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CHARLES MORDAUNT, EARL OF PETERBOROUGH,

Jacobus Houbraken

A framed copper plate engraving of Charles Mordaunt, 3rd Earl of Peterborough, by the Dutch engraver Jacobus Houbrackenn, struck in 1740.

DIMENSIONS: 43.2cm (17") High, 29.2cm (11^½") Wide, 2cm (0^¾") Deep

PRICE: £120

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HISTORY

"MORDAUNT, CHARLES, third Earl of Peterborough (1658–1735), admiral, general, and diplomatist, was the eldest son of John Mordaunt, viscount Mordaunt (1627–1675), nephew of Henry Mordaunt, second earl of Peterborough and, through his grandmother Elizabeth, first countess of Peterborough, directly descended from Charles Howard, earl of Nottingham [q. v.] His mother, Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Carey, was granddaughter of Robert Carey, first earl of Monmouth [q. v.], and niece of Henry Carey, second earl of Monmouth It is supposed that he received his early education at Eton. He matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford, on 11 April 1674, then 'aged 16' (Foster, *Alumni Oxon.*) His university career was short. In the following November he entered as a volunteer on board the *Cambridge*, commanded by his mother's stepbrother, Arthur Herbert, afterwards Earl of Torrington, and went out to the Mediterranean in the squadron under Sir John Narbrough The *Cambridge* went home in the following year, but Mordaunt, moving into the *Henrietta* with Narbrough, did not return till 1677. By the death of his father on 5 June 1675 he had become Viscount Mordaunt, and now, when barely twenty, he married Carey, or Carry, daughter of Sir Alexander Fraser of Durris in Kincardineshire. In October 1678, however, he again sailed for the Mediterranean as a

volunteer in the Bristol, when he was shipmate with the diarist Henry Teonge, who amusingly recounts how, on 3 Nov., on the occasion of his not being very well, Mordaunt obtained the captain's leave to preach, and how he, Teonge, took measures to prevent him. Three weeks later, on the arrival of the squadron at Cadiz, Mordaunt moved into the *Rupert*, then carrying the flag of his uncle Herbert as vice-admiral and afterwards as commander-in-chief on the Barbary coast. He returned to England in the autumn of 1679, but again went out in June 1680, as a volunteer for service on shore at Tangier, then besieged by the Moors. It was only for a few months, and on his return he settled down at Fulham, in a house which, like most of his property, he had inherited from his mother; the bulk of his father's estate reverted to his uncle, the Earl of Peterborough. He at once busied himself in politics, took his seat in the House of Lords, and attached himself to Shaftesbury. He was one of the sixteen peers who, in January 1680-1, signed the petition against the meeting of the parliament at Oxford, and one of the twenty who, in March, protested against the refusal of the lords to proceed with the impeachment of Fitzharris [see Cooper, Anthony Ashley, first Earl of Shaftesbury]. In November 1681 he declined the offer of an appointment as captain of a ship of war, which was possibly made with the idea of getting rid of him. In 1682 he was intimately associated with Essex, Russell, and Sidney, and in 1683 he was believed by many to be implicated in their alleged plot. On the accession of James II he delivered a speech, full of 'eloquence, sprightliness, and audacity,' against the increase of the standing army and the appointment of catholic officers (Macaulay, ii. 287). When the parliament was prorogued, believing that further opposition at home was useless, and not improbably dangerous, he went to Holland. He is said to have been the first to press the Prince of Orange 'to undertake the business of England' (Burnet, *Hist. of his own Time*, iii. 262).

During the next three years he was active in intriguing against King James, and made several journeys between Holland and England, towards the end of 1687 he had command of a small Dutch squadron in the West Indies. The object of this commission has not been explained, though it has been suggested that it was 'to try the temper of the English colonies and their attachment to the reigning sovereign.' It is probable also that Mordaunt was instructed to sound Narbrough, who was in command of an English squadron, at that time engaged in an attempt to recover treasure from a Spanish wreck. The actual pretext was an intention also to 'fish' for the treasure; but 'they were wholly unprovided to work the wreck,' and after a few

days, during which the two commanders met on friendly terms, Mordaunt's Dutch squadron took its departure, and returned to Europe (Charnock, iii. 316-17; *Hist. MSS. Comm.* 11th Rep. pt. v. p. 136).

While in Holland Mordaunt cultivated a close friendship with John Locke the philosopher, but his most intimate associate was one Wildman, a violent upholder of revolutionary principles. Wildman objected to the first draft of the prince's declaration, as laying too much stress on 'what had been done to the bishops,' and Mordaunt induced the prince to modify it in this and some other respects (Burnet, iii. 295). In matters of religion Mordaunt was a freethinker, and he was especially hostile to the political principles with which the English church was at that time identified.

