

The Death and Burial of Henry VI, A Review of the Facts and Theories, Part I

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'And the same nyghte that Kynge Edward came to Londone, King Herry, beyng inwarde in presone in the Toure of Londone, was putt to dethe, the xxj. day of Maij, on a tywesday nyghte, betwix xj. and xij. of the cloke, beyng thenne at the Toure the Duke of Gloucetre, brother to Kynge Edward, and many other; and one the morwe he was cheatyde and brought to Paulys, and his face was opyne that every manne myghte see hyme; and in hys lyinge he bledde one the pament ther; and afterward at the Blake Fryres was broughte, and ther he blede new and fresche; and from thens he was caryed to Chyrchesey abbey in a bote, and buried there in oure Lady chapelle.'

THIS EARLY ACCOUNT, written by John Warkworth soon after July 1472,² encapsulates the Henry VI legend and is taken as the source both of the date for Henry's death (in justification of the recent quincentennial celebrations³) and the inspiration for the subsequent familiar vilification of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as the murderer. In view of the apparently clear-cut nature of the evidence it is ever worthy of reiteration and re-emphasis that no contemporary source for Henry's end specifically implicates Richard and also that there is in such accounts (or, for that matter, in those written under the Tudors) no general agreement as to the cause, agent or even *date* of the death of King Henry.

In attempts to ascertain the facts, many have steered a course between the presumed propaganda of Tudor writers and the fabled inaccuracies of foreign reporters only to be thwarted by the divergence of the contemporary English versions of Henry's demise. This problem is illustrated sharply by the elusiveness of the date for this event. It is of transcendental importance to those who would absolve (or, conversely, convict) Richard of the alleged regicide that a precise date for the occasion be established, yet several dates during the second half of the momentous month of May 1471, have been mooted at one time or another.

Date of Death

Sir Clements Markham was at pains to demonstrate that Richard of Gloucester was no longer in London when Henry died, since he had been sent into Kent by Edward IV on 22 May to deal with the rebels under Thomas Nevill, 'the Bastard of Fauconberg'. Thus, drawing attention *en passant* to Vergil's statement that Henry died at the end of May, following Edward's final victory over the Kentish insurgents, Markham made use of the *Exchequer Issue Rolls*, (detailing expenditure during Henry's final days in residence in the Tower), to demonstrate that the deposed King was still alive up to the 24 May, at least.⁴ Several writers in the twentieth century have accepted this conclusion⁵ but the difficulty remains

at the date deduced may represent merely a convenient end to the accounting period concerned, and to the paying-off of Henry's attendants, as pointed out by Gairdner in his lengthy rebuttal of Markham's contentions.⁶

The wording of the Exchequer accounts has been translated as follows: 'To William Sayer, esquire. In money paid him for the expenses and diet of the said Henry and ten persons, attending in the Tower for the custody of the said Henry; for fourteen days, the first day beginning the eleventh of May last past . . . s.' This echoes an earlier enrolled entry concerned with payments for identical custodial services to the same William Sayer and to Robert Radclyf and specifying a period of seven days, commencing 29 April.⁸

A date ostensibly worthy of greater credibility is Thursday 23 May 1471, the feast of the Ascension, as recorded in the oft-quoted *Arrival of Edward IV*: 'The certainty of all whiche came to the knowledge of the sayd Henry, late called Kyng; being in the Tower of London; not havyinge, afore that, knowledge of the dede matars [viz. the reverses at Barnet and Tewkesbury, the deaths of his ally, the Earl of Warwick, and of his son, Edward of Lancaster] he toke it to so great spite, ire and indingnation that, of pure displeasure and melencoly, he dyed the thurday of the monithe of May. Whom the Kynge dyd to be browght to the priors Prechars at London, and there his funerall service donne to be caried, by water, to an Abbey upon Thamys syd, xvj. myles from London, called Chartsey, and there honorably enteryd.'⁹ This account of the events in May has, of course, the greatest claim to contemporaneity for it was in circulation in a condensed form (the *Short Arrival*), as early as 26 May 1471 and copies accompanied letters sent from Canterbury by Edward IV to his supporters in Burgundy and Bruges, dated 28 and 29 May, respectively.¹⁰

