

St. Stephen's Legacy: Mary, Patroness and Queen of Hungary

Erika Papp Faber

Not only did St. Stephen establish Hungary as a Christian nation that would serve as a bastion protecting the rest of Europe from barbarian incursions from the East for hundreds of years, but he also entrusted his country to Mary.

Since his only son Imre had died, St. Stephen offered his Crown, the symbol and embodiment of the Hungarian state, to Mary, the Mother of God. Ever since then, Hungary has been her legacy. This is best depicted by the miraculous image of Márianosztra, which was crowned with a replica of St. Stephen's Crown in 1986.

That painting's history is tied to Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland. Although the origin of Our Lady of Czestochowa is shrouded in mystery (was it painted by St. Luke? or is it a 14th century Byzantine icon? or was it perhaps painted by an Italian artist?), we do know that it was brought from Hungary to Poland in 1382. In that year, King Lajos sent his nephew, László of Opeln, to found a monastery at Czestochowa, where a small wooden church already stood.

The 16 monks accompanying László were from the monastery of Márianosztra in Hungary, which the king had founded 30 years earlier in gratitude for his safe return from the war, and where he often went to pray. The monks belonged to the Society of St. Paul the First Hermit, or Paulines, the only monastic order of Hungarian origin. They took with them the picture now venerated as Our



Lady of Czestochowa. They settled at Jasna Gora, and many miracles occurred through Our Lady's intercession there. The painting became the national treasure of the Polish people.

With the Turkish occupation of Hungary in 1526, which lasted for some 160 years, many churches and monasteries were destroyed. So was Márianosztra, which once had accommodated 300 Pauline monks. It was only in 1711 that the work of rebuilding was begun. In Poland, a copy of the miraculous image of Czestochowa was made for the renovated monastery of Márianosztra. The monks

wanted to transfer to it all the grace and power of the original, so they touched the copy to the original. Apparently, it worked, because miraculous healings soon were recorded at Márianosztra as well, and they continue to our own day.

But the rebuilt monastery did not flourish for long. In 1786, the Hapsburg emperor Joseph II closed down all religious houses. For 72 years, Márianosztra monastery stood empty. It was turned into a women's prison in 1858, and in the 20th century, under the Communist regime, it was used as a men's penitentiary. (Among the many victims of Communism, even József Cardinal Mindszenty was imprisoned there for a time.)

Today, Márianosztra is again a Pauline monastery. Its church, the national shrine of reparation, once more houses the miraculous image of Our Lady. Adorned with a copy of the Holy Crown of St. Stephen in 1986, it proclaims to all that Mary is Queen of Hungary. The picture was renovated and ceremonially reinstalled in October of 2011.

Erika Papp Faber is editor of Magyar News Online

A négyökrös szekér

Petőfi Sándor

Nem Pesten történt, amit hallotok,
Ott ily regényes dolgok nem történnek.
A társaságnak úri tagjai
Szekérre ültek, és azon menének.
Szekéren mentek, de ökörsekeén.
Két pár ökör tevé a fogatot,
Az országúton végig a szekérral
A négy ökör lassacskán ballagott.

Világos éj volt. A hold fenn vala;
Halványan járt a megszakadt felhőben,
Miként a bús hölgy, aki férjinek
Sírhalját keresi a temetőben.
Kalmár szellő járt a szomszéd mezőkön,
S vett a füvektől édes illatot.
Az országúton végig a szekérral
A négy ökör lassacskán ballagott.

A társaságban én is ott valék,
S valék szomszédja épen Erzsikének,
A társaságnak többi tagjai
Beszélgetének és énekelgetének.
Én ábrándoztam, s szóltam Erzsikéhez
„Ne válasszunk magunknak csillagot?”
Az országúton végig a szekérral
A négy ökör lassacskán ballagott.

„Ne válasszunk magunknak csillagot?”
Szólék én ábrándozva Erzsikéhez,
„A csillag vissza fog vezetni majd
A múlt időknek boldog emlékéhez,
Ha elszakaszt a sors egymástól minket.”
S választottunk magunknak csillagot,
Az országúton végig a szekérral
A négy ökör lassacskán ballagott

Sopron's Own Currency

An unusual concept was introduced in the city of Sopron and its surroundings in 2010: locally issued currency as the means of exchange within the region. It is perfectly legal and is backed up by the national treasury.



It is said that 110 million people in the world use local currency, as opposed to national currency, in their dealings with each other. In Sopron, Hungary, a local currency called *kékfrank* (a not so subtle reference to the local wine called *kékfrankos*) was introduced in May of 2010, for use within the region. Its purpose is to revitalize the economy of the region, and at the same time boost the sense of community.

