

# Tudor Life

The Tudor Society Magazine

THE TUDOR  
SOCIETY

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March 2015

The “Usurpation”  
of Richard III

- John Ashdown-Hill

The Death of  
William, Lord Hastings

- Josephine Wilkinson

The Discovery of  
Richard III's mtDNA

- John Ashdown-Hill

Richard III &  
Elizabeth Woodville

- David Baldwin

Bosworth's  
Lost Commander

- Susan Fern

# Richard III SPECIAL



# Welcome!

March 2015



For all our new and old members alike, a huge welcome to this massive **102 page Richard III special edition** of Tudor Life magazine.

We've gone to town with articles looking at Richard III from a wide variety of perspectives for this issue – from the places he knew to the Princes in the Tower, and even the lady who made the silk tassels for his coronation.

Of course, our regular contributors have done a stunning job with their articles too – and you can be assured you're in for a feast of fascinating facts.

Don't forget that as a member of the Tudor Society your name is already down with a chance to win a huge 6-book give away. It's a thank you for your support. My fingers are crossed for you!



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# TudorLife

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## MY DISCOVERY OF RICHARD III'S MTDNA

by John Ashdown-Hill

**I**N 2004 I discovered the mtDNA of Richard III and his siblings. Prior to my research, no-one had ever really attempted to introduce science into research relating to Richard III and the house of York.

Initially, the impetus behind my innovative research was actually not directly associated with Richard III himself. The inspiration arose out of my participation in a conference held by the *Centre Européen d'Etudes Bourguignonnes* at Mechelen (Belgium) in 2003. This conference was to commemorate the quincentenary of the death and burial at Mechelen of Richard's elder sister, Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy<sup>1</sup> – later affectionately renamed 'the diabolical duchess' by her nephew-in-law, King Henry VII !

At the Mechelen conference Dr Paul De Win gave a presentation on the three sets of female bones which had been found in Mechelen in the general vicinity of Margaret of York's long lost tomb. The discussion which followed sought to explore how it might be possible to clarify whether or not any of these remains really were the bones of Margaret of York. I suggested that we should try to use DNA. As a result I was invited by my Belgian colleagues to attempt to produce a DNA sequence for Margaret.

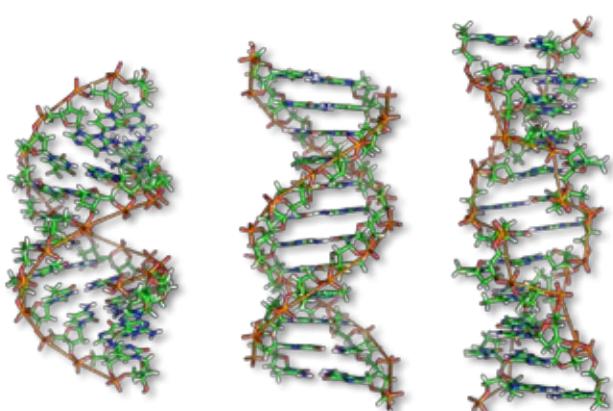
DNA was discovered in the twentieth century, and is now regularly used by the police at crime

scenes, in an attempt to identify the guilty party. But its use in historical contexts is very different from its forensic use. In a historical context one is not trying to prove that two separate DNA samples actually come from the same living individual, but that the DNA samples of two different people show that they were related. In the case of Margaret of York there was a 500 year time gap between her and any living relatives.

All living creatures have two kinds of DNA. Nuclear DNA is inherited 50% from the father and 50% from the mother. The result is jumbled up in the offspring. As a result, over several generations it becomes difficult to trace a relationship with ancestors. Most nuclear DNA would therefore be useless where there is a 500 year time gap. The only kind which might be used is the Y-chromosome. This is what makes boys boys. Girls don't have it. Therefore boys inherit their Y-chromosome from their father, unchanged. We shall return to this intriguing subject later. But for the moment we have to remember that Margaret of York was a girl. Therefore she had no Y-chromosome. Thus, it could not be used to try to identify her bones.

But the other kind of DNA is called mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). This is inherited by all children from their mother only. Thus mtDNA can be used over a 500 year time gap to confirm a family relationship. But it can only be traced in all-female lines of descent.

I therefore began trying to trace living female-line descendants of Cecily Neville, Duchess of York (mother of Richard III and his brothers and sisters), of Cecily's sisters, and of her female-line great aunts. A very large family tree developed on my PC! The work is complicated by the fact that traditionally women change their surnames when they marry. Nevertheless, by 2004 I had tracked one all-female line of descent from Cecily Neville's eldest daughter, Anne of York, Duchess of Exeter, to





1 Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy

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2 Joy Ibsen

a lady called Joy Brown (Ibsen), living in Canada<sup>2</sup>. Joy agreed to give a DNA sample, and her mtDNA sequence was revealed. Later (with her permission) I published it. But unfortunately, none of the bones found in Mechelen seemed to match it – so it appears that Margaret of York's remains are still missing.

Sadly, Joy died of cancer in 2008. But meanwhile my colleague in the LOOKING FOR RICHARD PROJECT, Philippa Langley, was using my DNA discovery – together with other new evidence which I had found relating to the burial of Richard III – for another purpose. She was trying to persuade rather reluctant authorities in Leicester to agree to a project to excavate the city's Social Services Department car park in quest of the lost body of King Richard III himself. Eventually her up-hill struggle with Leicester succeeded. In 2012 the dig took place – and on the very first day Richard III's leg bones were revealed. A week later his body was exhumed, and I was given the great honour of carrying the box containing what later proved to be his remains from the car park to the van which was going to take them away to the laboratory<sup>3</sup>. Philippa and I covered the box with my modern copy of the late medieval English royal standard. It was while I was carrying in my arms the bones of the dead

king that I first had the idea of commissioning the funeral crown which I later had made for Richard III, and which will be used at his reburial in March 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, following my discovery of the mtDNA sequence of Richard III and his siblings in 2004, I had been exploring other ways of using DNA in connection with late fifteenth-century English royal history. My attempts to find a living female-line descendant of Elizabeth Woodville or her sisters – thus revealing the mtDNA of the so-called 'Princes in the Tower' – was not successful. There appears to be no traceable living all-female line of descent from one of the Woodville sisters. However, a family tree showing close, all-female-line relatives of the 'princes' includes some interesting and well-known names.<sup>5</sup> I sought remains of some of these individuals, and located two locks of hair of Mary Tudor, Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk – the sister of Henry VIII. Mary's mtDNA would have been identical to that of her two lost uncles. I now have a sample of her hair, and it is still possible that one day this will reveal the mtDNA of the 'princes'.

I also began exploring sources for the Plantagenet Y-chromosome. This was not difficult, because male lines of descent are much better known than female lines. Although no-one alive today bears the surname 'Plantagenet', there are known male-line putative descendants of Edward III through his son, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The latter had four illegitimate children by his mistress (and later third wife), Catherine De Roët. These children were given the surname 'Beaufort'.

Although the legitimate male line of descent from the Beauforts is also extinct, an illegitimate male line of descent from Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset<sup>6</sup> leads to the Somerset family, the head of which is His Grace the present Duke of Beaufort. In 2006 I wrote to him asking whether he would consider giving a DNA sample for sequencing. Sadly he declined<sup>7</sup>. However, Burke's *Peerage* showed without the need for any detailed research that the Duke has a number of male-line cousins.

I made a list of ten of these living in the UK, in Australia, and in South Africa. And in September 2012, when the remains which proved to be Richard III had been discovered, I proposed to Dr Turi King, geneticist of the University of Leicester,

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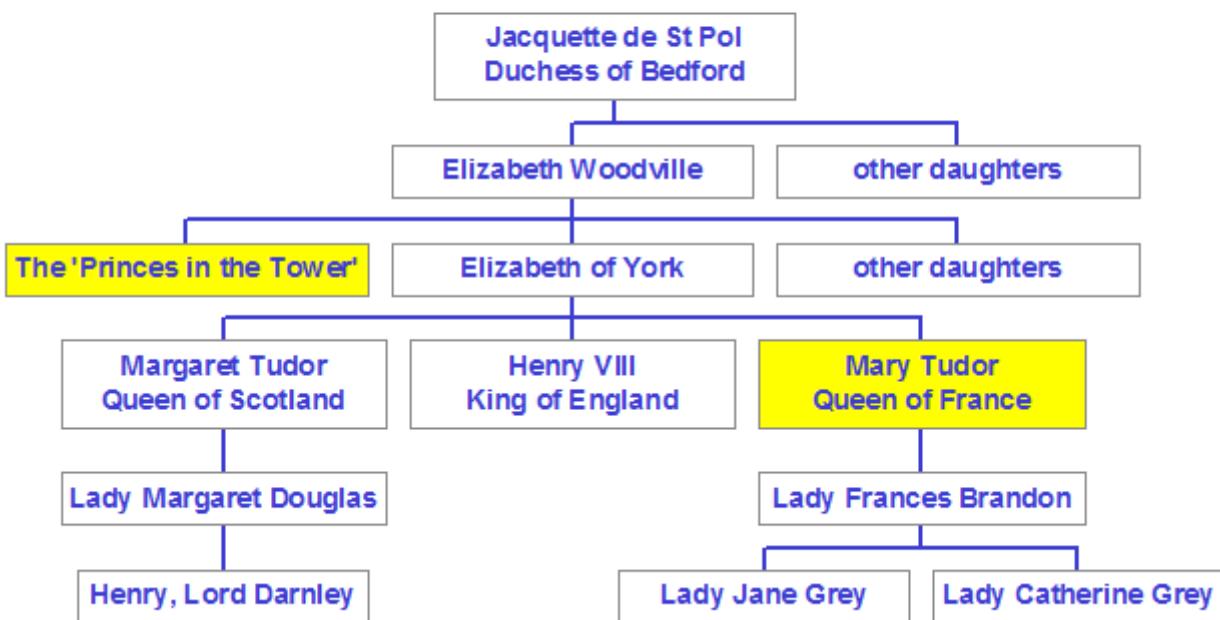


3 John Ashdown-Hill carrying the remains of Richard III



4 Richard III's funeral crown

## The mtDNA of the 'Princes in the Tower'



5 Close relatives who shared the mtDNA of the 'Princes in the Tower'



6 Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

16<sup>th</sup> June 2006

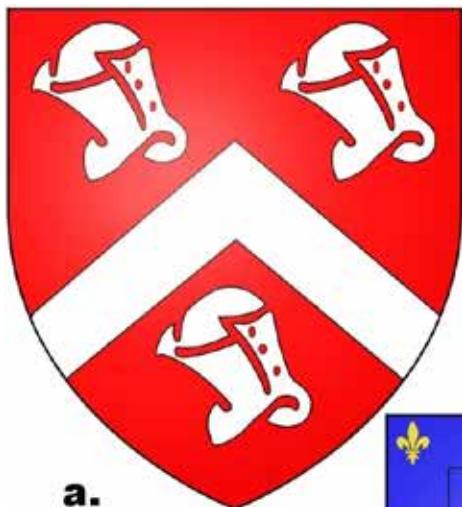
Dear Mr Ashdown-Hill,

Thank you for your letter but I am afraid I am not interested in participating in your investigation.

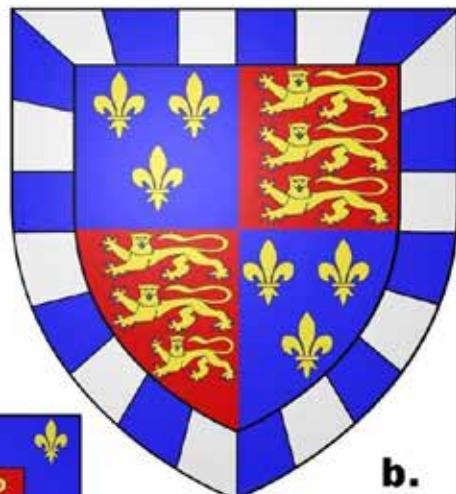
Yours sincerely,

*David Beaufort*

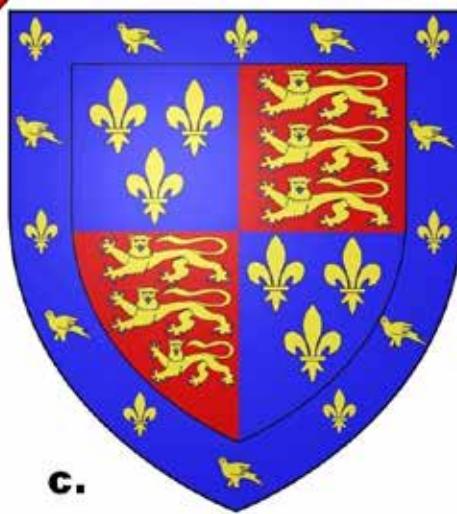
7 Letter from the Duke of Beaufort, 2006



a.



b.



c.

8 a. The arms of Owen Tudor, b. The arms of Edmund Beaufort, c. The arms of Edmund Tudor

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

that she might wish, not only to seek to match the mtDNA from the bones we had discovered with that of Joy Ibsen and her children, but also to explore whether the Y-chromosome of the Leicester bones matched that of the living male members of the Somerset family. Dr King was fascinated by this idea, and asked me to supply her with the names and addresses which I had assembled, so that she could contact the living male-line descendants on behalf of the University of Leicester. The results of Turri's testing have recently been published. Intriguingly, they show that the Y-chromosome of the living Somersets does NOT match that of the bones found in Leicester. Of course, this by no means disproves the identity of the Leicester bones as Richard III. For a number of reasons, the identity of those bones is now very well established.

What the Y-chromosome mismatch does show is that at some point the male line relationship between Richard and his Beaufort/Somerset cousins was broken by a wife (or mistress) who deceived her husband (or lover) and told lies about the paternity of her baby! Where and when precisely this happened, it is impossible to say at present. But this brings us face to face with one possible problem associated with the Y-chromosome in a historical context. Sadly, the person named as someone's father is not always the *biological* father! It also raises intriguing questions about the conduct of some of the ladies in the story.

Which leads us to my final point. Most people would assume that the Y-chromosome of the so-called Tudor royal family of the fifteenth- and sixteenth centuries would have been different from

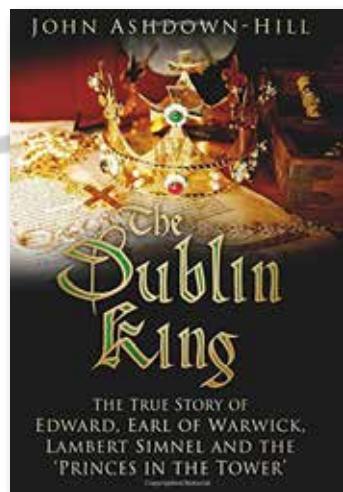
that of the Plantagenet family whom they replaced on the English throne. But I wonder about that. In my book, *Royal Marriage Secrets*, I resurrected the questions of what proof we have

- a) that Catherine of France (widow of Henry V and grandmother of Henry VII) ever married Owen Tudor, and
- b) that Owen Tudor was the father of Edmund Tudor.

Actually there is not a shred of evidence, either regarding the marriage, or regarding the paternity of Edmund Tudor. What is more, as I pointed out for the first time in *Royal Marriage Secrets*, we have the curious fact that Edmund and his brother Jasper did not use the arms of Owen Tudor, but a version of the royal arms to which they had no hereditary right – unless their father was someone other than Owen Tudor. At the same time I documented Catherine of France's known relationship with Edmund Beaufort, later Duke of Somerset – the ancestors of the present Duke of Beaufort, as mentioned above. Was *Edmund Beaufort* the father of the so-called Tudors? – And is that why they later used a version of the royal arms?<sup>8</sup>

If so, the Y-chromosome of Henry VII and Henry VIII would have been identical to that of the Beauforts - and *might* also have been identical to that of the Plantagenets! We must wait and see whether science is ever able to clear up this point. If so, maybe one day Tudor Tea Rooms, Tudor Art Galleries – and even Tudor Websites – may all need to be renamed.

**JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL**



**John Ashdown-Hill** is the author of many fascinating books and was integral in the DNA findings which helped identify the bones of Richard III. He is a renowned historian and has recently written “The Dublin King: The True Story of Edward Earl of Warwick, Lambert Simnel and the ‘Princes in the Tower’”, and has a forthcoming book “The Mythology of Richard III”, and “The Last Days of Richard III and the fate of his DNA: the Book that Inspired the Dig”.

# RICHARD III AND ELIZABETH WOODVILLE

by David Baldwin

**M**ost people who had dealings with Richard III fall neatly into one of three categories – friends, enemies, and doubtful friends who subsequently became enemies – but Elizabeth Woodville is different. She had every reason to fear and dislike her brother-in-law, but was apparently willing to cooperate with him and help promote his objectives. Their relationship is both complex and challenging, but an analysis of it is essential to an understanding of Richard's reign.

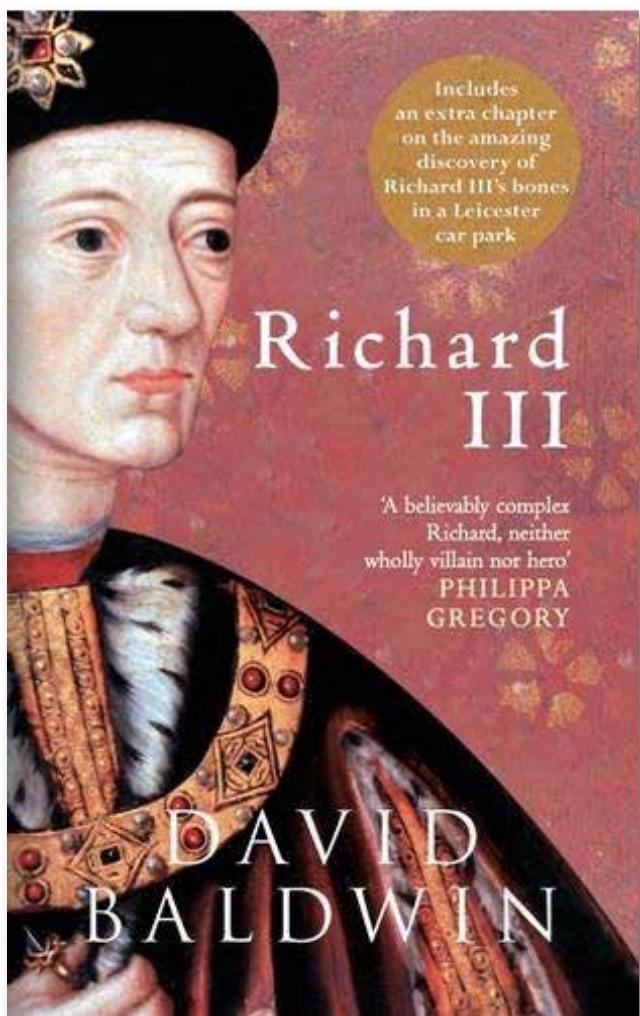
The upstart Woodvilles had few friends among the older noble families, but there is no evidence that Richard and Elizabeth were on bad terms in her husband Edward IV's lifetime. Paul Murray Kendall speaks of the 'beautiful and rapacious queen' behaving haughtily towards 'the undersized lad from Yorkshire with the awkward torso and solemn face',<sup>1</sup> but this is not the only occasion when Kendall's imagination runs away with him. Elizabeth would have seen Richard only sporadically in the 1470s and early 1480s, and there nothing to suggest that she nursed any particular ill-feeling towards the man who had shared her husband's exile in 1470-1 and was now his viceroy in northern England. By 1483 she had been queen for nearly two decades, and may have thought she had overcome much of the resentment caused by her secret marriage and the rewards given to her family and friends.

But all this changed when Edward IV died prematurely in April 1483. Edward V, Elizabeth's eldest son by the late King, was bound to favour those members of his mother's family who had been responsible for his upbringing, and it was Richard's fears for the future that led to the dramatic events at Northampton and Stony Stratford. Richard, encouraged, probably, by his ally, Henry Stafford,

Duke of Buckingham, seized Earl Rivers, Elizabeth's brother, and other members of her family who were escorting Edward to London, and would have executed them almost immediately if the Council had not objected. Elizabeth was probably as surprised by this turn of events as anyone, but she perceived the threat to her son's accession and took her other children into sanctuary without delay.

We do not know precisely when Richard first decided to take the throne as opposed to merely dominating Edward V's government, but the die was surely cast when he had William, Lord Hastings, Edward IV's close friend and until then his ally, seized and beheaded in the Tower on 13 June. Richard claimed that Hastings had been conspiring with Elizabeth against him, although there had been little love lost between them in King Edward's lifetime. Elizabeth blamed Hastings for her husband's licentiousness – she 'thought him secretly familiar with the King in wanton company' as Thomas More has it,<sup>2</sup> and the only thing that could have brought them together was the realisation that the boy-king's throne was in danger. Hastings was as devoted to young Edward as Elizabeth, and could call on the support of his powerful Midlands-based retinue. He was perhaps the only man with both

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the means and the resolution to frustrate Richard's plans.

Richard placed guards around the sanctuary to prevent Elizabeth and her children from escaping, and asked the Archbishop of Canterbury and a group of senior lords to persuade her to surrender Prince Richard, her younger son, to him. They tried various arguments, not least that the boy had no need of sanctuary because he had committed no offence; and eventually prevailed upon Elizabeth to let them take him. They told her that if she cooperated with them they would guarantee the child's safety, but that if she refused they would not seek to aid her in future. Prince Richard joined his elder brother in the Tower and their uncle was crowned on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

As soon as he became king Richard had Earl Rivers and Lord Richard Grey, Elizabeth's younger son by her first husband, executed, and this, together with the deposition of her elder son by King Edward and the bastardisation of her other children, can hardly have endeared him to her. Contempo-

raries agree that the last sightings of the two Princes were in the early autumn of 1483, and it would not be surprising if Elizabeth feared that they, too, had been killed. This is the only realistic interpretation that can be placed on her decision to join Lady Margaret Beaufort in a conspiracy designed to remove Richard and make Margaret's son Henry Tudor king in his place. They agreed that Henry would marry Elizabeth's eldest daughter, Elizabeth of York, after he had gained the kingdom, something the elder Elizabeth would surely never have countenanced if she thought that at least one of her royal sons was still living. But in the event 'Buckingham's Rebellion' (as it is rather inappropriately known), faltered, and Richard remained king for the time being.

The failure of the uprising, coming as it did hard on the discovery of her conspiracy with Hastings in the summer, placed Elizabeth in an extremely difficult position. King Richard had so far permitted her to remain in sanctuary notwithstanding the embarrassment her intransigence would have caused him, but might not allow the standoff to continue indefinitely. Even if he did, the refuge would, with the passage of time, have become increasingly cramped and uncomfortable for the six women who shared it, and it was possible that the Church authorities would themselves lose patience with a situation that threatened to sour their own relationship with the new ruler. There was no longer any hope of rescue, and so Elizabeth, having been formally deprived of her dower by the Parliament which met on 23 January 1484, and (we are told) 'after frequent entreaties as well as threats had been made use of'<sup>3</sup> bowed to the inevitable and entered into discussions with the new government. The result was an agreement that she and her daughters would leave sanctuary, and that, in return, the King would protect them, provide for them financially, and find suitable husbands for the five girls.

It has been suggested that Elizabeth would never have come to terms with Richard if he had killed the two princes (what mother could have done so?), and that this implies that she had discovered either that they were still living or that someone other than the King was responsible for their deaths. But she had certainly entered into the agreement in the knowledge that Richard had ordered the execution of her brother and the younger

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son of her first marriage, and may have been forced to accept that her continuing resistance was only harming the surviving members of her family. The fact that Richard was fifteen years younger than Elizabeth meant that there was unlikely to be another king in her lifetime, and whatever her feelings there was no option but to deal with him. She still had her understanding with Henry Tudor and the Lady Margaret, if, against the odds, Henry proved able to depose Richard, and in the meantime (and it was likely to be a long meantime) she had secured the best terms for herself and her daughters that she could.

It would be easy to assume that Elizabeth was a pragmatist – she took the view that whatever Richard had done to some members of her family it was only the survivors who now mattered – but this is apparently contradicted by a letter she wrote to the elder son of her first marriage, the Marquis of Dorset, urging him to abandon the exiled Henry Tudor and make his own peace with King Richard. It is possible that she was compelled to write this letter; but Dorset was so convinced by it that he tried to slip away from Henry and had to be forcibly brought back. The obvious conclusion is that Elizabeth was no longer just ‘doing what she had to do’, in so many words, but was going out of her way to help Richard. So had she genuinely forgiven him, possibly because she had discovered that at least one of the Princes was still living? Edward V was almost certainly ill and may have died from natural causes, but there was a story – ultimately unprovable – that Prince Richard had been given a new identity after being allowed to escape.

There is no record of where Elizabeth and her daughters lived after they emerged from sanctuary. Some of them may have been among the children mentioned in the ordinance drawn up to regulate the King’s northern household at Sheriff Hutton in Yorkshire in July, and Elizabeth of York was certainly invited to join the King and court to celebrate Christmas in 1484. The Croyland continuator commented disapprovingly on the ‘vain exchanges of apparel presented to queen Anne and the lady Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of the late king, being of similar colour and shape’,<sup>4</sup> but their intimacy may have been designed to convince onlookers that Richard was now fully reconciled with the Queen-Dowager and his late brother’s family. Queen

Anne seems to have fallen ill soon afterwards, and before long there were reports that Richard intended to marry the younger Elizabeth when his wife died. Sir George Buck claimed to have seen a letter which the Princess wrote to the Duke of Norfolk towards the end of February 1485 asking him to help facilitate her union with the King who she referred to as ‘her only joy and maker in [this] world’, declaring ‘that she was his in heart and in thoughts, in [body,] and in all’.<sup>5</sup> Various interpretations have been placed on this letter, but if the younger Elizabeth did hope to marry the King, her mother must surely have approved and encouraged the arrangement. Elizabeth Woodville may have seen this as an opportunity to recover much of her family’s former pre-eminence, but the union between Richard and her daughter never materialized. Croyland says that two of Richard’s closest advisors, Sir Richard Ratcliffe and William Catesby, told him to his face that the north had supported him principally out of loyalty to Anne, Warwick the Kingmaker’s daughter, and that any new wife must be acceptable to northern, Neville, sensibilities. Their real fear was probably that a Woodville restoration would lead to retribution for their involvement in the deaths of Earl Rivers and the others arrested at Stony Stratford, and the result was that the King was obliged to deny publicly, at an assembly held in the great hall of St John’s Hospital, that he had ever considered marrying his niece.

A marriage between Richard and Elizabeth would have frustrated the ambitions of Henry Tudor (Henry had sworn to marry the princess in a ceremony held in the presence of his followers at Rennes Cathedral on Christmas Day, 1483), and it is possible that it was Queen Elizabeth who persuaded the King, against his better judgment, that here was a way, perhaps the only way, of regaining the support of many of her late husband’s followers. If so, his rejection of the idea was another blow to her ambitions, but it again implies a readiness to come to terms with him that would have been almost unthinkable if she thought he had killed both her sons. On the other hand, King Richard could only have contemplated marrying the princess (thereby acknowledging her legitimacy) if her two brothers were dead or if it was now impossible for either of them to challenge his right to the throne.

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Once again, the evidence is tantalizingly inconclusive and could be interpreted either way.

Elizabeth Woodville effectively disappears from the record in the months between Queen Anne's death in March 1485 and Richard's defeat at the battle of Bosworth five months later. One of her brothers, Bishop Lionel, had died late in 1483, but two others, Edward and Richard, continued to support – and fight for – Henry Tudor. They, like Elizabeth, would have been alienated by the execution of their eldest brother, Anthony, and, unlike

Elizabeth, did not have the responsibility of caring for five daughters. If Elizabeth did what she did knowing that Richard had killed her sons she had a remarkable ability to keep a clear head and control her temper; but she may have felt that the dice was loaded against her and that using the King – as opposed to despising and resisting him – was her only practical course of action. This, I think, is the most satisfactory conclusion we can reach.

**DAVID BALDWIN**

### References

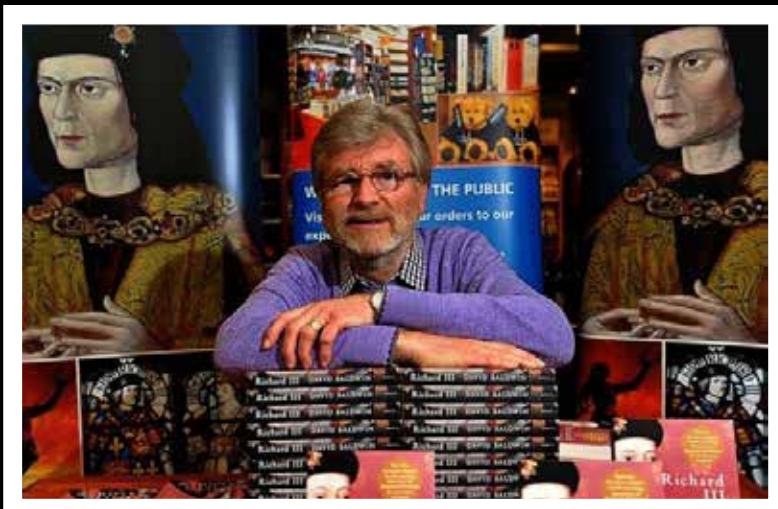
1. Paul Murray Kendall, *Richard III* (Folio Society, 2005), p. 52.
2. St Thomas More, *The History of King Richard III*, ed. R.S. Sylvester (1976), p. 11.
3. *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland*, ed. H.T. Riley (1856), p. 496.
4. *Croyland Chronicle*, p. 498.
5. Sir George Buck, *The History of King Richard III*, ed. A.N. Kincaid (Gloucester, 1979), p. 191.



**David Baldwin** is a medieval historian who has taught at the Universities of Leicester and Nottingham for many years. He is an expert on Richard III and the House of York, and has published critically acclaimed books on Richard III and the Princes in the Tower and on Elizabeth Woodville, queen of Edward IV, the first of the Yorkist kings. He lives in Leicester.



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RICHARD III

# **THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER**

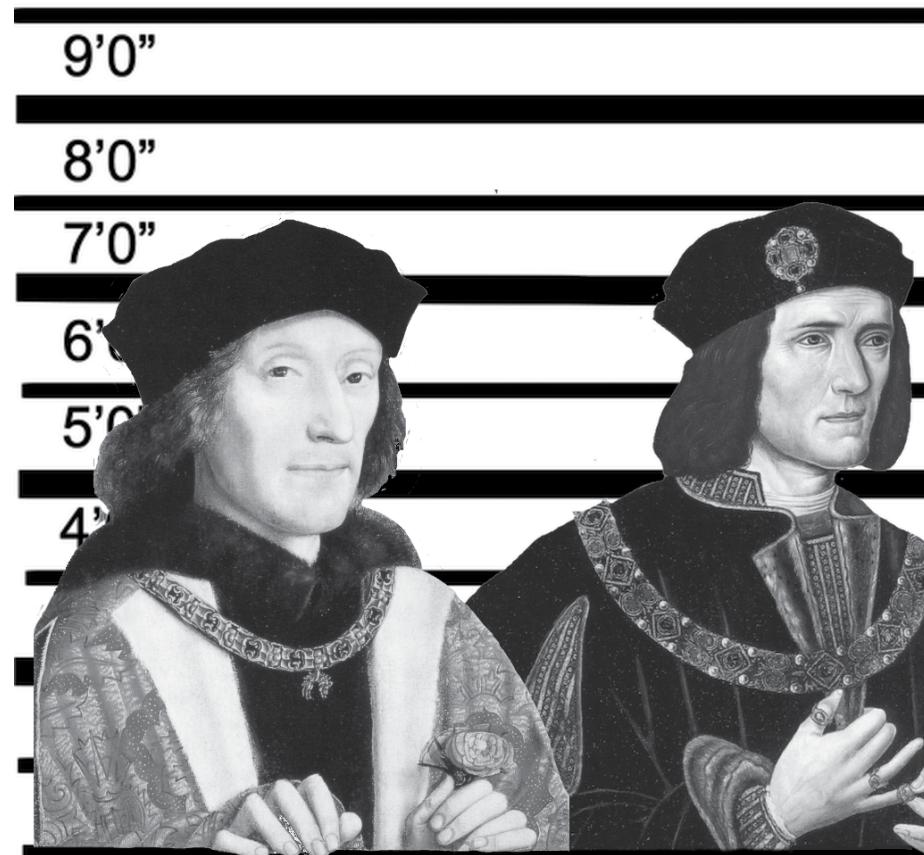
## **THE BIRTH OF A MYTH**

by Olga Hughes

### **THE USUAL SUSPECTS**

**K**ing Edward V and Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York, are remembered as little else than victims in a shocking coup. Few details are known about the short life of King Edward V, and even less about his younger brother, Richard Duke of York. In 1483 their father, King Edward IV, died unexpectedly. Prince Edward, now King Edward, began the long trip from Ludlow to London. On the way to London Edward's uncle Anthony Rivers and his half-brother Richard Grey were arrested by his uncle Richard of Gloucester.

