



Richard III Society, Inc.

Vol. 4 No. 1

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# Ricardian Chronicle

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

"It is with sadness that we announce the passing today (18th May 2018) of Dr John Ashdown-Hill. A prolific and popular author, John played an important, not to say critical, role in the Looking for Richard Project. It was he who tracked down Mike Ibsen, one of the two whose DNA helped to confirm that the remains in the car park were actually those of King Richard. When we first learnt of John's illness, one could only wonder how long he had before he succumbed, Motor Neurone Disease\* coming in various forms, some worse than others. For John, his passing was probably a blessing though he will be much missed by his friends and members of the Society. Our thoughts and prayers go with them all at this time. The news comes too late for the June issue of the Ricardian Bulletin but there will be a full tribute in the September issue."—Executive Committee, Richard III Society

\* Motor Neurone Disease is any of several neurodegenerative disorders that selectively affect motor neurons, the cells that control voluntary muscles of the body that includes amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).



John's Tribute -- Artist: Riikka Nikko

Please contact Riikka Nikko at [riikka.kyllikki@gmail.com](mailto:riikka.kyllikki@gmail.com) for permission to use "John's Tribute."

In this Issue:

Interview with Marla Skidmore

The Other Woman: An analysis of Eleanor Talbot Butler

Schallek Awards

Ricardian Review

ex libris

From the 1966 - 1991 Archive

Go to Page 2 for Table of Contents (ToC).

# *Contents*

<b>Interview with Marla Skidmore</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Other Woman</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Schallek Awards</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Ricardian Reading</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>ex libris</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Excerpts from 1966 Ricardian Register Vol. 1 No. 1</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Board, Staff, and Chapter Contacts</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Membership Application/Renewal Dues</b>	<b>22</b>

## 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)

## Interview with Marla Skidmore

Marla Skidmore grew up in a small medieval city in Northern England where she met and married her soldier husband. They lived a typically military life—in various postings all over the UK and Europe for a number of years—until she decided to return home to become a mature student at Leeds University. She told her family it would only be for four years. Seven years later she emerged with a dual Honours Degree in English and History; a Master's Degree in English Literature and a teaching Diploma and began a new career—Marla became a College Lecturer.

When a serious health issue resulted in her taking a prolonged career break, she turned to the writing in which she had dabbled since university and began her first novel—a romantic murder mystery, taking place during the Napoleonic Wars. It was set aside when Richard III's grave was rediscovered. *RENAISSANCE* is the result.



### **Have you always wanted to write?**

No, I am not one of those authors who have always known that they've wanted to write; I came quite late to it. I have always loved words though and was reading at a very early age—before I started school. As I grew a little older I often got into trouble at home for having my nose in a book when I should have been doing chores. Our local Library was one of my favourite places to be and Historical Fiction became one of my favourite genres. I clearly remember my delight in discovering Frederick Marryat's *THE CHILDREN OF THE NEW FOREST*—a story set during the English Civil War after the defeat of Charles I, which follows the fortunes of four children who hide from their Roundhead oppressors. This was followed by authors such as Jean Plaidy, Georgette Heyer, and Elswyth Thane who wrote the classic Colonial Williamsburg novels.

### **When did you know you wanted to become a writer?**

That's a memory that always makes me smile. It was during my third year at University—I was studying for a four-year dual honours degree in English and History. One of the courses of study was the Romantic Fiction; the successful formula of the Harlequin romance novels was a category we looked at. A fellow student and I decided we could easily write one. We decided upon a historical romance set during the early years of the reign of Henry VIII. We had enormous fun in meticulously planning and researching it and with much laughter wrote the first few chapters but somehow never got around to finishing it—it was the beginning of a long friendship though, and also the realization that I liked to write. From then onwards I wrote on and off—short stories, articles, poetry—even the beginnings of a couple of novels (historical of course). However, family and career commitments always took precedence. It is said that every cloud has a silver lining—my cloud was breast cancer which forced me to take a long career break—the silver lining was that it enabled me to concentrate on writing.

### **When did you first become aware of RIII?**

I can't really put my finger on it—I suppose I have always known of him, you see I grew-up in Richard III country, in the small medieval city of Ripon located between Middleham and York. We northern folk have always had an affection for 'good king Richard.' However, I became really interested in him when I read Josephine Tey's *DAUGHTER OF TIME* in my late teens. Inspector Alan Grant's methodical, analytical sifting through all the existing evidence and his ultimately finding that Richard did not have a case to answer was an eye opener. I went on to read Paul Murray Kendall's *RICHARD THE THIRD*. His lyrical prose really brought him to life for me as a man.

### **Is this your first book?**

It is my first published book—the way it came to be written is a story in itself. I was at lunch in York with a group of university friends at the time of the rediscovery of Richard's grave—during all the controversy about his reburial place. You can guess what the topic of conversation was—that his wish to be buried in York Minster should be respected or if not, then as an anointed king, he should be buried in Westminster Abbey. I found myself speculating aloud about what he would have made of all the fuss if he were here. One of our group—a fellow Ricardian and a highly respected Medieval historian—challenged me to write a story. Her words were: 'write

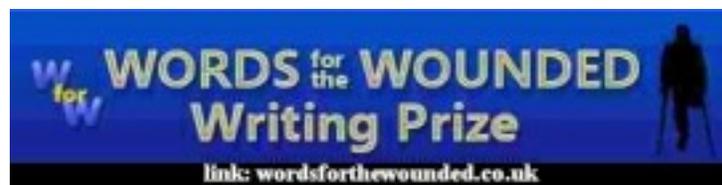
about Richard III in blue jeans.’ Needless to say, my friend had sown the seed into my mind and it took root but the flowering was quite different from what she envisaged. My Richard did not wear blue jeans but I did bring him into the 21<sup>st</sup> century—in my own way. The story took her completely by surprise and she urged me to try to get it published.

**In the short time since its publication, RENAISSANCE has been well received in the Book-Reading Community. In May it received the recommendation and seal of approval of the ‘Discovering Diamonds’ team of Reviewers—not only for the novel itself but they also declared it winner of the month for Book Cover Design. And on June 6th Renaissance was announced as one of the winners in the Fiction Category of the ‘Words for the Wounded—Georgina Hawtrey-Woore National Literary Award.’ Can you tell us a little more about them?**



Discovering Diamonds is a Review Blog founded by Author Helen Hollick. Their aim is to showcase historical fiction written by Indie and Self-Published Authors who do not have the marketing back-up of the big publishing houses —although traditionally published novels are welcome also. The Discovering Diamonds team are fussy in their selections—to quote the words on their website: “We only publish reviews of the best books, so we also take note of correct presentation and formatting, as well as the quality of the writing—and when space and time are limited we may only select a few books a month to review. If your book is selected to be reviewed then you know it is of an approved status.” Their chosen novels receive the Discovering Diamonds logo and are mentioned on Twitter—@HelenHollick—look for #DDRevs and Facebook.

The Words for The Wounded—Georgina Hawtrey-Woore Literary Award for Independent Authors (a charity that helps members of the Armed Forces who have suffered serious mental or physical injury) is judged by published authors; literary agents and editors. It is in remembrance of a senior editor at Cornerstone, Penguin Random House, who sadly died of breast cancer a few years ago. Georgina worked with authors such as Katie Fforde; Kathy Reichs; Susan Lewis; Karin Slaughter and Dilly Court to name but a few. This makes the award very special to me as I am a breast cancer survivor and married to a military veteran.



It is almost impossible to describe my delight about the way in which RENAISSANCE has been received—I loved writing the story and am so very gratified that those who have read it have taken time to leave their very complimentary reviews on Amazon and Social Media—in addition there is the very great satisfaction of receiving the recommendation of my peers.

**Would you please tell us a little about RENAISSANCE—THE FALL AND RISE OF A KING?**

My novel begins where most others end. Richard’s brutal slaying on Bosworth Field is not the end of his story, it is the beginning. The reader follows him into the Afterlife—to a place between life and eternity and watches him relive the events and confront the actions that he took which led him to the bloody Plain of Redemore; then accompanies him into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to be witness to the reburial of his rediscovered remains in Leicester Cathedral where Richard faces one final and very crucial decision that will affect his destiny through all eternity.

