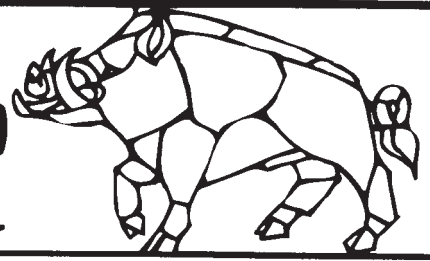


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Palace of Westminster
Central Lobby
Statue of
King Richard III
by John Thomas
c 1854/5

In This Issue

Shakespeare, Genetics,
Malformations, &
The Wars of the Roses,
Ernest B. Hook

Highlights of the
New Orleans AGM

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EDITORIAL LICENSE

Carole Rike

All contributions are eagerly sought for the *Register* and will be reviewed in whatever form they arrive. However, those which also include a digital file will get quicker publication. I admit to being slow in getting around to keyboarding long articles; if anyone should wish to volunteer with input, that might speed up matters. Likewise, I've become sluggish about writing letters, but answer e-mails on the spot. Sad comment on our times, but true.

Digital files may be either PC or Mac, may be e-mailed directly to me or the disk mailed; I will return your disks and any pictures. Preferred is an attachment to your e-mail, but you may include the text within the e-mail message itself and I will extract it. If you wish your original printout to be returned, please advise me and I will do so. Text files can be in any popular word-processing program, or text file format. If you have scanned photos, I can handle most graphic formats. For Mac files, I prefer TIF or EPS files.

Due to space constraints, Roxane's article on page four does not include an introduction, which I would like to include here. It is interesting what lengths a loyal Ricardian will go to in order to chase down articles about Richard III!

I came across this most interesting paper through a friend, who found it at her church book sale. Knowing of my interest in Richard III, she bought it for me, but was unable to discover who had donated it. Although several members have requested that I allow them to publish it, either in the Register or a chapter newsletter, I was unwilling to do so for fear of violating the author's copyright.

After the AGM, one of our more enterprising members, Wayne Ingalls, got on the internet and found Dr. Hook, who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, in the School of Public Health. I e-mailed him, and not only did he graciously consent to allow us to publish his paper, but he was most interested in the Society, and asked that we send him information about it. He also solved the mystery of how a paper that was written in New York State ended up in a church book sale in Fort Worth, Texas. It appears that Dr. Hook had a friend from Fort Worth, to whom he had given a copy of the paper, but he didn't know how it came to be in the church book sale. We're so glad it did, and we are delighted to present it to you, especially to those were were unable to hear it at the AGM in New Orleans.

SHAKESPEARE, GENETICS, MALFORMATIONS, AND THE WARS OF THE ROSES

Ernest B. Hook

Dr. Ernest B. Hook is a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health. Published with permission of the author.

INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare's work is a window into many aspects of knowledge in the late 16th and early 17th century. Of course there was no formal science of genetics at the time he wrote. But as his writing exemplifies one of the widest range of recorded human experience, and he is one of the most perceptive observers of the human condition, it is worthwhile to review what he knew of human heredity, what he could infer from his own observations, and what he accepted or rejected of the collective wisdom and shared knowledge of his time on genetic issues.

Some generalizations that can be made about Shakespeare's apparent beliefs in congenital and hereditary aspects of the human condition are well illustrated in the four plays of the Wars of the Roses — the three parts of *Henry VI*, and *Richard III*.

These plays were written at the beginning of his career (perhaps 1589 to 1593)¹ and probably as part of a tetralogy. It is well known that they are only loosely based on the historical sources, which were themselves biased and inaccurate in numerous matters, particularly the character of Richard III.²⁻³ Shakespeare chose what he wanted from his sources as a basis for the plots, and then rearranged events and invented characters and scenes for his own dramatic purposes.⁴ Nevertheless, while the plays are completely unreliable as history, and slander Richard III among others, as Shakespeare's literary creations they provide some interesting insights on his views on heredity. Moreover, because at least the literary character Richard III had several physical deformities, these plays also provide some suggestive insights on Shakespeare's views of malformations.

HEREDITARY THEMES

Shakespeare notes frequently the physical resemblance between parents and their children, particularly fathers and sons. Perhaps even more important, the lack of such resemblance is cited as consistent with illegitimacy, and is often invoked as such. He also implies that mental characteristics, at least those influencing personality, could be inherited too. Again, differences in temperaments between parents

and children might also be explained by illegitimacy, although this view is not expressed so consistently, and there are important exceptions.

In the Wars of the Roses tetralogy the best evidence for these views occurs in the scene where Gloucester (later to be Richard III) asks his henchman Buckingham about the latter's speech to the people of London. Buckingham denounced the right of the "princes in the Tower" (sons of Edward IV, Richard's brother) to succeed to the crown. He pressed Richard's claim instead:

Richard:
Touch'd you the bastardy of Edward's children?

Buckingham:
I did...

*And...his own bastardy,
As being got, your father then in France,
And his resemblance being not like the Duke: [your father]*

*Withal I did infer your lineaments,
Being the right idea of your father,
Both in your form and nobleness of mind;*

(*Richard III*, III, vii, 1.4-14)

This indicates directly that the argument of physical and mental similarity was used popularly to justify the inference of parentage, and dissimilarity to suggest false paternity.⁵⁻⁶ (It is incidental to this point that in the context of the plays the claims are fallacious. Richard is described elsewhere as physically deformed, lacking nobility of mind, and obviously quite different from both his parents (see below).) The text, which follows Shakespeare's sources, (e.g. references 5 and 6) illustrates the villainy of both men.

There are numerous other examples of arguments to physical or temperamental resemblances as evidence for parentage. For example, Talbot's son refuses his father's entreaty to escape, and replies to him:

*Surely, by all the glory you have won,
And if I fly, I am not Talbot's son.*

(*Henry VI*, part I, IV, vi., 1.50-52)

Another instance is found where Richard says of the young prince, son to the weak Henry VI and the cruel but valiant Queen Margaret:

*Whoever got thee, there thy mother stands,
For well I wot, thou hast thy mother's tongue.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, ii, l.133-134)

The theme of similarity is used with strong dramatic force in the scene after the death of the Duke of York, father to Richard and Edward. Richard compares their father to an eagle (who could supposedly look at the sun without blinking) and urges Edward to seek the throne their father unsuccessfully sought.

*Nay, if thou be that princely eagle's bird,
Show thy descent by gazing 'gainst the sun;
For chair and dukedom, throne and kingdom say,
Either that is thine, or else thou wert not his.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, i, l.91-95)

(It is ironic, that as noted above, in *Richard III*, a later play, Richard's agent Buckingham was to argue speciously the alleged dissimilarity of Edward to their father as grounds for his illegitimacy and for Richard's claim.)

An interesting invocation of dissimilarity in character as argument for illegitimacy is in Suffolk's denunciation of his enemy Warwick.

*Blunt-witted lord, ignoble in demeanor!
If ever lady wrong'd her lord so much,
Thy mother took into her blameful bed
Some stern untutor'd churl; and noble stock
Was graft with crabtree slip, whose fruit thou art
And never of the Nevil's noble race.*

(*Henry VI*, part 2, III,ii, l. 210-215)

The analogy of illegitimacy with plant grafting is a striking literary fusion of two genetic themes here. Grafting was well known to Shakespeare, and indeed goes back at least as far as the Romans.⁷

Another example of this fusion of the two themes occurs where Buckingham pretends to plead with Richard to accept the crown, while Richard feigns indifference, in order to convince onlookers of his virtue. Buckingham says that if Richard refuses, he resigns the crown "To the conception of a blemish'd stock" for the noble isle has "[Her] royal stock graft with ignoble plants (*Richard III*, III-7, l.122 and 127). The "ignoble plants" and "blemished stock" here are the young princes in the Tower, sons to Edward, whom Buckingham has already denounced as illegitimate. (See above.)

But not all dissimilarity in resemblance and character is attributed to illegitimacy. Indeed, aspects of

the human condition, when not obviously derived from parents, are attributed to "nature" in the sense in which the term is often used today. In at least one instance (see below) the term "heavens" is used in the same way. But it is clearly not "heaven" or "God" that is intended. Human qualities, when not clearly inherited, are derived, in some unspecified sense, from nature. They are innate, implicitly at least congenital or "inborn," even if not hereditary in the sense of being derived obviously from parents.

Thus the weak Henry VI comments on the boy Richmond (later Henry VII) who will eventually end the Wars of the Roses, found the Tudor dynasty, and become the grandfather of Queen Elizabeth, who reigned when Shakespeare wrote:

*This pretty lad will prove our country's bliss
His looks are full of peaceful majesty,
His head by nature fram'd to wear a crown,
His hands to wield a sceptre,...*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, IV, vi, l.70-73)

This appeal to "nature" leaves unanswered of course the reason for the result, or the mechanism of its action. Nature in Shakespeare is almost always used simply as an argument or origin of last resort. (See below.)

In the Wars of the Roses plays there are however two exceptions to this which stand at the core of the plots, and raise deep questions as to the origin of human temperament. These involve human personality traits that are explained neither by a hereditary origin nor, at least directly, by "nature." One is the weakness of Henry VI, the other the evil of Richard III.

Henry VI's character is at such major variance with that of his father (Henry V) and grandfather (Henry IV) that it is commented upon in the plays explicitly. For example, Clifford says to Henry in reproaching him for lack of bravery.

*And, Henry, hadst thou swayed as kings should od,
Or as thy father and his father did,...*
...Thou this day hadst kept thy chair in peace.

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, vi, l.14-15, 20)

Earlier Clifford, in referring to Henry's son, young Prince Edward, says:

*Were it not pity that this goodly boy
Should lose his birthright by his father's fault,
And long hereafter say unto his child,
"What my great grandfather and grandsire got,
My careless father fondly gave away?"*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, ii, l.34-38)

Henry's response to Clifford is of interest:

*But Clifford, tell me, didst thou never hear
That things ill got had ever bad success?
And happy always for that son
Whose father for his hoarding went to hell?
I'll leave my son my virtuous deeds behind,
And would my father had left me no more!
For all the rest is held at such a rate
As brings a thousandfold more care to keep
Than in possession any jot of pleasure.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, ii, l. 45-53)

Shakespeare leaves completely unexplained why Henry VI is so weak, and his temperament so differs from his father's. It is stated that Henry V died when his son was but none months old, hinting perhaps that Henry VI had no chance to absorb his father's valor by example, but this etiology is never explicitly suggested. It would have been easy dramatically to make what would be the obvious genetic suggestion, that Henry VI was illegitimate, or that the flaw derived from his mother, Queen Katherine of France, whom Henry V married after Agincourt. But this would probably have been difficult for practical reasons, not only because it would impugn the great popularity of Henry V, but because Katherine after his death bore two children to Owen Tudor, one of whose descendants gave rise to the Tudor dynasty. It would be a stain upon the ancestry of the then reigning Queen Elizabeth if it were suggested that Katherine either was not virtuous, or bore a weak strain with-in her.

