The Historical Journal, 34, 4 (1991), pp. 955–972
Printed in Great Britain

THE HOUSE OF ORANGE AND THE HOUSE OF STUART, 1639–1650: A REVISION

SIMON GROENVELD
University of Leiden

I

The study of seventeenth-century relations between Britain and the Netherlands reveals an unbalanced picture. Searching inquiries have been made into certain periods or topics, but almost none into others. There exist, for example, good books about the commercial and maritime tensions playing a role in the outbreak of three Anglo-Dutch wars;[1] but a profound survey of economic contacts between both countries has not yet been written. The same holds true for both religious and political relations. Consequently one single publication sometimes determines our views of a certain subject or period.

In a large measure this applies to Pieter Geyl's book *Oranje en Stuart 1641–1672* which was first published in 1939 and reprinted in 1963, while already in the twenties previous versions of its first chapters appeared in periodicals.[2] Geyl describes the period in the light of the relationship between the British royal family and the House of Orange which filled the stadtholderate of five Dutch provinces before 1650 and again after 1672. In Geyl's opinion this relationship had fatal consequences for the Dutch Republic, for time and again, he maintained, the stadtholder Frederick Henry (1584–1647) and his successor William II (1626–1650) deliberately subordinated the well-being of the Seven Provinces to Orangist dynastic aspirations. Geyl believed he had found four arguments in support of this theory during Frederick Henry's term of office. First the prince felt highly honoured when Charles I of England married off his daughter Mary to William, his son. He thus did his utmost to lend assistance to King Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria when, soon afterwards, the English Civil War broke out. Secondly, when asked for money by the queen, he immediately furnished large sums. Thirdly, when, in 1644, an extraordinary embassy was dispatched to England by the States General with instructions to mediate between both English parties, Frederick Henry even ordered the envoys secretly to provoke such difficulties in England that the Dutch would feel obliged to enter into the Civil War – on the royalist side, of course. Lastly, Orange's zeal was intensified when, in 1644–5, the Stuarts proposed a second marriage between both families. But Frederick Henry's activities were, still according to Geyl, continuously thwarted by the province of Holland which, in those very years, constituted itself as the true defender of the Dutch common weal and, in this connexion, as the partisan of the republicanizing English

[1] For example: J. E. Elias, *Het voorspel van den Eersten Engelschen Oorlog* (2 vols., The Hague, 1920); C. H. Wilson, *Profit and power. A study of England and the Dutch wars* (2nd edn, The Hague, 1978).

[2] In *English Historical Review* (1923), *Scottish Historical Review* (1923), *De Gids* (1923, 1927, 1928), *Bijdragen voor Vaderlandsche Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde* (1925). In this article, quotations are taken from the second edition of the book. Dates are given in the New Style or, if necessary, in both Old and New Style.

parliament. The contrasts between Orange and Holland sharpened after 1647 when William II indefatigably carried on his father's policy. It is true that William's sudden death in 1650 put an end to his actions, but his adherents afterwards continued to expect the very best from the Stuarts even during the Anglo-Dutch wars. Not until 1672 did William III – William II's posthumous son – finally come to realize that the true nature of Dutch well-being lay in an independent position of the Seven Provinces *vis-à-vis* the British.

In this picture of Frederick Henry, suggestive because of its strong draughtsmanship and its robust style, Geyl accentuates characteristics quite different from those of Orange's earlier lifetime. Though the prince before 1640 also paid attention to the interests of his family, he first of all proved a thoughtful, sometimes even too prudent politician.[3] Did he, in the forties, really turn into an old fool obsessed by the idea of dynasty? Did young William II indeed follow in his father's tracks? And did the province of Holland as a whole continuously keep a vigilant eye upon father and son during this decade? It is possible to give an answer to these questions on the basis of new research.

II

In 1621 the Dutch Republic resumed the old war against Spain after a truce of twelve years. From 1625 onwards, when Frederick Henry had been appointed stadtholder of five provinces and captain-general of the union, the Dutch government concentrated on sheltering its landward borders by the conquest of a series of buffers beyond the river Yssel, the Rhine and the Meuse.[4] Some Netherlanders, however, held the war to be primarily a struggle for the true Calvinist religion, whereas, in the opinion of others, war was the best means with which to paralyze the competition of the Flemish textile industries.

Before 1630 the adherents of those different views fought side by side. But then, after the first victories, inside the States of Holland – comprising eighteen voting towns and only one vote for the nobility – a faction came into existence that called for peace. The closing of the defensive ring, its members argued, could also be attained by means of negotiations. If this proved to be impossible and war had to continue, they wanted greater attention to be devoted to the struggle at sea where commerce was heavily damaged by Dunkirk privateers. Amsterdam played the vital role in this faction. Opposing this faction was another one, led by the textile manufacturing cities of Leiden and Haarlem, which pleaded for the continuation of war. This second faction found approval in circles of orthodox Calvinists. And a number of smaller towns initially adopted a central position between those two poles. As, for the time being, the Amsterdam faction did not win over a majority in the States of Holland or in the States

[3] P. Geyl, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Stam*, II (3rd edn, Amsterdam, Antwerp, 1961), 481–521. Cf. P. Geyl, 'Een verzuimde kans: Noord en Zuid in 1632', in *Kernproblemen van onze geschiedenis* (Utrecht, 1937), pp. 42–64.

[4] About the Spanish side of the war: J. I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic world 1606–1661* (Oxford, 1982); J. Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte (1618–1639)* (Barcelona, 1975); J. H. Elliott, *The revolt of the Catalans. A study in the decline of Spain (1598–1640)* (Cambridge, 1963); J. H. Elliott, *The count-duke of Olivares. The statesman in an age of decline* (New Haven, 1986). The Dutch side: S. Groenveld and H. L. P. Leeuwenberg, *De bruid in de schuit. De consolidatie van de Nederlandse Republiek 1609–1650* (Zutphen, 1985). Biographies of Frederick Henry: P. J. Blok, *Frederik Hendrik, prins van Oranje* (Amsterdam, 1924); J. J. Poelhekke, *Frederik Hendrik, Prins van Oranje. Een biografisch drieluik* (Zutphen, 1978).

General, the war on land continued. But when, in 1637, the territory of Holland was safeguarded completely through the conquest of Breda, many smaller towns gradually shifted from their central position to an alignment behind Amsterdam, as did the eastern provinces. Frederick Henry, however, considered his task to be unfinished before 1646, fought on, and was assisted by the Leiden faction as well as by vast majorities in the provinces of Zealand and Utrecht.[5]

Meanwhile the Spanish–Dutch war also had its international side. Philip IV of Spain was continually in touch with his relative, the German emperor. Their co-operation posed not only a threat to the Dutch Republic, but to France as well. In consequence the French concluded two offensive treaties in 1635 – the former with the Seven Provinces against Spain, the latter with the enemies of the emperor. From then onwards King Philip suffered heavy losses in the southern Netherlands, as he did in Germany where, in 1638, his supply-route from Milan to Brussels was broken. Only the sea was left open to transport between Spain and Flanders – and thus Philip urgently needed to have good relations with neutral England in order to secure a certain degree of protection.

