project should not have surprised the Council. For the King, the capture of the two Munster ports held the potential to redress the tactical failures of the 1690 campaign as it got bogged down besieging Limerick. William, like Marlborough, recognised the strategic benefits that could also be gained from closing the Jacobites' principal supply route from France and winning for the Williamite cause two well developed ports on the southern Irish coast.⁵¹ William had previously championed a similar operation to capture Kinsale in late 1689. Then, intelligence returns indicating that Kinsale was poorly defended by only one regiment accelerated preparations that were already in hand for an attack upon the port. Rear-Admiral Lord Berkeley and Colonel Trelawny were to have commanded a force of about half the size that Marlborough would subsequently lead. Only the onset of stormy weather at the end of November when the squadron was ready to sail caused the operation to be abandoned.⁵² Marlborough's proposals in August 1690 were therefore (perhaps deliberately) pushing at an open door in terms of King William's commitment to both the objectives of the operation and its character.

Within ten days of William sending his approval, Marlborough received warrants to embark aboard the main fleet at Portsmouth eight regiments of foot and 2000 marine soldiers. This reflected the fact that his Instructions effectively put him in charge of both the land and sea elements of the force. Command of the fleet was then under a triple commission of Killigrew, Ashby and Haddock; these Admirals were not ordered to obey Marlborough

⁵⁰ Churchill, *Marlborough*, i. 277-8; G.S. Cox, 'Marlborough in Ireland-Last Sieges of Cork and Kinsale', *AC* viii (1948), 287-8.

⁵¹ *CSPD, 1689-1690*, p. 300: Harbord to the King, 23 Oct. 1689; Ferguson, 'The Organisation of King William's Army', p. 72.

⁵² HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 237, 238, 243, 249, 253, 259, 260-1, 499: Instructions to Capt. Henry Priestman from the King, 2 Sept. 1689; Nottingham to Torrington, 3, 26 Sept, 3 Nov. 1689; Preistman to Nottingham, 7 Sept. 1689; Nottingham to Shrewsbury, 5 Oct. 1689, Berkeley to Nottingham, 10, 15 Nov. 1689; *CSPD, 1689-1690*, p. 346: Schomberg to the King, 6 Dec. 1689; PRO, WO 5/5, pp. 243, 249, 251: Order to Charles, Duke of Bolton, 6 Nov. 1689; Order to Col. Charles Trelawny, 26 Nov., 2 Dec. 1689; Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland*, ii. 58-60: part of a letter from the Duke of Schomberg to King William, 30 Dec. 1689; Powley, *The Naval Side of King William's War*, pp. 291, 302-4; ; Ferguson, 'The Organisation of King William's Army', p. 72.

directly, but they were to assist him in attacking Cork and Kinsale. The main Instructions were addressed to Marlborough and the responsibility for directing the attack rested with him. The simplicity of the Instructions had probably facilitated their swift formulation which was also the case with the preparation for departure. The Admiralty lost no time in assembling the fleet at Spithead, while also attending to the procurement of provisions and the additional requirements of having soldiers aboard ship such as bedding. Although Danby, as part of his constant critique on the operation, complained that the troops had not been embarked by 29 September, on the following day the task was completed. Thereafter the only thing preventing the departure were the contrary winds that kept the fleet at anchor off Portsmouth for three weeks. Finally on 17 September the expeditionary force weighed.⁵³

Demonstrating the concern for his men which in later years would cause him to be affectionately nicknamed 'Corporal John'⁵⁴, Marlborough wrote to Nottingham of his hopes that the voyage would be short as many of his troops were suffering sickness from having been embarked at anchor for three weeks.⁵⁵ Fortunately, it only took four days for the fleet to arrive on 21 September off Crosshaven near the inlet to Cork Harbour. Both Crosshaven and the Passage West had been mooted as potential landing sites, but the latter's location opposite Great Island in Cork Harbour meant a shorter march of only some seven miles in order for the troops to come up to the town of Cork and this factor probably caused it to be favoured by Marlborough. However, the numerous passageways of the Lee as it discharged into the estuary made entry into Cork Harbour an intricate task, and the fleet's arrival not only coincided with the end of a flood tide, but also the dropping of the wind. In these conditions, the pilots refused to guide the vessels into the harbour and the expeditionary force had to ride at anchor for the rest of the day.⁵⁶

⁵³ PRO, SP 44/166, pp. 149-50: Warrant to John, Earl of Marlborough, 25 Aug. 1690; HMC *Finch MSS*, ii. 430, 433, 457: the Queen to the Admirals, 26 Aug. 1690; Marlborough to Nottingham, 27, 28 Aug. 1690; Instruction to John, Earl of Marlborough, Lieut.-Gen., 14 Sept. 1690; Warrant to Our Commissioners for Executing the Office of Our High Admiral of England, 25 Aug. 1690; PRO, ADM 3/4, unpaginated: Board Minutes, 6, 22, 26 Aug., 6 Sept. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/6, pp. 269: the Admiralty to the Admirals, 22 Aug. 1690; PRO, ADM 2/170, p. 365: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 27 Aug. 1690; Browning, *Thomas Osborne*, ii. 188-9: Carmarthen to [the King], 29 Aug. 1690.

⁵⁴ D. Chandler, *Marlborough as Military Commander* (3 edn, Kent, 1989), p. xiii.

⁵⁵ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 460: Marlborough to Nottingham, 17 Sept. 1690.

⁵⁶ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 465-6: the Admirals to Nottingham, 26 Sept. 1690; PRO, ADM 51/4213, Part i, unpaginated, *Hampton Court*, 20-3 Sept. 1690; PRO, ADM 51/4201, Part i, unpaginated, *Grafton*, 20-3 Sept. 1690; BL, Add MSS 29878, p. 28 [This pagination runs in descending numerical order for the Diary entries were made on the reverse of the accounting entries once the notebook had been turned upside-down.]: W. Cramond's Diary, 21-3 Sept. 1690; *A Jacobite Narrative*, p. 119; G.J. Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*

The weather and tidal conditions on 22 September proved suitable and the fleet began to make its way into Cork harbour. The lead ship, the *Kent*, almost immediately encountered opposition on its larboard side from a shore battery in Prince Rupert's Tower.⁵⁷ Reports of its strength vary from between six to twenty guns. The fleet managed to silence it swiftly by several vessels firing a broadside as they sailed by in line-ahead; meanwhile, a small boat party was landed to drive the gunners off, though on reaching the emplacement they found it deserted and guns had only to be spiked for the battery to be rendered permanently out of commission. By early afternoon the ships had come safely to anchor at Passage West and the landing of the soldiers by the ships' boats began in the early hours of the following day and was complete by late afternoon. Four days later, once all the stores had been landed, the main fleet - as ordered - returned home, leaving a small squadron commanded by the Duke of Grafton to work with the expeditionary force.⁵⁸

The reinforcements which the King had promised Marlborough from his army in Ireland took a circuitous route to Cork. On William's departure for England, a Council of War at the Tipperary camp was called by Count Solms - temporarily in command - to consider how best to implement the King's order which, in addition to the emphasis upon supporting Marlborough's expedition, also included directions that the Irish territory currently held by the Williamite forces should be secured for the winter. Without positive confirmation of Marlborough's arrival before Cork, the Council considered that it had insufficient troops to send immediately a sizeable detachment to the Earl. In the first instance, therefore, Major-General Tettau commanding two Danish battalions was sent in the direction of Youghal but with orders to halt along the line of the River Blackwater, thus providing cover for county Waterford where the Danish winter quarters were to be based. Meanwhile, Major-General Gravemoer was to lead sixteen cavalry squadrons drawn from the Danish, Dutch and Huguenot forces along with five Dragoon troops, eastwards along the Blackwater

Duke of Marlborough to the Accession of Queen Anne (London, 1894), ii. 164-5. Exceptionally, Anon, *A Full and True Relation of the Taking of Cork, by the Right Honorable the Earl of Marlborough* (London, 1690) states that fleet entered Cork Harbour a day earlier.

⁵⁷ Prince Rupert's Fort has since been renamed Corkbeg.

⁵⁸ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 465-6: the Admirals to Nottingham, 26 Sept. 1690; PRO, ADM 51/4213, Part i, unpaginated, *Hampton Court*, 22-3 Sept. 1690; PRO, ADM 51/4201, Part i, unpaginated, *Grafton*, 22-3 Sept. 1690; BL, Add MSS 29878: W. Cramond's Diary, 22-3 Sept. 1690; PRO, ADM 3/4, unpaginated: Board Minutes, 18 Sept. 1690; Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*, ii. 187.

to Mallow, just twenty miles north-west of Cork.⁵⁹ Neither detachment contained a prominent English soldier and Marlborough's request as he approached the southern Irish coast that the English major-generals, Kirke and Lanier, command the reinforcements was brushed aside by Ginkel who had now succeeded Solms as commander. Ginkel's view was that detachments of Gravemoer and Tettau previously posted on the Blackwater were to proceed to Cork, while more than 3000 horse and foot under the Danish commander, the Duke of Wurtemberg, would march from Cahir to Marlborough's assistance.⁶⁰

Cork's garrison of over 4000 men commanded by Colonel MacElligott was thus threatened by a pincer as Williamite forces moved in to besiege the town from its heights to the north and south. MacElligott also had no obvious sources of relief. Jacobite forces had recently suffered reverses north and south of Limerick in attacking Birr Castle, county Offaly, and in attempting to occupy Kilmallock; while it was also reported that a move into county Cork had been repulsed by Gravemoer's cavalry near Mallow. Berwick did however begin to advance with a considerable force from Limerick towards Cork but the Marshall only got as far as Kilmallock before he generously estimated the enemy force in the region to be too great for his 8000 men, and this probably gave rise to Jacobite scepticism about the feasibility of holding Cork that was subsequently attributed to Berwick.⁶¹ Certainly, the task became even more unlikely when MacElligott's out-guards failed to offer any credible resistance to the approaching forces.

On landing at Passage West, Marlborough had sent a vanguard under Colonel Hales towards Cat Fort, on a hill rising 90 feet above the town and at a distance of 400 yards from the walls. This building was a small outwork to the larger Fort Elizabeth which, at under a hundred yards from the city walls, provided the principal defence. The Jacobites dispatched a couple of Dragoon troops to oppose Hales, and Cramond fondly recalls having much fun 'popping from the hedges'.⁶² The Dragoons quickly beat a retreat when Hales brought a

⁵⁹ *CSPD, 1690-1691*, pp. 111-12, 118-19: 'Mémoire pour mon cousin le Comte de Solmes', 2 Sept. 1690; Resolution taken by Count de Solms...as to what had best be done for the King's service, according to his instructions and orders, 12 Sept. 1690; *The Danish Force in Ireland 1690-1691*, eds K. Danaher & J.G. Simms (Dublin, 1962), nos. 58, 59, 60, 61, pp. 76-8: Wurtemberg to Harboe, 9, 13 Sept. 1690; Wurtemberg to Christian V, 12 Sept. 1690; Munchgaar to Harboe, 18 Sept. 1690.

⁶⁰ *The Danish Force in Ireland 1690-1691*, no. 62, pp. 78-90: Wurtemberg to Christian V, 23 Sept. 1690; *Journal of the Very Rev. Rowland Davies, LL.D. Dean of Ross*, ed. R. Caulfield (London, 1856), p. 148.

⁶¹ *Journal of the Very Rev. Rowland Davies*, pp. 148-9; Berwick, *Memoirs*, ii. 78; *The Life of James the Second*, p. 419.

⁶² BL, Add MSS 29878, p. 28: W. Cramond's Diary, 24 Sept. 1690; J.G. Simms, 'Marlborough's Siege of Cork, 1690', *JS* ix (1969-1970), 118.

couple of field-pieces to bear upon them, however. Once the rest of Marlborough's force had come up, the Jacobites abandoned Cat Fort overnight. Meanwhile, in Cork's northern suburbs, Tettau and Gravemoer had similar success intimidating the enemy from their outposts around Shandon Castle. Fortunately the castle was spared the fires lit by the Jacobites as they fled and it remained intact as a ready-made battery site. The final event on 24 September which bolstered the Williamite approach to Cork was Marlborough's request that Gravemoer send him a party of horse. He had been conscious that his expeditionary force lacked a mobile screen and, in particular, security on the south-westerly flank; once Gravemoer's horse had crossed the Lee some three miles westwards at the church of Carry Kippane, Marlborough could then devote full attention to disposing his siege works.⁶³

Shandon Castle and Cat Fort to the north and south of the city respectively were the obvious sites for the siege batteries and Marlborough quickly approved their construction. He recognised though that the bombardment from Cat Fort would be masked by the stoutly constructed Elizabeth Fort and thus a third battery was established at Red Abbey, situated to the south-east of the city, which would direct its fire wholly against the eastern section of the walls. The undulating nature of the ground meant that the labour-intensive task of digging trenches for cover was not necessary, leaving time for other batteries to be erected at Mitre Inn and at the Friar's Garden near Gallow Green, both within 600 yards of Elizabeth Fort. This decisiveness in siege operations was the product of the command discretion afforded Marlborough by his Instructions, with his authority galvanising the soldiers and sailors to work effectively together in bringing up the materials from Passage West and in constructing the batteries.⁶⁴ The efficiency of combined operational endeavour fostered by the command structure was, however, threatened on 26 September when Wurtemberg arrived with his troops and claimed precedence in command due to his royal lineage. Naturally Marlborough was reluctant to accede to the German's demands - particularly as his reputation was that of an indifferent soldier - and a row threatened. But to prevent the siege's progress being undermined a compromise was reached whereby command would pass between the two generals on alternate days. Marlborough's forbearance and flattery of Wurtemberg in choosing his name as the password for the Duke's non-command days has been greatly

⁶³ BL, Add MSS 29878, p. 28: W. Cramond's Diary, 24 Sept. 1690; *Journal of the Very Rev. Rowland Davies*, pp. 148-51; Simms, 'Marlborough's Siege of Cork, 1690', p. 118.

commended.⁶⁵ The somewhat juvenile form of the compromise perhaps undermines its credibility as a serious solution but Wurtemberg's recognition of his limitations by repeatedly deferring to Marlborough meant that the potential threat to the command structure for the combined operation never materialised.

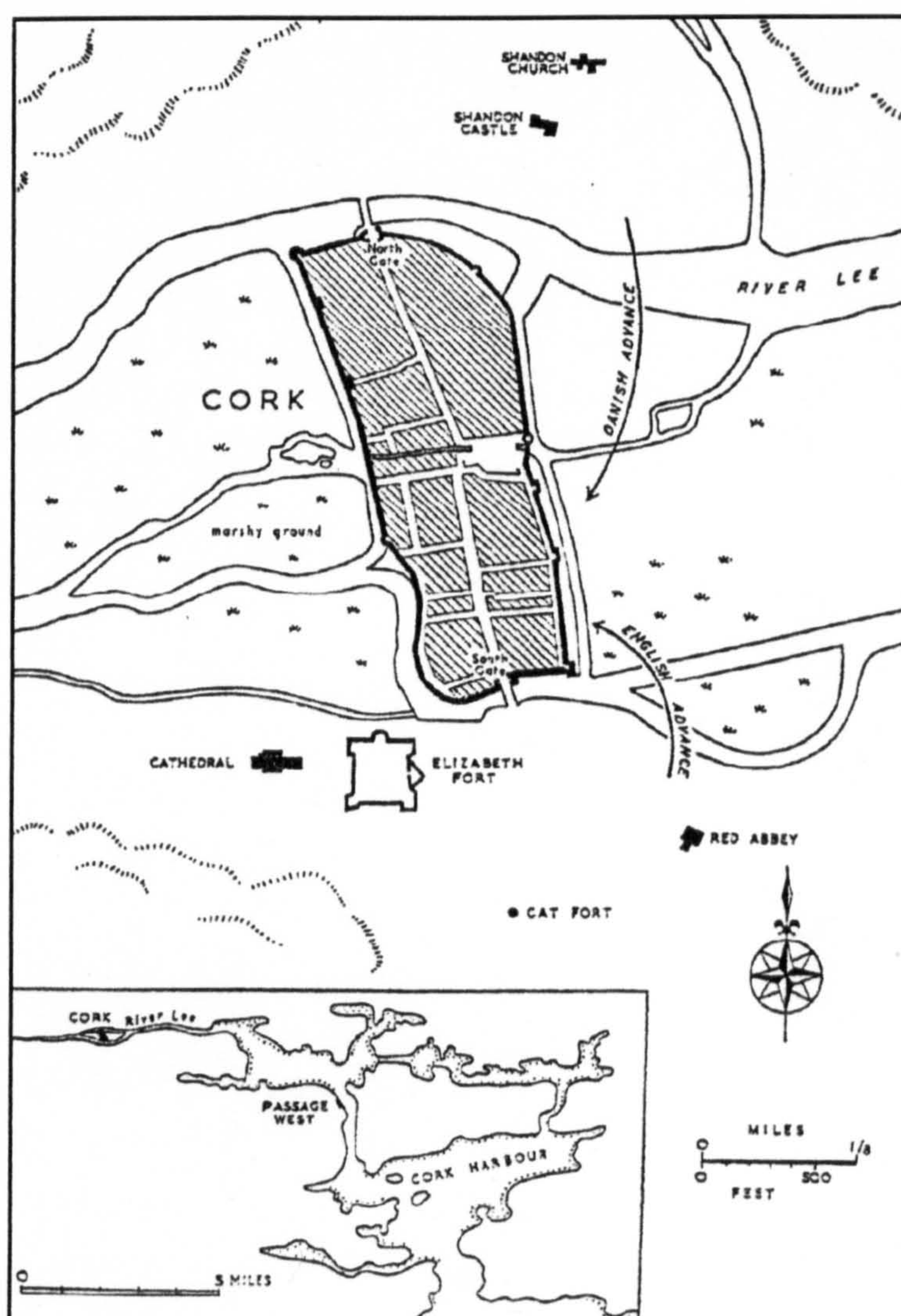


Fig 2: The Capture of Cork.

⁶⁴ BL, Add MSS 29878, p. 27: W. Cramond's Diary, 25 Sept. 1690; Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*, ii. 180-1.

⁶⁵ Churchill, *Marlborough*, i. 280; Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*, ii. 184-6; Chandler, *Marlborough as Military Commander*, pp. 39-40.

The final manoeuvre which captured Cork reinforced the combined army and navy foundation of the operation.⁶⁶ By 27 September, with another battery of heavy ordnance constructed on the river bank by the Red Cow Inn and firing directly on the eastern wall, it seemed that the siege guns had caused sufficient damage to force MacElligott to negotiate. On requesting that envoys be sent to discuss terms, he allowed Bishop Wetenhall to shepherd out over a thousand Protestants. This gesture of goodwill proved however merely a ruse. Notwithstanding the opportunity to exploit a difference between Wurtemberg and Marlborough over concessions to the garrison (the latter being determined to offer none), MacElligott held the envoys until the tide had risen and then rejected negotiations. According to the Danish Lieutenant-Colonel, Munchgaar, the arrival of the flood tide postponed a planned advance that he and Sir David Collier were to undertake on to islands near the city walls. Cramond, instead, refers to a three battalion strong assault from the south that had been ordered for daybreak on 28 September but which was countermanded at dawn. Both these advances would have lacked the breach in the walls upon which the successful capture of a besieged town was invariably contingent. It may well be that the attack which Cramond mentions was abandoned for this reason and not because of the confusion attending MacElligott's apparent desire to capitulate. Nevertheless, if so, the timing was marginal, for a breach was effected during the morning of 28 September in the eastern section of the wall. The plan reputedly formed for Munchgaar's aborted advance was now significantly expanded to encompass a joint advance on the town from the north and south and, with the Lee to be crossed, the attack was perforce timed against the tides. The morning's flood tide was used to bring up-river to the north-east of the city the bomb vessel *Salamander* and a sloop which were to provide extra fire support. This was likely to be essential, as the marshland around the city walls would make the going heavy for the soldiers. Unbeknownst to the allies, however, there was a difference in the tidal range between the Lee's north and south channels

⁶⁶ The ensuing account of the capture of Cork is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 29878, pp. 26-5: W. Cramond's Diary, 27-9 Sept. 1690; *The Danish Force in Ireland 1690-1691*, no. 65, Appendix IV, pp. 83-4, 151-2; Munchgaar to Harboe, 29 Sept. 1690; Transl. of Authentische Nachrichten - 'The Capture of Cork, 1690'; *Journal of the Very Rev. Rowland Davies*, pp. 151-6; *A Full and True Relation of the Taking of Cork; A Jacobite Narrative*, p. 119; W. Griffyth, *Villare Hibernicum* (London, 1690), p. 27; Cox, 'Marlborough in Ireland', pp. 289-90; Simms, 'Marlborough's Siege of Cork', pp. 120-1; Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*, ii. 187-99; Atkinson, *Marlborough and the Rise of the British Army*, p. 116. The four naval captains (in addition to the Duke of Grafton) directly involved in the assault were Cornwall, Leighton, Fairborne and Neville. See Griffyth, *Villare Hibernicum*, p. 27.

and this caused the start of the operation to mistime inasmuch as Wurtemberg's force was able to cross the river with ease well in advance of the English. More importantly, it also meant that Marlborough's column led by Lord Colchester with Trelawny's grenadiers in the van had to wade through water that was often at chest height. Nonetheless, the grenadiers ably fulfilled this specialised forward assault role that had become their central function since their introduction in 1678.⁶⁷ Under heavy fire, they fought a passage through to allow the regiments of Marlborough, his brother and Collier, along with detachments from two other regiments of the expeditionary force, to join Wurtemberg's troops on the East Marsh. Shelter and a chance to re-group was provided by the bank of the counterscarp which was also partially covered by a house standing in the lee of the city walls. However, before sanctuary could be reached, the Duke of Grafton - while reconnoitring the marsh for a gun emplacement site - fell to a bullet in the shoulder. His subsequent death caused him to be much praised as a volunteer in the offensive across the river; but he was only one of a number in this category which - significantly given the operation's amphibious context - comprised at least four naval captains in addition to Grafton.

Repeating his performance of the previous day, Governor MacElligott indicated a desire to surrender within two hours of the assault commencing, only to set his face against the prospect when the terms were offered. On this occasion, the two naval vessels in the Lee, along with the previously established siege batteries, were maintaining a preponderant fire which widened the breach, thus providing the troops in the East Marsh with a healthy chance of success in the assault. Consequently, MacElligott quickly changed his mind and agreed to surrender, regardless of the proposed terms. These conditions proved strict: the Elizabeth Fort was to be rendered inside the hour followed by the town in the morning, when the garrison would be taken prisoner. This latter provision yielded many senior Jacobite commanders, including the Earl of Clancarty who was also one of the country's largest land owners. Well might d'Albeville's account of Cork's capture imply that the sacrifice in attempting to retain it had been too great.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ C.T. Atkinson, 'Grenadier Companies in the British Army', *JSAHR* x (1931), 225.

⁶⁸ HMC, *Finch MSS*, ii. 470-7: d'Albeville to James II, [27 Oct.-]6 Nov. 1690.

The capitulation proceeded without incident and this released Marlborough to pursue the operation's second objective: Kinsale.⁶⁹ Situated some seventeen miles due south of Cork at the mouth of the River Bandon, Kinsale's harbour was considered the better anchorage, although much more poorly defended. The town was not walled, and its defensive strength derived solely from two forts: the Old Fort sat on an eminence which ballooned out into the river just east of the town; while the larger and more heavily gunned New (or Charles) Fort had been built recently to modern principles on the other river bank to the north. On 29 September, an advance party of nearly 500 horse and dragoons commanded by Brigadier Villiers and Colonel Neuenhuse was dispatched. As they reached Kinsale's environs, a trumpeter was sent with terms to the septuagenarian Jacobite Governor, Colonel Edward Scott, who answered in defiance and led his garrison and the town's inhabitants to occupy the two forts. The Villiers-Neuenhuse detachment then could only occupy the town and extinguish the fires begun by the Jacobites. Although summons were sent to the two forts, their respective commanders, Scott and O'Sullivan-More, imitated Michelburne at Londonderry by unfurling a bloody flag in answer.

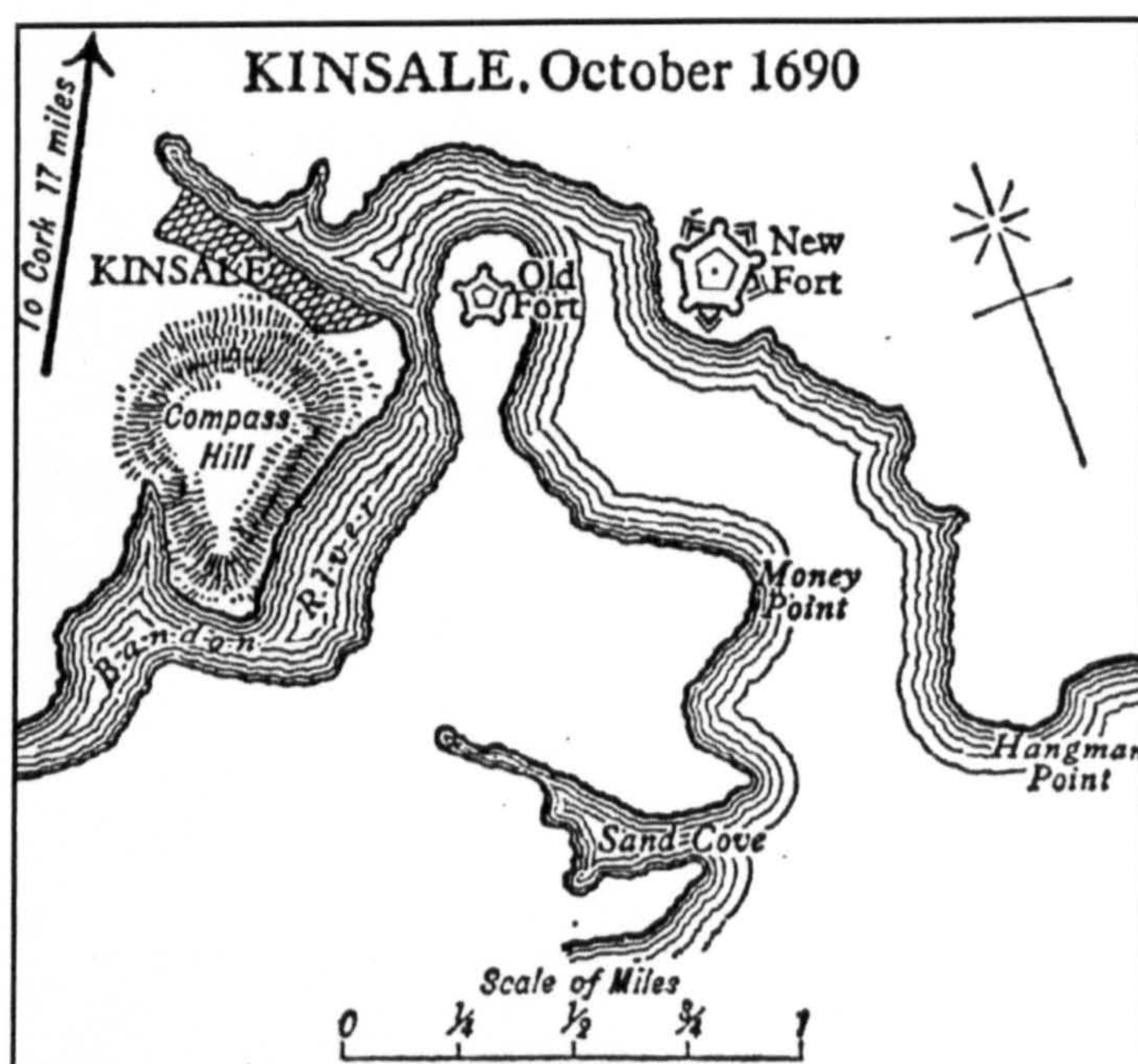


Fig 3: Kinsale, October 1690.

⁶⁹ The ensuing account of the capture of Kinsale is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 29878, pp. 24-2; W. Cramond's Diary, 29 Sept.-15 Oct. 1690; Griffyth, *Villare Hibernicum*, pp. 27-8; *The Danish Force in Ireland 1690-1691*, nos. 67-8, pp. 85-9; Munchgaar to Harboe, 15 Oct. 1690; Wurtemberg to Christian V, 17 Oct. 1690; *A Jacobite Narrative*, pp. 120-1; Cox, 'Marlborough in

Villiers believed that with modest reinforcements - up to three foot regiments and cannon - the Old Fort would be vulnerable; and although Marlborough sent these from Cork immediately on receiving Villiers's request, they failed to arrive any earlier than the main expeditionary force which entered the town on 2 October. Both Marlborough and Wurtemberg agreed with Villiers's assessment of the Old Fort and this was also underlined by some deserters who claimed its garrison to be barely 200 men strong. Accordingly, a plan was formed whereby Major-General Tettau would lead a mixed force of grenadiers and Fitzpatrick's fusiliers across the river to the promontory on which the Old Fort stood. With quite remarkable success in several appropriated river boats, this transfer of 800 men was completed noiselessly at low water during the night of 2/3 October. In order to maintain surprise, the troops landed to the south of the fort and Tettau then disposed them into two groups: one to make a feint attack on the weakest part of the fort, and the other more substantial group to assault the stronger bastions. This part of the plan worked well, but the garrison was about double the strength anticipated; and Tettau might have struggled if several barrels of powder had not exploded, killing many of those inside the fort and causing the rest to attempt escape. Frustratingly for Marlborough, this audacious capture of the Old Fort did not cause Scott to surrender the New Fort, as had been hoped.

Preparations to invest the New Fort were pushed forward, though effective progress was hampered until 11 October when the artillery train eventually arrived from Cork. Once these cannon began to play constantly upon the walls, a breach was opened and on 15 October Governor Scott beat a parley. In a reversal of previous attitudes, Marlborough was now willing to offer terms which would allow the garrison to march out with the full honours of war, where instead Wurtemberg wished them taken prisoner. Marlborough was merely being pragmatic: with the weather worsening, and news filtering through of Sarsfield roaming the region with a cavalry force, he reasoned that it would be better to secure Kinsale - even if this required that the garrison go free - than risk Scott refusing the terms and prolonging the siege. Ultimately, Marlborough prevailed over Wurtemberg and the garrison marched out on 17 October.

Ireland', pp. 292-3; J. Jordan, 'The Siege of Kinsale, 1690: The Danish Report', *AC* xv (1954-1955), 58-64; Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*, ii. 204-15; Atkinson, *Marlborough*, pp. 118-19.

The capture of both Cork and Kinsale had considerably exacerbated the 'death wound' that Lapthorne claimed Jacobite Ireland had received at Londonderry.⁷⁰ Another land campaign in the following year, with victory at Aughrim (12 July) and a successful second siege of Limerick in the autumn, would admittedly be required before the Jacobites were stilled. But Marlborough's operation to the Munster coast was undoubtedly the necessary pivot in the second stage of the Irish war, just as the relief of Londonderry had been in the first. A significant foothold in the south had been secured which provided William with both naval and military strategic benefits. The Jacobites' principal sea-based communication with France had been blocked off and, notwithstanding any residual French sea command gained from victory at the battle of Beachy Head, future supply convoys would be forced due west on to Ireland's Atlantic seaboard and into the ports of Galway and Limerick. Militarily, the Jacobites' defence of the line of the Shannon - effectively their strategic touchstone since the late summer of 1690 - could now be threatened simultaneously on two fronts from the north and south. Even Patrick Sarsfield's irrepressible military energy would find this a debilitating challenge. Twice in the Irish theatre, amphibious warfare had precipitated the military conditions which propelled the Williamite cause to victory.

⁷⁰ See pp. 43-4.

Section II: Combined Operations and the Colonial Theatre During the Nine Years War, 1688-1697.

II.i: The Overseas Empire as a Theatre of War.

John Evelyn's remark with regard to the Nine Years War that Flanders was where 'the greate stress of the quarrell lies'¹ reflected the view that the war was essentially a Grand Alliance of European states ranged against the principal European continental power - France.² More significantly, Evelyn's view also accorded with the Whiggish argument that William III should be considered a good 'European' because his descent on England in November 1688 was wholly motivated by his continental ambitions to join England to the European alliance against France.³

As has been previously outlined William's conduct immediately following the 'Glorious Revolution' did little to diminish this interpretation. The resistance in Ireland was considered a grave inconvenience which would hinder the deployment of English resources on the continent; and William's haste to free up troops and war supplies was omnipresent in his attitude to the war in that theatre. His frustration with Schomberg's apparent operational tardiness which forced him to delay his European command in order to take personal charge of the 1690 campaign in Ireland, whilst also sanctioning periodic peace initiatives, spoke of this urgency. William was even moved to reduce the Irish Establishment by three cavalry regiments and four infantry battalions before the commencement of what proved to be the final campaign in 1691. By then, of course, he had assumed command of the Alliance's armies in Holland.⁴

This European focus has had a dual distorting effect upon the historiography of the war. Firstly, it reinforced the existing trends in orthodox histories. These concentrated on the elemental aspects of warfare such as the bloody set-piece battle which characteristically neglected warfare outside of the European theatre. Even if treated by such works, the extra-European conflict was usually either portrayed as of little concern to the monarch in terms of

¹ *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. E.S. de Beer (Oxford, 1955), v. 186.

² The Grand Alliance was formed when England, the United Provinces, and Savoy joined the pre-existing League of Augsburg which dated from 1686 and comprised the Empire, Spain, and several German Princes.

³ Macaulay, *The History of England*, iii. 1326-7; Sir Charles Firth, *A Commentary on Macaulay's History of England* (London, 1938), p. 341.

⁴ Childs, 'The Williamite war, 1689-1691', pp. 195-6, 209; Simms, 'Williamite Peace Tactics. 1690-1691', pp. 303-23.

army deployment, or it was hijacked by the navalists as an aspect of naval strategy.⁵

Secondly, as a reaction to the above, the histories of empire which detail the Anglo-French conflict in the colonies consider the war a predominately maritime contest best waged by Mahan's 'command of the sea' principle.⁶ Ultimately, neither strand of history provides a clear understanding of the structure and function of overseas warfare.

Such an understanding is further removed because both distortions represent two differing uncritical assumptions about England's world role. Firstly, that England was a minor provincial power, predominately disengaged and insular in attitude towards European diplomacy where commercial activity was not impeded. It followed, therefore, that the military, naval and diplomatic consequences of the 'Glorious Revolution' were primarily European in focus. The second distortion assumes that with respect to her colonial settlements, the real interest taken, and the actual control exercised, by England was minimal. To question both is not an attempt to deny that William positioned England in the centre of the European states system; nor does it imply an unrealistic breadth of imperial control. Rather it serves to highlight that England was a global power that was necessarily obliged to achieve a level of colonial integration in pursuance of the war and that this is a more precise context in which to investigate the nature of warfare.

Perhaps ironically, on his appointment as Secretary of State in May 1695, a briefing paper partly informed Sir William Trumbull of this context. Its synopsis on the history of acquisition throughout the seventeenth century demonstrated that England's extra-European territory and colonial settlement ranged from the most northerly areas around Hudson Bay and the fishing banks of Newfoundland, down through the north eastern coast of mainland North America where the principal settlements of New England (comprising the provinces of Massachusetts Bay, New Plymouth, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) along with New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland were situated, to the most southerly colonies of Virginia and Carolina. In the Caribbean, England's principal colony was Jamaica, though the Leeward Islands, Barbados, the Bahamas and the Bermudas

⁵ B.P. Lenman, 'Colonial Wars and Imperial Instability, 1688-1793', in P.J. Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire ii. The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 151-4. The army-centric view with the set piece battle as the main focus is predictably provided by Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, i. 333-93. Good examples of the navalists' agenda are, N.H. Moses, 'The British Navy in the Caribbean, 1689-1697', *MM* 52 (1966), 13-40, and Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, ii. 418-534.

were also important English acquisitions.⁷ These territories became the foundation of Britain's 'Old Empire' which endured till the loss of the thirteen mainland American colonies as a result of the American Revolutionary War, 1775-1783.

While accurate in its bald historical facts, the paper remained a partial exposition of the war's context because it failed to address the contemporary issue of colonial integration in the war effort. Its analysis of the colonies as part of the English polity categorised them under one of two forms of government: the King's Commission or Proprietary control.⁸ This was too simplistic a picture for it failed to cover the subtleties in the governmental structure of individual colonies which evolved against a backdrop of increasing friction between the colonists and the English Court and Parliament over the extent and source of imperial control.⁹ More significantly, the paper also failed to relate England's continuing offensive and defensive wartime attempts to extend both her geostrategic reach and safeguard her mercantilist economy within these extra-European regions. This omission is all the more surprising given that by 1695, four operations combining ships and land forces had already been sent overseas in pursuance of these ends and another one was to follow before Trumbull resigned the Secretaryship on 1 December 1697.

In an attempt to correct the historiographical distortions, this section will, therefore, consider a set of five expeditionary operations undertaken during the Nine Years War which encompassed the extent of empire from Newfoundland to the islands in the Caribbean Sea. It should be recognised that the history of the war in the colonies yields many more examples of such operations. On the North American mainland, the future Governor of Massachusetts, Sir William Phips, undertook two expeditions in 1690: first against Port Royal, Acadia and then the grander attack against Quebec. Moreover, as the war there settled into a predominant

⁶ See for example, G.S. Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic: The Maritime Struggle for North America* (Canada, 1950); D.E. Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America, 1607-1763* (New York, 1973).

⁷ BL, Add. MSS 72572, fos. 140-9: 'A Short Account of the English Plantations in America, Brought by Mr Povey 2 May 1695'.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ See for example, M.J. Braddick, 'The English Government, War, Trade, and Settlement, 1625-1688', in N. Canny (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire i. The First Century of Empire* (Oxford, 1998), pp. 286-308; I.K. Steele, 'The Anointed, the Appointed, and the Elected: Governance of the British Empire, 1689-1784', in Marshall (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, ii. 105-27; I.K. Steele, 'The British Parliament and the Atlantic Colonies to 1760: New Approaches to Enduring Questions', in P. Lawson (ed.), *Parliament and the Atlantic Empire* (Edinburgh, 1995); M. Watson, 'The British West Indian Legislatures in the 17th and 18th Centuries: An Historiographical Introduction', in Lawson (ed.), *Parliament and the Atlantic Empire*, pp. 89-98.

pattern of frontier skirmish, small scale riverine expeditions such as the assaults in 1692 and 1696 upon the Acadian fort at the confluence of the rivers St John and Naswaack, became common. In the Caribbean, Sir Timothy Thornhill, a Barbadian planter, and Captain Heweston, at the behest of the Leeward Islands' Governor, Christopher Codrington, completed a series of modestly successful raids upon Mariegalante, St Bartholomew and St Martin's in late 1689 and the early 1690s; while the Royal African Company operated against the French territories on the West African coast throughout 1692-1693. However, this study will not consider these examples because although the Imperial Parent often knew what was planned, none of these operations were originally dispatched from England. Moreover, the men and materials involved were usually provided locally by the colonial authorities, or in the case of the vessels used against the West African coast, privately owned by the Royal African Company. Only on one occasion - the 1696 expedition against Fort Naswaack - was a Royal Naval warship, the *Arundell*, deployed, but it had not been sent out from England for this purpose.¹⁰ The common thread which ties all these expeditions to one side is England's wholly passive role in their preparation and execution. The definition of a combined operation aimed at here first seeks an exposition of the administrative role undertaken by England and, without wishing to concentrate solely upon substantive bureaucratic outcomes as manifest in the provision of resources, their total absence renders it both unbalanced and

¹⁰ PRO, CO 5/855, fos. 605-12: 'A Journal of the Proceedings of the Late Expedition to Port Royal'; CSPC, 1689-1692, nos. 914, 1417, pp. 275-6, 415: Journal of the proceedings of the late expedition under Sir William Phips, knight, to Port Royal, 30 May 1690; Sir William Phips's account of his expeditions against Acadia and Quebec, [21 Apr.] 1692; *Two Narratives of the Expedition Against Quebec, A.D. 1690*, ed. S.A. Green (Cambridge, 1902); T. Savage, *An Account of the Late Action of the New Englanders* (London, 1691); J. Walley, 'Mr Walley's Journal in the Expedition Against Canada in 1692 [sic]', in T. Hutchinson, *The History of the Colony and Province of Massachusetts-Bay* (2 edn, London, 1760), Appendix no. xxi, pp. 554-65; C. Mather, *Pietas in Patriam: The Life of His Excellency Sir William Phips* (London, 1697); NYCD, iv. 193-6: Journal of Major General Winthrop's march from Albany to Wood Creek, n.d.; E.W. Baker & J.G. Reid, *The New England Knight: Sir William Phips, 1651-1696* (Toronto, 1998), pp. 86-109; T. Church, *The Entertaining History of King Philip's War* (2nd edn, Boston, 1716), pp. 90-157; P.F.X. de Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, transl. & ed. J.G. Shea (London, 1902), iv. 27-8; *ibid.*, v. 29-33; CSPC, 1696-1697, nos. 257, 403, pp. 142, 218: Stoughton to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 24 Sept. 1696; Minutes of General Assembly of Massachusetts, 18 Nov. 1696; 'Journal of What has Happened in Acadia From Oct. 13th, 1691 to Oct. 25, 1692'; 'Account of the Siege of Fort Natchouak by the English of Boston, and of Their Retreat by Villebon, Oct. 22, 1696', in *Acadia at the End of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J.C. Webster (New Brunswick, 1934), pp. 40, 89-94; T. Spencer, *A True and Faithful Relation of the Proceedings of the Forces...In Their Expedition Against the French in the Caribby Islands in the West-Indies* (London, 1691), pp. 1-8; CSPC, 1689-1692, nos. 444, 779, 789, 789.I, pp. 146-7, 221-2, 225-31: Codrington to Lords of Trade and Plantations, 19 Sept. 1689; Stede to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 Mar. 1690; Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 1 Mar. 1690; Account of the action at St Martin's under Captain Heweston, n.d.; V.T. Harlow, *Christopher Codrington, 1668-1710* (London, reprint 1998), pp. 17-19; Molyneaux, *Conjunct Expeditions*, Part I p. 102; Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, pp. 263-6.

unproductive to consider the subsequent relationship of these operations to Grand Strategy and the practice of warfare. The five which are to be assessed fulfil this immediate administrative precept. Thus, with respect to the historical understanding of English combined operations in the Nine Years War, it is hoped that their narration will yield the justification with which the history of warfare might look upon them as combined operations, and also outline their utility within Grand Strategy.

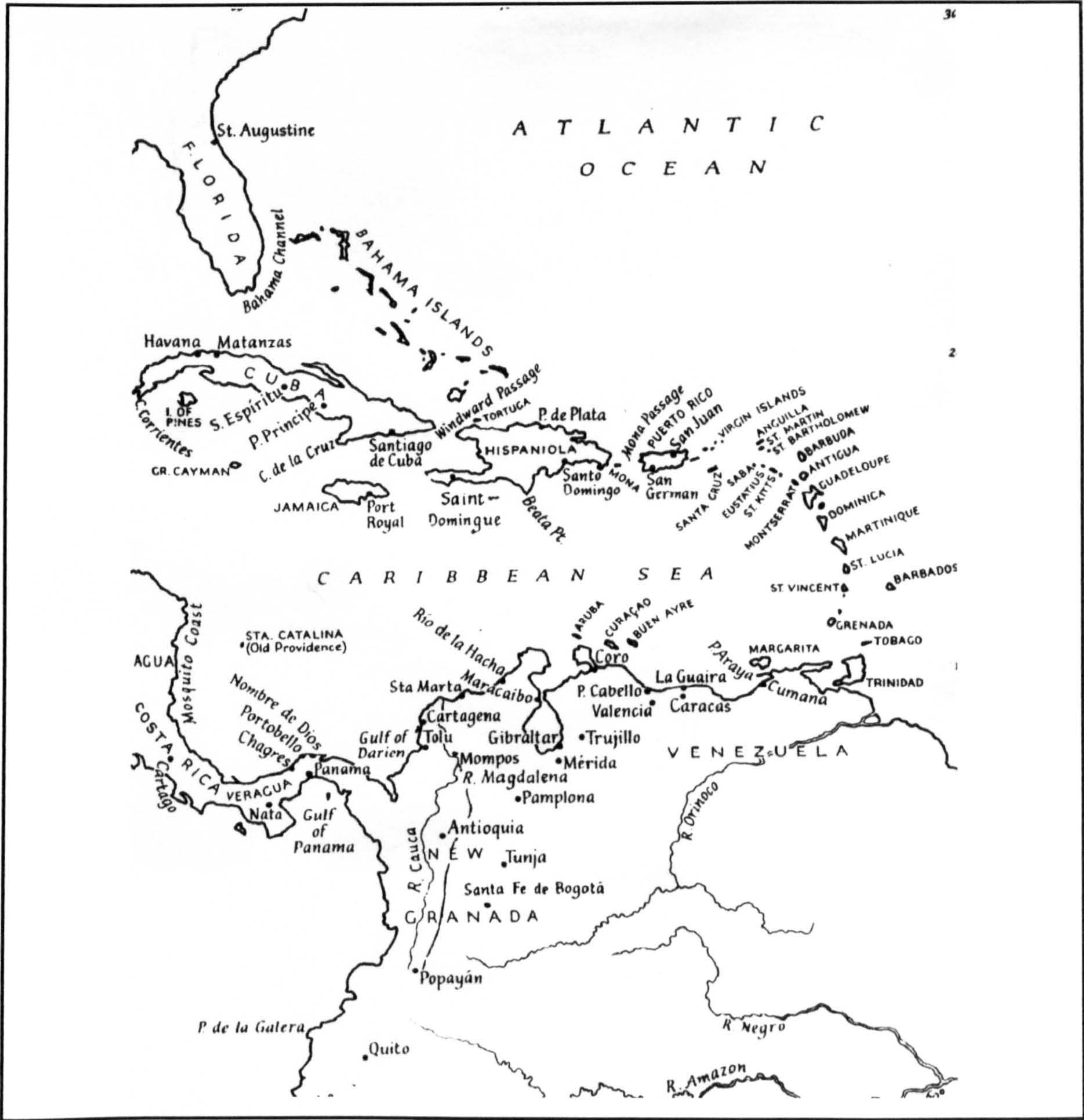


Fig. 4: The Caribbean.

II.ii: Commodore Lawrence Wright's Expedition to the West Indies, March 1690-September 1691.

Not only were many of the overseas colonies administratively and politically disordered by news of the 'Glorious Revolution'¹¹, on the outbreak of war the Caribbean territories had to face a superior French strength in the region that possessed great potential to strike effectively at the islands and to damage trade. These circumstances were underlined by the subjects of the westernmost colony, Jamaica, expressing their feelings of vulnerability by petitioning the crown for a significant defensive seapower commitment. It was to the east, however, where the French made some notable gains through the spring and summer of 1689. These included the reduction of the Dutch island of St Eustatius in April, and, two months later, the eviction of the English from the shared island of St Kitts after a destabilising rebellion by the Irish inhabitants. This rebellion spread throughout the Leewards Islands causing Anguilla to be left under an Irish Governor when it fell to the French, and forced the premature retirement of the Islands' chief, Sir Nathaniel Johnson, who although a staunch Protestant, was considered compromised by his publicly declared commitment to James.¹²

The Lords of Trade and Plantations (a committee of the Privy Council first appointed in 1675 to manage the expanding empire)¹³ had already foretold of the impending demands of war in the Caribbean. Within a fortnight of William's circular in early April informing the colonial governors of his intention to declare war on France, the Lords sent to the King recommendations on the prosecution of the war overseas. As a result, William ordered consultation with the Admiralty on the dispatch of a squadron overseas and this quickly produced a list of seven hired vessels (to be fitted as men-of-war) and two fireships that could form a squadron for the West Indies along with the navy's fourth rate, *Dunkirk*. Meanwhile, the operational conception was broadened by the recommendation that Sir James Leslie's regiment of foot should be embarked. Although by the end of May, four of the hired vessels were sufficiently adapted to be sent to Longreach for their guns and victuals and Leslie's regiment was ready to be embarked, quite unexpectedly the King ordered the hired vessels to

¹¹ R.S. Dunn, 'The Glorious Revolution and America', in Canny (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, i. 445-66.

¹² *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 88, 90, 143, p. 43: Johnson to ?, 25 Apr. 1689; Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 26 Apr. 1689; Johnson to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 24 May 1689; Sir Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies* (2nd edn, London, 1965), p. 375; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 15-17.

¹³ W.T. Root, 'The Lords of Trade and Plantations', *AHR* xxiii (1917-1918), 20-41.

be discharged and their places taken by Royal Navy ships.¹⁴ The King must have known that this action would delay the departure of his combined force to the Caribbean, not just because these ships would have to be prepared anew, but more simply because many of them were then part of the fleet under the recently ennobled Arthur Herbert (now Earl of Torrington) which had just lately fought the inconclusive engagement against the French off Bantry Bay, Ireland.¹⁵ The Lords of Trade were also concerned that the now delayed squadron would meet both hurricanes and a strengthened French presence in the Caribbean.¹⁶

William's decision was, however, not impulsive, and not just because of his Dutch stolidness. As already surveyed, a credible Jacobite interest was then emerging in both Scotland and Ireland where, significantly, it was sponsored by the French. Although Dundee's Scottish rebellion was perhaps more romantic than substantial, the prospect that the two centres of resistance might combine to organise their resources kept the crown precariously placed upon the heads of William and Mary. Moreover, William had still to turn his attention to the war on the continent and make the substantial English commitment implicit in his acceptance of the English crown. In practice, the Grand Strategy required to contain and combat Louis XIV in the early years of the war was proving to be critically torn between the competing demands of domestic, European and overseas theatres. Thus, faced also with a impecunious exchequer¹⁷, William probably accepted Torrington's advice that the hired vessels were fit only for coastal cruising and that they should be replaced by the navy's fourth-rates, with the consideration that some breathing space within the demands of strategic

¹⁴ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 69-70, 76-7, 79, 94, 102, 106, 111, 113, 125, 130, 146, pp. 22-3, 31-6, 39-40, 44: Circular to the Governors of the Colonies, 15 Apr. 1689; Circular to the same effect, 15 Apr. 1689; Shrewsbury to Robinson, 19 Apr. 1689; Shrewsbury to Howard of Effingham, 19 Apr. 1689; Shrewsbury to Baltimore, 19 Apr. 1689; Shrewsbury to Johnson, 19 Apr. 1689; Memorandum of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 29 Apr. 1689; Order of King in Council, 2 May 1689; Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4, 6 May 1689; Order of King in Council, 6 May 1689; the Lords of Trade and Plantations to the Admiralty, 16 May 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 17 May 1689; Blathwayt to the Admiralty, 25 May 1689; PRO, ADM 1/5247, pp. 31-4; Naval Minute, 6 June 1689; PRO, ADM 3/1, pp. 53-7, 83; Board Minutes, [4], 6, 27 May 1689; PRO, ADM 1/169, pp. 52, 55, 75-6, 93; the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 12, 25 Apr. 1689; the Admiralty to Shrewsbury, 15 Apr. 1689; the Admiralty to Beach, 24 Apr. 1689; the Admiralty to Schomberg, 4, 11 May 1689; PRO, ADM 2/377, pp. 123, 126-7, 138; Bowles to Blathwayt, 20, 28 May 1689; Bowles to Torrington, 22 May 1689; Bowles to the Navy Board, 23 May 1689.

¹⁵ R.W. Neeser, 'The British Naval Operations in the West Indies, 1650-1700', *USNIP* 40 (Nov.-Dec., 1914), 1613; P. Le Fevre, 'The Battle of Bantry Bay, 1 May 1689', *IS* xviii (1990-1992), 1-17.

¹⁶ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 150, pp. 44-5: the Lords of Trade and Plantations to the King, 29 May 1689.

¹⁷ PRO, ADM 2/169, p. 382: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 25 Oct. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/170, pp. 36, 89, 113, 143-4, 203: the Admiralty to the Lords of Treasury, 9 Jan., 8, 20 Feb., 17 Mar., 29 Apr. 1690; J. Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III, 1689-1697: Its State and Direction* (Cambridge, 1953), pp. 256-7.

policy might be gained.¹⁸ Whitehall, nonetheless, wished to keep up the appearance of momentum and, in early June, the Admiralty sent a list of eight naval vessels, accompanied by the rather improbable claim that they would be ready within a fortnight.¹⁹ The fourteen days was to become 225 by the time the expeditionary force left England on 9 March 1690.²⁰

The delay was a product of both accident and design resulting from the administrative insufficiencies and bureaucratic inertia of the Admiralty, 'War Office', and the Lords of Trade. It would seem that the Admiralty, despite the views of its head, Torrington, continued to promote a number of the hired ships rejected by the King and which had been dispatched on convoy duty as part of Rooke's squadron stationed off the Irish coast. In August some of these vessels were sent a recall order to Plymouth (via Hoylake to take aboard a detachment of the expedition's soldiers) but, after their arrival at the south-west port, confusion on the squadron's composition reigned through the autumn as the Admiralty then moved to implement the King's discharge order.²¹

Meanwhile, the Navy Board turned its attention to the detailed and time consuming task of fitting out a late seventeenth century overseas expedition. The squadron's vessels would have to be sheathed, manned, provisioned and have their ordnance weight reduced before the army battalion with its separate provisions and artillery train could be embarked. Other pressing tasks to be attended to included the preparation of the fireships and the auxiliary vessels required to carry surplus stores and provisions. In many of these areas, much of the Navy Board's work was duplicated as it began first with those hired ships that had returned from the Irish coast only to have to begin again with the Royal Naval vessels once they had been appointed by the Admiralty.²² Moreover, progress in any one of these

¹⁸ *CSPD, 1689-1693*, p. 133: Memorandum of the proceedings of the Committee of Trade and Plantations, 3 June 1689.

¹⁹ PRO, ADM 3/1, pp. 88-90: Board Minutes, 30 May 1689; *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 169, p. 57: List of ships presented by the Lords of the Admiralty as to the state of ships destined for the West Indies, 3 June 1689.

²⁰ PRO, ADM 51/582, Part ii, unpaginated, *Mary*, 9 Mar. 1690.

²¹ PRO, ADM 2/4, pp. 169-72: the Admiralty to Rooke, 27 Aug. 1689; the Admiralty to Tollemache, 27 Aug. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/169, pp. 251, 269, 271, 301-2, 361, 369, 398-402: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 7, 27 Aug., 28 Sept., 14, 18 Oct., 9, 14 Nov. 1689; the Admiralty to Schomberg, 27 Aug. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/170, p. 3: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 18 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/378, pp. 242, 301, 365: Bowles to Walton, 5 Sept. 1689; Bowles to Addis, 28 Sept. 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 23 Oct. 1689.

²² PRO, ADM 3/1, pp. 92, 102, 147-9, 153, 155, 163, 182: Board Minutes, 3, 10 June, 10, 13, 16, 23 July, 6 Aug. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/4, p. 277: the Admiralty to Wright, 24 Sept. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/5, p. 107: the Admiralty to Wright, 4 Jan. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/169, pp. 212, 214, 216-17, 223, 225-6, 240-1, 251, 271-2, 280, 317, 335, 362, 398, 401-2, 512: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 6, 8, 13, 16 July, 7, 27 Aug., 9 Oct., 9, 14, 21 Nov. 1689; the Admiralty to Torrington, 10, 29 July 1689; the Admiralty to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 7 Sept., 15 Oct. 1689; the Admiralty to Schomberg, 7 Oct., 14 Nov. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/170, pp.

tasks could easily to break down and, on this occasion, the navy's victualling system ground temporarily to a halt through a lack of both cash and credit.²³ An uncomfortably bright spot light had already been shone on this service during the debates on the conduct of the naval war in Parliament's second session, as a consequence of which a committee of inquiry had been established. Although the King attempted to pre-empt the committee's conclusions by appointing new victualling commissioners, the sense of despair in the service was well represented by his new First Commissioner, the London merchant Thomas Papillon, whose reluctant agreement to take on the job was almost immediately followed by his constant entreaties to be released from it. Ultimately, before the eight months victuals ordered for both the land and sea forces could be supplied, the Treasury had to make a series of tactical fiscal interventions to provide a short-term boost to the victualling commissioners' cash flow by prioritising their Exchequer payments and by forestalling other government creditors.²⁴ As the money crisis continued into the winter, the Admiralty was also grappling with the chore of finding accommodation and procuring freight for several newly appointed colonial governors that were to take passage with the squadron.²⁵

The organisation of the land force was soon equally mired in confusion. Promptly after the King's order to discharge the hired ships, it was decided not to employ Leslie's regiment, but without first selecting an alternative. In late June, Lord Roscommon offered his

3, 62, 67, 82: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 18 Dec. 1689, 25, 29 Jan., 6 Feb. 1690; PRO, ADM 2/378, pp. 28-30, 146, 220, 262, 317-18, 413, 419, 528: Bowles to Beach, 6 July 1689; Bowles to Torrington, 6 July 1689; Bowles to the Navy Board, 7 Aug., 11 Sept., 4 Oct. 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 27 Aug. 1689; Bowles to the Officers of the Ordnance, 8, 9 Nov., 10 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/379, pp. 54, 102, 108, 135, 141, 161, 181, 188, 189, 196, 200-1, 211, 220, 270: [Bowles?] to Jespen, 27 Dec. 1689; Bowles to the Navy Board, 10 Jan. 1690; Bowles to Wright, 11 Jan. 1690; Sotherne to the Officers of the Ordnance, 16 Jan. 1689; Sotherne to Wright, 18, 28, 29 Jan., 6, 18 Feb. 1690; Sotherne to Beach, 25, [30?] Jan., 1, 4 Feb. 1690; Sotherne to the Navy Board, 4 Feb. 1690; PRO, ADM 1/3560, pp. 25, 119: the Navy Board to the Admiralty, 3 Jan. 1690; the Navy Board to Bowles, 11 Jan. 1690; PRO, ADM 1/5247, pp. 62-3: Naval Minute, 15 Aug. 1689 [first version]; PRO, ADM 1/5249, p. 38: Naval Minute, 15 Aug. 1689 [second version].

²³ PRO, ADM 2/169, pp. 382, 528: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 25 Oct. 1689; the Admiralty to the Lords of the Treasury, 4 Dec. 1689; *CTB, 1689-1693* i.i. 62: Treasury Minute Book, 3 Nov. 1689.

²⁴ *CJ* x. 282-3; *CTB, 1689-1692*, pp. 64-5: Treasury Minute Book, 10, 14 Nov. 1689; *CTP, 1557-1696*, pp. 75, 95: Presentment of the Commissioners of Excise, 8 Nov. 1689; Representation of the Commissioners of Excise and Hearth Money to the Lords of the Treasury, 24 Jan. 1690; A.F.W. Papillon, *Memoirs of Thomas Papillon, of London, Merchant* (Reading, 1887), pp. 353-74; Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 309-16, 331.

²⁵ PRO, ADM 2/4, pp. 420, 440-1: the Admiralty to Wright, 7, 14 Nov. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/5, pp. 238-9: the Admiralty to Wright, 2 Feb. 1690; PRO, ADM 2/169, pp. 280, 293, 317, 362, 392, 534: the Admiralty to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 7 Sept., 15 Oct. 1689; the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 24 Sept., 7 Oct., 5 Nov., 13 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/378, pp. 66, 179, 220, 299, 345, 493: Bowles to Molesworth, 17 July 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 14, 27 Aug., 17 Oct., 29 Nov. 1689; Bowles to Montague, 28 Sept. 1689; PRO, ADM

services as colonel but bizarrely felt he could not speak for his regiment and, on the same day, the Lords of Trade noted the appointment of Luttrell's battalion. In less than a month, however, Secretary-at-War Blathwayt was inquiring of John Shales, Commissary General of Provisions, how soon the Duke of Bolton's regiment of foot could be shipped for the West Indies.²⁶ This was presumably Bolton's newly raised second regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Holt;²⁷ which first had to march to Liverpool, and then be brought down by sea to Plymouth.²⁸ Once this transfer had been completed (by the hired ships drawn from Rooke's squadron on their return to England) Bolton's second regiment was found to be under strength. With the majority of the English forces committed to the Irish theatre, a possible source of recruits was not obvious. It was, thus, decided to draft around 210 men from the six companies of Bolton's other regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Norton that had ironically recently been at Plymouth as part of an abortive descent force for Ireland under Trelawny but were now garrisoned at Portsmouth. As their relief from garrison duties had to be organised and recruits found to make good that draft, additional time was required; and furthermore this detachment was to board from Portsmouth thereby requiring the squadron commander to organise two separate embarkations.²⁹ All the while, as has been mentioned, the French were making gains in the Caribbean and, given that both the squadron and Leslie's regiment had been ready to go in May, the King might well have lamented his decision to discharge the hired ships. A breathing space in strategy was meaning strategic loss.

2/379, pp. 13, 105, 108, 217, 235: Bowles to Inchiquin, 16, 24 Dec. 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 11 Jan. 1690; Bowles to Wright, 11 Jan. 1689; Sotherne to Tollemache, 6 Feb. 1690; Sotherne to Wright, 8 Feb. 1690.

²⁶ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 201, 251, pp. 69, 83: Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 20 June 1689; Blathwayt to Shales, 11 July 1689.

²⁷ I consider Childs in 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 84, to have wrongly identified this force as the '1st battalion' of Bolton's regiment.

²⁸ PRO, WO 5/5, pp. 199, 225, 243, 249, 251, 254, 257: Order to the Duke of Bolton, [June/July 1689?], 6 Nov. 1689; Order to Colonel Trelawny, 26 Nov., 2 Dec. 1689; Order to the Earl of Bath, Governor of Plymouth, 4 Sept. 1689; Order to the six Companies of the Duke of Bolton's regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Norton, 9 Dec. 1689; Order to the Duke of Bolton's regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Holt, 9, 12 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/4, pp. 169-70, 171-2: the Admiralty to Rooke, 27 Aug. 1689; the Admiralty to Tollemache, 27 Aug. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/378, pp. 221, 242: Bowles to Lee, 27 Aug. 1689; Bowles to Walton, 5 Sept. 1689.

²⁹ PRO, WO 4/1, p. 149, 151: Blathwayt to the Lieutenant-Governor of Portsmouth, 28 Jan. 1690; Blathwayt to Nott, 18 Feb. 1690; PRO, WO 5/5, pp. 254, 263: Order to the six Companies of the Duke of Bolton's regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Norton, 9 Dec. 1689; Order to the Duke of Bolton's regiment commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Norton, 12 Jan. 1690; PRO, ADM, 2/379, p. 156: Sotherne to Blathwayt, 22 Jan. 1690; PRO, ADM 51/582, Part ii, unpaginated, *Mary*, 19 Feb., 6 Mar., 1690.

The third source of delay proved to be the drafting of the Instructions for the expedition. Initially, this was hindered by the indecision over whom to appoint as the squadron commander. Nobody was suggested for the post until June when Torrington recommended and secured the appointment of his protégé, Sir Cloudesley Shovell, whose recently conferred knighthood recognised his able performance at Bantry Bay.³⁰ As it became clear however that the French were still able to succour the Irish rebellion and, more importantly, threaten England's sea route to the coast, it was decided that Shovell's talents were required in the Irish sea.³¹ The Admiralty next favoured the equally experienced Captain Lawrence Wright whose service record, like Shovell's, included a West Indian tour.³² Nonetheless, far from expediting the squadron's departure, his experience brought preconceived ideas to be added to the consultation on the Instructions.

The Admiralty had requested in July that the Lords of Trade forward draft Instructions and their delay till October before even considering possible articles was blamed upon the King. To speed up the process, the Admiralty rather improbably intimated that Wright was ready to sail, though this failed to persuade the key bureaucratic figure, the King's Secretary-at-War, William Blathwayt, who also served the Lords of Trade as their secretary. It was the second week of November before he circulated a first draft and then there were the Admiralty's various amendments and alterations to be contended. Their formulation had been complicated by Wright's persistent lobbying that he be provided with an independent command from the colonial governors which would allow him scope to direct both the naval squadron and the operations once in the West Indies. Securing the Admiralty Commission's subsequent agreement to any alterations was convoluted due to the requirement that it comprehend the views of its head, Torrington. His frequent absences

³⁰ PRO, ADM 3/1, pp. 105-7: Board Minutes, 11 June 1689; PRO, ADM 2/169, pp. 158-60: Admiralty to Torrington, 13 June 1689. The treatment of this stage of Shovell's career in the most recent secondary literature is variable. S. Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell: Stuart Admiral* (London, 2001) fails to mention the appointment; while J.B. Hattendorf, 'Sir George Rooke and Sir Cloudesley Shovell, c1650-1709 and 1650-1707' in P. Le Fevre & R. Harding (eds), *Precursors of Nelson: British Admirals of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 2000), p. 51 claims that Shovell was temporarily assigned to the West Indian squadron commanded by Wright. My evidence indicates that Shovell was in fact appointed to the sole command of this squadron and that Wright's appointment followed the decision to employ Shovell off Ireland.

³¹ Le Fevre, 'The Battle of Bantry Bay, 1 May 1689', pp. 1-7; Mulloy, 'The French Navy and the Jacobite War in Ireland, 1689-91', pp. 25-6; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 108-16; Hattendorf, 'Sir George Rooke and Sir Cloudesley Shovell', p. 51.

³² PRO, ADM 3/1, p. 136: Board Minutes, 1 July 1689; PRO, ADM 2/169, pp. 216-17: the Admiralty to Torrington, 10 July 1689; Neeser, 'The British Naval Operations in the West Indies', p. 1613. Shovell had

afloat or in port put the secretary, Bowles, into a quandary as to how the Instructions could ever possibly be agreed if Torrington did not come up to London.³³ Accordingly, it was December before a final set of Instructions was issued, only for it to be augmented - though not substantively changed - through January by the formulation of additional provisions.³⁴ Bowles's irony was thinly veiled when he subsequently commended the Instructions to Wright for having been 'maturely debated'.³⁵

On reading his Instructions, Wright was doubtless disappointed because his principal request for independence from the colonial governors had not been granted. Instead, not only had Wright immediately on his arrival in the region to consult with the Barbadian Governor and Council on the expeditionary force's defensive and offensive dispositions, but also after making his way to the Leeward Islands, he was to be subordinate to their governor, Christopher Codrington. Although the context for this secondary role was specifically stated to be the direction of the land forces, and a Council of War was to be sovereign in all operational decisions, Wright's authority over the squadron was also circumscribed. Any sea action was only to be undertaken after consultation with the relevant governor and sanctioned by the Council of War; while, similarly, approval from both was required before he could dispatch individual ships. If either thought the squadron's presence was necessary on a particular island station then Wright had to comply. Such provisions will be seen to affect future disputes within Whitehall when the Instructions for other overseas operations were being drafted. In terms of targeting, the Instruction's gave the colonial interest an added command advantage. Wright's only option was the freedom to attack Martinique en route to the Leeward Islands, otherwise the Council of War had operational discretion on targeting.³⁶ The top loading of this Council by the colonists, including its presidency, and the priority which would rightly be afforded to the prevailing regional intelligence, meant that Wright's opinions as the newcomer would probably carry much less weight. Wright was though

actually served twice in the West Indies during his early career: first in 1663 with Sir Christopher Myngs and again five years later under Sir John Harman. See Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 14-16, 25-31.

³³ CSPC, 1689-1692, nos. 263, 519, 527, 552, 584, 617, pp. 97, 169, 171, 179, 183, 188: the Admiralty to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 17 July 1689; Blathwayt to Bowles, 28 Oct., 13, 21 Nov. 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 5 Nov., 3 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/378, pp. 453-4, 510, 513-14; Bowles to Torrington, 19 Nov. 1689; Bowles to Blathwayt, 3, 5 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/378, p. 413; Bowles to Blathwayt, 12 Nov. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/379, pp. Bowles to Wright, 21 Oct. 1689.

³⁴ PRO, ADM 2/5, pp. 77-82: 'Instructions for Capt. Lawrence Wright', 21 Dec. 1689; PRO, ADM 2/5, pp. 156-7: 'Supplementall Instructions to Capt. Wright for the West Indies', 18 Jan. 1690.

³⁵ PRO, ADM 2/379, p. 45: Bowles to Wright, 24 Dec. 1689.

³⁶ PRO, ADM 2/5, pp. 77-82: 'Instructions for Capt. Lawrence Wright', 21 Dec. 1689.

allowed to fly a 'distinguishing pendant' which identified him as Commodore and C.-in.C of the naval squadron going to the West Indies.³⁷

Wright's squadron of some thirteen ships with Bolton's regiment aboard and sundry auxiliary vessels arrived in the Caribbean in early May 1690. As instructed, Wright had made first for Barbados (to deliver the new governor, James Kendall) whence after consultation, he was to head for the Leeward Islands. Although the voyage had largely passed without incident, it was ominous that sickness was already prevalent when the anchors were dropped in Carlisle Bay. Wright downplayed the extent of the contagion, but both Kendall and Codrington made clear that it was sufficiently extensive to detain the squadron at Barbados for the remainder of May in the hope that the men would recover. Although Codrington seemed by this time quite resigned to delay, he failed to hide his bitter disappointment with the quality of the expeditionary force when it eventually arrived off Antigua. He was particularly dismayed at how short Bolton's regiment was of Establishment strength, and at the fewness in number and poor quality of the small arms. He calculated that by combining Holt's troops with the maximum number of the Leeward Islands' militia, and the remnants of the Barbadian regiment, a landing force of only 2000 men would be produced. In the hope that additional troops might be forthcoming from Jamaica or even Barbados, the first Council of War held on 1 June deferred selecting a French target. Instead, a fortnight was to pass during which the fleet watered at Montserrat and attempts were made to muster as many troops as possible. These included some 200 seamen which Wright agreed to commit to the land force, along with four naval captains to be commissioned as their officers, who became known as the 'Marine Regiment'. A further review of all available forces held on Nevis on 13 June produced, according to Codrington, an increase of only 500 men from his original calculation, though Sir Timothy Thornhill's secretary estimated an additional 1000.

A Council convened during this two week interval had determined that an attempt be made on St Kitts. Back in August 1689 the French had evicted the English from their half of

³⁷ PRO, ADM 2/5, p. 223: Warrant empowering Capt. Lawrence Wright to wear a Flag at the Main Topmasthead, 6 Feb. 1690. The official rank of Commodore did not appear in the Navy Regulations until 1806. Imported from Holland in 1689, it was used intermittently to denote a Captain dispatched in command of a squadron for overseas service. Wright's rank was Captain but he had been appointed C.-in-C. of the Squadron in the West Indies. Throughout the eighteenth century the term Commodore became a means of allowing a Post-Captain to be appointed to command a squadron without affecting the seniority lists. See Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 455, Appendix X, 650; Sir R. Massie Blomfield, 'Naval Executive Titles. Commadore or Commodore?', *MM* iv (1914), 73-7; N.A.M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (London, 1988), pp. 299-300.

this shared island and it was thought that the French had now dug in a strong defensive force. The *Antelope* and the *Hampshire* spent two days (15-17 June) annoying the enemy along the island's coastline, while a plan was composed to surprise the French by landing at Frigate Bay, situated to the south. To this end, on 19 June Wright was to lead a decoy squadron of five vessels away from the Bay, while the *Assistance*, the *Success* and the *Guernsey* would shepherd the ships' boats loaded with some 600 soldiers each as far as possible towards the shore. Although Wright was subsequently critical of these vessels weighing late in the day due to, he believed, the army's slowness embarking, Codrington was more affected by what he saw of the French as he neared the landing point. Some 1000 French troops at arms were disposed in deep trenches close to Frigate Bay. Surprise was now a chimera; and as Codrington considered it an standard rule of warfare that even with an additional 1000 bodies, men landing from boats cannot overcome those in trenches to establish a bridgehead, the attack was aborted.

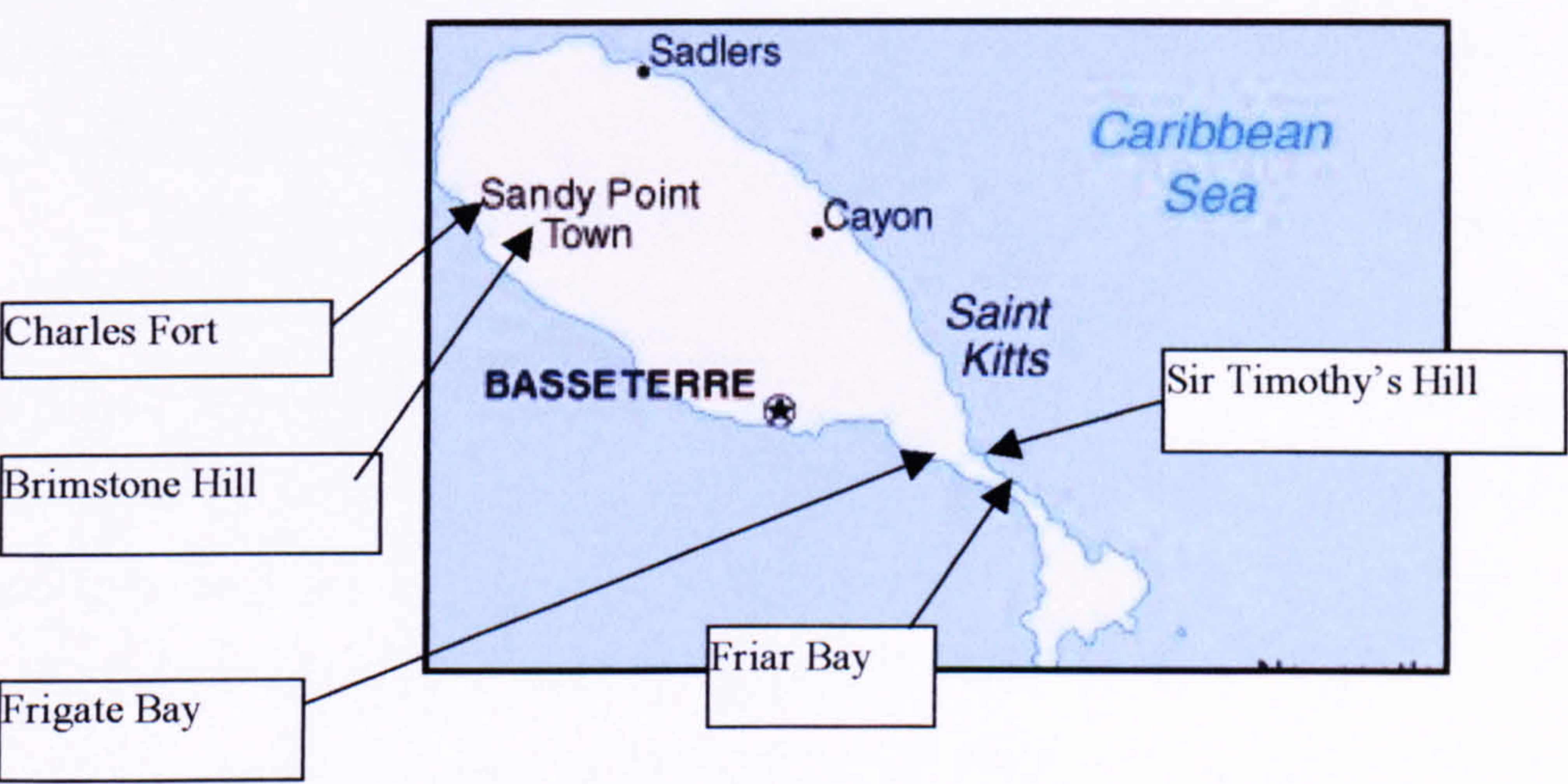


Fig. 5: St Kitts

Reconvening the following day, the Council now sought to formulate a plan which reclaimed the element of surprise. It now resolved to attack the French by landing two groups of troops: one force of around 500 colonial soldiers commanded by Sir Timothy Thornhill would go ashore at Friar Bay, a half-mile to the eastwards of Frigate Bay, ascend the near 800 foot interposing hill and drop down on the rear of the western flank of the French trenches; and as Thornhill was making this attack, a second force comprised of Bolton's regiment and the seamen would land as originally planned. The Council also

wagered that the French would believe the English return to Frigate Bay a feint for a principal landing to the leeward, and, so, to entrench this possible misapprehension, once the soldiers for Frigate Bay had been sent on their way, the squadron having been rejoined by the detachment at Friar Bay would set sail to leeward.

The execution of the plan was a complete success.³⁸ Thornhill encountered little resistance on landing or during his arduous march over what is still known today as 'Sir Timothy's Hill'. Swiftly dealing with the derisory number of French scouts, his colonial force was able to descend the western slope and punch a hole through the French trenches which had been weakened (as the English surmised) by the withdrawal of men to deal with an expected attack to the leeward. This changed the situation *visa vis* the seaborne assault. When the rest of the troops completed a successful landing at Frigate Bay, thus tightening the other arm of the English pincer, the French fled from their trenches towards the island's principal town, Basseterre. A bridgehead had been established; but if the island was to be completely conquered then further co-operation between the army and navy would be required. This was, in fact, what occurred over the course of the next month as the centres of French resistance upon the island were progressively eliminated.

Drawing his landed troops up into two lines - one taking the high mountainous route and the other the road at sea level - Codrington pursued the enemy towards Basseterre. About a mile from Frigate Bay both were engaged in a fire fight as the French had rallied during their initial retreat. The line of troops on the lower route met particularly stout resistance and the Antiguans, who comprised the majority of this force, lost a disproportionate amount of men. The French were eventually beaten back and sufficiently disordered to abandon the possibility of establishing the town and fort of Basseterre as a centre of defence. As Wright, whose task had been to take the squadron down to the coast parallel to the town with a view to bombarding it into submission, approached the roadstead, the French struck their colours, fired many of the town's building and fled into the mountains.

³⁸ The ensuing account of the operation on St Kitts is based on the following primary sources: *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 927, 968, 977, 1004, 1034.I, II, 1044.III, pp. 278-9, 288-9, 291-4, 313-14, 303-5: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4 June 1690; Kendall to Shrewsbury, 26 June 1690, Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4 July, 3 Aug. 1690; Wright to Kendall, 24 June, 26 July 1690; Inventory of

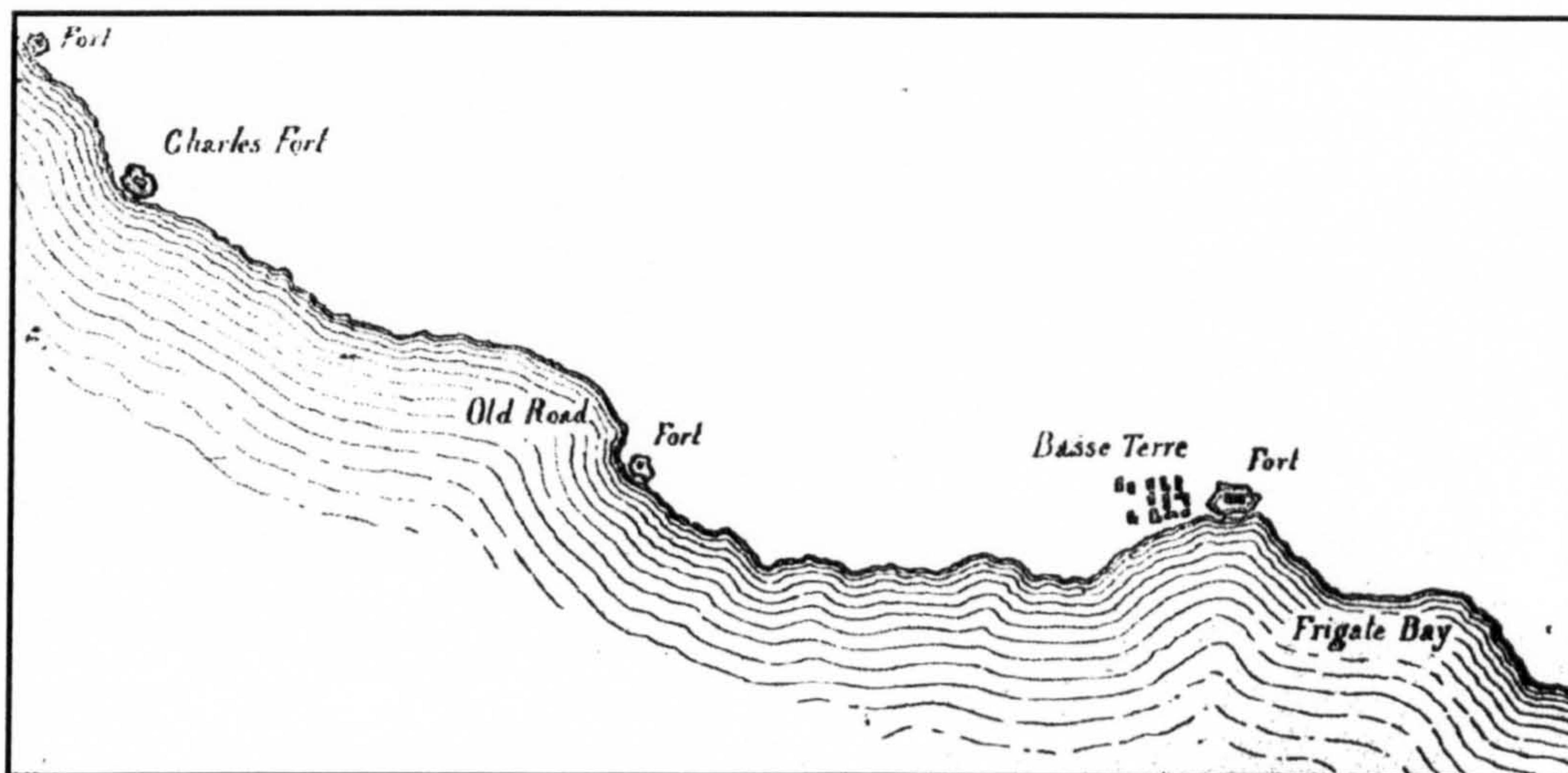


Fig. 6: Outline Coast of St Kitts

It was not the intention of the French Governor, Guiteau, to remain long in the highlands, and with a force of some 300 regular troops and planters he travelled north west to Charles (or the English) Fort on Sandy Point to stage his defence of the island. Guiteau's abandonment of the other inhabitants engendered a sense of betrayal that diluted any resistance to English troops on their march upon the fort, while the fleet sailed round to a rendezvous at Pheype's Bay. Overlooking Charles Fort from the east, Brimstone Hill provided an excellent vantage point for reconnaissance; and from its heights Codrington immediately appreciated that he was faced with undertaking a standard siege. Although Wright was now some distance off the coast in the Old Road having failed to make the rendezvous due to bad anchorage at Pheype's Bay, word still reached him on 27 June that Codrington wished a consultation. A meeting that day between the two men reached agreement on the positioning of naval ordnance on the north-east slopes of Brimstone Hill; and, more significantly, demonstrated their harmonious relations in that they had both felt able to dispense with a Council of War. Within two days Wright had landed the two chase guns from the *Mary's* forecastle, and the sailors then serving with the land force were subsequently commended by Codrington for their efforts in bringing this ordnance up the hill on specially built sledges. With the hill batteries ready to begin their fire, on 1 July Wright led seven of his

the arms etc. taken at Charles Fort, St Christophers; PRO, ADM 51/582, Parts i-ii, unpaginated, *Mary*, 9

squadron in a double pass of the fort, throwing from half-range an upper-tier broadside on each occasion. This did not, however, seem to quell the enemy's fire from the fort and the naval captains concluded that the situation of the well-walled fort on a rock that was almost as high as the walls caused it to be immune from a sea-based bombardment. A preponderant land battery was considered the only way forward and a further nine twelve pounders were landed from the squadron to form a shore level gun emplacement. Previously, on 30 June, Codrington had opened his half-moon trenches and, as the parallel lines inched forward, he sent parties out to sweep the mountainous environs in an attempt to flush out any enemy operating in his rear. Although this tactic culminated in a full island traverse by 800 troops headed by Codrington, the enemy's dispersal, allowed the majority of them to evade the English military broom.

Given that his attempt to secure his siege force had largely failed, Codrington required that swifter progress be made in forcing the fortress to surrender. There was, nonetheless, little cause for anxiety. Over the course of nine days from 2 to 12 July, the heavy ordnance began to take its toll as the trenches moved within pistol shot of the fort gates. At each stage sailors from the squadron - and not only those initially organised as the 'Marine Regiment' - were prominent in moving the siege forwards. On 12 July Guiteau beat a parley, seeking a cease-fire of between 48 to 72 hours and Codrington quickly consented, though he remorselessly continued the works by extending his front trench to link up with the one the enemy had dug outwards for access and mounted more guns. Within 48 hours of the cease-fire, Guiteau agreed to a surrender and on 16 July the garrison marched out with only their baggage, leaving behind some 29 cannon and over 200 small arms.

Buoyed by this successful action, Codrington persuaded the Council to dispatch Thornhill with a force of 350 men comprised of troops from Thornhill's colonial regiment and Bolton's regiment to reclaim St Eustatius for the Dutch. Wright ordered the *Guernsey* with some hired sloops to transport and land Thornhill's force, while the rest of the squadron sailed to Pheype's Bay to embark the sailors of the 'Marine Regiment'. Thereafter, the squadron was to bear for St Eustatius to support the land force. The landing was unopposed and Thornhill's force made good progress through the interior of the island to come up against the fort on the south side where a French garrison of 80 men had concentrated their

defences. Allied unity was not advanced, though, by the circumstance that former Dutch governor, Captain Schorer, had landed three days earlier from Saba with a meagre force of 60 soldiers which, Codrington acidly remarked, managed only to round up the island's livestock.

As at St Kitts, the English had to lay siege to the fort, and the squadron again provided the mainstay of the ordnance for the batteries. On this occasion, the fort was more susceptible to bombardment from the sea and over the two days - 21 and 22 July - Wright sent various ships in close to ensure a reasonably constant fire. The naval commander was also instrumental in maintaining a regular supply of stores to the trenches until the French surrendered on 25 July. It was an outcome that greatly pleased Wright who, after inspecting the fort, wrote of its natural and erected defences as being too great to have been overcome by assault.³⁹ He would also have been pleased with the successful completion of this second combined operation just as the height of the hurricane season was giving notice of a cessation in operational activity. Moreover, an increasing sickness amongst the troops was hindering, in the short-term at least, any further action. Considering these factors, a Council of War decided at the end of July that the remnants of Bolton's and the Barbadian regiments would remain at St Kitts while the colonial militia could return home. Wright was to depart for Barbados and weather the worst of the season by cruising off that station.⁴⁰

London's orders were that Wright return with the squadron on the depletion of his provisions towards the end of the summer. However, both Kendall and Codrington - albeit for different reasons - were keen that the squadron continue in the Caribbean. Kendall's concerns were defensive, fearing that Wright's departure would coincide with the anticipated French squadron's arrival in the region, thus leaving the English colonies vulnerable to attack. Codrington, however, had a more aggressive vision, focused upon the wholesale capture of the Caribbean sugar trade through deploying the squadron to press home attacks against the other French islands and, in particular, Martinique and Guadeloupe. As Kendall was not embroiled in the campaign to retake St Kitts, the Barbadian Governor was the first to begin lobbying the Court as early as June and his promptness bore fruit when agreement was reached that the squadron would remain till the turn of the year, while provision ships would

³⁹ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1004, 1034.I, pp. 303-5, 313-14: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 Aug. 1690; Wright to Kendall, 26 July 1690; PRO, ADM 51/582, Part ii, unpaginated, *Mary*, 17-26 July 1690; Spencer, *A True and Faithful Relation of the Proceedings of the Forces*, pp. 11-12.

be dispatched with supplies and around 400 recruits for Bolton's regiment. Furthermore, when he was eventually to depart, Wright was to appoint a frigate each to the island stations of Barbados, Jamaica and the Leeward Islands, showing an increased English commitment to the West Indies.

These decisions taken in October clearly responded more to Kendall's defensive concerns than Codrington's enthusiasm to take steps to expel the French. Indeed, the Leeward Islands' Governor was most upset when he received notification in December that Wright was only to stay until January, particularly as an operation against Guadeloupe in October had been shelved due to the refusal of the militia troops to participate until there was a full and fair division of the current stocks of plunder. Nonetheless, the slowness of early modern military communications meant that Codrington was then unaware that in November the Court had decided that Wright would remain in the West Indies indefinitely.⁴¹

By the time notification of the squadron's indefinite continuance reached the Caribbean, reports had come through that a considerable French squadron had dropped anchor at Martinique. Wright was cruising off Barbados when this news reached him and, although it proved difficult to clarify the exact number of French ships, with estimates of the number of men-of-war varying between fourteen and two, it was clear that the navy's ability to participate in a combined operation had been compromised. Regional sea command was now threatened, and as a result the squadron would either have to assert its supremacy or look two ways when undertaking operations. Without waiting for confirmation of the size of the French squadron, Wright's initial reaction was to augment his own force by hiring six merchantmen whose provisioning would be at the colonies' expense. The naval captains readily agreed with this course of action but - probably due to the cost - the colonial officials were more sceptical and, when the number of French ships was reported to be considerably less than fourteen, Kendall argued for the discharge of some of the merchantmen. Although

⁴⁰ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1004, 1034.I, pp. 303-5, 313-14: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 Aug. 1690; Wright to Kendall, 26 July 1690; PRO, ADM 51/582, Part ii, unpaginated, *Mary*, 31 July 1690; PRO, ADM 2/5, pp. 77-82: 'Instructions for Capt. Lawrence Wright', 21 Dec. 1689.

⁴¹ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 968, 1158-9, 1207, 1242, 1319, pp. 288-9, 338, 351-2, 369-70, 388-9: Kendall to Shrewsbury, 26 June 1690; the Lords of Trade and Plantations to Kendall, 1 Nov 1690; Minutes of the Council of Barbados, 3 Nov. 1690; the Lords of Trade and Plantations to Codrington, 24 Nov. 1690; Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 16 Dec. 1690, 15 Feb. 1691; PRO, ADM 1/5247, fos. 134-5, 145: Naval Minute, 18 Sept., 30 Oct. 1690; PRO, ADM 2/6, fos. 393-4, 488, 494, 507-9, 513: 'Instructions for Capt. Lawrence Wright', 1 Oct. 1690; the Admiralty to Wright, 17, 21 Nov. 1690; the Admiralty to Tollemache, 18, 20 Nov. 1690, PRO, ADM 2/380, f. 531: Sotherne to Wright, 17 Nov. 1690.

the naval Council undoubtedly complied with the Instructions by consulting with the Barbadian Governor, its rejection of his advice transgressed the spirit of the expedition; and this was the first milestone on the road to increasingly fractious relations between Wright and the colonial authorities.⁴²

In early February, Wright revealed his determination to mount further operations with Codrington by sailing for the Leeward Islands without first neutralising the French naval threat as Kendall had suggested.⁴³ To be fair to Wright, he did ply off Martinique for a couple of days on his voyage north to seek clarification on the actual strength of the French fleet; and on 16 February he received the lowest estimate of only two French men-of-war from the crew of a sloop that the *Bristol* captured under Martinique's shore. As this hardly represented a credible threat to his sea command, Wright did not want to waste time or resources blocking up Martinique to entice the French out for an engagement. Nonetheless, the Commodore also learned that Ducasse was on his way to the region with a considerably larger French squadron. This should, perhaps, have instilled a sense of urgency in the forthcoming amphibious operations.

A Council of War held ashore at St Kitts on 19 February resolved to attack Guadeloupe, and that the preparations for this were immediately to proceed apace. Wright's log recorded much activity by the squadron moving amongst the Leeward Islands embarking soldiers and stores but there was no explanation why a month hence the expeditionary force had still to sail for Guadeloupe or why on 20 March the Council changed the target of attack to Mariegalante. However, unusually for a Captain's log, Wright provides a fairly personalised commentary alongside the factual notes. He described disputes such as that over the discharge of the hired ships and punctuated the record with sarcastic remarks on Codrington's alleged pretensions to greatness in military command. In doing so, he charted the deterioration of his relationship with the Governor and implied that the delay was due to Codrington's procrastination. Of course, the Leeward Islands' Council was forthcoming with an alternative interpretation which portrayed Wright as a dilettante, who possessed

⁴² *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1312, 1384, 1384.I, 1384.III, pp. 384, 404-7: Minutes of the Council of Barbados, 2 Feb. 1691; Kendall to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4 Apr. 1691; Kendall to Wright, n.d.; Wright to Kendall, 19 Mar. 1691; PRO, ADM 51/582, Part ii, unpaginated, *Mary*, 11 Jan.-16 Feb. 1691.

⁴³ The ensuing account of the operations against Mariegalante and Guadeloupe is based on the following primary sources: *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1382, 1557, 1617, pp. 402-4, 461-6, 484-92: Hutcheson to Blathwayt, 3 Apr., 3 June 1691; Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 July 1691; PRO, ADM

insufficient resolve to attack the French and who wasted time cruising amongst the islands. The evidence is ultimately inconclusive but what is clear is that when the squadron left for Mariegalante on 21 March, the relationship between the land and sea forces and, more specifically, between Codrington and Wright had deteriorated.

Notwithstanding, the operation against Mariegalante was a success. On 28 March Bolton's regiment plus over 200 sailors were landed under the command of Major Nott and marched without opposition to the town where a fort of four guns was found to be deserted. The enemy had, in fact, fled to the woods upon the English landing, and Nott's main task was, as Hutcheson described it, 'hunting-work'. The Major was, nonetheless, deprived of his seamen after Wright took a boat down to shore to assess the extent of Nott's task and decided that the squadron might be more profitably employed reconnoitring Guadeloupe. When the Commodore returned to Mariegalante on 6 April, Codrington had arrived to send a summons to the French Governor, Auger, which he answered the day after Nott captured Lieutenant d'Avoux and 30 of his men. This number, added to the 50 already killed out of a total of 240, obviously caused Auger to believe that he had not sufficient numbers to defend French control of the island; but implicitly it also reflected the insignificance of Mariegalante within the region. Ironically, this view was underlined by the English who after sending the French prisoners away, brought off all their troops on 13 April having resolved to leave the island without a garrison as they set out for the strategically more important island of Guadeloupe.

This resolution had been taken at a Council held on 10 April - a fractious meeting at which Codrington had tried to persuade the assembled participants that Martinique should be attacked first. He argued that this more southerly French island held the key to the rest of their possessions in the West Indies and that, militarily, a logical progression could be made from it to Guadeloupe. Since Barbados had agreed only to commit troops to the reduction of Martinique, Codrington contended that the landing force could make an initial attack while awaiting the arrival of this contingent. This would secure the majority of the island save for the fort where it was expected the French Governor would retreat in strength. Once the Barbadians had arrived they could invest the enemy stronghold thereby freeing the landing force to press north to Guadeloupe which Codrington expected to offer less resistance even

though intelligence reports indicated that defensive preparations were being completed in expectation of an attack. It remains unclear why the Council was not persuaded by Codrington's plausible arguments, especially since the Governor held the Chair in the presence of many other soldiers. While the naval captains may have been resolved for Guadeloupe on going into the meeting, the majority verdict against Codrington implies that some land men voted against him. Perhaps there were fears that, regardless of the eventual support from Barbados, the landing force would incur loss at the initial attack on Martinique causing there to be a reduction in the 1100 troops then available for deployment on Guadeloupe; or perhaps the Council as a whole simply could not accept Codrington's assessment about the comparative degrees of resistance expected at either island.

When the fleet arrived off Guadeloupe on 19 April and bore down towards the shore in front of the main town, Basse-Terre, Wright noted the scale of the French defensive disposition: deep trenches faced with armed men and a couple of troops of horse positioned above. This was in addition to Fort Maudlin and other gun emplacements, all of which managed to badly gall the squadron that afternoon when it got caught in a calm at half-cable lengths distance. Some thirty men were lost in this exchange which lasted just over an hour before a slight wind blew up to allow the vessels to disengage. This stout French opposition caused a rethink of the landing site when the fleet arrived at the intended spot - Anse La Barque Bay - on 21 April only to spy the enemy hastening there too. Codrington proposed landing at another bay to the windward, sensibly arguing that the extra two leagues march was worth the security of wading ashore from the boats largely unmolested. This point was subsequently underscored when, after a successful landing had been effected, considerable French breastworks positioned at Anse la Barque were seen for the first time.

Major Nott and Lord Archibald Hamilton led English troops landed first to relative safety on a nearby hill-top; included in this force was the re-formed 'Marine Regiment' of around 400 sailors drawn from the squadron. Soon after, the march upon Basse-Terre began and it was not without incident. For the English, the major difficulty was the immediate topography which compressed the reach of their force and provided the French with many robust natural features to use as cover. Indeed, the ascent to the enemy's position some two and a-half miles distant on the opposite side of a steep gully was difficult; the path, wide enough for only three troops abreast, ran through a thick wood that thinned on the left flank as the crest was reached. It took a well executed flanking manoeuvre by Lord Hamilton

round the less dense left of this wood before the French were forced from their position. Such problems were virtually replicated three miles forward where the French had rallied on a hill-top across the Habitants river. Again a wood interposed and the most suitable approach could accommodate only two soldiers abreast. Codrington initially aimed to beat a path through the woods and he committed around 450 men to this task; but, as they got bogged down in a fire-fight, he was forced to seek a passage some distance up-river before the French could be forced once more onto the retreat. After sunset on 22 April, Codrington with an advanced detachment of 500 men did arrive in the deserted town of La Bayliff three miles from Basse-Terre; but it had not been without cost.



Fig. 7: Guadeloupe.

On the following morning, as the rest of the army came up, Captain Blackiston was sent forward to reconnoitre Basse-Terre. Since the landing, the squadron had been redundant as it followed the course of the army along the shore, but the land sources imply that its idleness caused the fleet to provide an inaccurate report that Blakiston was engaged at the

town, though Wright's log contains no record of this. Nonetheless, on this pretext, Codrington moved quickly to support Captain Blackiston to find that he had in fact entered a deserted town and that those French who had stayed were in the town's old fortified castle connected within a furlong to a 'cavalier' or fortified raised outpost. Hutcheson's report makes clear that the strength of these fortifications derived both from their natural aspects and the quality of their construction but on 24 April the Council agreed that siege works should be begun.

Wright organised his squadron to land the requisite amount of ordnance and store for the siege batteries, while drafting a proposal that the squadron ply to the windward and bear down in line to batter the castle and the 'cavalier'. Codrington and the land officers agreed to Wright's plans but despite three attempts, the weather and, in particular, the strength of the current prevented any seaborne bombardment. Hence by 1 May, Wright was back at anchor off Bailiff landing additional ordnance and stores as Codrington moved his gun batteries ever closer to the forts in expectation of effecting the necessary breach as a preliminary to an assault. At that point the principal source of worry was that the French might send reinforcements from Martinique and, in an attempt to neutralise this threat by increasing the size of their own force, the Council sent Hutcheson to Barbados to negotiate an additional supply of men. However, within three days of his departure Hutcheson's task looked increasingly irrelevant as word came through to Wright that Ducasse had already arrived at Martinique, albeit with only two men-of-war.

This news did not initially impact upon the English operation and the siege batteries continued their near constant bombardment, causing several smaller breaches to open up, and, on 11 May, the razing of the fort's house. Two days later however Wright was informed that eleven substantial French sail had been spotted coming from Martinique. He immediately concluded that Ducasse was leading a relief expedition and sent to Codrington with an account of these circumstances and a request that all the sailors currently on shore be sent back aboard. The Commodore's instinct was to leave Guadeloupe and sail towards Ducasse. His log does, however, play down such intentions and notes that at the Council of naval captains convened the following day it was resolved merely to ask Codrington if the squadron should sail, thus leaving the army ashore; and the minute of this Council supports this version of events. Codrington, nonetheless, believed that Wright was threatening to withdraw sea-based support without which his army faced being cut off. Codrington subsequently wrote of

trying to forge a compromise by suggesting to Wright that five of the hired merchantmen remain on station while the land force made a final push to capture the forts. According to Codrington - Wright makes no mention of this proposal in his log - the Commodore's response was intemperate and focused on preserving the squadron at all costs.

The army was re-embarked during the night of 14 May, thus signalling the end of the combined operations undertaken by Wright and Codrington. The squadron set off to engage Ducasse but, either through accident or design, the Frenchman managed to outrun Wright. Thereafter, on returning to Barbados, the relationships between Wright and the colonial authorities progressively worsened throughout the rest of the summer to such an extent that Codrington and others sought to engineer Wright's disgrace on his return to England. By the time Wright left the Caribbean in the early autumn due to sickness and a recall order, a warrant had been issued for his arrest. The court martial, which did not occur for another two years, acquitted him of all charges relating to his conduct when in the Caribbean. In the summer of 1691 this was for the future as the important questions about the failure of William's strategy and the combined operations in the Caribbean began to be asked at Court.

II.iii: Captain Ralph Wrenn's Expedition to the West Indies, January-April 1692.

The short three month duration of this expedition, combined with the fact that Captain Wrenn failed to make any offensive troop landings before he succumbed to yellow fever in early April, questions its separate inclusion in a study of combined operations. This though can be immediately answered by the administrative and strategic reality of an expedition which was dispatched in the six months following the ignominious circumstances surrounding the indecision over Wright's recall and his subsequent arrest for high treason.⁴⁴

Superficial enquiry might lead one to pre-date the operation's origins to a memorandum circulated in June 1691 in which the author (subsequently identified as Blathwayt) laid out a plan for a strengthened West Indian squadron to make a series of

⁴⁴ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iii. 168: Nottingham to Sydney, 21 July 1691, states that Wright was to be ordered home and yet, PRO, ADM 3/6, pp. 126-7: Board Minutes, 7 Aug. 1691, contains fresh orders to Wright regarding the provisioning of his squadron in the West Indies. HMC, *Finch MSS*, iii. 198: Nottingham to the Commissioners of the Admiralty, 10 Aug. 1691, indicates that it was not until 10 Aug. that the Admiralty were requested to remove Wright and issue a warrant for his arrest. Neeser, 'The British Naval Operations in the West Indies, 1650-1700', p. 1624 n. 38, claimed that an order countermanding the recall was received in the West Indies. By autumn, in the event of the Admiralty having failed to issue the warrant, the Lords of Trade in *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 1775, p. 545: Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 21 Sept. 1691, made clear their intention to do so.

destructive descents on the French territories in conjunction with the Duke of Bolton's Second Regiment of Foot (previously taken out by Wright) and a further two infantry battalions.⁴⁵ However, this was little different from what Wright had been dispatched to undertake, and Blathwayt's plan came to provide the wellspring and general direction of all expeditions sent to the Caribbean during the war. The more immediate origins of Wrenn's squadron are to be found in the failure of the last Wright-Codrington attempt against Guadeloupe. On that occasion the joint service equilibrium whereby maritime preponderance succoured the land campaign had been upset by the arrival of some eleven French sail in a neighbouring bay. The basic point that (regional) sea command was essential before any other attacks (land or sea) could be sustained had been well made.⁴⁶ It followed that a prerequisite of such command was a preponderant sailing force and the small squadron that Captain Arthur commanded after Wright's departure was evidently insufficient. Moreover, it was desperately short of provisions, both of victuals and war stores. These circumstances led West Indian interests to express their vulnerabilities. The colonial governors wrote home of their fears of imminent French territorial attacks and such misgivings were underscored by an autumn report that France was preparing to send to the region a squadron of fourteen sail.⁴⁷ Meanwhile, critical mercantile opinion on custom duties; the three quarters native crew threshold; and the continuing damage inflicted upon trade, all festered throughout the summer and culminated in a series of petitions and bills when Parliament opened in the autumn.⁴⁸ In the summer of 1691, therefore, William's war strategy seemed to lack a coherent imperial defence component and, in the Caribbean, England was offensively and defensively impotent. These were not circumstances he could afford to ignore; nor did he want to. On 19 August 1691, a month before Wright touched Kinsale on his return, the Admiralty summoned Captain Sir Francis Wheler⁴⁹ to attend 'haveing occasion to employ him'.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 1560, pp. 467-8: Proposals for destroying the French Plantations in America, [June?] 1691.

