



Carole Rike (right) with daughter Zoe Duplantis at Bosworth Field, 1976

In Memory of

Carole Rike, January 17, 1941 - August 3, 2010

Loyaulte me lie

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

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

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A Word from the Editor

As I was in the process of putting together this issue, we in the American Branch received the sad news that Carole Rike died after a brave struggle with cancer. Ricardians both in the American Branch and abroad will miss her sorely.

Laura Blanchard has kindly put together a tribute to Carole on very short notice. Since some of you may just now be learning of Carole's death, we would like to include additional tributes in a future issue. If you have memories or photographs of Carole you would like to contribute, please send to me at mail@susanhigginbotham.com or to my street address.

I will be serving at the editor for the *Register* for the present time. We hope to get the publications back to a regular schedule in the coming months. In the meantime, we welcome suggestions about any features you would like to see in the *Register*. We especially welcome your own contributions! Please feel free to e-mail me or telephone me with any questions or suggestions you might have.

If you had sent any material to Carole for publication in the *Register*, please re-send it to me, as Carole's health prevented her from turning over any of her files to me.

In Carole's fine tradition of leaving you with some pithy words, a few days ago, I was reading Helen Cox's interesting new book, *The Battle of Wakefield Revisited*. Ms. Cox made a point that I thought should always be remembered when studying the Wars of the Roses—or indeed any period of history: “The violent emotions unleashed are easy to imagine; so perhaps rather than apportioning blame, we should try to extend a measure of understanding and compassion to all parties. They were constrained by position, social expectations, nature and personal capabilities to do as they did.”

—Susan Higginbotham

Remembering Carole: January 17, 1941 to August 3, 2010

Compiled by Laura Blanchard

Carole Rike, American Branch member since the early 1970s, passed away peacefully on August 3, surrounded by her family.

Carole's longevity of Ricardian service exceeds that of anyone in the American Branch, and possibly of the entire Society. She served on the board and/or as editor of the *Ricardian Register* without interruption since 1985, working with eight consecutive branch chairs. She served, at one time or another, as vice chair, recording secretary, membership chair, sales officer, and treasurer.

Sharing a birthday with Benjamin Franklin, Carole was -- like Franklin -- a printer and a pundit, running a successful graphic design and printing business in New Orleans. She printed the *Register* continuously for twenty-five years and for all but three of those years also served as its editor.

Carole's Ricardian conversion was described in a *Wall Street Journal* article (March 13, 1991):

Carole Rike, a New Orleans Ricardian who runs a word processing and printing business, describes her own conversion after reading the Tey book as sudden, total and a trial to her loved ones. "I became rabid," she says. "My children would walk around the house pretending to have a hunchback or they would make some comment at the dinner table about the kind of man who smother his nephew with pillows, and I'd be in tears. It's as if you'd discovered that what you had always believed—that life is fair -- isn't true."

Many converts suffer lonely years before they discover the Richard III Society, usually by happening upon one of the annual notices the society places in newspapers on the anniversary of Richard's death (August 22). "It was like coming out of the closet," says

Ms. Rike. "Who else do you know who wants to talk about Richard III? Nobody."

At least once in their lifetimes, American Ricardians try to take the Ricardian bus tour of England. Ms. Rike remembers Bosworth Field, where the group laid a wreath, as a high point. "We'd climb over the barbed wire looking for the well where Richard drank before battle, and the farmer would come out and scream at us to get out of his field," she says. "Now it's a big tourist deal."

Carole's daughter Zoe Duplantis says she can't recall a time that her mother wasn't interested in Richard III and English history. "I didn't get normal paper-dolls or coloring books," she said. "I got Henry VIII and his six wives." Zoe traveled with her mother to England in 1976, where they visited Bosworth Field.

In addition to her work for the American Branch and for her own business, Carole was active in a number of other volunteer organizations -- the *Register* wasn't the only newsletter she published. She printed the *Tennessee Williams Literary Journal*, and was active in the New Orleans Personal Computer Club, Save Our Cemeteries, and the Society of Petroleum Engineers. (The other family business, Rike Services, is a petroleum engineering consulting and training firm, and Carole was very much involved with that as well.)

Her wide circle of friends in New Orleans resulted in noted columnist Don Lee Keith -- whose interviews of celebrities such as Truman Capote were legendary -- writing a column in *New Orleans Magazine* about her -- "Mrs. Rike and Mr. Royce." Her husband, Jim Rike, gave her a Rolls-Royce as a Valentine's Day gift, and it was a well-known sight around town. (It was garnet, Keith wrote, but Ricardians know it was actually murrey, one of the Yorkist colors.)

[Keith explains that Jim Rike told Carole to pick out a new car] Two years later she finally found a car she liked. Jim was in Tulsa on business when Carole called about it. She described the car, and then she added -- with sufficient discretion -- that the next day *was* Valentine's . So Jim -- figuring that roses or candy, no matter how many or how much, would fare poorly in comparison -- said "Happy Valentine's Day, Doll." By the time Jim Rike got back to New Orleans, he had become the owner of a Rolls-Royce....

Sometimes at a light she'll hear cat-calls from a nearby vehicle full of rumble-minded youths, and when they propose a drag match, which they often do, Carole has to grip the wheel to resist temptation. Once she yielded and accepted the challenge. She was halfway home before the other guy had shifted gears.

The story behind the title: as a gesture of respect, one of the maids insisted on calling the car The Royce. She wasn't on first name terms with it, you see.

Some of Carole's other interests (or passions) included shih-tzus, gardening and especially orchids. One of the joys of her last few months was the construction of a greenhouse on her property in Tickfaw.

When Katrina struck New Orleans in 2005, Carole and her family were especially hard hit. Because Jim's business took him all over the world, Carole was driving him to Houston to catch a flight the night before the storm hit, so the family was caught out of town with no opportunity to retrieve precious documents and photos. Carole spoke and wrote movingly to friends of the dislocations of losing so much to the storm. Her public comments in the *Register* were carefully understated.

Carole is survived by her husband, Jim Rike; her daughter Zoe Duplantis and partner Robert Ringenberg; her grandson Connor Ringenberg; and several siblings. As we go to press, memorial plans have not yet been set.

A number of tributes from American Branch members as well as from the Society itself in England follow:

There are few Americans who have done as much to get the word out about Good King Richard as Carole Rike. As the editor and printer of the *Ricardian Register* for twenty-five years, Carole proved to be a dedicated and talented Ricardian. Her good service and tireless work in memory of King Richard will be greatly missed. She served faithfully in a multitude of ways, including Vice Chairperson of the American Branch until recently. Her straightforward observations sometimes got her into trouble, and even that direct approach may be reminiscent of our Richard. The depth of her service to the Society cannot be measured. We will miss her.

—Wayne Ingalls
Chair, Richard III Society, American Branch

Carole's contributions to the Richard III Society were enormous. Editing, publishing, printing, and mailing the *Register* takes enormous talent, competence, dedication, energy, and TIME. And Carole took charge of those essential tasks for how many years? Memories of her must be recorded for posterity.

Could the next issue of the *Register* be dedicated to Carole? I never had the honor of meeting her, but I would ask if someone who knows specific details of her contributions to the Society could write a Memorial that would be featured in both the *Register* and the *Ricardian Bulletin*.

Perhaps the American Branch could create a permanent endowment named for Carole that would fund an award for the best article published in the *Register* during each year. The endowment should not come from member's dues, but from individual contributions. I'll happily donate. Or maybe we don't need a cash award, but could confer an honorific recognition of the best article, designated as the "Carole Rike Award for Excellent Research and Writing." Either would require a committee, separate from the editorial staff, to evaluate the published articles. The committee might be appointed by the Executive Committee.

The Society will miss Carole--as will her family. Together, we need to devise some way to perpetuate her contributions and her life.

—Arlene Okerlund

I never had the honor of personally meeting Carole but I did have many contacts with her via telephone and emails concerning RIII matters.

There are few words one can say that would pay due homage to an individual who gave so much of herself while at the same time accepting whatever problems, trials or tribulations that came with the responsibilities she accepted for our society.

One thing that I will never forget about Carole - no matter what the problem was she never threw up her hands and walked away from it.

God bless her.

We are all a little poorer today.

—Dave Luitweiler

We only met Carole once and it must have been over twenty years ago. She was in the UK visiting London with her husband and invited the Society committee to meet them at their hotel. We had recently visited America and been served a pecan pie by our hostess. We were lamenting that we couldn't then buy pecans in this country so we would not be able to have it again. A few weeks later, once the Rikes were home, a package arrived at our house, and to our surprise and pleasure we found that it contained a large bag of pecan nuts from Carole, together with a recipe for making pecan pie. This we thought was such a very kind gesture, to remember our conversation and take the trouble to buy and pack up the nuts and send them to us. We had some lovely pies after that.

We kept up an occasional correspondence with her and regularly exchanged Christmas cards. We greatly admired the way that she kept the Register going sometimes through great difficulties and disasters such as the New Orleans floods. We have happy memories of her.

—Carolyn and Peter Hammond

I leave it to the American Branch to do the facts and figures, but I remember Carole for her hard work on the *Ricardian Register*, getting it out, and liaising with the Society committee as to numbers, and distribution arrangements. Things did not always work seamlessly – that they worked as well as they did was in great part thanks to her.

I also remember what must have been her inaugural visit as an American officer, to London, and her amazingly generous offer to host the committee, or as much of it as could attend, to dinner at her hotel – from recollection the Rembrandt, opposite the Brompton Oratory in Kensington. Actually meeting face to face did much to aid smooth relations.

—Elizabeth M. Nokes

It is said that no one is irreplaceable, but Carole Rike came close. For more years than anyone can remember she put out the *Register*, through good times and unbelievably bad, like Hurricane Katrina and the aftermath, and she did her frequently difficult job with great success and without complaint. Although we saw each other only at AGMs, in the years that I was active in the Society we talked frequently, about Society business and many other topics. We agreed on many subjects and disagreed on others, but she was always respectful of other people's opinions. Carole was a woman of many interests, ranging from the Richard III Society, her business, her orchids, and especially her family. She will be missed by all who knew her.

—Roxane C. Murph

I will miss Carole, not only as the editor of the *Register*, but also as a friend, although our friendship was conducted mostly by e-mail of late years. The last one was sent just a few days before her death. I will miss those e-mails, the historical ones, and the hysterical, the political (whether I agreed with all of them or not) and the spiritual, the practical and the not-so-practical, the funny (including Cajun and Texan jokes) and the punny - all reflections of Carole's uniqueness.

I miss her already.

—Myrna Smith

My First Ricardian

Carole Rike opened up new possibilities for me, perhaps in a way that no one else has done. She

made me consider things I had not thought possible and make them real.

Carole Rike was my first Ricardian. In 1975, Touche Ross in New Orleans hired me as their data processing manager, replacing a man who had replaced – Carole Rike. Mr. Jacobs, my boss, offered Carole as a reference for help when problems arose. Many were the times when I called her, and long were the conversations.

Carole was always interested in Everything, so the conversations often turned away from data processing. Her life seemed glamorous and exciting to me, chained to my desk in downtown New Orleans; she recounted her trips to England. England! I should only wish! She also went to New York each year to attend the AGM of “a historical society” to which she belonged.

“What society is that?” I asked.

“The Richard III Society.”

Dredging up from the back of my brain what little of English history resided there, I asked, “Why would people have a society dedicated to such a villain?”

Carole’s short answer was, “Because he was the first victim of political propaganda in history.” She proceeded to fill in some details and sent over some books to educate me. Shortly after that, I joined the Society – Carole had converted me. So the first possibility she opened for me was joining the Society

After years of my being a passive Ricardian, Carole recruited me to fill in as Treasurer of the Society in 1993, following the resignation of the then-Treasurer. The seven years I spent on the Board as Treasurer and then as Membership Chair were challenging and fulfilling, not least because Carole attended our Board conference calls as Editor of the *Ricardian Register*, and it was a chance to talk to her, if only briefly and in the context of Society business. The Board position encouraged me to begin attending AGM’s (I told my husband – laughingly – that attendance was requirement of the job.) So the third possibility she opened for me was the opportunity to travel, including a few trips to England (but never to York, alas.)

Did I say “third”? What was the second? Perhaps most important was the example Carole gave me of a woman making money without a “regular job”. She was consulting to Touche Ross when we had all those talks. I thought, “If Carole can do it, maybe I can, too.” I started my own little consulting business by offering my services to two former employers. Less than a year later, my

husband joined me and we have been making a living without “regular jobs” ever since. Without Carole’s example, I probably never would have had the courage to try it.

It saddens me to think of how few times Carole and I could get together in the years since she first recruited me to the Society: an occasional lunch when we could both fit it into our schedules (hers was busier than mine) was typical. One highlight was her wedding, at the Pontchartrain Hotel on St. Charles Avenue, complete with bagpipers. Carole brought a special touch to everything she did; she wasn’t satisfied with “adequate” – she was always looking for the creative touch, the idea that would make things interesting, as we can see from the *Ricardian Register* that she edited for many years.

—Peggy Allen

Although I never actually met Carole, it was with great sadness that I learned of her illness and then of her passing. We had corresponded for several years, usually about matters Ricardian, but occasionally about things more personal, and the more I got to know her, the better I realised what an asset to the Society she was and how good a friend she could be.

