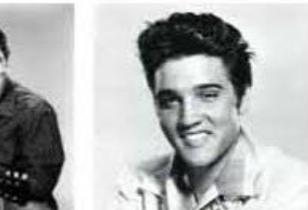
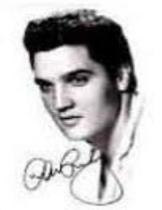
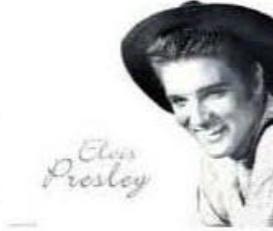
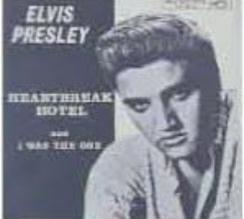


# GRANHOLM GENEALOGY

## ELVIS Our Relationship



## INTRODUCTION

It seems that we have inherited some musical genes from ancient times. These we share with many, among them Jean Sibelius. On our homepage, <http://www.ancestryfootprints.com/> is a story about him and how we are related in the book [“Finland’s Independence, the Birth”](#) .

I recently found another well known person with musical talent, to whom we are related, Elvis Presley. Here is some information about him and his Scandinavian ancestry. The information here is mainly from “Ancestry.com” and some other sources. I have included one example of a source with an internet link, showing a page which starts with Elvis’ father and his family members.

In the text (page 3) is a YouTube link to his very first recording in 1953 and video with Elvis and his family. You listen to his “*Blue Christmas*” at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WkxlngfsKA>

On the following pages I have selected three of many lineages showing our relationship to Elvis from three common Scandinavian ancestors:

- The Swedish **King Olof Skötkonung** and his wife **Edla**, who are our 28<sup>th</sup> great grand-parents and also Elvis’ 30<sup>th</sup> great- grand-parents. See more about them in the homepage book “*Swedish Royal Ancestry Book 1 - Mythical to 1250*”.
- The Russian **Grand Prince Vladimir the Great**, the great-grandson of the Viking Rurik, who founded Russia, and his wife **Rodgena**, who are our 29<sup>th</sup> and Elvis’ 30<sup>th</sup> great-grandparents. See more about Rurik in the book “*Russian Viking and Royal Ancestry*”
- **Richard II “The Good”, Duke of Normandy**, the great-grandson of the Viking Rollo, who founded Normandy in France, is our 30<sup>th</sup> and Elvis’ 29<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather .There is more about Rollo on the homepage in the part about “*Famous relatives*”.

Relationship charts are included for these persons. In the left column of the charts are our direct ancestors; the great-great-grand etc parents, in the right column are Elvis’ ancestors, who also are our cousins.

## Early years (1935–53)

*Presley's birthplace in Tupelo, Mississippi*



Elvis Presley was born on January 8, 1935, in [Tupelo, Mississippi](#), to 18-year-old Vernon Elvis and 22-year-old Gladys Love Presley. In the two-room [shotgun house](#) built by his father in readiness for the birth, Jesse Garon Presley, his identical twin brother, was delivered 35 minutes before him, [stillborn](#). As an only child, Presley became close to both parents and formed an unusually tight bond with his mother. The family attended an [Assembly of God](#) church where he found his initial musical inspiration.

Presley's ancestry was primarily a Western European mix: On his mother's side, he was [Scots-Irish](#), with some [French Norman](#); one of Gladys's great-great-grandmothers was [Cherokee](#). His father's forebears were of [Scottish](#) or [German](#) origin. Gladys was regarded by relatives and friends as the dominant member of the small family. Vernon moved from one odd job to the next, evidencing little ambition. The family often relied on help from neighbors and government food assistance. In 1938, they lost their home after Vernon was found guilty of altering a check written by the landowner. He was jailed for eight months, and Gladys and Elvis moved in with relatives.

In September 1941, Presley entered first grade at East Tupelo Consolidated, where his instructors regarded him as "average" He was encouraged to enter a singing contest after impressing his schoolteacher with a rendition of [Red Foley's](#) [country](#) song "[Old Shep](#)" during morning prayers. The contest, held at the Mississippi-Alabama Fair and Dairy Show on October 3, 1945, saw his first public performance: dressed as a cowboy, the ten-year-old Presley stood on a chair to reach the microphone and sang "Old Shep". He recalled placing fifth. A few months later, Presley received for his birthday his first guitar. He had hoped for something else—by different accounts, either a bicycle or a rifle. Over the following year, he received basic guitar lessons from two of his uncles and the new pastor at the family's church. Presley recalled, "I took the guitar, and I watched people, and I learned to play a little bit. But I would never sing in public. I was very shy about it."



## First recordings (1953–55)

*Presley in a Sun Records promotional photograph, 1954*

In August 1953, Presley walked into the offices of [Sun Records](#). He aimed to pay for a few minutes of studio time to record a two-sided [acetate disc](#): "[My Happiness](#)" and "That's When Your Heartaches Begin". He would later claim he intended the record as a gift for his mother, or was merely interested in what he "sounded like", though there was a much cheaper, amateur record-making service at a nearby general store.

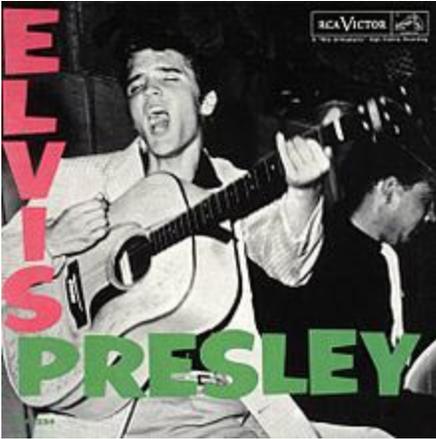
Asked by receptionist Marion Keisker what kind of singer he was, Presley responded, "I sing all kinds." When she pressed him on whom he sounded like, he repeatedly answered, "I don't sound like nobody." After he recorded, Sun boss [Sam Phillips](#) asked Keisker to note down the young man's name, which she did along with her own commentary: "Good ballad singer. Hold."

