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1 Introducing King Richard I and King John

Richard I and his brother John are two of the most well-known and controversial monarchs in British history. Their reigns saw many dramatic events: family feuds, the Third Crusade, the loss of Normandy, rebellion, the granting of Magna Carta and a bloody civil war. This chapter outlines the key events and introduces you to the controversy that surrounds the reputations of Richard and John.

1.1 Introducing King Richard: The legendary hero

Richard I is famous as a legendary hero. After his death many legends were created about 'Richard the Lionheart'. He was remembered as the great soldier king who fought bravely against the odds on **crusade** to win back the **Holy Land** for the Christian Church. This was the king who was cruelly captured returning from crusade and who, on his release from prison, once again displayed his incredible military skills by winning back the lands that his evil brother, Prince John, and the cunning King of France had stolen from him.

Dramatic stories were produced to explain his nickname – the Lionheart. One told of how, while Richard was in captivity, the King of Germany, angry that his daughter had fallen in love with Richard, planned to murder him by having a hungry lion released into his cell. But Richard was able to kill the lion by thrusting an arm down the beast's throat and pulling out its heart – which he sprinkled with salt and ate in front of the king.

Even Richard's death formed part of the legend. According to one story, after being wounded in battle, Richard continued to fight, leading an assault with a crossbow bolt embedded in his head, and refusing to die until the castle his army was attacking was taken.

The model king

For many years after his death Richard was seen as a model of what a good king should be. In Victorian times, people looked back to the Middle Ages for heroes and inspiration. In 1851 there was a Great Exhibition in London. The Italian artist, Carlo Marochetti, was paid to make a larger-than-life statue of Richard to stand at the western entrance to the exhibition. The statue shows Richard portrayed as a national hero. After the exhibition the statue was moved to the Houses of Parliament, where it still stands today.



Richard is brandishing his sword – showing he is a great warrior.

Richard is wearing close fitting chain mail to show off his muscles. This was not typical of the armour he would usually have worn in battle.

Richard sits proudly on his horse – symbolising he is a powerful ruler.

The base of the statue shows two key events – Richard fighting on crusade and on his death bed, forgiving the crossbowman who shot him.

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1 Introducing King Richard I and King John

1.2 Introducing King John: The legendary villain

After Richard's death in 1199 his brother, John, became king. John's popular reputation is also linked to legend, especially the Robin Hood legend in which John is a cruel, greedy king who plots against his brother, puts innocent people in prison and raises unfair taxes.

In Walt Disney's 1973 cartoon film, John is shown as vain and cowardly; his crown constantly slips from his head because he has stolen it from Richard. In a more recent Hollywood film (2010), John is portrayed as a sly, cowardly, incompetent and completely dislikeable monarch. These films show how, in popular perception, John is 'Bad King John'.

How did people at the time view Richard and John?

Medieval **chroniclers** admired Richard. Roger of Wendover described Richard as 'the most victorious' and 'most wise' monarch. In contrast, chroniclers thought John was a failure. This can be seen in this picture of John, drawn by Matthew Paris, a monk from St Albans Abbey who lived from 1200 to 1259 and wrote a chronicle of English history from the Norman Conquest to the year 1253.

Look at how John has been drawn – in particular his face and his pose. What message do you think Matthew Paris is trying to get across?



John's body blocks out much of the church. This suggests John lacked respect for the Church. John was criticised by chroniclers for ignoring the rights of the Church and treating it badly.

John is sitting on a campaign stool, not a throne. This implies that the country was never at peace and John was constantly fighting to win back land he had lost.

HOW ARE RICHARD AND JOHN PORTRAYED TODAY?

Find out more about Richard's and John's reputations by interviewing parents and relatives.

- 1 Ask the person you are interviewing to use three words to describe Richard and then three words to describe John.
- 2 Ask the person you are interviewing where their views come from:
 - ☐ Their time at school
 - ☐ Films and cartoons
 - ☐ Legends and stories about Robin Hood
 - ☐ History books.
- 3 Extra challenge: find other examples of how Richard and John have been portrayed in films, TV programmes, novels and legends.

