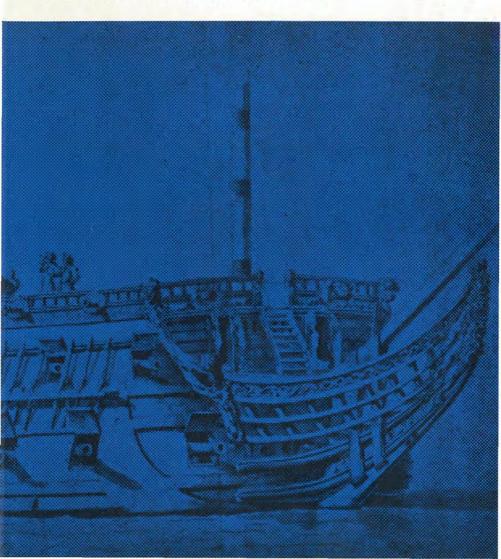
Niels Juel

A Danish Admiral of the 17'th Century

Jørgen H. Barfod

MARINEHISTORISK SELSKAB



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Cover Illustration: Man-of-war. Hull drawing by van de Velde. Presumably TRE LØVER, built 1656.

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Publication No. 14

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PREFACE

As naval historian for the Royal Danish Navy, I was given the task of writing a biography of the Danish Admiral Niels Juel, which was finally published in full in 1977.

In Danish history, Niels Juel and his victory of Køge Bay take a place as important as do Nelson and Trafalger in the history of England, and yet almost nothing is known about this 17th-century admiral in other countries. This became quite apparent to me in my search abroad for additional material for the biography. Also, I found that very little has ever been published in English about the Royal Danish Navy.

The 300th anniversary of the Victory of Køge Bay (July 1st, 1677) seems to me suitable occasion to remedy in some small measure this lack of knowledge abroad, by publishing this brief history of Niels Juel, and his service in a navy which in the 17th century was among the largest in Europe.

Official archives, and records of events in the middle and late 17th century have been my main sources of information, and my attempts to find and present Niels Juel as a person have been made difficult by the fact that no private correspondance between Niels Juel and friends or family exists today. Whatever glimpses of his personality we can get must be found in extracts from official letters and journals, the text of speeches held at his funeral, and in his actions.

At a period when the art of naval leadership may be said to have been in its infancy, it is interesting to find evidence of his special attention to such subjects as the training and exercising of crews, and specific directives to ships' captains regarding evolutions and tactical manoeuvring of ships in formation. Their application in battle seems to have been decisive in Køge Bay, when he led his line of ships to an audacious breakthrough of the enemy line to windward, resulting in the defeat of the Swedish fleet, and the establishment of Danish naval supremacy in the Baltic for many years.

As a Biographer, my task has been to find and present facts about Niels Juel and some of the events in which he participated during his lifetime. Judgement of his skill as naval commander, and assessment of the results of his activities at sea, I must leave to others more expert in seamanship, tactics and strategy. *Jørgen H. Barfod*

Translator's notes

The translator has endeavoured to convert into modern English the text of the Danish original, without losing too much of the flavour which characterizes Niels Juel's personal comments and the general linquistic style of the period.

Titles and terms have been retained in their original form, where it is felt that little would be gained by translation. In some lists the names of ships have been translated, perhaps thereby revealing some of the thoughts and feelings of those who have named them. The prefix Rigs-(of the realm) appears frequently, such as in Rigsdaler (Rix-Dollar, or largest official coin), Rigs-Admiral (roughly equivalent to First Lord of the Admiralty), Rigs-Råd (a council of lords, with extended powers, granted by a coronation charter. Disbanded in 1660, when absolute monarchy was introduced). Ship usually denotes warship, or ship of the line, capital ships being the largest. Boatsmen and constables were skilled seamen or petty officers. Schoutbynacht was a Dutch title, retained by the Danish Navy (roughly equivalent to Rear-Admiral).

Jørgen Havtorn

Chapter One

EARLY YEARS

Travels & Apprenticeship

Niels Juel was born and brought up in cruel and troubled times. When the mercenaries of the Thirty Years' War, in 1627 to 1629, invaded Jutland, Erik Juel and his family had to flee to Norway.

Niels Juel was born as a refugee on May 8th, 1629, in Oslo. A few days later, peace was signed by the Danish King, Christian IV, and on June 1st the family was back at Torp, in Thy, in the north-western part of Jutland, and Niels Juel had made his first sea voyage. For a period of six years he lived here, and from the moment he became aware of his surroundings, the sea, the roaring Western Sea, as it is called in Denmark, became an important part of his conscious world.

On Midsummer Day, the day of Saint Hans, Niels Juel was sent to his aunt, Karen Sehested, the widow of Thyge Kruse, living on the manor of Stenalt, in the mid-Jutland county of Randers, where he was to be brought up and educated. Stenalt was quite a museum of its time, containing many historical manuscripts, rare books, antiques, and valuable objects of art. Near the farm could be seen a Bronze Age burial mound, an in front of the manor house stood a runic stone from the Viking era. He thus grew up in historical environments.

Karen Sehested was well-connected, having been teacher to the children of King Christian IV, and although she had been discharged from this position of trust after having offended Eleanora Christina, a daughter of King Christian, she was reputed to be a very good teacher and apparently still maintained relations with the two Royal children. The name of two of his teachers at Stenalt are known. They were, Henric Lindemand, who was there from 1641 to 1642, and Memmius Burinus, who arrived in 1642.

On September 11th, 1642, Niels Juel returned to his home, but remained there only until April 13th, 1643 when, at the age of 14, he was called to Duke Frederik, the King's second son, to serve as his page. The duke was then Bishop of Bremen, and here Niels Juel for the first time in his life became acquainted with the conditions of war, when the Swedish General Torstensson that year attacked Denmark through the Duchy of Holstein.

In December 1647, Niels Juel was sent to the Boys' Academy at Sorø, on Zealand, where his name is to be found inscribed in the rolls from 13.12.1647 to 15.11. 1648.

Having obtained the foundations of a scholarly education, he was sent, as was the custom for sons of the aristocracy at the time, on the Grand Tour, on March 18th, 1650. He travelled through Germany to France, where he remained until 1652. However, his wish was to be trained as a naval officer, and here therefore went on to the Netherlands, which was then at war with England. He took service with the Navy but, unfortunately, we know very little about his activities here. In the funeral orations of 1697, it is mentioned only that he took part in four naval engagements, but not which.

In 1654, peace was made, but Niels Juel continued to serve in the Netherlands' Navy, and during the following years he was on several expeditions with Admiral Michael de Ruijter. When the fleet was in port, he was taught shipbuilding and other naval crafts. The funeral orations mention that, during a period of illness, he made ships' models "by his own hand". He was with de Ruijter in the Mediterranean, in his campaigns against corsairs, and



Niels Juel at the age of 18 (Painting at Valdemar Castle).

during one of the engagements he is said to have distinquished himself in the capture of a pirate by the name of Oman Diaz.

On June 16th, 1654, de Ruijter set sail from Texel with a squadron of five ships, and in early November of the same year, the squadron was back in the Netherlands again. The following year's cruise was more eventful. The squadron was made up on 8 ships of the line and two jagts. It weighed anchor at Texel on June 18th, 1655, and, on arrival in Mediterranean waters, had several sharp engagements with the pirates. On the first occasion, a Turkish barque from Tetuan, led by the Spanish renegade and pirate Arnando Diaz, was captured. No doubt this was the pirate mentioned in the funeral oration, in whose capture Niels Juel distinguished himself. In certainty, however, we know from the Netherlands ships' journals only that it was the Dutch Captain van Zaalingen, who with his ship engaged and boarded the privateer.

We know from Danish records that Niels Juel was paid as an apprentice of the Danish Navy. From February 8th, 1654, he was receiving an annual remuneration of 450 Rigsdalers for victuals, and 4 court dresses, valued 29 Rigsdalers each. His education, which included the art of shipbuilding and training as seaman and warrior, formed a sound basis for his later career as a Danish naval officer.

In Denmark, however, conditions were quite different. The large fleet of Christian IV was reduced considerably during the reign of his successor, and the economy of the Kingdom was far from favourable for the future of the Navy. The fleet, in 1656, consisted of only 12 large ships of the line of more than 50 guns, 14 ships of between 20 and 50 guns, and three small vessels of under 20 guns, besides 5 galleys and jagts, and 7 Royal merchant ships, used mainly for victualling, transport of materials for shipbuilding and other "civilian" purposes.

In June, 1655, Sweden had entered into war with Poland, and when the troops of King Karl X, Gustav, threatened Danzig, the Netherlands dispatched a fleet to protect its interests in the Baltic. On August 16th, a treaty was signed, under the terms of which the Danish King, Frederik III, agreed to support the Dutch fleet, in return for promises of help from the Netherlands against dangers resulting from such support. The Danes made no secret of the fact that they were anxious to clip the wings of the »Swede-King«.

Chapter Two

ADMIRAL OF HOLMEN

Ashore & at Sea

As war could now come also to Denmark, Niels Juel returned from abroad in 1656 and, in the squadron of 9 ships, which was brought into service, we find Niels Juel for the first time mentioned as a Danish naval officer, in command of the ship SORTE RYTTER (Black Knight). However, when the squadron reached Danzig, a Swedish-Netherlands defence treaty had been signed, and soon the Danish ships returned to Copenhagen.

In the spring of the following year, 1657, Niels Juel was dispatched with a squadron to the Sound, where he »arrested« some Swedish merchantment, 10 days before Frederik III signed his declaration of war against Sweden on June 1st, 1657. Shortly afterwards, on June 14th, Niels Juel was appointed Admiral of Holmen, the Royal Naval base at Copenhagen. He was then only 28 years old. For a period he had to leave the task of commanding the base to his Vice-Admiral, as he himself was with the main fleet, as squadron commander, under the recently appointed Rigs-Vice-Admiral Henrik Bjelke. The fleet set sail on June 23rd, with orders to cruise in the Baltic to protect merchant shipping and, if possible, to attack enemy warships. It was regarded as a distinct possibility that the Swedish forces in Poland might try to return to Sweden across the Baltic. At least, it was thought that the Swedish King himself would take this route.

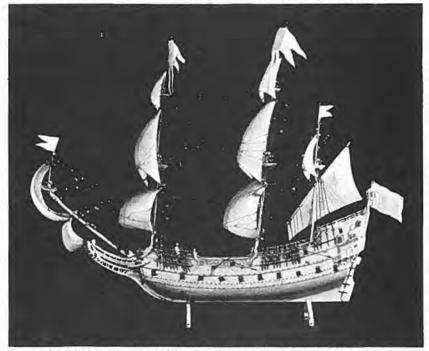
Therefore, King Frederik III went on board the old flagship TREFOLDIGHED (Trinity) to observe for himself the coming great events. Instead of obtaining this important catch, the King suffered the disappointment of learning, on July 2nd, that Karl Gustaf was now on the march, passing Stettin, on his way through Germany to Denmark. He thereupon immediately set course for Denmark to confer with Rigsraadet (Council of State), and lay new plans for the waging of war.

The Swedish Navy, which for some period had led a languishing existance in the shadow of the Army, was far from ready for action when war was declared, and it took some time to get it equipped. Not until August 27th could it set sail from Dalarø, under the Flag of Admiral Klas Bjelkenstjerna, heading south. Two weeks later it was in touch with the Danish fleet near Bornholm. The relative strength of the two forces, which met on September 12th, was 34 Swedish against 24 Danish ships. Niels Juel led one of the Danish squadrons, but unfortunately very little is known about this battle, which went on for two days.

Available reports agree, however, that the Swedish fleet throughout the engagement had the weather gauge, giving them the choice of attacking at will. In spite of this, and of their numerical superiority, the Swedes made no determined efforts to attack, and Admiral Bjelkenstjerna, in a subsequent report to his King, complained that several of his officers did not do their duty. We also know that Bjelkenstjerna, after the battle, had three captains placed under arrest, and one cashiered, so his explanation does not seem without foundation.

Several ships of both fleets were damaged during the engagement, and many were killed and wounded, but on the whole, the battle must be considered a defeat for the Swedes, who did not succeed in clearing the way for Karl Gustaf's land forces to invade the main islands of Denmark.

Whilst the Swedish fleet sought shelter under the island of Ruegen, off the north coast of Germany, for repairs, the Danish fleet returned to its base at Copenhagen. Here it was refitted, but unfavourable winds delayed its departure, and not until September 28th did it again put to sea to look for the enemy in the Baltic. The Swedish fleet did not venture to put to sea again, and the Danish Admiral Henrik Bjelke's worst enemy proved to be nature itself, with autumn gales, generally bad weather, and early winter. Under these unfavourable conditions several ships were wrecked and sickness spread among the crews. Admiral Bjelke, however, persevered, remaining at sea until December 3rd, when he finally anchored the fleet in the sheltered roads of Copenhagen, to be laid up for the winter. Before this, the Swedish



The frigate NORSKE LØVE, built in 1654 from an ivory model, now at Rosenborg Castle.

fleet had stood back east, likewise weakened by storms and sickness.

In the middle of December Niels Juel had struck his Flag on the NORSKE LØVE (Norwegian Lion), which had been his flagship for the past six months. He could now devote himself to his tasks in the naval base of Holmen, and he became a member of the Admiralty Board. As base commander he had to supervise and direct the activities of the civilian dockyard workers and the base personnel, being responsible for procuring, maintaining and guarding all ships' stores, such as timber, iron, tar, cordage, etc., etc. His annual pay was now 600 Rigsdalers, fodder for a horse, and three court dresses.

Meanwhile the war continued on other fronts and in other ways. Whilst the Swedish fleet had not been able to secure the safe transfer of King Karl Gustaf and his army from Jutland to the central islands of Denmark, nature now intervened in his favour. On January 30th, using a series of small islands as stepping-stones, he was able to cross the icebound waters between Jutland and the middle island of Fuenen, and on February 6th he made his audacious and famous crossing on the ice between Langeland and Lolland, thus passing the Great Belt and reaching the islands adjacent to the south coast of the main island of Zealand. All this was done without much opposition, the Danish army and defences being taken completely by surprise, not expecting to meet him here.

He soon stood on the south coast of Zealand, where he was met by a Danish delegation, who now sued for peace, but negotiations still continued as King Karl Gustaf marched on, towards Copenhagen. It was not until the Swedish forces stood at Taastrup, only 12 miles from Copenhagen, that an agreement was reached, with very harsh peace terms for the Kingdom of Denmark.

2 Niels Juel

The Treaty of Roskilde, signed on February 28th, 1658, ceded to Sweden all Danish provinces on the far side of the Sound, including Skåne, with the Baltic islands of Bornholm, Blekinge, Bohus Len, and the province of Trondheim in Norway. This represented a loss of onethird of all Danish land areas, which far back in historical times had been part of the Kingdom. Also, Norway was partitioned, being cut in half by the surrender of Trondheim Len to Sweden.

Niels Juel, on March 1st, was now ordered to release all Swedish prisoners of war at Holmen, and return all captured ships. Also, he had to muster sufficient seamen and ships to carry the Swedish troops away from Zealand. This part of the treaty terms everyone was, understandably, most anxious to comply with as quickly as possible, before Karl Gustaf had second thoughts.

Clearly Niels Juel carried out these duties to the satisfaction of King Frederik, for it is recorded that from May 23rd, 1658, he was awarded, for his performances at sea and on land, an increase of pay of 400 Rigsdalers, so that he was now earning 1000 Rigsdalers a year.

Meanwhile, Karl X, Gustaf, was gathering strength for a new attack against Denmark. Four thousand foot soldiers and 1200 horsemen were embarked at Kiel, in a fleet of 60 vessels, and on the morning of Saturday, August 7th, 1658, the convoy left for Zealand, escorted by a squadron of men-of-war. The same evening they reached Korsør, and Sunday morning word of this landing reached the inhabitants of Copenhagen, just as they were leaving their churches after the morning service.

Only a few ships of the Danish Navy were ready for service, and those that were in commission were spread in one's and two's throughout Danish waters, and soon fell into enemy hands. FALKEN (Falcon) was captured at Nyborg, and the jagt SØBLADET (Sea Blade) was seized on the Elbe, HAABET (Hope) in Little Belt and PELI-CANEN (Pelican), JÆGEREN (Huntsman), DUNKER-KER BOIERT (Dunkerque Boejer), and the fireship SCT. JØRGEN were all captured in various other localities. Niels Juel was soon put to work organising the seaward defences of Copenhagen. Naval vessels and barges were manned and armed wherever possible, but the total was not impressive, comprising only the ships TRE LØVER (Three Lions), TREFOLDIGHED (Trinity), HANNIBAL, KONG FREDERIK, DRONNING SOFIA AMALIA, PRINS CHRISTIAN, NORSKE LØ-VE (Norwegian Lion), GRAA ULV (Grey Wolf), JUSTI-TIA, SPES (HOPE), TRE KRONER (Three Crowns), VIKTORIA, LINDORMEN (Nordic Mythological Monster), SORTE RYTTER (Black Knight), LYKKEPOT-TEN (Pot o' LUCK) and HØJENHALD (Nordic Mythological Heaven) and the floating batteries NOAHS ARK and ARK NOAH, an old artillery barge, an old victualling barge, and a new artillery barge.

All extra personnel were set to work on the naval base or on the town ramparts. Nobody went free, and after all seamen had been pressed into service on August 9th, Niels Juel, on August 17th, had the homes of all known skippers and boatsmen searched from cellar to attic, to get hold of all shirkers.

In time, there were formed, under Niels Juel, eight Naval Companies to man the defences. They were:

66 men under the command of Jørgen Bjørnsen, Vice-

Admiral, Holmen,

61 men under Captain Søren Jensen Ørbæk,

66 men under Captain Jørgen Rytter,

44 men under Captain Peter Bjørnsen,

56 men under Captain Thomas Didriksen,

61 men under Captain Vilbot Petersen,

making a total of 348 men.

2*

Copenhagen was now exposed to a wearisome and exhausting siege, with alternating sorrow and joy. Grief at the fall of the fortress of Kronborg at Elsinore, was followed by rejoicing when Jakob Dannefer sailed the captured Swedish frigate [OHANNES into Copenhagen, to be handed over to the King. But Copenhagen would not have been able to hold out for long, if the Danish King had not received help from abroad. This time it was the Swedes who had broken the peace, and thus the Netherlands, under the agreement with Denmark, came to aid the Danes. This also suited their economic interests in the Baltic, as they were not interested in a strong military power on both sides of the Sound. On Sunday, August 15th, the Danish envoy had appealed to the States General for help. On August 21th it was decided to come to the aid of Denmark, and on October 7th a Support Fleet stood out from Vlieland under the Flag of Lieutenant-Admiral Jacob of Obdam, Master to Wassenaer.

On October 29th, the Netherlands' and the Swedish Fleets met in battle, south of Kronborg, resulting in the relief of Copenhagen. A Danish squadron tried to join the relieving forces, but wind and current were against it, and the Danish ships could only act as escort to the Netherlands' supply ships on their last lap to Copenhagen.

The period of siege had been busy days for Niels Juel, the sea being the only road open to Copenhagen. As naval base commander he had to procure ships, in purchase, lease or charter, watch over, and direct, the routing of supply ships, and provide stores and provisions for all vessels engaged in catering to the needs of the capital. Even winter brought no rest for him, for when ice blocked the approaches, new defence measures had to be taken.

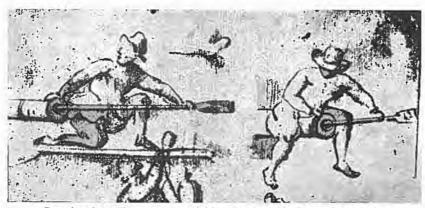
On January 6th, Niels Juel, on board the captured ship

JOHANNES, with eight other warships and a galiot, made an unsuccesful sortie into the Sound to capture som Swedish merchantmen passing through it. The only result of this action, however, was that it was decided to keep 3 inshore boats standing by at the customs-house to take care of such operations.

The watch on the ramparts of the town and naval base was intensified, and all naval vessels were searched for gunpowder on account of the possible consequences of a bombardment. All defences were improved with barbed wire entanglements and chevaux-de-frise, which Niels Juel had his carpenters make. It should also be mentioned that Niels Juel was with the Naval Companies in reserve at Kastellet, the citadel at the harbour entrance, and both Danish and Dutch sailors participated actively in the defence of Copenhagen during the Swedish attacks on February loth and 11th, 1659. For his important work at Holmen, Niels Juel was accorded »privileges of the Royal victualling depot, at a rate equivalent to that of a ship's captain at sea,« which was valued at 20 Dalers Courant.

The Netherlands, England and France tried to mediate several times, but neither of the two Nordic Kings were willing to accept such unwarranted interference, and the conflict went on.

Late in April, the Danish fleet was ready, and on the 26th the ships left Copenhagen, with Henrik Bjelke on TREFOLDIGHED (Trinity), and Niels Juel on SVANEN (Swan), whilst Admiral Opdam followed a few days later with some Dutch ships, heading for waters south of Møen. On Saturday, April 30th, the wind was moderate, ENE. The Danish-Netherlands fleet set course towards the Belt of Femern and, under a freshening wind, they sighted the Swedish fleet shortly before noon. The enemy was sailing close to the wind to reach up to the



Drawing by Villem van der Velde, showing ships' guns being taken on board.

allies, who had the weather position, and already at noon the ships were close enough for fire to be opened. There is not much information available about the course of events, but whatever records there are, seem to show that the allied fleet, under Admiral Opdam, was about equal in size to the Swedish force of 24 ships. The Danish Admiral Bjelke, with his squadron, was in the van. Four times the combatant fleets passed each other, and already during the first exchange firing seems to have been effective. The Swedish Admiral Bjelkenstjerna was wounded, and his flagship VICTORIA was holed under the water-line and suffered damage to main and mizzen masts. He had to hand over command to Gustaf Wrangel. At the same time, Bjelke had his fore-topsail shot to pieces, and sustained damages to such an extent that he considered immediate repairs necessary. He therefore asked Opdam for some ships to stand by him until he was ready again. The activities of both fleets were delayed by this, and, at the same time, the wind went from ENE to ESE, to the advantage of the Swedes.

