

Spain and Great Britain at War in the Early Modern Era; 1558 - 1750

Synopsis

Between 1558 and 1750, Spain and England, and later Great Britain found themselves at war with each other, or on opposite sides in wider conflagrations on 12 occasions. Between the first and the last there was a very large change in the balance of power between the two nations; in the former, Spain was the most powerful state in Europe, and England did well to just about hold its own in the Great Armada War, while by the time of the last, the War of the Austrian Succession, the balance had shifted far enough to make defeat for Spain inevitable, without powerful allies. If I had chosen to continue my account to cover another 70 years or so, the dominance of Great Britain would have become even more pronounced. The wars in question were only one amongst several causes of this transformation resulting from the weakening of Spain and the strengthening of Great Britain, but they were significant. The document is a relatively brief narrative history. The period considered is too long to allow detailed consideration of individual military engagements while key economic and demographic factors can only be touched on; however, room is found for brief pen-pictures of some of the most prominent individuals involved. The account should give readers an appreciation of a facet of history which is not very well known, and an understanding of why Spaniards might have reason to resent British behaviour during the period in question.

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1. Introduction

This study is concerned with the long series of wars and stand-offs in which Spain and first England, and after 1707, Great Britain, were opposed to each other in the two centuries following 1558. The lead up to the start of the period was not completely free of conflict between England and Spain; a century before the latter country was effectively created by the marriage of Ferdinand, King of Aragon, and Isabella, Queen of Castile in 1469, English soldiery were involved in civil wars there under the leadership of the Black Prince and John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. However this account picks up the story after the late 1530s, when King Henry VIII placed himself at the head of the English church in order to set aside his first wife, Queen Catherine, aunt of Emperor Charles V, ruler of a large part of Western Europe, including Spain. The Emperor was beset by crises, not least of religion, in his own extensive realms and made no serious attempt to respond militarily, though in c1540 the Henrician forts along the south coast of England were built because of fears that he might invade. After Henry's death, the short reign of the boy-King, Edward VI seemed to settle England more securely in the Protestant camp, but the accession in 1553 of the Catholic Queen Mary in England presaged an attempt to reverse the Reformation. Her chances of success were enhanced by her marriage in the next year to Phillip, the son of Charles, who became King of Spain in 1556, so temporarily uniting the soon to be warring countries.

Philip had become *jure uxoris*, King of England and Ireland in 1554, so by right of his wife was entitled to exercise all the powers of a monarch, although an Act of Parliament passed at the time of the marriage sought to impose some limitations. The terms barred King Phillip from involving England in overseas wars, and importantly as it turned out, terminated his authority after Queen Mary's death, a departure from the norm, which many thought unsustainable if the marriage were to produce an heir. Queen Mary made vigorous and sometimes savage efforts to restore England to Roman Catholicism, earning the Protestant soubriquet of 'Bloody Mary'; if her reign had extended much beyond 1558 when she died, childless, at the age of 42, she might have succeeded with the backing of her powerful husband, since her subjects were still divided on the matter. In such circumstances it is unlikely that her Protestant half-sister Elizabeth would have followed her onto the throne. However, Elizabeth did come to the throne, and early turned down the offer of King Phillip's hand in marriage; this was a clear signal that his influence in England would not continue, and that Queen Mary's religious measures would be reversed. Given the centrality of religious matters in the 16th century world, hindsight is not required to say that 1558 was a seminal year, when conflict between England and Spain became likely if not inevitable. Spain in the person of King Phillip II had seen the prize of associating a compliant, Roman Catholic England with his inherited realms snatched away.

It has been more difficult to decide on an end date for this study, and it is true that hostilities continued past my choice, 1750. However I have two reasons for not considering conflicts which arose in the later 18th century and in the early 19th century. One is the fact that Spain had become peripheral, as the long-term weakening of the state had proceeded to such an extent, that its actions were not a major consideration for the warring nations. It is true that dissent from the wish of the great war minister, William Pitt the Elder to launch a pre-emptive strike against Spain towards the end of the 7-Years War, caused his resignation, but when Spain entered the war later that year the impact was small, and not to Spanish benefit. Similarly, another late entry to the War of

American Independence in 1779, 4 years after its commencement, certainly caused difficulty to an overstretched British navy and brought some territorial gains, but cannot be said to have greatly influenced the outcome in the short or medium term, which followed almost entirely from the struggle between Great Britain and France. More important in explaining my choice of 1750, is the fact that these later wars have been pored over to good effect by many historians, making it difficult for me to add to the pool of knowledge in a worthwhile manner. It is also true that these struggles involved so many nations that any attempt to separate the events involving mainly Spain and Great Britain would risk losing their real significance in the overall picture.

Few events in English, and thus inevitably British, history have as high a profile as the defeat of the 'Invincible Spanish Armada' in 1588, though it is rarely set in context as one major campaign in a war lasting for almost two decades. Certainly, at that point, the English state was in comparable danger to that posed later by Napoleon and Hitler, but thereafter, the wars with Spain only became a real threat to the English and later, British, state when Spain fought alongside France, always then seen as the main adversary. This happened fairly often during the 'long 18th century' as defined by historians, but Spain became more and more the junior partner, especially after 1750. Britain was successful in most of these major wars, but the picture was mixed in the wars involving only Spain. They were usually low key, limited affairs fought in such a way as to give little cause for the intervention of other states, not least France, and quite often ended in frustrating stalemate. As a result, the Spanish dimension has been underplayed in accounts of English and British history, which is inevitably the angle from which I approach matters. I cannot take a Spanish overview, but it seems to me that the conflicts including those taking place after 1750, affected Spain far more, playing a large role in the dismantling of her huge empire, and involving 2 wars fought on her soil.

The conflicts and stand-offs which will be considered are as follows;

The Treasure Crisis: 1568 -1574

The Armada War: 1585 – 1604

The War of 1625 – 1630

Cromwellian War: 1654 – 1660

The Portuguese Restoration War: 1662 - 1668

The War of the Spanish Succession: 1701 – 1714, Civil War in Spain

The War of the Quadruple Alliance: 1718 – 1720

The Anglo-Spanish War: 1727 – 1729 (sometimes dated from 1726 when a British fleet was sent to the West Indies)

The War of Jenkin's Ear: 1739 – 1750, formally ended by treaty, 1750, but subsumed into the War of the Austrian Succession: 1740 – 1748,

For the record, the struggles not considered which took place in ensuing years, were;

The Seven Years War: 1756 – 1763, only entered by Spain in 1761

The War of American Independence: 1775 – 1783, entered by Spain in 1779

The Nootka Sound Crisis: 1789 - 1794

The French Revolutionary War: 1793 – 1802, Spain allied with France in 1796

The Napoleonic War: 1803 – 1815, after 1808 Spanish support was divided for and against France

The Confrontation over freeing of Spain's South American colonies: 1821 – 1827

This is a narrative history, based largely on secondary or even tertiary sources. I greatly admire the professional historians who have presented and interpreted the contents of letters, and a mass of other primary sources, official and unofficial, and am pleased to be able to use the results of their work, at first, second or third hand as the case may be. However, the account is far from an academic monograph so I do not give references for specific remarks, though I do provide a bibliography, which hopefully includes all my sources. I hope to place in context, a facet of British (and English) history of long duration and considerable importance, by pulling together sequences of events, which have often been treated as unconnected and secondary.

I present each of the conflicts within the same framework, looking at causes, course of events, and resolution (peace-making) and consequences. My experience is that it is feasible to give a lucid account of the causes and consequences of any pre-modern war, provided the narrative is not allowed to range too widely, a mantra, I attempt to stick to here. However, the provision of a coherent account of the course of a struggle, which is of long duration and takes place in a number of parts of the world is a challenge to anyone trying to produce a narrative history, (taking in factors like social and economic developments, in any but general terms, makes the task infeasible). In my view the worst approach (I will not quote examples) is to adhere strictly to the time line, which means breaking up accounts of campaigns and otherwise jumping from one part of the world to another. On the other hand, if a campaign is of long duration, its wider context is likely to be lost if it is followed from start to finish. So, compromise is essential, and I attempt that, in the accounts of the courses of the wars.

I should also emphasise that in spite of being focused mainly on wars, this is not a military history, as I understand the term; I follow the course of campaigns, have something to say about numbers involved in battles, the casualties, and the immediate results, but never give more than a broad outline of what happened on a battlefield. This means that battlefield diagrams are superfluous, and regrettably that I have no excuse to include any of the splendid old pictorial representations of battles, with their forests of raised pikes, massed bodies of infantry and cavalry, pools of cannon, and groupings of commanders and their staff officers on nearby vantage points. I gave more consideration to including maps for regions and campaigns, but it is my experience that no reader ever finds those which are included, adequate, or in the right place for easy consultation, so I have contented myself with giving some verbal guidance on locations and otherwise leave the reader to find his/her own suitable map source. As for accounts of the one confrontation which did not involve conflict, I leave it in a single block, preserving chronological order.

After this introduction, I group the confrontations and conflicts temporally as follows;

2nd Half of the 16th Century

17th Century

1st Half of the 18th Century

At the end of the document I provide a 'wrap-up' closing section and present some conclusions, which extend to the later conflicts which I do not consider. I have given in to one further temptation, which is to include as an Appendix, an account of another little-known war, that of the Polish Succession fought between 1733 and 1735. Sir Robert Walpole was proud to have kept Great Britain out of this war, avoiding as he said, the loss of a single British grenadier, and he worked hard to end the war, though to little effect. Great Britain would have been

aligned against Spain and France, and the possibility of British involvement certainly influenced the conduct of the combatants, who were on one side keen on drawing Great Britain in, and on the other side determined to prevent that.

2. Wars of the 2nd Half of the 16th century.

In addition to the historical lead-in, some demographic background is helpful to understanding the way in which the difficult relationship between England and Spain played out in the late 16th century. Population figures for 1600 may be inexact, but they are accurate enough to provide some context. The Behemoth in Western Europe was France, with a population of 20 million, but racked by religious conflicts following the Reformation, it was hardly an influence beyond its own frontiers in this period, though its internal affairs were of great importance to other states, and attracted long-lasting English and Spanish interference. Next largest in the region by some margin was Spain, whose king also ruled over Portugal, a large part of Italy, and the Netherlands though the latter was in a state of rebellion. The Iberian population was just over 10 million, the Italian total may have been 8 million, though as a fractured entity it did not 'punch its weight', while there were at least 4 million people in the Netherlands, by then almost evenly divided between supporters and opponents of Spanish rule. There were more subjects of King Phillip II in the Spanish overseas empire, too distant to take part in European wars, but supplying resources which provided economic muscle, and motivated the maintenance of a powerful navy to protect maritime links. Other European states were less than half as populous, including England (and Wales) with a population of around 4 million, though as a maritime nation, it also maintained a significant number of armed vessels, some funded by the state, others by private individuals, so-called merchant adventurers. The Hapsburg monarchy which ruled Austria, Hungary and Bohemia had around 5 million subjects, but as elected Emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, (essentially modern-day Germany, with add-ons around the perimeter) had influence if not total authority over 20 million people. Mention should also be made of 3 large states to the east, the unstable confederation of Poland-Lithuania with 8 million people, the fast-expanding Russian state with 14 million, and the turbulent, expansionist Ottoman Empire with 26 million people along the North African littoral, and in Asia Minor, Turkey, and the Balkans. Some countries, influential before and after 1600 had remarkably small populations; the soon to be independent part of the Netherlands, the Dutch United Provinces, were home to just 1½ million people, Sweden to 1¼ million, Denmark to 1 million, and Scotland to ¾ million.

As regards the conflicts to be discussed here, the seminal land battles of the age, from Flodden through Pavia, and well into the 17th century, involved armies numbering around 20000, and countries as small as Scotland, and as large as France fielded forces of this size. A nation's population was not the controlling factor; what mattered was whether it could fund the armed body of men, by taxation or borrowing, and such logistical practicalities as transporting and feeding soldiers, and providing fodder for cavalry horses. Apart from the Battle of Lepanto, fought between the Ottoman Empire and an alliance of Christian states, off the west coast of Greece in October 1571, which involved twice as many sailors and soldiers, the manning of the largest fleets usually included many soldiers, and was of the same order, c20000. Once again high costs were a major constraint, though the paymasters always had in mind the fact that a successful fleet action would yield prizes, which might defray most or all of the initial outlay. Probably a greater influence on naval potency, was the size of a country's pool of mariners, whether fishermen, traders or pirates, which could be drawn upon at need; it is arguable that the loss of many sailors in a fleet action was more serious than the loss of ships. These factors probably meant that the demographic advantage held by Spain over England, and her ally, the United Provinces, weighed less heavily than might be assumed, especially in the light of Spain's wide-ranging commitments. However, the economic advantage conferred by the precious metals shipped annually to Spain from her American Empire,

which amounted to many times the value of the taxation-derived revenues of the country's adversaries, certainly was very significant, and would have been expected to result in dominance.

2.1 The Treasure Crisis 1568 – 1574

Mention was made in the introduction of the fact that the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the English Throne in 1558, meant that King Phillip II of Spain was no longer *jure uxoris* King of England; he had attempted to preserve his powers by offering marriage to Queen Elizabeth, but had been turned down, so presaging the return of England to Protestantism, and independence. The newly crowned queen's ministers had an early success, when the Treaty of Edinburgh signed in July 1560, neutralised Scotland, at least between France and England, and effectively locked Elizabeth's back door, as far as potential invaders were concerned. This reversed years of misdirected policy by King Henry VIII and the Protectorate of his son, King Edward VI, which had thrown Scotland into the arms of France, and latterly the Guise family, who espoused a crusading Catholic French monarchy, in alliance with Spain. It might be added that this issue always had to be a concern for England when engaging in wars with continental powers; it was to be a key consideration in England's promotion of the Union of Parliaments in 1707, and the British government could have paid a heavy price for underestimating the danger of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion in Scotland, had French ministers given it significant backing, during the War of the Austrian Succession.

King Phillip had problems enough in the 1560s, especially in the Netherlands, where the Reformation had generated a strong independence movement, and in the Mediterranean where the Ottoman Empire threatened his Italian possessions, even after their navy was crushed at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. He seemed willing to accept that England was 'the one which had got away', and made no plans to do anything to alter the situation. However, the Treasure Crisis threatened to change things. The original source of the dispute was Elizabeth's seizure of gold from Spanish ships in English ports, in November 1568. Chased by privateers in the English channel, 5 small Spanish ships carrying gold and silver worth £85,000 sought shelter in the harbours at Plymouth and Southampton; the money for payment of Spanish soldiers in the Netherlands, was equivalent to a large percentage of a year's tax revenue in England at that time. When Queen Elizabeth discovered that the gold was not owned by Spain, but by Italian bankers, she seized it, and treated it as a loan to England. Unsurprisingly, the Spanish government was furious, not least because mutinies of unpaid Spanish soldiers were a regular occurrence, most famously in 1574, when Antwerp was sacked in the 'Spanish Fury'. The response was draconian trade restrictions, including closure of the Netherlands to English imports, and further tit for tat measures followed. However, neither side wanted war, and the Treaty of Nijmegen, which resolved matters, was agreed, albeit after 6 years of disputation and haggling, in 1574. England acknowledged a debt resulting from the seizure of the cargoes of the treasure ships, but succeeded in having it set against compensation claims, associated with over-vigorous Spanish seizures and searches of English shipping, so that only £20000 was paid to Spain; other provisions, such as an end to English support to privateers including John Hawkins and Francis Drake were agreed, though side-stepped later. Trade between the nations was important to both of them and this fact prevented any rupture for a few more years, but there were heightening tensions, which formed the lead-up to the long-lasting undeclared but fiercely-contested Anglo-Spanish war, which is generally reckoned to have commenced in 1585.

2.2 The Armada War 1585 – 1604

(i) Causes

As already suggested, it is possible to see war with Spain as inevitable from the moment that Elizabeth ascended the English throne in 1558, as a Protestant queen in seas dominated by Roman Catholic powers, which did not accept her hereditary entitlement. However, by most reckonings, war only broke out, 27 years later, so as well as looking at the development of the dynastic situation, it is sensible to look for more proximate causes, but I shall consider the former first. Queen Elizabeth was the sole issue of the marriage of King Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn, but those of the Roman Catholic faith, at least those beyond the reach of English retribution, did not recognise the King's divorce prior to his 2nd marriage, and thus regarded Elizabeth as disqualified from the throne by illegitimacy. This point of view should have meant that King Edward VI, the son of a 3rd marriage was equally ineligible, but there seems to have been little dispute about his accession. Almost on his death-bed, he produced a will which excluded both of Henry VIII's daughters on grounds of illegitimacy, side-lining his Catholic half-sister Mary, and his Protestant half-sister Elizabeth; as a committed Protestant, it is probable that his main target was Mary, though he also believed that rulers should be male, as all those of England had been until then. He bestowed the succession on the heirs male of Lady Jane Grey, grand-daughter of King Henry's younger sister, Queen Mary of France, before reluctantly altering his will to include his cousin (once removed), Lady Jane herself, and unknowingly signing her death warrant.

Of course, this was history by 1558, but there were other complications, introduced by the will of King Henry VIII, which had disqualified the line of his elder sister, Margaret, erstwhile Queen of Scotland, whose grand-daughter was Mary, Queen of Scots. That may seem a curious measure, given that he had sent armies to Scotland to try to procure Mary as his son's bride, but she was by then the prospective Queen of France. In fact, this will had to be set aside to allow King James VI of Scotland to succeed to the English throne. Another candidate, prominent in the late 16th century, his cousin Arabella Stuart, with a weaker claim of the same origin, would have required a similar dispensation. Just to complete a convoluted story, Queen Elizabeth's heir, if her father's will had been respected, would have been a descendant of either a sister or an aunt of Lady Jane Grey, namely respectively Edward Seymour, Viscount Beauchamp, or Anne Stanley, Countess of Castlehaven, but there were potential problems concerning the legitimacy or suitability of either.

By the early 1560s, much had changed with regard to Mary, Queen of Scots, since King Henry VIII had made his will in 1547. She had duly become Queen of France in mid-1559, but her husband King Francis II died less than 18 months later, and she returned to Scotland at the age of 19 in August 1561, to reign there as Queen. Given that her high status in France had been ended, and that the Treaty of Leith had more or less eliminated French influence in Protestant Scotland, a French dimension could no longer be offered as justifying her removal from the line of succession. Certainly that was the view of moderate Roman Catholics. At that time, though it is scarcely credible in view of later developments, it even seemed possible that Queen Elizabeth would accept Mary as heiress presumptive, if the latter could be married to the recently widowed Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, whose loyalty to Elizabeth and strong Protestantism were seen as strong safeguards. Presumably Mary would have lived in Scotland, while Leicester maintained his presence at the English court. Anyway, for Elizabeth, sharing her favourite as too big an ask, not least because all contemporary sources stress the

attractiveness of Mary, as regards appearance and personality, so the proposal was shelved, and Mary went on to make 2 more marriages, each disastrous in its own way, and to lose her throne, as a result.

Nonetheless, the perception that Mary was the rightful queen, or at least that she should have been recognised as heiress, fed the many unrealistic plots to free her, and often to kill Elizabeth, starting soon after she was first imprisoned in England in 1568. Those of Elizabeth's ministers, who had favoured Mary's execution for years before the event, with Leicester strong amongst them, were worried about the possibility that a plot might succeed, but as much about a scenario in which Mary outlived Elizabeth, leaving no credible candidate for a Protestant succession. King James would have been a complicated pick, with his mother still alive in an English prison, and the problems with other candidates have already been mentioned. It was difficult at the time to defend the judicial murder of Mary in 1587, and Elizabeth's conduct afterwards, suggests that she knew it would blight her reputation ever afterwards, but the fears of the English government were hardly overblown. Obviously there had been concern about how King James would react, with England beset by problems, but he was canny enough to protest relatively mildly, appreciating that his prospects of succeeding Queen Elizabeth had actually been enhanced.

As regards the contribution of the dynastic issue to the Anglo-Spanish conflict, relations had not been helped by the regular discoveries of conspiracies of Catholic origin, and open Spanish support for Mary's aspirations had increased, when her French links weakened. Yet Mary's death was not entirely negative from the Spanish viewpoint. A tenuous claim to the English throne, came through the 14th century paladin, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, whose eldest daughter married into the Portuguese royal house, and it passed eventually to the daughter of King Philip II of Spain, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia. She became the legitimate claimant in the eyes of many Roman Catholics, and would probably have become Queen of England if the Great Armada had resulted in conquest. Mary's execution in February 1587 is often described as the trigger for the Great Armada in 1588, but Spanish views were probably nuanced, whatever was stated publicly, and in any case, planning for the enterprise, originally intended to occur a year earlier, was underway long before the axe fell.

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The main flashpoint between Spain and England in the early years after Queen Elizabeth's accession had been privateering expeditions mounted by the likes of Sir John Hawkins in the 1560s, which traded illegally and plundered Spanish shipping. The Spaniards knew well enough that the Queen, who claimed no involvement, licensed the voyages and shared in any profits, but for so long as they were relatively infrequent events, a breach in relations was avoided. On occasion, compensation was paid and sometimes as in the Battle of San Juan de Ulúa in 1568, the Spaniards destroyed most of the offending English ships. Francis Drake was captain of one of only 2 out of 6 ships to escape that rout (Hawkins, leader of the expedition, was in the other), but more success including capture of a fully laden treasure ship, attended his voyages in the 1570s. In 1577, he set off on the voyage of circumnavigation which really made his name; it was the second such voyage after Magellan's expedition between 1519 and 1522, and although Drake lost 3 of his 5 ships, unlike Magellan, he returned alive after 3 years to be knighted soon afterwards by the Queen, a gesture calculated to anger King Phillip. For his sponsors, the purpose had been licensed piracy, and Drake had not let them down, capturing 13 Spanish ships, and bringing back their rich cargoes to England. It is thought that the Queen benefitted to the tune of £300000, over twice her income from all other sources, in a normal year, and enough to pay off most of her debts.

Drake's expedition could have been a one-off venture in the pattern of the voyages of Hawkins, albeit more ambitious and risky. The initial outlay had been large, (£5000), the organisational challenge formidable, and disaster had threatened Drake's ships on a number of occasions. Nonetheless, apart from the enticing profits in which they could share, the English government saw the privateers as available at times of crisis, to make up an auxiliary fleet, adding to the relatively small national fleet of some 25 'great ships'. These were strong incentives to increase the number of armed merchantmen employed in this way, in spite of likely Spanish reactions. King Phillip certainly saw Drake's exploits as marking a turning point, and from then on war with England was a part of his thinking. He must have become more sanguine about the prospect, when Spain was able to follow up the acquisition of Portugal in 1580, after the direct ruling line failed there, with a crushing naval victory in the Azores in which the fleet of a Portuguese Pretender, Dom Antonio, was defeated by a Spanish admiral, the Marquis of Santa Cruz. The sea battle of São Miguel, fought on 26th July 1582 was remarkable because it was largely achieved by oared galleys which overwhelmed a fleet of sailing ships by the tactic of ramming and boarding, methods supposed to be ineffective beyond the Mediterranean Sea. The defeated fleet comprised mainly French ships but did include some English privateers. Santa Cruz won another naval battle as part of the conquest of the Azores, and judging by his long successful career, it was England's good fortune that he died early in 1588, before the Great Armada assembled. Drake was heavily involved in further sea actions in the lead-up to that, but undeclared war had already broken out for different reasons.

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The countries we now know as the Netherlands and Belgium, had become part of the medieval Dukedom of Burgundy, which was inherited by Charles of Ghent in 1506, before he acquired the other domains like Austria and Spain which comprised his 'world empire'. As Emperor Charles V, he was confronted by many problems in his north-western territories, especially regarding taxation and religion, but the facts that he considered the Netherlands to be his homeland, and could speak their language, helped him to keep a lid on trouble. His son King Phillip II of Spain, was seen as an alien Spaniard, after he succeeded as ruler of the Netherlands in 1556, and measures taken by his father which had been grudgingly accepted, began to generate violent revolt. Through the 1560s and 1570s, King Phillip swung between repressive policies under one viceroy, the Duke of Alba, to a more conciliatory approach under Luis de Requesens, and then back to repression under Don John of Austria, the victor at the Battle of Lepanto, though the differences were in means, rather than any departure from a fixed intent that the Netherlands would remain a Roman Catholic possession of Spain. It would not be relevant here to embark on a history of the early stages of the Dutch Revolt, but the upshot by around 1579, was that the provinces, which had originally rebelled together, were divided into a small southern group, predominantly Roman Catholic, accepting of Spanish rule, and a larger northern group, on both banks of the River Rhine, predominantly Protestant, and de facto independent under the military rule of William of Orange (known as 'William the Silent').

There had already been foreign involvement, on both sides but it was at the level of groups of volunteer fighters, rather than national army contingents. The northern provinces, formally abjured the rule of King Phillip in 1581, and the Duke of Anjou, brother of the King of France, arrived by invitation in early 1582, to become ruler. He failed in the role and left in 1583, William the Silent was assassinated in July 1584, and King Phillip's general, Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, began to recover territory south of the Rhine. Queen Elizabeth had faced

pressure from some of her advisors, led by Leicester, whose major role in government for 30 years is often ignored amidst questions about possible intimate relations with the Queen, to intervene directly in the Netherlands, but had chosen to stick with the caution of her other key advisor, Lord Burghley, who feared conflict with Spain. However, in 1584, the long-lasting Wars of Religion in France, thrust itself to the forefront of her calculations. The French King, Henri III, although a Roman Catholic, sought religious compromise and was hostile to Spanish expansionism, but was faced by an insurrection led by the de Guise family, based in Lorraine. They aimed to take the throne, with the aid of a Catholic League, which sought to eradicate Protestantism in France. In 1584, King Phillip agreed in the Treaty of Joinville to give them military and financial assistance.

These events raised the stakes for Queen Elizabeth, who was faced with the prospect of an unbroken line of hostile states on the Western seaboard of the continent if she did not intervene. However, the alternative of trying to turn back the Roman Catholic tide, would certainly be costly and likely to provoke an early Spanish attack. Nonetheless she and her advisors chose intervention, and although France was likely to prove the biggest problem, England's first step was to offer aid to the United Provinces fighting for Dutch independence, in the Treaty of Nonsuch signed in London in August 1585. Queen Elizabeth agreed to supply 6,400 foot soldiers and 1,000 cavalry, initially to be deployed against Spanish soldiers besieging Antwerp. A large annual subsidy was loaned against the surety of Dutch towns, Brill and Flushing, which England garrisoned at her own expense, 'the Cautionary Towns'. The treaty also granted Elizabeth the right to appoint two councillors to the Council of State of the United Provinces, but she refused the title of Governor General of the Provinces. This was a tit for tat response; Spain had signed a treaty promising aid and effectively granting recognition to rebels against the French crown, so England had done precisely the same for rebels against Spanish rule in the Netherlands. King Phillip simply saw it as a declaration of war, and in reality both countries began to act on that premise, soon afterwards.

The early English involvements in the Netherlands seemed to achieve little. The soldiers, first commanded by John Norreys, arrived too late to influence events at Antwerp, which fell to the Duke of Parma, who then moved on to the line of the River Maas, capturing towns in his path. The Earl of Leicester arrived to command the English soldiers in late-1585, and accepted the official appointment of Captain-General, to the anger of Queen Elizabeth, who was still trying to avoid giving pretexts for outright war. The English contingent was poorly trained and under-resourced, and Leicester struggled to reconcile the aims of his frugal Queen, which were purely defensive, and those of the more aggressive Dutch. Parma's advances continued, with gains in the north-east of the country, so in September, Leicester felt compelled to respond by besieging Zutphen, a fortified town, on the right bank of the River IJssel, a northern strand of the River Rhine. Some outlying forts were captured, but the main clash took place when Parma sent an armed convoy to resupply the town, and Leicester attempted an ambush. Only a few thousand soldiers were involved on each side, and casualties were light, but one was the prominent courtier, and literary figure, Sir Phillip Sidney, who succumbed to wounds, 2 weeks after the event; his death has ensured that what was little more than a skirmish is remembered far better than later successful English exploits. This convoy and another one got through, but Leicester continued the siege, driving the Spanish out of more of their outlying defences, and naively entrusted the captures including Deventer, to English Roman Catholic officers. When Leicester returned to England, after his army went into winter quarters, the said towns were surrendered to Parma, as the traitors changed sides.

Leicester returned in the next spring, but his credibility had been badly affected by the treachery of his compatriots, and he compounded matters by favouring an extreme Calvinist group in Utrecht. There were more setbacks, including the loss of the port of Sluys, when the Dutch made no effort to support a beleaguered English garrison, and Leicester resigned in the autumn of 1587. His finances had been ruined by the campaigns in the Netherlands, and his reputation suffered, though it was restored within a year in most eyes by his leadership in the face of the expected invasion by the Great Armada; whenever he returned, the Queen's impatience while he was in the Netherlands vanished, seemingly replaced by understanding that she had contributed greatly to the difficulty of his task. Historians have accounted Leicester's involvement a failure, but his efforts did buy time, when the Spanish army under the Duke of Parma was rampant; as things turned out, that was important, because events elsewhere soon intervened. Parma was never again able to focus for long on defeating the free provinces, as he first had to prepare his army for transport to England by the Great Armada, and was then twice required to march them into Northern France to rescue the forces of the Catholic League from the superior general-ship of King Henry IV. However, I will defer discussion of the continuing land war until after I have caught up with events at sea.

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The English follow-up to Drake's circumnavigation was an expedition planned to go by way of Brazil and the Cape of Good Hope to Molucca in the East Indies. Its commander, Edward Fenton, had previously sailed on expeditions led by Martin Frobisher to search for the Atlantic end of the North-West Passage, and rather bizarrely he was expected to gather information about the Pacific end, which was several thousand miles distant from his intended destination. He set off in 1582, but got no further than Brazil, returning without covering his costs, never mind making a profit for his sponsors. The rival Hawkins/Drake group of merchant adventurers had prepared a plan for a raid on the Caribbean and South America, but it was only allowed to proceed after the breach with Spain had become inevitable. Drake sailed from Plymouth in September 1585 with 27 ships, 2 supplied by the Queen. Ostensibly, he was successful, capturing the important port of Cartagena, and other Spanish settlements, while accumulating considerable plunder. However, he did not capture any treasure ships, and returned almost a year later, having done no better than breaking even against the expedition costs, at a time when the Queen was desperate for money to pay for her commitments in the Netherlands. Hawkins, took 4 navy ships to cruise off the coast of Spain, during that summer of 1586, but though he took a few prizes, the overall impact was small, and King Phillip remained in control of his sea lanes.

That changed in 1587 with Drake's famous 'singeing of the Spanish King's beard'. By this time, it was known that a Spanish fleet was being readied to mount an invasion of England later that year, and Drake sailed in April 1587 with 21 ships to disrupt the preparations. The English attack on Cadiz achieved complete surprise and success, with Drake able to destroy 24 ships, some large galleons amongst them. To a degree, the rest of the expedition was an anti-climax, though a large Portuguese carrack with a valuable cargo was captured, ensuring that the venture was profitable. However, the strategic benefit came mainly from the Spanish response, because a large fleet was assembled under Admiral Santa Cruz to intercept Drake's ships; they failed to find them, and by the time the Spaniards returned to port after 3 difficult months at sea, the combination of the damage done by Drake, and the poor state of the returning ships and sailors meant that the invasion had to be deferred. Perhaps just as important, was the fact that Santa Cruz was blamed, not altogether fairly, by his King for what

had happened, and it is said that mortification hastened his death, early in 1688, so a great Admiral had to be replaced by a lesser one in command of the Spanish invasion fleet.

The Spanish planning had not proceeded smoothly either; their naval commanders, except perhaps for Santa Cruz, had respect for the strength of the English fleet which had been built up under the stewardship of John Hawkins as Treasurer of the Navy, during almost a decade. In particular, individual English navy ships, though smaller than the largest Spanish galleons carried more heavy guns. The consensus view of the Spanish Admirals, including Santa Cruz, was that their fleet should initially establish a bridgehead, either in Ireland or at Plymouth, before moving up-channel to join in an attack nearer London, by which time they would hopefully have won a fleet action. In particular, they did not contemplate going north of the Thames estuary, because of the difficulties this might present in returning to Spain against contrary winds and any English fleet that might remain in being. The commander of the designated invading army drawn from the Netherlands, the Duke of Parma, was at first content with this plan, seemingly taking the view that while the English fleet was occupied by the advance of their Spanish counterparts, his soldiers could be moved quickly across the North Sea, without protection, though he was probably wrong to discount Dutch warships. King Phillip did not like this approach; he was determined to protect his main army with a strong fleet so he envisaged the Spanish fleet sailing up the English Channel, holding off the English fleet, then in some rather ill-defined fashion, picking up Parma's army in Dunkirk, and landing it somewhere near the Thames estuary. It was a plan of a complexity never attempted before or since in the face of a determined enemy, and complete success was a long shot from the outset.

