



Through the 15th century the Gentry become firmly established as the real rulers of the localities; and an enterprising part of England's economy. So it seems worth finding out a bit more about them.



181 The 15th C Rural Economy

We know that the Magnates and peerage made some cutbacks and prettified fewer of their residences - but what of the Gentry, who by and large would have 1 or 2 manors and the peasantry and their yardland?



Peasants...

181a Arthur by David McLain



A third guest episode by David McLain. This time about Arthur, King of the Britons...

182 Games and Beasts

A chance to go into some byways, away from politics and talk about how medieval folk enjoyed themselves; the games they played in medieval days, from Football to Stoolball, from chess to skittles. And then, then completely unconnected, some of domesticated animals common in the Middle Ages - dogs, cats, horses and so on, where they came from, what they were called, how worked with man.

Did the Middle Ages have pet dogs or not?

Received wisdom is that lapdogs and dogs for pure companionship were not a medieval thing, they were far too practical. Well, here's a few things then.

Firstly there's the poet and writer Christine de Pisan (1364-1430). Here's a picture of Christine writing away. Tell me if that little hound is designed for anything practical? Look me in the eye when you answer.



'a greyhound, mastiff or little dog, whether on the road, or at table, or in bed, always stays close to the person who gives him food and ignores all others, being distant and shy with them. Even if far away, the dog always has his master in his heart. Even if his master whips or throws stones at the dog, the dog will still follow him, wagging his tail and lying down in front of his masters to placate him. The dog will follow the master through rivers, woods, thieves and battles'

A map of Smithfield market

Here's a map of Smithfield Market in the Middle Ages, from Know your London; the names around the market are interesting...some have now disappeared.



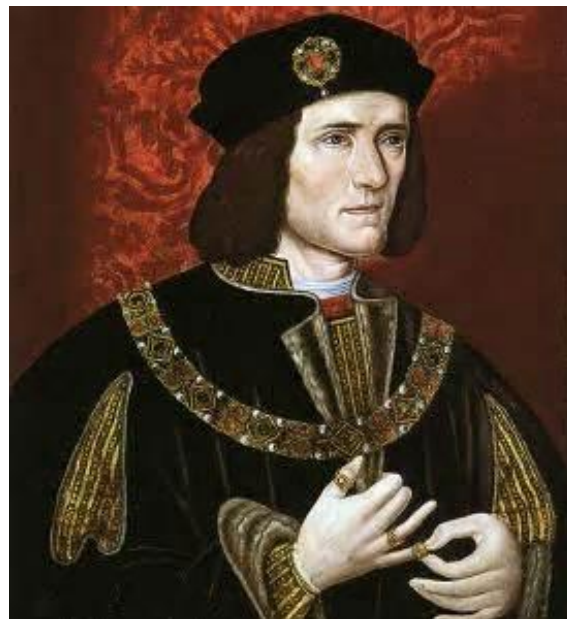
183 The Brothers York

They had a complicated relationship - Edward, Clarence and Richard; Clarence and Richard had often been left together with Cecily and Margaret while Edward was with his father. In the 1470s, things came to a head.



George, Duke of Clarence (1449-1478)

George's reputation has been shaped to a degree by Shakespeare, and the famous line 'false, fleeting, perjur'd Clarence'. Well, much as we might point out that Shakespeare was a thoroughly dull sort of chap, but anyway his job was to entertain, not give a history lesson, for once he might well be on the money. Clarence's behaviour as a rebel with Warwick against his own brother had been outrageous; Edward had forgiven, though unlikely he'd forgotten. Clarence could have sat tight and thanks the stars for his luck; he did not such thing. The fight between Clarence and Gloucester for Warwick the Kingmaker's inheritance demonstrated his greed, his defence of Thomas Burdett demonstrated his arrogance and stupidity, and his murder of Ankarette Twynho demonstrated his brutality.

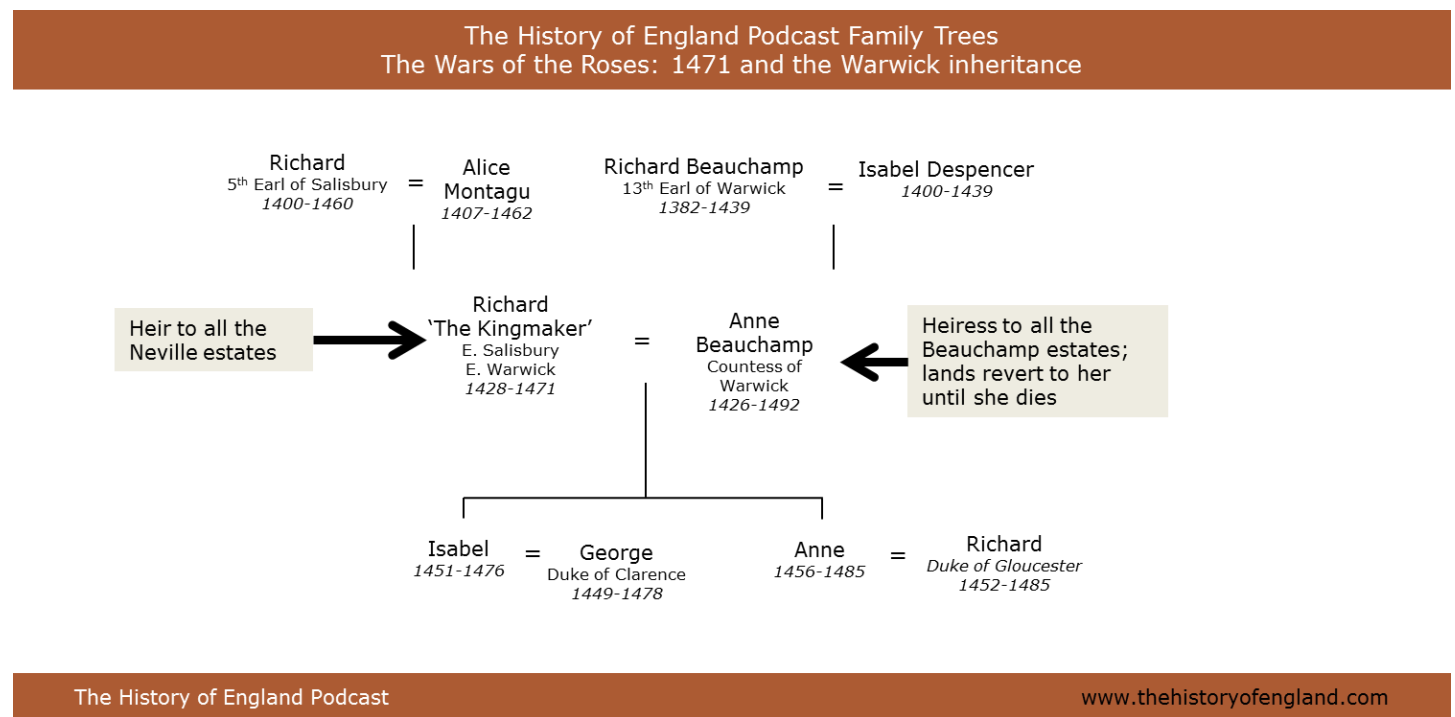


Richard, Duke of Gloucester (1452 - 1485)

