

GRANHOLM GENEALOGY

BRITISH ROYAL ANCESTRY, BOOK 3

Book 3, Kings of Wessex

INTRODUCTION

The British ancestry is very much a patchwork of various beginnings. Until King Alfred the Great established England various Kings ruled separate parts. In most cases the initial ruler came from the mainland. That time of the history is shrouded in myths, which turn into legends and subsequent into history.

Alfred the Great (849-901) was a very learned man and studied all available past history and especially biblical information. He came up with the concept that he was the 72nd generation descendant of Adam and Eve. Moreover he was a 17th generation descendant of Woden (Odin). Proponents of one theory claim that he was the descendant of Noah's son Sem (Shem) because he claimed to descend from Scaef, a marooned man who came to Britain on a boat after a flood. See the *Biblical Ancestry* and *Early Mythology Ancestry* books).

The book *British Mythical Royal Ancestry from King Brutus* shows the mythical kings including Shakespeare's King Lear. The lineages are from a common ancestor, Priam King of Troy. His one daughter Troana leads to us via Scaef, the descendants from his other daughter Creusa lead to the British lineage. No attempt has been made to connect these rulers with the historical ones.

Before Alfred the Great formed a unified England several Royal Houses ruled the various parts. Not all of them have any clear lineages to the present times, i.e. our ancestors, but some do. I have collected information which show these. These include

British Royal Ancestry Book 1, Legendary Kings from Brutus of Troy to including King Leir.

British Royal Ancestry Book 2, Kings of Mercia, from a mythical grandson of Woden (Odin) to Lady Godiva's granddaughter, who married King Harold II of England.

British Royal Ancestry Book 3, Kings of Wessex, from Cerdic, who came to Brittany in 495 to Harold II of England, my 27th great grandfather.

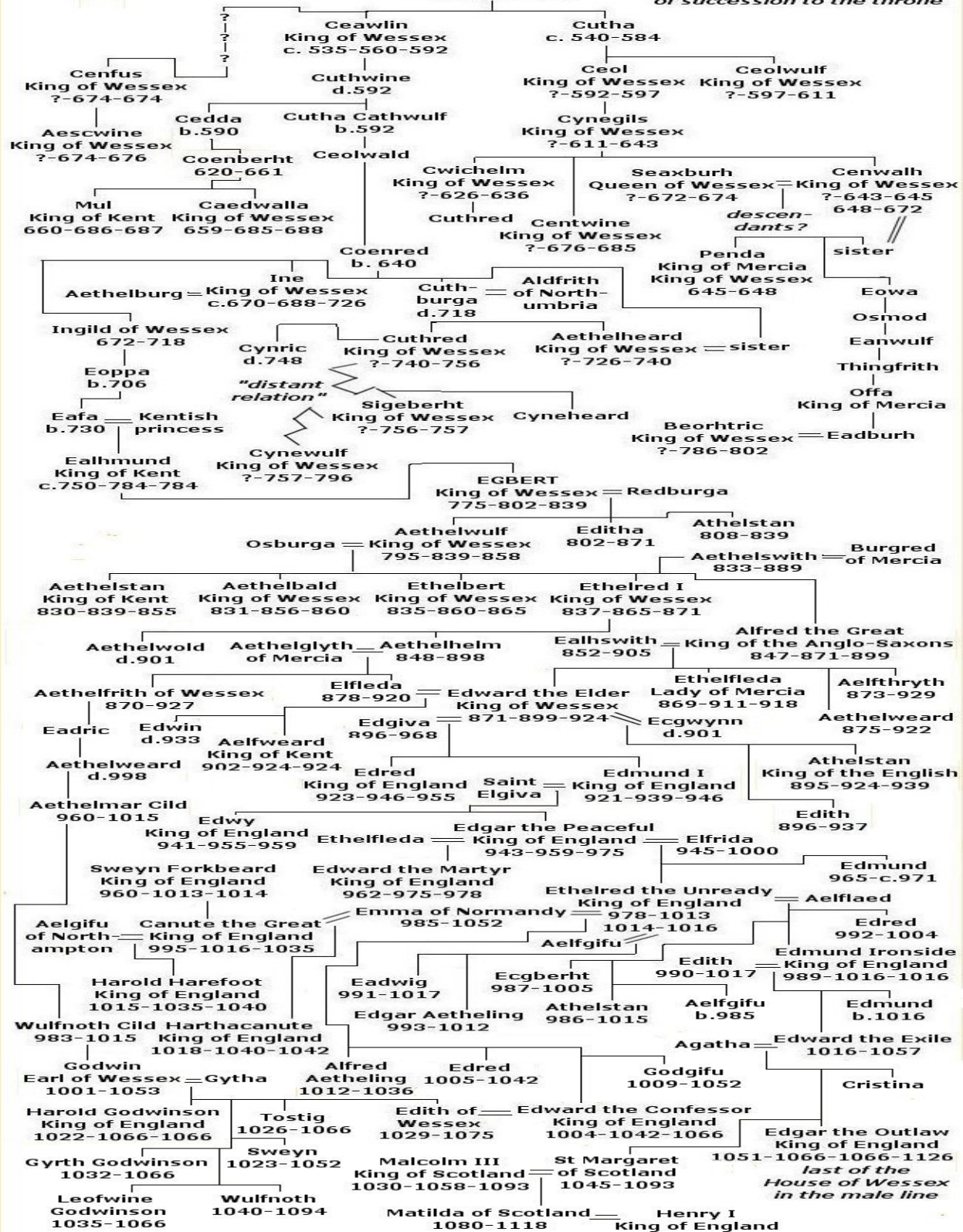
British Royal Ancestry Book 4, Kings of Kent from Hengest, who came from the mainland to Britain to King Alfred the Great and his sons.

British Royal Ancestry Book 5, Kings of Anglo-Saxons from Hengest's son, Hartwaker of Saxony to Henry the Fowler, the Duke of Saxony who became the first German King of the Ottoman Dynasty.

British Royal Ancestry Book 6, Kings of England from King Alfred the great to present time.

The books include ancestral lineage list with names **highlighted** for which text has been included.

