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Contents

Contents.....	2
Notes from the Chair	3
From the Editor	4
What are the Chances.....?	4
Membership Inquiries.....	4
"All the enemies of England are gone:" Richard de la Pole and the White Rose of York	5
Scrabble for the King.....	18
E is for Ewelme.....	18
Richard III Ranks Among Great Discoveries	22
Hearths vs. Chimneys.....	23
Meetings	24
Annual General Meeting.....	24
January meeting.....	24
February meeting.....	24
Meeting schedule.....	24
Richard III Society of Canada Executive 2020-2021	25



Notes from the Chair

Well, the year that was 2020 is now over, and we cling to the hope that 2021 will see the end to this terrible world-wide pandemic that has cost us all so much in so many ways. I do hope that you are all safe and well and were able to connect to family and friends in some manner over the holiday season.

Looking over my comments from the Winter 2020 edition of the RIII, I was reminded of all the great activities that we had planned for the year, that never came to pass. We will hang on to the hope that we can re-schedule some of these events, some day in the future.

As the COVID pandemic has not abated and, as I write, Ontario is once again under lockdown, I will remind everyone that our Library loan and Sales Office functions have been suspended. I hope this does not cause a great inconvenience to members, and we shall let you know when business resumes.

The most recent news from the UK is the unexpected and untimely passing of Dr. Phil Stone, the Society Chairman, on December 17th. I was honoured to meet and spend a little time with him and his late wife Beth at the reinterment for King Richard III in Leicester in 2015. Phil had been the “face” of the Society for many years; calm, credible, scholarly, well-spoken, and devoted to the cause. He will truly be missed.

During a quick email conversation amongst the members of your Executive Committee, we agreed to send a donation on behalf of the branch in Phil’s memory to MacMillan Cancer in the UK.

On a happier note, welcome to our newest member, Ms. S. Hicks of Grafton, ON. I hope you find your membership rewarding, and that we shall all have the opportunity to meet you online.

I was so pleased to see so many new faces at our video conference meetings in November and January. We now can reach out to the far corners of our country – and beyond – and share our learning and fellowship. I know some of you have struggled with the technology, and not everyone has robust internet connectivity, but please do persevere. We will continue to publish member’s papers delivered via video in the RIII, so everyone will be able to read or revisit the great research done by your fellow Ricardians.

Not knowing what the future has in store, our meeting planning for the year has been rather tentative, but we do encourage members to send ideas, or prepare research papers for upcoming meetings. At the February meeting we will kick around the theories and conspiracies around those sons of Edward IV, the Princes in the Tower, the subject of Philippa Langley’s Missing Princes Project <https://revealingrichardiii.com/langley.html>.

Stay healthy, stay safe, and I hope to see many of you at upcoming video meetings.

Vivat Rex Ricardus!

Tracy

From the Editor

What are the Chances.....?

(Editor's note: coincidence is a strange beast! Many years ago, I was on a cross-Canada rail adventure, and enjoyed the splendid solitude of my own roomette. On day 4 from Toronto, I thought I'd venture to the dome car to take in the beauty of the Canadian Rockies, and began a lively chat with an older gentleman (who'd joined the train in Winnipeg) while we admired the scenery. He said he had a niece living in Toronto.....and when we dug deeper into her whereabouts, it turned out she was my immediate boss. A little creepy, no?)

Here's another Ricardian story in the same vein:

Our former Chair Rev. Clement Carelse is a parish Deacon and organist at a large Anglican church in Mississauga, Ontario. As part of his parish duties, he's been hosting a "Happy Half Hour" on Friday afternoons during the pandemic. This unscripted chat brings light-hearted amusement to the half-dozen folks who call in via Zoom each week... from a population of over 7,000,000 in the Golden Horseshoe region of southern Ontario.

The unscripted topics range widely from railway construction to vintage cars, the origin of swear words, and the foibles of pets. On a recent Friday, Clement mentioned "intuition" and gave the example of the 'woman who had a strange sensation in a Leicester parking lot' which led to the discovery of the remains of Richard III. One of the callers then casually remarked that his parents had been involved in the Society in its early days in Canada, and had helped to establish it here in the 1960s. Cheers! to Donald Scott, son of the late Graham and Janet....you're 1 in 7,000,000!

