

# Herrick Family Association

Founded in 2001



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**Check our Web Page: [www.Herrickfamilyassociation.org](http://www.Herrickfamilyassociation.org) or find us on Facebook!**

## **Message from the President:**

**Dale E. Yoe, HFA #062**

Greetings from Maryland! As I make plans for summer, I would like to invite all interested in the inner workings of the HFA to join me on a Zoom meeting this June 23rd @ 7 PM, EST. I hope to get some ideas set for our next in person meeting and for a special meeting in 2025.

In the zoom meeting we will learn more about our membership and financial status. We will also learn about what elected positions may be open in the near future. For now- we will need someone to help with setting up events, such as a meeting in 2025, perhaps in person. We have had ideas including Philadelphia, Boston, Salt Lake, etc. We'd love to have your input. If you cannot make it, but would like a summary of what transpires, just let me know. Also, if you would like to attend, please email me at [yoeda@comcast.net](mailto:yoeda@comcast.net) to add your name and email to the zoom list. I will be sending the link out a week ahead of the meeting.

I will also extend an invitation to all interested to join me at the 36th annual International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences. Info for this event is at <https://www.americanancestors.org/icghs>. Please let me know if you plan to attend so we can meet and have dinner.

Another event of Herrick Interest is the Old Planters Weekend in Beverly. Please note the article by Alice Reynolds about this event. If you have any questions you'd like answered about the organization- also please let me know. I appreciate all the support you all give.

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## **A.B. Reynolds HFA #003**

A.B.has created a self guided tour of Herrick sites in the Salem/Beverly area. It will be attached to the email along with this newsletter.

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## By Michael Herrick HFA #118

History, particularly family history, continually evolves into new knowledge. What we as a family once considered as truth, may not always be the case. That is certainly true from my personal experience in documenting my Herrick ancestry, which ended up as a book. As many of you know, I published a book, called *Echoes of the Past: A Family Story*, which documents all I knew from our HGR publications and other documents, plus family stories. Since its publication in 2019, I have found numerous errors and some outright fabrications about our family history. So, I plan to write a new edition of the book to correct those errors, knowing full well that it might still not be totally factual. I have presented my book for three consecutive years at the Tucson Festival of Books but cannot consciencely do it again until I fix the errors. The audience that came up to me with questions were very curious, not about our family, but about how I went about gathering the evidence for the book.

Serious genealogists always worry about accuracy and historical evidence to make their case for their ancestry. That is harder to do as you go farther back, since records become less available. For example, membership in the Mayflower Society requires months, sometimes years, for an applicant to justify their ancestry to the Mayflower Society with legal records. And those records are checked and rechecked by independent reviewers. Jeanie Watts, the Historian of the Pilgrim Edward Doty Society (PEDS), a branch of the Mayflower Society, stated in a PEDS newsletter that family stories are a valuable part of one's family history, but should not be co-mingled with actual facts. She stated, "Every family has stories. Many are never verified. More are discounted yet continue to be handed down as a form of family badge of honor. Most professional genealogists and/or serious family historians will tell you this is harmful to the accuracy of your tree and should NEVER be included. However, I believe it is acceptable to include those stories with the process and still maintain the truth we discover. What matters is that those stories are put in the proper context within your research". She goes on to say that "We must put ALL those stories into a compartment and ignore them for the purposes of accurate discovery. If the document trail indicates the story is just that, then attach the stories in you notes to keep the storytelling aspect by making sure to include the disclaimer that the story is family lore. Stories can be a wonderful and fun enhancement to our personal family history. But we must be careful not to place them above logic, common sense, and good old-fashioned records and documentation".

My plan for a book rewrite is to mix family stories with documented facts to the extent possible. For example, my chapter on Ericke of East Anglia, is largely taken from HGR I and II with little of primary sources but a lot of guesswork. In my December 2022 article in the HFA newsletter, I cited statements from the Herrick Genealogical Register (HGR 1, 1846) that our family "claim their descent from Ericke, a Danish Chief who invaded Britain during the reign of Alfred, was vanquished by that Prince, and compelled, with his followers, to repeople the wasted district of East Anglia. He is recognized in history as Ericke, King of those Danes to hold the Country of East Anglia". No sources are given for that statement. Also, statements from 16<sup>th</sup> century English historians, found their way into our HGR. In his *Anglia Historia* (1534), Polydore Virgil states, "Ericke, the King of those Danes which held the country of East Anglia, was about to procure a new war, and to allure other Danes to join with him against the Englishmen . . . After great loss on both sides, he was vanquished and put to flight . . . Because of his great overthrow and fowl discomfort, he began to govern his people with more rigor, whereby he provoked the malice of the East Anglicans so highly that they fell upon him and murdered him". To further that theme, William Henry Herrick wrote to Alfred Herrick in 1836, stating that "It is now probable that we have sprung from the same old stock, Ericke, the Danish Chief, who as one of the invaders of England during the reign of Alfred". Then in 1957, W.G. Hoskins, a respected authority on the history of the Midlands, stated that "It seems likely that the Herricks could trace their ancestry back to Ericke, one of the original Danish settlers, perhaps of the last quarter of the ninth century". Unfortunately, these citations are examples of secondary sources, even that of Polydore since he does not site his sources. Unfortunately, there is n evidence that these stories are true. Regardless, these citations are tantalizing for us Herricks. The only primary sources regarding Ericke of East Angliia is from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles which only refers to Eohric, and he was slain as King of East Anglia. Eohric could be our Ericke, but there is no proof. Plus, Ericke was a common Scandinavian name in those days and it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to find our Ericke if he existed at all.