Introducing the big question

How have historians interpreted Richard and John? Historical interpretations are not set in stone. Historians' views of Richard and John have changed over the years. The traditional, popular images of both kings have been challenged and debated.

The big question you will explore in this book is:

What reputation does each king deserve?

- Does Richard I deserve to be remembered as a success?
- Does John deserve his reputation as an incompetent failure?

In this book you will look at the evidence carefully and make up your own mind. To judge them properly you need to judge them by the standards of the time – this means developing a good understanding of the world in which they lived ... medieval society and the Angevin Empire.

John's crown looks as if it is about to fall off his head. This gives the impression that John struggled to wear the crown properly and was not fit to be king. It also suggests that John was not in control of his kingdom.

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Henry VIII and his ministers

1.2 A story of glory and success?

The timeline below shows the main events of Henry's reign. It probably includes events that you included in your concept map on page 2, but there is also new information and events.

We need criteria to help us decide whether Henry was a success. Here are four criteria – the things people in the 1500s saw as evidence of a successful monarch.

- a) Did Henry defend his country from foreign threats? (Or did he create those threats?)
- b) Did Henry unite his people over religion? (Or did he create religious divisions?)

- c) Did he help his people live peacefully and prosperously? (Or did his decisions lead to rebellions and greater poverty?)
- d) Did he make sure he had a clear successor? (Or did he increase fears of civil war breaking out over the crown when he died?)

There is also one more criterion to add, the one that was probably most important to Henry himself. He became king aged 17 and, like many young men, he wanted fame and glory. So this fifth criterion is:

- e) Did Henry win fame and glory for himself?

1509–19

1509 Henry married Catherine of Aragon, the widow of his dead brother, Arthur. Such a marriage would normally have been prohibited but was allowed by the Pope on the grounds that Catherine and Arthur had not had sexual intercourse and so had not consummated their marriage.



1510 Thomas Wolsey appointed to the **Privy Council** (Henry's advisers).

1512–14 War with France. Henry had some success but the war was very expensive and he was let down by his allies.



1513 War with Scotland. King James IV of Scotland was killed at the Battle of Flodden. Henry was in France at the time.

1514–18 Henry wanted to renew war with France but could not persuade any other country to join him.

1515 Thomas Wolsey was appointed **Chancellor** of England and became Henry's **Chief Minister**.

1520–29

1520 Henry met King Francis of France near Calais at the Field of Cloth of Gold, a great diplomatic event that seemed to show off Henry's power.

1521 The Pope gave Henry the title 'Defender of the Faith' for writing a book defending the Pope and the Catholic Church against criticisms by Martin Luther, a German priest.

1522–5 War with France. Nothing was achieved, at great expense.



1525 The Amicable Grant Rising: a rebellion in East Anglia caused by high taxes.

1526–9 Henry wanted to end his marriage to Catherine so he could marry Anne Boleyn. All efforts to persuade the Pope to grant an **annulment** failed.

1528 Henry declared war on Emperor Charles V of Germany, but no war was actually fought.

1529 Wolsey fell from power over his failure to persuade the Pope to grant an annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon. Wolsey died on his way to stand trial for **treason**.

PAGE 2-b

1 Was Henry VIII really a great and successful king?

HENRY VIII – THE STORY IN OUTLINE



1. Look at each of the criteria on page 4 in turn and read the information on these two pages. How successful do you think Henry was in achieving each criterion? Did he achieve:
a) consistent outstanding success c) very little success
b) occasional success d) no success at all?
2. Choose two events that suggest that Henry was a great and successful king. Explain your choices.
3. Choose two events that challenge the view that Henry was a great and successful king. Explain your choices.
4. Work with a partner. Your task is to tell the outline story of Henry's reign from 1509 to 1540 in one minute – you can say a lot in one minute! Plan the story using your answers to Questions 1 and 2 and include your verdict on whether Henry seems to have been a success. Then write out your story.

