

CHAPTER FIVE

RICHARD I. DUKE OF NORMANDY

Twenty-third in Ancestry

Section 1, Richard, Duke of Normandy and His Family—History—The Old Castle.

SECTION 1.

*23. RICHARD I, Duke of Normandy, surnamed The Grand, le Vieux, Sans-peur, and the Fearless, son of William Longsword, Duke of Normandy, Chapter 4, Section 1; born 932; died 996. Married, first in 946 at the age of fourteen, Esmé or Emma, second daughter of Hugh, Duke de France and Bourgoyne, Count of Paris and Orleans. To this marriage no children were born.

A majority of his kingdom were worshipers of God according to the religion of Odin and the Norman Dukes were themselves less than half Christian, notwithstanding the odor of sanctity that has been thrown about their names. Moreover their title to be kings had come directly from the old line that traced back to Asia, and they were therefore very jealous of the rights to continue their line in the old way. Richard the third duke was no exception. While politics forced Esmé upon him as a wife, the Danish rite was still unused, and hence he married according to his heart's desire. This of course added a disagreeable complication, should both wives survive him. Fortunately Esmé predeceased him and on Esmé's death, Richard married according to the Christian church; his Danish wife Gunnora, or the 'Lady Gunnor,' who is described as sister to Herfaste, a Dane of Noble birth. Dudo who knew her personally, calls her 'Une très belle femme, . . . d'une famille de Dannemark de haute noblesse.' (A very beautiful woman, very skilful, and of great intellect, an accomplished woman of noble Danish family.) Sir Francis Palgrave in his History of Normandy, vol. 8, page 11, says,—Richard's fluttering affections (after the death of Emma) were ultimately fixed on the celebrated Guenora,—a damsel of pure Danish descent. . . . Guenor's father's name is not recorded. . . . She had a brother, Herfastus, and three sisters, Sainfrida, Gueva and Adelina. The eldest of these damsels, distinguished for her beauty, became the wife of Richard's Forester. By this second marriage with Gunnor, Richard's several children by her were made legitimate according to both the Norman and French law. There can be no doubt that they were always legitimate according to the Danish or Norman Law. The conflict between the religion of Odin and the religion of Christ in Normandy certainly made lots of trouble for the reigning dukes so far as the selection of their wives and the succession to the Duchy were concerned. It is remarkable that the marriage More Danico seems to have always been supreme and that this continued until the conquest brought to the English throne a king who was legitimate according to the Danish law, but admittedly a bastard according to the laws of the Christian nation which he and his descendants ruled. [Historie Genealogique et Chronol., by Anselme.]

Children of Richard and Gunnor:

1. Richard II, Duke of Normandy; Chapter 6, Section 2.
2. Robert de Normandie, Archbishop of Rouen, the first Count of Evreux.
3. *22. MAUGER or MAUGIS, Count of Mortagne and Count de Corbeil. Chapter 6, Section 1. [Dudo, page 137. Hist. Angl. Scripta. in British Museum, 2070 d.p. 458. Speed. p. 413.]
4. and 5. N.N. ——— and N. N. ——— de Normandie, two daughters whose names are unknown.
6. Emma de Normandie, who married in 1002 Aethelred, King of England, Chapter 11, Section 3, Subsec. 5.M., and in 1017 Canute, the Danish King of England. Her beauty and accomplishments are highly extolled, but her long connection with England, 1002-1051, as the wife of two kings and the mother of two others, brought with it nothing but present evil, and led directly to the Norman Conquest of England. With that marriage began the settlement of Normans in England, their admission to English offices and estates, their general influence in English affairs, everything, in short, that paved the way for the actual conquest. Through Emma came that fatal kinship and friendship between her English son and her Norman great-nephew, which suggested and rendered possible the enterprise which seated her great-nephew on the throne of England. From the moment of this marriage, English and Norman history are inextricably connected and Norman ingenuity was ever ready to take any advantage that offered itself for strengthening the foreign influence in England. The former dispute between Ethelred and the elder Richard was a mere prologue; we have now reached the first act of the drama. By her first marriage Emma became the mother of Edward the Confessor and by her second of King Hardicanute. [The Norman Conquest, by Edward A. Freeman, vol. 1, page 204-205.]
7. Hadwige de Normandie, married Geoffrey I, Count of Brittany, in 1008 and died February 21, 1034. [Historie Genealogique et Chronol. by Anselma.]
8. Mahaud de Normandie, first wife of Eudes II, Count of Blois and de Chartres. [Historie Genealogique et Chronol. by Anselma.]

