

CHAPTER SIX

MAUGER, COUNT DE CORBEIL AND MORTAIGN

Twenty-second in Ancestry

Section 1, Mauger and His Family; Corbeil—Section 2, Richard the Good, Duke of Normandy; History.

SECTION 1.

*22. MAUGER de Normandie, COUNT OF CORBEIL, son of Richard I, surnamed the Fearless, Duke of Normandy, Chapter 5, Section 1, married Germaine de Corbeil, daughter of Aymon, Count of Corbeil, and his wife Elizabeth, a near relation of Avoye the wife of Hugh the Great and sister of the Emperor Otho. [Mauger was the second son of Richard Duke of Normandy. The records of Normandy do not disclose what, if any, title he held except that of de Normandie, although he married the daughter of Aymon, Count of Corbeil, and must have been given by his parents an estate of equal importance in order that the marriage could be brought about. Mauger is known in history as Count of Corbeil, which title he obtained in right of his wife. The history of Mauger seems to center around that of Corbeil, which we shall briefly notice, particularly so far as it relates to our genealogy. The properties that came to his second son Haymon Dentatus, will give some indication of the great wealth Mauger had in his own right.] Children:—

1. *21. GUILLAUME, surnamed WERLAC, Chapter 7, Section 1.
2. Hamon, surnamed Dentatus, Chapter 7, Section 3.
3. Hugh, Bishop of Bayeux, of whom little is known, and upon whose death the bishopric was given to William d'Ivri, and upon his death William the Conqueror gave the bishopric to his brother Odo, whom he afterwards made earl of Kent in England. [Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy, by Ordericus Vitalis, vol. 2, page 416.]

The series of events which led to Mauger becoming Count of Corbeil began with the death of his Grand father. For when Richard the Fearless, father of Mauger was a little child his father died and he was taken away from Normandy by the King of France under an excuse that the child was to be educated, but really it was to make him a prisoner and possibly to kill him. He was placed in the care of a learned and good man known in history as Osmon the Dane, who took compassion upon him and, by concealing him in a load of hay, carried him safely back to Normandy, and placed him in the custody of his powerful relation Bernard of Senlis, surnamed the Dane. Thereupon Louis, King of France, 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 and King Louis was defeated. Peace was concluded and Richard secured a further grant of territory. Osmon then skillfully arranged a marriage between the young Duke and Esmé daughter of Hugh the Great, then Count of Paris and the most powerful man in France.

Le Paire, in his book on the History of the Town of Corbeil, published in Paris, in 1901, referring to the marriage of Richard, father of Mauger, and Esmé, daughter of Count Hugh, states that the betrothal ceremonies were carried out at Paris in 956. All the nobility of Normandy were present at this festivity, amongst them being Aymon, son of Osmon the Dane, a young man of much promise, 'beloved and made much of by the ladies.' In the French Court was a lady equally prominent, by name, Elizabeth, a near relative of Avoye, wife of Hugh the Great and sister of the Emperor Otho. These young people fell in love with each other, and the match being approved by the statesmen on both sides, Elizabeth was married to Aymon in the following year, viz. 957. As a wedding gift, Hugh the Great gave Aymon the Earldom of Corbeil and the manor of Gournay, on the Marne. At this time Hugh the Great was at enmity with the Emperor Otho, and hoped by these intermarriages to keep the support of Normandy. The marriage of Richard, the young Duke of Normandy, with a daughter of Hugh the Great was not pleasing to King Louis, and shortly afterwards he allied himself to Emperor Otho of Germany and attacked Normandy. Otho and Louis penetrated as far as Rouen where Hugh the Great had withdrawn with Richard, Duke of Normandy, his son-in-law. Here the kings were repulsed in battle by the two princes and compelled to retreat.

