HENRY VII'S
RELATIONS WITH SCOTLAND
AND IRELAND
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AND IRELAND
1485–1498

BY
AGNES CONWAY, M.A. (Lond.)
Associate of Newnham College

With a Chapter on
THE ACTS OF THE POYNINGS PARLIAMENT
1494–95
by EDMUND CURTIS, M.A.
Professor of Modern History
Trinity College
Dublin

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TO

THE MEMORY OF

SIR HENRY WYATT

OF ALLINGTON CASTLE

c. 1460–1537
PREFACE

This is a dry book, but to me it has been an adventure; a detective story lasting four years. The accident of a May day, with swans nesting in a moat, sent me to live in Henry Wyatt’s Castle. My quarry was his career. I wished to know why the Wyatt family MSS stated that the Earl of Richmond owed him his crown; why Henry VII and Henry VIII paid him a pension for over thirty years towards his ransom “from the cruel hands of the Scots”; and why he was the one Englishman mentioned in the Scottish Trial in Parliament of James III’s supporters. The search, lightly undertaken, led me to chase his name through the royal accounts, printed and unprinted. The clues began to appear and with them some light on obscure aspects of the reign of Henry VII.

The motor thieves, who stole my luggage with the finished manuscript inside, threw the loose leaves over the wall of a distant garden. It did not rain. Fate preserved and returned the book; and now I send it forth with thanks to all who have helped me: to Professor Curtis for encouragement and the clue to Irish words and place-names; to the members of the Staff of Professor Pollard’s Seminar at the Institute of Historical Research, in particular Mr C. H. Williams; to the officials of the Public Record Office and British Museum; and to Mr Herbert Wood, late of the Dublin Record Office. Since its birth as a thesis, the book has been completely remodelled.

A. C.

ALLINGTON CASTLE
NEAR MAIDSTONE

July 1931

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ABBREVIATIONS

B.M. British Museum.
E.H.R. English Historical Review.
P.R.O. Public Record Office.
V.C.H. Victoria County History.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

To compress this bibliography into a reasonable compass all works yielding negative results have been omitted, with the exception of the Account Books of the Treasurer of the King’s Chamber, of which I have tried to compile a complete list. MSS and printed books, slightly used, have been dealt with in the footnotes. The bibliography is divided into four sections, England, the Border, Scotland and Ireland.

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A. Printed


B. Unprinted


II. Parliament


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B. Unprinted
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September 30, 1489–Oct. 1, 1495 (Lovell). Heron’s hand-
writing. Vol. III. October 1, 1502–October 1, 1505 (John Heron). ¹

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7099.

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before October 1, 1495.)

2. King’s Book of Payments. October 1, 1495–October 1, 1497.

3. King’s Book of Payments. October 1, 1497–October 1, 1499.
P.R.O. E 101, 414/16.

4. King’s Book of Payments. October 1, 1499–October 8, 1502.
P.R.O. E 101, 415/3.

A preliminary copy, in Heron’s handwriting. At the end are lists
of the King’s Revenues, Recognizances, Obligations, Tayles, Debts,
Wards, Levry of lands and Memoranda.

5. An imperfect account for 20 Henry VII. P.R.O. E 101, 415/16.

¹ Heron succeeded Sir Thomas Lovell as Treasurer of the Chamber about
1492 (Newton, E.H.R. xxxii, 355).
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   A beautifully written volume, in Heron’s handwriting, initiated throughout by Henry VII, containing totals of weekly payments from October 1, 1499, to April 1, 1505. From April 1, 1505, to September 19, 1505, it contains daily payments. The lists at the end are the same as in E 101, 415/3. (Add. MSS 7099 is an incomplete copy of numbers 2, 3 and 4, and of an earlier lost book. Selections from Add. MSS 7099 are printed in Samuel Bentley’s Excerpta Historica, 1833, pp. 85–123, and in the appendix to Robert Henry’s History of Great Britain, 1824.)


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(Ferrarius, a native of Piedmont, first visited Scotland in 1528. While Abbot of Kinloss (1531–7) he wrote his continuation of Bocce’s *History of Scotland*, from 1451 to 1489. Lang has analysed his contradictory views on James III’s character in his *History of Scotland*, 1, 359–60.)

II. NON-COMTEMPORARY, IN THE ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE


Buchanan, George. *Rerum Scotorum Historia*. Translated by James Aikman. 1827. 4 vols. Glasgow. (1506–82. The history was published in 1582.)


