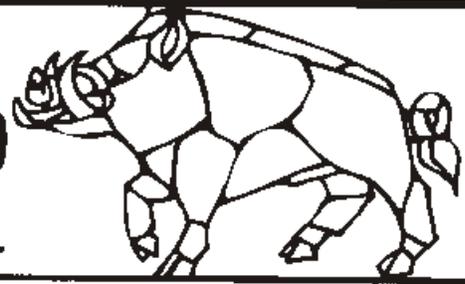


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The Mystery of the
Princes in the Tower

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The Mystery of the Princes in the Tower – The Locus in Quo

P.A. Hancock

Introduction

For people who study the Ricardian era and are fascinated by the mysteries, subtleties, and nuances of the early to middle 1480's, any chance to explore the various sites of important action is indeed a welcome one. This is especially so for those of us who live in the United States and whose chances to visit are necessarily more limited. So it was with especial pleasure that in November of 2006, I was able to spend one brief but very welcome morning in the confines of the Tower of London. It is a place that virtually oozes history. One can see on Tower Green the place of execution of Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard, unlucky wives to the second son of Henry VII. Along with others who were victims of the Tudor sword and axe, they are buried mere yards away in the ancient church of St. Peter Ad Vincula. The Tower is a living monument to English history and is a must see place even for those with little interest in the past (see for example, Abbott, 1998; McIlwain, 2005; Wilson, 1978).

For those who seek to understand the last Plantagenet King of England it is a wonderful resource. For it was here that so many pivotal events of Richard's life happened. It was in the Tower that, following almost immediately on his brother Edward's victory at the Battle of Tewkesbury, the suspicious death of Henry VI occurred (Kendall, 1955). The first individual of note dispatched on Tower Green was William, Lord Hastings, whose summary execution on the morning of Friday 13th June, 1483 still represents one of the most pivotal events in all of Ricardian history (Hancock, 2006). However, perhaps the most famous and indeed most infamous event of all time that is purported to have occurred within the hallowed walls is the alleged murder of the so-called 'Princes in the Tower' (see Aron, 2000; Baldwin, 2002; Hicks, 2003; Weir, 1992; Williamson, 1978). Among all of its other historical delights, it was largely this issue that had brought me to the Tower on that cold but fine morning. In what follows, I want to focus on only one of my observations of that day which concerns the supposed assassination. To my surprise, although so much effort has gone into the historical investigation and evaluation of this supposed double murder (and see for example; Fields, 1998; Jenkins, 1978; Pollard, 1991), relatively little seems to have been directed to the geographical aspects of what is purported to have

happened within the precincts of the Tower sometime during the latter part of 1483 (but see <http://richardiii.net/2004%20archive.htm>).

First – A Disclaimer

However, before I begin to explore the present question, I need to acknowledge an important disclaimer. The observations that I make here are based principally upon the nominal geography of events as they are now presented at the Tower (and see Abbott, 1998). I do not have access to the precise configuration of the Tower at the purported interval in which the incident is supposed to have occurred. Indeed, there is a sad dearth of information about such conditions in general (and see Key, 2001). Also I do not have any independent confirmation that the site of any particular event that I will discuss did actually happen where it is commonly attributed to have done so. I will try to make clear to the reader these assumptions as I proceed but it is important to understand that these *are* assumptions and that they may be challenged and even superseded by those who can demonstrate deeper and more certain knowledge. As we shall see, with respect to the present day assertions about this event, they are certainly questionable at best. Notwithstanding this caveat, the issues and concerns that I wish to express about the geography of the so-called murders must be of concern to anyone who is pursuing the likelihood of the assassination of Edward V and his brother Richard Duke of York sometime in the late summer of 1483 or beyond.

The Geography of the Tower of London

When one goes to the Tower of London today, the purported site of the alleged crime against the 'Princes in the Tower' is very clearly identified. It is the Garden or 'Bloody' Tower which is one of two structures that are attached together and located on the south side of the inner curtain wall adjacent to 'Traitor's Gate.' This water-gate, as we shall see, is itself potentially an important location in the story of the Princes. Since the geographical configuration of the Tower is central to the propositions I want to examine, an overview map is presented in Figure 1. It is also necessary for the present discussion to clothe this cartographic representation with pictures which were taken at the time of my recent visit. Thus, the juncture of the Garden Tower and the Wakefield Tower is represented in the photograph in Figure 2

which was taken from within the shadow of the Byward Tower facing along the throughway labeled 'Bell Tower' in Figure 1. As can be seen from both the map and the illustrations in Figure 2 and subsequently in Figure 3, the location of the Bloody Tower is in extremely close proximity to Traitor's Gate and thus direct access to the river Thames.

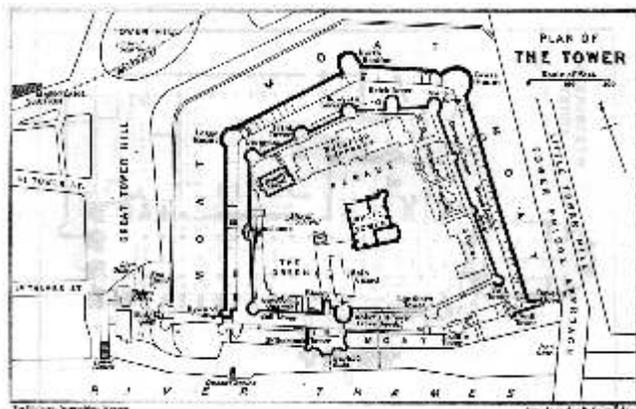


Figure 1: A map of the Tower of London. The combination of the Garden Tower and the Wakefield Tower is shown on the south inner curtain wall adjacent to Traitor's Gate fronting on to the river Thames, as represented at the bottom of the present diagram. On this map, the location in question retains its label as the Bloody Tower. It should also be noted that the Crown jewels are now to be found in the Waterloo Barracks and not in the Wakefield Tower as this older map indicates.



Figure 2: The round structure in the center of the picture is the Wakefield Tower while the Tower connected to it at left with the two windows and the doorway is the Garden or 'Bloody' Tower. The railings at right, at ground level, front on to Traitor's Gate which is shown in Figure 3. (Photograph by the Author)



Figure 3: Traitor's Gate as it appears from the area just outside the entrance to the Bloody Tower. The river Thames can be seen glistening in the background behind the crossed trellis. (Photograph by the Author)



Figure 4: The north face of the Bloody Tower. Traitor's Gate can now be seen through the archway and past the single standing figure. Just visible at left is the curved wall of the Wakefield Tower. The present entry to the Bloody Tower is accomplished by turning and walking up the walkway away from the Tower and then turning back along a path behind the wall shown here to the right. The present entry is on a level with the first window. (Photograph by the Author)

As previously observed, the Bloody Tower (which is the lurid name I shall continue to use throughout the rest of this work) is attached to the Wakefield Tower and each are situated at the approximate center of the south inner curtain wall. The predominant function of this

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combination was to act as a gateway to the Inner Ward. As a nominal 'weak point' in the defenses, these Towers represent heavily fortified structures, with the base of the Bloody Tower being laid down in the time of Henry III, at which time it is thought that it acted as a water-gate facing directly on to the river (Keay, 2001). The gateway itself, which is shown in Figure 4, is the primary entrance that modern-day tourists use to access the Inner Ward. The reader can imagine proceeding through the archway at the left in Figure 2 and then turning back to see the Bloody Tower through which they have just passed, see Figure 4.

Having now established the present geography of the entryway, we can now envisage the rest of the Inner Ward from this location. This is best accomplished with reference to the aerial photograph shown in Figure 5. As can be seen from this illustration, after passing through the passageway in the Bloody Tower, the vast White Tower appears to one's right and straight ahead is the tower on the western end of the Waterloo Barracks, which structure parenthetically houses the present-day display of the Crown Jewels. Now to one's left is Tower Green and just adjacent to the visible end of the Waterloo Barracks is St. Peter Ad Vincula, and see Figure 1. In respect of the present discussion, the next site of geographical interest is the south face of the White Tower. For it is here that the bodies identified as those of the Princes were supposedly found.