1530-40

1531 Thomas Cromwell became Henry's Chief Minister. He masterminded setting up the Church of England and ending English ties to the Roman Catholic Church.

1532 The clergy (priests, bishops, archbishops in the English Church) accepted the King and not the Pope as their lawmaker.

1532 Anne Boleyn became pregnant. For her child to be heir to the throne, Henry had to divorce Catherine and marry Anne before the birth.

1533 Henry married Anne Boleyn, who was crowned Queen of England. Their daughter Elizabeth was born.



1534 The Act of Supremacy said Henry was the Head of the Church of England. All monks and nuns were required to take an oath accepting Henry as Head of the Church. The break with the Roman Catholic Church was complete.

1535 John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More, Henry's former Lord Chancellor, were executed for refusing to recognise Henry as the Head of the Church of England.

1536 Parliament passed an Act for the Dissolution (destruction) of the lesser Monasteries. Many monasteries had given help to the poor and sick.

1536 Anne Boleyn was executed for treason. Henry married Jane Seymour.

1536 A widespread rebellion broke out in the north – the Pilgrimage of Grace. The rebels were protesting against the **Dissolution of the Monasteries**. After seeming to make concessions, Henry had the leaders executed.



1537 Birth of Edward, Henry's male heir. Death of Jane Seymour.

1538-9 Fear of invasion of England by Charles V and the King of France in order to restore Catholicism.

1539 Dissolution of larger monasteries.

1540 January Henry married Anne of Cleves.

July Thomas Cromwell executed. Marriage to Anne of Cleves annulled. Henry married Catherine Howard.



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KEY TOPIC 2

Conclusion

How should we remember William of Normandy?

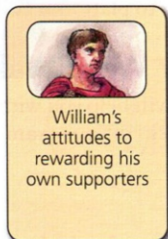
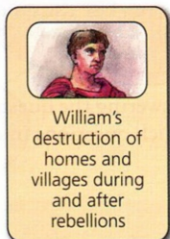
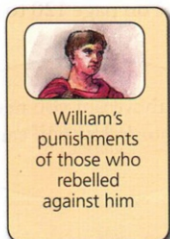
William – the man himself



This activity gives you the chance to sum up how you see William in the light of the events you have studied in Key Topic 2.

Choose **three** of the words from the wall below or choose other words of your own that you think best describe William as you have seen him in Key Topic 2. For each word explain your choice. You could refer to one or more of the aspects of William's life shown on the cards below the Word Wall.

clever generous ferocious risk-taking lucky merciful
ruthless vicious brave frustrated inspirational angry
heartless magnificent calculating energetic
vindictive well-prepared

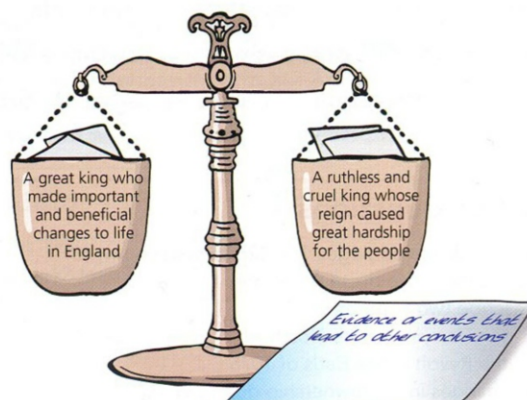


William's impact on England

On page 9 in Chapter 1 we introduced an activity that sums up William's impact on England. The activity used this set of scales to weigh up William's impact.

Now it's time to repeat that activity using the evidence in Key Topic 2 which has investigated the methods William used to secure his hold on England.

Think back over Chapter 5. Which events, policies or changes to life in England would you place on the set of scales or on the sheet alongside?



