

Henry V is probably medieval England's most well-known and admired king, famed for his victory at Agincourt. Yet Henry's invasion of France in August 1415 represented a huge gamble. As heir to the throne he had been a failure, cast into the political wilderness amid rumours that he planned to depose his father. Despite a complete change of character as king, founding monasteries and enforcing the law, little had gone right since. He was insecure in his kingdom, his reputation low.

Agincourt was a battle that Henry should not have won – but he did. Within five years, he was regent of France. In this vivid new interpretation, Anne Curry explores how Henry's hyperactive efforts to expunge his past failures defined his kingship, and how his astonishing success at Agincourt transformed his standing in the eyes of his contemporaries, and of all generations to come.