

Improvisation and directive.
Development of naval warfare tactics in the Anglo–Dutch Wars
(1652–1674)

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This essay aims to present the development and changes of naval warfare tactics during the Anglo–Dutch Wars in the seventeenth century (1652–1674). The main purpose of the study is source presentation and analysis. I would like to present the tactical changes in naval warfare using the contemporary *Fighting Instructions*, which was edited and annotated by Julian Corbett. My goal originally was a translation and presentation of the source in Hungarian and through the source to introduce this section of modern history to Hungarian research. In this paper I am trying to explore how the issued instructions were put in to practice on the battlefield and how they influenced the development of naval warfare. The study's objective is not an in-depth analysis of the Anglo–Dutch Wars. It is to describe the most important events. During my research I came to the conclusion that the Hungarian literature does not examine the *Fighting Instructions*. I think it is important to write such a summary. That is why I chose that approach. We can say that the new maritime warfare which was applied in the Anglo–Dutch Wars had epochal importance.

My presentation is based on English sources. The English and the Dutch researchers wrote several important monographs about the wars. For example: We have a number of primary sources about the wars and the naval warfare tactics. Corbett's work, *Fighting Instructions, 1530–1816* (1905) was one my primary sources. Corbett formulated what has become the most influential theory of naval grand strategy. Samuel Pepys was the greatest naval administrator of the period and his diary is very important. It was issued relatively early: H. B. Wheatley: *The Diary of Samuel Pepys* (10 vols., 1893–1899). An early work about the tactics was written by Paul Hoste: *L'art des armées navales* (1697). There are several contemporary accounts of the battles. Guiche, a French Count participated in numerous battles. He wrote his memories: *Memories d'Armand de Gramont, Comte de Guiche...* (1744). We can also mention Penn's work: Granville Penn: *Memorials of the Professional Life and Times of Sir William Penn...: From 1644 to 1670* (Volume II. 1833).

An early analysis of the Wars' reasons can be found in George Edmundson's work, *Anglo–Dutch Rivalry during the First Half of the Seventeenth Century*.¹ Charles Wilson's work, *Profit and Power: England and the Dutch Wars* was more substantial.² Some historians say that the war broke out because of commercial reasons. Jonathan Israel's

¹ George Edmundson: *Anglo–Dutch Rivalry during the First Half of the Seventeenth Century*. Clarendon Press, Oxford 1911.

² Charles Wilson: *Profit and Power. England and the Dutch Wars*. Longmans, Green, London 1957.

work, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477–1806* (1995) is a detailed history of the Dutch Republic. He presents the reasons and also the history of the Anglo–Dutch Wars. Maarten R. Prak's work, *Gouden Eeuw* (2004) is also a summary work (I used the Hungarian translation). Steven C. A. Pincus's work, *Protestantism and Patriotism* (1990) claims that ideology and religion played important roles in the conflict.

There are several old monographies. For example: John Leyland: *The Royal navy* (1914), Williams Hamilton: *Britain's naval power* (1894). Several studies present the opposing fleets. Jaap Bruijn's work, *The Dutch Navy of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (1993) claims that the Dutch developed the first "standing navy" in the world. Roger Hainsworth's work, *The Anglo–Dutch Naval Wars, 1652–1674* recounts the wars in a narrative history.³

A. T. Mahan work's, *The Influence of Sea Power on History, 1660–1783* (1890) is the best book for placing the naval events in the context of general history. Sir William Clowes's work, *The Royal Navy* (1897) is useful in describing the events, but lacks references to authorities. J. R. Jones's work, *The Anglo–Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century* (1996) is also important. Jack Sweetman's edited work, *The Great Admirals* (1997) is also a useful source (I used the Hungarian translation). Gijs Rommelse's work, *The Second Anglo–Dutch War (1665–1667)* (2006) presents the events of the second war. The most extensive book about the Four Days' Battle is Frank L. Fox's work, *A Distant Storm* (1996). P. G. Rogers' work, *The Dutch in the Medway* (1970) introduces the Dutch attack in the Medway.