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8 The end of the reign

8.3 Elizabeth's greatness – what do you think?

Do you think that Elizabeth deserves her reputation as a highly successful Queen who had a glorious reign? Or do you think that she was very lucky to survive and keep her throne because she made so many mistakes? Perhaps you are somewhere in between, and think she did really well in some areas but was a disaster in others? This final activity will give you the opportunity to reach an overall assessment. By analysing the main issues of the reign, you can decide whether the way Elizabeth dealt with them merits her reputation as 'Gloriana'.

Elizabeth was a highly successful queen who had a glorious reign.

Elizabeth was a competent monarch and her reign was fairly successful.

This event does not tell us anything either way.

Elizabeth's legitimacy, gender and single status

In the sixteenth century, people believed that a successful monarch needed to have adult children to continue the royal family and avoid disputes over the succession.

The challenge from the Catholics

Both in England and Europe, including the role of the Papacy.

The problem of Mary, Queen of Scots

Settling religious divisions

Rulers at the time believed their country had to be united behind one religion; any differences could lead to civil war.

The Revolt of the Northern Earls

Successful monarchs were supposed to rule a peaceful and prosperous country, free from plots and rebellions.

The threat from France

France had close links with Scotland, and the legacy of Mary I's reign meant England had just lost the last military base in France.

Plots against the Queen

The Ridolfi, Throckmorton and Babington plots, and the role of Mary, Queen of Scots.

The challenge from the Puritans

PAGE 4-b

8 The end of the reign

Assessing Elizabeth

In pairs or a small group, discuss each of the main issues of the reign described on each of the cards on these pages, and then decide where to place it on the continuum. Some of the cards have extra prompts to remind you of the extent of the problem and why it was important in reaching a verdict on Elizabeth's rule.

When you have placed all your cards on the continuum, you should be able to reach a verdict on Elizabeth's reign and the popular image of Elizabeth as a highly successful monarch. You should now prepare a presentation to explain how you have come to this conclusion.

This event does not tell us anything either way.

Elizabeth just scraped by; her reign had a few successes.

Elizabeth was very lucky to keep her throne; she made so many mistakes.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada, 1588

Privateering in the New World

The impact on relations with Spain, as well as the royal finances.

The growth of education and leisure

Including the theatre.

English intervention in the Netherlands

The impact on relations with Spain.

The increase in poverty and vagabondage

People expected their monarch to ensure that everyone was better-off and provide prosperity and work for all.

War with Spain, 1585-8

Successful monarchs were expected to rule powerful countries with a strong army and navy, to keep their subjects safe from attacks or invasions, and to win any wars.

The establishment of a good government

Successful monarchs needed to keep power in their own hands, while keeping nobles loyal and under control. They needed to choose a Council that would suggest and enforce successful policies.

Exploration and voyages of discovery

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PAGE 5

Introduction

1.4 Was William really almost six feet tall?

You read about William's appearance on page 2. The exact words were:

He may have been about five feet and ten inches tall but that depends ...

The key words above are '**may have been**' and '**that depends ...**'. They reveal that we are not certain about William's height because there is not enough good evidence to allow us to be certain.

William's height is a helpful example of an important issue when we study this period of history:

We are often uncertain about the answers to questions about the Norman Conquest.

The activity below provides an example of the problems of using sources for this period to explore one of many important questions.

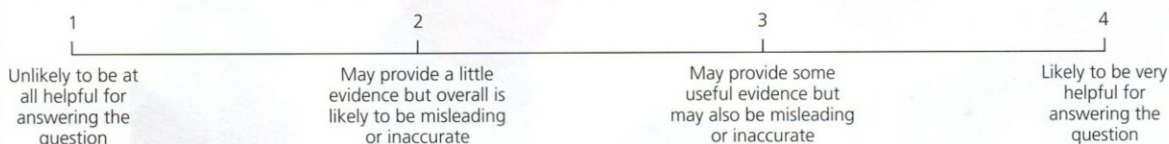
THINKING ABOUT THE SOURCES

You can see below details of six sources that provide evidence about the Norman Conquest.

