

1: Robert Blake, admiral and general at sea - William Hepworth Dixon - Google Books

The Blake oilfield in the United Kingdom Sector of the North Sea is named in honour of the general at sea. Blake is also mentioned in the poem Ye Mariners of England by Thomas Campbell. Blake also has a school house named after him at The Royal Hospital School.

Background[edit] In September the government of the Commonwealth of England , the Council of State , mistakenly believing that the United Provinces after their defeat at the Battle of the Kentish Knock would desist from bringing out a fleet so late in the season, sent away ships to the Mediterranean and the Baltic. At the same time the largest English vessels remained in repair and active ships were undermanned as sailors deserted or rioted because their wages were in arrears. This left the English weakened and badly outnumbered in home waters. Meanwhile, the Dutch were making every effort to reinforce their fleet. Dutch trade interests demanded that their navy would make a final effort to convoy merchantmen to the south. Maarten Tromp Robert Blake On 21 November Old Style , 1 December New Style , Lieutenant-Admiral Maarten Tromp , again unofficial supreme commander after his successor Vice-Admiral Witte de With had suffered a breakdown because of his defeat at the Battle of the Kentish Knock, set sail from the naval port of Hellevoetsluis with 88 men of war and five fireships , escorting a vast convoy of merchantmen bound for France, the Mediterranean and the Indies. At first, unfavourable southwestern gales forced him to return but on 23 November he again sailed south. With the convoy, accompanied by sixteen warships, safely delivered through the Straits of Dover , Tromp turned to the west in search of the English, and on 29 November he discovered the English fleet of 42 capital ships and ten smaller vessels anchored in the Downs , between the landheads of North Foreland and South Foreland , commanded by General at Sea Robert Blake. After a council of war in which it was decided to avoid battle, the English promptly left their anchorage, sailing south. Blake may have not realised how large the Dutch fleet was, or he may have feared to become trapped like the Spanish had some years earlier in the Battle of the Downs. The wind was now strong from the northwest, so the English could not return to the Downs in any case, having to settle for Dover. The English fleet swiftly rounded South Foreland while the Dutch were unable to reach them, both fleets anchoring in the evening at about five miles distance. During the night a storm dispersed some Dutch vessels. Next morning, at noon the two fleets began to move southwest, with the English hugging the coast and the Dutch keeping some distance. The forces were separated by the Rip-Raps and the Varne Shoal and therefore unable to engage. Between the Varne Shoal and Dungeness a narrow exit exists. Blake had hoped to escape through it but when he arrived already about seventeen Dutch ships were waiting for him. Nevertheless, he continued his manoeuvre. Blake, noticing this, tacked to cross the bow of the Brederode, giving his opponent a broadside. In response, Tromp also tacked and fired a salvo. This failed however, the Garland ramming the bow of the Brederode at starboard with such force that both ships remained entangled. The snout and bowsprit of the Brederode broke off. The larger crew of the Brederode swiftly boarded the Garland. Tromp encouraged his men by promising a reward of five hundred guilders to the first who would strike the English flag. In despair, captain Richard Batten blew up his own upper deck to drive away the Dutch. Meanwhile, the third English ship to arrive, the Anthony Bonaventure, grappled the port of the Brederode. Covering the deck of the Dutch ship with canister shot , it soon forced its crew below deck. Noticing the plight of his commander, Vice-Admiral Johan Evertsen in turn boarded the port of the Anthony Bonaventure with his Hollandia, so that four ships were now attached. In ferocious fighting his men, losing sixty, killed the entire crew of the Anthony Bonaventure, including Captain Walter Hoxton. The Garland was taken, with sixty killed out of a crew of hundred fifty, including Captain Batten. At this point the Garland was in a bad condition, her rudder largely having been shot away. Blake received little support from the remainder of the English fleet. When the Happy Entrance entered the channel, she was at once assaulted and only with difficulty managed to extract herself. The other English ships began to understand the tactical situation: On the other hand, most Dutch ships did not engage either. Annoyed, Commodore Michiel de Ruyter on the Witte Lam entered the exit in the opposite direction to attack the mass of the English ships but no one followed him and he was forced to withdraw. He complained in his journal:

Despite the tactical difficulties, it was unacceptable to leave Blake to his fate. The two most heavily armed English vessels apart from the Triumph, the Vanguard and the Victory, used their superior firepower to break the Dutch opposition and allowed Blake to retreat and join the English main force. The Triumph had lost her fore-topmast and Blake had been wounded. A large part of the Dutch fleet had not even arrived yet. The English fleet by nightfall had lost five ships. These included the captured Garland and Anthony Bonaventure that would be taken into Dutch service as the Rozenkrans and the Bonaventura. Two smaller vessels were burnt, one of them perhaps the light frigate Acorn, and one sunk. In the evening, the Dutch lost the Schiedam, also known as the Gelderland because the States of Gueldres had paid for her, through fire and subsequent explosion. Captain Dirk Juinbol died from his wounds the next day. Blake that night retreated under cover of darkness to his anchorage in the Downs. The Dutch did not follow but used this time to repair the ships, especially the Brederode. The next morning the Dutch intercepted a group of three merchantmen sailing from the west. Their guard ship, the Merlin, managed to escape, but they themselves were taken and their cargo of figs and lemons were distributed among the Dutch crews. Tromp could not be satisfied with the result however as the Dutch had missed an opportunity to annihilate the English. The wind turned east, which allowed Blake to quickly reach the Thames but slowed the Dutch. A group of English ships was encountered, that had been sent to reinforce Blake but had sailed past him in the darkness. Two new frigates, the Ruby and the Sapphire, managed to escape, but the Hercules, an armed merchantman, was run ashore by her captain, Zachary Browne. Returning to the Strait of Dover, Tromp allowed his merchant convoy to split up, each group of merchantmen continuing its way towards their individual destination together with their protecting warships. Tromp considered attacking Blake in the Medway, but despite offering a reward of fifty Flemish pounds, in the entire Dutch fleet not a single pilot could be found who dared to navigate these dangerous waters. Not until did De Ruyter manage to execute such an attack, in the Raid on the Medway. Aftermath[edit] The battle resulted in several reforms in the English Fleet. Many of them refused to participate in the battle. Some naval captains insisted on their traditional right to enter and leave the battle at times of their choosing, and to leave formation in order to secure any prize. Blake threatened to resign if something was not done. The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty responded by: A legend says that Tromp attached a broom to his mast as a sign that he had swept the sea clean of his enemies, but in his book *The Command of the Ocean*, N. Roger doubts the legend as such a boasting action would have been out of character for Tromp. Additionally, at the time, a broom attached to a mast was the way of showing that a ship was for sale. Also Dutch contemporaneous sources make no mention of it.

2: Robert Blake (), General at Sea - National Maritime Museum

The generals at sea. In February , within a month of the execution of Charles I, the Council of State decided to put the office of Lord High Admiral into commission, and Colonel Robert Blake, Colonel Edward Popham and Colonel Richard Deane were appointed by Parliament as the first generals at sea and Commissioners for the Admiralty and Navy.

When the English Civil War broke out during the period of the Long Parliament, and having failed to be re-elected, Blake began his military career on the side of the parliamentarians despite having no substantial experience of military or naval matters. He would later return to recover from an injury sustained in the Battle of Portland. After his leading role in holding Lyme Regis in the Siege of Lyme April he was promoted to colonel. He went on to hold the Parliamentary enclave of Taunton during the Siege of Taunton , which earned him national recognition and where he famously declared that he would eat three of his four pairs of boots before he would surrender. He subsequently succeeded in winning the Siege of Dunster November As well as being largely responsible for building the largest navy the country had then ever known, from a few tens of ships to well over a hundred, he was first to keep a fleet at sea over the winter. Blake was driven off by a storm in October and Rupert escaped via Spain to Lisbon, where Rupert had expanded his fleet to 13 ships. Blake put to sea with 12 ships in February and dropped anchor off Lisbon in an attempt to persuade the Portuguese king to expel Rupert. After 2 months the king decided to back Rupert. Blake was joined by another 4 warships commanded by Edward Popham , who brought authority to go to war with Portugal. Parliament voted Blake pounds by way of thanks in February Soon after he was made a member of the Council of State. By the end of the various English colonies in the Americas had also been secured. The proper war started in June with an English campaign against the Dutch East Indies, Baltic and fishing trades by Blake, in command of around 60 ships. On 5 October Dutch Vice-Admiral Witte Corneliszoon de With , underestimating the strength of the English, attempted to attack Blake, but due to the weather it was Blake who attacked on 8 October in the Battle of the Kentish Knock , sending de With back to the Netherlands in defeat. The English government seemed to think that the war was over and sent ships away to the Mediterranean. Blake had only 42 warships when he was attacked and decisively defeated by 88 Dutch ships under Tromp on 9 December in the Battle of Dungeness , losing control of the English Channel to the Dutch. Meanwhile the ships sent away had also been defeated in the Battle of Leghorn. They complied by, among other things, enacting Articles of War to reinforce the authority of an admiral over his captains. At the Battle of the Gabbard on 12 and 13 June Blake reinforced the ships of Generals Richard Deane and George Monck and decisively defeated the Dutch fleet, sinking or capturing 17 ships without losing one. Now also the North Sea was brought under English control, and the Dutch fleet was blockaded in various ports until the Battle of Scheveningen , where Tromp was killed. Peace with the Dutch achieved, Blake sailed in October with 24 warships to the Mediterranean, successfully deterring the Duke of Guise from conquering Naples. Bey of Tunis See also Barbary pirate In April Blake was sent to the Mediterranean again to extract compensation from the piratical states that had been attacking English shipping. The Bey of Tunis alone refused compensation, and with 15 ships Blake destroyed the 2 shore batteries and 9 Algerian ships in Porto Farina, the first time shore batteries had been taken out without landing men ashore.