Intermediate dates are dates of succession to the throne



Descendants of: Cedric King of Wessex As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 **Cedric King of Wessex** #17600 b. 467 d. 534 (48th great grandfather)
m. **Gorpe** #17601
- 2 **Cynric King of Wessex** #17602 b. 495 d. 560 (47th great grandfather)
 - 3 **Cutha** #18152 (47th great-uncle)
 - 4 **Ceol King of Wessex** #18151 (first cousin, 47 times removed)
 - 5 **Cynegils King of Wessex** #18150 (second cousin, 46 times removed)
 - 6 **Centwine King of Wessex** #18156 (third cousin, 45 times removed)
 - 6 **Cenwalh King of Wessex** #18147 b. _____ d. 647 (third cousin, 45 times removed)
m. **Daughter Pybba** #18148
[daughter of Pybba King of Mercia #17696]
 - 3 **Ceawlin King of Wessex** #17603 b. 535 d. 592 (46th great grandfather)
 - 4 **Cuthwine Prince of Wessex** #17604 (45th great grandfather)
 - 5 **Cutha Cathwulf Prince of Wessex** #17605 b. 592 (44th great grandfather)
m. **Gwynhafar Princess of Dumnonia** #17606 b. 580
[daughter of Clemen ap Bledric King of Dumnonia #17607]
 - 6 **Ceolwald Prince of Wessex** #17610 (43rd great grandfather)
 - 7 **Cenred (Coenred) Co-ruler of Wessex** #17611 b. 640 (42nd great grandfather)
 - 8 **Ingild Prince of Wessex** #17614 b. 672 d. 718 (41st great grandfather)
 - 9 **Eoppa of Wessex** #17616 b. 706 (40th great grandfather)
 - 10 **Eafa of Wessex** #17615 b. 730 (39th great grandfather)
 - 11 **Eahlmund (Elmund) King of Kent** #15846 b. 758 Wessex, England d. 785 Killed (38th great grandfather)
m. **Ethelbertsdotter II Princess of Kent** #15847
[daughter of Ethelbert II King of Kent #15848]
 - 12 **Egbert III King of Wessex** #15844 b. 784 Wessex, England d. Nov 838 Wessex, England (37th great grandfather)
m. **Redburga (Saint Ida) Queen of England** #15845 b. 788 Wessex, England
[daughter of Natronai al-Makir Theodoric Duke of Toulouse #16068 and Alda (Hilda) Princess of the Franks #16067]
 - 13 **Aethelwulf King of Wessex** #15830 b. 795 Aachen in the court of Charlemagne d. 13 Jan 858 (36th great grandfather)
m. **Judith Princess of Holy Roman Empire** b. abt 846 (34th great grandmother)
[daughter of Charles the Bald Emperor of Holy Roman Empire and Ermentrude Empress of Holy Roman Empire]
m. **Osburh (Osburga) of Wright Queen of England** #15831 b. 810 d. 852
[daughter of Oslac Chief Butler Of Wessex #16453]
 - 14 **Aethelred I King of Wessex**
#15839 b. 843 Wessex, England d. 872 (35th great grandfather)
 - 15 **Aethelhelm Ealdorman of Wiltshire** #15840 b. 859 d. 898 (34th great grandfather)
m. **Aethelgyth of Mercia** #15841
 - 16 **Aethelfrith Ealdorman of Wiltshire** #15843 b. 890 d. 924 (33rd great grandfather)
 - 17 **Eadric Ealdorman of Wiltshire** #15837 (32nd great grandfather)
m. **Aethelgifu of Wiltshire** #15838
 - 18 **Aethelwerd "the Historian" Thegn of Sussex** #15835 b. 920 d. 998 (31st great grandfather)
m. **Aethelfled of Wessex** #15836 b. 920
 - 19 **Aethelmaer Ciel "the Great" Thegn of Sussex** #15833 b. 940 d. 1015 Ealdorman i Devonshire (30th great grandfather)
m. **Aethelthrith of Wessex** #15834 b. 940
 - 20 **Wulfnoth Thegn of Sussex** #15832 b. 960 Wessex, England d. 1015 Held Coppton (29th great grandfather)
 - 21 **Godwin Earl of Wessex** #15627 b. 992 Wessex, England d. 15 Apr 1053 Winchester, Hampshire, England (28th great grandfather)
m. **Gytha Thorkelsdottir, Countess** #15628
[daughter of Torkel (Thorgil) Styrbjörnsson #15632]

Cerdic of Wessex

Cerdic (from the early British name represented by [modern Welsh](#) *Caradog*) was the King of [Wessex](#) from 519 to 534. He was the founder of the [kingdom of Wessex](#) and is regarded as the ancestor of all its subsequent kings. (See [House of Wessex family tree](#)).

Imaginary depiction of Cerdic from John Speed's 1611 "Saxon Heptarchy".



According to the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#), Cerdic landed in [Hampshire](#) in 495 with his son [Cynric](#) in three keels (ships). He is said to have fought a British king named [Natanleod](#) at [Netley Marsh](#) in [Hampshire](#) and killed him thirteen years later (in 508) and to have fought at *Cerdicesleag* in 519, after which he became first king of Wessex. The conquest of the [Isle of Wight](#) is also mentioned among his campaigns, and it was later given to his kinsmen, Stuf and Wihtgar (who had supposedly arrived with the West Saxons in 514). Cerdic is said to have died in 534 and was succeeded by his son [Cynric](#).

Descent from Cerdic became a necessary criterion for later kings of Wessex, and [Egbert of Wessex](#), progenitor of the English royal house and subsequent [rulers of England](#) and [Britain](#), claimed him as an ancestor.

Origins

The [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) provides a [pedigree tracing Cerdic's ancestry](#) back to [Woden](#) and the [antediluvian patriarchs](#).

It is thus odd to find it used here to describe the leaders of what purports to be an independent band of invaders, whose origins and authority are not otherwise specified. It looks very much as if a hint is being conveyed that Cerdic and his people owed their standing to having been already concerned with administrative affairs under Roman authority on this part of the Saxon Shore.

Furthermore, it is not until 519 that Cerdic and Cynric are recorded as "beginning to reign", suggesting that they ceased being dependent vassals or ealdormen and became independent Kings in their own right.

Cynric of Wessex

Cynric was King of [Wessex](#) from 534 to 560. Everything known about him comes from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. There he is stated to have been the son of [Cerdic](#), and also (in the regnal list in the preface) to have been the son of Cerdic's son, [Creoda](#). During his reign it is said that he captured Searobyrig or [Old Sarum](#), near [Salisbury](#), in 552, and that in 556 he and his son [Ceawlin](#) won a battle against the [Britons](#) at Beranburh, now identified as [Barbury Castle](#). If these dates are accurate, then it is unlikely that the earlier entries in the chronicle, starting with his arrival in [Britain](#) with his father Cerdic in 495, are correct. [David Dumville](#) has suggested that his true regnal dates are 554-581.

The name Cynric has a straightforward [Old English](#) etymology meaning "kin-ruler." However, as both his predecessor, Cerdic, and successor, Ceawlin, have Celtic names an alternative etymology has been postulated from "cunorix" which would mean "hound-king" in [Old British](#) (rendered as "cynwrig" in [Old Welsh](#)). In 1967 a stone was found at Wroxeter in a Sub-Roman context with the inscription CUNORIX MACUS MA QVI COLINE.^[4] This wording contains both the name Cunorix and another which is reminiscent of "Ceawlin."

In the 2004 film *King Arthur*, Cerdic and Cynric were depicted as [Saxon](#) invaders, and were killed, respectively, by [King Arthur](#) and [Lancelot](#) at the [Battle of Badon Hill](#) (Mons Badonicus). Cynric was portrayed by [Til Schweiger](#).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ceol_of_Wessex

Ceol of Wessex

Ceol (also known as **Ceola** or **Ceolric**) was King of [Wessex](#) from 592 to 597.

He was the son of Cutha (or Cuthwulf), the son of [Cynric of Wessex](#). He reigned from either [591 AD](#) or [592](#) to [597](#). According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, he began his reign in 591, but it was only in the following year that he drove out his uncle [Ceawlin](#) in a battle at Woden's Barrow in [Wiltshire](#), thus denying the throne to the rightful heir, Ceawlin's son [Cuthwine](#). Upon his death the throne passed to his brother [Ceolwulf](#), because his son [Cynegils](#) was presumably too young to inherit the throne, so it was given to the brother, as was probably the custom among the Saxons.