They gained the weather gauge, but Obdam records

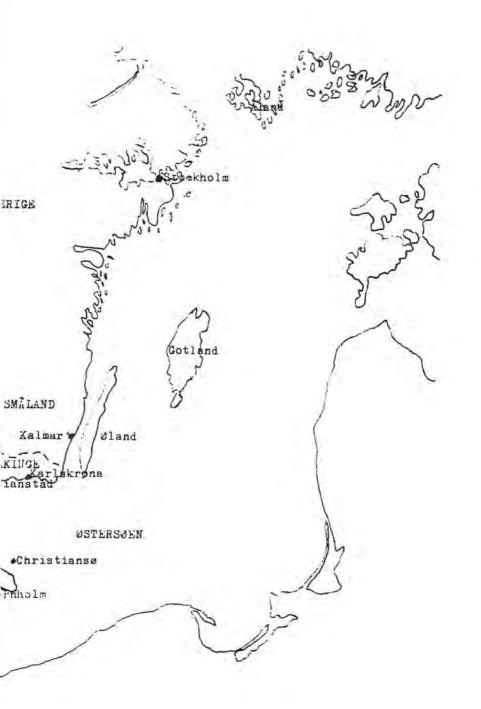
in his journal that, to the surprise of the allies, the enemy made no further attempts to attack, but stayed out of range so that the Dutch could not reach them, even with their heaviest pieces, during the remaining passage.

Both sides have their explanations and excuses for the lack of activity during the last phases of the engagement. The Swedish Admiralty Secretary, Gudm. Spak, declares that after wind freshened it was no longer possible to bring the guns to bear in the heavy seas. Opdam, on the other hand, explains that Bjelke's ship, after being damaged, sailed so badly that the combined fleet could not catch up with the enemy. For this reason, and also because it was now after seven in the evening, he suggested that the fleet proceed to Flensborg Fjord, to join up with Admiral Helt's squadron there. In spite of his explanations, Opdam's conduct was not everywhere in the Netherlands accepted as satisfactory. Officers of the Admiralty in Rotterdam supported his action, but from Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leyden, Hoorn, Enkhuisen, Edam, and Monnikendam strong voices of criticms were heard, which the retired State Councillor, Jan de Witt, only managed to repudiate by referring to Opdam's conduct and actions in the Sound, on October 29th, the year before.

The Dutch historian, Noordam, feels that there are indications that Opdam, after the battle in the Sound, feared the Swedes.

How Niels Juel fared under this engagement we do not know. The funeral orations mention that he distinguished himself by fearless conduct, but no details are given. Throughout the summer he was on cruises with the fleet, but there were no further battles or engagements. In fact, the fleet had to remain passive several times, as varying news reached it of decisions from the Conference of the Great Powers at the Hague.





For some time the British Admiral Montague was stationed in Danish waters with about 40 ships, and the Netherlands countered this move by dispatching Michael de Ruijter with another fleet division to Denmark.

The Danish-Netherlands fleet had, since the battle of Rødsand, remained south of the Danish islands, but on May 18th it moved back into the Great Belt, anchoring off Nyborg. It was the intention to collect provisions and stores for an attack on the occupied island of Fuenen, but on May 30th, Opdam came aboard Bjelke's ship to give him the news of the »First Hague Concert,« of which he had just received news in a letter. On that same day Opdam wrote to Jan de Witt: »I must admit that it perplexed me entirely, and I wish God would give me greater understanding than I have, so that I might unravel it (the treaty) since, in my opinion, it contains contradictions which I can find no way out of.«

During the following three weeks of armistice the Danish ships had to operate alone, but they remained in the Belt near Opdam's fleet. By this time both the English squadron, and de Ruijter's ships, had arrived there too. On June 20th, Bjelke again joined up with Opdam, and from Dutch ships' journals we learn that Bjelke carried his pennant above the flag, that Niels Juel had his hoisted from »de voorstengen,« and with them followed Vice-Admiral Helt and Rodsten. Great care was shown by the various fleets to avoid coming into conflict, and therefore, the Danish-Netherlands fleet, under Opdam, at one time retired to Copenhagen for new consultations with the King.

It was here decided to undertake an expedition for the relief of Nakskov, but when the newly provisioned ships came to the island of Møen, news of the »Second Hague Concert« reached Opdam, and once again operations were cancelled. Shortly after this came the "Third Hague Concert", and when the English fleet returned home at the end of August, Opdam decided to do the same, after having had to ride out two severe gales en September. Whilst de Ruijter, with his squadron, remained with Bjelke, Opdam set sail for Copenhagen to take leave of the King. At the same time Niels Juel returned to Copenhagen to take up his duties at Bremerholm.

The funeral orations of both M. Gjøe and Peter Jespersen, mention that Niels Juel took part in the landings on Fuenen. However, this cannot be correct, since from October 14th onwards we find orders to Niels Juel concerning his work as base commander at Holmen, and also, records at this time show that sailors were being discharged from Niels Juel's ship SVANEN (Swan).

The tasks before Niels Juel were, as in the year before, to assist in defence measures for the winter. However, when the Swedish King, Karl Gustaf, died suddenly on February 13th, 1660, Sweden was minded for peace and mediation by the Great Powers bore fruit, so that peace was signed on May 27th, 1660. The Western Powers did not want one country in command of both sides of the Sound, so the Danish King, Frederik III, had to give up all hope of getting back Skaane; but in return Trondheim province went back to Norway, and the Baltic isle of Bornholm, which had liberated itself from Sweden by its own efforts, was returned to Denmark.

Chapter Three

GATHERING STRENGTH

Revolution & Restoration

The circumstances of war, and experiences during the long siege of Copenhagen, had so changed customary concepts that it was impossible for many people to return to their old way of life. The violence of conflict had influenced the structure of society, exposing weaknesses in some places and strength in others, so that it was natural that the country's internal affairs were affected. Great changes are therefore associated with the year of 1660.

Already before the war, the government by Rigsraad (an aristocratic council of state) was exposed to criticism, and now that a financial crisis necessitated heavy tax burdens, which often interfered with old privileges, general dissatisfaction became the direct cause of a revolution in the form of government. The many changes which took place cannot be recorded here, but it should be sufficient to mention that when the annulment of the Coronation Charter, which had restricted the King's powers, was signed on October 16th, by the Rigsraad, the ecclesiastical and civil deputees, and 54 common peers, there were among them 23 men whose names had not previously been recorded in the minutes of the council meetings. They were mostly young noblemen in their twenties, belonging to the Court and Central Administration. Niels Juel and his brother, Jens Juel, were among them, and both were nephews of Hannibal Sehested, who had had great influence upon these events.

The new government was made up a College of the Treasury, a College of State, a College of War, besides the already existing Admiralty College, a Danish Chancery and a German Chancery. The Admiralty College remained unchanged, and when its head, Ove Gjedde, died at the end of December, Admiral Henrik Bjelke was appointed President, whilst Gjedde's simultaneous post as Rigs-Admiral remained unfilled. There were rumours of the position being offered to the Dutch Admiral de Ruijter and the Danish Niels Trolle, but these were never substantiated.

The country's financial difficulties of course also had economic consequences for the Navy, and only few ships were commissioned in the summer of 1661. Also, it is apparent that there was little money even for maintenance of the remaining ships. As the Swedish Resident, Gustav Duvall, wrote home: "The other ships lying at Holmen look bad. I myself was aboard them yesterday. Some of them would cost as much to repair as they are worth. He who had the inspection of Holmen took me with him."

Altogether, the Navy had fared badly since the death of King Christian IV, and the last war had reduced the number of ships considerably. In 1662 there remained only:

12 large ships of the line	e (50 guns and above)
FREDERIK	- 94 guns, built 1649
SOPHIA AMALIA	-100 guns, built 1650
PRINS CHRISTIAN	 91 guns, built 1650; in 1667 renamed PRINCESSE CHARLOTTE AMALIE, and again in 1673
TREFOLDIGHED	renamed ENIGHED (Unity) – 60 guns, built 1643

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SVANEN - 60 guns, built 1649; until 1658 (Swan) named HANNIBAL. TRE LØVER - 64 guns, built 1656 (Three Lions) TRE KRONER - 60 guns, built 1632; in 1665 renamed (Three Crowns) NELLEBLADET (Nettle Leaf) VICTORIA - 56 guns, built 1650 NORSKE LØVE - 52 guns, built 1634 (Norwegian Lion) SPES - 52 guns, built ? (Hope) LINDORMEN (Danish - 50 guns, built 1654 mythological monster) SORTE RYTTER - 52 guns, built 1636 (Black Knight)

3 medium-sized ships (20-50 guns)SORTE BJØRN- 36 guns, built about 1635(Black Bear)- 34 guns, purchased 1635, until 1654(Nettle Leaf)- 34 guns, purchased 1635, until 1654KØBENHAVN- 32 guns, built 1656, leased from the(Copenhagen)Salt Company

2 small ships, less than 20 guns VILDMANDEN – 16 guns, built 1658 (Savage) EGERN 16 guns, built 1658, until 1660 called (Squirrel) ELEFANTEN (Elephant)

4 jagts

PAPEGOIEN (Parrot), LINDORMEN (Dragon), MYNDEN (Greyhound), DRONNINGENS JAGT (Queen's Jagt).

5 merchant ships

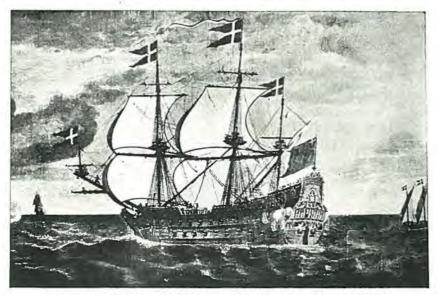
The galiots ST. PEDER (Saint Peter), HVIDE LØVE (White Lion), PRINSENS GALIOT (Prince's Galiot), and the boejers SORTE HUND (Black Dog) and HAABET (Hope).

Also, there were two floating batteries NOAH ARK (Noah's

ARK) and ARCHEN NOAH (Ark Noah), a victualling barge and yet another artillery barge.

There were thus only a few serviceable men-of-war, and a Swedish spy, Peter Chambers, in 1662, reports back: »It is, so help me, a sorry sight to see how these ships are spoiled, and rotten throughout. They are green outside and deteriorate.« Even the enemy spy felt pity at the sight.

After the introduction of Enevælden (Absolute Monarchy) in Denmark, the Navy could find support only from the »Finance Minister« Hannibal Sehested, and when he, in July 1661, went to Norway, and later to England, a guardian spirit left the Navy. Not until his return in 1662 did a favourable development for the Navy begin again. The King was inclined to support his absolute power with a strong Army, which could also secure his Person. It was also of some importance that many officers



Ship of the line, FREDERIK, built 1649 (Painting at Gaunø Castle).

of the Army were foreigners, whilst the officer corps of the Navy mostly came of old Danish nobility.

In 1662, Hannibal Sehested secured the appointment of Henrik Bjelke as Rigs-Admiral, and arranged for the Navy to begin repairs on its ships; but after only a few months' stay in the country, Hannibal Sehested was sent to France as ambassador.

Niels Juel, now 33 years old, held the second highest rank in the Naval Establishment, but the King wanted someone with European fame to head the reconstruction of the Navy, and therefore approached Cort Adeler, a man of common heritage, born in Norway, knighted during his service in Venice, and now resident in the Netherlands. Niels Juel was passed by, and on September 15th, 1663, Cort Adeler was appointed Lieutenant-General-Admiral, although it was not until 1664 that he took his seat in the Board of the Admiralty.

Already from the beginning of 1663, however, do we begin to note a speeding up of repairs and the construction of new ships. As Commanding Officer, Holmen, Niels Juel had more than enough to do, and it is actually possible to see from the new books which the writers inaugurated. that everyone went to work with renewed interest and energy. Each book has its own special preface, and the neat and tidy recording of the first orders characterize the books, so that it is possible even now, when opening the books, to sense the feeling of high spirit which had prevailed, and even reached into the writers' rooms at Holmen. As his closest associates during these years, Niels Juel had Nikolaj Helt, and Master of Stores, Arnt Tengnagel, who was engaged in 1663. They directed the work and controlled the purchases, and, as though to mark the beginning of a new era, the new constructions were numbered. A hull, which had been standing on the slip for some years, and which was completed in 1663, was allocated construction Number 1. It was the small frigate FLYVENDE HJORT (Flying Hart).

In 1664, a new Master Shipbuilder was engaged, a Thijs Hermansen van der Burg, whom Cort Adeler had signed contract with in Holland. In February, 1664, the keel was laid for construction No. 2, and in March and April No. 3 and No. 4 were put on the slip. Finally, No. 5 was completed during the same year; altogether, two frigates and two ships.

The political controversies in the spring of 1665 among the leading personages of the young monarchy also affected the Navy. The pro-English Hannibal Sehested had, during the absence of the Netherlands-orientated Christoffer Gabel, arranged that a large order for stores and provisions went to an English-born merchant in Elsinore. This matter had wider aspects and consequences, since it was connected with the question of Denmark's relations with England and the Netherlands in the new war which had broken out between them. Apparently, it was Sehested who was in particular favour with King Frederik III at this time. Not only did the King issue a proclamation recalling all Danish subjects from the Netherlands, but in April, 1665, an Anglo-Danish trade treaty was signed.

A further change of course in foreign relations was made, when it was secretly agreed with the English, that Dutch East Indies merchantmen who, with their valuable cargoes, called in at Bergen during the summer, on their way home, were to be attacked by an English squadron, with support from the Commandant in Bergen. Unfortunately, the secret dispatches did not reach Bergen before the English attack had begun, and the Port Commandant helped defend the Dutch ships. A consequence of this episode was firstly, a Danish-Dutch alliance, and secondly, after 1666, war against England on the side of the Netherlands.

3 Niels Juel

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During this period work was pursued with energy at Holmen. One frigate, three ships and two galleys were completed in 1665 and 1666; further ships were added to the fleet from other shipyards and, in addition, several ships were bought elsewhere. Niels Juel had his hands full; not least because of difficulties in obtaining necessary materials for building the ships, and a continued shortage of funds, all of which affected results. It was of some help that, as a kind of payment for the declaration of war against England, subsidies were forthcoming from the Netherlands. The Danish Navy was in no way anxious to fight against the English, and when the, for Denmark, relatively bloodless war ended in the summer of 1667, its most important consquences for the Navy had been the supplies which had been obtained.

When the Dutch subsidies were discontinued, there was once more a shortage of money, and 1668 and 1669 were again years when activities were slowed down. Only two new warships were completed during these years. It was now Christoffer Gabel, whose star was in the ascendancy, and unfortunately his interest in the Navy was minimal.

The death of King Frederik III, in 1670, once more changed the course of events, With the young King, Christian V, on the Throne, a younger generation now came to head the government and, furthermore, the new King was personally interested in the Navy. New instructions were issued to Holmen, and through rationalization, one tried to bring order in the economy, and a Naval Commission was established to reorganize the affairs of the Navy. A General Inspection was ordered, some of the older ships were scrapped, and a new shipbuilding programme was started.

During these latter years Niels Juel, also had found time to look after his private affairs. At the death of his father, in 1657, he had inherited the estate of Hundsbæk, but apparently he showed little interest in it, and during the 1660's he let it be parcelled out and sold. Instead, Niels Juel in 1666 purchased Sæbygaard, in Vendsyssel, North Jutland, and from the Land Registry we can se how Niels Juel went about repairing the buildings, expanding the estate, and apparently showing considerable interest in developing it.

It became a dignified setting for the young Admiral, when he had occasion to free himself of his often strenuous tasks at Holmen. We here catch a glimpse of his several talents, but although he had already achieved much, the coming years were to reveal his knowledge and skills to a still greater degree, both as naval commander and landed proprietor.

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Chapter Four

THE SKAANSKE WAR Gotland & Bornholm

Political affairs in Europe during the early 1670's were under strong influence of King Louis XIV's vitality and ambitions. Against France, in 1675, however, now stood a coalition of the Netherlands, Spain, Brandenburg, and the German Emperor, and on June 30th, 1674, Denmark joined in a defensive alliance with them, with the reservation that Denmark should only maintain a certain state of readiness, against subsidies from Spain and the Netherlands. At this time France was allied with Sweden, and when Swedish troops at the end of December, 1674, invaded Brandenburg, Denmark, in fact, was obligated to commence hostilities against Sweden.

In the spring of 1675 Denmark commissioned part of the fleet, and from Netherlands came a squadron of 7 ships and 1 jagt, under command of Captain Binckes. On July 16th, King Christian V returned from a general inspection of the Army in the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig, and with the King at its head a Commission was formed to look into the affairs of the Navy. On July 1st, its first meeting was held, at which was submitted a list of 16 ships which would be ready for operations against the Swedes, and it was decided that 12 of these, together with 7 Dutch ships, should enter the Baltic. Cort Adeler was to be Commander-in-Chief, and lead one of the three squadrons, Niels Juel and Jens Rodsten being put in command of the two others. The King decided to honour Captain Bincke by resolving that he should be fourth in rank, with the title of Vice-Admiral and that he should accompany Cort Adeler.

This, Captain Binckes was definitely not satisfied with. He claimed that since two fleets were joined together he should, as commander of one of them, be Second-in-Command. At the Royal Commission's second meeting on July 28th these problems were discussed, and the King resolved that Jens Rodsten should remain with his squadron in the Sound. Binckes was to command the left wing instead of Rodsten and should have third place in rank, but if Rodsten's squadron should join the fleet, he was to surrender his position.

Finally, on August 13th, at 8 a.m., the fleet weighed anchor, and after its departure the Rigs-Admiral, in a letter to the King, wrote: »It would appear that Admiral Adler will have to do with a difficult man, namely Captain Binckes, as did I, during the previous war, with Opdam, when I often regretted that fine gentlemen and masters were merchants and such.«

From the beginning the fleet was beset with difficulties. In his first dispatches home, Cort Adeler complained about the condition in which several of the ships had left Copenhagen, and when on August 30th an action against the island of Ruegen was planned, a gale arose and the action had to be cancelled. After this, an insidious and malignant sickness spread among the ships' crews. It had started before the departure, and spread day by day, favoured by the unhygienic conditions on board, where the men were crowded below deck. On August 30th, ten were already dead, among these Schoutbynacht (Rear-Admiral) Claus Michelsen, and a further thirty were seriously ill.

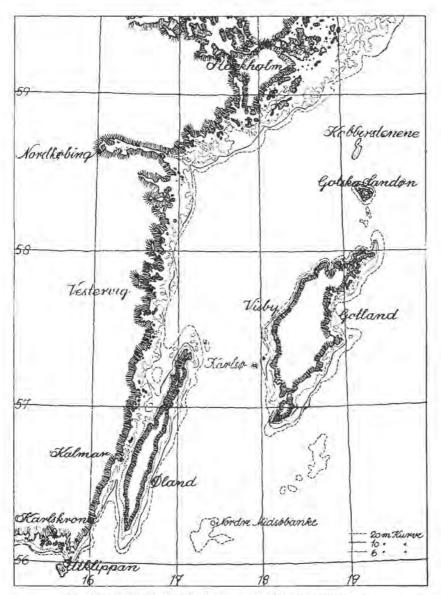
The fleet cruised about for a few days, awaiting the Swedish fleet, but a south-easterly gale forced it to anchor, and on September 16th Niels Juel journeyed to the King, who was then at Rostock, to report on the fleet's condition. On September 20th, the weather was particularly bad,

and several ships were damaged, and not until September 23rd was there a lull. At this time Cort Adeler had to report to Copenhagen that »PRINS JØRGEN has 14 dead and 60 sick, FREDERICUS III has 14-15 dead and 60 sick, CHARLOTTA AMALIA has about 50 sick, CHRI-STIANUS IV has more than 50 sick and some dead, and with other ships it is the same. I fear that even more will die, as a great number of them have no clothes to cover their bodies.« On October 1st, he reported again: »It is a very contagious illness, and when they have lain but one day they are so decimated that they cannot move any members, and many have a great rage. The Honourable Admiral Niels Juel, and our older Captains, say that during the last war against Sweden a similar sickness raged among the young men. It is a very painful affliction, and a special kind of pox, since when they are dead a large number of blue spots appear upon their bodies.«

Thus, sickness and gales marked the expedition and in the middle of October the Dutch Captain Binckes declared that he wanted to return home. It was fortunate that the Swedish fleet that particular summer had great difficulties in equipping itself, so that it, although ready with about 33 ships in October, had to cancel its expeditions.

On October 30th the Danish fleet was off Stevns head, and on board ten of the ships there were 72 dead and 699 sick. Furthermore, Cort Adeler himself declared that he was not well. Two days later the fleet anchored up off Dragør on the island of Amager, and on November 2nd he was taken ashore, seriously ill, after having bid his officers and men farewell, and handed over command to Niels Juel. The doctors stood helpless, and on November 5th, 1675, he died.

The two Admirals had worked well together, and personal relations between them had been good, but



Map of waters east of Sweden, between Øland and Gotland.

Niels Juel was still unknown outside the boundaries of his country, and it was therefore quite characteristic of the situation, that the Netherlands' envoy wrote back that it would be desirable if the States General could send de Ruijter or Tromp with a supporting fleet next spring. Immediately after Cort Adeler's death, Brinckes again put forward his request to return home, and after much discussion he was allowed to depart with the Dutch ships.

On February 28th, 1676, the King finally issued his formal Declaration of War against the Swedes, and during the winter months there were negotiations with the Dutch Admiral Cornelis Tromp, who was engaged to serve the Danish King as Danish General-Admiral.

Until Tromp arrived, Niels Juel remained Commander-in-Chief, and on March 28th he put to sea with the fleet, with the joint aim of obtaining information about the Swedish fleet, and launching an attack on the occupied island of Gotland in the Baltic. His preparations were very thorough, and from his accounts book we can see that he even allocated money to buy information about Gotland. As always, there could be found people who could be bought, and Niels Juel was apparently well aware of this.

The squadron consisted of 13 large and small ships, of which one was captured from the Swedes off the island of Utlängen near Blekinge, on April 23rd. Apart from these, there were a snow, three galiots, and two crayers.

