

The RICARDIAN HERALD

Connecting our global community

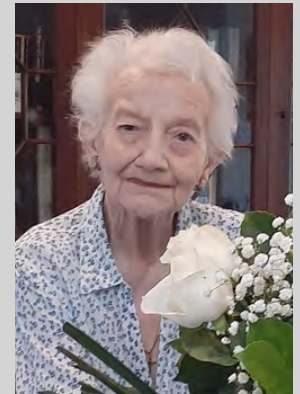


The magazine for the worldwide branches and groups of the Richard III Society

Cool occasions for keen Ricardians!

The Five-Minute Medievalist, Tombs of medieval kings; Anthony Woodville; how much did the first British military surgeon know about Richard's scoliosis? Branches & Groups worldwide celebrate the society's 100 years with a busy line-up of events through till October. Everything is outlined in detail on Pages 35-40.

Richard's Standard at Bosworth Heritage Centre Sun Dial Area June 2024
Image courtesy of Neil Trump.



PROFILE

New South Wales member Julia Redlich shares a lifetime of being a devoted Ricardian. Pages 11-12



SIGNIFICANT DATE

Leicestershire Branch member Victoria Roe became interested in King Richard III when she was appointed as a teacher at King Richard III Infant School in Leicester. She started work there on 22nd August 1983. Page 13.

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BRANCHES & GROUPS ELECTION

You are being invited to vote for a branches and groups liaison officer.

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COLDRIDGE & EDWARD V

Dr Alison Harrop discusses John Dike's key presentation to the Yorkshire Branch.

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PROFILE

Society Fellow Elizabeth Nokes chats about being a Ricardian since 1966. Pages 9-10.



HENRY PERCY

Did the Earl think Richard's orders at Bosworth were just a very bad idea? Canada Branch member Ian Yeates discusses this quintessential peer. Pages 30-31

We are nearly half the way through 2024 already which I find really scary, but it is fabulous to be anticipating the Society's 100-year centenary celebrations.

Richard's links to Portuguese royalty

The occasion makes this year so special. You, the B&G community, have really embraced this opportunity to celebrate the Society and Richard himself, and I am thrilled as to how you have responded to the initial suggestion of a Day of Celebration back in 2023. The calendar for July 6 is exciting, with a wide variety of activities planned.



There are also many events arranged for other dates. This is an immense undertaking, and our community should be proud of how we have engaged in this year of celebration. Please do send photos to Sue for the Herald. Let's make an album for the October Herald!

Back in April, I had the pleasure of attending the Society's Triennial Conference in Gloucester. As always, the talks were varied and excellent and the venue was extremely comfortable. The highlight of the weekend for me was just how many B&G members I got to meet. I thoroughly enjoyed catching up with those members I had met before and getting to know those I hadn't. It was good to discuss individual Branches and Groups and general Ricardian issues.

I have just returned from a fabulous touring holiday (hire car) in Portugal with my husband, Neil. The Portuguese are justifiably very proud of their royal heritage, and especially those monarchs who lived during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

I visited many places with links to King John I (reigned 1385-1433) and his queen, Philippa of Lancaster (daughter of John of Gaunt, married 1387-1415) and of course their son, Henry (the Navigator, 1394-1460). They are all remembered and commemorated for their achievements with much pride and affection. Another monarch proudly remembered is Manuel I (reigned 1495-1531).

There are many references to, and examples of, Manueline art and architecture, a lavish style of ornamentation to celebrate the prosperity of his reign - the Belem Tower in Lisbon being a good one. When I visited the Belem Tower, I was fortunate enough to escape the crowds for a while and sat alone in the loggia, where the royal family would on occasion have watched ships leaving for Africa and the New World.

Sitting there, it occurred to me that had Richard III won Bosworth and Elizabeth of York married Manuel (Duke of Beja in 1485), she would probably have had a far more colourful and exciting life than she had with Henry VII! Pity you can't change history...

Your Vote Is Needed

Election of the Branches & Groups Liaison Officer

Call for Candidates

As mentioned in the March *Bulletin*, the society's 36 affiliated Branches and Groups will be asked to elect the Branches & Groups Liaison Officer (BGLO) in September when current BGLO, Jane Trump, ends her term.

We are now asking members to come forward and express interest in taking on the role. In outline the BGLO role involves being the link – the liaison point if you prefer – between the Branches & Groups and the Board, in both directions. The BGLO does not automatically become a member of the Board (but may well wish to stand for election to the Board) but if they are not a Board member, they would be invited to relevant parts of Board meetings to ensure Branch and Group matters are properly considered.

The BGLO is the one Society Officer who is not appointed by the Board. Instead, it is up to the affiliated Branches and Groups to elect 'their' representative.

If you are interested in the role, at this stage, please contact the Society's secretary, Sue Ollier (secretary@richardiii.net) to express your interest. Sue will be able to provide more details; if you want to go ahead, you will be asked to submit a simple form with an up to 300-word statement about yourself, what you bring to the role and how you see it developing and running.

Your statement will be needed by July 31.

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As the March *Bulletin* article set out, it is up to each Branch and Group to decide who to vote for; the Board will be writing directly to the Branch and Groups to set out the process. That will contain a recommendation that the Branch/Group members are consulted but how that is effected is up to the Branch/Group.

We will aim to write to Branches and Groups with the list of candidates in early August, asking for votes to be submitted by late September, to allow for the new BGLO to be formally announced at the AGM.

Coldridge and Edward V

by Dr Alison Harrop

On February 10 John Dike gave us this entertaining, informative, and illustrated talk. John has been the Lead Researcher for The Missing Princes Project (TMPP) at Coldridge in Devon since 2018. He was writing a book on the history of Coldridge and was approached by Philippa Langley for his help with TMPP.

In the December of 2001, The Telegraph newspaper featured an article on The Coldridge Secret asking if Edward V lived and died in the county of Devon under an alias

Fortunately, Philippa and John were able to see the article first and make comments. This resulted in no less than 68,000 emails of interest the following day and there were a million hits on Tik Tok saying: "Go to Coldridge"! Coldridge is a quiet rural village, and this occasioned some alarm. John and his wife Jo decided to arrange a tour day in St Matthew's church once a month with the agreement of the PCC and local council; tea and buns provided!

Coldridge has a central hilltop position in mid- Devon, 18 miles northwest of Exeter, but would only have been accessible by cart tracks in mediaeval times. Stone Age artefacts have been found there and the church is Norman with alterations made in the 15th century. The village name derives from 'coal' which was burnt to produce charcoal locally.

St Matthew's has a stained-glass window of Edward V set in the east window of its chantry chapel. There are only two other such windows in the whole country - one in Canterbury and one in Little Malvern. The folklore of Devon has always maintained that the missing princes were here and at least one was buried here. This is legend of course and cannot be substantiated but is interesting

In 1900, the Rev H J Hodgson commented that the church was much larger than justified for such a rural parish. Sabine Baring-Gould, a neighbouring priest (and the author of *Onward Christian Soldiers*) also remarked on the rare Edward V window. In 1905, Beatrix Cresswell, a local historian and author, recorded information on Coldridge and other churches, echoing Hodgson's puzzlement regarding the size and decoration of St Matthew's which would have required major funding.

Brookes and Cherry also questioned the identity of a John Evans, the patron of the chantry chapel, whose tomb rests below the window in *The Journal of Stained Glass*. So, who indeed was John Evans?



Members L to R are: Yorkshire Branch Secretary Graham Mitchell; Devon & Cornwall Branch Member John Dike; Yorkshire Branch Journal Editor Dr Alison Harrop; Yorkshire Branch Chairman Paul Williams. Taken at St Bede's Pastoral Centre York on Saturday 10th February 2024, where John Dike addressed Yorkshire Branch Members on the subject "John Evans, the Missing Princes and the Coldridge Connection". Photo Mrs Joan Dike



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On March 1, 1484, Richard III made a public promise to protect Elizabeth Woodville (then in sanctuary) and her family. Elizabeth's son from her previous marriage, Thomas Grey, First Marquis of Dorset, was in France, with Henry Tudor at this time, and he held lands in and around Coldridge.

So now we have the likelihood of a deal being made. Robert Markenfield was sent to take over Coldridge Barton Manor and its fees only two days later. This is recorded in the Patent Rolls on March 3. Robert was the brother of Thomas Markenfield, Sheriff of Yorkshire, who was a trusted supporter and friend of Richard and was awarded generous lands in Somerset and Devon. Yet Robert was sent to this comparative back water. Now we encounter John Evans at the manor who would have been the same age as Edward V.

He is made the deer parker which is a prestigious position as it controls the supply of venison and timber and there would have been 150 deer there within a pale. There were also two farms and a flour mill. It has been suggested that Evans was a Yeoman of the Crown or possibly part of the army escorting Edward V from Ludlow but there is no evidence of this. Evans later builds a chantry chapel in St Matthew's and a yeoman or infantry soldier would not have had the financial means to do that. Arches had to be modified and considerable funds needed to be found. The disordered prayer benches noted by Beatrix Cresswell date the building of the chantry to 1511, the two inscriptions saying: "Pray for John Evans, Parker of Coldridge, maker of this work in the 3rd year of the reign of Henry VIII" and: "Pray for the good estate of John Evans who caused this to be made at his own expense, the 2nd day of August in the year of the lord 1511."

By 1511, John Evans would have been 40 years old and, if you survived beyond 25 years, the average life expectancy in those times would have been 40-50 years. So this would have been an appropriate time to build the chantry to pray for his soul. The effigy on his tomb is carved out of beer stone which is a local chalky stone from the area around Beer in the southeast of Devon.



St Matthew's church is Norman with alterations made in the 15th century.



The effigy on his tomb is carved out of beer stone which is a local chalky stone from the area around Beer in the southeast of Devon.



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There is a huge scar across the lower face, surrounded by scratch marks and the tomb looks directly up to the Edward V window. The name on the tomb appears to be misspelt as EVAS. EV might stand for Edward V and AS means "in hiding" or in "sanctuary" in Latin. There is also inverted mediaeval graffiti which spells the word "King" with five lines below.