There are good detailed accounts of the Great Armada campaign, so I will provide only a broad outline along with a few comments on key aspects, The Spanish fleet of 130 vessels set off from Lisbon in May 1588, under the command of the Duke of Medina Sidonia, not a professional seaman, but with advisors who were. They were faced by an English fleet of 200 vessels, 35 of which were warships of the English navy as opposed to armed merchantmen, and all were commanded by another courtier, Lord Howard of Effingham, who was assisted by Vice-Admiral Francis Drake and Rear-Admiral John Hawkins. Things went largely to plan for the Spanish fleet, as it sailed north-east up the English Channel, because the English ships stood off and fired most of their ammunition at a distance too great to seriously damage the Spanish ships. The English tactics were inspired by fear that if they closed with their more heavily-manned adversaries, they would be boarded and captured, regardless of advantages in manoeuvrability and weights of broadside. At this distance of time, their caution in circumstances, when they were trying to prevent an invasion is astonishing, regardless of arguments for preserving a fleet in-being. One would have expected heavy losses on each side, but especially the defending fleet.

At any rate, the Spanish fleet arrived at Calais Roads, having lost only two vessels, to a collision rather than enemy fire, and anchored on 27th July to await confirmation that the Duke of Parma's army was ready for embarkation. The issue was effectively decided on the next day when the English got lucky; through the era of sail, fire ships were an uncertain weapon but on this occasion, 8 which were floated towards the Spanish fleet 'hit the jackpot'. They did not sink anything, but total panic ensued as most of the Spanish ships upped their anchors and scattered. Two days later, while the Spanish commander was trying to re-assemble his fleet at Gravelines, the English ships finally got close enough to mount an effective attack by gunfire, and 5 Spanish ships were lost to them and their Dutch allies, while many others sustained damage; the Spanish fleet remained

disorganised. The plan had already failed, because Dunkirk, where Parma's army was waiting, was by then out of reach for most of the ships which had gone too far downwind to the north-east in seeking to escape English gunfire. The English militia assembled at Tilbury by the Earl of Leicester to confront Parma had he made it across the sea, were perhaps fortunately, not forced into action, and instead heard a stirring speech from their Queen. So, Spain had suffered a severe setback, but it was decisions still to come that produced a disaster.

The wind turned to the south, enabling the Spanish fleet, still largely intact, to avoid a lee shore and run to the north, shepherded by Lord Howard, though his ships were almost out of ammunition, whereas the Spanish ships remained well-stocked. Of course, Medina Sidonia cannot have known that, but I am still baffled that he did not attempt at any stage to turn and fight. Nor did he explore other options like turning east to seek a friendly port in North Germany or Scandinavia. The English fleet turned back when they reached the Firth of Forth, when the Spanish admiral might still have sought to pressure the Scottish King into sheltering and victualing his massive fleet but he continued northwards, eventually turning west and then south round Scotland, and west passed the coast of Ireland. By autumn, storms were entirely predictable, though they were probably worse in 1588, than on average, and it was at this stage of their journey that the Spanish losses became calamitous with sinkings scattered along the rugged rocky coastline. Their admiral, Medina Sidonia, had foreseen that danger and warned his ship captains to steer well out into the Atlantic Ocean, but perhaps many thought their ships were in such poor condition that they had to keep close to land. Any thought that they might find safe havens there was illusory; the English government in Ireland did all they could to kill every Spaniard who reached land, and largely succeeded, apart from 2000 or so who were rescued by mercenaries, and were repatriated by way of Edinburgh. It is thought that about half of the Spanish ships made it back, perhaps 63, mostly badly damaged, to Santander and smaller ports on the north coast, and one third of the seamen and soldiers, perhaps 8000 returned; the English losses had been the 8 fireships, surely a worthwhile investment, and a few hundred killed and wounded, while the overall cost to the English exchequer had been £265000.

King Phillip did not blame either his plan or the inexplicable decisions of Medina Sidonia for the disaster, but attributed it to storms and thus the will of God. In England, deliverance was also attributed to supernatural agency, and as is usually the case after success, few questions were asked about the detailed course of the campaign, or indeed about the extraordinarily low casualty figures in what was supposed to be a life or death struggle. It was suggested in the autumn, as news filtered through to London of the course followed by the Great Armada, that warships should be sent south-west through the English Channel to try to intercept the remnants, but it was probably wise not to do so, as this would have risked exposing them to the same storms that had wrecked the Spanish fleet. However, Queen Elizabeth's advisors realised soon enough that few of the surviving Spanish ships in the ports of Northern Spain were in any condition to fight. The death of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in September 1588 caused a hiatus in English affairs, as the Queen in her grief locked herself away for a period, but planning for a follow-up expedition in 1589 was soon underway. However the Queen could not fund it alone, so merchant venturers had to be called on, and this meant that profit would be at least as important as any strategic aims to the leaders, who with sea and land forces required, were the seemingly inevitable Francis Drake and John Norryes.

The Queen and her advisors made it very clear that if the enterprise was to have their support its main objective would have to be the destruction of the returned Great Armada ships in the ports of San Sebastian and

especially Santander, on the far east of Spain's north, Biscay, coast. As they saw it, the great prize was to destroy as much as possible of King Philip's remaining fleet, and to couple that with denying Spanish access to Scandinavian naval stores, (wood, tar and hemp) needed for building replacements. At least in the short term, the effects could have been crippling, and called into question Spanish ability to ship South American silver, and protect against privateering in the Western Hemisphere. Drake had to pay lip-service to the Queen's wishes, but they were never more than an add-on to his real targets of a descent on Lisbon, in support of a planned revolt in favour of the Pretender, Dom Antonio, who had promised large trade concessions in the East Indies, and to try again to intercept a treasure fleet in the Azores. The fleet, known somewhat tongue in cheek, as the English Armada, sailed after delays in mid-April 1589; it was made up of six royal galleons, 60 English armed merchantmen, 60 Dutch flyboats and about 20 pinnaces. In addition to upwards of 15000 soldiers, there were 4,000 sailors and 1,500 officers and gentlemen adventurers.

No doubt, Drake used the late departure to justify going nowhere near San Sebastian and Santander, and he headed straight for Corunna on the north-west tip of the Spanish coastline, but then unaccountably spent a month besieging but failing to take that town. Eventually, in May, he gave up and headed for Lisbon, where the Spaniards had considerably boosted the defences in preparation for an English attack. The expected Portuguese rebellion failed to materialise, and Lisbon withstood an assault. In late June, trying to rescue something from the debacle, Drake took 20 ships to the Azores to try to find the Spanish treasure fleet, but was hit by a storm, which caused so much damage to his ships that he had to return to England. The expedition had achieved virtually nothing, and certainly did not inhibit the rebuilding of King Phillip's fleet. On the contrary, the complete English failure combined with a few Spanish successes in small encounters did much to repair the morale of King Phillip's navy. The English losses of 40 ships were surprisingly large, given that they did not have to confront an organised fleet, and sickness disabled half their soldiers though some recovered. Needless to say no dividend was paid to the sponsors of the expedition, including the Queen, so Drake, if not actually disgraced, had tarnished his reputation, to the extent that he spent the next few years ashore. The English Armada was not a disaster of the same order of magnitude as the Great Armada, though some have attempted to portray it that way, but it did reduce English maritime ambitions for a time. However, that was in part due to increasing commitments on the continent, to which I now return.

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The chaotic situation in France was looming as large as the Dutch War of Independence in the minds of Queen Elizabeth and her advisors by the mid-1580s, though there was no real involvement on the ground until after the Great Armada had been repelled. The background is convoluted, and can only be touched on here. The French Catholic League had been formed in 1576 as a response to the relaxation of restrictions on Protestants (Huguenots), by King Henri III, though the organisation was also a vehicle for advancing the claim to the throne of Charles, Cardinal de Guise. It was clear by the early 1580s if not before, that the marriage of King Henri to Louise of Lorraine, which took place the day after his coronation in 1575, was unlikely to produce an heir, and in 1584, the King's younger brother, the heir presumptive died, making the Protestant, Henri of Navarre as next in line. The King gave way to pressure from the Catholic League, and issued an edict suppressing Protestantism, and annulling the right of Henri of Navarre to become King. He appeared to be trying at this point to assume leadership of the League, but the de Guises were having none of that, and in 1587 the King was forced out of

Paris. There was an apparent reconciliation between the King, Cardinal de Guise, and Henri, Duc de Guise, but it was short-lived, though no-one anticipated that the King would go so far as to arrange the murders of the de Guise brothers, which he did in December 1588. He again had to leave Paris, because of the popular uproar following this atrocity, and then, he had no option but to ally with Henri of Navarre. Together they approached Queen Elizabeth for money and military support; an anti-Spanish alliance was mooted after the defeat of the Great Armada, but the negotiations came to an end when King Henri III was assassinated in early August 1589, just outside Paris. He was the last Valois King of France, a dynasty which had reigned for 250 years.

Henri of Navarre had the best claim to the throne and he tried to mollify Roman Catholic opinion by promising to respect the dominant position of that religion in the country, but this was never going to be sufficient for the Catholic League and its supporters. He would have to fight to be King. The Catholic League recognised Henri's uncle, the Cardinal de Bourbon as King, but he died soon afterwards, leaving them in a quandary, lacking a credible French candidate. King Phillip saw an opportunity to place his daughter, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, daughter of a French princess, on the throne, but his proposal fell foul of the Paris Parliament as it was contrary to Salic Law (that no female could succeed to the French throne); it was suggested that a waiver might re-awaken English claims of 2 centuries earlier. The confusion helped King Henri IV, but he was so weak militarily, that he was easily driven away from Paris towards Dieppe, though his troubles did prompt a promise of aid from Queen Elizabeth. His immediate adversary was the Duke of Mayenne, general of the Catholic League who probably had an army 4 times as large as his, so the King decided that he could not hold Dieppe, a large town, and moved to Arques, 6km to the south-east, which he fortified. For 2 weeks, after 15th September, Mayenne attacked repeatedly without success, but both sides suffered heavy losses, which were obviously more serious for King Henri's smaller force. Then his salvation appeared in the guise of Sir Roger Williams and 4000 English soldiers; Mayenne withdrew, whether before or after the English soldiers joined the action is unclear, but the French King had a victory against the odds, and promptly marched towards Paris with the English contingent, by then commanded by Peregrine Bertie, Lord Willoughby, in support. However, their task had been to lend succour in a crisis, and Queen Elizabeth was adamant that they were not to become a fixture, so Willoughby was instructed to withdraw to the Channel ports, which he did by January 1590. Nonetheless, King Henri won another battle at Ivry in March 1590, and took some Paris suburbs. The Catholic League seemed on the verge of defeat, but King Phillip instructed the Duke of Parma to bring his army to their aid. Henri tried to bring Parma to battle, but the Duke outmanoeuvred the King and occupied Paris. The French King's army gradually fell apart, as tended to happen near to harvest-time, leaving him no option but a retreat to rebuild his strength. Parma was able to return to the Netherlands, in October 1590, leaving the Catholic League secure enough in Paris to embark on an internecine struggle which saw executions and other killings.

In parallel with these events, the situation of the free Dutch provinces had improved, helped by better co-operation with their English allies, and by the distractions to the Duke of Parma. The Earl of Leicester was succeeded in command of the English contingent by the afore-mentioned Lord Willoughby, and he achieved a striking success in repelling the Duke of Parma when he besieged Bergen-ap-Zoom in September 1588. The Spanish general had returned with his army from his sojourn in Dunkirk, when it became clear that the Great Armada, would be unable to transport him to England, and sought to restore Spanish prestige by taking the fortified town, (now in the south-eastern corner of the Netherlands). Parma's assault was hindered when dykes were broken to flood most of the surrounds, and by a successful ruse which led to the ambush of elite Spanish

soldiers. Finally, he was forced to call off the siege, when Prince Maurice arrived with a relieving force in early November. However those who thought a turning point had been reached proved wrong as in April 1589, the fortified town of Geertruidenberg fell to Parma amidst accusations of treachery by the English governor, Sir John Wingfield, though a mutiny by unpaid soldiers may have compelled his surrender.

The real turning point was the year 1590, when Prince Maurice became Captain General of the Dutch forces, and commander of the Anglo-Dutch army. He was fortunate because his assumption of the roles coincided with the diversion of the Duke of Parma's army, to rescue Paris from King Henri IV, as already described. He was also fortunate in that following the departure of Lord Willoughby for France, the command of the English contingent, devolved on Sir Francis Vere, whose record shows him to have been one of the most able English soldiers of the pre-modern era. He clearly had an excellent relationship with Prince Maurice, which meant that their co-operation was close from the outset. Vere was a grandson of the 15th Earl of Oxford, born in the late 1550s; his early life is obscure, and it is surprising that he is said to have first seen action in 1585, when he must have been nearly 30 years old. If so, his rise was meteoric because he was 'knighted in the field' for his contribution to the successful defence of Bergen-ap-Zoom, and his promotion to command the English contingent soon followed. He remained in that role taking part in 16 campaigns, until the English force was withdrawn as a result of the Treaty of London in 1604,. He lived for a further 5 years before being interred in Westminster Abbey, alongside his younger brother Horace, also a distinguished soldier. Francis Vere is more or less unremembered, and so are the important campaigns in which he fought for Dutch freedom, because the passage of time has reduced the popular history of these times to the big event in 1588 and some sanitised tales of English sea-dogs.

At any rate, Prince Maurice and Vere had real success in 1590 with the capture of Breda, near to Bergen-ap-Zoom, and in 1591 turned their attentions north-eastwards, reversing some of the failures of the Earl of Leicester's campaign by capturing Zutphen, and Deventer; then they came south again to capture Nijmegen. Not every siege ended in their favour, because Parma was still present in strength further south, but during the next year, when he was again ordered to invade France, there were more Dutch gains of fortified towns, including Steenwijk and Coevorden, which paved the way for the eventual capture of the major centre of Groningen, in 1594. Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, was wounded in France, and however serious the wound, none could be taken lightly in those days, and he died at the age of 47 in December 1592. Had he not been diverted from the Netherlands, first by the Great Armada campaign, and then to give succour to the Catholic League in France, he might have snuffed out the Dutch Revolt, at least for a time. He is rated a great general, and although his successors were able, they proved unable to prevent Prince Maurice and the Anglo-Dutch army from steadily increasing the territory they controlled during the ensuing period, which became known as the '10 Glory Years', though they did not come close to restoring the situation which had pertained when Parma began his campaigns. The interest in this activity is to the aficionado of fortresses and sieges, and in a broader account, it must degenerate into little more than a list, or be passed over with some general comments like those I have made here. I shall pick up the story of the Netherlands campaign again at the turn of the 17th century, when peace of some kind was on the horizon.

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King Henri's retreat from Paris in late 1590 worried the English government, as it seemed that his withdrawal could allow the Catholic League, allied to Spain, unfettered access to ports in Normandy and Brittany, from which to try again to invade England. In October 1590, a few thousand Spanish soldiers, commanded by Juan del Águila were landed at Nantes in southern Brittany to support Catholic League forces; Queen Elizabeth knew she had to respond, and a force under John Norry was landed near Brest, the major port on the north coast of Brittany, and something of a cat and mouse game ensued over the next couple of years. King Henri never seemed greatly concerned about Brittany, no doubt thinking that things could be sorted easily enough after he had made himself master of Paris, though in fact he did not snuff out Breton resistance until 1598. His focus in 1591 was on extracting financial aid from Protestant North German states, and England, and military aid from the latter to be supplied through Dieppe. The English Queen had spent £520000 in the armada years of 1588 and 1589, and was committed to subsidising the Dutch with £100000 per annum, so with a regular income from all sources of less than £200000 per annum, she had to sell Royal lands, borrow, and hope for profits from privateering expeditions to bridge the gap; finding more money to subsidise King Henri, and pay for forces to support him was a challenge and the French king did not help matters. He was always on the move, and was reluctant to give commitments as to where his efforts would be concentrated, and when debts would be paid. The English manpower situation was not good either, because there had been losses, mainly due to sickness, of 12000 men in the armada years, and the Queen was already deploying 7000 in the Netherlands, 2000 in Ireland and 3000 in Brittany. The bargaining in 1591 was tough; King Henri insisted that he would only go after Rouen, so protecting the Channel ports, if the support he wanted was forthcoming, and beyond that was the unspoken threat that he may have to adopt the Roman Catholic religion to win over his country. Queen Elizabeth tried to get Le Havre as surety for loans, perhaps seeking a replacement for Calais, lost by Queen Mary in 1558, but King Henri would have none of that idea.

Eventually, agreement was reached, and King Henri brought a restored army to Normandy in late 1591, where he was met by an English contingent commanded by Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. The siege of Rouen was conducted in rather desultory manner, until for the second time King Phillip instructed the Duke of Parma to bring his army to the aid of the French Catholic League, so the two greatest military leaders of the age again confronted each other. At first it appeared that Parma held the advantage, but having raised the siege, he had no desire to risk battle. King Henri succeeded in trapping the Spanish army with the River Seine at its back, and moved to engage them. However, Parma in a final demonstration of his skill, took his army across the river on a bridge of boats, retreated fast to the south-east, then re-crossed the river, at which point King Henri gave up the chase. Parma had saved Rouen from capture and returned his army to the Netherlands unscathed, but he had sustained a wound, which eventually killed him.

Thwarted, King Henri seemed no nearer to winning the support he needed, and although English aid had helped him to victory in important battles, the Catholic League, sustained by King Phillip remained a co-equal power in the land. Accordingly, King Henri took the step that Queen Elizabeth and her advisors had most feared, and renounced Protestantism in July 1593, perhaps making the statement credited to him, that 'Paris was well worth a mass'. At a stroke, he confounded his enemies, shattering the Catholic League, though they continued to hold such towns as Rheims where French Kings had been traditionally crowned. He had indeed gained Paris and majority support, so could arrange his coronation even if he had to settle for holding the ceremony in Chartres Cathedral, in February 1594. King Henri had also broken, seemingly irrevocably, with Queen Elizabeth's

England, but fears that he might ally himself with King Phillip, his fellow Roman Catholic monarch, proved groundless.

So the major commitments of England and Spain in France seemed to have come to an end, but both countries still had soldiers in Brittany. The Catholic League leader there, Philippe Emmanuel, Duke of Mercœur developed ambitions to make the province independent from France, and proclaimed his son, Prince and Duke of Brittany. With the aid of the Spanish force under Juan del Águila, which had been landed 2 years earlier, he defeated King Henri's forces, still including an English contingent at the Battle of Craon in May 1592. The Spaniards and their French ally gradually extended their control of the province, and built Fort Crozon which threatened the port of Brest, re-awakening English invasion fears. In September 1594, Martin Frobisher and John Norry arrived with eight warships and 4,000 men and captured the fort, slaughtering all but a dozen of its 350 defenders. It was handed over to King Henri and the soldiers were re-embarked ending the English involvement in Brittany, though the Spaniards retained a foothold for a little longer. I shall now go back to events afloat, following the English failure in 1589.

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The years immediately following the Great Armada were largely devoid of success for English naval expeditions. The so-called English Armada of 1589 has already been discussed, and although George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland and Sir Martin Frobisher returned a small profit from a voyage to the Azores in the same year, they failed to intercept any treasure ships. In 1590, Sir John Hawkins stationed off the north coast of Spain failed to intercept the Spanish ships carrying soldiers to Nantes in Brittany, and Frobisher achieved little in the Azores. In July 1591, Clifford was beaten in a small squadron action in the Battle of the Berlengas, off the Portuguese coast, losing ships and crew whose fate was to serve chained in galleys. More seriously, 2 months later, Lord Thomas Howard in command of 22 ships awaiting Spanish treasure ships allowed himself to be surprised by a larger Spanish fleet commanded by Alonso de Bazán. All but one of Howard's ships escaped; the one which did not was the Revenge with its captain, Richard Grenville, though it put up a mighty struggle against overwhelming numbers before it was taken with Grenville mortally wounded. On their journey back to port, a storm sank 15 Spanish ships and the captured Revenge, so it was no success for them, but the treasure ships completed their voyage unmolested. It was clear that the Spanish navy was well on the way to recovery by 1591, 3 years after the disaster of the Great Armada, and there were no longer easy pickings for English (or Dutch) ships in Spanish and South American waters; Rodgers states that in the 10 years after 1588, 60 or 70 warships were built by the Spanish government, which number can be compared with 35 in Queen Elizabeth's navy at that time. The next few years saw mainly small actions in which the Spanish navy operating in their own seas around Spain and the Carribean more than held its own, though a few rich prizes were captured by English privateers; it is hard to avoid the impression that the new generation of English commanders were simply not up to the task.

No doubt, this partially explains the rehabilitation of Francis Drake in 1595, when he and John Hawkins were given the command of a privateering voyage to the West Indies. They sailed with 27 ships in August, but nothing much went right for them; an assault on San Juan on the island of Puerto Rico was beaten off, Hawkins died in November, an assault on Panama failed in December, and Drake died of dysentery at the end of January 1596, before the fleet set sail back to England. The outcome could have been worse because they were intercepted

by a Spanish fleet on the return journey, but their attack was not pressed home and little damage was sustained. The failure was felt in the pockets of the sponsors, including the Queen, and meant a sad end for the two greatest English seamen of the age, but otherwise was soon forgotten in the light of a spectacular success. Lord Admiral Howard left in May 1596 with a fleet comprising 17 English navy ships, 20 Dutch warships and a few score of armed merchantmen, well over 100 vessels in all, with 14000 soldiers aboard under the command of the Earl of Essex with Walter Raleigh and Francis Vere as his deputies. They reached Cadiz at the end of June, achieving complete surprise, captured and sacked the town, held it for 2 weeks and destroyed at least 30 galleons and galleasses in the harbour. The motivation had been similar to that for Drake's voyage in 1587, because it was thought that King Philip was preparing another armada directed against England, but although the level of success was perhaps even greater, the Spanish King was not deterred.

King Philip ordered preparations to continue in Lisbon where the 2nd Spanish Armada was being assembled. It was expected to comprise 100 warships and carry 20000 soldiers, all under the command of Adelantado, Martín de Padilla. The point of attack was the subject of long-running debate, with Scotland, West Wales, and Ireland possible destinations, as well as Kent. However, by the time of its delayed sailing at the end of October, the King had to accept that the risks of venturing into English waters at that time of year were too great, so his fleet was directed towards the port of Brest in Brittany, as a good staging post for an attack on England in 1597. It did not even get that far as the ships were scattered by severe storms before they had cleared the north of Spain. When those ships that survived had limped back to port, it became clear that over 40, including 5 galleons, had been lost, along with over 5000 soldiers and sailors. The disruption caused by this disaster, added to the costs of repairing damage done at Cadiz forced Spain into bankruptcy. This was an embarrassment rather than anything more, because with his huge, normally dependable income derived from South America, King Philip's advisors had little trouble in negotiating delayed repayment schedules and new loans; his situation in that regard differed greatly from that of Queen Elizabeth who was compelled to live within her means, paying due regard to punctual repayment of any loans.

The English plan for 1597 took account of the success at Cadiz, and fears of another Spanish Armada. The Earl of Essex was given the command, with Thomas Howard, and Walter Raleigh as deputies, and in June he took out a force of over 120 English and Dutch ships, 17 from the Queen's navy, and 20000 soldiers and sailors. The plan was ambitious, namely to capture the important Spanish port of Ferrol, and whatever shipping was berthed there, then to go to the Azores and create a base from which the treasure fleet of that year could be intercepted. It was the turn of an English fleet to be disrupted by storms, and as a result Essex felt unable to attack Ferrol, and he was also unable to decide what to do next, 'hanging around' the coast of Portugal and the Azores, for a couple of months, making no serious effort to find the treasure fleet, before heading back to England. Meanwhile, Adelantado, Martín de Padilla had assembled the 3rd Spanish Armada at Corunna; it comprised 136 ships including 44 galleons and carried 14000 sailors and soldiers, but had to sail in mid-October before its preparations were complete. The plan was to capture and hold Falmouth and its surrounds, following the example of the English capture of Cadiz, but aiming to stay for long enough to negotiate English evacuation of the Netherlands in return for restoration of the port. The concept was dubious, but the Spaniards were favoured by the piecemeal return of Essex's fleet which meant that the English coast was largely undefended when they arrived. Once again, late departure exposed the Spanish fleet to autumn storms, and their fleet was scattered before they made landfall. They lost a few ships to storm damage, and capture by English ships,

which had belatedly arrived on the scene, but most made it back to port, so it was a failure rather than a disaster on the scale of those attending previous armadas.

In fact, 1597 was a turning point because it proved to be the last Spanish attempt to invade England. King Philip was over 70 years old and ill; he died in 1598. His successor King Philip III relied more on his advisors, and they proposed supporting Irish uprisings against English forces, seeking to replicate the effects of English support to the United Provinces in the Netherlands. I shall consider these initiatives in a brief account of the Irish Wars which brings this section to an end. Queen Elizabeth and her advisors, were disillusioned by the events of 1597, and sent no further large scale expeditions against Spain, instead seeking to impose partial blockades with small squadrons; they had their successes, but were never going to decide the outcome of a war in that way. I will now turn for the last time to the continental struggle, which was taking a surprising course.

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The English and Dutch governments feared that when King Henri IV converted to Roman Catholicism, relations between France and Spain would mend, but King Philip's continuing support for surviving fragments of the Catholic League prevented any rapprochement. When Archduke Albert of Austria was appointed Governor-General of the Spanish Netherlands in 1595, it was assumed that he would focus on his northern frontier, where Prince Maurice was continuing to expand the territories of the United Provinces; instead he moved to capture Calais from France after a short siege in April 1596. This prompted King Henri to seek help from Queen Elizabeth, and the outcome was the agreement of treaty arrangements, to which the Dutch state adhered soon afterwards, forming a triple alliance. It had symbolic importance for them because it conferred recognition on the United Provinces. However, none of the participants had much enthusiasm for the arrangements, and France had started negotiating for peace with Spain, before the treaty was agreed. Although the English government remained committed to assisting Prince Maurice to achieve defensible frontiers, they were becoming concerned about the growing commercial and naval strength of their ally, while the age-old fear of France, buried during the war with Spain was beginning to reappear. However, the Triple Alliance provided extra soldiers to King Henri and allowed him to recover Amiens from the Spaniards, and to hold onto the town, until in 1598, he agreed the Treaty of Vervins with Spain which also gave him back Calais; the treaty marked the end of French involvement in the Anglo-Dutch war against Spain.

England and the United Provinces continued the struggle. The independent Dutch mini-state had with English help reclaimed all the fortified towns in the Netherlands, north and east of the great rivers, together with islands and towns in their deltas, and on both banks. A natural boundary imposed by the landscape features was crystallising, having become a religious boundary, Protestants to the north, Roman Catholics to the south as a result of migrations, compulsory or otherwise. There were still anomalies, and each party could point to periods when territories of greater extent had been in their hands. So the fighting continued, although by then Spanish hopes of reuniting the Netherlands had almost vanished. There were also unrealistic ambitions on the Dutch side, exemplified in 1600, when Prince Maurice was ordered, in spite of advising to the contrary, to take his army to the south-western coast, of the Netherlands and to attempt the capture of Dunkirk, from where Spanish privateers menaced Dutch and English shipping. The result was the Battle of Nieuwpoort fought in July of that year between an Anglo-Dutch army of c12000 and a Spanish army of c9500 commanded by Archduke Albert. Prince Maurice had thought that the Spanish army was too disrupted by mutiny to interfere but this proved

wrong, when it moved in reasonable order to intercept him. The Prince responded to news of its approach by detaching a few regiments to delay the enemy and buy time for him to deploy; they did that but were totally destroyed so wiping out his numerical advantage. Detailed analyses are for the military experts, but Prince Maurice did lose an infantry battle before he was bailed out by the heroic performance of his cavalry which eventually overpowered the Spanish tercios; both forces lost a quarter of their numbers. It was clear that Dunkirk was not within reach and the Prince reverted to more realistic targets, taking fortified towns in the frontier lands. The last of these where he had the help of Francis Vere and an official English contingent was Sluys, just south of the delta, which was captured after a protracted campaign, in August 1604, just before a treaty was signed to end the Anglo-Spanish struggle.

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The Irish dimension of the Armada Wars only became significant in the last years of the struggle, though there was intermittent conflict in Ireland throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The military historian, Cyril Falls^(x) produced a respected account, 70 years ago, though to this reader it is one-sided, in that almost everything is presented from the English viewpoint, with their eventual victory seen as a very good thing. He acknowledges the clash of Gaelic and English cultures, but makes it clear that where the English writ ran, except in the 'Pale' around Dublin, the system was feudal with hardly a nod to modernity. Important Irish lords and landowners went through cycles of rebelling then submitting, regularly, at little cost to themselves in a fashion that would have been recognisable to English rulers of the 12th and 13th centuries; both rebels and their 'loyalist' counterparts formed small armies from their tenantry, augmented by mercenaries, many of whom were Scottish, the notorious 'gallowglasses'. The resulting struggles were brutal at ground level; if a fortified place was captured, all those within, not excluding women and children, were often slaughtered, even if assurances had been given that lives would be spared, and dwellings and crops were burnt as a matter of course. Terror was seen as an acceptable weapon by both sides, and although some now argue that this was the normal way of war at that time, others see an English view of the Irish as an inferior barbarian race as fuelling atrocities which were reciprocated.

For those at the top of Gaelic society, the outcome of revolts was usually a figurative slap on the wrist after submission, though a few seemingly unreconcilable offenders, like the Fitzgerald Earls of Desmond and Kildare were deprived of their lands and titles, and imprisoned in England. (This was due in part to their feud with Thomas Butler, Earl of Ormonde, a very influential figure in Elizabethan England). Until the 1590s, the armies fielded by English Lord Deputies, and Provincial Governors were relatively small, comprising 3000 soldiers at most, many of whom were supplied by loyalist Irish lords like the aforementioned Earl of Ormonde, but they were a match for at least twice as many of their adversaries, thanks to better weapons, drilling and leadership. However desertion, casualties in action, and especially sickness, meant that wastage rates could exceed 40% in a year, and the need to raise replacement levies of thousands annually, from across England did nothing for the popularity of the Elizabethan regime. The parsimonious Queen cut every corner she could in funding these armies, but the costs far exceeded any revenues obtainable from Ireland, so they were a major drain on her finances, especially during the Armada War.

At the start of the Queen's reign, and for the 3 decades afterwards, there was no concept of Ireland as an entity amongst most Irish people of influence, while the English may have seen the territory militarily in those terms, but not otherwise. National patriotism did not exist, though the Roman Catholic religion did take its place in

some regards. Irish lords did look beyond the boundaries of their own possessions, with a view to expansion of actual holdings and influence, but none aimed higher than to dominate a province. Rebellions occurred when such ambitions or perceived rights within their own domains were curbed by the English overlord, either directly or by her representatives in Dublin and the provinces. This changed only when Hugh O'Neill built an all-Ireland confederation of Irish clan chiefs and landowners, albeit fairly loose, in the 1590s. He was born in 1550 and brought up by Anglo-Irish families in the Pale, after the murder of his father, the 1st Earl of Tyrone. The English government nursed his ego and gave him practical support through the 1570s and 1580s, and in turn he made himself and his followers useful to the English crown in various conflicts, including that against the Fitzgerald earls. He was recognised by Queen Elizabeth as Earl of Tyrone in 1587, though his kinsman Sir Turlough Luineach O'Neill, who had been responsible for the deaths of his father and elder brother, was the chief of the clan, for 28 years until 1595 and dominated Ulster until the very end of that period. Turlough O'Neill is portrayed by Falls and others as an idle, drunken buffoon, but he must have been more than that to have held the English at arm's length for so long, and it was only after his death when Hugh O'Neill's wider ambitions ended in disaster, that Ulster came under full English control.

