

The Richard III Society

Promoting research into the life and times of Richard III since 1924

Patron: HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO, Founder S Saxon Barton



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THE UNBLEACHED LINEN CLOTHS A SIGNIFICANT DETAIL FOR THE REINTERMENT OF KING RICHARD III

- **Society member embroiders cloth to cover King Richard**

When the bones of King Richard III were 'coffined' in preparation for their interment in Leicester Cathedral on March 26th 2015, they were laid on a length of unbleached linen. The reason for the use of unbleached linen is that it is a natural material that will prevent any reaction with the delicate structure of the remains enclosed.

Once laid out and fixed in anatomical order, the bones of King Richard III were covered with another length of unbleached linen, this one embroidered with boars, roses and consecration crosses - white boars for the 'blanc sanglier', the badge of Richard III, white roses for his House of York and the crosses because he was an anointed Christian king. The purpose of the embroidered cloth is for the remains to be covered in a dignified and honourable way. The embroidery was sewn with white unbleached thread by Miss Elizabeth Nokes of the Richard III Society. Thirty years ago, Elizabeth embroidered the altar linen for the chapel of the Royal House of York in the church in Fotheringhay, the village where Richard III was born and where by tradition, he was baptised. King Richard III's parents and brother, Edmund, are buried in the church. During the 1980s and 1990s many members of the Society helped to make a complete suite of hassocks (kneelers) for the church so although it is a historical and research-based Society it also has a history of contributing to the beautiful art of Ricardian needlework. Indeed the Society is delighted and proud that it was asked to contribute in this way and especially pleased that Elizabeth was able to make these very important cloths.

Fotheringhay is one of five churches associated with the life of King Richard and which has benefitted from the Ricardian Churches Restoration Fund, which raises money independently of the Society but is administered by Miss Nokes and Society chairman, Dr Phil Stone. Two further churches which have received finance from the RCRF have also featured in the reinterment week activities, namely Sutton Cheney where the cortege halted on Sunday and Middleham where soil was taken and placed in the specially made chest along with soil from Fotheringhay and Fenn Lane farm and entombed with King Richard.

-ENDS-

For images of the embroidered cloth please visit: www.richardiii.net/reinterment.php



About the Richard III Society

With a worldwide membership and local branches the Society is actively engaged in original research through its own initiatives and through collaboration with other institutions bodies and scholars. Through the Richard III and Yorkist History Trust, a charitable body established by the Society, we publish important academic works and make research grants

The Society publishes an annual journal, *The Ricardian*, with original articles on fifteenth century history and a quarterly members' magazine the *Ricardian Bulletin*.

Visit: www.richardiii.net



For further information please contact:

Dr Phil Stone
Chairman of the Richard III Society
Tel: +44 7908 835921

Elizabeth Nokes
Richard III Society
(contact via Stephanie Coren Scott)

Stephanie Coren Scott
Press & Media Relations
The Richard III Society
Mob: +44 7775 870638
e-mail: stephscott17@btinternet.com