Ceol was the founding member of a sub-house of the House of Wessex which would rule Wessex from 591 - 645, 648 - 674 and from 676 - 685, comprising Ceol, Ceolwulf, Cynegils, [Cenwalh](#), [Seaxburh](#) and [Centwine](#). [Coenwulf](#) and [Ceolwulf I](#) of Mercia are also believed to be descendants of Ceol, meaning that the Ceolian line flourished for at least three centuries after its founder's death, and possibly longer.

Cynegils of Wessex

Cynegils was King of [Wessex](#) from c. 611 to c. 643. Cynegils is traditionally considered to have been [King of Wessex](#), but the familiar kingdoms of the so-called [Heptarchy](#) had not yet formed from the patchwork of smaller kingdoms in his lifetime. The later kingdom of [Wessex](#) was centred on the counties of [Hampshire](#), [Dorset](#), [Somerset](#), and [Wiltshire](#), but the evidence of the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) is that the kingdom of Cynegils was located on the upper [River Thames](#), extending into northern Wiltshire and Somerset, southern [Gloucestershire](#) and [Oxfordshire](#), and western [Berkshire](#), with [Dorchester-on-Thames](#) as one the major royal sites. This region, probably connected to the early tribal grouping known as the [Gewisse](#), a term used by [Bede](#) for the West Saxons, lay on the frontier between the later kingdoms of Wessex and [Mercia](#).

Imaginary depiction of Cynegils from [John Speed](#)'s 1611 "Saxon Heptarchy".



It appears that Cynegils became king on the death of King [Ceolwulf](#) c. 611. His relationship to Ceolwulf is uncertain. Cynegils is variously described in West Saxon sources as being a son of Ceolwulf, a son of Ceol brother of Ceolwulf, a son of Ceola son of Cutha, a son of Cuthwine son of Ceawlin, and a son of Cuthwulf son of Cuthwine. Several of the sources give Cynegils a brother named Ceolwald, described as the grandfather of King [Ine](#).^[3] Although the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and Wessex king lists portray the West Saxons as ruled by a single king, it is likely that the kingship was shared

between two or more kings.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for the year 611 states: "This year Cynegils succeeded to the government in Wessex, and held it one and thirty winters. Cynegils was the son of Ceol, Ceol of Cutha, Cutha of Cynric." Contradicting this simple account, the entry under 614 states that " This year Cynegils and Cwichelm fought at *Beandun*, and slew two thousand and forty-six of the [Welsh](#)." Likewise, [Bede](#) writes that the attempted assassination of King [Edwin of Northumbria](#) in 626 was ordered by [Cwichelm](#), king of the West Saxons. In 628, Cynegils and Cwichelm fought King [Penda](#) at [Cirencester](#). The *Chronicle* could be expected to report a victory, but does not, so it is likely that Penda was the victor. Cynegils and Cwichelm appear to have been subject to [Edwin of Northumbria](#) by this time, paying an enormous tribute of a hundred thousand [hides](#).



In the 630s, Bishop [Birinus](#) established himself at Dorchester, and both Cynegils and Cwichelm West Saxon king, named [Cuthred](#), who died c. 661, appears at this time. Oswald married a daughter of Cynegils at this time. Her name is not recorded in early sources, but [Reginald of Durham](#) calls her Kyneburga (Cyneburg). The date of Cynegils' death is not certainly known. Bede states that he was followed by his son Cenwalh, whose reign is dated from 643 by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

Centwine of Wessex

Centwine (died after 685) was [King of Wessex](#) from [circa](#) 676 to 685 or 686, although he was perhaps not the only king of the [West Saxons](#) at the time.

The [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) reports that Centwine became king [circa](#) 676, succeeding [Aescwine](#). Bede states that after the death of King [Cenwalh](#): "his under-rulers took upon them the kingdom of the people, and dividing it among themselves, held it ten years" Bede's dismissal of Aescwine and Centwine as merely sub-kings may represent the views of the supporters of the King [Ine](#), whose family ruled Wessex in Bede's time. However, if the West Saxon kingdom did fragment following Cenwalh's death, it appears that it was reunited during Centwine's reign.

An entry under 682 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that "Centwine drove the Britons to the sea". This is the only event recorded in his reign. The *Carmina Ecclesiastica* of [Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne](#) (d. 709), written a generation after Centwine's reign, records that he won three great battles. In addition, it states that he was a [pagan](#) for part of his reign, adopting [Christianity](#) and becoming a patron of the church. The Chronicle's version of his ancestry makes Centwine a son of King [Cynegils](#), and thus a brother of King Cenwalh and King [Cwichelm](#), but Aldhelm does not record any such relationship

Chapter 40 of [Eddius Stephanus's](#) *Life of Wilfrid* records that Centwine was married to a sister of Queen Iurminburh, second wife of King [Ecgrith of Northumbria](#). Her name is not reliably recorded, and the suggestion that she is to be identified with Dunna, Abbess of [Withington](#), is broadly rejected. Their daughter [Bugga](#) was certainly a [nun](#) when Aldhelm dedicated verses to her, and was probably an Abbess.

Centwine is reported to have abdicated and become a [monk](#). Aldhelm writes that he "gave up riches and the reins of government and left his own kingdom in the name of Christ". He was succeeded by [Caedwalla](#).

Cenwalh of Wessex

Cenwalh (died 674?), also **Cenwealh** or **Coenwalh**, was King of [Wessex](#) from c. 643 to c. 645 and from c. 648 to c. 674.

[Bede](#) states that Cenwealh was the son of the King [Cynegils](#) baptised by Bishop [Birinus](#). The [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) offers several ancestries for Cynegils, and the relationship of Cynegils and Cenwealh to later kings is less than certain.^[2] It has been noted that the name Cenwalh may have had a British rather than Anglo-Saxon etymology.^[3] Although Cynegils is said to have been a convert to [Christianity](#), Bede writes that Cenwealh:

refused to embrace the mysteries of the faith, and of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after also he lost the dominion of his earthly kingdom; for he put away the sister of [Penda](#), king of the [Mercians](#), whom he had married, and took another wife; whereupon a war ensuing, he was by him expelled his kingdom..

Cenwealh took refuge with the Christian king [Anna of East Anglia](#), and was baptised while in exile. The date of his exile is uncertain. Bede says that it lasted three years, but does not give the dates. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle reports that he granted lands at [Ashdown](#) to a kinsman named Cuthred. If this is same Cuthred whose death is reported [circa](#) 661, then he was perhaps a son of King [Cwichelm](#) or a grandson of Cynegils, if indeed King Cwichelm was not also a son of Cynegils.

At length the king, who understood none but the language of the [Saxons](#), grown weary of that bishop's barbarous tongue, brought into the province another bishop of his own nation, whose name was [Wini](#), who had been ordained in France; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed this last his episcopal see in the city of [Winchester](#), by the Saxons called Wintancestir.

The new [diocese of Winchester](#), in lands formerly belonging to the [Jutes](#), thereafter confined to the [Isle of Wight](#), lay in the heart of the future Wessex. The ravaging of Ashdown by Penda's son [Wulfhere](#) c. 661, in the original lands of the [Gewisse](#), suggests that this movement was brought about by sustained Mercian pressure on the Saxons.