The English Monarchy and the Dutch Republic fought three wars during the 17th century. The first between 1652–1654, the second between 1665–1667 and the third between 1672–1674. There was one more war during the 18th century: 1780–1784. The Dutch fell and the English rose. The wars were primarily naval and commercial wars. The most important thing was that modern naval tactics developed. Instead of the 16th century's chaotic sea battles, the 17–18th century was characterized – similarly to the land battles – by well-organized and predetermined battles. The good organization and the order was due to the different permanent fighting instructions.⁴

The basis of English naval tactics during the 17–18th century was "*The Fighting Instructions*" first consolidated by James, Duke of York (later James II; ruled 1685–1688) in the 1660s. The constant instructions of battle were differently named over the years. In the Third War the Duke of York was commander at sea. In the spring of 1672 he distributed his fighting instructions. Later he released the first printed book containing both sailing and fighting instructions. These *Instructions for better ordering his majesty's fleet in fighting*⁵ remained in general use until 1688. In 1689 the English government replaced this and published his own fighting instructions entitled *Sailing and Fighting Instructions*.⁶

³ Roger Hainsworth – Christine Churches: *The Anglo–Dutch naval wars 1652–1674*. Alan Sutton Publishing, Ltd. Stroud, Gloucestershire 1998.

⁴ Julian S. Corbett: *Fighting Instructions, 1530–1816*. In: *Publications of the Navy Records Society* Vol. XXIX. (Publisher location unknown) 1905. 67–135.

⁵ *Ibid.* 125.

⁶ Jack Sweetman (ed.): *Admirálisok: a történelem legkiválóbb tengernagyai 1587–1945*. [The great admirals: command at sea, 1587–1954]. Zrínyi Kiadó, Budapest 1999. 21–22.

In the 17–18th century there were two ‘schools’ which presented the evolution of fleet tactics. One school represented by the Duke of York and William Penn (1621–1670)⁷ inclined to formality. This school was called the *formalists*. The other school represented by George Monck (1608–1670) and Prince Rupert (1619–1682) was inclined to take tactical risks. This school was called the *meleeists*. Both tactical opinions held the line of battle to be the proper formation for a fleet entering action. The *formalists* thought that the formation should be retained until the enemy fleet was in retreat. Contrary to this, the *meleeist* believed that the line could be discarded in order to force out a decision. During the battles the Admirals developed three tactical maneuvers. The first of these tactics was merging the vessels. Another possibility was a tactical encirclement. Finally, a breakthrough was formulated in the instructions which tactics can be found in James, Duke of York’s *Supplementary Instructions* in 1672. In the battle the attacking fleet penetrated the enemy lines, broke it and divided the enemy’s fleet.⁸

Both of these schools represented themselves in the Anglo–Dutch Wars. My goal is to describe the development of tactics on the basis of the ideas of these two schools. First I examine the instructions and then how they were applied in practice.

After the Peace of Westphalia (1648) new powers emerged in Europe. England, France and the Dutch Republic were the great powers. The Netherlands owned its great-power status thanks to its economy. The country was at the forefront of long-distance trade. Admiral Mahan aptly remarked that “...the Dutch merchantmen (...) caused the grass to grow in the streets of Amsterdam.”⁹ The year 1650 marked a political turning point in the history of the Dutch Republic. The political leadership was in the hands of Johan De Witt (1625–1672) who began a more active naval policy at the sea. A commercial rivalry envolved between England and the Republic.

The cause of the first war was the combined effect of several factors. Several works emphasize that the main reason was the *Navigation Act* issued by the English Parliament in 1651.¹⁰ It stipulated that goods could be imported into territories of the English Commonwealth only by English ships, or by ships of the country originally producing the goods being carried. Some historians, such as Pincus argue that the cause of the outbreak of

⁷ Penn’s son was William Penn (1644–1718), founder of Pennsylvania.

⁸ Sweetman: *Admirálisok*, 78–79.

⁹ Alfred Thayer Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660–1783*. Little, Brown and company, Boston 1890. 77.

