

Henry V: A Legacy of Leadership, Diplomacy, and Military Triumph

Henri V: Nasleđe vodstva, diplomatije i vojnih trijumfa

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Rezime

Kada prvi put čujemo ime Henri V, verovatno bismo pomislili da je on neko ko nije doneo mnogo engleskoj istoriji, ali kada pogledamo dublje, videli bismo kako je slaba nacija postala nacija koja dominira Evropom. Henri je bio genije što se tiče politike i strategije. On je bio prvi kralj koji je nasledio francuski presto i da je živeo duže mogao je da osvoji Francusku. On je upamćen kao jedan od najčuvenijih engleskih vladara.

Ključne reči: strateg, genije, Francuska, Engleska, bitka, kralj, istorija, tron, pobeda, politika

Resume

When we first hear the name Henry V, we would probably think that he is a king who did not bring much to English history, but when we look deeper, we see how a weak nation became a nation that dominated Europe. Henry was a genius when it came to politics and strategy. He was the first English king who became heir to the French throne and if he lived longer, he could have conquered France. He is remembered as one of England's most illustrious monarchs.

Key Words: strategist, genius, France, England, battle, king, history, throne, victory, politics

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Picture 1. Portrait of Henry, late 16th or early 17th century Henry V (1989) by Kenneth Branagh

Introduction

Henry is described to be 6 foot 3 with dark hair cropped in a ring above his ears and clean-shaven. He was slim and his complexion was ruddy while his face was lean with a prominent and pointed nose.

Henry was smart and strong while also being considered a born fighter. If he lived a little longer, he could have conquered France. His most prominent battle was the Battle of Agincourt, where he managed to beat France while being highly outnumbered.

Using his genius, he built a stronger domestic policy. In 1420 he signed the Treaty of Troyes with John of Burgundy. He was recognized as the heir to the French throne and married Catherine, the daughter of king Charles on June 2.

Henry cannot be considered as some medieval hero because his character was hard and domineering. He lacked chivalry and was cruel and ruthless when it comes to politics. Even with these qualities, French writers still admire him as a brave and a loyal man while also being an honourable fighter. He was considered a “warrior-king”.

In nine years, he was able to turn a weak nation into a nation that dominated Europe.

Early Life

Henry’s birth has been disputed many times as it was not officially recorded. It is currently accepted that he was born on 16 September 1386. He was born in the tower above gatehouse of Monmouth Castle in Wales as a member of the House Lancaster, a cadet branch of the House of Plantagenet. Because he was born in Monmouth Castle, he got the nickname Henry of Monmouth.



Picture 2. Monmouth Castle

After his father’s exile, he was taken into custody by Richard II and accompanied him to Ireland. He was knighted by Richard II and was trained by Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester. When Lancastrians overthrew Richard, Henry’s father

took reign. At his father's coronation on 10 November 1399, he was given the title Prince of Wales. His other titles were Duke of Cornwall, Earl of Chester and Duke of Aquitaine.

Henry was educated at The Queen's College, which is today known as Oxford, where he became the first English king to know how to read and write in vernacular.

Political Involvement



From 1400 to 1404 he was the High sheriff of Cornwall. The role provided him experience in local governance and law enforcement. His first major battle was against Owen Glendower and Henry "Hotspur" Percy. He led his army into Wales and beat Owen Glendower. After that he joined his father against Henry "Hotspur" Percy and won. In the battle he was severely wounded to the head and was treated by the royal physician, John Bradmore.

Picture 3. Statue of Harry Hotspur in Alnwick

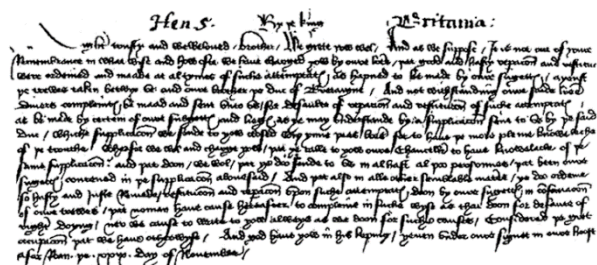
Due to his father's declining health, he gradually began to assume a more prominent role in the royal council and government affairs. With the support of his uncles, Harry Beaufort and Thomas Beaufort, he began to exert practical control over government policies and decision-making processes. By January 1410 he had the practical control over government. As his political opinions differed from his father's, he was discharged from the council in November 1411. It is believed that this quarrel was only political, and it did not change their relationship.