Where the Bodies Were Located

If one asks any of the very helpful 'Beefeaters,' who are the Yeoman Warders of the Tower, for the site of the exhumation of the purported bones of the 'Princes' which today reside adjacent to the Queen Elizabeth I monument in Henry VII's Chapel of Westminster Abbey, one is directed to the entryway to the White Tower. As one proceeds up the wooden stairs shown in Figure 6, which is the current method of entry into the White Tower, there is a small archway which one is able to look into but not presently enter. This location is shown in detail in Figure 7. As can be seen in this latter picture, there is a wall-mounted plaque that records the nominal burial place of the Princes. Of course, whether these bones represent the remains of the Princes is still a primary source of contention (see Hammond, 1976; Tanner & Wright, 1935). What is much less contentious, but not without debate, is the link between the bones found in or around this location in 1674 and those which presently reside in the urn in Westminster Abbey. The latter link is not as pristine as we might like since the workmen of that era appear to have found the bones and then discarded them and, at some unspecified interval later, they were subsequently thought to be of importance and retrieved for reburial. This suggests that even if the desired DNA testing of these bones is finally permitted, it may not prove quite so definitive as we might desire (and see White, 2003; White & Anon, 2003).



Figure 5: An aerial view of the Tower of London. The combination of the Wakefield Tower and the Bloody Tower, together with the rectangular block of 'Traitor's Gate' can be seen in the lower, left center of the illustration. Having passed through the entrance under the Bloody Tower one is faced with the massive central block of the White Tower to one's right, which is the dominate structure in the whole Tower of London complex.

In Figure 8, the plaque is shown in detail with its current caption. In the present work, I shall take this location as the site of the so-called burial, but again I need to



Figure 6: Illustrates the south face of the White Tower with the present day wooden stair entry. Especially note the small arched window that is partially obscured by the stairway itself. A much closer photograph of this location is shown in Figure 7. (Photograph by the Author)



Figure 7: The entryway in the south face of the White Tower showing the plaque located on the inside wall. (Photograph by the Author)

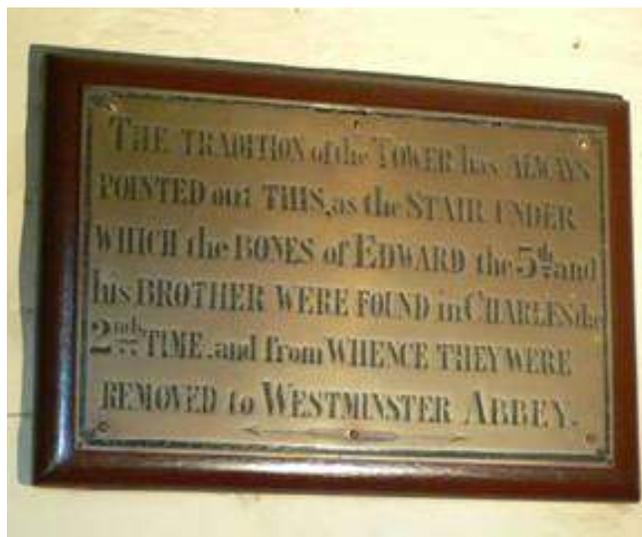


Figure 8: The wall-mounted plaque and what it says. (Photograph by the Author).

warn the reader this is an assumption that accords with the present thinking as indicated at the Tower, but is one clearly not shared by all (and see MacLachlan, 1998). There is one added wrinkle that is important to consider here. This identified internment site lies almost directly below the Chapel of St. John which is located on one of the present upper floors of the White Tower. As the detailed map shown in Figure 9 indicates, the nominal site of the discovery of the bones is beneath, but somewhat off to one side of, the Chapel itself. It is tempting to speculate that this location might represent some unknown individual's best attempt to locate the bones in what might possibly have been considered hallowed ground. The thought is indeed an extremely speculative one and relies on many suppositions, only some of which

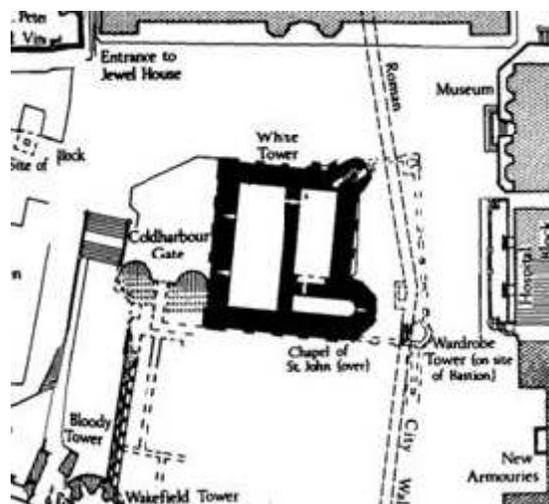


Figure 9: This illustration shows the configuration of the White Tower and the place of the Chapel of St. John within it. Although not precisely below the confines of the Chapel itself, was the putative burial site and attempt to locate the bodies within what might have appeared to be hallowed ground?

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I have indicated to this point. I shall try to elaborate on the other assumptions later.

Where the Murders are Supposed to Have Occurred

Having sought to establish the consensus site of the discovery of the bones, it is necessary now to retrace our steps back to the Bloody Tower and explore the site of the purported murders themselves. Today, we enter the Bloody Tower from the west on the middle floor level, above the entryway as shown in Figure 4. As we enter the Bloody Tower we pass almost immediately into the chamber that was reportedly used by Sir Walter Raleigh during his years of imprisonment in the Tower under James I, see Figure 10. The window shown here is the lower one of two shown in Figure 4. To get to the asserted 'murder' chamber, we now have to ascend to the next floor of the Bloody Tower. The stairs used for this purpose are shown in Figure 11. As can be seen, these are in the form of a tight spiral staircase with the standard ascending clockwise rotation (this is supposedly the case because the defending individual who is retreating up the stairs can now wield their sword in their preferred right hand).

Having previously discussed the way in which artistic images of the Princes have been portrayed over the years (Hancock, 2005) and especially the visual depictions of the purported assassination, it is of more than passing interest to compare this actual staircase with the one

shown in Figure 12. Here we see the archetypal evil uncle in the character of Richard himself overseeing the ascendancy of the two Princes who are shepherded by what looks like two ecclesiastics up the staircase in question. It is one of the most sinister of all of the images which looks to imply the coming assassination (and see



Figure 11: The stairs that mount from the lower to the upper level of the Bloody Tower. (Photograph by the Author).



Figure 10: The room which is attributed to that of Walter Raleigh during his imprisonment at the Tower forms the Inner Ward ground level portion of the Bloody Tower. The window shown at right is the lower of the two windows shown in Figure 4. (Photograph by the Author).

Hancock, 2005). Other than the fact that the actual staircase has no window, this is a relatively close representation of the stairs in the upper part of the Bloody Tower.

On reaching the top of the stairs, there is a small passageway which gives two sources of access to what is identified as the Princes' chamber. This passage is shown in Figure 13. Now with the stairs we have just ascended are at the end of the picture at the right. The doorways to the chamber are evident on both illustrations. If we are to believe the account of Sir Thomas More, it is perhaps likely that from here the assassins entered the chamber to accomplish their reprehensible deed.

Figure 14 shows a representative illustration of the approaching murder. Let us hear from Thomas More, whose words are the only near contemporary ones that we have to describe the event itself and the ones upon which subsequent artistic representations are based.

For Sir James Tirel devised that they should be murdered in their beddes. To the execution wherof, he appointed



Figure 12: The stairs in art. Reproduced from the book "Blood Red the Roses: The Wars of the Roses" C.L. Alderman, Bailey Bros. & Swinfen. Folkstone, Kent, 1973, (and see the earlier version of 1971) with the caption "Richard's nephews, the 'little princes' being led into the Tower of London. Courtesy of New York Public Library." Artist and source presently unknown. See also the Ricardian Register, (1996) Volume 21 (3), page 12.



Figure 13: The passageway outside the chamber identified as that in which the 'Princes in the Tower' were murdered. The illustration at left shows the passage from the head of the stairs looking west. The illustration at right shows the reverse view looking east from the doorway shown in the picture at left. (Photograph by the Author).

Miles Forest one of the foure that kept them, a felowe fleshed in murther before time. To him he ioyned one Iohn Dighton his own horsekeper, a big brode square strong knaue. Then al the other beeing remoued from them, thys Miles Forest and Iohn Dighton, about midnight (the sely children lying in their beddes) came into the chamber, and sodainly lapped them vp among the clothes so be wrapped them and entangled them kepung down by force the fetherbed and pillows hard vnto their mouthes, that within a while smored and stifled, theyr breath failing, they gaue vp to god their



Figure 14: An illustration of the supposed assassination. The children slumber innocently in their bed while a bemused pair of assassins approach. The restraining hand of one is laid on the other..

innocent soules into the ioyes of heauen, leauing to the tormentors their bodies dead in the bed. Whiche after that the wretches perceiued, first by the struggling with the paines of death, and after long lying styll, to be thoroughly dead: they laide their bodies naked out vpon the bed, and fetched sir James to see them.