It may be that Hugh O'Neill began to contemplate rebellion, in response to English attempts to gain the level of control in Ulster, which they had accumulated in the other provinces, but the catalyst seems to have been his association with Hugh Roe O'Donnell, soon to be Lord of Tyrconnell. Lord Deputy Perrott recognised him as a future threat when he was a 15 year-old boy and arranged for him to be kidnaped and imprisoned in Dublin Castle, in 1587. O'Donnell eventually made a rare escape 5 years later, and seems to have imparted some of his own vigour and understandable hatred of the English to Hugh O'Neill, who gave him protection he needed then. As Turlough O'Neill, over 60 years old, began to fail, the two of them engineered his replacement as 'the O'Neill' by his kinsman Hugh, though it was only when Turlough died in 1595 that the title was formally adopted. Until then Hugh O'Neill continued to negotiate with the English government as regards his rights as Earl of Tyrone. By then he and O'Donnell were in secret contact with King Philip II of Spain, requesting military aid in return for recognition of Spanish overlordship extending over Ireland as a whole.

O'Donnell was first to declare open rebellion in 1594, and within a year he was in control of most of the province of Connacht. In 1595, Hugh O'Neill abandoned negotiation with the English and in May the combined forces of O'Donnell and O'Neill defeated an English army commanded by Sir Henry Bagenal at the Battle of Clontibret. An ambush was laid for 1500 government soldiers marching to relieve Monaghan Castle, by around twice as many Irish, and the resulting casualties of the former were heavy, perhaps close to half their numbers, which made it an unprecedented setback for the government. However, tensions reduced again with talk of truces and submissions, before negotiations foundered, when King Philip promised his Irish correspondents that he would send an armada to Ireland in 1596. Probably, he intended to do so, but the successful English attack on Cadiz delayed preparations, so that by the time the 2nd Armada set off, Ireland was no longer a feasible destination, and in any case, the fleet was torn apart by autumnal storms before it cleared Spanish waters. The prospect of a 3rd Armada in 1597 sustained the Irish rebels, but in fact it never went near Ireland.

However, an English military mistake in 1598 re-ignited the Rebellion. Prompted by the need to relieve a garrison in Armagh, the government assembled 4000 soldiers to carry out the operation, a large force in the context of the Irish conflict until then, but the decision bespoke a failure to comprehend how strong the rebel army, built

by Hugh O'Neill in Ulster had become. He was supplied with arms from Spain and Western Scotland, and had Spanish military advisers, who directed training and settled tactics. The denouement in August 1598, was the Battle of the Yellow Ford on the Blackwater River where the Irish army, only slightly the larger, destroyed their government opponents, led again by Sir Henry Bagenal. Half the government soldiers including their general were killed, and the remainder were chased into Armagh, where they were trapped without hope of relief, before being allowed to march south leaving all their equipment behind.

This was a turning point in what has been viewed since as the 9-Years War in Ireland, almost at its half-way point, though things did not pan out in a predictable way. Certainly, the Irish rebels exploited their victory; Hugh O'Neill and Hugh O'Donnell went south, and persuaded many to join with them in a loose confederation, (the sources are unclear as to how much preparation for this eventuality had been done by Hugh O'Neill in the preceding years). At any rate, maps suggest that within a year the government writ ran only in the Pale and parts of Leinster in the South-East, with the rebels controlling up to 90% of the land area, albeit that most sizeable towns were still in the hands of the English government. There can be little doubt that if the Spaniards had given substantial support at this point, English rule in Ireland would have been in jeopardy, but this was the year when King Philip died, inevitably leading to a hiatus in planning and action. As a result, the key effect of the Battle of the Yellow Ford was to galvanise the English government; no longer were financial constraints allowed to determine the level of commitment, (a change possibly made easier by the death of Lord Burghley, that year). An army of 17000 (twice as large as that in the Netherlands) was available in Ireland by the following spring, though not all could be allocated to a field army, because of the increased need to garrison forts and towns with most of Ireland in rebellion.

However, that in itself was not enough to turn the tide in 1599, because the English government blundered in entrusting this army to the Earl of Essex, as Lord Lieutenant. His career until then had demonstrated that when given clear objectives, as before Cadiz in 1596, he could give inspiring leadership, but that when initiative was required, indecision took over, and nothing was achieved. The English government probably thought that they had dealt with that aspect, because Essex was dispatched with instructions to use his reinforced army to invade Ulster, attacking the root of the rebellion rather than trying to lop off branches. However, when he arrived in Dublin and discussed matters with local commanders, they advised strongly against this course, and Essex allowed himself to be persuaded. The advice may not have been wrong, because the forces at Hugh O'Neill's disposal were at their peak of strength; not only had they increased in numbers but their new-found confidence and efficiency meant that they were at least a match for an English force of equal size. O'Neill had also taken the precaution of laying waste to the country around the route which Essex would have had to follow.

In May 1599, Essex set off southwards towards rebel occupied areas in Munster, and Leinster, not itself a terrible decision as real gains were possible from such an approach, but the way in which he carried out a march through these areas led to disaster. Instead of keeping his army concentrated, and going after the major leaders of the revolt in these provinces, he shed small detachments to garrison unimportant towns and to pursue minor rebels, so that by the time he arrived back at Dublin in August 1599, after losing most of his baggage in a skirmish, while crossing the River Slaney just to the south, he could barely muster 300 horsemen, and a few thousand soldiers overall, many racked by disease. Not a single rebel commander had submitted, and no district had been left subdued; some of his detachments fared even worse, with calamitous defeats at the Battles of

Deputy's Pass in Wicklow, and Curlew Pass in the west. Essex tried to redeem himself with a much smaller-scale march, through the Pale to the west, but again achieved nothing, and followed up by agreeing a truce with Hugh O'Neill, which may have been realistic given the situation on the ground, but was certainly not to the liking of the English government. Thereafter, Essex lost his head, first figuratively, and then in reality on Tower Hill in February 1601, after leaving Ireland without permission, and then leading an abortive coup against the government.

Once again the Spaniards had a great opportunity, but once again they were unable to respond, whereas the English government did by restoring the numbers in their Irish army to 14000 foot and 1200 horse, and even more importantly, by appointing able commanders. The new Lord Deputy, who arrived in Dublin in February 1600 was Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, later Earl of Devonshire, born in 1563, who had gained military experience in the Netherlands and Brittany; he was not robust in health and perhaps was seen as something of a dilettante, but he proved to be the most able English general of the Elizabethan age, rivalled only by Francis Vere. Accompanying Mountjoy into Dublin was Sir George Carew, eventually, 1st Earl of Totnes, who had been appointed Lord President of Munster; between them they set about destroying the twin pillars of rebel support in Ulster and Munster. It is possible that Hugh O'Neill had not appreciated the damage done to the forces of the English government by the Earl of Essex, when he agreed a truce with him, but apparently let down by the Spaniards, he probably thought he still needed to come to an accommodation with Queen Elizabeth. In November 1599, he sent the Queen a proposed treaty which recognised English sovereignty, but asked for a mainly self-governing Ireland in which the Roman Catholic had formal status. To present eyes, it is a balanced document with many sensible provisions, far ahead of its time, but of course it was ignored by the Queen's advisors, who still saw Ireland as a collection of possessions rather than a national entity. Accordingly, O'Neill was rather on the back foot in early 1600, in spite of the Irish rebel successes, and the two main English commanders wasted little time in clipping his wings further.

For Mountjoy, there was no alternative to making another frontal attack on Ulster from the south, but prior to that, 4000 soldiers were carried in May 1600 to Lough Foyle in the north-west corner of Ulster, where Sir Henry Docwra garrisoned a fort, offering an obvious threat to Hugh O'Neill's heartland from the north. In September 1600, Mountjoy backed this up, by moving north from Newry with 3500 soldiers with intention of forcing a battle on Hugh O'Neill. The fight took place near the end of the month, in Moyry Pass, which had been fortified by O'Neill. By most reckonings, it would be accounted an English defeat, as they incurred far larger casualties, failed to take the Irish position, had to give up on their initial objective of the Blackwater River crossing, and had difficulty in making an ordered retreat to Newry. However O'Neill then retired north-west to his castle at Dungannon and left Mountjoy free to come forward, destroy the fortifications at Moyry Pass, and erect his own garrisoned fort, and essentially reverse the battle outcome. Given that a garrison was also installed at Carrickfergus to the east of Dungannon, and English control of the seas, it must have been obvious to O'Neill that English strategy was to hem him in and then squeeze. Nonetheless with interior lines, and an army that had recently proved its worth, there was no reason for that to cause him to despair.

Events further south must have given him more cause for concern. Thomas Butler, Earl of Ormonde was the most prominent Irish supporter of the English government, a cousin and long-time friend of Queen Elizabeth, and almost-permanently in high offices in Ireland, though never the highest. He was kidnapped by rebel

supporters in April 1600, but they refused Hugh O'Neill's request to send him to Dungannon; the refusal may well have preserved Ormonde's life, but also resulted in his being freed in June of that year without there being any significant quid pro quo. During the remainder of the year, Sir George Carew brought most of Munster back to the English fold, not by winning pitched battles but by canny shows of force in front of rebel strongholds and negotiations. Meanwhile, most of Leinster also returned to the English camp as a result of the fortuitous killing of a couple of key rebel leaders, of knock-on effects of the failed kidnapping and of a perception of the way the wind seemed to be blowing. By early 1601, Hugh Roe O'Donnell still controlled Connacht, but the lands held by the confederate lords were greatly reduced, with even Ulster seeming under threat. However, 1601 was the year when Spanish promises of substantial aid finally came good.

In the early part of the year, Mountjoy concentrated on trying to tighten the net around Hugh O'Neill, though progress was slow. The 4th Spanish Armada commanded by Don Juan del Águila, who had been an effective leader in Brittany, was dispatched to Ireland in late-September 1601, again too late in the year to avoid disruptive storms, which caused several ships to turn back. However, 4000 Spanish soldiers disembarked at Kinsale in the South-West of Ireland, and immediately fortified the port. Mountjoy's reaction was immediate, and by early October, he had placed the town under siege, bringing a force of 12000 soldiers, though sickness immediately began to reduce the numbers he could call on. Hugh O'Neill, and his ally Hugh Roe O'Donnell knew that the choice of Kinsale as a landing point was a massive error, as it could not have been further from their heartlands, whereas Mountjoy could be reinforced through nearby ports. The outcome might have been very different if a port on the west coast had been chosen. However, the Irish leaders also knew that they would have to support the Spaniards, if they were to continue to receive support from that quarter, so over the next month they assembled a substantial army and set off to cover up to 300 miles to Kinsale in early November.

Their pace was slow, with delays to plunder loyalist supporters, and they also had to evade a force under Carew, which had been sent to intercept them at a river crossing, but they reached the environs of Kinsale in mid-December with an army of 5000 foot soldiers and 700 cavalry, not an inconsiderable achievement. By this time, sickness and a few casualties incurred during besieging operations, had reduced Mountjoy's force to 7500, Hugh O'Neill may have been content to wait, allowing the English army to melt away, while his more resilient native army was less affected. However, his more aggressive associates, and the Spaniards demanded action, so the rebel army was advanced to a ridge in a boggy zone just west of Kinsale. Mountjoy kept the majority of his army in front of the Spaniards in Kinsale to prevent sorties by them, an un-necessary precaution as the Spanish soldiers intended only to hold Kinsale, until their Irish allies broke through to join them. This allocation meant that Mountjoy sent only 3000 to confront the Irish force, a brave decision given the outcomes of recent battles. Accounts are confused thereafter, but after a short period of stalemate, the Irish attempted to pull back, and the English cavalry simply drove through them and created a rout. I have seen no adequate explanation as to why an Irish army which had become used to winning battles in the previous few years, performed so poorly on this occasion. Materially the defeat was not disastrous with a loss of c1200, and the survivors mainly got back to their home territory; none of the leaders was killed or taken prisoner. However, there can be no doubt that the battle was a total disaster for Hugh O'Neill's rebellion, because of the effect on the morale of those fighting and their supporters.

However, the victor Mountjoy still had a problem on his hands, with an army deteriorating fast because of sickness, confronting a hardly damaged Spanish force behind defensive walls. However, their commander, Del Águila saw his position as hopeless without prospect of Irish reinforcement, though in fact another Spanish force was within a few days of arriving. He surrendered Kinsale and some other garrisoned outposts nearby, in return for honourable terms and the promise that his force would be conveyed back to Spain in English ships. The Spanish reinforcements turned back when they got the news, so ending the involvement of Spain with Ireland. The last episode had been as error strewn as their previous armada attempts; their landing point drew their allies too far from the rebel heartland, they had offered little support in the decisive battle, and their precipitate surrender of Kinsale shortly before reinforcements arrived, lost them the possibility of embarrassing Mountjoy and his dwindling army. Mountjoy, on the other hand had been bold throughout, fully deserving the good fortune associated with poor decision making of his adversaries, and he went on to finish the job, leaving a pacified country when he returned to England in 1604.

There is little more to be said in an account of the Anglo-Spanish War. The Ulster forces which had returned to their home province, continued to resist Mountjoy and it took 2 more years of attritional, largely guerrilla, warfare before the last of the rebels surrendered in 1603. The English policy had involved garrisoning many forts spread across the region, but also a sustained programme of crop spoliation, and destruction of settlements calculated to cause famine, which forced many to choose between starvation and migration to other parts of Ireland or abroad. Accusations of Genocide, which have been made in recent years probably overstate the case, but few would have put much past Sir Arthur Chichester, active then, and eventually Lord Deputy. Lord Mountjoy was probably a soft voice for moderation at that time, and it was to him that Hugh O'Neill, who had earlier been driven from Dungannon, submitted in March 1603, receiving terms which were generous given the trouble he had caused the victors in the struggle. He returned to Dungannon and began to rebuild his estates. Hugh Roe O'Donnell had gone from Kinsale to Spain seeking renewed support, but survived less than a year, dying just short of his 30th birthday, possibly poisoned by an English agent. The last act in the Irish struggle took place in 1607, when Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and many of his erstwhile supporters left Ireland for Spain never to return, the 'Flight of the Earls'; perhaps Hugh O'Neill hoped to reawaken Irish resistance with Spanish support, but after Mountjoy's death in 1606 he had been exposed to an English hierarchy seeking to overturn the terms of his submission. I have given considerable space to the Irish Dimension, because it seems to me that a strong commitment there offered Spain its best chance of decisive victory in the Armada War; a far better option than over ambitious plans to invade England.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

In April 1600, Archduke Albert, the governor of the Spanish Netherlands, opened secret negotiations with England for a settlement which led to a conference at Boulogne. The talks soon collapsed, mainly because of Spanish intransigence, and Dutch hostility, though channels were kept open between the Archduke and England. However, the game changer was the comparatively smooth accession of King James VI of Scotland after the death of Queen Elizabeth in March 1603. With the possible exception of Robert Walpole, he was the most pacific leader that Scotland, England and Britain has had in the past 4 centuries; he saw war as a failure of statecraft and an evil to be avoided at almost any cost, excepting only a direct threat to the integrity of his kingdoms. Perhaps the Anglo-Spanish war had been the latter, but he no longer thought it was, and by this time

Spanish hopes of a decisive military victory in the Low Countries, or a successful invasion of England or even Ireland were relatively remote. King Philip III of Spain, who had also inherited the war welcomed the offer of negotiations. The main concern of the Spanish government was to reduce or ideally stop English aid to the Dutch United Provinces, which they blamed for the steady deterioration in their military situation in the Netherlands since the mid-1580s. They underestimated the role of the Dutch themselves, especially after 1590 under the leadership of Prince Maurice, and were soon to have that brought home to them.

After the preliminaries normal at that time, negotiations began in London in May 1604. The importance attached to the talks by King James is demonstrated by his choice of negotiating team;

Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, Secretary of State, James I's leading minister;

Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, 1st Earl of Devonshire, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland;

Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset, Lord Treasurer;

Henry Howard, 1st Earl of Northampton, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports;

Charles Howard, 1st Earl of Nottingham, Lord High Admiral.

The delegations from Madrid and Brussels were of similarly high status, though I omit the names save the leader, Juan Fernández de Velasco, 5th Duke of Frías, Constable of Castile, as they would have little significance for most readers.

The terms of the Treaty of London signed in August 1604 were a return to the status quo ante bellum of 1585, and largely seemed to favour Spain, though they included a renunciation by that country of any intention to restore the Church of Rome in England. Otherwise, there was to be an end to English disruption of Spanish trading across the Atlantic, and with its colonies; the English Channel was to be opened to Spanish shipping, and there was to be an end to English intervention in the Netherland. Most extraordinarily, ships of both countries, merchants or warships, were permitted to use the mainland sea ports of the other party for refit, shelter or to buy provisions, with fleets of less than 8 ships not even having to ask for permission; this amounted to allowing Spanish bases in England from which their war against the Dutch could be fought. Many in England thought the terms humiliating, though peace was generally welcomed, but disquiet was tempered when it was realised that King James was placing no bar on the recruitment of English and Scottish soldiers by the Dutch army, and allowing privateers to fly the Dutch flag, though bizarrely they had to run the gauntlet past Spanish warships based in English ports. The Spaniards thought they had gained a victor's peace, and assumed that the whole of the Netherlands would soon be brought to heel, especially as they had unearthed another great general in Ambrogio Spinola. They certainly reversed some of the losses of the previous decade in the next few years, threatening a major advance north of the great rivers, and re-capturing Ostend, Groenlo, and a string of other fortified towns. However, it was clear that there were limits to what could be achieved even by a great general, given the resolve of the Dutch, and another financial crisis forced the Spanish government to negotiate and a 12-year truce was agreed in August 1609. The wording of the agreement was ambiguous, so it almost but not quite conferred Spanish diplomatic recognition on the United Provinces, but no-one, beyond some in Spain and its retained part of the Netherlands, doubted that an independent country had been born. Fighting was to resume in the 1620s, and once again England (and Scotland) became involved, but the war had become territorial concerning frontiers, more than existential, though Spinola still harboured great ambitions.

King James had achieved a key ambition, in restoring peace, and for the remainder of his reign which lasted until 1625, he kept things that way. His kingdoms were never drawn into the Thirty Years War, even when his daughter, Elizabeth, 'the Winter Queen' and her husband lost their possessions of Bohemia and the Palatinate, though he did not interfere when droves of his subjects went there to fight for the countries which were involved. A much under-rated King who ruled turbulent countries for almost 40 years, historians have focussed too much on distasteful personal habits and quirky beliefs, and not enough on a sure touch on policy matters. In general, he chose his advisors well, with a few aberrations as regards personable young men, and in total contrast to his son, King Charles I seemed to know instinctively just how far he could proceed with an unpopular design before retreating. Given that the contemporary King of Spain, Philip III, was generally seen as weak, and had plenty of his own problems to address, it is no surprise that England and Spain remained at peace, until both their Kings had died in 1625, though the writing was on the wall for another clash by then.

Readers of the preceding account may be taken aback when informed of how much seemed to go wrong for both combatants; this should be seen as a measure of just how difficult it was to wage war successfully in the pre-modern era, especially when operations involved co-operation between land and sea forces. The criticisms of English operations will surprise any who think the Armada War was an unalloyed triumph. However, any balanced overview of the 19-year struggle, confirms that although the terms of the Treaty of London were not for England a victor's peace, the war as a whole can indeed be accounted a triumph for England, her Queen, her government, and her armed forces. Viewing the material mis-match between the warring nations, whether measured by geography, population, size of armed forces, capable military leaders and above all by financial clout, the achievement of forcing a draw after a 2 decade-long struggle was remarkable. More than that, England had played a critical role in establishing another Protestant nation in North-West Europe, the United Provinces, and perhaps tipped the balance in favour of the religious moderate, King Henri IV in France, though the resurgence he began, caused plenty problems for England and then Britain in the future. Ireland was stabilised, for a while at least, and the previously fraught relationship with Scotland was calmed to the extent that succession by the Scottish King to the English throne became feasible, a key step leading to the formation of Great Britain. Like all leaders, Queen Elizabeth had faults and made mistakes and misjudgements, but she deserves her stature as an icon of English History, and in this day and age, no-one should forget that as a woman there were obstacles, in her path that previous rulers did not have to surmount.

3. Wars of the 17th Century

There were 3 wars fought between England and Spain in the 17th century; the Jacobean peace was broken by the War of 1625 – 1630, before England became distracted by internal affairs during the troubled lead-up to the Civil Wars of the 1640s and early 1650s. Then the Cromwellian War of 1654 – 1660 seemed to result from a desire by the Lord Protector to continue fighting, with the near arbitrary choice of Spain as an adversary. Immediately after the Restoration of King Charles II England became involved in the Portuguese Restoration War, between 1662 and 1668. A complicated situation arose after France and England attacked the Dutch United Provinces in March 1672; there were initial French successes on land, gained by their 3 great generals, Condé, Turenne, and Luxemburg, but their progress was blocked by extensive deliberate flooding, and the Dutch more than held their own at sea against combined Anglo-French fleets. Opposition to the war grew in England, as details emerged of provisions for Catholic toleration and more, contained in the secret Treaty of Dover of 1670, agreed between Kings Louis XIV and Charles II to create the Anglo-French alliance. By autumn of 1673, the war had reached stalemate, and the Dutch signed a treaty with Spain, and the Empire, to oppose France. This would have pitched Spain against England, an outcome neither country desired, and in England the prospect increased hostility to the French alliance in Parliament and in the country at large. King Louis became concerned that an English government actively hostile to France might emerge and released King Charles from the Treaty of Dover, allowing England to agree the Treaty of Westminster with the United Provinces in February 1674. Only then did Spain declare war on France, so this was one potential conflict which does not need attention here. There were no major difficulties between the countries during the remainder of the 17th century and they became allies during the War of the Treaty of Augsburg in the 1690s, before dynastic changes in both countries led to a new period of hostility in the early 18th century.

3.1 The War of 1625 – 1630

(i) Causes

Both governments had made considerable efforts to remain at peace, following the Treaty of London. Into this category fell the execution of the ageing Sir Walter Raleigh in 1618, which did nothing for the popularity of King James, but did assuage Spanish wrath. The King disliked the Devonian, but had spared him from the axe, for his part in the failed 'Main Plot', which aimed at supplanting King James, with Arabella Stuart in 1603. Raleigh was freed from the Tower after 14 years of imprisonment, and at the age of 65, given the task of leading an expedition to the River Orinoco in Spanish America, to search for 'El Dorado', or at least a source of precious metal. The King had consented to the project because he needed money, and may have intended answering any Spanish protests with an apology and pledge to stop any future expedition. However, without authorisation, one of Raleigh's lieutenants sacked a Spanish fort, killing many defenders, so making it certain that the Spanish would demand tangible redress. Raleigh knew that only a brilliant outcome would save him, but the expedition failed to deliver, and his fate was sealed.

Events in Germany, which triggered the 30-Years War, were a clash of religions, so inevitably placed England and Spain in opposing camps. The Hapsburg Emperor was by custom King of Bohemia, but when Ferdinand II succeeded to the Austrian lands, and was elected Emperor in 1619, the mainly Protestant Bohemian aristocracy conferred the crown on Frederic, Elector of Palatine. King James tried unsuccessfully to persuade his son-in-law to refuse, warning him that he could expect no official help from England, though he later facilitated the recruitment of volunteers, and as a result a force of 2000 infantry was despatched to the Palatine in July 1620, under the command of Sir Horace Vere, younger brother of Queen Elizabeth's general, Sir Francis. On the other hand, Prince Maurice, by then in complete control of the United Provinces, exerted all his influence to persuade Frederic to accept the Bohemian offer, and supplied Dutch soldiers to a Protestant army commanded by Count Mansfeld.

The issue was decided by the Battle of the White Mountain, fought beside Prague in November 1620, which resulted in a crushing victory for the Imperialist army led by Count Tilly. Frederic and his wife Elizabeth Stuart, henceforth known as the 'winter queen', had to flee from Prague in early 1621, after a reign of a few months. Tilly, with assistance from a Spanish contingent, then moved to occupy the Palatine and won a series of battles, against forces from North German Protestant states, backed by Dutch soldiers. Vere tried to link his English volunteers with the Protestant army but was prevented from reaching them, and instead used his force to garrison 3 fortified towns in the Palatinate, Mannheim, Frankenthau and Heidelberg. They hoped for eventual relief by the Protestant army, but Tilly's victories destroyed that possibility. King James called a Parliament, the first in 7 years, in 1621 to get money to fund a relieving force, but Parliament would only vote subsidies in return for approval of measures aimed at reducing the King's prerogative powers, so the initiative collapsed. Mannheim and Heidelberg held out until September 1622, and Frankenthau until April 1623, but their surrender removed Frederic's foothold in the Palatinate; his Electoral rights were transferred to Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria, at the Diet of Regensburg, early in 1623. Although Spanish and English soldiers had been on opposing sides in these events, neither country chose to regard that as grounds for war.

The 12-year truce between Spain and the United Provinces, had been accepted by the former as necessary for financial reasons, associated with overstretch. The major beneficiary had been the United Provinces which had

developed world-wide trading routes, and managed to commandeer much of the carrying trade in Spanish waters. As a result, Dutch financial institutions had assumed a leading role serving states and businesses across Europe, while the tax take had increased sufficiently to fund an enlarged army and powerful navy. The Dutch used their growing power to oppose Spanish interests wherever possible, as in Germany, or by allying with enemies of Spain, like Venice, in the Mediterranean. Nonetheless, the Spanish government was resigned to extending the truce in 1621, but wished to modify the terms; for example, by freeing up sea routes to Antwerp. Their attitude was governed in part by Archduke Albert and his wife, Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, once a Roman Catholic claimant to the thrones of both France and England, but by then a joint-sovereign of the Spanish Netherlands. Their rule from Brussels had already done much to consolidate the southern provinces into the single entity, which eventually became Belgium, and they feared the disruption of renewed warfare. The original Spanish proposals were rejected out of hand by the Dutch in 1619, but negotiations continued, mainly involving the Brussels government, rather than that in Madrid.

No agreement was reached, so the '80-years War' restarted. Inevitably, pressure for intervention rose in England, but for 4 years involvement was confined to the supply of volunteers recruited into the Dutch army, just as in the early stages of the Dutch Revolt. The Spanish army under the Genoese commander Ambrogio Spinola, took the initiative, and captured the fortresses of Jülich, and Steenberg in Brabant, before laying siege to the important fortress town of Bergen-op-Zoom. As happened quite frequently in this era, Spinola's besieging army of 18,000 melted away through disease and desertion and he had to lift the siege after a few months. The failure prompted a change in Spanish strategy; their army in Flanders went over to the defensive, though still part of a land blockade which stretched into Germany. At the same time the Spaniards imposed a kind of blockade by sea, by such measures as obstructing Dutch access to the Mediterranean, interfering with Dutch shipping close to home and the Dutch fishing fleet, using warships based in Dunkirk. Other measures included an embargo on supply of Spanish salt, used to preserve fish. All activity did not cease on the southern frontier of the United Provinces, and Spinola embarked on a siege of the important fortress of Breda in 1625. There can be little doubt that Spain had the better of things in the early 1620s, though the threat was to the prosperity rather than the existence of the United Provinces.

The first proposal for a marriage between the future King Charles I, and the Infanta Anna Maria of Spain had come from the Spanish Ambassador to London in 1514; the prince was only 14 and the princess, 8 years old, so there was no need for urgency and discussions dragged on. King James was amenable, since he saw the marriage as playing into his desire to bridge the Protestant/ Roman Catholic divide, in the cause of peace. There was also the prospect of a large Spanish dowry, which would lessen his dependence on fractious Parliaments. However, news of the negotiations caused uproar in England, partly because Spain was still seen as 'the enemy', although the main concern was that such a marriage would lead to a reduction of the restraints on English Roman Catholics. The marriage became unlikely when the Infanta was betrothed to Archduke John-Charles, heir to the Emperor, but the archduke's death in 1618, revived the project. Few in Spain doubted that without English intervention, the Dutch Revolt would have been crushed almost 40 years earlier, so the ending of the truce provided them with an incentive to reinvigorate marriage negotiations. However, difficulties accumulated, including the hostile attitude of the Parliament called by King James in 1621, to fund intervention in Germany, and Papal reluctance to approve the marriage. By this time, George Villiers, soon to be Duke of Buckingham, the favourite of King James, held great influence over the 21-year old heir, Prince Charles, and

they decided to pay a clandestine visit to Madrid, in the hope that Charles would be able to meet the Infanta, and even bring her back to England for a marriage ceremony. In March 1622, having travelled incognito, the Prince and Villiers arrived in Madrid to general amazement, and tried to negotiate a marriage treaty; they made little progress, and departed in October without the prospective bride.

Back in London, Charles and Buckingham decided to change tack completely, and claimed that Charles had been slighted by the Spanish government, who in turn went as far as to seek Buckingham's execution for his conduct in Madrid. There was no chance of that, and he set about overturning the King's unpopular policy of friendship with Spain, by proposing a French marriage. An agreement was reached, regardless of the fact that the marriage to a French Roman Catholic princess, Henrietta Maria, which actually took place just after the accession of King Charles I in May 1625, was certain to be almost as unpopular in England as the Spanish match. Worse, the agreement committed England to supply ships to assist in a French assault on the Huguenot stronghold of La Rochelle, though in the event the ships were crewed by Frenchmen. Buckingham persuaded Parliament to vote large war subsidies in 1624, but the ailing King, though willing to aid an effort to regain the Palatine for his son-in-law, still resisted declaring war on Spain. His death in March 1625, conceivably poisoned by Buckingham, paved the way for war to be declared in November 1625, though hostilities had begun some months earlier.

(ii) The Course of the War

The Protestant general, Count Mansfeld spent much of 1624 in London, trying to obtain a sizeable contingent to aid in an attempt to recover the Palatine. By early 1625 his efforts had borne fruit, and 7000 English soldiers were ready to leave from Dover for the Netherlands; others were dispatched from Scotland. However, a major siege of the Dutch fortress of Breda was ongoing, and inevitably the English force was switched to take part in attempts at relief. Spinola had assembled a massive army of at least 50000 to invest Breda, and it proved more than capable of fighting off the Dutch/English army, and imposing heavy losses on them. The fortress surrendered in June 1625, and reinforced previous successes of Roman Catholic states in the Thirty Years War. Buckingham had not given up on the Palatine, and made strenuous efforts over the next 2 years to get France to invade Germany. His failure of persuasion was a factor in Buckingham's switch from being an ally of France to a foe. However he was able to organise a Dutch/English contingent which was put together under the command of Sir Charles Morgan, a general in the Dutch service. It was sent to join King Christian of Denmark who had entered the war on the Protestant side, only to suffer a major defeat by Count Tilly and his Imperialist army at the Battle of Lutter in August 1626. Morgan's force of around 5000 soldiers, unpaid and mutinous, arrived in Germany in March 1627 but achieved little, before being locked up by the Imperialist army in the Hanseatic town of Stadt in September of that year. Unrelieved, they held out until April 1628, but were then returned to the Netherlands. Morgan went to Denmark with another Dutch/English force of similar size in 1629, but could do little in the face of collapsing Danish resistance; King Christian agreed a truce with the Tilly, which presaged a second return to the Netherlands, where Morgan, his reputation seemingly undamaged, took up a Dutch command.

Returning to the situation in the Netherlands, the Dutch response to failure was remarkable, remembering that their population scarcely exceeded 1½ million, and that they had large commitments at sea; they set their army strength at 61,670 infantry and 5,853 cavalry, albeit that almost 20,000 were English and Scottish soldiers.

There were 4 English regiments that King Charles had raised, and a 5th Scottish regiment. A part of this force was sent to the Spanish held city of Oldenzaal which was captured after a 10-day bombardment in the summer of 1626, and in the next year, the English contingent under the command of Edward Cecil contributed to the capture of Groenlo by Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, who had taken over as Stadtholder after the death of Prince Maurice in 1625. The next Dutch target was 's-Hertogenbosch, which was besieged by Frederick Henry's army of 28,000 men which included the English regiments numbering 9000 all commanded by Sir Horace Vere, and the Scottish regiment of 5000. The siege took place between April and September 1629, and serious attempts at relief had to be fought off, before the defenders capitulated. These Dutch successes were to continue, aided by the departure a year earlier of the great Spanish/Italian general Spinola to take command in Italy where Spain was involved in another war over the succession to the Duke of Mantua. 's-Hertogenbosch saw the last formal involvement of English and Scottish forces, as peace was re-established between England and Spain soon afterwards, but it cannot have been lost on the latter that just as 40 years earlier the injection of English (and Scottish) forces into the Dutch army, had reversed the course of the struggle. Many individuals continued to fight as volunteers, and it was here that some of the great names of the Civil War, like Thomas Fairfax and George Monck acquired experience of war.

