

# The New Model Army

The New Model Army was created in February 1645 by Parliament as it felt that a professional army would be more successful against the king's army. It was a military unit that was to transform the English Civil War. The Battle of Marston Moor, had been a major victory for Parliament but not totally decisive in the sense that Charles could recover from it. The New Model Army was to change all this. Its commander-in-chief was General Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell was put in charge of the cavalry. Cromwell had already made his mark at the Battle of Marston Moor where his cavalry had done a lot of damage to the king's army.

The New Model Army was a military force based on a person's ability rather than on your position within society. If you were good enough, you could be an officer in it. One of the leading officers in the New Model Army had been a butcher. This removal of this social obstacle meant that the New Model Army was open to new ideas and social class meant nothing. Cromwell preferred that the men in the new force were strong believers like himself and many men in the New Model Army did become Puritans who knew that God was on their side. It was not unusual for the men in the New Model Army to sing hymns just before going into battle.

The New Model Army would usually attack at the flanks where the enemy was at its weakest. The Royalists artillery and muskets were always pointing to the front towards the military side of the Parliamentarians – if you attacked from the sides, this artillery and muskets (which were difficult to handle) didn't work. One thing that the New Model Army did not do was to chase after the Royalists when they started to run away. Cromwell had noticed that at Marston Moor, the Royalists cavalry left the battlefield for an hour because they were chasing after Parliamentarian soldiers. When they returned the battle had finished – and Charles had suffered a major defeat.

Discipline was strict and the training was thorough. The first proper use of the New Model Army was at the Battle of Naseby (June 1645) where the Royalist army was severely beaten. Nearly 1,000 Royalist soldiers were killed at Naseby and 4,500 were taken prisoner. At the end of the battle, the Parliamentarians had captured

most of the king's guns and ammunition. The Royalists never recovered from this defeat and after Naseby, Charles was always on the retreat.