The actual chamber itself is shown in Figure 15. The window which is shown here is the upper of the two shown earlier in Figure 4. It faces out over the Inner Ward and almost directly on to the White Tower and the location at which the bones were subsequently found. At the time that I visited, the chamber contained a brief exposition on the murders and an on-going vote in which each patron could vote for the most likely culprit. On the day that I visited, Richard III had 53,759 votes, Henry VII tallied 29,201 votes and the only other option 'not murdered but disappeared' had reached 30,530. I found the idea of voting on history to be a democratic but somewhat doubtful procedure! However, as can be seen, again the artistic representation shown in Figure 14 is not too far from the actual chamber as given in Figure 15.

Does a Storey Go With it?

This account that we are given today is all very well but it has been observed that around the time that the Princes disappeared, the Bloody Tower possessed no second storey and thus no room in which we are presently told that the murders occurred! As MacLachlan (1998) asserts:

Problem is: In 1483, when the little Princes were supposedly there, the Bloody Tower was only a two-storey building: a guardpost at ground level, and then only one level above the archway. There was no third floor and there was no upper chamber. Early Tower records are pretty rare and full of gaps, but we know with certainty when the entire Garden Tower building was increased in height and the third floor inserted: in 1605 and 1606 to accommodate the imprisoned Sir Walter Raleigh and party. That is, not until 120-plus years after the Princes disappeared.



Figure 15: The chamber in which the murders are supposed to have occurred. The window shown here is the upper of the two windows shown earlier in Figure 4 (Photograph by the Author).

If what MacLachlan has to say is true, it seems to certainly put paid to the account now being given to modern-day visitors. Also, if such a location did not exist in the early to middle 1480's it seems to imply this can in no way have been the murder scene (always of course we are assuming there was any such murder in the first place). In favor of MacLachlan's interpretation, we are reasonably sure about the alterations made for Raleigh's occupation around the 1605-1606 time-frame (and see Keay, 2001, note 209, p. 52). However, this might not be the whole story since the actual notation reads: "*to divide the roome into two stories for S^r Walter Raleigh*" who had been a prisoner at the Tower since around the time of his trumped-up treason trial in November, 1603. Keay (2001) notes that two new windows were made and the building was slightly heightened (the emphasis is mine). But to what degree is the idea that the Bloody Tower at the time of the disappearance of the Princes was only two storey's tall actually true? As we know the dates of the alterations, we can look to other sources to seek to establish whether any radical external changes were made. Fortunately, two principle sources provide us with some evidence which is helpful here.

The first is represented by one of the more intriguing of the early representations of the Tower and it comes from the so-called 'Agas' map of London. This is an interesting perspective since it is not a classic, god's eye view map but rather much more of a pictographic representation. Although the name associated with this work is that of Ralph Agas, it is generally agreed that he was not its creator and that the designer and engraver still remain unknown at this time. Also, the date of the work is not known precisely but it thought to have been created some time in the decade between 1560 and 1570 and thus it is often the epithet circa 1570 seems to be attached to the work. This dating is important since it precedes the changes in the Bloody Tower attributed to the occupation of Walter Raleigh and his imprisonment some three to four decades later in 1603. As can be seen from the extract shown in Figure 16, the Bloody Tower appears to slightly overshadow the Wakefield Tower, even as it still does to a small degree today (cf., Figure 2 versus Figure 16).

A second, and perhaps even more definitive representation is derived from the Haiward and Gascoyne survey of the Tower that was made in 1597. Completed almost a decade prior to what might be called the 'Raleigh Refurbishments' this survey represents one of the earliest detailed attempts to document the Tower itself. The relevant section of the survey is shown in Figure 17. Here there is a somewhat less clear differential between the heights of the two respective towers. However, again

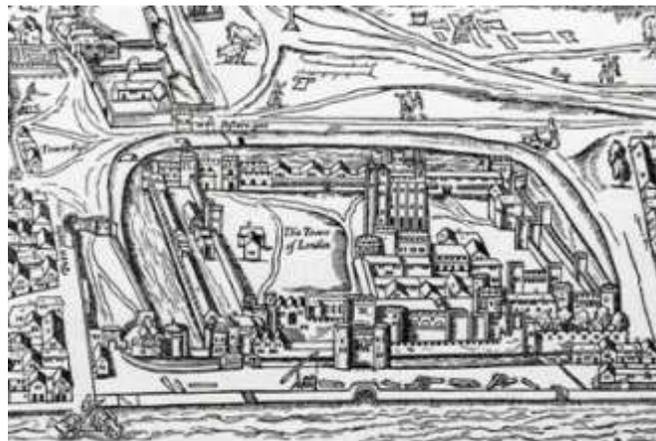


Figure 16: The detailed part of the Agas map of circa 1560-1570 showing the Tower of London. From the version in the Guildhall Library, Corporation of London. As can be seen, the Bloody Tower immediately behind the water entrance from the Thames and Traitor's Gate appears to overshadow the Wakefield Tower alongside of it.

if we compare this illustration with the actual appearance today we do not see any extensive differences and this indeed might lie behind Keay's comment as to the slight change in height of the Bloody Tower at the time of the Raleigh changes. This collective evidence might lead us to suspect that the alterations made for Sir Walter Raleigh were largely changes to the internal configuration of the Bloody Tower and indeed Keay notes that the internal floor which was inserted was "later removed, and then re-instated in the 1970's." Collectively, this information still leaves us uncertain as to whether any upper chamber may have been in existence in the 1480's but the possibility is that there was some form of enclosed space, otherwise the lower chamber (see Figure 10) would have been of an extravagant height. The upshot is that the general area of the upper level of the Bloody Tower must still be considered a possible site. Of course, this does not rule out other possible sites for the assassination (and see MacLachlan, 1998)

Before we leave the issue of the Bloody Tower it is worth, for a moment, considering the origin of the name itself. MacLachlan (1998) observes that "the name was not given as the Bloody Tower until at least 1597" and indeed it is so labeled on the 1597 Haiward and Gascoyne survey. However, Keay (2001, note 203, p. 52) indicates that the term Bloody Tower was in use from at least the mid-1560's. That is, less than a century after the purported murders had occurred. Of course, whether individuals in the mid-sixteenth century were thinking of the Princes when they used this term, we cannot readily determine. However, for the present purposes I intend to proceed on the assumption that this general location is the one most closely attached to the murders and seek to

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understand whether we can ask informative questions even based on these uncertain foundations.

The Disposal of the Bodies

Let us suppose then, for the sake of the present argument that we take as a premise that the murders did occur in the upper levels of the Bloody Tower. Further, let us also suppose that the bones of the children were buried in the area of the White Tower as is presented to current visitors to the Tower of London. What would this mean for the assassins and their problem of disposing of the bodies? One version of events tells us that this is essentially no problem. If the keys to the Tower had been handed over to the assassins, presumably this would have given them a free-hand to proceed as they wished. This would most probably involve excluding all other individuals not involved with the plot from the Tower on what would have presumably been the fateful night in question. But if this were so, and assuming that the Tower would have been one major center of the capital at the time, would not this expulsion itself have aroused some comment at the time and certainly suspicion later when the Princes appeared to be missing? Also, this strategy seems to be somewhat at odds with the account given by Thomas More who comments that while the retinue of the Princes seems to have been removed, the act itself was still performed under the cover of darkness. From this we might surmise that a degree of protection was eliminated from the Princes but whatever happened was surreptitious in nature. However, both the act of murder but

also in direct contrast the clandestine removal of the Princes from the Tower to safety each fit this pattern of events.

Again, we have to proceed upon the basis of assumption, but if we postulate that the murders did take place but were constrained to still be clandestine acts away from the general view of other residents of the Tower, how did the assassins get the bodies from the upper chamber of the Bloody Tower to the base of the staircase in the White Tower? This question implies both how and why. Let us try to deal with the how first. There are a number of exits from the Bloody Tower and the assassins would presumably have used the one most convenient to their purpose. This would mean transporting the bodies down the staircase we have seen in Figure 11. Unlike the action shown in the artistic rendering of this scene, presented in Figure 18, the manhandling of two corpses down the narrow stairs would have been no simple feat. However, we understand that the two Princes were not excessively tall and so determined assassins could well have accomplished this transit. However, now they are faced with the next phase of the journey. Let us see what this entails.

