

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

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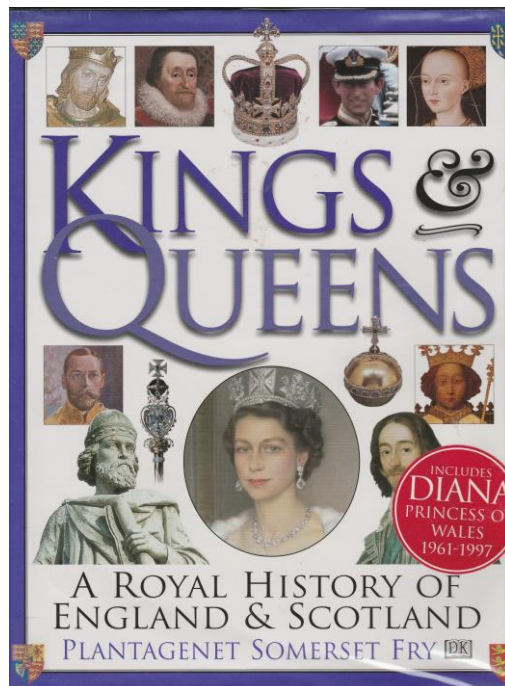
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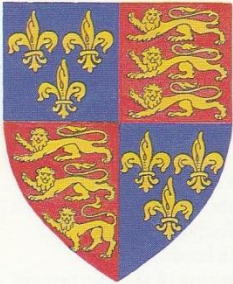
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Kings and queens: a royal history of England and Scotland. (2001). London: Dorling Kindersley.



RICHARD III

1483-1485



THE COAT OF ARMS OF RICHARD III

PROBABLY THE MOST MALIGNED of English kings, Richard III has stimulated more speculation and enquiry into his character and motivation than any of his predecessors or successors. Few contemporaries had either good or bad to say about him, although the chronicler John Rous called him a "mighty prince and a special good lord". Richard was king for barely two years, but once he was dead, historians, clerics, even playwrights fell over themselves to blacken his name. Most propaganda was designed to serve the Tudor dynasty, which began when Henry VII defeated Richard in battle, but in more recent times, historians have questioned whether Richard has deserved his evil reputation.

👑 RICHARD III

- ◆ **Born** Fotheringhay Castle, Northants, 2 Oct 1452, third son of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and Cecily Neville.
- ◆ **Married** Anne Neville, Westminster Abbey, 12 July 1472, 1 son.
- ◆ **Acceded** 26 June 1483.
- ◆ **Crowned** Westminster Abbey, 6 July 1483.
- ◆ **Died** Bosworth Field, Leicestershire, 22 Aug 1485, aged 32.

ANNE NEVILLE

In 1472 Richard married Anne Neville, daughter of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick. By all accounts it was a happy union: they had known each other since they were small children. They both enjoyed music and took an interest in education, endowing colleges at Cambridge University.

