

What immediate problems did Henry VII after he had defeated Richard III (at Bosworth) and how did he solve them?

- His claim to the throne was weak; in fact it was the **weakest claim** since William the Conqueror. His claim was through an illegitimate line (somewhere in his family history two of his ancestors had not been married) and he was technically barred from the throne.
- Other claimants (people who thought they had a right to be King) included:
 1. **Edward, Earl of Warwick** - Nephew of Richard III and Edward IV.
 2. **John de la Pole**, Earl of Lincoln - Nephew of Richard III and Edward IV. He had been nominated by Richard III as his heir.
 3. **Edmund de la Pole** - Nephew of Edward IV and Richard III.
 4. **The Princes in the Tower** - Edward V and his brother Richard. Sons of Edward IV.
- **The Yorkists still had support in the north** of England and in Ireland and had a powerful ally in Richard III's sister Margaret, dowager duchess of Burgundy. This made it inevitable that other claimants would crop up and challenge Henry for the throne.
- Many of the **barons/nobles** still possessed armies (retainers) that were a constant threat to Henry and peace in the country. (Overmighty subjects)
- The crown's **treasury was nearly empty** after the 100 Years War and the subsequent War of the Roses.
- England **did not enjoy good relations with** many countries of **Europe**. There was a constant threat of invasion from Europe on behalf of the Yorkists. All the powers of Europe doubted Henry's ability to survive, and most were willing to help Henry's opponents .

- English trade had suffered during the War of the Roses (WotR) and badly needed help.
- Spain was becoming a major power in Europe as she began to create an Empire in the New World (Central America, South America and the Caribbean).
- Henry was determined to **restore order to the nation**. England needed **stability and peace**.
- He wanted to be wise and firm. In Henry's mind there was no doubt that his major problem were his rivals to the throne and the nobles who might support them.
- Many of the nobles with whom he was going to have to deal with were greedy, selfish power seeking men who changed sides at the drop of a hat.
- They were untrustworthy and had little moral conscience.
- This was a '**New Monarchy**' and Henry would have to fight fire with fire and would often have to employ **bullyboy tactics** against them in order to achieve his aims.
- Henry was only too aware that he had won his crown in battle. If he wasn't extremely careful the same could happen to him!

HENRY VII - HOW HE DEALT WITH RIVALS TO THE THRONE.

Rivals and Rebellions

- In 1486, he married **Elizabeth of York** (daughter of Edward IV) and in doing so he united the houses of Lancaster and York. Some Yorkist supporters were now on his side.
- Edward, **Earl of Warwick** (a rival to the throne) was placed in the Tower. John de la Pole, the **Earl of Lincoln** was made to submit to Henry, recognise him as King and give up his claim to the throne.

- The fate of the **Princes in the Tower** was uncertain. However, there are an increasing number of historians who believe that Henry arranged for them to be killed.
- The first rebellion, against Henry that, led by **Lord Lovell**, in 1486 was ill prepared and unimportant.
- In 1487, a **Yorkist plot** put forward **Lambert Simnel** pretending he was the Earl of Warwick. John de la Pole, earl of Lincoln, was behind the plot with additional help from many Irish chieftains, and of 2,000 German mercenaries paid for Yorkist supporters abroad.
- Henry immediately took the real Earl of Warwick out of the Tower and paraded him around the streets of London.
- There was little support for Simnel's army and it was crushed at the **Battle of Stoke** on 16th June 1487.
- All the Yorkist leaders, including the Earl of Lincoln, were killed except Simnel who was captured.
- Henry realised that Simnel was just a pawn and he was made to work in the royal kitchen for the rest of his life.
- In 1491, The Yorkists again put forward another imposter. This time it was **Perkin Warbeck** claiming to be Richard, Duke of York, the younger of the two princes, kept/murdered in the tower.
- An invasion in 1495, failed and Warbeck was captured and held custody in the Royal household.
- Henry discovered that a number of his so called supporters had been involved in the plot, including Sir William Stanley. They were all executed.
- Warbeck remained in custody until he escaped in 1498.
- He invaded again in 1499, when Henry who decided enough was enough, had Warbeck executed.
- Warbeck had received help at some time or other from France, James IV of Scotland, Maximilian I of Austria as well as powerful figures in England and Ireland.
- In 1499, Henry negotiated the marriage of his son Arthur to a Spanish princess, Catherine of Aragon.

- Ferdinand, the Spanish King, fearing for his daughter's safety, would not agree to the marriage until all rivals to Henry's throne had been eliminated.
- The Earl of **Warwick** suddenly found himself facing a charge of treason and subsequent **execution**. In 1506 he imprisoned the Yorkist Edmund de La Pole in the Tower of London, that Henry could at last feel safe. **The last of Henry's possible rivals for the throne had been eliminated.**
- Henry had now effectively and successfully achieved one of his objectives. HE had dealt with his rivals and made sure that there would be no more attempts to dethrone him.