Rightly, or wrongly I have formed the impression that George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham had less interest in events in the Netherlands than elsewhere, but he had played a major part in starting the war, and he directed other English involvements until his assassination in 1628, so I shall give a little detail about his career. He was born into a family of minor gentry in 1592, but his ambitious mother had him educated with a role as courtier very much in mind. He reached the King's presence in 1614, at a time when the fortunes of a previous favourite, Robert Kerr, Earl of Somerset were waning. Probably, support from a Court faction opposed to Kerr was of some help, but the King quickly became captivated by the personable young man; his rise to the top of Court hierarchy as Master of the Horse took only 2 years. He was knighted in 1615, and by 1623 he was the only non-Royal Duke in the land, and as Lord Admiral began to dominate foreign and military policy. His influence extended widely in government and to Ireland if not Scotland, and most unusually he was as highly regarded by the Duke of York, soon to be King Charles I, as by King James, though the relationship was fundamentally different. There have been many accounts of the latter, which was probably physical to some degree, but to what extent no-one really knows. Buckingham did marry Lady Katherine Manners, daughter of the 6th Earl of Rutland in 1620, against the wishes of the King and the bride's father, and they had 4 children, but that proves nothing. However, it is important to recognise that the exercise of his Kingship mattered more to James than anything else, so Buckingham would not have been given wide responsibilities, if he had not been at least competent. The fact that he had gained no military experience before 1625, was one reason for the failure as a war minister that I am about to document, and he may have lacked qualities necessary for success in that role, but he certainly was not talentless.

Buckingham's grand plan for 1625 was predictable enough, an assault on Cadiz. The expedition, which included a Dutch contingent amongst 100 ships and 15000 soldiers and sailors, was not assembled easily, but set off from Plymouth in October 1625. Inevitably, storms were encountered which delayed the passage to Spanish waters. After Buckingham chose not to sail, the command was bestowed on Sir Edward Cecil, 1st Viscount Wimbledon, a soldier who had performed well in the Netherlands but had little experience at sea. The fleet entered the Bay of Cadiz at the beginning of November; soldiers were landed and a couple of outlying forts

were captured. However, Spanish ships were moved to safe anchorages without interference, and it became clear that the invading army had no chance of taking the heavily fortified town, having lost any element of surprise. Cecil re-embarked most of his men, and following a common pattern after failure to achieve a main objective, cruised for a while off the Spanish coast in the hope of intercepting probably mythical treasure ships. The condition of his ships forced him to return in December 1625. It was reckoned that the expedition had cost c£250000, and the losses, as usual mainly caused by storms and sickness were severe, amounting to more than half the ships and men.

Buckingham would not have expected to escape blame, and his policies suffered another hammer-blow when news of an alliance between France and Spain in February 1626 leaked out. The Parliament of 1626 which could have made good some of the losses, set about impeaching Buckingham, so was dissolved by the King. Buckingham had been completely outmanoeuvred by Cardinal Richelieu who had obtained English help against Huguenot resistance on false pretences, and then allied with England's adversary. The result was an Anglo-French war from 1627, in which England lent support to Huguenot revolts, and probably played a part in inciting them. Buckingham continued his record of military failure with a failed attack on the French coastal town of St.-Martin-de-Ré, and later failed attempts to succour the Huguenot fortress of La Rochelle. These events are not relevant to this account, except that they provided the backdrop for Buckingham's assassination by a disaffected Protestant officer, John Felton, in August 1628. Richelieu brought to an end Huguenot resistance by signing a not ungenerous agreement, the Peace of Alès, which continued most Protestant protections conferred by King Henri IV. Any avenue for success for England had been closed off, and the prime advocate of the Anglo-French War, Buckingham, was dead, so the Peace of Susa, a 'no change' treaty, was easily agreed in April 1629.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

By 1629, neither party in the Anglo-Spanish War wanted it to continue. As already mentioned, Spain had embarked on a new war in Italy concerning the succession in the Duchy of Mantua, and needing to draw resources from the Netherlands, was very keen to reduce English involvement there. England's main problem was the growing strife between King and Parliament, which in spite of Royal cash-raising expedients, was making it almost impossible for the government to fund a war. Added to this was a succession of failures which had destroyed confidence in England's ability to land an effective blow, except in the Netherlands. Even these successes were to the benefit of the United Provinces, not England, and there was concern that the Dutch state was already too strong a competitor in matters commercial and maritime. So another 'no change' treaty was agreed between Spain, England and Scotland, at Madrid in November 1629 and came into force early in 1630; as things turned out the nations would not confront each other formally in the next quarter of a century.

The war certainly damaged Spanish interests, though in fairness it had not come about at their behest, but it created more serious concerns for England. King James had just about kept a lid on conflicts between himself and Parliament, in large part because he had avoided wars which would have made him reliant on Parliamentary subsidies. King James only called 4 Parliaments in his whole reign, though those of 1621 and 1624 were in the lead-up to this war; 3 more were summoned before 1629 by his son, King Charles I. In this period Parliament, by refusing funds without concurrent agreement on measures to enhance its power at the expense of the King, made it impossible for monarchs to rule in the traditional fashion. Many would argue that the large step away from absolutism was a very good thing, but the immediate consequences were a decade of rule without

Parliaments, Civil War, and the dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell. The peace treaties withdrew England, though not of course English and Scottish soldiers who served in great numbers in the contending armies, from the Thirty Years War. On the other hand, Spain and France remained heavily involved in the continental struggle and thereafter suffered a mini-break-up of the state in the former case, and the debilitating Fronde revolts in the latter. King James was wise before his time in recognising that wars were risky enterprises, only justifiable if state survival was at stake. The Anglo-Spanish War of 1625 -1629, is often seen as nothing more than an over-reaction to a snub, but wider consequences flowed from it.

3.2 The Cromwellian War of 1655-1660

(i) Causes

For most of the wars considered in this account, the causes can be tracked back for some time, often relating to a previous conflict. The Cromwellian War was totally different in that it arose out of a situation in which the regime felt compelled to maintain a navy and army of wartime strength, the former to protect itself from external Royalist threats, particularly those originating in France, where Charles Stuart was based until 1656, the latter a hangover from the Civil War. There had been some disbandment of the triumphant army, but anything further in that line was likely to provoke a military uprising. Scotland had been crushed, and turned into an English colony, but the regime rightly assumed that only military occupation would maintain that state of affairs. The problem for the Republic which had taken over from the monarchy was the cost; taxation was at levels greater than King Charles would have dared to contemplate, but the sums raised were still insufficient. The Republic had attempted to square the circle by engineering the 1st Anglo-Dutch War, but although waged successfully in purely military terms, it was insufficiently profitable to offset damage to trade, never mind to solve the underlying problem. Cromwell overthrew the Republican government in 1653, and became Lord Protector towards the end of the year. He brought the Anglo-Dutch War to an end in April 1654, imposing a condition that no member of the Orange family should be appointed Stadtholder (military leader) in the future, but this, in a secret codicil, was his only demand.

Peace was cheaper than unprofitable war, so the Protector's government felt itself able to reduce taxes, but it was as far as ever from balancing the books. The cost of 15 cavalry regiments, 18 regiments of foot, 35 ships and 5000 seamen was given in December 1654 as £2,626,537 per annum, while the annual revenue, greatly increased as it was, amounted to £1,586,175, leaving a deficit equivalent to a year's taxes. Parliament proposed an overall annual grant of £1,210,000 in autumn 1654 for the military establishment and £200,000 for the civil one. Cromwell concluded that the gap could only be bridged by fighting. The choice of adversary had to be either France or Spain, and although there had been recent low-key clashes with the former, the latter seemed the obvious target, given historical antipathy, greater potential for financial gain, and the perception that it was a stronger bastion of Roman Catholicism; the last aspect mattering greatly to Cromwell, and even more to many of his supporters who were members of extreme Protestant sects. Discussions on how a war with Spain might be waged profitably began in early 1654, but no decision was reached until late in the year. Then it was decided to mount the expedition to Spanish America known as the Western Design, but it was thought that a wider war was not likely to follow immediately because of other Spanish commitments.

France and Spain were fighting in the Spanish Netherlands, a legacy of the Thirty Years War. Spain had benefitted in 1653, when as part of the fall-out from the Fronde revolts, the Prince of Condé had taken his talents and supporters over to the Spanish side; for the next few years, 2 great generals, Condé and Turenne, the commander of the French army, contended against each other, without forcing a decisive advantage. It was clear to both sides that addition of a sizeable contingent from the respected English army would probably tilt the balance. In 1655, the Prince sent his young cousin, the Count of Boutteville, (the future Duke of Luxemburg, scourge of English and Dutch armies), to London with the Spanish offer but the French government led by Cardinal Mazarin won out by promising Dunkirk, albeit that Cromwell's army would have to help to capture the port from the Spaniards. In October 1655, the terms of the Anglo-French Alliance were agreed between

Cromwell and Mazarin, and this was effectively a declaration of war against Spain, though hostilities had begun months earlier. The arrangement had the additional advantage for Cromwell that it would constrain French support for the exiled Stuarts, and indeed one immediate result was the departure of James, Duke of York, from the army of Turenne.

(ii) The Course of the War

Cromwell was undoubtedly an exceptional general, but his understanding of naval and amphibious operations was limited. During planning of his Western Design, targets shifted between Santo Domingo on the island of Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, Havana or Cartagena, and sometimes included all of them, with the aim of providing bases for English ships which would divert the Spanish output of precious metals from South American mines, and solve England's financial problems. Command of the expedition was given to General Robert Venables, with Admiral Sir William Penn in charge of the naval contingent of 34 ships; both had good prior records during the Civil Wars and afterwards. Strangely, their authority was constrained by two Civil Commissioners whom Cromwell had tasked with ensuring their loyalty, perhaps mainly because of doubts about Penn. The 13,000 troops were not the best available but taken from those thought weak, or politically unreliable. Add in typical deficiencies in equipment and supplies, and at least in hindsight, it seems that the chances of success were hardly maximised.

The fleet arrived off Hispaniola in April 1655, and c5000 soldiers were landed, but they were left with a thirty mile march to Santo Domingo. What happened next was wholly unforeseen, because after an admittedly difficult trek lasting for 4 days, they were routed in a series of encounters by a Spanish force, at most 2500 strong, and made up of militia as well as regular soldiers. The fleet had bombarded Santo Domingo without causing great damage, though they may have been conserving powder for another attack backing the expected land assault. Instead, they had to re-embark the surviving English soldiers, who had probably lost 1000 of their number. Admiral Penn thought it only a setback, but he could not convince Venables to try again; instead, the general decided to try to compensate for failure by capturing Jamaica, beginning with the fortified centre, Santiago de la Vega. This was accomplished with little difficulty in May 1655, after an army of 7000 had been landed, but the Spanish withdrew into the interior and began a guerrilla campaign of long duration. Penn and then Venables left for London, to try to explain away the failure on Hispaniola, but both were imprisoned in the Tower of London in the autumn of 1655. They were freed after a month or so but cashiered, though Penn was rehabilitated after the Restoration and held commands in the Wars against the Dutch before his death in 1670. His son founded Pennsylvania, but the colony was actually named for the admiral. Cromwell claimed to see the overall failure as by the will of God, but certainly learned a lesson, as no more expeditions were despatched to the Caribbean, or elsewhere in South America, in his lifetime.

As for Jamaica, the British occupiers suffered losses from sickness, and the Spaniards fed in some reinforcements, so fighting continued, with the outcome uncertain. Jamaica remained in English hands, largely because a very capable governor, Edward D'Oyley, inflicted heavy defeats on the Spanish forces in the Battles of Ocho Rios and Rio Nuevo in 1657 and 1658 respectively, and in 1670 English possession was recognised by the Treaty of Madrid. The colony paid its way at first by the rather dubious means of privateering, and Port Royal became the centre of that activity, but later, its suitability for growing sugar made it of great value to England and later Great Britain. As an afterword, some authors have suggested that the humiliating defeat on

Hispaniola destroyed the reputation of the English army, built up during the preceding decade, but that is surely an exaggeration, given the continuing efforts of France and Spain to gain support during the succeeding months.

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Any English war against Spain was bound to require a naval effort in European waters, if it was to have impact, and it can be argued that the Cromwellian navy enjoyed almost unparalleled consistent success, at least as regards major actions. The record might have been even more impressive if Robert Blake, returning from a campaign against the Barbary states of North Africa, had felt confident enough of the status of Anglo/Spanish relations, to attack a Spanish fleet which he encountered off Cape St. Vincent in August 1655. Instead, he sailed back to England, and was sent to Spanish waters early the next year, arriving off Cadiz with a fleet of 40 ships in April. He established a base from which to mount a blockade in Lisbon, (then in a state of revolt against Spanish control), but left a small squadron of 8 ships off Cadiz, under the command of Richard Stayner. By then a senior captain, this officer born in 1625 had risen through the ranks of the Parliamentary navy, and had continued to attract favourable notice during the 1st Anglo/Dutch War. The Spanish government knowing that Blake had left the scene, but not that he had left a detachment, decided to bring a Treasure Fleet into Cadiz. Though Stayner's own ships had been dispersed by a storm, he attacked with the three he had in company, fortunately the strongest. The English ships sank 3 and captured 2 of their adversaries and are reckoned to have taken goods and silver worth £600000, and although the English government saw less of that than they might have hoped, the Spanish losses were far greater as a result of the sinkings as well as the captures.

A couple of months earlier, a raid on Malaga had resulted in the destruction of 9 ships, and temporarily wrecked the defences of the town. Blake was sent back to Cadiz in 1657, with a fleet of 23 ships but he was given over-ambitious objectives, which included the capture of Gibraltar, which was not actually attempted. In April, he got news that a Spanish Treasure Fleet had been disabled by storms, and had taken refuge at Santa Cruz in the Canary Islands, and took his fleet there. Blake was unwell, and reluctant to attack ships anchored close inshore protected by fortress guns. However he was persuaded to make the attempt, and Stayner, whom we can imagine to have been the leading protagonist of attack, led 12 ships into the harbour, covered by the rest of fleet which engaged the land-based guns. Success was complete; there were 17 Spanish ships, and 12 were burnt or sunk, and 5 were taken as prizes, though Blake insisted on their destruction also. The only disappointment was the fact that the Spanish ships had been able to unload their cargoes of treasure, so nothing could be done to ease Cromwell's financial woes, but the Spanish were left with the problem of getting the valuable cargoes to mainland Spain where they could be utilised. The English ships sustained much damage, but none was disabled and they returned to Cadiz to continue the blockade until recalled in June. Blake did not reach England, dying on board ship in August 1657. His great career, which involved conversion from an army colonel, to an admiral (or as he was termed a General at Sea) has been well recorded, and full credit has been given to him for his exploits. One consequence is that Stayner, who by his controlled aggression was at least as responsible for the successes of this war, has been totally forgotten, except by a few naval historians. He died aged 37 in 1662, after assisting in the capture of Tangier, so was denied the chance to acquire renown in the later Anglo-Dutch Wars.

The lack of any more confrontations in Spanish waters can be put down to a number of factors. The United Provinces and Denmark formed a pact which threatened to control the trade in Scandinavian naval stores,

ranging from masts to pitch. This in part prompted a Swedish attack on Denmark which was initially successful, but resulted in their army being stranded by a Dutch fleet. An English fleet was sent to their relief; there was no fighting and an agreement was reached which gave Sweden partial control of the waters through which their exports had to pass, the Skagerrak and Kattegat of school geography lessons. This diversion of resources added to Cromwell's worsening financial situation, and made it impossible to send another fleet to distant waters, but naval ships were to be employed nearer to home. The one great success for Spain during this war was achieved by their privateers sailing out of Dunkirk; by then they had nothing to fear from the Dutch, and Rodgers suggests that they had captured 2000 English merchant ships by 1658, deepening Cromwell's financial problems, and creating growing anger against the government's apparent failure to provide any remedy. In fact they soon did, and I shall now turn to that aspect of the war.

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The treaty of alliance between England and France, agreed in late 1655, had awarded Dunkirk to England in return for assistance in capturing the fortified port. Thanks mainly to Condé's skilful conduct of the campaign in Flanders, Marshal Turenne in command of the French army was unable to begin the siege of Dunkirk until May 1658. In June, the Spanish army with Condé's contingent, but against its commander's advice, moved up to fight the battle which would decide Dunkirk's fate, and as it transpired, the outcome of the war between France and Spain. They were reasonably well matched in numbers; the royal army of France had 6000 cavalry and 4000 foot augmented by an English detachment of just over 5000 foot commanded by Sir William Lockhart, while the Spanish army and Condé may have had more cavalry, 8000 but only 6000 infantry. The battle was fought on a fairly narrow front, stretching inland from the sea, just to the north of the fortress of Dunkirk on 14th June 1658. The bulk of the infantry were deployed between the sea and the dunes, the Spanish under Don Juan of Austria facing up to Turenne himself. There were substantial English contingents on each side. Lockhart's contribution to Turenne's force has already been mentioned, while the Spanish force was augmented by close to a thousand English royalists, including the Duke of York. Condé was stationed on the left of the allied line between the dunes and green fields, with Boutteville (Luxemburg) on the extreme left leading a large squadron of cavalry. The opposing French (government) cavalry was led by Francois de Crequi, Marquis of Marines, whose relationship with Turenne, although it was later to sour, was at that time similar to that of Luxemburg with Condé.

As often happened, there were some preliminary skirmishes which set the tone for the battle, and in this case they favoured Turenne. Knowing his habitual caution, Don Juan expected to be given time to deploy his guns which were slow in coming up, but perhaps galvanised by the exhortations, of Cardinal Mazarin who was in his camp, Turenne moved quickly to attack the Spaniards with his more numerous infantry. He also had support from the guns of an English fleet which was able to approach close to the beach because the tide was high, (Throughout the age of sail, battle-fleet broadsides produced a weight of shot far greater than from the cannons normally deployed in major land battles). The vigour of Turenne's assault was too much for Don Juan and his Spanish forces, they broke and many fled the battlefield. In order to have any chance of rescuing the situation, Condé would have had to achieve a comparable success on his side of the battlefield, but although he repulsed an initial French attack by Crequi, and together with Boutteville mounted a determined attack of his own, with the aim of breaking through to Dunkirk, a slow withdrawal of the right wing of the royal French army never

became a rout. Thus, when Turenne was able to bring his victorious soldiers over to his right, Condé found himself facing attack from almost every direction. Although he drew most of his force off in good order, there were alarms along the way, and Boutteville was amongst those captured. The Battle of the Dunes, was a classic pre-modern battle with victory going to the side, which managed to overwhelm one part of an adversary's army, and then use the superiority thus gained, to defeat the remainder; Napoleon regarded it as Turenne's masterpiece, though Condé also deserved credit for rescuing a good part of his army from a battle he did not want to fight. It was decisive in a number of ways. From then on it became a matter of when, rather than if, the long war between France and Spain would end on terms favouring the former, and the treaty was to bring Condé and his supporters back into the fold, paving the way for the domination of Europe by a united France, ruled by King Louis XIV. It was important from an English perspective as well; the Protectorate army's contribution was recognised as crucial, and any small damage done to the country's military reputation by events in the West Indies was certainly repaired. Dunkirk surrendered, and the French kept their word to their ally, so that the English flag again flew over a continental outpost, and Spanish privateers lost the base from which they had mauled English shipping.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

Oliver Cromwell died relatively suddenly in September 1658, and his son, Richard, was elected as his successor, adhering to a monarchical hereditary principal, when logic would have favoured his more able and experienced younger brother, Henry, then Lord Deputy in Ireland. By May 1659, Richard Cromwell had resigned and lived the remainder of a long life in virtual obscurity; he was simply not up to the task of providing the strong leadership required to hold the English polity together. There followed 18 months of chaos at the top of government, before King Charles II returned, and with England in this condition, and Spain, having finally made peace with France at the Treaty of the Pyrenees, in November 1659, to end 24 years of war unfavourably, with no appetite for further military engagement, the Anglo/Spanish war seemed to be petering out. Indeed, when it became clear that King Charles II was to be restored, Spain could turn to the Treaty of Brussels, agreed with the exiled King in 1656, which had provided Royalist English and Irish support in the Battle of the Dunes, and also promised an end to English colonisation in the Americas, the return of any territory captured by the forces of the Protectorate, and an end to support for Portuguese independence. Charles, having just been forced to break with France, was in no position to negotiate good terms, but there had been a quid pro quo for all his concessions, namely Spanish support for an attempt at his restoration. By 1660, Spain had done nothing in this direction, so the restored King felt entitled to abrogate the Treaty of Brussels, keeping the countries in a state of war, though apart from England's dispatch of more colonists westwards, no significant action was taken by either. Accordingly this war is best seen as pausing and then continuing under a different guise.

3.3 The Portuguese Restoration War 1662 – 1668/1670

(i) Causes

As indicated Spain and England remained in a kind of limbo between war and peace after 1660. A Portuguese revolution in 1640 had triggered the Portuguese Restoration War, also known as the Acclamation War, which continued in desultory fashion for the next 2 decades, with occasional flare-ups. Portugal enjoyed de facto independence in the period, because Spain which had acquired the country in 1580 by dynastic succession, was fully occupied in wars with France and latterly England; only one serious attempt at reconquest was attempted in 1644 and it failed. However, Spain's wars had been brought to an end, by the Treaty of the Pyrenees in the case of France, and what could almost be termed loss of interest by both parties in the Anglo/Spanish War. It was accepted that this would clear the way for Spain to make a serious effort to reclaim its erstwhile possession. Portugal had earlier tried and failed to negotiate an alliance with France, but was able to re-established good relations with England after the Restoration; this should not have been difficult because the Portuguese had made no effort to get on well with the Parliamentary and Protectorate governments, but King Charles was allied to Spain until he abrogated the Treaty of Brussels.

An alliance was sealed by a marriage for which negotiations had actually begun before the Civil War; they were resumed early in 1661, and the marriage between King Charles II and Catherine of Braganza, sister of the Portuguese King took place in May 1662, in spite of Spanish protests. Most people know that Catherine produced no heir, and experienced miscarriages, but in spite of attempts made to persuade the King to seek an annulment, especially at a time of crisis around 1680, he refused, and the marriage endured until his death. She remained in England for some years thereafter, and is known for interceding strongly but unsuccessfully, for the life of the King's illegitimate son, James Crofts, Duke of Monmouth, a Protestant icon, in spite of her Roman Catholicism. She returned to Portugal in 1692, and survived until 1705. The dowry was considerable; England secured Tangier and Bombay, was granted trading privileges in Brazil and the East Indies, and an assurance that religious and commercial freedom would be upheld in Portugal. There was also a payment of £300,000. In return, Portugal obtained the promise of English military and naval support, which was needed if she were to have a chance of establishing her independence from Spain. Queen Catherine was guaranteed liberty of worship, which was no small thing because it meant the installation of a Roman Catholic chapel staffed by priests in the King's palace of Whitehall. This aspect, and things thought to flow from it, were to cause the King considerable trouble throughout his reign, since it fed into a perception that he was overly sympathetic to Roman Catholicism.

There is a strong sense of déjà vu about the English (and Scottish) involvement in Portugal, because there are considerable similarities to the English involvement in the Netherlands, 75 years earlier. Once again, a hard-pressed army fighting for national independence from Spain was bolstered by a substantial contingent of soldiers, whose efforts contributed significantly to a reversal of fortunes. However, hostilities between England and Spain were limited to this campaign; there was no major effort by the Spaniards to widen the conflict. The Spanish attempt at reconquest began in 1662 with an invasion of Alentejo, a province in the south of the country containing the approaches to Lisbon, by 14000 soldiers led by Don John of Austria the Younger, the general who had lost the Battle of the Dunes, though he had been successful prior to that in Catalonia, Naples and even in the Spanish Netherlands. At any rate he was able to capture the fortified town of Evora, and in early 1663

looked well placed to move on Lisbon, 130km to the west. Meanwhile a British brigade (in composition, if still supplied by England) comprising 3 regiments and 3000 soldiers drawn from the former Protectorate army had arrived in Portugal in August 1662. Not the least reason for the English commitment had been the King's wish to reduce the number of disaffected ex-Model Army soldiers in England, and their reemployment became possible when the Portuguese agreed to pay them. There were problems at first between the different nationalities, not least because of the religious divide, but these were ironed out. The Portuguese general, the Count of Vila Flor, who had Friedrich Hermann von Schönberg as advisor and commander of the English contingent, was able to bring the Spanish army to battle at Ameixial on 8 June 1663. Both armies had approximately 17000 soldiers, with the Spaniards slightly greater in numbers; I have found little detail on how the battle was fought, but the result was a crushing victory for the Portuguese/English army, who inflicted c8000 casualties at a cost of c1000 to their own force. The town of Evora fell 2 weeks later, and the Spanish army such as it was by then, vacated Portugal.

The Spanish had to lick their wounds, but the Portuguese/ English kept up the pressure by capturing a frontier town Valencia de Alcántara, actually in Spanish Extremadura in June 1664. In the summer of 1665, the Spaniards made another major effort; an army of 23000 soldiers invaded Alentejo, this time taking the town of Vila Viçosa. The Portuguese general, António Luís de Meneses, decided to fight a defensive battle on a site of his own choosing, and his adversaries obliged by closing up to his position at Montes Claros on 17th June. The battle fought between armies roughly 23000 strong, produced an even more decisive victory for the Portuguese/ English force than the previous one. The Spaniards lost two thirds of their numbers killed or captured, though they did inflict 3000 casualties on their adversaries during an attritional contest. The English contribution in breaking through the Spanish lines was decisive, and Schonberg was in the thick of it having a horse shot under him. A little more should be said about a remarkable military figure, a German born in 1615, he served France for most of his career with distinction and in 1675 was appointed a Marshal of France. However he was a Protestant, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 ended his French career, and he moved back to Germany (Brandenburg). He then joined William of Orange's English invasion in 1688, was made an English duke, and took a prominent role in the Irish war which followed. He was shot during the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, at the age of 75, in the front line as usual, leading soldiers across the river. His successful interlude in Portugal was in answer to a request by King Charles with the permission if not the open approval of King Louis XIV. The Battle of Montes Claros proved decisive, though the war continued with sporadic raids across the frontier, until a truce was agreed in 1667.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

During the 1660s, there was a developing split in England between the King who saw resurgent France under the rule of his cousin King Louis XIV as a friend and ally, and a potential source of funds, should an increasingly recalcitrant Parliament refuse supply. Others in England saw the growing power of France as a looming danger, and were divided in their attitudes to the Dutch United Provinces, with whom 2 wars were to be fought in a decade. As regards Spain there was no desire for war; it was hoped that Spain would recognise Portuguese independence as unavoidable which would allow the English contingent to be withdrawn, and in the meantime England did nothing to widen the war. Talks between the two parties progressed slowly, not least because England became embroiled in the 2nd Anglo-Dutch War, but in May 1667 the Treaty of Madrid was signed by

the two countries, after negotiations headed by Edward Montagu, Earl of Sandwich, once a Cromwellian Admiral, but by then a luminary of the restored monarchical state. Apart from settling some of the issues which had arisen during the Cromwellian War, and giving England similar terms to those already enjoyed by France and the United Provinces as trading partners of Spain, the treaty committed England to negotiate a settlement between Spain and Portugal.

This was probably made more difficult by an alliance between Portugal and France directed against Spain, signed in March 1667, which allowed King Louis to press his new allies to demand harsh terms, in the hope that Spain would refuse them and consequently be weakened elsewhere. However, England with soldiers on the ground, and the negotiating skills of the Earl of Sandwich, had the whip hand, and the Treaty of Lisbon was agreed in February 1668, and at the same time Portugal abrogated her treaty with France. The most important term was the recognition by Spain that the House of Braganza were legitimate rulers of Spain, which necessitated the retrospective deligitimisation of the rule of King Philip II and his descendants. Otherwise, matters like adjustments of colonial boundaries, and reparations were also agreed. The English contingent in Portugal was disbanded, with some going to garrison the new possession, Tangier, and others returning to England; Schonberg resumed his career in the service of France.

However hostilities continued in the Caribbean, where Governor Thomas Modyford of Jamaica actively encouraged privateering by such as Christopher Myngs and Henry Morgan, and a guerrilla war was still being fought in the interior of the island. This led to the final step in the Iberian peace-making process, the Treaty of Madrid signed in July 1670 which was extremely favourable to England, in guaranteeing access and freedom from attack for merchant ships throughout the Caribbean, though there were to be plenty disputes in the future over contraband, and breaching of Spanish monopolies over trade in various commodities, which regrettably included slaves. Spain recognised English possession of Jamaica which meant an end to guerrilla warfare there, and in return England undertook to suppress privateering. There was nearly a hitch, when Henry Morgan, claiming dubiously not to have heard of the treaty, sacked Panama City in January 1671. England tendered apologies, and recalled Modyford and Morgan, who on arrival in London in 1672, were arrested. Some may have wondered if they were to suffer Walter Raleigh's fate, but they were soon released and Morgan was knighted in 1674 and sent back to Jamaica as Lieutenant-Governor, presumably obeying the notion of setting a thief to catching a thief, in the hope of reducing privateering.

English diplomacy in the late 1660s had certainly exploited Spanish weakness to the maximum, and there was a danger that treaties would have been overturned if there had been a Spanish resurgence, but that did not happen. Instead England's trade with Spain grew, and after avoiding a potential slide into hostilities in 1673, which could have resulted from the efforts of King Charles II to march in step with King Louis XIV, the countries became allies in the War of the League of Augsburg, after King William took the British thrones in 1689. However, there was a residue of ill-feeling in Spain from the treaties forced upon her in the 1660s, and it was to be revived and magnified during the War of the Spanish Succession.

4. Wars of the Early 18th Century

4.1 The War of the Spanish Succession

(i) Causes

Whenever King Charles II of Spain came to the throne in 1665, at the age of 5, his death was thought to be imminent. In fact, he lived until 1700 in spite of regular alarms, by which time, European kings and statesmen had been anticipating the consequences of his death, for more than 30 years. Europe was then divided into two armed camps, one dominated by France ruled by King Louis XIV, the other an alliance, which had varied in membership and level of involvement over the years, but most often included the Austrian Empire, the Dutch Republic, Spain and England. If the Spanish inheritance were to fall to a successor in sympathy with France, the balance of power would inevitably tilt in the latter's favour. Of course, the uncertainty might have been reduced if either of the Spanish King's two marriages had produced an heir, but no-one had ever thought that likely. It was assumed then and afterwards, that his infirmities and deformities were attributable to in-breeding, resulting from the marriages between Hapsburg cousins in his lineage, and impotence was expected to be another consequence. It needs to be said that some of these assumptions are now somewhat controversial, and there are also doubts as to whether King Charles was so weak-minded, as to be incapable of influencing decisions taken in his name. Be that as it may, Spain was effectively ruled from 1665 by a Regent, his mother, Queen Mariana, an Austrian Hapsburg, and the advisers selected by her, until shortly before her death in 1696, and his second wife, Maria Anna, from Neuberg in the north-west of the Empire, also held to a pro-Austrian policy almost until the King died. Alongside the Austrian faction, there was a French faction at the court in Madrid, which sometimes threatened to change the slant of policy, but it had to wait until the last few months of the King's life to achieve anything.