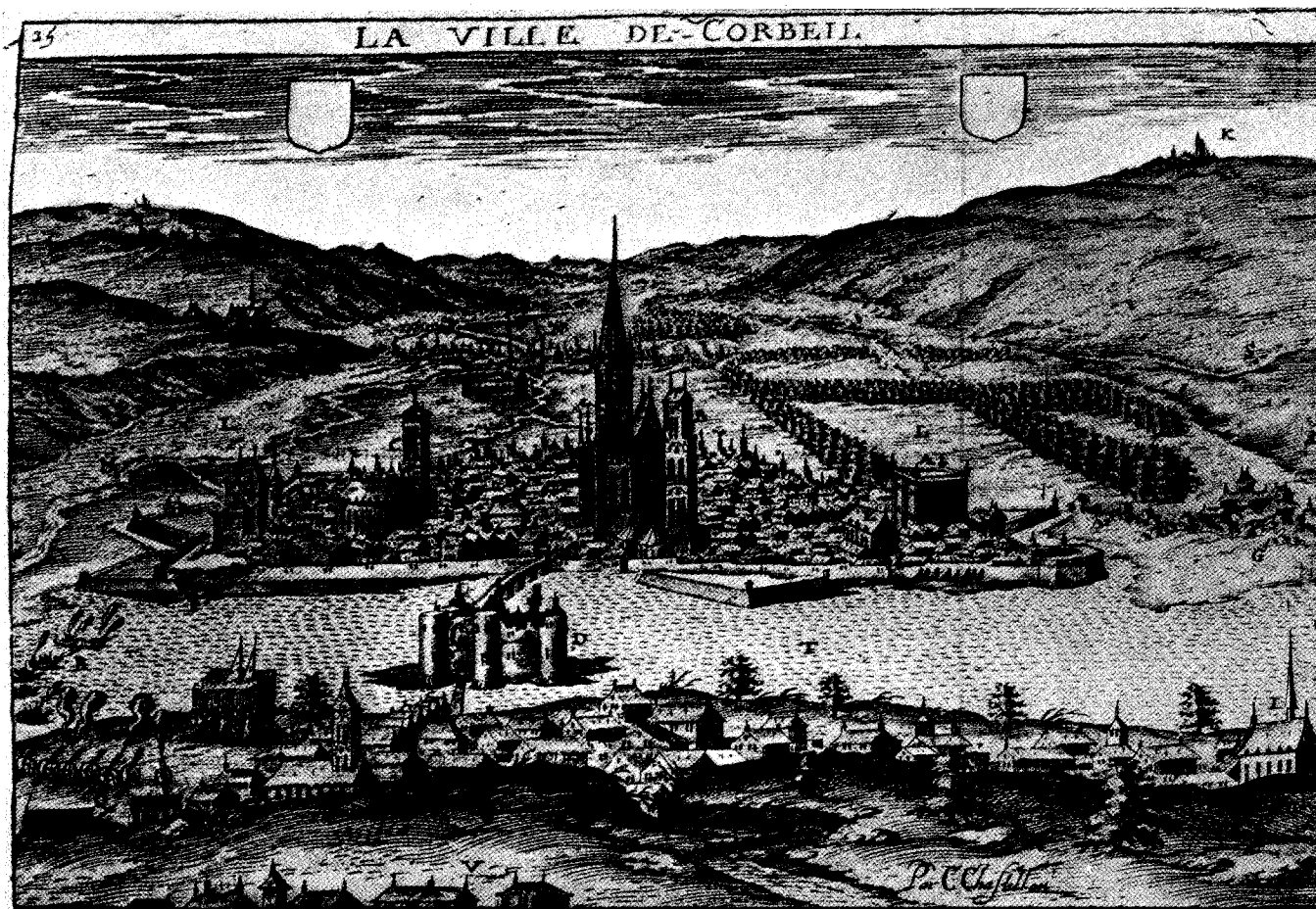
Aymon was a strong supporter of Richard, and it is recorded that he and his followers greatly distinguished themselves at this battle. After depositing his booty in his castle at Corbeil, Aymon set out to avenge himself on certain nobles who under cover of the foreign invasion had offended him. Amongst these was the Count Palluau,—Palluau being a small castle situated at the junction of the rivers Etamples and Essonne, above the bridge of Gomiers. In this castle were preserved the relics of two patron saints, St. Exupere or St. Spire and St. Lue, both bishops of Bayeux. Aymon took the castle by storm and slaughtered the defenders. The relics he retained as his own portion of the booty, and resolved to build a church at Corbeil in which to place them.