For this reason perhaps, the origin of Henry's difficulty is never clearly addressed in the play, as strong as the question is. Not even "nature" is invoked as an ultimate explanation.

A related difficulty lies in understanding the character of Henry's son, young Prince Edward, as valiant as his father is weak. After Henry VI's speech cited above, he knights his son, who then says:

*My gracious father, by your kingly leave,
I'll draw it [a sword] as apparent to the crown,
And in that quarrel use it to the death.*

And then urges his father on:

*My royal father, cheer these noble lords,
And hearten those that fight in your defence:
Unsheathe your sword, good father: cry, 'Saint
George!'*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, ii, l.63-65, 78-80)

Prince Edward's valor illustrates how deviant was the behavior of Henry VI in resembling neither that of his father nor his son. Indeed the prince resembles much more Henry V, as Oxford notes when Edward, still a child, speaks courageously to the soldiers.

*O brave young prince! Thy famous grandfather
Doth live again in thee.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, V, iv, l. 52-53)

Valor has skipped a generation — it is "non-penetrant" in Henry VI, in whom for some reason the expected qualities were not expressed, although by inference he did at least "transmit" the trait from Henry V to the prince.

But there are other explanations for Prince Edward's valor. He was the son not only of Henry VI, but of Margaret of Anjou. While she was a villain in her own right, cruel and vengeful, she was also brave and strongly determined. The prince's qualities could have originated here. Recall Richard's comment cited above, on a brave speech by the prince:

*Whoever got thee, there by mother stands;
For well I wot thou hast thy mother's tongue.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II,ii, l. 133-134)

But Richard's comment has the germ of another etiology in the "who-ever got thee." The prince may also be illegitimate, born of a father braver than Henry VI. Indeed, earlier in the play tetralogy Margaret has had an affair with Stafford after her marriage to Henry. Yet this obvious possibility is not elaborated upon beyond the hint in the phrase just cited. There were no dynastic reasons for not doing so. The prince died without heirs, and Henry VI left no other direct descendants. While the prince serves as a literary foil to his father, the abrupt differences between generations are completely unexplained.

RICHARD III — MALFORMATIONS AND CHARACTER

We understand a little more of Shakespeare's views as to the etiology of the evil nature of Richard III than we do of Henry VI's weakness. Richard's character is closely related to his physical deformities. These are described most explicitly in his soliloquy in *Henry VI*, part 3, where Richard compares himself to a newborn bear cub, which was then thought to be born shapeless and licked into proper form by its mother.⁸ He complains that nature has been "bribed:"

*To shrink mine arm up like a wither'd shrub;
To make an envious mountain on my back,
Where sits deformity to mock my body;*

*To shape my legs of an unequal size;
To disproportion me in every part,
Like to a chaos, or an unlick'd bear whelp
That carries no impression like the dam.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, III, ii, l. 156-172)

This description of his physical deformities is very similar to that found in Hall's and Holinshed's histories,⁹⁻¹⁰ two primary sources for Shakespeare.¹¹ These also reported that Richard had congenital teeth, which Shakespeare incorporated with telling effect. (See below.) (Modern historians, incidentally, believe that Richard had no noticeable deformity except perhaps an inequality in the height of his shoulders.)¹²⁻¹³ The constellation described suggests no obvious entity, although one might speculate about neurofibromatosis. Certainly the presence of kyphoscoliosis, atrophy or hypoplasia of the arm, unequal length of legs, and other "disproportions" would probably strike most modern readers as highly suggestive of a syndrome of congenital origin. But, such abnormalities often gradually, and may not be recognized until well after birth. To an Elizabethan observer their causal relationship to prenatal or congenital factors thus would not be as clear as to us, unless it was known there was some obvious deformity at birth, such as a congenital fracture. Indeed, postnatal infectious diseases such as tuberculosis or polio could well produce at least some of these deformities. But both the context of the above passage and the opening soliloquy of *Richard III* (see below) indicate that all the deformities are meant to be perceived as of congenital origin. And this follows also the implications in the sources. For example, in Holinshed's *Chronicle*, Richard is said to display "a wearish, withered arm, and small; as it was never other."¹⁴ The last phrase implies its presence from birth.

Shakespeare's perception of the relationship of the deformities to Richard's character is a question of great interest but some uncertainty. There are at least two hypotheses. One is that Richard's congenital deformities are a sign of etiologic prenatal factors that have also resulted in a congenitally determined villainous character. The other is that Richard's evil nature developed primarily as a psychological response to the social reactions to his deformity. One can of course make an analogy between more recent "hereditarian" and "environmentalist" explanations of deviant behavior.

As one may imagine, Richard's avowed enemies see him as congenitally evil. Queen Margaret, wife of Henry VI, puts it metaphorically when she says to him:

*Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog!
Thou that wast sealed in thy nativity*

*The slave of nature and the son of hell!
Thou slander of thy heavy mother's womb!
Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins!*

(*Richard III*, I, iii, l. 227-231)

And Henry VI immediately before his death at Richard's hands, sees significance for Richard's character at his birth, and at least one congenital characteristic:

*The owl shriek'd at thy birth, an evil sign;
The night-crow cried, aboding luckless time;
Dogs howl'd, and hideous tempest shook down trees!
The raven rook'd her on the chimney's top,
And chattering pies in dismal discord sung.
Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,
And yet brought forth less than a mother's hope;
To wit a indigested and deformed lump,
Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.
Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born,
To signify thou cam'st to bite the world:...*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, V, vi, l. 44-54)

Richard himself says:

*Indeed, 'tis true that Henry told me of;
For I have often heard my mother say
I came into the world with my legs forward.
Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste,
And seek their ruin that usurp'd our right?
The midwife wonder'd, and the women cried
'O! Jesus bless us, he is born with teeth.'
And so I was; which plainly signified
That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, V, vi, l. 69-77)

I am not aware of the significance of a breech birth in Renaissance England; the context implies it had a negative connotation for the character of the infant. With regard to congenital teeth one observer reports that in England infants born with teeth were regarded with suspicion and are called "hard bitten ones,"¹⁵ although another comments that it was thought to signify (in England) only a future as a great soldier.¹⁶ The time that these beliefs originated are not stated. It is possible that Shakespeare's play itself, which was very popular, was the origin of the folk beliefs in England, rather than the converse. In Italy and France at least, it was believed that congenital teeth were a good portent.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the context of the citation of congenital teeth in Hall's and Holinshed's histories implies it was an unfavorable sign. (The original source of the report on Richard's congenital teeth was a much earlier unreliable historian who claimed that

Shakespeare, Genetics, Malformations

Richard was “retained within his mother’s womb for two years and [emerged] with teeth and hair to his shoulders.”¹⁸

Richard’s mother, the duchess of York, does not complain of his deformities, but rather that his birth was a “grievous burthen” to her. (Indeed, according to Holinshed, she “had so much ado in her travail that she could not be delivered of him uncut.”)¹⁹

She then says:

*Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;
Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild and
furious;
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold and venturous;
Thy age confirm’d, proud, subtle, sly, and bloody,
More mild, yet more harmful, kind in hatred.
What comfortable hour canst thou name
That ever grac’d me with thy company?*

(*Richard III*, IV, iv, 1.169-175)

Earlier she commented:

*He was the wretched’st thing when he was young,
So long a-growing...*

(*Richard III*, II, iv, 1.18-19)

“Wretched’st” in the context refers specifically to his small size, but implies of course another sense as well.

In her accusations there is a hint that Richard’s evil nature was congenital, as were his deformities. He inflicted harm not only at the moment of his birth, but in infancy and childhood, as a prelude to his cruel villainies as an adult. It is of interest that Holinshed describes Richard as “malicious, wrathful, envious, and from afore his birth ever froward [perverse].”²⁰ Holinshed clearly intends his difficult nature to be viewed as prenatally caused, despite the qualification cited above.

This developmental history and the accusation about the significance of his teeth implies that Richard had no escape from an evil destiny. Yet elsewhere there is evidence that Shakespeare intended Richard’s evil character to be viewed not as innate and congenital, but rather a conscious, volitional response to his own malformations. This is of particular interest because nothing in Shakespeare’s sources provides any grounds for this view. If correct, it implies that Shakespeare went beyond his sources in developing a more social-environmentalist explanation for the character of the deformed.

In one passage, after describing his deformities, Richard says:

*Then, since the heavens have shap’d my body so,
Let hell make crook’d my mind to answer it.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, V, vi, 1.78-79)

One interpretation of this passage is that he had chosen his destiny in response to his body. But the main evidence is a soliloquy by Richard in the next play.

*But I, that am not shap’d for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
I, that am rudely stamp’d, and want love’s majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;
I, that am curtail’d of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform’d, unfinish’d, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me, as I halt by them;
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to see my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity:
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,*

*To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determin’d to prove a villain,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid,...*

(*Richard III*, I, i, 1.14-32)

Not only has he chosen to be a villain, but he had done so because of his repulsive appearance, and in particular the reaction it engenders. This rather modern statement about the social origins of his evil character comes at the very opening of the play bearing his name. Because it is a prologue, it appears that Shakespeare intended to provide here an explicit explanation of the villainy to follow.

Nevertheless, one might argue that Richard’s claim is intended to be only a further example of deceit, an attempt to generate pity. For in the very next scene he woos successfully the widow of Henry’s son under very difficult circumstances. Despite his deformity, he can succeed amorously, and the claim that he is denied love may be perhaps another example of his duplicity. This would suggest that we ignore his opening statement and regard his evil character as congenital, not as a reaction to environmental ill-treatment.

One could argue each side of the case, but considering all the evidence, I am inclined to take Richard’s explanation at face value, i.e., as what Shakespeare intended in *Richard III*. The main rationale for this is that while Richard is clearly deceitful in his

interactions with the characters, he is always open with the audience in admitting his worst villainies in his soliloquies. Given this candor about his deeds, it appears reasonable to accept his own explicit views as to his underlying character flaw.

Nevertheless, Shakespeare's own intention may have evolved as he wrote the plays. In the earlier *Henry VI*, part 3, for instance, Richard rejects the possibility of the pleasures of love as a "miserable thought" and also as unlikely because:

*...love foreswore me in my mother's womb;
And, for I should not deal in her soft laws,
She did corrupt frail nature with some bribe,*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, III, ii, l.153-155)

This is somewhat ambiguous. Taken literally, one might argue that the absence of the capability of love was intended to be not only congenital, but also the prime underlying cause of other deformities, both mental and physical. Alternatively, if one interprets the passage more figuratively, it is a metaphorical way of saying only that his physical defects, produced by "bribed" nature, have denied him love, the view expressed more explicitly in the opening passage of *Richard III*, discussed above. The latter appears more plausible to me.

