



June 2016

# Ricardian Chronicle

Newsletter by and about members of the American Branch of the Richard III Society

## 2016 General Membership Meeting September 23-25, 2016 Denver Colorado

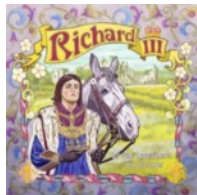
The Denver Chapter of the American Branch is hosting the 2016 GMM at SpringHill Suites in Downtown Denver, Colorado.

The Keynote Speaker is Dominic Smee, present day body double for Richard III with identical scoliosis. He will address how he and a team of experts (medical, armor, medieval combat, etc.) proved this medical condition did not impair the king's ability as a warrior wearing full body armor, including full cavalry charges through various tests he undertook.



Christina Smee, author of *The Rose of Middleham*, will share fascinating insights into 15th century England.

Ian and Elaine Churchward of The Legendary Ten Seconds will perform folk rock music for Ricardians written and played by Ricardians at the Saturday night banquet. The Legendary Ten Seconds' recordings chronicle the life and times of King.



Click here for [Schedule of Events](#).

Click here for your [Registration Form](#)

Richard III Society  
Start date: 9/23/16  
End date: 9/25/16  
Last day to book: 8/30/16



Marriott hotel(s) offering your special group rate: SpringHill Suites Denver Downtown for 159.00 USD

Here is the reservation link to make online reservations for the nights of Sept 23 and 24:

[Book your group rate for Richard III Society](#)

This group rate is available 3 days before and after our event, to extend, call Ashley Wray 720-439-2888. If you have questions or need help with the link, please do not hesitate to ask. We at SpringHill Suites appreciate your business and look forward to a successful event.

## Announcing: Auction Winner of Author Autographed Copy of THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNT by John Ashdown-Hill and Philippa Langley

Congratulations to Dolores Wolfe for the winning bid for the author autographed book, *The Official Account*. Sally Keil, Membership Chair, purchased this book in Leicester while attending the re-interment of Richard III's remains. She donated the book to be auctioned to raise funds for the American Branch.

"I have always been interested in the medieval period and enjoy historical fiction... especially anything about Richard III! When the news came out that they believed his bones had been discovered and all that Philippa had gone through, I was anxious to join the Society. I hadn't realized there was a group dedicated to him before that event... so I have been mesmerized along with everyone else with how things progressed. I hope someday to actually see Leicester Cathedral and all the rest!"—Dolores Wolfe



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#### Publication schedule and submission deadlines:

The *Ricardian Chronicle* is published semi-annually, June and December. Submission deadlines are: May 15<sup>th</sup> for the June issue and November 15<sup>th</sup> for the December issue.

#### What type of article will be published in the *Chronicle*?

The *Ricardian Chronicle* is a newsletter by and about members and chapters of the American Branch of the Richard III Society. This is the publication to share your stories about Ricardian and related trips and events.

#### Submission guidelines:

Text: 12 pt Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial font, document file type can be rtf, doc, docx, or odt.

(Sorry, I cannot accept pdf document type or non-standard fonts.)

Please contact me at [info@r3.org](mailto:info@r3.org) with any questions.

#### Formatting note:

At the end of each article you will find a link back to the Table of Contents represented below. Clicking on this link will bring you back to this page.

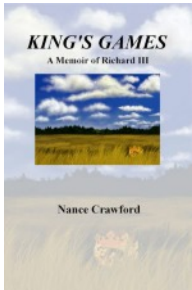
~ToC~

## Interview with Nance Crawford

In the early 1960's, Nance Crawford was Hollywood correspondent for Teen Life Magazine. By her mid-twenties, she was a widow with five children. Over the years, she worked on the first version of KING'S GAMES. Invited to join a theater group on the strength of that script, she began writing, acting, directing, and producing in local theater. Her first published book, DRAGON SOLSTICE, a medieval fantasy for the holidays, is based on her musical, THE CHRISTMAS DRAGON. How she came to write a verse play about Richard III of England is described in her most recent books, KING'S GAMES, A MEMOIR OF RICHARD III, and KING'S GAMES, THE COMMENTARIES. She has been a member of the Society since 1993.



### **Q. Why two books with almost identical titles?**



Part One of *King's Games, A Memoir of Richard III*, is the text of the play, which is written in the Elizabethan style familiar to us from Shakespeare (the nobles all talk to each other in verse, and talk down to the peasants in prose). Part Two consists of *The Commentaries*—essays on the history, narrative and date-to-date timelines, and a recounting of the forty-year quixotic adventure that resulted in the final version of the play. The second book, *King's Games, The Commentaries*, is for people who aren't interested in plays, much less verse plays. Also, since I am not fourteen actors, it is more reasonable to record only *The Commentaries*, which is what I'm working on, now. It's my second audio book, and I hope to have it on Audible.com by August.



### **Q. Isn't forty years a long time on one project?**

The script was in and out of file cabinets the majority of the time. There are over twenty drafts of two different versions of the play, a virtual history of the personal printed word, from manual typewriters and carbon copies, through electric and electronic typewriters, to endless transfers onto floppy disks and, finally, thumb drives.

### **Q. When did you first start writing?**

When I was about eleven, I wrote a short skit and corralled my brothers, Bobby and Johnny, into performing it with Mom, Dad and Grams as audience. Got my first intentional laugh, which was pretty amazing. That year, I wrote the sixth grade graduation play, which got an unexpected laugh, which was not quite as amazing. That same year, I wrote six pages of an intended novel, then got bored.

### **Q. When did you know you wanted to be a writer?**

I never wanted to be a writer—it was just something I did in between acting jobs and homework. What I really wanted to be was (don't laugh) a saloon singer, like Eartha Kitt, or a band singer. In the meantime, I found myself in the theater program at Hollywood High. Our wonderful teacher, John Ingle, encouraged original projects. I was asked to write the Holiday show in my sophomore year. In senior year, my Creative Writing class project was the book and lyrics for a musical comedy. It was modestly produced several years later, after two children and a divorce. The script got me a lunch with David Merrick, who went back to New York to take on *Hello, Dolly!* Except for an abortive attempt at a novel the year I lived in Nashville, writing was confined to journaling until returning home. I got married again—in Las Vegas. After my husband's death, I taught myself rhythm guitar, belatedly catching up with the folk music craze that had captivated my schoolmates, but enabling me to write simple songs on my own. The very first one was picked up by a record producer, who wanted to use it as the title song of an album. The deal fell apart. The track was released thirty-one years later on Georgia Holt's album, which is available on Amazon.

### **Q. What sparked your interest in Richard III?**

My mother handed me a copy of *The Daughter of Time*. She thought it would make a wonderful play. From there, it was on to Paul Murray Kendall. (The whole complicated story is part of *The Commentaries*.) I had to let it go, after it proved impossible to get the stage rights. Nevertheless, I couldn't let Richard go—as an actor, I was

used to searching for intention, motivation, and I couldn't figure out how, or why, there were so many contradictions in his story. So I kept reading, looking. As the years went on, I had the enormous benefit of listening to actors reading the words that had appeared on my paper, which, in itself, was a huge advantage.

**Q. As an American, why do you care about him?**

I'm a born and bred Anglophile. My maternal great grandmother was born in Berwick-upon-Tweed and her husband was one of the undoubtedly hundreds of northerners christened "James Fraser Sinclair," so there's little doubt of where he came from. It is family legend that we're descended from the last man beheaded in the Tower, Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat. My grandmother and her seven brothers and sisters, all profound Protestants, never got over the dubious honor, so it was a bit of a shock to find him in the Book of Martyrs. As a convicted Jacobite, he is considered by the Church in Rome to have died for his Faith. There's a book in him, the nasty old reprobate (I do a LOT of reading), but I'd need to do serious on-the-spot research—and hire a couple of researchers—to begin to get it right.

**Q. You chose Richard over a flamboyant ancestor?**

Once I read Tey, Richard III was a lot more sympathetic, more truly wronged, and, not to put too fine a point on it, much more romantic, to say the least. Then, too, there is the fact that, the deeper I got into Richard's story, the more I looked at his interactions with the suddenly-appearing Buckingham, I saw clarification, beyond their familial connection, for their initial, unexpectedly close partnership: they were the moth and the flame. In my own life, I had seen for myself the fascination that a quiet, apparently shy person can have with someone of flamboyant personality. At the time, it also occurred to me that the same trap had snapped shut on Richard Nixon, an essentially withdrawn and very private person who had surrounded himself with assertive, colorful California ad men. In both cases, it proved to be a deadly choice.

**Q. What is the most unexpected thing you discovered while writing the play?**

Writing can not only reveal insights into characters as they are developed, but also uncover personal insights for the writer. Only after learning about, and finishing the last essay on, Eleanor Butler, did I recognize the parallels that had escaped me at the time I originally wrote the scene where Richard has Stillington tell Buckingham of the Butler precontract (a portion of that scene is in the back of *The Commentaries*, as a teaser). They discuss whether Elizabeth knew of it, whether Edward had told her, and why he probably did not do so. I knew exactly why, and what Elizabeth's response was expected to be, because it had happened to me.

I woke up, one morning, newly widowed the night before, to find out that my husband's first wife (news to me!) was his only wife. He had not confirmed the existence of a final divorce decree before he drove us to Las Vegas. Four months before our third child was born, his mother had told him that his wife's attorney had never filed the final papers. In 1966, it would have been a horrific scandal. A wonderful actor, he kept the news to himself. I have no doubt that the stress contributed to the onset of the cancer that killed him four months later. In the aftermath, the possibility of exposing my family to public humiliation ended any hope of resuming my modest acting career. My choice. I'm still here, times have changed, we're all too old to care, and the people to whom it would have mattered are long gone, anyway.

**Q. How did you learn about the Society?**

From James MacArthur, who told me his mother, Helen Hayes, was a member. It was fascinating that she was an active defender of Richard, but I wasn't a joiner and didn't make further inquiries, at the time. Ten years later, a former teacher at Hollywood High, who had become a family friend, sent me a copy of a brochure, along with a firm note. I was already constructing the second version of the play, and it was time. There was a Los Angeles Chapter, which folded before my budget would allow me to be an active, participating member. From then, until the discovery in the car park, I thought I was the only member in Southern California. I would love to get an official group restarted here, but Los Angeles is 450+ square miles connected by parking-lot freeways. There was some initial contact with most of the California members, both north and south, before the trip to London in March, but there was no follow-through on my part. I did not realize how incapacitated I had become until my experiences

traveling alone, and it's taken the better part of a year for my health to begin to right itself. Hopefully, when I do make the attempt to reconnect, I will be forgiven my trespass, and we'll be able to begin to work something out. It was a miracle that I got to Leicester, at all.

**Q. You were in Leicester, last year?**

Yes. I never expected to go. I had filled out all of the ticket forms for the drawings on a compulsive whim. When the email arrived in January, I was stunned—and then sat there and wept, because I knew I couldn't afford to go. My eldest daughter knew how important it was to me and created a "Help Get Mom to Leicester!" fundraiser. With the help of family, friends and generous strangers, by the last minute there were just enough funds. I chose to put off a sleep study ordered by my doctor—the first available appointment was during Reburial Week.