3: Robert Blake: General-at-sea [by] J. R. Powell | National Library of Australia

Robert Blake () was one of the most famous English admirals and general. He fought in the English Civil war, and wars against the Dutch, the Spanish, Portuguese and the Muslim pirates along the African coast.

When the English Civil War broke out during the period of the Long Parliament , and having failed to be re-elected, Blake began his military career on the side of the parliamentarians despite having no substantial experience of military or naval matters. He would later return to recover from an injury sustained in the Battle of Portland. He went on to hold the Parliamentary enclave of Taunton during the Siege of Taunton , which earned him national recognition and where he famously declared that he would eat three of his four pairs of boots before he would surrender. He subsequently succeeded in winning the Siege of Dunster November As well as being largely responsible for building the largest navy the country had then ever known, from a few tens of ships to well over a hundred, he was first to keep a fleet at sea over the winter. Blake was driven off by a storm in October and Rupert escaped via Spain to Lisbon, where he had expanded his fleet to 13 ships. Blake put to sea with 12 ships in February and dropped anchor off Lisbon in an attempt to persuade the Portuguese king to expel Rupert. After two months the king decided to back Rupert. Blake was joined by another four warships commanded by Edward Popham , who brought authority to go to war with Portugal. Parliament voted Blake 1, pounds by way of thanks in February Soon afterwards he was made a member of the Council of State. By the end of the various English colonies in the Americas had also been secured. The proper war started in June with an English campaign against the Dutch East Indies, Baltic and fishing trades by Blake, in command of around 60 ships. On 5 October Dutch Vice-Admiral Witte Corneliszoon de With , underestimating the strength of the English, attempted to attack Blake, but due to the weather it was Blake who attacked on 8 October in the Battle of the Kentish Knock , sending de With back to the Netherlands in defeat. The English government seemed to think that the war was over and sent ships away to the Mediterranean. Blake had only 42 warships when he was attacked and decisively defeated by 88 Dutch ships under Tromp on 9 December in the Battle of Dungeness , losing control of the English Channel to the Dutch. Meanwhile, the ships sent away had also been defeated in the Battle of Leghorn. They complied by, among other things, enacting Articles of War to reinforce the authority of an admiral over his captains. At the Battle of the Gabbard on 12 and 13 June Blake reinforced the ships of Generals Richard Deane and George Monck and decisively defeated the Dutch fleet, sinking or capturing 17 ships without losing one. Now also the North Sea was brought under English control, and the Dutch fleet was blockaded in various ports until the Battle of Scheveningen , where Tromp was killed. Peace with the Dutch achieved, Blake sailed in October with 24 warships to the Mediterranean, successfully deterring the Duke of Guise from conquering Naples. Bey of Tunis See also Barbary pirate In April Blake was sent to the Mediterranean again to extract compensation from the piratical states that had been attacking English shipping. The Bey of Tunis alone refused compensation, and with 15 ships Blake destroyed the two shore batteries and nine Algerian ships in Porto Farina, the first time shore batteries had been taken out without landing men ashore. Blake maintained the blockade throughout the winter, the first time the fleet had stayed at sea over winter. The action also earned him respect years later from Lord Nelson who lost his arm there in a failed attack ; in a letter written on 17 April , to Admiral Sir John Jervis , Nelson wrote "I do not reckon myself equal to Blake", before going on to outline the plans for his own attack. Death Statue of Robert Blake in Bridgwater, Somerset After again cruising off Cadiz for a while, Blake turned for home but died of old wounds within sight of Plymouth. Blake and his flagship Triumph featured on a second class postage stamp issued in In various events took place in Bridgwater, Somerset, from April to September to commemorate the th anniversary of the death of Robert Blake. These included a civic ceremony on 8 July and a 17th-century market on 15 July Blake also has a school house named after him at The Royal Hospital School.