Listen to this and see him with his family on this link <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKTdFrFFdLM>

## Commercial breakout and controversy (1956–58)

### First national TV appearances and debut album

*The "iconic cover" of Presley's 1956 debut album featuring a photo taken July 31, 1955*



On January 10, 1956, Presley made his first recordings for RCA in Nashville. Extending the singer's by now customary backup of Moore, Black, and Fontana, RCA enlisted pianist [Floyd Cramer](#), guitarist [Chet Atkins](#), and three background singers, including Gordon Stoker of the popular [Jordanaires](#) quartet, to fill out the sound. The session produced the moody, unusual "[Heartbreak Hotel](#)", released as a single on January 27. Parker finally brought Presley to national television, booking him on CBS's [Stage Show](#) for six appearances over two months. The program, produced in New York, was hosted on alternate weeks by big band leaders and brothers [Tommy](#) and [Jimmy Dorsey](#). After his first appearance, on January 28, Presley stayed in town to record at RCA's New York studio. The sessions yielded eight songs, including a cover of [Carl Perkins](#)' rockabilly anthem "[Blue Suede Shoes](#)". In February, Presley's "[I Forgot to Remember to Forget](#)", a Sun recording initially released the previous August, reached the top of the [Billboard country chart](#). Neal's contract was terminated and, on March 2, Parker became Presley's manager

### Military service and mother's death (1958–60)

On March 24, Presley was inducted into the U.S. Army as a [private](#) at [Fort Chaffee](#), near [Fort Smith, Arkansas](#). [Captain Arlie Metheny](#), the information officer, was unprepared for the media attention drawn by the singer's arrival. Hundreds of people descended on Presley as he stepped from the bus; photographers then accompanied him into the base. Presley announced that he was looking forward to his military stint, saying he did not want to be treated any differently from anyone else: "The Army can do anything it wants with me." Later, at [Fort Hood](#), Texas, Lieutenant Colonel Marjorie Schulten gave the media carte blanche for one day, after which she declared Presley off-limits to the press.

Soon after Presley had commenced basic training at Fort Hood, he received a visit from Eddie Fadal, a businessman he had met when on tour in Texas. Fadal reported that Presley had become convinced his career was finished—"He firmly believed that." During a two-week leave in early June, Presley cut five sides in Nashville. He returned to training, but in early August his mother was diagnosed with [hepatitis](#) and her condition worsened. Presley was granted emergency leave to visit her, arriving in Memphis on August 12. Two days later, she died of heart failure, aged 46. Presley was devastated; their relationship had remained extremely close—even into his adulthood, they would use baby talk with each other and Presley would address her with pet names.

After training at Fort Hood, Presley joined the 3rd Armored Division in [Friedberg](#), Germany, on October 1. Introduced to [amphetamines](#) by a [sergeant](#) while on maneuvers, he became "practically evangelical about their benefits"—not only for energy, but for "strength" and weight loss, as well—and many of his friends in the outfit joined him in indulging. The Army also introduced Presley to [karate](#), which he studied seriously, later including it in his live performances. Fellow soldiers have attested to Presley's wish to be seen as an able, ordinary soldier, despite his fame, and to his generosity while in the service. He donated his Army pay to charity, purchased TV sets for the base, and bought an extra set of fatigues for everyone in his outfit.

## Focus on movies (1960–67)

Presley returned to the United States on March 2, 1960, and was honorably discharged with the rank of sergeant on March 5. The train that carried him from [New Jersey](#) to Tennessee was mobbed all the way, and Presley was called upon to appear at scheduled stops to please his fans. On the night of March 20, he entered [RCA's Nashville studio](#) to cut tracks for a new album along with a single—"Stuck on You" was rushed into release and swiftly became a number one hit. Another Nashville session two weeks later yielded a pair of his best-selling singles, the ballads "[It's Now or Never](#)" and "[Are You Lonesome Tonight?](#)", along with the rest of [Elvis Is Back!](#)

## Comeback (1968–73)

*The '68 Comeback Special produced "one of the most famous images" of Presley. Taken on June 29, 1968, it was adapted for the cover of Rolling Stone in July 1969.*



Presley's only child, [Lisa Marie](#), was born on February 1, 1968, during a period when he had grown deeply unhappy with his career. Of the eight Presley singles released between January 1967 and May 1968, only two charted in the top 40, and none higher than number 28. His forthcoming soundtrack album, [Speedway](#), would die at number 82 on the *Billboard* chart.

Recorded in late June 1968 a special, called simply *Elvis*, aired on December 3. Later known as the '68 Comeback Special, the show featured lavishly staged studio productions as well as songs performed with a band in front of a small audience—Presley's first live performances since 1961. The live segments saw Presley clad in tight black leather, singing and playing guitar in an uninhibited style reminiscent of his early rock and roll days.

Presley and his wife, meanwhile, had become increasingly distant. The Presleys separated on February 23, 1972, after Priscilla disclosed her relationship with Mike Stone, a karate instructor Presley had recommended to her. Five months later, Presley's new girlfriend, [Linda Thompson](#), a songwriter and one-time Memphis beauty queen, moved in with him. Presley and his wife filed for divorce on August 1.

## Health deterioration and death (1973–77)

Presley's divorce took effect on October 9, 1973. He was now becoming increasingly unwell. Twice during the year he overdosed on [barbiturates](#), spending three days in a coma in his hotel suite after the first incident. Toward the end of 1973, he was hospitalized, semicomatose from the effects of [Demerol](#) addiction. According to his main physician, Dr. [George C. Nichopoulos](#), Presley "felt that by getting [drugs] from a doctor, he wasn't the common everyday junkie getting something off the street." Since his comeback, he had staged more live shows with each passing year, and 1973 saw 168 concerts, his busiest schedule ever.

## Final year and death

Journalist Tony Scherman writes that by early 1977, "Elvis Presley had become a grotesque caricature of his sleek, energetic former self. Hugely overweight, his mind dulled by the pharmacopoeia he daily ingested, he was barely able to pull himself through his abbreviated concerts." In [Alexandria, Louisiana](#), the singer was on stage for less than an hour and "was impossible to understand". Despite the accelerating deterioration of his health, he stuck to most touring commitments. Presley was scheduled to fly out of Memphis on the evening of August 16, 1977, to begin another tour. That afternoon, Alden discovered him unresponsive on his bathroom floor. Attempts to revive him failed, and death was officially pronounced at 3:30 pm at Baptist Memorial Hospital.

