

LOOK AT THE LIFE OF RICHARD III
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Abstract

This article is a look at the life of Richard III.

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From his childhood Richard was small, thin and humpback. Up to XIX century the historians represented him as a cruel and crafty, ready to do any evil deed for his personal power. He was a dodged and cunning man, capable for any cruel violence. He was accused of the death his brother Clarence, his own wife, nephews and other relatives.

This “black legend” was promoted by historians and dramatists of the end of XV century. The same was done by the Lancasters, the enemies of the Yorks and even some York barons.

Richard was born in 1452. In the course of the political struggle in the second half of XV century he remained true to the king Edward. Even when Warwick and Clarence began to make a plot for Henry's restoration on the English throne, Richard kept a fidelity to his brother Edward. Richard Gloucester was his right hand in all Edward's actions. Gloucester was a good administrator, assistant and adviser to the king. He seemed to be a true helper to his brother king.

When Edward was captured by the adherents of the plot in August 1469, Richard, being devoted to Edward, rushed to the North of England to collect the forces for defending his brother, because Richard had a great influence and authority in the North. In the 70s Richard represented the royal interests in the North where there were the majority of Richard's supporters. His relations with the city of York were especially close. To this city he also addressed for the help when he became the protector for small Edward IV. As a whole during Edward's life time Richard always behaved loyally.

The judgement about Richard should not be based on later history as the murder of the princes. So far as he is a figure disputable, it is necessary to try to see in his early actions more than it was.

Shakespeare said that the death of Clarence was the result of Richard's intrigues, but Thomas Moore frankly asserted that Richard was against the punishment over Clarence.

The tradition represents Richard almost a monster : the Tudor's historians depicted him as a dwarf, humpbacked and a malicious demonic person. It is undoubtedly exaggeration : though Gloucester was small but carried the weapon and perfectly fought. His thin clever face sharply contrasted with Edward's rough face. In green years Richard was a handsome youth. Richard possessed a really royal bearing.

When Edward died queen Elisabeth was in London and Richard Gloucester was in the North of England. Queen Elisabeth should bring her son to the capital immediately, but she knew about her unpopularity in London and did not arrive there.

Only in three weeks the heir Edward V was conveyed to London for crowning Gloucester went to Edward V and arrested his suit. The young king who was only 12 years old wept bitterly and Richard said to him that his uncle, that is, Richard himself would be only his tutor and regent.

Queen Elisabeth with her children ran away to Westminster in searching of a refuge. Her brother Woodville and Dorset went by ship over the sea.

The counter-revolution made by Gloucester was rather popular and usually because Londoners did not like the queen's relatives. They believed that Gloucester wanted to be only a regent.

It was decided that the coronation of Edward V would take place on June 22 1483. Soon Richard's supporters began to arrive to London, Gloucester sent Edward V to the Tower. That was very suspiciously because everybody knew that the young king hated his uncle. So Gloucester decided to get rid of the boy.

Richard forced Edward V to give the order on execution of the queen's relatives. In May 1484 young king came to London accompanied by Richard and Buckingham. In three days Richard Gloucester went to Westminster and by threats made Elisabeth to give him her second son prince Richard.

Richard Gloucester appointed the residence for the nephews the Tower. He had spread the rumour that Elisabeth's children were illegitimate and had no right to inherit the royal power. In order to please Richard Gloucester the Parliament declared that king Edward's marriage with Elisabeth was illegitimate and the princes could not be crowned on the royal throne.

But in spite of that decision Richard could not have the rights on the throne would have to pass into the hands of the Duke Clarence or his son. Because of this obstacle Richard accused Clarence of a state treason. After that action the crown had passed to Richard Gloster. THUS he readched the desired aim : there was no any obstracles from taking the crown, and he was crowned as the king of England Richard III in July 6, 1483. The citizens of London regarded to this with indifference.

Then Richard III had gone to trip about the country. Before his departure he had hinted that during his absence the princes should die. Richard did not publish any message about their death in June 22, 1483.

In despite of great attention to this problem, it seems improbable that it was possible to open all the circumstances of destruction Edward's IV children. But obviously their remains were found in 1674 under a ladder of theWhiteTower.

This useless murder of the young princes was sensless and nobody need. It would make a strong blow to Richard's reputation. Nevertheless Richard III established a despotic regime in the country.

In two months Duke Buckingham rose against Richard III All the time before the Duck was Richard's ally. Apparently Buckingham conceived to rise againts Richard soon after his coronation and his departure from London. The new king knew nothing and went on his absence the Duke expessed in the talks with his friends the displeasure with Richard III.

When the rumour about the violent death of Edward's sons reached Buckingham he decided to raise a revolt agaist Richard. During the king's trip the revolt had flashed in several counties in October 1483. Richard managed to take the situation under his control. The royal army sat out against the rebellions. Duke Buckingham left his troops and took shelter in Yorkshire. He was caught and executed inSalisburyon November 2, 1483.

In April 1484 Richard's son died. Next year the king's wife died too. The rumour began to circulate about Richard's intention to marry Elisabeth York, his nice. May be this rumour was set by Richard himself to know what his supporters would say about it. When his friends heard that rumour, they were terrified by that news, and Richard said that he did not intend to marry her.

At that time all the emigrants fromEnglandwere very hospitably accepted inFrance. Henry Tudor, his uncle jusper Tudor and many other Richard's enemies found shelter there. ItEnglandthe goverment understood that a great force was gathering on the Continent and expected in England too. There were many enemies inside the country.

Richard looked for money everywhere he could. In May he left the capital and all the summer roved about England and collected money. The goverment

prepared the army and Navy for the future battles. These drastic measures needed huge sum of the money. The king extorted money by all kinds of means. In spring 1485 Richard obtained 20 thousand pounds.

At the same time Henry Tudor was preparing the revolt with the help of his supporters. On August 7, 1485 Henry Tudor and many other English and French dukes landed in Wales. Some towns in Wales and other counties had promised them their help. But at the moment of the battle near Bosworth Henry had not more than five thousand of men.

Getting to know about Henry's invasion in Wales Richard III began to call barons to him. But lords in the south and west did not come to the king. Henry Tudor's stepfather Stanley had used an especially big influence on them. The enemies met at Bosworth. When the battle had begun and Stanley had attacked the royal armies, they ran away with the shout "Treason!" Because of Stanley's treachery Richard understood that his deed had been given a horse, but he refused to run. He said that he would die as the king of England and he left on the field of battle.

Richard fought to the very last possibility. At last he was surrounded by the enemies. He was given a mortal blow at his head by a fighting axe. The broken crown fell down from Richard's helmet. It was found in the bush of hawthorn and was immediately put on Henry Tudor's head.

Together with king Richard III his not numerous supporters perished in this battle. They were Duke Norfolk, Ratcliff, Percy and nearly a thousand other representatives of the nobility.

In this very last battle not many barons took part. They were perished during the long war of the Scarlet and White Roses.

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