Ed.

Membership Inquiries

Please contact Sheilah O'Connor at membership@richardIII.ca.

"All the enemies of England are gone:" Richard de la Pole and the White Rose of York

- By Sheila Smith, Toronto

In the pre-dawn hours of 9 March 1525, a messenger newly returned from the continent rushed into the bedchamber of King Henry VIII at his palace of Whitehall. When Henry heard the story the messenger had to tell, he was said to have fallen to his knees to give thanks to God. Referring to the messenger as akin to "the Angel Gabriel, who announced the coming of Jesus Christ,"¹ Henry called out for wine for his guest. The man then recounted his first hand experiences of the Battle of Pavia, the capture of France's King Francis I, and the death of the enemy known as "The White Rose," who had been killed fighting in the midst of the battle. "All the enemies of England are gone," cried the king, and then called for more wine to reward the bearer of such good news.²



1. Effigies of John and Elizabeth de la Pole, Suffolk

¹ Macquereau, Robert, *Histoire générale de l'Europe depuis la naissance de Charle-Quint jusqu'au cinq juin 1527*, Louvain: Imprimerie Académique, 1765, p.231

² Macquereau p.231 (Unfortunately, Macquereau does not provide any sources and the story, while entertaining, is likely to be apocryphal.)

But who was this Blanche Rose, as he was called in many of the state papers and chronicles of the time? A respected soldier and leader of men, Richard de la Pole was born in 1480, the 11th and last child of John de la Pole, 2nd Duke of Suffolk, and Elizabeth, the daughter of Richard, Duke of York, and Cecily Neville. Through his mother he was a direct descendant of Edward III and the nephew of two future kings, Edward IV and Richard III.

His father's mother was Alice Chaucer, granddaughter of the poet Geoffrey and his wife Philippa de Roet who was the sister of Katherine Swynford, the mistress and eventual third wife to John of Gaunt. This made him a cousin to the Beaufort children, who were the half brothers and sister of Henry IV and uncles and aunt to Henry V and Henry VI. In other words, he was connected either by birth or marriage to nearly all of the royal and noble families of England at the time.

Richard's grandfather, William de la Pole, 1st Duke of Suffolk, was a key supporter of Henry VI, a military commander and statesman who was to back the losing side in the dynastic squabbles of the day. Blamed for a great many of the failures of his king's reign, he was briefly held in the Tower of London, before Henry VI was forced to banish him to the continent in an attempt to save his life. Unfortunately, he was captured while onboard ship just off the coast of Dover, given a mock trial and beheaded. His wife, Alice, nothing if not pragmatic, quickly changed sides, arranging a marriage of her only son to the daughter of the leader of the Yorkist faction. John had originally been married to Margaret Beaufort, but as they were only children at the time, the marriage was easily annulled, leaving both free to marry elsewhere.

Eleven children were born to John and Elizabeth between 1462 and 1480 and once their uncle Edward IV was on the throne, they were to enjoy a period of personal and economic good fortune befitting their new status.

Under Richard III, the first born son, John, who had been created 1st Earl of Lincoln in 1467, was appointed President of the Council of the North, and there is some suggestion that Richard had been planning to designate John as his heir after the death of his own son, Edward of Middleham. However fortune's wheel took another turn after the Battle of Bosworth and the ascension of Henry VII. Despite initially supporting Henry, Lincoln later became one of the leaders of the Lambert Simnel rebellion and was killed at the Battle of Stoke Field in 1487.

His father, the 2nd Duke, seems to have fared better, staying mostly out of politics, living until 1492 when the title passed to his fourth son, Edmund. (Of the two brothers in between, Geoffrey had died young and Edward had gone into the church, making him ineligible to inherit.) However, by 1495 Edmund saw his title downgraded to that of a mere Earl of Suffolk, ostensibly because

his income was not sufficient to support the dignity of a duke. The title of Duke of Suffolk would later be given to Henry VIII's friend and brother-in-law, Charles Brandon, but that did not stop the de la Pole sons from continuing to use it for political reasons.

