

Richard III and the Princes by A. J. Pollard

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Review and Comments

**P. W. HAMMOND, LIVIA VISSER-FUCHS
AND ISOLDE WIGRAM**

P. W. Hammond writes:—

This book is an excellent addition to the many written recently on fifteenth century topics. It claims to 'explore the story of Richard III' and not to be a biography, nevertheless it is a biography, combined with a discussion of the world in which Richard moved. However Pollard also fulfills his promise to explore Richard's story and discusses the legends and myths which grew up around him, including the 'crimes'. There is a most interesting first chapter which discusses how the stories concerning Richard's character, etc., grew up and why the 'evil' Richard became the received version. This procedure is repeated throughout the book with each of the various problems and myths with which Richard's life seems to be sprinkled, including of course the death of the Princes.

Interesting byways are examined in depth, 'Pigs and Boars', 'Richard III's Saints' and 'Historical Paintings of the Princes' for example, and this brings us to the illustrations because these sections are 'picture essays'. Here the subject is dealt with by annotating, at length in some cases, illustrations of the subject under discussion. These illustrations, and indeed those of single subjects are all excellent. There are naturally some of the familiar ones but these are kept to an absolute minimum and most of the illustrations are unfamiliar and excellently well chosen, 'inspired picture research' indeed by Margaret Condon as Pollard expresses it. The colour plates are very well reproduced.

The two final chapters are about Richard as a man and 'Later stories about Richard III' both of which are fresh and well repay reading. The last of these is a quick survey of the view of Richard as it developed from the Tudor period, mainly on the last 150 years or so, and concentrating on the recent period. Here the author makes some very interesting points, including some on such phenomena as the modern 'bodice ripper' novel, and the whole chapter is a fresh look at this subject. The book ends with an appendix of unpublished documents, recording different aspects of Richard's life and character. There are source notes to the chapters and a section on further reading, which describes the latest work on the topics concerned.

In all this book gives far more than the title promises. In the various points discussed the author takes a judicious and detached attitude amply fulfilling the promise in the first chapter (p.22) that the book 'attempts to be both objective and dispassionate' and that 'it tries to follow the precept that the historian is not a judge, least of all a hanging judge'. Not all of his conclusions even on this basis will be welcome to all readers but since the various points are discussed carefully and the sources given, it is possible to consider all sides of the questions oneself. The book is written from the point of view of someone who has given considerable thought to the subject and with an ease which conceals the amount of knowledge which lies behind it. In all a book well worth reading, and indeed buying.

Livia Visser-Fuchs writes:—

Even as a Ricardian my first reaction to this book was: not *another* book about Richard III, not *another* book with the inevitable words 'controversial' and 'five hundred years' in the first sentence of the publisher's blurb — but a book should not be judged by its blurb, not even by its title.

Allowing such a book to be reviewed in *The Ricardian* is to throw it into a den of merciless, hair-splitting lions, but I think the lions will go hungry this time: this is a very attractive, inexpensive, nicely illustrated and pleasantly readable book. All the latest research has been incorporated into a survey rich in good-will and common sense. Some aspects of Richard's life and reputation are dealt with in great detail, such as THE BONES, others, notably the battle of Bosworth, are mercifully brief. Surprisingly short is the section on Richard's books, but the author is probably wise to leave that to others.

This lion is tempted to roar very gently, after all: at the illustrations. They are excellent, but one would like to *beg* authors and editors once and for all to put a *simple, clear, short reference with every picture*, and, if possible, a date. Why is one forced every time to turn back to the two (!) lists of illustrations, find out which of the two rows of numbers refer to the pictures and which to the page, before one is told where the illustration comes from? (I wondered why the pictures had been given a number in the list, since they don't have one on the page, but this turned out to help with the 'picture credits'!) Do publishers fear that the common reader will be frightened off by so academic an addition as the name of a library and the shelf number of a manuscript?

