









THE  
REPORT  
OF THE  
GENERAL OFFICERS,

APPOINTED

By his MAJESTY's Warrant of the First of November 1757, to inquire into the Causes of the Failure of the late Expedition to the Coasts of FRANCE.

To which is prefixed,

A Copy of his MAJESTY's Warrant directing the said Inquiry.

WITH

An APPENDIX, containing the Papers referred to in the said Report.

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Published by Authority.

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L O N D O N :

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GEORGE R.

WHEREAS we were pleased, in *August* last, to send a Number of our Troops on an Expedition against *France*, with Orders and Instructions to attempt, as far as should be found practicable, a Descent on the *French* Coast at or near *Rochefort*, in order to attack, if practicable, and by a vigorous Impression force that Place ; and to burn and destroy, to the utmost of their Power, all Docks, Magazines, Arsenals, and Shipping, that should be found there ; and to exert such other Efforts, as should be judged most proper for annoying the Enemy, as by our several Instructions to the Commander of our said Forces does more fully appear : And whereas the Troops sent for these Purposes are returned to *Great Britain*, no Attempt having been made to land on the Coast of *France* ; concerning the Causes of which Failure we think it necessary that Enquiry should be made by the General Officers herein after named, in order that they may report those Causes to us, for our better Information : Our Will and Pleasure therefore is, and we do hereby nominate and appoint our right Trusty and right entirely beloved Cousin and Counsellor *Charles Duke of Marlborough* Lieutenant General, our Trusty and well beloved *George Sackville*, commonly called *Lord George Sackville*, and *John Waldegrave*, Major Generals of our Forces, to

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examine and enquire touching the Matters aforefaid. And you are to give Notice to the faid General Officers, when and where they are to meet for the faid Examination. And the faid General Officers are hereby directed to caufe you to fummon fuch Perfons (whether the Generals or other Officers employed in the Expedition, or others) as are neceffary to give Information touching the faid Matters, or as fhall be defired by thofe, who were employed in the Expedition: And the faid General Officers are hereby farther directed to hear fuch Perfons as fhall offer to give them Information touching the fame; and they are authorized, empowered, and required, ftrictly to examine into the Matters before mentioned, and to report a State thereof, as it fhall appear to them, together with their Opinion thereon. All which you are to tranfmit to our Secretary at War, to be by him laid before us for our Confideration. And for fo doing this fhall be, as well to you, as to our faid General Officers and all others concerned, a fufficient Warrant. Given at our Court at *Kenfington* this Firft Day of *November* 1757, in the Thirty Firft Year of our Reign.

By his MAJESTY's Command,

BARRINGTON.

To our Truftly and well beloved  
*Thomas Morgan*, Efq; Judge  
 Advocate General of our Forces, or his Deputy.



# MINUTES

## OF THE

# PROCEEDINGS

## OF THE

# GENERAL OFFICERS, &c.

As annexed to their REPORT.

**A**T a Meeting of the General Officers appointed to inquire into the Causes of the Failure of the late Expedition to the Coast of *France*, at the Judge Advocate General's Office in *Privy Garden*, on *Saturday* the 12th of *November*, 1757, *viz.*

Lieutenant General, His Grace the Duke of *Marlborough*.

Major General, Right Honourable Lord *George Sackville*.

Major General, Honourable *John Waldegrave*.

The General Officers employed in the Expedition, *viz.* Sir *John Mordaunt*, Lieutenant General (who had the principal Command) and Majors General *Conway* and *Cornwallis* being called in, and all Persons who were desirous being admitted, his Majesty's Warrant directing this Inquiry was publickly read.

Read also the several Papers transmitted to the Judge Advocate from Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, and two Orders transmitted from the Admiralty in consequence of an Application from the General Officers appointed to make this Inquiry, *viz.*

1. Copy of a Letter, dated *London* 15th *July*, 1757, from Captain (now Lieutenant Colonel) *Clerk*,

to Sir *John Ligonier*, and transmitted to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, with regard to *Rockefort*.

2. Minute, dated *Arlington Street, August 1757*, containing an Examination of a *French Pilot*.

3. *Memoire sur la Force actuelle de la France, et les Services auxquels elle est employée dans l'Année 1757*—received *July 28, 1757*, and communicated, at a Meeting at Lord *Holderness's* House, to the Generals appointed on an Expedition to the Coasts of *France*.

4. Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *August 5, 1757*.

5. Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir *John Mordaunt*, dated *August 5, 1757*.

6. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *August 5, 1757*.

7. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Major General *Conway*, Major General *Cornwallis*, Vice Admiral *Knowles*, and Rear Admiral *Brodrick*, dated *August 5, 1757*.

8. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Spithead, August 7, 1757*.

9. Copy of a Letter from Major General *Cornwallis* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Newport, Isle of Wight, August 6, 1757*.

10. Copy of a Letter from Vice Admiral *Knowles* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Portsmouth, August 6, 1757*.

11. Copy of a Letter from Rear Admiral *Brodrick* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Portsmouth, August 6, 1757*.

12. Copy of an Order from the Lords of the Admiralty to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *August 5, 1757*.

13. Copy of an Order from the Lords of the Admiralty to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *August 6, 1757*.

14. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Isle of Wight, August 11, 1757*, Ten at Night.

15. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, to Sir *John Mordaunt*, dated *August 13, 1757*.

16. Copy

16. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated Head Quarters, *Newport*, August 20, 1757. Inclosing,

17. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to *Thomas Orby Hunter*, and *Gilbert Elliott*, Esqrs. dated August 17, 1757.

18. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated August 23, 1757.

19. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *John Mordaunt*, dated August 23, 1757. Inclosing,

20. Copy of a Letter from Mr. *Cleveland* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated August 19, 1757;

21. Copy of a Letter from Mr. *Cleveland* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated August 20, 1757;

22. Copy of a Letter from Mr. *Cleveland* to Mr. *Cockburne*, dated August 21, 1757;

23. Copy of a Letter from Mr. *Cockburne* to Mr. *Cleveland*, dated August 23, 1757.

24. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Portsmouth*, August 25, 1757.

25. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *Edward Hawke* and Sir *John Mordaunt*, dated September 5, 1757, Four o'Clock in the Afternoon.

26. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies* at *Spithead*, September 6, 1757.

27. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Portsmouth*, September 6, Nine at Night.

28. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies* at *St. Helens*, September 8, 1757.

29. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies* at Sea, September 10, 1757.

30. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *Edward Hawke* and Sir *John Mordaunt*, dated September 15, 1757, by the *Viper* Sloop.

The above Papers containing all the Orders and Instructions which appear to have been signified to the Commanders of the late Expedition, it was publicly asked, Whether any Person had any Information to offer, tending to shew the Causes, why the said Orders were not carried into execution, or why the Expedition has failed?—And any such Person, being present, was desired then to declare the same, in order to his withdrawing for the present, with Assurance, that he should, in convenient Time, be fully heard: And no Person offering himself,

*Ordered*, That all Persons summoned as Witnessees, do withdraw into a Room appointed for that Purpose, until called for, in order to their being examined separately.

Then proceeded to read other of the Papers received from Mr. Secretary *Pitt's* Office, viz.

31. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies* in *Basque Road*, September 30, 1757. Inclosing,

32. Copy of a Report made to Sir *Edward Hawke* on board the *Ramilies*, September 24, 1757, by Rear Admiral *Brodrick* and others;

33. Copy of a Council of War held on board the *Neptune*, September 25, 1757; the same as the Original delivered by Sir *John Mordaunt*, soon after his Arrival, to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*;

34. Copy of a Council of War held on board the *Ramilies*, September 28, 1757; the same as the Original delivered by Sir *John Mordaunt*, soon after his Arrival, to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*;

35. Copy of a Letter from Rear Admiral *Brodrick* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *Achilles*, Tuesday Morning, One in the Morning;

36. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *Ramilies*, Thursday Evening, September 29, 1757.

37. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies*, *Rade de Basque*, September 30, 1757.

38. A



38. A Paper purporting to be Minutes of a Council of War assembled on board his Majesty's Ship *Ramilies* in *Basque Road*, the 28th of *September*, 1757, and appearing by the Indorsement to have been delivered by Sir *John Mordaunt*, soon after his Arrival, to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, being about to be read,

Sir *John Mordaunt* said, That he did not mean to object to the reading of the said Paper, but begged leave to observe, that the Minutes now produced, were taken down without the Knowledge of the Persons, who composed the said Council of War, and never seen by the Gentlemen, whose Names are thereunder written; and that the first Knowledge he (Sir *John Mordaunt*) had of them, was from a Copy delivered to him by Sir *Edward Hawke's* Secretary, Mr. *Hay*, after his Arrival at *Portsmouth*. That upon seeing them, he attempted to prevent Sir *Edward Hawke's* sending them up to *London*; but his Application was too late. Sir *John Mordaunt* added, That some little Time after his Arrival in *London*, understanding that he ought, as Commander in Chief of the Land Forces, to deliver Copies of the Councils of War, and any other material Papers, to Mr. *Pitt*, his Majesty's Secretary of State, in like Manner as Sir *Edward Hawke* had done, as Commander of the Fleet, he did so, and delivered the said Copy of Minutes received from Sir *Edward Hawke's* Secretary among the rest.

Sir *John Mordaunt* being asked, Whether at the Time of his delivering a Copy of these Minutes to Mr. *Pitt*, he observed to him, that they were not authentick?

Answered, He does not recollect, that he did.

Then the said Minutes were read, in Presence of the several Persons hereafter-mentioned, Members of the said Council of War, who were severally called upon for their Information, Whether the said Minutes are authentick, and taken down with their Privy? *viz.*

1. Vice Admiral *Charles Knowles*, who disavowed these Minutes intirely, saying that he never saw them,  
until

until they were shewn to him after his Arrival in *London*.

2. Rear Admiral *Thomas Brodrick*, who said, that he did observe Minutes taken, and remembers he objected to it, but never saw these Minutes; and mention being therein made of Sir *John Mordaunt's* retiring with him (Rear Admiral *Brodrick*) and others, observes that he remembers Sir *Edward Hawke*, Vice Admiral *Knowles*, and himself retiring, but does not recollect Sir *John Mordaunt's* going out with them. — He further says, that he, at the Desire of Sir *John Mordaunt*, went off to Admiral Sir *Edward Hawke* at *Spithead*, in Hopes of preventing these Minutes being sent up to *London*, but that unluckily they were sent away before he reached the Admiral.

3. Major General *Conway*, who says, that to the best of his Memory, these Minutes were never communicated to him, and knows it was agreed upon not to have any Minutes taken.

4. Major General *Edward Cornwallis*, who says he never saw the Minutes in question, until shewn to him at *Portsmouth* to his very great Surprise.

5. Colonel *George Howard*, who says, he never saw these Minutes till Sir *John Mordaunt* shewed them to him after their Arrival at *Portsmouth*.

Vice Admiral *Knowles* being, at his own Desire, again called in, desired to supply an Omission in his former Evidence, *viz.* That he recollects there was a positive Determination, that no Minutes should be taken, but that the Informations only of the Persons examined, should be noted down.

Major General *Conway* observed, That, as he understood it, not even what the Witnesses said was intended to be made publick, or to stand Part of the Minutes of the Council of War, so as to be transmitted to any Person,

Vice Admiral *Knowles* confirmed the same; adding, that he never heard their Examination read.

Read the Remainder of the Papers received from Mr. Secretary *Pitt's* Office, *viz.*

39. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies*, *October 4*, 1757.

40. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Portsmouth*, *October 6*, 1757.

41. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *Edward Hawke*, dated *October 7*, 1757.

42. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary *Pitt* to Sir *John Mordaunt*, dated *October 7*, 1757.

43. Copy of a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Ramilies at Spithead*, *October 8*, 1757. One P. M.

44. Copy of a Letter from Sir *John Mordaunt* to Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, dated *Portsmouth*, *October 8*, 1757.

The several Papers transmitted to the Judge-Advocate, and by him laid before the Board, being read, and no Person offering to give them any Information touching the Causes of the Failure of the Expedition,

Sir *John Mordaunt*, as Commander in Chief of the Land Forces employed therein, was asked; What have been the Reasons, if he has no Objection to laying them before the Board, which have prevented his Majesty's Instructions and Orders from being carried into Execution?

Who replied, that to prevent Trouble, and that the Matter may be the better understood, as his speaking is attended with Difficulty, he had committed the whole to writing, from Beginning to End, and delivered to the Board a Paper, as containing the same, which was, at his Desire, read in Words following, viz.

“ In order to give all the Satisfaction in my Power,  
“ I have reduced into Writing the fullest Account of  
“ the whole Matter I am able to give.

“ When I first received his Majesty's Commands  
“ in regard to this Expedition, I was told, that the  
“ Object of it was to make a Diversion on the Coast  
“ of *France*.

“ That

“ That as far as respected *Rockefort* in particular,  
 “ it was on the footing of a *Coup de Main*, or Sur-  
 “ prize, and that consequently, if the Design was  
 “ discovered, or the Alarm taken, it would be next  
 “ to impossible to execute it.

“ I also understood, that unless a proper Place for  
 “ the Landing, and safe Retreat of the Troops was  
 “ discovered, particularly where the Ships could pro-  
 “ tect them, and a safe Communication with the  
 “ Fleet, and Conveyance of Supplies from it was  
 “ secured, the Attempt could not be made.

“ In Confirmation of which I beg leave to take  
 “ Notice of two Paragraphs in a Paper given me  
 “ upon this Occasion by Sir *John Ligonier*, Com-  
 “ mander in Chief of his Majesty's Land Forces,  
 “ whose long Experience, and great Abilities in the  
 “ Art of War, will surely vindicate any Officer who  
 “ is guided by so good an Authority ; containing  
 “ his Observations on the intended Expedition ;  
 “ which Paper, as I remember, was read before the  
 “ Council.

“ The Paragraphs I mean, are as follows : ”

“ If an Attempt is to be made on *Rockefort*, it  
 “ will be the Part of the Admiral, to know the Coasts ;  
 “ to bring the Troops to the nearest Place ; to co-  
 “ ver their Landing by the Disposition of his Ships ;  
 “ and to destroy any Barbet Batteries which the Ene-  
 “ my may have on the Shore ; still remembring, that  
 “ if the Troops are landed at too great a Distance  
 “ from the Place, the Design will become dangerous,  
 “ and probably impracticable.”

“ The second Paragraph,”

“ A safe and well secured Communication between  
 “ the Camp and the Sea, from whence you are to re-  
 “ ceive your Supplies of all Kinds, is absolutely ne-  
 “ cessary ; the whole depends upon it ; but this being  
 “ done, I should not be much in Pain for the Safety  
 “ of the Troops ; an inferior Number dares not ap-  
 “ proach you, and one superior will not be easily as-  
 “ sembled



“ fembled without your knowing it; and, at all  
 “ Events, you have fecured a Retreat to the Ships.”

“ I alfo thought it clear from the State of *Roche-*  
 “ *fort*, as defcribed by Colonel *Clerk*, and afterwards  
 “ by the *French* Pilot, that though it fhould have re-  
 “ mained in the fame Condition as when they faw it,  
 “ which was not later than three Years paff, yet a  
 “ few Days Preparation would make it fufficiently  
 “ defenfible againft a *Coup de Main*: For which Rea-  
 “ fon, judging the Dependance on fuch an Operation  
 “ alone improper, in an Expedition of this Sort,  
 “ I applied to his Majefty’s Minifters in Council,  
 “ for two more Old Battalions, and Artillery for a  
 “ regular Attack, to force the Place, which, I  
 “ thought, from its Conftruction, as difficult to be  
 “ made defenfible againft a regular Attack, as it was  
 “ eafy to fecure it againft an Affault. And although  
 “ it was not thought fitting to comply with this  
 “ Request, yet his Majefty having ordered me to  
 “ take the Command of the Expedition, upon the  
 “ Footing it was planned, I thought it my Duty to  
 “ obey; underftanding, that my Inftuctions gave  
 “ me Latitude to act according to the beft of my  
 “ Judgment, regarding the Circumftances of the  
 “ Time, the Condition of the Place, and the Nature  
 “ of the Service; and where any Difficulty arofe, or  
 “ the Importance of the Subject required it, a Power  
 “ to call a Council of War.

“ Positive and credible Intelligence received, as  
 “ well before the Embarkation, as during the Voyage,  
 “ traced the Alarm, and the Preparations along the  
 “ *French* Coasts, from *Breft* and *St. Maloes* quite  
 “ down to *Rochefort*.

“ A Letter from a *French* Officer fuperintending  
 “ the Batteries near *Breft*, to the Captain of the  
 “ *Emerald*, taken and brought into the Fleet by Cap-  
 “ tain *Gilchriſt*, defcribes the Preparations which  
 “ had for fome Time been making there; and that  
 “ Troops were not wanting on the Coaft, there be-  
 “ ing at that Time near feven thouſand regular Troops  
 “ on

“ on one Side the *Brest* Water, and more on the  
 “ other Side, besides the Militia.

“ A Letter from Captain *Cleveland* declares, that  
 “ on *Wednesday* the 17th of *August*, he spoke with a  
 “ *Dutch* Convoy from *Rochelle*, and that a first Lieu-  
 “ tenant came on board him, and told him, that the  
 “ *French* expected the *English* at *Rochelle*, but were  
 “ not alarmed.

“ It was afterwards confirmed to us on the Voyage  
 “ by the Master of a *Dutch* Ship from *Vannes* in  
 “ *France*, to *Dort*, spoke with by Captain *Proby*  
 “ of his Majesty’s Ship *Medway*, on the 11th *Sep-*  
 “ *tember*; that the *French* expected to be attacked at  
 “ *Rochelle* or *St. Martins*, by the *English*: Also that  
 “ an Embargo was laid on all Shipping in *France*.

“ After all the several Indications and Intelligences  
 “ mentioned, it was impossible to doubt, that there  
 “ was a general Alarm spread, and still more so  
 “ to imagine, that a Place like *Rochefort*, the se-  
 “ cond certainly in Importance on the whole Coast,  
 “ should, after such Warning, be totally neglected.

“ The Voyage being tedious, we did not make  
 “ the *French* Coast till the 20th of *September*, about  
 “ Noon.

“ It was the 23d before we got into the Road, and  
 “ that Day made ourselves Masters of the Isle of  
 “ *Aix*. The same Day Admiral *Brodrick*, with four  
 “ Captains, was sent to sound the Coast, and find  
 “ out a proper Landing place. The same Night al-  
 “ so the Admiral declared, that the Fort of *Fouras*  
 “ should be battered; and in Consequence of that,  
 “ ordered the Pilot of the *Magnanime* to be sent for,  
 “ in order to be examined upon that Head, who next  
 “ Morning declared, a Ship might be brought up at  
 “ a proper Distance to silence that Fort.

“ The next Morning, being the 24th, a Plan for  
 “ landing the Troops as near the Fort of *Fouras* as  
 “ possible, while one or more Ships battered it on the  
 “ Water-side, and proposing also a Feint to be made  
 “ on the Side of *Rochelle*, and the Isle of *Rhé*, was  
 “ given-

“ given in by the Generals; but the Admiral not  
 “ approving of the Feint to be made, and declaring,  
 “ that *Fouras* could not be battered from the Sea,  
 “ without hazard of losing the Ship, the Admiral  
 “ and Captains, who returned, and made the Report  
 “ on the landing about One o’Clock also declaring,  
 “ That between the Fort of *Fouras* and *Rochelle* they  
 “ had found only two Landing-places, which were  
 “ both near the Point of *Chatelaillon* on the open  
 “ Bay, and where the Water was so shoal, that no  
 “ Ships could lye up to cover the Landing, or se-  
 “ cure the Retreat of the Troops: Upon these Con-  
 “ siderations, as well as upon other Intelligence I had  
 “ received in relation to the Place itself, I did, ac-  
 “ cording to the Latitude I understood to be in his  
 “ Majesty’s Instructions, and agreeably to the Powers  
 “ therein given me, think it my Duty, in so import-  
 “ ant and critical a Case, to desire a General Council  
 “ of War, to take into Consideration what was pro-  
 “ per to be done in Execution of his Majesty’s Secret  
 “ Instructions. That Council, composed equally of  
 “ Land and Sea Officers, having considered the  
 “ Nature of the Landing on the one Hand, and  
 “ of the Attack to be made on *Rochefort* on the  
 “ other, the Officers were unanimously of opinion,  
 “ That an Attempt upon *Rochefort* was neither ad-  
 “ viseable nor practicable. I concurred in that Opi-  
 “ nion, and thought that neither my Duty, nor Re-  
 “ gard for his Majesty’s Service, permitted me to  
 “ depart from it.

“ And that our Reasons for so doing may more  
 “ fully appear to this Court, I will state, as clearly  
 “ as I can, the Grounds upon which we proceeded.

“ *First*, In Confirmation of what has been already  
 “ mentioned in regard to the Landing, the Opinion  
 “ of so many Sea Officers of the greatest Judgment  
 “ and Experience seemed absolutely conclusive. To  
 “ this was added the Declaration of the most knowing  
 “ and able Pilot in the Fleet, who said, that with  
 “ westerly Winds, which set in from the Bay of *Bis-*  
cay,

“ say, he has known such a Sea in that Road, that  
 “ he himself was kept many Weeks on Board his  
 “ Ship, without being able once to go on Shore,  
 “ And as in the Opinion of all, or most of the Sea  
 “ Officers, both westerly Winds and blowing Wea-  
 “ ther were daily expected at this Season of the  
 “ Year, it must appear, that the Risque of sending  
 “ the Troops ashore, under the Circumstances de-  
 “ scribed, could by no Means be justified, though  
 “ there had been a better Prospect of Success than  
 “ there was, in regard to the Attempt on *Roche-  
 fort*; as in all Cases of a Descent, particularly of  
 “ a Descent upon the Continent of *France*, a secure  
 “ Retreat for the Troops, and a constant Communi-  
 “ cation with the Ships, from whence alone the  
 “ Troops are to draw their Provision and Ammuni-  
 “ tion, must be attended to by those to whom his  
 “ Majesty trusts the Command of his Troops, as ab-  
 “ solutely necessary, and that upon which the Ser-  
 “ vice wholly depends.

