



Order of the House of Wessex
The Anglo Saxon Chronicle
Winter Issue, December 2022

“Worthy is the man who appreciates his heritage”



President General Ann Scott Garner

From the President General

What a wonderful time of the year. I trust each of you were able to enjoy Thanksgiving with family and friends. I am so grateful to share this news with you. The Order of the House of Wessex has been accepted into the National Gavel Society. It has been a labor of love to serve with you the members. I am honored by your support. May we give thanks for our blessing and friendship this Christmas

Ann Scott Garner, President General

Highlights of the Order of the House of Wessex

On April 17, 2017 at the Annual Gathering of the Order of Alba, Founder and President General Charles Bryan Poland announced the upcoming founding of this Order. He presented his appointed Officers of the Board to those present. The Order was formally organized on April 23, 2017. The Founder's son Carl Bryan Poland designed the emblem of the Order that is centered with the face of Alfred the Great and banners of kingdoms represented in the Order. Councilor General Sharon Kaufelt Stine initiated editing of the bylaws. Recording Secretary General Ann Scott Garner agreed to design a brochure for distribution. Founder, President General Poland secured an estimate for the casting of dies for standard and miniature insignia.

The Order was incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia on November 2, 2017 by Chancellor General Walter Jervis Sheffield, Esq. An EIN was secured by Founder, President General Poland. Treasurer General Michael Scott Swisher opened the Order's bank account, accepted reservations for the Inaugural Gathering, and kept all financial records. First Vice President General Carla Whitehurst Odom secured the Order's National Publication. Registrar General James Daryl Partin circulated applications to individuals appointed to the Board. He began accepting applications from other candidates and has kept members of the board up to date as new members were verified. Historian General Paul Ashley Walden designed the Order website, and face book. He also processed orders for insignia. First Vice President Odom compiled the Inaugural Edition of the Register for online distribution in late 2018. President General Poland obtained the 501(c)(3).

2018 Inaugural Gathering

Founder, President General Charles Bryan Poland presided at the Inaugural Gathering on April 10, 2018, at The Army and Navy Club, in Washington DC. First Vice President General Odom made reservations for the event held jointly with Order of Alba. She introduced program speaker Suzanna Ethridge Rawlins whose program featured A Visit with Scottish Royalty.

2019 Second Annual Gathering

Founder President General Poland chaired the 2019 Annual Gathering. First Vice President General Odom introduced Dr. Stefan Zimmers, Assistant Dean at Georgetown University, program speaker for the Annual Gathering held jointly as a Tea with Order of Alba on Tuesday, April 9, 2019 in the Washington Room of The Army and Navy Club. The bylaws proposed by the Board were adopted by the members.

2020 Annual Gathering (Cancelled due to Covid-19)

2021 Fourth Annual Gathering

The Inaugural Edition of The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was edited and distributed online to the membership in the Summer of 2020. The next Annual Gathering is scheduled Monday afternoon, April 12, 2021 in the Main Ballroom of The Army and Navy Club, Washington, DC, with Founder and President General Charles Bryan Poland presiding. Business of the day will include a report by the Nominating Committee, elections and installation. Due to the necessary cancellation of the 2020 Annual Gathering the next administration will conclude as a full term of office in 2022 in accordance with the Bylaws of the Order. Founder and President General Charles Bryan Poland was elected Honorary President General and presented with a gift of a sterling silver star with the emblem of his office from his Inaugural Executive Council of officers. The 2021 Annual Gathering will be followed by a time of fellowship and an Inaugural Gala with the Royal Seven.