In England opinions as to the Dutch–Spanish war were divided. King James I had wished to remain aloof from both this conflict and the Thirty Years War in Germany. Charles I soon pursued the same policy in spite of the Treaty of Southampton which he had concluded with the Dutch in 1625. But quite different wishes were expressed by members of parliament during the twenties. Certain factions – some of which were puritan by nature while others were more generally protestant – had in vain requested royal aid for the continental brethren in their apocalyptic struggle against the emperor and Spain, the antichrist.[6] The puritans had persisted in these wishes during Charles's personal rule. The king himself, however, acted purely pragmatically, since Spain as well as France offered sums of money to him in exchange at least for his benevolent neutrality, and from 1638 inclined more and more to Spain. So, in 1639, he allowed Philip to send a large fleet towards Flanders via English waters and harbours. So close

[5] The existence of factions on the provincial level is a new field of study. See J. I. Israel, 'Frederic Henry and the Dutch political factions, 1625–1642', *English Historical Review*, XCVIII (1983), 1–27; S. Groenveld, *Verlopend Getij. De Nederlandse Republiek en de Engelse Burgeroorlog 1640–1646* (Dieren, 1984), pp. 55–66, 105–8; S. Groenveld, 'Adriaen Pauw (1585–1652), een pragmatisch Hollands staatsman', *Spiegel Historiael*, XX (1985), 432–9; S. Groenveld, '"Breda is den Bosch waerd". Politieke betekenis van de innames van Breda in 1625 en 1637', *Jaarboek Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring van Stad en Land van Breda* (1988), pp. 41, 94–109; S. Groenveld, '"J'équippe une flotte très considerable". The Dutch side of the Glorious Revolution', in R. A. Beddard (ed.), *The revolutions of 1688. The Andrew Browning lectures 1988* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 213–45. S. Groenveld, 'Holland, das Haus Oranien und die andern nordniederländischen Provinzen im 17. Jahrhundert. Ein Status Quaestionis und einige kontinuierliche Linien', *Rheinische Geschichtsblätter*, LIII (1989), pp. 92–116.

[6] S. L. Adams, 'Foreign policy and the parliaments of 1621 and 1624,' in K. Sharpe (ed.), *Faction and parliament. Essays on early Stuart history* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 139–71; S. L. Adams 'Spain or the Netherlands? The dilemmas of early Stuart foreign policy', in H. Tomlinson (ed.), *Before the English Civil War. Essays on early Stuart politics and government* (London, 1983), pp. 79–101; M. A. Breslow, *A mirror of England. English Puritan views of foreign nations, 1618–1640* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970); S. Groenveld, '"Als by het huwelyck van man ende wijff". Puriteinse voorstellen voor een Nederlands-Engelse unie, 1642–1652', in E. K. Grootes and J. den Haan (eds.), *Geschiedenis, godsdienst, letterkunde. Opstellen aangeboden aan S. B. J. Zilverberg* (Roden, 1989), pp. 147–158; J. E. C. Hill, 'The English revolution and the Brotherhood of Man', in his *Puritanism and revolution. Studies in interpretation of the English revolution of the seventeenth century* (London, 1958), pp. 123–52.

did relations between the Stuarts and the Habsburgs grow that there was talk of a marriage between Charles's eldest daughter Mary and the Spanish crown prince.

These developments were highly dangerous for the Dutch Republic. Consequently the States General did not hesitate, in 1639, to launch an attack upon a Spanish armada in English territorial waters off the Downs, inflicting a crushing defeat on the Spaniards. Immediately afterwards they sent François Aerssen, lord of Sommelsdijck, to Westminster in order to tackle the problem of the friendly relationship between England and Spain. The Dutch envoy was instructed to state that the Dutch proceedings were justified by the treaty of 1625 and, secondly, to renew that very treaty which was due to expire in 1640.[7] But Aerssen did not meet with any success: Charles wanted to remain in touch with Philip IV. By now the ambassador secretly proposed an alternative course to Frederick Henry. Already in 1638 some talks had been held about a marriage between the Stuart princess Mary and the stadtholder's son William.[8] If Aerssen were now to win this princess's hand for Orange, relations between England and Spain would be considerably dampened. For Philip would find a match between this Stuart daughter and his oldest enemy intolerable and could never allow a younger British princess to marry his son. When, afterwards, other diplomats discovered this, they fully agreed with Aerssen.[9] And Frederick Henry, aware of both dynastic and political advantages, ordered the ambassador to put his suggestion into practice. It is remarkable indeed that Geyl should give no credence to any of these remarks and considerations; in his opinion, only the pleasure of Charles I was of importance for the marriage, whereas Spain did not play any role in the matter.[10]

Charles, however, undoubtedly guessing what was going on in Dutch minds, was only willing to marry his younger daughter into the House of Orange. Though less attractive such an alliance too might be politically beneficial for the Dutch. When this news was disclosed to them in December 1640, the States General as well as the States of Holland shared this opinion with the prince. Holland resolved unanimously – 'eenpaerlijcken' – to congratulate Frederick Henry on the match and to thank God for his blessings bestowed on his church and on 'the well-being of the beloved Fatherland'. The city of Amsterdam fully agreed.[11] The States again demonstrated how conscious they were of political as well as dynastic advantages by sending an embassy consisting of delegates both of the States General and of the prince of Orange to discuss the marriage articles.[12]

Shortly after their arrival King Charles pleasantly surprised the ambassadors by offering, instead, his eldest daughter to the Republic. His reasons were obvious. His

[7] M. G. de Boer, *Tromp en de Armada van 1639* (Amsterdam, 1941); Groenveld, *Verlopend Getij*, pp. 91–5; S. Groenveld, 'The English Civil Wars as a cause of the First Anglo-Dutch War, 1640–1652', *Historical Journal*, xxx (1987), 541–66; S. Groenveld, 'Frederik Hendrik en de Stuarts, 1640–1647. Herziening van de opvattingen van Pieter Geyl', in *Jaarboek Oranje-Nassau Museum* (1987), pp. 7–28.

[8] T. J. Geest, *Amalia van Solms en de Nederlandse politiek van 1625 tot 1648* (Baarn, 1909), pp. 27–31.

[9] Algemeen Rijksarchief The Hague (ARA), States General Records 8386, Report by Aerssen. His correspondence with the States General in Loketkas and Secrete Kas 12576.45; with Frederick Henry in G. Groen van Prinsterer (ed.), *Archives ou Correspondance inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau*, 2nd series 3 (Utrecht, 1858). The other diplomats are mentioned in ARA, Lias Engeland (LE) 1641–2, 27 Jan. 1641: Johan Wolfert van Brederode a.o. to States General.

[10] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, p. 17.

[11] ARA, Resolutions of the States General (RSG) 1640, 12 Dec.; Resolutions of the States of Holland (RSH) 1640, pp. 271–3 (same date).

[12] ARA, States General records, 8391, Report by Johan Wolfert van Brederode, Aerssen, Heenvliet and Joachimi. Groenveld, *Verlopend Getij*, pp. 95–6.

negotiations with Spain had failed; Philip IV, faced with uprisings in Portugal and Catalonia, had no money to spare for England. And Charles, in his turn, was in urgent need of support. Because of his recent war against the Scots he had been forced to call the Short, and later on, the Long Parliament in order to get the requisite money. Dutch assistance was by now required to prevent too strong a dependence upon Lords and Commons. But the king did not feel a special preference for the Dutch; an alliance with them 'will prove as useful to this Kingdom as with any of our Neighbours' he told parliament.[13] Quite different, however, were the views of a majority of Lords and Commons. In December 1640 these had already shown their joy at the Dutch marriage; at present they expressed their friendly feelings towards the Republic while, in 1642, they even requested the king in their Nineteen Propositions to conclude 'a more strict alliance with the States of the United Provinces and other neighbouring princes and states of the Protestant religion'.[14] The opposite views of the Puritan-influenced parliament and of the pragmatic king still subsisted and would play their part in the outbreak of the Civil War.