1 Imagine you are trying to answer the question:

How fairly did William treat the English after he became King in 1066?

Where would you place each source on the continuum line below?



2 Explain your placing of **two** of the sources.

3 Why do you think it is difficult to provide certain answers about some aspects of the Norman Conquest?

4 Identify two questions about the Norman Conquest that you think could be answered with some certainty using one or more of these sources.

A The Bayeux Tapestry

was embroidered in the 1070s. Historians believe that William's half-brother, Odo, asked for the Tapestry to be made. It was embroidered by nuns in England. It shows the events leading up to William's invasion and then the Battle of Hastings.

B William of Jumieges was a monk who lived at the abbey of Jumieges in Normandy. He wrote a history of the Dukes of Normandy in 1070. William may have spoken to men who were at Hastings, including William the Conqueror who visited Jumieges in 1067.

C Orderic Vitalis was born near Shrewsbury in England in 1075. He had an English mother and Norman father and was sent to live in Normandy when he was a boy. He became a monk in Normandy and wrote his history around 1125. His account of the events of the 1060s was partly based on the histories written by William of Jumieges and William of Poitiers but his account from 1071 is his own work.

D William of Poitiers was a Norman priest. At one time he was Duke William's personal priest and regarded him as a hero. In the 1070s he wrote a history called: *The Deeds of William, Duke of the Normans and King of the English*.

E The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was a year-by-year record of events that had been kept since the 870s. There were different versions, each slightly different, written by monks in several monasteries. In 1066 two monasteries were still keeping their chronicle up to date.

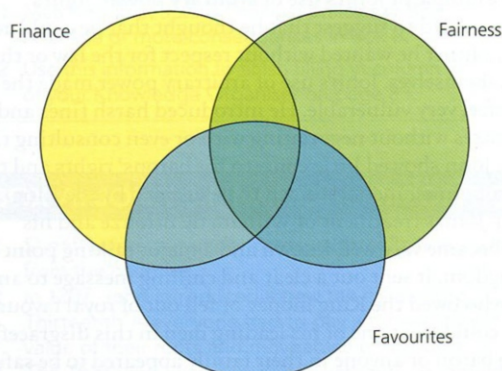
F John of Worcester was an English monk who lived in the monastery at Worcester. He wrote a history of England about 70 years after 1066. The early parts of John's chronicle are the same as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, but John wrote his own account of the Norman Conquest. He took his information from other English accounts that had been written earlier.

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Key topic 3: King John's downfall, 1205-16

THE BARONS' MOTIVES

Read the case studies on these two pages. Which factors may have influenced each baron's decision to rebel? Place each baron in a copy of the Venn diagram below. Remember that they may have had more than one reason to rebel, so think carefully about where you place them.



Key

Finance – Barons affected by John's financial policies.

Favourites – Barons who may have expected John to favour them but were instead ignored.

Fairness – Barons who felt that John had treated them cruelly or shown them a lack of respect.



▲ We do not know what the individual barons looked like as there are no recorded descriptions or portraits.

Case studies: What turned individual barons against King John?

Eustace de Vesci

- In his forties.
- Lord of Alnwick in Northumberland.
- Married an illegitimate daughter of William the Lion, King of Scotland.
- Used by John to help negotiations with the Scots.
- Rumoured at the time that John had made advances on his wife.
- Owed money to Jewish moneylenders.

Gilbert de Gant

- In his mid-thirties.
- Owned land in south Lincolnshire.
- John had failed to support his claim to the earldom of Lincolnshire.
- Owed £800 to Jewish moneylenders. The debt was taken over by the King and he has given just two years to pay it off.

Richard de Percy

- In his forties.
- Held land in Yorkshire.
- Owed money to the Crown; pressure was put on him to pay back his debts and the rate was set at £400 per year.

Roger de Montbegon

- In his fifties.
- Held land in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.
- He had supported John's rebellion in 1194 (and was one of the leading defenders of Nottingham castle – see page 62).
- When John became king, Roger may have been hoping to prosper, but this did not happen. In 1204, John seized control of Roger's land as a punishment for failing to come to Court.