Also in the December 2022 HFA newsletter, I wrote about new research on Erick the Forester. I dedicated a full chapter on him in my book, which as a result needs complete revision to explain the facts and still tell the

family story. John Thorsby, an English historian, wrote The History and Antiquities of the Ancient Town of Leicester in 1791. In the book, Thorsby referenced Erick the Forester as a “great commander who was opposed to the landing of William the Conqueror”. Again, this exact citation found its way into our HGR. This citation was followed up by John Nickols who repeated this claim in his History and Antiquities of Leicestershire, published between 1795 and 1815. Then in 1829, Walter Scott wrote about statements made by Abigail Erick, wife of Jonathon Swift. In this publication Scott writes about Abigail Erick’s Herrick ancestry, where she makes claims that Herrick ancestry goes back to Erick the Forester. Again, HGR picks up the story. It appears that HGR uses the commentary of Thorsby, Nickols, and Scott to claim that, “Abigail Erick of Leicestershire, descended from the most ancient family of the Ericks, who derived their lineage from Erick the Forester, a great commander, who raised an army to oppose the invasion of William the Conqueror, by whom he was vanquished, but afterwards employed to command the Prince’s forces, and in his old age retired to his house in Leicestershire, where his family have continued ever since, but declining every age, are now in the condition of very private gentlemen. The family of Erick, which has produced many eminent men is still represented by two respectable branches, the Heyricks of Leicester-town, and the Herricks of Beau Manor. Of both these branches, distinct pedigrees and many curious historical anecdotes are given in the History of Leicestershire”. Again, all these citations are secondary sources at best. They appear to be family stories, without historical fact or documentation. Consequently, I reached out to Ann Williams, a respected post conquest scholar. Dr. Williams does not believe that Erick the Forester ever existed. She believes this is a family story without merit, and might be fabricated from factual events of Erick the Wild, who raised an army in Wales to oppose William the Conqueror. This is documented in William’s book, The English and he Norman Conquest published in 1995. Our AB Reynolds also checked into this further and discovered that no land was ever registered in Leicestershire under name Erick the Wild or Erick the Forester, further suggesting wishful thinking.

So, given what I have discovered about Ericke of East Anglia and Erick the Forester relative to what Jeanne Watts says about family stories vs. documented facts, I plan to rewrite at least these two chapters in my book. I hope to be able to mix family lore with historical fact, if possible. Another way to do this is through a documentary film. I have toyed with the idea of a film since I published the book. I wrote screenplays for a two episodes for a historical fiction based on my book. After review and promotion help from film consultants in LA, I was encouraged by Michael Wood, an English historian and film maker, to convert the film to a documentary. So, I did. With the help of a local documentary screenwriter and filmmaker, I wrote an outline for one episode and summaries for six other episodes. Through a documentary, I hope to be able to tell family stories, present documented evidence of facts, and explain how wishful thinking can easily misunderstood as fact. This will all take time, money, and hard work. Currently, I am short of all three.

On behalf of the HFA Research Committee, I asked the membership in the last HFA newsletter to react to a list of possible activities the organization might pursue. No one responded to that appeal. However, if anyone is interested in helping with the needed research to discover further evidence for our ancestry, particularly in England, you may contact me at [herrickresearch@me.com](mailto:herrickresearch@me.com).

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### Shared by Dale Yoe, HFA #062

While watching the *Jeopardy* show on a night early in March, my husband and I were surprised to see one of the answers under the category of “*idioms and expressions*”.

THIS EXPRESSION  
MEANING YOU HAVE TO  
SUFFER TO ADVANCE  
WAS USED IN  
THE 17th CENTURY,  
IN PLURAL FORM,  
BY ROBERT HERRICK

The question: What is “No pains, No gains”?