Nonetheless, scorn has been poured upon this, the 'official' record, by foes and friends of the Yorkist cause alike. The latter, alert to the scent of bias among Lancastrian and Tudor writings upon the events, are swift to admit its Yorkist dialogue. In particular, the sheer convenience and coincidence of Henry's expiry at this juncture are found unpalatable. Such considerations need not undermine the value of the *Arrival* for dating purposes, however, for it is not entirely clear why falsification of the date should be advantageous (see below). Furthermore, support for the date Thursday 23 May comes from an otherwise hostile, albeit faint, quarter, a prophetic ode upon the outcome of the Battle of Bosworth, written 1485-6: 'God in heaven, our creator, was angered when Harri was killed. He [Richard] slew the saint on *Thursday* night, he himself has been slain.'¹¹ (my emphasis).

By contrast, two other documents of fifteenth century date record Henry's death as occurring on Wednesday 22 May. Thus, Henry died '*feliciter* [fortunately?] . . . in *vigila Ascensionis Dominice*;¹² similarly an Oxford manuscript dating no earlier than 1484, (since it mentions Richard's reburial of Henry's body at Windsor), give the *vigil of the Ascension* as the date of his death.¹³ Gairdner considered that 21 May was the date intended above, and that the events were dated by reference to the following day; he quoted no further instances of this convention, however.¹⁴

Finally, the traditional date, Tuesday 21 May (as given by Warkworth), is upheld by a note on the fly-leaf of an earlier chronicle (although from external evidence the date that may be deduced is 20 May!).¹⁵ Gairdner finds

further support for his case in one of the London chronicles which, although gives no date of death, records Henry's funeral on the eve of the Ascension and thus his death must have occurred on the previous day 'as no one puts it earlier than the 21st' (see above, however).¹⁶

Those who reject the *Arrival*, and its chronology, appear obliged to accept that Henry died, or, rather, was killed, on Tuesday 21 May 1471. Caroline Halsted was content with this dating, and that the 'Lancastrian account' (Warkworth) approached the truth most closely, because it meant that Henry was 'found dead on the only day that Edward was in London'.¹⁷ There is general agreement among the multifarious sources with the sequence of events in the *Arrival*: the royal party enters the city on 21 May and Edward, having 'tarry there one day', follows Richard to Sandwich; although, a single dissenting voice has Edward not arriving in London until Ascension Eve (again, 22 May), a day later.¹⁸ Precisely why the physical presence of Edward IV upon the scene is a prerequisite for Henry's murder is not explained by Halsted, however. Instead, she takes the trouble to neutralise the apparently sinister implications of Warkworth's casual remark about Richard's presence at the Tower in the night in question, emphasising that Richard possessed, as yet, no metropolitan residence of his own.¹⁹ Moreover, the 'many other' included the Queen and princesses (who had been present at the Tower throughout the whole of Fauconberg's siege²⁰), and who had now been joined by the king's Council.²¹

The uncertainty about the date for Henry's death needs to be borne in mind in assessing the allegations by later writers that Richard of Gloucester had a hand in the affair. It has even been alleged that 'Lancastrian writers' (Warkworth, informants and the compilers of the various chronicles of the city of London) deliberately set the murder on 21 May in order that it 'tally with young Richard's presence in the Tower'.²²

Richard or Edward?

As early as 17 June 1471 the Milanese ambassador to the Court of France was able to report to Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, the recent assassination of Henry VI by Edward IV: with the death of Prince Edward and the dissipation of the Lancastrian forces an alive Henry has no further value to Edward, who 'has, in short, chosen to crush the seed'.²³ In common with other foreign writers treating of the matter of England during the late fifteenth century the envoy Sforza di Bellini, is handling inaccurate material, for he has heard that Margaret of Anjou has been murdered also and that the Fauconberg rebellion was a popular uprising to avenge Henry VI's death, rather than a partisan attempt to rescue and restore the living deposed king! That other foreign contemporaries, Dominic Mancini, records no gossip concerning the death of Henry as current during his sojourn in England in the latter part of 1483, (the story was apparent as dead, or quiescent, as Henry himself).