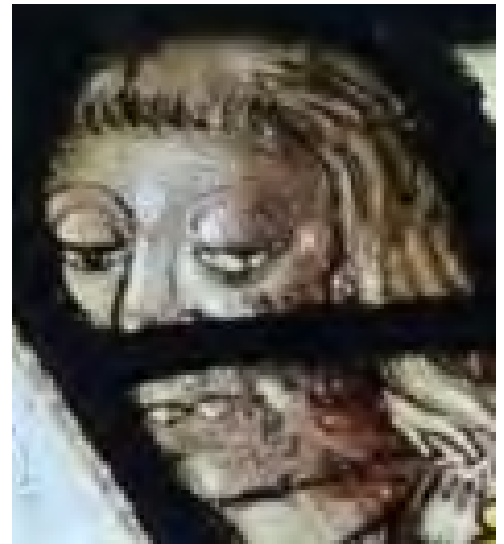
The rood screen also dates from 1511 and there are inverted clues here in the form of three images of ladies wearing Tudor headdress with long tongues protruding from their mouths. Original mediaeval tools have also been found in the screen. There are various ideas as to the identity of the lady: - it might have been Mary I who was attempting to restore Catholicism to the church when she came to the throne later or possibly Margaret Beaufort who was, it must be said, a wily woman! Or could it have been Elizabeth of York who must have had plenty to say but didn't, at least to our knowledge. Elizabeth said nothing about Perkin Warbeck being an imposter even though he was kept at court for some time where she would have surely seen him.

We have mentioned the bad facial scar on John Evan's tomb effigy. But there is also a smaller image in the Edward V window, and this is clearly the face of John Evans drawn from life with the same disfiguring scar almost destroying the lips. John Evans holds a crown against his chest in this image. Above the standing figure of Edward V in the window is a floating crown which indicates this king was never actually crowned. The ermine spots are made up of deer with ermine legs and there are 41 in all. 41 subtracted from 1511 gives us the date of 1470 which is when Prince Edward was born. There is also a blurred falcon and fetterlock emblem in an oval within the crown and, as we know, this was the emblem adopted by Edward IV. Floating crowns were invariably positioned above coats of arms and the dimensions of this floating crown do not fit well in this window.



ABOVE: St Matthew's has a stained-glass window of Edward V set in the east window of its chantry chapel.

RIGHT: Smaller image in the Edward V window is clearly the face of John Evans drawn from life with the same disfiguring scar almost destroying the lips.



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So perhaps it had been situated elsewhere originally, possibly in the large chancel window where it is likely to have been smashed during the Reformation but perhaps recovered later. A coat of arms in the stained glass could also have been smashed and been too fragmented to restore. (More of this later).

There are also many emblems of “The Sunne in Splendour” (adopted by Edward I (after the Battle of Mortimer Cross) and probable roses of York in the church floor tiles and roof bosses. Stained glass has been stuck back post reformation above the font and one of each Yorkist emblem is in the roof boss above.



Lambert Simnel was named “John” in the Heralds’ Report after the Battle of Stoke Field in 1487, when a young man and a boy were led from the field according to the French chronicler, Molinet... the boy ending up in the Royal kitchens. Was the young man then allowed to return to Coldridge, though not before his face had been intentionally slashed? Such a deep cut would have disabled the mentalis muscle which normally supports the lower lip and chin pad. As well as being disfiguring, this would have made it difficult for the victim to speak clearly. Not appropriate or desirable for any future king who may have then passed on his claim to the throne to his younger brother.

It appears John Evans was living in Coldridge before Stoke Field. There was also a colourful character named Sir Henry Bodrugan with links to Coldridge. He was a Yorkist supporter but also a local rogue, robber, and chaser of pirates. When he was hunted down for arrest, he leapt off the cliffs into his ship and escaped to Ireland. (John said think Poldark or Errol Flynn here!). He had two ships - so might he have taken Evans/Edward or his supporters to Ireland? He was definitely present at the Dublin coronation.

Moving on to Perkin Warbeck/Richard of Shrewsbury. He must have passed through Coldridge on his way to the Battle of Exeter in 1497 where he was captured, as he would have had to approach Exeter through the north gate. Although the route was on cart tracks, it avoided all rivers, and the younger prince may have visited his brother on the way.

Sir John Speke was a friend of John Evans and an adjacent landowner to Coldridge. He built the screen in Wentworth church which also contains emblems of the Sunne in Splendour, and he was heavily fined the sum of £200 for assisting Warbeck. Robert Markenfield was also mentioned as being Speke’s associate and colleague.

So, does everything found in Coldridge church just amount to a set of coincidences even though there are so many of them? Well, even if you think so, the specialist police investigators working within the TMPP have advised Philippa that where coincidences occur, you must also investigate – no ifs, no buts.

Everyone now is asking if the bones of John Evans can be removed from the tomb of course for DNA testing (as we do have DNA from a descendant of Jacquetta of Luxembourg, who was Edward V’s maternal grandmother). But John Dike has examined the interior of the tomb through a hole outside leading to the tomb with an endoscope (bought in Lidl!) and it is unfortunately empty apart from animal shells. This is not uncommon for mediaeval tombs, many of which were designed as mere monuments. The bones may be buried more deeply or somewhere else altogether. Therefore, ongoing research centres on the shattered stained glass. There has been an archaeological dig under the back of the windows to look for this. In all, 20 digs have found 400 pieces of small glass, both plain and patterned and all covered in clay which needs to be washed off. There are those who say this is all down to a Victorian hoax. But what has been found so far is very similar to the glass in Dollascombe church nearby and it has been confirmed that that was made in a workshop near Exeter Cathedral in the 1500s, so the analysis is ongoing.



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There is a drive to raise a target £30,000 to fund this and around £20,00 has been reached so far. If further evidence is found to corroborate this dating, and the coat of arms originally below the floating crown found and restored, this would be a massive step forward. Given the amount of social media interest shown so far, John fears the village might need some protection! He has recently moved into Somerset but assures us this is for family reasons and his heart still lies with Coldridge!

John began his research by considering three boxes to contain his work. There is a wastepaper basket for the Impossible Scenarios, though care is needed to resist temptations and prejudices here. Then there is a box for the Possible Scenarios which must include the possibility that the princes were murdered. But it is the box of facts hopefully leading to hard evidence which is filling up and it is time for the truth to come out. Considering the multiplicity of clues regarding Coldridge, it is almost impossible to ignore that something was going on there in the 15th century.

John received lots of questions after his talk. Interesting additions which emerged were that there are no records for John Evans prior to 1484, a supporting fact suggesting secrecy. There are descendants of Evans in the Church records, including sons. But they seem to disappear by the 1570s when Mary I was on the throne.

The Branch thanked John for his long journey to see us and donated £100 to the Stained Glass Research Fund following John's talk.



“Pray for John Evans, Parker of Coldridge, maker of this work in the 3rd year of the reign of Henry VIII”

Society Fellow Elizabeth Nokes joined the organisation in 1966 following her 'Olivier' period. Here Elizabeth shares what lead her to become a Ricardian, and chats about her involvement in key events and roles. Elizabeth also talks about the major Ricardian players she has met and worked with over the years, including patron HRH the Duke of Gloucester.



The Jubilee Grande Masque and Medieval Banquet at Crosby Hall in 1975. This was the dance demonstration given by a group of London Branch members who had attended 'Nonsuch' dance classes. The lineup is the late Anne Barnard, Richard Barnard, the late Anne Smith, Elizabeth Nokes, Anne Graham, Marshal Graham.

"I chose a good time to be involved..."

I joined the organisation in 1966 following my 'Olivier' period - seeing the film, knowing it wasn't history, reading the 'Clarendon' edition of the play, which gave some space to the real Richard, and using Senate House Library for books on Richard, notably Kendall, which convinced me: I was a Ricardian. Then I saw a magazine article in *Woman's Realm* on queens consort, including Elizabeth Woodville, which published the Society's then address – Val Giles, Twickenham – and joined in October 1966, just missing that year's AGM.

I decided I was going to be something/do something, in five years, and made it in four. Joined the committee [meeting in the Wigram's flat] and latterly at the Civil Service Club, and in 1971 was appointed as the first London and Home Counties Branch Secretary – which I have been ever since. I also became editor of the *Bulletin*, following Zarosh Mugaseth. So although I never knew the 'elder fellowship' i.e. the first founders, apart from Olivia and Isolde Wigram and Patrick Bacon, I knew everyone thereafter: George Awdry, author of the first 'History', Jeremy Potter, recruited by Patrick as Chairman, Robert Hamblin, recruited by Jeremy, Phil Stone of course, as Chairman of the London Branch, before he became Chairman of the Society, Joyce Melhuish, the Hammonds, John Saunders, the latter-day historian, Geoffrey Wheeler with his unrivalled collection of press records and media programmes.



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I was Secretary at the time of the National Portrait Gallery exhibition on Richard III in 1973, so involved with Geoff and Pamela Tudor Craig, as she then was, latterly Lady Wedgwood [Geoff and I were invited to her wedding to Lord Wedgwood, held in Westminster Abbey].

That was my first experience of a major publicity generating Ricardian event, involving responding to hundreds of enquiries about the Society, since which time I have been involved in many more – the finding of the Middleham Jewel, the Quincentenary, and the acquiring of HRH the Duke of Gloucester as the Society's Patron, the finding of the 'bones' – I think I chose a very good time to be involved in the Society.

As Secretary I was involved in producing major Society events, include the 1975 'Jubilee Grande Masque and Medieval Banquet' held at Crosby Hall – late for the 50th anniversary: the committee only woke up to the significance of the date a little late, but was quicker off the mark for the Quincentenary and held a dinner at the Guildhall, attended by HRH The Duke of Gloucester, and a dinner at the House of Lords.

I was recruited by Joyce Melhuish, a founder member of the re-founding, to support Ricardian churches in need of restoration funds – being by definition old, and usually in small parishes, they needed support. We engaged in craft work: she dressed historic costume dolls, and contributed many other artefacts, including wastepaper bins with Richard's portrait. Isolde objected to throwing rubbish into Richard and asked for one with Henry VII on instead – fittingly, it is still in use for the cash floats!

Well over £20,000 has been raised for Barnard Castle, Fotheringhay, Middleham, Sheriff Hutton, and Sutton Cheney, as well as other churches that can demonstrate Ricardian connections.

Until they became economically unviable, I was a member of the 'Visits' team, looking after the annual Bosworth visit, as Phil Stone did for the Fotheringhay Christmas visit.