Beginning of his reign

After his father's death, Henry was crowned on 9 April 1413 at Westminster Abbey. During the ceremony there was a snowstorm, and people could not decide if that was a bad omen or not.

With his smarts, he built a stronger domestic policy. Henry chose to reconcile the past differences. The late Richard II was re-interred; the young Edmund Mortimer, 5th Earl of March, was taken into favour; the titles and estates were gradually recovered to those who suffered under the last reign. Even though he did all of that, Henry was still merciless when it came to domestic dangers. For instance, in January 1414, he addressed the Lollard discontent, and in 1417, he resorted to the severe measure of burning his longtime ally, Sir John Oldcastle, to suppress the burgeoning movement and solidify his own authority as a ruler.

In August 1417, he promoted the use of English in government. During his reign, Chancery Standard English began to be used and English became the language of record within



Picture 4. English chancery hand. Facsimile of letter from Henry V, 1418

government. He was the first monarch to communicate in English for personal correspondence since the Norman conquest 4 centuries earlier. This was significant because this was the origin of Standard Written English. One of the larger happenings before going to war was The Southampton plot which happened just before he was about to sail to a campaign against France.

In 1419, King Henry V issued the Mantes Ordinances, which prohibited soldiers from entering areas where women were present and from robbing women. These ordinances also protected lower-class tenant farmers and prohibited the capture of children under the age of fourteen, unless they were from noble families who could pay a high ransom. Such regulations were not common among monarchs or lords and were typically issued on a selective basis.

The Southampton Plot

The Southampton plot, also known as The Cambridge plot, was a conspiracy to overthrow Henry V and replace him with Edmund Mortimer, 5th Earl of March that happened just before he took sail to a campaign against France. The people involved were Richard of Conisburgh, 3rd Earl of March, Henry Scrope, 3rd Baron Scrope of Masham, Sir Thoms Grey and Edmund Mortimer.



Picture 5. Red Lion Inn, Southampton

Edmund was the second son of Edward III and was the next in line to ruling England if there are no female intermediaries. Edmund betrayed them, informing Henry and stating that he just became aware of it. Everyone except Edmund was arrested and their trial took place in Southampton. Traditionally it is claimed that the trial took place on the site now occupied by the Red Lion Inn, but there are no records of that. Grey was beheaded on August 2 and Scrope and Richard were beheaded on August 5.

Even to this day, it is not known how Scrope is involved in the conspiracy because he was close with the royal family. Some historians believe that Scrope may have pretended to be part of the conspiracy to betray it. However, Mortimer's revelation to the King about the conspiracy prevented Scrope from carrying out any such plan. Others argue that Scrope's attempts to clear his name during the trial were

unconvincing. Additionally, some suggest that the accusation of plotting to assassinate Henry V and his brothers was exaggerated to ensure that Scrope and others received the death penalty for their other crimes.

After the Duke of York died at the Battle of Agincourt, the Earl of Cambridge's son Richard Plantagenet became the heir to the title. He would later inherit the Mortimer claim to the throne from his mother. This claim led Richard to attempt to overthrow King Henry VI in the future.

Beginning of the war

France and England were at peace until 1415. Due to his relation to Edward II by his mother's side, he had the claim to the French throne, but under the Salic law of the Franks, women were forbidden from inheriting the throne. Because of that, the right to the throne went to the cadet branch of the house of Capet, Philip IV of France, which led to a Hundred Year's War in 1337.

When he finished dealing with domestic affairs, he turned to foreign affairs. Henry wanted to assert his claims to the French throne, so he resumed the war in 1415. The justification for starting the war were the old commercial disputes, the support that France gave to Owen Glendower and the dynastic claim to the throne of France that was first pursued by Edward II.

The war started by besieging Harfleur, capturing it on 22 September. Even though the council warned him of the dangers, he still marched with his army across the French countryside towards Calais. He was intercepted by a French army near the village of Agincourt on 25 October, thus starting the legendary Battle of Agincourt.

Battle of Agincourt

It is stated that Henry had about 6000 men in the Battle of Agincourt and that France had about 5 or 10 times more than that. It has been described as one of the greatest battles of all time. Henry put his soldiers in a field that was flanked by woodlands on both sides, which diminished the superior numbers of French soldiers. He took advantage of the rainfall that fell the day before the battle. The French soldiers wore a 60-pound armor and if any of them fell backwards they were stuck in the mud or if they fell forwards, they would drown. Henry used longbows instead of crossbows because they were faster and could fire at a bigger range. They quickly took care of the soldiers behind the frontlines, which were the French reinforcements. Henry armed his soldiers with pikes a foot longer than those of French soldiers, which allowed his soldiers to deliver the first blow, which usually resulted in death. Any of the horsemen who tried to interfere were impaled on the stakes that Henry prepared beforehand. The French lost about 6000 soldiers, while England lost around 450. This was his



Picture 6. Medieval illustration of the Battle of Agincourt, the opposing Royal Standards displayed; England on the right; France on the left

greatest military victory, which solidified his rule in England and even more legitimized his right to the French throne.