**The setting of your novel is very unusual, where did the concept of locating Richard in Purgatory after the battle, come from?**

Richard was a medieval man. Medieval Society very firmly believed in a physical Heaven and Hell. Its location was believed to be somewhere in the Southern Hemisphere, surrounded by high mountains and vast deserts. Purgatory and The Garden of Eden would have been very real places to him. As I wanted my readers to step into his world and his mindset, for me it seemed the logical place for him to be after his death on Bosworth Field. The concept of a soul in Purgatory is not a new one—Dante Alighieri’s epic poem, THE DIVINE COMEDY, which he wrote in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, tells of his own soul’s journey through Hell guided by the ancient Roman poet Virgil. The second part of his poem PURGATORIO gave me the idea for the book’s setting. Dante with Virgil as his guide, climbs up the seven levels of suffering and spiritual growth that make up Mount Purgatory, until he finally reaches the earthly paradise of Eden. Allegorically PURGATORIA symbolises the penitent Christian and Eden represents the attainment of the state of innocence that existed before Adam and Eve fell from Grace—which Dante’s journey represents. In my story Richard achieves Eden but is unwilling to take the final step to Heaven; his mentor Father Gilbert makes him re-examine the reasons for this reluctance.

**Your book takes the reader deep into Richard’s psyche—what made you decide to tell his story in this way?**

I wanted the reader to hear Richard’s voice; to watch him being honest with himself; to listen to his innermost thoughts; share his pain as he examines his conscience and considers his actions. I wanted the reader to see the king pared back to the man himself and for the contemporary reader to be able to identify with him as a ‘warts and all’ human being. I also wanted to do my own little part in trying to redress the balance—the victor always writes history—for too long the strident voices of Tudor enthusiasts and traditional historians have coloured the image of Richard the deepest black.

**The other main protagonist in your novel is the fictional character of Father Gilbert—where did he come from?**

I intended Father Gilbert to make only a brief appearance in the novel—he was to act as Richard’s celestial guide into Purgatory and then disappear. He wouldn’t allow this to happen, he kept reappearing in my mind—insisting that he should stay in the story to be Richard’s mentor and friend—to make sure that Richard won out in the end. It was natural for me to make him a Franciscan monk—the Order was sympathetic to the Yorkists. I believe that one of Richard’s personal chaplains came from the Franciscan Order. Thinking further about him—I perhaps subconsciously modelled him on Dante’s poet guide in PURGATORIA.

**Was it hard to have a fictional character interact with an historical character?**

When writing about actual historical characters one has to be careful as their lives and the events that they took part in are already all mapped out but I found it relatively easy to weave Father Gilbert into the story—as he took no part in Richard’s past life—he was an observer and a vehicle with which I could take readers into Richard’s mind...and of course he was his guardian angel who was intent on making sure that Richard received natural justice.

**Why did you have Edward IV’s sons murdered in your book and have Richard shouldering the blame for their deaths?**

I’ve always felt that the Duke of Buckingham killed the boys—either to curry greater favour with Richard or as the tool of John Morton, Bishop of Ely and Margaret Beaufort. I got the idea from a well-known story about Henry II and Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. In a fit of rage against Becket, Henry shouted ‘Will no one rid me of this turbulent priest.’ On hearing these carelessly spoken words, four of his knights took it upon themselves to murder Becket in Canterbury Cathedral. When I remembered it, I thought—‘*what if Richard were to carelessly express regret for the existence of the boys and Buckingham overheard him?*’ This, and the existence of two mysterious unidentified children’s stone coffins, located in a small adjoining chamber in Edward IV’s tomb in St George’s Chapel, Windsor—gave me my *raison d’etre*.

**Did you find any part of the story difficult to write?**

The battle scene which takes place towards the end of chapter one was hard to write—I was determined to give Richard a small taste of victory and had to get him past Henry Tudor’s bodyguard of Pikemen. Having been told by a very knowledgeable Ricardian historian that this was impossible, I had to make it both possible and

plausible—my husband’s (a military veteran) practical knowledge about battle readiness helped me to overcome that problem. The other scene that I found difficult to write is at the beginning of Chapter two—where Richard relives his own death—writing it really made my heart hurt.

### **How do you research? What secondary resources did you use?**

I try to immerse myself in the lives of the characters I am going to write about. For this novel living in North Yorkshire, near to the places that have such a close association with Richard, it was relatively easy to spend many pleasurable afternoons in and around Middleham Castle imagining what Richard’s life there was like. Walking the ramparts of York’s city walls, I could see the mustering of his volunteer troops in front of Monk Bar after news of of Edward IV’s death and the Woodville grab for power reached him and whilst enjoying a cup of tea and some scones in the Jervaulx Abbey Tearooms, I could see him at worship in the great abbey church. The secondary sources that I used were Paul Murray Kendall’s ‘Richard III,’ his writing style made Richard the man very real to me. Anne Carson’s ‘Richard III The Maligned King;’ Michael Jones’ ‘Bosworth the Psychology of a Battle;’ John Ashdown-Hill’s ‘Wars of the Roses’ and ‘The Mythology of Richard III,’ and of course The many scholarly articles to be found on The Richard III Society’s Website were all invaluable to me. As was the input of fellow Ricardian and Medieval Historian, Cris Connor—who kept me firmly on the straight and narrow with regard to Richard’s world and the Battle of Bosworth.

### **Given that he/she is dealing with actual events that have taken place and people who have lived, do you think a writer of historical fiction should stick strictly to the facts or is he/she justified in distorting history for dramatic licence?**

Historical fiction makes history accessible; brings characters to life therefore, I feel that a historical fiction writer’s main responsibility is to respect history—be true to the events and the people about whom they have chosen to write. If they need to bend facts for dramatic licence—to suit their story, then they should be sure to acknowledge this in their Author’s Notes.

### **Is there any other character in Richard’s world that you find interesting?**

I find Francis Viscount Lovell fascinating because he doesn’t strike me as having been the warrior type—he was a ward of Edward IV but there is very little record of his time under his control—there is no record of his knightly training; he did not fight at Barnet or Tewkesbury—although he did take part in the border skirmishes against Scotland. He seems to have been content to be a friend and advisor to Richard—an administrator in the background a total contrast to the ambitious Duke of Buckingham. I’ve read somewhere that he had a fascination for books and spent a great deal of time in monastery libraries. After Bosworth he could easily have thrown in the towel; taken the oath of loyalty to Henry Tudor, as many of his contemporaries did, and then continued living a rich and easy life. Instead he chose to become of a hunted fugitive, doing his best to organise rebellion and drive the Tudor out of England back from whence he came. The extreme grief and outrage Lovell must have felt about the manner of Richard’s death and the vile treatment of his corpse—especially when he learned that his own stepfather William Stanley had betrayed his friend, transformed this man of peace into an avenging angel who was quite a thorn in Henry Tudor’s side. It’s sad that he didn’t succeed but he had no experience as a military commander and no knowledge of battle strategy.

### **What’s next for you as an author?**

Well...I’m in somewhat of a quandary. I put aside a romantic murder mystery set during the Napoleonic Wars to write ‘RENAISSANCE.’ I had six chapters already written and the rest of the novel meticulously plotted out. I promised myself that I would return to it as soon as Richard’s story was told but now ideas for a sequel are running around my head—about Francis Lovell. I am also involved in a project with my writing group ‘Skell Scriveners’ in putting together a poetry and prose anthology on different themes—our deadline for publication is the end of 2018. So here I am with a published novel, one partially written, another in the planning stage and a commitment to a further writing project—which do I tackle first? Is it possible to tackle them simultaneously? And then there also the promotion and marketing of ‘RENAISSANCE’ which is a pretty steep learning curve for me.

## The Other Woman

An excerpt from KING'S GAMES, The Commentaries

Nance Crawford

I can remember one of my seventh-grade teachers, a sweet maiden lady, calling one of the boys to the front of the class to help with a demonstration. When he reached her, she went to the door to the hall, pulled it open, and stepped back. Waving him ahead, she said, "I'll go first."

He immediately walked out, leaving her holding the door.

I cannot remember if we were stunned or giggled. Probably both.

She called him back into the room, reassuring him that what he had done was quite natural, he had just proved her point: that gestures—actions—inevitably speak louder than words.