2022 Fifth Annual Gathering (via Zoom)

With the continued threat of the Covid virus the Fifth Annual Gathering was held in a Zoom format on March 21st with President General Carla Whitehurst Odom presiding. Chairman of Charitable/Educational Endeavors Michael Scott Swisher reported the Executive Council had voted to present a gift from the Order (in honor of Honorary President General Charles Bryan Poland) to promote Classical Studies at Hillsdale College, President General Ann Scott Garner was elected and installed to office. Odom was elected Honorary President General. Later in the year First Vice President General Paul Ashley Walden edited a full copy Sixth Edition of The Register that was dedicated to Honorary President General Odom. President General Garner applied for recognition for the Order and was notified of acceptance of the Order by the National Gavel Society effective July 28, 2022.

2022 Register

The sixth edition of The Register was mailed to members this summer. Thanks to Carla Odom and Ann Garner for reviewing the draft. Please let Paul Walden know of any corrections for next year's Register. This year, we compiled all the membership data into an Excel spreadsheet which will greatly simplify the creation of future editions, as well as facilitate the maintenance of an accurate membership roll.

Save the Date

Our next meeting will be with the Royal Seven at the Army Navy Club in Washington, DC on April 10, 2022 at 5:00 pm.

2022 Annual Gathering Minutes

Monday, March 21, 2022

A Zoom Meeting held by Force Majeure

CALL TO ORDER at 7:33 p.m.

The Fifth Annual Gathering of the Order of the House of Wessex is called to order by Co-Founder and President General Carla Whitehurst Odom.

President General Odom requested all to secure their mute button and do not unmute it unless you have a speaking part in the Gathering, or have a question. She said photos are welcome, however, to protect our members' privacy please do not distribute photos or recordings of this meeting without prior approval of the Executive Board of Officers. Attendees were welcomed. Officers and chairmen were presented. A quorum was declared present.

President General Odom recognized Founder and Honorary President General Charles Bryan Poland who joined the meeting by teleconference.

MINUTES OF THE FOURTH ANNUAL GATHERING

Minutes of the Fourth Annual Gathering held on April 12, 2021, were published in the June 2021 Edition of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*. Constance Paradiso served as Secretary pro-tempore'. Rev. Rodney Wilson reviewed the minutes. No other amendments have been reported by the membership following the June publication. A motion was made by Ann Garner to adopt the minutes of the Fourth Annual Gathering as reviewed and published. Motion was adopted.

President General Odom thanked Ann Garner and Paul Walden who agreed to review the minutes and Secretary pro-tempore' Sandra Esty who has agreed to record this Gathering.

STATE OF THE ORDER

Reported by the President General

Order of the House of Wessex has had a fruitful year. The term of office was shortened at the outset of the pandemic so that the inaugural administration could carry the Order through what citizens were initially informed would be an international outbreak that would be broken by briefly closing down. By mutual agreement with Founder and now Honorary President General Poland and this officer, an election was held at the Zoom meeting of the Fourth Annual Gathering with the agreement that in compliance with the Order's bylaws the term would conclude in this even numbered year of 2022. It has been an honor and pleasure to serve the Order.

All the officers and chairmen are to be commended for their immediate hands on in their respective duties. The transition was smooth. In the past year a number of new members have been welcomed to the Order. James Conway designed an amended membership certificate with our finalized emblem of the Order. Going forward it is the membership certificate. Those of you holding the old certificate may for an additional fee request the new one.

This past July Awards Chairman Swisher forwarded a gift of \$500 to the Hillsdale College designated for the Classical Studies Curriculum. This action was in compliance with Standing Rule 5. The Fifth Edition of *The Register* was published and distributed to the membership by Bayport Printing House. Two issues of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle* were distributed to the membership by Constance Paradiso.

After careful consideration and with regret the Fifth Annual Gathering planned with the Royal Seven was amended to this Zoom meeting. Thank you for attending. It has been my high honor to serve with Founder and Honorary President General Poland , all the officers and the chairmen for the members of Order of the House of Wessex. Carla Whitehurst Odom

TREASURER GENERAL'S REPORT

President General Odom read the report presented by Treasurer General Swisher and reviewed by John Hallberg Jones.

