

# Reflecting on the Merovingian Dynasty

# Merovingian Mirror

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www.merovingiandynasty.com



Fall 2010

Volume 3, Issue 1

## Officers...

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Richard Alan Gregory

## Greetings from the President General...

Dear Members,

Thanks to each of you who attended and helped make our April Meeting very successful.

It was a great moment in the Order's history to present the first annual **Cornelia "Nellie" Smith**

**Ishenhour Scholarship** to Margaret "Meg" Andrews, a student at the University of Pennsylvania. The award was presented by Dianne A. Robinson, who endowed the scholarship fund in memory of her grandmother.

Dr. Brian Rose presented an interesting, informative and entertaining update on his work with the excavation of ancient Troy.

Each of you should have, by now, received our updated Member Roster. Please alert Barry Howard of any address changes or other corrections which may need to be made to your entry.

Membership continues to grow. I encourage each of you to propose eligible family members and friends. Our future and strength depends upon a strong membership base.

I have appointed a nominating committee to prepare a slate of Officers for the 2010 – 2011 term to be elected at our April 13, 2011 Annual Meeting. If you are contacted by the Chairman, Mrs. Stephen W. Duff to serve in an Office, I encourage you to accept.

In addition to the election of officers, we will be adopting a revised set of OMD bylaws.



Make plans now to attend our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2011 which will again be held at the City Tavern Club. Doug Richardson will speak and autograph the second editions of his monumental Plantagenet Ancestry and Magna Carta Ancestry.

Thank you for the honor and opportunity to serve as your President General. I look forward to greeting each of you at our Annual Meeting.

Hardwick Smith Johnson, Jr., EdD



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## Directory Changes...

Please notify the Secretary General and the Interim Registrar General of any changes:

Linda Corinne Mistler, MD  
OMD Secretary General  
20707 Ruhl Rd.  
Freeland, MD 21053-9710  
lmistler@prodigy.net

Barry C. Howard  
Interim Registrar General  
2603 Sykesville Road  
Westminster, MD 21157-7621  
barrychoward@hotmail.com



## Changes/Corrections to the Directory...

Page 28:

Bev Whittington  
304 S. Lindale Lane  
Richardson, TX 75080-6121



## New Members...

We welcome the following new members who have joined our Society since the last newsletter (complete member information can be found later in this publication):

#157-Mrs. Grayson Harding  
#158-Mrs. Robert Catron  
#159-Mr. Christopher Smithson  
#160-Mrs. Calvin Downing  
#161-Mr. Donald Broussard  
#162-Mrs. James Chamberlain  
#163-Ms. Sheila McCartney  
#164-Mrs. James Rouse  
#165-Mrs. Charles Ragsdale  
#166-Mr. James Alderman  
#167-Ms. Virginia Hegseth  
#168-Mrs. Alexander Anderson, Jr.  
#169-Mrs. Alan Newton, Sr.  
#170-Mr. Edward Horton  
#171-Mr. Samuel Freeland  
#172-John Gephart, Jr.  
#173-Mrs. Robert Griffin  
#174-Mrs. Jeffrey Fischer  
#175-Mrs. Mario Cardullo  
#176-Ms. D. Christine Hollister  
#177-Mr. William Erbes  
#178-Mrs. Floyd Nelson  
#179-Mrs. Frederick Belair  
#180-Mrs. Angus Dowling, II  
#181-Ms. Ginger Stephens  
#182-Mrs. Martin Frey  
#183-Mrs. Richard Roadfeldt  
#184-Mrs. John Horvath  
#185-Mrs. John Sachs

