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### ATTEMPTS BY KING WILLIAM III TO FORM A REGULAR AND PERMANENT ARMY IN ENGLAND 1689-1702

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The issue of forming a permanent army in England was considered one of the priorities that William III sought to achieve, after taking the crown in 1689. England did not have a regular and permanent army, and he made efforts to reorganize the English forces and increase their number to involve them in the war against France. And in the English kingdoms (Ireland and Scotland), and worked to integrate them with other foreign forces, especially the Dutch forces, which were more organized than the English forces, and he himself took command of the European coalition army in the Nine Years' War against France 1688-1697, and sought to find a balance between officers Foreigners and English in the ranks of his army in order to please Parliament, which objected to its dependence on foreign officers without the English, and as soon as the war ended in 1697, the parliamentary forces increased their pressure to reduce the number of the army, and he made attempts to maintain a permanent army in peacetime, but he was unable This is due to the parliament's vote to reduce the number of its forces.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The construction of the armed forces of each country is affected by a number of factors, including the political and strategic goal of forming the army, the nature of the country's economic conditions and its human resources, the extent of progress, the availability of qualified technical cadres and the nature of the expected conflict. All these and other influences are taken into account to build any army in the world, including the army. The Englishman, who remained even after the middle of the seventeenth century suffered from poor preparation and organization, as he was affected by the political and

economic factors that England went through, and relied in its formation on mercenaries who were being recruited and demobilized without prior planning, and after William III assumed the throne of England in 1689 he paid exceptional attention. The army sought to reorganize and prepare it in order to benefit from it in its wars to confront the French threat that threatened Europe in general and the low lands in particular, but his attempts collided with a parliamentary rejection due to the increase in military expenditures, and after the end of the war with France, Parliament remarkably reduced the number of army forces.

Accordingly, the research entitled, (King William III's Attempts to Form a Regular and Permanent Army in England 1689-1702) follows the efforts made by William III to prepare the English forces and engage them in wars, While he stopped at the year 1702, which witnessed his death and the end of his reign. The research includes three sections as well as an introduction and conclusion, and it was clear from the first section, (William III's endeavors in preparing and organizing the English army 1689-1690), that England did not have a modern and regular army before, and King William III relied on foreign officers, especially the Dutch Because they are more experienced than the English officers, but at the same time he sought to restructure and organize the English forces with the aim of putting them in the war, and the second section means, (William III's command of the European coalition army against France and its reflection on the English army until 1697), in following up the impact of the impact His reliance on the English forces in the war against France to enhance the ability of those forces and increase their experience and actual contribution to confront the French forces and keep their danger away from England and the lowlands, while the third section deals with, (Parliament's rejection of its attempts to maintain a permanent army in peacetime 1698-1702), he sought after The end of the war with France to keep the army, but Parliament opposed this and voted to reduce the number of the army.

***First, William III's Efforts in Preparing and Organizing the English Army 1689-1690.***

The issue of forming a standing army in England was one of the priorities that William III sought to achieve. Ten, and relied in its wars on the collection of militias and mercenaries from European countries, but the situation changed in the Republican era (1649-1660), as Oliver Cromwell formed forces estimated at about (50,000) soldiers characterized by well-trained and armed, and were more Effectiveness of the untrained militias that were the basis of the former English army. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Parliament decided to dissolve these forces, and in the following year issued the Militia Law, according to which the local authorities forbade the formation of militias without the consent of the King, and this led to the weakening of the incentive for local officials to prepare their own fighting forces (Nottingham, 2013, P.333).

Meanwhile, King Charles II (Charles II) formed a force of four regiments of infantry and cavalry at a cost of 122,000 pounds, to act as his private guard, and this force became the nucleus of the army later, in February 1685 its number increased To about (8865) soldiers, and (1400) of those forces were stationed in the military garrisons scattered on

the outskirts of the main cities, and King James II (James II), in order to reduce the unstable conditions witnessed by his reign, sought to increase the English forces. In 1688, their number reached (34,320), as well as (8938) troops in Ireland and (3,000) in Scotland, until their total number reached more than (45,000) soldiers. The forces were mercenaries; they lacked organization and armament, and were not qualified to fight foreign wars (Childs, 1980, P.3-5).

