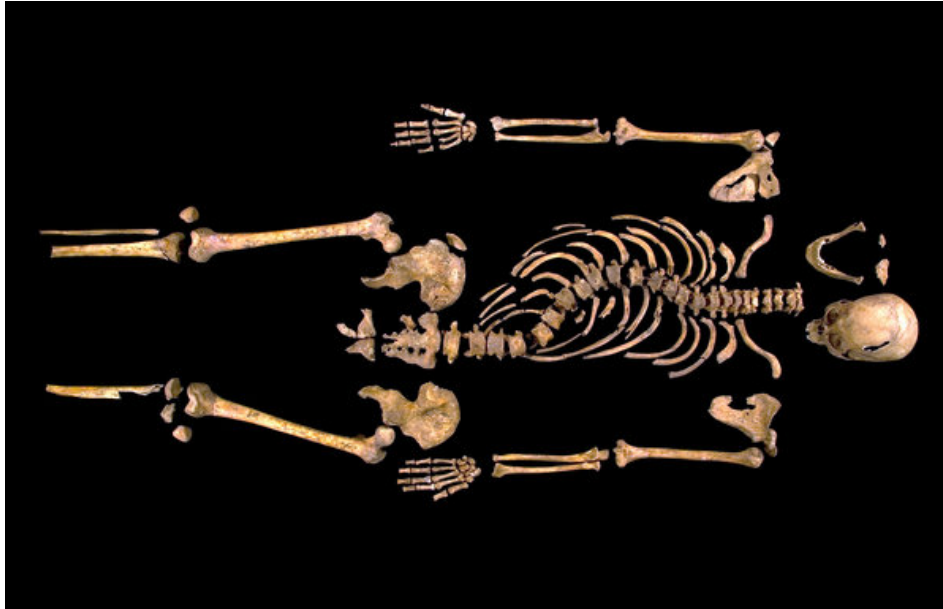


Bones Under Parking Lot Belonged to Richard III



Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The skeleton found last fall near the buried ruins of the Greyfriars Priory in Leicester was confirmed on Monday by a team of experts to be that of King Richard III.

By JOHN F. BURNS

Published: February 4, 2013 | 524 Comments

LEICESTER, England — Until it was discovered beneath a city parking lot last fall, the skeleton had lain unmarked, and unmourned, for more than 500 years. Friars fearful of the men who slew him in battle buried the man in haste, naked and anonymous, without a winding sheet, rings or personal adornments of any kind, in a space so cramped his cloven skull was jammed upright and askew against the head of his shallow grave.

On Monday, confirming what many historians and archaeologists had suspected, a team of experts at the University of Leicester concluded on the basis of DNA and other evidence that the skeletal remains were those of King Richard III, for centuries the most reviled of English monarchs. But the conclusion, said to have been reached “beyond any reasonable doubt,” promised to achieve much more than an end to the oblivion that has been Richard’s fate since his death on Aug. 22, 1485, at the Battle of Bosworth Field, 20 miles from this ancient city in the sheep country of England’s East Midlands.

Multimedia



Video

[The Search For King Richard III \(University of Leicester\)](#)

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE+

SAVE

E-MAIL

SHARE

PRINT

SINGLE PAGE

REPRINTS



Log in to see what your friends are sharing on nytimes.com. [Privacy Policy](#) | [What's This?](#)

[Log In With Facebook](#)

What's Popular Now

[Ted Cruz Runs Counter to the Senate's Courtly Ways](#)



[Why We Love Beautiful Things](#)





Connect With Us on Twitter

Follow @nytimesworld for international breaking news and headlines.



Twitter List: Reporters and Editors

Enlarge This Image



Andrew Testa for The New York Times

Michael Ibsen is one of two descendants of Richard III's sister, Anne of York, whose DNA was used to confirm the identity of the skeleton found beneath a parking lot in Leicester.

Readers' Comments

Readers shared their thoughts on this article.

[Read All Comments \(524\) »](#)

medieval historian writing in Latin within a few years after Richard's death, had recorded him as having been buried. Other unverified accounts said the king's body had been thrown by a mob into the River Soar, a mile or more from the priory.

Richard Taylor, the University of Leicester official who served as a coordinator for the project, said the last piece of the scientific puzzle fell into place with DNA findings that became available on Sunday, five months after the skeletal remains were uncovered. At that point, he said, members of the team knew that they had achieved something historic.

"We knew then, beyond reasonable doubt, that this was Richard III," Mr. Taylor said. "We're certain now, as certain as you can be of anything in life."

The team's leading geneticist, Turi King, said at a news conference that DNA samples from two modern-day descendants of Richard III's family had provided a match with samples taken from the skeleton found in the priory ruins. Kevin Schurer, a historian and demographer, tracked down two living descendants of Anne of York, Richard III's sister, one of them a London-based, Canadian-born furniture maker, Michael Ibsen, 55, and the other a second cousin of Mr. Ibsen's who has requested anonymity.