4: Robert Blake; general-at-sea (edition) | Open Library

The Blake oilfield in the United Kingdom Sector of the North Sea is named in honour of the general at sea. Blake is also mentioned in the poem 'Ye Mariners of England' by Thomas Campbell. Blake also has a school house named after him at The Royal Hospital School.

Background[edit] England, ruled at the time by the Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell , decided to support France in its war with the Spanish Empire in . This intervention was mostly motivated by hopes to profit from the war through raids on Spanish possessions in the West Indies. War was openly declared in October and endorsed when the Second Protectorate Parliament assembled the following year. Robert Blake was to be in charge and also was to come up with methods that he had used in his previous encounters with the Dutch and Barbary pirates. Although his captains wanted to search for the Spanish galleons immediately, Blake refused to divide his forces and waited until victualling ships from England arrived to re-provision his fleet at the end of March. After this Blake with only two ships to watch Cadiz , sailed from Cadiz Bay on 13 April to attack the plate fleet, which had docked at Santa Cruz de Tenerife in the Canary Islands to await an escort to Spain. Santa Cruz lies in a deeply indented bay and the harbour was defended by a castle armed with forty guns and a number of smaller forts connected by a triple line of breastworks to shelter musketeers. In an operation similar to the raid on the Barbary pirates of Porto Farina in Tunisia in , Blake planned to send twelve frigates under the command of Rear-Admiral Stayner in *Speaker* into the harbour to attack the galleons while he followed in *George* with the rest of the fleet to bombard the shore batteries. The attack began at 9: No shot was fired from the English ships until they had moved into position and dropped anchor. Blake saw what the Spanish had not; that the six galleons masked the fire of the other ten ships. Blake ordered that no prizes were to be taken; the Spanish fleet was to be utterly destroyed. The two great galleons fought on for several hours. English sailors took to boats to board Spanish ships and set them on fire. Contrary to orders, *Swiftsure* and four other frigates each took a surrendered ship as a prize and attempted to tow them out of the harbour. Blake sent peremptory orders that the prizes were to be burnt. He had to repeat his order three times before the reluctant captains obeyed. *Speaker* , which was the first ship to enter the harbour and last to leave, had been badly damaged, but no English ships were lost in the battle. Stayner was knighted by Oliver Cromwell. He returned to Cadiz in mid-July and handed command of the fleet to his flag captain , John Stoakes. Leaving nineteen ships to maintain the blockade, Blake sailed for England with eleven ships, most in need of repair. Worn out by his years of campaigning, he died aboard his flagship the *George* on 7 August as his fleet approached Plymouth Sound.

5: Robert Blake (admiral) - Wikipedia

Biography of Robert Blake, a hero of the Roundheads through his dogged defence of Lyme and Taunton, he became an admiral under the Commonwealth and is remembered as one of the greatest names in British naval history.