By August 1501 relations had soured again between the brothers and their King, and Edmund and Richard left England for the continent without permission. They eventually arrived in the Tyrol where they were welcomed into the retinue of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I. In retaliation, Henry VII had Edmund declared an outlaw on 26 December 1502 and arrested a third brother, William, who had stayed behind. At the 1503 parliament, Richard was attainted. The brothers were also exempted from the general pardon issued by Henry VIII at his accession in 1509.

The brothers settled in Aachen (or Aix-la-Chapelle), staying for the next two years and when, in 1504, Edmund left, he agreed that Richard would stay behind as hostage for the debts they had run up and were unable to repay with no access to any of their English possessions.

Leaving proved to be a tragic mistake as Edmund was captured and eventually turned over to Henry VIII who had him shipped back to England and delivered straight into the Tower. He kept him there for seven years, before ordering his execution in 1513, possibly due to Richard's increasingly brazen plotting with Henry's enemies.



2. Buda in the Middle Ages

Meanwhile, the third brother, William, was to remain a prisoner for 37 years, until his death in 1539, setting a record for the longest continual imprisonment in Tower history. Luckily for Richard, he managed to secure the protection of

Erard de la Marck, Bishop of Liege, who provided financial support as well as arranging for him to safely leave Aachen.



3. Anna de la Foix

We next find Richard under the patronage and support of King Ladislaus II of Bohemia and Hungary. Richard arrived in Buda early in 1506, by now referring to himself as the 'White Rose' and the Earl of Suffolk (despite the fact that his older brother was still alive in the Tower) and he set about promoting himself as the true King of England.

Ladislaus's consort, Anna, was a cousin of Richard through his father. She was the granddaughter of Elizabeth de la Pole, the sister of the 2nd Duke of Suffolk, whose daughter had married Jean de la Foix, a Gascon knight who had settled in England, eventually becoming a Knight of the Garter and Earl of Kendal in 1446. Kendal was Gallicised to Candale and the family known as Foix-Candale. Anna was Ladislaus's third wife, but the first to provide him with a male heir, so offering support to a kinsman was probably something he was happy to do.



4. Landsknechte

By 1512 Richard was in France and the English and the French were once again at war. Louis XII, always keen to annoy his English enemy, seized upon the propaganda value of his English guest and officially recognized Richard as the rightful King of England, supplying money (in the form of a pension of 60,000 crowns) and men for his cause.

On 1 June 1512, a courier who had recently been in Venice reported to Rome of a "rumour that the King of France had exalted a... son of the deceased sister of the King [Richard III], who was killed by the late King of

England [Henry VII], it being said that he purposes sending him to England, and helping him to the crown.”³



5. *Portrait of Francis I*

In 1514 Richard was given the control of 10,000 Landsknechte, or German mercenaries, and they set off for Normandy on their way to invade England, where their behaviour made them so unpopular with the locals they had to decamp to St. Malo, in Brittany. However, that was as far as they got as England and France agreed a peace treaty. Terms of the treaty included the marriage of Henry VIII's sister, Mary, to King Louis, and that Richard would be expelled from France.

Louis had to abide by the treaty, but neither he nor his heir, his cousin Francis, were willing to relinquish Richard and his potential to be a thorn in England's side. Richard's pension was reduced to 6,000 crowns, but Louis arranged for

him to have safe passage to Metz where he was taken under the protection of the Duke of Lorraine, Antoine ‘the Good.’ He arrived on 2 September with sixty horsemen, where he was feted and presented with two gifts of wine and 25 “quairts” of oats, presumably for the horses.⁴ He needed a suitable house, and one was found for him by the charming name of Passe Temps, referred to in the records as a “pleasure house.”⁵

³ “Venice: June 1512”. *Calendar of State Papers Relating To English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 2, 1509-1519*. Ed. Rawdon Brown. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1867, pp. 64-70

⁴ “Appendix to Preface,” *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 3, 1519-1523*. Ed. J S Brewer. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1867, pp. cdxxxvi-cdxlv.