I sardined myself into sixteen hours in coach, spent four days with friends in London recovering and sight-seeing, then was put on a train to Leicester. The hotel booking being last minute, travel was heavily dependent on cabs, but I was able to get to the cathedral for the 8 a.m. Sunday service—which turned out to be a radio broadcast. Have to admit quietly grinning to myself that I, who had expected a serene, quiet hour of reflection and penitence, was instead listening to a radio director giving instructions on participating in a service which included a full children's choir but no Communion, as the radio audience would not understand lengthy silences broken by the shuffling of feet.

Okay, so it was kind of a wonky start for a former professional actor on holiday. But it was a terrific first day. Chatting about Richard with a fellow visitor as we were leaving the cathedral, we were stopped by a young man with a recorder and microphone who asked if we would repeat what he had just overheard. He apologized that it was "only for a BBC Radio special to air on Monday." We happily complied, then went around the corner for breakfast, to find we were sharing the tiny shop with members of the choir and congregation.

Afterward, again on my own, I went back around the corner and found that the Visitor's Center had just opened. I decide to forego the official Society day, paid the fee, and was virtually alone for the first half-hour. It was remarkable. I took my time, bought lunch at the café, and ate outside, on the patio. The place was beginning to fill up by then, but beyond the glass doors it was quiet by the graveside. There was a statuesque young docent answering questions. I stood back and watched and listened. She did not have a regional accent, and when the people left, I asked where she was from. Canada. We chatted for a few minutes and when a new group came in, I stepped back. I didn't want to leave. In my memory, it was incredibly peaceful.

**Q. So it was a wonderful beginning?**

Oh, it got better. A voice at my right elbow said, "Excuse me," and I turned to see a pretty blond girl, who continued, "I'm with the Washington Post. May I interview you? It's only for online..." Well, of course I agreed, and confidently answered her questions. Having worked in media myself, I thought nothing of it, I was pleased to be able to share my knowledge, contribute to the cause. Within twenty-four hours, my laptop presented a link to the Post article from someone I must have given my card to—and then, out of the blue, an email inquiring if I was the Nance Crawford who had traveled from Los Angeles to Leicester. My response generated a cell phone conversation with one of the producers of *Take Two*, NPR's West Coast morning show originating from the KPCC FM studios at Pasadena City College (my late husband's alma mater!). He had tracked me down! We spoke for a while, and I was asked if I could I be available for an interview with Alex Cohen at 9 a.m., Los Angeles time. Considering it is my favorite morning program, it sounded fine. The six minutes I spent responding to the gentle interest of my favorite radio host were clear—as though I was in the room with her, instead of the 5,000 miles away that the Post headline had claimed. I do still cringe a bit when recalling that one of my answers included a forthright, "It's almost a life-changing event." I had no idea, at the time that, indeed, for me, it was.

When I got home and finally took the sleep test, it turned out that I had stopped breathing sixty-five times in an hour, once for twenty-three seconds. This is what sleeping an hour at a time for four years can do, other than kill brain cells at a wholesale rate. I am still astounded that I managed to get through the ten days with misfiring synapses, forgetting appointments, scheduled event times, and losing the memory of promising to return phone calls. I even managed to show up at the wrong cocktail party, at the wrong venue, and missed the official gathering of Americans altogether—misplaced the note—and, constantly, the schedule. Fortunately, my Richard cells did not fail me, and I continued to manage to snatch accurate information out of the air on our favorite subject.

**Q. You were actually ill the whole time?**

So it seems. It’s a real annoyance to appear to be perfectly healthy while standing and walking on burning feet with an easily wrenched knee, a back as unstable as cooked fettuccini, and up to the eyeballs in as much over-the-counter pain killer as is usually prescribed for a tall horse. I didn’t know I wasn’t well, I just kept moving and smiling. Least I could do to express my gratitude for the miracle of being allowed the experience. In further blessing of the therapy which has reinvigorated me in the past year is the return of my short-term memory, so that I can get out in the world and help set Richard’s record straight. So many interesting people left, to more fully discover, and get to know well.

**Q. Other than Richard, himself, what person in his life is the most fascinating to you, and why?**

Robert Stillington. Talk about your ambitious slithy tove. Morton, of course, is obviously the master of landing neatly on one’s feet; Stillington, to me, was Edward’s highly paid “Aye, m’lord,” man, but nowhere near as nimble. I find him a fascinating, although in many ways obvious, cipher.

**Q. If you wrote KING’S GAMES as a musical, what style would you choose?**

Richard is not a musical, his story is too weighty. I would love to write an opera libretto, as well as the music. Unfortunately, I know just enough about music to get myself into deep, deep trouble in the genre. Others are walking that ground and, apparently, with increasing success. My only observation regarding music and Richard’s story is that I would write Richard as a tenor (the Hero!), Edward and Buckingham as baritones, Anne as a soprano, Cecily a contralto, and Elizabeth a mezzo. Stillington and Morton would be a base and a baritone—who sings which is anybody’s choice, the other gets the default. Just to be outrageous, Clarence would be a counter-tenor. That ought to keep everyone awake.

**Q. What’s next for you as an author?**

At my age, it’s time to wrap up old business. I’m in what I hope is final draft of the first volume of a two-book project, *Return to Zenda: Escape from Zenda*, a sequel to the classic romance, *The Prisoner of Zenda*. Written in the style of the 1894 original, it remains to be seen whether or not anyone will be interested in the personal memoir of a British Victorian-Edwardian gentleman written by a semi-elderly American author. After that, I’m increasingly eyeing Stillington, and there may be a short one act in Elizabeth and her mother anticipating the arrival of Edward’s early morning visit—and, of course, the notorious Lord Lovat. We’ll see.

###

Nance can be reached at [NanceCrawford.com](http://NanceCrawford.com), where there are links to the *Take Two* interview and the song, *You Can’t go Home Again*. She has a presence on Linked In, and also can be found twice on Facebook: at a personal page, and also “Nance Crawford, Author.” She tweets irregularly via computer [@NanceCrawford](https://twitter.com/NanceCrawford) because she doesn’t own a phone smarter than she is. As with any writer, you can find her on [Amazon’s author page here](#).

~ToC~

**Interview with Diana Rubino**

Since 1991, Diana Rubino has been a Ricardian and subsequently a member of the American Branch of the Richard III Society. In addition to writing about Richard III, Diana has written several historical novels that range from Edward IV to John F. Kennedy. To see more about her books, visit her [Amazon author’s page](#).



**Q: With such a wide range of interests, what inspired you to write about Richard III in particular?**

Every Ricardian has a story about how they discovered Richard and here's mine: I'd just finished the first historical I ever wrote, *The Jewels of Warwick*, set in Henry VIII's court. I was trying to think of an idea for my next historical. I was in the Cambridge (Massachusetts, US) library, in the 'stacks' upstairs where they keep excess books, and found *Crown of Roses*, a Ricardian novel on the wrong shelf. The author thanks the Richard III Society, which I'd never heard of. This is pre-internet time, 1991/2. I contacted the Society by snail mail, and wrote my next book, *Thy Name is Love*, set around Richard and a fictional hero & heroine.

The following lists the 13 Things That Inspired me to Write *For Love and Loyalty* over the years:

1. Picturing Richard III in modern times blow drying his hair
2. The Richard III Society
3. Middleham Castle, Yorkshire
4. Blackadder (historical British sitcom)
5. The concept of time travel
6. Séances
7. Our modern conveniences such as zippers, computers, cars
8. Richard III
9. Richard's brother King Edward IV
10. Richard's other brother George, Duke of Clarence
11. The Three Stooges
12. Jackie Gleason and Art Carney in *The Honeymooners*
13. The discovery of Richard III's remains in a Leicester car park

**Q: Where did you get the idea for the story?**

I was brainstorming with my longtime critique partner Bonnie (pen name Alice M. Cole). We tossed around a few ideas for a time travel, and she said, "I can picture Richard in modern times blow drying his hair." I thought, "Wouldn't it be fun to see how Richard adapts to the 21<sup>st</sup> century?" The story grew around that one image.

**Q: Why did you write it as a comedy rather than a serious novel?**

The hedonistic skirt-chasing Edward and George play so well off the prim and chivalrous Richard; he's the perfect foil for them. Also, bringing people from the past to modern times posed many opportunities for humor, seeing our world through their eyes in the simplest ways: Richard goes to an open-air market with the modern heroine, and sees things he's never seen before: bananas, tomatoes, corn on the cob, peanuts. He begins to bite into a banana, and the heroine shows him the correct way: peel and eat it from the top. He takes an ear of corn and proceeds to eat it like the banana, from the top, but she explains that it's eaten sideways. How confusing the modern world really is! Not to mention his first glance at a running computer, connected with the world through the internet.

**Q: Why does Richard go back to his own time instead of staying here?**

Richard wanted to go back 'home' to live his life differently—and in the future, no one will ever know he was once called "King Crouchback."

**Q: Why didn't you have Anne Neville travel to the present?**

I left poor Anne back in the 15<sup>th</sup> century because I needed a modern love interest for Richard. At the time he pitched forward to modern times, he wasn't all that smitten with Anne; she was a mere diversion—as was the woman (girl? We don't know who she is) who mothered his illegitimate offspring, John and Katherine.

**Q: Why didn't you include the Grey boys in the story?**

I didn't get the Grey boys involved because they were on the fringes and the cast was already lengthy. I figured the 3 Plantagenet brothers were enough to make up a comedy team.

**Q: How can Richard return to the 15<sup>th</sup> century at the same time his bones are discovered under a Leicester car park? If Richard changed history—no Bosworth Field, etc.—then 500+ years later there should be no 'king in the car park' and no Tudor propaganda maligning him!**

I considered that paradox. When Richard returned to his own time after being here, he returned to an alternate universe, in line with the theory that time is an infinite continuum and 1485 is still 'going on' just as our time is.

Same as when Edward travels from here to the far future at the end of the story. From our perspective, it 'hasn't happened yet' but it's going on in that alternate universe, or another dimension, if you will. That's why there's some speculation that UFOs and aliens who visit Earth, if they truly do, may be from the future, and are time travelers.

**Q: OK, so what's happened in an alt-universe doesn't affect ours and Richard in our timeline still ends up in the parking lot?**

Yes, because theoretically, the universe is multidimensional, and 'alternate universes' also exist, so in an alternate universe, your fate took the path you didn't choose in this one. Maybe you wanted to go to Hollywood to get into motion pictures but didn't. But in that alternate universe, you did go to Hollywood, and might be a movie star in that universe.

It's all theory, of course, no one can prove it. I'm not sure Einstein looked into that, but it sure makes for great SciFi!

My head begins to hurt when I ponder the possibility of infinity. Never-ending? How can that be? But hold a mirror up to a mirror and think about it.

Exploring these theories is the 'serious' part of the story.