It is possible that in *Henry VI*, part 3, in which Richard is not yet a central character, Shakespeare chose the viewpoints of his sources regarding their implication as to Richard's congenital evil, but that at the time he wrote the prologue to *Richard III* he had reason to give more conscious thought to the temperament of what was now his central character, and chose to invoke a more subtle social-environmentalist explanation which went beyond his sources. The proposed dates for the plays, 1590-91 for *Henry VI*, part 3, and 1592-93 for *Richard III*,²¹ are at least consistent with such an evolution.

On this interpretation Richard's successful wooing of the widow of Henry's son and the duchess' later comments about Richard's wayward infancy in *Richard III* may be viewed as simple invocations of what was in the sources, without the author's recognition or concern about inconsistency with the prologue. (Many observers have noted that Shakespeare willingly sacrifices consistency for dramatic effect.)

An effect of deformity upon psychological aspects of character was recognized by at least one other Elizabethan. Francis Bacon, a contemporary of Shakespeare, in his essay "Of Deformitie," commented on the spur that deformity is to ambition, and claimed that "All deformed persons are extreme bold."²² Whatever the truth of the generalization, it illustrates a contemporary recognition that malformation has an

effect upon personality. (The psychological characteristics of the deformed in this essay by Bacon resemble strongly those of Richard III as depicted by Shakespeare. One wonders if Bacon's views were influenced by the play.)

THE ORIGIN OF RICHARD'S MALFORMATIONS

While we have at least some evidence as to Shakespeare's views on the origin of Richard's character, we have little guide as to what Shakespeare believed was the ultimate origin of Richard's deformities. Neither parental nor other hereditary influences are ever impugned for the origin of Richard's shape. Even *Henry VI* analogizes Richard's mother as a "goodly tree," despite the fact the Henry was displaced by another of her sons.

*And Queen Margaret said to Richard:
But thou art neither like thy sire nor dam,
But like a foul misshapen stigmatic,
Mark'd by the destinies to be avoided,
As venom toads, or lizards' dreadful stings.*

(*Henry VI*, part 3, II, ii, l.135-138)

She was also an enemy to York, Richard's father, and would have gladly attributed the defects, mental or physical, to him, if there had been any such hint. Nor is an illegitimate birth sired by a deformed father suggested by Margaret or others.

Richard's own mother, the duchess, understands the origin of neither his deformity nor his character.

*He is my son, ay, and therein my shame,
Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit.*

(*Richard III*, II, ii, l.29-30)

She can explain him only as a metaphorical mythical mutant:

*O my accursed womb, the bed of death!
A cockatrice has thou hatch'd to the world,*

(*Richard III*, IV, i, l.53-54)

A cockatrice is a legendary serpent with a deadly glance, hatched by a reptile from a cock's egg. While the claim is not flattering to either of them, Richard is clearly an unexplained calamity.

Richard himself, who had the most to suffer from his deformities, ascribes them only to "dissembling nature" (*Richard III*, I, i, l.19), "the heavens" (*Henry VI*, part 3, V, vi, l.78), or "frail nature" (bribed by love, in the allusion discussed above), never to his parents or to any other ultimate cause.

Shakespeare, Genetics, Malformations

Yet there were a number of possible etiologies for congenital malformations widely believed in the middle ages and Renaissance which Shakespeare does not cite. According to Warkany²³ these were: 1) Maternal impressions, especially visual impressions of misshapen objects, have a teratogenic effect on the fetus. Even the skeptical Montaigne explicitly endorsed this view, and moreover cited logical reasons why this should be so; 2) Sexual intercourse of the mother with lower animals. Executions of women after birth of a child with deformities resulting in similarities to lower animals took place into at least the late 17th century; 3) A 'Manifestation of divine anger aroused by depravity of the world' (It was not until Harvey in 1651 that more modern views of the origin of malformations were suggested.)²⁴

It would have been easy dramatically to introduce at least some of these explanations, particularly the theory of maternal impression. It is tempting to suppose that Shakespeare was aware of these theories, but rejected them as superstitious, although in *Henry VI*, part 2, Joan of Arc consorts with demons, a then popular English view. But there is no direct support even for Shakespeare's knowledge of these etiologies at the time he wrote the tetralogy.

Thus we have further explanation for Richard's physical deformity, the root of his evil, except that he is framed by "nature" this way, despite all the qualities of his parents. It was a problem Shakespeare did not pursue.

While Shakespeare's other works at least indirectly include a good deal of genetic interest, in none of them, to my knowledge, are there grounds to infer his view on the etiology of malformations. Yet, there is at least one moving passage in a later play, which taken out of context, implies an altogether different attitude to physical deformity from that in *Richard III*.

In *Twelfth Night*, written about eight years afterwards, Antonio, believing himself betrayed by the attractive Viola, exclaims on the false guide that external appearance is to character:

*In nature there's no blemish but the mind;
None can be called deform'd but the unkind.*

(*Twelfth Night*, III, iv, l.367-368)

It is tempting to take this as Shakespeare's ultimate view of the nature of true deformity.

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REGARDING RICHARD . . .

by Elizabeth York Enstam

My first Richard III tour got sandwiched into a family vacation. In the summer of 1999, between a Sunday morning in Durham and a weekend in Dumfries and Galloway, my husband Ray and I drove as far south as Leicester to several of the places associated with the king. Despite the inevitable restrictions of time, those three days have come to seem like a kind of pilgrimage, a journey with special meaning and purpose.

Ray and I began our vacation in Edinburgh with a visit to our daughter, then started our Ricardian tour at Barnard Castle, a beautiful little town chartered as a market village by the castle's lord in the twelfth century. The castle is still very much a part of the town, though now as an English Heritage site rather than a source of defense. The ruin sits high on the cliff above the River Tees, its round tower and the arched windows of its great hall blank against the sky, the rooms behind them long gone. Vacant, also, is the oriel window installed in the great chamber by Richard III, and the boar carved into the window's ceiling is weathered and barely discernible. The castle ruins only hint at the splendor achieved by medieval nobility.

The view upriver from Richard's window is especially beautiful, of the sparkling water running far below the castle walls—as it sparkled and ran 500 years ago.

Less than a mile from the castle and near the center of town is St. Mary's Church, founded around 1130 and designated a collegiate church by Richard of Gloucester in 1478. Numerous features in the church building, including its size, date from his donation of forty marks for improvements and



Barnard Castle: Oriel Window

renovation. Obviously a considerable sum, the Duke's gift widened the aisles, added a porch, raised the walls of both arcades to form a clerestory with windows, heightened the chancel walls, added windows in the south aisle, and built a vestry with an upper chamber for the priest. Roses (presumably white) are carved into the stone of the chancel arch, also installed at that time. Richard's likeness is at the arch's left terminal; that of Edward IV is on the right. The *boar passant* carved on a stone outside the east window of the south transept, is another acknowledgment of Richard's lordship in County Durham.

The road from Barnard Castle to Middleham runs along hillsides and through valleys, and everywhere the view is beautiful. But it was a frustrating drive, too, without anywhere safe to stop and take pictures. The north of England has escaped suburban sprawl. When we left a town, we had no doubt that we were in the country.

After about an hour and a half, the road becomes Middleham's main street, so our guest house was easy to find. Yorkshire is horse country, and we awoke the next morning to the sound of hooves on the pavement beneath our window. Riders from the local stables energize the horses right through downtown Middleham.

Middleham Castle stands on a slight rise in a gently rolling plain, its only natural military advantage being the fact that defenders could see for miles in every direction. The town spreads around two sides of the castle; farmlands border the other two. The ruins are compact and concentrated, with a self-contained dignity. We climbed the spiral staircase beside



Barnard Castle: Wall of the Great Hall (arched windows) & the Great Chamber with Richard's Oriel Window

Regarding Richard

the great hall to look out across the countryside. How easy to love this area, and to come to think of it as home.

Castles are perhaps less overwhelming than cathedrals, but still awesome for their sheer mass. Middleham's condition makes it easy to see how this one was built and to appreciate the engineering skill and design involved in its construction. Growing profusely over several walls are patches of what appears to be grass. Instead, the gift shop manager told me, the plants bloom into a rich covering of pink flowers each spring. In sunny nooks and crannies along the walls I also found bunches of little bell-shaped purple blossoms.



*Middleham Castle:
Linda Thompson's Richard III*

The most striking thing at Middleham Castle for me was the statue of Richard III, which stands a few yards inside the gatehouse. Sculptor Linda Thompson has produced a likeness which, judging from the portraits, seems exactly right. The king appears pensive and serious, unaware of the two monsters clinging to his back. Both are mythical figures, a medieval demon and a basilisk (or cockatrice), and they represent, according to Thompson's notes about her work, "the twin mischiefs of legend and imagination" that have plagued the "history of this now mute and defenseless figure."

I wondered if the demons in Richard's dreams the night before Redmoor Plain were perhaps a premonition not of the coming battle, but of how history would maul his reputation, distort the record of his work—and depict him as a monster. Much as I liked it, the statue gave a sadness to my visit at Middleham, although I know that the king was happy here.

Middleham had disappointments, too. In the gift shop I was irked to find Desmond Seward's very anti-Richard *England's Black Legend* for sale along with other, more sympathetic publications. I complained to the clerk, who blustered that he only worked part time and had nothing to do with stocking the shelves. Worse was to come. Soon after returning home, I learned that during the past decade, a performance of Shakespeare's abominable drama was presented in Middleham Castle. I sank into a "when-will-they-ever-learn" funk, then pondered Ray's observation that without Shakespeare, Richard III would be only a name in the list of English kings, an obscure monarch who ruled for merely two years.

When we reached the Midlands, we had left the happier sites of Richard's life. The city centre car park in Leicester has a beautiful mosaic at its main entrance and really tight spaces inside. Ray eased our British-made rental Ford into one, and we walked perhaps a block to the Castle Gardens. Somewhere nearby, the king's battered and violated remains were interred in the Greyfriars' churchyard, then years later, tossed into the River Soar. As we walked through the Gardens, little children were feeding the swans along the riverbanks.

At one end of the Gardens and just off a noisy main thoroughfare, the best known statue of Richard III holds up the circlet crown and, sword in hand, leans into a fighting stance. The statue's face is strained, agonized, but the body is a dramatic and powerful representation of the warrior king. White roses were blooming around the circular pavement in front of the statue, and on one of the park benches a businessman was reading his newspaper.