The capture of the Swedish ship was not without drama. It had been abandoned by the Swedes, who had lighted a fuse leading to the powder magazine. In spite of this, Lieutenant Hans Bertelsen Vold entered the ship and cut the fuse. Niels Juel quickly took advantage of this event, and when the ships returned the Admiral »dashed over to them,« and in joy at the result of the skirmish, immediately promoted the officer LieutenantCommander, »for his manly conduct and to encourage others.«

On April 29th the attack on Gotland began. The previous evening army officers and soldiers were assembled on HOMMEREN, HAVMANDEN (Merman), SPRAGLEDE FALK (Gaudy Falcon) and CHARITAS, from which they en sloops and boats landed near Klintehavn, under cover of the ships' artillery. The Swedish governor, who met with 600 men, soon surrendered and »took horse between spurs and headed for Visby, upon which the commandant followed him, and they all ran each their way into the woods.« A Gotlander, Thomas Wallenstein, who was with Niels Juel, sent word to the farmers that they were to assemble with horses and wagons, and by this means the Danish soldiers quickly reached Visby, to which they commenced to lay siege, under command of Colonel Bertelsen.

Whilst these operations were in progress, Niels Juel, on the watch against surprises, sent a galiot, a frigate and a snow to patrol southwards. Poor weather delayed further activities another day, but on May 1st, the bombardment of Visby castle began, »on that place where the governor's lodgings were.« Firing was apparently effective, for when Colonel Bertelsen, before starting his attack, sent a drummer to request surrender of the citadel, the Swedes quickly agreed,« if bombardment from the ships would cease.«

The capture of Visby, and thus control of the whole island of Gotland had been achieved in a very short time. On May 2nd, Niels Juel wrote to the Rigs-Admiral: »It is a day of renown, namely Philipi Jacobi, as know they whose lease has been terminated and must vacate, and yet do not understand that they have been given notice a quarter of a year before, since we came upon them as unannounced and unexpected.« Niels Juel was in high humor and had time for a joke referring to the traditionel bi-annual day for vacating tenancies.

Gotland was now again Danish, and Niels Juel started to reorganize the administration. Whilst Major Billenberg became Commandant of Visborg, Niels Juel appointed the Gotlander, Thomas Wallenstein, Commissioner »to watch over all civil matters.« He later wrote to the King: »I have appointed one of the most distinguished men of Visby, Customs Officer. He is born in this country.« Henrich Klahre, who was with the fleet, was appointed Customs Controller, and Andreas Winterberg became «Inspector of beach combers and shall also collect land fees and taxes.« Altogether Niels Juel endeavoured to conduct himself as liberator.

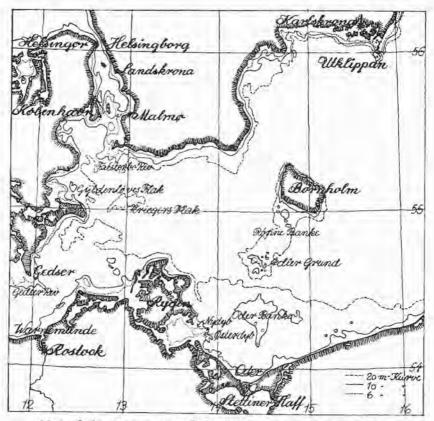
»In the other small harbours I have ordered that there shall be taken, among the local inhabitants, the most honest which can be found, and I have told them that Your Majesty will most Graciously entrust them, at which they loudly proclaim their happiness, that they can be given a position which was previously denied them, so that I can promise Your Majesty that you can thus gain the loyalty of the country; for the Swedes had filled all appointments with their own, a mob of hungry knaves, who have sat there, bent on extortion, and have laid most of the country waste.«

After having organised the government and set officials to work, Niels Juel left Visby with his fleet, »after the ships had come safely through some foul weather.« Niels Juel was acting quite in accordance with instructions when he wrote in his letter to the King: »As there is no secure or convenient roadstead for the fleet, and the Swedes have the best winds to set out with, and I have reliable information that they lie ready with 40 ships at Dalarøen, therefore I have not wanted to hazard Your Royal Majesty's fleet.« Niels Juel had orders not to risk his fleet against a superior force, and to await Tromp's arrival with the Support Fleet. Nevertheless, he could not refrain from unburdening himself to the Rigs-Admiral: »If I had been fortunate enough to have yet another 10 ships of His Majesty entrusted to me, I would not leave this post, and would show that I have Heart and Courage enough to do His Majesty the same Service as anyone else. I hope that God and Fortune will some time give me the occasion, so that His Royal Majesty can see that he has the same Service from his own Subject as of any Foreigner.«

The winds delayed Niels Juel at Carlsøe, and while waiting there, he had to send soldiers to Visby to enforce law and order. He also sent some ships on a reconnaissance to Stockholm. He mentions himself that they had been given money and tobacco to take with them, »for the Swedes are quite avid after tobacco,« and states that it was quite easy to buy information.

In the meantime the Dutch had arrived at Copenhagen, and on June 14th Admiral Almonde joined up with Niels Juel's fleet. On May 19th the wind backed NE, enabling him to set sail, and on the same day he received further reinforcements, with the arrival of Admiral Jens Rodsten, who had with him three Dutch and three Danish ships, besides a fireship. The joint fleet now headed for Bornholm, which it reached on May 21st, and where some sick were put ashore.

Simultaneously, the Swedish fleet had put to sea. The failure of its expeditions the previous year had angered King Karl XI, and Rigs-Admiral Stenbock had been held responsible, and was dismissed. As head of the Admiralty College he had appointed Baron Lorentz Creutz, who did not have any military experience, neither on land nor at sea, but was a very competent Councillor of State. He was quite ruthless in his reorganization of



Map of the western part of the Baltic, between Zealand, Skåne, Bornholm, and Ruegen.

the administration, took charge of equipping the Navy, and from May 4th onwards he had been ready with the fleet at Älvsnabben.

The Swedish fleet consisted of 44 large and small warships, 10 galiots, and 6 fireships, with a total of 2200 guns and about 12,000 men. Lorentz Creutz, who was appointed Admiral, became Commander-in-Chief, and his Squadron Commanders were Admiral Clas Uggla, Admiral Johan Bär, and Admiral Johan Bergenstjerna. However, Bergenstjerna died on May 20th, and the ships of his Fourth Squadron were detailed to other squadrons.

On May 23rd Niels Juel left his anchorage at Bornholm, and went cruising west of the island. On May 24th leading ships of both fleets were in contact, and finally, on May 25th, the main fleets met. Niels Juel's force consisted of 27 large and small ships and 7 smaller vessels. According to instructions given to the Dutch Admiral Almonde, his squadron was under command of Niels Juel, but even then the combined forces were so inferior in numbers that Niels Juel was, according to the instructions given to him, for such a situation »to withdraw in good time and take such precautions that the forces under him should not, by untimely bravour, be hazarded in vain.« On this basis the following events should be judged.

The wind was light, NNE, when the two fleets sighted each other at sunrise on May 25th. The Swedes were to windward, and Niels Juel could count 52 enemy sail heading toward the Danish fleet. His own ships were heading N by W and NW, that is, on a course towards the Sound, and could have had a chance of escaping, if Niels Juel had so desired. Here we must consider, however, that he may have wanted to test his strength against the enemy before Tromp took command, even though he did not know Almonde, and had not had a chance of carrying out exercises with the Dutch squadron.

At about six o'clock Niels Juel turned southwards with his fleet towards Jasmund, but both fleets progressed only slowly. When the Danes, at about I p.m. were about 3 miles north-east of Jasmund they changed to course SE. The Wind was E by N. Not until sunset, i.e. at 8.26, were the fleets close to each other, "but as they did remain about 3 miles to windward of us, I decided to turn towards the enemy.« Here, Niels Juel, apparently, attempted the manouevre with which he was to have more success the following year; i.e. breaking through the enemy line. In the logbook of ENIGHED (Captain Dreyer) it says: »We went about and headed NNE and most of us went through the last length of their fleet.« For a period of two glasses, about one hour, the gunfire continued, after which the Swedes also turned, so that they again had the weather gauge.

Of the ships which were cut out, DIDRIC was captured by the Danish frigate SVENSKE FALK (Swedish Falcon), and later, a Brandenburger squadron of three frigates and two galiots, which was on its way to Copenhagen, succeeded in taking the fireship LEOPARD, which had escaped.

During the night the passage towards Bornholm continued, and in the morning Niels Juel again attacked the Swedish force which now counted only 45 ships. In his report Niels Juel states: "Twice I did my best to break into their fleet, hoping to get at them and cut out a portion of their ships." The Swedes, however, did not appear anxious to engage and remained at a distance, which also appears from Creutz's report to the Swedish King, in which he writes, that "quite a number of the other ships were too far away and too high up wind to have any hope of damaging the enemy with their guns, or to come to my aid."

Niels Juel and Almonde have quite different opinions about the course of events and are harsh in their accusations against each other; Almonde even accuses Jens Rodsten of having retreated before the enemy. However, the Danish Admiral was completely cleared at a subsequent Court Martial. The damage incurred by the ships tells us something about the action they had seen. Vice-Admiral Chr. Bjelke's ship had its mainmast shattered, Vice-Admiral Rodsten's was so badly damaged that he had to move to another ship, and also Almonde's ship took such punishment that he too had to transfer his Flag. Both Danish and Dutch ships had been engaged, and Niels Juel at last had to break off the engagement, not only because of damages sustained and his inferiority in numbers, but also because the Danish ships did not have the sailing qualities of the Swedish vessels. It is worth noting that the Swedes did not attempt to pursue.

Niels Juel had, as best he could, carried out his task. He had survived a battle against a superior enemy force and had caused them losses; he had been able to break off the engagement when he wanted to, and found it most convenient, and thus, during the battle, and at its conclusion, shown tactical skill. Last, but not least, he could hand over an almost intact fleet to Tromp, so that a larger joint force could again take up battle against the Swedes.

The King, in a letter to Niels Juel, expressed his »pleasure and satisfaction« at the »ardour, loyalty, and good conduct, « he had shown in the battle.

Chapter Five

THE BATTLE OF ØLAND

Niels Juel & Tromp

Some weeks before, on May 4th, 1676, Cornelis Tromp had arrived in Copenhagen, and on May 8th he signed his contract with His Majesty, but not until May 17th did the King advise Niels Juel about Tromp's appointment as General-Admiral. It has hardly come as a surprise to Niels Juel, but it is not strange that the decision agitated him. He received the news on May 22nd, and the same day he reveals his feelings in a letter to the Rigs-Admiral. He wrote: »... and as I see from the copy which Your Excellency has sent to me, that His Majesty has Graciously engaged Tromp as General-Admiral to command the fleet here in the Baltic, I have no higher wish than that it will serve His Majesty; but I had hoped that I would, for the twenty years in which I have served as Admiral, some day be so favoured, that I would advance further, since, as Your Excellency can witness, I have never spared my skin in His Majesty's service either in siege, attack or other occasions at sea; and all I have done, has been done to serve His Majesty, and to achieve Honour rather than money; and, as Your Excellency assures me in your letter I have a Gracious Sovereign, Your Excellency may remain assured that if I did not retain the hope of His Majesty once again Graciously giving me advancement, I would not wish to remain one hour. But I hope that, when it once again comes to action, I will prove that Loyalty which I owe His Majesty, and do as much as others, who gain ten times as much as I. I trust that Your Excellency will recommend me well to His Majesty, and that Your

Excellency will assure His Majesty that he shall have a good Servant in me, who will not spare life or blood in His Majesty's service.*

These words, which were written shortly before the engagement on May 25-26th, show self-control and tact. They demonstrate heart and loyalty, and the letter is an important document in illuminating and evaluating the character and personality of Niels Juel.

General-Admiral Tromp left Copenhagen on May 26th, and two days later came to anchor near Niels Juel off Falsterbo with 5 Danish and ? Dutch ships. Tromp now took over command, and divided the fleet into three squadrons, with Niels Juel on board CHURPRINSEN, commanding First Squadron, Tromp on CHRISTIA-NUS V, Second Squadron, and Almond on DELFT, Third Squadron.

On May 30th the fleet weighed anchor at dawn, and rounded Falsterbo in a southwesterly wind. About 10 a.m. the Swedish fleet was sighted, »in the middle waters, towards Ystad, on the weather bow.« The Swedes, who knew that the Danish fleet had been strengthened, decided, although they still had superiority in numbers, to retire towards Øland, and a pursuit was begun. However, the Swedes had too great a lead, and during the night they also changed course, so that next morning they were out of sight. But, »at midday, about twelve, we again sighted them SE of us, and I signalled that everyone should do his best to follow them with every sail set. We were still chasing them at sunset, past the Ertholms and, on the forenoon of June 1st, along the south coast of Øland. At 11 o'clock we caught up with them and forced them to stand and face us.« The wind was strong, south-westerly, with showers.

A Swedish Navy official, Andr. Gyllenspaak, who was with the Swedish fleet, reports that they did their best

4 Niels Juel

to escape, but the pursuers positioned themselves between the Swedes and the shore and forced them to fight. »Immediately after the meal, His Excellency (Creutz) came up on the quarterdeck with other officers. At this time Admiral Uggla fired one shot: »I will go about.« His Excellency rapped out an oath and said: »Where the Devil is he going now?« and likewise ordered a shot fired to indicate that he would do likewise. Some were against this, especially old Captain Peer Gabrielsen, who said that, »if we go about in this weather with this crank ship, an accident will surely happen.«

Gyllenspaak went below deck to order the port guns pulled in, but they had hardly begun to do so, before the ship turned. «I then sprang up on the quarterdeck, where His Excellency Mr. Creutz and the other officers stood, and asked them for God's sake to strike the sails, but no one answered. We were then so near the Danish Admiral, Cornelis Tromp, with his five large ships of the line, that we were preparing to open fire. At this moment the ship heeled over so that the ship's rails went below the surface, and water poured in through the ports. Simultaneously, fire broke out in the powder chest at the entry port, and the ship's starboard side, as well as masts and cabin blew up.«

After CRONAN, the turn came to SVÄRDET, which was attacked by both Tromp and Niels Juel, but by misfortune this ship did not become prize either, since the fireship t'HOEN from the Amsterdam Admiralty, without orders, closed with the Swede, which had actually struck its Colours to Tromp, so that it caught fire and burned down. Several Swedish ships had tried, unsuccessfully, to come to the aid of the two large flagships, but with these ships lost, the remaining fleet now tried to make good its escape. SOLEN, which had lost its mainmast, fled, badly damaged; it later ran aground at



Medal commemorating the Battle of Øland. The Swedish ship STORA KRONAN is seen capsizing, and SVÄRDET is on fire (National Museum).

Vestervik, but was brought afloat a few days later. Another of the supporting ships, SATURNUS, escaped without much damage, but NEPTUNUS could not keep up, and was overtaken by Niels Juel. He writes about this, »yet another was brought under my guns, but I could not close with it, as I had damaged my mainmast; but they surrendered willingly; and then some Dutchmen rowed to it with their sloop and took it.

"Thus, we who carry the Flag must take the punishment, whilst others get the prize, although I expect I will get my share before it is released." The Dutchman was Captain v. Zeyl on the GIDEON. Also JERNVÅGEN had to surrender, being captured by ANNA SOPHIA (Captain Jan v. Hardenbroeck) whilst the fifth of SVÄR-DET's escorts, HIERONYMUS, was pursued by NORD-HOLLAND but escaped.

In the general flight the Swedes lost yet some ships, and the fleet was scattered. Some sought shelter at Kalmar, but most of them reached Stockholm with

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greater or lesser damages. When ÄPPLET ran into the skerries, it hit a rock and sank shortly afterwards.

The battle had been chaotic from first till last. At an early period Tromp had signalled everyone to advance upon the enemy, to catch up with him and force an engagement. In the chase which opened the action, many ships fell astern and not all managed to come up while the main battle took place. Among others, this was the case with CHRISTIANIA and FREDERICUS III, which Niels Juel had complained about already after the action of May 26th. This time he writes: »Our ships have not received much damage, as most of them did not come close enough, otherwise it would have gone even better than it did, and the Swedes would not have brought away as many ships as they did, if everyone had done what they should do.«

Under these circumstances Tromp did not have any opportunity of showing his skill and competence. The outcome depended mainly upon the individual commanders and, as will be seen, Niels Juel, at least, was not satisfied with their conduct. As Squadron Commander only it was not, however, up to him to give judgement, a fact to which he quite correctly draws the Rigs-Admiral's attention in his dispatch of June 15th, »Your Excellency might so arrange it with His Majesty, that General-Admiral Tromp should give a full report to His Majesty when he arrives, on the comportment of each in this last battle, and particularly on how the Dutch fleet conducted itself, as he has with him a Navy official who should observe these things.«

Such a request could seem superfluous, as it was part of the duties of Tromp to submit a report, but Tromp did not, in fact, reply to the King's request to send in a report on the conduct of the officers until July 23rd. Furthermore, his reply was evasive. "The vexation and

shame which I feel at the generally poor conduct of the Danish and Dutch officers makes me unsuited pursue this question further, « and he asked for a general pardon for all. It is difficult to avoid the impression that this strange excuse was made to cover up conditions which he did not want exposed, since he had not previously expressed any dissatisfaction. We also have a report from Almonde, but with our knowledge of previous critical comments, which could not stand up to legal scrutiny, too much weight should perhaps not be given to the apparently tendentious and quite temperamental account which he gave to the English Envoy in Copenhagen, if, in fact, this is correctly quoted. John Paull writes on June 20th: »I spoke today with Mr. d'Almonde, who commanded the Dutch squadron in these two engagements. He says that neither the Danes nor the Dutch fought well; they both showed cowardice. What was achieved, was done by Admiral Tromp and the Dutch ships. He was ashamed at seeing so many fine ships so badly led.« Unfortunately, there are no Swedish sources of information on the course of events.

The movements and condition of the respective naval units during the following days is also not quite clear. The pursuit had scattered the Danish fleet, but from Niels Juel's letters we can follow his progress.

On June 2nd he was at the northern end of Øland, "where I chased four ships, but they escaped into the skerries." After this, he proceeded northwards and was on June 3rd off Landsort, the day after near Gotska Sandøen, and on June 6th and 7th we learn that he had been out eastwards, as his letters are dated between Gotland and Kurland and Gotland and Memel. Later, he has probably been at Gotland, where he had contact with his administration, but otherwise we do not hear of him until he anchors at Nexø, on Bornholm, on June 15th. He reports then that he had been with Tromp, but that the last days' heavy weather had separated them, wherefore he had set sail for their rendezvous off Stevns head in the southern part of the Sound.

We know less of Tromp's movements. On June 6th he reports that on the day before he was at Vestervik, and he too then set course for Stevns. Two ships of his squadron, those of Admiral Jens Rodsten and Captain Dreyer, were with Niels Juel on June 2nd, after which they sailed to Karlsøerne to patrol westwards, but were prevented from doing so by westerly winds and some days of bad weather. On June 16th, their position was south of Bornholm and they finally reached Stevns on June 19th, at the same time as Tromp. Dreyer noted in his logbook on June 11th that they saw the Dutch admiral with 16 ships near Karlsø. Tromp's movements we do not hear anything of after this, apart from the fact that on June 2nd he sent a dispatch from Landsort.

Honours for the victory at Øland are Tromp's, as Commander-in-Chief of the allied fleet, although Niels Juel, who, from his experiences during the previous war, was very suspicious of motives of the Dutch, did not feel that full advantage had been taken of the success. On the basis of information available today, it is difficult to judge what possibilities were open to him, but that the Swedes were afraid, and reluctant to fight, seems clear. On June 7th it is reported from Stockholm, »... there is much consternation. All is revealed, nothing has been arranged for, no orders, no method,« and one week later we hear: »Since the battle, the enemy has been lying off Dalarø with the whole of his fleet, or part of it. If God had not struck him with blindness, it seems that he could, with two or three thousand men, have done what he wanted.«

On June 19th the fleet was again assembled in the Bay

of Køge, and it was possible to complete preparations for a landing in Skaane, which was now secured after the victory at sea. The main fleet was sent out on several diversionary manoeuvres along the Swedish east coast, and the blockade of Gothenburg on the west coast was tightened.

Two facts seem to emerge from these reports; first, the doubtful sailing qualities of the Danish ships and second, the tenor of relations with the Dutch allies. As regards the ships, it is notable that it is more or less generally accepted that they were unable to keep up with either the Dutch or the Swedish ships. Niels Juel has particularly pointed to CHRISTIANA and HAV-MANDEN. It is not strange that the Dutch could be vexed by this, but this is not the sole reason for the animosity which existed between the two nationalities. This was partly political, and partly due to the Netherlanders' feeling of superiority towards the Nordic seamen. The Netherlands' interest had, since the times of King Christian IV, clearly been to make sure that neither of the two Nordic nations should dominate the Sound and the Baltic, and thus endanger their considerable trade interests there. Their conduct during the war with Karl Gustav shows this, and Niels Juel, who could not avoid noticing it, clearly shows his suspicion of their motives, also during the war in which they were now engaged.

However, Niels Juel had to recognize the Netherlanders' competence, and it has not been empty phrases he used when he repeatedly refers to what must be in His Majesty's interest. Thus, on June 23rd, he writes to the Rigs-Admiral of this relations with Tromp: »... and as Your Excellency writes to me that His Majesty receives no letters from me, then Your Excellency must know that I cannot compose any without the knowledge of the

General-Admiral, as otherwise it would cause jealousy, which I try best to avoid, so that His Majesty's service should not suffer from it.«

Tromp now led the fleet on to southern Skaane, and on June 27th a landing was made at Ystad, which was occupied before evening. Niels Juel was actively engaged in this venture, and he reports gaily to the Rigs-Admiral: »Eight days ago I was an Admiral, and now I am an Adjutant, Stores Master and Engineer, so that I could lay claim to His Majesty's pay for three or four charges.« Also, he had received information that since the fighting began, Swedish officers »had to keep watch over the Dragoons, so that they should not run over to us, as they are recruited in Skaane. Even then, two have already come, and brought the news that as soon a possibility presented itself, they would all come,« and Niels Juel adds »... perhaps I can also become Colonel of several hundred Dragons, so I can have several duties to perform here«. During his stay at Ystad he spent no less than 72 Rigsdalers in various ways in His Majesty's service. There were minor payments to farmers who brought information about the Swedes' strength and positions, and rewards to franc-tireurs who were sent out on special tasks. Almost simultaneously, i.e. on June 29th, King Christian V went ashore with his troops at Raa-Aa, south of Helsingborg, under cover of 12 warships under the command of Admirals Jens and Marquor Rodsten.

After Admiral Almonde had returned home to take over command of the Dutch Mediterranean Fleet, Captain Poort commanded the Netherlands' squadron until the arrival of Vice-Admiral Cornelis Eversen on July 11th. A few days later, on July 14th, the fleet weighed anchor, cruised westwards a few days, and on July 16th anchored about 5 miles from Falster.