“ In regard to the forcing of *Roche-fort*, the weak-  
 “ est Part of the Place, according to the first Intel-  
 “ ligence of it, was at an Opening on the west Side  
 “ of the Rampart, said by *Thierri* the Pilot, to be  
 “ about sixty Yards in Length; but as this laid by  
 “ the River, where the Ground was in general low,  
 “ marshy, and cut with Ditches, into which the Tide  
 “ flowed, and also by *Thierri* the Pilot’s Evidence,  
 “ was closed with a Pallissade, it is plain, a few Days,  
 “ nay, a few Hours Work must make it defensible  
 “ against a *Coup de Main*; as it is known, a good  
 “ Intrenchment may be thrown up, in soft yielding  
 “ Ground like that, in twelve Hours Time, and by  
 “ lying on the Water Level, the Ships in the River  
 “ would intirely command it, as the Pilot declared,  
 “ they did command all the Ground by the Water-  
 “ edge; and that, in the present Case, within less  
 “ than half Musket-shot, which was a better Defence  
 “ than the Flanks of any Bastions.

“ As



“ As to the rest of the Circumference, the Ram-  
 “ part was generally proved to be strong and high,  
 “ with a Ditch, which two Witnesses declared posi-  
 “ tively, they themselves had seen full of Water  
 “ quite round, by means of Sluices in the Town;  
 “ and, though the chief Engineer did not think the  
 “ Ditch capable of being flowed, yet if it was so, he  
 “ thought it not practicable to take the Place by  
 “ Escalade.

“ Many of the Prisoners declared there were Num-  
 “ bers of Troops upon the Shore, both Regulars  
 “ and Militia, and even named particular Regi-  
 “ ments.

“ What seemed certain on the whole was, that tho’  
 “ even after all the Alarm there was on the Coast,  
 “ it was possible there might not be an Army assem-  
 “ bled to engage us in the Field; yet it seemed highly  
 “ improbable, that there should not be a sufficient  
 “ Force to make a good Garrison in the Place.  
 “ There were also great Numbers of Workmen be-  
 “ longing to the Docks; and the Crews of the Ships  
 “ then in the River, if compleat, amounted to near  
 “ 3000 Men.

“ It must also be considered, that though no  
 “ Alarm should have been taken before we came  
 “ within Sight of *Oleron*, which was on the 20th,  
 “ it was from that to the 24th, when the Report of  
 “ the Sea Officers was made, five Days inclusive;  
 “ we must have been two Days more in Landing the  
 “ Army and Stores; and had then, as we are in-  
 “ formed, a March of eight or nine Miles to the  
 “ Place, which must be made on the eighth Day  
 “ from the Time we were seen on the Coast. There  
 “ could be therefore no hopes of a Surprise; and as  
 “ there was then a *Mareschal of France* in or near  
 “ the Place, it is impossible, but such Precautions  
 “ must have been taken, as no Officer of any Capa-  
 “ city, or Experience, in the *French Army*, could  
 “ have neglected. Add to this, that it was now full  
 “ Moon, and the Nights were almost as light as

“ Day : So that to think of surprizing, or assaulting  
 “ a Place, under all these Circumstances, it is pre-  
 “ sumed, must appear contrary to the Nature of  
 “ that Operation, and to all the Maxims laid down  
 “ by every military Writer of Distinction ; such  
 “ Attacks being, it is apprehended, only to be made  
 “ where you can run upon a Place in a Night’s March,  
 “ and where you are by previous Intelligence, ac-  
 “ quainted with the Numbers and Nature of its  
 “ Garrison and Guards, the Neglect of its Rounds  
 “ and Defence, the exact Height of its Ramparts,  
 “ and the State of its Ditch, Draw-Bridges, Gates,  
 “ &c.

“ This I think is a fair Representation of the  
 “ Prospect I had in that Undertaking ; which, in the  
 “ Opinion of the whole Council of War, could not  
 “ justify the exposing His Majesty’s Troops, by  
 “ landing them without any Security for their  
 “ Supplies, or for their Retreat.

“ The great Object of the Expedition having  
 “ thus been found impracticable ; that we might  
 “ not remain inactive, while the Engineers were  
 “ demolishing the Fortifications of the Isle of *Aix*,  
 “ we did our utmost Endeavours to discover, how  
 “ we might annoy the Enemy by any other Means.  
 “ The next Day after the Council of War, being  
 “ the 26th, was spent in examining Witnesses, and  
 “ gathering Information, that we might judge if it  
 “ would be adviseable to make a Descent on the Isle  
 “ of *Oleron*, and to see if we could find out a land-  
 “ ing Place, from whence any Service could be done.  
 “ Evidence was examined concerning the Situation  
 “ of *Fouras*. The next Morning we went to re-  
 “ connoitre it from the Isle of *Aix* ; there was some  
 “ Difference of Opinion in regard to an Attempt  
 “ upon it, but we came to no final Resolution ’till  
 “ the Afternoon, when a Proposal was made to  
 “ land at *Chatellaillon*, and make a sudden Attack  
 “ upon *Fouras*, and the other Forts leading to, and  
 “ upon the Mouth of the River *Charante*, with the  
 “ Land

“ Land Forces. A Council of War was ordered  
 “ to meet in the Morning; and that Council was  
 “ unanimous for attempting it that very Night.

“ The necessary Orders were immediately given;  
 “ and about One o’Clock, the Grenadiers and great  
 “ Part of the Troops, who were to land with me  
 “ in the first Embarkation, were on Board; when a  
 “ strong Wind blowing from the Shore, the Officers  
 “ of the Navy appointed to conduct the Landing,  
 “ represented, that it was with Difficulty the Long-  
 “ boats could make Way; that it would be Day  
 “ before the first Embarkation could get to Shore:  
 “ And that it would be five or six Hours more, be-  
 “ fore the Troops first landed could be supported  
 “ by a second Embarkation. Add to this, that the  
 “ Boats belonging to the Transports would scarce be  
 “ able to get on Shore at all. For these Reasons,  
 “ the Generals found the Forces could not be  
 “ landed that Night.

“ The next Morning Sir *Edward Hawke* acquainted  
 “ Major General *Conway* and me, that if the Gene-  
 “ ral Officers had no farther military Operations to  
 “ propose, considerable enough to authorize his de-  
 “ taining the Squadron under his Command longer  
 “ there, he intended to proceed with it for *England*  
 “ without loss of Time. I made answer, that I  
 “ would summon the General Officers to consider  
 “ of an Answer; and I desired him to signify his  
 “ Intentions in Writing; which he did in a Letter  
 “ to me. Hereupon I summoned all those Land  
 “ Officers, who had been Members of the Councils  
 “ of War. We then took Sir *Edward Hawke’s* Let-  
 “ ter into Consideration; and the small Importance  
 “ of the Enterprize against the Forts did not appear  
 “ to us a sufficient Motive to justify us in detaining  
 “ His Majesty’s Fleet. We understood the Fleet  
 “ was to be employed in more considerable Services,  
 “ after this Expedition was over; and we had  
 “ learned from the Officers of the Navy, that near  
 “ this Time the *French* Fleets from *Martinico* and

“ *Louisbourg* were expected. These Considerations, together with the Limitation of the Time for our return to *England*, induced us to consent to Sir *Edward Hawke*’s Proposal.”

*Adjourned till Monday next the 14th Instant, at 11 o’Clock.*

“ At a Meeting of the said General Officers appointed to enquire into the Causes of the Failure of the late Expedition, &c. (pursuant to Adjournment) on *Monday the 14th of November, 1757.*”

Read a second Time Sir *John Mordaunt*’s Narrative, when he was desired to lay before the Board the whole of the Paper he had from Sir *John Ligonier*, from which he has quoted two Paragraphs; and the same was read as follows, *viz.*

“ There is a Chance in the best concerted military Enterprizes, which every Man of long Service must have experienced; what Share then must be left to Fortune in an Expedition, where neither the Country, nor the Number of Troops you are to act against, is known with any Precision.

“ The Capacity of the Generals may supply this Want of Intelligence; but to give them any positive Plan, or Rule of Action, under such Circumstances, I apprehend would be absurd.

“ If I am rightly informed, the great Point His Majesty has in View by this Expedition, and the alarming the Coasts of *France*, is the Hopes of making a powerful Diversion in Favour of H. R. H. the Duke, as well as the King of *Prussia*, who desires and presses much this very Measure.

“ In the Execution of this general Plan, a Project of giving a mortal Blow to the naval Power of *France*, is in his Majesty’s Thoughts, by attacking and destroying, if possible, the Dock, Shipping, and naval Stores at *Rochefort*. A Plan of that Place, given by one of his Majesty’s Engineers,

“ neers, who was there in 1754, seems to encourage  
 “ the Attempt; and it must be owned, that without  
 “ such Authority, it could hardly be believed that a  
 “ Place of that great Importance could be left in so  
 “ defenceless a Condition.

“ In all doubtful dangerous military Attempts,  
 “ the Advantages that may accrue from Success,  
 “ ought to be weighed against the Damage and Mis-  
 “ fortunes, that may be the Consequences of a Re-  
 “ pulse; and that well considered, may in Prudence  
 “ determine the Choice.

“ If an Attempt is to be made upon *Rockefort*, it  
 “ will be the Part of the Admiral to know the Coasts,  
 “ to bring the Troops to the nearest Place, to cover  
 “ their Landing by the Disposition of his Ships,  
 “ and to destroy any Barbet Batteries, which the  
 “ Enemy may have upon the Shore, still remem-  
 “ bring, that if the Troops are landed at too great a  
 “ Distance from the Place, the Design will become  
 “ dangerous, and probably impracticable.

“ Supposing the Troops landed, it must be left to  
 “ the Consideration of the Generals, whether they  
 “ should not march with the proper Precautions di-  
 “ rectly to *Rockefort*, to prevent any Succours being  
 “ thrown into the Place; at the same Time that the  
 “ Marines should be employed in making a good In-  
 “ trenchment for the Security of the Stores to be  
 “ landed from Time to Time, as well as of a Retreat  
 “ in Case of Necessity.

“ We are told, the Country in the Neighbour-  
 “ hood is low and marshy; that Circumstance might  
 “ be of great Advantage in this Undertaking, be-  
 “ cause in that Case, Troops cannot march by *Over-*  
 “ *tures dans la Campagne*, but must follow the Dikes  
 “ or Cawseys, which may be easily defended by  
 “ Coupures or Redoubts.

“ A safe and well secured Communication between  
 “ the Camp and the Sea, from whence you are to  
 “ receive your Supplies of all Kinds, is absolutely  
 “ necessary; the whole depends upon it.

“ But this being done, I should not be much in  
 “ Pain for the Safety of the Troops; an inferior  
 “ Number dares not approach you, and one superior  
 “ will not be easily assembled, without your knowing  
 “ of it; and at all Events you have secured a Retreat  
 “ to the Ships,

“ I would advise to procure Guides upon the Spot,  
 “ and paying them greatly, when faithful; there are  
 “ Numbers of Protestants in that Province, that  
 “ wish you well, and would be glad to go on board  
 “ with you.

“ As for a *Coup de Main*, it may perhaps succeed  
 “ best at your coming up, as the Enemy may be in  
 “ great Hurry, Surprise, and Consternation, at  
 “ such an unexpected Visit, and not have had Time  
 “ to make his Dispositions. But if that is not  
 “ thought proper, it may succeed as well after the  
 “ Place has been thoroughly reconnoitred, and you  
 “ have fixt the Spots where you design to direct your  
 “ greatest Efforts; and if the Enemy see any Prepa-  
 “ rations for a regular Attack, they will less suspect  
 “ a *Coup de Main*.

“ *Bergen-op-zoom* was taken by a *Coup de Main*,  
 “ after a long Siege,

“ *St. Philip's* was taken by scaling Ladders and a  
 “ *Coup de Main*, though the Garrison was 3000  
 “ strong, after a Siege of 56 Days.

“ The Necessity of dividing a small Garrison in a  
 “ Place of such Circumference as *Rochefort*, may fa-  
 “ cilitate the Success of a bold Attempt.”

Upon reading that Part of Sir *John Mordaunt's*  
 Narrative, which relates to the Night of the 28th of  
*September*, in which Night it was proposed to have  
 landed, where one Reason assigned, why the Troops  
 were not accordingly landed, is “ that it would be Day  
 “ before the first Embarkation could get on Shore,”  
 a Kind of Contradiction was observed between that  
 and Rear-Admiral *Brodrick's* Letter to Sir *Edward*  
*Hawke* on that Subject, who writes, that “ the Ge-  
 “ nerals are come to a Resolution not to land To-  
 “ night,

“ night, but to wait till Day-light, when they can  
 “ have a full View of the Ground where they are to  
 “ land.” And Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* was there-  
 upon desired to inform the Board, whether that was  
 the Fact he meant to write, or whether he had,  
 through Hurry, expressed himself otherwise than he  
 intended ?

Who said, that what was contained in the Letter  
 he must abide by ; that he gave it to Sir *John Mor-*  
*daunt* to read before he sent it, to see if what he had  
 wrote was agreeable to his Intention ; at the same  
 Time desiring Sir *John* would explain the Reasons  
 fully, as the Blame would lye upon him, Rear-Ad-  
 miral *Brodrick* ; and that Sir *John* returned him the  
 Letter, without making any Objection thereto ; and  
 answered him, that the Blame would not lye upon  
 him, but that they (the General Officers of the  
 Land Forces) would be answerable,

Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* added, that he believes  
 Major General *Conway* likewise read the Letter.

Major General *Conway* said, that he did not read  
 the Letter ; and particularly remembers, that from  
 the Letter being so short, he advised Sir *John Mor-*  
*daunt*, that it should in his Opinion have been much  
 fuller, setting forth the Reasons particularly of not  
 landing the Forces that Night.

Sir *John Mordaunt* admitted, that the Letter was  
 shewn to him ; but in the Hurry he did not suffi-  
 ciently attend to the Contents ; and at the same Time  
 did Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* the Justice to say, all was  
 ready on his Part, and that he shewed the greatest  
 Readiness to assist and co-operate for the Good of the  
 Service ; but that he was certainly mistaken in the  
 Reason assigned for the not landing ; and in order now  
 to convince the Rear-Admiral thereof, desired him  
 to recollect, whether all the Arguments used did not  
 turn upon its being necessary, or at least advisable,  
 to land before Day-light ; which was thought scarcely  
 possible, as the Wind then was,

Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* reply'd, that the landing would have been attended with great Difficulty, but is pretty well assured, they would have been on Shore before Day-light, or near the Time of Day; but that both Wind and Tide would have been against them for the second Embarkation, which would have occasioned at least six Hours Distance between the first and second Landing; he is nevertheless satisfied there is no Mistake in his Letter, and must beg Leave to repeat the Words Sir *John* himself made use of, "that they must see the Ground they were to land on."

Major General *Conway*, in order to explain this, observed, that Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* must, as he imagines, have mistaken the Sense, in which those Words were used, as what he conceives to have been meant by them is, Sir *John Mordaunt's* Intention of having the Ground viewed in the Morning, in order to embark the Night following.

The following Questions were then proposed by his Grace the Duke of *Marlborough* to Sir *John Mordaunt*, desiring he would use his Discretion in answering them, and received the several Answers subscribed to each Question, viz.

Q. Was the Attack of the Fort on the Isle of *Aix* with a view to facilitate the Landing on the Continent?

A. When he first attended the Council in *London*, he understood it was; and is of Opinion, the Fort alone was of no Consequence, had it not been with that View.

Q. Was that Attack necessary to engage the Attention of the whole Fleet and Army?

A. In his Opinion it was, because he understood the taking that Fort, and Fort *Fouras*, was to be done by the Shipping, and then they might have gone on to *Rochefort*.

Q. Did he see any Number of Forces or Batteries on the Shore, so as to make the Assistance of the Ships



Ships necessary to cover the landing on the Continent ?

*A.* There were Forces and Cannon, but the Number he can't answer for, and they were at a Distance from the Shore at the Time the Isle of *Aix* was taken, and did not know, where there was a Place to land. The Captain of the *Viper* Sloop said, the Sand Hills where they were to land would have concealed any Number of Forces, and it was not natural to expect the Troops would shew themselves, till they knew where the Landing was intended.

*Q.* Did he send the Quartermaster General or any Land Officers, with Rear Admiral *Brodrick*, to reconnoitre the Landing Places ?

*A.* He thought that a Matter relating to the Sea, and he did not : And besides, they could only make the Soundings in the Night, and consequently his sending a Land Officer with them could have been of no Use.

*Q.* When the Admiral returned with his Report, if a Council of War was thought necessary, why was it delayed till next Day ?

*A.* It was proposed by Major General *Conway* to go that Afternoon to the Isle of *Aix* to reconnoitre from thence, whether they could find out any Place near or toward *Fouras*, and also to examine the Prisoners ; and the Men of War laid at such a Distance from each other at that Time, that the Members of the Council could not, without some Difficulty, be convened.

*Q.* Did he go that Afternoon to the Isle of *Aix* ?

*A.* Yes.

*Q.* Does he think, that a Detachment of four or five hundred Men could have taken Fort *Fouras* by Land, whilst the rest were marching to *Rochefort* ?

*A.* He knew nothing, at that Time, of the Strength of Fort *Fouras* on the Land-side.

*Q.* Had he been in Possession of Fort *Fouras*, could they not have secured a Retreat by that very narrow Neck of Land, which runs out into the Sea, against  
a much

a much greater Number of Forces, that might have opposed them?

*A.* For an Answer to this Question, he begs Leave to refer to Major-General *Conway*, who laid that Way, with Vice Admiral *Knowles's* Division. — Major General *Conway's* Answer is, That the Part referred to, is not properly a Neck of Land, but a Sand, which is covered at High Water.

*Q.* (*To Sir John Mordaunt.*) Does he not think he could have secured a Retreat (independent of that supposed Neck of Land) if in Possession of Fort *Fouras*?

*A.* Doubtless it would have been of great Use for securing a Retreat.

*Q.* Were not the Accounts of *Rocheport* contradictory?

*A.* It is difficult to recollect all that might be said on the Subject; the Council of War shews there was a Contradiction.

*Q.* Did the Evidence of the *French* Prisoners taken at the Isle of *Aix* contradict, or confirm the Report of Lieut. Colonel *Clerk*?

*A.* Some contradicted, and some confirmed it; but he gave little or no Weight to what the *French* Prisoners said.

*Q.* Did the Evidence, that said there was a wet Ditch round the Town, affirm, that that Ditch remained wet at Low Water?

*A.* He refers to the Council of War, and thinks from the Sluices at both Ends, it is natural to suppose it must be so.

*Q.* Does he think it possible to judge of the Practicability of taking a Place by Assault without reconnoitring, since the Evidence was contradictory?

*A.* His Narrative, as he conceives, explains that very fully; and he begs leave to remark that two Witnesses saw the Place wet, and the other only says, that when he saw the Ditch, it did not appear to him capable of being flowed.

*Q.* Did

Q. Did he communicate his Instructions to the Council of War?

A. He laid them upon the Table.

Q. What was done on the 26th and 27th of September?

A. He refers to the Narrative.

Q. What Reasons induced him to consent to landing on the 28th, since it appeared so difficult on the 25th?

A. The Difficulty was the Retreat, and if they took *Fouras*, which it was in View to have done on the 28th, they had a Retreat.

Q. Why would he risque the Troops on an inconsiderable Object, when he did not think it advisable to risque them on that of so much more Importance, and particularly pointed out by his Instructions, viz. the Attack upon *Rochebort*?

A. He looked upon it, the great Risque was avoided by securing a Retreat in the taking of *Fouras*, and in the other Case (that of attempting *Rochebort* without such Retreat) he refers to the Quotation from Sir *John Ligonier's* Paper used in his Narrative.

Q. How came he to resolve on returning to *England* without holding another Council of War, seeing it had been unanimously agreed in a former Council to land?

A. He refers himself to his Narrative, and to Sir *Edward Hawke's* Letter to him, which was produced, viz.

“ *Ramilies, Basque Road, 29th Sept. 1757.*

“ S I R,

“ Should the General Officers of the Troops have  
 “ no farther Military Operation to propose, con-  
 “ siderable enough to authorize my detaining the  
 “ Squadron under my Command longer here, I  
 “ beg

“ beg Leave to acquaint you, that I intend to pro-  
“ ceed with it for *England* without Loss of Time.

" I am, Sir, your most Obedient

“ To  
“ Sir *John Mordaunt*.

“ Most Humble Servant,

“ED. HAWKE.”

Sir *John Mordaunt* having answered to the several Questions proposed to him, desired to observe in Addition to his Narrative, that the first Design was to have taken *l' Isle d'Aix* and Fort *Fouras* by Sea, and then there would have been great Ease in the rest of the Enterprize; that he imagined from the first setting out *l' Isle d'Aix* and Fort *Fouras* could be taken by Sea; and in the Evening of taking *l' Isle d'Aix*, Admiral Sir *Edward Hawke* mentioned, that he would take *Fouras* the next Morning, by laying a Ship to it: And the next Morning Sir *Edward* called for the Pilot of the *Magnanime*, and examined him, whether he could lay his Ship so, as to dismantle Fort *Fouras*? to which the Pilot answered, he could. The same Morning Major General *Conway* came to the *Ramilies*, and produced the Plan referred to in the Narrative.

