



# Richard's three greatest achievements

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## Soldier

Aged 18, in his first full scale battle, Richard led the vanguard of his brother Edward's army at Barnet. He was slightly wounded and his squire was killed, but he held on and Edward emerged victorious. Richard again led the vanguard of Edward's triumphant army the following month at Tewkesbury.

Richard undertook the siege of Berwick in 1482 and it is due to him that since that time Berwick upon Tweed has been an English town.

## Statesman

Richard was the first king to take the Coronation Oath in English. His laws were published in English so they could be understood by more people than just the educated who could read Latin. He dispensed the same justice to rich and poor alike.

## Lawmaker

In his only parliament of 1484 Richard was responsible for several acts which involved the rights of the common man:-

**The Land Tenure Act** helped to safeguard men's property rights. It prevented them from having their property taken away from them, or being sold land that had already been sold or partially sold to someone else.

Richard introduced the system of **Bail**. It might be years before a case came to court, causing an innocent man to lie in jail for several years for a crime he had not committed.

Richard tried to get **honest and unbiased juries and to cut out some of the corruption in the law**. Officials were forbidden to choose any juror who was not in possession of freehold land worth 20 shillings a year. Sheriffs and bailiffs failing to obey this law were to be fined 40 shillings. All convictions made by unqualified juries were to be declared void.

Sally Henshaw

Richard III Society

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