The following day there was a council of war on Tromp's ship. Eversen attended for the first time, and he was to become for Niels Juel yet another source of the irritation he felt towards the obtrusive Dutch admirals. The following day he wrote about this to the Rigs-Admiral, »... and as we were gathered together with the General-Admiral for a council of war he (Eversen) claimed precedence and second voice after the General-Admiral, which I would not accede, primarily because he has come as Dutch Vice-Admiral; and even if he did hold same rank as I. I still would not accede, unless this was specifically and Graciously commanded me by His Majesty, which I do not presume. After which it was resolved, to be noted by both parties, that I was to await orders from His Majesty, and he from the Prince of Orange.«

Tromp explained the matter in a letter to the King, and mentioned that the changes in the squadrons, with 4 ships sent to Norway and the arrival of three Dutch ships, had given Eversen the chance of claiming precedence over Niels Juel. Tromp also mentions that he had persuaded Eversen to delay a confrontation until decisions had been reached by the King and the Prince of Orange. Apparently, this time, the matter was resolved to the satisfaction of Niels Juel, since he thanked the Rigs-Admiral two weeks later, well before any letters could have reached the Netherlands and been replied to, for the great solicitude »Your Excellency has had for me with His Majesty. I do not think that the Dutch Vice-Admiral Cornelis Eversen can make any further pretensions.«

The reason for the council of war on July 17th was that the King had ordered Tromp, if possible, to capture the island of Ruegen. The fleet therefore left a few days later, and remained off Ruegen, until Tromp on August

17th again set course towards Bornholm. Tromp had found the island too strongly fortified and when Chr. Bjelke had managed to fetch Colonel Schack's regiment from Rostock, the garrison of Ruegen was strengthened by the Swedish General Kønigsmark. Although Tromp was given promise of supporting troops from Brandenburg, he felt that it would take too long before these reinforcements could arrive, and the time of year would then be such, that one should, for the sake of the fleet, delay the attack until a better opportunity presented itself. From August 7th until August 16th the fleet had had to endure strong gales and hardly any ship escaped injury to rigging, rope or anchor, and several ships lost their boats or were otherwise badly damaged. Four Dutch ships and the Danish GYLDENLØVE had to be dispatched to Copenhagen for repairs after the storm.

Under sail between Bornholm and Øland, Tromp, on August 24th, received the bad news about Marquor Rodsten's misfortune at Gothenburg, whereat he immediately dispatched Vice-Admiral Bjelke on SVANEN, and LINDORMEN, SVENSKE FALK, and the fireship STOKFISKEN to Copenhagen, so that the Rigs-Admiral could dispose over them and, if necessary, send them to assist at Gothenburg. One week later he additionally released LOSSEN, HVIDE FALK and HAVFRUEN for the same purpose.

In the meanwhile, news had also arrived from the east. Apparently some, in Niels Juel's opinion, undesirable people, were seeking positions in the administration of the island of Gotland, which had been captured and occupied by Niels Juel. In a letter to the Rigs-Admiral he expresses his annoyance, »and I do feel that not few seek appointments on Gotland, but presume, since His Majesty in a letter Graciously has approved those whom I have placed, that it remains thereby, as I have placed no one but those who are reliable and are sure of serving His Majesty, whilst the others presumably are looking to have some more to drink up, as they have already done with their own, which I would ask Your Excellency to prevent.« One week later, attention was drawn to the island for another reason, news reaching the fleet that a Swedish squadron had tried to obtain information about its defences. In Copenhagen, the impression was that an attempt to attack Gotland would be made, on an August 28th the King ordered Niels Juel to be sent there.

On September 3rd he left with 10 Danish warships, 2 krayers, 1 fluyt and 1 galiot, thereby halving Tromp's fleet, so that he had only Dutch ships left, apart from CHRISTIANUS V, on which he was himself, and DEL-MENHORST (Captain Jan Ejlers). Tromp was presumably now already preparing for the return of the Support Fleet to the Netherlands, a presumption which is supported by the fact that he had already asked permission to depart for Køge Bay within 4 weeks. That he did now further weaken the fleet, could seem hazardous, but the decision may perhaps be seen against the background of the lessons which the Swedish fleet had learnt. Nevertheless, Rigs-Admiral Bjelke was dismayed at Tromp having sent so many ships away.

On the same day that Niels Juel left, Tromp received orders from the King to fortify Christianopel, and attack the bastion at Carlshavn, upon which he immediately sent counterorders to Niels Juel, who already next day was back with the main fleet. There was now a strong south-easterly wind, which made Tromp give up the attack on Carlshavn, stating- *I have, in the name of good seamanship, not wanted to hazard Admiral Juel's detachment, which is now back with the main fleet, in an expedition against the bastions of Carlshavn, which must be carried out against a rocky coast, particularly in view of the unreliable season.« Then Tromp set course back towards Køge Bay, which he reached already on September 9th.

For Henrik Bjelke the return of the fleet came as a surprise. As late as on the morning of September 10th he was writing to the King about the ships which had been returned to him, and which were now being made ready to join the main fleet again, but on the same day he had to send another dispatch to the King, now with the information that Tromp was back in Køge Bay, »mostly for the sake of the Dutch ships, who complain of shortages in many respects, and now seem to have little desire to remain at sea.«

Again that discussion arose, which had taken place whenever Dutch ships had been in Danish waters to help Denmark. The Dutch wanted to return home in good time before the winter, and in Denmark they wanted to use them a little longer, and the result was, as usual, vaccilation and inactivity.

On September 11th, three Danish ships were sent to the coast of Pomerania, and on the 19th another three left for Christianopel, plus an additional ship with soldiers to Wismar, and yet another, with the sick, to Copenhagen. When the Dutch also left for Copenhagen on September 26th, Tromp, on the 28th, could write to the King: "I am now in Køge Bay with no other ships but CHURPRINSEN (Niels Juel) and ANNA SOPHIA (Captain Hardenbroeck)."

The Rigs-Admiral had visited Tromp on September 19th, after which he has probably been with the King, since he did not return to Copenhagen until September 30th, when he took up negotiations with the returned Netherlanders. They stubbornly insisted that they had only five days left, and therefore could not perform any further duties, and Bjelke could not even persuade them to support the Danish squadron at Gothenburg in an attack upon some Swedish ships. The retirement of the Dutch could not be prevented, and soon Tromp and Niels Juel returned to Copenhagen.

In the meanwhile the three ships which were sent to Christianopel, under command of Admiral Jens Rodsten, on October 4th started laying out batteries ashore opposite the bastions of Carlshavn, and, on October 7th the Swedes surrendered. The venture which Tromp had previously wanted to give up, was now crowned with success, as Rodsten here obtained not only large quantities of stores, but also two new ships.

Niels Juel was given yet another task before the end of the year. As the fortune of war turned in Skaane, there was need for still more troops, and the King, in November, ordered sailors to be recruited and pressed into service in the Army. Untrained, and badly armed, 1300 men in naval companies were engaged in the Battle of Lund, and as Tromp was ill, Niels Juel joined the King instead. On September 4th, at 8 a.m., we find him at the King's headquarters at Svenstorp, and Niels Juel has probably been among the Cavaliers who accompanied the King into battle. The naval detachment, under Colonel Cicignon, did not join in the first phase of the battle. Their contribution therefore remained insignificant, but was bloody enough, when some enemy squadrons of cavalry broke through and cut them down so mercilessly that the Swedish King, Karl XI, found it necessary to intervene.

Chapter Six

THE BATTLE OF MØEN

Interception & Destruction

With the arrival of winter, the seasonally dependant sea warfare of that time reached the phase where work was mainly directed towards the planning and preparation of expeditions in the following spring and summer.

To prevent the often annoyingly slow progress of fitting out the fleet, the King, on January 26th, 1677, formed a commission consisting of Henrik Bjelke, Cornelis Tromp, Holger Vind, Corfits Trolle, Fr. v. Arenstorff, Niels Juel, Christopher Sehested, Alb. Gyldensparre and P. P. Lerche. The orders were that these distinguished gentlemen should, "immediately and without delay, examine the condition of Holmen and the fleet," and on February 3rd the commission held its first meeting in the council chamber. Unfortunately, little is known about its work, and only a few pages of its minutes have been found.

As an additional measure for readiness at an early date, the seamen had not been dismissed, and they were billeted in Copenhagen. They could not be housed in the Navy's own lodgings of Nyboder, so a committee was formed by the Town Council, to distribute the burdens justly. Niels Juel was himself a member of this committee. When everything appeared to have been set in progress in Copenhagen, Cornelis Tromp was sent to the Netherlands to get preparations going there. He left on February 8th, stayed for a short while in Hamburg to encourage local recruitment, and in the beginning of March he reached the Netherlands, where he was kept busy trying to arrange for an early departure of the new Support Fleet, making necessary purchases and recruiting crews.

Through the months of winter, work on the Danish ships was pursued with energy, and as spring approached, the ships were made ready for sea. During April and May the ships assembled on the roadstead, ready for the summer's expeditions. They were now only awaiting the Dutch fleet, which they hoped would arrive during May, as in 1676, but were disappointed. In spite of the presence of Tromp in the Netherlands, the fleet was this year delayed even further.

Together, the Danish-Dutch fleet would be superior to the Swedish naval forces, and they could hope to inflict upon them a crushing defeat.

The Swedes were also working hard to get their fleet ready, and their plans, naturally, were directed towards striking at the Danes before the Dutch arrived, but it was necessary for them to have the squadron at Gothenburg join up with their main fleet, which was stationed at Stockholm.

Although the Swedes in that case would be numerically superior to the Danes, they lacked sufficiently qualified maritime leadership. In June 1676, the Swedish Navy had lost one of its most able admirals, Clas Uggla, and also Rigs-Admiral Carl Gustav Wrangel was dead. Carl Gustav XI had to look for a new man to head the Navy and, as during the previous year, he rejected all other ranking admirals, and chose to appoint Henrik Horn. He was Field-Marshal and, in his own opinion, totally without knowledge of the sea. He appealed to the King to be let off, but to no avail.

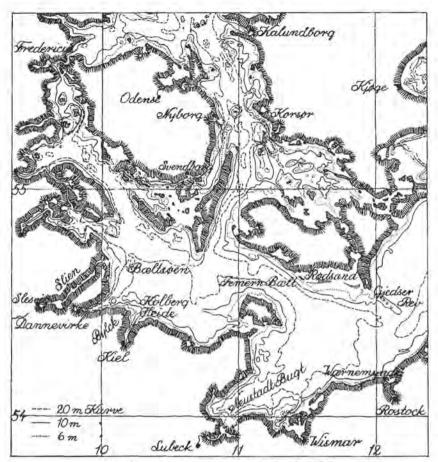
Whilst Copenhagen was now anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Dutch Support Fleet, disquietening news arrived, claiming that the Swedish fleet was now ready with 30 ships of the line, and that only ice prevented their setting sail from Dalarø. Only a few days later, a dispatch reported the departure from Gothenburg of the Swedish squadron there, and Niels Juel now received orders to go to sea with all the ships he had with him.

On May 22nd Niels Juel had formed the ships under his command into squadrons, and issued instructions to all ships' captains. When running free, or with the wind aft, the three squadrons should proceed in line abreast, with Niels Juel's squadron in the centre, Vice-Admiral Chr. Bjelke's on his starboard side, and Schoutbynacht Peder Morsing's on his port side. Sailing into the wind, and heading southward, Bjelke should lead, followed by Niels Juel and Peder Morsing; but heading northward the order should be reversed. Ships should always sail in close order and hold the line, from which follows that the rearmost ship should go about first when turning. Niels Juel in his instructions stressed that the ships must keep station, and for the fireships he added that they should use every means during a battle to close with the enemy's capital ships, and that it was also their duty to take care of enemy fireships. Dispatch jagts should remain at their posts, »and be ready to carry dispatches to and fro.« Furthermore, they should pick up survivors if any of His Majesty's ships should catch fire or sink.

There thus existed clear instructions, detailing the duties of Commanding Officers, but unfortunately Niels Juel did not have all these ships with him when the fleet set out on May 23rd. He had only three ships of the line and one frigate, the other ships having been sent away on various missions.

His orders gave him a double task. He was to stop the Swedish squadron, and at same time secure the safe passage of Muensterian troops from Rostock to Copenhagen, for which he had to release two ships.

It was characteristic of Niels Juel that he still had time



Map showing waters south of the Danish islands.

to remember Gotland, over which the King had appointed him Governor. Thus, on May 24th he asked deputies of the General Commisariat for 300 barrels of barley and 300 barrels of rye to be sent to the island for the poor, "who are in great destitution and hunger, as I perceive from their letters".

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But his main task was not forgotten. A galiot was sent ahead on a reconnaisance against the enemy fleet between Laaland and Femern, whilst his fleet cruised south of Møen and Falster. Finally, on May 28th, whilst at anchor between Robnes and Gedser, he received the news that the Gothenburg squadron was lying off Korsør, on their way south through the Great Belt. Final preparations to meet the enemy were made, and the fleet set sail, but did not reach far because the light winds, which continued also on May 29th, were westerly. En route, they passed the transport with the Muensterian troops, headed towards the Sound, and Niels Juel had a message sent with a skipper to Copenhagen to ask for, among other items, »tobacco, shirts and clothes, for those men who were recruited in Copenhagen, in this country and in Norway, since they are well-nigh naked«. Even on the eve of battle, Niels Juel apparently had time to consider the well-being of his men.

The Swedish squadron, which was commanded by Admiral Sjøblad, had left on May 20th, in an attempt to join up with the main fleet in the Baltic. On May 23rd it entered the Great Belt, where it was becalmed, and the following days the ships advanced only slowly, because of very light winds.

Not until May 30th did the two fleets sight each other and, at a council of war, the Swedes decided to let the squadron anchor about 3 miles from Rostock on the north German coast. The squadron consisted of 8 large ships, 1 small ship, 2 dispatch jagts and three fireships, whilst Niels Juel by this time had with him 13 large ships, 1 dispatch jagt and 2 fireships. Niels Juel thus had superiority in numbers, but also showed greater skill and more initiative than his opponent.

While the Swedes were at anchor, Niels Juel set sail in spite of the light winds. The next day, May 31st, when

the wind freshened a little from the south-west, the Swedes also weighed anchor, and with the wind aft they headed ENE to try to get past the Danes, who had to beat up against the wind. When a lull set in, Sjøblad had his ships towed by rowing, after which Niels Juel ordered everyone to do his best to prevent the enemy from escaping and also started towing. For a time the Swedes kept their ships together, by allowing the slowest ship to set the pace, so that by evening the two fleets were close enough for sporadic firing to commence. The exchange of shot ceased at nightfall, but during the hours of darkness the wind rose, this time favouring Niels Juel, coming, as it did, from south-east. Just before darkness had hidden the ships completely, Captain Dreyer, of ENIGHED, succeeded in capturing the Swedish ship WRANGELS PALAIS.

At dawn on June 1st, the Danes had the weather gauge, and Niels Juel once again signalled that everyone should do his best against the enemy, since the light winds did not make possible any tactical manouevring. Also the enemy obviously did not want to stand and fight, seeking only to escape into the Baltic. Niels Juel, who was quite far ahead with two or three small frigates, immediately attacked the Swedish squadron, which also had its flagship in the van. Three of the Swedish ships were engaged, among these CALMAR CASTEL, which had its mizzenmast shot overboard. After this, Niels Juel attacked ANDROMEDA and the flagship ADMIRANT, which tried to flee, but after some hours af battle the ADMIRANT's fore-topmast went overboard, and her main topsail was shot to pieces, and Admiral Sjøblad had to surrender. Rosenholm of ANDROMEDA, who was by now some way ahead, wanted to turn back to assist his admiral, »but the ordinary men would not handle any ropes, declaring that they would not go back to allow

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themselves to be slaughtered like pigs. Therefore I could not go about.«

During this engagement Sjøblad was seconded by four other Swedish ships, whilst only ENIGHEDEN had caught up with Niels Juel to support him. On the other hand, Vice-Admiral Chr. Bjelke, with two escorting ships had by now closed the badly damaged CALMAR CA-STEL, which struck its colours to him at about 4 in the afternoon. After the surrender, the Commanding Officer gave orders to his gunners to shoot holes in the bottom, so that Bjelke, when he later noticed this, was forced to set the ship aground at the southern tip of Falster. His anger knew no bounds, and he appealed to the King to have the Captain imprisoned, and not released until he had paid for the loss which Bjelke had suffered by having to forgo his prize money.

Niels Juel now turned against ENGEL GABRIEL, which he likewise took prize, and ENIGHED tried to engage GUSTAVUS, which fled and escaped into the Baltic, as did ANDROMEDA and the Swedish fireship ST. DAVID, where they sought shelter under Øland. At about 5 o'clock Captain Corn. de Witt of LIND-ORMEN had captured the Swedish ship HAFFRUEN.

By this time Niels Juel had to give up further pursuit, having sustained, during the long engagement, damage to *rigging, ropes, and other equipment,« and none of his other ships succeeded in catching up with the remainder of the fleeing Swedish squadron.

The Swedish Captain Fr. Rothkirk on ROSEN, »decided to risk the passage through the Sound, « and passed by the NORSKE LØVE, stationed at Kronborg (Elsinore), by flying the English flag. The two dispatch jagts who were with him had, however, only wound up their colours, so that Captain Schinkel on SVENSKE FALK became suspicious, went in pursuit of them, caught up with them, and took them prize. No better was the fate of a fireship which followed the same route. It was boarded by farmers from Dragør, on the roads of Malmø. Only LILLE GRIPEN and a fireship succeeded in following ROSEN back to Gothenburg.

The result of this action was that Niels Juel had successfully prevented the Gothenburg Squadron from joining up with the Swedish main fleet. Only ANDRO-MEDA, GUSTAVUS and one fireship got through to the Baltic, and of these, GUSTAVUS had suffered considerable damage. After the battle, the Danish fleet assembled in Køge Bay, prisoners and prizes were taken to Copenhagen together with the wounded, and everyone did best to repair the damage which had been done.

In spite of the victory, Niels Juel was not satisfied with the conduct of this ships' captains. In contrast to Tromp, who after the battle of Øland had refrained from charging his captains, Niels Juel wanted to clean up, so that he would be stronger when the time came to meet the Swedish main fleet.

As soon as some impartial officers had joined the fleet, a Court Martial was held. It took place on June 18th and June 19th, aboard CHRISTIANUS V, and the board was made up of Niels Juel himself, six captains from the fleet, besides the newly arrived impartial members; i.e. two admirals, one schoutbynacht and one captain.

Niels Juel considered it necessary to enforce discipline to make sure that all captains would do their utmost in the forthcoming battle with the Swedes. Here he showed greater firmness than Tromp had done the year before. The sentences were:

The captain of NELLEBLADET was discharged, and lost three months' pay.

The captain of CHRISTIANSAND was fined three

months' pay for not having understood the admiral's signal.

The captain of HOMMEREN, and Vice-Admiral Morsing, were sentenced for having, without orders, used a sloop to board a ship taken prize by another. The captain was fined 20 Rigsdalers and the Vice-Admiral two months' pay.

The captain of CHRISTIANIA was acquitted, and the captain of NEPTUNUS who, against the will of the admiral, had left the fleet, after being placed on watch, was to be placed under arrest, and tried under the Articles of War. He was later imprisoned and discharged.

Niels Juel was making ready to meet the Swedish fleet. He interrogated prisoners about conditions in Gothenburg, and learned that there would hardly be any danger from that quarter. He therefore left it to the Norwegians to keep an eye on Gothenburg, so that all the other ships of His Majesty could assemble in the Baltic, »as we would then have greater strength to stand against the enemy, if only the foreigners would do as they done the previous year, * but his experiences with the Dutch were not of the best and he did not have much confidence in them and their will to fight for the Danish cause.

The correspondance during these days showed great eagerness to gather together as many ships as possible, but he would content himself with just anything; as was shown when he returned SPRAGLEDE FALK (Gaudy Falcon) to Copenhagen with the meassage that, *this frigate is very dirty and cannot perform any duties until it has been careened.* Niels Juel asks for larger ships to be commissioned, *for to keep an eye on so many trifling ships I do not consider worth-while, as they do little for the task.* Niels Juel's personal views and his sense of tactics are here clearly expressed, as is also the case when, in a letter to the King, he declares: *When we come to anchor up here in these waters it will be somewhere between Stevns Head and Falsterbo, since to lie inside Køge Bay will not serve, as the enemy will come there with such a wind as will prevent us from sailing.«

On June 13th Niels Juel still had only 18 ships with him, and he was annoyed at the time it took him to obtain the equipment and the ships he had asked for. »I have several times written about the shortage of ammunition, cordage, timber, and beer, but I have only received a few hammocks, which can be of little help to the fleet in resisting the enemy.« These delays have hardly been without some political motive, since the authorities in Copenhagen were waiting impatiently for the arrival of the highly-paid General-Admiral, and can scarcely have wanted Niels Juel to go to sea alone with the fleet. When, one June 17th, he again pressed for permission to stand out, to prevent the transfer of cavalry from Pommerania to Skaane, he received no written reply. Instead, the King came to him personally.

King Christian V arrived on the morning of June 17th, aboard the jagt EENHORN (Unicorn), before he could have received Niels Juel's letter, and left again the same afternoon. Niels Juel succeeded in obtaining orders to leave with the fleet as soon as it was fully equipped, and he made sure that this message was passed on to the General Commissariat, since, as he concludes his letter to them, "so far, since the battle (of Møen) I have from you received not one word in reply to any of my writings."

As late as June 21st Niels Juel reported to the Rigs-Admiral that no ammunition had reached the fleet, and at the same time he could advise the King that an English ship a few days earlier had been close to the Swedish fleet, comprising 45 sail, of which 30 were capital ships, and which four days ago had been at Bornholm. He therefore put before the King the purely political question as to whether he should seek out the enemy or not.