#186-David Morton, Ed.D.  
#187-Ms. Nancy Talleur  
#188-Mrs. Cristin Birch  
#189-Mrs. Jerry Atkinson  
#190-Mrs. Harry Miller  
#191-Eugene Preaus, Esq.  
#192-Ms. Ethel Mitchell  
#193-Mrs. Timothy Faherty  
#194-Mrs. Nelson Kennerson  
#195-Mrs. John Kubeck  
#196-Mr. M. Jeff Ohlfs  
#197-Mr. Michael Schenk  
#198-Mrs. Jerry Koelling  
#199-Ms. Diane Pichette  
#200-Mr. Raleigh Worsham  
#201-Mr. Jon Rhoades  
#202-Mrs. Otis Livingston, Jr.  
#203-Mrs. William Baker  
#204-Mr. W. Tunstall Searcy, Jr.  
#205-Mrs. Thomas Aldinger  
#206-Mrs. John Ennis  
#207-Mrs. George Baumgartner  
#208-Mrs. Winston Lauder  
#209-Mrs. Lon Shrader  
#210-Dr. J. Philip London  
#211-Mrs. Robert E. H. Clark  
#212-Mrs. Reon Hillegass, Jr.  
#213-Mr. John Harman, Jr.  
#214-Mrs. Andrew Joseph Medina  
#215-Mrs. Milton Kasch  
#216-Comdr Kenneth Whittemore, Jr., USN  
#217-Richard Breithaupt, Jr.  
#218-Mrs. Elizabeth Breithaupt  
#219-Mr. Robert Cheney  
#220-Mrs. Susan Smith  
#221-Mrs. William Astrop  
#222-Mr. Richard Deavers  
#223-Mrs. Kelly Stewart  
#224-Mrs. Norman Haskins  
#225-Mr. Theodore Duay, III  
#226-Mrs. Thomas Craft, Jr.  
#227-Mrs. Allen E. Edwards  
#228-Mr. David William Medeiros  
#229-Mr. Gregory Hurd Barnhill  
#230-Mrs. Albert David Brault  
#231-Patrick Martin Cain, Sr.  
#232-Jonathan Walker Cain  
#233-Mrs. Thomas Gene Kenyon  
#234-Kelly Marie Kenyon  
#235-Carl Frazier Kenyon



The Order of the Merovingian Dynasty (OMD) was conceived of and organized in September 2004 by 23 Founder Members whose names denote leadership in the field of genealogy to honor the heritage of the Merovingian Kings, the first of which was Merovee who governed the Salic Franks from 448-457.

## 2010 Scholarship Award...



Dianne Robinson (Scholarship Chairman), Hardwick Johnson, Jr. (President General), Margaret Andrews (scholarship winner)

Margaret M. Andrews is a doctoral candidate in the graduate group for the Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World at the University of Pennsylvania. She studies both archaeological and theoretical aspects of urbanism and urban morphology in Roman cities, particularly Rome itself, during the first millennium A.D.

Her dissertation addresses the physical and social evolution of the ancient Subura in Rome from the period of Caesar through that of Charlemagne. It examines how the topographical development of the region both shaped and were shaped by the various social, political, and economic dynamics throughout the period.

Meg also contributes to Penn's *Mapping Augustan Alexandria* project, and she has excavated in North Carolina, Pompeii, and Athens. Since 2007, she has been working on the Villa Magna Project, based near Anagni, Italy, where, in addition to excavating, she studies the late antique and medieval occupation history of the site and the various building techniques of its structures.

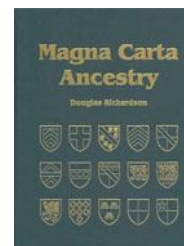
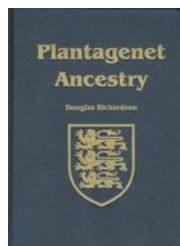
Meg received an A.B. in Classics from Princeton University in 2005, where she focused on the history of early Italy and Roman colonization throughout the peninsula.