It had been the plan of the Executive Committee to announce at the AGM in October that we had made Carole a Vice-President in recognition of her work for the Society and for the American Branch. Carole knew this and had expressed her pleasure at it. It very sad that she never had the chance to be publicly recognised by the members in this way. It is obvious that she will be a hard act to follow and I wish anyone who takes on the *Ricardian Register* and all that that entails the very best of luck. Others will be able to tell you more.

The Richard III Society has lost a very good friend, as has everyone who knew Carole. Let me just say that our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends at this time.

—Phil Stone
Chairman, Richard III Society

This is a devastating loss to the Society, and to me, personally. I talked to her on the phone a couple of times, and her life had its difficulties even before Hurricane Katrina. Afterwards, it must have taken

heroic efforts just to get by on a day-to-day basis. She has worked so hard for so many years to give us a great publication. I hope that we can give her a tribute in our next *Register*.

—Pam Butler

I am saddened at hearing of Carole's death. Geoff Wheeler let me know. She had a dreadful time since Hurricane Katrina and it was awful to hear she was suffering from cancer.

It's not very easy finding the right words to say to express my sorrow and send best wishes to you all.

—Pam Benstead
Worcestershire Branch

I worked closely with Carole on the *Register* for twenty years, and stayed with Carole and Jim twice -- once for two days before the 1992 AGM, which was held at the Hotel Pontchartrain, and once for two weeks in 1994, when both the *Register* and other Branch affairs needed an extra pair of Ricardian hands. A couple of stories will, I hope, give the flavor of the weird and wonderful Rike household.

Many of us had heard Carole's stories of her beloved shih-tzus, as well as the care with which her maid, Thelma, groomed them. By the time I stayed with them Thelma was well past retirement age but I think she kept working just so that she could groom those dogs.

Thelma used to snip strips of fabric from the hems of Carole's dresses so that she could make matching hair bows for the doggies. Every morning, each dog would be set on the counter of the lower level kitchen and carefully combed with the flea comb. If Thelma found a flea, she'd crush it with her thumbnail and lay the corpse on a paper towel. At the end of the grooming sessions, Carole would be summoned to hear the body count and view the line of dead fleas. This macabre little ceremony was repeated every morning with absolute solemnity on Thelma's part. How Carole kept a straight face, I'll never know, but she did -- at least until she could escape upstairs and laugh.

Then there was The Rolls. If it hadn't been for Carole, I don't think I would ever have driven a Rolls-Royce in my lifetime, but while I was down there she encouraged me to take it to go here and there. (Anything you've ever heard about how wonderful they are to drive is an understatement.) I was so proud that she trusted me to drive it. Actually, she let a number of people in her household, including her handyman, drive it, so it turns out I wasn't so special.

Carole and Jim didn't drive the Rolls to Houston in August 2005, and so it was a deeply-mourned casualty of Katrina. Not even a Rolls-Royce can survive several weeks of being several feet under water.

The Katrina diaspora was hard on Carole, although she gamely set up a household, first in Houston, and later outside the small town of Tickfaw, Louisiana, about an hour's drive north of New Orleans. Like most gardeners, she was very much aware of her plants as living things, and the loss of so many of her cherished orchids and other houseplants in New Orleans was very hard. The irony of houseplants dying of thirst upstairs because the lower level was flooded was not lost on her. She lost her Ricardian library, too, a fact she regularly lamented.

There were frustrating months when Carole could not mail a *Register*, even though one had been printed, because the New Orleans post office had not yet reopened and our bulk mail permit was based there. There were the tedious workarounds to get the *Register* printed elsewhere until she could work with her daughter to re-establish the printing business in New Orleans. Although she was plagued with a number of health issues in her last year, Carole was determined to make up those lost *Registers* and get up to speed before she turned over the reins of editorship to another. "I hate to leave a job unfinished," she told me in May. And she almost made it.

She'll be missed.

—Laura Blanchard

One of Richard III's biographers, Professor Charles Ross, always confessed his amazement that this subject should have such an attraction for women, but the demographic bears this out, and it

has to be said that, in the organisation of the Society's Committee, its publications and various projects, ladies with "independent minds" and "forceful personalities" tend to become the power behind the throne.

Some way into her tenure of office, in 2006, Carole herself noted that, "We have had an all female board for some time now, and whilst I firmly believe that, if you need a job done, get a woman, this may not have been the best for us." But if the phrase, "A great and strong minded woman" comes to mind – though assuredly, Carole would have been initially horrified to find herself compared to Margaret of Anjou, it should be remembered that, when taken out of context "generations of (mostly male) historians have suffered the misapprehension that (this) somehow implied that (she) was a strong-minded and domineering female", when in fact the Paston correspondent meant simply that the queen "was a sought after patron because she did her best to see that her petitioners' requests were fulfilled."

Fittingly, Carole inherited the post of American Branch Secretary at the end of 1985, Bosworth Quincentenary Year, though my first personal contact with her as editor of *The Ricardian Register* was not until 1991, when Laura Blanchard ran a feature on "Putting Richard on Display: Exhibitions across Three Continents", which highlighted the recent London National Theatre exhibition which I had organised, together with similar efforts in America and Australia. Following on from this, Carole made use of photos and material from the extensive collection I'd assembled over the years as useful 'generic' covers for the magazine.

Looking back over the years, at a rough estimate, we must have collaborated on over two dozen covers, usually composite 'montage' themes, even venturing into full colour on occasions, as well as several articles I thought might be of interest to American members on paintings and portraits of Richard III in USA collections, as well as long overdue illustrated account on the history and development of the Madame Tussauds' wax model of Richard, which was impossible to run in the UK *Bulletin* at the time as photographs could not be reproduced. It must have been re-assuring to her that, as well as garnering appreciative letters from members for her efforts, the former USA chairman and previous editor, Bill Hogarth, declared that "the Register looks more and more splendid each issue."

Regretfully, I only had one chance to meet up with her on a rare visit to London. With typical

generosity and hospitality, she entertained the whole Society committee to a memorable dinner at her hotel, opposite the Victoria and Albert Museum and near to that one time 'Mecca' for Ricardian tourists, Crosby Hall.

Entrusting the production of the *Register* to her business staff, originally unfamiliar with the medieval period and its idiosyncratic language, was a 'necessary evil' and not without its pitfalls. On at least one occasion, a photograph (not one of mine) was printed upside down. Some of the minor textual corrections were gathered together in "Carole's Careless Corner"! One of the most amusing incidents (at least, to me!) was her confusion between myself and that most prolific author of "polemical paperbacks," Geoffrey Richardson.

In summer 2002, still recuperating from a broken leg, she was unable to attend the AGM. Fall 2004 brought the first indication of the cruel forces of nature which hit the southern States as distribution of the magazine was delayed when "Ivan fouled up our schedule," and the following year, "Our homes and businesses were decimated by the levee break in New Orleans." With Winter 2005 came "The time is out of joint. Hopefully, the worst of the Katrina aftermath is drawing to a close." For the last few years, she struggled to keep ahead of things but admitted, "Through many more years than I can now recall, I have produced this newsletter – sometimes late, but never this late, and never under such extraordinary pressure." A brief respite came in 2006 when the family were settled in their new home and she was looking forward to a new start, though missing having "an orderly library - and people to talk to who read books."

But only in the Fall of last year did she reveal the extent of the difficulties she and her fellow Board members had endured, together with the tragic news of her terminal illness.

The magazines are an enduring legacy of which she and the Branch can be justifiably proud – a testament to her selfless devotion, produced under insurmountable odds – and every effort must be made to ensure their survival on to the one hundredth issue and beyond. AVE ATQUE VALE.

—Geoffrey Wheeler

St. Albans: Saints and Sinners

By Dorothea Preis

Before migrating to Australia in 1998, we lived for 5 years in the UK in Welwyn Garden City, where I had spent a memorable year as a German assistant in 1980/81. Welwyn Garden City is in Hertfordshire, so I decided to find out more about any Ricardian or Yorkist connections in that county. The recent 555th anniversary of the First Battle of St Albans (22 May 1455) lead me to take a closer look at this city, which had been a popular haunt for us, for shopping, eating out or just soaking up the atmosphere.

There have been settlements in the St Albans area for a long time. The first that we know of was by the Celtic Catuvellauni tribe, who called it 'Verlamion'. During the Roman period it became 'Verulamium', the second largest town in England after Londinium, situated on Watling Street heading north.[1] Most of the remains of the Roman town are today covered by Verulamium Park, but some parts have been excavated and can be visited. For instance the Hypocaust (including an *in situ* mosaic); the Roman Theatre of Verulamium; and the remains of the Roman city walls and London gate.[2]

The Saint of the Story

The present name comes from Saint Alban, who was the first martyr of Britain (executed in c. 304). His story has often been told, among others by the Venerable Bede.[3] According to this Alban was a Romano-British citizen of Verulamium, who gave shelter to a Christian priest, called Amphibalus, during a persecution of Christians. He was so impressed by what this man had to say that Alban converted to Christianity. When Roman soldiers came to search his house for the priest, he pretended to be him and was arrested. During the trial he stood firm to his new faith and was beheaded.[4] However, *en route* to his execution he

performed several miracles like stopping the water of the river to flow and causing a spring of water on the hill (hence the street name 'Holywell Hill'), where he was beheaded. His original executioner converted to Christianity on the spot and the man, who eventually did the deed, was punished by blindness. Unfortunately all this did not help Amphibalus, who along with some others was a few days later stoned to death.[5]

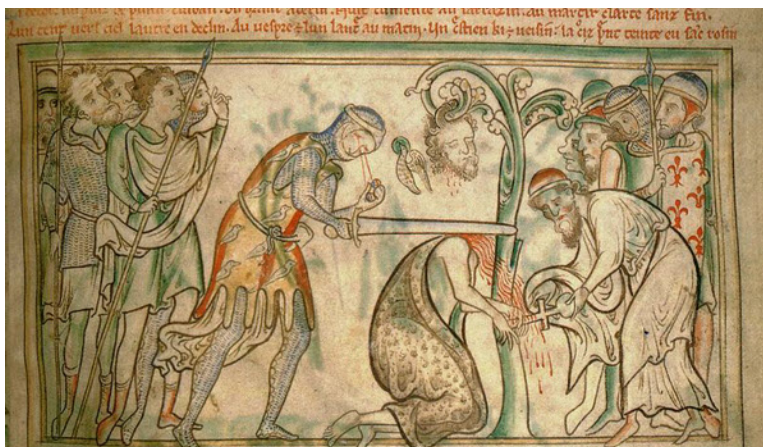
Alban was probably buried in the Roman cemetery to the south of the present Cathedral. Early on a basilica was built over the spot and then a Saxon Benedictine monastery in c.793.[6] The medieval town grew up to the east of the Roman town around the abbey. The present church was begun in 1077, replacing the earlier Saxon abbey. The abbey became a centre for art and literature.[7]

The End of an Era

The end came on 6 December 1539 with the dissolution of the monasteries, when the abbot and his community finally submitted to Henry VIII. The document was signed by an unusually large number of monks (39), indicating a strong sense of community in spite of the pressure from outside.

However, at this stage most of the wealth of the abbey had gone. Cardinal Wolsey had appointed himself abbot in 1521 and during his nine years in office (though he couldn't be bothered to actually be in St Albans) he stripped the treasury to fund his building of Cardinal College Oxford. Fortunately he was not interested in learning and had left the

extensive library alone. Many of the works can today be found in libraries of Corpus College Cambridge, Trinity College Dublin and The British Library. With what was left after Wolsey in the abbey treasury, Henry VIII gave himself an early



Christmas present, when he seized everything 12 days after the abbey's surrender. We don't know what became of the relics of St Alban, but churches at Odense in Denmark and Cologne claim to hold relics of him.[8] (This was news to me, after spending half my life in a town just 35 km from Cologne, I had not realised that there was a connection.)

The dissolution of the abbey also brought a dramatic decline to the town, as the trade from pilgrims and visitors stopped. The town bought the abbey church from Edward VI for £400 to be used as a parish church. It was the largest parish church in the country, but only had the population of a small market town to support it. Due to financial constraints it declined slowly into romantic decay. Most of the other abbey buildings had been demolished by aspiring Tudor landowners, who recycled the building stone to enlarge their newly-purchased monastic farmhouses. The Lady Chapel was walled off in 1570 from the rest of the church to house the grammar school (St Albans School).[8]

During "The Great Storm" of 1797, along with many buildings all over England, the Abbey suffered damage. Due to a lack of funds the repairs could not be carried out, until in 1832 part of the top of the south nave wall collapsed taking lead and timber down with the falling masonry. Then the national press took notice and a fund-raising campaign was started. During the renovations many of the original monastic wall paintings, which are among the finest in Britain, were uncovered. In 1870 there came a crisis in the restoration work, when the beautiful 11th century tower nearly collapsed, a fate that could just be averted. Unfortunately there were some, who thought they had to improve on the original and the Perpendicular west front and the main windows in the north and south transepts were destroyed.[9]

All the restorations, however, ultimately helped to preserve this beautiful building, which not only is home to many thriving congregations, but also attracts tourists from all over the world. I am glad to say that the Lady Chapel, after 300 years of use as a school, has been re-united with the church and I could attend the monthly German Lutheran services in this beautiful part of the cathedral. The school moved in 1871 into the Abbey Gateway, which had been used as a prison since the dissolution. There have been many additions to the school site, so that it forms today a very interesting architectural mixture of buildings dating from the 14th century to the 1990s. Some playing fields were a few years ago

opened by the present day Richard, The Duke of Gloucester,[10] Patron of the Richard III Society.

