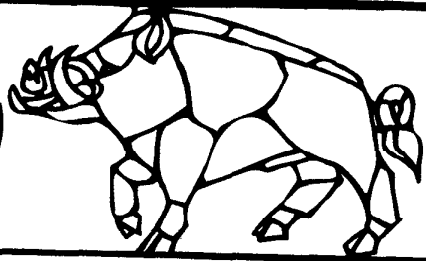


# Richardian REGISTER



Richard 111 Society, Inc.

Volume XXII No. 3

Fall, 1997



## THE LEICESTER MEMORIAL

BY JAMES BUTLER R.A.

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The Richard III Society is a nonprofit, educational corporation. Dues, grants and contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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## EDITORIAL LICENSE

This issue brings you the second part of Jim Gilbert's study of Richard III's kingship; we have two more hefty parts continuing for the Winter and Spring publications.

We also have a debut article from an Australian Ricardian. Sheila *Bignell* has been a member of the Melbourne Branch for over forty years and she clearly followed Nicholas von Popplau very closely and exactly. Thanks to Peter Hammond for sending Ms. *Bignell* to us.

Just to make sure no one thinks we are too serious, we include *Peggy Allen's* musings on Star Trek fans and Ricardians. Perhaps this will solicit some interesting responses for future publication?

*Ellen Pearlman* invites us along on another of her trips; she seems to always be at a new play or finding a Ricardian connection wherever she goes! *Ellen Prinsen* reports on the Memorial Service held by the Michigan Chapter.

Our Ricardian Reading editor, *Myrna Smith*, keeps plugging out the book reviews. We know Ricardians are voracious readers. How about sharing your reading adventures with us?

*Cheryl Rothwell* is struggling through a transcription of the files from the mailing list in an attempt to pull together some of the more interesting themes for reprint here. This will provide an opportunity for those of you who are not online to share in these discussions.

Plans are proceeding for a Winter feature on War of the Roses Fiction, spearheaded by Laura *Blanchard*. Author Sharon Kay Penman has agreed to participate and we will

be using Laura's original theme of the Iron Roses (Cecily Neville, Margaret of Anjou, Margaret Beaufort, Elizabeth Woodville, Anne Neville, etc.) Our own Roxane *Murph* has written the definitive bibliography on Ricardian fiction and we expect to have her input as well. We are even trying to woo Helen *Maurer* out of her scholarly closet. If you have thoughts on this subject area or knowledge that would be of assistance, please let us hear from you.

English roses have been much on our minds this past month; the mailing list exchanges reflect the regrets of our members, in particular those who are English-born, to the untimely death of Princess Diana. Being Ricardians, we also had to ponder the significance of a comparison between Diana and Mary Queen of Scots... Diana and Anne Boelyn ....

I was especially moved by the comments of *Peggy Dolan*, who recounted the story of photographers at the scene of the wreck saying "Just one more, luv. One more before you go." Peggy notes we can be thankful there was no portrait painter at Bosworth Field, and suggests we were perhaps more civilized in the 15th century.

A. L. Rowse, a sometimes (?) nemesis of the Society, died earlier this month. I have not included an obituary of Mr. Rowse, whose accomplishments are legendary and far-reaching, but whose opinions also include a remark that Ricardians aren't qualified to hold an opinion on anything.

Regards till next issue. And keep on holding those opinions!

*Carole*

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# STRIKING & MAINTAINING THE BALANCE - KINGSHIP & THE NOBILITY IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY ENGLAND<sup>1</sup>

James Edward Gilbert

*It is the ability to compromise that makes a man noble. . . Give an ear to our nobles. Knowing their minds is the key to the throne.*

*What does that mean, to be noble? Your title gives you claim to the throne of our country, but men don't follow titles; they follow courage.*

—from Braveheart<sup>2</sup>

ings of fifteenth century England inherited an unfavorable legacy after Richard II's usurpation in 1399 by his cousin Henry IV. The nobles learned a valuable lesson: the king is not invulnerable. The idea of the king as an absolute ruler had been shattered with the rise of Henry IV. Rivals to the king were now seen as options, and if a rival was strong enough, he could knock the ruler off the throne.<sup>3</sup> With Richard II's forced abdication in 1399, the power of kingship suffered its most severe blow since 1215.<sup>4</sup> Undoing the work of Henry IV was to consume much of the fifteenth century. Even when the monarchy stabilized, the solution was not permanent, as the seventeenth century saw the English Civil War tear the country apart again.<sup>5</sup>

The king was now seen as little more than a noble "grown big and upstart."<sup>6</sup> He was open to criticism, and the members of the nobility now knew they could refuse to grant him assistance, financial or otherwise. The fifteenth century was to prove a time where many more nobles were beginning to acknowledge their power. If they were unsatisfied under a weak king, they knew they could do something about it; in 1460 and 1470 they did. Only when Henry VII showed that he could hold the throne against anyone who dared oppose him did the nobles back down. The fifteenth century was an era of striking and maintaining a balance with the nobles- keeping them in line without completely dominating them, granting them free thought and action, but limiting their power enough to keep them from dethroning him. The king was a tightrope walker, doing everything to keep his balance. No ruler could be absolute in England, but he could still exert a degree of control, depending on the sort of ability he possessed. Henry VI showed himself incapable of fulfilling the duties of the monarchy.<sup>7</sup> He was a weak king, largely

responsible for the start of the Wars of the Roses between Lancaster and York.<sup>8</sup> Between 1455 and 1485, five men wore the English crown.<sup>9</sup> Henry VII, a strong king, ended them.

*Eight insurrections and rebellions and three changes in dynasty in thirty years had debased the vision of kingship, making men more inclined to treason than they had been in the middle years of the century.<sup>10</sup>*

There were three necessary elements to handling the nobles: binding the nobility to the crown, keeping the peace between the nobles, and insuring that the nobles saw to their respective holdings.<sup>11</sup> No king could hope to hold the throne for very long unless he could fulfill these. These were the keys to displaying strength- ensuring that the monarch would earn the respect and cooperation of the nobles. Failure in any part would indicate weakness, and a weak ruler could not hope to govern the realm.<sup>12</sup> I will show how kings in the fifteenth century tried to accomplish each of these three objectives, and to what degree they were successful.

Without the allegiance of the nobles kings lacked financial backing, effective regional control of their realm, military support, and the advice of experienced counselors, placing them in grave danger of being deposed. In 1483, Bishop John Russell compared the nobles to firm rocks in an unstable sea. He declared "the politic rule of every realm standeth in them; they like Moses and Aaron approach the king, the commons stand afar off."<sup>13</sup> William Caxton, England's printing pioneer, described the government as a cooperative effort between the monarchy and the nobility.<sup>14</sup>

Throughout her history, England has been a land where nobles figured prominently in national politics. In the mid-seventeenth century, with England again in the throes of a civil war, James Harrington wrote monarchy was one of two types: "the one by arms, the other by a nobility," and "a monarchy, divested of its nobility, has no refuge under heaven but an army."<sup>15</sup> In fifteenth century England, kings did not maintain standing armies or other policing force save a personal bodyguard and garrisons in castles under constant threat of enemy attack.<sup>16</sup> A king needed to rely on his nobility to govern, for as with

**any** authority, a title means nothing without a way to enforce it. 17

The nobility also needed the king. Without a monarch, control of the central government would be left entirely to Parliament, to the nobles and commoners who could afford to maintain their seats. To the nobility, what mattered was maintaining control over their individual areas and insuring the uninterrupted perpetuation of their lineage.<sup>18</sup> The king was responsible for foreign affairs, the defense of the realm as a whole and the provision of justice, tasks that no noble could handle, as it could create a conflict of interest.<sup>19</sup> He served as a unifying figure and a head of state for other governments to recognize and deal with, and a long-ruling dynasty was a show of strength and a sign of stability at home and abroad.

This did not mean the nobles were reliable or unified. George, duke of Clarence, Edward IV and Richard III's brother is a classic example of the unreliable noble.<sup>20</sup> He supported his brother Edward in 1461 to defeat Margaret of Anjou's forces. In 1469, angered by his brother's refusal to allow him to marry Isabel Neville, George joined Warwick "the King-Maker" in capturing, and ultimately driving Edward out of England in 1470.<sup>21</sup> Then, when Edward and Richard returned to England in 1471 under the pretense of Edward's reclaiming only the duchy of York, Clarence again changed sides, joining Edward in defeating Warwick at **Barnet**. Even king's own brother proved that a nobleman's true allegiance lay only with himself.

What made the nobility so difficult and unpredictable? The answer is simple: the majority of the nobility were fickle and noncommittal. Allegiance was a matter that was constantly called into question. Throughout the century, a long list of noblemen changed their allegiance from one side to the other.<sup>22</sup> While this grew to be common practice, the fifteenth

century was the first time the ramifications were so serious as to involve the loss of the throne. The reason behind the nobility's behavior was the risk involved:

*For a major aristocratic family in the later Middle Ages, survival was itself no mean task. There was always the risk of progenitive failure in the male line, which accounted for the disappearance of about a quarter of the aristocracy in each generation, but the troubled political conditions at home combined with the war in France until 1453 had enormously expanded the dangers for the higher aristocracy. Death in battle (at home or abroad) or on the executioner's block, for treason or conspiracy, had accounted for many leading members of the nobility. Forfeiture for treason and enforced exile had temporarily eclipsed the fortunes of others. Although there was often a younger brother or son to replace casualties of war and politics, survival rates were low.*<sup>23</sup>

In many cases, it was too dangerous for a noble family to faithfully commit to one side or the other, as it could cost them their place among the aristocracy. It was safer, and during the Wars of the Roses, wiser, for family heads to be flexible, or remain neutral until a clear victor emerged.<sup>24</sup> Many nobles changed sides at least once, leaving the service of the deposed king to enter the service of his deposer. For example, Edward IV's counselors included John, Lord Wenlok and Walter le Hert, the bishop of Norwich, both of whom had served Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou's court.<sup>25</sup> This adaptability can be clearly seen in examining the councillors each king held. As Table 5 indicates, a significant number of councillors had no difficulty adjusting to a new regime or serving a new king. Some even endured

Table 5.<sup>29</sup>  
Royal Councillors, 1437-1509

	Henry VI (1437-61, 1471)	Edward IV (1461-83)	Richard III (1483-5)	Henry VII (1485-1 509) —
<b>councillors</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>1 2 6</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>with Henry VI</b>	—	27	0	1
<b>with Edward IV</b>	—	—	23	9
<b>with H6 and E4</b>	—	—	5	1
<b>with Richard III</b>	—	—	—	6
<b>with R3 and E4</b>	—	—	—	14
<b>with all three</b>	—	—	—	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	—	27	28	31

Sources: Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* pp. 136, 150, 211, 288, Chrimes, *Henry VII* pp. 56, 98-104, 150-1, and Lander, *Crown and Nobility* pp. 309-20; data obtained from various sources.

through three regimes; one participated in all four. Even Edward's queen, Elizabeth Woodville, came from a Lancastrian family, who had switched their allegiance from Henry VI to Edward in March 1463.<sup>26</sup>

The monarch needed to strike a balance between himself and his nobles. He needed the power of the central government and the support of the nobles:

*Late medieval and early modern kings could not suppress the nobility. To govern at all, they were forced to sustain it, and yet, at the same time, to control it.*<sup>27</sup>

The king needed to insure the nobles were not powerful enough to remove him if they disagreed with him, yet strong enough to be supportive: "to make the system work the king had to enforce sufficient control over powerful men to keep their activities within decent bounds."<sup>28</sup>

A system of rewards and punishments developed to ensure this control. Each king used them in varying degrees and with varying results. Nobles needed an incentive to remain loyal to the monarch, and each monarch had his own ideas on how to maintain this loyalty. By balancing rewards, obligations, and punishments, the crown attempted to keep the nobles in line. This system relied on the ability of the monarch to judge and supervise his noble subjects. Giving too much or being too strict would upset the balance and leave the crown unsupported.

The rewards kings bestowed on subjects ranged from forgiveness to jobs to land and titles. Edward IV is an example of a forgiving monarch: he was quick to forget past treasons in return for support.<sup>30</sup> Edward pardoned Henry, duke of Somerset in 1463.<sup>31</sup> He jousted and shared his bed with Henry, making him captain of the guard on a northern expedition.<sup>32</sup> Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, was freed from imprisonment in the Tower in October, 1468, restored to his title and lands, and in 1470 given the wardenship of the east march, only to turn traitor in **1471**.<sup>33</sup> This was not always an effective system: of the seven pardons issued by Edward to Lancastrian supporters, only one remained loyal.<sup>34</sup> A policy of forgiveness was unreliable, and created dissension among the ranks of the loyal.<sup>35</sup> But it was a quick, appealing way to gain capable administrators and existing leaders.<sup>36</sup> Henry VII followed a similar practice: he needed capable service, and let Yorkists remain in their jobs as long as they proved loyal.<sup>37</sup>

The king could also be very generous in repaying service for at least one of two reasons: to check the growing power of other nobles, or to show appreciation for support. Percy was given wardenship of the east and middle Scottish marches in 1470 to counterbalance the Neville influence in the north of

England, for example.<sup>38</sup> Edward recognized the hegemony Warwick and his brother, Marquess Montagu held in the north, and used Percy as a way to maintain the balance of power.<sup>39</sup>

Kings also rewarded for ability and support. As Ross states:

*In his dealings with the nobility and gentry, a medieval king enjoyed two great advantages. The first lay in his exclusive right to confer titles of nobility and to promote an existing peer to a higher rank within the nobility . . . The king's second, and much more important, resource lay in the extent of his material patronage, far greater than any subject possessed, however powerful he might be. As king, he commanded a whole series of offices of profit and influence, ranging from major military commands like the captaincy of Calais and the wardenships of the marches towards Scotland, through positions like Lieutenant of Ireland or chief justice of North and South Wales, down to a wide range of constabularies or royal castles and stewardships of royal estates.*<sup>40</sup>

Edward IV, Richard III, and Henry VII bestowed rewards upon those who helped them attain the throne (and in Edward's case regain the throne).<sup>41</sup> By giving men land, the king gave them money: a necessity to become a noble in England. A man could not hope for a title he could not maintain financially. An example of this can be seen in 1478, when George Neville was deprived of the dukedom of Bedford on the grounds of poverty.<sup>42</sup> With this new territory, a faithful servant of the king could achieve title and a place among the nobility.<sup>43</sup> Edward created seven new barons in 1461, among them Warwick's uncle, William Neville, Lord Fauconberg, and Edward's chamberlain, William, Lord Hastings. Between 1461 and 1470 he added six more, as well as a dukedom, a marquessate, and eight earldoms.<sup>44</sup> Nobles were created to replace those who had been killed in battle or who lost favor with the crown with those of the rich gentry who had earned the king's backing.<sup>45</sup> The first several pages of the 1461-7 edition of the *Calendar of Patent Rolls* are filled with grants of varying degrees to nobles and commoners who had supported Edward. And once grants had been bestowed, they could always be extended or enhanced: grants issued during pleasure could become grants for life, or even in perpetuity.<sup>46</sup> Following his restoration in 1471, Edward was again very generous, distributing land forfeited by the rebels to his brothers and other supporters.<sup>47</sup> He also provided help to his supporters in other, intangible ways. He intervened on behalf of his supporters in disputes, as he did for John Trevelyan in Somerset.<sup>48</sup>

John, Lord Audley, joined the **Yorkists** in 1460 and became "one of Edward's most active supporters in the shires, chiefly in Somerset, Hampshire and Wiltshire, where his estates were situated" typifies this.<sup>49</sup> In 1461, Audley was listed in a commission to arrest and imprison servants of Edward's enemies for sedition in Southampton.<sup>50</sup> In 1465, he was awarded "goods, debts and chattels." In 1467 he was granted two Surrey manors forfeited by rebels, and Edward granted him £100 a year for life in 1474.<sup>51</sup> He was a prominent member of many of Edward's commissions of oyer and terminer and of array.<sup>52</sup> While the king expected his nobles to handle the business at hand in their regions, Audley served on commissions throughout the realm: he is listed as a member of commissions of oyer and terminer in Dorset, Warwick, and Gloucester.<sup>53</sup> Edward and Audley had a symbiotic relationship; Audley provided faithful service and Edward ensured he was suitably rewarded.