During the battle, Henry's ruthless and merciless side is shown by killing all of the war prisoners, even those who could have been used for ransom. Cambridge historian Brett Tingley posits that Henry killed the French prisoners because he thought they might turn on their captors while the England was busy fighting the third wave of troops.

This battle caused a heavy blow to the already weakened France. This led to internal conflicts between French nobility which divided the French aristocracy.

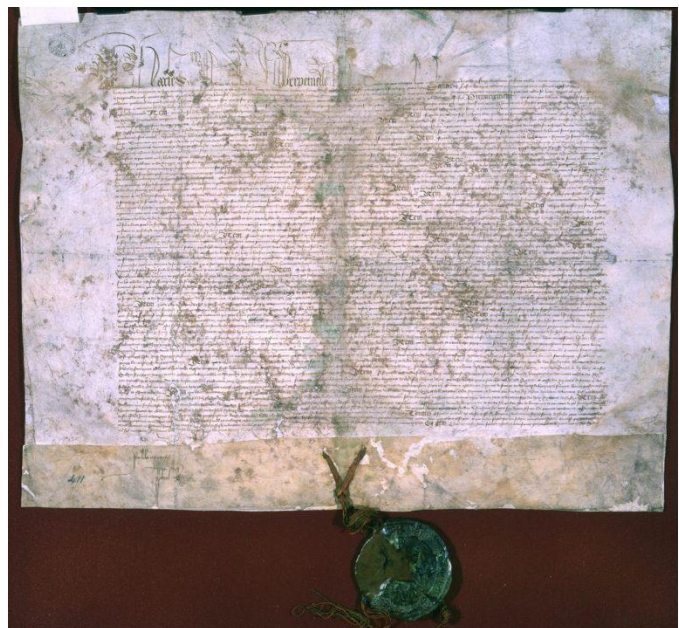
Diplomatic Triumphs and Challenges

King Sigismund of Hungary wanted Henry to modify his demands against France. Henry enrolled him in the Order of Garter and in return he was enrolled into the Order of the Dragon.

In 1416, a French and Genoese fleet surrounded the harbor at Harfleur while also besieging the town. In March 1416, England's forces led by Thomas Beaufort, were defeated at the battle of Valmont after a counterattack by the garrison of Harfleur. The Franco-Genoese fleet was defeated by Henry's brother, John, Duke of Bedford, after a seven-hour Battle of the Seine in August. Emperor Sigismund stopped supporting France and signed the Treaty of Canterbury in August.

Henry waged war on a larger scale in 1417 after dealing with two of his potential enemies. He conquered Caen and Lower Normandy, and besieged Rouen while also cutting it off from Paris. After the siege, he got an even darker reputation among people. Believing that Henry would let them pass, starved children and women of Rouen tried leaving but were instead expelled and they soon died of starvation in the ditches surrounding the town. Disputes between Burgundians and Armagnacs left France paralyzed. Rouen fell in January 1419. Norman French who had resisted were severely punished: Alain Blanchard, who had hanged English prisoners from the walls of Rouen, was executed; Canon of Rouen, who had excommunicated the English king, was imprisoned in England for five years.

After finally getting to Paris and after six months of negotiation, Henry was recognized as the heir to the French throne by the Treaty of Troyes. From June to July, Henry V's army besieged and took the military fortress castle at Montereau-Fault-



Picture 7. Ratification by Charles, King of France, of the Treaty of Troyes, 21 May 1420

Yonne. After that, in November, he besieged and took Melun.

On 2 June 1420, he married Catherine of Valois, queen of England, at Troyes Cathedral. It was a political marriage aiming to unite the warring factions. They had only one son, Henry, born on 6 December 1421 at Windsor Castle. Henry never met his son as he died on 10 August 1422. There is very little information known about their marriage. We can only suspect that she did not like the marriage because of Henry's occupation of France.



