

The Battle of Bosworth Field - narrative

King Richard's 9000 soldiers were well rested and were waiting on Ambion Hill while Henry, who had only half as many troops, was having a bit of trouble getting them to line themselves up on the rough ground below. Instead of charging at Henry straight away, Richard waited until Henry was ready. As always the archers started shooting first. A barrage of whizzing arrows criss-crossed the sky and soldiers in each of the front lines began to drop to the ground with terrible cries. There was an explosion of smoke and the boom of cannon fire, but with little effect. Their arrows spent, Henry's men dropped their longbows and charged up towards Richard's battle lines, yelling hoarsely and waving their weapons in the air. There was an almighty clash as the two sides met and began chopping at each other with their poleaxes, hitting and stabbing furiously with daggers and swords, as wounded and dying were trampled underfoot.

Meanwhile two armies stood at the sidelines and watched. They belonged to Lord Stanley and the Earl of Northumberland. Lord Stanley wanted to fight on Henry's side but dare not, as King Richard had taken his son hostage in order to prevent this treason. The Earl of Northumberland, on the other hand, was just waiting to see who would win before deciding which side to fight on.

Henry's men pushed and fought so hard that Richards troops were at first forced back up the hill. But reinforcements quickly came from behind and it was the turn of Henry's troops to retreat. Slowly, slowly they were being forced to give ground. Henry realised he needed help and galloped off across the field, heading straight towards Lord Stanley. One of the men accompanying him carried Henry's colourful banner which flapped in the wind and caught Richard's attention. Seeing his enemy separated from the rest of his army, Richard instantly decided to lead a downhill charge in the hope of killing his enemy and ending the battle. Several hundred men of his household mounted their horses and together they charged past Stanley's army and took Henry by surprise, killing several of his men. The fighting was fierce and vicious: Richard's standard bearer had both his legs sliced off by a poleaxe. It was at this point that Lord Stanley ordered his men to attack Richard. In an instant he was cut off from his main army as 2500 axe-whirling, sword-wielding soldiers whirled around him, cutting his men down one by one. Richard himself was killed by a poleaxe. With the help of Stanley's army, Henry had won the battle and could now celebrate his victory.