Wulfhere advanced as far south as the Isle of Wight, and detached the [Meon](#) valley from Cenwealh's kingdom, giving it to his godson [Aethelwalh](#), King of the [South Saxons](#). At around this time, the Mercian prince [Frithuwold](#) was ruling [Surrey](#) and [Berkshire](#). Wulfhere's defeat at the hands of [Ecgrith](#) in 674 freed the southern kingdoms from Mercian control, and Wulfhere was defeated the following year by the West Saxons led by [Aescwine](#).

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records a battle between Cenwealh and the Britons in its entry for 658: "Here Cenwealh fought at Peonnum against the Wealas and caused them to flee as far as the [Parret](#)". The advance into the British south-west is obscure, but Cenwealh's relations with the Britons were not uniformly hostile.

Cenwealh died in the 670s. According to tradition, his widow, [Seaxburh](#) held power for a year after his death.

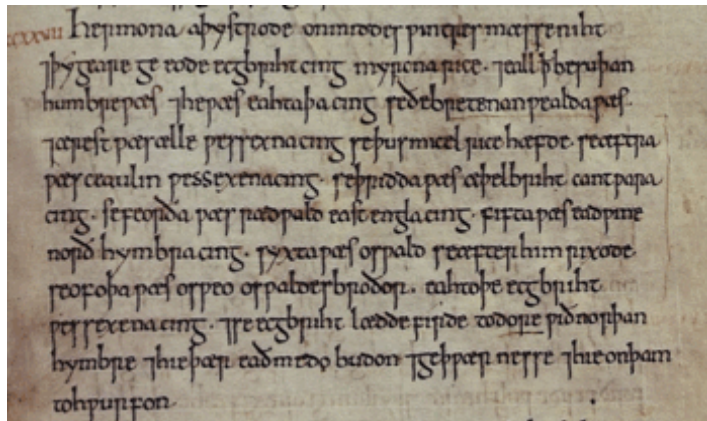
Ceawlin of Wessex

Ceawlin (also spelled **Ceaulin** and **Caelin**, died c. 593) was a King of [Wessex](#). He may have been the son of [Cynric of Wessex](#) and the grandson of [Cerdic of Wessex](#), whom the *[Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#)* represents as the leader of the first group of [Saxons](#) to come to the land which later became [Wessex](#). Ceawlin was active during the last years of the [Anglo-Saxon](#) invasion, with little of southern England remaining in the control of the native [Britons](#) by the time of his death.

The chronology of Ceawlin's life is highly uncertain. The historical accuracy and dating of many of the events in the later *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* have been called into question, and his reign is variously listed as lasting seven, seventeen, or thirty-two years. The Chronicle records several battles of Ceawlin's between the years 556 and 592, including the first record of a battle between different groups of Anglo-Saxons, and indicates that under Ceawlin Wessex acquired significant territory, some of which was later to be lost to other [Anglo-Saxon kingdoms](#). Ceawlin is also named as one of the eight "[bretwaldas](#)", a title given in the Chronicle to eight rulers who had overlordship over southern Britain, although the extent of Ceawlin's control is not known.

Ceawlin died in 593, having been deposed the year before, possibly by his successor, [Ceol](#). He is recorded in various sources as having two sons, Cutha and [Cuthwine](#), but the genealogies in which this information is found are known to be unreliable.

The entry for 827 in the [C] manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, listing the eight bretwaldas, Ceawlin's name can be seen in the fifth line, spelled "Ceaulin"



About 731, Bede, a [Northumbrian](#) monk and chronicler, wrote a work called the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. The work was not primarily a secular history, but Bede provides much information about the history of the Anglo-Saxons, including a list early in the history of seven kings who, he said, held "imperium" over the other kingdoms south of the [Humber](#). Bede also makes it clear that Ceawlin was not

a Christian—Bede mentions a later king, Aethelberht of Kent, as "the first to enter the kingdom of heaven".

Ceawlin lost the throne of Wessex in 592. The annal for that year reads, in part: "Here there was great slaughter at Woden's Barrow, and Ceawlin was driven out." Woden's Barrow is a tumulus, now called Adam's Grave.

According to the Regnal List, Ceol was a son of Cutha, who was a son of Cynric; and Ceolwulf, his brother, reigned for seventeen years after him.

Cuthwine of Wessex

Cuthwine, born c. 565, was a member of the [House of Wessex](#), son of [Ceawlin of Wessex](#). After the deposition of his father Ceawlin from the throne of Wessex in [592](#) he did not inherit the throne which passed to his cousin, [Ceol](#). Instead he went into exile for many decades, remaining a strong leader of the Saxons and passing on the royal line through his three sons.

He was born in the fifth year of his father's long reign over the West Saxons. He was a grandson of [Cynric](#), the son of [Cerdic](#), the first of the Saxons to come across the sea from Germany; and he and his people were still relatively out of place in a world dominated by the Britons. Nothing is known of his early life.

Ceawlin lost the throne of Wessex in June 592. The annal for that year in the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) reads, at least in part: "Here there was great slaughter at Woden's Barrow, and Ceawlin was driven out." Woden's Barrow is a tumulus, now called Adam's Grave, at [Alton Priors](#), [Wiltshire](#). His opponent was Ceol, the next king of Wessex, who ruled for six years. Ceawlin died in exile the following year, along with Cwichelm and Crida, his brothers and commanders of the armies is what is now [Dorset](#) and [Hampshire](#).

Exile

As stated above, the following year (593) saw the deaths of his father and uncles in unclear circumstances, although likely in another battle. Cuthwine escaped from this defeat also, and went into exile to the east with his young family (see below). For the first few years at least he lived as an outlaw, although his persecution seems to have waned somewhat when Ceol was supplanted by his brother.

In his princely years before the death of his father Cuthwine had at least three sons; Cynebald, born 585; [Cedda](#), born 590, and [Cutha Cathwulf](#), born 592. The name of their mother is not recorded, but it is possible that she died in the tumult surrounding Cuthwine's flight into exile given that Cuthwine had no more children after that time. Cedda became the father of [Coenberht](#), in turn the [Caedwalla of Wessex](#) and his brother [Mul of Kent](#), both kings in later years. Through Cutha Cathwulf, Cuthwine's youngest son, were ultimately descended the Kings of Wessex after the line of Ceol became extinct in 685.

Later life

This enigmatic prince and his long roster of descendants were not forgotten by the West Saxons, however. When the line of Ceol finally became extinct, first [Caedwalla of Wessex](#) and then [Ine of Wessex](#) became king; both great-grandsons of Cuthwine. Nowadays he occurs in many places simply as one of a long list of names in the descent from [Egbert](#) back to the dawn of time, but it is thanks to him that this continuous descent can be traced at all.

Cutha Cathwulf

Cutha Cathwulf was the third son of [Cuthwine](#) and consequently a member of the [House of Wessex](#). Although a member of the direct male line from [Cynric](#) to [Egbert](#), , Cathwulf was never king. He is said to have been born in c. 592 and his death date is unknown.

His brothers were Cynebald and [Cedda](#); his son was [Ceolwald of Wessex](#); nothing more of his life is known.

Cathwulf was born in tumultuous times. He was the third son of [Cuthwine](#), son of [Ceawlin](#), son of [Cynric](#), the son of [Cerdic](#), the first of the Saxons to come across the sea from Germany; and he and his people were still relatively out of place in a world dominated by the Britons. He was born in the final year of his father's time as prince of the Saxons.