When 'the business of England' was finally resolved on, Mordaunt, with Herbert and Edward Russell (afterwards Earl of Orford) [q. v.], was in immediate attendance on the Prince of Orange. On landing in Torbay he was sent in advance, to levy a regiment of horse. He occupied Exeter on 8 Nov.; and, still in advance of the main army, raised Dorset and Wiltshire in the prince's favour. At this time William placed much confidence in him, and during the early months of 1689 appointed him a privy councillor (14 Feb.), gentleman of the bedchamber (1 March), colonel of a regiment of foot (1 April), first lord of the treasury (8 April), Earl of Monmouth (9 April), lord-lieutenant of Northamptonshire (29 April), colonel of horse (15 June), and water-bailiff of the Severn (9 Aug.) It was supposed by many that the title Monmouth was selected as an indication that William did not intend to revive it in favour of the late Duke of Monmouth's son. It seems more probable that it was chosen by Mordaunt himself as reviving the title of his mother's family. His appointment as first lord of the treasury was strange, for he had no experience of business, but the administration of the office virtually rested on Lord Godolphin [see Sidney, first Earl Godolphin], whom, as a partisan of James to the last, it did not seem politic to place at the head of the board (Macaulay, iv. 21). Monmouth's work was mainly limited to the distribution of patronage, and he is said to have managed it in a liberal spirit and with clean hands. He offered Locke the embassy to Berlin; and when Locke declined it, on the ground of ill-health, he nominated him to be a commissioner of appeals (King, *Life of Locke*, Bohn, p. 172). He wished also to find some post for Isaac Newton; but before it could be arranged he quitted office (18 March 1689-90), accepting in lieu of it a pension and a promise

of the manor of Reigate (Macaulay, v. 168). There was, however, no coolness between him and the king, who, on going to Ireland in June, invited Monmouth to accompany him. Monmouth declined, preferring, apparently, to remain in England as one of the queen's 'council of nine.' The 'nine' were all jealous and mistrustful of each other; but Monmouth by his self-assertion and ability excited more jealousy among his colleagues than any other. When the French fleet was reported to be in the Channel, when Nottingham and Russell were accusing Torrington of neglect or of treason in not at once bringing Tourville to action, Monmouth proposed that he, with another—apparently Sir Richard Haddock—should go to the fleet as volunteers, with a secret commission to take the command if Torrington should be killed (the Queen to the King, 20 June 1690). But although Nottingham, who wished to get Monmouth out of London, supported this proposal, on the grounds that the king had thoughts of appointing Monmouth to command the fleet, Mary refused to give the commission. After the battle of Beachy Head was fought, the council agreed to send two of their body to the fleet as a commission of inquiry. Monmouth begged to be excused on account of his relationship to Torrington, 'especially as they were not to command the fleet;' but—he told the queen—as the king had previously thought of entrusting him with the command, he had reason to expect it now. 'As for that,' wrote Mary to her husband, 'I never heard you say it; and if you knew what I shall tell you, if ever I live to see you, you will wonder' (*ib.* 3 July).

The queen's secret was, no doubt, the story of certain anonymous letters addressed to a French agent at Antwerp. These had been intercepted. They were written in lemon-juice, but, on being held before the fire, were found to be detailed reports of the deliberations of the council. Some one of the nine was manifestly the traitor. Several of them believed that it was Monmouth, and were confirmed in that belief by the fact that the letters, which had been regularly despatched after every council meeting, stopped during Monmouth's absence. Carmarthen, Nottingham, Marlborough, and Russell gave the queen their opinion that the letters were written by Wildman on information from Monmouth. Monmouth, on the other hand, told the queen that they were written by some one in Nottingham's office in the service of France. The queen herself believed that, directly or indirectly, the letters were part of an attack by Monmouth on Nottingham (*ib.* 7 July).

William did not share the queen's dislike and mistrust, though, probably in deference to her

opinion, he took Monmouth with him to Holland in the following January. He was again in Holland with the king in 1692, but whether he continued with him during the campaign is doubtful. The statement that he commanded the royal horse guards (the blues) at the battle of Steinkirk (Russell, i. 96) is erroneous; at that date Monmouth was not an officer of the regiment, and the regiment itself was in England (Packe, *Historical Record of the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards*, pp. 71-3). Monmouth had meantime conceived some pique against the king, and in December strongly supported the motion for an inquiry into the conduct of the war; on its rejection he was one of the eighteen peers, 'the bitterest whigs and the bitterest Tories,' who signed the protest (Macaulay, vi. 310). This ended his confidential friendship with the king; and in February 1693-4, consequent, it was said, on his advocacy of the bill for triennial parliaments, he was suspended from his post of gentleman of the bedchamber, his regiment of foot was given to his brother Henry, and he ceased to be summoned to the meetings of the privy council. All this increased his bitterness against the king's ministers. In January 1694-5 he supported Nottingham's motion for the consideration of the state of the nation; and a few weeks later was one of the joint committee appointed to consider the charges of receiving bribes which had been made against the Duke of Leeds, lord president of the council (*ib.* vii. 182 et seq.) The court now tried to appease him. In April he was again gentleman of the bedchamber, and continued in attendance on the king during the year. But he had not forgiven his enemies, and on the arrest of Sir John Fenwick (1645?-1697) [q. v.] in November 1696, he encouraged him in vain efforts to charge the ministers, Marlborough, Russell, Shrewsbury, and others with complicity in the plot, and suggested ways of emphasising or confirming the accusations, especially against Shrewsbury and Marlborough. The Earl of Carlisle, Lady Mary Fenwick's brother, brought Monmouth's conduct to the notice of the lords. By a very large majority they resolved that he had devised some papers found in Fenwick's possession, which had been concocted so as to incriminate the ministers, and that he 'had spoken undutiful words of the king.' He was ordered to the Tower; 'was turned out of all his places, and his name was struck out of the council-book' (*ib.* vii. 399). The persons charged by Fenwick were, undoubtedly, in treasonable correspondence with King James, and Monmouth had suggested new witnesses and incriminating interrogations. It does not appear that he himself, or even his enemies, considered that he was dishonoured by the resolutions of the house, and after an imprisonment of three months he was released, 30 March 1697. By the death of his uncle on 19 June 1697 he became Earl of Peterborough, and made up his quarrel