¹⁰ Francis Ludwig Carsten (ed.): *The New Cambridge Modern History. Volume. V. The Ascendancy of France 1648–1688*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1961. 284.; H. Lawrence Swinburne: *The Royal Navy*. Adam and Charlie Black, London 1907. 61.; Maarten Roy Prak: *Hollandia aranykora: a Köztársaság talánya. [Gouden Eeuw. Het raadsel van de Republiek]* Osiris Kiadó, Budapest 2004. 48.; John Leyland: *The Royal navy: its influence in English history and in the growth of empire*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1914. 42.; Williams Hamilton: *Britain’s naval power: a short history of the growth of the British navy from the earliest times to Trafalgar*. MacMillan and Co., London 1894. 64.

the war was ideological.¹¹ Another cause was the English demand that all ships lower their flag in the Channel.¹²

In May, 1652 Maarten van Tromp (1598–1653), one of the most prominent sailors of the age refused to salute the English vessels. The English opened fire. Tromp lost two ships but escorted his convoy to the port.¹³ Two months later, on July 10, 1652 the English Parliament formally declared war on the Dutch Republic.¹⁴ The outcome of the battles was quite different during the war. The opposing forces were of the same strength. During the first month the English ships attacked the dutch merchant ships. Robert Blake (1599–1657), who was the “*general at sea*” of the English navy prevented the Dutch fishing in the North Sea and the dutch trade in the Baltic. Sir George Ayscue (1616–1672) was responsible for the protection the Channel.¹⁵

The first battle occurred off Plymouth on August 26, 1652. Michiel Adriaenszoon De Ruyter (1607–1676) who was a Dutch national hero and an admiral with exceptional ability defeated Ayscue’s weaker fleet. The next battle took place near the mouth of the River Thames at Kentish Knock on October 8, 1652. The English Admirals – Blake, Penn and Bourne – sank and captured twenty Dutch ships.¹⁶ The Dutch reinforced their fleet. This led to the Battle of Dungeness (December 10, 1652) and the Battle of Leghorn (March 14, 1653.) The Dutch won all these battles.¹⁷ During the winter of 1652–53, the English repaired their ships and strengthened their position. Between on February 28 – March 2, 1653 in the Battle of Portland the English Admirals – Blake, Deane and Monck – drove the Dutch – Tromp, De Ruyter – out of the Channel.¹⁸

Before the Battle of Portland the war was characterized by unorganization. Then the Commonwealth’s *generals at sea*, Robert Blake, Richard Dean and George Monck issued their instructions “*for the better ordering of the fleet in Fighting*” on March 29, 1653.¹⁹ These Fighting Instructions aimed at a single line ahead as a battle formation. The third article of the Commonwealth Orders ordered:

“...Then every ship of the said squadron shall endeavour to keep in the line with the admiral, or he that commands in chief next unto him, and nearest the enemy.”

¹¹ Steven C. A. Pincus: *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650–1668*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1996.

¹² Hamilton: *Britain’s naval power*, 62–64.

¹³ James Baikie: *Pepys at the royal navy*. Adam and Charlie Black, London 1913. 32.

¹⁴ Prak: *Hollandia aranykora*, 48.

¹⁵ Leyland: *The Royal navy*, 43–44.

¹⁶ Hamilton: *Britain’s naval power*, 64.

¹⁷ <http://www.british-civil-wars.co.uk/military/first-anglo-dutch-war-battles.htm>

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 82–88. *Commonwealth Orders*, 1653. Blake, Monck, Disbrowe and Penn re-issued the Commonwealth Orders with some amendments and verbal alterations in March 1654. (Granville Penn: *Memorials of the Professional Life and Times of Sir William Penn...: From 1644 to 1670*. Volume II. James Duncan, Paternoster Row, London 1833. 76–80.)

The Orders were comprised of fourteen articles. Eight established commands based on tactical circumstances (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 13). These instructions regulated the combat situations. Before the battle started each unit had to send a ship to detect the enemy fleet (Article 1). Article 2 provided that the rear-admiral and the vice-admiral had to come to the admiral on each wing when the fleet discovered the enemy. The vice-admiral was on the right wing and the rear-admiral was on the left wing. Also the paragraphs try to provided what to do if a ship from the fleet was disabled, sinking or burning (Article 4 and 5). The articles regulated what to do if the enemy ship was in the English hands (Article 10). Article 12 detailed how to prevent and repel the enemy fleet's fireship attack. Article 13 regulated the attack of the fireship of the fleet.

Four articles were standing orders. Article 11 was such an article:

"None shall fire upon any ship of the enemy that is laid aboard by any of our own ships, but so that he may be sure he endamage not his friend."

Two prescribed signals to be made by ships retiring to repair damage or in distress (Article 6 and 14). Article 14 formulated what signal should be applied when the fleet was in retreat. We can observe that the signal was not a flag signal:

"...the signal to be firing two guns, the one so nigh the other as the report may be distinguished, and within three minutes after to do the like with two guns more."