Edward was escorted into London to await his coronation in the Bishop of London's Palace. His mother Elizabeth Wydeville, in her fear and confusion, fled to sanctuary with her five daughters and youngest son Richard. After much pressure and the personal assurance of Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, she allowed Richard to join his brother in the king's apartments in Tower of London to await the coronation. King Edward V's coronation never eventuated. Richard of Gloucester declared the marriage of Edward IV and Elizabeth Wydeville invalid, their children illegitimate, and ascended to the throne as King Richard III. The boys, to our knowledge, never left the Tower. By late 1483 they were never heard from again.



## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

King Edward V and Richard Duke of York may have disappeared five centuries ago, but they have not been easily forgotten. Their fate has caused centuries of fierce debate. Now popularly known as 'The Princes in the Tower', they are treated less like young men and more like a historical puzzle that must be solved, the subjects of the enduring question, who murdered the Princes in the Tower? There is one thing the endless arguments about the boys' fate have in common. There is no argument that can be backed with any concrete evidence. And each claim that one of the list of suspects was guilty of murdering the boys raises more and more questions.

Let us consider – if King Richard III had murdered his nephews to secure his position, then why did he not merely claim that they had died of natural causes, as his brother King Edward IV had done after he murdered his predecessor King Henry VI? Had he allowed their bodies to lie in state, proof of the boys' death would have halted any possibility of rebellions in their name, as Henry VI's murder had secured Edward IV's position.

If Henry Stafford, the Duke of Buckingham had murdered Edward V and Richard Duke of York, his nephews by marriage, why did Richard III not denounce him as a child killer when he executed Buckingham for treason, and put paid to the rumours that Richard himself had murdered them?

If Henry Tudor had murdered his brothers-in-law when he found them in the Tower of London after his victory at Bosworth, why did he spend so much time and effort attempting to find out the identities of Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck? If his mother Margaret Beaufort had had a hand in murdering the sons of her former Queen and long-time friend Elizabeth Wydeville, why could she not simply have told Henry that Simnel and Warbeck were impostors?

Moreover, why did Dowager Queen Elizabeth Wydeville remain silent after the death of King Richard III? And why did no one in the new Tudor monarchy try to pin the blame on him, when he would have been a most convenient scapegoat? Claims that Henry VII led an active campaign to accuse Richard III of the murder fall flat when the earlier well-known accounts by Polydore Vergil and Thomas More were published after his death. And both More and Vergil mention the rumours that the boys were still alive. Shakespeare's *The Tragedy of King Richard III* was written just over a hundred years after the Battle of Bosworth, and while it was arguably influential, it could hardly benefit the long-dead King Henry VII, who had suffered rebellions stemming from the belief that the boys were still alive in his reign.

Each of the 'usual suspects' had the opportunity to clear their own name, even by devious means. None of them tried to.

Historians have long shied away from theories that Edward and Richard may have survived the Tower of London. Such an idea is not viewed as scholarly, it is considered a wild conspiracy theory, born of the desire to exonerate Richard III, or of sheer sentimentality. Yet we can only conjecture the fate of Edward V and Richard Duke of York.



# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

We have never been offered any actual proof the boys were murdered at all. No written evidence, no recorded confessions, no bodies, no burial place.

The only real conspiracy here is a deafening silence.

## “SUCH A PESTILENT SERPENT IS AMBITION”

One of the biggest problems surrounding the mystery of the Princes in the Tower is the king at the centre of it, King Richard III. Richard III is one of the most controversial kings in English history, and there seems to be no end to the matter. The Richard III Society has been working for decades to try to rehabilitate his reputation, which swings wildly between murderous monster and shining saint. It is almost impossible to find even-handed studies of Richard III. ‘Traditionalist’ historians, as they are dubbed, are firmly convinced Richard deserves his dark reputation and will brook no opposition. Equally, attempts to exonerate Richard by mawkish means have been inadvertently detrimental to his cause.

The other problem is that very little documentation, either from Richard III’s deposition of his nephews or from his own reign, survives. We rely on a handful of chronicles, with few of them truly contemporary. In fact the majority of information used to prove that Edward V and Richard Duke of York were murdered by their uncle is largely based on a historical drama. The first thing that may spring to mind is Shakespeare’s legendary *The Tragedy of Richard III*. But Shakespeare was influenced by earlier accounts. In reality Saint Thomas More’s *The History of Richard III* has been far more influential.

Both *The History of Richard III* and *The Tragedy of Richard III* should be considered historical dramas. Yet it is purported, to this day, that Thomas More’s work can be used as a reliable source of facts. Thomas More was a great intellect and is still widely respected and revered. The irony is he also had a wonderful sense of humour, and as we have no evidence More was writing a history at all, he may have enjoyed the joke.

We are often reading excerpts from More’s *History* without even realising it. It is an easy trap, to fall into relying on More when there are no other accounts available. More’s account is convenient. He fills many gaps in our knowledge. His *History* is also captivating, a brilliant exercise in rhetoric and discourse against tyranny.

As Peter Ackroyd notes: “Since it is the primary source of Shakespeare’s play on the same subject, which fixed for ever the image of the malevolent hunchbacked king, it might also now qualify as myth.”<sup>1</sup>

There is no indication that Thomas More ever intended for his manuscript to be published.

It is often wondered why More never finished his *History*. That it was abandoned twenty years before his death should indicate he never finished it because it was of no significant importance to him. Can we call More a “Tudor propagandist”? Hardly. More loathed Henry VII, denouncing his “tyrannical” reign in a lavish coronation poem composed for Henry VIII.

Of More’s *History*, no original manuscript in his hand survives. The first complete edition published by his nephew, William Rastell, in 1557 relies on an original manuscript which has been lost. It is thought that Rastell gave the manuscript its title of *History*, not More himself. The earliest hand-written duplicates that survive are in both Latin and English, in various stages of completion.

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Although mostly similar, neither are a direct translation of each other, and both are incomplete and filled with errors.

More certainly did have access to historical sources for his story, but his work had various historical inaccuracies and quite a few inventions. A great scholar such as More can't be accused of merely overlooking these errors. They are less likely errors, and more likely inventions, inventions that serve to suit the narrative. Over the centuries historians have examined possible influences on More, such as Suetonius, Tacitus and Sallust; Seneca, Plautus and Euripides, the medieval mystery plays that More himself loved to write and act in as a young boy, and the popular view that *The History of King Richard III* was an *exemplum*, or moral anecdote.<sup>2</sup>

Ackroyd also makes an interesting observation that More's work may have been designed as a rhetorical and grammatical exercise, as he had begun composing it when he started teaching at Oxford. Ackroyd notes that "It may have been the basis of exercises given to his own school or even to the boys of St Paul's: there is a sudden reference to a 'scole master of Poules' for no good reason." He also speculates that More's inclusion of the life of Edward IV's mistress Elizabeth "Jane" Shore may have been designed as a morality tale for his daughters, considering he portrayed Jane end her life in poverty and begging for alms. Jane was the daughter of a well-off merchant and had made a good marriage after Edward IV's death, so this is unlikely. Yet as a moral lesson, the tale of a fallen woman serves its purpose.<sup>3</sup>

But despite all of this critical examination of More's work as a historical drama or *exemplum*, for many years certain historians have selectively used one of More's phrases as proof that King Richard III murdered his nephews and buried them in the Tower of London. And you have probably heard this tale before.

### "AT THE STAYRE FOOTE, METELY DEPE IN THE GROUNDE"

There have actually been two sets of children's skeletons discovered in the Tower of London that were thought to have belonged to Edward V and Richard Duke of York. There is an old story of a pair of skeletons found in a 'walled-up room' in the Tower of London in the early 1600s. A note, dated 17 August 1647, is written on the flyleaf of a 1641 manuscript of Thomas More's *History*. While Helen Maurer has rigorously examined the alleged discovery in her excellent article, *Bones in the Tower: A Discussion of Time Place and Circumstance*, she notes that this particular story was dismissed because the bones were in "the wrong place at the wrong time." The first discovery may have been ignored because it did not fit with the more compelling account in More's *History*, that the boys were buried "at the stayre foote, metely depe in the grounde under a great heape of stones."

This sentence has captured the imagination of many. What many writers do not include is the next part of More's account. More follows on to tell us that King Richard III, "allowed not, as I have heard, the burying in so vile a corner, saying that he woulde have them buried in a better place, because they were a kinges sonnes... Wherupon they say that a prieste of syr Robert Brakenbury toke vp the bodyes again, and secretelye entered them insuch place, as by the occasion of his deathe, which he onely knew it, could never synce come to light."

Strangely the 1674 discovery of a pair of children's skeletons, found when workmen were demolishing the staircase leading to the White Tower in the Tower of London, has somehow given more weight to More's account. Or



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perhaps the first part of More's account gave more weight to it. A report of the discovery first appeared in Francis Sandford's *Genealogical History of the Kings of England* published in 1677.

"Upon Friday the ... day of July, An. 1674 ...in order to the rebuilding of the several Offices in the Tower, and to clear the White Tower of all contiguous buildings, digging down the stairs which led from the King's Lodgings, to the chapel in the said Tower, about ten foot in the ground were found the bones of two striplings in (as it seemed) a wooden chest, which upon the survey were found proportionable to ages of those two brothers viz. About thirteen and eleven years. The skull of one being entire, the other broken, as were indeed many of the other bones, also the chest, by the violence of the labourers, who....cast the rubbish and them away together, wherefore they were caused to sift the rubbish and by that means preserved all the bones. The circumstances of the story being considered and the same often discoursed with Sir Thomas Chichley, Master of the Ordinance, by whose industry the new buildings were then in carrying on, and by whom the matter was reported to the King: upon the presumptions that these were the Bones of the said Princes..." The first problem with this discovery is the soil level. A level of ten feet indicates that the remains must have been much older than 200 years. There have been ancient remains found in the Tower before, and as late as 1977 the skeleton of a child found in the Tower was dated to the Iron Age. A hasty grave could not have been dug deeper than a foot or two. In 1674 it took a team of workmen to dismantle the staircase. The remains were found at foundation level. This depth would have required scaffolding, and the digging itself would have taken days. The soil level could have risen no more than a couple of feet between 1483 and 1674. Annette Carson concludes that the latest possible burial date for the remains found in the White Tower would be 1066.<sup>4</sup>

Charles II did not have the remains reinterred immediately. In fact they languished until a warrant was issued in 1677 ordering an urn to be made for '*the supposed bodyes of ye two Princes*'. The wording would indicate that the remains were not thought to be that of Edward V and Richard Duke of York with absolute certainty. The sudden speed with which this belated interment was arranged saw chicken and fish bones and three rusty nails cobbled into the urn along with the remains of the two children, clearly debris from their sojourn on the rubbish heap. Maurer notes that, taking the uncertainty of Charles's succession into account, the remains "made touching symbols of the evils of deposition and thwarted succession" and the sudden decision to inter the remains was a "political act, fraught with a political message for Charles's own time."<sup>5</sup> The inscription on the urn describes Richard III as '*their perfidious uncle, Richard the Usurper*'.

An examination was conducted on the bones in 1933 by Lawrence Tanner, Keeper of the Monuments at Westminster Abbey, Professor William Wright, President of the Anatomical Society of Great Britain and Dr George Northcroft, president of the Dental Association.

Among other things they concluded that they were the bones of two children, the eldest aged twelve to thirteen and the younger nine to eleven. Yet they failed to determine the sex of the skeletons, a fundamental piece of information.

But we needn't go into any great detail about the examination of 1933. The presence of two children's skeletons proves very little. What should be made clear is that we cannot use More's account as historical evidence that Edward V and Richard Duke of York were murdered in the Tower of London and buried at the foot of the stairs in the White Tower, because the account is fictional. And even in this fictional account More himself did not come to this conclusion. More said they were taken from their hastily-dug grave at the foot of the stairs and reburied in a secret location, with the only man who knew their whereabouts then rather conveniently dying.

We can see that, even in 1677, these remains were not thought to be the remains of Edward V and Richard Duke of York beyond all reasonable doubt. We can see that the depth of the burial does not indicate the remains were almost 200 years old, but much older. It is evident that More's story somehow influenced the idea that they belong to the boys, but that Charles II was probably sending a political message against deposition with his own succession in doubt. We know that the sex of the two skeletons was not determined in the examination in 1933.

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We have no archaeological evidence. We have no scientific proof. Moreover, we have no guarantee that any DNA tests will ever produce results.

So it cannot be said with any certainty whatsoever that the remains in Westminster Abbey belong to Edward V and Richard Duke of York. In fact it can be said with far more certainty that they do not. We should not be adopting the romantic notions of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Edward V's and Richard Duke of York's graves have not been discovered anywhere, let alone in the Tower of London, and their remains do not lie in Westminster Abbey.

The absence of their remains, of course, does not prove that the boys survived their uncle Richard III's reign. This is where the real mystery begins.

## DAME ELIZABETH GREY

It is often said that Elizabeth Wydeville would never have come to an agreement with Richard III if she knew him to be the murderer of her sons. Richard III had, in fact, already executed her son from her first marriage, Richard Grey, along with her brother Anthony, on likely trumped-up treason charges. It is less a matter of whether Elizabeth could have trusted Richard III than whether she had a choice. Elizabeth was alone, her husband dead, the senior male members of her family dead, and her last son fled into exile to join Henry Tudor. She could not remain in sanctuary forever. Elizabeth had five daughters to protect, and realistically Richard III would have no wish or reason to harm them. Nor would it bode well for his public image, which was somewhat uncertain. Yet Elizabeth still extracted an oath from Richard, an unprecedented move, where he publicly swore he would protect her daughters, arrange their marriages, and furthermore: *"also not suffer any manner hurt in their body by any manner [of] person or persons to them, or any of them in their bodies and persons by way of ravishment or defouling contrary to their wills, not them or any of them imprison within the Tower of London or other prison"*.

It seems Elizabeth had quite a few reservations and wanted concrete assurance before she came to this agreement with Richard III. A more curious incident to be considered is Elizabeth writing to her son, Thomas Grey, now in exile with Henry Tudor, and urging him to come home. This could simply have been a matter of pragmatism after defeat, of course. Elizabeth had conspired with Margaret Beaufort to permit her daughter Elizabeth of York to marry Henry Tudor should he overthrow Richard III. The first attempt failed.

Elizabeth then made the best choice for her daughters, and could have trusted that Richard would treat them well enough. Considering their new illegitimate status he could also arrange better marriages for them than Elizabeth could hope to. There is evidence both Richard and his wife Anne Neville were fond of Elizabeth of York and she fared well in her new home, at least until some nasty rumours manifested.

Elizabeth Wydeville, now armed with a promise her daughters would be looked after, emerged from sanctuary and was promptly packed off to the country with an annuity and Richard's man John Nesfield in tow, who had been keeping watch on Elizabeth and her daughters while they were in sanctuary. Strangely, we have no idea where Elizabeth, now styled Dame Elizabeth Grey (her first husband's name) lived during her exile from court.

On paper she left sanctuary no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> 1484 and did not re-appear until after the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. The widow who had outraged the nobility with her presumptuous marriage to an anointed king, the queen consort who had presented the realm with ten princes and princesses, the queen whose dramatic life had hardly gone unnoticed over her almost twenty-year tenure, dropped off the face of the earth for almost eighteen months.

Even stranger is her continued silence. Even after Richard III was defeated, even after Henry Tudor, now King Henry VII, restored Elizabeth to her title and granted her the lands and income she was stripped

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of by Richard III, even after Henry VII married her daughter Elizabeth of York and made her the Queen of England, Dowager Queen Elizabeth Wydeville maintained her silence. She never named Richard III the murderer of her sons, even when it was safe to do so.

## THE PLOT THICKENS

There are many theories surrounding the idea that Edward V and Richard Duke of York survived the Tower of London. Each is as unlikely as the next – although some are rather more unlikely than others. While we cannot prove they were murdered, we also cannot prove that they survived. It is more practical to assume that the deposed King Edward V suffered the same fate as his deposed predecessors, King Richard II and King Henry VI, and that his younger brother needed to be disposed of along with him. It defies logic to imagine that the boys could have been smuggled out of the Tower, unnoticed, and lived their lives abroad with all parties involved remaining forever silent.

There's that silence again.

However there are rumours that the boys survived dating all the way back to Richard III's reign. Nicolaus von Popplau, who visited England in 1484 said he agreed with the many people who thought the boys were 'still alive and are kept in a very dark cellar'. Vergil noted a rumour that 'the sons of Edward the king had migrated to some part of the earth in secret, and there were still surviving'.<sup>6</sup> Thomas More noted that "some remain yet in doubt, whether they were in [Richard's] days destroyed or no".

There is another theory that Edward V may have died of natural causes in the Tower and, as a result, Richard Duke of York was released. Italian intelligence-gatherer Dominic Mancini's report, which was only discovered last century, notes that Edward V's Doctor, John Argentine, who was attending Edward in the Tower, told Mancini that Edward 'sought remission of his sins by daily confession and penance, because he believed that death was facing him'. This has been interpreted two ways, of course. It could either allude to Edward fearing he would be murdered, or that he was suffering from a serious illness and feared he would die. His sister Mary had died aged 13 the year before. John Ashdown-Hill has also examined an entry in the Colchester *Oath Book*, recorded in September 1483 that describes Edward V as "late" King of England, although he does note this could mean 'no longer' King.<sup>7</sup>

One thing many of the theories have in common is the idea the boys had been spirited away to the Low Countries. This stems from a combination of factors, Richard's sister Margaret of Burgundy had resources to help hide the boys. Equally Elizabeth Wydeville had relatives in Burgundy. And Perkin Warbeck's story that he spent his childhood hidden in the Low Countries adds weight to the idea. Richard III himself had been sent abroad for his safety as a child, along with his brother George, after their father had been killed.

So could either or both Edward V and Richard Duke of York have been removed from the Tower in secret and smuggled abroad? As unlikely as it may sound, it is still possible.

There are various theories that place them in England but that would require far too large a network of protection for it to truly be able to remain a secret.

We could not really begin to explore all the possibilities here. But one that has always seemed the least likely intrigues me the most. Now we will return to the elusive Queen Dowager and a man who was, in Thomas More's influential account, very significant indeed.

## MURDERER OR SAVIOUR?

Sir James Tyrell, who earned his knighthood from Edward IV, had enjoyed a successful career under both Richard III and Henry VII. Unfortunately in 1502 he suffered for his loyalty to Edmund de la Pole, the Earl of Suffolk, a Yorkist claimant to the English throne who had a rather fractious relationship with Henry VII. De la Pole survived Henry VII's reign, but Tyrell was executed for treason.

James Tyrell should probably have remained a footnote in history. However he has been linked to Edward V and Richard Duke of York since their disappearance in 1483, mainly as the prime suspect in the case of their alleged murder. Furthermore, while it is often supposed Tyrell murdered Edward V and Richard Duke of York at Richard III's behest, he has also been accused, much later than More, of murdering the boys on the orders of Henry VII.

Both the *Great Chronicle Of London* and Vergil name Tyrell as man who carried out the actual murder, although the date of the entry in the *Great Chronicle* been disputed. Vergil wrote that Richard ordered Sir Robert Brackenbury, Constable of the Tower, to carry out the murders, but Brackenbury could not bring himself to do it. After Brackenbury refused, Richard appointed Sir James Tyrell, who reluctantly carried out the gruesome task. More made Tyrell's involvement altogether more colourful. With the addition of the fictional "William Slaughter" or "Black Will", and James Dighton who can neither be placed in the Tower with Tyrell nor identified at all, and a confession that has miraculously never been recorded, Thomas More's account of the murder of Edward V and Richard Duke of York is clearly another of his inventions.

"*Very trouthe is it and well known,*" More assures us, that when Tyrell was committed to the Tower of London for treason against Henry VII "*both Dighton and he were examined, and confessed the murther in manner above written, but whither the bodies were removed they could nothing tell.*"

The 1504 Act of Attainder against Sir James Tyrell cites his connection with the conspiracy of Edmund de la Pole as the reason for his conviction and subsequent execution. Claims that the document containing the confession may have been "lost" go beyond the realms of conjecture and are deliberately misleading. Henry VII would have welcomed the vital confessions of the murderers of Edward V and Richard Duke of York, which would have safeguarded both Henry, his wife and his children against rebellion and put the minds of Spanish monarchs Isabella of Castille and Ferdinand at rest – considering they had insisted on the execution of the young Earl of Warwick and Perkin Warbeck. The confession would have been publicised, recorded, crowed from the rooftops and we would know about it today. The confession was not "lost". The confession never happened.

Francis Bacon's later elaboration that the 'king gave out' the confession is a further fabrication. Bacon was just as inventive as More, but rather less gifted.

The fact that he never confessed does not absolve Tyrell of the crime in itself of course. It should be considered that he was connected to the murders by Vergil, earlier than More, and a rumour may possibly have been recorded in the *Great Chronicle*. However a fabricated confession cannot be used as evidence, and that is what we should accept that More's version is.

James Tyrell has another connection with Edward V and Richard Duke of York, although this connection includes Dowager Queen Elizabeth Wydeville, and a long-standing family tradition. This is the survival theory that I find the most intriguing, as it concerns James



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Tyrell whose story has woven in and out of the mystery of the ‘Princes in the Tower’ for centuries. The late Audrey Williamson examined a “long-standing and specifically worded tradition in the Tyrell family going back well before the eighteenth century and handed down from generation to generation...”that the princes and their mother Elizabeth Woodville lived in the hall by permission of the uncle”. The hall in question is Gipping Hall, the Tyrell family seat which James had rebuilt in 1474.<sup>8</sup>

This is considered one of the least likely theories that may indicate that Edward V and Richard Duke of York survived the Tower of London, but it is compelling on several counts. We know that Elizabeth Wydeville’s whereabouts between March 1484 and August 1485 are unrecorded. Gipping Hall was close to the coast and therefore a useful spot to quickly arrange travel over the sea. Tyrell was Richard III’s trusted servant and could have been appointed to keep watch over Elizabeth and her sons while they spent time together before being exiled to Flanders.

Is it a coincidence that Richard III sent this trusted servant to Flanders during Elizabeth Wydeville’s rumoured sojourn at Gipping Hall in 1484? A warrant issued in 1484 notes “*we of lae sent oure righte trusty knighte for oure body and Counsailloure Sir James Tyrelle over the See into the parties of Flaundres for diverse maters concernyng gretely oure wele. Whoo in his Retornyng ayen unto us landed in oure poort of Dovor the chargeswhereof amounting to the somme of iiiij [four] markes as we certainly knowe were borne by the maire and othre inhabitauntes of oure said Towne of Dovor.*”<sup>9</sup>

It should also be pointed out that Elizabeth was still grieving in 1486. Despite many scurrilous claims to the contrary, Elizabeth Wydeville chose to go into religious retirement. She signed a forty-year lease with the Abbot of Westminster for Cheneygate mansion within Westminster Close in July of 1486. In February 1487, probably under the advice of her new son-in-law Henry VII, Bermondsey Abbey was chosen instead. Although she came to court on several festive occasions Elizabeth Wydeville spent most of the remaining years of her life in seclusion. She may have been grieving the loss of her sons, equally she may have been grieving a permanent separation from them. But if Elizabeth did know that her sons were alive, she did not inform her son-in-law. Neither, it would seem, did she inform her daughter Elizabeth of York.

## “THEYR BODIES CAST GOD WOTE WHERE”

When we examine the actual facts surrounding the disappearance of King Edward V and Richard Duke of York, we can really only come to conclusions based on conjecture. The only fact we have is that the boys disappeared from public view in 1483. It is perfectly logical to assume that their uncle King Richard III had his nephews murdered to secure his position, but again we fall into the endless cycle of argument and counter-argument.

The real problem at the centre of this mystery is, again, King Richard III. It should be noted that few of Thomas More’s biographers take his *History* as an actual history, and that it is more often used as a factual account by historians examining Richard III. That there have been few attempts at serious scholarship on survival theories is probably because of the main suspect. Most attempts to absolve Richard of the crime offer another of the usual suspects in his place. Attempts to examine alternatives pointing to survival are usually met with derision and accusations of wishful thinking.

I have to wonder if it is really wishful thinking on behalf of those desperate to prove they were murdered. There have been many other children murdered by kings that we pay no heed to. The victims of the horrible war crimes committed by the first and third Edwards go unnoticed. King John, whose reputation is actually far worse than Richard III’s and who has suffered far more at the hands of fiction, is remembered for his treatment of his nobles and his losses at war, rather than for the accusation that he murdered his nephew Arthur.

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Why do we care so much about these children in particular? Is it because of their uncle, or because they vanished completely and absolutely? But in the end, I am not interested in exoneration. I am interested in the truth. The reader will ultimately decide for themselves. You will have to weigh the facts and examine the historiography, and in the end you can only come to a tentative conclusion. Because if you really read the facts you will find that nothing is certain. And in the end you will not find out what happened to the 'Princes in the Tower'. You will not solve the mystery. There is a good reason for that. Whoever knew the fate of King Edward V and Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York was not going to leave behind a convenient paper trail. They were going to take the secret to the grave, with the intention that their fate would never be discovered.

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**WHO DO YOU THINK  
“DID IT”?**

# TRACING RICHARD'S PATH

by Kristie Dean

ONE of the most controversial kings in British history, Richard III has sparked heated discussions among people for centuries. With the recent discovery of his body, interest in the king has reached an all-time high. In March, he will be reburied in Leicester cathedral, with people attending the services from all over the world. Visitors will swarm the city, but there are many other sites in England within an hour's drive of Leicester related to Richard. Five of these locations are Fotheringhay Castle, Northampton,

Stony Stratford, Nottingham Castle and Bosworth Battlefield.

## FOTHERINGAY CASTLE

A grassy mound with a few crumbling pieces of masonry is all that remains of this castle by the River Nene. A fortification dominated this spot from the early twelfth century until its eventual ruin. Simon de Senlis built a motte-and-bailey castle here around 1100 AD, and the wooden fortification was later rebuilt in stone, walled and moated. After the death of Marie de St Pol, the castle revert-



Fotheringhay Castle

ed to the crown. Edward III granted it to his son, Edmund, the first duke of York, who substantially enlarged the castle.

Richard was born 2 October 1452 in the keep. In recording the children of Richard, Duke of York, the Clare Roll simply states that 'Richard liveth yet'. While earlier historians took this to mean that Richard was a sickly child, this is only one possible interpretation. Given that Richard was the seventh son, but only the fourth to survive, the author may have been pessimistic about his chances. Whatever the interpretation, Richard spent his formative years here with his siblings closest in age, Margaret and George. He also visited here on several other occasions throughout his life.

The view from the mound is magnificent, even today. The spires of the church of St Mary the Virgin and All Saints rise in the distance, as the River Nene winds its way around the mound. Instead of the hustle and bustle of the administrative centre for the house of York, visitors today are treated to picturesque canal boats gliding along the sleepy river. Standing at the base of the mound, it is hard to picture the former castle. The great stone keep rested on top of the mound, with stairs leading from the inner bailey up to the keep's entrance. A moat surrounded the entire castle area, and entrance was through a gatehouse.

While it is tempting to quickly look around and leave, take some time to sit on the top of the mound and absorb the atmosphere. Try to picture a young Richard playing down by the river. After relaxing for a while, wander down near the river to see the memorials to Richard III and to Mary, Queen of Scots, who was executed here.

Fotheringhay Castle is about fifty-five minutes from Leicester by car. To get to the site of the castle you will need to walk down a winding country lane. There is no admission fee and an informative panel explains the site's layout. While in the area, be sure to take time to see the church as well.

## NORTHAMPTON

When Richard was still a small child, a battle was fought at Northampton that allowed his father to return to England. Following the rout at Ludford Bridge, the Duke of York had escaped to Ireland,



Northampton

while Richard's brother Edward and the Nevilles had fled to Calais.

In June 1460, the Nevilles and Edward returned from Calais. Following a brief stay in London, they moved out to meet the king, who was in Northampton. A short battle was fought, largely on the grounds of Delapré Abbey, from which the Yorkists emerged victorious.

Years later, Northampton would play another role in the York saga. Following his brother's death, Richard set out to meet his nephew, the young king Edward V. Richard's motives in what followed have been hotly debated through the ages. If he did fear a Woodville plot, his actions are understandable. However, it is impossible to know exactly what was going through Richard's mind. The primary sources are murky on the exact events at Northampton, as some accounts place the king's half-brother, Richard Grey, at Northampton with Rivers, while others place him with the king at Stony Stratford.

In any event, Richard and Buckingham met Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, in Northampton. Some chroniclers claim the meeting was pre-arranged, but the Croyland chronicler says Rivers

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**Stony Stratford**

was sent there by the king to meet the dukes. The men passed a pleasant evening in polite conversation. The next morning, they headed towards Stony Stratford where the king was housed. Richard and Buckingham either arrested Rivers in Northampton or within a few miles of Stony Stratford.

Most of Northampton's medieval buildings were destroyed in the great fire of 1675 and Charles II ordered the walls and the town's gates to be destroyed. Unfortunately for the Richard enthusiast, there is not much left of the medieval city as Richard would have seen it. Due to the destruction of so many records by fire, it is hard to determine where Richard passed the night while in Northampton. Perhaps he stayed with a private citizen or in an inn, but it is just as likely that he stayed at one of the friaries within the town. Northampton had friaries from all the Mendicant orders. As the Duke of Buckingham's father was buried in the Franciscan church, perhaps they stayed there. It is doubtful

that they would have stayed at the castle as it was already in a severe state of decline.

By car, Northampton is approximately fifty minutes from Leicester. While in Northampton, make sure to visit the site of the battlefield. While most of the battle site has been lost to a golf course, it is still possible to walk the grounds. If you drive along the A508 out of town, you will see the Eleanor Cross from where the Archbishop of Canterbury is said to have watched the battle. From the cross, take the public footpath to walk near where the Yorkist lines were.