The Norse Sagas speak of Richard the Fearless, Duke of Normandy as follows: King Olaf had been on warfare west in Valland two summers and one winter. Two jarls were then in Valland, Vilhjalm and Rodbert; their father was Rikard Ruda-Jarl (jarl of Rouen); they ruled Northmandi. Their sister was Queen Emma, who was married to Adalrad (Engla-king); their sons were Jatmund, Jatvard the Good, Jatvig and Jatgeir. Rikard Ruda-jarl was the son of Rikard son of Vilhjalm Langaspjót (longue epee); he was the son of Göngu Hrölf jarl who won Nordmandi; he was the son of Rognvald Maera jarl the Powerful, as before is written. From Göngu Hrölf have sprung the Rúda jarls, and long after they reckoned themselves to be the kinsmen of the chiefs of Norway, and thought so for a long time, and were always great friends of the Northmen, and all of these men had a peace-land in Normandy who would accept it. For the autumn King Olaf came to Normandy, and stayed during the winter in Signa (Seine), and had peace-land there. [St. Olaf's Saga, ch. 19.]

An essential part of the plot which led to the assassination of William Long Sword, Duke of Normandy, was that the conspirators should proceed until they had barred his descendants from the throne of Normandy. In this they entirely failed. They found a difference between the blow that was struck in the back and the blow that had to be delivered face to face with a worthy adversary. Upon William's assassination, Bernard the Dane, the brother of Esprota, fetched from Bayeux his nephew, William's child Richard, then barely ten years old, in order that he might be solemnly invested with the ducal sword and mantle and receive the homage of the Normans. The Norman chieftains gathered round William Longsword's coffin. They included old gray-headed companions of Rollo, with their sons and grandsons, men who were the ancestors of the future conquerors of Italy and Sicily; men, whose children fought and won on the stricken field of Hastings; men whose descendants became the foremost Crusaders, the fathers of the proudest Houses of the mighty Anglo-Norman kingdom, and in their midst, standing by his murdered father's coffin, the little fair-haired boy with ruddy cheeks, whom they had fetched from Danish Bayeux. One gray-headed chieftain held the ducal coronet on the boy's head, one kissed the little hand, and the others swore eternal allegiance and fidelity to their child Duke Richard, who in sorrow and perplexity stood gazing on his father's coffin. It was the last great service Rollo's son could do his people and the land, this welding together by his coffin the varied interests of his mighty chieftains. In this solemn moment the Norman Dane and the Norman Frenchman forgot their jealousies, their antipathies, the conflicting interests of the old religion and the new, in their stern resolve to avenge their master's death by raising the throne of their master's son higher than the throne of any of the Princes of France.

But great dangers surrounded the young duke. His father's death was followed by a renewed Danish invasion and settlement. The old feud between the Norman and Danish party, which had broken out in his father's time, and which, though crushed, had been kept alive by his changeable policy, was revived. The Danish party welcomed the settlers. Hugh of Paris and King Louis jealously watched their opportunity. The latter had not apparently any hand in the shameful murder of Duke William, but the Norman power had too often endangered his throne for him to miss the chance of humbling it for ever; and Hugh had therefore particular reasons for joining the same cause. [The Normans in Europe, by Rev. A. H. Johnson, M.A.]

A few months after William's death, the sister of Otho had borne Hugh a son, Hugh Capet, the future king of France. The old king maker had already seen his father Robert, and his brother-in-law Rudolf of Burgundy, elected kings of France. He had been the guardian of King Louis, and, although he himself had wisely refrained from aspiring to the precarious title, he now began definitely to scheme that he might be the father of a king.

Such were the threatening dangers which surrounded the young Richard, and it was the successful struggle against them all which lends such romantic interest to his earlier years. The chief hope for his success, nay, for the preservation of his race, lay in two circumstances; first the loyal fidelity of his uncle, Bernard the Dane, and of his father's friends, Ivo de Belesme and Osmund de Centvilles