⁵ “Appendix to Preface” p. ccccxl

By 1518, the owner of Passe Temps, Claude Baudoiche, took back possession (because, according to Desmond Seward:⁶ "...perhaps Richard had seduced his daughter," although there is no evidence for that in the chronicles). The canons of Metz cathedral arranged for Richard to have a life lease on a run-down property called La Haulte Pierre at St Symphorien, on the banks of the Moselle. As part of the lease, he had to agree to take on all necessary repairs, so he had it razed to the ground and completely rebuilt as a modern and luxurious residence fit for a king-in-exile. Richard quickly acquired a reputation for his expensive tastes and love of luxurious living; he was also said to have initiated horse-racing at Metz, but gave it up personally after several expensive and embarrassing losses.⁷

While he was at Metz, his other pastimes were to make him the talk of the town. He took a mistress, a beautiful woman named Seville, the wife of a local goldsmith, who was referred to by a chronicler as 'tall, straight and slender, and white as snow' (haulte, droite et élançee, et blanche comme la nièce).⁸ Richard was said to have sent her husband, Nicolas, on a buying expedition to Paris to get him out of the way, but he was to hear of her behavior when he returned in the autumn of 1519. She left Nicolas, making sure to take a good amount of her husband's jewels with her, to go and live with Richard at La Haulte Pierre. Her husband followed in hot pursuit, looking to get his wife and property back. Nicolas and his friends accosted Richard one day in the streets of Metz, where Nicolas yelled insults at him; and Richard defended himself by pulling his dagger, throwing it at Nicolas as the irate husband ran to safety.

Nicolas demanded justice, and the local church council got involved. Richard offered to give Seville up if Nicolas promised not to beat or mistreat her – there is no record of what Seville herself wanted or if she was even asked – but Nicolas would not agree to these terms, choosing instead to hire someone to kill Richard (which says something of his character and why Seville might have preferred to live elsewhere.) Hearing of this, Richard left Metz and headed to the nearby town of Toul. Seville was given into the custody of her brother, but escaped, dressed as a vine dresser, and joined Richard in Toul where they lived together for a few years, in a house lent to Richard by the Cardinal of Lorraine, who seems not to have cared all that much about his tenant's unorthodox living arrangements.

⁶ Seward, Desmond, *The Last White Rose: Dynasty, Rebellion and Treason, The Secret Wars of the Tudors*, London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2010, p. 238

⁷ Gairdner, James, *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1885-1900, Volume 46, London: Smith, Elder & Co. - entry for Pole, Richard de la, p. 46

⁸ "Appendix to Preface" p. ccccxlii

Richard, by this point, had gotten good at dodging assassins. In 1515, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey (now also Bishop of Tournai), acting under instructions from his king who was fed up with Richard running around Europe claiming to be the rightful King of England, decided to hire an assassin to take care of the matter once and for all. The other de la Pole brothers were either dead, in custody, or had taken holy orders; by killing Richard, Henry could rid himself of one of the last Plantagenet threats to his throne. Percheval de Matte was one of three men hired to abduct or kill Richard (the other two were named as Robert Latimer and Symonde Francoyse). Despite getting close enough to report back on Richard's coming and goings, including reports of his secret nighttime meetings with French agents, they found that Richard always managed to stay one step ahead of them. It helped that Richard and his supporters were able to turn two of Cardinal Wolsey's own spies, Hans Nagle and Pierre Alamire, court musicians, against him and use them as double agents.

He also gathered a number of exiles from England unhappy with their treatment at the hands of the Tudors, including two illegitimate sons of old noble families. Known as the 'Bastard of Stanley,' Thomas Stanley was the son of Sir William Stanley, Henry VII's former chamberlain. He met up with Richard in Bruges, where he complained of having been kept in the Tower for 14 years after his father's death, and that no one would hire him after his release. Richard took him on as his porter, agreeing to pay him twenty crowns a year, but a dispute over non-payment of wages led to a scuffle, a farcical attempt at getting him to confess to being an agent of Henry VIII, and Thomas fleeing into the night.

Richard also took on Sir George Neville, the illegitimate son of a Thomas Neville, who had married Mary FitzLewis, widow of Anthony Woodville, as her second husband. There is some dispute among historians as to which branch of the Neville family he belongs to. In the index to the Harleian Manuscript, he is said to be the "bastard son of Sir Thomas and nephew of the 2nd earl of Westmorland."⁹

Under Richard III, George Neville had been granted a series of rich manors and was appointed, amongst other things, Constable of Corfe Castle and keeper of the king's forests in Dorset. He had been in and out of favour at court since 1483, and now found himself in exile on the continent, where he joined forces with the Yorkist faction.