I photographed the statue from every possible angle—full front, left side front with the figure dark against the overcast sky, right side front before a background of trees, left side back, close-ups of face, then head and shoulders. The businessman gave up hope of an undisturbed lunch hour, folded his paper, and left. Ray went to explore more of the gardens, and two English couples, obviously tourists, wandered by. They read the statue's inscription, wondered aloud why "they" killed this king, and eyed me as if I should know. (Why else would I be taking all these pictures!) I was feeling too morose to be accommodating.

The Leicester cathedral is a short distance from the Gardens. Constructed on top of a Roman temple, the building has Norman origins with additions and renovations from later centuries. Perhaps because Leicester is relatively small in size, the medieval grandeur here seemed friendlier than in other cathedrals. I paused by the black memorial stone to Richard III in the floor between the canons' stalls,

admired the rare wooden medieval ceiling over one of the aisles, and purchased several photographs. A very elderly, very energetic woman filled my hands with fliers announcing various events to be held in or near the cathedral later in the summer and told me how wonderful earlier programs have been. It seemed rude to reply that I'd be leaving Leicester within the hour, so I thanked her and accepted everything she gave me.

In the early afternoon we turned south toward Bosworth. Whatever I feel about battlefields in general and this one in particular, I'd come all this way, and the day was passing. Still, as we drove through the countryside I wondered about going to the place that gives me a weird sickish feeling when I merely read about it.

When we reached the visitors centre about mid-afternoon, a light rain was falling. That settled any question of following the trail tracing the course of the fighting. In the gift shop, I bought too many souvenirs and asked directions to the field memorial for the king.

"Turn left at the entrance to the park, then left again at the T crossroad. Look for the royal colors and just go through the gate," the attendant told me.

We had no trouble finding the royal standard behind a hedgerow and some tall trees lining the road. But we drove past, turned around, and followed the signs into Market Bosworth, probably the most beautiful village with the most beautiful flowers in all of England. In a floral shop just off the village square I bought one white rose, and we returned through the drizzle.

This time, Ray parked on the road's grassy shoulder beneath a huge oak. Above the rough-hewn memorial stone, the royal standard hung limp and damp after the afternoon showers. The wooden gate was padlocked from the inside. As I began planning how I'd go over it, Ray walked past the oak along the hedgerow and found a gap that had been fenced. Earlier visitors (intrepid Ricardians, no doubt) had torn away the two middle bars. A beautiful horse watched us climb through the opening and go through a weighted gate. Wilted flowers lay at the memorial's base—several white roses apparently from the huge bush growing nearby, and some yellow and blue wildflowers.

I took my white rose out of the florist's paper and noticed, as I bent to lay it with the others, that I felt

like I'd come to the grave of a family member. It was a fleeting sense, oddly vivid.

The village of Sutton Cheney is so small that we drove through twice before realizing we'd found it. A sign beside the road denotes St. James Church, where Richard III prayed before going into battle. There was nowhere to park, but across the road from the sign, a large graveled farmyard looked deserted. Ray drove in. Sounds of men talking echoed between long barn-like buildings, and a tractor sat near one of them. No one came to shoo us away, so we left the car and crossed the road to find the church.

The iron gate beside the sign was unlocked. We followed the long walkway paved with stones between two rows of trees, and only when we reached the second, wooden gate could we see the church. The walkway narrows to a path and curves around the cemetery of family gravestones, many of them more than six feet tall and blackened by age. Founded sometime in the early thirteenth century—and very possibly, many years earlier—the grey stone building has been "improved" numerous times. Structures from several architectural periods "work" together into a modest, graceful appearance, and even the (perhaps) eighteenth-century red brick clock tower seems to "belong."

The sanctuary may seat as many as 100 worshippers; it was much smaller in King Richard's time. A wall plaque memorializes the king's prayers, and the prayer cushions have needlepoint designs of white boars and white roses.

Beyond its beauty and grace and age, this church has an indescribable sense of peace.

Early the next day, before we turned north toward the Lake District, I decided that I could not leave without going to the church once more. This time, Ray waited in the car.

The morning mist was beginning to burn away; the light was golden and, as the Romantics would



Sutton Cheney: St. James Church



Altar of St. James Church

say, crystalline. As I reached the second gate on the walkway lined with trees, I heard sounds behind me and turned to see a friendly woman with her little dog. We walked together and exchanged polite remarks. “Where are you from?” “This must be a very pleasant place to live.” She was a member at St. James, fortunately for me: this morning, the door

NEW FROM THE SALES OFFICE

The sales office has just acquired copies for sale of one of Osprey Publishing’s newest publications in their campaign series *Bosworth 1485*, by Christopher Gravett, lavishly illustrated by Graham Turner. The book covers the origins of the Bosworth campaign, analyzes the armies involved, and gives a description of the battle and its aftermath. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs of surviving artifacts, contemporary pictures, photographs of sites pertinent to the campaign, and maps. The book is a soft cover - 95 pgs, retailing for \$17.95 - available through the sales office to members at the discounted price of \$16.15

Other Osprey titles available through the sales office pertaining to the Wars of the Roses are: *The Wars of the Roses* - sales office price \$11.65; *Henry V and the Conquest of France* - \$11.65; *The English Longbowman* - \$13.45

Contact Sales Officer direct (see page 3).

was locked. I waited by the cemetery as she went to the church secretary’s home and returned with a key at least eight inches long.

“This is the *small* key,” she chuckled, then pushed open the heavy, weather-worn door and added, “Don’t ask.” So I only thanked her as she and her pet went on their way.

I have never believed in praying for the dead, but I chose a pillow with a white rose and knelt in one of the pews. The church was silent, yet somehow not empty. I closed my eyes and hoped that, if only for a moment on that August day 500 years ago, King Richard felt the peace of this place.

Elizabeth Enstam is a “transplanted Texan”, having lived there for thirty years, but a native of North Carolina’s Blue Ridge Mountains.

In the mid-1960s, Elizabeth first learned that there is more to the Richard III story than Skakespeare, and for years has used this mystery as an extra-credit research project for her college freshmen. About two years ago, after finishing a book manuscript, she decided to investigate the mystery herself, knowing it to be a compelling subject, but not suspecting that it would become a major personal commitment.

Says Elizabeth: “After sending the essay to you, it occurred to me that in a way, King Richard is having his revenge for 500 years of slander—through the work and activities of all the Richard III Societies around the globe! Still, there is much to do: and I am “going after” A. J. Pollard next. That book on Richard and the princes is nothing but a historical “potboiler.” VERY bad for a scholar’s image! “

MALE EXHIBITIONISTS WANTED!

Anne Smith

To all who didn’t see the previous notice in the *Register* about putting on Maria’s play at the New York City AGM next year, I am hoping to generate male interest (we have plenty of females to fill all the roles, both male and female!).

Please shed your shyness, step forward into the spotlight and honor Maria’s fine play (and Richard’s good name) with your willingness to participate. It should be fun. And you don’t have to wear tights nor learn lines — you’ll just be reading up there with the minimum of movement.

Please e-mail me at gloucester@juno.com and indicate which role you might be interested in.



RICARDIAN POST

Being a great fan of the *New York Times*, I never expected to read in its pages a most uninformed attack on Richard. But there, in the “Sophisticated Traveler” section of the magazine, on Sunday, September 27, 1999, was a most gratuitous attack by one of their contributors, Mirabel Osler, who was ostensibly writing about Michelin starred restaurants in, of all places, Ludlow, Shropshire. The article was quite extensive and included pictures of the three restaurants which had earned such ratings, plus some additional photographs of other places in and around the town. Imagine my surprise to discover the photograph of Ludlow Castle with the following comments:

The castle, built by the Normans to keep out the Celts from the west, dates from 1086. Its history is saturated with triumph, malevolence, celebration and connivance. Here Edward V and his brother, Richard — the little princes in the Tower — lived for 10 years, a poignant fact that haunts the place.

Their vulnerability intrudes on your thoughts as you walk across the moat toward the inner bailey while trying imaginatively to resurrect how the castle had looked on a spring day in 1483 when Edward, traveling to London to be crowned King on the death of his father, Edward IV, was captured on order of his uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester. The two princes were locked in the Tower of London. Then murdered. Edward was about 13, Richard about 9. Two hundred years later their pitiful remains were discovered and buried in Westminster Abbey.

Occasionally, however, retribution works: their uncle on becoming Richard III had his two-year reign end violently at the Battle of Bosworth Field.

In this more enlightened era, it seems most unlikely that this is the version of the facts put out by the castle administrators; but you never know, so I sent the quote along to Elizabeth Nokes of the English Branch. Could be, however, that Ms. Osler (the author of “A Breath from Elsewhere: Musing on Gardens” (Arcade)) was quoting from the book which purports to “end once and for all ‘the great debate.’”*

*Quote from The Folio Society prospectus for 2000

Eileen Prinsen

I am writing in response to Mary Higgs’ letter in the Fall, 1999 *Ricardian Register*. I too am very interested in 15th century genealogy and share the Neville and Woodville lines Ms. Higgs mentioned. I would be very pleased to share information with other Ricardians who are interested in genealogy and request that you publish my address.

I would also be very grateful to anyone who could point me to a good pedigree of the Twiniho family.

*Nancy L. Piccirilli
1499 Centreville Rd.
Apt. 5 Centreville Ct.
Warwick, RI 02886*

From LMB List:

I thought some of you might be interested in this story I found last night in *Haunted Heritage*:

Minster Lovell Hall

“The imposing ruins of this 15th century manor house stand beside the River Windrush in Oxfordshire. Almost hidden behind the church, Minster Lovell Hall has a history of disappearances, suffering and tragedy. The hall is reputedly haunted by the ghost of Francis Lovell, who backed the pretender, Lambert Simnel, in 1487. When the rebellion was crushed, Francis fled to Minster Lovell with a price on his head. He hid in an underground room and was looked after by an old servant, the only person to know his whereabouts. When the servant died suddenly Lovell was trapped, and wasn’t discovered until 1708, when builders renovating the hall discovered him still seated at a table, with the bones of his god at his feet.

Another story attached to Minster Lovell begins one Christmas, when William Lovell celebrated his wedding at the hall with his young bride. During a game of hide-and-seek the bride offered to hide. The guests and William searched for weeks, but she was never found, and William eventually died of a broken heart.

Years later, servants found an old oak chest hidden in the attic and inside was a skeleton dressed in a bridal gown. It is thought that the lid had fallen and locked her inside. On windy nights the anguished cries of William can be heard, as he searches for his missing bride.”

The second story here is new to me, and I assume that the William Lovell they are referring to is the same one who built the manor, I don't know what other one there could be. I have found no other reference to the second story.