From: John Hallberg Jones <john@goodnewsproductions.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 2, 2022 7:12 AM
To: Mike Swisher <MSwisher@bayportprinting.com>
Subject: House of Wessex Audit 2021

I have examined the records of the Order of the House of Wessex for the year 2021.

All items appear to be in order.

I am pleased to present this audit report.

John Hallberg Jones
Minneapolis, MN

Treasurer General Swisher's report

Financial Statement for the Year Ending 31 December 2021

Beginning Balance	\$19,454.75
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INCOME

Life	
Memberships	\$6,750.00
Supplemental Income	\$975.00
Application Fees	\$1,000.00
Insignia Income	\$85.80
Donations	\$0.00
	<hr/>
	\$8,810.80
	<hr/>

EXPENSES

Postage	\$84.24
Annual Filing Fee for Incorporation	\$25.00
Website & Domain Name Fees	\$180.85
Donation to Hillsdale College	\$500.00
Insignia Expense	\$73.80
Office Supplies - USB Drives	\$71.64
Membership Directory	\$1,263.35
	<hr/>
	\$2,198.88
	<hr/>

Ending Balance	<hr/> <hr/>
	\$26,066.67

Life Membership Fund	<hr/>
	\$29,500.00
Operating Funds	<hr/> <hr/>
	(\$3,433.33)

GENEALOGIST'S REPORT

President General Odom read Genealogist Partin's report. The Order has 119 members, 14 supplemental applications. The Genealogist's report was adopted as presented.

All other reports received have been filed.

UNFNISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business reported.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business reported.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman Garner presented the slate as follows:

President General	Ann Scott Garner
First Vice-President General	Paul Ashley Walden
Second Vice-President General	Lila Burner Housden
Chaplain General	Dr. Grace Bliss Smith, Ph.D.
Treasurer General	Stephen Amandus Arter
Secretary General	Sandra June Esty
Registrar General	James Partin has agreed to continue to <i>serve by appointment</i>
Chancellor	Deborah Hicks <i>has agreed to serve pro-tempore' by appointment</i>
Historian	Michael Scott Swisher
Councilor	Virginia Hurtes Rouse

Asked if any nominations from the floor. Hearing none a motion was made by Cricket Crigler and the slate was accepted as presented, members voted and it was adopted. It was stated the new officers will accept their duties at the conclusion of this Fifth Annual Gathering. It was asked that each officer in the current administration to please be prompt in passing their records to their successor.

President General Odom asked if there was any new business to bring before this administration. Hearing none, she proceeded to install the incoming officers.

INSTALLATION

Outgoing President General Odom installed the incoming officers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 2023 Sixth Annual Gathering is scheduled to be held jointly with the Royal Seven at The Army and Navy Club, Washington, DC, beginning at four o'clock in the afternoon of April 10, 2023, with each Order's business meeting immediately following each other, concluding with a time of fellowship followed by a gala dinner and brief program. Invitations will be extended around the first of March in 2023.

President General Odom said having no further business to bring before the Fifth Annual Gathering it is now her privilege to turn over the remainder of the Gathering to President General Ann Scott Garner,

PRESIDENT GENERAL GARNER

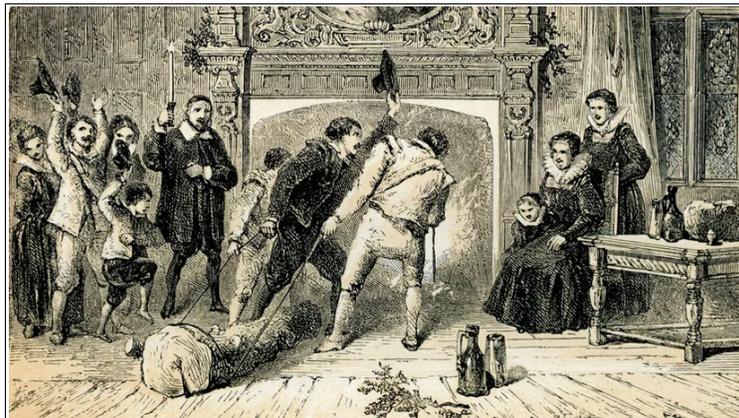
Made a motion to make Carla Whitehurst Odom Honorary President General, it was voted on and adopted.