He served as chief magistrate of Bridgwater several times, in recognition of the esteem in which the townspeople held him. Arms of Robert Blake: When the English Civil War broke out during the period of the Long Parliament, and having failed to be re-elected, Blake began his military career on the side of the parliamentarians despite having no substantial experience of military or naval matters. He would later return to recover from an injury sustained in the Battle of Portland. He went on to hold the Parliamentary enclave of Taunton during the Siege of Taunton, which earned him national recognition and where he famously declared that he would eat three of his four pairs of boots before he would surrender. He subsequently succeeded in winning the Siege of Dunster November As well as being largely responsible for building the largest navy the country had then ever known, from a few tens of ships to well over a hundred, he was first to keep a fleet at sea over the winter. Blake was driven off by a storm in October and Rupert escaped via Spain to Lisbon, where he had expanded his fleet to 13 ships. Blake put to sea with 12 ships in February and dropped anchor off Lisbon in an attempt to persuade the Portuguese king to expel Rupert. After two months the king decided to back Rupert. Blake was joined by another four warships commanded by Edward Popham, who brought authority to go to war with Portugal. Parliament voted Blake 1, pounds by way of thanks in February Soon afterwards he was made a member of the Council of State. By the end of the various English colonies in the Americas had also been secured. The proper war started in June with an English campaign against the Dutch East Indies, Baltic and fishing trades by Blake, in command of around 60 ships. On 5 October Dutch Vice-Admiral Witte Corneliszoon de With, underestimating the strength of the English, attempted to attack Blake, but due to the weather it was Blake who attacked on 8 October in the Battle of the Kentish Knock, sending de With back to the Netherlands in defeat. The English government seemed to think that the war was over and sent ships away to the Mediterranean. Blake had only 42 warships when he was attacked and decisively defeated by 88 Dutch ships under Tromp on 9 December in the Battle of Dungeness, losing control of the English Channel to the Dutch. Meanwhile, the ships sent away had also been defeated in the Battle of Leghorn. They complied by, among other things, enacting Articles of War to reinforce the authority of an admiral over his captains. At the Battle of the Gabbard on 12 and 13 June Blake reinforced the ships of Generals Richard Deane and George Monck and decisively defeated the Dutch fleet, sinking or capturing 17 ships without losing one. Now also the North Sea was brought under English control, and the Dutch fleet was blockaded in various ports until the Battle of Scheveningen, where Tromp was killed. Peace with the Dutch achieved, Blake sailed in October with 24 warships to the Mediterranean, successfully deterring the Duke of Guise from conquering Naples. Bey of Tunis See also Barbary pirate In April Blake was sent to the Mediterranean again to extract compensation from the piratical states that had been attacking English shipping. The Bey of Tunis alone refused compensation, and with 15 ships Blake destroyed the two shore batteries and nine Algerian ships in Porto Farina, the first time shore batteries had been taken out without landing men ashore. Blake maintained the blockade throughout the winter, the first time the fleet had stayed at sea over winter. The action also earned him respect years later from Lord Nelson who lost his arm there in a failed attack; in a letter written on 17 April, to Admiral Sir John Jervis, Nelson wrote "I do not reckon myself equal to Blake", before going on to outline the plans for his own attack. Death Statue of Robert Blake in Bridgwater, Somerset After again cruising off Cadiz for a while, Blake turned for home but died of old wounds within sight of Plymouth. Blake and his flagship Triumph featured on a second class postage stamp issued in In various events took place in Bridgwater, Somerset, from April to September to commemorate the th anniversary of the death of Robert Blake. These included a civic ceremony on 8 July and a 17th-century market on 15 July Blake also has a school house named after him at The Royal Hospital School. A collateral relative was the historian Robert Blake, Baron Blake

6: Robert Blake (admiral) | Revolvry

Robert Blake, Admiral and General at sea in the time of Oliver Cromwell, was buried in Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey on 4th September. However, by order of Charles II in his remains, along with those of other Cromwellians buried in the Abbey, were exhumed and buried in a pit in.

Powell edited *The Letters of Robert Blake* for the Navy Records Society in he sought, as he explained, " to provide the material upon which a definitive life of Robert Blake can be based. Powell is mixed with a little surprise that so great an admiral should have had no full-scale biography until now. This valuable book fairly makes amends to a sea officer whose career can be fairly compared with that of Sir Francis Drake. Born in , he came of a shipowning family in Bridgwater, took his degree at Oxford, served with the Parliamentary forces in the Civil War and was appointed one of the generals-at-sea in How he came to be chosen is still guesswork but as from this point his career is well documented and Covered, indeed, by his own correspondence. A tittle unfortunately for his reputation he was then defeated by Tromp in November off Dungeness. There followed a period of reorganisation, after which Blake put to sea again and fought Tromp, Ruyter and Evertson off Portland. In three days of fighting the Dutch were put to flight but Blake himself came ashore wounded and sick. He recovered just in time to resume command during the Battle of the Gabard 2 June, at which the Dutch were routed with ten ships destroyed and eleven taken. There followed a further action in which Tromp was killed, leaving England "the supreme naval power in Europe. The author of this latest and most complete biography writes, in conclusion that England was fortunate in having his flexible and adaptable mind to grapple with the new problem which confronted the navy. The broadside had made obsolete the old tactic of line abreast. This priceless gift they handed on to future generations of English seamen. The author of this latest book concludes that the 17th century tactical theory was perfectly sound and that there would have been no point in amending it. How could there be any progress in theory, he asks, when there was no change in ships or weapons? If this view were accepted we must be left wondering, with the author, "why it was that British fleets so often overcame their French opponents, when the latter were of roughly equal strength. At the end of this book, nevertheless, one is left with the feeling that some important questions have still to be answered and that some other questions " perhaps more important " have still to be asked. It is the sad fact that historians of naval Warfare have been too obsessed from the beginning by tactical diagrams. These afford what may seem an easy explanation of how battles have been won and lost. The truth is, however, that war is not merely a matter of tactics. It is to a far greater extent a matter of fighting; and this is the side of the story which scholars have mostly chosen to ignore. Blake did not owe his victories as much to tactical innovation as to the fact that the Dutch Ships and gunnery were inferior to his. No one troubles to do the needed research. We want to know more about the cannon and how they were mounted, What was the gun-drill and what was the equipment. What was the composition of the gunpowder? What discipline was used to combine accuracy with the high rate of fire? Why did the Dutch tend to fire too high? Powell gives due credit to George Monck, who certainly deserved it, and adds p. But this lies in the field of technology, which remains largely unexplored. There are too many problems still unsolved. Oddly enough, the question which Captam Creswell asks " why did the British so often beat their French opponents? Until it does not really arise, the French being More successful than the British history books will usually admit; successful enough, for instance, to establish the independence of what then became the United States. Then came the Revolution in which the French rid themselves of their senior officers and were defeated for want of them. As from that time they were so consistently blockaded that their ships had little chance to gain operational efficiency. A newly-commissioned man-of-war needed, in those days, about three months of training at sea before being regarded as ready for battle. But even this handicap was only a part of the story, for there were tremendous improvements in British gunnery before the French wars began and more again before they ended. It would be wrong to conclude that the tactics pursued were unimportant, but the British manoeuvres were based on the assumption that any British man-of-war should be able to capture a French ship of equal force. This was the basic fact, known to both sides, and no tactical theory could be of comparable importance. Admirals are often