## Mark Your Calendars...

The 2011 Annual Meeting of the Order of the Merovingian Dynasty will be a luncheon at the City Tavern Club in Washington, DC (Georgetown) on Wednesday, April 13, 2010. The Council will meet at 11:00 a.m. and the Annual Meeting/Luncheon will follow. The speaker will be Douglas Richardson. We will be electing officers, adopting an updated/revised set of bylaws and awarding our second OMD scholarship as part of the meeting. Please reserve the date. Mark your calendar now. More information will follow in the Spring.

## Douglas Richardson to Speak at the 2011 Annual Meeting...



**Douglas Richardson** is a professional genealogist, historian, lecturer, and author residing in Salt Lake City, Utah. He has been actively involved in genealogical research for over 40 years, and has earned a well deserved reputation as one of America's leading genealogists. He holds a B.A. degree in History from the University of California (Santa Barbara), and a M.A. degree in History from the University of Wisconsin (Madison).

Douglas is an accomplished author. He has written numerous articles for all the major genealogical journals and magazines, including *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register (NEHGR)*, *The American Genealogist (TAG)*, *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record (NYGBR)*, *Heritage Quest Magazine*, and *Foundations*. He is the author of two full length books, *Plantagenet Ancestry (2004)* and *Eno and Enos Family in America (Rev. ed., 1984)*.

Douglas has spoken at many genealogical conferences and workshops across the country. He is a former Contributing Editor of *The American Genealogist* and former member of the Santa Barbara Genealogical Society and Connecticut Society of Genealogists. He has taught American History at El Reno Junior College, El Reno, Oklahoma, and Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. For a more extensive biography, please see *Who's Who in Genealogy and Heraldry (2nd ed.)*.

Douglas specializes in medieval and royal families' genealogical research. He is also experienced in research cases involving all periods of American research from colonial to the modern times. He brings a fresh creative approach to all research assignments and enjoys a reputation at "solving the unsolvable."

Douglas will have the Second Editions of his books, *Magna Carta Ancestry* and *Plantagenet Ancestry*, available for purchase prior to and during the meeting. He is also willing to autograph either and/or both of these books if purchased at the Annual Meeting in April.



# Memories of Washington, D.C....



Richard Gregory, Hardwick Johnson, Jr., Charles Lucas



Hardwick Smith Johnson, Jr.



Hardwick Johnson, Jr., C. Brian Rose



Nita Augustus, Nita Helmer, Nancy Ragsdale



Linda Mistler, PhD



Craig Metz, Esq., Caroline Bowen



Mary Rever, Charles Lucas, Nancy Smith



John Autry, Priscilla Roberts and



Patricia Kryder, Esq., Melissa Fischer, Marlene Wilkinson



Rev. Dr. Albert Walling



Tim Field Beard, Dr. George Hill, Hardwick Johnson, Jr., John Mauk Hilliard, Charles Neuhauser

## Minutes of the Fifth Annual Meeting...

The sixth Annual Meeting of the Order of the Merovingian Dynasty was held 14 April 2010 at the City Tavern Club in Washington, DC at 10:30 a.m. President General Hardwick Smith Johnson, Jr., EdD called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Dr. Albert Clinton Walling II.

Officers in attendance were: Dr. Hardwick Smith Johnson, Jr. EdD, President General; Dr. Charles Clement Lucas, MD, First Vice President General, Mr. Charles William Neuhauser, Second Vice President General; Ms. Juanita Sue Pierce Augustus, Third Vice President General; Mr. John Hallberg Jones, Fourth Vice President General; Mr. Timothy Field Beard, Genealogist General; Reverend Barry Christopher Howard, Treasurer General; Dr. Linda Corinne Mistler, Ph.D., Secretary General; Dr. Albert Clinton Walling II, Chaplain General; Mr. John Mauk Hilliard, Archivist General; Mrs. Peter Irving Channing Knowles II, Curator General; Mr. George James Hill, MD, DLitt, Surgeon General; and, Mrs. Joel Strauch, Assistant Treasurer. Also in attendance was Diane Robinson.

The minutes of the Fifth Annual Meeting of 15 April 2009 were approved as distributed.