with Marlborough and Godolphin. But he continued to wage war against Russell, now Earl of Orford; and took an active part in the motion for the impeachment of Lord Somers, which was managed in the House of Commons by his eldest son, John, lord Mordaunt, now just of age and member for Chippenham. His quarrel with Somers, however, was shortlived ; and in 1702 he was, it is said, collaborating with him in an English version of the 'Olynthiacs' and 'Philippics' of Demosthenes, for which he translated the first of the three 'Olynthiacs.'

On the accession of Anne, Peterborough, through the influence of the Duchess of Marlborough, was again in favour at court. He was reappointed lord-lieutenant of Northamptonshire, and in December 1702 was appointed Captain-general and Governor of Jamaica and Admiral and Commander-in-chief of the ships of war employed on that station,' with the immediate prospect of active service against the Spanish settlements in the West Indies. It was intended that the expedition should consist of a combined English and Dutch force; but when the Dutch found that they could not spare the requisite number of men, Peterborough declined Godolphin's proposal to go alone. The English force was of inadequate strength. He was no worker of miracles, he said; and he had no wish to go to the other world loaded with empty titles (King, *Life of Locke*, p. 242). His commission was therefore cancelled ; and except that he vehemently opposed and assisted in rejecting the Bill for preventing Occasional Conformity, in December 1703, he led a comparatively private life till, in the beginning of 1705, he was offered the command of the expeditionary army to Spain. On 31 March he was appointed general and commander-in-chief of the forces in the fleet, and on 1 May was granted a further commission as admiral and commander-in-chief of the fleet, jointly with Sir Cloudisley Shovell [q. v.] The two were named 'joint admirals and chief-commanders of the fleet,' 'and in case of death, or in the absence or inability of either of you, the other of you' was to act as 'admiral and chief-commander.' Peterborough was entrusted with exactly the same powers as Shovell, and each was authorised 'to wear the union flag at the main-topmast-head aboard such ship of her Majesty's fleet where you shall happen at any time to be' (*Commission and Warrant Book*, vol. vi.) From the time of the Commonwealth such joint commissions had not been uncommon, and had twice been given in the preceding reign. But it was exceptional to give such a commission to one who, like Peterborough, had not regularly served in the subordinate grades. Since the Restoration this rule had been only broken in the case of the Duke of York.

The expedition sailed from St. Helens on 24 May 1705, and arrived at Lisbon on 9 June. There they were met by the Archduke Charles, styled the king of Spain by the English and their allies. They were joined also by the Earl of Galway, the commander-in-chief of the English forces already in the Peninsula ; and after several councils of war and much discussion, it was agreed, in deference to the opinion of Charles, to attempt the capture of Barcelona, where the people were said to be favourable to his pretensions. Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt, then commanding at Gibraltar, had proposed rather a landing in Valencia and a dash at Madrid (Prince George to King Charles, 21 May-1 June 1705, in Kunzel, *Leben und Briefwechsel des Landgrafen Georg von Hessen-Darmstadt*, pp. 571-2; Paul Methuen to his father, 13 Sept. (N. S). in *Addit. MS.* 28056, f. 324*b*; Richards, *Diary*, xxv. 3*b*); and Peterborough from the first advised operations in Italy, in concert with the Duke of Savoy. Both, however, gave way to the king's decision, and the expedition left the Tagus on 17 July. On 11 Aug. it anchored a few miles east of Barcelona. On the next day preparations were made for besieging the town.

It was only then that the military officers appear to have realised the difficulties of the task. The garrison, they understood, was nearly as numerous as the allied army; the Catalan levies were worthless; the fortifications were strong, and the ground over which they had to make their approaches was marshy and impracticable. Several councils of war were held, only to arrive at the same conclusion: the troops ought to be re-embarked and carried elsewhere. Shovell and Prince George dissented. Peterborough's lack of technical knowledge rendered him incapable of guiding their deliberations. When he attempted to press his colleagues' decision on the king it was ill received (*ib.* xxv. 6*b*). Peterborough wished to take his little army to Italy, perhaps to the direct support of the Duke of Savoy, perhaps to make a diversion in Naples which he believed to be denuded of troops for service in Spain (Peterborough to Duke of Savoy, 4-15 Sept., 26 Oct.-6 Nov.; Parnell, p. 122 *n.*; *Addit. MS.* 28056, ff. 309, 351). Finally a compromise was arrived at, and on 30 Aug. the Archduke Charles, Prince George, and Peterborough concluded a formal agreement to break up the camp on 4 Sept., to march against Tarragona and so on to Valencia (Paul Methuen to his father, 13 Sept., 10 Oct.(N.S.) in *Addit. MS.* 28056, ff. 323, 337). But on 1 Sept. Peterborough received information respecting the unfinished and unprepared state of the defences of Montjuich, a hill fort about two-thirds of a mile south-west of Barcelona, and he sent Major-general Richards to Prince George to appoint a time of conference (Richards, xxv. 7, where the dates, wrongly written, are fixed by the days

of the week). It was generally believed that an attack on Montjuich had previously been proposed by Prince George and refused (Boyer, *Annals*, iv. 146; *History*, pp. 203-4 ; Targe, iv. 46). But at this conference, between Peterborough and Prince George alone, without any council of war it was resolved, despite the recent agreement, to attack that fort.