William realized early on the importance of relying on the English and Dutch forces in the face of France, while he was making preparations (to invade) England after the middle of 1688, King Louis XIV continued his expansionist policy and pressure on the Holy Roman Empire to accept his demands, and his forces managed on September 26, 1688 to cross the River The Rhine River and its capture of the cities located on it, and imposed a siege on Philipsburg Castle on the next day, and this was the beginning of what was called the Nine Years War, also known as the Wars of King William(Mulligan et.al., PP.34-35)

Despite William's preoccupation with securing the throne during that period, the victories achieved by the French forces at the beginning of the Nine Years' War called him to invite the Parliament of the Convention in its first session on January 22, 1689, to agree to join the European Alliance to fight France and declare war on it. By standing by their side in the defense of Europe, but the members of the parliament of the agreement did not seem at first to agree to that call, and considered that its goal was to plunge England into the war to save Holland from the French occupation. James II's escape ordered the commander of the army, Louis de Duras (Handley and Stuart, 1993), to dissolve him, which created a state of chaos among his ranks, while some regiments remained in their military positions, others disintegrated. The deployment of the remainder of the British forces, and keeping them in their military barracks far from London, so as not to pose any potential threat to his new regime(Mijers and Onnekink, 2007, P.76.), and assigning some of them the responsibility of maintaining internal security and guarding government institutions and prisons.(Henshaw, Op.Cit., P.217)

In contrast to the English forces that were not ready to fight foreign wars, the Dutch forces that William led his campaign against England were ready to do so (Ibid. , PP.76-77), but William did not want to rely on them completely, but also wanted to take advantage of the English forces after preparing and arming them In the same ways he had done with the Dutch forces previously, but time did not help him to do so, while his intervention in the war against France required quickly, the English forces were suffering from a great shortage in their numbers and equipment(Childs , 1984, PP.54-63.), so he decided to integrate the Dutch forces, which numbered between 15,000 - 20,000 soldiers, including the Anglo-Dutch Brigade (Mijers and Onnekink, Op.Cit., P.87.), and his personal guard regiment (the Blue Guard) in the English forces (Childs, 1987, P.25), and a salary was allocated to them from the English budget, with the aim of increasing the numbers of the English army and enhancing its combat ability.

William's dependence on the Dutch forces led those forces to realize that their stay in England would not be short, and some of their leaders sought to occupy senior leadership and administrative positions in England, but he did not agree to the requests

submitted by some of them in this regard, as it contradicts English law, and as a result Some of them decided to leave England and return to Holland (Dekker, 2013, P.54).

This was not the only reason that prompted them to plan to return to Holland, but some of them suffered from a lack of harmony with English society, mistreatment, insults and ridicule in speech and publications, in addition to the high prices of basic commodities compared to what they were in Holland. William inquired of his personal secretary Konstantin Huygens about the rise in prices and the extent to which the Dutch accepted it. And their preference to keep it in Holland, and his personal secretary Huygens indicated in his memoirs, "The circumstances at this time made me think constantly of returning to Holland and retirement." This is due to the difficulty of their adaptation to live in it, due to the bad weather conditions. Jacques de Gastigny, one of William's leaders and those close to him, endured the same suffering, and informed Higgins on March 23, 1689 of his unwillingness to stay in London and decided to leave it, as did a number of other Dutchmen, while others chose to stay and adapt to the new reality (Ibid., P.54-55 )

In accordance with his policy of relying on the English forces to conduct foreign military operations, the 1st Earl of Marlborough assigned John Churchill to the numbers and command of the English forces, and was able to form a corps consisting of eleven infantry regiments and two regiments of cavalry and headed in the late March 1689 to the Low Countries, but some of those regiments declared their rebellion on their way there, and when the other regiments, whose number of soldiers was estimated (10,000) arrived in May of the same year, they did not initially provide a great addition to the war effort, because of their poor administrative organization and its military equipment, but the Dutch army commander, George Friedrich, oversaw their numbers and training, and they were integrated into the Dutch administrative organizations, which earned them more good(Commire and Klezmer, 1994, P.245).

In view of the continued progress of the French forces and their achievement of victories on most of the European fronts, William renewed his call for the need to confront them, and Parliament expressed its support for that after they realized the seriousness of the situation, and on April 25 of the same year the House of Commons voted to declare war on it, and William stated in the House of Commons saying , "France has actually declared war against England"(Hoppit, Op.Cit., P.102), and decided to take urgent measures to prepare the English forces and put them in the military fields, and what increased the importance of that was the Netherlands' declaration of war against France since February 1689, which required England to provide them with troops to participate with them in war according to the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of Mutual Support(M. Stapleton, Op.Cit., P.84).