Warkworth's subtleties apart, one reaches the end of Richard's reign with this particular regicide being attached to his name. The next stage in the development of the legend depends upon one's interpretation of the wording of the account of Henry's death given in the Croyland Chronicle. Thus, it has been claimed that the second (or third) continuator of the Chronicle was 'impressed

the idea that Henry VI came to a violent end at the hands of Richard of Gloucester or indirectly through the connivance or sanction of Edward IV.²⁴ Richard's most recent biographer says that this chronicler's remarks may be a veiled reference to Gloucester's responsibility for the crime.²⁵ In the wording given:

'Taceo, hoc temporum interstitio inventum esse corpus regis Henrici in Turri Londinaria exanime: parcat Deus et spatium poenitentiae ei donet, quicumque tam sacrilegas manus in Christum Domini ausus est immittere. Unde et agens, tyranni: patiensque, gloriosi martyris titulum mereatur.'

the juxtaposition of the perpetrator as 'tyrant, while he who thus suffered has gained the title of a glorious martyr', has been seen as that of the two rival monarchs.²⁶ Dr. Ross admits this possibility²⁷ and it is pressed more forcibly by earlier writers.²⁸ Dr. Alison Hanham goes further and claims that *tyrannus* need not mean 'despot' but could equally be translated: ruffian or bully.²⁹ This, taken with the chronicler's prayer that the murderer be granted time to repent may suggest that the villain was still alive at the time of writing (in 1486: acquitting both Edward and Richard), and she identifies the culprit as Robert Radclyf, one of Henry's gaolers.³⁰

Tudor Accretion

During the reign of Henry VII the story of Richard's involvement in Henry's death is free to grow unchecked, despite its flimsy origins (above), the lack of unanimity, hitherto, that Henry had met a violent end and, where murder is alleged, the guilty party unnamed (except where the writer was sufficiently geographically remote to identify Edward, with impunity). There is no precipitate 'confession' alleged, as in the matter of the 'Princes', to account for the wealth of detail that now appears. Fresh information is limited to 'common fame' (Fabyan, Vergil, More),³¹ and the story seems to move chiefly in accordance with the principle of the accumulation of malign embellishment with passage of time.³² Hence, with John Rous, writing, around 1490, the earliest work firmly identifying Richard with the crime, one is at last on familiar ground: 'he caused others to kill the holy man, Henry VI, or, as many think, did so by his own hands'.³³ Thereafter, the various London chronicles elaborate upon this:

... upon ascension evyn, King Henry was brought from the tower thurgh Chepe unto Powlys upon a bere, and abowte the beere more glevys and stavys than torches; who was slayne, as it was said, by the Duke of Glouceter.³⁴

'Upon Ascension Eve the corpse of King Henry VI was brought through Cornhill from the Tower with a great company of men of that place bearing weapons as if they would have led him to some place of execution ... For him shortly afterwards God showed sundry miracles, of whose death the common fame went that the Duke of Gloucester was not all guiltless.'³⁵

'Thanne upon Assencion Eynn next ensuinge, ye corps of Henry the VI late kynge was brought unreverently from ye Tower thorough ye hygh stretes of ye cytie unto Paulis Church, and there lefte for that nyght, and upon ye morrowe conveyed with glevvys and other wepyngs, as before thyther was broughte unto Chertyssey, where he was buryed. Of ye deth of this prynce dyverse tales were tolde: but the moost common fame wente, that he was stykkyd with a dagger by the handes of the Duke of Glouceter ...'³⁶

Philippe de Commynes, writing at a distance, may differ in matters of detail. Gloucester 'immediately after the battle (of Tewkesbury) slew this poor King Henry with his own hand or caused him to be carried into some private place and stood by while he was killed.'³⁷ Yet, contemporaneously, in the submission made by Henry VII to Pope Alexander VI for the removal of the body of Henry V from Windsor, he says of his namesake: 'He had yielded to a pitiable death, by the order of Edward...'³⁸ Somewhat surprisingly, an opportunity to denigrate Richard has been missed! Naturally, what Richard of Gloucester had to gain from such an act, especially with a half-dozen others separating him from the throne, is left unclear. In 1503, however, Bernard Andre ventured an explanation: 'Richard, Duke of Gloucester, that thirster after human blood, was sent by his brother, Edward IV, to butcher Henry.'³⁹