### Officer Reports:

Dr. Johnson gave his President General's Report (copy attached to these minutes):

A Scholarship Fund has been established with the first recipient was Margaret M. Andrews, receiving \$1000 this year.

There has been a significant increase in membership with 56 new members approved and 15 currently pending submission for approval. We anticipate another 50 new members in the next year. Total membership is now 202.

The Order's finances have been stabilized.

OMD member, Dianne Robinson, has endowed the Scholarship Fund with a total of \$35,000 in bonds, in memory of her grandmother, Mrs. Cornelia "Nellie" Smith Isenhour.

The Order's insignia is now produced by Citypride, Ltd. of Pennsylvania.

The OMD Newsletter will be edited by Shari Worrell and will be posted online on our website

Administrative procedures have been streamlined so that the day to day operation of the Order is very efficient.

Secretary General's report is attached to these minutes.

Treasurer General's report is attached to these minutes

Registrar General's report is attached to these minutes

Curator General's report is attached to these minutes

### Old Business:

None

### New Business:

Dr. Johnson will continue to pursue documentation of the Merovingian bloodline. Presently, we are fortunate to have not only communication from Christian Settiani, opinions of Prof. David H. Kelley, and Don Wood, but the expertise of our own Genealogist General Timothy Field Beard as well as a fine monograph compiled by Registrar General Tracy A. Crocker.

Barry Howard and Charles Lucas will work with Tracy Crocker to update the website regarding formatting of the homepage so that it is more visually pleasing, the Officer's listing so that it is more visually pleasing, and issues related to correct verbiage, grammar, spelling and punctuation, etc.

Dr. Johnson recommended that the Registrar General's fee be raised to \$75 per application in keeping with other organizations. Moved, seconded and adopted.

A Bylaws Committee was appointed consisting of Knowles, Jones, Lucas, Robinson, Harding, Duff and Phelps with B. Knowles as Chairman for the purpose of updating the Order's bylaws to presented for consideration and adoption at the 2011 Annual Meeting.

Dr. Johnson announced that he will appoint a Nominating Committee, according to the Order's Bylaws, two months prior to the 2011 Annual Meeting.

Blazer patches, designed by Mr. Richard Gregory, Honorary PG, will be manufactured and sold to members of the Order. Moved, seconded and adopted.

Dr. Johnson would like an updated Order of Merovingian Dynasty Directory to be published. This will also include Tracy Crocker's "monograph".

The Proposed Bylaw sent out with the Annual Meeting Notice was tabled.

Dr. Brian Rose, Professor at University of Pennsylvania, was proposed as an Associate Member. Moved, seconded and adopted.

### Announcements:

Diane Robinson thanked the Order for the flowers sent for her mother's funeral.

Dr. Johnson announced the Order's Seventh Annual Meeting on 13 April 2011. Details to follow.

Linda Corinne Mistler, PhD  
Secretary General

## Merovingian Origins

by Charles C. Lucas, Jr. MD

### Scythia

This was an area of **Eurasia** that included the Caucasians including Azerbaijan, the central Asia steppes including Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan, the valley of the Indus or that area between India and Pakistan, and the southern Ukraine with the lower Danube and Bulgaria.

Scholars regard the Scythians as an Iranian nomadic people speaking several languages but mostly Iranian (or Parsi which later became Farsi).

Scythians have left important ethnological markers such as **tamgas** (brand marks) and **kurgans** (permanent cemeteries). A 2500 year old mummy was recently found in the snow capped mountains of Mongolia with blond hair, tattoos, and weaponry. The mummy was preserved by ice and was found at 2600 meters. This find extended the range of the territory further east of the Scythians than had been previously thought.