In order to secure the Parliament's approval to go to war against France, William announced on May 12, 1689, England's accession to the European Alliance along with Spain, Holland, Denmark and Savoy. The allied countries pledged to jointly defend against any external aggression, and in response, France decided to increase the number of its soldiers to (450,000), and its naval forces to (100,000) thousand soldiers, which

required William to attach the utmost importance to establishing an army capable of facing the French threat(Neil Paterson, 2007, PP.49-50; Mulligan et.al., Op.Cit., PP.34-35).

On August 25 of the same year, the English forces clashed with the French forces in the area of Walcott, which is fifteen miles south of the city of Charleroi, and John Churchill took command of the English battalion, and was able to achieve a victory over the French forces. About (600) French soldiers were killed in that battle, and about (1400) were wounded and captured, while the English forces lost only a few of their soldiers, and William praised the victory achieved, and ordered the honoring of the forces that participated in that battle(Goorts, 2019, P.244).

The recent victories encouraged the involvement of the English forces in other fields, and William ordered the preparation of a military campaign against Ireland, and appointed the first Duke of Schaumburg(Howell, 2016, P.21), General Friedrich Schomberg, as its commander in chief, and at the end of August 1689 I went to Ireland to confront the Jacobite rebellion against his rule And its number reached about (15,000) soldiers, but it was not up to the task entrusted to it, and only a month passed since its presence there until it suffered from food shortages and disease spread among its ranks, and senior officers seized the salaries of soldiers, and the effect of that died about a third of those forces , while the four foreign regiments that participated with it in the fighting only suffered minor losses, which revealed to William that the suffering of the English forces in Ireland was caused by the rampant corruption among its leadership. And the expansion of the English army, and he chose qualified foreign officers to take over that task after the experience of the English army in Ireland revealed to him the serious shortcomings that its leaders were suffering from.( John M. Stapleton, Jr , M. A., Op.Cit., P.129)

In line with his policy of reforming the army, William decided in November of the same year to form a corps of officers to fill the shortage in their numbers, as a result of many former army officers leaving military service, because of their refusal to swear allegiance to the new government, while another section of them was expelled for political reasons or Religious or incompetence, not to mention the low turnout of English officers to fill vacant positions in the army, leaving only a third of the former army officers who did not have political affiliations hostile to the new rule, or who had great military experience, which increased the need to increase the number of officers in The army, orders issued by William limiting the task of commanding and directing orders to army officers only, and forbidding soldiers from doing this even if they had military experience, and relied on the Anglo-Dutch brigade, and on foreign officers, especially from the French Huguenots ( D. Gwynn ,1998), to supply The English army with officers and to compensate for the shortage in their numbers(Mijers and Onnekink , Op.Cit., P.80).

Accordingly, William assigned most of the senior positions in the army to foreign officers, while the share of English officers was limited. For example, the total number of senior officers in the English army that fought in Ireland in 1690 was fourteen

officers, including ten foreigners, six of whom were Dutch. The other four were from Denmark. In the same year, he hired a legion from Denmark consisting of (7,000) soldiers to increase the English and Dutch forces in Ireland, and he joined his forces completely in the spring of the same year, and not only relied on foreign fighting forces to strengthen his army, but also hired foreigners, especially the Dutch for financing and extending it. With the necessary equipment, in the same year Jacob Pereiara and his son Isaak, two of the Jewish financiers of the Dutch army, provided the English army that was fighting in Ireland with supplies and food, and also relied on other Dutch merchants to do so. Some of them are ovens and private shops that supplied the English army with foodstuffs and other supplies (Childs, 1991, P.53).

Following the defeats suffered by the English forces in Ireland, William decided in June 1690 to go there to lead the forces himself, and relied in his campaign mainly on Dutch officers instead of the English, despite England paying the price for that participation, and he also used the Dutch artillery, as it was shipped to Ireland under the supervision of Dutch and German officers. As for the English forces, despite their formation of two-thirds of his forces, which number (35,000) fighters, most of them are soldiers and junior military ranks. The Anglo-Dutch brigade, and the number of English regiments that fought in Ireland reached (45) regiments, supported by (30) foreign regiments (Bucholz and Key, 2019, P.337).