Article 6 also regulated what to do in the event when the admiral's ship or any other flagship had to leave the battlefield:

"...the respective squadron are to endeavour **to keep up in a line** as close as they can betwixt him [admiral] and the enemy, having always one eye to defend him in case thew enemy should come to annoy him in that condition."

Article 7 directed that where the windward station was gained the line ahead had to be formed "*upon severest punishment*". The sign for this maneuver was a blue flag at the mizen yard or the mizen topmast. Article 8 ordered which signals the ships should be used in battle. Article 9 provided similar signals for flagships.

The Generals at Sea were veteran military men. They all served in the English Civil War. Blake was the only one of the three generals who had had experience of naval actions. They were accustomed to the much greater control a general could at least aspire to exercise in engagements ashore. The new instructions were calculated to bring out the best methods which they had empirically practised. His goal was the maintenance of a closed system, constant practicing, precise and careful use of weapons, and most importantly compliance with the instructions of the commander.

In the next battle at Gabbard Bank on June 12–13, 1653, thanks to the instructions, the commanders used the line formation. The English won an overwhelming victory over the

Dutch. “*Our fleet,*” said a report by an eye-witness, “*did work together in better order than before and seconded on another.*”²⁰

The final battle of the war was the Battle of Scheveningen (also known as the Battle of Texel or the Battle of Ter Heijde) on August 8–10, 1653. Tromp, De Ruyter and Witte de With entered into battle with the English fleet led by Monck. The battle was watched by hundreds of spectators on the beaches as the two fleets met in a fierce fight of the line. “*This is the first action,*” wrote Paul Hoste, who was the author of the first treatise on Naval Tactics²¹, “*that the Dutch fleet forming in single line (...) and they adopted it in English formation.*”²² In the early stages of the battle, Tromp was killed by a musket shot as his flagship the *Brederode* led the Dutch attack. The loss was irreplaceable. A contemporary writer aptly remarked, that “*If they should cast twenty John Evertsen and twenty De Ruyters into-one, they couldn't make one Tromp.*”²³ The new Dutch commanders De With, De Ruyter and Jan Evertson retreated from the battle. The Battle of Scheveningen was the last fleet engagement before the war ended with the signing of the Peace of Westminster on May 8, 1654.

The material and financial sources of England and the Dutch Republic were exhausted. England won the war and the Netherlands was forced to recognize the *Navigation Act*. Thereafter all Dutch vessels were obliged to pay tribute to the English ships in the Channel.²⁴ The most serious differences however were not resolved. The two countries' commercial rivalry and the struggle between the two navies continued.

The Dutch Republic quickly recovered from the first Anglo–Dutch War. It was still a great power. When the monarchy was restored in England in 1660, Charles II (ruled 1660–1685) used his full power to put an end to the Dutch commercial superiority. The fight broke out in the colonies, and then it spread to Europe. James, the Duke of York instructed Robert Holmes (1622–1692) who was at service of the Royal African Company to occupy the Dutch colonies and trading posts in West Africa. Parallely with the events in Africa, the English occupied the Dutch possessions in North America.²⁵ The English fleet –

²⁰ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 79.

²¹ Paul Hoste (1652–1700) was a French priest and mathematician. He was present at a number of naval engagements including the Battle of La Hougue in 1692. Hoste learned many of his tactical ideas from Tourville and it was Tourville's suggestion that he wrote his masterpiece: *L'art des armées navales* (*L'art des armées navales : où traité des évolutions navales, qui contient des Règles utiles aux officiers généraux, et Particuliers d'une armée navale ; avec des exemples tirez de ce qui s'est passé de plus considérable sur la mer depuis cinquante ans...* Anisson & Posuel, Lyon 1697). Hoste was the author of several other works (*Receuil des traités mathématiques*, 1692). He received a pension from Louis XIV, to whom *L'art des armées navales* was dedicated.

²² Hoste: *L'art des armées navales*, 78. “*Les Anglois avoient essaié de gagner le vent. Mais l'Admiral Tromp en aiant toujours conservé l'avantage, & s'étant rangé sur une ligne parallèle à celle des Anglois, arriva sur eux, & commença le combat...*” Hoste's source was a French eye-witness, who stayed on a Corvette on the day of the battle.