given too much credit for some masterly decision made in the course of the action and far too little credit for the months or years of work which they or others had spent in training the fleet beforehand. Battles were often won in this way before the fleets were in sight of each other and won sometimes who knows?

7: Battle of Dungeness - Wikipedia

This is the biography of the renowned admiral and general, Robert Blake, and, in it, the naval history of England during the 17th century - one of its most dramatic and turbulent periods.

It has been argued that had Charles I stayed in power the war between the two nations would have never sprung, as he would never have obtained the necessary funding from parliament. However, the rise of the English Parliament under Oliver Cromwell saw the deterioration of diplomacy between the two as the Dutch stadtholder financially supported the Royalists. Nonetheless, Cromwell did not challenge the Dutch, still consolidating his power at home. The Dutch response was divided; the moderate States of Holland tried to appease the English; but when the negotiations failed and the Navigation Acts were adopted the ferocious Orangist faction became more powerful, and the States General passed a resolution which would allow the Dutch war fleet, to be tripled in size, to protect Dutch interest over the areas in question. This fleet was put under the command of Admiral Maarten Tromp , who had defeated the sixth and final Spanish Armada at the Battle of the Downs , 31 October That same year, the Dutch signed a treaty with Denmark with the intent to hurt English shipping. The two fleets met for the first time in a major battle at the Battle of Dungeness , November The battle turned out to be a heavy English defeat, forcing the English to rethink their naval strategy, led by Admiral Sir Henry Vane and an Admiralty Committee , including developing a tactic that would mark naval warfare for the following century. Taking a page out of the Dutch book the English reorganised each fleet into squadrons for greater tactical control. The two fleets would meet again off Portland. Battle[edit] During the first days of February , Tromp escorted a convoy of merchant ships through the Channel and put them safely into the Atlantic Ocean. He set to return to his home port, but first anchored off La Rochelle to repair and resupply his ships and waited for expected merchantmen coming from the Atlantic. He attempted to set sail on 20 February with merchantmen, but was held back for three days by high winds and rough seas. Immediately, Tromp set the signal for a general attack and began the offensive with the wind in his favor as he had the weather gauge. Blake subsequently veered away and decided to fight at long range. Dutch Commodore De Ruyter was able to attack the English rear and engaged the largest English vessel in the fleet, Prosperity, ending in a boarding attempt which was repulsed by the crew of the British vessel the first time around. A second boarding attempt forced the Prosperity to surrender thereafter, however. An attempt to reclaim the ship surrounded De Ruyter, but after an intense fight the Dutch commodore was able to fight his way out. The battle continued for the day with heavy fire exchanged by both sides. Later on 28 February Blake sent a squadron of frigates to intercept and claim the Dutch merchantmen off the coast of La Rochelle. Tromp quickly responded by sending his own captains to intercept the English. The following day the English were the first to begin the engagement, with the wind in their favor. The initiative of the English fleet was not gone from the previous day, but five attempts failed to break the Dutch line. After the second day most of the Dutch warships were out of powder and shot, and there was none to resupply with. The third day ended just the same, with a failure to break the Dutch line. Several Dutch captains attempted to flee after completely running out of ammunition but Tromp ended their flight with a few shots across their ships. The battle ended for the day when Blake drew off, after forcing the Dutch to fight to the point where they only had around half an hour worth of shot left. On the fourth day the English again attempted to resume action, but they found the sea empty of Dutch warships. Tromp had guided the remainder of his fleet along the coastline, escaping certain defeat the next day, leaving eight warships and a number of merchantmen behind. Although both sides claimed victory after the battle, the fact remains that it was Tromp who left the field, not Blake, and in the end, it was Blake who was able to commandeer 20 to 40 Dutch merchantmen and at least eight Dutch warships back to his homeport. While Dutch propaganda tried to paint the battle as a Dutch victory or a "glorious defeat" and the populace publicly rejoiced at the heroism shown, Admiral Tromp and the other flag officers knew better, all coming home in an extremely dark mood. They concluded that the adoption of line tactics by the English would make it impossible for the Dutch to compensate inferior firepower with better seamanship and they urged the States-General to finally start building real heavy warships instead of replacing