Picture 8. Late-15th-century depiction of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Valois, British Library, London

Henry's brother Thomas, Duke of Clarence, led the English forces while Henry was absent. On 22 March 1421, English forces led by Thomas were defeated at the Battle of Bauge by a Franco-Scottish army and he died in battle. On 10 June, Henry sailed back to France to see the situation. From July to August, his forces besieged and captured Dreux, thus relieving allied forces at Chartres. On 6 October, his forces laid siege to

Meaux, capturing it on 11 May 1422.

His Death and Controversies Surrounding it

Henry V died on 31 August 1431 at the Chateau de Vincennes. His exact cause of death is not known. The only fact about his death is that he contracted some kind of disease between May and June. A commonly held view is that he contracted dysentery following the siege of Meaux, but that is not likely because he was healthy in the weeks following the siege. Some of the speculative causes of his illness consisted of smallpox, bacterial infection, erysipelas and even leprosy. He was recovering at the castle of Vincennes and was healthy enough to lead his forces with the intent of engaging the Dauphinist forces at Cosne-sur-Loire. It is most likely he died because of a heatstroke due to being in full heavy armor while it was summer or a relapse of the previous disease. He was carried in a litter for a few weeks. His enemies had retreated, so he peacefully returned to Paris. One of the other stories says that he tried to mount his horse at Charenton and failed.

He died shortly after at the castle of Vincennes around 10 August 1422. There is a claim that he died on 31 August. When he died, he was 35 years old and reigned for 9 years. Before his death, Duke of Bedford, was named the regent of France in the name of his son. Henry was never crowned the king of France because Charles VII outlived him by two months.



Picture 9. Henry V's tomb, Westminster Abbey

Sutton, 1st Baron Dudley, brought Henry's

body back to England and bore the royal standard at his funeral. Henry V was buried in Westminster Abbey on 7 November 1422.

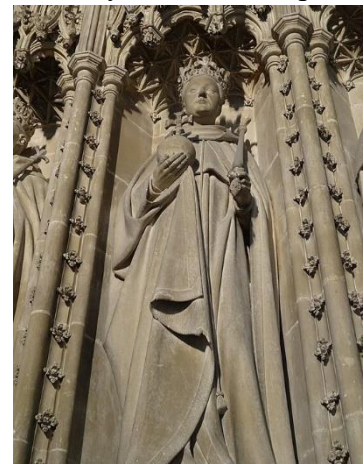
Henry's army

Henry V faced challenges in proving himself not only to his enemies but also to his own subjects, who had witnessed rebellion and conspiracy in his kingdom. However, he could rely on a sophisticated system for raising his army, as evidenced by administrative records from The National Archives. Indentures of war, sealed between the crown and nobles like Sir James Haryngton, specified the number of soldiers to be raised. At Southampton, soldiers received their first quarterly wages, recorded in Muster Rolls with annotations revealing their fate. The Office of Privy Seal authorized payments, recorded in warrants, while expenditures were noted in Issue Rolls. Specialized professionals like carpenters and armorers also played crucial roles, often overlooked. Henry successfully raised an army of approximately 12,000 soldiers, one of the largest since the English siege of Calais in 1347. Despite delays, the army embarked for France in August 1415, ready for battle under their commander and king.

Historical Influence

He is remembered as one of the most renowned monarchs in English history. He was a capable military commander, a genius strategist and a ruthless but fair king. He has inspired many kings and queens of England after him. Due to his victories, he influenced a national sensation and patriotic fervour among English people, which influenced the English army and the British army in the centuries to come. During 1417-1422, many depicted him in literature as a figure of nationalism and patriotism, the most well-known being Shakespeare's depiction of Henry V. In the 20th and 21st century, there were many films and TV shows which depicted Henry.

He is also remembered for commissioning the building of King's College Chapel and Eton College Chapel and many more which were discontinued after his death or were continued by his son. He also contributed to the founding of Syon Abbey.



Picture 10. A statue of Henry V on the interior of the Canterbury Cathedral

Literature about Henry V

Shakespeare wrote a drama titled Henry V. It was first performed in 1599 and officially published in 1600. It portrays Henry's inspiring leadership and England's victory over France at the Battle of Agincourt, exploring themes of power, honor, and the complexities of war. In the play, Shakespeare wrote in great detail about the Southampton plot, the Battle of Harfleur and

the Battle of Agincourt. Shakespeare wrote that Henry had great leadership skills and that he could turn game-changing disadvantages into advantages.