Ceawlin lost the throne of Wessex in June 592. The annal for that year in the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) reads, at least in part: "Here there was great slaughter at Woden's Barrow, and Ceawlin was driven out." Woden's Barrow is a tumulus, now called Adam's Grave, at [Alton Priors, Wiltshire](#). His opponent was Ceol, the next king of Wessex, who ruled for six years. The origins of the battle are unclear; it is probable that nothing more than greed and a lust for power motivated Ceol. Cuthwine, then twenty-seven, was a commander in the fateful battle; but upon defeat, as the rightful heir to the throne, he fled the place along with his young sons.

Cathwulf had two brothers; Cynebald, born 585, and [Cedda](#), born 590. The name of their mother is not recorded, but it is possible that she died in the tumult surrounding Cuthwine's flight into exile given that Cuthwine had no more children after that time.

Family and move to Devon

In about the year 620 it appears that the upper [Thames valley](#) where the household of Cathwulf was based became too small to comfortably hold the three brothers. As the youngest, Cathwulf was the one who was forced to move - at any rate this is a sensible deduction given that he later turns up in what is now east [Devon](#), on the western marches of Wessex and in constant conflict with [Dumnonia](#). This was a Celtic tribe that inhabited [Cornwall](#), although in Cathwulf's time their sphere of influence was much greater, extending over most of what is now Devon as well. The chronology of English dominance over Cornwall is unclear, but inevitably at about this time Cornwall came into conflict with the westerly-expanding [kingdom of Wessex](#). There are no recorded charters or legal agreements showing Cornwall as part of Wessex. Furthermore, there is little economic, military, social, cultural or archaeological evidence that Wessex established control over Cornwall, certainly not in those early days.

It is known that Cathwulf married a Dumnonian princess Gwynhafar, almost certainly a daughter of [Clemen ap Bledric](#), as part of a (temporary, at least) alliance - probably the one mentioned above by Geoffrey of Monmouth, or maybe an earlier one. The marriage was perhaps unsuccessful, as he is believed to only have had one son, [Ceolwald of Wessex](#).

Cenred of Wessex

Cenred of Wessex was a member of the [House of Wessex](#) and a member of the direct male line from [Cynric](#) to [Egbert](#). It is possible that Cenred ruled alongside his son [Ine](#) for a period. There is weak evidence for joint kingships, and stronger evidence of subkings reigning under a dominant ruler in Wessex, not long before his time. Ine acknowledges his father's help in his code of laws and there is also a surviving land-grant that indicates Cenred was still reigning in Wessex after Ine's accession.

His father was [Ceolwald of Wessex](#). Cenred had at least four children; [Ine of Wessex](#), who went on to be one of the most successful kings of the West Saxons; [Ingild of Wessex](#), who continued the royal line through his son [Eoppa](#); and [Cuthburga](#), who married the powerful Northumbrian king [Aldfrith](#), and who became abbess of Wimborne. There may also have been another daughter who was married to King [Aethelfrith of Wessex](#), but this claim may have been substantiated to further Aethelheard's claim to the throne.

Ine of Wessex

Ine was [King](#) of [Wessex](#) from 688 to 726. He was unable to retain the territorial gains of his predecessor, [Cædwalla](#), who had brought much of [southern England](#) under his control and expanded West Saxon territory substantially. By the end of Ine's reign the kingdoms of [Kent](#), [Sussex](#) and [Essex](#) were no longer under West Saxon domination; however, Ine maintained control of what is now [Hampshire](#), and consolidated and extended Wessex's territory in the western peninsula.

Ine is noted for his code of laws, which he issued in about 694. These laws were the first issued by an [Anglo-Saxon](#) king outside Kent. They shed much light on the history of Anglo-Saxon society, and reveal Ine's [Christian](#) convictions. Trade increased significantly during Ine's reign, with the town of Hamwic (now [Southampton](#)) becoming prominent. It was probably during Ine's reign that the West Saxons began to mint coins, though none have been found that bear his name.

Ine abdicated in 726 to go to [Rome](#), leaving the kingdom to "younger men", in the words of the contemporary chronicler [Bede](#). He was succeeded by [Aethelheard](#).

Early sources agree that Ine was the son of [Cenred](#), and that Cenred was the son of [Ceolwald](#); further back there is less agreement Ine's siblings included a brother, Ingild, and two sisters, [Cuthburh](#) and Cwenburg. Cuthburh was married to King [Aldfrith of Northumbria](#) and Ine himself was married to [Aethelburg](#). [Bede](#) tells that Ine was "of the blood royal", by which he means the royal line of the [Gewisse](#), the early West Saxon tribal name.

Dumnonia and Mercia

In 710, Ine and Nothhelm fought against [Geraint of Dumnonia](#), according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; [John of Worcester](#) states that Geraint was killed in this battle. Ine's advance brought him control of what is now [Devon](#), the new border with Dumnonia being the [river Tamar](#). The *[Annales Cambriae](#)*, a tenth century chronicle records that in 722 the British defeated their enemies at the [Battle of Hehil](#). The "enemies" must be Ine or his people, but the location is unidentified; historians have suggested locations in both Cornwall and Devon.

Ine fought a battle with the [Mercians](#) under [Ceolred](#) at Woden's Barrow in 715, but the result is not recorded. Woden's Barrow is a [tumulus](#), now called Adam's Grave, at Alton Prior, [Wiltshire](#). Ine may not have recovered any of the lands north of the Thames that had belonged to the West Saxons under previous kings, but it is known that he controlled the southern bank: a charter dated 687 shows him giving land to the church at [Streatley](#) on the Thames and at nearby [Basildon](#).

In 726, Ine abdicated, with no obvious heir and, according to [Bede](#), left his kingdom to "younger men" in order to travel to [Rome](#), where he died. Ine's successor was King [Aethelheard](#); it is not known whether Aethelheard was related to Ine, though some later sources state that Aethelheard was Ine's brother-in-law. His brother Ingild, who died 718, is given as ancestor of king [Egbert of Wessex](#) and the subsequent kings of England.

Ealhmund of Kent

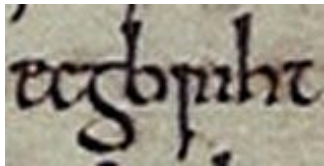
Ealhmund was King of [Kent](#) in 784. The only contemporary evidence of him is an abstract of a charter dated in that year, in which Ealhmund granted land to the [Abbot](#) of [Reculver](#). By the following year [Offa](#) of [Mercia](#) seems to have been ruling directly, as he issued a charter without any mention of a local king.

There is a general consensus that he is identical^[1] to the Ealhmund found in two pedigrees in the [Winchester \(Parker\) Chronicle](#), compiled during the reign of [Alfred the Great](#). The genealogical preface to this manuscript, as well as the annual entry (covering years 855–859) describing the death of [Aethelwulf](#), both make king [Egbert of Wessex](#) the son of an Ealhmund, who was son of Eafa, grandson of Eoppa, and great-grandson of Ingild, the brother of king [Ine of Wessex](#), and descendant of founder [Cerdic](#), and therefore a member of the [House of Wessex](#) (see [House of Wessex family tree](#)). A further entry has been added in a later hand to the 784 annal, reporting Ealhmund's reign in Kent. Finally, in the [Canterbury Bilingual Epitome](#), originally compiled after the [Norman conquest of England](#), a later scribe has likewise added to the 784 annal not only Ealhmund's reign in Kent, but his explicit identification with the father Egbert. Based on this reconstruction, in which a Wessex scion became king of Kent, his own Kentish name and that of his son, Egbert, it has been suggested that his mother derived from the royal house of Kent a connection dismissed by a recent critical review. It has likewise been suggested that Ealhmund might actually have been a Kentish royal scion, and that his pedigree was forged to give son Egbert the descent from Cerdic requisite to reigning in [Wessex](#).