⁴⁶ W.T. Morgan, 'The British West Indies During King William's War (1689-97)', *JMH* ii (1930), 390; Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, pp. 255-7.

⁴⁷ *CSPD, 1690-1691*, p. 525: Proceedings upon the petition of the Commissioner for the Leeward and Caribees Islands, 19 Sept. 1691.

⁴⁸ Morgan, 'The British West Indies', pp. 389-91; L.F. Stock, *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America, ii. 1689-1692* (Washington D.C., 1927), pp. 46-7, 50-9.

⁴⁹ Also frequently spelt Wheeler, though I have adopted the spelling given in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1909), xx. 1355.

⁵⁰ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 144: Board Minutes, 19 Aug. 1691.

Wheler was to be asked to command the prospective West Indian squadron and throughout the following weeks he and the Board were engaged in negotiations over the extent and the nature of this command. Using Captain Wright's Instructions as a model, both parties moved to the drafting of a new set. Initially no points of contention arose and, indeed, the Admiralty proposed and secured agreement for the appointment from the Queen's Cabinet Council.⁵¹ Moreover, the colonial governors were certainly led to believe that it was to be Sir Francis who was soon to arrive with a squadron.⁵² However, just two months after negotiations had first begun, the Admiralty signed Instructions for a Captain Ralph Wrenn, and not Wheler, to command the West Indian squadron.⁵³

This alteration was a product of the breakdown in negotiations between Wheler and the Admiralty. There had been a failure to reach agreement on the balance of authority between the naval commander and the colonial governor, who, in the absence of an appointed General Officer, would command the land forces. Wheler's request at the end of August for a clearer explanation on this point ran up against Governor Codrington's correspondence on the perceived imbalance in command which he considered had bedevilled combined operations with Wright. As part of a remedy, he had suggested that the governor should have sole authority over the naval squadron and this had recently been piloted by ranking the current naval commander in the West Indies subordinate to the Barbadian Governor.⁵⁴ The union of military and naval command in the hands of a colonial official was unlikely to appeal to a sailor of Wheler's experience; and, certainly, in the following year, a memorandum he drafted on the West Indian squadron explicitly argued that the naval command should be totally independent of the colonial governors.⁵⁵

The final Instructions issued to Wrenn indicated that the Admiralty required a more submissive junior captain to lead the squadron. The provisions on command expressed in Articles Seven to Eleven - albeit subtly drafted - showed Codrington to have succeeded in

⁵¹ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 161: Board Minutes, 31 Aug. 1691; PRO, ADM 2/171, pp. 399-400: the Admiralty to Nottingham, 31 Aug. 1691; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iii. 405-6: Minutes of the Committee, or Cabinet Council, appointed to advise the Queen during the King's absences from England, 21 Aug. 1691.

⁵² *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 1993, pp. 587: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 11 Jan. 1692.

⁵³ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 241: Board Minutes, 30 Oct. 1691.

⁵⁴ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 202: Board Minutes, 2 Oct. 1691; PRO, ADM 2/171, pp. 399-400: the Admiralty to Nottingham, 31 Aug. 1691; *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1617 1688, pp. 490-1, 520: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 July 1691; the Lords of Trade and Plantations to Kendall, 6 Aug. 1691.

⁵⁵ PRO, SP 42/1, fos. 397-406: 'Proposalls Humbly Offered by Sir Francis Wheeler Upon His Being Thought On to Goe Commander of the West India Squadron', 18 July 1692.

retaining the colonial influence. Admittedly he was not given sole command of the fleet as he had argued for, nor could he ignore the resolutions of a Council of War at which Wrenn and his three eldest Captains had standing, but overall, the greater discretion in command went to the governor. Similar to Wright's Instructions, Codrington, and the Leeward Islands' Council of War, could advise on the proceedings of the squadron at sea; while Wrenn was also prohibited from detaching any of his squadron without first informing the Barbadian and Leeward Islands' authorities. Moreover, having done so, the naval commander had to ensure that such land men were satisfied that the King's service did not positively need the ships to remain on the island station.⁵⁶

This wrangling between the colonial and naval interests did not hinder the material preparations of the squadron and these indicated that the naval force was to combine with a contingent of soldiers and, thus, possess an amphibious capability. That this was to be modest was obvious from the size of force to be embarked inasmuch that it did not warrant a general commanding officer, nor even a commissioned regimental officer. On its dispatch from England, twenty non-commissioned officers provided the higher ranks of military command for the 400 soldiers which had been drafted from Bolton's Regiment billeted at Portsmouth as recruits for his second infantry battalion previously raised for service in the West Indies.⁵⁷ Since 1690 it had been mainly quartered in the Leeward Islands and, due to sickness and combat casualties, was now desperately short of establishment strength not to mention clothes and provisions.

The squadron's modest amphibious capability was further underscored by the relatively small size of its naval component. As Captain of the *Norwich*, Wrenn was only to take under his command from England two fourth rates - the *Diamond* and the *Mordaunt* - which were to convoy fourteen merchant ships hired as freight for the soldiers, provisions and ordnance. Only on arrival in the Caribbean would the squadron be enlarged through the addition of the six warships that Wright had been persuaded to leave on station.⁵⁸

Significantly, the Admiralty denied Wrenn the additional authority of flying a Flag at his ship's

⁵⁶ PRO, ADM 2/8, pp. 330-4: 'Instructions for Capt. Ralph Wrenn', 29 Oct. 1691.

⁵⁷ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 169: Board Minutes, 4 Sept. 1691; PRO, ADM 2/8, p. 215: the Admiralty to the Commissioners for Transportation, 4 Sept. 1691; PRO, WO 5/6, p. 231: Order to the Duke of Bolton, 31 Oct. 1691; PRO, WO 25/3138, p. 139: Warrant for the Earl of Ranelagh, 19 Nov. 1691.

⁵⁸ PRO, ADM 2/8, pp. 330-4: 'Instructions for Capt. Ralph Wrenn', 29 Oct. 1691; *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 1617, p. 485: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 July 1691. In the event only five warships

topmasthead, which would have conferred upon him unofficial rank of Commodore.⁵⁹ This small number of warships and few soldiers has led Wrenn's force to be described as 'lamentably inadequate'.⁶⁰ Quantitatively, this was quite correct, especially if one of the reasons for the squadron's departure was to reclaim command of the sea. However, such condemnation misses the point that Wrenn's expeditionary force was modest by design because its combined operational deployment was to be as the junior partner with the colonial authorities. The Admiralty may have underestimated the capability required to command the Caribbean sea and eject the French from their territories, but with respect to Wrenn's squadron, its material resource was commensurate with the objectives and structure of command set down in the Instructions.

Despite its small size, the fitting out of Wrenn's squadron was not spared delay. The blame, however, did not entirely lie with the Admiralty. Indeed, as has been seen, the negotiations over the Instructions continued throughout September and October as the Navy Board worked to bring the squadron together. The delays originated with the merchant ships which had been hired to carry the majority of the soldiers (the three warships were only to carry 50 soldiers each)⁶¹ plus the ordnance and victuals. There occurred grave problems in getting the relevant freight - in particular the victuals - aboard and for the ships then to slip down the River Thames to the Downs before starting for St Helens where the soldiers were to be embarked.⁶² More delay could then be expected there for the War Office had been slow to issue the correct order for the draught.⁶³ Circumstances were further complicated by the fact that in early August preparations had been begun to send out some merchantmen with four months victuals and stores for the warships already on station. The fourth rates the *Diamond* and the *Norwich* were to act as convoy and they had a projected departure date of

joined Wrenn because the *Jersey* surrendered to the French after a short action on 18 December 1691. See Moses, 'The British Navy in the Caribbean, 1689-1697', pp. 26-7.

⁵⁹ PRO, ADM 2/381, p. 397: Sotherne to Wrenn, 7 Nov. 1691; PRO, ADM 2/8, pp. 380-1: Order to Capt. Wrenn, 7 Nov. 1691; PRO, ADM 3/3, pp. 20, 35: Board Minutes, 28 Jan., 6 Feb. 1690.

⁶⁰ Neeser, 'The British Naval Operations in the West Indies', p. 1615.

⁶¹ PRO, ADM 2/171, pp. 425-6: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 17 Sept. 1691.

⁶² PRO, ADM 2/381, p. 339: Sotherne to Blathwayt, 12 Oct. 1691.

⁶³ The initial order - PRO, WO 5/6, p. 223: Order to Col. John Gibson, 7 Oct. 1691 - was cancelled, but then reissued on 24 October - PRO, WO 5/6, p. 230. This was superseded when it was decided that the total 400 soldiers were to be solely drafted from Bolton's First Regiment of Foot instead of 100 coming from Viscount Castleton's Regiment. See p. 84 n. 57 above for the order and Ranelagh's warrant for payment.

15 September.⁶⁴ With both these warships appointed to the proposed West Indian squadron it seems likely that this convoy never departed and, instead, that the Navy Board had to integrate its freight with that being sent out in the fourteen merchantmen of Wrenn's squadron. To the Admiralty's credit they recognised the potential for delay and stressed to the Navy Board the need for its strict oversight.⁶⁵ It was, nonetheless, to little avail. In early October, the Admiralty Secretary, Sotherne, demanded to know of the victuallers why the loading of the merchant vessels was in a state of 'backwardness'.⁶⁶ Wrenn was to provide regular lists of those vessels that appeared at the Downs, though his first return of mid-October which mentioned only Henry Stupple's *England Frigate*, contradicted the Downs's commander's list that also cited the *Edward & Elizabeth*. Confusion and, doubtless, delay resulted. Certainly no time was gained and, by the end of the month, there were more than a few merchant vessels who had still not passed down the Thames. With the mass of soldiers still to be embarked, it was 2 December before Wrenn received his orders to sail.⁶⁷

The fate of Wrenn, his squadron and the prospective combined operations with the colonial authorities in the Caribbean can in outline be understood from the Court's consideration of his widow's petition for relief. The Admiralty had referred her pleadings upwards because its rules prohibited relief to the dependants of those not slain in an actual sea fight and it considered that Wrenn, who had died from the sickness prevalent in the West Indies, was due some form of recognition. The Admiralty's supporting report highlighted Wrenn's many years as a naval commander and also his actions in defending his convoy when it was attacked on 22 February 1692 by a much larger French force commanded by Comte de Blenac, as Wrenn made his way from Barbados to Antigua.⁶⁸

That this was the only incident related from Wrenn's last period of service was highly significant for it explains the failure of the combined operations directed by Article Seven of Wrenn's Instructions. As demonstrated by Wright's experiences, regional sea superiority was a significant requirement for the execution of combined operations. On his arrival at Barbados during the second week of January 1692, both Wrenn and Governor Kendall were

⁶⁴ PRO, ADM 3/6, pp. 120, 136, 147: Board Minutes, 3, 14, 21 Aug. 1691; PRO, ADM 2/171, pp. 362-3: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 4 Aug. 1691.

⁶⁵ PRO, ADM 2/171, p. 446: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 30 Sept. 1691.

⁶⁶ PRO, ADM 2/381, p. 322: Sotherne to the Commissioners for Victualling, 9 Oct. 1691.

⁶⁷ PRO, ADM 2/381, pp. 354, 383, 450: Sotherne to Wrenn, 17, 20 Oct., 2 Dec. 1691; Sotherne to Blathwayt, 30 Oct. 1691.

hopeful of gaining this sea command for intelligence had indicated that the eighteen-strong French squadron was divided between a station off Barbados and an anchorage at Martinique. Wrenn, having augmented his own squadron with some merchantmen, sailed on 30 January with the objective of engaging the French ships off Barbados. The French, however, checked his efforts by sailing north and effecting a concentration of their force, leaving Wrenn little option but to return to Carlisle Bay.⁶⁹

In the following weeks, despite the lurking presence of the French fleet, the Barbadian Council was keen that Wrenn should not default on providing security for the merchants operating between the islands, nor on the delivery of the recruits, provisions and ordnance for Bolton's regiment quartered on the Leeward Islands. Therefore, on 18 February, having taken full advantage of the enhanced authority afforded them by Wrenn's Instruction, the island's Council of War dispatched the Captain to convoy the merchantmen bound for Antigua and Jamaica. Although the Council had enjoined that Wrenn steer clear of the French squadron until the merchants were safe and he had been joined by three warships from the Leeward Islands, this took no account of Blenac actively seeking an engagement. This was what occurred on the morning of 22 February as Wrenn passed by La Désirade near Guadeloupe. The French took advantage of a favourable gale to form a line of sixteen sail and attack Wrenn, who was thus forced to fight a defensive action for four hours until noon when the convoy was in the clear. Thereafter, despite the preponderant French force, Wrenn managed to bring his squadron of seven sail back to Barbados on 25 February without loss. The lack of battle damage could not, however, hide the strategic consequences that Wrenn had not only failed to gain command of the sea but had been chased from it. Moreover, tactically, it was obvious that the small size of his squadron would prohibit further actions of either a naval or amphibious character. This was confirmed by the landing of the recruits - increasingly ravaged by sickness - at Barbados.⁷⁰

Wrenn's death soon after returning to Barbados meant that he was not given the opportunity to seek a resolution of his squadron's strategic and tactical problems. Nor indeed, did his successor, Captain Butler, whose leadership was confined to implementing the

⁶⁸ PRO, ADM 2/10, p. 306: 'Report on a Reference of Council upon the Petition of the Widdow of Captain Wrenn for Relief', 18 July 1693; PRO, ADM 1/4080, f. 155: Court Minute, 28 July 1692.

⁶⁹ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 2024, 2025, p. 591: Minutes of the Council of War at Barbados, 23, 25 Jan. 1692; Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, p. 258.

Admiralty's order to return in the spring after disposing certain warships for the guard and service of the islands. At the same time, Governor Kendall wrote home of the relative weakness of the French force in the region which was such that he believed the English were better placed to harm it than might have been thought. This implied that Wrenn's later conduct, his death and then Butler's concentration on returning home were all missed opportunities.⁷¹ Such criticism did not adversely impact Mrs Wrenn's case and she was awarded a pension of £100 per annum⁷²; but more importantly for the war policy it encouraged the organisation of a third expeditionary operation to the West Indies.

II.iv: Rear Admiral Sir Francis Wheler's Expedition to the West Indies and North America, January-September 1693.

Although the first six months of 1692 brought European naval success through Admiral Russell's triumph at the battle of La Hogue and then planning for an combined operation upon the northern French coast, Secretaries Blathwayt and Nottingham devoted much of the second half of the year organising a third combined army and naval force for the Caribbean. The English Court was optimistic as it considered there to be a 'fair prospect'⁷³ of inflicting some damage upon the French in the region, while Nottingham even reckoned the advantage to be gained 'so great and so probable'.⁷⁴ These views both reflected Kendall's assessment of inherent French weakness in the Caribbean, and coincided with the colonial Governors' continual solicitation for a further despatch of warships and troops to bolster regional security.⁷⁵ But perhaps most importantly, no-one involved in formulating war policy could ignore the need to make good the patchy success of the Wright-Codrington ventures in 1691 and the lack of progress by Wrenn. This was especially true for politicians like Nottingham who were sceptical of William's continental campaigning and instead favoured a more exclusively maritime strategy. This strategic conception had been pithily articulated by Sir Thomas Clarges during the debate on supply for 1692, through his claim that the natural way

⁷⁰ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 2110, pp. 607-9: Kendall to the Lords of Trade, 4 Mar. 1692; Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, pp. 258-9; de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 246.

⁷¹ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 2189, p. 627: Extract from a letter of Governor Kendall to Blathwayt, 20 Apr. 1692.

⁷² PRO, ADM 1/4080, f. 155: Court Minute, 28 July 1692.

⁷³ *The Conduct of the Earl of Nottingham*, ed. W.A. Aiken (New Haven, 1941), p. 113.

⁷⁴ NMM, SOU/14, unf.: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 12 Aug. 1692.

⁷⁵ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1993, 2110, 2189, pp. 585-8, 607-9, 627: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 11 Jan. 1692; Kendall to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4 Mar. 1692; extract from a letter of Governor Kendall to Blathwayt, 20 Apr. 1692.

for an island was to wage war by sea, and that if America could be reclaimed and sea superiority maintained, then the French could overrun continental Europe without impunity for England.⁷⁶

The operational continuities with 1690-1691 are, however, initially difficult to detect due to misleading accounts of the expedition's vague provenance.⁷⁷ It is necessary to work many months back from the flurry of preparatory activity in the autumn of 1692 to March when the Admiralty decided to send a squadron to the West Indies under Captain George Meese. This proposal admittedly fell into abeyance and Meese was soon employed in the Channel.⁷⁸ Notwithstanding, by the beginning of April, Secretary Nottingham indicated that Blathwayt had already grasped the initiative with respect to the West Indies when he encouraged the Secretary-at-War to press on with the project he had formed for the region. Governor Kendall's claims in early March that the Barbadians were eagerly awaiting Wheler's arrival could conceivably be used to push the date of origin back even further.⁷⁹ However, it seems likely that these expectations were continuing hopes founded upon the preparations for a squadron in the second half of 1691 that Wheler was initially designated to command - the truncated version of which Wrenn commanded - and not early knowledge of a new design. Despite further references between the two Secretaries throughout the spring, progress proved slow as overseas endeavour remained strategically subordinate to the quest for military and naval success in Europe.⁸⁰

Progress on land remained elusive, with William bogged down in a 'war-as-process'⁸¹ in Flanders. Command of the sea had been secured at La Hogue in the early summer, however; and Blathwayt was hopeful of gaining the King's attention for his colonial project.

⁷⁶ A. Grey, *Debates of the House of Commons, From the Year 1667 to the Years 1694* (London, 1763), x. 177.

⁷⁷ Particularly confusing in this respect is Moses, 'The British Navy in the Caribbean, 1689-1697', p. 27 who strongly implied that the decision to send out a squadron under Wheler was not taken till late summer. Others, for example, Morgan, 'The British West Indies', p. 391; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 86; and S.S. Webb, 'William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer: Muddling Through to Empire, 1689-1717', *W&MQ* xxvi (1969), 381, all rightly dated the expedition's origins to early 1692. However, only Neeser, 'The British Naval Operations in the West Indies', p. 1615 specifically mentioned the proposed squadron under Meese as a precursor to Wheler's.

⁷⁸ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 446: Board Minutes, 16 Mar. 1692; PRO, ADM 3/7, unpaginated: Board Minutes, 22 July 1692; PRO, ADM 7/692, p. 30: Order to Captain Mees[e], 13 June 1692.

⁷⁹ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 2110, pp. 607-8: Kendall to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4 Mar. 1692.

⁸⁰ BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos: 28-9: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 1 Apr. 1692; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 129, 357, 513, pp. 73, 188, 276-7: Blathwayt to [Nottingham], [14-]24 Apr. 1692; Nottingham to Blathwayt, 27 May 1692; Nottingham to Kendall, 1 July 1692.

In this he was aided by the diminishing prospect that a combined operation would be executed against the Normandy coast.⁸² By the end of June, not only did William agree to the dispatch of a squadron of eleven sail with one regiment, and 300 recruits for Bolton's battalion already quartered on Barbados, to the Caribbean by 1 August but he also allocated an additional infantry regiment; ordered all infantry Captains to increase their companies by between five and ten men; and appointed Captain Sir Francis Wheler C.-in-C.⁸³

The operation was clearly Blathwayt's progeny and his 1691 proposals once again provided the outline.⁸⁴ Still, the extent of the Secretary-at-War's originality in design and control should not be exaggerated. The detail in the appointment of the land and sea commanders, including the drafting of the Instructions, and the material preparations provided many opportunities for Whitehall and others to exert influence. It was thus that the King's appointment of Sir Francis Wheler as C.-in.-C. was highly significant. As mentioned, Wheler had, in 1691, been mooted to command a West Indian squadron with troops aboard, and both the King and Blathwayt would have known of his stalled negotiations with the Admiralty regarding this appointment.⁸⁵ Yet remarkably neither initially stipulated the parameters of his commission, nor those of the Instructions save only that Wheler was to have a 'superior' command at sea and land.⁸⁶ This provided Wheler and the Admiralty with an opportunity to influence both by continuing their discussions left off in October 1691.

By late July 1692, Wheler had been invited to London for a conference on the expedition. The agenda was to be two papers that Sir Francis had earlier submitted to Whitehall which considered separately the sea and land commands.⁸⁷ Three Articles in each document dealt with the command structure and indicated that Wheler favoured a unitary and

⁸¹ This is Lynn's paradigmatic expression for warfare during the time of Louis XIV. Its characteristics include indecision, slow and interminable operations which combined placed primacy on attrition, and an aim to make war feed itself. See Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 367-76.

⁸² Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 87; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 223-7; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv. xli.

⁸³ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 411, 500, pp. 214, 269: enclosure (i), Blathwayt to Nottingham, [9-]19 June 1692; Nottingham to Russell, 29 June 1692; BL, Add. MSS 37991, f. 95: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 20 June 1692; NMM, SOU/13, unf.: [Blathwayt] to Nottingham, 17 July 1692 [NS].

⁸⁴ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 1560, pp. 467-8: Proposals for destroying the French Plantations in America, [June?] 1691.

⁸⁵ PRO, ADM 3/6, p. 202: Board Minutes, 2 Oct. 1691; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 547, p. 297: Russell to [Nottingham], 6 July 1692.

⁸⁶ BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 97-8: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 3 July 1692 [NS].

⁸⁷ PRO, SP 42/1, fos. 397-406, 407-10, 413-15: 'Proposalls Humbly Offered by Sir Francis Wheeler Upon His Being Thought On to Goe Commander', 18 July 1692; 'Proposalls Humbley Offered by Sir Francis Wheeler,

autocratic form.⁸⁸ In the first paper, Article Two expressed the nub by stipulating that the sea command be totally independent of the colonial governors. Article Thirteen underscored this with the practical condition that the naval commodore have the freedom to deploy his squadron without reference to another authority in theatre. The third noteworthy Article (the Fifth) aimed at bolstering the naval commander's role by nominally commissioning him a Lieutenant-Colonel (or second-in-command) if he should go ashore with the troops.⁸⁹ Significantly, Wheler's paper did not mention a Council of War as an arbiter of command decisions. The whole thrust was that the number of decision-takers should be kept to a minimum.

The second paper, focusing on the land command, continued in a similar manner. Although the proposal that the naval commander be nominally commissioned a Lieutenant-Colonel when on shore clearly represented an attempt to interpose him within the army's hierarchy, it was not a prelude to reducing the senior soldier's authority and an argument for an increase in the scope of the Colonel's command was made. While it was accepted that the island forces would have a pre-existing command structure based upon the Governor, Articles One and Four made it clear that the land commander sent from England should have full authority over the colonial militia and territorially raised regiments. Furthermore, Article Three aimed at undermining this recognition of a pre-existing colonial command structure by proposing that all the islands' forces should combine to form one brigade under a single general officer.⁹⁰ The underlying logic that this would serve to break down the islands' regimental loyalties and habits of command, leaving just one individual for the commander of the land forces to treat with, was another example of Wheler's desire to concentrate command.

Whitehall's response can be inferred from certain scribbled marginal comments. Of the six Articles considered, Articles Two and Five of the first paper received a scribbled

Touching the Land Forces that are to Goe to the West Indys', 18 July 1692; Wheler to Albemarle, 30 July 1692; BL, Add MSS 37991, fos. 132-3: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 26 July 1692.

⁸⁸ The use of the word autocratic here owes much to the definition of personality traits given in N. Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (Pimlico edn, London, 1994), p. 287. Dixon considers that the autocrat would seek to exercise close control when the circumstances required it and it seems that Wheler aimed to structure the command to allow himself such autocratic discretion.

⁸⁹ PRO, SP 42/1, fos. 397-406: Articles Two, Five and Thirteen of 'Proposalls Humbly Offered by Sir Francis Wheeler Upon His Being Thought On to Goe Commander', 18 July 1692.

⁹⁰ PRO, SP 42/1, fos. 407-10: Articles One, Three and Four of 'Proposalls Humbley Offered by Sir Francis Wheeler, Touching the Land Forces', 18 July 1692.

‘agreed’ as did Article Four of the second paper. The margins of Articles One and Three of the latter document and Article Thirteen of the former remained blank.⁹¹ This pattern could suggest that Whitehall agreed that the Service commanders be mainly responsible for operational direction, but that there was also a willingness to recognise the essential component role of the colonial governors. Certainly, Nottingham reflected gubernatorial interests when he argued that Wheler should not be a supreme commander and that, outside the theatre of combat, the governors should remain in charge of their island’s troops. This was a theme that the Secretary returned to after Blathwayt had floated the idea of a military appointment superior to the governors and the Committee of Council wished it represented that they did not approve of a general army officer’s commission which placed the colonial officials in a subordinate position.⁹²

Eventually, the King and Blathwayt settled upon a command structure quite different from that implied by Wheler’s appointment as C.-in-C. Firstly, Wheler’s command was to be divided with Colonel John Foulkes, whose career had included the command of Monmouth’s White Regiment at Sedgemoor (1685), and who was to be C.-in-C. of all the land forces, including the colonial troops, when on board ship and in action; and, secondly, in line with the previous two expeditions, a Council of War was detailed as the sovereign command authority. This transfer of individual authority to a Council was underlined by its composition which included all land and sea officers; the governors; and even the colonial militia officers when in combat or discussing island defence.⁹³ It has been argued that the resolution of the expedition’s command structure was a ruinous fudge by Blathwayt acting as an imperial centralist, whereby a military commander had been interposed within the previously volatile relationship between the squadron commander and the colonial governors.⁹⁴ Not only does the progress of the expedition bear this argument out, it is also underscored by the prescriptive nature of the Admiral’s Instructions. Although the final version of Wheler’s Instructions were very general in their objectives, combining standard naval duties such as securing island trade with a weak amphibious provision to annoy the French by land or sea as

⁹¹ PRO, SP 42/1, fos. 397-406, 407-10: marginal comments at Articles Two and Five and the blank margin of Article Thirteen of ‘Proposals Humbly Offered by Sir Francis Wheler Upon His Being Thought On To Go Commander’, 18 July 1692; marginal comments at Article Four and the blank margins of Articles One and Three of ‘Proposals Humbly Offered by Sir Francis Wheeler, Touching the Land Forces’, 18 July 1692.

⁹² BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 131-2, 141-3: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 26 July, 12 Aug. 1692.

⁹³ BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 140-1: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 4 Aug. 1692.

⁹⁴ Webb, ‘William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer: Muddling Through’, pp. 386-7.

opportunity arose, the King issued him with a set of detailed Additional Instructions. These picked up on draft proposals that had been made in September which directed Wheler to destroy Martinique by 'frequent descents' and crucially outlined a second phase. It was stipulated that Wheler's squadron plus Foulkes's and Goodwyn's regiments must leave the Caribbean by the end of May and proceed to North America to combine with the New England provinces in an amphibious attempt to seize Canada. Thereafter, before returning to England at the end of September he was specifically directed to Newfoundland to destroy the French settlements and fisheries there.⁹⁵ Both targets were prevailing, though not predominant, strategic concerns of the Court since the failure of Sir William Phips's attempt to conquer Canada in 1690 and Commodore Holman's ineffective bombardment and raiding in 1692 of the southern Newfoundland coast.

The nine-month interval before Wheler weighed anchor with his squadron of one warship and 11 frigates, sundry support vessels and some 1500 soldiers reflected not only the length of negotiations to resolve the expedition's command structure but also the preparation of the ships and the organisation of the land force for embarkation. Aside from procuring some 50 tons of freight for the household goods of Jamaica's new Lieutenant-Governor, Sir William Beeston, who was to go out with the squadron, no specific issue seemed to hinder the Navy Board's preparations. It was just that the extent of their duties from ensuring that the ships were sheathed and provisioned for eight months, to the appointment of the squadrons' standing naval officers, caused the bureaucratic wheel to grind slowly. Moreover, they were reliant on the speedy dispatch of orders by others such as Admiral Russell who had been requested to send in four ships that had been with his fleet. Delays seemed inevitable, and when these occurred they set back other tasks which had been completed on schedule. This was particularly true of certain victuals which quickly went bad and had to be replaced if stowed for too long before departure.⁹⁶

The assembly of the two regiments and the recruits for Bolton's second battalion proved difficult, particularly in the final few weeks before the squadron's departure. Again

⁹⁵ PRO, ADM 2/10, pp. 322-7: 'Instructions to Sir Francis Wheler Knt', 25 Nov. 1692; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 982, pp. 510-11: the King to Wheler: Further Additional Instructions, 27 Nov. 1692; *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 2504, p. 712: Instruction to Sir Francis Wheler, Kt Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Force in the West Indies, 20 Sept. 1692.

⁹⁶ PRO, ADM 2/172 pp. 316, 350, 356, 361, 389-90, 390, 392, 413, 418, 423, 431: the Admiralty to the Navy Board, 23 July, 11 Aug., 3, 5, 14, 21, 24 Sept. 1692; the Admiralty to Nottingham, 17 Aug., 3 Sept. 1692; the Admiralty to Russell, 20 Aug. 1692.

the structure of command was at the centre of the contested issues. The first problem concerned the vacant colonelcy of Hale's Regiment of Foot as the eponymous colonel had not been reappointed after suffering the King's disfavour and reputedly that of the other officers in his regiment. Godfrey Lloyd was hopeful of being appointed but Nottingham managed to cause much rancour by manoeuvring Robert Goodwyn into the post with Lloyd being barely consoled with the command of Bolton's second battalion in the West Indies. Resentment deepened when Nottingham's judgement was called into question by Goodwyn's unwillingness to go on the expedition, though Lloyd's efforts to get Blathwayt to intervene proved fruitless.⁹⁷ More significantly, this lack of enthusiasm to serve in the Caribbean was also displayed by Foulkes who, even after being appointed C.-in-C. of the land forces, aimed to command his regiment in Flanders instead. When his request was turned down, he then began grumbling about his lack of authority as C.-in-C. These circumstances were made worse by the intervention of the Lieutenant-Governor of Portsmouth, Colonel John Gibson, who had been requested by Blathwayt to help with the troops' regulation and organisation as they assembled on the Isle of Wight and around Portsmouth. This he did, but the Governor's conduct was motivated by a desire to replace Foulkes. The King eventually stalled Gibson's malignant efforts but not before he had undermined Foulkes and caused him to believe that there was a whispering campaign against him at Court.⁹⁸

Possibly the most damaging aspect of Gibson's intriguing was its basis in truth. He accurately represented the poor condition of Foulkes's regiment which required both recruits and a stop placed upon deserters at its quarters on the Isle of Wight. This was reportedly in contrast to Goodwyn's regiment which was praised as were also the recruits for Lloyd's new command. To be fair to Foulkes, he fully recognised the problems with his regiment but hardly endeared himself to his men by requesting that a detachment of Dragoons be sent from Portsmouth to keep discipline. This ran contrary to English military tradition. Unsurprisingly, Gibson had little trouble representing Foulkes's idea as improper, further undermining the C.-in-C.'s authority, though Wheler had echoed Foulkes's suggestion. Through to December, Foulkes continued to struggle to bring his regiment up to near

⁹⁷ NMM, SOU/14, unf.: Nottingham to 'Sir' [Blathwayt], 3, 12, 15 Aug. 1692; [Blathwayt] to Nottingham, 1 Sept. 1692; BL, Add. MSS 9727, fos. 52-3: Lloyd to 'Sir' [Blathwayt?], 29 Sept. 1692; PRO, SP 44/166, pp. 292, 295: Commission for Robert Goodwyn Esq., 26 Sept. 1692; Commission for Godfrey Lloyd Esq., 24 Sept. 1692.

⁹⁸ BL, Add. MSS 9727, fos. 74-5, 88-9. 105-6: Gibson to Blathwayt, 3, 8, 18 Dec. 1692.

establishment strength, and also to keep the officers with their men, as many found the attraction of London with the possibility of gaining an exemption from the expedition too tempting. Four days before Christmas, Foulkes and Wheler completed the embarkation of soldiers, though the Colonel was still seeking deserters. Contrary winds then prevented the squadron from weighing until the latter half of the first week in January 1693.⁹⁹

The squadron arrived off Barbados at the end of February 1693 after a largely uneventful voyage.¹⁰⁰ Following a prudent enquiry into the health of the island, Wheler dropped anchor in Carlisle Bay and disembarked the troops. The Barbados Assembly had already passed an act to provide the soldiers with free quarters and colonial enthusiasm for Wheler's arrival was also evident in the efforts of Governors Kendall and Codrington to maintain the integrity of around 1000 victualled militia which they had each previously been directed to raise. Despite an outbreak of sickness, Kendall had managed to retain some 800 troops and had organised them into two regiments commanded by Colonels Butler and Salter.¹⁰¹ Codrington encountered difficulties after the arrival of the squadron, when the Antiguan contingent proved reluctant to serve under an alternative commander to their Governor. Codrington was forced to join the expedition as a volunteer commander without Wheler or Foulkes being informed.¹⁰² This was an ominous development for the operational command inasmuch as in a Council of War with upwards of 26 members, there was liable to be many opinions, and Codrington with his equivocal status was likely to prove contentious.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ BL, Add. MSS 9727, fos. 70-1, 76-7, 78-9, 92-3, 101-2, 103-4, 107-8, 109-10: Foulkes to 'Sir' [Blathwayt], 22 Sept., 3, 10, 16, 21 Dec. 1692; Gibson to 'Sir' [Blathwayt], 5, 21 Dec. 1692; Thomson to 'Sir' [Blathwayt], 14 Dec. 1692.

¹⁰⁰ It is difficult to determine the exact date of arrival. Wheler stated that he arrived on the 1 March and the King was certainly informed of this date. See *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 170, p. 41: Wheler to Nottingham, 6 Mar. 1693; NMM, SOU/14, unf.: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 28 Apr. 1693; [Blathwayt] to 'My Lord' [Nottingham], 3 May 1693. However, oddly, *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 113, p. 31: Minutes of the Council of Barbados, 21 Feb. 1696, records the Council as having been informed by Governor Kendall of Wheler's arrival but Kendall's own correspondence - *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 164, pp. 39-40: Kendall to Nottingham, 4 Mar. 1696 - indicates that Sir Francis arrived on the 28 February.

¹⁰¹ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 2599, pp. 732-3: Kendall to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 Jan. 1692; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 170, 171, pp. 41-3: Wheler to Nottingham, 6 Mar. 1693; Foulkes to Nottingham, 6 Mar. 1693.

¹⁰² *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 336, pp. 100-1: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 10 May 1693.

¹⁰³ Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, p. 11. Harlow argued that the senior Codrington's main weakness was a tendency to 'high-handedness' which sometimes manifest itself as 'down-right tyranny'. This temperament, combined with a self-confidence born of having participated in the combined operations of 1690-1691, boded ill for peaceful relations within the Council of War.

The Additional Instructions's direction that the squadron leave the Caribbean for the eastern American seaboard by the end of May put time at a premium, and the first Council of War to consider how best to descend upon Martinique was held on 2 March. The logistical task of joining the two groups' land forces at Barbados and the Leeward Islands was perforce the first issue to be resolved. The Council's minute implied that there was an early suggestion for the squadron to sail to Antigua, collect Codrington's force and then proceed to Martinique. This would certainly have been advantageous in terms of integrating the two bodies of troops while also reducing the vulnerability of two convoys sailing independently but drawing on the same escort force. However, Wheler represented the difficulties involved in beating leeward to Antigua and raised grave concerns about sickness setting in the longer the troops were at sea. Therefore, the Council resolved that Codrington's force would be met leeward of Martinique at the Cul de Sac Marin, one and half miles from the island's shore. The *Chester* and the *Mermaid* were sent to convoy the Leeward Islands' troops and a sloop was to reconnoitre Martinique's coast.¹⁰⁴

Alternative suggestions cast these proceedings and the point of rendezvous in an odd light. Kendall's contribution had emphasised that, while the French inhabitants were supposed to be few in number, they were busily fortifying all potential landing sites. By proceeding to Martinique in two different convoys, the English were risking one group arriving before the other, thus, advertising the expedition's approach and stalling any momentum that might have been built up for an immediate descent. Instead, time would be lost in full view of the enemy as the Council convened for deliberations on the choice of a landing site. Codrington had written to propose Mariegalante as an alternative rendezvous, but this was rejected by the Council on 16 March on the grounds that the fleet would struggle to weather Dominica and that the water was poor at Mariegalante. Yet, when the initial decision had been taken to meet at the Cul de Sac Marin there had been no discussion about the need to water, nor indeed would it have been possible there.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 982, pp. 510-11: the King to Wheler: Further Additional Instructions, 27 Nov. 1692; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 48, 170, 170.I, pp. 13, 41-3: King to Phips, 2 Feb. 1693; Wheler to Nottingham, 6 Mar. 1693; the Council of War to Codrington, 2 Mar. 1693. The covering letter - no. 170, pp. 41-2 - refers to the same Council of War as occurring on 8 March. However, this seems a misprint for the manuscript source of this letter - PRO, CO 28/37, fos. 181-2 - clearly dates the Council as occurring on the 2 March 1693.

¹⁰⁵ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 170, 194, pp. 41-2, 54-5: Wheler to Nottingham, 6 Mar. 1693; Minutes of the Council of War, 16 Mar. 1693.

The main squadron under Wheler sailed from Barbados on 30 March and arrived at the rendezvous on 1 April, a full three days before Codrington's convoy even left the Leeward Islands. To their credit Wheler and Foulkes did not prove idle for, accompanied by Codrington's son, Christopher - on temporary release from his Fellowship at All Souls, Oxford - they took a sloop to reconnoitre possible landing sites and by nightfall on 2 April, Foulkes had securely disembarked all the troops. This initial landing presaged a series of raids over three days in which Foulkes, Lloyd, Wheler and Lieutenant-Colonel Lillingston all commanded parties attacking French plantations and sugar works, forcing the inhabitants to flee into the woods. The only English loss was a party of around seven soldiers and their boat crew who had been commanded ashore by a Lieutenant without orders and had blundered into a French ambushade.¹⁰⁶ These raids were, at best, an irrelevance, for the operation could make no progress against the main centres of French defence - Forts Royal and St Pierre - without the extra men from the Leeward Islands; and in reality they probably bolstered French intelligence.

On 9 April, Codrington arrived at the Cul de Sac Marin with the Leeward Islands' troops and a detachment of about 600 soldiers from Lloyd's regiment. However, three days passed before a Council of War was held aboard Wheler's flagship to determine how the operation should proceed and then the substantive question was deferred until the fleet had gone about to view Fort Royal. Two days later, the Council decided to adjourn again until the other island fort had been reconnoitred. In the event a full week from Codrington's arrival was to pass before the operation gained any direction with the resolution on 15 April to attack Fort St Pierre. Both the natural aspect and design of Fort Royal had caused it to be considered a 'difficult work'¹⁰⁷ by a majority in the Council, though it is noteworthy that of the six dissenting voices five were officers from the colonies. Perhaps they possessed local insight that Fort St Pierre would prove as tricky.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 517-18: A Journal kept by Sir Francis Wheler, Knight, rear Admiral and Commander in Chief of all Their Majesties ships and vessels in the West Indies, [hereafter 'Wheler's Journal'] 30 Mar.-6 Apr. 1693; *CSPC*, 1693-1696, no. 334, p. 99: Kendall to Nottingham, 9 May 1693.

¹⁰⁷ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 525: Council of War Minutes, 15 Apr. 1693.

¹⁰⁸ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 518-19, 525: 'Wheler's Journal', 9-15 Apr. 1693; Council of War Minutes, 15 Apr. 1693; *CSPC*, 1693-1696, nos. 276, 334, 336, pp. 86, 99, 100-1: Minutes of the Council of War, 15 Apr. 1693; Kendall to Nottingham, 9 May 1693; Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 10 May 1693.

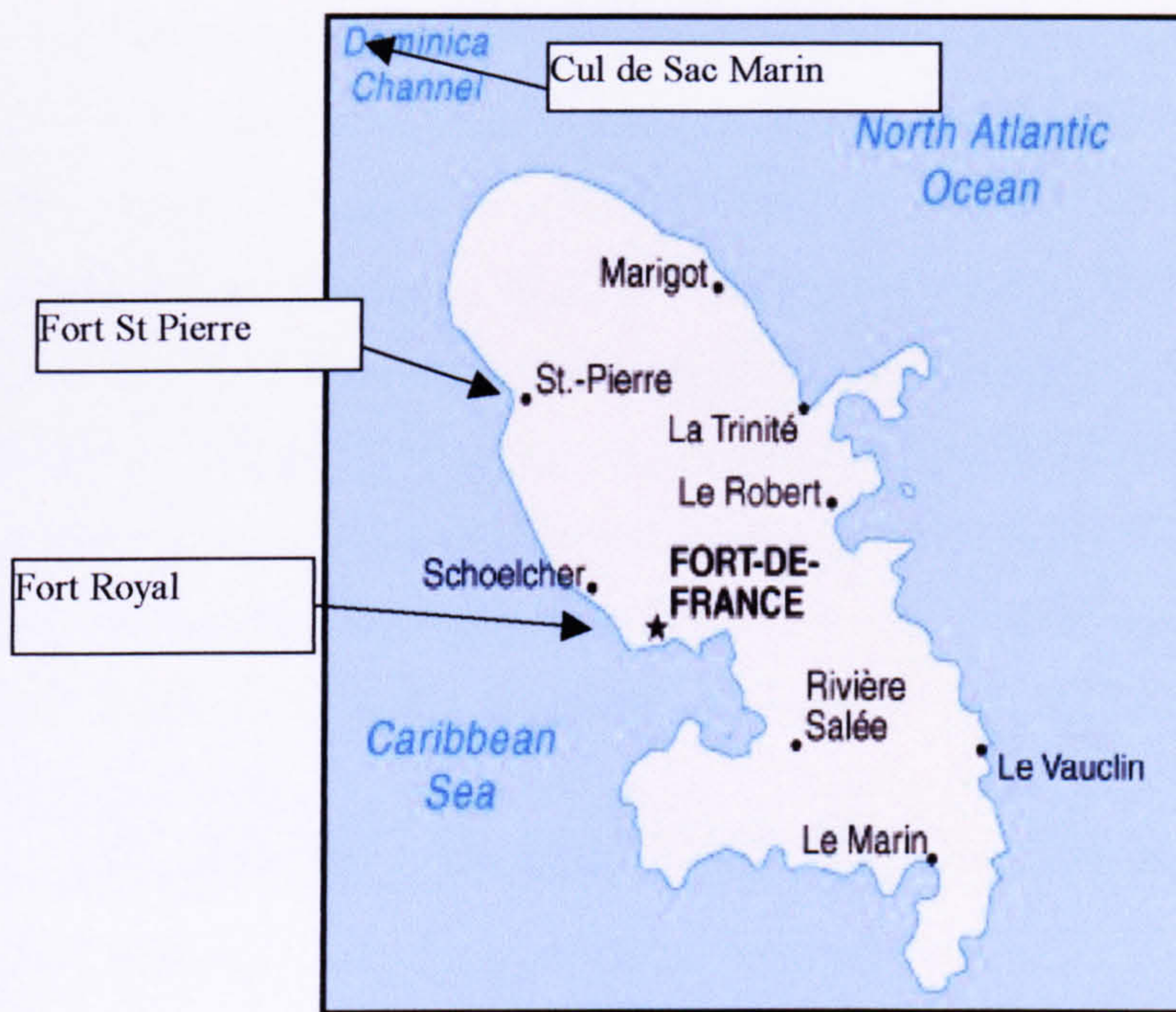


Fig. 8: Martinique

On 17 April, through an adroit, though admittedly opportunistic, use of calms and sudden gales, Wheler managed to create a diversionary impression that the disembarkation was to be the southern end of the bay in front of St Pierre, thus allowing a safe landing of an initial 1000 troops commanded by Colonel Holt on the basin's north-west side. The rest of the soldiers swiftly followed without any loss of life. Holt's advance troops, whose momentum had carried them some distance inland, quickly found themselves on the retreat as they came up against large enemy parties marching down from the town. It required timely succour by Foulkes, commanding a large second tranche of landed soldiers, to stall this reverse and cause the opposing forces to take up posts on each side of a large gully. A brisk fire fight continued throughout the afternoon and when the Antiguans' outflanking manoeuvre along the seashore ended bloodily, Foulkes realised that he would require naval assistance in order to force the enemy position. It was determined, therefore, that on the following day several frigates would lie close in by the shore so that Foulkes could attack the enemy across the gully under the cover of the naval ordnance. However, dawn on 18 April revealed that enemy had retired towards the town and fort, thus rendering the joint naval and military attack unnecessary.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 519-21: 'Wheler's Journal', 17-18 Apr. 1693.

Reconnaissance from a hill top quickly established that the enemy had given up a strong defensive position on one side of a gully for an even stronger position, entrenched inside the town's fort. It was, though, well within cannon shot and two of the train's field pieces were landed and dragged up the hill to begin playing upon the enemy. Meanwhile Foulkes organised his troops for the following day when he was to lead a party of 400 men followed by an additional 600 against the enemy's less fortified rear. However, on 20 April, this force was worsted en route and forced to beat a retreat, the potential effects of which were only ameliorated - according to Wheler - by Foulkes's leadership. Meanwhile, the French took advantage of the weakened English front to sally forth, killing and wounding several of the English out-guards. Despite a four-fold increase in the strength of his battery, Foulkes requested that the naval officers attend a Council of War ashore. At this he proposed withdrawal on the grounds that there was no prospect of his increasingly weak troops dislodging the enemy from the town and fort. A heated debate ensued and the Council was adjourned till the following morning when its members were to submit in writing their opinion on the question whether the army should besiege St Pierre or draw off. Wheler claimed that written opinions were needed partly for reasons of secrecy and partly so that the King and nation could be fully informed of events.¹¹⁰ This latter reason anticipated a political storm back home on the proceedings of the expedition, and Wheler, having already expressed his opposition to withdrawal, clearly viewed a written record as a necessary form of political and professional insurance.¹¹¹

By a majority, the Council, which reconvened on the morning of 21 April, agreed to withdraw from Martinique and then consider future action.¹¹² Well might Kendall write subsequently that the Barbadians were put into a 'great consternation' by this sequence of events.¹¹³ Ostensibly it appeared that the English had decided to walk away from a forward position of strength which at least merited the opening of trenches for a standard siege operation. Moreover, with the French concentrated in St Pierre, Foulkes would not have had to contend with the distraction of a relief army. The appreciation of these circumstances produced three basic positions within the Council. At the extremes were the traditional

¹¹⁰ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 521-2, 526: 'Wheler's Journal' 18-20 Apr. 1693; Council of War Minutes, 20 Apr. 1693.

¹¹¹ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 516: Wheler to -----, 4 June 1693.

¹¹² HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 522: 'Wheler's Journal', 21 Apr. 1693; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 281, pp. 87-8: Minutes of the Council of War in the West Indies, 20 [sic] Apr. 1693.

thoroughgoing attack and full-scale retreat options; whilst the pivot was represented by an argument to attack and destroy as much as possible around St Pierre before beating a retreat. Only Lieutenant-Colonel Colt and Wheler advocated a full-scale siege. Colt believed that a significant advance had already been achieved, thus ameliorating any risks. Wheler considered that the conjunction of field guns and mortars with the bombardment by the fleet should prove sufficient. Neither had any hope of attracting support for their position because the middle option reflected similar arguments, and ultimately reached the same answer as those who wished to leave immediately. Selecting Colonel Goodwyn and Major Abrahall as examples of these options, it is recorded that they both pointed to the 800 men lost since the landing and the large contingent of Irish troops who were considered untrustworthy when near their co-religionists as dictating retreat. The only difference between these two soldiers was that Goodwyn wanted an immediate departure, whereas Abrahall saw merit in causing as much devastation as possible before re-embarkation.¹¹⁴ This made clear that the division between those demanding instant retreat and those wishing to conduct alternative attacks in the environs was, at root, only a question of timing. Hence, twenty-four were in favour of withdrawal and only two in favour of continuing the operation, giving rise to the dismay of the Barbadians.

The re-embarkation had taken place in the early hours of 22 April and, thus, the soldiers were somewhat haphazardly billeted, causing the squadron to head first for Dominica in order to reorganise the troops and to take on water. It was 25 April before the Council convened to consider what further action might be taken and, specifically, whether Guadeloupe should be attacked. With positive orders to repair to North America by the end of May, Wheler was keenly aware that the prospects of any combined operational success in the Caribbean were diminishing daily and he argued vigorously for an immediate attack. Both Foulkes and Codrington were as aggressive as Wheler, but the land men considered it necessary for the troops and vessels to remain for at least six weeks to carry off the French inhabitants and bring on new settlers.¹¹⁵ These circumstances both revealed the limitation of seapower ashore and the dissociation between the services's requirements when operational co-operation is telescoped by time. Although the Foulkes-Codrington contingent was

¹¹³ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 334, p. 99: Kendall to Nottingham, 9 May 1693.

¹¹⁴ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 281, pp. 87-8: Minutes of Council of War, 20 [sic] Apr. 1693.

¹¹⁵ *HMC, Portland MSS*, iii. 526-7: Council of War Minutes, 25 Apr. 1693.

realistic, the warships could not afford the sea time in the Caribbean. Any continuance would eventually have required a transgression of the King's orders. The Council thus resolved against attacking Guadeloupe and formally signalled the end of all operations in the Caribbean under the aegis of Wheler's squadron by ordering that the island troops be returned.¹¹⁶

This cessation in operations was more naturally confirmed by an increasing sickness within the squadron and the English regiments. Apparently caught from the merchant ships in Barbados and made worse by the spring rains at Martinique, the distemper reached such a peak in May that Wheler was reported to have lost half his sailors and most of his officers.¹¹⁷ This was no exaggeration. Of the twelve naval captains who had sailed from England, up to seven had died, whilst the lower decks had been decimated by the loss of around 700 men.¹¹⁸ Such a high number of deaths amongst the seamen undermined the squadron's sailing effectiveness; and, although the marine soldiers along with some regular troops could, and frequently did, stand in for the able-seamen, they were usually poor replacements. The circumstances for Wheler's voyage to America were, therefore, not propitious, and the prospects seemed to worsen en route when Foulkes died of the sickness that had, in Wheler's opinion, already 'severely smarted'¹¹⁹ the two regiments aboard.

These vicissitudes were, however, largely irrelevant for unbeknownst to Wheler as he prepared to depart the Caribbean on 18 May, the second phase of his expedition to join the New England provinces in an combined army-navy attack upon Canada and then against the French settlements on the southern Newfoundland coast had already been undermined by the delay and miscarriage of the orders directing the colonial preparation. Letters to the Governors of Massachusetts and New York explaining Wheler's Additional Instructions had been drafted as early as February 1693. However, they seemed to have been delayed by a comedy of errors, in which the civil messenger objected to his schedule; Nottingham objected to the Whiggism of the military messenger; the Virginian fleet remained wind bound; and the Admiralty disdained to appoint a warship as courier. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the denouement was that when the packet boat with the orders aboard actually managed to leave England, it

¹¹⁶ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 526-7: Council of War Minutes, 25 Apr. 1693.

¹¹⁷ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 347, pp. 103-4: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 15 May 1693; Webb, 'William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer: Muddling Through', p. 392.

¹¹⁸ *CSPC, 1693-6*, no. 339, p. 101: A list of Commissioned and Warrant Officers and seamen in the West Indian Squadron who have died since leaving England, [May] 1693; HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 516: Wheler to -----, 4 June 1693.

¹¹⁹ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 516: Wheler to -----, 4 June 1693.

was captured by the French. Consequently, when Wheler arrived at Boston in June the Massachusetts Governor, Sir William Phips, claimed ignorance of the projected enterprise and, indeed, he subsequently alleged that Blathwayt's letter on the topic only arrived at the end of July.¹²⁰

The New York Council's consideration of the cost of naval stores with its resolution of May to inform Wheler of the scarcity of flour and biscuit, and Governor Fletcher's remark on the widespread surprise at the failure to attack Canada, might suggest that Phips was being economical in acknowledging what he knew of the proposed operation even given the delay in his official orders.¹²¹ However, due to his experience as commander of a combined operation against Quebec in 1690, and his subsequent lobbying of the Court for the resources to make a second attempt, Phips was the most influential colonial voice on such matters especially as Quebec was again the target which, if successfully taken, would presage an riverine assault on Montreal.¹²² The Massachusetts Governor was, thus, able to halt the operation against Canada when he informed Wheler that the provinces would have required at least four months prior notification to raise some 2000 troops which would have been necessary to join a similar number sent out from England - 4000 men being, in Phips's opinion, the minimum number required to mount a credible assault. Moreover, in response to Wheler's urging that an operation be undertaken even if not against Quebec, the Governor argued that the time of year was too advanced to make any descents, and that there was no viable alternative target to Quebec below the Île d'Orleans in the St Lawrence River. The only suggestion Phips made was that Wheler might attack some French merchantmen which were known to be harbouring at Plaisance, (or Placentia), the principal French settlement on Newfoundland.¹²³

The Additional Instructions already directed Sir Francis to this jointly occupied island off the North American coast on the conclusion of the operation against Canada. In the event

¹²⁰ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 48, 116, 445, 545, 578, pp. 13, 31, 124, 156-7, 165-6: the King to Phips, 2 Feb. 1693; the King to Fletcher, 23 Feb. 1693; Wheler to Phips, 8 July 1693; Phips to Nottingham, 11 Sept. 1693; Phips to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 11 Sept. 1693; NMM, SOU/14, unf.: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 7, 28 Apr. 1693; Blathwayt to Nottingham, 12/23 June 1693; BL, Add MSS 37992, fos. 4-5: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 14 Apr. 1693; Webb, 'William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer: Muddling Through', p. 392.

¹²¹ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 348, p. 104: Minutes of the Council of New York, 15 May 1693; *NYCD*, iv. 36: Fletcher to Secretary of State, 15 Aug. 1693.

¹²² HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 982, pp. 510-11: the King to Wheler: Further Additional Instructions, 27 Nov. 1692.

¹²³ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 441, 453, pp. 124, 128-9: Wheler to Phips, 8 July 1693; Phips to Wheler, 12 July 1693.

of the latter's abandonment, Wheler began early preparations for a descent on Newfoundland. However, once again it was Phips who undermined the viability of the operation by his unwillingness to make any material contribution. Hiding behind the Charter's provisions which prohibited the dispatch of militia without the consent of the colony's recently dismissed Assembly, Phips denied Wheler the 400 troops he had requested as reinforcements for the remaining 650 from Foulkes's and Goodwyn's regiments.¹²⁴ Without these men, Wheler's sickly squadron was to find the French at Placentia with their two new forts and forty guns too strong to combat. On arrival off the island, a Council of War rejected the proposals for a landing under the cover of the ships' guns, and Wheler's only success before setting course for England on 22 September was the destruction of the fishing station on the small Île de St Pierre which lay to the south-west.¹²⁵ This was a product of co-operation between the squadron's frigates and a small party of soldiers commanded by Major Rabisner, and it represented the sole combined operational success of the expedition's second phase.

The remnants of Wheler's squadron reached Spithead by mid-October and was put into quarantine.¹²⁶ It had contributed little to what was in any case a bleak year for the allies during which both the maritime and continental strategies had suffered reverses with the capture of the Smyrna convoy and the military defeats at Neerwinden (19 July) and Marsaglia (25 September).¹²⁷ That the commanders of the expedition suffered no professional censure can be explained by the reasons subsequently given by Codrington for the failure at Martinique. Firstly, the timing was poor; the squadron arrived just before the start of the rains in May, making sickness inevitable while hampering land operations, and the positive orders to leave by the end of May left only two months for what was, in Codrington's judgement, a four month operation. Secondly, the constant delay through the autumn and winter of 1692 had allowed the French time to fortify. Thirdly, the number of troops was insufficient; Codrington considered an additional two regiments necessary.¹²⁸ Significantly, all

¹²⁴ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 982, pp. 510-11: the King to Wheler: Further Additional Instructions, 27 Nov. 1692; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 441, 475, pp. 124, 133: Wheler to Phips, 8 July 1693; Phips to Wheler, 27 July 1693.

¹²⁵ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iii. 544-5: ----- to Sir Edward Harley, 17 Oct. 1693; Burchett, *A Complete History of the Most Remarkable Transactions*, p. 479.

¹²⁶ PRO, ADM 2/12, p. 424: Order to Sir Francis Wheler, 9 Sept. 1693; PRO, ADM 3/9, unpaginated: Board Minutes, 11 Sept. 1693.

¹²⁷ Childs, 'Secondary Operation of the British Army', p. 90; Webb, 'William Blathwayt, Imperial Fixer: Muddling Through', p. 393.

¹²⁸ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 336, pp. 100-1: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 10 May 1693.

three could equally account for the squadron's inertia when it reached North America. Each of the three criticisms could be attributed to the expedition's initial design and preparation and, in particular, the restrictions placed upon the commanders. At the watershed Council held after the withdrawal from Martinique, the Additional Instructions's tight time sequencing and the lack of discretion in command for individual commanders meant that Wheler's only option was to leave the Caribbean despite the senior commanders agreeing in principal that a combined operation could, and should, be mounted against Guadeloupe. Similarly, if an administrative *opera bouffe* had not been played out over the dispatch of the orders to New England, or indeed (assuming Phips knew more of the operation than he admitted), if Wheler's command had been sufficiently robust to pressurise Phips into providing the recruits, then the planned operations against Canada and Newfoundland could have gone ahead. The Court's optimism for regional superiority based on imperial aggrandisement remained unfulfilled because the amphibious means fixed upon had been poorly designed and prepared.

II.v: Commodore Robert Wilmot's and Colonel Luke Lillingston's Expedition to Hispaniola, January-September 1695.

The genesis of this operation was both retaliatory and defensive in form as the focus of the war in the Caribbean shifted westwards. In the summer of 1693, the Governor of Martinique had proposed the capture of Jamaica in order to alleviate what he considered was the vulnerability of the French dispersed among too many islands. Jamaica was also viewed as a suitable place to absorb some 2000 French whose plantations had been ruined by previous English raids or invasions.¹²⁹ Although the Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica, Sir William Beeston, was not aware of the French Governor's proposal, he knew that French privateering raids from French Hispaniola against the island had increased significantly. At the end of May 1694, the merchant sailor, Captain Elliot, on his escape from French custody had warned Beeston of an imminent French invasion as the Governor of Hispaniola, Ducasse, had gathered a force of twenty ships and 3000 men. The devastation wrought by the French in the six weeks following their dual landings at Cow Bay and at the eastern Morant Bay on 17 June 1694 was, perhaps, not surprising given the island's vulnerability after a massive

¹²⁹ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 433, p. 123: Abstract of a Memorial from the Governor of Martinique to Monsieur de Chamlay, [June?] 1693.

earthquake in June 1692, the damage from which Beeston had only started to make good following his return to Jamaica in 1693.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, the economic consequences and humiliation of having fifty sugar-works destroyed and some 1300 slaves stolen, plus Beeston's warning during the period of French occupation that all would be lost if a relief force was not sent, forced Jamaica's defence and the issue of a retaliatory action up the Court's war agenda.¹³¹

Of course, the war in the West Indies had not been ignored since Wheler's departure in May 1693. The colonial governors had constantly requested extra warships and troops to attack, and defend, against the French regional presence. London only managed temporarily to shelve all requests by claiming that any future force would have to await Wheler's return from America. It was however eight months before four warships were dispatched in June 1694 as convoy for the merchants headed for Barbados. Further pleas from the Leeward Islands' Commissioners, considered in November, caused a fifth rate to be appointed but by July of the following year it was still at Plymouth.¹³² Consequently, some historians have traced the origins of the Wilmot-Lillingston operation to these requests, when in fact it was not until the French attack upon Jamaica in the late summer of 1694 that the idea of sending another expeditionary force - as opposed to warships transporting recruits - to the region was seriously canvassed.¹³³

The Lords of Trade's initial response to Beeston's early correspondence on the French invasion was to recommend the dispatch of enough soldiers and ships to relieve the island and mount punitive strikes against the French. This latter proposal was specifically aimed at protecting English trade and preventing the French mounting a similar operation

¹³⁰ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 211, 212, 1236, 1236.I, pp. 62-3, 325-33: Petition of merchants and planters concerned with Jamaica to the King, 23 Mar. 1693; Considerations offered as to the state of Jamaica, [23 Mar.] 1693; Beeston to Shrewsbury, 18 Aug. 1694; Sir William Beeston, 'Narrative of the French Invasion', in G.W. Bridges, *The Annals of Jamaica* (London, 1828), i. 312-22; de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 250-1; L. Gregg, 'The Port Royal Earthquake', *HTI* (2000), 28-34.

¹³¹ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1109, 1121, 1194, 1228, pp. 299-300, 305, 318-19, 324: Beeston to Trenchard, 23 June 1694; Beeston to Trenchard, 2 July 1694; Beeston to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 7 Aug. 1694; Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 16 Aug. 1694; Bridges, *Annals of Jamaica*, i. 323.

¹³² *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 437, 494.I., 539, 627, 870, 1564.I, 1679, pp. 123-4, 140, 155, 183-4, 247, 410, 432: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 July 1693; Memorial of the Commissioners for the Leeward Islands to the Queen, n.d.; Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 7 Sept. 1693; Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 17 Oct. 1693; Order of the King in Council, 8 Feb. 1694; Memorial of the Commissioners for the Leeward Islands to the King, n.d.; Bridgeman to Blathwayt, 13 Feb. 1695; Moses, 'The British Navy and The Caribbean, 1689-1697', pp. 30-1.

elsewhere in the Caribbean.¹³⁴ Although the French withdrawal from Jamaica on 18 July rendered its immediate relief unnecessary, London did not know of this until October and, besides, the whole project gained currency in Whitehall as result of the King's personal intervention. Blathwayt represented William's awareness of the strategic importance of Jamaica as the centre for the Spanish trade and as a bulwark against French occupation of neighbouring islands. Indeed, William's principal fear was that the loss of Jamaica would trigger a regional domino effect, resulting in the French capturing the Spanish half of Hispaniola and Cuba, and providing them with footholds in the coastal towns from Trinidad to St Augustine (on the east coast of Florida). As he had done for the Wheler-Foulkes expedition, the King augmented the expeditionary land force by directing that two establishment strength battalions be sent; while he also attended to the diplomatic context through his envoy at Madrid, Alexander Stanhope, whose orders were to gain the Spanish Court's material help in driving the French from Hispaniola.¹³⁵

It was perhaps fortunate that delay in late seventeenth century diplomacy matched that of English administration. Immediately upon receipt of his instructions in October (OS), Stanhope had sent a memorial to the *Secretario del Despacho Universal*, Don Alonso Carnero, outlining the purpose of the operation and London's request that orders be sent by Carlos II to his colonial governors directing their assistance. Despite following this up with constant calls upon Spanish Ministers, Stanhope was told that colonial affairs could not be ordered until the Council of the Indies's President, the Duke of Montalto, recovered from illness and, thus, it was towards the end of November (OS) before a positive response was forthcoming. Even then, Stanhope was left lamenting the Spanish Court's reluctance to ensure that their governors received the orders by bearing the cost of sending out copies by various routes. Such circumstances might suggest that the Spaniards were unenthusiastic about the projected enterprise, yet Mancera wrote of its centrality to the Alliance's 'common cause'; and experience consoled Stanhope that the delay was the product of Spain's

¹³³ Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 91, posits a clear connection between the earlier colonial requests and the Wilmot-Lillington expedition. Morgan, 'The British West Indies, 1689-1697', pp. 399-401, is more oblique but no less confusing by initially implying the link only to step back from it later.

¹³⁴ PRO, ADM 7/693, pp. 10-11: 'Att the Committee of Plantations att the Councill Chamber Whitehall', 16, 20 Aug. 1694; CSPC, 1693-1696, no. 1189, p. 317: the Lords of Trade and Plantations to Beeston, 3 Aug. 1694.

¹³⁵ CSPC, 1693-1696, nos. 1195, 1277, pp. 319, 341-2: Beeston to Trenchard, 7 Aug. 1694 [Endorsed: 'R. 29 Oct. 1694']; Blathwayt to Trenchard, 2 Sept. 1694; HMC, *Buccleuch Montague MSS*, ii.⁴ 120-1: Blathwayt to [Shrewsbury], [23 Aug.-]2 Sept. 1694; PRO, SP 94/73, f. 310: Stanhope to 'My Lord', 3 Oct. 1694.

consistently phlegmatic approach to affairs of state.¹³⁶ Although frustrating, lethargy did not prevented Spain's commitment and this was finally offered in December.

A report on the forwardness of the expedition's arrangements received by the King in December did represent a delay from what had been the expected departure of October, its conclusion that only orders for embarkation were outstanding obscured the omnipresent confusion amongst the organising bodies during the previous three months.¹³⁷ The considerable correspondence on the preparations¹³⁸ suggests that the disorganisation was not a product of bureaucratic inertia but, instead, arose from the urgency with which the Departments would set to work preparing an aspect of the expedition without its parameters being clearly decided upon. The organisation of the land force was particularly afflicted in this respect both in terms of its size and the appointed regiments. Such were the problems that there occurred a fundamental change in the prescription of the force laid down by William in September.

Northcote's and Farrington's regiments were initially selected by the King, but the latter was reluctant to go and Shrewsbury thought that Northcote would be so to. Meanwhile, other officers offered themselves and their regiments, including Luke Lillingston whose regiment along with Northcote's was eventually chosen. This was Shrewsbury's preferred choice, supported by the Transport Commissioners who favoured the administrative advantages in terms of the supply of transports, victualling and a pre-embarkation muster offered by both these two regiments being in the environs of Plymouth.¹³⁹ Notwithstanding this decision, which on paper would have totalled around 1380 officers and men¹⁴⁰, various estimates of the force were invoked. On 3 September, the Transport Commissioners were charged with finding transportation for 2000 men but within three days, this was reduced by

¹³⁶ PRO, SP 94/73, fos. 310-12, 314-16: Stanhope to 'My Lord', 3, 17 Oct., 21 Nov. 1694, and enclosure, Mancera to Stanhope, 1 Dec. 1694 [NS]; *Spain Under Charles the Second; Or, Extracts from the Correspondence of The Hon. Alexander Stanhope, British Minister at Madrid. 1690-1699*, ed. Lord Mahon (2nd edn, London, 1844), p. 62: Stanhope to Halifax, 31 May 1694.

¹³⁷ CSPC, 1693-1696, nos. 1279, 1572, pp. 342, 413: Minute of the Lords of Trade and Plantations; Memorandum of the state of the preparations for Jamaica, laid before the King in Council, 2 Dec. 1694.

¹³⁸ Neeser, 'The British Naval Operation in the West Indies', p. 1624 n. 49.

¹³⁹ HMC, *Buccleuch Montague MSS*, ii.¹ 121, 126-7, 131: Blathwayt to [Shrewsbury], [23 Aug.-]2 Sept., 10-20 Sept. 1694; Shrewsbury to Blathwayt, 31 Aug., 4 Sept. 1694; CSPC, 1693-1696, no. 1332, pp. 357-8: the Commissioners for Transport to Povey, 22 Sept. 1694.

¹⁴⁰ The paper figure for an infantry battalion during William's reign was reckoned to be 650 men and 42 commissioned officers but Blathwayt's working assumption was said to be lower at 600 men, excluding commissioned officers. See, 'Lord Cutts's Letters, 1695', ed. J. Childs *Camden Miscellany XXX*, Camden 4th Series 39 (London, 1990), p. 381 n. 3.

300. Meanwhile, the Victualling Commissioners were working to a figure provided by the Committee of Council which was a hundred less again and, by December, a third figure of 1400 was settled upon much to the Transportation Commissioners' chagrin as they had just provided for 1841 men. Moreover, ironically, prior to the King's decision, estimates had also been prepared for the most economical regimental organisation of a maximum of 1200 soldiers. Matters were complicated further when it was proposed to send with the expeditionary force an Independent Company for service in Jamaica, and also a newly raised regiment for Barbados. It was not until the second week of December that the correct total of 1200 men - implicit in the King's decision in September for two battalions - was first adopted wholesale by all those preparing the expeditionary force.¹⁴¹

This initial confusion over regiments and the overall size of the force presaged a significant change in their organisation. Throughout the autumn both Lillingston and Northcote had presented memorials on the state of their regiments which noted principally their arrears of pay and shortage of men.¹⁴² This likely contributed to the decision taken before Christmas 1694 to send instead a detachment of 1200 men.¹⁴³ At the beginning of January, Brigadier Lord Cutts was sent on an regimental inspection tour starting at Plymouth and working east to Portsmouth, during which he was to form this detachment by breaking Lillingston's regiment and retaining its core of 600 men, while simultaneously adding to this

¹⁴¹ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1245, 1262-4, 1280-1, 1283, 1295, 1299, 1302, 1349, 1393, 1405, 1526, 1557, 1574, 1598, pp. 335, 338-9, 342-6, 364, 374, 376, 404, 409, 414, 417-18: Povey to Clerk, 21 Aug. 1694; Estimate of the annual charge, 28 Aug. 1694; Similar Estimate, 28 Aug. 1694; Memorandum as to the above Estimates, 28 Aug. 1694; Povey to the Commissioners for Transportation, the Victuallers of the Navy, Secretary at War, 3 Sept. 1694; the Victuallers of the Navy to Lords of Trade and Plantations; Order of the Queen in Council, 8 Sept. 1694; Extract from a letter from the Navy Board forwarding the following extract from the Victualling Commissioners, 10 Sept. 1694; Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 26 Sept. 1694; Povey to Guy, 9 Oct. 1694; Povey to Bridgeman, 10 Oct. 1694; the Agents for Barbados to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 26 Nov. 1694; Minute of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 26 Nov. 1694; Memorial of the Commissioners for Transportation to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 Dec. 1694; Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 14 Dec. 1694.

¹⁴² *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1360, 1381, 1439, 1453, 1471, pp. 366, 370, 384, 387, 391: Memorial of Colonel Lillingston to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 28 Sept., 8 Oct. 1694; Povey to Guy, 20 Oct. 1694; Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 24 Oct. 1694; Memorial of Colonel William Northcott to the Privy Council, [1 Nov.] 1694; *CTP, 1556/7-1696*, pp. 357, 390, 398, 412: Representation of Col. Luke Lillingston to the King, [About 4 Apr.] 1694; Memorial of Col. Lillingston to the Lords of the Treasury, [About Sept.], [About 31 Oct.] 1694; Representation of Col. Luke Lillingston, [1694].

¹⁴³ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 1598, pp. 417-18: Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations refers to 1200 men being sent, while *CTP, 1556/7-1696*, p. 410: Letter from Mr. William Blathwayt, to Henry Guy, Esq., secretary to the Treasury, 21 Dec. 1694, states that only Lillingston's regiment was to go. These documents combined with other evidence which indicates that the detachment of 1200 men was to be listed as a new regiment for Lillingston allows the decision to drop Lillingston's late regiment and Northcote's regiment to be dated to before Christmas.

number 200 strong drafts from each of Northcote's, Farrington's and Colt's regiments. Although above Establishment strength this detachment was to be listed as one regiment, and Cutts was to supervise its embarkation on board twelve transports for the voyage to the Caribbean. The process was not without incident, for despite noting the quality of the new regiment - attributed to the rump of Lillingston's former battalion - Cutts had to quell mutinous troops aboard four ships through negotiation and drawing a temporary guard of 100 men from Plymouth Garrison.¹⁴⁴

As with the organisation of Wrenn's expedition, the naval squadron suffered delay due to problems securing the auxiliary vessels. Time was lost haggling over the cost of freight and then the question of demurrage arose. The delay only lengthened when the Admiralty proved dilatory both in providing a convoy to bring these vessels from the Downs to Plymouth and in securing their crews' protections from the press. Consequently, it was 21 December before the transports headed west along the Channel.¹⁴⁵ To cap everything as time pressed, when the main squadron weighed from Spithead on 15 January to link up with the transports at Plymouth, the weather drove them beyond to Falmouth. The Commodore, Captain Robert Wilmot, then had to travel overland to notify Cutts and organise a conjunction of the squadron and the transports for 22 January by which time the troops would have been embarked for a week.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ 'Lord Cutts's Letters, 1695', nos. 1-5, pp. 381-5: Cutts to Blathwayt, 13, 15, 18, 20 Jan. 1695; L. Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs Or, Remarks on His Account of Captain Wilmot's Expedition to the West Indies* (London, 1704), p. 22-3, *CSPD*, 1695, pp. 305-6: Newsletter addressed: "For the Right Honourable the Earl of Derwentwater, Newcastle-upon-Tyne", 19 Jan. 1695.

¹⁴⁵ *CSPC*, 1693-1696, nos. 1239, 1244, 1259, 1261, 1280, 1301, 1313, 1332, 1345, 1347-8, 1352, 1361, 1407, 1435, 1440, 1449, 1527, 1533, 1553, 1555, 1572-4, 1577-9, 1582, 1584, 1613, pp. 334-5, 338, 342, 345, 353, 357, 363-4, 366, 376, 383-4, 396, 404-5, 408-9, 413-16, 419: the Commissioners for the Navy to Povey, 20 Aug. 1694; Povey to the Commissioners for Transportation, 21 Aug., 3, 6, 26 Sept. 1694; the Commissioners for Transportation to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 27 Aug., 10 Sept., 3 Dec. 1694; Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 28 Aug., 20 Oct., 3. Dec. 1694; Povey to Lowndes, 12 Sept. 1694; the Commissioners for Transportation to Povey, 22, 29 Sept. 1694; Memorandum for John Povey, 26 Sept. 1694; Povey to the King's Physicians, 26 Sept. 1694; Order of the Queen in Council, 27 Sept. 1694; Bridgeman to Povey, 11 Oct. 1694; Povey to Guy, 20 Oct. 1694; Minutes of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 24 Oct. 1694; Povey to the Apothecary General, 12 Nov. 1694; Blathwayt to the Apothecaries' Company at the Savoy, 20 Nov. 1694; Blathwayt to the Commissioners for Transportation, 20 Nov., 5 Dec. 1694; Blathwayt to Guy, 26 Nov. 1694; the Commissioners for Transportation to Blathwayt, 26 Nov., 8 Dec. 1694; Memorandum of the state of the preparations for Jamaica, laid before the King in Council, 2 Dec. 1694; Blathwayt to Bridgeman, 3, 21 Dec. 1694; Bridgeman to Blathwayt, 4 Dec. 1694; Masters of the transport ships to Lords of Trade and Plantations, 4 Dec. 1694; *CTP*, 1556/7-1696, pp. 410: Letter from Mr. William Blathwayt, to Henry Guy, Esq., secretary to the Treasury, 21 Dec. 1694.

¹⁴⁶ PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, *Ruby*, 15-23 Jan. 1694; 'Lord Cutts's Letters, 1695', nos. 4, 6, pp. 384-6: Cutts to Blathwayt, 20, 22 Jan. 1694.

Wilmot probably made the journey to Plymouth instead of sending a messenger because of his additional responsibilities as C.-in-C. Lillingston had been hopeful for this appointment and, moreover, had effectively claimed it from September. Nonetheless, when the Lords of Trade asked the King to decide between the military or naval commander for the appointment, Lillingston's recent experience of an amphibious campaign on Martinique in 1693 was ignored, and the Beachy Head veteran was preferred. For Wilmot, this was the pinnacle of a professional recovery begun three years previously following his acquittal by the Devonshire assizes for killing Marine Ensign Roydon in a duel at Torbay, despite his undoubted guilt. The appointment, though, was hazardous. Notwithstanding the trenchant support by the then commanding Admirals who claimed that Wilmot had been unreasonably provoked, the action had surely betrayed a temperament ill-suited to the stress of provocation that was likely to be encountered on an expedition to the Caribbean.¹⁴⁷ This point is underscored by the King, who took the unusual step of granting Wilmot and Lillingston a joint audience to impress the need for harmonious conduct. To facilitate this he provided instructions for the division of spoils which revealed his hope that his senior army and naval officers should, when necessary, think of themselves as the equivalent rank in the other service. The King's principal purpose was to point out where clashes between commanders had damaged previous expeditions and, then, to exhort Wilmot and Lillingston to 'a mutual exact concurrence of kindness'.¹⁴⁸

This reliance on personality to produce success might be viewed as a compensation for the lack of clarity of the Instructions. Although these confirmed the expedition's principal objectives as attacking French Hispaniola, a Council of War - again the sovereign command authority - could first determine on alternatives. The sealed Instructions given to Wilmot prior to departure clumsily attempted to accommodate gubernatorial interests while maintaining any operational momentum built up before the squadron touched an English

¹⁴⁷ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1360, 1602, 1614, pp. 366, 418-19: Memorial of Colonel Luke Lillingston to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 28 Sept. 1694; Minutes of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 16 Dec. 1694; Journal of Lords of Trade and Plantations, 21 Dec. 1694; PRO, ADM 3/9, unpaginated: Board Minutes, 27 July, 4, 13, Sept. 1693, 5 Mar. 1694; PRO, ADM 2/173, pp. 363, 379: the Admiralty to Attorney General, 4 July 1693; the Admiralty to Admirals of the Fleet, 15 July 1693; PRO, ADM 7/694, pp. 130-1, 184-90: the Admirals to 'Rt. Honble.', 30 June, 17 Aug. 1693; L. Edye, *The Historical Records of the Royal Marines* (London, 1893), p. 387. I am grateful to Dr P. Le Fevre for putting me on the trail of the references to this incident in PRO, ADM 7/694.

¹⁴⁸ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, p. 6; J. Burchett, *Memoirs of Transactions at Sea During the War with France Beginning in 1688 and Ending in 1697* (London, 1703), pp. 310-15: 'The Distribution of the Prizes and Booty That Should be Taken in the West Indies'.

colony. Its Articles were more similar to Wrenn's than Wheler's. The colonial governor was to be President of the Councils which met on the island, and his militia officers had membership when local defence was on the agenda; more significantly, the Governor and the Island Council had the right of veto on the dispatch of warships from the squadron. Furthermore, Lillingston's and Beeston's separate Instructions emphasised the latter's superiority in command. However, in terms of the Hispaniolan objectives, none of these provisions need be adhered to because the squadron was directed in the first instance to the Spanish half of the island. If, at the principal Spanish settlement of St Domingo, the Governor was ready to proceed against the French, then the squadron need not go to Jamaica till the operation was complete.¹⁴⁹ Beeston was unaware of this provision and, thus, that his influence could be limited to objectives decided upon later.¹⁵⁰ Whitehall had diffused the sources of unitary command but in doing so, a smokescreen had been drawn over the extent of colonial influence.

It is ironic that the expedition in which the King personally intervened to prevent disorder amongst his senior commanders produced inter-service bitterness of such a magnitude that the operation's weaknesses must be wholly attributed to it. This division was reflected in contemporary accounts and histories which sided with either Wilmot or Lillingston, leaving Beeston largely an irrelevance. The Admiralty Secretary, Josiah Burchett, put the naval case plainly in his history, which ignored almost completely the contribution of the land commander and was also peppered with waspish comments on the soldiers' contribution to the expedition.¹⁵¹ Published in 1703, this text provoked Lillingston to reply in which he accused Burchett of being 'indifferently qualified' as a historian and for uncritically

¹⁴⁹ BL, Add MSS 32694, fos. 137-40: Extract of Instructions for Capt. Wilmot, 1695; Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 9-12: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Luke Lillingston Esq.' 23 Dec. 1694; Burchett, *Memoirs of Transactions at Sea*, pp. 306-9: 'Contents of the Said General Instructions'; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1618-20, p. 420: Instructions to Sir William Beeston relating to the Jamaica Forces, 23 Dec. 1694; Instructions to Colonel Luke Lillingston, 23 Dec. 1694; Instructions to Captain Robert Wilmot, commanding the squadron for Jamaica, 23 Dec. 1694.

¹⁵⁰ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 2022, 2022.II-V, pp. 566-9: Sir William Beeston's narrative of what passed while the fleet was at Hispaniola, 22 Aug. 1695; Instructions from Sir William Beeston to Colonel Beckford, 21 Feb. 1694/5; Beeston to President of St Domingo, 21 Feb. 1694/5; Beeston to Lillingston, 21 Feb. 1694/5; Beeston to Wilmot, 21 Feb. 1694/5. These documents show Beeston to think naively it was his idea to attack Hispaniola first before the squadron came to Jamaica, and that the commanders would have to be encouraged to do so.

¹⁵¹ Burchett, *Memoirs of Transactions at Sea*, pp. 305-21. A good example of Burchett's querulousness is to be found on p. 319, when he remarks on the slowness in mounting guns ashore 'by those whose proper business it was'.

accepting 'a most scandalous false account'.¹⁵² Burchett continued the controversy by responding in detail to Lillingston within the year, and this text, though ignored in G.F. James's assessment of Burchett's historiography¹⁵³, contained in full many of the primary documents drawn on for his previous publication.¹⁵⁴ Other contemporary accounts are works of thinly veiled bias: Commissary Murrey's *Journal* is unabashed in its support of Wilmot, while there is a sense that the Captain of the *Ruby* sought to twist the usually neutral Captain's Log.¹⁵⁵ Lillingston, though, did attract some supporters, notably the army scholar, J.W. Fortescue, whose preface to the *CSPC, 1693-1696*, incautiously adopts the Colonel's perspective, quoting extensively from his pamphlet and heavily censoring Wilmot's conduct. This excess of self-justification provokes sympathy with Beeston's lament that the complaints from all sides were 'beyond my power to reconcile';¹⁵⁶ but, however biased these sources, they do provide the expedition's narrative and, in disagreeing so vehemently, show the King to have been unwise to rely on personal restraint to produce success.

The clash of characters was immediately evident on the outward voyage. En route first to Madeira¹⁵⁷, Lillingston believed that Wilmot opened their sealed Instructions before the stipulated 40° latitude, and then expressed his dissatisfaction with their contents. There also occurred a dispute over the admission of Captain-Lieutenant Warner to the Council of War during which Lillingston considered Wilmot to show insufficient deference to an army custom and to have done so in a manner contrary to the spirit of accommodation invoked by William. After anchoring at Madeira on 12 February, their relationship encountered further strains. Wilmot allegedly proposed to Lillingston that they ignore their Instructions and seek opportunities for personal wealth, a theme Lillingston believed he had previously hinted at during the voyage. Then, when a storm blew up dispersing the fleet over two days (15-17 February), Lillingston and other regimental officers were nearly stranded on the island. The

¹⁵² Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, Unpaginated Preface.

¹⁵³ G.F. James, 'Josiah Burchett, Secretary to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, 1695-1742', *MM* 23 (1937), 494-6.

¹⁵⁴ J. Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs in Answer to Reflections Made by Col. Lillingston* (London, 1704).

¹⁵⁵ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 1983, pp. 550-6: Commissary Murrey's *Journal of the Expedition to Hispaniola* [hereafter 'Murrey's Journal'], [31 July] 1695; PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, *Ruby*, 26 Nov. 1694-3 Sept. 1695.

¹⁵⁶ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 2026, pp. xxxviii-xliv, 373: Beeston to Trenchard, 24 Aug. 1695.

¹⁵⁷ C. Burchett, 'The Royal Navy and the Caribbean, 1689-1763', *MM* lxxx (1994), 31, argues that this route became orthodox for English squadrons headed for the Caribbean, leading to an unnecessary lengthening of the journey time and, thus, contributing disproportionately to the crew and passengers' poor health on arrival.

Colonel, however, did not consider nature as the sole reason for his prolonged stay on the beach and accused Wilmot of complicity in preventing his rescue. Murrey, though, recorded that the Commodore had sent his boat for the land commander and, moreover, the *Ruby's* log and other Captains' journals confirm both the violence of the storm and the necessity for Wilmot to weigh almost immediately in order to preserve the squadron. With reference to Lillingston's allegations during the first part of the voyage, Burchett undermines their credibility by stressing their origins in situations where only the Colonel and the Commodore were present.¹⁵⁸ Whoever was to blame, the important point is that before the squadron reached Spanish Hispaniola, the two commanders were squabbling furiously; the Commodore was reported as wishing to ignore his Instructions; and the fleet had been dispersed.

Notwithstanding further disputes as to whether Wilmot had issued clear rendezvous instructions in event of dispersal, and as to his advertisement of the squadron's presence, reassembly occurred at St Kitts by 25 March. Three days later, despite an ominous increase in sickness amongst the crews and soldiers, the squadron weighed for Spanish Hispaniola bound first for its eastern island of Saona where the *Swan*, which had previously been sent to make contact with the Governor at St Domingo, was to be met. Along with Colonel Beckford who had been sent from Jamaica by Beeston in the *Hampshire*, the *Swan's* Captain gave word that the Spanish were ready to proceed with the operation if Wilmot came first to St Domingo. In order to shield the transports from the arduous beat to windward, Wilmot sent them north to Samana Bay convoyed by the *Reserve*, the *Ruby*, the *Winchester* and the *Firebrand* fireship, while the rest including the *Hampshire* went to the Governor, Don Ignatio Peris Caro.¹⁵⁹

Wilmot believed the English to be initially well received at St Domingo with the Spanish showing considerable enthusiasm for the projected venture. However, as the days passed, in what Murrey euphemistically termed 'many conferences and papers'¹⁶⁰, in an

¹⁵⁸ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 24-35; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 24-37; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 1983, p. 550-1: 'Murrey's Journal', [31 July] 1695; PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, *Ruby*, 12-17 Feb. 1695; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 103-7: 'Shewing the Reasons of the Commodore's Sailing from the Maderas, when Colonel Lillingston was left behind: Commissary Murrey; Capt. Fletcher of the *Terrible* Fireship; Lt. Hickman, Third of the *Dunkirk*, Lt. Farquaharson, of the *Reserve*; Capt. Soul, of the *Firebrand* Fireship';

¹⁵⁹ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 37-44; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 15-16; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1946, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, pp. 535, 544, 547, 551-2: Narrative of Colonel Peter Beckford; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murrey's' Journal', [31 July] 1695.

¹⁶⁰ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 1938, p. 552: 'Murrey's Journal', [31 July] 1695.

attempt to agree the parameters of the Anglo-Spanish co-operation, Wilmot lost patience with what he regarded as Spanish procrastination. Not surprisingly, Lillingston argued that the negotiations took up to twelve days because Wilmot first tried to dominate the Spaniards and then refused to respect their wish to treat only with the land commander. The agreement eventually arrived at was wide ranging, including articles to regulate conduct in conquered French plantations. More importantly, it determined upon the windward most French settlement, Cap François, as the first target and a disposition of force comprising between 1500 to 1700 Spanish marching overland, while the English sailed around to Manchaneel Bay where a rendezvous would occur. Even though the English squadron left St Domingo on 15 April to link up with the vessels at Samaná Bay, it was 4 May before the fleet - save for three frigates and a bomb vessel which had been sent to blockade the French ships at Cap François - anchored off Monte Christo near Manchaneel Bay. Lillingston blamed the delay on the Commodore wasting time at Samaná but this proved irrelevant as the Spaniards had also been held up and their General, who had specifically pressed on ahead, only arrived two days later.¹⁶¹

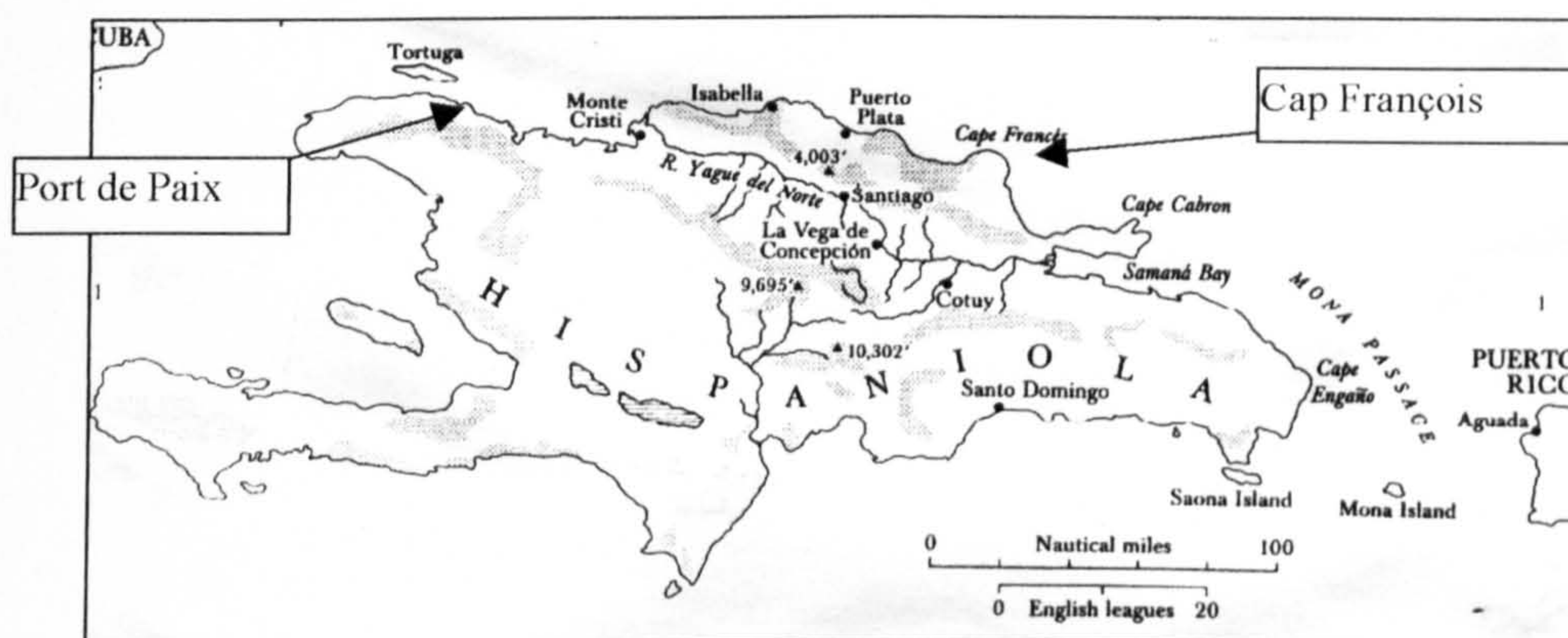


Fig 9: Hispaniola.

¹⁶¹ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 44-8, 51; Burchett, *Memoirs of Transactions at Sea*, pp. 316-17; Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 48-50: 'Articles Agreed and Concluded Upon, Between Robert Wilmot Esq., C.-in-C. of all the King of Great Britain's Fleets and Sea Forces in America and Collonel Luke Lillingston C.-in-C. of His Majesty's Land Forces on the One Part, and Don Ignatis Peris Caro on the Other'; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 113-14: 'That there was time lost at St Domingo, before things could be accommodated with the Spanish General: Commissary Murrey; Capt. Fletcher of the *Terrible Fireship*'; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1946, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, pp. 535, 544, 547, 552-3: Narrative of Colonel Peter Beckford; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to the Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murreys' Journal', [31 July] 1695; PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, *Ruby*, 10 Apr.-6 May 1695.

With Wilmot unwell, Lillingston and the Spanish officer agreed that Bayaha would be the specific point of rendezvous for the troops. On 9 May the squadron anchored in the Manchaneel Bay having been joined by the promised three warships of Spain's Barlovento Fleet which Murrey considered barely mediocre. Over the following three days the Colonel made frequent trips ashore in expectation of meeting the Spanish; and, when on 12 May this was fulfilled, it was agreed at a Council that his brother, the Regimental Major, would land with some 150 English troops (including 50 Grenadiers) and 100 Spanish from the Barlovento to join the overland march. The remaining fit men of Lillingston's regiment were landed with him at the Bay of Potansees, some three to five leagues from Cap François where the squadron proceeded to lie by just out of gunshot of the French fort. Lillingston subsequently grumbled that his detachment might have been spared the march by the ships' boats rowing one and a-half leagues further. It had been planned that once the soldiers marched up to the south-east side of the town, the squadron would broadside the fort while a detachment of landed seamen were to attack its rear. This, however, did not account for the French unexpectedly abandoning and blowing up the fort on 19 May as the sailors scoured the coast for a suitable landing site and the army, still some distance off, struggled across country.

All participants agreed that the sailors were the first into the town, but their conduct there became a source of competing assertions. The Commodore considered his men to have gallantly defused the booby-trapped houses until all the troops arrived by 21 May when he reported that the Colonel pulled down the Jack Flag to replace it with Spain's colours; Lillingston believed the sailors' entry to have been premature and their time spent in taking off all the spoil; Beckford wrote of soldiers assaulting sailors in their quest for loot; while Murrey accused the Spaniards of the plunder. The first combined operation against Hispaniola had ended successfully though its methods had exacerbated pre-existing tensions, leaving the army-navy force divided and squabbling. Ironically, by retreat, the French had damaged the English more than if they than if they had stood and fought.¹⁶²

¹⁶² Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 51-7; Burchett, *Memoirs of Transactions at Sea*, pp. 317-18; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 115-22: 'Relating to the Action at Cape Francois: Capt. Butler of the *Winchester*; Capt. Soul of the *Firebrand* Fireship; Capt Moses of the *Swan*; Capt Fletcher of the *Terrible* Fireship; Lt Hickman, Third of the *Dunkirk*, Lt Turner of the *Ruby*; Lt Stiles of the *Swan*; Lt Farquaharson of the *Reserve*'; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1946, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, pp. 535-6, 544, 547-8, 553-4: Narrative of Colonel Peter Beckford; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murrey's Journal', [31

The French had pulled back westerly towards Port de Paix which perforce had to be attacked next. Communication between Lillingston and Wilmot was now only through intermediaries and agreement on the disposition of force for this second phase proved contentious. Wilmot believed that the army and navy would be arranged as before and he was confounded when Lillingston failed to re-embark the English troops and instead took them to join the Spanish camp for the overland march. Lillingston's version was that he informed Wilmot of his intentions - a point corroborated by Murrey who acted as messenger - and condemned the Commodore for failing to leave behind some transports for care of the increasingly numerous sick soldiers. Whatever the motivation, the decision for all the troops to march to Port de Paix was ill-informed. Distances were miscalculated and the arduous nature of the terrain caused the army to take sixteen days where four had been estimated. Moreover, tempestuous weather added to the diminishing morale and health of the land force. The delayed arrival of the troops at Port de Paix gave rise to recriminations over the squadron's actions in the interim. Having left Cap François on 31 May, the squadron anchored some five leagues eastwards of Port de Paix on 6 June, and the Commodore sent raiding parties ashore to burn all French plantations up to the Port and also, according to Wilmot, establish a line of communication with Lillingston. Murrey and Beckford implicitly commended this action as a necessary preparatory step to flush out the French inhabitants. Lillingston, although not condemnatory, cast doubt on the resoluteness of Wilmot's raids, and argued, in particular, that the flight of the French from the principal and well defended plantation four leagues from the Port, was due to the threat that the soldiers were about to cut it off.¹⁶³

By 15 June both land and sea forces were before Port de Paix and a summons was sent. Its immediate rejection meant that batteries had to be constructed in the hope of effecting a breach in what, all agreed, was a stoutly built and naturally defended fort.

July] 1695; PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, *Ruby*, 6-21 May 1695; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 43-6.

¹⁶³ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 56-68; Burchett, *Memoirs of Transaction at Sea*, pp. 317-20; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 47-52; *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1946, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, pp. 536-7, 544-5, 548-9, 554-5: Narrative of Colonel Peter Beckford; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to the Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murreys' Journal', [31 July] 1695; PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, *Ruby*, 22 May - 15 June 1695; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 122-48: 'Relating to the Proceedings at Port de Paix: Capt. Butler of the *Winchester*; Capt Soul of the *Firebrand* Fireship; Capt Moses of the *Experiment*; Lt Hickman, Third of the *Dunkirk*; Lt Jarman, Second of the *Dunkirk*; Lt Stiles of the *Swan*; Lt Farquaharson of the *Reserve*; Lt Turner of the *Ruby*'.

However, disputes followed over the location of the Council of War and Wilmot was said to have withdrawn his participation from those held ashore unless Lillingston was willing to accept his repeated offer to focus on accumulating personal wealth. Lillingston believed his rejection of this offer contributed to Wilmot delaying the landing of the necessary ordnance and, eventually after ten days, putting ashore at a most incommodious site the wrong quantity and type. This allegation gained credence from the numerous letters that Lillingston wrote to Murrey on the topic. Burchett argued that the soldiers had proved dilatory in erecting those guns initially landed and that for this reason and others - principally the sailors' reluctance to serve under Lillingston ashore - Wilmot sailed by Port de Paix and from 23 June landed a detachment of up to 700 sailors with ordnance to erect batteries at differing levels on the hill overlooking the fort from the west. Perhaps predictably, Lillingston derided both the position and engineering of the navy's batteries; and both services promoted the relative efficacy of their continual fire. Certainly the cumulative effect had an impact for, at the beginning of July, news was brought to Wilmot that the enemy intended to abandon the fort. On the night of 3-4 July the French attempted a breakout: a party of around 500 headed towards Wilmot's forces and he sent forward 150 men to meet them. A sharp fire-fight then occurred, resulting in many casualties. Eventually the English seemed to gain the upper hand and the enemy fled into the woods, where the majority were rounded up later by the Spanish. Prior to this Lillingston's battery had managed to effect a breach and he was preparing to launch an assault. On hearing the exchanges to the west he sent his Major with some men to investigate and the subsequent report led Lillingston to conclude that his soldiers' efforts had in fact forced the French out and that the sailors had been lucky that the French wished only to break though and beat a path to the woods. This view was predicated upon the assumption that the garrison sallied westwards upon a reckoning that Wilmot's force would offer the least resistance. As at Cap François, the individual services tried to claim the success of this combined operation on Hispaniola as their own.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 68-86, 88, 90-7, 99-101, 103-16; Burchett, *Memoirs of Transactions at Sea*, pp. 317-20; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 52-4; CSPC, 1693-1696, nos. 1946, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, 2022.XI-XII, pp. 536-8, 545, 548-9, 554-6, 570: Narrative of Colonel Peter Beckford; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murreys' Journal', [31 July] 1695; Wilmot to Beeston, 10 July 1695; Lillingston to Beeston, 10 July 1695; Burchett, *Mr Burchett's Justification of His Naval Memoirs*, pp. 122-48: 'Relating to the Proceedings at Port de Paix: Capt. Butler of the *Winchester*; Capt Soul of the *Firebrand* Fireship; Capt Moses of the *Experiment*; Lt Hickman, Third of the *Dunkirk*; Lt Jarman, Second of the *Dunkirk*; Lt Stiles of the *Swan*; Lt Farquaharson of the *Reserve*; Lt Turner of the

Petit Goave and Leogane now remained as potential targets; the former had been cited in the original Instructions and both had been agreed upon with the Spaniards at St Domingo. However, the pattern of destructive inter-service relationships continued with similar disputes on the taking off of spoil at Port de Paix and on the viability of future operations on Hispaniola. The Spanish General, Don Juan del Barranio, and Wilmot had a heated exchange over the provision of naval help to destroy the Port de Paix fort and over the Spaniards' agreement to continue south to Petit Goave, which Wilmot held out as a prerequisite condition for providing more assistance. The Spanish were not forthcoming and, although the fort was ultimately razed, Wilmot considered the Spanish attitude, combined with Lillingston's refusal to commit the English troops due to their increasing sickness, to signal the suspension of operations.¹⁶⁵ Interestingly, Stanhope makes no mention of this dispute in his official correspondence through to 1696, despite Barranio's intention to brief Madrid. Alternatively, the Spanish Court may have deliberately omitted to mention it.¹⁶⁶ Nonetheless, the soldiers' refusal to continue was certainly the most important factor in causing the projected attacks against Petit Goave and Leogane to be set aside.

The squadron left Hispaniola for Jamaica on 17 July, and arrived within the week. Within two months the suspension of operations became a cancellation as Wilmot sailed for England. With the two main actions against French Hispaniola having been already undertaken, Beeston was in a poor position to generate further operations; and, as he tried to make sense of the inter-service squabbling, he became drawn into it. There were other contributory factors such as the sickness which was now affecting the warship Captains and had already considerably diminished the effectiveness of Lillingston's regiment. Indeed, an abstract of its Establishment after the squadron's departure, put it at over 1000 men under-strength. Moreover, Jamaica did not have the resources to make good the expeditionary force's deficiencies which were thrown into sharp focus by the news that Ducasse had dug-in

Ruby'; Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 83-6, 89-95, 101-3; Lillingston to Murrey, 22, 25, 26, 27 June 1695; 'At a Council of War' 23 June 1693'; Lillingston to Wilmot, 28 June 1695; 'At a Council of War' 25 June 1695.

¹⁶⁵ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, nos. 1946, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, 2021, 2021.I, 2022.XII-XIII, pp. 538, 545, 549, 556, 565-6, 570: Narrative of Colonel Peter Beckford; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murreys' Journal', [31 July] 1695; Lillingston to Normanby, 22 Aug. 1695; Translation of a letter from the Spanish Lieutenant-General and five of his officers to Colonel Lillingston, 18 July 1695; Lillingston to Beeston, 10 July 1695; Beeston to Wilmot, 19 July 1695.