If the journey between the two identified locations were to be undertaken today, it would almost certainly involve some transit across open ground, either that to the south of Tower Green and up toward what was the 'Cold Harbour Gate' (see Figure 9), or via some other avenue along the south Inner Curtain wall. Even if it happened at night, as More indicated, it would still most probably be

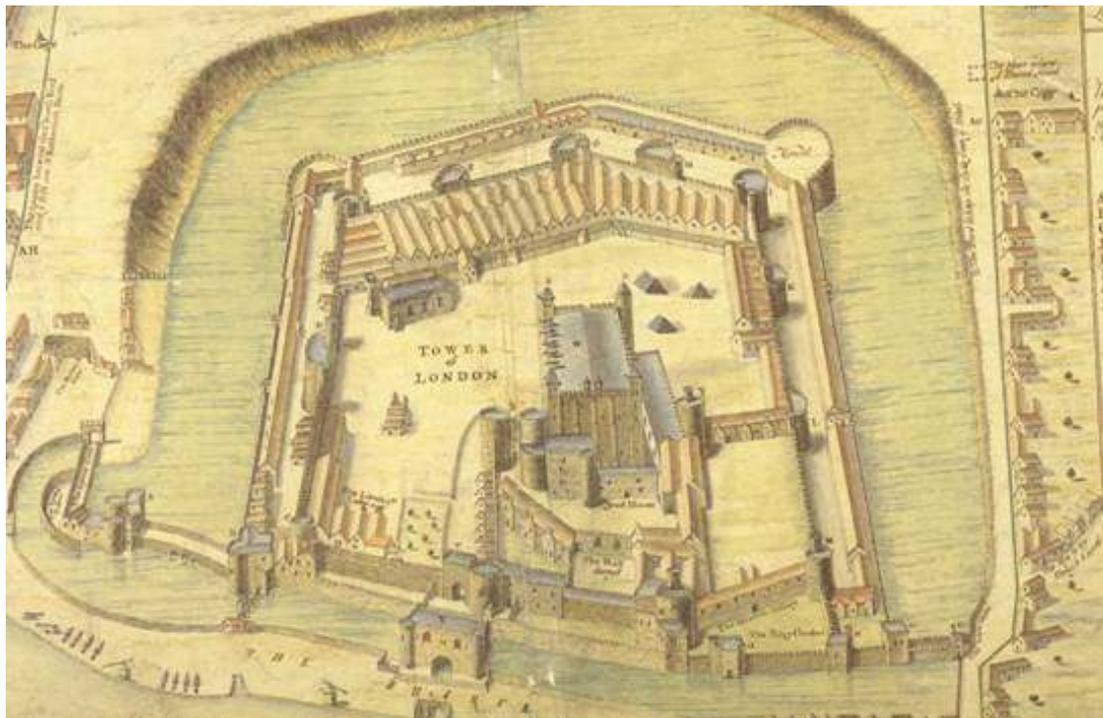


Figure 17: Detailed elements from the 1597 survey of the Tower by Haiward and Gascoyne. This particular representation comes from the 1752 Heath copy of the Lempriere copy of the survey. It is held at the Public record Office. The antecedents and subsequent account of the Haiward and Gascoyne survey is a story in itself (and see Keay, 2001).

within sight of many individuals who might well have a view out over these areas. However, as we have already seen, the configuration of the Tower of London as it is at present time is not it was in the early to middle 1480's. One modern reconstruction of the Tower configuration around the time of the supposed murders suggest otherwise. In Figure 19, a model of the Tower around the reign of Henry VII is illustrated. As can be seen, there is what appears to be a covered connection between the two referenced sites but this has to proceed through the Wakefield Tower and a tortuous path either along the south inner curtain wall and then up to the southern edge of the White Tower or alternatively directly north from the Wakefield Tower and then via the Cold Harbour Gate into the structure located on the southern face of the White Tower. Neither seems particularly appealing in respect of an enterprise redolent of secrecy. And why would anyone look to bury the Princes in this location anyway? Surely, if disposal of the bodies were the primary purpose, then exiting via Traitor's Gate with its immediate access to the river is much more convenient? (and see Figure 19). Indeed, this is how John Rastell in his 1529 text "*Pastimes of People*" indicated they were disposed of after being smothered and put into a chest (see Hammond, 1976)

Before we try to resolve the latter issue, let us return to the one account we have which indicates where the Princes were actually interred. Again, we hear from More (1513) when he reports:

and fetched sir James to see them. Which vpon the sight of them, caused those murtherers to burye them at the stayre foote, metely depe in the grounde vnder a great heape of stones. Than rode sir James in geat haste to king Richarde, and shewed him al the maner of the murther, who gaue hym gret thanks, and as som say there made him knight. But he allowed not as I have heard, the burying in so vile a corner, saying that he woulde haue them buried in a better place, because thei wer a kinges sonnes. Wherupon thei say that a prieste of syr Robert Brakenbury toke vp the bodyes again, and secretely entered them in such place, as by the occasion of his death, whiche onely knew it could neuer synce come to light. Very trouthe is it & well knownen, that at such time as syr James Tirell was in the Tower, for Treason committed agaynste the moste famous prince king Henry the seuenth, bothe Dighton an he were examined, & confessed the murther in maner aboue writen, but whither the bodies were remoued thei could nothing tel.

As I have pointed out elsewhere, this account provides two completely contradictory assertions (i.e., the bodies are at the stair foot and the bodies are not at the



Figure 18: As can be seen from Figure 11, manhandling the bodies down the respective staircase might not have been quite as easy as suggested here. However, a determined set of assassins could evidently have accomplished this.

stair foot, but rather somewhere else). This situation allows More to cover virtually all possible contingencies (Hancock, 2001; and see also Hammond, 1976). This selfsame problem concerning More's account has also recently been observed by Hanham (2004) in her response to the recent debate on the issue in the Ricardian Bulletin. Not for nothing was Thomas More a famous lawyer!

However, there is more to be had from More. His first identified burial site is designated as "*metely depe in the grounde*." However, technically, the burial as it is represented to us today is not in the ground. It is actually above ground level within the White Tower. We might suspect that the priest he names was the individual who might then have sought to relocate the bodies within the 'hallowed' ground beneath the White Tower. The observation also implies that Tyrell must have conferred with this "priest of Sir Robert Brackenbury" but it does not say why Tyrell did not complete the reburial himself but brought yet another party into the conspiracy and greatly increased the subsequent risk of exposure. What is clearly evident is that More's account provides within it options to



Figure 19: A model of the Tower as it is supposed to have appeared during the reign of Henry VII (Photograph by the Author).

satisfy almost any speculation. In this it has been used mostly in the form of confirmation bias for whatever theory is currently being offered (Nickerson, 1998).

There remain still many questions which derive from the geographical consideration of the purported murder site. Would someone digging a grave within such an important location not raise suspicion? After all the White Tower is perhaps the most emblematic representation of the whole Norman Conquest. Was the grave dug on the night of the murder, or was it readily available? This latter circumstance would be evidence of planning and premeditation. More's original account of burial "*vnder a great heape of stones*" does not seem to suggest sophisticated pre-planning. Nor indeed does the subsequent reburial, which is attributed to Richard's desire to honor a former King's sons. But surely, if an action so important were to be carried out, the manner of it would have also been the subject of planning would it not? If it were done almost on the spur of the moment, would not digging (especially at night) have aroused suspicion? And where does More get all his information from anyway? In this he cryptically observes: "*I shall rehearse you the dolorous end of those babes, not after every way that I haue heard, but after that way thay I haue so hard by such men & by such meanes, as me thinketh it wer hard but it should be true.*" But this really tells us nothing of his sources,

although one intriguing possibility must remain that Dighton himself revealed these things to Sir Thomas. After all, why would Thomas More evidently know about the fate of this individual?

There are also further questions which arise. Does the fact that the Princes were buried mean that the bodies might have been subsequently needed? If so, would they be needed to show proof of death and who would need this proof and why? Was this, for example, the reason they were not simply dumped in the river? Why were they buried together? Surely, the presence of two children in one grave would be highly suspicious? And on the subject of nephewicide, why would Richard dispatch two of his nephews in the Tower and not the third? The tired excuse that Edward Plantagenet, son of George Duke of Clarence was barred by his father's attainder must be re-examined. After all, following the tragic death of his own child, Richard subsequently named the then 10 year-old Earl of Warwick as Heir to the Throne. And, for me perhaps most critically, since the children were last seen in the Tower of London, why would murders (presumably wishing to hide their act) then bury them in the same location at which they were last known to be? Even today, when we have a missing child, the first place that the search begins is always the last location at which they were seen.