Egbert of Wessex

Egbert (also spelled **Ecgeberht** or **Ecgbriht**) was King of [Wessex](#) from 802 until 839. His father was [Ealhmund of Kent](#). In the 780s Egbert was forced into exile by [Offa of Mercia](#) and [Beorhtric of Wessex](#), but on Beorhtric's death in 802 Egbert returned and took the throne.

Egbert's name, spelled Ecgbriht, from the 827 entry in the C manuscript of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle



Little is known of the first twenty years of Egbert's reign, but it is thought that he was able to maintain Wessex's independence against the kingdom of [Mercia](#), which at that time dominated the other southern English kingdoms. In 825 Egbert defeated [Beornwulf of Mercia](#) and ended [Mercia's supremacy](#) at the [Battle of Ellandun](#), and proceeded to take control of the Mercian dependencies in southeastern England. In 829 Egbert defeated [Wiglaf of Mercia](#) and drove him out of his kingdom, temporarily ruling Mercia directly. Later that year Egbert received the submission of the [Northumbrian](#) king at [Dore](#), near [Sheffield](#). The [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) subsequently described Egbert as a [bretwalda](#), or "Ruler of Britain."

Egbert was unable to maintain this dominant position, and within a year Wiglaf regained the throne of Mercia. However, Wessex did retain control of Kent, Sussex and Surrey; these territories were given to Egbert's son [Aethelwulf](#) to rule as a subking under Egbert. When Egbert died in 839, Aethelwulf succeeded him; the southeastern kingdoms were finally absorbed into the kingdom of Wessex after Aethelwulf's death in 858.

The earliest version of the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#), the *Parker Chronicle*, begins with a genealogical preface tracing the ancestry of Egbert's son Aethelwulf back through Egbert, Ealhmund (thought to be [Ealhmund of Kent](#)), and the otherwise unknown Eoppa and Eafa to Ingild, brother of king [Ine of Wessex](#), who abdicated the throne in 726. It continues back to [Cerdic](#), founder of the [House of Wessex](#). Egbert was born around 769 or 771. He is reputed to have had a half-sister [Alburga](#), later to be recognized as a saint. She was married to Wulstan, [Ealdorman](#) of [Wiltshire](#), and on his death she became a nun.^[2] The only source for the wife of Egbert is a later medieval manuscript at [Trinity College, Oxford](#), which relates that Egbert married [Redburga](#), *regis Francorum sororia*, thought to indicate sister, sister-in law or niece of the [Frankish](#) Emperor.^[3] This seems consistent with Egbert's strong ties to the Frankish royal court and his exile there, but lacks contemporary support.

The number of Egbert's children is uncertain. Aethelwulf, who succeeded Egbert, having governed as Subregulus of [Kent](#), [Essex](#), [Surrey](#) and [Sussex](#), was his son. Some versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (e.g. the Worcester and Laud Chronicles) call [Aethelstan](#) Egbert's son, but the Parker Chronicle shows Aethelstan as son of Aethelwulf and hence Egbert's grandson, and this reconstruction is generally preferred. A number of writers after the [Norman Conquest](#) make Saint Edith (Eadgyth) of [Polesworth](#) a daughter of Egbert, but this is doubtful.

Egbert was buried in Winchester, as were his son, Aethelwulf, his grandson, [Alfred the Great](#), and Alfred's son, [Edward the Elder](#). During the ninth century, Winchester began to show signs of urbanization, and it is likely that the sequence of burials indicates that Winchester was held in high regard by the West Saxon royal line.

Redburga

Redburga or **Raedburh** appears in a late medieval manuscript held by Oxford University as wife of king [Egbert of Wessex](#). She is described there as "*regis Francorum sororia*", which means "pertaining to the sister of the French king". This is somewhat vague and has been taken to mean sister of [Charlemagne](#), sister-in-law as the sister of his fourth wife, [Luitgard](#), or some more distant relationship. Her very existence has been questioned, she being found only in manuscript of a much later date, suggested to have been forged to link the early Kings of England to the great West Emperor.

Chronologically, it has been suggested that Charlemagne arranged Raedburh's marriage to Egbert in the year [800](#). Egbert, who had been forced into exile at Charlemagne's court by [Offa](#), King of [Mercia](#), returned to [England](#) in [802](#), where he became King of [Wessex](#).

The uncertainty over Redburga has been further complicated by the existence of an Egbert at the Carolingian court, and attempts have been made to identify this continental nobleman with the exiled Wessex prince. That Egbert, who was duke of all [Saxony](#) between the [Rhine](#) and the [Weser](#), died in [811](#). He was survived by his widow, who devoted her life to helping the poor and became known as "[Saint Ida of Herzfeld](#)", the patron saint of brides and widows. These identifications would make Redburga identical to Saint Ida. However, unless the Egbert reported in the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) to have regained his throne in Wessex in 802 was, in fact, serving instead as a feudal supporter of Charlemagne in Saxony for many of the years following his return to Wessex, Saint Ida was not the Raedburh who married Egbert of Wessex. Given the irreconcilable differences in the dates of death given for these two Egberts, this solution is dismissed by most scholars.

Redburga would be mother of [Aethelwulf](#), who later became [King of England](#). Her grandson is [Alfred the Great](#).

Aethelwulf of Wessex

Aethelwulf, also spelled **Aethelwulf** or **Ethelwulf**; [Old English](#): means 'Noble Wolf' was King of [Wessex](#) from 839 to 856. He is the only son who can undisputedly be accredited to King [Egbert of Wessex](#). He conquered the kingdom of Kent on behalf of his father in 825, and was sometime later made King of Kent as a sub-king to Egbert. He succeeded his father as King of [Wessex](#) on Egbert's death in 839: his kingdom then stretched from the county of Kent in the east to Devon in the west. At the same time his eldest son [Aethelstan](#) became sub-king of Kent as a subordinate ruler.

An imaginary portrait by an unknown 18th century artist



The most notable and commonly used primary source is the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#). The chronicle refers to Aethelwulf's presence at some important battles. In the year 840 AD, he fought at [Carhampton](#) against thirty-five ship companies of [Danes](#), whose raids had increased considerably. His most notable victory came in 851 at "Acleah", possibly [Ockley](#) in [Surrey](#) or [Oakley](#) in [Berkshire](#). Here, Aethelwulf and his son [Aethelbald](#) fought against the heathen, and according to the chronicle it was "the greatest slaughter of heathen host ever made." Around the year 853, Aethelwulf, and his son-in-law, [Burgred](#), King of Mercia defeated [Cyngen ap Cadell](#) of [Wales](#) and made the Welsh subject to him. The chronicle depicts more battles throughout the years, mostly against invading pirates and Danes. This was an era in European history where nations were being invaded from many different groups; there

were [Saracens](#) in the south, [Magyars](#) in the east, [Moors](#) in the west, and [Vikings](#) in the north. Before Aethelwulf's death, raiders had wintered over on the Isle of Sheppey, and pillaged at will in [East Anglia](#). Over the course of the next twenty years the struggles of his sons were to be "ceaseless, heroic, and largely futile."