So, for almost 30 years while King Louis XIV of France tried to extend his realm to the north and east, Spain, with its possession, the Spanish Netherlands in the front line, resisted his aggression in company with allies, including Austria. Some revisionist historians now claim that the French King was acting reasonably in seeking to protect his capital, Paris, from assaults across frontiers, only a few days march away, but at the time his behaviour prompted fear amongst other western European states. A mix of faux-legalism, threats, military action and some atrocities led to occupation of fortified towns and their hinterlands in the 1660s and 1670s, so pushing the frontiers of France outwards towards the River Rhine, which was suspected to be the ultimate target of King Louis. However, 3 major events in the 1680s curbed French expansionism. One was an 'unforced error' made by the French King, when he revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1683, so outlawing Protestantism, and setting off mass-emigration which strengthened his enemies economically at his expense. In the same year, King John Sobieski's defeat of the Ottoman besiegers of Vienna resulted in an Austrian advance along the River Danube, followed by a truce which allowed the Emperor to focus exclusively on his western borders for a few years. France and the Ottoman Empire had never been formally allied, the religious divide prevented that, but a pragmatic accord had allowed France to encourage offensives towards Vienna, which had distracted the Emperor when France was seeking to make gains to his west. Then, in 1688, French complacency and inattention allowed William of Orange to accept an invitation from dissident peers, 'the immortal seven', to take most of his Dutch army to England, and to complete the conquest of a divided country, by insisting on being made King. William arranged for Protestant German states to provide forces to protect the United Provinces in

his absence, but there is little doubt that King Louis could have disrupted his plans, had he fully appreciated what was happening. A Catholic monarch, King James II and VII, who was well disposed to King Louis, was replaced by an inveterate enemy, who committed his new realms, England, Scotland and Ireland irrevocably to the anti-French camp.

The War of the League of Augsburg duly began in 1689, and France had to take on the Empire (Austria), Spain, England, Scotland, Portugal, Netherlands and Savoy without any significant ally, and without diversionary assistance from the Ottoman Empire. Yet France remained by far the most powerful single nation in Europe, with a population of over 20 million, a good proportion of the total for her adversaries. As a result she had the manpower to field larger armies than her opponents. France had also benefitted for many years from the exceptional organising powers of Marquis Louvois, who had spent a lifetime maximising the fighting power of her armies. Nonetheless, the French armies had the worst of things on the main battle-front in the first year of conflict, but this forced the King to employ his *bête-noir*, the Marshal-Duke of Luxemburg, the one really great general of that time. Over the next few years, Luxemburg won a string of victories in the Spanish Netherlands, at Fleurus, Leuze, (where a certain John Churchill, whose time was still to come, was one of those confronting him), Steinkirk, and Neerwinden, so moving the effective frontier, north and east. However, Louvois had died in 1691, Luxemburg succumbed to a fever in 1695, both were irreplaceable, and as a result in part of that, the tide turned. Also, France had overstretched herself economically in putting 100000-strong armies in the field, and a series of disastrous harvests, (not confined to France), resulted in widespread starvation, riot and rebellion, and bankrupted the nation. France's greatest admiral, Anne Hilarion de Tourville, had won major sea-battles at Beachy Head and Lagos Bay, but financial pressures forced the laying-up of all major ships, allowing a British blockade, which made matters worse. Thus, King Louis was desperate for peace after 1695, and King William was coming under increasing pressure from the English parliament to end the war, which saw few tangible gains in return for the high taxes, which funded much of the allied war effort. Plenipotentiaries from the two leaders were eventually able to agree the Treaty of Rijswijk, which brought the war to an end in 1697, after King William imposed the terms on his allies, including the Emperor who had wished to fight on. Since England (and Scotland) and Spain were on the same side in this war, I have not gone into any detail, but more needs to be said about its immediate aftermath which set the scene for the War of the Spanish Succession.

The treaty recognised a near-stalemate but France was in greater need of peace, so had to accept a definite check to her expansion under King Louis, because Lorraine, Luxemburg and Catalonia, along with fortified towns in the Spanish Netherlands and on the Rhine, some acquired in earlier wars, were returned to previous owners. King Louis recognised William as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland, withdrawing support from ex-King James though he permitted his continued residence in France; he also abandoned claims to the Electorate of Cologne, and the Electoral Palatinate, as a sop to the Emperor. These latter commitments could of course be reversed whenever he chose, and the French King achieved his main aim of avoiding discussion of the Spanish situation, in spite of the strong desire of Emperor Leopold to resolve that issue before making peace. France also did rather better away from Europe getting back Pondicherry in India, and receiving a few cash-generating islands in the Caribbean.

Surprisingly, King William, in spite of his life-long distrust of King Louis, allowed himself to be drawn into secret negotiations in which his emissaries along with those from France and the United Provinces (Holland), sought

to break the impasse over the Spanish Succession, without reference to other interested parties, most especially Spain. The enfeebled king had two healthy sisters, one of whom had married into the French Royal family, the other, into the Austrian Royal family, and both had given birth to sons. However the adopted Austrian also had a daughter who married into the ruling family of the electorate of Bavaria, which was at that time viewed as more or less neutral, rather than firmly attached to either the French or Allied camp; her Bavarian son, Joseph Ferdinand was nominated, at the age of 6, as heir to the throne of Spain by the terms of the Treaty of the Hague agreed by King Louis, King William, and the Dutch States General in late-1698. This was all very well, but the negotiators decided also that sweeteners taken from Spanish possessions in Europe would help to gain acceptance from key interested parties; King Louis was awarded Naples and Sicily, essentially Southern Italy, while it was hoped that the Emperor would be gratified to receive the Duchy of Milan. Of course, the Spanish court was outraged by the break-up of their empire, when the secret terms became known, and their King and his advisors responded by producing a will a month later, which acknowledged Joseph Ferdinand, the chosen one, as heir but his legacy was to be an undivided Spain. Then, everything was thrown into more confusion when the putative king died in February 1699, probably of smallpox, though rumours of poisoning swirled.

England, the United Provinces, and France made another attempt to settle the Spanish succession, but once again did so secretly, without involving Spain. By then, there seemed to be no alternative to conferring the Spanish prize on one or other of the ruling families of France and Austria, and the English and Dutch saw the latter as the lesser of two evils. Archduke Charles, the 15-year old second son of Emperor Leopold was chosen, on the doubtful assumption given the frequency of early deaths, that his older brother would succeed to the Austrian lands, be elected Emperor, and produce a direct heir, (actually his brother, Joseph, did all three of these things but died of smallpox in 1711, after his son had died in infancy, with consequences which shall be dealt with later). It was accepted that the price of French acceptance would be greater than before, and so they were granted Milan as well as Naples and Sicily, though complex provisions were made for exchanges which would eventually bring to France, duchies of Lorraine and Nice instead. The Treaty of London was signed in late-1699, but once again Spain refused to accept partition, and other un-consulted parties including the English Parliament, were unhappy when they learned of the details. Again, the will of the King of Spain was altered, this time leaving his undivided possessions to Archduke Charles. That youth stated that he would not consent to the division of the Spanish Empire, but this did not mollify many in the Spanish capital, and at the 11th hour, the French faction at court persuaded King Charles II to alter his will, a last time, leaving an undivided Spain to Philip of Anjou, the 16-year old grandson of King Louis XIV. The proviso that Philip would have to renounce any claim to the French throne convinced few people, though in fairness, he seemed to be further from succeeding to the French throne than Archduke Charles was from that of Austria.

When King Charles died in November 1700, King Louis was presented with a dilemma. He could have stuck by the London agreement and relied on English and Dutch help to force Emperor Leopold and Archduke Charles to obey the provisions, which would certainly have brought tangible benefits to France. His alternative was to accept the Spanish King's will, and support his grandson against any contesting nation. His advisors told him that England and Holland, exhausted by the recent war would not fight, either to obtain his compensation in Italy, if he acquiesced to the accession of Archduke Charles, or to put an Austrian on the Spanish throne, in place of his grandson. The fact that Philip was by far the more popular candidate-king in Spain, probably carried

little weight with King Louis, he seemed only to consider the potential benefit to France of the Spanish throne being occupied by his subservient grandson.

The irony is that his advisors had not been wrong about the reluctance of England and Holland to fight, so he might have avoided war, if he had done anything to accommodate their reawakened fears. Instead, his actions in the next year made war inevitable; he had measures enacted in the Paris Parliament to remove barriers to uniting the crowns of France and Spain, he forced out the Dutch occupants of the barrier fortresses in the Spanish Netherlands, and in September 1701 when the exiled King James died, he recognised his son, also James, as rightful King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Looking back, it almost seems as though the French King, with his confidence restored by his perception that providence had favoured him, was seeking war, and he soon got it; in September 1701 Austria, England, and Holland renewed the Grand Alliance, and in May 1702, they declared war on France; it soon transpired that they had an exceptional leader in place to fight the war, the Duke of Marlborough, one thing that King Louis had not factored into his calculations.

(ii) The Course of the War

The classic work in English on the subject of the War of the Spanish Succession was produced in 3 volumes by G. M. Trevelyan in the early 1930s, though he is now disparaged by much of the historical establishment for writing narrative history from a Whig standpoint, in the tradition of Hume and Macaulay. The two main strands in his account were political events in Britain, centred on the Union of Parliaments between England and Scotland against the background of intense factional struggles between Whigs and Tories, and the Duke of Marlborough's brilliant campaigns in the Spanish Netherlands and North Germany. That is not to say that other events were completely neglected in around a thousand pages, but they were seen as peripheral, and Trevelyan was right in this, if one looks towards the final outcome. Marlborough's campaigns created most of the military background which informed the terms of peace, and the triumph of a Tory party opposed to continuation of the war, settled the timing. It is fair to say that most that has since been written about the war has followed one or other of Trevelyan's strands, namely a plethora of military histories and biographies, not least Winston Churchill's portrayal of his ancestor, Marlborough, all focussed on the great general's campaigns, and many monographs on Parliamentary conflict during the reign of Queen Anne. This is not very helpful to anyone who wishes to deal primarily with the parts of the war which set British forces against those of Spain, whether on land or sea. However, there are some useful secondary sources, (as stated elsewhere, the canvas of this account is too wide to permit much searching through primary sources), and they are given in the bibliography.

It is the paradox of this war that although the ostensible objective of the Grand Alliance confronting King Louis, was to prevent a French prince continuing as King of Spain, the resources devoted to achieving this did not reflect the aim. The slogan 'no peace without Spain' was never followed through strongly on the ground. The armies which won the Duke of Marlborough's great victories on France's northern and western frontiers, Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde and Malplaquet, and took almost every French defensive line and fortified town in their path, were up to 80000 strong, whereas those which the Alliance put into the field in Spain rarely much exceeded 20000. Supply and logistics generally would no doubt have been difficult for a significantly larger force, but hardly impossible given British and Dutch naval dominance. The great general did talk on more than one occasion of going over to the defensive in the Spanish Netherlands for a campaigning season, thus freeing extra resources for Spain, and most importantly, of going there himself to take command, but he bowed to

pressure from the Dutch and other allies in North Germany, to remain where he was. He may well have been content to do so, because he always professed to believe that by applying remorseless pressure from the north, he could compel King Louis to desert his grandson, King Philip V, and in this way achieve regime change in Spain.

Marlborough proved correct in a sense, but by the time King Louis was forced to contemplate this possibility in early 1709, the British government, worried about the hostility to the Hapsburg claimant, Archduke Charles, in Madrid, demanded that the French King take an active role in removing King Philip from the Spanish throne. Even in a time of dire emergency for France, with a major invasion seeming imminent, this was too great an ask, and King Louis refused the offered terms of peace. (Some have suggested that the notoriously venal Duke of Marlborough engineered this situation because his positions of Captain General and de facto head of the Alliance, with consequent lucrative opportunities, depended on the war continuing but it is more likely that he and his government simply overplayed their hand). It would be wrong to say that this was a turning point, as Marlborough's army remained ascendant, but he was increasingly hobbled by the Dutch and his own government, so the French were able to hold out until wider events began to turn in their favour. I will return to these matters when discussing the peace treaties that ended the war, but here stress that although the War of the Spanish Succession is rightly seen as largely successful for British arms, the confirmation of King Philip as Spanish King caused Britain problems throughout the following century when Bourbon Spain regularly allied with Bourbon France. Of course, by the end of the war, the prospect of a recombination of the Spanish and Austria Empires, which seemed to be the only alternative, was hardly attractive either.

In this account of the course of the war, I shall have little more to say about Marlborough's campaigns on the northern and eastern frontiers of France, other than where they provide necessary context, because apart from a few Spanish units attached to the Bavarian army, which fought with France, Spain was not involved. In any case, I do not think I could add much to the printed matter already available. It can be argued that the War of the Spanish Succession was the first world war, especially if the link is made to the Great Northern War fought between 1701 and 1720, pitching Sweden against a shifting alliance involving Russia, Denmark and Poland, but Spain was not a combatant in it, while Hanover and Britain only joined in, after hostilities in Spain had been concluded. The argument for considering the war as world-wide is supported by the fact that there were clashes in India and the Americas, and those involving Spain and Britain are given some attention. Coinciding with those wars were major internal rebellions against King Louis in the Cevennes (an upland area in the central south of France) and the Empire in newly recaptured Hungary, but neither is germane to this account, except in so far as they diverted resources. The absence of British land forces means that the same applies generally to the campaigns in Northern Italy and Savoy, waged by Austria and Piedmont against France and Spain, but an attempt to take the French port of Toulon involved a British fleet, so is described briefly. In sum, these considerations result in an account focussed on the campaign in Spain, and the naval war in the seas around the Iberian peninsula, but with a later short excursion to look at naval events further afield.

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Before giving some detail of events in the struggle for Spain which occupied the years between 1701, when King Philip V arrived in Madrid, and 1714 when a Franco-Spanish army, commanded by the Duke of Berwick, captured Barcelona, it is worth commenting further on the inconsistencies in the allied approach, which

eventually caught up with them. The allies were supposedly fighting the war to replace the newly crowned Spanish Bourbon King, yet each member of the Grand Alliance had at least one higher priority, and this impacted on the vigour with which each of them pursued the major objective. The main concerns of the Dutch, were with their southern frontier, and ensuring that they were not disadvantaged in trading arrangements after the war, so their small contribution to the land war in Spain was at least consistent, as was their opposition to British proposals to reinforce strongly the armies already there. (It is not my task here, but the lack of any substantial account in English, of Dutch involvement away from the Netherlands on land and sea should be addressed.) Neither the British, nor the Austrians developed and stuck to a coherent plan. If the former really believed that Spain could be won on the French northern frontier, where they had determined to make their main effort, they probably attempted too much in Spain; a holding operation in Portugal would have sufficed, but they allowed themselves to be dragged into more ambitious schemes, without resourcing them properly. The Austrians who seemingly had most to gain by placing Archduke Charles on the Spanish throne did even less until the cause was almost lost; their main concerns throughout were to protect Vienna from France and Bavaria, to put down the Rákóczi revolt in Hungary, which had been stirred up by France, and to make gains in Italy.

I shall try to produce a coherent chronological account, but there is a danger that I shall imply a greater amount of strategic awareness and consistency to the actions of the participants, France, Spain, Britain, United Provinces, Austria, Portugal and Piedmont than was present at the time. (United Provinces included Holland as by far its largest entity, and Austria describes the main part of the hereditary Hapsburg lands, owned by the Emperor who could exercise great influence but not control over the many states which now make up Germany). I shall try not to tie myself in knots over references to things British and English, remembering that the former was a concept which only came into being in 1707. In fact Scottish objections to being dragged into the War of the Spanish Succession, without her parliament being asked to give consent, had ramifications which played a considerable part in bringing about the union of Parliaments which effectively created Great Britain. There were Scottish soldiers involved from the start, and a good proportion of Marlborough's most senior officers were Scottish, including the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Stair, and the Earl of Orkney, but in its early stages it was essentially an English War and my text reflects that fact.

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King Philip V was only 17 when he arrived in Madrid in early 1701, accompanied by French advisors, and they speedily replaced their predecessors who had followed a pro-Austrian line. Marie Anne de la Tremoille, Princess des Ursins, a remarkable woman for the age, who furthered French interests in Italy over a long period before going to Spain, and Jean Orry, a financial expert, directed Spanish affairs throughout the war, maintaining close alignment with France. The earliest threat to the integrity of the Spanish empire came in Italy, where Austria, attacked areas earmarked in the 1st Partition Treaty, and the King went there in the first year of his reign. He returned to Madrid during the next summer when a large English and Dutch force attacked Cadiz. Its aim was to obtain a port from which operations could be mounted in the Western Mediterranean, against the coasts of Spain, Italy and Southern France. The expedition, like many before and afterwards, not a few directed against Cadiz, was blighted by dissention between the naval and army commanders, in this case Sir George Rooke, and the Earl of Ormonde with most blame being loaded by posterity on the latter. Failure was bad enough, but soldiers landed beside the port-city went on the rampage, and their behaviour damaged the cause of Archduke

Charles at the outset of the Spanish campaign. However, Rooke had the knack of rescuing failed enterprises (or maybe he was just lucky) and on the return journey after aborting the assault on Cadiz, he learnt that the Spanish treasure fleet from the Americas, together with its French escort had arrived at Vigo on Spain's northern coast. He needed persuading to attack by his Dutch deputy, Phillips van Almonde, because it was no easy task given the presence of a boom across the harbour mouth, and the concentrated firepower of the French ships, but on 21st October 1702, one of the most crushing naval victories in history was achieved by his 25 line of battle ships. Of the 15 French rated ships, none survived, with 6 captured and 9 sunk, while 17 Spanish galleons and galleasses were also destroyed. Some of Ormonde's force had been landed, and they partially redeemed themselves by capturing and disabling the forts protecting the harbour, while the fleet bashed its way past the boom. The only disappointment concerned the cargo of the treasure fleet; although some silver was taken, most had been landed and moved well away from the coast before Rooke arrived.

Nonetheless, the success at Vigo Bay bears comparison with that of Admiral Nelson at Aboukir Bay, (the Battle of the Nile), 96 years later. Perhaps because it came at the tail-end of a failed enterprise, it is not high on the list of remembered British triumphs, nor is Admiral Sir George Rooke, in spite of other achievements, prominent in the pantheon of British naval heroes. Apart from reaping benefits from the significant reduction in French naval strength, the Grand Alliance profited from a Portuguese volte face. Portugal, ruled by King Peter II, had begun the war in alliance with France. He had been torn between fear of the threat that the latter could pose by land, and a recognition that English/Dutch naval superiority would be just as dangerous, but the victory at Vigo Bay persuaded the King to change sides, and treaties of alliance were signed, which endured until superseded in the late 20th century. The Methuen treaties were not an unalloyed blessing; they allowed the use of the port of Lisbon as a forward base for operations in the Western Mediterranean and against fleets returning from South America, but they also committed England to the defence of Portugal from land attack. It can be said that British military involvement on the Spanish mainland flowed directly from victory at Vigo Bay, though other events influenced the form it took.

The next major development was the arrival in Lisbon, in February 1704 of 19-year old Archduke Charles, accompanied by 4000 English and 2000 Dutch soldiers, together with a few hundred from his own nation. This force was added to 20000 Portuguese soldiers, but decisions taken by King Louis meant that they were certain to be outnumbered by an opposing army of invasion. The French King approved the transfer of 12000 soldiers from the Spanish Netherlands to Spain, and appointed the Duke of Berwick to command them, along with nearly 30000 Spanish soldiers, and they were massed on the frontier with Portugal by April 2004. The Duke of Berwick had such a large role in events in Spain over the next decade and later, that I must pause to say more about him. He was born in 1670, the illegitimate son of the then Duke of York, later King James II and VII, and Arabella Churchill, sister of the Duke of Marlborough. He began to gain military experience at the age of 15, attached to the Austrian army fighting the Turks, then held responsible positions in the Jacobite army which unavailingly fought for Ireland. A transfer to the French army followed and he was a Lieutenant-General in the entourage of the Marshal-Duke of Luxemburg, playing a role in the great victories of the early 1690s, though he had to be ransomed after capture by another Churchill uncle at the Battle of Landen. During the rest of the decade he carried out secret missions for his exiled father, risking his life on visits to London; then he returned to military service for France, first in the Netherlands, before, at the age of 33, receiving the Spanish appointment. His military career still had 30 years to run, and he was to prove that he was a very able general, if not quite on the

top rung with Luxemburg and his uncle, Marlborough. He was resourceful, methodical, and cautious, (sometimes too much so, his one discernible weakness), and had a demeanour in keeping with his high birth which compelled respect from subordinates, even those otherwise inclined to disobedience. From a young age he was the archetype of a safe pair of hands. In spite of over 40 years of service to France, and his possession of a French marshal's baton, he always thought of himself as an Englishman.

Berwick divided his army into 5 columns, spread along the Portuguese frontier, with the 3 in the centre, one of which he commanded himself, directed towards Lisbon. The invasion, which began in May 1704, prospered at first, capturing towns and forts, including Portalegre, where an English regiment, the 11th Foot, was caught up in the surrender by the local commander and compelled to lay down its arms. It seemed that Lisbon would fall, but Berwick's progress came to a halt, in part as a result of a counter attack by an able Portuguese general, Antonio Luis de Sousa, Marquis of Minas, partly because of supply difficulties, and partly because, apart from the French core, the dual-national army was neither experienced nor a cohesive entity. Soon, the French/Spanish army was back where it had started and there were rising tensions between its commander and the hierarchy in Madrid. Meanwhile, England and Holland had used Lisbon as a staging post to send a fleet, commanded by Sir George Rooke into the Mediterranean. Little was achieved there; an attempt to capture Barcelona failed because the fleet had too few soldiers to carry a large fortified town, even with considerable local support. However, Rooke had already shown that he was adept at putting a favourable gloss on previous disappointments, and the capture of Gibraltar in August 1704 gave allied fleets a port, then largely undeveloped, but with the potential to support a permanent presence in the Western Mediterranean, as it was to do for more than two centuries.

The engagement was hard fought by the soldiery attached to the fleet, backed by the guns of the warships, but the result was never in doubt. Interestingly, Rooke did not claim the prize for the Archduke Charles, as he was urged to do, but for the English crown. Within a week it became clear that he would have to fight for Gibraltar again, but this time at sea. Under the command of the Count of Toulouse fleets based at Toulon and Brest had joined together, and they confronted Rooke in the Battle of Malaga fought on 24th August 1704; it was the greatest sea-battle, in terms of the number of ships and men involved, of this war and one of the greatest of the modern age of sail. There were no subtle tactics, and no grievous mistakes by the admirals; both fleets formed lines about 50 ships long, bringing to bear 7000 great guns in total, involving over 50000 sailors and soldiers, and they hammered away at each other for hours in relatively calm conditions until darkness fell. (It is worth considering that Marlborough's great victory at Blenheim, a week and a half earlier, involved over 100000 men, but there would have been at most a few hundred guns). The incredible feature of this sea battle is that although thousands must have been killed, and more wounded, because casualties on both sides were described as heavy, not one ship was sunk or captured, either during or immediately after the battle. This reflects the durability of wooden ships, and the sterility of the naval instructions of the day, which meant that a captain leaving the line of battle voluntarily, risked court martial and dismissal from the navy; most importantly, in the following days there was no severe storm to cause damaged ships to founder. Otherwise, there are startling similarities to what happened after another apparent stalemate, 2 centuries afterwards, in 1916, at the Battle of Jutland. The French, who would surely have recovered Gibraltar if they had pressed on, because the English/Dutch fleet had used practically all of its ammunition between taking the Rock, and the battle, they loudly claimed victory but their fleets retired to Toulon and Brest, never re-uniting during the remainder of the war. Gibraltar was retained

and an English/Dutch fleet was at Barcelona within months and this reflects the fact that the indecisive Battle of Malaga was a major strategic victory for the Grand Alliance. The sea battle has been little remembered in Britain because in spite of its wider significance, it did not look like a victory, and has been completely overshadowed by Marlborough's triumph in the Battle of Blenheim, less than 2 weeks earlier.

In different ways, Gibraltar has been a bone of contention for more than 3 centuries, and its capture provoked a serious dispute between the Spanish court, who wished to put together an army to recapture it, and the Duke of Berwick who refused to transfer soldiers south for fear that this would open the way for an invasion of Spain by the resurgent and reinforced army of the Grand Alliance. At the behest of King Philip V, Berwick was recalled to France, not in disgrace as he was immediately given another command, but his replacement, the French Marshal, Tessé can have been under no illusions about the need to humour his Spanish allies. Accordingly, Gibraltar was besieged from land and sea during the following winter, but Admiral Sir John Leake, the able replacement for Rooke, who had been forced by ill-health to retire, led relief convoys from Lisbon in November 1704, and March 1705, and on the second occasion destroyed all 5 ships of the line in a French blockading squadron, so confirming British possession, which was to be formally recognised by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

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Later in 1705, an Anglo-Dutch expedition arrived off Barcelona, carrying a much larger landing force of 11000 soldiers than had been aboard Rooke's fleet in the previous year. The naval commander was the extravagantly named, but talented Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovell, with the unsung Dutch admiral, Philips van Almonde as his deputy. However, the unlikely overall commander was Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Monmouth and Peterborough, whose extraordinary career had included a spell as 1st Lord of the Treasury in 1689, before he was locked up in the Tower of London for a short time in 1697, accused of plotting a rebellion against King William. Unsurprisingly, he enjoyed no favour during the remainder of that reign, but became prominent again in political circles under Queen Anne. Nonetheless his choice, presumably by the Duke of Marlborough, to command the second attempt on Barcelona seemed inexplicable to most at the time, because of his unstable temperament and a background devoid of recent military experience. The siege did not run altogether smoothly, after the landing in mid-August, but the city with its surrounds was in the hands of the Grand Alliance by mid-October, 1705. In early 1706, Peterborough appeared to have reinforced the success by capturing Valencia, albeit that he had reduced the defences of Barcelona.

King Phillip and Marshal Tessé responded by bringing an army to Catalonia in April 1706, and besieged Barcelona, which was also blockaded by the French Toulon fleet; they took outworks and seemed on the point of success. However, Peterborough returned with a detachment of the force he had taken to Valencia, and more importantly, Admiral Leake arrived from Lisbon with reinforcements, compelling the French blockading ships to withdraw. The besieging force, in generally hostile country and with no chance of success, panicked and fled, leaving all their stores and heavy equipment behind; King Phillip had to divert into Southern France to avoid capture. Strategically, there had been much to be said for trying to eliminate the presence of the Grand Alliance, and Archduke Charles in Catalonia, but the failure of the Franco-Spanish campaign left them in grave difficulties. The Portuguese/English/Dutch army on the Portuguese border, under a new commander, the Huguenot Frenchman, Henri de Massue, Earl of Galway, was 25000-strong whereas the Franco-Spanish force had been

reduced to around 10000 soldiers, to provide manpower for the army sent to Catalonia. A slow advance into Spain began, then halted while Galway waited to learn the outcome in Barcelona, fearing that its fall would have allowed reinforcement of the Franco-Spanish army in front of him. Concern in Madrid was sufficient for the government there to eat humble pie, and request the return of the Duke of Berwick, newly appointed a Marshal of France, to take command of the army opposing Galway, which he did in March 2006. When the news of the outcome at Barcelona arrived, Galway began to inch forward again. Berwick knew that he was not strong enough to defend Madrid, so he conducted a careful retreat, avoiding battle, and following the evacuated Spanish government to Burgos, just over 200km to the north. Galway let him depart unmolested and entered the undefended Spanish capital on 27th June, where Archduke Charles was proclaimed King of Spain.

Given that Marlborough's crushing victory at Ramillies had been won just over a month earlier, placing France in real danger of invasion, it seemed that the issue in Spain might soon be settled in favour of the newly proclaimed King Charles III, but the seeds of a dramatic transformation were already being sown. Instead of pushing northwards to maintain pressure on Berwick, Galway made no further move, seemingly awaiting reinforcement from the east, but that reinforcement turned out to be smaller than anticipated, comprising 3000 soldiers, and took twice as long to arrive as might have been hoped. The two contingents combined just outside Madrid on 6th August, but because of wastage (injuries, illness and desertions) the fighting strength of the Grand Alliance army had been reduced to 14000. Meanwhile Berwick had been reinforced by 11000 soldiers from France, dispatched prior to the Battle of Ramillies, and 6000 rescued from the debacle in Catalonia, so raising his strength to over 25000. So the tables had been turned with a vengeance, but Berwick seemed as reluctant to press home his advantage as Galway had been earlier. Retreat for the latter was unavoidable. Spanish irregulars made the route westwards, back to Portugal, infeasible, so his only option was to head east for Valencia, but Galway took nearly a month to move away from Madrid. However, Berwick's pursuit was leisurely, and the Grand Alliance army got away without trouble, while Berwick used his force to recapture towns in the provinces of Murcia and Valencia.

Peterborough had already left for London, after advising in the strongest terms that because of the shift in the balance of forces, the campaign of 1707 should focus only on the defence of Catalonia, and perhaps Valencia, where the sea-power of the Grand Alliance could be brought to bear. Presumably he expected to return to ensure that his advice was followed, but he was dismissed, early in the year, and the overall command devolved on Galway. It was probably of equal significance that James Stanhope, who had become Peterborough's deputy, remained in that role, but with much greater influence over Galway and Archduke Charles, than he had possessed under the previous commander. At this time, Stanhope was a major-general aged 36, who had risen fast, partly because of conspicuous bravery on the battle-field, and partly because he was very personable, most of the time, and extraordinarily persuasive, so that those in positions of power, not excluding Marlborough, exerted themselves to further his interests. There was another side of the coin; he was bold to the point of rashness, and prone to uncontrollable outbursts which had caused his temporary disgrace a few times, and resulted in a number of duels. The fact that he was widely known to be homosexual, at a time when sodomy could be punished by a death sentence, had not hindered his career, and may even have given him a hold over some in high office. From the perspective of the Grand Alliance, his role in events of the next few years was largely malign.

The deliberations of the Grand Alliance leaders in early 1707 were to lead to a disastrous outcome, not least because they could not come to agreement, and ended up dividing their army. Archduke Charles, chastened by the events of the previous year, took Peterborough's advice seriously and departed northwards with a Spanish/Catalan contingent to reinforce the defences of Barcelona. Almost 7000 English reinforcements, originally intended for a diversionary landing in France, had arrived at Valencia and been placed at Galway's disposal, but this still only left him with an army of 15000 mainly English, Dutch and Portuguese soldiers, whereas Berwick disposed of 25000 French and Spanish. Yet the Grand Alliance commander who had refused to press home a substantial numerical advantage the previous year, determined to advance again on Madrid, which was bound to mean confrontation with Berwick's much larger force, on ground of the latter's choosing; the only logical explanation for such a perverse reversal is the influence of Stanhope. The battle which soon followed should never have been fought.

The Battle of Almanza lasted for little more than 2 hours on 25th April, and according to Fortescue, all but the Portuguese gave a very good account of themselves, with the English on the left, actually over-running their direct opponents at the outset. However, the Portuguese, who had insisted on the place of honour on the right, were swept off the battlefield by opposing cavalry, and Berwick was then able to concentrate his whole force against little more than half of Galway's army. It was no walk-over, but the outcome was inevitable; Galway and his senior officers, including Stanhope, who shone on the battlefield again, deserve some credit for holding together part of their army, comprising several thousand soldiers and most of their guns, in ordered retreat. Nonetheless, although Berwick incurred 6000 casualties, the toll on his opponent's smaller army was 9000, including 5000 made prisoner, and they had been eliminated as a serious threat for the foreseeable future. Galway took the remnants of his force back to Catalonia, and too late, adopted a defensive posture, while Berwick retook most of Valencia, and some of Aragon, so greatly reducing the area recognising Archduke Charles as King of Spain. The Battle of Almanza had not ended the war for Spain, indeed Galway was reinforced again later in 1707, and the Austrians finally began to commit significant forces to the cause of the archduke, but with the exception of one short campaign the initiative thereafter lay with the French and Spanish armies supporting King Phillip V. Finally, too much is often made of the fact that an Englishman, Berwick, commanded a French and Spanish army which defeated an English, Dutch and Portuguese army commanded by Galway, a Frenchman, because apart from the polyglot nature of the armies, both commanders had for long been wholly committed to their adopted countries.

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For all that Marlborough was one of the most brilliant generals of all time, he does seem to have been guilty of something of the scattergun strategic approach that infected some of his British successors, not least his great descendant, Winston Churchill. Expeditions left Britain with preferred rather than fixed destinations and commanders were given a surprising amount of freedom 'to play things by ear'. Sometimes, this paid off as at Vigo and Gibraltar, but sometimes the consequences were malign as with the unplanned reinforcement of Galway. However, an expedition later in 1707 directed at the French naval base of Toulon, was no ad hoc enterprise, and was made possible by a successful phase of the war in Northern Italy and South-Eastern France.