Like Elizabeth Woodville after her, the widowed Eleanor Talbot Butler insisted on an exchange of vows before tumbling into bed with the new, nineteen-year-old king of England. She probably insisted on the presence of a clergyman as witness. A member of the nobility well-versed in the rules, and devotedly religious, it can be deduced from her ensuing actions that, to her, the consequence of Mortal Sin was not a theoretical concept, it was a constant, viable danger.

In a day when the Sacrament was parceled out judiciously, when men would give their lives to protect the Blessed Elements from defilement, when holy women were reputed to survive by ingesting only the Bread and Wine of Communion, when Death stood one step within reach of knocking on anyone's door at any moment, the prospect of dying in a state of sin was a thought beyond terror. Abruptly passing from this world, to stand naked, unshriven and unblessed, at the feet of the enthroned Lord of Hosts, then thrown down into Eternal Fire, was a very real threat for the believer.

She was six years older than Edward, having been bartered into a ten-year marriage to a man twice her age who had left her with no living children. She suddenly found herself the focus of attention of her new king, a tall and handsome young man of charm and sophistication.

The circumstances of their first meeting are unknown, although it was undoubtedly through John Mowbray, her brother-in-law and heir of the Duke of Norfolk. The question of her remarriage had not yet become a concern and, for a while more, at least, she had some modest control of her own destiny.

After the Palm Sunday victory at Towton, Edward was on the threshold of becoming king. Even so, he wanted her.

She would have been a fool to say no. She was not a fool. She was mature enough to not permit herself to be duped. She could understand that, in the tumbling rapids of history which were sweeping the beautiful young man to his destiny, he did not have time to be concerned with much formality. He wanted her, now. He wanted her so badly that he was willing to pledge his devotion before a priest, declare himself married.

There was a priest in his entourage.

Canon Robert Stillington, Keeper of the Privy Seal, was, of necessity, never far from the king's call. Worldly and ambitious, Stillington agreed to witness their promises to each other and keep their romantic secret.

Edward, however, had quickly gone, off to London, to be crowned. Within the month, Robert Stillington was granted the enormous salary of £365 per year.

Eleanor moved from her father-in-law's home to East Hall, Kenninghall, Norfolk, where she would have privacy to entertain visitors. Owned by her sister, it was part of the jointure Elizabeth had received at the time of her marriage.

In November, Eleanor's sister, Elizabeth, became the Duchess of Norfolk. There was no sign of Edward's intention to honor his pledge to her sister.

It probably did not take Edward long to realize that he had seduced the wrong woman. Whatever the intimate details, he soon lost interest, although he apparently granted Eleanor property in Wiltshire early the following year. Not long after, Eleanor endowed a fellowship at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. If she was gentle and unassuming, she was also religious.

At the end of May, 1462, Eleanor began an association with the Carmelite priory in Norwich.

Edward was not a complete cad. He granted Eleanor's father-in-law, Lord Sudeley, the right to hunt Woodstock Park for four bucks in the summer and six does in the winter.

Within three months thereafter, it must have been over. The grant to Lord Sudeley was revoked.

In March of 1463, Eleanor became a Carmelite tertiary.

The following May Day, Edward secretly married Elizabeth Woodville Grey.

In anticipation of his being appointed to the newly vacant bishopric, on January 20, 1465, Edward granted Robert Stillington the temporalities (revenue) of the see of Bath and Wells. It took another year, but Stillington was finally confirmed by Rome and consecrated Bishop.

On June 20, 1467, Robert Stillington was appointed Chancellor. A trusted counselor, indeed.

Just under a year later, on June 4<sup>th</sup>, Eleanor Talbot Butler granted her personal property to her sister, the Duchess of Norfolk. Sixteen days later, she was dead at thirty-two. She was buried in the choir of the Carmelite Priory Church in Norwich.

Even with only the bare outline of the story, it is possible to see that, for Eleanor, the outcome was inevitable.

For all her position in society, Eleanor was unsophisticated. Sheltered in her father-in-law's home by her marriage at age thirteen, it is entirely possible that she never left the immediate area, that the gossip she heard, the romances she may have read, did not prepare her for the sophisticated, worldly choices which were to victimize her.

When she realized she had, indeed, been duped, that, in the eyes of God and the Church, she was married to a young man who not only wanted nothing to do with her, but had the power to quietly cast her aside without qualm, her despair must have been overwhelming.

She had locked herself into a marriage that whispered away like mist from between her fingers. The boy she had trusted and loved was doomed to Hell for his lies and defiance of God's Law. He did not consider himself married. He had broken faith, and, because of his position, he could deny it all, could laugh at the adventure, would get away with it.

To apply to Rome for an annulment would be an outright lie. She was married. She had walked blindly into the sin of arrogance, of pride, and her only escape was sincere penance for her foolishness. Her sister and her brother-in-law would have known of the affair, for there is no evidence that she was ever pressured, as Butler's widow, to remarry, the standard expectation at the time.

She could not escape into the cloister, for although there were many Carmelite monasteries in England, there were then no establishments for women. The Second Order of Carmelites had been established on the Continent less than fifteen years earlier, but the movement had not yet crossed the channel. In any event, as a woman with a living husband, she did not qualify to enter the novitiate.

The Third Order of Carmelites would not officially exist, with their own Rule, until created by Papal Bull thirteen years later.

The only choice she saw open to her was to live the life of a lay religious, a tertiary, a member of a Third Order. In the world but not of it, she would follow the Rule of the order as closely as possible in her daily life.

She cloistered herself in the house owned by her sister and was dead four years later.

From personal experience I know, beyond doubt, that it is possible to die of guilt, of a broken heart.

~ ToC ~

## Schallek Awards

Compton Reeves

The Schallek Awards program memorializes Dr. William B. Schallek, whose vision and generosity established the original scholarship fund, and his wife, Maryloo Spooner Schallek.

The Medieval Academy administers the award.

The Medieval Academy, in collaboration with the Richard III Society-American Branch, offers a full-year fellowship and five graduate student awards in memory of William B. and Maryloo Spooner Schallek. The fellowship and awards are supported by a generous gift to the Richard III Society from William B. and Maryloo Spooner Schallek.

The Schallek Fellowship provides a one-year grant of \$30,000 to support Ph.D. dissertation research in any relevant discipline dealing with late-medieval Britain (ca. 1350-1500). The annual application deadline is 15 October.

The Schallek awards support graduate students conducting doctoral research in any relevant discipline dealing with late-medieval Britain (ca. 1350-1500). The \$2,000 awards help defray research expenses such as the cost of travel to research collections and the cost of photographs, photocopies, microfilms, and other research materials. The cost of books or equipment (e.g., computers) is not included. The annual application deadline is 15 February.

Applicants to both Schallek programs must be members of the Medieval Academy. Graduate students who are members of the Medieval Academy and who seek support to research and write Ph.D. dissertations on topics related to medieval Britain before 1350 or on any other medieval topic should apply to the Medieval Academy Dissertation Grant program.

### 2018 Schallek Award-winners

Michelle Brooks (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), “Poeticizing the Universe: Scientific Discourse and Literary Absence in Chaucer’s ‘A Treatise on the Astrolabe.’”

Gina Marie Hurley (Yale University), “Schryue yow openlye: Confession and Community in Middle English Literature.”

Michaela Jacques (Harvard University), “The Reception and Transmission of the Medieval Welsh Bardic Grammars, 1330-1578.”

Anna Kelner (Harvard University), “Remedies against Temptations: Vision, Ethics and Gender in Later Medieval England.”

Charlotte Clare Whatley (University of Wisconsin, Madison), “No Time Runs Against the King: The Function of Fictions in the Late-Medieval English Common Law.”

~ ToC ~

*There's a skeleton in every closet.—Common saying.*

LOST BODIES: A CHRONICLE OF DEATHS, DISAPPEARANCES, AND DISCOVERIES—Jenni Davis, IMS Books, NY, 2017

This is a coffee table book, with more concentration on illustration than text, but quite useful for all that. It is divided into three sections: 'Well and Truly Lost:' those bodies that have been misplaced for so long, centuries or millennia, that it is unlikely they will ever be found: Alexander the Great, Harold II, Genghis Khan. Even in this section, there are some exceptions: Did Davy Crockett's body really go missing? He has a gravestone in the San Francisco Cathedral in San Antonio, but are his charred remains in there really Davy's?

