

Ricardian Register



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Richard III Forever

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Articles: Miracle in a Municipal Parking Lot • François Villon—Fifteenth Century Poet—and Criminal • Richard Plantagenet and Anne Neville: Childhood Sweethearts?

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(not printed)

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Miracle in a Municipal Parking Lot

Joan Szechtman

The announcement February 4, 2013 that the remains found under a municipal parking lot in Leicester, UK were, beyond a reasonable doubt, those of Richard III was the culmination of years of research, cajoling, and begging by fellow Ricardian, Philippa Langley.

According to extant records, after Richard's body was exhibited for two days, he was buried in the choir of the Greyfriars church in Leicester. The site remained unmarked until ten years later when Henry VII gave ten pounds for a monument

to be erected over the site. The friary was destroyed during the dissolution and Richard's grave was lost. A legend that his remains were tossed into the River Soar took root after John Speed could not find Richard's grave when he searched for it in 1612 because he had looked for it at the site of the Blackfriars.

After extensive research, Langley determined that if anything remained of the Greyfriars, that it was under a municipal parking lot in Leicester. But before she could campaign for an archaeological dig for Richard's remains, there had to be something to compare the remains to.

A few years ago (ca. 2005), in order to identify whether some remains in Belgium were those of Richard's sister, Margaret, John Ashdown-Hill had tracked down the maternal line descendent of Cecily Neville, Richard III's mother, to Joy Ibsen. Her mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is the same as Richard's mom's. (Her mtDNA belongs to haplogroup J whose ancestors can be traced back 10,000 years to Syria. This clan represents about 17% of the European population.) This is significant because the mother passes her exact mtDNA to her offspring, but only the female passes that mtDNA down to the next generation. So Joy's children and Cecily's children shared the same mtDNA. Langley now had her exemplar that could be used for comparison if skeletal remains were found and if other evidence such as battle trauma and that the skeleton was male could be compared to. It should be noted that Joy Ibsen had died prior to this search, but her son, Michael, was willing to provide his DNA, where his mtDNA is identical to his mother's and to Cecily's—17 generations back. However, his children would not have his mtDNA, but would have their mother's instead.

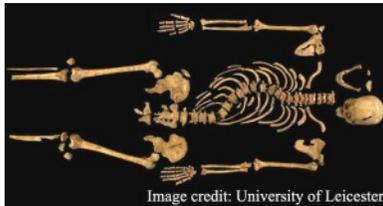
This now was a project that the University of Leicester would consider, but this kind of dig would not be cheap. Langley sought funding. Once she had the funding the dig was scheduled, but days before it was about to start, one of the donors had to back out £10,000. The project appeared to be doomed. However, fellow Ricardian Annette Carson created a flyer for funds for the project that was emailed to Ricardians around the world. Within two weeks individual small donations made up for the short fall and then some. Yay crowd funding! The dig was back on track. On a personal note, I was thrilled to be part of the dig in a monetary capacity.

Late in August 2012 the parking lot was cleared, three trenches were dug and almost immediately the archaeological team found human leg bones and artifacts indicating that they had found the friary. Jo Appleby, Osteology expert, immediately began excavating the site where the leg bones were uncovered. After a few days, she discovered a fully



articulated male skeleton that showed battle trauma and scoliosis, a curvature of the spine that would make one shoulder appear higher than the other. Meanwhile, the University of Leicester team was able to determine that the location where this skeleton was found was the friary's choir.

Now that it seemed to be a good chance that this could be Richard III's remains, DNA and bone samples were sent for analysis and a 3-D computer model was made of the skull for facial reconstruction. On February 4, 2013, the University of Leicester archaeological team announced that the DNA and bone analysis confirmed beyond a reasonable doubt that these were the remains of Richard III.



This find after Richard III was first interred some 527 years ago is made all the more remarkable by what could have gone wrong but didn't. Richard's feet were missing, thought to have been destroyed in the 19th-century during building construction. As noted earlier, the funding almost failed to come together. To obtain an mtDNA exemplar, a living descendent from the female line needed to be found. In addition, to be sure of the exemplar, a second female lineage was needed. In both instances, the last of the living descendents of the female lineage are alive today. If this research had started a few years from now, we may not have had the mtDNA for comparison.



Image Credit: University of Dundee and the Richard III Society



Image credit: University of Leicester

Facial reconstruction from CT scans of skull now confirmed to be that of Richard III

For details of the research, images of the mtDNA comparison, skeletal remains and facial reconstruction, and more about the team, please visit the University of Leicester website for Richard III at www.le.ac.uk/richardiii/ and The Richard III Society website at richardiii.net

Reference:

The Last Days of Richard III and the fate of his DNA, John Ashdown-Hill, The History Press, Kindle edition of second edition, S 2013

TOC

François Villon—Fifteenth Century Poet—and Criminal

Jonathan Hayes

Tell me where, in what country
Is Flora the beautiful Roman
Archipiada or Thaïs
Who was first cousin to her once
Echo who speaks when there's a sound
Over pond or river
Whose beauty was more than human?
But where are the snows of yesteryear?
Moreover where is the third Calixtus [1]
Last of his name to die
Who for four years held the Papacy
Alphonso king of Aragon
His grace the Duke of Bourbon
Artus duke of Brittany
And Charles VII "The Good"
But where is the valorous Charlemagne?

This is Villon speaking—beauty and political power may get you fame and renown, but you still wind up dead like everyone else. But Villon makes more of it through his phraseology—there is a poignancy "...where, in what country is Flora, the beautiful Roman... Where are the snows of yesteryear?"—a feeling of regret that it should be so. Men and women whose names are the only thing left of them—Villon creates an atmosphere of wistful sadness, which raises the poetry to a level not found in the normal courtly verse which we consider typical of the fifteenth century.

One of Villon's early translators, John Payne, explained the difference between Villon's directness and the artificiality of courtly verse.

The subjects usually chosen are love and chivalry, questions of honour, gallantry and religion, treated allegorically and rhetorically after the extinct and artificial fashion of the *Roman de la Rose*. Beautiful as is often the colour and cadence of the verse, we cannot help but feel that it is a beauty and a charm which belong to a past age and which have no living relation to that in which they saw the light. In perusing the poetry of the time, one seems to be gazing upon interminable stretches of antique tapestry, embroidered in splendid but somewhat faded hues, wherein armed knights and ladies, clad in quaintly-cut raiment and adorned with ornaments of archaic form, sit at the banquet, stray a-toying in gardens, ride a-hawking in fields or pass a-hunting through woods, where every flower is moulded after a conventional pattern and no leaf dares assert itself save for the purpose of decoration. Here everything is prescribed: the bow of the knight as he kneels before his lady, the sweep of the chatelaine's robe through the bannered galleries, the fall of the standard in the wind, the career of the war-horse through the lists, the flight of the birds through the air, the motions of the deer that stand at gaze in the woods—all are ordered in obedience to a strictly prescribed formula, in which one feels that nature and passion have ceased to have any sufficient part. [2]

In other words, Villon is not the normal fifteenth-century poet. Which is, of course, why he is still read today; he speaks not just for his age, but for the human condition in any

age. Readers of Joseph Heller's book, *Catch 22*, will recall the reference "Where are the Snowdons of yesteryear?"

François de Montcorbier or des Loges was born in Paris in 1431, the year Joan of Arc was burned at the stake. This was not a good time to be born in northern France. The English chevauchées had reduced the north of France to desolation and lawlessness. Only wretched starving peasants and wandering bands of criminals—échorcheurs—lurked outside Paris. To travel, except in a heavily armed group, was to risk being robbed of everything and probably killed. Paris nights belonged to thieves and carousing students—the one as dangerous to an honest citizen as the other. Winters were harsh—bands of wolves came into Paris itself, attacking children and other helpless souls. Smallpox killed 40,000.

Elsewhere in France, Gilles de Raïs, companion in arms of Joan of Arc, was sexually torturing children to death—how many is not known, but at least scores. The testimony at his trial was so horrifying that a veil was placed over the courtroom crucifix so the Christ would not have to listen. De Raïs was burned at the stake in 1440. In the Abbey of Port-Royal, the abbess presided over an establishment where every sexual activity an inventive mind can devise was freely practiced.

As any reader of the Paston Letters knows, it was a violent age. Tavern brawls or skirmishes between students and townspeople would typically leave corpses lying in their wake. Public executions (good clean family fun—suitable for children of all ages), usually hanging, but sometimes breaking on the wheel, burning or (for counterfeiting), boiling in oil, were frequent occurrences and popular entertainment. Young men would often bring prostitutes (or their girlfriends) out for a picnic supper and romp under the dangling corpses of the gibbet at Montfaucon.

As readers of Chaucer are aware, it was also a bawdy era. What one might term Anglo-Saxon phraseology was routinely used by both sexes of all classes of society. I know of at least two streets in London and one in Paris which had to be renamed in a more prim and prissy age. Villon was a man of his time in this regard—though at a different social level than Chaucer. There is one passage in the *Testament* in which an aged prostitute compares her present attractions to her former charms which can only be described as hard-core pornography—but great poetry! This caused early translators problems. Either they would entirely rewrite the offending passages or use Chaucerian terminology—neither one a satisfactory solution. Nowadays, since such sexual vernacular seems to be part of the everyday vocabulary of the average teenage girl, modern translators feel less impelled to stoop to such subterfuges.