HENRY VII AND HIS FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

Restoring the Wealth of the Crown

- Henry wanted to make the crown financially independent of Parliament, in other words he didn't always want to have to rely on Parliament granting him sums of money.
- He received an annual sum from Parliament (Tunnage and Poundage). Therefore, it was Henry's policy to gather up as much money as humanly possible. **How did he go about this?**
- Henry confiscated the land of Yorkist rebels. Henry made money from these lands.
- The collection of **forced loans**.
- Henry had his own retainers dressed in their green and white livery that 'visited' selected persons and put the pressure on them to make "gifts" to His Majesty. In reality, Henry was running a protection racket.
- He accepted 'free' gifts from rich subjects, seen as a sign of goodwill and respect for Henry.
- He **encouraged efficiency in administration**. Most of the money collected from taxes went into the Royal Treasury that was now run by able and energetic servants and

supervised by the king himself. He signed the accounts books!

- He used the Court of **Star Chamber** to impose fines on nobles that committed crimes.
- He owned the **custom duties** on **wool exports** so did much to make sure that the wool trade was helped when he made treaties with foreign countries.
- Nobles that inherited land on the deaths of their fathers had to pay a fee to the Henry before they were able to take over the land. This was called "**relief**".
- Nobles had to pay fees when their daughters married. Known as "**aid**".
- Henry **sold offices** and positions to suitable buyers.
- In 1491, Henry invaded France. The French quickly agreed a **Treaty at Etaples** that gave Henry an instant £149,000.
- When Arthur married Catherine of Aragon, Henry received a **huge dowry** from Ferdinand of Spain.
- Henry checked all the accounts himself and signed to that effect.
- He even changed his signature from time to time to avoid any fraud.
- Once again Henry was successful in achieving his financial aims. He is often portrayed as a miser. He was cunning and secretive and kept lists of those people who he thought were trustworthy or not.
- He avoided expensive wars that would have drained his treasury.
- During his reign **he increased his annual income** from £50,000 to £140,000. He also **accumulated a treasury** worth about £1½ million - £2 million.

He was the last King to die **leaving a surplus** in the treasury.

HENRY VII - CONTROLLING THE POWER OF THE NOBILITY... THE 'OVERMIGHTY SUBJECTS'

- Fortunately for Henry many of the nobles had been killed during the War of the Roses.
- However, the few who remained were extremely rich and powerful. The Earls of Warwick had held double the land of any previous man and had a personal armies of over 30,000 soldiers
- If Henry and the Tudor dynasty were going to survive he had to do it on his own two feet and needed to destroy such men and the threat that they posed.

WHAT ACTIONS DID HENRY TAKE AGAINST THESE POWERFUL NOBLES?

- **The Act of Livery** was passed in 1503: This banned the keeping private armies. This removed the threat of rebellion.
- **The Statute of Maintenance** was passed:

This prevented nobles from

1. Bribing judges and juries
 2. Frightening judges and juries into giving false decision by crowding court rooms with retainers.
 3. Causing riots.
 4. Holding unlawful meetings.
- Henry gave himself the sole monopoly of **gunpowder**. Without it the nobles would not be able to defy the King in long sieges. Henry had the ability to destroy their castles.
 - **No castle building** was allowed without Henry's permission.
 - Henry employed **middle-class men** and respected **churchmen** as his advisers and appointed them to the important offices in the land.
 - **The Court of Star Chamber** brought to trial any nobles who had broken the Acts of Livery and Maintenance.

- Juries were not used but instead a panel of judges consisting of the Lord Chancellor, Treasurer, Keeper of the Privy Seal, a bishop, two chief justices and a lord of council.
- Offenders were fined heavily and often had their lands confiscated.
- Henry **refused to show favouritism**. Even his friend the Earl of Oxford was fined £15,000 for breaking the Statute of Livery and Maintenance.
- Gradually, Henry struck at the wealth of the nobles.
- He took back all the land that had been given away by kings in the past.
- With their power broken, Henry appointed nobles who he felt he could trust to important positions.
- However, there was now an important difference. Henry was running the show not the nobles.
- **Henry had once again achieved all he had set out to do.**
- The nobles were now under control, less threatening and considerably less wealthy.
- Henry was richer and safer.

Henry's Foreign Policy (dealing with other countries).

- The Hundred Years War and The War of the Roses had resulted in a breakdown of relationships and trade with Europe.
- Henry realised the importance of good foreign relations and healthy trade.
- Henry was poor and his position insecure.
- **Peace** reduced the threat of imposters and rivals finding support abroad and it **was cheaper than war**.
- Spain and France were the two powers in Europe and Henry was to play one off against the other.
- Support abroad would also ensure the continuance of the Tudor Dynasty.