Dr. King said tests conducted at three laboratories in England and France had found that

Among those who [found his remains](#), there is a passionate belief that new attention drawn to Richard by the discovery will inspire a reappraisal that could rehabilitate the medieval king and show him to be a man with a strong sympathy for the rights of the common man, who was deeply wronged by his vengeful Tudor successors. Far from the villainous character memorialized in English histories, films and novels, far from Shakespeare's damning representation of him as the limping, withered, haunted murderer of his two princely nephews, Richard III can become the subject of a new age of scholarship and popular reappraisal, these enthusiasts believe.

"I think he wanted to be found, he was ready to be found, and we found him, and now we can begin to tell the true story of who he was," said Philippa Langley, a writer who has been a longtime and fervent member of the [Richard III Society](#), an organization that has worked for decades to bring what it sees as justice to an unjustly vilified man. "Now," Ms. Langley added, "we can rebury him with honor, and we can rebury him as a king."

Other members of the team at the University of Leicester pointed to Ms. Langley as the inspiration behind the project, responsible for raising much of the estimated \$250,000 — with major contributions from unnamed Americans — it cost to carry out the exhumation and the research that led to confirmation that indeed Richard had been found.

Ms. Langley's account was that her research for a play about the king had led her to a hunch that Richard's body would be found beneath the parking lot, in a corner of the buried ruins of the Greyfriars Priory, where John Rouse, a

FROM EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
RIDLEY SCOTT AND TONY SCOTT

NARRATED BY TOM HANKS

KILLING LINCOLN

BASED ON
THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL

WORLD PREMIERE EVENT
SUNDAY 8P

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL PRESENTS A SCOTT FREE / HERZOG & COMPANY PRODUCTION "KILLING LINCOLN"
WRITTEN BY TOM HANKS STARRING BILLY CAVAPPELL AND JESSE JOHNSON DIRECTED BY CHRISTOPHER G. CRIVEN ADRIAN ADAM
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RIDLEY SCOTT TONY SCOTT PRODUCED BY DAVID W. ZUCKER MARY LISKO AARON HERZOG ERIK JENSEN BILL O'BRIEN
WRITTEN BY BILL O'BRIEN & MARTIN DOUGARD EDITED BY ERIC JENSEN DIRECTED BY ADRIAN ADAM

Expand for Photo Gallery Expand for Videos Uncover the Conspiracy

9. BOOKS

[A Random Gift of Coffee Makes My Day](#)

10. THE QUAD

[For Alabama, a Recruiting Title](#)

[Go to Your Recommendations »](#)
[What's This? | Don't Show](#)



the descendants' mitochondrial DNA, a genetic element inherited through the maternal line of descent, matched that extracted from the parking lot skeleton. She said all three samples belonged to a type of mitochondrial DNA that is carried by only 1 to 2 percent of the English population, a rare enough group to satisfy the project team, pending more work on the samples, that a match had been found.

When she studied the results for the first time, she said, she "went very quiet, then did a little dance around the laboratory."

1 | 2 | [NEXT PAGE »](#)

Alan Cowell contributed reporting from London, and Nicholas Wade from Montclair, N.J.

A version of this article appeared in print on February 5, 2013, on page A4 of the New York edition with the headline: Skeleton in British Parking Lot Hailed as Richard III.

SAVE E-MAIL SHARE

524 Comments

Readers shared their thoughts on this article.

ALL | READER PICKS | NYT PICKS Newest | Comments Closed



Get Free E-mail Alerts on These Topics

[Leicester \(England\)](#)

[Richard III, King of England](#)

[University of Leicester](#)

[Skeletons](#)

Ads by Google what's this?

[Brain Training Games](#)

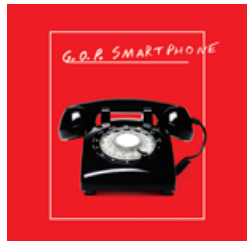
Improve memory and attention with scientific brain games.

www.lumosity.com

INSIDE NYTIMES.COM



MAGAZINE »



[Saving the Republicans From Obsolescence](#)

SUNDAY BOOK REVIEW »



[A Lincoln for Our Time](#)

T MAGAZINE »



[The Man Behind the Curtain](#)

SUNDAY REVIEW »

Loose Ends: Al Qaeda's AARP?
Calvin Trillin examines the decision to exempt older passengers from having to remove their shoes to pass through airport security.

MOVIES »



[Still Too Good, Too Bad or Invisible](#)

SUNDAY REVIEW »



[Download: Leonid Tishkov](#)

Obama bid for Europe trade pact stirs hope on both sides

ALSO IN VIDEO »

The dawn of computer love
Digital artists behind "Life of Pi"

[nytimes.com](#)

VIDEO

REFER A FRIEND TO A DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION and get a \$15 Amazon.com Gift Card when they subscribe. [LEARN MORE](#) **The New York Times**

Ads by Google what's this?

[Resume-worthy fun.](#)

Travel internationally and gain the experience of a lifetime.

www.vfp.org