Assumptions Involved in These Hypothetical's

It remains for me to again make explicit those assumptions which underlie the present observations. Perhaps the most critical and important one is that we currently have no evidence whatsoever that any murder actually took place. (and this will most probably remain the case even if the bones in Westminster Abbey are allowed to be examined) It is because of this that any reasonable and rational court at the present time would be constrained to find Richard III, and indeed anyone else, so accused of such murders as innocent (Drewett & Redhead, 1984). Thus, those who characterize Richard III as the wicked uncle do so primarily on the basis of persuasion not proof. The second set of assumptions concern relevant locations. As I have tried to make clear, I have no direct evidence that the locations I have discussed are actually those at which the actions identified did occur (which again of course assumes the murders to be real events). These are the two sites presented to modern day visitors and like much else in history they may just be confabulations rather than realities. However, we are as certain as we can be that the Princes were confined to the Tower and we have Mancini's account which indicates to us the events which are close in time to their disappearance. We will know much more when modern forensic science is allowed access to the bones in Westminster Abbey. Hopefully, we will be able to determine the consanguinity and sex of the individuals there interred and under the most favorable circumstances we would be able to compare DNA profiles with that of their father and mother. This would provide close to definitive evidence as to whether the bones in the Abbey are those of Edward V and his brother Richard, Duke of York. Given that such confirmation was forthcoming, the estimate of ages at death, which would provide somewhat less precise information, could hopefully establish the window of time in which they died. This would go some way toward establishing culpability but that would be an inference and not definitive in any way. The first empirical step along the road to an answer would appear to lie in Westminster Abbey and St. George's Chapel, Windsor. As to whether we are able to take that step, it resides with others to say.

Summary and Conclusions

The disappearance of the Princes in the Tower is rightly dubbed one of the greatest mysteries of all time. As such, it still excites interest in the general population even today (Brooke, 2007). Here, I have not gone through all of the historical arguments which relate to this mystery. These have been more fully articulated and discussed by several of the authors whose texts I have cited here. For myself however, one thing that I find very

strange is that writing around 1513 More reports that "*Dighton in ded walketh on a liue in good possibilitie to be hanged ere he dye.*" From this it appears that one of the assassins was still alive almost three decades after the alleged assassination. One would think that Henry VII might not want an admitted regicide still hanging around his realm thirty years after the event. And surely he must have had some sensitivity in respect of his late wife who had died in childbirth on her birthday ten years earlier in 1503. After all, if we are to believe More, this man Dighton personally suffocated both of the Queen's brothers. However, these are arguments for another time.

Like many other aspects of the mystery of the Princes, examination of the putative geography of the murders raises more frustrations than it does solutions. Why, for example, if the present site was considered the location of the murders was the structure referred to as the Garden Tower in the time of Henry VIII? Who first labeled it the Bloody Tower and was that individual thinking more of medieval tourism than historical identification? In the final analysis we must admit our continuing uncertainties and in the absence of more definitive written evidence we must try to proceed along the lines of psychologically feasible propensities (and see Hancock, 2003; Jones, 2002). One such assertion concerns the apparent need to hide the act of murder of a former King's two sons (illegitimate or not). This concealment being necessary, are the actions of the nominal assassins reasonable and rationale? Answers to so many of these respective questions hinge on the information that we might eventually get from the bones in Westminster Abbey. When that question is addressed, and to a degree resolved, the present speculations may assume greater importance or evaporate almost altogether.

What I have tried to emphasize here are the geographic considerations that come in to play if the murder and burial occurred as they are represented in a contemporary tour of the Tower. In any alleged murder investigation, especially one in which facts are scattered and uncertain, it is essential to examine the 'locus in quo,' the place in which the purported events are supposed to have occurred. On that morning in November 2006, these sites raised a number of questions in my mind which I have here put before the reader. I hope that these observations might spark some further discussion and debate about the configuration of the acts which were reported to have gone on. Hopefully, such a discussion will provide further insight into the fate of the Princes in the Tower and generate a small step toward the solution of one of histories most enduring mysteries.

Mystery of the Princes in the Tower

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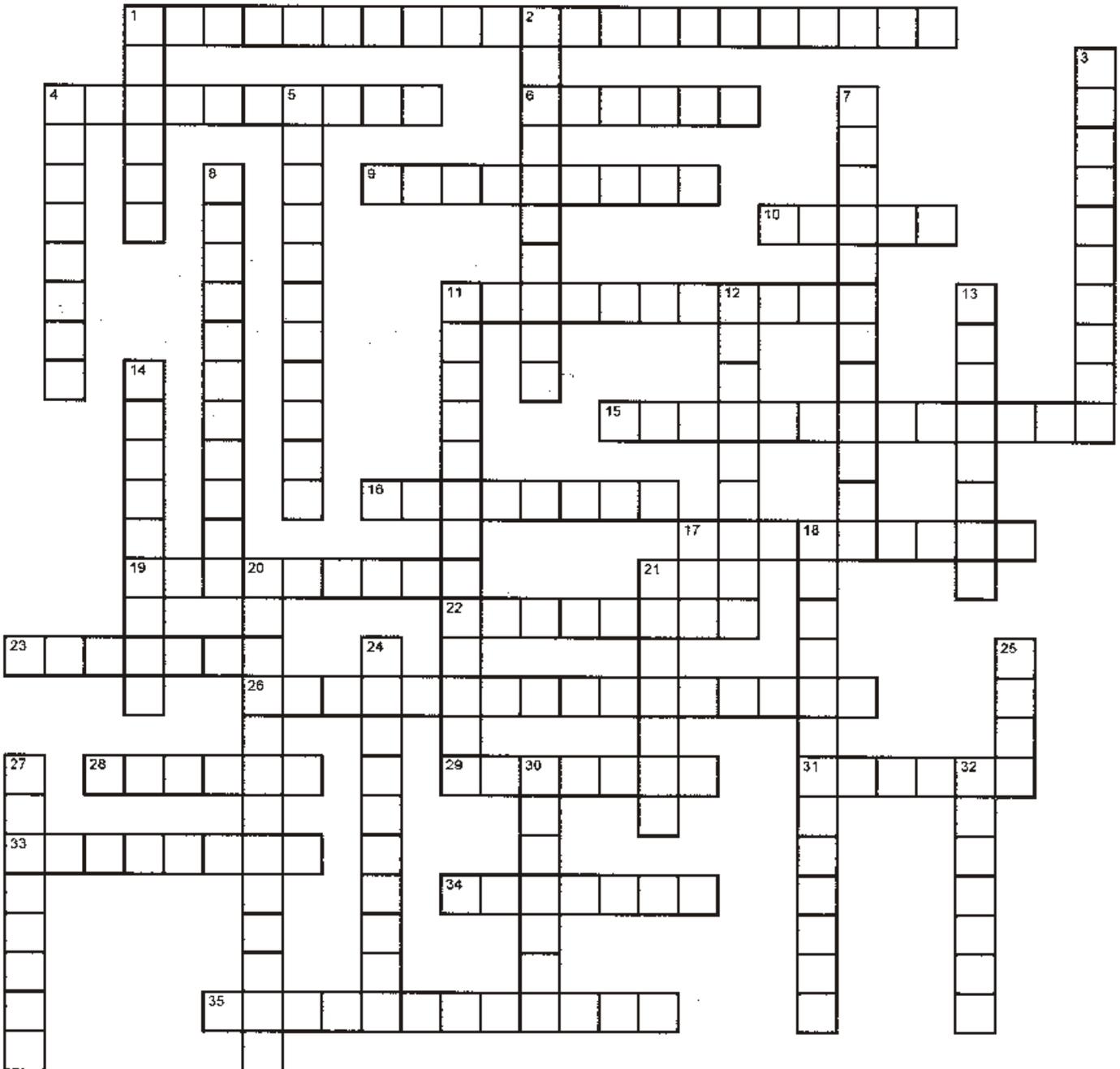


Edward V

Saints and Sinners

The Ricardian Puzzlers are Charlie Jordan, Lorraine Pickering, Marion Davis, and Nancy Northcott. The Ricardian crossword puzzles are intended as a fun method of learning about Richard and his life and times. Each puzzle will have a theme and clues are drawn from widely available sources. Suggestions are welcomed; please send comments to Charlie at charlie.jordan@earthlink.net.

This puzzle focuses on "saints and sinners" not all necessarily of the 15th century.