ADJOURN

Hearing of no further business, the Fifth Annual Gathering of the Order of the House of Wessex was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Submitted by Sandra (Sandi) Esty for Secretary General Rev Wilson.

Celebrating Christmas in Anglo-Saxon Times



Source: <https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/holidays-christmas/yule-log.htm>

The term “Christesmaesse” was first coined by the Anglo-Saxons in 1038. However, how did our early Anglo-Saxon ancestors celebrate this holiday? It began in the pre-Christian Britain with the December 25 celebration of Yule. When Pope Gregory the Great sent his missionaries to convert the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity in the sixth century, he instructed them to incorporate some of the Yule customs into Christian celebrations to make the conversion more acceptable. One of these customs of course was the burning of the Yule log. These early English however celebrated

Christmas much differently that we do today: for one, it was the custom to fast for the 12 days preceding Christmas and to give alms to the poor and monasteries. The alms giving custom represented the Three Wise Men bringing gifts to the Christ child. For Alfred the Great, the Christmas season ended unpleasantly in 878 when the Vikings defeated him in a battle on January 6 of that year...which was the day after the Twelfth Night of the Christmas season. December 25 was the day that Charlemagne was crowned in 800 and William the Conqueror in 1066. In early medieval times in fact, Epiphany (Jan 6) was more celebrated than Christmas Day.

Some other interesting Christmas customs which still exist today, at least in England, include mince pies, which were originally baked in a rectangular shell to represent the Christ Child's crib and included exotic spices such as cinnamon and cloves to represent the gifts of the Three Wise Men. Caroling began when carols were banned in churches in medieval times, thus forcing the carolers (the word carol literally means to sing and dance in a circle) to sing outside. Boxing Day (Dec 26) began when the rich provided gifts of money to the poor in a clay pot with a slit in the top called piggies (thus the piggy bank). Christmas Day ironically was one of the 4 days in the financial year when ground rents were due to the lords of the manor. (Source: historic-uk.com).

Edward the Martyr
The 8th King to follow Alfred
the Great

Submitted by Constance Paradiso

How did he get that name? Let's find out...

Edward (Old English: *Eadweard*, pronounced [ˈæːɑdwæɑrɔd]; c. 962 – 18 March 978), often called **the Martyr**,^[a] was King of the English from 975 until he was murdered in 978. Edward was the eldest son of King Edgar, but was not his father's acknowledged heir. On Edgar's death, the leadership of England was contested, with some supporting Edward's claim to be king and others supporting his younger half-brother Æthelred the Unready, recognized as a legitimate son of Edgar. Edward was chosen as king and was crowned by his main clerical supporters, the archbishops Dunstan of Canterbury and Oswald of York.

The great nobles of the kingdom, ealdormen Ælfhere and Æthelwine, quarrelled, and civil war almost broke out. In the so-called anti-monastic reaction, the nobles took advantage of Edward's weakness to



dispossess the Benedictine reformed monasteries of lands and other properties that King Edgar had granted to them.

Edward's short reign was brought to an end by his murder at Corfe Castle in 978 in circumstances that are not altogether clear.^[1] He was hurriedly buried at Wareham, but was reburied with great ceremony at Shaftesbury Abbey in Dorset early in 979. In 1001 Edward's remains were moved to a more prominent place in the abbey, probably with the blessing of his half-brother King Æthelred. Edward was already reckoned a saint by this time.

A number of lives of Edward were written in the centuries following his death in which he was portrayed as a martyr, generally seen as a victim of the Queen Dowager Ælfthryth, mother of Æthelred. He is today recognized as a saint in the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Anglican Communion.