Colonel *James Wolfe*, Quarter-Master General upon the Expedition, being called, at the Desire of Sir *John Mordaunt*, and desired to inform the Board what passed the Evening after taking the *Isle d'Aix*, in regard to the Attack of *Fouras*, — said, that he had been at the Isle of *Aix*, and returned about 8 o'Clock, and took the Liberty of suggesting his Opinion to Sir *Edward Hawke* and Sir *John Mordaunt*, that he did not doubt but a Ship of War might batter Fort *Fouras*, and that a Body of Troops might be landed at the same time, and attack it with Success: He took the Liberty also to mention, (as he only had seen the Fort) that if Sir *Edward Hawke* thought proper to make a Diverſion near *Rockelle* at the same time, it might

might engage the Attention of the *Frensch*, and give an Opportunity of making a Descent between: He also hinted his Opinion, as to sending the Bomb Ketches out, not knowing, but Bombs might be thrown into *Rochelle*; and Sir *Edward* sent for them up accordingly. He likewise mentioned another Circumstance, in regard to sending for the Pilot of the *Magnanime*, who would inform Sir *Edward*, if there was Depth of Water sufficient to carry a Ship up to *Fouras*; adding, from the indifferent Opinion he had of the Fort, a Forty or Fifty Gun Ship might at least annoy the Fort, so as to give an Opportunity of Landing. Sir *Edward* then seemed to incline to the Attack of *Fouras*, and mentioned the *Barfleur* as a Ship he intended to employ; talked of doing it the next Morning, and appeared very keen and warm about it; that Sir *Edward* did send for the Pilot of the *Magnanime*, and examined him the next Day, but he, Colonel *Wolfe*, was not present; that he spoke to the Pilot of the *Magnanime* himself the next Morning, (but whether before or after his being examined by Sir *Edward*, is not certain) and asked him, whether he could carry a Ship up to *Fouras*? The Pilot's Answer was, either he could (or he believed he could) take the *Magnanime* within half a Mile, as he understood, of *Fouras*; and if he recollects, said, he would beat it down in less Time, than he had done the other Fort. He asked the Pilot further, Whether between Fort *Fouras* and Fort *la Point* any Persons could be landed during the Attack to invest *Fouras*, and desired the Pilot to find a Guide amongst the Prisoners, to shew a proper Place for landing, venturing to tell him, they should be handsomely rewarded, if they performed the Service well. He also asked the Pilot, why he chose the *Magnanime*, rather than the *Barfleur*, or any other Ship? he answered, on account of the Captain, of whom his Expression was, “ *Il est jeune & brave, Servez vous en.*”

Being asked by Sir *John Mordaunt*, whether he ever heard

heard any Sea Captain say, he would undertake the taking of the Fort ?

Answered, Captain *Colby* of the Princess *Amelia*, in Conversation on that Head, told him, he had made Offers to attack it ; is not certain he said, he had made those Offers to Sir *Edward Hawke*, but frequently to Mr. *Brodrick*. He, Colonel *Wolfe*, likewise observed to Captain *Colby*, as it was then late, being the 28th September, if the Troops were pushed, there might possibly be a Necessity of attacking it, in order to bring off the Troops ; and said, in that Case he supposed, as an *Englishman* who wished well to his Country, he would urge the Admiral to do it ; and, he believes, he spoke to the same Purpose afterwards to Mr. *Brodrick* in the *America*.

Being asked, of what Strength did *Fouras* appear to him, when he first reconnoitred it ?

Answered, he saw it immediately after the Attack of the Isle of *Aix*, and it appeared to him to be a weak Fortress: The Front and Parapets were of Masonry, which, he conceives, must have been of Advantage, and consisted of a streight Line of a Wall, and another within that higher up, and no Outworks, (he speaks of the Side towards the Sea.) — He could not from his Eye discover the Land-side, nor get one Word of Intelligence concerning it at that Time. There were 24 Embrazures to the Sea side, and a Battery beyond, which Battery he did not see the first Day.

Being asked, (by Sir *John Mordaunt's* Desire) what Number of good Troops would, in his Opinion, have enabled a Commander to prevent their landing at the proposed Landing-place at *Chate-laillon* ?

Answered, Any Opinion he can form upon that Point must be very indeterminate ; but, from what he could observe, the Sand Hills were pretty near to the Water-side, and his Notion is, all Circumstances considered, a Thousand good Foot, and 200 or 300 Horse, might have prevented about 2000 Men landing from Boats.

Being

Being asked by the Board, How many could have embarked in the Boats ?

Answered, He believes there was never an exact Calculation made of that ; he should think about thirty-six Companies, which consisted of about sixty private Men each, besides Officers.

Q. Did he see any Troops, where it was proposed to land ?

A. No. He saw six Pieces of Cannon on the Point, but which he thinks could not reach the Beach.

Q. If a sufficient Number of Men had been concealed behind the Sand Hills, could Ships in that Case be of any Use to cover the Landing ?

A. No : Such Troops must have been safe from the Ships while concealed.

Colonel *George Howard*, being called at Sir *John Mordaunt's* Desire, and asked, what Account the Captain of the *Viper* Sloop gave him ? said, that he received Sir *John Mordaunt's* Orders to go reconnoitring with Colonel *Wolfe* on *Thursday*, which he believes was the 29th of *September* ; and when they came to the *Viper* Sloop, which was stationed nearest the Coast, as they were taking their View of the Land, he asked Captain *Skynner*, the Commander, some Questions relative to Observations he might have made. The Captain said, he came there on the *Sunday* before, and that on the *Sunday* Afternoon, or *Monday* Morning, he saw a considerable Number of Troops marching down, and that he reckoned eight or nine Pair of Colours ; that he saw them in Camp ; that the next Morning the View of the Camp was intercepted, so that he could not see them again, which he attributed to the Enemy having flung up some Ground on the Beach ; and that he saw the Sand Hills on the Beach considerably higher than they were on *Sunday* when he came there ; which he, Colonel *Howard*, reported to Sir *John Mordaunt*.

Being questioned by the Board, whether he asked  
the

the Captain of what particular Numbers he thought the Troops might consist?

Said, he did ask him that Question, and that the Captain answered him, he could not determine; but that he, Colonel *Howard*, might better judge from the Number of Colours.

Being questioned farther, he said, the Captain could give no Description of the Quantity of Ground they covered in their Camp, nor did he specify, whether they were regular Forces, or the Troops of the Country.

Captain *Thomas Osbert Mordaunt* being examined, at the Desire of Sir *John Mordaunt*, said, that he received a Message from Sir *Edward Hawke* the Morning after the Attack upon the Isle of *Aix*, desiring him to come down to the Cabbin; where he found the Admiral, Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, and the Pilot of the *Magnanime*. The Admiral desired him, Captain *Mordaunt*, as he did not understand *French* himself, to ask the Pilot some Questions for him. After asking some about the Approach to *Rockelle*, he asked particularly, how near a Ship could be brought to *Fouras*; the Pilot said, he could bring the *Magnanime*, as his Expression was “*dans un demy Mile,*” “*meme dans un quart de Mile;*” but he must then run the Ship upon the soft Mud, in which she would stand secure till the next Tide, which would bring her off. And lest there should have been any Misunderstanding, as to the Distance intended by a Mile, the Pilot was desired to explain himself, and said he meant “*Miles of England.*” The Admiral replied, that would do. The Admiral then asked, if, by lightening the *Barfleur*, he could bring her as near; the Pilot said he could, but he had rather go with the *Magnanime*, because Captain *How* was young and brave; and that he could not be better employed than in the Service of his Country. The Admiral mentioned, he did not care that Ship should go, as having been upon severe Service before.



Major General *Conway* being desired by Sir *John Mordaunt* to give an Account, as to the Time proposed for landing, whether it was intended to have been by Night, or by Day-light, and the Reasons of its being put off, said, that he understood it to have been the Intention of all (he knows it was his own) to have landed in the Night, and the Disposition was made to land accordingly. Captain *How* first came on Board the *Ramillies*, where they all were before they went to their Rendezvous; and said, he was sorry to observe to them, the Wind was sprung up from the Shore, and feared it would be a great Obstruction to landing that Night.—Sir *John Mordaunt* said, he would go to the Rendezvous on board the *America*, where they should be better Judges, and that he would make the Landing, if possible. When they came on board the *America*, Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* and several of the Captains said (believes Mr. *Brodrick* spoke first, but is not certain) they hoped it would not be imputed to any Backwardness in them, but it was their Opinion, the Wind sat so strong against them, it would be about Day-light before the Boats could get to Shore, and six Hours more, before a second Embarkation could be landed. Sir *John Mordaunt* said, as he remembers, the Disposition was made for landing in the Night, and that he thought it must be put off to another Night; and took the Opinion of the Officers present upon that Subject.

Major General *Cornwallis* confirmed the same in general; adding, that he rather understood from his Conversation with Captain *How*, that his Opinion was against landing in general, as he confesses his own was; but it was most indisputably the Intention, that the Troops should land in the Night. He remembers Captain *Dennis* particularly thought the landing, as the Wind then was, an impracticable, or at least, a very dangerous Enterprize.

Colonel *George Howard* confirmed the same, as to the Disposition being made for landing in the Night, and the Reason of its being deferred.

Colonel *Thomas Brudenell* being desired by Sir *John Mordaunt* to give an Account of what passed within his Knowledge, as to the Difficulty of Landing, said, that by Sir *John Mordaunt's* Orders the Afternoon of the 28th, it appeared the Intention was to land before the Day came on. The Long-boat belonging to the Transport he, Colonel *Brudenell*, was aboard of, was a pretty large one, and there were embarked in it 40 or 42 Soldiers. They waited some Time along side the Ship, expecting the Signal to put off, and observing that the Wind blew very strong from the Shore, he asked the Master of the Transport, whether he thought it possible, that the Yawl with four Soldiers in it could tow that Long-boat to Shore? who answered, he was satisfied it was impossible to do it in less than seven Hours, but he rather thought it was impossible to do it at all. He, Colonel *Brudenell*, had apprehended the Men of War's Boats were to have attended, and assisted in towing them; for having been on Board several Ships, it appeared to him an impossible Thing; this was about One in the Morning. Whilst they were waiting, an Officer of his Regiment, who had been on Board the Transport, whence the Grenadiers and Pickets were to go into the Boats, came on Board, and told him, Captain *Buckle* of the *Royal George* had been on Board that Transport, and observed to them, that as the Wind was, he thought it impracticable for the Boats to land; and that Captain *Buckle* was gone on board the Admiral to acquaint him therewith. In about an Hour and an half after that, another Boat came along side the Transport with a Sea Officer, as he believes, in it, who said, Captain *Buckle* was come back from the Admiral, and the Men were not to land that Night, but were to return to their Ships again. This he did not take for an Order, and so his Men remained in the Boat, where they had been some Hours, till he received Sir *John Mordaunt's* Orders to put them on Board again. He likewise asked several others next Day, what had passed on board their

Transports, and found it to have been the general Opinion of the Masters, that it was not possible to land that Night.

Vice Admiral *Knowles* being asked, at Sir *John Mordaunt's* Desire, whether several Winds might not have kept the Fleet a considerable Time in *Basque* Road, without a Possibility of getting out?

Answered, He has already given his Opinion in the first Council of War on this Head, to which he begs Leave to refer; for that the same Wind which would prevent the re-imbarking of the Troops, would detain the Squadron there.

Asked, Did he not think it advisable to sail on their Return Home at the Time they did, considering the Situation of the *French* Fleets, which might be expected home?

Answered, His Opinion never was asked about it.

Being desired by Sir *John Mordaunt* now to give his Opinion on that Question, said, That after he found there was no landing for the Troops, without great Risk, he should, had he been properly asked by his superior Officer, certainly have given his Opinion for coming away.

Sir *John Mordaunt* here begged Leave to observe, that he did apply for a Council of War to Sir *Edward Hawke*, who refused him, giving him for Answer, that the Seamen had nothing to do with it, it was a Land Operation only: He, Sir *John*, since finds, upon a closer Perusal of his Instructions, that he had himself a Power to have called a Council of War, but was not then apprised of it.

Major General *Conway* was then questioned by the Board, Whether Sir *John Mordaunt's* Instructions were laid before the Council of War?

Answered, Yes.

Q. What Reasons he had to apprehend a Body of Troops to oppose their Landing?

A. From general Reasoning upon the Subject, and the Information of the Prisoners.

Q. What was that Information?

*A.* One said, there were eleven Battalions, another mentioned seven ; and though he paid very little Regard to any of them singly, yet, upon the Whole, he thought there was no room left to doubt but there were some Troops.

*Q.* Whether any Batteries or Troops appeared to him ?

*A.* Very few : There was a small Battery, but he imagined the Troops would naturally conceal themselves till the Attempt to land.

He then observed, that no Officer, as he conceives, called to a Council of War, is criminally accountable for his Opinion given in that Council ; but if called upon, he is very ready to give the Reasons that guided his Opinion.

Being desired to mention those Reasons, he said, as well from general Reasoning as Intelligence, tho' he knew of no considerable Army in the Field, he was persuaded there must be a considerable Number of Men in *Rochefort*.—They had been seen five Days on the Coast, and two Days more must have been taken up in landing with the Stores.—They had no particular Intelligence of many necessary Circumstances relative to the State of the Place : They could not surprize it, and had not Artillery to attack it in form, and no secure Retreat for the Troops.—That he did imagine there would be an Opposition upon landing, but the Want of a Retreat was the principal Objection with him.—He further said, they had not at first sufficient Intelligence to depend on taking Fort *Fouras* by an Attack on the Land Side ; when he thought the Intelligence sufficient, he did propose landing in order to attack it. He then, to save the Trouble of any further Questions, said, that he had prepared a short State of the whole Proceedings, beginning from the first Attack upon *Aix*, so far as his own Conduct is any way concerned, which was laid before the Board, and read as follows, *viz.*

“ On *Friday* the 23d of *September*, I went up with  
 “ three Battalions to sustain the Attack on the Fort  
 “ of *Aix*. “ On

“ On *Saturday* Morning I went on board the *Ramilies* (Sir *Edward Hawke's* Ship) and there gave in a Plan for landing as near *Fouras* as possible, and attacking the Fort *de l'Equille* near it with a Detachment of Grenadiers, while a Ship lay up to batter the Fort of *Fouras* by Sea ; and for making a Feint on the Side of *Rochele* and the Isle of *Ré*, to facilitate that Attempt. This Plan was accepted by Sir *John Mordaunt*, but not approved of by the Admiral.

“ Soon after the Rear Admiral and Captains, sent to reconnoitre and found the Coast, reporting, that there was no landing Place near *Fouras*, and that the only landing Places they had discovered between that Fort and *La Rochele*, were near the Point of *Chatelaillon* ; and it being also now declared, that the Fort of *Fouras* could not be attacked by Sea, that Scheme was laid aside, and a general Council of War called, which met next Morning, the 25th ; wherein it was unanimously resolved, by both Sea and Land Officers present, that the landing near *Chatelaillon*, in order to march up and attack *Rochele* directly, as the Question was there stated, was neither advisable nor practicable.

“ But a Question being then proposed for determining to come back to *England*, I opposed it, as it was not in that View I gave my Assent to the former Question ; and thought we should by all Means see, what farther could be done to annoy the Enemy.

“ We met next Day to sign the Council ; and Sir *John Mordaunt* then proposed landing on the Island of *Oleron*, and said, he had mentioned it to Sir *Edward Hawke*, who approved it. To this I added, that if that Place was fixt upon for a Landing, I should then propose attacking the Castle of *Oleron* on the South End of the Island, and passing over from thence to the Continent, between *Brouage* and the *Charente*, which is about a League,

“ and from thence not more than two Leagues to  
 “ *Rochefort* : And as no Attempt was probably ex-  
 “ pected on that Side, we might possibly succeed, so  
 “ far as to destroy some of the Ships or Magazines.  
 “ But this Scheme being laid aside after some Debate,  
 “ I then proposed to the General Officers present, to  
 “ go and view *Fouras*, and the Coast near it, to see  
 “ what could be done on that Side, which was agreed  
 “ to.

“ They met accordingly at the Isle of *Aix*, where  
 “ I gave my Opinion for the Landing and Attack of  
 “ that Fort, and the Fort *de l'Equille* ; but that At-  
 “ tempt being in general judged too difficult, it was  
 “ dropt.

“ The same Afternoon I went on board the *Ra-*  
 “ *milies*, and proposed to Sir *Edward Hawke* and Sir  
 “ *John Mordaunt* the landing at *Chatellaillon*, and  
 “ marching from thence to attack *Fouras* and the  
 “ other Forts on the Back ; of which I thought we  
 “ had now sufficient Knowledge to depend upon the  
 “ taking *Fouras*, as a secure Retreat for the Troops,  
 “ and that we might then see, what farther could be  
 “ done.

“ This Proposition was next Morning referred to  
 “ a Council of War, where it was agreed upon, and  
 “ ordered to be put in execution that Night.

“ But was put off, on a Representation of the Sea  
 “ Officers, upon account of the strong Wind then  
 “ blowing from the Shore.

“ It was also at the same Time reported, that  
 “ some Camps and Entrenchments had been seen on  
 “ the Shore, particularly near the Place where the  
 “ Landing was to have been made.

“ I therefore asked Sir *John Mordaunt's* Leave to  
 “ go, and accordingly went next Morning to recon-  
 “ noitre the Coast from *Fouras* to *Chatellaillon*.

“ On my Report, Sir *John Mordaunt* called the  
 “ Land Officers of the Council of War together, to  
 “ know their Opinions, whether it was now proper to  
 “ renew the Attempt for the Landing.—I did de-  
 “ clare

“ declare it to be mine, but the other Gentlemen being  
 “ all of a contrary Opinion, I acquiesced.”

Major General *Conway* being asked, by desire of  
 Sir *John Mordaunt*, Whether he, Sir *John*, did shew  
 him Sir *Edward Hawke*’s Letter of the 29th of *September*, with regard to the Return to *England*?

Answered, That Sir *John* did shew him that Letter, and at the same Time offered Major General *Conway* (if it was his Opinion) still to go on; but he replied, it was too delicate a Matter for him to take upon himself, unless it was also Sir *John*’s own Opinion; that whatever might be his private Sentiments, he should acquiesce in the general Opinion, which he did accordingly.

Major General *Cornwallis* being called upon said, As he did not imagine his Conduct was under inquiry, he is not prepared with a Narrative. That he was a Major General, and the Third in Command in the Expedition, and, as he conceives, not responsible for the Failure or Success. That he was never wanting in any Part of his Duty, was always at his Post, and ready to obey any Order from his superior Officers: That he attended Councils of War when summoned, as was his Duty; and when there, gave his Opinion according to the best of his Judgment, and does not conceive himself to be accountable for the Opinion so given: But to any Questions the Board should think fit to propose, he would very readily give an Answer to the best of his Judgment.

Being asked, Whether he did at any Time, in his Opinion, see it practicable or advisable to land?

Answered, At no Time, as there appeared to him no Security for landing the Troops, nor any Retreat secured; and lastly, he had heard an able Pilot say, he had been seven Weeks there, without a Possibility of a Boat passing or repassing. The Retreat and Communication between the Troops and Shipping, appeared to him absolutely necessary; and their having been there so long, was a stronger Argument with him against landing. And informed, as he now is,

under all the Disadvantage of popular Opinion, were the Case again to happen under the same Circumstances, he should now persist in the same Opinion. He would as readily, as any Officer in the Service, have hazarded his own Person, if ordered to land with an Hundred Men only; but when called upon for his Opinion in so momentous an Affair, he could not answer to himself risking the Whole. He added, he was against the Measure of landing in the Second Council of War, but acquiesced in the Opinion of the Majority of the Council, and was ready at his Post, to put the Resolution in Execution.

Being asked, whether any Thing appeared to him to prevent the Communication between the Ships and the Troops?

Answered, no Men of War could get nearer than two Miles, which made the whole of the Communication precarious, as it depended only on the Wind's shifting into a particular Corner at the critical Juncture of the Equinox.

Colonel *George Howard*, as having been called to the Councils of War, by the Commanders of the Expedition, was then desired to lay before the Board, if he thought proper, the Motives which had the principal Weight with him, together with any other Matters, that he might judge material for the Information of the Board; who said, he was very little prepared, not knowing he should be called upon, but nevertheless readily mentioned to the Board the principal Matters, which had determined his Judgment, being to the same Effect, as contained in the Paper by him presented the Day following.

*Adjourned till the Morrow at 11 o'Clock in the Forenoon.*

At a meeting of the said General Officers, appointed to inquire into the Causes of the Failure of the late Expedition, &c. pursuant to Adjournment on *Tuesday* the 15th of *November* 1757.

Major



Major General *Cornwallis*, desired to add, in Explanation of what he mentioned Yesterday, with regard to the Pilot's Evidence upon the Impossibility of passing, and repassing, that he does not thereby mean any particular Storm or Tempest; but that the ordinary Wind sitting in from the Bay, would make such a Surf on the Shore, that Boats could not go there.

Colonel *Howard* acquainted the Board, that he had now committed to writing the Motives of his Opinion, differing in little more from the Account he gave them Yesterday, than that they are more methodically digested, and desired they might be accepted instead of his verbal Narration; and the same were accepted accordingly, and read, as follows, *viz.*

“ Unaccused and unconscious, as I am, of the least military Misconduct, I shall however, for the Satisfaction of this Honourable Board, relate the Motives, which induced the Opinions I have given, not as a Matter of Self defence, but of Evidence only, agreeable to the Summons I received to attend at this Place.

“ As it is well known I went upon the Expedition, only as a Regimental Officer, and that my Situation could neither intitle me to know the Motives upon which it was undertaken, nor the Springs which were to conduct the Execution of it, I flatter myself I cannot be in the least accountable for the Failure of the Enterprize.

“ As the Execution of this Affair was intrusted to three General Officers of such established Characters, I little thought I should be concerned, but in a chearful Obedience of the Orders I might receive from them.

“ When I was summoned as eldest Colonel to the Council of War on the 25th of *September*, I was totally uninformed, as my Situation could not admit of my being present at any previous Consultation.

“ When

“ When the Object of the Council was proposed,  
 “ and the Rear Admiral’s Report of the 24th rela-  
 “ tive to the Soundings and two landing Places,  
 “ which he had discovered, was read, the great Diffi-  
 “ culties, which attended the landing of the Troops,  
 “ Artillery, Ammunition, Provisions, and Camp  
 “ Equipage at either of those Places, as well as the  
 “ great Uncertainty of securing a Retreat from thence  
 “ in case of any Emergency, and of preserving a  
 “ Communication with our Shipping, were so fully  
 “ demonstrated, (as no Ship, not even a Frigate of  
 “ the Fleet, could afford the least Protection, either  
 “ in the landing or reëmbarking of the Troops) that  
 “ I thought the Attempt uncommonly hazardous, and  
 “ that they were by no Means the proper Places of  
 “ landing, to facilitate the Designs upon *Rochefort*.

“ In Consequence of which Opinion, I asked at  
 “ the Council of War, If it was not possible for a  
 “ Ship or two to favour a Descent of the Troops  
 “ near *Fouras*, by attacking that Fort by Sea; which  
 “ I thought should have been the immediate Opera-  
 “ tion, after taking the Fort of *Aix*; as by that  
 “ Means we should have been three Miles at least  
 “ nearer to *Rochefort*, the Troops, &c. could have  
 “ been landed in a very short Space of Time, and  
 “ nothing could have interrupted our Communica-  
 “ tion with the Ships: But the Admiral declared it  
 “ was impracticable, and that no Ship could go up  
 “ higher than the Isle of *Aix* without being on  
 “ Ground.