The parish church was elevated to cathedral status in 1877 when the diocese was created under Queen Victoria by the Bishopric of St. Albans Act 1875.[11]

Fighting in the Streets

During its history the abbey and the town around it were not always on the best of terms. During the middle ages the main industry was the manufacture of woollen cloth. To do this the townspeople had to use the monastery mills for fulling, which led to resentment to being ruled by the abbot and his agents. This led to frequent quarrels between the abbot and the non-monastic population.[12]

Two battles of the Wars of the Roses were fought in St Albans, the first on 22 May 1455, where the Yorkists were victorious, and the second on 17 February 1461, which was won by the Lancastrians. During this time John Wheathampstead (the spelling varies, but as the village near St Albans where he was born is spelled this way today, I also use this form for his surname) was abbot, who according to Galbraith had strong Yorkist leanings. He was a close friend to Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, uncle and Lord Protector for Henry VI. Wheathampstead tried in the chronicles to clear Humphrey's memory and also wrote some strongly Yorkist verses. And though both Henry VI and Edward IV showed favour to the abbey, and the Chronicles also show respect for Henry VI, the fate of the abbey in relation to the battles (though not of the town) shows that their Yorkist feelings were well known.

The First Battle of St Albans was fought in the streets of the town, next to the abbey. But as Galbraith asserts "only the fact that the direction of the Abbey's sympathies was well known can have saved it from being plundered".[13] The abbot also did what nobody else dared and asked the Duke of York to allow his former enemies to be buried. Permission was immediately given, and the bodies of three Lancastrian nobles were brought in by the monks and interred in the Lady chapel.[14]

And though the next six years were difficult for the abbey, true disaster struck after the Lancastrian victory at the Second Battle of St Albans on 17 February 1461. The "Northern troops plundered the Abbey and horribly savaged the surrounding country. The Queen even condescended to rob the Abbey of its most precious jewels and treasure." The result was a famine, with the abbot retiring to

Wheathampstead and the monks dispersing. However, the ultimate Yorkist victory allowed the monks to re-assemble by November 1461. [15]

However, if you ever visit St Albans spend a moment to remember the inhabitants of the town, who drew the short end of the stick in either of the battles fought there – the town was sacked after both.[16]

And when visiting the cathedral see whether you can find the effigy of Sir Anthony Grey, who was married to Eleanor, sister of Elizabeth Woodville. He is represented in full jousting armour with a collar of suns and roses, showing his allegiance to Edward IV and the House of York. He died in 1480.[17]

A Scandal at the Abbey

The most interesting bit in the long history of St Albans took place in the late 15th century. Wheathampstead's successor but one, William Wallingford, had a serious disagreement with the then Archbishop of Canterbury, John Morton, in 1490. So according to the motto "My enemy's enemies are my friends" I started digging and found that many ingredients in this story remind me of Richard III and his reputation under the Tudors.

William Wallingford was abbot from 5 August 1476 until his death in May or June 1492.[18] He was a man of great administrative talent with a strong financial acumen. He managed to get the abbey, which was heavily in debt when he took over, debt free and also spend much on improving it. He built the high altar known as the Wallingford Screen at a cost of £733 (this was destroyed during the dissolution, but replaced with a copy during the restoration in Victorian times) and lavishly remodelled the chapter house. [19] According to his successor Ramryge, he also built a library and a stone-bakehouse, repairing those buildings that needed repairs, and gave many rich treasures to the abbey, like a gold chalice and precious gold-embroidered vestments. In addition he funded at his own expense the training and education of ten young monks. According to David Ford Nash his "government at the abbey was marked by regard for strict discipline tempered with generosity". This generosity is shown in his testimonial for the absolution of a priest who by misadventure committed suicide and by freeing villeins and their children.

As part of the abbey's reputation as a centre for art and literature, he introduced the art of printing to

St Albans, just a few years after William Caxton had brought it to England. Between 1480 and 1486 the St Albans printer issued eight works, the first six in Latin, the other two in English. The most important and last was *The Boke of St Albans* (more about this later on).

Wallingford resisted attempts by Archbishop Bouchier (Archbishop of Canterbury from April 1454 to his death on 30 March 1486) to exert influence over the abbey by appealing to the pope who decided in the abbey's favour. Wallingford seems to have been a friend of William Lord Hastings, whom he gave in 1479 the office of steward of the liberty of St Albans.[20] However, in the matter of Hastings' execution on 13 June 1483 he did support Richard Duke of Gloucester saying that Hastings "got what he deserved"[21].

In stark contrast to this positive description is Galbraith's opinion, who describes Wallingford as a bad but vigorous man with evil influence for sinister purposes. Heard these adjectives before? – just wait! Galbraith was a historian who challenged the overall reliance of historians on the chroniclers whose works were often emotional judgments rather than constructive criticisms of contemporary figures. He concluded that William Rufus and King John were misrepresented because of their conflict with the clerical hierarchy.[22]

In line with his mistrust of chronicles he tells us that Wallingford is spoken of in "terms of the most extravagant praise" and that the register of his abbacy shows him in an overwhelmingly positive light. He then tells us that in March 1490 the then Archbishop of Canterbury received from the Pope a bull with special powers necessary for visitations of religious houses, though Benedictine abbeys were excluded.[23] Probably anticipating something like this, a month earlier, on 6 February 1490, Wallingford had procured a papal bull which ordered the archbishop to protect the privileges of St Albans.[24] St Albans as a Benedictine house enjoyed the privilege of being an exempt monastery, which means that the bishops had no Jurisdiction over it.[25]

The previous Archbishop of Canterbury, Bouchier, had grudgingly accepted this special status when he had tried to exert influence over the abbey. However, he conveniently died in 1486 so there was a vacancy which Henry Tudor (by the Henry VII) could give to one of his most influential supporters before and after his usurpation – John Morton, previously Bishop of Ely. Nobody would

classify Morton as a special friend of Yorkists and its sympathisers, so St Albans must have been highly suspect to him. Add to this Wallingford's determination to preserve the abbey's independence by getting his special status confirmed by the pope. It seems logical that this played a large role in the special vindictiveness with which Morton persecuted Wallingford.

So with his papal mandate for visitations of religious houses, though not including Benedictine establishments, Morton set to work and "imperatively called upon [the various monasteries] to reform". However, on 5 July 1490 he also wrote to the abbot of the Benedictine abbey of St Albans that "many witnesses worthy of credit" had told him that Wallingford had committed "enormous crimes and excesses". So what does he accuse him of?[26]

- Wallingford had "laid aside the pleasant yoke of contemplation". The question that springs to mind is, what would Morton know about that?
- Morton accuses Wallingford of "waste of goods, revenues and possession". But Wallingford seems to have been financially prudent enough to pay off his predecessors' debts. Indeed there was still enough money left in the treasury in 1521 for Cardinal Wolsey as abbot to help himself to the funds to build Cardinal College Oxford.[27]
- He had "dilapidated the common property, ... made away with the jewels and the woods to the value of 8,000 marks or more". As to "dilapidating the common property", how does this fit in with the magnificent screen and remodelling the chapter house and other building work? I'm not sure how many jewels there would have been to make away with, as Galbraith had informed us previously that Margaret of Anjou had helped herself to the jewels and treasures in 1461.[28] How much could a completely devastated monastery accumulate in not even thirty years? I'm not sure what Morton means by "making away with woods", but if it has anything to do with land holdings it is interesting to note that when Wallingford's successor Ramryge compiled an inventory of the abbey's properties in 1500/01 the park at Tyttenhanger (established 1427-8) was considerably bigger than in its infancy.[29]
- The juiciest accusation is that the nunneries of Pré and Sopwell, which were cells of St Albans Abbey, were "little better than brothels".

- In addition to that, the monks would "live with harlots and mistresses publicly ... within the precincts of the monastery and without."

- He then goes on to say that he had warned Wallingford repeatedly and if these problems were not sorted within 30 days he would make a personal visitation.

- Wallingford was not prepared to accept any interference from Morton and instead, on 11 July, appealed directly to the pope against the Archbishop's authority to hold a visitation. And the Pope agreed. But then Henry VII got involved and both Archbishop Morton and Henry talked the Pope into changing his mind. It is, however, unclear whether the visitation ever took place.[30]

In spite of these serious accusations, the abbot stayed on and there is no further mention of any immorality in the remaining years of the abbey. If things were really as bad as Morton made them out, would you not expect some drastic action? Instead everyone just carried on as normal. Henry Tudor even paid the monastery for "prayers for his soul to be rendered 'for ever and ever'".[31] No doubt Henry felt he needed as many prayers as possible, but would the prayers of such a centre of immorality have had the necessary influence?

There are also some interesting irregularities with the paperwork. The register of Wallingford's predecessor Wheathampstead, during whose term of office Wallingford was official general, archdeacon and chamberlain, had been tampered with to include grave charges which were explained in great detail. However, Wheathampstead always put his complete trust in him, indicating that these additions might have been added at a later date.[32] If Wallingford was such a dishonest man, would he have continued in his position, even been promoted, eventually to the top job itself? Doesn't really make sense, does it? This rather reminds me of Rous re-writing history after the ascension of Henry VII.

Then some pages have been torn out of Wallingford's own register. According to Galbraith these are the pages covering his election,[33] which would probably mean at the beginning of his register, but according to Ford these are pages from the end.[34] I think Ford's statement is more probable, as we don't have the exact date of Wallingford's death, which would have been contained on the last pages. However, maybe these last pages also contained his position in the quarrel with Morton? Then we have a case similar to the order to destroy

all copies of *Titulus Regius* unread – but unfortunately here no surviving copy has been found.

In this story we have two protagonists: on the one side Abbot Wallingford, strict but fair, working in the best interest of his abbey and ridding it of debt and a supporter of Richard III. On the other side is Archbishop John Morton, whose claim to fame is not for his piety but as the brains behind an ingenious system of taxation, “Morton’s Fork” (the idea was if the subject lived in luxury and had clearly spent a lot of money on himself, he obviously had sufficient income to spare for the king. Alternatively, if the subject lived frugally, and showed no sign of being wealthy, he must have substantial savings and could therefore afford to give it to the king.[35]) Otherwise also known as an expert in spreading rumour and innuendo.

All the negative statements against Wallingford seem to stem from this one letter by Morton, who many seem to believe because as Archbishop of Canterbury he just had to be right. Wallingford’s contemporaries though seem to have been unperturbed by his “enormous crimes and excesses”. Could it possibly be that Morton had some other axe to grind in his attack on the abbot? I am not in a position to state with certainty who of the two is right, but I know, whom I would choose to believe.

As to Galbraith it seems strange that he mistrusts the words of any chronicles, while building his whole case on one letter by someone like John Morton.

Wallingford died in late May or June 1492 (for all his predecessors their exact death dates seem to be known, but not for him – strange?) and got glowing obituaries. According to FA Gasquet one obituary said: “Nobody showed more care in the worship of God than our reverend father, abbot William Wallingford, or more kindness in works of piety. Nobody showed more devotion to the fervour of faith, hope and charity. None of the ancients before him had shown so much generosity in putting up buildings to the praise and glory of this monastery.”[36] Certainly not a bad way to be remembered!

“Little better than brothels” – the cells of the Abbey

And what about the nunneries at Sopwell and St Mary de Pré, which according to Morton’s letter were “little better than brothels”? These houses of ill repute were two of the three cells (or daughter houses) which were situated close to the town and

the abbey of St Albans. The third one, the Hospital of St Julian, was for leprous men and was not mentioned in Morton’s letter. This was founded by Abbot Geoffrey (1119-46) along Watling Street. In 1344 it was decided that it should house 6 lepers, primarily from the abbey. If a married man wanted to enter, he had to adopt a religious life, which freed him from the tie of marriage. The hospital was annexed to the abbey in 1505. There are no remains of this hospital, though the name St Julian is still used for an area of the modern city. Several skeletons have been discovered during building works at the corner of Vesta and Watling Street, which probably come from St Julian’s cemetery.[37]

St Mary de Pré was founded in 1194 by Warin, who was then Abbot of St Albans. A man of Walden had had a vision of St Amphibalus (the early Christian priest who had converted St Alban) who instructed him to tell the abbot to honour the place where the relics of Amphibalus and others had met the shrine of St Alban. So Warin built a church in this spot (on Watling Street) and houses for leprous women, who had to be veiled and live according to a rule. The whole organisation of this establishment was made in such a way to keep it dependent on the abbey. Until 1357 Pré was ruled by a Master or Warden and was a hospital for leprous nuns, but as leprosy died out its role changed and it became an ordinary priory ruled by a prioress. Apparently there was a division between nuns and sisters, the latter having an inferior position.

In 1416 the priory was granted by Henry V the reversion of the alien priory of Wing (Bucks) and it was exempted from payment of all subsidies. This was confirmed by a fresh patent from Edward IV.