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## **The Old Planters' Reunion Weekend**

**By A.B. Reynolds HFA #003**

The Old Planters' Weekend will be held Oct 4-6, 2024 in Beverly, MA. It is sponsored by the Beverly Historical Society (BHS) which plans the programs and provides lots of early Beverly family research. The Herrick Family Association (HFA) discovered the Weekend when our association was founded in 2001, but it has been held for many years prior to that. It celebrates the 17<sup>th</sup> century families as founders of Beverly including Balch, Conant, Dodge, Haskell, Herrick, Larcom, Patch, Standley, Trask and many others.

During the weekend a variety of programs are offered along with networking and research opportunities. It is a great time to learn more about the Herrick family and allied families, their role in the settling of Beverly (and Massachusetts and the US), learn about Beverly's rich sea-faring heritage and have some fun.

A booklet called the *Herrick Family, Self-Guided Tour* will be available there and online through the Herrick Family Association website to help you locate the sites where Henerie Hericke and his children lived, worked and were buried. The Beverly Historical Society has several other booklets and documents about the Herrick family along with important artifacts such as a Herrick trunk that held important Revolutionary War documents. The BHS has been a big help to the HFA throughout the years.

The tentative schedule for the Old Planters Weekend is:

### **Friday October 4, 2024**

10:00 am Jack Warner, Massachusetts Archives, will talk about research resources and methods using the archival information along with information about the early settlers.

1:00 pm Walking tour of historical spots in Beverly including the Old Graveyard.

Evening Fox'd and Fuddled at the Cabot House – play a colonial drinking game that is lots of fun and meet distant relatives.

### **Saturday October 5, 2024**

9:00 Family Meetings - all attendees meet together then branch out into family groups. This is a good time to talk with other Herrick's about your family line, its history and resources.

2:30 House tours of private homes once owned by the early settlers.

### **Sunday, October 6, 2024**

10:00 Walking tour of the North area of Beverly where you'll see Herrick Street and a home that is thought to be a very early Herrick home) along with the Dodge's Row cemeteries among many other sites.

To register, contact:

Susan Goganian, Director ([sgoganian@HistoricBeverly.net](mailto:sgoganian@HistoricBeverly.net)), 978-922-1186

117 Cabot Street, Beverly, MA 01915

More information about the BHS is available including other programs and events, their collections, tickets and hours, and the historical records they have on hand at <https://historicbeverly.net>

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## **Why Did I Join The HFA?**

### **Merrill Herrick #169**

In 2009 my nephew, Jim Hilton, and I attended the Herrick Family Association annual meeting in Albany, NY. It was a welcoming group and we both ended up becoming members. Why? Because we were Herrick descendants and we saw the importance of what they were doing.

They were publishing a Herrick Genealogical Record (HGR) consisting of 5 books and over 3000 pages in content. They donated the complete set of HGR volumes to over 30 libraries and historical sites across the United States. (complete list on our HFA website). The first HGR was published in 1846 by General Jedediah Herrick and the second HGR was published in 1885 by Dr. Lucius Carroll Herrick. The first HGR consisted of 69 pages and the second HGR had 516 pages. The HFA has contributed money to Leicester Cathedral (St Martins') for the stained-glass windows in the Herrick Chapel restoration and helped sponsor 3 members of HFA on a trip to Leicester to do research on Henry of Salem. They have arranged HFA meetings in places such as Salem, MA, Leicester, UK, Salt Lake City, UT, etc. The complete list can be found on the HFA website. They made a donation to NEHGS in honor of the founder of HFA, Richard Leon Herrick. The HFA is currently planning to publish an addendum to the HGR. Future projects can only be accomplished with help from the membership. There are various ways you can help.

1. Encouraging other members in your family to join HFA.
2. Contributing articles to the newsletter.
3. Paying your dues on time.
4. Step forward and help out on committees when the President asks for volunteers to help her.

Joining the HFA is not about what it can do for you, but what you can do for it in order to accomplish future goals!

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### **Shared by Dale Yoe, HFA #062**

#### **During the Civil War, a sack of flour was repeatedly auctioned off to raise money for wounded soldiers.**

In January 1865, four months before the Civil War's end, Harper's Weekly published the story of a peculiar flour sack credited with raising thousands of dollars for injured soldiers. The tale — entirely true — began in Austin, Nevada, the previous year. On the eve of city elections, two wagering men, area merchant Reuel Colt Gridley and Dr. Henry Herrick, placed a bet on the vote's outcome. The loser would pay up with a 50-pound sack of flour, but not before a dose of public humiliation: Whoever lost had to ceremoniously march down the town's main strip with the bag, all to the tune of "John Brown's Body" (a patriotic melody that would later inspire "The Battle Hymn of the Republic")