More ink has been spilled about Richard, so I won't go on. At this point, Richard has very much showed his worth to his brother. He refused to be seduced by Warwick and Clarence, stayed steadfastly loyal to Edward. He'd fought by his side at Barnet and Tewkesbury and proved himself. At 5 foot 8, relatively slight build, Richard had developed Scoliosis and therefore his shoulder may have looked higher than his left; but whatever his physical stature, he'd shown himself loyal and effective. in 1471 he was therefore handsomely rewarded by Edward and given the Neville lands in the north, and leadership in the north over Percy.

The Warwick inheritance

Here's a quick and easy family tree which helps illustrate the point about the Warwick inheritance



184 Edward's Foreign Glory

Edward IV fancied himself as a latter day Edward III, and with his love of the Garter tradition on the one hand and his determination to gain revenge for French support for Lancaster, a European adventure looked on the cards.

The House of Burgundy



185 Edward the King

The 1470's were a marked contrast to the 1460's; a decade of complete calm, of control and authority. How did Edward do it?



Edward IV

Edward the King

A few quotes might give a misleading impression of Edward IV. Dominic Mancini:

'He was licentious in the extreme. Moreover it was said that he had been most insolent to numerous women after he had subdued them, for, as soon as he grew weary of dalliance, he gave up the ladies much against their will to the other courtiers. He pursued with no discrimination the married and the unmarried, the noble and lowly, However, he took none by force.'

The Croyland Chronicler also waded in on Edward's passion for

Boon companionship, vanities, debauchery, extravagance and sensual enjoyments.

Here's Mancini again.

'In food and drink he was most immoderate; it was his habit so I have learned to take an emetic for the delight of gorging his stomach once more. For this reason...he had grown fat in the loins'

No one challenges the idea that Edward was a good time king. But Edward was also an active leader and governor. He was immersed in the daily business of governing his kingdom; he fostered trade, brought the royal finances under control. He is also credited with starting towards the direction of the modern state - using the royal household to manage rather than the cumbersome Exchequer and Chancery. Edward was probably not a great innovator; it would be left to the Tudors to create the bureaucracy that serviced the early modern state, but he was a master at the art of medieval kingship - managing his great men and barons, balancing their needs and ambitions, providing confidence and leadership.

186 The King is Alive!

It was critical that the heir to the throne, the young Edward, was tutored and governed to be brought up to be a successful king - and so Rivers was given the job, in Ludlow on the Welsh borders, and there was time. Then in 1483 the king fell ill. There's a bit of a fly by about the main players too this week - what is that stuff about the Woodvilles all about?



Edward V

Edward's life didn't start that well of course - born in the Sanctuary of Westminster, with Dad overseas, a fugitive. But once things were back on track, he emerged again in 1473, when Edward was installed with his own household at Ludlow Castle. His maternal uncle Rivers was appointed his Governor; Lord Richard Grey, Edward's half-brother his Treasurer, and Thomas Vaughan his Chamberlain. Sent away at the age of 3 - life was tough. He had civic duties too - at the age of 4, he returned to Westminster to be keeper of the realm while Edward IV was on campaign in France. Free sweets for everyone!

Edward began his formal education, under the strict guidance of rules laid down by his father King Edward IV. There's a nice letter that survives - you can see it on the War of the Roses section of my website.

Now, we don't get much of an insight in the young Edward Vth; just a little glimpses, through Dominic Mancini, the Italian who visited England in 1482-3 and wrote a famous description of the political events. He said of the young Edward:

'He had such dignity in his own person, and in his face such charm that however much they might gaze, he never wearied the eyes of beholders.'

Well that's nice, isn't it? And again:

"This context seems to require that I should not pass over in silence the talent of the youth. In word and deed, he gave so many proofs of his liberal education, of polite, nay rather scholarly attainments far beyond his age; all of these should be recounted, but require so such labor, that I shall lawfully excuse myself the effort. There is one thing I shall not omit, and that is, his special knowledge of literature, which enabled him to discourse elegantly, to understand fully and to disclaim most excellently from any work whether in verse or prose which came into his hands, unless it were from among the more abstruse authors.'

Essentially, Rivers seems to have done his job well, and if Mancini is to be at all trusted, here was a young man who shared Woodville's interests. At key points in 1483 when his father died, Edward was to show that he felt close to his uncles, Rivers and also Richard Grey.



Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers

Anthony Woodville (1440-1483) is in many ways an impressive character; a man of many parts, many talents and interests - a renaissance man, and very much more than a man obsessed by political power - this is no Warwick the Kingmaker. As the eldest son of Richard Woodville, first Earl Rivers, and Jacquetta of Luxemburg, Anthony was the brother of the Queen Elizabeth Woodville. Renaissance man he might have been, but the Woodville inheritance was very unimpressive in terms of income - part of the reason the peerage looked down on the Woodvilles so much. However, things were helped when he married and became Lord Scales in 1460; although his new wife legally brought him no rights to her lands, in common with the king and Duke of Gloucester, Anthony managed to bend the laws, and ended up retaining them - eventually they ended up with his brother Edward Woodville, to the loss of the heirs of the original Lord Scales. It's a point worth remembering; although Anthony Woodville is in many ways an attractive character, like any other magnate he was utterly ruthless in matters of land and inheritance - the papers of his agent apparently show him to be a hard headed business man. He became Earl Rivers when his father died at the hands of Warwick in 1469.