**Q: Why did you call the previously published first edition ONE TOO MANY TIMES?**

The former title *One Too Many Times* refers to the number of times Richard traveled through time, i.e., he should have stayed in our time instead of going back to the 1400s to change history, especially after he made the reputation-restoring movie and found his true love while here and now.

The title also hit me over the head. When I was searching for a title, I realized the song *One Too Many Times* by the Australian band Midnight Oil was going through my head at that moment. It's from their 1996 album, *Breathe*. Some of my book titles are song titles. So I used it as a tribute to Midnight Oil, one of my all time favorite bands. Sadly they broke up but the lead singer Peter Garrett was an MP from Sydney for several years.

**More about FOR LOVE AND LOYALTY:**

“Believing you can ‘go back and do it all over’ can create miracles.”

King Edward IV of England and his younger brothers George and Richard ‘do it all over’ when they travel across five centuries. They change their destinies and the world’s—for the better.

England, 1476: A wizard’s charm sweeps Richard, Duke of Gloucester far, far away. England, 2016: The Richard III Society’s annual séance doesn’t go quite as planned. Julianna Hammond believes their mysterious visitor really is Richard. As a loyal Ricardian, she feels obligated to educate him on past and present. In dismay Richard learns of his destiny in a certain battle, and his depiction in a certain play. Julianna and he wonder: can history be rewritten?

Back in the Middle Ages, Richard’s brothers King Edward and George Plantagenet are determined to find him—wherever he is—with the help of a little magic conjured up by a wizard. Since the wizard can’t say no to money or a lady, Edward-infatuated Elizabeth Woodville isn’t far behind them.

Changing one’s destiny is complicated. So is falling in love. When the two collide, three brothers, three women, and history will never be the same.

*For Love and Loyalty* is available in print and eBook formats on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, iTunes, and The Wild Rose Press.

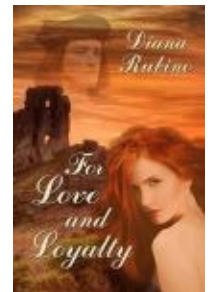
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~ToC~



(The following reviews were first published in the March, 2016 *Ricardian Register*.)

## Ricardian Review

Myrna Smith

### Eviscerating Terry Breverton...

#### **Richard III: The King in the Car Park**—Terry Breverton, Amberley, 2013

The second paragraph of the preface to this book brings up politics, citing Princess Diana and Margaret Thatcher, whose death “was generally regretted by those in the south of England, but not in many other parts of the country...There will never be a factual biography of Mrs. Hilda Margaret Thatcher”—Never? Even in 500 years?—“because our opinions and experience alter both writers and their audiences.” But what has this to do with Richard III, his life and times? Is there some mystery about Mrs. Thatcher?

In the third paragraph, racism and colonialism are introduced, and Bishop Stubbs castigated. “Stubbs glamorized the barbarian Angles, Saxons and Jutes in their genocide of the Christian Britons...” Wait a bit. Isn’t this, if not racism, an extreme form of ethnocentrism? How dare he imply that Christianity is better than the worship of Thor and Odin? Isn’t that bigotry? He also takes a swipe at the progenitor of the current Royal family, a “minor princeling from Hanover, a country the size of the Isle of Wight.” Hmm...sizeism! If size confers moral superiority, has he looked at the relative sizes of England and Wales?

Mr. Breverton, incidentally, sometimes uses “Britain” and “British” to refer to what is now Great Britain, sometimes to mean England and the English, and sometimes to apply to Wales and the Welsh only. No worries; one can usually tell by the context.

In paragraph four, the author brings up militarism, and Mr. Anthony Charles Lynton Blair. Who? Oh, he means Tony Blair. Note to aspiring political pundits: You get Brownie points for using politician’s full names, especially if they are multiple (George Herbert Walker Bush), alliterative (Hubert Horatio Humphrey), or at all odd-sounding (Margaret Hilda Thatcher). I mean, isn’t there something screamingly funny about being named Hilda, even if you never use that name?

In para number five, he attacks historical novelists. “A major problem is that historical novelists often stray from fact [doesn’t all fiction?] to form a hypothesis [a hypothesis is a scientific term, and can be tested by experimentation. A novel has a plot—usually—not a hypothesis], which will in turn sell more books.” ...which is a Bad Thing. Didn’t he write this book to sell? And didn’t he sell a copy of it to the Richard III Society Library? He disapproves of much non-fiction writing as well. “When a non-fiction writer resorts to derogatory adjectives...describing one king, say Henry VII while his protagonist Richard III is a heroic warrior...one has to beware. The more adjectives there are...the more it usually betrays its author’s biases.” I’ll tell you what betrays Breverton’s biases. “...facts are disguised and stage-managed for the benefits of the corporation instead of the state.” Ah yes. ‘Everything for the state.’ Wonder who said that? Perhaps he meant to say “people,” but slips of the pen often betray one’s true viewpoint.

In the next paragraph, he gets personal. “Even with a track record of writing over forth well-received non-fiction books...it is increasingly difficult for this author to be published.” He admits this is not all attributable to conspiracy. There are fewer people who enjoy reading nowadays. Another self-revealing remark and an example of the argumentum *ad oppressum*: I don’t get published because I’m being discriminated against. Maybe it’s just because he is not that polished a writer? More on that below.

Next he goes after the Church: “We seem to be returning to medieval times, with tourists (pilgrims) being attracted to pay to see holy relics, thus giving the Church and its environment an additional income stream.” (Money is the root of all evil, you know.) In the next sentence, with apparently no realization that he is writing of a different Church, he goes on: “Roman Catholicism in Richard’s day allowed one to go to Heaven if one confessed to one’s sins and endowed the Church with money and/or estates.” Though not a Catholic, I believe this misrepresents Catholic doctrine. For one thing, it omits any mention of penance.

Next (I’ve lost count of the paragraphs) he excoriates Thomas Penn, the author of *The Winter King*, about Henry VII. The way Breverton goes after Penn, Michael Hicks, et al. one would think they were wild-eyed Ricardians. They are not, but they do not overmuch admire Henry VII,”...there is a case to be made for Henry VII being the wisest and greatest king of England,” per Breverton. Yet he assures us he can be even-handed and dispassionate.

All this and we have only arrived at the beginning of the Introduction! Only 176 pages left. Need I go on? I'm prepared to take up my lance and do battle for the cause. Just for the cause of puncturing the Breverton ego, if nothing else.

## Part 2

Being an elaboration, with examples, of some of the points made in Part I, let's get the more trivial criticisms out of the way first.

Grammar: Pg. 82—"Her son was only 14 years younger than her." It should be "than she (was)." I can't help it. I paid attention in English Composition.

Here's one of my favorite gripes: "Devout believers in the Roman Church could literally get away with anything and still go to heaven if they confessed and paid enough to the Church. In Richard's case his gifts to the Church, in exchange for forgiveness for his sins, came from illegal confiscations of properties and fees." Literally? *Literally*?? You mean Richard is actually, literally, in Heaven right now, at the right hand of God? And more particularly, right next to Henry Tudor, who certainly made lavish gifts to the Church—which were a waste of good money, according to Mr. Breverton. More about that later. For right now, let's just say that people who confuse 'literally' and 'figuratively' are quite annoying.

More a matter of syntax than grammar is the way the author, 99 times out of 100, uses 'upon' for 'on', as in 'upon 20 January 1487.' Another annoyance, if a minor one.

Further, he doesn't seem to be able to count. Pg. 115: "Arthur was probably conceived two months before the couple wed. [My decimal digital computer says one month.], and recent Ricardian novelists are attributing this to forcible rape." [That's one 'Ricardian' novelist, Philippa Gregory—who writes mostly about the Tudors.]

Did I mention that there are no footnotes or endnotes, and only a "Partial List of Sources?" And no index! Grr-rrr!

To go on to more factual criticisms: Terry Breverton hates Richard, to be sure, but not half as much as he hates Ricardians, it would seem: "Ricardians claim that [the Beaufort line] had been bastardised by Parliament" (not just Ricardians claim this) "so Henry, the son of Margaret Beaufort, had no claim to the throne. The same could be claimed against Richard—no recent books seem to mention that. Anti-Henry writers decry the fact that Henry's real claim came via his mother, whereas in fact Richard's real right also came via his mother. Both inherited through the female line." No recent book mentions this, because it is simply not true. Richard's mother, Cecily Neville, had Beauforts in her family tree, but Richard's, and his brother Edward's, claim did not come through her. Breverton had just spent the better part of a paragraph telling us about Philippa, the daughter of Lionel of Clarence, and Anne Mortimer, without mentioning that they were from senior lines. Richard's father, from whom he derived his right to the throne, was the Duke of York, and he was descended from Edmund, Duke of York, third surviving son of Edward III. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, Henry's great etc. grandfather, was the fourth surviving son. Even if the Beauforts were unquestionably legitimate, Richard had primogeniture on his side.

"(T)he Richard III Society had always disputed that Richard had a crookbacked appearance, as usual blaming 'Tudor propaganda.', but the skeleton is the same as the body depicted by Richard's contemporaries and later writers." Most Ricardians accepted that Richard may well have had uneven shoulders, though not knowing the cause until his skeleton was discovered. Breverton is careful to use the words 'crookbacked appearance' in the text, but the blurb on the back cover clearly calls Richard a hunchback. The author thus confuses scoliosis (curvature of the spine) with kyphosis (commonly called 'hunchback') and hopes we won't notice. Or maybe he doesn't notice himself.

"A blog was recently set up called 'The Henry VII Appreciation Society. Unlike the Richard III Society, with its royal patronage, it is a one-man-band... This is one person facing the members of two national groups of the Richard III Society, plus their American, Continental, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand branches." He thus argues, on the one hand, that Richard was certainly guilty—"What we can say is that nearly every important death in his time was connected with Richard contemporaneously"—and the majority is always right—and also argues from poverty and minority status. Poor little brave David, against the Goliath of the Richard III Society. You're not going to root for Goliath, are you? (I have checked out that blog, which seems to be mainly a recording of significant dates in early Tudor history.)

That's not enough for TB (I'm tired of typing out full names), who decries 'hagiographies' of Richard, but proceeds to author one of Henry. "...Henry in his long reign was never involved in any estate-grabbing scandals, Richard was immured in them." The reader picks his/her jaw up off the floor, and reads on: "Henry redistributed estates illegally confiscated by Yorkists, but had no truck with upsetting the balance of the great houses and creating potential resentment and conflict." He contrasts Richard's shabby treatment of his mother-in-law, Anne Beauchamp, with Henry's: "In November 1487 [when Henry had been king for over two years—he was in no hurry to do right by our Nell] an Act of Parliament...restored to her the family estates. One month later, the countess conveyed most of her lands back to the Crown...This led to the effective disinheritance of her grandson, Edward, Earl of Warwick." And Breverton doesn't find that just a little peculiar? Doesn't necessarily mean that Henry bullied her, as TB accuses Richard of doing. He may simply have been a king of flim-flam artists (a viewpoint I rather favor, since I thought of it myself!).