¹⁶⁶ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, p.125. The relevant volumes up to 1702 (including the Supplementary Volume) in PRO, SP 94 State Papers Foreign, Spain, have been examined.

at Leogane with some 2000 men. Nonetheless, Beeston implied that it was the ongoing personal disputes which ensured that the expeditionary force could not be galvanised to further action, and in early September, with the season too far advanced for the squadron to go to Newfoundland as was stipulated by the Instructions, Wilmot prepared to leave for England. On 3 September the remnants of the squadron sailed from Jamaica. Three frigates, fewer than had been ordered, were left behind: two as a permanent guard and one to convoy the merchants at a later date. Lillingston's regiment was left in the Caribbean but the Colonel and some other officers took passage home.¹⁶⁷

For the religious amongst those soldiers left on Jamaica, Wilmot's subsequent death during the return voyage was likely considered a providential judgement on both the success and failure of the expedition.¹⁶⁸ For the sailors, it robbed the navy of an immediate advocate for its role in the expedition. The excursions to Cap François and Port de Paix had barely reaped any tactical advantage, still less fulfilled any geostrategic objective; but in evicting the French albeit temporarily from northern Hispaniola, the Wilmot-Lillingston expedition had succoured Jamaican defence and avenged the French operation of June 1694. These were primarily the reasons for which it was dispatched and, alone amongst the combined operations sent to the Caribbean during the war, it had fulfilled them. Due to the ceaseless inter-service conflict, the claim that this achievement was the product of genuine combined operational endeavour as opposed to individual service effort remains unproven.

II.vi: Commodore John Norris's and Colonel John Gisbon's Expedition to Newfoundland, April-October 1697.

In the imperial context of the late seventeenth century, Newfoundland was regarded as a territory whose possession did not necessarily require substantial military or fiscal commitment.¹⁶⁹ Lying off the North American coast bounded by the Atlantic reaches to the north-east and the south, with the Gulf of St Lawrence and the Straits of Belle Isle to the

¹⁶⁷ CSPC, 1693-1696, nos. 1971, 1973, 1980.I, 1983, 2026, 2026.I, 2123, pp. 543-5, 549, 556, 573-5, 612: Beeston to Trenchard, 22 July 1695; Copies of a series of letters on the Hispaniola expedition from Charles Whittell, 24 July 1695; Wilmot to the Admiralty, 26 July 1695; 'Murreys' Journal', [31 July] 1695; Beeston to Trenchard, 24 Aug. 1695; Copy of a Minute of a Council of War held at St Jago de la Vega in Jamaica, 29 July 1695; Abstract of the strength of Colonel Lillingston's Regiment of Foot at Jamaica in October, 1695; PRO, ADM 51/4322, Part vi, unpaginated, Ruby, 17-23 July 1695; Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, pp. 137-9.

¹⁶⁸ Lillingston, *Reflections on Mr Burchett's Memoirs*, p. 131.

west, the early history of England's involvement with this island bears testimony to the above point. Although discovered by the Englishman Cabot in the late fifteenth century, Newfoundland did not immediately become a principal area of official settlement for England and this dovetailed with the initial European interest which has been characterised as 'commercial and non-political'¹⁷⁰, whereby fishing the huge cod banks remained largely a private venture. Even when this became untenable as the competition over the fisheries gave rise to territorial disputes, English colonisation on the island remained small scale with the total resident population only increasing by thirteen per cent over eighteen years from 1680.¹⁷¹

Paradoxically, the inhabitants had been consistent in their enthusiasm for an official settlement but had, in turn, been firmly opposed by the influential West Country mercantile interest who feared that it would lead to the loss of their fishing monopoly. Historically, the Government had heeded the merchants' views and, while accepting a minimum level of settlement, no effort was made to commit human or material resource for the island's defence. Heavy fortifications and large garrisons were considered unnecessary on the basis that the command of the Atlantic from the Channel, combined with the annual summer warship convoy, and the severe winters would provide sufficient protection.¹⁷² In marked contrast, the French had officially settled over 200 miles of territory along Newfoundland's southern shore since the founding of Placentia in 1665. Moreover, Louis XIV had begun fortifying these settlements in the late 1680s, thus making clear his wish that France was to have a strong base from which to contest the overall territorial control of the island.¹⁷³

In 1689, England's Declaration of War recognised Louis's attitude by specifically mentioning French depredations upon Newfoundland.¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, it quickly became clear that England's indifference to the island's defence was not a sufficiently robust attitude for wartime. In May, the King had accepted the Lords of Trade's recommendations on the

¹⁶⁹ G.S. Graham, 'Britain's Defence of Newfoundland: A Survey, From the Discovery to the Present Day', *CHIR* 23 (1944), 260.

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 260.

¹⁷¹ J. Hatton & M. Harvey, *Newfoundland: The Oldest British Colony, Its History, Its Present Condition, and Its Prospect in the Future* (London, 1883), pp. 428-9.

¹⁷² Graham, 'Britain's Defence of Newfoundland', pp. 264-7; J. MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of the Maritime Colonies of British America* (reprint of 1828 edn, Wakefield, 1968), pp. 217-19; Hatton & Harvey, *Newfoundland*, pp. 37-8.

¹⁷³ Harvey, *A Short History of Newfoundland*, pp. 62-3; Hatton & Harvey, *Newfoundland*, pp. 38-9; Graham, 'Britain's Defence of Newfoundland', pp. 267-8.

¹⁷⁴ *A General Collection of Treatys,...Relating to Peace and War* (2nd edn, London, 1732), i. 281-2: 'King William and Queen Mary's Declaration of War Against France, May 7, 1689'.

conduct of the war in the colonies which included the harassment of French settlements on Newfoundland and the fortification of the principal English settlement at St John's.¹⁷⁵ However, it was 1692 before the Ministry made attempts to give their approach teeth through Commodore William's bombardment of Placentia and coastal incendiary raids, and in the following year (as has been narrated above) directing Wheler to attack the island after his operations against Canada. Nonetheless, both fell short of expectations and their failure further emboldened the French who then developed an aggressive policy to strike at the English placements on the island.



Fig. 10: Newfoundland.

In August 1694, an attack by two French men-of-war on Ferryland was only checked by the efforts of William Holman, commander of the sole English warship on station, who, in

¹⁷⁵ *CSPC, 1689-1692*, no. 94, p. 32: Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 26 Apr. 1689; *NYCD*, iii. 573-4: Order in Council on the State of the Plantations, &c, 2 May 1689.

conjunction with the inhabitants, erected some fortifications and gun emplacements.¹⁷⁶ French assaults commenced again in early 1696 when Admiral Nesmond anchored his ships in the harbour in order to attack St John's.¹⁷⁷ The attempt was foiled, but the French redoubled their efforts in the autumn when d'Iberville and the French Governor of Placentia, Brouillan, commenced a series of amphibious raids on the island. Between September 1696 and April 1697, d'Iberville and Brouillan effectively captured the whole of Newfoundland for France, though the settlement at Bonavista and the Island of Carbonear held out. The ultimate ignominy was served by the capture and destruction of St John's, thus making a mockery of England's defence policy for the island.¹⁷⁸

It required only the first wide-ranging raid by Brouillan between September and October 1696 which encompassed Ferryland and the Bay of Bulls before the West Country merchants were petitioning the King for retaliatory action. Inertia would mean the collapse of their fishing trade and the forfeiture of an excellent training ground for seamen, and the early representations from the Bideford and Barnstaple merchants were soon followed by others at the turn of the year, particularly after the attack on St John's in November 1696 became common knowledge. The merchants requested an appropriate number of ships and land forces in order to reclaim the areas of Newfoundland lost to the French; strengthened convoys, and an increased number of capital ships on station would then support this action. Ironically, some merchants were now even clamouring for the defensive fortifications that they had hitherto opposed because they had considered it a military adjunct of an official government settlement; there was even a willingness to countenance a permanent garrison of up to three companies of soldiers.¹⁷⁹ This mercantile pressure was of great importance in

¹⁷⁶ *CSPC, 1693-1696*, no. 2059, pp. 592-3: Journal of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 18 Sept. 1695; *CSPC, 1696-1697*, no. 417, pp. 222-3: Memorial of the case of William Holman, commander of the galley William and Mary, 23 Nov. 1696.

¹⁷⁷ There seems some confusion as to when this attack took place. Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 95, dates it as occurring in 1694 as do Hatton & Harvey, *Newfoundland*, p. 39. The latter may, however, be a printing error for they also write that the attack took place four years after 1692. Both Harvey, *A Short History of Newfoundland*, p. 63, and A.F. Williams, *Father Baudoin's War: D'Iberville's Campaigns in Acadia and Newfoundland 1696, 1697*, (Newfoundland, 1987), p. 28, date it 1696. If one accepts that a printing error has occurred in Hatton's & Harvey's text then the consensus would seem to fall upon 1696.

¹⁷⁸ Although from a French perspective, the most detailed account of these raids is to be found in Williams, *Father Baudoin's War*.

¹⁷⁹ *CSPC, 1696-1697*, nos. 392. I, 393.I, 450, 450.I, 479, 479.I, 583, 594.I, 608.I, 635, 692, pp. 211, 233-4, 244, 303-4, 309, 314, 331, 353-4: Petition of the Merchants of Bideford to the King; Petition of the Merchants, Traders and Seamen of the Corporation of Barnstaple to the King, 12 Nov. 1696; The Mayor of Weymouth to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 2 Dec. 1696; The Mayor of Poole to the Council of Trade

convincing the Court that an operation was required and yet oddly it has been overlooked in recent scholarship.¹⁸⁰ The petitioners were certainly pushing at an open door likely unlocked by Sir Robert Robinson's advice in 1695 which had recommended a more aggressive policy against the French on Newfoundland. Moreover, the deported inhabitants of the island underscored mercantile representations by also petitioning the Court for a land and sea expedition to reclaim their settlements.¹⁸¹ Despite this momentum, it was not immediately clear that the Court would agree to an operation that had Newfoundland as its sole destination, and the deliberations initially got caught up in the ongoing preparations for the despatch of a squadron to the West Indies. The strategic and tactical functions reflected by that command's composition was initially to form the yardstick by which a viable independent expedition to Newfoundland was to be decided.

A West Indian squadron had been proposed in late 1696 in response to intelligence that despite Châteaurenault's squadron being beaten back by bad weather, the French still intended to send a considerable force to the Caribbean.¹⁸² From November through to the spring of 1697 intelligence returns reported that the French were now fitting out a fleet at Brest under Pointis. This was thought to be designed for the Caribbean with soldiers aboard to attack the Spanish King's possessions there, and attempt the capture of the returning Spanish *Flota*. To deal with these threats, and the fear that Jamaica might be attacked, the dispatch of a West Indian squadron became an imperative.¹⁸³ Concurrently, an idea was floated in Whitehall to draft an Additional Instruction for this squadron, directing it to repair

and Plantations; the Council of Trade and Plantations to the King, 13 Jan. 1697; Copy of a petition from the Corporation and merchants of Exeter to the King, 16 Jan. 1697; Petition of the Mayor, Corporation, and Merchants of Poole to the King; Petition of the Bailiffs, Capital Burgesses and Merchants to Newfoundland in the Borough of Bridport, to the King, 27 Jan. 1697; John Cary of Bristol to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 8 Feb. 1697; PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 687-8: the Lords of Trade and Plantations to 'Sir' [Burchett?], 23 Nov. 1696.

¹⁸⁰ D. Aldridge, 'Sir John Norris 1660?-1749', in Le Fevre & Harding (eds), *Precursors of Nelson*, p. 132.

¹⁸¹ *CSPC, 1696-1697*, nos. 427, 586, pp. 226, 305-7: Petition of John Clappe and others, on behalf of the inhabitants of Ferryland, in Newfoundland, now residing at Barnstaple in Devon, to the King, 27 Nov. 1696; Copy of the several documents relating to the devastation of the English settlements in Newfoundland, [14 Jan.] 1697.

¹⁸² PRO, SP 42/5, fos. 175-6: 'Proposals for Sending a Squadron to the West Indies', n.d. [Late 1696 or early 1697].

¹⁸³ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 433, 435-42, 445-51, 893-4: Trumbull to Admiralty, 10, 11 Nov. 1696, 29 Jan. 1697 and enclosures, untitled; untitled; extract of the Journal of the Council of Trade, n.d.; extract of Sir William Beeston's letter, 19 June 1696; extract of another, 4, 5 July 1696; PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos 1245, 1247: Shrewsbury to the Admiralty, 28 Mar. 1697, and enclosure, untitled; PRO, ADM 1/4085, fos 443, 451-5: Vernon to Bridgeman, 17 June 1697, and enclosure, 'Instructions to be Observ'd by Our Trusty and Welbeloved John Nevill Esq.'

to Newfoundland on its voyage home. The details as to its actions when off the island were to follow at a later date.¹⁸⁴ The previous mercantile and inhabitants' insistence that both a land and sea force would be required to regain the settlements on Newfoundland makes it reasonable to suggest that this squadron would have had to have had some troops aboard. The intended West Indian squadron was to be formed from two separate groups of warships. One detachment of five warships and two fireships commanded in the Mediterranean by Vice Admiral John Neville had been ordered in December 1696 to proceed into the Caribbean. Neville's orders were strictly naval in character: to locate both Pointis and the Spanish *Flota* with the intent to destroy the former and secure the latter. No extant evidence suggests that he had any troops on board other than the likely draft of marine soldiers and, unless these troops were to be relied upon, Neville thus required land reinforcements to undertake any combined land and sea operations.¹⁸⁵ Initially this seemed possible for the other group of ships forming the squadron had been delayed in leaving England and could therefore have had troops embarked aboard. However, as the sheer extent of this delay became clear, it most likely caused the idea to be shelved. Undoubtedly it weighed heavily with the Court that the Board of Trade and the Admiralty had traded allegations as to whom was responsible for failing to communicate this squadron's design and purpose while the French raids continued unabated. Despite an attempt to hasten the squadron's preparations, William quickly rejected the idea of an Additional Instruction and, instead, chose to send to Newfoundland a self-contained squadron with land forces aboard. In order to inject a sense of urgency into the preparations, William informed all the petitioners of his decision by 30 January.¹⁸⁶

The King's determination made an impression upon the various boards, departments and officials who were to put the operation together as they demonstrated an early awareness into the necessity of their interdependence. The Board of Trade acted as a bureaucratic pivot, liaising effectively with the Admiralty, Secretary of State Trumbull, and the Ordnance Board. From the outset the net for help was cast wide in an attempt by Whitehall to spread the

¹⁸⁴ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 893-4, 995-6: Trumbull to the Admiralty, 29 Jan. 1697, and enclosure, the Council of Trade to Trumbull, 28 Jan. 1697.

¹⁸⁵ PRO, ADM 1/4085, fos 443, 451-5: Vernon to Bridgeman, 17 June 1697, and enclosure, 'Instructions to be Observ'd by Our Trusty and Welbeloved John Nevill Esq.'; NUL, PwA 972, unf.: The naval journal of Vice-Admiral John Neville, Dec. 1696-July 1697.

¹⁸⁶ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 853-6, 893-4, 995-6: Trumbull to the Admiralty, 16, 29 Jan. 1697, and enclosure, the Council of Trade to Trumbull, 28 Jan. 1697; NUL, PwA 974, unf.: Neville to Portland, 29 Apr. 1697; CSPC, 1696-1697, no. 648, p. 337: Popple to the Mayors of Bristol, Exeter, Bideford, Barnstaple, Plymouth, Weymouth, Dartmouth, Poole and Fowey, 30 Jan. 1697.

administrative burden. As sundry merchants were asked to estimate for the sea and land provisions, the North American provinces were requested to send men and equipment, though it remains unclear whether the colonies responded to this appeal.¹⁸⁷ Throughout, the bureaucratic oil was the redoubtable Blathwayt. His letters make clear William's personal commitment, evidenced by his attention to the operation's administrative minutiae. A notable example was the King's recognition of the vulnerability of the soldiers' health when aboard ship. He directed that the surgeons should care for both seamen and soldiers and, to prevent this order miscarrying due to friction between the Admiralty and War Office over funding, William shrewdly determined that on the return of the ships each surgeon be reimbursed two shillings and six-pence per soldier from the army contingencies. Blathwayt's correspondence also crucially kept the pressure upon the Admiralty with repeated requests for the King to be provided with reports on the forwardness of the preparations.¹⁸⁸

The culmination of all this bureaucratic activity was a detailed memorandum on progress sent by Blathwayt on 29 March to the Admiralty which demonstrated that, overall, the arrangements were at a relatively advanced stage.¹⁸⁹ Within three weeks, on 17 April, a squadron of eleven ships¹⁹⁰ commanded by Commodore John Norris¹⁹¹, with between 700 and

¹⁸⁷ *CSPC, 1696-1697*, nos. 647, 685, 686, 852, pp. 337, 351, 411: the Council of Trade and Plantations to Trumbull, 29 Jan., 5 Feb. 1697; the Commissioners of Transportation to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 5 Feb. 1697; the Council of Trade and Plantations to Stoughton, 24 Mar. 1697; *CSPD, 1697*, p. 62: the King to [the Governor of the Province of Massachusetts Bay], 18 Mar. 1697.

¹⁸⁸ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 1097-1100, 1221-4, 1229-32: Blathwayt to the Secretary of the Admiralty, 9 Mar. 1697; Blathwayt to the Admiralty, 23 Mar. 1697; Blathwayt to 'Sir' [Burchett?], 25 Mar. 1697.

¹⁸⁹ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 1269, 1271-4: Blathwayt to the Admiralty, 29 Mar. 1697, and enclosure, 'The Dispatch of the Preparations for the Expedition to Newfoundland Consists as Followeth'.

¹⁹⁰ There is some doubt as to the exact composition of the squadron. Both PRO, ADM 8/5, unf.: 'Ships Bound to Newfoundland', 23 Mar. 1697, and HMC, *House of Lords MSS*, NS, iii. 327: 'Instructions for Capt. John Norris', 11 Apr. 1697, cite an additional fourth rate, the *Portland*, and the *Etna* fireship as part of the squadron. *CSPC, 1696-1697*, no. 906, p. 440: Distribution of the Land Forces in the Fleet Bound to Newfoundland, also states that the squadron comprised thirteen ships. The Admiralty's disposition list for the squadron after its departure, PRO, ADM 8/5, unf.: 'A List of His Majesty's Ships and Vessels Now in Sea Pay', 4 May 1697, omits these two vessels; and yet, a disposition list two months hence, PRO, ADM 8/5, unf.: 'The Present Disposal of all His Majesty's Ships & Vessels in Sea Pay', 1 June 1697, includes them again and lists a further two fourth rates - the *Bonadventure* and the *Crown*. In their Journals - PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'A Journal of My Proceedings with his Majesty's Ships on the Newfoundland Expedition' [hereafter 'Norris's Journal'], and BL, Stowe 463, p. 5 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 1696-7, 1700 - Norris and Richards record that on 27 June, Captain Littleton in the *Portland* arrived with the *Fortune* fireship, the *Unity* transport vessel and the *Oxenden* and the *Katherine* storeships, while two further storeships, the *Union* and the *Benjamin*, had failed on that occasion to get about Cape Francis. This second fireship was different to the one cited in Norris's Instructions and the disposition list of the 23 Mar. Norris's journal - PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal' - notes the arrival with convoys of the *Bonadventure* (a hired man-of-war from Lisbon) and the *Crown* over the two days, 11-12 July. Another estimation of eight frigates, two fireships, two bomb vessels and some storeships was given in *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 27. The frequent citation of other

900 troops from Colonel John Gibson's infantry battalion¹⁹² and 60 Ordnance Office personnel¹⁹³ captained by Michael Richards (youngest brother of the notable family trio of gunners and military engineers)¹⁹⁴ aboard, left Spithead. A preparatory time of less than three months meant that the despatch of this expedition had been less beset by delay than the others sent overseas throughout the war.

Nonetheless, the administrative speed belied a lack of smoothness in respect of three issues. The least important glitch concerned Richards's appointment as the expedition's Chief Engineer and Principal Ordnance Officer. His Journal related the farcical story of how he came to this command. Despite initially requesting the appointment, a bout of illness at the end of February when the list of appointed ordnance personnel was published, and then the uncertainty as to whether Colonel Romer was to attend as the engineer with Gibson commanding the train, caused much muddle. Ultimately, without an official letter of appointment or Instructions from the Ordnance Board, Richards embarked onboard the flagship *Monck* at Portsmouth on 17 April with only the wishes of the Master-General of the Ordnance and a 'gentleman's understanding' with Gibson to explain his presence.¹⁹⁵

A second administrative ruffle was the debate as to whether the squadron was to proceed as one or as two detachments with different sailing times. Initially the officials - particularly the victuallers - favoured the latter option for it would allow the minimum of provisions to be sent with the first sailing, thus providing more time to procure all the

larger estimates by historians is possibly a product of a lack of awareness about the debate as to whether the squadron would depart as one unit or as two and the subsequent circumstances of its departure.

¹⁹¹ See Chapter 1, Section II.ii, p. 69 n. 37.

¹⁹² The primary and secondary sources disagree as to the exact number of soldiers embarked. Norris's journal - PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 14 Apr. 1697 - records his receipt of a letter from Gibson stating that the regiment to be embarked comprised 896 men. Blathwayt's communication with the Admiralty - PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 1113-16: Blathwayt to Burchett, 9 Mar. 1697 - states that 930 troops were to go to Newfoundland, though he did also indicate in that letter that bedding for 900 would be sufficient, thus anticipating the actual number of troops to be nearer this lower figure for bedding. CPSC, 1696-1697, p. 440: Distribution of the land Forces in the Fleet Bound for Newfoundland, put the total number of troops lower at 760. As for the secondary sources, Aldridge, 'Sir John Norris 1660?-1749', p. 132 puts the number at 750; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army' claims there were 50 less; and R. Chartrand, 'Early British Regulars in Canada, 1697-1717', *JSAHR* lxxvi (1998), 1, declares an additional ten. I have not found an exact embarkation return for this squadron.

¹⁹³ PRO, ADM 1/4084, f. 1269: Blathwayt to the Admiralty, 29 Mar. 1697.

¹⁹⁴ For biographical and military service details on Jacob, John and Michael Richards see H.T. Dickinson, 'The Richards Brothers: Exponents of the Military Arts of Vauban', *JSAHR* xlv (1968), 76-86, and F.J. Herbert, 'The Richards Brothers', *JS* xii (1975-1976), 200-11. An element of caution is required when reading both for they contain certain chronological inaccuracies with respect to Michael Richards's service in Newfoundland.

¹⁹⁵ BL, Stowe 463, pp. 1-3 (first pagination): Journals of M. Richards, Sept. 1696-17 Apr. 1697.

necessary foodstuffs. However, this ran contrary to the King's wishes that the squadron sail as a whole. At the end of March, the Board of Trade intervened on the victualler's behalf by pointing out that they had been working under the assumption that the squadron would be divided and that further orders would be required if the ships were to be provisioned to sail as a whole. The Board's warning had no effect. Within the following fortnight, the Transport Commissioners had informed Blathwayt that the transports, having suffered delays in victualling, could only sail immediately without the whole quantities.¹⁹⁶ The administrative process had seemed to frustrate monarchical design; but ultimately it was not to prevail. All the ships save one left on 17 April, the remaining vessel, the *Portland*, followed later with five storeships, thus acting more as a convoy than forming a second detachment.

The third difficulty faced by the officials concerned the drafting of Norris's Instructions. Encompassing not only the strategic purpose of the operation but also the balance of command between the land and sea officers, it was by far the most important issue addressed. Blathwayt sent a draft of the Instructions plus some 'Heads' for discussion to the Admiralty on 15 March. In terms of implementing the strategic intent to recover Newfoundland, the amphibious quality of the expedition suggested by the King's decision of 30 January was diluted. Instead of a single combined operation directed to take and hold one sector of Newfoundland from whence full control might be achieved through envelopment, vaguely targeted assaults against various parts of the island were now promoted. The potentially advantageous tactical position conferred upon a single landing by the maritime command securing the flanks and the line of retreat had been sacrificed in favour of sporadic landings determined upon by the land commander and approved by a Council of War.¹⁹⁷ Admittedly, the Instructions did specifically direct Norris to Placentia and the French strongholds along the southern coast but the suggested course of action was bound by the a number of caveats including the requirement that it would not prejudice service elsewhere. The combined service assaults were now one of a plethora of tasks for the squadron such that when the final set of Instructions was issued on 11 April, Norris's responsibilities ranged from

¹⁹⁶ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 1269, 1271-4, 1413-16: Blathwayt to the Admiralty, 29 Mar., 13 Apr. 1697, and enclosure, 'The Dispatch of the Preparations for the Expedition to Newfoundland Consists as Followeth'; PRO, ADM 1/4084, f. 1305: Trumbull to the Admiralty, 31 Mar. 1697, and enclosure, f. 1307: Council of Trade to Trumbull, 29 Mar. 1697.

¹⁹⁷ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos 1168, 1269, 1275-82, unf: Blathwayt to Secretaries of the Admiralty, 15, 29 Mar. 1697, and enclosures, 'Instructions for Norris'; 'Heads of Instructions for Captain John Norris'; 'Heads of Instructions for Captain John Norris'.

the immediate necessity of securing the coastal waters to the despatch of convoys to various Mediterranean ports. While some of the tasks were a standard feature for any squadron stationed at Newfoundland, the majority were thoroughgoing naval activities that evidently required no input from the army.¹⁹⁸

The Instruction's prescriptions on command did though fully recognise that this was to be combined army and naval venture. The standard exhortation that the success of the expedition depended upon constant good relations between the Service commanders was shored up by an attempt to provide both greater clarity on their specific responsibilities and enhanced authority in these areas. The commander of the land forces was detailed as responsible for proposing when, and where, his battalion was to land for an assault; while he also had full command of any detachment of seamen put ashore as assistance. However, in deference to the expertise of the senior naval officer, that detachment could only be authorised if the Commodore considered it consistent with the sea-going demands of the squadron. And, as has already been noted, Norris was in sole command of naval activities such as the provision of convoys to the Mediterranean.¹⁹⁹ Interestingly, in this form, these provisions were not in the original draught though the enhanced discretion for the land commander had formed one of the separate 'Heads of Instructions'.²⁰⁰ In so far as the above emphasised that this was a combined venture in a negative manner by delineating responsibilities peculiar to each Service, their conjunction was positively reinforced by a combined Council of War being the sovereign authority of command. In the usual manner, the presidency of the Council would depend on whether it convened ashore or afloat, though notably when ashore, Gibson was not bound to invite the naval officers unless he specifically wanted their advice.²⁰¹ This latter provision might be thought to provide a functional advantage for Gibson but such an interpretation overlooks the potentially superior structural advantage afforded to Norris by the presidency of the combined Council being determined by the location of its assembly. This made it more likely that Gibson would have to seek sanction for his proposals on the landings under a naval Presidency. These circumstances might have been thought to credit Norris with supreme command. However, as the events of

¹⁹⁸ HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, iii. 327-30: Instructions for Capt. John Norris, 11 Apr. 1697.

¹⁹⁹ HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, iii. 327-30: Instructions for Capt. John Norris, 11 Apr. 1697.

²⁰⁰ PRO, ADM 1/4084, f. 1168, unf.: Blathwayt to the Admiralty, 15 Mar. 1697, and enclosures, 'Instructions for Norris'; 'Heads of Instructions for Captain John Norris'.

²⁰¹ HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, iii. 327-30: Instructions for Capt. John Norris, 11 Apr. 1697.

the expedition were to show the Instructions conferred neither a structural nor a functional advantage to either service but instead confirmed their essential association in command.

It was 29 March before the squadron cleared Lands End, having spent twelve days since leaving Spithead working down the Channel collecting such merchantmen as required convoy to Newfoundland. However, once out in the Atlantic good progress was made with only the last part of the sailing bedevilled by a fog of such thickness that the ships had to use all their guns, bells and drums to ward against collision.²⁰² By 7 June, Newfoundland was in sight and Norris called a combined Council of land and sea officers to determine proceedings. Colonel Gibson claimed that he argued for a landing of 150 men to attack Kitty Vitty, a place near St John's, while the rest of the troops would be transported in light vessels for an assault upon the harbour. The Council ignored this by resolving to gain intelligence on the current state of affairs at St John's and, in particular, where it would be possible to effect a landing in the face of French opposition. Thus, Captains Cleasby (naval) and Petit (ordnance) were sent out in two ship's boats only to return quickly with the news that contrary to expectations, the French had quitted St John's some time ago. There remained a few English inhabitants along with some merchantmen who, having been separated from the convoy in the recent fog, had groped their way through to St John's harbour. By late afternoon, Norris's squadron had joined them.²⁰³

The French departure from St John's was a surprise which rendered void the expected fight for reoccupation and ameliorated the need to immediately place it in a defensive posture; but also there was now an opportunity to undertake the combined assaults against French settlements elsewhere. However, within two days of their arrival, the English decided to land all the troops at St John's with the necessary provisions left in the *Suffolk* hag-boat so that they could begin surveying the ground for the erection of the batteries and buildings. This would also allow Norris to take the squadron to sea for twelve days, though the two bomb vessels were left behind as harbour defence. These proceedings were not entirely without sense for, if a garrison was to be established, then it would require accommodation and St John's was also poorly fortified. Moreover, with the provisions stowed on board the men-of

²⁰² *ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁰³ *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, p. 39: Colonel John Gibsone's [sic] Narrative of the Expedition to Newfoundland [hereafter 'Gibson's Narrative'], 29 Nov. 1697; PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 28 May-7 June 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 1 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 7 June 1697; PRO, SP 42/5, fos. 187-91: Norris to 'My Lord', 12 Aug. 1697.

war having been kept to a minimum, Norris was keen to secure the supply ships coming from England and a convoy expected from the Mediterranean.²⁰⁴ This early decision to divide the immediate activities of the army and navy was to prove crucial for the future viability of the combined assaults. In fact, they never came to be discussed as a series of events on the land and at sea entrenched this initial disposition of force as the only one capable of providing both for its own security and that of St John's.

The first stage in this process occurred when Norris cut short his cruise after only three days as a result of intelligence he gained from the crew of the captured French merchantman. The captains agreed at Council that the prisoners' evidence strongly suggested that a French squadron of three 70 to 80-gun men-of-war and several 50s were headed for Placentia; while letters intercepted aboard from Rochelle referred to a squadron of eleven men-of-war bound for Newfoundland that were to link up with others from Brest. This information should not have been surprising for it was entirely consistent with the reports sent from Europe prior to the expeditionary force's departure on 17 April.²⁰⁵ Notwithstanding, the Council resolved that the fleet should return immediately to defend St John's.²⁰⁶ On 22 June, a combined Council agreed with the Captains' analysis, believing that St John's could only be protected by the fleet until the necessary fortification materials arrived in the supply ships from England. Meanwhile, to strengthen the fleet's position in the harbour, improvisation with some spare topmasts and fascines caused a boom to be placed across the harbour mouth.²⁰⁷

The French squadron had not appeared by 27 June when Captain Littleton arrived with the storeships, thus allowing Norris to set out cruising again.²⁰⁸ Ominously, the arrival of the foodstuffs did not seem to alleviate the general shortage. Gibson emphasised the plight of the soldiers, blaming Norris for refusing to send to New England for a further supply and

²⁰⁴ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 7-10 June 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 1 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 7-10 June 1697; PRO, SP 42/5, fos. 187-91: Norris to 'My Lord', 12 Aug. 1697; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 29.

²⁰⁵ PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 1197, 1199-1200, 1253, 1255-8: Yard to Bridgeman 22, 29 Mar. 1697, and enclosures, 'Paris' 25 Mar., Apr. 1697 [NS]; extract of a letter from The Hague, 29 Mar. 1697 [NS].

²⁰⁶ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 17 June 1697; PRO, SP 42/5, fos. 187-91: Norris to 'My Lord', 12 Aug. 1697; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 29.

²⁰⁷ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, iii. 321-2: At a Consultation held on board his Majesty's ship the *Monck* in St John's Harbour, 22 June 1697; PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 22 June 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 4 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 22 June 1697.

²⁰⁸ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 23 June-2 July 1697; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 29.

prohibiting the land forces from taking the merchantmens' goods until 2 August. The Colonel also drew attention to the prodigious consumption by the Masters of the storeships in serving out a full allowance to their crews.²⁰⁹ There was, doubtless, some truth in these points; but combined they provided a lop-sided picture of the range of the shortage, and gave credence to the rather cursory argument that the shortage was a product of divided command.²¹⁰ The accounts provided by Norris and Richards make clear that the deprivation was common to soldier and sailor, with both on half-allowance of bread and short-allowance of all other provisions save for oatmeal and flour; and that the three principal officers worked together to procure all the available bread whether it be with the island's inhabitants or hidden in the storeships.²¹¹ Rather than conflict between the services causing the scarcity, it seems probable that errors had occurred in the victualling as it was completed against an uncertain backdrop as to whether the squadron was to proceed as one or two groups of ships.

This prospective shortage of provisions did not prevent the Council from allocating 21 sea days for the squadron's second cruise which was to conclude with an assessment of the former English ports to the south of St John's. But again, Norris steered the squadron back to St John's in little over a third of that time as a result of confirmation from two captured prizes that the arrival of a French squadron was indeed imminent. The Masters of both the *Union* and the *Bellicuer*, claimed to have sailed from Rochelle on 5 May under the convoy of Nesmond's squadron of eleven men-of-war which had set course for Newfoundland. They believed that Placentia was the place of rendezvous in the event of separation and from there it was thought that Nesmond would target Boston. The English naval captains were too fearful of the French squadron's reputed strength to risk Nesmond being solely interested in the New England town by remaining at sea and thus leave St John's without defence.²¹²

Naval perception of French strength in the region was further enhanced by the assessments of over a hundred English prisoners who were returned from Placentia in early July. Norris was particularly alarmed by the testimony of one Richard Wakeling, Master of the *Speedwell* ketch. He provided a dispiriting account of the extent of the French

²⁰⁹ *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, pp. 39-40: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697; *CSPC, 1696-1697*, no. 1115, pp. 522-4: Gibson to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 28 June 1697.

²¹⁰ Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 96.

²¹¹ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 9 June 28-29 June 1697; BL, Stowe 463, pp. 4-5 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 27-29 June 1697.

²¹² PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 28 June-10 July 1697; PRO, SP 42/5, fos. 187-91: Norris to 'My Lord', 12 Aug. 1697.

fortification and ordnance at Placentia, including their 36 gun Fort Placens with a further six guns, and two mortars positioned on the hill-top and banks overlooking the settlement. In terms of human resources, Wakeling estimated that there were near 2000 soldiers, sailors and inhabitants. Finally, the Master reported observing a considerable amount of recent French naval activity at Placentia which included around 30 merchantmen in the harbour and four French men-of-war cruising between Newfoundland and Hudson Bay.²¹³ The cumulative effect of this intelligence about current and potential French regional strength, worked against the launching of any combined assaults. The initial decision taken on arrival regarding the disposition of the force which had indirectly prioritised the defence of St John's and its environs was increasingly confirmed by events as the most prudent option.

This trend was reinforced by Colonel Gibson, who, although possessing the authority for proposing the assaults, seemed not in the least interested in their potentiality. Richards provided a vivid account of the Colonel immersing himself in the building work, much to the Chief Engineer's chagrin for he considered Gibson to be transgressing upon his area of responsibility. The fortification of St John's was actually the only occasion throughout the whole expedition when Gibson suggested that the sea and land forces should work together. On 14 July, Norris and his captains considered Gibson's request for 400 seamen to fetch the palisades and they agreed to a daily provision of 100 men contingent upon restrictions on Gibson's command over them. Although the Colonel's ultimate shore authority was recognised, the captains wanted to ensure that naval officers would be the sailors' immediate commanders on shore, and further that they be given duties near the harbour mouth.²¹⁴ Gibson rejected the offer outright, and approached Richards to complain of the difficulties between the land and sea forces. Interestingly, acquitting Norris of responsibility for the state of relations, Gibson blamed 'turbulent spirits' amongst the Captains and asked if Richards could mediate.²¹⁵ Although clearly not sympathetic to Gibson, Richards waited upon Norris who had in the interim received a conciliatory letter from the Colonel. An agreement was reached for the immediate provision of 100 sailors to palisade and for a further 60 to be

²¹³ *ibid.*

²¹⁴ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 14 July 1697; BL, Stowe 463, pp. 8-10 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 7-14 July 1697.

²¹⁵ BL, Stowe 463, pp. 11-12 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 16 July 1697.

employed in breaking up old ships and harbour rock.²¹⁶ The tension between the land and sea forces over the employment of seamen ashore had been resolved but only temporarily.

Meanwhile, combined operational action seemed increasingly unlikely as there was no change in the intelligence assessments regarding French strength. In the evening of the 23 July, Pointis, having outrun Neville north of Cuba, stood some five French warship into Conception Bay. A Council of War held in the afternoon of 24 July confirmed a decision taken by the same Council in the morning for the expeditionary force to remain in St John's harbour for the common security of the island's settlements, the squadron, and the troops. It also decided to embark the soldiers, and call for all neighbouring inhabitants to man the incomplete gun batteries along with the naval ordnance that had been set ashore.²¹⁷ This was based upon the flawed premise that the five ships spotted were part of a much larger fleet under Nesmond which intelligence returns before leaving England, and naval reconnaissance since, had indicated was headed for Newfoundland.²¹⁸ In fact, Nesmond did not arrive for another month and, as a result of the Council's decision, Pointis's squadron with its valuable cargo was ultimately able to make a second escape.²¹⁹ In the Chair at the afternoon Council on 24 July, Norris argued that the fleet should leave the harbour and attempt to engage the French vessels at Conception Bay.²²⁰ However the mutual dependence of the combined army-navy action – as framed by the Instructions – was demonstrated by Norris's inability to persuade a third of the navy officers who joined the soldiers to vote against egress. These captains even rejected the Commadore's persuasive argument that if the French warships in Conception Bay were in communication with any others within five leagues, then they would have already been spotted from Cape Francis or Baccalieu. In other words, as this was not the case, the expected larger French fleet under Nesmond was likely to be too far away to be of immediate assistance to those at anchor in Conception Bay and, thus, the opportunity to

²¹⁶ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 15-17 July 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 12 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 17 July 1697.

²¹⁷ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 11-24 July 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 9-16 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 11-24 July 1697; *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, pp. 40-1: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697.

²¹⁸ NUL, PwA 972, unf.: The naval journal of Vice-Admiral John Neville, 27-31 May 1697; W.T. Morgan, 'The Expedition of Baron de Pointis Against Cartagena', *AHR* xxxvii (1931-1932), 249; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, iii. 324: At a Consultation held aboard his Majesty's Ship *Monck* in St. John's harbour, 24 July 1697; PRO, ADM 1/4084, fos. 1197, 1199-1200, 1253, 1255-8: Yard to Bridgeman 22, 29 Mar. 1697, and enclosures, 'Paris' 25 Mar., Apr. 1697 [NS]; extract of a letter from The Hague, 29 Mar. 1697 [NS].

²¹⁹ Morgan, 'The Expedition of Baron de Pointis', pp. 249-50.

²²⁰ See above p. 133 n. 217.

engage them should be grasped.²²¹ Captain Martin of the *Blast* bomb vessel subsequently claimed that all the sea officers had wished to engage Pointis; but laying aside his incorrect arithmetic, Martin missed the material point.²²² This was that despite his presidency of the Council, Norris could not overcome the combined dynamic of sailors and soldiers who had decided that they did not want the fleet to leave the harbour.

Even as it became clear over the course of the following days that it was only Pointis's squadron in the bay, the Council held firm to its view when it re-convened to consider the matter on 25 and 27 July.²²³ On the latter occasion Norris had had hopes that the pre-existing resolution would be amended because he claimed that prior to the Council Gibson had indicated a wholesale change in his opinion. That no alteration occurred, Norris credited to Gibson's behaviour in Council. The Commodore recorded that, although Gibson voted for the fleet's egress, he wished it minuted that he considered this action contrary to the benefit of the whole service.²²⁴ Neither Gibson nor Richards referred to the former's change of vote. Gibson stressed his constant opposition to the departure of the fleet on the basis of what he considered was the continuing uncertainty as to whether Nesmond remained unsighted off the coast. Certainly, it does seem odd that Gibson would show his hand for a proposal which he expressively stated was contrary to the King's service.²²⁵ Yet, Gibson undermined the veracity of his own record by claiming to remember that only three sea captains voted with the Commodore for the fleet's departure on 24 July when the extant minutes of the Council showed seven supporting Norris.²²⁶ However, regardless as to which record was correct, Gibson was lending his qualified support to what was primarily a naval task - securing the coastal waters. The question of a combined action upon Newfoundland had still to be raised and Gibson continued to show no inclination to do so when, at the end

²²¹ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 24 July 1697.

²²² *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 33-6.

²²³ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, iii. 324-5: At a Consultation held on board his Majesty's ship the *Monck* in St John's Harbour, 25 July 1697; PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 25-27 July 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 9-16 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 25-27 July 1697; *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, pp. 40-1: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697.

²²⁴ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 27 July 1697.

²²⁵ BL, Stowe 463, p. 1-60 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 1696-7, 1700; *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, pp. 39-42: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697.

²²⁶ *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, p. 40: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, iii. 324: At a Consultation held aboard his Majesty's ship *Monck* in St. John's Harbour, 24 July 1697.

of the month, he requested that the Council agree to the troops being landed at St John's again to continue their works ashore.²²⁷

Norris's own view on the egress of the fleet in such circumstances altered nearly one month hence when, on 18 August, Nesmond with a squadron of fifteen warships did in fact appear off St John's harbour. This time Norris gave no thought to seeking an engagement and, instead, drew his squadron up line-astern in a half-moon with the broadside of each covering the boom that lay across the harbour mouth. He also sent an express north to inform the inhabited coastal areas of the enemy's appearance. Meanwhile, with no time to embark, Gibson disposed his troops to man the still partially completed South and North batteries, while Richards ensured that each emplacement and the soldiers had sufficient ammunition.²²⁸ Norris and Gibson recorded that Nesmond spent a day plying up and down outside the harbour, though they disagreed on how many of the squadron subsequently stood into the harbour mouth. Gibson believed that the French commander despatched only a 50 and a bomb vessel which were chased away with a bomb thrown from either the *Comet* or *Blast*.²²⁹ Norris considered that the whole squadron stood in about noon, though a cross wind forced the vessels to head off and be brought to. Furthermore, he cited the weather as proving the undoing of the French when it thickened throughout the afternoon and into the following day with a south-easterly gale veering to the east and north-east, thus, forcing the squadron to stand out to sea.²³⁰ Gibson argued, however, that it was the strong defensive posture provided by the conjunction of the land and sea forces in the harbour area which had forestalled the French and he was later supported by the Lords Justices who minuted their intent to discount the news that Nesmond had forced the harbour due to the conjunction of numerous soldiers and vessels within its haven. Of course, their Lordships had no meteorological information.²³¹

The English suffered a further fright on 23 August when twelve sail were spotted some seven leagues out. Again, the fleet remained in the harbour and assumed a similar

²²⁷ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 30 July 1697.

²²⁸ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 18 Aug. 1697; *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, p. 41: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 25 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 18 Aug. 1697.

²²⁹ *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, p. 41: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697.

²³⁰ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 18-19 Aug. 1697; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 31.

²³¹ *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, p. 41: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697; *CSPD, 1697*, p. 415: Minutes of the proceedings of the Lords Justices, 5 Oct. 1697.

defensive posture. Though, on this occasion, Norris noted that his disposition attracted the criticism of Gibson who believed that the squadron's fire might prejudice his soldiers at the batteries. Not surprisingly, Norris considered his squadron well ordered to defend the harbour with the ships' guns clear of the batteries as a result of the broadsides being brought up with stream cables at the vessels' sterns along with other springs ahead and astern. The Commodore, thus, refused to alter the line and dismissed Gibson's intervention as typically impolite behaviour. This scare lasted for 24 hours after which the ships could no longer be sighted; and then both commanders returned to the building works with a detachment of sailors put ashore again to help the completion of the new fort's covered way.²³²

The first three months at Newfoundland show Norris and Gibson to be merely reacting to events driven by the intelligence provision which emphasised French strength. Certainly, neither had mentioned the possibility of undertaking the combined assaults against Placentia and the surrounding areas. Indeed, their initial decision not to work as a combined unit but concentrate on individual service responsibilities - fortification and naval cruises - had become entrenched. This trend continued through the first few weeks of September as relations between all officers became increasingly fractious. Norris and Gibson revisited their quarrel over the command of the seamen ashore; Richards and Gibson involved themselves in demarcation disputes; and a Council which convened to decide where the French prisoners should be returned occasioned a grubby dispute between Colonel Gibson and Lieutenant-Colonel Dove during which Gibson effectively challenged the younger man to a duel.²³³ Meanwhile, as the winter season approached, there was a constant awareness that the provisions were further dwindling; and Norris, not knowing that a peace treaty had been signed four days previously, called a Council on 17 September to settle affairs for sailing home.

The squadron did not actually leave Newfoundland until 8 October.²³⁴ The intervening weeks had been taken up with Gibson settling the extent of garrison that was to be left and completing as much of the fortification work as possible. The importance of

²³² PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 23-25 Aug. 1697; BL, Stowe 463, pp. 27-30 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 23 Aug.-6 Sept. 1697.

²³³ BL, Stowe 463, pp. 27-30 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 8-18 Sept. 1697; PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 6-17 Sept. 1697.

²³⁴ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 8 Oct. 1697; BL, Stowe 463, p. 60 (reverse pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 8 Oct. 1697. Oddly, *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 33, 36, dates the sailing as 7 Oct.

ensuring the defence of the areas of English settlement was confirmed by Gibson's initial desire to remain himself in command of the whole regiment as garrison. Even when a lack of provisions combined with the Council's refusal to leave the *Suffolk* hag-boat as lodging for the regiment in the absence of a completed barracks reputedly forced Gibson to alter his plans, over a quarter of the troops brought out were still to be left under the command of the Regimental Major, Thomas Handysde. With ten subordinate officers including three company Captains, and an artillery train of 36 personal commanded by Captain Petit, it was not an insignificant force for the defence of a relatively small sector of the island.²³⁵ Although the provision of a garrison had been ordered, the fact that this inherently defensive task was to be undertaken solely by the army, thus representing another enterprise successfully completed by an individual service, stood as final testimony to the lack of combined operational endeavour throughout the course of the expedition. Indeed, it would be easy to characterise the operation as one whereby the navy simply acted as a taxi to an army garrison and providing return travel for the remainder of the troops.

The ink on the peace treaty concluded at Rijswijk had been dry for nearly two months when the returning squadron came to anchor in the Downs on 3 November.²³⁶ Under the terms of the Treaty, the colonial status of Newfoundland was to revert to the pre-war circumstances: essentially a shared island with distinctive areas of French and English settlement.²³⁷ Thus, even if Norris and Gibson had attempted any combined action against the French and expelled them from Newfoundland the peace would have overturned such success. However, this prospect did not have to be contemplated because the English practice of warfare during this expedition had been wholly moulded by events. It was not on this occasion, as some have concluded ²³⁸, that the army and navy were despatched without any operational or administrative principles with respect to the war in the colonies; rather it was that both failed to adhere to those provided when in-theatre. The early decision that the army and the navy were essentially to remain at St John's was allowed to be entrenched by intelligence reports of a considerable French presence on the island and the appearance at

²³⁵ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 17 Sept.-8 Oct. 1697; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 31-2; BL, Stowe 463, pp. 40-60 (reverse pagination); Journals of M. Richards, 17 Sept.-8 Oct. 1697; *CSPC, 1697-1698*, no. 75, pp. 41-2: 'Gibson's Narrative', 29 Nov. 1697.

²³⁶ PRO, ADM 51/592, Part vii, unpaginated, *Monck*: 'Norris's Journal', 3 Nov. 1697.

²³⁷ *A General Collection of Treatys*, i. 304: Article VII of 'Articles of Peace Between the Most Serene and Mighty Prince William III. King of Great Britain, and the Most Serene and Mighty Prince Lewis XIV. the Most Christian King, Concluded in the Royal Palace of Reswick, the 10/20 September 1697'.

different times off the eastern Newfoundland coast of two French squadrons. Fortification and the immediate defence of St John's, including its environs, then quickly became the objective of the whole operation.

Ultimately these proceedings had a reductive effect upon subsequent Government policy towards Newfoundland. Despite the subsequent furore over Captain Charles Desborow's petition against the verdict of a court martial that 'broke' him whilst serving with Norris's squadron at Newfoundland, which occasioned the politically motivated suspension of Norris for allegedly having been more concerned with protecting prizes than pursuing Pointis,²³⁹ the Ministry was most concerned with the extent and efficacy of St John's defences in the immediate years following the squadron's return. At the end of January 1700, Michael Richards was called to a meeting at the Board of Ordnance to provide an account of the fortifications at St John's which resulted in him being sent out there again in April as Chief Engineer. He was to help the much reduced garrison of one Independent Company effect improvements to the nine gun South and five gun North batteries; strengthen the ordnance at Fort William and the One Clock Stage; and begin building anew.²⁴⁰ Although admittedly at peace with France, this policy betrayed a return to the Government's limited ambition for Newfoundland as a source of cod and a training ground for seamen albeit one that was to be better defended. Certainly there was no discussion or planning as to how England might hold the whole island as a strategic gateway to the 'New World'. Such was the legacy of a failed wartime combined operation that had in its planning and preparation sought conquest.

²³⁸ Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 98.

²³⁹ HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, iii. 317: House in Committee, 25 Mar. 1699; Aldridge, 'Sir John Norris 1660?-1749', pp. 132-4.

²⁴⁰ BL, Stowe 463, pp. 5-11 (first pagination): Journals of M. Richards, 27 Jan.-27 May 1700, and, p. 4: 'Memorandum of the Present State of the Ordnance at St John's Newfoundland'.

Section III: Combined Operations and the European Theatre During the Nine Years War, 1688-1697.

III.i: Combined Operations as 'Descents' in Europe.

In 1691 Edward Littleton's pamphlet recommended that King William undertake a 'descent' (simply a seaborne landing of men on enemy territory) upon the French coast. It concluded with the claim that the responsibility of a skilful general was 'not to dance after the Enemy, but to make the Enemy dance after Him'¹, and it followed that to undertake a combined army and navy operation to land soldiers on the French coast would cause Louis XIV to begin the jig. Littleton's metaphor neatly encapsulated the principal strategic motive of descents in early modern warfare: the establishment of a second front in the enemy's territory, which would force him to draw off resources from the main theatre of operations. It also hinted at more immediate tactical objectives such as the destruction of a harbour, which might be completed as part of the wider strategic venture or form the sole object of the operation, but which would equally prompt an enemy response. Overall, despite the author's rather naive enthusiasm, the pamphlet outlined a positive case for this type of combined army and navy operation upon the French coasts.²

Although Littleton was not alone amongst his contemporaries in making the military case for descents,³ modern commentators have remained largely sceptical of the arguments. The foremost military authority of the late seventeenth century, Professor John Childs, rejects the strategic and military worth of combined operations undertaken as descents upon the French coast during the Nine Years War.⁴ He condemns them as 'political operations of war, which were 'poorly conceived and ill prepared'.⁵ On both counts, Professor Childs has much evidence to draw upon. The political dialectic between the Whigs, who favoured a continental army-centric strategy, and the Tories, whose interest was for a more exclusively maritime or 'blue-water' strategy that promoted the navy in command of the sea while protecting and expanding overseas trade, did largely foster the European descents during the war. By combining army and navy resources to meet specific tactical or strategic objectives,

¹ E. Littleton, *A Project of a Descent Upon France* (London, 1691), p. 28.

² *ibid*, pp. 1-28.

³ NUL, PwV 55, fos. 63-70: Memorial subscribed Van Pelican and addressed to 'Great and Mighty King', with a heading 'Abstract', Berlin, 2 Oct. 1693.

⁴ J. Childs, *The British Army of William III, 1689-1702* (Manchester, 1987), pp. 209-18; J. Childs, *The Nine Years War and the British Army, 1688-1697: Operations in the Low Countries* (Manchester, 1991), p. 28.

⁵ Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 216.

they were considered structurally and functionally suited to fulfil certain aspects of both Whig and Tory strategies. At a more basic political level, Danby wrote of the propagandistic benefits of effecting a landing directly on enemy territory.⁶ On the second charge of poor planning and preparation, a history of failure can be found in the abandoned attempts against the Normandy coast and Brest in 1692 and 1693 respectively; in the bloody repulse at Brest in 1694; and in the lack of action by Russell's Mediterranean fleet which had soldiers embarked aboard during 1695.⁷ Nonetheless, Professor Childs's condemnation of descents does in the first instance require a rather improbable rejection of the - admittedly now banal - Clausewitzian consensus about warfare being *sui generis* a political instrument.⁸ And, more importantly, it assumes that London considered the descents to form a separate and coherent strategy. Clearly within such a context the operational failures were truly lamentable; but, considered from a different standpoint, the extent and nature of these miscarriages becomes explicable.

An alternative approach would be to consider these combined operations as just one element of the Court's war policy: a product not purely of political compromise but as a combined army and naval means to implement the separate military and naval strategies. This context admits an element of credibility in the argument that descents might help alter the military balance in the land theatre, though not sufficiently to comprise a single war-winning strategy. It also implies that William appreciated this point with a greater degree of enthusiasm than is usually accorded to him, and that along with senior courtiers and commanders, he sought to organise a series of descents as one aspect of his continental strategy. Equally, with reference to the wider naval strategy, this interpretative framework adopts descents as just one agency for its implementation. Although command of the Narrow Seas had been achieved at La Hogue (1692), the French navy had not been destroyed and the two principal squadrons operating out of Brest/Rochefort in the north and Toulon in the south could still combine to form a considerable battlefleet. There was much to recommend

⁶ Browning, *Thomas Osborne*, ii. 202-4: Carmarthen to [the King], 18 July 1691.

⁷ Childs, *The British Army*, pp. 209-37; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', pp. 74-80; Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', pp. 268-92; H. Richmond, *Statesmen and Seapower* (Oxford, 1946), pp. 66-7, 70-2, 75.

⁸ C. von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. M. Howard & P. Paret (pbck edn, Princeton, New Jersey, 1989), p. 87. H. Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 1-2 and J.T. Sumida, 'The Relationship of History and Theory in *On War*: The Clausewitzian Ideal and Its Implications', *JMI* 65 (April 2001), 347-8, lament the attention given to Clausewitz's explication of the relationship between war and politics which, they argue, would have been an automatic assumption for contemporaries.

destroying these vessels as they lay in port to guarantee sea command; and, aside from seaborne bombardment, a combined army and navy descent offered a means to do so. This approach was only underlined when, from 1694, the French naval strategy evolved to promote *guerre de course* above *guerre d'escadre*⁹ and the coastal ports now served as havens for the privateers preying on English trade and the naval warships that afforded them escort. In attempting either to prevent the conjunction of the French squadrons or to combat the French *guerre de course*, the descents planned against the northern French coasts might also be considered to have fulfilled a dual function by facilitating William's ambition to establish England as the principal Mediterranean seapower. As part of this ambition, descents were considered as an instrument for destroying shipping in the southern as well as the northern ports. More importantly, when in 1695 after the main fleet had wintered in the Mediterranean for the first time, descents were perceived as a means of intervening in the war on the Iberian peninsula, and, in particular, at Catalonia, where the Duc de Noailles's army had made significant gains against the Spanish and was threatening the region's principal town - Barcelona.¹⁰

This section will therefore consider the historical evolution of the alternative context in which to assess the descents undertaken by England in Europe during the Nine Years War. Necessarily such an approach will require an explication of the planning and preparation - even if operations were abandoned - which should throw some light upon their administrative control and, thus, help establish the credentials of descents as amphibious warfare. The corollary of this bureaucratic focus will be an indication of the level of political support for, and perception about, these combined operations. If, as conjectured above, it is possible to describe descents as handmaidens of the separate continental and maritime strategies and not as an independent war-winning strategy, then Childs's interpretation of such operations would seem to be open to question.

III.ii: The Planned Descents on the Northern French Coastline, 1691-1693.

⁹ Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power 1688-1697*, pp. 3-4, 6-8, 169-77.

¹⁰ Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean*, ii. 420-65; Gradish, 'The Establishment of British Seapower in the Mediterranean', pp. 1-9; Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', pp. 268-92; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', pp. 74-80.

The claim that the planned descents of the early 1690s resulted only from the King providing 'reluctant lip service to the idea'¹¹ sits oddly beside William's expressed interest in such projects even before Ireland was conquered. In February 1691, the Allied Conference held at The Hague, discussed proposals for a descent into France; and, although William was then sceptical about the plan's practicalities, within four months he ordered that preparations be begun. This change of mind was partly because Secretary Nottingham kept the proposal on the executive Council's agenda, despite Sydney's representations of the King's initial reluctance; but, more importantly, Ginkel's successful start to the 1691 Irish campaign at Galway and Aughrim, raised the prospect that troops might soon be spared for service elsewhere. Rather than ship them immediately to Flanders, the King was willing to deploy them in a descent.

Despite William's order and Nottingham's claim that the Council was working on the project, no detailed planning was undertaken and only Danby in consultation with Leinster and other French Huguenots put forward any firm proposals. Their ideas for descents on the River Gironde or on the Normandy coast accorded with the arguments that Littleton put forward in his pamphlet regarding the military benefits which could accrue from such an attack; but, as the summer lengthened, preparations had still not begun. By August, Sydney's representations that the King was lukewarm about the idea due to the lateness of the season and his desire for a naval action, were gaining credit. William's reputed coolness was probably a consequence of the military momentum in Ireland stalling once again in front of Limerick's walls, ensuring that there would be no earlier release of soldiers from that theatre; and, as the siege dragged through to the autumn, it was indeed becoming too late in the season. All residual hope that the project might be advanced was extinguished in early October when Nottingham told Ginkel to expect that on the conclusion of the peace treaty in Ireland many of the soldiers would be transferred to Flanders.¹²

Nonetheless, in early spring of the following year, the idea of a descent on the northern French coast was firmly back on the war policy agenda. A memorandum sent by

¹¹ Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 217.

¹² HMC, *Finch MSS*, iii. 17-18, 98-9, 128-9, 140-1, 165, 182-4, 188, 191, 202-3, 281, 397, 402: Nottingham to the Lord President [Carmarthen], 17 Feb. 1691; Nottingham to Portland, 5 June 1691; Nottingham to Sydney, 26 June, 31 July 1691; Sydney to Nottingham, 6, 20 July, 3 Aug. 1691; Nottingham to Ginkel, 28 July, 6 Oct. 1691; Nottingham to Russell, 29 July 1691; Russell to [Nottingham], 11 Aug. 1691; Minutes of the Committee, or Cabinet Council, appointed to advise the Queen during the King's absences from England,

Nottingham to Blathwayt on 3 March, noted that a descent would take place towards the end of May and that some 20 English and Dutch infantry battalions along with a couple of English regiments of horse and one of Dragoons would comprise the land force. Along with other details on the transportation arrangements for the collection of these troops and the artillery train, the memorandum revealed that the King had spoken only to the prospective commanders - Admiral Russell, the Duke of Leinster and the Earl of Galway - about the plan. The fact that the King had kept other senior courtiers in the dark probably contributed to the proposal's lack of political support when it was presented to the Cabinet Council advising Queen Mary following William's departure to the European continent for the 1692 campaign. Indeed, Godolphin, and a coterie of like-minded colleagues, managed to hold up the preparations until the King provided further evidence of his intentions in the matter. However, even when this was received, the operation's organisation continued to suffer delay when in mid-April the Council's attention was diverted to preparing the nation's defence against an imminent French invasion on behalf of the exiled King James.¹³

The death of Louis XIV's War Minister, Louvois, in 1691 had removed from Versailles the principal bulwark against French policy focusing upon a Jacobite restoration, and, consequently, the French King was persuaded to sponsor another attempt by James to reclaim his kingdoms. In early 1692, the French Channel and Mediterranean fleets - save for a 35-strong squadron which was to winter in the Mediterranean - had been combined in the Channel under the Comte de Tourville, while a sizeable expeditionary force was collected along the Normandy coast. However, its organisation proved slow and it was not complete when London became aware, through captured papers, of the French plans. To preserve the preparations completed to date, Tourville was positively ordered to engage the Anglo-Dutch fleet commanded by Russell that had been dispatched from England to intercept. Under the gaze of King James standing on the cliffs above, the two fleets clashed off Cape La Hogue on 19 May and, after five days of fighting, Russell had not only defeated Tourville but had also

23 June, 28 July 1691; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, p. x; Browning, *Thomas Osborne*, ii. 202-6: Carmarthen to [the King], 18 July, 28 Aug. 1691.

¹³ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 32, p. 18-19: Memorial for Mr. Blathw[ayt], 3 Mar. 1692; NMM, SOU/13, unf.: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 19, 21 Apr., 6, 17, 24 May 1692; [Blathwayt] to 'My Lord' [Nottingham], 9, 19, 22 May 1692 [NS]; H. Horwitz, *Revolution Politics: The Career of Daniel Finch Second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730* (Cambridge, 1968), p. 130.

destroyed much of the infrastructure for the invasion force.¹⁴ John Ehrman implies that the idea of a descent on the Normandy coast arose from the subsequent deliberations as to how best the victory at La Hogue might be followed up.¹⁵ However, as has been shown, the idea in general had been current almost since the start of the war and, more specifically, a proposal had already been agreed upon for 1692. Undoubtedly, though, Russell's victory provided an impetus to the preparations begun by Nottingham in late March.

Prior to the invasion emergency, it was Admiral Russell who had in fact proposed a specific target for the descent – St Malo. Admittedly, his selection was based on the assumption that it would force the French to a sea engagement but, immediately following La Hogue, he remained convinced that a landing should still be effected around that area of the Normandy coast, believing that it would most effectively capitalise upon the current French vulnerability. Significantly, however, he implied that for this opportunity to be grasped the descent force would have to be ready forthwith.¹⁶ As Russell was returning to Spithead, the Cabinet Council resolved to dispatch three of its members – Portland, Rochester and Sydney – along with Galway, to meet with the Admiral and Leinster at Portsmouth so that a specific target might be determined upon. From the – albeit limited – extant evidence of the meeting, it would seem that no resolution on the projected descent's objective was arrived at and that, instead, it was agreed that the fleet should reconnoitre the coast to determine the current disposition of the remaining French naval forces. Francis Bickley rightly concludes that this decision reflected the land force's current lack of readiness.¹⁷ Leinster's efforts in this respect had been frustrated by the delays in bringing troops from Ireland and by the measures effected to combat the invasion threat; while a general lack of funding had also undermined his organisation. Further problems threatened in June moreover when the Duke faced a recall demand by William for those horse regiments initially detailed to be transported to Flanders but which had remained behind to form part of the descent force. It was only as a result of

¹⁴ Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 393-7; Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650-1830*, pp. 154-5; Churchill, *Marlborough*, i. 338-41.

¹⁵ Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 399-400.

¹⁶ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 255, 287, 349, 361, pp. 133-4, 152-3, 183-4, 189-90: Russell to Nottingham, 9, 13, 25, 27 May 1692.

¹⁷ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 350, 357, 367, pp. xxxi, 185, 188, 193-4: Nottingham to Russell, 26 May 1692, Nottingham to Blathwayt, 27 May 1692; Council of Flag Officers, 30 May 1692; Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 399-400.

Nottingham's entreaties that this was averted.¹⁸ There was no doubt however that William was becoming annoyed at the inertia of an operation that he had initially outlined in March and, through Blathwayt, he demanded a more specific explanation as to what was currently proposed 'than by the Generall words of a Descent'.¹⁹

Although there seemed to be an – albeit unexpressed – consensus that St Malo would be the target, Nottingham could barely reply to the King in any accurate detail. Moreover, by July, Russell began to set his whole face against the enterprise. Following the meeting with the three members of the Cabinet Council at the end of May, the Admiral had undertaken a further reconnaissance voyage and had concluded that the coastline was too dangerous for the larger rates and that, in general, St Malo was not a practicable target as the season progressed. Given the time and political currency he had expended in trying to bring the plan to fruition, Nottingham was concerned with Russell's increasing intransigence. He therefore sought to regain the Admiral's support for the venture but, at this important juncture, the Secretary's correspondence did not prove sufficiently tactful. By suggesting that Russell would not want to leave himself open to the charge that he had failed to do everything possible to make the descent plan work, it seemed to the Admiral that Nottingham was not only criticising his actions to date but also probably preparing the political ground for him to be blamed for any subsequent failure. Accelerated by their political differences – Nottingham was a High Church Tory and Russell a Whig – relations between the two men quickly deteriorated to the detriment of the descent plan. With little contribution from Leinster, the debate as to whether the descent was to proceed and, if so, what its target should be continued throughout July without resolution.²⁰

Towards the end of the month, Leinster completed the embarkation of the troops and the transports weighed to fall in with the fleet as it sailed up the Channel from Torbay. With both component parts of the descent force now together, and with the Queen having specifically recommended to Russell that the operation should be deployed to burn St Malo in addition to considering the possibility of an attack on Brest given that intelligence had just indicated that a number of French vessels had proceeded to that port, Nottingham might have

¹⁸ Horwitz, *Revolution Politics*, p. 131; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 433, pp. 228-9: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 13/23 June 1692; NMM, SOU/13, unf.: Nottingham to 'Sir' [Blathwayt], 22 June 1692; [Blathwayt] to 'My Lord' [Nottingham], 2 June, 7 July 1692 [NS].

¹⁹ NMM, SOU/13, unf.: [Blathwayt] to 'My Lord' [Nottingham], 7 July 1692 [NS].

anticipated action. However, on 28 July, a joint service Council of War aboard the *Bredah* concluded that it was not practicable to attack St Malo and, further, that it was too late in the year to make any attempt against Brest or Rochefort, which had also been previously canvassed as a target. Russell's influence over this decision was evident from the long letter he wrote to Nottingham following the Council in which he justified its resolutions in some detail. Moreover, doubtless guided by the Admiral, the Council was not minded to alter its decision when Russell received the Queen's recommendation regarding the burning of St Malo. Strictly, the Council had not disobeyed the Queen inasmuch as she had not issued a direct order, but its resolutions were clearly clear contrary to her wishes and, perhaps as an attempt to soften its attitude, the Council agreed that the fleet would put in at St Helens where it could be kept together, ready to consider any commands from the Queen. In an attempt to resolve this deadlock between the wishes of the Court and the Ministry on one side, and those of the descent commanders on the other, Nottingham and the available members of the Cabinet Council – Carmarthen, Devonshire, Dorset, Rochester, Sidney and Cornwaillis – travelled to Portsmouth at the beginning of August to meet with Russell and the other senior commanders. Nonetheless, at their meeting with the Council of War, the politicians were not able to prevail with the servicemen to undertake an attack against St Malo or indeed anywhere else on the Normandy or Brittany coasts.²¹ As Nottingham laconically reported to Portland, the Cabinet Council members returned to London having 'succeeded in nothing that we designed'.²² The projected descent against the Normandy coast, which had been current since early March, was now finally abandoned, though it was to comprise a celebrated Parliamentary contest between the Whigs and the Tories (the supporters of Russell and Nottingham, respectively) when the session opened in November.²³ However, for the immediate future, attention was focused upon an alternative joint army-navy operation that the King had proposed just before the Normandy descent was given up.

²⁰ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 505, 550, pp. xxxv, 270-1, 299: Russell to Nottingham, 30 June 1692; Nottingham to Russell, 7 July 1692; Horwitz, *Revolution Politics*, pp. 131-2.

²¹ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 622, 635-7, 639, 643, 649, 655, 664-5, pp. xxxv-xxxvi, 334, 340-1, 343-5, 348-51, 354, 358-9: Meese to [Nottingham], 22, 26 July 1692; Nottingham to Blathwayt, 26 July, 1 Aug. 1692; Nottingham to Russell, 26 July, 1 Aug. 1692; The Queen to Russell, 26 July 1692; Leinster to Nottingham, 28 July 1692, and enclosure, (i) Resolution at a council of war; Russell to Nottingham, 29, 30 July 1692, and enclosure, (i) Resolution at a council of war, 30 July 1692; NMM, SOU/14, unf.: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 1, 3 Aug. 1692

²² HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 682, p. 369: Nottingham to Portland, 5 Aug. 1692.

²³ See pp. 150-1 below.

William's target was one of France's principal harbours for privateers and the most northerly point of the frontier with the Spanish Netherlands - Dunkirk; but on this occasion the operation was not to be a seaborne descent, but rather two separate though co-ordinated attacks from the land and sea. The intended troops (save for some 200 Dragoons and the regiments of Foulkes and Hales, the latter two being designed for an overseas expedition to the West Indies) were currently part of the descent force with the fleet at St Helens. William planned to land them at Ostend or Nieuport whence they would march overland with reinforcements to attack the town of Dunkirk. Meanwhile, the fleet which had transported them would undertake a seaborne bombardment against its port.²⁴

Given the vacillation over the planned descents for the northern French coast the Dunkirk operation has perhaps with some justification been labelled as 'face-saving'.²⁵ William did not however know for certain when he designed the operation that the descents against St Malo or Brest had been aborted, and, in fact, he made the Dunkirk assault conditional upon a final decision being taken to abandon operations. Although Blathwayt privately informed Nottingham that the King anticipated their abandonment, that is not an argument that the Dunkirk project possessed no merit as a combined army and navy assault outside the context of operational failure elsewhere.²⁶

William had previously targeted Dunkirk in January as a first strike for the 1692 campaign and it was probably only the fact that the French got wind of the design which caused it to be shelved.²⁷ Now, later in the year, William was returning to the project and hoped to make effective use of the military and naval resources brought together for the proposed northern coast descents. His commitment to the success of the venture - as opposed to just being seen to be doing something with the gathered forces - is illustrated

²⁴ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 646, 680, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii, 345-6, 368: The King to Nottingham, [28 July/7 Aug. 1691 and enclosure (i) Instructions to Col. Henry Withers, Adjutant General of Foot; The Queen to Leinster, 5 Aug. 1692; BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 135, 146-7, 162-4: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 3 Aug. 1692; Blathwayt to Nottingham, 8, 29 Aug. 1692.

²⁵ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, pp. xxxvii.

²⁶ See p. 147 n. 24 and HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 689, pp. 373-4: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 8 Aug. 1692 and enclosure (i) 'Memorandum: for the Earl of Nottingham'.

²⁷ NUL, PwA 1432, unf.: 'A Project made in the Year 1692 to blow up the Forts and Castle of Dunkirk and ruine that Harbour'; BL, Add. MSS 61337, fos. 19-31: 'Memoire touchant le Siege de D.: Fait au mois de janvier, 1692'; Childs, *The Nine Years War and the British Army 1688-1697*, pp. 178, 210 n. 1; Wolseley, *The Life of John Churchill*, ii. 265-6; Churchill, *Marlborough*, i. 333-4, 333 n. 8. Childs obliquely, and Wolseley directly, suggest that Marlborough was responsible for betraying the Dunkirk project to the French. Churchill, however, derides Wolseley's evidence for this charge but in the process makes the claim that the plan was not formulated until August - a view contrary to the manuscript source.

by the blanket of secrecy which he threw over details of the operation. Although William's adjutant - Colonel Withers who carried the details about the project to Nottingham - had Instructions which allowed for the service commanders to be briefed in full, it would seem that in the first instance this did not occur. Leinster did not know the exact target until he was landed at Ostend; and London - aside from select senior ministers - assumed that with the abandonment of the proposed descents, the troops were being transported to the Flanders theatre, albeit in the direction of Dunkirk.²⁸

The early organisation of this enterprise contributed to the belief that William was only transferring troops. Based on the Instructions Withers had delivered to Nottingham, the Queen ordered Russell to detach a squadron of some eight men of war from his fleet at St Helens to convoy the transport ships with Leinster's troops on board and the auxiliary store vessels containing the large descent train to the Downs or Margaret Road where further orders were to be sent. Russell appointed Shovell to command this detachment, which included Dutch vessels; and, since only the Dragoons and the two regiments bound for the West Indies had to be disembarked, the squadron proceeded quickly up the Channel. Once at the Downs, the Instructions which Shovell and Leinster received from the King proved only a little more specific by informing them that the troops and war stores were to be landed at Ostend or Nieuport by 22 or 23 August. A separate Memorandum attached to the order anticipated a visit to the squadron by Withers to inform the two commanders of the King's orders but it remains unclear just how much he revealed. At the Downs, sickness spread amongst the soldiers and in a tersely worded letter to Nottingham regarding the management of this problem, Leinster condemned the fact that he was still ignorant about how his troops were to be deployed.²⁹

The outbreak of disease proved not to be as serious as Leinster had represented and, although some men were put ashore, it did not hinder the squadron's passage across the Channel. The troops were in fact landed at Ostend in advance of the prescribed dates. It was

²⁸ BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 161-4: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 25 Aug. 1692; NUL, PwA 1001 fos. 1-2: Carmarthen to Portland, 5 Aug. 1692; *The Portledge Papers*, pp. 144-5: Laphorne to Coffin, 6, 13, 18, 20 Aug. 1692.

²⁹ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 679-80, 690, 704, 726, 741, pp. 368, 374, 380, 393-4, 401: The Queen to Russell, 5 Aug. 1692; The Queen to Leinster, 5 Aug. 1692; Shovell to Nottingham, 8 Aug. 1692; Blathwayt to Nottingham, 14/24 Aug. 1692 and enclosure (i) [The King] to the Commander of the squadron attending the transport ships and Memorandum; Leinster to Nottingham, 10, 17 Aug. 1691; PRO, ADM 7/692, p. 53: Order to Sir Cloudesely Shovell, 6 Aug. 1692; BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 141-3: Nottingham to Blathwayt, 12 Aug. 1692.

then that orders to march towards Dunkirk with the reinforcements of engineers were sent to Leinster, while Portland also visited him at Ostend to provide further explanation.³⁰ It is difficult to know exactly when Shovell was informed of the details that he was to lead his squadron against Dunkirk's port as one element of a combined attack on that town. As bomb vessels were initially ordered as part of his convoy along with pilots for the Flanders coast, and he was instructed to meet with Meester's 'Machine Vessels' if possible,³¹ Shovell might have guessed more about the operation than Leinster. Or perhaps Withers was more candid with Shovell, though given Leinster's seniority and reputed closeness to the King that seems unlikely. Shovell probably received more detailed instructions at the same time as Leinster given that he then wrote briefly to Nottingham about the squadron's disposal for the attack upon which Blathwayt later expanded. This correspondence revealed that the Dutch Admiral Evertsen would lead a detachment of smaller vessels inshore to bombard the harbour and explode some of Meester's 'Machines', while Shovell would remain outside with the larger ships to combat any sea based opposition or relief.³²

In the event, neither commander acted upon his orders. A week after Portland's meeting with Leinster at Ostend, the troops were only encamped just eastwards at Veurne whence Leinster marched south easterly to Dixmonde, instead of pressing forward due west to attack Dunkirk. Shovell for his part struggled offshore with poor weather which prevented his well boats from tracking the army as it marched. This was a necessary task to ensure a co-ordinated assault but which anyhow would have become impossible when Leinster turned his troops towards the interior.³³ Blathwayt's insouciance in reporting home Leinster's actions by claiming that he was preparing winter quarters to the allies' advantage perhaps reflected his hitherto low expectations of the enterprise, but it obscures the reasons why Dunkirk was no longer the immediate target. Furthermore, the Secretary-at-War failed to

³⁰ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 742, 767, 788, pp. xxxvii, 402, 411, 421-2: Atkinson to Nottingham, 17 Aug. 1692; Shovell to Nottingham, 22 Aug. 1692; Portland to [Nottingham], 26 Aug. [1692]; BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 161-4: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 25, 29 Aug. 1692.

³¹ 'Machine vessels' were small ships containing explosive 'machines' (which Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, p. 573, compares to modern depth charges) with a firing device which could be set to explode once the vessel had been towed inshore and ideally placed alongside the intended target. Meester was a Dutch artillery officer at the forefront of the vessel's development during the 1690s, though his Machines were utter failures in all respects. For a history of the 'Machine Vessel' both before and after Meester's versions see E.W.H. Fyers, 'The Story of Machine Vessels' *MM* xi (1925), 50-90.

³² HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 785, p. 420: Shovell to Nottingham, 26 Aug. 1692; BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 162-4: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 29 Aug. 1692.

elaborate when the orders for the embarkation of Leinster's troops were issued in mid-September having contended that the occupation of Veurne and Dixmonde was all that the General could achieve. Portland and Cambon, after visiting Leinster at Ostend, had reported difficulties with the proposed attack, though no specific details were offered. Thus, aside from the increasing lateness of the season and the bad weather hampering the co-ordination of the naval and military attacks, there is little else to suggest why the assault on Dunkirk was dropped.³⁴ Bickley's positive conclusion that unlike the earlier planned descents, the venture against Dunkirk had at least been begun, misrepresents the nature of the planned combined operation.³⁵ As previously noted, it was not to be a seaborne descent but a co-ordinated attack from the land and sea; thus, although the landing of the troops at Ostend was a necessary prerequisite for the attack, it did not mark its beginning. That event was forestalled by Shovell's squadron being beaten off the coast and more importantly, by Leinster marching to Dixmonde. The combined operation against Dunkirk had been abandoned just like the other descents against the northern French coast.

It might be reckoned a measure of William's commitment to descents as part of his war policy that despite the experiences of the previous year his speech at the opening of the parliamentary session in November 1692, indicated his intent to mount a larger descent as part of the forthcoming campaign.³⁶ Although Parliament first began picking over the traces of the previous summer's failed attempts which developed to become a celebrated contest in apportioning blame between the Tory and Whig supporters of Nottingham and Russell,³⁷ preparations for another descent were begun at the turn of the year. Neither Russell nor Nottingham emerged with much credit from the Parliamentary deliberations but it was the Admiral whom the King decided to replace for the forthcoming campaign by refusing to accede to Russell's threat to resign if he had to receive orders from Nottingham. In Russell's

³³ BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 159-60, 165-6: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 1, 8 Sept. 1692; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, no. 839, p. 448: Shovell to Nottingham, 7 Sept. 1692.

³⁴ BL, Add. MSS 37991, fos. 159-60, 164-6: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 1, 5, 8 Sept. 1692; HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, nos. 847, 855, pp. 453-4, 457-8: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 12, 15 Sept. 1692.

³⁵ HMC, *Finch MSS*, iv, p. xxxviii.

³⁶ Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England*, v. 707.

³⁷ The Commons debates on the descents and the naval campaign of 1692 can be followed in Grey, *Debates of the House of Commons*, x. 243-8, 252, 263-79, 291-6 and in *The Parliamentary Diary of Narcissus Luttrell, 1691-1693*, ed. H. Horwitz (Oxford, 1972), pp. 218-19, 220-4, 239-41, 271-7, 294-6, 310, 329-33. The papers submitted during these debates can be found in *CJ* x. 714-23, 749-59. H. Horwitz, *Parliament, Policy and Politics in the Reign of William III* (Manchester, 1977), pp. 104-22, is a detailed secondary account of the Parliamentary proceedings.

place, a triple commission of Killigrew, Delavall, and Shovell was appointed to command the fleet in a similar manner to Killigrew, Ashby, and Haddock in 1690. To the relief of Russell's defenders, however, Nottingham did suffer a reverse in March when the King completed some ministerial changes to the Whigs' advantage in an attempt to build a majority in Parliament. Two such changes were to move Nottingham to the Southern Department, and to appoint the implacable Whig, Sir John Trenchard, to the second secretaryship of state which had lain vacant since Shrewsbury's departure. Although it had been Nottingham's suggestion that the post be filled to ease his administrative burdens, Trenchard would certainly not have been his preferred choice.³⁸

In addition to his new appointment as Secretary for the Northern Department, Trenchard assumed responsibility for naval affairs and consequently for the co-ordination of the preparations for the descent. Deliberations by the Admiralty and Cabinet Council before and after the King's departure for the continent resolved upon Brest as the target for 1693. Specifically, the aim was to destroy the French fleet commanded by Tourville which had congregated in the port after La Hogue, and thus to prevent its conjunction with d'Estrées's squadron based at Toulon. The exact disposition for the attack was to be left to a Council of War called by the Admirals for on this occasion no general officer was appointed to command the five regiments which were ordered to comprise the land force.³⁹ Not all ministers supported the project and those at the Treasury in particular complained about what they calculated to be the disproportionate costs to the prospective benefits of the enterprise.⁴⁰ Despite these doubts, Blathwayt represented that William was sufficiently relaxed about the estimated £55 000 cost of the expedition to apportion a further £22 000; while the secretary also reported that the King believed 'something considerable' could be undertaken at Brest.⁴¹

The destruction of the enemy fleet in the port was contingent upon the descent being undertaken early in the season before the French put to sea. Preparations were pushed forward at Portsmouth, and the regiments were quickly moved to camps in Sussex and around Winchester in Hampshire where supplies were more plentiful and convenient than the

³⁸ Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 409-13; Horwitz, *Revolution Politicks*, pp. 135-41; Horwitz, *Parliament, Policy and Politics*, pp. 109, 114-15.

³⁹ BL, Add. MSS 37992, fos. 26-7: Blathwayt to Trenchard, 27 Apr. 1693; PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 3, 6, 9: Trenchard to the Admirals of the Fleet, 18, 24 Apr., 3 May 1693; PRO, ADM 7/694, p. 41: Order to the Admirals, 4 May 1693; Browning, *Thomas Osborne*, ii. 214-16: Carmarthen to [the King], 28 Apr. 1693.

⁴⁰ CSPD, 1693, pp. 102-3: [Godolphin] to the King, 18 Apr. 1693.

⁴¹ BL, Add. MSS 37992, fos. 26-7: Blathwayt to Trenchard, 27 Apr. 1693.

alternative camp at Hounslow Heath. Moreover, it was also thought that the congregation of the troops at those places was sufficiently close to Portsmouth to alarm the French with the prospect of an imminent embarkation if they spied the soldiers' movements. Only the confusion over the amount of bedding to be provided by the Admiralty for the soldiers on board the fleet and a debate which arose over the authority of naval Captains to discipline the troops when on board caused delay. These matters were however in the process of being clarified when the order was issued at the beginning of May for the Admirals to embark the soldiers.⁴²

It has been claimed that no embarkation took place and, indeed, that the descent upon Brest was dropped as the Admirals were ordered in late May to provide additional escort to the outgoing Smyrna convoy - the Levant fleet of merchantmen which Vice-Admiral Rooke in command of a squadron of fifteen warships had been ordered to escort in January 1693.⁴³ Delays had prevented its departure and on hearing in May that Tourville had left Brest to join d'Estrées to attempt an ambush of the convoy, William thought it prudent that Rooke leave immediately. The Cabinet Council however appreciated that a quick departure was unlikely and suggested instead that the main fleet should also accompany the convoy.⁴⁴ This did not mean that the descent had been abandoned, though. Blathwayt had previously confided to Nottingham the King's desire that any measures taken for the Mediterranean trade should not hinder the project of the descent and when members of the Cabinet Council went to consult with the Admirals about the naval campaign, the assault upon Brest was still part of the agenda. Upon the orders to accompany Rooke being sent to the Admirals, two regiments were embarked and they were to be followed by a further two with the fifth (for an unknown reason) left ashore. Moreover, these orders only required the Admirals to accompany Rooke as far as they thought appropriate. This left them with both the discretion and opportunity to undertake the attack on Brest, although the intelligence that Tourville had left the harbour negated the original objective.⁴⁵ This intelligence was however unconfirmed (Tourville did

⁴² NMM, SOU/14, unf.: [Blathwayt] to Nottingham, 27 Apr. 1693; PRO, ADM 3/8, unpaginated. Board Minutes, 9, 10, 22, 25 May 1693; PRO, ADM 7/694, pp. 41, 53-5, 67-8, 72-4, 77-80, 82, 92-4: Order to the Admirals, 4, 10 May 1693; the Admiralty to the Admirals, 10, 23, 24, 30 May 1693; the Admirals to 'Rt Honble', 18, 22, 24 May 1693.

⁴³ Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', p. 270.

⁴⁴ Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', pp. 270-1; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 163-4, 166.

⁴⁵ BL, Add. MSS 37992, fos. 6-8: Blathwayt to Nottingham, 15 May 1693; PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 14-15: 'Instructions for our Right Trusty and Entirely Beloved Cousin and Councillor Thomas Marquis of

not leave Brest until the end of May)⁴⁶ and on their departure with the Smyrna convoy, the expectation was that the Admirals would seek an opportunity to assault Brest.

That opportunity did nonetheless fail to present itself throughout the summer. After initially deciding that the main fleet would accompany Rooke's squadron thirty leagues past Ushant, the Admirals decided to continue on for a further twenty. This reflected their lack of intelligence on the movements of the French fleet and much of the early part of the summer was spent trying to guess where Tourville and d'Estrées might be. To begin with, the Admirals believed that the Toulon squadron had put into Brest, though it was not until Rooke had departed that the earlier reconnaissance of Brest harbour was followed up. This confirmed that it was empty and the Admirals then turned their attentions to a fruitless search for Tourville in the immediate vicinity. In the event, Tourville had sailed south to join d'Estrées to effect the ambush of the Smyrna convoy which they achieved in Lagos Bay just round from Cape Vincent on 17 June.⁴⁷

Although it was towards the end of August when the Council of War officially abandoned the descent on Brest due to the lateness of the season, in reality it was the earlier confirmation that its harbour was empty which had sounded the death knell of the descent. Unable then to prevent the joining of the French squadrons, the descent was rendered functionally irrelevant as an aspect of the naval strategy. This was confirmed when the additional provisions prepared for the assault were apportioned to alternative services soon after the June reconnaissance; while at the beginning of July, the field officers were set ashore and the artillery train and the auxiliary transports vessels were discharged.⁴⁸ As London had become increasingly concerned for the security of Rooke's squadron, the main fleet was ordered to set out to his aid. Lack of provisions and poor weather however prevented the

Carmarthen President of Our Councill, Our Right Trusty and Right Welbeloved Cousins and Councillors Thomas Earl of Pembroke Keeper of Our Privy Seal, William Earl of Devonshire Steward of Our Household, Charles Earl of Dorset Chamberlain of Our Household, Lawrence Earl of Rochester and Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Councillor Sir John Trenchard Kt One of Our Principall Secretarys of State', 13 May 1693; Order to the Admirals, 13 May 1693; PRO, ADM 7/694, pp. 56-8, 70-1: The Admirals to 'Rt Honble', 18 May 1693; Order to the Admirals, 19 May 1693.

⁴⁶ Symcox, *The Crisis of French Sea Power*, p. 134.

⁴⁷ PRO, ADM 7/694, pp. 101-3: The Admirals to 'Rt Honble', 16 June 1693; de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 139-48; Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', pp. 276-8; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 167-9.

⁴⁸ PRO, ADM 7/694, pp. 184-90, 203-4: The Admirals to 'Rt Honble', 17 Aug. 1693; 'At a Council of War', 19 Aug. 1693; PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 29-30, 34, 42: Trenchard to the Victualling Commissioners, 23 June 1693; Trenchard to the Transport Commissioners, 23 June, 21 July 1693; Trenchard to Clark, 4 July 1693; Trenchard to the Principal Officers of the Ordnance, 21 July 1693.

fleet from sailing before word came through of the ambush. Thereafter, it continued cruising in the Soundings until the Admirals' requests that the ships be laid up for the winter were granted at the beginning of September. Within a month the Admirals were given leave to come up to London to face the gathering political storm on the destruction of the Smyrna convoy. For the third year in succession, a descent had been prepared as a significant part of the King's war strategy only for it to be abandoned as other circumstances demanded more immediate attention. This type of combined operation would nonetheless be back on the war agenda in the following year; and it would then actually go ahead.

III.iii: The Descent on Brest, 8 June 1694, and the Subsequent Proposals for Descents on the Northern French Coastline.

Two years on from the publication of his 1691 pamphlet proposing a descent on the French coast, Littleton wrote a sequel.⁴⁹ In this he criticised the descent projects undertaken over the past two years for being either raids, or grandiose invasion ventures aimed to capture an enemy stronghold. The first he considered morally reprehensible and the second false economy in terms of men and resources. Littleton's ideal descent would instead aspire to seize a weak point on the enemy coast, fortify it and then maintain a small garrison. This would cost England little and, with the majority of troops re-embarked to attend to other descents, several footholds could be created along the enemy coast, thereby critically stretching their resources. In terms of purpose, the emphasis was on the strategic priority of establishing a second front upon enemy territory rather than on capturing an enemy town or port for immediate tactical reasons. It is unclear whether Littleton would have approved of William's determination to assault Brest in 1694 in order to prevent the French squadron based there from leaving for the Mediterranean and joining with the Toulon squadron to raise the prospect that the combined fleet might wreck the havoc on English trade it had the previous year. At one level this descent would be the tactical capture of Brest to destroy the harbour and the ships anchored within. At another level, it would be the implementation of William's developing ambitions that England be the principal power in the Mediterranean. As this would establish intervention on another front (albeit one projected from the sea), the descent's strategic credentials must also be recognised.

⁴⁹ E. Littleton, *The Descent Upon France Considered; In a Letter to a Member of Parliament* (London, 1693).

As a follow-on from the failures in 1693, a decision in principle to attack Brest in 1694 was taken during the winter of 1693-4 and not, as Professor Childs contends, in the spring of 1694. A rendezvous was fixed for the fleet at the Downs at the beginning of March; however it was mid-April before this was completed, and by then events in the Mediterranean during the early months of the year had forced a rethink of the plan.⁵⁰ At the end of November 1693, Rear-Admiral Wheler, recently returned from his fruitless expedition to the West Indies and North America, had been sent to the Straits with a squadron to convoy trade and provide succour to the Spanish along their Mediterranean coastline. In February Wheler's squadron was caught in a violent storm as it made its way through to the Middle Sea and the Rear-Admiral went down with his ship along with five other vessels. Although the remainder of the squadron made it into Gibraltar Bay, England was now without any effective naval presence in the Mediterranean either to pressurise the French in that theatre or - and more importantly in the City's opinion - to provide protection for trade.⁵¹ It now seemed imperative that the French fleets should not combine and the Instructions issued on 24 April to the re-appointed Admiral of the Fleet and newly appointed head of the Admiralty commissioners, Edward Russell, anticipated that he might have to chase the French Brest fleet south to prevent such a juncture if it had quit Brest before an assault could be mounted.⁵²

The political fall-out in the autumn from the Smyrna convoy débâcle had claimed Nottingham as its principal victim and abused the two obviously Tory admirals of the joint command - Delavall and Killegrew - more than Shovell, thus marking another milestone on William's political journey away from mixed-ministries to his mid-decade reliance upon the Whigs. Russell, therefore, largely owed his appointments not just to the failures of the joint commanding Admirals but to the increasing political ascendancy of the Whigs with whom he was identified.⁵³ It was certainly not due to his commitment to descents about which he had been unenthusiastic in 1692; and now, on receiving his Instructions of 24 April, he began to

⁵⁰ PRO, ADM 1/5248, unpaginated: Naval Minutes, 29 Dec. 1693, 11 Feb. 1694; Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', pp. 280-1; Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 221.

⁵¹ PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 87-91: 'Instruction for Sir Francis Wheler Kt, Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of their Majesties Ships in the Mediterranean', 20 Nov. 1693; N. Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs From September 1678 to April 1714* (Oxford, 1857), iii. 195, 225, 287; Ehrman, *The Navy in the War of William III*, pp. 503-5, 510; Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean*, ii. 152.

⁵² PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 109-10: 'Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Councillor Edward Russell Esq.', 24 Apr. 1694.

⁵³ Horwitz, *Parliament, Policy and Politics*, pp. 116-19, 125; Horwitz, *Revolution Politics*, pp. 143-9; T. Merz, *The Junto* (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, 1907), pp. 108-27.

question their feasibility in correspondence with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who in March had returned to the Ministry as Secretary for the Northern Department.⁵⁴

Russell's principal criticism that chasing the French fleet southwards could not be undertaken in conjunction with a descent on Brest was based on a misinterpretation of his orders. As part of William's strategy, the priority of the Instructions of 24 April was to stop the Brest fleet from entering the Mediterranean to combine with the Toulon fleet: the assault on Brest harbour and the chase were merely possible options to that end, depending upon the current intelligence of the enemy's whereabouts.⁵⁵ Russell's error was understandable, for the idea that both options would be pursued was driven by the administrative preparations of the descent which, having suffered an early delay, continued independently of the refinement of the Instructions upon fresh intelligence altering the operational context.

Although late and with many of the seamen unpaid, Russell's fleet had managed to assemble at Spithead by the end of April. There was however still no sign of the auxiliary store ships, the artillery train, nor indeed of the ten infantry battalions which were to comprise the land force for the descent.⁵⁶ The senior English general, Thomas Tollemache,⁵⁷ had been appointed to command these troops in mid-April, but it was the beginning of May before they had encamped at Portsdown Hill above Portsmouth. Nearly a fortnight later on 11 May, Tollemache announced that they were ready to embark but by then Russell had taken those ships in the fleet which had been paid upon a reconnaissance mission, and this confirmed the departure of the French fleet under the command of Châteaurenault from Brest harbour - presumably bound for the Mediterranean. Russell was furious that the descent force had been delayed, for Brest was then seen to be weakly defended by only the town's militia and a couple of regular infantry companies. The Master-General of the Ordnance - Lord Sydney -

⁵⁴ *Private and Original Correspondence of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury* [hereafter *Shrewsbury Correspondence*], ed. W. Coxe (London, 1821), p. 192: Russell to Shrewsbury, 3 May 1694.

⁵⁵ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, p. 192: Russell to Shrewsbury, 3 May 1694; PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 109-10: 'Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Councillor Edward Russell Esq.', 24 Apr. 1694.

⁵⁶ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 192: Russell to Shrewsbury, 3 May 1694; HMC, *Buccleuch Montague MSS*, ii.¹ 64: Russell to Shrewsbury, 3 May 1694 (although this is the same letter as the one above, the editors of the two collections have printed different sections of it); PRO, SP 44/204, p. 114: Trenchard to Sydney, 2 May 1694.

⁵⁷ Throughout its 800 year history, the Tollemache family name has been spelt in a variety of ways. I have adopted the spelling recommended by the family's historian as the version with the greatest claims to universality, although I recognise that in the late seventeenth century this was probably not the prevailing form. See E.D.H. Tollemache, *The Tollemaches of Helmingham and Ham* (Ipswich, 1949), p. 13.

was the main target of his ire, being labelled by the Admiral a 'driveller'.⁵⁸ Again, with the preparations for the descent force continuing in his absence, Russell had assumed that the descent on Brest had an additional objective to preventing the French fleet's departure. Shrewsbury's correspondence with the Admiral showed that he shared this assumption, although significantly, before Russell's return from his reconnaissance, the Secretary went beyond the April Instructions to outline a possible scenario which envisaged both an attack on Brest and the fleet sailing south. The suggestion was that if the French fleet had left the harbour, then Russell would lead a squadron to the Mediterranean in pursuit, but that the detachment which would have to be left behind to guard the Narrow Seas could undertake the descent. Upon hearing that Brest harbour was empty the King's reaction was almost exactly along these lines.⁵⁹ The descent was now being uncoupled from the policy of preventing a conjunction of the two French squadrons. It stood independently as an assault to destroy Brest harbour and any ship contained within. Admittedly, the possible strategic benefits which might accrue both in the Channel and the Mediterranean from knocking out France's principal northern port were not explained, leaving the operation vulnerable to the charge that it was purposeless.⁶⁰

To an extent, the administrative organisation of the descent force had already prepared the ground for a refinement of the orders contingent upon the new independence of the operation. During May, as Trenchard laboured to expedite the preparations, a warrant for the embarkation of the troops aboard the ships left by Russell at Spithead under Shovell's command directed Tollemache to consult with the Admiral on how best the force might be used for 'annoying the enemy'.⁶¹ No mention was made of the descent's previous purpose as one option for preventing the egress of the French fleet, though equally it was not specifically stated that Brest was to be targeted regardless. That clarification only came some weeks after Russell had concluded his reconnaissance when, on 29 May, Lord Berkeley, who was to command the Channel squadron that was now to be detached from Russell's main fleet, was given a squadron list along with a set of Instructions: these clearly directed Berkeley

⁵⁸ NMM, SOU/2, fos. 211-14: Trenchard to Blathwayt, 11 May 1694; PRO, SP 44/167, p. 212: Order to Henry, Viscount Sydney Master-General of Our Ordnance, 28 Apr. 1694; *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 194-6: Russell to Shrewsbury, 24 May/3 June 1694; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 66-7.

⁵⁹ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 193-4: Shrewsbury to Russell, 5, 19 May 1694.

⁶⁰ A.N. Ryan, 'William III and the Brest Fleet in the Nine Years War', in Hatton & Bromley (eds), *William III and Louis XIV*, p. 64; Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 224.

⁶¹ NMM, SOU/2, fos. 207-10: Warrant to Lieutenant-General Talmash, 11 May 1694.

undertake the descent upon Brest, though a Council of War was to decide the actual plan of attack ⁶²

On 31 May, after Russell had brought his ships up from Torbay (where he had put in after his reconnaissance mission) to Spithead and the two squadrons had weighed to sail down the Channel, a Council was convened aboard Russell’s flagship the *Britannia*. Probably because the only access to Brest and its harbour was through a tight channel called the Goulet, the Council decided against a direct attack and instead resolved to land the troops at Camaret Bay on the shore line of the Roscanvel Peninsula. This was the southern of two bays (Bertheaume Bay being the other to the north on the shore of the Plateau du Léon) which flanked the entrance to the Goulet; and, if the peninsula could be secured, then batteries might be established not only to bombard Brest but also to provide cover fire for the fleet as it proceeded up the Goulet to conduct its own bombardment of the harbour.⁶³

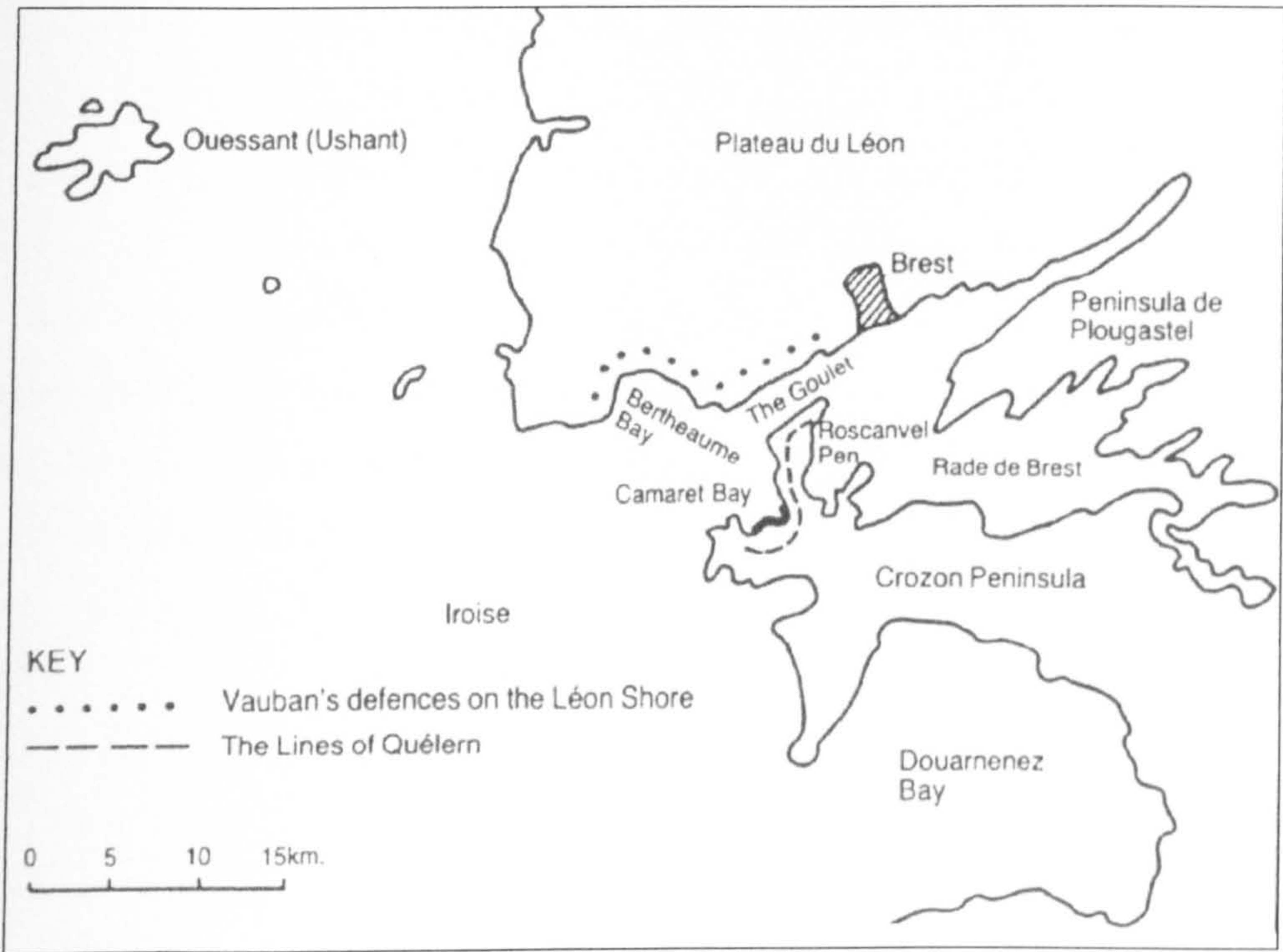


Fig 11: The Descent on Brest.

⁶² NMM, SOU/2, fos. 272-4: ‘Orders to the Rt. Hon. John, Lord Berkeley,’ 29 May 1694.
⁶³ Marquess of Carmarthen, *A Journal of the Brest Expedition*, (London 1694), pp. 6-8; BL, Egerton MSS 3359, f. 5: ‘A Draught of Breste and the Harbour’; Childs, *The British Army of William III*, pp. 226-7.