Meanwhile Charles tried to exploit the Anglo-Dutch marriage by proposing at the same time the conclusion of a political pact. But neither the States General nor Frederick Henry were willing to connect both treaties, arguing that political negotiations should not interfere with the talks on the marriage treaty and that the Dutch were not prepared to become entangled in the growing domestic problems of the English on the ground of recently-accepted obligations.[15] In the short run, a marriage agreement would offer them adequate guarantees against co-operation between England and Spain, though not before the difficulties between king and parliament had been settled, in the long run, therefore, the Dutch and the English could discuss a political alliance. Charles, who was not able to find another ally, was forced to submit. Still, he had one way left to remain in contact with his Spanish friends: after the wedding Mary was not to leave England for the Republic before she was twelve years old, in 1643. According to English marriage law the bride had to agree personally to the match on her twelfth birthday. She could thus also reject it in favour of a Spanish suitor if incited to do so by her father.[16] Grudgingly the Dutch accepted this condition – and on 12 May 1641 the celebration of the marriage took place. However, because of the mounting suspense in England, the young Princess Mary was already carried off to the Republic in the spring of 1642, accompanied by her mother. There she celebrated her twelfth birthday in November 1643, thus agreeing to her marriage. By now England and Spain were separated in fact. Orange and the States had acted in complete accord; none of them wished to have any involvement in Great Britain's growing troubles.

[13] About Anglo–Spanish relations: A. J. Loomie, 'Alonso de Cardenas and the Long Parliament, 1640–1648', *English Historical Review*, XCVII (1982), 289–305. Charles's remarks in *Journals of the House of Lords* (*LJ*), IV (n.p., n.d.), p. 157 (10/20 Feb. 1641). Cf. ARA, Report by Aerssen, 10 Mar. 1640.

[14] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II3, p. 306 (11/21 Dec. 1640): Henry Vane to Frederick Henry. ARA, LE 1640, 1 Dec.: Albert Joachimi to States General. *LJ*, V, 97–9. *Journals of the House of Commons* (*CJ*) II, 599–600.

[15] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, p. 19, insists that the Dutch embassy wanted to conclude a political treaty as well. The correspondence of the ambassadors with Frederick Henry proves the contrary: Groen (ed.), *Archives* II3, pp. 345–416.

[16] See Groen (ed.), *Archives* II3, pp. 290–3 (17 Aug. 1640): Heenvliet to Frederick Henry; pp. 360–2 (26 Feb. 1641): Aerssen to Frederick Henry.

III

In 1642 some Dutch politicians raised their voices against a too radical enfeeblement of England on account of its domestic troubles. For that could yet enable Spain to transport money and troops to Flanders unhindered. As a consequence, Frederick Henry proposed to offer Dutch mediation to both English parties, just as the Holland nobility and the ports of Amsterdam and Rotterdam had suggested. All of these advocated an active form of neutrality and, if civil war should occur in Britain, the supply of munitions to both English parties. The Leiden faction, however, fearful lest the Dutch should in some way become involved in English problems, opposed any kind of interference, and gained for this passive neutrality the support of the small cities at the centre of the political spectrum. Thus, where British affairs were concerned, the prince of Orange took the same line as the very faction which was opposed to his Spanish policy at that moment, whereas the adherents of such a policy were his opponents now.[17] In May 1642 the active neutralists got the upper hand. Consequently Willem Boreel of Amsterdam and the Utrecht nobleman Johan van Reede, lord of Renswoude, were appointed ambassadors. But just when they were about to sail for England their mission was sabotaged by Queen Henrietta Maria – to the fury of Frederick Henry, 'that must be said', Geyl uncomprehendingly admits.[18]

What prompted the queen to this action? In 1642 she did not come to the Republic to request mediation – which no doubt might result in an unattractive compromise –, but to obtain money and to buy munitions for war. Henrietta Maria was firmly convinced that she could fully rely on Frederick Henry, her daughter's father-in-law. But the prince did not turn out to be very helpful. Not until the queen had vainly tried to achieve her aims everywhere in the country – and even in Antwerp – for four months, was he willing to give her a little support: Geyl did not notice this interval. Orange, the queen wrote to Charles I, was 'une personne malaysée à engager'.[19] Later on he also rendered scant assistance, permitting only a few English officers of the Dutch army to leave for England or sending small amounts of weapons. This kind of assistance was anyhow permissible for a neutral party according to seventeenth-century custom without its becoming involved in a war. A larger quantity of munitions, however, was supplied by non-Orangists, by trading cities in Holland and Zealand which, after the Civil War had been declared, did good business with both parties. These cities continued their trade even after the States General, urged on by the passive neutralist faction of Leiden, had prescribed impartiality and forbidden any exports of war materials on 1 November 1642[20] – a measure that again sorely disappointed Henrietta Maria.

In the meantime the English queen also felt insulted by the arrival in The Hague of Walter Strickland, an envoy of parliament. Strickland's instructions, granted to him on

[17] The proofs for these relations cannot be found in the official resolutionbooks of the States of Holland, for those books do not give any information about voting in the assemblies. But some deputies took more detailed minutes themselves for the use of their cities, mentioning it; in these years the pensionary of the small town of Medemblik, Nicolaes Stellingwerff, was very active. His minutes are in the keeping of the Gemeentearchief of Medemblik, in the Streekarchief voor Westfriesland in Hoorn (GAM). As to the mediation: RSH as noted by Stellingwerff III, passim. Geyl did not know the existence of these minutes. [18] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, p. 30.

[19] C., comte de Baillon (ed.), *Lettres inédites de Henriette-Marie de France, reine d'Angleterre* (Paris, 1884), pp. 21–4 (27 Mar. 1642): Henrietta Maria to Charles I.

[20] ARA, RSG 1642, 1 Nov. See a protest by the royalist resident in The Hague: LE 1642, 6 November: Sir William Boswell to States General.

the very day on which Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham, as well as a letter from Lords and Commons to the States General, again revealed parliament's wish to enter into a 'more neere and straight league and union' with the Dutch brethren.[21] Parliament thus revived the old wish not, under these circumstances, in order to give support to the Dutch in their struggle against Spain, but to receive from them assistance against Charles I, by now the antichrist. When Charles's enemies, both English and Scottish, tried to strengthen their position in Great Britain still more by concluding the Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, they appointed beside Strickland the Scot Thomas Cunningham, giving him an identical charge.[22] But the States General did not consider either man a representative of the legitimate authority, i.e. the king. They consequently refused to admit them to their plenary meeting, but only received them as private persons in a smaller committee. The States of Holland, however, gave to them the same reception that they were accustomed to give to Sir William Boswell, the royalist resident. Holland interpreted the concept of impartiality to mean that the province's interests would be best served if no offence was given to either of the two sides in the Civil War. So did the States of Utrecht, although they refused to accept some copies of the Covenant in order to avoid even the semblance of partiality. Frederick Henry also granted Strickland an audience in January 1643.[23] But, just as in 1641, none of these Dutch authorities was prepared to conclude a political alliance with the English, either with the parliamentary party or with the Stuarts. Only the four Calvinist classes of Zealand would decide to write letters of comfort to their British brethren in 1643 – but were immediately reproved by their provincial States for such politically dangerous behaviour.[24]

Under these circumstances Henrietta Maria considered it senseless to stay any longer in the Republic. In February 1643 she left the country, albeit with a large amount of munitions which she called her luggage. The small towns of Holland protested, but Frederick Henry persuaded them to be flexible this time, 'because without that there is no appearance at all that the queen will depart, but only that she continues to stay with us to the great detriment of the country'.[25] Preference for neutrality was universal; at most active neutralists, including Frederick Henry, were still willing to offer Dutch mediation.

[21] ARA, Loketkas States General 12576.51, 22 Aug./1 Sep. 1642: Parliament to States General: 18 Oct. 1642: Strickland to States General. *LJ*, v, 316–17 (same date).