Richard III did the same with his supporters. Sir Thomas Montgomery, who faithfully served Edward IV **typifies** this. Richard sought the same faithful service. Edward rewarded Sir Thomas well. Richard realized he would be wise to keep the rewards uninterrupted if he was to keep the reliable service uninterrupted. Richard granted Sir Thomas lands worth the £412 a year for life.<sup>54</sup> Henry VII did the same in 1485, creating his uncle and chief supporter, Jasper, duke of Bedford in October. Many of his other supporters received payment for their aid.<sup>55</sup> However, after the first months of the reign, Henry was reluctant to issue grants he deemed unnecessary, especially those involving new creations.<sup>56</sup>

Treatment of the nobility also held true for the clergy of the time, who were essentially a **pseudo-nobility**. In the pre-Reformation era, the Church was a career, and many noblemen, such as George Neville, bishop of Exeter, entered the clergy:

*The clergy of 1483 were still secular in nature to a great extent. Most were more concerned with maintaining their sees than rebelling against unacceptable practices.*<sup>57</sup>

Piety was not a prerequisite for high church office. Most bishops, archbishops, and cardinals in England were given their positions based on political or administrative ability. Bishopsrics were often a reward for capable service; many held high incomes. Bishops could also receive grants of land or money.<sup>58</sup> For bishops, capable service could lead to translation to a richer see when one became available. Though only the Pope could grant translation, England had a loose connection with Rome; the Pope usually "provided" who the king recommended.<sup>59</sup> As they tended

to be well-educated, high ecclesiastics were a sensible advising choice. Many served as royal councillors: George Neville, Adam Moleyns, Thomas Bouchier, etc. Bishops held positions in the royal household: they went abroad as diplomats and spread the king's word, sometimes with unfortunate repercussions:

*Master Adam Moleyns, bishop of Chichester and keeper of the king's privy seal, the king sent to Portsmouth, to make payment of money to certain soldiers and shipmen [who had been fighting in France] for their wages; and so it happened that with boisterous language, and also for curtailment of their wages, he fell at variance with them, and they fell on him, and cruelly killed him there.*<sup>60</sup>

John Morton is an example of a **clergyman-administrator**. He served Henry VI and the **Lancastrians** faithfully until 1471, escaping from the Tower of London to join Henry VI in France.<sup>61</sup> He ultimately returned from exile to England and was pardoned by Edward IV.<sup>62</sup> He was made keeper of the rolls and by December, 1473, was a councillor of Edward's. Later in Edward's reign, he would go on to become Bishop of Ely, and under Henry VII, the archbishop of Canterbury and a cardinal.<sup>63</sup> He was not only pardoned, but was rewarded for capable and faithful service.

Though the reward system had many benefits, it had disadvantages. Without forfeited lands to disperse, it would cost the crown a great deal of revenue to grant lands. Thus, when there was no land to be given, the system was not used.<sup>64</sup> The king could also lose favor with a supporter as trying to win a new ally. Edward IV angered many of his supporters when he pardoned and rewarded Henry, duke of Somerset.<sup>65</sup> And though grants were incentives to remain loyal, as Somerset proved, they not a sure thing. Edward also infuriated many nobles, including his family and Warwick, when he married Elizabeth Woodville and then proceeded to lavish her family with wealth and power.<sup>66</sup> A king might also overlook some of his supporters in attempting to reward them. Again examining Edward IV, let us consider Edmund, Lord Grey of Ruthyn, as an example.<sup>67</sup> Grey almost singlehandedly won the Battle of Northampton for the Yorkists in 1460.<sup>68</sup> He received no lands for his support; he held the office of treasurer of England for a little over a year (1463-4), and was finally created earl of Kent in 1466.<sup>69</sup> Edward seems to have given "a disproportionately large amount of his patronage" to "a comparatively small group of men."<sup>71</sup> While Grey and others were overlooked, William, Lord Hastings, Warwick, and the royal dukes received lion's shares of Edward's patronage. This was dangerous in the long run; many of the men Edward

disregarded became supporters of Richard's usurpation of Edward's son in 1483.<sup>72</sup> As we shall see later, Richard III fared no better; he followed the same practice, establishing four "props" for his regime.<sup>73</sup>

The reward system could have a second, more dangerous repercussion: it could lead to the creation of overly powerful subjects. If a king gave too much power to one man or family, he placed himself at great risk of falling under that man's control in the region. Henry VI was notorious for failing to avoid this pitfall. He is known for being influenced by anyone who could get his ear. In the 1440s, William de la Pole, earl of Suffolk was the king's advisor, and essentially controller; the Croyland continuator describes him as "a man of singular astuteness and skilled in deceiving" and describes how Suffolk controlled Henry VI and the kingdom:

*Being admitted to his most intimate friendship by King-Henry, he abused his frankness and confidence, and was supposed to manage nearly all the affairs of the kingdom just according to his own will and caprice. He consequently bestowed the bishoprics and royal benefices for sums of money, ejecting some persons and intruding others, entirely in conformity with his own inclination, and by the exercise of his sole power did many things in the kingdom in utter contravention of all justice. At length his audacity increased to such a pitch of presumption, that by means of fraud and circumvention, he removed all the king's kinsmen and friends, and all those related to the royal blood, as well as the bishops and clergy of other ranks and the laity, from the King's presence.<sup>74</sup>*

After his death in 1450, the reigns were passed back and forth between Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, Richard, duke of York, and Queen Margaret. Henry VI was controlled by, rather than a controller of, the nobility.<sup>75</sup> Thus, Edward IV was welcomed as a potentially stronger and more willful leader.<sup>76</sup>

The best example of an overmighty subject in fifteenth-century England is the story of Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, "the King-Maker." He unseated Henry VI in 1461 and placed the nineteen-year-old Edward IV on the throne.<sup>77</sup> After growing dissatisfied with a number of Edward's actions, especially his marriage to Elizabeth Woodville, Warwick allied with Clarence and Margaret of Anjou to send Edward IV into exile and place Henry VI back on the throne.<sup>78</sup> Throughout the 1460s, Warwick was essentially Edward's ruler of the north; he and his brother Marquess Montagu held extensive lands in Yorkshire, Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Westmoreland.

While a king could use gifts to counterbalance powerful subjects, as Edward did with the Percys and Nevilles in the North, a nobleman like Warwick with a large base of operations and power in that region was a potentially valuable ally, but also a potentially dangerous enemy. The monarchy needed to remember that a noble's power lay in his territory, where he maintained castles and retainers. In Northumberland, for example, the inhabitants are said to have known "no prince but a Percy."<sup>79</sup> Monarchs needed to be wary of situations such as this, for men would be more likely to follow the noble lord than the king in a rising. While this meant, as we shall see, the king needed to use the nobles to control their spheres of influence, he needed to insure they did not have a monopoly over an entire region. Henry VI made the critical mistake of leaving nobles to develop and grow stronger.<sup>80</sup> Ultimately, extremely powerful subjects like Richard, duke of York, and Warwick the "King-Maker" cost Henry his throne. He failed to keep the balance of power among his subjects. Edward, upon his return to England's throne in 1471, learned from his mistake with Warwick. He balanced regional power, and, with one exception, kept any one noble from controlling too large a unified area, as in the case of using the Nevilles to check the Percys. But even he allowed his brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester incredible power in the north; he was sure of Richard's allegiance and dedicated service.<sup>81</sup> Though Edward had no problem with Richard threatening his throne, he left Gloucester vast resources and a solid power base from which to seize the crown of Edward's heir. Richard's regional hegemony ensured that he would be supported in his efforts.<sup>82</sup> Both Chrimes and the Croyland continuator declared that no over-mighty subjects in England by 1483, but they fail to consider members of the royal family.<sup>83</sup> Though Edward was better at handling nobles than Henry VI, his policy was not as successful as has been argued. Richard's usurpation proved this. Only Henry VII, who did not patronage in the way his predecessors did, had real success keeping his nobles from becoming too powerful.

How could a king expect to balance the reward system, insure against an overly mighty subject and keep his nobles in line? He needed to treat the nobility like a pack of vicious dogs. Their leashes had to be long enough to keep foreign and domestic enemies at bay, but short enough to keep them from breaking loose and attacking their master. This was done by a series of financial obligations, called bonds and recognizances.<sup>84</sup> Kings could also threaten to, or use, the act of attainder, which deprived a nobleman and his lineage of their holdings and title. We shall examine each in turn, and how they were used to keep the nobility in line.



**Table 6.**  
**Bonds, Recognizances, and the Loyalty of the Nobility, 1437-1509**

	Henry VI (1437-61,1471)	Edward IV (1461-83)	Richard III (1483-5)	Henry VII (1485-1509)
Total issued	37	23	6	205
To insure loyalty	5	3	0	76

Note: this table shows all recognizances and bonds issued, for people directly bonded, to those who were included as bound to insure that the individual in question fulfilled his obligations. Sources: CCR 1446-52, 1461-8, 1476-85, 1485-1500; Chrimes *Henry VII*, Lander *Government and Community*, Ross *Edward IV*, *Richard III*, Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship*.

Lander describes bonds and recognizances as “a terrifying system of suspended penalties,” for both the commons and the nobles.<sup>85</sup> One of their primary functions was to ensure loyalty.<sup>86</sup> They were periodically used by Henry VI, and while use on commoners became more frequent under Edward IV and Richard III, it remained consistent for nobles. During the twenty-four years of the Yorkist regime, approximately thirty nobles were bound, and only five were on condition of allegiance.<sup>87</sup> Of thirty, only one, Walter Devereaux, Lord Ferrers of Chartley, was bound more than once.<sup>88</sup> As Table 6 illustrates, with Henry VII, bonds and recognizances became even more widely employed, especially with the nobles. Under Henry VII, twenty-three nobles were bound multiple times. Of those twenty-three, eleven gave at least five. In fact, two of them, Edward Sutton, Lord Dudley and Thomas, Lord Dacre, gave twelve, and Lord Mountjoy gave twenty-three.<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, after 1500, there were more than fifty bearing the condition of loyalty to Henry VII and his descendants.<sup>90</sup> In nine years, Henry enacted two and one half times as many recognizances explicitly for loyalty than the Yorkists proclaimed on nobles altogether in a quarter of a century.<sup>91</sup> His system of suspended penalties was, as Lander describes it, “tangled.”

*[Henry VII] ingeniously tangled others in a web of legal chicanery. Upon some he imposed enormous fines for various offences: fines which he then suspended whilst holding the possibility of collection over the offenders' heads, threatening ruin if they fell out of step. Others he forced into bonds and recognizances carrying heavy financial penalties, binding them to maintain their allegiance and to be of good behaviour towards the king and his heirs. Lord Burgavenny, for example, was forced in 1501 to admit a debt of £100,000, the suspended penalty for unlawful retaining. Lord Mountjoy had to provide bonds of 200,000 marks that he would be*

*true to his allegiance while he was keeper of Hammes Castle. Henry bullied the Marquess of Dorset into making over the greater part of his estates to trustees appointed by the king. If he behaved himself for the rest of his life they would be handed over to his heir; if not, they would be forfeit to the crown. By the end of his reign, Henry had pressed a great part of the peerage, as well as scores of other men, under this brutal form of control.”<sup>92</sup>*

While not all of these restrictions were directly for loyalty, they all worked to entrap the nobles into heavy debts and obligations which they could not hope to pay except by providing loyal service.<sup>93</sup>

By financially binding the nobles, kings could insure their loyalty. However, like rewards, extreme cases were risky. Henry VII had the nobles under his control, but with such severe penalties that it led to grumbling among the nobles, “an atmosphere of chronic watchfulness, suspicion, and fear”

### Figure 3 A Recognizance Issued on Conditions of Loyalty:

**William Barbour of Bruton co. Somerset, Richard Meryk of Bristoll, merchants, Nicholas Barley skinner and John Hert brewer, of St. James Garlikhith, London. Bond in 2000 marks, payable at Michaelmas next, or levied etc. respectively in Bristol, Somerset and London.**

**Condition, that if Sir John Zouche during his life be loyal to his highness and observe faith and serve him truly in all things, this recognizance shall be voided etc.**

Source: CCR 1485-1500 no. 126.

**Table 7**  
**Attainders of the Nobility, 1453-1509**

	Henry VI (1437-61,1471)	Edward IV (1461-83)	Richard III (1483-5)	Henry VII (1485-1509)
<b>Acts of Attainder</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>Reversed</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>52</b>

Table does not include members of the royal family. Reversals not limited to by the attainting ruler. Both John Morton and Sir Nicholas Latymer (1461, 1484) were attainted twice at different times. If a noble was attainted more than once during the same reign, I have only counted it once. Sources: Ross *Edward IV*, *Richard III*, Lander *Crown and Nobility* from various places in *Rotuli Parliamentorum*.

developed, and Henry earned a reputation for tyranny.<sup>94</sup> By enacting forceful means of control, Henry encouraged rebellion, and he faced uprisings in 1487 and for much of the 1490s.<sup>96</sup>

For nobles who defied the crown, there was an even stiffer penalty: the act of attainder.<sup>97</sup> Attainders became acts of Parliament for the first time in the fifteenth century. Assent of the commons and king were the only requirements.<sup>98</sup> Use of attainder was appealing; it was quick, simple, immediately effective and easily reversed.<sup>99</sup> Reversals and attainders were frequent during the Wars of the Roses, when nobles shifted their allegiance, and new rulers sought to eliminate rivals “as speedily, as utterly, and with as much appearance of legality as possible.”<sup>100</sup> Between 1453 and 1504, 397 non-royal nobles were attainted, but 256 were reversed.<sup>101</sup>

It is not surprising that Edward IV attainted more people than Henry VII, or that Richard attainted a higher number per annum. The formers’ reigns were filled with long periods of instability: 1461-4, 1469-71, and almost all of Richard’s reign included rebellions or risings. In twenty-four years, Henry VII faced only five years with any real turmoil.<sup>102</sup> Henry also bound far more nobles than his predecessors. One difference between Henry VII and the Yorkists is the number of families with an attainted member. Two-fifths of titled families were attainted during the Yorkist regime; this rose to more than three-quarters during Henry VII’s reign.<sup>103</sup> Reasons for attainder were different for Henry VII than his predecessors. Henry VI and Edward IV probably used attainder as a means of seizing the holdings of their enemies. Henry used it as a tool to encourage loyalty: it hung over his nobles like the Sword of Damocles, ready to fall at any time.<sup>104</sup> Henry VII used an iron fist where Edward IV and Richard III used treasure chests.

Each monarch preferred one tactic to another: Edward and Richard used rewards with their nobles. Henry VII elected to entrap his nobles in economic entanglements and wave the threat of attainder in

front of them to keep them in line. Despite this, each of the kings used both rewards and bonds at one time or another. Their effectiveness in determining which was needed can be judged by the outcome of their reigns. Henry VI was dethroned; he clearly did not take the necessary steps or strike the needed balance between reward and obligation to ensure his reign. Edward, despite a period of exile, enjoyed a fairly successful reign after 1471: he was more capable than Henry. However, Edward’s approach was very limited in scope; he was strong enough to rule, even over those he displeased, but he never considered what might happen in the future. As a result, his heir was usurped. Henry VII, like Edward, enjoyed a lifelong reign. He showed that he could exhibit forceful behavior and be the strong ruler than England needed. His strict government served as a means to insure that his nobles would behave, rather than turning to violence against one another. His iron fist was sufficient to strike fear into the hearts of anyone who

### Figure 4 A Royal Pardon of Attainder

**Pardon to Humphrey Nevill, late of Brauncepath in the bishopric of Durham, esquire, who was attainted by authority of Parliament at Westminster, 4 November, of all executions against him, by virtue of any act made of that parliament and grant to him of his life, provided that he remain in prison during the king’s pleasure and that this pardon do not give him any title or claim to any forfeited lands or possessions.**

Source: CPR 1461-7 p. 122. Note the pardon explicitly states that all it does is grant him his life, ending the death sentence contained within the act of attainder.

sought to fight, unless it was for the king or against him. Strict policy ensured that Henry VII would have no problem fulfilling the second duty of king-ship-keeping the peace amongst the nobility.

The fifteenth century was an age of feuding between powerful families. From 1450 to 1470, national politics consisted of a struggle between the Yorkists and Lancastrians for control, further fueled by a number of local disputes. Old rivalries continued and new ones began, each side often joining one of the sides in the national conflict.<sup>105</sup> It would not be sufficient for a king to simply end the feuding between Lancaster and York; he needed to settle the other regional disputes and end the private wars waged by the nobles. Otherwise, there could be no effective government, national or regional.<sup>106</sup> Settling disputes was a difficult but vital task for fifteenth century monarchs. It is difficult to gain larger numbers of allies if each faction is busy fighting others; enemies are not likely to fight on the same side in a war. Besides, if the nobles are expending their resources fighting one another, there is less for the king to call upon for the defense of his crown or realm. And those at war would be paying less attention than is needed to control their territory; they would not be monitoring the regions as the king needed them to. The crown had to keep the peace among the nobles, no matter how difficult it might be; -failure greatly enhanced the risk of foreign invaders or challengers for the throne. As Lander states:

*The nobility upon whom so much depended were probably no less violent and corrupt than any other group of people. From time to time the king or royal council found it necessary to remind them of the need for higher standards of conduct. In 1425 and 1430 the nobility agreed not to take to violence to settle their own quarrels and in 1426, 1461 and 1485 they were either forbidden to receive or maintain criminals or bad sworn oaths against so doing.*<sup>107</sup>

Keeping the nobles in line was an “acid test” each king had to face, one requiring “a superior and independent will.”<sup>108</sup>

Henry VI was not strong enough to keep the peace. Disputes ran rampant throughout his reign. The Nevilles fought with the Percys and with each other. Thomas Courtenay, earl of Devon, fought with William, Lord Bonville in the south-west. It was recorded in Parliament in 1453 that:

*there are great and grievous riots done in the West Country at the city of Exeter, by the earl of Devonshire, accompanied with many riotous persons, as it is said with 800 horsemen and 4,000 footmen, and there have robbed the Church of Exeter*

*and taken the canons of the church and put them to ransom, and also taken the gentlemen in that country, and done and committed many other great and heinous injuries, that in abridging of such riots and offenses, should ride and labour into that country, for unless the riots and inconveniences were resisted, it would cause the ruin of that land..*<sup>109</sup>

As the situation was recorded in Parliament, Henry was aware of the dispute and the violence involved. So we must ask why he did nothing to curb it. Ultimately, he named Richard, duke of York protector and defender of the realm.<sup>110</sup> York was a strong ruler and leader, Henry VI was not.<sup>111</sup> Henry could not solve the problem himself; he was not forceful enough to control the situation. There were courts and commissions that could resolve the situation, and Henry could have arbitrated the matter himself, but he was unable to force the nobles to lay down their arms and deal with the situation peacefully. Instead, the disputes escalated.<sup>113</sup>

Henry VI began a downward spiral when he began his personal rule in 1437. He mishandled one crisis after another: trade difficulties, the war in France, Cade’s rebellion, and ultimately, the Wars of the Roses.<sup>114</sup> As Chrimes avers, “poor Henry could not govern, and others perforce had to govern for him.”<sup>115</sup> His troubles compounded each other: the war in France cost the crown money it did not have, and led to problems in trade. Trading problems led to revolts. And since the nobles were busy fighting amongst themselves, they did nothing to end the dissension.