The story of Francis however appears to have some actual fact to it. I have an excerpt from the original letter written in the 1720's on the Minster Lovell page along with the manors history and photos. Please see: <http://www.homeusers.prestel.co.uk/magor> and follow the link to Photographs of Medieval Sites.

Becky Vaccara

(Myrna Smith wrote after the AGM, to describe her trip home. To attend the AGM, Myrna had to travel from Texarkana to New Orleans. Her choices were limited: fly on a maybe-too-exciting commuter airplane, drive to Dallas (!) to fly on a real airplane, or take the bus. Myrna opted for the bus.)

The bus broke down on my way home, and was delayed 5 hours getting to Shreveport. They then told me I would have to go to Texarkana by way of Dallas, arriving at home at 5:30 Monday a.m.! [Ed: after leaving New Orleans at 6:45 a.m. Sunday!] I said forget it and called my husband to come and get me, which he did, 140 miles round trip. My husband wanted to know if I got up [in the broken bus] and hollered. [Ed: What did Mr. Smith think Myrna might have hollered? Answer below, at end of Ricardian Post.]

*L.M.L.,
Myrna*

Thank you for remembering Richard's birthday. Your obituary notice in *The New York Times* was in excellent taste. Because I do not always get *The New York Times*, I haven't seen previous notices, but I am glad to know that someone is remembering this misunderstood, mis-remembered man.

I am enclosing a copy of something I wrote for Richard. [Ed.: see below.] Perhaps it will amuse you. My best wishes to your organization.

*Lila Beldock Cohen
Manchester CT*

For Richard

Lila Beldock Cohen

For Freud's sake, let us sit upon the floor,
And cite case histories of the Duke of Gloucester,
Whose family saw him (serpent, toad and boar)
As Mother Nature's error, God's impostor.

Deformed, unfinished, sent before his time
Into a world too new in comprehension
To understand that nature sees no crime
When genes produce parturient dissension.
No other course for him but that of villain;
All human intercourse remote and sketchy.
And yet, if he'd been given penicillin,
Or had his mother known about LaLeche,
Or Bettelheim or Jung or Piaget,
Might history have moved another way?
Did no one ruminate on early training?
Did Margaret, as she went to smile in France,
Consider Richard might have guilt remaining
About the way his mother changed his pants?
When Queen Elizabeth commenced her nursing,
Had she been schooled in birth
(pre-or postpartum)?
Did she know cursing infants when they're nursing
Is not the most productive way to start'em?
But, no. The midwife says, "Ill luck's the factor."
(She probably was once a chiropractor.)

Poor Dick, yclept humanity's mistake,
Thou veritable cerebellyache,
How great and wondrous
All your might-have-beens
Had you and your mama borne different genes!

(From a new member, via e-mail:)

I read Josephine Tey's DT [i.e., *The Daughter of Time*] when I was twelve, and, so, in a Grandma's body these days, it's about time I joined up. So much fantastic, scholarly information on the site! The Internet has definitely changed things for the armchair researcher/history buff. I look forward to the 2000 newsletter.

Juliet Waldron

We had another lovely trip to England. We spent our time mainly in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire. At Bosworth, I found my own picture laying the Society's [American Branch] wreath in 1995. We also visited the home of the present Duke of Gloucester. (He lives at Kensington Palace now.) Northamptonshire is the loveliest shire we've seen so far.

Dale Summers

[And, now, about Myrna Smith's letter...]

Harold Smith, who must be a Perfect Ricardian Spouse, wanted to know if Myrna hollered, "A horse, A horse, my kingdom for a horse!"

MAKING OUR OWN FUN

Let's start this discussion of AGM '99 at the end with Celeste Bonfanti's presentation at the Schallek Benefit Breakfast on Sunday morning, for that gives us a theme for the whole weekend.

Celeste lived in the U.K. for seven years and so has had experience in belonging to Society chapters there as well as here in America. She explained that chapter meetings in the U.K. could easily include hands-on experience with medieval sites and artifacts, for obvious geographical and historical reasons. What American Branch member has not read the Ricardian Bulletin Visits Team proposals for day trips to Middleham, Warwick Castle, etc., without envy?

In contrast, Celeste reflected that Ricardians on this side of the Atlantic had to work harder, to "make our own fun" as she put it. The phrase "making our own fun" seems very appropriate for AGM '99. All of the Saturday workshop presenters — Lloyd Scurlock, Dianne Batch, and Roxane Murph, our Keynote Speaker Sharon Michalove, our banquet entertainment producer/presenter Myrna Smith, and, of course Celeste herself, were Society members. Here are short reports on how they made that fun, plus some other facts about this AGM.

Workshops

Lloyd Scurlock, a retired lawyer and current graduate student at Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University, presented the first workshop, an insightful and thought-provoking examination of the church in the 15th Century. He gave a brief history of the religious controversies which divided the church both in England and on the Continent during the 14th-16th centuries, with emphasis on Wycliffe and the Lollards, noting that the fact that Richard III owned a Wycliffe Bible did not necessarily imply that he sympathized with Wycliffe's views.

For the second workshop Diane Batch presented a lively, witty look at the trials and accomplishments of Henry II, the first Plantagenet. Henry inherited the vast Angevin lands from his father, Geoffrey of Anjou, and through his mother Mathilda he succeeded to the English throne after the death of King Stephen. The story of Henry's marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine, with whom he had nine children, his quarrels with his monumentally dysfunctional family, and his dispute with Becket, for whose death he was perhaps unwillingly responsible, made for an informative and entertaining hour.

Roxane Murph and Peggy Allen

Roxane Murph presented the third workshop, a paper entitled "Genetics, Malformations, and the Wars of the Roses" by Ernest B. Hook. This paper came into her possession through a friend who bought it at a church book sale. Neither Roxane nor her friend was able to discover anything about the author. After the AGM, member Wayne Ingalls located Dr. Hook via an Internet search. Dr. Hook, of the University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health, kindly allowed us to publish the paper, which appears in this issue of the *Register*.

Luncheon Keynote Speaker

Sharon Michalove, Chairman of the Society, Inc., and a teacher at the University of Illinois, Champagne-Urbana, gave the keynote speech after the luncheon. Her topic was 15th century Cambridge, and her focus was on three important and accomplished women of the period, all patrons of Cambridge or Oxford Universities: Margaret of Anjou, the unpopular wife of Henry VI and founder of Queens College, Cambridge; Henry VII's mother, the scholarly Margaret Beaufort; and Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, sister to Edward IV and Richard III, patroness of Caxton and supporter of Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck. The Society presented to Sharon a silver bracelet with a silver boar and engraved disc, as a token of our appreciation.

Saturday Night Banquet

After dinner, Myrna Smith, together with her team of panelists and judges, entertained the banqueters with a medieval version of Call My Bluff. Panelists Janet Trimbath, Bonnie Battaglia, and Maria Elena Torres were prepped with the correct answers to Myrna's questions. For each question, one of

AGM ANGELS

Peggy Allen

The Arizona Chapter

Dianne Batch

Dawn Benedetto

Celeste Bonfanti

DoubleTree Lakeside Hotel

Anne Gazzolo

The Illinois Chapter

The Michigan Chapter

Mary Miller

New Orleans Metropolitan

Convention and Visitors'

Bureau/Amanda Gambrell

Nita Musgrave

The Pacific Northwest

Chapter

Judith Pimental

Richard III Society Sales

Office

Carole Rike and Word

Catering

The Southwest Chapter

Marti Vogel

the panelists was appointed to answer truthfully and the others charged to lie as convincingly as possible (well, Anglophiles, to be as “economical with the truth” as possible.) The audience, of course, was not clued in as to who was to answer truthfully.

After each question, the audience voted as to who gave the most persuasive answer. Judges Sandra Worth and Rania Melhem counted hands and tallied who won on each question.

Myrna posed an apropos lead-in question: “This is a trivia quiz. In medieval times, the word “trivia” had a different meaning. What was it?”

Bonnie Battaglia explained that trivia was really two Latin words, “tri” and “via” - “three” and “roads” - i.e., a fork in the road. If you believe this, you can understand why Bonnie won first prize in this competition.

In the spirit of “making our own fun”, a trivia quiz like this would be a great chapter meeting activity. Myrna has offered to send copies of her quiz to all who request it. She’s added some suggestions for alternate ways to run the quiz, too. Use it as is for your chapter meeting, or use it for a model to make up your own quiz. To get a copy via e-mail, write to membership@r3.org, with subject header “Ricardian Trivia Quiz”.

Schallek Fellowship Fund Benefit Breakfast

As mentioned above, the speaker at the annual benefit breakfast for the Schallek Memorial Fellowship Fund on Sunday morning was Celeste Bonfanti. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have seen Celeste’s memorable portrayal of Buckingham at the Chicago AGM expected another witty and perceptive performance, and we were not disappointed. Her talk covered several of the plays in the Society library, including both published and unpublished works, among them “Richard Himself” by Richard Peter, “Crookback’s Crown” by Gordon Bottomly, and “The Tragedy of Jane Shore” by Nicholas Rowe. Celeste provided an entertaining accompaniment to a delicious breakfast, and her audience and the Schallek Fund were the beneficiaries.

And Now for a Report from Our Demographics Department

Surely, if we have ever heard the phrase “making your own fun” before Celeste mentioned it, we have heard it from our mothers. (Along with, “Use your Inner Resources”.) So, it’s especially appropriate that we had a record three mother-daughter teams attending at this year’s AGM. They were Beverlee Weston and Cynthia Sims, Sandra and Maria Elena Torres, and Mary Jane and Bonnie Battaglia (moms first.) Mary Jane served as Recording Secretary a few years back and now Bonnie has followed her onto the Board,

Awards

Awards are always fun — to give as well as to receive. This year’s annual Dickon award plaque was given to Treasurer **Bonnie Battaglia**.

This year, for the first time, the Board decided to cite active Committee Chairs and certain other volunteers for all their efforts during the year. The Society membership experience and quality of membership life would be much thinner and poorer without the donations of time and talent that these people make. The citations were published in the Fall, 1999, issue of the *Ricardian Register*. We can always use more volunteers, both on special projects and to help with ongoing activities.

AGM “Angels”

Many people donated money, table favors, and/or prizes for the traditional AGM Schallek raffle. Some of these were recognized in the official AGM program, but others made their contributions after the booklet went to press, so the sidebar, “AGM Angels” provides a complete list of these generous people.

Those Battaglias — Again, and the Raffle

As if winning the Dickon Award and the Saturday night banquet competition and being one of our mother-daughter attendee teams wasn’t enough, we must comment further on Bonnie and Mary Jane Battaglia. Bonnie brought a list of previous AGM sites as a handout for the attendees. For the record, the list is published elsewhere in this issue.