## Vernon Elvis Presley (1916 - 1979)

[Back to Presley surname](#)



Birthdate: April 10, 1916  
Birthplace: Fulton, Itawamba, Mississippi, United States  
Death: Died June 26, 1979 in Memphis, Shelby, Tennessee, United States  
Occupation: Share Cropper, Truck Driver

Managed by: private  
Last Updated: June 17, 2011

-  [Find Vernon Presley's Birth Records](#)
-  [Find Vernon Presley's Marriage Records](#)
-  [Find Vernon Presley's Obituary Records](#)

[View Complete Profile](#)

### Immediate Family

[view all](#)



**Gladys Love Smith**  
wife



**Jesse Presley**  
son



**Elvis Aaron Presley**  
son



**Davada Presley**  
wife



**Minnie Mae Dodger Hood**  
mother



**Jessie D. McDowell Presley**  
father



**Vester Presley**  
brother



**?? Presley**  
sibling



**Delta Presley**  
sister



**Calhoun Presley**  
brother



**Lorene (Nash) Pritchett**  
sister



**Vera Presley**  
stepmother

# Olof Skötkonung

**Olof Skötkonung**, also known as **Olaf Eiríksson** (c. 980–1022) was a Swedish king, son of [Eric the Victorious](#) and, according to Icelandic sources, [Sigrid the Haughty](#). He succeeded his father in 995.

*Olof Skötkonung at the Uppsala thing*



An explanation of the name is that it means "treasure king" and refers to the fact that he was the first Swedish king to stamp coins. An ancient land ownership ceremony which placed a parcel of earth in someone's *lap* (Swedish: *sköte*) was called *scotting* and may have been involved in this epithet.

## Viking expedition to Wendland

In a Viking expedition to [Wendland](#), he had captured [Edla](#), the daughter of a Wendish chieftain, and she gave him the son [Emund](#) (who was to become king of Sweden), and the daughter [Astrid](#) - later wife of [Olaf II of Norway](#). He later married [Estrid of the Obotrites](#), and she bore him the son [Anund Jacob](#) and the daughter [Ingegerd Olofsdotter](#).



**Edla**, traditionally called *Edla, Duchess of Venden* (*Edla, hertiginna av Venden*) (10th-11th centuries), was a [Slavic Viking age](#) woman. She was the mother of King [Emund](#) of Sweden and Queen [Astrid](#) of Norway.

Tradition says Edla was the daughter of a [West Slavic Tribal chief](#) from [Northern Germany](#). She was brought to Sweden as a prisoner of war c. 1000 at the same time or a little before, the arrival of [Estrid of the Obotrites](#) (*Estrid av obotriterna*). King [Olof Skötkonung](#) married Estrid but also fell in love with Edla and took her as his mistress. She became the mother of Emund, Astrid, and probably Holmfrid. [Snorre Sturlason](#) says that her children were sent to foster parents away from the royal court because Queen Estrid was not kind to them. This could indicate that Edla died when her children were small.

*Edla Duchess of Venden*

## Alliance with Sweyn Forkbeard

Olof is said to have preferred royal [sports](#) to war and therefore [Sweyn Forkbeard](#) retook [Denmark](#), which Olof's father Eric had conquered. Olof also lost the right to tribute which his predecessors had preserved in what is now [Estonia](#) and [Latvia](#).

In 1000, he allied with [Sweyn Forkbeard](#), who was married to Olof's mother, and with the Norwegian [Jarls Eric](#) and [Sven](#), against the Norwegian King [Olaf Tryggvason](#). Olaf Tryggvason died in the [Battle of Svolder](#) and Olof gained a part of [Trøndelag](#) as well as modern [Bohuslän](#).

## Norwegian-Swedish War

When the Norwegian kingdom was reestablished by [Olaf II of Norway](#), a new war erupted between Norway and Sweden. Many men in both [Sweden](#) and [Norway](#) tried to reconcile the kings. In 1018, Olof's cousin, the earl of [Västergötland](#), [Ragnvald Ulfsson](#) and the Norwegian king's emissaries [Björn Stallare](#) and [Hjalti Skeggiason](#) had arrived at the [thing](#) of [Uppsala](#) in an attempt to sway the Swedish king to accept peace and as a warrant marry his daughter [Ingegerd Olofsdotter](#) to the king of Norway. The Swedish king was greatly angered and threatened to banish Ragnvald from his kingdom, but Ragnvald was supported by his foster-father [Thorgny Lawspeaker](#).

Thorgny delivered a powerful speech in which he reminded the king of the great Viking expeditions in the East that predecessors such as [Erik Anundsson](#) and [Björn](#) had undertaken, without having the hubris not to listen to their men's advice. Thorgny, himself, had taken part in many successful pillaging expeditions with Olof's father [Eric the Victorious](#) and even Eric had listened to his men. The present king wanted nothing but Norway, which no Swedish king before him had desired. This displeased the Swedish people, who were eager to follow the king on new ventures in the East to win back the kingdoms that paid tribute to his ancestors, but it was the wish of the people that the king make peace with the king of Norway and give him his daughter Ingegerd as queen.

Thorgny finished his speech by saying: if you do not desire to do so, we shall assault you and kill you and not brook anymore of your warmongering and obstinacy. Our ancestors have done so, who at [Mula thing](#) threw five kings in a well, kings who were too arrogant as you are against us.

However, Olof married his daughter [Ingegerd-Irene](#) to [Yaroslav I the Wise](#) instead. An impending war was settled when Olof agreed to share his power with his son [Anund Jacob](#). Olof was also forced to accept a settlement with [Olaf II of Norway](#) at [Kungahälla](#), who already had been married (unbeknownst to Olof) with Olof's daughter, Astrid, through the [Geatish](#) jarl [Ragnvald Ulfsson](#).

## Christian King



Olof was baptized in [Husaby](#), probably by the missionary [Sigfrid](#), c.1008. At Husaby church, there is a sign at Husaby Honor his baptism and what is thought to be the well at the Holy spring where Olaf was baptized. He was the first Swedish king to remain Christian until his death. However, according to [Adam of Bremen](#), the fact that the vast majority of the Swedes were still pagan forced him to limit Christian activities to the already Christian border province of [Västergötland](#).

When he stamped coins in [Sigtuna](#) in the province of [Uppland](#) Olof used the word *rex* for king. *OLUF REX* as in the coin or *OLAF REX*. The use of Latin seems to suggest that

he was already baptized at this time but on the other hand the coins were imitating English pennies in type and style.



