

First civil war by 1646



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When a country is plunged into Civil War the effects are cataclysmic, brother fighting brother. This intensifies when religion is involved, Because it takes men's beliefs and puts drive and anguish behind them, claiming the other side is something, based on acts that the enemy has already committed, which is a powerful tool, this form of propaganda can inflict a damaging blow to the war efforts of both sides.

A war of words is one thing, but truly to win or lose a war it is based on many things, but the key is leadership, or lack of it, and could this sway an entire battle? And is it Possible that each battle was just a piece in the puzzle of Charles grand plan to win the war, but inevitably lost it. Rally the troops! Leadership lost the civil war! Throughout the entirety of the war many battles, were fought , Edge Hill (first in 1642) for example, was a strategic challenge.

Each of these battles would decide , who had the upper hand, logistic wise and ideologically, Moral blows would shape the battlefield. Parliaments victory wasn't full proof, it wasn't one sided, yes parliaments leadership did triumph but was it won by this? Or was it Charles generals poor capability to organise , their logistic failure, lack of food and fuel, or was it the lack of men? Or the way they moved them , lack of obedience. The war was lost, Leadership utter failure and Parliaments reform of genius which was the new model army.

The King hath the better cause, but parliament hath the better men"(Richard Baxter, autobiography 1696) Charles I believed in divine right of kings, the King placed by god, religiously this gives the Royalists a propaganda

advantage, Parliaments propaganda in my opinion had little effect, because yes it could sway the views of a few of the ramble, but the trust twisted couldn't (in my opinion) out sell loyalties and sway entire towns of men, and make flanks of men rout, Propaganda only had true effect once the king had lost the battle of

Naseby, when the kings carriage and his documents showing dealings he had done with The Pope, Parliament took this advantage and printed the documents, unedited , trying to prove Charles I was A Catholic, discrediting him, showing the lies and deals he had done with The Pope and Scotland and Ireland, This was a terrible failure on Charles part, for this would have and did damage his support and Charles ability to command troops on the field.

Charles was a strength on the battlefield overall he was a good soldier, he slept and stayed with his men, he remained on the field , he showed certain ability for tactics in the heat of battle, he risked his life leading a Second charge(after a successful first) only to be pulled back by one of his generals , not risking making a martyr of Charles I.

But what made parliament stronger was his weaknesses, he showed some eye for tactics yes, but that was only in the heat of battle, he didn't think one step a head unlike Cromwell, Charles I would show good tactics when forced to save his life, and at the key moment in time, but he had no strategic battle plan, just line up and engage the enemy,

In doing this he showed passion for his cause, he may be a fool but a courageous fool at that, a fool to risk his life, but his ideals clouded his judgement giving him courage, he did believe he was placed by god, as king,

and that parliament was just an rebellion in his eyes, this could be argued that his passion supremely clouded his judgement as a leader And to command, risking his life for a pitiful tactical move. Though the royalists did believe god was on their sides, this fake hope had some success thought-out the war when they had outnumbered the enemy.

But this would be tested when Oliver Cromwell's Revolutionary New Model Army, Comes to the battle field, these newly trained soldiers, 'godly men' men ordered not to drink, swear, men who would be punished severely if they were involved with vices, These 'Army of Saints' with his force of elite soldiers, the royalist hope crumbles, Charles' Kingship and his 'divine' rabble wasn't as well trained as the New Model Army's Crack troops. In the closing stages of 1644, Oliver Cromwell realised that the existing parliamentary armies were less than ideal.

Using his influence in parliament, he proposed the Self-Denying Ordinance. This stated that any member of the House of Commons or the House of Lords holding a military commission should resign it. This was intended to remove the aristocratic leaders, such as the Earl of Essex , and the Earl of Manchester, from the armies, allowing true military leaders to take their place. In addition to this, the armies were to be combined and reorganised into the " New Model". The personal regiments would be split up and pay standardised.

Food and provisions of clothing would be guaranteed to all in order to encourage soldiers to agree to the changes. The " Soldier's Catechism" was drawn up, which laid down rules and regulations, as well as correct drill

procedures, in order that the soldiers would know what was expected of them. This army was proposed in February 1645, and began to come into being in April 1645. Conscription was necessary to make up the numbers envisaged, although this was for a small percentage of the army.

Cromwell's iron grip couldn't be awe inspiring enough to turn a mob of 22,000 troops into an elite fighting force, surely this has to be a propaganda ploy, yes Cromwell did retrain the cavalry and his influence spreads across the rest of the army, But this reform and Cromwell's tight grip on his troops had a good effect, strict leadership though pain of death and punishment of ungodly acts(though heavy handed)went to a good effect.