However original some of the pictures a number of them seem slightly *recherché*. What does Caesar's caesarian birth have to do with Richard III? Who says the building in the illustration on page 95 is a church and what is the function of this picture? A boating scene from Edward's *Chemin de Vaillance* to evoke his catching a fatal cold on the river makes one smile (p.85). The picture essay about Richard's birth sign Scorpio is misleading in its brevity, and to ask in this context where he received his fatal wound seems a ridiculous concession to medieval credulity. When will historians finally give up the ludicrous, totally unfounded notion that one of those remarkably ugly men in the presentation picture of Jean de Wavrin's *Chronicles of England* is Richard of Gloucester? The miniature of the killing of the, single, innocent of Bethlehem — why call the child 'one of the first born of Israel'?! — is almost in bad taste, but we should remember we are viewing events/rumours through the eyes of the fifteenth-century beholder (p.136; KB

presumably means the Royal Library in the Hague? and the ms. is 76 G 21?). The 'Pigs and Boars' picture essay is attractive; just as well the author and the picture researchers do not know what opportunities they have missed. The boar is certainly a subject for further research.

Ricardians had perhaps better buy this book; they might enjoy it, and not only while trying to find fault with it (as I was unable to do).

Isolde Wigram writes:—

Dr. Pollard, in an admirably impartial study of Richard III, nevertheless sees him as driven by ruthless ambition based on insecurity in the title to his own lands, and concludes that Richard 'lacked the moral courage to face fatefully and with fortitude the uncertainties and risks of the future in 1483'.¹ If ambition then was the mainspring of his actions, one might paraphrase Shakespeare:

If it were so, it was a grievous fault
And grievously hath Richard answered it.²

Taking a leaf out of Shakespeare's book, Pollard tries to show that evidence of ruthless ambition can be traced throughout Richard's life: we are presented with the image somewhat of a teenage tearaway, bullying his brother King Edward almost as much as, more certainly and unpardonably, he bullied the old Countess of Oxford into making her property over to him, though it appears that her kinsman Howard connived at it.³ Although the more heinous in that she was an old woman, it is well known that ill-treatment of women in matters of property was quite common in the fifteenth century; Margaret Paston was removed bodily by Lord Moleyns from the manor of Gresham.⁴ The theme of course is continued in the unifying quarrel between Richard and Clarence over the Warwick inheritance and the removal from the Countess of Warwick of all her own property in order to satisfy the greedy brothers and, by implication, their equally greedy wives.⁵ However the real loser was George Neville, Duke of Bedford, Montagu's son. The curious clause in the act of parliament which broke the entail and bestowed the Neville lands on Richard, gave him only a life interest in them unless there were male heirs of Montagu living.⁶ As Pollard states, Richard's weak title to his northern estates made royal favour critical to him after the death of George Neville in May 1483. Richard's actions at Stony Stratford however were hardly likely to win him royal favour, and when Pollard writes that personal ambition is the one common strand which would make sense of all Richard's actions,⁷ it can be argued that an equally valid explanation was a disinclination to be assassinated.

Pace Dr. Michael Hicks, there are three indications that Richard opposed and resented his brother Clarence's death, and whatever were Richard's relations with the Woodvilles at the time of Edward IV's death, Mancini is quite explicit that 'they had to endure the imputation brought against them *by all*, of causing the death of the duke of Clarence'⁸ (my italics) and 'they were afraid that, if Richard took unto himself the crown or even governed alone, they, who bore the blame of Clarence's death, would suffer death or at least be ejected from their high estate'.⁹ They therefore attempted to pre-empt any action of Richard's by preparations for keeping power by force. All this is well known (though it sometimes seems to be overlooked) and has been re-stated recently in the pages of the *Ricardian*, so there is no need to repeat it.¹⁰

If the Woodvilles intended to hold power by means of a *coup*,¹ and if they were really afraid of Richard as Mancini suggests, his removal would be the logical solution, and Mancini further states that Richard told the young King that ambushes had been prepared for him 'both in the capital and on the road, which had been revealed to him by their accomplices',¹¹ while Crowland's version is that Richard said 'there were men close to the king who had sworn to destroy his honour and his life'.¹² It was also Mancini who said that Hastings urged Richard to secure the person of the King and to seize his enemies 'before they were alive to the danger',¹³ at the same time bringing a strong force with him, which Richard notably failed to do. Stony Stratford is more than ten miles nearer London than Northampton, and the King's absence from the agreed rendezvous with Richard shows that he, acting no doubt on his uncle Rivers' orders, was attempting to give Richard the slip and so proceed to his imminent coronation.

