ADIMIRAL RUSSELL AND THE MEDITERRANEAN CAMPAIGN OF 1694–1695*

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It is related that in the reign of Charles II, an act of Parliament was prefaced with the comforting observation that upon the Navy, "under the good providence of God, the wealth, safety, and strength of the kingdom chiefly depend." In the 1690's, William III and the Protestant Succession were to witness the truth of this on at least three dramatic occasions: the defeat of the French invasion fleet at La Hogue in 1692; the frustration of the attempted Jacobite-French invasion of England in 1696; and the remarkable eighteen-month sojourn of the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean in 1694–1695. The hand at the helm for England in each of the aforementioned instances was that of Edward Russell, Admiral of the Fleet. In this inspeximus, not to the grand sweep of the Pepysian or Williamite navies shall we turn, but rather to the fleet under Russell's command.

The "abdication" of James II in 1688 brought in the Protestant Succession of William of Orange and Mary. French gold, troops and ships were put at James' disposal time and again in the '90's, to enable James to attempt the recovery of his throne. The attempt to capture Ireland, the "backdoor" to England, was frustrated at the Battle of Boyne Water on July 1, 1690. Two years later Edward Russell broke for the moment the power of France upon the sea at the running battle of Barfleur and La Hogue of May, 1692. Indecision and contradictory schemes kept the English Admiralty from pursuing their gains to complete and ultimate victory in the Channel and along the Atlantic coast, and England failed to reap the fullest benefits from her initial successes at sea.

Rivalry in naval administration had confounded operations in the summer of 1692; rivalry drove Russell from office, and he relinquished command of the fleet to the triumvirate of Admirals Killigrew, Delaval and Shovel in January of 1693. This is not what some had thought would happen, but "Admiral Russell has declined going to sea next summer if he must receive orders

*The material of this paper is a brief condensation of a general study (unpublished) of the campaign and career of Admiral Russell in the Mediterranean in the years 1694–1695. The author's intention here has been to sketch in general terms the progress of that expedition, and briefly note the results, rather than to trace in great detail the week by week development of that campaign.
through Lord Nottingham’s hands (Secretary of State, and Russell’s deadly Parliamentary and administrative rival).” King William felt, at the moment, more need of Nottingham’s services than of Russell’s; since they could not work together, one had to be sacrificed. Russell was out of office in 1693. The work of the Navy continued, nonetheless, for the War of the League of Augsburg, or, for England, the War for the Protestant Succession, against Louis XIV went on. The campaign at sea in 1693 was projected for annoyance of the enemy and protection of English trade. It did neither effectively. Misfortune dogged the heels of the naval command. Seamen were so scarce that it was May before the fleet was put out. In June the Smyrna Convoy under Admiral Rooke was set upon by a superior French force, and over one hundred merchantmen were lost at Lagos Bay.

The disaster lay not so much with Rooke or with the Admiralty’s faulty information, as with confusion of orders and general misdirection of available information. The conduct of affairs at sea in 1693 showed that this joint-admiral-commission had not been a very workable arrangement, and public displeasure was soon to fall upon the Tory ministry. In the spring of 1694 the Whigs were to be put into office. As Nottingham put it:

... the king finding his affairs abroad impropersous, the French victorious, and a necessity of increasing his army and consequently of raising greater sums of money from the nation... unaccustomed to such heavy burdens and un-

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2 K. Felling, *History of the Tory Party, 1840–1714* (Oxford, 1824), p. 295. John Ehrman, in his recent article on “William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy, 1692–4” states that the major result of the Barfleur campaign was to secure the dismissal of Russell as commander-in-chief of the fleet and Nottingham as Secretary of State in charge of naval affairs, but he has not clearly indicated the chronology of the events. Almost a year intervened between the dismissal of Russell and the subsequent dismissal of Nottingham. *The Cambridge Historical Journal* (Cambridge, 1949), IX, #2, p. 269.

3 J. Burchett, *A Complete History of the Most Remarkable Transactions at Sea... (to 1712)* (London, 1720), p. 480; T. Lediard, *The Naval History of England... to the Conclusion of 1783* (2 volumes, London, 1736), II, 678; London Gazette, No. 2858. Killigrew and Delaval were put on the Admiralty Board, and given command of the Channel fleet.