The booty taken during the war and the ransom of his prisoners provided funds for the building of the church, and these were supplemented by property left him by his father, Osmon. The church was built and the relics installed therein, and provision was also made for the upkeep of four priests to celebrate Holy Mass daily in the church. According to the Abbé Lebaeuf, the building was completed in the year 963.

About the same time the relics of St. Guenault, Abbé of Landevenne, were brought from Courcouronne to the Castle of Corbeil, and placed in the care of Count Aymon. It is recorded that the Count received them with great ceremony, and later placed them in a chapel situated in St. Jacques, just outside the town. This chapel with its grounds, he gave to the monks.

According to Dom Guillaume Morin, the old bridge of Corbeil was also built by Count Aymon. This bridge spanned the Seine, thus connecting Old Corbeil on the right bank with New Corbeil on the left bank, which included Count Aymon's castle and the church.

King Louis died in 956, and Hugh the Great shortly afterwards. Their sons and heirs, Lothaire and High Capet respectively, were on friendly terms, and



Count Aymon took advantage of the peace to go on a pilgrimage to Rome. He died, however, on the road, not far from Corbeil, on the way home from Italy. The Countess Elizabeth had the body brought to Corbeil, where it was buried in the Church of St. Spire. There is no contemporary inscription giving the date of the death of Count Aymon, but La Barre estimates that he died in 967, ten years after his marriage. For a long time afterwards the anniversary of his death was solemnly observed on the 28th of May in the Church of St. Spire, but the exact date of his death is uncertain. A tomb, raised to his memory, still exists in the church, and is of great interest on account of its antiquity.

A good description of the church and of Count Aymon's tomb is given by M. Pinard, a member of the Société Française (for the preservation of historical monuments), in his Monograph on the Church of St. Spire, Corbeil. St. Spire, or St. Exupere as he should be called, was, says M. Pinard, a missionary sent from Rome to preach the faith to the Gauls. Nothing is known of his life, except that he was the first bishop of Bayeux, and that he died towards the end of the fourth century. He was buried, it is said, in the Church of St. Jean at Bayeux, and it is not known how his remains came to be transferred to Palluau. The second patron saint of Corbeil, St. Lue, commonly called St. Louis, is said to have been the third bishop of Bayeux. He died at the end of the fifth century. As related above, the relics of this saint were brought to Corbeil by Count Aymon, together with those of St. Spire. The church constructed by Aymon, however, did not exist long, for it was burned about the year 1019, and was afterwards rebuilt on the same site. This new building was also burned between the years 1137 and 1144. The Cartulary of the Church of Notre Dame in the same town preserves contemporary evidence of this disaster.

A Charter of 1029 refers to the 'Castellum Sancti Exuperii,' (Church of St. Exuperius) and one hundred and fifty years later we find it designated 'Santus Exuperius de sub castro forti,' ('St. Exuperius near to the castle'), but in recent times the name has come to be abbreviated to St. Spire.

In describing the monuments, M. Pinard points out that whereas Count Aymon's tomb is now in a side chapel, it was originally in the cenotaph. This monument is believed to have been erected to his memory at the commencement of the fourteenth century, that is, nearly 350 years after his death. The statue is in the form of an armed man lying prostrate; it is of stone of a very fine grain, while the head, neck and hands are of white marble. The veins and muscles are reproduced in a remarkably fine manner. The body is clothed in a coat of mail, over which is a cloak edged with fur. The baldrick is large and of an unusual form, and on it is represented, alternately, the head of an angel or child, and a griffin with two heads. Although coats of arms were not much worn before the Crusades, yet his shield has on it a coat of arms consisting of a lion salient on a red background. The costume, likewise, is somewhat of an anachronism. 'Gules, a lion salient,' were the arms of the later Earls of Corbeil, and it is probable that these were chosen for that reason. At the foot of the statue is a dragon with two heads, which, tradition says, represents a monster much feared in the country, and from which Aymon delivered it. In a street of Corbeil, the Trou-Patrix, there is an old covered drain entering into the river Essonne, and, according to

tradition, this place was the den of the dragon. The legend doubtless indicates that Count Aymon did much to better the health of the town and to rid it of disease. In the base of the monument was at one time a black marble panel with the following inscription beautifully inlaid in white marble mosaic; 'Cy gist le cors de hault et noble homme, le comte Hémon, jadis comte Corbeuil, qui fonda cette église et plusieurs autres. Dieu ait l'ame de luy Amen.' ('Here lies the body of the high and noble man, the Count Aymon, formerly Count of Corbeil, who built this church and many others. May God receive his soul. Amen'). [Parshall Book, page 35-36.]