Jeffrey Richards is inclined to believe Richard's allegations, pointing out that the Council, dominated by the Woodvilles, had decided to deprive Richard of the protectorship, and that the Queen's family were in a position to influence Edward V against him even as they had turned Edward IV against Clarence. As they controlled both princes, the fleet, the treasury and the Tower, it was little wonder that he saw them as a threat. Richard's actions at Northampton and Stony Stratford therefore were a *reaction* against measures already taken by the Woodvilles, and, apparently, partly on the advice of Hastings. But having been forced into arresting Rivers, Vaughan and Grey for his own security, he had of course made implacable enemies of the Queen, her family and affinity. Jeffrey Richards considers that it was the Council's refusal to condemn Rivers and Grey for treason which decided Richard to set his nephew aside, as they presented a continual danger while alive, nor, in view of the alarming precedents of the two previous Dukes of Gloucester — Thomas of Woodstock and 'Good Duke Humphrey', both of whom had exercised power during the minority of their nephews Richard II and Henry VI and had subsequently been murdered — would he have been any more secure once Edward V came of age.¹⁴

Pollard, in saying that there is no evidence of a conspiracy against Richard and that it was unlikely that Hastings sided with the Woodvilles,¹⁵ completely ignores Richard's accusation against Jane/Elizabeth Shore as well as the Queen. His virtual murder of Hastings surely suggests that he either felt very threatened or deeply betrayed, and his treatment of Elizabeth Shore following Hastings' execution indicates that he saw her as implicated in the gaining of Hastings' support for the alleged conspiracy. It is interesting that Shakespeare makes the compliant Lord Mayor of London say in *Richard III* Act 3, Scene 5

I never looked for better at his hands
After he once fell in with Mistress Shore.

Shakespeare of course follows More in making Richard withdraw from the Council in the Tower and re-enter with accusations of treason. Whether Hastings was genuinely implicated in a plot against Richard's life (and Charles Wood certainly thought so),¹⁶ which he might have been brought to believe was the only way to keep young Edward V on the throne, or whether Catesby had falsely accused Hastings and supplied apparent proof of his treason to Richard when he had left the Council, Richard's violent reaction against Hastings argues more than purely political calculation. The Queen knew that her brother and her son

Richard Grey were in mortal danger; she would hardly expect to find Hastings a willing tool to try and save *them*, but if she could convince him that removal of Richard, who was about to be offered the crown, was the only way to protect the life and throne of the young king as well as bringing increased honour and influence for himself, his alliance with the Queen at least would hardly be so remarkable. Elizabeth Shore was the ideal link between the Queen in sanctuary and Hastings. More's 'oral testimony gleaned from contemporaries'¹⁷ may have been near to the mark in saying that Catesby 'trusted by his death to obtain much of the rule that the Lord Hastings bore in his country: the only desire whereof was the enticement that induced him to be partner and one special contriver of all this horrible treason'.¹⁸ Catesby's involvement may well have been critical.