“ The other Part of my Opinion was founded upon  
 “ the Evidence mentioned in the Council of War,  
 “ being (as I have observed before) quite uninformed,  
 “ and not knowing any thing about *Rochefort*, but  
 “ from the Evidence which appeared at the Council.

“ As to the second Council of War on the 28th,  
 “ tho’ I do not think any great publick Utility would  
 “ have been answered in landing the Troops for the  
 “ Purposes therein mentioned; and tho’ the Pro-  
 “ posal was made late in point of Time, yet I was  
 “ deter-

“ determined no Negative of mine should appear to  
 “ any Operation it was thought proper to undertake  
 “ by so many better Judges than myself.

“ I have ever been most ready to exert myself in  
 “ all Points of my Duty, shall constantly persevere  
 “ in so doing, and defy the World to lay a contrary  
 “ Behaviour to my Charge!”

Captain *William Phillips* delivered to the Board a Paper from Sir *John Ligonier*, which he was directed to inform them is the Original, of which Sir *John Mordaunt* produced a Copy, and referred to in his Narrative; and which Sir *John Ligonier* is desirous the Board should understand, was by no Means intended as Instructions, but only Hints, which he had put upon Paper and read to Sir *John Mordaunt*, who thereupon desired a Copy. Captain *Phillips* likewise observed, That there is a Paragraph added at the Foot of this Paper, which is not contained in Sir *John Mordaunt's* Copy, and which Sir *John Ligonier* had directed him likewise to mention to the Board: The said Paragraph is, as follows, viz.

“ When Sir *John Ligonier* wrote this Paper, of  
 “ which Sir *John Mordaunt* desired a Copy, he knew  
 “ nothing of the Disposition of the *French* Troops.  
 “ —The small Number of those Troops that could  
 “ be upon that Coast, by the Disposition produced  
 “ at the Cabinet Council, lessened very much the  
 “ Necessity of the Precautions to be taken for a Com-  
 “ munication or landing.”

Sir *John Mordaunt* here observed, That those Hints proceeded from his pressing Sir *John Ligonier* to give him a positive Order; which, he said, he could not do, but would give him his Thoughts.

Major General *Conway* confirms the Circumstance of Sir *John Mordaunt* pressing Sir *John Ligonier*, in his Presence, and expressing a great Desire, in so particular a Case, to have a positive Order.

Vice Admiral *Knowles* being questioned by the Board, Whether he knew of any Proposal having  
 been

been made for attacking Fort *Fouras* by Sea at any Council of War, or Meeting?

Answered, He cannot particularly charge his Memory, but knows very well Sir *Edward Hawke* asked his Opinion about it, and said, The Pilot of the *Magnanime* had told him, that a Ship could go within a small Distance to batter it; and Sir *Edward Hawke* directed his Secretary to begin an Order directed to him, Vice Admiral *Knowles*, for the *Barfleur*'s being lightened for that Service; the *Barfleur* drawing near two Feet less Water than the *Magnanime*.

When he returned on board his own Ship, he sent for Captain *Graves*, who commanded the *Barfleur*, to acquaint him with the Order Sir *Edward Hawke* had given him: Captain *Graves* answered him, That the Ship was on Ground where she laid, and he might look at her, for the Water had ebbed away a Foot from her; and she then laid between four and five Miles distant from the Shore; he acquainted Sir *Edward Hawke* with this, who suppressed the Order; but directed him to try to carry the Bomb-ketches in. He did so, and one of them which drew but eleven Feet Water ran a-ground at a greater Distance from *Fouras* than the Bombardier could throw the Shells with the greatest Requisite of Powder; the Flight of which he knows, at an Elevation of forty-five Degrees, will go two Miles and two Thirds; the Bombardier threw several Shells; whilst the Bomb-ketch laid ashore, two large Row-Boats with two Pieces of heavy Cannon in their Prows, attacked the Ketch, (full of Men each) upon which he (the Vice Admiral) made a Signal immediately for all the Boats in the Fleet, manned and armed, to go to the Ketch's Assistance; and went himself on board the *Coventry* Frigate to drive away the Row-Boats, which Frigate ran a-ground five Times considerably within the Space of an Hour, and at greater Distance from the Shore than the Bomb-ketch. He then sent his Master on sounding; and by the Bearings of the several Places at

at which he took his Soundings, it appeared there were but six Feet Water at high Water, two Miles off the Fort.—He added, that he will venture to say, even if Frigates could have got to it, the Fort would have been attacked by Sea.

Being asked, What kind of Landing there was at *Chatelaillon Bay* for Boats?

Answered, He was not there, but refers to Rear Admiral *Brodrick*.

Asked, at the Desire of Sir *John Mordaunt*, What Day the Experiment was made against *Fouras*?

Answered, He is not certain of the particular Day; it was two or three Days after taking the Isle of *Aix*, if not four.

Rear Admiral *Brodrick*, being questioned by the Board, Whether he knows of any Proposal being made for attacking Fort *Fouras* by Sea?

Answered, He never heard it proposed; he was on a different Service.

Q. Whether he heard any Captain offer to undertake it?

A. He thinks he did in private Conversation hear a Captain say, he would undertake it, but no such Proposal was ever made to him, as Admiral.

Q. What kind of landing there was for Boats at *Chatelaillon Bay*?

A. It is a very fair, firm, sandy Bay; a Bay where, in his Opinion, he could get out of the Boat without wetting his Shoes.

Q. How near to the Shore could the Men of War come?

A. By the Soundings he had, not nearer than two Miles.

Q. Did he observe either Troops, or Batteries, to obstruct the landing, had it been attempted soon after his Return from the Soundings?

A. He saw some Troops, when sounding, about 400 or 500 Foot, and 150 Horse, to the best of his Judgment.—As to Batteries, he had several Shot fired at him whilst he was sounding; but at the Place  
where

where the Troops were to land, no Shot could have reached the Boats.

Q. What did he observe as to the Nature of the Country near the Shore?

Q. There were Sand-Hills the greatest Extent of the Bay, about forty Yards from the high Water Mark.

Q. (At Sir *John Mordaunt's* Desire) Could not Bombs have reached the Troops behind the Sand-Hills?

A. He believes the Bomb-Ketches could have been of Service to annoy the Troops, if they could have come near.

Q. Might not several Winds have detained the Fleet in *Basque* Road?

A. He refers to the Council of War, (in like Manner with Vice Admiral *Knowles*) saying, That the same Wind, which would have prevented the Troops from reimbarking, would have detained the Squadron there.

Q. As the Works of *Aix* were demolished, the Wind was then fair, and the Fleet wanted at Home, was it not, in his Opinion, advisable to sail on the Return to *England*?

A. His Opinion was never asked; but had he been called upon, he should certainly have been of Opinion for the Fleet to have sailed, upon a Supposition of no Land Operation being to be undertaken.

Sir *John Mordaunt* was here referred to, at the Desire of Major General *Conway*, lest any Doubt should be entertained of his Proposal having been given in, who said, the Proposal was delivered in, as mentioned in Major General *Conway's* Narrative.

Colonel *James Wolfe* was questioned by the Board, What is his Opinion of the Practicability of landing Troops between *Rockelle* and Fort *Fouras*?

A. He saw the Bays upon the 29th *September*, and has a Minute of the Report he made, which he laid before the Board.—His Opinion is, It was very practicable in the great Bay of *Chatellaillon*; the lesser Bay  
he

he did not see much of. — The Minute by him delivered being read, was to the following Effect ; That  
 ‘ he was sent with Colonel *Howard* and Lieutenant  
 ‘ Colonel *Murray* by Sir *John Mordaunt*, the 29th,  
 ‘ to view the Bay of *Chatelaillon*, and their Report,  
 ‘ as far as he can recollect, was to this Purpose,  
 “ That they did not see any Batteries, Redoubts, En-  
 “ trenchments, or Troops, to prevent their landing  
 “ in the great Bay ; but that the Sand-Hills were  
 “ high enough to conceal the Motions of an Enemy.  
 “ They were informed by the Captain of the *Viper*,  
 “ whose Ship anchored nearest the Shore, that a  
 “ Number of Men had been seen working in the  
 “ Sand-Hills for some Days. There were six Pieces  
 “ of Cannon upon the Point of *Chatelaillon*, and  
 “ small Guards and Posts along the Shore of the  
 “ lesser Bay.”

Q. Could the Boats have gone out of the Reach of the six Pieces of Cannon ?

A. Yes.

Q. Had he been ordered to attempt landing at any Time with all the Men the Boats would have contained, did any such Difficulties appear to him, as would have justified him in representing against it as rash, or impracticable ?

A. Had he been ordered to do it, he should not have represented against it. He observes, he did not see the Bay till the 29th.

Q. Did he ever propose to go out reconnoitring before that Time ?

A. He can't particularly recollect : He looked upon it to be more immediately the Duty of his Office, as Quarter-Master-General, and was ready to go, whenever ordered.

Q. Does he know any Thing relative to Fort *Fouras* on the Land-side ?

A. Only from viewing it through Glasses from the Isle of *Aix*.

Q. How far is it, as he apprehends, from the great Bay of *Chatelaillon* by Land to Fort *Fouras* ?

A. He

*A.* He can't well say, he never was within the Bay ; it may possibly be seven or eight Miles, but the guess is quite vague.

*Q.* How far from the Landing-place to *Rochefort* ?

*A.* He knows nothing of it, but has been told it is about twelve Miles from the great Bay ; about four Leagues.

*Q.* During the march from the Landing-place to *Rochefort*, might a Detachment sent to *Fouras* of 400 or 500 Men in his Opinion have taken it ?

*A.* He don't know the Strength of *Fouras* sufficiently to answer that Question.

*Q.* If the Troops had been in Possession of Fort *Fouras*, would not a Retreat have been secured ?

*A.* He supposes it might, but can't speak with any Certainty, or Precision.

*Q.* What does he take to have been the Strength of *Rochefort* from the best Intelligence he could get ?

*A.* He knows nothing of *Rochefort* ; nor did he get any Intelligence concerning it.

*Q.* (At Sir *John Mordaunt's* Desire) Whether he heard Major *Desbrisay* speak of any Troops marching down, which he imagined were coming from the Isle of *Rhé* ?

*A.* Yes, on the 24th in the Morning Major *Desbrisay* came on board the *Ramilies*, and addressing himself to him, (Colonel *Wolfe*) asked him, whether he should make a Report of what he had seen, viz. a Body of Troops marching towards the Shore from that Part of the Continent opposite to the Isle of *Rhé* ; he said, he had also seen a Vessel go backwards and forwards, which he supposed had carried the Troops over, but did not mention the Numbers. He thereupon advised Major *Desbrisay* to go down and make his Report to Sir *John*, in the hearing of the Admiral.

Colonel *Howard* was asked, by desire of Sir *John Mordaunt*, whether he (Sir *John*) did not desire him, as soon as ever the Isle of *Aix* was taken, to pick up



up all the Intelligence he could from the Prisoners?

*A.* Yes, in Consequence of which he spoke to several, particularly to some of the *French* Officers; but no satisfactory Answer was got from them. He knows likewise some were spoke to by Major-General *Conway*, and some were sent for on the *Saturday* to be examined on board the Fleet.

Major-General *Conway* said, he did speak to several.

Captain *Patrick Tonyn* being asked, at Sir *John Mordaunt's* Desire, what Orders Sir *John* gave him the Morning before the Council of War of the 25th on board the *Neptune*?

Answered, That Sir *John* came to him on the Quarter-Deck, and told him, some Prisoners were to come on board, and if there were any Soldiers, Sergeants, or Corporals, among them, directed him to collect what Intelligence he could by Bribes, offering them forty, fifty, or Sixty Guineas. The Prisoners came on board, but were most of them Labourers and Masons.—He questioned several of them, but they could give him no Intelligence, as they were pressed from a distant Part of the Country. There was a Soldier, or two, of the Regiment of *Poitou* amongst them, Militia, but they could give him no Information.—This he reported to Sir *John*.

Lieutenant-Colonel *Robert Clerk*, chief Engineer upon the Expedition, was questioned by the Board, whether he had ever been at *Rochefort*?

*A.* Yes, in *April* 1754.

*Q.* Had he then an Opportunity of making any Remarks on the Strength and Situation of it?

*A.* Yes, his Letter to Sir *John Ligonier* particularly describes it, to which he refers,—(being of the Number of Papers transmitted by Mr. Secretary *Pitt*, and which were read at the Outset of the Inquiry.)

*Q.* Is *Rochefort* situated on a Flat, an Eminence, or a Declivity?

*D.*

*A.* That

*A.* That Part next the River is flat and low, but it rises on the Side next the Land.

*Q.* Is the Ditch round *Rockefort* level with the River at High-Water Mark, or is any of it higher than the River?

*A.* A great Part is higher than the Tide can flow to.

*Q.* If any Part of the Fosse is higher than the River, can that Part be filled with Water?

*A.* It cannot.

Being desired to give a Description of the Strength and Situation of *Rockefort*; he referred again to his said Letter to Sir *John Ligonier*, which was read to him.

He desired to make one Observation (in Regard to an Opinion which had prevailed, that his being permitted by the Governor to see *Rockefort* was in friendship, or particular favour to him) that he was intirely unacquainted with Mr. *Macnamara*, who was the Governor at that Time; and believes, he would have shewn the same Indulgence and Civility in every Respect to any Officer in Regimentals.

*Q.* Whether he has received any Information since to induce him to believe *Rockefort* was stronger at the Time of this Expedition, than when he was there?

*A.* No, he has several Reasons, which induce him to believe, it was in the same Condition when they came into the Bay.

Being desired to mention those Reasons, he said, that the Day after the Council of War of the 25th, hearing there had been some Difficulties, he went to pass a Day with some of the principal *French* Officers in the Fort in the Isle of *Aix*. There were present the Engineer, the commanding Officer of the Marines, and the Commander of the Troops, with two or three other Officers of the Regiments. At first he examined two or three of them in regard to the Condition of some of the Places upon the Coast, and particularly *Rockefort*. He got at first no satisfactory Answers; upon which he resolved to pass the whole

whole Day with them. After Dinner he mentioned to the Company, that two or three of them had been very cautious of giving any Account of their Places, which he believed he knew as well as themselves : Upon which he took out his Pencil, and drew a Sketch of *Rochelle*, describing particularly its weak Sides, and then entered upon a particular Description of *Rockefort*. He then took the Engineer along with him to walk round the Fort, and desired him to tell him, if the Place (meaning *Rockefort*) was not as he described it, telling him besides, that there had been a Dispute between him and one of his Friends, who had it, by hearsay only, (that the Water could be thrown round the Town ; he said, that it was impossible upon account of the Inequality of the Ground, and that he (Lieut. Col. Clerk) gave a more particular Description of *Rockefort*, than he could do himself, though he had been often there ; but he had not examined it with great Attention, having always looked upon it as an open Place.---On the 30th at Night he went to the Isle of *Aix* with Colonel *Wolfe* on purpose to endeavour to make the Engineer say the same thing before him, as he had only mentioned it afore in private ; he brought him to Colonel *Wolfe*, and asked, whether, or not, the Ditch could be made wet and Water thrown round the Town ? his Answer was, that it could not be upon Account of the Unevenness of the Ground ;---his precise Words in *French* were, “ *Ce ne scauroit être, a cause de l'inegalité du Terrain.*”

Another Circumstance is, that on the 28th of *September*, 1757, after the Council of War had come to a Resolution to land, he was on board the *Ramilles*, when Captain *Hamilton*, Aid de Camp to Major-General *Conway*, told him, there was a Fisherman, a very sensible Man in his Opinion for a common Man, who had been at *Rockefort* the 21st, and had been since taken Prisoner, and examined by Major-General *Conway*. He got Captain *Hamilton* to shew the Fisherman to him immediately, and asked him a great

many Questions in regard to the Place ; who seemed to be very distinct in regard to many particular Circumstances ; for so common a Man, much more than he could have imagined ; he mentioned particularly that he went by *Rocheport* on the 21<sup>st</sup> of the Month, and that the Place which he Lieutenant-Col. *Clerk* had described to him as open and unfortified, was in the same Condition that Day. He asked him the Question several Times before many People, and particularly before Colonel *Wolfe* :---He had never seen the Man before.

A third Circumstance is, that upon the Voyage home on board the *Royal George*, where were some *French* Prisoners, he found among them a Mason, who had been employed at *Rocheport* about two Years, and enquired of him, if any of the Gates were upon a Level with the Ground, without any Bridge : He said, there was one, but that it had a very good strong Gate. The Reason of his asking that Question, was, that if Water could be thrown round the Town, there must have been a Bridge in his Opinion. This passed before Captain *Buckle* of the *Royal George*.

Since his Return to *London*, he has seen several People, who have been at *Rocheport*, and particularly Mr. *Plenderleith*, a Merchant, who was at *Rocheport* about 14 Months ago ; and he confirmed him in this Particular of the Inequality of the Ground, and in every other Respect regarding the Place. This Mr. *Plenderleith* lived, for many Years, a Merchant at *Rochelle*, and he, Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk*, knew him when he was there.

Major-General *Conway* said, that he examined several Persons, twenty at least, and therefore cannot particularly recollect, whether the Fisherman mentioned in Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk*'s Evidence was one ; but if the Name was mentioned, he should perhaps remember,---and Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk* there-upon mentioning, that he believes *Boneau* was the Name, Major-General *Conway* referred to a Minute,  
which

which he took of one *Boneau* of *L'Isle Dieu*, which is as follows :

“ *Boneau de L'Isle Dieu* was at *Roche fort* on *Wednesday*; does not know what Number the Garrison : believes great Part came out to the Coast and Batteries, since we came.---Town not very strong he thinks, but a good Rampart, and a *Ditch full of Water all round*.---That he saw it so.

“ 11 Battalions at *Roche lle*- More on the Isle of *Rhé*, several at *Oleron*-- Saw seven at *Roche lle* eight Days ago—Water over against *Fouras* at half Cannon—shot four Fathom—Many Batteries on the Coast—Some Sand, but most muddy—Isle de *Rhé* good landing—Sand at Flat near the Shore.”

Major-General *Conway* added, if this was the same Man (which he could not pretend to affirm) the Man was sometimes clear, and sometimes very indistinct.

Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk* said, the Man gave him an indistinct Account about the Ditch ; and believes it to be the same Man.

Captain *William Hamilton* being called upon, at the Desire of Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk*, said, he heard Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk* ask the Man many Questions, and amongst others particularly as to the Side next the River, whose Answer was, Every Thing remained in the same Situation as before, and open.

Sir *John Mordaunt* observed, that *Boneau*, (if it is the same) was examined almost a whole Day before the Council, and he was so very indistinct and unsatisfactory, that the Council was quite out of Patience with him.

Lieutenant-Colonel *Clerk* desired leave to remark, that though one cannot expect to have any distinct or satisfactory Account from a Fisherman, or any common Man, in regard to a Fortification, and that one must even look for Contradictions in some Things, yet one may depend for a particular Circumstance upon a Man of that Kind, very nigh as much as upon an Engineer.

Being asked, by desire of Major-General *Cornwallis*, when he had collected what passed, whether he acquainted the Commander in Chief of the *English* Forces with that Conversation?

Answered, He did acquaint Sir *John Mordaunt* with it the next Day in the Morning (being the 27th, the Day before the Order for Landing) and Major General *Conway* likewise, when they were walking at the Top of the Donjeon over the Gateway in the Isle of *Aix*, and mentioned particularly, that he had passed the Day with the People of the Fort, and particularly with the Engineer, on Purpose to examine him with regard to *Rockefort*; and that he had confirmed every Thing he, Lieut. Colonel *Clerk*, had said: And remembers particularly Sir *John Mordaunt's* Answer, That no Credit could be given to what a *French* Engineer said on that Subject; and asked, if he was in that Situation, whether he would have explained any thing on such a Subject? His Answer to Sir *John Mordaunt* was, "Different Men had different Characters; for his Part he believed him."

Sir *John Mordaunt* said, he remembers Lieut. Col. *Clerk's* acquainting him with this Circumstance of the Engineer, and his making that Observation upon it.

Major General *Conway* desired, it might be observed, that his two Proposals came on that very Day, and the Council was called that Night, which came to the Resolution of Landing. He added, that he tried the Engineer, but without getting any thing from him.

Sir *John Mordaunt* said, that if he understood Lieut. *Nethercote* rightly yesterday, the Engineer told him quite the reverse;—and Lieut. *Nethercote*, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, being thereupon questioned, said, That he did speak with the Engineer at the Isle of *Aix*, but had no particular Conversation with him about the Ditch at *Rockefort*, or the Place; but the Engineer gave him prevaricating Answers, and he did not chuse to proceed with him.

Lieut.

Lieut. Colonel *Clerk* being asked, at Major General *Conway's* Desire, Whether he offered, or hinted at any Consideration to the Engineer ?

Answered, No, never any; he industriously avoided that; but explained, that in Discourse he entered into their Affairs, thinking thereby to make them more free and open; and finding the Engineer, and one or two others, were likely to be ruined, unless they were soon released, he promised to use his Influence to get them released, as soon as they came to *England*.

Q. Did the Engineer give any other material Information about Troops, or otherwise?

A. No; he once threw it out to them, but he found, they shunned it.

Q. Did he ask the Engineer concerning the Troops after the Information given him in regard to *Rockefort*?

A. What he asked as to the State of their Troops was, to the best of his Knowledge, after the Information given him in regard to *Rockefort*; but the Engineer shunned giving an Answer, upon which he dropped it.

Being asked by the Board, whether he knows any thing of the Strength of Fort *Fouras* towards the Land?

Answered, It appears by his Letter, he never had seen the Fort; and at the Council of War he told them, he had then never seen the Land-side of it.

Q. Did he see any Obstruction to landing the Troops in the Bay of *Chatelaillon*?

A. None; when he reconnoitred with Major General *Conway* on the 29th; for he does not reckon the Cannon *en barbette* upon the high Bluff Point of *Chatelaillon* any Obstruction at all, as the Captains of the Men of War had remarked in their Report of the 24th.

Q. (By Desire of Major General *Conway*.) Did he hear him make his Report to Sir *John Mordaunt*?

A. He heard a good deal of it; he thinks not  
D 4 the

the whole; but believes it to have been conformable to what he has now said.