5 House of Lords Manuscripts, 1690–5 (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1900), I, 176–7; Tindal, *Continuation*, III, 248–9, and note #2, and p. 249, note #1.
easy under them, and the Whigs promising to extricate him out of all his difficulties if he would put his affairs into their hands, he yielded to their importunity.\footnote{Nottingham's Conduct, p. 134.}

In November of 1693 Russell was made Admiral of the Fleet. Nottingham relinquished the seals of the Secretary of State on November 6, and the Earl of Shrewsbury assumed the vacant office. Russell was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty on April 26, 1694.\footnote{R. Lodge, The History of England, from the Restoration to the death of William III (1660–1702) (London, 1910), The Political History of England series, Volume VIII, pp. 384–7; Sir Edward Harley to Abigail Harley, November 7, 1693, Portland Manuscripts (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1894–1997), p. 547; Tindal, Continuation, III, 252–3; Nottingham's Conduct, p. 128; Felling, op. cit., p. 296. Nottingham was dismissed from office on Monday, November 6, 1693, but Shrewsbury did not take office until March, 1694. The warrant for Shrewsbury's Dukedom was drawn on April 25, 1694. Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1694–5, p. 116. These will hereinafter be referred to as CSPD.}

William observed that at the moment the cabinet was “composed better than formerly and (of) persons who could at least draw together in . . . business.”\footnote{Ibid., p. 123. As Ehrman remarks in his “William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy, 1692–4”, neither Secretary of State was officially responsible for naval affairs, but Nottingham had in effect been managing them since 1689. His removal from their unofficial charge was effected by transferring them to his recently appointed colleague and enemy, Sir John Trenchard. Cambridge Historical Journal, IX, #3, p. 268, note #8.}

The essence of the quarrel between Russell and Nottingham hinged on the failure of the triumvirate in command of the fleet in 1698, for Russell had washed his hands of the whole affair by refusing the command after the campaign ended in 1692, and Nottingham had acquiesced in the appointment of Killigrew, Delaval and Shovel.\footnote{Nottingham's Conduct, pp. 130–31.} With the failure of the triumvirate, Russell alone remained as the most capable man to command in the coming season. But the bitterness produced by the aftermath of the Barfleur campaign remained, and either Nottingham had to go out, and permit Russell to take up the command, or an inferior had to be sought. At this juncture, naval policy seemed of greater importance to the King, and William dismissed Nottingham.\footnote{Ibid., p. 124.}

Naval action had meanwhile continued desultorily against the French. Admiral Benbow had worked little damage in the Channel, and Francis Wheler had achieved scant success in the West Indies. The latter commander arrived in England in mid-October of 1693, in time to carry out an assignment consequent upon the French victory over the Smyrna fleet. Following their triumph of June, 1693, at Lagos Bay, Admirals Tourville and d'Estrees retired to Toulon, with the largest French fleet ever seen in the Mediterranean: ninety-three ships of the line, and
sixty lower rates. Wheler was assigned to the Straits, and left England in late November. After convoying the returning Spanish Plate Fleet safely to port, he attempted to pass the Straits of Gibraltar and enter the Mediterranean. A violent storm sank six English ships on February 18–19, 1694, and Wheler perished, along with five other officers. In all, some eight hundred and twenty-four men were lost. France was momentarily supreme in the Mediterranean; Spain, England’s ally, was severely threatened, and to ensure her continuance in the war against Louis XIV, William had to make a new move. His decision involved the services of Edward Russell, and resulted in the inauguration of a new feature of English naval policy.

The momentary massing of French naval strength in the harbor of Toulon in the late summer of 1693 had loomed as a threat to British policy. That William III had no fully formulated concept of future Mediterranean policy at the inception of the naval campaign of 1694 seems well substantiated by the facts. Wheler’s expedition to the Mediterranean, in conjunction with a Dutch squadron, “was clearly little more than a development of the Cromwellian idea of commerce protection with a powerful cruising squadron.” As Admiral of the Fleet, Edward Russell was to direct the main design, which was concerned with activities in the Narrow Sea, and not initially in the Straits. Russell was put to the task of preventing a concentration of the French fleet at Toulon, for d’Estrees and Tourville’s original union having been broken, William was anxious to prevent a second occurrence of the same threat. The main fleet under Russell was to surprise and capture Brest before Tourville could get to sea. Then the tables seemed to turn, for it appeared that the Toulon fleet was making for Brest. Wheler was at once ordered to come out of the Mediterranean and wait at Cadiz till the Spanish fleet was ready for sea, or till reinforcements came from England. These orders were soon countermanded, for news of French activity became so alarming that Wheler was ordered home. Before these last orders ever reached him, he had set out to pass the Straits and gain the Mediterranean, and lost his life, and a fair portion of his squadron.