Within a day, the losing bettor, Gridley, was being cheered on by his fellow townsfolk — who turned out in numbers to watch the spectacle — as he followed a brass band down the city's center, flour sack over his shoulder. At the end of his march, he handed the sack to the bet's winner, Herrick, but not without first recommending it be donated to the Sanitary Commission, a relief agency that provided care for sick and injured Union soldiers. Herrick agreed, and soon after the hefty sack of flour was auctioned for \$350. But in an act of gallantry, the winner asked that the sack be sold again, raising another \$250. Surrounding towns joined in, and before long Gridley and the "Sanitary Sack of Flour" had gone as far as San Francisco and raised \$63,000. Newspapers spread the story, leading the flour sack across the country, raising upwards of \$275,000 (more than \$4 million today) and ending

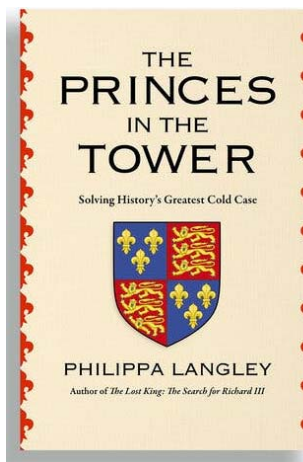
up as far as New York City. Gridley, who had started the journey as a Confederate sympathizer, returned to Nevada an ardent supporter of the Union; the famed Sanitary Sack returned with him and remains on display in Reno at the state Historical Society Museum.

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**Shared by Michael Herrick HFA #118**

### **Did Richard III Kill the Princes in the Tower?**

Philippa Langley devoted years to the search for Richard III's remains. Now, she's trying to crack a 15th-century cold case: Did he really assassinate his nephews?



Philippa Langley, an independent historian, is perhaps Richard III's most dedicated defender. Photo Credit...Robert Ormerod for The New York Times



**By Amelia Nierenberg**

**Reporting from Edinburgh and the Tower of London.**

April 26, 2024

For over 400 years, Richard III has been seen as Britain's most infamous king — a power-hungry usurper who killed his young nephews to clear the way to the throne.

In Shakespeare's "Richard III," the king tells an assassin, "I wish the bastards dead," referring to the princes Edward V and Richard. "And I would have it suddenly performed."

But the king's murderous image, drawn from history books and cemented in literature and lore, is just not true — or, at least, it has not been proven true, argues Philippa Langley, an author and independent historian.

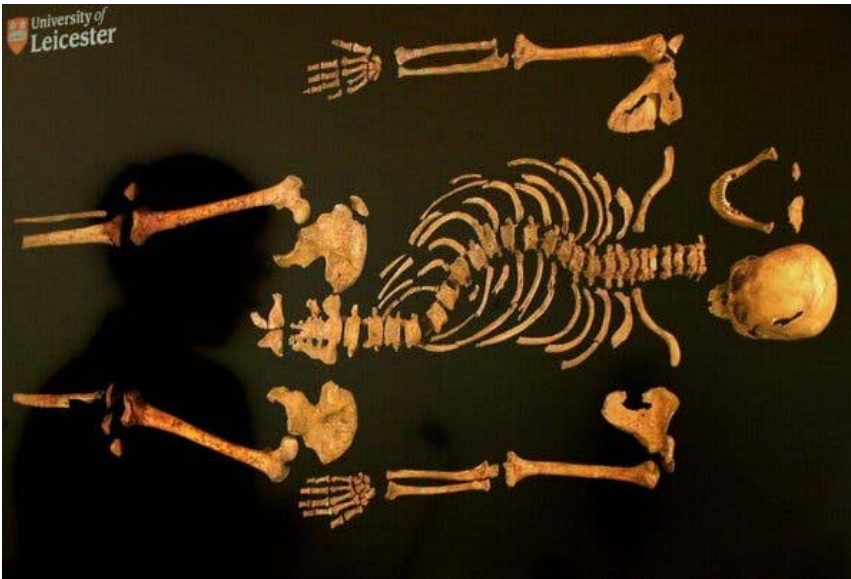


“Maybe there is evidence,” she said over a cup of tea in Edinburgh earlier this year. “But there *seems* to be no evidence.”

Langley is, perhaps, Richard III’s most dedicated living defender. A prominent member of the [Richard III Society](#), an organization that has been working since 1924 “to secure a more balanced assessment of the king,” she has made a career of researching — and rehabilitating — a man who ruled for two years, from 1483 to his death in 1485.

In 2012, she spearheaded a project to [find his remains](#), which were [under a parking lot](#) in the city of Leicester, as she believed they would be, and give him a dignified burial. Once she had laid Richard III to rest, however, she found she couldn’t quite let him go. After all, he was still seen as a murderer.

So she took on the case of [the princes’ disappearance](#). Is there, she wanted to know, enough archival evidence to say beyond a reasonable doubt that Richard III ordered the assassinations of the boys? Was the king a murderer — or a victim of centuries of rumor and prejudice?



The discovery of Richard III’s remains over a decade ago was one of Britain’s most dramatic modern archaeological finds. Credit...Rui Vieira/PA Wire, via Associated Press

These are the questions at the heart of Langley’s most recent book, “The Princes in the Tower,” published in late 2023. In it, she takes a true-crime approach to the mystery, using what she describes as “the same principles and practices as a modern police inquiry.”

