

country? In any case, it may have been God's secret intent to punish Edward IV's sins through his children, and if so, blame their fate, not Richard. If Richard was at fault at all in the matter, it was in bungling the affair. He should either have obtained general consent to killing the princes (no more difficult, says Cornwallis, than getting consent to their deposition!), or kept their deaths secret. But in any case, the people took the news with equanimity, and silence signifies consent. And anyway, again, who are we to judge him? In law, a man must be judged by his peers. Does this exclude the king? 'No, surely, it is preposterous, most unlawful to condemn a king, if not found guilty by a jury of kings.'

P.29. If Richard was guilty of crimes, his death redeemed him. When a criminal has served his punishment, the law accounts him 'as clear of the crime as if it had never been committed.' Therefore, we must not now censure him.

It must be remembered that Cornwallis, as a well-known author of 'paradoxes' in praise of such subjects as the French pox, sadness, debt and Julian the Apostate, was engaged in the Elizabethan equivalent of the academic team debate, in which one is expected to score points off one's opponents and to erect preposterous arguments without regard to one's real convictions. Like More, Cornwallis wrote for effect, not out of concern for historical fact or justice. We do not know what John Donne thought of the copy of the *Encomium* which is dedicated to him, but we may be sure that Thomas More would have enjoyed the work for its stylistic qualities and its high entertainment value. Its real effect is to denigrate Richard, and Cornwallis does not oust Sir George Buck from his first place among the knights errant who have broken a lance in whole-hearted defence of the king.

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Research Notes and Queries

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JOHN HOWARD AND THE DEATH OF THE PRINCES

It has been suggested that John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, may have known more about the death of the Princes than early sources, particularly More, would allow (e.g. C. Oman, *Political History of England*, Vol. 4, London (1910), p.476). A summary of the facts may therefore be welcome. Howard undoubtedly had a motive for desiring the death of at least Richard, the younger of the two Princes. Through his mother he was one of the coheirs of the last Mowbray Duke of Norfolk, after Anne, the only child of the Duke (the other coheir was William, Viscount Berkeley), and Richard had been married to the heiress Anne, created Duke of Norfolk in his own right, and

granted most of the Mowbray estates, to remain his even if his wife should die, as she did in 1481 (Report: *Touching the Dignity of a Peer*, Vol. 5, London (1829), pp.406-7; *Rolls of Parliament*, Vol. 6 (1783), p.168). The title and estates thus belonged legally (if not morally) to Richard, Duke of York, and to dispose of him may have seemed to Howard the only path to title and estates.

Opportunity for a murder is said to be provided by John Howard's being Constable of the Tower until July, 1483. In the *Household Books of John, Duke of Norfolk* (edited by J. Payne Collier, London, 1844) is an entry 'Item, paid to a carpenter for makynge of iij beddes' and 'Item, for ij sakes lyme' (p.394, dated 21st May), these being expenses incurred at the Tower. Collier (p.xiii) and later historians have insinuated that the beds were for the Princes, and the sacks of lime for the disposal of their bodies. There is no evidence for this, and the lime could equally well have been for sanitary purposes or whitewash (G. Brenan, E. P. Statham, *The House of Howard*, Vol. 1, London, 1907, p.46). The beds could have been for anyone.

That Howard was Constable in early 1483 may also be disputed. His grant of this office was made in 1479, but was not to take effect until the death or cession of the then present holders, Lords Dudley and Dacre (*Cal. Patent Rolls 1476-85*, p.137), and James Ramsay says that Dudley was still holding the post (or at least receiving payment) up to the death of Edward IV (*Lancaster and York*, Vol. 2, Cambridge [1892], p.476, note 4, citing the Tellers Rolls). Dorset is sometimes said, following More, to have been Constable on the death of Edward IV and during the reign of Edward V (*Complete Peerage*, Vol. 4, 1916, p.418). He undoubtedly had access to the Tower at the beginning of May, but not after Richard's arrival on the 4th May. It is therefore quite possible that Lord Dudley acted as Constable until Sir Robert Brackenbury was appointed in July, 1483 (*C.P.R. 1476-85*, p.364), except for a short period when Dorset did so. Collier (p.xiii) states that Howard succeeded Dudley in 1482, but gives no authority for this. This is possible; Dudley was then aged 82, but it seems far from certain, and apparently we cannot prove that John Howard had, at this period at least, any greater opportunity for the murder than several others.

RICHARD, DUKE OF YORK

It has been pointed out to me by Gwen Waters that in the *Calendar of the Patent Rolls* for Henry VII is an entry of a commission of enquiry into the ownership of a manor claimed by the dowager Duchess of Norfolk (*Calendar of Patent Rolls Henry VII*, Vol. 1, H.M.S.O., 1914, pp.307-8, dated 27th November, 1489). In the course of this entry, quoting a petition by the Duchess, are the words: 'The said Richard, Duke of York, died.' The whole petition is rather muddled in its account of the status of the Norfolk estates, and who had owned them in the previous few years, but as Mrs Waters points out, the above words are very non-committal. It seems most likely that Henry had not seen the petition, or did not wish to alter the wording of it, but it is possible that at this date he did not wish to commit himself to a semi-public statement as to the manner of death (i.e. murder or otherwise) of Edward IV's younger son.