On those occasions when Richard III and Henry VII did pretty much the same thing, such as post-battlefield executions, Breverton finds excuses for the latter, or points out that they are not the same thing at all, or Henry only did it a little bit. Henry's inactions are held up as virtues: He did not display Richard's head on a pole, "as Plantagenets were wont to do." Yes, and many of those Plantagenets were Lancastrians, Henry's ancestors and partisans. He deserves some credit for not being Margaret of Anjou, I suppose.

There is also the 'man of his times' argument, sometimes used in defense of Richard III. Breverton turns that argument on its head: "Plantagenet history is drenched in bloodshed and intrigue, whereby power was more important than legitimacy. This is Richard III's background...Several of Richard's predecessors had murdered their way to the crown or been usurpers, so his so-called royal bloodline was tangential at best..." Henry Tudor's background? "Over 200 years of fighters for independence." Welsh independence, he means. Honesty compels him to admit that Henry was twice as English (Boo! Hiss!) as he was Welsh, but he elides the fact that Henry actually did very little for the independence of Wales, though he did remove some of the anti-Welsh laws.

TB quotes copiously from Welsh poetry, hardly an unbiased source when dealing with an English king. One bard refers to King Richard ("the boar") as a 'Jew,' a "Saracen," and an "ape," none of which he was, and as "little," which was no doubt accurate. Breverton would not use such racial epithets himself, but the fact that someone in his own, less enlightened, time did, proves how much Richard was justifiably hated, and deservedly so!

Finally, TB gives an annotated list of Richard's crimes. Some so-called crimes might more accurately be described as civil torts (such as the Countess of Oxford affair). Some were undone almost as soon as they were done (the arrest of Stanley, et al). Some are just plain reaching. George Neville, Richard's ward, 'died in mysterious circumstances,' so he was murdered? The circumstances are a 'mystery' because no record survives of his cause of death, which would seem to lend credence to the conclusion that it was a natural death. If Richard did kill him, he did so at the worst possible time for his long-term benefit, so it can be put to simple bloodthirstiness. Same with the death of sister-in-law Isabel Neville, for which he had no motive whatever. (He does name Richard's guilt in her death as "unknown," which, translated, means "ridiculous.") He forgets to list Isabel's infant son, who died at the same time she did.

Terry Breverton does bring up some points that pro-Ricardian, or neutral, historians should probably give more attention to, such as the executions of Rivers, Grey, Vaughan, et al, But when one has said that, one has said just about everything. Not quite everything—the above is just a 'partial list.'

Just to show how ecumenical and even-handed I am, I am now preparing to eviscerate John Ashdown-Hill—well, mildly anyway. If there is such a thing as a mild evisceration.

### ...and John Ashdown Hill

*The Mythology of Richard III*—John Ashdown-Hill, Amberley Publishing, Stroud, Glos, 2015

In the first paragraph of his Introduction, Mr. Ashdown-Hill says: "Richard III's life story was rewritten...by the propagandists of his victorious opponents...Should anyone have the slightest doubt that such things still happen today...they have only to look at how the story of the rediscovery of the king's remains...has been edited...the story seems to have been chiefly manipulated by the University of Leicester Press Office and its associates in order to claim maximum kudos in respect of the discovery...Evidence of this activity is presented in part 7 and the appendices (of this book.)" It is understandable if JAH (I'm giving him the same initial treatment) feels he has

not gotten the proper credit for his efforts, and that he would want to set the record straight But why does he not just do so, and then drop the matter? Instead, it seems to have become a sort of King Charles' head with him.

Just as TB dragged Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair into his thesis, the author finds modern parallels, in the late Shah of Iran and in the Perons (with photographs in the picture section). He criticizes Charles Ross, not so much for writing a critical history of the king, but for accepting the story that Richard's bones had been thrown into the river, although at the time of his writing, he most likely believed this to be true. He criticizes the Leicester Visitors' Centre for not referring to Eleanor Talbot as Queen of England. Really, did he suppose that they would? As she never made any claim to be, and was never anointed, the most one can say is that she was queen *de jure*, but not *de facto*.

He finishes: ... "But in the end, it is always far better to be left with an open question to which we know that we can offer no simplistic answer, rather than to be palmed off with an easy 'answer' for which, in reality, there are absolutely no historical basis." All this, and we are only at the end of the Introduction! And, true, Ashdown-Hill is going to destroy myths, some of which we didn't even know were myths. Was Richard born in Fotheringhay? No proof of this, the author says, even though Richard probably wrote it himself in his Book of Hours. If he didn't know (albeit by hearsay) who did? Need we dig up his long-form birth certificate? The story that the King rode a white horse at the Battle of Bosworth, which we have come to accept, is likewise a myth. But he had to ride a horse of some color, and it probably does no harm to consider it a white one, at least in a fictional setting.

In spite of his claim to present the absolutely proven truth, and nothing but the truth, the author unconsciously indulges in a little myth-making of his own. The evidence of the bones, JAH states, proves that Richard was 5'8", above average height for the 15<sup>th</sup> century. No, they prove he would have been about that height if his spine was straight. Later, when discussing his burial site—the original one, he claims that "(p)resumably an average-sized grave was dug, but when Richard's corpse arrived it proved to be of somewhat above average height." So he grew post-mortem from average to tall! George, says the author, was the real shrimp of the family. This is based on a guesstimate by the chronicler Jehan de Wavrin, of the ages of George and Richard when the latter was about eight. He thought that George was the older, but only by about a year, rather than three years. Children grow at different rates, and de Wavrin might have been judging on factors other than height. JAH overlooks the fact that the Scottish prelate Archibald Whitlaw referred to Richard's slighthness to his face.

Thanks to Ricardian fiction, we have come to think of Cecily Neville as being tall and blonde and Richard of York as being short and dark. All a myth, with no proof. Ashdown-Hill thinks it was the other way around, but there is no proof of this either. Genetically, it was quite possible for both parents to be short, or for both to be tall, and the offspring to show a variety of statures.

## Part 2

I will admit that the following are simply quibbles, but as JAH has seen fit to quibble about them, so will I. On page 31, he castigates a headline writer for stating that Richard III had kyphosis (which he did not) and intestinal parasites (which he did, but so did most people at the time). The first is simply not true, the second 'terminological inexactitude,' as parasites do not 'infect,' they 'infest.' That would seem to be a distinction without a difference.

On page 74, he writes "Henry IV seized the throne from Richard II by force in 1399. Edward IV took the throne from Henry VI in battle in 1461. Henry VII took the throne from Richard III at the battle of Bosworth... Yet, curiously, not one of them is normally called a usurper, either by modern historians, or by the general public..." Really? I have never read a history in which Henry IV is not described as a usurper, and even Tudorphiles admit that Henry VII had only a weak genealogical claim.

On page 104, he examines the evidence that Richard ate a lot of fish, as Catholics were obliged to do at certain times. Then he tells us about the Bryene family, who ate fish not only on Fridays, but also on Wednesdays and Saturdays. "The Howard household did not go that far. But maybe Richard III did—making him one of the truly pious in terms of his diet." And maybe he didn't. Without a baseline, we can draw no conclusions on how many times a week he ate fish, much less his reason for doing so. Several times, JAH draws conclusions on similarly flimsy evidence or none at all. "Elizabeth [of York] was delighted at the prospect of a foreign royal marriage." There is no proof of how she felt about a betrothal to Manuel of Portugal, and the very fact that she wrote to John Howard asking him to run interference for her would seem to prove the contrary. "One result of [Richard's defeat

and death] was that Joanna [of Portugal] never married and became a religious. But that was not necessarily caused by Richard's death.

This brings up one of the themes that JAH returns to time and again. Richard was a Catholic who is now buried in a Protestant cathedral. Blasphemy, blasphemy! No, according to him, Richard was not a 'Roman Catholic.' "...the new, independent 'Church of England' coined the term 'Roman Catholic' to refer to the now opposed Catholic ('Romish') Church, while at the same time highlighting the fact that its English adherents were...of dubious patriotic loyalty." Couldn't it just be a retronym, along the lines of 'land-line phone,' or even 'Eastern' or 'Orthodox Church?' But no, it was all spin doctoring by those bad, bad, blasphemous Anglicans, who were responsible in the seventeenth century for 'inventing' (out of whole cloth) the festival of Guy Fawkes day.

Since Richard had the full funeral rites, if not the full panoply, of the church to which he belonged, and we have to assume that they "took," what difference does it make what someone else decides to do 500 years later? It does make a difference to JAH. He uncovers another evil motive for Richard's burial in the Cathedral: encouraging the tourist trade, and 'profit-making.' In this, he is very much like Terry Breverton. Profits are bad, money is bad. This seems special pleading, coming from an adherent of a church that is not exactly impoverished.

**Don't get me wrong, JAH is entitled to hold forth on his belief, as TB is to publicize his (Welsh nationalism). They are both free to proselytize for their viewpoints But it doesn't seem to have occurred to either one that you don't win converts by insulting a large proportion of your readers.**

Have I nothing positive to say about *Mythology*? Quite a bit, actually. JAH has done meticulous research on the possibility, promoted by Michael Hicks, that the bones are not those of Richard III, and finds an 85% probability that they are. He devotes the first of his appendices to this. He also points out the blood relationship of Lord Hastings to the royal family, which most historians miss. Given my natural bias in favor of Richard, I would have given this book four stars to begin with, then added a star for the completeness of his research. But then I must subtract stars for committing some of the same sins Terry Breverton does: illogical arguments, begging the question, and making the book more about him than about its presumed subject. Final verdict: 3.5 stars.

Maybe it's not possible to write a completely neutral biography of Richard III, neither a hagiography nor a demonology. Ricardian novelist Mathew Lewis comes close in *The Wars Of The Roses: The Struggle for Supremacy* (Amberley, 2015), and Michael Jones in *Bosworth: The Battle that Transformed England* (Pegasus, NY, 2015). Neither of these is, of course specifically a biography of Richard alone. I hope to review these in the next issue, as I am afraid that reviewing them in such close proximity to Mr. Ashdown-Hill's and Mr. Breverton's offering may color my reaction, one way or the other. In the meantime, here are a couple of quick overviews,

***Kings & Queens of Great Britain: A Very Peculiar History*** (With added blue blood) (Antony Mason, Scribo, Brighton, no date given) [ed. Note: Amazon lists the publisher as Book House, with the date of April 1, 2014]

This is a pocket-sized compendium of all the rulers from Saxon times to the present, with varied typography and cartoonish illustrations. The section on Richard III has him saying: "You'll be hearing from my lawyers, Mr. Shakespeare...and my lawyers have swords." The text, however, admits that "(w)e shall probably never know." Mostly but the authors may soon be hearing from Princess Anne, due to the proofreader having apparently fallen asleep. The section on the Princess Anne has her having a child seven years before her marriage. The front cover aims for ecumenicism, featuring a Saxon, a Plantagenet, a couple of Tudors, a trio of Stuarts, a Hanoverian, and Queen Victoria, as well as the present monarch.