In formulating this plan the Council was not wholly ignorant about the potential opposition which might be encountered. Intelligence had come through that Louis XIV had dispatched his celebrated engineer, Vauban, to Brest and that he was busily improving its defences and those on the attendant coastline; while there had also been reports of significant numbers of French foot and horse being transferred to the region. Childs points to a series of 'Letters from Brest' mentioned in the *London Gazette* of 4 June which mention specifically trenches and extensive batteries, and upwards of 9000 troops in the area; he questions why - given that Tollemache was in receipt of at least one of these letters before sailing - the operation was not called off? Only recklessness or a sense of confidence that the force was sufficient to combat the French can provide the answer.⁶⁴

The two squadrons had sailed together for just less than a week when, on 5 June, they parted upon their respective missions.⁶⁵ Once Berkeley had brought his Anglo-Dutch fleet of some 29 warships, fireships, bomb and machine vessels safely round the Île d'Ouessant, he called a Council of War. This upheld the principal resolutions of 31 May regarding the landing site at Camaret Bay and the subsequent progress of the fleet through the Goulet, but it considerably refined the landing disposition. The *Monck* and the Dutch frigate, the *Damiaten*, were to engage Vauban's recently built redoubt at the bay as the troops landed; a naval Lieutenant was to command each landing boat; and Major-General Lord Cutts secured agreement that not only should 600 grenadiers land as a vanguard but that 50 of them should initially be put ashore to assess the strength of the enemy entrenchments. Lastly, the Council expressed its intent to land that evening or at least for the squadron to stand as far into the bay as circumstances would allow.

⁶⁴ PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 131-2: Trenchard to Russell, 24 May 1694, and enclosure 'Extract of a letter from Mr Wolsely', 16/26 May 1694; CSPD, 1694-1695, p. 155: Trenchard to Russell, 28 May 1694, and enclosure 'Extract of a letter from Paris', 28 May 1694 [NS]; CSPD, 1695, p. 258: Newsletter addressed to the Earl of Derwentwater, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, 24 May 1694; Tollemache Family Archives 716, unf.: 'An Account of the Proceedings of the Brest Expedition in Vindication of the Aspertions Thrown Upon His Excellencie Lieutenant-General Tolmach'; Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 228; *London Gazette*, No. 2983, 11-14 June 1694.

⁶⁵ The ensuing account of the descent upon Brest is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: Carmarthen, *A Journal of the Brest Expedition*, pp. 9-34; BL, Add MSS 61264, fos. 9-12: 'Report of Descent on Brest'; Tollemache, *The Tollemaches*, pp. 78-80: 'Volunteer with Lt.-Gen. Talmach in the Expedition to Brest, Given this 15th June 1694'; Tollemache Family Archives 716 unf.: 'An Account of the Proceedings of the Brest Expedition'; 'The Attempt on Brest, 1694', in *The Naval Miscellany*, ii. ed. Sir John Knox Laughton (London, 1910), pp. 202-5; HMC, *Portland MSS*, viii. 41-2: 'Engagement in Camarett Bay'; NMM, SOU/3, fos. 35-7: 'My Lords Cutts His Account of the Attempt at Brest', 9 June 1694; PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 522-5: Berkeley to Trenchard, 9 June 1694; A. le Moyne de la Borderie, *Histoire de Bretagne* (Rennes, 1972), v. 565-7; G. Gustave-Toudouze, *Monsieur de Vauban* (Paris, 1954), pp. 103-40.

Several auxiliary vessels and even some ships had fallen too far astern for any progress to be made on the night of 6/7 June and it was the following afternoon before the fleet anchored in the water between Camaret and Bertheaume bays. On coming to this anchorage, a shortening of the wind had forced the fleet upon a double tack, thus exposing it to fire from the batteries posted at both bays as well as those situated at the Point des Minoux and the Point des Filletes on the north and south sides of the Goulet. Fortunately, none of this ordnance struck home. Curiously though, Tollemache ignored the extent of this fire when, on returning from a reconnaissance of Camaret Bay, he reported that there were neither batteries nor trenches nearby and that with only Camaret fort presenting an obstacle, he predicted that the landing would take place without any opposition. Either on a separate survey mission or accompanying Tollemache (the sources are not clear on this point) the Marquess of Carmarthen and Cutts came to a different conclusion about the extent of the French defensive preparations. Returning to the flagship, they argued vigorously to Berkeley that additional ships be sent in with the two already designated to bombard the fort at Camaret Bay, so that fire might be directed against any enemy troops, which they believed would mount considerable opposition to the landing. In accordance with his Instructions, Berkeley referred these matters to the Council which was to assemble in the early hours of the following morning.

Thick fog at first light on 8 June kept the signal for the Council unposted for some four hours, and when the cloud lessened, allowing the Council to meet, it also revealed several squadrons of enemy horse on the hills rising behind Camaret Bay.⁶⁶ Clearly the reconnaissance of Carmarthen and Cutts had been more keenly observed than Tollemache's efforts. More importantly, it underscored their argument for an increase in the naval detachment which would act as cover for the landing. Accordingly the Council resolved that an additional six vessels would follow the *Monck* and the *Damiaten* into the bay; and, upon offering, Carmarthen was given the task of positioning these latter two vessels first and then returning to lead in the remaining six. Meanwhile, the soldiers had been embarking in the landing boats in the previously agreed descent order by which Venner's regiment would follow the grenadiers on to the beach with the other battalions then descending in reinforcing sequential waves.

⁶⁶ The sources range from five to fourteen squadrons of enemy horse.

In the event, as the landing boats began to follow Carmarthen's detachment into the bay this order was lost - an inexcusable circumstance given that there was a naval commander in each boat and that the calm weather should have made it easier to manoeuvre these small oared crafts. Conversely, the tranquil weather conditions made Carmarthen's task much harder. In the calm both the *Monck* and the *Damiaten* had to be towed into position which was not only a laborious and finely balanced manoeuvre but it also caused a gap to open up between them and the other ships, now numbering only five as the *Greenwich* had failed to join the detachment. The two warships were exposed to a considerable bombardment from the west side of Camaret Bay and the Point des Filletes before they could either bring their broadside guns to bear or the other vessels arrived in support. Moreover, Carmarthen quickly appreciated that he faced a greater number of batteries - three emplacements with a total of fourteen guns around Camaret Church with another redoubt of up to six guns behind the fort - than even his reconnaissance had predicted, and that to combat this he would have to alter the naval detachment's position in the bay. Forced to visit each ship individually to communicate the new positions, critical time was lost as this inshore detachment failed to achieve any superiority over the shore defences still less establish an effective fire support for the beach landing.

The extent of the enemy preparations to oppose the assault also demoralised the landing party as it approached the shore line. Tollemache's aide, Captain Green, understated matters when on spying three batteries to the right and two to left of the beach, in addition to its three trenches containing troops and another battery, and the 150 musketeers positioned to provide flanking fire, he noted that the men were 'not very forward to land'.⁶⁷ It was not, however, just the men who appeared to waver as small arms and ordnance fire began to rain down amongst the boats. Belying the sobriquet 'Salamander' which he was subsequently to gain for stolidity under fire, Cutts failed to organise the 50 pre-vanguard grenadiers. Consequently Tollemache was forced to cry out to the Brigadier to effect the landing and in so doing questioned Cutts's commitment to his orders, although in fairness to Cutts, he had previously argued that the operation should be abandoned if the 50 grenadiers found the enemy entrenchments heavily defended by regular troops - a fact which was clearly apparent without any troop landings. Nonetheless, Cutts's views had not been officially adopted by the

⁶⁷ Tollemache, *The Tollemaches*, p. 79: 'Volunteer with Lt.-Gen. Talmach in the Expedition to Brest, Given this 15th June 1694'.

Council of War and crucially his vacillation in command forced Tollemache to land precipitously with only five other officers⁶⁸ and nine grenadiers.⁶⁹

Leading up from the beach, about thirty yards from the shore, were some rocks which provided cover for Tollemache and his colleagues while they awaited more troops. Although remaining in his boat, Cutts had now began to organise the grenadiers and a party of 150 were landed. Tollemache along with the other officers moved from the cover of the rocks to lead this group up the beach; but, lacking numbers and without adequate covering fire from the vessels in the bay, this party was badly galled by the French batteries. La Motte and many of the grenadiers were killed, while Tollemache was shot in the thigh (a wound he was subsequently to die from when it became gangrenous back in England) and he struggled back to the shelter of the rocks again with Green and Montargier.⁷⁰ A further 200 grenadiers next made it on to the shore and Tollemache, despite his wound, again went to rally them for an attack up the beach. Carmarthen's naval detachment was still making no impact upon the French batteries whose fire along with some French marines, killed many English troops and forced the rest to retreat to the boats. For a third time, Tollemache was back under the rocks with his two colleagues. Just then Green spied a considerable party of French horse making its way down to the beach and, fearing a rout, he was able to persuade a reluctant Tollemache that the descent could not succeed. Further ignominy was still to attend the General before he could leave the bay, however. The ebb tide at landing had stranded many of the boats on the beach and, with desertions amongst the crews, refloating was proving difficult. After lifting Tollemache into a boat, Green faced this problem and had to bribe the crew of

⁶⁸ The officers were Colonel de la Motte, Lieutenant-Colonel de Montargier, Captain Green and an Ensign accompanying the grenadiers.

⁶⁹ The reader should be warned about the narrative of the descent in J.Kent Clark, *Goodwin Wharton* (Great Britain, 1984), pp. 289-93, which could be considered misleading on several counts. Not only does Clark seemingly misunderstand the nature and function of the grenadiers by claiming on p. 291 that their standard operational form was 'neat rows' which undertook 'text-book attacks' (see above p. 53 for a different interpretation), he claims that Tollemache aborted the planned grenadier vanguard on nearing the shore, and instead chose to land the regular infantry under his leadership. There is no mention of the General's exchange of words with Cutts to encourage him to land the grenadiers; rather Clark writes on p. 292 that Cutts was ordered to go to the rear of the boats to organise the reinforcements. Another questionable claim by Clark is the statement that it was Carmarthen who - after returning from his reconnaissance - committed the additional warships to his detachment, when quite clearly only the Council of War had the authority to take (as it did) that decision.

⁷⁰ Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 234 states that Tollemache received his wound on making his final retreat from the rocks to the shore. I have instead preferred to follow the Captain Green's account - Tollemache, *The Tollemaches*, p. 79: 'Volunteer with Lt.-Gen. Talmach in the Expedition to Brest, Given this 15th June 1694' - which clearly states that the General was shot in the thigh when he went to lead the 150 grenadiers which had landed.

Berkeley's long-boat to help get the General safely off the shore. The spirit of combined army and navy operational endeavour here was somewhat defective.

As Tollemache's boat reached the relative safety of the flagship whence he was quickly transferred with a surgeon to the *Dreadnought*, the Earl of Macclesfield and Carmarthen were left to withdraw the remaining land and naval forces. Theirs was an unenviable task. Macclesfield, although not on the beach, had to bring off the remaining grenadiers as the French party of horse bore down and also turn around the other landing craft still burdened with their troops. Carmarthen meanwhile had to put about his detachment of ships whose rigging and masts had been badly damaged during their engagement with the fort and shore batteries. Given the progress of the descent to that point, it was perhaps remarkable that only the Dutch vessel, the *Wesep*, and four landing boats (from which approximately 50 grenadiers were taken prisoner) had to be abandoned; but, combined with the 1091 seamen and troops killed, wounded and missing,⁷¹ it represented an additional failure which had to be addressed by the Council when it convened that afternoon on board the *Dreadnought*.

The Council quickly fixed upon the extent of the French defences as the principal cause of the descent's failure but when Tollemache suggested that a small squadron be sent to bombard Brest, the Council demurred on the basis that it required a prevailing westerly and easterly wind respectively to get in and out of Brest, thus raising the prospect of a considerable delay while waiting for the appropriate wind. Perhaps more revealing however were Berkeley's fears about the quantity and capability of French ordnance at the town, which he subsequently confided to Trenchard.⁷² Accordingly, as the fleet upon the Council's direction returned to Spithead to land the soldiers and await further orders, the importance of Vauban's preparations at and around Brest in scuppering the descent was reinforced in English minds. Yet with respect to the execution of the combined operation, this perception

⁷¹ PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 518-19: 'An account of the soldiers and seamen that are killed, wounded, or otherwise missing since late action in Camarett Bay. & what ships they were on board'; 'An account what officers and soldiers are killed, wounded or missing that were on board the Dutch men of war'; 'An account what seamen were killed and wounded belonging to the Dutch ships'. There are a variety of claims made in both the primary and secondary sources as to how many men were killed, wounded or missing at Brest. Instead of trying to split the difference between them all, I have opted for the official tally which certainly seems well informed in terms of basic information. I recognise however that the authorities in England might equally have been pursuing an agenda in the presentation of these figures, and that accordingly they might have been massaged downwards.

⁷² PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 522-5: Berkeley to Trenchard, 9 June 1694.

about the role of the French defences can be shown to be largely a tactical and strategic red herring.

Firstly, unwarranted attention is often paid to this issue because of the allegation that it was the Earl of Marlborough who had betrayed the project to Louis XIV. Childs rightly warns against concentrating upon an issue which Marlborough's biographers have exhausted. In short, it would seem (assuming the letter is not a forgery) that Marlborough did write to Louis about the descent but that his letter was not the first which the French King had received on the English plans. Effective operational secrecy was rarely achieved in early modern warfare and, as Childs again appositely remarks, Louis's intelligence provision would have had to have been exceptionally inadequate for him not to have known even as early as April (which he did) what the English planned. It is also significant that following the bombardment of St Malo in November 1693, Louis had directed Vauban to make a swift inspection of the defences on the Cotentin peninsula and the Brittany coast. So, when on receiving intelligence of the projected Brest attack and ordering Vauban in early May (NS) to attend specially to the fortifications at Brest and the defences of Camaret and Bertheaume bays, improvements at these places had already been on the French King's agenda.⁷³ Stripped, therefore, of the allure of scandal, the defences should be properly placed within the context of the operation.

This does not mean that the importance of the batteries and the fortifications in the repulse of the English can be denied. As has been seen, they were undoubtedly the immediate cause of failure. The commanders knew that Vauban had been fortifying the area, and his reputation pointed to a conclusion that the defences being put in place were probably considerable. Moreover, it was an assessment of the strength of the French position which led to the naval detachment designed for the bay being augmented.⁷⁴ The descent was launched in the knowledge that it would be opposed and probably vigorously so. However, there was also a reasonable hope that this opposition could be overcome. Given that context, the tactical reasons for failure must therefore be looked for elsewhere. The King was of the

⁷³ Childs, *The British Army of William III*, pp. 224-7, 238 n. 19; B. Pujo, *Vauban* (Paris, 1991), p. 191; A. Blanchard, *Vauban* ([Paris], 1996), p. Y. le Gallo, *Histoire de Brest* (Toulouse, 1976), p. 130.

⁷⁴ PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 131-2: Trenchard to Russell, 24 May 1694, and enclosure 'Extract of a letter from Mr Wolsely', 16/26 May 1694; Tollemache Family Archives, 716, unf.: 'An Account of the Proceedings of the Brest Expedition in Vindication of the Aspersions Thrown Upon His Excellencie Lieutenant-General Tolmach'; Carmarthen, *A Journal of the Brest Expedition*, pp. 14-17.

opinion that Tollemache's 'too ardent zeal'⁷⁵ had caused him to act rashly, thereby implying that his military judgement was suspect. Macclesfield also made this point, but rather more brutally, when he wrote to Portland after Tollemache's death that the 'King has lost a subject but not a General'.⁷⁶ It was Shrewsbury who - though probably inadvertently - provided a credible answer. With few details then to hand, his relation to the King of the events at Brest noted the recollections of an unnamed participant that boats had run into each other and that too many craft had large draughts which were inappropriate for descending upon an ebb tide.⁷⁷ The loss of order by the boats - a naval responsibility inasmuch as a ship's Lieutenant was in command of each - as they followed Carmarthen's detachment into the bay was critical for it meant that the anticipated strike-force momentum built-in by the sequential landing disposition could not be realised. Moreover, as some boats struggled with the ebb tide and Cutts's irresolution about landing the grenadiers took hold, a confusion arose which prevented Tollemache reordering the nearby boats to effect a landing of a good number of troops, albeit not in the form of sequential waves. Tollemache's military judgement was too severely circumscribed by the conditions and by Cutts's actions to be at fault; zeal was all he could offer as a substitute. That could not however remedy the woeful inadequate strike-force of five officers and nine grenadiers which were first on to the beach nor could the additional 350 grenadiers which subsequently landed. The tactical deficiency of the descent was simply the failure to submit the French opposition to the maximum potential of the English plan.

Strategically, the failure at Brest has been attributed - though probably unintentionally given that the context of the passage was tactics - to the inflexibility of the operational Instructions which are considered to have afforded Tollemache or the other senior commanders no discretion in target selection.⁷⁸ It follows that as they were unable to favour an alternative point of attack, which might have seemed to offer better prospects of success when in-theatre, failure was largely predetermined - especially given the extent of the French defences at Brest. In a confused manner, this was an issue which subsequently greatly exercised those involved. After the repulse, the afternoon Council on 8 June asked Tollemache if he had the authority to mount an attack elsewhere. The General claimed then

⁷⁵ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, p. 46: William III to Shrewsbury, 1 July 1694 [NS].

⁷⁶ NUL, PwA 469, unf.: Macclesfield to Portland, 16 July 1694.

⁷⁷ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 41-4: Shrewsbury to William III, 15 June 1694.

that he did not and maintained this view until his death on 22 June. However, Secretary Trenchard was equally adamant in his subsequent correspondence that the orders did not restrict Tollemache to land only at Brest and that the Council of War possessed the sovereign authority to alter any aspect of the operation. Certainly, when delayed with the fleet at Spithead, and in receipt of intelligence regarding Vauban's work at Brest, Tollemache wrote to the Court of his desire to land elsewhere; and his proponents later claimed that as no reply was offered the General assumed that the attack on Brest must proceed regardless. It cannot be established whether the Court did reply but before the fleet left England, Trenchard reported Tollemache's request to Blathwayt, though he misinterpreted it to mean that Tollemache wanted to undertake an additional attack which Trenchard dismissed on the grounds of insufficient resources. The Secretary did stress to Blathwayt, however, that the operational orders did not fix the assault at a particular place: the Council of War was to advise on that. These points Trenchard returned to in correspondence with Blathwayt after reading the minutes of the Council of the afternoon of 8 June.⁷⁹ The final Instructions issued on 29 May hold the answers. In this document Brest is clearly stated as the first strike target and Trenchard was being disingenuous to claim that no particular place had been settled upon, though only insofar as he meant a wholly different target. The Instructions only allowed the Council full discretion to determine the landing site and the tactical deployment of the force at Brest. Tollemache, on the other hand, was guilty of ambiguity. His claim that he had no power to order an attack elsewhere was only strictly correct in that he could not personally sanction such a move. The Instructions expressively stipulated that after the land forces had completed whatever was possible at Brest, then a Council of War was to consider what might be undertaken elsewhere.⁸⁰ By prioritising the targets, the Instructions lacked the strategic vision which might have allowed for an alternative place on the Brittany coast to be attacked in pursuance of the same objectives inasmuch as if a foothold could have been secured on enemy territory then a body of troops might have been dispatched to attack Brest from the interior. Tollemache's failure at Brest was not tactical but strategic: he was too willing to accept the limitations of the Instructions.

⁷⁸ Childs, *The British Army of William III*, p. 235.

⁷⁹ NMM, SOU/3, fos. 25, 67-8: 'At a Council of War' 8 June 1694; Trenchard to Blathwayt, 15 June 1694; PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 522-5: Berkeley to Trenchard, 9 June 1694; PRO, SP 44/205, p. 138: Trenchard to Berkeley, 13 June 1694; Tollemache Family Archives 716, unf.: 'An Account of the Proceedings of the Brest Expedition'; NMM, SOU/2, fos. 275-8: Trenchard to Blathwayt, 29 May 1694.

In the aftermath of the failure at Brest the King - albeit indirectly - threw his support behind further descents on the northern French coast by confirming that he would not immediately recall the soldiers to Flanders and was content for them to be otherwise employed. This caused the Queen to order Berkeley to hold a Council of War of land and sea officers to consider what might now be undertaken against the French coast. With Brest no longer a viable target, the Council, which assembled on 15 June at St Helens, seemed bereft of ideas. It rather vaguely resolved that the squadron would sail to the northern French coast with the soldiers and the bomb vessels to 'give the enemy as much trouble' as the weather conditions would allow. This proved insufficiently detailed for the Queen who, through Secretary Trenchard, ordered the fleet to the Isle of Wight to land the soldiers until the Council decided both upon a particular target and the number of troops that would be deployed. In his defence of the Council's deliberations, Berkeley drew upon the military case for descents as expressed by Littleton's first pamphlet. The Admiral claimed that the Council's vague resolution to remain ready in sight of the French coast was a ploy to keep the enemy guessing as to where a landing might take place thereby forcing them to stretch their resources to cover all possible options. Berkeley also claimed the more practical motivation that, in light of recent events, it was prudent to keep operational details secret. A further Council held on 18 June was only a little more specific in its resolutions, suggesting Calais, Dieppe, and Havre de Grace as possible targets. For this, four regiments were considered sufficient but it was significant that greater emphasis was placed on their help to man the fleet and the bomb vessels rather than as an assault force. The Council was now promoting bombardment as a form of engagement upon the enemy coast and in conjunction with the increasing impasse between the Council and the Queen, descents were being undermined as a part of the war policy.⁸¹

Obviously keen that some attack be made against the French coast, the Cabinet Council attempted to push events forward by accepting the Council of War's prerogative over targeting. The Lords were, however, of the opinion that the full ten battalions should be embarked if the Council of War's objective remained to keep the enemy resources stretched; this they believed would leave weak points on the coast where the English troops might be

⁸⁰ NMM, SOU/2, fos. 272-4: 'Orders to the Rt. Hon. John, Lord Berkeley', 29 May 1694.

profitably landed. Consequently, once the King had again confirmed that he did not require the troops in Flanders, Berkeley was ordered to embark the ten battalions with Macclesfield as their commander.⁸² The Admiral and the Council of War were however now settled upon the bombardment of French coastal towns rather than troops landings. In early July, the Channel squadron set about bombarding Dieppe and Havre de Grace, reducing the former to ashes and leaving about two-thirds of the latter ablaze. In Berkeley's account of these actions there is no indication that the soldiers were deployed in a combined action, other than as help in manning the fleet and the bomb vessels. Just before sailing from Dieppe, Berkeley did send the *Elizabeth* and a brigantine with Colonel Venner in command of 200 troops to make an assault upon Treport, but this detachment soon returned having failed to effect a landing. In truth, the Admiral considered the ten regiments a burden - especially since two of his squadron had been withdrawn to escort the victualling ships bound for the Mediterranean. He warned that the overcrowding would cause the spread of sickness and returned to his claim that four regiments would be sufficient to make good the lack of seamen manning the squadron.⁸³

The bombardment of Dieppe and Havre de Grace had taken its toll upon the bomb vessels and the ship-borne mortars, and Berkeley's squadron was back on the English coast at the end of July for a refit. Permission was then given for him to disembark some of the soldiers if he wished, but he was to come to London for discussions on how best the squadron might be employed for the remainder of the campaign season. At these it was decided to target Dunkirk and for the rest of the summer attempts were made by the Channel squadron first under Berkeley and then, when the first and second rates had been laid up at the end of August, under Shovell, to destroy Dunkirk harbour through bombardment or the explosion of fireships and machine vessels. In mid-September, Shovell also brought the

⁸¹ PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 138, 140: Trenchard to Berkeley, 13, 16 June 1694; PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 540-3, 552-5, 564-5, 566-9, 588-91: Berkeley to Trenchard, 13, 17, 18 June 1694; Council of War Minutes, 15, 18 June 1694; Cutts to Anon., 21 June 1694.

⁸² PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 152-3: Committee of Council Minutes, 21 June 1694; NMM, SOU/3, fos. 107-14: Trenchard to Blathwayt, 22, 26 June 1694; PRO, SP 44/205, p. 145: Warrants to John, Lord Berkeley, and Charles, Earl of Macclesfield, 23 June 1694.

⁸³ PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 592-9, 600-1, 606-9, 616-31, 652-5, 664-7, 674-5, 684-7, 718-21, 978-85: Berkeley to Trenchard, 25, 28 June, 2, 6, 11, 13, 17, 25 July 1694; 'At a Council of War', 28 June 1694; the Admiralty to Trenchard, 4, 13 July 1694, and enclosures, 'Copy of a Letter from the Rt. Hon. the Lord Berkeley', 3 July 1694, 'At a Council of War', 3 July 1694, 'Extract of a Letter from My Lord Berkeley', 9 July 1694; 'At a Council of War', 14 July 1694.

squadron in front of Calais to bombard it.⁸⁴ At least four regiments from the original ten were aboard the squadron during these attempts⁸⁵ but at no point was a landing attempted nor is there evidence to suggest the troops' active participation in the bombardments. In the event, these proved largely unsuccessful, though not sufficiently so to diminish the increasing support of them as the instrument of warfare best directed against the French coastline.⁸⁶ A combination of the failure at Brest and their subsequent frustration by the commanding Admiral and the Council of War had caused the descents to be dropped as the preferred form of coastal attack. Although in the summer of 1696, a couple of small scale descents – in reality these were little more than raids – were undertaken by Berkeley and Captain Messe at Belle Île, the islands of Houat and Hoëdic, and Rhé Island, it would appear that neither infantry nor marines soldiers were involved, and that the brief landings which did take place were conducted by the seamen. By mid-decade, bombardment was the staple form of assault upon France's northern coasts and the only combined army and navy operations being deployed in the European theatre were in the Mediterranean through the agency of Russell's fleet.⁸⁷

III.iv: Combined Operations and Admiral Russell's Mediterranean Fleet, 1695.

Two months on from leaving Berkeley 37 miles south of Rams head, Admiral Russell led his fleet of 63 warships through the Gibraltar Straits and into the Mediterranean. July had been spent refitting and revictualling at Cádiz and, seeking the combined French fleet, Russell was bound for the waters off Barcelona where Tourville had taken station to succour Noailles's

⁸⁴ PRO, SP 44/205, pp. 156, 159, 162, 164, 172, 176: Trenchard to Berkeley, 16, 21, 26 July, 6, 11, 15 Aug. 1694; Trenchard to the Admiralty, 24 Aug. 1694; NMM, SOU/3, fos. 183-6, 203-6, 223-6, 231-4, 249-52, 315-18: Trenchard to Blathwayt, 27, 31 July, 3, 7, 10, 24 Aug. 1694; PRO, SP 42/4, unf.: Committee of Council Minutes, 15, 23 Aug. 1694; Richards to Anon., 18 Aug. 1694; Hopson to Anon., 29 Aug. 1694; Shovell to Trenchard, 29 Aug. 1694; Orders to Shovell, 31 Aug. 1694; Admiralty to Shovell, 10 Sept. 1694.

⁸⁵ This is based on the evidence which shows that after returning from the bombardment of Havre de Grace, Berkeley landed six regiments and also the marching orders for four regiments when the fleet was laid up after Shovell's bombardment of Calais. See, HMC *Frankland-Russell-Astley MSS*, p. 79: [Lord Cutts] to Trenchard, 27 July 1694; PRO, WO 5/7, unf.: Orders to Colonels Stewart, Venner and Hastings, 25 Sept. 1694; Order to Brigadier Erle, 9 Oct. 1694.

⁸⁶ NMM, SOU/3, fos. 302-10: Trenchard to Blathwayt, 21 Aug. 1694; PRO, SP 42/4, unf.: Shovell to Shrewsbury, 13, 19 Sept. 1694; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 193-5.

⁸⁷ Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 197-224; Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650-1830*, p. 162; Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, ii. 481-4; Ryan, 'William III and the Brest Fleet', pp. 64-5.

army as it advanced on this principal Catalan town.⁸⁸ For the 1694 campaign, Louis XIV had committed large resources to the war in Spain in the hope that Noailles, who had first led a French army into Spain four years previously, could make considerable gains in Catalonia and force the Spanish to a separate peace. The French King's calculation was that this would damage the unity of the Grand Alliance and perhaps cause the other members to seek individual peace with the French. On 7 May, Noailles's army decamped from Le Boulou and assisted by Tourville's Toulon squadron made good progress. The Fluvia and Ter rivers were crossed by the end of May and at the latter the Spanish army, commanded by Catalonia's viceroy the Duke of Escalona, was defeated. A month later Palamós and Gerona fell to the French who, shadowed by their now combined fleet, pressed on towards Barcelona; a siege in early autumn seemed probable. However, news of Russell's approach caused Tourville to scurry back to Toulon, believing his fleet to be outnumbered by the Anglo-Dutch force. The balance was more even than the French Admiral thought but his actions based on this perception had effectively allowed Russell to complete his mission of chasing the French from the Mediterranean sea; while it also meant that Noailles was without the necessary fleet support to besiege Barcelona.⁸⁹

Running short of provisions and with only a few weeks left in which the larger rated vessels could remain at sea, Russell's expectation was that he would shortly head for England. The King, wishing to consolidate this newly gained strategic position in the Mediterranean, had other ideas, however. At the end of July, William let it be known to the Cabinet Council that he wanted Russell to continue as long as possible in the Mediterranean and on his departure to leave a substantial squadron to winter in those parts. William's actual desire was for the whole fleet to winter in the Mediterranean but, as political cover, he wanted the initiative on this to come from his ministers. However, when the Cabinet Council vacillated over interpreting the King's intentions and then issued Russell with Instructions which allowed him the option of returning home depending upon what stage in his return journey he had received these orders, the King decided to issue his own Instructions on 7 August. These were unequivocal: Russell was to use Cádiz as a base and winter with the

⁸⁸ *An Exact Journal of the Victorious Expedition of the Confederate Fleet, the Last Year, Under the Command of the Right Honourable Admiral Russell* (London, 1695), pp. 1-4; PRO, SP 42/3, fos. 602-5, 714-17; Russell to Trenchard, 1, 28 July 1694; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, p. 67.

whole fleet in the Mediterranean; only the passage of the French fleet through the Straits would admit Russell's departure. The prospect of wintering in the Mediterranean had apparently been raised with Russell earlier in the summer and on that occasion he had argued strongly against it on strategic and practical grounds. His immediate reaction on receiving his Instructions was no different. It was largely due to Shrewsbury's soothing correspondence that Russell accepted the King's orders without first embarrassing himself or causing his command to be vulnerable by raising objections.⁹⁰ William now had the strategic presence in the Mediterranean which he had long aimed for and the 1695 campaign season offered the prospect of converting this into territorial gains upon the French Mediterranean coastline or tangible diplomatic currency by helping the Spaniards to force Noailles back across the Pyrenees.

Aside from the marine soldiers aboard, Russell's fleet had no additional troops to use either as a strike force on the French coast or to offer as support to the Spanish army. These circumstances had in 1694 caused him reject the Spanish Viceroy's proposal to augment his army for attacks against French positions.⁹¹ Accordingly, it was decided in December to boost Russell's capability by dispatching to Cádiz four regiments - about 3000 men in total. The emphasis of command was indeed upon the Admiral for, although Brigadier Stewart was appointed commanding officer of the regiments, he was to defer to Russell about their deployment and Russell was separately commissioned as Captain-General. The decision had been taken before the turn of the calendar year to ensure that the troops arrived in the Mediterranean early in the campaign season but transport arrangements quickly ran into many problems. A portion of the troops were to go aboard the victualling convoy and bomb vessels set to leave in the spring but for the remainder ships would have to be hired. The initial hope that these vessels would be ready to come down the River Thames to the Downs as soon as the ice melted at the end of January quickly proved forlorn as the owners proved

⁸⁹ *An Exact Journal of the Victorious Expedition*, pp. 4-7; C. Sevin de Quincy, *Histoire Militaire du Regne de Louis Le Grand*, (Paris, 1726), iii. 54-70; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 243-4; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', p. 76.

⁹⁰ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 65-76, 197-9, 200-2, 204-9: Shrewsbury to William III, 3, 14, 28 Aug., 7 Sept. 1694; William III to Shrewsbury, 16, 30 Aug., 12 Oct. 1694 [NS]; Russell to Shrewsbury, 1 July, 3 Aug., and enclosure, Russell to Trenchard, 1 July 1694; Shrewsbury to Russell, 4, 14, 26 Aug., 25 Sept. 23 Oct., 20 Nov. 1694; NMM, SOU/3, fos. 203-6, 315-18: Trenchard to Blathwayt, 31 July, 14, 24 Aug. 1694; Ehrman, 'William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy', pp. 284-92

⁹¹ PRO, SP 42/4, unf.: Council of War Minute, 2 Aug. 1694; Russell to Anon., 3 Aug. 1694; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 68-9.

punctilious in getting protection for their crews in advance of concluding the Charter Party negotiations. Even then the transport ships proved slow in getting to the Downs whence they were still to sail along the coast to Spithead for the troop embarkation. In late March, William got Blathwayt to float a proposal that ships at Portsmouth be hired instead. When Lord Cutts, whom the King had appointed to inspect and embark the soldiers, wrote that there was a shortage of 800 berths upon his arrival at Portsmouth, Blathwayt might well have wished that he had pushed the proposal further. It was not just the organisation of the transports which gave rise to delay for problems emerged during the embarkation process. Many of the companies remained unpaid due to their officers' speculation and it was the stifling of an order about pay by an officer which allegedly led to the mutiny of four companies of Brigadier Stewart's regiment at Salisbury as they marched to Southampton, where they were to board. Cutts's intelligent management of these problems ensured they did not proliferate and cause even greater delay, thus allowing him to complete the embarkation towards the end of March. Shortly thereafter, the convoy was reported to be in mid-channel, off St Catherine's point and bolstered by a fair gale from the east and north. Within approximately three weeks the troops were with Russell.⁹²

A descent on Toulon or at Marseilles - similar in form to that undertaken at Brest - was considered the optimum use of these troops by the Ministry and the Instructions sent to Russell in May actually prioritised these targets and not order their abandonment as Childs contends. To bolster the attack, a link-up with some soldiers provided by the Duke of Savoy, Victor Amadeus II, which would march upon the target from the interior was also mooted and the English envoy in Turin, Lord Galway, was attempting to co-ordinate matters. Russell, however, first attended to the subordinate part of his Instructions which required that he put troops into Barcelona to prevent its capture by the French who were considered likely to make it a priority again in the forthcoming campaign. Then he took the fleet to the Îles d'Hyères whence he was able to reconnoitre Toulon; while Rear-Admiral Neville was sent with four Colonels to assess Marseilles. Both missions reported on the extensive French

⁹² *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, p. 78, 222-4: Shrewsbury to William III, 23 Dec. 1694, 2 Jan. 1695; Russell to Shrewsbury, 10 Feb. 1695; PRO, WO 5/7, unf.: Blathwayt to Bridgeman, 9, 16, 19 Jan, 6 Feb. 1695; Blathwayt to the Commissioners of Transportation, 16 Jan. 21, 22 Feb., 7, 8 Mar. 1695; Blathwayt to Cutts, 17 Mar. 1695; PRO, SP 44/168, p. 104: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Brigadier-General William Stewart Commanding Our Land Forces Going for Cadiz', 12 Mar. 1695; Childs, 'Lord Cutts's Letters, 1695', nos. 12-14, 17-20, pp. 394-6, 398-404: Cutts to Blathwayt, 16, 19, 21, 22, 24 Mar. 1695; Rivett to Cutts, 19 Mar. 1695; Blathwayt to Cutts 21 Mar. 1695.

defensive preparations, particularly at Toulon where the French fleet lay, apparently showing no signs of putting out. In the interval, Victor Amadeus, having set in train the negotiation which would lead to a separate peace with France and Savoy's departure from the Grand Alliance, failed to respond to Galway. Russell then returned to the Catalan coast to find that the troops were not required in Barcelona as the war in Spain had taken a different course from the previous year.⁹³

The opportunity for Russell to intervene in the Spanish theatre was a product of the altered military realities in Catalonia where the energy of the new Viceroy and army commander, the Marquis de Gastañaga, caused the Spaniards to take the initiative. In the spring, he moved to capture Ostalric and Castelfollet de la Roca and, although on that occasion French relief got through, by the end of July the new French commander, the Duc de Vendôme, abandoned the former town upon Gastañaga's second approach. The French had retired to Gerona and consequently the Viceroy was keen to capture Palamós next; but with only an army of 12 000 (many of whom were sick) and, more importantly, lacking the heavy ordnance which would be necessary to conduct a successful siege, he sought Russell's help.⁹⁴ At the beginning of August, after having withdrawn the troops from Barcelona, the two commanders held a meeting at Blanes, about a half days march from the Spanish camp, and it was agreed that Russell would provide combined military and naval help.⁹⁵

Initially Gastañaga had rather vaguely proposed that Russell land the troops he had aboard at Blanes whence they would march with the Spanish army to Palamós. The Admiral, concerned that this held out the prospect of several days marching and presumably keen to firm up the details of the operation, instead informed the Viceroy that he would land up to 4000 soldiers at a bay near Palamós if the siege looked likely to go ahead. Russell also

⁹³ *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 228-34, 237-8: Shrewsbury to Russell, 7 May, 2 July 1695; Russell to Shrewsbury, 2, 11 May, 14 June, 21 July, 16/26 1695; HMC, *Buccleuch Montague MSS*, ii.¹ 182-3: Privy Council Minutes, 4 May, afternoon 4 May 1695; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', pp. 77-8.

⁹⁴ Quincy, *Histoire Militaire*, iii. 77-81; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 251-2.

⁹⁵ The ensuing account of the operation to retake Palamós is based upon the following primary sources and secondary authorities: NMM, SOU/16, fos. 5-12: 'An account of proceedings from the first time it was desired of me that His Majesty's subjects land in Catalonia', 16 Aug. 1689, (printed by Coxe in *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 237-42, but with less detail); PRO, SP 94/74, fos 4-6: Stanhope to 'My Lord', 28 Aug. 1695, and enclosure, 'Extract of a letter from the Duke of Tursis's Secretary to his friend in Madrid of the 27 Aug. from the Roade at St Feliu'; CFKS, U1590 C9/1/33: 'Father' to James, 4 Aug. 1695 [NS] (Alexander Stanhope specifically claims that Russell offered help to Gastañaga before being asked for it. This is not however born out by the other evidence); Quincy, *Histoire Militaire*, iii. 77-81; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 251-2; Childs, 'Secondary Operations of the British Army', pp. 78-80.

claimed that he then informed Gastañaga that he could spare the troops for just over a week and that their disposition at the siege would have to facilitate embarkation in the event that the French navy departed from Toulon. Soon after their meeting, Brigadier Stewart was set ashore to consult further on military matters, while Russell took the fleet south down the coast in anticipation of the troop landings and to deliver the first phase of naval support.

On 7 August (NS), two bomb vessels were sent into the Bay of Palamós to throw some shells as a preliminary to the siege. Two days later, upon Brigadier Stewart's word that the military circumstances were propitious with the French army camp reportedly at least four leagues from Palamós at La Bisbal d'Emporda, Russell landed 3000 English infantry and about 500 Dutch troops under Count Nassau in the early hours of the morning at St Feliu de Guíxols. Linking up with the Spanish army which had encamped at Calonge, the whole force marched that day to within two miles of Palamós. When covering these final miles the next day, the Anglo-Dutch van encountered a considerable body of enemy horse as they entered a defile and, although they did not attempt to stop the march, it did contradict the report that the French were some days march from Palamós. As the allies settled into their camp just outside the town, Vendôme drew up his army to within a mile, posting his horse in the valley and foot upon the surrounding hills. The French had effectively checked the initial moves of the allied force and when reports came though that Vendôme was expecting over 4000 reinforcements from Rousillon, it seemed unlikely that the allies would be able even to invest Palamós.

According to Russell (although it is necessary to keep in mind his contempt for the Spanish) the Spanish commanders next panicked and, expecting a battle the following day, they transferred all power of command to Stewart. In the event, an engagement did not occur. The allies occupied and began fortifying some high ground so that when on 12 August the French marched forward to inspect their opponent's position, they wheeled north and left for the neighbouring town of Palafrugell. Perhaps they felt the allied position too strong or were surprised at the size of the Spanish army given that they were probably unaware of the arrival of troops from England; but, regardless, twenty-four hours had been sufficient to make the siege of Palamós appear a realistic proposition.

A similar amount of time was sufficient to bring this operation to an end. Over 12-13 August (NS), Russell had delivered the second phase of naval support. Bomb vessels and ketches with mortars were towed into Palamós Bay to throw their shells at the town and were

exacting considerable damage when a frigate, which had previously been dispatched on an intelligence gathering mission along the Provence coast, returned. The Captain had taken two Toulon fishermen prisoner and they claimed that the French fleet of sixty warships was now lying in Toulon Road, armed and ready to sail. In order to prevent them passing through the Straits, Russell wished to go in search of them and once a Council of War had sanctioned his resolution, he informed Gastañaga that he was recalling his troops so he could leave the Catalan coast. The Spanish Viceroy protested, not the least because he had just begun to press the siege forward by landing heavier ordnance that had been brought down from Barcelona, but Russell remained firm to the decision. A debate on the viability of continuing with the siege of Palamós followed, though the sources place different emphasis upon the participants. In his correspondence with Shrewsbury, Russell gave himself a central role in pressing the futility of the operation; he foresaw the principal difficulty as that - even with the troops he had put ashore - the total number would be insufficient to combat the French relief army currently at Palafrugell but which could return at any point. Another source emphasised instead the discussions which took place between Gastañaga, his Spanish colleagues and the Imperial officer, the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt. During these consultations, Hesse-Darmstadt heard what he considered were defeatist, even treacherous, remarks by the Spanish commanders to the effect that the English fleet was of no service to Spain and that a separate peace treaty would be of greater benefit. He accordingly withdrew the Imperial troops and this was thought to have caused the siege to be abandoned. All such discussions probably contributed to the demise of the operation but with regard to the combined operation, it is Russell's account of his own actions which is of interest.

Since arriving in the Mediterranean, he had made no secret of his contempt for the Spanish in general and their military competence in particular.⁹⁶ Having agreed to Gastañaga's request, albeit inserting a qualification on how long he could have the troops ashore, as soon as intelligence came through which allowed Russell to recall his troops, he did so. Yet the urgency which he protested was necessary to prevent the French fleet from passing through the Straits did not seem to extend to embarking the troops. They were not put aboard until 16 August (NS) and then Russell, upon Gastañaga's request, agreed to support to his army as they marched away from Palamós all the while passing further

⁹⁶ See for example, *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 216-18, 242-5: Russell to Shrewsbury, 31 Dec. 1694, 4 Sept. 1695.

derogatory comment upon the Spanish. Such conduct does beg the question whether this was another example of Russell's equivocation about combined operations, similar to what he had displayed in 1692 and over the descent on Brest in 1694.

The intelligence about the French fleet's imminent departure proved to have been a ruse concocted by Vendôme. When Russell arrived off Toulon the fleet were found to be still in the harbour, though he was unable to determine the extent of their preparations for sea as bad weather forced him off station. By then, however, any further combined action on the Spanish coast could not be contemplated and, although the French did evacuate from Palamós and Castelfollit de la Roca, they maintained a presence in Catalonia. In October, leaving a squadron of ships under Vice Admiral David Mitchell which Sir George Rooke was on his way to augment, Russell returned to England. He took all the troops - save for a couple of companies from Colonel Pusissar's regiment - with him and there were to be no further combined operations in the Mediterranean. For the remaining two years of the war, England was able to maintain a squadron in the Mediterranean sufficient for the protection of trade, but it did not have the military capability to intervene decisively on the French or Spanish coasts. Indeed, Barcelona fell to the French in 1697.⁹⁷ The abandonment of descents or combined operations as part of the war strategy in the northern European theatre had been quickly followed in the southern Mediterranean region.

⁹⁷ Quincy, *Histoire Militaire*, iii. 178; *Shrewsbury Correspondence*, pp. 242-5: Russell to Shrewsbury, 4 Sept. 1695; PRO, WO 5/7, unf.: Orders to Brigadier Stewart, Colonels Brudenell, Coote and Puissar, 2 Nov. 1695; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 251-2; Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650-1830*, p. 162.

Section IV: Combined Operations and the Nine Years War, 1688-1697.

As an adaptation of the traditional interpretation of early modern warfare, Professor Lynn's paradigm - 'war-as-process'¹ - is correctly applied to the operational history of the Nine Years War. It allows for Professor Black's criticism that the orthodox histories suffered from a 'present-mindedness' which failed to recognise that early modern warfare could be viewed as decisive²; it also rightly characterises such warfare on land and at sea as largely static. When advantage was sought, the intention was usually to out-manoeuvre the enemy rather than to force an engagement, and even when battles occurred few immediate in-theatre decisions resulted. This inflexible cast of combat might not seem to provide a propitious operational context in which to assess alternative forms of warfare such as combined operations; but paradoxically its contextual rigidity yields a clear background against which the developing features of a quite different instrument of warfare can be illustrated.

Despite a reasonably high incidence of such operations - nine executed and numerous others planned - throughout the war, a clear and unambiguous definition for this type of combat does not emerge. At a basic level, the composition of force continued to be a useful definitional category but, aside from the participation of land and sea components, there was little functional similarity between, for example, the combined expeditions despatched to the Caribbean and the 'descents' promoted against the northern French coast. Operational form was often contingent upon the purpose and the theatre of the war in which it was to be deployed - factors which worked against universality. Moreover, the events of the Nine Years War revealed two further categories as inherent to defining early modern combined operations.

Integral to the post-1688 emergence of the 'fiscal-military state'³ were the bureaucratic structures concerned with the direction of warfare. The multi-component form of combined operations required these authorities to co-operate or, at least, liaise in preparing the force for departure. Throughout the war, the principal organisational relationship

¹ Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 367-76.

² J. Black, 'Eighteenth Century Warfare Reconsidered', *WIH* i (1994), 215-31.

³ This is a term developed and applied by the historian J. Brewer to best describe the form of the 'British State' from the later seventeenth century as a result of Britain's perennial involvement in wars from then which necessitated a sharp increase in spending on the armed forces and a rise in taxation and the National Debt. The argument follows that this moulded the state's form. J. Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State 1688-1783* (London, 1989); J. Brewer, 'The Eighteenth-Century British State', in L. Stone (ed), *An Imperial State at War: Britain 1689-1815* (London, 1994).

between the Admiralty, the Secretaries of State, and William Blathwayt (as King William's *de facto* Secretary-at-War) was always tortuous and often broke down. Delays were endemic and were usually lengthened for the colonial operations as the Board of Trade and the local colonial authorities sought a role. The identifiable problem was the absence of a non-personal administrative process, which could be initiated as the standard procedure for preparing a combined army-navy operation. However, although the fiscal-military state required further development, the authorities could not simply avoid the task and hence their increasing awareness - albeit often contingent on personalities - that the organisation of a combined operation necessitated a sustained multi-level bureaucratic relationship. By 1697, this recognition had arguably ameliorated the length of delays; the colonial expedition dispatched in that year was prepared within three months.

In-theatre command structures was the second category to emerge as important in shaping the form of the operation. In the eighteenth century, Thomas More Molyneaux's belief that a successful combined operation required the 'uniting of the two heads' to produce a unified and purposeful force highlighted the inherent significance of command to operational progress.⁴ However, a recent authority on early modern amphibious warfare has argued for a shift in analysis away from this relationship and a general reduction of the emphasis placed upon the functioning or malfunction of the executive Councils of War of the joint services, which became the standard command structure for such operations. Indeed, in terms of operational command, Professor Harding considers these Councils as mediating the separate and potentially divisive service interests, thus leaving the senior commanding officers reasonably content with their tactical control when in theatre.⁵ This argument rightly highlights other factors excluded by Molyneaux which bore upon the success of amphibious warfare throughout the eighteenth century; but, with respect to the Nine Years War, it risks dismissing the command concerns of contemporaries which were significant in shaping perceptions of combined operations. Representations by commanders such as Sir Francis Wheler and Christopher Codrington on the scope and form of their individual operational command arose from their recognition, or from their anxieties, that they were to be engaged in a combined and co-operative venture. Personal or individual service advantage was viewed in this context as potentially important. Equally, the drafting of operational Instructions

⁴ Molyneaux, *Conjunct Expeditions*, Part II, p. 30.

⁵ Harding, 'Sailors and Gentlemen of Parade', pp. 35-55.

revealed the Ministries' perceptions regarding the combined service form of the intended operation. Their promotion of executive Councils of War was indeed an attempt to mediate service interests, though as this was achieved through the dilution of individual service authority it is questionable whether the commanders were content. Moreover, the prescriptive nature of the Instructions with respect to, for example, objectives or chronology also caused resentment amongst commanders. Notwithstanding, by strictly confining the issues over which they had to co-operate, it was another means whereby the Ministry made manifest the combined form of the operation. From the perspectives of the commanders or the Ministry promoting the operation, command structure was viewed as an important component in shaping operational design.

Albeit variously defined, England's war policy during the Nine Years War did encompass combined operations, but equally it cannot be claimed that they revolutionised the military policy of the Ministry's Grand Strategy. It is nonetheless important to understand that this was never the contemporary aspiration and the condemnation by Professor Childs of these operations' supposed Grand Strategic ambition tilted at a historical illusion of his own making.⁶

Combined operations were motivated by differing strategic and tactical reasons across the varying war theatres: expeditions overseas were expected to conquer territory, whereas the two operations deployed in Ireland aimed at rejuvenating a stalemated military theatre. The experience of the Nine Years War thus suggests that combined operations should be correctly looked upon as embedded within the Grand Strategy and, depending upon whether the Whigs or the Tories were ascendant in the Ministry, as handmaidens of their favoured continental or maritime policies. The Whigs' commitment to William's campaigning on the European continent disposed them to the arguments regarding the diversionary capacity in the land theatre of descents or raids; whilst the Tories were keen to link the amphibious capability to the maritime standard, thus promoting the colonial combined operations as a means to enhance trade and English commercial supremacy. This political split on strategy was more general than absolute, however. The King, principally advised by Blathwayt, kept a tight rein over war policy and emerged as a champion of the combined operation in either a maritime or continental context. In 1690, William's support ensured that Marlborough's operation to

⁶ See Chapter 1, Section III.i, p. 139.

capture Cork and Kinsale proceeded; in the mid-1690s, a similar level of commitment to the descents and raids on the northern French coast allowed these to continue longer than their manifest failure admitted; and finally William - albeit often prompted by Blathwayt - continued to promote combined expeditionary forces to the colonial theatre, both as a means to expel the French and also to assert the establishment of maritime supremacy in those areas. The King's objective that England should become the principal Mediterranean seapower also embodied maritime ascendancy, and the combined operations deployed as interventions in the Iberian theatre or against French shipping in its main northern and southern ports were a component part of that policy. It remains to be seen whether a change of monarch and the increasingly divisive Party atmosphere would cause combined operations to be more consistently applied within the strategic context of the War of the Spanish Succession, or to be dropped altogether.

Combined operations, had a higher profile during the Nine Years War than Lynn's 'war-as-process' admits. Their identification is nonetheless predicated upon accepting an increased number of the categories of definition to include the theatre of war, bureaucratic control and command structure. This properly illuminates the developing contemporary perception about combined army-navy operations. With respect to Grand Strategy, combined operations were embedded within and variously applied across theatres and hence there can be no generic or revolutionising strategic claims with respect to their deployment. It thus remains to be seen whether the history of the Spanish Succession war can provide greater clarity on both the form and strategic function of combined operations as amphibious warfare.

Chapter 2

The War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713.

Section I: Combined Operations and the Mediterranean Theatre During the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713.

I.i: The Outbreak of War and the Mediterranean as a Theatre of Combat During the Spanish Succession War.

‘Laugh at this as much as you please, I was told it to-day by a reverend churchman.’¹

Thus, the English Envoy to Spain, Alexander Stanhope, concluded a letter home to an official in the Secretary of State’s office. The topic for hilarity was the continued attempt to cure the perennially sickly King of Spain, Carlos II. On this occasion an exorcist from Germany had been employed to produce not only Carlos’s good health but also his ability to sire an heir. Since acceding to the Spanish throne in 1665, Carlos’s demise had been frequently anticipated by observers at Madrid, but against seemingly considerable medical odds he had lived. However, he had also - despite the ministrations of exorcists and quacks - remained impotent.² It was this latter issue, rather than Carlos’s well-being, which was of greater interest to the European capitals. In the absence of an heir, not only would the Spanish Habsburg line end with Carlos but there would also be a vacancy on the Spanish throne and its substantial empire, which ranged from the New World to the European territories in Italy and the Netherlands.

European interest in the Spanish succession also reflected the fact that there were no shortage of claimants to the throne. The principal dynastic candidates were the French Bourbons and the Austrian Habsburgs through the marriages of Louis XIV and Emperor Leopold I to the daughters of Philip IV of Spain - Maria Thérèse and Margaret Thérèse respectively. There was (and remains) substantial debate about the legitimacy of these dynastic claims. For her part, Louis’s wife had renounced her rights and those of her

¹ *Spain Under Charles the Second*, p. 191: Stanhope to Yard, 21 Oct. 1699.

² W. Coxe, *Memoirs of the Kings of Spain of the House of Bourbon* (2nd edn, London, 1815), i. 45; *Spain Under Charles the Second*, pp. 98-9, 102-4, 124-6, 136-8, 179, 181-183, 194: Stanhope to Vernon, 5 Sept. 1696; Stanhope to Lexington, 16 Sept. 1696; Stanhope to Shrewsbury, 19 Sept., 14 Nov. 1696; Stanhope to Portland, 14 Mar. 1698; Stanhope to Methuen, 29 July 1698; Stanhope to his son, James Stanhope, 14 Mar.,

descendants to the Spanish throne on her marriage but, although Spanish custom embraced this act, its legality under Castilian law was doubtful and besides, Louis believed it invalid due to the non-payment of her marriage dowry. On the Habsburg side, Margaret Thérèse died young having borne Leopold only one child, Maria Antonia. Her son, Joseph Ferdinand, the Electoral Prince of Bavaria, had therefore a more direct claim than either of Leopold's sons by his second wife, Eleanor of Neuburg; but Maria Antonia had also given a pre-marital renunciation - albeit in private with her father and therefore also legally questionable - to the Spanish inheritance.³ Quite simply, the issue was a dynastic and legal quagmire which, in early modern Europe, could only be solved by diplomacy or war.

Bourbon and Austrian Habsburg diplomatic initiatives on the question of the Spanish succession had been current even before Carlos came to the throne, and their success was usually a yardstick of either dynasty's European predominance. Partition of the Spanish Empire had been the focus of this diplomacy and in the final years of the seventeenth century, when Carlos's death seemed imminent, it was again the favoured proposal. At Louis XIV's instigation, just after the end of the Nine Years War, the Maritime Powers entered into negotiations with him over the future of the Spanish throne and empire.⁴ In 1698, the First Partition Treaty was concluded which identified Joseph Ferdinand as Carlos's heir with territorial compensation from the Spanish Empire for the sons (to whom the claims had been transferred) of Louis XIV and Leopold I - the Grand Dauphin and Archduke Charles. As Leopold and the Spanish Court both opposed partition they did not accept this treaty, however. Indeed, Carlos considered the succession a domestic matter; and, despite his Court being divided between supporters of the French and Imperial candidates, he made a will which left the whole empire to Joseph Ferdinand. The death of the Electoral Prince in the following year however forced the issue to be quickly revisited. This, in turn, produced the Second Partition Treaty. Its provisions substituted the Archduke Charles for Joseph

29 June, 9 July 1698, 15, 29 July 1699; Stanhope to Jersey, 24 June, 1699; Stanhope to Yard, 4 Nov. 1699.

³ R. Lodge, 'The Spanish Succession', *History New Series* xii (1927-1928), 333-8; H. Kamen, *Philip V of Spain: The King Who Reigned Twice* (London, 2001), pp. 1-2; H. Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain 1700-15* (London, 1969), pp. 1-4; W. Roosen, 'The Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', in J. Black (ed.), *The Origins of War in Early Modern Europe* (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 157-61; Thomson, 'Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 141-4; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 266-8; Hattendorf, 'Alliance Encirclement and Attrition', pp. 13-15.

⁴ The progress of these negotiations can be followed in *Letters of William III and Louis XIV and of Their Ministers*, ed. P. Grimblot (2 vols, London, 1848).

Ferdinand and augmented the territorial compensation to the French Dauphin. The treaty was rejected for a second time by Spain and the Emperor, whose interest in the whole inheritance was in truth focused upon the Spanish Italian territories. Carlos's response was to draft another will which replaced Joseph Ferdinand with Louis's grandson, Philip, duc d'Anjou, whom failing Philip's younger brother, the Duc de Berri, though with the codicil that if the French failed to accept the will then the whole inheritance would fall to the Austrian Archduke.⁵ Aside from marking the victory of the French influence at the Spanish Court led by Cardinal Portocarrero, the will made it more likely that war rather than diplomacy would be required to provide a solution to the Spanish succession.

The inevitability of war on Carlos's death on 1 November 1700 has nonetheless remained the subject of considerable historical debate. One theory emphasises the structural malfunction of the European states system in 1700 whereby it proved unable to mediate Louis's unenviable choice between his commitment to the Second Partition Treaty and his dynastic ambitions now vested in his grandson as a result of Carlos's will.⁶ Substantive proposals are required for diplomacy to work however, and in 1700 there was simply no credible (and thus compromise) candidate to those proposed by the Bourbons or the Austrian Habsburgs. The European powers were not therefore at Carlos's death afforded any meaningful chance to resolve the succession issue. Nonetheless, although Emperor Leopold invaded the Spanish Italian territories within a few months of Louis's acceptance of Carlos's will, the response of other European states was seemingly peaceful. Poland and Savoy quickly recognised d'Anjou as Philip V; while the United Provinces and England came round to that position too, albeit with a sense of anxiety.⁷ Consideration of another aspect of this historical debate is perforce required to provide the bridge from these circumstances to the outbreak of general hostilities.

This focuses upon the responsibility of individual rulers and, in particular, the extent to which Louis XIV's actions after accepting the will precipitated the re-formation of the

⁵ Lodge, 'The Spanish Succession', pp. 333-8; Kamen, *Philip V*, pp. 2-4; Kamen, *The War of Succession in Spain*, pp. 1-4; Roosen, 'The Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 157-61; Thomson, 'Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 141-4; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 266-8; Hattendorf, 'Alliance Encirclement and Attrition', pp. 13-15.

⁶ Roosen, 'The Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 151-71.

⁷ *ibid*, p. 161.

Grand Alliance against France in September 1701.⁸ The letters patent declaring that d'Anjou retained his right to accede to the French throne; the French occupation of the barrier fortress in the Spanish Netherlands; the granting of the Spanish *assiento* to French merchants; and finally the recognition of the 'Old Pretender' as James III, have been interpreted as particularly inflammatory of English and Dutch opinion and thereby eliciting a proportionate response from these states.⁹ Equally, it has been argued that each event possessed a benign explanation and that they were only considered *casus belli* because William and the Dutch were looking for excuses for a war that they had already determined upon. Louis's conduct was therefore blundering rather than intentionally malign.¹⁰ Such a view however overlooks the importance of perception. To Louis's fellow rulers, his actions seemed to mark a return to his earlier kingship, which sought territorial aggrandisement and the destabilisation of the European states system.¹¹ This was why the Earl of Marlborough's Instructions for negotiating the second Grand Alliance charged him, amongst other things, to limit French power and preserve the European peace.¹²

The Alliance Treaty signed by England, the Dutch Republic and Emperor Leopold on 7 September 1701, continued in a similar manner by committing the signatories to 'repelling the greatness of the common danger'¹³; and, although the war was not officially declared until the early summer of 1702, the continuing preparations and the Franco-Imperial clash of arms in Italy allows this document to be considered as an initial statement of the war aims. Its broad strategic thrust of checking French power meant that, while the succession of d'Anjou was deplored as potentially giving rise to a union of the Franco-Spanish crowns, there was no requirement that the Confederate Powers¹⁴ take military action to place the Archduke Charles on the Spanish throne. That commitment would only be made in eighteenth months time as a

⁸ Thomson, 'Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 140-61; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 268-71; P. Sonnino, 'The Origins of Louis XIV's Wars', in Black (ed.), *The Origins of War*, p. 129; G.M. Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne: Blenheim* (London, 1965), i. 144-52.

⁹ Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 144-52; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 269-70.

¹⁰ Thomson, 'Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession', pp. 140-61.

¹¹ Sonnino, 'The Origins of Louis XIV's Wars', p. 129.

¹² PRO, SP 104/69, f. 152-6: 'Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Right Welbeloved Cousin and Counsellor, John Earl of Marlborough', 26 June 1701.

¹³ *A General Collection of Treatys*, i. 415: 'The Second Grand Alliance or the Treaty concluded between the Emperor, the King of Great Britain, and the States General, September 7, 1701.'

¹⁴ This was the term by which the allied powers fighting France became commonly known.

means of bringing Portugal into the Grand Alliance.¹⁵ Paradoxically therefore, despite the wellsprings of war being the succession to the country's throne, mainland Spain was not immediately a combat theatre.

That did not mean however that the Peninsula was not a target as Spain was central to the military balance of power. If French strength was to be reduced then English strategy, at least, looked to extend the war to as many fronts as possible in order to stretch and exhaust Louis's resources.¹⁶ Of greater strategic importance was the fact that, unlike the previous conflict with Louis, the country which stood as the gateway to the Mediterranean was now hostile. This had considerable implications for the development of a Mediterranean strategy similar to the one which William III had pioneered for the Grand Alliance in 1694-5 and which, in his last years he supposedly vouchsafed to Marlborough.¹⁷ It has been argued that the latter's commitment to this Mediterranean ideal demonstrated a military and strategic mind resembling 'the whole map of the war'.¹⁸ Yet, the same commentator criticises Marlborough's range across this map in downplaying the importance of the Iberian peninsula, particularly when compared with the war in Flanders.¹⁹ Such a view is though based on the narrow premise that the war in Spain was the principal focus of the conflict in the Mediterranean whereas English Grand Strategy actually incorporated this region within the broad aspiration of asserting English power from the Straits through to the Levant. As the Tory Southern Secretary of State, the Earl of Nottingham, surmised: a Mediterranean presence meant that England could secure her trade routes, assist the Imperial interest in Italy, and provide a powerful diplomatic lever to encourage states such as Algiers and Savoy to break with France.²⁰

Consideration of the war policy with respect to the Mediterranean must therefore be two-fold. Spain was undoubtedly an important element, particularly given that it passed from

¹⁵ *A General Collection of Treatys*, i. 356: Article 1 of 'An Alliance Offensive and Defensive between Leopold Emperor of the Romans, Anne Queen of England, and the States General of the United Provinces, on the one part, and Peter II King of Portugal, on the other part.'

¹⁶ Hattendorf, 'Alliance Encirclement and Attrition', p. 20; J.B. Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession: A Study of the English View and Conduct of Grand Strategy, 1702-1712* (London, 1987), pp. xiii-xviii, 267.

¹⁷ E. Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London, 1984), pp. 126-7; Churchill, *Marlborough*, ii. 28; Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean, 1603-1713*, ii. 468-9

¹⁸ C. Barnett, *Marlborough*, (Ware, Hertfordshire, 1999), p. 264.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 157.

²⁰ NRO, FH MSS 275, pp. 194-6: Nottingham to Marlborough, 27 Oct. 1702.

one strategic context to another during the course of the war. The first, from 1702-3, was as an enemy territory forming a theatre of the war in which the conflict there was characterised by attrition. The second, from 1703 to the end of the war, was as the main object of acquisition for the Grand Alliance. Although Britain's significant military commitment to Spain arrived under the second strategic context, combined military and naval expeditions were dispatched to the Iberian peninsula from the first summer of the war and numbered three by 1706. Then, over the course of two years the Spanish dependencies - Majorca, Ibiza, Sardinia and Minorca - were captured by expeditions which were formed from the allies's naval squadrons that plied off the Spanish coast and the military forces that had been stationed in the two Spanish coastal footholds - Gibraltar and Barcelona - that the Grand Alliance had captured. Meanwhile, combined operations were also being directed further eastwards against the southern French coast where the naval port Toulon was a perennial target; while they were also the favoured operation when the allies sought to help the Camisard rebels in Languedoc or to ease French pressure upon the Duke of Savoy in Piedmont when he switched sides to join the Grand Alliance in 1703. Not all of these operations were successful and many merely remained as plans but the early and sustained commitment of the Ministry to combined operations within the Mediterranean proves instructive with respect to their strategic function. A necessary first step however is to consider in turn the organisation and progress of the operations and to comprehend how this shapes the historical understanding of early modern combined operations.

I.ii: Admiral Sir George Rooke's and the Duke of Ormonde's Expedition to Spain, July-November 1702.

The decision to send an expedition to Spain had, in principle at least, actually been made prior to the official declaration of war on 4 May 1702. After the conclusion of the Grand Alliance in September 1701, when it seemed unlikely that war would be averted, the Imperial Court had pressed for the immediate dispatch of a fleet to the Mediterranean. The Emperor believed that the Alliance Treaty recognised his pretensions to the Spanish Italian territories and, accordingly, that this fleet should facilitate a descent upon the Neapolitan coast to reinvigorate the recent revolt against Spanish rule in Naples.²¹ The centrality of the

²¹ PRO, SP 105/65, unf.: Vernon to Stanhope, 17 26 Apr. 1702 [NS], and enclosure, 'La proposition du

Mediterranean to William's strategic ambitions meant that he too wished the dispatch of a fleet there but he questioned it proceeding directly to the Italian coast. Encouraged by the Admiralty, William considered it first more important to secure entry and a presence in the Mediterranean both diplomatically and logistically by luring Portugal from its French alliance and by capturing a Spanish port which might be used as a forward naval base. Admiral Rooke had already in January 1702, submitted a plan for a combined land and sea attack upon the Portuguese or Spanish coasts.²² Ironically, the English hand was strengthened by the redundant Imperial courtier, Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt, who, since arriving in London in February 1702, had been engaged in discussions on this topic with the English Court, while semi-detached from the Imperial Envoy, Count Wratislaw.²³

Only a complex of factors can explain why Hesse-Darmstadt departed for London at the beginning of 1702. The conclusion of the Franco-Portuguese alliance the previous summer had shelved the plan that he would command some 5000 Habsburg troops in Portugal in support of the Archduke's Spanish claims; and, since then, despite being a cousin of the Empress Eleanor, he had found his influence at Vienna to be on the wane. To Hesse-Darmstadt, England offered a refuge from his enemies and, more appealing, potential employment. Hence his letter of recommendation suggested that he be the Imperial commissary with any land force on board the English fleet. The fact that his letter was only signed by the Vice-Chancellor Kaunitz, and not by the Council of State, suggests that the obscure politics of the Imperial Court also underlay his trip. Certainly, his behaviour upon arrival in London, when he kept his distance and concealed his intentions from Wratislaw, underscored this point; as did, in greater measure, his formal proposal to William for an expedition to Spain.

Hesse-Darmstadt's scheme, which not surprisingly suggested that he serve as the Imperial Commissary, reflected previous informal discussions he had held with the King, during which William requested that the Emperor provide 5000 troops for the venture. Such

Ministre de L'Empereur pour envoyer la Flotte sur les Costes du Royaume de Naples, fondé sur la nécessité facilité, et sur l'utilité de cette Entreprise, 15 avril 1702'; Stepney to Manchester, 11 Apr. 1702 [NS]; S. Spens, *George Stepney 1663-1707: Diplomat and Poet* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 202-3.

²² *The Journal of Sir George Rooke, Admiral of the Fleet 1700-1702*, ed. O. Browning (London, 1897), pp. 144-5; A.D. Francis, *The First Peninsular War 1702-1713* (London, 1975), pp. 21-2, 31-2; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 138-9, 155.

²³ A.D. Francis, 'Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt and the Plans for the Expedition to Spain of 1702', *BHHR* xlii (1969), 58-75.

talks have also been identified as resolving upon Cádiz as the target, though Hesse-Darmstadt's proposal did not name it specifically.²⁴ Undoubtedly, Marlborough's references in his letters home to Godolphin, less than a month after Queen Anne's succession, about the 'the project of Cádiz'²⁵ implied that this was a pre-existing Williamite policy; while this targeting decision would also have been in line with the positive marginal comments William made upon Hesse-Darmstadt's submission.²⁶

The King's enthusiasm for the project was probably founded in the opportunity it offered for England to capture a forward naval base so that the fleet could enter the Mediterranean and act with impunity along the Italian or French coasts. Moreover, around the same time, it was decided to send John Methuen back to Lisbon - where he had served in the 1690s - with the task of detaching Portugal from its French alliance.²⁷ William's death at the beginning of March did not derail the policy and, although the Emperor ordered Wratishlaw to redouble his efforts in pressing the necessity of going to Naples, Queen Anne remained firm to her Privy Council commitment on the evening of William's death that his preparations against France would continue. Eventually, the Emperor had simply to accept that the Confederate fleet was to mount an attack against the Spanish coast first and that, if success and time allowed, the Italian coast would be the next target.²⁸

While Queen Anne's accession may not have altered the proposal, it did initiate the substantial delay which beset the organisation of the expedition. Part of this could be attributed to the uncertainties over the composition of Anne's first ministry and her desire to find a military and naval role for her husband, Prince George of Denmark. With decidedly modest abilities in both spheres he had to be found titles - Generalissimo and Lord High

²⁴ Francis, 'Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt', pp. 59-62; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 31-5; PRO, 105/65, unf.: Stepney to Vernon, 22 Apr. 1702 [NS]; 'Memorial presented to his Majesty by the Landgraf of Hesse, concerning the Descent on Spain, 12 mars 1702' [NS].

²⁵ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ed. H.L. Snyder (London, 1975), i, no. 53, pp. 53: Marlborough to Godolphin, 24 Mar. 1702.

²⁶ PRO, SP 106/95, unf.: marginal comments on, 'Memorial presented to his Majesty by the Landgraf of Hesse, concerning the Descent on Spain, 12 mars 1702' [NS].

²⁷ A.D. Francis, 'John Methuen and the Anglo-Portuguese Treaties of 1703', *HJ* iii (1960), 103-24; A.D. Francis, 'Portugal and the Grand Alliance', *BIHR* xxxviii (1965), 71-93; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 35-8.

²⁸ Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England*, vi. 4; PRO, SP 105/65, unf.: Stepney to Vernon, 8, 26 Apr., 9, 20 May 1702 [NS], and enclosure, 'La proposition du Ministre de L'Empereur pour envoyer la Flotte sur les Costes du Royaume de Naples, fondee sur la necessite facilite, et sur l'utilite de cette Entreprise, 15/26 avril 1702'; Stepney to Manchester, 11 Apr. 1702 [NS].

Admiral - without any real executive power.²⁹ It was May before Nottingham and Hedges were appointed to the two Secretaryships and Prince George's Admiralty Council was in place; and, only then, could they begin to pick up the organisation of what was to be one of the largest expeditionary forces dispatched in the early eighteenth century.

Bringing together the English and Dutch Grand Fleets at Spithead on which twelve English infantry regiments, some dragoons, and eight Dutch battalions were to be embarked quite simply took considerable time. The journals and correspondence of the commanders, Admiral Sir George Rooke and the Duke of Ormonde, detail their exhaustive efforts in this regard. Aside from the standard responsibilities of their positions, such as the gathering and the provisioning of their forces and ensuring that they had adequate accommodation with bedding, Rooke and Ormonde were faced with certain larger administrative tasks.³⁰ In particular, five regiments had to be transferred from Ireland; a sizeable descent train organised in conjunction with the Ordnance office; and oversight provided for the infantry holding camp on the Isle of Wight, which was only one of the two embarkation points (Plymouth being the other). These were not primarily army affairs either due to the role of the navy in organising transport for the troops and embarkation.³¹ Given the potential for delay attendant upon all these matters, it is perhaps remarkable that the organisation of the expeditionary force was largely complete by the beginning of July.

The same could not be said for the drafting of the Instructions. This process continued on from the Nine Years War in a manner whereby it was usual for several sets to be issued along with attendant shorter Additional Instructions. Rooke received his first Instructions and secret additional notes from Secretary Hedges on 7 June. With the joint army-navy Council of War the sovereign command body, the Instructions required that Cádiz was to be reduced, though Gibraltar was acceptable as a default target. Moreover, if time

²⁹ W. A. Speck, *The Birth of Britain: A New Nation 1700-1710* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 35-6

³⁰ *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 144-63; BL, Add MSS 38159, pp. 2-7: The Duke of Ormonde's Journal of the Expedition to Spain in the Year 1702 [hereafter 'Ormonde's Journal']; PRO, SP 42/67: fos. 13-15, 18, 22; Rooke to Nottingham, 29 May, 1, 4, 13, 25 June 1702; PRO, SP 44/168, pp. 398-400: 'Commission for the Duke of Ormonde to be C-in-C of the Forces to be Employed on Board the Fleet', 12 Apr. 1702.

³¹ PRO, WO 46/5, p. 70: 'Your Lordship Most Obedient & Humble Servants' to 'My Lord [Romney?]', 20 Feb. 1702; PRO, SP 44/206, p. 21-2: 'The Duke of Ormonde's Demands from the Office of the Ordnance for the Sea Expedition', n.d.; Vernon to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 26 Mar. 1702; Vernon to the Transport Commissioners, 26 Mar. 1702; PRO, SP 105/65, unf.: Vernon to Sutton, 12 July 1702; PRO, ADM 2/28, pp. 76, 107-8, 151: the Admiralty to the Transport Commissioners, 24, 31 Mar, 20 Apr. 1702.

and the Council allowed, then Vigo, Pontevedra or La Coruña could be attacked on the fleet's return. The secret Instructions directed that ships and a garrison be left at Cádiz, if the operation proved successful.³² Within a week, however, the priorities of these Instructions were upset when the Ministry requested that Rooke's Council of War immediately consider whether a descent might first be undertaken at La Coruña if the French ships listed in the intelligence report from the station commander, Rear-Admiral Munden, were still present. The Council agreed but stressed that it was contingent upon confirmation of the French presence in the harbour and to facilitate this, Rear-Admiral Fairborne was dispatched with a squadron to keep the French bottled-up in the port.³³ Notwithstanding, the Instructions were altered for a third time as a result of the poor early July weather which delayed Rooke's departure. The Ministry considered the season of year to be too advanced for attempting a range of targets; hence it was decided that if Fairborne reported a French squadron at La Coruña then the descent was to be made there but, if not, then the fleet could proceed on to Cádiz but no further. Gibraltar on the outward and Vigo and Pontevedro on the return journeys were all ruled out as possible targets; only La Coruña on the fleet's return was viewed admissible if the Council of War agreed.³⁴ The expeditionary force's Instructions were strictly drafted and this was ultimately to have considerable bearing upon the progress of the operation.

Once Rooke made it out of the Channel at the end of July, the weather conditions improved considerably and the main fleet quickly made Cape Finisterre to link up with Rear-Admiral Fairborne's squadron which, as mentioned, had been sent to La Coruña at the end of June to block up the French squadron that Munden had failed to prevent getting into that port in the first place. The French had, however, left before Fairborne's arrival and, although the Rear-Admiral and Rooke initially missed each other at the latter's station off the Cape, Fairborne came up by the end of the first week in August.³⁵ Within three days of this conjunction, the main fleet reached the Portuguese coast and on 11 August in Lagos Bay, a

³² PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 3-10: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 7 June 1702; 'Additional Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 7 June 1702.

³³ *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 157-60; PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 16-22: Hedges to Rooke, 13, 16, 18 June 1702; 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 16 June 1702.

³⁴ PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 28-30: Hedges to Rooke, 20 July 1702; 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 20 July 1702.

³⁵ *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 163, 164 n. 1, 171-3; PRO, ADM 2/28, pp. 226-8, 438-9: the Admiralty to Munden, 5 May 1702; the Admiralty to Rooke or in his absence Shovell, 24 June 1702.

Council of War was convened to consider an agenda dominated by intelligence on Cádiz sent by the English Envoy to Portugal, John Methuen.³⁶

The defences at Cádiz were reportedly poor, both with respect to the garrison troops and the fortifications. The six regiments in the town were said to be a third under strength and, although several new works had been erected since Carlos II's death, the speed with which they had been thrown up had impaired their quality. Satisfied that no significant measures had been undertaken to defend Cádiz, Methuen concluded that the circumstances for an immediate attack were propitious, especially since the town's commandant, Scipio Brancaccio, was reputedly disliked by both soldiers and inhabitants. Nonetheless, it seemed to the Council that this intelligence merely underscored the expedition's original strategic intent to target Cádiz and that its assessment of the doubtful and confused state of affairs in the town prevented a decision being taken on the tactical form of the assault. To address this concern, a detachment of grenadiers commanded by Colonel Pearce was to be put ashore at Rota - some six miles north-west of Cádiz - to gain further intelligence.

It must be assumed that Methuen had not then sent Ormonde a duplicate of an anonymous letter from Tavira, dated 10 August (NS), for it provided considerable detail on the disposition of Cádiz's defences.³⁷ The town itself was situated at the extremity of the narrow Isla de León peninsula, which snaked out from Spain's south-west coast, and was separated from the mainland by the Bay of Cádiz. Cádiz's inner harbour - the Puntales - was accessed by a channel - the Canon de Puntales - leading from the outer bay, and which was, at its narrowest point, flanked by the forts Puntales and Matagorda, on the Isla de León and the mainland respectively. The anonymous correspondent told not only of strong materials comprising the chain across the Puntales, but also of the number and the reach of the guns in the Puntales and the Matagorda forts and, significantly, of a new work built just up from the Puntales Fort, which provided additional fire from its sixteen guns across the inner bay.

³⁶ The ensuing account of the operation to capture Cádiz is based upon the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 38159, pp. 2-33: 'Ormonde's Journal'; *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 118-262; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 47-56; *A Full and Impartial History of the Expedition into Spain* (London, 1704), pp. 1-172; *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop of Deddington in Oxfordshire* (London, 1744), pp. 6-11; PRO, ADM 51/4320, Part iv, unpaginated, *Royal Sovereign*, 21 July-17 Sept. 1702; BL, Sloane 2496, pp. 42-54: 'Examinations relative to the failure of the Expedition against Cadiz 1702'; *Spain Under Charles the Second*, pp. 206-12; Stanhope to his father (Hon. A. Stanhope), 29 Aug., 3, 4 Sept. 1702 [NS]; Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, pp. 77-81; Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, pp. 283-6.

Further detail in the letter outlined the strength of the forts dotted along the coastline leading to Cádiz. In addition to this correspondent, accounts from fishermen captured by the detachment en route to Rota were sent by Pearce; while other news filtered through from Portugal and elsewhere along the southern Spanish coast. Thus, although Pearce's sally onto the mainland failed to glean anything further, on reconvening two days later, the Council considered that it had sufficient information to facilitate detailed planning.

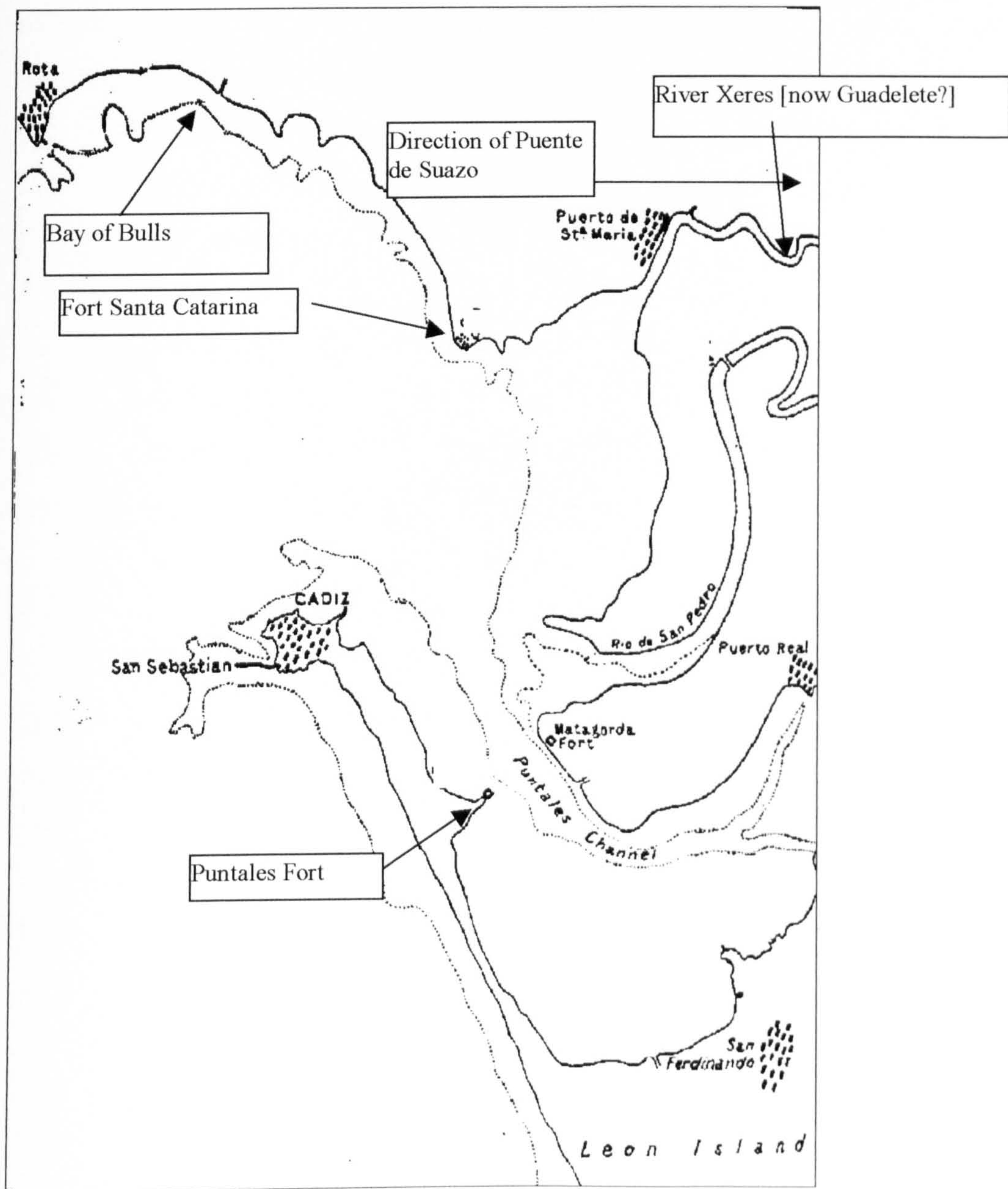


Fig. 12: Outline of Cadiz

³⁷ BL, Add MSS 38159, pp. 12-13: 'A letter from Tavira', 10 Aug. 1702 [NS].

Certain topographical circumstances were similar to those which had framed the attack on Brest in 1694 inasmuch as that a direct landing upon the principal target from the calm of an inner harbour was an unlikely proposition due to the narrow sea access. A day after this Council, while waiting for the transport ships to gather, Fairborne did suggest that a passage through to the Puntales could be forced but he failed to convince his naval colleagues. The other possible direct route was from the Atlantic side of the León peninsula and it was reconnoitred on 13 August by both the Quarter-Master-General and the Chief Engineer. Despite their report of three commodious landing bays (one large and two small) between the Isla de Santa Pedro (on the backside of the León peninsula) and Cádiz town, and notwithstanding Ormonde's support, this approach was vetoed for leaving the naval vessels too exposed. The intelligence also made it clear that any direct route would have to contend immediately not only with the considerable ordnance located in the strategically sited forts but also with some 4000 troops based in the town and 1000 regular horse alongside the militia which roamed the nearby coast. Cádiz would probably have to be besieged and the navy had doubts about supply, particularly if the ships were forced to lie off the León peninsula in unsettled weather. As at Brest in 1694, it was considered more appropriate to land troops some distance from the intended target and, then to march upon it with the aim of capturing enemy defence works en route which would facilitate the entry of the fleet into the inner harbour to conduct a destructive close range bombardment. The Council therefore resolved to land the troops in the Bay of Bulls, immediately east of Rota, with Fort Santa Catalina (or St Katherine's Tower)³⁸ and Puerto de Santa Maria on the road to the León peninsula the initial objectives.

Ormonde, was principally responsible for the troop landings, having issued the Instructions governing them and then being present in his barge throughout; meanwhile, the most senior naval commander present, Fairborne (Rooke was ill in his flagship with a gout

³⁸ The 1695 map reproduced in Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, causes confusion on the question of fort names. Its Spanish name for St Katherine's Tower is Santa Cattalins and it marks another fort to the north-east of Cádiz town, called Santa Catalina. Although Owen does not obviously represent the capture of St Katherine's Tower (Fort Santa Catalina) as part of the march to occupy Puerto de Santa Maria, on p. 78, he refers to Fort Santa Catalina as being like Fort Matagorda on the 'northern arm' of the inner harbour, which must be the fort labelled Santa Catallins on the map. Other secondary literature such as Colomb's *Naval Warfare*, pp. 283-4 and, more importantly, the primary sources listed in n. 36 above generally refer to the fort east of Puerto de Santa Maria as Santa Catalina, though *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, occasionally makes reference instead to Fort Santa Catarina.

induced fever) could only maintain a supervisory role from the deck of the *Swiftsure*.

Ormonde's descent Instructions bore a remarkable similarity to Tollemache's intentions at Best. Some 1200 grenadiers were to be first ashore with the landing thereafter configured as mutually reinforcing waves of regiments in line; the English would take the place of seniority on the right leaving the Dutch to the left. Significantly, two important lessons had been learnt from the Camaret Bay débâcle: the forward landing craft were to be of the shallowest draft; and the Instructions indicated that it was the responsibility of the general officers and also the individual platoon commanders to ensure an orderly landing. Naval lieutenants were not on this occasion - as they had been at Brest - solely in charge of the landing craft. Although additional ammunition and war stores were to follow immediately behind the third wave, Ormonde also shrewdly ensured that his men were each carrying two days full provisions, thereby providing them with the capacity to sustain a period - albeit short - of operational independence in the event that the landing was vigorously contested.

It was late morning on 15 August before the operation commenced. Four third rates stood into the bay to guard against the French galleys known to be in the Puntales and also to engage Fort Santa Catalina whose guns could rake the landing site. The weather proved the main obstacle with the strong winds upsetting several boats and thus causing a number of men to drown; only a very few soldiers did not have to swim or wade through shoulder high water to reach the shore. The detachment of grenadiers led by Pearce and Lord Donegal were first onto the beach and, despite wet ammunition, fought off an equal number of Spanish troopers which charged down from the hills. Those horsemen and a small gun emplacement (abandoned on the approach of the Dutch) apart, no other opposition was encountered on the landing beach and some 6000 troops were successfully ashore by night-fall. Before then, however, Ormonde had moved to secure Rota, in his rear, which was a suitable prospect for additional troop and artillery train landings.

A place of little strength upon a declination, Rota was easily threatened by the Confederate forces. A summons was sent ahead and, as the army approached, Rota's chief magistrate came out to offer Ormonde the town keys. A camp was quickly established along with a headquarters in the town castle, while the remaining stores and troops were landed. Amongst the latter were a group of sailors who had been asked to volunteer to go ashore as 'Pioneers' and the account of one 'Pioneer' - Matthew Bishop (then a seaman in the

Swiftsure but later a celebrated Malburian soldier)³⁹ suggests that their experiences were not dissimilar from those of the Naval Brigades some centuries later.⁴⁰

Ormonde remained at Rota for three days to organise the next phase of the operation. In anticipation of the march along the coast to the Isla de León peninsula, a letter was sent to the Governor of Puerto de Santa Maria explaining that the Confederates intended to occupy the port but pledging that no harm would come to the inhabitants provided that they remained quiescent. Ormonde's letter recognised that the operation against Cádiz was indirectly linked to the promotion of another claimant to the Spanish throne and the ongoing diplomacy to bring Portugal into the Grand Alliance. The necessity of not alienating the inhabitants of the targeted territory meant that it was simply not sufficient to complete the operation without thought to the impact of the army's actions. On this occasion, some restraint in waging war was required which quickly proved to be beyond Ormonde and his fellow officers and, more importantly, was unrecognised by the soldiers.

Once two small ambushes had been beaten off, the army was able to enter the now nearly deserted Puerto de Santa Maria; meanwhile a grenadier vanguard captured Fort Santa Catalina. Almost immediately, discipline broke down. Houses were looted and churches despoiled; while drunk troops molested the remaining women and nuns. It was not just the army privates who were culpable, however. The naval 'Pioneer', Bishop, contentedly recollects drinking wine with a colleague on a roof prior to the army entering the town and in his log entry of 23 August, Captain Ley of the *Royal Sovereign* bluntly notes that both seamen and soldiers were plundering Santa Maria. Considerable evidence also points to the participation by officers of both services. Certainly, the senior generals, Sir Charles O'Hara and Sir Henry Belasis, were later placed under arrest by Ormonde for their alleged role in the plunder, while some naval officers were implicated in storing loot in their vessels. These actions undoubtedly extinguished any support there might have been in Andalucia for the Habsburg claimant to the Spanish throne and Ormonde's subsequent declaration against the plundering did not appease the inhabitants. Militarily, this meant that Cádiz would have to be captured and then defended in a conventional manner, not only against the Franco-Spanish troops but also against the town's inhabitants and those of the surrounding area. Without

³⁹ C.T. Atkinson, 'One of Marlborough's Men: Matthew Bishop of Webb's', *JSAHR* xxiii (1945), 157-69.

⁴⁰ See, for example, R. Brooks, *The Long Arm of the Empire: Naval Brigades from the Crimea to the Boxer*

considerable additional resources, the security of a Confederate Cádiz might easily be breached from within and hence its worth as a naval base and a secure gateway to the Mediterranean was called into question. Even before an attack had been launched, and regardless of whether it was to be successful, failure at Cádiz had largely been ensured by the expeditionary force's conduct at Santa Maria.

This last point was not however fully appreciated at the time and, although both Rooke and Ormonde subsequently recognised that the events at the port had greatly hardened opposition, the desire to push forward was maintained. The Council had previously agreed that the naval bombardment of Cádiz depended upon the capture of Fort Santa Catalina, thus allowing the naval detachment to stand safely into Cádiz Bay, and also whether or not Ormonde decided that the army should reach Puerto Real first. With the first condition achieved, Ormonde inexplicably deferred his decision on the march to Puerto Real by calling another Council, which convened on 24 August. Perhaps responding to the Duke's unexpressed wish, the officers present looked at the next stage in greater detail and resolved that if the army could capture Fort Matagorda, then the navy might send a couple of frigates though the Canon de Puntales and, if the passage proved clear, additional vessels might follow. Aside from enabling the navy to destroy the French ships and galleys tied up in the Puntales, it would, more importantly, allow for a close range bombardment of Cádiz to soften up its defences against a land assault. The Council recognised though that the essential first step - the capture of the Matagorda - was not an easy prospect, particularly with respect to its approach. Consequently, Rear-Admirals Fairborne, Wassanaer and Grayden were charged with assessing the viability of transporting men from the River Xeres (now River Guadalete)⁴¹ at Puerto de Santa Maria to the neck of land upon which the Matagorda was situated.

The Admirals submitted two reports which, although admittedly taking account of the different conditions at high and low water, gave no clear opinion other than to convey their general scepticism about this method of advance. Uncharacteristically, it was a Dutchman, Admiral Allemonde, who forestalled the potential deadlock by calling another Council which decided to stick with the resolution of 24 August. The coastal advance upon the Matagorda

Rebellion (London, 1999).

⁴¹ I am most grateful to Dr Roy Alexander of Chester College, Professor Adrian Harvey of Liverpool University and Dr Roberto Lazaro Suau of Consejo Superior des Investigaciones Cientificas (CSIC) at the Estacion Experimental de Zonas Aridas (EEZA), Almeria, for their geographical expertise which helped me

was nonetheless rejected in favour of Baron Sparr marching some 2500 troops overland, albeit having to cross three rivers in the process. This task though was to be eased by use of the ships' boats. By the end of August, Sparr was dug in a half-mile from the Matagorda and, although the attack was getting bogged down in marshy ground which was ill-suited for the siting of his field-artillery, he confidently sent for the rest of the army to join him. That it proved not forthcoming was partially due to the emergence of reservations over this approach but also because of a general desire to get some troops on to the Isla de León in quick-time. This in turn set in-train a series of Councils of both land and sea officers which led to the abandonment of the operation against Cádiz.

In separate letters, Ormonde and Rooke had represented their doubts about the attempt to force the Puntales by taking the Matagorda. Ormonde, writing to Secretary Nottingham, was circumspect but seemed to be preparing the ground for the failure by emphasising that his preference had always been to land troops on the back-side of the León peninsula. Rooke meanwhile, making his first effective intervention in the Cádiz operation, represented to the General that he would need to clear the channel of blockages. Furthermore, that the capture of the Matagorda fort would be insufficient for him to send vessels through the Canon de Puntales due to the prohibitive fire which would come from the fort opposite the Matagorda. A change of mind on this matter meant that Rooke was now supported by his commander in Cádiz Bay, Fairborne, and in a rarely remarked upon display of unanimity with Ormonde, Rooke similarly argued that Cádiz could only be taken by a considerable landing of troops on the León peninsula in conjunction with a sea-based bombardment. Accordingly, to expedite the entry of the army on the Isla de León, Ormonde proposed that the soldiers march away from the coast to Puente de Suazo and cross over the bridge there to León and, in the event that it was broken or defended, he requested that the navy send sufficient boats and materials to the river at Santo Pedro, so that a make-shift bridge could be fashioned between there and Suazo. Chairing his first Council of naval officers since arriving in the region, Rooke gained their agreement to Ormonde's proposal only for it to be thrown into doubt four days later when Brigadier Seymour brought an additional caveat to the plan.

Before attempting to pass over on to León, the Council of Land Officers considered

conclude that the Xeres is probably now the Guadalete.

what to do in the event that the bridging manoeuvre failed and the army was forced to retreat. Implicit also in their deliberations was the belief that Sparr was unlikely to succeed, and thus the generals sought naval agreement to bring the army and artillery off at the mouth of the Xeres. The naval Council balked at this proposal, arguing instead that the only safe embarkation place was the mole at Rota. Two days later, an increasingly discontented naval Council reconvened to consider matters further. Rooke had to contend with the mounting concern of his Captains at the increasing sickness amongst the junior officers and the crewmen employed ashore in what the Council superciliously called 'slavish services'⁴², and at the lateness of the season. There was also a move to restate the belief that the capture of the Matagorda would not facilitate the entry of the fleet into the Puntales. This naval Council of 2 September should not however be interpreted as representative of discordant relations between the army and navy, which contemporaries and commentators have assumed to be the principal reason for the failure of the operation.⁴³ It also passed resolutions that the flag-officers in Cádiz Bay reassess their scepticism about the tactical utility of the Matagorda and that a bombardment of Cádiz be undertaken at the first opportunity of good weather. Far from actually pulling the plug on the operation, the naval officers merely asked aloud if there was any real prospect of success at Cádiz and, if so, how quickly it was likely to come about.

On the same day, a Council of army officers had moved to answer that question. Considering a letter that Lord Shannon had brought from Sparr which included the engineering officers' opinions, the Council decided that the attack against the fort should be recalled and that a joint Council should convene to assess matters further. It was this Council, held on 5 September, which concluded that as the capture of the Matagorda was too difficult a task with the resources to hand, and one which would not in any event ease the passage of the fleet into the Puntales, then the operation against Cádiz should be abandoned. There is no record of rancour at this Council, nor of any such vigorous debates as had occurred at the Council of mid-August, which determined the tactical advance on Cádiz. Rather, it would seem that both the army and navy, first separately and then in this Council, calmly came to the conclusion that the operation could not succeed on the approach taken

⁴² *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, p. 194.

⁴³ *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 54-6, is a contemporary account which considers poor inter-service relations the cause of failure at Cádiz. Examples of histories which emphasis the role of army-naval discord are, Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 273, 276 and Coxe, *Memoirs of the Kings of*

and, indeed, that any attack would now require greater resources. Implicitly, this recognised that the indirect route to Cádiz was misguided and, as Marlborough later argued, if Cádiz was not from the outset a directly attainable target, then an alternative should have been considered.⁴⁴ More obvious was the impact of the events at Santa Maria in encouraging the locals' resistance and help to Governor Villadarias and Commandant Brancaccio to make best use of their limited resources, a point which Hesse-Darmstadt's letters to Rooke and Ormonde made clear. The problem therefore with Colomb's judgement that the operation represented a failure of perseverance is that it overlooks these factors.⁴⁵ The inter-service discord frequently referred to, and particularly the break-down in relations between Rooke and Ormonde, principally arose from the debate about what the expeditionary force was to do (if anything) now that Cádiz was not considered a feasible target.

Marlborough later stepped into this debate by urging to Nottingham that the situation on the Spanish coast be retrieved if possible for the 'common cause'.⁴⁶ This had been Ormonde's view, though unlike Marlborough, he was so anxious to undertake something that no obstacles were recognised. Rooke however saw complications everywhere, and retreated behind the provisions in his Instructions of 20 July which restricted alternative targets to one - La Coruña - but, as usual, its viability was contingent upon the agreement of a joint Council. According to Rooke's journal, Ormonde had proposed proceeding to La Coruña at the Council of 5 September but the sea officers declared against it due to the lateness of the season and they were supported by the testimony of the Coruña pilots whom Rooke brought in for questioning. However, no formal resolution was apparently adopted by the Council and meantime Prince Eugene's campaign in Italy and, in particular, the Battle of Luzzara (4 August) was being interpreted as an encouragement for the Spaniards to welcome the Austrian Habsburgs. Emboldened therefore, Ormonde continued to lobby Rooke privately as they organised the troop withdrawal from the Andalucian coast. Increasingly frustrated by what he considered the General's disregard of the Instructions, Rooke sought the opinion of his fellow senior naval officers, once the embarkation was complete on 16 September.

Spain, i. 224.

⁴⁴ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 139, p. 148: Marlborough to Godolphin, 21 Nov. 1702.

⁴⁵ Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, p. 285.

⁴⁶ *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough, From 1702-1712*, ed. Sir George Murray (London, 1845), i. 47: Marlborough to Nottingham, 23 Oct. 1702 [NS].

Ormonde had suggested a variety of targets for another assault including Cádiz again; the Galician coastal towns of Pontevedro, Vigo and La Coruña; and Ayamonte, which was located westwards from Cádiz Bay at the estuary of the Guadiana river. Rooke placed them before his naval Council and, considering each in turn, the officers concluded that Ayamonte was the only possibility but even then concerns were raised about the viability of seaborne supply in the winter season. Ormonde's earlier disquiet about insufficient resources to capture Cádiz was used to reject a second attempt there; while it was felt that the Galician coast could not be reached in time before the inclement weather and diminishing provisions made an attack impractical. A joint Council was convened the following day to resolve the future proceedings of the expeditionary force, when the specific question before it was whether it would be reasonable to make a second landing on Spain. Factors such as the region's disinclination to the Austrian House and the depleted condition of the Dutch provisions - such that they had only one months supply for their troops - weighed heavily in the balance, and the Council decided against another landing in Spain. Indeed, it resolved that the expeditionary force should head for England. Ormonde, Sparr, and Pallandt refused to sign the minute but this did not represent a simple army-navy division for Brigadiers Seymour and Hamilton, Major-General O'Hara and the army's second-in-command, Bellasis, sided with the eight naval officers present. As with Captain Norris's experience at Newfoundland in 1697, it was Ormonde's failure to carry his fellow service officers which caused the decision to go against him.

The fleet stood out into the Mediterranean and, in accordance with the Instructions, the dispatch of an expeditionary force to the West Indies was organised.⁴⁷ Ormonde however proved unable to accept the Council's decision and his attitude quite clearly tilted at the Council's sovereignty of command enshrined in the Instructions. Seizing upon a letter from Methuen, which strongly implied that the Portuguese now offered a blank cheque of help to the expeditionary force, Ormonde began to agitate again that the circumstances were propitious for a second assault. Rooke had also received a letter from the envoy but his was more balanced in tone. While acknowledging that the Portuguese had declared themselves free from the French alliance, Methuen reported that their only overture to the Alliance was to make available six warship berths in each of the country's ports. Methuen did nonetheless

⁴⁷ See Chapter 2, Section II.iii, pp. 309-28, for the progress of this force.

believe that the navy should take up this offer and leave some frigates to winter in the Mediterranean - a proposal that had also been included in the Instructions. The Council, which convened to consider Methuen's recommendation, had first however to decide upon the scope of Portugal's engagement. The officers present proved overwhelmingly sceptical of Ormonde's 'blank cheque' letter, believing it to contain 'ambiguous and doubtful expressions'⁴⁸ and again only Sparr and Pallandt supported the General. There was also opposition to the substantive issue of leaving some ships in the region and, at a further Council held two days later on 24 September, the resolution to return forthwith to England was upheld.

The history of the Rooke-Ormonde expedition to Spain would have remained one of failure if they had not come upon a piece of luck on their return journey. Off Cape Finisterre in thick weather on 6 October, the *Pembroke* came into the fleet from Lagos with news that a substantial French squadron escorting the Spanish *flota* had put into Vigo.⁴⁹ The convoy was commanded by Vice-Admiral Châteaurenault whose squadron had originally left Brest in September 1701 for a year long tour in the Caribbean where it was to defend the French possessions and attack the English colonies. However, a lack of resources and stout English island defences caused vacillation in pressing forward these attacks, and, on hearing that a lack of provisions and worm damage had forced Cœtlogon's escort squadron to return home without the Spanish silver plate, Châteaurenault considered that Louis's interests would instead be best served by his squadron taking up this task. Throughout June the *flota* was gathered at Havana and, in the night of 23 July, the 56 sail convoy departed. Cádiz was the usual destination for the plate fleet but the arrival of the allied operation against that town in late August meant that an alternative had to be found. As a result of an accurate intelligence appraisal of the Anglo-Dutch fleets' dispositions and a disagreement between Châteaurenault and the *flota* commander, Manuel de Velasco, Vigo was selected as the safest compromise option.⁵⁰ The communication by Captain Hardy of the *Pembroke* would not however have

⁴⁸ BL, Add MSS 38159, p. 32: 'Ormonde's Journal'.

⁴⁹ PRO, ADM 51/4320, Part iv, unpaginated, *Royal Sovereign*, 6 Oct. 1702; *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, p. 227.