In addition to accusing the nuns of the priory of a rather unconventional lifestyle, John Morton also claimed in his letter that the prioress in those days, a Helen Germyn, was a married woman who had left her husband for a lover. It seems that Helen was removed from her position, though she might have died, and was replaced by Amy Goden from Sopwell. It is difficult to ascertain what actually happened in the case of Helen Germyn. The author of the VCH thinks Helen’s replacement shows that the allegations were true, though also acknowledging that she might have died. If she was indeed replaced, she would have been the only one to suffer any consequences from Morton’s letter. The VCH does not explain, however, why her replacement should have been chosen from the equally notorious Sopwell of all places. If you want a new prioress to

sort out a rather lax discipline, wouldn't it make more sense to get someone in with a proven track record of strict adherence of the rules?

In April 1528 an inquiry found that the last prioress had died the previous June, and that the three nuns which had been left at the convent had deserted the place. It was then dissolved and annexed to the abbey of St. Albans, where at that time Cardinal Wolsey was the absentee abbot. In July Henry VIII granted the site of the late nunnery with all its possessions to Wolsey himself, who used all its property to fund his new college at Oxford. After his downfall, Henry VIII seized the land and leased it to a London merchant and then to a yeoman of the King's guard. In 1531 he swapped Pré with St Albans Abbey. After the dissolution the site was granted to Sir Ralph Rowlatt. One of the buildings was still standing in the 18th century, today aerial photographs show the outlines of buildings. When digging pipe trenches the foundations of walls have been revealed.[38] Off St Michael's Street there is a Prae Close remembering St Mary de Pré.

The third of the cells was St Mary of Sopwell. Like St Julian it was founded by Abbot Geoffrey (1119-46), apparently for the nuns who had from Saxon times existed at St Albans Abbey itself. The convent was to be completely dependent upon the abbey. The number was limited to thirteen nuns, and the abbot had to give his consent to who might be accepted. It was "maidens only" and the nuns were to be locked in at night.

I found St Mary of Sopwell particularly interesting as seems to have attracted women with spirit and intellect.

In approximately 1330 the nuns decided to fight for women's rights and challenged the existing order. When their Prioress Philippa died, they had a general meeting and came to a majority decision in favour of Sister Alice de Hakeneye. As soon as he heard about this, the abbot send his prior over, who asked each sister to state her choice in writing. The result was 16 votes for Alice de Hakeneye against 3 votes for the sub-prioress Alice de Pokesden. This was not the result the abbot wanted and majority decision notwithstanding he installed Alice de Pokesden. This show of male dominance was a few years later followed up with further restrictions.[39]

In 1420s and 1430s a Dame Eleanor Hull was a frequent visitor at the priory. She was the daughter of a retainer of John of Gaunt and was married to John Hull, esquire, also a retainer of John of Gaunt and later ambassador to Castile for both Henry IV

and Henry V. After her husband's death, c. 1421, she spent much of her time at Sopwell. Eleanor is known to have translated religious texts from French into English. Cambridge University Library has a manuscript with two text attributed to her: a translation of a commentary on the Seven Penitential Psalms and a translation of a collection of prayers and meditations. It is assumed that she did these translations in the early years of her widowhood, while actually staying at Sopwell, where she might have had access to the famous library at the abbey. She had probably enjoyed a better than average education, which also included Latin, and as a royal servant she would have had a knowledge of spoken and written French. It is assumed that she translated the prayers and meditations before the commentary on the Penitential Psalms, which is a much more ambitious work.[40]

Her connection with Sopwell was not without excitement: In 1428, apparently due to her influence at court, the famous robber captain William Wawe and his band broke into Sopwell hoping to find her there. While they were plundering the priory, a man in the village around it raised the alarm and the robbers ran away.[41]

We heard earlier that Abbot Wallingford had introduced the printing press to St Albans, and that one of the books printed was *The Boke of St Albans*. It is supposed to have been written by Juliana Berners. *The Boke of St Albans* was the last of eight books printed in St Albans[42] by an unknown schoolmaster in 1486. There is no title page, but at the end of this first edition there is an attribution "Explicit Dam Julyans Barnes in her boke of huntyng". She is thought to have been a prioress of Sopwell in the 15th century, and though she is not contained in the list of prioresses in the VCH, there is a gap between 1430 and 1480. She is thought to have been born c. 1388 and probably grew up at court, where she developed her love of hawking, hunting and fishing as well as field sports. Taking up a religious life did not change this, as the book deals with hawking and hunting. Juliana's book on fishing is supposed to be the first book on the subject to have been written by a woman.[43] With this book she made Sopwell famous world-wide and apparently there are many sporting organisations in the USA which bear her name. In St Albans she is remembered in the name of a street, 'Berners Drive'. [44]

In 1480 Abbot William Wallingford sent the archdeacon and sub-prior to Sopwell, to replace the

previous prioress, who was old and infirm, with an Elizabeth Webbe. A few years later the archdeacon wanted to depose Elizabeth, but she decided to fight and brought an action against him in the Court of Arches and was reinstated. That is when it got nasty, as the archdeacon sent two monks to the nunnery, who broke down her door with an iron bar, beat her and put her in prison. Elizabeth then went one step further and complained to the Archbishop of Canterbury – our friend John Morton. I think the author of the VCH is at least in part correct in saying that that “it can hardly be doubted that she was the authority for some of Morton’s charges against St. Albans”. She remained as prioress and continued fighting for the rights of the women of Sopwell.[45]

While it is easily understandable that Elizabeth Webbe would have painted the archdeacon’s choice for prioress in as negative a light as possible to Morton, it is more difficult to see that she would have described the priory community as a whole as “little better than brothels”. Surely this would have reflected badly on herself, as she had been in charge for 10 years prior to her attempted replacement. Possibly for Archbishop Morton the women at Sopwell were just too independent and it was easier to accuse them of loose morals.

Until the dissolution Sopwell remained to offer shelter for women with an independent spirit. Anne Boleyn, another lady, who was not easily intimidated, has some connection to Sopwell. She is said to have stayed there while Henry VIII tried to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, as she was safe at the priory, but it was close enough to London for Henry to visit frequently – in secret of course. It is said that Henry proposed to her under a cedar tree near St Stephen’s church. They were married on 25 January 1533, according to some at Sopwell.[46] The street name ‘Boleyn Drive’ remembers her stay at Sopwell.[47]

After the dissolution (the end for Sopwell came in March or April 1537), and Anne’s execution, Henry VIII used Sopwell to reward Richard Lee for his service with the Army of Calais. Richard continued to serve in Calais until on returning to England, he was also given the grounds of the monastery of St Albans, as well as other former Abbey properties. Richard acquired more and more properties in the centre of the town and became one of its wealthiest men. In 1549 he started building work at the priory to transform it into a comfortable family residence, using bricks and flint from the monastery. After the death of his wife and the

marriage of their two daughters, he started rebuilding the hall with new foundations in the same spot as the priory had been. The ruins we can see today are those of this new building. The ruinous state is due to Sir Harbottle Grimstone, who bought it in 1669, to use it as a quarry for his nearby house Gorhambury. [48]

If you ever visit St Albans and are interested in history as well as play golf (or happen to travel with someone who does), you might like to know that Mr Samuel Ryder had his seed business in St Albans. He donated the Ryder Cup, which is contested every second year between the PGA of American and the PGA European Tour. His office building is now the Comfort Hotel St. Albans on Holywell Hill and the former seed hall houses the Café Rouge.

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The Austen Sisters on Richard III

Cassandra



Jane

The Character of this Prince has been in general very severely treated by Historians, but as he was York, I am rather inclined to suppose him a very respectable Man. It has indeed been confidently asserted that he killed his two Nephews & his Wife, but it has also been declared that he did not kill his two Nephews, which I am inclined to believe true; & if this is the case, it may also be affirmed that he did not kill his Wife, for if Perkin Warbeck was really the Duke of York, why might not Lambert Simnel be the Widow of Richard. Whether innocent or guilty, he did not reign long in peace, for Henry Tudor E. of Richmond as great a Villain as ever lived, made a great fuss about getting the Crown & having killed the King at the battle of Bosworth, he succeeded to it.

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Plantagenets at Play: Medieval Gambling

By Susan Higginbotham

Whether you were in a tavern, a ship, a solar in a great castle, or camped in a battlefield, no matter what your station in life, there was one way you could pass the time in medieval society: by gambling.

Games of chance, of course, have an ancient history, and cubic dice appeared as far back as the seventh century B.C.¹ There were many different sorts of dice games. Among the favorites were raffle, where the winner had to throw all three dice alike or the highest pair, and hazard, which seems to have been aptly named because it had the worst reputation. It was most often played in taverns, and it attracted cheaters, who if caught could be led to the pillory and made to wear their false dice around their necks.² Crooked dice were quite common: the Museum of London has some examples, including a stash of dice bearing only high numbers or only low numbers and dice that had been weighted with drops of mercury. Such dice, the museum website reports, were called “fulhams,” apparently because “the Thames-side village of Fulham was notorious as the haunt of dice-sharpers.”³ On a more pleasant note, when Hugh le Barber claimed in 1307 to have been miraculously cured of blindness, he noted that he could once again see to play dice as well as chess. Commissioners sent to test his story reported that he could now see the points of a dice.⁴ The apprentice in Chaucer’s *Cook’s Tale* was an accomplished dice player:

For in the toun nas ther no prentys



That fairer koude caste a paire of dys⁵
Dice was the simplest form of gambling, but it was by no means confined to the lower classes. The future Henry IV, one of the most well traveled of English kings, lost at dice at Calais, in Prussia, and at Danzig.⁶ Henry VII was an especially avid gambler, as we shall see: dice was just one of the means by which he lost money.⁷ John Howard, the future Duke of Norfolk, paid five pence for a “bale [that is, a pair] of dysse.”⁸

A close relation of dicing was a game called cross and pile, named for the two sides of a coin—in other words, “heads or tails.” One of the royal practitioners of this sport was the ill-fated Edward II, who had to borrow money from his barber and his usher to play at the game. This appalled a nineteenth-century antiquarian, who wrote

that such pastimes would now be considered “insufferably low.”⁹ One can only wonder what the man would have made of Las Vegas.

Checkers, or queek, was another way a gambler could be parted from his money. One enterprising soul designed a checkerboard with depressed squares so that those betting that their pebbles would land in a black or a white square would lose. The board was only profitable for a short time, however: it cost its proprietor an hour in Newgate for three consecutive days.¹⁰ Betting on horses was a perennial favorite, with John Howard, the future Duke of Norfolk, being a notable devotee. Howard also bet on cockfighting.¹¹

Medieval people, in fact, could turn almost any type of recreation into a money-losing enterprise. Henry VII lost money at tennis and archery as well as traditional games of chance,¹² and the future Henry IV proved to be as unlucky at tables as he was at dice.¹³ Even chess, the most respectable of medieval pastimes, could be bet upon.¹⁴ Fifteenth-century England did see one new arrival on the gaming front: cards. Though cards existed in tenth-century China, European playing cards apparently derived from Egyptian models.¹⁵ In 1371, they are first mentioned in Spain,¹⁶ and by 1377, both Florentine and Parisian officials had enacted restrictions on playing cards.¹⁷ It would be several decades before cards became popular in England. Chaucer, it has often been noted, never mentions them in his works. The earliest reference I have found in England is in 1413, and it has a good Yorkist pedigree.

Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, was uncle to Richard, Duke of York, and therefore a great-uncle of Edward IV and Richard III. He had a good claim to the throne and for that reason, Henry IV and Henry V kept a close eye on him. In the period from September 1413 to April 1414, the twenty-three-year-old was traveling in the company of Henry V—and losing over 157 pounds in gaming. Mortimer's companions must have been delighted when the young lord proposed a game of chance, because the word *perdebat*—"lost"—occurs with distressing frequency in his household accounts. Mortimer lost at tables, raffle and chance, a game called *devant* (apparently a dicing game)—and at cards.¹⁸

Despite Mortimer's enthusiasm for cards, it would be decades before another mention of them occurs in English sources. That is in 1459 in the Paston letters, where Margaret Paston reports that over Christmas, a widowed acquaintance forbade the members of her household to engage in dancing, harping, luting, singing, or "loud disports," but permitted them to play tables, chess, and cards.¹⁹

In 1463, Edward IV's Parliament forbid the importation of playing cards as well as the importation of dice and tennis balls, in an effort to protect English craftsmen.²⁰ This, as card expert David Parlett points out, suggests that they were

being produced in England, although no English cards from this period have been found.

The following year, Edward IV secretly married Elizabeth Woodville, and at least one of the king's new extended family members was a card player. In November 1464, when at Reading with the king, John Howard lent Eliza Scales, Anthony Woodville's wife, eight shillings and four pence to play at cards.²¹ The early English cards did not bear the suits of spades, hearts, clubs, and diamonds that they do today; those suits made their first appearance on French cards in around 1470 and are accordingly referred to as the French suits. Parlett suggests that the early English cards bore what are known as Latin suitmarks: swords, clubs, cups, and coins.²²

Though Parlett states that no English cards dating before 1590 have been found,²³ some earlier packs from other countries are extant. One of the most striking is a set from the Netherlands known as the Hunting Pack, which dates from about 1470 to 1480. The four suits in the 52-card pack consist of hunting accessories: bundles of cord, dog collars, double nooses, and hunting horns. Each suit has a king, queen, and jester and 10 numbered cards. The entire set can be seen in the Cloisters in New York. Its website indicates that other than Tarot cards, this is the only complete set of illuminated playing cards to survive from the fifteenth century.²⁴ One wonders if



Margaret of York or her brothers might have seen this set!