The Battle of Bowen on July 12, 1690 was the first fierce battle that William fought with the English forces in Ireland, in which about (15) English infantry regiments participated, as well as (11) cavalry of different nationalities (Sir Arthur, 1909, P.240), and despite the fact that the minor injury he sustained in the leg during the battle (Henriëtte, 1925, P.42-43), however, did not deter him from continuing the fight and his forces were able to defeat the French forces and the forces loyal to James II in Ireland, and James II was forced after his defeat in that battle to withdraw and return to France, but all his loyal forces did not surrender and continued their fight for the next year. William praised the achievements of his forces in that battle and addressed them, saying, "You have not forgotten the victory achieved, and I will not forget you." He ordered the army commanders to thank the soldiers on his behalf (Rudolf Dekker, Op.Cit., P.43). His victory was widely praised in England and abroad. The English ambassador to Switzerland, Thomas Coxe, held a celebration on that occasion (Storrs, 2010, P.198), but the Battle of Bowen did not completely resolve the Irish hostility to his rule, so he decided retaining part of his forces in Ireland before returning to England, he installed the Dutch general Godert de Ginkell to run the war on his behalf, and he achieved several victories in the battles he fought against the Irish forces opposed to William's rule.

### ***Second, William III's Command Of The European Coalition Army Against France And Its Reflection On The English Army Until 1697.***

With the aim of strengthening the participation of England in the war against France in Flanders (Spanish Netherlands), William participated in February 1691 in the Allied Conference in The Hague, which was his first visit to his native Netherlands since 1688,

and emphasized in his speech before the delegates of the Allied countries participating in the conference His intention to send more English forces to participate in the fighting in Flanders, and to take command of the Dutch forces himself (Mijers and Onnekink, Op.Cit., P.82).

In preparation for this, he reached on October 3, 1691, a peace treaty of Limerick (Simms, 1961, PP.19-24), to end the war in Ireland, and the Irish Protestants tried to thwart its ratification, and they criticized William's policy through which he tried to show his good dealings with the Irish Catholics. However, through this treaty he wanted to end the Irish threat, and direct the resources of England to the most important conflict against France, because the contribution of the English forces was limited at the beginning of the Nine Years' War, because they were still in the midst of his reforms, as well as his focus in the first year of his rule on The war in Ireland, and its participation was limited to 8% of the infantry of the Federal Army, and 4% of the cavalry, and the rate of participation in the following year also declined, while Spain and the Netherlands, during the first two years of the Nine Years' War, bore the largest share of the Allied war efforts in Flanders, with an estimated rate of about 80% of the total number of infantry in the Allied army, as Spain provided the Federal Army with 29% of the infantry and half of its cavalry forces, in The Netherlands contributed 51% of the infantry, 36% of the cavalry and most of the artillery(O'Brien, Op.Cit., PP.10-11).

When he took command of the allied forces in the Low Countries, William sought to restructure them and gave the Dutch and English forces a priority in managing the war, and since the Dutch forces constituted the largest proportion in the Federal Army, this implied that he assumed the leadership of the Federal Army himself. He estimated the number of Dutch forces in the army In 1691, the Federal Army had about (68,000-70,000) fighters, while the English Legion consisted of (11,343) fighters, as well as three Dutch regiments (Childs, P.111-112).

On the other hand, William's leadership of the coalition army contributed to alleviating the competition between the coalition armies that suffered in the first two years of the war, and he organized and divided it into brigades, each brigade consisted of several infantry battalions or squadrons, and the cavalry command was entrusted to the officer who held the rank of brigadier. Or a colonel and each country formed its own brigade. The Dutch brigades were formed from Dutch forces only, while the English brigades consisted of English forces, and so for the rest of the other countries participating in the coalition, and its goal was to preserve the national unity of each brigade and to spread the spirit of competition between them (Ibid., PP.180-181)

In most of the years of the Nine Years' War, the Federal Army was divided into two field armies, the first stationed in Flanders, and initially included the Dutch and Spanish forces, then the English forces joined with them, while the second stationed near the province of Brabant, and included English forces, Bavaria and Brandenburg and other forces (.Mijers and Onnekink, Op.Cit., P.84).

