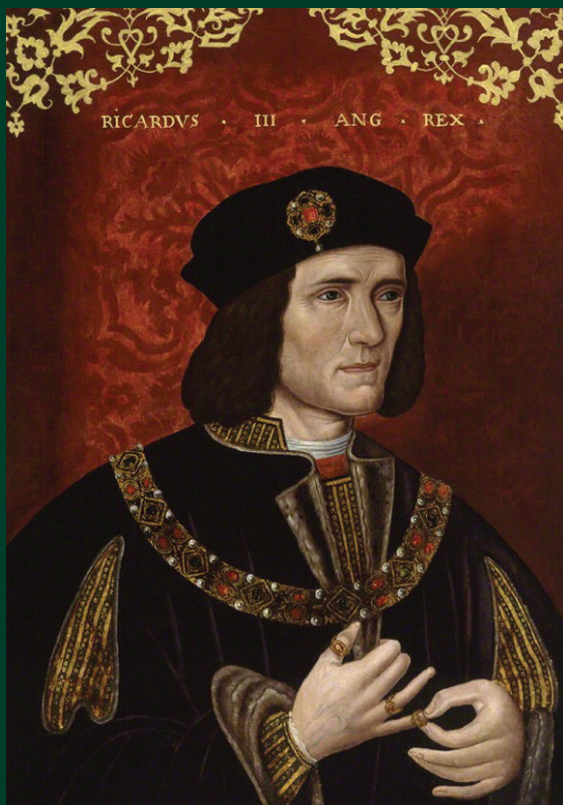


# The Life and Times of Richard III

Richard III has fascinated us for over five centuries either as the evil hunchback of Shakespearian legend who murdered his nephews to usurp the throne or the much-maligned 'Lord of the North' where he is still affectionately regarded. His reign lasted for just over two years but the controversy surrounding it remains today. It is hard to find someone who has no opinion at all about Richard!

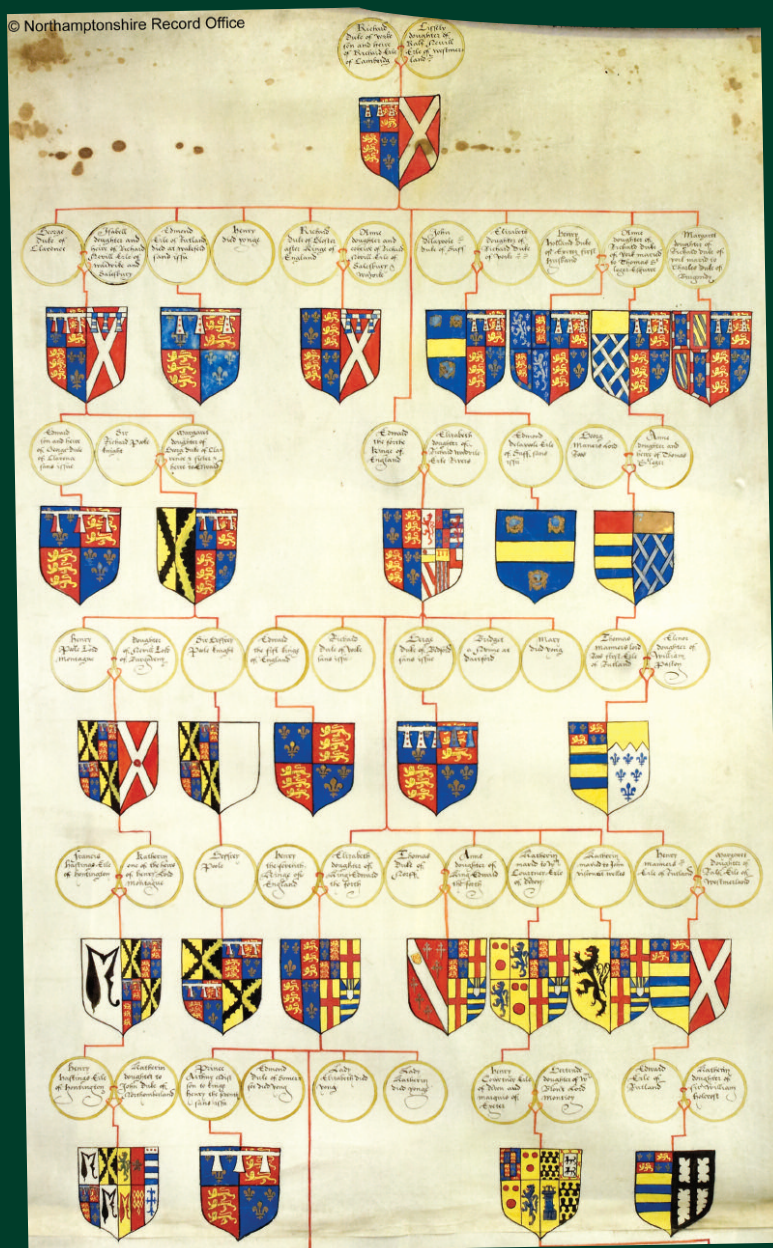
But who was he?



Richard III. Source: National Portrait Gallery.

## The Wars of the Roses

This is a modern name for a period of civil war in England which lasted from 1455 until 1487. English military failure in France, an economic downturn and a lack of leadership from King Henry VI led to a violent struggle between factions of the English ruling class. These factions grouped round two branches of the Royal family who provided rival claimants to the throne: the House of Lancaster (King Henry's branch of the family) and the House of York (King Henry's cousins).



Pedigree of the Descendants of Richard Duke of York, father of Edward IV, showing the York brothers. Source: Northamptonshire Record Office.