losses by recruiting armed merchants. In a desperate attempt to at least keep the North Sea open, an under-equipped Dutch fleet engaged the English again at the Battle of the Gabbard. Please help to improve this article by introducing more precise citations.

8: Battle of Santa Cruz de Tenerife () - Wikipedia

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It has been argued that had Charles I stayed in power the war between the two nations would have never sprung, as he would never have obtained the necessary funding from parliament. However, the rise of the English Parliament under Oliver Cromwell saw the deterioration of diplomacy between the two as the Dutch stadtholder financially supported the Royalists. Nonetheless, Cromwell did not challenge the Dutch, still consolidating his power at home. This changed when Parliamentary armies finally routed the Royalists at the Battle of Worcester, effectively ending the English Civil War. The Dutch response was divided; the moderate States of Holland tried to appease the English; but when the negotiations failed and the Navigation Acts were adopted the ferocious Orangist faction became more powerful, and the States General passed a resolution which would allow the Dutch war fleet, to be tripled in size, to protect Dutch interest over the areas in question. This fleet was put under the command of Admiral Maarten Tromp, who had defeated the sixth and final Spanish Armada at the Battle of the Downs, 31 October. That same year, the Dutch signed a treaty with Denmark with the intent to hurt English shipping. The two fleets met for the first time in a major battle at the Battle of Dungeness, November. The battle turned out to be a heavy English defeat, forcing the English to rethink their naval strategy, led by Admiral Sir Henry Vane and an Admiralty Committee, including developing a tactic that would mark naval warfare for the following century. Taking a page out of the Dutch book the English reorganised each fleet into squadrons for greater tactical control. The two fleets would meet again off Portland. Battle Edit During the first days of February, Tromp escorted a convoy of merchant ships through the Channel and put them safely into the Atlantic Ocean. He set to return to his home port, but first anchored off La Rochelle to repair and resupply his ships and waited for expected merchantmen coming from the Atlantic. He attempted to set sail on 20 February with merchantmen, but was held back for three days by high winds and rough seas. Immediately, Tromp set the signal for a general attack and began the offensive with the wind in his favor as he had the weather gauge. Blake subsequently veered away and decided to fight at long range. Dutch Commodore De Ruyter was able to attack the English rear and engaged the largest English vessel in the fleet, Prosperity, ending in a boarding attempt which was repulsed by the crew of the British vessel the first time around. A second boarding attempt forced the Prosperity to surrender thereafter, however. An attempt to reclaim the ship surrounded De Ruyter, but after an intense fight the Dutch commodore was able to fight his way out. The battle continued for the day with heavy fire exchanged by both sides. Later on 28 February Blake sent a squadron of frigates to intercept and claim the Dutch merchantmen off the coast of La Rochelle. Tromp quickly responded by sending his own captains to intercept the English. The following day the English were the first to begin the engagement, with the wind in their favor. The initiative of the English fleet was not gone from the previous day, but five attempts failed to break the Dutch line. After the second day most of the Dutch warships were out of powder and shot, and there was none to resupply with. The third day ended just the same, with a failure to break the Dutch line. Several Dutch captains attempted to flee after completely running out of ammunition but Tromp ended their flight with a few shots across their ships. The battle ended for the day when Blake drew off, after forcing the Dutch to fight to the point where they only had around half an hour worth of shot left. On the fourth day the English again attempted to resume action, but they found the sea empty of Dutch warships. Tromp had guided the remainder of his fleet along the coastline, escaping certain defeat the next day, leaving eight warships and a number of merchantmen behind. Although both sides claimed victory after the battle, the fact remains that it was Tromp who left the field, not Blake, and in the end, it was Blake who was able to commandeer 20 to 40 Dutch merchantmen and at least eight Dutch warships back to his homeport. While Dutch propaganda tried to paint the battle as a Dutch victory or a "glorious defeat" and the populace publicly rejoiced at the heroism shown, Admiral Tromp and the other flag officers knew better, all coming home in an extremely dark mood. They