She wanted to find the truth, she said, even if it meant finding evidence that suggests that he was, indeed, a killer.

“It’s about making sure that the story we tell about this country is correct,” Langley, 62, said, adding, “Whether that is today or tomorrow or 500 years ago, evidence, truth, facts — rather than stories and lies — are really important.”

To the reading public in Britain and historians around the world, Langley is something of a curiosity. She did not attend university. And yet she became the face of one of the splashiest historical events of the century.

For finding Richard III’s body, she was awarded an M.B.E., a national honor. She is recognized at train stations, though not terribly often, she said. And she has earned the respect of many university scholars.

“I don’t think she got lucky with Richard III,” said Sebastian Sobocki, a professor of late medieval English literature at the University of Toronto. “She did very good research.”

Langley, who formerly worked in marketing and advertising, understands how to excite people about the past — more so, perhaps, than most academics (How many historians can say they were played by Sally Hawkins, as Langley was in the film “The Lost King”?)

But even if some professors think of her work as worthy, many also see it as fundamentally unacademic. Serious scholars do not usually probe the past to find or exonerate long-dead kings, they argue.



Richard III's bones were found beneath a parking lot near the buried ruins of the Greyfriars Priory in Leicester  
Credit...Andrew Testa for The New York Times

“The reason that archaeologists hadn't looked for him in the past is that archaeologists don't go looking for famous dead people,” said Philip Schwyzer, a specialist in early modern English literature at the University of Exeter.

A few critics even see Langley as a charlatan. But most just think that she is naïve, blinded by her own rosy image of the king.

That outlook builds on a longstanding skepticism of the Richard III Society. “It is frankly partisan in a war that ended more than 500 years ago,” said Spencer A. Strub, a humanities researcher at Princeton University, of the organization.

Langley knows what her detractors say about her, she said: She doesn't have the right credentials. She's emotional, a woman with a 15th-century crush.

But Langley fought for legitimacy well before discovering Richard III. For decades, she has lived with chronic fatigue syndrome, a condition that has long been met with skepticism from doctors and colleagues alike.

That's part of what binds her to Richard III, Langley said. Studies of his skeleton showed that he had scoliosis — a physical condition long portrayed (and mocked) on the stage as a motivation for his rage across the centuries. “He would have been dealing with something that he had to hide,” she said. “And I was the same.”

And her work speaks for itself, Langley said: She did find his grave. And now, she thinks she has cracked a major historical cover-up.

The story stems from Richard III's coronation, which happened amid a swirl of scandal.

His brother, King Edward IV, had died in the spring of 1483. Richard was made protector of the realm until the king's eldest son and successor, the 12-year-old Edward V, came of age. But before the boy was crowned, his parents' marriage was declared illegitimate, and his coronation was suspended.

Richard III was proclaimed king instead. Soon after, the boy and his younger brother, Richard, 9, disappeared from where they had been held, the Tower of London.

Langley is a prominent member of the Richard III Society, an organization that has been working to rehabilitate the reviled king's image since 1924.  
Credit...Dan Kitwood/Getty Images

That, Langley argues, makes it a missing persons inquest, not a murder case. “This was all we knew for certain, based on the available evidence,” she writes.

She argues that the dominant narrative — that Richard III had the princes killed to take the throne — is little more than rumor that calcified into fact over 500 years. Instead, she suggests, the boys were alive when Richard was crowned.



Richard III was the last king in England's Plantagenet line. Henry VII, who ousted him, was the first Tudor king; he had a dynasty to establish, a reputation to build. So, Langley argues, Henry VII cast his predecessor as a villain.

It would also have been useful for the Tudors if people thought the boys were dead, unable to fight for the throne, Langley writes in the book. Rumors of their deaths started under Henry VII, she notes, pointing to texts from Richard III's reign that talk about his nephews in the present tense.

That's why she thinks that the boys weren't killed — at least not in the Tower of London, in 1483. Instead, she argues, they were smuggled out of the British capital. Then, after Richard III was killed and the princes were made legitimate again, she argues that they both tried to retake the throne, Anastasia-like.

She weaves her argument out of archival material gathered over seven years by a team of over 300 independent researchers. The evidence includes receipts for weapons; a witness statement describing the boys' flight; royal seals and more. To complicate matters, Langley also argues that both of the princes were later given false identities by the Tudor government: They were described as impostors trying to pose as princes, not the real thing.

"Apparent red herrings seemed to litter the story," she writes. "The project could not afford to miss anything, no matter how seemingly insignificant."