As an adjunct to her article in the *Ricardian Register* earlier this year, Mary Jane Battaglia brought copies of a chart that allows one to work out the correct relationship of any two people who have a common ancestor (at least, within the last 9 generations.) Working with this device, I realized that people whom I had previously called second and third cousins were really my “first cousin, once removed” and “second cousin”, respectively. So, Mary Jane, you helped bring a family together.

serving as Treasurer since 1996. Our mother-daughter team total jumps to four if we count (and we do) mom Carole Rike and banquet attendee daughter Zoe Duplantis.

We set what surely must be another record, too — over 40% of this year’s attendees were first-time AGM attendees, and we appreciated their help in making our own fun. Continuing a tradition started at the 1998 AGM in Cincinnati, Vice-Chairman Dawn Benedetto introduced the first-timers at the Saturday midday luncheon. We hope to see them all

BIG JULY IN PROSPECT IN 2000

*Geoffrey Richardson,
Yorkshire Correspondent*

On July 6th, 2000 it will be 517 years since Richard, third — and last — monarch of that name, was crowned King of England and France and Lord of Ireland. And, to mark the anniversary in Millennium Year, plans are afoot for special events which will attract hundreds — nay, probably thousands — of visitors to the North of Yorkshire.

Celebrations will commence, as is traditional, in Richard's own favourite part of his realm, Middleham in the North Riding. Currently, it may be that a double ration of merry-making is in prospect, since a start may be made on July 1st and 2nd, with the climax planned for the following weekend [July 8th and 9th] which is the nearest date to the actual Coronation timing. Early days yet, but Middleham square will be filled with medieval market trappings, costumed re-enactors will, doubtless, strut their stuff, and on the 8th and 9th, Richard himself is scheduled to make his customary appearances at the Castle and to welcome visitors from far and wide, hither and yon, to the joyful remembrance of this most important occasion in a Ricardian's calendar.

Then, a week later still, July 15th and 16th, attention moves on to the next big Ricardian occasion at Sheriff Hutton where it appears that Society members from all over the world will be forgathering. As well as the Coronation celebrations in Richard's honour, Sheriff Hutton has two further reasons to celebrate the start of the new Millennium. In the year 2000, the Castle's

foundation 900 years previously will be remembered, as will the coinciding 600th anniversary of the building of the first church in the parish.

To mark this twin event appropriately, a "People's Festival" is in prospect and though this adjective has been much cheapened in recent years, through over-use by so-called political spin-doctors, in this case it happens to be true, since most of the arranging is being done on an ad hoc basis by the people of the village, assisted and abetted by members of the Yorkshire Branch of the Richard III Society and sundry other sympathisers.

There will be more parading in medieval costume by villagers and visitors alike. Many local homes are offering B & B accommodation to friendly incomers on a moderate cost basis [ten pounds has been mentioned as a probable benchmark charge] and there will be sundry entertainments on site, centering around the medieval market which will be staged there over the weekend. No doubt there are those who will see this latter as a tourist trap, but the basics will be entirely honest and sound, with the vast majority of proceeds allocated to worthy historical and restoration projects within the village and to the Society's efforts to restore the good name of the much maligned monarch.

The list of medieval attractions is intended to be lengthy with the intention of capturing the very essence of village life in the late fifteenth century and thereby enabling all visitors, for a few brief hours to feel — indeed, to BE — a part of the northern England that Richard III knew and loved best in all his Kingdom.

It is likely that excursions to Towton and Northallerton will be included in visitors' itineraries and, obviously, York will be another rendezvous of limitless attraction a mere handful of miles to the south.

Watch this space for more details as these unfold.

1999 FIRST-TIME AGM

ATTENDEES

Anne Cappel
Daryl Daily
Florence S. Graving
Cecily Ingalls
W. Wayne Ingalls
Allyson Keller
Elizabeth J. Linstrom
Amy Lubelski
Marie Lutzinger
Rania Melhem
Ruth J. Moss
Gayle Roberts
Marion Roberts
Cynthia Sims
Sandra Torres
Sandra Worth



American Branch Members Who Joined 01-SEP-99 Through 30-NOV-99

Joan Anderson
Lisa Schonder Arneth
Wendy E. Binnie
Joyce A. Borowski
Audrey Daniels Braver
Tara L. Buck & Mike McGuane
James J. Callahan
Colleen T. Clinton
Carrie Cooper
Wendy S. Duke
Barbara J. Dunlap
Roger R. Durham
Patricia A. Girty
Matthew Boyd

Goldie Deloris Grant
Sharon Griesinger
Mary Higgs
J. Hinkley & Mr. C. Post
Mary Beth Jones
Katharine Keogh
Liliane King
Kelly Laggenbauer
Judith Lieberman
Tonya LeAnn Macquarrie
Dallas McGlenn
Ellen R. Mertz
Christine R. Mickler
Stephen A. Mikulak

Patricia Nicholson
Michael Nighan
Shannon Parker
Jerilyn R. Petersen
Scott Davis Reese
Byron D. Ruppel
Brandy Schnautz
Brenda Sutherland Field
J. Milstead, A. Tremblay &
S. Byrd
Juliet Waldron
Mary Elizabeth Walsh
Jennifer Young

**1999 RICARDIAN HONOR ROLL
SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES**

1969: 30 Year Members

Mrs. Linda McLatchie

1979: 20 Year Members

Mrs. Dianne G. Batch
Miss Jo Carol Eakins
Miss Nancy L. Piccirilli
Mrs. Anne E. Stites

1984: 15 Year Members

Ms. Peggy M. Belcher
Mrs. Constance M. Biernacki
Judythe Bocchi
Ms. Elisa K. Campbell
Mr. J. Michael Dwyer
Mrs. Dorothy H. Keenan
Prof. H. A. Kelly
Helaine Gann & Andrew R.
Knight
Mr. James D. Kot
Mrs. Anne Gloria Marr
Mr. John McMillan

Mrs. Dick Messersmith

Mrs. Mary Ann Park
Pat & David M. Poundstone
Mrs. Dorothy Pruitt
Mr. Jerry Simmitt
Miss Carrie J. Wesley
Mrs. Rose M. Wiggle

1989: 10 Year Members

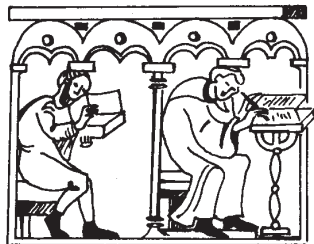
Mrs. Lorilee B. McDowell
Ellen L. & Alvin Perlman
Dr. Larry C. Thompson
Mrs. Janet M. Trimbath
Mrs. Marianne Vander Zanden

1994: 5 Year Members

Susan Biolchini
Prof. Arthur Boodaghian
Ms. Colleen Carter
Mrs. Jacqueline C. Cox
Ms. Kathryn M. Davidson
Mrs. Nancy E. Detrick

Miss Jean Fant

Bertram & Barbara G. Fields
Ms. Susan S. Hesler
Mr. Welcome E. Hill
Mr. James J. Hines
Mr. Lawrence L. Irwin
Ms. Margaret A. Kellestine
Mr. David Charles Klein
Ms. Deborah A. Klink
Mr. Richard A. Mattos
Mrs. Janet McLeod
Ms. Ann Muentner
Mrs. Michelle Murrills
Ms. Linda A. Peecher
Miss Lila M. Rhodes
Mr. Ed Ruotsinoja
Dr. Ruth Silberstein
Maria Elena & Sandra Torres
Dr. Daniel C. Warren
Mrs. Hester B. Well
Ms. Sandra Worth



RICARDIAN READING

In the Spring, 1999 issue, I named Bertram Field's *Royal Blood* as the 'Ricardian Book of the Year.' This was my own unassisted judgment, (though I'm sure most Ricardians would agree with me). The Board has made the selection official, and it has been suggested the naming of such a book as an annual event. [Ed. note: *The paperback edition of Royal Blood, due out in Spring, 2000, will carry on the cover the legend "Ricardian Book of the Year".*] Suggestions for nominees, anyone? Volunteers for the committee? Let us hear from you. We might also make the awarding of a Wax Image for the Worst Ricardian Book an annual event as well. What do you think?

The books in this column would probably not qualify for either award, being either not strictly Ricardian, not recent enough, not bad enough, or not really intended to be anything but light reading. Herewith, then, light reading introduced by light verse.

**Elizabeth, Liza, Betsy and Bess
All went together to find a bird's nest.**

📖 *To Shield The Queen* - Fiona Buckley, Scribner, NY, 1997

📖 *The Doublet Affair* - Fiona Buckley, Scribner, NY, 1998

To Shield the Queen introduces Ursula Blanchard, a Lady of the Presence Chamber in the court of Elizabeth I. A "remarkable young woman" in the words of William Cecil, Elizabeth's Secretary of State, Ursula is first sent from Elizabeth's court to Comnor Place, the residence of Amy Robsart, the estranged wife of Elizabeth's favorite, Lord Robin Dudley, to put to rest the rumors that Dudley is poisoning Amy. Amy is portrayed sympathetically and is quite likable and real. She is dying of breast cancer and is overwhelmed with fears that she is being poisoned despite Ursula's assurances that she is not. Further investigation, though, prompts Ursula to wonder if someone is, indeed, planning to do away with Amy.

I found the sections dealing with Amy and the ones towards the end of the book to be especially well done when Ursula discovers a plot to place the Catholic Mary Stuart on the English throne. Mary was the real heir to the throne, as opposed to the illegitimate

Elizabeth. The middle dragged after Ursula's service to Amy ends, until Ursula discovers the truth behind the Catholic plot. When I was not reading the book, I found myself wanting to return to Ursula and her time. The mystery behind Amy Robsart's death has intrigued me. Ursula is a well drawn character, vividly alive, as is her suitor, Matthew de la Roche, a Catholic. The truly Catholic families in the story are happy ones, celebrating the Mass in secret.

In the second book in the series, Ursula longs more than anything else to join her husband Matthew in France. Elizabeth grants her request, but asks her to do one more job — to assume the role of spy in returning to the home of the Masons, a Catholic family she had visited previously, whose head is under suspicion for advancing the cause of Mary Stuart. Ursula goes there under the guise of helping the Mason daughters with their dancing and needlework. She is warmly greeted by Anne Mason. Anne's wife (*not a misprint - ed.*), though, greets her with mistrust, and the same with the children's tutor. They aren't the only ones that cause Ursula a great deal of fear. Her fear is justified, as more than one attempt is made on her life before she enjoys a brief reunion with her husband.

Although I enjoyed being back with Ursula and her husband, the book dragged a great deal, until one very exciting passage toward the end. The ending itself is disturbing, but it's still worth a visit to the library to enjoy the good parts, and *To Shield the Queen* is highly recommended.