The Count Aymon left to survive him, his widow and two children of tender years: 1. Thibault, who became the Abbé of St. Maur. 2. GERMAINE.

Elizabeth, widow of Count Aymon, married a second time Bouchard surnamed le Vieil, Count of Vendome, de Melun, and de Paris, who became jure uxoris de Corbeil and guardian of his wife's minor children. By her second marriage she had two children: 3. Renaud, Comte le Vendome and de Melun, Bishop in partibus of Paris, who died January 18, 1020. 4. Elizabeth or Adele, Comtesse de Vendome, who married Fonques III., Comte d'Anjou, surnamed Nerra, son of Geoffrey I., surnamed Grisegonnelle, Comte de Anjou, de Vermandois, who died in 1040. [Anselme History Genealogique, vol. 8, page 722.]

The Count Bouchard, during the later years of his life, lost interest in worldly things and retired from the world to the Monastery of Saint Maur. In 1005, in the month of August, he came out for the last time and visited Robert the Pious during the siege of Sens and d'Avallon. The first of May, 1006, he made known his last wishes in a will which was an occasion of grand solemnity. This will was signed by the chamberlain Josselin, the cupbearer Gaudri, and the constable Hugues de Avon (Fontainebleau) all of the house of the Count, The Archdeacon Aubri, Ansoud le Rich de Paris, one of the counsellors of King Robert II., Ferri, The Vicomte Robert de Corbeil and his two sons Nantier and Josselin, and finally by another Josselin, Vicomte de Melun, of whom we have no other account except a deed of his in 998. None of these appear to have been related to Mauger. Vicomte Robert de Corbeil, together with his sons, during the reign of Robert of Paris, made a gift to the Abbé of Des Fosses of some land which had come to them by inheritance, which was called by the name of Villarie, and which is situated above the village called Nogent. It is the Villiers-sur-Marne situate very close to Nogent. It is actually within the limits of Nogent, and therefore the Vicecomte Robert would be designated as de Nogent. It is remarkable that this land of Villari had already been given to the monastery by M. Bégon Count of Paris during the reign of Charlemagne. The Viscount Robert became a monk at the end of his life, which occurred sometime before 1043. [Society Historie & Archeologique de Corbeil de Etamps et du Huipoix, bulletin 10, page 106; bulletin 5.]

Having made his will, Bouchard returned to Saint Maur where his step-son Thibault was Abbé, and died according to the chronology of Saint Denis, four days before the beginning of March, about February 24, 1007. Elizabeth followed her husband to the tomb the following eighteenth of January.

The obsequies were magnificently carried out in the presence of all his family and he was buried in one of the chapels of the Abbey. On his tomb, the following epitaph was engraved:—

His vir magus guondam, dom Corpore vivit,
 Nomine Bucardus, per mundi climata notus,
 Celsus erat meritis distisfactisque modestus.
 Pauperibus largus viduis per cuneta benignus,
 Ipsius en corpus tumulo requiescit in illo,
 Martius ostendit obiisse Kalendus.

Translation: (Here, in this tomb, lies the body of a man great during his life, named Bouchard, renowned throughout the whole world, of a high merit, kindly in his speech, and in his actions, generous towards the poor, liberal in his charities. He died four days before the first of March.) [The Parshall Book, p. 38-39.]

According to Gaignieres, the tomb represented the statue of a knight lying prone on a pedestal which was let into the wall.

Elizabeth, the widow of Count Bouchard, and formerly wife of Count Aymon, was buried in the same chapel, her tomb, according to Gaignieres, was that of a lady lying likewise on a pedestal. The epitaph inscribed on the tomb was as follows:—

Hoc placuit Domino conjungere vivis,
 Et poliendrarum simul sic voluit,
 Hoc qui cunque legis persolve carmina Psalmi,
 Spiritus ut valeant sexudere regna poli.