Louis XII died in 1515 and was succeeded by his cousin Francis I, who was only too happy to re-visit Richard's plans for an English invasion. By 1518,

⁹ Hammond, P. W and Horrox, Rosemary. British Library Harleian Manuscript 433. Gloucester: A. Sutton Publishing for The Richard III Society, 1979, Vol. 4 (Index compiled by Horrox), p. 142

Francis's official mistress was the Comtesse de Châteaubriant, née Françoise de Foix, a cousin of Richard's, which further strengthened ties between the two men.

By 1522 Richard was in negotiations with France and England's other historic enemy, Scotland, to fund an invasion. An alliance was even proposed that would include Christian of Denmark and other Hanseatic leaders, with the treaty sealed by the marriage of Richard to Frederick of Holstein's daughter, Dorothea.



6. *The Battle of Pavia (tapestry)*

According to a deposition from a Hanseatic merchant named Perpoynte Devauntter on 18 August 1522: "...the King [of France] intended to set Ric. De la Pole forward with a great number of men, and, with the help of Denmark, land him in England in those parts where the duke of Buckingham had lands, where they would burn and destroy man, woman and child. The French king would give him 50,000 crowns, and every nobleman and gentleman had promised him a contribution."¹⁰

While the marriage never came about, France and Scotland carried on with their plan of an invasion to be launched on two fronts: Richard and his troops invading from the continent and the Duke of Albany (the Scottish regent on behalf of the young James V) leading his troops south into England. Rumours

¹⁰ "Henry VIII: August 1522, 11-20." *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 3, 1519-1523*. Ed. J S Brewer. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1867, pp. 1025-1037.

went back and forth across the Channel that an invasion was imminent, but it never got much further than the planning stages.

On the 4 August 1523 Thomas Dacre, 2nd Baron Dacre, wrote to Margaret Tudor, dowager Queen of Scotland, warning her off Richard and his enterprises, saying that: "If it be true that the Duke [of Albany] associates with 'one of the vilest caitiffs of the world, named Richard de la Pole,' for the prosecution of his claim to England... to her prejudice and that of her son, it cannot be to her interest to favor him."¹¹

Writing with the benefit of hindsight in 1548, Edward Hall in his *Chronicle* referred to Richard's threats to take the throne as the "shameful bragges of a nobleman and very folishe."¹² But it is obvious that Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey did take him seriously as a threat.

Whether Francis was actually serious about invading England or was just, to use a modern word, trolling Henry, is unclear. Regardless of his motivations, he was soon to have more pressing matters closer to home to keep him busy.



7. *The Battle of Pavia carved on rock crystal*

By 1521, relations between France and the Holy Roman Empire, now under Charles V, had devolved to the point of open conflict. Sometimes called the Four Years' War, this stage of the Italian Wars saw France and the Republic of Venice go up against the combined strength of Charles V, the Papal States, and England. On the morning of 24 February 1525, in a town near Milan, the armies met up.

¹¹ "Henry VIII: August 1523, 1-10." *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 3*, pp. 1338-1343.

¹² Hall, Edward, *Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, And the Succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, In Which Are Particularly Described the Manners And Customs of Those Periods*, London: J. Johnson [etc.], 1809, p. 651

The Battle of Pavia, fought in what is now the Visconti Park of Mirabello di Pavia, just outside the city walls, was to see the end of the 45 year-old Richard's quest to take back the throne for the Yorks. During the four hours of the battle, the French forces were overwhelmed, resulting in one of the worst defeats for any French king. Many of his nobles were killed and Francis was, humiliatingly, taken prisoner and transferred to Spain for safekeeping, where he was forced to agree to a treaty. Richard, alongside François de Lorraine, was in command of the right wing of the French infantry, which mainly consisted of a group of German mercenaries – the Landsknechte again, mostly pikemen and foot soldiers known as the Black Band.

François de Lorraine was the son of René II, Duke of Lorraine and Philippa of Guelders. As the younger brother of Claude de Lorraine, 1st Duke of Guise, he was the granduncle of Mary Queen of Scots, although he died 17 years before she was born.