²³ Leyland: *The Royal navy*, 47.

²⁴ Charles D. Young: *The British Navy, the earliest period to the present*. R. Bentley, London 1866. 76.

²⁵ George Clark: *The Later Stuarts: 1660–1714*. 2. ed. Clarendon Press, Oxford 1955. 63.

commanded by Colonel Richard Nicolls (1624–1672) – occupied New Amsterdam which Holmes named to New York, in honor of the Duke of York at a later stage of the war.²⁶

During the Restoration James, the Duke of York was the commander in chief of the English fleet. He issued his first tactical instructions to the fleet on April 10, 1665.²⁷ The commands essentially did not include many new instructions compared to the ones in 1653. After rising to the throne Charles did not want a collection of commands to remain in practice, issued by the Republic, which executed his father.

There were only two new important provisions among the sixteen articles. Article 2 told captains to “*put themselves into the place and order which shall have been directed them in the order of battle*”. Article 3 formulated, that the ships “*they can to engage with the enemy according to the order prescribed*”. Thanks to these instructions each ship had now been assigned a definite position in the line.

Later, on April 18 James added ten *Additional Instructions* to his previous provisions.²⁸ Article 6 reflects the tactical thinking of James. He thought that the formation should be retained until the enemy fleet was in retreat. This instruction made it impossible for any unit of the fleet to exploit a tactical situation or a moment of opportunity.

The directive specified what distance had to be observed in the line for the ships. The distance was half a cable’s length (100 yard).²⁹ The Royal Navy (as Charles II entitled it following the Restoration) would observe that distance for almost two hundred years.³⁰

“...the commanders of his majesty’s fleet shall endeavour to keep about the distance of half a cable’s length one from the other...”(Article 4)

Article 7 formulated what to do when chasing the enemy:

“In case of chase none of his majesty’s fleet or ships shall chase beyond sight of the flag, and at night all chasing ships are to return to the flag.”

Only nine days later James issued three additional instructions.³¹ These instructions were the confirmation of his previous instructions. James clearly intended to concentrate tactical control of the fleet in his hand.

The first battle, which almost put an end to the war took place at Lowestoft on June 13, 1665.³² James broke through the Dutch line and won the battle. It was the most serious

²⁶ See. Henry L. Schoolcraft: The Capture of New Amsterdam. *English Historical Review*, Vol. XXII. 1907. 674–693.

²⁷ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 100–104. The Duke of York, April 10, 1665.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 104–106. The Duke of York, April 10 or 18, 1665.

²⁹ This distance was a full cable in the French fleet. Hoste: *L’art des armées navales*, 65. “*Les Vaisseaux doivent Être à un cable les une des autres, ou à cent toises.*”

³⁰ Sweetman: *Admirálisok*, 20.

³¹ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 106–107. The Duke of York’s Supplementary Order, April 27, 1665.

³² William Laird Clowes: *The Royal Navy: A History from the Earliest Times to the Present*. Volume. II. S. Low, Marston, London 1897. 259–264.; Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power*, 67–71.

defeat of the Dutch Republic's navy.³³ Sir William Penn believed that the battle was fought according to the *Fighting Instruction* which provided the division of the enemy fleet.³⁴ However, James did not write anywhere that this maneuver was intentional. The victory was due to an accident: Opdam's ship, which was the flagship of the Dutch fleet, exploded.

James was relieved from his post in the leadership of the fleet because he did not press the chase of the defeated Dutch fleet. James acted according to his *Fighting Instruction*. He retained the formation: "*None of the ships of his majesty's fleet shall pursue any small number of ships of the enemy before the main of the enemy's fleet shall be disabled or shall run.*"³⁵

After James left, Prince Rupert and Monck were appointed the heads of the English fleet. De Ruyter who returned to the West Indies led the Dutch fleet. The two opposing fleets clashed again on June 11–14, 1666. The Four Days' Battle was one of the longest and bloodiest naval engagements of the age.³⁶

Before the battle started the English fleet was split into two parts because the intelligence had reported that the English should also be take up the fight with the French fleet.³⁷ In January, 1666 the French monarchy entered the war on the Dutch side. The fleet allocation during the battle was a strategic mistake. This mistake was a decisive reason for the defeat of the English fleet.