Translation: ('Just as it pleased God to unite them during their life; so in the same way it has pleased Him to reunite them in death. Whoever ye be that read this, remember the verse of the Psalmist, "Souls such as these transcend the Kingdoms of the Earth."'). Both these epitaphs were transcribed by the Monk Oddes in 1508, and at the time of writing he said that the epitaphs were already half destroyed.

Before he died, Count Bouchard confirmed in writing all the pious gifts of his predecessor Count Aymon, and it is stated by the old historians, that he also completed the Church of St. Pierre at Melun.

The remains of Count Bouchard and his wife were discovered in excavating a ditch in the embankment of the ancient Abbey in 1860.

Bouchard seems to have held the Countship of Corbeil after his step-daughter came of age, possibly until the death of his step-son Thibault, the Abbé of Saint Maur, as it does not appear that Mauger became Count of Corbeil until 1012, while his marriage with Germaine took place about 984. This indicates that Thibault was Count of Corbeil from 1007 to 1012 and that at his death the honor fell to his sister, wife of Mauger and that prior to this Bouchard was only Count of Corbeil by courtesy. Mauger's wife, Germaine, was celebrated for her beauty and grace, and the marriage is said to have been strongly advised by Bishop Regnaud, Chancellor of France, who wished to maintain the alliance between the Dukes of Normandy and the Counts of Corbeil. Mauger rendered great services to King Henry of France in the struggle for the crown against the King's mother, Constance, and became one of his greatest friends.

In 1031 Robert King of France, the lifelong friend of the Norman Duke, had died leaving the crown to his eldest son Henry, whom he had the wisdom to have crowned at Rheims just before his decease. The widow of Robert, a woman of masculine and harsh character, disliked the retiring disposition of her eldest son and set up the claims of her spoilt youngest son, Robert. She secured the aid of Fulk of Anjou, and Eudes II of Blois, and King Henry, driven from his throne, was forced to throw himself on the protection of his vassal of Normandy. By this help the formidable league was overthrown, Henry was restored, and Robert his brother, contenting himself perforce with the Duchy of Burgundy, became the founder of the first line of Burgundian Dukes. Mauger was the brother and advisor of Richard, surnamed the Good, then reigning Duke of Normandy, and he took an active part in the war that resulted in replacing King Henry upon his throne. The king held him in the highest esteem and was very friendly with him. As a reward for his services he received the Countship of Montaigne. [The Normans in Europe, by Rev. A. H. Johnson, M.A., page 88.]

Mauger died, some say in 1039, and others that he died before 1040. [Society Historie & Archeologique de Corbeil de Etamps et de Huipoix, bulletins 10 & 5.]

SECTION 2.

RICHARD II, the elder brother of Mauger, surnamed The Good, Duke of Normandy, succeeded his father Richard I, Chapter 5, Section 1. He married first, Judith, daughter of Conan I, Count of Brittany, and d'Ermengarded. Anjou, and sister of Geoffrey, Count of Rennes. Richard's sister Hadwige or Haduisa had become the wife of Geoffrey I, Count of Rennes and Brittany. Judith died 1017. Their children were: [Historie Genealogique et Chronol des Pairs de France, by Anselme.]

1. Richard III, Duke of Normandy, Chapter 7, Section 3.
2. Robert I, Duke of Normandy, surnamed Le Diable, or the Devil, Chapter 7, Section 2.
3. Guillaume de Normandie, a monk of the Abbey of de Fescamp, named in a donation in 1025.
4. Adelais dite Judith de Normandie, who married 1023, Renaud I, Count of Bourgogne.
5. Alienore de Normandie, second wife of Bauduin IV, Count of Flanders, i. e. Count Baldwin, surnamed the 'Bearded'.
6. A daughter who married Thurstin de Goz, Lord of Hiesmes, Viscount of Avranches, who accompanied Duke Robert to the Holy Land in 1035. Isabella Lupus, who married Gilbert de Corbeil, was a grandchild of this marriage, thus making in our genealogy another line of descent from the illustrious Rollo: see Chapter 9, Section 3.

Richard II married second, Estrithe or Marguerite, daughter of Swenon, king of Denmark and England. There were no children by this marriage.