While national currencies are issued by the state, and are guaranteed by law to be accepted within the country, individuals may also use substitute currency as a means of exchange. A Hungarian law restricts the use of an alternate currency to a closed community, whose members may use it among themselves. In the case of the *kékfrank*, this is the *Ha-Mi-Összefogunk Európai Szövetkezet* (If We Join Together European Co-operative). Co-op members may enter subscriptions for *kékfrank*, and the institution may give the currency only to its members and partners. They, in turn, may pass them on to any strangers who will accept them. It may even be dropped in the church collection.

By last year, some 440 places of business in the Sopron area, and over 40 within the border area of Austria which had been part of Hungary and which still retains a Hungarian population accept the *kékfrank* as a means of exchange. Although coins have not been issued as yet, any change is usually

paid in *forints*.

Based on the principle of the Swiss alternate currency called *Wir*, which has been in existence for decades, the *kékfrank* is backed 100% by the forint, and is under official financial oversight. One *kékfrank* equals one forint in value. It was created by the Hungarian Mint, and carries the same safety elements as the 20,000 forint note.

The smallest *kékfrank* denomination is 500, the largest, 20,000. Portraits of famous people with connections to Sopron decorate the various denominations. They include Liszt Ferenc (on the 20,000 note), Joseph Haydn (on the 10,000 note), and Kitaibel Pál – see “Did you know...” in the October 2010 issue of Magyar News Online) – on the 1,000 note. Following Sopron's lead, the city of Kapuvár, located between Sopron and Győr, has started a similar local currency initiative in the Rábaköz region. It will be called “*Rábaköz tallér*.” It has been said that these alternative currencies will become respected means of exchange when they begin to be counterfeited!

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A Date in Hungarian History: August 29th, 1526

Dr. Dora Józsefné, née Tima Irma

On August 29th, Hungarians remember the disastrous Battle of Mohács, which determined the fate of Hungary from that day forward. It marked the beginning of 160 years of Turkish occupation, followed by Austrian rule. Here is a brief summary of that historic battle.



Memorial park in Mohács

In the course of its history, our nation was often the target of outside attacks. Yet Hungary never received any help from Europe. Once our proud, fighting people had been the feared raiders of the surrounding nations, and proved themselves unbeatable. Let us recall the era of incursions, when all of Europe lay at its feet. But we could always count only on ourselves, even when we were the shield of the western states.

Nor was there a lack of internal strife. The barons, prelates and landowners cruelly oppressed the people. The barons passed a large part of the treasury's income into their own hands, and the border fortress system became weak, leaving the way open for the Ottoman empire. At this time, the peasant revolt also caused serious losses. After the death of King Ulászló II, his ten-year old son Lajos II became king. The royal power continued to decline. In place of the king, it was the council of barons and prelates that ruled the country. Then, Sultan Suleiman I captured Nándorfehérvár (today's Belgrade), which had been the gate of Hungary, in 1521. The line of southern border fortresses no longer protected the country, and the way lay open to the heartland. Instead of joining together against the powerful Turkish horde, the other countries

turned away from us.

Suleiman I started out from Istanbul towards Hungary on April 23rd, 1526. Tomori Pál, Archbishop of Kalocsa and captain of the southern part of Hungary, begged in vain for help; he did not even receive the money to pay his soldiers.

The war council chose the meadow of Mohács as the scene of the battle. The Hungarian army of 25,000 faced a Turkish force of 78-80,000, trying to stop the Turks who greatly outnumbered them. The battle lasted a mere hour and a half. Some 15,000 Hungarians lost their lives in the battle fought on August 29th, 1526. In fleeing from the battle scene, the young King Lajos II drowned in the flooded Csele Brook. Left without its king, the country lay at Suleiman's feet.

The Battle of Mohács is one of the worst defeats of our history. The defeat was brought about by the combination of wasted treasury income, division among the aristocracy, and the mistakes made by the Hungarian military command in conducting the battle.

On September 9th, Suleiman I entered the defenseless city of Buda. Meanwhile, the Turks devastated the eastern and northern parts of the Dunántúl – Transdanubian – area. The country awaited its fate in dead silence.

We have to mention Kanizsai Dorotya, one of the last descendents of an ancient aristocratic family, a person of consequence who had been greatly respected and who had always helped the needy. Following the Battle of Mohács, she hired 400 men to bury the fallen on the battlefield.