Mediterranean policy had not evolved in its full significance in late March of 1694; this is evident in the orders then given to Russell. Directed to assume command of ninety-three ships, of

13 Corbett, op. cit., II, 427
14 Ibid., II, 427–8.
which forty-six were ships of the line, the Admiral was to “proceed with the Dutch fleet to the westwards, and do his best to harass the enemy without expecting further orders, and to protect the trade passing in and out of the Channel.” Then news of Wheler’s disaster put a completely different complexion upon affairs! The English squadron in the Straits was forced to return to Cadiz and refit, with no hope of protecting English trade, or preventing the passage of the Brest or Rochefort squadrons through the Straits en route to join at Toulon. The concurrent information that d’Estrees and Tourville had left Paris for their respective commands at Toulon and Brest, and that Marshal de Noailles was about to take the field in Catalonia, made the situation grave indeed. To replace Wheler, Edward Russell was detailed for service in the Mediterranean.

Sir Julian Corbett saw the turning point of Williamite naval policy in the Mediterranean campaign of 1694–1695. Though the victory at La Hogue had given William III command of the sea, it was used in the same old way: coastal raids, attacks on France’s channel ports, crippling of privateer activities, “and confusing the strategy of the French armies by diversions.” This is true of the campaign of June to August, 1692, and even more true of the fiasco of ’93. Corbett dramatized his thesis:

... political and financial difficulties had kept the King so late in England (in 1694) that he found himself deprived of the initiative in Flanders, and his main hope for the year was now centered on what the fleet could do in the Mediterranean. On that he boldly resolved to stake his all, and so with the high resolution that marks the great captains from the small, he penned his memorable order.

In a very broad sense Corbett is justified in his enthusiasm, for Russell’s campaign marked the advent of the future permanent English Mediterranean fleet. Russell’s sojourn there was a transient instance of that phenomenon; many years were to

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15 House of Lords Manuscripts, 1693–5 (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1900), I, 463.
16 Corbett, op. cit., II, 429.
17 Ibid., II, 423; CSPD, 1694–5, p. 118.
18 The resolution was laid before the Committee of the Privy Council on April 10, 1694, and agreed to on April 19th. The Instructions were issued on April 24, 1694. Trenchard’s notes, quoted by Corbett, op. cit., II, 430, footnote.
19 Corbett, op. cit., II, 432.
20 Ibid., II, 433; P. Colomb, Naval Warfare (London, 1899), p. 130, merely observes that England went into the Mediterranean to hamper French military activity against Spain. De la Ronclère sees nothing “spectacular” in this move, nor does Clowes, Callender fails to mention the move; Mahan says of it: “the five remaining years of the War of the League of Augsburg (after 1692), in which all Europe was in arms against France, are marked by no great sea battles, nor any single maritime event of the first importance.” The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783, p. 191.
elope before the stationing of the Mediterranean fleet became continuous. In the immediate order for Russell’s proceeding against the French fleet, I doubt if William had anything more in mind than striking a decisive blow. The Instructions to Russell indicate nothing more. They point out that as the disposal of the French fleet for the summer was not as yet known, Russell was to follow one of three courses: 1) to attempt to burn or destroy the French fleet if found at Brest or Belle Isle; 2) to search for it if news were received that the fleet had put to sea, but not to pass south of the latitude of Cape Finisterre; 3) “in case he has trustworthy information that” the fleet “or any part of it has gone to the Mediterranean, or south of Finisterre, to follow and attack it.”

Placing the burden of decision upon the commander was well illustrated in these orders (as it was to be throughout Russell’s entire command in this campaign) for the Admiral was not to await further orders, but to proceed as he deemed most proper. Time and again the burden of decision was to be put upon Admiral Russell; both Admiralty and Privy Council shunned the assumption of responsibility, with the possibility of Parliamentary chastisement.

Limitations of space prevent me from detailing the course of the Mediterranean expedition of these years. It must suffice to sketch in the broadest strokes the course, and effects, of this campaign, the first such elongated campaign in British naval annals. In early May of 1694 Russell and a portion of his fleet got under sail, but there was still confusion and division of opinion as to the proper course of action: an attack on Brest, or immediate dispatch to the Mediterranean? “I am afraid” Russell wrote, that “these two designs, Brest and the Straits, will hinder one another, and may make neither effectual.” He saw the danger in the Mediterranean, and hesitated to waste time, effort and material on the Brest diversion.