Q. Does he remember the Fort, or Cannon, upon the high Ground, on the other Side of the Fort *Fouras*?

A. He did not observe it himself; he knows Major General *Conway* mentioned it.

Q. (*From the Board.*) If Fort *Fouras* could not be taken, what Method would he have taken to secure a Retreat?

A. By making an Intrenchment at *Chatellaillon* to secure the two new Battallions, which he understood were to have been left there.

Sir *John Mordaunt*, after remarking that these two Battallions consisted intirely of new-raised, raw, and undisciplined Men, desired Lieut. Colonel *Clerk* might be asked, If an able Engineer had been at *Rochefert*, with a sufficient Number of Men and Tools, how long would he have been in making the Opening spoken of equally secure against a *Coup de Main* with the rest of the Works?

To which he answered, That it is very difficult to ascertain any thing of that Kind with Precision, and that no Conclusion can be drawn from what may be done; for what may be done, very seldom is done---even in *France*.

Q. (*At the Desire of Major General Conway.*) What Time it would take to throw up an Intrenchment of a strong Profil in that yielding Sort of Ground, such as he threw up in the Isle of *Wight*, with as many Hands, as could be employed?

A. Though this depends very much upon the Nature of the Ground, so that sometimes a particular Spot takes double the Time of what a most able Engineer could determine at first (the particular Case of the Lines thrown up at the Island at the Entrance of *Portsmouth*, by Captain *Demeré*, having taken him five Times more Time than he expected) as for the Entrenchment thrown up in the Isle of *Wight*, he believes it may be thrown up in a Day and half, or perhaps



perhaps even in a Day, with as many Hands as could be employed upon it.

Q. Does he not think that Ditches and the morass Ground would be an additional Strength at the Opening of *Rocheport*?

A. To be sure they would.

Q. Were there not Ditches already cut, that would be an Impediment?

A. Yes.

Q. Does he not think Moon-light Nights would be a great Impediment to an Assault?

A. Believes the Moonlight could be no such Impediment, as to hinder the Place from being carried in a couple of Hours.

Q. (*From the Board*) If, contrary to his Expectations, *Rocheport* had been too strong to have been taken by a *Coup de Main*, could not the Store-houses and Magazines have been burnt by throwing of Carcasses and red hot Balls?

A. Undoubtedly, by Carcasses and Shells one might destroy a great many of the Stores; but to do it in any tolerable degree, would require five times the Number of what they had with them; and that such a Method would both take up Time, and there would likewise be great difficulty in bringing up sufficient Stores for that Purpose to the Place.

Major General *Conway* desired leave to produce a Minute of an Examination of a *French* Prisoner taken before Sir *John Mordaunt*, which was read, *viz.*

“ *Pierre Girard de Rocheport*, Sailor, who says, “ they have worked at *Rocheport* this Fortnight past; “ that he has seen new Works; that they had worked at the Ditch and at *Souterrains*.”

At Sir *John Mordaunt*'s Desire, who said he had lately received Information of a Letter found in the Isle of *Aix*, the Postscript whereof he conceived material, as it shews Precautions were taken at *Rocheport*, Mr. *John Eiser*, Engineer, produced a Letter as found by him in a Room belonging to a Priest in the Isle of *Aix*, without Cover or Superscription, the Day after  
the

the Fort was taken, dated, “ *A Rochefort ce 18;*” (the Month and Year not specified) the Postscript whereof is as follows.—“ *Je vous prie d’assurer Monsieur & Madame le Comte de mon respect ; il conjecture que la Saison est trop avancée pour que les ennemis entreprennent rien sur nos Costes ; mais la precaution de Monsieur le Gouverneur n’en est pas moins bonne.*”

Lieutenant Colonel Clerk said, That besides the Particulars he has before-mentioned, he met with another Circumstance that confirmed him in his Opinion about *Rochefort*, and that before he left *England*,—which is a Relation of the Port of *Rochefort*, printed in 1732. That Book gives a very clear Account how it comes to be in the Condition he has represented.—*Colbert*, who was Prime Minister of the *Finances*, intended, that there should be nothing but a simple Wall round *Rochefort*, that no Garrison of regular Troops might be put in it, on purpose to prevent Disputes between Land and Sea Officers. The Governor built a Rampart in the same Form as he supposes the simple Wall was intended ; that is to say, with Redans, than which nothing can be more absurd. *Signellai* disgraced the Governor upon that Account ; tho’ the Author takes his Part, and says, he followed the Plan of an Engineer.

Sir *John Mordaunt* begged leave to refer to an Examination taken by his Secretary Captain *Richard Davenport*, of *Pierre Girard*, Mariner, one of the *French* Prisoners, which being produced by the said Captain *Davenport*, was read as follows.—“ *Pierre Girard*, Mariner, says, That he is well acquainted with *Rochefort*, and was there on the 20th ; that there is a Ditch round the Place, of which two Thirds are full of Water, and the other Third may be filled at pleasure ; that the Avant Guard is fortified and defended by a fascine Battery of several Pieces of Cannon just finished.”

*Robert Boyd*, Esq; Comptroller of the Train, by direction of the Board, laid before them an exact Account

count of the Proportion of Brass Ordnance, Howitzers, Mortars, and Stores furnished from the Ordnance for this Expedition.

Sir *John Mordaunt* then addressed himself to the Board as follows,

“ I am conscious of having done my utmost to the best of my Judgment for his Majesty’s Service in the Conduct of this Expedition; and I have submitted myself voluntarily and readily to this Examination. I desire no Favour or Partiality; and I know I shall have the most exact Justice in the Report this honourable Board will make.

“ I apprehend, that an Inquiry into the whole Conduct of an Expedition, without any Accusation formed, or any Charge laid, is a Proceeding not quite common; and however free from Guilt a Man may feel himself, there are few who can stand so strict an Examination.

“ There is nothing but the high Opinion I have both of the Justice and Candour of this Board, could make me easy in such a Situation.

“ I therefore hope you will be indulgent to my Errors; but I desire no Mercy for Guilt or known Disobedience, and with these Sentiments I submit myself to the Court.”

No Person having any thing farther to offer, all Parties were directed to withdraw,—when the Board proceeded to take the whole Matter before them into Consideration; and after some Time,

*Adjourned to Thursday next at 11 o’Clock in the Forenoon.*

At a Meeting of the said General Officers, &c. (pursuant to Adjournment) on *Thursday* the 17th of *November* 1757.

The Board took into farther Consideration the several Matters before them relative to the Failure of the late Expedition, and came to several Resolutions; which they directed to be stated in a Report to his Majesty,

Majesty, and a Draught thereof to be prepared and laid before them at their next Meeting.

*Adjourned till Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> Instant, at 11 o'Clock in the Forenoon.*

At a Meeting of the said General Officers, &c. on *Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, 1757.*

The following Report to his Majesty, prepared agreeable to the Resolutions of the Board at the last Meeting, being laid before them, was approved and signed.

Report of the General Officers, &c. to his Majesty. *May it please your Majesty,*

**W**E the underwritten General Officers of the Army, in Obedience to your Majesty's Warrant, which bears Date the 1<sup>st</sup> Day of this present Month, commanding us strictly to examine into the Causes of the Failure of the late Expedition to the Coasts of *France*; and to report a State thereof, as it should appear to us, together with our Opinion thereupon, have, at several Meetings, perused and considered your Majesty's Orders and Instructions, as transmitted to us by the Right Honourable Mr. *Pitt*, your Majesty's principal Secretary of State, together with sundry Letters and other Papers therewith transmitted, and have heard and examined Lieutenant General Sir *John Mordaunt*, the Commander in Chief of the Land Forces, and other principal Officers employed on the said Expedition, with such Witnesses as either of them desired, and also such other Persons as seemed to us most likely to give any material Information; and in order that your Majesty may be fully possessed of every Circumstance, which has appeared in the Course of this Inquiry, we beg Leave to lay before your Majesty the whole of our Examination, as contained in the Minutes of our Proceedings to this our Report annexed: And upon the most diligent and careful Review of the whole Matter, we do, in farther Obedience to your Royal Command, most humbly report to your Majesty

jeſty the principal Cauſes of the Failure of the ſaid Expedition, as they appear to us, *viz.*

It appears, that one Cauſe of the Expedition having failed, is the not attacking Fort *Fouras* by Sea, at the ſame Time that it would have been attacked by Land, agreeable to the firſt Deſign, which certainly muſt have been of the greateſt Utility towards carrying your Majeſty's Inſtructions into Execution. It was at firſt reſolved by Sir *Edward Hawke* (*Thierry* the Pilot of the *Magnanime* having undertaken the ſafe Conduct of a Ship to Fort *Fouras* for that Purpoſe) but afterwards laid aſide, upon the Representation of Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, that the *Barfleur*, the Ship deſigned for that Service, was on Ground, at the Diſtance of between four and five Miles from the Shore; but as neither Sir *Edward Hawke*, nor the Pilot, could attend to give any Information upon that Head, we cannot preſume to offer any certain Opinion thereupon.

We conceive another Cauſe of the Failure of the Expedition to have been, that; inſtead of attempting to land, when the Report was received on the 24th of *September* from Rear-Admiral *Brodrick* and the Captains, who had been ſent out to ſound and reconnoitre, a Council of War was ſummoned and held on the 25th, in which it was unanimouſly reſolved not to land, as the Attempt upon *Rochefort* was neither adviſable nor practicable; but it does not appear to us, that there were then, or at any Time afterwards, either a Body of Troops or Batteries on the Shore, ſufficient to have prevented the attempting a Deſcent, in purſuance of the Inſtructions ſigned by your Majeſty: Neither does it appear to us, that there were any ſufficient Reaſons to induce the Council of War to believe, that *Rochefort* was ſo far changed in reſpect of its Strength, or Poſture of Defence, ſince the Expedition was firſt reſolved on in *England*, as to prevent all Attempts of an Attack upon the Place, in order to burn and deſtroy the Docks, Magazines,  
Arsenals,

Arfenals, and Shipping, in Obedience to your Majesty's Commands.

And we think ourselves obliged to remark upon the Council of War of the 28th of *September*, that no Reason could have existed sufficient to prevent the Attempt of landing the Troops previous to that Day, as the Council then unanimously resolved to land with all possible Dispatch.

We beg Leave also to make one other Observation ; that after its being unanimously resolved to land in the Council of War of the 28th, the Resolution was taken of returning to *England*, without any regular or general Meeting of the said Council : but as that whole Operation was of so inconsiderable a Nature, we do not offer this to your Majesty as a Cause of the Failure of the Expedition, since we cannot but look upon the Expedition as having failed, from the Time the great Object of it was laid aside in the Council of War of the 25th.

All which is most humbly submitted to your Majesty's Wisdom.

*Privy-Garden,*  
21st November, 1757.

MARLBOROUGH.  
GEORGE SACKVILLE.  
JOHN WALDEGRAVE.

*A true Copy,*  
CHARLES GOULD,  
*Deputy Judge-Advocate-General.*





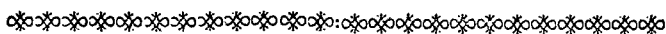




# A P P E N D I X,

CONTAINING

The P A P E R S referred to in the  
foregoing R E P O R T.



Numb. I. *Copy of a Letter, dated London, July 15, 1757, from Captain (now Lieutenant-colonel Clerk) to Sir John Ligonier, and transmitted to Mr. Secretary Pitt, with regard to Rochefort.*

SIR,  
Y<sup>O</sup>U have desired me to put down in Writing what I mentioned to your Excellency in regard of *Rochefort*.

In returning from *Gibraltar* in 1754, I went along Part of the western Coast of *France*, to see the Condition of some of their Fortifications of their Places of Importance, on purpose to judge, if an Attempt could be made with a Probability of Success, in case of a Rupture; and of the *French* drawing away their Troops to *Flanders, Italy, and Germany*, in the same Manner as they did in the last War. I had heard, that *Rochefort*, though a Place of the utmost Importance, had been very much neglected. I went there, and waited upon the Governor in my Regimentals, told him, that I was upon my Way to *England* from *Gibraltar*; and, that I came on purpose to see the Place, the Dock, and the Men of War. He was very polite; I was shewed every Thing; went aboard ten  
E Ships

Ships of the Line new built : and, an Engineer attended me in going round the Place.

I was surpris'd to find, that though there was a good Rampart with a Revetement, the greatest Part of it was not flanked but with Redans ; that there were no Outworks, no Covert-way, and in many Places no Ditch ; so that the Bottom of the Wall was seen at a Distance : That in other Places where the Earth had been taken out to form the Rampart, there was left about them a good Height of Ground, which was a Disadvantage to the Place : That for above the Length of a Front there was no Rampart, or even Intrenchment ; but as the Ground was low and marshy at that Place, being next the River, there were some small Ditches, which were dry, however, at Low-water ; yet the Bottom remained muddy and slimy.

Towards the River there was no Rampart, no Parapet, no Batteries on either Side. Towards the Land-side there was some high Ground very nigh the Place, perhaps at the Distance of about 150 or 200 Yards.

The Engineer told me, that the Place had remained in that Condition for above 70 or 80 Years.

I got no Plan of the Place, and put nothing down in Writing ; for I found that the whole Town had been talking of me, and thought it very extraordinary that I should be allowed to go about and see every Thing.

I burnt even some Sketches and Remarks I had by me upon other Places, that they might have no Hold of me, in case they searched my Baggage, and therefore could only expose themselves, as I had done nothing but what was open, above board, and with Permission.

However, as to Utility, I was as much satisfied as if I had got a Plan. In regard of the Profil indeed, I have thought since, that it would not have been amiss if I had known for certain the exact Height of the Rampart. I think that it could not well exceed

25 Feet. In *Martiniere's* Geographical Dictionary, it is called only 20 Feet high; perhaps the Parapet is not included.

I told your Excellency, that I had never seen any Plan of the Place; but as there had been no Alteration in the Works for so many Years, I made no question but that some old Plan of it might be found which would correspond exactly with what I said. In the *Forces de L'Europe*, which I have, there is no Plan of *Roche fort*, but I found one in the Duke of *Argyle's* Edition, which I borrowed, and shewed to your Excellency. It agrees exactly with what I said, and with the Sketch I drew of it before you from my Memory, except that a regular Ditch is represented every where, which is not the Case.

The River may be about 130 Yards broad. The Entrance is defended by two or three small Redoubts, which I did not see, nor could I venture even to go down and examine the Coast.

What I mentioned to your Excellency of the Method of insulting the Place, considering it upon the Footing of an immediate Assault, I have not put down; for, though it may be reasoned upon in a general View, yet many Things can only be fixed and determined immediately upon the Spot. I was told, that there are never any Troops at *Roche fort*, but the Marines. There might be about 1000 at that Time.

By the Expedition to *Port L'Orient* in 1746, it appeared to me, that the Country-people in Arms are very little better than our own; and that an Officer who possesses himself, might march safely from one End of a Province to another, with only five Companies of Grenadiers, where there are no regular Troops. They imagine at first, that they can fight, and their Intentions are good till it comes to the Point, when every Body gives Way almost before the Firing of a Platoon.

In writing this I have obeyed with Pleasure, as I have always done, your Excellency's Commands.

I am, &c.

ROBERT CLERK.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. II. *Mimute, dated* Arlington-Street, August, 1757, *containing an Examination of a French Pilot.*

P R E S E N T.

Lord Anson

Sir Ed. Hawke

Lt.-Genl. Sir J. Mordaunt

Major-Genl. Conway

Lold Holdernesse

Mr. Secretary Pitt

General Ligonier

Admiral Knowles

Captain Clarke.

Le nommé, Joseph Thierry, Pilote François, Natif de Protestant de Religion, aiant été examiné, dit,

QU'IL a exercé le metier de pilote sur les cotes de France au dela de vingt ans, qu'il a servi comme premier pilote, a-bord de divers vaisseaux du roi de France, & nommément du Magnanime, sur lequel il a servi pendant l'espace de vingt & deux mois; qu'il a conduit le dit vaisseau le Magnanime plusieurs fois a la rade de l'isle D'Aix, & qu'il connoit bien l'entrée, & la sortie de la dite rade; que le chennel entre les isles d'Oleron & de Rhé a trois lieues de large, qu'il y a louvoié sur le Magnanime, que les *bancs* qu'il faut éviter sont pres de la terre, qu'on en peut distinguer les *brisans* a une distance considerable; qu'il y un banc nommé *le Boiard*, dont on ne courre pas grand risque moiennant les *brisans* qui annoncent sa situation; que pour entrer a la rade d'Aix il n'y a pas de telles difficultes, qu'il soit neccessaire d'avoir un pilote pour y conduire des grands vaisseaux; qu'il y a bon mouillage tant en dedans la rade, qu'en dehors en mer a 12 & 14 brasses d'eau jusqu' a Bayonne.

Que l'isle d'Aix a environ sept miles d'Angleterre de circuit, & un quarantaine de cabanes ou maisons rassemblées dans une espece de village, qu'il y a une batterie

batterie de vingt quatre, a vingt fix canons, de 24 livres de bale, mais qu'il n'y a point de fortification, que les plus gros vaisseaux peuvent en approcher de bien pres, & que le vaisseau le *Magnanime seul* pourroit en peu de temps detruire la dite batterie.

Que les plus gros vaisseaux peuvent monter jusqu'a *Vergerot* a deux miles Angloises de l'embouchure de la riviere avec leurs canons & equipage, que la riviere est fort etroite.

Que l'on peut mettre du monde a terre au nord d'une batterie nommé *de Fourras*, sans etre ou du fort dans une prairie ou le terrain, est ferme & uni a la grande portée de canons des vaisseaux.

Que de l'endroit ou l'on met pied a terre jusqu'a *Rochefort*, il y a cinq miles Angloises, le chemin sec, & n'est point coupé par des fossés ny des marais.

Que la ville est presque entourée par un rempart, mais que l'endroit qui aboutit a la riviere des deux cotés il n'y a point de mur l'espace de soixante pas, qui n'est fermée simplement que par une barriere ou pallisade, & que le terrain pour aborder les dites palissades n'est coupé d'aucun fossé.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. III. *Memoire sur la Force actuelle de la France, & les Services auxquels elle est employée dans l'Année 1757, received July 28th, 1757;—and communicated at a Meeting at Lord Holderness's House to the Generals appointed on an Expedition to the Coasts of France.*

MEMOIRE,  
Sur la Force actuelle de la France par terre, & les Services auxquels elle est employée dans l'Année, 1757.

L'Armée Françoisse, au commencement des troubles presents, ne consistoit

TRANSLATION.

MEMORIAL,  
Of the actual Force of France by Land, and the Services on which it is employed in the Year 1757.

THE French Army at the Beginning of the present Troubles, consisted

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only

fiftoit qu'en 157,347 hommes, non compris la milice & les invalides. Elle étoit composée de la maniere suivante.

Infanterie Française	98,330
Artillerie — —	4,100
Infanterie Etrangere —	25,589
Maison du Roi, Cavalerie	3,210
Cavalerie Française —	14,520
Cavalerie Etrangere —	960
Dragons — —	7,680
Huffars — —	800
Troupes Legeres —	2,158

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157,347

only of 157,347 Men, not including the Militia and the Invalids. It was composed in the following Manner.

French Foot	—	98,330
Artillery — —	—	4,100
Foreign Foot — —	—	25,589
King's Household, Horse	—	3,210
French Horse — —	—	14,520
Foreign Horse — —	—	960
Dragoons — —	—	7,680
Huffars — —	—	800
Light Troops — —	—	2,158

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157,347

Au mois d'Août, 1755, on fit une augmentation de quatre compagnies de 45 hommes chacune, dans chaque bataillon du regiment du roy, & de quatre compagnies de 40 hommes chacune, dans chaque bataillon ordinaire de l'infanterie Française; ce qui faisoit en tout 29,620 hommes.

Environ le même tems, une augmentation se fit dans les dragons, qui porta chaque regiment à quatre escadrons de 640 hommes, montant en tout à 2,560 hommes.

Au mois de Decembre de la même année 1755, une augmentation se fit pareillement dans la cavalerie, de dix hommes par compagnie, en tout 5560 hommes.

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In the Month of *August* 1755, an Augmentation was made of four Companies of 45 Men each, in every Battalion of the King's regiment, and of four Companies of 40 Men each, in every common Battalion of *French* Foot; which made in all 29,620 Men.

About the same Time an Augmentation was made in the Dragoons, which made up every Regiment four Squadrons of 640 Men; making in all 2560 Men.

In the Month of *December* of the same Year 1755, an Augmentation was also made in the Horse, of ten Men a Company; in all 5560 Men.

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Les volontaires royaux, & le corps de *Fischer*, furent aussi augmentés ; nous ne savons pas au juste de combien ; mais, selon nos avis, cette augmentation alloit à 680 hommes, ou environ.

Toutes ces différentes augmentations montent à 38,420 hommes ; & par conséquent l'armée Française (sans compter la milice & les invalides, que je mets au delà de 67,000) est composée de 196,000 hommes. Ils ont, à la vérité, levé deux nouveaux Régiments dans le pays de Liege ; mais, malgré tout cela, leurs troupes réglées sont au dessous de deux cent mille hommes.

Les îles de *Minorque* & de *Corse*, avec les colonies en Amérique, occupent au moins 25000 hommes ; ils ont fait embarquer, au printemps, 3 à 4000 hommes différents services aux deux Indes ; l'armée de M. le maréchal d'Estrees, si les régimens étoient complets, iroit à 92,000 hommes ; celle du maréchal de Richelieu est de 32,665. Il faut, aussi compter un corps de 6 ou 7000 hommes,

qu'ils

The royal Volunteers, and *Fischer's* Corps were also augmented ; we do not exactly know to what Number ; but, according to our Advices, this Augmentation came to 680 Men, or thereabouts.

These several Augmentations amount to 38,420 Men ; and consequently the *French* Army (without reckoning the Militia and the Invalids, which I put at above 67,000) is composed of 196,000 Men. They have, it is true, raised two new Regiments in the Country of *Liege* ; but, notwithstanding that, their regular Troops are under 200,000 Men.

The Islands of *Minorca* and *Corfica*, with the Colonies in *America*, take up 25,000 Men at least ; they embarked in the Spring 3 or 4000 Men for different Services in the two *Indies* ; Marshal *D'Estrees'* Army, if the Regiments were complete, would amount to 92,000 Men ; Marshal *Richelieu's* is 32,665. A Body of 6 or 7000 Men must also

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be

qu'ils sont obligés de tenir en garnison à *Toulon, Marseilles, Cette, Antibes, &c.* à porté de cette partie de leur Côte.

