**Ring**

Place of origin: England (made)

Date: possibly 17th century (painted)
18th century (setting)

Artist/Maker: Unknown

Materials and Techniques: Gold set with a crystal enclosing a miniature

Credit Line: Bequeathed by Miss A. Cameron

Museum number: M.1-1909

Gallery location: In Storage

---

**Public access description**

After the execution of Charles I on 30 January 1649 by the Commonwealth, commemorative jewellery was immediately produced. Locks of the King's hair, painted miniatures and royalist symbols were set into rings, lockets and pendants and worn as a sign of allegiance to the Royalist cause. As wearing such jewellery could be dangerous during the Civil War, many of these objects may have been hidden until the Restoration or produced after the accession of Charles II.

This ring was probably made in the 18th century but is set with a portrait which appears to have been painted in the mid-17th century. Although some jewels supporting the King were worn during the Commonwealth period, many were produced after the Restoration of 1660. Charles II was vigilant to ensure that his father’s memory was preserved. He was celebrated as King Charles the Martyr and the day of his death was maintained as a national day of ‘fasting and humiliation’. Rings set with the King’s portrait were therefore worn as a sign of allegiance to the new regime and a repudiation of Commonwealth sympathies. After the exile of James II in 1688, political supporters continued to wear these rings to show their support for the restoration of Catholic Stuart rule. Interest in Charles I continued in the 19th century. In 1813, when the coffin of Charles I was discovered in St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, the Prince Regent, later George IV, had it opened and removed a number of mementoes, including locks of hair which were made into jewellery.

**Descriptive line**

Gold commemorative ring, the oval bezel set with a crystal enclosing a miniature of Charles I, England, the miniature possibly 17th century, the setting 18th century

**Physical description**

Gold commemorative ring, the oval bezel set with a crystal enclosing a miniature of Charles I.

**Dimensions**

Height: 2.1 cm, Width: 2.1 cm, Depth: 1.9 cm

**Museum number**

M.1-1909

**Object history note**

A note in the Registered Description suggests that it was a family heirloom for the Cameron family before being bequeathed to the V&A in 1909.

**Historical context note**

Commemorates the death of King Charles I

**URL**

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O126108/ring-unknown/