Gambling, of course, is a social concern now, and was in medieval times as well. Most anti-gambling legislation in medieval England was aimed at ordinary people. During Richard I's crusade of 1190, for instance, anyone below the degree of knight was prohibited from gambling. Knights and

clergy, on the other hand, could play as long as they did not lose more than twenty shillings in a single day. If they did pass the twenty-shilling limit, they



had to cough up one hundred shillings. Not surprisingly, Richard the Lionhearted and Philip of France were exempt.²⁵

Edward IV's first Parliament in 1461 was not only bad news for Lancastrians, but for card players. (Lancastrian card players must have been in particularly bleak spirits that year.) As part of a general crackdown on lawlessness, Parliament directed, "And also that no lord or other person of lower estate, condition or degree, whatever he may be, shall allow any dicing or playing at cards within his house, or wherever else he may prevent it, by any of his servants or others outside the twelve days of Christmas; and if any presume to do the contrary at any time, that he shall expel them from his house and service."²⁶ Again and again, medieval English kings forbade commoners from engaging in various pastimes, including football and dicing, ostensibly because it distracted them from practicing the archery skills they needed to defend their country. This must have been a losing proposition, since successive Parliaments kept passing such legislation. Edward IV himself had a second go at an anti-gaming law in 1478. The act, entitled "Closch" (a bowling game that Elizabeth Woodville's ladies were spotted playing in 1472), conquers up a world straight out of the film *Reefer Madness*:

To the king our liege lord; the commons assembled in this present parliament pray, that where according to the laws of this land no person should play any unlawful games such as **dice**, quoits, football and similar games, but that every strong and able bodied person should practise archery because the defence of this land relies heavily on archers; contrary to which laws the said games and several newly invented games

called clossh, kayles, half-bowl, hand-in and hand-out, and checker-board are played daily in various parts of this land, both by persons of good repute and those of lesser estate, not virtuously-disposed, who fear neither to offend God by not attending divine service on holy days, nor to break the laws of this land, to their own impoverishment, and by their wicked incitement and encouragement they induce others to play such games so that they are completely stripped of their possessions and impoverished, setting a pernicious example to many of your lieges, if such unprofitable games are allowed to continue for long, because by such means many different murders, robberies and other most heinous felonies are frequently committed and perpetrated in various parts of this land, to the very great disquiet and trouble of many of your well-disposed lieges, and the unbearable loss of their goods: which players have daily been supported and favoured in their said misbehaviour by the officers and occupiers of various messuages, tenements, gardens and other places in which they play and pursue their said wicked and disgraceful games.²⁷

Henry VII passed legislation in the same spirit. In 1495, his parliament decreed that "no apprentice, agricultural worker, labourer or employee in a craft shall play at the tables from 10 January next except for food and drink only, or at tennis, clossh, **dice**, cards, bowls or any other illegal game in any way other than at Christmas, and at Christmas to play only in the dwelling house of his master or where the master of any of the said servants is present, upon

pain of public imprisonment in the stocks for one day."²⁸

Household ordinances also restricted gambling: in 1468, the servants of George, Duke of Clarence, were subject to dismissal if they



played games for money, except during the twelve days of Christmas.²⁹ Whereas commoners were the target of such legislation, kings and their offspring could gamble to their heart's content, if they were so inclined. In 1377, mummers entertaining the future Richard II at Kennington played dice with the young prince for a ball of gold, a cup of gold, and a gold ring. Young Richard won each object, because the dice "were subtly made so that when the Prince threw he would win." On the whole, however, in gaming, the House of Lancaster seems to be ahead of the House of York. Henry IV as Earl of Derby, we have seen, was quite fond of games. I have found nothing to indicate whether Henry V had a taste for gaming, but as young Edmund Mortimer suffered so many gambling losses while in that king's company, it must have been common in his household. Despite his drearly pious reputation, Henry VI is known to have lost sums at gaming.³⁰ Edward IV seems to have been fond of a board game called fox and geese, though whether he played it for stakes is not recorded.³¹ He ordered "two foxes and fourty-six hounds of silver over-gilt to form two sets of merelles."³² Fox and geese (or in Edward IV's case, fox and hounds?) was essentially a hunting game in which the fox captured the geese.³³ (Others who enjoyed the game were the monks of what became Gloucester Cathedral; a board was found cut into the benches there.³⁴)

Sadly, I have found no indication of whether Richard III was a gambler—unless, of course, one counts his fatal charge at Bosworth as a gamble. Charles Ross notes that he enjoyed hawking and commissioned his servants to search out new birds for him,³⁵ but there is no indication of his attitude toward even eminently respectable pastimes such as chess. It may or may not be significant that in his censorious account of Richard's Christmas court of 1484, the Croyland chronicler complained that "too much attention was paid to singing and dancing and to vain exchanges of clothing between Queen Anne and Lady Elizabeth," but did not mention gambling in his parade of horrors.³⁶ Richard, however, was evidently not disposed to tolerate much frivolity among his common subjects. In May 1485, he sent a letter to James Herde, bailiff of the town and lordship of Ware, marshalling the archery argument

and threatening the man with the loss of his position if he did not bring the locals into line:

Forsomoche as it is comen (to) unto
oure knowlaige that diverse & many
personnes inhabitants within oure
said Towne whiche be of habilitie in
theire persones & expert in shoting
approved a lawfulle game and
necessarily requisite to be exercised
for the defense of this oure Royalme
refusing the same game applie them
customably to use carding dising
Boling playing at the tenys Coyting
picking and othre (unf) unlefulle and
inhibited disportes. . . . marveling that
ye have suffred any suche
inconveyences soo to be used within
youre Offices.

Those who continued to play the prohibited games after a warning (along with offenders caught taking hares, partridges, pheasants, and other game) were to be committed to prison to remain there at the king's pleasure.³⁷ Whether Herde managed to bring his unruly town into line is unknown.

Henry VII, who has been rather unfairly saddled with a reputation as a miser, was quite fond of gaming. Extracts from his accounts aptly demonstrate the willingness with which he was parted from his money through playing cards, dice, tennis, and even chess:

To the King to play at cardes, £5.

To the King which he lost at cardes,
£4.

For a par of tables and dise bought,
1s. 4d.

To the King for his losse at cards,
£2.

To a Spaynyard the tenes pleyer, £4.

To Sir Charles Somerset for the
Kinges losse at tenes, to Sir
Robert Curson, with the balls, £1.
7s. 8d.

To the King for pleying at the cards,
£3.

To Hugh Denes for the Kinges losse
at tenes, 14s. and for a
silke girdle, 6s. 8d.—£1. 0s. 8d.

For the Kinges losse at the paune
pley, 7s. 8d.

To the Kinges grace to play at the
cardes, in gold, £20., in
grotts, 100s. in grotts, £19., and in
grotes, 60s.

To the new player at tenes, £4.

To Jakes Haute for the tenes playe,
£10.

For the Kinges losse at cardes at
Tawnton, £9.

To Hugh Denes for the Kinges pley
at dice upon Friday last
passed, £7. 15s.

To the Kinges losse at cardes at
Hegecote, 3s. 4d.

For the Kinges losse at tenes, 8s.

Delivered the Kinges grace for play
on Sunday at night,
£1. 13s. 4d.

To my Lorde of York to play at
dice, £3. 6s. 8d.

For the Kinges losse at chesse, 13s.
4d.

To Weston for the King to pley at
cleke at Burton-opon- Trent, £2.³⁸

On one occasion, Henry VII lost half a mark at cards to his seven-year-old son Henry.³⁹ The future Henry VIII did rather better than his older brother Arthur, who lost forty shillings in 1496.⁴⁰ The Tudor family

matriarch, Margaret Beaufort, was not above wagering herself. Michael Jones and Malcolm Underwood report that she “sent a man of Buckden to go on pilgrimage on her behalf whilst she gambled at blank or cards”!⁴¹ Elizabeth of York’s privy purse expenses from the last year of her life show her to have been an avid player as well. In August 1502, 10 shillings were delivered to her for “tabuls”; in October 1502, Lady Guildford delivered 13 shillings and 4 pence for the queen to play at dice. In December, the queen received 100 shillings “for hure disporte at cardes this Cristmas.”⁴²

The subject of Elizabeth of York and cards leaves us with a final question: Was Elizabeth the “playing card queen”? This has been stated as fact many times, including by an authority no less august than *The Weekly World News*,⁴³ but there seems to be little or no evidence to support this proposition, other than the vague resemblance between Elizabeth of York’s most famous portrait and the stylized queen that appears on modern playing cards. Parlett makes no mention of Elizabeth of York. The International Playing-Card Society’s website states that Anglo-American cards take their design from the patterns used in Rouen in the 1400’s, where the kings, queens, and jacks mainly represent named figures from antiquity, although some of the names may have become corrupted over time.⁴⁴ Notably, in French sets from the fifteenth century and the nineteenth century, the queens clutch a flower, just as do Elizabeth of York in her portrait and the Queen of Hearts in English decks.⁴⁵ Unfortunately, then, it seems that the queen in English decks has a French origin and that the story of Elizabeth of York inspiring the Queen of Hearts must be consigned to the stuff of legend, though we can take comfort in the fact that the queen did enjoy a good game of cards nonetheless.

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Notes:

¹ McLean, p. 102.

² McLean, pp. 103-04.

³ <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/EventsExhibitions/Permanent/medieval/objects/record.htm?type=object&id=515184>

⁴ Woolgar, *Senses*, pp. 185-86.

⁵ Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*. <http://classiclitt.about.com/library/bl-etexts/gchaucer/bl-gchau-can-cook-m.htm>

⁶ McLean, p. 104. A detailed record of Henry's gaming can be found in Lucy Toulmin Smith, ed., *Expeditions to Prussia and the Holy Land Made by Henry, Earl of Derby . . . in the Years 1390-1 and 1392-3*. Camden Society, 1894.

⁷ Chrimes, p. 306.

⁸ Crawford, vol. II, pp. 327, 524.

⁹ Grose and Astle, pp. 406-08.

¹⁰ McLean, p. 105.

¹¹ McLean, p. 22-23; Crawford, vol. I, p. 227.

¹² Chrimes, p. 306.

¹³ McLean, p. 108.

¹⁴ McLean, p. 117.

¹⁵ Parlett, pp. 38-40

¹⁶ Parlett, p. 35.

¹⁷ Parlett, pp. 36-37.

¹⁸ Woolgar, *Household Accounts*, pp. 592-94.

¹⁹ Parlett, p. 46; *Paston Letters*, vol. vi, 78-79. Gairdner dates the letter in 1484, but as Parlett points out, it appears to be from an earlier time.

²⁰ Parliament Rolls, April 1463, Edward IV; Parlett, p. 46.

²¹ Crawford, vol. I, pp. 480-481.

²² Parlett, p. 43, 46. For an illustration of some French cards of the late fifteenth century, see http://www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/~daf/i-p-c-s.org/faq/history_6.php

²³ Parlett, p. 46.

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http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/the_cloisters/set_of_fifty_two_playing_cards/objectview.aspx?collID=7&OID=70016900. Another view of the cards can be seen at http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/bnpr/hod_1983.515.1-52.htm

²⁵ Ashton, p. 13.

²⁶ Parliament Rolls, November 1461, Edward IV.

²⁷ Parliament Rolls, January 1478, Edward IV.

²⁸ Parliament Rolls, October 1495, Henry VII.

²⁹ Woolgar, *Great Household*, p. 44.

³⁰ Griffiths, pp. 250, 269 n. 99.

³¹ Reeves, pp. 76-77.

³² McLean, p. 110.

³³ McLean, p. 110.

³⁴ Reeves, p. 77.

³⁵ Ross, p. 142.

³⁶ Pronay and Cox, p. 175.

³⁷ Horrox and Hammond, vol. 2, p. 219.

³⁸ Taken from Bentley, pp. 85-133.

³⁹ Woolgar, *Great Household*, p. 101.

⁴⁰ Orme, p. 178.

⁴¹ Jones and Underwood, p. 158.

⁴² Nicolas, pp. 42, 52, 84.

⁴³ 'Every Poker Player Knows This Gal!' *Weekly World News*, July 6, 1993, p. 28. Page 7 of same issue informs the reader, "Space Alien Graveyard Found!"

⁴⁴ http://www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/~daf/i-p-c-s.org/faq/history_12.php. See also Parlett, pp. 44-45.

⁴⁵ http://www.cs.manchester.ac.uk/~daf/i-p-c-s.org/faq/history_6.php



Ricardian Reading

Myrna Smith

Most books reviewed here can be purchased at www.r3.org/sales.