Langley also tries to debunk some of the historically accepted pieces of evidence in support of the view that the nephews were assassinated, the so-called eyewitness testimonies. One, from Sir Thomas More, was written decades after the fact — under the Tudors. She argues that another, penned by an Italian monk who was in London in 1483, does not say the boys were murdered — only that he didn't know what had happened to the older boy.

The accounts are not proof, she says.

Many top academics agree that the often-cited accounts for the princes' murder are thin. "People realize how flimsy the evidence is," said Schwyzer, the scholar of early modern English literature. "The most reliable reports say they went into the tower and were seen less and less often, and people thought they were dead."

For Langley's argument to prevail, she must first explain the skeletons of young children that were found in the tower in 1674. The bones were examined in 1933. They are interred at Westminster Abbey as the supposed remains of the princes.

"How many children would have been put in a box and buried under a staircase in the tower?" said Raluca Radulescu, a professor of medieval literature and a cultural historian at the University of Bangor, in Wales. "Like, why?"

Langley has an answer there, too.

The remains have not undergone modern scientific analysis or DNA testing, she notes. That would require approval by the Dean of Westminster in consultation with the royal household.

"The view of previous deans has always been that the mortal remains of two young children, widely believed since the 17th century to be the princes in the tower, should not be disturbed," said Victoria Ribbans, a spokeswoman for the Abbey. "There are no current plans to change this."

Within the Tower of London itself, speculation is afoot.

Julian Jennings, a warden who has worked there for over 18 years, is fascinated by the history he protects. He even traveled to Leicester when Richard III was reinterred in 2015, just to be present.

"Today or tomorrow or 500 years ago," Langley said, "evidence, truth, facts — rather than stories and lies — are really important." Credit...Robert Ormerod for The New York Times

He's been following the debate about Langley's book, and he's bursting to talk about it. When asked for directions — with no mention of the princes — he brought up the debate. "It's an absolute minefield," he said.

Jennings is still making up his mind on the matter, he said. But a few stories below, the longstanding narrative

is codified on a plaque: “The tradition of the tower has always pointed out this as the stair under which the bones of Edward the 5th and his brother were found.”

The research Langley put forward, he said, could well be the biggest historical shake-up in a long time. He and his colleagues are abuzz with wonder: What if the princes actually lived?

The question is a testament to Langley’s influence.

“It’s good to keep an open mind,” he said, during a recent shift. “At least I do, anyway.”

**Amelia Nierenberg** writes the Asia Pacific Morning Briefing, a global newsletter.

A version of this article appears in print on April 28, 2024, Section A, Page 1 of the New York edition with the headline: Sleuth Who Found Richard III Wants to Clear Him of Murder.

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## **Can You Help?**

**Dale E. Yoe, HFA #062**

[yoeda@comcast.net](mailto:yoeda@comcast.net)

I recently met a lady whose ancestry included a Herrick or two. She is having a lot of trouble finding details, and I told her I would place this much in the newsletter to see if anyone else is looking. Here is what we know.

William Herrick, son of Stephen Herrick and Anna Fargo, born between 1749 and 1760 in Preston, New London, CT. He died at the battle of Monmouth Jun 1778.

Married 17 December 1780 in Sharon Litchfield, CT, Anna Goodrich, born 02 July, 1755 in Sharon, Litchfield, CT/ died 08 Sep 1841 in Erie, PA- after Wm’s death she married a John Gordon.

She says there were two brothers-in-law, James and Jonathan Herrick, who did guard duty at the Poughkeepsie Jail in 1778 (based on their rev pension files).

Wondering if John Gordon may have been housed there as a British POW.

William is noted in the HGR3, Vol I, part 1, page 94 with no further info.

All we have is Fold 3 info on his Mil. Info and the Pension record for his widow.

We also know he had two children with Anna. We thought both the son and the daughter had died, but recently found a record where William Herrick b. 3 September 1776, received 450 acres of bounty land in 1797/8 as the heir of his father William who was killed in 1778.

If this rings a bell with you- please let me know so I can forward the info.

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## **Herrick Inquiry**

**David Walker**

I have a long-shot question about a Charles Herrick and his wife (I haven’t been able to find her first name) who lived in Chicago in 1852-53, and I was hoping that you (or other members of your association) might be able to help me? Any advice or information would be very much appreciated.

I know very little about these Herricks, except that they may have been Spiritualists—she, a trance medium, and were associated with the short-lived “Bank of Chicago” in those years, which was a financial bank run by

Spiritualists. “Mrs. Herrick” worked as the bank’s cashier, and also a consulting medium for the bank; and she was arrested in February of 1853, along with several other bank employees, during a run on the bank. Charles Herrick is named in a couple newspaper reports from the time as well, but outside of those reports I have found no information about either of these Herricks. (No court documents survive, as far as I can tell, nor bank records, nor mention of the Herricks in any spiritualist journals of the time, beyond reproduction of articles from the Chicago Tribune and similar newspapers.)