The loss at Mohács brought a turning point in the history not only of Hungary, but of all Central Europe. It

was the start of Hungary's decline. Posterity had a memorial erected on the spot of the catastrophe of Mohács. It is reminiscent of a huge mass grave. Many Hungarian artists have placed their memorial creations on it. Hungarian *kopjafa* (carved wooden grave markers) and horse-tail-bedecked Turkish banners serve as reminders of the tragedy.

Dr. Dora Józsefné, née Tima Irma is a retired school principal enjoying her "golden years" at Hévíz.

Translated by Erika Papp Faber

A Mohácsi vész

A történelem folyamán sokszor érte nemzetünket külső támadás. Magyarország sosem kapott Európa részéről támogatást. Harcos, büszke népünk egykor a környező országok rettegett kalandozói voltak, megverhetetleneknek bizonyultak. Gondoljunk a kalandozások korára, amikor egész Európa a lábai előtt hervert. Ám mindig csak magunkra számíthattunk, akkor is amikor a nyugati államok pajzsai voltunk.

A belső villongások sem maradtak el. A nép nyakára telepedett bárók, főpapok és földesurak kegyetlenül sanyargatták a népet. A kincstári jövedelmek nagy részét a bárók a maguk kezére játszották át, a végvárrendszer meggyengült, így szabad utat engedett az oszmán birodalomnak.

Ebben az időben a parasztháború is súlyos veszteséget okozott. II. Ulászló halála után gyermeke II. Lajos tízesztendősen lett király. A királyi hatalom tovább gyengült. A király helyett a főnemesek, főpapok tanácsa látta el a kormányzást. Ez időben I. Szulejmán szultán 1521-ben elfoglalta Nándorfehérvárt, az ország



The finding of the body of King Lajos II painted by Székely Bertalan

kapuját. A déli végvárvonal nem zárt többé, megnyílt az út az ország szívébe. Az egyes országok ahelyett, hogy összefogtak volna a hatalmas török sereg ellen, elfordultak tőlünk.

I.Szulejmán 1526. április 23.-án elindult Isztambulból Magyarország felé. Tomori Pál (kalocsai érsek), a délvidék kapitánya hiába könyörgött segítségért, még katonái zsoldját sem kapta meg. A haditanács a mohácsi mezőt választotta a csata helyszínéül. A magyar sereg 25 ezer fővel állt szemben a törökök 78-80 ezer fős seregével. Mohácsnál próbálták feltartóztatni a túlerőben lévő törököket. A csata mindössze másfél óráig tartott. 1526. augusztus 29.-én megívott csatában 15 ezer magyar esett el.

Menekülés közben az ifjú II.Lajos király a megáradt Csele patakba fulladt. A király nélküli ország Szulejmán lábai előtt hevert. A mohácsi csata történelmünk egyik legsúlyosabb veresége. A bárók által eltékozolt kincstári jövedelem, a nemesi megosztottság, a magyar hadvezetés hibái együttesen eredményezték a kudarcot.

I.Szulejmán szeptember 9.-én vonult be a védtelenül hagyott Buda városába. Közben földúlták a Dunántúl keleti és északi részét és a Duna-Tisza köze északi részét. Az ország halálos csendben várt sorsára.

Meg kell említenünk Kanizsai Dorottyát, egy ősi nemzetség egyik utolsó sarját, akit nagy tisztelet és tekintély övezett, aki mindig segített a szenvedőkön. A mohácsi ütközet után, a csatamezőn temetetlenül fekvő halottakat, 400 felfogadott emberrel eltemettette.

A mohácsi csatavesztés fordulópontot hozott nemcsak Magyarországra, de egész Közép-Európa történelmében is. Megindult Magyarország romlása.

Az utókor, a mohácsi vész helyén, egy hatalmas, közös sírra emlékeztető emlékművet építtetett. Rajta számos magyar művész helyezte el az emlékezés műalkotásait. Magyar kopjafák és török lófarkas zászlók emlékeztetnek a tragédiára.

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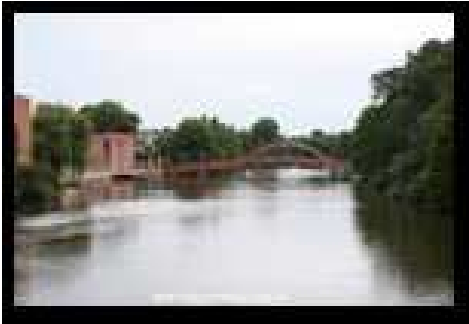
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Szarvas

Good things come in small packages. With only 18,000 inhabitants, Szarvas today is a quiet vacation town, with opportunities for thermal baths, boating and angling. But its recorded history reaches back some 800 years.