About 6 p.m. on 2 Sept. a body of one thousand men marched out of camp. About ten o'clock Peterborough and Prince George joined them, and after some delay, caused by a mistake of the guides, the little force found itself, at daybreak on the 3rd, at the foot of Montjuich. The outer works were carried without difficulty, but the scaling ladders were too short, and, after some loss, the storming party was compelled to draw back. The Neapolitan defenders made a sally, and Prince George was killed. The English were retiring in disorder, when Peterborough, coming up, restored confidence, and the outworks were held. The next day Richards got up a couple of small mortars; on the 6th the garrison surrendered at discretion, after the governor had been killed by a shell. The attack was then turned on Barcelona. On the 7th some three thousand men and several heavy guns were landed from the fleet, by the 22nd a large breach had been made in the walls, and on the 28th the governor signed the capitulation. On the next day the mob broke out into furious riot. The English were hastily called in, and by great personal exertions, and at personal risk, Peterborough restored order (Burnet, v. 214; Boyer, *Annals*, iv. 152). On 12 Oct. Charles made a formal entry into Barcelona and was proclaimed king of Spain. In England, parliament presented addresses to the queen on the glorious successes of her arms, and the sole credit was given to Peterborough.

At Barcelona he was nominally the governor, and for some months was engaged in bitter quarrels with everybody near him; with the Spanish king and the king's German ministers more especially. To remedy the defects of his associates, Peterborough requested to be made commander-in-chief of all the forces in Spain, with the sole command of the fleet, and the rank of vice-admiral of England. Under any other conditions he 'desired positively to come home' (Peterborough to Stanhope, 18 Nov. 1705). No notice seems to have been taken of these applications.

Meantime the province and city of Valencia had been won for Charles by native forces. On 24 Jan. Peterborough entered Valencia in triumph amid 'extraordinary demonstrations of joy.' For four nights the streets were illuminated, and the monks and the ladies are represented as

being particularly enthusiastic in their welcome (Stebbing, p. 86). Charles had already given him a commission as captain-general in the Spanish service, and now sent him full powers for the civil administration of the province, for the efficient defence of which he drew a great part of the troops from Catalonia, so that by the middle of March the garrison of Barcelona was reduced to something less than fourteen hundred regulars, and this when a French army of twenty-five or thirty thousand men, under the Marshal de Tessé, was advancing to attempt its recapture. Charles was in dismay. The outlying garrisons were hastily called in, and expresses sent off to Peterborough and Sir John Leake [q. v.], calling for their immediate assistance. On 23 March Tessé sat down before the town, but he had not made himself master of the country as he advanced. Without lines of communication, he was dependent for his supplies on the French fleet which, under the command of the Count of Toulouse, arrived from Toulon and blockaded the town by sea.

Peterborough was still enjoying the gaieties of Valencia. On 10 March his commission as commander-in-chief of the fleet, jointly with Shovell, had been renewed (*Commission and Warrant Book*, vol. vi.; cf. Carleton, p. 146), but despite the position of affairs he showed no sign of leaving his quarters. On 10 March he ordered Leake, who in the absence of Shovell was left in command of the fleet, to land the troops which were on board the fleet, at or near Valencia. At the same time King Charles wrote urgently desiring Leake to hasten to the relief of Barcelona. Peterborough repeated his original orders, but Leake quietly put them on one side and prepared to do as the king requested. Peterborough himself did not leave Valencia till 27 March, and on his arrival near Barcelona, joined Cifuentes, who commanded the Catalan levies. Meanwhile, the town was very hard pressed. Montjuich had been taken, a practicable breach had been made in the walls; adverse winds delayed Leake; it was not till the evening of 26 April that he was known to be drawing near. The news reached the French fleet at the same time, and it departed at once, and so far the siege was raised by the mere threat of Leake's approach. On the morning of the 27th Peterborough went off to the fleet in a country boat, went on board the Prince George, hoisted the union flag as commander-in-chief, and thus, as the fleet anchored off Barcelona in the afternoon, claimed to have relieved the town. But in reality the town was saved by Leake, and by Leake alone, in direct disobedience of the orders he received from Peterborough. The later and contradictory orders which he received on 26 April, bidding him land the troops at Barcelona without a moment's loss of time, had no

influence on his conduct (Parnell, p. 167; *Addit. MS.* 5438).

It may, indeed, be doubted whether Peterborough's delay at Valencia, and the delays which he so persistently urged on Leake, were not part of a scheme for ruining the cause of Charles. Writing to the Duke of Savoy on 30 March, Peterborough, after referring to Charles as hard pressed in Barcelona, had continued: 'In case of his death I shall give Spain to him who ought to have it [presumably to the Duke of Savoy]. ... The game will be difficult and delicate; I can only say that I will do my best, for your interests will always be [dear] to me, and you cannot desire a more devoted or more faithful servant' (Parnell, p. 166; *Addit. MS.* 28057, f.94b).