Selon ce calcul, donc, voilà 160,000 hommes de troupes réglées employées ; il restera environ 40,000 hommes pour toutes les garnisons depuis *Sedan* jusqu'aux frontières de la *Suisse*, de même que pour celles du *Roussillon* et de *Guienne*, sans parler de la *Flandres* et de la côte.

Nous comptons environ 20000 hommes placés depuis *St. Valery* jusqu' à *Bergue*, de façon que nous avons tout lieu de croire, qu'il ne peut pas y avoir 10,000 hommes de plus, depuis *St. Valery* jusqu' à *Bordeaux*.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

be reckoned, which they are obliged to keep in Garrison at *Toulon, Marseilles, Cette, Antibes, &c.* at hand for that Part of the Coast.

According to this Calculation then, there are 160,000 regular Troops employed ; there will remain about 40,000 Men for all the Garrisons from *Sedan* to the Frontiers of *Switzerland*, as also for those of *Roussillon* and *Guienne*, without speaking of *Flanders* and the Coast.

We reckon about 20,000 Men placed from *St. Valery* to *Bergue* ; so that we have all the Reason to believe, that there cannot be 10,000 Men more from *St. Valery* to *Bordeaux*.

A true Translation.

Robert Wood.



Numb. IV. *Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir Edward Hawke, dated Aug. 5. 1757.*

G E O R G E R.

*Secret Instructions for our trusty and well-beloved Sir Edward Hawke, Knight of the Bath, Admiral of the blue Squadron of our Fleet, and Commander in Chief of our Ships to be employed in a secret Expedition for our Service; or for such other Officer on whom the Command of our said Ships may devolve. Given at our Court at Kenlington, the fifth Day of August 1757, in the thirty-first Year of our Reign.*

WHEREAS we have thought fit to employ a considerable Body of our Land-Forces on a secret Expedition, under the Command of our trusty and well-beloved Sir *John Mordaunt*, Knight of the Bath, Lieutenant-general of our Forces; and whereas we have appointed you to be Commander in chief of a Squadron of our Ships of War, to act in Conjunction, and co-operate with the said Sir *John Mordaunt*, in the Execution of the Services prescribed to him: For your better Discharge of the great and important Trust thereby reposed in you, we have judged it proper to give you the following Instructions.

1. You shall immediately, upon the Receipt of these our Instructions, repair to *Spithead*, where we have ordered a Squadron, consisting of at least 16 Ships of the Line, and a proportionable Number of Frigates, to rendezvous, together with the Transport-Vessels for our Troops, (who are to embark from the Isle of *Wight*) and also the Vessels with the Artillery and Stores, which Squadron and Transports you are to take under your Command; and, so soon as the Troops shall be embarked, you are to proceed without Loss of Time to the Coasts of *France*.

2. Whereas we have determined, with the Blessing of God, to prosecute the just War in which we are engaged against the *French King*, with the utmost Vigour; and it being highly expedient, and of urgent Necessity, to make some Expedition that may cause a

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Diversion, and engage the Enemy to employ in their own Defence a considerable Part of their Forces destined to invade and oppress the Liberties of the Empire, and to subvert the Independency of *Europe*; and if possible to make some effectual Impression on the Enemy, which by disturbing and shaking the Credit of their public Loans; impairing the Strength and Resources of their Navy, as well as disconcerting and in Part frustrating their dangerous and extensive Operations of War, may reflect Lustre on our Arms, and add Life and Strength to the common Cause; and we being persuaded, that nothing in the present Situation of Affairs can so speedily and essentially annoy and distress *France*, as a successful Enterprize against *Rocheport*: Our Will and Pleasure is, That you do co-operate in attempting as far as shall be found practicable a Descent on the *French* Coast, at or near *Rocheport*, in order to attack, if practicable, and by a vigorous Impression force that Place; and to burn and destroy to the utmost of your Power all Docks, Magazines, Arsenals, and Shipping, that shall be found there, and exert such other Efforts as shall be judged most proper for annoying the Enemy. After this Attempt on *Rocheport* shall either have succeeded or failed, and in case the Circumstances of our Fleet and Forces shall, with Prospect of Success, still admit of further Operations, *Port l'Orient* and *Bourdeaux* are to be considered next as the most important Objects of our Arms on the Coast of *France*; and our Will and Pleasure accordingly is, That you do proceed successively to an Attempt on both or either of those Places, as shall be judged practicable, or any other Place, that shall be thought most adviseable from *Bourdeaux* homewards to *Havre*, in order to carry and spread with as much Rapidity as may be, a warm Alarm along the maritime Provinces of *France*: And you are, as far as you shall be able with the Fleet under your Command, to be aiding and assisting to Sir *John Mordaunt* in the Performance of the several Services aforesaid.

3. In case, by the Blessing of God upon our Arms, our Forces should become Masters of any Places on the Coast of *France*, our Will and Pleasure is, That they do not keep Possession thereof, but that after demolishing and destroying as far as may be all Works, Defences, Magazines, Arsenals, Shipping, and naval Stores, you do proceed successively on the ulterior Operations of this Expedition, according as any of them may be judged adviseable, and may be performed within such Time as shall be consistent with your Return with the Fleet under your Command, so as to be in *England* at or about, as near as may be, the End of *September*, unless the Circumstances of our Ships and Forces shall necessarily require their Return sooner; and our Troops are to be landed at *Portsmouth*, or such other of our Ports as the Exigency of the Case may suggest.

4. Whereas it is necessary, that upon certain Occasions, Councils of War should be held, we have thought fit to appoint, and do hereby appoint such a Council, which shall consist of four of our principal Sea-Commanders, and of an equal Number of our principal Land-Officers, including the Commanders in Chief of our Sea and Land-Forces (except in Cases happening at Land, relating to the carrying on any military Operations to be performed by our Land-Forces only; and in like Manner, except in Cases happening at Sea, with Regard to Operations to be performed by the Fleet only) and all such Sea and Land-Officers are hereby respectively directed, from Time to Time, to be aiding and assisting, with their Advice as often as they shall be called together by you, or the Officer commanding our Land-Forces for that Purpose; and in all such Councils of War when assembled, the Majority of Voices shall determine the Resolutions thereof; and in Case the Voices shall happen to be equal, the President shall have the casting Vote.

5. Whereas the Success of this Expedition will very much depend upon an entire good Understanding

ing between our Sea and Land-Officers, we do hereby strictly enjoin and require you, on your Part, to maintain and cultivate such a good Understanding and Agreement, and to order the Sailors and Marines, and also the Soldiers serving as Part of the Complements of our Ships, to assist our Land-Forces, if judged expedient, by taking Post on Shore, manning Batteries, covering the Boats, securing the safe Reimbarkation of the Troops, and such other Services at Land as may be consistent with the Safety of our Fleet; as we have instructed our General and Commander in chief of our Forces, on his Part, to entertain and cultivate the same good Understanding and Agreement, and to order that the Soldiers under his Command shall man the Ships when there shall be Occasion for them, and when they can be spared from the Land-Service; and, in order to establish the strictest Union that may be between you and our said General and Commander in chief of our Land-Forces, you are hereby required to communicate these Instructions to him, as he is directed to communicate those he has received from us to you.

6. As our Service may require that you, or the Commander in chief of our Land-Forces, should, on particular Occasions, dispatch a Sloop or small Frigate to *England* with Intelligence, you shall always take Care to have with you one or more Sloops or small Frigates for that Purpose.

7. You are to transmit constant and particular Accounts of your Proceedings to one of our principal Secretaries of State, and to our Commissioners for executing the Office of our High-Admiral of *Great-Britain*; and you shall observe and follow such Orders and Instructions as you shall receive from us under our Sign-Manual, or from one of our principal Secretaries of State, or from our Commissioners for executing the Office of our High-Admiral of *Great-Britain* for the Time being.

G. R.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

Numb. V. *Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir John Mordaunt, dated Aug. 5th, 1757.*

GEORGE R.

*Secret Instructions for our trusty and well-beloved Sir John Mordaunt, Knight of the Bath, Lieutenant-general of our Forces, whom we have appointed General and Commander in Chief of all and singular our Troops and Land-forces, appointed, or to be appointed for a secret Expedition, for our Service; or for such other Officer, on whom the command in Chief of our said Troops and Land-forces may devolve. Given at our Court at Kensington, the 5th Day of August 1757, in the thirty-first Year of our Reign.*

**H**AVING by our Commission, bearing Date the third Day of this Instant, appointed you to be General and Commander in Chief of all and singular our Forces, appointed, or to be appointed, for a secret Expedition; for your better Discharge of the great and important Trust thereby reposed in you, we have judged it proper to give you the following Instructions.

1st, You shall immediately, upon the Receipt of these our Instructions, repair to the *Isle of Wight*, where we have appointed Ships to convey you, and the Forces under your Command, to the Coasts of *France*; and so soon as the said Forces shall be embarked, you shall accordingly proceed, without Loss of Time, under Convoy of a Squadron of our Ships of War, commanded by our trusty and well-beloved *Sir Edward Hawke*, Knight of the *Bath*, Admiral of the blue Squadron of our Fleet, whom we have appointed Commander in Chief of our Ships to be employed in this Expedition; the said Admiral, or the Commander in Chief of our said Ships for the Time being, being instructed to co-operate with you, and to be aiding and assisting in all such Enterprizes, as, by these our Instructions, you shall be directed to undertake for our Service.

2d, Whereas we have determined, with the Blessing of God, to prosecute the just War, in which we

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are engaged against the French King, with the utmost Vigour ; and it being highly expedient, and of urgent Necessity, to make some Expedition, that may cause a Diversion, and engage the Enemy to employ in their own Defence, a considerable Part of their Forces, destined to invade and oppress the Liberties of the Empire, and to subvert the Independency of *Europe* ; and, if possible, to make some effectual Impression on the Enemy, which, by disturbing and shaking the Credit of their public Loans ; impairing the Strength and Resources of their Navy, as well as disconcerting, and, in Part, frustrating their dangerous and extensive Operations of War, may reflect Lustre on our Arms, and add Life and Strength to the common Cause ; and whereas we are persuaded, that nothing in the present Situation of Affairs can so speedily and essentially annoy and distress *France*, as a successful Enterprize against *Rocheport* ; our Will and Pleasure is, That you do attempt, as far as shall be found practicable, a Descent, with the Forces under your Command, on the *French* Coast at or near *Rocheport*, in order to attack, if practicable, and by a vigorous Impression, force that Place ; and to burn and destroy, to the utmost of your Power, all Docks, Magazines, Arsenals, and Shipping, that shall be found there, and exert such other Efforts as you shall judge most proper for annoying the Enemy.

3d, After the Attempt on *Rocheport* shall either have succeeded or failed ; and in case the Circumstances of our Forces and Fleet shall, with Prospect of Success, still admit of further Operations ; you are next to consider Port *L'Orient* and *Bordeaux*, as the most important Objects of our Arms, on the Coast of *France* ; and our Will and Pleasure accordingly is, That you do proceed, successively, to an Attempt on both, or either of those Places, as shall be judged practicable ; or on any other Place that shall be thought most adviseable, from *Bordeaux* homewards to *Havre*, in order to carry and spread, with as much

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Rapidity as may-be, a warm Alarm along the maritime Provinces of *France*.

4th, In case, by the Blessing of God upon our Arms, you shall make yourself Master of any Place on the Coast of *France*, our Will and Pleasure is, That you do not keep Possession thereof; but that, after demolishing and destroying, as far as may be, all Works, Defences, Magazines, Arsenals, Shipping, and naval Stores, you do proceed, successively, on the ulterior Operations of this Expedition, according as any of them shall be judged adviseable, and may be performed within such Time as shall be consistent with your Return, with the Troops under your Command, so as to be in *England* at, or about, as near as may be, the End of September, unless the Circumstances of our Forces and Fleet shall necessarily require their Return sooner; and you are to land the Troops at *Portsmouth*, or such other of our Ports as the Exigency of the Case may suggest.

5th, Whereas it is necessary, that upon certain Occasions, you should have the Assistance of a Council of War, we have thought fit to appoint such a Council, which shall consist of four of our principal Land-officers, and of an equal Number of our principal Sea-commanders, including the Commanders in Chief of our Land and Sea-forces, (except in Cases happening at Land, relating to the carrying on any military Operations, to be performed by our Land-forces only, in which Cases you may call a Council of War, consisting of such Officers of our Land-forces as you shall think proper) and all such Land and Sea-officers, in the several Cases before-mentioned, are hereby respectively directed, from Time to Time, to be aiding and assisting with their Advice, so often as they shall be called together by you, or by the Commander in Chief of our Squadron, for that Purpose; and in all such Councils of War, when assembled, the Majority of Voices shall determine the Resolutions thereof; and in case the Voices shall happen to be equal, the President shall have the casting Vote.

6th,

6th, And whereas the Success of this Expedition will very much depend upon an intire good Understanding between our Land and Sea-officers, we do hereby strictly enjoin and require you, on your Part, to maintain and cultivate such good Understanding and Agreement; and to order, that the Soldiers under your Command should man the Ships where there shall be Occasion for them, and when they can be spared from the Land-service; as the Commander in Chief of our Squadron is instructed, on his Part, to entertain and cultivate the same good Understanding and Agreement; and to order the Sailors and Marines, and also the Soldiers, serving as Part of the Complements of our Ships, to assist our Land-forces, if judged expedient, by taking Post on Shore, manning Batteries, covering the Boats, securing the safe Re-embarkation of the Troops, and such other Services at Land as may be consistent with the Safety of our Fleet: and in order to establish the strictest Union that may be between you, and the Commander in Chief of our Ships, you are hereby required to communicate these Instructions to him; and he will be directed to communicate those he shall receive to you.

7th, You shall, from Time to Time, and as you shall have Opportunity, send constant Accounts of your Proceedings, in the Execution of these our Instructions, to one of our principal Secretaries of State, from whom you will receive such farther Orders and Directions as we may think proper to give you.

G. R.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. VI. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt, to Sir Edward Hawke, dated Whitehall, August 5th, 1757.*

SIR,

**I** SEND you herewith the secret Instructions, the King has been pleased to sign for your Guidance and Direction, in the important Command with which his Majesty has honoured you: I have only to add



add my most sincere Wishes for your Success on this Occasion, and to assure you, that I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. VII. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt, to Major-General Conway, Major-General Cornwallis, Vice-Admiral Knowles, and Rear-Admiral Brodrick, dated Whitehall, August 5th, 1757. mutatis mutandis.*

SIR,

I HAVE the King's Commands to send you the inclosed sealed Packet, containing an attested Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir *John Sir Edward Hawke. Mordaunt*, which you are to open, in case the Command in Chief of the *Fleet.* the *Troops* now under that of Sir *Sir Edward Hawke. John Mordaunt*, should devolve upon you, in order that you may thereby be fully apprised of the King's Pleasure, and be enabled to carry his Majesty's Intentions into Execution, in which I am persuaded you will exert your utmost Endeavours. I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. VIII. *Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke, to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated on board the Ramilies at Spithead, 7th August, 1757.*

SIR,

I Received your Letter of the 5th Instant, inclosing the secret Instructions his Majesty has been pleased to sign for my Guidance and Direction in the Command with which he has honoured me ; I beg you will do me the Justice to believe, that I shall exert my utmost Abilities for his Honour, and the Service of my Country. I am, with the greatest Respect, &c.

ED. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. IX. *Copy of a Letter from Major-General Cornwallis, to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Newport, Isle of Wight, August 6th, 1757.*

SIR,

I AM just now honoured with your Letter, with an inclosed sealed Packet, containing an attested Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir *John Mordaunt*, which I shall (conformable to your Instructions) open, in case the Command in Chief of the Troops now under Sir *John Mordaunt*, should devolve upon me, that I may thereby be enabled to carry his Majesty's Intentions into Execution; in which I will exert my utmost Endeavours, with true Zeal for his Majesty's Service. I am, &c.

ED. CORNWALLIS.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. X. *Copy of a Letter from Vice-Admiral Knowles, to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Portsmouth, August 6th, 1757.*

SIR,

I TAKE this Opportunity of acknowledging the Receipt of the Letter you honoured me with, containing an attested Copy of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir *Edward Hawke*, which shall remain inviolable in my Hands, unless the Contingency you mention make it needful to open them. I am, &c.

CHAS. KNOWLES.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. XI. *Copy of a Letter from Rear-Admiral Brodrick, to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Portsmouth, August 6th, 1757.*

SIR,

I AM honoured with your Letter of the 5th Instant, with a sealed Copy of secret Instructions for Sir *Edward Hawke*, which shall remain so, unless the Necessity

cessity of the Service should require their being opened. I am, &c.

THOS. BRODRICK.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XII. *Copy of an Order from the Lords of the Admiralty to Sir Edward Hawke, dated August 5th, 1757.*

*By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.*

HAVING ordered the Commanders of the King's Ships and Vessels named in the annexed List, to follow your Orders for their farther Proceedings: you are hereby required and directed to take under your Command such sixteen of these of the Line as can soonest be got ready to proceed on Service, together with the Frigates and small Vessels, and use the utmost Expedition in getting them manned and ready in all Respects for the Sea; in case you take the *Royal William*, you are to cause Vice-Admiral *Mosby's* Retinue and Servants to be removed into the *Royal Ann* or *Barfleur*, which ever of them you shall leave behind. And having ordered Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, and Rear-Admiral *Brodrick*, to put themselves under your Command; you are hereby required to take them under your Command accordingly. Given, &c. the 5th of August, 1757.

To Sir Edward Hawke Knight  
of the *Bath*, Admiral of the  
Blue.

ANSON.

G. HAY.

G. ELLIOT.

J. FORBES.

By Command of their Lordships, *J. Cleveland.*

*List of Ships and Vessels, whose Commanders are directed to follow Sir Edward Hawke's Orders.*

Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.
100	Royal George	90	Namur
	Royal Sovereign	84	Royal William
90	Ramillies	80	Barfleur
	Neptune		Princess Amelia
	Royal Ann	74	Magnanime
		F 2	Tor-

Guns.	Ships.	Guns.	Ships.
74	Torbay	28	Coventry
	Dublin	18	Cormorant
70	Burford	16	Escort
64	Alcide	16	Pellican
60	America	Fireship	Pluto
	Achilles		Proserpine
	Dunkirk	Bomb	Firedrake
	Medway		Infernal
50	Norwich	Cutter	Hunter
		Bufs	Canterbury
32	Southampton		Medway

Numb. XIII. *Copy of an Order from the Lords of the Admiralty to Sir Edward Hawke, dated August 6, 1757.*

*By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High-Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.*

**I**N pursuance of his Majesty's Pleasure, signified to us by Mr.<sup>a</sup> Pitt, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, you are hereby required and directed, in Addition to our Order of Yesterday's Date, to proceed with the Squadron put under your Command, and the Transport-Vessels named in the inclosed List (which are ordered to join you and follow your Orders) to *Spithead*, where you will receive his Majesty's Pleasure for your future Conduct; and you are strictly to follow such Orders and Instructions as you shall receive from his Majesty, or one of his principal Secretaries of State. Given *Ec.* 6th Aug. 1757.

To the Hon. Sir *Edward Hawke*, ANSON,  
Ad. of the Blue, *Ec.* at *Portsmouth*. G. HAY,  
J. FORBES.

By Command of their Lordships, *J. Cleveland.*

*A List of Transports.*

Maria Theresa	Peggy
Duke of Cumberland	Friend's Adventure
Mill's Frigate	Three Sisters
Charles	Lion
Benjamin	Patience
Mathias	Gowland
Lark	Good Intent (2)
Respect	Freedom
Queen of Spain	John and Thomas
Alexander	Yarmouth
Nazareth	Thomas and Mary
Mary (2)	William and Mary
Amity's Succession	Violet
Elizabeth (1)	Parnassus
Elizabeth (2)	Constantia
Neptune	Antelope
Good Intent (1)	Providence and Jane
Providence Increase	Baltimore
Royal Union	New Phillis
Restoration	James and Mary
Mary (1)	John's Adventure
Unity	Samuel and Robert
James and Henrietta	Prince George
Duke of Cumberland (2)	Prosperous Amelia
Ruffel	

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Numb. XIV. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Isle of Wight, Aug. 11. 1757, ten at Night.*

SIR,

**B**EING honoured with his Majesty's Commands to correspond with you, I think it [my Duty to acquaint you, that on my Arrival here on *Monday* last, I was disappointed in finding none of the Transports were come round, and the more so in that I have not yet been able to hear any positive Account of them: I have, however, employed this Interval in giving such Orders as I thought necessary, to have the

Troops here in Readiness for their Embarkation at a Moment's Warning.

Having, on Perusal of my Commission, some Doubt how far I am empowered to carry the Sentences of Courts-Martial in capital Cases into Execution, during my Abode within his Majesty's Dominions, I should be glad, as soon as may be, to know what is his Majesty's Intention on that Head, as there are now many Deserters with us ordered for immediate Trial.

I must also beg Leave to trouble you farther, on a Matter which occurs to me relative to the Service I am going upon, which is, that having, since my Arrival here, conversed with Sir *Edward Hawke*, and Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, who both seem of Opinion, that it is possible, from the Nature of the Navigation to *Rocheport*, the Fleet may be detained even in Sight of the Coast of *France*, for a Week or ten Days, without being able to get into the Road, or off the Isle *d'Aix*; during which time an Alarm will necessarily be given in those Parts. This Conjecture and Situation, if it should happen, appears to me so very delicate, and equally to the other General Officers on the Expedition, who may by Accident to the first in Command, come to be under the same Difficulty (the Success of our Undertaking depending, as I apprehend, on the Suddenness of its Execution) that I should be glad, if it is thought proper, to have a Direction, how I am to act in that Case.

I send this by an Officer, who will take Care to deliver it safely. I am, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. XV. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt to Sir John Mordaunt, dated Whitehall, Aug. 13. 1757.

SIR,

I Immediately laid your Letter of the 11th instant, at Night, before the King, and am commanded by his Majesty to let you know, That his Royal Intentions

tentions are, that you should, by virtue of your Commission, carry the Sentences of Courts-Martial, in capital Cases, into Execution, during your Abode within his Majesty's Dominions, so long as the Troops under your Command shall continue under their present Destination, according to the King's Orders and Instructions.