Woodville interests were in some ways traditional - war, religion, family & wealth, the tournament. At the first he had some success, but was an occasional player - or at least according to his station; he was in London in 1470 when the Bastard of Fauconberg attacked, took part in Edward IV's campaign in France, was one of Gloucester's commanders in the Scottish campaign, that sort of thing. The rest, he often seemed to take a little further than was absolutely necessary - and maybe this is why he stands among the Woodville clan. In religion, he was famously found to wear a hair shirt when he died; everyone was so impressed it became an object of veneration and pilgrimage (I must remember to donate my string vest to someone in my will). And in a decade when the story is one of grasping, power mad Woodvilles, it's head was wasting valuable networking time by going on crusade and pilgrimage - in Portugal, Santiago, Rome and Italy.



He was also a famous jousting; the most famous was in 1467 when he jousting with Antoine, the Bastard of Burgundy for 2 days at Smithfield. On the first day, when they fought on horseback, the Bastard's horse was killed; on the second, when they fought with axes, Woodville held his own and the joust was declared drawn. Next year, at the marriage celebrations of Margaret of York, he broke eleven lances with Adolf of Cleves. Despite that hairshirt thing, he was a full and enthusiastic participant in the whole pageantry of the joust; so for example in the marriage celebrations of Anne of Mowbray to Richard of York, he fought in the habit of a white hermit.

In his literary interests, Woodville was a little more exceptional. He was clearly interested in the Italian Renaissance; he translated "*Les Dictes Moraux des Philosophes*" whilst in the Prince of Wales' household and had his "*The Dictes and Saying of the Philosophers*" printed by Caxton in 1477, and was thus not only a writer but an earliest patron of Caxton and the new fangled invention.

Woodville at one point said that the vicissitudes of life had led him to devote his life to God. Maybe this sense of perspective, with a tinge of fatalism was why in the second reign of Edward, he did not take up the opportunity to become the leading political figure he could have become. But in 1483 he wielded enormous influence through the job of tutor and governor of the young Prince of Wales, the future Edward V.

In 1483, there was no sign of any animosity between Gloucester and this particular Woodville - indeed rather the opposite. Rivers had asked Gloucester to arbitrate in a dispute he had, which implies closeness and trust; Rivers was one of the commanders of Gloucester's Scottish campaign.

187 Edward V

The reign of Edward V is one of the great controversies of English history. This episode is as uncontroversial - just what happened.

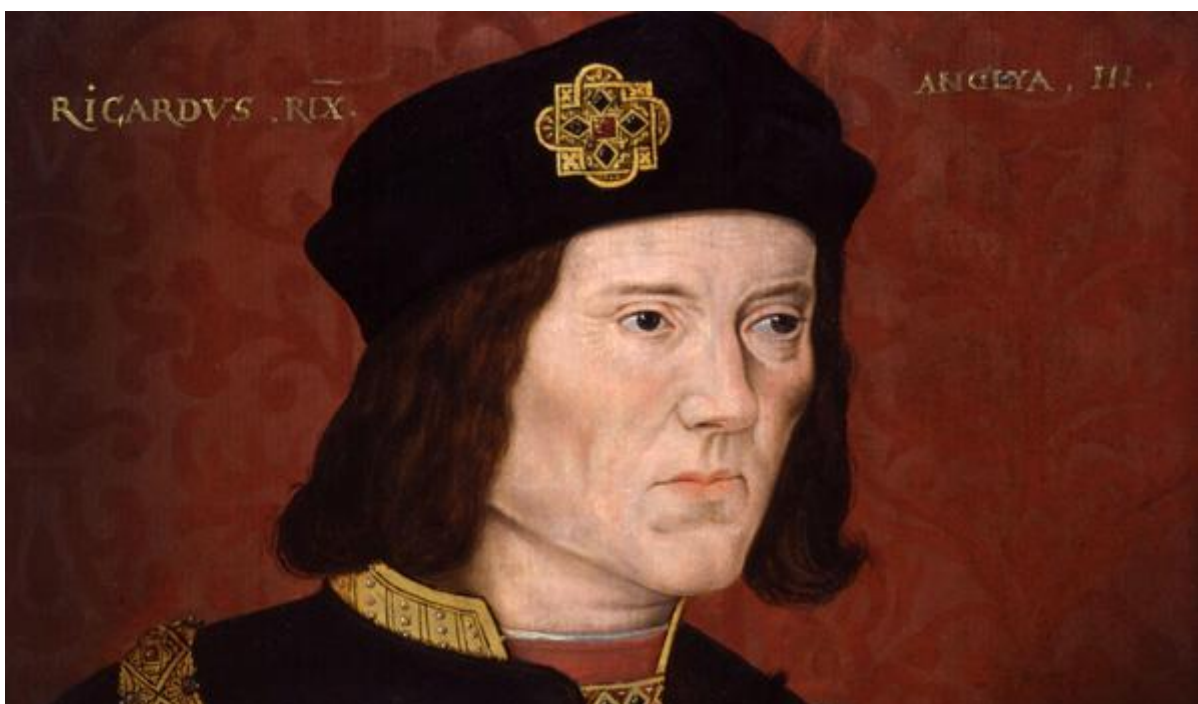
The events of 1483, April to June

Richard III is one of English History's great controversies. Despite his image as the king's right hand man, a fine upstanding example of loyalty and competence - was he really an ambitious schemer who saw a chance to be king? Or was he a man driven by fear and events? Or yet, was he a man who, faced with a disastrous revelation about the heir to the throne, stepped forward to take up the burden himself?



St Paul's Cross

This was a place by the old St Paul's cathedral where speakers and preachers were often heard. It's here, on 22nd June 1483 that a man called Ralph Shaw preached on the text of 'The bastard slips shall not take root' - and revealed to Londoners that Richard was the real heir, and should take the throne instead of his 12 year old nephew, Edward V.