On the night of the third day, 30 April, the French secretly quitted their camp outside Barcelona. For eight days their retreat was harassed by the Spanish horse under Cifuentes, but none of the troops belonging to Peterborough's command took part in the pursuit. At home the news of the relief was received with much joy, and it was coupled with Marlborough's victory at Ramillies, in ordering a day of general thanksgiving. On 7 May, Charles, at Barcelona, held a grand council of all the ministers, generals, and admirals. It was proposed that he should march through Aragon to Madrid, there to join hands with Galway, who was advancing from Portugal, but Peterborough successfully urged the route by Valencia (*Minutes of the Council, Spain*, p. 135; Richards, xxv. 38). It was resolved that the cavalry should march to Valencia; the fleet could carry the foot soldiers; Charles should stay at Barcelona till the requisite preparations had been made. The troops, whom Peterborough accompanied, were landed at the Grao on 24 May, but Peterborough's statements at the council that there would be no difficulty about transport proved misleading; there was no money, and without money there was no transport (*ib.* xxv. 40-1). Peterborough, for the time, gave up the plan of a march on Madrid, engaged the troops in scattered expeditions, and wrote to the king 'that he had received such instructions and limitations about the public money, that he could no longer subsist the troops which he had with him in Valencia, much less could he supply him with any money for his journey to Madrid; that his troops were very sickly; that baggage mules and carts were not to be had ... and therefore, seeing that his majesty had heretofore shown an inclination to go to Aragon, he now advised him to do so' (*ib.*; *Impartial Enquiry*, p. 181).

This letter reached Charles when already on the way to Valencia, the route almost forced upon him by Peterborough. Although naturally indignant, he turned aside towards Aragon, but he

declined to retrace his steps, when, in consequence of a sharp letter from Stanhope, Peterborough again wrote to him bidding him make for Valencia (Richards, xxv. 45). Peterborough meanwhile wrote 'volumes' to the ministers at home, and afterwards published his complaints of the laziness and arrogance of the king.

While the king and the commander-in-chief were on these terms, the Castilians revolted against Galway and the Portuguese. Charles and his council, perceiving the situation to be extremely critical, wrote to Peterborough desiring him to hurry forward with every available man. There were in Valencia some five or six thousand regulars, but without organised transport they were useless. Peterborough started at once with four hundred dragoons, with which he joined the king on 24 July at Pastrana, and two days later escorted him into the camp of the allies at Guadalajara. The army, then some fifteen thousand strong, was opposed to the Duke of Berwick with nearly double the number. Peterborough's arrival, from which much had been expected, brought no increase of strength, and was, in itself, the signal for discord. There was 'a superfluity of generals' (Russell, ii. 46), and though Galway, still suffering from the loss of his arm, expressed his willingness, or indeed his wish, to resign in favour of Peterborough, his Portuguese colleague, Las Minas, would not agree, and the Dutch general preferred to be independent. Both Galway and Las Minas had reason to be dissatisfied with Peterborough, who, on learning, it seems clear, that they were at Madrid, had remained at Valencia, idly indulging his love of pleasure (*Impartial Enquiry*, p. 209; *Parl. Hist.* vi. 987).

Amid these personal recriminations Peterborough, at a council of war on 29 July, announced 'that he had orders from the queen to go to Italy,' and his colleagues were 'as well content to be rid of him as he was to go' (Godolphin to Marlborough, 30 Sept. in Coxe, *Life of Marlborough*, i. 471). Two days afterwards he started for Valencia with an escort of eighty dragoons. At Huete he learned that all his baggage, horses, and equipage, on their way up to the camp, had been taken by the enemy, leaving him, he wrote to Stanhope, with only one suit of clothes and six shirts. The value of the loss, which included 'eight waggons of good eatables and drink,' he estimated at 6,000/, but his accounts, whether public or private, were always largely imaginary. Towards the middle of August he went to Alicante, presumably to confer with Leake. The town had been taken by storm on 28 July, and with the reduction of the castle, which did not surrender till 17 Sept., Peterborough had nothing immediately to do.

The remainder of July was occupied in forwarding to Stanhope spiteful accusations against Leake and others, charging them with irregularities, which, if they took place, must have been connived at by Peterborough himself. Simultaneously he resolved on an expedition to reduce the Balearic islands, but on receiving orders from England to despatch a squadron of nine ships of the line to the West Indies, he abandoned the expedition, judging that the fleet so reduced would be insufficient for the task, and failing in his efforts to induce Leake or a council of war to undertake the responsibility of disobeying the order from home. On 10 Sept. he sailed in the *Resolution* for Genoa, in order according to his own account to arrange with the Duke of Savoy for a combined attack on Toulon. The subject was, indeed, spoken of during Peterborough's visit to Turin; but he had no instructions about it, and the claim which he seems to have made to be the originator of the scheme, which was carried out next year, is without foundation. Both the inception, and the maturing of the project were Marlborough's (*Impartial Enquiry*, p. 238).

The only real business which Peterborough engaged in was the negotiation of a loan of 100,000*l.* from the Jews of Genoa—a loan which he had no authority to contract, and for which he agreed to pay an exorbitant interest. His visit seems to have been principally one of pleasure, and partly in pique at the conduct of the king of Spain and of his own colleagues. By the end of December he rejoined the king at Valencia, where, on 11 Feb. 1706-7, he received orders recalling him to England to give an account of his conduct. Galway was at the same time appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in Spain.