With regard to the supposed Case, as stated in your Letter, and arising from Conversation had with Sir *Edward Hawke* and Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, namely, that it is possible the Fleet may be detained in Sight of the Coast of *France*, for a Week or ten Days, without being able to get into the Road of *Rochefort*, or off the *Île d'Aix*, during which Time an Alarm will necessarily be given in those Parts; in which Case you express a Desire, if thought proper, to have a particular Direction, how to act; I am commanded thereupon by the King, to signify to you his Majesty's Pleasure, That you, or such other Officer, on whom the Command may devolve, do, in Conformity to the Latitude given by his Majesty's Instructions, judge of the Practicability of the Service, on the Spot, according as contingent Events, and particular Circumstances, may require; the King judging it highly prejudicial to the Good of his Service to give particular Orders and Directions, with regard to possible contingent Cases that may arise.

I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XVI. Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Head-Quarters, Newport, Aug. 20. 1757.

SIR,

I Have the Honour of your Commands, dated *August 13th*, and you may depend upon it, that his Majesty's Orders shall be most punctually observed.

Mr. *Thames*, who has long been, and now is, Agent for the Transports, came here the 17th from *Portsmouth*: He said, he came over on Purpose, from

thinking it his Duty to inform me, the Transports were not sufficient for the Number of Troops. I own his Conversation much puzzled me, as I know our Expedition should meet with no Delay on one Hand, and that the Preservation of the Soldier's Healths ought on the other to be thought on. At length I recollected two of the Commissioners of the Admiralty were at *Portsmouth*, to whom I sent a Letter, a Copy of which I now enclose to you. Though I have since heard nothing from the Commissioners or Mr. *Thames*, I thought it my Duty to mention this Circumstance to you, being informed last Night, by a Letter from Sir *Edward Hawke*, that an Express is sent to the Navy-Board upon this Occasion.

The Troops are in great Spirits, and wait impatiently for the Transports.

I am, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XVII. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt, to Thomas Orby Hunter and Gilbert Eliott, Esquires, dated Head-Quarters Newport, Aug. 17. 1757, enclosed in Sir John Mordaunt's Letter to Mr. Secretary Pitt, of the 20th Aug. 1757.*

GENTLEMEN,

**M**R. *Thames*, Agent for the Transports, has just been with us, and says, he thinks it his Duty to mention, that the Transports are not sufficient to carry the Number of Troops. We send him with this Letter, that he may explain his Reasons for the Opinion he gives, and if you find them satisfactory, we flatter ourselves some Method may be found, without occasioning Delay, to redress the Grievance. I am, Gentlemen, &c.

(Signed)

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.



Numb. XVIII. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt, to Sir Edward Hawke, dated Aug. 23. 1757.*

SIR,

**A** Doubt having been started by Mr. *Thames*, Agent for the Transports at *Portsmouth*, whether the Vessels ordered there will be sufficient for the Number of Troops; I am commanded to signify to you the King's Pleasure, that in case of any Exigency, you do receive on board the Men of War, such Part of the Troops as may be necessary, and can be accommodated therein without Prejudice to his Majesty's Ships.

I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XIX. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt to Sir John Mordaunt, dated Aug. 23. 1757.*

SIR,

**I** Have received the Favour of your Letter of the 20th Instant, and have, in consequence thereof, made the necessary Enquiries, with regard to the Doubt started by Mr. *Thames*, that the Transports ordered to *Portsmouth* would not be sufficient for the Number of Troops.

The inclosed Papers, containing the Orders given by the Admiralty on this Subject, will, I am persuaded, give you full Satisfaction, and remove any Doubts of this Sort; and, tho' there is the greatest Reason to imagine that a sufficient Quantity of Transport-Vessels has been provided for this Service, I have, however, signified the King's Pleasure to Sir *Edward Hawke* by this Night's Post, that he should, in case of any Exigency, receive on board the Men of War, such a Number of the Troops as may be necessary, and can be accommodated therein, without Prejudice to his Majesty's Service.

I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

Numb XX. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Cleveland to Sir Edward Hawke, at Portsmouth, dated Admiralty-Office, Aug. 19. 1757, enclosed in Mr. Secretary Pitt's Letter to Sir John Mordaunt of the 23d Aug. 1757.*

SIR,

**M**Y Lords Commissioners of, the Admiralty having been informed, that one Mr. *Thames*, a Person sent to *Portsmouth* by the Navy-Board to assist the Agent for Transports in the Embarkation of the Troops, has represented to Sir *John Mordaunt*, and yourself, that the Tonnage for the Troops is not sufficient, those that went to *l'Orient* in 1746 being allowed one Ton and half to each Man, their Lordships command me to acquaint you, that they are extremely surpris'd and displeas'd at the said *Thames's* Behaviour, in raising unnecessary Difficulties and Uneasinesses; and, that they may not have any ill Effect, their Lordships direct me to acquaint you, that the Rate of one Ton a Man is as much as has been allowed on the like Services in former Times; that with regard to the Troops sent to *Port l'Orient*, they had a greater Allowance, on account of their being originally design'd for *Louisbourg*; but that you may be satisfi'd of the whole Tonnage, I beg Leave to refer you to the List of all the Transports sent to you in the Lords' Order of the 6th Instant, (to which the prosperous *Amelia* of 400 Tons is to be added) amounting to about 12400 Tons, 9500 of which are fitted for the Reception of the Troops, which will probably be far short of 8000; wherefore their Lordships recommend it to you to endeavour to remove any Uneasiness that Mr. *Thames's* Representation may have created, they being thoroughly satisfi'd that no Inconveniencies whatever will attend the present Allowance; but, on the contrary, the Service will be attended with less Accidents and Delays, by having fewer Ships.

I am, &c.

J. CLEVELAND.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

Numb. XXI. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Cleveland to Sir Edward Hawke, dated August 20th, 1757, enclosed in Mr. Secretary Pitt's Letter to Sir John Mordaunt of the 23d of August, 1757.*

SIR,

**I** Have communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your Letter of Yesterday, informing their Lordships, that upon a Consultation with Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, and the Director of the Embarkation, you were unanimously of Opinion, that at least four thousand Ton of Transports are still wanting; and am commanded by their Lordships to acquaint you, that they have Reason to believe this Person, who the Navy-Board have sent to *Portsmouth*, is ignorant in what Manner the Transports are fitted, otherwise he could not mistake so much in his Calculation; for these Ships have all of them two flush Platforms between Decks for the Men to lay their Bedding upon, by which Means many more can be conveniently stowed than in Cabbins, the usual Method of fitting Transports; wherefore the Lords are of Opinion there will be sufficient Room, agreeable to what I writ you in my Letter Yesterday; however, to remove the Difficulties and Uneasiness which Mr. *Thames* has raised, Mr. *Cockburne*, the Comptroller of the Navy, is sent to *Portsmouth* with Directions to do every Thing possible, and to furnish such other Ships as shall be ready, if necessary.

I am, &c.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXII. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Cleveland to Mr. Cockburne, dated August 21st, 1757, enclosed in Mr. Secretary Pitt's Letter to Sir John Mordaunt of the 23d of August, 1757.*

SIR,

**I**N answer to your Letter of Yesterday to my Lord *Anson*, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, that although  
they

they are persuaded the Transports coming round from the River to *Portsmouth*, are sufficient for the Troops that are to embark on the present Expedition ; yet to prevent Uneasiness or Dissatisfaction in any Persons whatever, their Lordships approve of your adding the five or six hundred Ton of Shipping you mention to be employed as you propose : Also the *Jason's* being properly fitted to carry 500 Men, by leaving behind her lower Tier of Guns, which their Lordships hope will quiet the Minds of every one, without the Addition of the *Chesterfield*, a Ship wanted on very material Service ; however, she will be getting ready ; but their Lordships direct me to observe to you, that nothing herein-mentioned is intended, if it shall be found to delay the Transports a Moment after they arrive at *Spithead*, as the Success of the whole depends upon their sailing with the utmost Expedition ; wherefore their Lordships recommend it to you to exert yourself in forwarding this Service, and Orders in Form will be forwarded, when they meet To-morrow, this being sent to save Time.

I am, &c.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. XXIII. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Cockburne to Mr. Cleveland, dated August 23d, 1757, enclosed in Mr. Secretary Pitt's Letter to Sir John Mordaunt, of the 23d of August, 1757,*

SIR,

YOU will please to acquaint their Lordships that I went over this Morning to the *Isle of Wight*, to talk with Sir *John Mordaunt* about the Tonnage of the Transports, and found Sir *John* had been informed that a Ton and a Half to a Man was the least that had ever been allowed to Troops on foreign Voyages, or where there was a Probability of their continuing any considerable Time on board, which he seemed to think might be the Case with these, and apprehended they would be too much crowded, if confined to one Ton to each Man only : I explained to him the Man-

ner in which they were fitted, and told him of the Addition proposed to be made, which seemed to satisfy him entirely: I also proposed to Sir *John* to turn the prosperous *Amelia* into a Foot-Ship, and to stow the Fascines, &c. in the Holds of the Hospital Ships, which he also approved on: I have writ to the Navy-Board, and desired they would send an Express to *Deal* (in case the Transports are detained by the Wind there) to order her to be fitted accordingly, which may be easily done even on the Passage here, by the Assistance of the Carpenters of the Men of War that come round with them, if their Lordships please to give the Commanding Officer Orders for that Purpose. This Ship has only fourteen Days Provisions on board for four hundred Men; I propose putting only two hundred on board of her, that I may by that Means still reserve some Room in her Hold, in case there should be more Fascines, &c. than the Hospital Ships will conveniently take in, and have desired that one Month's more Provisions for two hundred Men may be immediately put on board her, where she is; but in case that is not accomplished before she arrives here, it shall be ready to be sent on board from hence on their appearing.

I have received your's of the 21<sup>st</sup>. by the Messenger, with their Lordship's Directions. I shall immediately fit the *Jason*, which, with the Tonnage I have got here and the Tenders, I think I can venture to assure their Lordships will remove all the Difficulties I found here, without the *Chesterfield*. Their Lordships may depend on my doing every Thing in my Power to forward this Service, and don't doubt but I shall have all in such Readiness as not to run the least Risque of a Delay, when the Transports from the Eastward come round. I am disappointed in the Ships I mentioned in my Letter last Night to Lord *Anson* from the *Mother-Bank*, and also in one out of this Harbour; but with the Tenders that I am fitting, I shall have enough to quiet the Minds of all. It blew so excessively hard Yesterday, that I did not get back from the *Isle*  
of

*of Night* before Ten at Night, which is the Reason I could not dispatch the Messenger till this Morning.

I am, &c.

GEO. COCKBURNE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXIV. *Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Portsmouth, August 25th, 1757.*

SIR,

I AM honoured with your Letter of the 23d Instant. As a Number of Transports more have been taken up at this Port by the Comptroller of the Navy, and the *Jason* Ship of War is fitted for the Reception of Soldiers; I hope there will be no Occasion to put any on board the Ships of War, which are already sufficiently weakened, by having two Battalions of raw undisciplined Men in their Complements; but in case the Transports should not be sufficient for the Number of Troops, I shall, in Obedience to his Majesty's Commands, accommodate the Remainder on board the Men of War.

I am, with the greatest Respect,

ED. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXV. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt to Sir Edward Hawke, and Sir John Mordaunt, dated Whitehall, September 5th, 1757, Four o'Clock in the Afternoon.*

SIR,

THE Wind having been fair for the Transports going to *Spithead*, ever since *Friday* Morning, I am to acquaint you, that his Majesty expects, with Impatience, to hear that the Troops are embarked; but if, by any Delay, the Embarkation should not be compleated, when this Letter reaches you, I am to signify to you the King's Pleasure, that the most particular Diligence be employed in getting the Troops on board, and proceeding without the Loss of a Moment

ment to the Execution of your Orders and Instructions; with regard to the Expedition under your Care.

His Majesty being informed that ten Battalions, under the Orders of Sir *John Ligonier*, were all completely embarked at *Williamstadt* within the Course of twenty-four Hours, in which they arrived at that Place; the King expects to hear, by the Return of this Messenger, that the Fleet under your Command with the Troops on board, have proceeded to Sea, in case the Wind permits, agreeable to your Orders and Instructions.

To Sir *John Mordaunt*,  
with the Troops under  
your Command on board.

under your Command with the  
Troops on board, have proceeded  
to Sea, in case the Wind per-

I am, &c.

To Sir *Edward Hawke*.

W. PITT.

P. S. The Messenger that carries this has my Orders to stay to bring an Account of the Fleet's Sailing.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXVI. Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies at Spithead, September 6th, 1757.

SIR,

AT half past five this Morning I received, by Express, your Letter of the 5th Instant, signifying his Majesty's Directions to use the utmost Diligence in embarking the Troops, and getting to Sea.

As I could not doubt of my Letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty, by Express on Sunday Morning, being immediately communicated to you, I should have expected, that before your's was sent, his Majesty would have been fully satisfied that I needed no Spur in the Execution of his Orders.

As the Wind was fair here on Saturday, I ordered an Officer with six Cutters out to cruize for the Transports, with positive Directions not to come to at *Spithead*, but proceed directly to *Cowes*. Soon after they appeared in Sight on Sunday Morning, I dispatched an Officer to acquaint Sir *John Mordaunt*, with their Arrival,

rival, that every Thing might be ready. As there was but little Wind all Day on *Sunday*, but few of them reached *Cowes* that Night, and proving but little Wind on *Monday* Morning, I sent Boats to tow the *Jason* down, with two Boats from each Ship at *Spithead*, together with all the Boats from the Dock, and the six Cutters to assist in the Embarkation. One Brigade was embarked Yesterday, as the other will be by Noon To-day ; so that the whole Time taken up in the Embarkation, from the Arrival of the Transports to this Day at Noon, will not exceed twenty-four Hours, tho' we have not the Advantage of Jetty-Heads, from whence the Troops could step into the Transports.

Beside, Sir, as they were detained so long in their Passage round, they were in Want of considerable Quantities of Provisions, which to save Time I sent to *Cowes* after them, while I watered, and victualled the Ordnance, and Horse-ships here ; the Horse are embarked this Morning.

Give me Leave to add, that the Mortar was to be shipped on board the *Infernal* Bomb Vessel ; she will be ready To-night ; the Men of War which came round with them, were also in Want of Stores and some Provisions.

The Squadron is now unmooring, and I only wait the Return of the Transports to *Spithead*, when I shall take the first Wind that offers to go to *St. Helens*, and if it should prove favourable shall go to Sea immediately after.

Be so kind, Sir, as to take the Trouble to assure his Majesty, that as I ever have, so more particularly on this Occasion, I shall shew the greatest Regard to his Orders.

I am, &c.

ED. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.



Numb. XXVII. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Portsmouth, September 6th, Nine at Night.*

SIR,

I Had this Morning the Honour of your's of the 5th Instant, and can assure you, that not a Minute's Time has been lost in embarking the Troops.

Though the first of the Transports did not arrive at *Cowes* 'till Sunday Evening, we began the Embarkation at Day-break the next Morning, and continued putting the Troops on board 'till after it was dark. We have followed the same Method To-day, and by that Means I have now the Pleasure to acquaint you, that I finished the Embarkation of the last Regiment at about six this Evening.

I beg you will do me the Favour, to mention to his Majesty, that we were obliged to march the Troops and Baggage five Miles to the Place of Embarkation, and that we were then forced to put the Men in small Boats, in which they were rowed above a Mile before they could embark in the Transports; whereas at *Williamstadt* the Troops marched directly from the Quay into the Transports, without the least Possibility of a Delay.

It is both my Duty and the Pride of my Heart, to execute with the utmost Dispatch and Diligence the Orders his Majesty has honoured me with, and I flatter myself a very short Time will now shew it.

I am, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXVIII. *Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies at St. Helens, September 8th, 1757.*

SIR,

A Calm obliged me on *Tuesday* to moor the Squadron again; Yesterday at four in the Morning I began to unmoor again, and sent an Officer to *Cowes*, to see none of the Transports were left behind. About  
G
three

three in the Afternoon I got to this Place, and was obliged to come to, as they could not get out, dispatching Officers, who were all Night employed in ordering them to join me without Loss of Time.

Last Night arrived from the *Downs*, a Company of Lord *Effingham's* Regiment, which had been embarked on board the *Norwich* at *Chatbam*.

The Transports are all come down, and I am now under Way, with a moderate Breeze at E. N. E.

I am, &c.

E. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXIX. Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies at Sea, September 10th, 1757.

SIR,

ON *Thursday* last, after I wrote to you, the Wind died away, which obliged me to come to again, till half an hour past Five: then a moderate Breeze about W. N. W. springing up, I made the Signal to weigh, and at Seven made Sail with all the Transports. On *Friday* we had contrary Winds till Evening, and this Morning I was joined by his Majesty's Ship *Effex*, by whom I send this. We have now a fresh Gale, with the Wind at N. N. E. *Portland* bears N. E. 11 Leagues. I am, &c.

ED. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXX. Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt to Sir Edward Hawke and Sir John Mordaunt, dated September 15th, 1757, by the *Viper Sloop*.

Sir Edward Hawke, and like Letter, *mutatis mutandis*, to Sir John Mordaunt.

SIR,

*Whitehall, Sept. 15th, 1757.*

HIS Majesty, by his secret Instructions, dated the 5th Day of *August* last, having directed *Troops.* the Return of the *Fleet* under your Command, together with the *Land Forces on Fleet.* board, "so as be in *England* at or about, as  
"near

*Forces*      “ near as may be, the End of *September*, un-  
*and*            “ less the Circumstances of the *Ships and*  
*Ships.*        “ *Forces* shall necessarily require their Return  
                   “ sooner :” I am now to signify to you the

King’s Pleasure, that you do not consider the above-mentioned Time, limited for your Return, as intended, in any Manner, to affect or interfere with the full Execution of the first and principal Object of the Expedition, namely, “ Attempting, as far as shall be  
 “ found practicable, a Descent on the *French* Coast,  
 “ at or near *Rocheport*, in order to attack, if practi-  
 “ cable, and, by a vigorous Impression, force that  
 “ Place ; and to burn and destroy, to the utmost of  
 “ your Power, all Shipping, Docks, Magazines,  
 “ and Arsenals, that shall be found there, and exert  
 “ such other Efforts as shall be judged most proper  
 “ for annoying the Enemy.” And with regard to any other particular Attempt, which, agreeably to your Orders, you shall have commenced, and in the Execution whereof you shall be actually engaged, it is also his Majesty’s Pleasure, that you do not desist from, or break up the same, merely and solely on account of the Time limited for your Return by the Instructions abovementioned, but that, notwithstanding the same, you do continue with the

*Troops.*    *Fleet*, during such a farther Number of Days, as may afford a competent Time for the Completion of any Operation under the above Circumstances : After which you are to take

*Forces.*    care to return with the *Fleet* under your  
*Fleet.*      Command, and the *Forces on board*, in the Manner directed by your former Instructions. I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXXI. Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies, in Basque-Road, Sept. 30th, 1757.

SIR,

ABOUT Seven o'Clock in the Evening of the 22d Instant, as I was standing in between the Islands of *Rhé* and *Oleron* for *Basque-Road*, I received his Majesty's Orders, signified in your Letter of the 15th Instant by the *Viper*. Having before made the Disposition for attacking the Isle of *Aix* (a Step, in the general Opinion, necessary for securing the landing of the Troops), at 10 in the Morning of the 23d, the Vice-Admiral, by my Order, weighed with the Tide of Flood, and stood towards it with his Division, composed of the *Magnanime*, *Barfleur*, *Neptune*, *Torbay*, and *Royal William*, Frigates, Bomb-vessels, Fireships, and Cutters. The *Magnanime* led: About Twelve the Fire began from the Fort with Shells and great Guns, and continued while our Ships approached, till about ten Minutes after One; when the *Magnanime* brought up within less than forty Yards of the Fort, where she kept an incessant Fire for about thirty-five Minutes; as did the *Barfleur*, which brought up, about five Minutes after her, a-breast of the Fort. About three Quarters after One the Firing ceased, the Garrison having struck their Colours and surrendered. They had in the Fort eight Mortars of about 14 Inches Diameter, and thirty Guns, sixteen of which were eighteen, and the Remainder about fourteen Pounders. The *Magnanime*, tho' damaged in her Rigging, Yards, and Masts, yet had only two Soldiers killed, and eleven Men wounded. Of the Garrison, which consisted of near six hundred Seamen and Soldiers, only one was killed, and seven or eight wounded.

On the Morning of the 23d, I observed a *French* Man of War, over the Land, to the S. E. of the Isle of *Aix*. Being desirous of destroying her, I directed Capt. *Byron*, of the *America*, to take with him the *Achilles*

*Achilles* and *Pluto* Fireships, and, as soon as the Red Division should begin to batter, go and destroy her. But the *French* flung their Guns overboard, cut their Cables, and otherwise lightening her, run up the *Charente*. It is said she was the *Prudent* of 74 Guns, bound for *Louisbourg*.

It having been thought necessary, in order to secure a safe Landing for the Troops, to sound and reconnoitre the Shore of the Main, as soon as the Fort had surrendered, I directed Rear-Admiral *Brodrick*, with Captains *Denis*, *Douglas*, and *Buckle*, to perform that Service, and make their Report to me. It was the Afternoon of the 24th before they returned: A Copy of that Report accompanies this. After maturely considering it, I was of Opinion they might land; on which Sir *John Mordaunt* desired a Council of War might be assembled to consider of it. There it was granted by every body, that the Landing could be effected. In Confidence of their Judgment, and Knowledge of their own Profession, we assented to their Reasons for not proceeding to attempt taking *Rochefort* by Escalade. A Copy of the Result of that Council of War is here inclosed. He desired a second, which was assembled early on the Morning of the 28th: Herewith I send you the Result of it. Immediately the Disposition was made for the Landing, under the Direction of Rear-Admiral *Brodrick*, and all the Captains of the Squadron. Part of the Troops were actually in the Boats, when I received a Letter from Mr. *Brodrick*, a Copy whereof I herewith transmit.

Last Night I applied to him, to know whether the General Officers of the Land Forces had any farther military Operations to propose, that I might not unnecessarily detain the Squadron here. This Morning I received Sir *John's* Answer, a Copy of which is here inclosed. It was the daily Expectation of their undertaking something, which induced me to stay here so long. As I have now got their final Resolution, I shall sail for *England* To-morrow Morning.