He married third, Poppa, a Norman. Children:—

7. Guillaume de Normandie, Count Talou and d'Arques.
8. Mauger de Normandie, Bishop of Rouen.

Richard dated his public acts by the regnal years of the king. And no wonder for it is plain that the Norman Duke was the mainstay of the French kingdom. King Robert, though the most pious of men, could not avoid either temporal warfare, ecclesiastical censures, or domestic oppression. In the last two classes of afflictions Norman help could hardly avail him, but in all Robert, the French King's wars, Richard proved a steady and valuable ally. The help of the Norman Duke enabled him to maintain his claims over the Ducal Burgundy, 1003, and Norman troops served along with those both of the French king and of the German Caesar in a war against their common vassal of Flanders. The imperial and royal saints joined their forces against the city of Valenciennes, 1006, and the more purely temporal help of the Norman Duke was arrayed on the same side. With his Breton neighbors or vassals Richard was on good terms. The friendship between him and the Breton Count Geoffrey was cemented by an exchange of sisters between the two princes. Richard married Judith of Brittany, 1008, and Hadwisa of Normandy became the wife of Geoffrey, on whose death her sons, Alan and Odo, were placed under the guardianship of their uncle. With another neighbor and brother-in-law, Richard found it less easy to remain on friendly terms. His sister Matilda had married Odo the Second, Count of Chartres, the grandson of the old enemy Theobald. The town and part of the district of Dreux had been given to Odo as her marriage portion, and this, on her death, he refused to restore. A war followed, which was made conspicuous by the foundation of the famous castle of Tillieres, which long remained a border fortress of Normandy. Of course every effort of Odo to take or surprise the Norman outpost was rendered hopeless by Norman valor, and yet we are told that Richard found it expedient to resort to help to support him against his enemy. The old connection with the North was still cherished and there was ever the coming of new emigrants from the old north country. Richard did not scruple to bring northern invaders into Gaul to help him against his Christian enemies. [The Norman Conquest, by Edward A. Freeman, vol. 1, page 306-308.]

It was not unnatural for England to hope that the marriage to King Ethelred of Emma, daughter of Duke Richard I. of Normandy, and therefore sister of Richard II., had gained for England a continental ally, and we are told, that Ethelred sent to his brother-in-law Duke Richard, asking for both help and counsel, against the continued Danish invasions. Whatever may have been given by Richard in the way of counsel, it does not appear that a single Norman ship or Norman soldier was sent to the help of England. Hugh, the betrayer of Exeter, is the only recorded contribution which either Norman chivalry or Norman Churlhood made to the defence of English shores against the Dane. Richard and his subject were Normans, hence Pagans, before they were Christians, and all the traditions of Norman policy tended to fraternization with their Danish kinsmen. Such fraternization with the Danes had already caused, certainly a dispute, perhaps an open war, with England. Richard the Good in no way departed from his traditional policy. According to a Norman account, told with great confusion as to time, Richard was, either now or a few years later, actually bound by a treaty with Swegon, whose daughter he had married, not only to receive sick and wounded Danes in his dominion, but to allow the spoils of England to be sold in

the Norman ports. This was the old ground of quarrel, but Ethelred was just now not likely to retaliate by another invasion of the Côtentin. And, according to another story, told with equal confusion as to dates, Richard, like his father, did not scruple to accept the help of the kings of the North in his warfare with his French neighbors. At a later time indeed he could not well refuse shelter in his dominions to his sister with her husband and children; but anything like even an attempt at active interference, on the part of Normandy, in English affairs, was delayed till the reign of his son Robert.

The invasion of Normandy by the forces of King Ethelred of England, was a very sore spot in the amicable relationship of the two countries. Ethelred became involved in a dispute, most likely in an open war, with the Duke of the Normans. Richard the Fearless, his former antagonist, was now dead and the reigning prince was his son Richard the Second, surnamed the Good. Of the transactions between the two countries we have no account from any English authority. Ethelred sent a fleet into Normandy, with orders to burn and destroy throughout the land, and to spare nothing except the Mount of Saint Michael with its revered sanctuary. As for the reigning Duke, he was to be taken prisoner, and to be brought into the presence of his conqueror with his hands tied behind his back. The English fleet crossed the Channel, and its crews landed in the peninsula of Coutances and began to carry out the royal orders. But Neal, the valiant Viscount of the district, gathered the men of the country, and smote the invaders with such a slaughter that, of those who actually landed, one man only escaped to the ships. The fleet sailed home with the news of its discomfiture. Ethelred is pictured as waiting for the triumphant return of his fleet with the news of the conquest of Normandy. His first inquiry is for the captive duke. But instead of seeing Richard with his hands tied behind him, he only hears that his men have not so much as seen the duke, that the men of one county had been enough to destroy all their host, that the very women had joined in the strife, striking down the choicest warriors of England with the staves on which they bore their waterpots.