***The Tudor Tutor: Your Cheeky Guide to the Dynasty***—(Barb Alexander, Skyhorse Publishing, Delaware, 2015).

This is written by a woman who hosts a blog of the same name, and illustrated with non-cartoonish portraits by Lisa Graves, who co-owns the copyright. In fact, the portraits, which include one of Richard III and one of James I and VI, might be called a bit flattering. Naturally narrower in scope than the previous book, and a bit thicker (but still only 148 pages), it opens with a run-down of the Wars of the Roses, "...a series of civil wars between two sides of the same family. (This is known in some families today as "the holidays.")" That is very much the spirit throughout. A few errors creep in, such as dating the Battle of Bosworth on August 7, thus going Henry Tudor a couple of weeks better in pre-dating! No doubt this is the result of translating from the Gregorian calendar to the Julian, but other dates, such as birthdates, are not changed. The reader should not beware, perhaps, but read with care.

## Eviscerating chick-lit...

*Cicely's Sovereign Secret: A Story of King Henry VII's Private Matter*—Sandra Heath Wilson, Buried River Press, London, 2015

This is the fourth in Sandra Heath Wilson's series about Cicely Plantagenet, sister of Elizabeth of York, and a bit more serious than the preceding three. It is less of a bedroom romp, though there is a fair amount of bedroom activity involved.

The cover of this book, like the previous ones, does not run to the buxom belle in ropable bodice typical of the genre. Instead it features a stylized dragon twisting around to bite its own back. A metaphor? But what does that have to do with a "Sovereign Secret?" Nothing really. Cicely's secret, which she is trying desperately to keep any Tudor from finding out, is that she has borne a son to Richard III. That, however, was revealed to us early in the series. Ms. Wilson has promised that we would learn certain things in this volume: (1) the identity of the woman (or one of them) 'who taught Henry Tudor the arts of lovemaking.' We do learn her name, but she does not appear as a character, having died. (2) The identity of the mysterious older man known as Tal. He is not Taliesin ap Gruffyd, though possibly partially Welsh, as he has written Welsh poetry. But 'Tal' is short for something else.

We also learn that John ("Jack") de la Pole has an almost feline talent for survival. He 'dies' and is resurrected twice, so far. But the secret of the title would seem to be the secret of Cicely's sovereign, Henry VII, and it would be about the son he left behind in Brittany. What is so secret about that? Almost all noblemen had at least one by-blow. There has to be more to the story than that, and there is. There is a subplot involving that by-blow, Roland de Vielleville, and Cicely's 12-year-old sister, a precocious flirt and even more precocious schemer. Even his own father calls Roland "an insufferable little prick." (Pot, say hello to kettle! Acorn, meet tree!) But let's be fair. Henry was not responsible, except genetically, for how Roland turned out, as he didn't raise him. Nor is Roland's character a deep dark secret.

It may strike the thoughtful reader that the real secret Henry is trying to hide from the world is himself. One character describes him as "unbalanced," or, as we would say nowadays, schizoid. He does seem, at times, to do or say things that he has no memory of afterward, although at other times he is quite conscious and deliberate. Cicely realizes all this, yet she sees another side to Henry. He can be "loving, warm, amusing, engaging." Perhaps Ms. Wilson, and therefore Cicely, literally sees this. The upper classes of the Renaissance had begun to use portraiture as later centuries would use photography: for propaganda purposes, but also just to mark the passage of time. We have a series of portraits or sketches of Henry, including those dating from his stay in Brittany and France. Can we see in them a hopeful and vulnerable young man who, with a little effort, could be quite charming? And who gradually morphs into the grasping old cynic of the Sittow portrait?

At least, that's one theory. He might have been, as Ms. Wilson points out in a previous book, as dull as ditchwater and about as opaque. But then why write about him at all?

Perhaps to resuscitate something of that early vulnerability, or to work up some sympathy for Henry VII, the author has given him a number of illnesses. In a previous book, she admits 'causing' Henry to come down with TB years before he actually did. In this book, she really piles it on. Though only in his early 30s, he already has gout and bad eyesight. The latter he acquired by checking his account books by candlelight. Couldn't he do that in the daytime? Reading glasses, he thinks, are for old people, so he uses a magnifying glass instead. I know spectacles were in use in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but were magnifying glasses? Somehow the idea of a Sherlock Holmes in deerstalker and doublet, carrying a magnifying glass, is a bit ludicrous. Eventually, Henry breaks down and gets a pair of specs.

That's only a minor problem, though. To advance the plot and no doubt so that Cicely can save his life, the author gives Henry a particularly nasty and painful digestive upset. This is not the result of premature aging, nor the fickle finger of fate, but of the flickering fingers of a poisoner. Like other monarchs in his position, Henry had tasters, so the culprit had to be someone close enough to him to slip poison into his wine after it had been tasted. It wasn't Cicely, and it wasn't the same person who poisoned Edward IV, so who? (This is what is known as a teaser. I know, but you will have to read the book to find out.)

There is much plotting and counter-plotting, both dynastic and personal. Richard III appears only near the end of the book when Cicely conjures him up (from her imagination—no witchcraft here) to give her some good advice. There are one or two mild anachronisms. Elizabeth, for example, wears the new French hood, but still

shaves her eyebrows and forehead in the old fashion. All her portraits, admittedly painted later, show a normal hairline.

My chief complaint about this book is that there are too many loose ends. Cicely complains of being barren, but in real life she had children during her marriage to Lord Welles ('Jon'), though they did not live very long. And speaking of long lives, how many more will Jack of Lincoln have? What will happen to Cicely and Richard's son, Leo Kymbe? He is much too young to be 'Perkin Warbeck,' who isn't even a gleam in Margaret of Burgundy's eye here. Could Leo turn out to be the bricklayer of Eastwell, assuming he could fudge his age by a decade or so? Maybe he just decided to lie low. In this story, he is in as much danger from so-called 'friends' as from Henry Tudor. Relations between Henry and his Queen are worse than ever, but he would seem to be devastated when she died. Was this faking? Did he lock himself away so nobody could see him turning gleeful cartwheels? Figuratively, of course. Gout would have prevented actual acrobatics.

But the big question is: How many more books will there be in this series? And, given that I am no longer in my first youth, am I going to be able to read them all? Come on, can't we hustle it up a bit?

***Plantagenet Princess, Tudor Queen: The story of Elizabeth of York***—Samantha Wilcoxson, Middleton, DE, 2015

Both this book and *Cecily's Sovereign Secret* might be classified as chick-lit, but could not be more different. The cast of characters have the same names, but divergent personalities. There is a different Elizabeth, a different Cicely, a different Anne, and definitely a different Henry VII. The one point of similarity is the character of Richard III. Elizabeth is confused as to her feelings toward her uncle, and he does not make any 'after-death' appearances to straighten her out.

Elizabeth is a truly pious and a truly good person (the two do not always go together). Her chief preoccupations seem to be doing good works, keeping the peace, and acting as matchmaker for her sisters, her cousins, and her aunts. But she is not entirely a goody-two-shoes. She is vain enough to regret the onset of crows'-feet and additional chins, but is philosophical about it. At times, she can indulge in a little minor pettiness; for example, refusing to move over on a bench to make room for her husband, and enjoying the minor power this gives her. Since she is highly pregnant at the time, he doesn't mind too much. She is a little irritated with her colicky second child. Henry shows more patience with little Margaret.

Elizabeth is even a little ditzzy at times. "The child robs me of my brain. I always wondered why my mother claimed that, but now I know..." I didn't have to have twelve children to know this is true, but it is only temporary. I think. At other times, she can be quite prescient: "Elizabeth loved Henry, but recognizes that at times he appeared as though he was a merchant playing king for the day. One reason that many avowed and devoted Ricardians, like Ms. Wilcoxson and myself, are fascinated by Henry Tudor, is that he seems to wear a Harlequin mask, which we yearn to peel off to reveal—what? The good man, buried however deep? Some unimagined horror? Or nothing but air? Is it just masks all the way down?"

Their marriage is fairly happy to begin with, but undergoes some rough patches later. Most marriages do, but probably not for the same reason. Few men are in a position to execute their wife's relatives.

Elizabeth always had doubts about her brother's fate. She sets out to do some detective work. It's a slow process, and when she is incapacitated by pregnancy or childbirth, she uses the help of her faithful servant, Jayne. Eventually, she does find out. Although the solution is not unique—I have met it before—it is not one of the usual suspects.

By contrast with Sandra Wilson, Ms. Wilcoxson is not comfortable with writing sex scenes, so this is implicit rather than explicit. That is not a problem. The problem here is that there is little conflict or contrast. The good people are not 100% good, and there are few outright villains. Even the murderer of the princes is not totally evil. A black-and-white, good vs evil melodrama may not be realistic, but it is possible to go too far in the opposite direction, and wind up essentially pale grey.

...and dude-lit...

***The Doom Assigned***—Richard Unwin, Middleton, DE, 2015

Unlike the previous books, this is dude-lit, with all that involves. Mr. Unwin has written a series of historical novels about the de la Halle family, armourers. This is an alternative history about alternative de la Halles. His

father, Laurence, was the King's armourer, going to Bosworth Field in that capacity. Robert is an apprentice armourer, and also a squire—too young to be a knight, but still a soldier. He will be knighted by Richard, deservedly.

Henry Tudor, though defeated, does escape the field. It is the Earl of Oxford whose body is slung over the back of a horse and taken away to a hasty burial. But don't worry; Henry will come to a sticky end—literally. Jasper Tudor and Rhys ap Thomas are captured and executed. Richard earns his sobriquet of Good King Richard by commuting their deaths to simple hanging, without the drawing and quartering. If the author intended this as irony, it went over my head.

John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, is killed on the field and succeeded by his son Thomas. But he is still in command as late as page 227, and then the Duke is referred to as Thomas, then John, then back again to Thomas. Please, proofreader needed here! Like Ms. Wilkinson, Unwin doesn't go in for sex scenes. Wilkinson is writing about a young virgin of good family. Robert may be a virgin—he's only 15—but isn't that when youths are at their randiest? Mind you, he is mature for 15, fighting like a grown man.

Robert has many hairsbreadth adventures, meeting his future stepmother, who just happens to be the daughter of Ankarette Twynho, and his own future wife, who is an attendant of Joanna of Portugal. There is an attempt, thwarted by Robert, to poison Joanna. But to what purpose is never explained. And while it is understandable that Margaret Beaufort would want to go on fighting, simply for revenge, why do the French and Scots stay in the fight, with no figurehead to back? A maddened Margaret makes an attempt on Richard's life, which is unsuccessful, indirectly because of Richard's scoliosis.

There is a modern-day epilogue where the 21<sup>st</sup> century Robert Hall and his family visit Morecambe Bay, and Robert feels a sense of déjà vu. We learn that there have been ten King Richards in all (goodness, isn't eight enough of anything?) The fifth one doesn't appear to have been any prize—according to legend, he walled his wife up. Richard VIII was pretty much a no-goodnik, too. Richard X is now ruling, one of an unbroken line of English kings. No Welsh, Scots or Germans need apply. We also learn that Richard became known as Good King Richard because "...his policy was to strip the nobles of their and rely on the goodwill of his people. He made a series of laws that benefited commerce rather than landed interest." We would like to learn just how he did that. The real Henry VII made an attempt to break the power of the nobles and support commerce, and not even his most ardent supporters calls him Good King Henry.