The battle and the assessment of the battle were very important lessons for the development of tactics. First of all we must mention a contemporary criticism about the English command. Samuel Pepys considered to his diary that Admiral Sir William Penn had told him it proved "...we must fight in line, whereas we fight promiscuously, to our utter demonstrable ruin: the Dutch fighting otherwise, and we whenever we beat them."³⁸ His assertion should not be accepted without source criticism. He was not present at the battle. He knew that the causes of defeat were strategic, not only tactical reasons. Penn was the opponent strategic school's representative. And it is hard to believe that the English fleet took up the fight without line formation in the middle of the Second Dutch War. Finally, Penn was "...the falsest rascal that ever was in the world", according to Sir George Carter, who was the treasurer of the fleet.³⁹

³³ Sweetman: *Admirálisok*, 51.

³⁴ Penn: *Memorials of the Professional Life and Times of Sir William Penn*, 322–333., 344–350. The order which provided breaking the enemy's fleet was not included among the directives in the Second Anglo–Dutch War. James issued such instruction in 1672, presumably based on the lessons of the previous war. (Corbett: *Fighting instructions*, 121–122. The Duke of York's Supplementary Orders, 1672. Article 2.)

³⁵ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 104. The Duke of York, April 10 or 18, 1665. Article 6.

³⁶ See. J. R. Jones: *The Anglo–Dutch Wars of the Seventeenth Century*. Longman, London, New York. 1996. 169–171.; Frank L. Fox: *A Distant Storm: The Four Days' Battle of 1666: The Greatest Sea Fight of the Age of Sail*. Press of Sail Publications, Rotherfield 1996. 167–314.; Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power*, 71–76.; Clowes: *The Royal Navy*, 264–279.

³⁷ Clark: *Later Stuarts*, 65.

³⁸ Samuel Pepys: *The Diary of Samuel Pepys. From 1659 to 1669*. Ed. Lord Braybrooke. Frederick Warne an Co., London, New York 1879. 219. (July 4, 1666.)

³⁹ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 98.

De Guiche, the French Count, who joined the Dutch fleet praised the English fleet. He remembered the English ships with admiration and using a military analogy, he drew parallels with the cavalry:

“Nothing equals the beautiful order of the English at sea. (...) They fight like a line of cavalry which is handled according to rule, and applies itself solely to force back those who oppose; whereas the Dutch advance like cavalry whose squadrons leave their ranks and come separately to the charge.”⁴⁰

The English tactics reflected the ideas of the *meleeist* tactic. We can see it in Prince Rupert’s instruction:

“...and to endeavour the utmost that may be the destruction of the enemy, which is always to be made the chiefest care.”⁴¹

The English fleet broke through the line of the Dutch fleet in the battle. On the fourth day – probably due to Rupert’s Instruction – Myngs broke through the Dutch line and then carried out the attack with his ships on the other side.

After the lost battle the English military moral did not break up. De Witt perfectly realized: “If the English were beaten, their defeat did them more honour than all their former victories; all the Dutch had discovered was that Englishmen might be killed and English ships burned, but English courage was invincible.”⁴²

In the next battle, the St. James’s Day fight the English won (on August 4–5, 1666).⁴³ Tromp opened the Dutch line.⁴⁴ He left the line with his ships and he began a separate battle with the English van. This was the reason for the defeat of the Dutch fleet.⁴⁵ The battle demonstrated – with Dutch example – the correctness of the tactics of the *formalists*. If the commanders do not keep the closed line then the fleet will be defeated.

On June 20–23, 1667 the Dutch successfully attacked the English naval base at the mouth of the River Medway.⁴⁶ They broke the boom which guarded Chatham harbour,

⁴⁰ “...que rien n’égale le bel Orde & la Discipline des Anglois. (...) Il faut imaginer une ligne de Cavallerie, qui se gouverne avec Règle; & qui s’applique seulement à faire céder celle qui lui est opposée, (...) vers les ennemis [the Dutch]; contre une autre, dont les Escadrons sortiront de leur Rang, & avanceront inégalement à la Charge.” Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power*, 74. Quoted by *Mémoires d’Armand de Gramont, Comte de Guiche, Concernant les Provinces Unies des Pays-Bas servant de supplément et de confirmation à ceux d’Aubrey du Maurier et du Comte d’Estrades*. Philippe Changuion, Londres 1744. 251., 267.

⁴¹ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 107–108. Prince Rupert, 1666. Article 1.