Richard may indeed have 'acted on impulse, and so set himself on a course from which the only way forward was to take the throne',¹⁹ but of course he had at first counted on a continuation of the protectorate, for which the new Chancellor had prepared an opening speech to Parliament. Pollard says that Richard 'took and never surrendered the initiative',²⁰ but he had strong supporters in Howard, Buckingham and Bishop Stillington, who doubtless foresaw indefinite trouble from the minority of a king with a flawed title, dominated by his mother's detested family. Vergil surprisingly admits:

Notwithstanding that many of his friends urged him to utter himself plainly, and to despatch at once that which remained, yet lest his doings might easily be disliked, his desire was that the people might be earnestly dealt withal, and the whole matter referred to the determination of others as judges in that behalf. . . .²¹

This surely gives a rather different impression from either the conspiracy or cock-up theory of Richard's accession. Of course Stillington's revelation of Edward IV's pre-contract of marriage with Eleanor Butler was suspiciously timely for Richard when he began to aim at the throne, but this too may have been linked with Clarence's death, for surely only a real threat to his heir, which Stillington who held the secret may have divulged to the Duke, would cause Edward to condemn his brother. As to Rivers and Grey, although according to Crowland²² this again was urged on Richard by Catesby and Ratcliffe, was he by condemning them avenging, as he had promised, Clarence's death? Certainly the summary execution of the first Earl Rivers and his son John by Warwick and Clarence would not have been lost on Richard.

The rebellion of 1483 and the fate of the Princes

The timing and component parts of this rising are very complex, and we are indebted to Dr. Michael Hicks for shedding some further light on the problem.²³ It is difficult to believe that Margaret Beaufort/Stanley was concerned to restore Edward V. Vergil more realistically wrote that on hearing of the death of the Princes that lady (described so delightfully by George Buck as 'of a politic and contriving bosom')²⁴ 'began to hope well of her son's fortune, supposing that that deed would without doubt prove for the profit of the commonwealth'.²⁵ So much for contemporary horror at the slaughter of the innocent babes. But if the rebellion's original aim was the rescue of the Princes from the Tower and Richard's letter of 29 July really referred to a plot and not to a rescue attempt, which may have come later, at what stage was the rumour spread that the Princes had died a violent death?

Vergil of course is very circumstantial about the plotting between Lady Margaret and Elizabeth Woodville (the latter undertaking 'to procure all her husband king Edward's friends to take part')²⁶ and it would be interesting to know how Elizabeth, in sanctuary, heard the news of her sons' murder. Richard's German biographer, Andreas Kalckoff, writes that *Das Gerücht vom Tod und ihr tatsächliches Ende haben demnach nichts miteinander zu tun* (The rumour of their death and their actual end have nothing to do with each other).²⁷ Nothing would have been easier, of course, than to start such a rumour, and Mancini was halfway to doing it before he left England in July. Clearly the proposed marriage between Henry Tudor and Elizabeth of York could not be suggested to Elizabeth Woodville until she was satisfied that her sons were dead. According to Crowland it was Buckingham, on Morton's advice, who invited Henry to come over to marry Elizabeth and take possession of the kingdom.²⁸ Vergil's version of the rebellion runs thus:

In the meantime in England the heads of the conspiracy went about many matters; some held furnished fit places with force of men; some secretly solicited the commonalty to sedition; others earnestly minded and were ready, so soon as they should know of Henry's arrival, to begin the war; others finally, of which number John Morton bishop of Ely was chief, provoked, by secret messengers, all men to this new conspiracy whom they knew assuredly to hate king Richard no less than themselves did . . .²⁹

Did this version come from Henry or from Morton himself? Perhaps the extent to which the rebellion was a matter of incitement as much as a spontaneous movement has been a little overlooked.

At any rate, if Richard was well served by his spies, what was his response to all this plotting? Perhaps the attempt to send the princesses out of the country reminded him of his own flight to Burgundy when he was a boy, with his brother George, after their father's death. Certainly he may have deemed it advisable to remove his nephews from the Tower where they were a focus for plots, and to divert attention from them. Possibly he intended to send them to Sheriff Hutton, shortly to be joined by their cousins and younger sisters, but possibly also, as a short-term measure, he had his eye on the Low Countries. Pollard states that the death of a child in the fifteenth century was no less a heart-rending event than in the twentieth century. In parentheses one might ask how much grief therefore was provoked by the murder of the two sons of the Earl of Desmond? But they were not princes, and lived far away in Ireland. If, as Pollard writes, children were as loved and cherished in mediaeval times as in any other³⁰ (and certainly Richard gave evidence of loving his own sons, both legitimate and illegitimate), why is he alone supposed to be immune from this feeling in the case of his nephews? Why should he, an intelligent man, not have seen the fatal damage to his reputation by their murder, beyond all possible gain? Such a scandal at the very outset of his reign, when he was on a triumphal progress, would have been the action of a lunatic, besides clearing the way for Henry, as he was probably aware of the latter's hopes.