Later sources of questionable reliability address the identity of Edward's mother. The earliest such source is a life of Dunstan by Osbern of Canterbury, probably written in the 1080s. Osbern writes that Edward's mother was a nun at Wilton Abbey whom the king seduced.^[4] When Eadmer wrote a life of Dunstan some decades later, he included an account of Edward's parentage obtained from Nicholas of Worcester. This denied that Edward was the son of a liaison between Edgar and a nun, presenting him as the son of Æthelflæd, daughter of Ordmær, "ealdorman of the East Anglians", whom Edgar had married in the years when he ruled Mercia (between 957 and Eadwig's death in 959). Additional accounts are offered by Goscelin in his life of Edgar's daughter Saint Edith of Wilton and in the histories of John of Worcester and William of Malmesbury. Together these various accounts suggest that Edward's mother was probably a noblewoman named Æthelflæd, surnamed *Candida* or *Eneda*—"the White" or "White Duck".

A charter of 966 describes Ælfthryth, whom Edgar had married in 964, as the king's "lawful wife", and their eldest son Edmund as the legitimate son of the king. Edward is noted as the king's son. Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester was a supporter of Ælfthryth and Æthelred, but Dunstan, the Archbishop of Canterbury, appears to have supported Edward, and a genealogy created at his Glastonbury Abbey circa 969 gives Edward precedence over Edmund and Æthelred. Ælfthryth was the widow of Æthelwald, Ealdorman of East Anglia, and perhaps Edgar's third wife. Cyril Hart argues that the contradictions regarding the identity of Edward's mother, and the fact that Edmund appears to have been regarded as the legitimate heir until his death in 971, suggest that Edward was probably illegitimate. However, Barbara Yorke thinks that Æthelflæd was Edgar's wife, but Ælfthryth was a consecrated queen when she gave birth to her sons, who were therefore considered more "legitimate" than Edward. Æthelwold denied that Edward was legitimate, but Yorke considers this "opportunist special pleading".

Edmund's full brother Æthelred may have inherited his position as heir. On a charter to the New Minster at Winchester, the names of Ælfthryth and her son Æthelred appear ahead of Edward's name. When Edgar died on 8 July 975, Æthelred was probably nine and Edward only a few years older.

Disputed succession

Edgar had been a strong ruler who had forced monastic reforms on a probably unwilling church and nobility, aided by the leading clerics of the day, Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury; Oswald of Worcester, Archbishop of York; and Bishop Æthelwold of Winchester. By endowing the reformed Benedictine monasteries with the lands required for their support, he had dispossessed many lesser nobles, and had rewritten leases and loans of land to the benefit of the monasteries. Secular clergy, many of whom would have been members of the nobility, had been expelled from the new monasteries. While Edgar lived, he strongly supported the reformers, but following his death, the discontents which these changes had provoked came into the open.

The leading figures had all been supporters of the reform, but they were no longer united. Relations between Archbishop Dunstan and Bishop Æthelwold may have been strained. Archbishop Oswald was at odds with Ealdorman Ælfhere, Ealdorman of Mercia, while Ælfhere and his kin were rivals for power with the affinity of Æthelwine, Ealdorman of East Anglia. Dunstan was said to have questioned Edgar's marriage to Queen Dowager Ælfthryth and the legitimacy of their son Æthelred.

These leaders were divided as to whether Edward or Æthelred should succeed Edgar. Neither law nor precedent offered much guidance. The choice between the sons of Edward the Elder had divided his kingdom, and Edgar's elder brother Eadwig had been forced to give over a large part of the kingdom to Edgar. The Queen Dowager certainly supported the claims of her son Æthelred, aided by Bishop Æthelwold; and Dunstan supported Edward, aided by his fellow archbishop Oswald. It is likely that Ealdorman Ælfhere and his allies supported Æthelred and that Æthelwine and his allies supported Edward, although some historians suggest the opposite.