⁵⁰ *A Full and Impartial History*, pp. 152-72: An Account of Monsieur Châteaurenault's Expedition from his First Sailing from Brest in September 1701, to his Putting into the Harbour of Vigo in September 1702; A. Baudrillart, *Philippe V Et La Cour de France* (Paris, 1890), i. 115; H. Kamen, 'The Destruction of the Spanish Fleet at Vigo in 1702', *BIHR* xxxix (1966), 165-6.

surprised the English Ministry because two days previously Secretary Nottingham had received similar news from Paris. This timely report was the fruit of the Maritime Powers' efforts to track the *flota* since the early summer in the knowledge that its interception would be a significant financial set-back for the Franco-Spanish war effort. This priority was reflected in the deployment from mid-July of Sir Cloudesley Shovell's squadron on stations off the Western Approaches and the Channel looking for Châteaurenault. However, by the time Nottingham had informed the Admiralty and orders to Rooke and Shovell to consult over the destruction of the French fleet had been dispatched, Rooke had already seized the initiative in theatre. Within hours of Captain Hardy coming aboard, the *Sorlings* and the *Sheerness* were dispatched to confirm the news and the fleet stood away for Vigo; meanwhile Rooke called a meeting of the Flag Officers for the following day.⁵¹

This naval Council quickly brushed aside the deadline of 1 October for attacking Galician ports, which it had set on 16 September when considering Ormonde's list of targets for a second landing on Spain, and it determined to 'insult them [the French] immediately'⁵² at Vigo. Although the unexpected nature of the opportunity which had arisen was an argument for ignoring the cut-off date, the alacrity with which it was disregarded suggests that the naval officers had been unnecessarily timid in their earlier deliberations. Indeed, Ormonde might with some justification have concluded that the Navy had wrongly frustrated the expedition's progress after the embarkation of the troops from Rota. However, delight that action was about to occur probably led the General to abandon this argument, albeit temporarily. By the early morning of 8 October, Vigo was in sight and, although the *Sorlings* and the *Sheerness* did not return with confirmation of *Pembroke's* intelligence until the following day, Lieutenants Paddon of the *Lenox* and Sanders of the *St George* were sent in boats to reconnoitre the French position.⁵³

They would have found that the eighteen strong French squadron and fifteen sail of

⁵¹ PRO, ADM 1/4088, f. 78: Nottingham to the Admiralty, 4 Oct. 1702; PRO, ADM 2/28, pp. 508-9: the Admiralty to Shovell, 17 July 1702; PRO, ADM 2/29, pp. 30-1, 92-3, 98-9, 146-7, 150: the Admiralty to Shovell, 20 Aug., 11, 18 Sept., 5 Oct. 1702; the Admiralty to Rooke, 5 Oct. 1702; PRO, ADM 3/17, unpaginated: Board Minutes, 24, 26 Sept., 5 Oct. 1702; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 110, pp. 114-15: Godolphin to Marlborough, 13 Sept. 1702.

⁵² *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, p. 228.

⁵³ *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, p. 228; PRO, ADM 8/7, unpaginated: 'The present disposall of all her Majesties Ships & Vessells in Sea Pay', 1 Aug. 1702.

the Spanish *flota*⁵⁴ had passed by Vigo, which was situated in the middle of its eponymous bay's southern shore, and through to the estuary where a capacious inner harbour opened out at the town of Redondela. Just prior to this, between the Randa headland and the northern shore, the bay narrowed to a breadth of half a mile, thus forming the Estrecho de Randa channel, which was the only access to the harbour. Sheltered also by the surrounding Galician mountain range, the French anchorage was naturally a strong defensive position. Additional security was provided by a number of artificial land defences, which Châteaurenault had augmented since his arrival. A boom, described by Bishop, 'as strong as the "Art of Man" could devise'⁵⁵ had been placed across the Estrecho, which was flanked by Fort Randa to the south and by Fort Corbeyo on the northern shore, though this was essentially little more than a boosted gun emplacement. Aside from increasing the ordnance of these forts with naval guns so that Randa held nearly 30 pieces and Corbeyo ten less, Châteaurenault also ordered a number of French marines to garrison the southern fort and to act in conjunction with the Spanish troops that roamed the coast from Vigo eastwards. Much of this detail and more was known to London due to Methuen's intelligence contacts from Vianna in southern Spain; but, of course, such reports took so long to be processed that Rooke was forced to rely upon his own reconnaissance provision. Fortunately, Paddon and Sanders were able to furnish Rooke with the above intelligence picture, while also informing him that much plate had already been disembarked for Lugo.⁵⁶ Although the opportunity to destroy Châteaurenault's fleet made this latter point seem immaterial, its pre-eminence in any reckoning of the operation's success has subsequently been emphasised.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ There is considerable disagreement amongst the domestic primary sources consulted on the number of French and Spanish ships at anchor in the inner harbour. The numbers cited are taken from Kamen, 'The Destruction of the Spanish Silver Fleet', p. 168, on the basis that his authorities are documents held in the Archivo General de Indias, Seville, and therefore arguably have greater pretensions to accuracy.

⁵⁵ *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, p. 11.

⁵⁶ PRO, ADM 1/4088, fos. 91-4: 'An Account of the Present Condition of Vigo in a Letter from Mr Lacy an English Gentleman Living in Vianna from Vianna', 13 Sept. 1702. Endorsed: '27 Oct. 1702, Nottingham transmits an account from Mr Methuen of the present condition of Vigo which he hear from Mr Lacy and English Gentleman at Vianna'; More intelligence on Vigo from Methuen, n.d.

⁵⁷ Kamen, 'The Destruction of the Spanish Silver Fleet', pp. 165-73.

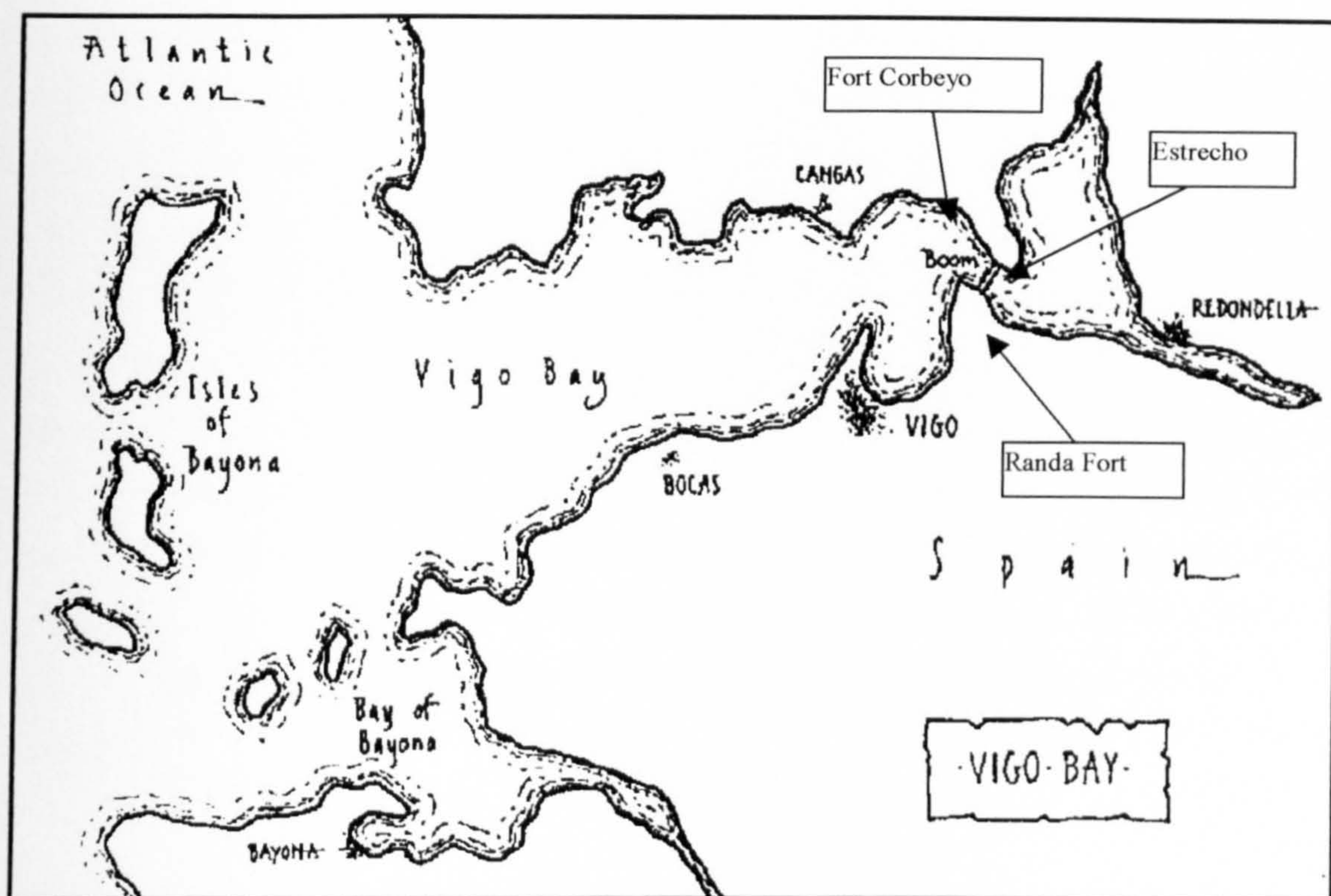


Fig. 13 : The Attack on Vigo.

While the naval Council had taken the initial decision to proceed to Vigo with the intention of attacking the French fleet, it was a meeting of both the land and sea officers on 11 October which formulated the assault tactics. Marshal Tallard's aide, Hautefort, later claimed that the anchorage possessed near 'perfect security'⁵⁸ and it was clear that Rooke's ships would not be able to penetrate the inner harbour without help from the land. Specifically, at least one of the two sources of flanking fire across the Estrecho would have to be stilled and, to this end, it was decided to land a detachment of soldiers on the southern shore of Vigo Bay with the objective of capturing Randa fort. The theorist Callwell has written that military success must occasionally act as a prerequisite for the naval operation⁵⁹, but this places a premium upon sequencing the separate service actions. Thus at Vigo, officers gave considerable thought to their service formations. Ormonde issued an equivalent set of landing instructions to those used at Cádiz: a vanguard detachment of grenadiers would secure the beachhead for the line regiments to come ashore in sequence; and the soldiers were

⁵⁸ Louis Charles, Marquis de Hautefort, *The Memoirs of the Marquis de Hautefort* (London, 1763), p. 41.

⁵⁹ Callwell, *Military Operations and Maritime Preponderance*, pp. 136, 146-7.

again to be self-sufficient for two days with order to be rigorously enforced at the battalion and company level. As for the navy, Rooke appreciated that disarray threatened if the whole fleet tried to pass through the Estrecho. Twenty-five of the smaller rates were therefore selected as the initial attack squadron which was disposed in seven groups of up to four vessels, each with a commanding Admiral and accompanied by ten fireships. Entry to the channel was to be in line abreast with the end ships detailed to absorb and quell any shore artillery fire, while the other line vessels would concentrate on breaking through into the inner harbour to bombard the enemy thereby allowing the fireships to be dispatched. Vice-Admiral Thomas Hopsonn was to command the lead group in the *Torbay* with the *Barfleur* on the starboard post by the Randa promontory and, with no land assault planned for the northern shore, the post on the more vulnerable larboard end of the line was taken by Buckman's *Association*.⁶⁰

The haze which had masked the fleet's arrival in Vigo Bay - though not sufficiently to prevent a desultory cannonade from Vigo's town defences - was replaced on the 12 October by heavy rain and squalls.⁶¹ The morning was spent landing some 3000 troops in the Punta de Alameita and Taberna bay near Teis where no opposition was encountered.⁶² The Grenadiers commanded by Pearce and Shannon were immediately ordered forward to Fort Randa and Ormonde was to follow with the rest of the troops. The march proved as uneventful as the landing and it was only upon drawing near the fort that Ormonde spied a body of Spanish foot advancing between the fort and the hills to the rear of Redondela. Despite reputedly being four times the number of the assault force, they retreated upon the approach of the grenadier vanguard after a rather half-hearted attempt to engage in a long-range skirmish. Although the fort's garrison of 300 French marines and 50 Spaniards was more determined in its opposition, it was not long before they too were overcome. Almost

⁶⁰ Anon, *A Relation of the Great and Glorious Success of the Fleet and Forces of Her Majesty and the States General at Vigo* (London, 1702).

⁶¹ The ensuing account of the operation at Vigo is based upon the following primary sources and secondary authorities: Anon, *A Relation of the Great and Glorious Success of the Fleet and Forces*; *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 232-6; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 57-9; BL, Sloane MSS 2496, pp. 42-54: 'Examinations relative to the failure of the Expedition against Cadiz, 1702'; *A Full and Impartial History*, pp. 111-25; BL, Add MSS 38159, pp. 33-7: 'Ormonde's Journal'; PRO, ADM 51/4375, Part vii, unpaginated *Torbay*: 11-13 Oct. 1702; *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, pp. 12-13; de Surville, *The Memoirs of the Marquis de Hautefort*, pp. 40-5; Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, pp. 83-5.

⁶² Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, p. 84, claims that some 3000 Spanish militia had to be driven from trenches along the shore but none of the primary sources listed in the above reference refer to this.

immediately upon coming up to the fort, the grenadiers captured the lower gun platform which housed the majority of the ordnance and, as the garrison retreated into the old stone tower, Charles's Churchill's regiment arrived in support to secure the western end of the fortifications. This freed the grenadiers - in a typically opportunistic fashion - to rush in and overpower the garrison when its commander, the French naval Captain, Sorel, opened the tower gate to make a sortie. Randa fort was in Confederate hands and if Hopsonn could correctly time his run up to the boom, he would be spared the potentially devastating flanking fire from the south.

Sailing ships are however too reliant upon the wind for their sailors to be more than approximate in their timing and, having rather precipitously set off immediately the soldiers had landed, a calm descended which forced Hopsonn to drop anchor just short of the boom before Ormonde's grenadiers had even taken the fort's outwork battery. Accordingly, the French turned all their ordnance upon the motionless squadron, only to squander the opportunity to force its retreat through inaccurate fire. As the shells fell around him, Hopsonn's proximity to the boom allowed him to observe the scope of the French defence of the inner harbour. It looked much stronger than the previous reconnaissance mission had suggested and consequently he thought Rooke should see this too. The Admiral along with Fairborne completed the perilous journey to the *Torbay* and retired to Hopsonn's cabin for discussions on how they might act.

Although the Admirals decided to adhere to the original plan, the weather proved the important element inasmuch as a fresh gale shortly sprung up to allow the squadron another run at the boom. With the *Barfleur* and *Association* disposed against the two forts, Hopsonn signalled his division to set both fore and top sails and then he 'steered directly for the boom'.⁶³ It was at this point that Ormonde began the final assault on Randa Fort, having earlier taken its principal battery. The sequencing was only therefore slightly disrupted by an early naval move but it did mean that the lead ship, the *Torbay*, received a considerable amount of fire, particularly from the French ships, *Le Bourbon* and *L'Esperance*, placed just inside the harbour. Nonetheless, *Torbay*'s ramming of the boom allowed her to break clean through and, although the remainder of her division and that of Vandergoes had to set about the obstacle with cutting equipment, it was not long before three divisions of the attacking

⁶³ Quoted in Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, p. 84.

squadron entered the inner harbour. For the vessels first inside the Puntales, there was still an awkward engagement to be fought before the French squadron could be destroyed or captured. The harbour's confined sea space increased the destructive potential of the French fireships. Indeed, Hopsonn had to abandon the *Torbay* as it was very nearly destroyed by the blazing *Le Favori* - only its premature explosion allowed crew to return to the English ship and extinguish the flames. Within about forty minutes from first breaching the boom, the Confederates had silenced *Le Bourbon* and *L'Esperance* and consolidated their presence both in the harbour and on the coast around Randa. In such circumstances, Châteaurenault was quick to conclude that his defence was now untenable and he ordered the French squadron to be fired and abandoned. The loss of fifteen ships of the line so early in the war was a considerable set-back for the French navy which, even in less troubled times, struggled for recognition at Versailles.

It has been argued that the Confederates could also only really feel pleased at the losses suffered by the French marine for fiscally the operation did not prove to be (as hoped) a debit upon the Franco-Spanish war finance. The silver taken from the *flota* was insignificant compared to the amount previously landed; and it was revealed that the Maritime Powers' trading communities possessed a capital and financial interest in the *flota*. Anglo-Dutch embarrassment over these circumstances was compounded by Philip V's shrewdness in using the attack as a pretext to exact additional contributions from foreign traders and raise loans, thus further upsetting established trade patterns.⁶⁴ These reservations do however ignore the psychological impact of the operation. The financial disparities were not widely appreciated at the time - indeed, as the merchandise and silver were recovered from the prizes, the officers and men anticipated considerable pay bonuses - and the practical symbolism of the assault resonated to a greater extent to England's benefit throughout the European capitals than this argument admits. Certainly in Lisbon, even if Pedro II was not immediately persuaded to join the Grand Alliance, the operation helped make the context for Methuen's diplomacy, which brought about that accession, much more favourable. Equally, the Emperor now seemed more willing to consider temporarily sidelining his Italian ambitions

⁶⁴ Kamen, 'The Destruction of the Spanish Silver Fleet', pp. 165-73; Kamen, *Philip V*, p. 32; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 54.

and sending the Archduke Charles to the peninsula.⁶⁵ Stripped of its economic failures, the operation might justly be interpreted as contributing to the transition between Spain's different strategic war contexts and, in that regard, the judgement that the operation at Vigo had no impact upon England's or the Alliance's Grand Strategy seems wide of the mark.⁶⁶ Moreover, even if this transition has not been seen as heralding an alteration in the foundations of England's and the Grand Alliance's war strategy⁶⁷, it at least forced a re-ordering of the resource priorities over a wider geographical area.

That development was however several months away. The more immediate strategic implications were implicitly considered by Parliament in different but equally suggestive ways. Upon their return in November, motions of thanks to Rooke and Ormonde were moved in the Commons alongside those to Marlborough. Despite taking important posts in the Maas valley and the lower Rhine, Anne's Captain-General had had a torrid campaign on continental Europe, having been frequently prevented from engaging the French by the cautious Dutch Field Deputies.⁶⁸ The parity of esteem implied by the votes of thanks suggested that the political debate over the poles of war strategy - continental or naval - continued in ignorance that the Ministry was effectively promoting a blend of both and that the combined expeditionary force sent to Spain was not perforce a handmaiden of the navalist case. This though was the assumption the Lords made by ordering an enquiry into the failure at Cádiz.

Doubtless, the Lords had been provoked by Ormonde's friends whose complaints about Rooke's conduct at Cádiz were sharpened after relations between the General and Admiral broke down again at Vigo: Rooke had refused Ormonde's request to leave behind a substantial number of ships to support his troops as they conducted further attacks in the Galician interior, thereby forcing Ormonde to embark all the troops on 17 October and to relinquish his post on the Spanish mainland. Marlborough did try to warn of the folly of an enquiry in that it might rebound to Ormonde's detriment, which to an extent it did.⁶⁹ However, the sense that the operation was a failure of naval strategy and tactics to penetrate

⁶⁵ Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 309; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, p. 277; Francis, 'John Methuen and The Anglo-Portuguese Treaties of 1703', p. 117; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 69.

⁶⁶ Churchill, *Marlborough*, ii. 137.

⁶⁷ Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession*, p. 267.

⁶⁸ Cobbet, *Parliamentary History of England*, vi. 94; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 253; C. Barnett, *Marlborough* (London, 1974), pp. 50-4.

⁶⁹ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 139, pp. 147-8: Marlborough to Godolphin, 21 Nov. 1702; BL, Add MSS 38159, pp. 35-7: 'Ormonde's Journal'.

the Mediterranean - an opinion held by the Queen - drove the investigation. Rooke appeared before the committee of the House of Lords twice in January 1703, when he was subject to detailed questioning on matters that had largely been the concern of the Councils of War during the operation. Of the 36 answers to written and oral questions Rooke provided, he referred back to the deliberations of the Councils of War in twelve, while eight of these twelve responses related to the joint army-navy Councils. In doing so, Rooke demonstrated a far surer grasp of the nature of combined operational command than his political peers and thus took the sting out of the attack on the navy. It was probably his performance in this regard which, despite the best efforts of the former Admiral of the Fleet, Torrington, ensured that Rooke escaped without censure when the Committee reported on 17 February. Indeed, their resolution that Rooke had 'acted like and brave an worthy commander',⁷⁰ with respect to his Instructions and Councils of War, recommended him when, in 1704, the Admiralty aimed to implement a wide-ranging combined operational agenda against France and Spain in the Mediterranean.⁷¹

I.iii: Operations Against the Spanish Coast, 1704 and the Capture of Gibraltar, July 1704-April 1705.

The Spanish theatre had been quiet during 1703 as the allies awaited the outcome of the Methuens' diplomacy to bring Portugal into the Grand Alliance. Joint army-navy ventures were limited to projected attacks on the French coasts and aiding the Camisard revolt in Languedoc.⁷² Nonetheless, as two of the Methuen treaties⁷³ - the *Quadruple Offensive and Defensive Alliance* and the *Triple Treaty* - were agreed in the early summer, a fleet was dispatched to the Mediterranean. Its priorities were however trade protection and assisting the Imperial forces on the Neapolitan and Sicilian coasts. Descents upon Spain were suggested but they were explicitly categorised as subsidiary services and it was only for watering that 2500 marines were landed at Altea on 3 August.⁷⁴ The *Quadruple Treaty* had

⁷⁰ *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 255-6.

⁷¹ *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 241-52, 254-6 (calculations are based upon Rooke's list of questions and answers); P. Le Fevre, 'Arthur Herbert, Earl of Torrington, 1648-1716', in Le Fevre & Harding (eds), *British Admirals*, p. 38; Hattendorf, 'Sir George Rooke and Sir Cloudesley Shovell', p. 65.

⁷² See Section I.vii, pp. 294-5 below.

⁷³ The third was a Commercial Treaty, which was not signed until December 1703.

⁷⁴ PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 81-6: Hedges to Shovell, 10 May 1703, and enclosure, 'Instructions for Our Trusty

however completed the transition of Spain's strategic context within the war from simply a theatre of combat to a target of acquisition for the Habsburg claimant to the Spanish throne, the Archduke Charles.⁷⁵ This alteration ensured the Peninsula's centrality within the Alliance's war policy for the remainder of the war.

The strategic commitment to place the Archduke on the Spanish throne meant that the most pressing task was to transport him to the Peninsula along with the 12 000 troops - 4000 from each of England, Austria and the United Provinces - that the Alliance was bound by the treaty to augment the Portuguese army.⁷⁶ Charles was proclaimed 'King of Spain' in Vienna at the beginning of September; however the Emperor's reluctance to let his son go, and the Archduke's adoption of a punctilious monarchical grandeur, greatly slowed his progress to the Dutch coast, where he was to embark aboard a Anglo-Dutch fleet for Portugal. Meanwhile, the troop provision proved contentious. The Imperial contribution was not forthcoming and, although London increased England's contribution by a half again, the Dutch only reluctantly agreed to share the cost of supplying the outstanding 2000. Although Marlborough indicated a willingness to furnish 6000 troops from the army in Flanders, he manoeuvred to limit the amount withdrawn from that theatre and directly opposed Nottingham over having to provide the remaining 2000. Perhaps surprisingly - given Marlborough's pre-eminence in the Queen's affections and his political and personal friendship with Lord Treasurer Godolphin - the Secretary prevailed.⁷⁷ Even with the arrival

and Welbeloved Sir Cloudesley Shovell Knt', 7 May 1703; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 98-109; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 70-1.

⁷⁵ *A General Collection of Treatys*, iii. 356: Article I of 'An Alliance Offensive and Defensive between Leopold Emperor of the Romans, Anne Queen of England, and the States General of the United Netherlands, on the one part, and Peter II King of Portugal on the Other', 16 May 1703. Despite the facts that he was proclaimed Carlos III, King of Spain, by the allies and others opposed to Philip V, and that he even entered Madrid as King, his 'reign' (unlike Philip's) achieved no legitimacy outside of the war. Therefore, in relating events in the Peninsula, I shall continue to refer to him as the Archduke Charles.

⁷⁶ *A General Collection of Treatys*, iii. 357-8: Article IX of 'An Alliance Offensive and Defensive', 16 May 1703.

⁷⁷ HMC, *Frankland-Russell-Astley MSS*, pp. 126-46: [G. Lamberty] to Cutts, [28 July/]8 Aug., [4/]15, [18/]29, Aug., [28 Aug./]8 Sept., [1/]12, [4/]15, [8/]19, [15/]26 Sept., [29 Sept./]10 Oct., [2/]13, [16/]27 Oct., [23 Nov./]4 Dec. 1703; *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, i. 85, 117-18, 123, 142-3, 155-6, 163-4, 168, 170-1, 192, 203-4: Marlborough to Nottingham, 13/24 Apr., 14 June, 15 July, 8, 23, 27 Aug., [5/6?] Oct. 1703 [NS]; Marlborough to Stanhope, 23 June 1703 [NS]; Marlborough to Hill, 30 Aug. 1703 [NS], Marlborough to Hedges, 30 Oct. 1703 [NS]; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 175, 221, 245-6, 255, pp. 182 n. 1, 227-8, 246-7, 254-5: Marlborough to Godolphin, 13 May, 29 July, 23, 27 Sept., 19 Oct. 1703; *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough and Anthonie Heinsius, Grand Pensionary of Holland*, ed. B. van't Hoff (The Hague, 1951), nos. 114, 121, 130, 133, 144, 149, pp. 70-1, 74, 81-3, 91, 94: Marlborough to Heinsius, 26 May, 12 June, 16, 21 July, 13 Sept., 4 Oct. 1703

of the Archduke on the coast, and the embarkation of the troops aboard the transports by November, planning continued to be frustrated. Over the two days (26-7 November), the west-south-westerly winds of the celebrated Great Storm blew up the Channel and along its coasts wreaking devastation on a grand scale.⁷⁸ Several of the troop transports off Holland were run aground forcing the soldiers ashore and the senior Lieutenant-General on the coast, Lord Cutts, was faced with the unenviable logistical task of re-organising the embarkation of the troops before large scale desertions occurred. Despite considerable effort, however, not all the transports were ready by December when Admiral Rooke's squadron collected the Archduke, and the remainder had to follow in the New Year.⁷⁹

The original hope that Charles, along with the troops, would reach Portugal by September had been dashed by these delays and, thus, instead of proceeding directly to the Peninsula, he was landed at Spithead on Boxing Day whence he travelled to Windsor to be received by the Queen. His subsequent journey to the Peninsula aboard Rooke's fleet was however attended with considerable delay, partly caused by Rooke's unwillingness to leave without the troop transports and partly by bad weather. The fleet did not reach Lisbon harbour at the mouth of the River Tagus until the beginning of February.⁸⁰

The triumphal reception and ceremonies for the Archduke in Lisbon bored Rooke and, after participating in those that he was duty bound to, he left with a squadron of some

[NS].

⁷⁸ A full account of the Great Storm on land and at sea can be found in Daniel Defoe's two works, *The Storm. Or a Collection of the Most Remarkable Casualties and Disasters Which Happen'd in the Late Dreadful Tempest, Both By Sea and Land* (London, 1704) and, *A Collection of the Most Remarkable Casualties and Disasters, Which Happen'd in the Late Dreadful Tempest Both By Sea and Land, On Friday the Twenty-Sixth of November, Seventeen Hundred and Three* (2nd edn, London, 1713) - albeit recognising the warning given in Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 126 n. 1 with respect to Defoe's inventive methodology in compiling his *A Journal of the Plague Year* (London, 1722). Other accounts of the storm can be found in, CFKS, U1590 C9/4 unf.: Philip Stanhope to James Stanhope, 29 Nov. 1703; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 116-18; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 126-9; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 72-3.

⁷⁹ HMC, *Frankland-Russell-Astley MSS*, pp. 147, 151-2, 157-9: Cutts to Churchill, [28 Nov./]9 Dec. 1703; Cutts to Leigh, or the Officer Commanding HM Forces Ordered for Portugal, [18/]29 Dec. 1703; Cutts to Whiteman, [30 Dec./]10 Jan. 1704; Cutts to Sadler, [30 Dec./]10 Jan 1704; Cutts to Marlborough, [31 Dec./]11 Jan. 1704; PRO, ADM 51/4317 Part vii, unpaginated, *Royal Katherine*, 26-27 Dec. 1703.

⁸⁰ PRO, SP 44/208, p. 119: Hedges to Rooke, 20 Jan. 1704; PRO, SP 42/67, fos. 38, 40-4, 48, 50B: 'A Copy of Sir George Rooke's Orders', 26 Jan. 1704; Rooke to Nottingham, 27, 28 Jan., 1, 14, 29 Feb. 1704, and enclosure, 'At a Council of Flag Officers', 28 Jan. 1704; 'Draught of Orders to Sir George Rooke, Read & Approved', 31 Jan. 1704; PRO, ADM 51/4317 Part vii, unpaginated, *Royal Katherine*, 26 Feb. 1704; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 265-6, pp. 263-4, 263 n. 3: Marlborough to Godolphin, 25 Jan. 1704; Marlborough to the Duchess, 25 Jan. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 134-5; *Memoirs Relatng to the Lord Torrington*, p. 121.

eighteen sail for a commerce protection cruise between Capes St Vincent, St Marys and Spartell. Sir John Leake, who on 3 March had brought into the Tagus those auxiliary ships left behind by Rooke, remained at Lisbon with six men-of-war to organise the trade convoys and the landing of stores from the *Content*.⁸¹ It was on his return to Lisbon in early April after an uneventful cruise when Rooke turned his attentions to the fleet's three sets of Instructions issued during March. Although descents against the Spanish coast were recommended, none of the Instructions were exclusive to the Peninsula and, indeed, a wide range of tasks within, and at either end of, the Mediterranean were given. More pressing however were the secret Additional Instructions which ordered the fleet's participation in a land and sea attack against Toulon. The Ministry, and Secretary Nottingham in particular, considered this operation of great importance. Only the relief of Nice and Villefranche⁸² (directed by the open Instructions) had priority. Given that Rooke concealed these Additional Instructions even from his Council of fellow Flag officers, which met three times following his return, it is understandable that the Portuguese Court failed to appreciate his haste to depart for the Mediterranean.⁸³

The Portuguese priorities were descents against Spain and the stationing of a squadron off the Atlantic coast. An apparent problem with respect to the former was that Rooke's fleet had no army soldiers aboard, but when a specific suggestion for a landing of troops in Catalonia was made, Rooke claimed that he had been assured 2000 Portuguese troops by the Archduke's 'Court'. Neither John Methuen nor King Pedro knew of this commitment, and, although the latter was not unwilling to provide the men, he was unable to do so in the time Rooke laid down for the fleet's departure. Accordingly a row developed which was only compounded by Rooke's intention to take the whole fleet into the Mediterranean, thus leaving the Portuguese coast without a defensive squadron. Pedro

⁸¹ PRO, SP 89/18, fos. 85-6: Paul Methuen to 'Sir', 12 Mar. 1704; PRO, SP 42/67, f. 50B: Rooke to Nottingham, 29 Feb. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 165-8: 'At a Council of War of Flag Officers', 29 Feb., 5 Mar. 1704; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 25-6: Journal of Admiral Leake [hereafter 'Leake's Journal'], 20 Feb., 3 Mar. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 135-8; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 74.

⁸² Their Italian names - Nizza and Villafranca - were then current.

⁸³ PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 121-35: Hedges to Rooke, 14, 24, 28, 29 Mar. 1704, and enclosures, 'Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 14, 24, 28 Mar. 1704, 'Additional Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 29 Mar. 1704; NRO, FH 275, pp. 16-17: Nottingham to Rooke, 29 Feb. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 169-74: 'Att a Council of War of Flag Officers', 12, 18, 25 Apr. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 142-3.

considered this a breach of the *Quadruple Treaty*⁸⁴ and it took all Methuen's personal currency with the King, and guile in arguing that Portugal's security would be best served if French fleet could be destroyed in the Mediterranean, before tempers calmed.⁸⁵ Given the existence of Rooke's secret Instructions, it could have been that he engendered this row to hasten the fleet's departure and to prevent it being locked into plans for descents. Nonetheless, by not informing his fellow Flags of the Additional Instructions, Rooke risked the Council of War frustrating his intentions, which to an extent it did. The final Council before Rooke left Lisbon bound the fleet in the first instance to the relief of Nice and Villefranche but also, on the basis of a proposal submitted by the Almirante de Castille, committed the Admiral to helping the Archduke's cause on the coast near Barcelona.⁸⁶

This pledge was temporarily prioritised during the outward voyage due to the tireless lobbying of Prince George Hesse-Darmstadt, who had taken passage with the Anglo-Dutch fleet as a military adviser to the Archduke. On 10 May, when seven cruisers previously dispatched on a fruitless chase of six French ships that had fallen in with the fleet off Cape Palos returned, a Council of War was held in Altea Bay at which Hesse-Darmstadt successfully argued that an appearance of the fleet before Barcelona would greatly help the Archduke's cause in Spain. Barcelona, and indeed the wider province of Catalonia, had a history of opposition to the Castilian-based Spanish crown, and reports had filtered through that it favoured the Archduke over Philip V. Hesse-Darmstadt - a former Governor of Barcelona in the 1690s - did not therefore wish merely to show the flag and when the current governor, Don Francisco de Velasco, refused to admit Hesse-Darmstadt's secretary, Zingerling, with the summons to surrender, the German Prince proposed a landing of the marine soldiers and two small companies of Spanish deserters aboard the fleet to encourage the inhabitants' defiance of Velasco. Initially, the naval Council rejected his proposal on consideration that there were insufficient officers to command the forces ashore, and also because Rear-Admiral Wishart had recently reported that several French sail had been spotted

⁸⁴ *A Collection of General Treatys*, iii. 359: Article XVII of 'An Alliance Offensive and Defensive', 16 May 1703.

⁸⁵ PRO, SP 89/18, fos. 89-91, 100-11, 122-3, 128-9: John Methuen to Nottingham, 22 Apr., 1, 7, 8 May 1704 [NS]; John Methuen to Hedges, 7, 14 June 1704 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5437, f. 54: John Methuen to Leake, 23 Mar. 1704 [NS]; PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 151-3: Hedges to Rooke, 16 May 1704.

⁸⁶ BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 173-4: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 25 Apr. 1704; T. Lediard, *The Naval History of England* (London, 1735), ii. 783-4 n.i.

apparently heading westwards. However, the following day brought news that Barcelona was on the brink of declaring for the Archduke and that a naval bombardment in addition to a landing would comprise a sufficient display of support to act as a trigger. Pressing his case again in the Council, and with the strategic importance of controlling Barcelona with respect to the neighbouring provinces of Valencia and Aragon highlighted, Hesse-Darmstadt secured agreement to land some 1600 English and Dutch marines along with the companies of Spanish deserters, while several bomb vessel approached the town.⁸⁷

Covered by the *Tiger*, the *Tartar*, the *Newport*, and two Dutch vessels, Hesse-Darmstadt landed with the troops towards the north-east of Barcelona in the late morning of 19 May; meanwhile the bomb vessels took up position. As the landing's objective was merely to precipitate the rebellion, the operational orders restricted the troops from marching beyond a secure line of retreat; therefore, they did not advance much upon Barcelona, despite attracting some 1000 local volunteers. Hesse-Darmstadt nonetheless immediately sent another summons to Velasco, which elicited the same response as before. More alarming however was the news that the town council could not deliver the town and that, on being informed of the smallness of the land force and its finite time ashore, Velasco had moved against the dissent: the revolt against Philip V's rule in Barcelona was stillborn. Hesse-Darmstadt quickly sent word to Rooke for the marines to be embarked the following morning but that, meantime, the bomb vessels should continue to bombard the town. The numerous shells expended in this manner proved a woeful denouement to an operation which had held sufficient promise to distract the fleet from the pursuit of its more pressing orders.⁸⁸

The fleet spent the remainder of May and early June aiming to implement these Instructions with respect to Nice and Villefranche; while Rooke also at this juncture revealed his secret orders for Toulon. Ultimately, neither Savoyard town required relief and the

⁸⁷ H. Kuenzel, *Das Leben und das Briefwechsel des Landgrafen Georg von Hessen-Darmstadt* (London, 1859), no. 42, p. 313: Hesse-Darmstadt to his brother, 7 Apr. 1704 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 175-80: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 10, 18, 19 May 1704; BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 30: 'Leake's Journal', 18-19 May 1704; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vi. 149-51: Hesse-Darmstadt to Rooke, 10, 18 May 1704; Rooke to Hedges, 8 June 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 145-7; Lediard, *The Naval History of England*, ii. 786-7.

⁸⁸ BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 30: 'Leake's Journal', 19-21 May 1704; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vi. 151, 154-5: Rooke to Hedges, 8 June 1704; Hesse-Darmstadt to Rooke, 20 May 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 181-2: 'Att a Councill of War', 20 May 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 147-8; Kuenzel, *Das Leben und der Brieswechsel*, no. 47, p. 320: Hesse-Darmstadt to Galway, 12 June 1704; PRO, ADM 51/4317 Part vii, unpaginated, *Royal Katherine*, 19-21 May 1704; Francis, *The First Peninsula War*, pp. 106-

reluctance of the Duke of Savoy, who was to commit troops overland from Piedmont-Savoy, meant that the Toulon operation seemed unlikely to proceed, thus causing Rooke to focus upon seeking the French fleet that was reportedly operating in the area. London had been aware early in the season of the extensive French naval preparations at Brest and, although it was initially thought that a concentration in the Channel was intended, by the time that Shovell's squadron sailed to cover the port, the Comte de Toulouse had journeyed south to join the Toulon squadron. There had been various reported sightings of French naval vessels since the Anglo-Dutch fleet's entry into the Mediterranean, but, when lying off Îles d'Hyères on 25 May, Rooke received credible information that both French commanders had recently been near the mouth of the Straits.⁸⁹ Sailing westwards, Rooke spotted Toulouse passing Minorca, whereupon he tacked the fleet northward and cleared for battle. A calm prevented the allies reaching the French fleet until it was sufficiently close to Toulon for the egress of reinforcements to worry the Anglo-Dutch Flags and, consequently, the Council decided to put about for Lisbon. Prior to leaving the Mediterranean however, another brief landing on 10 June was undertaken at Alicante where some 400 marines commanded by Lord Nugent temporarily occupied two forts and transported the Governor northwards in an attempt to intimate the Bourbon authorities to adopt a softer policy against dissenting local inhabitants.⁹⁰

Off Lagos on 16 June, the fleet met Shovell's squadron of 22 warships which had followed Toulouse down from Brest to reinforce the Mediterranean fleet. Rooke also then received new Instructions from London which significantly altered the fleet's strategical and tactical priorities. These recognised that the operations on the Italian and French coasts were either no longer required or were not possible and instead directed the fleet to the reduction of Spain as 'the main and principall service'.⁹¹ Accordingly, Rooke was to consult with the Archduke and Lisbon as to what might be done. Capturing Cádiz, supporting Catalonia or

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⁸⁹ BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 183-4: 'Att a Councill of Flag Officers', 25 May 1704; PRO, ADM 51/ 4317 Part vii, unpaginated, *Royal Katherine*, 22 May-16 June 1704; PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 141-2, 146-8, 153-6: Hedges to Rooke, 18 Apr., 2, 9, 30 May 1704; PRO, SP 89/18, fos. 113-14: John Methuen to Nottingham, 12 May 1704; HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vi. 152-3, 155: Rooke to Hedges, 8 June 1704; The examination of several Frenchmen, 25 May 1704.

⁹⁰ HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vi. 152-3: Rooke to Hedges, 8 June 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 185-8: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 28, 29 May 1704; PRO, ADM 51/ 4317 Part vii, unpaginated, *Royal Katherine*, 28 May-16 June 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 148-9.

⁹¹ PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 149: "Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt", 9 May 1704.

any other province inclined to the Archduke, and coastal troop transportation were all recommended. In anticipation of Charles and Pedro formally making their intentions known, the Council of Flags dispatched an escort squadron for Portugal's Brazil *flota* in response to Methuen's warnings about Portuguese anxieties for its safety, and resolved that the remainder of the fleet would take up station in the Straits.⁹² Charles and Pedro, meeting at Santarem, fixed upon Cádiz as the primary target for bombardment and a landing of marines, with Port Mahón, Minorca, the alternative. Rooke's naval Council considered the Cádiz proposal on 17 July and, despite the emphasis in the Instructions to act at the Archduke's behest (an approach which bore the personal approval of Queen Anne)⁹³ they rejected it as unworkable without army co-operation. The Council's decision was not surprising inasmuch as it had at earlier meetings made the provision of some army soldiers a prerequisite for attacks on Cádiz or Barcelona. This did not however account for overlooking the second option, Port Mahón, which Zingerling had strongly advocated at Santarem. It was sidelined by Hesse-Darmstadt's proposal to capture Gibraltar through a bombardment and a marine landing. This action, which had originally been a possibility on the fleet's first passage through the Straits in May, was now resolved upon by the Council of War.⁹⁴

Situated at the north-west foot of a three mile long rocky mountain (the Rock) that forms a peninsula of southern Andalusia, and which is connected to the mainland by a small flat isthmus, Gibraltar had a long history of attention from English seamen and politicians. Of the latter, Cromwell had advocated its capture in the mid-1650s; while its use as a temporary naval base between 1680-2 when Admiral Herbert tired of Tangier, may well have been within recent memory for many of the sailors of 1704 - Rooke and Shovell had certainly served with Herbert during the 1680s. Although one contemporary report compared its harbour facilities favourably with Cádiz, it was Gibraltar's strategic position as guardian of the Straits accessing the Mediterranean which comprised its worth. Certainly, it was this

⁹² PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 147-50: Hedges to Rooke, 9 May 1704 and enclosure, 'Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke Knt', 9 May 1704; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vi. 160-1: John Methuen to Shovell, 22, 23 June 1704 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 189-90: 'Att a Council of War of Flag Officers', 17 June 1704.

⁹³ *The Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne*, ed. B.C. Brown (London, 1968), pp. 143-5: Queen Anne to 'The King of Spain', 16 May, 4 June 1704.

⁹⁴ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vi. 167-8: John Methuen to Rooke, 10 July 1704 [NS], and enclosure, The Almirante to John Methuen, n.d.; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 197-8: 'Att Council of War of Flag Officers', 17, 21, 28 June, 17 July 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 152-153; Francis, *The First Peninsula*

command of the Straits, together with the aim of capturing a bridgehead on the Spanish mainland for the Archduke, which was again the principal attraction for the Anglo-Dutch Flags.⁹⁵

Early morning fog on 20 July caused an inauspicious start to the Gibraltar operation as the *Lenox* collided with the *Prince George*.⁹⁶ By about 11 o'clock however, the weather had sufficiently improved to allow Rooke to signal the fleet's attack disposition. It had previously been agreed that, although the whole fleet would stand into Gibraltar Bay, Rear-Admiral Byng would position a squadron of some twenty Anglo-Dutch vessels much closer in against the town to conduct the bombardment and cover the marines. One account implies that Byng was given this command because of Rooke's pique that the junior Admiral had opposed the operation at the Council, though Byng's subsequent conduct did not betray any lingering resentment.⁹⁷

Dating from 1627, the town's shore defences were not extensive and the 50 small guns along the sea wall had been poorly maintained over the years. Notwithstanding, on the squadron's first approach cannon fire damaged the Flagship's mainmast and, as Byng's operational orders prohibited firing until a summons had been sent to Governor Don Diego de Salinas, he withdrew the squadron out of cannon range. Meanwhile, to the north of the Old Mole, Captain Whitaker of the *Dorsetshire* was directing the landing of around 1800 marines

War, pp. 108-9; G. Hills, *Rock of Contention: A History of Gibraltar* (London, 1974), pp. 167-9.

⁹⁵ BL, Add MSS 10034, fos. 99-100: 'A Letter from the Engineer, Mr Bennet', 6 Dec. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 153-4; T. Venning, *Cromwellian Foreign Policy* (London, 1996), pp. 119-20; Le Fevre, 'Arthur Herbert, Earl of Torrington, 1648-1716', pp. 25-6; BL, Add MSS 28058, f. 31: 'Memorandum Advocating the Occupation by the English of Gibraltar and Havana'; *The Tangier Papers of Samuel Pepys*, ed. E. Chappell (London, 1935), pp. 231-2.

⁹⁶ The ensuing account of the first phase of the operation to capture Gibraltar is based upon the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 10034, fos. 5-6, 91: 'A Short Account of Gibraltar from the time of its being Possessed by the Crown of Great Britain in 1704 to 1745, W. Skinner, Chief Engineer of Great Britain'; 'Journal of the Taking of Gibraltar by the Combined Fleet in 1704, and Defence of the Garrison by the Prince Hess', 21 July-1 Aug. 1704; BL, Egerton 2521, fos. 91-2: Whitaker to 'Sir' [Sir Richard Haddock], 29 July 1704; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 34-5: 'Leake's Journal', 17-26 July 1704; Add MSS 5440, fos. 197-8, 201-2: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 17, 25 July 1704; PRO, ADM 51/4317 Part vii, unpaginated, *Royal Katherine*, 17-25 July 1704; PRO, ADM 51/53 Part i, unpaginated, *Lennox*, 17-25 July 1704; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Jumper to 'Honorable Sir' [the Admiralty], 22 Mar. 1705, and enclosure, 'To His Royall Highness Prince George of Denmark, Lord High Admiral of England &c. The Humble Petition of Sir William Jumper Captain of HMS *Lennox*'; HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vi. 164-5: Rooke to Hedges, 28 July 1704; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 137-46, 189-94, Appendix: '[Some Extracts from the Journal of the Rev. Thomas Pocock]'; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 154-6; *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, p. 19; Hills, *Rock of Contention*, pp. 169-75; J.A.C. Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain* (London, 1974), pp. 89-99; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 423-7.

⁹⁷ *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, p. 137.

and 200 Catalans⁹⁸ under Hesse-Darmstadt near Punta Mala on the isthmus connecting Gibraltar to the mainland. Once the marine grenadiers' fire had frightened off a party of up to 50 Spanish horse, which came down from the town during the landing, Hesse-Darmstadt secured the immediate objective of severing Gibraltar's line of communication by taking post amongst the mills at the foot of the Rock within musket shot of the Puerto de Tierra (the town's landward gate, also known as the Land Port). A summons was then sent to the Governor.

The tensions between Salinas's instinct to hold out and his persuading the City Council to do so despite the dilapidated fortifications and, more importantly, the crucial shortage of manpower (the garrison had only about 60 regulars and 300 raw militia, notwithstanding a previous request for additional troops to the Andalusian Captain-General, the Marquis de Villadarias) probably caused the delay in responding to Hesse-Darmstadt. As a result, before the garrison's statement of loyalty to Philip V reached the Puerto de Tierra, Byng had deftly warped his squadron in overnight so that on 23 July it ranged in-line ahead from the Old Mole at the north of the town to the New Mole in the south. This meant that when Rooke received word of the summons's rejection, Byng was prepared for the Red Flag being raised at the *Royal Katherine's* foretop, to signal the beginning of the bombardment. Until then only a few bombs had been thrown into the town as cover for the squadron and the marines but now, and for nearly six hours, Byng unleashed a bombardment upon the town that, Bishop observed, made the 'Houses shake'.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ Hills, *Rock of Contention*, p. 169-70, n. 26 and Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 90-1 discuss the number and composition of troops landed. As Rooke had no regular troops aboard, it is accepted that the burden of the force landed was (as the Admiral himself noted) around 1800 English and Dutch marine soldiers. However, references by others - and in particular Whitaker - put the number of troops landed at 2000. Hills and Hugill credibly suggest therefore that the additional troops comprised the companies of Spanish deserters originally embarked by Hesse-Darmstadt and some of the local Catalans which joined him at his landing at Barcelona in May.

⁹⁹ *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, p. 20.

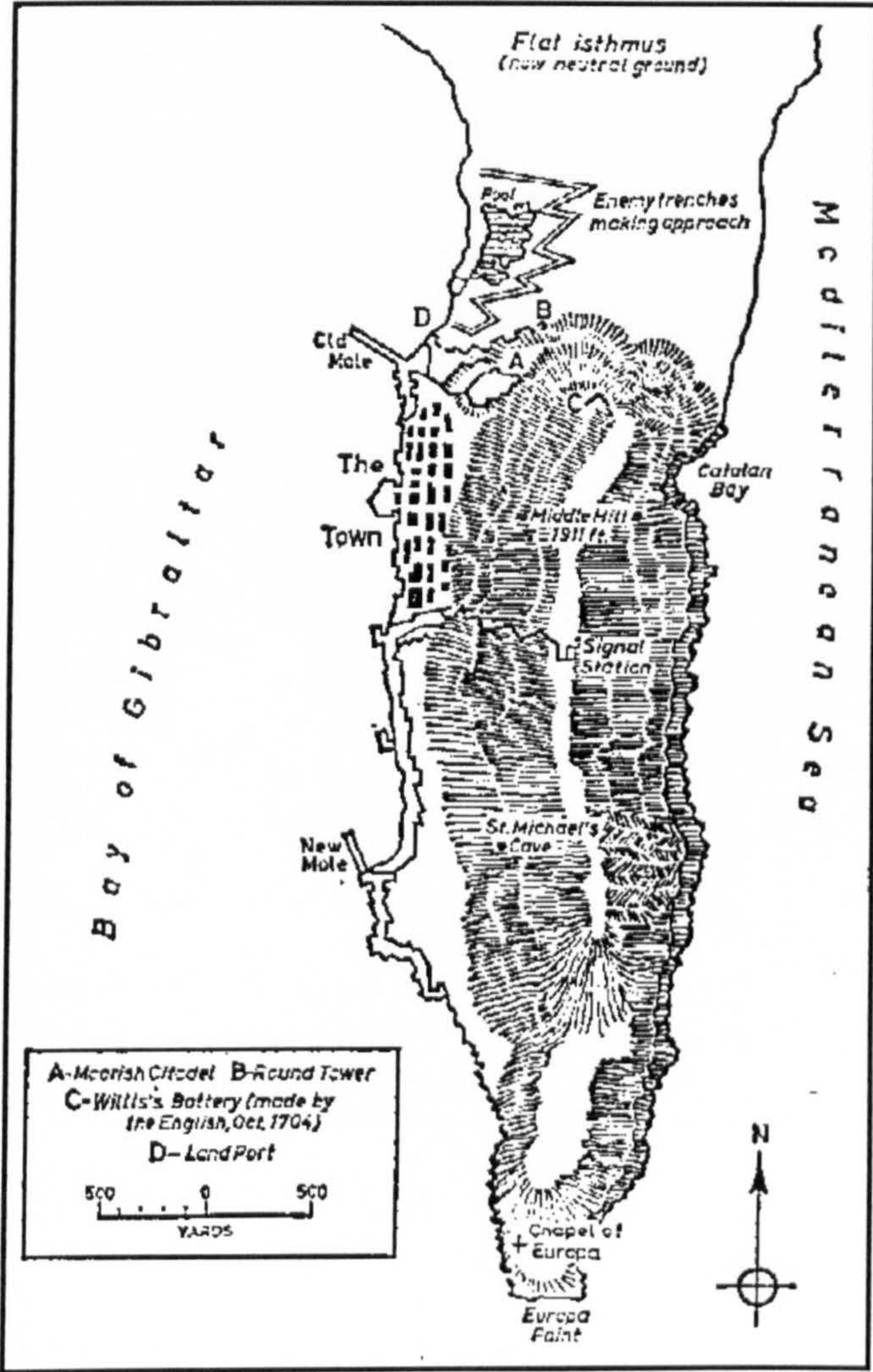


Fig. 14 : The Rock of Gibraltar.

Having led a night raid into the Old Mole to disable a 10-gun French privateer which had been firing into the marines' camp, Captain Whitaker had not brought the *Dorsetshire* into Byng's line and he was thus acting as liaison between Rooke, Byng and the individual ships of the attack squadron. The hot calm weather of 23 July caused the gun smoke to lie particularly heavily in the air, and by mid-morning it was clear that only a temporary cease-fire would allow its dissipation so that the bombardment's progress could be effectively reviewed. Whitaker was carrying this cease-fire order throughout the squadron when, upon reaching the English ships at the southern end of the line, his attention was drawn by Captain Jumper of the *Lennox* to the silence of the New Mole's battery and the Torre del Tuerro

Fort¹⁰⁰, situated just south-east of the Mole. Through the smoke, both Captains perceived that an attack by the ships' boats at this sector might well be unopposed. Whitaker took this suggestion back to Byng who ordered the squadrons' boats to be armed and manned while Whitaker sought Rooke's agreement. This was readily given by the Admiral who released the remaining fleets' boats and appointed Whitaker to command the attack. By the time he returned to the *Lennox*, however, the sailors from about a dozen boats had, with little opposition, already landed and were entering the fort.

It remains unclear why Jumper began the attack without a direct order. Some commentators have suggested that he and Captain Hicks mistook as a signal the warning shot fired by the *Ranelagh* across the path of the women and children who were fleeing back to the town from their shelter in the Europa Point shrine. Another has suggested that Whitaker agreed to Jumper beginning the attack before he returned to Byng and Rooke. There seems no irrefutable evidence for either suggestion, however, and a more accurate picture would probably emphasise a number of factors - the warning cannon shot; poor communication between Jumper and Whitaker; and news passing along the line that the commanding Rear-Admiral wished the attack - as precipitating the action. Whitaker was not however without a crucial leadership role at the New Mole. Either through a seaman's carelessness in carrying a lighted match or as a result of an enemy mine, the powder magazine in the Torre del Tuerto Fort exploded as the sailors took control, killing up to 50 and wounding over 100. The surviving sailors panicked and fled back to the boats. Whitaker, on coming ashore at Rosia Bay, had immediately to rally these men to the task in hand. His swift action sent Captains Aston and Roffy along the sea rampart with some 50 men to take the 8-gun southerly bastion of the town walls; while another detachment of troops was dispatched to secure Europa Point. With operational composure restored, Whitaker and the rest of the sailors followed Aston and Roffy.

As the attackers at the New Mole fastened in upon the town from the south, the fleet recommenced their bombardment against the centre; and meanwhile to the north, the marines

¹⁰⁰ Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 89-90, 93-4 refers to four forts in total near the New Mole: the Nuestra Senora de Europa, (New Mole Fort) and three others, one of which is identified as the Torre del Tuerto. Hugill's description of their exact location is vague and given that the primary sources, and the other secondary histories, identify only one fort behind the New Mole - the Torre del Tuerto - it may be that Hugill conflated some smaller gun redoubts with fortifications. This piece concentrates upon the Torre del Tuerto as the focus of the attack at the New Mole.

had kept up a steady musket fire against the defenders of the Puerto de Tierra. Salinas's instinct to hold out was appearing increasingly misguided as the Anglo-Dutch operational momentum took hold - a trend underscored by Byng leaving his Flagship to join Whitaker at the southern gate on the evening of 23 July. Indeed, the following day, Hesse-Darmstadt and Byng sent in summons from their respective positions and, although Salinas requested time to consult with the City Council, there was little doubt that it would seek a surrender upon terms. Hesse-Darmstadt did however suspect Salinas of one final delaying ruse by sending negotiators without any proposals, but the threat of imposing an unconditional surrender led to the north gate being relinquished as a sign of good faith and the negotiations proceeded apace. The subsequent terms were reasonably generous inasmuch as the garrison, with all their equipage and colours flying, had three days to depart after the Anglo-Dutch entry and, provided an oath was sworn to the Archduke as King, only French subjects would be imprisoned. On 25 July, the march of the marine soldiers into Gibraltar town and the signal ordering the seamen at the New Mole back to their vessels marked the end of the operation.

Two historiographical myths quickly arose about this operation at Gibraltar: that the Rock was captured for Queen Anne and that, at the moment of surrender, Rooke replaced the Austrian Flag with the Union Ensign.¹⁰¹ To these it is possible to add a third: that it was in 1704 that Gibraltar could be considered captured for either the Queen or the Austrian House. Undoubtedly, the Anglo-Dutch land and sea operation gained control of Gibraltar in late July but it is not always recognised that besides a subsequent naval engagement, a combined action sustained between the late autumn of 1704 and the spring of 1705 would be required before the town could be described as captured.

The capability of the French fleet to imitate the allies's action at Gibraltar and regain the town was immediate and real. Toulouse heard of the allies' success while lying off Barcelona with some 50 men-of-war and immediately headed for the Straits. Meanwhile, the allied Flags had decided to remain off Gibraltar until Charles issued further orders, though the Council ruled out further operations upon Spain's coasts due to the lateness of the season and would only support a siege upon Cádiz if the marines at Gibraltar were relieved. A week later, just as the fleet completed watering on the Barbary coast, the *Centurion* with its topgallants fully set and firing warning shots, came in with the news that Toulouse had been

¹⁰¹ Hills, *Rock of Contention*, pp. 475-7, Appendix A: 'Two Myths about the Capture of Gibraltar, 1704'.

spotted off Fuengirola. Despite Hesse-Darmstadt's protests, Rooke immediately embarked about half of the marines from the garrison at Gibraltar and sailed to engage the French.¹⁰²

The only set piece naval battle of the Spanish Succession war took place off Málaga on 13 August.¹⁰³ Mahan and Colomb judged it indecisive and, although neither side dominated after seven hours of fighting, this view does not reflect contemporary or subsequent historical opinion.¹⁰⁴ Toulouse's decision - admittedly pressed upon him by his senior colleagues - to disregard the following morning's opportunity to re-engage from the windward in favour of returning to Toulon, has been interpreted as both a French and an Anglo-Dutch victory. In France, news of the engagement caused *Te Deums* to be sung; while Toulouse's return to Toulon was greeted with bunting and general joy. However, Marlborough's casual note, after some initial doubts, that this public rejoicing did not seem to be quickly followed up in the French news-sheets or pamphlets raised questions about the nature of the purported French victory.¹⁰⁵ It was narrowly based on the belief that the refusal to re-engage from the windward on 14 August was consonant with the epoch's preference for a 'victory of etiquette' over the 'decision of a battle'.¹⁰⁶ Since Toulouse had sufficiently established the French fleet's reputation during the previous day's fight, the appropriate course of action had been to preserve its future capability. Nonetheless, as Admiral Torrington found out after Beachy Head, explanations of the 'fleet-in-being' thesis lack popular appeal - hence the absence of instructive French literature to accompany the people's rejoicing on simply being told that they had won a naval victory. Marlborough's remark could also have indicated French recognition that Toulouse's return to port was a strategic victory for the allies, with such success subsequently underscored by France's abandonment of Grand Fleet actions for the rest of the war. Paradoxically, interpreting Málaga as a

¹⁰² *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 146-9; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 157; HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vi. 172: Rooke to the Lord High Admiral, 27 Aug. 1704.

¹⁰³ Contemporary accounts of the battle can be read in HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vi. 172-3: Rooke to the Lord High Admiral, 27 Aug. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 158-67, 176-81; *Memoirs Relating to the Lord Torrington*, pp. 150-63. Standard secondary accounts include: L.G. Carr-Laughton, 'The Battle of Velez Malaga, 1704', *JRUSI* lxxviii (1923), 367-90; J. Creswell, *British Admirals of the Eighteenth Century: Tactics in Battle* (London, 1972), pp. 50-62; Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650-1830*, pp. 171-2; Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean, 1603-1713*, ii. 530-5.

¹⁰⁴ Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*, p. 211; Colomb, *Naval Warfare*, p. 303.

¹⁰⁵ de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 368; PRO, SP, 87/2, fos. 158-9, 168-9: Marlborough to 'Sir', 26 Sept. 1704 [NS]; Marlborough to Harley, 3 Oct. 1704 [NS]; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 379, p. 372: Marlborough to Godolphin, 15 Sept. 1704.

¹⁰⁶ de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 365.

strategic naval victory for the Alliance highlights the distinctive role of combined operations within war policy because it did not - contrary to the consensus of naval historians¹⁰⁷ - fully secure Gibraltar for the allies. The French marine may have begun to concentrate upon the *guerre de course*, but smaller squadrons could still undertake coastal attacks or assist military forces ashore. It was against this latter possibility that the allies had to defend Gibraltar by mounting an eight month long combined operation.

Since the garrison's surrender in late July, the Andalucian Captain-General, Villadarias, had been preparing to regain Gibraltar by a siege action. His efforts received a timely boost in late September when Pointis's squadron of nineteen men-of-war from Toulon landed supplies and up to 3000 troops on the isthmus, north of Gibraltar. Astutely, the French had taken advantage of the absence of an allied naval presence in the Straits. The fleet had departed for home on 24 August and, although there remained a winter squadron under Vice-Admiral Leake, the majority of its vessels were undergoing necessary repairs at Lisbon. Accordingly, Villadarias moved quickly to reap the full benefit of these circumstances by opening his trenches at the beginning of October and slowly moving his besieging force of between 7000 and 11 000¹⁰⁸ men towards the town's northern walls.

Inside Gibraltar, Hesse-Darmstadt was struggling with a lack of resources and with dissent. Prior to Rooke's departure all the marines had been put back ashore, but along with the Catalan companies and about 60 naval gunners, the garrison only made, according to the Quarter-Master-General, about 2600 men. Its effective disposal moreover was threatened at an early stage by friction between the marine Brigadier, Fox, and the Irish-born Imperial Major-General, Henry Nugent, whom Hesse-Darmstadt appointed Governor. Despite this dispute, which continued until the death of both officers in November, the garrison worked to improve Gibraltar's defences in advance of the desperately needed additional materials arriving from England. The Round Tower, situated north-east of the northern walls, marked the garrison's first line of defence. Guns placed there and at the audaciously constructed Willis's battery further north-east again on the Rock's northern face provided an enfilading fire against an enemy approach in that sector. The area was also partially mined, while gun

¹⁰⁷ Harding, *Seapower and Naval Warfare 1650-1830*, p. 171; Carr-Laughton, 'The Battle of Velez Málaga, 1704', p. 367-8; Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean, 1603-1713*, ii. 535.

¹⁰⁸ There is no agreement amongst the sources on an exact figure, but this probably accurately represents the operational peaks and trough as forces were brought up in stages and were killed, wounded or withdrawn.

emplacements were erected at the Old Mole. Finally, conscious perhaps of their success at the New Mole, the garrison positioned several 32 pounders to contest an attack there.¹⁰⁹ These efforts meant that the Anglo-Dutch position at Gibraltar was not weak. Moreover, in addition to the defences being strategically disposed, the provisions left by Rooke would last until December and, once refitted, Leake's squadron might establish a sea-borne supply line. Hesse-Darmstadt could nonetheless only be aware that if the French established footholds north and south (as the allies had in July) then the town could be reduced with minimal enemy effort through blockade rather than by siege.

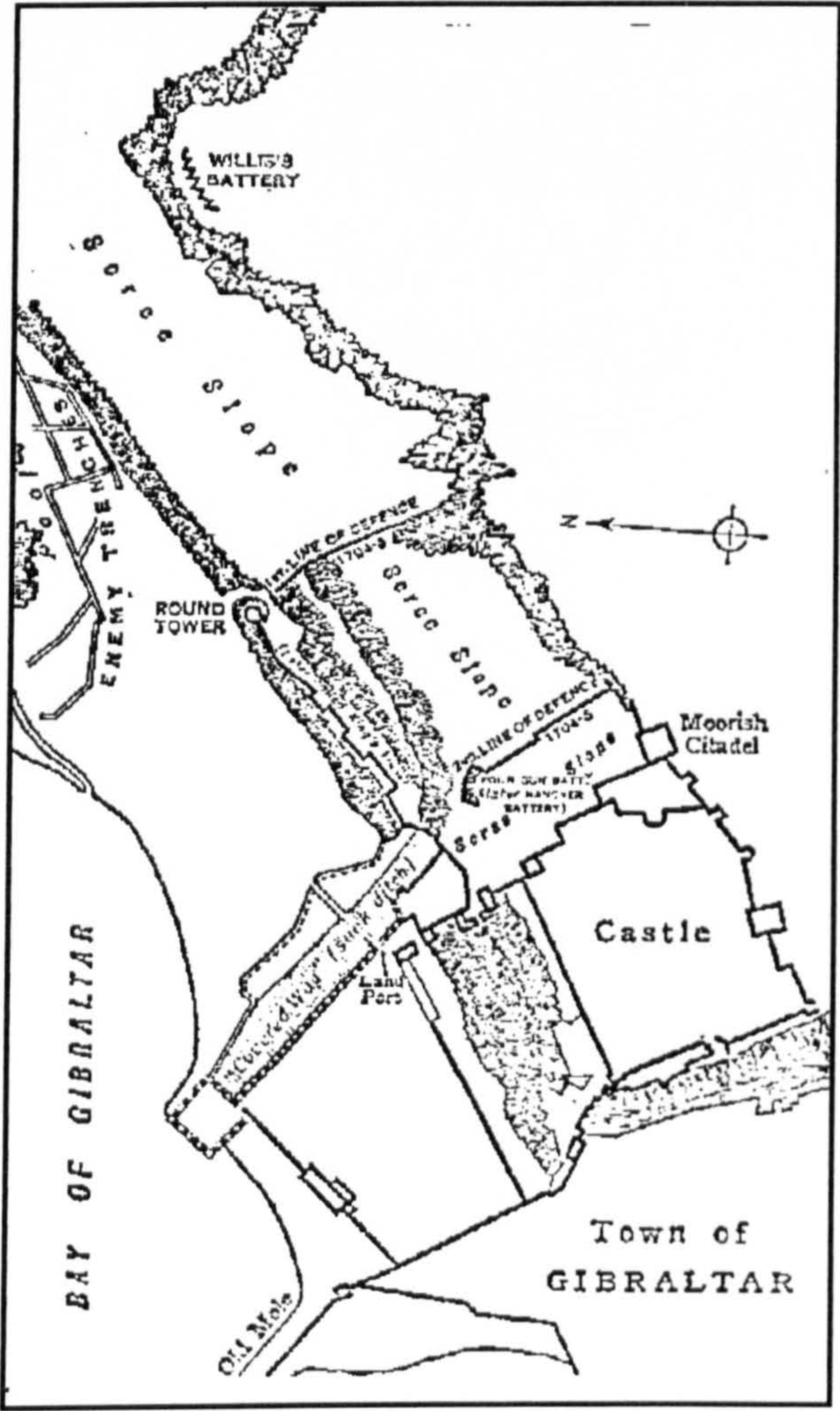


Fig.: 15: The Garrison Defences of the Town of Gibraltar.

After landing reinforcements, however, Pointis decided to put about for Cádiz, thus

¹⁰⁹ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, i. 181-2; Kuenzel, *Das Leben und der Brieswechsel*, no. 3, pp. 465-6; Hesse-Darmstadt to Galway, 21 Sept. 1704 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 10034, fos. 5-6, 99-101: 'A Short Account of Gibraltar', n.d.; 'A Letter from the Engineer Mr Bennet', 6 Dec. 1704.

reducing the immediate threat of a combined French attack on Gibraltar. Still the six frigates left behind served notice of the French capability and Pointis's Cádiz station suggested that the priority might be to strangle Gibraltar's supply route from Lisbon.¹¹⁰ These were the circumstances Leake faced when Hesse-Darmstadt requested relief for the garrison, particularly powder and provisions. The Admiral had first been informed on 19 September that the French were before Gibraltar by his scout, *Tiger*, but it was only when Hesse-Darmstadt and Captain Fotherby corroborated this news that the Council of War convened to address the issue. Its meeting on 1 October considered the squadron too small, and possessing too few supplies, for an immediate departure to Gibraltar. Nonetheless, while awaiting further details on the enemy dispositions in the area, four vessels designed for England as a trade escort were held back and one small rate sped for home to request additional men and materials. Fortunately, Hesse-Darmstadt continued to get news to Leake and on 13 October, this included the important report that Pointis was thought to be lying between the Puntales and Cádiz and, thus, not well placed to trouble Leake's passage to Gibraltar.¹¹¹

Upon receipt of this advice, Leake called another Council of War. Three ships carrying provisions from England had recently arrived at Lisbon, as had a small Dutch squadron of five sail, and Leake recommended a swift departure for Gibraltar. The Council agreed to send a 23-strong Anglo-Dutch squadron, but its departure was to be delayed by five days in the hope that John Methuen would procure the desperately needed powder, which was the only commodity lacking from the six months provisions for Gibraltar now stowed aboard the squadron. Fortunately, 200 barrels duly arrived by 24 October and the squadron was able to depart the following morning, bound on a operation to combine with Gibraltar's military garrison to raise the French siege.¹¹²

Hesse-Darmstadt's belief that Pointis posed little threat at Cádiz proved prescient and the squadron completed an uneventful four day passage to Cape Spartell. In advance of

¹¹⁰ de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 368-9; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 128.

¹¹¹ BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 33, 49-50, 215-16: Fotherby to 'Sir' [Leake], 9 Oct. 1704; Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 24 Oct. 1704 [NS]; 'Att a Councill of Flag Officers', 1 Oct. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5437, fos. 58-60, 75: Leake to the Admiralty, 26 Sept., 2 Oct. 1704; Leake to the Secretary of State to His Majesty the King of Portugal, 1 Oct. 1704; 'Capt. Fotherby's Account of the French Ships and Army before Gibraltar', 8 Oct. 1704.

¹¹² BL, Add MSS 5437, fos. 66-7, 70: Leake to John Methuen, 21, 22 Oct. 1704; Leake to Hesse-Darmstadt, 21 Oct. 1704; Leake to the Admiralty, 24 Oct., 3 Nov. 1704; BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 41: 'Leake's Journal', 24-5 Oct. 1704.

crossing the Straits to enter Gibraltar Bay, Leake sent ahead all the clean frigates to prevent the egress of any enemy vessels; he also - rather unscrupulously - ordered colours be struck to increase the surprise. In the event, neither measure was necessary for, although the *L'Etoile* slipped through the frigate screen, she was captured by the *Swallow* after a short chase, while the rest of the enemy vessels in the bay - including two French warships, a frigate and a fireship - were either burnt or ran aground upon the squadron's appearance on 30 October. The immediate French naval threat had, at least, been combated without much effort, and Leake could land his supplies and some twenty armed sailors unimpeded.¹¹³

The squadron's arrival had the more important consequence of helping the garrison frustrate an imminent three-pronged French attack.¹¹⁴ Towards the end of October, Villadarias's siege guns had breached both the Round Tower and St Paul's bastion, which guarded the Old Mole, and thus preparations had begun for an assault upon these openings. Simultaneously, 3000 men were to be landed at the New Mole, and an attack launched on the town from the heights of the Rock to the east or ideally from within the town, if the Spanish troops managed to descend unnoticed. Tactically, these attacks aimed at spreading the garrison so thinly throughout the town that the entire defence of Gibraltar would implode. However, the destruction of the French vessels in the bay meant that they could not supply cover for the assault on the breaches; instead an allied naval force might now confine Villadarias's force to the trenches. Meanwhile, as the Anglo-Dutch squadron prevented the bay being traversed, the rendezvous of the New Mole assault force at the beaches was simply abandoned. The appearance of Leake's squadron could not however forestall the attack from the east. Colonel Figueroa's force of 500 men had already made their way to the Rock's south-eastern slopes some distance beyond Catalan Bay, where the native goat herd, Simon Susarte, was to guide their ascent. This vanguard expected a detachment of 1500 troops to follow but, having spent the night of 30/31 October in St Michael's Cave, they awoke to find

¹¹³ BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 41: 'Leake's Journal', 29-31 Oct. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5437, f. 69: Leake to John Methuen, 3 Nov. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 199-200; *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, p. 25.

¹¹⁴ The ensuing account of the planning and frustration of the French attack is based upon the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 5437, f. 66: Leake to John Methuen, 3 Nov. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos 57-8: Hesse-Darnstadt to Leake, 12 Nov. 1704 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 41: 'Leake's Journal', 31 Oct. 1704; BL, Add MSS 10034, f. 92: 'Journal of the Taking of Gibraltar', 31 Oct. 1704; *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, pp. 25-6; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 200-2; Hills, *Rock of Contention*, pp. 187-9; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 133-4.

the summit ridge deserted. G. Hills argues that, in the absence of clear evidence, the larger detachment's non-appearance should be understood as Villadarias's final attempt to facilitate the northern sector attack. Probably aware that a self-imposed oath prohibited Colonel Figueroa's force returning until Gibraltar was taken, Villadarias envisaged this vanguard entering the town regardless of their number. Once inside, he hoped that they might cause sufficient distraction to make an assault upon the breaches tenable. Mindful however, that Leake's squadron tipped the balance of force against him to the north, Villadarias retained the 1500 men to ensure a concentration of troops in the attack. His error was the failure to recognise that for Figueroa the 1500 men did not just represent an enhanced capacity; as his troops carried only small arms with three rounds of ammunition each, the reinforcement was essential fire support for the main attack to get inside the walls. In the event, Figueroa's men were simply outnumbered and outgunned by Colonel Borr's 800 strong mixed force of sailors, marines and their grenadiers, which was dispatched on 31 October when the Spaniards were spotted on the ridge. Bishop colourfully described them as 'swarms of bees upon the hill' whose confusion caused them to be easy prey to the garrison, which acted, 'like lions in the valley'.¹¹⁵ An assault on the breaches was now impossible.¹¹⁶ Despite the French reverses, however, the siege was not raised, nor did Pointis return to Toulon. The allies's control of the Rock remained vulnerable and the combined operation had to be maintained.

In the period immediately following the failure of Villadarias's attack, Hesse-Darmstadt did suggest a counter-attack: the garrison would sally forth against the French trenches and a couple of frigates would cannonade the east side of the enemy camp and their battery where it lay open to the sea thus softening it up for an attack by the ships' boats.¹¹⁷ It is a misrepresentation to portray Hesse-Darmstadt as enthusiastically - even recklessly - urging this action.¹¹⁸ The whole project was to be left to Leake's 'very best consideration

¹¹⁵ *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, pp. 25-6.

¹¹⁶ Hills, *Rock of Contention*, p. 189 n. 41, claims that the north front attack did in fact begin. He cites in support BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 57-8: Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 12 Nov. 1704 [NS] and specifically Hesse-Darmstadt's phrase, '...the enemy were attacking us that very night of your entrance in many places at once...' However, this is a misquotation. Hesse-Darmstadt used the imperfect subjunctive tense 'were to attack' rather than the imperfect 'were attacking'. Accordingly, the letter cannot evidence the beginning of an attack in the northern sector; indeed, the sense of the letter is that Leake's arrival prevented all imminent attacks. On this issue, I am grateful to my Chester College colleague, Mr John Doran, for an enlightening discussion upon grammatical form.

¹¹⁷ BL, Add MSS 5440, fos 57-8: Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 12 Nov. 1704 [NS].

¹¹⁸ Hills, *Rock of Contention*, p. 190; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 134.

what may be thought most proper to be executed'¹¹⁹ and, moreover, with respect to the landward sally, Hesse-Darmstadt implied it would be reckless to release the necessary two-thirds of his current garrison force. Leake's naval Council promptly rejected the sea-based elements of the counter-attack as unsafe for the time of the year and Hesse-Darmstadt lodged no official protest.¹²⁰ Perhaps the senior commanders were influenced by the broader operational reason, that large set-piece land-sea attacks against the French positions had to be avoided during the last two months of 1704. The July operation had only gained an insecure, and now besieged, foothold within Gibraltar and its translation into a secure bridgehead required Hesse-Darmstadt and Leake to prioritise its succour; a combined operation based upon attrition was required. Such an operation had not been common in Europe during the last decade, however. Most of the combined military-naval ventures had either been single strike coastal incursions such as the descents of the 1690s or operations to capture territory in which the target had been successfully secured by the initial amphibious action or not at all - Cork (1690) and Brest (1694), for example. Lacking experience and specific Instructions to guide their actions, Hesse-Darmstadt and Leake had to achieve an combined *modus operandi* themselves.

Not surprisingly, their joint action over this two month period was multifaceted, though the fleet undoubtedly bore the heavier burden. The squadron provided a considerable quantity of materials, provisions and ordnance, while seamen worked ashore with their number peaking at a daily contribution of 600 in early November. About half acted as relief guard for the southern posts so that the garrison could set about improving the defences and another half helped with these works. Hesse-Darmstadt did offer the sailors payment for their labour; while Leake carefully husbanded the naval resources by levying fines on non-returned or broken equipment, though many sailors simply side-stepped this penalty by stealing from the garrison's stock. Under the expert guidance of the engineer, Colonel Bennett, the town's defences were vastly improved and, despite Villadarias's bombardment from recently augmented batteries the siege made little headway.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ BL, Add MSS 5440, f. 57: Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 12 Nov. 1704 [NS].

¹²⁰ BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 57-8, 217-18: Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 12 Nov. 1704 [NS]; 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 2 Nov. 1704.

¹²¹ BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 67-8, 71-4, 78-9, 82-3, 217-20, 225-26, 229-32: Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 13, 16, 18, 22, 25 Nov. 1704 [NS]; 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 2, 6, 27 Nov., 14, 16 Dec. 1704; BL, Add MSS 10034, fos. 92-3, 100-1: 'Journal of the Taking of Gibraltar', 1-27 Nov. 1704; 'A Letter from the

Equally, however, the garrison lacked the manpower to use the improved defences for attack, while the increasing sickness daily reduced their number. Upon his return to England, Rooke had raised questions about the garrison's strength as part of a general plea for resources; while Leake believed it to be the most pressing issue from the outset. Crucially, Marlborough - who represented the strategic importance of Gibraltar to the Court - proved an ally and, locally, the army commander in Portugal, Lord Galway, was also impressed by Gibraltar's needs. News of the latter's support was manifest in the promise, conveyed by John Methuen, that Gibraltar would receive a detachment of troops from the reinforcements to arrive at Lisbon, including soldiers from the Irish Establishment.¹²²

The safe transfer of these soldiers from Lisbon opened a fault-line in the relationship between Leake and Hesse-Darmstadt and strained the effectiveness of their combined operation to defend Gibraltar. Since early November, the increasingly poor weather had made it difficult for the Admiral to keep station safely within Gibraltar Bay. Consequently, towards the end of the month, Leake suggested departing for Lisbon with the dual purpose of getting replacement ship parts and of securing the expected troop convoy, either on route or directly from the Tagus. Given that Pointis was known to be in Cádiz and, according to recent intelligence, had been preparing his squadron for departure, the convoy's security seemed a pressing matter to Leake. He even raised the prospect of looking into Cádiz to offer the French Admiral battle. Hesse-Darmstadt had however become frustrated by the squadron's variable motion in the bay, which he believed eased the pressure on the enemy by allowing the naval bombardment and the ships' boats attacks against enemy camps to be inconsistent. Perhaps not surprisingly therefore, he opposed the departure of the squadron, believing that it would leave Gibraltar vulnerable to attack. The commanders' respective positions turned upon different predictions of Pointis's immediate intentions, and both views were based upon narrow service interests. Leake considered that Pointis would engage the troop convoy in a naval action, thereby denying the garrison vital reinforcements; while Hesse-Darmstadt believed that the French Admiral's intention was to combine with Villadarias to mount an attack upon Gibraltar from the landward. Despite there being a

Engineer Mr Bennet', 6 Dec. 1704; *The Life and Adventures of Matthew Bishop*, pp. 27-9.

¹²² BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 36-7, 77: Rooke to Leake, 9 Oct. 1704; John Methuen to Leake, 9 Nov. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5437, fos. 69, 71: Leake to John Methuen, 3, 10 Nov. 1704; *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, i. 526: Marlborough to Hedges, 3 Nov. 1704 [NS]; Kuenzel, *Das Leben und der Brieswechsel*, no.

majority of naval officers at the Council, the garrison officers present - Hesse-Darmstadt, and Colonels Purcell and Borr - secured agreement after a lengthy debate that the squadron would remain in front of Gibraltar - either in the bay upon an easterly wind or, nearby, if out at sea under a westerly.¹²³ Other than the implication that the naval Flags were more willing to compromise, there is no indication why the three soldiers prevailed at this Council. Nonetheless, this wholesale neglect of an important naval concern nearly undermined the combined operation then being sustained to defend Gibraltar. Indeed, it was largely luck that ensured the garrison survived the winter.

Leake had been correct to think that the troop transports would require additional protection against Pointis. The 21-strong convoy left Lisbon on 1 December with just a four-frigate escort and dispersal was the convoy's only defence when it fell in with Pointis's squadron of 22 warships off Cape Spartell on 6 December, having first thought the French were Leake's squadron coming to their aid. The Admiral had had news of their departure a day previously but, despite immediately resolving to sail to their aid without consulting the garrison, the wind proved contrary.¹²⁴ Although, paradoxically, this variable weather enhanced the effectiveness of dispersal as a defensive tactic, the allies were very fortunate that some fifteen transports made it through to Gibraltar, thereby depriving the garrison of some 20 infantry companies and 200 recruits.¹²⁵ The events of the early winter of 1704-5 quickly

6, p. 468: Hoffmann to Hesse-Darmstadt, 11 Nov. 1704 [NS].

¹²³ BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 41-3: 'Leake's Journal', 2-27 Nov. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5437, fos. 72, 79-81, 89-91: Leake to Vanderdussen, 14 Nov. 1704; Leake to Hesse-Darmstadt, 22 Nov. 1704; Hesse-Darmstadt to John Methuen, 26 Nov. 1704; Leake to the Admiralty, 28 Dec. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 80-3 225-6: Hesse-Darmstadt to Leake, 25 Nov. 1704 [NS]; 'Att a Council of War of Flag Officers', 27 Nov. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 214-21.

¹²⁴ BL, Add MSS 5437, fos 82, 89-91: Leake to Hesse-Darmstadt, 5 Dec. 1704; Leake to the Admiralty, 28 Dec. 1704; BL, Add MSS 5440, fos. 227-9: 'Att a Council of War of Flag Officers', 5 Dec. 1704; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 44-5: Leake's Journal', 6-14 Dec. 1704; BL, Add MSS 47972A, pp. 9-11: Journal of Captain Thomas Kempthorne, 26 Nov.- 19 Dec. 1704; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 223-5.

¹²⁵ The exact number of troops and transports actually lost to the French as opposed to simply escaping back to Lisbon is uncertain. Hills, *Rock of Contention*, p. 194 claims that one transport was lost and three captured, thus losing 13 companies of Barrymore's regiment, three companies of Donegal's regiment, six Dutch companies and 200 recruits. Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 136, claims that only one transport was captured by the French with four others returning with Kempthorne's *Roebuck* to Lisbon, though no total of soldiers lost is given. The primary sources do not consistently support either Hills or Hugill. Kuenzel, *Das Leben und der Brieswechsel*, no. 62, p. 532: Hesse-Darmstadt to 'King Charles III', 27 Dec. 1704 [NS], notes the loss of 7 English and 6 Dutch companies, but it makes no reference to Donegal's men or the recruits. BL, Add MSS 5437, fos. 89-91: Leake to the Admiralty 28 Dec. 1704, suggests tentatively that only 400 men were lost. Kempthorne's journal - BL, Add MSS 47972A, pp. 10-11: Journal of Captain Thomas Kempthorne, 28 Nov.- 19 Dec. 1704 - makes no mention of accompanying transports back to Lisbon. The point is that the evidence is only conclusive in the positive sense as to how many transports passed through

underscored the significance of this incident. The 2000 troops which did arrive safely proved essential reinforcements for the garrison as its number continued to fall due to sickness.

Hesse-Darmstadt's problems were not yet over, however. Leake was forced to remove the squadron to Lisbon for refit at the end of December, and the Marshal de Tessé arrived in Spain to succeed the Duke of Berwick with direct orders from Louis XIV to make a personal assessment of the siege's progress. Even before Tessé's arrival at Gibraltar, moreover, Hesse-Darmstadt had to defend the town against another major assault launched by Villadarias, which - probably due to the jealousy and anxiety he felt at the imminent arrival of the French General - proved particularly vigorous.¹²⁶

Bolstered by some 4000 reinforcements brought down by General de Thouy, Villadarias launched a two-pronged assault against the breaches in the Round Tower and the northern curtain wall on 7 February. Initially, the weight of the enemy force enabled them to capture the Tower and penetrate the northerly first line of defence. Quickly negotiating the scree slope, this Franco-Spanish force next took the four-gun battery just 40 yards from the old Moorish citadel, which stood as an outwork to Gibraltar's castle, guarding the north-east edge of the town. Only the sacrificial actions of Captain Fisher, commanding just over a third of a company of Seymour's marines, gained the allies time for reinforcements commanded by Lieutenant-Colonels Rivett and Moncal to come up from the town and along the covered way. Once these deployed, the enemy momentum was halted and, after a bloody combat, reversed. Within the hour, Villadarias's men had been forced back down the scree and out of the Round Tower. It was the Spaniard's last attempt to recapture Gibraltar as Tessé arrived to take command within two days.¹²⁷

The French Marshal was pleasantly surprised at the progress of the siege but, despite bringing with him an additional 3000 troops, he remained sceptical about the potential for its success and believed this could only come about if the siege was consistently supported from the sea. As a result of the representations Tessé made to the French and Spanish Courts, Pointis was positively ordered to Gibraltar, where he arrived on 16 February. Bad weather, however, frustrated the putting of supplies ashore, and also prevented the co-ordinated land

the Straits.

¹²⁶ *Mémoires et Lettres du Maréchal de Tessé* (Paris, 1806), ii. 136-9; G.M. Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne: Ramillies and the Union with Scotland* (London, 1965), ii. 57-8.

¹²⁷ Hills, *Rock of Contention*, pp. 196-7; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 139-41; *Mémoires et Lettres du*

and sea attacks envisaged by Tessé. By the end of February, the worsening weather had largely dispersed the French squadron, leaving only five warships in the bay. Meanwhile, Leake's squadron had returned to Lisbon on 23 December for a much needed refit; but a lack of supplies and the requirement that Leake attend to a variety of outstanding tasks - such as the transport to Gibraltar of some 500 Portuguese soldiers collected at Lagos by Paul Methuen back in November - caused delay. Nonetheless, with the *Garland* left to serve Gibraltar and some frigates continuing to cruise the Straits, the French naval actions were recorded and communication with Hesse-Darmstadt was maintained. Leake was therefore well aware of the pressing need to relieve Gibraltar but, with the sanction of his Council, he determined to wait for the additional supplies expected with Rear-Admiral Dilkes's squadron from Spithead.

Dilkes's arrival at the Tagus shortly thereafter meant that only contrary winds prevented the departure of Leake's squadron prior to 6 March. As before, his intention was to rendezvous at Cape Spartell, and then cross over the Straits to surprise the enemy in Gibraltar Bay. The strong south-westerly that blew on 10 March disrupted this plan, however; but it also forced the five French vessels out of the bay, allowing Leake to spy them as he rode two miles off Cape Caberta. A shot fired at the French from the Europa Point led the Admiral to conclude that the garrison was secure and he immediately gave chase. Within four hours, *L'Arrogant* struck to the *Newcastle*, while the elapse of another four saw *L'Ardent* and *Le Marquis* captured by two Dutch ships and *Le Magnanime* and *La Lys Vaisseau* run ashore. On board *Le Magnanime*, Pointis had been wounded, though not fatally, unlike the French naval challenge at Gibraltar. Tessé was now denied the sea-borne support of his military operations that he had considered a prerequisite for the recapture of Gibraltar, and this circumstance increased his scepticism about pursuing the siege. Louis was also of this opinion, believing that his troops might be more usefully deployed elsewhere on the peninsula. Understandably, given that it would mean conceding the loss of part of his mainland kingdom, Philip V remained to be convinced. This took less than a month as the evidence that allied garrison had an uninterrupted sea-borne supply line and could still, despite the ravages of sickness, mount sallies against the besiegers' positions, was balanced against the pressing allied threat on Spain's Portuguese borders. On 12 April, on Philip's

orders, Tessé raised the siege of Gibraltar.¹²⁸

The lifting of the Franco-Spanish siege in April 1705 meant that Gibraltar could be effectively considered as captured by the allies. There was certainly a qualitative difference in their control of the town from when the marines first took possession on 25 July; and it was not simply that their numbers had been boosted by line infantry. For nine months, the land garrison maintained a constant operational relationship with Sir John Leake's Mediterranean squadron to defend Gibraltar, and more specifically to cause the Franco-Spanish siege to be lifted. Twice - in November 1704 and March 1705 - as the garrison resolutely maintained their presence in the town against the enemy siege, the navy brought in essential reinforcements to help defend against assaults and neutralise the French naval threat. Moreover, in the interval, Leake stationed his squadron within Gibraltar Bay and combined with Hesse-Darmstadt's forces to pressurise Villadarias's siege works: sailors were sent ashore to help the garrison with their defences; bombardments were conducted; feint attacks by ships' boats against the enemy camps facilitated garrison sallies. Clearly, there is considerable evidence to characterise the capture of Gibraltar as the product of a successful combined operation undertaken between the summer and spring of 1704-5.

It might equally be argued however that the action at Gibraltar cannot be conceived as a combined operation in the traditional manner inasmuch as the land force deployed was not precisely an army. Despite the presence of some regular soldiers and the Archduke's military representatives, the force was comprised mainly of the marine soldiers which had been raised for sea service in April 1702. The legislation expressly stated that these men were to serve aboard naval ships and they were ultimately placed under the direction of the Lord High Admiral; certainly, the War Office had no bureaucratic interest in these men. It is nonetheless essential to set the marines' traditional 'army' features against this prevailing Admiralty influence in their administrative and command structures. Specifically, the men were organised into standard infantry regiments (indeed Edward Fox's and George Villiers's marine regiments first raised in 1702 were subsequently translated into the line and continued

¹²⁸ *Mémoires et Lettres du Maréchal de Tessé*. ii. 147-54, 186: Tessé au Prince de Conde, 21 février, 11 avril 1705 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5437, fos. 89-91, 93-4, 100-1, 105-7, 110-13: Leake to the Admiralty, 28 Dec. 1704, 13, 27 Jan., 24 Feb., 3, 31 Mar. 1705; Leake to John Methuen, 4 Feb. 1705; Leake to Clarke, 7 Feb. 1705; Leake to Hesse, 28 Mar. 1705; BL, Add MSS 5440, f. 77: John Methuen to Leake, 9 Nov. 1704.

- albeit under different guises - into today's army)¹²⁹ with two grenadier companies. Perhaps more significantly, (as Gibraltar demonstrated) the marines undertook many traditional soldierly functions, which could allow them to be considered as soldiers rather than sailors which operated ashore. Thus, although this operation was not technically an example of co-operation between the Royal Navy and the English Army, the marines functional ambiguity contributes to the conclusion that there was a sufficiently strong element of co-operation between a military land force and the navy to enable it to be included.

Insofar as this is an appropriate characterisation of a combined operation, it broadens its definition. The operational co-operation was between forces on land and at sea with the exact composition and specific function of these forces less important. With respect to the Grand Strategy, the significance of the combined operation at Gibraltar was two-fold. It was integral to England's strategic penetration of the Mediterranean, which was necessarily being headed up by the Royal Navy; while it was equally important in furthering the military cause of the Archduke on Spanish mainland. This operational pattern which emerged to capture Gibraltar was repeated later in 1705 when the allies attempted to take Barcelona, the principal city of the symbolic and strategic Spanish province of Catalonia.

I.iv: The Capture of Barcelona, and Other Lesser Spanish Coastal Towns, 1705-1706.

Although the popular slogan - 'No Peace Without Spain' - emerged from a Parliamentary address presented to the Queen on 23 December 1707 as part of the Lords's debate on the progress of the war in Spain, it did not invoke a new war strategy.¹³⁰ Rather, it was a public declaration of a policy determined by Portugal's accession to the Grand Alliance and given military expression upon the Archduke's arrival in the region in 1704. From then on, the conquest of Spain had remained high on the Ministry's strategic agenda, either as an end in itself or as part of England's penetration of the Mediterranean. In the latter respect, the capture of substantial coastal ports not only provided footholds in Spain for the Archduke but

¹²⁹ Fox's and Villiers's marine regiments evolved to form part of the current Light Infantry and Queen's Regiments.

¹³⁰ The specific origin of the phrase was the passage in the address: '...That no Peace can be honourable or safe, for Your Majesty and Your Allies if *Spain, The West Indies* or any part of the *Spanish Monarchy*, be suffered to remain under the Power of the House of *Bourbon*...' - *LJ*, xviii. 400. The House of Lords spent much of the first session of the First Parliament of Great Britain considering the state of the war in the

also bases to sustain a permanent naval presence. Even before Gibraltar had been secured, Admiral Mitchell was again sent to negotiate with the Dutch about the creation of a Grand Fleet with troops aboard, which was to depart for the Mediterranean in the coming campaign year. Agreement was reached that the United Provinces would contribute some 20 warships and 2400 troops, while England was to provide as half as much again. The English Parliament showed its commitment to such a venture by voting funds to raise six new regiments for 'sea service'.¹³¹ The specific strategic and tactical intent of this fleet and the land force remained however undefined until the spring of 1705 when discussions began in the Cabinet Council.

Julian Corbett has argued that the Ministry's ambition for this Grand Fleet did not relate to the Spanish mainland but was instead directed towards broadening English influence in the Mediterranean. This would require the fleet to maintain a regional sea command and protect the trade routes, and a contemporary pamphlet emphasised the capture of Minorca to gain use of its superior and strategically sited Port Mahón harbour. On this occasion, however, according to Corbett, Marlborough's advocacy of an attack against the principal southern naval base of Toulon formed the focus of deliberations on possible combined operations for the Grand Fleet.¹³² Corbett's argument implies that both the Ministry and Marlborough, in particular, were indifferent towards the conquest of Spain and that it was not conceived of as part of a wider Mediterranean theatre. At a strategic and political level, however, Marlborough, along with Godolphin, had first given expression to the 'No Peace Without Spain' resolve when they sought to undermine French peace overtures in the late summer of 1705; while previous operational priorities had demonstrated an appreciation of the naval and military logistical advantages that might accrue from captured enemy ports on the Spanish coast or nearby island dependencies.¹³³ More specifically, an attack on Toulon might fulfil the diversionary purpose of a descent as articulated by Littleton's 1690s

Spanish theatre - see *LJ*, xviii. 359, 397-400 and HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. xxix-xxxv.

¹³¹ PRO, ADM 1/4090, fos. 14-15: Hedges to 'H[is] R[oyal] H[ighness, Prince George]', 30 Nov. 1704; PRO, SP 41/3, f. 38: St John to Hedges, 3 Apr. 1705; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 160-1.

¹³² Corbett, *England in the Mediterranean*, ii. 546-8; Anon, *An Inquiry into the Causes of Our Naval Miscarriages* (2nd edn, London, 1707), pp. iii-v.

¹³³ *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill*, nos. 256, 323, 333, pp. 160, 202-3, 208-9; Marlborough to Heinsius, 9 Jan., 5 Sept. 1705 [NS]; Heinsius to Marlborough, 15 août 1705 [NS]; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 489, 493, pp. 473, 478-9; Marlborough to Godolphin, 8 Aug. 1705; Godolphin to Marlborough, 18 Aug. 1705; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 73-4.

pamphlets since it would ease the French military pressure in Spain.¹³⁴ Thus, when the Cabinet Council met to consider three target options in February, the Ministry's ambition and Marlborough's preference for Toulon suggested that both possessed a strategic vision with a broader tactical bottom than characterised by Corbett.

The Admiralty rejected an assault against Toulon on the grounds that it was wholly contingent on easterly winds. The Board also managed to get the second option - Barcelona - overruled on the basis that its defensive fortifications were too strong and that the retribution following the allies' previous landing in May 1704 would have had a demoralising impact upon its inhabitants. This left Cádiz, which was thought to be poorly defended and ready to declare for the Archduke; thus the Admiralty was to prepare a memorandum upon targeting it. Any self-congratulation by the Admiralty on its influence over the objectives of a joint army-navy operation would have been premature, however. A detailed report of the Cabinet Council meeting soon reached the French thereby enabling Philip V to begin defensive preparations at Cádiz. When London learnt of this leak, the Ministry was forced into a rethink.¹³⁵

This process began at the end of March just after the appointment of Charles Mordaunt, 3rd Earl of Peterborough as C.-in-C. of the land forces to be embarked aboard the fleet, which was followed in May by his commission to be joint Admiral with Sir Cloudesley Shovell.¹³⁶ Although Peterborough would still have to work through a Council of War, this dual commission undoubtedly placed him in the senior command position with responsibility for both the naval and army components. His appointment attracted considerable surprise and subsequent critical comment for not only was Peterborough's military experience limited, he possessed an uneven temperament that was thought to be unsuitable for command. Only two years previously he had stepped back from both the Governorship of Jamaica and command of an expeditionary force to the West Indies, when he considered that preparations for the latter were proceeding in a slow and haphazard manner. In March 1705 however, two factors were in Peterborough's favour. Firstly, Marlborough did not veto his appointment

¹³⁴ See Chapter 1, Section III.i, pp. 139, 154, for a discussion of Littleton's pamphlets.

¹³⁵ *Mémoires et Lettres du Maréchal de Tessé*. ii. 169-74: 'Memoire sur les project des ennemis, et relation d'un homme bien informe et bien intentionne que j'entretiens aupres de milord Gallowai', n.d.; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 149-50.

¹³⁶ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 361: Copy of a warrant from the Queen to Charles, E. Peterborough, 31 Mar. 1705.

despite - as he explained to his wife (who reportedly liked and corresponded with Peterborough, albeit infrequently) - not expecting much of the Earl. Secondly, Peterborough's aristocratic lineage and political experience embodied the essential position of rank for working with Archduke's 'Court'.¹³⁷ Indeed, it is surprising, given the subsequent emphasis and form of Peterborough's operational Instructions, that the importance of this latter criteria has been neglected.

Throughout April and early May the Cabinet Council, along with both Peterborough and invariably Shovell, drafted these Instructions. The perfunctory nature of Harley's minutes of these meetings, which recorded the bureaucratic process rather than revealed the discussion, meant that it was not until the Instructions were first issued on 1 May, and then added to on 2 and 4 May, before the debate over objectives was glimpsed. Given that concerns over the increased defences at Cádiz had caused the rethink, it was noteworthy that this port remained a listed target. Along with Barcelona, the Instructions identified Cádiz as a town whose capture was essential for the Archduke's conquest of Spain. However, as to which to assault first, the Cabinet Council's only recommendation was that the in-theatre Council of War leave any attempt on Cádiz until the fleet's return from the Catalan coast.¹³⁸ Undoubtedly, this would have been thought of as prescriptive and certainly the Cabinet Council would not have expected to be ignored, but nonetheless, the measure of strategic command devolved to the Council of War on this occasion was noteworthy. Operational Instructions had been in the past most strictly drafted and, although the Council of War usually possessed immediate tactical control, it was rare for this body to be able to exercise strategic discretion on the initial operational objectives.

Two explanations are possible. Firstly, and the reason which brings the appointment of the aristocratic Peterborough into focus, London recognised that the war in Spain since

¹³⁷ Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 52-3; Francis, *The First Peninsula War*, pp. 174-3; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 156-9; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 79-80, all comment upon Peterborough's character and give explanations for his appointment; as do his principal biographers: W. Stebbing, *Peterborough* (London, 1890), pp. 47-8; F.S. Russell, *The Earl of Peterborough and Monmouth* (London, 1887), i. 166-7; *A Memoir of Charles Mordaunt Earl of Peterborough and Monmouth: With Selections from his Correspondence*, ed. G.D. Warburton (London, 1853), i. 1-4, 130-2; Lord Ribblesdale, 'Lord Peterborough', *FR* xxxviii NS (July-Dec., 1885), 206-7. For details on Peterborough's colonial appointment in 1703, see Chapter 2, Section II.ii, pp. 310-11.

¹³⁸ BL, Add MSS 70335, unf.: Council Minutes, 9, 10, 13, 17, 20, 22, 24, 27, 28 Apr., 1, 6, 8 May 1705; PRO, SP 104/207, pp. 1-14, 18-20: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Right Welbeloved Cousin and Councillor Charles, Earl of Peterborow and Monmouth and Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir Cloudesly Shovell Knt Joint

1703 had been principally one of conquest on behalf of a man whom they had already crowned 'King' and who was now in-theatre with his own 'Court'. Etiquette and military effectiveness combined to direct that the operational Instructions should allow for some of the strategic and tactical detail of the whole war effort in Spain to be generated by the Archduke; or, at least, provide for the Council of War's operational decisions to be moulded by the in-theatre circumstances of the war. It was of course customary for Councils to take account of such immediate theatre conditions when deliberating upon courses of action but, on this occasion, there did seem to be a qualitative difference in the Council's discretion over individual targets. The second, and probably more compelling explanation, was that the Ministry kept the Instructions regarding the operation against Spain vague because a combined action against Toulon, previously advocated by Marlborough, was in fact to be secretly vouchsafed to both Peterborough and Shovell as the principal objective. These secret Instructions, issued on 7 May, explained the recent assurance by the Comte de Briançon (chief minister of the Duke of Savoy, Victor Amadeus II, who had in the autumn of 1703 broken with Louis to join the Grand Alliance)¹³⁹ that the Duke now yielded to the pressure to co-operate in an attack against Toulon, and that the start of the combined action awaited only confirmation from the English Envoy at Turin, Richard Hill. The previously issued open Instructions had only recommended succouring the Savoyard Duke if opportunity arose and this loose prescription, along with, more particularly, those for the operations against Spain, were to provide cover for the Toulon operation.¹⁴⁰

Unlike the preparations for the projected Anglo-Dutch expedition to the Caribbean in 1703, Peterborough was not really vexed by delay or a lack of momentum - though this did not prevent his occasional complaint. While drafting the Instructions, the Cabinet Council had kept a close oversight on those authorities responsible for bringing both the land and sea elements of Peterborough's force together.¹⁴¹ The Admiralty and the Secretary of State's correspondence certainly demonstrated an urgency to get the warships and auxiliary vessels

Admiralls of Our Fleet', 1, 2, 4 May 1705.

¹³⁹ G. Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II: Absolutism in the Savoyard State 1675-1730* (London, 1983), pp. 138-43.

¹⁴⁰ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 363-4: Copy of instructions to Charles, E. Peterborough and Sir Cloudesley Shovell, 7 May 1705; PRO, SP 104/207, pp. 1-14, 18-20: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Right Welbeloved Cousin and Councillor Charles, Earl of Peterborow and Monmouth and Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir Cloudesly Shovell Knt Joint Admiralls of Our Fleet', 1, 2, 4 May 1705.