Though, before I came here, this Place was represented as very difficult of Access, and so narrow that Ships could not lye in Safety from the Forts, nay, the Pilots made many Baulks before we came in; yet I find it a safe spacious Road, in which all the Navy of *England*, Merchant-ships included, may ride without the least Annoyance; and that a Squadron may, at any time, by laying here, prevent any Armament from *Rockefort*, and ruin all the *French Trade* to *Rhé*, *Oleron*, or the Continent, within these Islands.

I beg Leave to assure you, Sir, I have discharged my Duty to my King and Country with Fidelity, Diligence, and Integrity, and wish more could have been done for the Good of the Service.

The Pilot of the *Magnanime* has behaved like a Man of Bravery and Skill, and as such I beg Leave to recommend him to you.

I am, &c.

ED. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXXII. *Copy of a Report made to Sir Edward Hawke on board the Ramilies, Sept. 24th, 1757, by Rear-Admiral Brodrick, and others, inclosed in Sir Edward Hawke's Letter to Mr. Secretary Pitt, of the 30th September, 1757.*

In Pursuance of an Order from Sir *Edward Hawke*, Knight of the Bath, Admiral of the Blue Squadron of his Majesty's Fleet, &c. dated the 23d *Sept. 1757*,

**W**E the underwritten went and sounded the *French Shore* from *Rochelle* to *Fort Fouras*, and find as follows:

From the south Point of the Entrance of *Rochelle* (on which Point there are 27 Guns mounted on *Barbett*) to the Point of the *Angolin*, we find it a rocky Shore,

Shore, and steep Cliffs, with Shoals near two Miles off: From *Angolin* to *Cbatiliallon*, we find a fair hard sandy Beech, with a Flat lying off near two Miles, having but three Fathom at high Water at that Distance, but clear Ground; along which Beech are Sand-hills, about fifty Yards from the Top of high Water: On the Point of *Cbatiliallon* are two Guns on Barbett, which can no ways annoy the landing of the Troops in the Bays of either Side of it; and off which Point runs a Riff of Rocks west two Miles, which are dry at low Water; and round the said Point, about half a Mile to the Eastward, there is a small sandy Bay, near half a Mile long; and the Land over the said Bay rises with an easy Ascent, about a Quarter of a Mile, to a Church or Convent, with a few Houses near it. From the sandy Bay, along to a square Fort on the south Part of the Bay, lies a long flat Mud, which is dry near two Miles at low Water.

It is our general Opinion, the Transports cannot come nearer to either of the foresaid Bays (in order to land Troops) than a Mile and a half, as we found three Fathoms only at that Distance at high Water.

The square Fort on the south Side of the Bay, we could only see two Sides of: The Face to the North-west had nine Embrazures, and that to the North-east only two.

Given under our Hands on board his Majesty's Ship *Ramilies* in *Basque-Road*, this 24 Sept. 1757.

THO. BRODRICK,  
JAMES DOUGLAS,  
PET. DENIS,  
MATT. BUCKLE,

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXXIII. *Copy of a Council of War held on board the Neptune, Sept. 25th, 1757, inclosed in Sir Edward Hawke's Letter to Mr. Secretary Pitt of the 30th Septemb. 1757; the same as the Original delivered by Sir John Mordaunt, soon after his Arrival, to Mr. Secretary Pitt.*

*At a Council of War held on board his Majesty's Ship Neptune, at Anchor off the Isle of Aix, Sept. 25, 1757.*

# P R E S E N T,

Sir *Edward Hawke*, Knight of the Bath, Admiral and Commander in Chief of his Majesty's Ships employed in the present Expedition.

Sir *John Mordaunt*, Knight of the Bath, Lieutenant-General of his Majesty's Forces, and General and Commander in Chief of the Troops on the present Expedition.

*Charles Knowles*, Esq; Vice-Admiral of the Red.

The Right Hon. Major-General *Henry Seymour Conway*.

*Thomas Brodrick*, Esq; Rear-Admiral of the White.

Hon. Major-General *Edward Cornwallis*.

Captain *George Bridges Rodney*.

Colonel *George Howard*.

THE Fortifications and Island of *Aix*, belonging to the *French* King, having surrendered to his Majesty's Arms, the Council proceeded to take into Consideration the farther Steps proper to be taken, in Execution of his Majesty's secret Instructions to Sir *Edward Hawke* and Sir *John Mordaunt*, Commanders in Chief of his Majesty's Forces on the present Expedition; and the first Object being to determine, whether a proper Place could be found for landing the Troops, Sir *Edward Hawke* produced a Report by Rear-Admiral *Brodrick*, and the Captains *Douglas*, *Denis*, and *Buckle*, whom he had sent to sound and reconnoitre the Coast, from *La Rochelle* to the Point of *Fouras*, near the Embouchure of the River *Charente*, which Report is hereunto annexed.

The



The Council having taken the said Report into Consideration, and examined the Pilots, it appears that there are but two Landing-places; and that the Troops could not be reimbarcked from either of them in bad Weather, the Swell of the Sea making so great a Surf on the Shore, that no Boats would be able to approach it to take the Troops off; (the ablest Pilot having informed the Council, that he had been at Anchor seven Weeks in this Road, and not a Boat been able to pass or repass.) And it likewise appears to the Council, that in case the Troops should be overpowered by superior Numbers of the Enemy, they could have no Protection from the Cannon of the Fleet, the shoal Water preventing their coming within Gun-shot.

The Probability of Success in the Attempt against *Rockefort*, in case the Landing was effected; being then taken into Consideration, Lieutenant-Colonel *Clarke*, chief Engineer, was called in; and being asked his Opinion, declared, That when he saw the Place in the Year 1754, he thought no Place was more capable of being taken by Assault; what Alteration may have been made in the Place since, he has not sufficient Information to judge: That he does not imagine any regular Attack was intended against that or any other Place, the small Quantity of Artillery we have not being sent on that Plan. Being asked, if the Ditch were flowed with Water, whether he should then think it practicable to take the Place by Escalade, said, he thought not; but that when he saw the Ditch, it did not appear to him capable of being flowed.

*Monf. de Bonneville*, Volunteer, being asked what he knew of *Rockefort*, said, that he was there about nine Years ago; that the Ramparts were of Earth, and that there are Sluices there, by which they can flow the Ditch, and that it was full of Water all round when he was there.

The Pilot of the *Neptune* being called in, said, that he had been very frequently at *Rockefort*; that he  
com-

commanded a small Vessel there many Years; that they have Sluices near the Hospital, by which they can fill the Ditch with Water; that they raise them sometimes to cleanse the Ditch, and that he has seen Water in it quite round the Town.

The Informations of some *French* Prisoners were then produced, confirming the same; as also, that they had been working on the Fortifications there for some time past.

The Intelligence received from several neutral Vessels, spoke with on the Passage, was also produced, declaring, that the *French* had been for some time in Expectation of a Descent from the *English* in those Parts: All which being taken into Consideration, together with the long Detention of the Troops in the Isle of *Wight*, and our meeting with contrary Winds, Fogs, and Calms, upon our Passage; the several Informations received of Troops assembled in the Neighbourhood, and the great Improbability of finding the Place unprovided, or of surprizing it, or consequently succeeding in an Enterprize founded on the Plan of an Assault or Escalade merely, and the Uncertainty of a secure Retreat for the Troops, if landed; the Council are unanimously of Opinion, that such an Attempt is neither advisable nor practicable.

EDWARD HAWKE,  
J. MORDAUNT,  
CHARLES KNOWLES,  
H. SEYMOUR CONWAY,  
THOMAS BRODRICK,  
EDWARD CORNWALLIS,  
G. B. RODNEY,  
G. HOWARD.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

Numb. XXXIV. *Copy of a Council of War held on board the Ramilies, Sept. 28th, 1757, inclosed in Sir Edward Hawke's Letter to Mr. Secretary Pitt, of the 30th Sept. 1757; the same as the Original delivered by Sir John Mordaunt, soon after his Arrival, to Mr. Secretary Pitt.*

*At a Council of War held on board his Majesty's Ship Ramilies, in Basque-Road, this 28th Sept. 1757.*

P R E S E N T,

Sir *Edward Hawke*, Knight of the Bath, Admiral and Commander in Chief of his Majesty's Ships employed on the present Expedition.

Sir *John Mordaunt*, Knight of the Bath, Lieutenant-General of his Majesty's Forces, and Commander in Chief of the Troops employed on the present Expedition.

*Charles Knowles*, Esq; Vice-Admiral of the Red.

The Right Hon. Major-General *Henry Seymour Conway*.

*Thomas Brodrick*, Esq; Rear-Admiral of the White.

Hon. Major-General *Edward Cornwallis*.

Captain *George Bridges Rodney*.

Colonel *George Howard*.

THE Council of War being assembled, at the Desire of Sir *John Mordaunt*, proceeded to take under Consideration, whether it is advisable to land the Troops, to attack the Forts leading to and upon the Mouth of the River *Charente*; and after mature Deliberation are unanimously of Opinion, that it is advisable to land the Troops for that Purpose, with all possible Dispatch.

ED. HAWKE,

J. MORDAUNT,

CHA. KNOWLES,

H. SEYMOUR CONWAY,

THO. BRODRICK,

ED. CORNWALLIS,

GEO. BRIDGES RODNEY,

G. HOWARD.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

Numb. XXXV. *Copy of a Letter from Rear-Admiral Brodrick to Sir Edward Hawke, dated Achilles, Tuesday at One in the Morning, inclosed in Sir Edward Hawke's Letter to Mr. Secretary Pitt, of the 30th of September, 1757.*

S I R,

I Have prepared all the Boats, with proper Officers, to land the Troops, agreeable to your Order; but am to acquaint you, that the Generals are come to a Resolution not to land To-night, and to wait till Day-light, when they can have a full View of the Ground where they are to land. I am, &c.

THO. BRODRICK.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXXVI. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Sir Edward Hawke, dated Ramilies, Thursday Evening, September 29, 1757, inclosed in Sir Edward Hawke's Letter to Mr. Secretary Pitt, of the 30th of September, 1757.*

S I R,

UPON Receipt of your Letter, I talked it over with the other Land-Officers who were of our Councils of War, and we all agree in returning directly to England. I am, Sir, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XXXVII. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies, Rade de Bafque, Sept. 30, 1757.*

S I R,

LAST Thursday I had the Honour of your's of the 15th Instant, and am pleased with thinking, that, before the Receipt of it, we had judg'd right in resolving to attack *l'Isle de Aix*, though it could not possibly be done without breaking, in some measure,

sure, into his Majesty's Orders, in regard to the Time of our returning to England.

We took *l'Isle de Aix* on the 23d; and as Sir *Edward Hawke* will send a particular Account of the Affair, I shall trouble you with very few Words on that Head.

When Vice-Admiral *Knowles* was sent with his Division to attack the Fort, I sent Major-General *Conway* with the *Buffs*, *Bentmich's*, and the *King's* Regiments, to be ready to land, whenever the Admiral thought it might be of any Use.

The Fort did not hold out above half an Hour after Capt. *Howe* had given his first Broadside, which he did not do till he was within fifty Yards of it.

I am quite unhappy that the great national Object, the taking of *Rochefort*, was not at this Period practicable; and what adds to my Unhappiness is, that the King so strongly ordered it. But when his Majesty reads the particular Events and Circumstances, which are strictly stated in the Council of War, I flatter myself he will not be dissatisfied with our Proceedings.

Whilst the Fortifications of the Fort on the *Isle d'Aix* were blowing up, we thought it right to make some Attempt, and agreed on Landing and Attacking the Forts leading to and upon the River *Charente*. Orders were accordingly given on the 28th, for our landing the same Night with the whole Army. At One in the Morning, Rear-Admiral *Broderick*, with most of the Captains, and all the Sea-Officers of every Kind, with all the Boats that could be got, were ready to assist, and more of the Troops for the first Embarkation were on board; unfortunately, such a high Wind sprung up from the Shore, that all the Sea-Officers gave their Opinion that the Landing should not be attempted: That the Boats must be towed so very slowly; the Transport Boats, by Reports to me, could not some of them make any Way at all; That it would be Day-light before the first Embarkation could possibly be landed; and all agreed

agreed it would be six Hours before that Body of Troops could be supported by the Landing of a second Embarkation: Add to this, that the Ships could not come near enough to help to cover the Landing, and the Garrison of *Rochelle* was within two Leagues.

Under these Circumstances, and the strong Representation of the Sea-Officers, the General Officers unanimously agreed to send the Troops back again to their Transports.

The Wind being fair, and the Works near blown up, I had next Morning a Note from Sir *Edward Hawke*, letting me know, that if the General Officers had no further military Operations to propose, considerable enough to authorise his detaining the Squadron longer here, he intended to proceed with it to *England*, without Loss of Time. I communicated this Note to the Land-Officers that composed our Councils of War; and, upon weighing every Circumstance, we all agreed to return to *England*.

I greatly grieve that I must report to his Majesty, that so fine a Body of Troops has done nothing. But I am not conscious that any commanding Officer (however more able than myself) could have done more under our Circumstances. I am, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

MINUTES of a Council of War assembled on board his Majesty's Ship *Ramilies*, in *Basque Road*, this 28th of *Sept.* 1757.

Numb. XXXVIII. *Copy of Minutes of a Council of War held on board the Ramilies, Sept. 28, 1757, and delivered by Sir John Mordaunt, soon after his Arrival, to Mr. Secretary Pitt.*

# P R E S E N T,

Sir *Edward Hawke*, Knight of the Bath, President.

Sir <i>John Mordaunt</i> , Knight of the Bath, &c.	<i>Charles Knowles</i> , Esq; Vice Admiral of the Red
Right Hon. <i>Henry Seymour Conway</i> , Major-General	<i>Thomas Brodrick</i> , Esq; Rear-Admiral of the White
Hon. <i>Edward Cornwallis</i> , Major-General	Capt. <i>Geo. Bridges Rodney</i> .
Col. <i>George Howard</i>	

THE Council, in order to determine whether the Forts, leading to and upon the Mouth of the River *Charente*, were open and capable of being attacked by Land, proceeded to examine,

1. Lieutenant-Colonel *Wolfe*, who declares, that with regard to Fort *Fouras*, it is his Opinion that it is not a strong Place, seeming to be principally fortified towards the Sea, yet he saw People at Work on the Land Side: That if our Troops could come at the *Barbette* Battery by it, it might be of great Use in taking the Fort, provided there was proper Ammunition for that Purpose. He further gives it as his Opinion, that Fort *Fouras* cannot be taken but by Artillery or Escalade.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel *Clarke*, who says he could make no kind of Judgment of Fort *Fouras* on the Land Side by the Help of a Telescope, the only Method he has ever heard of observing it.

3. A *French* Prisoner, who says, Fort *Fouras* is a circular Fort; upon the Back of it, towards the Land, there

there was no Ditch, when he saw it three Years ago : That it had twenty-four Pieces of Cannon, mounted towards the Sea, and Embrazures for Guns towards the Land : That Fort *la Pointe* is like *Fouras*, circular, and has twenty-two Pieces of Cannon ; on the East Side, towards the Land, it has a Wall like that of *Fouras* : That the Landing in the Bay of *Chate-laillon* is the best Landing of any Place here ; and that when landed, and you get upon the *Rochefort* Road, it is a fine open Country : “ That on *Friday* “ Morning of the 23d Instant, he was in Fort *Fou-* “ *ras* ; that there was but twenty-two or twenty-four “ Guns in it, and not above fifty Men of all Kinds : “ That there are much about the same Number of “ Guns in Fort *la Pointe* ; and that both Forts are “ inclosed by a Wall, in much the same manner to- “ wards the Land.”

The Council having maturely considered the Evidence, Sir *John Mordaunt* declared he was of Opinion, that something further should be attempted, and that he would give his Orders accordingly that Moment, if any, meaning the General Officers of the Troops, would say it was adviseable.—Vice-Admiral *Knowles* declared he had received great Light from the Persons examined, and therefore thought something ought to be attempted.

Major-General *Conway* declared for the Attempt, merely from his own Opinion, without Regard to the Evidences.

Sir *Edward Hawke*, appealing to every Member of the Council for the Truth of what he said, declared, that he was now of the same Opinion, which he had given both before and at the Council of War of the 25th, that the Landing could be effected : That the Troops ought to be landed for some farther Attempt, which was alone Matter of Consideration with the General Officers of the Troops, he, not taking upon him to be a Judge of Land Operations, but would, from his Confidence in their Abilities and Skill in their own Profession, readily assent to any Resolution they



they should come to, and assist them to the utmost of his Power. This being settled, after some Debate, Sir *John Mordaunt*, Vice-Admiral *Knowles*, Rear-Admiral *Brodrick*, and Captain *Rodney*, withdrew.

The Council of War being re-assembled, and the Question put,

Whether it is adviseable to land the Troops, to attack the Forts leading to and upon the Mouth of the River *Charente*?

Y E S.

Col. *George Howard*,  
Capt. *Geo. Bridges Rodney*,  
Rear-Admiral *Brodrick*,  
Right Hon. *Hen. Seymour Conway*,  
Vice-Admiral *Knowles*,  
Sir *John Mordaunt*,  
Sir *Edward Hawke*,

N O.

Hon. Major-General *Edward Cornwallis*; but afterwards acquiesced with the Majority.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

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Numb. XXXIX. Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies, Oct. 4, 1757.

S I R,

I Have the Honour to inform you, that we are now got into the Channel; and, as it is doubtful how long we may be before we reach *Portsmouth*, as the Wind now stands, I think it my Duty to trouble you with this Express.

I must beg the Favour to know his Majesty's Orders in Regard to the Destination and Quartering of the Troops. I must also desire Orders, whether I am to stay at *Portsmouth* till the Troops have all marched out of that Town, or, whether upon Landing, I am immediately to come to *London*, and make my Report to his Majesty, and leave the Disembarking and Marching of the Regiments to the two Major-Generals.

H

As

As the Resolution to sail for *England*, and the Dispatch of the Express to you, were of the same Day, I flatter myself you will make Allowances for the Hurry I was in, and excuse the Inaccuracies in the Letter I had the Honour to send to you, dated the 30th of *September*; in looking over the Copy of it, I see I have not stated, in a clear Light, the Article relating to the Gentlemen of the Sea Service; and I think it my Duty to explain, that after our talking over the Affair together, it was the General Officers saying it would be necessary to land before Day, that occasioned the Gentlemen of the Sea Service to advise against the attempting it that Morning.

I cannot help repeating my Concern that the Affair of *Rochefort* did not succeed, and I shall be doubly unhappy, if, upon reading the Council of War, you do not think we acted right. I am, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XL. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Portsmouth, Oct. 6, 1757.*

SIR,

I Think it my Duty to inform you, by my Aid de Camp, that the Fleet came to an Anchor this Evening at *St. Helen's*, and that most of the Transports are already got to *Spithead*.

As it will be of the greatest Advantage to the Troops to disembark soon; and as I am doubtful whether or not the Letter I had the Honour to send you, by a Ship ordered to *Plymouth*, to be forwarded by Express, can have so soon come to your Hands, I think it my Duty to send you a Duplicate of it.

I must keep the Troops on board, till I receive his Majesty's further Commands; and am, &c.

J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb.

Numb. XLI. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt to Sir Edward Hawke, dated Oct. 7, 1757.*

S I R,

**Y**esterday Morning I received the Favour of your Letter of the 30th past, which was immediately laid before the King; and having this Day had an Account from Sir *John Mordaunt*, that the Troops are arrived at *Portsmouth*, I am commanded to signify to you his Majesty's Pleasure, that you do give immediate Orders for Disembarking at *Southampton* the five following Battalions, *viz.* the Earl of *Home's*, Lord *George Bentinck's*, first Battalion of Lieutenant-General *Wolfe's*, first Battalion of Colonel *King'sley's*, and first Battalion of Colonel *Howard's*; and that the five other Battalions, *viz.* the Earl of *Loudoun's*, Colonel *Amherst's*, Colonel *Hodgson's*, Colonel *Brudenel's*, and the first Battalion of Major-General *Cornwallis's*, be disembarked at *Portsmouth*. With Regard to the two Battalions of Lieutenant-General *Stuart's* and Earl of *Effingham's*, which have served on board the Fleet, it is the King's Pleasure, that they be disembarked at *Portsmouth* or *Chatham*, according as the Men of War may be ordered to either of those Places. I am, &c.

W. PITT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XLII. *Copy of a Letter from Mr. Secretary Pitt to Sir John Mordaunt, dated Oct. 7, 1757.*

S I R,

**Y**esterday Morning I received the Favour of your Letter of the 30th past, and this Morning that dated the 4th Instant, in the Channel; and, at One o'Clock this Afternoon, I was also favoured with one of the 6th Instant, by your Aid de Camp, from *Portsmouth*: All which were immediately laid before the King. And I am to acquaint you, that his Majesty is pleased to permit you to return to *London* immediately, in order to make a Report of your Proceedings, leaving at *Portsmouth* one of the Major-Generals,

to

to superintend the Disembarkation of the Troops ; and the King is pleased to leave it to you to appoint, which of the two Major-Generals you shall judge most proper for that Service ; the other being at Liberty to return to *London* with you. I am, &c. W. PITT.

P. S. I send you inclosed a Copy of a Letter I have wrote to Sir *Edward Hawke*, by which you will see the Orders his Majesty has thought proper to give him for disembarking the Troops. You will acquaint the Major-General, whom you shall leave to superintend the Disembarkation, that he may return to *London*, as soon as that Service shall be completed.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XLIII. *Copy of a Letter from Sir Edward Hawke to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Ramilies at Spithead, Oct. 8, 1757, 1 P. M.*

S I R,

I Have the Honour of your Letter of Yesterday's Date, signifying his Majesty's Orders for the Disembarkation of the Troops. As I have Permission to come to *London*, I have directed Vice-Admiral *Knowles* to put these Orders in Execution as soon as the Weather will permit, it blowing very hard at present. I am, &c. ED. HAWKE.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

Numb. XLIV. *Copy of a Letter from Sir John Mordaunt to Mr. Secretary Pitt, dated Portsmouth, Oct. 8, 1757.*

S I R,

I Had this Morning the Honour of your Letter ; and, in consequence of it, shall set out for *London* To-morrow Morning-early, and propose myself the Pleasure of paying my Respects to you on *Monday* Morning. I am, &c. J. MORDAUNT.

A true Copy. Robert Wood.

F I N I S.