A rule of thumb works four out of five times (including this one). – Paul Delany

Every rule has at least one exception, except this rule. – Stephen Verbit, attorney

Your reviewer aims to not only amuse and enlighten her readers, but also to guide them in the proper way to live and behave. First, one must know the ground rules, so many of the quotations in this column are taken from a book called **Rules of Thumb** (Tom Parker, Workman Publishing, NY, 2008), or the website rulesofthumb.org.

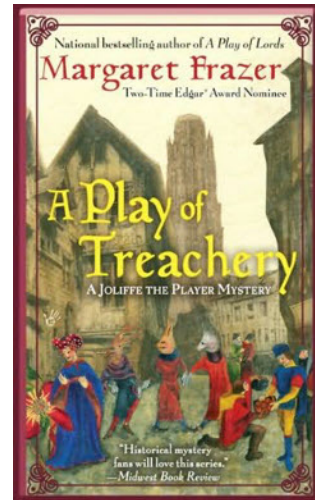
The most difficult character in comedy is that of the fool, and he must be no simpleton that plays the part – Cervantes.

Always figure out your characters before you figure out your plot. You can follow a good character through a bad plot, but you can't make a plot good with a bad character. – Rulesofthumb.org

A PLAY OF TREACHERY – Margaret Frazer, Berkeley Prime Crime, NY, NY, 2009

Joliffe has been drafted by Bishop Beaufort to go to France to serve in the household of Jacquetta of Bedford – and Richard Woodville is very much in evidence. Joliffe has not been sent abroad just to chaperone them, nor to practice his clerkly skills, but, as you might have guessed, for a spot of espionage. He can use his acting skills to play the harmless fool, while taking instruction in swordplay, writing and directing a morality play (just well enough to be passably amateur), and brushing up on his rusty French. Of course there is a great deal of suspense and action, but the principal attraction, to me, is in Ms. Frazer's description of day-to-day life and backstage doings.

To accomplish any of these things, Joliffe has to go across the English Channel, of course, and he finds this exhilarating as well as a little seasick-making.



Until the 19th century, being on a sailing ship with a good following wind was as fast as anybody could possibly travel.

At the end, when all the mysteries are solved, and Joliffe is preparing to go back to an actor's life, he is informed that he must now go to Paris on another assignment. It may be he will never make it back to his little company of players, but I do hope he does.

Cheap paperback novels average one typographical error for every 10 pages. – Joe Appleton, typo hunter

ADDIE'S KNIGHT – Ginny Reyes, Time Passages, Berkley Publishing Group, NY, 1999

Adele Shaw, schoolmarm of York, Pa., is trying to get her students to re-enact the Battle of Bosworth, with mixed results. She leans against a tree to catch her breath – and falls through it, to end up exactly 400 years earlier, in the middle of a battle. Not Bosworth, but a minor skirmish between the

Swyntons and the Morlands. She thinks Robert Swynton is a murderer, he thinks she is a witch or a spy, or both. While looking for a way back home, she tries to make the best of things by introducing hygiene and chicken potpie to the locals. She even invents the flea collar! Most of the peasants regard these things as a plus, but they are in some doubt when she performs a Caesarian operation, and in no doubt when she insists she knows what is going to happen in the coming August. Even though she might be a traitor and/or a witch, Robert wants to save her from burning, so he marries her. And she has become fond of him, so she wants to save him from certain death at Bosworth Field.

It is by accident, however, that she finds the right tree (it is never explained how it can be on two different continents at the same time, or even at different times), and reverses her journey, this time bringing along Sir Robert and his horse. The Pennsylvanians are amazed at the size of the horse, Midnight, though draft horses were larger than warhorses, if not so spirited. And in lecturing Robert and his friends about the superiority of negotiation over violence, she apparently never remembers a spectacular failure of negotiation that occurred during her own lifetime, namely the Civil War. Perhaps the story takes place in an alternate universe, in which the Battle of Bosworth took place, but Gettysburg, et. al. did not.

There is some comedy, as in the puzzlement by the hero and heroine when faced (separately) with the wardrobe of a different century. All in all, an interesting combination of fantasy/sci-fi with historical bodice-ripper. Not that there is too much of the latter, Addie being a proper Victorian lady. In fact, judging by the cover art, most of the garment-shredding has been going the other way!

It is a secret worth knowing that lawyers rarely go to law. – Moses Crowell.

If you have the facts, pound the facts. If you have the law, pound the law. If you have neither, pound the table. – Jeff Eckard, lawyer

To avoid being picked for jury duty, read a book. Many lawyers won't select jurors who are reading

because they might be too independent. – Rulesofthumb.org

THE COUNCIL OF THE CURSED – Peter Tremayne, St Martin's Press, NY, 2008

Temperatures are high at the Church Council meeting to decide certain items of doctrine in what is present-day Burgundy, and some of the delegates are behaving in a most un-spiritual way. High words are spoken, less about religious differences than ethnic ones, Briton vs. Saxon. It starts with insults and shouting, progresses to fisticuffs, and then escalates to... murder? Sister Fidelma and Brother Eadulf are there as advisors to the Irish delegation, and are called in to solve the murder, over the protests of Bishop Leodegar, who has declared the local abbey to be celibate, and none of this nonsense about couples who were already married being grandfathered in. Because Fidelma will pull rank when necessary, and because he needs their forensic skills (she is a lawyer, he has medical training), the Bishop reluctantly agrees, and allows them a room in the abbey. At any rate, many of the delegates think the team will give them "fair" (i.e. biased) treatment, as she is Hibernian (cousins of the Britons) and he is Saxon. Fidelma and Eadulf are only concerned with the facts in the case, however, and manage not only to track down the murderer but also to break up a kidnapping/slavery ring.

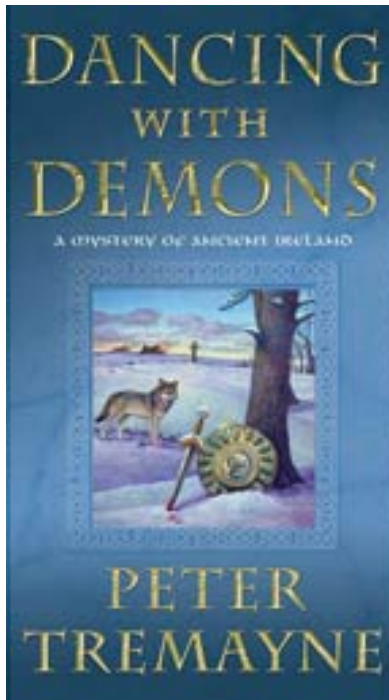
Not only are the Britons and Saxons at daggers drawn – figuratively and also sometimes literally – but the Burgundians and Franks sometimes mix it up, in spite of the fact that they are so similar that Eadulf can understand both languages. Of course, the couple manage to get themselves cursed out in several languages, and, more seriously, physically threatened. Nothing will stop the indefatigable duo.

A character from an earlier book is carried over into this one, but it is not necessary to read both books in the correct order in order to enjoy the stories. In fact, I read this before the next, earlier, one, and am reviewing them in just the order I read them.

If you've eliminated all the other possibilities, whatever is left, however improbably, is what happened. – "Sherlock Holmes"

DANCING WITH DEMONS – Peter Tremayne, St Martin's Press, NY, 2007

A High King is murdered, his supposed murderer killed by the guards; the mystery is why he done it. Some religious are massacred and their church



burnt; the classic whodunit. And an old man dies in an inn, apparently of natural causes, but without identification; a who-was-it-done-to.

Fidelma and Eadulf don't quite solve all three of these mysteries. The old man is never identified, but at least it is known what sort of person he was – a druid. The first mystery, the murder of the king, is quite enough to be getting on with, as nothing is quite what it seems. Just as they think they have found a motive, it seems to go glimmering.

Eadulf's main function in this is to be the damsel-in-distress, to be rescued by Fidelma and her cohorts. Tremayne will do better by him in the next novel in the series, as recounted above.

Each soldier on the front lines requires ten support personnel in the rear. – Elliot Miller

ALTERNATE GENERALS – Harry Turtledove, Ed, Simon & Schuster, NY, 1998

Druids feature strongly in the lead story of this anthology, *The Test of Gold*, in which Boudica puts a *geas* on a Roman soldier. In other stories, Eleanor of Aquitaine has a curse laid on her, Cardinal Bounaparte comes to Waterloo and Sir Robert E. Lee, Bart., to the Crimea, and Gen. Billy Mitchell forestalls Pearl Harbor and starts a war on December 6. And there are others, all things that could have happened, should have happened, or didn't happen, thank goodness. Interesting

To build a sturdy sand castle, the sand should be firm enough that your footprints barely show. – Rulesofthum.org

Old houses mended/Cost little less than new before they're ended. – Colley Cibber

Renovation generally saves only 10-15% of the cost of new construction. – James Colby, engineer

THE ROYAL PALACES OF TUDOR ENGLAND: Architecture and Court Life 1460-1547 – Simon Thurley, Yale University Press, 1993

In spite of the title, but as the subtitle suggests, this covers more than the historical Tudor period. Many of the architectural features we now think of as Tudor actually date from earlier times, sometimes much earlier. As the subtitle does *not* suggest, some attention is also paid to the later Tudors.

Henry VIII's cozy little cots account for much of the coverage. A graph shows that the number of occupied royal homes during his reign exceeded even that of Elizabeth I, who lived and reigned longer. Well, she didn't need them – she developed inviting herself to her subjects' homes to an art form.

Illustrated with photographs, plans, and reproductions of paintings (the detail in the anonymous *Field of the Cloth of Gold* is amazing), this would be of interest to aficionados of historical architecture, but there are other tidbits. Did you know that the Tudor age, like the Roman, went in for brightly painted statuary? (There are pictures to prove it.) Did you know that Elizabeth of York, not her husband, not her mother-in-law, not even the

Clerk-of-Works, planned the landscaping at Richmond Palace – which puts her married life in a somewhat different light.

Anyway, enjoy looking at the pictures!

For marketing purposes, assume that elderly consumers think they are 15 years younger than they actually are. – Tracy Frances

Children think they are five years older than they actually are. – Rulesofthumb.org

When giving instructions to a high school class, assume that three students will follow them incorrectly. – David Russell, retired teacher

EXILE: Daybooke the Fifth of My Lady Grace Cavendish, Maid of Honour to Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth I of That Name, At the Presence Chamber of Her Majesty, Palace of Placentia, Greenwich. All Miscreants and Ill-Thinkers, Keep Out. – Jan Burchett and Sara Vogler, Delacorte Press, NY, 2006

Grace Cavendish is not only a Maid of Honour, but also the Queen's goddaughter, her Lady Pursuivant (which means she pursues criminals for the Queen), and Her Majesty's favorite dog-walker, which comes in handy sometimes.

An oriental princess-in-exile has come to court as a guest of the Queen, and also as a petitioner. She wishes to float a loan from Elizabeth, and offers a huge and valuable ruby as collateral. Unfortunately, it is stolen almost immediately, and a friend of Grace's, a laundrymaid, is accused. Grace must clear her friend and find the true thief. She will, with a bit of help from some of her friends in low places, and from Rajah the black panther.

The detailed background is of as much interest as the story, and the tomboyish 13-year-old narrator is easy to identify with. The authors include a glossary and a chapter on the historical background of Queen Elizabeth's time and family. One thing, though. She would not have been Queen Elizabeth I, being at that time the only.

Adolescence is the time in a boy's life when he notices that a girl notices he is noticing her. – Source unknown

SHADOW OF THE DRAGON – Marjorie Rowling, Faber & Faber, London, 1965

This is an adventure story aimed at young people. After the Battle of Bosworth, 15-year-old Mark Harrington sets out to find his father, who has been MIA since that battle. With his mentor, Sir Thomas Broughton, they set out, sometimes disguised as jongleurs, sometimes as monks or merchants, but always trying to keep their Yorkist identity quiet. For besides tracking down Mark's father, they are also attempting to find and recruit Yorkist sympathizers, and foment rebellion. They do find Yorkist sympathizers, mainly Richard's friends the Metcalfs, but they also find a lot of trouble. Broughton, incidentally, fancies Buckingham as the culprit in the murder of the Princes. The story ends shortly after Stoke Field, with Mark and his father reunited, and also Mark and his best girl, Bega the yeoman's daughter.

Re Lambert Simnel, Sir Thomas says: "It is true our lad was princely – quite unlike the Warwick I knew; *he* was simple." Oh, and Mark does meet "The Dragon Face to Face," as one chapter heading puts it, and lives to talk about it.

Whoever serves his country well has no need of ancestors. – Voltaire

If a politician mentions "special interests," he or she is discussing someone or some group with whom he or she disagrees. On the contrary, the "public interest" is always something with which he or she is in complete agreement. – Bill Bacon, web manager.

RICHARD III'S 'BELOVED COUSYN': JOHN HOWARD AND THE HOUSE OF YORK – John Ashdown-Hill, The History Press, Gloucestershire, 2009

The House of Howard had a collective biography (**THE DUKES OF NORFOLK; A Quincintennial**

History, by John Martin Robinson, OUP, 1982) and the second duke, the redoubtable Thomas Howard, had his career covered by M.J. Tucker, but no full-scaled bio of the Founder has been published, to the best of my knowledge. This lack has been remedied by John Ashdown-Hill, in this thoroughly researched and thoroughly fascinating biography of John Howard. The author even includes a list of Howard's men-at-arms and a calendar of the Year of the Three Kings, 1483, so the reader can note the day of the week when any given event occurred. Howard's background is covered, as well as his service to Edward IV and Richard III, on both land and sea. Howard's father, Robert, came from a relatively humble gentry family, not even knighted until after his marriage to a Mowbray heiress. Ashdown-Hill suggests that this may have been a love match.