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The area of Szarvas, located in Békés County, in the southeastern part of Hungary, has been inhabited since the Stone Age. Of the numerous archeological finds, a bone needle-box with *rovás* (carved Hungarian writing) is most significant. The town of Szarvas (meaning "elk") was mentioned by King Béla's scribe – known only as Anonymous – as early as 1210 as "Szarvashalom", that is, "Elk Hill".

In Turkish times, a palisade fortress was erected here to guard the crossing over the backwater of the Kőrös River. It changed hands several times, and was finally destroyed in 1686. The area became totally depopulated during the Turkish occupation. The succeeding Hapsburgs gave it to commissary officer Harruckern who brought in Slovak serfs from Upper Hungary in 1722.

A Lutheran minister, Tessedik Sámuel established the first Central European agricultural school here, at the turn of the 18th-19th century, developing up-to-date agricultural methods, and was important for his contribution to town planning. The church designed by Tessedik has a

pneumatic organ with 2,500 pipes. The family of Count Bolza built castles, and founded the so-called *Pepikert* (the forerunner of today's arboretum which can boast of some 1,600 species of trees and shrubs). They also set up a so-called "dry mill", one that functioned on live horsepower. Békés County's first printing house operated in Szarvas from 1847 on.

In 1880, Hungary's geographical center was determined to be in Szarvas, at a former mill site, where a windmill was built in 1940. The country having been reduced to a third of its size by the Treaty of Trianon, the geographic center of present-day Hungary lies some 124 kilometers to the northwest, at Pusttavacs.

Today, Szarvas has a population of 18,000. The monument with the replica of St. Stephen's Crown flanked by two angels (as seen on our header this month) was created by Mihály Gábor and erected for the Hungarian millennium in 2000. It stands on top of a 15 m (about 45 ft.) high column.



The monument in Szarvas

It's a Small World

Olga Vallay Szokolay

We were taking a day-trip from our hostess, Erzsébet's, old family vacation house in Bad Goisern on the Traun River, in Austria, to nearby

Gosau. After some hiking and some beers our little company of six was descending on the narrow, steep mountain path leading to the cable-car and to the parking lot from a restaurant overlooking the magnificent blue lake, Gosausee, in the deep, far below. On our way down we encountered another group climbing up and they, lo and behold, were talking Hungarian.

Sándor, our host, addressed them, asking if they knew the Hungarian water-polo team's result in the finals at the ongoing Olympics. This started a conversation, exchanging where we all were from. It turned out that we were all living in the United States. Erzsébet asked them which state they lived in.

"In New Jersey", came the reply. "We live in Jersey, too", she responded. "Whereabouts do you live?"

Their answer revealed that they lived quite close to each other. Their "spokesman" introduced himself and his name was something like "Joe B.-".

Erzsébet said: "My daughter used to be engaged to Steve B.- but they broke up. Are you related?"

"He is my cousin", Joe said.... Luckily, by then Erzsébet's daughter was happily married to someone else.

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Flower Regatta (virágkorzó), Budapest, 1934

Remy P. Papp

My dear sister asked me to write this item for her. Her excuse was that she was not around then, but I was. (She'll think of anything to get out from under, even coming up with such a lame excuse as this!) True enough, though, not only was I around at the time, I took part in it. More about that in a moment.

I do not recall whether it was the first year, or whether it was a continuation of a recent tradition. Anyway, with the rich rowing cult on the Danube, somebody came up with this idea to hold a regatta (really a parade on the water with all the private boats) decorated with flowers any way the boat owners desired. The parade was held in the little bay south of the Technical University on the Buda side (the right shore of the river). There one was supposed to row past the jury stand, where the judges acted as in a beauty contest and awarded prizes to the more outstanding and innovatively applied decorations.

This regatta was to be held as part of the St. Stephen's Day celebrations of August 20. My parents were young and full of ambition and decided to participate, without considering the hard reality of getting into the restricted space of that small bay so many boats and "wild" rowers ("vadevezősök" – that's what they called those who did not belong to any club or take part in an officially organized race).

My parents planned quite an elaborate setup for the decorations. My Father worked for a dredging and water construction company at the time, located at Újpest, farther up on the river at the north end of Pest. He had the shop there fabricate a bow-shaped nose made of flat steel for the boat. My Mother had bought quite a large amount of cut flowers. We did not have to buy the so-called

Boy Scout poles (approximately 8 feet long), which were used as the center support for our tent. We had two of those.