On 13 March Peterborough again sailed for Genoa in the *Resolution* [see Mordaunt, Henry, 1681 ?-1710], and after narrowly escaping capture on the way, was put on shore at Oneglia. At Turin he was met by peremptory orders to return to England immediately. Nothing was further from his intentions than obedience; and finding that the Duke of Savoy, who had been duly informed that his commission was revoked, declined to discuss the operations of the coming campaign with him, he made a circular tour through Europe. At Vienna he was well received, and is said to have inspired the emperor with the idea of an expedition against Naples. Almanza had been fought and lost a few weeks before; and as Peterborough, after his quarrel with Galway, had prophesied misfortune, it was supposed that he had foreseen the course of the war. Accordingly Count Wratislaw, the emperor's minister, wrote to Marlborough on 21 June-2 July: `When you have spoken to him you will probably be more satisfied with him than

you imagine; for Prince Eugene has written to me that his lordship thinks like a general, though he does not always express himself with propriety' (Coxe, ii. 79). From Vienna Peterborough went to Leipzig, charged, it would appear, with some irregular mission from the Austrian court to the king of Sweden. At Leipzig Charles XII sought to avoid him, but Peterborough managed to point out to him that with an army such as his nearly eighty thousand men of the best troops in the world he might be the arbiter of the fate of Europe. Charles, however, had other designs, and Peterborough went on to Hanover, paid his court to the Electress Sophia, inspired her son, the future king of England, with antipathy, and early in August arrived at Soignies on a visit to Marlborough.

For some time back Marlborough had conceived a poor idea of Peterborough's conduct, and on 13 Sept. 1706 had written privately to the duchess that 'he did not think much ceremony ought to be used in removing him from a place where he has hazarded the loss of the whole country' (*ib.* i. 471). He was, however, quite sensible that Peterborough might be a dangerous man to offend, and now received him with civility but apparently with little confidence. 'By what he tells me,' he wrote to Godolphin on 18 Aug., 'he thinks he has demonstration to convince you that he has been injured in everything that has been reported to his disadvantage.' 'I have endeavoured,' he added four days later, 'to let him see that, for his own sake, he ought to clear up the objections against him, and he has promised me that he will acquaint you and Lord Sunderland with all he has to say' (*ib.* ii. 132).

By 20 Aug. Peterborough was in England. A proposal had been made by Harley, and endorsed by others of the cabinet, to arrest him and bring him to trial, but it was not acted on (*ib.* ii. 137). On 3 Sept. he applied for an audience. It was refused, on the ground that he could not be admitted to the queen's presence until he had explained 'why he did not in the preceding campaign march to Madrid with the army under his command; why he did not fulfil his instructions in advancing to the King of Spain the supplies entrusted to his disposition; and why he retired to Italy without orders, and borrowed large sums of money on disadvantageous terms' (*ib.* ii. 178). Peterborough made no attempt to clear himself officially, but he commissioned his friend, Dr. Freind, to publish an account of what had been done, and supplied him with such documents as he judged suitable. These documents were correctly reproduced, but Freind's 'Account of the Earl of Peterborough's Conduct in Spain' must be

considered, as was said at the time, as 'the Earl of Monmouth's vindication of the Earl of Peterborough.' It is Peterborough's own story, and, except where extraneously supported, has no authority. Neither has the answer, under the title of *Remarks upon Dr. Friend's Account*, any independent authority; it merely supplied glosses, pro or con, on such evidence as it suited Peterborough to produce. But Freind had also challenged an official inquiry, and an investigation began before the House of Lords in January 1707-8. It speedily became a trial of strength between the factions of the day; the tories upheld Peterborough, although he was the most radical of whigs, against the whig government, whose supporters had denounced him. After an examination extending over several weeks, the House of Lords refused to adopt the charges against him; but it also refused to pass a vote of thanks. The government was loth to accept this ambiguous decision as an acquittal. Peterborough was, indeed, on 30 July, admitted to kiss the queen's hand; but he was also ordered to render an account of the money which he had received and expended during his command ; and as he had kept no accounts (Richards, xxv. 36-7), his property was attached till he should have cleared up his pay-lists. For the next two years he was occupied with 'the compilation of ledgers,' the trouble of which was broken only by his domestic sorrows. In March 1709 his wife, to whom, notwithstanding his reputation for gallantry, he seems to have been soberly attached, died of a quinsy; and in the early months of 1710 his two sons, first the younger and then the elder, died of small-pox. But the change of ministry came as a relief to his distress, personal and financial. Within a week it was rumoured that he was to be general of marines and first lord of the admiralty. On 2 Nov. he was actually appointe'd captain-general of marines with the pay of 5/. a day. In December he was nominated ambassador extraordinary to Vienna, and was on the point of starting when, at the request of the House of Lords, he was stayed, pending a renewed inquiry into the conduct of the war in Spain. Peterborough and Galway both gave their account of what had taken place, and after a warm debate, extending over several days, Peterborough's account was approved, and in an address to the queen the lords expressed their admiration for the many great and eminent services he had performed 'during the time he had the honour of commanding the army in Spain.' 'The votes of the peers proved literally nothing,' except that sixty-eight of them were tories and only forty-eight were whigs (Stebbing, p. 178). The majority voted panegyrics on Peterborough as implying censure on Marlborough. The mob, with whom Marlborough was out of favour, took the same view, and Peterborough was the idol of the hour. On one occasion, it is said, the mob mistook Peterborough for Marlborough, and were on the point of dragging

him through the kennel, when Peterborough convinced them of their error by saying, 'In the first place, I have only five guineas in my pocket; and in the second, they are very much at your service.'

