

**THE PARLIAMENTARY  
GENERALS OF THE  
GREAT CIVIL WAR**

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The Parliamentary Generals of the Great Civil War by N. L. Walford

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**N. L. WALFORD**

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BY  
N. L. WALFORD,  
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INTRODUCTION.

FOR the purpose of enabling the reader to more fully realise the character of the contests of the Civil War, it is proposed to give a brief description of the arms and tactics of the period, while on a later page will be related the early life of the principal generals of the army of the Parliamentary party.

Two great schools for the art of war existed in Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century—the camp of Gustavus Adolphus, and the Netherlands. The former appears to have principally attracted the Scottish adventurers, while the latter was visited by almost every young nobleman or gentleman in England, as a part of his education.

It would be beyond the scope of this work to enter at any length into the differences and similarities which existed between the systems of war used by the Swedes and the Dutch; but we may say that, while the former studied chiefly the offensive, the others, favoured by the character

of their country, were renowned throughout Europe for their skill in defence.

In comparing the art of war as it was in the seventeenth century with the same art in its latest developments, we are at first naturally more struck by the differences which meet the eye than by the points of similarity which may be found. But, in truth, many of these differences, great as they are, are of quite modern growth ; for it is scarcely too much to say, that there was less dissimilarity between the tactics of Naseby and Waterloo than there was between those of the latter battle and Gravelotte.

If we look into the history of war, we shall find that strategy and the general principles of tactics have but little changed during the lapse of many years, while the details of the latter have not only constantly varied, but are in fact now undergoing a daily process of change. If we further inquire as to the reason for this fact, we shall discover that the stability of the first is caused by the practically unaltered relations of men and horses to each other, while the last derives its variability from the continual improvement which takes place in the manufacture of arms.

The men of the present day can march no farther than the men of old, they are as liable to hunger and thirst, they are as delicate in organisation, are as easily wounded or killed ; and the same may be said of the horses of this era. But if we turn to the arms, how great is the change. The old musket carried about 200 yards, but was not to be trusted above 100 ; the new rifle will throw with ease a distance of 2,000 yards, and is trustworthy up to 1,000. This last was about the range of field artillery in the old days ; the present possible range may almost be described as infinite as far as the gun is concerned, being in practice bounded only by the limits of man's vision.