- In 1501, he married his eldest son Arthur to **Catherine of Aragon**, thus establishing peace with Spain.
- The fact that Ferdinand of Spain allowed his daughter to marry a Tudor, clearly shows the growing respect that Spain had for Henry and England.
- After the death of Arthur in 1502, Henry arranged for his second son, Henry, to marry Catherine of Aragon, thereby **maintaining the peace with Spain**.
- With Scotland the long tradition of war and hostility was harder to overcome; but Henry eventually succeeded in concluding in 1499 a treaty of peace, and in 1503, he **married one of his daughters, Margaret, to James IV of Scotland**.
- This reduced the French influence in Scotland and therefore also made sure there was no rebellion from over the border.
- He agreed the Treaty of Etaples, in 1492 with Charles VIII of France and he made arrangements for his daughter **Mary to marry Louis the Dauphin (heir to the throne of France)**.

Trade

- In 1485, he passed the **Navigation Act** in order to build up the **Merchant Navy**.
- Wines from France were only to be carried aboard ships manned by English, Welsh or Irish sailors.
- He made **treaties** with Italian States and **encouraged English** ships to trade in the Mediterranean.
- He made treaties with Denmark and the Port of Riga. This gave English ships valuable access to the Baltic Sea area and allowed them to compete for trade in northern Germany.
- In 1496, Henry agreed a treaty with Flanders (modern Holland and Belgium). This allowed the trade of English cloth and wool without a hindrance.

- In 1497, Henry paid for **John and Sebastian Cabot's** voyages of exploration. Newfoundland (part of modern Canada) was claimed for England. If these had paid off, Henry would have been considerably wealthier.

In conclusion

- Henry was unattractive, hard-hearted, mean, crafty and often cruel yet he could be courteous.
- However, Henry appears to have achieved all he attempted to do.
- His success can be summed up in the important fact that when he died, his son Henry succeeded to the throne without any dispute or rivals.
- The House of Tudor had been established.
- Henry's methods may have appeared to be those of a gangster or thug. However, he lived in difficult times, surrounded by difficult people who would often not listen to reason and who were more concerned with themselves than the interests of the country.
- His achievements were beneficial to England and led to greater things.
- Many would argue that the **'end justified the means'**.
- The Masked Historian likes Henry VII's story and wishes that more books for school children would pay more attention to what he has described as "The Forgotten Tudor".

Henry VII Problems and Solutions (Summary)

The problems faced by Henry VII during his time as King.

- Became king by killing Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. Possibility that others could do the same to him.
- Nobles had become very powerful during the War of the Roses.
- Henry had no money. Spent on the War of the Roses.
- Nobles had private armies....the king was not in control of these soldiers.
- Needed to make peace between the warring houses of Lancaster and York.
- France, Scotland and Spain were potential enemies and threats.
- After thirty years of war there had been a breakdown of law and order. Soldiers were roaming about committing crimes.
- Henry had to face Rebellions in 1486, 1487 and 1497.

How did Henry VII manage to make the monarchy strong, powerful and wealthy.

- **Powerful Nobles:** Henry made the nobles give him "LOANS" of large sums of money. Henry did not repay these loans. This INCREASED Henry's wealth and DECREASED the wealth and power of the Nobility. Henry outlawed private armies. All soldiers were then commanded by the King. The Court of Star Chamber was created specifically for nobles that committed crimes. Henry was the Judge. The punishments were huge fines.
- **France, Scotland and Spain:** He made political marriages for children with each of these countries. This turned enemies into friends (allies). He arranged a marriage between Arthur and Catherine of Aragon (Spain) when he signed the treaty of Medina del Campo in 1489. The treaty of Etaples in 1492 made peace between England and France and eventually led to a marriage between Henry's daughter, Mary, and the heir to the French throne. The Treaty of Perpetual Peace with Scotland made in 1502 arranged for Henry's eldest daughter, Mary to marry the King of Scotland.

- **Making peace**: Married Elizabeth of York to bring York and Lancaster together. Tudor Rose. Gave a pardon to Yorkists in return for their loyalty.
- **Money**: Kept England out of wars. Tax collection-he made the system more organised and efficient. He took a personal interest in tax collection- he signed the accounts!. "Loans" taken from nobles. Huge fines in Star Chamber. Treaties with Spain and France encouraged trade as well as arranging marriages. Taxes were ruthlessly collected ending with Henry getting the reputation as being a King that loved money above all other things.
- **Law and order**: Henry strengthened the Law by creating Justices of the Peace (local judges) who had the power to arrest suspects and put them on trial.
- **Rebellions**: He fought rebellions and executed their leaders. He showed that he was not to be challenged.