

Did henry viii inherit a
secure throne



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On 24th June 1509 Henry VIII inherited the English throne from his father, getting all the power that Henry VII had won at Bosworth and built up throughout his rein.

To say Henry VIII inherited a secure throne he must have been in a situation where; his claim to the throne was certain, there were no threats or fear of loss of the throne and that it was a stable throne. Henry's claim to the throne was a certain one because he had both Yorkist decent through his mother, Elizabeth of York and the Lancastrian decent through Henry VII joining both the houses. Due to his joined lines of decent it would be difficult for people to challenge him and try to take the throne by saying that Henry did not have the right family line to become King. Also Henry did not have to worry about any 'spare' brothers or ambitious sisters with plans to take the throne from him. At the beginning of his rein Henry VIII was very reliant on councillors and advisors because it was planned that Arthur would be king and Henry was not educated in the ways of leading a country. But he did what he thought was best to keep himself safe and reduce the chances of threats to his throne.

He arrested and executed Empson and Dudley, financial enforcers of bonds and recognisance's, who was hated among the people, this increased Henry's popularity. Afterwards he married Catherine of Aragon supposedly that what he father wished him to do but mainly it would have been because marrying her meant being connected with a powerful country. Being allied with Spain meant that he would have protection from attack even though at the time England was not seen as a powerful country, also the large dowry of 200, 000 crowns that came with Catherine along with the wedding present

sent by Isabella and Ferdinand of Spain on 100,000 crowns. This would have been very desirable giving him more money for his ambitious foreign policy plans. The only main threats to his throne were during the English Reformation. Henry tried to remain balanced, he had to try to show devout Catholics that he was defending their faith, whilst subtly trying to show that he was trying to phase in Protestantism so that both Catholics and Protestants thought that he was on their side but each side just thought he was acting against them.

Opposition to Henry's religious policies were quickly suppressed. Foreign threats were still happening at the time of his succession. There were unstable relationships with Burgundy and France. Burgundy because it was a major trading partner but Margaret of Burgundy was Yorkist and supported impostors to the throne such as Perkin Warbeck.

The relationship with France was unstable because even though they supported Henry VII in his fight for the throne but they allied with Scotland and they were still seen as traditional rivals to the English. The Scottish were still troublesome even though there had been a period of peace they allied with France and tried to invade England even after Margaret, Henry's sister, married King James IV of Scotland. Also the Welsh border was still disorderly due to there not being a full justice system in Wales allowing English criminals to just cross over the border escaping justice. Many of the Marcher Lords were Roman Catholic and went against Henry during his annulment from Catherine and the English Reformation.

Although there were still some Yorkist families around no major threats were made or carried through. The threats from Yorkists were minimal compared to those Henry VII faced. The Duke of Buckingham is a good example of how any possible threats were stopped. The Duke of Buckingham was a descendant of Edward III and he was one of the most powerful men in the kingdom. On at least one occasion, under the previous reign of Henry VII, had been considered a possible successor to the crown.

Buckingham was seen as suspicious by Henry VIII and especially by Henry's minister Cardinal Wolsey. At last he was accused, probably falsely, of treasonable practices – of having heeded prophecies of the King's death and his own accession to the throne and having voiced intentions to kill the king. He was taken to the tower and executed soon after. The end of Henry VIII's reign he had dealt with all possible descendants, causing the problem of lack of healthy male heirs to ascend to the throne. For extra security Henry made treaties with European powers because he knew from past events like in his father's case that when a pretender to the throne joins forces with a European power it can be very dangerous and a major threat to whoever is defending their throne.

Henry, oppositely to his father, was generous to nobles perhaps because he thought that what had to be done in a Renaissance court or because nobles were needed to protect the country from any threats, such as pretenders or rebellions, with their private armies. The throne Henry VIII ascended to can be seen as stable because of all the reasons above and also because he had inherited a solvent throne due to his father being an 'accountant king', Henry VII was seen as ruthless and successful in demanding every penny

that was owed him. The throne was solvent because Henry VII retained lands from nobles enabling him to keep the profits for himself, got money from feudal dues paid by those who held land from the king and Legal Dues fines for criminals who appeared before the king's courts e. g.

Sir William Stanley paid an immediate £9000 fine followed by £1000 every year after that. By 1509 annual land revenues had risen to £42, 000 and annual customs receipts rose from more than £20, 000 to an average of £40, 000 by the time Henry died. Also trade was encouraged because this meant lots of money but England could not be too reliable on other countries for valuable resources. Duties were enforced on exports as a way of making money. Navigation Act was set up so that English ships were used before foreign ones so the English got the money from the voyage. The sale of raw wool was made illegal so that it had to be processed in England creating more jobs in England and increasing the price of it.

When Henry ascended to the throne he inherited 1. 5 million pounds! Henry VII spent his rein and especially the last years of his life making sure that the English throne was secure for when his heir ascended the throne and that all future Tudor generations had a secure throne. He left a safe throne, a solvent government and a prosperous and reasonably united country. The throne looked to be very secure at Henry VIII accession in 150 there were still some problems, which did not make it totally secure because he was not completely free from threats and there was always a chance he could have lost the throne.