Although remote electric access – zoom lectures, etc., are beneficial for members with no other connections, the continuance and activity of branches and groups demonstrates the value of face-to-face connection, and this is still needed.



The Wax Chandlers float in the Lord Mayor's Show 1984. Members standing on the ground are [?], Kitty Bristow, Joan Cooksley, the late Anne Barnard, behind on the float – Elizabeth Nokes, Joyce Melhuish and John Saunders as Richard III.

Julia Redlich of the New South Wales Branch, Australia, shares a lifetime of being a devoted Ricardian.

Rewards of being Ricardian



Robert Smith, Australasian vice-president, presenting Julia with the 2009 Robert Hamblin Award.

Thank you for asking me to describe my life as a Ricardian “down under”. The fact that both our countries have groups of people who enjoy learning and discovery about an English monarch whose reign was tragically cut short gives us a welcome sense of fellowship.

Unfortunately, English history is not a major part of schooling in Australia. At a recent coffee morning, I was asked about my “funny” scarf with little pigs on it that I wore. Explanation that they were white boars, symbols regarding Richard the Third, brought the response “Never heard of him”.

A few weeks later was more encouraging. I was wearing the small Bosworth scarf when visiting my doctor and he asked “What happened in 1485?” My response that it was the Battle of Bosworth.

As I turned away to take off my jacket, he turned to his computer and began work ... which happened to be research into the said battle and the king who was killed there.

My interest in Richard III began in Britain where I grew up - and where the Plantagenets seemed to be connected only with William the Conqueror and Bad King John. Then my parents sent me to see a play at London’s Old Vic called The Black Arrow, based on the book by Robert Louis Stevenson.



Julia with a beautiful bouquet of white roses.

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“ *Wherever in the world we live, loyalty binds us*”

What happened on stage threw my 10-year-old brain into confusion. The brave young leader in black armour on stage, leading his army, was nothing like the wicked uncle skimmed over with scorn in history picture books. Life had an absorbing new interest. History at school was limited, so thank goodness for libraries and bookshops!

After I had moved to Australia, the editor of the magazine where I worked had a similar abiding interest. When she retired, I encouraged her to join the local branch of the Richard III Society where she started our Affinity newsletter.

I joined her in the late 1980s and my involvement has never stopped. I have enjoyed friendships, meetings, discussions and conferences with fellow Australian branches. I have helped with afternoon teas at meetings, with publicity, the newsletter, and provided presentations at local conferences and conventions. In 2005, our chairman resigned and I became secretary of the New South Wales branch, valuing the extra work involved, as well as a greater connection to the UK executive, including Phil Stone and Elizabeth Nokes.

A highlight of being a Ricardian arrived in 2009 when I was surprised and honoured to be given the Robert Hamblin Award at a convention in Perth, Western Australia. Robert Smith, the Australasian vice-president, presented me with the award.

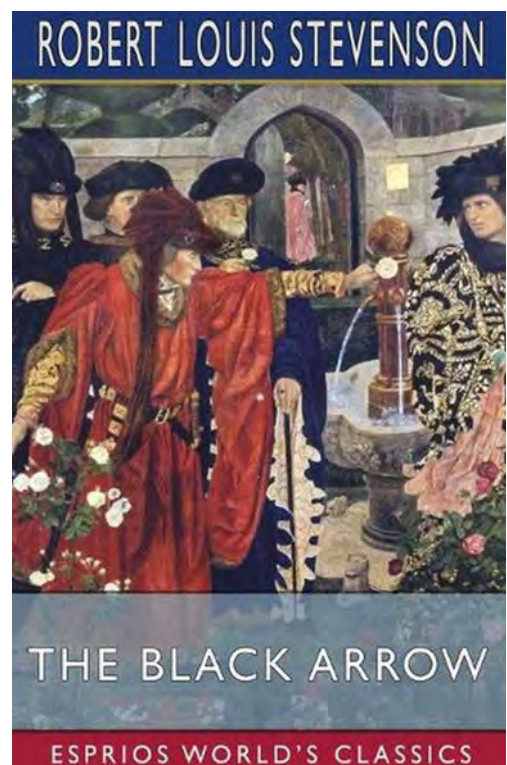
The generous applause made me realise how I valued my connection with a Society with a strong membership, intent on presenting truth that can chase away the clouds that have defamed characters and distorted so-called truthful reports.

Wherever in the world we live, loyalty binds us.

First published as a novel in 1888, *The Black Arrow*, by Robert Louis Stevenson, is set during the Wars of the Roses. Image courtesy The Nile.



All dressed up for a convention banquet: Denise Rawlings, a fellow New South Wales Branch member, with Julia.



Victoria Roe's interest in King Richard III began when she was appointed as a teacher at King Richard III Infant School in Leicester and started work there on August 22, 1983...

Teaching Richard's story...

I have been a member of the Leicestershire Branch of the Richard III Society since 2011.

However, my interest in King Richard III began much earlier, when I was appointed as a teacher at King Richard III Infant School in Leicester and started work there on 22nd August 1983, although at the time I did not realise the significance of the date.

The school was located close to Bow Bridge over the River Soar and near to Castle Gardens where James Butler's statue of King Richard III was then displayed. The staff were keen to educate the children about the person after whom the school was named and so organised a whole-school project about 'Richard III and Medieval Life' that was done on alternate years, ensuring that every child learned about this important period of history.



Victoria Roe: History is Before King Richard, and After King Richard

We taught the children about good King Richard, took them out on walks around the area to the sites connected with him and on trips to Bosworth Battlefield. As music teacher, I introduced them to the music and instruments of the period and other subject areas covered it in imaginative ways. The children divided history into 'before King Richard' and 'after King Richard,' which was fairly accurate. Having to teach about it, I had to learn about it myself and became fascinated with that historical period. I was sad to leave the school in 2001.

When I retired from teaching in 2010, I was able to join the local branch of the Richard III Society. That enabled me to learn more about this period of history from a wide variety of speakers and be with others who had the same interest.

When the 'Looking for Richard' project and the University of Leicester Archaeological Service actually found the King in 2012, I was astounded and thrilled, along with everyone else, having believed and taught that his remains had been thrown in the River Soar, which a plaque on the wall by the river attested (a corrective plaque has now been added to the site).

I was also pleased that the children from King Richard III Infant School were involved in the re-interment preparations in 2015, sewing the linen bags to contain the small bones. The white roses thrown onto the coffin during its procession to the Cathedral were taken to the school the next day and some children from the school were at the services.

Someone on the re-interment team had been educated at the school and had done the Richard III project. I had to watch everything on TV, having had a heart attack on 13th March 2015, but did get permission to jump the queue to visit the Cathedral and pay my respects by the coffin of the King at whose school I had taught for 18 years.

The Leicestershire Branch of the Richard III Society has close links with the award-winning Visitor Centre, Bosworth Battlefield and Leicester Cathedral, where King Richard III rests in peace.

Devon & Cornwall Branch

On May 11 the Devon & Cornwall celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Richard III Society and the 45th anniversary of the Branch with a Memorial Service for King Richard III.

This was followed by a presentation from our Chairman Shirley Stapley on the beginnings of the Society and the history of the branch. Shirley, assisted by member David Elliott, illustrated her talk with several photographs of the Branch from the founding to the present day. After the presentation members enjoyed refreshments and the cutting of an anniversary cake.



Devon & Cornwall Chairman Shirley Stapley with member David Elliott



Secretary Edna Coles reading a prayer for all affected by the Battle of Bosworth



Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine

Founding an empire

By Rhonda Bentley

The NSW branch was privileged to welcome our Chair, Matt Lewis to discuss his book Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine. Members and friends from around the world joined in and we had attendees from England, Germany, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Canada and Australia. A massive thank you to our friends in America where it was a very early morning start.



Our host was Australian historical novelist, Isolde Martyn, and the facilitator was our NSW branch chair, Marnie Lo, who was instrumental in organising the Zoom meeting with Matt.

Matt kept us entertained for two hours as he talked about the couple's life including the 14 year-old Henry's ill-fated trip to England, the original of Eleanor's name, Thomas Beckett and Henry's penitence. In 2019, after finishing his last book, Stephen and Matilda's Civil War: Cousins of Anarchy, Matt felt that he wanted to continue the story of Henry II, publishing Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine: Founding an Empire in 2021. This power couple of the 12th century had four sons and three daughters who lived to adulthood, their daughters in particular making good marriages. Matt also thought Henry II was one of the most capable and greatest kings of England, and the couple as the grandparents of Europe - though it ended up being a slightly dysfunctional family group.



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Eleanor of Aquitaine



We were told about Eleanor's need to remarry after her annulment from Louis VII of France, and the need for a powerful new husband who could also protect her vast lands in Aquitaine – marrying Henry who, though nine years her junior, was a man with obvious potential and known to be attractive as well.

The descriptions of the couple from the various chroniclers of the period including Gerald of Wales, Roger of Howden and Gervase of Canterbury showed what their contemporaries thought of them: Matt presenting tracts of their work. Matt displayed maps of France showing the regions gifted to their sons Geoffrey, Richard and Henry, The Young King.

Matt also talked about Henry, the Young King, Henry and Eleanor's relationship with him, his untimely death at age 28 and the problems caused by his crowning in 1155 and then again in 1172. Matt wondered if Henry was a control freak or a loving father just trying his best.

Henry was described as energetic though he never fought or claimed land that he did not believe he was entitled to. Henry declined an offer to become king of Jerusalem. We touched slightly on Henry's attempts to centralise government administration.

Eleanor's love for Aquitaine was discussed as well as the many rumours and myths associated with her – mostly dismissed as misogyny. Eleanor's stamina was evident as she continued to work well into her late age, escorting her granddaughter Blanche of Castile to France when Eleanor was 76. Matt doesn't believe that Henry held Eleanor captive or that Henry had a relationship with Richard's betrothed, Alix.

Questions and comments at the end rounded off an enjoyable evening. Matt mentioned that a new book will be released in June this year about Berengaria of Navarre by Gabrielle Storey. We thanked Matt for spending time with us and the NSW branch sent him a book voucher. We look forward to seeing Matt again on Zoom on 6th July when he will be presenting The Coronation of Richard III.