⁴² Swinburne: *The Royal Navy*, 91–92.

⁴³ See. Gijs Rommelse: *The Second Anglo–Dutch War (1665–1667): Raison d’État, Mercantilism and Maritime Strife*. Uitgeverij Verloren, Hilversum 2006. 161.; Mahan: *The Influence of Sea Power*, 76.; Sweetman: *Admirálsok*, 52.; Clowes: *The Royal Navy*, 278–282.

⁴⁴ Cornelis Tromp (1629–1691), the son of Maartren Tromp.

⁴⁵ Rommelse: *The Second Anglo–Dutch War*, 161–162.

⁴⁶ See. P. G. Rogers: *The Dutch in the Medway*. Oxford University Press, London, New York 1970.; David Douglas (ed.): *English Historical Documents*. Volume. VI. 1660–1714. Routledge, London 1996. 835–836.; Rommelse: *The Second Anglo–Dutch War*, 180–182.

burnt four ships of the line, towed away the *Royal Charles*, the largest vessel of the fleet.⁴⁷ This was a great moral victory. In London panic broke out among the inhabitants and the political leadership. They were afraid of a Dutch invasion. The diary of Samuel Pepys gives a telling account of the events.⁴⁸ The demand for peace intensified in England.⁴⁹

The *Treaty of Peace, Alliance, Navigation and Commerce* was concluded by Sir Henry Coventry and Denzil Hollis from England and Hieronymus Bevernik from Holland, Pieter De Huybert from Zeeland and Allard Jongestel from Friesland at the Dutch city of Breda on July 31, 1667.⁵⁰ Surinam (northern South America) and Polaroon or Pulo-Run (the island of Run in Indonesia) remained in Dutch hands. New Amsterdam (New York), New Jersey and Dalewage were kept by England. The Navigation Laws (1651, 1660) were modified and the Dutch were now allowed to ship German goods to England.⁵¹

In the Third Anglo–Dutch War we can see the change in the alliance system, which was characteristic of the modern age. The French monarchy aimed to have a continental hegemony in Europe. The English and the French monarchy concluded the Dover Convention on June 1, 1670. The Convention aimed at breaking the trade hegemony of the Dutch Republic. According to the plan they wanted to destroy the Republic's military strength at sea and on land and then they wanted to appoint a new political leadership.⁵² Louis XIV (ruled 1643–1715) wanted a quick war in alliance with England, Cologne and Münster. However, the conflict very quickly reached a continental size. In the first phase of the war the English fleet attacked the Dutch ships. The English historians called this conflict the Third Anglo–Dutch War.⁵³

At the beginning of the war James was re-appointed as Fleet Commander. He was the commander of the fleet a short period. In 1672 the Test Act formulated the exclusion of non-anglicans from the various offices.⁵⁴ James was Catholic so he was forced to leave his

⁴⁷ Visitors can see the *Royal Charles*'s counter in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. The *Royal Charles*'s counter is the part of the ship which rises up above the stern, and was often decorated with elaborate carving. http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/aria/aria_assets/NG-MC-239?page=0&lang=en&context_space=&context_id=

⁴⁸ Henry B. Wheatley (ed.): *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*. Volume II. Random House, New York 1951. 600. For example he wrote this on July 17, 1667: “*The Dutch fleete are in great squadrons everywhere still about Harwich, and were lately at Portsmouth; and the last letters say at Plymouth, and now gone to Dartmouth to destroy our Streights' fleete lately got in thither; but God knows whether they can do it any hurt, or no, but it was pretty news come the other day so fast, of the Dutch fleets being in so many places, that Sir W. Batten at table cried, “By God,” says he, “I think the Devil shits Dutchmen.”*”

⁴⁹ Clark: *Later Stuarts*, 67–68.

⁵⁰ Rommelse: *The Second Anglo–Dutch War*, 184–188.

⁵¹ George Chalmers: *A Collection of Treaties Between Great Britain and Other Powers*. Vol. I. Printed for J. Stockdale, Piccadilly, London 1790. 132–159.; See. Jonathan Israel: *The Dutch Republic: It's Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806*. Clarendon Press, Oxford 1995. 774. Quoted by P. J. van Winter: *De Acte van Navigatie en de Verde van Breda*. In: *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 4. 1949. 27–65.

⁵² Prak: *Hollandia aranykora*, 52.