(it is an interesting fact that on our maternal lines we also trace our ancestry to two of these worthies, namely Bernard the Dane and Osmund de Centville); and second the certainty that the kingly and ducal interests of King Louis and Hugh would soon diverge and thus break up their coalition. For the present, however, they were firm friends, Hugh was confirmed in his dukedom of Burgundy, and the state of affairs in Normandy offered them a legitimate opportunity for interference. There, the heathen party, recruited by the renewed Danish settlement, had rapidly increased, and it was now governed by a young duke, who having been raised as a Norseman, had no strong affection for the Christian religion. Thus the Christian and French parties were driven to appeal to King Louis and Hugh. The wish of some of the Danish party was apparently to unite Normandy with the kingdom of Denmark; but even without the threat of this, the interference of King Louis and Hugh might well be justified. Rollo had sworn to become a Christian and a Frenchman, his grandson had willingly or unwillingly broken that compact. The Christians in the duchy had turned against their duke and appealed to them for aid. Feudal ideas were fast developing and King Louis might well claim the wardship over the fief during the minority of his vassal. Accordingly the duchy was invaded, the Danish party overthrown, Rouen seized, and King Louis gained possession of the young duke's person, while Hugh secured Evreux. United by this common robbery, King Louis and Hugh seemed firmer friends than ever; and King Louis, elated by the prospect of acquiring the whole of Normandy, granted in full sovereignty to Hugh the duchy of Burgundy, which henceforth became a dependancy of the lord at Paris. But here all concord ended. King Louis wished to hold all Normandy; Hugh wished to have his share. From the very first he had been forming a party among the Normans, and now he turned against his ally. Meanwhile King Louis permanently occupied Rouen.

Richard next received a formal investiture from the French King which made him a feudatary of the king, who thereby became entitled to the custody of his person and to the charge of the duchy during the minority of the reigning duke. King Louis, however, under the pretence of educating the young duke at his own court, persuaded the Normans to allow Richard to accompany him back to France. Soon after, Richard was imprisoned at Montleon, and King Louis sought to recover Normandy for himself. Richard at the command of King Louis was treated with cruel harshness by his jailor. The French party among the Normans, who under the first impulse of terror had applied to King Louis, but without the desire, however, to become his subjects, felt their old spirit of independence stirred up by this base conduct. Hugh, not improbably, worked upon their discontent, and they rapidly slipped away from King Louis.

A Norman esquire, Osmund or Osmon the Dane, who was called Centeville, had been allowed to accompany Richard to Montleon as his tutor, and with his help he escaped in a truss of hay and joined his Uncle Bernard. Thereupon King Louis, with the aid of Hugh the Great, in the year 945, made war upon the Normans. Bernard called to his assistance the King of Denmark.

Denmark, since the days of Gorm the Old, a single powerful kingdom, was at this date in the hands of his son, Harald Blattand (Blue tooth) the grandfather of

King Canute of England. In Normandy's greatest peril he appeared on her coast, rallied the Normans round his standard, and meeting King Louis on the Dives utterly routed him. King Louis, made prisoner in personal combat with the hardy Danish king, escaped in the turmoil which succeeded, only to fall into the hands of the enemies, stirred up against him by Hugh. Harald now passed through the land, confirming the authority of the young Duke Richard, and restoring the old Norman customs, and then, his mission over, returned to his northern home. A strange mediator between the Normans and King Louis was found in the treacherous Hugh, who then became his gaoler. Deaf to the remonstrances of Edmund of England, Hugh only yielded to the threats of King Otho on condition that Laon should be ceded to him, and King Louis, the victim of his own greed, regained his freedom at the price of his own imperial city. Hugh and the other princes renewed their homage; but the Normans, exasperated by the treatment they had undergone, revived their old claims to independence, and, if we may believe the partial evidence of their chroniclers, repudiated for ever the demands of the Frankish king. Still, Normandy could not hope to stand alone; an alliance was necessary, and it was sought at Paris. Self interest alone could keep Hugh true; but at the time this so clearly pointed to alliance with Normandy, that the Normans were justified in looking to him for aid. After all, Paris was the natural ally of the Normans. Hitherto, adhering to the oath of Rollo, they had paid a personal allegiance to the Karoling line; but now, they, by reason of the marital alliance of the reigning duke, turned to Paris. We have seen in the reign of William Longsword the question raised, whether they were to be Frenchmen or Scandinavians. This was now decided in favor of the former, and even here a choice must be made; therefore, French Paris, and not Frank Laon, must in future be their ally. The alliance assumed the form usual at that time. Feudal ideas were rapidly growing, and Richard, following the custom of the day, commended himself to Hugh and became his man; while Hugh, anxious to secure the friendship of the Normans for his son, betrothed his young daughter Emma to the Norman Richard. Thus began the vassalage of the Duke of Normandy to the Duke of Paris, which, though sometimes denied by the independent Normans, was a real one, and deeply affected their future history. The most important event in the later life of Richard, was the controlling part he took in the accession of the Capeting Kings to the throne of France.