François' father either died or disappeared when François was still an infant. His mother managed to raise the youngster and, when he was seven, she arranged for his adoption by Guillaume de Villon, canon of St. Benoît, and a prosperous man in his own right. Young François had obviously impressed Guillaume with his intellectual potential and François was also impressed with Guillaume. He took the name Villon for his own and kept a strong affection for his benefactor for the rest of his life. François was no Errol Flynn—he was self-described as looking like a turnip. The tavern-brawl scars he acquired wouldn't have helped his physiognomy—of course, his chosen companions would not have had movie-star looks, either. Cutpurses and strumpets rarely do.

According to the records of the University of Paris, Villon was awarded his Baccalaureate in 1449 and Masters in 1452. According to the standards of the time, the awarding of these degrees gave him the status of a clerk in Holy Orders—an important point since it meant he could only be tried in clerical courts for offenses, not civil courts.

By the standards of his, or indeed of any age, he was a highly educated man. With this, his undoubted literary talent and such connections as Guillaume de Villon could provide, he could have had a respectable and comfortable career in the household of some high prelate or great noble. As he was to do again later when he had another, similar, opportunity, he chose not to take it. He was by nature a ne'er-do-well. He much preferred the company of prostitutes, petty thieves, muggers, and pickpockets, the habitués of the low taverns he frequented, rather than the wealthy venues to which his education and talent would have provided easy entrée. Villon, at this time, established a reputation for light-hearted roguery—actually becoming eponymous. It was not to last.

Although he wrote no love poetry, he did fall in love once—with Catherine de Vausselles. If my female readers wish their names to be remembered through the ages, they should jilt a poet. The only reason we remember Catherine's name is that Villon wrote about her—and not very happily: “to the woman I spoke of/Who sent me packing so cruelly/That I am forbidden joy/And barred from every pleasure/I leave my heart in a casket/Pale, pitiful, dead and gone/She drove me to this sorry state.” In order to discourage his affections, Catherine arranged for him to be beaten up under her window. I would not advise any lady to emulate this manner of ridding themselves of unwanted suitors. Sherlockians will recall a similar incident in “The Adventure of the Three Gables” when Isadora Klein informs Douglas Maberley that his affections are no longer desired by having him similarly thrashed under her window while she sat there and laughed—just as Catherine had. I'm not enough of a Sherlockian scholar to definitely assert that art is imitating life there, but it's certainly suggestive.

Villon had already had run-ins with the law. In 1455, he'd stabbed a priest named Sermoise to death in a quarrel over a girl. Killing a member of the clergy was a very serious matter, and Villon left Paris in a hurry, not returning until his adopted father had procured a pardon for him. Villon had already made the acquaintance of Colin de Cayeaux and Regnier de Montigny among other miscreants. Cayeaux and Montigny were Coquillards—members of loosely organized bands of criminals of the worst sort. Of many nationalities and backgrounds, they had developed their own jargon. Knowledge of this patois would have gained Villon entrée into their company. He may have spent this period of exile among the Coquillards, completing the transition from frivolous scalawag to hardened criminal. It also created another problem for French speakers as well as translators as several of his poems are written in Coquillard jargon. While some of the phraseology has yielded to patient scholarly research, much remains impenetrable.

How did he live? We can't know, of course, but looking at how others in a similar milieu lived in more recent times, we can make reasonable suppositions. Suppose you are a burglar. You have a good day—a good haul. What do you do with your ill-gotten gains? You throw a party for all your friends. Money no object; spend all you've made. What have you accomplished? Two things: first, you've obviously spent all your money so there's no reason for your “friends” to knock you over the head and empty your pockets. Second, you've created an obligation among your friends. If one of your prostitute acquaintances manages to roll a drunken trick and is particularly flush the next day, she'll also throw a party—and you'll be invited. There may not be honor among thieves, but there is mutual understanding.

Back in Paris, at the end of 1456, Villon and three of his friends, with the unfortunate addition of Guy Tabarie as lookout, robbed the College of Navarre, the richest of the colleges of the University of Paris. Villon had scouted the location of the strongbox containing the money and led the group to the sacristy where it was kept. Petit-Jean picked the locks and the thieves got 500 gold écus—quite a fortune. They refastened the locks and exited the

way they had entered. All very professionally done—so well accomplished that it was three months before the crime was discovered and even then there were no clues indicating who the perpetrators were. It was another year and a half before Guy Tabarie’s big mouth in front of a police informer got him arrested.

Torture, as we know, is not a means of punishment. It’s a way of keeping the conversation going, of getting over those awkward moments of silence. Once under the proper means of persuasion, Tabardie sang like the sweetest of canaries—his confession is extant. He revealed numerous felonies involving Villon, including the burglary of the College of Navarre. Villon was now a wanted man, and a dead one if caught. He was long gone, however. The ending of his suit of Catherine de Vausselles had made him the laughing-stock of Paris and he couldn’t stand the humiliation. He wrote *The Legacy*, a mock will of a style in vogue at the time and went into self-imposed exile.

The next five years of his life are mostly a mystery. With two exceptions, we don’t know where he wandered or what he did during that period. We do know he spent at least part of 1457 at Blois, at the court of Charles, Duke of Orléans, a lover of poetry. (Charles had spent a number of years in England as a prisoner after Agincourt. On his return, he devoted himself to the arts. While luxurious, Charles’ court was also ruled by decorum. Charles was a poet, but a very different one than Villon. His verse was courtly, mannered and delicate with gentle emotion, very different from Villon’s direct earthiness. Poetic games such as one person reciting a couplet and another improvising a second would have been right up Villon’s alley, and he could easily have stayed there as long as he wished. But for him, trading refined courtly couplets in the staid atmosphere of Blois couldn’t compare with provoking raucous laughter from burglars and trulls in seedy taverns with Regnier de Montigny and Colin de Cayeaux, a wine goblet in one hand and half a roasted chicken in the other. We don’t know what happened, but Villon left Blois, probably at the direction of Charles of Orléans. Villon had undoubtedly blotted his copybook in a way that couldn’t be overlooked. Villon then tried for patronage from René, Duke of Anjou and Lorraine and Jean, Duke of Moulins, without success. Presumably they’d heard about Villon from Charles of Orléans.

Regnier de Montigny had been hanged by this time. Caught and convicted, he was given a Letter of Remission, a general pardon. One minor problem—such a letter had to list all the person’s previous crimes and Regnier had unfortunately omitted a few. This invalidated the letter, and Regnier became a dancer on the slack rope. In 1460 Colin de Cayeaux also decorated the gibbet at Montfaucon.

In 1459, Villon was imprisoned in Orléans for some offense, the details of which we are unaware, tortured, confessed and sentenced to death. Reprieve came from the visit of Marie, Charles of Orléans’s infant daughter. A general reprieve in honor of the visit released Villon. “And here before God I acknowledge/I would be dead by now/If it were not for your sweet birth...” It wouldn’t be the last time he got a “Get Out Of Jail Free” card.

In 1461, he apparently tried to rob the church at Baccon, near Meung-sur-Loire. He was caught and brought before the Bishop of Orléans, Thibault d’Aussigny, since robbery of a church was sacrilege. Thibault was a man with little sympathy for malefactors. Quite probably, Villon had been before him two years prior only to be released. The good Bishop wasn’t going to let him go again. Villon was the only one caught—however good a crook he was, he was lousy at making an escape. The Bishop wanted the names of Villon’s accomplices and Villon—he tells us this—was put to the Question—that’s with a capital “Q”.

However, no amount of torture can make you reveal something you don't know, and Villon didn't know his fellow robbers' names, only their Coquillard nicknames, which changed frequently. One can imagine the scene at the end of a session: "Villon, you persist in making things difficult for yourself. What a pity. Tomorrow you will have another opportunity to be more reasonable. Perhaps tonight you will give that your thoughtful consideration." Psychological torture was not invented in the twentieth century. Eventually the Bishop realized Villon was telling the truth and ordered punishment. Because of the sacrilegious nature of his crime, he was reduced from a clerk in Holy Orders to a layperson. Villon thought this was extremely unjust—the Bishop of Paris was his Bishop, not d'Aussigny. "...he's not my lord or my bishop, I'm not his serf or his timid doe." It's much better in the original: "mon seigneur n'est ne mon evesque ... je ne suis son serf—ne sa biche." Those sibilants positively spit venom!

The Bishop, as a churchman, was not permitted to draw blood or execute. The method of torture avoided the first—Villon tells us what it was; probably Perkin Warbeck "confessed" after something similar. The details are not pretty, but there is no permanent bodily damage done. He wasn't executed either, but as Ambrose Bierce put it, "Thou shalt not kill—but needs not strive, officiously to keep alive." The oubliette in which Villon was subsequently confined was discovered in Meung in 1973; a 40 foot deep beehive-shaped prison in the ground with a 150-foot well in the center for waste. The only access was through a hole in the top through which a small loaf of bread and a jug of water were lowered each day. There privation and disease could do their work.

One of his greatest poems was a result. "Aiez pictié, aiez pictié de moy" ending "Le lesserezla, le povre Villon"—"Will you leave him here, the poor Villon?" The first line is biblical—Job 19-21—and becomes a parable; he will endure, but desperately needs assistance. This poem was used by the 1920s German playwright, Bertolt Brecht, for Macheath's "Call from the grave" in *Die Dreigroschenoper* (Threepenny Opera).