Charles VII declared war on England on July 3, 1449; England could not fight back. Under-equipped, the English armies were swept from the field, and many fortresses surrendered without a fight.<sup>116</sup> On July 17, 1453 the last English forces driven out of France.<sup>117</sup> Within five years, England lost Maine, Normandy, and Gascony-only Calais remained. The nobles ignored the situation until it was too late; there was no one to bring it to their attention. This was because of Henry VI’s inability to restrain his nobles from fighting one another.<sup>118</sup> In 1455, York led troops against Henry at the First Battle of St. Albans, largely because of the rivalry between York and Somerset.<sup>119</sup> Henry’s failure plunged England into civil war. He sought peace, but by offering amnesty if the sides agreed to disarmament, rather than using strength and leadership to stop the nobles.<sup>120</sup> This weakness cost Henry his crown, as a small group of nobles was sufficient to unseat him.<sup>121</sup>

Edward IV knew the only way to hold the throne was to keep the nobles from engaging in personal battles. He personally settled disputes when they arose, especially early in his reign, when the nobles assumed he was too young or weak to stop them. In 1470, in a dispute between Sir Thomas Burgh and Richard, Lord Welles, Welles destroyed Burgh's house and drove him out of Lincoln. Edward stepped in and ended the dispute, showing his insistence on peace in the realm:

*It also provides a measure of contrast between Edward IV and his feeble predecessor. In this vital sector of high politics, the management of great men, Edward had succeeded in stifling their disputes and keeping the peace of the realm.*<sup>123</sup>

Henry VII had little difficulty with warring nobles. He locked them so securely under financial penalties he needed to worry little about them fighting. He had a strong enough presence to discourage the nobility from fighting. During his reign, only twelve bonds were issued regarding keeping of the peace.<sup>124</sup> Watts explains the situation very well:

*In the local realm, no less than in the kingdom proper, the peace and justice of the common weal depended on the existence of a stable and recognised structure of authority. .. The rule of the localities was in the hands of the nobility; with the result that it was they who formed the principal constituency and agency of the crown's overall jurisdiction.*<sup>125</sup>

The king needed to keep the nobles from fighting for another important reason: they were the only ones capable of enforcing laws and exercising control in the various shires and towns throughout England.<sup>126</sup> The king's reach could not directly extend to each subject; his regional representation was limited to justices of the peace, sheriffs, and surveyors of the region. The crown had to strike a balance: control the nobles, but give enough power to effectively administer their own holdings.<sup>127</sup> If the nobles were preoccupied with their feuds, their attentions would not be on the administration of the region. As Ross states "as might be expected, open defiance of the law was most often flagrant in the more remote parts of the realm."<sup>128</sup> Disorder posed a number of problems: it affected the king's income and the region's economic performance. In a time when kings struggled to hold the throne, a region in turmoil could provide a rival or foreign invader with a place to land, a place to organize, and justification for invading.<sup>129</sup> In 1462, as Edward IV attempted to assert his authority, there were risings in Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire. Trouble was also reported in six north-Midlands counties and in

the north-west.<sup>130</sup> Edward could not see to all of this himself; he needed his nobles to intercede on his behalf to bring the areas under control and punish the instigators. The king needed his nobles to have sufficient power to act on his behalf, without letting them develop into potential threats.<sup>131</sup>

The nobles had the greatest degree of regional power, power the crown needed at its disposal. If local rule could be left to the landed nobility of the region, the king could focus on other matters—he would not be preoccupied with handling affairs in every town from Cornwall to Northumberland. The king needed loyal and effective nobles to control the shires.<sup>132</sup> An effective regional administrator paid attention to his work. Thus, there had to be peace among the nobility.<sup>133</sup>

With frequent changes from monarch to monarch over the second half of the century, titles and land were often redistributed. This was done for two reasons. It served as a way to reward some and punish others: lands and titles were given to loyal nobles and wrested from their previous owners, enabling the king to place loyal men in regions where he was largely unpopular or had no direct connection. Also, further lands were bestowed on some nobles, enabling them to develop a regional hegemony, as Edward IV did with his brother, Richard.<sup>135</sup> Neither practice was new, Richard II had placed favorites in hostile regions in the 1380s.<sup>136</sup>

Henry VI could not control his nobles. He could not keep them from squabbling, so he had no regional control. His reign was one of extremes: either control was minimal, or nobles had "regional hegemonies."<sup>137</sup> Reports of rebellion occur as early as *circa 1435*, when rumors surfaced of Lollard riots in Cambridge:

*do all the diligence that ye can and may to the good rule of our said shire of Cambridge, and in especial have a sight that there be no gathering of such misgoverned men, and at all times to be ready, with all the might and power that ye can and may get for the resistance of their malicious intent and purpose, as it is to presume they would do and execute.*<sup>138</sup>

Over the next fifteen years, Henry watched his kingdom fall apart. All traces of royal authority disappeared; his actions only pushed England further into turmoil. Rather than installing capable administrators, Henry allowed his nobles to control him. In his name they dabbled in local politics, particularly in Wales, the Welsh Marches, and Kent during the 1440s. He incurred a good deal of animosity as a result.<sup>139</sup> Even worse, in 1453 Henry suffered a breakdown that lasted a year and a half. A weak king was

bad enough; one with mental problems was disastrous.<sup>140</sup>

After the turbulence of the 1450s, it is hardly surprising that a new ruler was received with little opposition.<sup>141</sup> Edward IV sought to establish some degree of stability by creating new magnates and enhancing some existing ones:<sup>142</sup>

*An important and necessary consequence of the change of dynasty in 1461 was a large-scale redistribution of political power at the regional and local level. Successful government in the localities depended upon the active cooperation of the nobility and their connections and well-wishers among the knights and gentry; but at Edward's accession a majority of these, especially amongst the higher nobility, was more or less Lancastrian in sympathy. The local influence and traditional loyalties commanded by these families had to be challenged, and political authority in the shires placed in reliable hands.*<sup>143</sup>

Edward learned from his predecessor's mistakes, and avoided repeating them. His choices were logical; they were his, rather than those of self-interested advisors.<sup>144</sup>

Edward also employed another means of keeping firm relations with all of his realm: geographic diversity at court. By hiring servants from across the realm, he made regional connections. This displays a keen interest on Edward's part to show attention to the various regions of his realm.<sup>145</sup> Edward did not meddle in local affairs; he had a genuine interest in the goings-on of his realm, and made decisions based on this. In 1462, Edward ordered John Hudylston, Richard Musgrave, Richard Salkelt, Roland Vaux, and John and William Par "to arrest and imprison persons going about inciting to insurrections and uttering seditious speeches in the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland."<sup>146</sup> Edward let local men do the work, rather than bringing in outsiders.<sup>147</sup> Edward at times was involved in local governance, but was careful not to interfere. He placed his nobles in their holdings for a reason, and he left most of the work to them. In the north during the 1460s, the Nevilles were left to keep Percy in line, and after 1471, Gloucester was left to rule the north almost single-handedly.<sup>148</sup> This *laissez-faire* policy ensured that Edward would not step on the toes of local rulers—their local power was assured without fear of royal intrusion.<sup>149</sup>

Henry VII's behavior was not as disruptive as Henry VI's, nor was it as hands-off as Edward IV's. Like Edward, Henry VII placed followers in positions held by supporters of the losing side.<sup>150</sup> He was also interested in local affairs:

a monarch who *wrote letters directly to deter those whom he understood to be planning riots, and who intervened readily in legal processes and local quarrels.*<sup>151</sup>

While this made him "a useful king to know," it did not make him a popular one.<sup>152</sup> Henry VII was aware of his own strength and he tended to meddle in local affairs. He sued for royal rights of wardship.<sup>153</sup> He installed clergy when and where he chose, promoting some to bishoprics, regardless of the preference of the local ecclesiasts.<sup>154</sup> Henry acted as a man who paid little attention to what others said or thought. As a result, his forceful rule was arguably the only way he managed to maintain his throne. Some monarchs ruled by compromise. Henry ruled by control.

The fifteenth century observed vastly different approaches to the dealings between king and nobles. As each element of kingship overlaps its counterparts, it should not be surprising that a king who was effective handling one element was also at least somewhat effective with the others; a show of strength and leadership would effect how the king was perceived, what kind of control he had. Henry VI could not bind his nobles effectively, as a result there was a great deal of feuding, so there was no effective regional control. Edward IV bound the nobles to an extent, and controlled them effectively during the second part of his reign. Henry VII also controlled his nobles, using "bonds, coercion and fear" to create stability.<sup>155</sup>

How tactics worked depended on the actions of the king who employed them. We have seen how Henry VI, Edward IV, and Henry VII practiced government. Let us now examine Richard III specifically. I have mentioned him in a few examples, but now I will scrutinize his performance as both lord (duke of Gloucester) and king. How does he compare to his predecessors and successor? This is a question that must be answered if we are to devise a historical depiction of the last Plantagenet king. We will do so in the next chapter.

## References

- 1
- 2 *Braveheart* produced by Bruce Davey, Mel Gibson and Alan Ladd Jr., directed by Mel Gibson, screenplay by Randall Wallace. Paramount Pictures 1995.
- 3 Watts Henry *VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 50.
- 4 King John signed the *Magna Carta* (Great Charter) in 1215, guaranteeing rights to the nobles and setting a new standard in English government: the constitutional monarchy. The king needed the permission of

- Parliament to receive funding, etc. For more on this see, for example, C. Warren Hollister *The Making of England* (sixth edn.) pp. 173-6.
- 5 More on the English Civil War: e.g. Lacey Baldwin Smith *This Realm of England* pp. 242-302.
  - 6 Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* pp. 38-9.
  - 7 Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* p. 76.
  - 8 The Wars of the Roses (1455-87) was actually a collection of battles and short campaigns between the Houses of Lancaster and York. Descendants of Edward III (1327-77) through John, duke of Lancaster (d. 1399) and Edmund, duke of York (d. 1402) struggled for control of the throne (family tree: p. vii). There were three Lancastrian kings: Henry IV (1399-3.413) Henry V (1413-22) and Henry VI (1422-61, 1471); Edward, earl of March, unseated Henry VI in 1461, starting the legacy of Yorkist kings: Edward IV (1461-83), Edward V (1483) and Richard III (1483-5). The last battle of the Wars of the Roses was Stoke in 1487, when Henry VII's army defeated an army of Yorkist supporters, killing the remaining heir, John de la Pole, earl of Suffolk.
  - 9 Rosemary Horrox "The Government of Richard III" in John Gillingham (ed.) *Richard III: A Medieval Kingship* p. 68 lists the defense of the realm and foreign policy as duties.
  - 10 Lander *Conflict and Stability* p. 99, *Crown and Nobility* p. 70.
  - 11 Lander *Conflict and Stability* p. 183.
  - 12 Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 59 from *Rotuli Parliamentorum* vol. V p. 300.
  - 13 J. R. Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 268-9 from J. G. Nichols (ed.) *Grants, Etc., From the Crown During the Reign of Edward Vpp. xxxix-lxiii*.
  - 14 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 269 from J. B. Crotch (ed.) *The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton* pp. 14-16, 81. For more on Caxton see above p. 17.
  - 15 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 296 from J. Harrington "Oceana" pp. 203,223.
  - 16 i.e. garrisons at Calais (the last English stronghold in France after 1453), Berwick (a castle in southeastern Scotland in English hands at various points between 1460-80, and permanently after 1482), and Carlisle (another castle on the Scottish frontier). Horrox "Government of Richard III" p. 58; Lander *Limitations* p. 14 from *CCR 1485-1500* no. 1193 (Berwick); *CCR1500-09* no. 958 (Carlisle); PRO, E. 3511225 (Calais).
  - 17 Horrox *A Study of Service* p. 21.
  - 18 Ross *Edward IV* p. 302; Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 297.
  - 19 Not to mention the fact that in all probability, no other noble would permit it if they were of the same rank! Horrox "The Government of Richard III" p.68; Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 21.
  - 20 George, duke of Clarence (d. 1478) was the third son of Richard of York and Cecily Neville. He held important positions after 1461 including Lieutenant of Ireland and Great Chamberlain of England. After rebelling in 1471 and then reuniting with his brothers, George continued on in Edward's regime, causing several problems, especially after his wife's death in 1476. Losing his patience, Edward charged George with treason, attainted, and executed him in 1478. Clarence's trial: below p. 114.
  - 21 Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, the "King-Maker" (d. 1471) was one of Richard, duke of York's allies. After York's death in 1460, Warwick played a major role helping York's son Edward depose Henry VI in 1461. In return, Edward gave him a vast base of power in the north, where Warwick was already a well-known and respected magnate. In 1469, angry with Edward's policies, Warwick rebelled with Clarence. In 1471 he changed sides, and restored Henry VI to the throne in 1471. He was killed at **Barnet** in 1471 by Edward IV's army. A character study: C. W. Oman *Warwick the Kingmaker*.
  - 22 Lander *Crown and Nobility*, pp. 209-11.
  - 23 Ross *Richard III* p. 163.
  - 24 The most famous (or infamous) example of nobles remaining neutral until there was the possibility of establishing a clear victor: Sir William (d. 1494) and Lord Thomas (later earl of Derby, d. 1504) Stanley. At **Bosworth** in 1485 they did not commit until they had the opportunity to decide the battle: p. xx (3).
  - 25 John, Lord Wenlok (d. 1471) joined Edward IV in 1461, served as a councillor and steward of many of Edward's castles, and was chief butler of England for Henry VI and Edward IV. He died fighting for Edward in 1471. His reappointment by Edward as chief butler: CPR 1461-7 p. 8. Walter le Hert (or Lyhart) (d. 1472), bishop of Norwich 1446-72, served as councillor to Henry VI and Edward IV.
  - 26 Elizabeth Woodville (d. 1494) had two sons with her first husband Lord Grey: Lord Richard Grey and Thomas, Marquess of Dorset. She married Edward IV in 1464, and bore him several children, most notably, Elizabeth of York (Henry VII's queen), Edward V and Richard, duke of York (the "Princes in the Tower"): Lander *Crown and Nobility*, pp. 210-211 from J. J. Bagley Margaret *of Anjou* pp. 57, 68; 1.5 S. B. Chrimes *Sir John Fortescue*, p. lxvii; Victoria County History *Lancashire* vol. II p. 215.
  - 27 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 272.
  - 28 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 271.
  - 29 Notes on tables in the chapter: unless indicated, I begin with 1437 as it was the date when Henry VI's minority ended and his personal rule began. As elsewhere, Edward V has been left out. Though Edward IV was in exile during the Readeption of Henry VI (1470-1), since the material during that time was recorded on the rolls as 49 Henry VI, I have considered Edward's reign as one of continuous rule.