In order to concentrate his military power and consolidate his influence, William assigned the responsibility of his Anglo-Dutch army in Flanders to the leaders of the

alliance close to him, and he himself took command of the main coalition army in the province of Brabant alongside the ruler of Bavaria, Maximilian II Emmanue (Vico, 2004, P.517), and since the Anglo forces - A Dutch presence in both field armies, and occupied the largest proportion of the coalition forces in them during that period, which allowed him to appoint most of the officers in both armies, and worked to unify the allied forces under his command, and soon gained the confidence and respect of the leaders of the coalition for his military capabilities and political position, as King of England, and his political influence extended beyond the borders of England and Holland.

Meanwhile, war operations took place at sea in favor of England. In May 1692, pieces belonging to the English and Dutch fleets were able to achieve a victory over the French forces in a naval battle off the coast of La Hogue shores. One of the results of this victory was the continued maintenance of the English fleet, by controlling the seas for two successive centuries (Dekker, Op.Cit., P.45).

However, his dependence more on foreign officers to lead the battles was met with the resentment of the English officers, and a number of parliamentarians criticized the failure to appoint English officers to leadership positions and limiting him to the Dutch or other nationalities, and the impact of the defeat that William's forces suffered in the Battle of Steenkerque, in August 1692 by French troops (Ibid., P.45), the English officers accused General Count of Solms, Hendrik Trajectinus, who was related to William, of misleading the English forces and of sacrificing them carelessly in that The battle, and this, in turn, opened the door to debate in Parliament about the importance of relying on foreign officers in the command of the English forces, and some parliamentary circles saw that its dependence on foreign forces would lead to the establishment of a foreign army of mercenaries that could help it form an arbitrary government with the help of his standing army (Mulligan et.al. , Op.Cit. ,P.40).

Despite the parliamentary criticism, he continued to rely on foreign officers, especially as his policy enjoyed government support represented in providing funds to support the war effort (Ibid. , P.40), and until the end of 1692, foreign officers retained seven out of twelve officers who held senior positions in the English army, The foreign officers were not limited to the field side, but some of them were assigned administrative services in the army, and some of them occupied the first three positions to supervise the artillery in Flanders, while his dependence remained limited on the English officers, which clearly indicated the degree of foreign influence in the establishment of the English army. The defeat of the English forces alongside the allied forces at the end of July 1693 at the Battle of Neerwinden, led to an increase in the parliamentary criticism that William faced because of his continued dependence on foreign officers (Dekker, Op.Cit., P.45).

In order to reduce the criticism and accusations against him, because of his dependence on foreign officers in the English army, he worked to install some English officers in the administrative centers in Flanders, and this contributed to supplying the Union Army with more English forces in an attempt to benefit more from England's military



capabilities, and this led To increase the number of the British forces, and their number reached about (90,000) fighters. The Netherlands also strengthened the impact of the setbacks suffered by its forces in the years (1692-1693), its contribution to the war and mobilized (75,737) fighters, including (23,227) foreign forces, and hired in the following year about (20,500) additional foreign soldiers, which increased the combat capability of the regiments. And the number of Dutch forces increased to (102,161) soldiers in that period of the war (Childs, *The Nine Years*, P.16-17).

The expansion of the English and Dutch army was reflected remarkably on the increase in the Allied armies that were fighting in the Low Countries, and their total number increased from (120,000-145,000) in 1694, and thus exceeded the French forces by about 30,000 soldiers, which allowed William to take the initiative to attack and achieve victory. In more than one battle, he forced the French forces to withdraw from many of the areas they had previously controlled in Flanders (Mijers and Onnekink, *Op.Cit.*, P.87) .France was surprised by his ability to quickly regroup his forces after defeat and return to the battlefield again in a more determined manner until the war operations became forming France has a long war of attrition.

Meanwhile, William continued his policy aimed at strengthening the English army and increasing its number until it numbered about (80,000) fighters in the period (1694-1695). The cavalry, five regiments of cavalry, and twelve infantry regiments, and this led to an increase in the number of British forces during the period (1695-1697) by about (10,000) soldiers([http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/english\\_army.html](http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/english_army.html)) .

