

Kings and Queens

Henry VII

Born in 1457

Ascended in 1485

Died in 1509, aged 52

Reigned for 24 years

Married to Elizabeth of York bearing 2 sons and 2 daughters.

Henry defeated Richard III in battle and became King with only tenuous links to the throne on his mother's side - she was the granddaughter of John of Gaunt and his mistress Katherine Swynford. The House of York ended when Henry was crowned, and the crown was now in the hands of the House of Tudor.

Henry VII's reign was one of the better ones; there was a war with France, but he was paid off (war parties could be used to blackmail others for money) and Henry maintained a rough peace for the rest of his reign.

His eldest daughter married James IV of Scotland, and his son and heir, Henry, married Catherine of Aragon (Spain was also aligned against the French). These moves assured peace for a while. Prosperity was on the increase and forays to the newly discovered America were supported. The poor were at last treated with some compassion.

A minor uprising from Lambert Simnel, posing as a son of Edward IV, landed in Ireland with 2,000 German mercenaries but failed. He was captured, but not executed, and spent the rest of his life serving the king in his kitchens.