[22] J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart constitution, 1603–1688. Documents and commentary* (Cambridge, 1969), pp. 263–6; *Calendar of state papers, Domestic series (CSP Dom) 1644*, pp. 19, 25, 26, 32; E. J. Courthope (ed.), *The Journal of Thomas Cuningham of Camphere 1640–1654 with his Thrissels Banner and explication thereof* (Edinburgh, 1928).

[23] H. Boskowski (ed.), *Mémoires de F. de Dohna* (Königsberg, 1898), pp. 77–8. H. Bots and P. Leroy (eds.), *Correspondance intégrale d'André Rivet et de Claude Sarrau*, I (Amsterdam, 1978), 363 (5 Jan. 1643): Rivet to Sarrau. H. C. Rogge (ed.), *Brieven van Nicolaes van Reigersberch aan Hugo de Groot* (Amsterdam, 1901), pp. 728–30 (3 Jan. 1643): Reigersberch to De Groot.

[24] L. van Aitzema, *Saken van Staet en Oorlogh in, ende omtrent de Verenigde Nederlanden* (7 vols., The Hague, 1669–72), II, 928–32; J. H. Kluiver, 'Zeeuwse reacties op de Acte van Seclusie', in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden (BMGN)*, XCI (1976), pp. 406–28, esp. 406–7; *Calendar of state papers, Venetian series (CSP Ven) 1643–47*, pp. 85–6 (1 Apr. 1644): Agostini from London to Venice.

[25] GAM, RSH Stellingwerff 115, 25 Feb. 1643: 'duer dien buijten sulcx geen apparentie is datte Coninginne vertrecken sal, maer tot merckelijcken ondienst vant landt alhier blijven continueren'.

IV

In the first half of 1643 passive neutralists successfully blocked any offer of mediation by requiring previous proof of agreement from both English sides. But the active neutralists, fearing that events in England would develop in an undesirable direction for the Dutch if they took no steps, stood firm and, finally, in the autumn, won the day. Boreel, a man from the political centre, and Renswoude, pro-Orange but not automatically pro-Stuart, received instructions to mediate.

Having arrived in England in January 1644 both envoys almost immediately went to Oxford, the residence of Charles I. According to their instructions they had at first to win over the lawful prince to the cause of mediation, and only afterwards parliament. Initially the king tried to prejudice the ambassadors to such an extent that Lords and Commons, their suspicion being roused, would reject any Dutch interposition, and thus provoke the indignation of the Republic. But when Boreel and Renswoude did not enter into his overtures, Charles receded and accepted their offer, albeit reluctantly. The envoys had not behaved very compliantly to the king.[26]

Nevertheless, when both Dutchmen next proferred parliament their good services they did not receive any reply for the time being. This was due to a shift of balance in the house of commons. There John Pym had led an influential centre group, lying between a peace faction at one extreme and a war faction at the other. But after Pym's death late in 1643, the centre group drew, in the very year 1644, nearer to the war party. Now a radicalizing majority of the house wanted to press the king to make extreme concessions and did not wish to accept any mediation by whomsoever,[27] not even by the brethren from the Republic. Neither was this majority willing to rebuff its most desired ally. So parliament only seemed to have one option: to keep the ambassadors on a string, promising them that their assistance might be required when talks should be opened with the king. But when at last, in 1645, negotiations started in Uxbridge, none of the Dutchmen was invited to lend any help. Now Charles profited by the situation and succeeded to some degree in inclining Boreel and Renswoude toward himself. Consequently both of them took the initiative after the failure of Uxbridge to solve the deadlock by publishing their own proposals – proposals more or less corresponding to Charles's wishes. But parliament did not comply with these, for it had not accepted Dutch mediation before.

By now the ambassadors asked to be called back to The Hague. There, in May 1645, they not altogether unjustifiably blamed parliament for the failure of their mission. The Lords and Commons may well have manoeuvred themselves into an insoluble situation, and they were aware of it. Because of their mounting irritation on that point, Boreel and Renswoude at last inclined to Charles, but not on account of a permanent desire for formal Dutch war-efforts on behalf of the king, as Geyl argues. In a detailed

[26] ARA, States General Records 8396 and 8397: report by Boreel and Renswoude. Groenveld, *Verlopend Getij*, pp. 111–20.

[27] J. H. Hexter, *The reign of King Pym* (3rd edn, Cambridge, Mass., 1968), D. Underdown, *Pride's purge. Politics and the Puritan revolution* (Oxford, 1971); V. Pearl, 'Oliver St John and the "middle group" in the Long Parliament: August 1643 – May 1644', *English Historical Review*, LXXXI (1966), 490–519; L. Glow, 'Political affiliations in the house of commons after Pym's death', *Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research*, XXXVIII (1965), 48–70; L. Glow, 'Peace negotations, politics and the Committee of Both Kingdoms, 1644–1646', *The Historical Journal*, XII (1969), 3–22.

letter to the States General, parliament tried to justify its proceedings and, as much as possible, to point out the mistakes of the envoys – but it nowhere alluded to the sort of activities Geyl suggested.[28]

V

At the same time Henrietta Maria, now living in France, resumed her activities to collect money and munitions for her husband. One of those whom she tried to win over was Frederick Henry. In June 1644 she secretly dispatched to the prince the theologian Dr Stephen Goffe, a man with little sense of reality, to propose a marriage between the prince of Wales and Orange's eldest daughter, Louisa Henrietta. At the same time offensive and defensive treaties should be concluded between the Dutch, the French and the English royalists. In the event of France being unwilling to enter into such an alliance Spain could take its place; then the Republic would have to end its almost eighty years' old war against the Spaniards by concluding a truce....[29] Frederick Henry, however, who only held private talks with Goffe, rejected all propositions. Continuation of civil war was not the right way to solve British problems, he wrote to Lord Jermyn, Henrietta Maria's anything but sagacious councillor; accommodation between Charles and his subjects had to be considered the most preferable means. The prince put into words the same idea which had formed the basis of the mediation-plan.[30]

Nevertheless in the spring of 1645 the queen sent Goffe back with new propositions. She did not want a large dowry, but rather intensive Franco–Dutch assistance in the shape of a maritime action, grounded on an offensive and defensive alliance.[31] However, Frederick Henry again rejected the combination of a political and a marriage treaty, just as he had done in 1641; he declared himself prepared only to discuss private business and offered Goffe a generous dowry. Yet the theologian stuck to his opinion that, in the end, the marriage proposals would make Frederick Henry politically pliable – until, in April 1645, he discovered that the prince had found another suitor for his daughter: the elector of Brandenburg, who would indeed marry Louisa Henrietta in December 1646.[32]

Although Orange had taken an interest in the dynastic side of the English propositions, he had personally declined them on purely political grounds. The province of Holland had not known anything about all this, and thus did not bear the least responsibility for upsetting the plan – exactly contrary to Geyl's view.[33] In October 1645 Goffe's letters were captured by parliament in a skirmish near Sherborn in Yorkshire. When they were published in England and, in the following spring, were edited in a Dutch translation, they did not excite any emotion in the Republic: people

[28] ARA, Loketkas 12576.51: parliament's memorandum to States General, 14/24 June 1645. *LJ*, VII, 240–1 (24 Feb./6 Mar. 1645). *CJ*, IV, 60–1 (same date), 62 (25 Feb./7 Mar.).

[29] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 101–4 (30 May/3 June 1644): Goffe's instructions. Documents on these negotiations are to be found in the Koninklijk Huisarchief (Royal Archives) in The Hague (KHA), Frederick Henry's records XIV A 2.