Victor Amadeus II, Duke of Savoy, and King of Piedmont, (now north-west Italy and south-east France), began the War of the Spanish Succession allied with France and Spain, but had to watch on, as an Austrian army led

by Prince Eugene captured a considerable area of the Spanish Duchies of Milan and Mantua to the east of his domain. However, the French Marshal, the Duke of Vendôme, reversed the Austrian gains, in late-1702, and there was little activity during the next year, until in October 1703, Victor Amadeus II defected to the Grand Alliance, apparently persuaded by British naval support; his timing was curious, and French offensives over the next 2 years cost him most of his territory, saving a small enclave around Turin. The Austrians sought to rescue their new ally but in April 1706 lost a battle at Calcinato in Lombardy, which kept them far enough away to allow Turin to be besieged.

Then, significant changes of command took place, as the able Vendôme was recalled to France during the crisis following the Battle of Ramillies, and Prince Eugene took command of the Austrian army. Nonetheless, success for the French looked likely, as the Prince had to reorganise his force and out-manoeuve the French army in front of him to interrupt the siege. However, Turin bought him time by defying assaults for almost 3 months, until in September 1706, Prince Eugene's Austrians with support from the Savoyards were able to attack the besieging army, and win a hard-fought victory, which forced the French to retire in some confusion, leaving many soldiers cut-off to the east in fortified towns. The tide had turned, and in March 1707, the Austrians agreed the Convention of Milan with France so ending the war in Northern Italy, and gaining Milan and Mantua, though to the annoyance of the remaining members of the Grand Alliance, the trapped French garrisons were repatriated with all their equipment, free to fight again.

Nonetheless, the plans were by then well advanced for an assault on Toulon, by a large army of 35000 Austrians and Savoyards commanded by Prince Eugene, which would march westwards along the Mediterranean coast, shepherded by Sir Cloudesley Shovell's fleet. The planned start-date in April had to be put back because the Emperor detached 10000 soldiers to pursue his ambitions in Southern Italy, but all was ready by July. At first matters went well for the Grand Alliance, Nice was taken, and Toulon was loosely invested, but Marshal Tessé in command of the defending French army had been reinforced from Italy and Spain, while a hoped-for rising in the Cevennes proved to be a chimera. Though some outworks were captured, the pace was slow, and Prince Eugene grew fearful that he would be cut off from his Italian base. Accordingly, he raised the siege, and marched his army away on 22nd August, a rare failure in his glittering career. However, there was a dramatic sting in the tail; Shovell had bombarded Toulon harbour just before the army's departure and destroyed 2 line of battle ships, and the French naval authority became convinced that a full scale assault aimed at capturing the remaining 13 rated vessels was intended, no doubt they remembered Vigo Bay. Their gross over-reaction was to scuttle all these ships and an array of smaller ones; it was claimed later that the harbour was shallow and that they had intended to re-float the ships, but none took any further part in the war, leaving the British and Dutch unchallenged in the Western Mediterranean. The final notable event of a topsy-turvy year occurred in October, when HMS Association carrying Admiral Shovell, foundered on rocks amidst the Scilly Islands along with 3 other ships; up to 2000 sailors perished including the able admiral, though whether he drowned or was murdered after being washed ashore has since been the subject of speculation.

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The Franco-Spanish army had made gains on the Portuguese frontier in late-1707, and in the next year they used their superior numbers to squeeze the area round Barcelona, occupied by Grand Alliance forces. The latter were commanded by an Austrian general, Guido Starhemberg, while Stanhope had reappeared in the

spring of 1708, apparently undaunted and untarnished by Almanza, still Envoy to Archduke Charles of Austria, and in command of the few thousand British soldiers, remaining in Catalonia. The new Commander in Chief was cautious, as his situation warranted, and resistant to the pressure exerted by Stanhope who continued to push for offensive action. Accordingly, Stanhope, devoted his energies to the capture of the island of Minorca, which had a fine harbour, and led a successful invasion in September of that year; British possession was confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht. The coup demonstrated that Stanhope's energy and bold leadership could be an asset if properly directed, but it was the misfortune for himself, and his country that this did not always happen during his military career. Otherwise, the forces backing King Phillip V remained generally in the ascendant in Spain through 1708 and 1709, with victories on the Portuguese frontier, which forced a truce on that front, and the capture of Alicante on the east coast, to show for their efforts. The pressure exerted by Marlborough on the French Northern frontier was having some wider impact by forcing the withdrawal of French soldiers from other fronts, but King Louis strove to minimise the effects, while making serious efforts to reach a peace settlement.

Nonetheless, by the start of the campaigning season in 1710 the balance in Spain had shifted; the Grand Alliance army in Catalonia, approaching 30000 strong, gradually restored by Starhemberg, and reinforced from Austria, outnumbered its adversary by a few thousand soldiers, so began to advance westwards. Two battles were won by Starhemberg, at Almanera in July, and at Saragossa in August; in each case, French cavalry charges initiated the action and came close to a decisive break-through, but gaps opened in the Franco-Spanish line, into which Stanhope led his men, precipitating disordered retreats by his adversaries; at the Battle of Saragossa the Franco-Spanish army lost 12000 men as casualties and prisoners from an army of 20000. Starhemberg wanted to pause and consolidate the gains made, almost certainly the correct course to have followed, but Stanhope was determined to advance the 200 miles to Madrid. Archduke Charles was easily persuaded that his own arrival in the Spanish capital would help his cause, so he over-ruled his countryman. By September, the allies were ensconced in Madrid, and King Philip had withdrawn with the remnants of his army to Valladolid, some 110 miles to the north-west. However, as the Earl of Galway had found 4 years earlier, it was one thing to occupy the Spanish capital, but a different matter to sustain an army there, in the absence of local support. It would have been best if the allied army had simply pulled back, having demonstrated the vulnerability of Madrid, but this was perceived as damaging to the prestige of Archduke Charles, so they hung around aimlessly for the next two months. Meanwhile, King Philip's plea for help to his grandfather, King Louis XIV was answered by the despatch of the Duke of Vendome, who quickly restored the Franco-Spanish army.

Belatedly, the allied leaders realised that they were in an untenable situation given the normal harshness of the Madrid winter, and the vulnerability of their supply lines passing through a hostile population. Their withdrawal to the east began in November 1710. To ease the difficulties of collecting forage in a ravaged countryside, late in the year, the army was split into a main body of 13000 men under Starhemberg, and a rear-guard of 5000 under Stanhope, while a detachment of 2000 cavalry hurried Charles of Austria back to Barcelona, without incident. The dispositions were reasonable, perhaps unavoidable for logistical reasons, but the two generals failed to ensure that their divided force could coalesce quickly if threatened, and to have been unforgivably dilatory. Presumably, they were unaware of the improved state of the Franco-Spanish Bourbon army, and had discounted the possibility of close pursuit. They could not have been more wrong; Vendome moved with great speed, at least compared with the slow pace of his adversaries, and came up with Stanhope at Brihuega, 80km

north-east of Madrid, before the British general even realised that he was being chased by an army rather than a few irregulars intent on picking off stragglers.

Stanhope, who had seemingly encamped without posting pickets, only realised the extent of his predicament, after he was surrounded, so he sent for aid to Starhemberg at least a day later than he should have done. However Brihuega was a fortified town, and he will have expected to be able to hold it for some time and certainly until the rest of the allied force could come to his aid, but Vendome hadn't just force-marched 20000 soldiers to Brihuega, he had managed to bring a substantial number of large guns to the scene, and their deployment proved decisive. The morning after the town had been invested, they battered down large sections of the town walls, paving the way for an intense struggle in the streets of the town. The superior numbers of the French-led army eventually began to tell, though they were given a very hard fight, and suffered a thousand deaths; by evening the British defenders had lost much of the town and were very short of ammunition. It is hard to understand why Stanhope capitulated rather than seeking to prolong the struggle by withdrawing to the town citadel, which would have bought time for Starhemberg to respond to his call for help. The Austrian general reached the environs of the town, later that evening, and confronted Vendome on the next morning, but by then his rear-guard was in captivity. The battle of Villaviciosa followed, and Starhemberg did well to hold his own against a larger army, checking the Franco-Spanish advance sufficiently to allow his own relatively unhindered withdrawal to Barcelona, 430km away, albeit with an army less than half as large as that with which he had started the campaign.

Brihuega with the loss of a few thousand soldiers was by no means the worst setback experienced by either side in the Spanish campaign, but it occurred at a critical time, when a Tory government was taking over in Britain with the intention of bringing the war to a speedy end. So there was no motivation to rebuild the allied army, or at least its British contingent, as had happened after the much greater setback of Almanza. Instead, the unpromising situation for Archduke Charles penned up again in Barcelona, was factored into the negotiation of peace. Peterborough's prediction that Stanhope would lose Spain in a year if placed in command of the British contingent proved to be more or less accurate. The defeated general was incarcerated for almost 2 years and perhaps that was to his benefit, as the Tory government, which had no reason to spare a partisan Whig, might have sought a draconian punishment, if he had been released sooner. The surrender at Brihuega and the retreat which brought it about, marked the end of the quest for the Spanish throne by Archduke Charles, in part because his circumstances changed dramatically in 1711, when he was elected Emperor. More importantly his unpopularity with all levels of society in Spain could no longer be gainsaid, and in the face of this, his sponsors in the Grand Alliance accepted that they would not be able to impose him as king.

Of course, fighting did not cease in Spain, but to a large extent the struggle became an attempt by Catalonia to maintain its independence under the rule of the newly elected Emperor. British involvement became minimal before it ended in 1713; the Duke of Argyll was appointed commander of such British forces as remained in 1711, but the next year he withdrew them to Minorca. In 1713, a Spanish army, 20000 strong was sent to retake the recalcitrant province, but the force barely outnumbered the defenders, and was not provided with a siege train, so made no progress. A French army, which doubled the size of the attacking force, and deployed close to a hundred large calibre guns, arrived in May 1714, and in July, the Duke of Berwick took command. A formal siege began with a heavy bombardment, but it was not until September, after the besiegers had sustained

10000 casualties, that the Catalans surrendered. The war in Spain finally ended with the capture of Majorca by a Bourbon fleet in 1715.

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Before considering the peace treaties which brought the war to an end, I will mention some events involving Spain and England/Britain which took place away from Western Europe and the surrounding seas. The one with the highest profile took place in August 1702, at Santa Marta, off the coast of Columbia. An English squadron with 7 ships of the line, commanded by Admiral John Benbow, encountered a convoy of 5 Spanish cargo ships escorted by 4 French ships of the line. An English victory should not have been in doubt, and Benbow duly steered for the enemy, but most of his ships hung back. The desultory running battle lasted for 6 days, until Benbow was seriously wounded, and the action was broken off; a majority of the English ships had hung back, refusing to engage with the enemy. Inevitably, Courts Martial followed and 2 of the captains were shot for cowardice, while others were dismissed the service. Benbow died of his injuries a few months later, amidst acclaim for his conduct, and the action which cost him his life, was probably the best-remembered of the war, in spite of its small scale and inconclusive result. It was a strange incident, and Benbow had clearly been unlucky in the Navy Board's choice of captains, but perhaps his own conduct before the event had made matters worse.

The participants at Santa Marta were typical of actions in the Western Hemisphere, as the Spanish navy was so weak that their convoys were practically always escorted by French warships, as exemplified by the fleet which ended up at Vigo Bay in 1702. French privateers were the other large factor in these waters, but Spanish vessels took little part. There was some land-based fighting in what is now the southern United States, but it did not change anything. The Spanish colony of Florida had been established with boundaries close to those of the present state in 1513, but had then expanded north and west in the remainder of the 16th century, even although the absence of precious metals, limited Spanish interest in the territory. The English colony of Carolina, founded in 1639, began to push against Florida's northern boundary and defensive forts were built, beginning with St. Mark's Castle, a star fort with 4 bastions at a Spanish settlement called St. Augustine. The English laid siege in November 1702, and 1500 town residents and soldiers were crammed into the fort during a 2-month siege, which was broken when a Spanish relief fleet from Havana arrived, and the attackers had to march back to where they had started from. There was no further action here.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

The earliest approach for a negotiated peace was made by France no later than in 1706, and certainly by 1708, it can be argued that the likely outcome of the war had been determined on all major fronts. The Duke of Marlborough's victories had put an end to French hopes of moving their northern frontiers towards the River Rhine; the Duke of Berwick's victory at Almanza had confirmed that the Bourbon King Phillip V would rule in Spain, provided that binding commitments could be devised to ensure that the French and Spanish crowns would be in different hands; Austria had made substantial territorial gains in Italy to which France if not Spain had acquiesced; Britain with Dutch help had established naval superiority which would enable them to exact trading and some territorial concessions, mainly from Spain. Yet it took 5 years to agree the Treaty of Utrecht, in April 1713, which effectively settled matters between Britain and Holland on one side and France and Spain on the other, and almost another full year before the Treaty of Rastatt (in Baden) was agreed in March 1714 between France and Austria. Spain and Austria did not make peace officially until 1720. In the intervening years,

many soldiers died without changing the outcome materially, though the delay certainly had political consequences, especially in Great Britain.

Negotiations began in earnest between France and Britain in 1709, involving the French foreign minister, the Marquis de Torcy, and the Whig politician, Viscount Townshend, and there can be little doubt that the latter backed by the British government over-played the hand that Marlborough's victories had given to him. It is remarkable that King Louis seemed willing to acquiesce in the removal of King Phillip from the Spanish throne, but it is equally remarkable that the demand was made that if need be, he should send an army to Madrid to bring about the change. At any rate the negotiations collapsed, and the perception that the government had blundered, given the war-weary state of the nation, played a significant part in the Tory election victory of 1710. This placed British foreign policy in the hands of Henry St. John, later Viscount Bolingbroke, who was willing to reduce the harshness of the terms offered by Britain, and to adopt almost any recourse to force the other members of the Grand Alliance to accept them. Marlborough was sacked in early-1712, and his replacement, the Duke of Ormonde was instructed to withdraw co-operation from the armies of the other allies on the French northern frontier; the gist of this instruction was conveyed to Marshal Villars, in command of the French army. The actions amounted to a betrayal, unprecedented in British history. The Battle of Denain followed in July, and though the victory of Villars over Prince Eugene did not amount to much of itself, with relatively few casualties suffered, it was clear that an army without British soldiers, and especially without Marlborough, would struggle to hold its own. The recapture of a number of fortified towns by Villars during the next few months, confirmed the truth of this.

The signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, some months later, between France, Holland, Britain, and under strong protest Spain, was taken by Bolingbroke as justification of his approach, and he also pointed to a commercial treaty with France which was intended to lead to improved relations between the main warring powers. For almost 30 years it did so. However, Britain's treacherous conduct resulted in a storm of protest from the other members of the Grand Alliance, and a certain George, Elector of Hanover, soon to move to London as King was as vociferous as any. Fury was just as great amongst the Whig opposition, who claimed that the government had given away the fruits of Marlborough's victories, and feared that the Tories had taken a first step towards overturning the Hanoverian succession in favour of James Stuart, 'the Old Pretender'. Later observers have taken a more balanced view, seeing that the war was being un-necessarily prolonged, and that there were significant gains for Britain, like Gibraltar and Minorca, the interposition of a viable buffer state ruled by Austria between Holland and France, the break-up of the over-large Spanish Empire, and the establishment of the only logical dynastic line on the throne of Spain itself. However, as we shall see, the hostility to the provisions of the treaties especially in Spain, meant that peace was short-lived though the actual dispositions endured for longer. Because of this the consequences are best dealt with as causes of a war which followed after a 4 years.

4.2 The War of the Quadruple Alliance, 1717-1720

(i) Causes

As with many wars, the causes were rooted in the settlement which brought a previous conflict to an end. As has been seen the War of the Spanish Succession can be fairly regarded primarily as a triumph of an Anglo-Dutch army commanded by the Duke of Marlborough over French forces, in a decade-long campaign fought mainly in the Spanish Netherlands but including a renowned march into Germany which ended with victory in the Battle of Blenheim. Spain was a lesser theatre in which armies were generally smaller than in the Netherlands, but there, Franco-Spanish forces more than held their own, and thwarted British, Austrian and Catalonian attempts to capture and hold Madrid and so secure the Spanish throne for an Austrian Hapsburg candidate, the eventual Emperor Charles VI. Secondary theatre, it may have been, but the most important of the peace terms, agreed between belligerent nations at Utrecht and later at other venues, like Rastatt and Baden, concerned the future of Spain.

That nation had suffered while her nationals and foreign soldiers had fought for more than a decade on her soil, but far from being treated sympathetically her domains were then ripped apart by the peace agreements. The confirmation of the Bourbon, Philip V, as King reflected the will of most of the nation outside Catalonia, though it is doubtful if at any stage he fully accepted the quid pro quo of forced renunciation of his claim to the throne of France, to which he had moved much closer because of a number of deaths. Otherwise, Spain was treated as a defeated nation, and stripped of almost all her European possessions beyond the Iberian Peninsula, including the Spanish Netherlands, Naples and Sicily, Sardinia, and the Duchy of Milan. Even in her own backyard, Spain suffered depredations, with the recognition of Britain's annexation of Gibraltar and Minorca. The arrangements harked back to agreements reached between King Louis XIV and King William III of England at the end of the previous century; they had seen the partition of the Spanish inheritance as essential if the seemingly inevitable movement of Spain itself into either the French or Austrian orbit was to be generally accepted. King Louis had opportunistically changed his view when it seemed that his family might gain the whole prize, but Marlborough's victories forced him to accede to the earlier compromise. None of the negotiators took much account of the likely consequences for the stability of their settlement, of humiliating a still-powerful nation, Spain.

That nation, brought almost to ruin by what had many elements of a Civil War, might have taken years to recover, and so remained quiescent, but the emergence of an Italian cleric named Giulio Alberoni at the top of government was the catalyst for a very different scenario. He had first come to Spain in 1710, as private secretary to the French Marshal Vendome, who destroyed Stanhope's army at the Battle of Brihuega. Thereafter, Alberoni attached himself to the Princess d'Ursines, who exerted control over King Philip V, and with an appointment as Spanish Consul for the Italian mini-state of Parma became a prominent figure in Philip's Court. He was ideally placed to promote the remarriage of Philip, immediately after the death of his first wife in 1714, to Elizabeth Farnese of Parma, and this initiative proved the making of his career. Though only 21 at the time of the wedding, the new Spanish Queen quickly established dominance over her rather feeble husband, and effectively ruled Spain for the next three decades. She knew who to thank, so that by 1715 Alberoni was a Spanish duke, and First Minister, while a Cardinal's red hat followed two years later. Although the Queen's favour had got Alberoni to the top, his abilities seemed initially to be commensurate with his high position, as

he embarked on a programme of reform which removed barriers to trade within Spain, and especially with her South American colonies, and so revived the economy remarkably quickly. In less than three years he was able to inform the King and Queen that Spain could call on sufficient resources to set about reversing the despised Treaty of Utrecht.

The obvious target for Spanish forces was Italy where Austria had acquired the majority of the territories stripped away from Spain, but an attack there would result in war with Austria and probably Britain whose regional interests, mainly commercial, were protected by a large Mediterranean fleet. It was well understood in Spain that the attitude and conduct of France would be crucial in determining whether she would have to confront the full might of her potential adversaries, or forces limited by the need to take account of possible French hostility. However, Spain could take nothing for granted and was to blunder badly in her choice of methods to try to gain French support. The widely-anticipated (and feared) dynastic compact between France and Spain had not operated since the Treaty of Utrecht because of unusual circumstances affecting France and Britain. King Louis XIV had died in September 1715, to be succeeded by his 5-year old great-grandson, Louis XV, under a Regency of the Duke of Orleans, a nephew of the old King. The life chances of young children were not good in that age with killer diseases like smallpox rampant. If Louis XV were to die, it was clear that the strongest candidates for the succession would be the Regent, and, in spite of formal renunciations, King Philip V of Spain; hardly a recipe for good relations between the Courts of Paris and Madrid. In this situation, the Regent wanted to be able to call on support from France's then ally, Great Britain. This apparently un-natural conjunction had grown out of the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Utrecht, when Bolingbroke had partnered France in devising the terms while at the same time essentially discarding Britain's wartime allies. Since then, mutual interests had kept the two nations together, in spite of hostility in both their capitals, especially Paris.

In the councils of the French Regent, Cardinal Dubois, the ostensible First Minister strongly supported the British alliance but Marshal Villars, one of the few French generals to enhance his reputation amidst the welter of defeats in the recently-concluded war, and by then Defence Minister, was just one of those who favoured a Spanish alliance. The political rivalry could be seen as almost a proxy contest between the great British Minister, Stanhope, who of course backed Dubois and exerted considerable direct influence over the Regent, and Alberoni, who through his ambassador, Antonio del Giudice, Prince of Cellamare, sought to strengthen the 'Spanish party'. However, Alberoni was playing the weaker hand, and his failure was demonstrated by the signing of the Triple Alliance between Britain, France and the Dutch Republic in January 1717. Up to this point, Alberoni's actions had been measured, and had he continued in this fashion he might still have reversed French policy, but henceforward he made mistake after mistake, as we shall see.

The directing mind responsible for the Triple Alliance was of course Stanhope, though he had not seen it as an anti-Spanish measure, but rather as a building block for his more ambitious plan to provide peace and stability across Europe. His next objective was to obtain the agreement of Austria and Spain to its terms, though he knew that his task would be difficult. Neither state had approved of the peace settlement agreed at Utrecht, while the mutual hostility between the Courts of Philip V of Spain, and Emperor Charles VI, previously the Hapsburg pretender to the Spanish throne, and by then ruler of most of the 'stolen' Spanish territories in Italy, made it highly unlikely that they would adhere to the same alliance. It is unsurprising that Stanhope commenced his rather thankless task in Vienna, because he retained much of the influence over the Emperor that he had

exerted a decade earlier when a general in Spain, whereas he remained something of a hate-figure in Madrid for opposing King Philip's claim to the throne. With hindsight at least, his priorities look to have been wrong, because Austria embroiled in war with the Ottoman Empire, and without expansionary ambitions, except in the Balkans, was no threat to the peace of Western Europe, unlike embittered Spain. Alberoni did not wait for further diplomatic developments, and a Spanish army was sent to one of the lost possessions, Sardinia, in August 1717, and the war to be known as the War of the Quadruple Alliance had begun, even although there was as yet no Quadruple Alliance, and formal declarations of war were not to come for another year.

(ii) The Course of the War

In contrast to many wars of the 18th century, it is easy to track the course of this war; it was fought almost entirely in Europe, though a French force did encroach on the Spanish colony of Florida from Louisiana. Essentially, there were three elements, and because all were of relatively short duration, I shall follow them separately from start to finish.

1. Spain attempted to recover Italian territories taken from her by treaty in 1713/14, and fought Austria on land and Britain by sea, briefly, in consequence.
2. Spain attempted to exploit dynastic issues in France and Britain by supporting conspiracies and a Jacobite landing in the latter.
3. France and Britain sought to force Spain to back down by sending respectively a substantial army and an amphibious force into Northern Spain.

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As already noted, Spain initiated the conflict by sending an army of 9000, accompanied by 15 warships to Sardinia in August 1717. The recently ceded island was not well defended by Austrian forces, and reinforcements were not readily available because of Austria's war with the Ottoman Empire. Accordingly Spain had little difficulty in completing the conquest of the island by the end of the year. If Spain had been able to follow up this success quickly, while Austria was still engaged in the Balkans, matters might have turned out differently. Perhaps a smaller army could have been shipped sooner but it was early in July 1718 before a Spanish army of 30000 was landed in Sicily. This is not to minimise the Spanish achievement, especially logistically, in mounting such a major amphibious expedition, but accounts do not focus on that aspect, but on the riskiness of the endeavour, which soon became apparent. However, there was at first little resistance to the Spanish force, most of the island was in their hands by the end of the month, and the main city, Messina had been placed under siege. However events elsewhere had turned against Spain as Austria first concluded the Treaty of Passarowitz with the Ottomans, and then on 2nd August 1718 acceded to the terms of the Triple Alliance, which thereby became the Quadruple Alliance. At this point there was no declaration of war but a demand that Spain evacuate Sardinia and Sicily, couched in terms of an ultimatum.

The consequences followed quickly; a naval battle, of Cape Passaro to the north of Sicily took place on 11th August 1718 and resulted in the destruction or capture of most of the Spanish ships by a British fleet commanded by Admiral Sir George Byng. It was not a classic fleet action, but from the start a melee in which more powerful British warships hunted down individual Spanish ships. The latter had incautiously been sailing separately because ignorant of the ultimatum, and naïve to a fault, the commanders did not imagine that they

had anything to fear from the British fleet. At the last moment before action was joined, the Spanish admiral, Gaztaneta tried to save his smaller, weaker ships by detaching them, but this ploy was matched by Byng's dispersal of his own ships. By the end of an unequal struggle between 22 British ships of the line and 18 weaker Spanish ships of the line, more than half of the latter had been taken or destroyed, and 23 ships in all suffered one of those fates. It might be thought, and maybe was by some observers at the time, that without a support fleet, the Spanish army on Sicily, which could no longer be reinforced or supplied from Spain, would have no choice but to surrender. In fact this proved to be far from the case; on a large rich island like Sicily, supplies were not an issue, and the Spanish army outnumbered any force that Austria could bring to bear in the short term. The truth of this was rammed home soon enough when a small Austrian force was landed by the British fleet to attempt the relief of those besieged in Messina, but was defeated at the Battle of Milazzo on 15th October 1718; Messina then fell to the Spanish army and the Austrians were confined to a small bridgehead.

However, time was on the side of the Austrians. They could reinforce at will, under British naval protection, and by late spring, 1719, had amassed over 20000 soldiers. However this reduced rather than removed the superiority of the Spanish force, as the Austrians discovered to their cost when they attacked Spanish positions at Francavilla in mid-June, and were beaten back with heavy losses. The Austrians had to regroup and reinforce again, but finally won a battle, the second at Milazzo, and then besieged Messina, which fell into their hands after numerous assaults in October 1719. Thereafter, Spanish resistance crumbled leaving Austria in control of most of the island, and discussions were initiated to discuss surrender terms. Events elsewhere meant that it was in British (and French) interests to keep the Spanish army marooned in Sicily, so British Secretary of State Craggs warned the Emperor's ministers that such terms must not include repatriation of the Spanish army, and instructed Admiral Byng to sink any vessels disobeying this edict, even if they were Austrian. The threat was enough and the Spanish army had to wait to return to Spain in British ships as was eventually agreed in the peace treaty that ended the war. The war between Spain and Austria had ended in disaster for the former.

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Throughout the summer of 1718, Stanhope had tried to make adjustments to the Utrecht settlement, which might pacify Spain without causing too much upset to other nations. Knowing well enough where the real power lay in Spain he had persuaded the Emperor to renounce the Austrian claim to the Farnese territories of Parma and Piacenza in favour of the Spanish Queen's eldest son Charles. Austria was to be compensated with Sicily, while Piedmont, awarded Sicily in the recent treaties, but totally unable to defend the prize, would in turn be compensated with Sardinia. Stanhope was motivated above all by a general desire to preserve peace in Europe, but less idealistically by the difficulties he was having in the British parliament, after the Whig-split, with Walpole who was able to focus on the likely costs of a war. Stanhope also knew that opinion in Paris remained finely balanced. His efforts culminated in a distinctly risky trip to Madrid, early in August 1718, when apart from the proposals listed above, he would also have been willing to discuss the return of Gibraltar to Spain. Stanhope's role in the recent war was by no means forgotten in the Court of Philip V, and he remained more unpopular than he had perhaps realised, but the failure of his embassy was probably ensured by the Spanish feeling that with Sardinia and most of Sicily already repossessed, she had no need to negotiate for scraps. If this was so Alberoni was compounding his errors, but Stanhope left empty-handed, and fortunate that news of Cape Passaro arrived a few days after his departure. From that point a widening of the war became inevitable.

In Paris, discrete Spanish persuasion had been replaced by plotting against the government, and conspiracies directed to displacing the Duke of Orleans as Regent by either the Duke of Maine or King Philip V were devised, and led by the Spanish ambassador. The first of them, named for him, the Cellamare Conspiracy of mid-1718 failed and contributed to the reluctant French government's formal declaration of war against Spain soon afterwards and a second, the Pontcallec Conspiracy which was detected in 1720, would have had even worse consequences for Spain, if Alberoni had not already been dismissed and exiled. In December 1718, the British, and Austrians also declared war on Spain, though the fourth member of the alliance, the Dutch, prevaricated, seeing an opportunity for enhanced trade at the expense of her allies. Stanhope took the lead in deciding how Spain should be brought to book, and in what became the norm for British statesmen, seemed to have succeeded in arranging that most of the fighting would be done by other nations.

For the first 6 months of declared war, British military involvement had been fairly peripheral away from the Mediterranean, and might have remained so had Alberoni not stirred things up. An ambitious plan was developed in Madrid to land forces in South-West England and Western Scotland to feed into Jacobite revolts. The scheme is often mocked because the much larger force commanded by the Duke of Ormonde, comprising 7000 men in 27 ships, and directed towards the south-west of England was hit by severe storms and forced back to Spanish ports. This left only a smaller force, whose landing in Scotland had been conceived mainly as a feint, commanded by Earl Marischal Keith. It duly reached the north-west of Scotland where its soldiers, including 300 Spanish, were disembarked on 13th April 1719. In the next few weeks, supportive clansmen boosted the numbers to about a thousand. By late May, Keith had been informed of the abandonment of the main invasion, but nonetheless determined to advance on the Highland town of Inverness. The government had collected similar numbers of soldiers to intercept him and a battle was fought at Glen Shiel.

It was no walk-over, lasting several hours but the issue was decided when clan irregulars, as they must be termed, broke under assault from a grenadier regiment, and fled. The Spanish contingent fought on, but their situation became hopeless, so the survivors surrendered. Keith and his fellow Jacobite leaders escaped. It is of course highly unlikely that Ormonde's force could have prevailed if it had reached British shores, given the wider geopolitical situation. There may have been some local support for overthrowing the Hanoverian dynasty, but there were no substantial overseas commitments weakening the home-based army, nor was there any reason to doubt the loyalty of that force. (The situation mirrored neither that in 1745/46 when there was a large British contingent in the Pragmatic Army, nor that in 1688 when Britain was close to Civil War). Nonetheless, Alberoni's venture was certainly taken more seriously by the British government than by those later historians who have only looked scornfully at the small Scottish incursion; it served to change British attitudes towards the war, raising the level of hostility towards Spain. Rather than being almost a bystander, Britain looked for ways to strike back and end the war.

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At the same time as Alberoni mounted his failed invasion of Britain, in April 1719, French armies entered north-west Spain and Catalonia. The larger army, deployed to the west of the Pyrenees comprised 30000 men, and was commanded by the Marshal-Duke of Berwick, already portrayed as a cautious general but a 'safe pair of hands' who could be relied on to win any battle he chose to fight, and especially to take due account of the diplomatic and political background, against which he was operating. The irony associated with his involvement

was that he had done as much as anyone to secure Philip on the Spanish throne, especially by his victory at the Battle of Almanza in 1707 and by crushing Catalan resistance to that monarch in 1714.

Berwick made no effort to seek out the Spanish army, weakened by the absence of so many soldiers in Sicily, and left it to shadow him at a safe distance, nor did he encourage any local uprisings of those still dissatisfied with Bourbon rule. Instead, he progressed methodically, if slowly, into Spain taking ports like Los Pasages, Fuenterrabia, and Santona, destroying the Spanish ships he found there; at length he besieged and took the city of San Sebastian in August 1719. Disease rather than losses in fighting proved to be the main problem for both French forces in Spain, and that in Catalonia achieved little. Meanwhile stung by the attempted Spanish invasion, a plan for an amphibious assault on the Galician port of Vigo, which had been devised by Secretary of State Craggs, and the British Ambassador in France, the Earl of Stair, mainly as a way of convincing the French that Britain was willing to engage seriously in the war, was dusted down and adopted as a way of retaliating. A force of 4000 soldiers, protected by 8 ships of the line and other assorted craft, including fire-ships, was dispatched under the command of General Lord Cobham in October 1719. Vigo was captured easily, and held for 10 days while the soldiers made their presence felt some distance away at Pontevedra, and Santiago. They returned with much booty, including many cannon, and sustained comparatively few losses from enemy action or sickness. The smooth conduct of the expedition, and lack of dissention between the senior officers, made a sharp contrast with previous British amphibious operations against Spain, and its commander and planners deserve great credit. The vulnerability of the Spanish coast to invasion had been demonstrated, and in particular it had been made clear that any force resisting the advance of the Duke of Berwick could easily be taken in the rear.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

In December 1719, Philip, and more importantly, his wife Elizabeth accepted the inevitable. They dismissed and banished Cardinal Alberoni viewed everywhere as the promoter, instigator and director of Spain's war-like actions, though in reality he had only implemented, with spectacular lack of success, the wishes of his royal master and mistress. Then, they sued for peace. Stanhope was happy to revert to the status quo as far as Spain was concerned, rather than exacting a price for the disruption caused. As a result a Treaty (of The Hague) was signed as early as 17th February 1720; unusual speed was possible because Spain simply agreed, probably with some relief, to the offered terms. Certainly, any willingness to discuss the return of Gibraltar had vanished, but otherwise the Spanish royal house actually gained because the recognition of the claim of the eldest son of Philip and Elizabeth to Parma and Piacenza was not withdrawn. Austria swapped Sicily for Sardinia which went in return to Piedmont. In some ways both countries gained in the short term; Sicily was much the greater prize though there had to be doubts as to whether a negligible naval power like Austria could hold an island in the Mediterranean, if challenged. Sardinia was at least closer to Piedmont, and the junction was to prove durable. France received some trading concessions from Spain in return for the return of occupied territories, but Britain neither sought nor received any prize; one extra reason for the war being so little remembered in the latter country. Stanhope was content to have encompassed the failure of Spain under Alberoni to overturn the status quo, and with the expansion and deepening of the alliance he was building.