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11 Instructions to Russell, April 24, 1694, House of Lords Manuscripts, 1693–5, I, 459; CSPD, 1694–5, p. 112.
12 Russell was to report from time to time to Shrewsbury, Secretary of State for the Northern Department, to Sir John Trenchard, who had been sole Secretary following Nottingham’s dismissal until Shrewsbury’s appointment on March 2, 1694, and to the Admiralty. House of Lords Manuscripts, 1693–5, I, 459; CSPD, 1694–5, p. 112. For the influence of the Secretaries of State in various naval affairs, see M. Thomson, The Secretaries of State, 1661–1782 (Oxford, 1932), pp. 77–82, 86–89. See also footnote #10, supra.
13 W. Coxe, Private and Original Correspondence of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury (London, 1821), p. 192; cf. Shrewsbury’s reply, May 5/15, 1694, ibid., p. 193. See also Privy Council Minutes of May 9 and 14, 1694, Buccleuch Manuscripts (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1903), II, 65–6. Shrewsbury’s opinion of the two operations, as expressed to the Council on May 9, was the same as Russell’s: “nothing of the Brest preparation should delay the sending the squadron into the Mediterranean, that being, in my opinion, the service that desires preference.” Ibid., II, 65–6.
By mid-May King William himself was at last convinced of the prime importance of dominance in the Mediterranean, and he turned to hastening Russell's departure for those waters. The effect was almost instantaneous! Russell ordered Admiral Berkeley to proceed to Brest, and in conjunction with General Talmash to do whatever could be done by land and sea. The Mediterranean voyage was about to begin. On May 29, Russell wrote that "the wind is now fair, and we are going." On June 6th, the squadrons for Brest and the Mediterranean parted company, and Russell proceeded to the Straits with some misgivings. It seemed that the year was too far advanced for effective action, the

24 William III to Shrewsbury, May 14, 1694, Coxe, op. cit., p. 32; Shrewsbury to Russell, May 23, 1694, Bucleuch Manuscripts, II, 69-70; see also Coxe, same to same, same date, p. 194. For the date of the sailing of the French fleet, see Trenchard to Russell, May 17, 1694, CSPD, 1694-5, p. 137.

John Ehrman's "William III and the Emergence of a Mediterranean Naval Policy, 1692-4" is an attempt to show that King William held to a conscious Mediterranean policy for England from Barfleur down to Russell's undertaking the expedition in 1694. "On the very morrow of Barfleur, in his first letter to Nottingham after the news had reached the King, Blathwayt wrote that His Majesty wished the inner Council to consider the possibility of sending a squadron to the Mediterranean." (Add. Mss. 37991, f. 87) In August of 1692 "Blathwayt wrote the King was anxious a squadron be sent to the Mediterranean, and requested 'that ships for the purpose be found by any means.'" (Add. Mss. 37991, f. 140—August 14th) As Ehrman further notes, "exactly what William had in mind for the Mediterranean in the late summer of 1692 cannot be said for certain. He revealed his preoccupation with interests other than trade only when trade had failed him, and then he gave no clue to his real intentions. We must infer these largely from his attitude a few months later, when the situation was still much the same but when he himself was more explicit. Undoubtedly one reason for his plan lay in the diplomatic pressure which he hoped to exert upon the Turks, for he referred to this again in 1693;" (Add. Mss. 37993, f. 33) "but it is probable that he also had in mind its effect upon the Spanish Court, which he knew by experience responded to a show of naval force." (S.F. For. 94/73, Stanhope to Nottingham 17 January and 7 March, 1691) Ehrman's conclusion that the Mediterranean policy goes back as far as the days following Barfleur is highly speculative: "...if interrupted concentration on one objective is the mark of a policy, then William's conscious Mediterranean policy may be said to date from that time (May, 1692)." Cambridge Historical Journal, IX, #8, pp. 273-4.

25 Coxe, op. cit., p. 39. It was popularly believed for a time that Shovel might be sent to the Mediterranean. Derwentwater's informant gave the definite news of Russell's going thither on June 5, 1694. CSPD, 1695, Addenda (newsletter), pp. 269-1. See also Shrewsbury to Russell, May 26, 1694, Coxe, op. cit., pp. 196-7.

26 CSPD, 1694-5, p. 157; Bucleuch Manuscripts, II, 75; House of Lords Manuscripts, 1695-6, I, 484-5; Burchett, op. cit., pp. 496-7; Present State of Europe (London), June 1, 1694, pp. 204-7, 206-7; C. Scarb., Histoire militaire du regne de Louis le Grand (Paris, 1726), III, 77.