Drummond of Hawthornden (1585–1649) has never been considered an important authority for the reign of James III. But after his account of the death of the young Earl of Mar in 1479, in which he maintains that he “died unawares amongst the hands of his best friends and servants”, in spite of what some writers have written to the contrary, he continues in these words: “But no such faith should be given to them as to Bishop William Elphinstone, who was living in that time, and whose records we have followed, who for his place could not but know, and for his possession would not but deliver the very Truth”. William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen (1431–1514), is known to have collected materials for a history of Scotland “from the first rise of the nation till his own time”1 upon which his pupil, Bocce, based his history which stopped in 1461. The collections themselves do not appear to have survived and the chronicle of James I in the Fairfax MSS at the Bodleian, attributed to Elphinstone, was written by Maurice de Buchanan in 1461.2 But Crawford,3 in the eighteenth century, wrote that “My learned and worthy friend, Dr George Mackenzie (1669–1725)4 tells us that General Fairfax got his MSS from one Mr Drummond, a brother of Hawthornden, in 1650; “perhaps it was his brother’s, the learned Mr Drummond our Historian, who died much about this time”. If Fairfax owned

3 Author of *Lives of the Scots Writers*.

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Elphinstone MSS which are not now among his papers at the Bodleian, but had been the property of Drummond of Hawthornden. Drummond’s history may be a more important source for the period of James III and IV than has been recognised. The closeness with which Drummond’s narrative is corroborated by record evidence is striking; in wealth of detail and a certain sense of life it resembles the chronicle of a contemporary. It is strange that it has found no editor and must still be read in an edition of 1711.

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INTRODUCTION

By 1498 Henry VII’s work was done. The Yorkist pretenders were quelled, and the throne secure. Peace after long years of negotiation had been made with Scotland. Ireland, disciplined by the Poyning Administration, had entered upon a temporary period of calm. The evils of feudalism were checked, and the departments of government reorganised, working smoothly, and in the hands of well-trained officials whom the King could trust, linked to him by the bonds of early struggles in adversity. Six millions of gold in ducats (according to the Milanese envoy) was piled up in his coffers. There is little to relate of the latter years of his reign. Peace and tranquillity leave no landmarks.

This result had been achieved in thirteen years by ceaseless attention to detail. Henry knew of the movements of the Yorkist conspirators in their early stages, through the agents whom he kept on the Border, in Ireland, and at the Courts of Charles VIII, Maximilian and Margaret of Burgundy. He was never taken by surprise. Perkin Warbeck, the most formidable of his enemies, was outplayed before each of his five invasions. Only by following the King’s preparations and negotiations in detail can his finger be felt continuously on the pulse of danger.

The following pages make this attempt in the case of his relations with Scotland and Ireland. Scotland had been England’s enemy for 200 years. During periods of ineffective monarchy, strong Scottish barons had been accustomed to seek England’s help against a weak King; and Edward IV and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, backed James III’s rebels in Scotland. James retaliated in due course by supporting the Earl of Richmond’s bid for the English crown.

No period in Anglo-Scottish history is more obscure than the last years of the reign of this unhappy King, murdered in 1488, while fleeing from the battlefield of Sauchieburn, defeated by a rebel faction that gathered around his son. The following pages show that Henry VII was in truth invited to invade Scotland and rid James III of his rebellious nobles, and that his best friends were justly condemned by the first Parliament of his successor for their treachery in “the inbringing of English-
INTRODUCTION

men”. The parts played in the struggle by James III’s attained favourites, John Ramsay, Lord Bothwell, and his half-uncle James, Earl of Buchan, both of whom afterwards acted as Henry VII’s spies at the Court of James IV, have never been explained. Yet their doings can be followed over a period of twelve years, during which they were continuously associated with Henry Wyatt, one of Henry VII’s “new men” and trusted officials, who served the Tudors in office for fifty years and was the father of Sir Thomas Wyatt, the poet.

In the first chapter the movements of Bothwell, Buchan and Wyatt form the links in a long chain of evidence proving the close relations of Henry VII with James III. Henry’s policy was perfectly consistent. Rymer’s chaotic misdating, in Foedera, of Anglo-Scottish documents from the Scots Rolls, has misled all historians of the period. The unravelling of the story involves a recapitulation of the stages of successive diplomatic negotiations and is tedious and difficult, though allowable, perhaps, if in the end light can be thrown upon a hitherto baffling episode.

Henry VII’s dealings with Ireland from 1491 to 1496 have never been closely investigated. The publication in 1923 of the Public Record Office List of Diplomatic Documents has made accessible a number of previously unknown Irish indentures and oaths of allegiance, facilitating the reconstruction of the march of events in the years immediately preceding Henry VII’s experiment of direct rule in Ireland through the administration of Poyning. A detailed analysis of the unpublished accounts of the two years’ régime, audited by Hattecliffe and Wyatt, throws new light upon the political history of the period; and the study of some unnoticed contemporary letters has led to a somewhat new interpretation of the causes and results of the administration. The text of the unprinted and burnt Poyning statutes has been partially re-established from new sources, the acts of the Parliament as a whole being dealt with in a chapter by Professor Curtis.

In any study of Henry VII’s gradual domination of the Yorkist party, his Scottish and Irish activities must be co-ordinated at every step. Their history is one and indivisible, till the capture of Perkin Warbeck in 1497 rounded off the critical