Cromwell was an MP even though they didn't want MPS in command of the Army, they wanted commanders with actual talent instead of aristocrats, with no talent at all, Cromwell even though he was part of government, he did show tactical awareness Cromwell was promoted to Colonel in February 1643. This gave him the authority to recruit and train his own regiment. He insisted on strict discipline, which then allowed his troops to reform after a charge on the battlefield.

In 1644, Cromwell was promoted to Lieutenant-General, second-in-command in Manchester's northern army. In this role he fought at Marston Moor and the 2nd battle of Newbury. After these battles, he criticised Manchester for his lethargy and lack of action at crucial moments. When the New Model Army formed in 1645, Cromwell was unable to serve on it due to the self-denying ordinance, which prevented MP's from holding military posts.

However, he continued to fight, and eventually was endorsed as General of Horse.

Cromwell fought with the New Model Army at Naseby and at Langport, both victories for parliament. He was a war Hardened battle Hero, Outstanding in Command, Ruthless, and tolerant, he knew his men, he rose through the ranks to a captain within just twenty four months, his insight gave him the tactics to know how a soldier would fight, move, march, act in times of hostility, his crack decisions merged with his ruthlessness, made him brutal on the battlefield.

Off the field a godly man, he was modest, Cromwell He was exceptionally courteous to women and included them in his friendships. this shows he had a caring side, so on the battlefield he would not risk strategy that would waste his soldiers lives, using them to the best of his ability, his godly ideals would be put in practice and enforced on the field so he would have mutual respect from his men A truly outstanding leader of men respected by his enemy,

Charles was arrogant, reckless, he cared more for his views, and place as King, even though he had passion for it, he couldn't fight a war, like Cromwell, or Fairfax, he didn't have the logistical skills, though as I said he did have some tactical skills in battle, but he wasn't a soldier he was a King, born into the position, Cromwell had experience, Charles knew how to squander money in extravagant clothes and other antiquities, which is important to take note when you look at his war effort, instead of the

extravagance he could have invested it into the war effort which could have given him an upper hand.

So logistically this would effect his command on the field, and the grand plan of his, would he worry about supplies of his men or just himself and his commanders? Proof by his personality he wouldn't have cared, only for himself, being placed by god as the King, and that was the only thing that mattered.

A Tyrant on the battlefield is a very bad thing, though he may have been a good commander when it mattered, overall he was a bad leader he only had the respect from his men because he was the king but his personality that represents a tyrant would mean he didn't care for his men, and the amount of demoralising casualties that could be inflicted, Charles's personality is a terrible weakness for the Royalists. Having fought an inconclusive battle at Edgehill, the Earl of Essex moved back to Warwick. This left Charles I with a clear route to London.

Charles marched for London, first capturing Banbury and then entering Oxford, where he was greeted by cheering crowds From Oxford, Charles moved East to Colnbrook, which he reached on the 11th November. Charles had advanced cautiously, not knowing where Essex was, but this had allowed Essex to pass his army on the way, and reach London before him. Essex was able to muster a large defensive force at Turnham Green. Essex also left two regiments at Brentford, not far to the West, which Charles took on the 12th November. This action, and the sacking that followed it, roused the people of London.

By the time that Charles was ready to march on, a force of 24, 000 men awaited him at Turnham Green. Charles had no chance against a force twice his size, Unable to rest his army, Charles withdrew to Reading. Finally, realising that his chance to take the capital had passed, Charles returned to Oxford, where he established his headquarters for the rest of the war.

Charles wasted that time taking Colnbrook, he should have stayed in Oxford and recruited more men and rested his army, in theory Charles I could have won, but he would have had to flanked the parliament force at Turnham green and engaged Sir James Ramsey and forced his way to London.

In Conclusion Charles's leadership and his generals were the main failure of the First Civil War, Charles chose commanders that could benefit him, or where already part of his court, he didn't actually think for once, to win a war you had to be tactically sound, Cromwell and Fairfax based on there command traits could wipe the floor with Charles I, at least they were professional soldiers, Charles's Divine right was his failure, it clouded his judgement making him arrogant, making him king, by birth not, war.

Cromwell and Fairfax could lead, they were soldiers, Charles I was just a King with only experience in spending money for himself. Charles arrogant ideas were his downfall, his passion for his divine right to rule the country, was just an ego out of control, even though he showed little skill in tactics, he was no match for the reformed Parliamentarian force of Fairfax and Cromwell, Professional soldiers Charles was fighting for power, the Parliamentarians were fighting for what they stood for, the people. Both sides claimed they were fighting for god, but the more godly cause won, The Parliamentarians.