

Landmarks of Henry's lifetime

Old enemies

France and England had a long history of conflict before Henry became king, such as the Hundred Years' War of 1337-1453. As Henry was first and foremost interested in securing his throne, he mostly pursued a strategy of peace with France but did launch a small invasion in 1492 which led to the Treaty of Etaples, the terms of which helped to swell Henry's coffers.

Power of the nobles

In England many noble families were very powerful and possessed land and armies that could potentially challenge the king. Henry used two main tools to limit their power: taxation and the Court of the Star Chamber. The court operated unusually quickly for the time and would act against those so powerful that ordinary courts wouldn't convict them. However, as its actions were carried out in secret, it could be used tyrannically by rulers.

The New World

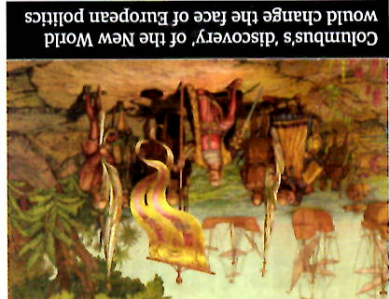
In 1492 Genoan explorer Christopher Columbus (backed by Spanish money) landed in the New World, an action that would change from Europe to this new area would lead to the world forever. The discovery of a path colonise it and saw a raft of gold and exotic goods flood into the continent.

Money, money, money

Years of war with France had led to England being in severe debt and Henry worked hard to build up his own personal finances and in this aspect of government and his trade agreements and policies were designed to boost finances. By the end of his reign, tax revenues were significantly higher and Henry VIII inherited a far richer monarchy than many who had gone before him.

A new world power

The marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile in 1469 began the process of uniting Spain as one country (although Aragon and Castile remained independent from each other in some ways) and increased its power. Spain would emerge as a powerful player on the world and international stage and a country that England had to be increasingly wary of.



Columbus's 'discovery' of the New World would change the face of European politics

Bosworth remains as one of the most well-known battles in English history



By his death he had amassed a fortune that in today's money would be worth approximately £950 million

increased. The spying network was increasingly well funded and Henry's Privy Chamber, his personal space where he worked and slept, became harder to gain admittance to as the number of people whom he trusted decreased. The king became obsessed with two things: money and security. His style of government became increasingly personal, with his signature required for all substantial financial transactions. For Henry, money meant control. When in 1497, Warbeck - who had been a constant thorn in Henry's side - was captured, and executed two years later, it was a vindication of the king's refusal to loosen his grip on government. However, with Warbeck killed and the king having been on the throne for more than a decade, he could begin to focus more attention on matters outside of the island nation and look to further legitimise his dynasty. Marriage alliances were a formidable diplomatic tool and Henry had given customary care and attention to whom Arthur would marry.

and troops, who decimated the rival army in the plan, was pardoned by Henry. the fact that Henry had been forced into keep his crown was a further indication place on the throne was not secure. years later, history repeated Henry had to deal with rebellion; this time a young Perkin Warbeck who be whom it was Richard had killed. serious problem for the new that much had only come disappearance of - while Warbeck's suddenly discredited, it would excuse for people to rise up an on the throne for more than a decade, he could begin to focus more attention on matters outside of the island nation and look to further legitimise his dynasty. Marriage alliances were a formidable diplomatic tool and Henry had given customary care and attention to whom Arthur would marry.