This leads to my one critique of the book. Howard was married twice, at least once to a widow. Whether these were love matches or simple business arrangements, we learn nothing of the women except their names. Who were their families, their previous mates? What about Thomas' siblings? John's? They should be more than just names on a chart. In short, Ashdown-Hill has, in my opinion, given short shrift to John Howard's personal life. For his political and military careers, you couldn't do better than this biography.

You don't just marry your spouse, but your spouse's entirely family. Make sure yo're ready to spend the rest of your life with them as well. – Moses Moore

If you're playing cards in any gambling game for over 20 minutes and have not figured out who the patsy at the table is, it's you. – Rulesofthumb.org

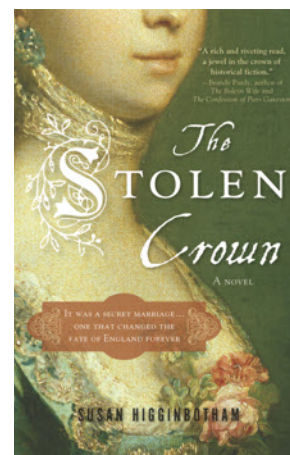
If you are innocent, do not take a lie detector test. If you're guilty, take it, because it may exonerate you. – Kevin Kelly, writer

THE STOLEN CROWN – Susan Higginbotham, Sourcebooks Inc, Napierville, IL, 2010

The subtitle of this book is "The secret marriage that forever changed the fate of England," but it is not primarily about the marriage of Edward IV and

Elizabeth Woodville. Instead it is the story of Henry, Duke of Buckingham, and his Duchess, Kate Woodville. Incidentally, this book puts to rest the idea that she was much older than he. He was a few years the elder. Their story is recalled and narrated by Buckingham just before his execution, and by Kate at a later time.

I may as well be up front about this. Many Ricardians are not going to care for this novel, however well written it is (and it is). The title should be some indication, right? Because it is sympathetic to Buckingham, it is less than sympathetic to Richard, al-



though Ms. Higginbotham attempts to show how Buckingham falls under Richard's spell, and succeeds to some degree. That is a big turnaround for those of us who have favored Buckingham for First Murderer, or who feel that he was Richard's Evil Genius. Here, Buckingham is more a victim himself, more passive. Indeed, his virgin bride despairs, at one point, of ever changing her status! The relationship of Buckingham with his cousin Richard has a homoerotic tinge to it, unnatural because it is never consummated, never reciprocated, but is thoroughly exploited by Richard. As Duke and as King, Richard casually insults Buckingham, most of all by confiding his misdeeds to him, apparently believing that Harry is too much of a patsy to do anything about it. The worm finally turns....

Did Susan Higginbotham convince me? For the duration of the book, yes; a reviewer knows when to suspend disbelief and just enjoy. Permanently? No. But I am more willing than I was to consider the idea that Buckingham may have been as much, or even more, moved by events than moving them, much like

the other protagonists in the story. Since he is not around to defend himself or to take a lie-detector test, he deserves a good and passionate advocate, and has gotten one here.

Finally, some rules that apply to the task of a writer, or a reviewer:

Two rounds of proofreading catch 98% of the errors in a book. – Bill Kaupe, consultant

When an instructor says “Please correct me if I make a mistake,” do it once and only once. – Rulesofthumb.org

*Until I was six or seven years old, I thought that ordinary speech must have been a recent invention, because in the olden days (the days of **Carmen** and **The Magic Flute**), people apparently didn’t know how to talk. It seemed that they had to sing whatever they wanted to say. This was my first misconception about language.*

“When did we Americans lose our British accent?” Answer: We didn’t. The British once spoke pretty much as we do. ...The expression “stiff upper lip”..was coined by Phoebe Cary, a nineteenth-century poet from Cincinnati.

ORIGINS OF THE SPECIOUS: Myths and Misconceptions of the English Language – Patricia T. O’Connor & Stewart Kellerman, Random House, NY, 2009

Ever wonder what Richard and his contemporaries sounded like? The husband-and-wife team who authored this book say it would have been something like modern Americans, but not quite. “Until the 1500s, the English did indeed pronounce words like “bath”... with an “ah.” But in the 16th century they began pronouncing the a in what we now consider the American way.” However, at that time, they did pronounce multi-syllable words with all syllables, instead of swallowing half of them. And they spelled any way they pleased, with or without extra “u’s”. Once having established that we Colonials speak better English than the English, the authors go on to demolish many other etymological myths, such as the one that “rule of thumb” comes from a law that permitted a man to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. A good thing, too. I have thin

fingers, but wouldn’t want to be beaten with a stick the thickness of my own thumb, never mind my spouse’s. Well, I’d hate to be beaten with any kind of stick, even an ugly one.

O’Connor and Kellerman consider the history of many words that originated in the Middle Ages (loophole, tenterhooks, - yes, even brassiere – a piece of armor), and some much more recent (“in like Flynn” is not what you thought).

Fun to read, and you might even learn something. (The headings, in case you haven’t guessed, are from this book.) – *m.s.*

...a team of psychologists..attached voice-activated digital recorders to 396 people and actually counted the words they spoke. The results: Both men and women used an average of about 16,000 words a day.

THE SISTERS WHO WOULD BE QUEEN: Mary, Katherine, and Lady Jane Grey; A Tudor Tragedy – Leanda de Lisle, Ballentine Books, NY, 2008

The title is somewhat misleading, as only one of these sisters really wished to be queen. The author considers that Jane was as fanatic a Protestant as Mary was a Catholic. Katherine couldn’t keep a low enough profile to avoid Elizabeth’s ire, and wasn’t trying very hard when she got pregnant (twice!) while a prisoner in the Tower of London. Mary tried to avoid any appearance of threat by taking a leaf from her mother’s book and marrying a man of much lower status than herself. Elizabeth didn’t like that either, and put him under arrest. All this doesn’t show Gloriana in a very glorious light. She comes off as more petty and vindictive than concerned about the succession.

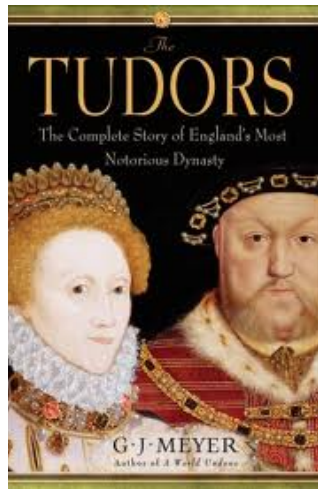
Ms de Lisle demolishes a number of myths surrounding the Tudor court. For instance, the mother of the three sisters, Frances Brandon, was not a hard-faced old harridan, and her second husband, Adrian Stokes, though of lower status, was not her boy-toy. The belief that this was the case comes from a mis-identified portrait.

One thing that can’t help striking the reader is how young many of these women died, even though most were not executed, and, surprisingly, didn’t die in

childbirth. They just weren't a very healthy lot. Males were also at risk from disease, as well as violence, (part of the reason that all the English heirs to the throne at this point were female) but those who survived adolescence had a good chance of living to their 50's, at least. Elizabeth, at 70, had beaten the odds.

A number of family trees are included, although even they don't explain all the complications of Tudor inheritance.

2009-10 has seen the publication of a number of books about the Tudors, many historians and novelists apparently believing that the Tudor dynasty really didn't start till 1509. In some ways they are right. One such history is **THE TUDORS: The Complete Story of England's Most Notorious**



Dynasty (G.J. Meyer, Delacorte Press, NY, 2010). Although there has been some stiff competition for that title, Meyer makes a good argument for its validity. He says "it was impossible to doubt that [the princes] had been murdered," but by no means romanticizes the Tudors. "[They] were never more than stonily indifferent to the well-being of the people they ruled." Another quote: "Make a ..list of all the notable English men and women who were ever imprisoned in the Tower of London and ..put to death there, and a remarkable fact leaps out: such executions were overwhelmingly concentrated in the Tudor era... There is no better measure of just how big a deviation from the norm the Tudors were – of how much more savage their politics were than anything seen before or since." Yet they still fascinate.

In the chapter that covers the Battle of Bosworth, Meyer claims to know just how tall Richard was

(5'4") but gets his emblem wrong. It was a white boar, not a blue one. As regards his title characters, however, he seems pretty accurate, although he does perpetuate the myth that people took their annual bath in May as a preparation for marriage! (I used this in a recent column, but strictly as a joke.) Henry VII gets less than a chapter, a sort of preamble to the *real* Tudors. – m.s.

...some words ..true believers look down on as annoying new examples of psychobabble or bureaucratese. I'm talking about venerable old warhorses that have been revived and put back into harness. And this is the thanks they get! For example, many wordies love to beat up on "doable" in the mistaken belief that it's some trendy new invention.. A document from 1449 described the ideal law as one "which is doable and not oonli knoweable."

THE LAST KNIGHT; a Knight and Rogue novel – Hilari Bell, HarperCollins Publishers, NY, 2007
ROGUE'S HOME; a Knight and Rogue novel – Hilari Bell, HarperCollins Publishers, NY, 2008
PLAYER'S RUSE; a Knight and Rogue novel – Hilari Bell, HarperCollins Publishers, NY, 2010

Michael Severson has decided to become a Knight Errant, even though Knight-Errantry has been out of fashion for a couple of centuries in the Medievalish fantasy-world in which he lives. He does this for two reasons: (1) he is noble by nature as well as by birth, and (2) there are not very many interesting and challenging careers open to the fourth son of a baron. The Rouge, Fisk, becomes his squire because he has no choice, at first. He is an experienced con artist at the age of 17. Michael, a year older, has certain Gifts, which are not magic, but which could theoretically aid him, and sometimes actually do. Most of the time, he just manages to get himself and his squire into a lot of trouble. Although he could leave his outlawed former master, Fisk stays with him, reasoning that Michael is a lunatic and needs someone to look after him. A double lunatic, since their (unnamed) world has two moons.

In **ROGUE'S HOME**, Fisk actually does leave, in answer to a plea for help from his sisters, - quietly and secretly, so as not to land Michael in deeper trouble. He should have known better. From what we see of Fisk's hometown, it's a good place to be *from*. The citizens seem to be hell-bent on beating the daylights out of both young men, but principally

the outlawed Michael. In the course of their travels, the young men are accompanied by, or acquire, a lame destrier, a piebald pony, and a barkless watchdog, among other impedimenta – like they need that extra trouble!

In the third book, **PLAYER'S RUSE**, they run into Michael's cousin, Rosamund, with whom he has been deeply and unrequitedly in love for years. She still regards him as a brother, and has fallen in love with a handsome actor. What would a knight-errant do in these circumstances? You're right, that is what Michael does. He and Fisk, along with Rose, join the troupe of players for a while. If you miss Margaret Fraser's Jolliffe the Player stories, this is the book for you. Makejoye, the leader of the troupe, also has certain similarities to a well-known 19th century detective. One of his shticks is identifying people's trades or professions, and he even plays the viol. The primary detection – and there is at least one serious crime in each book – is done by the two heroes, or anti-heroes. They are more motivated.

The author, in her afterword, claims that these stories are her personal favorites. Although an author is not always the best judge of her brainchildren, many would agree with her. There is something here for aficionados of several genres, fantasy/detective/adventure / picaresque/buddy story, and just plain fun. –*m.s.*

..since "female" isn't related etymologically to "male," I guess one could make a case for using "femina" or "femelle" instead. But why bother? I'm not changing my vocabulary to fix a slip of the quill by an obscure scrivener (male, no doubt) in the Middle Ages.

Another triple-header, courtesy of Dale Summers, reviewer:

THE HUNTER'S TALE – Margaret Frazer, Berkley Prime Crime, 2004

THE APOSTATE'S TALE – Margaret Frazer, Berkley Prime Crime, NY, 2008

THE WIDOW'S TALE – Margaret Frazer, Berkley Publishing Group, Prince Frederick, MD, 2004

THE HUNTER'S TALE finds Frevisse outside the convent again, with Sister Johanne. A bad man is killed, to the relief of all of his family, none of whom

are very interested in finding the killer. A girl is betrothed to his heir, but clearly loves another.

On his brother's seemingly accidental death, Hugh inherits the responsibility of the manor, complete with hunting dogs. As the hunter of the title, he finds himself out of his depth. There is a second bad man, a neighbor, who hopes to join the lands of the two manors. He tries to trap the widow into a liaison, or the appearance of one, to exclude her from inheriting, under a clause of the first bad man's will. The widow and her daughter flee to St. Frieswide's, and Dame Frevisse and Sister Johanne return with her.

Frevisse is puzzled at the general lack of interest in finding the murderer, and begins to put clues together. In the midst of an evil deed, the second bad man – the one still alive – is killed by a wolfhound. Frevisse solves the murder, announces the identity of the murderer (the same in both deaths) and wants to see justice done. But the widow wants justice for the living and prevents the summoning of the law.