The next section is "Lost and Found." Richard is not the only ruler whose skeleton has come to light. Oliver Cromwell and Henri IV of France have also been found—or at least parts of them. And of course, there are the Romanovs, and Eva Peron.

Finally, there is 'Lost for Good' persons who simply disappeared, and are unlikely to be found because they have no known burial places. These include the Princes in the Tower, Louis Le Prince, who was not a prince, but who may have invented the motion picture camera, Roald Amundsen, Amelia Earhart. This is not to say the mysteries surrounding these long-missing persons will never be solved. Lord Lucan might even still be alive. After all, he would be only 84.

All very interesting, Wanda good thing, if it gets people interested in the mystery, and in history. Recommended as a good gift-book selection, if you have to give it to yourself.

*Blood cannot be obtained from a stone—Charles Dickens*

BLOOD ROYAL: The Wars of the Roses 1462-1485—Hugh Bicheno, Pegasus Books, NY, 2017

Bicheno provides about a page of 'primary sources' found online, which seem a lazy man's way of doing research, and approximately four pages of 'secondary sources' in a bibliography. At times, a source, such as Mancini, is referred to in the text, but the only footnotes amplify the text; they do not give a source for any of the author's statements. The only way of discovering where he gets his information for any statement is to read every word of every source. Few academics are going to do that, never mind the casual reader, for whom this book is designed.

There are some good points to the book. Bicheno does provide a lot of maps, family trees, charts of various sorts (e.g. a list of 'Protagonists and marriages,' running to 14 pages). Chronologically, the book omits the earlier battles of the Wars of the Roses, as these are covered in his earlier book BATTLE ROYAL.

He announces his theory early on. "Was the Yorkist cause dishonorable? Well—yes." Bicheno describes how Richard II had arbitrarily taken Henry Bolingbroke's inheritance from him, and how Henry (who ruled as Henry IV) took the throne from Richard. Henry VI, whose "...only offense (other than chronic weakness) was a cautious refusal to hand over the administration of his kingdom to a haughty cousin with as good or better right by blood to the throne." But the Lancastrians are the good guys, and Yorkists are the baddies. No room for moral equivalencies here. Hugh Bicheno has picked a side and will stick with it.

Sometimes this leads him to make statements that are factually untrue. For example, on Pg. 64: "George was two years older than Richard." Actually, it was just about three weeks short of three years. But what's a year or two between friends. Pg. 297: "The most regime-threatening part of the conspiracy (Buckingham's) was among the Yeoman of the Crown..." who were not organized, or not known as such until Henry VII's reign.

"The discovery of Richard III's bones has only underlined the durable fascination of a period that culminated in one king buried with full honours in the magnificent chapel he built at Windsor, and his successor brother's naked body cast into an unmarked grave...28 months later." But Richard's grave was not unmarked at the time, and the author should know this.

It is not Bicheno's minor inaccuracies that are troubling, as much as his major errors of argumentation and logic. For instance: "The issue of blood became crucial after York was killed in battle. There was good reason to believe that Edward, his heir, was not his son...parents of slight builds and average height does not engender burly sons 7-8 inches taller than they." This betrays only a superficial knowledge of genetics. "Richard conspicuously slighted Edward in favour of his second son, Edmund." No source is given for this statement, and Edward remained the heir.

The author gives much valuable insight into politics on the continent, as they affected events in England and elsewhere. But his sense of omniscience leads him into drawing conclusions about the motives of his subjects, both political and personal, that may not be warranted.

Bicheno consistently refers to the Duke of Brittany as Frañcez (with a tilde over the n). This may be the way it was written in Breton, if you assume that that language, rather than French, was spoken at the ducal court. It just seems odd, since there is no contemporary Francis or Francois that he could be confused with. Who is going to think he and Francis Lovell were the same person?

“It is not difficult to deduce what tipped George into outright malignancy. ....at some point, the enraged Duchess Cecily must have told him that Edward was not his father’s son, and that he should properly sit in his place.” This is not reasoning backwards. This is what I think happened, so it must have happened. OK if one is writing a novel, but Mr. Bicheno is presumably not.

“The idea that Rivers, his brothers and his nephews worked to a plan concocted by Elizabeth to increase their power and influence is manifest nonsense. To the contrary...Rivers spurned opportunities to make himself a magnate.” Occasions when he did not spurn them are dismissed as exceptional.

“One of the most persistent myths about the Woodville ascendancy is the supposedly scandalous nature of the marriage...between the elder of the two dowager duchesses of Norfolk, 65-year-old Katherine Neville, and the queen’s 19-year-old brother John. This is based on a misunderstanding of women’s property rights. What actually took place was that Katherine—who had another scandalous liaison between her marriages...bought herself a young husband, and with him influence at court.” Oh, that makes everything all right. Move along, folks, no scandal to see here. Poor Johnny, victimized by a Medieval cougar! Besides, hasn’t the author just informed us that the Woodvilles exercised no particular influence at court?

“If Duchess Cecily, in her fury at losing her precedence at court to a woman she could not dominate did indeed tell [George] at this time that Edward was the product of her adultery, it would explain a great deal of what ensued.” This is called begging the question.

A little bit of psychoanalysis: “...Edward’s lifelong philandering may be seen as an obsessive fixation on an unattainable partner by someone emotionally crippled from childhood. Pursuing the thread, another manifestation of the same psychological deprivation would have been a subconscious attempt to build himself an alternative family—which incurred the potentially murderous hostility of his biological mother and half-brothers.” This, of course, carries the question-begging a little further.

Pg. 150: “Sociological studies of the posturing hyper-masculinity known as machismo occur in the paradoxical role of mothers in perpetuating it as a form of revenge on philandering fathers. They teach their sons that all women—apart from the sainted mother—are bitches on heat and all men treacherous dogs. Throw in the high testosterone levels commonly found in homosexual men, add almost unlimited wealth and power, and you get Charles ‘the Bold.’ Where are these studies? And isn’t this supposed to be about the English Wars of the Roses, not continental history?

Pg. 201: “When [Henry VI’s] bones were examined in 1910 the skull was found to be shattered, with residual scalp and dried blood suggestive of a heavy blow to the back of the head. Edward probably ordered it done as mercifully as possible, and somebody hit him with a club as he knelt, head bowed in prayer.” All invented details.

Pg. 242: “Gloucester was 8 years old when Richard of York was killed and would have remembered him as a distant, god-like figure...the contrast between how he believed a son of York should behave and what he observed in Edward was stark. He did not keep away from court because of the Woodvilles, far less favoured and powerful than he, but for fear his mask would slip.” Again, attributing motives Richard may not have had, and certainly not at the age of eight. This doesn’t even pass the smell test for fiction.

Pg. 272: The siren song of ‘After which therefore because of which’ must be resisted during the last months of Edward’s reign.” Yet this is a principle which he will often violate.

Pp. 273-4: “Thomas More knew Jane (Shore) in her old age...Jane told More that the king spoke of only three long-term lovers...” That More could have and probably did see Jane in her later years does not mean that he had any conversation with her. He never credits the information about the king’s three mistresses to her, though Bicheno does. Even if he did get the information from her, More was perfectly capable of inventing conversations which he could not possibly have overheard.

Pg. 279: “Cecily...had waited nearly twenty years for revenge on Elizabeth, and threw discretion to the wind when Gloucester summoned the late king’s executors to Baynards castle...The truth was that Cecily told the gathering that Edward had been conceived in adultery, and Bouchier and the others were convinced it must be true....” No proof that she told them anything at all. Besides, Edward was definitely her son, even if he wasn’t her husband’s. Why should she hate him and wish to disgrace him, and herself?

Pg. 285 footnote: “A Freudian would argue that R’s vindictiveness was displacement activity for his ambivalent feelings about his mother.” In other words, I wouldn’t say this about this awful person, but some people will.

Pg. 289: “Even if Stillington’s statement had been true the princes in the Tower were born after Eleanor died...so they were free of the taint of bigamy.” But Edward’s marriage to Elizabeth was bigamous in its origin, and did not become automatically legal when Eleanor died.