In order to take every precaution therefore it is possible that he sent the boys abroad, which is why they disappeared from the Tower and Richard was silent in face of the rumours. As D. M. Kleyn writes in *Richard of England*:

What would have happened to them if Richard had won the battle of Bosworth is obviously of academic interest only; nevertheless it deserves to be taken into account because we judge from hindsight, whereas Richard must have believed he had the situation in hand and would easily defeat whatever invasion the Tudor could mount . . . He would believe that time was on his side, and any disclosures he had to make could wait until he had defeated Tudor. He was not to know that for him that time would never arrive.³¹

Dr. Pollard meticulously records every relevant fact on this perennially recurring topic up to the present time (and it is reassuring to Ricardians that he admits the Bones found in the Tower are a red herring) except the widespread rumours after Henry's accession that the Princes, or one of them, had *survived*. Vergil, Bacon and Buck all mention the rumours, one being that the Princes were embarked in a ship at Tower wharf and that they were drowned, and others that they were safely set ashore overseas.³² Bacon and Vergil also say it was rumoured that they were conveyed secretly away.³³ The truth may well lie between them: the elder boy may have been drowned, perhaps by accident or through the agency of Buckingham, and the younger one set safely ashore, and hidden for a time in the Werbeque family. The *Divisie Chronicle* mentions Buckingham having spared one of the children 'whom he had lifted from the font'.³⁴ Was Richard of York in fact his godson?

As Pollard notes, the failure of the 1483 rebellion meant that Richard's enemies had declared their hand,³⁵ and if Richard could convince Elizabeth Woodville that at least one of her sons survived safely abroad and that rumours of the boys' death were spread in order to get her consent to her daughter's marriage to Henry as well as to blacken Richard, her reconciliation with him no longer presents a problem. Richard certainly sent Sir James Tyrell on a mysterious mission to Flanders in 1485 'for divers maters concernyng gretely oure wele'.³⁶ If Elizabeth Woodville believed that one of her sons survived abroad — which information would certainly have reached Henry also — her (and Dorset's) suspected implication in the Lambert Simnel rising is easily explained. Although it is inconceivable that she would support the claim of Clarence's son, yet if it was not known for certain who the boy in Ireland was claiming to be, Henry, by consigning Elizabeth at least for a time to a convent, was allowing her no chance of identifying and supporting her son if it should turn out to be he. Moreover Henry's remark, quoted by Bacon after Lincoln's death at the battle of Stoke, is significant: that he regretted the Earl's death because he had hoped to learn from him the 'bottom of his danger'.³⁷

Buck suggests that Brackenbury was instrumental in sending the Princes out of the Tower,³⁸ but again Richard may have entrusted their conveyance to Tyrell, which is why his name was linked with their fate, and perhaps the death of one of them. Buck also writes of 'the English noblemen and gentlemen which were privy to the conveyance of the Prince Richard (as I intimated before) and who knew where he lurked or lay close . . .',³⁹ which of course leads on to 'Perkin Warbeck'. If he had really been a mere impostor, Henry would have exposed him as easily as he had Lambert Simnel, if this had not been done long before by the other crowned heads who had recognised him. No one could have done it more easily than Henry's own Queen, the Pretender's supposed sister, but they were never confronted. There would have been little difficulty for Henry in forcing a

confession of imposture where threats or promises involving the Pretender's wife were made.