See below the Chicago Tribune article that mentions the Herricks. The article is written in an alarmist tone, and I cannot vouch for the accuracy or objectivity of the reporting. (Fowler’s writings did however influence the tone of other newspaper coverage from the time.)

Might you have any information about these Herricks? Or might other members of your Association know anything about them? My research attempts in Ancestry.com, newspaper databases, journals, and the personal papers/publications of other bank employees have yielded no information about their full names, their lives outside of this incident, or anything else about them.

As for myself: I am a historian of 19th-century religious movements in America. I am interested in this bank’s history, and in the lives of the people who were associated with it.

**Any information would be much appreciated. Thank you for your help!**

“Henry Fowler, “The Bank of Chicago and Spiritualism,” Chicago Tribune, February 10, 1853.

The commission of lunacy which was instituted against Mr. Ira B. Eddy, was a sure death blow to the spiritual Bank and all its strange operations. During the forenoon of yesterday there were many rumors as to the doings of the mediums in connection with Mr. I. B. Eddy, amongst them that they had carried off the money of the bank. Mr. D. Eddy, the conservator, having good reason to believe this to be correct, caused a number to be immediately arrested and carried before Mr. Justice Rucker. There was at once a general rush to the Court House to obtain admission. The room was filled, and an immense number were unable to gain entrance. The Summons was against Smith and his wife, Herrick and his wife, Mrs. Ryerson, Drysdale, Arnold and Pilgrim—their first names we were unable to learn.

The Court was crowded to excess. The charge was for breaking the peace, but the investigation embraced the whole management of the Bank under the pretended guidance of spirits through mediums, and the examination was very irregular from beginning to end, and was a mournful display of the lengths to which spiritual fanaticism had gone. There have been many statements afloat as to the management of this Bank, being professedly under the directions of spirits; but the examination yesterday, brought to light the most humiliating fact that men of property, and who hitherto have had credit given them for at least ordinary intelligence, would submit to be led by silly women as to the disposal of their property and their reputation. From the lateness of the hour at which the proceedings terminated, it would be impossible to give a detailed account of the lengthy examination; but for the satisfaction of such of our readers as are at a distance or incredulous as to the possibility of such infatuation, we shall give some part of the evidence taken yesterday.

The first witness called was John M. Holmes, who has been acting as Book-keeper for the bank for some time past, and stated that for some time past, the affairs of the bank had been carried on by the use of mediums. A female was in the habit of retiring to a back room with Mr. Paine or Mr. Eddy, and there professed to hold conversation with the spirit of such men as General Washington, General Jackson, and many others, who directed how the affairs of the bank should be carried on; and according to this woman dictated the bank was managed. These women were constantly about the bank. Mrs. Herrick retired several times a day and pretended to tell from the spirits to whom they should and should not redeem money. Some time ago she pretended to receive a revelation that if any party brought a bill who smoked tobacco, or drank liquor, or sold liquor, that such persons should not have their bills redeemed.

She had stood behind the counter and pretended to reveal such persons on their entering the bank, as were honest or dishonest; that she had called persons absurd names, such as fools, unclean, dishonest, robbers of the poor; that she had snatched segars from the mouths of gentlemen who had come to the bank on business. There had been great excitement at the bank for some time past, occasioned by these proceedings. He knew all the

defendants; most of them were mediums, and Eddy was completely under their control. He advised with them on all matters and followed their directions in all things. Yesterday Mr. Eddy went into the bank and demanded the key of the safe. He (Holmes) refused it, when Mr. E. pointed a six-barreled revolver and threatened to shoot him thro', when he gave it up. Soon after he saw Arnold load a similar pistol, he urged him not to load it with balls. Arnold replied that without balls it would be of no use. Drysdale said it would be right for Eddy to shoot any man, as he was pronounced insane and was not responsible. Most of the defendants were present when the pistol was loaded, and advised Eddy to defend himself. Soon after this he left the bank. So long as Eddy was under the influence of the mediums he should be afraid to conduct the business of the bank, had no fear of him if left to himself. He returned to the bank in the evening; found the defendants present; they were consulting the spirits; said they were in communion with the spirit of Alexander Hamilton, who recommended Eddy to defend himself. Soon after he was told that they had received spiritual revelations that he (Holmes) was an enemy and a traitor; that they knew all his secret doings, and Eddy and Paine ordered him to leave the bank.

From Friday to Monday there were great crowds of people about the bank, the peace was endangered, all the mediums said that they were not to redeem the bills presented by useless or dishonest persons. Mrs. Herrick frequently asked those who presented bills if they had obtained them honestly, and told them that they had not the mark of honest labor about them. He had been to the bank to-day, but they would not let him in.

