

The Ricardian Register

Newsletter of the American Branch
Richard III Society



Newsletter of the American Branch of the Richard III Society, Incorporated
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WE ARE INCORPORATED!

If you look at the heading of this issue of the Register, you will see that the Richard III Society is now officially incorporated. Because we are a non-profit, educational organization, all dues are tax-deductible. Also, the Register can be mailed at bulk rates rather than the regular rate of 6¢ thereby saving the Society a considerable amount of money.

JOIN IN ON A JOUST

The Centennial Celebration Committee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art has invited the Richard III Society, Inc., to participate in some of its festivities. The theme of the Museum's exhibition is The Year 1200. The "happening", which will be held in New York's Central Park on Saturday, May 9, 1970, will feature a joust, tilting at the quintain, the Court of Love, a miracle play, fire-eaters, sword-swallowers (any volunteers?), and stalls where ox, boar, mead, and syllabub will be served. There will also be a booth with favors for youngsters. Costumed spectators are needed to fill the bleachers. The costumes, which must be hand-made, should be based on fashions of the late 12th or early 13th century. If you would like to join in on the fun, please write me. You will then be assigned a role and given instructions about the costumes. If you sign up, please be sure you can follow through with your commitment--because the Metropolitan will expect us to "deliver" the number of people that we promise to send.

THE ATTACHED CARTOON is reproduced from a cartoon originally appearing in Punch, the English humor magazine.

A NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to thank Judge Lybarger of Cleveland for his gift of his original oil portrait copy of the painting of Richard III that hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.

William Hogarth
230 East 52nd Street
New York, New York 10022

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

My mailbox has been well supplied with checks for the payment of dues, but some people have not yet paid. This is the last issue of the Register before the listing of 69-70 members and your dues must be paid in order to be included in this listing. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to write me.

Apparently, there has been some confusion due to the letter from the Yorkshire Branch (See below). Actually, this branch is equivalent to our "chapters", and until recently was supported by the English Branch. It is now required to be self-supporting, and this occasioned the letter most of you received from them. I hope that those of you who were interested in helping did subscribe to their newsletter. But, this does not mean that your dues for membership in this branch are "paid up"! The American Branch has always been self-supporting, and we send \$2/ family membership, \$1.50/ regular member, and \$1/ student member to England for support of activities there. If you have any questions concerning this, please feel free to write me.

Mrs. Jean Airey, Secretary-Treasurer
6226 Rocky Den Road
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

FROM THE YORKSHIRE BRANCH

Subsidies have been cut off from all English branches (or chapters) of the Richard III Society. In order to become self-supporting, the Yorkshire Committee has decided to open a subscribers' mailing list to any American members who are interested in hearing about Yorkshire events and activities. An annual donation of 10 s. (\$1.20) per year entitles members on the mailing list to three copies of "Le Blanc Sanglier" plus an annual report of research carried out within the Yorkshire Branch. If you are interested in being put on their mailing list, send your donation to:

Mr. M. A. Top
4 Silver Mill Cottages
Silver Mill Hill
Otley, Yorkshire ENGLAND

SYLLABUB

I would like to thank all Ricardians who sent me recipes for syllabub. They ranged from Mr. Witlieb's 4-ingredient recipe to one that requires 3 days to prepare. Reproduced below are 3 of the many recipes I received.

1. Beat together in a bar glass: 1 tablespoon sugar syrup, 1 jigger top milk, 1 large jigger heavy cream, and ½ cup sherry, port, Madeira, or bourbon whiskey. Serve at once in punch glasses. Serves 4. (Submitted by Bernie Witlieb.)

2. Put into a bowl: 1 cup white wine, 1 cup heavy cream, 1½ cups milk, ¼ cup brandy, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, ¼ cup sugar, ¼ teaspoon nutmeg, and ¼ teaspoon rosemary leaves (crushed). Beat with whisk for 5 minutes until frothy. (More modern Ricardians may use a blender.) Chill well. Serves 4. (Submitted by Bill Hogarth.)

3. Combine: ½ cup sugar, 4/5 quart dry white wine, 3 tablespoons finely grated lemon peel, 1/3 cup lemon juice. Stir until sugar is completely dissolved; chill well. In punch bowl, blend 3 cups cold milk and 2 cups light

cream. Pour in the wine mixture and beat with a rotary beater or wire whip until frothy. Beat 4 egg whites until firm; gradually add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar, beating until stiff and glossy. Put spoonful puffs of this meringue on top of the punch. Sprinkle lightly with nutmeg. Makes about 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup servings. (Submitted by Mrs. Irene Joshi.)