Nassim Nicholas Taleb has coined the term "Black Swan event" for something which is statistically totally improbable, but nevertheless happens. Black Swan events are eschewed by all novelists. Even one reeks of *deus ex machina*; two would get your manuscript thrown out the window. Black Swan events only occur in real life, never in fiction. So, perhaps, it's not totally surprising that we know of Villon's tribulations in this period due to a Black Swan event. His release in 1459 due to the infant Marie's visit was a Black Swan event. Another would occur for Villon.

In July, 1461, Charles VII, King of France died. In October, 1461, the newly crowned Louis XI (the "Spider King") passed through Meung on a royal progress. According to custom, prisoners were freed—including Villon. One can imagine how the good Bishop felt.

No need to ask how Villon felt. He tells us in the *Testament*: "Praise be to (Christ) and our Lady/And Louis the good King of France/To whom God grant Jacob's luck/And Soloman's honor and glory/As for prowess he has plenty/And authority too, by my soul/And so his memory may last/In this fleeting world/Such as it has in length and breadth/Let him live as long as Methuselah." And much more in the same vein. This was good fortune beyond any possible belief.

Physically, though, he was a wreck. The wandering life, multiple sessions of torture and the privations of prison had irretrievably ruined his health. We sometimes forget how young most creators of history were—Alexander the Great was 33 when he died; Mozart was 35, Richard III was 32. As Villon made his way from Meung to Paris, he was only 30. He waited outside Paris, already working on the *Testament*, while he waited to see which

way the wind blew. He'd been away for five years—an eternity in the fifteenth century. The blithe companions of his salad days had had their meetings with Henri Cousin, Paris's executioner.

Ou sont les gracieux gallans
Que je suivoye ou temps jadis
Si bien chantans, si bien parlans
Si plaisans en faiz et en dis?

Few now knew him and fewer were interested. Jailed, he was released on promise to repay his share of the money stolen from the College of Navarre years before—the money presumably to come from Guillaume de Villon.

I won't go into an analysis of the *Testament*—others have done a much better job than I could. It's long—but parts of it are some of the best poetry ever written. Like the *Legacy* written five years earlier, it's chock full of in-jokes. Many of these have been patiently unraveled by French scholars enabling the assiduous footnote reader to appreciate the humor today fully as much as a fifteenth-century Parisian would have. One imagines Villon declaiming his verses to his friends who would be howling with laughter at his references to the foibles of various of his fellow Parisian citizens.

Then he was back in prison. For once he was innocent, but that cut no ice with the authorities, who were thoroughly sick of him. Faced with torture, he confessed to anything he was asked to confess to. He was no longer physically capable of resisting. He was sentenced to be hanged.

Two great poems were the result. To fully appreciate the *Quatrain*, you have to understand the difference between hanging now and hanging in the fifteenth century. Now the amount of the drop is calculated to snap the spinal column and render the victim unconscious. Henri Cousin was more parsimonious with his rope—just enough to reach from the gibbet to the neck so when the ladder was pulled away, the victim just hung, the entire weight of his body suspended by the neck, to strangle slowly.

Villon makes this quite clear: “Je suis François dont il me poise/Né de Paris emprès Pontoise/Et de las corde d'une toise/Sçaura mon col que mon cul poise.” “I am François which is my bad luck/Born in Paris near Pontoise/From six feet of rope/My neck will learn the weight of my ass.” Bravado—but also one of the best quatrains ever written. The cadence of the quatrain and the alliteration of col (neck) and cul (ass) are especially good.

Also the *Ballade*: “Freres humains qui après nous vivez/N'ayez les cuers contre nous endurcis ... /Mais priez Dieu que tous nous vueille absouldre.” “Brother men who live on after us/Don't let your hearts against us harden ... /But pray to God that He will pardon us.” This part of the *Ballade* was also taken by Bertolt Brecht for Macheath's “Death Message” in *Die Dreigroschenoper*.

Further on, Villon imagines the hanged: “The rain has rinsed and washed us/The sun has dried us and turned us black/Magpies and ravens have pecked out our eyes/And plucked our beards and eyebrows/Never ever can we stand still/Now here, now there as the wind shifts/At its whim it keeps swinging us ...” For pure description, this is as good as you could ever hope to get.

It didn't happen. We don't know how or why, but his sentence was changed to banishment from Paris, not to return on pain of death. He was given three days to say goodbye to his mother and to Guillaume de Villon. Then he walked out of Paris. And out of history. When, where, how he died is unknown—which, of course, hasn't prevented speculation. Four years later, Louis XI, concerned at the diminishing population of Paris,

proclaimed an amnesty. It's difficult to believe that such a boulevardier as Villon would not have returned had he been still alive at that time.

The first printed edition of his poems was 1489—extremely early, which says something about how he was regarded. It was full of errors which were corrected in an edition of 1533, done at the request of François I—which says even more about how he was regarded. In English he was discovered by the pre-Raphaelites; perhaps fortunate since Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Algernon Swinburne could provide poetic—though expurgated—translations. I've alluded to some of the influences that he's had, but the story is too good for fiction writers to leave alone and his name, and that of Catherine de Vausselles, have been tacked onto plots which probably leave them both spinning in their graves. Possibly the worst offender was Rudolf Friml's *The Vagabond King* which had the François Villon and Catherine de Vausselles characters singing Nelson Eddy/Jeannette MacDonald—type duets. Poor Villon! No matter what a person's crimes, no one deserves that.

So what are we left with? Perhaps it's only fair to leave the last word to Villon himself: "Prince, je congnois tout en somme/Je congnois coulerez et blesmes/Je congnois Mort qui tout consomme/Je congnois tout fors que moy mesmes". "Prince, I know everything/I know colored things and bland/I know Death who takes us all/I know everything—except myself."

Endnotes:

1. Calixtus had a special significance for Villon—who was an ardent French patriot—as he was the Pope who initiated the rehabilitation process for Joan of Arc.
2. The Poems of Master François Villon of Paris, xi-xii, J. Payne, trans., Villon Society, London, 1892, quoted in *Danse Macabre* Aubrey Burl, Sutton Publishing, 2000

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Video:

To watch Part 1 of 5, go to tinyurl.com/b8wu7s7 (link shortened from 80 characters) and then enter password r3AGMy2012 (upper and lower case is exactly as you see it here). To see the next part, click on the left arrow that appears when you place your mouse inside the video frame. My apologies for the poor sound quality.

[TOC](#)



Richard Plantagenet and Anne Neville: Childhood Sweethearts?

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Middleham Castle

"...Middleham appears to have been the favorite residence of Warwick's countess and her two daughters and the seat of his 'court'..." [1] "There were several lads at Middleham, like himself [Richard] apprentices in knightly conduct." [2] "In the chamber and in the

courtyard Richard and his fellows were tutored....” [2] “In leisure time they developed their knowledge of etiquette by reading romances and by conversing with Warwick’s Countess and her two lovely daughters,...” [2] “On special occasions like the Christmas holidays or the spring festival of Corpus Christi, Richard would ride with the Countess of Warwick and her two daughters and the principal members of the household to the city of York....” [3] “Richard sought out Anne in St Martin’s sanctuary. She came forth at once to be his bride. Since they were cousins they needed an ecclesiastical dispensation to wed, but Richard was in no mood for waiting. Without dispensation and apparently, without any ceremony, they were immediately married. Then turning their backs on the splendors of London and Westminster, they speedily retired to the castle in Wensleydale which spelled home to them both.” [4]

Anne

Foul devil, for God’s sake hence, and trouble us not,
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,
Filled it with cursing cries and deep exclams.
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.
O gentlemen, see! See dead Henry’s wounds,
Open their congealed mouths and bleed afresh!
Blush, blush, thou foul lump of deformity;
For ‘tis thy presence that exhales this blood
From cold and empty veins where no blood dwells.
Thy deeds inhuman and unnatural
Provokes this deluge most unnatural. [5]

So which is it? Did Richard Plantagenet force Anne, Princess of Wales, to marry him after he murdered her young husband? Did she loathe him and blame him also for the deaths of her father the Earl of Warwick and, as Shakespeare describes above, her father-in-law King Henry VI? Was he physically repugnant to her? *Or* did they share a peaceful, contented childhood at Middleham Castle as Paul Murray Kendall reports? Did they know each other well as friends and childhood sweethearts, happy and relieved to find each other and be together after all the deaths and upheavals of the Wars of the Roses? Did they rush into their marriage as a bulwark against the cruel world around them?

We’re offered two starkly different views of the personal relationship that might have existed between Anne Neville and Richard Plantagenet prior to their marriage in 1472. Was Anne physically coerced into marriage with Richard, or did she hold shared fond memories that led her to happily wed him? Did Richard truly love Anne and want to protect and shield her as a young woman alone in the harsh, dog-eat-dog world of medieval England, or was he only after her money?

Unfortunately, very little documentation exists covering the years of Richard’s childhood and early adolescence. For Anne, even less about her thoughts and feelings remain. We are required to build a theory of the nature of their personal relationship based on three analyses: the timelines of their lives, the political climate of those times, and what constitutes a ‘sweetheart’ type of relationship.

Sweethearts?

There is no question that both Richard and Anne knew, and fully accepted the fact, that they would have marriages arranged for them by their families. They were both born into the very top of the peerage and always exhibited dutiful behavior towards their parents,

their families and their king. Knowing this, we cannot believe that either of them thought they could marry for love or even consider pursuing a love match on their own.

Presumably, anyone entering into an arranged marriage hopes that love will grow between them and their spouse. We must assume this applies also to Richard and Anne, and that they hoped to *find* love in their marriages. However, neither believed that love would *guide* them into a marriage.