## STONY STRATFORD

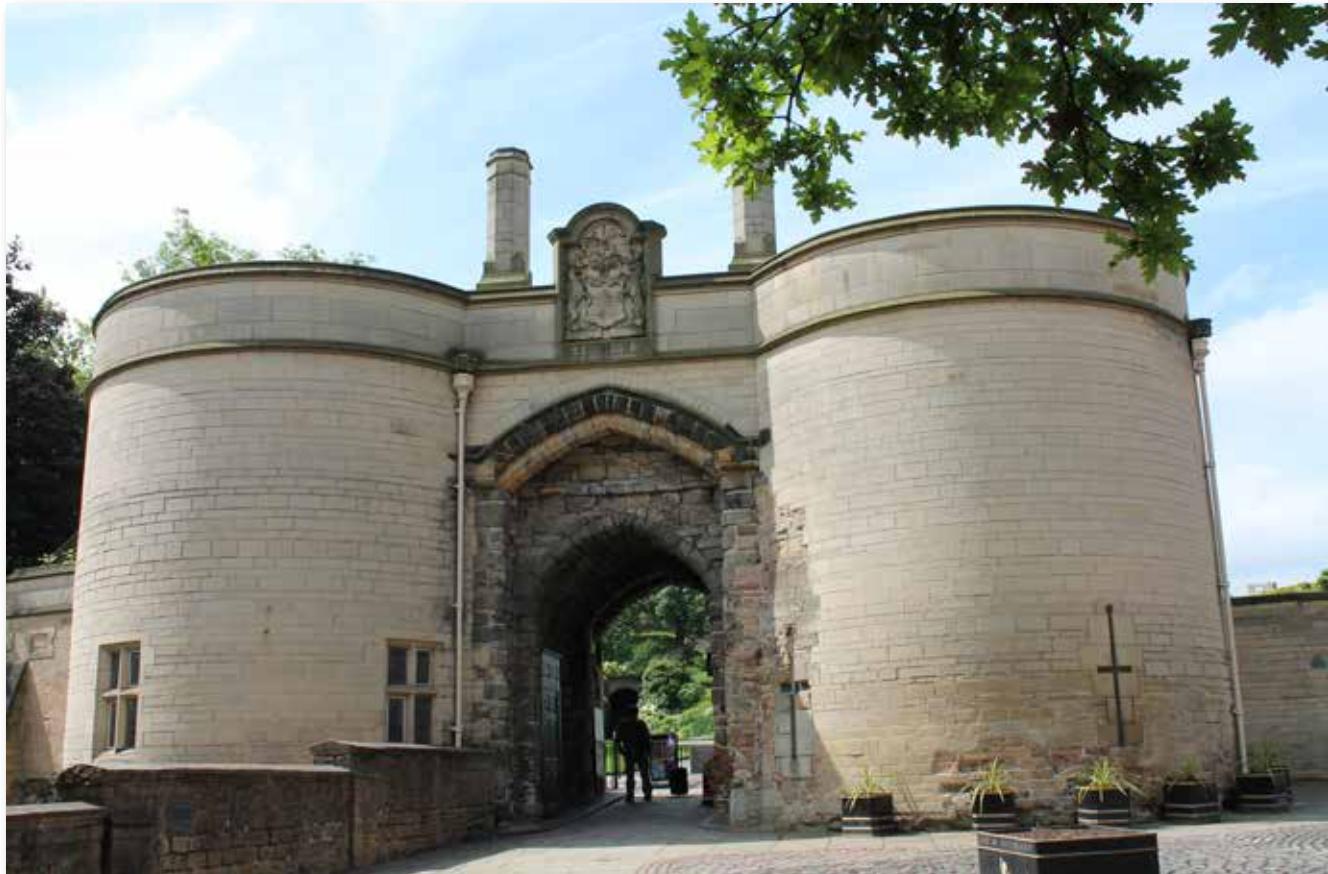
Close to Northampton lies the market town of Stony Stratford. Located near the River Ouse, it was on a main coaching road. The town played host to royalty several times, and it is believed that Edward IV stayed here while wooing Elizabeth Woodville.

On 29 April 1483, the young Edward V, likely accompanied by his half-brother Richard Grey, passed the night at Stony Stratford. In the morning, Edward and his retinue prepared to leave and find larger accommodations in order to house all the men in both parties. He had no idea that his uncle Richard had already arrested Rivers.

When Richard reached Stony Stratford, he immediately arrested Richard Grey and Thomas Vaughan. Next, Richard and Buckingham approached the young king. Treating him with all the courtesies due a king, Richard explained that the Woodville and Grey had conspired to keep him out of the government and that he had arrested the men for his protection. Despite Edward's assurances that the men were honourable, Grey and the others were sent north. Given little choice, Edward acquiesced to his uncle's wishes.

Stony Stratford is proud of its historic connections and makes it easy for a visitor to locate items of historic significance through its informative website. The website, [http://www.stonystratford.gov.uk/Visit\\_The\\_Area/Visitor\\_essentials](http://www.stonystratford.gov.uk/Visit_The_Area/Visitor_essentials), provides information on free parking as well as different walking tours through the area.

Once you arrive in Stony Stratford, you will want to head straight for the Market Square. From the square, turn left in front of the library,



**Nottingham Castle**

and then right onto Church Street. From here it is a short walk to the high street, where you turn right again. After passing New Street on your left and the George on your right, you will see a red building on the left. This is the former Rose and Crown Inn, where it is believed that Edward stayed while in Stony Stratford. A small plaque on the building tells the story.

Although it does not have many buildings connected with Richard, Stony Stratford played an important role in his life. It was here that he took control of the young king and set in motion a chain of events that would change both their lives.

## NOTTINGHAM CASTLE

Built soon after the conquest, Nottingham castle towered over the surrounding countryside atop its perch on the sandstone cliffs. Given its strategic location, it commanded the river crossing over the River Trent. Up until the reign of Edward IV, kings and queens who visited the castle stayed within the royal apartments of the inner ward. Either

these apartments were not large enough or just did not suit the king, as Edward IV began construction of new apartments within the middle ward.

Once Richard was king, he completed Edward's buildings. The new royal apartments were built in a crescent along the wall. Richard finished the building works of these elaborate rooms with large bay windows and added a second storey, complete with its own bay windows overlooking the large courtyard. During his tenure, he also completed the tower at the north-west corner of the yard. The ashlar-faced tower, which later became known as Richard's Tower, was four storeys with a winding spiral staircase.

Richard visited Nottingham castle often during his short reign. Arriving at the castle with his large retinue of horses, wagons and men, he and Anne would have passed through the raised portcullis of the embattled two-storey gatehouse. The castle would have appeared formidable with its thick, impregnable walls stretching completely around it.

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



## Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre

It was here at Nottingham where Richard and Anne received news that no parent wants to here. Their son, Edward, had died. Perhaps the tragic news was received in the Great Hall as the Croyland chronicler records their great grief:

'You might have seen the father and mother, after hearing the news at Nottingham where they were then staying, almost out of their minds for a long time when faced with the sudden grief.'

Unfortunately for Richard, a king could not grieve overlong, as he was faced with the governance of his kingdom. Given the threat of Henry Tudor, Richard realised that he needed to make peace with Scotland so a meeting was arranged. The Scottish delegation arrived at Nottingham and entered the great hall where Richard sat under his cloth of estate, with his delegation surrounding him. The terms of the peace treaty worked out at Nottingham were mutually beneficial. The promise of a marriage between Anne de la Pole, Richard's niece, and the future James IV was arranged, but following Richard's death at Bosworth it was abandoned.

Nothing substantial remains of Richard III's palatial residence at Nottingham. Following the Civil War, the castle was ordered destroyed. The gatehouse and parts of the wall are medieval, but these have been greatly restored. The best place to visualise the former castle is right after you have entered through the gatehouse. Standing here you can look up at what was the middle and inner bailey and get an idea of the size of the former castle. Even though it was built many years after Richard's time the current castle offers a wonderful museum, as well as art galleries. It is easy to pass a day at Nottingham. If you are not claustrophobic, a tour of the caves is interesting.

## BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE

In 2005 a grant was awarded for a battlefield survey of Bosworth Battlefield, and after several years of hard work, the battlefield site was located

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

in 2009. With the discovery of the new site, accepted scholarship was turned on its head. One way of making sense of the new location is to visit the Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre.

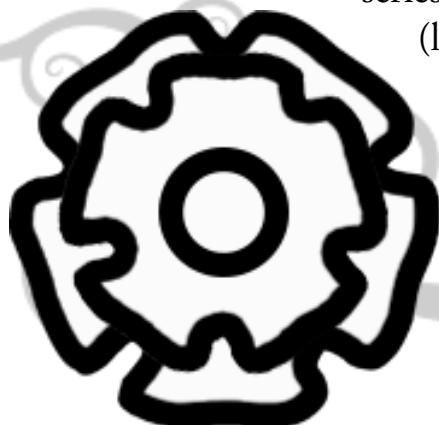
A quick drive from Leicester, the heritage centre is well worth a visit. It is one of the best interactive museums I have ever had the pleasure of visiting. Four characters lead you through the story of Bosworth as you explore the exhibits. An exhibition of weaponry helps visitors visualise the types of weapons used at Bosworth. One area not to be missed is the exhibit of artefacts found around the area of the battle. This is where the Bosworth Boar Badge is located.

After leaving the exhibit, walk to the top of the hill. Here a memorial sundial commemorates all who lost their lives during the battle. Three chairs rest near the sundial. The smaller chair is for Stanley, while the two larger chairs are for Henry and

**Kristie Dean** is the author of the fascinating book “*The World of Richard III*” which brings each location associated with Richard III to life with an interesting narrative and with an extensive collection of photographs, floor plans and images.

Kristie has an MA in History and now enjoys teaching the subject, following a successful career in public relations. Her particular historic interest is the medieval era, specifically the Plantagenets, the Wars of the Roses and the Tudors. She has been published in several online magazines and local newspapers, and presented a paper at the International Congress on Medieval Studies. She has also published a

series of short guidebooks (less than 20 pages) to help visitors to the UK find great locations.

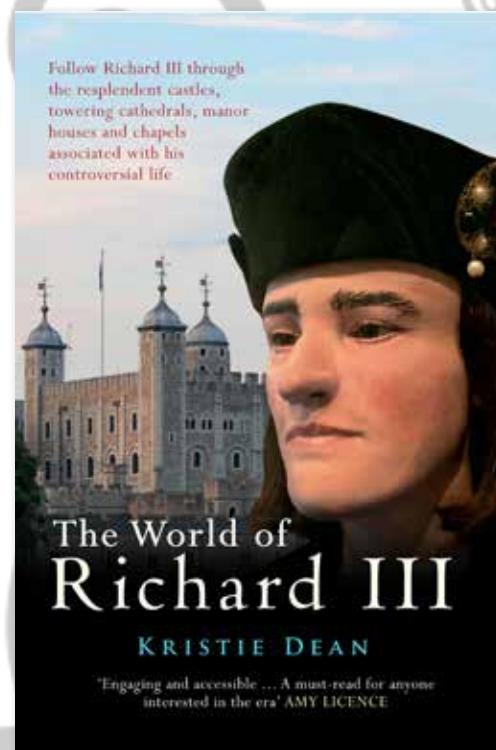


Richard. From atop the hill, there is an excellent view of the surrounding countryside.

The area where the boar badge was found is on private land and is not accessible, although a public footpath is nearby. The best way to see the new battle site is to take one of the guided walks. Two-kilometre guided tours of the Battlefield Trail are available every weekend. For the fit, a special twelve-kilometre walk of the battlefield is available in the summer and autumn months.

Visiting each of these sites will help visitors both escape the crowds at Leicester as well as see other locations related to this famous king. Each of these locations may easily be visited in a day, and it is possible to combine a visit to Northampton with one to Stony Stratford.

### KRISTIE DAVIS-DEAN



You can follow Kristie on Twitter @kristiedavisdea, or like her Facebook page, The World of Richard III. She also has a blog at KristieDean.com. When not travelling for research, you can find Kristie at home in Tennessee with her husband, three dogs, and two cats.

# RICHARD III – A READING GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS

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If this special edition of Tudor Life has awakened your interest, **Olga Hughes** from Nerdalicious takes a look at some of the best books to have been written about the life and times of this fascinating King...

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**K**ING Richard III has always fascinated people, one way or another, whether historians have subscribed to traditional views of his villainy or have sought to reform his reputation.

As a result there have been quite a lot of books written about Richard III, over many years and since the discovery of his grave in Leicester even more books have been published.

Anyone new to Richard III may have a little difficulty deciding where to start with quite a wide range of book to choose from. In my opinion the best way to approach any new historical figure is to start with some of the newer texts, and in the case of Richard III this is particularly important, as some new facts have come to light in the last century and even in the last decade.

As I mentioned earlier, it is very difficult, even now, to find balanced accounts of Richard III. The following is a recommended reading list in chronological order for the beginner.

The books that follow the biography recommendations are academic ones, but as collections of

articles they are particularly valuable as they cover more specialised topics. I have omitted some books which are usually recommended on Richard III because they are either quite dated or partisan, and partisan accounts serve no purpose for the beginner. The best approach is a fresh one, with an open mind.

## BIOGRAPHIES:

David Baldwin – *Richard III*: David Baldwin's book is, without a doubt, the best starting point for anyone new to Richard III. This is a fair and balanced account of Richard's life, beautifully written and empathetic to the subject without sentimentality. It is a concise biography that covers Richard's life from childhood to his death, without lingering over-long on any particularly controversial topics. It presents a nicely balanced account and a thoughtful portrayal of what can be gleaned of Richard's character.

Josephine Wilkinson – *Richard III, The Young King to Be*: This is the first of a two-part biography of Richard, focusing on his life up until 1471.

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

The second part of the biography is still in progress, however it is worth reading this first part directly after Baldwin's book for a more detailed account of Richard's early life. Wilkinson has a wonderful style that is both academic and engaging and this is an excellent in-depth study of an area of Richard's life that has been rather neglected.

Charles Ross – *Richard III*: Ross is quite dated and as such presents a more traditional view of Richard, but it is still used widely today. Ross also wrote a book on Richard's brother Edward IV and was a highly respected academic in his field. This is now a part of the Yale English Monarchs series, which are 'classic' academic studies and are always worth reading after you've read newer texts on the subjects.

## STUDIES:

Toni Mount – *Richard III King of Controversy*: This micro-book gives an excellent introduction to Richard, covering the relevant facts and history, the search for Richard's grave and the controversy surrounding the 'Princes in the Tower'.

Keith Dockray and Peter Hammond – *Richard III from Contemporary Chronicles, Letters and Records*: An extremely useful resource for contemporary documents, and essential as a reference guide.

A.J. Pollard – *The World of Richard III*: This collection of articles from an expert in his field focuses on Richard's connection with various towns and his relationships with people in the North. There is a wonderful article on Richard's son Edward of Middleham, from some of the only documentation that survives on him. This one is out of print, but there are usually a few used copies available.

John Gillingham (ed) – *Richard III: A Medieval Kingship*: A wonderful and diverse collection of articles from various Richard III experts. Out of print but plenty of used copies are usually available.

Rosemary Horrox – *Richard III: A Study in Service*: This is an academic study and as such, comes with a hefty price-tag, although used copies are available quite frequently. This book focuses on the social and political climate, and gives a fair and unbiased account of Richard in the context of his times.

## THE SEARCH FOR

## RICHARD III

A.J. Carson (Ed.), J. Ashdown-Hill, D. Johnson, W. Johnson & P.J. Langley – *Finding Richard III: The Official Account of Research by the Retrieval and Reburial Project*: This is the actual account of the Looking for Richard Project's search for Richard III written by the founding members. It also covers many years of research undertaken before the project was launched and contains various documents pertaining to the project. You can also read more in John Ashdown Hill's *The Last Days of Richard III and the Fate of his DNA* and Phillipa Langley and Michael Jones *The King's Grave*.

## PRINCES IN THE TOWER

The fate of Edward V and Richard Duke of York has always warranted its own study, and as such, there are a lot of books on the market. They generally focus on either Richard III or Henry VII as the murderer, and you shouldn't have too much trouble hunting them down. My list recommends the few books that look beyond the traditional and repetitive views, and a couple of articles.

Josephine Wilkinson – *The Princes in the Tower*: This should be required reading for anyone interested in the topic. Wilkinson's the first academic study that not only dismisses Richard as the murderer of his nephews, but each of the 'usual suspects'.

David Baldwin – *The Lost Prince*: This covers one of the unlikelier theories that Richard Duke of York assumed the identity of a builder and lived to an old age in England, but it is a thought-provoking read and immensely enjoyable. It's also the only full-length study of the mysterious Richard Plantagenet.

John Ashdown-Hill – *The Dublin King*: This focuses more on the mysterious boy who was crowned in Ireland before the Lambert Simnel rebellion and George Duke of Clarence's son Edward Earl of Warwick. A really fascinating look at some neglected figures in Tudor history.

Ann Wroe – *Perkin Warbeck*: This is one I have not got around to reading yet but it has been recommended to me by many. A dense and detailed study of the identity of Perkin Warbeck.

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## ARTICLES ON THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER

Helen Maurer – ‘*Bones in the Tower: a discussion of time place and circumstance*’: This wonderful study I mentioned in my article is an in-depth examination of the remains in Westminster Abbey. It was published in two parts in the *Ricardian*, vol. VIII, number 111,(1990), pp. 171-193 and vol. IX, number 112, (1991) pp.2-22. The Richard III Society has not uploaded this one online yet but part one can be read at <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/12233546/bones-in-the-tower-a-discussion-of-time-place-richard-iii-society> History Salon: *The Survival of the Princes in the Tower* David Baldwin, Annette Carson, Toni Mount and Josephine Wilkinson joined us on Nerdalicious to discuss the survival of the Princes in the Tower, and it is fascinating to read the different views from historians who are brave enough to tackle the subject. It can be viewed at <http://nerdalicious.com.au/history/history-salon-the-survival-of-the-princes-in-the-tower/>

[nerdalicious.com.au/history/history-salon-the-survival-of-the-princes-in-the-tower/](http://nerdalicious.com.au/history/history-salon-the-survival-of-the-princes-in-the-tower/)

## THE RICARDIAN

The Richard III Society publish four magazines and an academic journal, *The Ricardian*, each year. The journal has some really wonderful articles and can be purchased by non-members.

At the moment some are also available to read online, which the society is still working on. They can be viewed at [http://richardiii.net/6\\_3\\_2\\_ricardian\\_index.php](http://richardiii.net/6_3_2_ricardian_index.php) And as always, please join us on the Tudor Society forum for further discussions, and you can find me there frequently if you'd like to discuss books.

**OLGA HUGHES**



## NERDALICIOUS - FEED YOUR INNER NERD

Tudor Society member and writer **Olga Hughes** is editor of the Australian blog Nerdalicious which is a treasure trove of content to “feed your inner nerd”, from literature to Dr Who, from history to Game of Thrones. It is a wonderful site to get lost in and Olga does a great job at supporting historians and authors over there. We defy anyone to visit it and not get addicted!



# RICHARD III REBURIAL EVENTS

### SATURDAY 21 MARCH – RICHARD III INTERACTIVE OPEN DAY, UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

According to the University of Leicester Press Office, this open day of interactive and hands-on workshops:

- will take visitors on a journey of Discovery, Knowledge and Identification
- includes the opportunity to have your own DNA profiled
- visitors will take part in a forensic investigation and see what happens when an arrow head is fired at steel armour.

And it will include The Discovery Journey – which looks at the excavation and post excavation work carried out by archaeologists. Find out more at <http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/press/press-releases/2015/february/relive-the-amazing-discovery-of-king-richard-iii-at-the-university-of-leicester>

### SUNDAY 22 MARCH – RICHARD III FUNERAL PROCESSION

Richard III's coffin will leave the Fielding Johnson Building at Leicester University, where a short ceremony will be held, before departing for Leicester Cathedral.

The cortege will process from the University to:

- Fenn Lane Farm – A special ceremony will unite soils from Middleham, Fotheringhay and Fenn Lane.
- Dadlington – 10 minute service on Dadlington village green.
- Sutton Cheney – 10 minute service outside the church.
- Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre – Service led by the Right Reverend Tim Stevens, Bishop of Leicester.
- On through Market Bosworth, Newbold Verdon and Desford.
- Entry into Leicester via Bow Bridge, where the City Mayor, Lord Mayor and Guild of Freemen will

12.00 Departure from  
University of Leicester

Fenn Lane Farm

Dadlington

Sutton Cheney

14.00 Bosworth Battlefield  
Heritage Centre

Market Bosworth

Newbold Verdon

Desford

16.00 Bow Bridge

17.45 Leicester Cathedral

18.00 Evening Worship

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welcome the remains at the medieval city boundary. A short ceremony will include the wrapping of a garland of roses around the bridge post.

- Walking procession to St Nicholas Church for a 10 minute service.
- Coffin transferred to horse-drawn hearse for procession through Leicester centre to the cathedral.
- Arrival at Leicester Cathedral at approximately 5.45pm, to be met by the Very Reverend David Monteith, Dean of Leicester.
- Service of Compline for the Reception of the Remains of King Richard III, 6pm, Leicester Cathedral. Attendance by invitation only. Preacher: Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster.

## MONDAY 23 MARCH

- Leicester Cathedral open 9am-12.30pm and 2pm-5pm for viewing of Richard III's coffin.
- 1pm – Usual daily Eucharist, Bishop Tim Stevens.
- 5pm Requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of Richard III, at Holy Cross Church, the Catholic parish church and Dominican priory, Wellington Street, Leicester.

## TUESDAY 24 MARCH

- Leicester Cathedral open 9am-12.30pm and 2pm-5pm for viewing of Richard III's coffin.
- 1pm – Usual daily Eucharist, Bishop Christopher.
- 5.30pm Vespers sung by the Dominican friars in Leicester Cathedral.

## WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH

- Leicester Cathedral open 9am-12.30pm for viewing of Richard III's coffin.
- 1pm – Usual daily Eucharist, with Father David Rocks OP, parish priest of Holy Cross Church, and Sister Beverley, a Franciscan Anglican priest.

## THURSDAY 26 MARCH – REINTERMENT

- 10.30am – Procession of significant guests from Leicester Guildhall to Leicester Cathedral.
- 11.30am – Service of Reinterment of the Remains of King Richard III in the presence of the Most Right Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury and senior clergy from both dioceses, and other Christian denominations alongside representatives of the World Faiths. Invitation only. It will be broadcast live on the UK's Channel 4.
- 5.15pm – Solemn Choral Evensong at York Minster, York. The Very Reverend Vivienne Faull, Dean of York Minster, explains “On the evening of the re-interment of King Richard III it is right that the people of York and Yorkshire will have the opportunity to gather in the Minster to pray and to remember the death of the King at the battle of Bosworth in 1485. The service of Choral Evensong will include a prayer composed for the service by the Dean of Leicester. I am glad the cathedrals of both York and Leicester will take the opportunity of the re-interment to give thanks for the peace of our realm and to pray for reconciliation for those who are caught up in conflict in our own day.”
- 7.30pm – Requiem Mass in the style Richard III would have known at St Catherine's Church, Stanifield Lane, Farington, Leyland, PR25 4QG. Sung High Latin Mass with Singers of the Laeta Cantoribus Choir, followed by a light Buffet with wine. For further details telephone 01772 421174 or Mobile 07533 029622.

## FRIDAY 27 MARCH

- 12pm – Service of Reveal of the Tomb and Celebration for King Richard III. Invitation only.
- Afternoon – Richard III's sealed tomb on display to the public.
- 6pm-10pm – Leicester Glows: Fire Garden and Cathedral Illuminations, Jubilee Square & Cathedral Gardens. This free, public event will end with a firework display from the roof of the cathedral.

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**SATURDAY 28 MARCH**

Leicester Cathedral open to the public as usual allowing public to view Richard III's tomb.

The Richard III Society has organised events for Reinterment Week – see [richardiii.net/reinterment.php](http://richardiii.net/reinterment.php) for more details – as has Bosworth Battlefield and Heritage Centre

– see [bosworthbattlefield.blogspot.co.uk/p/king-richard-iii-s-reinterment.html](http://bosworthbattlefield.blogspot.co.uk/p/king-richard-iii-s-reinterment.html)



Leicester Cathedral

# **THE KING OF CARMARTHEN: BOSWORTH'S LOST COMMANDER**

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**by Susan Fern**

*In 1984 during excavations of the Franciscan friary at Friars Park in Carmarthen west Wales, a fragment of leaded stained glass window was unearthed. The fragments were tentatively dated to 1250-1280, making this piece of leaded window one of the oldest surviving pieces of medieval window in Britain. The friary once contained the tombs of many illustrious persons including Edmund Tudor (the father of Henry VII), Gruffydd ap Nicholas, Sir Thomas Rede, and Sir Rhys ap Thomas. Three generations of the same prominent Carmarthen family rested here at the friary. Gruffydd ap Nicolas, his son Thomas ap Gruffydd and his grandson Sir Rhys ap Thomas. After the dissolution of the monasteries during the reign of Henry VIII, the subsequent fate of only two of the tombs is known; Edmund Tudor's tomb was removed to St David's Cathedral in Pembroke, and Sir Rhys ap Thomas' was re-sited in St Peter's church, Carmarthen, where both can be visited.*

*The small piece of stained glass that was unearthed depicted the outline of a bird, the head and body occupied one quarry and the wings two quarries on either side: the bird was etched in black paint with a red ochre background. The bird, a raven, was the emblem of Urien Rheged, the sixth century King of Rheged, legendary knight of King Arthur, from whom a prominent Carmarthen family traced their descent. The family of Gruffydd ap Nicholas Gruffydd adopted the symbol of the three ravens on his banner:*

*'With the three ravens of the sons of Urien Rheged of old.'*



Gruffydd ap Nicolas and his family played a significant role in the century after 1430, during the troubled period of the Wars of the Roses ravaged the country. The opposing factions of York and Lancaster struggled for dominance and of course the Crown and civil war became rife. West Wales remained particularly resistant to Yorkist power, but the same was not true for other parts of the Principality. However, at the battle of Mortimer's Cross in 1461 that position was dramatically reverted when the Lancastrian's suffered a set-back and Owen Tudor (grandfather of Henry VII) was executed, and also, allegedly, Gruffydd ap Nicolas (grandfather of Rhys ap Thomas) was killed. The fate of the Lancastrian adherents was finally sealed ten years later at the battle of Tewkesbury, and this profoundly affected the two most prominent families in west Wales, the Tudors and the family of Gruffydd ap Nicolas.

The heir to the Lancastrian claim, the young Henry Tudor, with his uncle Jasper were forced to flee their home at Pembroke castle to go into exile in France. At this time the young Rhys ap Thomas, with his father also went into voluntary exile to the court of Burgundy. Henry and Rhys were approximately the same age: Henry was born in 1457 and according to the *Achaeologia Cambrensis* so was Rhys, but it appears more likely from later events that Rhys may have been about seven years older. Their paths may well have crossed during those

years of exile, so it is not surprising that they would meet again as grown men. Henry Tudor would remain in exile until 1485, while Rhys and his father returned to Wales sometime during the 1470s. Rhys' father was soon to die in a duel leaving Rhys sole heir to his estates. However under the new Yorkist king Edward IV the family fortunes had been 'curbed and its position neutralized'.

Surrounding himself with wise counsellors, during the next ten years of Yorkist rule, Rhys began to re-build his family's reputation and standing within Wales. The first matter to be dealt with was the long-standing feud between his family and that of Henri Gwylim of Court Henri, a feud that had resulted in his father's untimely death. A marriage between Rhys and Eva the co-heiress of Court Henri was arranged to help cement new bonds of kinship, which both parties agreed to and which brought Rhys a fortune as well as more loyal supporters. With this marriage and the new alliances it brought, Rhys now decided to put his house in order and take care of his family. The *Life of Sir Rhys ap Thomas* says that he was renowned for holding an open house:

'the gentry did continually flock there as to some academy, for their civil nurture and education, by which means his house was so frequented, and he so well attended, that whenever he came in respect of the greatness of his train, he bare show rather of a prince than a private subject'.

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The years spent at the Burgundian court had served Rhys well and helped him impress his fellow Welshman to such a degree that he soon began to gain their confidence and more importantly their allegiance. Holding such courts was a costly business, but Rhys was frugal when it came to his own expenses and kept well within his yearly revenues. He dressed modestly except when he had to attend official duties. The *Life* describes him as 'homily in his appearance'. He kept only a few servants and was modest in his diet and this comely behaviour was another attribute that gained him favour amongst his peers.

His greatest challenge however was to turn his people away from the rough, unruly manner to which they had become accustomed and instil civility and good order. In order to achieve this *Life* states that he did it through 'religion and conversation'. Rhys employed the Bishop of St David's to instigate a survey of all the churches in the diocese. Religion had fallen by the wayside during the tumultuous period of the wars and many clergy had abandoned their churches. Rhys set about finding

the funds to re-instate them to their former glory and to employ incumbents to take charge of them. He also instituted festival days where sports and dances could take place, even on occasion joining in with the merrymaking; places of meetings were appointed and summer houses erected. No doubt this was a reflection of courtly procedures that he had become accustomed to whilst in Burgundy, but they had the desired effect and resulted in more civilized behaviour from his countrymen.

The political situation in England was still far from secure and Rhys bore in mind the possibility of further strife. He employed two captains Richard Griffith and Arnold Butler to train young gentlemen and others who were deemed worthy in military discipline. They were to receive daily exercises in the art of warfare, which at first was not well received, but once they saw the benefits of such training then many others flocked to enlist. The *Life* also tells us that he found a way to endear all his countrymen by

'Turning all such lands as he had in demesnes, into horse races, as that of Carew, Narberth, Emyln, Abermarlais, Weobley or other of his great houses, and as they increased he would bestow on this man or that a horse, by which means drawing in those of the best abilities in all the adjacent counties, he tied them strongly to their former proffers, so that now with the help of his tenants (which I find upon record to be between eighteen and nineteen hundred, and all of them bound by their leases to be ready with a horse when he called upon them)...For as he gave them horses they gave him certain patches of land within their estates'.

By these devices Rhys was able to summon between four to five thousand men on very short notice. It appears that Edward IV, the incumbent Yorkist king, was happy for Rhys to continue in this manner and viewed him as a loyal subject; for Rhys gave no indication that he was seeking any personal advancement. So great was his popularity that the bards sang;

'All the Kingdom is the Kings, Save where Rice does spread his wings'.

Rhys however was not amused and made the bard Lewis Glyn Cothi change the words to 'The Kingdom is the King's, The skirts of France and Rice is his'.

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



Rhys had been farsighted in his actions because the tide of events was soon about to turn again for on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1483 Edward IV died suddenly leaving as his heir the twelve year old Prince Edward. Later in that year the prince's uncle Richard of Gloucester took the throne, and Rhys swore fealty to his new English king.