A fun adventure, but if you are looking for accuracy, why are you reading an alternate history?

***The Arrival of Richard III***—Kari August, Mountain Track Publishing, Denver, Co, 2015

...in Estes Park, CO, in 2012. How did that happen? Simple. He is 500+ years late showing up in the ante-room of Heaven, and discovers that his bad reputation has preceeded him, and may result in his being sent to the Wrong Place. Management agrees that mistakes were made and Richard deserves a chance to make his case. He is sent back to the home of a relative, his first cousin, 18 times removed, Ned York. The nerdish but likeable Ned is disbelieving at first, then frustrated. His cousin, both imperious and impulsive, can drive him to banging his head on the dining room table. ("You'll hurt yourself if you keep on doing that," says a solicitous Richard.) But what can he do? Blood is thicker than water, after all. And there are compensations. Somewhere along the way, Cousin Dickie has become melded with the reincarnation of Felix Under. He quickly masters the use of the vacuum cleaner and kitchen appliances (automobiles not so much) and turns out to be a gourmet cook. (Maybe Ms. August should have included some recipes? The English shortbread cookies with caramel frosting sound delicious. Yes, I know shortbread is Scottish. Try to convince Richard of that!) He also becomes addicted to a shopping channel on TV. Even that has an upside, as Richard York becomes quite the businessman. Oh, and there is romance, and a Cousin George, and the Estonian Mafia, and...you name it.

Many amusing situations result from the clash of cultures. On learning that German barbarians now occupy the English throne, Richard wants to raise an army to reclaim his kingdom. Richard's old-fashioned sense of morality and honor leads him to matchmake for his relative, and his relative's relatives and friends. There is a satisfactory ending for all concerned, even George, and yes, including Richard, who decides that the mending of his reputation is not as important as the happiness of his kin. Blood is thicker, after all.

I am happy to report that there are some people in the land of Twain and Hemmingway who understand the rules of grammar and punctuation, if there are those in the land of Shakespeare and Dickens who do not.

Utterly ridiculous—by intent—but fun.



## Eviscerating a hero...

*Henry V: The Life of the Warrior King & the Battle of Agincourt 1415*—Teresa Cole, Amberley Publishing, Strout, Gloucestershire, 2015

I must admit that Henry V has never been one of my favorite monarchs, being a bigot and a persecutor of Lollards, so I approached this books with more a sense of duty than anything else. Ms Cole has made me realize that I have been projecting modern attitudes onto the 15<sup>th</sup> century. By the standards of his own time, Henry would have been regarded as tolerant and even-handed. And the Lollards were not entirely without stain. John Wycliffe's original intent was to reform the Catholic Church, which he regarded as corrupt. (Doubly so, since there were two separate and distinct popes in his time, both corrupt. It is correct to regard Wycliffians as proto-Protestants, perhaps. But the movement soon became as much political as religious. Nor is it correct to regard Wycliffe's followers as democrats (small 'd'—or small-r republicans either). He was not for the separation of church and state, in the Jeffersonian ideal—the government should keep its nose out of the church's business. He believed that the state should step in and reform the church if it wouldn't reform itself. This was only a step, as the author points out, from the belief that the people should step in and reform the state, if it showed no signs of reforming itself. Hence the Peasant's Revolt. Like Martin Luther later, Wycliffe was no doubt shocked by what he had indirectly brought about.

This was before the beginning of Henry V's reign, of course, but an important part of the background, as was the invasion and usurpation of Henry's father, Henry IV, or Henry of Bolingbroke. Up front, Ms. Cole gives us a Cast of Characters, and in appendices, mini-biographies and family trees. The average reader may still find the relationships a bit confusing. Everybody seemed to be related to everybody else in the upper classes at least six different ways. Henry and his brothers might have been their own uncles in one way or another, but they were very close and supportive as a family. The author suggests that one reason for this might have been that they lost their mother so early, when Henry was only seven, and all four of them were born between 1386 and 1390. Thomas and John were raised, like their older brother, to be soldiers, and the youngest, Humphrey, to be a scholar. Whether this was arbitrary or reflected a natural bent on their parts cannot be known. Not every king had such loyal brothers.

Ms. Cole writes concisely, in a straightforward, informal manner, but without inserting personal opinion into the matter. She makes the convoluted politics of the time as clear as anyone can, and gives a very good overview of the titular battle—which of course was far from being Henry's only battle or even the only battle of that campaign. Agincourt does, however, take up several chapters: "Preparation," "Harfleur..." the battle itself, and the aftermath. Henry was a skilled general, but he could have achieved little or nothing without good troops, and more specifically, longbowmen. One archer by himself wasn't much, but "a force of several thousand longbowmen could send a storm of some 30,000 arrows a minute towards an enemy, 'so thickly and evenly that they fell like snow.'..." In effect a super-weapon, the WMD of their day.

One thing she omits that I think should have been included is a portrait of the king, other than the half-face that appears on the dust-jacket. (Why do publishers do that?) Henry may have chosen to be painted in profile because of an arrow scar that disfigured one side of his face. It may have been a badge of honor, but it wasn't pretty. The author describes the probable method of removing the arrow point from his face, which I will not quote here, both for reasons of space and the *euuew* factor. Other pictures are well-chosen, however.

Ms. Cole doesn't doubt that Henry had charisma; a great war-leader must have that. But little can come across on the printed page. She tries to ameliorate, as far as possible, his stiff and priggish image, without giving him the kind of fictional past that Shakespeare did. Cole thinks that there are so many reports of his rowdiness as a young man that there must be a little truth to them, but it would seem to have been very little. He had no reported mistresses or illegitimate children. Not surprising in his monkish son, but Henry V? A soldier? A man's man?

Teresa Cole sums up Henry's legacy this way: "When we want to be inspired by a national hero he is more accessible than Alfred the Great, more English than Richard the Lionheart, more stirring than Lord Nelson. It was not a coincidence that in the dark days of the Second World War Churchill demanded that a film be made of Shakespeare's Henry V..." One of his legacies is that he was English, and thought of himself as such. Closer to his own time, Henry had a great influence over his successors, who all, in their own way, tried to emulate him, some militarily, some in his probity, some in their Englishness. At least this was true until 1603. The Stuarts came from a different tradition.

I can't say that I have come to love Henry (it seems undue familiarity to think of him as Hal) but I certainly have a new-found respect for him, and for the author as a biographer/historian. Will she possibly tackle his father, Henry IV, next? It might be difficult to make the tubby little man with the funny beard (as he appears on his effigy) into a leading man, but he does deserve a readable biography. And speaking of effigies, what happened to Henry V's head? Not his real one, but the one on his effigy. The one there now is a replacement, the original, made of solid silver, having been stolen. Melted down long ago, I suppose.

One final comment: besides the battles and the politics, Ms. Cole gives us a glimpse of life in this period (late 14<sup>th</sup>—early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries). If time travel ever becomes possible, my advice is to give that period a miss. Between revolting peasants, revolting hygiene, war, and the very real threat of starvation—for the nobles as well as the peasants—it was a hellish time to live. No doubt the men and women of the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries thanked their lucky stars that they lived in a more advanced and modern society.

### **On eviscerations in general, and other medical (?) procedures...**

*Dragon's Blood and Willow Bark: The Mysteries of Medieval Medicine*—Toni Mount, Stroud, Glos, 2015

This began as the authors MA thesis in medieval medicine. The origin of medicine goes back much farther than the Middle Ages, of course. Even animals practice it in a way, e.g. by eating grass to help digestion. Ms. Mount puts some of the blame for communicable disease on animals. We catch them by living in close proximity to domestic animals, as farmers. "The flu epidemic of 1914-18 may have originated in ... distemper or rinderpest." But even hunter-gatherers got sick. Otzi the Iceman carried a laxative in his baggage.

So why should we be reading a book about Medieval Medicine? Just to make us feel good about ourselves? Partly, but let's not be too smug. Blood poisoning, which was responsible for many deaths in earlier centuries, and which was one of the complaints that 'dragon's blood' was supposed to alleviate, accounts for approximately 37,000 deaths in the UK every year. Nor were the physicians of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries entirely ignorant about hygiene. The Tudor physician John Caius blamed 'dirt and filth' for the spread of the 'English sweat.' If it was what we now call hanta virus, spread by rodents, he was quite right. Much of medieval medicine is still with us, in so-called 'alternative treatment.' Willow bark, for instance, was what people used for aspirin before there was aspirin. By experimentation, I have proved that if you are allergic to aspirin, you will also be allergic to willow bark, and if you find aspirin ineffective, you will also find willow bark ineffective. Leeches are also making a comeback. I have not experimented with this.

Ms. Mount gives us a run-down on the hierarchy of medieval healers: physicians, surgeons (doubling as barbers), apothecaries, not to mention midwives, wise-women, amateur healers, astrologers, etc. We may consider the theory of the four humours a bit ridiculous, but what of the 'government food pyramid,' which seems to change every few years. The ob/gyn field is covered at length. Why did medical books of the period show the foetus in the womb as a miniature adult, when they surely knew what a newborn baby looked like? "Another mystery," says Mount, but maybe it was just artistic convention.

The author has studied the post-mortem reports of several royals, including a section headed "A Most Unfortunate King—Richard III," but also including Mary I, Edward VI, Charles II, and others. The most poignant, however, is the skull of a soldier from the mass grave at Towton, pieced together and fleshed out, much as Richard's was. This is a citizen-soldier, a top-sergeant type, a middle-aged veteran of several battles, much like your relative who fought in France, or Vietnam, or Kuwait, or... We have to assume that he, and all the others buried at Towton, had at least minimal funeral rites, and that modern forensic scientists treated his remains with respect. But did he, and they, have a re-burial ceremony? If so, under the auspices of what faith? And would it make any difference to Breverton or Ashdown-Hill?

The author issues a disclaimer on the dust jacket: "No animals, large, furry, or mythological, were harmed during research for this book." That is, unless you consider humans a large furry animal. Of course, the research was not done by Toni Mount, but by inquiring minds such as those of the Emperor Frederick II, who determined to raise a selected group of children with minimal human contact, to see what language they would speak in a state of nature. (James IV of Scotland is supposed to have done something similar.) Nobody should knock medical experimentation, though. The author offers this example:

In 1747 James Lind conducted an experiment to find a cure or preventative for scurvy, by using a control group and dividing his experimental subjects into six different groups. Only one was given the specific which eventually worked (oranges and lemons)...The total size of his experimental group? Twelve sailors.

A most interesting study. I think I'll stay in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, thanks.