[30] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 117–18 (14 Sep. 1644): Frederick Henry to Henry lord Jermyn.

[31] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 120–7 (about 1 Feb. 1645): new instructions for Goffe.

[32] See a.o. R. Fruin, 'De jeugd van Louise Henriette d'Orange'. In his *Verspreide Geschriften*, IV (The Hague, 1901), 95–121. KHA, Frederick Henry records XIV A 2.

[33] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, p. 36.

probably read in those letters, however one-sided they might be, that Orange had continually fended off all politically dangerous English suggestions.[34]

VI

In 1646 the situation in Britain and in the Republic changed considerably. In England the Civil War came to an end when King Charles surrendered to the Scots. In the Republic Frederick Henry resigned himself to the desire for peace of the Amsterdam faction and its growing adherence. He also decided to do so because he had closed the defensive ring around the Dutch territory in 1645 by the conquest of Hulst. Spanish–Dutch negotiations in Münster soon led to an agreement, and in 1648 to a formal peace treaty. France, the Dutch ally, continued the war with Spain, however. Frederick Henry died in 1647, thus before the peace could be promulgated, and was succeeded by William II. Young and ambitious, William hoped to enhance his prestige in the same way as his predecessors: as a military commander. For this purpose he wanted to break the peace with Spain of which he had never approved, and to resume the war against Philip IV side by side with the French – a wish quite opposed to the official Dutch policy. At the same time the prince wanted to put aside anyone he considered in his way.[35]

The first person with whom he clashed was his mother, Amalia van Solms, who, in Frederick Henry's times, had exercised a great influence at court, and who had willingly embraced the peace policy. Now that her husband had died, she had to take a step backward – but that was contrary to her nature. William was not generally disposed to take advice, however, and certainly not from a person who favoured a policy he detested. Thus quarrels between mother and son were the order of the day: 'Her Highness recommends many things that are impracticable for His Highness; then Madame loses her temper. His Highness keeps silence or tries to slip away, then Her Highness weeps', an eye-witness reported.[36]

On the same grounds William rejected co-operation with his father's former councillors. But as yet without a personal clientele, he did not have any successors at his disposition. Admittedly he tried by means of donations rapidly to win over some prominent persons, and hoped to create a network of friends in each separate town via secret correspondences. But the group of his intimate confidents remained very small during his lifetime.[37] He was thus obliged to reappoint his father's councillors, who

[34] The publication of the letters was entitled *The Lord George Digby's cabinet and Dr. Goffs negotiations*, B.L., Thomason Tracts E 329 (15); in the Republic: *Extracten Uyt verscheyde Missiven, gevonden in de Lord Digbijs Cabinet* (April/May 1646), Koninklijke Bibliotheek The Hague, Knuttel Collection 5252.

[35] The best biography of William II is written by G. W. Kernkamp, *Prins Willem II* (Amsterdam, 1943). Cf. S. Groenveld, 'Willem II en de Stuarts, 1647–1650', *BMGN*, CIII (1988), 157–81.

[36] Much inside information about the court of the Oranges can be found in the diaries of the Frisian stadtholder Willem Frederik van Nassau, who spent every summer in the army and, after the peace was made, in The Hague or the other palaces of the Oranges. KHA, Dagboeken Willem Frederik (DWF); see DWF 1648, 2/12 July, 12/22 Sep., 23 Sep./3 Oct., 3/13 Oct., 25 Oct./4 Nov., 22 Nov./2 Dec.; DWF 1649, 15/25 Aug., 27 Aug./6 Sep.,10/20 Sep., 14/24 Sep. The quotation: 'Hare Hoogheyt recommandeert veul dingen die Sijne Hoogheyt niet doen kan, dan wordt mevrou quaet. Sijne Hoogheyt swiecht stil, off wil gaen, Hare Hoogheyt krijt dan': ibid. 16/26 Sep. Cf. Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, p. 244 (24 Oct. 1647), 245–6 (28 Oct.): De la Thuillerie to Mazarin.

[37] B. J. Veeze, *De Raad van de Prinsen van Oranje tijdens de minderjarigheid van Willem III* (Assen, 1932), pp. 23–6. S. Groenveld, '"Een out ende getrouw dienaer, beyde van den staet ende

maintained relations with Princess Amalia. Consequently two factions could be discerned at court: 'la mère et ceux de son parti' and 'le fils et son dépendans', as the French diplomat Abel Servien called them already in 1647. Both of them sustained correspondence with officials in the several provinces.[38]

A comparable situation developed during those years in English royalist circles. King Charles' party was confronted by radicalization inside the victorious parliament, where political and religious Independents got the upper hand in co-operation with the army and finally had the faction of presbyterians purged by Colonel Pride in 1648.[39] These developments played a part in the severance of the Anglo-Scottish relations in that same year. King Charles, still residing in Scotland, refused to sign the Covenant, but in 1647 had already accepted the more moderate Engagement which put power in the hands of the presbyterians for a period of three years.[40] And in divided Ireland the king's chances were apparently not lost since the Catholic Confederation of Kilkenny as well as the presbyterian Anglo-Irish were willing to give him support.[41]

From 1646 onwards the question was raised of where the prince of Wales would take up his residence. Prince Charles should be prevented at all costs from falling into the hands of parliament. Thus the Scilly Islands, where he stayed from March 1646, were not safe enough; Jersey, where he arrived in April, was less risky. But would he from there go on to Ireland, or rather to Scotland? In 1645, King Charles had intimated that the prince would join his mother in France. But information about the royal wishes was not fully reliable. Thus most privy councillors who remained with the prince did not sympathize with the idea that he should leave British territory; besides they did not put a great trust in promises for support made to Henrietta Maria by the French government. Consequently, a vehement dispute took place between these councillors and those around the queen, resulting in Prince Charles's departure for France and the privy councillors' remaining behind in Jersey.[42]

So in the circles of royalist refugees two factions stood out, confronting one another ever more harshly on account of their differences about whether more intense contacts with Scotland or with Ireland were preferable. Henrietta Maria gave preference to the Scots led by the duke of Hamilton, with whom King Charles had already concluded the Engagement; she put up with their presbyterian wishes. But the privy councillors in Jersey, especially Edward Hyde and Sir Edward Nicholas, opted for the Irish with

---

welstant in t'huys van Oragnen". Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687), een hoog Haags ambtenaar', *Holland, Regionaal-historisch tijdschrift*, XX (1988), 3–32, esp. 17. V. S. Groenveld, '"C'est le père, qui parle". Patronage bij Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687)', *Jaarboek Orange-Nassau Museum* (1988), 52–107, esp. 68–71. KHA, DWF 1648, 23 June/3 July, 24 June/4 July, 26 June/6 July, 14/24 Sep., 25 Oct./4 Nov., 4/14 Nov.; DWF 1649, 20/30 Sep., 18/28 Oct. KHA, William II records XI c 7: Letters from the Zealand regent Hendrick Thibaut to William II. Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 314–15 (14 Aug. 1649): William II to Mazarin(?).

[38] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 220–7 (27 May 1647): Servien to Mazarin.

[39] Underdown, *Pride's purge*; A. B. Worden, *The Rump Parliament 1648–1653* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 1–19.

[40] Charles's ideas as to the Engagement and the Covenant in R. Scrope and T. Monkhouse (eds.), *State papers collected by E. Hyde, earl of Clarendon, commencing 1621* (3 vols., Oxford, 1767–86), II, 305 (Charles to Henrietta Maria, 15 Dec. 1646).

[41] T. L. Coonan, *The Irish catholic confederacy and the Puritan revolution* (Dublin, London, New York, 1954), pp. 177–293. R. Bagwell, *Ireland under the Stuarts during the Interregnum* (2 vols., London, 1909), II, 103–90.