Timeline of Events: April to July 1483

APRIL	6th	False reports of Edward IV's death reach York
	7th	Edward gathers the Queen and Royal Councillors at his death bed, urges Hastings and Dorset to make peace which they do.
	9th	Edward IV dies
	11th	Royal Council meet in London. Woodvilles win the argument to crown Edward immediately on 4th May, with Gloucester as merely leader of the council not Protector. Agree to limit the size of Edward V's retinue to 2,000
	14th	News of Edward's death reaches Rivers and Edward V in Ludlow
	?15th	Confirmation of news of Edward's death reaches Gloucester at Middleham from Hastings. Hastings urges Gloucester to take control of Edward V before he reaches London
	?16th+	Gloucester writes to Rivers, suggesting they meet on the road to London
		Gloucester writes to the Royal Council; pledging allegiance to Edward, consoling the Queen, but also stating his right to the Protectorship
		Buckingham's letter reaches Richard, suggesting they travel together
	19th	Funeral of Edward IV; buried at Windsor
	21st	Gloucester carries out a funeral service at York for Edward and pledging allegiance to Edward V
		Buckingham receives Gloucester's letter & replies that he will meet at Northampton
	23rd	Gloucester leaves York, having heard from Rivers that they should meet at Northampton on 29th.
	24th	Rivers and Edward V leave Ludlow
	29th	Rivers reaches Stony Stratford; heads north to Northampton to see Gloucester, while Edward V, Grey & Vaughan stay at Stony Stratford. Buckingham arrives at Northampton in the evening, joining Gloucester and Rivers.
		Edward Woodville sails with the Fleet and £10,000 of royal treasure

	30th	Gloucester and Buckingham seize the King and send Rivers, Grey and Vaughan to captivity at Sheriff's Hutton. Gloucester writes a calming letter to the Royal Council
MAY	1st	Hastings assembles lords and magnates in London, reads Gloucester's letter and assures them that Rivers, Grey and Vaughan's cases would be heard by the Royal Council, and wins them to acquiescence.
		The Woodvilles attempt to raise an army against Gloucester in London - but fail. The Queen flees with her family to the Sanctuary at Westminster Abbey
		Chancellor and Archbishop of York panics, and takes the Great Seal to the Queen in Sanctuary.
	2nd	Gloucester at Northampton. Sends Rivers to Sheriff Hutton, Grey to Middleham, Vaughan to Pontefract. All in captivity.
	4th	Gloucester, Buckingham with Edward V between them enter London with 500 men. Greeted by the Mayor and Alderman and happy smiling people. Gloucester brings carts of arms which he claims to have been gathered by the Woodvilles.
		Gloucester summons lords and magnates to swear loyalty to Edward V
	10th	Meeting of the Royal Council. Gloucester rewards followers, calms nerve with the appointment of neutral men to key positions, turns Great Seal over to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Installed as Protector by the Royal Council. Coronation of Edward V delayed to June 24th.
		However, Council refuses Gloucester's request to accused Rivers, Grey and Vaughan in treason, and criticise him of failing to treat Elizabeth with the dignity of a queen.
	13th	Writs for a parliament on 25th June issued in Edward V's name.
	15th	Buckingham handsomely rewarded by Gloucester, with appointments that made him the most powerful man in Wales
JUNE	5th	Anne, Duchess of Gloucester arrives in London
	?8th	Phillippe de Commines claims that Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells presented a case to Gloucester, or Gloucester's associates, about Edward IV's pre-contract to Eleanor Butler. A letter from Simon Stallworth makes mention of it in the royal council.
	10th	Gloucester writes to York and asks for troops to save him from

		the Woodvilles' plots
	13th	Hastings, Morton, Stanley seized from the royal council, and accused of treason. Hastings executed immediately without trial.
	16th	Richard surrounds Westminster Abbey & sanctuary, threatens to seize Edward Vs younger brother, the Duke of York, from Elizabeth Woodville. The Queens hands over her son to Gloucester, and he is taken to the Tower
	17th	Writs issued delaying Edward Vth's coronation to 9th November. However, many missed their target, since the lords and commons assembled on 25th
	22nd	Ralph Shaw, Canon of St Pauls, preaches a sermon advancing Richard's claim as the only legitimate heir of York, based on the old story of Edward IV's bastardy, and a new claim that Edward's sons were bastards due to a prior marriage
	24th	Buckingham advances the same claims to the Mayor & Aldermen of London at the Guildhall
	25th	Lords & Commons called to 'Parliament' assemble - though legal status as a parliament not clear. Buckingham presents the petition developed by Stillington for Richard to be king, based on bastardy of Edward IV's children.
		Rivers, Grey and Vaughan executed on Gloucester's orders
	26th	Delegates of lords and knights duly visit Richard at Baynard Castle, and urge him to take the throne
		Gloucester sits in the King's chair at the Court of the King's Bench in Westminster hall
	28th	Official letter to the Captain of Calais announces that his oath of loyalty to Edward V is no longer valid due to his illegitimacy
JULY	3rd	By now, troops from the north have arrived at London. Mancini claims there to be 6,000.
	6th	Coronation of Gloucester as Richard III

187a Jane Shore by James Boulton

Jane Shore lives among the list of the most famous mistresses - along with the likes of Roseamund Clifford, Alice Perrers. Like Alice, Jane lives and loved at the very centre of political power for a while - but unlike Alice, left an attractive reputation.

Visit the Queens of England podcast site at www.queensofenglandpodcast.com



The life of Jane Shore in brief (d. 1526/7)

Jane married William Shore a London mercer, but the marriage was annulled in 1476, at her request, because of his impotence.

Edward IV claimed to have three concubines: the merriest, the wiliest, and the holiest harlot in his realm. Jane qualified as the merriest; according to Thomas More:

'a proper wit had she, & could both read & write well, merry in company, ready & quick of answer, neither mute nor full of babble, sometime taunting without displeasure & not without disport'.

'For many he had, but her he loved, whose favour to say truly ... she never abused to any man's hurt, but to many a man's comfort. ... And finally in many weighty events, she stood many men in great stead, either for none, or very small rewards, & those rather gay then rich: either for that she was content with the deed itself well done, or for that she delighted to be asked to help, & to show what she was able to do with the king'

Edward's death on 9 April 1483 left her in need of a new protector; and different chronicles link her with two great rivals - the Woodville, Thomas Grey, marquess of Dorset; and Edward's closest friend, and chamberlain William, Lord Hastings.

However, she fell foul of the pious Richard III and was forced through the streets of London to do penance:

'In which she went in countenance & pace demure so womanly, & albeit she were out of al array save her kyrtle only: yet went she so fair & lovely ... that her great shame wan her much praise'

Jane found her protector in the king's solicitor, Thomas Lynom who married her. Lynom was dead by 29 July 1518; and Thomas More paints a picture of her penury; but if the Thomas Lynom who was active in Wales after 1518 was her son, it could well be poetic licence - something with which More was well acquainted. It's not sure when Jane died - but her memory is still alive and kicking in various historical novels!

