

# Richard II, Duke of Normandy

**Richard II** (23 August 963 – 28 August 1026), called **the Good** (French: *Le Bon*), was the eldest son and heir of **Richard I the Fearless** and **Gunnora**.<sup>[1][2]</sup> He was a Norman nobleman of the **House of Normandy**.

## 1 Life

Richard succeeded his father as **Duke of Normandy** in 996.<sup>[1]</sup> During his minority, the first five years of his reign, his regent was **Count Rodulf of Ivry**, his uncle, who wielded the power and put down a peasant insurrection at the beginning of Richard's reign.<sup>[3]</sup>

Richard had deep religious interests and found he had much in common with **Robert II of France**, who he helped militarily against the duchy of **Burgundy**.<sup>[3]</sup> He forged a marriage alliance with **Brittany** by marrying his sister **Hawise** to **Geoffrey I, Duke of Brittany** and by his own marriage to **Geoffrey's** sister, **Judith of Brittany**.<sup>[3]</sup>

In 1000-1001, Richard repelled an English attack on the **Cotentin Peninsula** that was led by **Ethelred II of England**.<sup>[4]</sup> Ethelred had given orders that Richard be captured, bound and brought to England.<sup>[5]</sup> But the English had not been prepared for the rapid response of the Norman cavalry and were utterly defeated.<sup>[6]</sup>

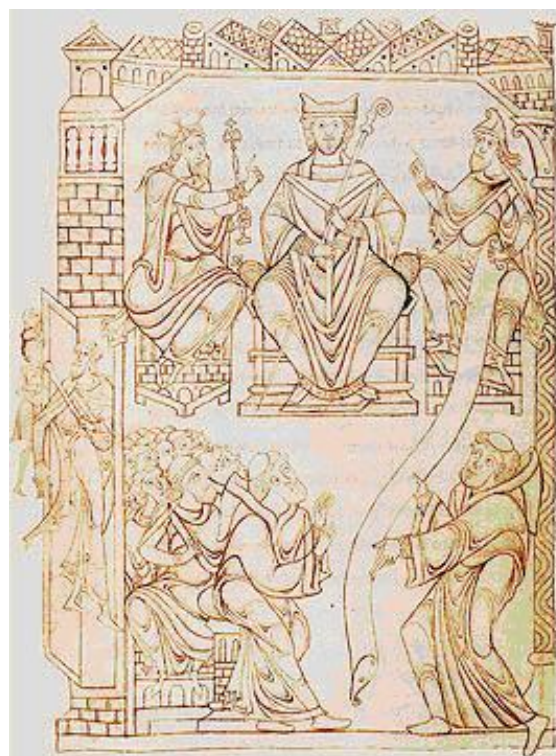
Richard attempted to improve relations with England through his sister **Emma of Normandy's** marriage to **King Ethelred**.<sup>[4]</sup> This marriage was significant in that it later gave his grandson, **William the Conqueror**, the basis of his claim to the throne of England.<sup>[7]</sup> The improved relations proved to be beneficial to Ethelred when in 1013 **Sweyn Forkbeard** invaded England. Emma with her two sons **Edward** and **Alfred** fled to Normandy followed shortly thereafter by her husband king **Ethelred**.<sup>[7]</sup> Soon after the death of **Ethelred**, **Cnut, King of England** forced Emma to marry him while Richard was forced to recognize the new regime as his sister was again **Queen**.<sup>[4]</sup> Richard had contacts with **Scandinavian Vikings** throughout his reign. He employed **Viking mercenaries** and concluded a treaty with **Sweyn Forkbeard** who was en route to England.<sup>[8]</sup>

Richard II commissioned his clerk and confessor, **Dudo of Saint-Quentin**, to portray his ducal ancestors as morally upright Christian leaders who built Normandy despite the treachery of their overlords and neighboring principalities.<sup>[9]</sup> It was clearly a work of propaganda designed to legitimize the Norman settlement, and while it contains numerous historically unreliable legends, as re-

spects the reigns of his father and grandfather, **Richard I** and **William I** it is basically reliable.<sup>[10]</sup>

In 1025 and 1026 Richard confirmed gifts of his great-grandfather **Rollo** to **Saint-Ouen** at **Rouen**.<sup>[11]</sup> His other numerous grants to monastic houses tends to indicate the areas over which Richard had ducal control, namely **Caen**, the **Éverecin**, the **Cotentin**, the **Pays de Caux** and **Rouen**.<sup>[12]</sup>

Richard II died 28 Aug 1026.<sup>[1]</sup> his eldest son, **Richard** becoming the new **Duke**.