It should be pointed out that the last ice age ended about 9,000 to 10,000 years ago, or about the 8<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. Carbon 14 dating has allowed archaeologists to trace the emergence of the Scythians to the **Sayan-Altay** mountains from 3000BC to about 500BC. These mountains are where Russia, China, Mongolia, and Kazakhstan come together. They are also known as the homeland of the Turks. The mean elevation in the central area is about 4500 meters. **About 900 BC the Scythians began a western migration.**

They were nomadic warriors who rode horses bareback and who used archers, and the women fought along side the men. Women dressed like men. They were described by **Homer and Herodotus**. **Herodotus**, the Greek historian wrote about them in his **Histories of the 5<sup>th</sup> Century**. They became slave traders, merchants, and shippers. They were described as long haired warriors who were ferocious. **Edmund Spenser** wrote that the primary nation that settled Ireland were the Scythians, and that they also settled Scotland. It has been shown that the Scythians landed in Cornwall. **In Shakespeare's King Lear, Act 1, Scene 1, he writes of the barbarous Scythian.**

It is thought that tribes of the **Scythians settled Greece**, and also moved into eastern Europe.

**Haplotypes** from current Y Chromosome DNA studies show that Central Asia was a mixing pot of several population groups. Haplotype R1a and R1b is found in eastern and western Asia as well as Europe and the United States.

### Greece

Ancient Greece was formed in the third millennium BC when people known as Greeks migrated south to the Balkans in waves, the last being the Dorian invasion about 2300 BC. 1600-1100 BC is described as **Mycenaean Greece** known for the **Wars against Troy as narrated by Homer**. Ancient Greece ended with the end of the reign of **Alexander the Great in 323 BC**.

**Herodotus, 484-425BC**, was a Dorian Greek historian who is regarded as the father of history, and who was the author of **The Histories**- a 6 volume series.

### Cimmerians

**Herodotus** described the **Cimmerians** of the north Black Sea coast as a distinctly autonomous tribe expelled by the **Scythians**. The Cimmerians in 714 BC were in the region of Azerbaijan, and in the 7 and 8<sup>th</sup> century BC were in southern Russia and Ukraine. Their language was Iranian.

There were many off shoots of the Cimmerians. Numerous Celtic and Germanic peoples descended from the Cimmerians. The etymology of Wales is said to descend from the Cimmerians. The Celts in France were known as Gauls. The Celts spread into present day Italy where remnants in the town of Doccia, in the province of Emilia-Romagna, showcase Celtic houses in very good condition dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

### Sicambri

The west Germanic tribe of the **Sicambri** descended from the **Cimmerians**. The **Sicambri** were located along the right bank of the **Rhine** and appear about 55 BC. They fought several wars with Rome, namely one led by **Gaius Julius Caesar**. In 16 BC they defeated the Roman army under **Marcus Lollius**. About 11 BC they were forced to move to the left side of the Rhine by **Nero Claudius Drusus**.

### Merovingians

The **Merovingians** claimed their descent from the **Sicambri**, who they believed were originally a **Scythian or Cimmerian** tribe once inhabiting the river **Danube** that changed their name to the Franks in 11 BC under the leadership of a chieftain called "**Frankus**". The Franks first appear in historical writing in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The **Merovingians** traced their **Sicambrian origins from Marcomir I-died 412 BC** and ultimately to the **Kings of Troy. Marcomir I lived around 400 BC and preceded the Merovingian dynasty.**

**St. Gregory, Bishop of Tours** was installed in 573 and was made **Master of Tours by Sigibert I, King of Austrasia (561-576)**. St. Gregory of Tours, who was the leading historian wrote that the **Frankish leader Clovis** on the occasion of his baptism into the Catholic faith in 496 was referred to as **Sicambrian** by the officiating **Bishop of Rheims**.

### Troy

**Troy** was a legendary city established about 3000 BC and was the center of the **Trojan Wars**, which occurred about 1200 BC. These wars were described in the **Iliad by Homer**, who was a blind Greek historian. Today **Troy** is an archaeological site in northwest Turkey. Troy was founded by **Dardanus**, son of the **Trojan Royal Family of Electra and Zeus**. One generation before the Trojan War, **Heracles** captured Troy and killed **Leomedon**, but spared his son **Priam** who became King of Troy. During his reign, the Mycenaean Greeks invaded and captured Troy in the Trojan War 1193-1183 BC.