By the end of the day, both Richard and François were dead. In a picture painted shortly after the battle (currently held at the Ashmolean in Oxford), Richard's body is shown in the middle of the field, beneath a banner with the inscription 'Le Duc de Susfoc dit Blance Rose'. This, then, was the end of the last member of the York family to openly challenge the Tudors for the throne. The two men were given fine tombs in a local church, the Basilica of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro (St. Peter in the Golden Sky).

The Basilica is also the final resting place of St. Augustine of Hippo. Unfortunately, due to rivalries between different religious orders, the building fell into disrepair. Richard's tomb is long gone and even the location of his remains are unknown. The church was renovated in the 1870's and many unidentified remains were reburied in a common grave.

As mentioned at the beginning, Henry VIII was overjoyed at the turn of events. Richard had outwitted Henry at nearly every turn but now, one of the last remaining grandchildren of Richard, Duke of York, was dead and his great enemy, Francis, was in custody. Bonfires were lit, wine flowed through city conduits, the church's bells were ordered to be rung, and Cardinal Wolsey led a procession into St. Paul's Cathedral to celebrate mass and sing the Te Deum.

Of the eleven children born to John de la Pole and Elizabeth of York, two died young, three took holy orders, and of the four who did marry, only one (Edmund, the 3rd Duke), was known to have had a child who lived to adulthood (but she, as well, took holy orders and became a nun).

This might have been the end of Richard's story, and indeed of this branch of the family, except for a marriage that took place at the Palace of Fontainebleau on 21 May 1539. Cibaud de Tivoley, Seigneur de Brenieu, was an esquire to

Queen Eleanore of Austria, second wife of Francis I. (She was also a granddaughter of Mary of Burgundy, the step-daughter of Margaret of York, which may have made her sympathetic to the Yorkist cause). In attendance alongside the Queen and other nobles was Gabriel di Saluzzo, the son of Marguerite de Foix-Candale. Gabriel was the second cousin of Richard through their de la Pole ancestors.



8. *Basilica of San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro*

But who was the bride? She signed the marriage register as Marguerite de la Pole – Suffolk. She was said to have been born in 1520 and named after Francis's sister, Marguerite of Navarre, whom she later served as lady in waiting. Genealogists have been attempting to verify her identity since at least the 18th century. At various times she has been mistaken for Margaret Pole, daughter of the Duke of Clarence and Isabelle Neville, or Richard's cousin Margaret Foix-Candale, but those identities have been conclusively disproved. If, as now seems to be generally accepted, she really was the daughter of Richard, who never married, the next question is who was her mother, whose

identity is also shrouded in mystery. An eighteenth century historian¹³ named her mother as a Marie of Sicily, but provided no further identification to help narrow her down. The runaway wife Seville is another contender, or perhaps a woman from Lorraine who never made it into the records.

Marguerite and her husband had three sons and five daughters. One of her daughters, Eleonore, was the Grandmother of Louis de Buade, better known to Canadians as the Comte de Frontenac who was Governor of Canada (then called New France). While Frontenac was married to Anne de La Grange-Trianon, he does not seem to have left any children, which, disappointingly, means that there are no York-Chaucer heirs in Quebec today (at least not from this branch).



9. *Le Comte de Frontenac*

An able soldier and leader of men, a man known for his luxurious tastes and love of the good life, and one of the last of the Yorkists able to openly fight the Tudors for the throne, Richard de la Pole fought for a throne he felt had been usurped from his family only to be killed fighting in a foreign war on the side of

¹³ Anselme de Saint-Marie, *Histoire genealogique et chronologique de la maison royale de France*, 3rd edition, Paris: La Compagnie des Libraires, 1728, p. 383

England's traditional enemy. While there were still a few Yorkist descendants left to give Henry VIII a good bit of trouble (Cardinal Reginald Pole was to be a particular thorn in Henry's side a few years later) Edmund and Richard were the last of the Plantagenets to actively seek the throne, ultimately losing the fight.