¹⁴¹ PRO, ADM 1/4090, fos. 183-4: Hedges to the Admiralty, 16 May 1705; BL, Add MSS 70335, unf.: Council Minutes, 2 Feb. 9, 10, 13, 17, 20, 22, 24, 27, 28 Apr., 1, 6, 8 May 1705.

fitted out and present at the two troop embarkation ports - Portsmouth and Plymouth. Notably though, attention to detail was not sacrificed. In the light of the previous year's experience, when several ships ran out of ordnance supplies at the battle of Málaga supposedly as a consequence of their prior bombardment of Gibraltar, the Admiralty was particularly attentive to its negotiations with the Ordnance Office over all aspects of gunning the fleet, including in particular the bomb vessels. Meanwhile, Secretary Hedges contributed to the punctilious tone by prompting a transfer to the fleet for one Hepburn, a naval chaplain who reputedly possessed a solid knowledge of fortification engineering.¹⁴²

There was from the outset however one aspect of the preparations which, if handled badly, threatened to undermine any prospect of the fleet's departure in good time. None of the six newly raised regiments for 'sea service' were scheduled to be embarked aboard the fleet. Instead three of these regiments (Luke Lillingston's, Owen Wynne's, and Nicholas Leppell's) were to replace an equivalent number coming from the Irish Establishment, with the other 2500 men of the projected 5000 strong expeditionary force to be provided by three previously raised regiments on the English Establishment.¹⁴³ As the Irish regiments were currently billeted in the south of Ireland, the decision whether their arrival from Cork should be awaited or whether a separate convoy to Lisbon should be organised obviously bore upon the sailing of the main fleet. Moreover, the potential for delay resulting from bureaucratic muddle was raised by the particular arrangements for the transport of these Irish regiments. Whereas responsibility for ensuring that three English regiments reached the appropriate embarkation port lay wholly with the War Office and its marching orders, the transport of the Irish regiments required Secretary-at-War St John to liaise with both the Admiralty and its Transport Board. Merchant vessels had to be hired as auxiliaries and complex 'Charter Party' negotiations threatened. In the event, the reasonably smooth preparations for the main fleet continued for the transport of the Irish Regiments.¹⁴⁴ At the end of April, Captain William

¹⁴² PRO, ADM 1/4090, fos. 181-2: Hedges to the Admiralty, 28 Apr. 1705.

¹⁴³ PRO, WO 4/3, pp. 207-8, 220: St John to Hedges, 10 Apr. 1705; St John to Southwell, 17 Apr. 1705. The three English Establishment regiments were Hans Hamilton's, James Rivers's, and Richard Elliot's; while the three regiments from the Irish Establishment were John Caulfield's, Lord Charlemont's, and Richard Gorges's.

¹⁴⁴ SP 41/3, fos. 38, 40, 43, 53: St John to Hedges, 3, 10, 20, 30 Apr. 1705; 'Extract of Orders Issued about the Three Regiments that go to Sea', 20 Apr. 1705; PRO, WO 5/13, fos. 109, 114, 121 123-5, 127: Orders to Colonel Hans Hamilton, 6, 9, 19, 20 Apr. 1705; Orders to Colonel Roger Elliot, 19, 20 Apr.; 'Dispositions of the Three Regiments that are to go onboard the Fleet in England under the Command of the Rt. Hon. the Earl

Jumper of the *Lennox*, accompanied by the *Grafton* and the *Burford*, was appointed to convoy thirteen auxiliary vessels to Cork, which was reached on 18 May. Although it was only five days later that the main fleet began making its way down the Channel from Portsmouth to collect more troops at Plymouth before, on 30 May, sailing out into the Western Approaches, an early decision had in fact been taken that the Irish troops would travel separately to Lisbon under Jumper's convoy, thus eliminating any impact upon the main fleet's timetable. This was fortuitous inasmuch as, although the regiments were largely ready for Jumper to embark on his arrival at Cork, he found them considerably understrength and he had to await the enforcement of Lord Lieutenant Ormonde's augmentation order. Hence, despite receiving instructions from the Joint Admirals to proceed on 31 May, Jumper was unable to leave Cork for another week and only did so with some 200 soldiers short of full compliment.¹⁴⁵

The Grand Fleet arrived at Lisbon in separate groups. The Dutch Admiral Allemonde came up the Tagus first on 3 June with the Dutch warships and a majority of the auxiliary vessels, to be followed within the week by Peterborough and then Shovell and Fairborne. Once the Irish convoy joined them in late June, the fleet left Lisbon to cruise between Cape Spartell and the mouths of the Straits to prevent the junction of the French Brest and Toulon fleets - an event which had been feared since the departure from England, despite Vice-Admiral Sir George Byng's Channel Squadron keeping watch over Brest. There was however little reason to worry for the French had no intention of combining a Grand Fleet in 1705. On the Anglo-Dutch fleet's departure, Peterborough remained behind to design with the Archduke and the Portuguese Court the forthcoming operations, and their discussions were joined on 3 July by the talismanic commander at Gibraltar, Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt. A decision on a specific target proved elusive, however and, although Portuguese vacillation came in for much criticism - particularly from Peterborough - the bigger problem was the varied agendas of the participants.¹⁴⁶ Bound by his secret Instructions of 7 May,

of Peterborough', 23 Apr. 1705; Orders to Colonel James Rivers, 24 Apr. 1705; PRO, ADM 1/3729, unf.: Atkinson and Colby to the Admiralty, 27 Feb., 15, 27 Mar., 20 Apr., 8, 10 May 1705; Atkinson, Roope, and Colby to the Admiralty, 1, 6, Mar., 5, 14 Apr. 1705; Atkinson and Roope to the Admiralty, 10 Apr. 1705.

¹⁴⁵ PRO, ADM 1/3729, unf.: Atkinson and Colby to the Admiralty, 27 Feb. 1705; PRO, ADM 1/1980, unf.: Jumper to 'Honoured Sir' [Burchett], 27 Apr., 5, 8, 18, 22, 31 May, 2, 5, 7 June 1705.

¹⁴⁶ PRO, SP 42/67, f. 61: Copy of a letter of Sir George Byng, 24 June 1705; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 277-9; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, pp. 1-3: 'Journal Kept by Arnet Furly for the Earl of Peterborough Proceeding in his Expedition to Spain 1705' [hereafter 'Furly's Journal'], 10-28 June 1705 ;

Peterborough could not contribute frankly to the consultations; while his contributions only became more complex throughout July when it became increasingly clear both to himself and to London that the operation against Toulon was not going to proceed. Far from confirming Victor Amadeus's readiness, the English Envoy, Richard Hill, wrote home that Briançon had acted without the Duke's authority, and that the Savoyards could not currently contribute to such an scheme. Hill suspected that Briançon's assurances about the attack on Toulon might have been a ruse to get the fleet to relieve the westerly Savoyard towns of Nice and Villefranche, which the Duc de la Feuillade's army had occupied in April. But, in any event, the Envoy maintained his previous candid advice that the expeditionary force should concentrate first on any important operations it had planned for the Spanish coast. In this respect, Hesse-Darmstadt's contribution proved equally problematic for he did not, as expected, latch on to the suggestion in the original public Instructions of 1 May to attack Barcelona but had instead, before coming from Gibraltar, sent the Archduke a proposal for landing the troops in Valencia province whence they might march directly to Madrid. This left Cádiz from the Instructions's original suggestions and, apart from the Dutch envoy Schonenberg, it attracted little support.¹⁴⁷ It became apparent however that Hesse-Darmstadt's reluctance to attack Barcelona was indexed to evidence of the inhabitants' enthusiasm. As previously remarked the Catalans were traditionally ill-disposed to the centrism of the Castilian-based Spanish throne, which they now associated with the Bourbon, Philip V; there were nonetheless fears that their rebellious ardour might have been quelled following the allies' aborted landing in 1704. The activities of the English agent in Genoa, Mitford Crowe, proved essential in challenging such perceptions. On his own suggestion, Crowe - who had excellent contacts among the Catalans and who knew Hesse-Darmstadt from the Prince's time as Governor of Barcelona - had been sent by the Court under the cover of a trade mission to Genoa to engage the Catalans about declaring for the Archduke. Manipulating his network of associates in the region he was able, despite encountering some

PRO, SP 104/207, pp. 34-5: Hedges to the Joint Admirals, 12 June 1705; *The Byng Papers*, ed. B. Tunstall (London, 1930), i. 61-3, 66, 74-8, 80-2, 85: From Prince George of Denmark, 14 Feb., 6, 11 June, 21 July 1705; From Josiah Burchett, 19 June 1705; From George Clarke, 19 June 1705; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 500-6: Peterborough to Godolphin, [? July 1705].

¹⁴⁷ PRO, SP 92/27 Part i, fos. 60-3, 83-8, 93-4: Hill to 'Sir' [Hedges], 8, 28 Apr., 13 May 1705 [NS]; PRO, SP 94/73, unf.: Peterborough to Hedges, 12, 28 July 1705; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 500-6: Peterborough to Godolphin, [? July 1705]; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 176, 178; A. Parnell, *The War of the Succession in Spain* (London, 1888), p. 111 n.1.

initial reluctance, to send home encouraging reports about the regional support for the Archduke and the likelihood of a rebellion against the Bourbon control in the event of an allied landing; moreover, he could point to areas such as Vich, Urgell, Manlleu and Cardona, where the local peasantry's armed bands - the *Miqueletes* - had already been active in encouraging opposition to Philip. By mid-June, Crowe had concluded a pact with the representatives of the Catalan rebels which, in the short term, afforded them arms, ammunition and money in return for supporting the Archduke and raising some 6000 men to aid an allied landing; while they also gained the longer term commitment that their traditional constitutional and cultural privileges would be upheld if Charles captured the Spanish throne. Although the details of this pact did not reach the expeditionary force until it was anchored off Altea in late July, Crowe had sent positive reports through to Lisbon as the discussions were being held and a consensus - albeit weak, given that Peterborough still retained some expectation for the Toulon project - evolved around operations in Catalonia.¹⁴⁸

In mid-July the participants to these talks were back on board the fleet and later that month, a Council of Flags confirmed that a descent would be made on the Catalan coast. Measures were then taken to augment the expeditionary land force. Two Dragoon regiments - Cunningham's and the Royal Regiment - had already been embarked from Portugal; while when anchored off Gibraltar between 20-24 July, Elliot's and Caufield's regiments were exchanged with a Guards battalion, Barrymore's, Mountjoy's and Donegal's regiments, and a detachment of marines - all from the Rock's garrison. It was while off Gibraltar that the Archduke landed on the Spanish mainland to be received for the first time as 'King of Spain'.¹⁴⁹

As the fleet made its way around the Spanish coast, it halted next at Altea to water, where there proved to be considerable local support for the Archduke, with many inhabitants coming directly to the coastline to offer their services. Appropriately, Charles capitalised on this by settling a governor ashore and by drafting a manifesto for widespread distribution. He

¹⁴⁸ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 378: Instructions to Mitford Crowe; PRO, SP 79/3 Part iii fos. 500-1, 510, 513, 520-1, 539, 541, 545, 552, 571: Crowe to Hedges, 2, 13, 30 May, 7, 10, 12, 17 June, 8 July, 5 July [NS] 1705; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 161-3; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 175-8.

¹⁴⁹ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 409-10: Peterborough and Shovell to the Admiralty, 3 Aug. 1705; At a Council of War of English and Dutch Flag Officers, 21 July 1705; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, pp. 3-6: 'Furly's Journal', 28 June-30 July 1705; NMM, SOU/7, f. 169: 'Mr Holland's Journal of the Campaign in the Mediterranean' [hereafter 'Holland's Journal']; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 279; Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, pp. 136, n. *; Parnell, *The War of the Succession in Spain*, p. 111.

also made clear his preference at the Council of War, which convened on 2 August, for a landing at Barcelona. With details of Crowe's pact with the Catalan rebels also now arriving, along with more assurances of support for the Archduke in Barcelona's environs, there seemed a real prospect - albeit paradoxical - that Charles might make the principal city of the fiercely independent anti-Castilian province of Catalonia his power base for the capture of the Castilian-dominated Spanish crown. With further correspondence from Hill and Hedges dashing Peterborough's hopes for the secret Instructions, Barcelona was now the only realistic target.¹⁵⁰

The Council on 2 August certainly thought so. It resolved to press forward to Barcelona, and the fleet entered the town's bay on 11 August. On board the *Britannia*, a Council of General Officers met, though, given that any operational item on their agenda - troop landings, for example - would necessarily involve the navy, it remains unclear why this meeting did not take the form of a combined land and sea Council. Perhaps it was assumed that as joint Admiral, Peterborough could act as the naval representative at meetings of the General Officers. On this occasion the participants were only required to listen to a 'handsome speech'¹⁵¹ from the Archduke regarding the necessity of landing the troops immediately. To this proposal, all present unanimously agreed. A prevailing easterly causing a heavy swell held up the landing on the day of arrival and the sea had improved little the following morning as the soldiers began to come ashore when, on exiting the boats, many had to wade through water at chest height. Despite some desultory shore fire upon the transports first coming to anchor, the landing at Badalona, three-quarters of a league east of Barcelona near the rivers Basoz and Secchia, was unopposed. Moreover, its disciplined execution caused some fifteen English and Dutch infantry regiments to be landed within five hours; the dragoons and horse followed the next morning.¹⁵²

On 17 August, the Archduke went ashore to the camp which had been established at St Martin. Both during his progress there and inside the camp he received a warm reception.

¹⁵⁰ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 279-80; HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vii. 410: At a Council of War of English and Dutch Flag Officers, 2 Aug. 1705; Shovell to the Admiralty, 10 Sept. 1705; PRO, SP 94/73, unf.: Peterborough to Hedges, 28 July 1705; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 169-70.

¹⁵¹ CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 5: 'Furly's Journal', 11 Aug. 1705.

¹⁵² HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vii. 410: At a Council of War of English and Dutch Flag Officers, 2 Aug. 1705; NMM, SOU/7, fos. 169-70: 'Holland's Journal'; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 5: 'Furly's Journal', 30 July-11 Aug. 1705; PRO, SP 94/73, unf.: 'At a Council of War consisting of General Officers', 11 Aug. 1705; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 280-1.

This however belied a major dispute which had arisen between Charles and his senior generals for on the previous day a Council of land officers had rejected his proposal to begin a siege against Barcelona. On the grounds of the garrison's reputed strength - as much as 7000 men - which was expected to be enhanced by Madrid, and the engineers' assessment that the current allied position fronted by marshland was disadvantageous for the construction of siege works, the generals concluded that a siege would have no hope of success. They were also of the view that an army five times the size of the one encamped at St Martin would struggle to capture Barcelona and these troops could be more productively employed in helping the Duke of Savoy, who was hard pressed in the Italian theatre, or, as proposed by Peterborough, in campaigning through Catalonia and the nearby provinces to secure their allegiance.¹⁵³ It was thought that a successful prosecution of the latter option might allow the Archduke to begin a march on Madrid in the spring. Although in the interval a Council of senior naval officers expressed their wish to attempt Barcelona on the basis that this action was the clear intent of the Instructions, the General Officers' opposition to a siege remained firm for a further two meetings of their Council (22 and 25 August).¹⁵⁴

It is noteworthy that combined Councils were still not being called, and since Peterborough was both C.-in-C. and joint Admiral, this placed a premium on his views - a circumstances which was to have a significant bearing on the immediate direction of the combined operation. Until the Council of 22 August, the Earl had agreed with the other generals that a siege was not practicable but, on this occasion, he switched his opinion to support the Archduke's position as set out in two letters that the Council was then considering. In particular, Peterborough argued that Charles's point that Barcelona would probably surrender upon a breach being opened was valid; and, further, that the Queen's regard for the Archduke should afford his views greater deference, especially about an action where there was some hope of success. Peterborough's multiple roles - land commander, Admiral, and the force's liaison with the Archduke's 'Court' - combined with his naturally

¹⁵³ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 282 claims that the land officers favoured succouring the Duke of Savoy, but this is not evident from the Council's minute - PRO, SP 94/73, unf.: 'At a Council of War consisting of General Officers', 16 Aug. 1705.

¹⁵⁴ PRO, SP 94/73, unf.: 'At a Council of War consisting of General Officers', 16, 22 Aug. 1705; J. Freind, *An Account of the Earl of Peterborough's Conduct in Spain, Chiefly Since the Raising of the Siege of Barcelona, 1706* (London, 1707), pp. 5-6: At a Council of War, 25 Aug. 1705; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 282.

mercurial nature meant that there could not be any certainty that this was his settled opinion about the operation. To underline the point, his presentation to the naval Council on 24 August as to whether the fleet might succour an army campaign ashore after the eighteen days of siege requested by the Archduke or whether help could be given to the Duke of Savoy if the troops were embarked within seven days, has been described as prejudiced against the siege and thus marking a return to his earlier position. Moreover, when the Generals softened their opposition sufficiently at a Council on 26 August to begin contemplating a siege, and accordingly asked the fleet to provide daily some 1500 seamen ashore, Peterborough advised the Flags to reject the request and recommended instead proceeding immediately to Italy. According to Leake's biographer, the Flags refused Peterborough's advice and agreed to provide 2500 armed men ashore, though this number included those 1100 marines already at the St Martin camp. The minute of the subsequent General Officer's Council however stated that the fleet had agreed to release only 900 men of which just 300 could work everyday, which the soldiers considered insufficient. Whatever the exact number of men offered by the navy, the important point was that the General Officers returned to a position of implacable opposition to a siege. The conflicting views of the soldiers and the sailors, together with Peterborough's varying opinions, led in late August to a loss of all coherence and momentum in the operation.¹⁵⁵

The deadlock was broken, probably unintentionally, by a letter from the Archduke, who wrote to Peterborough to affirm once again his resolution to make at least one attempt on Barcelona. He also indicated that he had favourably considered the proposal - first aired at the General Officers' Council of 16 August - to mount a campaign through the nearby provinces. Peterborough seized on this apparent concession and suggested that, while he could not contravene his orders from the Queen, if the Archduke promoted Hesse-Darmstadt Vicar and Captain-General then a Council might be convened under the Prince's chairmanship. It could thus legitimately set aside his and the land officers' settled disposition to go to Italy, in favour of a campaign in the provinces. Peterborough was of course being disingenuous, for his orders to link up with the Duke of Savoy in Italy were contingent upon the Toulon operation, which was clearly not going ahead. His Instructions required that he

¹⁵⁵ PRO, SP 94/73, unf.: 'At a Council of War consisting of General Officers', 22, 26, 28 Aug. 1705; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 283-6.

work through a Council of War, but as noted previously, the Ministry's latitudinarian design of the Instructions on this occasion had afforded the Archduke and the in-theatre Council of War greater discretion over both strategic and tactical targeting. Hence Peterborough might easily at the Archduke's behest have manoeuvred a Council to alter the operation's objective to Catalan countryside. In this respect it is noteworthy as Francis points out that, despite references to Peterborough seeking a letter of indemnity, there remains no record that Hesse-Darmstadt ever convened a Council. Thus, although Charles did appeal separately to Shovell to prevent the abandonment of the Barcelona operation, it would simply seem that at the end of August he and Peterborough agreed to march the troops first to Tarragona and then onwards to Tortosa. As these were two small Catalan towns, the decision was far short of a campaign through Valencia and Aragon as first envisaged; but it did nonetheless represent action.¹⁵⁶

The roles of Peterborough and Hesse-Darmstadt over the three days following this decision to march forwards to Tarragona has been subject to an intense historical debate. It might seem tempting to heed Professor Childs's previous warning against concentrating upon an already over-written historiographical dispute.¹⁵⁷ On this occasion however, the debate embodies the actual course of events and not simply the *ex post facto* rationalisation of operational failure (as with, for example, the descent on Brest), and thus it merits greater attention.

The origins of the historical controversy lie in the departure on 2 September of a thousand-strong detachment of allied troops in the direction of Tarragona but with the secret intention instead of swinging round in an arc to attack the Montjuich fortress, which commanded Barcelona from the south-westerly heights overlooking the town. There was however no consensus amongst the sources as to whether Peterborough or Hesse-Darmstadt was responsible for the clandestine plan and, as will be seen, the subsequent success in capturing Barcelona gave this debate an added edge. In the early 1930s, G.M. Trevelyan seemed to resolve the question in the Earl's favour by drawing fully upon the journal of the

¹⁵⁶ CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 9: 'Furly's Journal', 30-1 Aug. 1705; HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vii. 425: Hesse-Darmstadt to Shovell, 12, 13 September 1705 (N.S.); Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 286-7; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 183-5

¹⁵⁷ Chapter 1, Section III.iii, p. 164.

senior allied artillery officer present, Colonel John Richards.¹⁵⁸ Hitherto, the value and credibility of other contemporary accounts - such as those by Captain George Carleton, Peterborough's secretary Arent Furly, and his physician Dr John Freind¹⁵⁹ - which believed Peterborough to be wholly responsible for the attack had been successfully undermined as hagiography.¹⁶⁰ This in turn gave rise to histories about the Spanish Succession War like Colonel Parnell's, which was immoderate in its criticism of Peterborough and considered Hesse-Darmstadt to be the sole architect of the Montjuich attack.¹⁶¹

Trevelyan argued, however, that Colonel Richards's testimony was of greater weight due to his reliable reputation - illustrated by his extant letters and chronicles covering his five year involvement on the Peninsula - and also by his presence at Peterborough's side during the relevant period of time. His eyewitness account is that intelligence received on 2 September indicated that Montjuich was poorly defended, and that this prompted Peterborough to propose a meeting with Hess-Darmstadt at which it was resolved to attack the fortress. This seemed to confirm the opinion of Carleton and others that the attack was Peterborough's idea.¹⁶² Historical instinct might agree, but Trevelyan's argument ultimately rested on implication: Peterborough was in receipt of the intelligence and arranged the meeting therefore he must have put the proposal. In his journal, Richards did not explicitly record that the Earl sought the meeting to propose the attack and also that, despite being present, he did not record what was said at the conference. Thus the conclusion that the Prince suggested the attack during the course of their discussion could be equally valid. A.D. Francis draws upon the work of the contemporary Spanish historians, N. Feliu de la Pena and Franciso de Castellví,¹⁶³ to show that it was plausible that the deserters with the intelligence

¹⁵⁸ G.M. Trevelyan, 'Peterborough and Barcelona, 1705', *CHJ* iii (1931), 253-9. On p. 254, Trevelyan noted that Professor John Knox Laughton's entry on Peterborough in the *DNB*, xiii (London, 1909), 843, foreshadowed - albeit briefly - much of the argument in his article. Two copies of Richards's journal - 'A Memorial of the Expedition to Barcelona anno 1705' [hereafter 'Barcelona Memorial, 1705'] - can be found in BL, Stowe 471, pp. 1-10 & 11-19 but the first copy seems incomplete and thus I have used the second longer copy at pp. 11-19. For biographical information on John Richards see Chapter 1, Section II.vi, p. 126 n. 194.

¹⁵⁹ *Memoirs of Captain Carleton*, ed. C.H. Hartmann (London, 1929); CFKS, U1590 0135/11, pp. 1-59: 'Furly's Journal'; Freind, *An Account of the Earl of Peterborough's Conduct in Spain*.

¹⁶⁰ Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 159-60; Trevelyan, 'Peterborough and Barcelona, 1705', pp. 252-3.

¹⁶¹ Parnell, *The War of the Succession in Spain*, pp. 126-7.

¹⁶² Trevelyan, 'Peterborough and Barcelona, 1705', p. 254; BL, Stowe 471, pp. 15-16: 'Barcelona Memorial, 1705'. With respect to Richards's reliability, it should be noted that Professor Laughton, *DNB*, xiii. 843, believed that, on occasion, Richards wrote his dates wrongly.

¹⁶³ N. Feliu de la Pena y Farell, *Annales de Catalunya*, (3 vols, Barcelona, 1709); F. de Castellví, *Narraciones*

about Montjuich went first to Hesse-Darmstadt who informed the Archduke. Then, on 31 August, Hesse-Darmstadt and the Archduke convened a meeting with Peterborough and Shovell to discuss this news, though ultimately arriving to no firm resolutions. As Richards was not present at this meeting, Peterborough was therefore able on 2 September to create the impression that not only was the intelligence he then described was fresh but also - by calling a meeting with Hesse-Darmstadt - that he had proposals based upon it. With no exact record of either meeting, Peterborough and Hesse-Darmstadt could have returned on 2 September to issues previously discussed, however obliquely. Francis concludes this scenario which posits Hesse-Darmstadt as the originator of the Montjuich attack by pointing to the lack of surprise in the Archduke's subsequent good luck note (issued after the attack had been 'revealed' to him) and also by mentioning that Shovell ordered a landing of men and materials below the fortress without first seeking permission.¹⁶⁴

This outline does rather improbably require Hesse-Darmstadt to have shown uncharacteristic magnanimity towards Peterborough but nonetheless the Prince perhaps thought that his conduct during the attack would make it clear that he was the initiator; certainly some of the troops were of this view.¹⁶⁵ However, the Prince's leadership at Montjuich, as long as it lasted, was not unblemished.¹⁶⁶ When the detachment swept east away from Tarragona towards the fortress it got temporarily lost and, although the local guides were immediately responsible for this blunder, Hesse-Darmstadt's knowledge of the area gained during his time as Barcelona's Governor in the 1690s should have helped prevent such an error. In the short term, this diversion meant that the troops were late in arriving on the hill slopes upon which Montjuich stood, and with the passing of the night, the element of

Historicas, eds J.M. Mundet i Gifre & J.M. Alsina Roca (2 vols, Madrid, reprint, 1997).

¹⁶⁴ Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 187-8.

¹⁶⁵ *A Royal Dragoon in the Spanish Succession War: A Contemporary Narrative*, ed. C.T. Atkinson (London, 1938), p. 14.

¹⁶⁶ The ensuing account of the capture of Barcelona is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Stowe 471, pp. 15-19: 'Barcelona Memorial, 1705'; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, pp. 11-21: 'Furly's Journal'; NMM, SOU/7, fos. 170-1: 'Holland's Journal'; *Memoirs of Captain Carleton*, pp. 91-106; *A Royal Dragoon in the Spanish Succession War*, p. 14; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 288-95; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 82-3; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 414-15, 417-22: At a council of English and Dutch flag Officers, 27 Aug., 4, 19, 22 Sept., 1, 8 Oct. 1705; Shovell to the Admiralty, 12 Oct. 1705; At a Council of War of English Flag officers, 17, 20 Sept. 1705; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 60-4: 'Leake's Journal', 2 Aug.-4 Oct. 1705; H.T. Dickinson, 'Peterborough and the Capture of Barcelona, 1705', *HT* xi (1964), 711-15; H. FitzM. Stacke, 'The Capture of Barcelona, 1705: A Little Known Combined Operation', *JRUSI* lxxv (1930), 343-5; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 183-93; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 188-91; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 87-91.

surprise was lost. The predominately Neapolitan garrison commanded by Lieutenant-General de Carracioli spied the allies' arrival and began to fire upon them. Although few were killed, Barcelona was loudly notified of the impending attack thereby enabling Governor de Velasco to organise reinforcements. At this point however - probably in an attempt to gain cover - the grenadier commander, Colonel Southwell, launched his vanguard detachment into Montjuich's covered way in which the troops fortuitously found a good portion of the garrison encamped. The grenadiers swiftly expelled the enemy from their tents and the ditch, whereupon they fled over the fortress's incomplete outer-works and into the small four bastion citadel; and, although the allied ladders proved insufficiently tall for the outer works, this action by Southwell's grenadiers had rescued a very uncertain start in time for the arrival of Peterborough and Hesse-Darmstadt on the hillside.

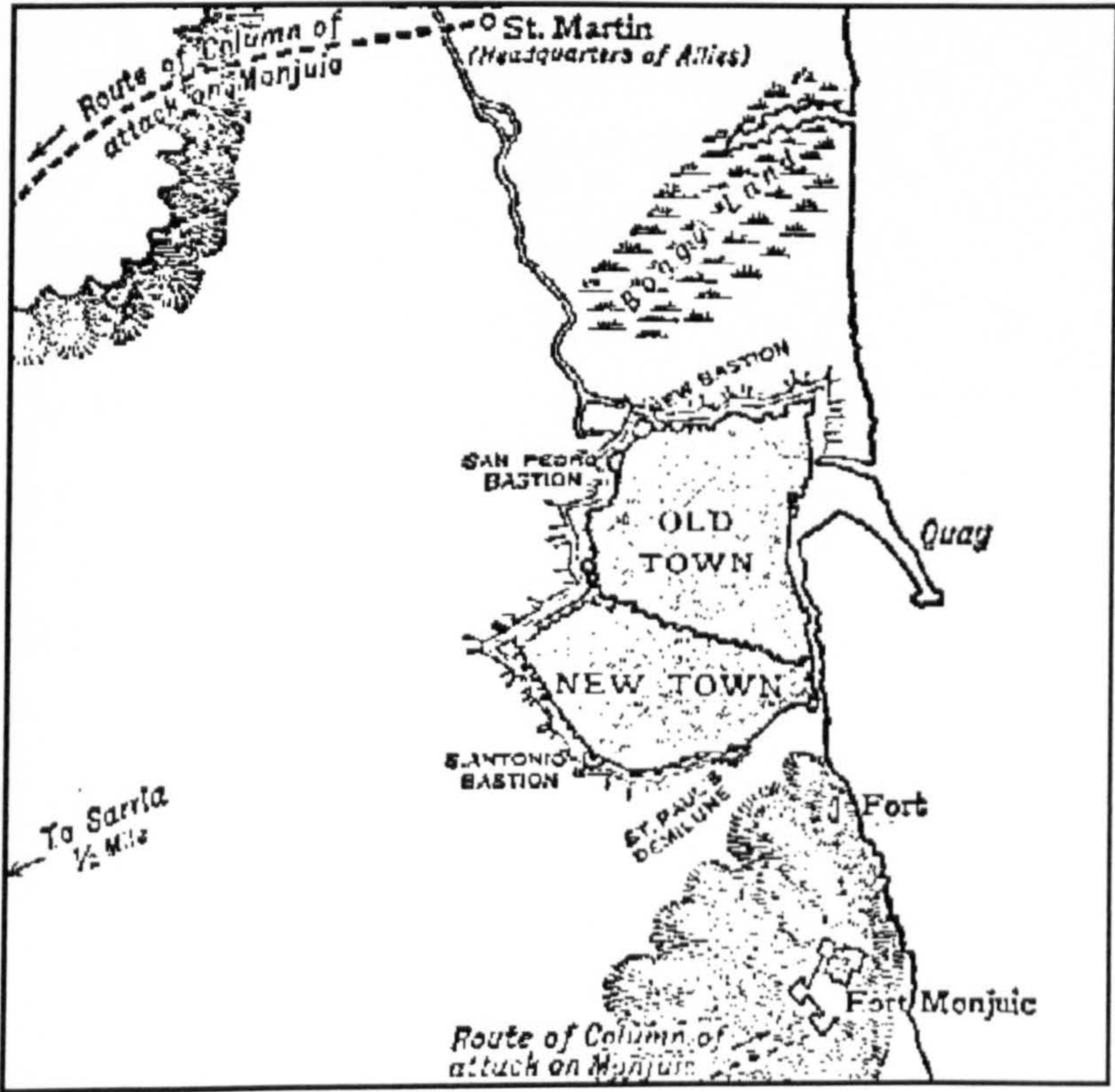


Fig. 16: The Attack on Fort Montjuich and Barcelona.

Their assessment of the position moved Peterborough to retrace his steps to bring up the 1300-strong force under Brigadier Stanhope, which had been held in reserve at The

Covered Cross, a mile from Montjuich; meanwhile, Hesse-Darmstadt was to lead a detachment of troops to cut the communication between the fortress and Barcelona. Some historians judged his objective to be the capture of the small St Betram outwork which stood mid-way on the coastal path from the town. If this was correct, Hesse-Darmstadt did not get near it for, as a result either of losing his way or of consciously taking a prodigious gamble, he led his men too near to the principal gate and wall of the citadel whereupon a Neapolitan bullet struck the Prince's right thigh. With his femoral artery severed, the Prince quickly bled to death. The troops were disordered by this dramatic loss of their charismatic leader and Lord Charlemont, who as Lieutenant-General was now the senior officer, coped poorly with the command responsibilities that fell upon him. He was vacillating between pressing on or retreating when, according to certain reports, the garrison tricked the allied troops into an ambush by crying out *Viva Carlos Tercerco* and seeming to lay down their arms, to then only discharge a thunderous fire when Colonel Allan approached with a group of some 200 soldiers to receive the surrender. Either convinced that retreat was now necessary or simply overwhelmed by the troops' alarm, Charlemont did not attempt to stop the men as they began a chaotic descent away from the outer works. En route to Stanhope, Peterborough heard the firing, and upon receiving some news of the events on the hilltop, he turned back. The scale and ill disciplined nature of the retreat soon became apparent and it was then that his quixotic character served him well as he fell into the 'Horriblest Passion'¹⁶⁷ and, with half-pike aloft, single-handedly exhorted the soldiers back uphill to reclaim the outer works.

Although still strongly placed inside Montjuich's citadel the Neapolitan defenders were becoming isolated. Reinforcements sent out by Velasco returned to the city after their commander assumed wrongly - following a conversation with the captured Captain Allan - that Peterborough had his whole force at Montjuich. Meanwhile, the local *Miquelets* managed to sever the fortress's line of communication by taking St Betram. The advantage was thus increasingly with Peterborough and, although Captain Cavendish's eight-vessel naval detachment carrying the additional men and supplies had been delayed by bad weather, Richards returned quickly to the Archduke's camp to bring up some artillery pieces, including two seven inch mortars. As these began to play upon the citadel's wall, Cavendish brought his flotilla to anchor opposite the fortress, and on 4 September began unloading the heavier

¹⁶⁷ BL, Stowe 471, p. 17: 'Barcelona Memorial, 1705'.

naval ordnance, which sailors and soldiers were to haul to the top of hill. It was anticipated that these would be primarily required for besieging of Barcelona, though it was only luck which allowed Montjuich to be reduced after two days of mortar fire. On 6 September, a shell providentially landed in the citadel's magazine causing a massive explosion which killed Carraccioli and ruptured one of the walls. Isolated, without their commandant, and vulnerable to an assault through the breach in the damaged wall, the garrison surrendered.¹⁶⁸

In possession of the strategic height overlooking the town, Peterborough pressed forward to besiege Barcelona. Shovell had, upon Peterborough's prior request, already agreed the naval contribution with his senior colleagues at a Council on 4 September. This endorsed their previous commitment of 27 August to provide over 50 guns with crews (thought to amount to about 600 men) and some 2500 armed sailors to help dig trenches and construct siege batteries; in addition the Dutch agreed to provide 600 armed men from their vessels. Also upon Peterborough's request, the naval Flags detached a small squadron under Fairborne close inshore to bombard the town. Although its role was not as significant as that of Byng's detachment at Gibraltar inasmuch as the warships discharged no broadsides, the shells from its bomb vessels effectively maintained pressure upon the city between the capture of Montjuich and the commencement of fire from the largest land battery on 17 September. This was positioned just 400 yards from the curtain of Barcelona's new town near to the St Antonio Gate and, according to most accounts, both its erection and that of the smaller batteries which opened a week earlier, had involved soldiers and sailors in an unprecedented degree of logistical co-operation. There was no simple route up from the shore south of Montjuich where the naval ordnance was landed. The carpenters had to adapt the naval carriages for transport overland; while Captain Littleton of the *Cambridge* apparently

¹⁶⁸ The exact progress of the early stages of the attack on Montjuich is unclear. Many of the primary sources and secondary authorities - CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 11: 'Furly's Journal'; *A Royal Dragoon in the Spanish Succession War*, p. 14; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 183; and Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 188, for example - elide the details. Others, such as *Memoirs of Captain Carleton*, pp. 91-2 and Dickinson, 'Peterborough and the Capture of Barcelona, 1705', p. 711, suggest that the detachment largely arrived as an unit which Peterborough disposed for a three pronged attack upon the morning light. Richards, however, in BL, Stowe 471, p. 16: 'Barcelona Memorial, 1705' was clear that Southwell's grenadiers arrived first to engage the Neapolitans in the covered way; and, although as Trevelyan pointed out in 'Peterborough and Barcelona, 1705', p. 259 there are differences in detail between Richards's account in his 'Memorial' and his 'Diary' in BL, Stowe 467: 'Diary of J. Richards 1704-1705', I have relied on his 'Memorial' for it arguably provides the fuller account and relates the grenadiers in a forward assault role, which is consonant with recent historical experience. My approach is the same as Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 87, but he gave no explanation for relying on this piece of evidence more than the other.

foreshadowed Captain Hoste's scientific skills a hundred years later by reputedly devising a human harness to facilitate the hauling of the guns.¹⁶⁹ Service integration was not just restricted to shared material and logistics, however. With the ships' gun crews manning the ordnance ashore, three junior Captains and six Lieutenants were landed on 11 September to work a command rota. Richards was one of the few to grumble about this combined endeavour on land and he formed a poor view of the sailors' work ethic. His dismissive opinion was however influenced by his disapproval of Peterborough's retention of the principal army camp at the distant St Martin, to which he had to send for the land train's materials, and by the fact that the demands on his time forced him to devolve much of the immediate oversight of the siege to Colonel Petit.

The siege quickly fell into an unremarkable bombardment pattern as the besiegers sought the necessary breach prior to launching an assault. As at Montjuich, the advantage seemed to be with the allies, for not only did they have open sea based supply line and additional naval bombardment, there was also no immediate prospect of a Franco-Spanish relief army to threaten the siege works. Moreover, declarations of support for the Archduke were now belatedly being made in the principal Catalan towns and villages surrounding Barcelona. A number also came through from the neighbouring provinces of Valencia and Aragon. Admittedly, in most cases these declarations were not spontaneous, since a notable villager or a band of *Miquelets* was usually required to galvanise the community; while at Tarragona, it was fire from a small naval flotilla commanded by Cavendish which proved decisive. They were nonetheless a psychological boost to the Archduke's cause and more importantly isolated Barcelona as a Bourbon enclave within the region thereby offering, if the siege was successful, the prospect of a secure Catalan base from which to effect the conquest of the rest of Spain.

Possession of these advantages did not mean that the progress of the siege was without difficulties. Peterborough quickly deemed his batteries to be of insufficient scale and low on resources, while he was also troubled by a shortage of funds for the land force's subsistence. Once again, the navy was pressed to help. Following a personal visit by Peterborough to Shovell, the Council of Flags agreed on 17 September to release the

¹⁶⁹ M. Duffy, "Science and Labour". The Naval Contribution to Operations Ashore in the Great Wars with France 1793-1815', in P. Hore (ed.) *Seapower Ashore: 200 Years of Royal Navy Operations on Land*

seamen's short allowance money and a substantial proportion of the fleet's contingency fund to total 40 000 dollars for the army's living. Furthermore, subsequent Councils over a four day period from 19 September sanctioned the landing of 14 more guns and the provision of ordnance supplies which would reduce the English ships to a minimum 30 rounds apiece for their 18 and 24 pounders; and, although the ratio established for the respective operational contributions by England and the United Provinces meant that the Dutch contribution had not yet brought their ships' guns to that level, they agreed to supply more shot and powder if required. The totals of powder and shot already provided for the 18 and 24 pounders ashore had informed this decision and the minute of the meeting at which it was discussed (22 September) betrayed just the vaguest sense of apprehension amongst the Flags that this might not prove sufficient.¹⁷⁰

Their concerns would have been eased by the events of the night following this last meeting. A breach had just recently been opened between the St Antonio Gate bastion and the St Pauls demi-lune to the east, against which Peterborough was to dispose his troops (albeit that the majority were still some distance away at the St Martin camp) for an assault. First though, in accordance with the contemporary conventions, a summons was sent to Velasco. Although historians agree that the Governor resolved to surrender, there is disagreement on the timing of his decision. One claim was that the Governor rejected the summons in the first instance and attempted to shore up the breach with mined earthworks only for this gambit to fail when accurate fire from the allied battery exploded the mines.¹⁷¹ Another is that Velasco sought a four day respite to make up his mind about surrender. A third possibility is that his decision was immediate.¹⁷² It is difficult to locate all these various explanations in the primary sources; but on the basis that Stanhope and the Conde de Ribera were exchanged as hostages for the duration of the negotiations on 23 September, any delay over Velasco's acceptance of the summons could really only have been a matter of hours. The negotiations about terms however lasted much longer. Velasco sought a settlement similar to that offered by the French in the Nine Years War, vouchsafing him privileges

(London, 2000), pp. 47-9.

¹⁷⁰ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 420-1: At a Council of English and Dutch flag Officers, 22 Sept. 1705.

¹⁷¹ Dickinson, 'Peterborough and the Capture of Barcelona 1705', p. 712.

¹⁷² Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 189; Francis, *The First Peninsula War*, p. 190; Parnell, *The War of the Succession in Spain*, p. 136.

beyond those commensurate with his present military position. Desiring a quick resolution, Peterborough was reportedly sympathetic, but the Archduke's advisor, Lichtenstein, strongly disagreed and the two men clashed over the conditions to be imposed upon the French. Even when agreement on the 49 Articles was reached on 28 September, the siege was not resolved smoothly. Under the agreement, nearly a week was to pass before Velasco, his garrison and any supporters were to march out and be transported by the navy to southern Spain. During this time, the pro-Habsburg faction in Barcelona began to assert its victory by rioting and inciting violence against the town's pro-Bourbon inhabitants. A massacre entirely antithetical to the contemporary conduct of war thus threatened and Stanhope, who was still inside the town, got word out to Peterborough. The Earl moved quickly to quell this rebellion by leading an occupation force into Barcelona on 3 October before the garrison marched out and, besides giving rise to the romantic tale of his periwig sustaining a bullet as he carried the winsome Duchess de Populi to safety, Peterborough's action proved effective in ensuring the security of the town.

The main fleet under Shovell departed Barcelona for England on 12 October, leaving behind Peterborough with the land force, and also a small eight-vessel winter squadron to be stationed at Lisbon under Sir John Leake. Within days of Shovell's departure the Archduke made his formal entry into the town, attended by considerable ceremony, to be proclaimed King. The allies were keen for Charles to take the first opportunity to march onwards to Madrid and Peterborough spent the winter of 1705/6 at the head of a body of troops in the province of Valencia securing the support previously demonstrated for the Archduke in that region.¹⁷³ However, Charles's cause was quickly hampered by a lack of money and resources, both of which were made worse, according to Peterborough, by the 'wretches for Ministers',¹⁷⁴ who advised the Archduke. The deflation of the allies' momentum was manifest by the French making the first significant move at the turn of the year. 1705 had been a poor year for the Bourbon cause in Spain, even though Marshal de Tessé had successfully expelled the Anglo-Portuguese force from Estremadura province. Following on from the loss of Gibraltar, the French could not afford to relinquish the strategic benefits that

¹⁷³ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 294-5; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 21-3: 'Furly's Journal', 12-14, 27 Oct. 1705; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 7-9: Leake to Burchett, 17 Jan. 1706; *A Royal Dragoon in the Spanish Succession War*, p. 14-17.

¹⁷⁴ *Letters From the Earl of Peterborough to General Stanhope in Spain*, ed. Lord Mahon (London, 1834), p.

land base such as Barcelona provided the Archduke. Perhaps even more important was the political imperative that Philip V should predominate in the principal city of the region most ill disposed to his rule. Accordingly, Louis prompted his already enthusiastic grandson to an early attempt by land and sea to recapture Barcelona and thus, as at Gibraltar, the allies were forced to mount a combined army-navy operation to maintain and enhance their possession of the Catalan city.¹⁷⁵

Having left Madrid early in the new year, a pessimistic Tessé arrived in Saragossa on 21 January 1706 to assemble the army which was to march on Barcelona. About a month later, and with some 12 000 men mustered, he was joined by Philip V at Caspe. The Marshal's intention while en route to Barcelona had been to cut the allies' communication throughout the provinces of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia, and also to secure his own flanks. Many of his colleagues however thought this approach ponderous and argued successfully that the army's swift appearance in front of Barcelona, combined with the arrival of the Toulon fleet under the Comte de Toulouse off the coast, would cause the city to capitulate with the same rapidity it had to the allies. Thus, as Prince Lichtenstein's intelligence correctly predicted, the force under Philip and Tessé marched directly for Barcelona and, despite their failure to pacify the hostile Catalans as they passed through the province, the River Llobregat, which ran down to the Mediterranean just south of Barcelona, was reached in the last week of March. The siege of Barcelona was to be pressed forward from this position, but first some 9000 reinforcements from Roussillon were awaited. Meanwhile, Toulouse had been fitting out a 40-vessel fleet, including some seventeen warships, at Toulon whence he was to sail to Barcelona to perform a similar function for Tessé as the allied fleet had for Peterborough. Departing Toulon in the last week of February, Toulouse was expected to arrive off Barcelona well in advance of the land force; but in the event bad weather greatly hampered him and, when Tessé sought to make contact on arriving at the Llobregat, the Admiral was only just bringing the French fleet to anchor.¹⁷⁶

It has been claimed that London knew of the French intentions with respect to

2: Peterborough to Stanhope, 18 Nov. 1705.

¹⁷⁵ Quincy, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 655-60; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, p. 302, 310-11; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 92-3.

¹⁷⁶ *Mémoires et Lettres du Maréchal de Tessé*. ii. 207-8, 217; Marquis de Dangeau, *Abrégé des Mémoires ou Journal de Marquis de Dangeau* (Paris, 1817) ii. 412-13; BL, Add MSS 5438, f. 71: Lichtenstein to 'Sir' [Leake], 26 Mar. 1706 [NS]; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 202-4.

Barcelona by January 1706, but Galway's letter of late November 1705 which referred to the westward movements of Philip and Tessé plus the imminent departure of the Toulon fleet, only related them to a general French desire to recover Catalonia and not a specific action against Barcelona.¹⁷⁷ The Ministry did plan though to reinforce the Archduke's capability. Five regiments - three from England and two from Ireland - were to be dispatched, along with six months provisions for the 5000 allied troops plus a commitment to provide for 10 000 in the immediate future. It was also agreed that at least nine of the naval vessels convoying this supply from England and Ireland would remain in the Mediterranean to augment Leake's winter squadron. The dispatch of these reinforcements and provisions was however continually delayed throughout the winter months.¹⁷⁸

Aside from Catalonia, the Ministry attention during these months was partially occupied by schemes for the Archduke to capitalise on the reported pro-Habsburg inclinations of the Spanish West Indian possessions but mainly by the deteriorating situation of the Duke of Savoy. In April 1705, the French had occupied Nice and Villefranche, with the former's citadel eventually falling to the Duke of Berwick in the winter; while the Duke's stronghold, Turin, was expected to be the Duc de La Feuillade's target for the opening of the 1706 campaign. Assuming that the Archduke remained secure in the Peninsula, the Ministry aimed to use the resources already in the Mediterranean, perhaps along with the additional men and materials then being prepared at Portsmouth for Catalonia, to succour the Duke. The Court's concern for Victor Amadeus only deepened in the new year when his emissary, Conte Annibale Maffei, arrived in town seeking help; and, in early March, the Admiralty tried to expedite the departure of the supplies (men and material) for Catalonia by appointing the C.-in-C. Portsmouth, Sir George Byng, to the sea-going command of the convoying squadron. Byng's Instructions simply referred to the pressing need to reinforce Leake, while the latter's orders, issued on 2 April, prioritised getting material help through to the Duke; in neither document was the fate of Barcelona specifically cited as a concern.¹⁷⁹ This was

¹⁷⁷ *The Byng Papers*, i. 99; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 388-9: Extract of a letter from Galway to Hedges, 7 Dec. 1705 [NS] [refers to an earlier letter in late November].

¹⁷⁸ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 390-4 : Extract of a letter from Hedges to Galway, 4 Dec. 1705, 8, 29 Jan., 12, 26 Feb. 1706; Extract of a letter from Hedges to Methuen, 18, 26 Dec. 1705.

¹⁷⁹ PRO, SP 104/207, fos. 57-63, 70-3, 89-91: Hedges to John Methuen, 11 Sept. 1705; Hedges to Hill, 11 Sept. 1705; Hedges to the Admiralty, 4 Dec. 1705; Hedges to Peterborough, 11 Dec. 1705, 7 Feb., 2 Apr. 1706; 'Instructions for Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Cousin and Councillor Charles Earl of Peterborow and Monmouth', 2 Feb 1706; 'Instructions to Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Sir John Leake Knt', 2 April

curious inasmuch as by spring the signs were that London's ignorance regarding the impending threat to Barcelona had been significantly enlightened. French intelligence current among the Ministry from the end of February had been referring to a prospective siege of the city; while notably Leake's Instructions of 2 April did, albeit as a general point, direct him first to ensure Charles's safety in the city, particularly from the French fleet. Ultimately the rumours Godolphin referred to on 19 April about Barcelona being besieged from the land were confirmed three days later when he received Marlborough's letter of 16 April from The Hague, which told of the French opening their trenches. The Lord Treasurer's response was simply to hope that Leake would get round the coast in time.¹⁸⁰

Leake had largely remained as uncertain of the specific threat posed to Barcelona as London. The winter months had been spent refitting the fleet and planning an attempt on the French galleons thought to be harbouring in Cádiz. Nonetheless, when cruising off Cape Spartel in March, he had received news that Toulouse had left Toulon bound for Barcelona.¹⁸¹ The fact that on receipt of this information he did not sail immediately to the town was doubtless due the optimism of his principal mainland correspondent - Peterborough. Now based in Valencia province, the Earl seemed relatively untroubled by the developing events to the north, and, perhaps more significantly, he wished the expected additional troops to be brought by Leake to augment his force. This remained Peterborough's view even though Charles and Liechtenstein had sent Leake letters in mid-March outlining the peril faced by the town and requesting that he come with all the reinforcements sent from England for Catalonia. Peterborough calculated that the supply maintained by Toulouse's fleet was the essential link in the enemy's operation and that Leake's squadron would be better placed to chase it from the coast if unencumbered by the troop transports.¹⁸² This analysis was not without foundation. By rejecting Tessé's approach

1706; *The Byng Papers*, i. 112-14: From Prince George of Denmark's Council, 4 Mar. 1706; Quincy, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 589-92, 627-35; Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II*, pp. 149-50.

¹⁸⁰ HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vii. 393-4: Extract of a letter from Hedges to Galway, 19, 26 Feb. 1706; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 539, 541, 544, pp. 520, 522, 524: Marlborough to Godolphin, 16 Apr. 1706; Godolphin to Marlborough, 19, 22 Apr. 1706.

¹⁸¹ BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 7-9, 17-18, 25: Leake to Burchett, 17 Jan., 19 Mar. 1706; Leake to Peterborough, 18 Feb. 1706; BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 77: 'Leake's Journal', 19 Mar. 1706.

¹⁸² HMC, *House of Lords MSS NS*, vii. 427-8: Peterborough to the Admiral or officer commanding-in-chief of her Majesty's squadron in the Mediterranean, 18 Mar. 1706; Peterborough to Leake, 19 Mar. 1706; 'King of Spain' to Leake, 26 Mar. 1706 [NS]; Lichtenstein to Leake, 26 Mar. 1706 [NS]; BL Add MSS 5438, fos. 48-51: Peterborough to 'Sir' [Leake], 7, 18 Apr. 1706 [NS].

and proceeding directly to Barcelona, the French army had failed to establish any mainland lines of communication and its isolation was increased by the debilitating attacks undertaken by the Conde de Cifuentes's band of *Miquelets*. Using the local topography to full effect, the *Miquelets* seemed to the French to be simultaneously nowhere and everywhere: a raid at Philip's headquarters at Sarria nearly resulted in his capture, while another seized some 700 sheep from the French field depot.¹⁸³ Whereas at Gibraltar the siege army had largely relied on the fleet's additional attack capability, the French land force's maritime dependency at Barcelona was total.

The weakness of the French besiegers was not however apparent to the allies inside the town. Although augmented by the arrival of the 1800 strong Gerona garrison commanded by Lord Donegal along with some 1500 *Miquelets*, the regular garrison soldiers only totalled approximately 1400.¹⁸⁴ Improvements to the city defences had been effected under the guidance of Colonel Petit, including the replacement of the St Betram outwork¹⁸⁵ with a trench running to Montjuich which made the severing of its communication with the city a more elusive military proposition. Notwithstanding, there was little confidence that the garrison could resist Tessé's 20 000 men supported by Toulouse's fleet. A measure of this was the proposal made during the siege to send the Archduke out of the city to ensure his safety, though Charles was ultimately aware of the damage that flight would inflict on his claim to the throne and thus decided to stay on.¹⁸⁶ In doing so, he at least aimed to act like a King by providing a figurehead for the defence of the town.

The differing reflections on Barcelona's situation and its relief posed a dilemma for Leake, inasmuch as he was not in receipt of a consistent land opinion to guide what was necessarily a land and sea venture. Off Gibraltar on 6 April, this circumstance was partially resolved by his naval Council when it considered all the correspondence previously received from the Archduke and Peterborough and resolved upon Barcelona's relief as a priority. The intention was not for the whole fleet to appear immediately before the city, but rather to proceed in stages along the Spanish coast in order to gain intelligence about the size of Toulouse's fleet. The Council also on this occasion adopted Peterborough's point about the

¹⁸³ Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 205; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 206.

¹⁸⁴ Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 204; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 206.

¹⁸⁵ Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 206 wrote of it still being erect.

¹⁸⁶ Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 204.

benefits of not being hindered by troop transports by ordering all the soldiers to be embarked aboard the fleet vessels. Altea was reached on 18 April, whereupon another naval Council was held. Although again recognising Barcelona's need, its members were reluctant to sail much further without either Byng's reinforcements or the other convoy from Ireland. There was also the additional problem that Peterborough continued to press for all the troops to be landed at either Altea or Denia and in so doing he attempted to assert his authority by sending Leake his commission as joint Admiral. Leake was not disposed to heed Peterborough's demands and upon learning that Byng was not far away, the Council decided to await his arrival overnight. Interestingly, during the night Brigadier Gorges appeared with further correspondence from the Earl, indicating a subtle shift in his position. He now suggested that Leake should retain at least 1000 soldiers on board to be immediately landed as a descent force on reaching Barcelona.¹⁸⁷

Peterborough wrote this letter after marching with a number of his troops to a new position in the mountains surrounding Barcelona and it may well have been that sight of the city informed his shift in opinion. By mid-April, the French had clearly made gains from the landward. Siege works had been erected in front of the city walls, but Montjuich was targeted first with a constant mortar fire and on 10 April, Tessé, despite having suffered a repulse a week earlier, launched a large scale assault under the command of the Marquis de Aytona. The commandant of Montjuich, Lord Donegal, mounted a vigorous defence during which he and 300 troops died but ultimately the fortress could only hold out for four days before surrendering. Undoubtedly this action at Montjuich delayed the enemy's advance on the city and also afforded more time for Leake's approach, but as Barcelona's garrison was largely unaware of the relief squadron's progress and now faced a besieging force that commanded the south-westerly heights of the town, they remained beleaguered.¹⁸⁸

Leake's squadron was augmented by the arrival of Byng's detachment on 20 April and of the Irish convoy only days later. He proceeded through bad weather to Tortosa, where on 26 April he received a letter from the Archduke which represented the city's bleak

¹⁸⁷ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vi. 432-3: At a Council of War of Flag Officers and Captains, 6 Apr. 1706; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 48-50: Peterborough to 'Sir' [Leake], 7 Apr. 1706; BL, Add MSS 5442, f. 114: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers', 18 Apr. 1706; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 78-9: 'Leake's Journal', 4-6 Apr. 1706; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 10-16.

¹⁸⁸ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 15-17; de la Roncière, *Histoire de la Marine Française*, vi. 381-2; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 205-7.

situation. More importantly it rebuffed Peterborough's call for the majority of the troop reinforcements to be landed elsewhere and directed that they must be brought to Barcelona immediately. There was also correspondence from Peterborough in Leake's mail bag, which showed him firm in his belief that Barcelona's relief required only a smaller descent force covered by the fleet. To this end he had collected several boat loads of troops at Sitges, 21 miles west-south-west of Barcelona, which only awaited the fleet's support. Leake however remained resolved to bring his whole fleet, including all the reinforcements round into Barcelona Bay, and engage Toulouse if necessary. The paradox, which only Peterborough had considered, was that Toulouse had no intention of fighting to supply Tessé. On learning from a Genoese vessel on the night of 26/27 April that Leake was fast approaching with a larger fleet, he signalled the French fleet to weigh and returned to Toulon.¹⁸⁹

Given that the French siege only lasted for another four days following Toulouse's departure, Peterborough's opinion that the allies had only to target the French fleet to relieve Barcelona seemed accurate. Nonetheless, just as Leake approached the empty Barcelona Bay, the town was at its most vulnerable from the landward. A breach of considerable width had been opened in the walls and, with a French infantry assault imminently expected, the troops landed from Admirals Byng's and Wassenar's flagships, which Leake had ordered ahead, proved invaluable in immediately augmenting the garrison's defence. The remaining troops and marines landed when Leake came to anchor and the 1400-strong descent force compiled by Peterborough at Sitges enabled the allies to put into Barcelona some 5000 reinforcements. This so dispirited the French that their threatened assault on the breach was never launched and they retreated quickly from the walls, leaving artillery and ammunition behind.¹⁹⁰ Toulouse's departure clearly enfeebled the siege, but the landing of all available infantry reinforcements had been necessary to neutralise the very immediate threat to Barcelona.

When bringing his descent force from Sitges to the main fleet just before it entered

¹⁸⁹ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 17-22; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 437-8: King of Spain to Leake, 4 May 1706 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 53-5: Peterborough to 'Sir' [Leake], 30 Apr. 1706, 5 May 1706 [NS]; BL, Egerton 2521, f. 94: Haddock to 'Hon. Sir' [Sir Richard Haddock], 1 May 1706.

¹⁹⁰ BL, Egerton 2521, f. 94: Haddock to 'Hon. Sir' [Sir Richard Haddock], 1 May 1706; BL, Add MSS 47970, p. 80: 'Leake's Journal', 28 Apr.-1 May 1706; Lord Mahon, *History of the War of the Succession in Spain* (2nd edn, London, 1836), Appendix, pp. vi-viii: To Secretary Sir Charles Hedges, 9, 12 May 1706 [NS]; *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, p. 94; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 212.

Barcelona Bay, Peterborough had boarded Leake's flagship and asserted what he believed was his superior command by hoisting his flag at the main mast. Peterborough presumably predicated this action on his dual commission as C.-in-C. of the land forces and joint Admiral. It was unclear whether this commission applied with an Admiral other than Shovell; certainly later in June, Burchett sent out a fresh commission for Peterborough to be joint Admiral with Leake but Leake at this stage made no comment. His restraint did not mean that he forgot Peterborough's insensitive gesture and future relations between the two commanders proved increasingly strained.¹⁹¹ This was significant in the aftermath of relieving Barcelona when a Grand Council of War convened by the Archduke on 10 May upheld the resolutions of the naval Council of 4 May to combine with the land forces to extend full control over Valencia province. However, as the first target was to be Alicante, which it was thought would surrender simply at the appearance of the fleet off the coast, no combined land and sea action was immediately envisaged and Leake merely had to land Peterborough along with some 600 troops at either Altea or Denia, where they would be joined by a party of horse marching overland.¹⁹²

The squadron left Barcelona on 18 May and within four days Peterborough caused the plans to be changed by convincing a Council of War that the troops should be landed at Valencia town, so that the enemy might be cleared from the road linking it with Denia. Progress was further disrupted when four days later, on arriving off the town on 24 May, Leake at last received from London the Instructions of 2 April directing him to the urgent succour of Savoy. A naval Council - at which Peterborough was present - took a decision in principle to fulfil these Instructions, and the Earl agreed to embark those troops he felt he could release for this service. However, to Leake's considerable frustration, Peterborough cast these proceedings in doubt the next day by advising the Admiral of the subsequent decision of his Council of land officers: that the Archduke should adjudicate on this impeding departure to Italy, and that in the interval operations in Valencia province should continue. When Leake sought clarification on their next step from Peterborough, the Earl claimed to be

¹⁹¹ BL, Add MSS 5438, f. 31: Leake to the 'Secretary to HRH' [Burchett], 15 May 1705; BL, Add MSS 5441, f. 81: Burchett to Leake, 5 June 1706; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 23, 30-9; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 169.

¹⁹² HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 439: At a Council of War, 4 May 1706; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 36-40: 'Furly's Journal', 6 Apr.-1 June 1706; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 43-5; BL, Add MSS 5438, f. 30: Leake to Peterborough, 6 May 1706.

too indisposed to attend a Council of War but wrote that the operation against Alicante should continue and that he had readied some of his men to march in that direction so that an attack from the landward could be launched in the event that the town did not surrender on the appearance of the fleet. Shrewdly, Peterborough had managed simultaneously to out-manoeuver Leake and to undermine his authority over the fleet. Recalling the Admiral's deference to the Archduke's commands for the relief of Barcelona, Peterborough calculated that Leake would not or could not object to the referral of the Council's decision to Charles, despite the Instructions being solely addressed to him as Admiral. Moreover, the referral afforded Peterborough time in which to exercise his authority over a full complement of troops and thus place him in a position to determine the direction of both the land operation and the combined action with the fleet. This point was manifest when the naval Council of 30 May agreed fully with Peterborough's resolution and on 1 June, the fleet weighed for Alicante.¹⁹³

The dissociation in command between Peterborough and Leake was further confirmed only three days after leaving Valencia. Off Altea, Leake received credible intelligence that Major-General Mahóni was to command for Philip V in Alicante with 500 horse, whereas Cartagena had no such defence and inhabitants who were said to be well inclined to the Archduke. Considering this information on 5 June, the naval Council inverted the previous intelligence perception and resolved that Alicante would have to be besieged from the land and sea but Cartagena might submit simply on appearance of the fleet. Peterborough was merely to be informed of this decision, with the additional note that the fleet would proceed to Alicante later.¹⁹⁴

Leake and his naval Council were able to assert this independence of action due to the presence of a number of marine soldiers on board the fleet. As demonstrated at Gibraltar, these men could - depending on their number and the operational circumstances - provide the

¹⁹³ BL, Add MSS 5442, fos. 118, 120, 122-3: 'Att a Councill of War', 22, 28, 30 May 1706; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 32-3, 55-6: Leake to Peterborough, 27, 30 May 1706; Leake to the 'Secretary to HRH' [Burchett], 31 May 1706; Peterborough to 'Sir' [Leake], 9, 10 June 1706 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5441, fos. 126, 128: Peterborough to 'Sir' [Leake], 9, 10 June 1706 [NS]; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 48-53; PRO, SP 104/207, fos. 90-1: 'Instructions to Our Right Trusty and Welbeloved Sir John Leake Knt', 2 April 1706; CFKS, U1590 0135/11, p. 40-1: 'Furly's Journal', 22, 30 May 1706.

¹⁹⁴ *Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 95-6; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 53-4; BL, Add MSS, f. 124: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers and Captains', 5 June 1706; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 34-5: Leake to Peterborough, 5 June 1706; Leake to Lord Ambassador Methuen, 20 June 1706.

fleet with a temporary land capability; and the prospects for reducing Cartagena suggested that they would be sufficient, without additional support from Peterborough's infantrymen. This was apparent when the fleet reached Cartagena on 12 June, and the Governor and the city magistrates requested a day to think about Leake's summons. Fearful that reinforcements would get into the town during this 24-hour period, Leake disposed a smaller ten-vessel squadron under Sir John Jennings to proceed inside the harbour, with 1000 Dutch and English marines to be landed nearby. If the city authorities refused to submit to a second summons, Jennings was to cannonade the city and the castle, which stood on a elevation just behind the harbour, while the marines would march in to secure the harbour area and act as a garrison. This deployment had just begun the following morning when some city representatives rowed out to Leake's flagship, the *Prince George*, to relinquish Cartagena. Leaving Jennings in the harbour with four warships and a 600-marine garrison commanded by Major Richard Hedges to settle the city affairs, Leake departed Cartagena for Alicante on 18 June.¹⁹⁵

The fleet reached Altea Bay on 20 June where Leake received the Archduke's response to Peterborough's referral of the Council's earlier decision to succour Savoy according to the London Instructions. Not surprisingly, Charles did not want to spare Victor Amadeus any troops from the Peninsula, and believed that Queen Anne would be of a similar opinion if fully aware of recent events. Certainly, he could not conceive that she wanted to render vulnerable those Spanish provinces already secured by the allies nor threaten further success. The Archduke stated that he would accept Leake detaching a squadron to Italy, if the Admiral believed it might be of help; but that he would prefer Leake to continue the combined land and sea operations against the eastern Spanish coast and also to begin operations amongst the Spanish island dependencies. The Archduke believed that both Minorca, with its commodious Port Mahón harbour, and Majorca were particularly well disposed to him. Along with the Archduke's letter was a typically flighty one from Peterborough. He now expressed sympathy with Victor Amadeus and claimed that even Marlborough's victory at Ramillies (12 May), which captured Flanders for the allies, would

¹⁹⁵ BL, Add MSS 5442, fos. 128-30: 'Att A Council of War of Flag Officers', 13, 16 June 1706; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 35-7, 39-40: Leake to Lord Ambassador Methuen, 20 June 1706; Leake to Peterborough, 17 June 1706; Leake to the 'Secretary to HRH' [Burchett], 20 June 1706; *The Byng Papers*, i. 121-2: From Sir John Leake, 18 June 1706; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 54-8; *Life of Captain Stephen*

not compensate for the loss of Turin. However, hiding behind the Archduke's refusal to release troops, Peterborough concluded that a decision about Savoy's succour would have to await the arrival of a fleet from England with further reinforcements. Peterborough was not then aware that the other combined operations currently being considered in London would thwart the early arrival of this fleet in the Mediterranean. On 21 June, Leake presented Charles's letter to his Council. In considering the dispatch of a squadron to Savoy without troops to be a futile exercise, it clearly did not regard the land capability of the marines sufficient on this occasion. This was in addition to the concern that, as marines often helped man the ships, the garrisoning of Cartagena combined with the current sickness of crews had meant that further manpower detachments could not be made safely from the fleet. Operations against the Spanish Mediterranean islands, as suggested by the Archduke, were therefore currently ruled out, because those which declared for Charles would probably require a garrison from the ships' complements. Recalling Peterborough's previous commitment to march upon Alicante from the landward, the Council therefore resolved to maintain its earlier decision to proceed there.¹⁹⁶

Two days into the voyage to Alicante, the *Rye* brought Leake another set of Instructions from England urging him to Savoy's aid. Dated 14 May, these had been drafted in the knowledge of Toulouse's retreat to Toulon and Barcelona's relief thereby leaving, in London's opinion, Turin as the most imperilled operational theatre. However, as the Court's policy had been to devolve control over the conduct of the war in the Peninsula to the Archduke, the Instructions directed Leake to seek his opinion first. This had of course already been done and Leake concluded he could for the moment postpone further consideration of succouring Savoy and continue with the projected action against Alicante. This decision was timely, for on the same day as he received the mail from England the fleet came into Alicante road.¹⁹⁷

Leake dispatched a summons to both the Governor and Major-General Mahóni, who

Martin, 1666-1740, p. 96.

¹⁹⁶ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake* ii, 58-62; BL, Add MSS 5442, fos. 132-3: 'Att a Council of War of Flag Officers and Captains', 21 June 1706; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 41-2, 57-8, 74-5: Leake to Lichtenstein, 22 June 1706; Leake to 'King Charles III', 22 June 1706; Peterborough to Leake, 26 June 1706; Leake to the 'Secretary to HRH' [Burchett], 30 June 1706.

¹⁹⁷ BL, Add MSS 5442, fos. 136-7: 'Att a Council of War of Flag Officers and Captains', 27 June 1706; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake* ii, 62-3, 69.

had previously been reported as proceeding with 500 horse to provide the main defence of the town.¹⁹⁸ It was the latter who responded to Leake by forwarding a copy of a letter he had previously sent to Peterborough outlining his commitment to Philip to defend to the last the area between Montesa and Cádiz. This of course included Alicante, where he had currently based himself. Such a negative response to his summons caused Leake to convene a Council on the following day to consider the fleet's options. At least two alternatives were considered and rejected: sending succour to Italy, and seeking to augment the convoy of the returning Turkey merchantmen. On the first, despite the receipt of the Court's recent Instructions, there seemed no reason to alter previous resolutions until the Archduke agreed to spare some troops; while on the second, more information about the Turkey convoy's whereabouts was thought necessary. This left action against Alicante; but, until Peterborough's promised troops arrived in support, there was little the fleet could profitably do. Hence, Leake's Council could only resolve to remain at anchor in the bay and send word to Peterborough at Valencia in the hope that this would hasten the troops southwards.

Leake received letters from Peterborough on 28 June and 7 July, and both were dominated by the question of sending help to Savoy. Ostensibly this was curious for, albeit cloaked by the Archduke's refusal, Peterborough had already expressed a settled opinion to help Victor Amadeus's once the expected fleet for England arrived with reinforcements. However, references in the letters to the Archduke's recent inclination to dispatch aid if at all possible, and the pressure he was placing upon Peterborough to effect this, indicated that the Earl was trying to manoeuvre Leake or, more accurately, the naval Council to decide whether the fleet should sail now with succour. And, as argued by the Admiral's biographer there was a devious edge to this correspondence because at this point Peterborough reputedly knew privately that the reinforcement fleet from England was designed for another service and thus

¹⁹⁸ The ensuing account of the capture of Alicante is based on the following primary sources: BL, Add MSS 5441, fos. 152, 154: Mahóni to 'Sir' [Leake] 7 July 1706 [NS], and enclosure, Mahóni to Peterborough, 5 July 1706 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5438, fos. 44-5, 58, 60-3, 73-5, 77-94: Leake to Jennings, 28 June, 18, 19 July 1706; Peterborough to 'Sir' [Leake], 7, 13 July [NS], 7, 26 July, 25 Aug. 1706; Leake to Hedges, 29 June 1706; Leake to the 'Secretary to HRH' [Burchett], 30 June, 10, 31 July, 19 Aug. 1 Sept 1706; Leake to Peterborough, 3, 8, 22, 29 July 1706; Leake to Gorges, 18 July 1706; Leake to Lichtenstein, 22 July, 13 Aug. 1706; Leake to Stanhope, 20 July 1706; Leake to 'King Charles III', 8 Sept. 1706 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5442, fos. 142, 144, 146, 152, 157: 'Att a Councill of War of Flag Officers and Captains', 19 June 11, July, 1 Aug. 1706; 'Att a Councill of War', 21, 29 July 1706 [NS]; *The Byng Papers*, i. 122-3: From Sir John Leake, 20 July 1706; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake* ii, 69-115; *The Life of Captain Stephen Martin, 1666-1740*, pp. 96-7.

the naval Council's responsibility for the operation would extend to causing a drastic reduction in manpower in Catalonia. Peterborough was seeking to avoid the blame for any subsequent operational failure but, on this occasion, Leake had the measure of the Earl and deftly side-stepped Peterborough's trap by moving his Council to resolve that succouring Savoy could not be achieved due to a lack of resources. This left Peterborough in charge of his 2500 men in Valencia but it also forced him to continue with the Alicante operation, whose prospects he had downplayed in the second of the two letters which announced that the land force had been detached.

The arrival of Brigadier Gorges in charge of four infantry regiments and 200 horse to undertake the landward attack on Alicante could not come soon enough for Leake. A force of 400 marines had already been put ashore to secure the local militia's possession of the St Facie convent, while delay provided the enemy with time to work on their defences. However, when the Brigadier came aboard the *Prince George* on 9 July, he proved as pessimistic about the operation as Peterborough. Dismissing any possible contribution by the 2000 militiamen nearby, Gorges pointed out that his force totalled only 1450 horse and foot whereas he believed that Alicante could not be captured by less than 3000 regulars. Leake's attempt to call a combined Council of War on this question foundered when Gorges refused to give his view without the approbation of his fellow field officers. At their separate Council the next day, agreement to begin the siege was made contingent on the fleet making good the shortfall of some 1500 troops plus providing all the necessary siege materials. Doubtless not wishing the operation to be abandoned, the naval Council acceded to the soldiers' requirements and along with the guns and their crews, some 800 marines and 500 sailors were to be put ashore. Furthermore, a commitment was made to deploy those marines currently at Cartagena, once they had been relieved by the infantry regiment that Peterborough had reputedly promised for the town. Even though Leake personally delivered these resolutions to the land officers at Luga Nova on 11 July, it was a week later before Gorges, having been pressed again by Leake, convened another land Council which agreed to commence the siege.

In a subsequent letter to the Archduke, Leake laid the blame for the tardiness in commencing the operation at Alicante wholly upon Peterborough and the conduct of the land forces. Undoubtedly there was some truth to this but the Admiral was not blameless. He tended to call a Council upon any daily development, however incidental. For example, upon

receiving correspondence on 19 July from both the Archduke and Peterborough which did not materially affect the decision to attack Alicante, Leake still considered a Council of War necessary to consider the letter. Predictably, this resolved to uphold its former resolutions about the impending operation, but it took another meeting of the Council before the attack disposition was formulated.

Finally, on 21 July, the marines and sailors were landed from the fleet just eastwards of the bay whence they were to march the following morning to meet Brigadier Gorge's force, which was moving south from Elche, about a mile outside the town. For this purpose, the sailors, whose number had been increased to 800, were regimented with three naval Captains given temporary command as Colonel, Lieutenant-Colonel and Major. During the night of the landing, a number of bomb vessel threw shells into the town as a preliminary to the main bombardment the following morning by an eight-ship squadron commanded by Byng. Continuing throughout the day, Byng's cannonade proved remarkably accurate in silencing the town's sea batteries, leaving only those mounted in the castle, and this enabled the allies' ordnance and crews to be landed. On 23 July, Jennings brought in the marines from Cartagena's garrison and, in accordance with the naval Council's commitment, these were immediately deployed ashore.

The action ebbed and flowed over the following five days as Byng's squadron kept up its bombardment from the bay, and the recently erected shore batteries engaged those enemy emplacements outside of the ships' range or elevation. Little gave on either side however until 28 July when in the early hours Gorges's men managed to claim the town's suburbs and, in particular, the windmill acting as an enemy forward post, which the allies had held briefly four days previously. On the morning of this advance, Leake boarded the *Shrewsbury* and ordered all the fleet's boats - armed and manned - to congregate around it. Placing them under Jennings's command, he awaited an obvious weakening in the enemy's sea front against which to launch them. The actual occasion of their departure did not initially appear propitious, however. A breach had been opened in the Round Tower at the western end of the town's wall and, without orders, a small detachment of grenadiers had broken ahead of Gorges's main force advancing through the suburbs to attack this post. On observing these developments, Leake ordered Jennings's boats in support but, before the sailors got ashore, the grenadiers had been repulsed. Nonetheless, rallying around the Captain of the *Royal Oak*,

Evans, who quickly assailed the breach, some three boats' crews got inside the wall. Seamen commanded by Captains Passenger and Watkins quickly followed, and it was not long before the boat crews under Jennings combined with the soldiers, who had first occupied the suburbs, secured the town. As the main gates were opened to Brigadier Gorges and the rest of the troops, Major-General Mahóni in command of a party of horse retreated uphill to the castle, situated on an elevation over the town. The siege of Alicante castle lasted for over a month until, on 22 August, Mahóni sought terms. He claimed to have run out of drinking water, but when entering the castle a week later the allies found at least a month's provision left. Closer inspection revealed this supply to have been spoiled and it seemed that the garrison's heavy loss of life had caused Mahóni's subordinates, many of whom were Neapolitans, to indulge in an act of sabotage, to force his surrender.

The effectiveness of the allied siege was largely due to it being waged both from the land and sea. The castle's elevation meant that the onshore batteries manned by the soldiers, marines and ship gun crews would have been on their own of little consequence; however they were tellingly supported by the bomb vessels. It was to their credit that this co-operation between the two services endured considerable tension and alarm during the course of the siege. Once again Leake showed tact and restraint when a land Council of War requested that he re-embark those sailors ashore - save for the marines and gun crews - because it was feared they would loot. The Admiral also suffered a scare that twelve French warships were about to appear and trap his detachment in the bay. Absorbing such pressures, Leake and Gorges pressed the month-long siege to its conclusion and it proved to be the final combined operation undertaken against the Spanish mainland for the remainder of the war.

The operational history of the war years 1705 and 1706 produces in the Mediterranean theatre and, more specifically, on mainland Spain a number of combined army-navy operations. It was apparent even before the beginning of 1705 that the Ministry wished to extend the strategic scope of these ventures as an instrument of warfare. A Grand Fleet and a considerable detachment of troops were combined under the direction of Peterborough and Shovell. Guided by latitudinarian Instructions, the in-theatre Council of War had considerable independence in determining this force's objectives and eventually Barcelona was settled upon. Its capture however required more than a first strike operation for at the beginning of the next campaign season the enemy quickly placed the allies' control of the

town under threat. With patchy intelligence and communication the Ministry, the land commanders -who luckily were split between the garrison and the nearby provinces - and the Vice-Admiral commanding the regional naval squadron, all had to co-operate in an operation to bring relief to the town. That this proved successful was undoubtedly due in large part to good fortune and the enemy's irresolution. With Barcelona secured by April 1706, the allies were emboldened to extend the Archduke's control through Spain's eastern provinces. In pursuit of this object, combined operations played a role when both Cartagena and Alicante were captured, by the fleet either deploying its marines as land soldiers or linking up with detachment of troops that had marched through the interior. Nonetheless, by the autumn of 1706 such operations were at an end. Leake left Alicante at the behest of the Archduke to target Ibiza and on 8 September this island declared for Charles immediately on the appearance of the fleet. Majorca, next capitulated on 16 September after the threat of naval bombardment sparked an uprising against the Bourbon governor. Of the three Spanish island dependencies, this left Minorca and in particular its prized harbour, Port Mahón. Two years would pass before it fell to a British combined operation; and in the interim the frequently touted combined army-navy attack on Toulon would become a reality.

I.v: The 'Project': The Attack on Toulon, June-August 1707.

During a halt at the Crown Inn, Farringdon, in September 1707, Robert Harley reflected that his first conversation with King William in 1691 had concerned a 'very extraordinary proposal' about Toulon.¹⁹⁹ Harley's recollection was representative of William's concern to establish England as the principal Mediterranean power, in pursuance of which a combined land and sea attack on Toulon became a perennial aspiration of England's war policy. In the context of the twenty-five year conflict with France (1688-1713), its capture was thought to entail a double prize: denying the French the port which served as their main southern naval arsenal whence they sought military and commercial control of the Mediterranean region; and secondly, providing an point of entry to the French Mediterranean coastline, along which the allies might extend their control by linking up with armies marching across the Pyrenees from Spain or, to the east, over the Alps from Piedmont-Savoy. Implicit in any attack was also the immediate benefit that the port's importance to France would necessitate a vigorous defence

¹⁹⁹ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iv. 451-2: Robert Harley, 25 Sept. 1707.

whereby troops and resources would probably have to be withdrawn from other war theatres.

Accordingly, during the succession war, Toulon was actively targeted from the outset and Marlborough, as heir to William's strategic conception, was often the inspiration. The Captain-General was not alone, however. Lord Treasurer Godolphin was at times equally enthusiastic, and successive Secretaries of State and Admiralty Boards proved receptive; proposals also often emerged from continental Europe. Indeed, it has been suggested that a plan drafted by an Italian engineer and divulged to Marlborough by the Envoy at Vienna, George Stepney, formed the basis of the deployment in 1707.²⁰⁰ Certainly, there had been little detailed planning until 1705 when, following Marlborough's advocacy at the Cabinet Council, a proposal to mount a combined attack with the Duke of Savoy was contained within the secret Instructions issued to Peterborough and Shovell. This plan could not of course be implemented because early in the year the French forced the Duke of Savoy on to the defensive by capturing Nice and Villefranche and also by threatening his Piedmont stronghold, Turin, thereby rendering it impossible for him to lead an army across the Alps and westwards into Provence. Victor Amadeus was similarly occupied for most of the following year by the celebrated battle for Turin, but once he and the senior Imperial General, Prince Eugene, broke the French siege in September and saved the city, the Grand Alliance, and England in particular, were able in the winter months of 1706/7 to resurrect the plans for an attack on Toulon.²⁰¹

The decision to make this a focus of the 1707 campaign in the Mediterranean again owed much to Marlborough's support as the Ministry pressed forward the dispatch of the 'Project' - expressed in the form of Instructions - in February 1707 to the senior allied Admiral in the Mediterranean, Sir Cloudesley Shovell.²⁰² Shovell had been in the region since

²⁰⁰ Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 230; *Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i. 337 n. 5; *The Diplomatic Correspondence of the Right Honourable Richard Hill*, ed. W. Blackley (London, 1845), i, pp. 130-1: Godolphin to Hill, 27 June; PRO, SP 105/77, unf.: Stepney to Harley, 27 Jan. 1706 [NS]; Spens, *George Stepney*, p. 266.

²⁰¹ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 363-4: Copy of instructions to Charles, E. Peterborough and Sir Cloudesley Shovell, 7 May 1705; Quincy, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 589-92, 627-35; Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II*, pp. 149-50; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii. 755-6 n. 5; see also Chapter 2, Section I.iv, pp. 235-6, 238, above.

²⁰² *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, iii. 268: Marlborough to the Prince of Savoy, 27 Dec. 1706; BL, Add MSS 28153, fos. 9-17: Instructions for Attack on Toulon, Feb 1707; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. pp. 516-17: Extract of a letter from Sunderland to Shovell, 23 Dec. 1706; Extract of a letter from Sunderland to Shovell, 14 Feb. 1707; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 230; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, p. 250.

the autumn of 1706, when his fleet arrived at Lisbon along with Earl Rivers's detachment of troops. Originally it had been intended that this combined force would undertake a descent on the French Atlantic coast, but when this action was cancelled before the fleet departed England, the new Instructions charged them with helping the war effort in the Peninsula and suggested Cádiz or Seville as possible targets for a descent. In the event, no combined action took place for Rivers and the Ministry reckoned that augmenting the allied armies in Spain was the more pressing necessity.²⁰³ Shovell joined Sir George Byng's winter squadron, which had been established following the departure in September 1706 of Leake's main fleet, to act as an escort convoy to troops and war materials. It was on return to Lisbon from delivering troops to Valencia in early March that Shovell received the February orders about the Toulon attack.²⁰⁴

The operation outlined in the 'Project' document was similar to the 1705 proposal: a combined Savoyard and Imperial army would march from Piedmont through the Alps into French Provence. As this force advanced to attack Toulon from the interior, a substantial Anglo-Dutch fleet commanded by Shovell would approach Toulon harbour with the aim of calibrating a bombardment with the Duke of Savoy's landward assault. The greater detail of the 1707 plan compared with the 1705 outline did however give rise to two particular points of interest. The prohibition in Article Fourteen against the fleet having troops aboard due to the military exigencies of the Peninsula shaped a different combined army-navy dynamic for this operation, compared with that of other operations considered. Without a self-contained descent force launched from the fleet, the amphibious element was to consist of the co-ordination and mutual reinforcement of free-standing land and sea forces. This absence of a combined expeditionary force specifically dispatched from England might ostensibly place the Toulon operation outside the scope of this study; but, albeit different, the operational plan did embody an inherent land-sea relationship which, along with London's administrative and policy input in terms of operational design and the material provision manifest in both the 40-vessel fleet and war supplies for the land forces, meant that it can be appropriately considered as a British combined operation. The second notable item to emerge from the Instructions

²⁰³ See Chapter 2, Section I.vii, pp. 297-9, for a relation of the abandonment of the Shovell-Rivers descent.

²⁰⁴ HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, vii. 516-17: Extract of a letter from Sunderland to Shovell, 23 Dec. 1706; Extract of a letter from Sunderland to Shovell, 14 Feb. 1707; BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 32-3: Shovell to the Duke of Savoy, 28 Mar. 1707 [NS].

was the command structure. Hitherto, the sovereign command authority for British combined operations had typically been - both in theory and largely in practice - the Council of War. The 1707 'Project' for the assault on Toulon however placed full command with the Duke of Savoy. Shovell would still have to call a naval Council of War for the regulation of fleet actions but, with respect to the overall operation, he was specifically directed to 'conform' himself to the Duke's 'orders and advises'.²⁰⁵ Accordingly, this was clearly going to place heavy responsibilities on the fleet liaison officer to the Duke's Court at Turin, which Shovell was ordered to appoint.

To fill this appointment Shovell turned to his former Flag Captain and recently promoted Rear-Admiral of the Blue, Sir John Norris. Aside from their personal friendship, Norris had performed a similar role - albeit in an unofficial capacity - as Shovell's emissary to the Archduke Charles's 'Court' in late August 1705 when it seemed that the operation to capture Barcelona might be given up. He therefore at least had some experience of what would in later years be termed a Staff appointment. Norris's early transport to Turin to establish the Duke's readiness was clearly an imperative; but Shovell also recognised that he had to guard against the possibility that the land march might already have begun, thus necessitating the early arrival of the naval squadron off Toulon. Moreover, besides this operation, the Admiralty had recently dispatched orders requiring the fleet to keep a presence in the Mediterranean and to be ready to undertake whatever tasks were deemed appropriate to assist the war effort in Spain. With his own squadron badly in need of a refit and unable to sail immediately, Shovell was faced with a problem of resource deployment. The naval Council of War at two meetings on 13 March therefore decided that in the absence of reinforcements the only way to satisfy the demands upon the fleet was to dispatch Byng and the Dutch Admiral Vandergoes to the Mediterranean with as large a squadron as could quickly be brought together. It would carry to Valencia the land supplies now ready at Lisbon and undertake any other tasks required of it by the Archduke. Norris was to sail with Byng's squadron into the Mediterranean and, at an appropriate early moment, he would proceed onwards with four warships to Genoa whence he would transfer overland to Turin. As required by the Instructions, these four ships would remain on the coast guarding the Italian ports to prevent enemy egress or coastal transportation; and, if this number was to

²⁰⁵ BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 24, 28-30: Shovell to Norris, 28 Mar. 1707 [NS]; 'The Project'.

prove insufficient, Norris could request Byng to detach vessels from his squadron. Equally, Byng was to bring his squadron before Toulon if news was received that the Duke had punctually begun his march. Meanwhile, Shovell was to prepare his squadron to join Byng; and, under the anticipated operational timetable, the combined fleet would sail to Toulon.²⁰⁶

Byng left Lisbon at the end of March with an Anglo-Dutch squadron of 22 men-of-war, six frigates and sloops, and some auxiliary vessels. He reached Alicante on Spain's south-eastern coast in the second week of April. Liaising with its Governor, Major-General John Richards, and the commander of the allied forces in Spain, the Earl of Galway, Byng's squadron provided coastal transportation for troops and provisions; and, although mundane, this service proved vitally important in getting reinforcements to Galway's shattered army at Tortosa, where it had retreated following its defeat by Marshal Berwick at Almanza (14 April). Whilst engaged with this task and also assisting the organisation of an enhanced defensive posture for Alicante, Denia and Valencia, which were now thought to be vulnerable as a result of Berwick's victory, the *Orford* and the *Winchester* joined from Lisbon on 22 April with important letters for the Duke. Prompted by their arrival, Byng and Norris immediately met aboard the *Royal Anne* and decided that the Rear-Admiral should leave immediately for Savoy, even though only two of the four ships originally scheduled for this voyage were available. The storeship would also have to remain with Byng due to uncertain intelligence of a French fleet off Cape Mallorca. The Admirals were nonetheless hopeful that Shovell's arrival with the rest of the fleet was imminent, as this would release all the vessels thought necessary for the Toulon operation. Norris raised his Flag in the *Orford* that same day and made good time to put into Genoa harbour on 3 May; two days later he reached Turin and met the English envoy, William Chetwynd.²⁰⁷

To facilitate agreement on the final details of the plan, Shovell had furnished Norris with a number of heads for discussion, but on presenting himself for the first time in the

²⁰⁶ BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 24-8: Shovell to Norris, 28 Mar. 1707 [NS]; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, p. 311; *The Byng Papers*, i. 146-7, 152-62: Prince George of Denmark to Shovell, 10 Feb. 1707; At a Council of War, 13 Mar. 1707 [There are separate minutes for the two Councils held on the same day]; From Sir Cloudisley Shovell, 13, 28 Mar. 1707.

²⁰⁷ *The Byng Papers*, i. 138, 162-88: At a Council of War, 10, 16, 17, 18 Apr., 19 May 1707; From Lord Galway, 21, 23 Apr., 5, 8, 10, 15, 17, 20, 25, May 1707 [NS]; From Major-General Richards, 28 Apr. 1707; At a Consultation between Sir George Byng, Kt., Vice Admiral of the Blue and Sir John Norris, Kt., Rear Admiral of the Blue, 22 Apr. 1707 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 31-2: Norris to Sunderland, 3, 7 May 1707.

Duke's bedchamber it quickly became clear that Victor Amadeus was unfamiliar with the substantive proposal. This was largely London's fault. In an attempt to keep the plan from Peterborough, who having finally goaded the Ministry into his recall was expected to travel through Italy on his return, Chetwynd had not received any specific instructions about the plan to communicate to the Savoy Court. It now meant that the Duke wished to go through and respond to each article of the 'Project' but only once his fellow land commander, Prince Eugene, had arrived in Turin. Until Eugene appeared, the Duke would only discuss with Norris the wider strategic impact and context of the attack, particularly with respect to the Peninsula. These discussions did allow Norris to establish Victor Amadeus's enthusiasm for the project and his belief that it would ease the military pressure on the allies in Spain.²⁰⁸ The articulation of this latter argument was significant inasmuch as it challenged the increasingly prominent view in some allied quarters that the transfer of a substantial number of troops from the Italian theatre to the Peninsula would be beneficial measure to the allied cause in Spain. Post-Almanza, the Archduke Charles's desire for reinforcement, supported - unhappily from the English perspective - by Prince Eugene, threatened to undermine the Toulon operation. Their claims were eventually thwarted by Marlborough's intervention against any troop transfers and Shovell's resolve to undertake the operation.²⁰⁹

Consultations upon the 'Project' began in earnest when Eugene arrived on 8 May, and it was soon clear that troop transfers to Spain was not the only resource issue which threatened the operation. Ever since being forced to concede the assault against Cádiz in 1702 rather than a descent on Naples, the Imperialists had continued to advocate the latter. This reflected the Emperor's primary territorial interest in the Spanish Empire's Italian lands rather than the mainland crown, and there had been no change in this regard upon the succession of the Archduke's elder brother, Joseph I, following the death of their father, Leopold I, in May 1705. Imperial ambition in northern Italy had only been enhanced by the

²⁰⁸ BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 28, 39-41: 'Some Heads which Sir John Norris is to Concert with his Royal Highness the Duke of Savoy'; Norris to Shovell, 12 May 1707.

²⁰⁹ *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, iii. 382-3, 399-400, 404: Marlborough to Comte Maffey, 28 May 1707 [NS]; Marlborough to Chetwynd, 8 June 1707 [NS]; Marlborough to the 'King of Spain', 11 June 1707 [NS]; *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill*, no. 547, p. 332: Marlborough to Heinsius, [c. 2 Aug.] 1707 [NS]; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, no. 779, p. 768: Marlborough to Godolphin, 4 May 1707; BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 53-4: Shovell to Norris, 1, 3 June 1707 [NS]; Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, pp. 164-5; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 233-4; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, p. 313.

gains made there - including Milan and the Duchy of Mantua - in the autumn of 1706 after the defeat of the French at Turin. Although the armistice signed by Eugene in March 1707, boosted the French army by allowing those remaining French garrisons in northern Italy, a route to Naples was now open and the Emperor pressed firmly again for an attack against it. In preparation he sought to detach substantial numbers of troops from the army Eugene was to join with the Duke's men at Turin, thus undermining the size of the landward attack on Toulon. The design of the 'Project' anticipated this turn of events inasmuch as Article Fifteen expressly rejected a descent on Naples as both 'impracticable', and 'prejudicial' to the Toulon project; and this was the theme Marlborough and Godolphin adopted in conjunction with the importance of the proposed operation in that year's strategic thrust when lobbying against the withdrawal of troops once the Emperor's intention became clear. It was however to no avail, for the joint response by Eugene and the Duke to the 'Project' simply stated that there were sufficient troops for both assaults. Nonetheless, the folly of relinquishing between 10 000-15 000 troops to Count Daun for the Naples enterprise was inadvertently admitted by Eugene when he subsequently complained of a lack of manpower to push forward the siege at Toulon.²¹⁰

A lack of heavy ordnance supplies - powder and cannon ball - for the prospective siege batteries was the principal resource insufficiency that the Duke pressed on Norris during the consultations. According to the Rear-Admiral, this problem would only be increased by the Duke's intention to capture Monaco, Villefranche and Antibes during the march upon Toulon. It was however largely London's fault that the difficulty over the supply of powder and shot had arisen. Firstly, loose phrasing of the 'Project' document did not make it expressly clear who was responsible for supplying or paying for the ball, though since the Admiral had been detailed to provide the cannons, Victor Amadeus with some justification assumed this included the shot; secondly, although the fleet was to provide some powder, the exact amount remained unstated. Norris made it plain to the Duke that the fleet could only supply such materials consistent with its own safety; but, perhaps recognising the implied obligations of the planning document, he lobbied Secretary Sunderland for additional supply,

²¹⁰*The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, nos. 784, pp. 755-6 n. 5, 772-3 n. 3: Godolphin to Marlborough, 9 May 1707; *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, iii. 388-90: Marlborough to Noyelles, 3 June 1707 [NS]; Marlborough to Wratislaw, 6 June 1707 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 3, 38: 'The Project'; 'Answers to the Memorial of Sir John Norris', 11 May 1707; Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen*

particularly of ball which he considered harder to obtain. He also worked with Chetwynd on procurement deals from Leghorn and Genoa and wrote to Shovell for help. Moderate success was achieved inasmuch as Marlborough lent his authority to procurement without London's permission and Shovell, now with Byng off Barcelona, dispatched two ships to Gibraltar for additional supplies which yielded some 12 000 ball. Nonetheless, Shovell was eventually forced to reduce the fleet rounds per gun to 35 and extend his own private credit for purchases, which understandably greatly irked him.²¹¹

The more immediate significance of the continuing bickering over ordnance supply was that it delayed the departure of the land force on its march to Toulon.²¹² Upon Shovell's arrival with the main fleet of some 43 warships off Finale on 2 June, Norris informed him that the army would be ready to march within the week.²¹³ Although the fleet auxiliary vessels had been loading supplies at Leghorn, Genoa and Savona before and after Shovell's arrival at Finale, there was still much to be prepared on the landward side and it was nearly three weeks before Eugene began to march his 35 000 strong army from Turin. Norris and Chetwynd caught up with him three days later on 22 June at Limone just before he began to make the crossing of the Maritime Alps. Negotiating the mountain passes via Tenda, Breil and Sospel, the army made reasonable progress by keeping up a steady pace of between ten to fourteen miles daily along arduous terrain, though this caused a number of men and horses to be lost - principally from slipping down the mountain side. Resistance was threatened only once from a small fort at Sospel with a 100-strong French garrison but it soon surrendered. A day's halt was taken there on 27 June to allow the remainder of the army to come up and Norris took

Anne, p. 161; Symcox, *Victor Amadeus*, p. 154.

²¹¹ BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 35-41: 'Answers to the Memorial of Sir John Norris', 11 May 1707; Norris to Sunderland, 12 May 1707; Norris to Marlborough, 12 May 1707; Norris to Shovell, 12 May 1707; *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, iii. 407-8; Marlborough to Shovell, 12 June 1707 [NS]; Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, pp. 162-3.

²¹² Owen, *War at Sea Under Queen Anne*, p. 163.

²¹³ The ensuing account of the operation against Toulon is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 28141, fos. 3-18: 'A Journall in my [Norris's] attending his Royall Highness the Duke of Savoy with the Confederate Armies from Turin Prince Eugene being Generall under him'; PRO, ADM 51/4261, Part vii, unpaginated, *Milford*, 3-10 Aug. 1707; *The Byng Papers*, i. 199-235: Savoy to Shovell, 7 July. 1707 [NS]; At a Council of War, 3 July, 11, 22 Aug. 1707; From Sir Cloudisley Shovell, 4, 18, 22, 31 July, 7, 9 Aug. 1707; Shovell to the Duke of Savoy, 13 July 1707; Account of the Campaign Against Toulon, Another Account; *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill*, no. 544, pp. 329-30; Marlborough to Heinsius, 27 July 1707 [NS]; *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, iii. 399-400; Marlborough to Chetwynd, 8 June 1707 [NS]; *The History of the Siege of Toulon* (London, 1708); Owen, *The War At Sea Under Queen Anne*, pp. 168-92; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 315-29; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 233-42; Francis, *The First Peninsular War*, pp. 253-6.

this opportunity to forward the Duke's request that the fleet be anchored near the wide Var river estuary just west of Nice to assist the army's crossing of this river.

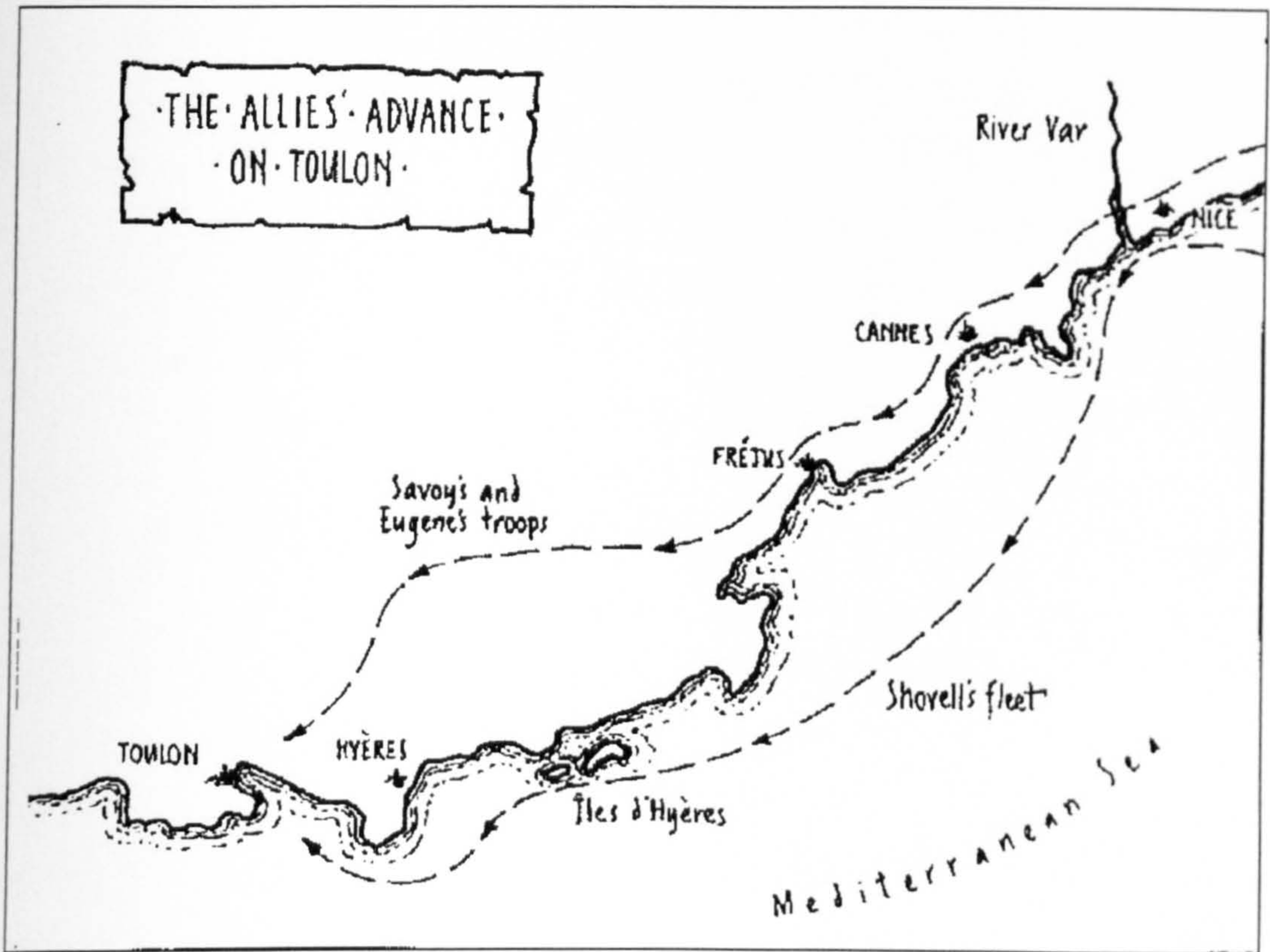


Fig. 17: The Route of the Allies' Advance on Toulon

The rapidly flowing River Var was not only a considerable natural obstacle; the French had dug entrenchments along its western bank some four miles inland from the estuary, and in these were stationed under Monsieur de Saily upwards of seven infantry battalions and three of horse and dragoons. An additional three battalion strong reinforcement was also expected. At a dinner hosted by Shovell aboard the *Association* Flagship on 29 June, it was agreed with the Duke and Prince Eugene that the fleet would undertake a diversionary action by bombarding the French entrenchments nearest to the estuary, thus allowing the army to cross unmolested up river. Norris was appointed to command the small nine-vessel inshore squadron and, upon the Duke's order at noon the following day to begin the bombardment two hours hence, the Rear-Admiral began to warp the squadron in towards the shore line on the French bank of the Var near Cannes. At this

Shovell, Byng and the fleet's other Rear-Admiral, Dilkes joined Norris aboard the *Monmouth*. Shovell as the senior Vice-Admiral was now in command and he justified this seniority by quickly appreciating that the bombardment was causing the enemy horse to draw away from the river side and thus a flank attack by the ships' boats might well capture the angle of the redoubt nearest to the water. The descent of some 600 marines and seamen in boats commanded by Norris proved even more effective than Shovell envisaged, however; for, on the boats' approach, the enemy abandoned their works and fled. On retreat westwards to Toulon they came upon reinforcements under the renegade Irishman, Lieutenant-General Dillon, only eight miles from the Var. Saily's experience of the allied combined force at the river caused him to convince Dillon to abandon his base at the small village of St Paul and seek sanctuary in Toulon. Notwithstanding the French garrisons in Antibes and Monaco, the road to the port was clearing for the allies. During a two-day rest period at St Laurent following the crossing of the Var, Shovell hosted another dinner for the Duke which Eugene, Norris and Chetwynd also attended. Shovell and his guests considered the next stage of the 'Project' and it was now that the Admiral persuaded the Duke to rethink his intention to undertake a circuitous march to Toulon. Victor Amadeus had legitimately reasoned that such a route would allow the capture of Villefranche, Antibes and Monaco, which would not only provide a secure line of retreat in the event of failure but also, when in front of Toulon, relieve any anxieties about a French force operating in his rear. On first coming to Finale, Shovell, supported by Marlborough, had agreed that these places should be targets but considered that the fleet's dependence upon the weather meant that it was better for it to be headed for just one place rather than to have to regulate its appearance at various different points along the coast. Furthermore, although the French knew of the operation, the allied army's elongated disposition when congregating at Turin had kept them guessing as to the direction of their march, thereby causing the main French defence force of 26 squadrons and 53 infantry battalions, which Louis had dispatched under Tessé, to be largely based throughout the Dauphiné and in the Provence-Alpes region. Intelligence returns indicated that there were few defenders actually inside Toulon. Shovell now argued convincingly that a direct and quick march upon the port might allow its capture before Tessé arrived to mount a credible defence. To allay the Duke's principal concern about keeping a secure line of retreat, Shovell did commit the fleet to withdrawing the troops back along the coast aboard

ship if necessary. A naval Council subsequent to the Duke's change of mind also tried to address many of his fears and his arguments for a gradual direct approach upon Toulon. In the absence of the interior line of communication forfeited by not holding Antibes and Monaco, it was decided that two frigates would be left cruising between these places to maintain a sea based communication link. Meanwhile, a twelve-ship squadron under Sir George Byng would, along with the auxiliary vessels, sail close inshore to shadow the army's march, while being ready to land immediately at least twenty guns if required. Shovell would sail the remainder of the fleet to a sheltered anchorage at the Îles d'Hyères, where it would await the land force's arrival in front of Toulon. The Council also took this opportunity to settle upon upwards of 100 guns with proportional powder and shot as the amount of ordnance and supplies that the fleet was to provide for the land force. This supply, combined with the ammunition that the Duke had eventually agreed to procure, made a total of 60 000 shot which, even if the fleet was unable to broadside the port, armed the allies' prospective siege batteries with considerable fire power.