Of course even if he were the Prince it does not prove that Richard did not try to murder him, as he is said to have alleged, but although he had to do this in order to counter Richard's charge of bastardy and make his own claim good, he nevertheless added, according to Bacon, that 'King Richard, our unnatural uncle, although desire of rule did blind him, yet in his other actions, like a true Plantagenet, was noble, and loved the honour of the realm and the contentment and comfort of his nobles and people . . .'⁴⁰ He may even never have known the truth about who was responsible for the removal of his brother and himself from the Tower, but relied on what others told him. What is certain, and what More makes clear, is that the number of people who believed him to be the Prince threw doubt on the whole story of the murder of both Princes in the Tower and that there were those who were still doubtful if they had died during Richard's lifetime.⁴¹ It may be noted also that the De La Poles gave Henry no trouble until after the death of 'Perkin Warbeck'.

The Reign and the Man

Pollard writes ' . . . it is misleading to emphasise the legislation of the 1484 parliament in isolation and a misunderstanding of procedure to assume it was introduced by the Crown . . . the King assented (and could veto) but he rarely initiated such legislation'.⁴² Nevertheless, propaganda or not, Richard was responsible for the abolition of benevolences and, as Bacon notes, other measures 'for the ease and solace of the common people'.⁴³ Would Bacon not have known? And no one was in any doubt that Henry VII was responsible for the Act which dated his reign from the day before Bosworth. If the 1484 parliament was as cowed as the Crowland Chronicler indicated, how did they come to introduce reforming measures? Pollard cannot have it both ways: if Richard packed his parliament, he packed it with good men. Pollard does not consider that Richard left any significant 'legacy' for future ages, but surely might have mentioned that the statutes were printed in 1484 for the first time, and that in his zeal for the due administration of justice, Richard also took the coronation oath in English for the first time.

The record of Richard's generosity was 'tinged with policy' according to Pollard, though this is surely something to be expected in any ruler.⁴⁴ But policy can only dictate actions up to a certain extent except in the case of very accomplished hypocrites. Henry VII was more insecure than Richard and therefore needed support even more, but the mind boggles at the thought of Henry ever saying that he would rather have his subjects' hearts than their money. It is impossible to act consistently against one's own nature, and Henry acted according to his, with the result that he was feared and often detested. On the other hand a glimpse of Richard as king is to be seen in his order to discharge Richard Bele from the Privy Seal office because he had obtained the post through bribery 'and so yit occupieth in grete discouraging of the under-clerkes whiche have long contynued therein . . . to see a straunger never brought uppe in the said office to put them by of their promocione . . .' and he refers further to these clerks having 'spended the floure of their ages in the same . . .';⁴⁵ a rather charming touch which reveals real understanding. Pollard regrets the paucity of

written evidence in Richard's favour, but (perhaps because so well known) he omits the famous letter about the marriage of Mistress Shore to Thomas Lynom,⁴⁶ of which notably Charles Ross only quoted half.

Marriage to Elizabeth of York

Pollard writes that any affection there may have been between Richard and his wife Anne 'would seem to have run its course by 1485, for when Queen Anne lay dying his reluctance to visit and comfort her led to disapproving gossip and fed rumours that he had poisoned her'.⁴⁷ This may be conflating two accounts, and the Pronay and Cox translation of the Crowland Chronicle Continuations seems less reliable than the Riley one which makes it clear that Richard abstained from sleeping with her on the advice of his doctors: *quod rex ipsi thori sui consortium omnino aspernabatur, itaque a medicis sibi consultum ut faceret iudicavit* (because the king entirely shunned her bed, declaring that it was by the advice of his physicians that he did so).⁴⁸ It would appear from Vergil's account that the rumour of the Queen's death could easily have arisen from Rotherham's 'foreshadow[ing] the same to divers of his friends' and it was this which caused Anne to come to Richard and ask for an explanation; whereupon Richard did comfort her, though of course Vergil suggests that he did it hypocritically.⁴⁹ It is clear that at this time the court and the city were hotbeds of rumour, much in the same way that the tabloids write about the present royal family.

