



A Message from the President

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***Email Communiqué***  
**Society of King Charles the Martyr**

**American Region**

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**Accession of King Charles I, 1625**

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The particular dating of Easter this year throws into juxtaposition two important events in the life of our Blessed Martyr. King Charles ascended the throne on 27 March, this year Wednesday in Holy Week. The shift from Palm Sunday to Holy Week itself is an abrupt one. Of course, we have been observing lent for a good while, but nevertheless the quickness with which the adulation on Palm Sunday shifts to the sad events of Holy Week serve as a reminder of how fickle the world's attitudes can be and how easily loyalties can be shifted for worldly gain. But there is another day, less than a week away, that we can also celebrate as a link between heaven and earth, and that is the finding of King Charles's incorrupt body on 1 April. Finding the Royal Martyr's body is, of course, hardly the same thing as the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, but it is an evidence of the mysterious way the Lord can work His wonders to perform. As you come to the Holy Table on Easter and hear those words "do this in remembrance of me," may your spirit be lifted by the resurrection faith embodied in that one word that ties King Charles's life forever to the throne of Grace: REMEMBER!

The Board of Trustees held its annual meeting last month. The SKCM-AR Bylaws require such a meeting, in addition to any special meetings that we may hold during the year. Here is a summary of what we accomplished:

- ✓ Received the Treasurer's report for FY2011-2012 and the current fiscal year through January. FY2011-2012 closed with a \$900+ surplus, especially due to cost savings in the *SKCM NEWS* and the 2012 Annual Mass; the current FY is also running a surplus, primarily due to record Annual Mass contributions. (The December 2012 *SKCM NEWS* includes a full FY2011-2012 financial report.)
- ✓ Agreed to better track and ensure the future availability of prepaid dues by creating subdivisions within the checking account for life member and future years' dues payments, as well as endowment contributions already protected in this manner.
- ✓ Received a draft budget for FY2012-2013 and projections for FY2013-2014, for further consideration by the Executive Committee. Surpluses are projected.
- ✓ Received reports on the 26 January Annual Mass & Luncheon at All Saints' Ashmont, including the honoring of Mark Wuonola for his 25 years as *SKCM NEWS* Editor.
- ✓ Received an updated historical listing of Annual Masses, with venues, attendance numbers and select preachers, dating back to 1984 and including upcoming venues (2014, St. Vincent's Cathedral, Bedford, TX, 2015; Holy Communion, Charleston, SC; and 2016, Resurrection, New York, NY.) The 2017 Annual Mass will be at S. Clement's, Philadelphia.

- ✓ Designated the Society's executive officers as an Executive Committee empowered by the Bylaws to take certain actions between Board meetings;
- ✓ Created a Nominating Committee for future trustees. In the meantime, there is a general moratorium on election of new trustees until early 2014.
- ✓ Gave a green light to completing the Society History and preparing updated pages (mostly necrology) to current and future holders of the Devotional Manual, with Dr. Wuonola designated as the responsible person for both.
- ✓ With all nine current Trustees remaining in office, re-elected the existing officers, i.e., Canon Swatos, President, Mr. Ruff, Vice-President, Archdeacon Monroe, Secretary, and Mr. Lewis, Treasurer.

Speaking of membership numbers ... we have a good, stable membership, but it would be even better if we could be larger and thus reach more people. Here are some suggestions on how to achieve that goal: every member recruit a new member during this fiscal year ... order Society membership flyers for your tract rack (email the Treasurer/Membership Secretary at [Ameraca453@aol.com](mailto:Ameraca453@aol.com)) ... form a SKCM chapter if you already have a core group ... if you use social media sites, post on the Facebook SKCM page to help give visibility to the Society (contact Doug Ruff at [douglassruff@aol.com](mailto:douglassruff@aol.com) or John Covert at [covert@covert.org](mailto:covert@covert.org) for assistance, if needed) ... if you already have a SKCM presence in your parish, put a link on your parish website to the SKCM website, [www.skcm-usa.org](http://www.skcm-usa.org) (make certain that you use this address rather than the one in the UK).