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KEY
TOPIC 3

Norman England, 1066–88



A different kind of story

We'd like you to meet an Anglo-Saxon family. They lived in Suffolk in the 1060s and were quite well-off. Leofmaer farmed lands in the villages of Cockfield and Lindsey which he inherited from his father Wulfric. He and his wife, Saegifu, had two children, Adam and Edith. They all had common Anglo-Saxon names. We know about the family from documents drawn up around 1100, probably when Edith became a nun. By then Saegifu was quite elderly.

Leofmaer had died by 1100, perhaps from illness, or in a rebellion. Saegifu had married again. She and her new husband had two sons but their names were very different. Her second husband was Robert, their sons were Fulco and Roger – good Norman names.

So Saegifu was an Englishwoman who married a Norman. What is even more interesting is that her children seem to have got on well together. Adam gave some of the family land to the nunnery to pay for Edith's welfare and documents show that Fulco and Roger agreed to Adam making this gift. They could have objected but they did not – which suggests that they probably got on well.

▲ We do not know what these people looked like but these illustrations may help you conjure up the family in your imagination, to see them as real people. If you had been born a thousand years ago, you could have been one of them.

When Saegifu looked back she must have been very surprised at how her life had turned out. When she was a young mother with her first children, she could never have imagined that one day she would be married to a man from France with sons who had strange French names.

Yet her life *was* changed by the Norman Conquest. She married a man she would never have met if William had not invaded England. Many people had similar stories – their lives were utterly different because of the events of 1066.

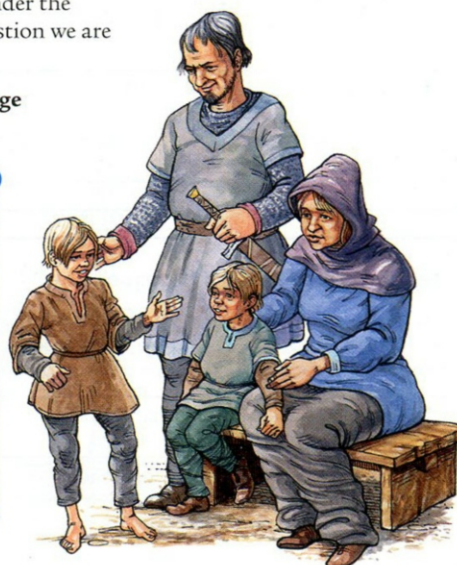
Chapters 6 and 7 explore life in England under the Normans between 1066 and 1088. The question we are going to investigate is:

How much did the Normans really change England after 1066?

SAEGIFU AND HER FAMILY ?

- 1 What can you learn from Saegifu's story?
- 2 After 1066, which of these aspects of life in England do you think were:
 - a) most likely to change
 - b) least likely to change?
 Explain your choices.

Medicine	The role of the king	Laws
Farming methods	Houses	Taxes
Religion and the Church	Diet	Language



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INTRODUCTION

The People and their Rulers

The Tudor Century?

The room was already half-full of men, some seated around the table in conversation with their neighbours, others standing, talking in groups of two or three. Despite the busy sound of their voices, most were only half-listening to their colleagues, their glances checking the other figures in the room and noting new arrivals. Occasionally, individuals broke off to greet friends and draw them into the security of a group. From the sounds of the conversations an eavesdropper would have been aware of an atmosphere of caution and uncertainty mixed, in different quarters, with sparkles of confidence and self-congratulation.

Such may have been the atmosphere in early September 1485 at the first meetings of Henry VII's council. Henry had been king for no more than two weeks, having been suddenly transformed from Henry Tudor, exiled Earl of Richmond, into Henry, by the Grace of God, King of England and of France and Lord of Ireland. The confident ones amongst his councillors were those who had shared his dangerous exile in Brittany and France. The cautious and uncertain were those who had served Richard III and would still be doing so had Richard not been killed on the battlefield near Market Bosworth.