—Anne Marie Gazzolo, IL

The following is not really "light reading," although it is about "light reading," and it might even qualify for an award:

📖 *Richard III's Books: Ideals And Reality In The Life And Library of A Medieval Prince* - Anne Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, Sutton Publishing Ltd, Stroud, Glos., 1997

Richard III liked books, and in certain quarters, that alone makes him one of the "good guys." In the last half of the 15th century, many members of royal and aristocratic families collected books. Some were, like Richard's sister Margaret of Burgundy, connoisseurs. Rather than symbols of prestige or works of art, Richard

used his books as sources of information and ideas. Among English noblemen, Anne Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs have found, the king was virtually unique for signing his books as he acquired them. He read them, too, and often wrote notes in the margins. As with any serious reader, certain texts came to be part of his life, as indicated by his remark about Nottingham Castle: the term "Castle of Care" comes from William Langland's poem *Piers Plowman*, which the authors call "one of the most moving works of medieval literature."

Those books which can be identified as Richard's are fairly representative of aristocratic libraries of the time. The king owned copies of the Old and New Testaments along with his book of hours and other devotional writings. His books on chivalry dated from his boyhood, and they taught much that a young gentleman was expected to know. Books on genealogy and heraldry enabled aristocratic families to record their descent and the symbols of their status. Richard's library included books on military subjects and works of history, the latter with the usual mixture of mythology and chronology of actual past events. For "light" reading, the king had a number of "romances," such as *The Canterbury Tales* and various stories from the ancient world.

Without an inventory dating from his lifetime, we cannot know the actual extent of Richard's interests, and his library, of course, was broken up long ago. The finer works were undoubtedly taken after his death by whoever fancied them, much as his book of hours was looted from his tent after Bosworth. Sold in time to collectors and dealers, his books are now scattered in far-flung archives and libraries — in the Royal collection, in New York City, even in St. Petersburg.

Because Richard chose his books deliberately, Sutton and Visser-Fuchs are able to make significant observations about the king, his tastes and attitudes. His books show that he was better educated than most persons of his class. As the youngest son of a noble family — and of a devout mother — he may well have been expected to enter the church, at least in his early childhood before his father and older brother were killed. On the other hand, he may simply have been a serious, diligent student. Richard read French as well as English, and he read Latin, perhaps the strongest evidence of a superior education. When he took care, the king wrote a practiced, legible hand. It would seem, too, that he was intellectually curious: a number of his books are inexpensive editions, undoubtedly purchased for their content alone.


Twentieth-century bibliophiles can appreciate the fact that Richard's only parliament exempted book merchants and artisans from protective tariffs. Free trade not only encouraged the emerging business of

printing, but also insured the free entry of ideas and information into England. This carries interesting implications about Richard's political attitudes, for tyrants have never been notably eager to promote the spread of ideas. Equally interesting as evidence for a degree of independence of mind is the king's Wycliffe Bible, although his copy contains none of Wycliffe's "heretical" commentaries. In a time when the Church strongly discouraged laymen from reading the scriptures in the vernacular, mere ownership of an English Bible suggests an inclination to think for oneself.

In a thorough, but circumspect, analysis of the king's tastes, the authors take care not to push their evidence too far. Like virtually everything else about this king, his reading can be interpreted in negative or complementary terms. Ownership of books that were well known among educated people could indicate that he was (1) conventional and unimaginative in his tastes, or (2) well informed and well read about the issues and ideas of his day.

The book's first chapter and its last are interpretive; they make fascinating, even compelling reading. However interesting for its insight into the king's life and opinions, the book is a very slow "read," for the authors tend to write in a plain, "just-the-facts-ma'am" style. As a result, *Richard III's Books* is dense with information and requires close attention. Although the book is not "fun," it is richly rewarding, particularly in light of the fact that the king's books may be as close as we can ever come to understanding Richard III.

— Elizabeth York Enstam, TX

 *Secret History: The Truth About Richard III and The Princes* - R. E. Collins and J. Denning, The Plantagenet Press, Brandon, Suffolk, 1996

As I pulled Victorian histories from my bookcase to make room for Ricardian books, this slender volume caught my eye. I had no idea at first where it had come from. But the price sticker was in pounds and bore the name of English Heritage. I think I plucked it from the gift shop shelves of Castle Rising. If other Ricardians are interested, they might write to: The Plantagenet Press, 27 The Raddocks, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 ODX, England (Be sure to use two first class stamps.)

The book is in two parts, each written independently by one of the authors, and the styles contrast nicely. John Denning is a retired Anglican priest who became interested in Richard after reading Tudor propaganda. His interest rapidly became devotion to the House of York. His other fervent belief is in the afterlife and in communication with those on the "other side." The skeptic is quite at liberty to disbelieve. He decided to unite his two interests with the

assistance of an expert in clairvoyance and clairaudience. In four sessions, he learns that Richard was reluctant to be king, that the princes were murdered and their bones dissolved in lime at the behest of a fat bishop-to-be-cardinal, that Richard signed a paper restricting the Princes to the Tower, not condemning them to death, and that Edward was “helped” to his death. The style is relaxed, conversational, even chatty. He is open, trusting, and even a bit naive, a very gentle man.

The second part of the book is a thesis by R. E. Collins “of University”, Cambridge — the only identification attached to him — but that he is a scientist is clearly revealed by his style; clinical, erudite, well-organized. Throughout there are flashes of dry English humor that are delightful. His topic is the death of Edward IV. He begins by proving the death was not natural, and proceeds to examine the behavior of the major characters before Edward’s death, concluding that Edward was murdered by arsenic administered by the Woodville gang. “To find Elizabeth Woodville in the midst of a conspiracy is as unusual as finding a haddock in the sea.” He points out that for her son and brother to defect to Tudor was treason against Edward V. He believes that the Woodvilles conspired with Margaret Beaufort and John Morton and were involved in the murder of the Princes. Elizabeth decided to make her daughter queen and sacrificed her sons to that end. Collins believes that Buckingham’s treachery began when he joined Richard at Stony Stratford; whether he was involved with the Woodvilles or working on his own behalf is not certain.

Collins points out an ignored fact which should warm the hearts of Ricardians. The Sainted More was writing *literature*, not history, and followed the style of classical literature, thus producing the angelic Edward and the satanic Richard. Historians through the ages assumed it was intended as history because More used the word in the title, although he completely ignored the rules of historical research and objectivity.

This book is very enjoyable. Each part adds to the knowledge of the incidents of 1483-85, despite the lack of authentication. After 500 years, there has been a loss of documents and changes in language which necessitate intelligent speculation to produce truth.

— Dale Summers, TX

..... dreams can come true,
It can happen to you
If you will just pretend.

Some time back, we published a review by Ellen Perlman of chapters from *Historical Enigmas*, by Hugh Ross Williamson (St Martins Press, NY, 1974). Here, she reviews his chapter on Perkin Warbeck :

.....who claimed to be Richard, Duke of York. He repeats rumors out of Ireland that Perkin was the son of Clarence or perhaps a bastard of Richard III or possibly Edward IV’s godson or even his son. Probably, he goes on, Warbeck was the son of the Duchess of Burgundy and the Bishop of Cambrai. This...was based on a letter dated February 17, 1495, from the Milanese ambassador in Flanders to the Duke of Milan. If this liaison is accepted, Warbeck would have been a cousin to the Prince of York, and it would also explain Margaret’s loyalty to and acceptance of him.

As a 12 year-old page in the Brampton household in Portugal, he met a number of people from the Spanish court, including a friend of Richard III, Sir Bernard de la Force. It was here...that he may well have begun ‘training’ for his imposture. Five years later, aged 17, Perkin went to Ireland, where an earlier pretender, Lambert Simnel, had been crowned Edward VI and where Yorkist sympathy still lay. There he was supported by the Irish people, as well as by the Earls of Desmond and Kildare. Accepting an invitation from Charles VIII of France, Perkin crossed the Channel, lived at Amboise, and received many English Yorkists there. But in October of 1492, Henry VII invaded France and managed a peace treaty which required Perkin be expelled.

He went to Duchess Margaret’s court in Burgundy and was named by her the “White Rose of England.” She was able to gain recognition for him as the Duke of York, but Henry’s spies discovered Perkin’s foster-parents, John and Catherine Warbeck, and the imposture was officially proclaimed. A number of high-ranking Englishmen who were preparing, with Warbeck, to invade England, were charged with treason. Among them, interestingly enough, was that same Lord Stanley who had been instrumental in bringing about Richard’s defeat at Bosworth.

Another unsuccessful invasion attempt was made in 1495, and Perkin avoided capture by going to Ireland and from there to Scotland. King James IV made him a cousin by marriage and continued to assist him until the bitter end.

On September 7, 1497, Perkin Warbeck landed near Land’s End, and at Bodmin was proclaimed Richard IV, King of England. But at Taunton his army met Henry’s troops and when the king offered pardons to the rebels, Perkin’s cause was lost.

Warbeck eventually surrendered to Henry, made public confession of being an impostor, and was imprisoned in the Tower of London. He lived another year, along with the Earl of Warwick, and when the two attempted to escape, they were executed — Warwick beheaded, Warbeck hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn, as befitted all traitors. Alas, poor Warbeck. It was a good try.

— Ellen Perlman, *FL*
(*I think I've got the right Ellen.*)

John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt
His name is my name too.

📖 *Names Through The Ages* - Teresa Norman, The Berkeley Publishing Group, Penguin Putnam Inc., NY, 1999

If you want to write a historical novel set in Medieval times, or indeed in any other, and you want a name for your heroine a little more distinctive than the ubiquitous Mary, Elizabeth, or Anne, but don't want to choose a screaming anachronism like, say, Melody, consult Teresa ("Harvester"). Norman's ("Norse, from Normandy") lists. How about Bennet? Parnell? Pentecost? (These were also male names, by the way.) She covers England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and France, these being the countries an English-speaking writer would be most interested in, together with the USA. If you are writing about real people, of course you have to use real names, but you might avoid confusion by nicknames. For example, Katherine could be called either Kate or Kitty in the 15th century, according to her lists. She also includes a chart of Saint's days, which were used for christening purposes — some of them are pretty strange and must not have been used often.

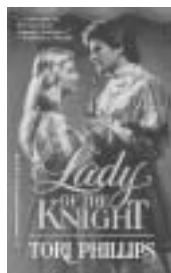
Ms. Norman also gives us potted histories of the different periods, though an author should have more than just a basic acquaintance with a period before attempting a novel. Besides, she takes a pretty conventional view of Richard III. But as an aid to the harried author, this would be most useful. It might also be useful for prospective parents. I loaned it to my daughter, who should have had her son by the time you read this, with the suggestion that she look among the Welsh names for one that would go well with Jones. Evan Jones? Umm, maybe. Jasper Jones? No, perhaps not!