Pg. 290: Why did Duchess Cecily not attend Richard and Anne’s coronation? “Perhaps she was ashamed to show her face after being publicly branded an adulteress, but possibly it had dawned on her, much too late, that she had put her grandsons in mortal peril. The ostentatious piety of her later life suggests belated repentance for the great evil she had wrought, and when she died her will mentioned her husband and Edward IV, but not her youngest son.” But her ‘ostentatious piety’ had begun years before. And the much-vaunted piety of Margaret Beaufort is simply piety

Pg. 302: “Psychopaths are polarizing individual, mesmerizing to weak personalities but repulsive to those who can see them as they are. Richard commanded a loyalty from his northern retainers that went far beyond hope of gain...the personalities of his northern followers were per-shaped by submission to the will of the no less psychopathic Kingmaker. Nor should we overlook the fact that Richard was physically unimpressive.” Richard was ugly, Warwick was ugly, (a conclusion based on a stylized representation of him on his father’s tomb) therefore they were both psychopathic. And on top of that, the author manages to tar an entire geographic area with the same brush.

Pg. 312: “One of the strongest modern Ricardian arguments against the guilt of their hero is that Henry Tudor never specifically accused Richard of having murdered his nephews...suspicion and rumour were already doing all the damage that could be hoped for, and an open accusation risked the possibility that Richard might produce the princes like a rabbit out of a hat.” But if there was the remotest possibility that he could have produced them, this argument fails.

Pg. 305: Any ‘progressive’ or good legislation instigated by Richard is considered ‘cosmetic.’ “or ‘playing to the gallery.” Even facts that do not show Richard in a good light, or in any light at all, are treated cavalierly. Pg328: “Uncle Jasper was left in Wales, perhaps to act as governor but probably because he was unwilling to take orders from younger and abler men.” While there is no evidence that Jasper was at Bosworth, there is no evidence that he was anywhere else, much less of the reason.

Pg. 330: There is a chart of men named in the ballad of Bosworth Field and other credible sources. What these credible sources are we are not told.

Pg. 351: “History is the mistress of life, and I have tried to make love to her as she deserves.” This is the last line of the book, and I wouldn’t dare to add to it, or even comment on it!

*Never speak ill of the dead*—English version of a Latin proverb

SIX OF ONE: A TUDOR RIFF—JoAnn Spears, Kindle Edition, 2011

Our heroine, Dolly, has decided to become the 7<sup>th</sup> bride of a much-married multi-millionaire, Henry, who in his youth was with a band called Good Company. (Chapter Heading: Six chicks had already been nixed in the mix.) At her wedding shower, attended by her assorted female relatives—and his—she passes out. “I could just imagine the headlines: ‘Bride Chokes to Death on Cocktail Olive.’ I would never live that down.” While unconscious, she is transferred to another plane, where she meets a number of Tudor/Plantagenet ladies, who seem to have odd parallels in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (Chapter heading: The Sweet Smell of Six Ex’s.)

She is introduced to Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth of York, and finds out what really happened to the princes, and is also privileged to meet Bess of Hardwick. “I wonder if anyone ever called Bess of Hardwick redoubtable to her face. I redoubted it.”

Mostly, though, she engages in a symposium with Henry VIII’s six wives, who reveal the true story of their marriages. Which wife was a lesbian? Which was a witch? Which a murderess? And which one was hot to trot?

Her conclusion: Henry was terribly misunderstood. No, she doesn't marry him. Dolly meets an old sweetheart, Wally Rolly, and becomes Dolly Rolly. Her ex-fiancé Henry joins a monastery.

SEVEN WILL OUT: A RENAISSANCE REVEL—JoAnn Spears, Kindle edition, 2015

Dolly Rolly, due to receive academic recognition for her seminal work on Henry VIII, passes out again at the ceremony honoring her (chapter heading: Dear Me, Syncope), and comes to, as before, on an astral plane, where she meets a number of later Tudor ladies, including queens, and three—count them, three—Grey sisters, plus Arabella Stewart, who, in the opinion of her contemporaries, is 'a few stays short of a corset.' These ladies have opinions on everything, as does Dolly, and they quote freely from Gilbert & Sullivan, P.G. Wodehouse, and the Bard. Well, that would be easy, since they wrote the works commonly attributed to William Shakespeare. All three queens (including Jane Grey) were busy constructing plays, as were the other Grey sisters. Did Shakespeare write any of Shakespeare? Well, yes, the sonnets, and possibly Antony and Cleopatra.

Now prohibited by their non-corporeality from being playwrights, these ladies not run a sort of supra-natural advice bureau, consulted by the great and good, such as the Empress Josephine, Mary Todd Lincoln, Greta Garbo, Katherine Hepburn, and Lucille Ball.

Good, clean, punny fun. At the end, we learn the reason for Dolly's fainting spell. Yes, the Rolly marriage is about to be blessed by a bouncing baby Rolly.

*Every baby born in the world is a finer one than the last.*—Charles Dickens

ROYAL BABIES: A History 1066-2013—Amy Licence, Gloucester, UK, 2013

Ms. Licence gives us case histories of selected royal babies. In chronological order, they are

- Matilda, born 1102; grew up to become “Lady of the English” and mother of Henry II
- William, born 1153, son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine; died in infancy.
- Eleanor, born 1215, daughter of John and Isabella of Angeulome; grew up to marry Simon de Monfort.
- Edward, born 1284, son of Edward I and Eleanor of Castile; grew up to be king Edward II.
- Edward, born 1330, son of Edward III and Phillipa of Hainault; grew up to be the Black Prince, died at 46.
- Henry, born 1386, son of Henry IV and Mary de Bohun; grew up to be Henry V, died in his 30s.
- Edward, born 1453, son of Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou; died at 17.
- Edward, born 1470, son of Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville, died (?)
- Arthur, born 1486, son of Henry VII and Elizabeth of York; died at 15.
- Henry, born 1511, son of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon; died in infancy.
- Elizabeth, born 1533, daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Bolyen; became Queen, died at 70.
- Edward, born 1537, son of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour; became King Edward VI, died in his teens.
- James, born 1566, son of Mary Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley; became King
- Henry, born 1594, son of James I and Anne of Denmark; died in his teens.
- Henriette (Minnette), daughter of Charles I and Henrietta Maria; grew up to marry Philippe of Orleans, died at 26.
- James, born 1688, son of James, Duke of York, and Mary of Modena; grew up to be the “Old Pretender
- George, born 1788, son of the much-hated (by his parents) Frederick, Prince of Wales, and Augusta of Saxe-Gotha; grew up to be George III, died at 80.
- Amelia, born 1783, last daughter of George III and Queen Charlotte; died of TB at 27.
- George, born 1817, son of Princess Charlotte of England and Leopold of Sax-Coburg, grandson of George IV; stillborn.
- Victoria, born 1840 (Princess Vicky), daughter of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert; grew up to marry and become the mother of Kaiser Wilhelm.
- Edward, born 1894, and
- Albert, born 1895, sons of the Prince who would become George V, and Mary of Teck, great- grandsons of Queen Victoria. Grew; up to become Edward VIII and George VI, respectively.
- Elizabeth, born first in 1926, daughter of George VI and Lady Elizabeth Bowen-Lyon; grew up to be Elizabeth II, at this writing 91 and counting

(The book was published before the Duchess of Cambridge's children were born, so they are hypothetical in this context.)

What we can learn from this: Royal or commoner, try to arrange to be born no earlier than the 20<sup>th</sup> century of course, the royals of previous generations had the benefit of the best medical literature of their times, e.g. books of “leechcraft.” Such a book of the 11<sup>th</sup> century advised expectant mothers 'not to eat salt or drink beer.' Hmmm, I was told that too. But they were also warned off sour foods, as well, not so much for their own health but for fear it might mark the child. It was widely believed that the pangs of childbirth could be transferred to another woman (but not to a man?) by witchcraft. If only...

Ms. Licence bypasses poor Queen Anne, who lost all of her many children, but the Stuarts in general were not great obstetric subjects. James II had eight children by Anne Hyde, of whom only two daughters survived (Mary II and Anne). By Mary of Modena, only one of ten survived—the so-called 'warming-pan baby.' (aka The Old Pretender).