Cross-examined by Mr. Drysdale, as to whether he had ever written what had purported to be a communication from spirits. Witness declined to answer the question, as it was not pertinent. You were present when the pistol was loaded, and distinctly said that it would be right for Mr. Eddy to shoot any man who should attack him. After several unimportant questions by other defendants, Mr. Rucker asked what right all these people had in the bank. Witness—They were there, some as door-keepers, but most had no legitimate business. Mrs. Herrick, with much warmth, here emphatically announced that she was the Cashier of the bank (much laughter)—and there was considerable altercation among some of the defendants as to who were present last week, and their duties at the bank—some asserting that they were employed by Mr. Paine as door-keepers.

Mr. Edward Hate testified that a short time ago Mr. Ira Eddy, and a man whom he recognized among the defendants as Pilgrim, came to the store of Mr. Dominic and asked for some pistols. He showed some Colt's and Allen's; they conversed as to the merits of the two, and Pilgrim advised Eddy to take Allen's, as it was best for "quick work." They spoke about borrowing one, when he referred them to Mr. Dominic. They afterwards left with a pistol. Soon after that Arnold came to the store and purchased some powder. Has since seen the pistol, it was loaded with six balls, which he drew.

J. R. Hugunin went to the bank this morning to get redeemed two dollars, and was treated respectfully. Some time after, he went again for the same purpose, when a woman, (Mrs. Herrick,) was behind the counter, told him that the bill would not be redeemed, and he was ordered out. He refused to go, when he was seized by the collar by Herrick, and dragged away from the counter and put out at the back door.

Mrs. Elizabeth Burton, sister to Ira B. Eddy, corroborated the statements that her brother was under the control of the defendants, and that they advised him to defend himself, but they kept their conversation as much as possible from her. Heard they were talking about the money, and her brother say "take it, and keep it." Saw Drysdale climb up through a window into the bank or vault, and return with it. In doing so, he lamed his arm. They all assisted in wrapping up the money—it was gold and silver. There was a large amount. Some of them took it from the bank, and she followed them over Randolph street bridge. A desultory conversation followed of no interest.

Mr. Cyrus Bradley, the city Sheriff, stated that he had found money, gold and silver in the house of Pilgrim, on the west side. Pilgrim told him it was there, that he got it from Eddy, who told him to take care of it; asked the defendants if they had any keys or property belonging to the bank; they all denied it. Pilgrim gave the key of Harmony Hall, and said that was all he had. He afterwards admitted that he had taken the money.

Mr. Ira B. Eddy who was present the whole of the time, and in constant conversation with the "mediums," here wished Mr. Holmes to be re-called, and asked him the name of the banking firm, and if he, Eddy, was a partner in the bank, and several questions as to his (Eddy's) connection with the bank, the purport of which was to show that the bank was not his, but "Seth Paine, Brothers & Co." He said that he did not hold stock in the bank,

that he had only deposited money the same as any other depositor, and charged them with interfering with the affairs of a bank with which he had nothing to do as partner. He demanded that Paine be brought to prove the fact. The Justice remarked that Mr. Paine was in prison and that he had no jurisdiction over him. From the cross-examination of Mr. Holmes, there came out the startling fact that Paine had little or no capital in the bank; that all the stock amounted to some 4,000 or 5,000 dollars, deposited by Ira B. Eddy, and about \$3,000 by other persons. This disclosure produced considerable excitement in court.

Mr. Goodrich here summed up and addressed the Court at some length, pointing out in strong terms the mournful fact that while some were evidently deluded in this novel and painful matter, there were evidently some who, as master spirits, were working all things for their own mercenary ends. He spoke of Mrs. Herrick as a coarse, vulgar, impudent woman—as evidently the High Priestess of the affair. Mrs. Herrick became much excited, began to twitch, and show the usual signs of spiritual affections, previous to making some revelation; but on being ordered to silence, she grossly insulted the Court, and for contempt, was taken into custody. After going through the evidence, Mr. Goodrich contended that there was sufficient to convict most, but not all, the defendants. Several of them then made statements, explanatory or otherwise, of their conduct, and some were much ashamed of their position.

Justice Rucker then summed up, and stated that as the Grand Jury was then sitting, he should not feel it his duty to notice the grave charges that had been brought out in the evidence, but should confine himself to the breach of the peace. Whatever part Smith and his wife had taken, there was no evidence against them, and they and Mrs. Ryerson would be discharged; but the others he should bind over in the sum of \$500 each. Mrs. Herrick's case would be disposed of in the morning. We did not hear whether or not they obtained bail. As might be expected, there was much excitement during the whole proceedings.”

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### **Message from the Editor:**

**Nancy Johnson, HFA #212**

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Thank you to our members, Dale E. Yoe, HFA #062, Michael Herrick HFA #118, A.B. Reynolds HFA #003, Merrill Herrick, HFA #169 for contributing to this newsletter.

I'd like to remind everyone that I'm happy to accept articles and stories for the next newsletter at any time.

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