
NEW TITLES

History

RICHARD III
by Charles Ross
Univ. of Calif., 1982
265 pp. \$24.50



Badge of Richard Duke of Gloucester.
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Shakespeare labeled him "That foul defacer of God's handiwork." Seen thus by Tudor "propagandists," Richard III (1452–85) was a spiritual and physical cripple, driven by evil until justice, in the guise of Henry Tudor, brought him down at Bosworth Field. Richard's more recent defenders have been no less impassioned. Steering a middle course, Ross, professor of medieval history at the University of Bristol, measures Richard by the standards and political climate of the 15th century, a particularly ruthless period. As a child, Richard saw his father and brother (the future Edward IV) plunge the country into civil war to overthrow the Lancastrian monarch, Henry VI. Edward used any means available—disinheritance, betrayal—and when Edward died at an early age, leaving two young sons, Richard proved his mastery of the family lessons. Though he had no preconceived plan to usurp the throne, according to Ross, the divisions within the court provided an irresistible opportunity. There is still uncertainty as to whether Richard ordered the execution of his nephews; the important matter is that most Englishmen believed he had. Richard's overdependence on powerful northern landowners and his alienation of vital southern support figured largely in his downfall. But in Ross's view, Richard was neither the most nor the least immoral of men; merely a man of his times, when times were "sadly out of joint."

**INTEGRATION OF
THE ARMED FORCES,
1940–1965**
by Morris J. MacGregor, Jr.
Government Printing Office,
1981, 647 pp. \$17

A handful of pragmatists who set to work shortly after World War II made the armed services the institutional vanguard of racial integration in the United States. Motivated less by high ideals than by concern for military efficiency, men such as General Idwal Edwards, chief of Air Force personnel, and