Later sources suggest that perceptions of legitimacy played a part in the arguments, as did the relative age of the two candidates. In time, Edward was anointed by Archbishops Dunstan and Oswald at Kingston upon Thames, most likely in 975. There is evidence that the settlement involved a degree of compromise. Æthelred appears to have been given lands which normally belonged to the king's sons, some of which had been granted by Edgar to Abingdon Abbey and which were forcibly repossessed for Æthelred by the leading nobles.

Edward's reign

A penny minted during Edward's reign at Stamford, Lincolnshire, one of the Five Burghs

After recording Edward's succession, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reports that a comet appeared, and that famine and "manifold disturbances" followed.^[25] The "manifold disturbances", sometimes called the anti-monastic reaction, appear to have started soon after Edgar's death. During this time, the experienced Ealdorman Oslac of Northumbria, effective ruler of much of northern England, was exiled due to unknown circumstances. Oslac was



followed as ealdorman by Thored, either Oslac's son of that name or Thored Gunnar's son mentioned by the *Chronicle* in 966.

Edward, or rather those who were wielding power on his behalf, also appointed a number of new ealdormen to positions in Wessex. Little is known of two of these men, and it is difficult to determine which faction, if any, they belonged to. Edwin, probably ruling in Sussex, and perhaps also parts of Kent and Surrey, was buried at Abingdon, an abbey patronised by Ælfhere. Æthelmær, who oversaw Hampshire, held lands in Rutland, perhaps suggesting links to Æthelwine.

The third ealdorman, Æthelweard, today best known for his Latin history, ruled in the west. Æthelweard was a descendant of King Æthelred of Wessex and probably the brother of King Eadwig's wife. He appears to have been a supporter of Edward rather than of either faction.

In some places, the secular clergy who had been driven from the monasteries returned, driving the regular clergy out in their turn. Bishop Æthelwold had been the main enemy of the seculars, and Archbishop Dunstan appears to have done little to aid his fellow reformer at this time. More generally, the magnates took the opportunity to undo many of Edgar's grants to monasteries and to force the abbots to rewrite leases and loans to favour the local nobility. Ealdorman Ælfhere was the leader in this regard, attacking Oswald's network of monasteries across Mercia. Ælfhere's rival Æthelwine, while a staunch protector of his family monastery of Ramsey Abbey, treated Ely Abbey and other monasteries harshly. At some point during these disorders, Ælfhere and Æthelwine appear to have come close to open warfare. This may well have been related to Ælfhere's ambitions in East Anglia and to attacks upon Ramsey Abbey. Æthelwine, supported by his kinsman Ealdorman Byrhtnoth of Essex and others unspecified, mustered an army and caused Ælfhere to back down.

In the 19th-century depiction by James William Edmund Doyle, Edward the Martyr is offered a cup of mead by Ælfthryth, widow of the late Edgar, unaware that her attendant is about to murder him.

Very few charters survive from Edward's reign, perhaps as few as three, leaving Edward's brief reign in obscurity. By contrast, numerous charters survived from the reigns of his father Edgar and half-brother Æthelred. All of the surviving Edward charters concern the royal heartland of Wessex; two deal with Crediton where Edward's former tutor Sideman was bishop. During Edgar's reign, dies for coins were cut only at Winchester and distributed from there to other mints across the kingdom. Edward's reign permitted dies to be cut locally at York and at Lincoln. The general impression is of a reduction or breakdown of royal authority in the midlands and north. The machinery of government continued to function, as councils and synods met as customary during Edward's reign, at Kirtlington in Oxfordshire after Easter 977, and again



at Calne in Wiltshire the following year. During the meeting at Calne, some councillors were killed and others injured by the collapse of the floor of their room.