[42] E. Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *The history of the rebellion and Civil Wars in England* (Oxford, 1843), pp. 564–5 and 594–605. A. Fraser, *King Charles II* (London, 1980), pp. 34–5. S. E. Hoskins, *Charles the Second in the Channel Islands* (2 vols., London, 1854), I, 300–448.

whom, being anglicans, they felt they had more in common than with the Scots whom they also deemed unreliable.[43] In this matter the French statesman Mazarin also played his part: the prince of Wales, now residing in France, had, in Mazarin's opinion, to be kept from co-operating with a party which could pose a threat to French interests.[44]

Events reached a climax in 1648 when revolts in Kent, Essex and South Wales, an insurrection of the navy, and an invasion of the Scots under Hamilton ignited the Second Civil War. Admittedly the Scots were already defeated in August near Preston, but at sea the war would continue much longer. Under these circumstances the prince of Wales left France in July 1648 with the approbation of Mazarin for the Republic, where he went on board one of his men-of-war at Hellevoetsluis. Again the Seven Provinces were confronted with British troubles. But because of factional developments inside both Stuart and Orange camps Anglo–Dutch relations would soon become still more complicated.

VII

Prince Charles did not remain at sea for long. In September 1648 he put with the royalist fleet into Hellevoetsluis, immediately followed by a parliamentary squadron.[45] Would both navies clash with each other inside Dutch territorial waters? In order to prevent this, the Dutch stationed some of their men-of-war under Lieutenant-admiral Tromp between both parties and forbade them to sell their booty in those provinces.[46] Deliberations over the tense situation were held in The Hague where former customs revived. Royalist delegates were formally received by the States General as well as the States of Holland, whereas parliamentary envoys only got an audience in the plenary assembly of the States of Holland. Unavoidably the latter proposed again the creation of a union between parliament and the Republic.[47] In Holland the passive neutralists considered even Tromp's mission to be too risky, whereas active neutralists like Amsterdam and Rotterdam approved of it.[48] And the States General reissued their passive neutralist resolution of 1 November 1642.[49] The navy problem was solved, however, when both fleets put to sea of their own accord in December 1648. The prince of Wales resolved to stay in The Hague, as did his brother the duke of York.

Reactions at the court of Orange were quite different. Princess Amalia repeatedly showed her resentment against the English, who behaved impolitely and were 'sponging' on the House of Orange, as she argued. Not without some self-satisfaction

[43] D. Underdown, *Royalist conspiracy in England 1649–1660* (New Haven, 1960), pp. 9–12. B. H. G. Wormald, *Clarendon, politics, history and religion 1640–1660* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 147–58 and passim. D. Nicholas, *Mr. Secretary Nicholas 1593–1669. His life and letters* (London, 1953), pp. 224–40 and passim.

[44] D. A. Digby, *Anglo-French relations 1641 to 1649* (London, 1933), pp. 56–150; Ph. A. Knachel, *England and the Fronde. The impact of the English Civil War and revolution on France* (Ithaca, New York, 1967), pp. 18–49; cf. Loomie, 'Cardenas'; *CSP Ven. 1647–1652* (London, 1927), p. 42, Nani to Venice, 11 Feb. 1648.

[45] J. R. Powell, *The navy in the English Civil War* (London, 1962), pp. 146–90.

[46] ARA, RSH 1648, pp. 332–3 (30 Sep.), 335 (1 Oct.), 353 (9 Oct.). GAM, RSH Stellingwerff 144, same dates.

[47] Groenveld, 'Als by het huwelyck', pp. 150–2.

[48] Gemeentearchief Rotterdam (GAR), Resolutions of the Council 22, p. 231 (10 Sep. 1648). Gemeentelijke Archiefdienst Amsterdam (GAA), Resolutions of the Council 18, f. 204 ro. (11 Sept. 1648). The passive neutralists: GAM, RSH Stellingwerff 144, 3 October 1648.

[49] ARA, RSG 1648, 6 November.

she recounted that she had not given any answer when Henrietta Maria once again proposed a marriage, this time between the duke of York and her second daughter, Albertine Agnes.[50] The former councillors of Frederick Henry acted more reflectively, especially when in those very days Edward Hyde joined the prince of Wales and when, under his influence, the privy council turned from pro-Scottish to pro-Irish. In this precarious situation the Orangist councillors judged that the wisest decision for William II to take was to dispatch 'une deputation plus notable et non suspecte' to England in order to restore peace between parliament and King Charles.[51] It was the policy of moderation and mediation, championed by Frederick Henry, which was continued by this faction.

A quite new element in Dutch policy, however, was the proceedings of Prince William II. The honour of his alliance with the Stuart family and the personal friendship of the prince of Wales prompted him to give active support to Charles, he wrote in the autumn of 1648.[52] Moreover, his initiatives had a political side as well. Like some French diplomats the prince was convinced that the Spaniards and parliament were making overtures against France. If he were to resume the war against Spain, he would automatically clash with Lords and Commons; so co-operation with the Stuarts was inevitable. It is not clear, however, which war the prince thought of waging first, the English or the Spanish one.[53] But towards the end of 1648 he surely realized that by then he was too powerless to wage any of them. He had perforce to abide by the declaration of neutrality of the States General. Things would be better, he wrote to Prince Charles, after he himself had replaced many city-magistrates in the Seven Provinces, just as his uncle Prince Maurice had done before, in 1618....[54]

So William was not inclined to idle away his time. Besides his secret talks with Prince Charles, he was concerned with three topics. First, in spite of the prohibitions of the States General, he stimulated the sale of booty brought into Dutch ports by royalist men-of-war and privateers.[55] In the second place he actively favoured Stuart co-operation with Scotland. It was easier to invade England from there than from Ireland; besides, it seemed plausible that European protestants, including the Dutch Calvinists, would be ready to help their Scottish brethren. This did not mean that William sympathized personally with the Scots on religious grounds; in fact he felt aversion to the orthodox presbyterian convictions which predominated in Scotland

[50] KHA, DWF 1648, 2/12 July, 12/22 Sep., 27 Nov./7 Dec.

[51] J. A. Worp (ed.), *De briefwisseling van Constantijn Huygens (1608–1687)* (6 vols., The Hague, 1911–18), IV, 491 (19 Aug. 1648), 493 (30 and 31 Aug.), 493–494 (2 and 3 Sep.), 497–8 (21 Sep.), 498–9 (28 Sep.), 502–3 (19 Oct.): David le Leu de Wilhem to Huygens. Most of these letters are also published by Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 263–73.

[52] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 267–8: memorandum by William II, written in November 1648 as the contents makes clear, and not in September as the editor suggests. Groenveld, 'Willem II', p. 171 n. 63.

[53] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 352–3 (24 Feb. 1650): William II to Godefroy d'Estrades (?). Cf. p. lxix n. 2 (30 Jan. 1650): Servien to Crouillé; 415–18 (21 Sep. 1650): Brasset to Mazarin. The Frisian stadtholder too expected an alliance to be concluded between Spain and the parliament, with Holland as a third partner: KHA, DWF 1649, 14/24 Oct. About priorities: Groenveld, 'Willem II', pp. 171–2. R. Fruin, 'De oorlogsplannen van Prins Willem II na zijn aanslag op Amsterdam in 1650', in his *Verspreide Geschriften*, IV, 122–94, esp. 136–7.

[54] Groen (ed.), *Archives* II4, pp. 267–8: memorandum by William II. For the activities of Prince Maurice in 1618, see Groenveld and Leeuwenberg, *Bruid*, pp. 29–44.

