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# Folks Used to Believe

by ALVIN F.  
HARLOW

## Wonderfully Preserved Relics



**T**HE zeal of the early and medieval Christians, and the yearning for some tangible souvenir of the founders of the religion, coupled with the general child-like belief in rumor, brought about the preservation of a quantity of relics, great numbers of which could not have been other than spurious. For example, there would be skulls in several churches, all claimed to have been originally in the head of the same saint; and in some cases, enough bones of a single saint were scattered over Europe to have made up several complete skeletons.

The famous Iron Crown of Lombardy was said to contain one of the nails used in the Crucifixion, though the actual history of the crown can be traced no farther back than the Ninth Century. Gregory of Tours said that another of the nails was thrown into the Adriatic by Queen Radegunda, rendering it therewith one of the safest seas in the world to navigate.

One church in Rome claimed a tooth of St. Peter, another of St. Paul, a part of the chemise of the Virgin Mary, a part of Christ's gir-

dle, a piece of Moses' rod, some of the earth on which Christ prayed, the reed and sponge used at the Crucifixion, three spines of the Crown of Thorns, a part of the towel with which Christ washed His disciples' feet, part of the swaddling clothes in which He was wrapped at His nativity, and a part of the shroud in which He was buried. One of the Savior's tears was formerly preserved at Vendome, France.

D'Aubigné tells us that in the Church of All Saints at Wittenberg were shown a fragment of Noah's Ark, some soot from the Babylonian furnace in which the three Hebrew children, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, were so miraculously preserved, and nineteen thousand other relics. At Schaffhausen was kept the breath of St. Joseph, which Nicodemus had received in his glove! Wurttemberg had a feather from the wing of the Archangel Michael. St. Augustine (354-430 A. D.) said that in his day people were still going to see the dung-heap on which Job had sat—although the Book of Job was written at least seven to ten centuries before his time.