As usual with Frazer, the characters are finely drawn, and she evokes sympathy for them. They are good people, harassed and abused by bad men, who get their just rewards in violent death. An enjoyable read.

An apostate is a nun who has broken her vows and left the community. This is the backstory of **THE APOSTATE'S TALE**, and such a woman is Sister Cecely, who returns to St Frieswide's nine years after leaving with her lover. He is now dead, and she is bringing her illegitimate son with her. It is Lent, and the nuns have are eagerly awaiting Easter and spring. Sister Cecely's arrival puts everyone ill at ease. She is a sinner, but not a sweet, repentant one. She hated being a nun and escaped at the first opportunity. Now she is back, with a demanding manner despite her plea for penance and the protection of her child. Secretly, she holds all the nuns in contempt, and remembers the love of the man with whom she had lived. The nuns, especially Frevisse, are skeptical of her sincerity, and appeal to the abbot to get her off their hands. They feel she has not been cleansed of her sin, and withdraw their skirts as they pass.

As a complication, the guest rooms become crowded, with two widows and the daughter of one of them. A Master Breredon arrives with two servants and a

married couple. The wife was sickly, and he is seeking healing for her. Strange, because St. Freiswide's was not a shrine for healing. Cecely's lover betrays to a relative her status as an apostate. Master Rowcliffe arrives with companions, and demands to know if Cecely is there, and if her son is with her. Rowcliffe is the uncle of Cecely's lover. He wants the child and the deeds to family property, which Cecely has stolen.

In the crowded guestrooms, Breredon and Rowcliffe quarrel. It turns out that Cecely had asked Breredon to meet her at the convent, where she would give him her son and the deeds. She is locked in a small room, "a prison," she cries bitterly, and is grounded until the abbot decides her fate. Cecely's bitter contempt for the nuns is matched – and more – by their contempt for her and her wanton ways. There is no pity for her, and in fact she makes feeling sympathy for her very difficult. She is stubborn, not very bright, and a poor mother. But I pitied her. Forcing her into the cloister when she had no vocation was the true sin. It happened to unwanted girls, girls with no dowry, girls not pretty enough to attract a husband, girls whose fathers simply desired, for selfish reasons, to gift the Church. Not all chose the life. Some adapted to it; Cecely did not.

The widow of **THE WIDOW'S TALE**, Cristiana Helyngton, was the beloved and loving wife of an extensive landowner, Edward Helyngton, a happy woman, gracious hostess and tender mother of two daughters, Mary, 12, and Jane, 8. the presence of her brother, Gerveys, a member of the household of the Duke of York, adds to her happiness. The only distress in her life is her husband's cousin, Lawrence, who is driven to reunite the Helyngton lands by putting Jane in anunnery and marrying Mary to his son. Edward flatly refuses Lawrence's plan, then Edward dies.

Cristiana is delivered, bound and gagged for the journey, to St. Frideswide's. She is charged by Lawrence, his wife, and his sister, with wantonness. Domina Elizabeth believes Lawrence's story. Because of her corruption, the nuns are forbidden to speak to her, and stern and cruel penance is ordered. Cristiana says no word in her defense, though her captors make a very unfavorable impression on old Ela, whose keep perception in the guesthouse is usually observed by Frevisse. Dame Claire notices the chaffing of the ropes on Cristiana's wrist, but is

obedient to Domina Elizabeth's charge. The pain Cristiana suffers, lying facedown on the cold stone floor in a thin gown, is demoralizing. Her one hope is that Gerveys would hear of her disappearance and rescue her and her daughters. Lawrence returns to take Cristiana out of the priory, with a view to force the marriage of Mary to his son. Domina Elizabeth determines that she must leave, and assigns Frevisse to accompany them.

As they approach Cristiana's home, they are met by Master John Say with orders that supercede Lawrence's. He takes the widow and her daughters into his protection, a clear relief to Cristiana. But Lawrence is not, and it seems never will be, persuaded to abandon his obsession with acquiring Edward's lands. There is more trouble, and a double murder for Frevisse to solve. At last, Cristiana must solve her problems herself.

As always with Frazer, the book is well-written, the characters finely drawn, and the language evocative. This is a very pleasant read. – *Dale Summers*

In about 1300, when the word made its first known appearance in print, a "girl" was a child of either sex...But in the late 14th and early 15th centuries, the word began to mean female children, and by the end of the 15th century the androgynous meaning of "girls" was lost.

THE CHILD BRIDE – Philippa Wiat, Robert Hale, London, 1990

This is the story of Anne Mowbray, real-life child bride of Richard of York, son of Edward IV, and of her fictional half-sister, Joan Halidon. Joan is the bastard daughter of the last Mowbray Duke of Norfolk and a laundress. Her ailing mother asks the Dowager Duchess to take Joan into her household, and she becomes a servant/ copanion to her daughter Anne. A piece of luck for Joan, who becomes known as Joan de Warrenne, and the girls become fond of one another, Anne having no other siblings, and Joan having lost all of hers to the plague. They spend a lot of time exchanging confidences and clothes. (Joan is the younger, but the more physically mature, much to Anne's disgust – which rings true for sisters). Though Anne is married to the younger brother, both girls are in love with the older, Edward, Prince of Wales. In Anne's case, it is infatuation, but

in spite of her tender years, it's the real thing for Joan.

In 1483, the girls accompany the Duchess to London, and are involved in the exciting events of that year. More exchange of clothes and identities takes place, and Joan is witness to a terrible crime, which is unfortunate for her. Anne also meets an early death, but the last scene of the book foreshadows coming events, with the mention of a "golden-haired boy," and a mysterious person with a Flemish accent. —*m.s.*

The arbiters of French culture look down their noses at Hollywood, then award the Legion d'Honneur to Jerry Lewis, Clint Eastwood, and Sylvester Stallone. Is it any surprise that we get the word "condescension" from the French?

A MURDEROUS PROCESSION: A Mistress of the Art of Death Novel – Ariana Franklin, G.P Putman's Sons, NY, 2010

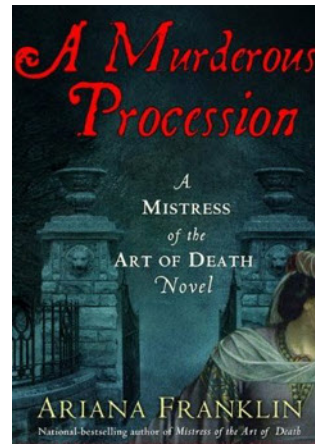
The year is 1176, and Henry II (a speaker of French, by the way) has an assignment for his reluctant sleuth, Dr. Adela Aguilar. It is apparently a simple one with no detection involved: accompany his 10-year-old daughter Joanna to Sicily, where she is to marry William II. Adela is forced to leave her own 9-year-old daughter behind, in the care of Queen Eleanor, and although her main squeeze (Bishop Rowley) will be in the traveling party, she will not be able to be with him very much. And she doesn't even get a rest from crime. Before she gets to the intended destination, she has had to solve the murders of a knight, a laundress, and a billygoat..

Not only that, but Adela's own life is in danger. She has a narrow escape from being burnt at the stake, and is stalked throughout the trip by a character from the previous novel in this series, **GRAVE GOODS**. Readers of that know the identity of this person, of course, but not the identity he has assumed for the trip. Only in the last few pages do we learn this, and then the author throws us a curve and a cliffhanger, to mix metaphors. No fair!

The author also includes an appendix of notes, mostly about Medieval medicine. An exciting mystery/adventure with interesting characters. —*m.s.*

Purists insist that "to the manner born" is the correct, but most people seem to prefer "to the manor born." Who's right? To Hamlet, the

phrase "to the manner born" means accustomed to a behavior by birth.



TO KNOW A LION BY HIS CLAWS: The Secret Story of England's Uncrowned King – Sarah Badders, iUniverse, NY & Bloomington, 2010

This is classified as History, but it must be qualified as speculative history. Any history of the Princes in the Tower must be speculative, since it is by no means proven that the bones found there are those of Edward V and Richard of York. Only DNA testing and comparison with other members of the royal family, preferably their presumed sister, Elizabeth of York, could definitely prove or disprove that, and that is very unlikely to happen. So any identification of e.g. Perkin Warbeck as one of the princes must rely on circumstantial evidence. (As pointed out above, so does the current, conventional, identification of the bones.) Nevertheless, Ms. Badders makes a good case for her hypothesis.

It's also a history (nonspeculative) of their times, and exciting times they were, with Humanism struggling to be born, midwived by the printing press, which Badders characterizes as the 15th century Internet. There is a concise overview of the background of the so-called Wars of the Roses, as well.

The author follows "Warbeck's" comings and goings quite thoroughly, from childhood to the inevitable end on the gallows. Or was it? Another intriguing possibility is raised. Ms. Badders is not the only writer to favor Perkin as Richard of York, but she also has a candidate for Edward V. He survived as – but no, I'm not going to tell you. Read the book and find out. You might find this theory a reach, but you will have to admit that this person was

surrounded by mystery, much of it of his own making. By his accounting, he reports several different birthdays, not just in regard to the year, but even the date, and the details of his upbringing seem to be deliberately obfuscated. One might almost think he was in some kind of early witness protection program, which if he was Edward, he was.

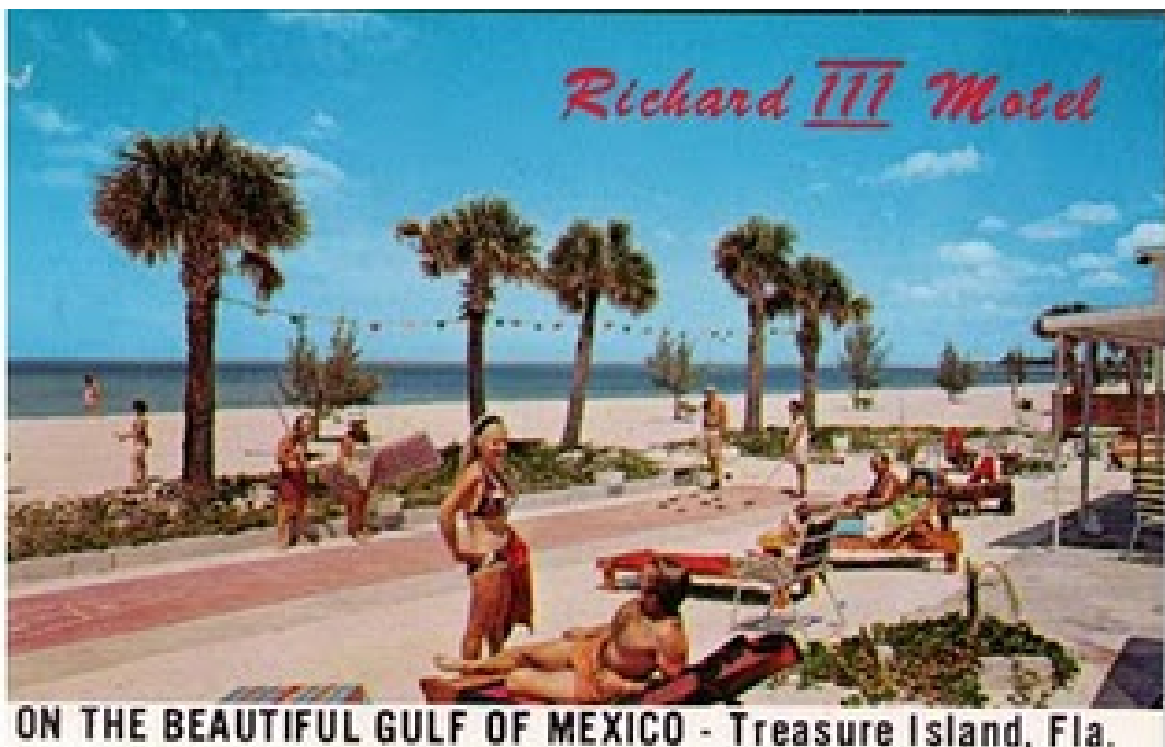
The author also speculates on the death of Edward IV. Could it have been un-natural? Murder by poison? And if so, *qui bono*? Not Richard. Although there is no “Saint Richard” here, she exonerates him of the guilt of murder, though some of his executions were questionable. But the main thrust of the account is on the sons of Edward IV.

No matter how well-written and well-edited, no book is entirely free of typos, and there are one or two here. Henry Tudor’s youngest son was named Edmund, not Edward. And at one point the word “illusive” is used where I think “elusive” is meant. Though given the subject matter, maybe it was correct after all!

There are a number of sidelights, some seemingly trivial, of the kind that I love to pick up on. What was it like to wear cloth of gold? (Fashionable, very grand, but not too comfortable.) And when Thomas More introduced his friend Erasmus to the future Henry VIII and his sisters, where were their royal parents? “(A)way on holiday to the southern coast of England and the Isle of Wight” like many a vacationer since!

There are also a number of pictures, in one of which you will note the White Rose, not where you might expect it to be. There’s a bibliography and notes, but no index, which would have been (small whine here) very useful to the reviewer.

If you go to Ms. Badder’s website, you can read an excerpt from the book. Be sure to type the following in quotation marks: www.missingprinces.com. --m.s.



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