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3. Queen Anne de Foix-Candale of Bohemia and Hungary - Fresco from walls of the St. Wenceslas Chapel in St. Vitus Cathedral, Prague, 1508 (Public domain)
4. Landsknechtes - Rosenberg, Adolf and Heyck, Eduard, *Geschichte des Kostüms* (Published by Weyhe, New York, 1905) (Public domain)
5. Portrait of François I by Jean Clouet (Public domain)
6. Battle of Pavia, one of a tapestry suite woven at Brussels c. 1528–31 by Bernard van Orley (Public domain)
7. The Battle of Pavia in an engraved rock crystal cameo relief commissioned by Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, by Giovanni Bernardi, Rome, c. 1531–35 (Walters Art Museum, Creative Commons Zero: No Rights Reserved)
8. Pavia, San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro (CC BY-SA 3.0 -Welleschik)
9. Frontenac receiving the envoy of William Phipps demanding the surrender of Quebec prior to the Battle of Quebec in 1690, Charles William Jefferys (Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1972-26-780 - Copyright: Expired)



Scrabble for the King

At the January meeting, we asked members to pick a Scrabble letter and research a topic for that letter. We have one more entry.

E is for Ewelme

By Sheila Smith, Toronto

For our scrabble challenge I chose the letter E, and that made me think of Ewelme in Oxfordshire. I am currently researching the de la Poles, the nieces and nephews of Richard III by his sister Elizabeth, who was married to John de la Pole, first duke of Suffolk. John's parents were Alice Chaucer,

granddaughter of the poet, Geoffrey Chaucer, and her third husband William, first duke of Suffolk. The manor of Ewelme, the parish church, and the surrounding village had been inherited by Alice through her mother Matilda Burghersh who had married Chaucer's son Thomas.

In 1437 Henry VI issued a royal license that established the Ewelme Trust, which is still in existence, and the family built almshouses and a school, and began a series of renovations to the church and chantry. The school is still running today, which makes it the oldest school in the UK still in use.

After the death of her husband in 1450, Alice remained under the protection of Henry VI, but she began to ally herself with the Yorkists, and by 1458 she had arranged a marriage between her only son and Elizabeth of York.

Alice died in 1475, and her son arranged for a grand tomb for his mother in the local village church of St Mary the Virgin. Located between the south-east chapel and the chancel, the elaborate alabaster tomb was likely made in London, and is one of the finest examples of medieval funerary workmanship. It also contains a few surprises.



10. Inside the tomb

On the top half of the tomb, which is solid alabaster, lies a life-size and life-like effigy of Alice resting under an ornately carved canopy. She is displayed in a traditional pose, hands folded in prayer, dressed in nun's clothing (depicting her as a consecrated widow – a widow who had taken a vow of chastity), her ducal coronet on her head, and the Order of the Garter on her left arm. Queen Victoria was said to have consulted the tomb to learn how a Lady should wear the order, as it would not have been modest to wear it on the leg as Knights

did. The cushion her head lies on is surrounded by angels, said to be there to help guide her to heaven (although, going by what we know of Alice, she might be the one giving them advice!).



11. North side of Alice Chaucer's tomb

Underneath the effigy is a handsomely decorated chest that houses her mortal remains. The monument is decorated with a series of heraldic shields displaying, among others, the coats of arms of her Chaucer, de la Pole and Roet

family members, as well as the royal arms of England, which John would have included thanks to his marriage to the sister of Edward IV. His mother is also referred to as “the Most Serene Princess Alice, Duchess of Suffolk,” further highlighting the family's royal connections.

But that is not all that is interesting about the monument because this is a transi tomb (also called a cadaver tomb), designed to remind church-goers of the transience of all life, and that all were equal in death. On the bottom level of this double-decker tomb is a second effigy of Alice, this time carved in skeletal form and partially wrapped in a burial shroud. Death being equal was all well and good in theory, but she was a Duchess so she had a good view – the ceiling of the bottom tomb is painted with elaborate scenes of the Annunciation. Visitors to the tomb will notice that they are for her eyes only, hidden from view as the only way to get even a partial view is on hands and knees. Of course, the difficulty is probably one of the reasons the scenes survived the Reformation and its destruction of religious art deemed idolatrous. This is the sole surviving, intact cadaver effigy of a woman in England, and the only cadaver effigy in alabaster.



