

“Perkin Warbeck’s conspiracy posed the greatest threat to Henry VII’s rule.” To what extent do you agree with this view?

Even though I do agree that Perkin Warbeck posed the greatest threat to Henry VII, other events did trigger Henry to take action in order to save his throne. The longevity of Warbeck’s rebellion, eight years in fact, showed how much of a threat Warbeck was to the monarch.

In 1490, Warbeck was taken to Ireland to impersonate Richard Duke of York, who had a better claim to the throne than Henry. Rumours circulated that Richard Duke of York could be anywhere, there was no evidence to disprove this, so Henry may have a bigger problem than he may of thought. Also, Warbeck was sent to the court of the Margaret of Burgundy. This is a huge factor in Warbeck’s favour as she is the aunt of Richard Duke of York. Anything she claimed, had to be supported as she was a direct relation to Richard. Margaret also had the funds to support Warbeck in troops and artillery, she had the potential to be very damaging to Henry VII.

One of the most important factors, in my opinion, is Sir William Stanley. If Henry couldn’t trust his own step uncle, someone who had supported Henry in the Battle of Bosworth and a close relative, who could Henry trust? Even though Henry was victorious in the Battle of Bosworth, it may of made his throne safer, but certainly not as secure, as this proved. With him being one of the main conspirators against Henry, Stanley was executed in February 1495. It may have not been a huge impact directly on Warbeck, but it showed the lack of trust within royal family, which could maybe could be exploited to overthrow the monarch.

Furthermore, even though Warbeck didn’t have much support in Britain, his foreign backing was very creditable indeed. For example, from France and Brittany. This transformed Warbeck from a pest, to a constant irritant to Henry VII. Also, the fact that Henry had a lack of support from France and Warbeck did was a worry for the monarch. France was very near British ports, a dangerous position for Henry, and the fact he grew up in Brittany means he would be very desperate not to give it up. This showed that Warbeck was getting under Henry’s skin. Leading the monarch placing a trade ban with Flanders, even though it could have a damaging effect on Britain’s cloth trade. Showing the considerable threat that Warbeck was to Henry, in my opinion.

On the other hand, it can’t be forgotten the impact Lambert Simnel had on Henry VII. The fact that Simnel caused a battle to break out (The Battle of East Stoke), shows he must have had a considerable effect on Henry. In reality, the rebellion was deadly serious and came very close to success. Simnel had the backing of the Earl of Lincoln and Margaret of Burgundy was involved again, providing 2,000 men that contributed to Simnel’s army of 8,000. Although Simnel was unable to add sufficient followers to the army of mercenaries which he had landed in England, he aimed to be passed on as the Earl of Warwick and usurp Henry VII. The Earl of Warwick had a better claim to the throne than Henry, so in retaliation, Henry paraded the real Earl of Warwick throughout the streets of London. Now this would