*Olof Skötkonung* was baptized about year 1000 by this fountain in Husaby

## **Death**

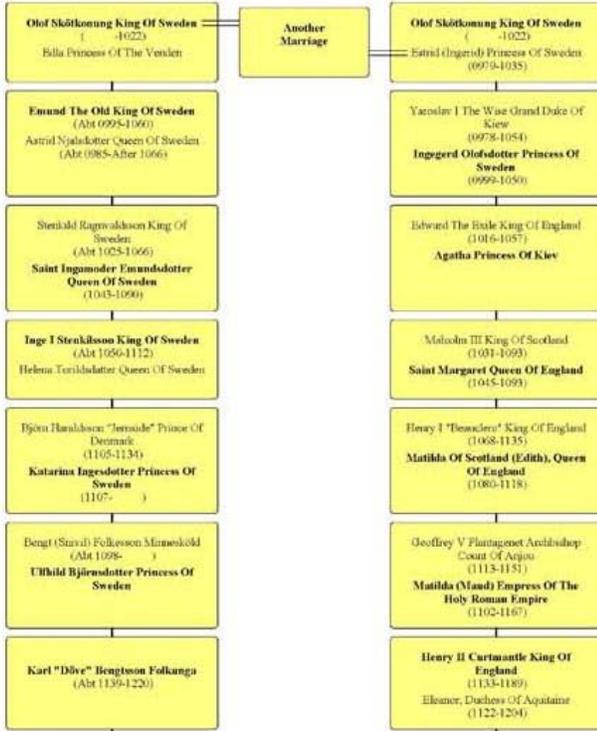
*The alleged Olaf Grave at Husaby Church*



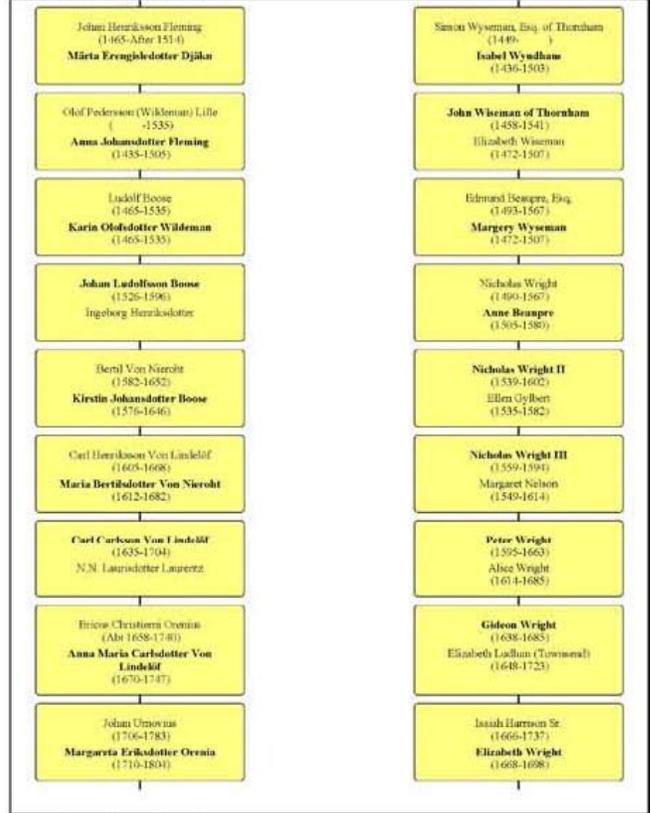
His death is said to have taken place in the winter of 1021–1022. According to a legend he was martyred at [Stockholm](#) after refusing to sacrifice to pagan gods. He's venerated as a [saint](#) in the [Catholic Church](#).

### Relationship Chart

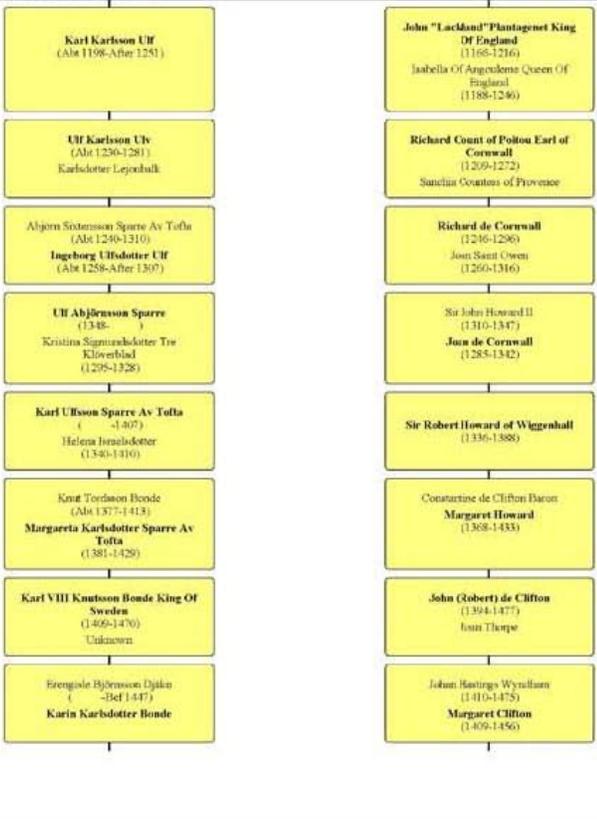
Elvis Aaron Presley is the Half 29th Cousin twice removed \* of Lars Erik Granholm



