

The Battle of Edgehill (1642)

The numbers:

- The Battle of Edgehill was fought on October 23rd 1642.
- The Roundhead army had around 12,000 infantry men (musketeers and pikemen), 2,000 men on horses (cavalry) and about 30 cannons (artillery).
- The Cavalier army had around 10,000 men in total (infantry and cavalry) and 20 cannons.

The main players:

King Charles,
Prince Rupert,
Lord Essex,
Sir Faithful Fortesque,
Sir James Ramsey,

The story:

The Battle of Edgehill was the first main battle of the English Civil War. **It took place at the bottom of a steep hill.** King Charles gathered his army towards the top of the hill and by doing this he had a very good view of the battlefield. The commander of the Roundheads, Lord Essex, refused to attack the King uphill, so Charles decided to march down the hill to attack.

The first actual fighting involved the cavalry, when **Prince Rupert led a charge against the Roundhead soldiers** commanded by Sir Faithful Fortesque – who was so scared of the cavalry charge, he changed sides and started attacking his own men. A lot of the Roundhead soldiers panicked and ran away. But, instead of just attacking the Roundheads, Prince Rupert decided to keep riding, and he rode past the actual battlefield to the nearby village of Kineton.

In the centre of the battlefield the **Roundhead infantry (the Pikemen and the musketeers) fought very hard** and it was there that they began to win. Because of this, the Cavalier infantry fell into confusion as there was no obvious commander.

The battle ended with no obvious winner or loser – but both sides said they had won! As it was October, it got dark and cold very quickly. Both sides lost about 1,500 men – mostly infantrymen.

The Battle of Marston Moor (1644)

The numbers:

- The Battle of Marston Moor - July 2nd 1644,
 - 28,000 Roundhead men,
 - 18,000 Cavalier men,

The main players:

Prince Rupert,
Lord John Byron,
Oliver Cromwell,
Duke of Newcastle,

The story:

On 1st July, 1644, Prince Rupert, King Charles I's nephew, rode into the city of York. This had been a Roundhead stronghold, but the Roundheads were chased out and the two armies met at Marston Moor.

The King's soldiers had a better position on the moor, but **the Cavalier commanders of the army were impatient and wanted to fight** – even though the whole army wasn't ready at the moor. One Cavalier commander, Lord John Byron, ordered an attack on the Roundheads, who were commanded by Oliver Cromwell. The attack was a failure and this meant that **Cromwell could attack the Cavalier infantry on the left side because they weren't defended**. Cromwell's counter-attack only failed because Prince Rupert rushed his men over to this side of the army to force back Cromwell's attack.

When **both sides of the Cavalier's army were under attack**, the infantry in the centre were in a panic and weren't being defended. Prince Rupert was not helped by the late arrival of the Duke of Newcastle – they were no help at all, Newcastle's men lasted for no more than one hour before they were also defeated.

The Roundheads had won the battle, which meant that the King and the Cavaliers lost a lot of their power in the North of England.

The Battle of Naseby (1645)

The numbers:

- The battle was fought on June 14th, 1645.
- Cavalier army of between 8,000 and 9,000 men.
- Roundhead army, commanded by Fairfax, of 13,000 men.
 - The battle started at 10.00am.

The main players:

King Charles,
Sir Thomas Fairfax,
Oliver Cromwell,
Marmaduke Langdale,
Henry Ireton
Prince Rupert,
Prince Maurice,

The story:

The battle started at 10.00am when **Prince Rupert attacked the Roundhead cavalry** commanded by Henry Ireton. The Prince was winning at first but rather than turning and attacking the Roundhead infantry, he decided to keep riding forward and attacked the Roundhead supply wagons.

On the right side of the battle, Sir Langdale attacked Cromwell at the same time as Rupert attacked Ireton – but **Cromwell defeated him, which left the Cavalier cavalry open to attack**. Cromwell attacked the Cavalier infantry, but he kept some of his men in reserve as insurance. The Cavalier infantry panicked and, because they didn't have good commanders, **they got trapped in a Roundhead 'pincer movement'** – being trapped on both sides by the Roundhead cavalry, surrender was the only real option.

The Roundheads won the battle, it was one of the most important victories in the Civil war.

The Battle of Newbury (1643)

The numbers:

- The first battle of Newbury took place September 20th 1643.
 - Approximately 10,000 Roundhead soldiers
 - Fighting went on possibly until 10.00 at night

The main players:

King Charles,
Prince Rupert,
Lord Essex,

The story:

The Roundhead army were trying to make their way back to London, after defeating the Cavaliers in Gloucester. The Cavalier army blocked their way and King Charles spread his army out across Newbury, which barred the way back to London.

The two sides met in Newbury and the battle started very badly for King Charles because **the Roundheads took the best position on the battlefield.**

Prince Rupert, the King's nephew, was a very good commander and cavalry soldier, but he was very impatient and didn't wait for Lord Essex and the Roundhead army to come to attack him – instead **the Prince broke cover and tried to charge at the Roundhead army.** He and his men were **defeated easily** and lost a lot of horses and soldiers.

Fighting went on possibly until 10.00 at night, which was very unusual – even daytime fighting could be quite confusing as neither side wore a uniform.

Early in the morning of September 21st, Lord Essex found that the King and his Cavalier army had retreated to Oxford. The Roundheads had won the battle.