On the other hand, William did not abandon the foreign forces in strengthening the English army, and until 1695 included in its ranks forces of multiple nationalities, as the Dutch forces consisted of (12) squadrons (Mijers and Onnekink , *Op.Cit.* ,P.80) of cavalry, (5) squadrons of cavalry, and (6) Infantry battalions, while the Danish forces formed (6) squadrons of cavalry, and (8) infantry battalions, and the Principality of Hanover contributed (8) squadrons of cavalry and (4) infantry battalions, while the share of the Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel Emirate was two infantry battalions. In all, the foreign forces formed (26) cavalry squadrons, (5) cavalry, and (20) infantry battalions, or an estimated (23,042) out of the total number of officers and soldiers that numbered (87,702) during that period of the war (Ibid., P.80).

The English forces continued their active participation in the battles, and were able, alongside the allied forces in 1695(Lenihan, 2011, P.297), to regain control of the fortress of Namur after a two-month siege followed by a major attack on it, but William suffered from a lack of funds allocated to finance the war, due to the financial crisis that England witnessed it during that period, which hindered his efforts to exploit the advantage he gained after taking control of Namur. The exit of Savoy from the conflict in 1696 also gave France an advantage in the last year of the war, and its forces achieved some victories, but they were not enough to win the war in their favor. During that period, Louis XIV decided to abandon the victories his forces had achieved in the Spanish Netherlands in exchange for keeping the city of Strasburg (B. G. Preston , 2020), and to make peace with England, according to the Treaty of Riswick on

September 20, 1697, which ended the war between them, And according to which Louis XIV recognized William III as king of England, and thus his recognition of the Protestant succession, which was sought by England (Youngs Jr. and B. Manning Op.Cit., P.171-172).

***Third, Parliament's Rejection of William III's Attempts to Maintain a Standing Army 1698-1702.***

While William sought to maintain a standing army for England even after the end of the war with France, this was met with Parliamentary rejection, and required Parliament's approval to maintain a standing army in peacetime. About (100,000) soldiers under arms, and as soon as France reduced its armed forces after the treaty, the English Parliament wanted to reduce the English army also to (24,000) fighters, but William looked at the issue from the perspective of what Europe might witness from the events, and wanted to Doubling this number(Mijers and Onnekink, Op.Cit., P.43), as he saw that peace with France is nothing but a temporary truce, and considered renewed fighting with it as inevitable, especially if the death of King Carlos II of Spain (Carlos II), who was suffering from poor health, and raised the issue of The Spanish caliphate, therefore, urged Parliament to continue expanding and strengthening the land forces and not to be satisfied with spending on the naval fleet, and sought to maintain a permanent army of no less than (300,000) fighters to face any emergency, but his policy in this regard was met with parliamentary opposition, and some of them promised that the dark army A pilgrim in his best condition is a necessary evil in wartime, and it cannot be tolerated in peacetime(Innes A. D., 1912, P.524).

The interference of political forces negatively affected William's goals in maintaining a permanent army. The rightists promised that peace with France provided an opportunity to reduce the army to a level much lower than the level he was seeking. The rightist forces put pressure on him and stood against his policy, and these pressures increased because His continued dependence in managing foreign business on the Dutch instead of the English statesmen, especially after publicly recognizing the Earl of Sunderland Charles Spencer as one of his advisors and giving him more confidence than the leaders of the right-wing party themselves (ibid.P525), as the majority of the members of the House of Commons refused Keep spending money on the military. Parliament decided to reduce it to (10,000) soldiers, and William resented this decision as it prevented the realization of his aspirations and endeavors to keep the army and not reduce it even in peacetime (Mijers and Onnekink , Op.Cit., P.50).

William's preoccupation with fighting foreign wars himself and his continuous absence from the country negatively affected his policy at home, and the results of the parliamentary elections left his government ministers in direct confrontation with the conservative forces hostile to his policy after achieving a majority in the House of Commons and after the parliamentary elections of 1698 he sought to reach again There was consensus in the elected parliament regarding the retention of (300,000) armed soldiers, and he criticized, in a speech before Parliament in December of the same year, the policy of the previous parliament because of what it had caused a significant

reduction in the number of the army, and expressed his disappointment with the demands aimed at abandoning Foreign forces, especially Dutch ones, saying, It is difficult to abandon “those guards who came with us to save England.” (Heimans, Op.Cit., P.79 )