We recently received a new shipment of the Society's sterling silver medal. The originals were blessed above the vault where King Charles is interred. Our goods order form, available on the website, includes this medal which in recent months has been purchased by a number of members. Regrettably, due to ongoing increases in the cost of silver, the price is now \$125 rather than \$90, which continues to include shipping and handling – but the good news is that this popular item is now back in stock.

Watch for the next planned edition of the *Communique*, which will be 26 April, the Recognition of the *Cultus* of S. Charles, K.M. in 1661. Among other things, we expect to report on recognitions given to Society members plus actions from the Board's Executive Committee at its March meeting.

Fr. Bill Swatos, President

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 MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES SKCM NEWS (SEMIANNUAL) AND CHURCH & KING (ANNUAL).  
 THIS COMMUNIQUÉ (PERIODIC) IS PROVIDED AS A PDF.

## ***The Finding of the Incorrupt Body of S. Charles – 1 April 1813***<sup>1</sup>

by Mark A. Wuonola, Ph.D.

On 1 April 2013 we observe the Bicentennial of The Finding of the Incorrupt Body of Saint Charles. The Prince Regent, later King George IV, had an interest in King Charles I. The reader will remember that it was he who brought to fruition the two centuries of negotiations that resulted in the return to England of the van Dyck portrait, 'King Charles I in Three Positions', from the sculptor Bernini's heirs. The portrait had been painted from three angles in order to enable the famous sculptor to sculpt a marble bust of King Charles.<sup>2</sup>

### THE INTERMENT

As difficult as it may be for us to understand from our vantage point, there was uncertainty that led to King Charles I's remains being exhumed in 1813. The interment in the vault in S. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle on 9 February 1649 was conducted in haste and with no ceremony. This was under the Commonwealth: King Charles had been under house arrest, virtually imprisoned, for several years; Oliver Cromwell had been in control well before the trial and beheading of King Charles.

While the rebels had decided that King Charles must be beheaded, Cromwell saying hyperbolically, "I will have his head off, with the crown on it," what should happen afterwards had not been as well thought out as the death itself. Even that was imperfect: the death warrant had been prepared in advance of the court's verdict (guilty of treason) and sentence (beheading). In the event, its date had to be altered and several of the signatures had to be obliterated and replaced by others, since some of the signatories had left in disgust before the end of the show-trial! The original death warrant, on exhibit at the House of Lords, shows clearly the evidence of these alterations.

The rebels had not thought about where to inter the King. The first place considered was the Chapel of Henry VII in Westminster Abbey with King James I, his Queen, Anne of Denmark, and mother, Mary Queen of Scots (King Charles's parents and grandmother). This sensible and sensitive option was ruled out by Parliament, worried that the central location would make it a pilgrimage site for royalists. Parliament decided that S. George's Chapel, Windsor would be preferable, the castle being enclosed. Herbert and Mildmay accompanied the King's hearse from S. James's to Windsor. They considered Cardinal Wolsey's tomb-house, but technically it was not in the Chapel proper. (The Wolsey tombhouse was later completed and decorated by Queen Victoria as the Albert Memorial Chapel.) Excavation was then begun near the center of the choir at the tomb of King Edward IV, but when a group of nobles loyal to the King arrived the next day a vault under the choir, which had been used for King Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, was chosen because of convenient access.

All readers will know that the King's obsequies were conducted in silence because the BCP had been outlawed. Bishop Juxon was not willing to pray extemporaneously, as would have been permitted by the Governor of Windsor Castle. In haste, no marker was placed.