Conditions were not easy for Niels Juel. The country's political leaders were waiting impatiently for Tromp and his Support Fleet, and all were apparently in doubt about what orders should be given Niels Juel if the Swedes arrived before Tromp. Through letters from Niels Juel one receives a singular impression of the kind of help he was getting from Copenhagen. On June 21st he wrote to the General Commisariat: »What I have asked for has been sent to me in such small measure that many would be embarassed by it, and should thereby any failure occur, I could easily be blamed. When one does not have what is required, the task cannot be done.« The following day it says in yet another letter to them, »the ship FREDERICUS TERTIUS yesterday came to the fleet with a mob of naked Swedes aboard, for distribution in the fleet. It had been better if they had staved ashore, as I fear that they will bring upon us an illness; nor is it good to have the enemy both inboard and outboard.«

Niels Juel took 70 of the Swedes and allotted them to other ships, whilst taking 76 seamen from these and putting them aboard FREDERICUS TERTIUS.

It was thus not under the best conditions that Niels Juel had to prepare for the battle which was to make him famous.

Chapter Seven

VICTORY IN KØGE BAY

Confrontation & Triumph

On June 22nd, Niels Juel held a General Meeting (i.e. a meeting of commanding officers), where he issued instructions for formation and signalling procedures. He divided the fleet into three squadrons:

co LINDORMEN (Dragon)	and the second se	
LINDORMEN (Dragon)	212	50
NORSKE LØVE (Norwegian		
Lion)	568	86
FREDERICUS TERTIUS	260	52
ANNA SOPHIA	360	58
CHRISTIANUS QUARTUS	272	54
HOMMEREN (Lobster)	152	40
DELMENHORST	200	50
HAVMANDEN (Merman)	154	30
BONTE FALK (Gaudy Falcon)	-	18
Hunter)	÷.	4
BON EVENTYR (Bon-Aventur	re) -	4
Lion)	-	-
m		
CHRISTIANSAND	174	40
CHURPRINSEN (Prince Elect)	454	74
ENIGHED (Unity)	260	62
CHRISTIANUS QUINTUS	567	84
NEPTUNUS	180	40
MARIA	120	30
TRE LØVER (Three Lions)	286	58
HAVFRUEN (Mermaid)		30
	Lion) FREDERICUS TERTIUS ANNA SOPHIA CHRISTIANUS QUARTUS HOMMEREN (Lobster) DELMENHORST HAVMANDEN (Merman) BONTE FALK (Gaudy Falcon) GRØNNE JÆGER (Green Hunter) BON EVENTYR (Bon-Aventur NORSKE LØVE (Norwegian Lion) CHRISTIANSAND CHURPRINSEN (Prince Elect) ENIGHED (Unity) CHRISTIANUS QUINTUS NEPTUNUS MARIA TRE LØVER (Three Lions)	Lion) 568 FREDERICUS TERTIUS 260 ANNA SOPHIA 360 CHRISTIANUS QUARTUS 272 HOMMEREN (Lobster) 152 DELMENHORST 200 HAVMANDEN (Merman) 154 BONTE FALK (Gaudy Falcon) - GRØNNE JÆGER (Green Hunter) - BON EVENTYR (Bon-Aventure) - NORSKE LØVE (Norwegian Lion) - CHRISTIANSAND 174 CHURPRINSEN (Prince Elect) 454 ENIGHED (Unity) 260 CHRISTIANUS QUINTUS 567 NEPTUNUS 180 MARIA 120 TRE LØVER (Three Lions) 286

	comt	lement	guns
Frigate	POSTILLIONEN (Postillion)	50	18
Fireship	FORGYLDTE FISK (Gilded Fish)	-	8
Galiot	KONG DAVID (King David)	-	10
Dispatch Jagt	VENUS	-	4
Third Squadron			
Ship	SVANEN (Swan)	340	58
	GYLDENLØVE	268	56
Frigate	LOSSEN (Lynx)	84	30
Ship	CHRISTIANIA	230	54
	TRE KRONER (Three Crowns)	420	68
	NELLEBLADET (Nettle Leaf)	267	52
	CHARLOTTA AMALIA	322	58
Frigate	HVIDE FALK (White Falcon)	102	30
	SVENSKE FALK (Swedish Falcon)	203	40
Galiot	UNGE PRINS (Young Prince)	-	-
**	KLEINE JÆGER (Little Hunter)	-	6
**	ST. JOHANNES	-	4
Dispatch Jagt	DIANA	-	4

But not all of these 27 ships, frigates and other vessels, were gathered together on June 22nd. HAVFRUEN was at Kiel, and other ships were out cruising. On June 23rd, Niels Juel held a council of war, where it was decided, according to the King's orders, to put to sea. The same evening the fleet weighed anchor and set course southwards, towards Stevns head, where it anchored in order of squadrons. Niels Juel's intention was to go out from here to cruise between Ystad and Ruegen, not only for the purpose of securing own transports, but also to destroy those of the enemy. He also hoped that he might still have time to make up some of his shortages, such as clothes and shirts for some Norwegians and Swedes, "who are literally naked," and that more ships would be able to join him here.



Admiral Niels Juel (Print at the Royal Library).

The choice of Stevns, however, still made it possible for the authorities in Copenhagen to interfere with his dispositions, and in the capital there was disagreement as to whether Niels Juel was to be allowed to engage in battle. The Chancellor, Fr. Ahlefeldt, in particular, had misgivings. In his letters to the King he expresses the opinion that Niels Juel, if at all possible, should wait until Tromp had arrived with the Support Fleet; and the situation came to a head when it became known that the Danish fleet would be inferior in numbers if it fought alone. Rigs-Admiral Bjelke was, however, not at all certain that they could expect the Dutch fleet to arrive in time, expressing the opinion: »That the Dutch fleet remains absent is regrettable, but does not appear so strange, since, as Your Majesty will know to remember, I have always presumed and believed that they would not be sorry to see Your Majesty's fleet receive a blow before they turn up and, as Your Majesty's grandfather, and father, in Gracious Memory, have done before, I too fear that they prefer their Own Advantage to Honour.«

Fr. Ahlefeldt's fear can be said to be understandable, and natural, as he scarcely had any possibility of evaluating, from a naval point of view, the two antagonists; but for Niels Juel himself, there was no doubt. He had previous experiences with the Swedes to draw upon, which could entitle him to be reasonably certain that he need not, in spite of numerical inferiority, fear a defeat.

General-Admiral Cornelis Tromp had left, in February 1677, for the Netherlands, to assist in equipping the Support Fleet, and joining in negotiations for its dispatch. It took time to make it ready for sea, and it did not set sail from Nieuwdiep before June 18th. It consisted of 7 ships of the line, three frigates and three smaller vessels and three fireships. Due to light winds it proceeded slowly, and did not pass Jutland Reef before June 28th. The next day it entered the Skagerrak and finally, on the morning of July 1st, Zealand was in sight south of the fleet. At noon, when it passed Kronborg at Elsinore, they received news of the battle which was then in progress between the Danish and the Swedish fleets.

Even before the Dutch had left their homeland, the Swedish fleet stood out from Dalarø. On June 11th, the Stockholm skerries passed from sight, and two days later it reached the southern tip of Øland, where it anchored. From June 15th to 24th the ships cruised between Christianopel, Hanø and Bornholm to work up the crews. They finally anchored under the island of Møen, when Niels Juel was off Stevns head, but they did not appear very eager to come to grips with the Danish force, since the fleet made yet another cruise into the Baltic, to Bornholm, before returning to Møen on June 29th, 1677.

The Command	er-in-Chief was	Henrik	Horn,	and his
fleet was made up	on the followi	ng ships		

First Squadron		complement	guns	
Ship	VICTORIA	480	84	
	WRANGEL	400	64	
	SATURNUS	380	64	
	MARS	430	74	
	CAROLUS	250	56	
	WISMAR	250	52	
Frigate	RIGA	230	46	
	HJORTEN (Hart)	150	34	
Ship	FLYGANDE WARGEN (Flyin	ng		
	Wolf)	230	56	
	ANDROMEDA	250	52	
Frigate	FREDERICA AMALIA	150	32	
	ELISABETH	100	18	
	TRUMSLAGAR (Drummer)	130	18	
Fireship	ST. JACOB	20	-	

		complement	guns
Fireship	DRUFVAN (Grape)	17	-
Boeyer	SJØHUNDEN (Sea Dog)	32	10
**	EKKOREN (Squirrel)	26	12
v	RÅBOCKEN (Roe-Buck)	20	4
v	ST. JOHANNES	22	4
Second Squad	lron		
Ship	SOLEN (Sun)	470	72
	VENUS	410	64
	MERCURIUS	400	66
	HERKULES	260	54
rigate	SPES (Hope)	210	46
Ship	SVENSKA LEJONET		
	(Swedish Lion)	230	52
Frigate	FENIX (Phoenix)	150	34
**	KG. DAVID	140	32
	PÄRLAN (Pearl)	100	18
ireship	ST. JOHANNES	22	_
,,	BJÖRNEN (Bear)	22	-
Boeyer	LAURENTIUS	44	8
	GRIPEN (Griffin)	25	8
	LILLE FORTUNA	29	10
	LUNA	20	4
Third Squad	ron		
Ship	NYCKELN (Key)	450	88
"	JUPITER	400	68
	DRAKEN (Dragon)	390	64
	ST. HIERONYMUS	390	72
	CÆSAR	240	60
	KALMAR	2	66
	GÖTEBORG (Gothenburg)	220	52
	ST. MARIA	110	50
Frigate	GUSTAVUS	200	48
	SOLEN (Sun)	100	22
** **	SALVATOR (Saviour)	140	22

	comp	lement	guns
Fireship	DANSKA SVAN (Danish Swan)	18	-
Boeyer	FÖRGYLDA FALKEN (Golden		
	Falcon)	20	10
	FORTUNA	50	10
	GRÖNA DRAKEN (Green		
	Dragon)	25	8
	SJÖMAN (Sailor)	20	4

Nor were all the Swedish ships listed here with the fleet during the battle of Køge Bay. CAROLUS from I Squadron, and GÖTEBORG and ST. MARIA from III Squadron were detached for other duties, but instead, the small jagt GRIPEN, which had escaped at the battle of Møen, joined the fleet.

From the Danish forces the frigates BONTE FALK from First Squadron, and HAVFRUEN from Second Squadron were away together with the galiot ST. JO-HANNES and the jagt VENUS. Instead, three additional frigates were sent from Copenhagen to assist Niels Juel, but none of them arrived in time to take part in the battle, although the frigate CHARITAS, of 34 guns, did come up in time to join in the subsequent pursuit.

The relative strengths can be summarized as follows: Swedish ships engaged were:

18 ships of the line,

12 frigates

with a total of 1542 guns

6 fireships, and possibly some 12 other vessels.

The Danish fleet met up with:

16 ships of the line,

9 frigates

with a total of 1372 guns

2 fireships, and presumably some 7 other vessels.

With a total complement of 6500 men on the Danish

ships, against 8200 men on the Swedish, it would appear that the Danish fleet was undermanned.

Niels Juel had been lying with his fleet at Stevns head from June 23rd until June 28th, due to changing winds, either light easterly, calm or southerly winds, in typical Danish summer weather, until it finally freshened from NW. One hour before sunset the fleet set sail, anchoring two hours later, closer to Skaane, to obtain a better starting position in a possible engagement. The following day Niels Juel could report to Copenhagen that the Swedish fleet was in sight, and this message caused the Chancellor, Fr. Ahlefeldt to submit a most urgent appeal to the King asking him to recommend to Niels Juel that he should, if at all possible, avoid an engagement and remain in safety until the Support Fleet from the Netherlands arrived. The diplomat brother of Niels Juel, Jens Juel, was sent to the fleet to watch over the council of war and the following events, and it was decided to remain cruising between Falsterbo and Stevns head under shortened sails.

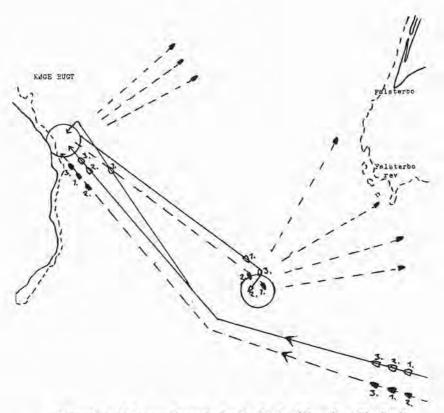
As was the practice during naval engagements at the time, both parties sought to secure a good starting position to windward of the enemy. Therefore, we see Niels Juel moving his fleet from east to west, and back again, following the changing winds. Thus, when he sailed into the waters between Stevns head and the island of Møen, Henrik Horn, who had just arrived, thought that the Danish forces were going to attack, and withdrew to a position south of Møen, so as to have the weather gauge if the Danes came. The wind then turned south-west and Horn advanced with his fleet against Niels Juel, who withdrew some distance northwards. The Swedes did not come up to the Danish fleet until early evening, and both fleets stood by under reduced sails during the night, in the waters between Stevns and Falsterbo. In the dark, the Swedish ship ST. HIERONY-MUS was unlucky, running aground at Stevns Klint, but sat no harder than it could get off by its own efforts, and rejoin the Swedish fleet.

At first light, Sunday July 1st, 1677, the two fleets sought to close within gun range. They were in two columns in line ahead, on a westerly course, with the Swedes in the southernmost position with III Squadron first, followed by I Squadron with Henrik Horn, and II Squadron in the rear, whilst the Danish fleet was moving in squadron number order with Niels Juel in the centre. In the early morning, between 5 and 6, the first shots were exchanged, and the engagement rapidly developed into a fast and furious battle. The smoke of battle gave the Swedes the chance of launching their fireships in an (unsuccesful) attack from their windward position, but also caused Marquor Rodsten's Danish Third Squadron to fall off to leeward and, unnoticed by Henrik Horn, to change course, so that it did not join up again until the later actions at Stevns head, where the Swedish Admiral took it to be an additional squadron joining in the fray.

During the morning the wind had been southerly, but was steadily turning west and ended up coming from north-west. The course of the two fleets had been adjusted accordingly, so that they, when approaching Stevns, were heading towards the north-easterly corner of the promontory. The Swedes were closest to Stevns Klint, the chalk cliffs on their port bow, and had the misfortune that the ship DRAKEN, from the leading III Squadron, came too close and ran aground »off Esketi, under the cliff by Sigerslev beach«.

Admiral Horn found himself in a difficult dilemma. Should he let DRAKEN fend for itself, or detach some ships for its protection? He could also continue past the

6 Niels Juel



Disposition of the squadrons during the Battle of Køge Bay. The Dark ships are Swedish, the light, Danish.

promontory into Køge Bay, where he would have room to turn and still maintain the weather gauge and thus, on his return run, again keep his ships between the enemy and DRAKEN, or finally, he could turn into the Danish line and try to break through it. However, all these manoeuvres would require highly skilled ships' masters and well-trained crews, and Admiral Horn therefore chose to leave five ships with the DRAKEN, and wear about immediately in line ahead, thus passing down along the Danish line again, on an opposite course. During the run towards Stevns, Niels Juel, on CHRI-STIANUS QUINTUS had come close to the DRAKEN, and became actively engaged in fighting it down. His own ship had, during the running engagement, sustained such damage that he had to change ships. Marquor Rodsten's Third Squadron had by this time turned up again and Niels Juel transferred his Flag to FREDERI-CUS TERTIUS, and with this ship the final assault upon DRAKEN was made, with the result that its commander surrendered to Niels Juel.

Niels Juel now sent his fleet in pursuit of the Swedish fleet, likewise turning and heading south-east. The two forces were still in line ahead running parallel, but the action at Stevns had brought some disorder in their formations. The Danish fleet was still to leeward, but the wind was turning westerly, and when an opening in the Swedish line presented itself they luffed, and stood into the gap, close-hauled on a starboard tack, with FREDE-RICUS TERTIUS leading, cutting out 16 Swedish ships. Niels Juel was among the first in the history of naval warfare to lead a line of ships to a breakthrough of the enemy line. As already mentioned, he had previously tried to carry out the same manouevre, but at that time with much less success, mainly because it was done just before nightfall. By the breakthrough in the battle of Køge Bay. Niels Juel succeeded in cutting off about one-third of the Swedish fleet. After this a hard, but disorderly battle developed, during which the Swedes got into further difficulties, when Marquor Rodsten's Third Squadron arrived from the west, after having fought the Swedish ships which had been seconding the DRAKEN at Stevns. »The enemy met us with great resolution,« Admiral Horn wrote to the Swedish King, and in Danish reports it says that »fighting was so violent and ferocious that it hardly can be described, both

6.

sides letting off full broadsides against each other«.

NORSKE LØVE lost its main-topmast, took hits in the waterline, and had to withdraw from the battle, and TRE LØVER was badly mauled, but had time to disable the Swedish ship MARS, so that it had to surrender. Marquor Rodsten's ship ANNA SOPHIA was also severely damaged, and lost its mainmast, and Vice-Admiral Chr. Bjelke managed to board and take the Swedish ship CAESAR. Also FREDERICUS TERTIUS, with Niels Juel on board, was strongly engaged, and was at one time surrounded by six enemy ships, who hammered away at the Danish flagship, which suffered badly. Once again Niels Juel had to transfer his Flag, and from the CHAR-LOTTA AMALIA he led the last phases of the engagement.

At three in the afternoon Admiral Horn found it wisest to withdraw, "since we could no longer resist," as he wrote to the King. When Horn commenced his withdrawal, the weather changed to strong winds with rain, and this, combined with the general confusion, made navigation very difficult. FLYGANDE WARGEN went aground at Falsterbo Reef, and was here taken prize by CHARITAS, which had come from Copenhagen to join the battle, and yet another Swedish ship had to surrender during the flight. This was SVENSKA LEJONET which, according to Admiral Horn's report "committed a great madness", when it suddenly turned, and ran straight back towards the Danish fleet, where ENIGHED dealt with it, without meeting much opposition.

The Swedish ships which had been left behind to help the DRAKEN, now sought to escape northward through the Sound, but the ship KALMAR and the small jagt GRIPEN ran ashore near Malmø. The other men-of-war, ST. HIERONYMUS, and MERCURIUS, at first tried to help them, but as they did not succeed, they con-



The Battle of Køge Bay, from a tapestry at Rosenborg Castle. Symbolically, the Swedish ship, MARS (left) is shown being entered and captured by the Danish ship TRE LØVER (the three lions of the Royal Coast of Arms), thus illustrating the triumph of Denmark over Sweden.

tinued northwards. Here they ran straight into the arms of the Dutch Support Fleet, and both ships were captured by the Netherlanders. The jagt became a total wreck, and the captain of the KALMAR set his ship on fire before abandoning it.

In the meanwhile, Niels Juel continued his pursuit, but the Swedish ships were better sailers, and at nightfall Niels Juel lost contact with the enemy, although he continued the chase westwards. Next day's morning, when they were abreast of Bornholm, Niels Juel decided to return, and the Danish fleet beat back laboriously against the wind, to reach anchorage at Dragør on the morning of July 4th. On July 3rd, Horn had sought shelter in Kalmarsund, where he left his most badly damaged ships, and continued with the remainder of the fleet back to Stockholm.

Materially, the victory meant that the Danes had captured from the Swedes seven large ships of the line, one galiot and some supply ships; additionally the Swedes had lost one large ship, one jagt and probably three fireships, whilst a number of their other ships were badly damaged. Altogether, Admiral Henrik Horn had lost 8 of 18 ships engaged in this action.

But the victory, the result of an exceptional tactical manouevre on the part of Niels Juel was, however, primarily of strategic and political importance. The Swedish King's plans for defeating the Danes, before the Netherlands' squadron arrived, had failed. Niels Juel retained command of the sea, and secured the lines of communication with Danish land forces in Skåne. The main political significance lay in the fact that the victory had been achieved without foreign aid. Abroad, and not least in the seafaring nation of England, the importance of the battle was fully appreciated, and considerable interest was shown in its tactical course of events. The Danish Ambassador reported back home how he had time and time again been asked to read a report of the battle. "There was a great throng about me. The King and the Duke of York hardly had room for themselves," and the Duke of York commented that, "it was wondrous that Niels Juel could thus gain the windward position, and that it would have been impossible if the Swedes had had one good seaman among them". The King, the Duke og York and the most distinguished admirals had talked about the battle late into the night, and King Charles II had concluded with congratulations to Christian V, stating "that Niels Juel was now the gratest admiral in Europe".

Whilst England with some considerable degree of satisfaction took note of the victory, which would indirectly weaken France, its significance was also appreciated in the Netherlands, but here feelings were more mixed. The Danish Ambassador wrote back that since many Dutch merchants had great sums invested in Sweden, they feared that Denmark should now have too much power in the Baltic, and he continued, »for this reason it is necessary for me that I do not use too enthusiastic terms about the advantages with which God has graced your Royal Majesty«. When one considers that Denmark and the Netherlands at the time were joined in alliance against Sweden, such a statement seems curious, to say the least, but it does perhaps, after all, explain much of what took place between the Dutch and the Danes, and throws an interesting light upon events during the last years of the war.

After the battle, Niels Juel was awarded a considerable sum in prize money, which, together with his previous prizes, were paid to him the shape of a large farming estate on Taasinge, and also enabled him to purchase Valdemar Castle on that same island. Furthermore, Niels Juel was now appointed Lieutenant-General-Admiral. Niels Juel was now back in Copenhagen to have his ships overhauled, and to take aboard stores, and had sent some frigates and a galiot on patrol, to watch for enemy ships, since he intended to be ready for sea again as soon as possible to exploit his victory further; but it was July 17th before he could again board his reconditioned flagship, CHRISTIANUS QUINTUS.



The reverse of the Great Medal struck in honour of Niels Juel after the victory. The medal is about 5 inches in diameter.

Chapter Eight

SUCCESS EXPLOITED

Pursuit & Harrassment

After the arrival of Admiral Tromp in Copenhagen, several disputes had arisen between the Danes and the Dutch. As a result, Tromp put before the King nine demands, but King Christian V refused all the requests, except for a few minor ones concerning his private circumstances. Tromp was, among other things, dissatisfied with the condition that Niels Juel should accompany the fleet and attend all councils of war as a kind of observer for the King, and also he wanted his own vote to be decisive if the votes in a council of war were otherwise evenly divided. To this latter demand the King only replied that it was up to him to ensure that there was always an odd number of members in the council. In addition, the admiral of the Dutch Support Fleet demanded that he should be considered an admiral of the allied fleet, and thus rank above Niels Juel; but also this request was turned down, and Admiral Bastiansen had to accept being placed below Tromp and Niels Juel. Passions ran so high that Bastiansen exultantly wrote home that Margaritje, Tromp's wife, no longer was as good a Dane as she had been.