Solution on page 23

Across

- 1 The Woodvilles' enemies accused _____, Queen Elizabeth's mother, of casting spells on Edward IV and the earl of Warwick.
- 4 The shrine of Our Lady of _____ attracted women seeking divine assistance with pregnancy and childbirth; Margaret of Anjou made a pilgrimage there in 1453.
- 6 Friend and confessor to Margaret Beaufort, this bishop of Rochester was executed by Beaufort's grandson, Henry VIII.
- 9 The site of Becket's shrine was an extremely popular destination for 15th century pilgrims.
- 10 In 1473, Anthony Woodville made a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. _____ in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, which attracted thousands of pilgrims a year.
- 11 Richard's _____, a private book of devotions, is considered by Sutton and Visor-Fuchs to be relatively modest in decoration.
- 15 _____, Cambridge received funding from Richard in 1477 to support 4 priests who were to pray for Richard's family as well as those who died at Barnet.
- 16 In the 1470s, Richard and Anne often visited the shrine of St. _____ in Durham Cathedral; northern England's most popular saint.
- 17 Edward IV probably violated the traditional custom of _____ by seizing Somerset and others from Tewkesbury Abbey after the battle of Tewkesbury.
- 19 Margaret Paston promised to make pilgrimage to the shrine of _____ in Norwich to aid in her husband's recovery from illness.
- 22 St. _____, often pictured emerging from the stomach of a dragon, was considered a protector of women in childbirth.
- 23 To honor St. _____ of Corbie, Richard's sister, Margaret, duchess of Burgundy, reformed convents and monasteries in Burgundy.
- 26 Although his books and the hair shirt he wore reflected high aspirations, _____ sometimes failed to live up to them.
- 28 _____ of our Lady; a devotional work prepared for the Sisters of Sion, a Brigittine community in Isleworth.
- 29 His self-centered betrayal of Richard at Bosworth marks him as a sinner.
- 31 Richard reportedly requested that a prayer by this patron saint of the Western Marches be included in his book of hours.
- 33 When he ordered the hanging of his wife's servant, Ankarette Twynho, the duke of _____ was guilty of taking "a king's power" into his own hands.
- 34 The earl of _____ and the duke of Clarence committed treason against Edward IV.
- 35 _____; an early 15th century woman whose visions drove her to make pilgrimages to the Holy Land, Rome, Spain, and Germany; her story has been called the first true autobiography in English.

Down

- 1 _____ of Norwich was an early 15th century English anchoress, famous for writing "...All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."
- 2 Ascribed to St. Bridget, these popular devotional prayers were included in Richard III's hours.
- 3 Apocryphal archer who, Commynes alleged, was involved in an adulterous relationship with Cecily Neville from which Edward IV was born.
- 4 The shrine at Worcester honored the last Anglo-Saxon bishop, St. _____; his popularity reflected pilgrim's growing pride in their English heritage.
- 5 Pilgrims visited _____ Abbey to honor the relics of St. Joseph of Arimathea.
- 7 Richard decreed that the holy oil allegedly given to _____ by the Virgin should be kept in Westminster Abbey.
- 8 More accused _____ of murdering the princes.
11 In 1469, Edward IV and Richard, duke of Gloucester, made a pilgrimage to _____, one of England's most important shrines, dedicated to the saintly Anglo-Saxon king reportedly skewered by Danish arrows after refusing to renounce Christianity.
- 12 Margaret, duchess of York, convinced Edward IV to reintroduce this order of friars to England in 1481.
- 13 Jane Shore was forced to do public penance for _____.
- 14 His exceptional cruelty as Edward IV's Constable of England earned the earl of _____ the label "Butcher of England."
- 18 _____, dowager duchess of York, followed a strict religious practice during the last years of her life.
- 20 Humphrey, duke of Gloucester's enemies undermined his power by accusing his wife, _____, of witchcraft.
- 21 Richard's youngest sister served as a Dominican nun at Dartford Priory.
- 24 This saint's "history" continues to damage Richard III's reputation.
- 25 When Henry V's government needed money in 1419, it accused _____ of Navarre, Henry IV's widow, of witchcraft in order to justify confiscating her money.
- 27 Countess of _____ and Derby at her death, Margaret Beaufort founded the Chairs of Divinity at both Oxford and Cambridge.
- 30 European observers considered Edward IV guilty of _____ because he drove hard bargains when negotiating marriages for his daughters.
- 32 Like Richard III, St. _____ the Hermit is associated with the boar.



Metaphasiarchy

📖 *um...Slips, Stumbles, and Verbal Blunders, and What They Mean* – Michael Ernst, Pantheon Books, N.Y. & Toronto, 2007

The vocalization “um” was first recorded in English speech (as “hum”) in 1469, but people have been committing disfluencies, false starts, Spoonerisms, and well, like, you know, since they opened their mouths to speak. Sooner, perhaps, since you can “um” with your mouth closed. We start doing it as toddlers (my daughter used to say “I won’t bite the dog”), taper off somewhat as we mature, then increase in our senior years. While there are linguistic differences in “word whiskers,” – Spanish speakers tend to say “eh” instead of “uh” and “este” (this) instead of “you know” – “um” is very nearly universal. And yes, you can hem and haw in sign language too.

Don’t want your blunders held up for ridicule outside your immediate circle? Then don’t run for high political office. Journalists routinely clean up people’s speech, with the exception of “major policymakers, including the president...since not only what they say but how they say it often makes the news.” Once a person has gained a reputation for making verbal slips, however, he will have things he never said fathered on him, as with the Rev. William Spooner. What do they mean? Ernst devotes a chapter to Freudian slips, but comes to the conclusion that verbal bloopers are more a function of language than anything else. (The title above is a Hellenism for “Spoonerism,” and the headings below are typical Spoonerisms, whether or not uttered by “the Spoo,” as his students called him.)

Of course, this is more than a collection of verbal bloopers. It’s a serious attempt to classify and define them. But dip into the book almost anywhere, and it’s difficult to avoid snickering, if not outright laughing.

Kinkering Congs Their Titles Take

📖 *Right Royal Bastards* – Peter Beauclerk-Dewar, Roger S. Powell, Burke’s Peerage & Gentry LLC – Wilmington, DE, 2006

Our own Duke of Gloucester, the Society’s Patron, provides the Foreword for this book, which is obviously not about slips of the tongue. The authors, one of whom is a descendent of a Royal Bastard (as is the Duke – in fact of

Ricardian Reading

Myrna Smith

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

several of them), take up where a previous volume, *The Royal Bastards of Medieval England*, by Chris Given- Wilson and Alice Curteis, left off, (though there is some overlap in the persons of Plantagenet bastards who survived into Tudor times – for a while), and then bring the story down to the present time. Yes, there are still rumors of illegitimacy, but the authors make clear that they are just that, based on nothing more than a child’s having red hair, for example, or being better-looking than its siblings.

The book divides into two sections, the first being of bastards acknowledged by their fathers, the second of possibles, though unproven. A great deal of space in the first half is taken up by the progeny of Charles II by numerous women, and by William IV’s expansive household with the actress Dorothy Jordan. At one time, it contained one of William’s and four of Dorothy’s offspring by previous relationships, plus their 10 together. And all during this, Ms. Jordan was continuing her career, often in drag!

Among the possible-but-unproven are several of the more modern examples (Edward VIII’s, e.g.) and, at the other end of the time-frame, Henry VII’s supposed son, Roland de Velville. There is some mystery about this. Roland was about 10 years old when he came to England with Henry’s troops in 1485, too young to be a soldier or even a squire, though he might have been a page or perhaps a minstrel. Beauclerk and Powell speculate that he was, if not Henry’s son, the son of some one he owed, big-time. (Not their expression.) But who? Uncle Jasper? He had an acknowledged illegitimate daughter, so why not acknowledge a son also? In any case, the sensible thing to do would be to leave the boy behind in France or Brittany and send for him later – if there were anybody that could be trusted to take care of him. Roland apparently grew up around the court, but doesn’t seem to have been a companion of Henry’s other children, as was Charles Brandon, to whose father Henry also owed a debt of gratitude. Maybe this was because of the age difference. While it is claimed that Roland was a “favourite” of the king, he was given no official position, and seems to have made his living on the odd royal grant and prizes he won in tournaments – a sort of Early Modern version of a semi-professional athlete. (He was knighted after the battle of Blackheath.) The authors hate to give him up,

and find an explanation for this peculiar treatment: "Henry was hardly likely to...create a potential future threat to his own legitimate children by recognizing an illegitimate child. De Velville's treatment was therefore precisely what we would have expected it to be if he had been Henry's illegitimate child."