188 Richard III - Knave, Fool or Saviour?

The time has for the Richard III podcast episode and vote. 3 of the no doubt many possible interpretations of the events of 1483 - did Richard plan to usurp the throne; was he driven to it by fear and events and the situation; or did he step into a breach to save a kingdom?



Richard - The Knave? (The Conspiracy theory)

- Richard was ambitious to be king from hearing of the death of Edward IV. He planned a campaign to usurp the throne
- Richard should go down in history as a bad man who consciously planned and committed crimes to achieve his ends



Richard - The Fool (The Cock-up theory)

- Richard was in a difficult position in 1483 – Edward IV had relied on a small number of powerful groups, Richard feared the Woodvilles would destroy him
- Richard took an irretrievable, ill-considered step at Stony Stratford, which he took to protect himself; and it led to a series of unintended consequences to usurpation.



Richard - The Saviour (The take-it-at-face-value approach)

- Richard had to protect himself from the Woodvilles at Stony Stratford; but he always intended to put Edward V on the throne, but had every right to make himself Protector
- The illegitimacy of the Princes was genuine; and once it came out, he behaved impeccably - took it through parliament, became king when not to do so would have caused chaos.

189 The Most Untrue Creature

Richard sought to start the reconciliation of the factions in the realm. But despite his triumphant progress through the Kingdom to York, trouble was brewing - including from the most unlikely quarter

Major players in 1483

Here are a few of the players that would play a leading role in the reigns of Edward V and Richard III. Below you'll find:

1. Thomas Stanley, Earl of Derby
2. Woodvilles
3. Hastings
4. Margaret Beaufort
5. Henry Tudor
6. Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham
7. John Morton, Bishop of Ely
8. Henry Percy, 4th earl of Northumberland
9. John Howard, Duke of Norfolk
10. Francis Viscount Lovell
11. John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln

The Stanleys



Thomas Stanley



The Stanleys came from Cheshire in the North West of England. William Stanley was a violent and nasty Master Forester in the early 14th Century, with sons, William and John Stanley. John liked violence too, and fought in the French wars in Aquitaine. Then in 1376 the brothers pushed their luck too far when they forced entry to Thurstaston Hall and murdered one Thomas Cloxton. Outlawed, things looked black for John Stanley. But with the French wars going on he was too good a man to be thrown away – so a captain hired him for the war in France, and in so doing held off the law.

By 1405, John Stanley had made his fortune from the wars and from the Lancastrians, and had risen the heights as king of Mann.

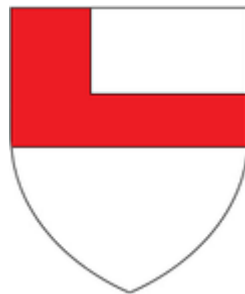
Thomas Stanley, Earl of Derby (1433-1504) and William Stanley (1435-1495) were the grandsons of John Stanley. Thomas Stanley was the eldest, and an outrageous and shameless trimmer and turncoat - such as at the battle of Blore Heath. I guess you get to acquire the expression in his portrait when negotiating your way through the Cousin's War. And the Stanleys defended and enhanced their strength in Cheshire and Lancaster ruthlessly and against all-comers; and this essential strength made them essential for the success of Yorkist rule.

Thomas Stanley married Margaret Beaufort in 1472, after his first wife Eleanor Neville died. Stanley's children by his first marriage included George Stanley, the Baron Strange (1460-1503).

In 1483, Thomas Stanley was probably one of those on the council that worked to keep a balance between Gloucester and the Woodvilles. Certainly he was arrested by Richard on 13th June along with Hastings, Rotherham and Morton. But Richard either felt that Stanley was reconcilable, or that the threat of Baron Strange and the Stanley strength in the North West was too much to challenge; Stanley was quickly rehabilitated, confirmed as Steward of the Royal Household, and carried the Mace at Richard's coronation. His loyalty would be critical to Richard's success, and was tested in 1483 with Buckingham's rebellion. For their support, both Thomas and William were well rewarded by Richard.

However; it is unclear whether and why Stanley really held back from supporting his wife Margaret Beaufort in the rebellion of 1483. It is possible he saw the rebellion collapsing, and would not have been keen to support Buckingham. Certainly he appeared to do little to stop Margaret from continuing to plot her son's return in 1485; and distrust between him at Gloucester could hardly have been clearer in 1485 when Richard held his son, Baron Strange as a hostage. And when Henry Tudor invaded in 1485, there may well have been a pre-agreement for his support for Henry which was to prove so critical.

The Woodvilles



Elizabeth Woodville (1437-1492) has attracted far too much coverage and comment for me to cover her properly here. But in 1483 she had become associated with the pride of family members, and the 'scandal' of her marriage to Edward IV refused to fade, despite her position as queen. In the early council meetings of 1483 she is either clearly a member (as in the first meeting after the death of Edward; but Buckingham and Gloucester object to her having a role. At a council meeting after her flight to sanctuary and after Gloucester was made Protector, she is referenced as present - but it was grimly remarked that she neither spoke nor was spoken to. Elizabeth was of course in a hideous position from sanctuary, trying to protect both her family and her young children - from Elizabeth aged 17 all the way down to Bridget who was just 3. But until the accession of Henry Tudor she remained an essential part of the potential futures; notably negotiating with Margaret Beaufort and Henry Tudor to marry Elizabeth to Henry and thus establish the legitimacy for a new dynasty.

After the bloodletting of the Readeption, **Anthony Woodville (1440-1483)**, then Lord Scales, became the 2nd Earl Rivers. Anthony was the brother of the Queen, Elizabeth Woodville. Rivers was a renaissance man - famous jousting, but a man who wore a hair shirt, who went on pilgrimage and crusade. Despite the fury and dislike directed at the Woodvilles, this did not seem to attach itself to Anthony Woodville in quite the same way. Dominic Mancini wrote of him:

'Lord Rivers was always considered a kind, serious, and just man, and one tested by every vicissitude of life. Whatever his prosperity he had injured nobody, though benefitting many...'