Try any or all of these recipes over the holidays--it will be a real Ricardian treat.

NEW MEMBERS

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The following is an excerpt from the Yorkshire Branch's magazine, "Le Blanc Sanglier." The article is entitled "The Princes in the Tower" and was written by I. Wigram.

When King Edward IV died on April 9, 1483, he left behind him a highly explosive situation. With characteristic shrewdness he had created a sort of third party in the State, of whose loyalty he could be assured. The nucleus of this party was the very numerous family of his commoner Queen, Elizabeth Woodville. These relations of the Queen, since they had been raised to the highest honors by Edward and were detested by nobles and Commons alike, therefore stood or fell with Edward, and unless they took instant measures to consolidate their power on his death, they had no illusions as to what would happen to them. On this point of the unpopularity of the Woodvilles with all classes, I would like to quote Dr. James Gairdner, one of the most distinguished upholders of the "Traditional Front" against Richard III. He cites a document in the Public Record Office containing a recantation before a very full council summoned by the King at Westminster, of certain calumnies which one John Edward had propagated at Calais against the Earl Rivers and the Marquis of Dorset (the brother of the Queen and the elder son by her first marriage). Dr. Gairdner says, "What those calumnies were, and what semblance of probability they had, we do not know; but the remarkable point is that in disowning them John Edward pleads in his excuse, that he only uttered them for fear of his life, apprehending that he would be put to the torture in the town of Calais. Thus unless we conceive the fact to have been just the contrary--that is to say that the calumnies were true and were only disowned through fear--we must suppose that the Woodvilles were so exceedingly unpopular that calumnies against them were welcome intelligence even to the authorities of Calais at a time when Edward IV was still king."

Edward's policy then, while it served him well during his life, was to serve his son very ill after his death. This unpopularity of the Woodvilles with all classes is a very important factor in what is so often known as the "usurpation" of Richard III. A contributory factor to this unpopularity was the suspicion that the Queen and her relations had prevailed on the King to proceed to the execution of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, in 1478, five years before Edward's own death. Clarence, although he has not come down to history as a very estimable character, was good-looking and popular in his lifetime. King Edward was also good-looking and popular, and when a king was popular some excuse might be found even for the crime of fratricide, though in any case, Clarence's activities had been treasonable for some time, and Edward had repeatedly forgiven him. It was, however, convenient to blame the Queen and her relations for having forced this extreme measure on the King, some color being lent to the accusation from the fact that the Queen's relations profited through Clarence's death, notably her brother, Lord Rivers. In this connection it is not irrelevant to refer to a footnote in Miss Caroline Halstead's admirable though often neglected biography of Richard III. She says: "The grant which conveyed to Lord Rivers the rich possessions which probably provoked the fate of the unfortunate prince (Clarence) is preserved in the Foedera, vol. xii, p. 95"; and Laing in his comments upon it says, "The hypocritical language of this donation is curious, and seems to fasten the murder indisputably on Rivers. The grant insinuates that Clarence at his death made a nuncupative will in Rivers' favor; a proof that his conduct required exculpation."

It might be interesting to note here that Clarence's young son was imprisoned in the Tower after his father's death, and who was it who

released him and restored him to his rightful position but his "wicked" uncle, the Duke of Gloucester?

Turning now to another source, the Italian monk Domenico Mancini, whose contemporary account of the events following the death of Edward IV was only discovered as recently as 1933, we notice three statements about Clarence's death, which are rather significant in the light of subsequent events:

1. The Woodvilles "were certainly detested by the nobles because they, who were ignoble and newly made men, were advanced beyond those who excelled them in breeding and wisdom. They had to endure the imputation brought against them by all of causing the death of the Duke of Clarence."

2. That the Queen "concluded that her offspring by the King would never come to the throne unless the Duke of Clarence were removed." This was because Clarence openly denounced Edward's marriage to a commoner and a widow as being against all established custom. Mancini used the words "bitter and public denunciation of Elizabeth's obscure family."

3. Mancini's third statement refers to Richard's reactions to his brother Clarence's death, and says, "Richard Duke of Gloucester was so overcome with grief for his brother that he could not dissimulate so well but he was overheard to say that he would one day avenge his brother's death."

