

**ENGLISH  
WORTHIES;  
ADMIRAL BLAKE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649037889

English Worthies; Admiral Blake by David Hannay & Andrew Lang

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**DAVID HANNAY & ANDREW LANG**

**ENGLISH  
WORTHIES;  
ADMIRAL BLAKE**



# English Worthies

EDITED BY ANDREW LANG

---

## ADMIRAL BLAKE

BY

DAVID HANNAY

LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1886

*All rights reserved*

H Br 2645-

Br 1852.29.7 ✓



### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

THE authorities for the life of Blake are scanty and of dubious value. He is, of course, frequently mentioned in the Calendar of State Papers (Domestic), 1649-57, but the references to him are in a great majority of cases purely official and of little interest. Other mention of him is to be found in Rushworth, Thurloe, and the compilers and memoir-writers of the time. In Thurloe are some of his despatches, and of the orders sent him when on foreign service in his later years.

An account of the first battle of the Dutch war was published by authority under the title of 'The Answer of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England to three Papers delivered in to the Council of State by the Lords Ambassadors Extraordinary of the States-General of the United Provinces.' It gives the English version of the preliminaries of the encounter, and may be compared with the Dutch story as told in the life of Cornelius Van Tromp, Martin's son and successor.

There are also official or semi-official 'Narratives' of the capture of the Plate Ships, and of the attack on Santa Cruz, published by authority.

No life of the Admiral was written till nearly half a century after his death. In 1704 one appeared in a collection of 'Lives English and Foreign.' It was an attempt to supply a want with indifferent means. When the

reaction against Walpole's policy had brought on the war of *Jenkin's Ear*, and there was a revival of interest in the old naval glories of the country, two lives, by very different hands, were written to meet the popular demand. Dr. Johnson turned the life of the collection into good English. His short biography has, of course, an independent literary value, but it does not pretend to be an original authority.

About the same time there appeared 'A History and Life' professing to be the work of a gentleman bred in the family. It was manifestly written in Grub Street while Vernon's capture of Portobello was a fresh and glorious feat, but if the author did not use up some local tradition he was a clever fellow with a dash of Defoe in him.

Mr. Hepworth Dixon's 'Life,' published in 1852, is a work of undoubted research, and had at least the advantage of being written before his style had reached its full maturity.

A long and careful article on Blake will be found in 'The Dictionary of National Biography,' vol. v.



## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. TO THE CIVIL WAR . . . . .	1
II. THREE SIEGES . . . . .	11
III. THE NAVY OF THE COMMONWEALTH . . . . .	35
IV. THE PURSUIT OF RUPERT . . . . .	45
V. IN THE CHANNEL, AND AT WHITEHALL . . . . .	64
VI. WAR WITH HOLLAND . . . . .	75
VII. THE DUEL WITH TROMP . . . . .	93
VIII. IN THE MEDITERRANEAN . . . . .	114
IX. CHASING THE PLATE SHIPS . . . . .	153
X. THE CAPTURE OF THE PLATE SHIPS . . . . .	151
XI. SANTA CRUZ DE TENEBRIFE . . . . .	166
XII. CONCLUSION . . . . .	179
INDEX . . . . .	181

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

# ROBERT BLAKE.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### TO THE CIVIL WAR.

WHEN Nelson was about to sail on the one unsuccessful enterprise of his life—the attack on Santa Cruz de Tenerife—he wrote these words to Earl St. Vincent: ‘I do not reckon myself equal to Blake: but, if I recollect right, he was more obliged to the wind coming off the land than to any exertions of his own.’ ‘The greatest sailor since our world began’ was not wholly just in his implied criticism on the seventeenth-century Admiral. Blake did not sail into the harbour of Santa Cruz blindly relying on the chance of accidents to give him a means of retreat, but this sentence is none the less peculiarly fit to stand at the head of his biography. If Robert Blake had no other claim to be remembered, it would still be enough to entitle him to a high place among our heroes, that he planned and successfully carried out an enterprise which, a hundred and fifty years later, in the midst of a war of continual victories, still seemed over-bold to Horatio Nelson.