On 11 Feb. 1710-11, the day after the vote of thanks, Peterborough started for Vienna. The primary object of the mission was to get the ambassador out of London; the nominal end proposed was to bring about more cordial relations between the emperor and the Duke of Savoy. Peterborough's diplomacy seems to have been conducted with the same irregularity as his campaigning. Before his work at Vienna was half finished he went to Turin, and while there the death of the emperor Joseph I (6 April 1711) led him to recur to his former project of putting the Duke of Savoy on the throne of Spain. Returning to Vienna, he received despatches censuring his conduct. He started for England at once, and, travelling post, without stopping, landed at Yarmouth attended by only one servant. According to Swift (*Works*, xv. 455), he had scattered the rest of his suite in several parts of Germany. 'He sent expresses and got here before them.' The next day he had an audience of the queen, who received him graciously. The ministers did not conceal their dissatisfaction; but, troublesome colleague as he was, they recognised that he might be still more troublesome as an adversary, and hastened to get him out of the country by appointing him ambassador extraordinary to the diet about to assemble at Frankfort for the election of the emperor. At Frankfort he plunged into a sea of intrigue about matters outside his instructions. He is said to have suggested that, in default of male heirs to the new emperor, Charles VI, the Elector of Saxony ought to be king of the Romans. His idea, for the moment, was to have 'a levée of suppliant kings expecting their destinies from England.' He soon tired of the situation—everybody mistrusted him; and was glad to go to Italy on a nominal mission, the true object of which was to keep him out of the way.

During 1712 he was, for the most part, at Venice, busy over some make-believe political intrigue for his government, or engaged in some more real love intrigue for himself, possibly paying his court to Anastasia Robinson [q. v.], who was then living at Venice with her family. In January 1712-13 he returned to England, eager to be at work. Swift, who saw him on the afternoon of his arrival, wrote of him: 'He left England with a bruise by his coach overturning that made him spit blood, and was so ill, we expected every post to hear of his death; but he outrode it, or outdrank it, or something, and is come home lustier than ever. He is at least

sixty, and has more spirits than any young fellow I know of in England' (*ib.* iii. 94). During the session he occasionally spoke in the House of Lords, and especially on 28 May, against the Earl of Findlater's motion for the repeal of the union with Scotland (*Parl. Hist.* vi. 1217). In his brief periods of leisure about London he made famous his hospitality at Parson's Green, where his conversation and his cookery, his music and his wall-fruit delighted the artistic and literary society of Queen Anne. The ministers, however, were anxious to keep him well-disposed. He was appointed colonel of the royal horse guards, and on 4 Aug. was nominated a K.G. In November he was sent as ambassador extraordinary to the Duke of Savoy (now become king of Sicily), and to the other Italian princes. It was a mere mission of compliment, and very positive instructions minimised his talent for mischief. In March 1714 he was appointed governor of Minorca, but before he could go thither the queen died, King George ascended the throne, and, on the return of the whigs to power, Peterborough was summarily recalled. On his way home through Paris he was entertained at dinner by the Marquis de Torcy, and Louis XIV 'ordered the fountains at Marly to be set working in his honour, keeping him by his side as he walked, and treating him "avec beaucoup de distinction"' (Stebbing, p. 191).

But in England he was 'a fallen star.' The day after his return he presented himself at court; he was coldly received, and an order was sent to him forbidding his reappearance. It was the end of his official career, though he continued to attend in the House of Lords as late as 1731, and frequently spoke with much wit and vehemence. In June 1715 he was deprived of his colonelcy of the blues (Packe, p. 76). In 1717 he went to Italy in search of health. At Bologna he was arrested on suspicion of being concerned in a conspiracy against the Pretender, and was detained for a month till he made his identity clear to his captors. The excitement' restored his health. He hastened back to England to clamour for revenge; but the story that the English fleet was sent off Civita Vecchia to exact compensation is not true. The papal government, however, expressed regret, laying the blame on the cardinal-legate at Bologna. In 1719 Peterborough again went to Italy on a self-constituted mission to the Duke of Parma, and is said to have brought about the downfall of Alberoni, who, on his part, had described him as 'a most pretentious fool and consummate blackguard' (Armstrong, *Elisabeth Farnese*, p. 122). He was again in France in 1720, when Dubois wrote of him as likely to injure the Anglo-French alliance by his pernicious habit of belittling the resources of England. It was afterwards said that in 1722 he married Anastasia Robinson, the singer. At the time, however, the marriage if

there was one was kept strictly secret; it was believed by many that she was Peterborough's mistress a belief that gained ground when, apparently in January 1723-4, Peterborough publicly caned Senesino, the leading tenor of the opera company, for insolence to her, and compelled him to ask her pardon on his knees. Lord Stanhope, afterwards earl of Chesterfield, jestingly spoke of Peterborough as 'an old Don Quixote,' and in consequence received a challenge: the duel, however, was prevented by the civil power (*Letters of Lady Mary Worthy Montagu*, ed. Bohn, i. 352-3). After this, Miss Robinson, as she was to the world, quitted the stage and settled down in a house taken for her by Peterborough near Parson's Green, Fulham.