The Valois Kings of France

By Emma Holmes



The Valois were the royal house of France from 1328 – 1589, alongside the Plantagenets in England who reigned from 1154 to 1485. The house had three lines:

- (1) the direct line, beginning with Philip VI, who reigned from 1328 to 1498.
- (2) the Valois-Orléans branch, which consisted of one member, Louis XII (reigned 1498–1515) and
- (3) the Valois-Angoulême branch, beginning with Francis I, son of Charles, count of Angoulême; it reigned from 1515 to 1574 and was succeeded by the Bourbon dynasty.

The House of Valois was a branch of the Capetian family, descended from Charles of Valois, the second surviving son of Philip III (reigned 1270-1285).

Their entitlement to the throne was based on a precedent in 1316 (later retroactively attributed to the Merovingian Salic law) which excluded females, as well as male descendants through the distaff, or maternal, side, from the succession to the French throne. This meant that the Valois dynasty's rise to the throne was not without controversy.





A 19th-century representation
by [Eugène Viollet-le-Duc](#)

LA TOUR NESELE, PARIS

***Like all good stories, it begins with a royal scandal.
This occurred at the end of the difficult reign of
Philip IV, known as "le Bel" (the Fair).***

So why did this happen and what was the 1316 precedent?

Like all good stories, it begins with a royal scandal. This occurred at the end of the difficult reign of Philip IV, known as "le Bel" (the Fair). Philip had been engaged in the liquidation of the order of the Knights Templar in France and by 1314 he was financially overstretched and in an increasingly difficult domestic political situation.

Philip IV had three surviving sons - Louis, Philip and Charles. All three were married with an eye for political gain. Louis married Margaret, the daughter of Robert II, Duke of Burgundy, in 1305; Philip married Joan, the eldest daughter of Otto IV, Count of Burgundy in 1307; Charles married Blanche, another of Otto's daughters, in 1308.

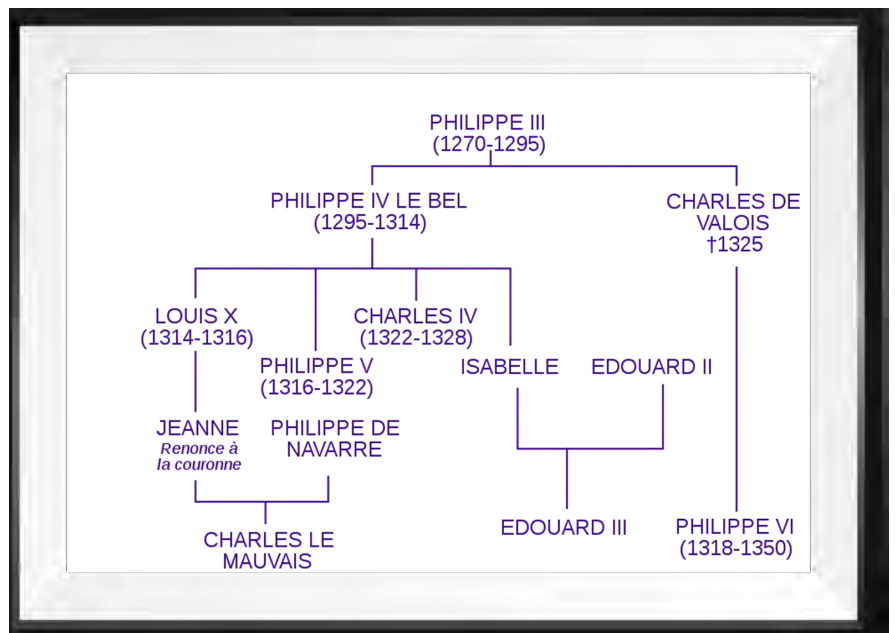
The three marriages had fared differently. Louis, known as "the Quarreller" or "the Headstrong", is said to have preferred playing real tennis to spending time with the "feisty and shapely" Margaret. Charles, a relative conservative, "strait-laced" and "stiff-necked" individual, had an unexceptional marriage. Philip, in contrast, became noted for his unusual generosity to his wife Joan; and the pair had a considerable number of children in a short space of time.

Meanwhile, Philip married his daughter, Isabella, to Edward II of England in 1308. Isabella's marriage proved difficult as we all know and she frequently looked to her father for help.



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Most accounts of the scandal begin with the visit of the king and queen of England to France in 1313, during which Isabella gave new embroidered purses to her brothers and their wives. Later in the year, Isabella and Edward held a large dinner in London where Isabella noticed that purses she had given to her sisters-in-law were now being carried by two Norman knights Walter (or Gautier) of Aunay and Philippe of Aunay. Isabella concluded that the pair must have been carrying on an illicit affair and appears to have informed her father of this during her next visit to France in 1314.



End of the Capet Dynasty

After Philip put the knights under surveillance, all involved were arrested. The accusations were that Blanche and Margaret had been drinking, eating and engaging in adultery with Gautier and Philippe. The third wife, Joan, was initially said to have been present on some of these occasions and to have known of the affairs; later accusations were extended to have included suggestions that she had also been involved in adultery herself.

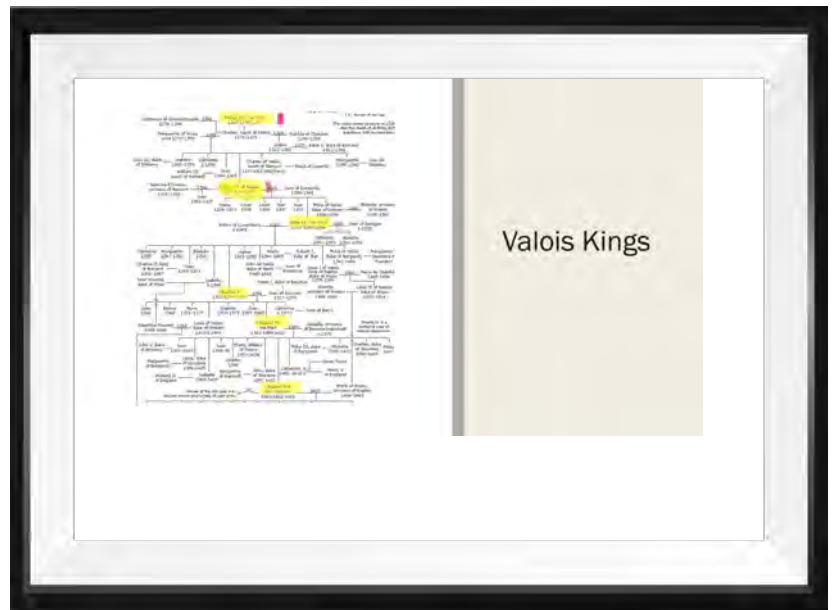
Most historians have tended to conclude that the accusations against Blanche and Margaret were probably true. Both knights were interrogated and tortured, after which both confessed to adultery. They were found guilty of lèse majesté (an offence against the dignity of the head of state). Blanche and Margaret were found guilty of adultery, resulting in them having their heads shaven, followed by life imprisonment. Joan was also tried but was found innocent.



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Following their torture, the guilty knights Gautier and Philippe were executed; most histories agree that they were first castrated and then either drawn and quartered or flayed alive, then broken on a wheel and finally hanged.

Due to the gap in the papacy between the death of Clement V in 1314 and the election of John XXII in 1316, Margaret's marriage to Louis could not be annulled.



She was imprisoned at Château Gaillard castle and when Louis succeeded to the throne, being officially crowned in August 1315 as Louis X, Margaret was still alive so she became queen of France. However, she promptly conveniently died and Louis remarried five days later to Clementia of Hungary, the niece of Louis' own uncle and close advisor, Charles of Valois.

Louis himself died a year later, falling ill following a game of tennis. He left a pregnant wife, as well as a daughter, Joan, from his marriage with Margaret. The baby, Jean I, was born but died within days. Louis' brother Philip, who had acted as regent during the pregnancy was proclaimed King as Philip V.

But what about Joan? Well, obviously there were suspicions about her parentage and Philip fought off challenges by focusing on that issue as well as her youth. In order to prevent more claims, as well as a French cautiousness over the ability of females to inherit, the monarchy brought in the Salic Law – a determination by the Estates General's that women should be excluded from the line of succession to the French throne.

Philip's wife, Joan, had been placed under house arrest after the trial, although found not guilty, but the following year and she returned to court and to her marriage. However, the couple produced no male heirs, so when Philip died from dysentery in 1322, he was succeeded by his younger brother Charles IV.

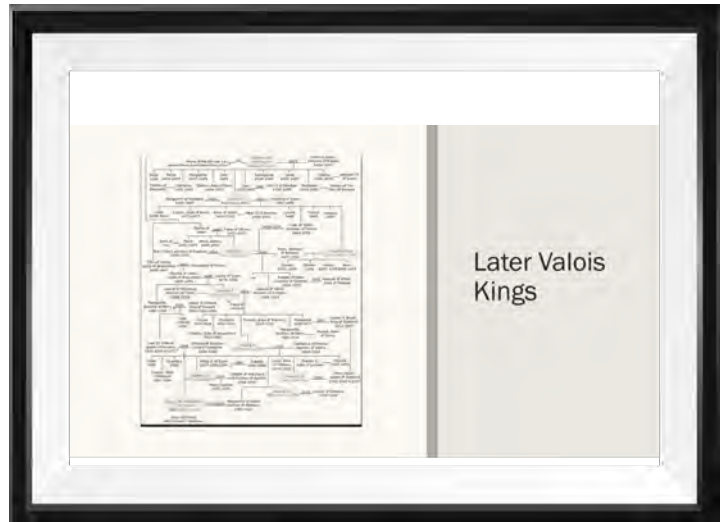
His wife, Blanche, remained in prison at Château Gaillard when Charles assumed the throne, but she also technically became queen of France. Charles refused to release her, instead annulling their marriage and having her confined to a nunnery where she died the following year. Charles remarried immediately following the annulment to Marie of Luxembourg.

Charles IV similarly died without male heirs, in 1328, thus ending the direct line of the Capetian dynasty. The Salic law prevented his baby daughter Mary, by his third wife, from succeeding, but his widow Jeanne was pregnant. A regency was set up under the heir presumptive Philip of Valois, son of Charles of Valois as the House of Valois was the next most senior branch of the Capetian dynasty. Jeanne gave birth to another daughter, Blanche, and thus Philip was consecrated and crowned Philip VI.