The various printed editions of Sir Thomas More's work differ, slightly, in emphasis. Thus Richard's admitted virtue of loyalty is used in evidence against him: 'Poore King Henry the sixt, a little before deprived of his Realme, and Emperiall Crowne, was nowe in the Tower of London, spoyled of his life, and worldly felicity, by Richard Duke of Gloucester (as the constant fame ranne) which, to the entent that King Edward his brother should be cleere out of secret suspicion, of sodayne invasion, murdered the sayde king with a dagger. Was it kind-heartedness on his brother's behalf'⁴¹ or, rather, Richard exceeding authority:

'He slue with his awne handes King Henry the sixt beyng prisoner in the Tower of London, as men constantly say, and that without commaundement or knowledge of the king, which would undoubtedly, if he had entended that thing, have appointed that Butcherly office to some other then his awne borne brother.'⁴²

Thus, even making use of the Tudor writers, there appears to have been a general consensus of the distribution of guilt for the death of Henry between the royal brothers and later writers tend to agree that the ultimate responsibility for the judicial murder lay with Edward IV and his council,⁴³ the role of York Richard being diminished to, at most (as Constable of England), the loyal bearing of the Council's sentence of execution to the Constable of the Tower.⁴⁴ However, although Gairdner concedes that the overall responsibility was as above,⁴⁵ he is struck by Richard's sumptuous reburial of Henry as mute evidence for Richard's personal guilt and his actions are thus 'partly due to a sense of remorse' and 'desire to expatiate his crime.'⁴⁶ The question of Richard's motives for the removal of Henry's body to Windsor is a complex issue which deserves greater attention than is permissible here.⁴⁷ Suffice it to say that the reason(s) need not be sinister as Gairdner implies nor as straight-forward as the translation of Richard II from King's Langley to Westminster by Henry V, the precedent for the accession of a 'second generation' monarch of a dynasty.⁴⁸

Cause of Death

Where there was agreement among Tudor writers that King Henry VI was put to death the murder weapon agreed upon is a dagger (Grafton and Holinshead following Fabian, though Vergil cites a sword). Indeed, the dagger with which was alleged, Henry met his end was preserved among the relics at 'Our Lady Caversham', a chapel on the bridge between that Berkshire town and Reading.

and became the object of especial veneration by Elizabeth of York.⁴⁹ This very weapon, 'schethe and alle', was among the booty confiscated in 1537 by John Stokesley, Bishop of London, who was acting on a commission for the suppression of idolatrous images or relics.⁵⁰

Fresh theories concerning the death of Henry VI followed the exhumation of his remains in 1910.⁵¹ A lay interpretation of the condition of the contents of Henry's coffin was that he had suffered a violent death⁵² and a further interpolation, apparently due to Kendall, since this was not claimed in the original report, was that death resulted from a fractured skull.⁵³ The view promulgated in later works is not based upon any scientific examination of the skeleton but upon a layman's postscript to the report of the expert responsible for the anatomical investigation who, indeed, reached no such finding.⁵⁴ Determination of death from bones alone is notoriously difficult and, prudently, Dr. MacAlister attempted no such diagnosis in the case of Henry VI.⁵⁵ It was left to another lay person, Mary Clive, to point out that the examination of Henry's remains had proved neither death by violence nor a fractured skull.⁵⁶ MacAlister's simple observation that the bones of the skull were broken has not the sinister connotations referred to by subsequent writers and, indeed, is not at all surprising in a burial of this date which had, moreover, been disturbed and redeposited, as is admitted. That dead Henry's hair was 'matted with blood' was the invention of St. John Hope (no pathologist he, but an architectural historian!), and was not corroborated by the anatomist that he consulted.⁵⁷

Such distortion of the skeletal evidence to fit a pre-judged issue is, of course, familiar from (and slightly foreshadows!) the analogous examination of the bones attributed to the 'Princes in the Tower'.⁵⁸ The resemblance does not end here, however, for it was observed that a bone from the fore-leg of a pig had been substituted for Henry's missing right arm, just as similar deficiencies in the catalogue of the skeletal remains of the 'Princes' had been supplemented by the bones of a variety of animal species!⁵⁹