About the same time began a correspondence with Mrs. Howard, the mistress of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II [see Howard, Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk]. A set of verses addressed to her, beginning 'I said to my heart between sleeping and waking,' are not without merit, and led Walpole to include Peterborough in his list of 'noble poets;' but the letters themselves, written by a man of seventy to a deaf woman of forty, are 'the silliest of superannuated philandering' (Stebbing). They may perhaps be counted as one of his literary amusements, in which, and in the society of literary men, more especially Swift and Pope, with Arbuthnot and Gay, much of his time was passed. Tours in France or other parts of the continent filled up the rest. Mr. Stebbing speaks too of his military duties. In May 1722 his commission as general of marines, originally given in 1710, was enlarged to 'General of all the Marine Forces of Great Britain;' but there were no marine forces at the time, and the only duty Peterborough could be called on to perform was to receive his pay.

He was always needy and in debt. He asserted that he had impoverished his estate by maintaining the army in Spain at his own cost; but he had no accounts to show in support of this statement, and no government could accept it. By reckless expenditure and by confusion between his own and the public money he unquestionably lavished a great deal, but not necessarily on the army. He had never been wealthy, and on the death of his uncle in 1697 the family estates, separated from the title, had gone to his cousin, Lady Mary, daughter of Henry Mordaunt, second earl of Petreborough [q. v.], in her own right Baroness Beauchamp and Mordaunt, and wife of Henry Howard, seventh duke of Norfolk [q. v.], from whom she was divorced in 1700. On the duke's death in 1701 she married Sir John Germain [q. v.], and though Peterborough endeavoured to recover the estates from her, the House of Lords, decided

against him. At her death, in November 1705, Peterborough succeeded to the baronies, but she left the property to her husband. Peterborough contested Germain's right, but the House of Lords again decided against him. He found ways, however, of raising fresh actions, which were still pending when Germain died in 1718. The litigation then came to an end, Peterborough having already declared that he would withdraw his claim if Germain left the property to his second wife, Lady Elizabeth Germain [q. v.]

During his later years Peterborough resided for the most part near Southampton, in a pleasant cottage with a large garden, known as Bevis Mount, the site of the present Bevois town, but then 'beautiful beyond imagination,' as Pope wrote to Mrs. Knight (*Works*, ix. 451). He suffered from stone. For some years his death, at frequent intervals, had seemed imminent, and in the spring of 1735 he was advised that an operation offered the only chance of life. His wife, still unacknowledged, but latterly, in deference to her scruples, allowed to wear her wedding ring, was his constant attendant, 'the sunshine' of his home. Before undergoing the operation he assembled a party of his relations in the rooms of his nephew, Stephen Pointz, in St. James's Palace, and formally introduced her as the Countess of Peterborough (Burney, *Hist. of Music*, iv. 247-9). Shortly afterwards he publicly married her (Pope, *Works*, ix. 318).

In July he was at Bevis Mount, conscious of his approaching end, and writing to Lady Suffolk that the example of the Emperor Julian showed him 'how a soldier, how a philosopher, how a friend of Lady Suffolk's ought to die. I want,' he continued, 'to make an appointment with you, Mr. Pope, and a few friends more to meet upon the summit of my Bevis hill, and thence, after a speech and a tender farewell, I shall take my leap towards the clouds (as Julian expresses it) to mix amongst the stars.' Pope visited him towards the end of August, and was much struck by the extreme contrast between the vivacity and sprightliness of his mind and the attenuation of his body (*ib.* ix. 319-20). Peterborough was afterwards in London for a few days, alternating between bed and dinner parties. He had been meditating a journey to the south of France, but he ultimately went with his wife to Lisbon. He died there on 25 Oct. 1735, six days after his arrival. The body was brought back to England by his widow, and buried in the family vault in Turvey Church, Bedfordshire. His second son Henry is separately noticed.

For some years Peterborough had amused himself in writing his memoirs in three manuscript volumes. The countess, in looking over them, was so shocked that she burnt them. A lady who

had also seen them told Dr. Burney that Peterborough boasted of having committed three capital crimes before he was twenty. But the memoirs were in all probability wholly or in great part fictitious. In Peterborough's mind there was a strange confusion between imagination and fact, and his unsupported assertions cannot be accepted as trustworthy contributions to his biography. In matters of history, where his character, his reputation, and his interest were at stake, statements emanating from him and known to be false must be held as substantiating the graver charge. He was of untiring energy, restless in mind and body. His parliamentary speeches and letters show him to have been clever, witty, incisive in thought and word. He was a generous and judicious patron of men of letters and science, who gratefully acknowledged his benefactions, and gave him a higher reputation than he otherwise deserved. Swift, however, who had a certain affection for him, calls him with friendly insight 'the ramblingest lying rogue on earth,' and to Macky's unflattering portrait in the 'Memoirs' Swift gave the rare distinction of his approval. He was as foolishly careless of his own as he was culpably careless of the public money; and the common idea that he was a distinguished commander of fleets or armies rests only on his own statements; while the official documents and the reports of the men who were with him in Spain testify to his incompetence. He is described as a little spare man, 'a skeleton in outward figure,' according to Swift's familiar lines, of pleasing appearance and winning manners. His portrait, by Dahl, is in the possession of the Earl of Carlisle; another, by Kneller, belonging to Mr. W. B. Stopford, was engraved by Houbraken. A third portrait belongs to Viscount Boyne."

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