**The Secrets of the House of York**—Marylynn Salmon, Bernards Township, NJ: Liberty Corner Press, 2015

Marylynn Salmon has read widely in the literature related to fifteenth-century England, and in other subjects as well. The book is nicely produced, and includes numerous color illustrations. There are events of the historical record about which Salmon wishes for greater clarity, and she has therefore set about to create an historical narrative more meaningful to her, admitting that she has proposed answers “beyond the reach of current proof techniques.” (p. xii) Salmon is especially interested in “irregular sexual relationships at the highest levels of English society,” (p. 11) and what implications such relationships had in the unfolding of English history in the era of the Wars of the Roses.

One major focus in the narrative is the 1464 marriage of King Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville. As background, Salmon rejects the historically accepted dates for the birth of Edward and his brother Edmund, earl of Rutland, as 28 April 1442 and 17 May 1443, respectively. She asserts that the brothers were born between 1430 and 1432 when their father Richard, duke of York, was living in France. (p. 20) Moreover, Salmon believes that the mother of the brothers was not York's wife Cecily, daughter of Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland, and his second wife Joan Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and Katherine Swynford. The proposed mother of the boys is Jacquetta of Luxembourg (d. 1472), daughter of Pierre de Luxembourg, count of St Pol, and Marguerite del Balzo, although Salmon admits that there is no evidence for an affair between York and Jacquetta. (pp. 11-12) Jacquetta was the niece of Louis de Luxembourg, bishop of Théroutanne and Henry VI's chancellor in France, who in 1433 presided over the marriage of Jacquetta to the recently widowed John of Lancaster, duke of Bedford and uncle of Henry VI. John of Bedford died in 1435, and his wealthy young widow went on to marry the young and handsome Sir Richard Woodville (d. 1469). The marriage to Bedford was childless, but not so that to Woodville, for at least thirteen children were born to the couple. The first child of Sir Richard and Jacquetta was Elizabeth Woodville, born about 1437, who became the queen of Edward IV. Thus, according to the supposition of Salmon, the marriage between Edward IV and Elizabeth was incestuous because they had the same mother. One reason Edward IV was drawn to Elizabeth was her links through her mother to the House of Lancaster, and a marriage would be a peaceful bridge between the House of Lancaster and that of York. (p. 308) Beyond that, however, Salmon asserts that Elizabeth's father was not Sir Richard Woodville but rather Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, and the marriage to Woodville was just a cover so that an affair between Jacquetta and Somerset could continue. We are then informed that Richard, duke of York, wished to renew his affair with Jacquetta, and thus the true reason for the rivalry between York and Somerset was not a matter of power politics as historians have long believed but a contest for the sexual favors of Jacquetta. (p. 310)

But why did Woodville consent to play cuckold in this imagined affair for the benefit of Somerset? It was to pay off Woodville's ransom after being captured at Gerberoi in 1435 as well to be the beneficiary of patronage. (pp. 331-34) Henry VI, Salmon tells us, believed that a clandestine marriage existed between Somerset and Jacquetta, and the disapproving Henry ordered Woodville to be Jacquetta's true husband. (pp. 329, 332) Jacquetta's father, incidentally, did not just die from illness but was assassinated in 1433 on orders from Duke Philip of Burgundy, who was outraged at the marriage of Jacquetta to the duke of Bedford because that impeded Burgundy's defection from his alliance with England in favor of joining forces with King Charles VII of France. (p. 308)

Another reason for the incestuous marriage between Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville was alchemy. (p. 482) The spiritual side of alchemy appealed to Edward, and was a pathway to immortality. (pp. 483-84) Alchemy had as an objective the making of gold from base materials, and was of interest in an era of bullion shortage. Quoting Salmon: “According to alchemical principles, the conjunction of metals that had their origin from the same source and therefore were the most similar of all opposites was the union most conducive to transmutation and the production of gold, the perfect metal. The belief that substances arising from the same source could produce perfection when conjoined may have arisen from the tradition of vitalism in alchemy.” (p. 533) Thus an incestuous union of a man and woman with a common parent would be the way to produce a perfect child. (p. 537) Edward

and Elizabeth, thinking in terms of alchemy, may have been seeking to initiate a return to the human perfection lost by the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. (p. 550)

Returning to the duke of York's son Edward, Salmon wishes us to remember that the younger brothers George, duke of Clarence, and Richard, duke of Gloucester, knew that both Edward and Edmund were illegitimate. George thought that he therefore was the lawful heir of York, and that explains the trouble George caused for Edward while Edward was king. (pp. 34-35, 139) Still, the duke of York just might have legitimized his two eldest sons (p. 37), although there is no proof either that they were illegitimate or were legitimized. When Edward became king in 1461, his father and brother Edmund were no longer living, having died in battle, and George (d. 1478) was the next brother in line.

In 1464 Edward IV married Elizabeth Woodville. Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, who had been a great supporter of Edward, was distressed by the marriage. Part of the distress, as is generally accepted, was because Warwick wanted to arrange a French marriage for Edward while Edward was favoring good relations with the duke of Burgundy, and also because Warwick was busy negotiating for a marriage when Edward was already married. Another reason for Warwick being upset, by Salmon's reckoning, was that the marriage of Edward and Elizabeth was incestuous. (p. 114, 135) Incestuous relationships were alluring for Edward (p. 11), and if a papal dispensation had been obtained for the irregular marriage, Salmon thinks it must have been destroyed (in the papal archives as well as the English?) (p. 114) It is also suggested that the incestuous marriage was the reason the daughters of Edward and Elizabeth were not married when Edward died in 1483. (p. 112) Knowledge of the incestuous nature of the royal marriage was apparently current among the political classes (p. 162), by Salmon's reckoning, but somehow no record or comment about it has survived in the historical record.

Richard, duke of Gloucester, the only surviving son of Richard, duke of York, and a man of sexual virtue (p. 183), assumed the throne in 1483 as King Richard III following the death of Edward IV. Richard III could appropriately bypass the two sons of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville because he was the representative of the legitimate York family line. (p. 174) Salmon does not believe that the sons of Edward IV, Edward (who is commonly known as Edward V) and Richard, duke of York, were murdered by or on the orders of Richard III. (p. 192) Salmon proposes that the two boys were spirited away from England during Richard III's coronation banquet into the protective care of King Richard's sister, dowager Duchess Margaret of Burgundy. (p. 193) The young brothers, we are asked to believe, grew up with secret identities. (p. 196) The older boy, Edward V, grew up to be the humanist scholar Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam. (p. 367) A considerable amount of biographical information is presented on Erasmus, which is relevant to the story of the House of York only if one can accept that Erasmus and Edward V are the same person. Richard, the younger brother, was not of a scholarly disposition like Edward and wanted to be the champion of his family legacy. Richard also had a double, the pretender Perkin Warbeck. Richard, with the aid of James IV of Scotland, staged a brief invasion of England in 1496 and was present for the Cornish revolt of 1497. (pp. 414-35) Warbeck was present as well, and was captured by the forces of King Henry VII. Richard of York may have escaped to become a sanctuary man at Glastonbury Abbey or Henry VII may have managed to capture and execute him. (pp. 436-39) York's wife, Katherine Gordon, lived until 1537, and their son lived his life as a commoner in Reynoldson near Swansea in Wales under the name of Richard Perkins. (p. 268)

King Richard III, as everyone accepts, was killed at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485, and the victor of that battle was Henry, earl of Richmond, who became King Henry VII, the first king of what is by tradition called the Tudor dynasty. Henry's mother was Margaret Beaufort, a descendant of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster and Katherine Swynford. Margaret Beaufort's parents were John Beaufort, duke of Somerset (d. 1444) and Margaret Beauchamp of Bletsoe. We have earlier met Duke John's younger brother and successor Duke Edmund, who was killed at the Battle of St Albans in 1455. Margaret Beaufort holds considerable interest for Salmon. Margaret's son Henry was born early in 1457 soon after the death of her husband Edmund Tudor, earl of Richmond. Salmon suggests that Edmund Tudor as well as Edmund Beaufort were murdered by Edward, earl of March and future King Edward IV. (p. 260-62) Margaret in time was married to Henry Stafford (d. 1471) and later to Thomas Lord Stanley (d. 1504). Salmon presents Margaret Beaufort as a staunch enemy of Richard III and a woman who wanted to kill the sons of Edward IV and who was determined to place the Lancastrian line back on the English throne. (pp. 195, 215-23)

The historical consensus is that Margaret Beaufort had only one child, Henry VII, and that complications with the birth likely prevented the conception of additional children in subsequent marriages. Salmon has an alternative narrative. Salmon suggests that Edward, earl of March, seduced Margaret Beaufort and they contracted a secret and never announced marriage about 1453. (pp. 250-61) When Edmund Tudor married Margaret, he forced Margaret to disavow Edward, and Tudor conveniently died soon after. When the young widow married Henry Stafford, Edward convinced Stafford that he was the legitimate husband so the secret marriage could continue. (p. 266) The marriage to Lord Stanley was also a cover for the Edward-Margaret affair. (pp. 224-26) This was the secret marriage, Salmon believes, that made the children Edward and Elizabeth Woodville illegitimate, not the marriage to Lady Eleanor Boteler (d. 1468) that has attracted the attention of historians. Lady Eleanor was a convenient ruse in 1483 for keeping secret the marriage of Margaret Beaufort and Edward of March. (pp. 276-78) Salmon boldly offers the names of possible sons born to Margaret and Edward: Archbishop William Warham of Canterbury, Archbishop Matthew Parker of Canterbury, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, and Bishop John Fisher of Rochester. (pp. 268-76)

This review has concentrated on Salmon's theme of the unknown secrets of the family of York. Other byways of Salmon's book include: possible incest between Edward the Black Prince and his wife Joan of Kent because the father of both was King Edward III (p. 570); the founding of the Order of the Garter by Edward III may have been influenced by spiritual alchemy (p. 568-69); Richard II had a malformed leg or foot and had a messiah complex (pp. 573, 579); possible incest between Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, and his wife Eleanor Cobham because both were the children of King Henry IV (pp. 580-86); the Lancastrian SS livery collar may have had hidden and forbidden religious meaning (pp. 560-64); possible incestuous sexual relations between Edward IV and his sister Margaret of Burgundy (pp. 564-68); the Jewish Cabbala (pp. 518-33); Richard III might have gotten his niece, Elizabeth of York, pregnant (p. 212); Zoroastrianism (pp. 541-49); and that the imposter Lambert Simnel truly was the son of George, duke of Clarence (pp. 411-14).

Beginning from a foundation of accepted historical knowledge, a narrative has been offered by Salmon that has been augmented by speculation, extended by imagination, supplemented by whole-cloth fabrication, and compounded by fantasy. The result is historical fiction.

Compton Reeves

## Music about Richard

Three CD albums by *The Legendary Ten Seconds*, review by Elke Paxson

As Ricardians we are probably here to read and learn what we can about Richard III—his life, his times and the places connected to him or his reign. Richard and music about him was certainly nothing I had thought about before.