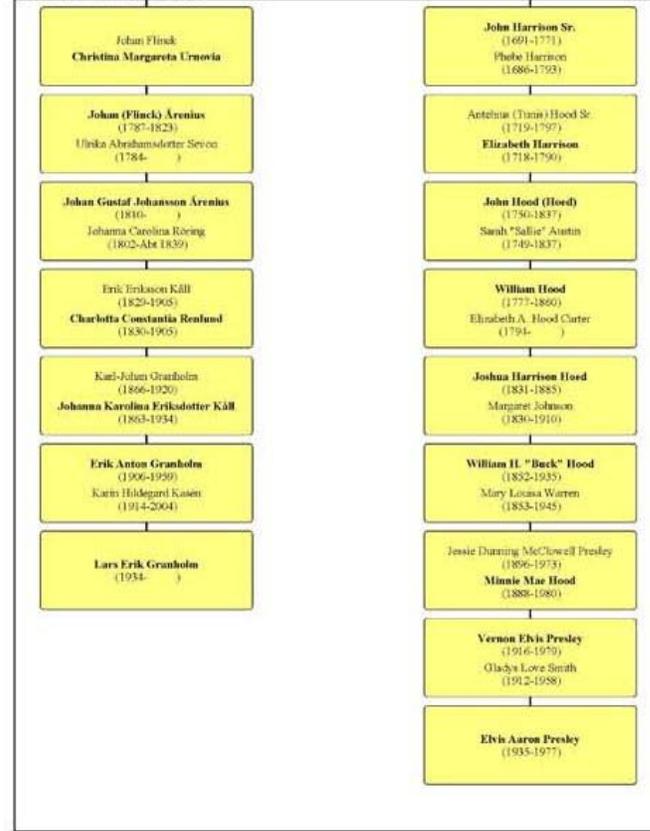
### Relationship Chart



### Relationship Chart



### Relationship Chart



# Vladimir the Great

**Vladimir Sviatoslavich the Great** (c. 958 near [Pskov](#) – 15 July 1015, [Berestovo](#)) was a [grand prince](#) of [Kiev](#), ruler of [Kievan Rus'](#) in (980–1015).

*A mid-19th century statue overlooking the Dnieper at Kiev*



Vladimir's father was the prince [Sviatoslav](#) of the [Rurik dynasty](#). After the death of his father in 972, Vladimir, who was then prince of [Novgorod](#), was forced to flee to [Scandinavia](#) in 976 after his brother [Yaropolk](#) had murdered his other brother [Oleg](#) and conquered [Rus](#). In [Sweden](#) with the help from his relative [Ladejarl Håkon Sigurdsson](#), ruler of [Norway](#), assembled a [Varangian](#) army and reconquered [Novgorod](#) from [Yaropolk](#). By 980 Vladimir had consolidated the [Kievan realm](#) from modern day [Ukraine](#) to the [Baltic Sea](#) and had solidified the frontiers against incursions of Bulgarian, Baltic, and Eastern nomads. Originally a [pagan](#), Vladimir converted to [Christianity](#) in 988, and proceeded to [baptise all of Kievan Rus'](#).

Vladimir, born in 958, was the [natural son](#) and youngest son of [Sviatoslav I of Kiev](#) by his housekeeper [Malusha](#). Malusha is described in the [Norse sagas](#) as a prophetess who lived to the age of 100 and was brought from her cave to the palace to predict the future. Malusha's brother [Dobrynya](#) was Vladimir's tutor and most trusted advisor. Hagiographic tradition of dubious authenticity also connects his childhood with the name of his grandmother, [Olga Prekrasa](#), who was Christian and governed the capital during Sviatoslav's frequent military campaigns.

Transferring his capital to [Pereyaslavets](#) in 969, Sviatoslav designated Vladimir ruler of [Novgorod the Great](#) but gave Kiev to his legitimate son [Yaropolk](#). After Sviatoslav's death (972), a fratricidal war erupted (976) between Yaropolk and his younger brother [Oleg](#), ruler of the [Drevlians](#). In 977 Vladimir fled to his kinsman [Haakon Sigurdsson](#), ruler of [Norway](#), collecting as many of the [Norse warriors](#) as he could to assist him to recover Novgorod, and on his return the next year marched against Yaropolk.

On his way to Kiev he sent ambassadors to [Rogvolod](#) (Norse: Ragnvald), prince of [Polotsk](#), to sue for the hand of his daughter [Rogneda](#) (Norse: Ragnhild). The high-born princess refused to affiance herself to the son of a bondswoman, but Vladimir attacked Polotsk, slew Rogvolod, and took Ragnhild by force. Polotsk was a key fortress on the way to Kiev, and the capture of Polotsk and [Smolensk](#) facilitated the taking of Kiev (978), where he slew Yaropolk by treachery, and was proclaimed [knyaz](#) of all [Kievan Rus](#).

Vladimir continued to expand his territories beyond his father's extensive domain. In 981, he conquered [the Cherven cities](#) (known later as [Galicia](#)) shifting his borders toward [Poland](#); in 983, he subdued the [Yatvingians](#), whose territories lay between [Lithuania](#) and [Poland](#); in 985, he led a fleet along the central rivers of Kievan Rus' to conquer the [Bulgars](#) of the [Kama](#), planting numerous fortresses and colonies on his way.

Though [Christianity](#) had won many converts since Olga's rule, Vladimir had remained a thoroughgoing pagan, taking eight hundred concubines (besides numerous wives) and erecting pagan statues and shrines to gods. He may have attempted to reform Slavic [paganism](#) by establishing the thunder-god, [Perun](#), as a supreme deity. "Although Christianity in Kiev existed before Vladimir's time, he had remained a pagan, accumulated about seven wives, established temples, and, it is said, taken part in idolatrous rites involving human sacrifice."

“In 983, after another of his military successes, Prince Vladimir and his army thought it necessary to sacrifice human lives to the gods. A lot was cast and it fell on a youth, Ioann by name, the son of a Christian, Fyodor. His father stood firmly against his son being sacrificed to the idols. More than that, he tried to show the pagans the futility of their faith: ‘Your gods are just plain wood: it is here now but it may rot into oblivion tomorrow; your gods neither eat, nor drink, nor talk and are made by human hand from wood; whereas there is only one God — He is worshiped by Greeks and He created heaven and earth; and your gods? They have created nothing, for they have been created themselves; never will I give my son to the devils!’”

An open abuse of the deities, to which most people in Rus' bowed in reverence in those times, triggered widespread indignation. A mob killed the Christian Fyodor and his son Ioann (later, after the overall christening of Kievan Rus, people came to regard these two as the first Christian martyrs in Rus and the Orthodox Church set a day to commemorate them, July 25).



Immediately after the murder of Fyodor and Ioann, early medieval Rus saw persecutions against Christians, many of whom escaped or concealed their belief.

However, Prince Vladimir mused over the incident long after, and not least for political considerations. According to the early Slavic chronicle called *Tale of Bygone Years*, which describes life in Kyivan Rus' up to the year 1110, he sent his envoys throughout the civilized world to judge at first hand the major religions of the time—Islam, Roman Catholicism, Judaism, and Byzantine Orthodoxy. They were most impressed with their visit to Constantinople, saying, "We knew not whether we were in Heaven or on Earth... We only know that God dwells there among the people, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations."