Since the days of King Charles the Simple the chief question at issue had been the succession to the throne of the West Franks, and the quarrels and treaties between Laon and Paris the true thread of these discontents. But till now the claim of Paris to be the sole rival of the Karoling line had been disputed by other princes. Burgundy had already given a king, and Vermandois, proud of a descent from King Charles the Great, had entered the lists as a competitor. Now Burgundy was annexed to ducal Paris; Vermandois, since the death of Herbert, according to some accounts by his own hand (943), had been divided amongst his sons, while a small portion had gone to extend the ever growing dominions of Hugh. Arnulf, since the treacherous murder of Duke William, seems to have lost influence and power. Normandy, long the chief supporter of the Karoling line, and hitherto the constant enemy of Paris, had at last, by the marriage of

Richard to the daughter of Hugh, come into close alliance with Paris. From all these causes the power of Hugh became supreme; no one arose to dispute his claim of being the leader of the opposition to King Louis and his family.

The second principle follows from the first. We have seen that it was originally the two chief dukes of the West Franks who were allies against their king. The quarrel then was one of the ducal provincial element against the royal-imperial. Now that kingly interests were definitely at stake, it was only natural that King Louis should turn to his neighbor King Otho. The king of Germany had himself to struggle against the jealousy of the rival provinces, of which many only surlily acquiesced in the establishment of the Saxon line upon the throne, and this alone could lead him to favor the appeal of King Louis. But there was another reason. King Otho had probably already conceived the idea of claiming the empire for himself, and reviving in his own person the position of King Charles the Great; and King Louis, too glad to get valuable aid at any price, acquiesced.

Thus, the quarrel which ensued was between two kings on one side, and two dukes on the other, the provincial against the imperial element; and it was the severing of one of these alliances which really decided the question. As long as the German king supported King Louis, the influence of Normandy was counter-balanced; but when that policy was temporarily abandoned by King Otho, the fall of the house of Laon and the rise of Capetian France was the necessary and inevitable consequence. It is fortunate that we are able thus to clear our way, and that the main questions at issue stand out sharply, because of the details it is extremely hard to feel secure. The French and German accounts are meagre in the extreme, while the Norman overwhelm us with details which are probably semi-mythical. We shall, therefore, only briefly notice the chief points of interest.

King Otho, indignant at the terms imposed upon King Louis on regaining his freedom, joined him, and their united forces invaded the territories of Hugh and Richard. Repulsed from Laon, Paris, and Rouen, they only succeeded in taking Rheims, from which they expelled Hugh's nominee, the once boy bishop. Laon only fell in 949, and then by stratagem. The Church, which was again beginning to make its voice heard, declared for the kings, and Hugh was excommunicated by the Pope. The princes of Aquitaine were definitely gained over, and by 953 Hugh had made full submission. Such was the position of King Louis when he was snatched away by an untimely death at the age of thirty three.

On the death of King Louis the destinies of Gaul were again in the hands of Hugh, although King Otho claimed a real but ill defined supremacy. To the influence of these two men we may ascribe the election of Lothaire. King Otho had supported King Louis; it was natural he should support his son. As for Hugh, a kingmaker he had lived and a kingmaker he wished to die; and Lothaire, at the age of thirteen, like his father before him, ascended the throne under the protection of this busy intriguing prince. Hugh, once more the guardian of his king, hastened to turn the position to his own advantage. Gaining from Lothaire a grant of the duchy of Aquitaine, he embroiled the king in a war with the princes of that country, but their combined forces were checked before Poitiers. The war was ended, and shortly after, Hugh's successful, restless, intriguing life was brought to a close.

Unwilling or unable to assume the crown himself, he had paved the way for his son, in two ways. The constant intrigues of his earlier life had tended to weaken the power of the royal line, and the final alliance made with Normandy eventually served to place his son upon the throne.

Left a minor at the age of thirteen, Hugh Capet fell by the will of his father under the guardianship of Richard the Norman Duke, and the alliance was cemented in 960 by the consummation of the marriage between Emma and Richard who renewed his homage to his ward. The relations between Paris and Laon remained the same, Hugh doing homage to young Lothaire. Thus the destinies of Laon and Paris were in the hands of two boys of almost equal ages, the Karoling leaning more and more on the staff of Germany, and the Frenchman on that of Normandy. So things remained, with the exception of one short war between Lothaire and Richard, until the death of King Otho I.

By that event the last hope for the Karoling line was extinguished. Lothaire foolishly quarreled with his successor, King Otho II., about the possession of Lotharingia, and the war which ensued was only ended by the death of the two rivals within three years of each other. Thus by the imprudence of Lothaire, the powerful German house was alienated at the moment when its aid was most needed.