- 30 Ross EdwardIVp. 65.
- 31 Henry, duke of Somerset (d. 1464) was a supporter of Henry VI. Captured in 1461, he became Edward's servant, receiving many rewards. Yet, at the first real opportunity, he betrayed Edward. Recaptured after the Battle of Hexham, he was executed.
- 32 Lander Conflict and Stability pp. 95-6.
- 33 Henry Percy, fourth earl of Northumberland (d. 1489) was a staunch Lancastrian, largely because of the Percy-Neville dispute. After betraying Edward, he was one of the chief props of Richard III's reign, and was at Bosworth, but for some reason (the debate rages on), he never engaged the enemy. He then entered Henry VII's service, and was killed by a mob attempting to collect taxes in 1489: Lander Crown *and Nobility* p. 207 from J. Warkworth, *A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of Edward the Fourth* pp. 13-4; C. Scofield *Life and Reign of Edward IV* vol. I p. 505, vol II. p. 316.
- 34 Hicks Richard III and His *Rivals* p. 151.
- 35 Ross *Edward IV* pp. 42, 51-2 from *The Paston Letters* (J. Gairdner ed.) vol. III p. 292.
- 36 Ross EdwardIVp. 70.
- 37 Chrimes Henry *VII* p. 110.
- 38 Lander Crown *and Nobility* p. 207 from Oman *Warwick* pp. 25-34; J. Bruce (ed.) *The Arrivall* pp. 6-7.
- 39 John Neville, Marquess Montagu (d. 1471) was Warwick's brother. He was created Marquess Montagu by Edward in 1461. He defected with Warwick in 1470, and was killed at Barnet in 1471.
- 40 Ross *Richard III* pp. 153,155; He says much the same in EdwardIVp. 332.
- 41 Lander Crown and Nobility p. 123 *Rota Parliamentorum* vol. VI p. 173, J. S. Roskell "The Social Composition of the Commons in a Fifteenth Century Parliament" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 24 pp. 169-70.
- 42 *Rotuli Parliamentorum* vol. VI p. 173 reprinted in EHD pp. 477-8.
- 43 Lander Crown *and Nobility* p. 270 from G. A. Holmes *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England* pp. 4-5.
- 44 William Neville (d. 1462), earl of Kent ("Bastard of Fauconberg"), was, like his Neville nephews, an early supporter of Edward IV, and defected to Henry VI in 1470. He later led an attack on London, and was finally captured and executed. William, Lord Hastings (d. 1483) was Edward IV's closest friend. Created a baron in 1461, he served the royal household faithfully. Following Edward's death in April, 1483, Hastings supported Richard (then duke of Gloucester) as Protector, largely because of his hatred of the Woodvilles. However, as will be discussed below (p. 105), he was executed for treason by Richard on June 13, probably because of his refusal to allow Richard to usurp Edward V; Lander Government and Community p. 43, 228; Ross EdwardIVp. 69, 72; Domincus Mancinus *Usurpation of Richard III* pp. 91, 93.
- 45 Lander Crown and *Nobility* p. 123 from *Wedgewood Register*, pp. lxii-lxxiv; *Rota Parliamentorum* vol. VI p. 173; A. R. Wagner *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* pp. 9, 11, 77-9.
- 46 J. L. Watts "The Counsels of King Henry VI, c. 1435-1445" *English Historical Review* 106 p. 289.
- 47 Ross EdwardIVp. 185.
- 48 Horrox *A Study of Service* pp. 255-6 from Somerset RO DD/Wo 29/4 ff. 12v, 18v; Inqs p.m. III no. 581. Trevelyan's dispute with the de la Poles involved a tract of land worth at least £8 annually.
- 49 Ross Edward *IV* p. 80; Audley's listing in *Complete Peerage* : "John (Tuchet) Lord Audley.. .had a special livery of his lands (1459-60), 38 Henry VI.. .taken prisoner at Calais next year, where he joined the party of Edward IV.. .summoned to Parliament 26 May 1461 to 9 December 1483.. .Master of the king's dogs, 5 July 1471, Peer Councillor 1471, obtaining a grant of £100 a year and being joint commander of the army.. .sent into Brittany, 1475.. .one of the 35 peers at the coronation of Richard III, who made him Lord Treasurer, 1484.. .died 26 September 1490. *Complete Peerage* vol I pp. 341-2. Appointed master of the king's dogs: CPR 1467-77 p. 266; Joint Commander: pp. 536, 542.
- 50 CPR 1461-7 p. 67.
- 51 Goods and chattels: CPR 1461-8 p. 270; manors: CPR 1467-77 p. 22; £100 annually: pp. 440-1; Other grants: pp. 162, 411.
- 52 A commission of oyer and terminer (literally translated 'to hear and determine') was "a commission.. .directed to...persons of note, empowering them to hear and determine indictments on specified offences, such as treasons,.. .etc., special commissions being granted on occasions.. .such as insurrections" OED vol. XI p. 22; Commission of array: "calling forth of a military force.. ."vol. I p. 646.
- 53 CPR 1467-77 p. 490, 573.
- 54 CPR 1476-85 p. 430; Lander Crown and Nobility p. 218 from BM MS Harleian 433 f. 284.
- 55 Jasper Tudor (d. 1495) was a staunch Lancastrian who never made peace with the Yorkists. In exile with Henry VII, he was the first supporter of Henry's rise to the throne. Chrimes Henry *VII* p. 54-5 from *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII* ed. by William Campbell vol. I p. 102; Rewards issued by Henry VII: CPR 1485-94, especially pp. 4-49, 53-70.
- 56 Ross *Edward IV* p. 333.
- 57 St. Aubyn 1483 p. 232. See also Lander Government and Community p. 130.
- 58 See below Appendix A p. 155 for the English and Welsh sees and their incomes; Lander Crown *and Nobility* p. 211; A clergyman receiving a land grant: CPR 1461-7 p. 105; in 1462, George Neville, bishop of

- Exeter, received manors forfeited by Lancastrian nobles; he also received manors on pp. 25, 122, 151-2, and 287. My thanks to Ross *EdwardIV* p. 72 for the references.
- 59 Lander *Government and Community* p. 118; A. J. Pollard "The Crown and the County Palatine of Durham, 1437-94" in A. J. Pollard (ed.) *The North of England in the Age of Richard III* p. 72.
  - 60 An English Chronicle ed. by J. S. Davies p. 64 reprinted in EHD 259-60; the story next reports that six months later William Ayscough, bishop of Salisbury was also slain "horribly".
  - 61 John Morton (d. 1500) served Henry VI until 1471. He later joined Edward IV's regime, translated to the bishopric of Ely in 1479. He went into exile during Richard III's reign, and was a supporter of Henry VII. He was translated to Canterbury in 1486 and became a cardinal in 1493: Davies "Bishop John Morton" *English Historical Review* 102 p. 3. Chrimes describes him: "astute politician and a sagacious lawyer and administrator... well able to trim his sails according to prevailing winds." *Henry VII* p. 10.5.
  - 62 Morton's pardon: CPR 1467-77 p. 261.
  - 63 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 210 from *Dictionary of National Biography*.
  - 64 Edward experienced this problem in the 1460s when trying to give land to his brother Richard; there was none available until Warwick's revolt in 1471. Horrox *A Study of Service* p. 30.
  - 65 Lander *Conflict and Stability* pp. 95-6.
  - 66 See above pp. 42-3 and the notes therein for a description of Somerset's treachery.
  - 67 Mancinus *Usurpation* (C. A. J. Armstrong, ed. and trans.) p. 75 from DuClercq, *Mémoires* iv. 88.
  - 68 Ross *EdwardIV* pp. 69-70; In addition he includes Richard Fiennes, Lord Dacre, William FitzAlan, earl of Arundel, and John de la Pole, duke of Suffolk.; St. Aubyn 1483 p. 120 and Ross *EdwardIV* p. 337 add Ralph Neville, heir to the earl of Westmoreland, to the list.
  - 69 Grey was commander of the Lancastrian vanguard: Ross *EdwardIV* p. 27.
  - 70 Ross *Edward IV* p. 69 and the notes therein; appointment as treasurer: CPR 1461-7 p. 286.
  - 71 Ross *EdwardIV* pp. 69-70, 337 and the notes therein.
  - 72 Ross *EdwardIV* p. 103.
  - 73 See below p. 88.
  - 74 *Croyland Chronicle* pp. 403-4; William de la Pole earl of Suffolk (d. 1450) was Henry's most trusted advisor from 1447-50. He was placed in command of the armies in France, which, hopelessly under-equipped, were driven out of Normandy and Gascony. Upon his return, he found that public sentiment was highly against him, and Henry sent him into exile. However, his ship was caught by some dissenters, who executed him.
  - 75 Jones "Somerset, York and the Wars of the Roses" p. 292, *passim*. is one of many sources that illustrate this situation. Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset (d. 1455) was York's chief rival during the 1450s. Ultimately, it was the animosity between them that led to the First Battle of St. Albans, where Somerset was killed. Queen Margaret (of Anjou) (d. 1482) was Henry VI's queen, and a far more forceful person than he was. She essentially ruled the country and commanded the army from 1455-61, and led the invasion force at Tewkesbury in 1471. She was captured after Tewkesbury, and imprisoned until 1476, when she was allowed to return to France, where she died in 1482.
  - 76 St. Aubyn 1483 p. 62.
  - 77 Ross disagrees with the common conception of Warwick giving Edward the throne, feeling that this version of the story "does not allow sufficiently for Edward's own role in the events of which he now becomes the central figure." *EdwardIV* p. 33.
  - 78 The dispute between Edward IV and Warwick is a complicated one. Most historians feel that the cause of the rift is directly connected with relations with France: Warwick had arranged a political marriage for Edward when he learned of Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville. Warwick also encouraged Edward to trade with France and ally with the French against the duke of Burgundy. Edward refused, allying with Burgundy instead: Ross *EdwardIV* pp. 104-25.
  - 79 St. Aubyn 1483 pp. 139-40; Ross *EdwardIV* p. 45; Horrox *A Study of Service*. See below pp. 70-3 for more on the issue of regional control.
  - 80 Even before the chaos of the 1450s, Henry had granted the earls of Salisbury and Stafford sizeable holdings, Salisbury in the north, Stafford in the west midlands. His rule was dominated by powerful subjects. Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* pp. 172-3 from R. Somerville *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* pp. 500, 507, 514, 528; CPR 1436-41 p. 96; CCR 1436-41 pp. 157-8; A. J. Pollard *North-Eastern England During the Wars of the Roses* pp. 91-5, 246, 249-50, 267-8, 402; R. G. Davies "The Episcopate in England and Wales 1375-1443" unpub. thesis p. 408; R. L. Storey *The End of the House of Lancaster* p. 11.5 and "The Wardens of the Marches of England Towards Scotland 1377-1489" *English Historical Review* 72 pp. 604-5, 613-4.
  - 81 Richard's acquisitions: Appendix B; As magnate of the north: see below pp. 71-3.
  - 82 Horrox *A Study of Service* p. 61.
  - 83 Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* p. 125; Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 206, Limitations p. 22.
  - 84 Bonds were suspended penalties that the king could demand at any time; "Bonds [had] specific conditions for the payment of money, the fulfillment of an undertaking, or the performance of a specific duty. Recognizances were obligations [i.e. a type of bond] which recognized or acknowledged a previously established debt of agreement, often made contingent on future



- conduct. If the recognizer did not fulfill the terms of his bond, he was liable to forfeit the sum specified by the bond. The full penalty, however, might be compounded for a fine. Most, but by no means all, these bonds, were for payment, usually by installments, of legally justified debts to the king.” (my ital.) Chrimes *Henry VII* p. 212 from W. C. Richardson *Tudor Chamber Administration 1485-1547* pp. 143-4. Kings used them for any number of reasons: to keep the peace, to ensure loyalty, etc.
- 85 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 276.
- 86 To understand the frequency of use overall, let us consider the example of Cheshire. From 1442 to 1485, 2,057 recognizances were issued. However of these 2,057, only six were to insure allegiance. Dorothy J. Clayton “Peace Bonds and the Maintenance of Law and Order in Late Medieval England: the Example of Cheshire” *London University Institute of Historical Research Bulletin* 58 p. 142.
- 87 In 1465, the Croyland continuator refers to men who “through the payments of immense sums of money, were restored to the favour which they had formerly enjoyed.” *Croyland Chronicle* p. 439.
- 88 Lander *Crown and Nobility* pp. 280,281 from *CCR 1476-85* nos. 1184, 1194,1218, 1225, 1242, 1243, 1244, 1245, 1258, 1259, 1317, 1412, 1417, 1423, 1456.
- 89 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 292.
- 90 This was only slightly more than-one third of all recognizances issued over that period.
- 91 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 276 from K. B. McFarlane “The Wars of the Roses” *Proceedings of the British Academy* vol. L pp. 115-6.
- 92 A mark is equivalent to 13 s. 4 a’.
- 93 Lander *Conflict and Stability* p. 183.
- 94 Chrimes *Henry VII* p. 214, Ross *Edward IV* p. 339 agrees with Lander.
- 95 Lander *Crown and Nobility* pp. 293-300, Chrimes *Henry VII* pp. 208-16.
- 96 Stoke, 1487, Perkin Warbeck’s poorly organized invasion, 1495-6, and a rising in Cornwall, 1497.
- 97 The act of attainder was a parliamentary device by which men (living or dead) charged with treason would forfeit all land and titles and incur a death sentence. Attainted individuals corrupted the blood of their entire family. Hicks describes the politics of attainder as “a rather complex game in which the King wrote the rules and cast the dice.” [his italics] *Richard III and His Rivals* pp. 47, 70.
- 98 Before a court told him otherwise, Henry VII attainted individuals without parliamentary consent: Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 128 from K. Pickthorn “Henry VII” in *Early Tudor Government* p. 119; A. F. Pollard *The Reign of Henry VII From Contemporary Sources* vol. II p. 19.
- 99 e.g. John Morton, see above p. 55. However, a pardon only negated the death sentence. Parliamentary reversal was required to restore holdings. Lander *Crown and Nobility* pp. 248-9.
- 100 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 128 from K. Pickthorn “Henry VII” in *Early Tudor Government* p. 119.
- 101 Lander *Conflict and Stability* pp. 107-8.
- 102 As previously discussed: 1485-7, 1495, and 1497.
- 103 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 281.
- 104 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 274
- 105 Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* pp. 202-4; Ross *Edward IV* pp. 16-7; S. J. Payling “The Ampthill Dispute: A Study in Aristocratic Lawlessness and the Breakdown in Lancastrian Government” *English Historical Review* 104 pp. 67-87 outline eight major disputes from 1435 on. I discuss two (the junior-senior Neville and the Neville-Percy feuds) below p. 78.
- 106 Ross *Edward IV* p. 42 from *The Paston Letters* pp. 28, 31, 33, 37, 66, 101, 135; Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 120; Payling “Ampthill Dispute” pp. 881-2 and the notes therein.
- 107 Lander *Crown and Nobility* pp. 269,272 from H. Nicolas *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council* vol. III, pp. 174-77, 217-18; *Rotuli Parliamentorum* vol. V pp. 407, 408, 487-88, vol. VI pp. 287-88.
- 108 Ross *Edward IV* p. 331; Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 78.
- 109 *Rotuli Parliamentorum* vol. V p. 285 reprinted in *EHD* pp. 1125-6.
- 110 *Rotuli Parliamentorum* vol. V p. 286 reprinted in *EHD* p. 1126.
- 111 Studies of Richard, duke of York: P. A. Johnson *Duke Richard of York 1411-1460*, Lander *Government and Community* pp.175-222.
- 112 e.g. Henry could order a commission of oyer and terminer to resolve the dispute.
- 113 Payling “Ampthill Dispute” p. 907.
- 114 Trade Problems: above pp. 33-4; Cadc’s rebellion: above pp. 34-S; I discuss the French war here.
- 115 Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* p. 60.
- 116 Harvey *Jack Cade* pp. 60-1.
- 117 Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* p. 67.
- 118 Gerald L. Harriss “Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England” *Past and Present* no. 138 p. 31; Lander *Limitations* p. 34.
- 119 This had been escalating for years. In December 1450, York ravaged Somerset’s chief residence, Corfe castle in Dorset. Other small outbreaks of violence occurred from 1451 to 1455 between the Corfe garrison and York’s men on the Isle of Purbeck: Jones “Somerset, York and the Wars of the Roses” p. 288 from PRO C1/1/66 and University of Nottingham Archives,