If I may, here are some notes and thoughts about the music of *The Legendary Ten Seconds*, who write and perform Ricardian-era music. Perhaps many of you know about this English group that produced not one, but three full CD albums with music about the life and times of Richard III. That's quite an accomplishment in itself. If you haven't listened to their songs you are missing out big time. So was I, until I read the review of their second CD, *Tant Le Desiree*, in the March 2015 *Ricardian Bulletin*. I thought it might be interesting to listen to something that would certainly be different. I purchased their first CD and it really surprised me as to how much it impressed me. All the lyrics are pithy and meaningful. They tell stories of Richard's life, his struggles and his fate. Soon thereafter I purchased their second CD that I enjoyed likewise. The music and the sound are diverse, catching, and dynamic with some beautiful harmonies. You will hear a great mix of English folk, rock and elements of medieval music with a modern touch. Some incorporate a few fitting and nicely done sound effects. If the sound is difficult to imagine you might want to go to the Internet and listen to *The Boar Lay Slain* and/or *Loyalty Binds Me* to give you an even better idea of this special and beautiful music by Ian Churchward and *The Legendary Ten Seconds*.

Listening to their music I was curious about how one gets the idea of writing and making music about Richard III so I asked Ian Churchward who wrote most of the songs. With his permission, here is his reply: "The Richard III music all started with a song idea. A nice flute sounding keyboard melody played by Lord Zarquon. We managed to work out the structure for the verse of a new song idea one evening. We didn't have any ideas for words or the chorus. A few days later I saw a documentary on TV about the discovery of Richard III's grave in Leicester so I

thought I would see if I could make the song idea into a song about Richard III. That song idea became a song called *The House Of York*. When we had finished recording the song I suggested that we try to write a whole album about Richard III. I read lots of books about Richard III,...it was great fun reading those books and then composing the songs. My wife wrote some of the words and Lord Zarquon helped to write some of the melodies. I managed to write so many songs about Richard III that we had enough for a second album and then a third."

Ian Churchward and the musicians of the *Legendary Ten Seconds* have treated us to an astonishing set of 3 CDs—the latest is simply called *Richard III*—with lively, sometimes exciting, thoughtful, soothing, entertaining songs that are quite unique.

The first two songs—*Sheriff Hutton* and *Richard Liveth Yet* are dynamic songs with a swinging rhythm. *Written At Rising* has wonderful sound effects of running water, yet its instrumentation gives it a beautiful medieval flair. Other songs are striking with their beautiful harmony. *The Year of Three Kings* and *Hollow Crown* have a nice swinging rhythm. They are accompanied with diverse instruments, but the acoustic guitar and a lively flute stand out as does an electric keyboard. *Remember My Name* is filled with beautiful harmonies that strike a chord inside. *Lord Lovell's Lament* is a slow song that stands in its sweet presentation. There are other songs, but the last song on the CD—*How Do You Rebury a King*—perfectly rounds out this album. Ian Churchward and musicians of *The Legendary Ten Seconds* have created an astonishing set of thrilling, thoughtful, sometimes soothing and always lively songs. The lyrics are pithy and meaningful. Some have nicely flowing melodies while others have a rocking beat that make you tap your fingers. They tell stories of Richard's life, his struggles and fate. I certainly would not want to miss any more of their CDs, and I don't think you will be disappointed with their work.

*The Legendary Ten Seconds* donate their profits to a British Scoliosis Organization

~ToC~

## Research Duplicates & Overstock Book Sale

The Research Library and the Sales Office are offering their excess books for sale. All proceeds will be donated to the Richard III Society, American Branch. The books and shipping costs for both are:

Books: \$2 donation for first book + \$1 for each additional book.

S&H: \$5 for one book, \$7.50 for two or more books.

International shipping costs will be quoted.

### Research: Non-Fiction Books for Sale

The American Branch Research Library still has a few duplicate books for sale. Susan Troxell, Research Librarian, is making this final offer before she donates them to a public library:

Giles St. Aubyn, *Year of Three Kings*

Charles Ross, *Edward IV*

Charles Ross, *Richard III*

J.R. Lander, *Wars of the Roses*

J.R. Lander, *Crown & Nobility 1450-1509*

J.R. Lander, *Government & Community 1450-1509*

Jeremy Potter, *Good King Richard?*

Paul Murray Kendall, *Warwick the Kingmaker*

Pamela Tudor-Craig, *Catalogue to NPG's Richard III Exhibit (1973)*

### Process:

Contact Susan Troxell at [researchlibrary@r3.org](mailto:researchlibrary@r3.org) with your choice(s) and ship to address

Susan will email invoice to be paid by check or paypal

Once payment is received, books will be shipped.

### Sales Office Books for Sale (because the list is long, alternating blocks of two are shaded)

Abbott, Jacob, *Richard I*

Abbott, Jacob, *Richard II*

Abbott, Jacob, *Richard III*

Ashdown-Hill, John, *The Last Days of Richard III*

Aubyn, Giles St., *The Year of Three Kings*

Baldwin, David, *RICHARD III*

Bennett, Michael, *The Battle of Bosworth*

Blixt, David, *The Master of Verona*

Carson, Annette, *Richard III: The Maligned King*

Cheetham, Anthony, *The Life and Times of Richard III*

Clark, David, *Barnet 1471: Death of the Kingmaker (Battleground: Wars of the Roses)*

Dockray, Keith, *Richard III: A Source Book*

Farrington, Robert, *The Killing of Richard the Third*

Fields, Bertram, *Royal Blood: Richard III and the Mystery of the Princes*

Gairdner, James, *History of the Life and Reign of Richard III (New Portway Reprints)*

Gravett, Christopher, *Tewkesbury 1471: The Last Yorkist Victory (Praeger Illustrated Military History)*

Hammond, P. W., *The Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury*

Hammond, P. W., *Richard III: The Road to Bosworth Field (History and Politics)*

Hammond, Peter, *Richard III and the Bosworth Campaign*

Hancock, Peter A., *Richard III and the Murder in the Tower*

Hicks, Michael, *Richard III*

Hicks, Michael, *Richard III: The Man Behind the Myth*

Hipshon, David, *Richard III and the Death of Chivalry*

Hutton, William, *Battle of Bosworth Field: Between Richard the Third and Henry, Earl of Richmond*

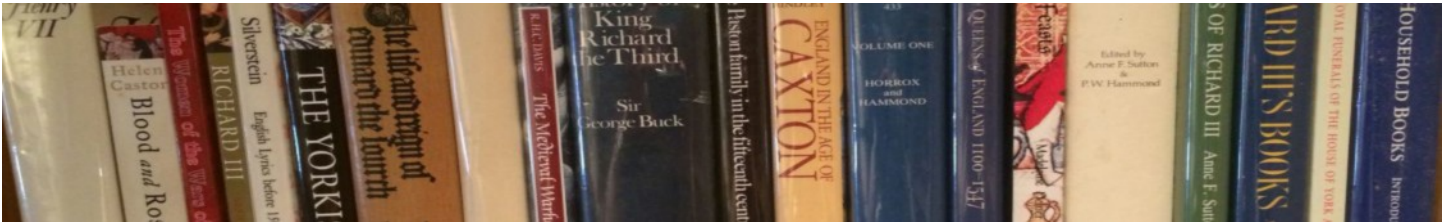
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 Weir, Alison, *The Princes in the Tower*  
 Wilkinson, Josephine, *RICHARD III: The Young King To Be*  
 Woodward, G.W.O., *Richard III: A Pitkin Guide (Royalty)*

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~ToC~





# ex libris

Rare and delightful books from the non-fiction library

Susan Troxell

I am pleased to announce that the Non-Fiction Library has been completely restored to its “former glory” as the project to replace the books lost by the US Postal Service in 2015 has been fully executed. It was truly amazing to see 24 members donate over \$1,400 to this cause, which allowed me to purchase replacements and acquire additional new texts to expand our collection of research materials. Our library now contains a vast array of primary sources, rare and out-of-print books, and almost all those from leading scholars and writers in the field of Ricardian study.

We were also able to sell 55 surplus copies, raising \$500. This left 40 surplus titles, many of which are still being offered for sale to the public and our membership (see announcement herein). The rest of the duplicate books were donated to The Free Library of Philadelphia’s “Book Corner”, which sells used books for \$3 or less, the proceeds of which go toward one of the country’s oldest non-profit, free libraries serving the educational needs of a large and diverse population. If you would like to know more about The Free Library, please check out their website [here](#). The Free Library’s collection of ancient manuscripts contains the famous *Edward IV Roll*, the incredible genealogical roll of ancestry that was used to promote the Yorkist entitlement to the English throne. They have digitized and made public the entire roll, and have included a scholarly annotation to it. You can find it [here](#).

It seems that, almost every month, a new book is being published about Richard III, his contemporaries, or his time period. I try my best to sift through the new titles and acquire those that would add research value to our library. However, if you see a book that you think should be added to our collection, please feel free to send me an email ([researchlibrary@r3.org](mailto:researchlibrary@r3.org)) and I will do my best to accommodate the request. We also accept donations of books. All you need to do is send me a list of the titles you wish to donate, and I will let you know whether they can find a new home here. I would like to make a “shout out” to members Carol Adams and Carole Bell, who recently donated many items to the Non-Fiction Library, including back issues of *The Ricardian* and James Gairdner’s multi-volume 1904 edition of *The Paston Letters*.

Currently, my focus has been on acquiring additional primary source material, such as *The Plumptre Letters*, *Jean de Wavrin’s Chroniques*, and *The Parliamentary Rolls of Edward IV*. Going forward, I hope to acquire *The 1484 Parliamentary Roll of Richard III* and *The Beauchamp Pageant*. In my opinion, primary source materials are a critical part of a research library. But I’ve also been able to acquire all the recent books about the 2012 archeological discovery of Richard III’s skeletal remains, as well as other new publications about the Wars of the Roses and the 15<sup>th</sup> century. All these, and others, are available to members for only the cost of outbound/inbound postage (usually does not exceed a total \$10 for 3 books). I am also available to answer questions, conduct research, or forward by email any selected portions of texts that can be scanned. So, please feel free to use this feature of your Society membership! Your “inner scholar” or “inquiring mind” will be deeply gratified.

## **Recent Acquisitions of the Non-Fiction Library:**

Ashdown-Hill, John, *The Wars of the Roses* (Donated by UK R3S)

Bradfield, N., *Historical Costumes of England – 11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (Donated by Carole Bell)

Davis, Norman (ed.) *Paston Letters and Papers* (3 vols.)

Gairdner, James, *The Paston Letters* (4 vols) (Donated by Carole Bell)  
Gies, Frances & Joseph, *A Medieval Family: The Pastons of 15<sup>th</sup> Century England* (Donated by Carole Bell)  
Goodman, Anthony, *A Traveller's Guide to Early Medieval Britain* (Donated by Carole Bell)  
Horrox, Rosemary (ed.), *The Parliamentary Rolls of Edward IV* (2 vols.)  
Kirby, Joan (ed.) *The Plumpton Letters & Papers*  
Williamson, Audrey, *The Mystery of the Princes* (Donated by Carole Bell)

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