**King Henry VII**

King Henry VII was the first English monarch from the House of Tudor, having won the crown in battle. The Tudors include some of the most famous and important monarchs in English history

**I.Early Life:**

 Henry Tudor was born in Wales, on 28th January 1457. His mother was Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and his father, who died three months before his birth, was Edmund Tudor, 1st Earl of Richmond. Henry was a descendant of Edward III, King of England from 1327 to 1377, but his claim to the throne was weaker than many others.

**II.Wars of the Roses**

 Between 1455 and 1487, a civil war for the control of the throne swept through England. The two houses of York, associated with a white rose, and Lancaster, associated with a red rose, engaged in numerous battles in the hope of claiming power. After the deaths of many high ranked members of both houses, Henry Tudor became the most highly ranked member of the House of Lancaster. After a House of York victory where Richard III was crowned king, Henry was able to raise a strong force, defeat the Yorkists at the Battle of Bosworth field, claim the throne as his own and end the civil war. Henry was crowned King Henry VII of England in 1485. In order to try and keep the peace, Henry married Elizabeth of York, the daughter of the Yorkist king, Edward IV, in 1486. To show the union of the houses, the Tudor rose, showing both red and white roses, was created. At that time, royal marriages were often arranged to unite countries or parts of countries.

**III. Life as Monarch**

 As king, Henry faced many challenges to his throne. Despite marrying Elizabeth, there were still threats of Yorkist plots against him from many powerful nobles. Many uprisings against his rule were defeated and it was only towards the end of his reign that Henry began to feel secure in his position. King Henry VII Henry had very little experience suited to ruling a kingdom. He had no experience of running estates or managing finances and relied heavily on his advisors. Despite this, Henry was seen as a very sensible king who began to make England a wealthy kingdom again. Henry was not much of a military man and wanted to keep the peace wherever possible. He did, however, mount an invasion of Brittany in France in 1492 so France would not support any other pretenders to the English throne. Aside from this, Henry’s reign was largely peaceful; he made treaties with Scotland, the Vatican and Spain.

 Early in his reign, Henry decided to try an invasion of France. His invasion was not successful. After a while, Henry and the French king sat down at a peace conference. There they decided to settle the problem with money instead of with more battles. England withdrew its forces from French territory, and France paid a large sum of money to England. With all of this money, King Henry's government was in a good position to take on other projects. Henry spent some of England's money on education. He brought in scholars from France who could pass on their knowledge to people in England. In his court, scholars from Italy and other countries were welcome too. Through these scholars, the Renaissance began to spread to England. King Henry was also interested in exploration. Everyone had heard about Christopher Columbus's voyage in 1492. Columbus had sailed for Spain, but Henry thought that it would be a good idea for England to get in on some explorations too. After all, England had excellent ships and was known as a seafaring nation. Then, King Henry heard that John Cabot was looking for someone to sponsor a voyage of exploration. Cabot was Name: edHelper from Italy; his real name was Giovanni Cabotto. His home country had not been interested in sending him on an exploration. So Cabot had gone to Spain, the country of Christopher Columbus, but Spain was not interested in his plan either. Finally, Cabot went to England. There, King Henry was happy to see the explorer, and signed him on to sail for England. Cabot set sail on his famous voyage to North America flying the English flag.

**IV. Succession and Legacy**:

Henry and Elizabeth had four children: two sons, Arthur and Henry, and two daughters, Mary and Margaret. Arthur was educated in the skills that he needed to succeed his father as king. Sadly, Arthur died in 1502 at the age of 15 and Henry, the king’s younger son, was suddenly the heir to the throne and had a lot to learn in a short space of time. In 1503, Elizabeth died and Henry was left devastated. Henry was very much a family man, buying his children musical instruments to learn and spent lots of time with his wife. After he lost Elizabeth, however, Henry spent less time with his children and his health started to fail. In 1509, Henry fell ill with tuberculosis and died on 21st April. His son, Henry, succeeded him as king, becoming King Henry VIII, one of the most famous monarchs in history. In founding the Tudor dynasty, Henry created one of the most important families in royal history. His son, Henry VIII, and his granddaughter, Elizabeth I, are remembered as two of the greatest English monarchs.