Whatever Richard really intended towards Elizabeth of York, Pollard entirely ignores Richard's offer for the hand of the Princess Joana of Portugal, on which mission he sent the Portuguese-born Sir Edward Brampton six days after the death of Queen Anne.⁵⁰ Besides her reputation for holiness, she had the advantage of being a Lancastrian heiress. If it is maintained that he was nevertheless hedging his bets, it appears that the Princess Elizabeth raised no objection to marrying him, which must indeed have been a desperate expedient since Richard must have realised it would appear highly incestuous to most of his subjects. If her mother was enough of a realist to overlook the murder of the Princes, as Pollard suggests,⁵¹ would Elizabeth also be prepared to do so? Far more likely that she too believed at least one of them to be overseas and safe, and did not hold Richard responsible for the death of the other. The same Portuguese source shows that Richard was also trying to find her a suitable husband in the King of Portugal's cousin, Manuel Duke of Beja (later King Manuel I).⁵²

Conclusion

Pollard says that Richard seized power in 1483 with ruthless self-confidence.⁵³ If this were so, why did Vergil write that Richard's wish was that the people should be earnestly dealt with and the whole matter referred to the determination of others? A subtle mind perhaps, but ruthless? Andreas Kalckhoff considers that *Niemand wird plötzlich zum Schurken* (No one suddenly becomes a villain), quoting Juvenal, *Nemo repente turpissimus*. And is it really likely that Richard *imprisoned* his mother-in-law in a castle where he and his wife were living?

Among the factors given for Richard's final failure as king Pollard has omitted the death of Richard's heir, which fatally shook confidence in his dynasty. And is it true to say that Richard III destroyed the House of York?⁵⁴ If

Henry VII had not been, in Bacon's words, a King 'wise, stout and fortunate', either young Warwick or Lincoln could have been king after the battle of Stoke, or 'Perkin Warbeck' could have been king if the expeditionary force of 1495 had been successful: in either case Henry would have been toppled and the House of York restored. In the latter case, in Wellington's words, 'It was a damned close-run thing' — or would have been if Henry had not nipped the conspiracy in the bud — as most of the foreign ambassadors indicated.

Pollard seems to contradict himself when he says that Richard was a man of considerable ability, energy and attractiveness,⁵⁵ yet a few pages earlier he said that Richard did not emerge in a particularly attractive light: either he was a prig or a hypocrite.⁵⁶ Perhaps he was a little of both, for few of us are immune from double standards, and he may well have been profoundly influenced by reading his English Wyclif Bible. Also, if his own marriage was happy, he would be less likely to understand adultery in others. Kalckhoff, who concludes that the English need their 'wicked king' as a scapegoat in the Biblical sense, thinks that Richard in his 'prurient' proclamations against his enemies, was appealing to the strain of puritanism which was beginning to emerge.⁵⁷

If Richard had a dream before Bosworth of a multitude of demons surrounding him, it might well have been a vision of what future ages would do to his reputation. Yet, as Pollard says, the real Richard eludes us, and as Jeremy Potter wrote in *Good King Richard?* 'Mostly, the views held by historians and non-historians alike are more revealing of their own characters and attitudes than of his'.⁵⁸

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43. Bacon, p.38.
44. Pollard, p.189.
45. *Harleian MS 433*, vol. 2, p.36.
46. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p.259.
47. Pollard, p.200.
48. *Crowland*, pp.174-5. *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland*, ed. and trans. H. T. Riley, London 1854, p.499.
49. Vergil, p.211.
50. Barrie Williams, The Portuguese Connection and the significance of the Holy Princess, *The Ricardian*, vol. 6 (1983), pp.138-145, esp. p.141.
51. Pollard, p.133.
52. Williams, p.141.
53. Pollard, p.192.
54. *Ibid.*, p.177.
55. *Ibid.*, p.210.
56. *Ibid.*, p.203.
57. Kalckhoff, p.331.
58. Jeremy Potter, *Good King Richard?* London 1983, p.271.