[55] Clarendon, *History*, pp. 673–4. Clarendon, *State papers*, II, 416 (24 Sep./4 Oct. 1648): anonymous report. The privy councillors in the Republic acted sometimes as a prize court.

after Preston.[56] In order to achieve his end he played a role in the appointment of Hyde and his pro-Irish colleague Francis Cottington as royalist envoys to Spain in 1649: after their departure the pro-Irish faction would lose its majority.[57]

Lastly, William devoted his energy to large-scale projects of the same nature as those which Frederick Henry had sabotaged in 1644–6. Such a plan in 1648 was initiated again by Dr Stephen Goffe. By now 500 troops, furnished by the duke of Lorraine, were to be transported to England from the Wadden Island Borcum on board ships hired by William. The expedition was aimed at the release of Charles I. However, before preparations were finished the plan was crossed by parliament's victory near Preston. Fierce discussions followed in the privy council about a new destination for the ships. Would they sail to Guernsey in order to conquer that island? Or to Jersey to strengthen the royalist base over there? But ships and troops could not be kept under arms until the decision was taken. So the project collapsed. Prince William lost a large sum of money.[58]

VIII

In January 1649, the prince of Wales took an unusual step: he asked the States General for help. His father was in danger of his life. Would Their High Mightinesses be willing to do their utmost to rescue the king?[59] The States General immediately dispatched one of their best diplomats to London: Adriaen Pauw, the architect of the Peace of Münster. The House of Orange did not protest against this appointment, though Prince William regarded Pauw as his chief enemy.[60] The Dutch mission failed, however: the king was beheaded. The execution roused a storm of indignation through the Seven Provinces: actually this very deed was incompatible with feelings about legitimacy which prevailed in this republican society.[61] Certain governing bodies also ran the risk of being involved and were willing not only to condole the prince of Wales on his loss, but at the same time to congratulate him on his succession. Holland, however, advised them to keep their heads: so long as it was not known whether England would be a monarchy or a republic it was too early for congratulations. For the time being it seemed to be more sensible to keep to condolences, doing so 'in terms of neutrality', moreover. At the same time the States of Holland prohibited all theologians from condemning King Charles's execution from the pulpits or by means of pamphlets.[62]

Holland's prudence was stimulated by growing difficulties at sea, where royalist

[56] KHA, William II records XI D 5, 8 Nov. 1649: William II to Charles II. For the role of the Dutch, see J. Birch (ed.), *A collection of the state papers of John Thurloe esq.* (7 vols., London, 1742), I, 115 (9/19 Sep. 1649): information by Strickland.

[57] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, pp. 48–52. KHA, William II records XI D 5, 14 Sept. 1649: William II to Charles II; ibid. VIII 15, 31 Jan. 1650: Hyde to William II; ibid. XI A 3, 22 Apr./2 May 1649: Henrietta Maria to William II. Clarendon, *History*, p. 718.

[58] Groenveld, 'Willem II', pp. 174–5.

[59] ARA, RSG 1649, 22 and 23 January. Loketkas 12598.52: Charles's declaration. The prince asked France as well for help: *CSP Dom. 1648–1649*, pp. 346, 347.

[60] KHA, DWF 1648, 26 Oct./5 Nov. DWF 1649, 11/21 Aug.

[61] D. Grosheide, *Cromwell naar het oordeel van zijn Nederlandse tijdgenoten* (Amsterdam, 1951), pp. 5–28.

[62] ARA, Resolutions of Gecommitteerde Raden (executive council) of the States of Holland 1647–1649, 16 Feb. 1649. RSH 1649, p. 29 (25 Feb.), 30 (26 Feb.), 31 (1 March), 36 (2 March). RSG 1649, 19 to 22 Feb.

men-of-war, Irish privateers, and parliamentary ships captured an increasing number of Dutch merchantmen.[63] But that impulsive man William II wished to launch a rigorous counteraction against the British by having sixty men-of-war built immediately. Did he want to enforce the military conflict with parliament at this very moment?[64] Amsterdam and the active neutralists, however, preferred diplomatic means. On their advice the States General sent a commissioner to Ireland to negotiate for the release of Dutch vessels as early as April 1649 – but this mission came to nothing.[65] Next year Their High Mightinesses lingered on arranging diplomatic representation with the not yet recognized government of the commonwealth. Holland now resolved to dispatch a commissioner of its own to Westminster, its maritime interests being in too great a danger.[66] Was the largest province prepared to abandon its neutrality in favour of parliament?

This question can be answered by looking at the new projects of Orange and Stuart. In the spring of 1649, while the pro-Irish faction still dominated Charles's privy council – Hyde and Cottington as yet being in The Hague – a resolution was passed for action in co-operation with the Irish. But money was lacking. For that reason Stuart requested the States General for some transport ships and for 300,000 guilders to pay off his debts. Some Hollanders, among whom were delegates from Amsterdam, immediately voted for it: the ships were meant 'not for hostility but for security', and a donation for the payment of outstanding debts was not an act of hostility either. But a majority of other towns and provinces dawdled so long that Charles departed before a decision was taken.[67] In what ways had he obtained the finances required? Partly by way of a loan which William II contracted on his behalf, partly as a gift, granted to him by Amsterdam in order to prevent internecine quarrels in the Republic – and maybe to get rid of Stuart as well.[68] It was obvious that the prince of Orange did not have the power to manage the States General at will and, at the same time, that actively neutral Amsterdam accorded equal treatment to both English sides. Charles's expedition turned out badly, however: Irish armies were defeated near Drogheda while Stuart was still in France.

By then the fierce presbyterian Scots under the marquis of Argyle were the only possible ally left for Charles. In March and April 1650 he consulted with them in Breda, in the presence of Orange. Would he now subscribe to the Covenant? William laughed aside Charles's scruples: had not Stuart's own grandfather, Henry IV of France, set a good example of political opportunism by his 'Paris vaut bien une

[63] Provisional figures of seizures of ships and their values: Groenveld, 'English civil wars', pp. 558–65.

[64] ARA, RSG 1649, 1 May; RSH 1649, p. 112 (same date).

[65] ARA, RSG 1649, 28 April, 1, 18, 23 May; RSH 1649, p. 105 (29 April); Groenveld, 'English civil wars', p. 562.

[66] On this mission see S. Groenveld, *Het gewest en de unie. Het Hollandse gezantschap van Gerard Schaep Pietersz. naar Engeland, 1650–1651, als fase in de Nederlands-Engelse betrekkingen* (unpublished master's thesis, University of Amsterdam, 1965). Schaep's instructions may be found in ARA, RSH 1650, pp. 28–30.

[67] ARA, RSH 1649, pp. 112 (1 May), 118 (6 May), 123 (8 May), 127 (12 May), 129 (13 May), 139 (18 May); GAM, RSH Stellingwerff 146 (same dates, esp. 8 and 12 May); GAA, Resolutions of the council 19, ff. 24 ro. – vo. (4 May). Rotterdam was less decisive: GAR, Resolutions of the Council 22, p. 260 (17 May).

[68] GAA, Treasurer ordinary records 170: Resolution of the Council 2 June 1649 for a gift of *f* 150.000 to Charles, and receipt d.d. 6 June signed by Charles himself. Cf. KHA, DWF 1649, 5/15 August. William's loan: J. Wagenaar, *Amsterdam, in zyne opkomst etc*, 1 (Amsterdam, 1760), 550. Clarendon, *History*, p. 718.

messe'?[69] Here William just showed a glimpse of his own way of thinking... Charles left the Republic for Scotland, while William endeavoured for a third time to finance a new expedition, now via private Amsterdam money-lenders. As a pledge he offered them... the Scilly Islands, well-situated 'in the road and way of the towne of Amsterdam'. But when, shortly afterwards, the prince laid siege to Amsterdam in order to bend Holland to his bellicose will, the financiers withdrew in hot haste: they were not willing to compromise themselves by contacts with this prince of Orange.[70] William's lack of authority had had a negative influence upon Charles's new projects. Yet the total failure of these projects in September 1651 with the decisive defeat of the royalists near Worcester, had nothing to do with William's lack of authority, since he had died suddenly in November 1650.