Finally, there is a useful appendix of royal mistresses, known and unknown, which even includes Queen Victoria's whatever-he-was-but-surely-not-a-mistress, John Brown. See below for more on the subject.

Our queer old dean

 *Sovereign Ladies: The Six Reigning Queens of England*—Maureen Waller, St. Martin's Press, N.Y.

Ms. Waller has done exhaustive research on Victoria, as well as her other five subjects, but it's far from exhausting reading. After reading the Queen's surviving letters, (not all of them have survived, and some may have been deliberately destroyed) she concludes that John Brown was a trusted servant and confidant, but not a lover. Still, Victoria took to her coffin a lock of Prince Albert's hair and a photograph of John Brown. Her relationship with her prime ministers, Melbourne and Disraeli (but not Gladstone) had a strong element of the romantic, but she didn't choose to be buried with any mementos of them.

This is not just a raking up of scandal and gossip, however. The author gives due attention to the political as well as the personal lives of her subjects, perhaps most needed in the case of the Stuart sister-queens, Mary II and Anne. Both have been regarded as sad but rather dim and uninteresting characters. They were more than that, and Waller gives them their due. The writing is clear, concise, and sympathetic without being fawning, and there are a number of pictures, not always in chronological order. Portraits of Elizabeth I and Elizabeth II at approximately the same age are on facing pages, for example. An excellent "popular" history, but not unscholarly.

A less scholarly, and less factual, light on Victoria's family is found in *Her Royal Spyness*, by Rhys Bowen, published this year (2007). Lady Victoria Georgina, etc, etc, is a fictional granddaughter of "Queen Victoria's plainest daughter," and 34th in line for the throne when this story opens in the early 30s. The other side of her ancestry is thoroughly plebeian; her mother is an actress and her grandfather a Cockney p'liceman. (Both have small but important roles in the book.) Tired of life as a poor relation of an impecunious Duke in a drafty Scottish castle, Lady Georgie goes to London to make her own way, with mixed results. While staying in the family's townhouse, she is startled to discover - surprise! - a body in the bathtub, and even more shocked to learn that her half-brother, the Duke, is suspected of murder. Of course, our plucky heroine will unmask the real culprit.

Along the way, she is drafted by her distant cousin, Queen Mary, to spy on Mrs. Simpson, hence the title. She turns in a negative report, but the queen is satisfied enough with her efforts to ask her to take on another assignment at the book's end, which surely foretells a series to come. Like Bowen's Molly Murphy and Constable Evans novels, and like this one, it will have likeable characters, satisfactory plots, a dash of romance, and a generous dollop of humor.

You have tasted two worms and must leave
Oxford by the next town drain.

I didn't mean for this to turn into a series of Victorian Society reviews (although it appears that Victoria was not particularly Victorian), but one book sort of segues into another. So it is with this next one: *The Ghost Map*, by Steven Johnson, (Riverhead Books, London, 2006, pb) Despite the title, there are no ghosts involved, only bacteria. The Victorian connection is in physician/ anaesthesiologist John Snow, who administered chloroform to the queen in her eighth confinement, and was understandably a hero to her. He was a hero to a great many common Londoners, as well, in the next year's great cholera outbreak, and had the virtue of being right, where many intelligent and humanitarian Britons, like Florence Nightingale, were dead wrong. How he worked out the disease's origin and the cause of its spread, with the aid of his close friend, a curate, and some statisticians, is as intriguing as many a detective story, and well worth following.

The Medieval connection? The reference to the Great Plagues of the Middle Ages, and earlier. Mr. Johnson doesn't fail to bring his theme home to the 21st century. It could happen today, though perhaps not in the same way. In spite of this, he considers the prospect of a city-planet generally a good thing. One wonders. While a large city, like NYC, might have a relatively small footprint, it depends on a vast network of transport, technology, and agriculture - unless he is suggesting that today's city-dwellers go back to the Victorian habit of keeping cattle in disused houses - sometimes even in the attic.

Note: while I don't have a strong stomach, it is not a suggestible one, so I was able to read this while actually snacking. I wouldn't recommend that to everyone.

To put me back on the Ricardian/Medieval track, Dale Summers sends some feedback on a book previously reviewed:

You have hissed all my mystery lectures

 *A Rose For the Crown*—Anne Easter Smith, Simon & Schuster, N.Y. 2006.

This is a formidable book, 630 pages, but not to be missed. Well researched and well written, the book's main character is Kate Haute, the mother of Richard's illegitimate children ['unknown' in the Burke's book]. Kate

is a well-developed character, as are John Howard, his wife, Richard himself, and lesser characters.

I think most Ricardians like to believe that there was a deep friendship, from childhood, which developed into romantic love between Richard and Anne. It was a bit jarring to have him describe Anne as a child, while declaring undying love for another woman. Even his motto [in this story] refers to his loyalty to his mistress. But Kate becomes real quickly, and the reader accepts the love affair. When Richard decides that Anne is the wife for him, he seems to be speaking of their positions in society, without any interest in the wealth such a match would bring.

The book drew my interest not only for the well-drawn characters and descriptions, but because John Howard plays a major role. Howard has always been a favorite of mine, after Richard and Anne. Smith brings to life a colorful and turbulent age. This is an excellent book.

— Dale Summers

Noble tons of soil

 *Growing Up in Medieval London*, by Barbara A. Hanawalt. New York: Oxford University Press, c. 1993.

Growing up in medieval London couldn't be taken for granted. The infant death rate was high. A child who lived long enough to walk faced many hazards indoors and out. Accidents ended some young lives; disease ended others. Long apprenticeships or the need to save money for marriage delayed the arrival of the next generation. London's birth and survival rate was too low to maintain its population.

London continued to grow because opportunities for advancement attracted enough young men and women from the countryside to make up for London's population losses. Some came to serve apprenticeships they hoped would lead to prosperity and social advancement. Those who couldn't afford apprenticeships went into service. Some prospered; others failed. Those who endured seven to ten years of apprenticeship and successfully established themselves in their profession could finally afford to marry in their late 20s or early 30s. In an era of short life expectancies many of these late marriages ended with young widows and young children in court.

Data concerning apprentices, servants, widows, and orphans survives in records of several fourteenth and fifteenth century courts. One branch of the Husting Court ("husting" described a court held inside) dealt with land transactions, including bequests of land; the other dealt with common pleas. The overload of cases from the common pleas court was dealt with in the mayor's court. Hanawalt comments that the mayor's court records give the impression that "the mayor and aldermen were busy

listening to citizens' complaints from morning to night." In addition to dealing with violations of apprenticeship and service contracts, the mayor, aldermen, and chamberlain set up a council to deal with miscellaneous overload from the mayor's court. This council's decisions were recorded in the Letter Books, which supply the data on orphans, marriages, and apprenticeships supporting her text.

From these records, Hanawalt has recreated the life cycles of medieval Londoners. Despite her focus on the early stages of life, medieval living conditions forced Hanawalt to cover the later stages of life as well. To bring the facts drawn from surviving records to life, she has integrated imaginative recreations of Londoners' experiences into her discussion of the facts. These recreations are clearly distinguished from historical examples, and all are enhanced by pen and ink drawings.

The goal of a medieval Londoner's upbringing was a "sad and wise" citizen. Not all Londoners achieved this goal. Tensions developed between adults trying to maintain the status quo and apprentices or servants enduring extended periods of powerlessness. Young people lived in their masters' households with their wages under their masters' control; they had little or no autonomy. A female servant's future depended on her ability to save money for marriage and herself from pregnancy before marriage. A male apprentice's future depended on his master's willingness and ability to teach the skills of the trade. Some hopes were crushed by unwanted pregnancies; others, by exploitive masters' refusal to provide proper training. Some potential careers ended in riots or on the gallows.

Those fortunate enough to achieve respectable adulthood sometimes suffered at the hands of exploitive officials. In Cornwall, Thomasine Bonaventure and her parents made a service contract with London mercer Thomas Busby. After several years' service in Busby's household, Thomasine married her master. But she was widowed twice before she reached the age of thirty. Her third husband was John Percival, a merchant tailor who served a term as mayor of London. After Percival's death in 1507, Henry VII's revenue collectors invented charges against Thomasine. Her "pardon" cost 1,000 pounds.

Although Hanawalt includes nothing about Richard III in her book, she describes court cases that offer insight into public feelings about disinheritance. These cases show how public opinion could be swayed by Tudor stereotypes of Richard III as a wicked uncle. Harsh experiences apparently made that stereotype convincing for many English men and women.