With all this equipment plus the flowers and a goodly number of small nautical pennants (and wire and rope) we – that is my parents; I was coxswain – rowed up from the boathouse along Szentendre island to a quiet place, to ready the boat for the regatta. My Dad attached the steel nose on top of the bow of the boat. The two poles were set in holes drilled into wood boards mounted fore and aft of the sliding rowing seats. A rope with the little flags was then strung from the steel nose across the tops of the poles and back down to the stern. In the meantime, my Mother started stringing the flowers along the side edges of the boat all around.

Coming back to my role in this whole thing: I was all of five years old, but a seasoned helmsman nevertheless. We were out on the water quite often and I had learned the tricky steering along the shore in a river of such a strong current. It is easy when one is drifting along downstream, but rowing upriver, against the current is different. Even a few centimeters farther away from the zigzagging shore increases the necessary rowing effort, as my parents would let me know in no uncertain terms.

As always, I was enjoying the trip – until we stopped near the University and picked up my uncle, who at that time was 19 years old. I complained bitterly – strenuously and vocally – and tried to argue against such demeaning and humiliating treatment, but to no avail. I was cut to the quick: my parents did not trust me! So there I was, sitting on the floor



Third prize a silver cigarette case, the sulking coxswain and his uncle, Bronze plaque to be attached to the boat

of the boat between my Uncle's legs, not as a participant but as an idle spectator, having been displaced from my rightful coxswain's seat. Boy, was I mad, as a picture of the two of us clearly shows!

**Rakott sonkás karfiol /
Layered cauliflower with ham**
Zsuzsa Lengyel

1 cauliflower
½ lb macaroni
8 oz. ham
6 fl.oz milk
6 fl.oz heavy cream
3 eggs
salt
pepper
parsley
grated cheese on top
butter and breadcrumbs

After cleaning the cauliflower pull apart the florets, and cook in salted water, until it is almost soft.

Break up the macaroni, and cook that also.

While the cauliflower and the pasta is cooling, cut the ham into cubes, chop the parsley, and butter a fire-proof dish and sprinkle with breadcrumbs.

Beat the eggs, pour the milk and heavy cream into it, put in the salt and pepper.

Put layers of macaroni, cauliflower, ham and parsley. Put salt on each layer according to taste. Make sure that the top layer is macaroni. Pour the sauce over it, sprinkle generously with grated cheese, and bake in a preheated oven at 400 degrees for 30 minutes.



Hungarian Mosaic St. Stephen

During the 1980's Claudia and Joseph Balogh wrote, edited and presented an informative radio series in the Bridgeport, Connecticut area as part of the weekly program featuring Rózika and László, very well known and respected Hungarian musicians. The Hungarian Mosaic focused on a variety of topics of interest to Hungarian Americans and we are pleased to present another of these topics.

In the middle of August, the attention of Hungarians turns to the founder of the Hungarian state, to St. Stephen. Son of Géza, the first Hungarian leader to take up Christianity, Stephen was baptized with his father. In 997 AD, Stephen inherited the realm of his father and in 1001 became the first king of the Hungarians. He felt a strong devotion to Mary, Mother of God, built a magnificent church in her honor and declared her the Patroness of Hungary. He also proclaimed the

feast of the Assumption, August 15th, as Our Lady of Hungary's Day. Every year on this day, King Stephen personally gave justice. Any or all inhabitants of the country could appear before him on this day to present complaints and requests.

August 15th has another significance, too. On this day, in 1038, at the age of seventy, King Stephen died.

Still another day in August was to be designated to St. Stephen. His mortal remains in the Basilica of Székesfehérvár were exhumed 45 years after his death, during the reign of King László. Stephen's right hand was found preserved and intact. For its safe-keeping, the Abbey of the Holy Right Hand was founded, but later the relic was transferred to Székesfehérvár. During the Turkish invasion, the Holy Right Hand was taken to Bosnia and was retrieved only after the defeat of the Turks. It reached Ragusa and returned to the homeland in 1771. On the day of August 20th, processions honoring St. Stephen spread nationwide and became a national holiday.

Once again, during the Second World War, the Holy Right Hand left the country, and was brought back to the Hungarian people by sergeants of the US Army in 1945, to be carried in the procession of August 20th.

This is Claudia Margittay-Balogh adding a thousand year old chip of historical memories to the Great Hungarian Mosaic.