Since the empirical evidence for the violent death of Henry VI is unsatisfactory the possibility of death from natural causes has been revived recently.⁶⁰ Evidence is adduced that Henry, from his French antecedents, was a sufferer from porphyria.⁶¹ This malady, genetically transmitted, would account for Henry's lapses into insanity and render sudden death (cf. *The Arrival*, above) tenable. Similarly, attention has been drawn to the genuine find, in the anatomical investigation of the skeleton of Henry VI, his abnormally thin skull and, hence, that any fall upon a hard surface (as precipitated by shocking news, etc.), could have accounted for his early death.⁶²

In fact no special circumstances need necessarily be invoked to explain Henry's death at the age of forty-nine. As a member of the well-to-do classes he might have looked forward to ten more years of life,⁶³ yet his recent privations and, above all, his family background militate against this.⁶⁴ Overall, his death appears to have been less precipitate than that of Edward IV who was to die, aged only forty-three. The cause of Edward's early demise remains unknown yet few sinister insinuations (Vergil, Hall, excepted), have been made in this instance.

Burial

The description of Henry lying in his coffin, with only his face uncovered has

been held to support the 'blunt instrument' theory of murder.⁶⁵ In fact, Warkworth himself shows, this was a deliberate arrangement for the exposure of Henry's body so that the fact of his death be acknowledged, as had been accomplished with Richard II under similar circumstances.⁶⁶

Warkworth's further report, that the corpse, thus exposed, was observed to bleed freely, in mute witness to the outrage committed, is sheer dramatic licence. This is quite impossible since it is claimed that Henry died between eleven and twelve o'clock, whereas by the time of the public exhibition of his dead body in the morning *post-mortem* changes in the blood would have removed the possibility of fresh 'bleeding'. If the observation of liquid stains was made then the explanation must lie not in Henry's blood but, perhaps, in the leakage of embalming fluid. Despite assertions to the contrary, there is cause to believe that an attempt had been made to embalm Henry (see below), but, as has been argued elsewhere (English expertise in this art during the second half of the fifteenth century (by comparison with continental European exponents), might allow such disastrous results.⁶⁷

These shocking scenes apart, the Sir Thomas More accounts above compare that Henry's funeral resembled a military manoeuvre, rather than a solemn religious occasion, and that the King's body was conveyed to Chertsey without benefit of 'Priestes or Clarcke, Torche or Taper, syngyng or sayyng'.⁶⁸ In fact, the accounts of the Exchequer reveal that a considerable sum was defrayed, precisely so that the customary obsequies be observed, a fact first pointed out by Markham.⁶⁹ *Hugh Brice was re-imbursed £15 3s 4½d, in part for wax, linen and spices for embalming the body and the remainder to pay those who carried torches accompanying Henry from the Tower to St. Paul's and thence to Chertsey Abbey.*⁷⁰ More's insinuations are belied both by this and the fact that the monks of Chertsey were paid £2 12s 2d, and the various orders of Friars in London a total of £8 12s 4d, for masses on Henry's behalf.⁷¹ St. John Hope remarks that the total expenses were 'only £33 6s 9½d',⁷² yet Edward was being far more generous toward his rival than Henry VII was to his: donating a paltry £10 1s 0d towards Richard's tomb.⁷³

The repeated disinterment of Henry's body has supplied interesting information. John Rous has left a description of the awe-inspiring sight at the exhumation on 12 August 1484, at Chertsey, when the corpse was found almost perfectly preserved thirteen years after death. His account is detracted from, somewhat, by the fact that he was not present on this occasion (indeed, those who were have left conflicting testimony⁷⁴), and he plays down the role of the cerecloth and spices known to have been employed (see above), attributing the claimed incorrupt state of the body to the King's sanctity.⁷⁵ That there are a number of factors, both natural and artificial, capable of preserving the human body in an apparently intact state is well established.⁷⁶ However, this particular 'miracle' of Henry's is, presumably, the result of deliberate embalming for political purposes, since there was ever the intention of displaying the corpse after death.