Meanwhile, Niels Juel was eagerly engaged in getting the ships ready again. His opinion of the Dutch he expressed quite candidly in a letter to the King, in which he wrote: "When the Dutch arrive we will in every way humour them, but if this should not serve, then we will with Your Majesty's fleet endeavour to achieve what is possible and can be considered to Your Majesty's advantage. If General-Admiral Tromp stays away from the fleet, we still presume that something can be done, but if he joins there is but little hope, as we foresee that he will, together with the Dutch, make everything difficult.« These were harsh words, but may well have some connection with another fact, which he mentions in connection with the King's plans to burn and plunder the island of Øland. He states that »the Dutch Resident reasoned with me that Queen Christina of Sweden has recommended to the States General that Øland should not be laid waste, since it was her Crown Land«. Niels Juel added in his letter, »we did not reply one word to this, but let it go in one ear and out the other«.

On July 20th Niels Juel left the anchorage with his fleet, although still short 7 ships, which were not yet ready, and the next day Bastiansen also set sail with his Dutch Support Fleet. They rendezvoused off Bornholm, from where further progress was hampered by a northeasterly wind. Niels Juel had planned that the Dutch should seek to enter Kalmarsund south about Øland. whilst the Danes should go around the island from the north. Niels Juel is in high spirits when he tells about Admiral Bastiansen's visit aboard CHRISTIANUS OUIN-TUS on July 26th. »When they arrived, chairs had been set out for them to be seated, but they preferred to stand, which they did, around the table, one here and one there, in the order in which they arrived. We cannot but say that there in them, and in particular in the admiral, is to be found much willingness, and we give them the deference which is due to them, so we are on all sides agreed with one another and well satisfied. And we wish that it will, with God's help last, as long as no one else troubles us. They desire that when a council of war is held, and we want four members, they shall have three members, and if we want five they will have four, in summa, always one less than we.«

Let us for a moment imagine this interesting scene taking place in Niels Juel's stately stern cabin on the CHRISTIANUS QUINTUS, with the distinguished gentlemen standing casually about the table, exchanging repartee, and gradually bringing about a feeling of conciliation in the hithertoo strained atmosphere, until suddenly Niels Juel cannot no longer restrain himself. »We answered them that we will satisfy them in everything, as long as they would be as reasonable as they were.« Suddenly we see the Victor of Køge Bay standing, broad with authority, with a sardonic glint in his eyes, clearly master of the situation.

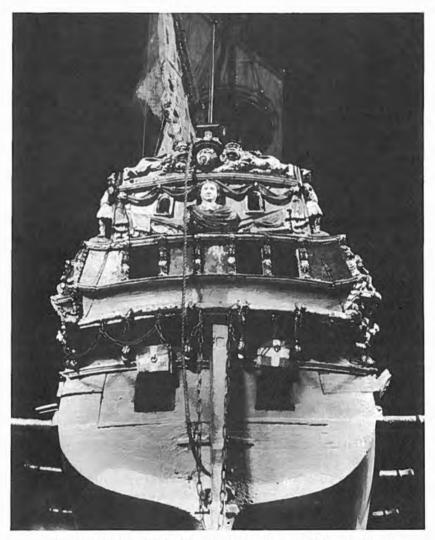
On the same day the wind turned north-westerly and Niels Juel hoisted the blue flag, after which the entire fleet set sail, Dutch and Danes together. On July 29th the fleets were separated, under shifting winds, but on August 1st, Niels Juel reached an anchorage in the northern part of Kalmarsund off Borgholm, at the same time as the Dutch were entering from the south. Without delay, Niels Juel now began the unpleasant operations which had been entrusted to him. The aim was, through harassment and plundering, to draw Swedish troops northward and thus ease the Danish operations in Skåne. Already during the first few days, troops were brought ashore, where they burnt down two manors, six farmhouses and the small town of Mønsteraas. They also sounded the entrance to the port of Kalmar, where they wanted to lay their hands on the Swedish warships which had sought refuge there. On August 3rd, Tromp arrived with 4 Danish ships. He approved the plan of attack, and on August 4th all the highranking officers, Tromp, both the Juels, Rodsten and two vice-admirals, aboard one of the smaller ships, were brought as close to the enemy vessels as was possible, but had to accept the fact that the harbour entrance was blocked, and so full of

rocks that it was apparently impossible to get at the enemy from seaward.

They now turned their attention to the environs, which consisted of more than 150 houses and 11 windmills. It is of interest to note that the soldiers were reluctant to set fire to the buildings, and that Vice-Admiral Span and Scoutbynacht Carstensen had to prevent the soldiers from taking to the boats again. In less than three hours the suburbs, and all the mills, were burnt down to the ground, as were some adjacent manor houses and villages. »It is without doubt that, if we had had scaling ladders and pontoons with us, we could have crossed the moat to Kalmar and, with sword in hand, entered right into the town.«

On August 9th they reconnoitred the area south of the town near the Grimskærs, but as the fleet did not have sufficient light vessels for an attack here, they gave up further operations against Kalmar, and turned their attention towards the island of Øland. Here, troops had already been put ashore from both Danish and Dutch ships, but again there were difficulties, since the Dutch Admiral Bastiansen refused to carry out the orders for pillaging alone, claiming that they had orders to *act in conjunction«, and in his letter home he emphasizes that it was *Danish officers who gave the order to burn and pillage.«

The task was now divided between them so that the Danes should advance north from the landing point, and the Dutch southwards, and during the following days, until August 17th, the merciless sacking and looting of the land took place without much resistance from the Swedes. All buildings and farmhouses were burnt down, and from villages and forests all large and small cattle were driven to the west coast and brought aboard the ships. Niels Juel records that altogether some 2000



The stern of the ship ANNA SOPHIA (after a model in the Naval Museum).

heads were collected. The Dutch reached the southern tip of Øland on August 17th, and were sailed northward to Borgholm, which the Danish forces had reached on the same day, after which preparations were made for an assault upon this bastion. It quickly became clear however, that this would take time, and as Tromp furthermore felt that additional reinforcements would be necessary, he expressed the view that, whilst they lay there »a good season would be wasted«.

On August 21st Tromp held a council of war to plan their further activities. It was estimated that so far three fourths of Øland had been burnt down, and that in Smaaland on the mainland, burning and pillaging had taken place in an area some ten miles in depth. Niels Juel wrote about this council of war that it was "Tromp's raisonnement« that it was late in the year already, and that one should begin to think of the safety of the ships, and that furthermore nothing much could be done within the skerries. Against this, the brothers Juel felt that one should try to »inflict further damage to the enemy, at some places which were more considerable«. The result was that the fleet left for a rendezvous near the island Svenske Jomfru, where it should meet the Dutch Support Fleet, which was to sail south and east of the island to the meeting place.

When, on August 24th, another council of war was held, it came as no surprise that Tromp once again suggested that the »heavy ships should return home«. »As he was firm in his insistance,« wrote Niels Juel, »and as we (Jens and Niels Juel) saw how it was with the provisions, it was decided that these ships should give over all their provisions, except for three weels' supply of meat, fish, grain and peas. Of beer and bread they should be allowed only sufficient for 14 days. They should detach 3-400 men, to man the ships which were to remain at sea.« On this occasion it was also planned that Vice-Admiral Bjelke, with some ships, should proceed to Vestervik, further north along the coast, Niels Juel with some others to Gotland, and that the remainder should raise as much alarm on the Swedish coast as they could. On August 26th Tromp left with six of the largest ships, and when he met Bastiansen's squadron east of Øland, he took it with him to Copenhagen.

This splitting up of the fleet, Niels Juel complained to the General Commissariat, was caused by shortage of provisions, but nevertheless it can be discerned in his letters that he was delighted to be his own master again. A reconnoitring squadron was sent against Vestervik on August 26th, whilst harassing expeditions were sent from the fleet against Dorhultvik (now Oscarshamn) »where the townsmen from Kalmar did their bartering with the farmers«. Warehouses and stalls were fired and the marauders took possession of, among other things, twenty masts, and »oak timber enough to build a whole ship, and of all sorts of pine enough to fill some twenty schuyts«. It was a rich bounty the Danish assailants obtained, »and ours were well satisfied thereby, as there were some boatsmen who obtained well 40 Rigsdalers worth«.

On August 28th the galiots which had been sent on a reconnaisance to Vestervik arrived back, and final orders for the action were issued. On August 30th they stood up through Vestervik Gat, through Idesund to Sparresund and on to Vestervik. Two days later the town, from which the inhabitants had fled, was captured, and the castle as well as the town was fired, together with quantities of all types of timber, tar and pitch, "so that nought remained standing". A galiot was sunk, and a new ship of 40 guns, which was ready to be launched, was also set afire, together with a new fluyt and some smaller vessels. At the same time customs duty was exacted from some foreign ships, which had not yet received their clearance papers. »Altogether, once again God gave us good fortune on a first day of a month.«

On the same day Niels Juel held a council of war aboard Bjelkes flagship, due to Vice-Admiral's illness, and as soon as he saw reflected the fires in the town, he went to sea to fetch provisions from Gotland. From here he wrote an indignant letter to the General Commissariat, complaining about shortages. He hoped, however, to be able to provision the fleet quickly and intended to go on to Norrkøping, still further north, to subject this town to the same fate as Vestervik. Also, he wanted to send some ships to the waters around Aaland, to intercept the Livonian and Finish fleet of some 7-800 vessels, which used to come to the Michaelis Market at Stockholm. However, things turned out differently. Not only did the baking and brewing on Gotland drag on, but also he did not receive any supplies from Copenhagen. On September 15th he once again complained to the King, stating that he had now, in over a month, heard nothing from the capital, so that the men now had to drink water, causing sickness among them. »Our men are deteriorating, and the enemy has now had time to look to his defences. We lie here, and have been put completely off from our intentions from shortage of provisions,« he adds in his letter to the Rigs-Chancellor.

It did not satisfy him that his mere presence in these waters, although inactive, influenced the Swedish dispositions. Where previously his main problem had been the Dutch sluggishness, it was now the supply situation which held him back.

The attack on Norrkøping had to be given up, but he hoped to the last that supplies would finally reach him. The first to arrive, however, were letters from War Councellor Mejer, which told of General Gyldenløve's successes in Bohuslen, north of Gothenburg and the attack on Ruegen, accompanied by the King's orders to Niels Juel, instructing him to send some of his ships to Ruegen. He plucked out the most suitable ships for this operation but, when he, a few days later, received Royal orders to leave for Copenhagen with the rest of his fleet, he gave vent to his dissatisfaction with the General Commissariat. To these Noble Gentlemen he wrote that he had spoken to the ships' captain and the writer clerks about the shortage of provisions and had learnt that when they, in Copenhagen, tried to collect supplies in response to orders, there was nothing in store, »so that they had to run ten times, and no more did they get«. As a result, when the fleet came to Gotland, »there was no ship which had enough for three nights' lighting of the lanterns, and many, such as the GYLDENLØVE, not a mouthful of bread«

Some days later we find Niels Juel really expanding himself in reproaches. »We have so often and frequently written about shortages in the fleet, that we had supposed some thoughts would have been given to supplying the ships; but as we have now, contrary to all our hopes, in three to four days, seen the arrival of three vessels, which could easily have brought a month's supplies to us, but did not bring the slightest, and alas, not even a letter or any promise from you good gentlemen, we are now forced to report that the ships do not have in them more than 8 days' supplies of many items such as beer, bread, butter, grain, meat and pork, and of other items about enough for about 14 days.« These were harsh words, which spoke for themselves, and it is hardly surprising that he is unable to contain himself when he adds. »If the winds continue S and SW then it is not with God's Own Wisdom possible to get away from here. We will do our

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best, but wind and weather are in God's Hands and, as highly as you good gentlemen care for the preservation of the fleet, in which lies the fortune of Denmark, as much will I ask you to send provisions to meet us, as without these the ships and men are lost.*

It is quite clear that Niels Juel was now furiously angry, which he also expresses in a letter to the Rigs-Admiral, where the raises just that question which springs to our minds today. "Who is resposible is not known to me, but it is certain that in all the time I have served His Majesty, the ships have never been in worse condition, nor more poorly supplied."

However, this question must be seen in a greater context, since the operations in which Niels Juel was engaged, did not represent the only theatre of war. Not only did Gyldenløve have an attack in progress in Bohuslen, but there was a Danish army to be supplied in Skaane; Danish ships were operating in the Sound and in the Kattegat, and during the early autumn months the King had launched an attack on Ruegen. On arrival at Copenhagen, Tromp's and Bastiansen's squadrons had been used to transfer Danish troops to Ruegen. Landings commenced on September 7th, and most of the island was captured. In October the fleet returned to Copenhagen, and the Dutch contingent continued on to its homeland. There were thus more than enough demands for supplies, but that seems no excuse for totally neglecting the squadron in the Baltic.

On October 3rd, when wind and weather were favourable, Niels Juel left Gotland and, after only 4 days' sailing, he was back in Copenhagen.

With this return his activities at sea were over for that year. By his two victories he had obtained mastery of the sea, and had been able to retain it. Through his harassment of the Swedish coasts, he had struck terror in the population and tied down enemy forces, to the advantage of the King's activities elsewhere. He had caused damage to the maritime trade with Sweden, and prevented Swedish ships from carrying out forays into the Baltic, so that Danish sea trade was free from interference. Also, he had made it possible for the King to carry out his plans against Ruegen.

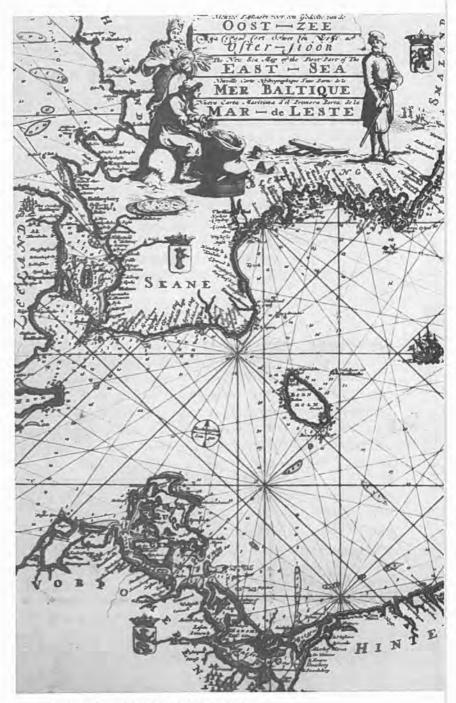
Niels Juel had served his country well in 1677.

Thoughts were now being directed towards next year's operations, and now that France had declared war against Denmark, it could be expected that a French fleet would appear in Danish waters. It was therefore necessary that the Dutch Support Fleet should arrive earlier than in 1677.

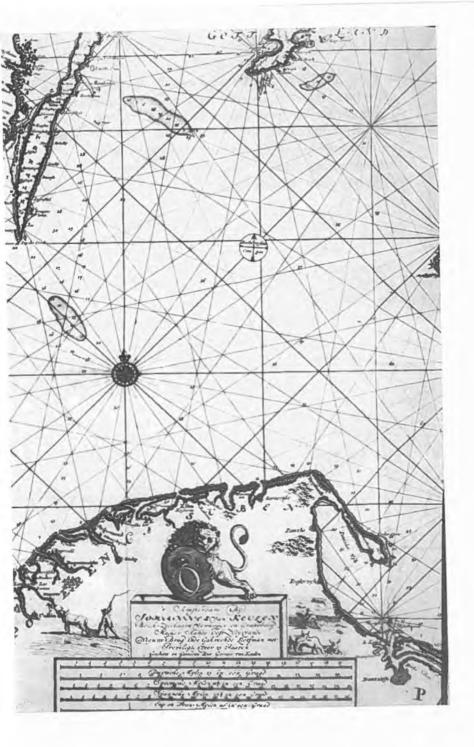
Already on November 8th did the King ask for views of the coming year's operations to be submitted to him in writing by the highest ranking generals and admirals. Common to all the admirals' recommendations is a wish for all naval operations to be carried out further to the north. Thus, Niels Juel suggests an attack from the sea against Stockholm on the west coast, with a simultaneous land attack from the Norwegian border eastward, in an area as far north as Trondheim province. Also he wants an attack on the island of Øsel in the Baltic. Jens Juel, his brother, recommends an attack from the sea both at Stockholm and at Kalmar in the south-east, combined with a land attack from Norway against Gothenburg, whilst Tromp's plan more has the appearance of previous years' operations, according to which one should concentrate upon Ruegen in an attempt to cut off supplies to Sweden across the Baltic from the south.

In Denmark, one wanted to intensify war by privateers, and encouraged the fitting out of ships for this purpose by new regulations and Letters of Marque. The brothers Juel did not hold themselves back in this respect, and

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Contemporary Dutch map of the Baltic.



we know that they fitted out at least two privateers for operations against Swedish and French merchantmen.

The winter was very mild this year, so that refitting could commence sooner than usual, and, as early as in the beginning of March, it was possible to send some small contingents to cruise in the Baltic and reinforce the blockade against Gothenburg in the Kattegat.

Chapter Nine

COMMANDER - IN - CHIEF

The Fruits of Victory

The biggest problem this year was not equipping the fleet, but choosing the Commander-in-Chief.

The growing atagonism against the Dutch Support Fleet, for its lateness in arriving, its half-heartedness, and its few results, was now concentrated against the person of Admiral Tromp, who had not, as Fleet Commander, achieved any notable victories.

As in the year before, Tromp now put forward a number of demands for the forthcoming operations. They would give him greater independance during operations, and most of them were not unreasonable. But it was his wish that he should not be forced to hold a council of war before each operation, although it was a commonly accepted practice in the Navies at that time that the commander should let himself be guided by such a council, and rules for it were to be found in Tromp's own instructions of 1677, and later in Niels Juel's of 1679. Also, he required that anyone who had committed an offence at sea should not be put before any other tribunal after a proper court martial had been held on board. It is not quite clear what his intention was here, since ordinary offences against discipline were always tried on board, and only very serious charges required more thorough investigation, and trial by an impartical court, as was the case of Niels Juel's Courts Martial after the battle of June 1st, 1677. If Tromp has really wanted to claim sole jurisdiction in the case of more serious offences, it must have caused considerable misgivings.

But his third demand caused a furore. He wanted to have full authority to fill any vacancies on board as long as he was at sea, and there was fear that Tromp might abuse this right. In Embassy reports this request was given another interpretation, since it is mentioned that his desire was that "some of our best serving regulars" should remain behind, but if this was interpreted otherwise i.e., that Tromp could use his authority in connection with his personal disagreements with other naval officers, it could certainly leave a different impression. A contemporary historian does mention the removal of some Danish naval officers as one of Tromp's demands; even Niels Juel is mentioned, but no other source material about this matter has been found.

In his conditions, Tromp added the demand that the Prince of Orange should give his consent if he was to continue in the Danish King's service. On June 6th 1676, the Prince had declared that Tromp might remain in the King's service as long as he could spare him, and in 1677 the Prince had likewise given his written permission, but since the Netherlands, due to their peace negotiations in 1678, did not want to send either ships or subsidies to Denmark, the King did not wish to seek further permission for Tromp.

The background for Tromp's attitude may have been the situation in Denmark, but equally well the prevailing conditions in the Netherlands, where he had enemies, and many who were envious of him. In his own account he mentions the difficulties he had had in the Netherlands in 1677, where he made many enemies because of the ships, and the many delays, and most of all because of his recruitment of seamen, and, in passing, makes some quite vicious attacks upon »little admiral Bastiansen«, as he called him. From the Danish point of view it can be said that when the Support Fleet was not forthcoming then not only had the political background for his employment, in terms of foreign policy, lost its meaning, but also his position as commander of a joint fleet. Also, it had been proven that Danish admirals were now well able to command their own fleet.

Tromp's severance from Denmark was, however, quite amicable. He remained in the country some months, and then left to join the Elector of Brandenburg, who was anxious to secure his help in the capture of Ruegen. Together with Tromp's retirement from the Danish fleet, 4 captains, one fireship commander and one lieutenant also tendered their resignations; but this reduction was more than fully compensated for, by the recruiting, from the Netherlands, of six captains and 13 lieutenants to take their place in the Danish Navy.

On May 29th, 1678, at 8 o'clock in the morning, Niels Juel, together with Colonel Stuart, left the little harbour of Dragør to join the fleet, which was lying at anchor a mile away.

For the first time in his life Niels Juel went aboard as Commander-in-Chief, with the knowledge that he should no more cede his position to any other as long as he was able to do what was required of him.

The results of the operational planning for fleet activities in 1678 were not revolutionary, but rather followed traditional lines of the years before. When, on June 2nd, Niels Juel held a council of war, and read the Kings orders, they said that it was intended to effect landings several places in Skaane, to »harass the inhabitants, carry off the young men, shoot the horses, and cut off enemy supplies«. Also, specific operations should be carried out against Ystad and Christianstad, after which Ruegen was to be attacked.

The total war of that time began with an attack on Ystad. The town was sacked for two days so that, »no thing is left,« and the jetties, where ships discharged and loaded cargoes, were set afire. After this the fleet went to Bornholm, whilst some smaller vessels were sent to make a harbour survey at Carlshavn and Rønneby, and yet other ships were given the task of sailing into the Baltic to obtain information about the enemy, who was known to be a Dalarø, with 30 ships. On June 13th Niels Juel received the news that the enemy had been seen off the southern tip of Øland. A council of war was held, where it was decided to prepare for battle, but to wait for the Swedes on the high seas, since Niels Juel reasoned that the Swedes intended either to head for Ruegen, or to try to prevent Danish reinforcements from reaching Christianstad. However, the Swedish Admiral Wachtmeister had orders not to engage the Danes at sea, but only to establish the fleet safely in a secure position in Kalmarsund, so no contact was made on this occasion.

The main principles of Niels Juel's strategy were now apparent, both for the present and for the rest of the summer. The Swedish fleet was no longer considered a target in itself. If skirmishes should occur, they would only be a means to the primary aim of securing freedom of movement for the Danish fleet in the Baltic. This appears from comments in letters to King Christian V. He writes, for instance: »It is our opinion that we can achieve our purpose without having to consider them« and later, »We can relieve Christianstad or attack Ruegen, according to the King's wishes, and at the same time secure ourselves against the Swedes.« If he was to fight the enemy he wanted this to take place in the open sea, where he could take advantage of his strength, and show his tactical superiority, and he could see no reason why he should expose his forces to the risks of operating in the narrow waters of Kalmarsund. This strategy was made quite clear.