I have dwelt perhaps unduly long on this matter of Clarence's death, but it does have considerable bearing on subsequent events as you will see. But there is one further fact which must be mentioned. At about the time that Clarence was executed--certainly within three weeks of it--Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, was imprisoned in the Tower. Four months later, after having paid a heavy fine, he received a royal pardon, in which his offence was stated to have been uttering "words prejudicial to the King and his state." That is certainly not the last we are to hear of the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Now to return at last to the Princes and their uncle Richard. Edward IV in his will appointed his brother Richard Duke of Gloucester Regent or Protector of his realm and children. Richard had always been unshakeably loyal to Edward and there was a strong bond of affection between them. The actual will has been destroyed but historians are all agreed that Richard's Protectorship must have been laid down in the provisions. It is important to note here that, although the Tudor chroniclers accuse Richard by vague assertions of "common fate" of complicity in the death of Henry VI's son at the battle of Tewkesbury and of the death of Henry VI himself, most historians are now very doubtful of Richard having been implicated in either of these happenings--especially as Henry VI's son was certainly killed during the battle. Mrs. Lamb in her Betrayal of Richard III, referring to Dr. Gairdner's portrayal of Richard's character, says that "he draws the portrait of a man of honor, integrity and wisdom, against whom there was no breath of scandal for the first thirty years of his life."

This then, is the picture at the death of Edward IV. His elder son, the Prince of Wales, aged 12½, was living at Ludlow under the guardianship of his maternal uncle, Lord Rivers. Richard Duke of Gloucester, the appointed Protector, was making his headquarters at his beloved castle of Middleham in Wensledale, his time fully occupied in keeping peace on the Scottish border. The Queen, with most of the rest of her relations was in London, solely concerned, probably out of fear for their lives, in keeping the power

which they had held for so long. And finally, there was a peerage and commons detesting the Woodville clan and looking to the popular Duke of Gloucester to put the arrogant upstarts in their proper place.

The first necessity, from the Woodvilles' point of view was to get the young King crowned before Richard could arrive, and at the first Council meeting after Edward IV's death, it was suggested that the King should be sent for to come up to London with a strong force with him. Against this it was urged (according to Sir Thomas More, who states that the objections were Richard's) that if the Queen's party assembled a large force to accompany the King, the Nobles would look upon it rather as an act of aggression against themselves than a safeguard to the King, who had no need of such protection; and this in turn might lead to civil war. Lord Hastings, the Lord Chamberlain, was foremost in the anti-Woodville bloc, being one of the most intimate friends of the late King and consequently both friend and supporter of the Duke of Gloucester. Finally, giving way to his threats, the Queen agreed to limit the force to 2,000 men. Nevertheless, Hastings is said to have warned Richard to come south with a sufficiently strong force himself; advice which Richard did not take. In the meantime, Lord Dorset, as Governor of the Tower, had sent his uncle, the Queen's brother, Sir Edward Woodville, to sea with a small fleet, ostensibly and indeed possibly as a measure of protection against the French, for Edward IV had died on the eve of war with France. Dorset had also considerably provided his uncle with a third share of Edward's vast treasure stored in the Tower, dividing the rest between his mother and himself (according to More and Mancini), and over all this, Dorset and Rivers were issuing orders, as from the "uterine brother" and "uterine uncle" of the King, with no mention of the Protector whatever.

According to the Croyland Chronicler, Richard himself attended a requiem mass to his brother at York and administered an oath of fealty to the new King to all the nobility and gentry of the neighborhood, himself setting the example. He then proceeded towards Northampton, the agreed meeting place with the King, attended by a mourning train of 600 gentlemen only. At Northampton, he was met by Lord Rivers, who told him that the young King had thoughtfully vacated the town, since it was not large enough to accommodate both their trains, and had gone on to Stony Stratford, 14 miles nearer London. At Northampton too, Rivers and Richard were joined by Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, who occupies a place of the utmost importance in relation to this subject, but whose motives will probably remain for all time inscrutable. He had been married, whilst still a minor, and therefore without being able to make a valid protest, to the Queen's sister, Katherine Woodville, and for this reason he had an especial hatred of the Woodvilles, for he was himself of the blood royal and to say that he considered the Woodville blood inferior to his own, would no doubt be putting it very mildly. He was also of a Lancastrian family--or at least a family with Lancastrian leanings--and may always have remained a Lancastrian at heart. How deep or far-seeing his plotting may have been is impossible to determine, but it has been suggested--though I am unable to find the reference--that he deliberately led Richard on into "evil courses" hoping they would lead to Richard's destruction and his own aggrandisement. At any rate, he is stated by More to have promised Richard his support immediately on Edward IV's death, and this is very probable. However, he arrived at Northampton--presumably from his estates in Wales--with only 300 men. This gave Richard and Buckingham a combined force of 900 against Rivers' 2,000.