*The Baptism of Saint Prince Vladimir (1890)*

The [Primary Chronicle](#) reports that in the year 987, as the result of a consultation with his [boyars](#), Vladimir sent envoys to study the religions of the various neighboring nations whose representatives had been urging him to embrace their respective faiths. The result is amusingly described by the [chronicler Nestor](#). Of the [Muslim Bulgarians of the Volga](#) the envoys reported there is no gladness among them; only sorrow and a great stench. He also said that the Bulgars' religion of Islam was undesirable due to its [taboo](#) against [alcoholic beverages](#) and [pork](#); Vladimir said on that occasion: "Drinking is the joy of the Russes. We cannot exist without that pleasure." Russian sources also describe Vladimir consulting with [Jewish](#) envoys (who may or may not have been [Khazars](#)), and questioning them about their religion but ultimately rejecting it, saying that their loss of [Jerusalem](#) was evidence of their having been abandoned by [God](#). Ultimately Vladimir settled on [Christianity](#). In the churches of the Germans his emissaries saw no beauty; but at [Constantinople](#), where the full festival ritual of the Byzantine Church was set in motion to impress them, they found their ideal: "We no longer knew whether we were in heaven or on earth," they reported, describing a majestic [Divine Liturgy](#) in [Hagia Sophia](#), "nor such beauty, and we know not how to tell of it."

In 988, having taken the town of [Chersonesos](#) in [Crimea](#), he boldly negotiated for the hand of the emperor [Basil II](#)'s sister, [Anna](#). Never before had a [Byzantine](#) imperial princess, and one "[born-in-the-purple](#)" at that, married a barbarian, as matrimonial offers of French kings and German emperors had been peremptorily rejected. In short, to marry the 27-year-old princess off to a pagan Slav seemed impossible. Vladimir, however, was baptized at Cherson, taking the Christian name of Basil out of compliment to his imperial brother-in-law; the sacrament was followed by his wedding with [Anna](#). Returning to Kiev in triumph, he [destroyed pagan monuments](#) and established many churches, starting with the splendid [Church of the Tithes](#) (989) and monasteries on [Mt. Athos](#).

Modern statue of Vladimir in [London](#) with an a historical inscription "Ruler of [Ukraine](#)"



After Anna's death, he married again, likely to a granddaughter of [Otto the Great](#).

In 1014 his son [Yaroslav the Wise](#) stopped paying tribute. Vladimir decided to chastise the insolence of his son, and began gathering troops against Yaroslav. However, Vladimir fell ill, most likely of old age and died at Berestovo, near Kiev. The various parts of his dismembered body were distributed among his numerous sacred foundations and were venerated as [relics](#).

Until his baptism, [Vladimir I of Kiev](#) was described by [Thietmar of Merseburg](#) as a great profligate (*Latin: fornicator maximus*). He had a few hundred concubines in [Kiev](#) and in the country residence of [Berestovo](#). He also had official pagan wives, the most famous being [Rogneda of Polotsk](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogneda\\_of\\_Polotsk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rogneda_of_Polotsk)

## Rogneda of Polotsk

**Rogneda of Polotsk** (962–1002) is the [Slavic](#) name for **Ragnhild**, whose father [Ragnvald](#) (Slavic: [Rogvolod](#)) came from overseas (i.e., from [Scandinavia](#)) and established himself at [Polatsk](#) in the mid-10th century.

*Vladimir and Rogneda (1770)*



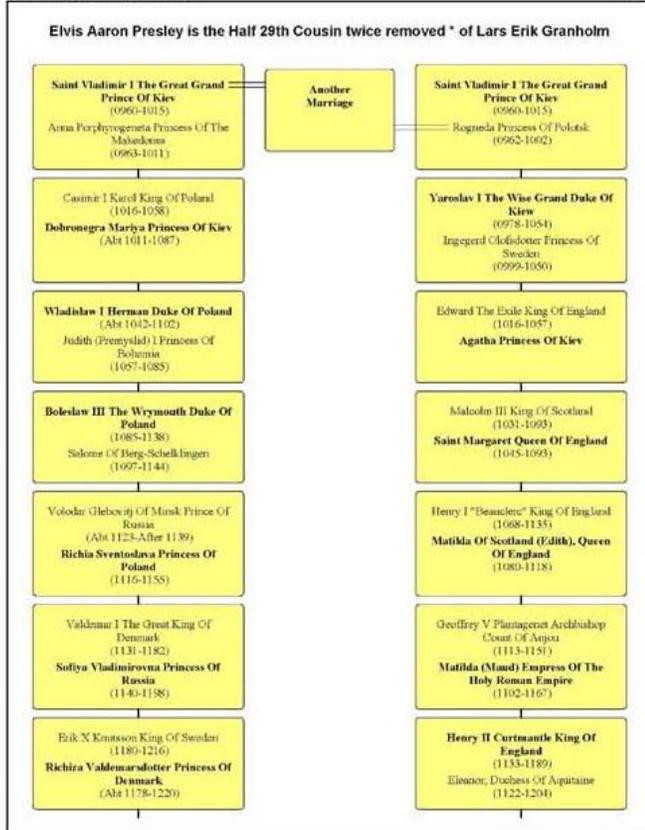
It has been speculated that Ragnvald belonged to the [Ynglings](#) royal family of [Norway](#). In or about 980, [Vladimir](#), on learning that she was betrothed to his half-brother [Yaropolk I](#) of [Kiev](#), took Polotsk and forced Rogneda to marry him. Having raped Rogneda in the presence of her parents, he ordered them to be killed, along with two of Rogneda's brothers.

Rogneda gave him several children. The four sons were [Yaroslav the Wise](#), Vsevolod, [Mstislav of Chernigov](#), and [Izyaslav of Polotsk](#). She also bore two daughters, one of whom is named by [Nestor the Chronicler](#) as [Predslava](#) (taken as a concubine of [Boleslaus I of Poland](#)). A later chronicle tells a story, most likely taken from a [Norse saga](#), of Rogneda plotting against Vladimir and asking her elder son, Izyaslav, to kill him. As was the Norse royal custom, she was sent with her elder son to govern the land of her parents, i.e. Polotsk. Izyaslav's line continued to rule Polotsk and the newly-found town of [Izyaslavl](#) until the [Mongol invasion](#).