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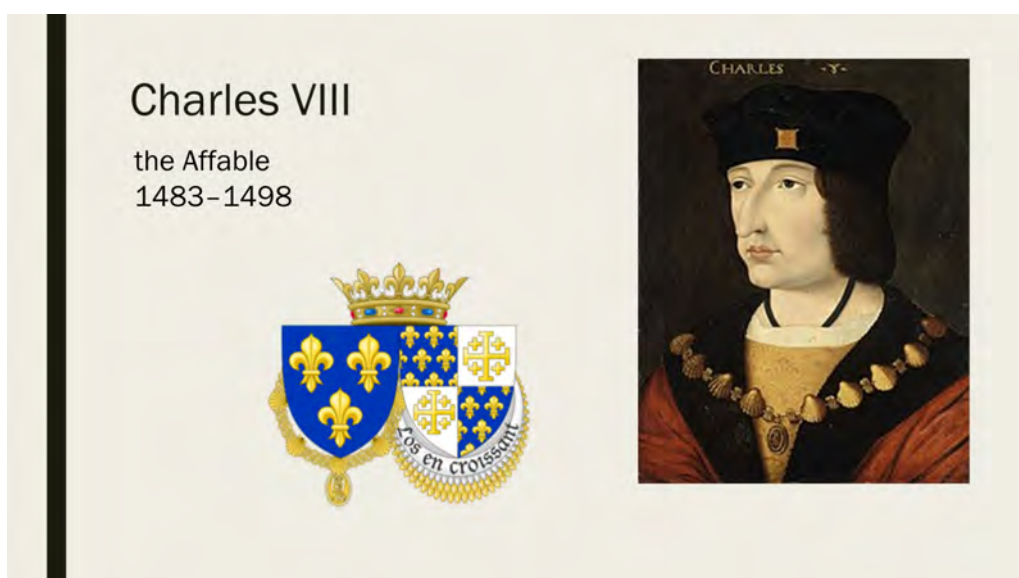
The succession of Philip VI over Edward III of England, who was grandson of Philip IV, and Charles IV's nephew and therefore technically had a stronger claim to the French throne, led to the outbreak of the Hundred Years' War. Edward argued that although the Salic law should forbid inheritance by a woman, it did not forbid inheritance through a female line – under this argument, he, as son of Queen Isabella, wife of Edward II and daughter of Philip IV, should have inherited the throne.



Philip became known as 'the fortunate' and was succeeded by:

- John II, the Good 1350–1364
- Charles V, the Wise 1364–1380, who brought the country through the Black Death, positioning France as a major European power.
- Charles VI, the Well-Beloved, later known as the Mad and father of Catherine de Valois, wife to Henry V - 1380–1422.
- Charles VII, the Victorious or the Well-Served 1422–1461, brought to the throne through the actions of Jeanne d'Arc, but then refused to rescue her and prevent her death at the hands of the English.
- Louis XI, the Prudent 1461–1483, succeeded in bringing France together in the aftermath of the Hundred years war and was Edward IV's direct contemporary.
- Charles VIII, the Affable 1483–1498, who began the insurgencies into Italy resulting in the Italian wars, came to the throne the same year as Richard III.

When Charles died childless, the throne went to the Valois-Orléans line via his second cousin once removed. Louis XII (1498-1515) became known as the Father of the People and was very popular domestically despite the disastrous Italian wars.



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This brings us to the final section of the Valois line - Valois-Angoulême. This begins with Francis I – 1515–1547. He was the son of Charles, Count of Angoulême and first cousin once removed, as well as son-in-law, to Louis XII, who had died without a legitimate son. Francis was known as a patron of the arts as well as contemporary to and adversary of Henry VIII, but has a mixed reputation in France, with his playboy ways and disappointments at war.

Francis' son was Henry II – 1547–1559. Henry had a difficult childhood, being 'the spare' he was more or less ignored and then had to suffer 4 years of captivity in Spain, with his elder brother, as hostages for their father in the aftermath of the French-Spanish war. He was married to Catherine de Medici - from the Florentine ruling family but despised as 'shopkeepers' - for money but became Dauphin when his older brother died. They became parents to the final 3 Valois kings:

- o Francis II – 1559–1560
- o Charles IX – 1560–1574
- o Henry III – 1574–1589



Catherine de Medici: A towering figure in French royal history. Source Wikipedia

Catherine de' Medici was a towering figure in French royal history, wielding significant political influence during her sons' reigns. She was known for her patronage of the arts and her role in the religious conflicts that engulfed France. She remains a controversial figure in French history.

Francis II, who was married to Mary, Queen of Scots, was a weak child and was shocked to come to the throne at age of 15 when his father died a very unpleasant death following a jousting injury. Mary's French relatives, the Guise, were a strong Catholic force and were the power behind the throne until Francis' death only a year later, from an ear infection.

The power of the last Valois kings was weakened by the Wars of Religion (1562–98) when militant Roman Catholic and Protestant factions dominated politics and fought for control of France. The apex came during the reign of Charles IX, in 1572. This saw the king's sister, Marguerite, forcibly married to Henry of Navarre, who would later become the first king of the Bourbon dynasty; the wedding was used as a ruse to bring a large number of protestants to Paris, igniting the Bartholomew's Day massacre and resulting in thousands of French Protestants being killed, sparking outrage and rebellion across France, as well as the rest of Europe and spreading unrest and instability.



St Bartholomew's Day massacre. This painting is by Francois Dubois, a Huguenot, who fled France after the massacre. Source Wikipedia

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The dynasty's alliances and conflicts with other European powers reshaped the political landscape of the continent and had far-reaching implications.

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The Valois dynasty came to an end in 1589 with the assassination of Henry III by a mad monk. With his death, the House of Valois became extinct in the male line. Under the Salic law that had seen them come to power, the head of the House of Bourbon, Henry of Navarre, the senior representative of the senior surviving branch of the Capetian dynasty, descendants of Louis IX, became King of France as Henry IV.

Henry was a Protestant who later converted to Catholicism, famously stating that Paris was worth a mass. He was the first king of the Bourbon dynasty, who would reign in France for 2 centuries.

The wars of religion finally came to an end with the Edict of Nantes in 1598, which granted religious tolerance to the Protestant minority.

The Valois dynasty's decline can be traced back to the reign of Charles VI, who suffered from bouts of madness leaving him unable to rule effectively.

This instability paved the way for powerful noble families to seize control of key positions within the government, weakening the monarch's authority. Although the Valois dynasty's rule was marked by instability and conflict, they left a lasting impact on French history and the country's cultural and artistic heritage, playing a pivotal role in shaping the course of medieval France and the French monarchy. Their rule is marked by a period of significant social, political, and cultural change, with their support for the arts and culture laying the groundwork for the rich cultural heritage of France that persists to this day.

Their role in European politics and conflicts also cemented their place in medieval European history. The dynasty's alliances and conflicts with other European powers reshaped the political landscape of the continent and had far-reaching implications.



Contemporary depiction of Charles VI from the Dialogues of Pierre Salmon, 1415



WOW! WHAT A DAY!

The above title doesn't even go halfway to describe what an amazing day the Thames Valley Group had on Saturday, May 18.

At our AGM last November, one of our group, Veronica Upton, offered to organise a 'Living History' day at her home which would involve medieval crafts, cooking and dressing up to fit the part. None of us were entirely sure what this would really entail, but it sounded very interesting. As it happened, we could not have imagined just how remarkable the day would be.

After worrying about the forecast of rain and thunder, Veronica took a huge gamble and decided to go ahead with the day starting at 11am through to 4pm. A number of us saw the opportunity to wear our medieval 'gear' as Veronica and her friends were dressing appropriately. On arrival, the first impression was the size of the garden with at least four medieval tents, a large shed, a slightly smaller one painted white with windows on three sides showing beautiful medieval pottery inside and seating for everyone.



The tents, which were all in medieval style had weaving, spinning, pottery, archery implements, lots of arrows, helmets and various types of drinking vessels. In a further part of the garden was a medieval lathe for wood turning. Oh, and there was archery in the field adjoining the garden with a competition running for the highest score!

We were invited to visit the tents and perhaps try our hand at the crafts, all of which were exactly as they would have been created hundreds of years ago.



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We marvelled at the expertise of the demonstrators, we asked questions and learned a lot about them, but the over-riding impression was that everyone loved what they were doing and were very knowledgeable. We saw beautiful dresses and outfits for men, which Veronica has made over the years, not to mention a heavyweight cloak which Veronica was wearing. Moreover, there were stunning Hennins made by her Spanish daughter-in-law and her son, Tim, who had come over especially from Spain to run the archery!

Tea and coffee was 'on tap' all day in another tent which was round, and had the most exquisitely domed frame made from slats of wood bent into shape and all made by Veronica. There were two handsome chairs made of Yew which Veronica had also made. Lunchtime arrived and Veronica had us all seated in the garden and served a medieval recipe of 'Lamb Mouchette' (Lamb and Mushroom stew with lots of spices and vegetables) which was delicious. There were two very large cheeseboards with a huge selection of cheeses.

The homemade bread rolls and biscuits were again medieval recipes, and there was a choice of white, red or rosé wine. There was even a loaf of brown bread for the gluten intolerant guests.

We met the rest of her family and cannot thank them enough for their generous hospitality. Just when we thought the day was drawing to a close, Veronica produced a very large medieval fruit cake which was literally steeped in brandy!

Then the winner of the archery competition was presented with a bottle of Champagne. We send our grateful thanks to her, her family and her very skilful friends who gave their time for our pleasure and made it a truly unique day! I hope you enjoy the photographs and appreciate how I had such difficulty in finding a suitably descriptive title.



Where they fought - the final chapter

By Rosamund Cummings

Tony Hawkins, the Norfolk Co-ordinator of the Battlefields Trust, welcomed us in March to the last in the series of study days about the battles of the Wars of the Roses.

Our first speaker, Peter Masters from Cranfield University, started with the 6th battle, the 1471 Battle of Barnet.

Edward IV had been in exile in Burgundy but he returned with support from the Duke of Burgundy and a force of Dutch mercenaries. He met more forces in Nottingham and marched to London, taking Henry VI into custody.

Edward marched to Barnet to prevent the Lancastrians from occupying London.