Due to the absence of a marker, and the intervention of over one and a half centuries, including the Commonwealth and Protectorate, there was uncertainty about King Charles I's actual place of interment. Even in 1660 when those present at the interment again gathered in S. George's Chapel, they disagreed about the locus, partly because the chapel was in a disordered state because of its disuse during the interregnum.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE EXHUMATION

In the course of work early in 1813 to prepare a place for King George III's eventual interment, an accidental breach of the vault of King Henry VIII occurred. Perceiving this opportunity to settle the question of King Charles's place of interment, the Prince Regent sought to resolve the matter. This was done on 1 April 1813, the day after the funeral of the Duchess of Brunswick.<sup>4</sup> In the presence of requisite workmen and craftsmen, Sir Henry Halford<sup>5</sup> (President of the Royal College of Surgeons and physician to King George III and the Prince Regent), observed by the Dean of Windsor (Dean Legge), the Duke of Cumberland, Count Munster, and Benjamin Charles Stevenson, Esq., and supervised by the Prince Regent, examined the Martyr King's remains once the lead coffin, containing a wooden coffin, had been opened. The wooden coffin was very much decayed, and the body was carefully wrapped up in cerecloth. "[T]he left eye, in the first moment of exposure, was open and full, though it vanished almost immediately". The head was carefully disengaged from the cerecloth (the sutures with which it had been reattached to the body when it was embalmed had disintegrated) and it was held up to view; Halford inspected and sketched it. Some of the hair from the back of the head, the beard, a tooth, and half of the severed fourth cervical vertebra were removed. The transverse surface of the severed vertebra was perfectly smooth and even, "an appearance which could have been produced only by a heavy blow, inflicted with a very sharp instrument." Thus, the circumstantial evidence, a leaden ribbon inscribed "KING CHARLES I 1648" soldered to the outside of the lead coffin, and the witnesses' unanimous agreement that the head was of the King whose portraits by van Dyck were so familiar, all confirmed that these remains were indeed those of the Martyr King. "After this examination of the head which had served every purpose in view and without examining the body below the neck, it was immediately restored to its situation, the coffin was soldered up again and the vault closed."

#### FOLLOWING EVENTS

During the short reign of King James II (1685-8), the choir of the Chapel was paved with the present black and white marble squares. In 1837, King William IV added the present memorial stone:

IN A VAULT  
BENEATH THIS MARBLE SLAB  
ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS  
OF  
JANE SEYMOUR, QUEEN OF KING HENRY VIII  
1537  
KING HENRY VIII  
1547

KING CHARLES I  
1648  
AND  
AN INFANT CHILD OF QUEEN ANNE  
—  
THIS MEMORIAL WAS PLACED HERE  
BY COMMAND OF  
KING WILLIAM IV, 1837

In 1888, the relics removed by Sir Henry Halford in 1813 and kept at Wistow Hall were presented to the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, in an ebony casket measuring  $4\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ ". On a silver plate inside the lid was engraved:

EN  
CAROLI I<sup>MI</sup> REGIS  
IPSISSIMUM OS CERVICIS  
FERRO EHEU INTERCISUM  
1648  
ET REGIAM INSUPER BARBAM

The portion of the beard and tooth were folded in a piece of notepaper addressed "The Hon. and Most Reverend The Dean of Windsor", tying them back to Dean Legge, who had wrapped them in it for Halford to take away and report in 1813. Quoting Fellowes<sup>1(i)</sup>:

On 11<sup>th</sup> December 1888, the Prince of Wales informed Dean Davidson that he had received the relics from Sir Henry [St. John] Halford [grandson of 1813's Sir Henry Halford] and that he desired to return them to the vault in which the body of King Charles lay buried, he having obtained the consent of Queen Victoria to do so. Two days later the Prince appeared at the Deanery and handed to Dean Davidson the ebony casket in which he had himself placed the following autograph memorandum: "These relics of King Charles I are deposited by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, in the vault containing the coffin of the King, on December 13, 1888."

In the meantime the Dean had had a leaden casket prepared on the lid of which the following inscription was engraved: "The relics enclosed in this case were taken from the coffin of King Charles I on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1813, by Sir Henry Halford, Physician to King George III. They were by his grandson, Sir Henry St. John Halford, given to H.R.H. Albert Edward, Prince of Wales. On December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1888, they were replaced by H.R.H. in this vault, their original resting place.