After Vladimir converted to Christianity and took [Anna Porphyrogeneta](#) as his wife, he had to divorce all his previous wives, including Rogneda. After that, she entered the convent and took the name **Anastasia**.

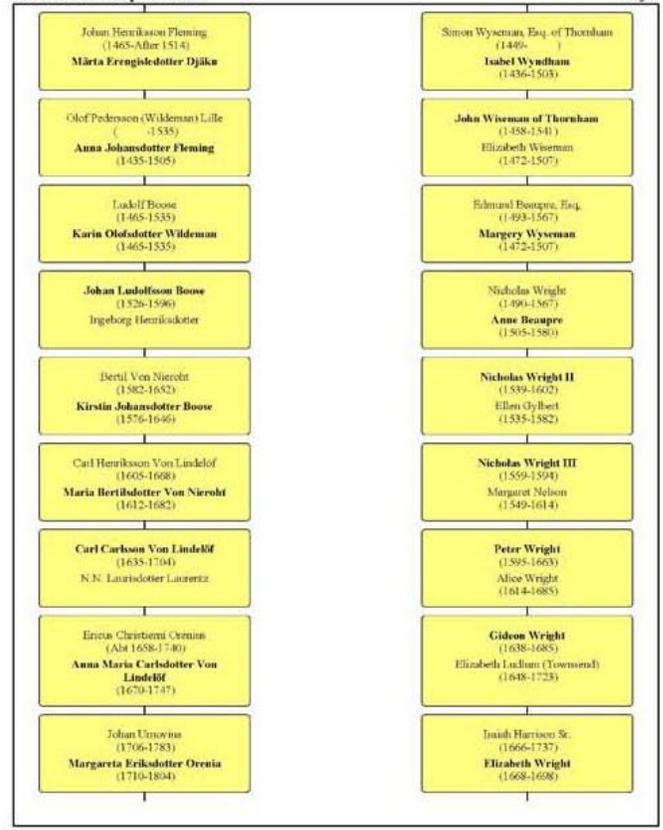
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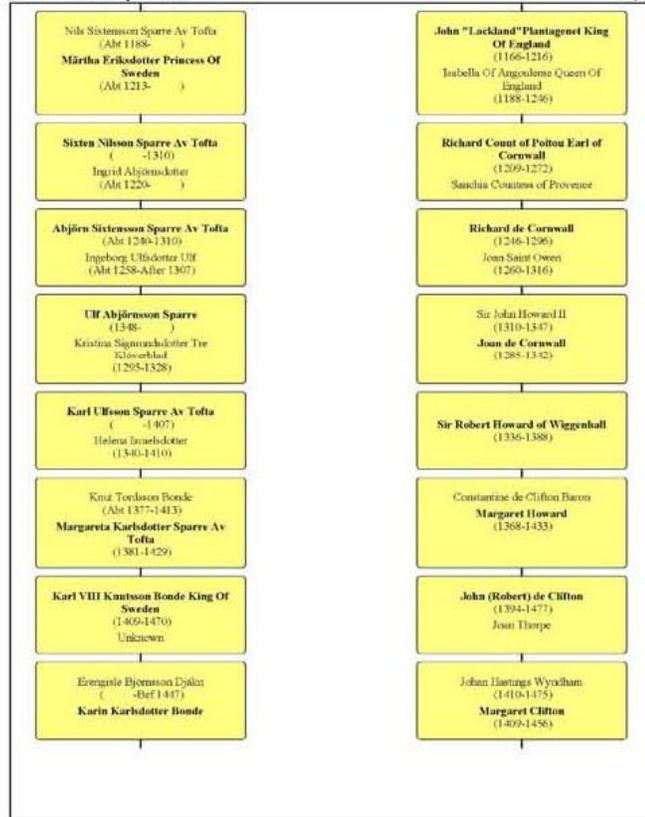
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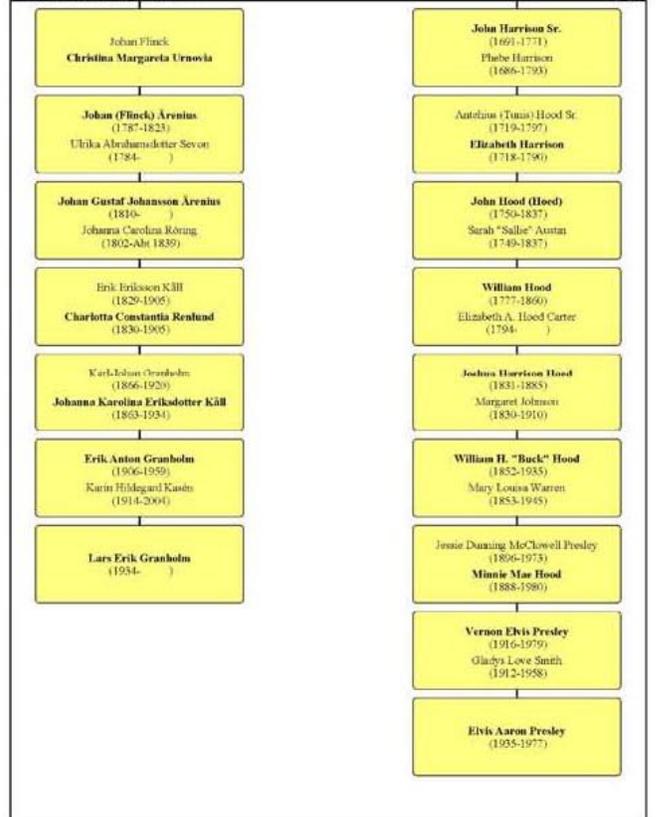
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# Richard II, Duke of Normandy

**Richard II** (born 23 August 970, in [Normandy, France](#) – 28 August 1026, in Normandy), called **the Good** (French: *Le Bon*), was the eldest son and heir of [Richard I the Fearless](#) and [Gunnora](#).

*Richard the Good as part of the "Six Dukes of Normandy" statue in the town square of [Falaise](#).*



Richard succeeded his father as [Duke of Normandy](#) in 996 but the first five years of his reign were spent with Count [Ralph of Ivry](#) wielding power and putting down a peasant insurrection.

When he took power he strengthened his alliance with the [Capetians](#) by helping [Robert II of France](#) against the [duchy of Burgundy](#). He formed a new alliance with [Brittany](#) by marrying his sister [Hawise](#) to [Geoffrey I, Duke of Brittany](#) and by his own marriage to Geoffrey's sister, Judith.