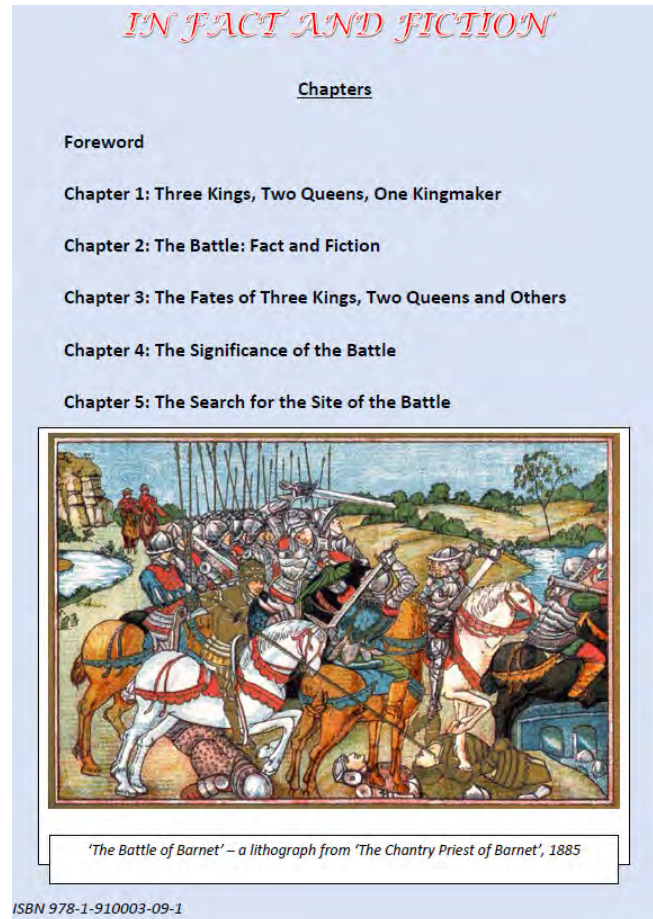
There is no precise location for the battle. An obelisk commemorating it was moved but it is believed to have been on a small, flat area between a 15th century barn and the church. The church was damaged by artillery and was rebuilt in 1491.

The battle lasted only four hours mainly because the area was so small there was no room to manoeuvre troops. It took place in thick fog, this led to the soldiers mistaking the livery of their opponents and great confusion.

To date there have been few finds to suggest where the main battle took place, any finds are displayed in the Barnet Museum

Richard Goddard, of the Tewkesbury Battlefield Society, then explained the Battle of Tewkesbury with the assistance of extremely good illustrations. It is fortunate that the topography in Tewkesbury has changed very little, so showing the movements of the forces is possible.

Having been denied any further backing from Louis XI, Margaret of Anjou arrived at Weymouth determined to ensure that her son would be king.



Excerpt from a publication by the Barnet Museum.



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Margaret raised forces in Exeter and marched to Gloucester, hoping to meet Jasper Tudor, but was unable to cross the river Severn. When she reached Tewkesbury she found two small bridges across the river, but these were unsuitable for a large number of men. While the Lancastrians were crossing the river, Edward IV arrived and prepared for battle the following day.

The size of the armies was approximately the same, but Edward had more cannon and his opening salvoes dishearten the Lancastrians. The Lancastrian Army led by Prince Edward and The Earl of Somerset breaks; Somerset retreats to Bloody Meadow while Prince Edward retreats to the town and fighting continues round the Church and Abbey.



**Reenactors at the annual Tewkesbury Medieval Festival.
Image courtesy Cotswold Centre for History and Heritage**

The Abbot and Clerics try to stop the fighting but the Abbey is not licensed to offer sanctuary so they hand over those soldiers in the Church. Most of those killed were in Bloody Meadow but Prince Edward was killed in the town of Tewkesbury.

After the battle the common soldiers were allowed to go free. The common knights were bound over to "keep the peace". Seventeen "ringleaders" were tried and executed in Tewkesbury.

Jasper Tudor retreated to Wales with Henry Tudor. Margaret of Anjou was captured by Edward's forces at Little Malvern Priory. Henry VI died in the Tower of London the same night.

Our next speaker, Dr James Barnaby, then told us about two northern battles which are not often covered when considering the Wars of the Roses; the Battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham.

By 1461 Edward had earned his right to the Crown, but he still had three major issues to deal with: Lancastrian opposition, a break-down in law and order and a possible invasion from France.

There was little support for him from the aristocracy and at first he tried a policy of conciliation, but this proved difficult to manage as the leading nobles were more interested in benefiting themselves. In addition, the northern earls found a ready supporter in James II of Scotland, who offered them sanctuary and military backing.

The death of James II gave Edward the opportunity to negotiate with the Queen, Mary of Guelders and to agree a truce which prevented the continuing strife.

The provision of small garrisons on the border was insufficient, so Edward sent the Neville family to capture and hold castles in the area.

Somerset planned to besiege Newcastle in support of Henry VI but failed. However by 1463 the Lancastrians had captured most of Yorkshire and the North. Edward sent the Earl of Mortimer to deal with the situation, and he was met by Somerset at Hedgeley Moor. After a short, savage engagement the Lancastrians fled and Percy was killed. Hedgeley Moor was not a substantial victory or defeat for either side.





Swallowship Hill, possible site of the Battle of Hexham

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Edward gathered more troops and was marching north when Mortimer heard that the Lancastrians were at Hexham. The exact location of the battle is unknown, but it was probably on Swallowship Hill, south of Hexham where the ground is unsuitable for battles. Mortimer had the strategic advantage and it is probable that Somerset thought he had a superior number of men. The battle was short and Somerset's men were swept back into a river. Somerset, Hungerford and Roos were captured and executed.

The defeat and death of Somerset ended Lancastrian power in the north and enabled the signing of a 15-year truce with Scotland. Neville kept supporting rebellions in the north but was captured and executed, confirming Edward as King.

Dr Barnaby continued our day of battles with an account of the Battle of Empringham, known as "Loose Coat Field".

This battle was the defining moment in the power struggle between Edward IV and the Earl of Warwick.

Having supported Edward's claim to the throne, Warwick was the most powerful man in England, but he was not satisfied and wanted to rule himself. Edward left much of the state business to Warwick. This encouraged Warwick but he did not have the support of the nobility, so he started to encourage rebellions.

Edward wanted to be in charge and demonstrated this by marrying Elizabeth Woodville while Warwick was negotiating a marriage for him with a French princess. In retaliation Warwick married one of his daughters to the Duke of Clarence, who then supported Warwick and gave him information on the king's plans.

Edward decided to march north to Lincolnshire, to deal with a rebellion there but more rebels gathered at Stamford. The battle was fought on the Great North Road between Stamford and Grantham. There is no contemporary evidence for numbers, Edward possibly had fewer men but his were better trained.



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Stoke Field is Nottingham's only registered battle field:
Image courtesy Nottinghamshire County Council.

The battle started with a cavalry charge and the rebels broke and fled, throwing away their livery coats so that they could not be identified.

Warwick and Clarence also fled and took ship for Calais. They then went to Honfleur and asked Louis XI to act as an intermediary with the Lancastrians for them. It is notable that during this time Warwick called Edward "illegitimate" the first reference to this that can be found.

"Loose Coat Field" left Edward in a much better position and in better control of the country.

Our final presentation, by Kevin Winter, was on the last Battle of the Wars of the Roses, The Battle of Stoke Field.

Acts of Attainder in 1485 and 1486 made both John de la Pole and Francis Lovell, both friends and strong supporters of Richard III, traitors.

A Royal Proclamation of 1485 proclaimed Henry Tudor as King, and in 1486 he married Elizabeth of York, the Yorkist claimant.

The Duchess of Burgundy, Margaret of York, supported John de la Pole and Francis Lovell who promoted a pretender, Lambert Simnel. She hired mercenaries to support them in Ireland, where Simnel was crowned as Edward V in 1487.

De la Pole and Lovell then took Edward V and troops made up of Irish supporters and the mercenaries and landed at Furness in Cumbria. They moved to York but did not gain much support there. The City of York appealed to Henry VII for help.

Henry VII was making a royal progress in East Anglia when he heard of the landing and he moved to Kenilworth Castle. He then gave command of his troops to John de Vere, who was now an experienced commander.

Both armies moved to Stoke Field where the Yorkists took position on the top of a hill with a steep descent to the river Trent. The Rebels probably had about 8,000 men, but there is no evidence of Artillery.

The Yorkists moved down the hill to attack but were devastated by the Tudor army. The battle lasted only three hours and the rout began when fresh troops arrived from the royal army. The Yorkists were forced back over the hill and into the river. The total death toll was about 700, a mass grave was found near the A46 in 1982.

After the battle the common soldiers were executed; the mercenaries were sent home and Lambert Simnel was sent to the royal kitchens.

John de la Pole was killed in the battle but Francis Lovell escaped and disappeared from the records.

The excellent presentations provided the opportunity for questions and discussions afterwards. Thanks went to all the speakers and organisers.

Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland

By Ian Yeates, Regina, Saskatchewan



Percy was one of the quintessential peers during the time of the Wars of the Roses, whose personal and family fortunes varied significantly throughout the period. He was also related to a large number of prominent figures and had important connections on both sides of the Yorkist and Lancastrian divide. As such he well represents the convoluted loyalties and very real difficulties in determining who to support at various periods during the civil war. Imprudent decisions could cost one's life and one's family position and wealth.

Percy's father (the 3rd Earl), also called Henry, was supportive of the Lancastrians and brought his retainers to fight for Henry VI during the period of intense campaigning throughout 1459-1461. This ended badly with Northumberland being numbered amongst the casualties at the Battle of Towton on 29 March 1461. His son, nominally now the 4th Earl, was captured at the battle and imprisoned in London. His title was declared forfeit and given to John Neville, one of the impecunious members of that famous family that was headed by the Earl of Warwick, in 1464. Percy was able to participate to an extent in Edward IV's court and over a number of years managed to persuade the King to restore both title and lands to him. John Neville was compensated with the unusual rank and title of Marquis of Montague (this French title was not often used in England, is senior to an earl and junior to a duke in the peerage, and often used in the case of parvenu nobles needing prestige).

Percy returned to his estates in the north of England, where he resumed his role as a prominent peer and who held a number of inherited positions involving defence against marauding Scots. In these endeavours, throughout the late 1470s and early 1480s he was accompanied and subordinate to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, brother to Edward IV. The two had a close relationship and certainly Richard would have relied on and assumed loyalty to his person as a result of these experiences. There were tensions however, with Percy concluding that his prominence in the north might be contested with Richard's nephew, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, increasingly favoured as a power in the north after Richard assumed the crown in 1483.