*I have received letters mandatory from your Majesty, wherein I am enjoined to use my best endeavours for the conservation of your royal authority in these parts to apply likewise my soundest forces for the safeguarding of Milford Haven from all foreign invasion; especially to impeach and stop the passage of the Earl of Richmond, if so by any treacherous means he should attempt our coasts; and withal Sir, an oath of allegiance has been tendered me in your Majesty's name by certain commissioners, deputed (as it seems) for that fidelity. Touching the first Sir, now an enemy is declared, I hold myself obliged without looking any further into the cause, faithfully to observe the same, by a necessary relation, my obedience, hath to your Majesty's commands, to which I deem it not unseasonable to annex this voluntary protestation; that whoever ill affected to the state, shall dare to land in those parts of Wales, where I have any employments under your Majesty, must resolve with himself to make his entrance and irruption over my belly. As for my oath Sir, in observance to your Majesty's will, I shall ever regulate mine. I have, (though with some heart's grief I confess and with reluctantly of spirit), as*

In a characteristic precaution during the later months of 1484 Richard III required Rhys to take an oath of fidelity to the King and to hand over his only legitimate son Gruffydd ap Rhys as a hostage. Rhys responded to the King by letter, written from Carmarthen by the Abbot of Talley as follows:

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

*was required, taken the same before your Majesty's commissioners, and if stronger trial than either faith or other might be laid upon me to confirm my most loyal affection, I should make no delay to emannacle and fetter myself in the strictest obligations for your Majesty's better assurance.*

*And here I beseech your Majesty give me leave without offence to disburden myself of certain cogitations, whereby I am persuaded, that these pressings of vows and oaths upon subjects, no way held in suspect, have often times wrought even those of soundest affections, a sensibility of some injury done to their faith; a thing which heretofore has been prejudicial to many great princes, who, while they showed themselves distrustful, and feared subtle dealing, have read to some of fickle minds and unstable thoughts evil lessons against themselves. I speak not this Sir as repining at what I have done; but to give your Majesty, to witt, that I fear some evil offices have been done me, which might you think yourself unsure of my service without this manner of proceeding.*

*Whatever, Sir, other men reckon of me, this is my religion, that no vow can lay stronger obligation upon me in any matter of performance, than my conscience. My conscience binds me to love and serve my King and country my vow can do no more. He that makes shipwreck of the one, will (I believe) make little account of the other. For my own part Sir, I am resolutely bent, while I am to spin out my days in well doing; and so God willing to conclude the last actions of my life. And sure Sir could I find myself culpable of one single cogitation, repugnant to the allegiance I owe your Majesty, I should think that life I have lived overlong. Now Sir for the delivering of my son to your Majesty's commissioners as a gauge of my fealty, I have as yet presumed on this short pause, not in way of opposition to your commands, but to fit myself with such reasons, as shall I hope in no sort seem discordant with your will. The years, Sir, that my poor child bears on his back are but few, scarce exceeding the number of four, which I conceived, might well privilege him, being more fit for the present to be embosomed in a mother's care, then exposed to the world, nature as yet not having the leisure to initiate him in the first lecture of feeding himself. Again, Sir, be pleased to consider he is the only prop and support of my house now in being; and therefore may justly challenge at my hands a more tender regard then I can anyway expect he shall find among strangers, and in a place so far remote from his natural parents. And lastly, Sir, I may well call him the one half of myself, nay to speak more truly the better part of me, so that if your Majesty should deprive me of this comfort, I were then divided in my strength, which united might perhaps serve as most useful were I called to some weighty employments for the good of your service. I humbly beseech your Majesty to reflect upon these necessities with an impartial eye, and in the meanwhile to be fully assured, that without these hard injunctions, I really am and will, how badly so ever I be entreated still continue,*

*Sir, your most humble,  
Most obedient,  
And most faithful  
Subject and Servant*

*Rhys ap Thomas. From Carmarthen Castle 1484.*

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

In 1485 Henry Tudor finally made his bid for the English crown. Henry's return had been prophesised and the prophecy had declared him to be the returning King Arthur, but prophecy alone was not enough to ensure success. Henry needed support from the powerful Welsh lords, and in particular Rhys ap Thomas.

When Henry Tudor finally landed at Dale near Milford Haven on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1485 all he commanded was a ragged army comprised of exiles and mercenaries numbering approximately 2,000, many of whom were suffering from the sweating sickness which later spread and decimated his troops.

Legend says that Rhys was at Dale to meet Henry and that he prostrated himself underneath Mullock bridge so that Henry could march over him. Rhys could keep the promise he made to Richard that Henry would enter only over his body. This is not true as Rhys was many miles away at the time of Henry's landing and had not declared for Henry, but was remaining neutral. He waited and watched. Finally they met, just outside Welshpool on 16<sup>th</sup> August, and here Rhys pledged his allegiance and his army numbering at least 3,000 men to Henry. They then made their way towards Bosworth in Leicestershire and a date with history.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> August the armies of Henry Tudor and Richard III met at Bosworth field in Leicestershire and on this spot the future course of British history was determined. Henry Tudor had about five thousand men of which Rhys had supplied the majority, William Stanley two thousand five hundred, Lord Stanley commanded between three and four thousand, even so Richard outnumbered him 2:1 commanding roughly nine thousand men, three thousand under Norfolk's command. Richard despatched scouts to ascertain where Henry Tudor was positioned.

The battle was less than half an hour old, many of Richard's reserve had not yet been committed and the Stanleys still remained impassive, when Richard made the extraordinary decision to seek out Henry Tudor. Maybe his intention was to cut off the head of the rebellion for once Tudor was dead there would be nothing left to fight for, but whatever his reason this would be a fateful decision. He mounted his horse and cried 'we go to seek Henry Tudor'; armed with a battle axe he moved forward at a walk, the two hundred men of the Household

pacing behind. He rode northwest down the slope to swing clear of the northern battle line, with less than hundred men Richard charged the battle line.

Richard rode straight past Stanley's front, up a slight slope heading straight towards a milling mass of horsemen; the ranks of Henry's guard surged forward. Sir John Cheney blocked Richard's path, they clashed and Richard despatched him with his battle axe. Lovell and Robert Percy managed to draw close to Richard's side. Richard was hacking his way towards the standard of the red dragon borne by William Brandon. Richard caught a glimpse of Henry but he had already reached Brandon and both the standard bearer and the standard yielded under Richard's axe. His men made a tight arc about their King as they hacked their way closer and closer to Henry. A squire seized Richard's bridle and pointed. Richard turned and saw the red jackets of Sir William Stanley's cavalry hurtling towards them. The *Life* says:

'Rhys ap Thomas who from the beginning closely followed the Earl [Henry] seeing his party began to quail, and the King's gain ground, took this occasion to send to Sir William Stanley, giving him to understand the danger they were in, and entreating him to join their forces for the disengaging of the Earl, who was not only in despair of victory, but almost of his life. Whereon (for it did not seem he understood the danger before) Sir William Stanley made up to Rhys ap Thomas, and joining both together rushed in upon their adversaries'.

Another squire brought Richard a fresh horse and Richard spurred it forward with only a few men accompanying him. Richard was getting closer to Henry, but his men were falling fast he cried 'treason, treason' as he swung his battle axe, moving ever forward. None of his Household remained at his side; he was beating about him against spears and swords. Finally the blows rained down him; it seems that Richard had lost his helmet, as well as his horse at this moment, for recent forensic evidence on his skull implies the blows came from above (i.e. from men on horseback). Although he had received many head injuries, the final fatal blow was yet to come; 'Rhys ap Thomas slew Richard manfully fighting with him hand to hand'.

On 22nd August at Bosworth the last Plantagenet King of England was slain. The supreme accolade of striking the killing blow to Richard

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

was given to Rhys by the poet Guto'r Glyn in his praise poem which says that 'Rhys killed the boar, destroyed his head'. This is confirmed by the Burgundian writer Jean Molinet who noted that a Welshman delivered the killing stroke with a halberd (Rhys weapon of choice) while Richard's horse was stuck in the marsh of the battlefield.

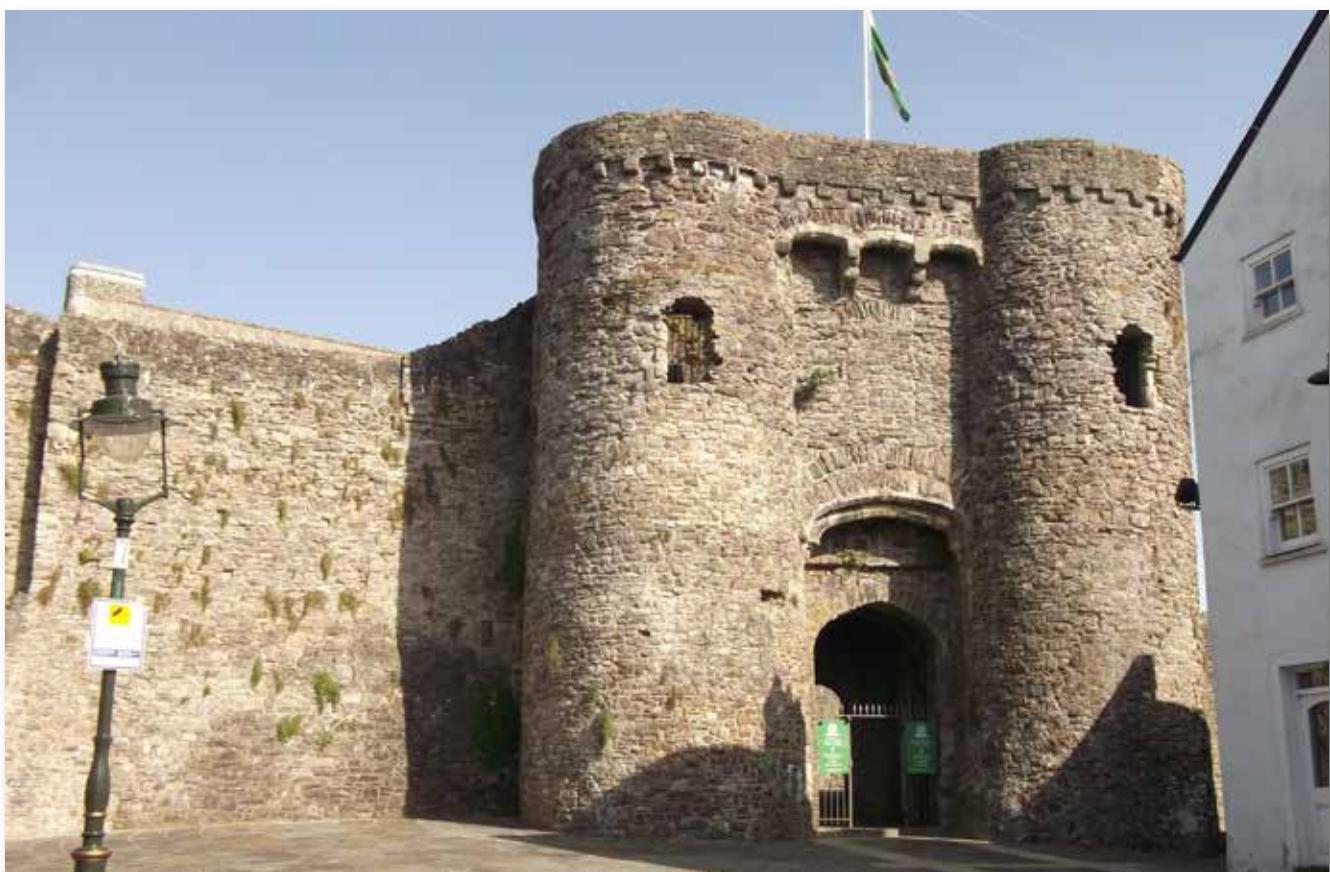
Some of Richard's followers managed to escape, including Viscount Lovell and Humphrey Stafford. On the news of the death of the King his army quickly disbanded, some headed northeast toward Cadeby, some south through the swamp to Redmore Plain, where the victors had gathered. Northumberland remained where he was until he was summoned to Henry to whom he paid homage, but he was taken into custody. Sir William Stanley retrieved the crown from Richard's battered helmet and placed it upon Henry's head; all knelt and did homage to the new King.

The battle had lasted a mere two hours, with only one hour spent in actual combat. In the afternoon Henry entered Leicester in triumph, followed later by the body of Richard 'stark naked, despoiled and derided, with a felon's halter about the neck'. The bloody body was slung contemptuously across

a horse, which one of the dead king's heralds was forced to ride. As it made its way across the west bridge of the Soar his head was carelessly battered against the stone parapet. For two days the body was kept on display in the house of the Grey Friars, when he was afterwards given a quick burial.

As a postscript in 2013 the dramatic discovery of Richard's remains in a car park in Leicester shed light on the death of the King. Of the many battle wounds that he had received the killing blow was dealt to the back of the skull by a 'medieval pole weapon' (halberd). Such a weapon Rhys ap Thomas employed so there can be little doubt that it was Rhys who dealt the death blow. The man who killed Richard III was now about to achieve greater prominence and favour than he could ever have imagined from his grateful new liege, Henry Tudor as a new era in British history was about to begin.

On that day, within the space of two hours the fortunes of both Henry Tudor and Rhys ap Thomas had changed dramatically. At the battle of Bosworth Rhys' aid had played a significant role in gaining Henry what he most desired, the Crown of England. Rhys' forces had numbered around two to three thousand men and had included a number of



## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

landowners and officials from Carmarthenshire and Cardiganshire. A good number of these Welshmen were now rewarded by the new King with offices in the principality or lordship of Kidwelly. Henry also honoured his promise to Rhys that he would make him chief governor of south Wales. With the exception of Henry's uncle Jasper, no-one else received such commanding authority in south Wales 'afterward when he had obtained the kingdom he [Henry] gave liberally to Rhys'.

Henry was quick to recognise Rhys' military prowess, but especially the influence that he held in south and west Wales, along with an unswerving loyalty that had been a crucial factor in determining the outcome of Bosworth. Rhys was a man 'noted for strength of will and military expertise...an excellent leader in war'. His motto 'Secret et Hardy' can be seen today on the garter plate in St George's chapel in Windsor.

Tradition says that Henry looked on him as a father figure, affectionately calling him 'Father Rice' despite Rhys being only seven or eight years older and he greatly valued his counsel. Three days after the battle of Bosworth Henry dubbed Rhys a knight,

'And today is declared a Knight  
And his raven and his shield – line by  
line –  
To Harry the King power is long  
given.'

Rhys went on to become one of the most powerful Welsh lords of the time, so much so he was given the nickname 'King of Carmarthen'. He served Henry VII faithfully and also his son Henry VIII. Rhys, now a man in his 60s, still commanded his army and won honours in France at the battles of Therouanne and Calais.

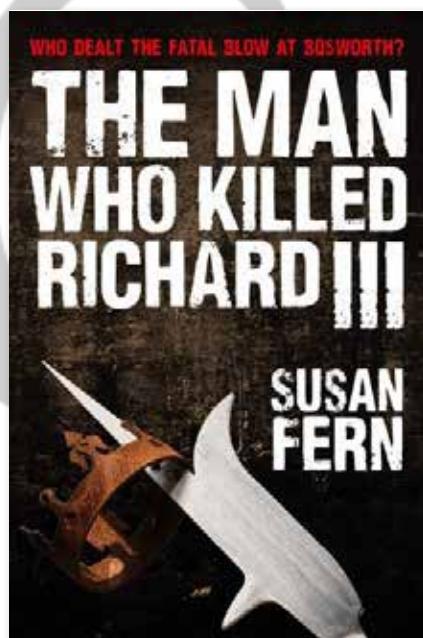
In 1525 Rhys was ailing, but chose to spend his last remaining days with the Grey friars in Carmarthen and not with his family at one of his many palatial dwellings. Was this perhaps a kind of atonement for the treatment of the King he once betrayed? On the dissolution of the monasteries his body was re-interred in St Peter's church in Carmarthen, where his tomb can be seen today. His fame has long since waned, yet without this man the outcome of Bosworth field would have been very different. Had he joined with Richard then Henry would have lost his claim, and presumably his life. English history would have had a very different outcome, and the glorious age of the Tudors would have been unknown. It is fitting that in this year that has seen the resurrection of the controversial battle with the discovery of the remains of Richard III, that the lost commander of Bosworth also receives the acknowledgement that has been denied him for almost 500 years.

SUSAN FERN

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**Susan Fern** is the author of "The Man Who Killed Richard III: Who Dealt the Fatal Blow at Bosworth?". She has lectured in history at Lampeter University and is currently research affiliate at the Open University. She is a member of the Richard III Society and took part in the 1984 archaeological dig on the friary in Carmarthen where Rhys ap Thomas is buried.



# THE 'USURPATION' OF RICHARD III

by John Ashdown-Hill

**I**N 2013 I was asked to give a talk before a group of highly qualified lawyers and a member of the present British royal family on 'Richard III's right to the throne'. It was a potentially embarrassing experience, and I wondered whether I might find myself spending the night in the Tower of London after giving my address. For the official position is that Richard III was a usurper. The present royal family (composed of descendants of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York) depends upon this 'fact' for its own right to

the throne. Thus, to this day the official website of the British Monarchy contains the following bald statement about Richard:

'Richard III usurped the throne from the young Edward V, who disappeared with his younger brother while under their ambitious uncle's supposed protection'.<sup>1</sup>

Yet I consider – and I certainly planned to argue in my talk – that Richard III was never a usurper. He was the legitimate king of England from the summer of 1483 until his death. Fortunately my

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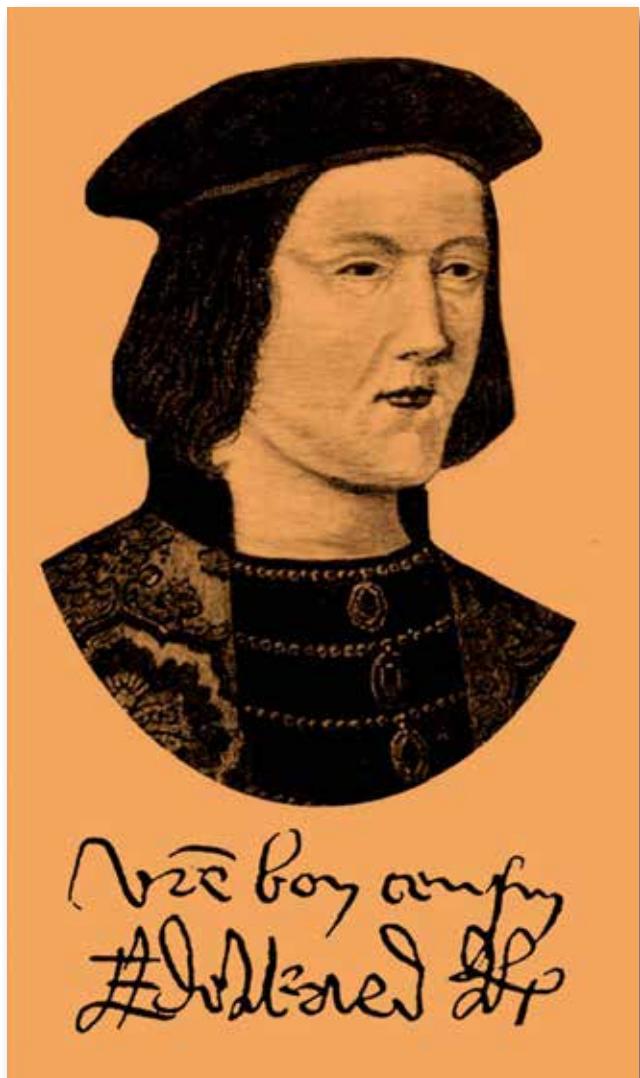
**Richard III (r. 1483-1485)**



Richard III usurped the throne from the young Edward V, who disappeared with his younger brother while under their ambitious uncle's supposed protection.

<sup>1</sup> 'Richard the usurper' – the Official Website of the British Monarchy

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



2 Edward IV – a usurper?

argument was greeted with care and interest and I didn't end up in the Tower!

First, we need to be clear what the word 'usurper' means. It implies that the person in question seized possession without any legal entitlement to back up his or her claim. The term could certainly, therefore, be applied to Richard III's elder brother, Edward IV<sup>2</sup>, who grabbed the throne by defeating the army of his predecessor, King Henry VI, in battle (backed up by his claim to more senior royal descent than the Lancastrian royal family). The term 'usurper' might also be applied even more strongly to Henry VII (progenitor of the present royal house), who also seized the throne in battle in 1485, having virtually no right to it (being of very remote and originally illegitimate English royal descent).

Curiously, however, the term 'usurper' is not normally applied either to Edward IV or to Henry VII<sup>3</sup>. Yet it is applied to Richard III, who did not seize the throne in battle, but was offered it by a 'proto-parliament'. This comprised the group of nobles, clergy and commons who had come to London in June 1483 to form the first parliament of the reign of the young king Edward V – a parliament which, however, was never formally opened. Their decision was reviewed in 1484 by the officially opened parliament, and was then formally accepted as an Act of Parliament, normally known as *titulus regius* ('the royal title').

Following the death of Edward IV, in April 1483, his eldest son had been proclaimed king under the royal title of Edward V. The new king was a minor, not yet old enough to wield royal power in person, so he required an adult to exercise the powers of regent. According to established English precedent, such powers should have been exercised by the senior living male-line relative of the young king – in this case the new king's paternal uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester (later King Richard III). The senior living prince of the blood royal was normally awarded regency powers by Parliament, with the title of Lord Protector of the Realm.

Yet following the death of Edward IV an attempt took place to illegally seize power in England. This attempt was made, not by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, but by Edward V's mother, Elizabeth Woodville.<sup>4</sup> The attempted Woodville coup was completely illegal in terms of established English custom. (In medieval England, regency powers had never been legally granted to the queen mother.) The Woodville plot was opposed by senior members of the nobility in London, who informed Richard, Duke of Gloucester, (then based far from the capital, in the north of England) of what was going on, and advised him to assert his rights to the protectorship. Richard did this by marching south, and meeting his nephew, Edward V, at Stony Stratford. Richard then took over guardianship of the young king and escorted him on to London, where plans for the boy's coronation were made.

But in June 1483, in the course of a council meeting which was discussing the details of Edward V's coronation, Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells made an astonishing announcement. He stated that Edward V could not be crowned or ac-

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



3 Henry VII – another usurper?



4 Elizabeth Woodville – a usurping queen?



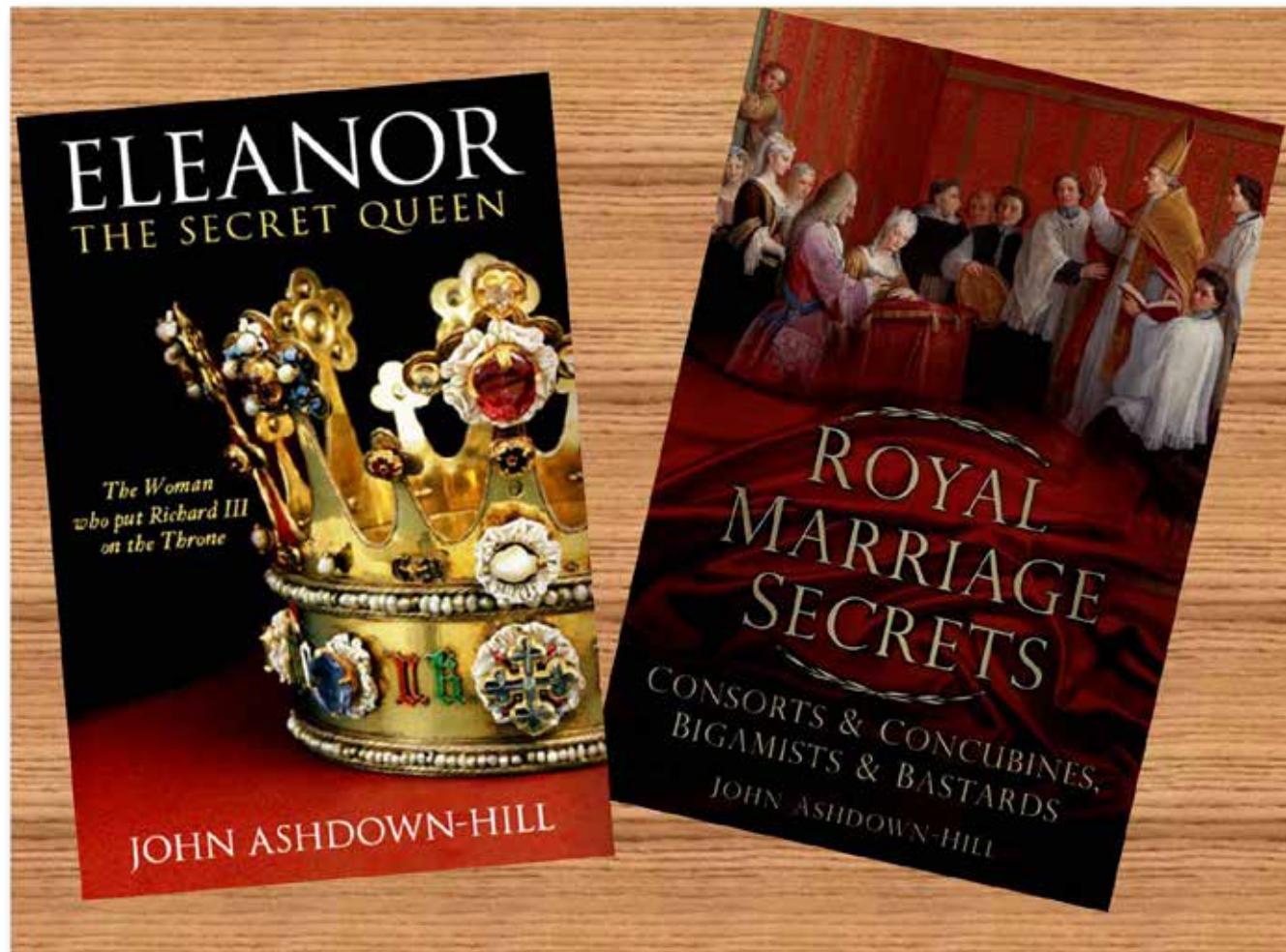
5 The rightful queen of Edward IV – Eleanor Talbot (left – facial reconstruction based on the skull found in Norwich), together with her father, John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury (centre – from his tomb effigy) and her younger sister, Elizabeth Talbot, Duchess of Norfolk (right – from a stained glass window at Long Melford Church, Suffolk).

# **FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III**

**"King Edward was and stode maried and trouthplight to oone Dame Elianor"**

of the church of Sylvestre And hode also that as he was of contynct of the same prestes mariage and before  
and longe tyme after the ded king Edward & king Edwards das and frode maried and yonthlyght to come Dame Elizabet  
Smythe daughter of the ded Isle of Shoddesbury with whom the same ded Edward had made a portacie or  
marriagone longe tyme before he made the said prestes mariage with the said Elizabeth Grey in maner and forme  
showing whiche prestes being true to my yongt they been true it appereth and foloweth evidently that the said

## **6 The key sentence of the act of *titulus regius* of 1484**



## 9 The books

cepted as King of England because he was illegitimate. This was because when his father, the late King Edward IV, had secretly married Edward V's mother, Elizabeth Woodville, in May 1464, he had committed bigamy. Edward IV was already married at that time to the daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lady Eleanor Talbot (Lady Butler)<sup>5</sup>. Stilling-

ton's knowledge of this situation was based upon the fact that he himself had married Edward to Eleanor Talbot, who did not die until June 1468 – four years after the bigamous Woodville marriage.

Despite later assumptions to this effect by later generations of historians, there is not a shred of evidence that the Lord Protector, Richard, Duke of

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



7 Richard III – NOT a usurper!



8 Elizabeth of York – illegitimate eldest daughter of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville

Gloucester, was in any way responsible for Bishop Stillington's revelation. Nor have we any right to simply assume that he was delighted by it. In fact, he may well have been shocked. However, he behaved in an absolutely proper manner. Nothing was done in secret. Richard made Stillington's evidence public, and invited the unofficial 'parliament' to consider the case and decide what should be done. It was the unofficial parliament – the three estates of the realm – who then decided that Edward IV had legally been married to Eleanor Talbot, that Elizabeth Woodville had never really been Queen of England, and that all the children borne by her to Edward IV, were bastards. On this basis they concluded that Edward V had never really been King, and could not be crowned. Instead the throne must be offered to the senior surviving prince of the blood royal – Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Thus it was on this entirely legal basis that the latter became King Richard III.

And the following year this decision was formally enacted by an official English Parliament.<sup>6</sup> The act declared that Edward IV had been married to Eleanor Talbot (Lady Butler), that Elizabeth Woodville (Lady Grey) had never been queen, and that her children could not therefore succeed to the

throne. Thus Richard III was the rightful king of England.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, later, after Henry VII had seized the throne, he was eager to improve his very weak blood claim by marrying Elizabeth of York (eldest daughter of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville) and by presenting her to the nation as the Yorkist heiress.<sup>8</sup> To achieve this Henry took the unprecedented action of repealing the act of 1484 without quoting it, and tried to ensure that all copies of it were destroyed. Actually, the fact that Henry VII acted in this way, instead of producing evidence in Parliament to show that Edward had not been married to Eleanor, very strongly implies that the original evidence produced in 1483/4 had been incontrovertible.

One result of Henry VII's action was that Eleanor Talbot was airbrushed out of history. For five hundred years she was forgotten or ignored. But that has hopefully been rectified by my published research about her<sup>9</sup>. The second outcome of Henry VII's action was that Richard III was declared a usurper. As the official website of the British Monarchy shows, that issue still needs to be contested!

**JOHN ASHDOWN-HILL**

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## RICHARD III FESTIVAL: 6-15 MARCH 2015

The Gloucester Richard III Festival comprises a programme of talks and events taking place in the city of Gloucester in the UK. You can find out full details at [venues.goucester.gov.uk/Freetime/Museums/events/Richard-III-Festival.aspx](http://venues.goucester.gov.uk/Freetime/Museums/events/Richard-III-Festival.aspx), including links for buying tickets, but here is a list of events:

- Friday 6 March, 7pm, City Museum – ‘Richard III: the King under the car park’, with Mathew Morris, Greyfriars site director. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Saturday 7 March, 11am, City Museum – ‘CSI Richard III: Analysis of the King’s Bones’, with Sarah Hainsworth. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Saturday 7 March, 1.30pm, City Museum – Richard III: the genetics, the genealogy and is it actually him?, with Dr Turi King. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Saturday 7 March 3.30pm, City Museum – ‘R’ Almost Marked the Spot – Filming the Search for Richard III’, with Carl Vivian, video producer for the University of Leicester. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Tuesday 10 March, 7pm, Gloucester Guildhall – ‘Music in the Age of Richard III’, talk with Cllr Sebastian Field. The talk will be illustrated with recorded musical examples. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Friday 13 March, 2pm, meeting at the City Museum – Richard III – Walking Tour of the City Centre, tour with Christine Morgan. Tour lasts approximately one hour, maximum of 20 people. Tickets £4 each.
- Friday 13 March, 7-9.30pm, St Nicholas Church – ‘Richard III, Tudor Propaganda and the Judgement of History’ – Choral Concert. Tickets £10 to include mulled wine and cakes.
- Saturday 14 March, 10.30am, City Museum – “Tis but a scratch”, the reality of 15th century Warfare’, with Bob Woosnam-Savage, Curator of European Edged Weapons at the Royal Armouries in Leeds. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Saturday 14 March, 12pm, City Museum – ‘Richard III’s Heir? – The Dublin King’, with author and historian Dr Louis-John Ashdown-Hill. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Saturday 14 March, 2pm, City Museum – ‘Shakespeare and the Remains of Richard III’, with Professor Philip Schwyzer. Tickets £7.50 per person.
- Saturday 14 March, 3.45pm, City Museum – The Trial of Richard III. Come along and witness the trial of Richard III, hear all the facts and opinions from the defence and the prosecution – then see what fate the impartial judge delivers! Tickets £5 per person.

# ‘THE DEATH OF WILLIAM, LORD HASTINGS’

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Historian and author  
**Josephine Wilkinson**  
delves into a fascinating period of  
English History...

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**W**HEN Edward IV died in April 1483, he left several difficulties within his realm and his council unresolved. The most perilous was that his heir, now King Edward V, was still a minor. The young king had spent most of his short life at Ludlow on the Welsh marches, his affairs initially managed by a council which included his paternal uncles, George duke of Clarence and Richard, duke of Gloucester. The execution of Clarence in 1478 and Gloucester's absence as the result of his duties in the north meant that the prince's upbringing and education was directed primarily by his Wydeville kin. Indeed, the most important position in the household at Ludlow was held by Edward's maternal uncle, Anthony Wydeville, Earl Rivers.