- Manvers MS Ma C58; Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* pp. 331-2.
- 120 Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* p. 70.
- 121 Lander *Conflict and Stability* p. 95.
- 122 Ross *Edward IV* p. 134 from *The Paston Letters* ed. by J. Gairdner vol. V pp. 40-52, 55-7; *CCR 1468-76* p. 138.
- 123 Ross *Edward IV* pp. 138, 191; Lander *Government and Community* pp. 23, 257.
- 124 *CCR 1485-1500*; Lander *Crown and Nobility* pp. 281-96.
- 125 Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* pp. 74, 96.
- 126 Ross *Edward IV* pp. 323, 388 avers that "violence was endemic in English society."
- 127 Lander *Crown and Nobility* pp. 268, 271 from J. P. Gilson "A Defence of the Proscription of the Yorkists in 1459" *English Historical Review* 26 p. 515; L. Stone *The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1559-1641* chapt. 5.
- 128 Ross *Edward IV* p. 407 refers to Cornwall; The same could be said for the north of England.
- 129 In 1482, Edward issued precepts to the sheriff of Southampton and other shires "commanding all the king's subjects to prepare...to wait upon the defense of the realm..." *CPR 1476-85* p. 320.
- 130 *CPR 1461-7* pp. 67, 101-2, 132; Ross *Edward IV* p. 43 from R. L. Storey *The End of the House of Lancaster* p. 197.
- 131 Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 268; Ross, *Edward IV* p. 43 from R. A. Griffiths "Royal Government in the Southern Counties of the Principality of Wales" (unpub. PhD. thesis)
- 132 Horrox *A Study of Service* p. 1
- 133 Ross *Edward IV* p. 394.
- 134 Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 335; Ross *Edward IV* pp. 323, 388.
- 135 Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 172; Gloucester's hegemony: pp. 71-3.
- 136 Lander *Limitations* p. 32.
- 137 Watts *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* p. 172.
- 138 "Letter from Henry VI to the Abbot of St. Edmonsbury, and to the Aldermen and Bailiffs of the town, for the suppression of the Lollards" in Halliwell *Letters of the Kings of England* vol. I p. 115.
- 139 Lander *Limitations* p. 25 from R. A. Griffiths *The Reign of Henry VI-The Exercise of Royal Authority 1422-46* pp. 329-46.
- 140 What happened to Henry VI in 1453 is uncertain. Chrimes *Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII* p. 67 states Henry "lost his mental faculties entirely." A letter from John Stodely to the duke of Norfolk on January 19, 1454 states that when Prince Edward was presented to the king "the king gave no answer... saving only... he looked on the prince and cast his eyes down, without any more [sign of recognition] ." *The Paston Letters* (ed. J. Gairdner) vol I. p. 263 reprinted in *EHD* p. 272.
- 141 St. Aubyn 1483 p. 47.
- 142 Lander *Limitations* p. 32; see above pp. 44-5 for examples of new creations.
- 143 Ross *Edward IV* p. 64, 337.
- 144 Horrox *A Study of Service* pp. 66, 283-4; Lander *Crown and Nobility* p. 270.
- 145 Rosemary Horrox "Government of Richard III" p. 61.
- 146 *CPR 1461-7* p. 132; Musgrave and Salkelt were escheators (rent-collectors) in Cumberland and Westmoreland: *CFR 1476-85* pp. 401, 420.
- 147 Horrox *A Study of Service* p. 66; Ross *Edward IV* p. 338; Lander *Limitations* p. 25.
- 148 Ross *Edward IV* p. 45; Gloucester: Appendix B p. 156; Rule of the north: see below pp. 81-4.
- 149 Ross *Edward IV* p. 337; Lander *Government and Community* p. 42.
- 150 e.g. Jasper Tudor as duke of Bedford.
- 151 Gunn "Courtiers of Henry VII" p. 48 from *Original Letters* p. 40; A. Camera "A Nottinghamshire Quarrel in the Reign of Henry VII" *London University Institute of Historical Research Bulletin* 4.5 pp. 35-6; Chrimes *Henry VII* pp. 208-16.
- 152 Gunn "Courtiers of Henry VII" p. 48.
- 153 Chrimes *Henry VII* pp. 208-16.
- 154 Lander *Limitations* p. 32 from Lander *Conflict and Stability* p. 98.

**Henry has made me realize the importance of the king's personality. Look at Stephen: his judgment is poor; he's determined in short bursts, then he gives up; he's courageous to the point of foolishness and he pm-dons his enemies all the time. People who betray him risk very little: they know they can count on his mercy. Consequently, he's struggled unsuccessfully for eighteen years to rule a land that was a united kingdom when he took it over. Henry already has more control over his collection of previously independent duchies and counties than Stephen has ever had here.**

— Francis of Gwynedd, discussing King Stephen and Henry, duke of Aquitaine (later Henry II) in 1152 in Ken Follet's *The Pillars of the Earth*, p. 838.



*Oranges and lemons  
Say the bells of St Clement's*

Being a special treat, like the orange children used to find in their Christmas stockings, and a real lemon:

*Medieval Holidays and Festivals, A Calendar Of Celebrations* - Madeleine Palmer Cosman, Judy Pratkus, Publishers, Ltd. 1984 (reprinted 1996)

Dr. Cosman, a Medieval expert, has written an earlier book: *Fabulous Feasts: Medieval Cookery and Ceremony*, and lectures at museums throughout America. The information for this book was gathered bits at a time from a surprising scope of sources. Letters between individuals were not often helpful, describing games and songs as "the usual ones" or "the new one from France." However, details were revealed. A particular dance was denounced in a cathedral sermon. A stained glass window revealed a song lyric, and a delicious dessert recipe was contained in a 12th century tract on asthma. From such unlikely sources, from England, France, Italy and Germany, Dr. Cosman put together this book.

Customs during the 12th-16th centuries changed slowly and varied little from country to country. Ancient pagan rituals were Christianized and encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church. Religion was at the foundation of most celebrations.

The book begins with Twelfth Night, January 6, and proceeds on a monthly basis. Each month had its special celebrations. For February there was St. Valentine's Day; March had Easter; April, All Fool's Day; June, Midsummer's Eve; July, St. Swithen's Day, and so forth. St. George played a part in more than one celebration. Christmas was the most elaborate and lasted twelve days.

The structure of the celebrations was very stable. All classes of society had the same rituals and games. The decorations and prizes were more expensive for the rich. Many customs for several holidays were attempts to predict the future in an uncertain medieval world. It was a time when a lack of rain or a surfeit of rain meant a poor harvest and hard times for all classes. The Wheel of Fortune reminded everyone that life was chancy. Lady Fortune's turn of the wheel could bring disaster to one while allowing another to ascend to better circumstances. "Nothing lasts forever and nothing is impossible."

## R I C A R D I A N R E A D I N G

*Myrna Smith*

The book ends with advice for recreating medieval holidays in the areas of decor, dress, and food with recipes included. A very interesting idea is how many medieval celebrations are still in modern language if not in actual use. Technology has brought to modern life a sophistication that makes medieval pastimes interesting only to children. Games like Blind Man's Bluff and Trick or Treating were enjoyed by medieval adults. But the expressions of "Oranges and Lemons, Bells of St. Clement's," and "Summer is a-cumin," wearing one's heart on one's sleeve, and "loves me, loves me not" while picking petals off a flower, are still familiar. Apple-bobbing and carving a Jack o' Lantern are not uncommon though the medieval lantern was a turnip or squash, since pumpkins are a New World discovery.

The book brings a different approach to an important age and enriches the reader's concepts of medieval life.

-Dale Summers, TX

*The White Rose* -Jan Wescott, J.P. Putnam's Sons, NY 1968

This is not a book Ricardians will enjoy.

The "White Rose" of the title is Elizabeth Woodville, and the love story of Edward and his "Bessie" is told with charm and grace. Anthony Woodville, Lord Rivers, is golden. He is warrior, courtier, and poet. As mentor of his nephew the Prince, he is faithful to King Edward and to his sister, the Queen.

Richard, on the other hand, is greedy, prudish, and ambitious. This characterization might be understandable if it were told as the thoughts of Elizabeth and the conversation of her companions. However, this is not the case.

Unfortunately, with the death of Edward, the author loses her focus. The Queen virtually disappears, and all we get is straight Shakespearean "history." What a shame.

-Margaret Drake, FL

*Tin kettles and saucepans  
Say the bells of St Anne's*

Or of St. Aubyn's, being mostly a lot of noise:

The Year of Three Kings - 1485 - Giles St. Aubyn, Atheneum, NY, 1983

Among the plethora of Ricardian reading that flooded the public around the time of the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Redmore Plain is Giles St. Aubyn's *The Year of Three Kings: 1485*. Apparently motivated to refute the more romantic depictions of Richard III which have been offered throughout history and which peaked at this time, St. Aubyn sets out to deflate "apologist" theories and "revisionist" portrayals of Richard III and his political surroundings.

St. Aubyn attempts to shed some light on a sequence of events as confusing and controversial today as they were five hundred years ago: the political situation up to the death of King Edward IV, the accession and brief reign of his son Edward V (during which time his uncle Richard of Gloucester was (self?) appointed Protector, the usurpation of Edward's title and Richard's own proclamation of himself as King Richard III, and the subsequent disappearance of Edward V and his brother, Richard Duke of York, from the Tower of London, where they had been confined by their uncle. St. Aubyn also provides a brief overview of the houses of Lancaster and York prior to the accession of Edward IV, and devotes one chapter to chronicling the rest of Richard III's turbulent reign, ending with his defeat at Redmore Plain by the remnants of the Lancastrian faction. An overview of the changing perspectives on the people and events throughout history closes the last chapter, but the bulk of the author's study is concentrated within the years 1483-85.

Although the author makes a conscious effort to avoid the traditional portrayal of Richard III as a hunchbacked monster, the picture he does paint is still far from flattering. Relying largely on contemporary sources, St. Aubyn gives compelling evidence that Richard assumed the Protectorate under false pretenses, removed his nephews to the Tower under duress, and was in some way responsible for their disappearance. He also demonstrates that, had Richard held the support of his subjects, he could not have been so easily deposed; in most cases he attempts to provide as accurate a contemporary view of Richard as is possible, and examine in detail the individual and institutional forces which contributed to his fall.

While St. Aubyn's view of Richard leans towards the cynical, he accepts that "there was nothing in Richard's reforms to suggest that his reign was that of a despot, although it was so judged by his subjects and posterity" (199). But neither was Richard III "the victim of one of the most venomous and aggressive smear campaigns on record ... even when every allowance is

made for the degraded standards of his age, the fact remains that Richard fell far below them." (238)

Although the author's prejudice is held mostly in check until approximately the middle of the sixth chapter, it manifests itself nonetheless. His theories and apologies at times take excessive leaps of logic: "The Woodvilles may have feared Richard and tried to oppose him, but that does not necessarily mean they plotted to seize or kill him." (106) Despite thorough scholarship and an easy familiarity with 15th and 16th century chronicles, St. Aubyn must be found guilty of "stacking the deck," in many cases using only the most incriminating sources. Even before the first references to Richard's alleged tyranny crop up, the reader notes that each chapter is headed by an epigraph from Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

Inconsistencies in St. Aubyn's argument are also noticeable. In the last chapter, which briefly touches on most of the major works on the Ricardian era from the 15th century to the present day, he criticizes Markham's 1891 "acquittal" of Richard on grounds of Markham's unreliability: 'At one moment, he dismisses the [contemporary] author as hopelessly unreliable ... and in the next happily cites him as an authority to buttress his argument' (250). This criticism is especially interesting in light of St. Aubyn's own heavy reliance of More; aside from a brief parenthetical reference to the questionable integrity of More's History of King Richard III, no notice at all is taken of the current view of Tudor historians regarding Richard. "If More is to be believed — and it must be admitted that his version of the Princes' death is extremely suspect —" begins St. Aubyn, and yet More is quoted prodigiously throughout *The Year of Three Kings*.

There are a few other problems as well: Anne Neville is described as dying of "a short illness" on page 2.5, and of "a long illness" on page 201. Several quotes appear unattributed; if they refer to a previous or subsequent speaker, they need to be made much clearer to the reader. Nevertheless, St. Aubyn's narrative style is enthralling, resembling that of a storyteller rather than an historian. Possibly the historian's obligation to constantly refer to sources gets in the way of a smooth narrative. At times, however, the resemblance to a fireside tale detracts from the historic integrity of this account; hyperbole and metaphor abound in places. For example, after Dr. Shaa preached his politically loaded sermon, "Bastard slips shall not take root," under Richard's orders, he went home and "apparently died of remorse," reports St. Aubyn with a straight face (148). And "during the night of July 4 [1483], two Kings slept in the Tower for the only time in its history; although possible Edward V slept the sleep of the dead" (167). Oooo!

All in all, an entertaining and even informative read; the author's methods of historical research and accompanying conclusions make for an interesting study in themselves.

— Valerie Perry, IL.

You owe me *three farthings*  
Say the *bells* of St. Martin's

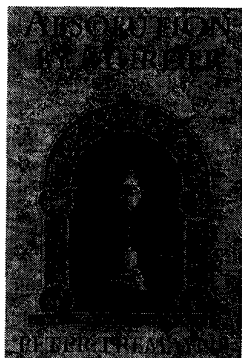
Being a triad of mysteries featuring a new (to me) clerical detective. (All right, I changed the rhyme a little bit.)

*Absolution By Murder* - Peter Tremayne, Headline Books, London, 1994, pb

*Shroud For The Archbishop* - Peter Tremayne, Headline Books, London, 1995

*Suffer Little Children* - Peter Tremayne, Headline Books, London, 1995

These three books bring us another rival to Sister Frevisse and Brother Cadfael. Sister **Fidelma** has no need to do her detecting covertly, for she is a *brehon*, an accredited lawyer in the Irish Court, and a Princess, too. She is a delegate to the historic Synod of **Whitby** in 664, which was to choose whether England would follow the Roman branch of the Catholic Church, or the Celtic. **Fidelma** speaks for the latter, but a murder disrupts the proceedings.



Was it planned just for that purpose? King **Oswy** sets a Royal Commission to look into the matter, this Commission consisting of **Fidelma** and a representative of the Roman faction, young Brother Eadulf. The partnership is described as that of a **wolf** and a fox, but it is more like Holmes and Watson, and **Eadulf makes** a fine Watson. Eventually, Sister **Fidelma** tracks down the killer, but Oswy rather ungratefully decides for the Roman Church. One reason may be found in the words of a churchman: "... **we** of Rome hold up the thumb and the first and second fingers to represent the Trinity when giving the blessing whereas you of the Columban church hold up the first, third, and fourth fingers." Just try it!

In *Shroud For The Archbishop*, **Fidelma** and Eadulf are in Rome on church business, and also enjoying the sights, and dodging the tourist traps, when they stumble on crime in the catacombs — and in the convent as well. Celibacy was not required in the Irish Church, and not universally in the Roman at this date, so there is a chance for romance to develop between the partners in detection, but at the end of the second book

they have not yet progressed so far as a peck on the cheek.

In the third, Brother Eadulf is not present, and Sister **Fidelma** misses him greatly. Little children do suffer in this book, not on-stage, but only just off. If this might bother you, be warned. This aside, the books are a pleasant way to pass the time, and to learn something about an age which we unjustifiably call Dark.

Of British provenance, these might not be in your local bookstores. Tiy specialty and/or mailorder bookstores, like Rue Morgue in Boulder, Colorado, (my source), or Murder by the Book., or others of that ilk. Couple of side notes: The cover art is very attractive, but not very accurate. **Fidelma** is described by the author as being 28, tall and red-haired. The cover girl has red hair, all right, but she is tiny and looks about 20, tops. Also, the author uses the word "prevaricate", which according to my dictionary means "to lie", as a synonym for "procrastinate," or so it seems. I asked an English friend about this, and he says that there it means "to be deceptive", perhaps by the application of delaying techniques, something like what we mean by "equivocate". I'm not entirely convinced; it still seems to stress delay more than deception.

— m.s.

*When will you pay me?*  
Say the *bells* of *Old Bailey*.

Being what the Native Americans still want to know:

Another Unusual Defender of Richard (sort of) in a rather unusual venue is found in the book *Cherokee Tragedy: The Ridge Family and the Decimation of a People*, by Thurman Wilkins, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1970. A few words of background: The title refers not to the Trail of Tears, but to the internecine political rivalry between the followers of Major Ridge, who signed a treaty with the US Government and allowed themselves to be moved, and those of John Ross, who would not and were eventually forcibly moved. Ridge became the victim of an assassination, which Ross may or may not have known anything about. Says Wilkins (page 4): "Often told, usually from the point of view of the executioners, the Ross faction (just as the account of Richard III of England...was permanently slanted by those who had destroyed him), the story of the Cherokee removal calls for a reevaluation in a time like ours. ..." Interesting parallel, since the author is clearly on the side of Major Ridge and his family.

In *The Cherokee Nation* (J.G. Press, Mass., 1973) Marion L. Starkey gives us the other point of view, of John Ross and his followers. Reading both these books is something like reading Tudor and "revisionist" histories, and the two still have impassioned

advocates and detractors, after a century and a half.  
Remind you of somebody you know?

When I get rich  
Say the bells of *Shoredich*.

When will that be?  
Say the bells of *Stepney*.

Being the continuing adventures of Dame Frevisse, of  
the Abbey of St. Frideswide:

*The Prioress' Tale* - Margaret Frazer, Berkeley  
Publishing Group, NY, 1997, pb

The prioress of St. Frideswide is Frevisse's old antagonist, Sister — now Domina — Alys, and she has visions of making this tiny refuge from the world into something more fitting, in her mind, to the glory of God. And there should be sufficient money to do it with, with good management, and Alys is, even Sister Frevisse will admit, a managing woman. But somehow there is not. The stocks put by for the winter are beginning to run short, thanks to an inundation of visitors, many of them the abbess's own kin. No wonder Domina Alys is getting headaches! Her troubles are just beginning, for murder soon follows, and then another one. ...

Even if she will never be likable, Domina Alys is shown here in a more sympathetic light than before. Frazer not only has the gift of making her characters seem real, but of making rather unusual circumstances seem logical and right. How often will you find murder done in a community of nine-persons? In fact, Ms Frazer (who is actually two people) must invent reasons to occasionally get Frevisse into the outer world, to make the mystery plausible. It's a tribute to her (their) skill that she does so, inside the walls or outside.

— m.s.

I'm sure I don't know.