COLLEGE OF ARMS

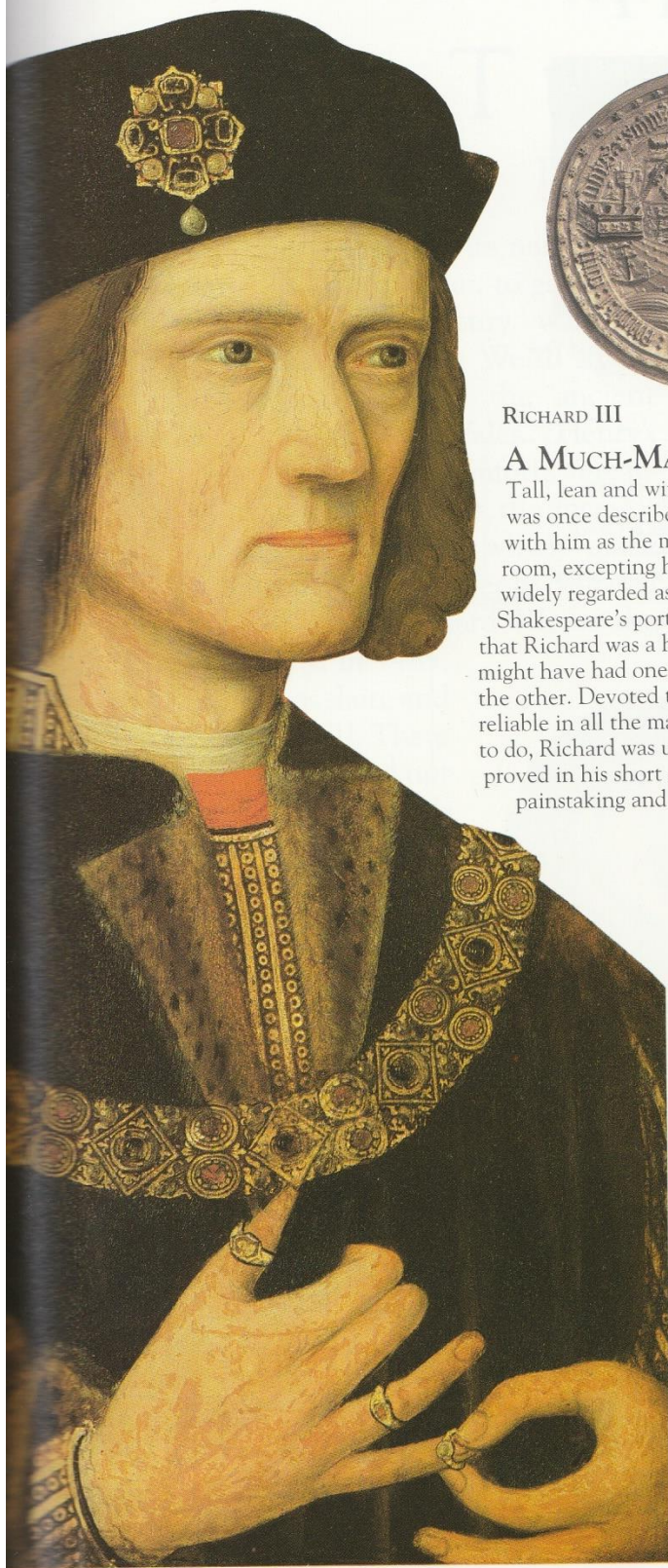
For more than 500 years the royal heralds have controlled the issuing of coats of arms from headquarters in the City of London. Their building below dates from the 1670s.



RICHARD AND ANNE (left)

COLLEGE OF ARMS

Heralds were first employed by kings as messengers. They also arranged coronations and state funerals, and read out royal proclamations. When it became necessary to control the use of coats of arms identifying each noble family, the heralds carried out the regulating. By the reign of Richard III, 10 different types of herald were in existence. All were incorporated in 1483 into a single college, which still controls the issuing of all coats of arms today.



RICHARD III

A MUCH-MALIGNED KING

Tall, lean and with slender limbs, Richard was once described by a woman who danced with him as the most handsome man in the room, excepting his brother Edward, who was widely regarded as beautiful. Contrary to Shakespeare's portrayal, there is no evidence that Richard was a hunchback, although he might have had one shoulder slightly higher than the other. Devoted to his brother Edward and reliable in all the many tasks Edward asked him to do, Richard was undoubtedly courageous and proved in his short reign to be an energetic, painstaking and just ruler.



RICHARD III'S
GREAT SEAL

EVENTS OF THE REIGN 1483 – 1485

- ♦ 1483 Richard succeeds his brother Edward IV after confining his two nephews, Edward V and Richard, Duke of York, in the Tower of London; after a few months the two brothers were never seen again.
- ♦ 1483 The Duke of Buckingham, an ally of Richard, rebels against the King but is captured and executed.
- ♦ 1483 Foundation of the College of Arms.
- ♦ 1484 Death of Richard's son Edward, Prince of Wales.
- ♦ 1484 Richard creates the Council of the North for better administration of the North of England; it survives until its abolition by Parliament in 1641.
- ♦ 1484 Abolition of benevolences – compulsory gifts from individuals to the monarch.
- ♦ 1484 A bail system introduced for defendants in court cases.
- ♦ 1484 Parliamentary statutes written down in English for the first time.
- ♦ 1485 Death of Queen Anne.
- ♦ 1485 Henry Tudor lands in West Wales and gathers support as the Lancastrian claimant to the Yorkist-held throne.
- ♦ 1485 Defeat and death of Richard at Bosworth.



BOSWORTH

On 22 August 1485 the 8,000-strong army of Henry Tudor faced Richard's 12,000-strong army at Bosworth. Richard's support ebbed away but he dived into the thick of battle, coming within a sword's length of Henry Tudor before he was cut down.

BATTLE ROYAL

The fields outside the Leicestershire town of Market Bosworth were the site of one of the most important battles in English history, a battle that decided the fate of a royal dynasty.