Therefore, if we want to believe that there was an ‘attraction’ of any kind between Anne and Richard, it cannot have sprung from a longing to always be together, to marry and build a life together as we might define a romantic attraction today. Rather, any ‘attraction’ would have to be described as originating in, and ending in, a strictly physical/sexual context.

At what age does a young girl feel a physical attraction to a boy? Can we say that by the age of twelve, Anne might have had her head turned by someone of the opposite sex she found attractive? At what age does a young girl become physically attractive to a young man? Can we assume that a young girl of, say eight or nine, probably wouldn’t catch the eye of a young man of thirteen or so, but a twelve- or thirteen-year-old girl would?

Richard was almost four years older than Anne. If we try to find the point in time when Anne was old enough to be physically and/or sexually attractive to Richard, we can identify the most likely time frame when any sort of mutual attraction - if there ever was one - might have begun: between 1468 (Anne began that year at age eleven and a half) and 1470 when Anne was betrothed in France to Edward, Prince of Wales (at age fourteen). This gives us only a two-year window. Under what circumstances did their paths cross during this two-year period? Would the opportunity for a ‘crush’ have developed between them to tag their subsequent marriage as a ‘love match’?

Time frames

When do we *know* that Anne and Richard were actually together? For what events are there indisputable records of the two of them being in the same place at the same time?

Anne’s mother was Anne Beauchamp, daughter of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. It is through her (specifically due to the death of her older brother Henry who left no heir) that Richard Neville, Anne’s father, gained the title of Earl of Warwick. Warwick Castle was the seat of the earldom. Anne Neville was born at Warwick Castle on June 11, 1456. It is presumed that Anne lived there as an infant with her mother until the entire family took up residence in Calais in May 1457. They continued to live there for the next three years.

Because the castle at Middleham—a Neville property that the Earl inherited following his father’s death in 1461—was one of the Earl of Warwick’s domains and reputed to be his favorite residence, it is often assumed that the Earl used Middleham as his primary residence and that his family lived there with him. This is not the case. The Neville family held many strongholds and the Earl traveled around to all of them in addition to his travel in support of his work for King Edward IV.

When the family returned from Calais in the summer of 1460, it is more reasonable to assume that Anne resumed residence with her mother and sister at Warwick Castle, not Middleham. Hicks writes “During the 1460s [the Earl of] Warwick was constantly away on military or diplomatic business, most commonly in the North, at Westminster, and on continental embassies, on which his family can rarely have accompanied him.” [6]

Middleham Castle was very far north and a key mustering point in organizing English forays into Scotland in 1462 and 1463; not necessarily a suitable home for a family with two young girls. We know that in January 1463 the Earl and King Edward IV were at Middleham following the capitulation of a number of border strongholds held by the

Lancastrians and the Scots. Hicks writes regarding the Earl's negotiations with Mary of Guelders: "... failing to secure her co-operation he retired to York where he left his Countess, and thence to Middleham..." [7] This implies that he would never leave his Countess (and presumably their two young daughters) at Middleham without being present there himself; rather they would be left in the more secure location of York. Hicks states that in June 1464 "Now that the North was pacified... [the Earl] was never to spend as much time in the North again." [8] Hicks tell us "The countess was not at Middleham for the whole of 1464-5, the only year for which accounts survive." [9]

Richard was born at Fotheringhay Castle and lived quietly with his mother, older brother George and sister Margaret during his early years. The death of his father saw great upheaval in the little boy's life, and ultimately his flight to safety in Flanders. Edward's military victories enabled him to return to England. Following Edward's coronation he and his siblings lived at court until Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville. "The accounts of Robin Cousin, keeper of the great wardrobe, suggest that Richard continued to live with his sister Margaret and his brother George, in a household of their own. Their place of residence, which was supervised by the royal household, was the palace at Greenwich, where one of the towers had been especially prepared for their use." [10]

David Hipshon states, "There is not much evidence for his [Richard's] whereabouts or his activities from the age of ten to thirteen." [11] It is not likely that Richard had even visited Middleham Castle until he took up residence there to begin his knightly training. Paul Murray Kendall is alone in setting the date of Richard's arrival at Middleham as November 1461. Virtually all other references date the start of his training at Middleham to 1465. Josephine Wilkinson states, "...Richard, who had recently celebrated his thirteenth birthday, left for the north in the autumn of 1465." [12]

It seems clear that Richard and Anne did not grow up together at Middleham and form the domestic tableaux described by Paul Murray Kendall. If Richard and Anne didn't share a childhood home then when *might* they have first met?

There are a number of times when their families came together:

- August 19, 1460: the Earl of Warwick went to Calais to fetch his family after the Yorkist victory and accompanied his mother, wife and two daughters to Sandwich and then on to London. There were a number of celebrations along the way and a reception in Greenwich. Anne was four at the time.
- Christmas 1460. The Earl of Warwick, Cecily, - Duchess of York, George, Richard and Margaret were all in London. Richard's father, the Duke of York, his older brother Edmund and the Earl's father were on their way north to do battle with Margaret of Anjou. Edward was raising troops elsewhere. Presumably the Earl was in London to protect the city from any Lancastrian assault and to safeguard the Duke's family. However, there is no reason to suppose that Anne, Isabel and their mother would have been brought to London—into possible harm's way. It is more reasonable to assume they would have stayed safely at Warwick Castle.

One well-documented Neville family event was the 'road trip' of 1465. That autumn the Earl, his Countess and his two daughters Anne and Isabel gave offerings at the Collegiate Church of St Mary's in Warwick. We know that Richard was there—apparently his first stop on his way out of London heading up north to begin living at Middleham. He celebrated with the Nevilles in Warwick, and then the whole Neville clan traveled up to Caewood Castle near York to celebrate the enthronement of George Neville as Archbishop of York.

This was a happy, joyous time for the whole group. The Yorkists were in power, a fifteen-year truce had recently been made with the Scots, and there was (relative) peace in the realm. Richard was the king's youngest brother, and Anne and Isabel were the daughters

and heiresses of the mighty and powerful Earl of Warwick. There can be no question but that Anne, Isabel and Richard had to have been in high spirits, saw each other a lot during this trip, dined together, rode together, perhaps danced together, and spent quiet family time together. If their personalities were at all compatible, they undoubtedly formed a friendly acquaintance at that time.

However, this was 1465—three years before the probable ‘window’ when an attraction might have begun. Richard was thirteen, Isabel was eleven and Anne was nine. It is unlikely that the ‘road trip’ sparked the start of any sort of romantic relationship between Anne and Richard.

From Caewood Castle Richard continued north to take up residence at Middleham Castle while Anne, Isabel and their mother returned south to Warwick Castle.

While there is no specific authority that puts both Anne and Richard together at other events following the 1465 ‘road trip’, they might reasonably have attended a number of family celebrations. For example, in London, the Earl of Warwick presided over the churching of Elizabeth Woodville following the birth of her first child. It was an “elaborate ceremonial.” [13] Gabriel Tetzl reports that eight duchesses and thirty countesses were present. After the three-hour banquet came music and dancing. Margaret, Richard’s older sister, danced with “two dukes...” presumably her brothers Richard and George. Would Anne and Isabel Neville have been present? In all probability they would have attended with their mother.

However, February 1466 is still outside the possible ‘window’ for a spark to ignite between Richard and Anne: she was only nine and a half, Isabel eleven, and Richard thirteen and a half. If either Neville sister were to have caught his eye during these festivities wouldn’t Richard be more reasonably attracted to the sister closer to him in age, the older Isabel? Elizabeth Woodville’s younger sisters were undoubtedly also in attendance at the churching. Presuming they were as beautiful as their older sister was reputed to be, might Richard have been more likely to notice Anne Woodville, who was the same age as he, rather than Anne Neville? Or perhaps another one of the Queen’s younger sisters, such as Mary Woodville?

A huge ‘fun’ event was the Smithfield Tournament in the summer of 1467. A magnificent entertainment on the outskirts of London, the Smithfield Joust was arranged by Edward IV and his queen, Elizabeth Woodville. The entire court was on hand to cheer on the Queen’s brother Anthony—a championship level joust— in his competition with the Bastard of Burgundy. In all probability Richard was there and as a fifteen-year-old must have found it to be a thrilling time: perfect for flirting, high adventure and clandestine liaisons. However, it is very unlikely that Anne was there. King Edward IV to France had dispatched her father on a diplomatic mission that spring. The Earl and an entourage of 200 embarked from Sandwich on May 28, 1467. The trip was to be a number of months in duration and, as it was a ‘wine and dine’ type of diplomatic mission, it might be assumed that he brought his Countess and two daughters with him. The mission has been described as a strategy used by Edward IV to get the Earl of Warwick and his pro-French perspective out of England while Edward entertained and negotiated with Burgundy.

The summer of 1468 saw the nuptials of Richard’s sister Margaret to the Duke of Burgundy. Margaret’s ‘Marriage of the Century’ was launched amid as much pomp and regal display as Edward IV could manage. While not in favor of the marriage, the Earl of Warwick apparently ‘rose to the occasion’ and played a positive role. Christine Weightman’s book *Margaret of York* describes the festivities of the wedding on the English side: “...Warwick’s approval was made public when Margaret rode behind him on a pillion through the streets of London.” [14] Weightman goes on to write: “After attending service on the Sunday, Margaret made her final farewells and then left, accompanied by her two

younger brothers and a large retinue, to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Thomas á Becket. Edward impetuously decided to accompany Margaret, and the whole royal party spent three days on the journey stopping at Dartford, Rochester and Sittingbourne. On the Thursday morning, accompanied by all her brothers and the Earls of Warwick, Shrewsbury and Northumberland, Margaret made her pilgrimage at Canterbury. The next day she embarked on the ‘*New Ellen*’ at Margate,...