Family life

One of the first of Aethelwulf's acts as King was to split the kingdom. He gave the eastern half, that of Kent, Essex, Surrey and Sussex to his eldest son [Aethelstan](#) (not to be confused with the later Athelstan the Glorious). Aethelwulf kept the ancient, western side of Wessex (Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset and Devon) for himself. Aethelwulf and his first wife, [Osburh](#), had five sons and a daughter. After Aethelstan came [Aethelbald](#), [Aethelbert](#), [Aethelred](#), and [Alfred](#). Each of his sons, with the exception of Aethelstan, succeeded to the throne. Alfred, the youngest son, has been praised as one of the greatest kings to ever reign in Britain. Aethelwulf's only daughter, [Aethelswith](#), was married as a child to king [Burgred of Mercia](#).

Aethelwulf's first tombstone, in the church porch at Steyning - the two incised crosses indicate a royal burial



Religion was always an important area in Aethelwulf's life. As early as the first year of his reign he had planned a pilgrimage to Rome. Due to the ongoing and increasing raids he felt the need to appeal to the Christian God for help against an enemy "so agile, and numerous, and profane."

In 853, Aethelwulf sent his son Alfred, a child of about four years, to [Rome](#). In 855, about a year after his wife Osburga's death, Aethelwulf followed Alfred to Rome. In Rome, he was generous with his wealth. He distributed gold to the clergy of St. Peter's, and offered them chalices of the purest gold and [silver-gilt](#) candelabra of Saxon work. During the return journey in 856 he married [Judith](#), a Frankish princess and a great-granddaughter of [Charlemagne](#). She was about twelve years old, the daughter of [Charles the Bald](#), King of the [West Franks](#).

Upon their return to England in 856 Aethelwulf met with an acute crisis. His eldest surviving son Aethelbald (Athelstan had since died) had devised a conspiracy with the Ealdorman of Somerset and the Bishop of Sherborne to oppose Aethelwulf's resumption of the kingship once he returned. Aethelwulf mustered enough support to fight a civil war, or to banish Aethelbald and his fellow conspirators. Instead Aethelwulf yielded western Wessex to his son while he himself retained central and eastern Wessex. The absence of coins in Aethelbald's name may also suggest that West Saxon coinage was in Aethelwulf's name until his death. He ruled there until his death on 13 January 858.

Judith of Flanders

Judith of Flanders (or *Judith of France*) (October 844 – 870) was the first daughter of the [Frankish](#) King and [Holy Roman Emperor Charles the Bald](#) and his wife [Ermentrude of Orléans](#). Through her marriage to two Kings of [Wessex](#), Judith was twice a Queen, and through her third marriage to [Baldwin](#), she became the first Countess of [Flanders](#). She was ancestress of the later [Counts of Flanders](#), and was the stepmother and later the sister-in-law of King [Alfred the Great](#).

Queen of Wessex

When Judith was about 12 years old, her father gave her in marriage to [Ethelwulf](#), King of [Wessex](#) on October 1, 856 at [Verberie sur Oise](#), France. Ethelwulf had been on pilgrimage to Rome, and had stopped at the Court of Judith's father, [Charles the Bald](#) on his journey back to Wessex. Soon after the two returned to England, Ethelwulf's eldest surviving son, [Ethelbald](#), had devised a conspiracy with the Ealdorman of Somerset and the Bishop of Sherborne to oppose Aethelwulf's resumption of the kingship. In response to this crisis, Aethelwulf yielded western Wessex to his son while he himself retained central and eastern Wessex. Aethelwulf's restoration included a special concession on behalf of Saxon queens: the West Saxons previously did not allow the queen to sit next to the king. In fact they were not referred to as a queen, but merely the "wife of the king." This restriction was lifted for Queen Judith, probably because she was a high ranking European princess.

When [Ethelwulf](#) died on the 13th of January 858, he was succeeded by his son, [Ethelbald](#). In the same year Ethelbald earned the censure of the Church by marrying Judith, his widowed teenage stepmother. The relationship was deemed incestuous and in direct contravention of church law. The marriage was eventually annulled in 860 on the grounds of [consanguinity](#), the same year that Ethelbald died.

Through her marriages to two Kings of Wessex, Judith was twice Queen of Wessex and was both the stepmother and later sister-in-law of [Alfred the Great](#). Interestingly, Judith's son by her third marriage, [Baldwin II of Flanders](#) would go on to marry Alfred's daughter, [Aelfthryth](#) (also known as *Elfrida*). By her third marriage, Judith was also the ancestress of another Queen of England, [Matilda of Flanders](#), the consort of England's first Norman King, [William the Conqueror](#). Thus Judith is not only an ancestress of the Counts of Flanders, but through Matilda, she is also direct ancestress of the Monarchs of England, including [Queen Elizabeth II](#).

Judith was first married to King [Ethelwulf of Wessex](#), then to his heir, [Ethelbald of Wessex](#). Her first two marriages produced no issue.

By her third husband, [Baldwin I of Flanders](#), Judith's children included:

- Charles (born after 863, died young) - ostensibly named for Judith's father, [Charles the Bald](#)
- [Baldwin II](#) - (c. 864/866 - 918). Succeeded his father as Count of Flanders. Married [Aelfthryth](#), daughter of [Alfred the Great](#)
- Raoul (*Rodulf*) - (c. 869 - 896). Became Count of [Cambrai](#) around 888, and was killed by [Herbert I of Vermandois](#) in 896

Osburh

Osburh or **Osburga** (born c 810 died March 853)^[*citation needed*] was the first wife of King [Aethelwulf of Wessex](#) and mother of [Alfred the Great](#). Alfred's biographer, [Asser](#), described her as "a most religious woman, noble in character and noble by birth".

Osburh's existence is known only from [Asser's](#) *Life of King Alfred*. She is not named as witness to any charters, nor is her death reported in the *[Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#)*. It is presumed, but nowhere recorded, that she was also the mother of Alfred's older brothers [Aethelstan](#), [Aethelbald](#), [Aethelberht](#), [Aethelred](#), and of his sister [Aethelswith](#), wife of King [Burgred of Mercia](#). Osburh was the daughter of Oslac, King Aethelwulf's *pincerna* (butler), an important figure in the royal court and household. Oslac is described as a descendant of King [Cerdic's](#) [Jutish](#) nephews, Stuf and Wihtgar, who conquered the [Isle of Wight](#).

Issue

Name	Birth	Death	Notes
Aethelstan		851-855	
Aethelswith		888	Married, Burgred of Mercia ; no issue.
Aethelbald		860	Married, Judith ; annulled.
Aethelbert		865	
Aethelred		871	Married Wulfrida ; had issue
Alfred	849	26 October 899	Married 868, Ealhswith ; had issue.

Aethelred of Wessex

King **Aethelred** (sometimes rendered as **Ethelred**, "noble counsel") was King of [Wessex](#) from 865 to 871. He was the fourth son of King [Aethelwulf](#). He succeeded his brother, [Aethelberht](#) ([Ethelbert](#)), as King of [Wessex](#) and [Kent](#) in 865. He married Wulfrida and had two sons, [Aethelwold](#), the elder, and [Aethelhelm](#), the younger.