When the Swedes did not appear, he proceeded with his fleet to Bornholm where, on June 26th, he received the King's orders stating that he should also try to intercept Swedish transports. A council of war suggested that it would be useful to proceed to Dornbusch, where one could not only obtain supplies, but also could block the entrances, so that the Swedish privateers could not come out. He remained here until July 13th, having succeeded in his plans, although a ten days' gale caused difficulties for his ships. He was then again ordered to go north to Christianstad. A year earlier this town had been occupied by the Danish forces, but it was now besieged by the Swedes. Provisions were running low, and King Christian wanted the town relieved.

On July 18th a Danish army had arrived from Helsingborg overland, and the Swedish forces were now between two fires, but stood their ground. Therefore efforts at sea by either of the two navies could turn the scale, but the Swedish fleet was lying at anchor in Kalmarsund, between the town of Kalmar and the entrance to Kalmarsund, and actually remained there throughout the summer, complete inactive. Niels Juel therefore was free to do what he wanted. After harassing the shores of Ruegen on several occasions he came back to the coast of Blekinge. He could not directly aid Christianstad, which was an inland town, but after some difficulties he managed to find suitable anchorage in its vicinity. Primarily he concentrated his efforts upon preventing supplies from reaching the Swedish besieging forces, and it was with some satisfaction that he could, one week later record, «the enemy suffers greatly from shortage of supplies, as they have had nought from land or sea since the arrival of our fleet«. The Danish army prevented



Medal struck in honour of Admiral Niels Juel.

supplies from reaching the Swedes overland, and these therefore had to be shipped in through the nearby port of Karlshamn. This town therefore, became of strategic importance to the Swedish King, Carl XI, and was subjected to constant attacks not only by the Danish naval forces, but also by groups of franc-tireurs with whom Niels Juel was in touch. Popularly called »Snaphaner«, they were partisans or Danish freedom-fighters, who came into being during the Swedish occupation. It must be remembered, in this connection, that Skaane, although geologically a part of the Swedish peninsula, had been an integral part of Denmark since the beginning of recorded history until it was ceded to Sweden in 1658.

By July 18th, Danish troops had been put ashore in an attempt to relieve Christianstad, but Colonel Stuart, who commanded the contingent, was not succesful, and another attempt, on July 24th to July 25th, also failed. They did succeed in burning some bridges, and turned back a Swedish transport which had attempted to reach Karlshamn. As the Swedish fleet held back from coming to grips with the Danes, King Carl XI ordered a party of 150 dragoons to fetch provisions, but this coincided with a landing operation by Niels Juel, involving some 1200 men. The superior Danish forces succeeded in setting fire to Karlshamn, but during their retirement they were sharply attacked by the Swedish dragoons, and a retreat took place under such conditions that Niels Juel found it necessary, at a subsequent Court Martial, to punish some of the Danish officers severely.

In a letter to the King, Niels Juel had reported that Karlshamn had become »prey to the flames«, but the Swedes must have managed to save something, since they declared themselves prepared, on August 2nd, to bring supplies to the Swedish forces at Christianstad, and in this connection asked for help from the Swedish Admiral Wachtmeister. But he did not turn up, and as Niels had taken counter-measures, they met a landing party from the Danish ships, when they tried to reach the besiegers, and were driven back. Niels Juel had succeeded in his purpose, but although Niels Juel wrote to the King that there was a greater possibility of starving out the Swedish besieging forces, than that they should be able to do this to the Danes in Christianstad, the Danish forces capitulated on August 4th.

The Danish ships had been in constant activitity during the summer, and had, unopposed by the Swedish fleet, been able to operate freely in the Baltic and carry out their landings. In spite of repeated requests from Carl XI, Admiral Wachtmeister made no attempt to prevent the Danes from carrying out their enterprises, neither at the island of Ruegen, nor on the coast of Blekinge, close to their own anchorage at Kalmarsund. One reason for this could well be that the fleet had retired so deeply into the narrows of Kalmarsund that it could only with very favourable winds run out. At all events, help did not reach the Swedish encampment before conditions on land had altered radically.

On August 4th, Niels Juel once again received orders from the King to go to Ruegen, where the Elector of Brandenburg was ready to attack the island from the landward side. On August 7th, he embarked all his troops and set sail for Bornholm to await further instructions. In the meantime he kept his ships busy with trials and exercises in the surrounding waters until he finally, on August 16th, set out for the island of Ruegen.

Without delay he now reconnoitred the coasts of that island, and was several times on board a small galiot or sloop to see for himself what possibilities there were for putting troops ashore. It took some time before the final arrangements were concluded with the Elector, and not until September 11th did the intolerable period of waiting come to an end. He now received the information that the forces of Brandenburg were ready to cross over to Ruegen from the south. A massive landing of Danish forces took place on September 12th, at 5.30 in the morning, and already by noon had a bridgehead been secured, a smaller Swedish party having been driven back. Niels Juel's intrepid and succesful landing was reported to the Elector, who was not so successful at first. but by the next day also his objectives had been reached. The Swedish General Kønigsmark had to retire before these superior forces, and he entrenched himself opposite Stralsund, whilst the rest of the island was quickly occupied by the allied forces of Denmark and Brandenburg.

Niels Juel had once again carried out a successful operation, and on September 25th he left with his fleet, homeward bound. From September 25th until October 5th he was held up by a violent gale, whilst at anchor between Falsterbo and Møen, and not until October 10th could the fleet anchor up on the roadstead of Copenhagen, after a season of successful campaigns.

Niels Juel had this year reaped the full harvest of his victory in Køge Bay the year before. The Swedish fleet had not shown itself in the Baltic and Niels Juel had been free to carry out his King's orders for operations in Skaane and on Ruegen.

From October 22nd, 1678, Niels Juel again regularly attended the meetings of the Admiralty Board, which was, as usual, occupied with plans for the coming season, the acquisition of the necessary materials for carrying out these plans, and preparing for the recruitment of personnel. Also the conditions of the regulars had to be taken care of, and it is interesting to note how the war was bringing about unusual promotions. Whilst some captains and lieutenants were being discharged, new appointments were made. Among these may be mentioned that such diverse persons as two skippers, two mates, a quartermaster and a sailmaker were given the rank of lieutenant.

Recruitment of seamen took place several places in Denmark, as well as in Hamburg, the Netherlands and the Low Country areas of Ditmarsken. Niels Juel writes about this: "We need twenty good constables (petty officers) which cannot anywhere better be obtained than in Holland, where those who are suitable are either Norwegians or Englishmen who come to Holland to enlist."

Military strength, however, was only a means to an end, in the politics which Denmark wanted to pursue, and from the point of view of foreign relations the situation was not very favourable. Louis XIV's plans for dividing his enemies had succeeded only too well. In 1678 he had offered the Netherlands such peace terms, that this country had made a separate peace, without the allied countries of Denmark, Brandenburg and the German Kaiser being able to prevent this. The Spanish Netherlands had thereby been placed in such an exposed position, that peace with Spain followed shortly after. Added to this, the German Kaiser found himself with a revolt in Hungary on his hands, and threats from Turkey in 1679, after which he, on February 5th, 1679, concluded a peace treaty with France, and shortly afterwards also with Sweden. Also the German princes fell away and, in the spring of 1679, Denmark and Brandenburg stood alone against France and Sweden.

Denmark was faced with the possibility that a French fleet might now come to the aid of the Swedes. The Swedes had already in the autumn of 1678 been pressing France for this, and both the Swedish Ambassador and a special envoy had had negotiations about it in Paris. However, there are many indications that the French King never seriously considered sending his fleet on such a hazardous ekspedition, and that the talks mainly should serve the purpose og subjugating Denmark. In this they did not succeed, and the Danish Navy was now making preparations to meet the new challenge.

In this spring Niels Juel was with his ships in the Sound, awaiting news of a Swedish or French fleet; but in May it became apparent that no contingent was going to arrive from France, and he received his orders for that summer's operations.

First, he was to fetch troops from Wismar, and then he was to set course with the main fleet towards the Swedish coast where he should, rights up to the archipelago of Stockholm, levy customs duties on incoming and outgoing sea traffic and, if possible, make landings to destroy and burn as occasion presented itself. On June 11th the order was modified, so that he was not to burn, but only destroy and ravage, and a few days later the instructions were made even milder, in that Niels Juel should now only concentrate his efforts around Kalmarsund, and do what he could against enemy vessels. The reason for these changes could well be that France had sent troops to Brandenburg and forced the Elector to enter into negotiations, which seemed to bear towards a peace treaty, which was actually concluded on June 19th, 1679.

Therefore, King Christian V had assembled his troops in Holstein, and he would hardly want the Danish fleet to remove itself too far away from Danish waters. The way the wind was blowing was indicated by the King's orders to Niels Juel for the complete destruction of the bastions of Visby on Gotland. The King already now had to face the unpleasant fact that he might have to give up that captured island again.

On June 19th Niels Juel lay with fleet off Bornholm, having sent off some frigates to obtain information about the Swedes. Admiral Wachtmeister was again this year in Kalmarsund with the Swedish fleet and finally, on June 24th, he ventured out with his ships. The same day he sighted a small Danish squadron and went in pursuit of it. When some of the fastest Swedish ships, by five in the afternoon, were catching up with the enemy, the Danish squadron split up, three of the ships setting course towards Bornholm and five towards the Pomeranian coast. When the wind then started rising to gale force, Admiral Wachtmeister stopped the pursuit.

The same evening Niels Juel received news of these events, and showed characteristic determination and eagerness to make the most of this opportunity. In spite of the storm, he gave orders to weigh anchor and set sail, and after the natural difficulties which the heavy weather imposed on all activities, his fleet was made ready, and already next morning he sighted the Swedes at a distance

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of some 4 miles. Wachtmeister, who had not yet reassembled his force, was on a course towards the southern tip of Øland, but did not become aware of Niels Juel's presence until the following morning of June 26th. "The sea ran hollow," and the Danish ships were only very slowly gaining upon the enemy but, when by morning, the distance had been reduced to only 1 mile, Niels Juel signalled to everyone to do their best in chasing the enemy. Soon fire was opened. The Swedish rearguard took up the fight, but the Danish main fleet was catching up, and the Swedes chose to try to escape with the rest of the fleet. Only the Swedish ship LAXEN was cut out, and had to strike its colours to NORSKE LØVE and ANNA SOPHIA.

The wind was now dropping, and although everyone joined in the pursuit as best they could, the better sailing Swedish ships, as so often before, managed to escape. Wachtmeister reached Kalmarsund on June 27th, and on the same evening Niels Juel came to anchor about 11/2 miles from the Swedish fleet, and assembled his forces. According to instructions he should, whenever matters of seamanship were involved, call a council of war with all flag officers, and then carry out whatever was resolved. He submitted the suggestion that four fireships should be sent against the Swedish fleet, each being accompained by two sloops and a boat, whilst two frigates should tow the fireships into position. At the same time the fleet should weigh anchor and be prepared to go into action with full force, when the fireship attack had succeeded.

The attack was launched early next morning, June 28th, but the weather played him a trick. When the van had come to within a mile or so of the Swedish fleet, »a flying gale arose, so that our gunports went under water, « and in the afternoon the wind veered over north

to north-northeast so that now the Swedes, and their fireships, had the weather gauge. The attack had to be given up, and the mischievous weather now changed to dead calm. Niels Juel had, correctly and wisely, sought to avail himself of a chance presented to him, but the weather gods were this time with the enemy.

There was now not much Niels Juel could do, the Swedish ships having been warped or sailed into harbour areas which were well protected by shoals and rocks. He did not quite give up, and tried to block the harbour entrances, which could give good results in such shallow and rocky waters, and he also tried to survey the channels and lay out marker buoys with a view to renewed assault. While these tasks were being carried out, he tried to carry out a diversionary attack overland, but this attempt was not followed by much success, and he turned his attention elsewhere.

Some ships were sent to occupied Gotland, and another division, with the sick, and the captured ship LAXEN, was sent to Copenhagen, whilst the remainder of the fleet went south about Øland to Carlsøerne, which were reached on the evening of July 1st. At a council of war the next day Niels Juel suggested that they should attack Norrkøping and loot and destroy the town, and estates and farms in the environs. Army officers, however, recommended that they should reconnoitre the area before making a decision, and according to his instructions Niels Juel was forced to follow this suggestion. To the King he wrote, with some vexation, "I, for my part, could not see that there would be any risk involved, but as I am strictly guided to do what most of the council decide, it was given up."

As the pilot, who was to have brought the ships to Norrkøping, now declared that he would not take the responsibility, Niels Juel called another meeting and managed to get through the suggestion that they should now attack Borgholm on the inshore side of Øland.

Finally, on July 20th, they reached the northern entrance to Kalmarsund, and here they met a Swedish squadron returning from a cruise on which they had been sent by Wachtmeister. The chase was taken up, but the Swedes got into Kalmarsund before the Danes could intercept them, except for the ship RIXNYCKELN of 88 guns. After a gunfight, lasting about half an hour, it ran aground, but was now supported by the guns of a nearby bastion. It was also reinforced by fresh crews sent out from Kalmar, but it did not escape its fate, as it was finally shot on fire and blew up. The ship had a crew of some 550 men, reinforced by an additional 250, and of these the Swedes saved only about 50, whilst the Danes picked up about 40 survivors. »The rest went into the deep cellar.« The prisoners reported that they had lost more than 200 dead whilst on board, besides those that had been thrown overboard when the ship exploded.

During this engagement a Danish fireship had been sent in against the Swedish fleet, and although it did no damage, it caused great confusion, so that some the Swedes ran aground. Later, a Swedish frigate was shot on fire.

After the battle, Niels Juel wrote to the King and praised officers and men for their good conduct and bravery, and he added that some of the men had conducted themselves so well that he had honoured them with officer rank to encourage others. The Danish force had lost 30 dead, among these the captain of ENGELEN, and had 84 wounded.

For some days the fleet remained in Kalmarsund, where they discussed the proposed attack on Borgholm, but the Army officers still had many objections. It was therefore probably not unwelcome when, on August 2nd, he received a letter from the King, ordering him to send back the »land military« when it could no longer be used profitably. At a council of war on the same day it was duly decided that there was nothing more to do for the land forces, and some ships were picked out to take them back. With the remainder of his fleet Niels Juel now departed for Gotland, arriving there on August 4th. Here, at the King's commad, he gave orders for the destruction of the castle, and collected provisions for his ships. On August 13th, Niels Juel, for the last time during this war, left Gotland.

On its way back, the fleet ran into a bad storm with thunder, lightning and heavy squalls, and they did not reach Bornholm until August 21st. Here, orders to return to the Bay of Køge were waiting for him, and when he finally got back on August 25th, he received the news than an armistice had been signed with Sweden.

This was a forerunner of a final peace treaty, at which the Danish envoys were in the sad situation of having to accept that all military gains came to nothing. The victorious Louis XIV did not want his ally, Sweden, to suffer any loss, in spite of its military defeat, and the threat of French troops was sufficient to ensure that the Danish King submitted to this demand. Denmark had tried to negotiate separately with the two countries, and had even let the talks take place in the country of the military loser, but nothing could be done to change the conditions. On September 2nd, 1679, peace was concluded with France, at Fontainebleau, and on October with Sweden, in Lund. All territorial gains were given back to Sweden, i.e. all of Bohuslen, Landskrona and Helsingborg, as well as Gotland, where Niels Juel was governor, and Ruegen, where his brother, Jens Juel, had held the same appointment.

Chapter Ten

PRIVATE AFAIRS Wealth & Health

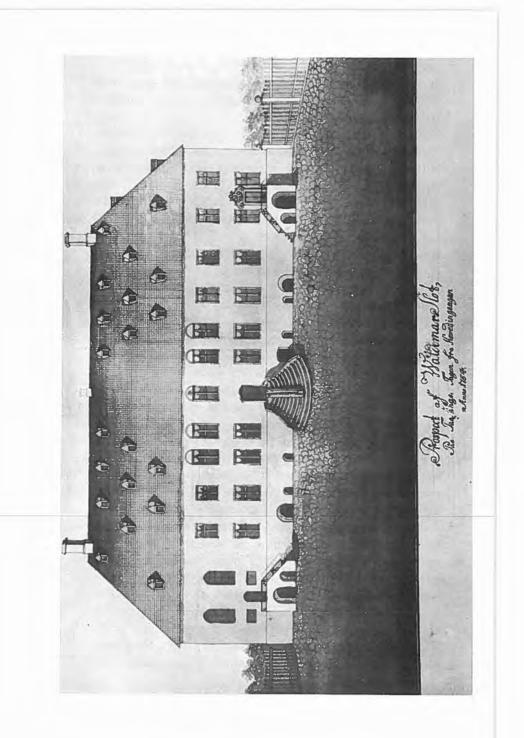
The Skaanske War was to be come a turning point in Juel's life and career. Although his professional skill had been appreciated earlier, his training of the fleet and his leadership in battle, now forced also the politicians to accept and recognise him. Twice earlier he had, for political reasons been bypassed when a naval commander-in-chief was to be appointed. The first time, when they called in Cort Adeler, with a European reputation behind him, and the second time when the Dutch Cornelis Tromp was engaged. Both these appointments were made to suit the game of foreign politics.

Niels Juel had therefore remained in the shadow of celebrities until fate, on the victorious First of July, gave him the chance of showing that he was of the same calibre as these men. Added to to this was the fact that Niels Juel had proven himself a more true servant of his King than the famous Dutchman who still had let himself be guided by his homeland. Politically, it was therefore fortunate that Niels Juel had been able to show that Denmark had a great naval commander, who could take his place among the most famous of European admirals.

On July 4th, 1677, the King had appointed Niels Juel lieutenant-admiral-general; medals were struck in his honour, and songs and pamphlets were published in his praise. On April 1678 he was apointed Privy Councillor, with a seat on the Kings Counsil, on January 10th, 1679, he was made Vice-President of the Admiralty, and on March 11th the same year, Knight of the Order of the Elephant, thus being granted the highests honours it was possible to achieve. His pay rose accordingly, from 2000 Rigsdalers a year at the beginning of the war, to 5000 Rigsdalers annually in 1679.

Also, he received prize money for ships taken during the war, i.e. for ships in the capture of which he himself had been involved. These were, in 1676, the ships KONG DAVID, CHARITAS and FORTUNA, in 1677, AD-MIRANTE, ENGELEN, HAVFRUEN, WRANGELS PALAIS, VENUS, DIANA, DRAGEN, MARS, JULIUS CAESAR, SVENSKE LØVE, and FLYVENDE ULV, and in 1679 for LAKSEN. Altogether, the sum of 23,060 Rigsdalers. Such a huge sum it was, of course, difficult for the King to pay him in outright, and he therefore took payment in all Crown Property on the small island of Taasinge, south of Fuenen.

On Taasinge lay a castle, Valdemar Slot. It was built in 1639-44 by King Christian IV for one of his sons, Valdemar. The Dutch architect. Hans v. Steenwinkel had erected this beautiful, two-storied building, with a high, slated, gable roof. Its facade pointed east, with a view over idyllic and picturesque waters, and centrally placed on the front stood an octagonal entrance tower, surmounted by a spire. On the west side were added two low wings, enclosing a courtyard. Prince Valdemar, however, seldom stayed here, and in 1656 he died, while serving in the wars in Poland. During the Danish-Swedish war of 1656-60 its buildings suffered extensive damage, having to house, at one time, 100 Swedish cavalrymen and their horses, and when they left, it was razed and stripped in almost every way. Instead of windows, there were openings in the walls, almost all window frames having probably been used as firewood. The spire was torn down, and there were gaping holes in the roof. Also inside it was spoiled. Panels were torn off, the doors were gone, and even the horseboxes in the stables, and



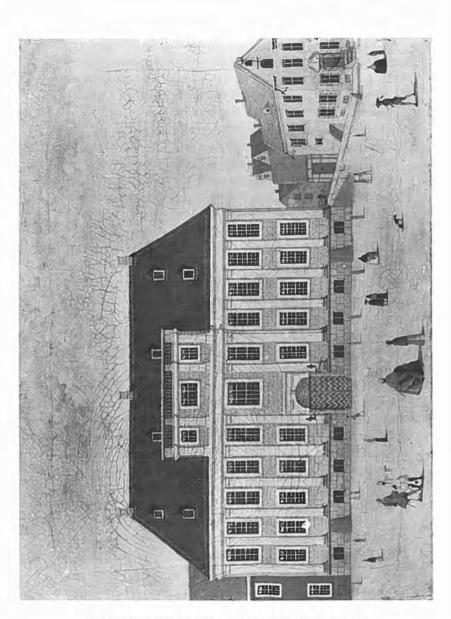
all hatches in the barn had disappeared. In many years the castle stood as a veritable ruin, which no one could afford the rebuild, until it was bought by two merchants from Copenhagen. From them, Niels Juel now purchased the castle for 258 Rigsdalers.

Niels Juel rebuilt and repaired the castle, at the same time buying up most of the property on the island, and this beautiful estate, which he had created for himself, was his favourite residence, and he stayed there whenever possible. As a pearl in a lovely island setting, the castle still stands there today.

But most of the time Niels Juel had to spend in Copenhagen, and also here he tried to live according to his station. King Christian IV had doubled the town area by straightening out the city wall so that it ran in a more straight line towards the Sound. In this area, where noblemen were allowed to erect their fashionable mansion houses, stood, and still stands, Niels Juel's small palace on the corner of Kongens Nytory and Bredgade. Large, high-ceilinged salons, with tall windows overlooking the square, with drawingrooms and living quarters in the wing on Bredgade. There were paintings on the ceilings, above the doors, on the chimney-pieces and above the richly ornamented fireplaces. The wall was covered with gilt leather, and everything carried the mark of a distinguished and prosperous owner. The garden, with water fountains, was well tended, and a hoarding enveloped the grounds, shielding against prying eyes. In 1686 this mansion was finally completed and Niels Juel moved into his winter residence.

Niels Juel's first manor, Sæbygaard, in the northern part of Jutland, was inconveniently situaded for his work in the navy, and in 1683 he exchanged it with the estate

Valdemar Castle, from a reproduction in »Frederik V's Atlas«.