Whatever may have been Henry's appearance at his first exhumation, the re-examination of the remains in 1910 revealed a vastly different state of affairs. What was found this time was a disarticulated collection of bones that had once been buried in earth but that had been re-packed (ostensibly in 1484), in a

miraculously small lead casket.⁷⁷ These findings are reminiscent of the reburial of John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury, who died, and was buried, at the siege of Chastillon in 1453 yet whose skeleton was disinterred early in the sixteenth century for re-patriation to his native land, and then re-discovered, in 1874, crammed into a tiny box, of proportions similar to Henry's.⁷⁸ Furthermore, Henry's reburial differed from that of Talbot, and others, chiefly in the provision of an outer wooden coffin, corresponding to the normal adult human proportions, yet which concealed Henry's ludicrously small lead coffin and hence maintained the outward illusion that the body was still full-size (and incorrupt?).⁷⁹ The Rous story thus reads, overall, like an example of the mediaeval phenomenon of historical invention for religious propaganda,⁸⁰ an early contribution, perhaps, to the abortive project for the canonisation of Henry VI.

In this, the first in a two-part summary of the circumstances surrounding the death and burial of Henry VI, note has been taken of the salient points of the various theories advanced but his death, more than 500 years ago, is one of the few certainties in the affair. That not one of the received 'facts' about the event (date and cause of death and, if murder by whom?), has gone unchallenged, over the centuries, indicates that the subject remains a valid field for research.

To be continued with a discussion of the Cult of Henry VI.

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3. A. L. Rowse, Guilt for the murder of Henry VI, *The Times* 21 May 1971.
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5. J. Rae, *The Deaths of the Kings of England* (Aldricham 1947), pp.63-5; J. Harvey, *The Plantagenets* (2nd edition, London 1939), p.190.

6. J. Gairdner, Did Henry VII murder the Princes? *English Historical Review*, vol. 6 (1891), pp.444-5. Markham's final response was that the accounts, made up on 12 June 1471, related not only to Henry's custodians at the Tower but to their charge, himself, see his *King Richard III, His Life and Character* (London 1906), p.198.
7. F. Devon (ed.), *Issues of the Exchequer (Pell Records) ... from King Henry III to King Henry VI* (London 1837), p.497.
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11. Quoted in Pamela Tudor-Craig, *op. cit.*, Appendix 1, p.95. More surprisingly, 23 May 1471 is the date given for Henry's death in Ralph Holinshed's *Chronicle* (1587), pp.324-5.
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13. Bodleian: MS Laud 674 (B.23), Halliwell (*op. cit.* in n.1), pp.xi-xii.
14. Gairdner (1891, *op. cit.* n.6), pp.450-1.
15. *Ibid.*, p.450, cf. BL: MS. Arundel 28, quoted in Halliwell (*op. cit.* n.1), p.xi. Markham (*op. cit.* n.6), p.198, dismissed this as evidence since it was undated.
16. Gairdner (1891, *op. cit.* n.6), p.450, quoting BL: MS. Cotton Vitellius A XVI. He did not have access to the *Great Chronicle* of London, but this would have led him to similar conclusions, since they probably share a common source, Alison Hanham, *Richard III and his Early Historians: 1483-1535* (Oxford 1987), pp.110-111.
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18. More curious still, this is a London source: City of London Journal 8, f.7, quoted Myers (*op. cit.* in n.1), pp.315-6.
19. Halsted, p.214.
20. *Ibid.*, p.212, quoting Bruce (*op. cit.* n.9), p.34.
21. Halsted, p.211, quoting Halliwell (*op. cit.* n.1), p.20.
22. Markham (*op. cit.* n.6), p.196. The London chroniclers confirm only Ascension Eve (22 May 1471), the day of Henry's funeral: his date of death unstated and deducible by later writers, *pace* Gairdner.
23. A. B. Hinds (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers, Milan*, vol. I (London 1912), p.157; P. M. Kendall, *Richard III* (London 1955), p.452.
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- H. St. John Hope, The discovery of the remains of King Henry VI in St. George's Chapel, Windsor
- Archaeologia*, vol. 62 (1911), pp.533-542.
- p.541.
- Ellis, *Richard III*, p.451.
- Ellis (*op. cit.* n.8), p.317; Tudor-Craig (*op. cit.* n.2), p.34; Williamson, *op. cit.*, p.34; Spencer (*op. cit.* n.49),
- p.68.
- The Cambridge Professor of Anatomy restricted himself to what could be established with some degree of
- evidence from remains admittedly in poor condition. Thus, he provided valuable confirmatory evidence of
- age (45 to 55 years), sex (male) and stature (5' 9" to 5' 10"). He stated that 'The bones of the head were
- unfortunately much broken' as an apology for being unable to 'make any trustworthy measurements', rather
- than bemoaning the results of a violent death, Hope (*op. cit.* n.51), pp.536-7.
- Clive, *This Sun of York: a Biography of Edward IV* (London 1973), pp.185-6.
- p.186; Hope (*op. cit.* n.51), p.537.
- E. Tanner and W. Wright, Recent investigations regarding the Princes in the Tower, *Archaeologia*, vol. 34
- 1944, pp.1-24. Neither of these reports is a model of objective enquiry.
- p.20.
- Recent research into the problem of another insane English king, George III, had led to the provisional
- diagnosis of porphyria (inherited through Mary, Queen of Scots, an alleged sufferer), and an attempt had
- been made to trace this disorder, back at least as far as Catherine of Valois, in order to explain both her
- insanity and early death ... Muriel E. Smith, Henry VI's Medical Record, *Ricardian*, no. 43 (1973),
- p.4-15.
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- Adwyn Allen drew attention to the case of Henry's cousin, Charles VIII of France, who died
- immediately after striking his head on a low gateway: the question arises of an heritable trait of an
- exceptionally thin skull, Research Notes and Queries, *Ricardian*, no. 58 (1977), pp.25-6.
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- total those who had met a violent death), T. H. Hollingsworth, A demographic study of the British
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- age at death for the members of Parliament during the fifteenth century: 58 years of age, J. C.

- Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, 1439-1509, vol. 1: Biographies* (HMSO 1936), p.xi; T. H. Hollingsworth, A note on the longevity of the secular peerage, 1350-1500, *Population Studies*, vol. 29 (1975), pp.155-9, correcting J. T. Rosenthal, *ibid.*, vol. 27 (1973), pp.287-293. Male members of the bourgeoisie appear to have expired a little younger, 49-50, on average, Sylvia L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Mediaeval London, 1300-1500*, Michigan, (1948), p.194.
64. Henry's antecedents and collaterals appear to have had a history of poor health and early death, (whether or not the disorder of porphyria was involved), and thus his maternal grandfather, Charles VI, died at 54 and two of his uncles at only 25 years of age, Smith (*op. cit.* n.60), p.15. One might add, also, that neither of Henry's parents reached the age of 36 and that his paternal grandfather died aged 46.
 65. It is held that a fatal injury to the back of his skull would have been undetectable under such conditions, Dr. Tudor-Craig (n.54, above).
 66. W. J. White, Changing burial practice in late mediæval England, *The Ricardian*, vol. 4, no. 63 (1978), pp.23-30.
 67. *ibid.*, pp.28-29.
 68. Richard Grafton (n.40, above), and versions given by Edmund Hall (1548-1550), quoted in Hope (*op. cit.* n.51), p.539.
 69. Markham (*op. cit.* n.4), p.255.
 70. Issue Roll, quoted in Devon (*op. cit.* n.7), pp.495-6.
 71. *ibid.*, p.496.
 72. Hope (*op. cit.* n.51), p.538.
 73. Kendall, *Richard III*, p.493, n.11.
 74. A. P. Stanley, *Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey* (2nd edition, London 1868), pp.579-580.
 75. T. Hearne (ed.), John Rous, *Historia Regum Angliae* (2nd edition, Oxford 1745), p.217.
 76. cf. White (*op. cit.* n.66), p.26.
 77. Dimensions: 3' 5" x 1' 3" x 1' 0", Hope (*op. cit.* n.51), pp.535-6.
 78. W. H. Egerton, Talbot's tomb in the parish church of St. Alkmunde, Whitchurch, *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeology and Natural History Society*, vol. 8 (1885), pp.413-440. I am indebted to Peter Hammond for this reference.
 79. Hope (*op. cit.* n.51), pp.535, 542.
 80. J. Clark, St. Erkenwald: bishop and London archaeologist, *The London Archaeologist*, vol. 4 (1980), pp. 3-7.