What of the future for the main protagonists and their countries? Stanhope, who had transformed himself from a general whose rashness made him an accident waiting to happen, into perhaps the greatest foreign minister

that Britain ever had, died a year later as a result of an apoplectic fit brought on by an outburst of the temper he never fully mastered, so bringing to an end British dominance in the councils of Europe. Cardinal Alberoni had to survive a few difficult years in Italy, but the death of a hostile pope opened the way for him to receive some ecclesiastical posts of consequence, though he continued to attract controversy. Later, he stacked up a significant number of votes in at least one papal conclave, even if not enough to gain election; he died a very rich octogenarian, in 1752. More generally, Britain's leaders were to learn soon enough that the Spanish Court saw the failure as a setback, rather than an end-point.

4.3 The Anglo-Spanish War – 1726-1729

(i) Causes

When imposing peace terms after the War of the Quadruple Alliance, Stanhope had exacted no territorial or commercial penalties from Spain. His hope was that with Cardinal Alberoni removed from power and banished, Spain would settle down, and accept the outcome of the Treaty of Utrecht, and perhaps that relations between Britain and Spain might improve. There was probably little chance of either development, given the ambitions of the Spanish Queen, Elizabeth, for Spain, and for the heirs of her body, in Italy, and such chance as there was vanished with Stanhope's death in 1721. Britain abnegated the role of arbiter of Europe, and under the cautious stewardship of his successor, Viscount Townshend, became largely an onlooker. This passivity applied to Spain as much as anywhere else, and contrasted with continuing hostility from that quarter.

The Spanish grievances included the continuing British occupation of Gibraltar and Minorca, the constant presence of British fleets in the Western Mediterranean acting as a barrier to Spanish ambitions in Italy and apparently threatening her coast directly, and manifestations of British trading and colonial ambitions in the western hemisphere. The Spanish objective of reversing the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht had not changed in a decade, though Britain had replaced Austria as the main enemy, but there was a realisation that Spain must in future avoid uniting all the western European powers against her, so a search for allies began. Efforts were made to patch up relations between the Bourbon rulers of Spain and France, poisoned by the Cellamare and Pontcallec conspiracies, to which reference has already been made, and the process was aided by the deaths of Cardinal Dubois, and then the Duc d'Orleans in 1723, shortly after King Louis XV had attained his majority. However, the increasing influence, culminating in his appointment as France's First Minister in 1726, of the Bishop of Fréjus, later Cardinal Fleury, set limits on the rapprochement, because he soon made it clear that he had every intention of maintaining good relations with Britain. When forced to choose, he scuppered marriages intended to forge a closer dynastic union between France and Spain. This only left Austria amongst the greater west-facing powers, and at first sight there was little to be hoped for there, given that the Spanish ruling dynasty was not recognised in Vienna, and that Spain had made her designs on Austrian possessions in Italy obvious to all, in the recent war, and afterwards. Yet a treaty was signed in the Austrian capital, in June 1725 which seemed to give Spain the backing which she craved.

The development, which shocked the rest of Europe, came about because each party saw short term benefits, and because of the actions of a remarkable individual, John William Ripperda. Spain and Queen Elizabeth gained recognition of the claims of the Queen's sons to rule the Italian Provinces Parma, Piacenza, and Tuscany, and vague promises of Austrian aid for Spanish attempts to recover Gibraltar and Minorca. In return the Emperor Charles VI received even vaguer promises of recognition for his daughter's rights to inherit Hapsburg hereditary lands, and more tangibly, or so it seemed, trading rights with Spain's colonies for his new Ostend Company together with the promise of a large Spanish subsidy. Ripperda's role was central, in that he conducted the negotiation lasting 10 months in a fashion that may have owed little to conventional diplomatic practice, but circumvented every problem. He was Dutch born, in Groningen in 1680, and he has variously been portrayed as violent, dishonest and corrupt, but he must also have been very persuasive. His early career is obscure, but in 1715 he was sent as a Dutch envoy to Madrid. In many ways his rise mirrored that of Cardinal Alberoni, whom he assisted, and through whom he was able to access Queen Elizabeth, becoming one of the

instruments of her dynastic designs. He survived the fall of the Cardinal, increased his influence with the Queen, and was eventually sent as special envoy to Vienna.

I shall complete his tale before saying more about his treaty. He returned to Madrid later in 1725, claiming that Spain's new ally, the Emperor, expected him to be appointed First Minister, and King Philip V duly obliged, also making Ripperda a Spanish Duke. However chickens soon came home to roost; the Austrians demanded the first instalment of the subsidy, which Ripperda had agreed without authority, and thereafter the two Royal Courts compared notes and found that most of the negotiation had been based on false premises. The damaging revelations were hushed up to spare the embarrassment of the Spanish Court, and because it suited both nations to maintain the fiction that a substantive treaty was in place. Ripperda largely escaped punishment, and gulled the British ambassador, Lord Harrington, into assisting his passage back to his Dutch homeland. His adventures were not at an end, and he is thought to have died, possibly a Muslim convert, attempting to act as a power-broker in Morocco in 1737.

The strangest thing about the Treaty of Vienna is that it was taken seriously across Europe even by those who must have known that its terms were so vague as to be almost meaningless. Presumably, they anticipated that having taken a first step towards amity, the participants might move on to reach a more comprehensive agreement. Nowhere was the reaction stronger than in London, where Secretary of State Townshend immediately devised his own counter-measure. In his eyes, the Treaty of Vienna was not only a threat to Gibraltar and Minorca, but also seemed to presage an Austrian attack on Hanover, which could have brought about his dismissal by King George I. He was almost certainly over-reacting but wasted no time in agreeing the Treaty of Hanover which was signed in September 1725 between Prussia, France, also apparently threatened by the Treaty of Vienna, and Britain, with the stated aim of protecting Hanover from the new threat seemingly coming from Austria. Spain still looked like the clear beneficiary from the diplomacy of 1725; as compared with 1717, she had neutralised Austria and France if she chose to move against British interests, and perhaps she still hoped for some assistance from the former. Spain had certainly discommoded the British government, but her prospects remained poor in any direct confrontation with British naval power, so the Madrid Court realised that her next steps required careful consideration.

(ii) The Course of the War

This turned out to be another short and limited war, so I shall track the two areas of conflict separately. Spain had indeed made a powerful enemy in Townshend whose reputation had been enhanced by his uncharacteristic decisiveness. Not content with having neutralised any threat to Hanover, Townshend decided to punish Spain for as he saw it, disturbing the peace. He called his proposed action a pre-emptive strike, based on advice that a fleet sent to Porto Bello in Panama could prevent the departure of the Spanish treasure fleet, on which the country's finances were heavily dependent. There was a domestic political element to this initiative; long-lasting friendly co-operation between himself and his brother-in-law Robert Walpole was turning into enmity, not least because Townshend, who had been the senior partner, was being overtaken by Walpole as the dominant force in government. In the sphere of foreign affairs, which included questions of peace and war, he could still anticipate that the last word would be his, and a successful war would boost his prestige before a confrontation which seemed inevitable. Accordingly, a fleet of 11 ships of the line and some other smaller vessels, carrying 2000 soldiers, was readied for action and despatched for the Caribbean under the command of Vice-Admiral

Francis Hosier in March 1726. However, Walpole was able to compromise the expedition, fatally as it transpired, by limiting its scope. He may have been motivated mainly by a wish to avoid war with Spain, which might draw in other countries, but another major success for the Secretary of State would have troubled him. Admiral Hosier's instructions, drawn up after much argument within the divided government, allowed him to take any ship which he encountered on the high sea, but not to attack Porto Bello or the ships, including the treasure fleet, which were protected by its guns.

The British fleet arrived on station in June 1726, and was initially successful in so far as several Spanish ships were captured, but it soon became clear to the Spanish commanders in Porto Bello, that although the British force appeared to be strong enough to take the port without difficulty, it was not going to do so. Accordingly they unloaded the treasure fleet and waited. Hosier cruised for 6 months suffering ever-increasing losses to disease, and eventually was compelled to visit Jamaica to take on replacement crew members. He then returned to his station, but his blockade had been interrupted, and the Spanish treasure fleet had been able to depart for Spain in January 1727. Although it had failed in its purpose the British fleet was not withdrawn and first Hosier in August 1727, and then his two successors died of disease, before peace brought relief in 1729; in total, upwards of 4000 British sailors and soldiers may have died, practically none as a result of enemy action. Hosier was held to be responsible in the immediate aftermath, but the longer view has shifted the blame to the government and especially to Robert Walpole. Nonetheless, I have the feeling that a more forceful commander, a Rooke, a Hawke, or certainly a Nelson would have circumvented his instructions, taken Porto Bello quickly, and defied his government to risk popular outcry by doing its worst, thereafter.

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Long before the outcomes described above were known in Europe, in January 1727, an ultimatum formulated as a complaint that Britain had infringed the terms of the agreement under which Gibraltar had been ceded, (principally by allowing many heretics to settle there), was presented by the Spanish ambassador in London. The Spanish ploy was intended to justify an assault on the fortress. They cannot have imagined that carrying Gibraltar by an assault purely from landward would be easy, but in the face of overwhelming British naval superiority, Spain had no other recourse. The 13th siege of Gibraltar, as it has been accounted, began in late February. There had only been just over a thousand British soldiers in the fortress when the Spanish ultimatum was tendered, but the delay before fighting began, allowed time for 6 ships of the line to be despatched under Admiral Sir Charles Wager, a very competent admiral, along with a few thousand reinforcing soldiers. Although the Spanish force was much larger, perhaps upwards of 15000 men, they were compelled to attack along a narrow strand connecting the fortress to the mainland, and were subjected to heavy shelling from the British fleet, as well as batteries within and just outside the fortress. The Spanish regrouped and mounted their own artillery bombardment during March, but it did not achieve much against soldiers protected by thick masonry walls. The British defenders were further reinforced to more than 5000, principally from Minorca in April, and were easily supplied thereafter from the sea. The Spanish guns were brought into action again during May but there was no sign that they were seriously inconveniencing the garrison. The two scourges for static forces in this era, namely disease and inadequate supply began to affect the Spanish army, and in June 1727, a truce was agreed which in spite of some alarms lasted until the Anglo-Spanish War was formally brought to an end,

two years later. Casualties on the British side had amounted to a few hundred, while the Spanish force suffered about four times as many.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

There was no further fighting in the Anglo-Spanish War, but it proved to be far more difficult to end than it had been to start. Eventually, three separate negotiations were required; the first produced the Treaty of Pardo in March 1728, but the British government refused ratification. There followed the Congress of Soissons which lasted over a year between June 1728 and July 1729, before the Treaty of Seville was finally signed in November 1729. Neither the war nor the treaty which brought it to an end changed much, though the two belligerents formally accepted that the ownership of Minorca and Gibraltar, would not change, but in spite of interminable discussions Spain held its ground over trade with its American colonies, insisted on retaining the right to board merchant ships to inspect cargos, and refused to settle compensation claims arising out of rough treatment during such incidents.

The negotiations could well have dragged on even longer, but Walpole and the Duke of Newcastle saw the chance to use the Seville Treaty as a lever against Lord Townshend; it was a clear indication of the decline in influence of the latter, that he, the minister who had initiated the war, was completely frozen out of the process which brought it to an end. In fact, it can be argued that the most important consequence, at least on the British side, was the effect on Lord Townshend's reputation; far from being enhanced as he had hoped, the Caribbean expedition did the opposite, and it can be argued that this was a kind of justice given the cost in British lives. Robert Walpole was unable to engineer the dismissal of Lord Townshend from his position of Secretary of State as he retained some respect from the King, but in 1730 he became so disgusted by his loss of control in the domain of foreign affairs that he resigned. For the remaining 8 years of his life, during which he never once spoke to Walpole, he was occupied in making and publicising agricultural improvements on his estates. Perhaps ironically, 'Turnip' Townshend is now remembered more for that facet of his life, than for two decades occupying the highest political offices in the land, or indeed for organising an expedition to the Caribbean which turned into something of a debacle.

4.4. The War of Jenkin's Ear – 1739-1742 (1750)

(i) Causes

Some authorities believe, that the breakdown in relations between Walpole and Townshend, though eventually very personal, was brought on by the sudden assumption of a belligerent posture by the latter in 1725. Walpole knew that financing any war diverted cash, which he required to maintain his complex and corrupt system of political management. He funded sinecures and commercial concessions, and went as far as making 'under the counter' payments, so benefitting some who would not otherwise have given him support. After Lord Townshend's departure from the government, Robert Walpole was paramount for a few years, and from that point is rightly designated our first Prime Minister; he was able to stick rigidly to a pacific foreign policy, serving his political aims, but also in fairness because he detested war. There had been no decrease in the number of confrontations between Spanish warships and British merchantmen, but Walpole was strong enough in parliament to ignore the occasional representations made there on behalf of those affected. With some justification, the Prime Minister saw faults on both sides, and any losses falling on British insurers as negligible compared with those which would accompany a war, without even thinking about the overall damage to trade which would have resulted.

The incident, that later gave its name to a war took place, as early as 1731, off the coast of Florida, when a British brig named Rebecca was boarded, and an ear of its master, Robert Jenkins, was sliced off by a Spanish sword, but there were no repercussions at the time. It is likely that Spain eased back on the vigour of its patrolling in the Western Hemisphere during the War of the Polish Succession (between 1733 and 1735) to avoid giving pretexts for British entry to the war against her, but by 1736 the number of incidents was again on the increase. Crucially, the parliamentary balance had moved against Walpole, so that complainants about Spanish harassment of British vessels could get a hearing. The aforementioned Robert Jenkins testified to parliament in March 1738, some 7 years after receiving his injury, and the famous severed ear perhaps made an appearance, before the members.

Walpole knew that feelings were by then running too high to be brushed aside, but his preferred route to calming them was still negotiation. Accordingly, in 1738, British and Spanish diplomats got together at the El Pardo palace in Madrid to try to reach agreement. The questions they had to address included the scale of allowable trade, especially in slaves, by British merchants with Spanish colonies, the Asiento, the matter of Spanish searching of British ships, compensation payments in both directions, and recent boundary disputes between the British and Spanish colonies, Georgia and Florida. By January 1739 the Convention of Pardo had been agreed by the negotiators and was despatched to London for ratification. The head of the British team, Sir Benjamin Keene, was satisfied with his efforts, but hardly anyone in London was. There had been large reductions in the net amount of the compensation to be paid by Spain, and the questions of ship searches and the Georgia/Florida boundary had simply been held over for further discussion. Although Walpole tried to keep the agreement, the pressure for war mounted in parliament and the country at large. Walpole was by then dependent on the Duke of Newcastle for his majority in the House of Commons, and when the Secretary of State performed a volte face and declared for war in the summer, Walpole accepted, not without bitter words, that he could not prevent it. After tit-for-tat repudiations of parts of the Convention of Pardo, (the British refused

to recall their fleet from the Mediterranean, and the Spanish reneged on the compensation payment), war began. It became known over a century later at the instance of Thomas Carlyle as the War of Jenkin's Ear.

(ii) The Course of the War

There had been major shifts in the alignments of the Western European powers since the previous conflict between Britain and Spain, but the implications were not clear-cut. A near-quarter century of 'un-natural' amity between Britain and France was under threat, and there was a feeling in Britain that it would not take much to trigger a war. In such a conflict, Britain would probably be a target for invasion with Jacobite involvement, and Hanover, a German possession of the British crown since 1714, would be highly vulnerable. Britain was still nominally allied to Austria, but having let her partner down during the recent War of the Polish Succession, could not expect to receive much assistance from that quarter. Spain and France had fought the aforementioned war together, but had quarrelled about objectives throughout, not least because of unlimited Spanish ambitions in Italy. It was thought unlikely, that France would wish to fight another war to expand Spanish territory, but almost certain that she would respond, if Spain was seriously threatened. So, just as France had limited the scope of her operations against Austria, on the Rhine front to avoid British involvement in the War of the Polish Succession, it was in the British interest to fight a limited war against Spain to avoid French involvement. Such considerations decided the British strategy of concentrating offensive efforts in the Western Hemisphere. However two precautionary principles were followed; a fleet commanded by Admiral Nicholas Haddock had already been sent to the Mediterranean, in 1738, to protect Gibraltar and Minorca, and it was maintained throughout the war. For fear of a reversal of French neutrality, a strong fleet was also kept in home waters.

From the Spanish viewpoint, it would have been beneficial to entice Britain into committing some action which would have drawn France into the war, but there was no obvious way of doing this, and the presence of a British fleet had eliminated the possibility of launching successful attacks on Gibraltar and Minorca. Accordingly it must have seemed sensible to stand on the defensive, as had been done in the previous clash, and hope that disease and British incompetence might again win the day for Spain. In July 1739, Admiral Edward Vernon, who had taken a prominent role in the agitation for war, departed for the Caribbean with a squadron of five ships of the line, and some support vessels, unencumbered by restrictive instructions; indeed much was asked of a relatively small force. When he arrived in October, he first detached three ships under a Captain Waterhouse, to intercept Spanish ships in the sea lanes around a port called La Guaira. The British presence was probably enough to keep most Spanish ships in port, so he took few prizes before deciding rashly to attack the port, enticed by the ships he could see sheltering there. He was beaten off with heavy losses to his crews, and had to return to Jamaica to make his excuses.

This might have set the tone for the whole expedition, but Vernon, an aggressive commander, next took his 5 ships of the line to Porto Bello in Panama, and captured it within 24 hours in November. Thanks in part to the acrimony which had attended the prohibition of its capture in the previous war, Vernon's success was blown out of proportion, but success it was, and the fort and port were demolished before Vernon left. (Commodore Anson's famous expedition was dispatched in 1740 to follow up Vernon's coup by raiding round the South American coast; Anson achieved little at first, and lost most of his ships by the time he rounded Cape Horn, but his later capture of a treasure ship and completion of a rare circumnavigation, transformed his career prospects.) Vernon's next target in March 1740 was Cartagena de Indias in Columbia, but an attempt to land soldiers failed,

and thereafter a bombardment proved insufficient to force surrender. Losses were not great, save perhaps to Vernon's self-esteem, and he responded by sailing to Panama where he captured and destroyed the last Spanish port there, San Lorenzo el Real Chagres. Cartagena clearly rankled and Vernon went back there in early May 1740, but another bombardment accomplished nothing. Nonetheless, at this point in time, the balance was in Britain's favour, with the Spanish military presence in Panama more or less wiped out, and losses to disease and enemy action sustainable.

The prestige which Admiral Vernon had acquired in London, principally thanks to the capture of Porto Bello, meant that his request for additional resources was accepted by the government to a remarkable extent. 10000 soldiers and 27 ships of the line were made available, originally to capture Havana, but a fateful change of plan switched the point of attack to Cartagena de Indias once again. It took time to assemble the force in Jamaica, but in March 1741 the scene was set for the major British attack. The Spanish commander at Cartagena, Admiral de Lezo, seemed to have little chance of making a prolonged defence, outnumbered as he was with less than 4000 soldiers and only 6 ships of the line, though military doctrine would suggest that British superiority was no more than adequate to take a defended fortress. Much was going to depend on planning and leadership; in this regard the Spanish advantage was great with a single respected commander who set clear objectives, whereas British planning seems to have been very much ad hoc, while Vernon and General Wentworth, the army commander were at daggers drawn throughout, and there have been few testimonials to the competence of the latter.

British soldiers had some early success when outlying fortifications were taken, enough to cause Vernon to send dispatches to London indicating that Cartagena was about to be captured, but that was as good as it got. Through April, attack after attack failed to make enough progress, with outlying positions remaining in Spanish hands; then on 19th April the Spanish mounted a fierce counter-attack and came close to driving the main British force into the sea. A bridgehead was held but heavy casualties had been incurred, and reserves were almost exhausted. The soldiers were withdrawn to their ships before the end of the month, and predictably, in crowded conditions, with the rainy season underway, disease, probably yellow fever, grew to epidemic proportions. On 9th May, Vernon was forced to accept the inevitable and return with his battered fleet to Jamaica. Admiral de Lezo had little time to enjoy his triumph as he caught the fever which had spread to the fort, and died within days of Vernon's departure. In total, British deaths totalled more than 6000, compared with less than 1000 on the Spanish side. Twice in just over a decade, British expeditions to the Caribbean had ended in disaster with disease the major factor, but lasting lessons had not been learned.

Vernon was not a man to be daunted by failure, however humiliating, and remained determined to use his depleted resources to the best advantage. It was probably only after his return to Jamaica that he was able to assess the scale of his losses, men and materiel. He realised that he no longer had the manpower to resume the campaign against Cartagena, so switched his attention back to Cuba, landing a force which marched on the city of Santiago de Cuba. However, the Spanish were able to block the British advance with little difficulty, and another evacuation followed. It was not just men that the British lacked, but ships as well, because so many had been damaged off Cartagena, and other raids mounted by Vernon were unsuccessful as a result. While no-one could doubt Vernon's energy and determination, he had squandered the unprecedented resources that had been made available to him, and his premature claim of success at Cartagena had caused great embarrassment

to the government which had gone as far as to cast celebratory medals. Yet when he returned to London towards the end of 1742, it was to find that his reputation still stood high, and his active career was not at an end. Once again, Walpole, who had just been forced out of office, was blamed for a failure to prosecute the war with sufficient brio, and Vernon managed to shift any remaining obloquy onto his subordinates. Apart of course from Captain Jenkins, Admiral Vernon is the only British figure of note associated with the war and he continued his turbulent career into the War of the Austrian Succession, but in 1746, clashed once too often with authority, and was retired; he died in 1757. Now, his main claim to fame is his association with the sailors drink of diluted rum, 'grog'. He had the nickname 'old grog' because he wore a coat of mohair, known in France as grogram, and presumably was one of the first to supply the drink to his sailors, but further details escape me.

Before moving on, I shall mention campaigns little-remembered in Britain, which took place at roughly the same time on the American continent. Following earlier clashes between Florida and Carolina, Georgia had been founded by General James Oglethorpe in early 1733 as a buffer state on disputed land between the two colonies. In June 1740, Oglethorpe and an English fleet of 7 ships appeared off St. Augustine in northern Florida. As in the 1702 siege, 300 Spanish soldiers and 1,300 residents took shelter within the walls of St. Mark's fort. For 27 days, the British bombarded the fort and small town to little effect. Oglethorpe decided to starve the defenders into surrender, but he ran out of supplies before his target did, and had to retreat ignominiously. However, he redeemed himself entirely, when a Spanish force of c4000 landed on St. Simon's Island in Georgia in early-July 1742, beside a British fort. Oglethorpe, who probably had less than 1000 militia-men, abandoned the fort, and spiked its guns, but when the Spanish commander sent a reconnaissance party against him, he routed them at the Battle of Gully Hole Creek, and then defeated another contingent at the Battle of Bloody Marsh. Though still heavily outnumbered, he kept the Spanish soldiers penned up in the fort by a mixture of small scale attacks and bluff. As a result theirs was the humiliation this time, as they evacuated the island before the end of the month, and this proved to be the last action before peace was finally agreed between Britain and Spain in 1763; Georgia was then confirmed as a British possession.

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Vernon's return had marked the end-point of British offensive action in the Caribbean, and arguably the point of time when the War of Jenkin's Ear ended, though the War of the Austrian Succession, into which it was subsumed, did not officially begin until Declarations of War were promulgated in March 1744. However hostilities in Europe involving Spanish, Austrian and British forces began 2 years earlier with the French watching on while threatening to enter the conflict at any time. This account would be unbalanced if I were to move into any sort of full description of the War of the Austrian Succession, and in any case such an exercise would be hardly relevant to the struggles between Spain and Great Britain. This is because the priorities of the two nations diverged to the extent that in Europe there was soon to be almost no contact between their armed forces, but this was after an important naval clash which against the odds went in favour of Spain. As has been noted, the provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht which had cost Spain her territories in Italy, largely to the benefit of Austria, had never been accepted by the Court in Madrid, not least because Queen Elizabeth Farnese, who dominated there, worked tirelessly to create Italian states ruled by her sons. (Her eldest son Charles, who ironically was eventually to become King of Spain, had been recognised as putative ruler of Piacenza and Parma in 1720, then gained the much larger prize of Sicily at the end of the War of the Polish Succession in 1735). Spanish

ambitions in 1740 were for the extension of his realm and to obtain principalities for the younger siblings of King Charles. Much of this territory would have to come at the expense of Austria, which was hard pressed on all sides, following the death of Emperor Charles VI, and the succession to the Hapsburg lands of his daughter, Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary. However, Austria did have a rather shaky alliance with Britain, and the scene appeared to be set for a replay of the events of August 1718, when a British fleet had destroyed its weaker Spanish counterpart, and eliminated the possibility of reinforcement of a Spanish army in Sicily.

There was a major difference between the naval capabilities of Britain in 1718 and 1740, lying mainly in the qualities of leadership shown by the admirals appointed by the government in the latter period. Perhaps the 3 British admirals who were responsible for the debacles which followed were not entirely to blame, as each of them had spent a substantial period in semi-retirement before being recalled to take command of the British fleet in the Mediterranean, and this may have impacted on competence. The first to be found wanting was Admiral Nicholas Haddock, member of a distinguished naval family. (His father and grandfather were both Comptrollers of the Navy, responsible for the building, arming and provisioning of all warships). With those connections it is unsurprising that he was a captain in charge of a line of battle ship in 1707 at the age of 21, and thereafter he seems to have performed adequately, becoming an admiral in 1734. He was appointed to command the Mediterranean fleet in 1738, and his main tasks were to interdict trade with Spanish America, and blockade the Spanish fleet in the harbour of Cadiz, preventing its escape northwards to combine with a French Channel fleet. Blockade was always a chancy business, and the Spanish fleet did escape, but entered the Mediterranean Sea, when gales drove Haddock westwards, after which his only recourse was to follow his adversaries. With only 10 ships of the line at his disposal, (no doubt this was in part a consequence of the diversion of ships into Vernon's fleet), Haddock was unable to mount a successful blockade in the Mediterranean and failed to prevent the crossing of Spanish armies from Barcelona to Italy. In November 1741, a Spanish fleet with 14,000 troops sailed to Orbetello and in mid-December, 52 ships carrying almost 12,800 men successfully crossed towards La Spezia; both landing points were on the west coast of Tuscany.

Admiral Haddock fell ill and had to return to England in mid-1742, though steps had already been taken to replace him. The government having made one uninspiring appointment, made two others which together proved little short of disastrous. By then, the Mediterranean fleet had been greatly reinforced to a point where it should have been strong enough to dominate the seas around Spain and Italy, and it was first entrusted to a Rear-Admiral Richard Lestock. To his chagrin, this turned out to be only an interim appointment and Vice-Admiral Thomas Mathews was sent out to take command later in the year. The Admiralty Board must have been aware that Mathews and Lestock had clashed previously while the former was Commissioner of Chatham Docks, and the latter commanded a block ship. The enmity continued, and Mathews tried to get Lestock sent home, but as was to be proved later, Lestock had powerful friends in high places, and was actually promoted to the rank of Vice-Admiral, rather than being recalled. Nonetheless, naval matters progressed in largely satisfactory fashion in 1743, with some minor successes for Mathews, but the fleet had not been put to any real test. The admiral was later criticised for not engaging more during this period with the ship's captains to explain his thinking about the conduct of any fleet action, but he had a second role as plenipotentiary to Piedmont/Sardinia, and other Italian states, and delegated most operational matters to his deputy. Far from trying to increase fleet efficiency, Lestock seems to have concentrated on discrediting his superior.

The admiral in charge of the Spanish fleet, Juan José Navarro y Búfalo, was well outmatched, and had to behave circumspectly, seeking refuge in the French port of Toulon, where he was blockaded by Mathews in early-1744. War had not been declared between France and Britain, but when a combined fleet of 27 ships of the line, only 12 of which were Spanish, emerged from Toulon harbour on 21st February, Mathews had to assume that they would all fight him. The British fleet, which was stronger, with 3 more ships of the line, and a larger advantage in great guns, set off in pursuit. However the rear division of several ships, under the command of Admiral Lestock fell behind for no obvious reason, and did not close the gap in spite of signals telling them to do so. As a result, Mathews was at a disadvantage when forced to attack on 23rd February, to prevent the Franco-Spanish fleet from escaping. Mathews seems to have been guilty of hoisting confusing signals, but the actions of his own ship steering into the Spanish squadron in the rear should have left no doubt as to his intentions, and some of his captains, most notably Edward Hawke, later a renowned admiral, followed him, but too many did not. The British ships which attacked perhaps had the better of things, but their small numbers left them in serious danger of encirclement, and they had to break off the action. They regrouped and resumed the pursuit south-westwards, catching the combined fleet, which had been slowed by the need to tow damaged ships, but again Mathews, by faulty signalling gave some excuses to those captains, who chose not to engage, including Lestock's squadron. This time the Franco-Spanish fleet made good its escape and continued to Italy delivering reinforcements and supplies to the Spanish army there. The British fleet retired to Port Mahon in Minorca.

As sea battles go, Toulon was a non-event; though 300 seamen perished, only one (Spanish) ship of the line was sunk. However, the battle did have consequences. The Spanish celebrated success; their admiral became a marquis, and he fully deserved the plaudits for confronting a superior force, coming away from the sea battle with honours even, and achieving his objectives, whereas his opponent had failed totally to make his material advantage count. For a while the French and Spanish had control of the waterways which allowed supplies to reach Italy, though it was not too long before the Spanish fleet was bottled up again, by Admiral Rowley in the port of Cartagena. France and Britain declared war on each other immediately after the Battle of Toulon, and the attention of both switched northwards, the latter to defend herself against potential invasion in support of a Jacobite Rebellion, and Hanover and the Netherlands against French armies led by a great commander, Marshal de Saxe.

Blockade of French ports played a large role, and attempts by French squadrons to escape led to two sea battles of Finisterre, in which crushing victories by Admirals Anson and Hawke mostly repaired the damage to British naval prestige, resulting from the earlier sea battle. However recriminations were long-lasting. Admiral Mathews who had shown himself to be a brave seaman, but an incompetent admiral, made another mistake in sending Admiral Lestock home. Far from disgracing Lestock, this simply gave him time to mobilise his powerful friends in his support before a Court Martial which acquitted him; this was a travesty, his conduct during the battle was either cowardly or traitorous, and he was probably as much deserving of execution as the captains who disobeyed Admiral Benbow, or Admiral Byng, who did suffer that penalty. Incredibly, he was given important commands afterwards, though he died in 1746. When Admiral Mathews returned to Britain, more extensive Courts Martial took place, and he was duly found guilty of misconduct and dismissed the service, as were 7 of the ship's captains involved in the battle, though in a further travesty, none of those led by Lestock suffered this fate. The injustice was acknowledged in a sense, when the articles of war which governed behaviour of fleets

were amended soon afterwards, to eliminate the get-outs called in aid by Lestock, and to emphasise that admirals and captains had to do everything possible to engage with their enemies. This change went a long way to sealing the fate of Admiral Byng.