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At the time of Henry of Richmond's invasion, Northumberland joined Richard's defending army as was his duty as a peer. He commanded one of the divisions of Richard's force – the others were the Duke of Norfolk and Richard himself. At the decisive Battle of Bosworth, fought on 22 August 1485, Richard was killed leading a reckless charge against what he clearly perceived to be an isolated Richmond at an exposed part of the Lancastrian line. Richard's thrust was inadequately numbered, and he was overwhelmed. It was a gamble that went very wrong.

Northumberland's role in the battle does involve some controversy. Richard's attack on Richmond was at least partially triggered by Northumberland's reluctance to throw his force into the fray as ordered. Two explanations have been provided for this action, or lack of action. One is that he betrayed Richard due to his perception that his ambitions of being dominant in the north would be thwarted in favour of Richard's nephew.

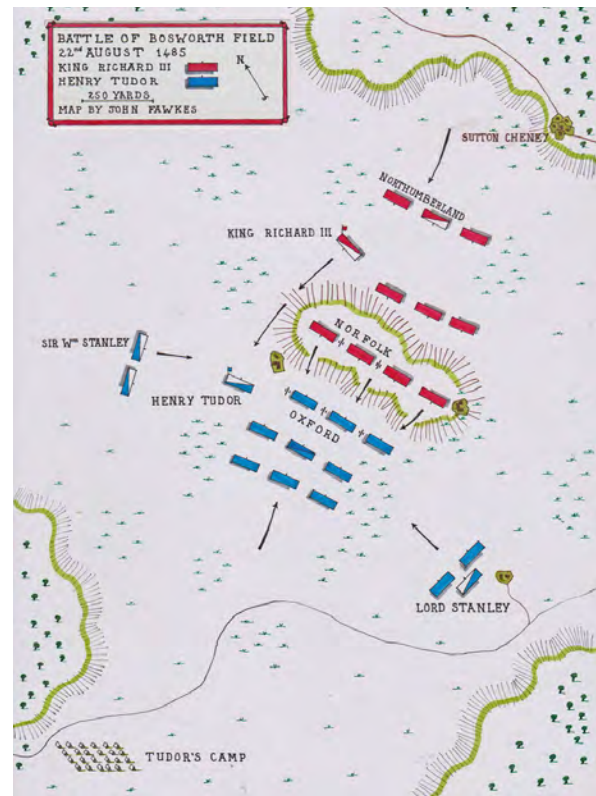


Image:

<https://www.britishbattles.com/wars-of-the-roses/battle-of-bosworth-field/>

The second is that Richard's order was militarily impossible to execute due to the lay of the land and the challenge of moving his force to where Richard had indicated.

This is likely the case. In brief, Richard did not manage the battle particularly well as demonstrated by the reckless charge that resulted in his death. His fate immediately changed the calculations of all involved and the battle was over.

Interestingly, Northumberland was accepted by the new king, Henry VII, as a loyal peer fairly promptly after the battle, which has led some to conclude that he betrayed Richard. It is equally possible, however, that Henry needed to settle affairs with all who were willing to accept the outcome of Bosworth so as to pacify the kingdom, which by 1485 had endured 30 years of civil strife and uneasy periods of peace. This motivation can be said to be demonstrated with the Lambert Simnel (1487) and Perkin Warbeck (1497) episodes in the years after the battle. Henry's weak claim to the throne – essentially by conquest rather than by right – meant that he and all the subsequent Tudor monarchs lived with the constant threat of pretenders and endemic insecurity. Having a potential enemy in Northumberland, had he been treated harshly, would be unhelpful in the long term. Northumberland, in the event, did not long outlive Richard III. He was involved in a tax raising scheme to finance Henry VII's conflict with Charles VIII of France. A riot broke out in York in opposition to the tax in which Northumberland was killed in April 1489. His heir, Henry Percy, became the 5th Earl of Northumberland.

This article was first published by the Canada Branch in its journal RIII Volume 57, Number 1, Winter 2024.

Book Review

The Princes in the Tower, by Philippa Langley

***Reviewed by Juliet Howland,
Gatineau, Quebec***

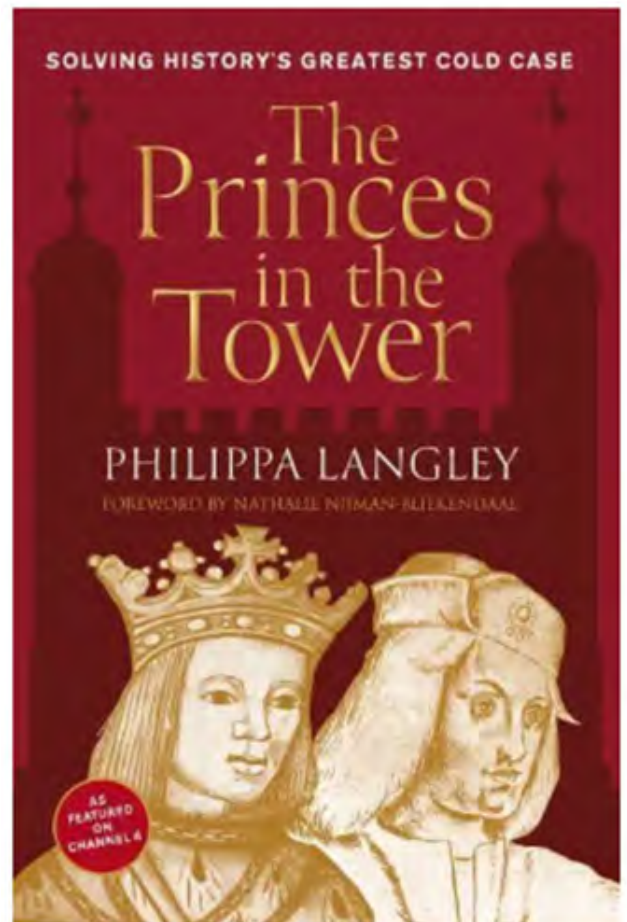
For the past five hundred years, people have been fascinated by the story of the princes in the Tower. Shakespeare's play has simultaneously managed to have the story's popularity continue while at the same time playing an important role in the historiography of Richard III's reign by accepting Thomas More's view of Richard III as a murdering psychopath. Philippa Langley, in her book *The Princes in the Tower*, believes that four key documents, taken together, provide proof that the boys were alive in the years after Richard III's reign.

On April 9, 1483, Edward IV dies unexpectedly after a fishing expedition. He leaves behind two young sons: Edward, Prince of Wales, now Edward V and his younger brother Richard, Duke of York. In his Last Will and Testament, Edward IV names his brother, Richard, Duke of Gloucester as the Lord Protector.

Once having arrived in London from Ludlow, Edward V in the company of his uncle Richard, followed the tradition of English monarchs, and entered the royal apartments in the White Tower of the Tower of London. He was later joined by his younger brother, Richard, Duke of York.

Edward was supposed to have been crowned King of England on June 22, 1483. However, the coronation was not to take place. Bishop Stillington of Bath and Wells provided proof that Edward IV had been married to Lady Eleanor Talbot during the first couple of years of his marriage to his Queen, Elizabeth Woodville. This rendered his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville bigamous and the children of the union illegitimate. Richard, Duke of Gloucester became, by popular acclamation, King Richard III.

From this point on in the story, opinions diverge. The traditional or non-Ricardian view of events is that the boys were murdered. The Ricardians hold on to the notion that the princes somehow survived Richard III's reign.



Philippa Langley's book offers a thorough and fascinating examination, using evidence-based research techniques and an extensive use of primary sources.

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Until now there has been very little proof supporting the Ricardian view on the fate of the princes. But following intensive research in the UK, American and European archives, Philippa Langley and her team of three hundred investigators uncovered archival documents that challenge the traditional historical narrative.

The first document, which has become known as the Lille receipt, was found by a Dutch research group in the Lille archive in France, dating back to 16 December 1487.

This receipt supposedly provided evidence of Edward V's existence and was signed by several important people including Edward V's aunt, Margaret of Burgundy. The receipt indicated his leadership of an invasion force into England in 1487, under the name of Lambert Simnel, culminating in the Battle of Stoke. Crucially, the absence of the customary phrases indicating the person's death in the receipt suggests that Edward V was believed to be alive after the Battle of Stoke

(<https://www.historyhit.com/the-battle-of-stoke-field-last-battle-of-the-wars-of-the-roses/>).

The second document was discovered in November 2020 by Natalie Neyman at the Gelderman archive in Holland—a four-page note purportedly dictated by Richard, Duke of York. The note chronicled his story from sanctuary at Westminster Abbey

(<https://access.historyhit.com/videos/the-history-of-westminster-abbey>) to the Tower of London and subsequent escape to safety in France and the Low Countries, orchestrated by John Howard, Duke of Norfolk.

After his escape, Philippa contends, Richard took on the name of Perkin Warbeck.

Subsequently, more evidence surfaced, including the third document signed by Richard as 'Richard of England,' and, the fourth document, a letter from King Maximilian in the Austrian archives. Maximilian's letter described meeting Richard, Duke of York, identifying his three unique birthmarks (by his eye, mouth, and thigh), which had been identified by Margaret of Burgundy and subsequently offering full support. Intriguing though the document is, its authorship cannot be verified, though the shortlist of who could have written it with such verifiable detail is short. It had been previously found and dismissed in the 1950s.

Much of Langley's case rests on whether Margaret was appropriating the identities of her dead nephews as part of a plot to get her Yorkist family back in power or if she was telling the truth. Langley thinks the latter and points to the fact that Margaret, a good Catholic, confirmed the identity of Richard to the Pope.

Philippa Langley's book offers a thorough and fascinating examination, using evidence-based research techniques and an extensive use of primary sources. She has further exciting new evidence as well as a fresh take on already known evidence and new explanations surrounding the princes and the events that may have happened to them during their last days in the Tower of London.

This article was first published by the Canada Branch in its journal RIII Volume 57, Number 1, Winter 2024.



Image of Richard's standard at Bosworth.
June 2024. Courtesy Neil Trump

Branches & Groups present...