He also repelled an [English](#) attack on the [Cotentin Peninsula](#) that was led by [Ethelred II](#) of England. He pursued a reform of the Norman monasteries.

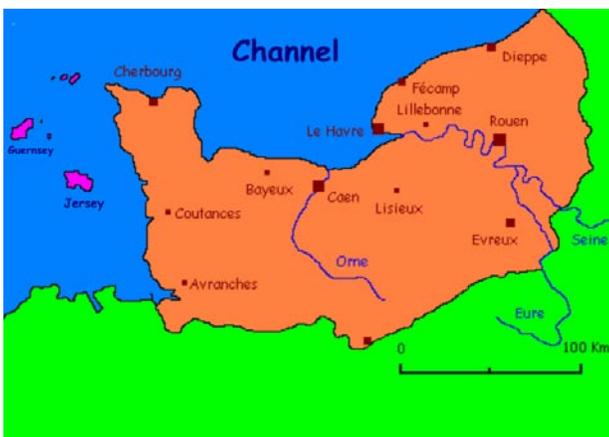
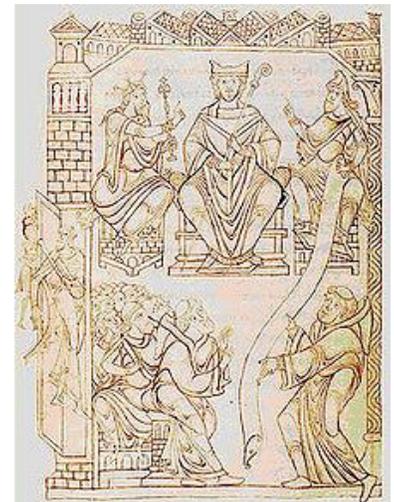
In 1013 AD, England was invaded by the [Danes](#) and [Æthelred the Unready](#) fled to his brother-in-law in Normandy. His marriage to [Emma of Normandy](#), sister of Richard, had made them unpopular among the English.

In 1015 AD, [Olaf II of Norway](#) was crowned king. Prior to this, Prince Olaf had been in England and on his way to unite Norway he wintered with Duke Richard II of Normandy. In 881 AD, this region had been conquered by the Norsemen. As Duke Richard was an ardent Christian, and the Normans had converted to Christianity, Prince Olaf was baptized in [Rouen](#).

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

Richard attempted to improve relations with England through his sister [Emma of Normandy's](#) marriage to King Ethelred, but she was strongly disliked by the English. However, this connection later gave his grandson, [William the Conqueror](#), part of his claim to the throne of England.

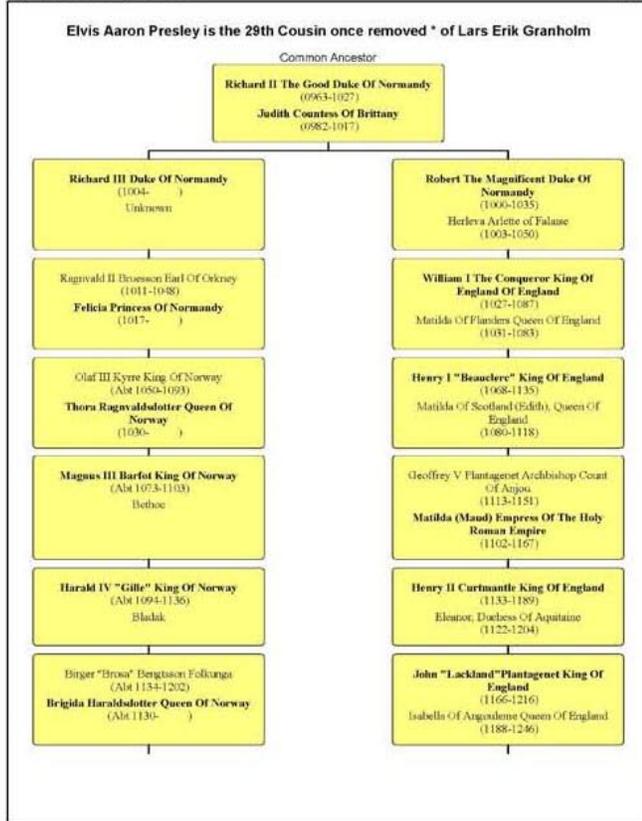
He married firstly (996) [Judith](#) (982-1017), daughter of [Conan I of Brittany](#).



*Map of Normandy*

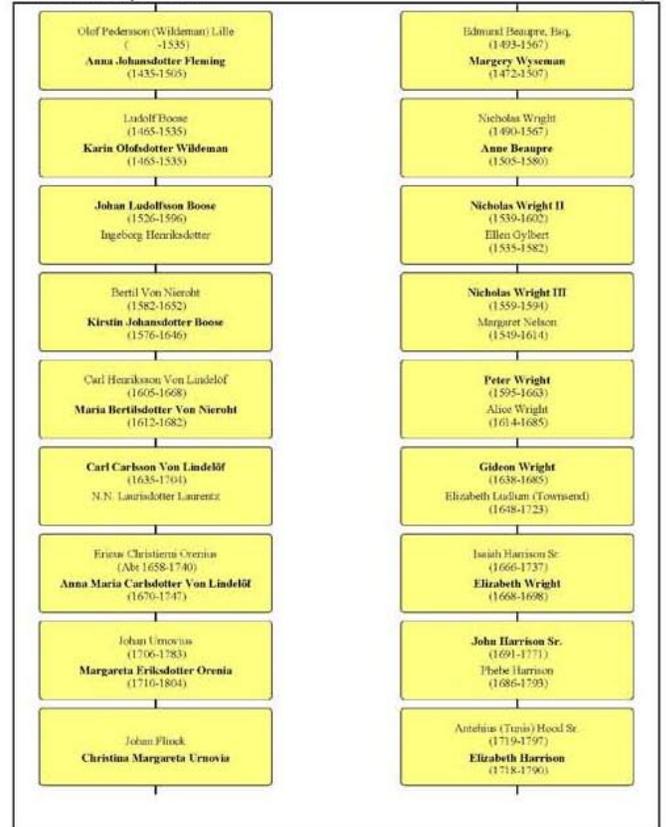
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