Sixteen ships set sail for Flanders. We know that Richard was actively involved in all of the celebrations and festivities; Anne in all likelihood was too. Richard was approaching his sixteenth birthday and Anne had just celebrated her twelfth. There certainly would have been ample opportunities for the two of them to talk, dine together, ride together, dance together, and enjoy all the splendid entertainments and events. Might a ‘crush’ have been formed at that time?

Political Climate

By the fall of 1467 and into the early months of 1468 tensions between the Earl of Warwick and King Edward IV were rising. Josephine Wilkinson reports in her book *Richard the Young King to Be* “According to Jean de Waurin, while Warwick was still in the South, he took George of Clarence and Richard of Gloucester with him on a visit to Cambridge. Here, it is suggested, he proposed that Clarence should marry his elder daughter Isabel. ... Waurin asserts, ‘[Edward IV] mercilessly reprimanded his brothers before having them arrested and placed under guard.’ ...but is this true? It is found in only one chronicle, that of Jean de Waurin.” [15]

Richard’s loyalty to his brother Edward has never been questioned. If Richard was aware by early 1468 that his brother would not accept a marriage between George and one of the Neville heiresses, might we reasonably assume that Richard would not seek out the Earl’s other daughter to form some sort of liaison or to pursue and/or further an existing romantic relationship?

“Certainly, by St Valentine’s Day 1468, the Milanese ambassador, writing from Tours, was spreading the gossip once again: ‘In England the country is up in arms. The Earl of Warwick has drawn a brother of the king against the king himself.’” [16]

July 12, 1469 saw the wedding of George, Duke of Clarence and Isabel Neville in Calais. The Earl of Warwick and his new son-in-law invaded England and took Edward IV captive. However, they could not hold him, and Edward IV regained his freedom.

Christmas 1469 must have been a very tense time. The Earl of Warwick and George, Duke of Clarence were in London with Edward IV’s court. Isabel, pregnant with their first child, was probably there, as well as Anne and her mother. It is unknown if Richard participated in the holiday festivities of 1469; presumably he would as his brother’s (now) most trusted advisor and confidante. Were he and Anne likely to have spent time together in a flirtatious fashion? In a romantic fashion? In a sexual fashion? Knowing how angry Edward IV was with Clarence, it seems almost impossible to believe that Richard would pursue any sort of relationship with Anne by this time.

In April 1470 the Earl fled England with Clarence, Isabel, Anne and his Countess in tow; Anne was betrothed to Edward, Prince of Wales on July 25, 1470.

And finally...

We know that Richard Plantagenet was slight of build and dark in coloring like his father. Richard’s oldest brother Edward was viewed as blindingly handsome and so “king-like”—tall, muscular and golden haired. His physical characteristics were quite the opposite of Richard’s and therefore we must assume that Richard would not have been labeled ‘handsome’ in the popular sense. In addition Richard’s skeletal remains, found at Greyfriars in Leicester during the summer of 2012, prove his slender frame and also show

us that he suffered from adolescent onset scoliosis. It is believed that he was born with a normal spine but it began to curve when Richard was about ten. It is the curvature of his spine that would have made him appear fairly short. It has not yet been formally reported but might reasonably be supposed that his significant spinal curvature was apparent to others in his daily life and might have altered his gait or carriage somewhat. Assuming this, there is no reason to believe that Ann Neville would have had an immediate physical attraction to Richard.

We know that in the negotiations arbitrated by Edward IV between George, Duke of Clarence and Richard, Duke of Gloucester over the confiscated lands of the (now) deceased traitor the Earl of Warwick, two agreements were reached: that Anne's mother would be considered 'dead' so that her own Beauchamp and Despenser inheritances as well as her widow's jointure and dower rights would be available to be divided up among the brothers, and that if for any reason a Papal dispensation for his marriage to his cousin Anne was not forthcoming, Richard would keep all of Anne's lands even in the event of the subsequent divorce. Through rose-colored glasses it could be imagined that Richard was very much in love with his wife while these negotiations went on and he, as her husband, was the only male protector she had at that time to watch over her interests. However, in the cold hard light of day, it is clear that Richard wanted all of the wealth he could gain from marriage with Anne Neville even if that marriage should be dissolved. From Richard's perspective there was no reason to wait to marry until the dispensation came through (which it did) because the inheritances would be his either way.

Clearly, Richard Plantagenet and Anne Neville knew each other from various happy family events in their childhoods, but they did not grow up together at Middleham Castle. Both Anne and Richard were dutiful to those in control of their lives: Anne to her father and Richard to his brother the king. Anne's father married her to Margaret of Anjou's son and Richard would never have crossed the king in the matter of the selection of a spouse for him.

Therefore, we are left only with the slim possibility that a physical/sexual attraction might have begun sometime between the years 1468 and 1470 when both were at an age when such an attraction might have arisen. However, I can only conclude that the *political* environment and increasing tensions between Richard's family and Anne's would all but have precluded it.

Endnotes:

1. Kendall, p. 49
2. Ibid., p. 51
3. Ibid., p. 50
4. Ibid., pp.127-128
5. Shakespeare, p.557
6. Hicks, *Anne Neville Queen to Richard III*, p.54
7. _____ *Warwick the Kingmaker*, p. 240
8. Ibid., p. 247
9. Hicks, *Anne Neville Queen to Richard III* p. 54
10. Wilkinson, p91
11. Hipshon, p. 67
12. Wilkinson, p.104
13. Weightman, p.53
14. Ibid., p.21
15. Wilkinson, p.145
16. Ibid., p.147

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- Crawford, Anne, *The Yorkists The History of a Dynasty* Hambledon Continuum, 2007
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_____ *Warwick the Kingmaker*, Blackwell Publisher, 1998
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Hipshon, David, *Richard III and the Death of Chivalry*, The History Press, 2009
Kendall, Paul Murray, *Richard III*, W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., 1956
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Weightman, Christine, *Margaret of York The Diabolical Duchess*, Amberly, 2009
Wilkinson, Josephine, *Richard The Young King to Be*, Amberley Publishing, 2008



Letters to the Editor

The American Branch of the Richard III Society received an email from Lawrence I. Plotkin to commemorate confirmation that the remains found in Leicester, UK were those of Richard III:

Although not a member of the Society, I've long agreed with your views on Richard vis-a-vis the Tudor propagandists. So, I thought you might enjoy the following.

Removed Are the Lour'ding Clouds

Plotkin– 2/5/13

Five hundred years and more in discontent
My bones unshrouded in the earth reposed,
Defamed by hacks, my reputation rent,
My reign maligned. Though violently deposed
I, god-anointed king, ne'er did accept
The unjust fate by which some writers curried
Tudor favor. I cursed them all. I wept,
In the deep bosom of a car park buried.
A few took arms against false Henry's smooth
Unwrinkled front. They knew that Polydore
And More had masters who they had to prove
Legitimate, so into Richard tore.
Now I'm unearthed, my enemies undone.
Restored, I joyfully bask in Leicester's sun.

Lawrernce I. Plotkin
Senior Docent
Folger Shakespeare Library



To the Editor

"I suspect I inadvertently gave the wrong impression when thanking Annette Carson and John Ashdown-Hill at the end of my review of David Baldwin's biography of Richard in the September 2012 edition of the *Ricardian Register*. What I intended was to acknowledge that Annette and John assisted me with some of my extensive research into sources. My review was, of course, all my own work."

Paul Trevor Bale
Jan. 25, 2012

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Message from the Sales Office

News

Sales has introduced two new items available to members: notepads and pencils. Both are branded with "Richard III Society" and the American Branch's web address.

The notepad is 4 1/4" x 5 1/2" and includes the Loyaulte Me Lie boar graphic. Notepads are available at \$2.25 plus \$1.50 shipping. Each notepad contains 50 sheets.

The pencils are standard #2 pencils with a burgundy background and imprinted with "Richard III Society" and our web site address. Pencils are available in packs of 10 at cost of \$3.00 plus \$1.50 shipping.

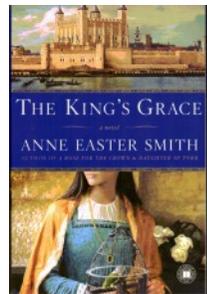
These items were chosen with the idea of offering practical items that help to advertise the Society. Your purchases will not only directly benefit the Society—although profit margins are slim—but also should help "spread the word" about Richard, the Society, and that fascinating 15th-century!

Sales volunteers Ruth Roberts and Victoria Pitman are tackling projects of testing a newly designed window sticker and exploring Richard III-branded bookplates. We hope to move toward using more US-based vendors toward lowering postage costs and decreasing time required for restocking items. The bookplate project is based on a member's suggestion, so please do provide your feedback.

Drawing!

As a method of ensuring members know that the Sales Office remains alive and well, we recently offered an drawing for a free book to members of the email discussion list. Now--it's time for fair chance for members who are not on the email list!