Edward V's minority intensified the power-struggle between rival factions in council and at court. Mancini<sup>1</sup> speaks of the Wydevilles, Thomas Grey, marquis of Dorset, Lord Richard Grey and Sir Edward Wydeville on one side, with Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York, John Morton, Bishop of Ely and William, Lord Hastings on the other. The ascent of the Wydevilles had led to disquiet among the old and established members of the household. The danger was that one side or the oth-

er, seeing themselves as vulnerable to the ambitions of their rivals, would initiate a coup.

The dying Edward IV had been mindful of this state of affairs. Calling the rival parties to his bedside, he had urged the leaders, Dorset and Hastings, to put aside their differences for the sake of Edward's children and the peace of the kingdom. This they did, although the truce would last only as long as the king lived.

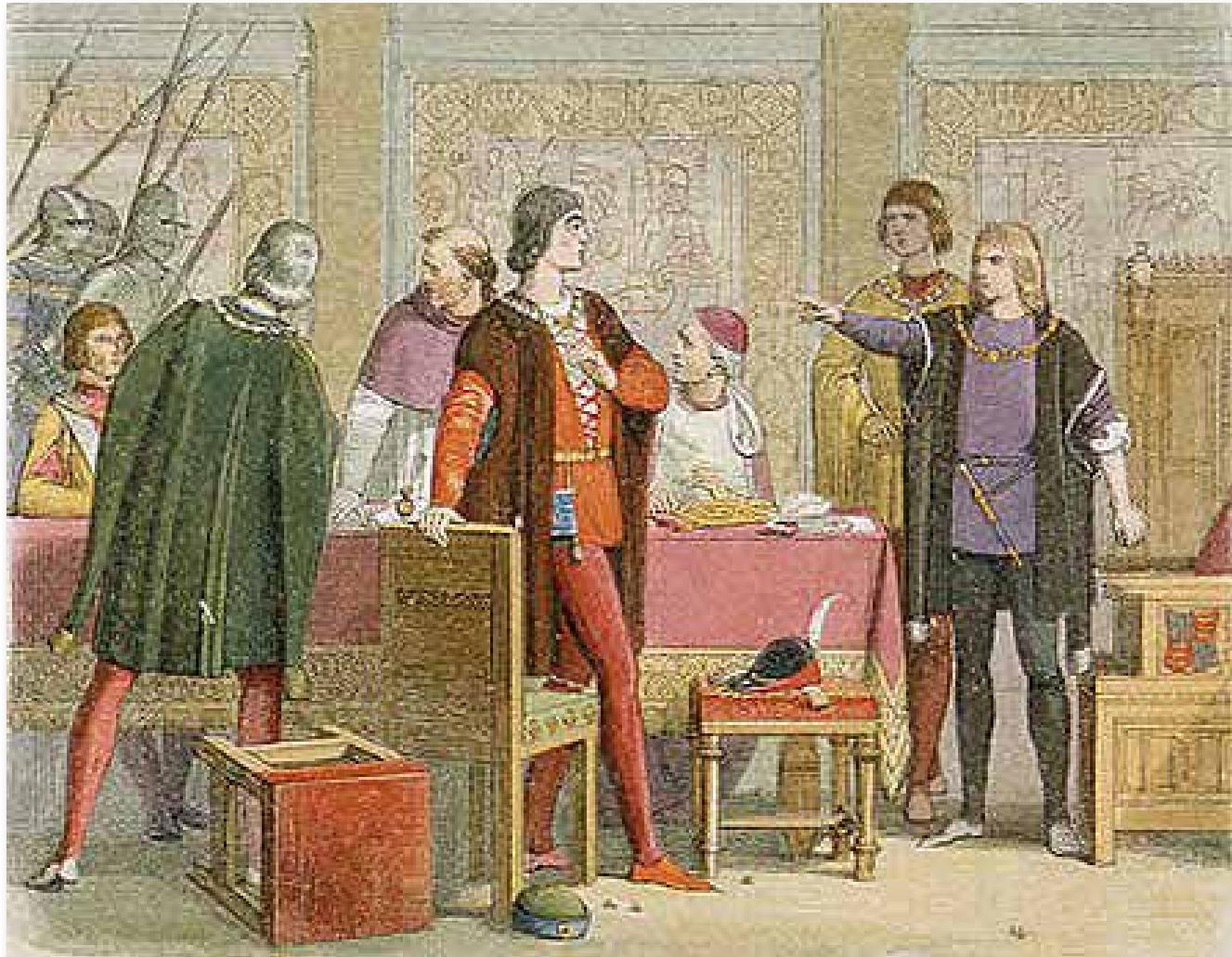
The days following Edward's death saw a series of meetings of the Privy Council. In the case of a royal minority, it was the duty of the available lords, spiritual and temporal, to maintain the government of the country. This included making plans for the minority of Edward V. The councillors consulted the late king's last will and testament and found that Richard of Gloucester was named as protector.<sup>2</sup> This pleased some council members who believed that the young king 'ought to be utterly forbidden to his uncles and [step-]brothers by his mother's side';<sup>3</sup> that is, the Wydevilles. However, this posed a dilemma because the Wydevilles had custody of the young Edward. They solved it by agreeing that the realm should be governed by a council, which would include the Wydevilles, but which would be headed by Gloucester.<sup>4</sup>

1 Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.69

2 Hanham, *Richard III*, p.118; see also Mancini, p.71

3 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.485

4 Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.71



**Richard and Hastings**

The next item on the agenda was to set a date for the coronation, and 4 May was chosen. Given that this was less than a month away, it allowed very little time for the necessary arrangements to be made. In spite of this, no one in the council appears to have objected to it.

The Wydevilles then proposed that a large company of men should escort Edward V as he travelled from Ludlow to London. Their proposition was firmly opposed by William, Lord Hastings. While an early date for the coronation had not unduly concerned him, he could see no reason why such a strong force should accompany the new king. He felt that it suggested some sinister purpose on the part of the Wydevilles. So worried was he about this new development that he threatened to withdraw to Calais.

Hastings's threat was significant. He was governor of Calais, a well-armed garrison town that had been the starting point for the rebellion led by the earl of Warwick and the duke of Clarence that had deposed Edward IV in 1469. It is cannot be said for certain whether or not Hastings was threatening civil war if the Wydevilles got their way. That the council relented and agreed to a smaller retinue indicates that they did not wish to press the matter too far. Queen Elizabeth wrote to her son, Richard Grey, telling him 'not to exceed an escort of two thousand men.'<sup>5</sup> Lord Hastings accepted this compromise. He expected that the combined retinues of the dukes of Gloucester and Buckingham would constitute a force of similar size, so that any threat would be neutralised.

<sup>5</sup> Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.485

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



**Richard III**

However, Hastings remained uneasy with the way events were unfolding. The marquis of Dorset's boast that, 'We are so important, that even without the king's uncle [Richard] we can make and enforce these decisions',<sup>6</sup> did little to reassure him. At this point Hastings wrote to Richard,<sup>7</sup> urging him to hasten to London with a strong force 'and avenge the insult done to him by his enemies.' Richard could achieve this if 'before reaching the city, he took the young King Edward under his protection and authority, while seizing before they were alive to the danger those of the king's followers, who were not in agreement with this policy.' Hastings also expressed his fears for his own personal safety, saying he was alone in the capital 'and not without great danger, for he could scarcely escape the snares of his enemies since their old hatred was aggravated by his old friendship for the duke of Gloucester.'

6 Mancini, *Usurpation*, pp.71-73

7 Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.71

8 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.486

For Richard the unfolding events were a poignant reminder of the power struggle that had occurred during the reign of Henry VI. At that time, his own father had been excluded from royal council by his enemies.

Richard set out on the journey south on or about 23 April, two weeks after Edward IV's death. The young King Edward was expected to leave Ludlow the next day. Edward's party followed Watling Street for much of the way, but they made a detour so that they could meet Richard coming from the north. As it happened, the two parties missed each other, and Edward pressed on to Stony Stratford. When news of Richard's arrival at Northampton reached him, the king sent Earl Rivers, Richard Grey and others to pay their respects and 'to submit the conduct of everything to the will and discretion of his uncle, the duke of Gloucester'.<sup>8</sup> The lords appear to have spent an agreeable evening at Richard's table, enjoying the hospitality of the inn as they engaged in pleasant conversation. At some stage, they were joined by the duke of Buckingham.

As morning broke, the lords advanced towards Stony Stratford to join King Edward and the rest of his party. At this point, Richard and Buckingham suddenly arrested Rivers and Grey and sent them as prisoners to various castles in the north. Richard now entered Stony Stratford and arrested certain others.

Richard was obliged to explain his actions to the young king. He stressed that he had acted out of self-defence and to preserve the honour and the safety of the king.<sup>9</sup> He added that it was 'common knowledge' that an attempt had been made 'to deprive him of the office of regent conferred on him by his late brother.' This information had, of course, been given to Richard by Lord Hastings.

As soon as news of the arrests and Richard's having taken custody of the king reached London, Queen Elizabeth took her sons, Richard of York and the marquis of Dorset, and her daughters into sanctuary at Westminster.<sup>10</sup> Elizabeth and Dorset attempted to raise an army to defend them and to free the young king, but they were greeted with hostility. It was thought by some that it would be

9 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.487; Mancini, *Usurpation*, pp.77, 79

10 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.487

'more profitable that the youthful sovereign should be with his paternal uncle than with his maternal uncles and uterine brothers.'<sup>11</sup> It was now clear to the Wydevilles that the moment Richard and Buckingham arrived in London with Edward V and joined forces with Lord Hastings their supremacy would be at an end.

The rival parties now began to consolidate their positions: 'some collected forces at Westminster in the queen's name, others at London under the shadow of the lord Hastings, and took up positions there'.<sup>12</sup> Hastings, it must be remembered, had written to Richard to urge the very measures the duke had taken, and he was very pleased with the way events had turned out. Richard was taking care of business and he was clearly concerned for the new king's welfare and that of the realm. Hastings told anyone who would listen that

*hitherto nothing whatever had been done except the transferring of the government of the kingdom from two persons of the queen's blood to two more powerful persons of the king's; and all this, too, effected without any slaughter, or indeed causing as much blood to be shed as would be produced by a cut finger.*<sup>13</sup>

However, Hastings' exhilaration would very quickly diminish and he would enter into a conspiracy against Richard; but what could have caused such a sudden and dramatic change? Polydore Vergil<sup>14</sup> writes that Hastings had been deeply disturbed by Richard's cavalier approach as he took the young king into his custody. As has been seen, evidence provided by earlier chroniclers does not support this assertion.

In fact, the change in Hastings' attitude was, in part, directly linked to a terrible secret that Duke Richard had recently become privy to. This was that his late brother, Edward IV, had entered into a pre-contract with a lady before his marriage to Elizabeth Wydeville. Moreover, this prior relationship had been consummated, meaning that it was effectively lawful matrimony. The Wydeville marriage was, therefore, invalid and the children born to

11 Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.79; cf. Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.485

12 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.487

13 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.488

14 Vergil, *English History*, p.175

15 Grants from the Crown, pp.5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 31–36, 49

Edward and Elizabeth, including King Edward V, were illegitimate. The consequences for the succession were obvious. It is possible, then, that Hastings saw it as his duty to preserve the honour of Edward IV's memory and ensure the succession of his son.

However, there may have been a stronger reason why Hastings should turn against Richard. While Richard was making determined efforts to promote the interests of men formerly loyal to Edward IV, he not unnaturally wanted to promote his own friends and supporters to positions of power within the new regime. The first, and most obvious, beneficiary was Henry Stafford, duke of Buckingham,<sup>15</sup> but John, Lord Howard,<sup>16</sup> Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland<sup>17</sup> and William Catesby<sup>18</sup> were all advanced. Conversely, notwithstanding his anxiety to defend Richard's interests following the death of Edward IV, William, Lord Hastings was largely excluded from the protector's distribution of grants. The only item of note was that he was confirmed in his position as Master of the Mint.<sup>19</sup>

Now that Hastings 'saw all in uproar and matters fell out otherwise than he had expected' he repented his earlier action. He summoned to a meeting at St Paul's 'such friends as he knew to be right careful for the life, dignity, and estate of the prince Edward, and conferred with them what best was to be done'.<sup>20</sup> The friends with whom Hastings collaborated were Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of Canterbury and John Morton, Bishop of Ely. This conspiracy was deeply worrying to Richard. He 'sounded their loyalty through the duke of Buckingham,' who reported that the three men sometimes 'forgathered in each other's houses'.<sup>21</sup>

Hastings, Rotherham and Morton had been allies under Edward IV. None of them had reason to support the protector. Richard had removed Rotherham from the chancellorship, thus depriving him of the powerful position he had enjoyed under the previous régime. Morton had also enjoyed a successful career under Edward IV. However, his allegiance had initially been Lancastrian; in November 1459, he had drafted a bill of attainder against Richard's

16 Grants from the Crown, p.4

17 Grants from the Crown, pp.19–20

18 Grants from the Crown, p.3, 36–37

19 CPR 1476–1485, p.348

20 Vergil, *English History*, p.175

21 Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.89

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

father. Later, his allegiance expediently transferred to Edward IV, but his commitment was to the king, not his house; and, of course, Edward's queen was the Lancastrian Elizabeth Wydeville. Under Edward IV, Morton had been involved in the negotiations for the treaty of Picquigny, for which he received a pension of 600 crowns from King Louis XI. Richard had actively opposed the treaty, seeing it as a disgrace, both militarily and morally.

Rotherham and Morton, once part of the inner circle of power under Edward IV, now saw themselves marginalised in favour of those who had never held any significant political authority. Lord Hastings, who had not been well rewarded for his efforts to protect Richard's interests, felt that he had reason to believe that he, too, would be excluded from power within the new régime. As such, the disaffected Hastings had legitimate grounds to conspire with Morton and Rotherham against Richard and his ally, the duke of Buckingham.

However, Hastings' association with these men brought him over to the Wydeville side; to remove Richard and Buckingham would lead to the restoration of the Wydevilles and their faction. On the face of it, such an alliance might be difficult to accept considering the difficult relations that had existed between Hastings and the Wydevilles in the past. However, the two sides now shared a mutual objective which transcended these differences. This was to ensure the coronation of King Edward V, an event for which, it was now apparent, Richard had little enthusiasm.<sup>22</sup>

Given the strength of the conspiracy against him, and the influence of those involved, it is no surprise that Richard felt insecure and made enquiries into their activities. What he learned frightened him, all the more so considering he felt himself under attack from Queen Elizabeth, whom he accused of using witchcraft against him. He wrote to the City of York as well as to Lord Nevill ex-

plaining the danger he faced.<sup>23</sup> He asked for armed assistance, but he must have known that there was every chance that they would arrive too late. He had no choice but to act quickly. His first step was to suspend normal government.<sup>24</sup> Next, he called two council meetings to be held the following day. One meeting would be at Westminster Hall with Chancellor John Russell; the other would be led by Richard at the Tower.<sup>25</sup>

Among those present at the Tower on Friday 13 June were William, Lord Hastings, Archbishop Rotherham and Bishop Morton. During the course of the meeting, Lord Hastings was arrested and led out to his immediate execution. The scene is described by Mancini:

*When they had been admitted to the innermost quarters, the protector, as prearranged, cried out that an ambush had been prepared for him, and they had come with hidden arms, that they might be first to open the attack. Thereupon the soldiers, who had been stationed there by their lord, rushed in with the duke of Buckingham, and cut down Hastings on the false pretext of treason; they arrested the others, whose life, it was presumed, was spared out of respect for religion and holy orders.<sup>26</sup>*

The Croyland chronicler's account is more succinct:

*The lord Hastings, on the thirteenth day of the month of June, being the sixth day of the week, on coming to the Tower to join the council, was, by order of the Protector, beheaded. Two distinguished prelates, also, Thomas, archbishop of York, and John, bishop of Ely, being, out of respect for their order, held exempt from capital punishment, were carried prisoners to different castles in Wales.<sup>27</sup>*

In time, more detailed versions of the incident appeared. Polydore Vergil,<sup>28</sup> followed by Sir Thomas More,<sup>29</sup> included in their accounts Richard's allega-

22 See the essay 'Richard III' in Wilkinson, *The Princes in the Tower*

23 Davies, *Extracts*, p.149-50

24 As evidenced by the cessation of grants as recorded in *The Grants of Edward V*

25 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.488; Vergil (p.180) suggests that the meetings were to do with the coronation, with the council at Westminster Hall tasked to proclaim the day of the coronation, while the Tower council would debate the whole matter. This is incorrect, since the date of the

coronation had been set for 22 June, the writs for which had already been sent out.

26 Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.91. In fact, the lives of Archbishop Rotherham and Bishop Morton were spared because, as men of the church, they were outside Richard's authority.

27 Ingulph, *Chronicle*, p.488

28 Vergil, *English History*, pp.180-1

29 More, *Richard III*, pp.48-9

tions of witchcraft against Queen Elizabeth, previously known only through the letter to York.

It is possible that Richard had simply acted on impulse, carried away by fear in the face of threats against his life and that of the duke of Buckingham. Yet this explanation does not fit easily with the situation in which Richard now found himself. He was worried about Hastings' conspiracy with Rotherham and Morton. When this is added to Richard's fear of the queen and her adherents and his concerns over Edward V's legitimacy and the succession, it is difficult to believe that he would be content simply to allow events to take their course. For all Richard knew, soldiers could have been stationed in readiness to arrest him and to carry him away to his own hasty execution; indeed, Mancini's account suggests that this was, in fact, the case.

In view of this, it must be accepted that Richard had arranged armed protection for himself and the duke of Buckingham, and that he was prepared to attack first should the occasion demand it. As Mancini notes, soldiers were on standby, ready to strike at Richard's command.<sup>30</sup> It can only be assumed that these men were among those who had formed the original retinues of Richard Gloucester and the duke of Buckingham. The forces Richard had requested from York and Lord Nevill had not yet arrived; his letters would not reach their destinations until 15 and 16 June respectively.

A letter, much fragmented, written by George Cely, a merchant of the Staple, describes the confusion in London in the days that followed the Tower incident:

*schamberlayne ys dessesset in trobell... yff the kyng [Edward V] God safe his lyfe wher desett, the Dewk of Glosetter wher in any parell, gaffe my lorde prynsse wher God defend wher trobellett, yf my lorde of Northumbyrlond wher dede or grettly trobellytt, yf my lorde Haward wher slayne...*

<sup>30</sup> Pollard ('Events of 1483', p.155) suggests that one of Mancini's sources was a leak from within the council. It is possible, therefore, that his informant was someone who had witnessed the incident. In the panic and violence of the moment, it could have appeared to that witness that the entire incident had indeed been prearranged.

<sup>31</sup> *Cely Papers*, pp.132-3. The period in which this letter was written is established by the date of the death of Lord Hastings, on 13 June, and the creation of John Howard as the Duke of Norfolk, on 28 June.

[the chamberlain is deceased in trouble... if the king God save his life were deceased, the duke of Gloucester were if any peril, if my lord prince were God defend were in trouble, if my lord of Northumberland were dead of greatly troubled, if my Lord Howard were slain...]<sup>31</sup>

Interestingly, Cely remarks that Richard of Gloucester was in danger. While he could be repeating propaganda supposedly spread by Richard in the aftermath of Hastings' execution, it is equally possible that he was reporting the truth. Evidence that Hastings had led a plot to assassinate Richard and Buckingham exists in several sources.

Mancini<sup>32</sup> states that Hastings was cut down for treason, although he considers this to be a false pretext. The *Great Chronicle of London*<sup>33</sup> simply notes that Hastings was accused of treason, without commenting on the veracity or otherwise of the charge. The document known as *College of Arms MS 2M6*<sup>34</sup> includes Hastings among those who imagined the death of the duke of Gloucester, for which he was taken in the Tower and beheaded forthwith. Vergil<sup>35</sup> declares that Hastings had brought about his own ruin. He recounts a discussion between Richard and Hastings about witchcraft and what was the best punishment for those who would use it to harm others. Richard then asks: 'What than, William, yf by thine owne practises I be brought to destruction?' Vergil continues, saying that 'As soone as this dede [Hastings's execution] was done they cryed treason, treason throwght the whole towre.' According to Vergil, then, Hastings was involved in the Queen's plot against Richard, the charge of using witchcraft being the link.

However, probably the best evidence comes, as it so often does, from a most unexpected source. In Thomas More's<sup>36</sup> purposefully hostile<sup>37</sup> account, Richard is said to have suddenly and urgently sent for help. He and Buckingham hurriedly dressed

<sup>32</sup> Mancini, *Usurpation*, p.91

<sup>33</sup> Great Chronicle of London, p.231

<sup>34</sup> Firth Green, p.588

<sup>35</sup> Vergil, *English History*, p.181

<sup>36</sup> More, *Richard III*, pp.52-3

<sup>37</sup> See the essay 'History and Imagination in Thomas More's *History of King Richard III*' in Wilkinson, *The Princes in the Tower* for an explanation as to why this account was purposefully hostile.

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

themselves ‘old il faring briginders, such as no man shold wene that thei wold vouchsafe to have put upon their backes, except that some sodaine neces- sitie had constrained them.’ That is to say, old, ill- kempt armour, that none would have worn except out of necessity. Richard then declared that Hastings and others ‘of his conspiracy’ had plotted ‘to have sodeinly destroyed him & the duke, ther the same day in the counsel.’ Moreover, ‘what thei intended further, was as yet not well knownen.’ Richard, had not known of their treason ‘before x. of the clock the same fore none.’ At which time, ‘sodain fere drove them to put on for ther defence such harnes as came next to hande’

Since it was well known that Hastings had been executed for treason, More used the event as a set-piece in his drama, where it was put to the purpose of revealing the deviousness and cruelty inherent in Richard’s character as demonstrated in his behaviour.

More presents an image of the two dukes, having suddenly learned of Hastings’ dangerous plot against them, being forced to put on whatever armour lay to hand. Although this work is fictionalised – note that More makes Richard unaware of the Hastings plot until ten in the morning of the day it was to be carried out – this does not mean that More largely fabricated every detail. Certain particulars are too specific to be entirely the product of invention. More’s most probable source for this scene is John Morton, in whose household More stayed in his youth. A close eye-witness to the events, Morton would probably have retained the memory of small, seemingly insignificant details, such as the ill-fitting and shabby armour Richard and Buckingham were forced to put on. Such a

grisly scene would undoubtedly fire the imagination of a young boy, and its details remained with him until they could be written down and applied to literary use.

It must be remembered that these sources, with the exception of Cely’s letter, were written after Richard’s accession, and in the case of Vergil and More, long after. By then Richard’s reputation as a usurper and a murderer was firmly established. Each of these writers wanted to show that Hastings and his fellow conspirators were opposed to Richard’s ‘usurpation’, which he had already decided upon and for the success of which the removal of Hastings, Rotherham and Morton was a necessary measure. The real reason why these men opposed Richard, however, was, as we have seen, to protect their own positions of power. This would only be possible by removing Richard and Buckingham and ensuring the accession of King Edward V.

Richard’s proper course of action should have been to arrest those involved in the plot and send Hastings for trial. However, the urgency of the situation, and the lack of men to carry out the arrests, left Richard with no recourse other than to act as he did. Richard, therefore, ordered the immediate execution of the ringleader, Hastings – it was Hastings’ life or Richard’s – and the arrests of Rotherham, Morton and others.<sup>38</sup> Still, no matter how justified it might have been, Hastings’ execution was truly horrific.<sup>39</sup> On that one brutal and bloody day, Richard had removed those who presented the greatest and most pressing danger to him and, in doing so, ensured his own infamy.

**DR JOSEPHA JOSEPHINE  
WILKINSON**

38 It is the Tudor sources, particularly Vergil (*English History*, p.180), who suggest that Thomas, Lord Stanley, was also arrested at the Tower. Their inclusion of Stanley, which is almost certainly erroneous, was probably intended to emphasise his enmity towards Richard. Stanley, whose attitude with regard to

Richard was often ambiguous, was married to Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry Tudor.

39 Vergil (*English History*, p.181) suggests Hastings’ execution was divine retribution for his part in the murder of Edward of Lancaster. Clearly, he is not entirely the humanist he pretends to be.

# FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III

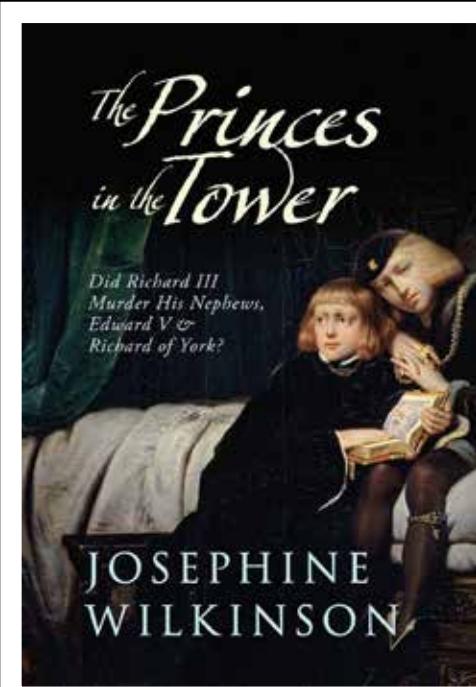
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# Tudor Life



# JULY 1483 – LONDON WOMAN MAKES KING RICHARD III'S CORONATION ROBE

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With her keen eye for the “normal person”, **Toni Mount** looks at a woman most won’t have heard of ... and yet without her skills, life would have been different...

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In July 1483, Alice Claver, a London silk-woman, supplied the silk tassels for the king’s gloves for the coronation of Richard III and the exquisite great lace mantle, costing sixty shillings and seven pence, worn by Queen Anne en route to Westminster Abbey. Alice’s fine workmanship was admired by the throng of nobility packing the abbey on a hot summer’s day, when the laces of purple silk and gold thread, complete with tassels and silk buttons, adorned their highnesses coronation robes of finest purple velvet at the cost of sixty-three shillings and two pence each. It was a splendid occasion as well as an excellent advertisement for the skills of a local craftswoman.

Alice carried out her independent business as a *femme sole* during her husband’s life time. This meant that unlike a *femme couverte*, she was responsible for her own income, debts and any legal actions concerning her business. After the death of her husband Richard, a wealthy mercer, in 1456, she continued to practise her craft, occasionally be-

ing employed by the king’s Great Wardrobe. With a single mother with an infant son, also named Richard to care for and raise alone, an income was vital and Alice ran a sizeable workshop. Her name first appeared in the royal accounts back in 1480 when she was paid to make laces and tassels to decorate King Edward IV’s books, silk ribbons to be used to

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French 15th c collecting silk cocoons

lace points and for girdles (belts), buttons of blue and gold silk, fringing of Venice gold at six shillings an ounce, coloured fringing and an elaborate garter – this last item at the tremendous cost of seventeen shillings. Most likely this was an Order of the Garter insignia, rather than a garter to hold up stockings, since only a single item was ordered. Alice also supplied four yards of black silk and two yards of blue and an ounce of sewing silk costing fourteen pence.

Some of the ribbons which Alice supplied may have been made by the tablet weaving process, a technique for making narrow, decorative braids. By this method, wool or silk could be used to produce intricate designs, from repeat geometric patterns to free-hand birds and animals or individual lettering, such as the motto on the Order of the Garter: *Honi soit qui mal y pense*. I've had a go at tablet weaving, using six wooden tablets (little flat squares with sides of about 1½ inches), each with

four holes through which the coloured threads pass to keep them in order. As you weave, the tablets are turned in sequence to make a regular pattern by changing the order of the threads. I quickly realised, having produced a tangled mess after weaving only a few passes, you need a brain like Einstein to work out which tablet to turn in which direction and in what order. My respect for the silk-women's mathematical skills increased enormously, as did my mess of threads.

Alice Claver also provided the Great Wardrobe with four counterpanes at £12 each with embroidered images and scripture texts in various colours, trimmed with the Yorkist badges of crowns, suns and roses. She may have been helped with these roses by the embroiderer, Martin Jumbard, to whom the wardrobe paid four pence each for eight large roses and one penny each for forty-eight small ones. Martin appears again in the accounts, this time 'powdering' and setting the green velvet harness and trappings for two horses with aglets (decorative metal ends to stop laces and fringes fraying) and spangles of silver and gilt.

As a widow, Alice relied on the support and friendship of two fellow silk-women: Beatrice Fyler and the widow Katherine Hardman who came to live in Alice's house. They took each other's children on as apprentices, witnessed each other's wills, acted as executors and stood as guarantors for each other in their business ventures. In her will, Alice, who never remarried, identified herself as the 'widow of Richard Claver of London', not as an independent silk-woman and, when she died in 1489, she left her business to her apprentice, Katherine Champyon.

From the statutes of the City of London for the 1450s we know that silk-working was strictly a woman's business, unlike embroidery, knitting or even laundering – jobs that men did too – because the statutes say:

...Many a worshipful woman within the city has lived full honourably and therewith many good households kept, and many gentlewomen and others, more than a thousand, have been apprenticed under them in learning the same craft of silk making.

Clearly, this craft was carried out by the most respectable women and was a suitable occupation for ladies of gentility, as well as bringing in sufficient profits that 'many good households' depended upon it for their livelihood. Since it was so important, it

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is surprising the craft never formed its own proper guild, probably because men weren't involved in the work. Instead, the silk-women regulated and co-operated among themselves, very much as guild members would have done, but unofficially. Having completed her long apprenticeship of seven years or more, instead of being admitted to a company of fellow artisans, the young woman would remain with her mistress until she was able to marry and set up her own shop.

The London silk-women pursued a line of work involving many skills. As throwsters they turned raw silk into yarn; as weavers they produced ribbons, laces and other small goods; as craftworkers they made up silk laces and other decorative items and as traders in silk they undertook large and lucrative contracts. This work wasn't a sideline to domestic duties, something a wife pursued in moments free from housework and child care: this was a career and wives often continued to work in silk, no matter what the occupations of their husbands.

Silk-working was a true 'mystery' with secrets of production and trade passed on from mistress to apprentice. Besides running workshops and training apprentices, silk-women invested large amounts of money in purchasing raw materials and embark-

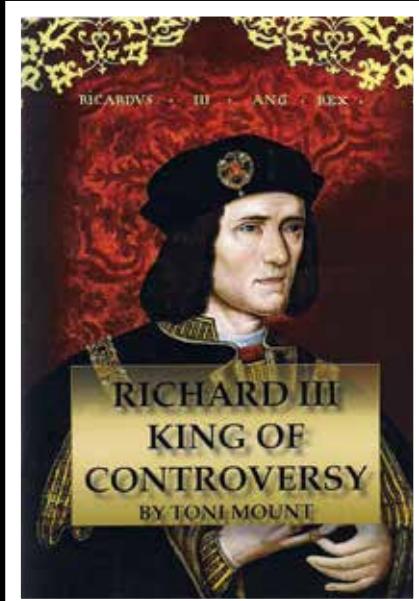
ing on foreign trading ventures, often with Venetian silk-merchants. Sometimes the women banded together to help each other. On six occasions between 1368 and 1504, the London silk-women sought protection for their craft through petitions to Parliament or to the Lord Mayor of London and their requests were granted, but the silk-working business was never recognised officially.

Unfortunately, the lack of representation as a guild proved the downfall of the craft as a female monopoly. When men began moving into the silk-working industry in the sixteenth century, due to rising unemployment in the Tudor period, the silk-women could do nothing to prevent the men from taking over. Silk-working was no longer a women-only craft as the men turned it into an industry. But Alice Claver's skills were long remembered by all who saw their Highnesses so splendidly attired on Coronation Day 1483.

