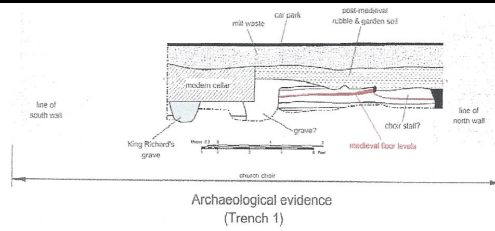


## “The King in the Car Park”

### Death and Burial



## Timeline

- After his death in 1485 in the battle of Bosworth, Richard III was buried in the choir of Grey Friars church in the city of Leicester.
- King Henry VIII ordered the dissolution of the monasteries, and in 1538 the buildings were demolished. Defacement was confined to the floor level only.
- In the early 17<sup>th</sup> century the land was owned by Robert Herrick who erected a memorial pillar inscribed: "Here lies the body of Richard III sometime King of England" at a spot on the property.
- In 2012 a team of archeologists, scientists, and genetics experts, using medieval maps, received permission to excavate parts of the Social Services car park in Leicester.
- They opened 3 trenches; elements of the friary and its church were found in all three.
- The grave identified as that of Richard III was located in Trench 1. Irregular in construction, and, unlike other graves in the choir and presbytery, the grave is too short for the body

## Evidence of the Remains

- There is no evidence of a shroud or coffin.
- Arrangement of body suggests Richard III's body was lowered feet first, torso and head second. The position of the hands—crossed on the pelvis, suggest he was buried with his hands bound.
- Analysis of the skeleton determined he had severe \*\*adolescent-onset scoliosis; as he aged disability may have lifted his right shoulder higher than his left.
- Ten perimortem\* wounds have been identified on the remains; 8 on the skull, 2 on the post-cranial skeleton; 2 large wounds underneath the back of the skull are likely to have been fatal. There is a 3<sup>rd</sup> smaller penetrating wound to the top of the skull. Other wounds are more superficial.
- "Humiliation wounds" (delivered after death): cut on right rib and a cut to the right pelvis-- typical of a thrust through the right buttock; in addition 2 wounds to the face.
- Radiocarbon dates, evidence on the male skeleton of severe scoliosis, trauma consistent with injuries in battle and specific perimortem "humiliation injuries" combined with the DNA match

\*at or near the time of death; wounds show no signs of healing

\*\**arising spontaneously or from an obscure or unknown cause*

## Arguments for

### The Good Richard

Most searches will refer you to the [Richard III Society](#) and the links listed there.

If you want a balanced argument that gives both sides—and comes to a conclusion based upon a thoughtful appraisal, read [Allison Weir's book, \*The Princes in the Tower\*](#)

### The Bad Richard

Contemporary sources such as *Holinshed's Chronicles* and Thomas More's *History*.

Among other arguments, modern scholars point to the fact that Richard a) knew of the rumors re: the Princes, b) never brought forth the "usual suspects," or c) evidence that they had not been murdered.

## Characters by relationship

### King Edward IV

- His sons: Edward, Prince of Wales; Richard, Duke of York
- His brothers: George, Duke of Clarence; Richard, Duke of Gloucester
- His wife: Queen Elizabeth
- His mother: Duchess of York, also mother of Clarence and Gloucester

**Allies of Queen Elizabeth:** Lord Rivers, brother of Queen; Elizabeth; Marquis of Dorset and Lord Grey, sons of Elizabeth by her first marriage; Sir Thomas Vaughan

**Allies of Richard:** Lord Hastings, Duke of Buckingham

**Other important characters:** Queen Margaret, widow of King Henry VI; Lady Anne, her daughter-in-law, widow of Edward Prince of Wales, who was the son of King Henry VI

## Act I, scene 2: Richard and Lady Anne

- Reaction?
- At what point did she give in and why?

Agree?

- "Anne waits for Richard."
- "She gets herself seduced"
  - participates in his word game;
  - "becomes a tease"

## Act I, scene 3

- At the time of the play's action, Queen Margaret was in France; her formal transfer from English to French hands had taken place in January 1476. **Why do you think Shakespeare uses her in this scene?**
- We have another soliloquy in which Richard acknowledges his intentions to "seem the saint when I most play the devil." **Why would Shakespeare so involve the audience?**

## Act I, scene 4

- Is there any comedy in this scene—albeit "dark comedy"?
- Notice lines 58-162: Clarence invokes the law—all elements of which we have in our courts today.
- How do we feel about Clarence?

**Irony:** The Richard III Shakespeare portrays is still, one could say, manipulating public opinion through the society established to rectify his reputation.