Death

The version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* containing the most detailed account records that Edward was murdered in the evening of 18 March 978, while visiting Ælfthryth and Æthelred, probably at or near the mound on which the ruins of Corfe Castle now stand. It adds that he was buried at Wareham "without any royal honours". The compiler of this version of the *Chronicle*, manuscript E, called the Peterborough Chronicle, says:

Commemorative sign for Edward the Martyr at Corfe Castle, Dorset, UK. The sign is an artist's impression of Edward, and underneath is written "Edward the Martyr King of Wessex treacherously stabbed at Corves gate in A.D. 978 by his stepmother Elfrida".

"No worse deed for the English race was done than this was, since they first sought out the land of Britain. Men murdered him, but God exalted him. In life he was an earthly king; after death he is now a heavenly saint. His earthly relatives would not avenge him, but his Heavenly Father has much avenged him."

Other recensions of the *Chronicle* report less detail, the oldest text stating only that he was killed, while versions from the 1040s say that he was martyred.





Corfe Castle from below

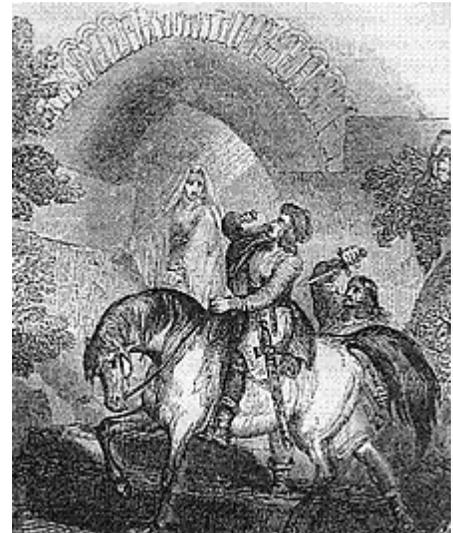
Of other early sources, the life of Oswald of Worcester, attributed to Byrhtferth of Ramsey, adds that Edward was killed by Æthelred's advisers, who attacked him when he was dismounting. It agrees that he was buried without ceremony at Wareham. Archbishop Wulfstan II alludes to the killing of Edward in his *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos*, written not later than 1016. A recent study translates his words as follows:

"And a very great betrayal of a lord it is also in the world, that a man betray his lord to death, or drive him living from the land, and both have come to pass in this land: Edward was betrayed, and then killed, and after that

burned ..."

Ælfthryth looks on as Edward is stabbed to death: from a Victorian edition of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*

Later sources, further removed from events, such as the late 11th-century *Passio S. Eadwardi* and John of Worcester, claim that Ælfthryth organised the killing of Edward, while Henry of Huntingdon wrote that she killed Edward herself.



Modern historians have offered a variety of interpretations of Edward's killing. Three main theories have been proposed. Firstly, that Edward was killed, as the life of Oswald claims, by nobles in Æthelred's service, either as a result of a personal quarrel, or to place their master on the throne. The life of Oswald portrays Edward as an unstable young man who, according to Frank Stenton: "had offended many important persons by his intolerable violence of speech and behaviour. Long after he had passed into veneration as a saint it was remembered that his outbursts of rage had alarmed all who knew him, and especially the members of his own household."^[42] This may be a trope of hagiography.

In the second version, Ælfthryth was implicated, either beforehand by plotting the killing, or afterwards in allowing the killers to go free and unpunished.

A third alternative, noting that Edward in 978 was very close to ruling on his own, proposes that Ealdorman Ælfhere was behind the killing so as to preserve his own influence and to prevent Edward taking revenge for Ælfhere's actions earlier in the reign.^[45] John notes this and interprets Ælfhere's part in Edward's reburial as being a penance for the assassination.