R3 member and award-winning author Anne Easter Smith has offered a signed copy of one of her books, "The King's Grace", for our drawing. Open only to members who are not on the email list, to win you need only alert me that you would like to be in the drawing and then be chosen in a random drawing we'll hold. Send me a note via regular mail, send an email to sales@r3.org—or you can call and leave a message at 614-321-4001. Please indicate that you'd like to be included in the Richard III book drawing and make sure you include your name and how to reach you. That's it—just tell us you want in and you're in. And you won't even have to pay for postage! We'll announce the winner in the next edition of Register. (Post your regular mail request to me at Charlie Jordan, 3870 Highland Bluff Drive, Groveport, OH 43125.) Many thanks to Anne for her donation and thoughtfulness. Go Team Richard!



TOC

Reviews

Myrna Smith

In the High and Far-Off Times...

*Now this is the Law of the Jungle—as old and true as the sky—Rudyard Kipling, **The Jungle Book** (All headings following are from the works of Kipling.)*

Behind them was the Tribe in hierarchal order, from owners of four caves (one for each season), a private reindeer-run, and two salmon-leaps, to feudal and prognathous Villeins, semi-entitled to half a bearskin of winter nights, seven yards from the fire, and adscript serfs, holding the reversion of a scraped marrow-bone under heriot.—“The First Letter”

So let's jump right into the reviews in roughly chronological, if not hierarchal, order, which is at least some kind of law and order.

*“And why the guiltless soul should die
Good reason find I nane”—“Ballad of the Cars”*

THE GUILT OF INNOCENTS—Candace Robb, Random House, London, 2008

Although Candace Robb is an American, she researches her novels in York Minster Library and uses historical events and names in her plots. At least one guide in York Minster uses her works in leading his tours. The result of her research is that her novels not only feel authentic, they are authentic.

In this book Owen and Lucie Archer's adopted son, Jasper de Milton, is a student in a grammar school within the minster's liberty. There is a “town v. gown” situation between the students and the barge pilots. One pilot, Drago, snatches a scrip (wallet) from one of the boys and returns it empty. The students rush the barge pilot and he is knocked into the river. He is pulled to the surface with cuts on his face. They should not be lethal, but he nevertheless dies. The boy, Hubert de Weston, who owns the scrip, runs away. He has stolen a cross he believes to be his mother's in order to keep a sense of her being with him.

Magda, midwife and healer, pulls a second body from the river. But Owen has taken Jasper to Weston, searching for Hubert. During the short trip, Jasper and Owen become close, and Jasper's young eyes and powers of observation surprise Owen. The two murders are connected and Jasper is threatened. Owen's paternal feelings must be kept under tight control when the murderer is in his hands. Lucie, Owen's wife and an apothecary, is pregnant again and seemingly well, but the people around her are concerned because her last pregnancy ended tragically.

The characters are finely drawn and real. Owen and Lucie are not static but develop subtly. John Thorsby, Archbishop of York, ages. The children grow and develop. The mystery is satisfying. Although the reader knows who the villain is, there is a twist at the end when Hubert's mother is found to be a victim, when she had appeared to be a conspirator. The one nagging flaw to the history buff's mind is that the minster seems to be complete, when in fact it was not. It was not actually completed until 50 years later. But I suppose the lack of stonemason's hammers and chisels and the ladders and pulleys of the workmen will not disturb anyone else. —Dale Summers

*For the colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady
Are sisters under their skins.—“The Ladies”*

QUEEN BY RIGHT—Anne Easter Smith, Simon & Schuster, NY, 2011

The title character is, of course, Cecily Neville, Proud Cis, the Rose of Raby, the devoted, loving wife of the true heir to the throne, Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.

Cecily and Richard meet as children when her father, the powerful earl of Westmorland, receives the wardship of the orphaned Richard. Westmorland betroths Richard to his youngest and favorite daughter. The children become fast friends and develop a strong, tender relationship in marriage. Cecily's common sense guides her husband, who is wise enough to respect his wife's opinions. Their love scenes are motivated by mutual passion and mutual tenderness. Cecily is deeply religious, believing that the virgin guides and guards her. She is in Rouen when Jeanne d'Arc is tried and burned. Cecily feels a deep bond with Jeanne, naming her first child Joan, the English version of Jeanne, which is also her mother's name.

Her husband Richard is frustrated by the corrupt councilors who surround and influence Henry VI. His own heritage makes him a danger to Henry. In spite of his professions of loyalty, he is blocked from any influence with the king. In the meantime, the war Henry V started in France goes on and the common people suffer. England is a dangerous country.

It is for England that Richard asserts his claim, but he has waited until Margaret of Anjou has borne a son, and she protects his rights like a mother bear with her cub. Richard is caught inside his castle during a Christmas truce and murdered, with Cecily's favorite son, Edmund.

The book is very well written, and the characters, major and minor, ring true. Descriptions are vivid and colorful. In an ironic twist of the author's imagination, Elizabeth Woodville, as a toddler, meets the infant Edward.

There are helpful aids, including genealogies of the important families, a bibliography and a glossary, as well as topics for discussion at book club meetings. There are some errors. The future Richard III is born in Ludlow Castle rather than Fotheringay. And I'm probably nit-picking, but Easter Smith has Cecily offering Richard a bite of food on her fork—which were not in use at the time.

The first chapter is set in 1461 with Cecily grieving for her murdered husband; the second is in 1423 with the meeting of Cecily and Richard as children. It continues to 1426, then we are back in 1461 again. Then we proceed to 1429, to 1450, and back again to 1461. I know, they're called "flashbacks," and I'm sure the author has a reason for this structure, but I find them distracting. Nevertheless, the book is an easy read. Overall, this seems to be an accurate portrayal of a woman who should have been queen.—Dale Summers

Daughter I am in my mother's house

But Queen in my own—"Our Lady of the Snows"

THE KINGMAKERS'S DAUGHTER—Philippa Gregory, Simon & Schuster, NY, 2012

A rousing good adventure story, this is one of Ms. Gregory's Cousin's War series, told in her patented first-person, present-tense style, and with a completely different point of view than the ones expressed in the other books in the series, **THE WHITE QUEEN** and **THE RED QUEEN**. While this style may succeed in making a basically unsympathetic character (such as Margaret Beaufort in **THE RED QUEEN**) more sympathetic, it has the opposite effect on Anne of Warwick.

Anne and her sister Isabel (whom she calls Iz) are sometimes on opposite sides and sometimes spiteful with each other, but there is an undercurrent of love and family loyalty. After all, they are all each other has. Anne even makes peace with her brother-in-law, George, and comes to adopt his viewpoint on poison. Her relationship with her mother is more complicated and much more simple—they hate one another. Mothers at that time could be pretty hard-nosed (cf. the Paston women), and it is probably unfair of Anne to blame her mother when she adores her father, the prime mover behind her troubles. And while it's not logical for the Countess to blame Anne for keeping her in Sanctuary and taking her inheritance, we can see why she might feel that way. Mothers and daughters may

feud even today, and one can picture even a loving daughter trying a bit of emotional blackmail: “Mom, if you want to see your grandson, I don’t want to hear anything about your inheritance, all right?” Problem is, the Countess *doesn’t* want to see her grandson, regarding him as a bastard because Anne and Richard married without a dispensation, although one was on order. They live in the same complex of buildings, but the younger and older generations stay as far apart as possible, and Anne keeps her mother a literal (not virtual) prisoner. The reader can’t help but wonder why Anne went to London to join her husband and left her son behind with his granny in the same castle. Wouldn’t she think she was endangering him?

For Anne is suspicious of everyone, seeing potential witches or poisoners behind every smile. She hates the Woodville women with a purple (murrey?) passion. She even mistrusts her husband, who is depicted in a reasonably sympathetic way—he is not unkind to his mother-in-law, for example—but remains enigmatic. The author promises an answer to the Big Question in the next book about the family, **THE WHITE PRINCESS**.

At least Anne is not depicted as a cipher here, as she sometimes is in fiction, as well as history, but she often seems to be in negative numbers. All the same, the book is a good read and very interesting, and I am looking forward to the next one in the series.

(Note: I haven’t yet read **LADY OF THE RIVERS**, Ms. Gregory’s take on Jaquetta Woodville. If any Gentle Reader has, please favor me with your opinions, pretty please?)

*“O my friends and O my enemies, why have the Man and the Woman
made that great light in their great cave,..?”—“The Cat that Walked by
Himself”*

TRAVELING LIGHT—Diana Rubino, Eternal Press, Barnaby, B.C., Canada, 2009

This is less farcical than the author’s **ONE TOO MANY TIMES**, but is still played largely for laughs, and also for suspense. Leigh, a historical preservation architect, is measuring a medieval manor house, when she trips and falls into a bed that once belonged to Richard III...

...and wakes up in 1485. It seems the bed in which Leigh was lying was lying on a Ley Line, which has certain magnetic and magical forces that...well, anyhow, she is not only more than five centuries back in time, but also married, or at least betrothed, to the man whose portrait was in the room back in the 21st century. And the story that accompanied the portrait was that he murdered his wife, as well as playing traitor to Richard III. Since, as she learns, Sir Guy Blackamour’s first wife died a natural death, she seems to be the one elected, and she is in no hurry for the wedding to be solemnized at church door. Understandably, she tries to stall as much as possible. But she finds it difficult to believe that anyone as considerate and kind as he seems to be could be a murderer. Will she solve the mystery? Of course she will! But that’s not the only mystery. What happened to the young woman, Sandrissa, whose place she is apparently taking, and who wanted the marriage so little that she jumped out of a window? And where did the wristwatch that she stumbles over come from?