You can learn more about ordinary women of the middle ages from Toni's website [www.medievalhousewife.co.uk](http://www.medievalhousewife.co.uk) or her Facebook page [www.facebook.com/medievalhousewives](https://www.facebook.com/medievalhousewives).

**TONI MOUNT**

**Toni Mount** is a historian with an eye for the real-life details of history. She is able to bring depth and character to each of her subjects, and in her Kindle book "Richard III King of Controversy" she continues with this high standard. This book is an introduction to the life and controversies surrounding one of England's best known Kings whose reputation has grown and intrigued generations over the centuries. His body was discovered in an amazing twist of fate in 2012 and his re-interment in Leicester Cathedral in 2015 is creating yet more controversy.



# JASPER TUDOR

GODFATHER OF THE TUDOR DYNASTY

M ADEGLOBAL Publishing are publishing new, fully revised and edited edition of Debra Bayani's fascinating "Jasper Tudor" biography.

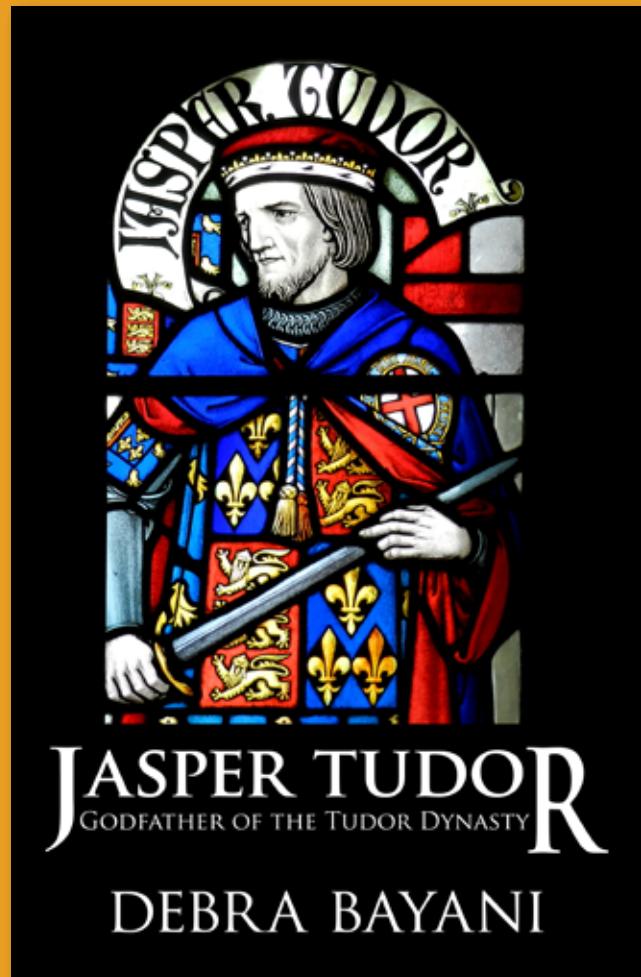
Jasper Tudor, born in secrecy in 1431, rose to become one of the key supporters of King Henry VI during the difficult period of English history known as the Wars of the Roses. Devoted to the Lancastrian cause and to his nephew Henry Tudor, Jasper's loyalty led him through a life full of adventure.

When he was just six years old, Jasper's life was changed dramatically by the death of his mother, the dowager queen Katherine de Valois, and the arrest of his father Owen Tudor soon afterwards. Jasper and his older brother Edmund were called to court and by 1452 they became the first Welshmen to be elevated to the English peerage. Sadly, Edmund died in captivity in 1456, leaving Jasper to protect his brother's child, the future king Henry VII.

Jasper's dedication to the Lancastrian cause took him through many of the well-known battles of the Wars of the Roses, including the historic victory at Bosworth. It is clear that Henry VII owed an enormous part of his success in claiming the throne in 1485 to his uncle, who was his closest adviser, confidante and mentor.

In this biography, Debra Bayani clearly shows that Jasper Tudor was a key figure in the tumultuous history of England, detailing his life from his birth in 1431 to his death in 1495. He can rightly be called the "Godfather of the Tudor Dynasty".

This edition includes a comprehensive appendix with contemporary Welsh poems translated into English for the first time, and many full page illustrations.



# THE DROPPED QUILL OF SAINT THOMAS MORE

by Beth von Staats

*"He was little of stature, ill fetured of limmes, crooke backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard favoured of visage ... he came into the worlde with the feete forwarde ... and also not untothed."*

- Saint Thomas More, *The History of King Richard III* -

**A**LTHOUGH no authority whether from the 16<sup>th</sup> century or today would affirm Saint Thomas' More's *The History of King Richard III* to be an accurate non-fictional accounting of the life of world history's last Plantagenet king, the Roman Catholic patron saint of politicians and public servants did get at least a few things right. King Richard III was not a large man, and he had a crooked back resultant from scoliosis. Though

which shoulder was higher is reversed in More's exaggerated description of the king from the reality found of the skeleton dug up from under a Leicester parking lot, he was not that far off the mark. This actually should not be as surprising as it is to many people. After all, King Richard III reigned in Saint Thomas More's lifetime. The history was a fresh one, the king's appearance easily reported by those who knew him.

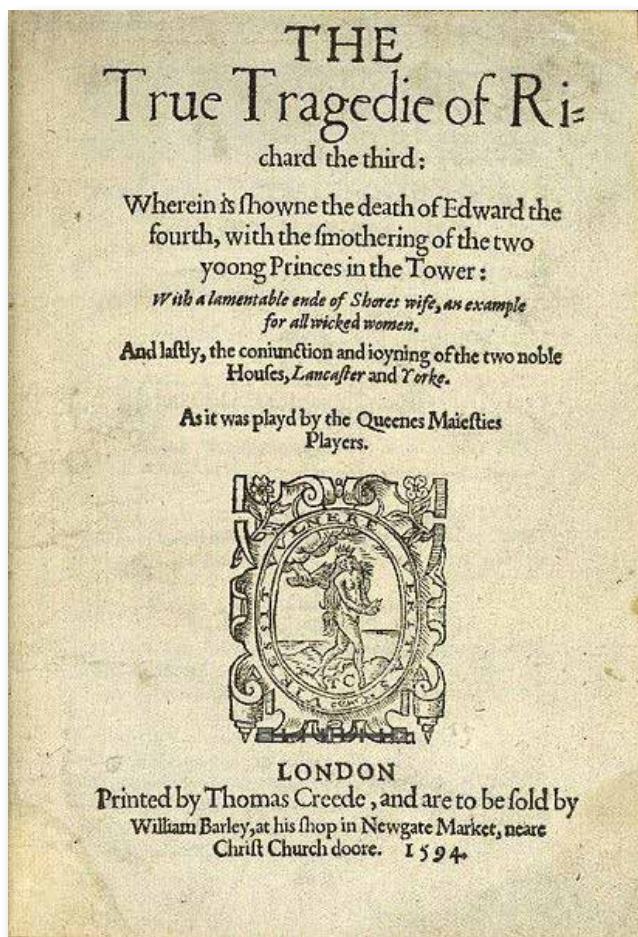
Unfinished works in progress, *The History of King Richard III* was composed as separate and distinct accountings in both English and Latin between the years of 1513 to 1518. Historians and religious scholars have debated well over 400 years now why More chose to put down the quill. Did it become politically too dangerous to continue the biography and promulgate it? Did More simply begin a draft of a biography that he lost interest in? Was it actually even a work he ever intended to finish? Or instead was it some kind of hobby writing, practice or intellectual exercise? Ask any renowned scholar and he or she will give you a different answer. All we know in fact is this. For reasons unknown, Saint Thomas More never finished his historical biographies when he clearly had the time before his tragic 1535 execution to do so. In addition, no original manuscripts in his handwriting remain.

Alternately described by scholars as drama, biography, political satire, a myth or Tudor propaganda, when reading the *The History of King Rich-*



Medaillon of Saint Thomas More

## FEATURE SECTION: RICHARD III



### The True Tragedy of Richard the Third

ard III, you might find More's words ring all too familiar, the story harkening back to an English Literature class from youth. Why? Well, although More never finished the work or promulgated it, by the time of Queen Elizabeth, Regina's reign, the written portrait More composed of the Plantagenet king made the rounds. William Shakespeare obviously got a hold of and thoroughly digested a copy. In doing so, England's famous bard borrowed significant plot line and even word choice from More's accounting in composing his screenplay, *Richard III*. Hence forward, Saint Thomas More and King Richard III, the man he scathingly portrayed in a work he never intended others to see, became irrevocably joined – one man a saint, the other Satan.

#### Resources:

1. Ackroyd, Peter, *The Life of Saint Thomas More*, Vintage, 1999.
2. Monti, James, *The King's Good Servant But God's First: The Life and Writings of St. Thomas More*, Ignatius Press, 1997.

A brilliant lawyer, humanist and religious scholar, Saint Thomas More is regarded by many to be one of the Tudor Era's most remarkable intellects. Whether one believes him to be a courageous and morally grounded Roman Catholic martyr of his faith or a religious zealot fond of flagellation and evangelical martyr burning, two things are absolutely clear. Saint Thomas More was an intellectual genius who fell woefully short of the mark as a "historical biographer", assuming that was actually his intention. Though More himself was an avid reader of historical works, his own attempt is laden with factual errors, starting with the very first sentence that aged King Edward IV by 13 years. *The History of King Richard III* is also laden with long speeches composed by More rather than the actual historical figures who reportedly spoke them. Was Saint Thomas More's unfinished work actually intended as biographical fiction instead of historical fact? No one can actually be certain, but the fact the question can be legitimately raised leaves no doubt that this man was no historian even among his contemporaries.

Yes, *The History of King Richard III* is an unfinished work. Yes, *The History of King Richard III* is laden with historical inaccuracies and fictional accountings. Still, Saint Thomas More's incomplete story of the tragic last Plantagenet king is an acutely important piece of Tudor Era literature. Simply stated, whether considered pure fiction, historical fact, or something in between, *The History of King Richard III* shaped our understanding of who this monarch was as a man, perhaps unfairly painting him as a child murderer, tyrant and usurper of the very crown of England. Or was he? With an unintended nudge from Saint Thomas More, the debate among historians, Tudorphiles and Ricardians continues to this day and may spiritedly carry forward for time eternal.

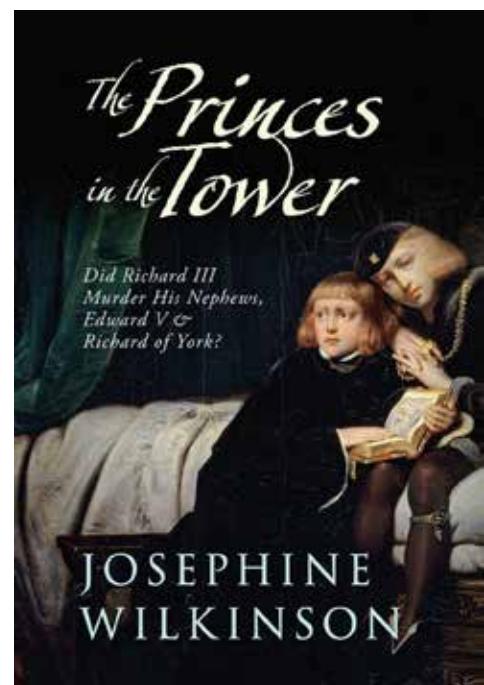
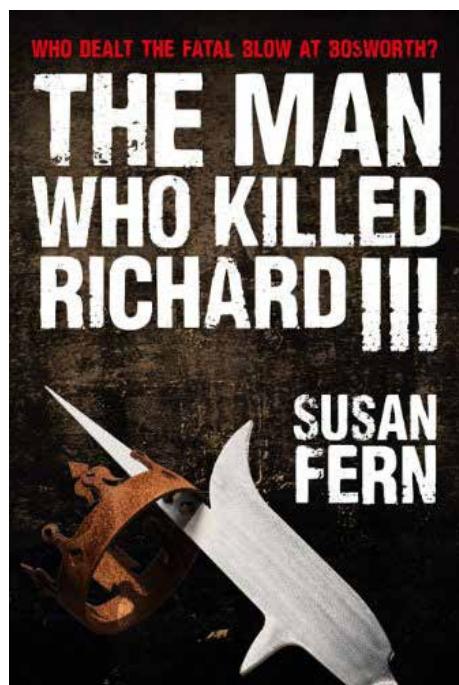
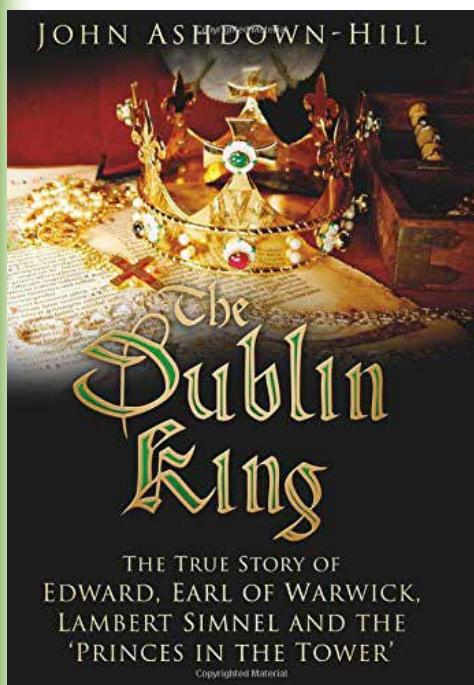
BETH VON STAATS

RICHARD III

# OUR BIGGEST EVER GIVE-AWAY!

This month, one lucky winner will receive a copy of the following books

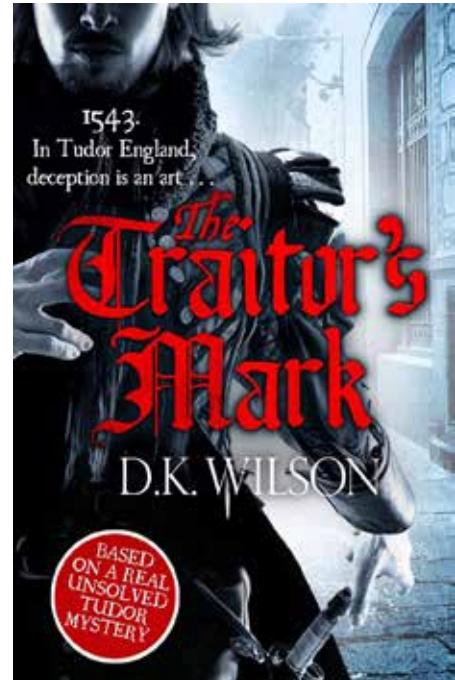
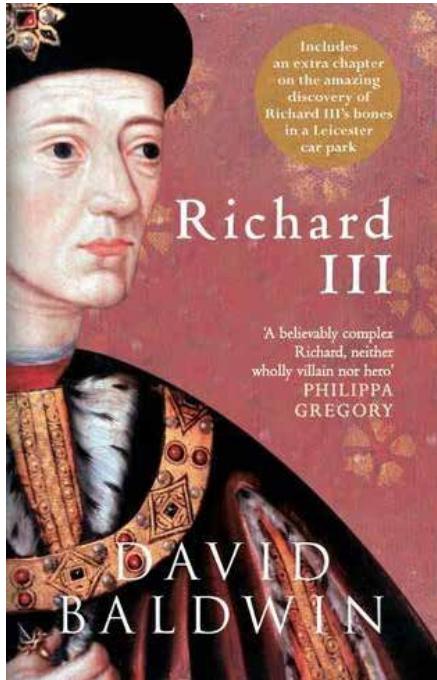
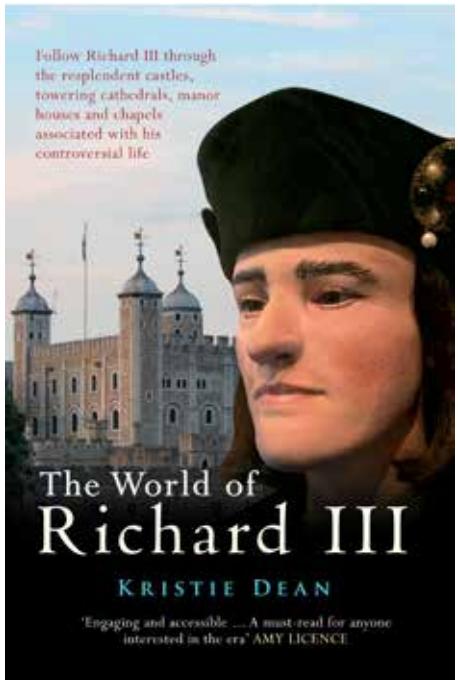
- Richard III – David Baldwin
- The Dublin King – John Ashdown-Hill
- The Man Who Killed Richard III – Susan Fern
- The Princes in the Tower – Josephine Wilkinson
- The World of Richard III – Kristie Dean
- The Traitor's Mark – D.K.Wilson



As this is a Richard III special edition version of Tudor Life Magazine, we thought it would be a great idea to give away a copy of some Richard III books to one lucky winner ... and the idea grew and grew into a *massive 6 book bumper give away.*

And don't forget to log in to our Expert Live Chat session (date to be announced) with **Natalie Grueninger** when you can win a copy of "*In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn*"!

What a month!



# ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

<p><b>1 March</b> <b>1546</b></p> <p>Hanging and burning of George Wishart, Scottish evangelical preacher and martyr, at St Andrews, Scotland.</p>	<p><b>2 March</b> <b>1545</b></p> <p>Birth of Sir Thomas Bodley, scholar, diplomat and founder of the Bodleian Library, in Exeter.</p>	<p><b>3 March</b> <b>1500</b></p> <p>Traditional date given for birth of Cardinal Reginald Pole, Mary I's Archbishop of Canterbury, at Stourton Castle in Staffordshire.</p>
<p><b>7 March</b> <b>1556</b></p> <p>One of the days on which the <i>Great Comet</i>, or the Comet of Charles V, was seen and recorded by Paul Fabricius, mathematician and physician at Charles V's court.</p>	<p><b>8 March</b> <b>1539</b></p> <p>Sir Nicholas Carew was beheaded on Tower Hill for treason, for allegedly plotting with Cardinal Pole.</p>	<p><b>9 March</b> <b>1566</b></p> <p>David Rizzio, the private secretary of Mary, Queen of Scots was assassinated in front of a heavily pregnant Mary by a group of men led by Mary's husband, Lord Darnley.</p>
<p><b>13 March</b> <b>1619</b></p> <p>Death of Richard Burbage, actor, close friend of William Shakespeare and star of Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men and the King's Men.</p>		<p><b>14 March</b> <b>1555</b></p> <p>Death of Sir John Russell, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Bedford. Russell served Henry VIII as Lord High Admiral, and Henry, Edward VI and Mary I as Lord Privy Seal.</p>
<p><b>17 March</b> <b>1473</b></p> <p>Birth of James IV, King of Scots, at Stirling in Scotland. He was the eldest son of James III and Margaret of Denmark, the husband of Margaret Tudor and the father of King James V.</p>		<p><b>Reginald Pole, 1540, Sankt Petersburg, Artist unknown</b></p>
<p><b>20 March</b> <b>1549</b></p> <p>Execution of Thomas Seymour, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron of Sudeley and Lord High Admiral, husband of the late Dowager Queen Catherine Parr and brother of Queen Jane Seymour and Protector Somerset, for treason.</p>	<p><b>21 March</b> <b>1556</b></p> <p>Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was burned at the stake in Oxford for heresy. He is one of the "Oxford Martyrs", along with Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley.</p>	<p><b>22 March</b> <b>1519</b></p> <p>Traditional date for the birth of Katherine Willoughby (married names Brandon and Bertie), Duchess of Suffolk and leading patroness of the reformed faith.</p>
<p><b>26 March</b> <b>1609</b></p> <p>Date of death for John Dee, astrologer, mathematician, alchemist, antiquary, spy, philosopher, geographer and adviser to Elizabeth I, given by John Pontois and Anthony Wood. Some give it as 1608.</p>	<p><b>27 March</b> <b>1489</b></p> <p>The Treaty of Medina del Campo was signed between England and Spain. One part of it was the arrangement of the marriage between Arthur, Prince of Wales, and Catherine of Aragon.</p>	

# DATES – MARCH

<b>4 March</b> <b>1590</b> Execution of Christopher Bales, Catholic Priest, in Fleet Street, London. He was found guilty of treason under the “Acts against Jesuits and Seminarists” (1585).	<b>5 March</b> <b>1496</b> Henry VII of England issued letters patent to John Cabot (Giovanni Caboto), the Italian navigator and explorer, giving him “free authority, faculty and power to sail to all parts, regions and coasts of the eastern, western and northern sea”.	<b>6 March</b> <b>1536</b> Introduction into Parliament of the “Act for the Suppression (or Dissolution) of the Lesser Monasteries”.
<b>10 March</b> <b>1524</b> King Henry VIII suffered a jousting accident after he forgot to lower his visor in a joust against Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. He was not seriously hurt.	<b>11 March</b> <b>1513</b> Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici was proclaimed Pope Leo X after being elected on 9 March.	<b>12 March</b> <b>1537</b> Execution of William Haydock, Cistercian monk. He was hanged for his involvement in the Pilgrimage of Grace.
<b>15 March</b> <b>1493</b> Arrival of Christopher Columbus, explorer and navigator, at Palos in Spain after his 1492 voyage to the New World.	<b>16 March</b> <b>1485</b> Death of Anne (née Neville), Queen Consort of Richard III, in London. She was buried on the south side of the high altar at Westminster Abbey.	 Queen Elizabeth I, The Ditchley portrait by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger
<b>18 March</b> <b>1496</b> Birth of Mary Tudor, Queen of France at Richmond Palace. She was the youngest daughter of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York.	<b>19 March</b> <b>1563</b> Death of translator and poet Arthur Brooke and Sir Thomas Finch, knight-marshall, in the shipwreck of the “Greyhound” off the coast of Rye in East Sussex.	
<b>23 March</b> <b>1534</b> Parliament passed the “First Act of Succession” declaring the validity of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn’s marriage, and recognising the rights of their issue to inherit the throne.	<b>24 March</b> <b>1603</b> Death of Queen Elizabeth I at Richmond Palace at the age of sixty-nine. She was the third of Henry VIII’s children to be monarch and reigned for 44 years and 127 days.	<b>25 March</b> <b>1584</b> Letters patent granted to Walter Raleigh to “discover, search for, fynde out and view... landes, countries and territories”, for the benefit of himself, “his heyres and assignes forever.”
<b>28 March</b> <b>1483</b> One of the birthdates given for Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino, or Raphael as he is known, the Italian Renaissance artist and architect.	<b>29 March</b> <b>1555</b> Former Dominican priest and Protestant martyr, John Laurence, was burned at the stake in Colchester.	<b>30 March</b> <b>1533</b> Thomas Cranmer, Archdeacon of Taunton, was consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury in St Stephen’s College, Westminster Palace.
		<b>31 March</b> <b>1547</b> Death of Francis I of France, at the Château de Rambouillet in the Île-de-France, and the accession of Henry II.

# ANOTHER BOOK – ANOTHER MYSTERY

by Derek Wilson

I DON'T know whether other novelists have the same experience but I find the second book in a series easier than the first. The main character already 'exists' in the mind as a three-dimensional and complex reality and some of the other lead personnel are also already well delineated. They provide a core for the new story. When I put them into fresh situations, I know pretty well how they will react. And that's a great start. In *Traitor's Mark*, book two of the Treviot series, my little group of travellers, Thomas, Ned, Lizzie and Bart, are ready (although, of course, they don't know it) to begin their new adventure. Readers who enjoyed *The First Horseman* will, I hope, be happy to resume acquaintance with them.

As before, the new book has at its heart a real life mystery. Two, in fact. The first is, 'Whatever happened to Hans Holbein?' The great artist simply disappears from history in the autumn of 1543. Karel van Mander, the Dutch artist and art historian, tells us in his *Schilder-boeck* that Holbein died of plague but he was writing in 1604 about things that happened before he was born. Earlier, people had searched in vain for the artist's grave. We know from his will that he had two children in England but of them, also, there remains no trace. Plenty of scope there for the fictioneers!

Another momentous event of that autumn was the plot against Archbishop Thomas Cranmer. The same caucus that brought down Thomas Cromwell in 1540 tried, three years later, to destroy the other twin figurehead of the Reformation. We know a fair bit about this from the historical record but exactly how or why the archbishop escaped, when the minister did not, is far from clear. His enemies tried the same tactics that had persuaded the king to abandon Cromwell – connecting his name with those of convicted heretics. For months Cranmer was walking on very thin ice but when it seemed certain that he would sink something hap-



Hans Holbein self portrait 1542-3



Woman and children, c.1540 by Holbein  
– could this be the artist's English family?

pened to foil the intriguers of the reactionary court cabal. It is safe to say that had the archbishop's enemies been successful the whole course of English history would have changed. What happened to save Cranmer?

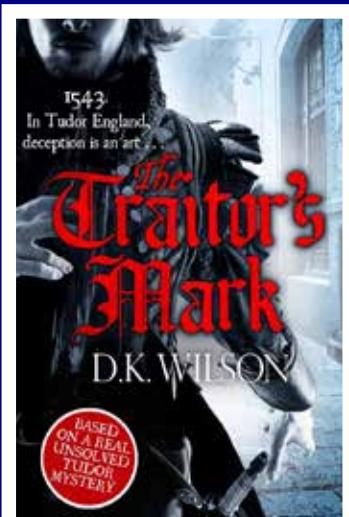
So there we have it – two mysteries interwoven with each other, against an extremely tense background, during one of the wettest summer-autumn periods on record. Thomas Treviot's connection to these events was, initially, tangential. He was irritated when some designs for decorative metalware ordered from Holbein became overdue. He sent Bart to find the artist. Then ..... Well, you wouldn't expect me to reveal all, would you? Suffice it to say that, once again, Thomas and Co. found themselves in deep political waters. In *Traitor's Mark* readers will encounter senior members of the king's council, German merchants of the Steelyard, a gang of mercenary cutthroats and protective members of Cranmer's staff – some taken from real life, others invented. The fast-moving story is pure fiction but, given what we know about the realities of 1543 England something like this could have happened.

**DEREK WILSON**

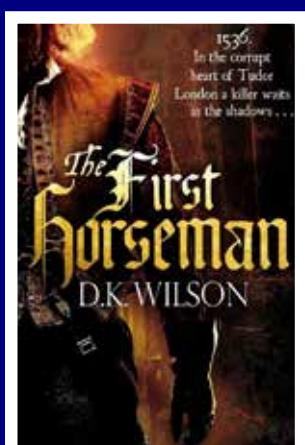


Thomas Cranmer

Thomas Cranmer, 1545, by Gerlach Flicke



Derek Wilson has a magic touch with words – he's fascinating to read and to listen to, and his books are no exception. His books "The First Horseman" and "The Traitor's Mark" look into real crimes and mysteries which happened in Tudor times, but as they are fiction books, Derek is able to explore each situation and really bring history to life.



**Derek Wilson is our guest speaker in April and the details will follow in updates on the Tudor Society website.**

# MARCH GUEST SPEAKER NATALIE GRUENINGER

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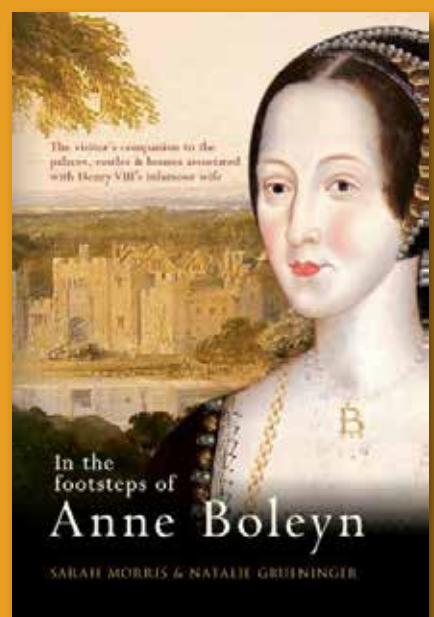
This month's guest speaker is Natalie Grueninger from the "On the Tudor Trail" website who is speaking about the "Tudor Court in Progress".

Natalie graduated from The University of NSW in 1998 with a Bachelor of Arts, with majors in English and Spanish and Latin American Studies and received her Bachelor of Teaching from The University of Sydney in 2006. Her first non-fiction book, co-authored with Sarah Morris, *In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn*, was published by Amberley Publishing in the UK in September 2013. Natalie is currently working with Sarah Morris on a new book, '*In the Footsteps of the Six Wives of Henry VIII*', due out late 2015.



Dates of the live chat will be announced on the website in the usual way.

**ONE Lucky person on the live chat  
will win a copy of  
“In the Footsteps of Anne Boleyn”.**





# "Words" of the Roses Quiz

H	M	L	S	O	H	W	A	K	E	F	I	E	L	D
D	E	O	A	T	T	I	O	D	O	E	D	W	P	S
E	H	S	R	L	N	N	S	H	A	R	E	B	E	I
R	E	C	E	T	U	A	L	F	L	R	W	O	M	W
H	D	O	S	Y	I	D	A	T	I	Y	H	S	I	A
E	G	T	S	O	A	M	F	A	O	B	L	W	Q	K
X	E	E	T	M	D	D	E	O	U	R	B	O	T	E
H	L	D	A	N	B	R	T	R	R	I	A	R	O	F
A	E	G	L	K	E	Y	H	T	S	D	R	T	W	I
M	Y	E	B	L	O	R	E	A	H	G	N	H	T	E
Y	R	C	A	T	A	A	E	S	D	E	E	A	O	L
O	B	O	N	O	R	T	H	A	M	P	T	O	N	D
L	O	T	S	T	O	K	E	T	M	E	E	R	T	L
U	Y	E	N	T	L	I	C	T	I	A	M	E	E	Y
T	H	I	P	T	E	W	K	E	S	B	U	R	Y	A

St. Albans  
Blore  
Ludford  
Northampton  
Wakefield  
Mortimers  
Ferry Bridge  
Towton

Hedgeley  
Hexham  
Edgecote  
Losecote  
Barnet  
Tewkesbury  
Bosworth  
Stoke

## The Shadow of the Tower

**T**HE last few weeks I've been watching a BBC drama from the 1970s – the decade that produced *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* and *Elizabeth R*, as well as *I, Claudius*, and the lesser-known *The Devil's Crown*, about the early Plantagenets. The series is a 13-episode drama called *The Shadow of the Tower* that follows the Tudors' consolidation of power from the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 to shortly after the death of Elizabeth of York in 1503. James Maxwell stars as Henry VII, Norma West plays Queen Elizabeth, and excellent performances are turned-in by Joanna Trope (Cecily of York), Marigold Sharman (Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond), Richard Warwick (Perkin Warbeck), John Hamill

(Thomas Stafford), and James Laurenson (John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln).

*The Shadow of the Tower* did not enjoy the same success as the other two Tudor-inspired series from the BBC in the 1970s – neither at the time it was viewed, nor since. Admittedly, that may be down to the era's leading man, the enigmatic and reserved Henry VII, although the show does branch out to cover episodes like the Simnel and Warbeck rebellions, as well as John Cabot's expedition, and the Cornish uprising, choosing to tell them mainly from the point-of-view of their leaders, rather than the King and his court.

I found myself enjoying it greatly, even if I did think a few episodes in the middle dragged a little. It sticks relatively close to the known facts



– Ricardians may quibble with the relatively sympathetic portrayal of Margaret Beaufort, although I thought the formidable Countess was admirably dramatised. When it does veer into areas of speculation or, as far as we can tell, outright fantasy, such as the suggestion of an affair (or one night stand) between Perkin Warbeck and Garret, 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Kildare (played by Gawn Grainger), the dramatists are wise enough to leave it at nothing more than subtle inference.