The play begins with Archbishop and Bishop of Ely talking about Henry's legitimacy to the French throne. The next scene is about Henry V wanting to assert his claim to the French throne. He is faced with various challenges about politics and preparing his soldiers for the Battle of Agincourt. In the play it is said that Henry delivered a motivational speech on one of The Allied Ships. In this speech, delivered by King Henry on the eve of the Battle of Agincourt, he rallies his troops with powerful words of brotherhood, valour, and the glory that will come from fighting bravely. It's one of Shakespeare's most famous speeches, emphasizing unity and the bond of soldiers in the face of adversity. After the Battle of Agincourt, Henry courts Princess Katherine (Catherine) and the play ends with their marriage, which symbolizes the union between England and France.

This play is still performed widely in the whole world and there are about 6 adaptations of it. The best known is the film by Kenneth Branagh titled "Henry V", which was released in 1989.



Picture 11. Henry V (1989) by Kenneth Branagh

Another piece of literature is an anonymous Elizabethan play titled "The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth" which tells about Henry's transformation into a warrior king and The Battle of Agincourt. It consists of 20 scenes. It is most likely that Shakespeare took inspiration from this play.

It starts off with Prince Henry, Tom, Ned and Jockey stealing 1000 pounds from Henry IV's two Receivers. The Receivers are threatened by Henry, and they leave him alone. Later, Chief Justice hears about Henry's antics at a tavern and they went to where he caused a drunken street brawl and one of the people there recognized the Thief. Henry and the Thief are arrested. Henry is released on the behalf of his father. Later, Henry and his gang are insisting that the Thief should be released. After Justice refuses to release the Thief, they assault him. After that, Henry IV is lecturing his son about his bad behavior and tells him of his royal duties. Henry was ashamed and promised to change his lifestyle. Later on, Henry V becomes the king, and he sets off to France. The rest of the book is about The Battle of Agincourt. The final scene is about Henry and Charles discussing about who's the heir to the throne and Henry and Katherine's wedding day.

He is a minor character in a sequel to Shakespeare's "Henry IV, Part 2" known as "Falstaff's wedding" by William Kenrick. He is a minor character in Georgette Hayer's "Simon the Coldheart" and is also a minor character in "Agincourt" by Bernard Cornwell. He plays the main character in one of the modern pieces of literature, "Good King Harry" by Denise Giardina.

Methodology of The Work

I have spent a lot of time on this essay. I chose to write about Henry V when I stumbled upon a YouTube video discussing The Battle of Agincourt. I really admired Henry for his ruthless character and strategic mindset. I began writing on January 2nd and completed it February 28th. For writing this paper, I have relied on internet. In a separate document I have written all information that I could find about Henry V and read the summarized "Henry V" by Shakespeare and the complete "The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth" by an anonymous writer. After doing all of that, I started writing the paper. I used all the information I gathered and put it into a research paper. Along the way, there were some information gaps that I missed, so I had to gather more information to fill those gaps. I verified the information I gathered by cross-referencing multiple websites, all of which corroborated the same details.

Results of Research and Discussion

The information that is known about Henry V is vague and there is much uncertainty surrounding Henry's history. The exact date of birth and death is not known and a lot of the sources I have read have different information about it. There is not any detailed information about his battles other than The Battle of Agincourt and most of the writers have only written about The Battle of Agincourt while not writing anything about his other battles. Only surface information is known about his early political involvement and the big part of information about Henry is from governmental records, chronicles, diplomatic correspondence and accounts of eyewitnesses. A big part of the information about Henry is from Shakespeare's "Henry V". Even though Shakespeare used artistic liberty for dramatic effect, we still gained substantial insight about Henry. Something that puzzles me is that many sources say that Chancery English started being used during the reign of Henry VI, but there are evidences of it being used during the reign of Henry V. This is a big deal because research shows that Chancery English is the origin of Standard Written English. There are also many inconsistencies with dates among many sources, but that is to be expected because many of the dates we know about are from many government documents and literature.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Henry V's remarkable life and reign, as explored in this research paper, offer valuable insights into medieval kingship, military strategy, and political ambition. From his early

years to his ascension to the English throne and his ambitious campaigns in France, Henry V's story is one of resilience, determination, and strategic genius.

As we consider the impact of Henry V's reign on English history and his enduring legacy, we gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of leadership and the pursuit of greatness. His portrayal in literature and cultural representations further enriches our understanding of his character and achievements.

In summary, Henry V's legacy continues to inspire generations, reminding us of the profound influence that individuals can have on the course of history. As we reflect on his life and accomplishments, let us draw lessons from his example and strive to emulate his dedication, courage, and vision in our own endeavors.

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