A la the Connecticut Yankee, Leigh amazes and awes the locals by such things as taking out and re-inserting her contact lenses, and introduces beauty spas to the 15th century. (A gal has to keep busy somehow, while she is fending off the attentions of her future husband, among others.) And whenever there is an opening for a comedy routine, Ms. Rubino clasps it to her bosom with hoops of steel. (Sounds uncomfortable.) Not to be taken seriously for a moment, but a lot of fun.

*Cook’s son—duke’s son—son of a belted earl –
Son of a Lambeth publican—it’s all the same today!—“The Absent-
Minded Beggar”*

PRINCE PERKIN—M. Brooke Stoker, Robert Hale, London, 1966

Highly melodramatic telling of the story of the Pretender. Was he or wasn't he? In this, he is always referred to as Richard, Diccon, or York, even in his own mind, but there is a revelation in the last chapter, which I won't spoil for you. An unusual feature is the relationship between Perkin/Richard and his bride, Catherine Gordon—there isn't one. It's a political marriage. Catherine is in love with Patrick Hepburn and her husband with a girl named Jeanne Marie. At least, it's a new wrinkle in Warbeckian fiction.

Much of this is a matter of interpretation and/or speculation, legitimate fictional license, but there are some odd mistakes. The pretender calls Elizabeth of York his "little sister," when she was actually ten years his senior. He convinces her he is the real prince by calling her by her childhood nickname, Beth. But surely that is a common pet name for Elizabeth, one he might have hit on by a lucky guess. It is uncouth of Henry Tudor to tell his wife she is stupid to her face, but one can't help feeling that he was right.

Any story about Perkin Warbeck has to be a lot about Henry VII as well. Let's just say that is not the worst thing he does. Not a nice person. One might think he deserves it when a witch-like character puts a curse on him: "Let his seed be withered, his daughters barren, his sons diseased." But it didn't quite work out that way. Henry's granddaughters were barren, but his daughters were not. And dying of disease was the norm in the 16th century. Still, that's close enough for a government curse, fictional or otherwise.

*Mine was but an idle quest -
Roses red and white are best. "Blue Roses"*

PALE ROSE OF ENGLAND—Sandra Worth, Berkley Books, NY, 2011

It's odd that this book in Sandra Worth's series about the Wars of the Roses has that title, since Catherine Gordon was a Scotswoman born and bred. But if she was called that by her contemporaries, who am I to quibble?

This is mainly the story of Catherine's marriage to the young man she calls Richard of York or Richard IV. (I am going to call him 'Perkin' here simply to avoid confusion with Richard III.). Only in a small part is it that of her other three husbands. Ms. Worth makes no bones about where her sympathies lie; the Pretender *is* Richard IV, and she gives her reasons in an afterword. Since there are only two choices—he was or wasn't the Prince—and one is as valid as the other, there is no reason to object to the plot or its development. Much is a matter of recorded history anyway. The weakness is in character development.

It's easy to see what so many men saw in Catherine. She is breathtakingly beautiful, intelligent, brave, loyal, and witty. And Perkin is almost her equal. His only faults are a drooping eyelid (a Plantagenet birthright that somehow skips six or seven generations) and lactose intolerance. Milk makes him f.er, become gassy. Somehow, it's hard to imagine so perfect a hero suffering from so plebian and ignominious a complaint.

But Henry VII is another matter. He's the obvious villain here—no objection to that. But Worth's depiction makes Stoker's seem almost cuddly. He is said to 'shrink from regicide,' and destroying Warbeck and Warwick ages him rapidly, presumably from an aching conscience (but maybe from a stress-induced stroke or heart attack—my thought, not Ms. Worth's). But he is also depicted as being willing and able to poison anyone who gives him trouble, from an entire army to young children (Edward V and Richard III's son), to even his own wife and her sisters. At least, that's what Catherine thinks at the time. He seems to be grief-stricken as well as remorseful when Elizabeth dies, but he loses no time proposing marriage to Catherine. His intentions would seem to be honorable, anyway.

We are supposed to feel sympathy, or at least pity, for a man whose only friend is his pet monkey. (He talks to it, but thankfully not baby talk.) Catherine does pity him, at times. Holding the pursestrings, he could compel her to do many things, but not to tell him funny

stories. This she does voluntarily. “Never would she understand this King. He was ruthless, but not without scruples, and a touch of kindness.” Catherine must have seen something in him that we are not allowed to see, and while a historian can only *tell* us, a novelist should *show* us.. More and Shakespeare at least did not depict Richard as being literally bloodthirsty - and I literally mean ‘literally’ literally. Maybe they just didn’t think of it. Somehow, I can’t suspend my disbelief quite that high.

I like Sandra Worth, I like her novels, and I like her protagonists. I wish I would recommend this book more highly. It is exciting and well written , if a bit chick-literary in the romantic parts. Note to male readers: Skip the sentimental stuff—there’s gore galore too.. Some scenes are powerful, but others seem powerfully overblown. Maybe it’s just me.

Not so, but far otherwise. –“How the Whale Got His Throat”

THE FINAL ACT OF MR. SHAKESPEARE—Robert Winder, Little, Brown, London, 2010

Mr. Shakespeare has been in retirement for years when James I, through Sir Edward Coke, makes him an offer he can’t refuse: Write a play about Henry VIII. Shakespeare is personally disgusted by James, hates the reign of terror his government has imposed on England - excuse me, Britain—(“Ours is a garden of beastly delights.”) and, descending to the bathetic, is unhappy about what has become of the infrastructure. (“There are only six firm roadways in the kingdom now” says Sir Walter Raleigh) Though he accepts the assignment, having no choice, he determines to leave the donkey-work to Mr. Fletcher. However, he uses the cover of writing the Henry VIII play to create something he has wanted to do since he read a pamphlet about Richard III, complaining about Shakespeare’s own play on that subject. (There were friends of Richard around even then? Who knew?)

He calls together some of his old company—Ned Alleyn, Richard Burbage, et al—and together with Constance Donne, John Donne’s daughter (yes, *the* John Donne), they set to work creating *The True and Tragicall Historie of Henry VII*. Says the author: “I have assumed a free hand and attributed a significant measure of Shakespeare’s creative power to his fellow actors... drama is a team sport, and I suspect that if Shakespeare had to address an award ceremony, the list of people requiring thanks might be longer than we suppose.” Our Will is still the chief, if not the “onlie begetter,” but it is interesting and amazing to hear Alleyn, Armin, et al, extemporizing in blank verse and rhymed couplets, and even more amazing that their amanuensis, a young John Harvard (yes, *the* John Harvard) can take it all down in a clear hand.

What they come up with is tragical, if not entirely true. Shakespeare takes the same liberties with facts that he does in many other plays. (His co-workers tease him about the “seacoasts of Bohemia,” but it has little effect.) The play is reproduced as part of the book, and it’s no wonder it would have never have been produced, even if it had been written. It’s even more Grand Guginol than *Richard III*.

In totting up the credit side of Henry VII’s ledger, Winder tells us that “..Among other achievements, he turned a swamp of warring barons into the cradle of modern England, oversaw the first nautical steps into the Atlantic and played midwife to the birth of printing.” Not quite. The first nautical steps for England, maybe; and he was a patron of Caxton, but not his first royal patron. That would be Edward IV. And Anglophiles tend to forget that William Caxton did not invent moveable type; Herr Gutenberg did.

The suggestion is made that “Henry VII” as Earl of Richmond might have been an imposter. While this seems very unlikely—would Margaret Beaufort have involved herself so much in the life of someone not related to her?—Henry was probably all too aware why he was accepted in Europe as who he said he was. Nobody asked to see his bona fides, his

“long-form birth certificate.” They believed he was who he said he was because it suited them, and they would believe “Perkin” as Duke of York because it suited their aims.

Another side issue: Could Shakespeare have gotten away with passing for a retired wool merchant in Stratford, as he claims, because actors were not considered quite respectable there? I somehow doubt it. Surely Stratfordians occasionally visited in London.

“Oh, you’re from Stratford. Do you know Master Shakespeare?”

“Master Shakespeare the wool merchant?”

“Never heard of him. I mean Master Shakespeare the playwright.”

Nevertheless, interesting and a good read for anyone interested in Shakespeare, Tudors, or actors, as well as Ricardians. And there’s an ironic twist at the end, both in the novel and in the play-within-the-novel.

“Nay, never lift up thy hands to me—there’s no clean hands in the trade.

But steal in measure,” said Harry our King. “There’s measure in all things made.”—“King Henry VII and the Shipwrights”

MISTRESS OF MOURNING (also known as **The Queen’s Confidante**) - Karen Harper—New American Library, NY, 2012

Varina Wescott, nee Waxman, a young widow working in a chandlers shop, is called on for a special assignment by Elizabeth of York. Varina has a reputation as a sculptor in wax, and the queen wants this prototype of Madame Taussaud to make images of Elizabeth’s deceased children, Elizabeth and Edmund, and of the two young Princes in the Tower. This may strike the modern reader as a little creepy, but Varina, who has lost an Edmund of her own, and has a son named Arthur, understands perfectly. Varina is escorted to and from the palace by Nicholas Sutton, an impoverished gentleman wishing to get in good with the Tudors, for there lies the path to success. Of course this leads to romance, but the love story takes second place for most of the book.

