



**The Embalmed Head of Oliver Cromwell - A  
Memoir: The Complete History of the Head of the  
Ruler of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland  
and Ireland, ... Subsequent Journeys Through the  
Centuries wit**

*Marc Hartzman*

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Oliver Cromwell led the charge in the beheading of England's King Charles I in 1649. But little did he know that his own head would soon roll. And roll and roll-for the next three hundred years across the Commonwealth. The execution of Charles I ended the monarchy, and Cromwell became the Lord Protector of England until his own death from natural causes in 1658. His body was embalmed and buried in Westminster Abbey, only to be exhumed by King Charles II three years later. The new king had restored the monarchy and wished to avenge his father's death by hanging Cromwell and beheading him posthumously. Now, for the first time, the memoirs of Oliver Cromwell's embalmed head have surfaced, making it the first account of any world leader-or any human being for that matter-chronicling the afterlife. This remarkable memoir recounts its journey through the centuries, beginning with Cromwell's decapitation and the head's impalement on a post at Westminster Hall, where it stayed for more than twenty years before being freed by a heavy storm. Over the centuries, the head enjoyed a series of unexpected adventures, encountering a host of bizarre and well-known characters-from its many owners, curious anatomists and misled but obsessed phrenologists to other preserved decapitated heads and impostor Cromwell heads. These escapades came to an end only after the head was donated to Cromwell's alma mater, Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge, where it was eventually buried for good in 1960.

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