

Before and After Bosworth

1. Barnet to Bosworth, 1471-1485
 - a. Henry Twdr or Tudor was a (bastard) Lancastrian, the descendants of John of Gaunt
 - b. When Henry Tudor landed at Milford Haven in 1485, it was by no means clear that he would be viewed as anything but an usurper.
 - c. In 1485, it wasn't so much that kingship but legitimacy that needed to be restored
2. Lancaster and York: THE END OF MONARCHY?
 - a. officially, the Wars of the Roses were struggle between descendants of Edward III
 - b. (prequel) Crisis of Monarchy in the 14th and early 15th centuries
 - i. Richard II (1377-99)
 - ii. Henry IV (1399-1413)
 - iii. Henry VI (1422-1461, longest minority reign in history of Britain)
 - c. War of the Roses: Causes
 - i. the myth: White Rose, badge of House of York; Red Rose, badge of House of Lancaster
 - ii. "Wars" of the Roses: a small number of battles separated by long intervals of peace
 - iii. causes of the War of the Roses
3. War and Faction
 - a. pre-1453: Open War preceded by Jack Cade's Rebellion in 1450, a popular rising in Kent
 - i. poor joining the rebellion in opposition to the Statute of Laborers
 - ii. but rebels not just the poor
 - b. 1453, the first open conflict between Yorkist and Lancastrians, also a year of complications
 - i. loss of most of French possessions
 - c. 1454-1459
 - i. 1456-59, Henry VI regains sanity (2nd time) and power; York and followers flee into exile
 - d. 1460-61
 - i. 1461, Yorkists defeat Lancastrians at battle of Mortimer's Cross. In March, Edward, 19-year old son of duke of York, enters London and proclaims himself, King Edward IV.
 - ii. Edward defeats Lancastrians again in the north at battle of Towton; Henry VI flees to Scotland, but four years later (1465) is imprisoned in the Tower; Lancastrian rule ends
4. Yorkist rule, 1461-85
 - a. Duke of York proclaimed Edward IV, Parliament proclaims him legitimate successor to Richard II
 - b. Continuation of disorder in countryside, at least until 1471
 - c. From 1471, Edward IV works to strengthen his position and monarchy
 - i. allowed Henry VI to die in 1471
 - ii. reversed the trend of giving large land grants to favorites
 - iii. worked with Parliament to ensure taxes and customs revenues
 - iv. threatened war with France, but refused to get bogged down in costly continental war
 - v. strengthened royal bureaucratic power
5. Lessons of the Wars of the Roses?
 - a. Aristocratic factions could disintegrate into private warfare under a weak King.
 - i. Country desired and found a succession of strong kings; but Kings needed noble factions.
 - b. Make sure there is a strong heir to the throne of age to succeed.
 - i. Edward IV's son, Edward V, was only 12, obviously open to control by the Woodvilles and, the Duke of Gloucester.
 - ii. Edward's uncle, Richard III, had learned the lesson of strong central rule, and seized power.
 - iii. Henry Twdr, son of a Welsh knight—and claimant to Gaunt's Lancastrian line through an illegitimate line—and Beaufort's heiress, lands with an army and in Wales in 1485.
6. Lancastrian Kingship Restored
 - a. Henry VII's victory and usurpation threatened to revive the anarchy of the Wars of the Roses
 - i. Yorkist opposition remained
 - b. Strengthened dubious claim to throne by marrying Elizabeth of York, sister to Edward V.

- c. Yorkist groom a series of Pretenders to the throne.
 - i. 1487, Yorkist groom Lambert Simnel, a trader's son, to be the Earl of Warwick.
 - ii. 1490s, Yorkists try again with Perkin Warbeck, who impersonated Richard "IV" (dead).
 - iii. 1490s, a new fake Earl of Warwick arose.
 - d. If Henry VII secure in his claim to the throne by 1500, what power did the throne have?
 - i. Wars of the Roses had seen growth of aristocratic power and violence; noble power continued.
 - ii. Henry VII also needed money: it will turn out that raising money was Henry's forte; he never made many institutional changes, just worked around existing institutions
 - e. Henry VII also not afraid to increase taxes. Taxes useful in the former goal as well; that is, unlike most of Europe, English nobility not excluded from taxation.
 - i. direct taxation (property taxes) not used much because of need to call Parliament for new land tax
 - ii. Benevolences (forced loans) hit rich
 - iii. feudal "taxes"?
 - iv. Henry's financial rapaciousness by Henry's own historian, Polydore Vergil,
7. Henry VII to Henry VIII: the assessment of the first 50 years of the Tudors.
- a. Henry VII was successful in consolidating his rule. But,
 - i. He made it appear that his major purpose was not to revive justice and suppress violence, but to raise money; and
 - ii. He freely manipulated power outside the bounds of the common law to force what he viewed as evaders of justice to submit and to pay.
 - b. Within two days of his accession, Henry VIII arrested his father's advisors—Richard Empson and Edward Dudley—who were most responsible for squeezing revenue out of the nobility. In 1510, executed them on trumped up charges.
 - i. He also decided in the first two days of his rule to marry his brother's widow—Catherine of Aragon—seven years older than himself.
 - c. Henry VIII was the darling of the new humanist intellectuals and of the noble class. The new king could write poetry and joust. He longed to show his military prowess, which delighted the nobles.
 - i. In 1513, he did just that, defeating the French in two unimportant battles and capturing Tournai a French town in the middle of the Holy Roman Empire. England held Tournai 1513-18.
 - ii. In 1520, Henry continued his play-acting from general to diplomat, this time at the Field of Cloth of Gold.
 - d. The anarchy of the 15th century had two central causes
 - i. the anarchy of the barons
 - ii. the distress caused by pretensions to the French throne.
 - iii. Henry VII had solved both; would Henry VIII revive the latter?