The Great Seal of Shaftesbury Abbey, where Edward's relics lay until the English Reformation

Edward's body lay at Wareham for a year before being disinterred. Ælfhere initiated the reinterment, perhaps as a gesture of reconciliation. According to the life of Oswald, Edward's body was found to be incorrupt when it was disinterred (which was taken as a miraculous sign). The body was taken to the Shaftesbury Abbey, a nunnery with royal connections which had been endowed by King Alfred the Great and where Edward and Æthelred's grandmother Ælfgifu had spent her latter years.

Edward's remains were reburied with lavish public ceremony. Later versions, such as the *Passio S. Eadwardi*, have more complicated accounts. It said that Edward's body was concealed in a marsh, where it was revealed by miraculous events. The *Passio* dates the reburial to 18 February.

In 1001, Edward's relics (for he was considered a saint, although never canonized) were translated to a more prominent place within the nunnery at Shaftesbury. The ceremonies are said to have been led by the then-Bishop of Sherborne, Wulfsig III, accompanied by a senior cleric whom the *Passio* calls Elsinus, sometimes identified with Ælfsige, the abbot of the New Minster, Winchester. King Æthelred, preoccupied with the threat of a Danish invasion, did not attend in person, but he issued a charter to the Shaftesbury nuns late in 1001 granting them lands at Bradford on Avon, which is thought to be related. A 13th-century calendar of saints gives the date of this translation as 20 June.

The rise of Edward's cult has been interpreted in various ways. It is sometimes portrayed as a popular movement, or as the product of a political attack on King Æthelred by former supporters of Edward. Alternatively, Æthelred has been seen as one of the key forces in the promotion of Edward's cult and that of their sister Eadgifu (Edith of Wilton). He was thought to make the charter in 1001 granting land to Shaftesbury at the elevation of Edward's relics, and some accounts suggest that Æthelred legislated the observation of Edward's feast days across England in a law code of 1008. It is unclear whether this innovation, seemingly drafted by Archbishop Wulfstan II, dates from Æthelred's reign. It may instead have been promulgated by King Cnut. David Rollason has drawn attention to the increased importance of the cults of other murdered royal saints in this period. Among these are the cults of King Ecgberht of Kent's nephews, whose lives form part of the Mildrith Legend, and those of the Mercian Saints Kenelm and Wigstan.



The Shrine of St Edward in the Church of St. Edward the Martyr, Brookwood (2018)
Plaque to John Edward Wilson-Claridge at the Church of St. Edward the Martyr, Brookwood; he recovered and donated the



supposed remains of Edward the Martyr

During the sixteenth century and English Reformation, King Henry VIII led the dissolution of the monasteries and many holy places were demolished. Edward's remains were hidden so as to avoid desecration.

In 1931, the relics were recovered by Wilson-Claridge during an archaeological excavation; their identity was confirmed by Dr. T. E. A. Stowell, an osteologist. In 1970, examinations performed on the relics suggested that the young man had died in the same manner as Edward. Wilson-Claridge wanted the relics to go to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia. His brother, however, wanted them to be returned to Shaftesbury Abbey. For decades, the relics were kept in a cutlery box in a bank vault at the Midland Bank in Woking, Surrey because of the unresolved dispute about which of two churches should have them.

In time, the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia was victorious and placed the relics in a church in Brookwood Cemetery in Woking, with the enshrinement ceremony occurring in September 1984. The St Edward Brotherhood of monks was organized there as well.^[51] The church is now named St Edward the Martyr Orthodox Church, and it is under the jurisdiction of a traditionalist Greek Orthodox community. However, while the bones are of approximately the right date, they are of a man in his late twenties or early thirties rather than a youth in his mid-teens.

In the Orthodox Church, St Edward is ranked as a Passion-bearer, a type of saint who accepts death out of love for Christ. Edward was widely venerated before the canonization process was formalized, and he is also regarded as a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion. His feast day is

celebrated on 18 March, the day of his murder. The Orthodox Church commemorates him a second time each year on 3 September and commemorates the translation of his relics into Orthodox possession on 13 February.

Credit to House of Wessex – Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_the_Martyr