27 Russell to Trenchard, May 23, 1694, Bucleuch Manuscripts, II, 73. Macaulay relates that Russell persisted in claiming ignorance of his destination until he was ready to weigh anchor, and that even Marlborough failed to get the news of the Brest-Mediterranean expedition from him, but got it from other sources, and relied his information to France. Thus, according to Macaulay, and those who accept his analysis, and the authenticity of the Camaret Bay letter, the French were well prepared for the Brest attack which proved so costly for the English. For the most modern interpretation of the incident, and complete exoneration of Marlborough from any complicity in the disaster, see W. Churchill, Marlborough, His Life and Times (New York, 1933), II, chapters VII and VIII. Churchill's arguments against Macaulay's allegations are logical and convincing. See also Luttrell, op. cit., III, 327-8; and Shrewsbury to Bathwayt, June 13, 1694, Bucleuch Manuscripts, II, 81.
French too well prepared to meet the English designs. 28 Remark-
ing that he was not a very desponding man, Russell nevertheless
confessed to be a little out of hope. 29

By July 1, the combined Anglo-Dutch fleet stood off Cape
Spartel, near the Atlantic entrance to the Straits of Gibraltar.
At this juncture word came that the French fleet of seventy sail
stood between Alfacques and Barcelona. 30 The imminent danger
to Spain had been foreseen by Russell. In coming into the Medi-
terranean, his aim had been to protect momentarily the Spanish
ports between Gibraltar and Barcelona, and eventually to inca-
pacitate or completely destroy the French fleet so that Spain
would be menaced no longer. 31 Much ground had been lost in
putting Russell’s aims into execution, for in May of 1694 Marshal
de Noailles had pushed into Catalonia with the French army,
supported by Admiral Tourville’s fleet off the Catalan coast. On
the 17th de Noailles defeated the Spanish army at the Ter River,
and the way into Catalonia opened before the French. The Cata-
lan fortresses fell in quick succession. Only the fortress of Ostal-
ric remained between de Noailles and Barcelona, and Tourville
was sailing to that latter place to aid in the siege. 32 News of
Russell’s entrance into the Mediterranean induced de Noailles
not to proceed to the siege of Barcelona. 33 Tourville was soon to
flee to safer harbor before that advance of the English fleet.
By mid-July he had fled to the safety of the Isle of Hieres, and
possibly prepared to withdraw to Malta in fear of the English. 34

28 The design on Brest was frustrated by the French, and Talmash killed; the
losses for England were very heavy, and seemingly unnecessary. Quincy, op. cit.,
III, 77–81.
29 Russell to Trenchard, June 6, 1694, CSPD, 1694–5, p. 165. Cf. same to same,
May 29, 1694, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 73–4.
30 J. Ehrman: “On July 1, the main allied fleet, with sixty-three men-of-war
excluding auxiliaries, entered the Straits for the first time in English naval his-
31 Russell to Trenchard, July 1, 1694, Coxe, op. cit., pp. 197–8; without the nine
Spanish vessels, Russell’s combined fleet numbered sixty-three ships of the line.
See also Burchett, op. cit., p. 505, and Souches, Memoirs du Marquis de Souches
sur le regne de Louis XIV (Paris, 1855), IV, 349.
32 Russell to Trenchard, CSPD, 1694–5, p. 239. Quincy’s reflections on the cam-
33 L. von Ranke, A History of England principally in the Seventeenth Century
(Oxford, 1875), V, 82. Ranke pointed out that “Spain now clearly saw what the
(United) Netherlands had long seen; namely, that the great monarchy could no
longer defend itself without foreign help. It was of incalculable importance to Spain
to be in alliance with the maritime powers.” Ibid., V, 82. Cf. Quincy, op. cit., III,
55–6. For his success, Louis XIV made de Noailles Vice-roy of Catalonia, which
dignity he assumed on July 9, 1694. Ibid., III, 96. See also Memoires de Noailles
(Paris, 1777), I, 256–7, 265–8; Present State of Europe, May–August, 1694, pp. 165,
198–9, 225–9, 264–5.
34 Souches, op. cit., entry for June 29, 1694, IV, 349.
35 The French had promptly retired upon news of the approach of the English—
fearful, yet not knowing where the English and Dutch were. Russell to Trenchard,
July 13, 1694, CSPD, 1694–5, p. 224. See also Blathwayt to Shrewsbury, July 9/10,
1694, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 96; Present State of Europe, August 1694, pp.
271–2; Souches, op. cit., IV, 366.
It is clear that Admiral Russell deeply regretted his inability to meet the French in battle. Even were he to stand before Barcelona, this action would be of little lasting value. The Spaniards, Russell opined, were so weak that the moment the English retired, the French would reappear and take Barcelona, whence they might overrun Catalonia at their pleasure.

After gaining Barcelona, the English fleet would offer to join in any attempt against the French that the Spaniards would propose, and then would prepare to return to England. In Admiral Russell’s opinion, the only service the Anglo-Dutch fleet had rendered England in the present campaign was the establishment of a reputation, “which is very great at this time.” By July 29 Russell anchored off Barcelona, his fleet in good condition; but the French, he regretted to report, were at Toulon.