12 Tomb of Alice Chaucer

Sources:

Friends of Ewelme Church (<http://www.friendsofewelmechurch.co.uk/>)

The Ewelme Almshouse Charity
(<http://www.ewelmealmschousecharity.org/index.html>)

'Ewelme,' in A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 18, ed. Simon Townley (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2016), pp. 192-234. British History Online
(<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/>)

Photo credits:

1. Inside the tomb (By Bill Nicholls, CC BY-SA 2.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=14356973>)
2. North side of chest tomb of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Suffolk (By --Rensi 21:14, 23. Dec. 2009 (CET) - Self-photographed, Public Domain,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11680321>)
3. Tomb of Alice, Duchess of Suffolk, Ewelme (By Alastair Rae - CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7554023>)

Richard III Ranks Among Great Discoveries

Thanks to member Ray Rawlings (Mississauga, Ontario) for reporting that the finding of Richard's remains in August, 2012, scored highly on a list of important discoveries of the last decade compiled by the Archaeological Institute of America. Other finds on the list include:

- 2010 – a Neanderthal cave in Croatia
- 2011 – a Neolithic city in China
- 2012 – a Peruvian child and llama sacrifice area
- 2014 – the wreck of the Franklin expedition
- 2015 – laser scanning in Angkor, Cambodia
- 2015 – Pylor, Greece: grave of a warrior
- 2018 – an Egyptian mummification workshop
- 2018 – new excavations in Pompeii

Exalted company indeed for our Richard!

Hearths vs. Chimneys

by Sheilah O'Connor, Toronto



13. Barley Hall with its central hearth

Photo credit: Image from

<https://murreyandblue.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/aldermanshouse.jpg>

We tend to think of chimneys as inevitably used in homes and that's how we picture the houses in the 15th Century however, that was not always the case!

Central hearths continued to be used in smaller, poorer homes until the late 16th Century. Smoke escaped through the thatch, or through a louvre in the roof. The smoke could also be used to smoke meat and to keep down the number of rodents and insects that might be nesting in the thatch. Barley Hall, in York, is renovated to look as it did in the late 15th C: it has a central hearth.



Meetings

Annual General Meeting

The booklet for the AGM was distributed as a PDF file to members before the AGM in October, 2020. This includes the officers' reports for 2019-2020 & the minutes of the 2019 AGM. If you want a copy, please ask Sheilah O'Connor.

January meeting

In January, Jamie Pratt presented his paper *The Transformation of Witchcraft in the 15th Century*. Look for it in the next RIII.

February meeting

We will be discussing the fate of Edward IV's sons, the Princes in the Tower, Zoom. Our chairman, Tracy Bryce has very kindly supplied some links for quick research (just click on the underlined text):

- ⊗ History Extra Podcast: [Princes In The Tower | Exclusive History Podcast Series - HistoryExtra](#)
- ⊗ Tudors Dynasty Podcast: [Tudors Dynasty Podcast: Matthew Lewis Talks Princes in the Tower on Apple Podcasts](#)
- ⊗ [The Mystery of the Princes in the Tower – Richard III Society of Canada](#)
- ⊗ [Richard III Society | LEARN MORE](#) Princes in the Tower
- ⊗ [The Princes in the Tower | Tower of London | Historic Royal Palaces \(hrp.org.uk\)](#)

Meeting schedule

During the pandemic, our meetings will be conducted remotely. Currently, we are using Zoom. It works on a computer with a Windows, Mac OS, or Ubuntu operating system, using the browsers Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Safari, or Chrome. It also works on smartphones, where you will want a Zoom app. Meetings are usually at 2 p.m. Eastern time.

Meeting Date	Host or Hostess (via Zoom)	Paper or Activity
February 14, 2021	Tracy or Jamie	<i>The Princes in the Tower</i> Read and Discuss
March 14, 2021	Tracy or Jamie	Book Review from Ray Rawlings & one other activity
April 11, 2021	Tracy or Jamie	To be announced
May 9, 2021	Tracy or Jamie	Victoria Moorshead - TBA
June 13, 2021	Tracy or Jamie	TBA

Please also look for emails about remote meetings in other areas.

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Thank you to Mona Albano, mona.albano@gmail.com, for helping to produce the *RIII*.



Working at home with cats

Thanks to Sheilah O'Connor and Andrea Reynolds, Toronto!