*Richard II (right), with the Abbot of Mont Saint-Michel (middle) and Lothair of France (left)*

## 2 Marriages and children

He married firstly, c.1000, **Judith** (982–1017), daughter of **Conan I of Brittany**,<sup>[13][14]</sup> by whom he had the following issue:

- **Richard** (c. 1002/4), duke of Normandy<sup>[1]</sup>
- **Alice of Normandy** (c. 1003/5), married **Renaud I, Count of Burgundy**<sup>[1]</sup>

- Robert (c. 1005/7), duke of Normandy<sup>[1]</sup>
- William (c. 1007/9), monk at Fécamp, d. 1025, buried at Fécamp Abbey<sup>[1][15]</sup>
- Eleanor (c. 1011/3), married to Baldwin IV, Count of Flanders
- Matilda (c. 1013/5), nun at Fecamp, d. 1033. She died young and unmarried.<sup>[16]</sup>

Secondly he married Poppa of Envermeu, by whom he had the following issue:

- Mauger (c. 1019), Archbishop of Rouen
- William (c. 1020/5), count of Arques

### 3 Genealogy

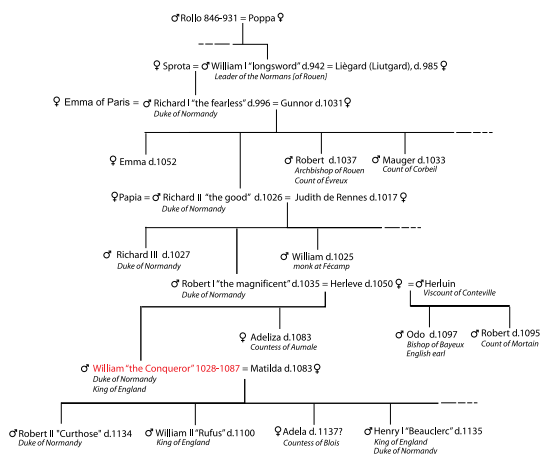


Diagram based on the information found on Wikipedia

### 4 Notes

### 5 References

- [1] Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band II (Marburg, Germany: J. A. Stargardt, 1984), Tafel 79
- [2] *The Normans in Europe*, ed. & trans. Elisabeth van Houts (Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 56-7
- [3] François Neveux, *A Brief History of The Normans* (Constable and Robinson, 2008) p. 74
- [4] François Neveux, *A Brief History of The Normans* (Constable and Robinson, 2008) pp. 94-5

- [5] Eleanor Searle, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840-1066* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988), p. 132
- [6] David Crouch, *The Normans: The History of a Dynasty* (Hambledon Continuum, 2007), p. 34
- [7] David C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror* (University of California Press, 1964), p. 160
- [8] *The Normans in Europe*, ed. & trans. Elisabeth van Houts (Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 20-21
- [9] David Crouch, *The Normans: The History of a Dynasty* (Hambledon Continuum, 2007), p. 32
- [10] *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*, Ed. & Trans. Elizabeth M.C. Van Houts, Vol. I (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992), p. xx
- [11] *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*, Ed. & Trans. Elizabeth M.C. Van Houts, Vol. I (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1992), p. 67 n. 5
- [12] Eleanor Searle, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840-1066* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1988), p. 128
- [13] Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band II (Marburg, Germany: J. A. Stargardt, 1984), Tafel 75
- [14] David C. Douglas, *William The Conqueror* (University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1964), p. 15, n. 5
- [15] Cassandra Potts, *Monastic Revival and Regional Identity in Early Normandy*, (The Boydell Press, 1997), 27.
- [16] David C. Douglas, *William The Conqueror* (University of California Press, Berkeley & Los Angeles, 1964), p. 31

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