IX

Thus relations between the United Provinces and Britain changed dramatically in the forties, as did those between the House of Orange and Stuart. Whereas in 1639 the Dutch had been the nation that demanded a political treaty with the English, within two years the English were the appealing party. Thrice the Stuarts tried to decoy the Oranges by means of a marriage. Their motives had not been of a dynastic, but only of a political nature; religious incentives did not inspire them either – contrary to their puritan subjects who time and again proposed a union with the Dutch. However, their political wishes were not complied with. The first marriage project yielded no profits to the Stuarts, but only to the Oranges and the Seven Provinces – profits both dynastic and political. The second one turned out to be so politically unattractive to the Republic that Orange rejected it on his own initiative. The third one was declined by Princess Amalia on emotional grounds only. So during the forties Frederick Henry continually proved unprepared to entangle the Dutch in British troubles. In his opinion the Seven Provinces could offer mediation in order to assist the English in solving their problems by negotiations and, at the same time, to avoid the Dutch being harmed by international exploitation of English weakness. The principal task Orange set himself in those years was to bring the Dutch war against Spain to a favourable ending. This meant that Frederick Henry remained reflective and prudent even when he was growing old.

Obviously the relations between Orange and Holland also proved more complicated than historians have until recently supposed. Holland did not turn out to be an anti-Orangist entity, but housed several political opinions inside its borders. It is noteworthy that Frederick Henry sided with the Amsterdam faction on the subject of England, whereas they disagreed completely as to the war against Philip IV. It is also remarkable that the Leiden faction, which took the same line as the prince in the case of Spain, was in opposition to Orange with regard to England because of its passive neutralism. And none of the Holland towns favoured a Dutch involvement in the British Civil War.

[69] A. Bryant (ed.), *The letters, speeches and declarations of King Charles II* (2nd edn, London, 1946), pp. 14–16.

[70] William had first of all contacts with an Englishman by birth, by then a citizen of Amsterdam, John Webster. See Groenveld, *Verlopend Getij*, pp. 125, 289, 303, 307, 343; P. W. Klein, *De Trippen in de 17e eeuw* (Assen, 1965), pp. 200, 218, 361, 366. KHA, William II records VIII 15: memorandum over talks between the privy council and William II, May–June 1650. Bodl. Lib., Carte MSS 130, fos. 220–3. (7/17 June 1650): Instructions for John Berkeley concerning the Scillies, and fos. 240–1. (2/12 Sep.): John Webster to Charles II.

After the succession of William II the situation became even more complicated because of the two Orange and Stuart factions coming into existence. It was Princess Amalia and the former councillors of Frederick Henry who continued the active neutralist policy and, in co-operation with the Amsterdam faction, tried to manoeuvre between Stuart and parliament. To their right, the passive neutralists, supported by a majority in the States General, stuck steadfastly to their ideas as well. But the vacuum to the left was filled by hot-headed William II and his small entourage, who expected profits from a struggle against what they regarded as a Spanish-Parliamentary-Hollandish alliance. Thus they were continuously open to any Stuart schemer who had not previously been able to do business with Frederick Henry. They preferred to wage their war alongside the pro-Scottish adherents of the Stuarts. Actual religious convictions had no, or scarcely any influence upon their choice, however.

This picture obviously deviates from the one Geyl drew some decades ago, when he argued for a princely co-operation between the Houses of Orange and Stuart against 'the republican parties in England and the Netherlands'.[71] How did Geyl come to these by now vulnerable ideas? His opinions can of course partly be explained by the state of research in his day. At that time knowledge of the behaviour of political factions – though far from complete even now – did not exist at all; almost all problems were looked at, anachronistically, through nineteenth-century eyes, so that historians time and again thought they saw new clashes between national parties. So did Geyl too, although he indeed discerned some nuances.[72] But in spite of his critical capacities, he sometimes proved blind to the one-sided or tendentious character of certain sources – above all diplomatic letters which are to be used by a historian with the utmost care. Geyl, however, took those sources too literally and gave far too much credit to, for example, the wishful picture unrealistic Dr Goffe drew of Frederick Henry.[73]

But this questionable use of sources was not only caused by a kind of blindness. Some outspoken convictions of Geyl's contributed too: his republicanism and his Great Netherlands ideals. In Dutch history he perceived 'an Orange myth which did not tally at all with reality'.[74] According to Geyl, the Oranges frequently served not the well-being of the country, but their self-interest. This is the thesis he wished to prove in his *Oranje en Stuart*. Of course the proceedings of William II offered him the necessary support. Other sources on which to base his criticisms were already produced in William's own times. Above all Orange's siege of Amsterdam had caused a host of pamphlets, positive as well as negative, about the prince.[75] The latter had exercised a direct influence upon the picture drawn by historians and politicians immediately after 1650. These people not only depicted William II in the darkest colours, but projected his detestable methods upon his forefathers as well. Thus a negative image of Frederick Henry was created which was adopted by Geyl – all the more because he also had other criticism of this prince of Orange inspired by his Great Netherlandism. Frederick Henry did not do his utmost to 'liberate' the Southern Netherlands, even when he

[71] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, p. 59.

[72] P. van Hees, in P. Geyl, *Verspreide opstellen*, I (Utrecht, Antwerp, 1978), xiii.

[73] Geyl, *Oranje en Stuart*, p. 37 and n. 1 and 4. Cf. the same uncritical method in 'De Oranjes en Antwerpen, 1646–1650', in his *Kernproblemen*, pp. 80–105.

[74] 'Interview van Bibeb met Geyl (1958)', in P. Geyl, *Verspreide opstellen*, I, 21–9, esp. 26. Cf. H. W. von der Dunk, *Pieter Geyl, 15 december 1887–31 december 1966* (Amsterdam, 1967), pp. 2, 8–9; C. Wilson, *Profit and power*, pp. 7–8.

[75] S. Groenveld, *De Prins voor Amsterdam. Reacties uit pamfletten over de aanslag van 1650* (Bussum, 1967), pp. 54–75.

stood a really fair chance, Geyl argued.[76] Consequently he sided wittingly with a tradition which had created an anti-Orange myth no less persistent than the myth he combatted – an anti-myth, moreover, of which he was willing to perceive some partialities and exaggerations as well.[77]

It is true that Geyl's description of the relations between the Houses of Orange and Stuart may be placed in clear-cut historiographical developments. Nevertheless it can only partly stand the test of recent research. It has become obvious that the picture of Frederick Henry has to be remodelled, and that the continuous line of policy drawn by Geyl from this Orange to his son William II never really existed.

[76] Geyl, 'Verzuimde kans', passim.

[77] P. Geyl, *Het stadhouderschap in de partij-literatuur onder De Witt* (Amsterdam, 1947). Cf. E. O. G. Haitsma Mulier and A. E. M. Janssen (eds.), *Willem van Oranje in de historie 1584–1984* (Utrecht, 1984), pp. 32–62, esp. 46–55. L. J. Rogier, 'Evoluties in het historisch portret van het huis Oranje', in his *Terugblik en uitzicht. Verspreide opstellen* (2 vols., Hilversum, Antwerp, 1964), I, 109–23.