Query: Why do Americans say someone 'gets pregnant,' as if it were a g great accomplishment, while the British say 'falls pregnant,' as if “oops, how did that happen?”

*Adults are really not wiser than children, they're just more cunning*—Anonymous

SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY VII, David Collard

The premise of this play is that the “Henry VII” written by William Shakespeare and then somehow mislaid, like all those Sherlock Holmes stories that John H. Watson carelessly left lying around for generations. Mr. Collard argues that it may not have been simple carelessness. “To have revived questions about the legitimacy of the Tudor succession... would have been foolish. Yet he wrote *Julius Caesar*, a dangerous play if ever there was one... There are also *artistic* arguments. First there is the question of whether Henry provides sufficiently interesting material... Bosworth, the most glorious episode, had been covered in *Richard III*... Our principal was no Henry V and there was no Agincourt.” In fact, Henry’s life, though having natural turning points, doesn’t have them in the right places for the dramatist’s purpose. What is unique about the life of Henry Tudor is that he was an anomaly: the successful pretender. John Ford wrote that play. He called it *Perkin Warbeck*. Though Perkin was not successful as a pretender, he would have been, and was, a star turn as a play.

The author does his best by Henry, including most of the major events of his life and even inventing a few. For example, there is no evidence that Elizabeth of York requested him to marry again, or, for that matter, not to. But she could have. Henry is not caricatured. He has some admirable qualities and even a sense of humor, though it is what the Scots would call a pawky one. Example: Elizabeth, understandably skeptical about astrologers, still wants to know if she will live to see the coronation of her younger son. Henry interrupts acidly, “It’s certain that I won’t.”

Minor characters are more stereotyped. There is a Greek chorus led by Henry’s fool, commenting on events, explaining how Morton’s fork worked, etc. Henry’s advisers are divided into the Good (Giles Daubney) and the Bad (Morton, Fox, Empson, Dudley, et al)

Mr. Collard speaks of opportunity cost. “The opportunity of writing one play was the loss of another. The opportunity cost of Henry VII might have been the loss of *Julius Caesar* or *As You Like It*, or *Hamlet*, or *Twelfth Night*, or... What more do we want? Blood? Well, perhaps.”

*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*—Proverbs

22:6

SECRET SON OF YORK—Maureen Fairbank, Kindle Edition

Sir Thomas Moyle is fascinated by his new employee, a bricklayer called “Old Dick.” Obviously an educated man down on his luck, he is old enough to have a fund of stories about the late unpleasantness (The Wars of the Roses) as well as the reigns of the first Tudors. But he can be a little long-winded. Sir Thomas frequently interrupts him with “I know all that.” Then Old Dick drops a bombshell. He is the son of Elizabeth of York and Richard III. The two have a conventional uncle-niece relationship until Elizabeth is about twelve years old, when she begins to become self-conscious. By the time she is 15 ½ she feels like a spinster who will never be married, and is becoming very frustrated, especially as she is well aware of her beauty.

Richard convinces himself that their relationship is perfectly all right, since Edward IV was only his half-brother, and therefore Elizabeth is only his half-niece. The story is loosely based on the so-laced Buck letter, the Croyland Chronicle, and 'legend.' The story is narrated by Old Dick (Richard Plantagenet of Eastwell) and by

Elizabeth herself. It will require a willing suspension of disbelief to accept their stories, and also a suspension of grammar and punctuation. Many words that are usually written as one, or hyphenated -erg. *somehow, out-numbered*, are divided into two words: *some how, out numbered*. Paragraph breaks are inserted apparently at random, often in the middle of a sentence. And the whole, though written in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is in full Victorian lady-novelist style.

For the completest.

*Living is being born slowly. It would be a little too easy if we could borrow ready-made souls.*—Antoine de Saint-Exupery

HEARTS NEVER CHANGE—Joanne R. Lerner, Kindle edition, Part III of the RICHARD LIVETH YET trilogy

The cover of this book shows Richard in motorcycle leathers, and very fetching he looks, too. If he has a few gray hairs, at 50+, or 550+, they are not visible under the helmet. This is how he looks when he turns up on the doorstep of his third wife, Rose, after 15 years. They have been trying to get together during all that time, but the fact that they are in different times (literally) has made it difficult. In some ways, their troubles are just beginning. Richard has been, through no fault of his own, an absentee father to his adolescent twins, as well as an absentee from modern times in general. There are adjustments to be made. Talk about a generation gap!

To some extent, the story is combined with a travelogue of Norway, a country Ms. Lerner is obviously enamored with, as much as with Richard III. In the middle book of the trilogy, she made her heroine, A FOREIGN COUNTRY, she has her heroine, Rose, pretend to be a Norwegian princess

This brings the series to a satisfying, happy-ever-after, close, with all loose ends tied up. What more could you ask for? Well, if you do want more, check out Ms. Lerner's facebook page, DICKON FOR HIS DAMES.

*Paper bleeds little.*—Earnest Hemingway

THE SURVIVAL OF THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER: MURDER, Mstery AND MYTH—Matthew Lewis,

The History Press, UK, 2018 (Hardcover), Kindle Edition 2017

Asking to be taken more seriously, and deserving to be, is Matthew Lewis' seminal work on the boys (they were not both Princes) in the Tower. Lewis tries to be impartial, in spite of his natural bias as a Ricardian, and succeeds most of the time. He has four main theses of what might have happened to them, which we might as well take in order.

Instead of killing them, their uncle Richard spirited them away to safety. Lewis quite accurately and devastatingly shows up the holes in the traditional (More) story, but doesn't seem to realize that there are holes, though not so glaring, in his own theory. If the boys were alive and well in a distant castle, why did the King not say so when the rumor first surfaced? He doesn't have to say where. He can keep them separated, and keep moving them from one place to another, lessening their danger. Why not say this, even if it were not true? I find it difficult to accept someone who was unprincipled enough to murder close relatives for personal gain, and too principled to tell a lie. At least he could buy time. Instead he let himself to be forced into a position of eternal stalling.

Then there is the matter of Lambert Simnel and the Battle of Stoke. Here is where things get confusing. Lewis says that the Duke of Clarence planned to send his son to safety in Ireland as early as 1477. Did he succeed in doing so? Was it this boy, now an adolescent, who went with the Earl of Lincoln to Stoke, and was captured there? Or was it Edward V, supported by his Aunt Margaret and his cousin John (Lincoln)? Was the rebellion in favor of the boy in the Tower in 1487, presumed to be Edward of Warwick, but who was maybe a changeling? Was the boy at Stoke really 'Lambert Simnel,' as Henry VII claimed? Lewis thinks that that name was so comical that it must have been made up by Henry to make fun of the whole affair. But don't real people also sometimes have odd-sounding names? After all, there was a contemporary Bishop Lambert Fosdyke, which to my ear sounds rather snicker-worthy.

I made the mistake of going to bed right after reading this chapter and couldn't get to sleep for all those Edwards chasing around in my brain. I had to get up and read a few more chapters. Why didn't the Irish lords, a few years later, recognize Lambert/Edward when he served them wine? Maybe they were afraid to or were too embarrassed to. Surely Lambert, whoever he was, would do everything he could to avoid being recognized, for his own safety.

The story Lewis seems to favor, and the one most Ricardians believe, because it makes Henry VII unquestionably guilty of the (judicial) murder of at least one of the princes, is that the man known as 'Perkin Warbeck' was really Richard of Shrewsbury, the younger of the two princes. The arguments for this are almost convincing: Margaret of Burgundy, Maximilian of Austria, the royal families of Spain and Scotland recognized

him as such. With the exception of Margaret, how did any of them know what he looked like? And of course, they were such snobs that they would surely not support a low-born impostor. Which only means that they believed him to be the real thing, not that he was. As the author himself points out in the section on Stoke, the Royal Duke of Clarence was plotting to substitute a relatively low-born stand-in for his son, whether he actually succeeded in doing that or not.