**It is from Priam, King of Troy that Roderick Stuart in Royalty for Commoners shows descent from the Cimmerians to the Sicambri to the Merovingians.**

### Rome

Rome was founded 21 April 753 BC from settlements around a fjord on the River Tiber by **Romulus and Remus, sons of the Trojan prince Aenas. Romulus** killed Remus and became the first of the seven kings of Rome. The Roman Republic was

established around 509 BC. By 200 BC Rome had become the dominant Mediterranean power. About 55 BC Gaius Julius Caesar was in power, and by 31 BC **Augustus** had consolidated his power.

The Roman Empire is said to have ended as such in 476 AD when Odoacer, the Barbarian Germanic General deposed **Romulus Augustulus**. (Ian Woods states that Odoacer deposing Augustulus is speculation).

### **Barbarian Kings**

The Roman Empire was replaced with a number of states ruled by barbarian kings. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century Italy was controlled by the Ostrogoths, France by the Franks, and Burgundians, and Spain by the Visigoths. A century later, the Lombards controlled northern Italy, and the Franks were unchallenged in France, and the Anglos and Saxons were in Britannia.

### **Franks**

**It was the kingdom of the Franks which was to exercise the most influence for the longest time. For the first three centuries of its existence until 751 it was ruled by a single family, that of the Merovingians.**

There were two groups of Franks-the **Salian Franks** and the **Ripuarian Franks**.

The **Salian Franks** (sea dwelling) lived **North and East of Limes** in the **Dutch coastal area** and in the 5<sup>th</sup> century migrated throughout **Belgium** and into **northern France**. By the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries, the **Belgium city of Tournai** had become the center of activity.

The **Ripuarian Franks** (river dwelling) lived along the **Rhine river**, and were perhaps called **Ripuarian** by the Romans.

By the 9<sup>th</sup> century any differences between these two groups had disappeared.

They were involved with the Romans as military recruits in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. **Gregory of Tours**, the historian, placed the emergence of the Merovingians at the conclusion of the Frankish migration. The **Liber Historiae Francorum** went further, connecting them with the Trojan migration.

**Gregory of Tours** wrote that the **Franks** had created long haired kings in **Thuringia (Belgium)**. Gregory of Tours was troubled that there was no clear passage of royalty to the Franks from a line of Kings, but other scholars were not troubled since historical records were lacking.

As indicated the line of Frankish Kings began with Frankus who died 11 BC. The line continues from Frankus to Chlodio.

### **Chlodio**

The history of Chlodio comes from Gregory of Tours and Sidonius Apollinarius.

**Chlodio, was a semi legendary King of the Salian Franks.** He lived in Dispargum which was a castle. Around 431 he invaded the territory of **Artois** but was defeated near **Hesdin** by **Aetius, Commander of the Roman Army in Gaul.** **He regrouped and captured Cambrai (Cameracum) and occupied territory as far as the Somme River. He made Tournai the capital of all Salian Franks. He died 447-449.**

## **MEROVINGIAN KINGS**

### **MEROVEE (MEROVECH)**

According to the **Chronicles of Fredegar**, **Merovee (Merovech)** the first of the Merovingian Kings was conceived by **Chlodio's** wife when she went swimming and was encountered by a **Quinotaur**, a sea monster. **The royal dynasty was thus given a supernatural origin. The actual parentage of Merovee is subject to conjecture, but he was clearly a Frank. Stuart in Royalty for Commoners states he was either a son or a son in law of Chlodio.**

**Merovee**, the first Merovingian King, fought along side **Flavius Aetius** the Roman ruler when **Attila the Hun was defeated in 451.** Merovee was proclaimed King of the Franks in 448 and reigned for 10 years.