Niels Juel's mansion on Kongens Nytorv in Copenhagen.

of Eriksholm at Holbæk fjord on Zealand, but also here he apparently stayed infrequently. Niels Juel was primarily a landed proprietor, but also owned some ships, as did so many admirals at the time; but a great shipowner he never became, and we know very little of his activities in connection with merchant ships. During the Skaanske War it is recorded that the owned some privateers, and we also know the names of some of his ships from the 1680's and 1690's, but none of them were particularly large, and what profits he had from them we do not know.

On July 13th, 1687, Niels Juel's daughter was married to Admiral Christian Bjelke, and the same year Niels Juel was able to inaugurate the newly restored chapel at Valdemar Slot. The distinguished Bishop of the diocese of Fuenen, Thomas Kingo, presided over the ceremony, which was attended by a select party of noble guests. Afterwards a magnificent banquet was held.

Finally, in 1686, Niels Juel acquired yet another manor and estate, Totterupholm in south Zealand. He took good care of his estates, and added to his many holdings by the purchase of many adjacent farmlands.

The 1680's were probably the best years of his life, both as a highly-esteemed admiral and a prosperous squire. Nevertheless, the hardships of a life at sea had taxed his health, and in 1690, when he was 61, we hear, for the first time, of illness befalling Niels Juel. He had been ordered to provide the King with an assessment list of naval officers during that summer, and we note that, in an accompanying letter, he regrets that his recommendations had been delayed, and explains that this was due to some indisposition. Medical skills were not far advanced in those days, and the remedies he had used may be found in a book of prescriptions, which still exists at Valdemar Slot. In this, there are recorded a number of recipes and old household remedies, to which he resorted when need arose.

In the orations which were held at his funeral, it was said that »several weaknesses, caused by so many exposures and exhaustions, in his old age wasted away his vital juices, and made his stomach unable to consume and digest«, and in the prescription book there can be found both a recipe for stomach balsam and an akvavit against wind.

Difficulties with his digestion were not the only physical problems he had to cope with in his later years. In 1693, when he was 64, he had the misfortune of breaking an arm by falling out of his carriage when his horses bolted, due to some negligence by a servant or coachman. At the funeral it was said with some asperity: "The enemy had never in 14 battles at sea caused him a single wound, and he scoffed at letting anyone feel or hear that he suffered any pain." The mishap occurred at Jægersborg, north of Copenhagen, and it is recorded that the King, on June 13th, visited Niels Juel, who had broken his arm some days before.

Three years later, in 1696, Niels Juel again had troubles with it, and from another source we hear what was now done. On a farm in Thy, in the north-western corner of Jutland, there lived a certain Laurids, born and bred in the countryside, who by practice and experience alone had achieved such skills in surgery that people sought him not only from neighbouring villages, but also from Norway and from overseas, due to his ability to cure any injury, particularly fractures. Due to his fame he was brought to Copenhagen to the great admiral, to drive away or at least mitigate the pains which were beginning to tear at his arm. By successful laying of hands he managed to reduce the pains to such an extent that Niels Juel gave him credit for his complete cure, and when he wanted to return home, Niels Juel offered to help him obtain a position among the townspeople and surgeons; but the old man preferred to spend his twilight years in the countryside, rather than expose himself to the envy of others in the glare of public life.

When age and infirmities presented themselves to Niels Juel he decided, together with his wife, to make a will. This was written in 1690, and in the preface it said that it was »made to decide how our wealth and property is to be disposed of, if one should die before the other, and when both are deceased, so that all the disputes and quarrels, to which our children might expose the longest living of us, may be avoided and prevented«.

Chapter Eleven

ADMIRALTY DAYS

Men & Ships

It is natural to conclude this brief account of the life and work of Niels Juel by looking at what he managed to achieve in the Navy, after the Skaanske War and until his death.

His life's work was primarily with the fleet, and his main interest were the ships and their men, which is clearly shown during his many years as the establishment's highest ranking officer. One of the first matters which he dealt with, after the war, was to look into the conditions of seamen and sailors. During the war it had been necessary obtain crews from abroad, mainly from the Netherlands, where many Danish and Norwegian seamen had gone to offer their services. Here was a recruiting market which many nations made use of. Crews had also been conscripted in Norway and Denmark, but such recruitment and conscription was a slow and laborious process, which it was desirable to avoid or at least reduce to a minimum.

Therefore a »seamen's charter of freedom« was issued, already on September 30th, 1679.

In this, the King gave freedom to all seamen, whether officers or hands, who had been in his Majesty's service, or who should serve in the Navy in the future, to settle in any part of the Kingdom, and be free from all taxes, even though they be engaged in some modest civilian trade or craft, except customs duties. It was hoped in this manner to induce them to remain in the country. It was estimated that the Danish isles and townships alone could raise some 2000 boatsmen, since every community according to its means should raise a certain number for service at the King's command. A naval officer was to pass the boatsmen, and Regulating Captains were given the task of supervising activities in various parts of the country.

In 1682 a »regiment de marine« was organised, to which were transferred a number of Danes and Norwegians from various Regiments of Foot. In the same year, new regulations were passed for treatment of the sick, and plans were made for the building of a new infirmary for naval personnel, the Søkvæsthuset.

Also, foundations were laid for reforms in the officer corps. For a Navy in peacetime there were too many officers, and to establish some basis for selection, the most distinguished admirals were given the task of making a seniority list for each rank. About one-third of the captains was to be discharged, two-thirds of the lieutenant-commanders, and four-fifths of the lieutenants. Naturally, the admirals were not unanimous in their listing, but all gave a brief characteristic of the officers on their list, which makes interesting reading today. Looking through the lists, it becomes apparent that the judgement of Niels Juel was decisive.

Not only were officers and men sorted out, but most of the functions in the Navy were given new regulations. These were applied to all classes, from the Admiralty itself, down to the jobs of master of stores, master ropemaker and master brewer. It was, indeed, a very thorough reformation of the naval estate which took place.

This examination and assessment of everything concerning the Navy naturally also extended to the warships and all stores and gear at the Holmen. Likewise, a new building programme for the coming year was laid. Ships were checked in all respects, and it was decided which could still be used for Naval purposes, and which should be used in some other manner, such as voyaging to the colonies and, finally, which should be sold or perhaps given in lieu of back pay owed by the King. From this examination we have interesting reports about the ships.

The number of warships had increased considerably during the war, not least due to the number of prizes taken, and although the number was now reduced by these classifications, it had to be faced that there was an urgent need for a better naval harbour than the one which had existed so far in the roads of Copenhagen. In the spring of 1680, Niels Juel looked into this matter himself, together with members of the Admiralty Board, and it was recommended that a new anchorage be laid out, at which the ships could lay better separated, to reduce the fire hazard, and in the autumn of that year the King himself went out to look at the location. On this occasion we hear how it was specified that the limits of the anchorage were to be fixed from »the beacon which his Royal Majesty himself laid out«. Within a few years the area of the naval anchorage was so well defined that it was possible to anchor the warships in their new positions.

The Skaanske War had clearly shown that it would be an advantage to have a more forward base in the Baltic, and in 1680 the feasibility of placing a naval base at Bornholm was considered. The Swedes seemed to have similar ideas, and felt that the naval base at Stockholm was badly placed, and they chose a more advanced position in the southern part of Sweden, where a new naval port and town was established, and given the name of Karlskrona.

At Bornholm the Danes looked at several possibilities, one being the small islands of Ertholm, the other a place on the shore of Bornholm itself. After some years of deliberation and surveying, both at summer and in the



Contemporary drawing of the new naval base at Christiansø off Bornholm.

9 Niels Juel

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winter, it was decided that the Ertholms should be the site, and in 1684 the base was ready to be taken into use. The inauguration took place under great festivity, and on this occasion the King, Christian V, let strike a commemorative coin, decorated with the outline of the new harbour on the largest of the islands, which was named Christiansø. The King himself later visited the base, accompanied by Niels Juel.

Simultaneously with the realisation of these plans, the construction of new warships was continued. Besides the launching of two frigates, the keel was laid for a new ship of the line, which was to be the flagship of the Navy, and which at its launching was named CHRISTIANUS QUINTUS after the King. It was to be longer and larger than any ship heretofore, and carry between 90 and 100 guns. Its building caused certain difficulties, with the master shipbuilder not adhering as closely to the plans as was desired. He was dismissed in May, 1682, and the ship had to be finished by his successor. On October 23, 1683, the ship was completed, and Niels Juel's old flagship of the same name, which had carried his Flag during his victories in the Skaanske War, was renamed ELEPHANTEN.

In the winter of 1682-83 it again looked as though war might break out between Sweden and Denmark, and this time both had new allies. Sweden now had the support of the Netherlands, and Denmark was allied with France. While the fleet was being made ready to go to sea, Rigs-Admiral Henrik Bjelke died on March 16th, 1683, and Niels Juel was now head of the Naval Establishment. Final preparations were completed during the month of May, and when the fleet was lying ready in the Sound, it was visited by the King.

The Danes were now awaiting the arrival of the French fleet, which had been promised, and in the meanwhile Niels Juel was ready to depart either towards the east, to meet the Swedish fleet, or to head north to intercept the Dutch fleet, which the Swedes had called to their assistance.

It was the French fleet which arrived first in northern waters. One June 26th they entered the Sound with 13 ships of the line, 2 frigates, 4 fireships and 2 supply ships, under the command of Marquis de Preville. When they arrived, the French thought that war had already broken out, but the situation had not yet reached that stage. Some frigates, which Niels Juel had sent into the Baltic, could report that a Swedish fleet of 26 warships was ready at Kalmar, apparently only awaiting the arrival of the Dutch.

Niels Juel had sent some frigates out to obtain early information about the Dutch fleet, having received dispatches from the Danish Envoy in the Netherlands, stating that Admiral Willem Bastiansen was completing preparations for its departure, and that he had sought navigators who were familiar with the Baltic Sea.

During this period of waiting Niels Juel had kept the fleet engaged in continued exercises, and not until August did he set course towards the Baltic. The French flagship had the misfortune of touching ground on the shoals at Saltholm in the Sound, off Copenhagen, but it was lightened by removing some guns and stores, and finally it was towed free with the help of boats. These activities took some time, as it was necessary to bring the guns back on board again, and the end of the month was reached before the whole fleet was again assembled, near Bornholm.

Niels Juel, who commanded the joint Danish-French fleet, had split his force into four squadrons, of which the French contingent made up one, and the Danish Admirals, Henrik Span, Chr. Bjelke, and Niels Juel, com-

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manded the other three. The total strength was 37 large ships, 6 smaller ones and some fireships.

For some months the allied squadrons cruised about in the Baltic around Bornholm, and along the Swedish coast, keeping a constant watch on the Swedish fleet which, however, remained at anchor in Kalmarsund. In the meanwhile it looked as though peace would prevail. The Dutch never arrived, the French admiral was ordered to return home, and the allied fleet now went back into the Sound. On October 3rd, the Frenchmen stood out northwards through Danish waters on their way home.

Throughout the winter months Niels Juel was kept busy with meetings in the Admiralty, and again there were financial problems which affected his dispositions. The year of 1684 passed relatively quietly, apart from some minor episodes between Danish and Swedish ships, since there was, in spite of the political detente between the two countries, still considerable bitterness between them. The economy had not improved, and in 1685 it again became necessary to make reductions in the permanent staff of the Navy.

Behind these changes, which also caused a reorganisation at the top of the naval establishment, stood a new man, Privy Councillor Christopher Sehested, who had moved close to the King. The authority of the Admiralty was curtailed, so that Niels Juel, as its head, now had to confine himself entirely to military and tactical problems, whilst the Naval Deputees, headed by Sehested, should be in charge of personnel and equipment. In a sort of summation of the problems which were now to taken over by Naval Deputees, the Admiralty sent in a report, on the »poor state of the fleet«, together with a review of financial shortages in connection with back pay to the personnel. Naval officers were due pay for 15 months, deckhands were 18 months in arrears, and the petty officers at Holmen had 21 months' remuneration coming to them.

In spite of all difficulties, the building of new ships went on, and the year of 1686 saw the launching of an unusual ship, which in design could lead our thoughts towards features now incorporated in landing craft of later years. It was built by a recently engaged Master Shipbuilder, the Englishman Frans Shelton, and, the always well-informed. Swedish envoy in Copenhagen wrote home about it. »The day before yesterday, May 1st. they launched a galiot, which Shelton has constructed in a special manner, designed to disembark cavalry quickly. It is large enough to accommodate about sixty horses below deck, a Company of soldiers above, as well as about ten heavy guns. The latter are to cover the landing, if it is resisted. The bottom of this galiot is said to be very flat, and to have a draught which enables it to run in at a water depth of only six feet.«

"When it was launched from the ship, the bow opened, and a ramp was thrown out, to show how the landing could be made." It was given the name of SECKEPIBEN (Bagpipe), and its life span was only 5 years. Unfortunately, very little information about it has survived.

The Admiralty did not seem to be afraid of innovations, and under the leadership of Niels Juel we find, during these years, many examples of experiments; such as new means of ensuring the safety of the inflammable ships, or new methods for the sheathing of ships bottoms. In 1687 it was mentioned during discussions about this, that previously it had been practice in England and Holland to cover the ships first with oak and pine sections, and then connect these with oak planks longitudinally, whilst Shelton now recommended a new method of doubling the bottom sheath with pine beams. thereby strengthening it and making it less exposed to the decay which could otherwise be caused by water entering by the sections and remaining there to rot.

In 1688, the working conditions of the men was again taken up. They should be organised in three divisions of each 10 companies, which should relieve each other at Holmen. Having worked 8 days at Holmen, they should be off duty 14 days, during which time they could, according to their own wishes, carry out decent work for themselves or others in town, and thereby have extra earnings. Besides, they should each year have a duck suit, and every other year a cloth frock and a cap. One did what was possible to ease their enonomy and make the boatsmen happy. It proved difficult to obtain the clothes promised in time, and the King therefore, »to encourage the men, « gave permission to provide them, at New Year, with a pair of shoes and stockings, once and for all. At the same time Niels Juel wrote to the King about Bremerholm School at Holmen's church, asking for free board and lodging for 12 boys. There is much to indicate that one really tried to make the King's Service as attractive as possible, during these years where foreign relations were so unsettled, and boatsmen much in demand.

At the time when William of Orange ascended to the Throne of England, Louis XIV tried to expand his territory by invading Kurphalz, where he demanded the right of succession for his sister-in-law, but this time such an act did not bring about concurrent threats of war in the North. On the contrary, it finally led to negotiations, which resulted in conciliation between the Nordic countries.

Nevertheless, the fleet was made ready for sea in 1689, and, organised in three squadrons, Niels Juel stood out and entered the Baltic on June 2nd. The squadrons practiced evolutions, and were visited several times by the King. On June 20th an agreement was signed with Sweden, and both countries decided to remain neutral in the European conflict.

In 1690 instructions to the Admiralty were renewed, and the areas of responsibility were more clearly defined. Niels Juel, as head of the Admiralty, was again given more direct influence upon matters concerning personnel, and the Admiralty was also to take care of the teaching and training of apprentices, and the »improvement of navigation«. Therefore, once again a seniority list for all naval officers was made, and it was stressed that their ranking in the list should decide their promotions. To the Admiralty's normal work was now added the task of arranging convoys, which together with Swedish ships, should secure the Nordic countries' overseas trade during the current wars. The many encroachments to which they were exposed by the English, the Dutch and French, led to strong reaction and countermeasures from the two countries, which resulted in their finally signing a treaty of neutrality in March 1690.

The tasks of the Navy were very diverse during these last years of Niels Juel's life. Besides the new naval base af Holmen, shipbuilding here, and the dispatch of ships therefrom, new naval bases had been established in the more distant parts of the Kingdom: Glueckstadt on the river Elb, Christiansand in Norway and Christiansø off Bornholm. From all these outposts came requests for improvements and expansion during these years. At the naval establishment at Glueckstad were employed one vice-admiral, three captains and two lieutenants, and some other personnel, and there were stationed one frigate, eight jagts and some other vessels. At Christiansand in Norway was listed a scoutbynacht, a master of stores and a master shipbuilder, and three lieutenants, together with other personnel, and there were available a frigate, 2 snows, 7 jagts, 3 inshore boats, some galiots and several other vessels. At Christiansø was also stationed a small permanent staff and some smaller ships, but otherwise the base here was really maintained only as a reserve forward base for Copenhagen.

It was also necessary during these war years to take up the question of the socalled »defended ships«; i.e. armed merchantment, which, if necessary could be used in the Navy, and therefore were given certain exemptions in the way of customs duties, etc. In these troubled times many shipowners were anxious to have their ships armed, and new regulations for »defended ships« were promulgated.

The famous Danish astronomer, Ole Rømer, was at this time attached to the Navy, and in 1691 he introduced a compass reform. For more than 200 years it had been well known that compasses had a variation, and that this differed from locality to locality. This led to compass makers in each country moving the needles on the compass cards to compensate for the variations most commonly present to the seamen who were to use them. The danger of faulty navigation, when outside their normal waters, was considerable. A few years earlier the Dutch had therefore changed their compasses back, so that they did not take account of the variation, which should be calculated separately, and allowed for, when laying out a course. Ole Rømer recommended this change for all Danish and Norwegian seamen. A poster was made up and, as a start, the new compasses were introduced in His Majesty's ships. It was felt that other ships, in time, would gradually adapt the new system.

Also sea charts were being improved. In the same way that Denmark, during these years, had had all land areas surveyed and mapped out, so it was decided to chart all Danish waters. After many deliberations, the task was given to Jens Sørensen, who proved capable of producing quite exceptional work. With a new method, he charted all Danish waters during the following years with such accuracy that it was not possible to improve upon them until 150 years later, in the middle of the nineteenth century. His work was quite often criticized, and he was lucky to have, in Niels Juel, a loyal protector. Nevertheless he had to see all his charts laid aside after the death of Niels Juel. For security reasons one was afraid of having the charts printed, since Denmark, in its difficult approaches and inaccessible sounds and waters, had considerable natural protection against invading fleets. Therefore sailors again had to content themselves with charts which had been produced elsewhere, many of which were quite inaccurate.

The last years of his service in the Navy was, typically, marked by his concern for the naval personnel. Nyboder, a barrack town, which had been built to house the regulars of Holmen, was repaired, and new regulations were published showing who were to be allowed in the 590 houses. In each street there should reside one lieutenant-commander or lieutenant, two skippers, and two senior boatsmen, and only regular personnel were allowed to live there. It was also discussed whether similar housing should be built on the island of Møen, where there should then be stationed one sea captain and two lieutenants to take care of the seamen.

During the winter of 1696–97 Niels Juel had to cancel several appointments for Admiralty meetings because of illness, and his last act in the service of the Danish Navy was to enter, on Marsh 9th, 1697, a young apprentice for instruction by the Director of Navigation, an almost symbolic act of an old man towards that youth which he desired should improve itself by learning.

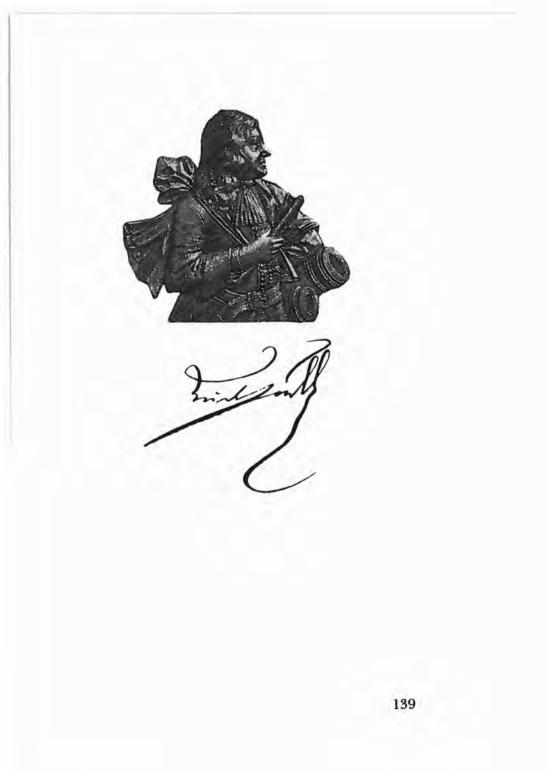
On April 8th, 1697, at 11 o'clock in the morning,

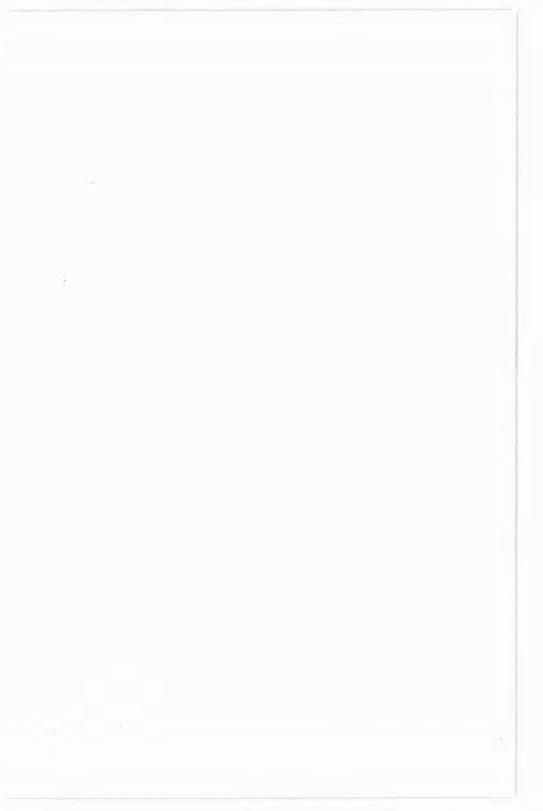
Lieutenant-General-Admiral Niels Juel died in his mansion in Copenhagen. On April 10th, his successor was appointed. Life went on, but Denmark paid a moving farewell tribute to its greatest naval hero.

The funeral did not take place until June 17th, when, with a display of magnificent splendour, his coffin was carried to Holmen's Church, where long funeral orations were held in his honour. His sarcophagus can be seen in the church, with reliefs illustrating his many naval victories, and a long poem, which ends (in inadequate translation):

Stay, traveller; and see in stone a man of fame, And be you not as hard yourself, pay homage to his name. It is Niels Juel, whose marrow, bones, and blood, With ardent heart, for his King's honour stood. Whose manhood's deeds in many battles stand, And name is honoured now throughout the land. A man of older virtues; a frank, outspoken Dane, Of yes, and no, spoke honest, true and plain.

His bones are in this grave, his Soul is at God's side, As long as there be water in the seas, his name abide!





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