Other arguments in support (not necessarily proof) of this identification don't ring quite true, either. Henry had Perkin/Richard beaten up so he would not be recognized in London? This presumes that everyone in London, from the beggars on the street, to his own family members, would recognize the 9-year-old boy as the grown man? And a black eye and a few bruises would prevent any recognition. Why did the queen not denounce 'Perkin.'? Perhaps he was Richard, but equally, she may have been simply unable (because of the time that had passed) to say one way or the other, or unwilling. No doubt she was aware that recognizing 'Perkin' as her brother, or definitely saying he was not her brother, was effectively signing his death warrant. She also, at this point, had several children of her own. Would she wish to endanger them by making any positive statement? Or even a negative one?

I have to say that in his only portrait, 'Perkin' does resemble, not so much Edward IV as Elizabeth herself. This means little, except that both of them may have had a somewhat androgynous appearance. 'Perkin' is often referred to as 'beautiful,' while Elizabeth was referred to as a 'very handsome woman.' In any case, chance resemblances mean very little. The More family fool, whom Lewis refers to in the next section, had an uncanny likeness to Henry VIII (Lewis merely describes this—there may be an illustration in the print version) but nobody suggested that Henry Patenson was any relation to the Tudors whatever.

To be fair, if Lambert Simnel was not necessarily a made-up name, it is possible that 'Perkin Warbeck' was the code name devised by Henry and his spies for the young gentleman, whoever he was. The reasoning goes like this: Perkin = Peregrine = Pilgrim, or wanderer. That this was something like 'Piers Osbeck', the pretender's real name, or what the Tudor authorities decided was his real name. Another argument is Henry's own attitude toward the pretender. He seemed to alternate between leniency and cruelty. After all, Henry had been a pretender himself, in the sense of someone with pretensions to a throne, even though he was who he claimed to be. Henry was well aware that nobody had asked for his *bona fides*, his long-form birth certificate. He was accepted by the royal family of France and the ducal family of Brittany as the Earl of Richmond because he, and his uncle, said that he was, and because it suited their political policies. Henry was afraid of Perkin, even panicked by him, but not necessarily because he was 'Richard of York.'

This brings us to the next theory, that both boys survived and were hidden in plain sight at the Tudor court—the Leslau hypothesis. This doesn't call for anybody to be a villain—neither Richard, nor Henry, nor even Thomas More. Edward became 'Edward Guildford,' and Richard 'John Clement.' There are some interesting sidelights here. John Clement appears on a list of jousting, along with Henry VIII and the king's illegitimate uncle, Arthur Plantagenet, and the king's good buddy, Edward Brandon. This was surely an unusual honor for a middle-class scholar. Clement, if he was Richard of York, would be about 35 at the time, Arthur probably about the same age, Brandon in his late 20s or early 30s not too old to be jousting, as Henry did in his 30s. Leslau's idea of having Guildford and Clement's DNA followed up seems to have been abandoned since his death, but I think they should be carried out. I hate mysteries, unless they are solved.

Basically, the Leslau theory is picking a conclusion, and cherry-picking proof to fit it. An interesting puzzle, but unfalsifiable and therefore unprovable. This applies to all the theories about their identification.

My theory, also unprovable, is a combination of the Baldwin theory (which Lewis mentions in passing—Richard of Eastwell could have been Richard of York) and a theory that was put forward by a Professor or Dr. Murphy at an AGM some years back.

To wit: Richard comes to the Tower to take the boys to a place of safety just too late. Edward, deeply depressed, (testified to by Dr. Argentine) has committed suicide, which adolescents are vulnerable to. His brother, having witnessed this, is deeply traumatized, perhaps unable to speak. Not knowing what else to do, they inform Elizabeth Woodville. She will have hysterics later, but in the crisis she keeps her cool. She and Richard agree that the only thing to be done with the surviving boy is to send him to a place where he will be safe and have the best care possible, someplace like the monastery at Colchester. Now having one boy dead and one alive is the worst possible scenario. He cannot bury Edward in consecrated ground, and cannot say masses for him, so he cannot benefit by his death, and young Richard is more of a liability than ever. He has to act as he did, in fact, act, and do nothing to acknowledge or deny their existence. Even today, there is a tendency to cover up a teen-age suicide, feeling

that it reflects badly on the family. Among deeply religious medieval Catholics, the impulse to silence must have been much stronger. Elizabeth Woodville will still hate him, hate him for driving her son to self-murder, but she realizes that he poses no direct threat to her or her family, and will eventually come out of sanctuary.

Years pass. Henry Tudor becomes king. The surviving boy recovers to some degree, and Elizabeth Woodville believes it would be better to be the King's Mother, rather than his mother-in-law. She supports Lincoln/Warwick's bid, which she regards as a stalking horse for her son. Her daughter (her oldest two girls were surely in on the plot) doesn't go along with this, not believing that the boy is completely recovered yet, and fearful for her own children. Little Arthur would be demoted to Heir Presumptive. But she can't bring herself to tell Henry the truth either. On the one hand, she doesn't completely trust him; on the other, she doesn't trust her mother either. If she did confess what had happened, Henry would say "Why didn't you tell me in the first place, and save me a battle?" There would be no answer to that. Elizabeth no doubt sighed with relief when *l'affaire Simnel* blew over.

Too soon. 'Warbeck' comes along. If it was awkward to tell Henry the truth before, it is much more so now. She can only stonewall, refuse to either recognize or deny 'Perkin Warbeck.' This may have been entirely truthful. But her brother remains safe, in a house of religion.

More years pass, with them Henry, Elizabeth, and many of 'Perkin's' own generation. The former Prince Richard, long adjusted to being an anonymous lay-brother/monk/bricklayer, realizing that his best guarantee of a long and happy life is to be nobody, is queried closely by Sir Thomas Moyle. Does he claim to be what he appears to be, an educated man, a former monk, down on his luck? He doesn't know how Moyle feels about Catholics in general and monks in particular. Does he admit to being a Plantagenet prince? Hardly safe in Henry VIII's England? But being someone of royal but of illegitimate birth may get him certain perks and comforts in his old age. Even if he is proved to be a fraud, it is unlikely that he will be punished severely. He would simply be no worse off than before.

Yes, quite fanciful and unprovable, but it fits all the facts and is psychologically likely. At least, if I were writing a novel or short story (which I may yet) it is the tack I would take. I have certainly seen more fanciful recreations, in serious books as well as fiction.

Whether reading Mr. Lewis' thoroughly-researched and well-written speculative history inspires you to come up with your own theory or not, this is well worth reading, though if you have eyesight problems, it might be worth the wait and the money to get the print copy.

All right, just one more.

*There is nothing more certain than death, and nothing more uncertain than the hour of death.*—John

Dalton, English merchant, quoted by Ms. Johnson.

SO GREAT A PRINCE—Lauren Johnson, Head of Zeus, UK, 2016; also available in a Kindle edition.

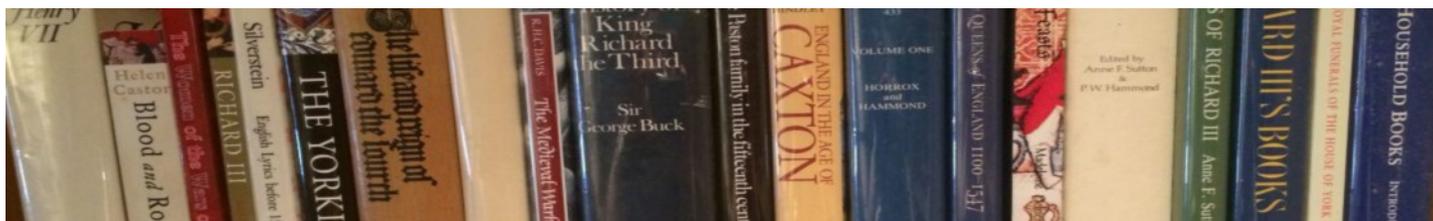
Not a biography of Henry VIII, nor a history of the early years of his reign and the political moves therein, though these certainly play a part; this is more a social history of the scene in England in the first decade of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Ms. Johnson frames the book in terms of the canonical calendar, which can be a great puzzlement to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although people living in 1509 called January 1 New Year's Day, and celebrated it, mainly by the giving of gifts within the household, from employer to employees and vice versa, and among family members, the year did not turn (e.g. from 1509 to 1510, until Lady Day, the Feast of the Annunciation, on March 25. Official pronouncements were usually dated by regnal years, e.g. 24 Henry VII. And events in any large town might be dated by the name of the mayor at the time. No doubt most people knew when and where they were born, and made a note of it, but there were always those who fell between the cracks. (My mother, for example, knew when and where she was born, but the State of Kansas didn't, since registration of births was not required until the next year. In order to prove her age so she could get Social Security, she had to get an affidavit signed by an eye-witness of her birth—her mother!)