After Evensong on 13<sup>th</sup> December, at 6 o'clock, Dean Davidson, with Canon Philip Eliot, Canon in Residence, and Canon J. N. Dalton, superintended the removal of the pavement stone above the vault and bearing the William IV inscription, and six of the black and white marble squares on the south side of the pavement stone. About twenty bricks were then taken out, great care being shown so that no debris should fall on the coffin. This work was carried out by three workmen under the supervision of Mr. A. Y. Nutt, Surveyor to the Dean and Chapter. No one else was present in the Chapel.

The Prince of Wales came alone, with no attendant, to the Chapel soon after 7 o'clock, and lowered the casket containing the relics through the aperture, placing it about the centre of the coffin of King Charles I. The Prince then retired. The closing up of the vault was completed by about 9.30 p.m. The Dean and the two Canons and Mr. Nutt remained at the grave-side until the three workmen had finished their task, which was carried out with the utmost decorum and reverence.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>This article is drawn from various sources, importantly, the booklet, (i) *King Charles I: His Death, His Funeral, His Relics* by Edmund H. Fellowes (Windsor: Oxley and Son, 1950). In a modest, understated introductory note, Dr. Fellowes writes, "For fifty years it has been part of my duty to chant the daily services in Saint George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, from a stall not more than six or seven feet from the vault in which the body of King Charles lies. The story of his execution and particularly of his burial at Windsor, and also of the opening of the vault in 1813 and 1888, has been so loosely described that many of the facts will bear restating."

Other germane references are (ii) *The Day They Killed the King* by Hugh Ross Williamson (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), (iii) *'O Horrible Murder': The Trial, Execution and Burial of King Charles I* by Robert B. Partridge (London: The Rubicon Press, 1998), and (iv) *The Last Days of Charles I* by Graham Edwards (Phoenix Mill, Thrupp-Stroud-Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1999).

It has been noted before in the *Email Communiqué* that sources are discordant on many of the details of King Charles's death and burial. The reasons for this include the confusion and haste accompanying the events themselves, the hearsay nature of some reports, the length of time elapsed before the principals recorded their experiences, and republicans' and Whigs' desires to suppress or sanitize certain facts. Williamson states in the Preface of ref. (ii) above that the beheading of King Charles I "is one of the better-known scenes in English history, but it is only fair to warn the reader that almost every detail of it is still hotly debated and that there is conflicting contemporary evidence on many important points."

<sup>2</sup>Several items related to this essay are available from among the Society's goods. These include the 28-page *Devotional Manual*, silver medals blessed while resting on the marker over the vault containing the Martyr King's relics, a large color postcard of the van Dyck Triple Portrait, and a new postcard with a handsome etching of the Bernini bust. An abbreviated Goods List with Order Form was sent with December's dues notice; a complete Goods List with Order Form is always available at [www.skcm-usa.org](http://www.skcm-usa.org).

<sup>3</sup>According to Clarendon, who may have overstated its disorderliness. However, the Garter stall-plate of King Charles I had indeed been removed by his enemies. It came to light in 1928 and was replaced in the stalls by desire of King George VI in 1950.

<sup>4</sup>Augusta, Princess, Duchess of Brunswick (1737-1813), the eldest child of Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, and Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, was the sister of King George III and thus the Prince Regent's aunt. She had married her second cousin, Charles William Ferdinand, Hereditary Prince of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel. He succeeded his father as reigning Duke of Brunswick in 1780. Fighting for Prussia in the Napoleonic Wars, he was fatally wounded at the battle of Jena (1806) and the impoverished Duchess escaped to Sweden, where her brother George III sent the frigate *Clyde* to bring her to England in 1807.

<sup>5</sup>Sir Henry Halford, Bart., was a descendant of Sir Richard Halford, Bart., who was a notable royalist. It was at Sir Richard's home, Wistow Hall, that King Charles and Prince Rupert stopped and were provided with fresh mounts, permitting their successful escape from Cromwell's troops, in hot pursuit, after the battle of Naseby. There was insufficient time to change saddles; the saddles used by the King and the Prince on the first leg of their flight are still on display at Wistow Hall.