*Says the big bell of Bow.*  
*Here comes a candle to light you to bed*  
*Here comes a chopper to chop off your head.*

Being the tale of vile deeds done by night in the Tower of London:

*Red Slayer, Being The Second of The Sorrowful Mysteries of Brother Athelstan* - Paul Harding, William Morrow and Company, NY, 1992

"Murder had been planned, foul and bloody, by a soul as dark as midnight. Only the searing sun and the glassy, wind-free waves of the Middle Sea would bear silent witness to Murder's impending approach."

That's the first sentence of this Medieval mystery - nothing like plunging right in, is there. But that is just the Prologue, not the mystery that concerns us. That one is done in the depths of winter, with the moats all frozen over, in the cold, time-haunted fortress of the Tower of London. No, it's not THE murder, being about a century too early for that. A (fictional) Constable of the Tower has been murdered, apparently in a locked room. What is the significance of the seed-cake he received a short time before his death? Was he killed by mysterious assassins from distant parts? By revolutionaries at home? Or by more personal enemies?

There is an embarrassment of riches when it comes to suspects, Sir Ralph Whitton not having been much loved. Officially, Sir John Cranston, King's Coroner, is charged with bringing the murderer to justice — after finding out who he is — and Brother Athelstan is his amanuensis and sidekick. Actually Sir John plays Watson to Athelstan's Holmes. There are interesting sidelights on Sir John's home life and Athelstan's rag-tag flock at St. Erkinwalds, which may have the honor of becoming parish church to the ratcatcher's guild.

Ricardians may enjoy this more than the author's Roger Shallot or Kathryn Swinbrooke mysteries, since Harding nowhere mentions Richard III in a bad light — can't, since he has not been born yet. But as I have often pointed out, he likes the Tudors even less. The dust jacket blurb, by the way, says that P.C. Doherty is a pseudonym of Paul Harding, while I had always thought it was the other way around.

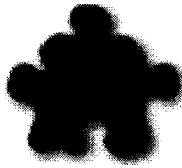
— m.s.

Anything here that rings your bell? If there is, let us hear from you. If not, certainly let us hear from you!

# DID LOUIS XI HAVE EDWARD IV ASSASSINATED?

*Michael Bongiorno*

I would like to present my theory that Louis XI had Edward IV assassinated by poison for responses from other members of the Society. I welcome all opinions, but please refrain from insulting the theory. I have no problem with criticism if it is intelligent, logical and factual.



I am writing a screenplay based on Jeremy Potter's *A Trail of Blood* and I want it to be a quality script, so I have taken my time and read everything I could concerning this baffling historical mystery. In the process over the years, mulling over all the information I read, I could not help but begin to question some things that I found "illogical," (for lack of a better word) about the unusual events of the Spring of **1483** in London, but especially about Edward IV and Louis XI.

The death of Edward IV struck me, intuitively, as suspicious. No definite cause was ever established, only capricious opinions about why he died so suddenly. Although nothing has been written about the oddness of his death nor has it been questioned, with the exception of Vergil's poison theory, it has never gone away.

Then something occurred to me. Vergil's "rumor" of poison was the only suspicion in the contemporary records. How odd it was for Vergil to make a statement about a "rumor" when his was the only source. "Rumors" are collective. Where are the other sources about this rumor? The other rumor — the murder of the princes — is conspicuous in just about every contemporary record so why not this rumor of poison? I felt there had to be some reason for Vergil's suspicion and simultaneously some reason why this rumor was exclusive only to Vergil.

It was not long before I suspected Louis XI. Many questions must come to your mind when you read this accusation.

## What motive did Louis have?

Louis XI was dying for approximately the last two years of his life. If this was the case, what could possibly be his motivation? The answer is quite clear: Louis was haunted about his son assuming the throne and the future of his beloved country. He was becoming increasingly paranoid and suspicious about everyone around him. He was obsessed with the heir to the throne and equally obsessed with real dangers lurking inside and outside his country, as a threat to his son's reign as king.

What would his reaction be when Edward IV reacted aggressively to the Treaty of Arras and declared war on France as retribution? Not only would his country again face an unremitting assault on its people and resources within his own lifetime, but within his son's lifetime as well. That meant a mere boy of thirteen would ascend the throne and be faced with the legacy of a maniacal and ancient enemy assaulting his [France's] shores.

How would his son cope? Louis spent his adult life picking up the pieces of the Hundred Years' War and restoring his nation to its feet. It required years of tireless work, endless intrigue and the genius of a man of his talents. Would his son, only **13** years old, be able to do the same all over again? Goaded by his declining health and accruing paranoia, Louis was left with only one obvious decision: assassinate Edward IV. Stop all the terrible devastation of another Hundred Years' War in its tracks. In doing so, Louis was insuring peace in double measure because he was well aware Edward would be succeeded by his twelve year old son, the same age as his own. With both nations ruled by a minor, war was unlikely to break out soon. That would leave his son plenty of time to learn the lessons of kingship. The benefits were too good for Louis to pass up when the alternative was destruction and bloodshed.

## How would he commit such a crime?

It would be to one such person that Louis XI would entrust as secretive a mission as the assassination of another reigning monarch: Angelo Cato.

Cato was particularly attractive to Louis for two reasons:

- Cato was an astrologer and divinator. According to Audrey Williamson, there was supposedly a link between astrology and spying. To mastermind such an undertaking — the assassination of a foreign monarch — would require the exceptional skills of a master of spying technique. Angelo Cato possessed this requirement.
- Louis XI was fascinated by poisons and Cato was an expert. Prompted by Louis, Cato could easily have created a slow-acting poison that would neither arouse suspicion nor detection in Edward IV's court.

Why is there not any indication in the records and why has this conspiracy eluded detection for five hundred years? I could give you the answer in three words: Philippe de Commines. When I first became suspicious of Louis XI's ordering the assassination of

Edward IV, my first line of inquiry was to read his reaction to Edward IV's invasion.

An upset reaction would certainly be a very valid one: Louis XI had spent his whole life trying to revitalize France from the horrible devastation of the Hundred Years' War.

Yet astoundingly the reactions of Louis XI to the invasion of Edward IV, recorded in four major biographies of Louis XI, range from nil to bland! I was dumbfounded and very disappointed that no reaction was recorded. It took the wind right out of the theory I was developing. The absence of any reaction would be due solely to Commynes not reporting one.

I found that fact very suspicious. *Louis XI had reacted with fear before, in 1473, when the news was Edward IV was going to invade France!* He must have reacted that way in 1482-3 when the stakes were much higher. If so, why did Commynes deliberately omit a hysterical reaction from Louis?

The reason I arrived at was simple. By ignoring any terrified reaction Louis XI had, he would divert a very compelling suspicion that Louis had anything to do with Edward's death, especially since Edward IV, died so suddenly and so soon thereafter.

If Commynes deliberately lied about this whole affair, would these lies and misrepresentations occur in the rest of his Memoirs? The answer is a definite yes. The research of Earl Bittman proves Commynes was very unreliable in places that he was previously held to be trustworthy.

A compelling point also became apparent. If Edward IV decided to invade France, shouldn't Louis's reaction be to mobilize his army and his nation, to prepare for the inevitable attack? Wouldn't his court become abuzz with the news of an invasion? Yet nothing of the sort is reported: no French records that I know of mention any mobilization of the sort, nor any concerned reaction by his court.

Absence of any mobilization could only mean that Louis was going to take or had taken action already by assassinating Edward. It could mean nothing else. The silence is deafening.

What evidences in the records support such an incredible theory?

A sane and level-headed Louis was capable of a drastic act of assassination. There are well-documented accusations against Louis for attempting to poison both his father and Charles the Bold. Even though they both were never proven, the accusation proves that it was certainly with the purview of his personality.

One compelling piece of evidence that further supports my assassination theory is that the records are rife with reports about the mental sickness Louis XI suffered in the last two years of his life. Paranoia, suspicion, obsessive thinking/actions and debilitating mental state could easily have contributed to his decision to assassinate Edward IV. If Louis were paranoid about his own court and family could you imagine what he thought about Edward IV and a proposed invasion? In his delirium, his reaction to Edward IV's invasion may have taken on even more paranoid proportions. As normal humans, our primal instinct is survival. The prospect of an enraged man bent on destroying our country and threatening our children is the best motive for murder. In Louis XI's mind he had no choice.

An important point that has never been brought out by any historian to my knowledge is that Louis XI could easily have inherited his grandfather's madness,

as his cousin Henry VI had and his other cousin, Henry VII, was suspected of having done as well, according to Paul Murray Kendall.

How credible is such a theory?

A comparison between Louis XI and Richard III demands exploration in the regard for this. One major precept that crops up in the "Richard III as murderer" controversy is that Richard had a good motive to murder the princes. Even if he were not aiming for the throne, he had to protect his own life. To many anti-Ricardians, malicious or not, this is their prime reason for believing him to have murdered the princes. While I completely disagree — the *Titulus Regius* was adequate protection for Richard — let us compare Richard's motive and the motives of Louis XI. While Richard was protecting his life and his family and his claim to the throne, Louis was protecting all of that plus the welfare of two nations. In light of motivation, Louis XI had stronger motives than Richard III.

### Useless Random Thought for the Day

If Henry the IV were cloned, would he be Henry V or Henry IV, Jr.? Or, wait . . .  
Henry IV Part II?

----



Ellen Pearlman

A funny thing happened on the way to an Elderhostel. Who could resist the lure of going to France and England with people who also had scanned the Elderhostel newspaper and found a perfect course which would include Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry Plantagenet; the chateau of the Loire Valley, William the Conqueror; Thomas Becket; plus a trip through the Chunnel on the "Eurostar?" We certainly couldn't, so on May 25<sup>th</sup> twenty-five strangers met on a bus parked outside Charles de Gaulle Airport and, three weeks later, after investigating all of the above, had become great friends.

The Elderhostel motto, "studying there is half the fun," appeals to us, and we've enjoyed several of their tours in the U.S. as well as in Europe and Canada. We've learned a lot and met good people. We recommend this kind of travel for all of you who are over fifty-five years of age, up to a hundred, depending on the rigors of the terrain you may encounter. It happens! If you are interested, get in touch with Elderhostel, Inc., 7.5 Federal Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02110 for information.

Writing about my trip, however, is not what this article is about. I am not going to describe the wonderful family effigies of the early Plantagenets, now installed in the center of the nave at Fontevraud, so close you can almost touch them. Or the amazing Apocalypse tapestry in Angers, the charming lunch in a troglodyte cave, and the grand cheeses of France. I am not going to describe the sounds of Chaucer's old English as one lecturer read from his "Canterbury Tales" or the discovery of the only working silk mill left in England or John de Vere's church, built in thanks for Richard's defeat at Bosworth.

Instead, this article is about the wonderful serendipity of serendipity. Before we moved to Florida in February of 1994 from Winchester, Virginia, we were members of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter and on occasion attended its meetings and received its newsletters. Here, there is no chapter, but we continued to note what was happening up north. One item in particular struck my fancy: a gathering to hear a tape of "The Middleham Requiem" by Geoffrey Davidson.

I wrote to Carol Bessette to search out a copy and she very kindly routed an address via Jeanne Faubell to me. This must have been late in 1994, because by January 23, 1995 Mr. Davidson had received my letter to him asking for a tape. After agreeing to several stipulations-not to make copies, not to lend it out, etc.-and sending him the one twenty pound note we

happened to have left over from a previous trip to England, the cassette arrived.

Along with it came a grand commentary and a program from the performance at the Church of St. Mary and All Saints, Fotheringhay, on Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1993, performed by the choir and orchestra of the Hitchin Thespians Operatic Society. The full text was also included, as well as Mr. Davidson's recommendation that I set aside "ninety minutes with a set of earphones. "The piece," he continued, "requires to be heard a number of times before recognition of themes becomes an exciting feature of the saga."

Well, that's just what I did and his was a good suggestion. Since then, I've listened a number of times and its "modern" music and "pretty harsh scenes" (Mr. Davidson's words) have become familiar refrains.

Geoffrey Davidson, a member of the Richard III Society, has stood in the midst of a Bosworth Field strewn with white roses and thought about what it meant. Before his move south to London where he became a BBC singer and conducts several choirs, he was a music teacher in Scottish schools. He came to composition late in life, and now his inspiration for composing is kindled during weekends away from the big city, at his country home in Norfolk.

Among his heroes is Robert Burns, on whom he is basing an opera. And, of course, Richard III is another hero who elicited the creation of "The Middleham Requiem." A review in the Yorkshire Post revealed Mr. Davidson's view that Richard was a brave, deeply religious leader, intent on performing good works for his people. It indicated that he mixed history and liturgy in a way reminiscent of Shostakovich and Orff-good company for a musician to keep.

There is, of course, a great deal of Latin throughout the "Requiem." Having long since forgotten most of that language except for *amo, amas, amat*, I wanted to know what the words meant, so I sent a copy to a friend, a Latin teacher in Virginia, who had fun translating them for me. By this time, it was the winter of 1995.

In the fall of 1996, I began a "study group" for the local chapter of the Brandeis University National Women's Committee. Teaching it would force me to organize my slides from long-ago trips and collate articles and bits of information collected over the years. A dozen women were interested enough to sign up for "The Legendary Plantagenets." We met monthly, and I made each deadline, which always included a Medieval "goody" to taste, by dint of hard, but pleasurable work. The course ended, naturally, with the last

Plantagenet, Richard III. I played one of Mr. Davidson's sweetest themes, a duet by Richard and Anne:

**Richard:** *Hollin green hollin green  
Hollin green hollin ...*

**Anne:** *Alone in greenwood I must roam  
A shade of green leaves is my home  
Where nought is seen but endless green  
And spots of far blue sky between ...*

Four days later, we would be leaving for our Elderhostel-ten days in France, ten days in England. There was to be one free day in London and we invited several English friends to join us for lunch at the Royal College of Defence Studies, where my husband had spent a wonderful year in 1967. We call it his "British Club," and we've returned several times to enjoy the sense of belonging to a wood-panelled piece of English tradition. Al even wears his special RCDS tie when we go there.

That recent hearing of "Hollin Green" gave me the idea of inviting Geoffrey Davidson to join us, so I quickly sent off a letter to his last known address. Although we had a number of responses waiting for us at Wansfell College (our British Elderhostel site), his was not among them.

One evening, however, we were treated to a musical soiree, and this is where the serendipity enters in. The soloist was accompanied by a pianist whose wife

was his "page turner" and after the performance we were talking with them over coffee. We told them the story of Mr. Davidson, "The Middleham Requiem," and the luncheon invitation. Amazingly, serendipitously, they knew him and the page-turning lady offered to search out his new address and phone number. Which she did.

Her kindness resulted in my finally reaching him by phone. It turned out that he would, indeed, be in London for rehearsals on the very day we'd arranged for the luncheon, and although he was unable to stay long, he did come for drinks and we did meet. Our new friend, Geoff Davidson, brought along a gift-a copy of the score of his requiem. So there you have the story.

Maybe that isn't the end. Maybe the American Branch will, one day, be able to produce "The Middleham Requiem" here in the U.S. Maybe we can all go to Leicester where Geoff is hoping to do it again. Maybe we can all cash in on the serendipity that gives life an extra little spark and opens us up to new ideas. Maybe ...

*GEOFFREY DAVIDSON is currently a member of the BBC Singers with a busy career as solo singer, lutenist and conductor. He enjoys a full musical life, but still finds time for composition.*

*"The Middleham Requiem" is his largest work to date, having taken four years of preparation. He is now working on an opera about his other great hero, Robert Burns.*

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# RICARDIAN POST

These letters are from Peggy Allen,  
Membership Chair:

*Barbara McDougall writes:*

The local outdoor advertiser does billboards with quotes by famous people. The most interesting one is a quote by the (in)famous Will Shakespeare. It reads like this: "There is no legacy so rich as honesty." Ah, everytime I see that I don't know whether to laugh or cry!

*And from Santiago, Chile:*

Thank you for your kind letter in which you welcome me to the Richard III Society and tell me I am the first and only member in Chile.

On this date of August 22nd, which reminds us of treason and loyalties, I am pleased to send you this slide, which shows myself in my office of general manager of a British water company in Chile. You can see that King Richard plays an important part also in my business life.

*Juan Vadell*

Dear Ms. Allen:

Enclosed please find our check. ...

This money is in memory of one of your members, Daphne Hamilton, of Worcester, Massachusetts, who died in November of 1996. Daphne was a good friend and a great Star Trek fan. STW was given a lot of her Star Trek collection, and we have been able to sell some of it. This check represents that sale.

We feel Daphne would like to have the money go towards the scholarship funds that your society maintains. Please either divide it between the two funds or use it as you feel right.

I will inform her family this is being done. Thanks for your help.