Under **Merovee** and his successors, the kingdom of the Franks flourished. It was not the crude barbaric culture often imagined. It warrants comparison with the high culture of the **Byzantines**. Secular literacy was encouraged.

They built lavish **Roman styled amphitheaters** in **Paris** and **Soissons**. The Franks were brutal but not like the Goths and the Huns. They accumulated immense wealth. They were active in farming, commerce, and maritime trade. Their gold coins that were minted bore an equal arm cross.

### **Childeric I**

The son of **Merovee** was **Childeric I**, who fought **Odoacer** at Angiers. Childeric was expelled from the Franks for sexual profligacy. Childeric returned to power and married the wife of the King of Thuringia. **Childeric's grave was found in 1653 in Tournai and was filled with weapons, gold, jewelry, Byzantine coins, and gold cicadas or bees. This is one of the most important medieval treasures ever found.**

### **Clovis**

The **Bishop of Rheims** wrote a letter to **Clovis**, son of **Childeric I** which has been preserved. With Clovis, we have the beginnings of a substantial documented history. **Gregory of Tours could at last chronicle a Barbarian King.**

**Clovis** reigned from 481-511 and was the major **Merovingian King** as was **Charlemagne** the major **Carolingian King**.

**Gregory of Tours** writes that Clovis defeated **Syagrius**; he then married **Clothilda**, daughter of a Burgundian King, who attempted to convert him to Christianity but failed. **Clothilda was later named a Saint.**

Beginning as early as 496 there were secret meetings between Clovis and Saint Remy, confessor of the wife of Clovis. Soon thereafter an agreement of cooperation was signed between Clovis and the Roman Church. Such an agreement was important because it transformed the less than unified Roman Church to one of supreme power in the West. **Clovis became the sword of the Church.**

During a battle against the Alamans, he vowed to become a Christian if he was victorious. **He won and was baptized by the Bishop of Rheims in 496.** On his return he received consular office from the eastern emperor (the Western Roman Empire had ceased to exist) and he established Paris as his capital. He was named **Novus Constantinus-the new Constantine**. At his baptism, Saint Remy said "Sicambrian

revere what thou hast burned and burn what thou hast revered.”

There was now a powerful religion, and a powerful Church being administered by a Merovingian bloodline.

Clovis allied with Godegisel against the Burgundian King Gundobad, but the latter survived. Clovis then attacked the Visigoths because they were heretics.

His last years were spent eliminating rival Frankish leaders. The sister of Clovis, **Audofleda married the Ostrogothic King Theodoric** and there were further marriages between the Visigoths, Thuringians, Herules and Burgundians, further consolidating the empire of the Franks.

The conversion of Clovis to Catholicism made him more acceptable to the Gallo Romans. In 511 he convened an ecclesiastical council in Orleans to discuss matters of newly acquired Aquitaine. When Clovis died in 511, the Frankish kingdom was the most powerful in Gaul.

After Clovis died, his kingdom was divided into 4 parts-one for each of his 4 sons. For more than a century thereafter, the Merovingian Dynasty presided over a number of disparate and warring kingdoms.

#### **Clothair II**

**Clothair II** reigned 584-629 and reunited the Kingdom of the Franks. He signed the **Perpetual Constitution** which was an early **Magna Charta**.

As the Merovingian Kings were concerned with ritual, pomp, and circumstance, the actual administration of the empire was left to the Mayors of the Palaces.

#### **Dagobert II**

In 651 **Dagobert II** came to power and was a worthy successor to Clovis. He amassed power and authority and great wealth which has been reported to have been located at **Rennes le Chateau**. He also seemed to lose interest in protecting the Roman Church and expanding it. **Dagobert II married a Visigoth princess, and further expanded the empire to Languedoc**. In doing so he created enemies-both secular and ecclesiastic. His Mayor of the Palace, **Pepin the Fat** aligned himself with enemies of Dagobert II.