It was obvious that the French fleet would continue its refusal to engage until it enjoyed an advantage. In disgust the Admiral announced his intention to remain on the Spanish coast ten days more at the most, and then start homeward. He was in decidedly low spirits over the results of his Mediterranean expedition. In eager expectation he had prepared for the voyage, only to be diverted at the outset by the proposal to make an attempt on Brest. Interpreting his orders in accordance with his own concept of the relative importance of the two objectives, Russell had gone directly to the Mediterranean and put the execution of the Brest diversion upon other shoulders. Seemingly the Mediterranean expedition was to meet with little more success than had the Brest assault.

The Admiral wrote to Shrewsbury from Barcelona in early August his conviction that the French would not appear and fight, and confessed he thought Toulon too well guarded to risk the fleet in that harbor. Realizing the fickleness of the public temper, he confided to the Duke that he fully expected to be blamed for not fighting the French, whether they would offer battle or not. “I long to be rid of this troublesome affair. I have

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36 Russell to Trenchard, July 25, 1694, CSPD, 1694–5, p. 238.
38 Russell to Trenchard, August 3/13, 1694, CSPD, 1694–5, p. 252. Russell felt his position in the Mediterranean to be precarious. “With only four weeks to go before his big ships should be taken into harbour, he was over 1600 miles from home and with a hard passage ahead of him. A shift of wind to the West for a week and he was caught inside the Mediterranean with no major base and with the Atlantic and the autumn between himself and Portsmouth.” Ehman in Cambridge Historical Journal, IX, #3, p. 286.
39 This is the same view that he had tendered Trenchard. Russell was correct in his observations, if Sourches, among many others, can be taken as authoritative in his remarks upon the French success in fortifying Toulon. Op. cit., IV, 357.
neither head, body, nor temper to undergo all I do. Pray... that I may have the good fortune to see you at Christmas."

But such was not to be the Admiral’s good fortune. At Malaga in early September of 1694, Edward Russell met with one of the greatest surprises of his life: he was ordered to remain in the Mediterranean area during the winter, and to establish quarters at Cadiz. This move on King William’s part is considered by Corbett to be the masterstroke of late seventeenth-century English naval policy. So important does Corbett deem this establishment of a semi-permanent Mediterranean fleet that he indulges in fulsome praise of William III’s action:

So the momentous step was taken to adorn William’s memory with one of its finest ornaments. It was he and he alone whose act it was, and his should be the undying credit. For the honour of his ungenerous ministers, it must be said that, when he had once assumed the responsibility, they did all they could to support him.

Though, as Corbett says, “it was he and he alone whose act it was,” Burchett speaks of a similar proposal: “at this time (late summer of 1694) a noble Lord (Earl of Gallway) proposed the fleet’s wintering in the Mediterranean...” In extenuation of Corbett, many may have had the idea; William III did put it into execution! Sufﬁce it to say that by September 7th Russell had acknowledged the royal orders, and had written of his compliance to Shrewsbury, detailing the shortcomings and defects of the fleet, sneering at the King, who “fancies the defects of a ship are as easily repaired as mending a bridle or stirrup leather,” and outlining his further plans for the aid of Spain.

By October the fleet was at Cadiz, its designated winter base. Russell set to work to make the port as suitable a winter station

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38 Russell to Shrewsbury, August 3/13, 1694, Coxe, op. cit., p. 199.
39 Draft (with the Queen’s signature) of instructions for Edward Russell, Esq., Admiral of the fleet, August 14, 1694, CSPD, 1694–5, p. 264.
40 Corbett, op. cit., II, 444. See also Blathwayt to Trenchard, July 27/August 6, 1694: “His Majesty has now declared his Pleasure concerning Admiral Russell’s return home and commands me to lett you know that he is Inclined that the Fleet should remain in the Mediterranean as long as may consist with its safety, and that upon Admiral Russell’s coming away, he leave as considerable a squadron as may be convenient in those parts.” Add. Mss. 37992, f. 58, quoted by Ehrman, Cambridge Historical Journal, IX, #3, p. 296.
41 Burchett, op. cit., p. 597. As Ehrman points out, however, William III’s policy had been more foresighted: “From his vantage point at the head of an alliance, with his varied sources of information of which he alone knew the sum, and with his European interests which separated him from all his English ministers and of which he alone had always been acknowledged to be the judge, William looked at the Mediterranean with a different eye from that of the authorities at home. To him, it was now the point at which allied sea power impinged upon allied strategy.” Cambridge Historical Journal, IX, #3, p. 275.
43 Russell to Shrewsbury, Alcante, September 21, and Cadiz, October 8, 1694, Coxe, op. cit., pp. 204, 206; S. Martin-Leake, Life of Captain Stephen Martin (Navy Records Society, 1895), p. 23, claims October 7th as the date of Russell’s arrival.
as possible, and to refit the Anglo-Dutch fleet for future action in the Mediterranean, always touching his observations of his work with characteristic pessimism: “if it be possible to serve at sea eighteen months,” he wrote Shrewsbury, “I may hope to see you again; if not, my cares about my house and garden will be at an end.” And while Russell stood at Cadiz, the French wintered at Toulon, and thus affairs rested through the winter.