None the less, Mancini may have been bigging Anthony up to make his death at Richard's hands all the worse; and modern historians who reviewed the management of his personal affairs and estates uncovered a hard headed, practical businessman. Rivers never quite played the central role in Edward IV's reign he might have; but in 1483 he had been Tutor to Edward's son and heir, Edward, setting up his household at Ludlow. After 10 years that relationship between Rivers and the young king was a critical position of influence and power. His half brother, Richard Grey was with him in 1483



Elizabeth Woodville's sons by her first marriage were **Thomas Grey** (1455-1501) and **Richard Grey** (1457-1483). Thomas was made Marquess of Dorset, and to give him the lands to back up his new dignity, was given in marriage Cecily Bonville, heir to the Bonville and Harington lands in the North and South West. Dorset was in the centre of attention from 1483. His was the feud with William Hastings over land, and over influence with Edward IV. On his death bed, Edward had begged them to be reconciled. But Dorset was full of pride at the power of his family at court, and could not imagine their downfall. At the fateful council meeting he declared that they, the Woodvilles, were quite important enough to make decisions without Richard of Gloucester.

Edward Woodville (c.1454-1488) was Anthony's brother and unlike him, but like Dorset, was active at court. He went with Edward to France in 1475, and fought in Scotland in 1482 with Gloucester, who promoted him to knight banneret. Like Dorset, Edward was the hated face of the Woodvilles-active at court, seen as a promoter of Edward IV's vices that Gloucester so despised.

Richard Woodville (1453-1491) seems to have been far quieter, a local dignitary in the South West; Lionel Woodville was the Bishop of Salisbury (1446-1484); he was in London when Edward IV died, and seems to have fled to Sanctuary with the Queen.

As members of the king's council, the Woodvilles were constantly resented as parvenus who had too much influence with the king, whether that was true in fact or not. Warranted or not, Dorset, Richard and Edward attracted great hatred and envy. Dominic Mancini again:

'The other three earned the hatred of the populace, on account of their morals, but mostly because of a certain inherent jealousy which arises between those who are of equal birth when there has been a change in their station. They were certainly detested by the nobles, because they, who were ignoble and newly made men, were advanced far beyond those who far excelled them in breeding and wisdom. They had to endure the imputation brought against them by all, of causing the death of the duke of Clarence.'

William Hastings



William Hastings (1430-1483) had been solidly close to Edward from the start. Infamously in pretty much everything - including his love life. Jane Shore seems to have been the object of both his and Edward IVth's admiration. Dominic Mancini described his position:

'...Hastings was not only the author of the sovereign's public policy, as being one that shared every peril with the king, but was also accomplice and partner of his privy pleasures. He maintained a deadly feud with the queen's son, whom we said was called marquis, and that because of the mistresses whom they had abducted, or attempted to entice from one another. The suborned informers of each had threatened a capital charge against the other.'

Hastings combined closeness to Edward with the good opinion of pretty much everyone. He was, in the words of Thomas More, an

'honourable man, a good knight and a gentle ... a loving man, and passing well beloved'.

Nonetheless, nice guy or not, as Chamberlain of England, Hastings had that most essential gift - access to the king. If you needed something through patronage or recommendation, you also needed Hastings to be well disposed towards you. King Louis of France gave him a pension of 2,000 crowns, Charles Duke of Burgundy gave him 1,000 ecus - because they knew the strength of Hastings' influence over Edward.

In 1483, on Edward's death, Hastings' main fear was probably of being swept aside from power and influence by the Queen and her relatives. Hastings was Captain of Calais, which gave him access to a standing army; at his first council meeting, he was forced to threaten that he would run to Calais to presumably do just that, unless the Queen moderated the young King's entourage. Hastings needed Gloucester as a counter weight to the Woodvilles; and he wrote urgently to Gloucester, talking up the Woodville threat to get Gloucester on his side. In all probability, Hastings was loyal to the memory of Edward, and in his son, Edward V.

If you want to know more, there's another article on the [History of England site here](#)



Margaret Beaufort

Margaret Beaufort (1443-1509) was a clever and tough political survivor. Over the next decade she effectively gained the trust of Edward, even while Edward was trying to hunt down and kill her son. Through the 1460's she'd been protected by her husband, Stafford. At the Readeption of Henry VI, she'd taken her son to see the king, as a Lancastrian restored to influence. But with the return of Edward and then the death of Stafford in 1471 she needed a protector, and although she and Stafford had been close, she had no time to hang around feeling sorry for herself. The man she chose as her protector was Thomas Stanley. Stanley had connections and already had children and so was looking mainly for status, which Margaret brought. So they got hitched, and Margaret began to use his connections to work towards the

goal that dominated her life –protecting the rights and life of her only son, Henry Tudor, and to restore him to his father's patrimony as Earl of Richmond.

Just before Edward IV's death she had brokered a deal whereby Henry Tudor would return to England as earl of Richmond. Before Richard's coronation on 6th July 1483, she advanced the same suggestion to Richard - and he appeared open. But both Margaret and Richard were working both ends - Richard applying to Duke Francis of Brittany for the capture of Henry, and Margaret plotting rebellion.

The rebellion of October 1483 is usually called Buckingham's rebellion, since he was the only major magnate, and because of the extent of his treachery; but it should better be called Margaret's rebellion. She encouraged and coordinated the rebellion of the disaffected southern lords. She brokered the arrangement with Elizabeth Woodville to have Henry marry Elizabeth's eldest daughter, adding credibility to Henry's claim by combining Tudor and York. Although she was supposedly under the lock and key of her apparently loyal husband, Thomas Stanley, after the failure of the rebellion, she appeared to have no difficulty planning and supporting Henry's further return.



Henry VII

Both **Jasper Tudor** (1431-1495) and Margaret Beaufort's son **Henry Tudor** (1457-1509), heir to the earldom of Richmond, had fled to Brittany, to the tender mercies of Duke Francis. The Duke knew a valuable political card when he saw one, as he fought to maintain Breton independence from France. So Jasper and Henry were held in comfortable captivity, moved around Brittany to avoid potential assassins, and Francis politiced with Edward and Louis, tempted to throw the Tudors to the wolves if the gain were big enough. Thus Henry Tudor spent his life under constant threat and fear. In 1483, Duke Francis decided to ignore Richard's requests, and instead support Henry-but the rebellion failed. Henry was helped, though by two things. One was the concept of combining his claim with the line of York in the person of Elizabeth of York; and at Christmas he swore to marry Elizabeth, and the Woodvilles in exile swore to support him as their king. The other was a changing political situation in France, which meant that in 1485 he was able to claim their support and protection.



Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham

Henry Stafford (1455-1483) was the senior Stafford line. In 1458 his father died, and then his grandfather, great pillar of the Lancastrians, was killed at the hands of the Yorkists in 1460. Buckingham made his peace with the Yorkist regime, marrying Catherine Woodville, sister of the Queen. With income of £3,000 a year, Buckingham was as rich as any other magnate, and after the Readeption was for a while a close member of Edward's household.

Buckingham had a particularly fine heritage. He was descended from both John of Gaunt, and Thomas of Woodstock, the latter being the fifth son of Edward III. So he had royal blood, a claim to the throne if a suitable number of people

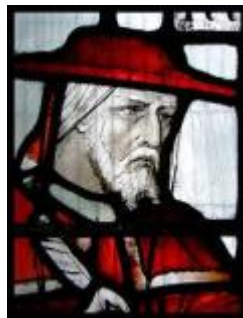
popped their clogs. There's a rather famous point in 1483 where Buckingham reportedly says that he'd forgotten his royal lineage until John Morton reminds him. Unlikely.

In 1483, Buckingham had some gripes. One was his claim on the Bohun inheritance. There had been two famous heiresses Mary and Eleanor. Mary Married Henry IV, and sister Eleanor had married Thomas of Woodstock, and her half of the lands had come down to Buckingham. So, when the Lancastrian line came to an end at Tewkesbury, Buckingham claimed the balance. This was a dispute never resolved -as far as Edward was concerned, the land was irretrievably part of the royal lands. But the main problem was his distance from the power and influence that as a royal duke he would have expected. But in 1475 he appeared to fall out of favour with Edward IV, sent home early from France, and from then was excluded from real political power under Edward, despite a brief re-appearance as High Steward to oversee

Although Buckingham was married to a sister of queen Elizabeth, he had been married when he was but 10 years old, and when Catherine was 14; from there he'd spent his wardship in Elizabeth Woodville's household. For some reason, Dominic Mancini reports that Buckingham was livid at having been made to marry a Woodville, such an appallingly lowborn person; so low born she'd not bought a dowry with her. This assertion is rather difficult to deal with; we have absolutely no other evidence to support the claim; he and Katherine have plenty of off spring, there's no obvious sign of estrangement. There's a titchy bit of support for the statement in the fact that Katherine wasn't at the coronation of Richard in which Buckingham played such a leading role.

Nonetheless, Buckingham appears to have seen Gloucester as the main route back to the limelight in 1483, and to have been keen to see the Woodvilles unseated from power and influence.

In terms of his personal characteristics, it is of course hard to judge. But volatile might be one; the suspicion he flared up and stormed off in France and wasn't forgiven. He appeared to find it difficult to hold on to loyalties and inspire confidence, but none the less appears to be a good and persuasive speaker. But these are just stabs in the dark – we can't be sure.



John Morton, Bishop of Ely

Morton had been a fierce adherent of the Lancastrian cause, returning with Margaret after Towton to Northumberland in 1463-3. But after the Readeption, Edward IV recognised his talent, and brought him into the administration. Along with Hastings and Rotherham, he was the driving force of Edward's administration; as the chroniclers of the time described:

'Now these men being in age mature, and instructed by long experience of public affairs, helped more than other councillors to form the king's policy, and besides carried it out'

'...he was of great resource and daring, for he had been trained in party intrigue since King Henry's [VI] time; and being taken into Edward's favour after the annihilation of King Henry's party, he enjoyed great influence'

Like Hastings Richard knew his loyalty would have been first to Edward V, which may be why Richard acted against him on June 13th. But his decision to allow Morton to be placed under the custody of Buckingham was to prove a mistake, as Morton fueled Buckingham's fears and ambition in the 1483 rebellion. Morton fled to exile and the court of Henry Tudor; and was to become one of Henry VII's partners in tyranny.

Morton is an interesting and impressive chap;

John Morton came from a middling gentry family of the South West, in Somerset and Dorset. He was probably born somewhere around 1420, educated in Cerne Abbey Dorset and probably Balliol College, Oxford. The first official sighting of him is when he became a notary in 1447. His early career was very much centred in Oxford, where he seems to have been very successful as a proctor of the Chancellor's office, and principal of civil law. From 1453, his career began to take off as he entered royal service - Chancellor for Edward the Prince of Wales from 1456 for example. He was also accumulating benefices and wealth, as an eminent lawyer in government service would expect.

The Lancastrian

He'd by then established a reputation as an effective administrator, and impressive lawyer. Over the next decade, he was a firm adherent of the Lancastrian cause. When the Lancastrian cause crashed and burned at Towton in 1461, he fled for Scotland but was captured and imprisoned in the Tower. This was not a man to be negotiated with at this time, and he was part of the bill of attainder.

Morton was determined to see Henry and Margaret back on the throne. He escaped from the Tower and made his way to the court in exile; he was indispensable to Queen Margaret, accompanying her on her return to Northumberland to fight for the crown in 1462 and 1463. But as the Lancastrian star then waned, he was not a man to sit around, and started to study theology at the university of Louvain - though still a part of the court in exile.

He was there again with Margaret at Cerne Abbey in 1470, but when the readeption failed and Edward was killed at Tewkesbury, he finally bowed to the inevitable and became reconciled to Edward. Here was a man too talented, energetic and ambitious to be held down; and Edward was clever enough to recognise that.

Servant of Edward IV

Morton's rise under Edward was fast and impressive, and reflected his central value in Edward's administration; in 1472, he became Master of the Rolls, during which time the chancery court changed, expanded and grew. Envoy to France and part of the treaty of Picquigny - with that mark of distinction, thought worthy of a stipend from King Louis in 1475. He acquired a string of archdeaconries and prebends, until in 1478 he was made Bishop of Ely.

Morton had been a committed and active Lancastrian; now he was a committed and loyal Edwardian; and observers noted how much Edward relied on his council. Together with Hastings and Rotherham, Morton was at the very heart of Edward's government.

Conspirator

He was therefore a powerful enemy when Richard III removed him during the events of 13th June. He was given to Buckingham to guard in his castle at Brecknock, and maybe that was one of Richard's more critical mistakes; certainly Buckingham, rebelled almost immediately, and it's not hard to visualise the iron-willed Morton working on the volatile and ambitious Buckingham, and turning his thoughts to rebellion.