Dagobert II had a major capital at **Stenay** which included a huge forest. On 23 December 679, while resting during a hunt in the forest, a servant under the direction of Pepin the Fat killed him. He was buried at Stenay, the royal chapel of Saint Remy. In 872, he was made a Saint. For all practical purposes, this ended the real power of the Merovingian Kings. The Mayors of the Palaces developed more and more power.

#### **Charles Martel**

The most important **Mayor of the Palace** and an extremely important historical figure was **Charles Martel**, or Charles the Hammer who was born 686 and died 741. He expanded his rule over all three Frankish kingdoms: Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy. He was the **illegitimate son of Pippin the Middle and his concubine Alpaida**. He won the **Battle of Tours** in 732 which saved Europe from Muslim expansionism. He was a brilliant general and is considered the father of western heavy

cavalry. **He was the founder of the Carolingian Empire which was named after him.**

In 737 **King Theuderic** died and Martel titled himself **Major Domus** and **Princeps et dux Francorum** and did not appoint a new King. The throne was vacant until the death of Martel. He was buried at Saint Denis Basilica. Before his death he divided his properties among his sons.

German and French historians have treated Charles Martel with great acclaim and believe that he saved Europe from Islam. He was called the hero of the age and it was said he delivered **Christiandom**.

#### **Usurpation by the Carolingians**

##### **First Carolingian King**

Ten years after the death of Charles Martel, **his son Pippin III** or Pippin the Younger, or Pippin the Short, Mayor of the Palace to **King Childeric III** enlisted the support of the Pope in overthrowing the Merovingians.

Pippin's ambassadors to Pope Zachary asked: "who should be King, the man who actually holds power or he though he is King has no power at all?"

The Pope then ordered that by **apostolic authority** Pippin III, or Pippin the Younger, or Pippin the Short, be created **King of all the Franks**, thus betraying the pact which had been made with Clovis. **Pippin** deposed **Childeric III**, and had his head shaved, and confined him to a monastery.

**In 754 Pippin III was anointed at Ponthion. He died in 768 and is buried at St. Denis. In 740 he married Bertrada of Laon. Bertrada descended from the Merovingian Kings.**

#### **Charlemagne**

**Charlemagne was the son of Pippin and Bertrada.**

#### **Summary (Accomplishments of the Merovingians)**

When Childeric III was deposed, the Merovingians were the longest ruling dynasty in western Europe.

Clovis I, Clovis II, Childeric II, and Dagobert II were very strong rulers.

Childebert III operated successively with the aristocracy.

The people east of the Rhine were also subject to the Merovingians.

Merovingian history provides a focus for understanding the political history of western Europe in the two and half centuries following the deposition of Romulus Augustulus.

The Merovingian kingdom had a significant role to play in the transmission of culture from the late Roman period to the Carolingian period.

The Rhone valley was a storehouse of manuscripts, without which Benedict Biscop could never have equipped the great monastery of Monkwearmouth/Jarrow in England.

The Merovingian Church had a distinguished tradition in ecclesiastical legislation in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries; it witnessed a flowering of monastic tradition. It was an institution heavily involved in politics. Boniface's death at Dokkum can be seen as the last chapter in the Merovingian Church.

## Order of the Merovingian Dynasty



448 ~751

### PROPOSAL FOR MEMBERSHIP

6 May 2009

To the President General and Committee on membership:  
The undersigned propose for membership in the Order:

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Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: Zip: Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel # Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is personally known and request that a formal invitation be sent to our friend. It is understood that upon acceptance of the invitation and payment of the fees, that lineage blanks will be sent to the prospective member on which can be recorded the requisite genealogical data relating to lineal descent from the.

#### Other Personal Recommendations

(As Societies, Commissions, and Honors)

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Proposed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposer Comments:

Please send completed Proposal for Membership to:

Barry C. Howard  
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