

# Anglo-Dutch Wars

Dan Western



# Background

- ▶ The Dutch took over the spice trade from Portugal in Asia in 1628
- ▶ This coincided with a huge increase in the size of the Dutch merchant marine
- ▶ The Dutch eventually took over much of England's trade after the English civil war
- ▶ However, after the 30 Year's War ended, the Netherlands became an independent nation and decided to decrease the size of their navy. Conflict over this decision brought them to the brink of civil war and allowed England the time to build up enough power to face off.

# The First War

## ► Causes

- England passed the Navigation Acts
  - These said that all imported goods must be carried by British ships
  - The Acts themselves didn't really hurt the Dutch, but the English pirates took advantage of it to seize any Dutch ship
- A Dutch Admiral refused to strike his flag to salute the British, leading to a skirmish- this was the start of the first war

# The First War

## ► The War Itself

- The British won the first battle at Kentish Knock
  - Thinking they had won the war, they split up their troops
  - Because of that they got routed at the Battle of Dungeness and a few other battles
- The British rethought their strategy, using the line of battle to drive the Dutch back

# The First War

## ► Results

- The British captured 1200-1500 Dutch merchant ships
- However, they didn't establish themselves as the ultimate power
- The Dutch increased the size of their navy by 60 ships to close the gap between them and England

# The Second War

## ► Causes

- A secret part of the treaty that ended the first war outlawed the election of any member of the house of Orange to the head of Holland.
- The Dutch tried to bribe Charles II of England to overlook that, but Lord Arlington and James, Duke of York, had other plans- they wanted an all-out war, and Charles did too to strengthen his authority



# The Second War

## ► The War Itself

- Started after Charles sent men to capture Dutch trade outposts in Africa and invaded New Netherlands (New York) and took it
- Netherlands retaliated, took back all of its outposts and most of England's too, then headed for New Netherlands
- The English won the first battle at Lowestoft (worst Dutch defeat ever), but that was pretty much all they won
- The English allied with the territory of Munster and the Dutch with France and Denmark

# The Second War

## ► The War Itself (cont.)

- Four Day's Battle- England lost almost half of their ships, had an Admiral surrender for the last time ever
- Charles, due to his extremely weak navy, was forced to the peace table under Dutch terms, but he allied secretly with France
- The Dutch found out, and to end the war they invaded the Medway, where the heavy English ships were laid up.
- They destroyed 15 more ships, 3 of them the heavy ones, ending the war for good.



# The Second War

## ► Results

- Treaty of Breda ended war
  - England kept New Netherlands (now New York)
  - Netherlands kept holdings in Asia
- Kings of France and England intensify their cooperation after getting embarrassed by the Dutch, leading to the third war

# The Third War

## ► Causes

- Charles especially was humiliated after the war because of the concessions he was forced to make, so he made a secret treaty with France promising to assist if they invaded the Dutch.
- He wanted access to the main trade hubs of Rotterdam and Amsterdam

# The Third War

## ► The War Itself

- The English and French allied with the Bishopric of Munster and the Archbishopric of Cologne in order to gain direct access to the Netherlands
- Merlin Incident
  - Charles sent a ship (the Merlin) past the Dutch navy, who lowered their flags in accordance with the treaty of the time, but would not give the full military salute because the Merlin was not a military ship
  - Charles did this to stir up public support for the war
- The Dutch navy, while smaller, was extremely well-trained, while England and France were unable to cooperate

# The Third War

## ► The War Itself (cont.)

- France made huge gains on land, having better and more troops, but the Dutch were again far superior on the water
- The French gains led to very early peace talks, which dragged on for far too long, allowing Holland to be protected by an artificial sea, rendering the land attack useless
- The Dutch immediately regained the upper hand, as the English were almost useless compared to the Dutch navy
- The Dutch invaded and the complete ineptitude of the English fleet bought upon a complete retreat back to England
- Because the English could make no advance, they gave up and went to the peace table

# The Third War

## ► Results

- Return to status quo ante bellum-all territories from before the war returned



# End of Conflict

- ▶ In 1688, William of Orange took over England in the Glorious Revolution.
- ▶ William built up the English naval fleet and weakened the Dutch one
- ▶ The merchant marine moved their base to London, setting the Netherlands on their decline, which would be complete by 1780, when England passed them in wealth.



# Effects of the Wars

- ▶ Established the Netherlands as the premier trading nation in the world until around 1780
- ▶ Led to James II, King of England, being overthrown by William of Orange, the Dutch leader

# Summary

- ▶ What: Wars between England/France and the Netherlands over trade rights
- ▶ Who: Charles II, William III, Louis XIV
- ▶ Where: England, Netherlands, many battles in English Channel/North Sea
- ▶ When: mid-late 1600s
- ▶ Importance: established the Dutch as trade leaders for the next century, helped lead to the Glorious Revolution