— *m.s.*

Good (k)night, sweetheart.....

📖 *Lady of The Knight* - Tori Phillips, Harlequin, Buffalo, NY, 1999

Ms. Phillips' trilogy of the Cavendish family in the 15-16th centuries has turned into a quadrilogy — or whatever it's called — with perhaps more in the future. The time and place is the Field of the Cloth of Gold, which the author calls "the party of the second millennium." This time, however, the Cavendishes act as supporting cast/Greek chorus, and the



main roles are taken by Andrew Ford, an elderly (38!) friend of the family, and a girl he has purchased at auction from a whoremaster, who touts her as a virgin (which she isn't). His motive is only a small part charity; mostly it is the result of a bet he makes with one of the Cavendishes that he can pass her off as a lady to King Henry VIII in less than two weeks time. Even Professor Higgins would have quailed at that.

Complicating matters are a villainous villain named Sir Gareth Hogsworthy (yes, really!), and the tendency of our hero's Galatea, young Rosie, to speak her mind - her mentor can only teach her to express herself grammatically. Oh, yes, and the fact that they quickly fall in love with each other. Turns out, of course, that she is not so low-born as she thinks.....

Phillips' description of the Field, "a combination of a summit meeting....an Olympic games, a World's Fair, an international fashion show and a culinary showcase" can make you feel that you are really there, and her sense of fun and refusal to take too much too seriously ensure you will enjoy the trip.

Previous books in the series have been *Midsummer Knight*, *Silent Knight*, and *Three Dog Knight*. The dogs featured in the last named are long gone, of course, but they have a worthy successor in Buttercup the bloodhound. What does our own Mary Schallar have in store for us next? *Knight After Knight? Knight and Day?*

— *m.s.*

**Same song, second verse,
A little bit louder, not a bit worse.**

Other series you might want to look into:

📖 *Stolen Heiress* - Joanna Makepeace, Mills & Boon, Richmond, Surrey, 1996

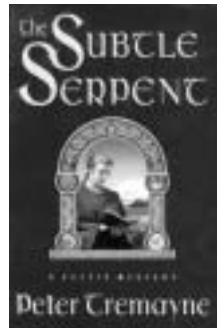
Claire Hoyland manages to get herself kidnaped by one Robert Devane in the early days of the Wars of the Roses. He is, of course, not just a common criminal; they merely happen to be on opposite sides. Being brave and plucky, Claire wins the heart of her captor. Somehow they get involved with taking young Richard of Gloucester and his brother George into exile. This is not just a pleasure trip but fraught with danger. Richard, though only about 7, and not brattily precocious, is as brave and resourceful as we would like to imagine him at that age.

Dragon's Court, by the same author, same publisher, but published in 1998, deals with covert Yorkists in the reign of Henry VII. It seems to use descendants of characters from some of her previous books, all unreconstructed Yorkists. Henry VII is allowed one redeeming feature, however: he loves his children. When our hero, Richard Allsop, saves the future Henry VIII from a nasty hunting accident

(how was he to know?) the elder Henry's gratitude, and a ring he gives the rescuer, save Allsop from a traitor's end. He and most of the other characters are firm believers in Perkin Warbeck as the True Heir. These books are probably not available in US bookshops, but perhaps you can obtain them from public libraries via inter-library loan if they are not in your local.

📖 *The Spider's Web* - Peter Tremayne, St Martin's Press, NY, 1997

📖 *The Subtle Serpent* - same author, New American Library, Penguin Putnam, NY 1999, pb



Mr. Tremayne, who is a recognized scholar of early Irish history, includes a fairly lengthy foreword giving some of the background of these mystery novels of 7th century Ireland. "Women could, and did aspire to all offices and professions as the equal of men. They could be political leaders, command their people in battle as warriors, be physicians, local magistrates, poets, artisans, lawyers and judges." Celibacy was not a tenet of the Irish church, and not required for minor clergy even in the Roman at this stage. Sister Fidelma, the leading detective, he compares to "a modern Scottish sheriff-substitute, whose job it is to gather and assess the evidence, independent of the police, to see if there is a case to be answered." In American terms, she would combine some of the role of the DA with that of the Grand Jury, and a great deal of the independent investigator. At one point, Fidelma says to her friend and sidekick, Brother Eadulf, "You know my methods," so we know what investigator the author has in mind. But these are not dry novels-with-footnotes. Historical information and exposition is provided naturally, in conversation and otherwise.

In *The Spider's Web*, Sister Fidelma comes to the aid of a blind mute accused of the murder of a much-hated, and deservedly hated, chieftain. Understandable to a degree, since he was found by the bedside of the murdered man with a knife in his hands. Before she succeeds in clearing him, secrets long held will come out into the open, and Eadulf will have a narrow scrape with death.

At the beginning of *The Subtle Serpent*, Fidelma, at sea in a coastal barc, comes on an 7th century *Marie Celeste*, apparently deserted. She finds evidence that indicates Brother Eadulf had been on board, and had been abducted. She comes to realize how much she cares for the prickly Saxon, and how much she misses

him. Before they are reunited, however, Fidelma runs into a bizarre situation at the abbey of the Salmon of the Three Wells (a metaphor for Christ). A headless body turns up in the well. This is only the first....Is the murderer one of the sisters? What are those eerie, hollow, knocking noises heard in the cloisters? All is explained, and the two detectives are reunited, for another adventure, we are sure.

— m.s.

I've got the horse right here,
His name is Paul Revere.

📖 *The Stallions of Woodstock*, Edward Marston, St. Martin's Press, NY 1997

📖 *The Serpents of Harbledown*, same author and publisher, 1998



Also a bit before our period, being shortly after the Conquest, but good examples of the Medieval mystery. *Stallions* starts with a horse race, which ends in a murder. Who did it and why? The Norman lords are only too ready to pin it on a Saxon, but who were the large bettors with the best motives? There's a promising young singer and an evil chaplain to provide a subplot. *Serpents* involves the murder of a young girl, and the repercussions caused thereby. It is, incidentally, dedicated to Elizabeth Peters, author of *The Murders of Richard the Third*, as well as the turn-of-the century (the 19/20th) Amanda Peabody mysteries.

Sir Ralph Delchard is now married to his Golde, a Saxon brewer. This might be thought a bit of a come-down for a Norman knight, but what Sir Ralph minds is having to take a working honeymoon, accompanied by his deputy Gervase Bret, Canon Hubert and Brother Simon — especially the later two. But they do their part in solving the murders.

— m.s.

Someday I'm going to murder the bugler,
Someday they're going to find him dead.
I'll amputate his reveille
And stomp upon it heavily,
And spend the rest of my life in bed.

📖 *Murder At Medicine Lodge*, Mardi Oakley Medawar, St. Martin's Press, NY 1999

Ms. Medwar asks us to suppose someone did murder a bugler — not because of his early rising. Further, suppose that the person unjustly suspected of the murder

Ricardian Reading

is a Kiowa Indian, on the eve of an important treaty. Then suppose that the Kiowa healer, Tay-bodal, is reluctantly sent off to detect the true murder, accompanied by other warriors, both red and white. The former are supposedly the prisoners of the latter, but things get turned around. Ms. Medwar has found her formula, but she can ring the changes on it adeptly. It's only fair to warn the reader, though, that the murderers are characters he/she may have come to feel kindly towards.

This is not a humorous book, but there is humor in it, both subtle and broad. These are not the dead-pan Indians of stereotype. A great deal of interest comes from Tay-bodal's interaction with white culture. He finds much to condemn, but also some things to commend: Yankee ingenuity, as exemplified by a folding shovel, and apple pie!

Taking place in the late 1860s, this is not Ricardian, and only recently historical. I include it because of 1) the parallels between Kiowa and Medieval culture; 2) because this column occasionally falls into the hands of spouses and other non-Ricardians who might appreciate being informed about some good reading; 3) because I have reviewed the previous books in the series; and 4) because it's one of my favorite series. So there!

— *m.s.*

Oh what a face, it's a disgrace To be showing it in any public place

 *Gothic Gargoyles - Text & Photos by Bill Yenne, First Glance Books, Cobb, CA, 1998*


A true coffee-table type of picture book, notable for its beautiful aerial photography. In order to photograph genuine gargoyles, of course, you need a helicopter.

Though the pictures are very handsome, they are apt to give the acrophobic a funny feeling in the pit of the stomach. The most charming are probably those at Sint Jans Hertogabosch in the Netherlands: mannikins of tradesmen and women as well as of animals and grotesques straddle the gables. The most modern are on the Chrysler Building in New York City. There are still artisans in the business of making and repairing gargoyles, believe it or not.



— *m.s.*

...his sisters and his cousins Whom he numbers by the dozens, And his aunts!

 *The Beggar and The Professor: A Sixteenth-Century Family Saga - Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie; translated by Arthur Goldhammer, The University of Chicago Press, 1997*

This has to do with the 15th century only because one of the subjects was born in the last year, or next to last year, of that century. It is truly a saga, and one the reader might find it difficult to believe, except that it did happen. Thomas Platner, weaned on a goat-horn, deserted by his mother, a barefoot goat-herder, member of a gang of boy-thieves and beggars, illiterate at the age of 16, nevertheless wound up in the intellectual world as a printer and professor of languages — though he never got rich and generally had to eke out his income by taking in boarders. Platner's success was due in part to the fact that he was a Protestant (though never a strict or bigoted Calvinist) when the Catholic pedagogues were being turned out of their livings. Nevertheless, his rise from humble beginnings is astounding. His son Felix is another matter. Born when his parents were fairly prosperous, he was destined for a medical career, which fortunately coincided with his own wishes.

Thomas's story comes from his autobiography, his son's mostly from his letters home from Montpelier and Paris, where he studied medicine. Unforgettable scenes abound, such as Thomas going on a journey carrying his young daughter in his arms and leading his wife Anna by a rope tied around her waist. (Well, remember this *is* in the Alps.) "Characters" wander on and off stage, including Casper Fry, professional pilgrim, hired by those who did not want to do it themselves; the bully Paulus, who made Thomas' youth even more miserable than it was; mentors and mentees; friends and enemies. We come to like the tough old bird, and his more gentle and sentimental son (who had "a horse more sentimental than himself.") We share in the many sorrows and joys of the family.

Since this book was translated from the French, written by a Frenchman from original sources written in German-Swiss, one can't help but think that something has been lost, or added, in the translation, or was added by Thomas himself for embellishment. Did his grandfather really live to the age of 126? Did he have 72 unmarried female cousins? Whether he did or didn't, this is fascinating reading, and all — or mostly — true.

— *m.s.*

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