

MIRACLES ASSOCIATED WITH CHARLES I

John Gauden (1605–1662), Dean of Bocking (1641–1660)

1649

That your Lordship may not be a stranger to those things which have come to pass here in these, our days, since the death of our gracious Sovereign lord, King Charles, I shall make bold to begin this, my letter unto you (most excellent sir), in the words and preface (with a little alteration) of Saint Luke to his gospel.

Forasmuch as many have set forth and privately discoursed of those things which are most surely believed amongst us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye- and ear-witnesses of them. It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of those things from the very first, to write unto you in order, most excellent lord, that you may know the certainty of those things which I have both heard and seen.

I was desired by a noble knight, a kinsman of mine, after he had related to me a miracle which he had seen done at Deptford, near London, to go thither to know the truth of it and to witness it under my hand for the greater confirmation of it, that thereby it might be the more credibly believed among strangers. Whereupon I went thither to the house of one Mistress Bayly, the wife of Charles Bayly, who related it to me as it follows, which I write down verbatim, as near as I could, from her and her daughter's own mouth (in the presence of Mr. Thomas Bret, an ancient gentleman of known truth and integrity) and then I read it over to them and they confessing the truth of it, the mother set her hand unto it, her daughter her mark, and Mr. Bret subscribed his name as a witness to it.

This, my daughter, about a year-and-a-half after her birth was troubled with a swelling under her chin and a flux of rhume in her eyes, for the removal and cure whereof I used all the means I could; but she continued still in the same case. As last I procured a water from one Mrs. Arnold, which being applied to her eyes diverted the humour from thence. So as they being pretty well, it fell into her lips, which thereupon swelled grievously and then about a month after it returned into her eyes again, whereupon both her eyes and lips were extremely ill, the swelling in her neck still continuing and at last she was absolutely blind in her right eye for twelve months, and then it fell into the left eye after that manner that she could scarce discern the light of a candle. Some telling me that it was the King's Evil, others doubting of it, I never sought for remedy by a touch from the hand of His Sacred Majesty while he was living. At last the Saturday after his death, I went to Mr. Francis Cole, his house, a woollen draper at the Black Lion at Paul's Chain, whose journeyman gave me a little piece of a handkerchief that was dipped in the King's blood. And then returning home, it came into my mind that many miracles had been done by handkerchiefs or aprons which were brought from Paul's body to the sick, as I had read.¹ Whereupon I stroked my daughter's eyes and the swelling under her chin with it, which presently was much better than before and mended every day. At last through forgetfulness I neglected the application of it for a night, and then the next day she was almost as ill as ever she was before in her eyes. Whereupon I used it again and it has helped her, and she is now perfectly recovered, as you see, in her eyes and the swelling under her chin is almost gone, the colour of her flesh is recovered, and the pain totally gone. With this small piece of a handkerchief was all this done, which many have desired of me; but, although I am but a poor woman and of mean condition, I protest I will not sell it for forty pounds.

And now, excellent sir, I shall crave to leave to make the same profession that Annas, the High Priest, and Caiphas did when they saw what was done by Peter, "It is manifest that a notable miracle has been done, and

¹ Acts 19:12

we cannot deny it”,¹ but must confess (as our Saviour did of the man that was borne blind²) the works of God are manifest in this child by this miraculous cure. For my part therefore I cannot but acknowledge (and here I shall make bold to express myself almost in the same manner that Nicodemus did unto our Saviour) that His Sacred Majesty (now with God) was a physician that was sent from God; for the relics of no man could do such miracles except God had been with him.³ And I hope it may be lawful for me to say, as Saint Peter did, that he was a man approved of God by miracles, wonders, and signs which God had done by him.⁴ As then the blind man in the Gospel told the Pharisees that it was a marvelous thing that they should not know from whence his physician was who had opened his eyes.⁵ So shall I from henceforth tell any man that doubts of our Sovereign’s being with and coming from God that I marvel at him, since this relic (with God’s blessing) has opened the eyes of a child that was blind, which ought to stop the mouths of all those railing Rabshakehs,⁶ *Tumulo quoque sensimus hostem*,⁷ who have lately hindered the steps of the Lord’s anointed and endeavoured to kill him in his grave. This one miracle (not now to speak of his sanctified life and inimitable expression of himself in his most divine book, which shows, though he was bodily here, yet his conversation was still in Heaven, may make it apparent (since it will be attested by so many hundreds of brethren) to all good Christians who will not willfully blindfold themselves that he is returned to God (Who gave and sent him out of His special favour unto us) and that he is now a saint in Heaven. And that your Lordship may also, after this painful life is ended, reign with him there shall ever be the prayer of Your Excellency’s most humble servant.

May it please you, excellent sir, to know that I am informed there have been many others cured by His Majesty’s blood, which will be attested by people of most eminent quality. But in regard I can only be deposed of the truth of this particular, I have only made mention thereof; but concerning the rest, I believe that suddenly, excellent sir, you will have a true and certain certificate.

A Letter Sent into France to the Lord Duke of Buckingham, His Grace, of a Great Miracle Wrought by a Piece of a Handkercheffe Dipped in His Majesties Bloud (London: 1649). [modernized]

¹ Acts 4:16

² John 9:3

³ John 3:2

⁴ Acts 2:22

⁵ John 9:30

⁶ II Kings 18:17–37 and Isaiah 36:12–20

⁷ *Tumulo quoque sensimus hostem* — from the tomb itself we have felt our enemy (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, XIII:504)