

Investigation
and conditions
attack

Basque Roads

(2)

and furnish
their crews.

- 155 French fleet anchored in 2 lines in this Roads.
aiming to anchorage 2 miles wide. lots of mud flats.
Shore batteries on Ile d'Aix - but delayed attack
- 156 Mulgrave failed to send the fire-ships
Gambier agree to prepare fire ships. Cochrane the
explosion vessels. ^{>100}
1500 barrels of gunpowder tied together to form
"a gigantic mortar" on ^{top of the} ~~the~~ east side of 10 inch shells &
3000 hand grenades around it all and a fuse
leading to the stern.
- 157 fuse would burn 12 to fifteen minutes giving
the crew a chance to get into a boat and so to safety
Three explosion vessels and 13 fire ships prepared
On April 10 ~~five~~ 8 fire ships arrived from Mulgrave.
Cochrane to lead attack in person. all crews to
be volunteers. French viewed practice as punishable
with death by firing squad. Hit by a battery gun would be
catastrophic.
- 158 when all was ready Gambier refused to authorize
an attack by fire ships due to danger to crews.
French frigates behind a massive boom across
the entrance to the anchorage ^{2 mile long (p 159)}
April 11 high winds. Flood tide would help
attackers restrain French guard boats
Gambier went 9 miles out to sea as ~~the~~ (be hindered)
Cochrane's vessels went in but their escape boats would
- 159 "Explosion vessels" to go first - fire-ships to follow.
Cochrane accompanied by his Brother Basil
- 160 Two ^{ships} ~~ships~~ ^{each} ~~each~~ marked the channel with a light
Approach after 8 pm in intense darkness, visibility
less than a mile, could not see the French ships.
Cochrane's crew left but he stayed on board and lit the
fuse and then joined them. Cochrane went back to pick
up a mascot dog. 8:30 first explosion tremendous
Boat torn apart. Second explosion 10 minutes
later right against the remains of the boom
Boom shattered ^{the 3rd} ~~the~~ explosion vessels could reach
the fleet but failed to detonate. The fire-ships
passed the boom and hit the guard boat.
some got through to the fleet only four of the 20

600 yards
from the
guns of the
fleet
162