The troops began marching again on 4 July and in eleven days they reached the environs of Toulon, camping about one-and-half to two miles to the east of the port with the village of La Valette serving as the Duke's headquarters. The march had however taken a heavy toll on the land force. The road to Cannes had been difficult to pass along and, from there, the sixteen mile stretch to Fréjus involved an arduous hill climb in insufferable summer heat. Not surprisingly, on reaching this place the entire force was exhausted and had suffered a number of deaths, including at least two suicides. The commanders had also allowed the army to become so stretched out that it took two days for the whole to arrive at Fréjus. Those who were first were occupied in helping to embark some 500 sick soldiers aboard Byng's squadron. More significantly however, this allowed Tessé's force marching from Barcelonnette to gain time on the allies and the Marshal acquired another day when the allied force rested at Pignans over the weekend of 12-13 July. Ultimately, despite his longer distance to march, Tessé brought some 28 infantry battalions into Toulon on the day before the allies arrived at La Valette and, having left them under the Marquis de Göesbriant's command, Tessé promptly departed to bring up some more troops. Göesbriant had also been receiving troops in the town from Provence and, in conjunction with the town's small garrison, he had directed improvements to the defences.

Reconnoitring from the top of Mount Faron, which rose to the north of the town, Norris along with Eugene and the Duke were able to see that Göesbriant's improvements had not yet caused any palisades to be erected along the dry ditch surrounding the ten bastion town wall. They did spy the three small redoubts - St Catherine's, St Ann's and St Anthony's - that commanded the land approaches to the town, and also the towers and forts - particularly La Grande and L'Equillette towers - along the coastline of the Great and Small Roads, which might provide a similar enfilading fire across the sea approach. In addition, Norris recorded seeing about 40 sail of the French fleet in the westernmost of Toulon harbour's two basins, but his journal entry betrays a vague sense of puzzlement that these appeared tightly lashed together. The reason (unknown to Norris at the time) for the ships' curious alignment was that, although Louis had diverted resources away from the battlefleet to the privateers since the battle of Málaga, he did not wish his capital ships to be destroyed by allied fire; therefore, he planned their preservation by scuttling them. Unlike the burnt timber carcass of a ship set ablaze, water damage to a wooden sailing ship could be rectified as long as the submersion had not been too prolonged. Shrewdly however, two three-deckers - *Le Tonnant* and *Le Saint Phillippe* - had been exempted from the impending general scuttle and transformed into buoyant batteries that would subsequently be situated at the eastern end of the harbour.

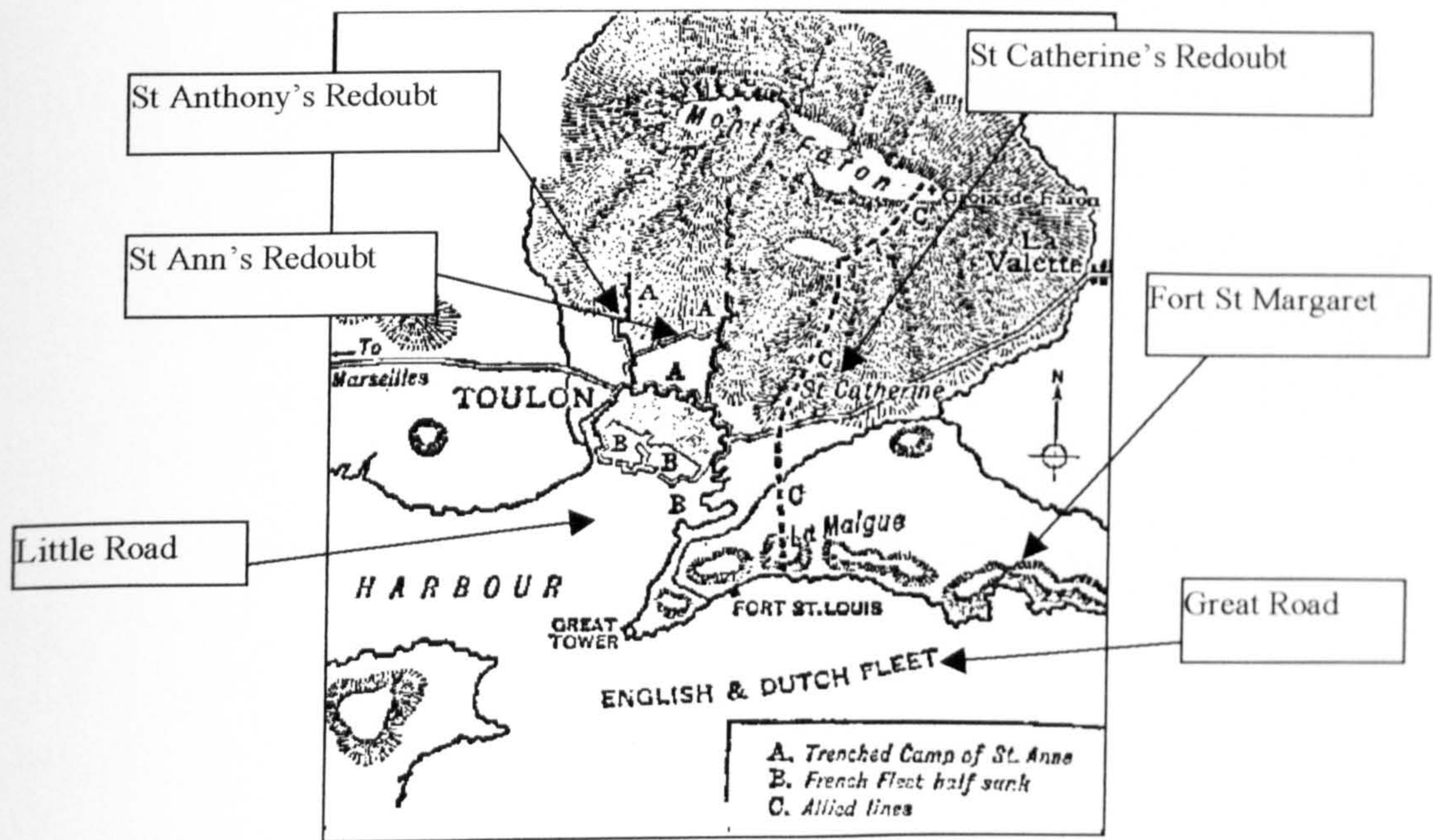


Fig. 18: The Attack on Toulon.

On returning to their camp from Mount Faron on 16 July, Norris first became aware of an irresolution creeping into the land force's command. In general, he heard that Prince Eugene was beginning to raise doubts about the whole enterprise; and in particular, he noticed that no men were sent to secure forward posts. This latter inaction Norris thought odd for it was affording the French time to complete the entrenchments around their camp outside the town, which the reconnaissance had revealed to be situated in the ground between the town's two landward gates, around St Ann's Hill - a much smaller elevation in the foreground of Mount Faron. The operational delay was to an extent explained by the desire of the Duke and Eugene to consult first with Shovell. The Admiral's progress towards Toulon had been eventful. Initially beaten back by a storm on approach to the Îles d'Hyères, Shovell had then adopted the coastal town of Hyères as the fleet base following its ready submission - upon realising that it was now behind enemy lines - to a detachment of marines landed from Byng's inshore squadron. Fortunately, however, it was located westwards of the Îles and thus Shovell had a shorter distance to travel to Duke's headquarters at La Valette.

According to Norris's journal, the senior commanders' consultation on 17 July began to go over old ground prompted by Eugene and the Duke's questioning of Shovell about the size and scale of the fleet support. Shovell again confirmed the ordnance supply and also that the fleet would keep open a coastal line of communication along which the troops might retreat aboard the ships. He also committed the fleet to undertaking a more comprehensive blockade of the town by agreeing to dispose it from the western end of the harbour, where the ships were to link up with an army detachment supposedly coming over the hill, through a central position in front of the harbour, to a point near Hyères in the east. These discussions on details however simply masked a more significant dispute. This had been current since crossing the Var and was principally between Shovell and Eugene over the speed of the operation. The Admiral, supported by the Duke - albeit not to the extent that the latter was willing to assert his superior command - now wished an immediate assault on the enemy lines prior to a direct assault upon Toulon. Eugene however refused to countenance such a approach, believing that the French defence was too strong and that the element of surprise had been forfeited. The consultation also proved an occasion for the Prince to air his general scepticism about the whole operation. Since the Duke refused to make a definitive ruling, a compromise resulted: the fleet would begin unloading the ordnance, while a small scale

assault would take place on St. Catherine Fort as a first stage in fastening in on Toulon. Eugene's real pre-occupations were revealed when Shovell agreed to detach ships to Genoa to carry artillery supplies to Naples to succour Count Daun. By not forgetting his Imperial employer's primary interest, Eugene demonstrated that he was a shrewd political general.

The attack launched against the St Catherine's redoubt on the day following the consultation proved a success, but only after an additional 2500 troops were brought up within a twenty-four hour period to invigorate an uncertain start. When General Razendorf launched an assault on 19 July, the French abandoned the fort and fled, though they demonstrated sufficient presence of mind to blow up the magazine and spike their guns prior to departure. The successful capture of St Catherine's allowed the allies to move their lines forward and site their batteries closer to Toulon. The next few days were taken up by breaking the ground for these batteries and continuing to unload and bring up the guns to them. Meanwhile, Shovell certainly remained keen to advance the operation; he recognised that the basins of Toulon harbour could not be penetrated without first neutralising some of the forts along the roadsteads' shore line, so, on 21 July, he proposed an attack on the starboard sited forts, St Louis and St Margaret. He envisaged that the main thrust would come from the landward, though he committed the fleet to a bombardment. Norris and an engineer were sent by the Duke to undertake a feasibility reconnaissance, and they concluded that both forts were vulnerable. An assault at St Margaret would however have to be without the fleet bombardment, for it seemed likely to the engineer that the naval shot would carry into the allied camp; whilst St Louis seemed a particularly attractive prospect to Norris because of its proximity - with only a narrow neck of land lying between - to Toulon's south-eastern wall. Accordingly the Duke ordered a battery to be constructed against it.

Work on this, like all other building or action ashore, seemed to proceed at half-pace. The suspicion for the absence of momentum must fall on Eugene, but the Duke was also now beginning to have strong doubts about the operation. Although the shore batteries were finished in the last week of July and were manned by a combination of soldiers and seamen, little impression was made on the fortifications of Toulon. Furthermore, the enemy began sallies to harass the allied lines and on the night of 24 July about 200 of the enemy attacked the right of the allied works and temporarily occupied them. When several French galleys also managed to leave the harbour, the Duke began to worry that the fleet might withdraw its

support and leave his men stranded. On 29 July he sought another meeting with Shovell, whom Norris warned to expect the worse. In the event the Duke did not, as perhaps Norris feared, propose abandoning the operation; but he did however convey his considerable misgivings about its current prosecution. He considered all action to date to have been slowly implemented, thus causing them to have sat in front of Toulon for fifteen days without progress. While he still believed the capture of Toulon possible, the siege would have to be pushed forward far more vigorously. Shovell kept private his own recently expressed doubts in letters to Secretary Sunderland about the likelihood of success at Toulon and, according to Norris, he wholeheartedly agreed with the Duke about pressing the siege forward. He furthermore suggested that if the town's capture was to prove beyond their capabilities, they should aim to destroy as much as possible of the French shipping in the harbour given that the scuttling had begun. The Duke was however again unwilling to assert his superior command and he relied upon Eugene for suggestions as to how their conduct of the siege might be improved and accelerated. Predictably, the Prince proved diffident, proposing only that the Generals be consulted and that the number of the guns on certain of the batteries be increased to 90. Despite not using his command authority over Eugene, the Duke had no intention of sharing it with other officers, and accordingly the meeting closed with the modest resolution to land more naval ordnance and to target actively both forts St Louis and St Margaret. Over the course of following fortnight, however, the allied siege continued in a half-hearted manner. Prince Eugene's lukewarm attitude began to permeate throughout the army and their position only seemed more vulnerable when on 4 August the French launched around 12 000 troops along the whole stretch of allied lines. Although they were eventually pushed back, a number of allied officers, including the Prince of Saxe-Gotha, and men were killed. More significantly the assault had demonstrated that the French capability at Toulon was not purely defensive. Off the coast, the fleet was also making little progress. Squadrons under Byng and Dilkes had been struggling to capture Fort St Louis and the various gun emplacements along the coasts which were preventing Shovell turning the fleet's fire upon the French ships in the westernmost basin. By 7 August, St Louis and St Margaret were taken, though the former was actually abandoned by the French; and this allowed Shovell to place a detachment of ships, including the bomb vessels, under Dilkes close into the harbour. This manoeuvre had no future apart from targeting the shipping in the harbour. The Duke had

already decided to raise the siege. On 5 August, he requested that Norris arrange the embarkation of the soldiers. When this was taking place at St Margaret's fort, he decided to march away with Eugene, leaving the remainder of the army not yet embarked. A couple of days later Shovell followed the Duke back to Nice, and on 23 August the land force was disbanded.

The 'Project' to capture Toulon, which had been a perennial item on the Alliance's agenda, had upon its first implementation five years into the war simply petered out. The army-navy relationship was novel in the context of the succession war; however, it had not been at fault. Facilitated by Norris, the commanders of the two free-standing forces - the Duke of Savoy and Shovell - co-operated effectively throughout, with the Admiral to his credit always seeking both to accommodate the Duke's requirements and to prompt him forward. The problem lay instead with the Duke's simultaneous exercise of his land and supreme operational commands. With respect to the former, he too quickly deferred to Prince Eugene; this meant that he subsequently lacked the confidence to assert the latter. Eugene, while not a reluctant participant, was certainly sceptical of the operation from the outset. As it progressed, he was only able to view it through the prism of a land operation. He considered the French defences and manpower at Toulon too strong for his troops, without thinking how the combination of land and sea forces might be effectively used to neutralise the French strength. Moreover, the Prince made plain his contention that there were allied armies in enclosed land theatres which badly needed the troops. Although it had been made clear even by Marlborough that resources were in the first instance to be devoted to the Toulon 'Project', Eugene's attitude did not engender the critical operational momentum. Failure at Toulon was the product of irresolute command which had been principally vested with the land service. It is true that combined Councils of War have often been identified as the reason for operational failure or underperformance. On this occasion, however, one might reasonably speculate that a sovereign Council of War under Shovell's guidance might have provided the necessary operational momentum to propel the army and navy to the capture of Toulon.

I.vi: The Capture of Sardinia and Minorca, July-September 1708.

The failure to capture or destroy Toulon meant that, once the scuttled ships had been raised,

the harbour could be quickly operational again and the French might continue their strong challenge for dominance of the Mediterranean. The allies needed to guard against French egress or embarkations and this bore upon another consequence of the previous year's retreat - the lack of an adequate port where the allied fleet could winter in the Mediterranean.

Gibraltar had served usefully since 1705 and, in particular, its situation at the entrance to the Mediterranean had helped prevent the conjunction of the French Brest and Toulon fleets. Nonetheless, its dockyard could only cope with a small number of refits and, as Leake's squadron discovered upon bringing relief in November 1704, the roadstead was too exposed to provide a secure anchorage in all but seasonable weather. None of the other captured islands or Spanish coastal towns - Majorca and Barcelona, for example - had appropriate facilities either, and the practice had been for a smaller winter squadron to be based at Lisbon. This left the allied presence in the Mediterranean semi-permanent, and the vessels of the winter squadrons faced a return voyage to Portugal if disabled at sea.²¹⁴

Minorca and its harbour, Port Mahón, had long been considered the key to the permanent exercise of allied, or more specifically British, naval power in the Mediterranean. Unlike Gibraltar, Minorca did not share a land border with enemy territory and it was also strategically sited within the Mediterranean as the easternmost of the three Balearic Islands, with the other two - Majorca and Ibiza - already taken by the allies. As for Port Mahón, it was a commodious and secure harbour, where a sizeable fleet comprising the largest rates might easily winter.²¹⁵ During the war, Minorca had frequently been suggested as a target, most recently in 1706 when Sir John Leake had captured Majorca and Ibiza. Then the Archduke Charles had particularly urged its capture, believing the inhabitants to be well disposed to the Habsburg cause, and it would probably have fallen to Leake if he had not been forced to take the main fleet back to England due to the lateness of the season.²¹⁶ The Archduke put the island's capture back on the war policy agenda when, in the spring of 1708, following a year of military reverses on the Peninsula, he and the Emperor - albeit with

²¹⁴ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, no. 977, pp. 975, 975 n. 4: Marlborough to Godolphin, 6 May 1708; BL, Add MSS 5431, f. 85: 'The report of Mr Dugald Campbell', 5 June 1708; H.T. Dickinson. 'The Capture of Minorca 1708', *MM* li (1965), 195-6; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 439-40; for details of Leake's relief of Gibraltar in November 1704 see Chapter 2, Section I.iii, pp. 224-7, above.

²¹⁵ J. Armstrong, *The History of the Island of Minorca* (2nd edn, London, 1756), pp. 2-3, 17-20; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 397-8.

²¹⁶ See Chapter 2, Section I.iv, pp. 263, 269.

differing interests focusing upon Spain and the Italian coast respectively - urged the British Admiralty to winter a fleet within the Mediterranean. This clearly required a forward port other than Lisbon, and Minorca seemed the obvious target. The island was still thought to be vulnerable, although a new Governor, Diego Leonardo Davila - who had been sent to Minorca in January 1707 along with (albeit temporarily) Marshal Villars - had tightened Bourbon control and improved the defences. Notwithstanding, London was curiously slow in considering the Archduke's request and it was towards the end of June before Godolphin wrote to the newly appointed commander of English troops in Spain, Lieutenant-General James Stanhope, pressing upon him the necessity of Minorca's capture.²¹⁷

Interestingly, Stanhope was not sent a set of Instructions and had himself suggested La Spezia on the Genoese coast as a winter port. However, as Marlborough had also written about the strategic imperative of this action at Minorca and criticised La Spezia, the General was left in no doubt that he should take charge of organising the operation forthwith.²¹⁸ Then based at Cervera, Stanhope travelled to Barcelona where he began to assemble a land force in the middle of August. Despite Imperial reinforcements, troops numbers remained low in the Peninsula and Stanhope managed to secure only about 1800 men. Of this number, Southwell's was the sole English regiment with the remaining 1300 being Spanish, Neapolitan and Portuguese drafts. An artillery train of ten guns and some mortars along with a reasonable amount of ordnance supplies was also collected and Stanhope was fortunate to obtain the services of the experienced gunner, Albert Borgard, and the engineer, Colonel Petit. Of course, this represented only half of the operational force for the navy was required to project the land detachment on to the island and also - particularly if fierce opposition was encountered - to provide fire support and supply. Aware of this, Stanhope had upon first arriving in Barcelona sent a dispatch with details of the proposed operation and a request for

²¹⁷ PRO, ADM 1/4091, Part iii, fos .622, 643: Sunderland to the Admiralty, 13 Apr. 1704; Burchett to Sunderland, 27 Apr. 1704; PRO, ADM 1/4092, fos. 50-1: Boyle to the Admiralty, 17 Aug. 1708, and enclosure, 'Extract of a Letter from Mr Stanhope', 22 June 1708 [NS]; HMC, *Seventh Report, Marlborough MSS*, pp. 32-3: Sunderland to Marlborough, 15 June 1708; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, no. 1025, pp. 1019, 1019 n. 4: Godolphin to Marlborough, 22 June 1708; Mahon, *History of the War of Succession in Spain*, Appendix, pp. lxxii-lxxiii: To the Earl of Sunderland, 25 Aug. 1708 [NS]; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 276-7.

²¹⁸ *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, iv. 108: Marlborough to Stanhope, 15 July 1708 [NS]; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 440.

help to the Admiral currently commanding in the Mediterranean, Sir John Leake.²¹⁹

Following Sir Cloudesley Shovell's death on his return voyage from Toulon when his flagship accidentally foundered upon the rocks off the Scilly Isles, Leake had been sent to the Mediterranean as the senior Admiral for the beginning of the 1708 campaign. The fleet's tasks during the early summer had included transporting troops and supplies to the Peninsula, mainly from the Italian coastline controlled by the Imperialists, and also escorting the Archduke's fourteen year old bride, Princess Elisabeth Christina of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, to whom he had already been married by proxy.²²⁰ At a Council of War on 29 May, the naval Flags had resolved to subordinate the fleet to the Archduke's operational authority and, having landed the Princess safely at Mataró just north of Barcelona on 14 July, Leake next expected Charles to order the capture of the island of Sardinia.²²¹ Although mountainous, its fertile lands yielded large amounts of corn and the contribution this might make to the allies subsistence on the Peninsula had been recognised. The principal city, Cagliari, located on the southern coast, was however well defended by extensive fortifications with over, it was reckoned, 200 cannon; and any operation against it would probably require a sizeable land force and siege train. Albeit still without a official order, Leake wrote to Stanhope requesting materials for a siege and additional troops to bolster the marine soldiers which were expected to comprise the burden of the land force. Shortly thereafter, Leake's intuition was borne out when the Archduke did direct him to the reduction of Sardinia. In addition, the fleet was to secure the Sicilian and Neapolitan coasts from the privateers and thus open a passageway for an Imperial-run expedition from Naples to capture Sicily. On 21 July, the naval Council considered the Archduke's order and resolved that the fleet would start for Sardinia once the marines coming from Tarragona had arrived and the Spanish regiment - which was seemingly all the additional manpower Leake's letter to Stanhope had yielded - was embarked. Notably,

²¹⁹ BL, Add MSS 22231, fos. 76-7: Cope to 'My Lord', 25 Aug. 1708 [NS]; Mahon, *History of the War of Succession in Spain*, Appendix, pp. lxxii-lxxiii: To the Earl of Sunderland, 25 Aug. 1708 [NS]; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 274-5; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 277.

²²⁰ Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 343-53; BL, Add MSS 5431, fos. 4-6, 66-8: 'Instructions for Sir John Leake Kt.', 8 Jan. 1708 [NS]; 'The King' to Leake, 28 May 1708 [NS]; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 242-50; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 440.

²²¹ The ensuing account of the capture of Sardinia is based on the following primary sources: BL, Add MSS 5431: fos. 101-3, 107, 106, 113: Leake to Stanhope, 20 July 1708; 'The King' to Leake, 30 July 1708 [NS]; 'Att a Councill of War', 21 July 1708; Leake to Wills, 1 Aug. 1708; Leake to the Marquis of Jamaica; Leake to the Chief Magistrates and Inhabitants of the City of Cagliari, 1 Aug. 1708; Leake to 'The King of Spain', 6 Aug. 1708; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 104-5: 'Leake's Journal', 25 July-7 Aug. 1708; Martin-Leake, *The Life*

the Council also decided that seven warships from the fleet were to be left behind with orders to patrol the Catalan coast on guard duty.

With the Conde de Cifuentes 500-strong regiment aboard and about 600 marines brought from Tarragona, Leake signalled the fleet's departure from Barcelona on 25 July. The voyage proceeded slowly as the Admiral initially waited for the *Essex* and the *Dunkirk* to catch up. These ships had respectively delayed their sailing to take on board the recent mail and some Sardinian exiles who were to be landed on the island prior to the fleet's arrival to fan support for the Archduke. Next, when crossing from the Balearics to Sardinia on 30 July, Leake eased sail to allow three warships to go ahead to chase any enemy vessels out of Cagliari Bay. It was not until the late afternoon of 1 August that the fleet, having been joined by the *Dunkirk* earlier that morning following its landing of the exiles, came upon Cagliari. In accordance with convention, Leake sent a summons to the Viceroy and the City Magistrates, which they returned later that evening requesting a day to think about it.

As at Cartagena in 1706, Leake was not inclined to afford the authorities time to seek terms nor to dispose their defences and he immediately ordered the bomb vessels against the town. While they kept up a vigorous bombardment throughout the night - some 110 shells were thrown into the city by the early hours of 2 August - Leake arranged with Major-General Wills that his marines and Spanish troops would congregate in the fleet's boats around the *Isabella* yacht, which Wills would board, for a landing to the east of the city. This force was augmented by 900 sailors who were regimented into 13 companies with the naval captain, Evans, as Colonel. Rear-Admiral Norris was also ready with seven warships to continue the bomb vessels' bombardment. However, again as at Cartagena, the town's authorities sent out an offer to surrender and then agreed to submit to Leake's terms immediately upon the attack beginning in the morning of 2 August. The Spanish regiment was disposed as a garrison and the marines and the seamen 'regiment' were re-embarked aboard the squadron. By 6 August, all the Articles of Capitulation had been signed and the Conde de Cifuentes, as Governor, assumed control of the island for the Archduke.

It was twelve days later, just as Leake was preparing his squadron to exact retribution in the form of 400 000 crowns from Pope Clement XI due to his alleged fiscal involvement in the 'Old Pretender's' recent attempted invasion of Britain, that Stanhope's letter reached him.

Also enclosed with this post was a letter from the Archduke which - curiously, given Charles's previously expressed enthusiasm for Stanhope's operation - recommended that Leake first finish the operations on the Italian coast and then proceed to Minorca; whilst correspondence from Godolphin emphasised the importance that Queen Anne placed upon his current action against the Pope. To decide the best course of action, the Admiral held a Council of War that same day, 18 August. The lateness of the season dictated that only one substantive operation might be undertaken. The Dutch were not involved in the action against the Pope because the grievance was an issue of British sovereignty and therefore since Minorca had long been an attractive prize for the Grand Alliance, the Council decided to respond to Stanhope's request.²²²

Once the *Defiance* had been sent to Majorca and, if necessary Barcelona, to inform Stanhope of the Council's resolution, Leake lost no time in putting the main fleet under sail for Minorca on the evening of 18 August. After a week's voyage they approached the island's southern coast but, with no sign of Stanhope and his force, the Council resolved to cruise off the island awaiting his arrival. Back at Barcelona, Stanhope, having embarked his troops and train aboard the auxiliary vessels, had encountered a minor problem in securing a convoy. Of the seven warships left by the Council off the Catalan coast when the fleet sailed for Sardinia, the three Dutch vessels were prohibited from leaving that coastline after 20 August; whilst the others, in the absence of further directions from Admiral Leake, were bound by their original operational orders to remain there on guard duty.²²³ Given these circumstances, it is usually remarked that Stanhope secured an escort because his brother commanded one of the warships - the *Milford* - then on that station.²²⁴ Doubtless fraternal loyalty inclined Captain Philip Stanhope to help his elder brother, but a Council of the English captains of those vessels left on the coast legitimated the departure of the *Milford* and Captain Trevanion's *York* by invoking an article of their Instructions which permitted two

²²² BL, Add MSS 5431, fos. 78-9, 117-20: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir John Leake Knt', 4 May 1708; Sunderland to Leake, 4 May 1708; 'The King' to Stanhope, 23 Aug. 1708 [NS]; Stanhope to Leake, 24 Aug. 1708 [NS] and enclosure, 'An Extract of a Letter from My Lord Treasurer', 22 June 1708; 'At a Council of War', 18 Aug. 1708; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 271-8; HMC, *Eighth Report and Appendix - (Part I)*, Marlborough MSS, p. 32: Sunderland to Marlborough, 7 May 1708; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 399-400.

²²³ BL, Add MSS 5431, f. 123: 'Att a Councill of War', 25 Aug. 1708; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 276, 278-9.

²²⁴ B. Williams, *Stanhope: A Study in Eighteenth Century War and Diplomacy* (Oxford, 1932), p. 74; Francis,

vessels, upon the request of Stanhope or the Archduke, to sail between Algiers or Majorca convoying corn for Catalonia. As the elder Stanhope wished to go to Majorca first to collect more men and materials, there was nothing improper about the *Milford* and the *York* accompanying him. In the event, however, it would seem that the other captains, including the Dutch, also attached their vessels to the convoy because Stanhope's aide-de-camp, John Cope, referred to a squadron of ten warships leaving for Majorca over 22-23 August. This number was corroborated by the logs from the *Milford* and the *York*; whilst Leake's biographer notes that there were three Dutch vessels present.²²⁵ No extant evidence accounts for the increased escort and the reasons for the change in the Council's resolution remain unclear.

Hours prior to Stanhope's arrival Leake had received a letter from him detailing the additional marines and material supplies that the expeditionary force had taken on at Majorca during its two day stay there (26-28 August) en route from Barcelona. Despite increasing the number of troops to around 2000, Stanhope was still concerned that his land force was insufficient, particularly as the nature of Minorca's coastline would not allow the fleet to provide close fire support for the soldiers on land. Accordingly, he requested that Leake release the maximum possible number of marines to help with the land action and to form a garrison in the event of Minorca's successful capture. While awaiting the land force, the naval Council had resolved that, due to the lateness of the season, Leake should prepare to depart for England with as many warships as a subsequent Council would deem desirable. Meeting again on 3 September, it attempted to comply with Stanhope's request by directing the departing ships to leave any marines surplus to the vessel's highest complement with Rear-Admiral Sir Edward Whitaker's seventeen-strong winter squadron. This naval force was to assist in completing the operation at Minorca for as long as the weather allowed, and then undertake a number of other tasks such as the transport of imperial reinforcements to

The First Peninsular War p. 267; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 277.

²²⁵ BL, Add MSS 22231, fos. 78, 81: Cope to 'Sir', 29 Sept. 1708 [NS]; Cope to 'My Lord', 30 Sept. 1708 [NS]; PRO, ADM 51/4261, Part vii, unpaginated, *Milford*, 23 Aug. 1708; PRO, ADM 51/4402, Part iii, unpaginated, *York*: 23 Aug. 1708; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 283. Oddly, in a letter to Sunderland after the operation – Mahon, *War of the Succession in Spain*, Appendix, pp. lxxvi-lxxviii: To the Earl of Sunderland, 11 Oct. 1708 [NS] – Stanhope strongly suggested that there was no Council of War and that the *Milford* and *York* simply precipitously left Barcelona. The purpose of this letter was though to recommend Trevanion as one of the Commissioners of the Navy and it may be that this objective caused Stanhope to manipulate the truth.

Spain.²²⁶ Stanhope was subsequently critical of the naval contribution to the operation, even alleging that its officers were more difficult to contend with than the enemy; this frustration might have had its roots in Leake's failure to commit all the resources under his control, which appeared to mark a decline in naval enthusiasm for the operation compared to when Leake left off exacting retribution from the Pope. The Admiral's biographer - albeit again overstating his case - rescues Leake from such criticism. Autumn was fast approaching and as the senior Admiral, Leake had always to have regard for the safety of the whole fleet, which included the larger rates that were unstable in poor weather. Moreover, in complying with Stanhope's request for marines he increased the land troops by about 500 and the General could still call on the support of a sizeable naval squadron. It should also be recalled that during the war Leake had frequently commanded in the Mediterranean, including at least two tours in charge of a winter squadron, and he was thus unlikely to forget or downplay the necessity for a secure Mediterranean harbour. Most significantly, however, Leake did not depart immediately but remained to oversee the landing of the marines and other troops.²²⁷

This began in the evening of 3 September at a site about three miles from the town of Mahón well away from the harbour's heavy fortifications.²²⁸ When the landing was completed the following morning, Stanhope marched a detachment of 100 grenadiers to Mahón which, without opposition, quickly declared for the Archduke. These circumstances, along with the formation of a small militia force that was eager to join the allies, seemed to confirm Charles's contention that the islands' inhabitants favoured him over the Bourbons. Stanhope sought to capitalise on this by dispatching some 400 soldiers north to secure the main city, Ciudadela; whilst Rear-Admiral Whitaker did likewise by ordering a couple of ships to Fornells, where they were to silence the fort guarding its harbour.

²²⁶ BL, Add MSS 22231, f. 78: Cope to 'Sir', 29 Sept. 1708 [NS]; BL, Add MSS 5431, fos. 124, 126-8: 'Att a Councill of War', 1 Sept. 1708; Stanhope to Leake, 14 Sept. 1708 [NS]; Leake to Stanhope, 3 Sept. 1708, and enclosure, 'Att a Councill of War' Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 281-5; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, pp. 277-8.

²²⁷ Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 297-303; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 440.

²²⁸ The ensuing account the capture of Minorca is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: BL, Add MSS 22231, fos. 79-84: Cope to 'Sir', 29 Sept. 1708 [NS]; Cope to 'My Lord', 30 Sept. 1708 [NS]; PRO, ADM 51/4261, Part vii, unpaginated, *Milford*: 2-8 Sept. 1708; PRO, ADM 51/4402, Part iii, unpaginated, *York*, 3-13 Sept. 1708; BL, Add MSS 5431, fos. 130-1: Leake to the Admiralty Secretary [Burchett], 4 Sept. 1708; BL, Add MSS 47970, pp. 106-7: 'Leake's Journal', 8 Aug.-8 Sept. 1708; Mahon, *History of the War of Succession in Spain*, Appendix, pp. lxxiii-lxxvi: To the Earl of Sunderland, 30 Sept. 1708 [NS]; Armstrong, *The History of the Island of Minorca*, pp. 92-6; Martin-Leake, *The Life of Sir John Leake*, ii. 285-7, 293; *The Byng Papers*, ii. 301: Stanhope to Sunderland; Dickinson, 'The Capture of

Port Mahón however remained the allies' main objective, but it was also the most stoutly defended part of the island. Three forts - Philipet, St Philip and Charles - covered both the harbour mouth and the roadstead. Of these three, St Philip was the largest: four-bastions, bolstered by three ravelins and a ditch, meant that it was more accurately described by John Cope and others as a castle and, combined with its situation on an eminence above the harbour, its early capture was imperative. Additional defence for the 1000-strong Franco-Spanish garrison commanded inside St Philip by the Frenchman, Colonel de la Jonquière, was provided by the harbour's perimeter stone wall along which were four towers housing four guns each. Due to the poor quality of the ground around the harbour for transporting cannon, an attempt was made on 7 September to land the artillery near to this perimeter wall but La Jonquière effectively directed St Philip's guns to beat this off. It was now - notwithstanding that the land force was about to face its sternest test - that Leake's reduced fleet departed for England. Stanhope's frustration with the Admiral is perhaps understandable, though prior to leaving Leake did at least augment the ordnance.

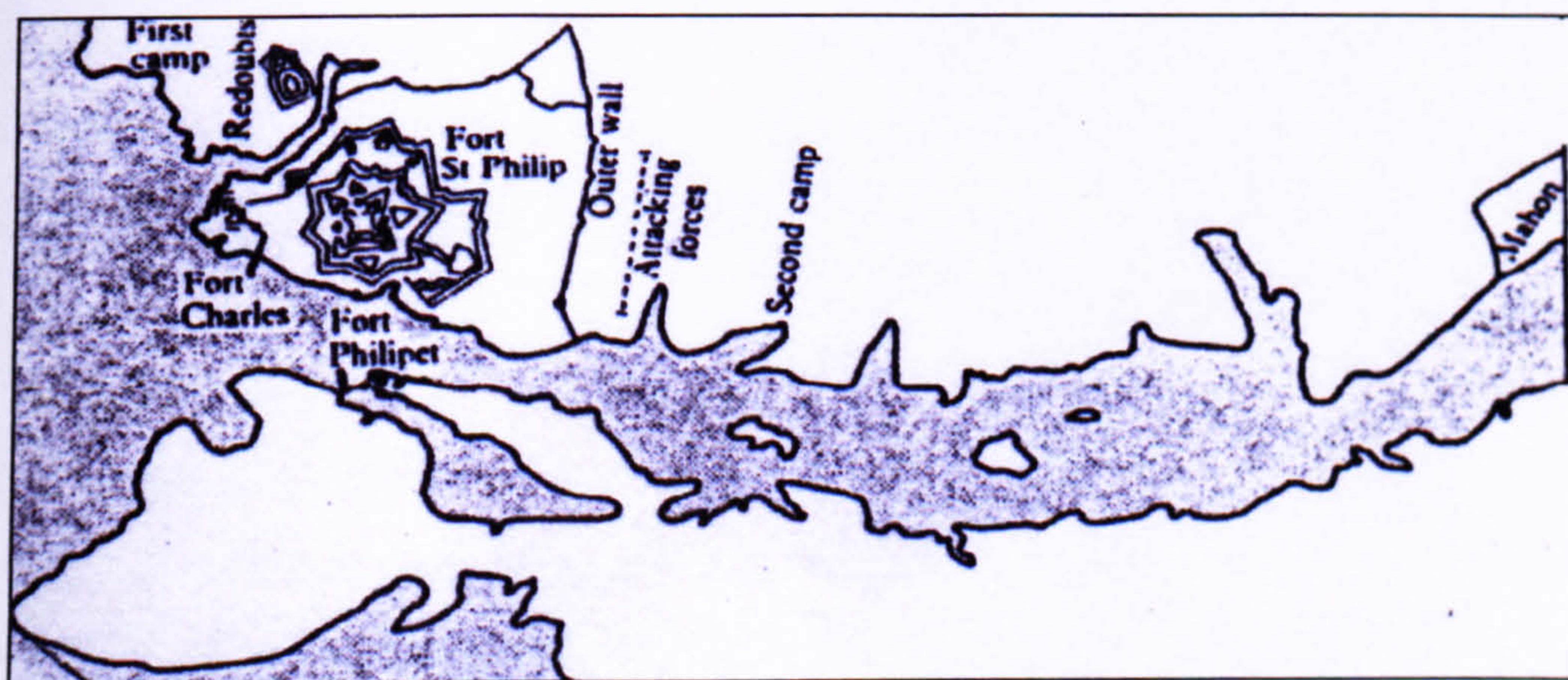


Fig. 19: Outline Sketch of Port Mahón

On the same day as the fleet's departure, another attempt was made to land the artillery. This time a cove to the east of the harbour was selected as the site and, though there was no opposition, the land force, helped by some sailors, had to haul the 42 cannon and fifteen mortars along a rocky and obstacle strewn countryside for upwards of twelve days to bring them within range of the harbour wall and Fort St Philip. By 17 September, a nine-

gun battery positioned against the two middle towers of the perimeter wall was complete and it began firing at dawn the following day. Several hours of bombardment successfully silenced all the guns in the two towers and opened breaches in the wall. Circumstances were increasingly well disposed for an assault over the wall and on against St Philip, even though it had yet to be substantially damaged by the battery. In the event, however, Stanhope was deprived of the decision as to when to launch the attack by a detachment of grenadiers posted to the right of the allied lines under Brigadier Wade, which advanced without orders. To his credit, Stanhope viewed this as an opportunity and, like Peterborough on the slopes of Montjuich, he rallied the remainder of the troops to the attack with sword in hand. With the loss of only 40 men, the allies carried the wall and the area of habitation in front of St Philip. The troops lodged themselves amongst the houses here and in the fort's glacis. The Franco-Spanish garrison remained strongly placed however and Stanhope demonstrated his military pedigree by adapting his method of attack. He had already distributed pro-Habsburg propaganda to encourage defections and now he used a captured 12 year old spy as a human billboard, covering the boy with notices in French and Spanish about the allies' capture of Ciudadela and Port Fornells, while also offering 2 *pistoles* to every deserter. The boy's return to St Philip had an almost immediate effect for, the next day, La Jonquière sought terms and a capitulation was signed in early evening.

The Franco-Spanish surrender was premature and, on entering St Philip, Cope expressed his surprise at the potential defensive strength of the garrison. This was Louis XIV's view and he imprisoned both Commandant La Jonquière and Governor Davila for their conduct. It is doubtless correct to point to the influence of the presence of women and children inside the garrison and that there was little prospect of a French fleet arriving to engage Whitaker and deprive the allied force of supply but the success of the operation should also be attributed to the British conduct and Stanhope's command, in particular. The General maintained the unity and focus of the combined force. In this he was helped by the absence of detailed Instructions from London, which afforded him considerable discretion to shape the operation from the outset and then to command its progress. The speed with which the operation was conducted along with Stanhope's efforts to deceive the enemy commanders about the extent and potential of his force in addition to his guile in altering the means of military attack were also important contributing factors to the success. Although

understandable, Stanhope frustration should not obscure the naval input. Leake did leave Whitaker with a substantial squadron along with as much ordnance as he could spare, and Stanhope was well served by the sailors put ashore with his brother, Phillip's, enthusiasm for the attack costing him his life.²²⁹

Louis's subsequent attitude towards his commanders at Minorca did accurately reflect the island's importance within the Mediterranean and this was underlined again in 1756 when France regained Minorca and the British Admiralty accounted for its loss by imposing a capital sentence on the commanding Admiral, John Byng, which was implemented on the quarter-deck of his flagship. That was in the future, though. By September 1708 Stanhope, with an eye to subsequent peace negotiations, had continued to ensure that although the island had been captured in the Archduke's name it was to be garrisoned solely by British troops. Britain had therefore gained a Mediterranean port from which the whole fleet might operate all the year round.²³⁰ The permanent penetration of the Mediterranean first sought by William in 1694-1695 in order to make England the principal regional power could now be effectively consolidated. It is of some significance that the instrument of warfare which eventually precipitated this was a combined army-navy operation.

I.vii: Supporting the Camisards and Coastal Diversions: Unfulfilled and Small Scale Combined Operations During the War of the Spanish Succession, 1703-1710.

During the Spanish Succession war there were a number of occasions when combined operations were planned but never undertaken or were dispatched on such a small scale that they comprised little more than raids upon the enemy coast line. Despite such limitations, interest in these operations remains two-fold. Firstly, the preparations for their dispatch, including the determination of the command structure, provided an insight into operational form and function, which is material to deliberating upon a definition for combined operations during this period. Secondly, the simple fact that they were proposed indicates that, amongst their proponents at least, there was a perceived role for them within Grand Strategy. An understanding of their strategic purpose - albeit ultimately unfulfilled - is inherent to contemporary perceptions about combined operations as an instrument of warfare.

²²⁹ BL, Add MSS 22231, f. 80: Cope to 'Sir', 29 Sept. 1708 [NS]; Hugill, *No Peace Without Spain*, p. 280; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 402.

²³⁰ Dickinson, 'The Capture of Minorca', pp. 201-4; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, ii. 403-5.

Notably, the strategic context provided a common theme for the unfulfilled operation planned in 1706 and also the limited raiding of the southern French coast in 1710. They were directed in support of the Camisard rebellion in the Languedoc region of France. The Camisards – whose name was commonly thought to be derived from the white peasant smock or *camisia* they wore²³¹ – mainly comprised Huguenot peasants who had remained in France following Louis XIV's Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Not only had the Revocation deprived the French Protestants of their limited religious toleration, but it was accompanied by a programme of forced religious conversion. As Languedoc, particularly around Nîmes and the Cévennes mountain range west of the Rhone, contained a great number of Huguenots, it suffered disproportionately. Nonetheless, the inhabitants sought to maintain their religious identity and, in the early eighteenth century, several young Protestant prophets toured the area and fuelled religious conviction. In 1702, the intendant, Lamoignon de Bâville, along with his senior Catholic adviser Abbé Chayla, became so concerned with this trend that they ordered its suppression. The imprisonment and death of the prophets and their families followed and combined with the repressive taxation regime, sparked a revolt. Although lacking noble leadership, the peasant rebels organised themselves into a fairly effective guerrilla force which operated with varying degrees of intensity out of the countryside and the Cévennes massif for most of the war.²³²

Allied interest in the Camisards was focused upon the scale of the internal distraction the rebellion might cause Louis thereby disrupting the French war effort. At an early stage, London sought to supply the Camisards with war materials and in 1703 arms and ammunition were put aboard Sir Cloudesley Shovell's squadron bound for the Mediterranean. Shovell however failed to make contact with the rebels and the initiative passed to the newly arrived English envoy to the Duke of Savoy's court, Richard Hill. Savoy's accession to the Grand Alliance had broadened the strategic scope of the war, with the possibility of an invasion of southern France which the allies harboured hopes of effecting with the Camisards' help. Now there was the prospect that the Mediterranean French coast line might be assailed from

²³¹ B.C. Strayer, *Huguenots and Camisards as Aliens in France, 1598-1789: The Struggle for Religious Toleration* (Lampeter, 2001), p. 294, suggests that the name might also have stemmed from the notion that the rebels were 'burners of idols' as a *camis* was a Japanese idol; or from the word *camisade* which embodied the activity of attacking Catholic strongholds

²³² A. Ducasse, *La Guerre des Camisards: La Résistance Huguenote Sous Louis XIV* (Paris, 1970), pp. 9-63; Strayer, *Huguenots and Camisards*, pp. 296-308; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 277-9.

Piedmont in the east and the Languedoc towards the west.²³³

Richard Hill had some success in prosecuting what he referred to as his 'Holy War'.²³⁴ Money and supplies got through to the rebels in the Languedoc; while Hill also persuaded the Duke to succour his own Protestant subjects in the Vaudois in the hope that they might form the mainstay of Savoy's contribution to any action which linked up with the Camisards. The Duke was nonetheless reluctant to commit his troops to such a venture. The suggestion in early 1704 by Colonel Pierre de Belcastel, who commanded a Huguenot regiment on the English Establishment, that he lead 3000 troops raised in Switzerland into France in support of the Camisards was in part blocked by the Duke on the basis that it threatened to diminish his own recruitment prospects in the Cantons. Victor Amadeus's hostility continued even when Belcastel travelled to Savoy to seek help for the Camisards directly from the Duke.²³⁵ Opposition to such schemes did not come solely from Savoy. Despite the inclination of his government and, in particular, Lord Treasurer Godolphin towards such ventures, Marlborough tended to see little worth in them. When later in 1704, another Huguenot officer, the Marquis de Miremont, proposed leading an army of 8000 men from Piedmont into the Cévennes mountains to help the Camisards and also to bolster Savoy's interests in France, Marlborough argued that the money would be better spent on raising 8000 Prussians for the Duke of Savoy's service.²³⁶

Thus, although in the early years of the war allied policy recognised that the Camisard revolt offered some military and strategic advantages, there was a lack of agreement on the extent to which, and how, these might be exploited. Consequently, despite reference being made to possible expeditionary landings and overland support from Savoy, limited material assistance was all the Camisards received. This proved inadequate as Louis moved quickly to suppress the revolt. The initial failures of the local military commander, the Duc de Broglie, caused him to be replaced at the beginning of 1703 by the Marquis de Montrevel, who began

²³³ Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II*, pp. 145-6.

²³⁴ PRO, SP 92/26, f. 398: Hill to Hedges, 17 July 1704.

²³⁵ PRO, SP 92/26, fos. 304-5, 324-7, 346-7, 392-5, 412-13, 416-17, 446-9 : Hill to 'My Lord', 2, 13 Nov. 1703 [NS]; Hill to Nottingham, 11 Apr. 1704 [NS]; Hill to Hedges, 1, 4 July, 1, 12 Aug., 19 Sept. 1704 [NS]; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 263, p. 262 n. 3: Marlborough to Godolphin, 21 Jan. 1704; Symcox, *Victor Amadeus II*, pp. 146-7.

²³⁶ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 286, 348, 369, 385, 419 pp. 277 n. 3, 337 n. 5, 359-60, 376-7, 377 n. 1, 406-7: Marlborough to Godolphin, 14 Apr., 16 July, 17 Aug., 6 Oct., 5 Dec. 1704; P.J. Shears, 'Armand de Bourbon, Marquis de Miremont', *PHSL* xx (1958-1964), 413.

an aggressive campaign against the rebels which he concluded in September by ordering the *dépeuplement* of the Cévennes. At the start of the campaign in the next year, Louis dispatched to the region his most able general, Marshal Villars, who shrewdly pursued a conciliatory policy of pacification which, in the wake of Montrevel's shock tactics, bore considerable fruit. Not only did one of the main Camisard leaders, Jean Cavalier, seek terms and then surrender, but the inhabitants of the region began to live more peaceably.²³⁷

The revolt did, however, rumble on, particularly in the mountainous area under the leadership of Rolland; and, even when he was fatally betrayed at Chateau Castelnau in 1705, the wellsprings of rebellion remained.²³⁸ In an attempt to reinvigorate this Protestant opposition to Louis XIV, another French Huguenot refugee, the Comte de Guiscard, presented a proposal to the Cabinet Council for a descent on the western French coast. Guiscard envisaged that a large number of troops, comprising several regiments raised among the Huguenot refugees, would land between the River Charente estuary to the north and Blaye at the mouth of the Garonne to the south; Xantes would then be occupied and the Huguenots would lead a detachment forward to the Cévennes to rouse the Camisards. Guiscard and his proposal gained support within the Government. Secretary-at-War St John formed a very favourable opinion of him; while critically, Marlborough thought it an appropriate moment at which to launch such an assault, particularly as he understood that the French would have few troops in that region during the forthcoming campaign.²³⁹

Throughout the winter of 1705 and into the spring of 1706, six Huguenot battalions were raised to serve alongside eight infantry and four dragoon regiments from the English Establishment and 1000 marine soldiers; while four regiments of foot and three dragoon squadrons were to come from the United Provinces. Sir Cloudesley Shovell was the Admiral appointed to the naval squadron from which this force would be projected but the principal command of the descent was given to Richard Savage, 4th Earl Rivers.²⁴⁰ Although it was expected that Rivers would work through a Council of War, his Instructions afforded him considerable discretion over the choice of landing site and the land force's progress

²³⁷ Ducasse, *La Guerre des Camisards*, pp. 142-82; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 278-9, 297-8.

²³⁸ Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, p. 298; Strayer, *Huguenots and Camisards*, p. 317.

²³⁹ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 544, pp. 525-6, 525 n. 5, 526 n. 2: Godolphin to Marlborough, 22 Apr. 1706; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 75.

²⁴⁰ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, pp. 525 n.5, 541 n. 2; PRO, WO 4/4, p. 268: St John to Officers of the Ordnance, 3 May 1706; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, p. 303.

thereafter. Indeed, the main emphasis of the Instructions was not the regulation of the descent itself but rather its political context. Just as was the case with William III's expedition to England some eighteen years previously, Rivers was to ensure that the action was viewed, not as a 'conquest', but as an attempt to secure the ancient rights and liberties of the French Protestants. To this end, Rivers was upon landing to distribute a manifesto outlining such intentions and to punish severely any soldier who acted outside of its framework.²⁴¹

The fact that Rivers did not receive these Instructions until the end of July reflected the substantial delay which beset the preparation of the descent force. Raising the Huguenot regiments proved particularly troublesome. The senior officers were prickly characters who easily took offence and made considerable demands upon the ministry; Godolphin was moved to call them 'unsufferable'.²⁴² One of their number, the Marquis de Montandre, raised a battalion only to decide late on that he could not serve under his fellow co-religionist, Guiscard, and the Colonelcy passed to Brigadier de Vimaré. Guiscard's place in the expedition was the subject of a separate debate as Lieutenant-General Thomas Erle was to act as Rivers's deputy, a role that Guiscard considered his. The Frenchman was eventually mollified with the equivalent rank of Lieutenant-General and third place in seniority. It was not only the establishment of the Huguenot regiments which caused delay, however. Many of the English troops had to be transported from Flanders to the descent force's camp on the Isle of Wight and, not for the first time, the Dutch proved slow in providing their contribution. Consequently, it took the majority of the summer for the material preparations to come together and it was 10 August before the squadron of 28 warships and numerous auxiliary and transport vessels weighed from Portsmouth.²⁴³

Immediately, the squadron faced stormy weather in the Channel and after being badly buffeted for four days, Shovell put about for shelter in Torbay. Further delay was clearly going to result and this caused the government and the commanders to question seriously the

²⁴¹ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, nos. 621, 628, pp. 613, 620: Marlborough to Godolphin, 4 July 1706; Godolphin to Marlborough, 11 July 1706; HMC, *Bath MSS*, i, p. 84: The Queen's Instructions to Earl Rivers, 21 July 1706.

²⁴² *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, no. 556, p. 538: Godolphin to Marlborough, 6 May 1706.

²⁴³ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 556, 560, 565, 568, 630 pp. 538, 540-1, 540 n. 1, 548-9, 623: Godolphin to Marlborough, 6, 9, 14, 16 May, 15 July 1706; PRO, WO 4/4, p. 326: St John to Rivers, 20 July 1706; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 154; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 303-4.

viability of the operation. Doubts based on the increasing lateness of the season had already been expressed prior to the squadron's departure from Portsmouth; and, with the diversion into Torbay, these simply hardened. Moreover, Guiscard gave equivocal responses to questions about the prospects for fanning the revolt in Languedoc, which Rivers and others put to him during this pause in proceedings. Upon considering these issues the Queen along with her Cabinet Council concluded that the descent was unlikely to meet expectations and that certainly it would little justify the considerable cost of it going ahead. With the Spanish theatre in need of additional troops, it was decided instead that Shovell and Rivers would depart for the Mediterranean. Their new Instructions embraced combined operations inasmuch as descents at Cádiz or Seville were suggested. However, as has already been noted, in the event both Rivers and the Government realised that augmenting the Peninsula army was the first priority.²⁴⁴

With the abandonment of the 1706 operation, plans to help the Protestant rebels in Languedoc went into abeyance as the Government's interest in the French Mediterranean coastline was firmly focused upon the capture of Toulon and ensuing support to the Duke of Savoy.²⁴⁵ This did not mean however that the advantages offered by a religious rebellion in south central France were forgotten. In 1710, the Archduke commended a proposal - first drafted by the French Colonel, N.N. de Seissan, who had been captured at the siege of Tournai and then, upon Marlborough's recommendation, had joined the Polish Service - to take Cette in Languedoc. Seissan owned an estate there and the main purpose of the action was to aid those Cévennes rebels who still maintained their opposition to Louis XIV, albeit at a low level. The proposed operation was not on the same scale as the one planned in 1706 inasmuch as it was to be put together from those naval and military forces already in the Mediterranean and there were no specific Instructions drafted for its regulation. The in-theatre Service commanders were to regulate their own conduct, though given precedent it was expected that a Council of War would facilitate their co-operation.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁴ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, nos. 628, 659, 664, 667, pp. 620, 651, 656 n. 6, 658: Godolphin to Marlborough, 11 July, 15, 23 Aug. 1706; Marlborough to Godolphin, 29 Aug. 1706; HMC, *Bath MSS*, i, pp. 89-90: Godolphin to [Rivers], 18 Aug. 1706; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 154-5; Harris, *Sir Cloudesley Shovell*, pp. 303-4; above Chapter 2 Section I.v, pp. 270-1.

²⁴⁵ See Chapter 2, Sections I.iv & I.v, pp. 235-7, 239, 269-84.

²⁴⁶ PRO, 42/67, unf.: 'At a Council of War', 6 July 1710; Norris to Sunderland, 7 July 1710; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii. 1581 n. 2, 3; Aldridge, 'Sir John Norris', p. 138.

On 6 July, Admiral Sir John Norris, whose duties as Mediterranean C.-in-C., in the early part of the 1710 campaign had comprised assisting the war effort on the Peninsula and undertaking raids on the Genoese coast, met his fellow Admirals, Baker and van Somelsdyck, to consider the proposed action against Cette.²⁴⁷ They agreed to undertake it forthwith and that Edward Stanhope's regiment at Tarragona, along with a detachment of 300 troops from Port Máhon, would be embarked as the land force. Arriving off the Languedoc coast on 13 July, Seissan was put ashore at the head of a 1000-strong force about a league from Cette. At dawn, the troops began marching towards the town, while Norris disposed a number of his ships against its principal defence - a fort sited on a mole. The heavy naval ordnance was not however required as the town capitulated following a short fire-fight during which some five British soldiers were wounded. Leaving Major-General Wills in charge of Cette with a garrison of 300 men, Seissan immediately pressed forward to Agde. Norris had reinforced the Frenchman with some 300 marines but they were not required as Agde surrendered that night without opposition.

No time was afforded to consolidate these gains as news came through that the French military commander in the Languedoc, the Duc de Roquelaure, was planning to descend upon Cette from the nearby lake. The organisation of a number of the ships' boats on this lake, along with a military force in the environs, to thwart Roquelaure caused a breakdown in communication with the troops left guarding Agde and this post was relinquished. Seissan and Edward Stanhope wanted to return immediately to retake town but the exertions of the troops over the past two days had left them exhausted, and instead the force retired to Cette. The next day, further consultation upon this reverse was held with Norris offering another reinforcement of 300 men from the fleet so that Seissan might attempt recapture of Agde. However, also on 17 July, intelligence was received that the French General Noailles was nearby at Mize at the head of a sizeable force, while the Marshal Berwick had reputedly detached a number of troops from his army with the aim of dislodging the British from Cette. A joint Council of War resolved to make a defence of the town; but when, in the morning of 18 July, both Noailles and Roquelaure brought their forces into its outskirts, it was clear that they greatly outnumbered Seissan's men and in addition had the

²⁴⁷ The ensuing account of the operations at Cette and Agde are based on the following primary sources: PRO, SP 42/67, unf.: 'At a Council of War', 17 July 1710 [comprises the minutes of the two meetings held on 17

fire support of seven field cannon. Accordingly, as the French Generals began their attack, the decision was made to re-embark aboard the fleet. The retreat was completed successfully save for the loss of the Company of Foot appointed to cover it along with the men in the fort, who, Norris believed, had surrendered accidentally to the French. With the enemy fully mobilised along the Languedoc coastline, it was agreed that no further action could take place; and, although Norris commended the zeal of the inhabitants towards the British, the Protestant rebels were again left without material aid.

The remaining notable, though unfulfilled, descent proposal during the Spanish Succession War was developed by Marlborough at the beginning of the 1708 campaign. During a conference at The Hague in April 1708, Marlborough agreed with Eugene that the expulsion of the French from the Spanish Netherlands would comprise the focus of the coming land campaign and, although a set-piece battle would most probably be the principal means of effecting this, the Duke recognised the potential of a diversionary coastal descent to disrupt French action in Flanders. During the early summer, some 11 regiments (around 6000 troops) under the command of Lieutenant-General Erle were encamped on the Isle of Wight with Admiral Byng subsequently detailed to command the naval squadron. As the preparations of this force continued, Godolphin was confident that a departure date at the beginning of July could be met. Then, however, Marlborough defeated the Duc de Vendôme and the Duc de Burgundy at the encounter battle of Oudenarde and Erle's descent force became part of the calculation as to how that victory might be effectively followed up.²⁴⁸ Heinsius pressed for the force to range along the northern French coastline to 'augment their [the French] consternation'²⁴⁹ and Marlborough agreed with this but Erle's men were delayed at the Isle of Wight by contrary winds. Fearful that the wind bound force might instead be detailed to accompany the Queen of Portugal to Iberia, the Duke suggested that Godolphin rejuvenated his longstanding plan for a descent on Abbeville in Picardy. By mid-July, it was agreed with both Erle and Byng that a landing would be effected at Saint-Valery on the Somme estuary whence the land force would march upon Abbeville some eighteen kilometres up-river. This operation was to form part of Marlborough's wider project to invade France,

July]; 'At a Council of War', 18 July 1710; Norris to Sunderland, 27 July 1710.

²⁴⁸ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, nos. 959, 982, 1005, pp. 946-7 n. 5, 957-8, 979, 1001: Godolphin to Marlborough, 20 Apr., 11 May, 3 June 1708; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 310-12, 333-66.

for after linking up with Erle, the Duke would use Abbeville as his principal post on a sea-borne supply route.²⁵⁰

The plan to invade France was however thwarted by Eugene who, along with some other generals, argued that it was more appropriate to capture Lille first thereby creating a secure inland magazine. Probably motivated by the interests of allied unity, Marlborough accepted these representations and on moving to invest Lille, the Abbeville descent was postponed, though not at this stage abandoned. Indeed, Marlborough hoped that if the Lille siege could be concluded by September then there might still be time to invade France along with the accompanying descent. Meantime, therefore, Erle's force was ordered to undertake raids on the Normandy coast. However there seems to be no evidence that any landings took place - certainly, Godolphin reported that a planned raid against the port at La Hogue was abandoned on approach due to a heavy French presence in the area – and it was not long before Byng returned the descent force to Spithead, having merely caused the French some alarm. It was nonetheless soon clear to Marlborough that the siege of Lille was going to last longer than he had hoped and that, more significantly, the French defensive strategy for the town sought to mount a blockade along the River Scheldt thereby cutting the allies supply route and line of communication from Brussels. It was the pressing necessity to circumvent this problem which caused the eventual abandonment of the unfulfilled descent of 1708; it was decided instead to land Erle's force at the allied held Ostend whence the General might organise a supply convoy through to Marlborough.²⁵¹

For the sake of completeness it is worth mentioning that certain proposals for descents on either the northern French coast or against the Spanish coastline continued to be current until the end of the war. In particular, Cádiz remained an attractive target for both the military and the naval commanders in the Mediterranean, with Sir John Jennings in 1709 - some seven years on from the Rooke-Ormonde expedition - developing another plan for its capture. This though lapsed due to the lateness of the season. In the same year, the Earl of

²⁴⁹ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, no. 1037, p. 1026: Godolphin to Marlborough, 8 July 1708.

²⁵⁰ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, nos. 1035, 1037, 1040-1, 1046, 1048-9 pp. 1028, 1029-30, 1033, 1034, 1040-1, 1043-5: Godolphin to Marlborough, 6, 8, 12, 18, 20 July 1708; Marlborough to Godolphin, 12 July 1708; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 372-3.

²⁵¹ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii, nos. 1061-2, 1081-2, 1099 pp. 1056-8, 1078-80, 1098-9: Godolphin to Marlborough, 2, 20, 23 Aug., 8 Sept. 1708; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iii. 373-7, 414-15; Chandler, *Marlborough as Military Commander*, pp. 229, 231.

Galway developed a project for a second descent on Vigo. Nonetheless, perhaps as a result of Marlborough's advice which frowned upon such actions in Spain as a distraction at this stage in the war when he thought that efforts should be being made to create the appropriate military conditions for peace, it never found favour with the Queen.²⁵² As will be seen in the next section, a proposal for a descent on the north eastern French coast with the land force linking up with Marlborough's army in Flanders was floated in 1710. However this was bound up with Godolphin's efforts to forestall an expedition to reduce Canada, which he and Marlborough disapproved of. The Lord Treasurer calculated that if the Marlborough proposed alternative employment (such as the descent) for the troops detailed on that expedition then the Cabinet Council would opt for it instead. Marlborough was however more sensitive to their increasingly weak political position as Anne began in 1710 to remodel the Ministry in favour of the Tories and accordingly the Duke was unwilling to reduce further his political stock by promoting projects which would undermine the Canadian venture. He therefore failed to respond to Godolphin's suggestion and, although there was a slight prospect that the troops might have been employed on a descent when the Canadian expedition was cancelled, in the event the proposal never came to fruition and the soldiers were sent to Spain.²⁵³

The evidence for those combined operations which were planned and abandoned, or which were very small on scale, provides only a limited insight into the military-naval operational relationship. Nonetheless, where operational organisation and planning occurred prior to abandonment, this was not dissimilar to the preparations undertaken for those operations which went ahead. Similar points of friction and causes of delay emerge, while an appropriate determination on command structure had to be reached. More significantly, however, these episodes demonstrated a contemporary recognition of combined operations as an instrument of warfare with a strategic purpose.

²⁵² *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, no. 1376, pp. 1342-3, 1342-3 n. 3: Marlborough to Godolphin, 15 Aug. 1709.

²⁵³ See Chapter 2, Section II.ii, pp. 339-42.

Section II: Combined Operations and the Colonial Theatre During the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713.

II.i: The Overseas Empire as a Theatre of War.

The Treaty of Rijswijk, which brought the Nine Years War to a close, did not alter the territorial balance of the combatants' overseas empires.¹ England and France retained control of their pre-war island possessions in the Caribbean and continued to share St Kitts; while on the North American continent, English colonial authority remained concentrated on the eastern seaboard with - aside from the new colony of Louisiana - the principal French settlements of *La France Septentrionale*² to the north west. The points of friction between the imperial powers remained, therefore, fuelling both the keen trading contest and the proxy conflict fought through the native American Indians. Accordingly, the prophecy of the Massachusetts preacher, Cotton Mather, on a fast day in April 1701 that 'there must be another Storm, and War'³ reflected an opinion which had become increasingly widespread following the death of Carlos II six months previously.⁴ The Spanish King's demise was significant in the imperial context due to the extensive New World colonies - including Florida, Cuba and the Spanish Main (the northern parts of present day Venezuela and Columbia) - that the Spanish throne held in addition to its European territories in the Netherlands and Italy. The prospect that Louis XIV's grandson might rule these overseas possessions threatened a combination of the French and the Spanish empires into a strategic trading bloc, which would not only render the Anglo-Dutch plantations vulnerable locally but also, more importantly, influence the European balance of power.⁵ The protection of trade and territory therefore brought the War of the Spanish Succession to the overseas colonies prematurely, just as European security was breaking down.

In early November 1701, Vice-Admiral John Benbow, commanding a 10-strong

¹ *A General Collection of Treatys*, i. 304-5: Articles VII & VIII of 'Articles of Peace Between the Most Serene and Mighty Prince William III. King of Great Britain, and the Most Serene and Mighty Prince Lewis XIV. the Most Christian King, Concluded in the Royal Palace of Reswick, the 10/20 September 1697'.

² French for what was more commonly known as *La Nouvelle France* or 'New France', the central part of which was usually referred to as 'Canada'. See P.S. Haffenden, *New England in the English Nation 1689-1713* (Oxford, 1974), p. 72.

³ Mather quoted in Leach, *Arms for Empire*, p. 116.

⁴ Haffenden, *New England in the English Nation*, pp. 204-8.

⁵ J.I. Israel, 'The Emerging Empire: The Continental Perspective, 1650-1713', in Canny (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, i. 441-2; Lenman, 'Colonial Wars and Imperial Instability', pp. 154-5; Leach, *Arms for Empire*, pp. 116-17; Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic*, p. 83.

squadron, arrived in the West Indies. Benbow's purpose, based upon a report that Louis XIV and Philip V had ordered their colonial Governors to prohibit and attack the Anglo-Dutch trade, was in the first instance defensive. Nonetheless, his Instructions urged him to take every opportunity to attack the French and Spanish at sea or, in conjunction with the English colonists, on land, and also to seek out the Spanish *flota* which was thought to be proceeding from the West Indies under French convoy.⁶ Prior to the official declaration of war in May 1702, Benbow's tour in the Caribbean proved uneventful. Admiral Châteaurenault arrived in January but the two squadrons never met, and Benbow passed the six months either in port at Jamaica with sick crews, or cruising amongst the islands to check their defences and secure the trade.⁷

The declaration of war did not have an immediate impact for the news took nearly two months to arrive abroad. Once enlightened, however, the colonists in the Caribbean and mainland America began to act against the French and the Spanish. Demonstrating the same energy and aggression as his father in the previous war, the younger Christopher Codrington (now Governor of the Leeward Islands) mobilised his militia and the local forces of nearby islands to expel the French from St Kitts at the beginning of July 1702.⁸ Such early land success was not however followed up at sea. In August, Benbow engaged the small French squadron under Ducasse that had arrived to guard the French *assiento* interests off the Spanish Main while Châteaurenault convoyed the Spanish *flota* home. A running battle took place north-westwards from Rióhacha, during which at least four of Benbow's captains failed to fully bring their vessels up, and, by the end of the sixth day, Benbow, who was then directing the fight from a cradle rigged in his quarter deck having suffered a serious wound to his right leg, was eventually prevailed upon to give up the chase. On his return to Jamaica, the Admiral court-martialled the four captains and two were sentenced to death, although this punishment was not carried out before Benbow succumbed to his wounds in November.⁹

⁶ BL, Add MSS 33028, fos. 13-21: 'Instructions for John Benbow Esq. Vice-Admiral of the Blew', 23 Oct. 1701, 19 Feb. 1702.

⁷ PRO, SP 42/67, fos. 7-8: Benbow to Vernon, Nov. 1701; Benbow to 'Principal Secretary of State', 9 Dec. 1701; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 261.

⁸ CPSC, 1702, no. 968, p. 595: the Council of Trade and Plantations to Hedges, 17 Sept. 1702; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 147-50.

⁹ CPSC, 1702, nos. 936, 1063, 1063.I, 1191, pp. x-xiii, 577-9, 673-9, 744: Beckford to Nottingham, 4 Sept. 1702; Whetstone to the Principal Secretaries of State, 20 Oct., 25 Nov. 1702; Copy of Proceedings at a Court Martial held on board HMS *Bredah*, 8-10, 12 Oct. 1702; CPSC, 1702-1703, no. 123, pp. 82-7: Benbow to the

Despite contemporary and historical misgivings about the events of this battle, the English had clearly outgunned the French and the disengagement should be viewed as a missed opportunity.¹⁰ Meanwhile, on the American mainland, heightened tension had led to tit-for-tat frontier skirmishes in conjunction with the respective Indian allies; indeed, in the south, the Carolinians combined with the Creek Confederacy to mount concerted attacks against Spanish settlements in Florida. By design these early colonial actions were provided for locally and had little impact on the wider conflict.¹¹

The operational intentions of the Ministry were not merely limited to local insurgency operations and defensive station squadrons. Notwithstanding the attraction of another theatre in which to stretch the enemy, the mercantilist economy dictated - as it had during the Nine Years War - that wartime territorial gain was a positive commercial enterprise. Indeed, even before the onset of war Sidney Godolphin (then a Treasury Commissioner), and a coterie of like-minded colleagues, had been planning to increase trade through imperial expansion and had ensured a reference to trading interests in the Treaty re-forming the Grand Alliance.¹² Of greater significance for the formulation of war policy at the beginning of hostilities was the increased Tory representation in Anne's first Ministry, and, in particular, the appointments of the Earl of Nottingham and Sir Charles Hedges to the two Secretaryships of State. As has already been seen, traditionally the Tories had advocated a 'Blue Water' strategy that promoted a maritime war whereby the French were principally opposed at sea, on the trade routes, and in the overseas empires, rather than on the European continent. In 1703, Nottingham's conceived this strategy as a war conducted 'by a Fleet, and an Army accompanying it'¹³ and, although the two Secretaries could not frustrate Marlborough's design to fight the French in Flanders, they kept the maritime alternatives, and specifically the overseas expeditions, in focus.¹⁴

The operational pattern which emerged for the war overseas was nonetheless

Secretary of State [Nottingham], 11 Sept. 1702; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 261-4.

¹⁰ The Admiralty Secretary, Burchett, in his *A Complete History of the Most Remarkable Transactions at Sea*, p. 598, was critical of Benbow's conduct, while Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, i. 262-3, 471-2 n. 4, notes the continuing debate on the conduct of both Benbow and the court-martialled captains.

¹¹ I.K. Steele, *Warpaths: Invasions of North America* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 153-5; Leach, *Arms for Empire*, pp. 122-33.

¹² W.G. Bassett, 'English Naval Policy in the Caribbean: 1698-1703', *BIHR* xi (1933-1934), 123-4; R.A. Sundstrom, *Sidney Godolphin: Servant of the State* (London, 1992), p. 87.

¹³ NRO, FH 277, pp. 75-6: Nottingham to The Pensioner, 30 Apr. 1703.

inconsistent across the empire. The proposal of Lord Cornbury, Governor of New York, in September 1702 that England mount a combined army-navy assault against the French in Canada was largely ignored as the Ministry concentrated upon the Caribbean. In June, Codrington had been ordered to expel the French from St Kitts and also to forward a feasibility study for an attack on Martinique. By the time he received Nottingham's letter, the Governor had, of course, already completed the expulsion at St Kitts but he responded enthusiastically to the Ministry's intention to act in the Caribbean by sending home a proposal for capturing all the French islands.¹⁵ Yet by 1703, when the combined expeditionary force sent to the West Indies had failed to make any territorial gains, such operations in the region ceased and increasing attention was paid to mainland America's proposals for capturing Canada.¹⁶ This pattern contrasts with the Nine Years War when, after Lawrence Wright's failure in 1691, a further three combined expeditions were dispatched to the Caribbean and, aside from Commodore Norris's and Colonel Gibson's voyage to Newfoundland, no combined forces were directly sent from England to America. During the Succession War, it was 1708 before the Ministry agreed to send an expeditionary force to America and then over the following two years, it broke this commitment twice. Only in 1711, when the Tories dominated both the Ministry and the Parliament, was an appropriately sized operation to attempt the conquest of Canada resolved upon.

This section will consider the single combined expeditionary force sent to the West Indies in 1702/3 and also the many planned expeditions, but specifically the two actually dispatched, to the eastern American seaboard in 1710 and 1711. This should illuminate the developing perceptions on combined operational warfare which derive partially from its structure and composition, but mainly from its role in the war strategy. As a result, if, as suggested above, the momentum behind such warfare in the colonies was increasingly reliant upon the political complexion of the Ministry, then a comprehensive analysis of the operational history should promote an understanding of the comparative lack of combined operations in the Caribbean and the direct, though unreliable, commitment to America during

¹⁴ Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 156-7; Horwitz, *Revolution Politics*, pp. 167-8.

¹⁵ PRO, CO 5/1047 Part II, fos. 517-18: Cornbury to 'My Lords' [the Board of Trade?], 29 Sept. 1702; BL, Add MSS 29591, fos. 13-15: Nottingham to Codrington, 1 June 1702, and enclosure, 'Instructions' [Draft]; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, p. 149 n. 1.

¹⁶ Atkinson, 'Queen Anne's War in the West Indies Parts I-II', pp. 100-9, 183-97; W.T. Morgan, 'Some Attempts at Imperial Co-operation During the Reign Of Queen Anne', *TRHS* 4th Series x (1927), 171-94.

the War of the Spanish Succession.

II.ii: Commodore Hovenden Walker's Expedition to the West Indies and Newfoundland, September 1702-October 1703.

Serious intent lay behind Nottingham's request in June 1702 that Codrington reconnoitre Martinique. Soon after being appointed Secretary of State, Nottingham had secured agreement that once Sir George Rooke's fleet, which along with the Duke of Ormonde's land force was then preparing to depart for Spain, had completed operations against the Spanish coastline, an expeditionary squadron would be detached from it for Barbados. Arrangements were settled in a 'Secret Committee' whose membership varied, but at its first recorded meeting of 26 May it notably included Nottingham's fellow Tories - the Earl of Rochester and Sir George Rooke - and also William Blathwayt, whose enthusiasm for imperial expansion through wartime combined operations had been demonstrated during the previous war.¹⁷ There were other members of the Ministry who had to be informed of the proposals including, in particular, the Earl of Marlborough. Although he attended later committee meetings, Marlborough was at the end of May already abroad concerting matters for the forthcoming land campaign with the Dutch.¹⁸ Conveniently, the detachment from Rooke's squadron was projected to be one part of a larger Anglo-Dutch combined force bound for the Caribbean; and thus Nottingham took the opportunity, when informing Marlborough of the plans, to request that he gain Dutch agreement and their commitment to make a specific contribution.¹⁹

Although he displayed no particular enthusiasm for the project, Marlborough lobbied Grand Pensionary Heinsius, while Admiral Sir David Mitchell, who had attended the Secret Committee, was sent to The Hague to agree the details. During these negotiations, the Dutch were accused of vacillation, though they in turn considered Mitchell an evasive participant. Certainly, Marlborough was forced disingenuously to downplay the size of this expeditionary force by reassuring Heinsius in confidence that the detachment from Rooke's fleet would form the major part of the Maritime Powers's presence in the West Indies. Despite

¹⁷ BL, Add MSS 29591, fos. 11-12: Note of the 'Secret Committee', 26 May 1702.

¹⁸ BL, Add MSS 29591, fos. 131-2: Note of the 'Secret Committee', 22 Dec. 1702, records Marlborough as present. Snyder notes in *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i. 50, that Marlborough left England for The Hague as early as 14 March in 1702.

¹⁹ NRO, FH 275, pp. 33-4: Nottingham to Marlborough, 26 June 1702.

Marlborough's warm words the Dutch decided not to contribute, but then they rather bore out the charge of indecision by changing their minds within a fortnight.²⁰ Meanwhile, the Ministry in London had, as part of the process of drafting Rooke's Instructions, determined upon the composition and general function of the detachment that was to be made from his fleet. Six sheathed ships were to be sent to Barbados with a minimum of 2000 troops, though the Council of War had discretion to increase that number and, if Rooke and Ormonde had successfully captured either Cádiz or Gibraltar,²¹ then all the troops were to be sent save those required for garrison duty. On arrival in the Caribbean, the soldiers were to be disembarked either at Barbados or amongst the other Leeward Islands, depending on the advice of the colonial governors as to their respective defensive requirements. Garrison duty was not however the sole military task envisaged, for the squadron commodore was also instructed to assist the local authorities in attacking the French colonies according to the resolutions of a Council of War.²²

About a week after the Dutch finally decided to contribute to the projected larger force, the detachment from Rooke's fleet left the southern Spanish coast for the West Indies. Although Cádiz had not been captured, the Council of War decided to send some 500 soldiers more than the minimum 2000 stipulated in Rooke's Additional Instructions. The four youngest regiments (excluding the marines) - Erle's, Hamilton's, Donegal's, and Charlemont's - commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Bristow were embarked aboard the transports. These vessels were to join the six warships over which Captain Hovenden Walker had been appointed Commodore.²³ Parting from Rooke on 25 September, bad weather bedevilled the voyage: not only had the standard provisioning stop at Madeira to be forgone

²⁰ *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill*, nos. 36-8, 39a, 40-1, 45, 55, pp. 18-19, 20-1, 23, 31: Marlborough to Heinsius, 13, 16, 18, 23 July, 2, 14 Aug., 23 Sept. 1702 [NS]; Heinsius to Marlborough, 21 juillet 1702 [NS]; *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill*, i. 8, 18-19: Marlborough to Nottingham, 13 July 1702; Marlborough to Mitchell, 14 Aug. 1702; NRO, FH 275, pp. 46-50, 109: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welblov'd Sir David Mitchell Knt', 9 July 1702; Nottingham to Marlborough, 3 Sept. 1702; PRO, SP 84/225, nos. 32, 35-6, 42, 45, 48-51, 53, 56: Mitchell to 'My Lord' [Nottingham], 23, 28 July, 7, 14, 25, 28 Aug., 4, 8, 16 Sept., 4 Oct. 1702; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, i, nos. 75, 80, pp. 82 n. 5, 88: Marlborough to Godolphin, 6, 13 July 1702.

²¹ This operational design was completed before the changes to Rooke's Instructions on 20 July dropped Gibraltar from the target list.

²² PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 8-10: 'Additional Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbelov'd Sir George Rooke', 7 June 1702.

²³ See Chapter 2, Section I.ii, pp. 190-201, for an account of the Cádiz operation; BL, Add MSS 38159, pp. 31, 33: 'Ormonde's Journal'; *The Journal of Sir George Rooke*, pp. 216-17, 226; *A Full and Impartial History*, p. 98.

in favour of the squadron making do amongst the various Cape Verde Islands, it took nearly three months before Barbados was reached on 5 December.²⁴

On arrival, Walker rode at anchor for five days in Carlisle Bay but as no advice from the governors was forthcoming, he asked the Barbadian Council for permission to land the soldiers and sick seamen. This authorisation took some three weeks to be granted and, meantime, Walker fell sick, thereby delaying the disembarkation until the end of December when a Council of War signalled that there would be no operational activity over the winter months. This Council also expressed its hope for fresh orders.²⁵ Limited progress had been made with this inasmuch as the Earl of Peterborough, who had at the end of October been appointed to the vacant governorship of Jamaica, was assigned to command the expeditionary force and concert its activities thereafter. An ambitious set of Instructions were drafted for the Earl which ordered him firstly to ensure that the French windward colonies had been comprehensively attacked before mounting operations from Jamaica against Havana and the Spanish Main. In another illustration of the problematic slowness of communications during this age, orders to assist Peterborough were also to be sent to Benbow, despite the fact that he had been dead for four months by the time these were agreed in February.²⁶

The more immediate problem for the Admiralty was however the continued absence of the Dutch contribution, which had still not materialised by the turn of the year. Combined with the ongoing preparation problems he was encountering in England, Peterborough became increasingly disenchanted with the prospect of commanding what was potentially a small scale operation in the Caribbean that currently lacked momentum. The Earl would also have been aware that in the recent past a colonial governorship had not proved a particularly fruitful appointment for martial distinction and that he was more likely instead to get

²⁴ PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to H[is] R[oyal] H[ighness, Prince George of Denmark]', 12 Jan. 1703; *CSPC, 1702-1703*, no. 164, p. 115: Walker to [Nottingham?], 12 Jan. 1703.

²⁵ PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to HRH', 12 Jan. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 1 Jan. 1703. For Walker's journal, historians usually refer to PRO, CO 152/5, no. 30, fos. 1-71: '*Boyne's Journal, Remarkable Observations and Accidents*' but I have found this to be simply a shortened copy of the Captain's Log above, and thus I shall refer to the Log throughout.

²⁶ *CSPC, 1702*, no. 1169, p. 733: Nottingham to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 17 Nov. 1702; BL, Add MSS 29591, fos. 26-7, 131-2: 'Instructions for the Earl of Peterborough', n.d.; Note of the 'Secret Council', 22 Dec. 1702; PRO, ADM 2/405, pp. 176-8: Burchett to Nottingham, 27 Oct. 1702 and enclosure, 'Instructions for Vice-Admiral Benbow'; PRO, ADM 1/4088, fos. 120-4: Nottingham to the Admiralty, 3 Dec. 1702, and enclosure, 'Instructions for John Benbow Esq. Vice-Admiral of the Blew'; *CSPC, 1702*, no. 1191, pp. 744-5: Whetstone to the Principal Secretaries of State, 25 Nov. 1702, noted Benbow's death on 4 Nov., but it was 6 Feb. 1703 when it was endorsed R.[eceived].

embroiled in local planters' disputes. To a man of Peterborough's energy and conceit, this would have been tedious; and so, at the beginning of January, he indicated a desire to step back from the project.²⁷ The ministers had not decided their next step when Admiral Vanderdussen brought the long-awaited Dutch military-navy contribution into Spithead in stages around 15 January. By this time however both Marlborough and Heinsius were expressing doubts about the project and their opinions, in addition to Peterborough's equivocation, produced an evident lack of confidence in the eventual dispatch of this Anglo-Dutch force.²⁸ Still unaware of Benbow's death, the Admiralty had sent further Instructions, which afforded him far greater operational independence from any force that Peterborough or an alternative new Governor of Jamaica might bring out. Specifically, once Hovenden Walker had completed his actions in the Windward Islands, Benbow was to lead the two squadrons and a contingent of troops to attack the French settlements on Newfoundland. Perhaps even more revealing of the lack of confidence was the dispatch of reinforcements for Walker's force. Through the winter of 1702/3, an additional five warships were scheduled to proceed to the Caribbean, along with a number of auxiliary vessels carrying provisions, recruits and Columbine's regiment. Moreover, they were to carry orders for Walker (the earliest dating from October) prompting him to begin operations against the French windward colonies in conjunction with the Leeward Islands' authorities.²⁹ The ministers certainly seemed to be signalling that he should not expect support from any prospective Anglo-Dutch expeditionary force from England. In the event, that project was officially shelved by the end of January; Vanderdussen returned to Holland and Marlborough announced to Heinsius that the Dutch could deploy their military and naval contribution on other services.³⁰

The Government was nonetheless still keen to dispatch a flag officer to the Caribbean

²⁷ CPSC 1702-1703, no. 129, p. 94: Peterborough to [Nottingham?], 3 Jan. 1703; Lord King, *The Life and Letters of John Locke* (New edn, London, 1858), p. 242: Peterborough to Locke, 27 Jan. 1703; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, p. 152. For further details on Peterborough's character, see Chapter 2, Section I.iv, p. 237 n. 137.

²⁸ *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill*, nos. 76-8, 80, 82-3 pp. 45-9: Heinsius to Marlborough, 12, 16, 23, 26 janvier 1703 [NS]; Marlborough to Heinsius, 5, 12, Jan. 1703; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, p. 152.

²⁹ PRO, SP 42/67, fos. 33-5: 'Orders to Captain Hovenden Walker', 18 Jan. 1703; 'Instructions for John Benbow Esq Vice-Admiral of the White', 19 Jan 1703; 'Orders to Captain Lyell, *Resolution*', 19 Jan. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 9 Jan. 1703; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to HRH', 12 Jan. 1703.

³⁰ *The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill*, nos. 84-5, pp. 49-50: Marlborough to Heinsius, 19, 22 Jan. 1703; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, p. 152.

and Rear-Admiral John Graydon was eventually selected. Perhaps in an attempt to present the Admiralty as coping successfully with the uncertainty over the Anglo-Dutch squadron and ensuring a seamless transition from Peterborough, Admiralty Secretary Burchett's memoirs pre-dated the Rear-Admiral's appointment to 19 January. However, unless Burchett was being unusually inefficient, the fact that he did not inform the Secretary to the Board of Trade, William Popple, about Graydon's appointment until the end of February, belies this earlier January date. Given that Graydon inherited the Instructions drafted for Benbow on 19 January, which included the organisation of an expedition against the French at Newfoundland, and that the Admiralty only learnt of the Benbow's death in the first week of February, then Graydon should be more accurately considered as his replacement and not filling the gap left by Peterborough's withdrawal.³¹ The reality was that both the Government and the Admiralty had struggled to bring the original project involving the Earl to fruition, and, on its collapse, they lacked an alternative. For the foreseeable future, meanwhile, the successful prosecution of the Ministry's war policy amongst the Caribbean colonies rested with Commodore Walker's military-naval force.

Hovenden Walker had not received the Admiralty's earliest orders prompting him to action until the second week of January but, once in receipt of them, he began organising the expeditionary force for departure to the Leeward Islands. Almost immediately he encountered delay as the land officers scrupled at not having separate instructions to embark the soldiers; and, when Lieutenant-Colonel Bristow subsequently received these orders, other officers demanded a second embarkation at Spikes Bay because they considered it too tedious for the soldiers billeted around that area to march to Carlisle Bay. Such trifles do seem to justify later criticism that time was needlessly wasted proceeding from Barbados, but the delay was also a product of an acute shortage of crew. Many of the Masters claimed that they had insufficient men to embark the soldiers from Carlisle Bay without even considering having to sail round to a second embarkation point or, more importantly, on to the Leeward Islands. Sickiness had claimed a considerable number, though equally problematic on this occasion were the inducements faced by the sailors to remain on Barbados. The temptations of the colonists' generous hospitality (some claimed debauchery) and their help with

³¹ Burchett, *A Complete History of the Most Remarkable Transactions at Sea*, pp. 600-3; PRO, SP 42/67, f. 34: 'Instructions for John Benbow Esq', 19 Jan 1703; CSPC, 1702-1703, no. 348, p. 208: Burchett to Popple,

concealment ironically made them complicit in undermining the challenge to the French, which they desired. In addition, Walker blamed the irresolution of the Barbadian authorities for failing to round up the absentees, though it is unclear how his proposed Act prohibiting desertion, which the Assembly failed to pass, would have quickly yielded enough men. Eventually, Walker was forced to use soldiers who had some knowledge of seafaring to man vessels and, although this was less than satisfactory, it had become and would remain an increasingly common wartime solution in this region to the problem of manning.³²

The expeditionary force finally departed Barbados for Antigua on 4 February, with the *Cumberland* staying behind for a couple of days to pick up any stragglers. On receiving the Admiralty's orders at the beginning of January, Walker had sent Governor Codrington a note of his intentions but remarkably this was also the Governor's first news of the squadron being in the region.³³ Codrington was predictably frustrated with the lack of action when he received this note on 20 January and his attitude was only hardened by a lack of information from London about the problems with the Anglo-Dutch fleet. Nonetheless, characteristically, Codrington had already raised a regiment and two independent companies in anticipation of Peterborough's arrival and, thinking now that Walker should not be far behind his note, he immediately embarked these troops on several locally procured sloops. The Governor was, of course, unaware of the delay that had beset Walker in preparing his force for departure from Barbados and this meant that Codrington's troops remained aboard for some three weeks before the squadron arrived on 18 February. His mood was not lightened by Walker's decision to come to Antigua, which he thought wrongheaded inasmuch as the whole force would have to beat back against the prevailing trade winds to reach the probable French island targets. A rendezvous south of the Leeward Islands would have, according to Codrington, been more appropriate. Not only would it have meant just his few vessels working against the winds, but it would also have allowed him to annoy Guadeloupe's coast

22 Feb. 1703; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, v. 486-90: Instructions for [John] Graydon Esq, 20 Feb. 1703.

³² PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to HRH', 12 Jan., 4 Feb. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 1-30 Jan. 1703; *CSPC, 1702-1703*, no. 362, pp. 213-14: Codrington to [Nottingham?], 24 Feb. 1703; Atkinson, 'Queen Anne's War Part I.', p. 103-4; C.T. Atkinson, 'British Regiments Afloat. Cape Passaro and Other Incidents', *JSAHR* xxiii (1945), 46-53.

³³ Walker had on his arrival at Barbados in December asked the authorities to notify Codrington and, although they agreed to so, problems subsequently arose over the cost of hiring a vessel. *CSPC, 1702-1703*, nos. 34, 56, 148, pp. 44, 53-4, 107: Minutes of the Council of Barbados, 10, 16 Dec. 1702, 7 Jan. 1703.

as he sailed by, thus preparing it as a target for a main attack.³⁴ Even before the respective service commanders had first met, a familiar picture of competing land and sea ideas on undertaking the combined operations, attended by certain notable points of friction, was emerging.

That first meeting took place on 20 February when a Council of War convened aboard the *Boyne* to consider the immediate course of action for the expeditionary force. Nottingham's original intention had been for it to attack Martinique first but at a meeting of the 'Secret Committee' in November 1702, all the principal French windward islands had been surveyed as targets.³⁵ This may well have been prompted by Codrington's plan to capture them all, though it is not known whether his paper was distributed to the Committee. During the autumn, Nottingham wrote to the Governor encouraging him to attend to Martinique first but aside from a couple of ambiguous references to this island, none of the early Instructions issued for the Caribbean theatre prescribed a plan of operations. The Ministry did draft more detailed instructions for Walker and Codrington in January which attached certain conditions to their actions. The Governor was specifically directed to attack Martinique first and then Guadeloupe; while Walker was ordered (like Wheler in 1692) to discontinue operations on 20 May so that he could proceed to Jamaica to link up with Benbow (or whoever was then the commanding officer on that station) for an expedition to Newfoundland. Walker did not however receive these Instructions until late March and, although there is no certain evidence, it would seem likely that Codrington's arrived in the same packet.³⁶ In the event, Codrington and the other land officers dominated the first Council of War, which due to the very general nature of the Instructions had full control over nearly all aspects of operational planning. The Governor knew that, after his success at St Kitts in July 1702, the French had improved the defences throughout all their island

³⁴ *CSPC, 1702-1703*, nos. 200, 230, pp. 132, 150: Codrington to [Nottingham?], 18, 23 Jan 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 18 Feb. 1703.

³⁵ BL, Add MSS 29591, fos. 128-9: Note of the 'Secret Committee', 11 Nov. 1702.

³⁶ NRO, FH 275, pp. 175-6, 199-201, 214-16, 265-7: Order to Christopher Codrington, 31 Oct. 1702; Nottingham to Codrington, 31 Oct., 3, 14 Nov. 1702; 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Christopher Codrington Esq.', 18 Jan. 1703; PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 8-10: 'Additional Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke', 7 June 1702; PRO, CO 153/8, fos. 9-59: 'Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Christopher Codrington, Esq.', [18 Aug. 1702]; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to HRH', 12 Jan. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 21 Mar. 1703, and enclosure, 'Orders to Captain Hovenden Walker C.-in.-C. of Her Majesty's Squadron detached by Sir George Rooke', 18 Jan. 1703.

possessions and that, in particular, an extra 1800 men had been put on Martinique. With the English expeditionary force having already lost upwards of 1000 men to sickness, the Council ruled out Martinique on the grounds of its garrison strength. As in the spring of 1691 when Commodore Lawrence Wright and Codrington's father were considering their target options, Guadeloupe was again considered a viable alternative. It was nonetheless necessary for Walker to agree to bolster the land force to around 3000 men by contributing a 'regiment' of some 400 seamen commanded by two naval Captains and a First Lieutenant. Having determined upon Guadeloupe, the Council did not at this stage deliberate further upon the assault's tactics and simply resolved to depart within a couple of days.³⁷

Two days lengthened into six when, according to Walker, Codrington failed to meet his promise of a quick departure. Subsequent to this delay, the squadron's approach to Guadeloupe became disjointed as a result of the cumulative effect of a variety of small but troublesome events. Walker's flagship and the *Samuel and Henry* collided, necessitating repairs to both vessels; while Codrington pressed the Commodore to detach two warships to the leeward side of Guadeloupe to meet the separate hired vessels carrying the Creole Regiment from Antigua. When the majority of the squadron under Walker reached Guadeloupe's coast, just north of the island's principal town, Basse-Terre, on 7 March, an anchorage could not be quickly found as the pilots lacked the essential coastal knowledge and many of the bays proved too deep. These circumstances forced the squadron close inshore, thus rendering it vulnerable to the French shore defence; and it was only good fortune that brought the squadron unscathed to an anchorage in Guavas Bay on 10 March. Almost immediately, Walker launched a series of small scale raids to ravage the shore line in what seemed to be preparation for a landing. However, the land officers had determined on a site much closer to the principal target, Basse-Terre, and accordingly, the squadron quickly weighed from Guavas Bay and headed south, leaving only part of the late arriving Creole Regiment under Colonel Byam ashore to continue devastating the coastline.³⁸

³⁷ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 21-2 Feb. 1703; *CSPC, 1702-1703*, no. 362, p. 214: Codrington to [Nottingham?], 24 Feb. 1703.

of Codrington and the land officers by determining to look for a site further southwards and settling upon La Bayliff. Captain Fairborne was to command the landing, which was to comprise a series of mutually reinforcing detachments. The remainder of the Creoles, along with Major Johnson's company of grenadiers from Whetham's regiment and 150 other men, would go ashore first in the early hours to establish a bridgehead and they would then be followed within three hours by a tranche of 1200 soldiers from the four regiments brought by Walker. The *Chichester* and the *Sunderland* were to provide fire support by plying the nearby coastline and, in particular, silencing La Bayliff's defences. Once secure inside the village, Codrington was to march the troops forwards to Basse-Terre.⁴⁰

This landing proved a good illustration of how operational planning can be upset by the unexpected during its execution. For unknown reasons, the Creoles and the grenadiers were delayed until dawn, by which time the first detachment of regulars should have been ashore for over an hour. Codrington then either precipitously or in an attempt to inject some urgency into the operation - depending upon the service provenance of the source - dispatched 500 of the 1200 troops which had rendezvoused on the *Yarmouth*. The urgency possibly caused the lapse in judgement that steered these boats to a well entrenched area of the landing site, whence the French were organising a vigorous fire. Meanwhile, as the *Sunderland* had been driven off the coast on losing its anchor, only the *Chichester* could provide any sea-based fire support - although the *Maidstone* was belatedly ordered to assist. Not surprisingly, it took Codrington and Colonels Whetham and Wills over an hour to force the French from the trenches, and it was night before La Bayliff village was secure. Additional troops had to be landed for Codrington's assault on the hill batteries and the fortified church which overlooked the village, but, once these had been captured, the resistance to Colonel Moses's night attack on the village plantation was negligible.⁴¹

Perhaps sensing that the operation was at last gathering some momentum, Codrington was keen to press on towards Basse-Terre, which was now only a few miles distant. A comparison of the contemporary descriptions suggest that its defensive fortifications had been augmented since the attack in 1691. The 'cavalier', which had been linked by trenches to the

⁴⁰ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 10-12 Mar. 1703; PRO, CO 152/5, f. 174: enclosure, Council of War Minutes, 11 Mar. 1703.

⁴¹ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 12-13 Mar. 1703; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 158-9.

castle now appeared substantially more like a fort - and was described as such - than a raised outpost. The strength of both buildings remained enhanced by their positioning on a precipice overlooking the town and on either bank of the Galion river that discharged into the harbour below. It was however the main area of habitation around the sea-front that the land force first approached on 13 March, having taken the coastal route from La Bayliff. Here, no resistance was encountered for the town's defenders fled uphill to the fortifications. As Codrington's land Council recognised when it convened the following day, the French abandonment of the lower town was tactically shrewd: command from the heights retained control of the town and rendered the English position vulnerable to bombardment. Militarily, Codrington's only option seemed to be the construction of a battery in the hope that it would open a breach in the French position. Accordingly, Walker agreed to the Council's request that he provide six fully crewed 12 and 18 pounders, which the naval 'regiment' ashore would position provided enough ships' carpenters could be spared to craft land carriages. The landing of this ordnance from the *Boyne*, *Cumberland*, *Chichester* and the *Anglessey* was ordered on 15 March.

The Governor and his fellow land officers were nonetheless aware that even if a breach could be opened, the assault troops would have to work uphill against a potentially devastating fire. Moreover, the strength of the French position was not just its elevation: the fort and castle were mutually reinforcing through a network of trenches, while a ditch encompassed both. Thus, although they resolved to request the naval ordnance, the Council considered alternative means of attack. One possibility suggested by Codrington was to target the island's Dos D'Asne - simply a fortified camp which was a characteristic feature of eighteenth century West Indian colonies. The Council reasoned that if this camp was surprised with a majority of the island's inhabitants inside, then the garrison defence in the fort and castle would dissolve. It was decided that Codrington would lead some 2000 soldiers against the Dos D'Asne and that the squadron was to provide the four days provisions required for the march into the island's interior where such camps were usually located. Walker raised no objection to the naval contribution, but he failed to prioritise its requirements by first attempting to resolve the victualling problems which had arisen between the two Services since the landing. Immediate surprise was critical to a successful attack on the Dos D'Asne and the two day delay before the provisions came ashore sufficiently

diminished the prospect of success to cast doubt on the merit of now launching the operation. This view was quickly confirmed when news reached Codrington that the French had landed several hundred reinforcements from Martinique. The attempt to side-step an attack on the fortified upper reaches of Basse-Terre thus lapsed, and the expeditionary force turned its attention to constructing the battery.⁴²

Less two 18 pounders which the squadron failed to land, the battery began firing on 22 March and it quickly proved to be of sufficient weight and accuracy by opening up a breach within a couple of days. Although Captain Moses - one of the naval officers commanding the sailors ashore - reported to Walker that this breach was sizeable, the land officers' passivity indicated that they did not yet consider it sufficiently wide to risk an infantry assault. Having already sent off additional powder and supplies, Walker took this opportunity to warn Moses that in his view the continued dispatch of further supplies was inconsistent with the squadron's safety.⁴³ Harlow is surely correct to suggest that the hardening of Walker's attitude was partially a consequence of having just received the Admiralty orders regarding the post-20 May expedition to Newfoundland, but his charge that Walker behaved like most sailors of this period in having 'a rooted objection to sacrificing the navy for the benefit of land operations' cannot be sustained.⁴⁴ This accusation represents Walker as committed to a general principle whereas in this instance he was simply protecting the navy's interests in accordance with the operational circumstances. Walker had generally provided - albeit often delayed - whatever the land force requested; he had even proved receptive to Codrington's suggestions about the stationing of individual ships - a responsibility usually jealously guarded by the naval commander. The Governor meanwhile might be seen as rather awkward and uncommunicative about both his intentions and the progress of the action ashore. Notably, Codrington fell silent on his own request for the dispatch of a ship to the windward side of Guadeloupe when Walker - admittedly perhaps mischievously - selected the *Yarmouth*, which required the withdrawal of its sailors from

⁴² PRO, CO 152/5, f. 175: enclosure, Council of War Minutes, 14 Mar. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 13, 15-18 Mar. 1703; Codrington to Walker, 14 Mar. 1703; Walker to Codrington, 14, 16 Mar. 1703; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 157, 160-1.

⁴³ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 24 Mar. 1703.