It was scarcely a month since Henry had landed his forces, a mixed group of French, Welsh and English, in Wales. They had marched east, not knowing how large an army Richard had collected. When the two armies met, Henry had still not known whether his potentially strongest allies, the Stanleys, would fight for him or against him. When Richard and his bodyguard had ridden down Henry's standard-bearer it had looked as if Richard might seize the victory by killing Henry with his own hand. Then Sir William Stanley's men had made their move. They had charged into Richard's household knights, scattering them and beating Richard to the ground, knocking his crown from his helm. For the first time since 1066 an English king had been killed in battle.

Some of the councillors awaiting the arrival of Henry still ached with the effects of the battle – bruises that had still to disappear, scars that would stay with them for life. And they had other reasons for keeping the battle sharply in mind. Some of Richard's soldiers were in prison awaiting the new king's judgement. Most had managed to escape and some of them were doubtless planning rebellion against the new regime. One or two, including Richard's nephew and heir, the Earl of Lincoln, were actually in the council chamber, a consequence of Henry's need to win over as many former enemies as possible.

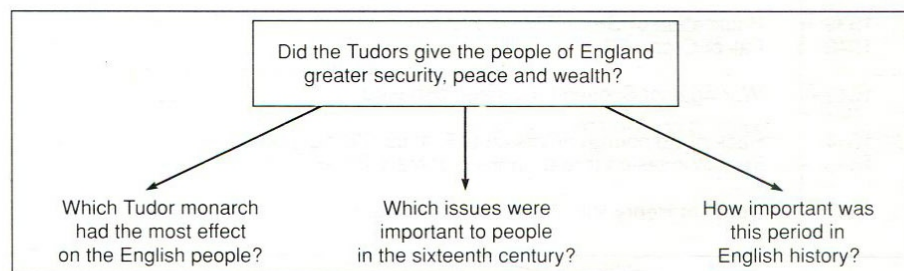
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Indeed, with Henry's coronation only a few weeks away, everyone present faced a new situation. For some Henry was a new and unknown leader. For others he was their deliverer from a hunted and landless exile but they still had to grow used to him as their sovereign. As they awaited his arrival, all of them knew that their own futures depended on the new king. If Henry was successful they would, more than likely, be secure and prosperous. If he failed and was deposed their likely fate would be either death, exile or imprisonment. At best, they would be fearfully attempting to win the confidence of yet another new monarch.

THEMES AND QUESTIONS

That reconstruction of the thoughts and feelings of Henry VII's councillors in 1485 suggests just how important the personality and character of a king was at that time. This had been abundantly clear during the previous thirty years, the period we call the Wars of the Roses. Back in the 1450s the king had been Henry VI. During his reign England's lands in France were lost and peace at home was destroyed because Henry could not enforce law and order. Noblemen squabbled and fought for lands and other rewards given away by Henry VI with foolish generosity. Henry's failings led to the civil wars but, from their beginnings in 1455 to Henry VII's victory at Bosworth in 1485, people of all classes retained a desire for a strong, effective ruler who would give the country peace and security.

The major theme of this book will be the extent to which the Tudor monarchs gave the people of England peace, security and wealth. Accompanying this question are three other issues (shown in the diagram) which will be discussed in each section of the book. Given this emphasis upon monarchy the main sections of the book, sections 1 – 4, focus upon monarchs, identifying and discussing the important elements of each Tudor reign – foreign policy, religious reforms, law and order, poverty and prosperity, leading politicians and their impact. Part 1, in contrast, provides a necessary introduction, looking at how people lived in the sixteenth century, what kind of ideas and beliefs they had and how they were governed. By the end of the book you will be well versed in the details of Tudor kingship and politics but will also have considered these much broader questions which will give continuity to your studies, preventing your work on the Tudors disintegrating into a set of unrelated topics.



The People and their Rulers 3