William III, it is clear, had every intention of keeping Russell at his post during 1695, and wanted from Russell the exact date when the Anglo-Dutch fleet would be ready to put to sea, for he had certain concrete proposals in mind: English trade in the Mediterranean must be protected; the Catalan coast in particular, and Spain in general, must be defended; the fleet should be ready, if possible, to join in action with the Duke of Savoy and Lord Galway in a descent upon Provence. Bombardment of Toulon was also to be given serious consideration, for if the bomb-vessels could get close enough, they might wreak terrible havoc in view of the extraordinarily large concentration of ships there. The same consideration was to be given for an attack on Marseilles. William furthermore wanted Russell to consider the possibility of bombarding the towns themselves if the French fleet moved out before the English fleet could effect a counter move, or if the harbor itself should prove too well defended.

“At such a time as this,” wrote Shrewsbury to Russell, “when there appears to be a prospect of doing something to weaken France in their naval power, which is so immediately the interest and security of England, his Majesty is earnestly concerned that such an opportunity be not lost, which in an age may not offer itself again.”

at Cadiz. See also Burchett, op. cit., p. 513; Shrewsbury to Blathwayt, September 25, 1694, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 140. William refused as well to consider an alternative port for the fleet. Shrewsbury informed the Spanish ambassador, and insisted that the fleet winter at Cadiz. See also Souchres, op. cit., November 22, 1694, IV, 402.

Coxe, op. cit., pp. 209–10. Russell had written to Trenchard in a similar vein in early September: “I am at present under a doubt with myself whether it is not better to die.” CSPD, 1694–5, p. 283.

Russell to Trenchard, October 29, 1694, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 154; Mémoires de Noailles, I, 397.

These were stressed in Council meetings in May of 1695. Cf. Privy Council minutes, May 4, 1695, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 182–4.

Shrewsbury to Russell, December 4, 1694, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 163. That the Ministry hesitated to commit itself to a hard and fast policy regarding Russell’s remaining in the Mediterranean over the winter is evident in its recommendation to William: “... if the King be inclined to have Mr. Russell remain in the Straights his Orders should not be to (sic) positive, but that he may have liberty to return, if upon notice of what supplies he may expect from England, or upon other consideration of the state of the fleet under his command: he shall Judge it not practicable to refit it at Cadiz in due time.” National Maritime Museum, Bibliotheca Philippiaca I, f. 212, quoted by Ehrman, Cambridge Historical Journal, IX, #8, p. 286. As usual, the ministry shifted the burden of decision to the King, and ultimately it was Russell who had to make the decision as to the proper course of action.
With the advent of spring, Russell stood ready to put to sea, and with the arrival of suitable supplies and reinforcements from England, set out. Though hampered by adverse weather, by May 10th Russell and the fleet were out of Cadiz Bay, heading for Barcelona. Joining with the Dutch fleet, the Admiral went in search of the French, then went to aid in the siege of Pala- mos, finally moving off to stand in at Toulon and observe the preparations of the French fleet. The weather proved so unpredictable, however, that Admiral Russell was forced to withdraw from the coast; his appearance had given the French a great scare, nonetheless, for they had not expected him again on the coast of Provence. Unable to find out for certain what the French intended to do, Russell surmised that their aim was to make a run for the Straits. As for Spain, Russell despaired of their soldiery: “nothing but a high mountain or an unfordable river is security sufficient for such miserable creatures, with officers at the head of them who are no soldiers.”... now I shall leave them to God and themselves; and if Providence does not protect them, against all their own endeavours, Spain must be a prey to any that will demand it.” From Toulon the fleet withdrew to Altea Bay, and there received news of Rooke’s succeeding to the command of the Mediterranean fleet. Now