⁴⁴ Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 162-3; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 21 Mar. 1703 and enclosure, 'Orders to Captain Hovenden Walker C.-in.-C. of Her Majesty's Squadron detached by Sir George Rooke', 18 Jan. 1703.

serving ashore. Furthermore, the Governor's dispatch of various emissaries to Walker with digests of the latest events on the island was spasmodic and, as is clear from the Commodore's journal, it was difficult to for him gain a consistent picture of the action ashore. The differing reports of Lieutenant Nesbitt and Captain Keck, for example, sowed confusion as to whether the *Dos D'Asne* had in fact been attacked; while it was four days after first receiving word of the breach before Walker was informed that there were indeed assault plans.⁴⁵

It is in this context that Walker's resistance on 28 March to Codrington's request for more battery supplies, including extra guns, and also to anchor all the ships off Basse-Terre, should be interpreted. Echoing his previous warning to Captain Moses, Walker now explained to Lieutenant-Colonel Wills that the issuing of additional supplies would leave the squadron short and thus compromise its safety - especially if it subsequently encountered the French at sea - which was contrary to his orders. He did nonetheless agree that each ship with more than 30 rounds for the 12 pounders would send the excess shot and proportional powder ashore, along with the small arms supplies that had also been requested. As for positioning the whole squadron off Basse-Terre, Walker was exceptionally reluctant. The Captains of those ships already anchored there informed him that it was a very poor roadstead and, with so many sailors working ashore, crews would have to be transferred between ships to bring them down individually from the other anchorage at Petits Habitants. Walker's explanation to Wills was merely representative of his growing anxiety with Codrington's conduct and the progress of the operation; indeed the private pages of his journal vouchsafed his contention that the Governor was actively seeking disagreement to create a naval scapegoat. Consequently, Walker believed it essential for the operation's continuance that a combined land and sea Council of War convene to review its progress.⁴⁶

Codrington and his land force did not however share Walker's analysis. At their separate Council of 30 March, they agreed to request again that Walker provide a further 300 shot cartridges for both the 12 and 18 pounders and moreover that he deploy the ships' boats in a feint attack on the other side of the Galion river. Provocatively, they also labelled the

⁴⁵ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 15-19, 22-5 Mar. 1703, and enclosures, 'Order to Captain Prower, Commander of HMS *Yarmouth*', 24 Mar. 1703; Walker to Codrington, 24 Mar. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 27-28 Mar. 1703.

⁴⁶ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 28-30 Mar. 1703.

Commodore's views on the operation, including the request for an army-navy Council, as the 'effects of ill nature, ill manners and ignorance'.⁴⁷ The Council's proceedings sparked an unedifying exchange of views with Walker in the course of which he implied that the soldiers demonstrated a lamentable disregard for the navy and the operational Instructions; while the land Council rejoined that Walker interpreted the Instructions 'ridiculously' and 'very maliciously'.⁴⁸ More significantly, the land officers expressed their opinion that the navy had been 'principally sent' to serve the army and that this subordinate role could, if accepted by Walker, provide for the squadron's safety.⁴⁹ The failure by the land Council to recognise the combined and co-operative nature of the current action seemed to Walker to confirm that Codrington sought service discord as an insurance policy against operational failure; it also forced him to convene his own separate Council of sea Captains to determine the squadron's future conduct.⁵⁰ With two separate service Councils of War convening, the operation on Guadeloupe seemed to have relinquished all pretensions to being a combined army-navy venture.

This problem over separate Councils of War had arisen not, as Harlow claimed, through a lack of unified command, but rather because the original operational Instructions which afforded this combined Council of War sovereign command authority were not prescriptive about its membership.⁵¹ Notwithstanding, the Instructions Walker received at the end of March did direct a combined Council and thus his reluctance to convene the naval Captains separately is understandable, especially when, at their meeting on 31 March, they decided that they could only accede to the land Council's demand for more ordnance supplies and to undertake the feint attack. As Walker recognised, the Captains' options were limited. If the recent Admiralty orders had been received before leaving Antigua then the squadron could have remained at that island to await the *Resolution*, which was bringing supplies from

⁴⁷ PRO, CO 152/5, f. 175: enclosure, Council of War Minutes, 30 Mar. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 31 Mar. 1703, and enclosure, Thornton to Walker, n.d.

⁴⁸ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 31 Mar. 1703, and enclosure, Thornton to Walker, n.d.

⁴⁹ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 31 Mar. 1703, and enclosures, Walker to 'Sir', 30 Mar. 1703; Thornton to Walker, n.d.; PRO, CO 152/5, fos. 175-6: enclosures, 'The Letter from the Council of War to the Commodore', n.d.; 'The Commodore's Answer to the Foregoing Letter', n.d.; 'The Reply to the Foregoing Letter', n.d.

⁵⁰ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 31 Mar.-1 Apr. 1703.

⁵¹ Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, p. 165; PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 8-10: 'Additional Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke', 7 June 1702; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to HRH', 12 Jan. 1703.

England. However, given that this alternative had been missed by several weeks and that operations had already begun, the Captains were obliged to prosecute its successful outcome. In terms of the skewed dynamic of combined command, they were reduced to protesting to the two land officers sent by Codrington as observers about the extent of the naval commitment and their corresponding treatment by Codrington.⁵²

The preparations for the feint attack indicated that Codrington was close to launching an infantry assault, though additional heavy bombardment was still thought necessary to weaken further the French defences. To that end, Walker detailed the *Yarmouth* and the *Sunderland* - whose particular gun complement meant that they had not contributed any ordnance supplies ashore - to bombard the French fortifications and to disrupt their communication trenches. In conjunction with the battery, they opened fire on the afternoon of 2 April. With the infantry assault and the feint coastal attack scheduled for the following day, Walker went ashore to observe this bombardment and liaise with Codrington. This was the second time the two commanders had met since the deterioration in relations. The first occasion had been just after the meeting of the naval Council and elicited no comment from either man, but this time, Walker complained that his personal safety while ashore had been endangered by Codrington's indifference. In any event, the senior commanders' relationship was not tested further at this stage for the current focus of their combined action - the naval feint attack in conjunction with an assault on the breach - was shelved. In the early morning of 3 April, the artillery bombardment alone had forced the French from the castle to the trenches and fort on the other side of the river; and, by simply retargetting their preponderant fire, the English were soon able to clear these defences of the enemy too. Codrington's forces thus marched unimpeded to take possession of the upper half of Basse-Terre.⁵³

The capture of Basse-Terre placed the English in a commanding position but they still lacked full control of the island: the Dos D'Asne remained a place of defensive strength for the French, which might be reinforced from neighbouring islands. By effecting a close coastal

⁵² PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 21 Mar. 1703, and enclosure, 'Orders to Captain Hovenden Walker C.-in.-C. of Her Majesty's Squadron detached by Sir George Rooke', 18 Jan. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 1 Apr. 1703, and enclosure, 'Att a Consultation held aboard the *Chichester*', 31 Mar. 1703; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: 'Att a Consultation held aboard the *Chichester*', 31 Mar. 1703.

⁵³ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 1-4 Apr. 1703; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 165-6.

sea command and disposing their troops over the island, however, the English had a fair prospect of blockading the camp into submission; or, alternatively, they could mount a direct attack with the hope of capturing it immediately. A couple of days after the success at Basse-Terre, Codrington and Walker seemed to be leaning towards the former approach by seeking to extend their presence throughout Guadeloupe. The Governor boarded the *Yarmouth* to reconnoitre Guadeloupe, windward of Point Eitan. The *Maidstone*, which along with six other sloops, formed part of this mission, returned within a day to collect enough boats to carry 500 men. Codrington had found breast-works and small plantations along the island's eastern shore, which these men under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Martin were going to raid. This incursion and other raids were successfully completed and on 17 April, a Council of land officers unanimously rejected a direct assault on the Dos D'Asne on the grounds that it presented too many insurmountable difficulties. Blockade and a gradual extension of control over the island, had thus finally been determined upon - albeit perhaps by default - as the means to wrest Guadeloupe fully from the French.⁵⁴

The Council moved to demonstrate its resolve in this decision by immediately organising a large scale raid of Grand-Terre, the principal settlement on the other half of Guadeloupe. Some 600 soldiers, including at least 60 grenadiers, under the command of Colonel Whetham and his fellow field officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Carpenter and Brigade Major Bowles, were to be distributed throughout three warships with a fourth attending in support. However, as the ships manoeuvred get into the narrow road in front of Grand-Terre, the operation was cancelled as a result of intelligence Major-General Hamilton received, which indicated that the French were waiting to contest the landing with an additional 400 men that had been recently brought into the plantation. The circumstances of the abandonment of the Grand-Terre raid, revealed the considerable difficulties associated with the longer term, and attritional, approach to capturing Guadeloupe that the English had adopted. The drip feed of intelligence - credible or not - that the French had augmented their forces on the island or that a number of their men-of-war were now operating close by spread anxiety and cast doubt amongst the English as to whether they had sufficient manpower and provisions to complete the operation. Confidence was moreover only further undermined by

⁵⁴ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 5-17 Apr. 1703, and enclosures, 'Order to Captain Prower, Commander of HMS the *Yarmouth*', 10 Apr. 1703; Codrington to Walker, 15 Apr. 1703; PRO, CO 152/5,

the impact of disease, which significantly felled the two senior service commanders towards the end of April. During this period the operation lost focus, which it was not to recover. Indeed, on the last day of April, Codrington was so sick that he took passage to Nevis to recover his health; but, by transferring his command to Colonel Whetham, who was also gravely ill, the authority of daily operational command passed Walker, whose health had temporarily rallied.

This was a significant development for two reasons. Firstly, whereas earlier Codrington's separate land Council had dominated the operation, Walker's preference for combined Councils would now allow naval opinion to be actively represented rather than forced to acquiesce. Secondly, and more significantly, this opinion had already demonstrated its intent to give up the operation. Walker's private reckoning on 24 April was that no more could be achieved against the enemy on Guadeloupe and the squadron should prepare to re-embark the soldiers. Two days later his naval Council came to a similar conclusion. Shrewdly, however, the Captains did not at that stage call for a withdrawal of the troops; instead, emphasising that at least a fortnight would be required between leaving Guadeloupe and departing for Jamaica as directed by Walker's Instructions, they resolved only to re-embark the sailors posted ashore so that the squadron could be prepared for sea. This decision effectively called time on the operation and it required only concurrence of a combined land and sea Council formally to end it. Codrington's departure and then Whetham's request to take passage with three companies from his regiment in the ships transporting some field guns to Antigua provided Walker with an ideal opportunity to convene and preside over this combined Council. It met on 3 May, and after reviewing the dearth of provisions for both the land and sea forces, the decision was taken to withdraw from Guadeloupe in five days time. As with the attack on Guadeloupe in 1691, the naval element of the combined force had largely brought about the conclusion of the operation.⁵⁵

In the early hours of 7 May all the troops were successfully re-embarked without loss of life, while Basse-Terre was set ablaze. In his journal, Walker expressed considerable regret at the withdrawal, especially since Guadeloupe was clearly pre-eminent among France's

fos. 176-7: enclosure, Council of War Minutes, 17 Apr. 1703.

⁵⁵ PRO, CO 152/5, fos. 176-7: enclosure, Council of War Minutes, 17 Apr. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 18 Apr.-3 May Apr. 1703, and enclosures, 'Orders to Captain John Moses, Commander of HMS *Anglessey*', 18 Apr. 1703; Hamilton to Whetham, 22 Apr. 1703; 'At a Consultation aboard HMS

colonial possessions in the Caribbean; but, rather disingenuously given that on 24 April he was of the opinion that operationally little more could be achieved, the Commodore noted that the island might have been held with only a modest increase in resources, if the appropriate orders had been issued. Walker's focus upon the operational orders can be explained inasmuch as he viewed his Instructions of 18 January as a political and professional insurance policy. Even upon a most rigorous interpretation from the land force's perspective, the Instructions sanctioned his manoeuvring to conclude the operation and depart for Jamaica. Thus, this was Walker's defence when two days after arriving in Nevis Road, Codrington sent General Hamilton to argue that the Admiralty orders should not be viewed as absolute and that Walker should instead winter amongst the Windward Islands. A commander who was temperamentally disposed to gamble against authority might have been seduced by Codrington's arguments. However, Walker's character had already proved to be unimaginative and with the crucial support of Colonel Bristow, he held fast to the timetable set out by the Instructions.⁵⁶

The original intention of Walker's orders following the 20 May deadline had been for him to meet Benbow at Jamaica, whence they would sail north for Newfoundland. Graydon's appointment in Benbow's stead had altered these circumstance insofar as he was to meet Walker first at Barbados or the Leeward Islands to supervise the conclusion of the operations in the Windward, and then both men would proceed eastwards to Jamaica to execute the orders as drafted for Benbow. However, as a result of a skirmish with four French warships on his outward journey - for which (as will be seen) the House of Lords subsequently censured his failure fully to engage - Graydon in the *Resolution* reached the West Indies too late to fulfil the supervisory role and he eventually came upon Walker's dilapidated expeditionary force in Nevis Road on 23 May. In light of Codrington's allegedly bad-tempered response to Graydon when he had requested bread the previous day at Antigua, it was fortunate that the Vice-Admiral had first collected supplies at Barbados. Clearly conscious of the time, these provisions were distributed throughout the squadron in less than a day, while Walker removed to the *Cumberland* to allow Graydon, as the senior officer, to

Boyne', 25 Apr. 1703; Wills to Walker, 1, 2 May 1703; Walker to Wills, 2 May 1703.

⁵⁶ PRO, ADM 51/128 Part x, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 24 Apr., 7-10 May 1703.

raise his Flag in the *Boyne*.⁵⁷

Port Royal, Jamaica was reached on 5 June but the subsequent twenty day stay there was doubtless longer than Graydon had envisaged. It was neither settling the defensive station squadron of four warships and two fireships nor landing the additional 400 garrison soldiers which proved time consuming; but rather, it was a quarrel which arose over the supply of additional provisions and men for the departing squadron. By his own admission Governor Handasyd failed to persuade the Council to provide supplies, thus leaving Graydon dependent upon individual colonists' private charity, which yielded smaller returns. Despite this insult, Graydon was ill-advised to undertake the aggressive press of men throughout the island. The Council minuted their discontent and a steady number of mercantile protest petitions were still being sent back to London after the squadron had arrived home. Indeed, as also recognised by the Lords' subsequent censure, Graydon's general conduct at Jamaica had only a negative impact on the Ministry's often fractious relationship with the colonies, particularly with respect to the military-naval provision.⁵⁸

It was the beginning of August before the expeditionary squadron neared Newfoundland's Cape Race, having obviously decided that time did not permit putting into Boston for additional help.⁵⁹ Notwithstanding some small settlements dotted elsewhere, this Cape represented the southerly boundary of the English colonial settlements that were concentrated on the eastern coast of Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula. French plantations dominated the southern coastline westwards to their main settlement at Placentia, which was the principal target for Graydon's combined army-navy force. During the voyage from Jamaica, there had been one Council of land and sea officers about the disposition and necessary resources for a landing, but on first approach, it was thought prudent to send the barges from three ships on a reconnaissance mission along the River Trapassey which ran

⁵⁷ PRO, SP 42/67, fos. 33-5: 'Orders to Captain Hovenden Walker', 18 Jan. 1703; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, v. 486-7: Instructions for [John] Graydon Esq., 20 Feb. 1703; *CSPC, 1702-1703*, no. 1128, pp. 717-18: Graydon to Nottingham, 8 Oct. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/222 Part v, unpaginated, *Cumberland*, 18-15 May 1703.

⁵⁸ *CSPC, 1702-1703*, nos. 885, 916, 1128, 1224, pp. 535, 554, 717-18, 791: Handasyd to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 7 July 1703; Minutes of the Council of Jamaica, 14 July 1703; Graydon to Nottingham, 8 Oct. 1703; Petitions of Merchants and Planters, 1703; PRO, ADM 51/222 Part v, unpaginated, *Cumberland*, 25 May-29 June 1703; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Wavell to 'Honoured Sirs', 5 Nov. 1703.

⁵⁹ The ensuing account of Graydon and Walker at Newfoundland is based on the following primary sources: PRO, ADM 51/222 Part v, unpaginated, *Cumberland*, 29 June, 13, 17 July, 12-13, 22 Aug., 3, 8 Sept. 1703; HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, v. 488: Instructions for [John] Graydon Esq., 20 Feb. 1703; *CSPC, 1702-1703*, no. 1071, pp. 667-8: Minutes of a Council of War, 3 Sept. 1703.

south-westerly from Ferryland. This yielded no intelligence of substance, however, and in its progress towards Placentia, the squadron moved round the coast to St Mary's harbour, dropping anchor on 12 August.

Although Placentia was the priority target, Graydon's Instructions encouraged when possible the destruction of other French settlements. Despite the worsening weather, moderate success in this regard was achieved throughout the latter half of August. A number of raiding parties were landed in bays along the coast from St Mary's, with at least one reaching some distance westwards as a result of intelligence about the existence of a large fortified French settlement. It was however found to comprise only three small houses and a number of boats. This event highlighted poor intelligence provision, which previous incursions had obviously not enhanced; the small and insignificant settlement typified the majority of those destroyed by these raids. By the end of August, the bastion of French strength on Newfoundland still remained and, as the Norris-Gisbon expedition during the previous war had demonstrated,⁶⁰ Placentia required to be comprehensively destroyed to effect French expulsion. In this respect, Graydon's coastal forays in late August were strategic irrelevancies.

Of more immediate operational concern however, was the negative tactical impact of these raids. With the weather deteriorating through August, there could have been little expectation that it would improve with the onset of autumn and thus the opportunities to mount the attack on Placentia were diminishing. Moreover, as the majority of the squadron had been at sea without a proper refit and repair since leaving Spithead for Spain in July 1702, they were increasingly unseaworthy in poor weather. The problems posed by diminished equipment were only compounded by the frailty of the expeditionary force. Many of the soldiers and sailors continued to suffer from the disease which had been prevalent in the Caribbean, while the scarcity of provisions reduced further their immunity and morale. Certainly, these were the issues along with a shortage of war supplies upon which Graydon's Council of War deliberated on 3 September when it met to consider how best to attack Placentia. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Council regarded its weaknesses too great when set against the reputed French strength at Placentia and it decided to abandon the operation against that settlement and return to England forthwith.

⁶⁰ See Chapter 1, Section II.vi, pp. 119-38, for an account of this expedition.

Despite committing themselves to sail together, the squadron arrived back home piecemeal. The two naval commanders - Graydon and Walker - parted company between Land's End and the Scilly Isles in late October when Walker's *Cumberland* failed to make the passage through these landmarks and he was forced into the first port of sanctuary - Milford Haven - by sickness among his crew. Professionally and politically, however, no home port was to provide shelter for either Graydon or Walker.⁶¹ Both their expeditions had been abject failures, which within a few months fell under Parliamentary scrutiny. Admittedly, there was less immediate interest in the operational shortcomings of Graydon at Newfoundland, though this was largely because the investigating House of Lords Select Committee, appointed in February 1704, was more concerned with his activities while at Jamaica and the graver allegation that he had failed properly to engage a small French squadron on his outward journey. As previously mentioned, the Lords censured Graydon's conduct in both respects and his naval career was ended with their recommendation to the Queen that he should not be employed again.⁶² Although political considerations clearly underlay such resolutions passed by a Whiggish House of Lords over a Tory Admiral, the events at Newfoundland might be seen as justifying the judgement of the House of Lords. At least one subsequent report from the main English settlement, St John's, could not understand why the expedition had failed, and it specifically criticised the commanders' ignorance of Newfoundland's coastal topography and meteorology. However, given that the Council of War's decision on 3 September to return home was a consequence of the strength of the French defences at Placentia rather than the weather, it is not obvious that Graydon would have aimed to press ahead even if he had known that the fog tended to dissipate closer to the shore. An intelligence report in late September, underscored the Council's apprehensions by indicating that, upon spying Graydon's squadron in the nearby bay, the French added 500 men to the 3000 already at Placentia, and that they also apparently held plans to put more warships on that station with a view to attacking St John's. The only contention of the House of Lords about the Newfoundland expedition was to stress the lapses in its secrecy. Paradoxically, the report from St John's which criticised Graydon also implicitly recognised these circumstances by recommending that a successful expulsion of the French would require at least fifteen

⁶¹ PRO, ADM 51/222 Part v, unpaginated, *Cumberland*, 9 Sept., 18 Oct., 25 Nov. 1703.

⁶² HMC, *House of Lords MSS* NS, v. 462-8; *LJ*, xvii. 507-11.

warships carrying some 2500 troops fresh from England: such manpower and equipment, Graydon simply never possessed.⁶³

The specific combined operational endeavour at Guadeloupe came under greater scrutiny as result of Codrington's protests. Despite still being very ill and hoping for leave, the Governor accused Walker in early August of a dereliction of duty with respect to the action at Guadeloupe. Clearly this was a grave charge, and one which Codrington did not dilute in his subsequent account of the operation. Although the Ministry decided to replace Codrington as Governor of the Leeward Islands instead of affording him temporary leave, they were obliged to consider seriously his correspondence. A Committee of the Privy Council was established to investigate Walker's conduct with respect to three points: that he remained too long at Barbados, while having failed to notify Codrington of his arrival; that he came to the leeward of Guadeloupe; and that he ceased actions before the 20 May.⁶⁴

Walker did not have much difficulty rebutting these charges when he appeared before the Committee on 29 April. It was already on record that illness and the decision of a Council of War to await new orders had caused the delay at Barbados; while Walker had also specifically directed the responsibility for notifying Codrington to the Barbadian authorities soon after his arrival. The sanction of a Council of War was similarly cited for the stop in operations prior to 20 May, notwithstanding Walker's manipulation of the circumstances attendant to its meeting. As for the second charge of going to the leeward of Guadeloupe, it remains unclear what aspect of the operation this referred to. If, as seems most likely, the reference was to Walker coming leeward of Guadeloupe to rendezvous with Codrington at Antigua, then the Commodore's defence that the Governor agreed with this approach on the grounds that the ships would struggle to beat to the windward is doubtful for two reasons. Firstly, there was no consultation between Codrington and Walker about their point of rendezvous; and secondly, the Governor was, on the contrary, critical of Walker coming to Antigua because all the ships would have to beat back to the windward to target the French.

⁶³ *CSPC, 1702-1703*, nos. 1131, 1191, pp. 719-20, 770: Roope to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 10 Oct. 1703; Copy of an Examination of Laville and Belase, 2 deserters from Placentia, 29 Sept. 1703; *LJ*, xvii. 551.

⁶⁴ PRO, CO 152/5, fos. 137-8, 149-50: Codrington to the 'Board', 8 Aug. 1703, 6 Feb. 1704; Nottingham to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 16 Nov. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/222 Part v, unpaginated, *Cumberland*, 5-29 Apr. 1704; PRO, CO 153/8, fos. 66-75, 212-15: the 'Board' to Codrington, 8 Sept. 1703; Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 28 June 1704; the Lords of Trade and Plantations to Nottingham, 19 Oct. 1703; Lords of Trade and Plantations to Codrington, 28 Oct. 1703.

Although Walker's defence on this point could be contradicted, his Instructions had nonetheless required him to liaise with the Leeward Islands' authorities and thus his proceeding to Antigua could not be condemned wholesale.

The Earl of Peterborough, who was appearing for Codrington at the Committee, seemed to appreciate the strength of Walker's defence for his response shifted focus from these three points. He now accused Walker of refusing to supply ordnance materials and of sending Codrington a letter that was peremptory in tone. Again, the Commodore easily parried the claims. The decisions of the Council of naval captains could justify all such supplies as were sent ashore and while he accepted that Codrington may have taken offence at the letter, their relationship had been equal and gentlemanly. Walker was of course being at once insincere and devious. Questions on relationships between commanders were largely contingent upon anecdotal and subjective personal evidence whereas the operational proceedings could be accounted for in the documentary evidence. A recommendation to consult these records was Walker's parting shot to the Committee when, at its second session, he was excused from further attendance.⁶⁵

The Commodore's early dismissal indicated that his evidence had impressed the Committee and indeed, when it reported on 4 May, Walker's conduct was not criticised. Instead its findings blamed the Barbadian authorities for failing to notify Codrington of the squadron's arrival and also the generally poor state of the expeditionary provisions. Perhaps understandably, Codrington was unimpressed with this judgement: he looked to apportion blame, whereas the Ministry seemed to have been, in his opinion, too easily contented with the events at Guadeloupe. Certainly, Codrington might have wondered that the Privy Council Committee made no reference to the operation's command structure. At the end of February 1703 before the beginning of the operation, Codrington had complained to Nottingham about the absence of a unified command and suggested - as his father had done in July 1691 after the failure of his action on Guadeloupe with Commodore Wright - that both the land and sea forces be under his sole jurisdiction.⁶⁶ In 1691, the Admiralty had been reluctant to concede

⁶⁵ PRO, ADM 51/222 Part v, unpaginated, *Cumberland*, 29 Apr. 1704; *CSPC*, 1702-1703, no. 230, p. 150: Codrington to [Nottingham?], 23 Jan. 1703; PRO, SP 44/208, pp. 8-10: 'Additional Instructions for Our Trusty and Welbeloved Sir George Rooke', 7 June 1702; PRO, ADM 1/2642, unf.: Walker to the 'Secretary to HRH', 12 Jan., 4 Feb. 1703; PRO, ADM 51/128 Part ix, unpaginated, *Boyne*, 9 Jan. 1703.

⁶⁶ PRO, ADM 1/5249, pp. 414-16: Court Minute, 4 May 1704; Harlow, *Christopher Codrington*, pp. 174-5; PRO, 152/5, fos. 256-7: Codrington to the 'Board', 8 July 1704; *CSPC*, 1702-1703, no. 362, pp. 213-14:

this and instead had enhanced the authority of the combined Council of War with respect to the movements of the expeditionary or station squadron. However, given the younger Codrington's unwillingness to work through the combined Council, there could not on this occasion be any effective assessment of its command performance. Besides, the Privy Council was quite correct to emphasise the failings of other operational requirements. Clearly, the lack of provisions - both the victuals and war supplies - had hastened the action on Guadeloupe to a conclusion regardless of success or failure. As a detachment from another operation the land force was without a dedicated artillery train, and it was unrealistic to expect Walker (as Codrington did) to deprive his warships of a minimum amount of powder and shot. Moreover, once in receipt of the Instructions detailing the Newfoundland operation, the Commodore had to think of reserving enough foodstuffs for that expedition and for the return home without knowing the extent of the supplies being sent to him or what might be gained at Jamaica.

It was not that the combined operations in the colonial theatre in 1703 suffered from a poorly managed army-navy dynamic - although a more positive relationship between the senior commanders would undoubtedly have facilitated their actions - rather it was that poor logistics undermined the essential mutuality of the endeavour. This weakness can be traced to the origin of the expeditionary force in Rooke's larger fleet off the Spanish coast and also to the failure of the larger Anglo-Dutch fleet to materialise. Notably however, there was no attempt during the Spanish Succession War to dispatch a combined expeditionary force from England solely bound for the West Indies and this in turn highlights the political wellsprings - the Tory Secretary of State, Nottingham - of these early operations. Nottingham's departure from the Ministry in 1704, followed by the increasing dominance of the Whigs through to 1710, underscores this point. From 1704, there were fewer advocates for a 'Blue Water' strategy in the Caribbean and such sympathy the predominately Whiggish Ministry had for combined army-navy ventures was disposed to acting with the North American colonists. Even then though, the organisation of an expeditionary force was not forthcoming and it required the re-emergence of the Tories in 1710 to provide the necessary impetus. It is to these events that this study must now turn.

Codrington to [Nottingham?], 24 Feb. 1703; *CSPC, 1689-1692*, nos. 1617, pp. 490-1: Codrington to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 3 July 1691.

II.iii: The Combined Expeditions to North America, 1708-1711.

The proposal by the New York Governor, Lord Cornbury, in September 1702 that England undertake a combined land and sea operation to expel the French from Canada was not an original suggestion. During the Nine Years War, Sir William Phips had aimed to do likewise with an assault against Quebec from the St Lawrence River, while a separate land force marched from Albany upon Montreal. Phips's attempt in 1690 failed but, with the colonies having provided all the men and material, he and others maintained that the action might easily be successful if London was to commit substantial land and sea forces. Cornbury's proposal was very similar to Phips's operation and he emphasised the necessary role of the home country by requesting that England provide at least eight fully supplied fourth rates and some 1500 troops. However, despite there being similar defensive and economic motivations for such an action in the continental colonies as amongst the West Indian islands, London's attention was, during the early war years, focused on the Caribbean. Cornbury's proposal was therefore largely ignored; when the war-time defence of North America was raised in the Cabinet Council, the outcome was that money and some supplies would be sent to improve fortifications along with encouragement to the colonial militia forces operating on the frontiers.⁶⁷

London's response did not however discourage the colonial authorities. Both Cornbury and the Massachusetts Governor, Joseph Dudley, continued to append operational suggestions to their news dispatches. These often followed details of the latest skirmishes with the French and their Indian allies and, as an attack on Canada was frequently mentioned, it became clear that the colonists considered it an essential defensive measure.⁶⁸ Other proposals related more to extending the commercial foundation of the empire. The imminent union of England and Scotland prompted Dudley to propose an expedition to secure Acadia as a colony for the 'North Britons'. Included in his plans was the destruction of Port Royal -

⁶⁷ PRO, CO 5/1047, fos. 517-18: Cornbury to 'My Lord' [the Board of Trade], 29 Sept. 1702; PRO, CO 5/1048, f. 146: Court Minute, 3 Apr. 1703; Morgan, 'Some Attempts At Imperial Co-operation', pp. 172-3; see Chapter 1, Section II.i, pp. 60 n. 10, for details on Phips's operation in 1690.

⁶⁸ PRO, CO 5/912, fos. 41, 143, 305, 473-5: Dudley to the Board of Trade, 25 July 1705, 1 Feb., 8 Oct. 1706; 'A Memoriall humbly Presented by Colonel Dudley HM Governor of Massachusetts and New Hampshire referring to the French Settlements in America' n.d. [Received: 19 July 1708]; PRO, CO 5/1848 B Part II, fos. 220-1: Cornbury to 'My Lords' [the Board of Trade], 6 Nov. 1704; PRO, CO 5/1049, no. 97: Cornbury to the Board of Trade, 20 Aug. 1708.

There is no clear reason why 1708 marked a change in London's commitment to the war in North America. British war fortunes in that theatre had not suffered a significant reverse which required remedial action; nor had there been any substantial alteration in the strategy on the European continent or in the Mediterranean. Marlborough's victory at Oudenarde had doubtless eased pressure on the allies and, a year on from Almanza, the Imperialists had begun to provide additional troops for the Peninsula; but equally the Ministry did not lack military and naval projects within Europe. An important development was probably the personal presentation of the colonists' case by Samuel Vetch. Vetch, an 'eighteenth century knight errant'⁷⁰ was a Scotsman who had fought for William in his native country during the Revolution and had then participated in the failed Darien scheme to establish a Scottish colony on the Panamanian isthmus. Upon leaving there in 1699, he established himself as a trader with the Indians, first in New York and then in Albany, and his increasing mercantile prominence in addition to his close links with the natives caused him to be variously employed as an emissary by the colonial authorities. In 1705, Dudley sent him to Quebec to arrange a prisoner exchange and assess the offer of a neutrality treaty by the French Governor, the Marquis de Vaudreil.⁷¹ It was rejected then and on a number of subsequent occasions but Vetch used his time in Canada profitably to gain information on the French colony. Upon his return, he wrote a long memorandum entitled 'Canada Survey'd'. This work provided a comprehensive assessment of the region, including its geography, government and economy, and aimed not only to underscore the necessity of the conquest of Canada but also its vulnerability to a well resourced combined operation similar to that suggested by Cornbury: an attack upon Quebec from the St Lawrence River and overland against Montreal.⁷²

An obvious strength of Vetch's pamphlet was the clarity with which it outlined the economic case for conquest - albeit based upon a negative premise. Using figures from the City of London, Vetch calculated that the war with France was costing English traders yearly some tens of thousand of pounds in lost Indian trade and that, overall, the English continental empire was losing several hundred thousand pounds. As Canada was the headquarters of the French commercial and trading challenge, it followed that it would be cheaper to shut it

⁷⁰ Morgan, 'Some Attempts At Imperial Co-operation', p. 179.

⁷¹ J. C. Webster, *Samuel Vetch: An Address* (Annapolis Royal, 1929), pp. 5-7.

down.⁷³ Supporting Vetch in London was another colonial veteran, Colonel Francis Nicholson, who had served in a variety of posts overseas; and, despite having been recalled in 1705 from his most recent appointment as the Governor of Virginia due to his high Tory politics, the Whig Ministry afforded him an audience.⁷⁴ The members of the Council of Trade also contributed to the momentum by reporting positively upon Vetch's proposal and shrewdly added weight to their judgement by not commenting upon its military form, lest the Ministry considered their support of colonists uncritical. It was doubtless a measure of the strength of the arguments in 'Canada Survey'd' (and also a demonstration that the divisions in war strategy were not as absolute as was often characterised) that the Whig ministers who instinctively, favoured the European continental war over the maritime context of the colonial conflict agreed to support and supply a combined operational assault against Canada.⁷⁵

In February 1709, preparations began in earnest for the dispatch of this operation, which was scheduled to begin by mid-May. A pressing first task was the provision of transport to take Vetch and Nicholson back across the Atlantic so that they might make the necessary arrangements in America; for not only was the operation going to be a joint army-navy enterprise, it was also going to combine forces from the colonies and Britain. Vetch's Instructions - issued at the beginning of March - stipulated that New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania were to contribute a total of 1500 men⁷⁶ for the attack upon Montreal; meanwhile New England and Rhode Island were to raise 1200 men for the seaborne assault against Quebec. In addition, all the men raised by the colonies were to be appropriately armed and provisioned for three months, whilst the 1200 were to be embarked aboard transports in order to join the British naval squadron on its arrival at Boston.⁷⁷

Vetch and Nicholson departed Spithead in the *Dragon* on 11 March with a considerable amount of war supplies aboard and by the end of April they had put ashore from Nantucket Bay, Boston. Not surprisingly, given the tenor of recent dispatches home, they met a favourable response upon delivering the Queen's orders to the various colonial

⁷² PRO, CO 324/9, fos. 221-45: 'Canada Survey'd', 27 July 1708.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ S.S. Webb, 'The Strange Career of Francis Nicholson', *W&MQ* xxiii (1966), 513-48.

⁷⁵ *CSPC, 1708-1709*, nos. 221, 221.I, pp. vii, 164-5: the Council of Trade and Plantations to Sunderland, 1 Dec. 1708, and enclosure, the Council of Trade and Plantations to the Queen.

⁷⁶ The following quotas of men were to make up this total: 800 from New York; 200 from New Jersey; 350 from Connecticut; and 150 from Pennsylvania.

⁷⁷ *CSPC, 1708-1709*, no. 387, pp. 230-2: H.M. Instructions to Colonel Vetch, 1 Mar. 1709.

governors and also when seeking the local legislatures' authority to raise the troops. Only in the predominately Quaker New Jersey and Pennsylvania did problems emerge. Both refused to provide men, though after much argument they agreed as a compromise to vote some funds.⁷⁸ At the colonists' end therefore the operation remained largely on schedule when on 25 May, the land force for Montreal marched out to a staging post at Wood Creek, south of Lake Champlain. Vetch's Instructions had not made provision for the command of this force and the New York Assembly pressed for Nicholson's appointment. Opposition to this development focused upon Nicholson being ill-suited to liaise with the Five Nation Indians who were to join this overland force but the preferred alternative - Peter Schuyler - was selected as Nicholson's deputy and he had in any event been one of the proponents of Nicholson's appointment.⁷⁹

At Wood Creek, the force was organised for the attack on Montreal, which amongst other things involved building the canoes for the transfer along to the north end of the lake. While these preparations and those in New England continued throughout the summer, the colonists fully expected the British squadron to arrive at Boston. By August, however, there was still no indication that its arrival was imminent and the authorities in America became increasingly restless. Their arrangements had been in place for a number of weeks and the strain of keeping men at arms, whether aboard transports at Boston or in camp at Wood Creek, was beginning to show. Indeed, Nicholson's forces skirmished with some French outguards and their Indian allies near to Lake Champlain thereby advertising not only their presence in that area but also the fact that an operation was imminent. The continuing delay thus allowed the French time to prepare their defences. By early September, it was clear to

⁷⁸ PRO, CO 5/9, fos. 96-9: 'Journal of the Proceedings of Col. Vetch and Col. Nicholson from New York to Sunderland' [hereafter 'Journal of Vetch and Nicholson'], 21 June 1709; PRO, ADM 51/269, Part vi, unpaginated, *Dragon*, 28 Feb.-30 Apr. 1709; *CSPC, 1708-1709*, nos. 580, 605, 671 pp. 349, 406, 409-10: Gookin to Nicholson and Vetch, 17 June 1709; Nicholson and Vetch to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 28 June 1709; Cockerill to Popple, 2 July 1709. It is noteworthy that on p. ix of his Preface, the editor of the *CSPC 1708-1709*, Cecil Headlam, stated that Pennsylvania gave neither men nor money; while Morgan, 'Some Imperial Attempts at Co-operation', p. 182, claimed that it voted £2000. Curiously, the document Headlam cites as evidence - *CSPC, 1708-1709*, no. 580, p. 406: Gookin to Nicholson and Vetch, 17 June 1709, - refers to the Pennsylvanian Assembly raising £500 as a present for Queen Anne; he does not seem to have considered that this might have been looked upon as funding for the expedition. It is not clear whether the £2000 Morgan refers to was voted in a bloc or whether, taking into account the above £500, an additional £1500 was subsequently found. Nonetheless, on the substantive question as to whether Pennsylvania did vote this sum, Morgan, 'Some Imperial Attempts at Co-operation', p. 182 n. 3, cites an impressive list of local evidence unavailable to this study.

⁷⁹ PRO, CO 5/9, fos. 96-9, 100-1: 'Journal of Vetch and Nicholson'; Nicholson to Sunderland, 8 July 1709.

Vetch that the opportunity to begin the operation had passed and he convened a governors' conference to decide what to do next.⁸⁰

Vetch's instinct that the squadron was not going to appear was correct. London had tried to maintain the momentum of its preparations begun in February with the appointment of Vice-Admiral John Baker⁸¹ and Brigadier MacCartney to the squadron and the land force commands; meanwhile vessels were brought down to Spithead and five regiments were identified to form the land force. Progress slowed in April however as a new land commander - Brigadier Whetham - had to be appointed upon MacCartney's embroilment in criminal proceedings following an allegation of rape by his housekeeper. When, in May, Whetham was issued with two sets of Instructions, it was no longer assumed that the operation against Canada would take place. Given the increasing lateness of the season, a Council of War to be convened by Whetham on his arrival at Boston was now to determine upon its practicability. The Ministry's evident and increasing scepticism about the departure of the force was manifest towards the end of May when Baker was told to wait with his squadron for further orders. Ten days later, he attended the Queen in Council to be told that the Canadian expedition had been abandoned and that his squadron was to depart with seven regiments for the Mediterranean. The lateness of the year, the prospects for peace and the demands of the Peninsula including, in particular, another proposal to reduce Cádiz were given as the reasons.⁸² Of these three, only the first stands up to scrutiny. Ever since the failure of the Rooke-Ormonde expedition in 1702, Cádiz had been a perennial paper target for the allies and 1709 was no different in that the operation never occurred. Contrary winds delayed Baker's departure until the middle of August by which time it was thought to be too late for operations against the Spanish coast and, on entering the Mediterranean, Byng

⁸⁰ PRO, CO 5/9, fos. 96-9, 102-5: 'Journal of Vetch and Nicholson'; Vetch to Sunderland, 2 Aug. 1709 and 'Postscript Letter', 12 Aug. 1709; Dudley to Sunderland, 13 Aug. 1709.

⁸¹ Snyder wrongly claimed in *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, 1269 n. 3 that Baker was to convey the force to America to capture Port Royal. It is clear from Baker's journal – NMM, JOD/22, unf.: Journal of Vice-Admiral John Baker, 1709-1711, 19 Mar. 1709 - that his orders required his participation in the assault against Quebec.

⁸² NMM, JOD/22, unf.: Journal of Vice-Admiral John Baker, 1709-1711, 19 Mar.-5 June 1709; PRO, ADM 1/4092, fos. 208-10, 224-5: Sunderland to the Admiralty, 26, 28 Feb., 20 Mar. 1709; PRO, ADM 1/4093, fos. 8, 14, 44: Addison to Burchett, 3 Apr. 1709; Sunderland to 'My Lord', 12 Apr. 1709; Sunderland to the Admiralty, 9 May 1709 and enclosure, 'Copy of Her Majesties Additional Instructions to Brigadier Whetham', 9 May 1709; PRO, WO 4/8, pp. 138: Walpole to Bridges, 2 Mar. 1709; PRO, WO 4/9, p. 39: Walpole to Whetham, 11 June 1709; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, ii. 1180 n. 1; *The*

directed Baker to land the troops at Barcelona. Peace negotiations were admittedly current but to abandon one operation on the basis that these talks showed signs of success only to promote another (the Cádiz proposal) suggested either muddled thinking or disingenuousness. Marlborough certainly thought it inappropriate to be planning operations in Spain when peace was under discussion, though notably he omitted to apply this stricture to Flanders.⁸³ The time of year was however crucial for with the squadron still at Spithead well beyond the date previously set for the start of the operation across the Atlantic, dispatching it now would probably result in a waste of resources. As was to be discovered at great cost in 1711, the St Lawrence River - up which the squadron would have to pass to reach Quebec - was navigable in only the most seasonable conditions.

On 27 July, Sunderland wrote officially to inform the colonists of the recent decision but the slowness of communication meant that the news did not reach them until the second week of October. Dudley conveyed the information to a conference of senior New England colonists and general officers, including Vetch and Nicholson, and they began to consider Sunderland's suggestion in his letter that they use the force amassed to target Acadia, with an attack on Port Royal especially recommended. Reluctant to see all their preparations put to waste the colonists agreed that some of the forces should be used against Port Royal but the participation of the naval vessels then on the North American station had to be sought first. Although some of the Captains were personally sympathetic to an action, only one – the Captain of the *Chester* – agreed on the basis that his ship's station was to attend to the Governor of New England whereas the others claimed that their Instructions did not allow for it. Perhaps because both operations for 1709 had now fallen through, the colonists maintained the pressure upon London by petitioning for another expedition to be organised early in 1710. This time however their demands were scaled back inasmuch as they promoted the assault against Port Royal rather than the conquest of Canada. It was reckoned that for the former operation Britain need only supply four men-of-war and a bomb vessel plus some

Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, iii, nos. 1295, 1301, pp. 1269, 1275: Godolphin to Marlborough, 31 May, 5 June 1709.

⁸³ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1317, 1324, 1353, 1375, 1376, pp. 1287 n. 2, 1293, 1319 1342-3: Godolphin to Marlborough, 26 June, 20 July, 14 Aug. 1709; Marlborough to Godolphin, 15 Aug. 1709.

500 marines or army troops with a couple of large mortars.⁸⁴ The Conference's implicit calculation that London would be more likely to deliver on this reduced provision by the beginning of March thereby allowing Port Royal to be quickly captured, meant that there still might be time to revive plans for the expulsion of the French from Canada.

In the new year, Nicholson returned to England accompanied by Schuyler and four of the Five Nation Indian Chiefs to present the Conference's petition to the Ministry. The Chiefs aroused some interest in London and their exotic presence may have encouraged ministers to begin planning the dispatch of another expedition to conquer Canada, despite the colonists having limited their ambitions to Port Royal. Godolphin reported that the failure of the peace negotiations then taking place at Gertruydenberg had persuaded the Cabinet Council to renew hostilities and make another attempt in North America.⁸⁵ Such an operation was thought to be 'of great consequence and also very feasible'.⁸⁶ It was clear though the Lord Treasurer was unconvinced and that Marlborough was positively hostile, though he kept his opposition private. The Duke argued that experience showed that little was gained from such expeditions except great expense and the ruin of the regiments involved.⁸⁷ Marlborough's opinion was not necessarily directed against combined army-navy operations as an instrument of warfare – he had after all been a proponent of them since the 1690 campaign in Ireland. Rather, his opposition was focused on the fact that this operation was to be an overseas colonial expedition which, due to the distances involved, would deprive him of the troops for the whole of the campaign season; whilst it was also rooted in the changing political background against which war policy was being formulated. In early 1710, the

⁸⁴ PRO, CO 5/9, fos. 111-16, 123, 125-6, 125A, 127-8: Dudley, Nicholson, Vetch and Moody to 'My Lord' [Sunderland], 24 Oct. 1709; Dudley, Vetch and Moody to 'My Lord' [Sunderland], 25 Oct. 1709 and enclosure, 'Votes at the Congress'; Dudley, Nicholson, Vetch and Moody to Ingoldsby, 18 Oct. 1709; Dudley, Nicholson, Vetch and Moody to Mathews, Tate, Clifton, Smith and Davis [Commanders of Her Majesties Ships at Nantucket], 19 Oct. 1709; Dudley, Nicholson, Vetch and Moody to Martin, 19 Oct. 1709; Smith to Dudley, 20 Oct. 1709; Martin to Dudley, 20 Oct. 1709; BL, Add MSS 61500, f. 22: Minutes of the Cabinet Council, 11 June 1709.

⁸⁵ Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, iii. 162; Morgan, 'Some Attempts At Imperial Co-operation', pp. 188-9; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1504, 1510, pp. 1467-8, 1471: Godolphin to Marlborough, 20, 25 Apr. 1710. See *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii. 1467 n. 9 for an explanation regarding Godolphin's curious tendency to refer to this proposed expedition to Canada in North America as one bound for the West Indies.

⁸⁶ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, no. 1510, p. 1471: Godolphin to Marlborough, 25 Apr. 1710.

⁸⁷ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1504, 1510, 1515, 1522-4, pp. 1467-8, 1471, 1475, 1483-5: Godolphin to Marlborough, 20, 25, 28 Apr., 2 May 1710; Marlborough to Godolphin, 5, 8 May 1710.

Tories were reviving as a political force. Their effective exploitation of the Ministry's crass handling of the impeachment of the popular high-flying divine Dr Sacheverell, combined with their subtle reflection of the increasing national war weariness, persuaded the Queen (deftly guided by Robert Harley) in the early spring of 1710 to remodel her Ministry incrementally in their favour. Despite being inclined to the Tories during their early years as courtiers and then attempting to rise above the political party fray, Marlborough and Godolphin had firmly identified with the Whigs since 1708 largely on the basis of the support that party gave to the European continental war. The Duke and the Lord Treasurer were therefore becoming increasingly isolated within the Government and could not rely on popular support as a bolster.⁸⁸ Consequently, their domination of war policy was no longer total and, for Marlborough, the Canadian expedition pointed to a reduction of his military efforts on the continent with the emphasis to be more exclusively upon the maritime and, specifically, the colonial context.

From the outset, Godolphin had suggested to Marlborough that he should propose an alternative form of employment for the selected regiments in the hope that the Cabinet Council would opt for his suggestion instead. Initially the Duke failed to respond to Godolphin's invitation as he did not wish to be blamed for the failure of the Canadian venture but eventually there was a suggestion of a project that Godolphin had long advocated, namely a landing of troops on the north eastern French coast which might then link up with Marlborough's Flanders army.⁸⁹ The Cabinet Council had meanwhile been pressing ahead with the preparations for the North American venture. Just as was the case with the 1709 operation, the colonists – Nicholson and Schuyler – were quickly returned home to raise the quotas of men and material before the arrival of the British contribution. Prior to his departure in mid-March, Nicholson was issued with Instructions appointing him Commander of all forces directed against any French possessions in the region, with Port Royal specifically mentioned. Doubtless this was a response to the colonists' complaint that in 1709

⁸⁸ G. Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London, 1973), pp. 238-9, 250-1; B. Hill, *Robert Harley: Speaker, Secretary of State and Premier Minister* (New Haven & London, 1988), pp. 125-8; G. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, (revised edn, London, 1987), pp. 75-6; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, iii. 84-8

⁸⁹ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1510, 1521-4, 1584, 1589, 1593, pp. 1471, 1481-5, 1542, 1546 n. 2, 1550: Godolphin to Marlborough, 25 Apr., 2, 5 May 1710; Marlborough to Godolphin, 5, 8 May, 24, 26 June, 10 July 1710.

their inability to command the participation of the naval captains in the action against Port Royal had caused it to be abandoned.⁹⁰ Nonetheless, although the Ministry had seemingly conferred on Nicholson a supreme command for any action in North America, they had no intention that this would extend to the principal attempt to expel the French from Canada. Upon Nicholson sailing with six vessels and some 400 marines, arrangements were begun for the force that was to follow him. In addition to Nicholson's small squadron and those already on station, the Admiralty was ordered to provide three men-of-war and sufficient transports to carry the five regiments which had been selected to form the mainstay of the land force. The command of these soldiers along with the troops that were to be raised by the colonial authorities was given to Lord Shannon. He received his Instructions in July and these further circumscribed Nicholson's command by directing Shannon on his arrival in Boston to convene a Council of War of senior British and colonial land and sea officers. Just as with Whetham's Instructions in 1709, this Council was to decide the viability of the Canadian operation and also what else might be undertaken in the event of its early success or abandonment.⁹¹ Nicholson's command was therefore confined to much smaller and provincial-dominated operations against targets such as Port Royal.

In the event, Nicholson was to exercise this authority as the progress of the operation against Canada followed the same pattern as the previous year. It was mid-July before he arrived back in Boston and could set the provincial authorities to raising their quotas and procuring the necessary war materials. The belated start to these tasks caused them not to be completed until the second week of September, which was too late to begin any credible action against Quebec.⁹² This second successive failure to make an attempt to expel the French from Canada should not however be wholly be blamed on the slowness of the colonial preparation. Some ten days after Nicholson's return to New England, London decided to cancel the dispatch of Shannon's force. The regiments were encamped on the Isle of Wight but their embarkation and the squadron's departure was being prevented by the current

⁹⁰ BL, Add MSS 61500, fos. 80, 85, 87, 96 107: Minutes of the Cabinet Council, 4, 28 Dec. 1709, 3, 26 Jan., 21 Feb. 1710; PRO, CO 5/865 unf.: *Boston News-Letter*, No. 345, 30 Oct.-6 Nov. 1710; PRO, CO 5/9, f. 106: Dudley, Vetch and Moddy to Sunderland, 25 Oct. 1709.

⁹¹ PRO, ADM 1/4090 Part I, fos. 12, 14 16, 2146, 79: Sunderland to the Admiralty, 29 Apr., 19 May, 10 June 1710; Pringle to Burchett, 13 May 1710; Dartmouth to the Admiralty, 8 July 1710; PRO, WO 4/9, pp. Walpole to Brydges, 25 Mar. 1710; PRO, CO 5/9 fos. 152-5: 'Instructions for Richard, Viscount Shannon, General of the Land Forces, that are to be Employed in the Reduction of Canada', July 1710.

⁹² PRO, CO 5/9, f. 156: Nicholson and Vetch to Dartmouth, 16 Sept. 1710.

prevailing winds. On 11 July, the Cabinet Council met to consider advice about sailing times to Boston and Quebec and consequently, Godolphin expressed his doubts that the operation could proceed given the current time of year. He restated this view a week later as the winds remained contrary and then finally reported to Marlborough on 24 July that Shannon's force was definitely not going to depart.⁹³

The letter informing the colonists of this decision was not sent until the last day of August, by which time the Queen had finally been persuaded to dismiss Godolphin and to put the Treasury under a Commission headed by the First Commissioner, Lord Poulett, but controlled by Robert Harley as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Fearing a lack of political support, Marlborough had never responded specifically to Godolphin's invitation to suggest alternative employment for Shannon's troops and despite the possibility that they might have comprised the landing force for a descent upon the northern French coast which was then being canvassed, these soldiers were, as in 1709, sent to Spain.⁹⁴ It is not clear exactly when Nicholson received this news but the *Boston News-Letter* implies that he was in any event intent on using his own Instructions to mount an attack against Port Royal.⁹⁵ In possession of the authority to compel the station naval captains to participate – though there is no suggestion that he had to exercise it – Nicholson had by 18 September gathered in Nantucket Bay a five-strong squadron with one bomb vessel and a number of transports and auxiliaries. Embarked aboard were four colonial regiments and the 400-odd marines from Britain along with the necessary war supplies. The squadron stood out to sea that day and reached the Wolves islets at the entrance to Passamaquoddy Bay on 21 September. There it remained until the early hours of 24 September when the ships crossed the Bay of Fundy to the estuary of the Port Royal river. The combination of a calm and an ebb tide forced the squadron to come temporarily to anchor but, once the tide was spent, the ships proceeded up river except for the *Cæser* which ran aground after sailing too close to the shore. On reaching an anchorage

⁹³ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1605, 1609, 1622, 1630, pp. 1560, 1566 n. 2, 1572, 1578; Godolphin to Marlborough, 7, 11, 18, 24 July 1710; PRO, ADM 1/4094 Part I, f. 97; Dartmouth to the Admiralty, 7 Aug. 1710.

⁹⁴ *CSPC, 1710-1711*, no. 380, pp. 183-4; Dartmouth to Dudley, 31 Aug. 1710; Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 315-20; Hill, *Robert Harley*, pp. 128-9; *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1630, 1647, pp. 1578, 1592-3; Marlborough to Godolphin, 24 July, 1710; Godolphin to Marlborough, 7 August 1710.

⁹⁵ The ensuing account of the capture of the capture of Port Royal is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: PRO, CO 5/865 unf.; *Boston News-Letter*, No. 345, 30 Oct.-6 Nov. 1710; PRO,

just above Goat Island, Nicholson convened an evening Council of War, which decided that two reconnaissance parties commanded by Colonels Vetch and Reading would go ashore in the early morning to determine whether the north or the south side of the river would provide the better landing site and camp. Their reports recommended the south side, where Port Royal's fort was situated, and, despite cannon fire from the fort as they put ashore, the troops were by the evening encamped in a nearby wood.

At day break on 26 September, Nicholson marched his force from the wood upon Port Royal town. This was easily taken despite the ambush of the marine vanguard commanded by Major Livingston as they ascended the hill overlooking the town. Skirmishing increased as the force neared the fort, when they were also subjected to its cannon fire. Nicholson however detached an advanced guard of grenadiers which managed to entrench themselves some 400 paces from the walls and in so doing swept many of the enemy back inside the fort. That night, while the bomb vessel maintained the pressure upon the fort's garrisons, Vetch led a party of 100 men to Spurs Point where he hoped to construct a twelve mortar battery to cover the passage up-river of the boats loaded with cannon and stores. The ground proved unsuitable however, and the landing of the field artillery was temporarily suspended. Fortunately, no substantive delay ensued as the war materials were brought up over the course of the following two days under the cover of a more effectively deployed bomb vessel. Although only a few hundred men, the Port Royal garrison kept up a fire disproportionate to their number ensuring that the movement of artillery cost Nicholson a number of men. Nonetheless, by the end of the month, a thirteen cannon battery supported by some 24 coehoorn mortars and two land mortars had begun to play against the fort and Governor Subercasse quickly sought terms. These were concluded within the week and on 6 October the French marched out of the fort with the full honours of war. Upon taking control, the colonists raised the Union Flag and renamed the fort Annapolis Royal in honour of the Queen. Its possession and the immediate environs held the key to the whole of Acadia, which also now fell to the British and was renamed Nova Scotia. The combined action of the Royal Navy, marines and colonial troops had therefore secured some success from the plans for the 1710 campaign. Nonetheless, it was the expulsion of the French from Canada which

the colonials sought above all else and, leaving Vetch to organise a new garrison at Annapolis Royal, Nicholson departed for England to press again the case for the more ambitious operation.

Nicholson was to return to much changed political circumstances in Britain. The Tories had consolidated their political revival with a crushing General Election victory over the Whigs in October 1710, which meant that they now dominated Parliament and the Ministry. Although led by the moderate Chancellor of the Exchequer, and later Lord Treasurer, Robert Harley, the more politically aggressive side of the Party was represented at a senior level by Henry St John, who had been appointed Secretary of State for the Northern Department a month before the election, while there were also numerous vigorous partisans on the backbenches.⁹⁶ These political developments had important implications for the direction of war policy. Previously, mixed and Whiggish governments had pursued both the traditional maritime and continental strategies, but it was now probable that the new Tory government would alter the strategic emphasis. Their election campaign had exploited an increasing national war weariness that was largely founded upon the discontent with the four shillings in the pound land tax and the inability of the continental campaigning (which necessitated the high tax) to bring victory. In 1709, Marlborough had again defeated the French on the battlefield but this victory at Malplaquet (31 August 1709) was considered pyrrhic by many inasmuch as it had not brought the French to peace in 1710, despite the huge loss of life. Moreover, by the end of that year, the allies had effectively lost the war on the Peninsula. The campaign had begun well with the Archduke occupying Madrid for a second time following victories at Almenara (17 July 1710) and Saragossa (8 August 1710), but the city rose for Philip and, to avoid being cut off in Castile, the allied commander, Starhemberg, decided to withdraw eastwards towards Catalonia. This retreat turned into a rout however with the rear of his army commanded by James Stanhope defeated at Brihuega (28 November 1710); while the remainder was badly galled and pinned back into Catalonia, despite a tactical victory against Vendôme at Villa Viciosa (29 November 1710). Thus, although there were few advocating immediate withdrawal from the war, there was undoubtedly a sense that war policy should now reflect such discontent and aspirations towards peace; while also

⁹⁶ Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, p. 379; Speck, *The Birth of Britain*, pp. 188, 190-2; H.T. Dickinson, *Bolingbroke*, (London, 1970), pp. 72, 75.

recognising that a strong military showing would enhance Britain's negotiating position as informal peace contacts with the French were re-established in the winter of 1710/11.⁹⁷

For St John, an expedition to capture Canada seemed an ideal operation in such circumstances. Its distance from Europe and the possible deployment of some of the best regiments from Marlborough's Flanders army would send the double signal that the Ministry was now less concerned with European continental campaigning but also aware that a significant military victory which captured territory was required as negotiating collateral. There was also the possible party political advantages to be reaped from undertaking an operation which appealed to the City and the merchants, who had never been traditional supporters of the Tories.⁹⁸ Accordingly, St John described it as a project about which he was neither 'light nor whimsical'.⁹⁹ Although keenly supported by the Board of Trade, which had been a proponent of the action since reading Vetch's 'Canada Survey'd', it was not clear in early 1711 that St John had convinced Harley. There was little trust between the two men and though at this stage their relationship remained intact, each desired to limit the other's role in the Ministry. Harley moreover suspected St John's avarice inasmuch he might aim to make money from the expeditionary victualling contracts, particularly those concerning the clothing.¹⁰⁰ As the senior of the two and with greater access to the Queen, Harley possessed the advantage in the long term if he wished to frustrate the proposal and there was undoubtedly a plaintive tone in St John's appeal to him that 'I hope you will support me in it since I have gone so far.'¹⁰¹ Luck was however with the Secretary when during a Privy Council examination of the dissident French Huguenot, Guiscard, the suspect stabbed Harley with a pen-knife. Although the wound was not life threatening, Harley was forced into several weeks convalescence and St John seized the opportunity of his absence to push forward the expedition to Canada.¹⁰²

The Secretary built on the proposal of previous years, which meant that there was no

⁹⁷ Homes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, pp. 76-7; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iv. 144, 148-9, 159, 280; Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 339-41

⁹⁸ W.T. Morgan, 'Queen Anne's Canadian Expedition of 1711', *QQ* xxxv (1927-1928), 463-4; *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, ed. G.S. Graham (London, 1953), p. 12.

⁹⁹ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iv. 656: St John to [Harley], 17 Jan. 1711.

¹⁰⁰ HMC, *Portland MSS*, v. 465: The Earl of Oxford's Account of Public Affairs; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, iii. 139

¹⁰¹ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iv. 656: St John to [Harley], 17 Jan. 1711.

¹⁰² Morgan, 'Queen Anne's Canadian Expedition', p. 464; Trevelyan, *England Under Queen Anne*, iii. 140-1.

change to the basic operational structure. A detachment of colonial troops was to march overland from Albany to attack Montreal, while a combined army-navy force sent from Britain would put in first at Boston and then sail around the north American coast to proceed up the St Lawrence river for an assault on Quebec. The capture of both places would allow the two forces to combine and complete the expulsion of the French from Canada. St John was nonetheless able to mould, and arguably, determine the fate of the operation through the choice of the commanders and by effecting its preparation under a blanket of secrecy. With respect to the former, the charge that personal and party politics influenced his choice cannot be evaded. G.S. Graham clearly made the point that Rear-Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker's naval career hardly recommended him to the command of the squadron to be dispatched from Britain, while his expedition to the Caribbean in 1703 had not only failed to achieve its objectives but had also descended into a squabble amongst senior commanders. Walker's friendly relations with St John and the fact that he was a known Tory were strongly suspected as having caused his selection in place of Sir Thomas Hardy, who was reputedly the first preference.¹⁰³ Complex political and personal calculations undoubtedly underlay the choice of Brigadier John Hill to command the land forces aboard the fleet. Hill had proved himself a reasonably capable regimental soldier but that did not mean he was suited to general command. Marlborough certainly did not think so and Hill's promotion in June 1710 had been forced upon him by the Queen. Marlborough had earlier that year successfully vetoed the Brigadier's translation to the Colonelcy of the late Earl of Essex's Dragoon Regiment. His opinion of Hill was nonetheless coloured by his wife's estrangement from the Queen, which the Duchess blamed on Abigail Masham, one of Anne's bedchamber maids and sister of John Hill. Sarah Churchill's animosity was especially bitter; she had as Mrs Masham's cousin recommended her to the Queen, but Abigail proved politically to be strongly inclined to the Tories. This was, of course, antithetical to the Duchess's staunch Whiggism and Abigail had made matters worse by acting as a conduit between the Queen and Harley when the latter began intriguing against the Whig government soon after his dismissal from the Secretaryship in 1708.¹⁰⁴ In these circumstances, and with Harley absent from Court, St John

¹⁰³ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 14-16, 59; for a relation of Walker's expedition to Quebec in 1703, see Chapter 2, Section II.ii.

¹⁰⁴ *The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence*, iii, nos. 1446A, 1447A-B, 1449, 1499, 1526, 1559, pp. 1408, 1410-13, 1415-16, 1461-2 n. 6, 1488 n. 2, 3, 4, 1522: Cowper to Marlborough, 17 Jan. 1710;

saw opportunities in Hill's appointment inasmuch as it might through Abigail interest the Queen in the expedition and, more generally, offer the prospect that he could replace Harley as the Queen's principal contact with the Tories. He achieved the first objective as Anne gave the expedition such strong support that upon his return to work Harley was unable to prevent its deployment. This remained the case even when the death of the Emperor Joseph I in April undermined the strategic wellsprings of British policy. The 'election' of Joseph's brother the Archduke Charles as Emperor Charles VI, meant that Britain was no longer fighting against Bourbon domination of France and Spain to ensure a balance of power in Europe but for Hapsburg domination of Spain and central Europe. Upon this development, the Earl of Rochester changed his mind about the expedition and Harley encouraged him to persuade the Cabinet Council to do likewise but Rochester's efforts proved unsuccessful. Nonetheless, despite the support St John received from the Court on the specific issue of the expedition, he did fail to reduce the Chancellor's standing with the Queen and in May 1711 Harley was elevated to an earldom and the Treasurership.¹⁰⁵

The experience of the previous two years had demonstrated that the squadron would have to depart Britain by early spring if the operation was to be viable. St John therefore pressed forward the preparations throughout March. The land force was to comprise some seven infantry regiments and half a marine regiment. Of the seven, five battalions were to be withdrawn from Marlborough's army in Flanders.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps understandably, given the recent contention over Hill's promotion, the Duke was reluctant to relinquish these men as it would demonstrate his diminishing control over military affairs at the start of what would be his last campaign as Anne's Captain-General. St John had not however chosen the regiments to embarrass Marlborough personally as he had liked and respected the Duke since serving as Secretary-at-War from 1704 to 1708. The Secretary did however want seasoned and experienced troops, while withdrawing them from Flanders would underline the strategic importance of the expedition compared with the European continental campaigns. In this, St John had the Queen's express support and so the troops were brought over from Ostend in

Marlborough to the Queen, [18 Jan. 1710]; Godolphin to Marlborough, [21 Jan. 1710]; Marlborough to the Duchess, 8 May 1710; Marlborough to Godolphin, 9 June 1710.

¹⁰⁵ HMC, *Portland MSS*, iv. 675-6: Rochester to [Harley], 18, 19 Apr. 1711; St John to Harley, 19 Apr. 1711; Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 337-8; Hill, *Robert Harley*, pp. 150-3.

¹⁰⁶ The seven regiments were Hill's, Kirk's, Clayton's, Kane's Seymour's, Windresse's and Disney's.

good time to join the fleet at Spithead by the beginning of April.¹⁰⁷

St John's obsession to keep the expedition secret went far beyond the customary desire that the enemy be kept in ignorance. On this occasion even the Admiralty were unaware as to the exact purpose or destination of the squadron and, although this did not necessarily impede preparations, it meant that in order to maintain the mystery, St John requested that the squadron be victualled for only three months rather than for the eight months projected to complete the operation. St John's intention was that further provision could be taken on board when Walker reached Boston but the implications of this additional colonial supply were not considered and, as will be seen, the problems which arose over this arrangement damaged the prospects of success at an early stage.¹⁰⁸ Another aspect of St John's secrecy was that he shared the contents of the operational Instructions with only a very few people and Walker and Hill were not among them. The Admiral's initial commission referred to a 'secret expedition',¹⁰⁹ and, although both men attended the Queen in person to receive their Instructions, these were to remain sealed until the squadron was at sea. Upon opening them, Walker was likely to have been disappointed. During his expedition to the Caribbean in 1703, the Admiral had possessed some discretion – albeit mediated through a Council of War – on targeting and the conduct of any attack. However, his Instructions for the expedition to North America laid out in considerable detail how the operation was to progress after his arrival in Boston and also on its return voyage when Placentia was to be reduced. Perhaps more significantly Article VII placed him subordinate to Hill in respect of the landing at Quebec and also in terms of command authority over the marines.¹¹⁰ Walker's inferior role was confirmed by Article X of Hill's Instructions which, after outlining the action to be taken at Quebec, stated that the Ministry's determination was that the Admiral 'do give speedy and full assistance to you in all these matters, or in any other

¹⁰⁷ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 13 n. 2, 91; *Letters and Correspondence, Public and Private, of the Right Honourable Henry St John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke*, ed. G. Parke (London, 1798), i. 94, 129: St John to Marlborough, 13, 27 Mar. 1711.

¹⁰⁸ *Letters and Correspondence, Public and Private, of the Right Honourable Henry St John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke*, i. 106-7, 111-12: St John to Drummond, 16, 20 Mar. 1711; *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 19-21.

¹⁰⁹ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, p. 159: Hovenden Walker's Commission, 3 Apr. 1711.

¹¹⁰ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 91-2, 97, 163-8: A Journal And Full Account of the Expedition to Canada [hereafter 'Walker's Journal'], 6-14 Apr., 9 May 1711; Instructions for our trusty and well beloved Sir Hovenden Walker, Knt, 11 Apr. 1711; Additional Instructions for our trusty and well-beloved Sir

matter or thing'.¹¹¹ Notably, a Council of War was not on this occasion expressively referred to in either Instructions as the sovereign command authority and, although a Council meeting might have seemed the implication of the references to Hill advising with the Admiral or that they act together on a particular task, it seemed that the Government (or more likely St John) sought to exercise pre-determined tactical control through the Instructions. Where this was not possible, the Brigadier was to exercise a superior command.¹¹²

These various efforts by the Secretary to conceal the operation had mixed results as far as the French were concerned. Their intelligence provision picked up in early spring the preparations being completed in England and also the transfer of regiments from Flanders - though at this stage Quebec and Canada were simply listed among a number of possible targets. Nonetheless, a renegade French sailor who wished to join the expedition told Walker that he had heard he was bound for Canada and, by July, Governor Vaudreil knew that his jurisdiction faced attack. Vaudreil's information had doubtless been bolstered by the increasing activity within the American colonies following Nicholson's return on 8 June. A conference of colonial authorities was convened in New London towards the end of that month during which Nicholson presented the Queen's orders that the colonists raise men and material both for the overland force to Montreal and also to augment the British expeditionary squadron. Despite the large amounts of money they had invested to no return in the previous two years, the colonists responded enthusiastically once again. Also tabled at this conference were the detailed Instructions for the New York Governor, Robert Hunter, who had additional responsibility for co-ordinating the dispatch of the purely colonial force commanded by Nicholson, which was to attack Montreal.¹¹³

Following the conclusion of the conference, the Massachusetts Governor, Joseph Dudley, returned to find the expeditionary force had already arrived. Under increasing pressure from St John and Hill, Walker had weighed from Plymouth Sound on 5 May with a

Hovenden Walker, Kt., 11 Apr. 1711; for details on the nature of Walker's command in the Caribbean in 1703 see above Chapter 2, Section II.ii, pp. 309, 314, 321-2, 324.

¹¹¹ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, p. 282: Queen Anne's instructions to General Hill, 11 Apr. 1711.

¹¹² *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp.163-8, 279-86: Instructions for our trusty and well beloved Sir Hovenden Walker, Knt, 11 Apr. 1711; Additional Instructions for our trusty and well-beloved Sir Hovenden Walker, Kt., 11 Apr. 1711 Queen Anne's instructions to General Hill, 11 Apr. 1711; Additional Instructions to General Hill, 15 Apr. 1711.

squadron of some 64 vessels, including ten warships. Although the crossing of the Atlantic had been bedevilled by changeable weather and the thick fogs which were common to the north American coastline, the squadron had put into Nantucket Bay at the end of June. The soldiers were disembarked on Noddles Island for exercise, while Walker and Hill travelled to Boston. An immediate departure for Quebec was not possible, for the colonists had only just begun their preparations while Walker and Hill had to procure the expeditionary force's provisions for the following months. It was now that St John's decision that the fleet would proceed from Britain without full supply began to have a damaging impact upon the operation. With the colonial authorities trying to provide for their own troop quotas and the British commanders not only seeking food for the immediate subsistence of their men but also a future supply, demand in the Boston area simply outstripped supply. As a result prices rose and it was believed that some merchants were deliberately stockpiling goods in order to increase them. In such a market, London's Exchequer Bills were devalued and it was quickly clear to Walker that he would have to raise some hard cash and also request the colonial authority to issue him some Bills of Credit. Sterling was however set at an unfavourable exchange rate with the colony's currency and this reduced Walker's purchasing power with the colonial Bills. Eventually, provisions of reasonable quality were secured but the issue had caused about a months delay and had strained relations between the British commanders and the colonial authorities.¹¹⁴

While trying to sort out the procurement problem, Walker also became aware how little knowledge both within the squadron and Massachusetts there was on the navigation of the St Lawrence river. In Boston he stayed with Cyprian Soutack, who had been appointed to command the lead ship, the *Province Galley*, up river. However, Soutack made it known to Walker that he had been no higher up the St Lawrence than the Sept Îles, which lay just inside the river estuary. Moreover, contrary to expectations, there was a lack of willing local pilots to join the expeditionary force. The Boston pilot, Captain Bonner, for example,

¹¹³ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 17-19, 95, 238-47, 268-76, 302-7: 'Walker's Journal', 3 May 1711; Da Costa Bella to Pontchartrain, 23, 24 July 1711; Instructions for Robert Hunter, 6 Feb. 1711; Minutes of a Council of War, 21 June 1711; Walker, 'Queen Anne's Canadian Expedition', pp. 468-70.

¹¹⁴ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 23-5, 101-22, 319-24, 340-6: 'Walker's Journal', 26 June-20 July, 1711; Colonel King's Journal – Part One, 28 June-20 July 1711; General Hill's Journal, 28 June-20 July 1711; PRO, CO 5/9, fos. 52-7: Hill to Dartmouth, 31 July 1711; Morgan, 'Queen Anne's Canadian Expedition', pp. 478-81.

although reputed to possess the best knowledge of the route, had only previously made the sailing in a sloop and was therefore unwilling to guide any larger vessel. A Governor's warrant was eventually issued to compel those trying to avoid the service but, given that Walker subsequently came to rely upon a French Master captured near to the mouth of the St Lawrence, it would seem that this local action had proved largely ineffective.¹¹⁵ By the middle of July, both Walker and Hill believed the prospects for success so remote that they considered abandoning the operation against Quebec and undertaking an attack elsewhere. However, not only did they find their Instructions strictly drafted to prohibit such a decision, but also that there was no provision for them to call a Council of War, which would probably have countenanced an abandonment of the action. Indeed, Walker was later to believe that London had deliberately omitted to provide for a Council for that reason, and also in order to ensure that the two commanders would have to bear full responsibility for any operational decisions. Despite their strong reservations, both commanders agreed therefore that they would at least have to make an attempt on Quebec.¹¹⁶

Over the course of the next fortnight, the final arrangements for the operation were completed. Nicholson arrived in Boston with Colonel Vetch, who was to sail with Walker, and reported that the French had drawn the majority of their forces down to Montreal and that there was a lack of powder in Canada. Walker had hoped that Nicholson's visit would speed the preparations along but with the problems over victualling and pilots continuing and an increasing desertion rate amongst the ships' crews, particularly those of the auxiliary vessels, there was no quickening of the pace. In an attempt to stem the flow of deserters, Walker secured a proclamation from the colonial authorities but he did little for his relations with them by complaining when they informed him that they had exceeded their quota of men for the land forces that it was sailors he needed. Thus on 20 July - a good deal later than anticipated - the soldiers began re-embarking from Noddles Island and eleven days later the squadron weighed from Boston.¹¹⁷

The expeditionary force, comprising nine warships and two bomb vessels along with

¹¹⁵ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 102, 110, 115, 196-7: 'Walker's Journal', 26 June, 2 July 1711; Walker to Dudley, 9 July 1711; Dudley to Walker, 9 July 1711; The Warrant to summon the Pilots, 9 July 1711.

¹¹⁶ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 116-17: 'Walker's Journal', 11 July 1711.

¹¹⁷ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 117-31, 323-6, 344-8: 'Walker's Journal', 12-30 July 1711; Colonel King's Journal - Part One, 11-30 July 1711; General Hill's Journal, 12-29 July 1711.

around 7500 troops and marines aboard about 60 transports, made steady progress to reach Cape Sable on the eastern coast of Nova Scotia by 3 August.¹¹⁸ Walker then asked Colonel Vetch to sail ahead in the *Dispatch* along with three smaller rates to identify potential anchorages and to warn of possible dangers. To help with the navigation, the Admiral sent Vetch a French pilot he had taken aboard at Plymouth; Vetch however formed a low opinion of the man's abilities and relied instead upon his own local knowledge to bring the squadron safely round to the Îles St Pauls, just north of Cape Breton island - a remarkable feat considering that Vetch's service experience had been predominately military. According to the Colonel, it was while lying off St Pauls on 12 August that he again boarded the Flagship to consult with Walker about the progress up the St Lawrence. The Admiral apparently asked Vetch to join the squadron's smallest vessel, the *Sapphire*, to lead the sail up-river. Vetch felt that it would be too much trouble to transfer his equipage from the *Dispatch* and on leaving the *Edgar* he believed that Walker had concurred with his refusal to switch ships. Yet, the following day he received a note from the Admiral informing him to await the signal to take up the lead position. This might of course have meant Vetch in the *Dispatch* but as the signal was not then forthcoming and Captain Rouse of the *Sapphire* began to enquire as to Vetch's whereabouts, it seemed that Walker had aimed to bounce his colleague into transferring ships. This approach lacked subtlety and Vetch simply informed Rouse that Walker had already sanctioned him remaining in the *Dispatch*; the signal never was posted and the squadron proceeded onwards through the Gulf of St Lawrence. Walker made no mention of these events in his journal and the whole affair might have remained a digression of Vetch's recollections if the squadron had not subsequently foundered in the St Lawrence. Because it did, however, it raised the question that Walker's intransigence about Vetch transferring ships may have deprived the squadron of a guide whose piloting skills had most recently been tested. This was certainly Vetch's view but equally, given the circumstances, his punctiliousness over having his equipage about his person seemed small-minded.

¹¹⁸ The ensuing account of the attempt to capture Quebec is based on the following primary sources and secondary authorities: *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 30-8, 132-43, 329-31: 'Walker's Journal', 3-27 Aug. 1711; Colonel King's Journal – Part Two, 15-26 Aug. 1711; PRO, CO 5/9, fos. 70-5, 219-220: Hill to Dartmouth, 9 Sept. 1711; Lee to 'Hon. Sir', 12 Sept. 1711; 'Journal of a Voyage designed to Quebeck from Boston in New England in July 1711', 30 July-25 Aug. 1711; PRO, SP 42/68, unf.: Walker to Burchett, 14 Aug., 12 Sept. 1711; 'At a Council of Sea Officers', 25 Aug. 171; Morgan, 'Queen Anne's Canadian Expedition', pp. 483-5; Churchill, *Marlborough*, iv. 330-1.

Walker was now principally relying on the skills and knowledge of another French sailor - Captain Paradis - who had been bribed to pilot the squadron after being captured by the *Chester* while sailing off Nova Scotia. Although there is no substantive evidence that Paradis sought to frustrate the squadron's progress, two circumstantial events remain persuasive. First, in conversation with Walker he caused the Admiral to be even more fearful and thus cautious of proceeding up the St Lawrence to Quebec. Second, while the squadron lay north of the Bird Islands near to Cape St Lawrence on 13 August, he was one of three who advised that Walker tack southwards so as to run by Anticosti Island safely. This caused the squadron to sail backwards for some six hours when, according to Vetch, the wind was favourable to take them into the St Lawrence. A calm subsequently descended for several days and when on 18 August a north-westerly blew up, it was too strong for the squadron to weather Cape Gaspé. Forced to ride out the elements in Gaspé Bay, the squadron missed out on a wind which would have been particularly favourable for its progress up river.

On 20 August, Walker weighed from Gaspé and two days later the squadron had turned past the north-westerly point of Anticosti Island into the St Lawrence. During the evening of 23 August, with the wind veering and a thick fog descending which obscured the land, Walker consulted with his pilots and senior officers and brought the squadron too on a larboard tack. The Admiral had however misjudged his position inasmuch as a powerful north-westerly current from Anticosti had driven the squadron much further westwards towards the Îles aux Œufs and the 'north' or west bank of the river. This misunderstanding was compounded later in the evening when Walker's Flag Captain, Paddon, reported a land sighting. The Admiral erroneously assumed that this was the southern shore and thus the order to tack to the leeward simply brought the squadron even closer to the north shore. Twice after retiring to bed, Walker was roused by Captain Goddard of Seymour's Regiment who told him that he had spotted breakers around the ship. On the first occasion Walker dismissed the Captain on the grounds that an army officer would know nothing of the sea and that Paddon had not yet mentioned the breakers. However, on Goddard's second appearance at Walker's cabin, a commotion above caused him to ascend immediately to the quarter deck in his dressing gown and slippers. It quickly became clear that the north shore was looming to the leeward and it was only Walker's quick order to cut the anchor cable and make all sail that brought the *Edgar* safely out into mid-channel. Nine auxiliary vessels were however not

so fortunate and during the night of 23/24 August they foundered on the north shore of the St Lawrence. Seven of these vessel were transports and nearly 900 soldiers from the regiments of Windress, Clayton, Kane, and Seymour were lost. This represented nearly half of the land force and when Walker met Brigadier Hill on 25 August, the latter insisted, despite their Instructions, that a Council of War be convened to determine the next course of action.

The Council, comprising the naval Captains with the senior army officers attending, met later that day. Taking evidence from the available pilots, it concluded that it was not practicable to continue up the St Lawrence due to a lack of knowledge about the river. Only Colonel Vetch protested, though not during the Council meeting but subsequently in a letter to Walker so that it appeared as if he was seeking a personal insurance policy against the failure of the expedition. Nonetheless, the points Vetch made in his letter were pertinent. Even with some 900 soldiers lost, the strength of the expeditionary force was thought to exceed the French garrison at Quebec; while the fact that the pilots' ignorance of the river had been known before departing Boston meant that to abandon the attempt now on this pretext would cast the earlier decision to proceed in a very unfavourable light. Perhaps most significantly, however, Vetch noted the poor consequences the expedition's failure would have for the British colonial empire in North America. His fellow colonist Colonel Nicholson clearly agreed with him and on hearing the news while with his troops at Lake George, he was reported to be enraged at having once again to return the colonial force to Albany for disbandment. The relationship between imperial parent and the colony suffered another setback and was the culmination for the colonists of four years of disappointment and missed chances. Professor Morgan is doubtless right to suggest an inclusion of these Canadian expeditions in any broad assessment of the causes of the American Revolution.¹¹⁹

Although the operation against Quebec had been abandoned, there was still the reduction of Placentia to be considered. Both Hill's and Walker's Instructions had directed them to this task on the return journey from Canada, though significantly it was recognised that the time of year would determine whether the action could go ahead. By 4 September, when the squadron was safely congregated in the Spanish Road north of Cape Breton, the senior commanders began to consider the next stage. Walker wrote subsequently in his journal of his reluctance to return home without having attempted Quebec and that with the

¹¹⁹ Morgan, 'Some Attempts at Imperial Co-operation', p. 171.

increasing lateness of the season rendering action against Placentia unlikely, he suggested returning to New England for the winter. The Admiral claimed that both his Flag Captain and the Colonel of the Artillery Train, Richard King, agreed with him, whereas Hill was determined to make the return voyage. King's journal does not corroborate Walker's record but, in any event, it was quickly apparent that the Admiral was principally motivated by the fear of a political and professional storm on his return. When Hill suggested that they convene another general Council of War, thereby holding out the prospect of spreading the responsibility for any operational decisions, Walker readily agreed. Recently captured letters indicating that the French knew about the imminent action against Placentia formed the background to the meeting of the Council on 8 September; and, although, this intelligence highlighted Placentia's weakness, the Council's deliberations were dominated by the anticipated lack of provisions. With only ten weeks short allowance remaining from 12 September, which was considered the earliest sailing date from the Spanish Road, and no prospect of supply from New England until November, it was doubtful if there was sufficient supply to mount an attack against Placentia. Such doubts about the viability of the operation were only reinforced by reports that the Newfoundland coast was difficult to navigate in late season. Accordingly, the Council resolved that it was not practicable to attempt the reduction of Placentia and that the expeditionary squadron should return to Britain.¹²⁰

Walker and Hill arrived home in mid-October, though not to the expected row. It was not in the Tories' interest to begin enquiring about the conduct of the operation and their political stranglehold was still sufficiently strong a year after the General Election to prevent the Whigs making political mischief out the operation. Indeed, despite the failure of the operation which was to have embodied a shift in strategy from the military campaigns on the continent, the Tories still managed to demonstrate their inclination on this issue by engineering the dismissal of Marlborough barely a month following the expedition's return. Moreover, Walker and Hill were both employed within the year: the Admiral sailed as Commodore of the Jamaican squadron, while Hill was promoted to Major-General in command of the force rendered as security at Dunkirk for the duration of the Utrecht peace negotiations. Such blame as was apportioned in Britain tended to fall on the colonists, with

¹²⁰ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 38-9, 144-8, 331-3, 361-2: 'Walker's Journal', 4-8 Sept. 1711; Colonel King's Journal - Part Two, 4-7 Sept. 1711; Vetch to Walker, 26 Aug. 1711; PRO, SP 42/68, unf.:

the problems over supply alluded to in particular.¹²¹ That specific issue however originated with St John's decision that the fleet was not to carry the full complement of provisions for the whole of the expedition, and it raised the important point that any credible assessment of the operation's failure must perforce take into account the preparatory role of the Secretary of State.

Not only had St John's desire for secrecy caused problems with respect to provisions, his tight control produced Instructions so strictly drafted that Whitehall had effectively regulated the tactical direction of the operation before it had begun. Admittedly, Councils of War were perceived to dilute command authority and, in the context of combined operations, they had proved to lack dynamism with respect to in-theatre command. Equally, however, the antidote to these problems was a unitary command vested in either the naval or land commander and not pre-set executive control from home. Brigadier Hill did hold a superior command to Admiral Walker, but it was not unitary; and the command discretion afforded him could only have been put to effective use by a vigorous commander who was resolute in pursuit of the operational objectives. Hill did not fit that mould and his failing in this respect proved critical when Walker mismanaged, and ultimately gambled on, the piloting of the squadron up the St Lawrence. The dearth of pilots and the lack of knowledge of those available was obvious prior to departing from Boston and Walker simply compounded these problems by a display of unthinking seamanship once in the river. St John was responsible for the appointment of both commanders and it is especially here in which he is vulnerable to criticism.

The common theme linking combined operations in the context of the North American continent between 1708-1711 was the negative impact of London's political and governmental process. Twice in 1709 and 1710, a failure of political and administrative will caused planned operations to be abandoned; while on the third occasion in 1711, the party political and personal motivations of the Secretary of State impaired his judgement when preparing the expeditionary force so that the seeds of its failure had been sown even before it crossed the Atlantic. It was for these reasons that during the Spanish Succession War, there was a notable failure of combined operations on the very continent which would several

'Resolution of a Council of War of Sea and Land Officers', 8 Sept. 1711; Walker to Burchett, 12 Sept. 1711.

¹²¹ *The Walker Expedition to Quebec*, pp. 45-6, 50.

decades later witness some of Britain's most notable amphibious successes.

Section III: Combined Operations and the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713.

The largely static set-piece battle on land or at sea undoubtedly dominated the operational history of the War of the Spanish Succession and, consequently, current historiography tends to concentrate on the military successes of Marlborough in Flanders or the allied failings on the Iberian Peninsula. Nonetheless, one of the first operational deployments of the war was the Rooke-Ormonde operation against Cádiz in 1702. This proved be the first of thirteen combined army-navy actions deployed throughout the war with a number of others planned but not executed. Quantitatively at least, successive ministries demonstrated a sustained commitment to combined operations and hence a clearer definition of them as an instrument of warfare should be possible. In this respect, it is necessary to consider these examples within the context of the five categories of definition – objectives, theatre of war, composition of force, bureaucratic control and command structure – which were established when considering the operational history of the Nine Years War. In so doing, the form, function and strategic purpose of combined operations in the early eighteenth century should be illuminated.

Although there was a greater functional equivalence between those operations dispatched to capture Spanish coastal towns and the colonial expeditions - Walker's army-navy detachment for the Caribbean was after all initially part of the Rooke-Ormonde force - than similar overseas operations and the 'descents' during the Nine Years War, operational form was still dependent upon the specific objectives and the theatre of the war. In the Mediterranean, the fleet could be instructed to capture or destroy enemy territory without necessarily having been dispatched from England with a dedicated land force. The attack on Toulon in 1707, for example, involved the co-ordination of a free standing army and naval forces. On that occasion the combined service relationship was partially a product of the recent success of the Duke of Savoy against the French in the Italian theatre, which enabled him to march an army over the Maritime Alps into Provence, and also the lack of a safe landing site near to Toulon harbour. There seemed a greater potential for success if the navy acted in conjunction with a land force already advancing through the interior rather than one it projected from the fleet. The relief of Gibraltar in November 1704 and in March 1705 and Barcelona in April 1706 were also examples of combined operations that were shaped by the

objective and the war theatre. Securing the allied garrisons in both places from the French besieging force on land and at sea could not simply be a question of the navy transporting to them additional manpower and supplies. Instead, the respective service commanders had to engage in a joint operational relationship to neutralise the French threat. Even when French capability at sea was dealt with first, the army-navy co-operation in-theatre had to be maintained to beat off the landward attack and, in this respect, seamen and naval ordnance were often put ashore to bolster the landward defences. These operations lasted several months, affording them an attritional quality not present at the earlier first strike to gain control of the towns; but, as secure capture was the overriding objective, both phases should be considered together to form one long combined operational campaign.

This broadening of the definition of combined operations by the object and theatre of war is furthered by a consideration of the composition of the force. The combination of the regular army and navy remained a benchmark but, during the Spanish Succession war, the marine soldiers assumed an increasingly prominent role. These troops often formed a large part of the land force set ashore or, as at the initial assault on Gibraltar in July 1704, comprised - save for a number of Spanish irregulars and latterly some seamen - the whole. The marines at Gibraltar were those of the regiments raised for 'sea service' in April 1702, which was the third time since the Restoration that this type of soldier had been mobilised. The ambiguities between the legislation which made the navy responsible for their administration and command, and their regimentation as infantry battalions which undertook soldierly functions ashore, suggested that actions completed by them in conjunction with naval vessels could be considered as combined operations. In this respect, it is the question of whether there was operational co-operation between at any rate some form of military force on land and a navy at sea which defines the combined operation. The composition of the force, including its function, as a category of definition must therefore be widened to incorporate operations that are not strictly undertaken by the regular English army and the Royal Navy.

The two categories - bureaucratic control and command structure - which principally emerged during the Nine Years War as integral to the definition of combined operations continued to be of use during the Spanish Succession war. The former was not however subject to any notable development. A non-personal administrative process to prepare the army and naval components was still lacking and, although certain individuals - Admiralty

Secretary Burchett and successive Secretaries of State, for example - appreciated the necessity and importance of their bureaucratic relationships, the organisation of operations continued to suffer delay, no consistent trend of increased efficiency emerged as the war progressed. Debates over command structure continued, with the contributions from the service commanders and members of the Cabinet Council demonstrating its enduring contemporary relevance to operational design. Unlike the question of bureaucratic control, the issue of command became even more germane due to the increasing complexity and interplay of the theatres of the war in which such operations were deployed. Overseas, colonists such as Christopher Codrington and Francis Nicholson again sought a determinate voice; while in the Mediterranean, and specifically on the Peninsula, London had to devolve a certain amount of operational authority to the Archduke Charles as 'King of Spain'. The response of the various service commanders, including in particular the Earl of Peterborough and Sir John Leake, to this shaped historical perceptions of combined operational endeavour both in terms of its substance and spirit.

The devolved command structure in the Peninsula emerged from the strategic considerations of war policy. As was the case in the Nine Years War, the frequency of combined operations (broadly defined) demonstrated that they comprised part of the military component of Grand Strategy as a support to the maritime and continental strategic traditions favoured, as previously explained, by the Tories and the Whigs respectively. As Queen Anne's ministries - until the exclusively Tory government of 1710 - were led by the political 'undertakers' Godolphin and Marlborough, and supported for a good part of the war by the instinctive political manager Robert Harley, war policy tended to blend both strategies. Combined operations were therefore concurrently deployed overseas in the maritime context and planned against the French coast to facilitate the progress of the continental land war.

Professor Hattendorf has argued that Britain's strategic touchstone during this conflict was the future role and governance of Spain in the European states system.¹ To this he might have added the establishment of a permanent strategic presence in the Mediterranean. When in 1703, Britain committed itself to placing the Archduke Charles on the Spanish throne, this concern with Spain and the Mediterranean reinforced the simultaneous application of both the continental and maritime strategies to the same end.

¹ Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession*, p. 267.

Armies fought on the Spanish mainland and the navy strove to command the Mediterranean as a line of communication and also to safeguard trade. Within this military and strategic context, combined operations were consistently deployed. The capture of Gibraltar and, more particularly, Barcelona, provided the Archduke with a vital foothold on the mainland whence military operations might be begun from a base other than the Portuguese border. Army-navy actions were also frequently used as the means to capture an appropriately sized Mediterranean port where the main fleet could be based permanently. It might be argued that when an island such as Minorca was targeted then a combined operation would perforce have to be deployed for the soldiers could only be put ashore from the sea. But at Minorca and elsewhere, there was a planned and continuing combined operational relationship beyond the initial projection of the land force. Conversely where mainland ports like Cádiz could have been attacked solely from the landward, an army-navy conjunction was still deemed to be the more appropriate instrument of warfare.

Professor Lynn's 'war-as-process'² paradigm can be applied to the operational history of the War of the Spanish Succession, but it does not fully account for the frequent planning and deployment of combined operations nor their component strategic role. An understanding of their form and function remained dependent upon the five categories: objectives, theatre of war, composition of force, bureaucratic control and command structure; but as the content of each was broadened by the operational examples, a universal definition of combined operations remained elusive. During the Spanish Succession war, combined army-navy actions – broadly defined – were more obviously an elemental part of the war policy. They were consistently deployed in pursuance of Britain's ambition to gain a permanent presence in the Mediterranean, while also integrated within the continental land campaigns, particularly on the Peninsula. Again there can be no claims that these combined actions were at this stage considered as an independent strategic instrument of war; rather, they were conceived as support for both the maritime and continental approaches. Nonetheless, their integration within both strategic traditions combined with the fact that the lineaments of British war policy looked set to maintain both a continental commitment and also command of the sea, meant that combined operations can be perceived in the early eighteenth century to be evolving as a strategic instrument of warfare.

² Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV*, pp. 367-76.

Conclusion

This study has shown that it is impossible to arrive at a blanket definition for British combined operations as an instrument of warfare during the wars of 1688-1713. Instead, five categories of definition – objectives, theatre of war, composition of force, bureaucratic control and command structure – have been advanced and, against these, the historical experience of combined army-navy actions can be set to illuminate their form and function. Although it has been demonstrated that combined operations were neither conceived nor deployed as independent strategic actions, they formed a fundamental role in support of both the continental and maritime strategic traditions embedded within Grand Strategy. Moreover, with respect to certain policies, such as the penetration of the Mediterranean, these operations often came to provide the mainstay of Britain's military contribution. At the end of the Spanish Succession War, therefore, it was possible to look ahead to a later period when Britain's practised expertise in combined operations as an instrument of warfare was recognised and thought distinct from the army-centred and infantry-dominated continental campaigning of other European powers. However, this raises the question of whether it is possible to identify the reasons for success, and conversely for failure, of the operations of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, which would make it possible to comprehend in some detail the historical development of the form and function of combined operations as amphibious warfare.

Over the course of the two wars considered in this study only seven operations were wholly successful inasmuch as they fully achieved their objectives: the two actions in Ireland (1689 and 1690); Gibraltar (1704-5); Barcelona (1705-6); Ibiza and Majorca (1706); Sardinia (1708) and, finally, Minorca (1708). This is clearly a diverse list of combined operations which do not conform to one operational mould. For example, unlike Cork or Kinsale, Gibraltar never featured as the sole target of a set of operational Instructions determined by the Ministry; nor did its capture involve the use of regular army regiments, which were to participate to a great extent in the action which seized control of Barcelona. Moreover, it has been argued that the capture of both Gibraltar and Barcelona should be seen as the product of attritional combined operations extending over the course of a year, rather than the first-strike action which proved sufficient to take the Balearics. Identifying specific common reasons for the success of combined operations which might shape the future development in this form of warfare is thus an elusive task.

Equally, of the eight actions which failed entirely to meet any of their objectives – Captain Wrenn's expedition to the West Indies (1692); the descent on Brest (1694);

Admiral Russell Mediterranean expedition (1694-5); the expeditions of Admirals Wheler and Walker to the Caribbean and North America (1693, 1702 and 1711); the Rooke-Ormonde assault on Cádiz (1702); and the attack on Toulon (1707) – their operational forms were sufficiently distinct to prohibit a universal explanation for their failure. Discord between the respective service commanders evidently hindered the actions in the colonies but, even then, the failure of Wheler's expedition to the Caribbean was principally dictated by the strict chronological framework set down in his Instructions. This forced him to leave the region by a specific date and therefore rendered him unable to continue operations against either Guadeloupe or Martinique, even though there were reasonable prospects for success despite his bickering with Governor Codrington. Similarly, although in the European theatres inter-service conflict undermined joint operations, it has been shown, for example, that at the assault on Cádiz in 1702 this factor was less important than has been previously thought; while it was wholly absent from operations such as the descent on Brest in 1694. Failure on that occasion resulted from the Ministry's prioritising of targets, which caused the commanders to continue at Brest despite the increasing realisation that the French defences and (more importantly) the inability to land a significant body of troops with momentum meant that the tactical conditions were not propitious. A similar argument about the lack of common characteristics defining success or failure might be made about those three operations – Commodore Wright's and Wilmot's expeditions to the Caribbean (1690-1 and 1695 respectively), and Commodore Norris's action at Newfoundland (1697) – which ultimately failed but which notched up some partial successes along the way.

To a large extent, the fact that it is difficult to isolate some common operational characteristics to explain success or failure is inherent in the already recognised inability to arrive at a comprehensive definition for combined operations in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The operations related in this study can be viewed, and were so viewed by contemporaries, as joint land and sea actions; but they took many forms, and their operational history therefore yields only very general characteristics which made a consistent positive contribution to the progress of the operations. The importance of leadership and, in particular, the ability of personal command to respond effectively to the exigencies of combined operations should not be underestimated. Although similar to all military and naval commanders in that they faced operational circumstances contingent upon factors outside their direct control, the leaders of combined operations had from the outset to establish and to maintain a cohesive joint operational momentum of the land and

sea forces. Moreover, it was rare for these commanders to be afforded an unitary command structure in which to effect this; instead, it was customary for them to have to accommodate a Council of War of diverse opinions. Mercurial and talismanic commanders like the Earl of Peterborough and Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt could immediately transform the progress of an operation. Hesse-Darmstadt's (ultimately fatal) demonstration that it was essential to cut the enemy's line of communication between Barcelona and the Montjuich fortress along with Peterborough's charge up the hill of Montjuich to rally Lord Charlemont's retreating troops were turning points in the first-strike phase of the operation in 1705 to capture the city. The dominant personalities of such commanders ensured that they were well equipped to push at the parameters of their operational Instructions and more importantly to dominate the membership of the Councils of War, which were typically prescribed by the Ministries as the sovereign command authority. The failure of, respectively, Sir Francis Wheler in 1693 and Commodore Norris in 1697 to impose their wills on their Councils of War left the former bound to his prescriptive Instructions directing his departure from the Caribbean and the latter circumscribed by timidity. Instinctive and dominating commanders were, of course, often difficult to work within the context of a joint service action; hence the equally positive contribution made by the more methodical and steadily resolute commanders should also be noted. Britain's successes in the Mediterranean between 1705-1708 was in a large part due to the stolid leadership of Admiral Sir John Leake. Where others failed, he forged a tense but effective partnership with Peterborough. His determined seamanship preserved and ensured the deployment of the squadron during the successive winters of 1704-5 and 1705-6, when he established an operational relationship over the longer term with the land commanders in besieged Gibraltar and Barcelona.

Naturally, a commander from either service who genuinely understood the necessity of the co-ordination of the land and sea forces and who actively promoted their interplay could only be beneficial to the progress of such operations. However, in the wars concerned with here, only the Duke of Marlborough demonstrated such an ability. This, though, was only glimpsed during his actions in Ireland in 1690 when he had in any event the benefit of a near unitary command structure. Later, during the Spanish Succession War, although he undoubtedly promoted the strategic role of combined operations as part of Britain's attempt to penetrate the Mediterranean, he was never actively involved in the operations. In that respect, no clear model of a joint service

commander emerged; notwithstanding, leadership remained a positive constituent in ensuring the success of a combined operation..

During the wars concerned in this study, the pamphlets by Edward Littleton were the only significant attempts to theorise on the practice of combined operations. Their focus was not, however, upon the techniques of landing troops and then upon the conduct of the two services as progress was made upon the target but rather upon the immediate strategic and tactical benefits which might accrue from the joint actions that Littleton termed 'descents'. This absence of a theoretical model of the conduct of a combined operation was, of course, consonant with the lack of a comprehensive definition of them as a type of warfare. It also reflected the nature of success and failure as contingent on the quality of the command. Some commanders were developing techniques peculiar to combined operations - such as the landing of troops in sequential waves, as intended by Tollemache at Camaret Bay, or the increasing practice amongst naval commanders to detail frigates to shepherd and provide fire cover for the ships' boats as they neared the shore - and it might be suggested that over the course of the two wars the conduct of the commanders was increasingly informed by the practices and experience of others. Certainly, at Cádiz, Ormonde deployed a modified version of Tollemache's landing disposition at Brest in 1694. This sought to reap the maximum momentum afforded by landing in sequential waves, while also avoiding the more obvious errors committed during the Brest operation such as the disorderly progress of the forward landing craft. There remains, however, no evidence to suggest that the failings at Brest had been absorbed at an institutional level and specifically vouchsafed to Ormonde; nor is it possible to know for certain whether Ormonde had studied Tollemache's command prior to the Cádiz expedition in 1702. Nonetheless, the Duke's instruction for landing indicated a familiarity with the earlier operation and this underscores the individual and experiential foundation of learning in combined operational command. In a similar manner, the positive quality of Sir John Leake's stolidness in command (referred to above) was as much a product of his prolonged service in the Mediterranean where he was the lead Admiral in several combined operations as it was of his naval personality. Overall, the absence of a theoretical framework and a structured learning process for commanders meant that the dominant contingent nature of their conduct kept the execution of combined operations largely *ad hoc*.

This essential improvisation placed a premium upon the commanders' available resources, which were usually, though not exclusively, a product of the preparatory

activity back in Britain. It is therefore the appropriateness and the quality of the operations' resource base which comprises another general characteristic that across the broad spectrum of operations could have a constant positive or negative effect. For example, Secretary St John's expeditionary preparations in the early spring of 1711 left Walker without sufficient provisions on arrival at Boston with which to maintain an operational momentum; while governments in general rarely seemed to take account – despite the evidence – of the high attrition of manpower in the Caribbean through sickness. When resources were sufficient for the operational purpose, as in the case of Stanhope's operation which captured Minorca in 1708, then a serious potential obstacle to the success of the operation was removed.

It is not possible to foreshadow in detail the form and function of combined operations as practised to considerable effect in the wars of the mid-to-late eighteenth century. This was largely a product of the amorphous nature of such operations in the earlier part of the century; although they could be identified as a type of warfare with a strategic role, there was then no one successful operational mould to be developed or, conversely, a common failing form to be avoided. Nonetheless, laying to one side the often essential contribution of good fortune, it can be argued that overall operations were positively influenced by the leadership of commanders who were either mercurial or stolidly determined, or who genuinely embraced the combined action of both services; equally, due to these contingencies of command, successful operations were required to possess a sufficient resource base for the set objectives. Such conclusions might seem straightforward but, ironically, it is this straightforwardness which is noteworthy. Appropriate operational command and sufficient resource provisions would be considered a pre-requisite for the successful direction of the conventional types of warfare, whether a set-piece land battle or a naval engagement. It is therefore a measure of the development in the form, function and acceptance of the strategic utility of combined operations in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that as a instrument of warfare they were demonstrating the same characteristics for success as the more orthodox forms of combat in the early modern period. Moreover, as this progress became increasingly understood at the highest levels of the government and the military, combined operations became throughout the eighteenth century a dominant form of warfare upon which Britain's imperial reach and exercise of world power rested. It is of considerable significance that the wellsprings and nascent growth of this development can be traced to Britain's naval and military co-operation in the wars of 1688 to 1713.

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