

Why did the foreign policy of henry viii fail in the years 1514-1525? essay sampl...



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In source 4 we read that “[Henry] finally accepted the fact that royal finances could not support a repetition of the campaign of 1513” so he made peace with France. Here, Henry’s lack of resources seems to be the dominant reason for not pursuing his aim of winning the French crown. However, much must have depended on diplomatic relations with Maximilian and Ferdinand - “[Henry’s] allies proved unscrupulous and unreliable. Maximilian and Ferdinand were bribed by the French to disown their treaty obligations to England”, had Wolsey been more successful and persuasive in dealing with the major powers they would not have abandoned England to fight on its own.

In source 5 the cause of failure was partly luck, within a year after the Treaty of London Emperor Maximilian had died and the election of Charles his brought imbalance of power and thus break of The Treaty of London, and partly lack of resources “ The Treaty was wholly at the mercy of shifts in great power politics”. Again had England been more resourceful it could have aligned the balance of power and hence preserved The Treaty of London.

The letter from Archbishop Warham in source 6 tell us that people didn’t want to pay the Amicable Grant for another expedition into France on various grounds. Some lacked the resources “ Some would give but cannot”. Some say that “ last loan is not repaid and nor will this be” the reason of which is again lack of resources and Henry’s imprudence in spending money. Yet others do not see the point of invading France considering the last invasion which “ have not gained the King a foot more land than his father

had". Here the main reason for failure seems to be disappointment in Henry's war and lack of trust that he will achieve anything with the invasion.

Both sources 4 and 5 were written 400 years after the events they describe and the authors' views must be influenced by current to them political situation. In 400 years the perspective with which we look might change, altering the whole meaning of an event.

Another reason for Henry's failure might be indecisiveness and constant switching of allies. Had England allied itself with Spain from the very beginning eventually it would have benefited greatly. Instead the alliances were constantly changed which encouraged betrayals and plotting.

All in all, Henry's foreign policy failed mainly because of his lack of resources. England could not be involved in the political game at the highest level nor could it make any difference in military because other countries were much more wealthy and powerful. Other factors such as unskilled foreign politics must have played a role yet it was not as significant as the inability to pay for war.