By a strange turning about of events, all England was later in the hands of Swegen, while the cause of Ethelred was still maintained by Thurkill, and the Danish fleet in the Thames. The monarchy of Cerdic was now confined to the decks of forty-five Scandinavian warships. The fleet still lay at Greenwich, the scene of the martyrdom of Aelfheah. Thither, immediately after the submission of London, Ethelred and Thurkill betook themselves. The Lady Emma went over to her brother in Normandy in company with Aelfsige, Abbot of Peterborough, and she was presently followed by her two young sons, the Ethelings Edward and Alfred, with their tutor Aelfhun, Bishop of London. Ethelred himself stayed some time longer with the fleet, but at Midwinter he went to the Isle of Wight, the old Danish quarters which the adhesion of the Danish fleet now made the only portion of his lost realm accessible to the English king. He there kept the feast of Christmas and in January he joined his wife and his young children in Normandy, where his brother-in-law, Duke Richard, could hardly refuse him an honorable reception.

Richard died in 1026 after a reign of thirty years. Before his death he assembled the chief men of his duchy and by their advice he settled the duchy itself on his eldest son Richard, and the County of Heimes on his second son Robert as his brother's vassal. Disputes arose between the brothers; Robert was besieged in his castle of Falaise, and peace was made by the submission of Robert. The duke did not long survive his success. After a reign of two years he died by poison, as was generally believed, and was succeeded by his brother Robert in 1028. Richard, like his ancestors, was engaged in building great churches for the Christians and at the same time he was careful not to offend his pagan subjects. [The Norman Conquest, by Edward A. Freeman, vol. 1.]

Bernay in Normandy was once celebrated for its abbey, founded in the beginning of the eleventh century, by Judith, wife of Richard II, Duke of Normandy. Some of the monastic buildings are standing, and are now inhabited. The abbey church, which belonged to the original structure, is all desolate within, and all defaced without. The interior is divided into two stories, the lower of which is used as a corn market, the upper as a cloth hall. Thus blocked up and encumbered, we may yet discern that it is a noble building; its dimensions are grand, and in most parts it is a perfect specimen of the semi-circular style, except the windows and the apsis, which are of later dates. The pillars in the nave and choir are lofty, but massive: the capitals of some of them are curiously sculptured. On the lower member of the entablature of one capital there are still traces of an inscription; but it is so injured by neglect and violence, that we are unable to decipher a single word. The capital itself is fanciful and not devoid of elegance.

The convent was placed under the immediate protection of the sovereign, by virtue of an ordinance issued by Philip Augustus, in 1280, at which time Peter, Count of Alençon, attempted to establish a claim to some rights affecting the monastery. He alleged a grant from a former monarch to one of his predecessors, by whom he asserted that the convent had been founded; and, in support of his claim, he urged its position within the limits of his territory. The abbot and monks resisted: they gave proof that the abbey of Bernay was really founded by the duchess; and therefore the king after a full and impartial hearing, decided against the count, and declared that the advocacy of the monastery was thenceforth to belong to himself and his successors in the dukedom for ever.—Judith died before the convent was entirely built, and the task of completing it devolved upon her widowed husband, whose charter, confirming the foundation, is still in existence. It begins by a recital of the pious motives which urged the duchess to the undertaking; it expressly mentions her death while the building was yet unfinished; and, after detailing the various lands and grants bestowed on the abbey, it concludes by denouncing the anger of God, and a fine of two hundred pounds weight in gold upon those who disturb the establishment, that they may learn to their confusion that the good deeds of their ancestors, undertaken for the love of God, are not to be undone with impunity. [Account of a Tour in Normandy, 1820, vol. 2, by Dawson Turner.]