For the remainder of the war, British attention remained focused on France, and although the Spanish fleet was held in Cartagena this was a measure to prevent its passing into the Atlantic, and joining the main French fleets, rather than to fulfil local objectives. Other than that, British involvement in the Mediterranean was confined to diplomatic efforts in Italy. There, Spain's military campaign against the alliance of Austria and Savoy/Piedmont was frustrated, not least by a lack of support from France, which concentrated on the protection of its northern frontier. So confrontation between Spain and Britain continued only as a privateering war, and there can be no question that Spain with the assistance of France enjoyed the upper hand. She had the wherewithal to run an effective convoy system in the Caribbean and South American waters from her ports there, so defending against British privateering. Britain could not spare the frigates to do likewise, because of heavy commitments elsewhere, especially in home waters, guarding against invasion plans by blockading French ports, and maintaining a Channel fleet as a second line of defence. Thus, British merchant ships were easy prey, but so lucrative was their trade, in slaves and textiles in particular, that Spanish privateers were never short of targets.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

Negotiations to end the conflict between Britain and Spain began in 1746 when envoys met in Lisbon, but Spanish attempts to include recognition of gains in Italy from Austria, Britain's ally, doomed them to failure. Terms to end the War of Austrian Succession were agreed between France and Britain in 1748, and more or less imposed on the other belligerents by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, but contentious matters between Britain and Spain were glossed over in what was a general return to the status quo. It might have been expected that relations would soon revert to the fractious state which had persisted for more than thirty years but events took a different turn. The British government led by Henry Pelham was hardly pro-active in most areas, but in this matter it did show some initiative. In 1750 negotiations began again in Madrid and agreement was reached that the British Asiento contract should not be renewed, so removing the source of many of the disputes between the nations in the first half of the 18th century. The full name, Asiento de Negros indicates that it was what would nowadays be viewed as a totally disreputable contract to supply slaves to the Spanish colonies in South and Central America. It had existed since the early 16th century, and had been awarded to Spanish, Portuguese, Genoese, French, and Dutch contractors before Britain received the commission to deliver 4800 slaves annually for 30 years, by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. One shipment of ordinary goods was also allowed every year, but no-one should be in any doubt as to where lay the real value in the contract. It would be nice to think that British slave trading was at least reduced as a result of the ending of the Asiento contract, but in fact it went on at an increased rate for another 50 years, before Wilberforce and Clarkson, with crucial support from those more influential in Parliament, brought British involvement in the trade to an end. In 1750, Britain received £100000 in return for non-renewal of the Asiento, which continued for some time in Spanish hands, and otherwise a promise of favourable terms of trade, which was kept. For a decade afterwards, relations between Spain and Britain were comparatively good though fall-out from the Seven Years War eventually drove a wedge between them again.

I choose to end the account at this point, for reasons given in the introduction, but repeated here. In the wars fought before 1750 against England, and then Great Britain, Spain was usually a major contender, but later in the century, Spain tended to join the fray late, seemingly in a rarely successful quest for easy pickings. If I dare say so, its role was like that of a jackal trying to pick up scraps. Of course the change was at least in part dictated by a decline in power as compared with other major European nations, though it should not be thought that Spain had become a negligible opponent, especially on the sea. However, this means that any focus on Spain's role in these very well documented conflicts, would tend to over-emphasise its relatively small importance, for all that 15 of the 33 ships overwhelmed by Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, were Spanish. The other reason for my choice of this end-point is the fact that the documentation of all the wars fought between 1756 and 1815 is to say the least comprehensive, and even the relatively small number of important confrontations between British and Spanish forces are covered to a reasonable degree. So, for fear of further contributions being superfluous or disproportionate, I go no further, except to wrap things up in the next section.

5. Final Reflections

At the starting date for this account, Spain had a massive empire, with many possessions beyond the Iberian peninsula, in Europe, the East Indies, and especially in the Americas, South, Central and North. This allowed her to draw on large pools of manpower and thanks to the precious metals sent across the Atlantic Ocean, budget for large expenditure, especially on wars. Of course, her situation was the opposite of problem-free, especially after the Reformation, but her resources certainly gave her some chance of winning out. England on the other hand was a relatively small island, with a single by no means docile possession, Ireland, with a pool of manpower, perhaps a third as large, and with the money she could extract from reluctant tax-payers, an income probably an order of magnitude smaller than that of Spain. By the end of the whole period of confrontations between the two nations in the 1820s, Spain had been reduced to occupying a part of the Iberian peninsula, and a few scattered colonies around the world, of which the Philippines were probably the largest; her population had hardly increased since 1600, and no-one thought of the country as wealthy. England was by then the dominant constituent of a state occupying the whole of the British Isles, had an empire stretching across the world, including most of India, her population was much the same as that of Spain but would soon be greater, and as the largest financial and commercial centre in the world, Britain could pay for whatever she wanted to do. Of course, the conflicts described in this account do not explain this dramatic shift, and distinguished historians and economist have explored many factors which contributed to the decline of Spain, and the rise of England. However, there can be no doubt that these same conflicts had a significant effect.

Starting from the Great Armada War, disregarding excessive claims of English triumph in 1588, it is clear that it was a great achievement of Queen Elizabeth's government to more or less draw the encounter, as demonstrated by the terms of the Treaty of London of 1604, given the imbalance of resources. However, considerable damage was done to the Spanish state, much self-inflicted, as indicated by its bankruptcies, and a process in which Spain was stripped of its possessions had begun. The English contingents which fought under Francis Vane in the Netherlands, played a critical role in the creation and preservation of the independent state of the United Provinces, robbing Spain of a dynamic and prosperous entity. Nothing of great note happened in this regard in the first two conflicts of the 17th century, and it was a war with France that further drained Spanish resources, but in 1662, the Elizabethan pattern was repeated in the Portuguese Acclamation War. Once again a relatively small English contingent (3000 strong with an able commander, Friedrich von Schonberg) had a crucial role, this time in freeing Portugal from Spain in 1668.

Moving on to the early 18th century, the British effect was less obvious, but the maintenance of a large fleet in the Western Mediterranean and willingness to use it was a great restraint on the efforts of Spain to recover possessions in Italy, lost in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht, imposed mainly by Great Britain. Finally moving beyond the period covered in this account, it was actions of Lord Liverpool's government, to which the name of George Canning, should also be attached, which by negotiating trade treaties with erstwhile Spanish colonies in South America, recognised their independence. This was followed up by warnings that the all-powerful British navy would prevent any soldiers being taken there from Europe to try to halt or reverse the liberation process. Spain still agitates for the return of Gibraltar, captured by Admiral Rooke in 1704, but in truth this was just a pinprick, compared to the damage done to Spain by England/Britain during 3 centuries of warfare.

I am sure the general perception would be that France was the main English and British adversary in the early modern period, and this would seem to be confirmed by the fact that between 1550 and 1815, there were 10 wars between the two countries. There were some peaceful interludes, between 1546 and 1627, during which the Elizabethan government, made a considerable contribution to securing King Henri IV on the French throne, from 1629 to 1667, and from 1713 to 1744, during which the French and English were actually on the same side during the War of the Quadruple Alliance. In the same period, Spain and England actually fought 13 wars, and the longest interlude was the 33 years between 1668 and 1701. I suppose their profile is generally low because most of them did not grow into major conflagrations, and many ended indecisively, with a return to the status quo antebellum, suggesting that the war had been fairly pointless.

It is interesting to speculate about whether things could have turned out differently. My view is that the pattern of events in the 16th and 17th century was controlled by religious and dynastic issues which made Anglo-Spanish conflicts inevitable. However, the 'great might have been' occurred in the first decade of the 18th century. If the dying King Philip IV had not changed his will, the War of the Spanish Succession might have been averted, and even when it became unavoidable, thanks to the response of King Louis XIV of France, to the actual will, if Britain and Austria had devoted more resources to the war in Spain, Archduke Charles might have been imposed as King. Of course, his accession as Emperor would have caused a problem, but I suspect a solution would have been found by settling the Spanish Crown on another member of the Hapsburg dynasty. Had that happened, Spain would not have been pushed into the French sphere of influence, where she landed after an initial hiccup, and another century of hostility between Great Britain and Spain might have been avoided.

Certainly closer association with Great Britain would have required painful trading concessions by Spain, but these had to be conceded anyway. France would no doubt have responded, but subjugation of Spain proved too difficult, even for a military genius, Napoleon, and he only got the chance to make the attempt because of internal dissension. The real question is whether a closer relationship with Great Britain, the most progressive, and commercially successful nation in the World, soon to be uplifted further by an industrial revolution, would have been beneficial for Spain in the longer term. I find it hard to argue against such a proposition, but of course history took a different course.

Appendix

The War of the Polish Succession – 1733-1735

I have only been able to find one book published in English which deals comprehensively with the War of the Polish Succession; it was written by an American academic, Sutton. The author has done those interested in the period a service by producing a solid account but he seems over-concerned about the constraints under which the adversaries operated, and runs the risk of underplaying the scale and intensity of the campaigns which took place. It was a 'hot war' in which large armies took part, and Robert Walpole when pressed by King George II to enter the war, is alleged to have pointed out that 60000 had perished in a year, but not one British grenadier. The settlement incorporated in the 3rd Treaty of Vienna by which it was ended produced significant changes in the map of Europe, and had other consequences which reverberated throughout the next century. In that regard, it was almost as influential for all but the maritime powers, as the higher profile War of the Austrian Succession, which followed it. I have included this summary here because Spain was a combatant, gained from the war, and was probably encouraged by that, to adopt a fairly belligerent posture which contributed to the outbreak of the War of Jenkin's Ear in 1739.

A few other points of interest can be highlighted at this point; Britain remained a non-combatant, thanks largely to the fact that Robert Walpole at the apogee of his power willed it so, but the desire to keep things that way loomed large with some of the leaders of those involved, especially France, and influenced her decision-making. Russia, whose army settled the issue which gave the war its name, made a first appearance in a pan-European conflict. Some of the armies fielded, especially by France, were larger than anything seen before; the Duke of Berwick had at least 120000 soldiers under his command in the Rhineland, in spring 1734, and at the beginning of that year, there was another substantial allied (French, Spanish and Sardinian) army in Northern Italy. Berwick was one of three distinguished commanders who fought their last campaigns in the war; the others were Marshal Villars, and Prince Eugene, and only the last-named survived past its end, (by a few months). On the other hand as a harbinger of the next European war, French Generals Belle Isle and de Saxe were prominent, and impatient, in subordinate capacities, while a certain Crown Prince Frederick took part in negotiations in which the Hapsburg Emperor tried unsuccessfully to obtain tangible Prussian support.

(i) Causes of the War

In view of the name of the war, it is appropriate to begin this account with Poland, i.e., the Confederation of Poland and Lithuania. In 1572, the Polish monarchy had become elective, not of course by universal suffrage or anything like it, but by the higher nobility. Although some great kings emerged by this route, not least John Sobieski who raised the siege of Vienna by the Ottomans in 1683, the election process was frequently an invitation to outside states to intervene, in their own interests. During the 17th century, Sweden was usually powerful enough in the region to impose her nominee, but in 1697, the Elector of Saxony, Augustus Wettin II, no friend of Sweden, managed to win the crown. In 1704, Sweden imposed herself again, when King Charles XII invaded, and Augustus was forced to abdicate; Stanislas Leszczynski, an unexceptional Polish noble was elected King by a 'packed' convocation. The battle of Poltava in 1709 changed the balance of power in Eastern Europe, this time irrevocably in favour of Russia. King Stanislas was deposed in his turn, and King Augustus restored, to reign unchallenged until his death in 1733. He did nothing in his 30 years on the throne to arrest the

decline of his country; perhaps he did not have the time, because he is alleged to have fathered 360 illegitimate children, though he acknowledged only a few of them.

Ex-King Stanislas, though ineffectual, was one of history's great survivors, (he reached the age of 88), and was allowed to keep royal status within the Empire. His fortunes took a massive upturn when his daughter, Maria, married King Louis XV of France, in 1725, and he moved to live in that country. As dynastic matters were viewed at that time, it became imperative in French eyes for Stanislas to recover the Polish throne; otherwise their king would be thought to have entered a demeaning marriage. So it could be assumed that when the next Polish election came round, France would line up behind Stanislas. In the years leading up to the Polish election, indirect methods of strengthening the candidacy of Stanislas were pursued, by encouraging the Ottoman Empire, and various Tatar potentates to attack Russia, and Prussia to threaten Saxony (with an unspoken threat to Hanover should Britain stray from neutrality), but it is doubtful if much was achieved. There was quite a broad field of potential candidates, obviously including the son of the then ruler, who in fact did become Augustus III, but during the 1720s, other candidates emerged, including James Stuart, the 'Old Pretender' (who had a Polish wife), Prince Emmanuel of Portugal, and a son of the King and Queen of Spain.

However, by 1733 when Augustus II died, the contest had narrowed to a choice between his son and Stanislas, and the former had what seemed to be a critical advantage in that he was actually in Poland, as was required of candidates. There followed a brilliantly organised French coup, as they sent Stanislas disguised as a servant in a closed carriage through Germany, while a decoy set off with a French fleet, but only went as far as Copenhagen, gulling everyone into thinking that Stanislas had failed to complete his journey. In fact he arrived in Poland in time for the convocation, duly won the election, and was crowned King of Poland for the second time in August 1733. His apparent popularity with the Electoral College doubtless owed something to French money, and his Polish blood, but also reflected the fact that he was reckoned to be a weak man, who would not constrain the higher nobility. It was of course one thing for France to manoeuvre Stanislas onto the throne, but entirely another to keep him there, when nations much better placed to intervene in strength, specifically Austria and Russia, had decided to back the Saxon candidate, Augustus.

The responsibility for French foreign policy in the period was shared between Cardinal Fleury, who had ascended from the position of tutor to King Louis XV, to become his first minister in 1726, and Germain Louis Chauvelin, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs between 1727 and 1737. Scholars have argued about whether there was much difference in substance between the objectives of the two men, and about who really set policy, but there was certainly a difference in the tone of their communications and perhaps in emphasis. The Cardinal sought to convey the impression that France was pacific, and especially that she wished to live in amity with the Maritime Powers, (Britain and the United Provinces, i.e., Holland), while Chauvelin played much on hostility towards Austria, and the justice of Spanish claims for Austrian possessions in Italy. They realised that they had to do more if King Stanislas was to have any chance of retaining his throne; Russia could only be influenced through her ally Austria, so France upped the stakes by developing, and allowing disclosure of, plans to punish Austria for any direct involvement in Poland, in the hope that Austria would also restrain her ally. The putative French attack was to be on two fronts, the Rhineland, and in Northern Italy, though limited in the former case for fear of alarming neutral German states, and the Maritime Powers. That campaign would aim to capture one or two high profile fortresses, and draw Austrian forces away from Italy, and the Polish border. The main

effort would be made in Italy in conjunction with Spanish soldiers, and aimed at the elimination of the dominant Austrian presence in Northern Italy. A key requirement here was an alliance with Sardinia/Piedmont which controlled most of the access routes from France into Italy, and could provide a useful addition to the attacking armies; agreement was reached in September 1733. The price was to be the absorption by Sardinia/Piedmont of the Austrian possession, Milan.

Though there was no room for Austrian complacency, given the threats described, her government had some grounds for optimism. They were under no pressure from the east, and had concluded an alliance with Russia, as long ago as 1726. Any aggression by France in the Rhineland would allow the Emperor Charles VI to use the institutions of the Empire to line up at least some of the German states behind his forces. In addition, Austria had an alliance with Britain, defined by a Treaty of Vienna signed in 1731, but from the Austrian viewpoint, there were two problems with this treaty. Firstly, it was defensive, which meant that there would be wriggle-room in the event of an Austrian call for assistance, since wars were rarely entirely attributable to the actions of one of the contending parties. The second difficulty was the dominance of Robert Walpole in Britain. He had seen the rapprochement with Austria as beneficial to Britain commercially, in that it had ended Austrian trading initiatives out of Ostend, but he valued his accord with France more, and was determined to keep Britain out of any European war. Cardinal Fleury and Walpole understood each other, not least because they maintained private lines of communication, often involving Walpole's brother, Horatio, throughout the period. Thus there was little prospect that Austria would get tangible aid from Britain, and she also lost any chance of Dutch support when, in order to gathering a force to resist a French offensive in the Rhineland, they removed 10000 soldiers from the Barrier fortresses along the boundary between France, and the Austrian Netherlands. Thanks to this weakening of the defence of their southern frontier, the Dutch were left with little alternative to seeking an accommodation with France.

To complete this discussion on preliminaries to the outbreak of war, reference needs to be made to two other states. One of course, was Spain, not much interested in Poland, but seeing the likely European war as an opportunity to make further progress in Italy, towards eliminating the hated provisions of the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713. Charles, the eldest son of Philip and Elizabeth, had become Duke of Parma and Piacenza in 1731, but Spanish ambitions were much higher than that, and French anger with Austria provided the opportunity of enlisting France in their pursuit. Perhaps the French, who were going to contribute the main part of the army attacking Austrian forces in Northern Italy, should have realised earlier that their main ally was poorly aligned with them. The other state to be greatly affected by the war was the Duchy of Lorraine which had been more or less absorbed into France during the 17th century, before uncharacteristically Louis XIV allowed the ruling family to regain possession as one of the terms of the Treaty of Rijswijk in 1797. Lorraine was almost totally surrounded by France, and its repossession was an unspoken ambition of Cardinal Fleury, though he continued to assert that France sought no territorial gains. French discontent with the situation had increased when Francis Stephen became Duke in 1729, as he was destined to marry the Emperor's daughter, Maria Theresa. The potential replacement of a docile satellite by an Austrian enclave was not at all to the liking of the French government.

In summary, France, which had committed most strongly to the succession of King Stanislas in Poland, had little prospect of exerting direct influence there, Their remedies involved putting pressure on Austria, and through her, Russia, to abide by the Polish outcome, by attacking Austrian forces in the Rhineland and Italy were both

likely to be compromised, the former by the need to limit any gains to avoid the intervention of other states, especially Great Britain, the latter by the unreliability of France's allies. It was not a recipe for easy French success.

(ii) The Course of the War

The War of the Polish Succession was fought on three fronts, Poland, the Rhineland, and Northern Italy, but only France and Austria had involvement on all of them. Paradoxically, their involvement was least in the country that gave the war its name, but it is here that I shall begin my account. I shall deal separately with each front, rather than jumping from one to another to stick with the chronology. Obviously, the campaigns were interwoven to a degree but usually at the strategic rather than the operational level, and the main considerations in the former category have hopefully been covered in the preceding section.

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The election of King Stanislas in August 1733 was quickly followed by the movement of Austrian and Russian forces up to the Polish border, and agreement that the latter, invading from the east, would be the instrument of his removal. It might be imagined that the new King's accession as ruler of a populous nation would have placed an effective army at his disposal, but unlike its co-belligerents in the recently concluded Northern Wars, (Russia, Sweden, Prussia, and Denmark), Poland/Lithuania had developed no centralised institutions capable of raising and funding a state army, so kings depended on their own estates, and on aid from supportive nobles. The long-time exile Stanislas had few resources, and his prospects of defying the armies deployed against him looked so poor, as to discourage sympathisers. His contest with a Russian army, aided by the supporters of the defeated election candidate, Augustus of Saxony, was doomed from the outset. France could do nothing in the short term to back her protégé, and as it turned out, precious little in the longer term, though she continued diplomatic efforts unavailingly. A Russian army, 20000 strong entered Poland in September 1733, an act which allowed France to justify her own declaration of war against Austria, as defensive in nature.

The Russian invasion, commanded by an Irish general, Lascy, resulted initially in a walk-over, reaching the River Vistula opposite Warsaw, in October 1733, and capturing the capital during the next month. King Stanislas fled northwards to the fortified port of Danzig, while the Russians summoned a new convocation which deposed him, and elected King Augustus III in his place. The Russians then turned north, and opened siege lines around Danzig in February 1734. The fortress was expected to hold out for some months, so the French government had time to do something about the matter, and they certainly had the means. A large fleet could have been sent into the Baltic, with the acquiescence of Sweden and Denmark which controlled the straits giving access, and enough soldiers could have been sent to render the Russian siege of Danzig extremely difficult and maybe abortive. There was one problem. It was highly unlikely that the Maritime Powers, and especially Britain, which viewed the Baltic as within their sphere of influence, would tolerate such a large-scale French involvement there. Cardinal Fleury's determination to do nothing to endanger British neutrality ruled out the only French counter to the Russian invasion that might have succeeded.

Probably France should have dropped the matter completely, but egged on by passionate ambassadors, Pléto at Copenhagen, and Monti in Poland, they decided to send a few ships and a force of about 2000 men, commanded by a Brigadier La Motte to Danzig to bolster its defence. In what followed, there were elements of

farce, as La Motte's force was landed near Danzig, but its commander quickly concluded that the task was impossible, so re-embarked the soldiers and returned to Copenhagen. Ambassador Plélo was appalled by this, seeing it as an affront to French honour, and insisted on a return to Poland, accompanying the force to stiffen resolve. An island fort of Weichselmünde was captured, but by then the Russian besieging force had been reinforced and comprised 40000 soldiers led by a Marshal Munnich. A few weeks of French indecision was brought to an end by a bombardment from a Russian fleet, commanded by a formidable Scottish admiral, Thomas Gordon; Count Plélo was killed, and La Motte wasted little time before surrendering. The inglorious French defeat is cited as the first clash between that nation and Russia. The fall of Danzig became a matter of time only, and surrender was negotiated on 30th June 1734. The greatest prize slipped through Russian hands, because Stanislas Leszczyński, having resorted to disguise again, escaped into Prussia a few days before the capitulation. He took up residence in Königsberg. His pleas that France should attack Saxony, the base of his usurper Augustus, were ignored. Thereafter, Poland faded from the view, all of the adversaries tacitly accepted that the outcome there had been settled, whether they liked it or not.

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As already indicated, France began her Rhineland campaign with very limited aims, and in spite of early military success, stuck to them. Her plan allowed the occupation of Lorraine, and some territory around Trier and Trarbach, together with assaults on a few Austrian fortified towns and defence lines across the Rhine. Extension of the front northwards towards Luxemburg and the Austrian Netherlands was forbidden because of the possible reaction of the Maritime Powers, and deeper penetration into Germany was ruled out because it could have been seen as a threat to Hanover. Given the type of war to be fought, France was fortunate in her commander, the Marshal-Duke of Berwick, natural son of King James II of England and Arabella Churchill, sister of Marlborough, who has appeared a number of times in the account. His 40-year military career in the service of France had been characterised by careful proficiency, and if there had been few dazzling victories, (Almanza in Spain in 1707 was the one real exception), he had almost always achieved what was required of him. This record of success added to his royal blood and dignified bearing gave him an aura which meant that subordinates, however lustrous would not lightly challenge his orders. This was important because he had two brilliant but impetuous generals reporting to him, on occasion operating independently, namely the Marquis Belle Isle, and the Comte de Saxe. Berwick understood precisely why his army could not exceed its remit. When necessary, he applied the brake firmly.

Austria could do nothing to inhibit the French operations in Lorraine and in the Moselle valley which began in October 1733, and quickly achieved their objectives; she could do little more about a French attack over the Rhine which resulted in the capture of the fortress of Kehl, directly across the river from Strasbourg, a month later. Then the French army withdrew from the east bank of the Rhine to go into winter quarters, retaining Kehl, leaving Austria and her War Minister, Prince Eugene, erstwhile associate of Marlborough, to ponder over the prospect of further French operations in the spring of 1734. The vulnerability of Vienna to attack from the west was to be demonstrated again and again over the next eighty years, not least because of the willingness of Bavaria, in the line of advance and one of the more powerful German states, to ally with invaders. The Wittelsbachs who ruled there saw themselves as genuine rivals of the Hapsburgs, competing for lands like Bohemia and the Imperial Crown. Prince Eugene spent the winter months pulling together an army large enough

to inhibit French operations, if not to defeat them, and weakened Austrian forces in the Netherlands and Southern Italy. He also established a defensive line at Ettlingen, near Karlsruhe, which he hoped to hold in sufficient strength to prevent any further French siege operations on the east bank of the Rhine.

Berwick re-crossed the Rhine in April 1734, with an army of close to 100000 men, and easily forced Eugene to withdraw from Ettlingen. This opened the way for the investment of Philippsburg during May, and a formal siege began in June. Berwick was able to allocate half his army to siege duties while retaining a covering force of similar size to Eugene's army. The Austrian commander's failure to intervene in the siege, even after the numbers balance moved a bit in his favour, has been taken as evidence of waning powers; on the other hand he knew that the loss of a battle there would have left the route to Vienna unguarded. Berwick was killed in early June 1734 while he visited the siege-works at Philippsburg; he met the same end as some of his ancestors including King Charles I, by different means, decapitated, but by a cannon ball probably misfired by his own artillery-men. (Marshal Villars, who received the news while on his own death-bed, thought that Berwick was fortunate to die quickly and cleanly at a good age (64) and after an illustrious career, though to have one's brains spattered over a nearby aide-de-camp is not perhaps the end that most would choose.) The command devolved on a Marshal d'Asfeld, and he pursued the siege to a conclusion in mid-July, when the garrison of Philippsburg capitulated. There were no further developments in 1734. The French had gained the bargaining counters they wanted for peace negotiations, and the Austrians though stronger than they had been, had neither the means nor the will to take the offensive.

When the campaigning season resumed in 1735, nothing much happened until the autumn; by then peace negotiations were close to a successful conclusion, and the Imperial army had been reinforced by 10000 Russian soldiers under General Lascy. They were sufficiently emboldened to attempt to recover some lost territory in the Moselle valley, and thanks to some rather complacent general-ship by Belle Isle, and especially the new French commander in the Rhineland, Marshal Coigny, the Imperial commander, General von Seckendorff was able to reoccupy Trarbach and a tranche of land around it. The Battle of Clausen which took place on 20th October may have involved 50000 men, but was hardly more than a skirmish with total casualties of a few hundred. Nonetheless, a French defeat caused them to retreat to south of the Moselle River. So, unlike the preceding 22 months, the last 2 months of the Rhineland war saw Austrian forces in the ascendant, Berwick was clearly missed, but the peace negotiations were hardly affected by the Austrian resurgence.

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The war in Italy was to be dominated by the determination of France's allies, Sardinia and Spain to realise their own territorial ambitions. These soon proved incompatible with the French strategy which was to weaken Austria by driving her out of the whole Po valley, and thus effectively out of Northern Italy. At first, all went well for the allies whose army comprised 40000 French soldiers, 26000 Spanish, and 15000 Sardinians, opposed by perhaps only a third of that number of Austrians. Prudently the Austrians pulled back and the combined allied army took Milan, which was intended to be Sardinia's reward, and in the early spring of 1734, drove down the Po towards Mantua, which was intended for Charles, Duke of Parma and Piacenza, the son of the Spanish rulers. The French commander who had arrived in November 1733, was Claude Villars, recently accorded the distinction of appointment as Marshal-General, the first such since Turenne, but he was over 80 years old. Nonetheless, he retained some of his bombast and fire, and attempted to take full advantage of Austrian

weakness. He proposed that the allied armies continue their advance down the Po, and occupy the whole valley as far east as the border with Venice, while at the same time advancing to the foothills of the Alps to block off the passes through which Austrian reinforcements would have to come. However, Villars could secure the co-operation of neither of his allies; King Charles Emmanuel of Sardinia wished to consolidate his position in Milan, while Duke Charles withdrew his Spanish army and took it south to attempt the conquest of Naples and Sicily.

In May 1734, the Austrians did what Villars had sought to prevent, sending an army under the command of Florimund von Mercy through the Alps to descend on the rear of what was by then a largely French army in the Po valley. The French pulled back to confront this threat, and Villars, old, ill, and disgusted by the conduct of his allies, decided to return to France, but died during the journey, less than a week after Berwick's demise, in June 1734. There then followed a series of unsuccessful and costly attempts by the Austrians to defeat the French, including a Battle of Parma, at which their commander von Mercy was killed in late June, and the Battle of Sechia in September, under a new commander, Field Marshal Konigsegg. Nonetheless, the Austrians had gained a certain momentum, and with the King of Sardinia still confining his efforts to Milan, the campaigning season ended with the mainly French allied army pushed back, to the west of their position in the spring. The one great allied success of the year was somewhat ironically the campaign of Duke Charles in the south. Helped by a faulty Austrian decision to disperse many of their soldiers in isolated fortified towns, the largely Spanish army won battles and prosecuted successful sieges to such effect that Sicily, and the whole of Southern Italy centred on Naples was surrendered by November 1734.

In the early months of 1735, it seemed that the allies reinforced by Spanish soldiers returned from Southern Italy had recovered the initiative, and Mantua was invested in May. However the alliance was developing fissures with Spanish ambitions rising in proportion to their success in the previous year. In response, Sardinia withdrew support, and the allied army had to retreat into the Duchy of Milan. As serious negotiations to end the war began, the Austrians kept up the pressure, and here as in the Rhineland, they ended the war on the front foot, recapturing much of Milan's hinterland, though not the city itself.

(iii) Peace and the Consequences

From its start, there was probably no-one in Europe keener to see the war ended than Robert Walpole. Keeping Britain on the sidelines meant defying the wishes of his King, who as Elector of Hanover thought that he owed a duty to the Emperor, and his one remaining influential colleague, the Duke of Newcastle, who had negotiated the treaty with Austria and thought that its terms were not being honoured.. Thus it is no surprise that the first serious attempt to negotiate peace terms emanated from London in late 1734. Horatio Walpole, who had been sent to the Netherlands as British Ambassador, met with Cardinal Fleury's representative, M. Jannel at Delft in November, and discussions began. The terms hammered out over the next few months were in most respects close to those eventually agreed, but the initiative had failed by April 1735, largely because the government in Vienna seemed to be recovering lost territory, though at great cost to the state finances. However, a new set of negotiations, brokered by the sovereign Count of Wied, a small principality in the Rhineland, had already begun. Soon enough, this process evolved into direct discussions between the French and Austrian governments, and by October 1735, the preliminaries to the 3rd Treaty of Vienna had been signed by the main adversaries, leaving little choice for the other nations but to acquiesce.

The surprise constituent term, totally absent from the package negotiated by Britain was the award of the Duchy of Lorraine to ex-King Stanislas of Poland, whose daughter was of course, Queen Maria of France. This meant that France, which had all along protested that she sought no territorial gain, became arguably the chief beneficiary of the war, though because of the longevity of Stanislas, she had to wait until 1766 to formally receive her prize. In compensation, Duke Francis Stephen, a future Emperor and wife of Queen Maria Theresa, received the promise of Tuscany, for which he only had to wait until the death of the incumbent ruler in 1737. Augustus III was acknowledged as King of Poland, and gave up various claims to territories like Livonia which had conflicted with Russian ambitions. King Charles Emmanuel of Sardinia received only a part of Milan, albeit including the main prize of the city. Spain saw her ruling dynasty in the person of Don Charles confirmed as King of the Two Sicilies, though he had to give up Parma and Piacenza to Austria. The loss of the Two Sicilies was a blow to Hapsburg prestige, but the rearrangements in Northern Italy consolidated the Austrian position there. Austria recovered her lost territory in the Rhineland, including the fortresses of Kehl and Philippsburg.

Another sop to Austrian pride, the French adherence to the Pragmatic Sanction which guaranteed the right of Maria Theresa to succeed to the Hapsburg domains proved completely worthless when Emperor Charles VI died in 1740, two years after the final ratification of the 3rd Treaty of Vienna. The War of the Austrian Succession began with a feeding frenzy as German states sought to help themselves to Maria Theresa's inheritance, backed by the French who saw the chance to eliminate Austria as a rival in central Europe. However they greatly underestimated Maria Theresa, Queen of Hungary, and she recovered many of the losses before eight years of war were brought to an end by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chappelle, agreed in 1748. By this time Austria had been bolstered by the entry into the war of Great Britain, and the terms reflected a stalemate produced when French successes in the Netherlands were balanced by British successes at sea and beyond the continent of Europe. The majority of the territorial provisions of the 3rd Treaty of Vienna which had ended the War of the Polish Succession were unaltered by the later treaty.

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I have consulted the 47 books listed above and drawn information from them consciously. I have read many more, which touch on my subject matter, and no doubt information from them has found its way into the account, but I had to draw the line somewhere.

I should reference also 2 websites, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>, which has been invaluable as a quick fact-checker, and my own website on which this account appears, <https://drtomsbooks.com/>, which contains previous work from which I have drawn.