Queen Elizabeth believes her Uncle Richard ordered the murder of her brothers, but wants to know whose hands did the actual deed, so she may be revenged. She asks her husband to find out for her, by any means necessary, including torture. When their son Arthur dies soon after his marriage, she senses another mystery to be solved. Did someone poison Arthur? With King Henry’s support, she sends Varina and Nicholas to Wales to do the detective work. Varina’s cover story, which has the advantage of being true, is that she is to provide the cerecloths, or wax-impregnated grave clothes. (More information than one would probably require about 16th century embalming is given, but nothing too graphic.) Nicholas’ cover is that of her protector, which is also not a lie, though Varina is pretty good at looking after herself. During their sojourn in Wales, they have many dramatic adventures, bordering on the melodramatic at times. They do discover the man responsible for the death of Arthur and several others. Fair warning: it is a person who usually features as an admirable or at least neutral character in pro-Ricardian fiction.

Aside from a reference to chain mail (plate armor would have been more common), there don’t seem to be many anachronisms, but it is puzzling that nobody mentions Perkin Warbeck, who was executed only a few years earlier, even to refute his claims. Perhaps Ms. Harper believes Warbeck would add an unnecessary level of complication for the average reader. The average reader will find this a rousing good story, and the average Ricardian reader will find the denouement satisfying, if a little creepy also. Not disgusting or horrifying, just, well....creepy. If you read the book—and you should—you will see what I mean.

YOUNG HENRY: THE RISE OF HENRY VIII—Robert Hutchinson, St Martin’s Press, NY, 2011

I didn't intend for this to turn into a symposium on the Tudors, but it seems to have worked out that way. This book deserves mention, I think, for the fair treatment it gives Richard III. In the brief potted biographies given in one of the appendixes, the author says that Richard "(s)eized power," but that Henry VII "(s)natched the throne of England." Not much difference there; "snatched" may even be a bit more pejorative than "seized." In the early chapters, he says that the princes disappeared and were never seen again, then adds:

"In this instance, foul murder did not shriek out. It was presumed they were either killed in the Tower or died from disease or privation... Whether Richard Iii himself was responsible for their deaths has been thoroughly clouded by clever Tudor propaganda and is still debated heatedly... The puzzling ramification of Henry VII's repealing of the Titulus Regius was that he must have been certain sure that the two princes were already dead."

But this is not Richard's story, nor Henry VII's. It is the story of Henry VIII, and that only up to the time of Anne Boleyn, before he became a grotesque caricature of himself. As such, it is an excellent sample. Hutchinson writes in a plain, straightforward way, avoiding academese and other "gobbledegook". Yes, he uses that very word, which indicates something of his style. He is not afraid to speculate, as for example, about the illnesses of the varied protagonists, but he gives reasons and sources. However, Hutchinson doesn't replace facts willy-nilly with speculation or guesswork. He has done his homework. He includes many interesting if trivial items. Did you know that young Henry's "night cradle," as opposed to his daytime or "show" cradle, was over four feet long, but only one foot wide? This wouldn't seem to give a husky baby much room to move around, but probably cut down on the instances of SIDS or "cot death." In any case, the author's conclusions and sources are fully and clearly foot-noted.

In short, this could be a benchmark for good popular historians to aim at.

And while we are on the subject, here are a couple of unclassifiable books, which I haven't read but would like to: **On This Day in Tudor History** (Claire Ridgway, 2012), and **The Merry Wives of Henry VIII: A Tudor Spoof Collection** (Clair Ridgway, Anne Normy, 2012). One of the chapters in the latter is titled: "If only there had been a prenu!"

"Becky" at the Popular Culture Division of the Akron Library (Stand up, Becky, identify yourself, and accept my vote of thanks) has referred me to this site: fantasticfiction.co.uk, which contains information on just about every historical and/or mystery series ever written. Do check it out. I'm listing a small sampling from a few of our favorite series. Some may only be available from the UK.

Margaret Frazer—Sister Frevisse series: **The Witch's Tale** (2010), **Winter Heart** (2011), **The Stone-Worker's Tale** (2011), **Sins of the Blood** (2012)

Pat McIntosh—Gil Cunningham series: **A Pig of Cold Poison** (2010), **The Counterfeit Madam** (2011), **The Fourth Crow** (2012)

Kate Sedley—Roger Chapman series: **The Midsummer Rose** (2004), **The Burgundian's Tale** (2005), **The Prodigal Son** (2006), **The Three Kings of Cologne** (2007), **The Green Man** (2008), **The Dance of Death** (2009), **Wheel of Fate** (2010), **The Midsummer Crown** (2011), **The Tintern Treasure** (2012), **The Christmas Wassail** (2013)

No word on any new output from Sandra Worth or Joan Szechtman. Can one of you update me? And Joan, how *do* you pronounce your last name?

Thank you for asking, Myrna. Hopefully, Sandra Worth will see this article and reply. I am currently working on the third book and hope to finish it by the fall. My last name is pronounced the way it's spelled if you pronounce the "z" like an "h."—Joan

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Richmond is located in and around many historic sites that are an easy drive from the Doubletree. The following list is a sample of what you can see.

Sites in Richmond:

Agecroft Hall—Recreated from the original Agecroft Hall that was located near Manchester, UK see website at agecrofthall.com/house.html

Virginia House—Constructed from the materials of a sixteenth century English manor house see website at vahistorical.org/vh/vh_house_main.htm

Agecroft Hall is next door to Virginia House.

Civil War—The American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar, see website at tredegar.org/

There are too many Civil War museums and battle sites to list here, for a more complete listing see Civil War attractions website: tinyurl.com/b8x17dv (link shortened from 66 characters)

And don't forget, we will be in the heart of barbecue country. One BBQ restaurant that I'll be going to is Extra Billy's, website: extrabillys.com/

Sites within driving distance from Richmond:

Monticello—Thomas Jefferson's home in Charlottesville, VA is about 70 miles from Richmond and can be reached by car in about an hour and fifteen minutes: monticello.org/

Mount Vernon—George Washington's home in Alexandria, VA is about 100 miles from Richmond and can be reached by car in about two hours. See website at mountvernon.org/

Colonial Williamsburg—Williamsburg is about 50 miles from Richmond and can be reached by car in less than an hour: history.org/index.cfm

Jamestown Settlement—Jamestown, VA is about 60 miles from Richmond and can be reached by car in about an hour. historyisfun.org/jamestown-settlement.htm

Washington D. C. is just over 100 miles from Richmond and can be reached by train.

Civil War sites:

Appomattox Court House—about 94 miles from Richmond and can be reached by car under two hours, website at nps.gov/apco/index.htm

See also Civil War Traveler (civilwartraveler.com/EAST/VA/) for other sites of interest too numerous to list here.

Some locations, such as many Civil War sites, are part of the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands system. If you or someone you are with is over 62, you can get a senior lifetime pass for \$10, which admits up to four adults on one pass. A standard annual pass is \$80/year. For more details, go to the National Park Service website here: nps.gov/findapark/passes.htm

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From the Editor

Joan Szechtman

Our Webmaster, Lisa Holt-Jones, has created a Richard III buy, sell, and swap FaceBook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/R3BuySellSwop/>

This group has been created for books & memorabilia related to King Richard III & 15th Century to buy, sell, swop or place a wanted advert. The group can be viewed by anyone, but to place an advert you have to join the group & be approved by the administrator. Any unsuitable adverts will be removed.

All Richard III Society members are welcome to join.

As many of you know, we've had to raise our basic membership to \$60/year so that we can meet our expenses. Last year, printing and distributing the *Register* cost over \$3,000, so in an effort to contain costs going forward, we are looking to make the *Register* digital only starting in 2014. One thing that I am looking into is to create a print on demand annual issue that the members can order should they choose, This will not affect expenses for the American branch, but will mean that each member who wants a yearly printed copy will pay for it individually. To this end, we stopped printing the Sales Catalog in the Register beginning with the December issue. Everyone with email should have received a digital version of the Sales Catalog. To ensure you receive our Sales Catalog and other communication such as finding Richard III's remains and to help us keep our records up-to-date, please send your email information to Sally Keil, Membership Chair, at membership@r3.org.

Unless the Richard III Society parent agrees to submit digital files to the American Branch, our members will continue to receive the dead tree version. Last year, between membership fees and publication shipping, the UK pubs cost us over \$12,000. The details can be found in the December 2012 *Register* issue.

Also outstanding is our need for volunteers to fill positions. Of utmost importance is that we need a treasurer to replace Diane Hoffman, whose term expired at the end of 2012. Because we cannot function without a treasurer, Diane has agreed to continue for a limited time until a replacement can be found. If any member reading this has some accounting knowledge and computer skills (need someone with internet access), please contact Diane at treasurer@r3.org. Other open positions are: Research Officer (assists the Editor—contact me at info@r3.org for more information) and Web Content Manager (assists the Webmaster—for more information contact Lisa Holt-Jones at webmaster@r3.org).

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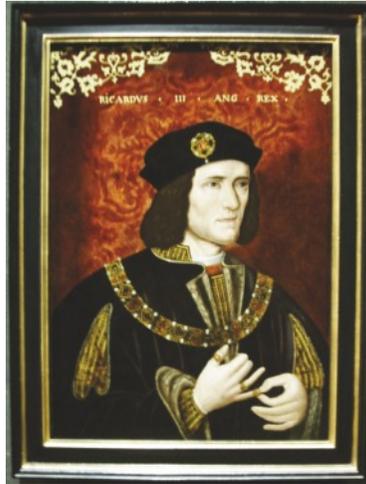
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