But the rebellion failed; and once again Morton became part of a court in exile, that of Henry Tudor, not finally become a viable candidate through Richard's efforts and those of the French. He was a key conspirator from the moment Richard of Gloucester removed him on June 13th. And quite possibly he was a key conspirator before then. Mancini noted that Morton, Hastings and Rotherham had 'foregathered', and in this lies some support for Gloucester's claim of a conspiracy to remove him. It seems at least likely that these 3 men had the influence and connections within Edward IV's administration, and history of service to lead any resistance to a threat the position of his son, Edward V.

Servant of Henry VII and Morton's Fork

Morton played a critical part in Henry VII's tyranny; he was a member of the king's council and made Chancellor from 1487, constantly present and employed by the king to drive through a rationalisation of the law that resulted in the infamous Star Chamber. He was part of the harsh personal taxation of the nobility; the relentless, bullying method became known as Morton's Fork - by which those who entertained king or chancellor lavishly were told that they could obviously afford to contribute handsomely, while those who, to avoid this fate, were parsimonious, that they must have

a great deal stored away from which they could give. While it has been argued that Morton actually acted to soften the demands of the king, there's no doubt he was Henry's companion in his policy, and attracted great hatred as a result.

Archbishop and death



In 1483 on the death of the aged Thomas Bouchier, Morton became Archbishop of Canterbury, and in 1493 Cardinal. As Archbishop, Morton energetically built the central power of the English church hierarchy; balancing the liberties of the church against royal control, but seeking to make sure English control was not bypassed by Rome. He died in 1500 at Sevenoaks in Kent, and was buried in Canterbury cathedral.

The opinions of contemporary writers vary; one accused him of acting *"from base and sordid motives,"* even of sorcery. As a young man the statesman and writer Sir Thomas More served in the Morton household. He later wrote that Morton was *"a man not more venerated for his high rank than for his wisdom and virtue."*

Other writers said he was energetic, sometimes brusque with polished manners, exemplary as a lawyer, one possessed of a great mind and a phenomenal memory. Through discipline and hard study he improved the talents which nature had bestowed upon him. Writing at some distance of time, Bacon described him as a wise man but *"a harsh and haughty one."*

Morton was without doubt talented; he became the right hand man at least of one queen and 2 kings. He was clearly a ruthless and brutal man, a player at the very highest level of politics. But without doubt effective; and along the way unsurprisingly gathered plenty of hatred, particularly from the nobility under Henry VII.

Henry Percy, 4th Earl of Northumberland (1449-1489)



The Percies had a chequered relationship with York; brought low by Edward IV with the death of the 3rd Earl and imprisonment of the 4th after Towton. But Henry's tacit support for Edward after the Readeption led to their rehabilitation and restoration by Edward. However, the situation during Edward's second reign was complicated.

Even Percy, with estates generating £3,200 plus offices of £800, were outgunned by Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Gloucester's estates were more attractive and slowly Percy began to lose some of his affinity to Gloucester; in 1474 the two were called in front of Edward, and the result was an indenture between them; Percy retained his sphere of influence but was forced to accept Gloucester's supremacy. None the less Percy and Gloucester seemed to work together amicably. And this was borne out by Percy's critical support for Gloucester in 1483; he raised troops to support Richard, and he would have hoped to regain his complete dominance in the north, and become the king's lieutenant there when Gloucester became Richard III.

In this though he was disappointed; Richard was not blind to the value of Percy's support, and rewarded him with land grants, but Richard decided to retain direct control of his own lordship there. So Percy continued to lose a little ground amongst the regional networks and gentry. This was to prove critical; in 1485, Percy responded to Richard's call to arms, but held back his contingent at the critical time. Percy demonstrated the most important skill of the Wars of the Roses - who to back and when.



John Howard, Duke of Norfolk (c.1425-1483)

John Howard was one of the household knights of Edward IV who through service and loyalty to Edward gained in land, influence and power. His roles were typical of Edward's inner household, a soldier and fighter, and administrator and diplomat. By the time of Edward's death he had used his position and marriage to build a substantial land holding, particularly in East Anglia. With the death of Anne Mowbray, the only heir of the Mowbray Dukes of Norfolk, he also had a claim to the Dukedom, though by act of parliament, Edward IV had set aside his claim in favour of his son Richard. In 1483, Gloucester recognised him as an influential and talented man to be won over to support his new reign; as Protector, he rewarded him with grants of land; and as king he set aside Edward's provision, and created him Duke of Norfolk. In this case, Richard's efforts were well rewarded; Howard became his loyal supporter, helping break Buckingham's rebellion on 1483, and fighting at his side at Bosworth. This despite the message he received on the eve of the battle:

Jack of Norfolk, be not to bolde For Dykon thy maister is bought and solde

Francis Lovell, Lord Chamberlain

Francis Lovell came from a noble family that was part of the Neville affinity, holding lands in Yorkshire and Cheshire. After the Kingmaker died at Barnet, Lovell was given in ward to John de la Pole, assuming his majority in 1477.

Lovell was quickly part of Richard's inner circle. He served in the Scottish Campaign in 1481, and clearly a bond was formed there as he was given the title of Viscount. As Protector, Richard quickly rewarded Lovell with lands in the Midlands and south and offices, such as chief butler of England; at Richard's coronation, Lovell carried the third sword of state, and soon after was made Chamberlain, replacing Hastings in that role. Like other northerners, he struggled to embed himself in his southern lands, watching William Stonor, for example, join the rebels in 1483. But he was Richard's loyal captain up to and during the Battle of Bosworth.

Richard's enemies recognised his importance to Richard, as demonstrated in the famous couplet

The Cat, the Rat and Lovell our Dog Rule all England under the Hog.

He was to carry that loyalty into a new reign after Richard's death.

John de La Pole, Earl of Lincoln (1462-1487)



John Suffolk (1442-1492), 2nd Duke of Suffolk, played a peripheral part in Richard's reign, though apparently loyal; even suffering at the hands of Richard's favourite Francis Lovell. However his son, John de la Pole (1462-1487) - created Earl of Lincoln in 1467, and knighted with Edward IV's sons, was better favoured. After the death of Richard III's only son Lincoln became head of the Council of the North, and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lincoln was descendant through his mother from Richard of York; and with these appointments, it looked as though he would be made Richard's designated heir.