In spite of court and accident records' emphasis on the hardships of London life, Hanawalt describes her book as optimistic. She expresses appreciation of archival

research and medieval society in her introduction: “My process of investigation is eclectic. I have used sociology and anthropology where they help in seeking for definitions and categories. I have not, however, forced my material into the preconceived categories of these disciplines. The record sources of London and literary remains have ample information of their own. ... Just as a field observer cannot leave behind his or her basic views of life while observing an alien culture, I cannot completely erase my own views, despite my knowledge of the period. I have a basic optimism about human nature that comes through.”

Non-specialists can learn about interdisciplinary research and writing as well as medieval London life from this reader-friendly book. Barbara Hanawalt’s optimism and appreciation for her subject should make *Growing Up in Medieval London* a beneficial experience for a wide variety of readers.

— *Marion Davis*

Do you practice ju-jusit?

 *My Lady Knight* – Jocelyn Kelley, Penguin, New York, N.Y., 2007, pb

Isabella de Monfort does not have a title and therefore is not a knight, or even a Dame, but what a dame! She is a student at a very unusual convent, where the damsels learn not only Latin and the liberal arts, but science and the martial arts. Isabella is not especially skilled at these, though she is pretty handy with a bull-whip (you won’t believe some of the things she can do with it), but her strong points are logic and science (you won’t believe what she discovers). Queen Eleanor (need you ask which Queen Eleanor?) has some documents that need to be retrieved from London. Isabella is sent to find them, along with one Jordan le Courtney, a real knight. That is the set-up for this adventure/ romance. Along the way, there are kidnappings, robbery, murder, secret passages, a secret Brotherhood, and even an eclipse and an earthquake. This might seem to be making the mixture too rich, but these last two did occur within a matter of weeks in 1185.

Isabella and Jordan take turns rescuing each other, with the lady being slightly ahead on points. A couple of characters simply disappear, presumably lost in the earthquake, but without follow-up. However, this does not distract from the good fun of the book. Not to be taken seriously for a moment, but a great hammock read. I imagine the same must be true of the other books in this series, *A Knight Like No Other*, *One Knight Stands*, and *A Moonlit Knight*. I am going to make it my business to find out.

The cover art shows the heroine as a tall young woman, as described in the text. The book does not describe her otherwise, so the unaccredited artist has shown

her as somewhat along the lines of Dagmar. If you know who Dagmar was, you must be my age or older, nearly old enough to remember when knighthood was in flower! She is also shown in the foreground, with Jordan relegated to the background. For this unusual view, present in the story also, it’s worth a reading.

Mardon me, Padam, you are occupewing my pie. May I sew you to another sheet?

 *The Lady of the Forest* - Jennifer Roberson, Kensington Publishing ISBN-13: 978-1-57566-749-2

Perhaps in a resurgence of Robin Hood fever on the heels of the BBC’s smash hit series “Robin Hood,” Jennifer Roberson’s *Lady of the Forest* (as well as its sequel *Lady of Sherwood*) have recently been re-released with a syrupy cover reminiscent of the ever-present cover boy Fabio. Despite that I decided to read *Lady of the Forest*, as I had never read much on Robin Hood. It is important to note that if you are looking for a novel with the established Robin Hood tale, he really isn’t Robin Hood for almost the whole of the novel. The novel’s primary focus is on inducing him to become Robin Hood and developing his ever famous array of merry men, - Will Scarlet, Little John, Much and Alan-a-Dale - and the reasons behind their also being outlaws.

I was captivated from page one due to the array of characters and Roberson’s writing, which is mesmerizing. I can’t say it is up there on my top favorite book list, but it was entertaining and intriguing.

The novel opens with Robert of Locksley returning from the Crusades and Marian of Ravens keep seeking him out to find out any information Robin may possess on her father, who died fighting by Robin’s side. As the novel progresses we see that Robin/Robert is basically a shell of a man, haunted by nightmares and fatigued by battle and from being a captive of the Saracens.

The part of the novel that I enjoyed the most involved the small pieces of history that are inserted. In this novel we see/experience Eleanor of Aquitaine, King Richard the Lionhearted, and Prince John. Roberson paints a picture of the Crusades through Robin who has just returned from battle. These scenes of his reliving the Crusades quickly become tiresome, almost to the point that the reader wants to avoid altogether Robin’s struggle with what is obviously post-traumatic stress disorder.

Her other characters are very animated and enticing, especially in the evil Sheriff of Nottingham, William DeLacey. Notable in the treacherous category are Prince John, the Earl of Huntington (Robin’s father), and Sir Guy of Gisbourne. The reader is privy to the minds of these character’s and the rationale behind their evil and often vengeful actions. We are absorbed inside their

almost compulsively insane plots, which usually end up being very humorous.

Robin's relationship with King Richard was elaborated in the novel with good reason. Richard is the catalyst that propels Robin into his life of thievery in the quest to amass money for Richard's ransom. King Richard is also needed to precipitate a pardon when released from captivity for Robin Hood and his band to return to normal lives. I enjoyed the plot line that focused on Robin Hood being mistaken as Blondel, the lute player for King Richard. Supposedly Blondel was a "favorite" of King Richard and therefore many thought Robin Hood was the one who had a sexual relationship with King Richard. Robin Hood stresses that he and King Richard were "intimate in matters of the spirit ...but there are those who will say whatever they wish to say." (On a side note, after reading this story line of King Richard, Blondel and Berengaria, Richard's queen, I found an old paperback of Norah Lofts' *The Lute Player* that tells basically the same story line, sans Robin. It is an interesting idea when expanded on and of course Norah Lofts never disappoints.)

Roberson's Robin is a little too non-heroic for my liking. The only time he actually wins any type of fight is when he "saves" Marian during an archery contest. In all the other fight scenes the other characters usually best him even to the point that he needs Marian to step in to save him from the Sheriff during a brawl. Unfortunately, throughout the novel Robin spends most of his time brooding and reliving the past. I am surprised Marian even fell in love with him because he doesn't really have any attributes of interest. Marian is supposed to be portrayed as a "woman ahead of her time" as far as questioning women's roles in the medieval time period. She is a strong character in the novel, standing up to the Sheriff and Huntington, but I can't say I became attached to the way the author portrayed her either.

In summation, despite my criticism I did enjoy the book for what it was meant to be, an entertaining page-turner. I think you keep turning the pages because you keep feeling like something is going to happen that never really does. I just kept waiting for this great love story to surface and Robin to "turn into" the hero of the people and that doesn't really ever happen. For a story about Marian I enjoyed *Maid Marian: A Novel*, by Elsa Watson, much more.

— Lori J. Braunhardt

Must you stay, can't you go?
Yes, until next time.

—M.S.

From Ricardus Rex, the journal of the Victoria Branch

Mediaeval Recipes — Towres

by Jean Kent

Ingredients:

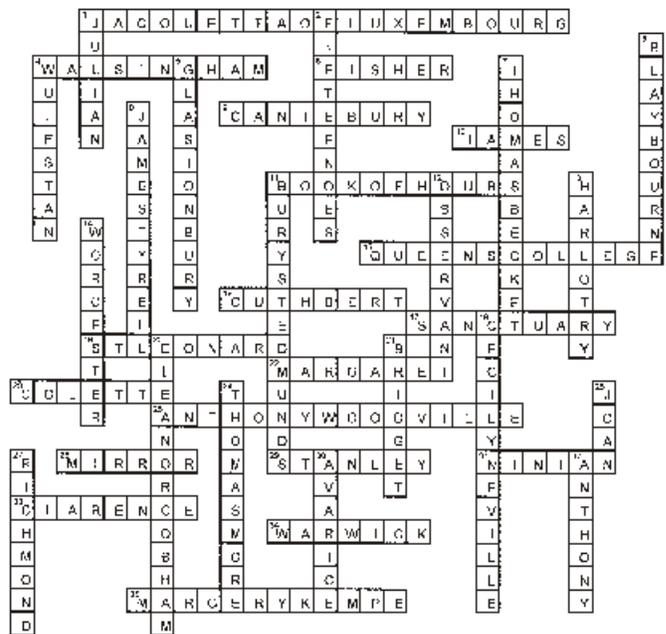
- Eggs
- Marrow
- Powdered pepper, mace, cloves, saffron
- Sugar, salt,
- Chopped cooked pork or veal
- Make a thick batter of the yolks and marrow.
-

Add the powdered ingredients, sugar and salt, and (if you wish) the pork or veal.

Strain the egg whites, add saffron and salt.

Set an oiled pan on the stove, allow the whites to flow over the pan. When stiff add the batter in the middle.

Loosen cake all around and close it four square and fry it. Serve immediately.



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