*Shirley S. Malewski  
Chairman, Star Trek Welcomittee*

From Peggy:

*After hearing from Ms. Malewski, I pondered my own situation and what I knew of fellow Ricardians. Science fiction was always a favorite of mine, ever since I found*



**Mr. Juan Vadell, American Branch's  
first member *from* Chile**

*Heinlein's Red Planet in the public library at age 7. And I had eagerly embraced the Richard III Society when first introduced to it. Were there similarities in the two interests? From my term as Treasurer, I also knew that more than a few Ricardians were interested in Star Trek: they paid their Society dues with United Federation of Planets checks. (For the Treasury's sake, it was good that the checks were payable in U.S. Funds, rather than Federation credits.)*

*I invited several Ricardians to comment on the existence of a Star Trek/Richard III connection, and the reasons for it. Bonnie Battaglia has also observed the dual interest phenomenon. She reported from California that members of the Society for Creative Anachronism ("at least the ones out here") are also "into Star Trek." Janice Weiner shared her insights and also answered my question about whether the Enterprise crew (which has on occasion traveled back in time) had ever met Richard III, as follows:*

Dear Peggy:

I think some of the appeal of the worlds of Star Trek and Richard III is that when in those worlds one isn't

thinking about one's own problems. In a word: escapism. Consider the possible motivation of people who dress up as medieval or Ricardian characters for the AGM banquet and those who attend Star Trek conventions in costume. Think of why people join the Society for Creative Anachronism or become a crewmember on a Klingon warship. I suspect all of us have a subconscious (if not conscious) desire to be a different person, at least for a while.

There is fantasy and speculation in both Star Trek stories and in Ricardian history. Obviously, in Star Trek the major speculation is how the future will be. A part of the fantasy is that much of the science the series are based on isn't possible (at least until aliens land and show us how wrong we are).

With Ricardian history the speculation comes from postulating answers to questions (e.g., who killed the princes?) from insufficient and inconclusive evidence. The fantasy comes from the speculation about the questions. In one way, all the historical novels about Richard III (etc.) are fantasies. Authors create dialogue and motivations for characters that cannot possibly be (and usually are not) fully documented. An illustration: as much as someone may know me and my ex-husband, recreating what we said on the day we parted will be forever a fantasy since I have forgotten most of what happened and cannot prove what did. (I've forgotten because my mind is a sieve, rather than there being any major angst in the situation.)

Though Star Trek has had some episodes with Sherlockian (Sherlock Holmes) themes the closest any came to a medieval storyline was a Next Generation one where the Enterprise officers were characters in a Robin Hood story. So there are no obvious connections I see between the two subjects.

I hope I've given you some idea why some of us are interested in both Star Trek and Richard III. Thanks for asking about it.

Sincerely,  
Janice Weiner

*Thank you, Janice. And thanks to the Star Trek Welcomittee for their donation and also for sharing with us another interesting aspect of Daphne Hamilton's life, and giving us an opportunity to reflect on our own.*

## RICARDIAN MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD IN DETROIT

Eileen Prinsen

The Michigan Chapter, of the American Branch held a memorial service for Richard on Sunday, August 24 at the Mariners' Church of Detroit-known as "The Maritime Sailors' Cathedral." The active cooperation of the Board of Trustees and the Rector, the Reverend Richard W. Ingalls, together with the inspired music provided by Organist and Choirmaster Kenneth J. Sweetman (A.R.C.O.) and the professional choir, produced a truly inspirational service.

Mariners'-a free and independent church-uses the Anglican Tradition as its form of worship as set out in the Book of Common Prayer of 1662/1928. King Richard's Hymn (text by the Reverend Tom Hunter-Claire, tune St. Matthew, by William Croft) was sung prior to the address from the pulpit; at the end of which the congregation recited together The Prayer of Richard III from his Book of Hours.

Dr. Ronald R. Stockton, professor of Political Science, University of Michigan-Dearborn, gave the address from the pulpit speaking from the premise: "We are here to reflect upon a human life ...". This was a truly moving and inspiring address which we plan to place on the NET in its entirety in the near future.

Other music during the service included the Organ Voluntary by composer Healey Willan, based upon a plainsong hymn from the Sarum Rite; the communion service included the ancient Plainsong Requiem in common use in Western Catholic Churches during the 15th century; and the Voluntary after the Service was an adaptation for the organ of a tune attributed to John Dunstable, the 15th century's best known composer.

We should add that the hymn "Christ was the Word" sung by the choir during the distribution of the elements is sometimes attributed to Elizabeth the First!

About 24 members, friends and family of the Michigan Branch attended; others came attracted by Ron Stockton and newspaper stories. Branch members gathered for brunch immediately after the service at one of Detroit's deservedly famous restaurants "Fishbone's Rhythm Kitchen Cafe."

This event has been in the planning since the summer of 1996—that it was successful beyond my hopes is due completely to the goodwill and serious attention to detail of the Reverend Richard W. Ingalls and Professor Ronald R. Stockton.

# SCATTERED STANDARDS



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## Michigan Area Chapter

On Sunday, August 24, 1997, an event that had been in the planning since the summer of 1996 took place at Mariners' Church in Detroit, Michigan. The memorial service for King Richard III was well attended by 24 Society members, friends and family as well as regular parishioners and those attracted by newspaper stories in the area press.

The active cooperation of the Board of Trustees and the Rector, the Reverend Richard W. Ingalls, together with the inspired music provided by Organist and Choirmaster Kenneth J. Sweetman and the professional choir produced a truly inspirational service.

Dr. Ronald R. Stockton, professor of Political Science, University of Michigan-Dearborn, gave the address from the pulpit speaking from the premise: "We are here to reflect upon a human life ..." This was a truly moving address which will be available on the Michigan Area Chapter webpage in its entirety in the near future. (<http://www.users.eesc.com/forevere>)

The annual Coronation 'Banquet was held on Tuesday, July 1 at the Fox and Hounds Restarant in Bloomfield Hills, MI. Following the business meeting Janet Trimbath presided over a very enjoyable Ricardian Trivia contest, which showed us just how much we have left to learn.

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## Ohio Chapter

Since our April meeting in Columbus, the Ohio Chapter has been busier than usual. Not only did we make our tenth annual appearance at the Ohio University Renaissance Festival in May, where our booth has become a mainstay, rain or shine, but we've investigated the possibilities and laid the groundwork for hosting ACM '98, celebrated our eleventh anniversary in July at the home of Kathie and Jim Raleigh in Sagamoe Hills, OH (just south of Cleveland) and are looking forward to an enjoyable fall meeting in September, attending the Ohio Renaissance Festival (an annual permanent-site festival in the southern part of the state) and then gathering for dinner and a short business meeting in a restaurant in nearby Wilmington, OH.

Under the co-chairmanship of Bruce and Judie Gall, the AGM '98 Planning Committee is working feverishly on making "Middleham Revisited" an even more memorable event than 'An Evening at Middleham' was in Cleveland at the '89 AGM. Particulars, as they become available, can be found in articles

submitted to The *Register* from time to time, but our personal wizards, when it comes to whipping up authentically medieval events, Pat and Tom Coles, assure us this banquet may well outside the one in '89 and that one had even members of the hotel staff present at the time absolutely spellbound. Nor is all our concentration centered on the AGM. Northern member Shirlee McQuown is busy organizing library displays in the Cleveland area this coming fall and winter. We've members actively involved in the Society's website, both as contributors of original material and transcribers of other materials constantly being added to that growing compendium of original source documents and information on the World Wide Web.

Throughout the past Ricardian year, we've welcomed several new members to our ranks and seen the return of some we hadn't seen for quite a while, all of which bodes well for our future. While our major project for the coming year will be the AGM, we're alsomaking plans for an interesting round of activities in conjunctionwith our regular quarterly meetings. For those Ricardians in the area (Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana primarily) there's something for everyone in the Chapter and you can be assured of a warm welcome. Anyone interested in obtaining further information may do so by contacting Bruce Gall, 5971 Belmont Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45224-2363; (513) 542-4541; e-mail: [bwgicg@ix.netcom.com](mailto:bwgicg@ix.netcom.com).

## Modern Day Richards Abound?

Actor Gary Sinisc credits persistence for the fact that he ended up playing George Wallace in TNT's miniseries of the same name, after having been coaxed by director John Frankenheimer into playing therole.

In a recent newspaper article he is quoted as saying he now considers the role akin "to a modern day Richard III" — and he's glad he did it.

Richard III and George Wallace? Or TNT's Turner and Shakespeare? Why is it that old line seems to come out everytime an actor plays some extraordinary character or a news commentator is giving the inside dish on one of our politicians?

# WHO WAS NICHOLAS VON POPPLAU?

*Sheila Bignell*

Nicholas von Popplau<sup>1</sup> was a Silesian knight inordinately proud, indeed, vainglorious, about his great learning, his almost superhuman strength and his skill in jousting with a lance so long and heavy that it had to be transported on a cart. Claiming to be the only one capable of lifting and wielding it, he enjoyed besting his would-be adversaries of high estate and arousing the amazement and admiration of the crowds who flocked to see him with his extraordinary weapon.

Born in Breslau about 14402 to a gentry family which also engaged in mercantile pursuits, Popplau traveled extensively on the affairs of the family business in his early years, and then entered the service of the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick III. Between 1483 and 1486 he undertook a mission to the courts of Europe, setting out from Vienna with letters of credence from the Emperor in February 1483. His itinerary, according to the extant sources whose provenance and reliability will be the main theme of this essay, was as follows: he traversed various imperial territories, visiting the princess of the Holy Roman Empire, beginning in Bavaria and proceeding to the Palatinate, Innsbruck, the Rhineland and the archdiocese of Treves, among other places.

He was warmly greeted by the two Dukes of Bavaria, whose principal seats were situated at Munich and Landshut respectively. At Heidelberg where he went twice, at the beginning and towards the end of his journey, the Elector Palatine of the Rhine was particularly gracious to him. At the Archbishop of Treves's court at Coblenz the prelate's tutor had to respond in German to Popplau's Latin, while at Bonn, where the Archbishop of Cologne held court, Popplau allegedly shamed his princely host by not attempting the vain task of addressing him in Latin, having been warned that the Archbishop was entirely ignorant of that tongue. He went on by river to Cologne where he astonished the Dean of the Cathedral and his many noble visitors by performing sensational and novel feats with his long lance, as he had previously done at Innsbruck before Archduke Sigismund. Next he made his way via Maastricht, where the Bishop of Liege supplied him with an escort, to Brussels in the expectation of meeting the Duke of Burgundy<sup>3</sup> (or rather the acting Duke during the infancy of his infant son, Philip) in the person of the Archduke Maximilian of Austria, the widower of Mary, sole heir-at-law to the last Valois Duke, Charles the Rash. However, finding that the Duke had gone to

Hainault, Popplau proceeded to Valenciennes, where he met not only Maximilian but his French adviser, Dr. Rochefort. Popplau greatly impressed the latter with his acts of valour in jousting and with his wide learning and fluency in Latin. When Rochefort expressed his admiration of the knight's great skill in these different fields Popplau's reply, if we can believe the sources, was scandalously rude. If a Frenchman were master of this range of accomplishments, it would be worthy of remark, he said, but for a high German it was nothing out of the ordinary. He met the Duke of Burgundy once more at Malines and again displayed his knightly prowess in the lists to the wonder of the bystanders. Maximilian, who of course was the son and heir of the Emperor Frederick III, farewelled him with rich gifts and letters of commendation for the foreign sovereigns he was about to visit. From Malines he rode via Antwerp and Middelburg to take ship for England.

Arriving in April 1484, he walked ten miles to Canterbury to see Becket's shrine, which amazed him with its rich jewels. He was at London for Easter and was shown the sights by a fellow-countryman, Dr. Schenk, a doctor of laws. A Danzig merchant to whom the latter introduced him gave him a miraculous ring which, according to legend, protected the wearer against epilepsy, having been blessed by Edward the Confessor. He then set out via Cambridge, Stamford, Newark-on-Trent and Doncaster for York, whose Cathedral he thought more splendid than St. Paul's in London. Thence he proceeded, according to some accounts, to the northern court of Richard III at Pontefract, where he stayed a week.<sup>4</sup> Popplau found Richard living in sumptuous and refined surroundings. He gloried in the magnificent music performed in the Chapel Royal in the monarch's presence and acknowledged the kindness and generosity of his royal host. Certain important aspects of their encounter will be discussed below.

Popplau then visited many other places in the British Isles before setting sail for the Iberian Peninsula early in June. His comments about the English, their cooking and the customs of the country were held by later German historians to have been remarkably prescient<sup>5</sup>, but to a modern reader they only demonstrate how old and persistent are national stereotypes.

Popplau's ship landed in Galicia on 22 July<sup>6</sup> after much delay caused by repeated storms which had blown the ship off course. Popplau then traveled about Spain extensively, visiting the famous pilgrimage sites

before making his way in August to Lisbon and thence to Setubal where King John of Portugal held his court. He admired the monarch, except for his table manners, but had nothing but scorn for the uncouth behavior of the courtiers and the general appearance and attitudes of the Portuguese.

Thereupon he sailed from Lisbon, landed at Lagos and journeyed towards Seville where he encountered the King and Queen of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, to whom he proffered his credentials from the Emperor and the German princes. However, he had to wait four weeks and enlist the assistance of the Duke of Burgundy's envoy before receiving an answer and letters of safe conduct. His comments on the Spanish sovereigns and their subjects are more scurrilous than anything he had yet penned. He even takes a side-swipe en passant at the Spaniards' ally, the pope. Thence he made his way northeast through Catalonia towards France.

In the Kingdom of France Popplau's contempt was aroused by the meanness of the buildings and the superstitious pride manifested in a multitude of dubious relics at Toulouse and at Mont-St-Michel. He had been similarly sceptical about the legend he had heard in Ireland of St. Patrick's pit which was believed to give access to Purgatory<sup>7</sup>. Yet he expresses no similar reservations about the sacred objects at Canterbury or London, where he reports there was ajar from the marriage feast at Cana, nor did he question the authenticity of those in northwestern Spain associated not only with St. James the Great but with St. James the Less and even the Virgin Mary.

Popplau also reports having experienced more mistrust and ill-usage in France than anywhere else in the course of his journey. He was confined for several weeks in a castle near Angouleme where his effects were confiscated. Although he was eventually released and had most of his goods returned to him, his precious letters were missing. He was told they had been sent on to the King. He believed that the doubtful welcome he received at Nantes from the old Duke of Brittany, who honoured him with fair words and gestures but no gifts, was perhaps owing to suspicion aroused by the absence of his papers, which were never restored, even when he finally caught up with the young King Charles VIII at Rouen. If our sources are to be believed, Popplau made another withering speech to the child monarch, blaming his kin and councillors for the lack of courtesy and the rough handling he had endured in France, while exonerating the King himself on account of his age. He left the court at Rouen without receiving any honours or tangible rewards and made his way via Paris back to imperial territory. There he found a warmer welcome at the courts of the princes of the Holy Roman Empire, many of whom he waited upon before returning to his

natal city, Breslau, in May 1486. He had met the Emperor at Ulm in May 1485 and given him a verbal report before collecting his pay and taking leave for a time until called upon to embark on further missions<sup>8</sup>.

A written report, doubtless the source for the various extant descriptions of Popplau's travels, must have been delivered subsequently<sup>9</sup>. The earliest known version is a manuscript copy of 73 folio pages, dated 1712, in the archives at Breslau, or Wroclaw, as it is now called. Its completeness and accuracy cannot be assessed because the original has never been found. Besides, even this copy was not readily accessible to western scholars during the Communist regime in Poland. Last year, however, a Polish translation of it with a formidable scholarly apparatus appeared and a German edition is soon expected<sup>11</sup>. These may throw some light on the problems associated with the printed accounts of Popplau's travels which appeared in the nineteenth century, all based on the 1712 copy. In 1847 a paraphrase, composed in the 1780s by Samuel Benjamin Klose (1730-98), was printed by G. A. Stenzel in a collection of historical material relating to Silesia<sup>12</sup>.

It was the latter which gave English-speaking readers their first inkling of Popplau's meeting with Richard III; in C.A.J. Armstrong's second edition of Mancini's *The Usurpation of Richard III*, published in 1969, there is an appendix in which a short passage from the printed version of Klose's description is introduced and discussed<sup>13</sup>. To judge by his conclusions, Armstrong appears to have read attentively only five of Klose's fifteen pages dealing with Popplau's journey to the courts of Europe. Probably he looked no further than the account of the interview with Richard III. Armstrong does not seem to have recognized that Klose had paraphrased his source, nor to have been aware that Popplau was on an official mission. Klose's text is, writes Armstrong, "possibly the earliest and most reliable extract from the journal of Nicholas," since the original manuscript, "perhaps in Latin," has probably been lost. How could Armstrong judge its reliability if the original were lost? His only other citations are two publications derived from the same manuscript: Sinapius, who in a work published in 1720 devotes less than a page to Popplau<sup>14</sup>, and Fielder, who gives a summary of Popplau's mission to the courts of Western Europe, acknowledging Klose as the main source for this first part of his essay, before going on to his main theme, two subsequent visits by Popplau to Russia<sup>15</sup>. If Armstrong had read more of Klose's text he would have encountered the heated assertion that Popplau had written his account in German and not in Latin, despite Sinapius's referring to his source as *Itinerarium Poppelianum*. Yet Klose admits that he knows neither the whereabouts of the document on which Sinapius had based his summary

of 1720, nor whether it was the original or a copy. Even had it been a copy, Klose concedes the one he saw himself in the 1780s might well have been made later<sup>16</sup>. So it is evident that both Klose and Armstrong lacked convincing evidence of the language in which Popplau had penned his report.