concluded that the adoption of line tactics by the English would make it impossible for the Dutch to compensate inferior firepower with better seamanship and they urged the States-General to finally start building real heavy warships instead of replacing losses by recruiting armed merchants. In a desperate attempt to at least keep the North Sea open, an under-equipped Dutch fleet engaged the English again at the Battle of the Gabbard.

9: Full text of "Robert Blake, Admiral and General at Sea, based on family and State papers"

Blake died on the return voyage and his body lay in state in the Hall of the Queen's House at Greenwich. The author of the portrait is unknown but it may have been painted by Captain Thomas Preston for the citizens of London and is often identified as the Pelly Portrait of Admiral Robert Blake.

He served as chief magistrate of Bridgwater several times, in recognition of the esteem in which the townspeople held him. Arms of Robert Blake: When the English Civil War broke out during the period of the Long Parliament, and having failed to be re-elected, Blake began his military career on the side of the parliamentarians despite having no substantial experience of military or naval matters. He would later return to recover from an injury sustained in the Battle of Portland. He went on to hold the Parliamentary enclave of Taunton during the Siege of Taunton, which earned him national recognition and where he famously declared that he would eat three of his four pairs of boots before he would surrender. He subsequently succeeded in winning the Siege of Dunster November As well as being largely responsible for building the largest navy the country had then ever known, from a few tens of ships to well over a hundred, he was first to keep a fleet at sea over the winter. Blake was driven off by a storm in October and Rupert escaped via Spain to Lisbon, where he had expanded his fleet to 13 ships. Blake put to sea with 12 ships in February and dropped anchor off Lisbon in an attempt to persuade the Portuguese king to expel Rupert. After two months the king decided to back Rupert. Blake was joined by another four warships commanded by Edward Popham, who brought authority to go to war with Portugal. Parliament voted Blake 1, pounds by way of thanks in February. Soon afterwards he was made a member of the Council of State. By the end of the various English colonies in the Americas had also been secured. The proper war started in June with an English campaign against the Dutch East Indies, Baltic and fishing trades by Blake, in command of around 60 ships. On 5 October Dutch Vice-Admiral Witte Corneliszoon de With, underestimating the strength of the English, attempted to attack Blake, but due to the weather it was Blake who attacked on 8 October in the Battle of the Kentish Knock, sending de With back to the Netherlands in defeat. The English government seemed to think that the war was over and sent ships away to the Mediterranean. Blake had only 42 warships when he was attacked and decisively defeated by 88 Dutch ships under Tromp on 9 December in the Battle of Dungeness, losing control of the English Channel to the Dutch. Meanwhile, the ships sent away had also been defeated in the Battle of Leghorn. They complied by, among other things, enacting Articles of War to reinforce the authority of an admiral over his captains. At the Battle of the Gabbard on 12 and 13 June Blake reinforced the ships of Generals Richard Deane and George Monck and decisively defeated the Dutch fleet, sinking or capturing 17 ships without losing one. Now also the North Sea was brought under English control, and the Dutch fleet was blockaded in various ports until the Battle of Scheveningen, where Tromp was killed. Peace with the Dutch achieved, Blake sailed in October with 24 warships to the Mediterranean, successfully deterring the Duke of Guise from conquering Naples. Bey of Tunis[edit] Main article: Action of 14 April In April Blake was sent to the Mediterranean again to extract compensation from the piratical states that had been attacking English shipping. The Dey of Tunis refused compensation, and with 15 ships Blake destroyed the two shore batteries and nine Algerian ships in Porto Farina, the first time shore batteries had been taken out without landing men ashore.

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