⁵³ Hahner Péter: *A régi rend alkonya. Egyetemes történet 1648–1815*. Panem, Budapest 2006. 100.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* 164.

office. His naval career came to an end in 1672. Sometime in spring between summer of 1672 he issued his instructions taking into account the experience of the previous war. The documents contained twenty-six articles which repeated and renewed the previous war's instructions.⁵⁵

After his first instructions James issued three supplementary orders.⁵⁶ Article 1 reflected the English tactical idea. The paragraph ordered to keep the enemy fleet to leeward position. The English fleet in the 17–19th century still endeavored to ensure that vessels to be placed in windward position. The fleet that was in windward position, had advantages over the enemy fleet.⁵⁷

The interpretation of Article 2 is problem because the order is not characteristic of the tactical thinking of James. This article first laid down in writing to break through and divide the enemy's fleet:

“...if the van of our fleet find that they have the wake of any part of them, they are to tack and to stand in, and strive to divide the enemy's body...”

This tactical maneuver was far from the *formalists'* tactical idea. This was rather characterized the *meleeists'* represented by Monck and Prince Rupert. This was an earlier instruction probably in the second war which first appeared in written form in 1672. James enshrined in this instruction, taking into account the experience of the previous war.

Finally, Article 3 provided again that the commanders had to keep the line at all costs. At this point we see again the tactical thinking of James which reflected *formalism*:

“The several commanders of the fleet are to take special care that they keep their line, and upon pain of death that they fire not over any of our own ships.”

The first battle between the Allied and the Dutch fleet – commanded by De Ruyter – was on June 7, 1672. The Dutch took up the fight on the Suffolk coast, in the Solebay.⁵⁸ The Anglo–French fleet was defeated and the Netherlands temporarily averted the risk of a seaward attack. But in the meantime the French troops penetrated deep into the Netherlands. Amsterdam was under a direct threat. In this situation Zeeland recognized William III (stadtholder 1672–1702; king of England 1689–1702) as stadtholder. The Dutch troops, thanks to William's fast response managed to force Louis's regiments back down.

In 1673 the events were concentrated at sea again. The Dutch encountered the Allies three times: twice in Scoonnenveld and once in Texel. The Dutch Admirals won all the three battles and repulsed the invasion intention of the Allied fleet.⁵⁹ Texel was the last

⁵⁵ Corbett: *Fighting Instructions*, 118–120. The Duke of York, 1672.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 121–123. The Duke of York's Supplementary Orders, 1672.

⁵⁷ John Keegan: *A tengeri hadviselés története [The Price of Admiralty. War at Sea from Man-of-War to Submarine]*. Corvina Kiadó, Budapest 1998. 50.

⁵⁸ Israel: *The Dutch Republic*, 797. Quoted by C. R. Boxer: *The Anglo–Dutch Wars of the 17th Century*. National Maritime Museum Booklet, London 1974. 47–48.

⁵⁹ Prak: *Hollandia aranykora*, 55.

battle of the Third Anglo–Dutch war. England finished the war against the Republic and concluded the Second Peace of Westminster on February 19, 1714.⁶⁰ Thanks to the peace the Netherlands won new allies against the French. The length of the war revealed the weaknesses of the French monarchy and a stalemate developed. On August 10, 1678 the French and the Dutch concluded the Peace of Nijmegen which meant the end of the war.

England and the Netherlands were exhausted by the wars which mutually weakened the two countries. The English won only the first war by an overwhelming superiority. In the Peace of Breda which ended the second war, the English had to make concessions in favor of their opponent. However, they acquired the North American colonies. The third war was a complete and shameful failure for the English. The French monarchy only used England in order to achieve its great-power aspirations.

The Anglo–Dutch Wars were important not only in terms of the development of the relationship between the two countries. Thanks to Blake’s instructions the line was adopted as the basic order of battle by every European sailing fleet. The typical Medieval impact tactics was replaced by the ship-ship, line-line tactics.

The new tactics brought success for the English in the first conflict. The second and the third wars were characterized by the opposition of the two schools. In the development of naval warfare tactics Horatio Nelson’s thinking brought a new impetus who undertook the risky sea maneuvers – as Monck and Rupert – in order to destroy the entire fleet of the enemy.

⁶⁰ Chalmers: *A Collection of Treaties*, 172–174.