



## Henry V

The Archbishop of Canterbury, worried over impending legislation that would effectively rob the Church in England of its power and wealth, convinces Henry V to forego this pursuit in favor of laying claim to France. Armed with a legal technicality, Henry means to take the throne of France by whatever means necessary. The Dauphin's insulting response—sending an ambassador with a gift of tennis balls—convinces Henry that the French will only respond to war; thus, he arranges for an army to invade France. However, rebellion has always seemed to follow when the king's away, and Henry makes certain that he leaves behind enough troops in England to quell any potential uprising. That leaves him with a relatively small invasion force.

In fact, Henry must deal with one plot before even crossing the Channel. Lords Cambridge, Scroop, and Grey are discovered to be conspiring to assassinate Henry (paid for by the French). Henry makes a very public example of all three, arresting them in person and seeing to their execution. The army then lays siege to Harfleur, capturing it after heavy losses in battle with the city's defenders. Henry attempts to take his army out of France before the onset of winter; however, now the French are certain that they can teach the young king a humiliating lesson on the field of battle. Henry is resolute, nonetheless. If the French want a decisive battle, they will have it.

While in camp, Henry disguises himself as a common soldier in order to mingle with his troops before the battle. There he talks candidly with his men, and they with him. The men may be leery of their king, but their willingness to battle the French army is undaunted. The next day at Agincourt, Henry makes the stirring St. Crispin's Day speech, knowing his army is outnumbered five to one. Aided mightily by the longbows of his archers, Henry makes the day a rout for the French. The French must now sue for peace, which Henry will grant—completely on his own terms, of course. According to the terms of the Treaty of Troyes, Henry will marry Princess Katherine of France and will be named as heir to the French throne. England and France will thus be united in peace.

### *Dramatis Personae*

*King Henry the Fifth*  
*Humphrey of Gloucester*  
*Duke of Bedford*  
*Duke of Exeter*  
*Duke of York*  
*Earls of Salisbury, Westmoreland, and Warwick*  
*Archbishop of Canterbury*  
*Bishop of Ely*  
*Earl of Cambridge*  
*Lord Scroop*  
*Sir Thomas Grey*  
*Sir Thomas Erpingham, Gower, Fluellen, Macmorris, Jamy*  
*Bates, Court, Williams*  
*Pistol, Nym, Bardolph*  
*Boy*  
*A Herald*  
*Charles the Sixth, King of France*  
*Lewis, the Dauphin*  
*Dukes of Burgundy, Orleans, and Bourbon*  
*The Constable of France*  
*Rambures and Grandpré*  
*Montjoy*  
*Governor of Harfleur*  
*Ambassadors to England*  
*Isabel, Queen of France*  
*Katherine, daughter of Charles and Isabel*  
*Alice*  
*Hostess of the tavern, wife of Pistol*  
*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Citizens*  
*Chorus*