Once more the Karoling line was chosen, and Louis, the son of Lothaire, quietly succeeded under the protection of Duke Hugh. The one act of his reign was to alienate the powerful Archbishop of Rheims, Adalbero, whose interests were thus transferred to Paris.

At King Louis's death the crown was again referred to the will of the princes. The only possible competitors were Charles of Lorraine, the uncle of the late king, and Hugh Capet. Now at last there could be no doubt. Hugh Capet could depend upon the suffrages of Burgundy which was in the hands of his brother Eudes, of the metropolitan Archbishop of Rheims, lately estranged from King Louis, and, above all, of Richard the Norman Duke, who had private as well as public wrongs to avenge. There were some, indeed, who favored Charles, but of these Aquitaine was too little connected with France to make its influence felt, and Vermandois was no longer powerful. The only influential supporters of Charles were the Archbishop of Sens and Baldwin of Flanders; when, therefore, the Archbishop of Rheims, asserting the elective character of the crown, put the question to the vote, the election of Hugh Capet was carried by acclamation. The party of Charles, not strong enough to gain his election, took up arms in his behalf. Charles displayed the activity common to his race, and for two years carried on the struggle with considerable success, but fortune had declared against the Karolings, and now overwhelmed their last representative. Betrayed by the treachery of the Bishop of Laon, whose most sacred promise he had trusted, he and his city were handed over to Hugh. Laon ceased for ever to be a capital, and Charles remained a prisoner till his death in 1001.

We have dwelt upon the important struggle which ended in the final triumph of Paris because the Norman duke had been the primary agent in the revolution, and because future Norman history is deeply influenced by it. Since the days of Rollo, Norman history had formed an unbroken thread in the history of France.

As long as the Norman Dukes remained true to the Karolings they were safe; but when Richard finally sided with Hugh of Paris, their death knell was sounded, and it was only a question of time as to the exact moment when the event should be consummated. Thus it was the Normans who had made Gaul France, and Paris owes her position as capital of modern France to their agency. The effect on Normandy, on the other hand, is fully as great. Till now the Normans had been hardly accepted as brethren by their Christian neighbors; they were hated while they were feared; and branded with the name of pirates. Henceforth they gain a recognized and important position as Frenchmen. In Normandy the best French qualities appear; the vivacity, the impulsiveness, the cleverness of the Romanized Celt seem to have gained strength from the courage, the high spirit of independence, the perseverance, the chivalry of the Scandinavians. Nowhere else is the Scandinavian influence so great, nowhere is it so permanent. Elsewhere they become rapidly lost amid the surrounding nationality, and lose their predominance; in Normandy the union of the Scandinavian nobles with the French produces a famous and peculiar type of men, the best of the French—the conquerors and wise kings of Sicily, the powerful conquerors and organizers of England, the flower of chivalry and the heroes of the Crusades. Here the langue d'oïl assumes its greatest polish, here rise the first of North-French poets, here the finest of the early French cathedrals are built.

But nevertheless all the while there were parts of this duchy which were essentially Danish, and in which the inhabitants persistently adhered to the old Norse customs and religion, so that the Dukes of Normandy down to the time of the Conquest of England did not dare overlook the old religion or the old Norse affiliations, and moreover, the succession was always to the progeny of the Danish marriage ceremony.

Lastly, the relations between Normandy and Paris, inaugurated by the revolutions which we have been considering, deeply affected the future history of Normandy as well as that of France. Richard I. had commended himself to Hugh, the great Duke of Paris. That duchy had now grown into a kingdom. The vassalage continued, but it was due rather to Hugh Capet as duke than as king of France; and while the Capetian kings in later days ill requited the assistance they had received from their Norman vassals, the Normans were ever ready to claim their independence and reduce their vassalage to the narrowest limits.

With this Capetian revolution, in which Richard had borne so prominent a part, his public life ended, and the remaining years of his eventful reign were spent in quiet at Rouen. Nothing disturbed the internal peace of the duchy except a short war with England, caused by the shelter offered by Richard to the Danes, who, under Swegen, king of Denmark, and son of Harald Blaatand, were again beginning to trouble England and entering on that political conquest which culminated in the establishment of Canute upon the English throne. The war was soon put to an end through the mediation of the Pope, and is important not only as forming the first instance in which the Norman dukes were brought into direct connection with the opponents of the English kings, but as indicating the continuance of the old close association between Normandy, the Danish settlement in England, and the Scandinavian peninsula. An association which was