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61 Russell to Shrewsbury, April 12, 1695, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 180; Present State of Europe, May, 1694, p. 175; Quincy, op. cit., III, 179.
62 Russell to Shrewsbury, Britannia, in Cadiz Bay, May 2, 1695, Coxe, op. cit., p. 222; Newsletter to Derwentwater, June 1, 1695, London, CSPD, 1695, Addenda, p. 339. Derwentwater’s informant merely knew that Russell had quit Cadiz Bay by May 8th; he knew not where he had gone. Cf. Present State of Europe, June, 1695, p. 208. The Privy Council and the King were most interested in the protection of the trade, the coast of Spain, and particularly in keeping Barcelona from the hands of the French. Privy Council Minutes, May 4, 1695, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 182, 188.
63 Torrington’s Memoirs, pp. 72–3; Quincy, op. cit., III, 180. On May 21, Russell and the fleet were at Cape de Rose. Galway to Shrewsbury, June 3, 1695, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 187. Galway was in camp before Casal. See also, Russell to Shrewsbury, Britannia, 6 leagues south of the Isles de Hieres, June 14, 1695, Coxe, op. cit., pp. 331–2.
64 Quincy, op. cit., III, 176–8. Quincy sets the figure at 3000 men for the English troops.
65 Souches, op. cit., V, 50, 52, 54–5; Present State of Europe, September, 1695, p. 335.
66 Russell to Shrewsbury, August 16, 1695, Coxe, op. cit., pp. 238–42.
67 Russell to Shrewsbury, Britannia, in Altea Bay, September 4, 1695, Coxe, op. cit., p. 244; Quincy, op. cit., III, “Quoi que celles (Anglo-Dutch in 1694–5) qu’il fit fussent asses considérables pour allermer le Roy d’Espagne oy ses peoples, allez ne purent l’amener au but que e France s’etoit propose, qui eot de faire la paix.” Page 98.
68 Shrewsbury wrote to tell Russell the news of Rooke’s appointment: “The truth of the matter is, to oblige you to stay longer, would have been a barbarity to you, and your not staying is a cruelty to the public.” July 30, 1695, Coxe, op. cit., pp. 235–4. See also, Lord Capel to Mr. Vernon, August 15, 1695, CSPD, 1695, p. 45. Shrewsbury had expressed his belief to Russell as early as May that Rooke would be the Admiral’s successor: May 21, 1695, Buccleuch Manuscripts, II, 186. See also Souches, op. cit., V, 21–2.
Edward Russell's sojourn was nearing its end, and his work was nearly finished. Care for the weakened fleet was of paramount interest to Russell; he left what ships he could for Rooke, and beat up the Atlantic coast with the remainder of the Anglo-Dutch fleet. Making the passage from Cadiz in twenty-two days of fine weather, Edward Russell was at Portsmouth on November 4th, and two days later he struck his flag at Dover and went ashore.58

The Admiral was home at last, and he could cast his glance back over eighteen months of activity in the planning and execution of the Mediterranean expedition. He had failed to destroy the French fleet, but he had kept it bottled up at Toulon and Marseilles. He had failed to bombard or destroy in part the towns or harbors at either of those two ports, but he had succeeded in keeping the French from capturing Barcelona, and had limited them to their gains in Catalonia secured prior to his arrival. He had failed to concert a land and sea action with Lord Galway, not because he was unwilling to co-operate, but because the Duke of Savoy either could or would offer no assistance. He had managed to keep the fleet ready for sea duty, and this in spite of poverty-stricken facilities at Cadiz, and long-delayed supplies from England. Intent on searching for the French, he had been obliged to aid in the siege of Palamos, transport troops from Italy to Barcelona, and attempt to force action and decision from lazy, shiftless, indecisive and disinterested Spaniards, many of whom were more in the interests of France than of Spain. If the whole campaign seems in general scope frustrated, it appears, upon detailed analysis, about as successful as it could have been in view of the odds against the Admiral.

There were other concrete gains that cannot be overlooked. Most important was the new prestige that England had gained in the eyes of the Mediterranean and Italian city states, and in the eyes of the maritime powers. France's fleet had not been beaten, but it had been immobilized and prevented from aiding her land forces to put Catalonia out of the war. The preponderance which France held in the Mediterranean immediately after the destruction of the Smyrna Convoy in 1693 had amounted to nothing when the English fleet had come into the Mediterranean; Spain had been kept intact and at least temporarily on the side of the Allies: all this by one Anglo-Dutch fleet. The respect that William's government had gained among the previously recalcitrant Italian city states was phenomenal. All in all, Edward

Russell had served well in his appointed task. Under his command and at his discretion, the policy that was to prove one of the bulwarks of later Empire had been inaugurated. The reputation of England was much greater for Russell's having sojournered in the Mediterranean sea, and King William was under obligation to thank his enterprising but querulous Admiral for his valuable services, nautical, diplomatic and military.