Further reading of Klose would also have disabused Armstrong of his surmise as to Popplau's and Richard's stature. He translates the passage in which Popplau allegedly describes the English king's appearance thus:

*Richard was three fingers taller than himself, but a little thinner and not so thick set, also much more lean; he had delicate arms and legs.*

From this Armstrong comes to the following conclusion:

*Having regard to Popplau's extraordinary strength, it is natural to suppose that he was a big man and if Richard was three fingers taller his height was doubtless considerable. If the king's limbs were really so frail, it is easy to see how the legend arose of Richard's withered arm. Hostile caricature would have little difficulty in making a hunchback of a tall and emaciated man who not improbably stooped as well.*

Thus, disregarding the paraphrastic nature of Klose's narrative, Armstrong neatly accommodates his own translation to the later legends by means of two word shifts and two assumptions: "'delicate' becomes 'so frail' and 'thinner than' becomes 'emaciated,'" that Richard "not improbably stooped" is pure guesswork and tallness turns out to be an erroneous assumption. Armstrong's rendering of "subtile Arme und Schneckel" as "delicate arms and legs" is not wrong but the connotation of frailty he gives it, which can certainly be read into the English word "delicate," does not hold for the German adjective "subtil." A less ambiguous translation would be "slender arms and legs," connoting gracefully shaped rather than unduly frail.

Andreas Kalckhoff in his German language biography of Richard III, published in 1980, draws quite a different conclusion about Richard III's appearance from the same passage. He notes that since according to tradition:

*Richard was rather small, the four-square strongman from Silesia must have been positively dwarfish. Or did Richard only seem small in comparison with his lofty brothers?*<sup>17</sup>

"However, if he and Armstrong had but read a little further in the text their suppositions would have proved to be unnecessary.

Popplau's subsequent visit to King John of Portugal, related a few pages later, throws much light on the stature of the monarchs of both England and Portugal and of the knight himself, for there we read: "Popplau describes King John as of middle height and somewhat taller than he<sup>18</sup>." So, if we can trust Klose, that would make Richard also of medium height and Popplau a little on the short side though no dwarf. What is most interesting, but not remarked on by Armstrong or Kalckhoff, is that Klose's Popplau gives not the slightest hint of any deformity in Richard's person. Yet elsewhere he is scandalously free with derogatory comments on many of the rulers visited, from the Archbishop of Cologne to practically every French person of rank he encountered.

Yet the accuracy of the text cannot simply be taken for granted. There are some garbled passages owing to illegibility or other deficiencies in the source, flaws in Klose's or Popplau's notes or memory, or to a not very skilled attempt to paraphrase a complicated situation. Some dates and places in England are demonstrably wrong since they do not tally with the English archival records<sup>19</sup>. Not only does Klose refer to his source as a copy of a lost original, he writes in the third person, gets into syntactic muddles when trying to quote verbatim, omits to mention many stages on the journey and even interposes comments and criticisms of his own from time to time. One example should suffice to establish the latter. When telling of Popplau's detention in the castle in France Klose writes:

*Popplau believes that the captain intended to rob him of his clothes and valuables but it is more likely that the Zatter mistook him for a treacherous man who had been in France three years previously<sup>20</sup>.*

So it seems that when making his abridged paraphrase Klose did not have before his eyes the full transcription of the document he had unearthed in his search through the Breslau archives and monastic libraries in the 1780s<sup>21</sup>. He appears to have relied on inadequate notes made at the time of reading or immediately afterwards to produce his handwritten synopsis which was not destined to appear in print for another half-century when it was edited in 1847 by Stenzel, who made his own modifications and revealed that the marginal dates and gazeteer, which he retained, had been added by Klose<sup>22</sup>. Moreover, other German pieces based on the same source and published before and after Stenzel's compilation do not chime with Klose's text in every detail. One account, published in 1806, gives only a brief, not entirely reliable, third-person summary of the first 23 pages of



the 1712 document before launching into an annotated first-person narrative, beginning with Popplau's departure for England. The editor makes no bones about altering the spelling and punctuation of his source because, he says, he cannot be sure that the manuscript has not already been falsified<sup>24</sup>. Then, in 1856, Joseph Fielder published in a Viennese journal an interesting sketch of Popplau, the main purpose of which was to show that the European mission of 1483-86 had been followed by two accredited journeys to Russia<sup>25</sup>. Fielder states that a learned colleague who had examined Klose's source in Breslau was of the opinion that the copyist had modernized it considerably<sup>26</sup>. In giving his summary of Popplau's journey of 1483-86 Fielder relies on Klose's paraphrase, as his footnotes make clear, yet in the course of abbreviating and rewriting the narrative he makes small changes of emphasis as well as altering some dates and the spelling of names. The Emperor even becomes Frederick IV, on the authority of a calendar of documents covering the years 1440-93<sup>27</sup>. Of course every selection from a longer account and every rewording, transcription and translation, to say nothing of interpretation, opens the way for error and misunderstanding to creep in. So, once it is acknowledged that the earliest extant description of Popplau's journey is a copy, perhaps at more than one remove from the original, there is no call to judge Klose and those who rely on him as a source more harshly than other labourers in the Popplau vineyard.

The authors who mention Popplau in works on Richard III view him more as a tourist than an envoy with a task to fulfil. Some of the German works about Popplau, including Klose's paraphrase, while mentioning that he embarked on his travels in 1483-85 as an emissary of the Emperor, fail to specify the terms of his commission. Yet Popplau's purpose surely has considerable bearing on the content and tone of his report and its derivatives. Fielder is exceptional in arguing that all three of Popplau's journeys accredited by the Emperor were diplomatic missions. He gives evidence, however, that their purpose was to be divulged solely to the sovereigns concerned and was to be kept secret from the world at large. He argues convincingly that the two Russian visits were undertaken to forge an alliance between the Emperor and the Grand Duke of Muscovy in the face of the continuing menace posed by the Turks. Yet Fielder searched in vain for material that could elucidate the purpose of the earlier mission<sup>28</sup>.

Fortunately, the English archives contain a document which sheds light on this question: the letter of credence, issued by the Emperor at Vienna on 18 January 1483, which was presented by Popplau to Richard III in 1484<sup>29</sup>. It reveals that Popplau was charged with raising an army, no doubt to assist the

Emperor in his quarrel with the Turks, and perhaps also the King of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus<sup>30</sup>.

Frederick had claimed the crown of St. Stephen himself but had ceded it to Matthias for a financial commutation at the Treaty of Wiener Neustadt in 1463. Subsequently, having wrested Moravia and Silesia from the Kingdom of Bohemia in 1478 and won a brilliant victory for the Turks the following year<sup>31</sup>, Matthias, backed by the Hungarian magnates, began to challenge the Emperor in the Habsburg heartlands. In 1485 he turned his guns on Vienna from which Frederick had already fled when Popplau found him at Ulm and gave him his verbal report. A few weeks later Vienna fell and the Emperor had perforce to wander around western Germany without house and home.

Popplau's official report must have been written up later. It was doubtless based on a log or rough jottings made at the time and, like many a diary or description intended for eyes other than the writer's, it might well have been modified so as to present its author in a favourable light and coloured by the expectations of the recipient. Popplau's evident scorn for many of his European hosts and his admiration for others could have been at least partly dependent on their responses to his appeal for military aid for his beleaguered sovereign. Besides, if he even as much as polished his final report after the fall of Vienna in June 1485 and when he had reflected on Frederick's plight as a fugitive from his capital this might explain the fervour of his praise for the courageous and defiant speech that he attributes to Richard III, when the latter was told of the King of Hungary's victory over the Turks. Klose and the author of the piece published in 1806 both use almost the same words to say that this had been accomplished with the help of imperial allies late in 1483, so they must have relied on their common source, the 1812 copy. Yet both the date and the participation of allies seems to be wrong<sup>32</sup>. Doubts are thus aroused about the adequacy of the notes on which the original writer based this passage or, more to the point here, his motives. It is perhaps worth pointing out that the Hungarian annexation of Silesia, the home of the Popplaus, was greatly resented there<sup>33</sup>. Of course, there is a possibility that these mistakes are entirely due to later misreading, misunderstanding and interpolation, yet the episode is too detailed and specific for this to be likely. Armstrong's translation of Klose's version of Richard's speech reads:

*I wish that my kingdom lay upon the confines of Turkey; with my own people alone and without the help of other princes I should like drive away not only the Turks, but all my foes*<sup>34</sup>.

If this passage has been transmitted correctly from Popplau's lost original, which we cannot ascertain, it is tempting to interpret it as a veiled admonition from the envoy to his pusillanimous master, who had sent him abroad to drum up troops and then had fled from his capital before the Hungarian onslaught. However, it would be idle to infer motives and feelings on the basis of an eighteenth century copy, an eighteenth century paraphrase and accounts written in the nineteenth century, all based on the same source which derives from a document of unknown provenance. Some of the versions discussed in this essay are at odds with each other and some are frank about editorial emendation. Copyists are wont to make innocent mistakes as well as knowing improvements. Who can tell by what devious paths Popplau's story had threaded its way since the fifteenth century, collecting burrs and briars at every step?

### Notes and References

1. The name is variously spelt as Nicol, Niclas, Nicolas, Nicolaus, Nikolaus von Popplau, Poppelau, Poppel, Popplaw, etc. in the sources for the following account of Popplau, viz.: Johannes Sinapius, *Schlesier Curios&ten Erste Vorstellung*, Darinnen die ansehnlicher Geschlechter Des Schlesischen Adels, etc., first part, Leipzig, 1720; *Schlesien ehedem und jetzt*, edd.d Oelsner und Reiche, Breslau 1806, vcol. 1, pp. 27-45, 91-100; Joseph Fielder, "Nikolaus von Poppel, erste Gesandter Oesterreichs in Russland," in *Sitzungsberichte der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. 2, Vienna 1856, pp. 187-220. *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 26, Leipzig, 1888, pp. 428-31; Samuel Benjamin Klose, "Darstellung der inneren Verhältnisse der Stadt Breslau vom Jahre 1456 bis zum Jahre 1526" in Gustav Adolf Stenzel ed., *Scriptores Rerum Silesiacarum oder Sammlung Schlesischer Geschichtschreiber namens des Vereins für Geschichte und Alterthm*, vol. 3, Breslau, 1847, pp. 361-75.
2. There is no agreement about the exact date of Popplau's birth in the above-cited works. Piotr Radzikowski (see pg. 5 above and n. 8 below) estimates that he was born in 1443.
3. Maximilian, in his capacity as acting Duke of Burgundy, is referred to as the Duke in the 1712 manuscript copy (see pp. 4-5, 8-9 above) which was the source for Klose, Fiedler and the authors of the articles on Popplau in *Schlesien ehedem und jetzt* and the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, who all call Maximilian the Duke of Burgundy in this context. Even a twentieth century historian, E. J. Goerlich, in a work on Austrian history, cited elow, n. 30, says that Maximilian became Duke of Burgundy on the day of his marriage to Mary 1477: *Geschichte Oesterreichs*, p. 138. Sinapius, however, is misled into naming the Duke of Burgundy in 1483-4 "Caroli audacis," i.e. Charles the Rash, who had been killed in 1477.
4. Klose, Fiedler and the author of the article in *Schlesien ehedem und jetzt* give Pontefract as the castle where Richard III received Popplau in May 1484, which does not tally with Richard's whereabouts at this date in the English archives. See British Library *Manuscript 433*, 4 vols., ed. R. Horrox and P. W. Hammond, Upminster and London 1979-83, vol. 2, pp. 131-39. When writing his report Popplau must have mistaken either the place or the date (see pp. 8, 10 above). Professor Radzikowski thinks the meeting took place at York but it could well have been at Middleham.
5. E.g. *Schlesien ehedem und jetzt*, p. 3; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, p. 429; Fielder, p. 190.
6. The dates were doubtless given in the source document in the form of saints' feast days or the eve of a feast in the church calendar, a practice which opened the way for inconsistency in the days and months cited in the above secondary works; e.g. Klose gives 21 July here, others write 22 July. It depends on whether the secondary writers have noticed, or perhaps added, the word "eve."
7. This story was well known during the Middle Ages from *The Golden Legend* by Jacopo da Voragine, which appeared in Latin at Genoa in 1293 and was subsequently translated into many vernacular tongues. The story about the pit derives from a work written in 1150 by an Irish monk, Henry of Saltery. My reference is *La légende dorée*, trans. J.-B.M. Roze, 2 vols., Paris 1967, vol. 1, pp. 245-48.
8. Fiedler, *passim*; Piotr Radzikowski, *Ospanie podróży Mikolaja von Popplau*, Cracow 1996, *passim*.
9. My argument for this assumption is based on certain discrepancies of place and date in the extant versions which derive from the lost original. See Radzikowski, p. 11, where it is put forward, that the final report might well have been composed or completed years after the meeting at Ulm. The misdated and misleading account of Matthias's victory over the Turks is suspicious, too. I am grateful to Professor Radzikowski for drawing the latter to my attention (letter 9 May 1997). See above pp. 10, 13, n. 32.
10. Radzikowski, op. Cit.
11. Letter to Peter Hammond from Piotr Radzikowski, 15 April 1997, letter to Sheila Bignell from Anne Sutton, 12 June 1997.
12. Klose, op. Cit.
13. Dominicus Mancinus, *The Usurpation of Richard III*, ed. And trans. C. A. J. Armstrong, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Oxford 1969, pp. 1366-38. The author is generally referred to in the literature as Mancini.
14. Sinapius, op. Cit.
15. Fielder, op. Cit.
16. Klose, p 374.
17. Andreas Kalckhoff, *Richard III. Sein Leben und seine Zeit*, Bergisch Gladbach 1980, p. 377, (my translation).
18. Klose, p. 367

19. *British Library Manuscript 433*, loc. Cit.
20. Klose, p. **370** (my translation)
21. Stenzel, *Scriptores Rerum Silesiacum* etc., op. Cit. Preface, p. WI.
22. Ibid., pp. IX-X
23. *Schlesien ehemdem undjetzt*, loc. Cit.
24. Ibid., p. **30**
25. Fiedler, op. Cit.
26. Ibid., p. 290, n.2
27. Ibid., pp. **191-92**, n.5, *Reichs-Registrarbuch K. Friedrichs XV. DD. 48 vers.* J. Chmel. This reference is also cited by Radzikowski, p. 9 but I have not seen it and do not understand its purport.
28. Ibid., p. 197, n.2.
29. British Library *Manuscript* 433, op. Cit., vol. 3, pp. 74-76[f255].
30. The following account is based on: E.J. Goerlich and F. Romanik, *Geschichte Oesterreichs*, 2nd edition, Innsbruck n.d. [Probably 1967], passim; Lexikon der *deutschen* Geschichte, ed. Gerhard Taddey, 2nd edition, Stuttgart 1983, passim; *Deutsche Geschichte*, ed. H. Pleticha, 12 vols., Gütersloh 1984, vol. 5, passim; *Propyläen Geschichte Deutschlands*, ed. Dieter Groh, 9 vols., 1983-5, vol. 3, passim.
31. Goerlich und Romanik, p.140.
32. Klose, p. 365 and the author of the piece in *Schlsien ehemdem undjetzt*, p. 45, give the date as 1483, whereas it could be 1479, (letter from P. Radzikowski 9 May 1997). Goerlich und. Romanik, p. 140, emphasize the absence of support for the Hungarians by the other imperial principalities.
33. Goerlich und Romanik, p. 143.
34. Klose, *ibid.*; Mancini, *The Usurpation. . .*, P. 137

N.B. I wish to thank the following colleagues for assistance in obtaining material relating to Popplau: Peter and Carolyn Hammond, Isolde Wigram, Rita Diefenhardt-Schmitt. I am also most grateful to Piotr Radzikowski for his contribution towards my assessment of knotty points. Names in the above are given in the accepted English forms, where they exist. Otherwise, the local form has been given, e.g. Angoulême, or the spelling found in most sources, e.g. Popplau.



**OOPS!**

The following new members' names were "scrambled" in the Summer, 1997, list, so we're printing them correctly here:

Julie Re  
Louis Everett Duncan

**New Members, 6/22/97 - 08/31/97**

Christine A. Hirvonen  
Antoinette Aubert  
Heather K. Meyer  
Lucille S. Warner  
Barbara J. Payne & James A. Payne  
Mark Atkinson & Kathy Freise  
Judy Hohl  
Mason Hohl, M.D.  
William Mason Hohl, M.D.  
Dr. Mary E. Weaver  
Susie Korytar  
Tina C. & Gregory P. Cooper  
David Bjorlin  
Crystal Raymond  
Joan Lyman  
Donna L. Peters  
Judith A. & Burnett W. Watkins  
Anna Safdie  
Joanne K. Smith  
Cynthia R. Letteri  
Kathleen Halecki & Mary Halecki



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