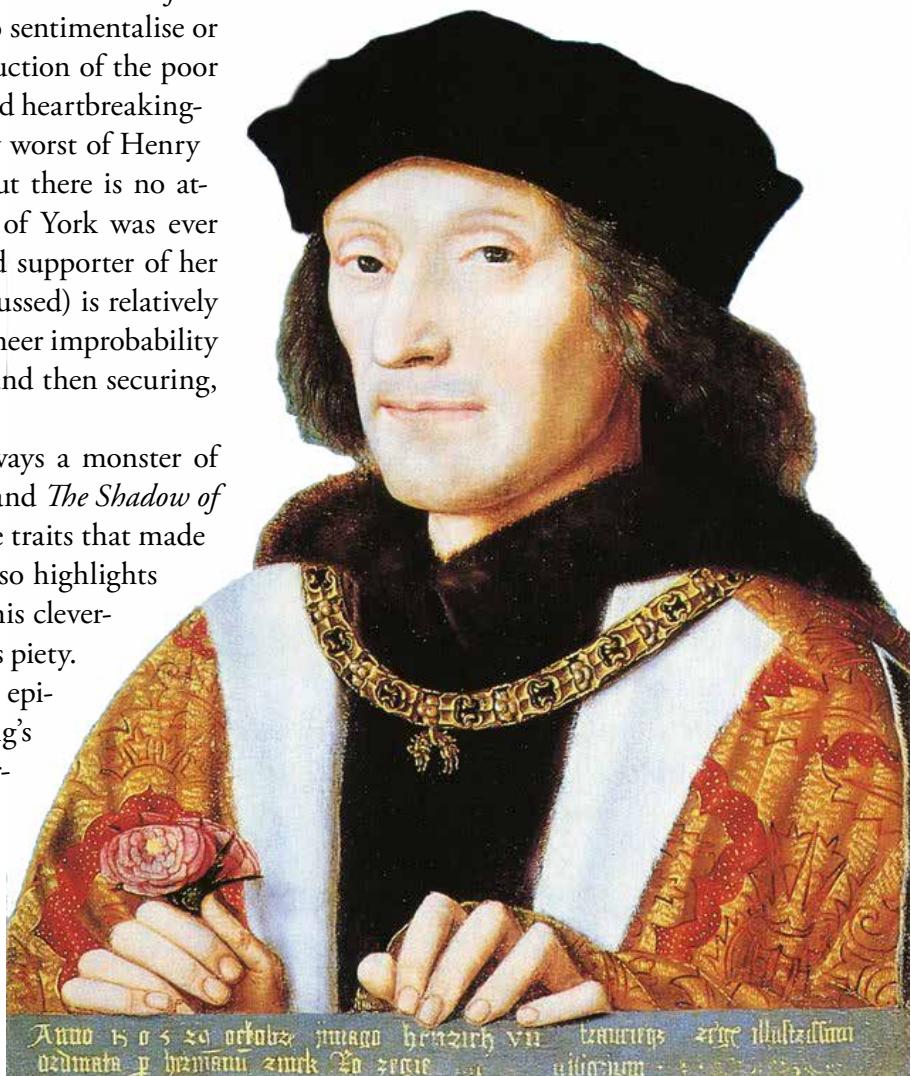
What struck me most about *The Shadow of the Tower* was its admirable refusal to sentimentalise or sensationalise its leads. The destruction of the poor Earl of Warwick was chillingly and heartbreakingly portrayed, showcasing the very worst of Henry VII's manipulative dishonesty, but there is no attempt to suggest that Elizabeth of York was ever anything less than a full-throated supporter of her husband's regime; sex (while discussed) is relatively absent, and it brought home the sheer improbability of the fledgling dynasty seizing, and then securing, their power.

Henry VII was in many ways a monster of unpleasantness in his later years, and *The Shadow of the Tower* does not soft peddle the traits that made him so unpopular. However, it also highlights his commitment to due process, his cleverness, his quest for stability, and his piety. There is a particularly wonderful episode that focuses solely on the King's interaction with a condemned heretic the night before the latter's execution. The heretic is played by Peter Jeffrey, who eagle-eyed Tudor fans might recognise as Thomas Howard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Norfolk in *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969) and King Philip II of Spain in *Elizabeth*

(1971). It's a superb portrayal of the fifteenth century's views on religious dissent and the fate of the condemned in the life to come.

Under-rated and compelling, *The Shadow of the Tower* is something any Tudor history fan might enjoy and, for this reviewer, pursued its quest for accuracy with a little more success than 2015's *Wolf Hall*.

## GARETH RUSSELL

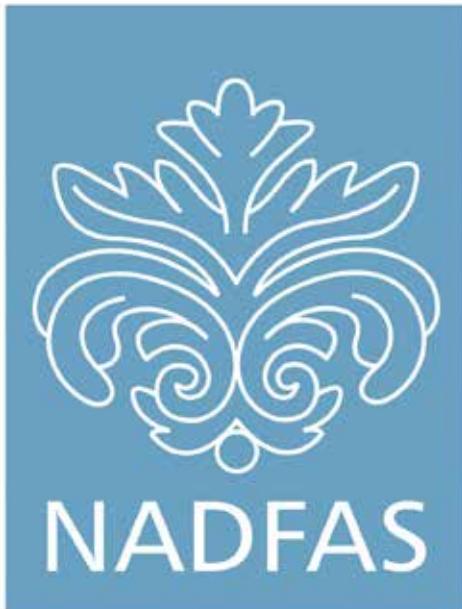


**Our regular columnist Gareth Russell** has been incredibly busy in the world of history in recent years. He has recently published “**An Illustrated Introduction to the Tudors**”, amongst other historical books, his next book “**A History of the English Monarchy**” will be published by MadeGlobal early in 2015



# The National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies

The National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) is a leading arts charity which opens up the world of the arts through a network of local Societies and national events.



EDUCATION AND  
CONSERVATION

With inspiring monthly lectures given by some of the country's top experts, together with days of special interest, educational visits and cultural holidays, NADFAS is a great way to learn, have fun and make new and lasting friendships.

Society Members and Affiliate Members can also become involved in worthwhile conservation volunteering projects in churches, museums, castles and stately homes. There are over 375 Societies throughout the UK and mainland Europe, as well as in Australia and New Zealand, so join us and discover all that NADFAS has to offer.

The National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) works to advance decorative and fine arts education and appreciation, alongside promoting the conservation of our artistic heritage. NADFAS supports over 375 local Societies across the country, in mainland Europe and New Zealand.

In March and April NADFAS has two special events which are about the Tudors - in the first **Nicole Mezet** will be looking at Tudor art as propaganda. In the second, **Tracy Borman** will be talking about Thomas Cromwell (this ties in perfectly with our April Tudor Life magazine which is loosely focusing on Cromwell).

For more information call 020 7430 0730 or email [enquiries@nadfash.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nadfash.org.uk)





Name of Event	Smoke Mirrors and Sanctity: The Tudors and the Arts as Propaganda
Event Type	Lecture (Speaker: Nicole Mezey)
Date	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Timings	7pm – 9pm
Venue	Secret Venue – Covent Garden
Nearest Tube	Covent Garden
Phone number for publication	020 3206 9337
Web Address	<a href="http://www.nadfas.com">http://www.nadfas.com</a>
Price	£10 – please book in advance (please book in advance)
Age group	18-60
Short Description	Nicole Mezey looks at the Tudors and their use of the arts as propaganda in this hour long lecture at a brilliantly quirky secret venue in Covent Garden.
Description	Complementing the success of BBC 2s ‘Wolf Hall’, Nicole Mezey gives her talk “Smoke Mirrors and Sanctity: The Tudors and the Arts as Propaganda”. Six wives, phantom pregnancies and a Virgin Queen – in barely 100 years the upstart Tudor dynasty produced some of the great dramatic characters of British history. It also steered the realm into the modern age and virtually invented the art of propaganda through portraits by such artists as Holbein and palaces which outshone the finest of its European rivals. This is the first of six exclusive events for 2015 at our secret location in the heart of Covent Garden. This private club has a distinct 50’s retro feel and our brilliant lectures take place in the small, intimate theatre. The ticket price includes a complimentary drink of wine or a soft drink.
Organisation	NADFAS (National Association of Decorative & Fine Art Societies)
Ticket Requirements	Please book online at <a href="http://www.nadfas.com">www.nadfas.com</a> before attending

Name of Event	Who was the real Thomas Cromwell?
Event Type	Lecture (Speaker: Tracy Borman)
Date	Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April
Timings	7pm – 9pm
Venue	Secret Venue – Covent Garden
Nearest Tube	Covent Garden
Phone number for publication	020 3206 9337
Web Address	<a href="http://www.nadfas.com">www.nadfas.com</a>
Price	£10 – please book in advance
Age group	18-60
Description	Following the recent success of BBC 2’s ‘Wolf Hall’ everyone is talking about Thomas Cromwell. With new insights into Cromwell’s character, his family life and his close relationships with both Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII, joint Chief Curator of Historic Royal Palaces Dr Tracy Borman reveals the life, loves and legacy of the man who changed the shape of England forever. Her highly acclaimed biography, Thomas Cromwell: the untold story of Henry VIII’s most faithful servant, was published by Hodder & Stoughton in September 2011 and was Book of the Week in The Times. This is the second of six exclusive events for 2015 at our secret location in the heart of Covent Garden. This private club has a distinct 50’s retro feel and our brilliant lectures take place in the small, intimate theatre. The ticket price includes a complimentary drink of wine or a soft drink.
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# Charlie Jane Seymour: Henry VIII's Favourite Wife by David Loades

## Books



Jane Seymour is one of Henry VIII's wives we know the least about, mostly because she only became important and prominent in the Tudor court in 1536. David Loades has written one of the few biographies on Jane and so I was curious to know whether it would shed some light on her character.

Unlike some other biographies, this book does not attempt to guess what Jane was doing before 1536. It just starts with a small introduction to the Seymour family at Wolf Hall. Loades talks about Jane's parents and siblings, saying that 'Jane was Sir John's eldest daughter, although something like his fourth or fifth child'. It also mentions Jane going into Queen Katherine's service and then Anne Boleyn's, but I think the most interesting chapter was the second one on 'Jane and Anne'.

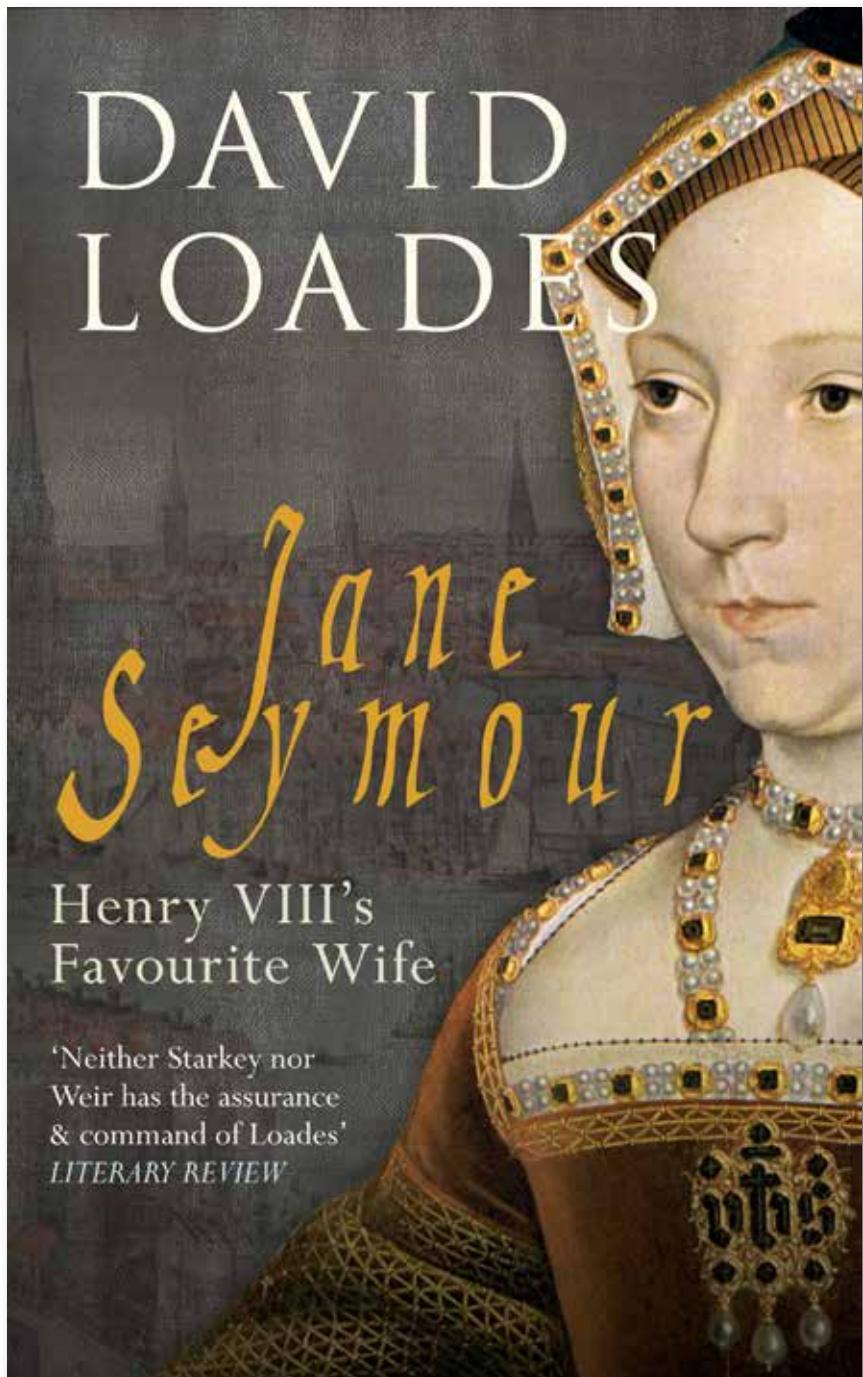
Historians can't seem to agree as to whether Jane was a pawn of her parents and the faction against Anne at court, or whether she actually cared for Henry and was, like Anne, holding out for marriage. Loades seems to take a neutral stance on this, not saying one way or the other. He does, however, talk about the breakdown of Henry and Anne's marriage and then Henry turning his attention to Jane, making it seem like it was just good timing on everyone's part.

The chapter 'A Whirlwind Romance' is actually more about the Pilgrimage of Grace than Jane as a queen and wife. At the start of the chapter there is, at least, a very interesting part on Jane and Princess Mary's relationship. Loades talks about how Jane probably gave Mary advice before she submitted to her father's will and how close they eventually became. Once Mary finally figured out that it wasn't really Anne's fault that her mother had been treated like she was and saw that it was Henry instead, she took to Jane like another mother. What also helped is that Jane did whatever she could for Mary and was also of the same faith. Unfortunately, the rest of the chapter after that was just details about the Pilgrimage of Grace, not much about Jane herself. If anyone is interested in the Pilgrimage though, this book tells it very well!

The fourth chapter, 'Jane the Queen', is the one that focuses the most on Jane. It is about what she is most remembered for, her pregnancy and finally giving Henry the son he longed for. It is the

part of her life we have the most information on and what probably made Henry and historians call her his 'favourite wife'. This chapter goes into a lot of detail on the labour, christening and funeral. One part I particularly liked was when Loades mentioned that Princess Mary was particularly distressed with the death of Queen Jane. Mary was even named as chief mourner.

As much as the parts on Jane are interesting, only half of the book is actually on Jane. Less actually, if you count the Pilgrimage of Grace chapter. The rest is about what happened after and about Prince Edward. As much as the second half is still connected to Jane, I thought that what happened after her death should have been a smaller section, instead of half the book. Unfortunately, there is not enough information on her to warrant a full biography, especially for those who already know a little about her. However if you have not read anything on Jane before or want to find out more about the Seymour family as a whole (as there is a lot on her siblings after her death) then I would suggest this. If you know a little about her already or want to find out about the rest of the six wives too, then I would suggest a book on all of Henry's wives, as there is about the same information on her in those as there is in this biography of Jane.



**Charlie Fenton** has recently published her Anne Boleyn novel, *Perseverance*, and has started a blog and Facebook page called **Through the Eyes of Anne Boleyn** to document and share her research into Anne Boleyn's life. She is also a student and is currently studying Medieval History in college.

Charlie writes monthly book reviews for the **Tudor Life Magazine**

# THE MYSTERY OF THE QUEENS' CHANGE OF IMAGE ON LEGAL DOCUMENTS & IN ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

Focusing on her favourite historical subject, **Melanie V. Taylor** shows us some fascinating artworks...



Figure 1 Accession P of Mary I: Michelmas 1553



Figure 2 Marriage of Mary to Philip II of Spain: Michelmas 1554

**H**IDDEN away in the National Archives at Kew are documents called the Coram Rege Rolls, which record the pleas on both the Crown and the Plea side of the Court of King's Bench. These date from the time of the Edward I until the reign of William III. The rolls have a formulaic front and commence with the word Placita, meaning plea. The initial P is decorated and carries an image of the monarch usually portrayed seated on the throne and the wording goes on to say who was on the throne, the particular law term and the specific regnal year of the king. Most of the Ps are simple pen and ink images, with strapwork, but some of them are coloured and from the 1520s onwards Renaissance decorative elements start to appear and, as far as we know, created long before the law term ended.

Princess Mary came to the throne in the summer of 1553 and her accession presented a problem for the artist commissioned to decorate the front of the roll for the Michelmas law term of this year (starts in September). How do you create an image for the first queen to reign in her own right?

Originally this P would have glittered silver and gold as the black areas are oxidised silver leaf. The whole page is a glittering display of gold lettering and the P is topped with an imperial crown. Within the P itself, the artist has chosen to show the story of the events surrounding Mary's accession and has split the area into three, the central image of Mary on the throne being the most important. Unfortunately while this image is beautiful, it is unfinished and we have no ideas what words may have been placed in the banners.

If we look to the area to left of the throne we see two angels supporting a woman. She wears a similar head-dress to the one we see in images of Mary such as in various large portraits such as those by Master John and Hans Eworth, which would identify her as England's rightful queen. The presence of angels reflects how God has directed Mary's divinely appointed route to the English throne. On the right-hand side of the throne this section is split in two by the empty horizontal banner: above is a substantial army. Is this the army of John Dudley and his supporters, or perhaps it is the army made up of the supporters for Mary? The minute pennant at the head of this army appears to be a red cross on

a white background and if it is, then the thousands of Mary's supporters have been immortalised in this image. Whether this is Mary's army or that of the Duke of Northumberland, its presence tells us that an army was vital to the success of either claimant.

Below there are four mounted knights who have thrown down their weapons as an act of surrender. Clearly this is Dudley's capitulation and that of his fellow conspirators. Perhaps Dudley is the man on the white horse, but because the image is so small it means we have to speculate as to the individual identities of each of these men.

Centrally, Mary is seated on a throne under a cloth of estate. Again she is accompanied by angels and the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, hovers above her. All the empty banners were clearly designed to have words of praise for her safe deliverance and accession. The English coat of arms are above her head, supported by the English lion and a red Welsh dragon. She wears the traditional coronation robes, lined with ermine and her hair flows down across her shoulders declaring her virgin state.



Figure 3 P Hilary Term 1555

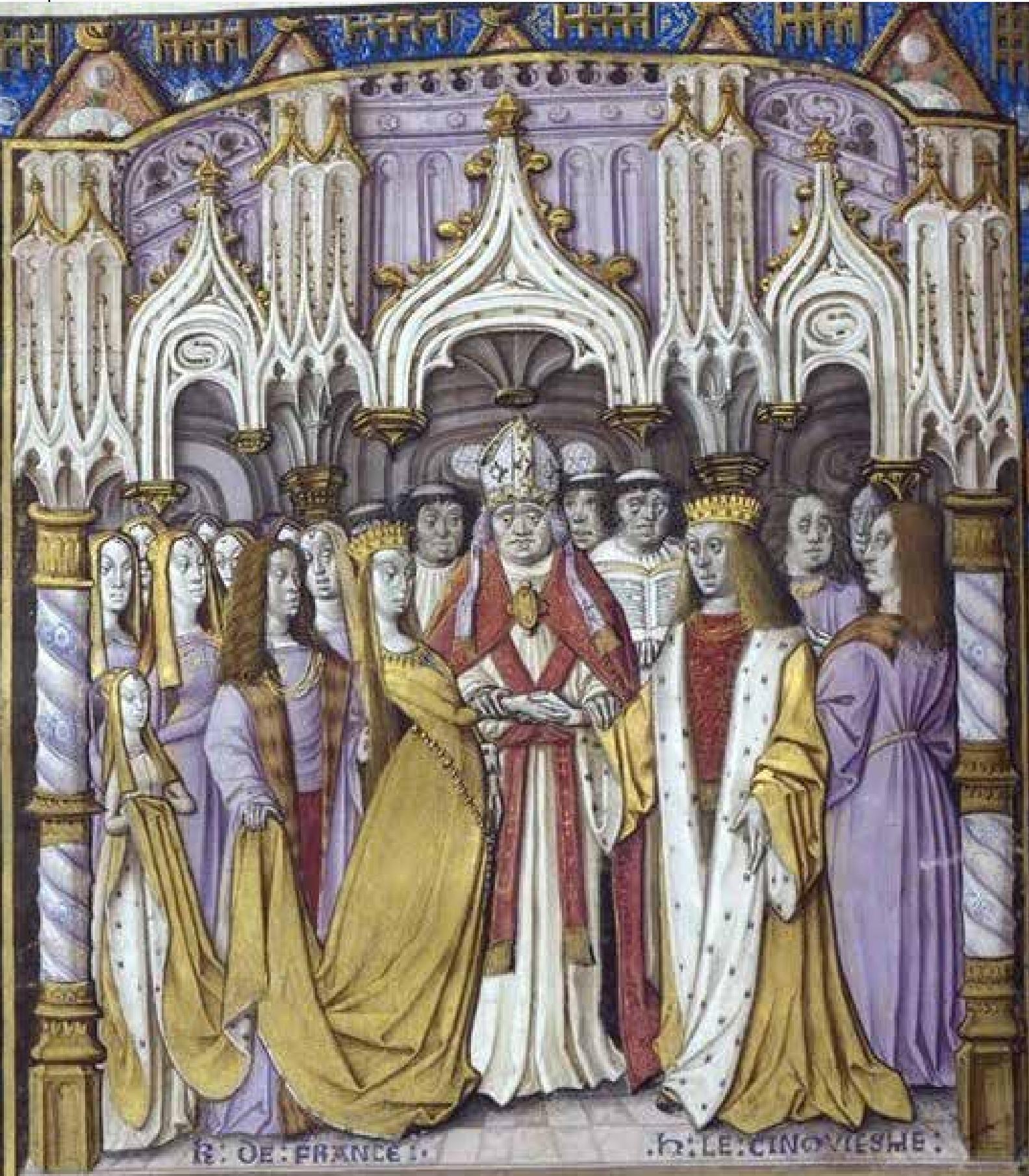


Figure 4 Marriage of Catharine de Valois to Henry VI BL Ms Royal 20E vi f9v



Figure 5 The Talbot Hours: BL MS Royal 15E IV f2V

Having gained her rightful place as Queen, Mary set about contracting a suitable marriage and she married Philip II of Spain the following year. The Ps for the law terms between Michelmas 1553 and 1554 all show Mary seated, but without the complicated narrative. In the P of Michelmas 1554, not only is the image simpler, but the artist is a different person.

Even though the Michelmas term of 1554 records the royal marriage, the faces are stylised. From the way Mary wears her hair, it is apparent that she is still portrayed as a virgin despite the wed-

ding having been celebrated on 25<sup>th</sup> July at the end of the Trinity law term. Because the marriage was celebrated so late in the Trinity term is why this image appears as the Michelmas P of 1554.

In my research into the possible work of Levina Teerlinc I examined all of the Ps for Mary's reign. The Hilary term of 1555 (starts January) shows a image of Mary, again seated next to Philip, but this time the P is a simple pen and ink sketch and her image has changed. Now Mary is wearing the head-dress similar to those portrayed in portraits of her by artists such as Hans Eworth and Philip II's own



Figure 6 Funeral of Anne of Bohemia

Affin de toute force abatre.  
furent abstinance de meure.



Comment la fille de ecaille fut  
mariee au roy d'ngleterre.  
et afoire le roy de eauille.

Figure 7 Les Vigiles de Charles VII: BnF department des Manuscrits Français 5054

artist, Antonis Mor. The change of image set me thinking of why has her portrait changed and are there other examples of how royal brides have been portrayed in other illuminated documents.

The marriage of Catherine de Valois to Henry VI is recorded in Ms Royal 20 E vi f9v in the British Library where an illumination shows Catharine and Henry standing on either side of the bishop and holding hands. The bishop holds their wrists presumably in the act of joining them in marriage and Catharine wears her hair loose.

In the Talbot Hours which were presented to the fifteen year old Margaret of Anjou on the occasion of her betrothal to Henry VI by John Talbot, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Shrewsbury, Margaret is shown with her hair loose. Is this demonstrating her virginity?

In a French illuminated manuscript called *Les Vigiles de Charles VII* their marriage is celebrated in an illumination. The anonymous artist shows the English King Henry VI and the young Margaret and again, the artist has portrayed the young bride with her hair flowing down her back.

In another British Library manuscript called the Rous Roll (Add MS 48976), Henry I's daughter Matilda, who was married to the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V, is portrayed as Empress and her hair is a magnificent loose mane. Her marriage to the Emperor was childless and she returned to England after the Emperor's death. Later she is married to Geoffrey of Anjou.

In the *Liber Regalis*, Anne of Bohemia, first wife of Richard II, is portrayed with her hair loose. Even in an illumination showing her funeral she is shown with her hair loose. Anne failed to produce an heir, and the illumination depicting Anne on her funeral bier with long hair suggests the anonymous artist is using a recognised 14<sup>th</sup> century indicator that their marriage was not consummated.

Likewise, when Richard married the six year old Isabella (this illumination is in BL Ms Royal 14 D VI f 268v), the six year old child bride is depicted in a similar way as Anne of Bohemia, Margaret of Anjou, Matilda Empress and Mary I.

The virginity of a royal bride was essential to ensure that any subsequent child/heir was the king's and what better way to show this than in an image portraying her in a way that her virgin status would be immediately understood i.e. the same as that used to portray the Virgin Mary.



**Figure 8 Anne of Bohemia: 1st wife of Richard II**

So is there a specific audience for all these documents and manuscripts?

The Talbot Hours were a present for the future Queen of England so would have been looked at by the King and perhaps other members of the English court, but I have not found any further painted images of Margaret after the birth of her son (1453) except for a medallion, dated 1563 that appears as the frontispiece of Nora Loft's book, *Queen's of England*. As you can see, Margaret's hair is no longer visible and in 1563 her son, Edward, was ten years old.



Figure 9 BL Ms Royal 14D VI f268v



Figure 10 1563 Medallion of Margaret of Anjou

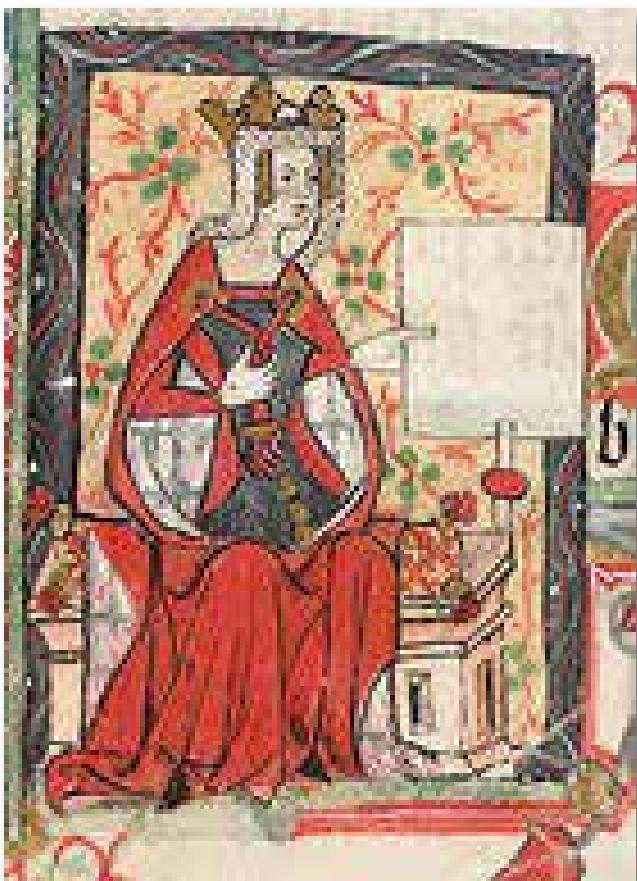


Figure 11 Matilda, Queen of England from Ms Cotton Nero D VII

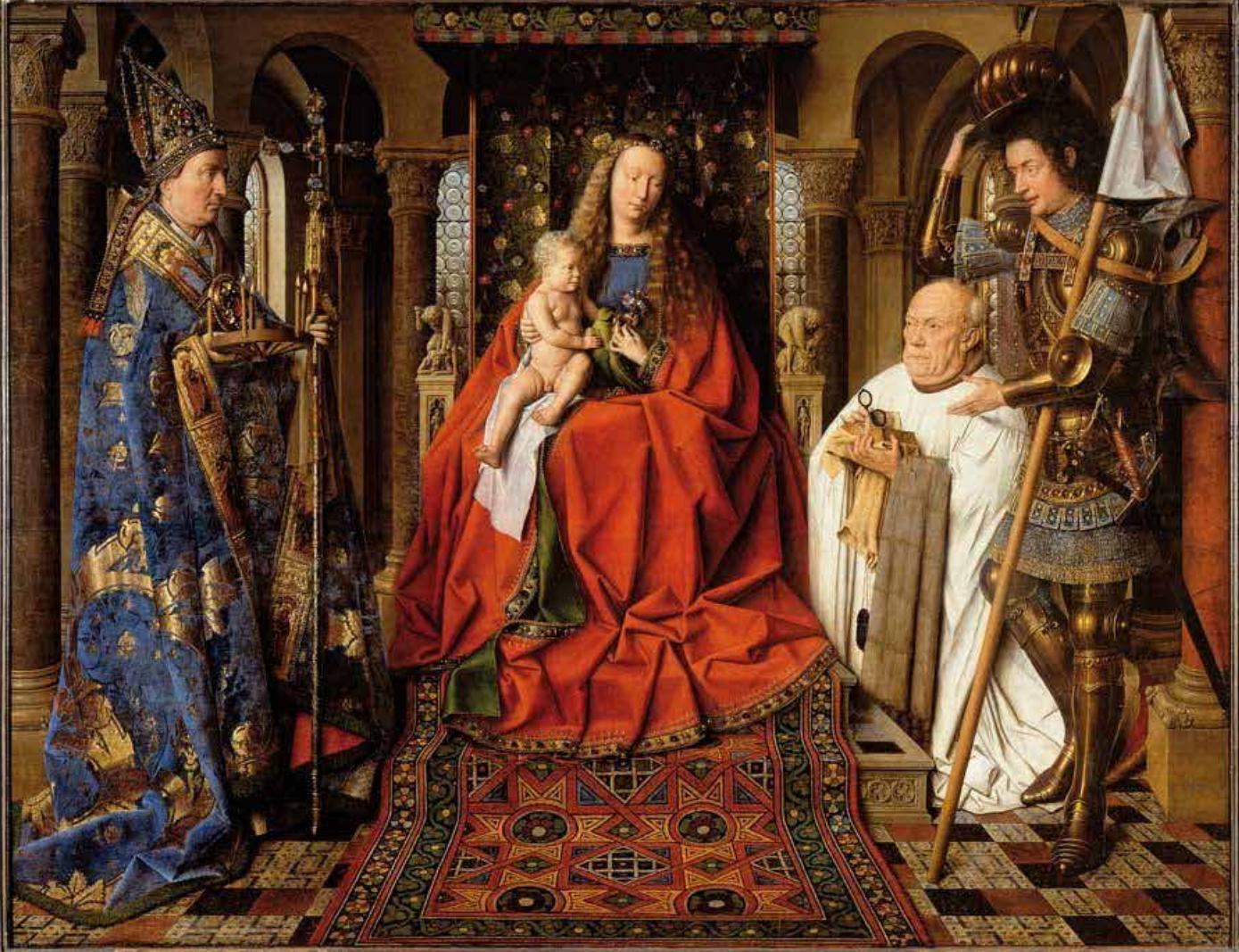
This intrigued me so I returned to images of Matilda, the ex Empress of the Holy Roman Empire who had failed to produce an heir when married to Holy Roman Emperor. In 1128 aged 25, Matilda was married to the 13 year old Geoffrey of Anjou. This union resulted in three sons, the eldest of whom would become Henry II of England. In the British Library the manuscript Cotton Nero D VII shows Matilda of England, who, despite having been named as heir to the throne by her father, Henry I, never ruled in her own right. This 15<sup>th</sup> century illumination shows the Queen Matilda, mother of Henry II (born 1133), wearing an elaborate headdress and her hair covered.

