

Richard III

Following on from [Michael Curtis' very interesting](#) post this morning on Richard III and the Devon church of Coldridge, which may or may not have been the refuge of Edward V, I was only in Leicester recently and thought I would bore you with my photograph of his new tomb.



✘ Favouring Yorkshire as a county for purely personal reasons I was one of that cohort that believed that Richard should have been re-intered in York Minster. But there were also good reasons why Leicester was appropriate and the tomb is rather lovely when viewed in person. Leicester Cathedral, being a former Parish church, lacks the glory of the great foundations (York, Winchester, Ely, Wells, Lincoln; my ambition is to visit Durham before I get much older) but it is a

friendly place and they have done a good job.

✘ The stone is Yorkshire Swaledale marble, which in sunlight shines with the facets of a million tiny fossils, mostly crinoids. The same stone was used in Durham cathedral and York Minster in the Middle Ages.

On the subject of how the Princes in the Tower died I have only two comments to make.

Tudor propaganda notwithstanding, Richard was a devoted and

loyal brother to Edward IV and not known for the sort of ruthless killing, be it in war or politics which other contemporary leaders used in their struggle for power. I have never been convinced that he would suddenly turn into the sort of man that would murder his beloved brother's two young sons in cold blood. I believe that he would have waited until and unless, in adulthood, they actually led a rebellion against him. He didn't need them dead; they were already declared illegitimate by virtue of the irregularity of Edward's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville.



OLYMPUS DIGITAL CAMERA

The person who needed the boys dead was Henry VII. His right to be king by conquest was shaky. His right as a descendant of Edward III wasn't as good as men descended from the older sons of Edward III. His best claim was as the husband (ruling for her or through her) of Edward IV's eldest daughter Elizabeth of York. For that claim to be valid he needed 1) for her to be legitimate and 2) for her to be Edward's heir, because all her brothers were dead, and hence the throne devolved on her, but as a woman her husband would reign as King.

While I never have had Richard down as a cold blooded killer, Henry VII's mother Margaret Beaufort was a termagant. I wouldn't put murder past her in the pursuit of her ambition for her son. But professional historians have no proof.

I'm glad we went to Leicester when we did. The cathedral will

be closed all this year, and much of 2023. There is to be some demolition and rebuilding of a 1930s choir school, underneath which is much archaeology to be carefully examined.