Despite his efforts to maintain a permanent army, he did not succeed in this, and on March 5, 1699, Parliament decided to reduce the number of the English army to (7,000) soldiers, and to limit the formation of its regiments to the English only, which means that it was unable to keep Dutch forces and officers It was also decided to reduce the Scottish army to (4,700), and the Irish to (12,000) fighters (Innes A. D., Op.Cit., P.525). Perhaps William was right in his insistence on maintaining a standing army, as the decisions taken by Parliament led to the restoration of the English forces to what they were before the war, and left England without sufficient strength to confront any aggression that might be exposed to it, and for that any rebellion would occur at that time. In Ireland he needed (12,000) soldiers to regain control of it. Also, England was in need to such a number to be ready for any attack (The English army , on The Website [http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/english\\_army.html](http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/english_army.html)).

Like the decision of Parliament shocked him to William and waded to abdicate the throne of England, and left the government in the hands of commissioners appointed by the two houses of Parliament, and on December 20 of the same year he wrote to his former advisor in the Netherlands, Anthonie Heinsius (de Jongste and Veenendaal, 2002), saying, "I can scarcely Turning my thoughts to any other matter, I anticipate that I will have to come to extreme decisions and see myself in Holland sooner than I thought."( Mijers and Onnekink, Op.Cit., P.50) Perhaps William was not, in fact, serious about leaving the throne and relinquishing power, despite his hint of that, but rather wanted to pressure Parliament to change its decisions in line with his aspirations to maintain a permanent army despite the difficulty of achieving this (Innes A. D., Op.Cit., P.525).

In view of Parliament’s insistence on reducing the army, William realized that his abdication of the throne would lead to the severing of relations between England and Holland, and that the beneficiary of this was France, so he decided to accept the fait accompli and worked to avoid some of the effects of this decision, especially since the only amendment he obtained From Parliament it was only the survival of naturalized English subjects in the army who were born in England, so he endeavored to redeploy his forces and transfer the veterans of them from Flanders to Ireland, and reduce the number of soldiers in the companies and keep most of the officers and non-commissioned officers in them, and despite this, However the number of units of the English army has decreased significantly([http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/english\\_army.html](http://www.spanishsuccession.nl/english_army.html) )

It appears from the above that William’s efforts to maintain a standing army were met with parliamentary opposition, which led to their failure. Despite that, his reforms to the English army, and his leadership in the Nine Years’ War had an impact on removing the danger of France to Europe in general, and England in particular.

Perhaps he was right in his belief that peace in Europe was only a temporary armistice, unlike the English Parliament, which believed in its permanence, and insisted on reducing the army, without paying much attention to following up on continental developments and their repercussions on England, especially with regard to the issue of Spanish inheritance (Young, 2005, P.253), which became clear through which France's expansionist intentions, parliamentary forces revealed, but belatedly, the importance of maintaining a permanent army to fight France. At a time when England was on the verge of a new war on the Spanish possessions, William did not live to see the declaration of this war, as he died on March 8, 1702 at a time when the War of the Spanish Succession was imminent. (Bijster, 2019, P.43-44)

### CONCLUSIONS

It was found through the research that England did not have a regular and permanent army before William took its throne, but the situation changed after his accession to the throne, as he worked on organizing and preparing the English army, and strengthening it with foreign forces, especially the Dutch, to enable it to fight the war against France. His direct command of the federal army against France in Flanders led to an escalation of his political and military role in Europe, but at the same time his preoccupation with fighting foreign wars and his continued absence from the country negatively affected his policy at home, and the results of the parliamentary elections left his government ministers in direct confrontation with conservative forces. Thus, his efforts to maintain a permanent and regular army for England after the end of the war with France were confronted with a parliamentary rejection, and he did not succeed in achieving this, but his reforms to the English army, and his leadership in the Nine Years' War had an effect in removing France's danger to Europe in general and England in particular.

The study revealed that the parliamentary forces exerted great pressure against the authority of the Crown to reduce the number of the army after the end of the war with France in 1697, until these pressures prompted him to threaten to leave the throne. But the parliamentary forces eased their pressures with the clarification of French intentions to wage war against England against the background of the issue of Spanish inheritance. Therefore, Parliament and the English people showed their standing with the King and supporting him with full force to confront the French threat. Therefore, it can be said that the conflict in Europe was clearly reflected in determining the course of domestic policy in England.

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