Anne of Bohemia goes to her grave with her hair still displayed loose. Isabella was so young that her marriage to Richard II would not have been consummated as she was only nine when he died. Sadly she died in childbirth in her second marriage.

The early 15<sup>th</sup> century Flemish paintings and illuminated manuscripts by Roger Campin, Jan Van Eyck and Anon containing images of the Virgin Mary, portray her with her hair loose after the birth of Christ as in *The Virgin & Child with Cardinal Van der Paele* painted in 1434-36 by Jan van Eyck. Byzantine and early Italian artists usually show Mary with her hair covered after Christ's birth, so is this style of portrayal of the Virgin a Northern European tradition?

Those creating the early documents were probably either English or French and it is possible that this visual tradition is a European one that has evolved in the scriptoria of the Cistercian and Clunyac monasteries of what is now northern France. The consummation of a royal marriage would have resulted in the queen's loss of virginity and if so, surely this would have elicited a change in Mary's image which would have been reflected in the Michelmas P of 1554?

Many cultures have a tradition of hiding a woman's hair after marriage. Orthodox Jewish women grew their hair long, then shaved their heads after they are married and wore wigs in public, so only their husbands saw their hair, and in ultra orthodox communities this tradition is still practised. How often is a woman's hair still remarked upon as 'her crowning glory'? Once Mary announced she was pregnant may explain why her image changes in the Hilary term of 1555 and why the images of



**Figure 12 The Virgin & Child with Cardinal van der Paele. Groeningmuseum, Bruges.**

the previous queens either change or not, depending on whether they produce heirs – or not.

In Elizabeth's reign there are very few extravagantly illuminated Ps, the majority of the early ones are simple pen and ink sketches that show the queen seated on a throne and the famously virgin Queen Elizabeth is portrayed with long hair, as seen in the P for the Hilary term of 1559 celebrating her coronation on 15<sup>th</sup> January and the famous Coronation miniature. This miniature is generally considered to be by Levina Teerlinc and shows the twenty five year old queen making a very obvious statement of her right to rule and of her virgin state.

With the announcement of Mary's pregnancy the artist was posed with a problem because this was the first time a ruling monarch was carrying the heir.

With the impending birth of an heir, what better place than to make a visual statement than where the Queen is portrayed as God's representative on earth and His purveyor of justice and mercy. The audience would be limited to curious lawyers, but the prospect of an heir 'in utero' would have been recorded on a legal document. Sadly for Mary, we know it was never to be.



**Figure 13** The Coronation Miniature: Levina Teerlinc, after 1559

In the heady days of 1560 Elizabeth's behaviour with a certain courtier was the subject of rumour and gossip. An interesting sketch of the queen appears on the Michelmas term P of that year. Elizabeth looks over her shoulder and her expression is worried. Perhaps the artist is recording the queen's concern about the death of Robert Dudley's wife, Amy Robsart, in September 1560. Dudley was exonerated from blame, but despite now being free to marry, he could never be considered as a royal husband. The circumstances of Amy Robsart's death were such that the rumour and gossip threatened Elizabeth's very existence as queen, so no wonder her expression is worried.

The P for the Hilary term of 1561 also tells a story. Elizabeth's image has changed, but why? The number of terms from the beginning of her reign is not the same as when Mary's image changes in the Hilary term of 1555.



**Figure 14** The P for the Michelmas term of 1560

And why does Elizabeth make William Cecil Chancellor of the Court of Wards at this time? He had been out of favour and the chancellorship is a rich one and had been vacant for some time. For someone out of favour, it seems a little odd to give him such a rich gift. Perhaps the queen felt guilty for having allowed herself to be so distracted by her heart and ignoring his advice?

Is it a fashion statement, but if so, why change her image at a time when Elizabeth is saying she is married to the nation and refusing to contemplate marriage proposals seriously?

Or, is this a record of something that has been rumoured of for four hundred and fifty four years? Was Elizabeth pregnant? We will never know for sure, but it is intriguing that someone has chosen to make some form of visual comment about the queen where she is portrayed as queen by divine right.

I am still in two minds regarding these images and if Elizabeth were pregnant, then who was the child? Despite having looked long and hard at the



**Figure 15 Detail of the P for the Hilary term of 1561.**

Hilliard miniature portrait of an unknown young man, also known as *Attici Amoris Ergo*, and compared him with Hilliard's 1572 miniature portrait of Elizabeth and those he painted of Robert Dudley, I am still not sure if he is their son. Perhaps he is an impostor. My suggestion as to the meaning of the obscure Latin motto on this miniature is based on an interpretation of ancient Roman social hierarchy, which suggests that perhaps this sitter is by, with from, or through the love of Atticus, a Roman of the rank of an equestrian knight. That miniature,

together with these intriguing images I found in the Ps on the Hilary rolls of 1554 and 1561 were what inspired my novel, *The Truth of the Line*.

Was the anonymous artist of the 1561 roll leaving us a clue to as to a long hidden skeleton in Elizabeth's cupboard, or did the queen decide to change her image as a statement that she was married to the nation? We will probably never know for sure.

**MELANIE V. TAYLOR**

# LITTLE COGS MAKE BIG WHEELS TURN

by Kyra Kramer

**S**HAKESPEARE wrote that all the world's a stage. On the historical stage one tends to look at the stars – the main actors and those with speaking parts. However, there are lots of people scurrying around in the back of the theater making sure the show will go on. Sometimes the act would be irrevocably changed without their unsung services. One of those important behind-the-scenes guys was **Lewis of Caerleon**, a Welsh physician, astrologer, theologian, and mathematician who helped plant the seeds of the Tudor dynasty.

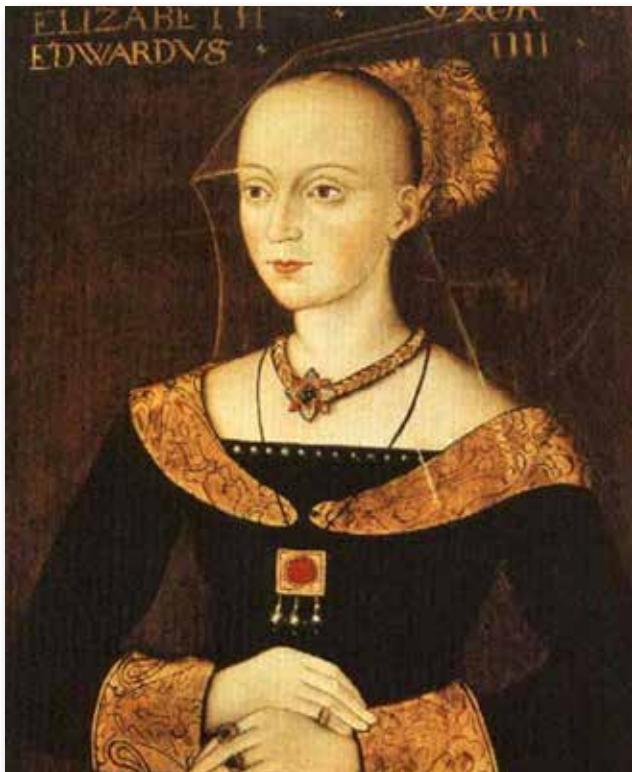
Lewis, although known only to a few in modern times, was quite a big cheese in his day. He was such a respected and illustrious medical man and prognosticator that his clients came from the highest echelons of society. He was the personal astrologer/physician of Margaret Beaufort, who was the

Countess of Richmond and the widow of Edward Tudor. Married at twelve, Margaret Beaufort had nearly died giving birth to her only child when she was just thirteen and her son, Henry Tudor, was the single brightest star in her universe. In the book *Blood Sisters* by historian Sarah Gristwood, the author quotes from *Polydore Vergil's Angelica Historia* (published in 1534) that the countess "was wont oftentimes to confer freely" with Lewis, "a grave man with no small experience".

Inasmuch as Lewis was "a very learned physician", he was also the astrologer/physician of Elizabeth Woodville, the unpopular queen of Edward IV. Lewis was a loyal Lancasterian, and was a trusted favorite of Elizabeth as well. When Edward IV died and his sons were murdered, Lewis continued to support the widowed queen against her former brother-in-law who had usurped her children's throne, Richard III. Lewis may have even been imprisoned by Richard as punishment for his devotion to Elizabeth's cause.

Margaret Beaufort wanted her son, a descendant of Edward III and the grandson of a former queen of England, to take Richard's crown for himself. Elizabeth Woodville wanted Richard off the throne and neutralized before he could do any more damage to her and her family. (Even if Richard III did not murder her sons by Edward IV he had beyond contestation murdered her brother Anthony Woodville and her younger son by her first marriage, Richard Grey.) The women had been friends at court before Edward IV's death and were naturally allies against king Richard. As a trusted and educated servant of both women, Lewis was the perfect go-between when the ladies wanted to communicate.

At the behest of Margaret Beaufort, Lewis suggested to Elizabeth that she consider a marriage between her eldest daughter and Margaret's son Henry. The widowed former queen was "so well pleased with this device" that she swore to enlist all



Elizabeth Woodville

of her Lancastrian allies to fight on Henry's behalf when he made his play for the throne. With the help of Lewis as messenger and co-conspirator, Elizabeth and Margaret were able to arrange an alliance based on the promise of a union between Elizabeth of York (or the next oldest daughter Cecily if necessary) and Henry Tudor. The risk Lewis took to help his rebellious clients should not be underestimated; if it was discovered he was helping plot against the king then Richard III would have had his head on a pike.

Although it must be said that Elizabeth of York and Henry Tudor would have doubtlessly been wed for political reasons after Richard III was overthrown anyway, Lewis certainly made it easier for plans to be exchanged and solidified before the final die was cast. He also allowed the ladies to coordinate their allies for the uprising. Henry Tudor must have thought that the aid Lewis gave had been important because the physician/astrologer was given royal patronage and various grants just a few months after the new monarch had won the crown on Bosworth Field. According to the 1486 *Calendar of Patent Rolls* on February 24th "the king's servant, Lewis Caerlion, doctor of medicine" as assured forty marks per annum for the rest of his life out of the yearly revenues of Wiltshire. Henry VI also gave Lewis another twenty marks for life on November 27th of that same year. Sixty marks was roughly forty pounds, and that much yearly income qualified Lewis to be classed as one of the gentry. Moreover, on August 3, 1488 Lewis was made one of the knights of the king's alms, which Henry reiterated again on September 14, 1491. These financial and social perks meant that Lewis was comfortably well off and socially secure.

Lewis's career continued to wax under Tudor rule. Not only did the Welshman write six books detailing astrological principles as well as the mathematical and astronomical tables needed to calculate the eclipses of the sun and the moon, he became a professor at Oxford university. He also devoted himself to copying and compiling the work of famous English astrologers. His work as both an independent astronomer and precise copyist helped form the template for the navicula – the ship-shaped sundial used to navigate seagoing vessels based on the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of horoscopes the Lewis created for his clients still survive today in the Cambridge University Library.



Lady Margaret Beaufort from NPG

There is one more important part that Lewis may have played in the downfall of Richard III and the rise of the Tudor dynasty. Rhys ap Thomas is the nobleman who is traditionally credited with killing Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field. One of the reasons that Rhys had risen in distinction among the outcast Lancastrians who had escaped to France with Henry Tudor is that Rhys had been given the best education possible by his father, Thomas ap Gruffydd. The seventeenth-century chronicle entitled *The Life of Sir Rhys ap Thomas* claims that Rhys was singled out for such honors due to a horoscope that had been cast upon the occasion of his birth. The astrologer told Thomas ap Gruffydd that his newborn son would grow up to be a man of renown who would attain high office. Having faith in the prognosticator, Gruffydd prepared his son for a great destiny. The astrologer employed by Gruffydd was none other than Lewis of Caerleon. It is possible that Lewis not only helped conspire against Richard III, he may have set Richard's killer on the path toward the king's doom.

Lewis of Caerleon may have been a small cog in the machine of history, but his efforts turned a big wheel in the English monarchy.

KYRA KRAMER

# MARCH FEAST DAYS

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Lady Day, Annunciation of  
the Blessed Virgin Mary (25 March)  
Palm Sunday (29 March)

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## LADY DAY

**L**ADY Day, or the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, was a feast day commemorating the day that the Virgin Mary was first told by the Angel Gabriel that she was carrying Jesus. It was the first day of the calendar year in England until 1752, when the first day of the year was changed to 1 January and the Gregorian Calendar replaced the Julian Calendar. Although the calendar year officially started on 25 March in Tudor times, New Year's gifts were still given on 1 January, which came from the Roman tradition of New Year.

*"The xxv day of Marche, the wyche was owre lade [day,] ther was as gret justes as youe have sene at the tylt at Vestmynster; the chalyngers was a Spaneard and ser Gorge Haward; and all ther men, and ther horsses trymmyd in whyt, and then cam the Kyng and a gret mene [menée or retinue] all in bluu, and trymmyd with yellow, and ther elmets with gret tuyffes [tufts or plumes] of blue and yellow fether, and all ther veffelers [whifflers or forerunners] and ther fotemen, and ther armorers, and a compene lyke Turkes red [rode] in cremesun saten gownes and capes, and with fachyons [falchions] and gret targets; and sum in gren, and mony of clyvers colers; and ther was broken ij hondred stayffes and a-boyff [above]."*

Historians and researchers have to bear Lady Day in mind when reading primary sources and reading things like tomb inscriptions. For example, according to primary sources Thomas Boleyn died in 1538 and Lady Jane Grey was executed in 1553, but this is because their deaths took place before Lady Day that year. When we take into account the modern calendar, Thomas and Jane died in 1539 and 1554 respectively.

On Lady Day in 1555, during Mary I's reign, diarist Henry Machyn recorded jousting at Westminster which was in celebration of the feast day:

The only knight named is Sir George Howard, but the knights were both English and Spanish, and a record two hundred staffs were broken.

Trivia: The UK tax year starts on 6th April which dates back to 1753 when rents were

due on Lady Day (it was a Sunday so the taxes were due on 26th March), the old New Year, but because 11 days were skipped due to the implementation of the new Gregorian Calendar they became due on 6th April.

## PALM SUNDAY

**P**ALM Sunday marks the start of Holy Week and commemorates the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem the week before the Resurrection. It is an event which features in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and in Tudor times the priest would read out the story and then bless branches of greenery to be used in processions. In many countries today, we celebrate Palm Sunday with palm leaves or crosses made out of palm leaves, but these leaves were hard to come by in Tudor England, so they would use local greenery, which was blessed before it was made into crosses. The crosses were taken home and placed over the doorway to protect the family from misfortune and witchcraft. The cross was a reminder of Christ's message and the greenery also symbolised spring and new life. The crosses were later burned to make ashes for the following year's Ash Wednesday ceremonies.

If you watched Tudor Monastery Farm, you will have seen Peter Ginn dressing up as a prophet (he chose John the Baptist), holding a big wooden cross and leading a procession around the village. The Tudor Monastery Farm team had found mention of this tradition taking place on Palm Sunday in communities in southern England from the 1490s. A lay person would be chosen to read a prophetic text at the

Palm Sunday service before leading the procession out of the church and around the village. The procession ended with what Peter described as a "snowball and pillow fight" with the villagers throwing unleavened bread, greenery and flowers at each other.

A special shrine would also be prepared for Palm Sunday. This shrine contained the blessed Sacrament to represent Jesus Christ, and the church's own relics. The clergy carried this special shrine around the outside of the church as the laity processed around the church in the opposite direction, with the two processions meeting at the church door. The Lent veil (a veil hiding the chancel from the nave during Lent) was drawn up and then dropped down again as they passed. In rural communities, the local priest would also lead a procession to bless the fields for a good harvest. He would carry a solar monstrance, i.e. a sun shaped receptacle with a glass centre containing the consecrated Host. The Host was held in place by a luna, a container of glass and gilded metal. As the Tudor Monastery Farm team pointed out, the Holy Sacrament was on display with both the sun and moon. Blessing the fields with this solar monstrance was seen as a blessing from Christ himself. A good harvest was, of course, vital to a rural community.

**CLAIRE RIDGWAY**

# HENRY VIII'S BOOK – THE MUSIC OF THE KING

by Jane Moulder

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You want music fit for a king?  
How about music written *by* a king!

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Henry playing the harp accompanied by his fool, Will Somers.  
Henry VIII Psalter, British Library, Royal MS 2 A. xvi, fol. 63v



LIKE every other fan of the Tudor period, I have been avidly watching the BBC's production of Hilary Mantel's novel, Wolf Hall and have been very impressed with both the look and feel of the production. It is obvious that considerable energies have been expended in trying to recreate, as accurately as possible, the atmosphere and artefacts of Tudor life. I'm sure, as with others who have an in-depth knowledge or expertise in a specific area, I am not alone in trying to spot any inaccuracies or mistakes that have been made! Whilst I think the costumes have been accurately recreated, I'm sure there is an expert out there who has spotted a few errors. So, I have listened out for the music. Usually period music is where producers of historical films and dramas manage to get it spectacularly wrong! Whilst it is absolutely clear from a couple of shots that the actors themselves don't know how to play their instruments, the music itself is correct and it is played on the right instruments for the period.

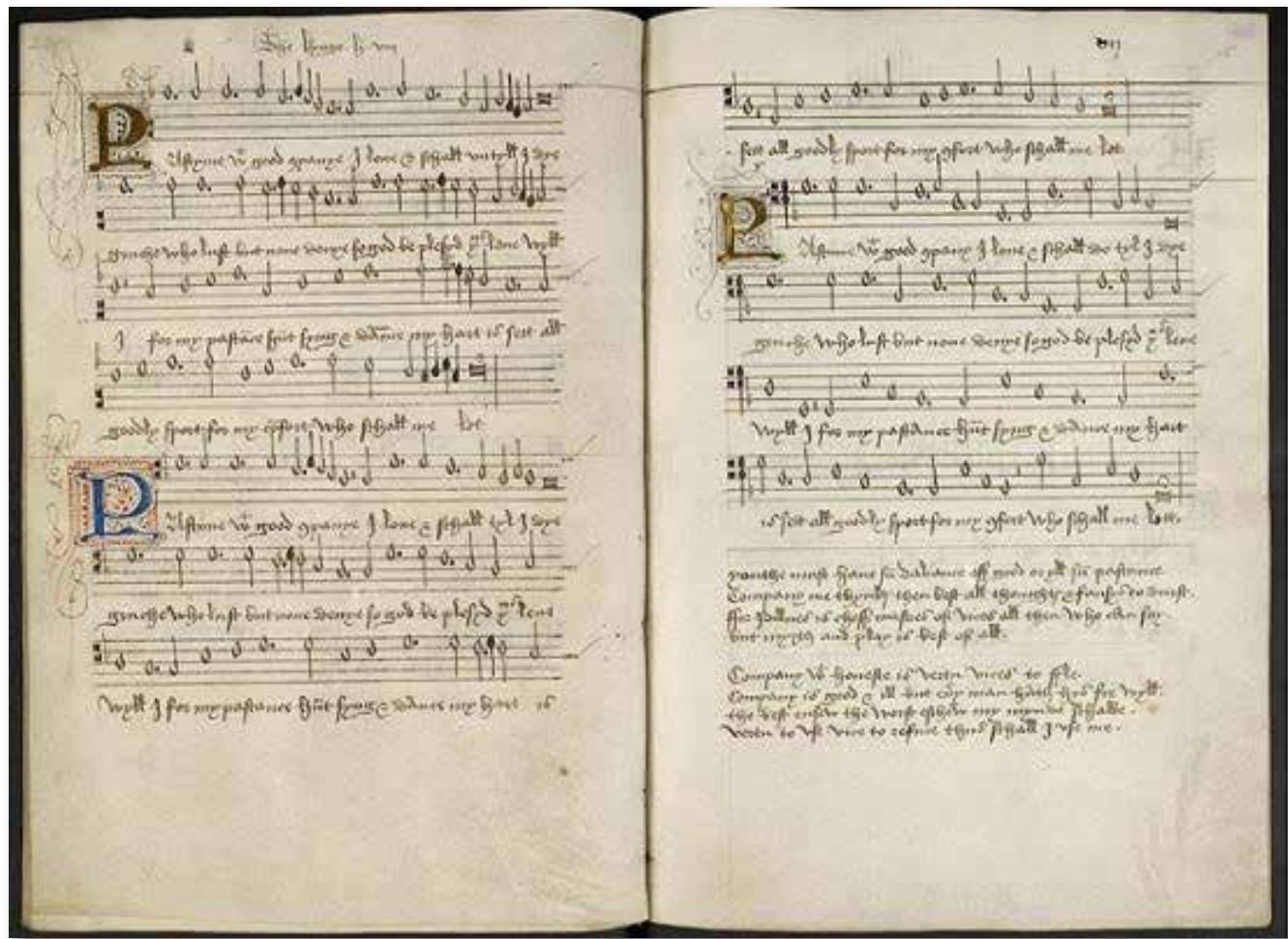
One aspect of Henry's life that has not been emphasised in either the Wolf Hall novel or TV production is his love of music and his abilities as a musician and composer. There is no doubt at all that Henry was a competent and able musician and whilst we don't have a record of his musical education, we do know that in 1513 that the Milanese Ambassador noted that Henry could "*play the clavicembalo (harpsichord) and recorders in company most credibly, affording pleasure to all present*". In 1511, Edward Hall, on describing the King's progress to Windsor, observed that Henry was "*exercysing hym self daily in shotyng, singing, daunsyng, wrastelyng, casting of the barre, plaiyng at the recorder, flute, virginals, and in setting of songes, [and] makynge of balettes*." It is not surprising that Henry could play music, after all it was a skill that was a mark of a

gentleman and one that any man of breeding and wealth would seek to attain. But, interestingly, this reference clearly states that Henry was also composing music and writing songs.

Late last year, a beautifully reproduced facsimile of the book known as "Henry VIII's Book" was published. I was lucky enough to view a copy of this book at the Greenwich Early Music Exhibition but sadly was not rich enough to be able to afford to buy it! The original is now part of the collection in the British Library, Additional MS 31922, and it contains 109 songs and instrumental pieces. The book measures 12 ins by 8 ins and is beautifully, though not sumptuously, produced with vellum leaves and leather covered wooden boards for a cover. Whilst it is commonly called "Henry VIII's Book", there is no evidence that it was ever actually his personal property. It was certainly not made for royalty as its decorations are far too modest. William Chappell, a Victorian musicologist and antiquarian, wrongly stated in 1867 that it was Henry's personal book and sadly the myth has stuck.

The reason that it has become so closely associated with Henry is that out of the 109 pieces, 33 bear the inscription "the kynge h.viii" inferring that these were the compositions of the King. Of these 33 pieces, 20 are songs and 13 are purely instrumental.

The book was compiled around 1518 and as well as pieces by Henry, the collection contains compositions by well-known and significant composers connected with the English court such as William Cornish and Robert Fairfax as well as continental composers such as Agricola and Heinrich Isaac. Many of the pieces are by the popular and prevalent "Anon" but it is Henry's name which carries the largest number attributions.



From the facsimile edition of the King Henry VIII Book, *Pastime with Good Company*.

The book dates from the beginning of Henry's reign, when he was still a young man. It is recorded that Henry would play and sing in public and many of the vocal pieces in the book are in three parts or what was commonly known as "three-men's" or "freemen's" songs. The popularity of this type of part singing would continue throughout his reign and into the early 17<sup>th</sup> century as evidenced by Thomas Ravenscroft's 1609 publication of freemen's songs subtitled 'K[ing] H[enry's] Mirth'.

In 'The Lyffe (life) of Sir Peter Carewe', such freeman's songs are mentioned in connection with Henry. "For the Kynge him self being muche delited to syng, and Sir Peter Carewe having a pleasaunte voice, the Kynge woulde very often use him to singe with him certeyne songes they called fremen songes, as namely, "By the bancke as I lay", and "As I walked the wode so wylde."

The songs contained in manuscript book are secular rather than sacred and some of them were written to mark specific events, such as 'Englond,

ge glad' and 'Pray we to God' which were probably written to commemorate Henry's invasion of France in 1513. There is also a song 'Adew adewe le company' which was probably written to commemorate the birth of Henry, Duke of Cornwall in January 1511. There were elaborate celebrations to mark this event and the song refers to the infant prince. Sadly, though the young prince died the next month. The book also contains the song that is most closely associated with Henry – 'Pastime with Good Company' – and its lyrics extol the virtues of a young, princely lifestyle.

Pastime with good company  
 I love and shall until I die.  
 Grudge who lusts, but none deny,  
 So God be pleased, thus live will I.  
 For my pastance:  
 Hunt, sing, and dance.  
 My heart is set!  
 All goodly sport



From the facsimile of the King Henry VIII Manuscript – ‘Adieu Madame et ma maistresse’

For my comfort.  
Who shall me let?  
  
Youth must have some dalliance,  
Of good or ill some pastance.  
Company I think then best --  
All thoughts and fantasies to digest.  
For idleness  
Is chief mistress  
Of vices all.  
Then who can say  
But mirth and play  
Is best of all?  
  
Company with honesty  
Is virtue, vices to flee.  
Company is good and ill,  
But every man has his free will.  
The best ensue.  
The worst eschew.  
My mind shall be.

Virtue to use.  
Vice to refuse.  
Thus shall I use me!

Known in its own time as ‘The King’s Ballad’, it became a top 10 hit of the day and no wonder. It’s a great song with a rousing tune.

Whilst there is no doubting that Henry himself penned this song and tune, there has been considerable analysis and debate as to whether he was responsible for all of the music that has been attributed to him. Some of the pieces are undoubtedly his work, such as ‘Green Growth the Holly’ but others are not purely of his own invention. For example, with ‘Helas Madame’, a beautiful and haunting piece, it is clear that Henry only added the alto line to an already existing piece of music. The original top line appears in an earlier manuscript, the Bayeux Chansonnier , and the alto line stands out because it is musically naïve when compared with the other lines. Likewise, the instrumental ‘En Vray



Another illustration from Henry VIII's Psalter (BL)

'Amoure', very closely resembles a piece composed by Loyser Compère (1445-1518) and printed in the Odhecaton in 1501. The virtuosic 'Taunder Naken' is based on a popular Flemish folk tune and there are numerous arrangements of this piece by many other composers.

So, although it seems that there is no doubt that Henry was a musician and composed both lyrics and music, he was not as skilled as has been popularly promoted. Henry was taking existing compositions and pieces, adding a line here and there or adapting some other composers works. Likewise, he was taking a popular tune, adapting it slightly and adding his own words to it. No matter because Henry's legacy is not so much with his own music but his patronage of music and musicians throughout his reign. Henry did more than perhaps any other monarch, save his daughter Elizabeth, to promote, commission and be a patron to music. His love and patronage of music had a positive effect not only in court but spread throughout all sections of society as people wanted to emulate the passions and accomplishments of the king.

But if this music manuscript wasn't Henry VIII's own book, was it ever used by him and who actually owned it? The book was clearly owned by someone of rank because of the nature of the "art music" it contains but also this kind of music making was confined to the privileged few. The most likely owner of the book was Sir Henry Guildford. He was at court and his position was Controller of the Household. A couple of years older than Henry,

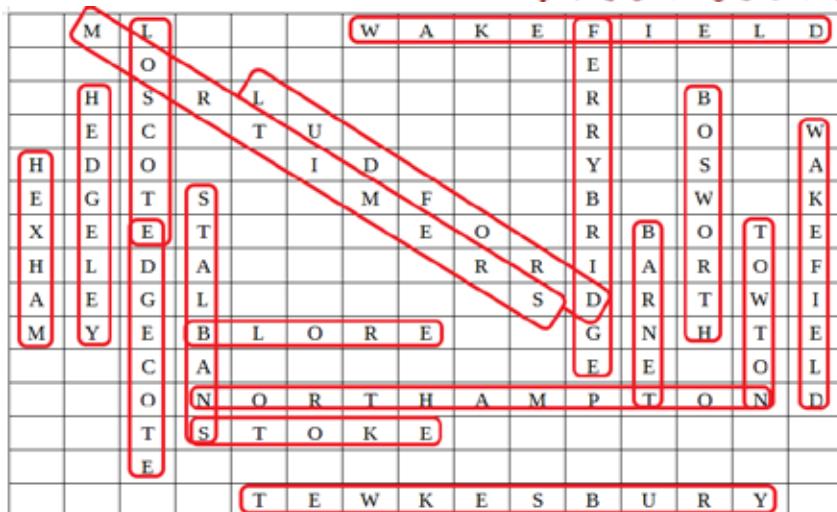
they had been close companions since their youths and was Guildford known as a personal favourite and part of the King's inner circle. Among his other duties, Henry Guildford was appointed Master of the Revels on a number of occasions and was also responsible for staging the elaborate celebrations to mark the birth of Henry's son in 1511. Henry Guildford was a skilled musician and may well have tutored Henry in music. This close link between the two young men, who shared a love of music and entertainment, could explain why it contains so many pieces attributed to the king. Perhaps this book was used so that they could play music together? It's a nice thought.

JANE MOULDER

I must add a postscript to this article and try my best to put the record straight. Henry VIII did NOT write Greensleeves! The tune is written over a ‘ground bass’, a musical form originating in Italy which did not reach England until the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, some years after Henry’s death. The song was first registered with the Stationer’s Company in September, 1580 by a Richard Jones as “a Newe Northern Ditty of ye Ladye Greene Sleeves”. Any association with Henry writing the song to Anne Boleyn is completely historically inaccurate!

If you're interested in buying the book – here's a link <http://tinyurl.com/lvrwdxdd>

# Wars of the Roses Answers



How are you finding our crossword and word searches? Do you want them to be harder, easier? Do you think you've got what it takes to make a quiz we could include in a future edition of Tudor Life?

Give us your thoughts and feedback to [info@tudorsociety.com](mailto:info@tudorsociety.com)



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**DON'T MISS**  
THIS MONTH'S GIANT  
GIVE-AWAY & EXPERT TALK!