**Cool occasions for the keenest
Ricardian!**

AMERICAN BRANCH

Saturday 6 July / 12:00 – 14:00 EST

Zoom Presentation

The American Branch celebrates the Society and the King

The American Branch welcomes any member of the Richard III Society or its branches and groups to attend our celebratory Zoom talk by its chair Susan Troxell and research officer Dr Compton Reeves. The event will include a virtual toast to the Society on the occasion of its 100th anniversary, a brief presentation on the Society's history, achievements, and the American Branch's role in supporting its mission, and a lecture detailing the historic and well-documented double coronation of Richard III and Queen Anne in 1483. Attendance is limited to 100 participants with priority given to American Branch members.

MORE INFORMATION: via American Branch Website: <https://r3.org/events-gmm/>

ARUN GROUP

Saturday 6 July

Trip Out

The Arun Group will be having a picnic at the Weald and Downland Museum.

CONTACT: Julia Langham - Email j.langham39@btinternet.com

CANADIAN BRANCH

Saturday 6 July (12 - 4pm)

Lunch and Talk

Talk in person and via Zoom

The day includes a catered lunch, and features ***The Five-Minute Medievalist*** Danièle Cybulskie as our guest speaker. Danièle's presentation will be shared with members & guests across the country via Zoom. The event is being held at the historic 1832 Montgomery's Inn in Etobicoke, Ontario and only costs \$45.00.

Montgomery's Inn is a museum and event venue easily accessible from Toronto, close to a major highway and public transit. Further information on menu and tickets will be shared with members and posted on our website at www.richardIII.ca/branch-news as plans proceed. If you are not on our mailing list and wish to receive updates, drop a line to info@RichardIII.ca. All members and guests are welcome! Tickets will be available starting May 1. We also expect to show the Society's anniversary video.

Ongoing: The Ricardian Name Game

All members of the Canadian Branch are encouraged to take part in our version of the Ricardian Name Game. It starts April 23 and ends November 6. Two prizes will be awarded. See details on our website: <https://www.richardiii.ca/branch-news/>

CONTACT: Tracy Bryce – Email: chair@RichardIII.ca

DEVON AND CORNWALL BRANCH

Saturday 15th June

Talk in Person

'Prince Rupert' - a talk by Steven Luscombe

Saturday 13 July

Talk in Person

'Lovell and his Cohorts' – a talk given by Stephen David

Saturday 14th September

Ricardian Music

Ricardian Songs sung by Ian & Elaine Churchward

CONTACT: Edna Coles – 01752 31685 / Tel Email: ednacoles@blueyonder.co.uk

LEICESTERSHIRE BRANCH

Thursday 20 June

Talk in Person

'Anthony Woodville: Sophisticate or Schemer' by Danielle Burton.

This talk is based on years of research which culminated in a biography of the same name. Danielle will ponder whether Anthony Woodville, brother of Edward IV's queen, was as bad as some have portrayed him, or was he really a man of many talents.

Saturday 6 July

Wreath Laying

There will be the annual wreath laying at King Richard's tomb in Leicester Cathedral in the morning.

Thursday 18 July

Talk in Person

'Leicester Cathedral Revealed' by Mathew Morris.

The construction of Leicester Cathedral's new Heritage and Learning Centre has revealed a snapshot of life in Leicester over the past 2000 years. Mathew Morris will take us on an archeological journey through time, revealing the lives of the people of St. Martin's parish and the significance for the story of Leicester.

NO MEETING IS HELD IN AUGUST

Thursday 19 September

Talk in Person

'Medieval Kings' Tombs - 1307-1485' by Caroline Wright.

This is part II of the fascinating, illustrated talk given by Caroline last year. She will discuss the locations of the tombs, their style and decoration and the ceremonies involved in burying Kings during the 'Hundred Years War' and the 'Wars of the Roses'.

Thursday 17 October

Talk in Person

'The First British Military Surgeon – The Life of William Hobbes' by Stuart Orme.

William Hobbes was the first Sergeant Surgeon (Chief Military Surgeon) in our history, court physician to Edward IV and Richard III, and a rarity in that he was a university educated physician who was also a surgeon. There are also questions about how much he knew of Richard III's hidden scoliosis, as well as Hobbes' scandalous personal life! Discover his intriguing life and times in this talk.

CONTACT: Sally Henshaw - Tel 0116 243 3785 / Email sallyoftarahill@gmail.com

LONDON AND HOME COUNTIES BRANCH

Wednesday 3 July, 2pm

Lecture Meeting

The Branch will host a question and answer session on The Missing Princes Project with Philippa Langley, MBE.

CONTACT: Elizabeth Nokes – Email e.m.nokes@gmail.com

MERSEYSIDE AND WEST LANCASHIRE GROUP

Saturday 6 July

Film Showing

There will be a special showing of the film, The Lost King at the Southport Bijou Cinema followed by a Q&A Session.

CONTACT: Margaret Byrne – Email margaret.byrne58@tiscali.co.uk

MID-ANGLIA GROUP

Saturday 6 July

Trip Out

The Mid-Anglia Group is taking a trip to Leiston Abbey. Leiston Abbey, outside the town of Leiston, Suffolk, was a religious house of Canons Regular following the Premonstratensian rule, dedicated to St Mary. Leiston Abbey is an English Heritage site and is free to enter. Trips to Sudbury, Waltham Abbey and Colchester will follow on later dates – details tba.

CONTACT: Stephen Lark – Tel 07946 630694 / Email stephenmlark@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND BRANCH

Saturday 6 July

Medieval Banquet

There will be a medieval banquet held in Kapiti on the coast north of Wellington. The New Zealand Branch has been fortunate enough to engage an experienced chef keen on creating authentic medieval dishes and there will be at least four removes. Costumes are encouraged!

CONTACT: Rob Smith – Tel +64 (0)274 416 813 / Email rob.helen.smith@xtra.co.nz

NORTH MERCIA BRANCH

Saturday 1 June

Talk in Person

‘The Ladies of the Garter’ by Dr Andrew Gray

Saturday 20 July

Talk in Person

‘A Voice for Richard’ by Yvonne Morley Chisholm

Saturday 3 August

Social

Dr John Ashdown Hill Social Day

Saturday 7 September

Visit & Talk

‘Hawks on the Walk’ – A day out at the Falconry Centre at the Battle of Shrewsbury Exhibition Site near Shrewsbury. There will be a talk on the history of falconry, followed by a chance to fly the birds.

Saturday 12 October

Talk

‘The King’s Work: The Defence of the North under the Yorkist Kings: 1471-1485’ by Anne F. Sutton. Talk given by Margaret Byrne, Secretary of the West Merseyside and Southport Group.

CONTACT: Marion Moulton – Tel 01270 623444 / Email tedandbess1943@gmail.com

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE GROUP

Saturday 6 July

The North Staffordshire Group will be distributing leaflets locally.

CONTACT: Penny Lawton – Email nstaffs22@gmail.com

PENRITH AND NORTH LAKES GROUP

Saturday May 25

Visit to Brougham Castle, Penrith

Saturday June 15

Visit to Piel Island with the South Cumbria Group

Saturday July 6

Talk and Associated Events

Celebration of RIII Society Centenary: talk and events based on Penrith Library

Saturday August 24

Visit to Barnard Castle

Saturday September 28

Talk (tbc)

Monday 7 October

Talk and Leaflet Display

Venue: Penrith Library

Thursday 10 October

Talk on the history and aims of the Richard III Society, the story of the king and his relevance to Cumbria – by Sue Scott-Buccleuch

Venue: Museum of Military Life, Carlisle

Saturday October 19

Talk on the Salkeld Screen in Carlisle Cathedral - by Marilyn Parkes-Seddon

CONTACT: Sue Scott-Buccleuch – Email sue.sb48@gmail.com

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA (ADELAIDE)
BRANCH**

Saturday 6 July
Celebration Lunch

CONTACT: Sue Walladge – Email walladge@internode.on.net

SOUTH CUMBRIA GROUP

May
Visit to Muncaster Castle.

Saturday 15th June
Meeting at Piel Harbour

July
Visit to Towton Battlefield.

August
Visit to Middleham Castle.

September
Visit to Leicester.

October
Visit to Cartmel Medieval Church and Harrington Tomb.

CONTACT: Isobella Sneesby – Tel 01229 826120 or John Farrer – Email
john.farrer@yahoo.co.uk

THAMES VALLEY GROUP

Saturday 22 June
Book Sale

Saturday 6 July
Celebration Lunch

NO MEETING IN AUGUST

Saturday 21 September
Visit to St George's Chapel, Windsor

Saturday 19 October
Talk on 'Leaves of Gold' Illuminated Manuscript Exhibition in Philadelphia – Sally Empson
& Maria Hale

CONTACT: Sylvia Morrison-Moore – Email s.morrison-moore@hotmail.co.uk

WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH

June (date not yet given)

Gala Afternoon Tea using recipes from the Branch's book of medieval recipes. Includes costume wearing, a quiz and the presentation of a research paper discussing past anniversaries celebrated in days gone by.

CONTACT: Alison Carman – Email: Richard3inWA@gmail.com

YORKSHIRE BRANCH

Saturday 6 & Sunday 7 July

Middleham Festival

With the kind support of the Society Events Committee, the Yorkshire Branch has arranged three festival lectures in St Alkelda's Church Middleham on Saturday 6th July:

11.00 am: "Richard the Northern King" by Graham Mitchell (Branch Secretary)

1.00 pm: "The Princes in the Tower – Solving History's Greatest Cold Case" by Philippa Langley, MBE.

2.00 pm: "John Evans, the Missing Princes & the Coldridge Connection" by John Dike (Lead Investigator TMPP Coldridge)

3.00 pm: Questions & Book Signing.

Each illustrated lecture lasts one hour.

Entry is free but donations to the church will be welcomed.

The Society & the Yorkshire Branch will have stalls in the castle grounds.

Saturday 27 July

Branch visit to St Alkelda's Church, Giggleswick plus informal meal.

CONTACT: Graham Mitchell – Tel 01535 645454 / Email rgm@dockroyd.co.uk



Mission Statement

‘In the belief that many features of the traditional accounts of the character and career of Richard III are neither supported by sufficient evidence nor reasonably tenable, the Society aims to promote in every possible way research into the life and times of Richard III and to secure a reassessment of the material relating to this period and raise awareness of the role in history of this monarch.’