Ms. Johnson follows the citizens of London, native-born and incomers, through the year: Midsummer Eve, All-Hallows, the Twelve Days of Christmas etc. Each chapter covers some aspect of life at the time: the status of women, the merchant or middle-class, exploration, books, clothing, and of course, Henry himself, and his dying father. The author highlights selected citizens, some of whom will be fairly well-known to us: the Pastons, the Plumpton, the Duke of Buckingham, noted for consumption conspicuous even by the generous standards of Henry VIII

But there are others, including John and Alice Middleton (you may know Alice better by the name of her second husband, More). There is Thomasine Percyvale, who came from the wilds of Cornwall to work as a maidservant, married and was widowed by three tailors, and wound up with her own tailor shop and enough money to become something of a philanthropist. Bess of Hardwick could have taken her correspondence course..

Well-researched and good background material for the period. England, and anything but dry-as-dust. England in 1510 was not so different from England in 1483, or 1450, or even 1409. The England of 1547 would be very different. But that is all in the future, as Ms. Johnson pulls back to give the reader an overview and leaves 1510 behind., perhaps with an air of regret. It would not be surprising if the reader feels that same regret.

~ ToC ~



# ex libris

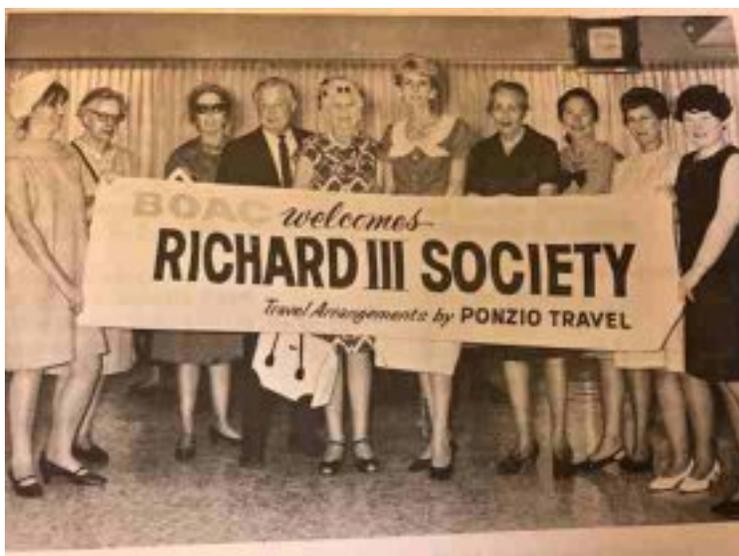


Susan Troxell

Rare and delightful books from the non-fiction library

## AMERICAN BRANCH DIGITAL ARCHIVES PROJECT

We are pleased to announce that back issues of the *Ricardian Register*, the newsletter of the American Branch of the Richard III Society, have been digitally scanned and uploaded to the Branch's website. These go back to 1966, not long after the Branch was founded and had only a few dozen members but was energized in August 1967 to make its first trip to the United Kingdom to visit Ricardian sites.



American branch members on their inaugural trip to England and Wales in August 1967. Shown from the left are Gretchen Clumpner, Mary McKittrick, Mrs. and Mr. Robert Leicester, Arlene Rosner and Mrs. Lena Rosner, Mrs. Viola Neiman, Mrs. Betty Schloss, Mrs. Helen Schweser, and Shelagh Hunter. Source: *Ricardian Register*, Vol. II, no. 2 (1967).

They also contain thoughtful and sometimes enlightening articles written by our members, such as a full astronomical analysis of the 1485 eclipse that occurred on the day of Anne Neville's death, as well as nostalgic glimpses of past AGMs and the cherished contributions of past and some now-deceased members.

The project to digitally archive and make accessible the *Registers* began almost a decade ago, when the more substantive articles from 1991 to the present were scanned and uploaded to the members only section of the Branch's website.

The recent project, overseen by our Research Librarian, involved digitally scanning full issues of the *Register*, including society news and organizational events, from 1966-1991. The scanning was performed by Allstate Information Management in Pennsauken, New Jersey. Using the website password given to American Branch members, the archived *Registers* can be accessed at [r3.org/members-only/archived-ricardian-registers-1966-1991/](http://r3.org/members-only/archived-ricardian-registers-1966-1991/). To obtain the password, please contact our Membership Chair, Cheryl Greer, at [membership@r3.org](mailto:membership@r3.org).

The Non-Fiction Library also maintains hard copies of past *Registers* for those wishing to browse them. Excess copies are available for free, in exchange for the cost of postage. Requests for borrowing or purchasing the hard copies should be submitted to our Research Librarian, Susan Troxell, at [researchlibrary@r3.org](mailto:researchlibrary@r3.org).  
January – June 1978 Cover containing the appeal for a bigger than life size statue of Richard III.



Cover of the 1978 Ricardian Register now available online. Geoffrey Wheeler's photograph is of Sir James Butler's proposed design for the Richard III Leicester memorial sculpture. The successful appeal headed by the Society ultimately led to a slightly less martial image of the king.

## Excerpts from 1966 Ricardian Register Vol. 1 No. 1

Fifty-two years ago, the American Branch of the Richard III Society published its first edition of The Ricardian Register: Vol. 1. No. 1. Here are two excerpts from this publication:

### REGIONAL DIRECTOR SPEAKS AT TOASTMASTERS

On November 2, Mr William Snyder, regional director of the Washington area, gave a talk entitled: 'Why Richard III' to the Toastmasters International Club of Washington, D. C. The following quotes are excerpts from this talk.

'...the careful, objective, and interested student of history can observe the layering of myth, legend, and propaganda into so-called history, shrouded in textbooks and sanctified, by repetition over these 500 years. In the same manner as the skilled pathologist dissects and lays bare diseased tissue, students of history are examining the life and times of Richard III with scrupulous care and objectivity and are attempting to lay bare the facts and remove the thick layers of fiction, propaganda, and hearsay.'

'Let's go back again to the Grand Canyon. Note how the colors of the rock seem to change with the shifting light of the sun. In the same way, we can observe how the character of Richard III changes as we focus the strong, clear light of careful and objective research and evaluation on this man and his times.'

'Such research has real meaning for our times, when the failure to distinguish between propaganda and fact might conceivably result in a  
holocaust.'

What is truth and how does one recognize it? This problem confronts very age and explains why the character of King Richard III now, more than ever, poses a fascinating and challenging problem.'

### RICARDIAN REFERENCE IN SCI—FI BOOK

While down in Florida and doing some light reading, I came across the following interesting reference:

'Earlier in time E625 had been one with the world Blake had once called home. Then two crucial alterations of events had given it another future altogether.

The first came in 1485. Thereafter no Henry Tudor had reigned in England. Instead Richard the Third's courageous charge at his enemy during the battle of Bosworth had carried him to the Lancastrian Pretender and, with his own hand, Richard had Put an end to the red rose for all time.

Once firmly on-the throne, Richard had developed the potentials that historians in Blake's world had come to grant him, with regret that he had never, in their own past, had a chance to show his worth as probably one of the ablest of the Plantagenet house. ...

The brilliance that, in Blake's world, had marked the reign of Elizabeth Tudor, had in E625 flourished a generation earlier under Richard and his immediate successors.

Andre Norton, QUEST CROSSTIME, Pp 75 - 76, Ace Books, Inc., New York, 1965

Editor's note: Since I am a fan of sci-fi as well as a Ricardian, I decided to chase down this book and immediately found it available on Amazon in the Children's books section ([amazon.com/Quest-Crosstime-Andre-Norton/dp/067058441X](https://www.amazon.com/Quest-Crosstime-Andre-Norton/dp/067058441X)). I've ordered it, but as of this publication, have not read it.

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If you do not see your chapter listed here, please contact the Chapter's Advisor at [chapters@r3.org](mailto:chapters@r3.org) and include current contact information.

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