Aethelred was not able to control the increasing [Danish](#) raids on England. On 4 January 871 at the [Battle of Reading](#), Ethelred suffered a heavy defeat. Although Aethelred was able to re-form his army in time to win a victory at the [Battle of Ashdown](#), he suffered another defeat on 22 January at the [Battle of Basing](#), and was killed at the [Battle of Merton](#) on 23 April 871.

Aethelred is buried at [Wimborne](#) in [Dorset](#). Following his death, he was popularly regarded as a [saint](#), but never [canonised](#). He was succeeded by his younger brother, [Alfred the Great](#)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86thelhelm>

Aethelhelm

Aethelhelm (c. 870–923) was the younger son of [Aethelred of Wessex](#). Both he and his brother were too young to inherit the throne in 871 and it passed to their uncle King [Alfred the Great](#) (*Aelfred*) who granted them both lands. On Alfred's death in 899 his elder brother [Aethelwold](#) contested the succession and was killed. Aethelhelm remained loyal, and is believed to have been [Ealdorman](#) of [Wiltshire](#).

Two children have been attributed to Aethelhelm:

- [Aelfflæd](#) (c. 890–918), consort to King [Edward the Elder](#) (c. 871–924), is called by one source daughter of Ealdorman Aethelhelm (although there were several Ealdormen of this name at the time, this has been taken to refer to the Ealdorman of Wiltshire); and
- [Aethelfrith of Wessex](#) (c. 900–927), a landholder, father to four Ealdormen: [Aethelstan Half-King](#) ([East Anglia](#)), Aelfstan ([Mercia](#)), Aethelwald ([Kent](#)), and [Eadric](#) ([Wessex](#)). Aethelfrith is hypothesized to be son of Aethelhelm because [Ealdorman Aethelweard 'the Historian'](#), who is thought to be son of Eadric, called himself 'grandson's grandson' of Aethelhelm's father Aethelred I and held lands originally granted to Aethelhelm by Alfred. From Aethelweard the reconstructed pedigree is traced through [Aethelmar Cild](#) (c. 960–1015), a benefactor of [Eynsham Abbey](#); and [Wulfnoth Cild](#) (c. 983–1015), [Thegn](#) of [Sussex](#); to [Earl Godwin](#), thereby making Aethelhelm ancestor of [King Harold II](#), Godwin's son.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86thelfrith_of_Wessex

Aethelfrith of Mercia

Aethelfrith (c. 900 – 927), was an [Ealdorman](#) southern [Mercia](#), occurring in documents in the first part of the 10th century. Having married Aethelgyth, daughter of Aethelwulf, he was father to four Ealdormen: [Aethelstan Half-King](#) ([East Anglia](#)), Aelfstan ([Mercia](#)), Aethelwald ([Kent](#)), and [Eadric](#) ([Wessex](#)), and apparently grandfather of Ealdorman [Aethelweard](#) 'the Historian'. That the latter called himself 'grandson's grandson' of [Aethelred I](#), as well as documented patterns of land inheritance, have led to the hypothesis that Aethelfrith was son of [Aethelhelm](#), Ealdorman of [Wiltshire](#), one of Aethelred's sons. A further genealogical reconstruction would make Aethelweard, and hence Aethelfrith, an ancestor of [King Harold II](#).

Aethelweard (historian)

Aethelweard (also spelled **Ethelward**), [Anglo-Saxon historian](#), was the great-great-grandson of [Aethelred of Wessex](#) (who was the brother of [Alfred the Great](#)), and was ealdorman or earl of the western provinces (i.e. probably of the whole of [Wessex](#)).

Biography

He first signs as *dux* or *ealdorman* in 973, and continues to sign until 998, about which time his death must have taken place. In the year 991 he was associated with [archbishop Sigeric](#) in the conclusion of a peace with the victorious Danes from Maldon, and in 994 he was sent with Bishop [Aelfheah](#) of Winchester to make peace with [Olaf](#) at [Andover](#).

Aethelweard was the author of a *Latin Chronicle* extending to the year 975. Up to the year 892 he is largely dependent on the [Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#), with a few details of his own; later he is largely independent of it. Aethelweard gave himself the bombastic title "*Patricius Consul Quaestor Ethelwerdus*," and unfortunately this title is only too characteristic of the man. His narrative is highly rhetorical, and as he at the same time attempts more than [Tacitean](#) brevity his narrative is often very obscure. Aethelweard was the friend and patron of [Aelfric of Eynsham](#), who in the preface to his Old English *Lives* of saints, addressed Aethelweard and his son Aethelmaer.

New scientific research found the reason for Aethelweard's obscure Latin. He wrote his work on request of his relative Mathilde, abbess of [Essen](#) monastery and granddaughter of emperor [Otto I](#) and [Eadgyth](#) of Wessex, to help her in the duty of keeping the remembrance of the dead relatives. Mathilde was not able to understand Aethelweard's preferred old English, therefore he had to write in Latin. Most likely Mathilde rewarded him with a copy of [Vegetius](#)' work *[De Re Militari](#)* which was written in Essen and survived in England. The later medieval historian [William of Malmesbury](#) says of him

"... a noble and illustrious character, who attempted to arrange these chronicles in Latin, and whose intention I could applaud, if his language did not disgust me it would be better to be silent..."

Aethelweard was the brother of [Aelfgifu](#), the wronged consort of King [Eadwig](#), who was their foster-brother. He and Aelfric of Hampshire - who later turned traitor - were said to have suggested the idea of [danegeld](#). He was father of ealdorman Aethelmaer Se Greatta and grandfather of [Aethelnoth](#), who became [Archbishop of Canterbury](#) in 1020, and was later regarded as a saint.. Aethelmaer has been identified with the man of this name whom chronicler [John of Worcester](#) made father of [Wulfnoth Cild](#) and brother of the notorious [Eadric Streona](#) (although the Worcester chronicler gives their father a different name), leading to a genealogical reconstruction that makes Aethelweard the father of Eadric, and the great-grandfather of [Godwin, Earl of Wessex](#), the father of king [Harold Godwinson](#), a reconstruction that is still in

dispute. Eadric's involvement with the attempt to rescue Alfheah from the Danes in 1012 by raising a large ransom may suggest his involvement in Aethelweard's earlier mission at Andover.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wulfnoth_Cild

Wulfnoth Cild

Wulfnoth Cild (died 1015) was an Anglo-Saxon nobleman who is thought to have been the father of [Godwin, Earl of Wessex](#) and thus the grandfather of King [Harold Godwinson](#). Earl Godwin's father was certainly named Wulfnoth, a relatively uncommon name. He is thus assumed to be the same person as Wulfnoth Cild, a [thegn](#) in [Sussex](#).

The *[Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#)* reports that in 1009, Wulfnoth, commanding a force of 20 ships, was accused (of some unspecified offence) to King [ed the Unready](#) by Earl [Brihtric](#) (or *Beorhtric*), [Eadric Streona](#)'s brother. Wulfnoth retaliated by ravaging the south coast, leading to Brihtric being sent with a force of 80 ships to deal with him. Brihtric's ships were caught in a storm, driven ashore, and then burned by Wulfnoth and his men. Wulfnoth was sentenced to exile but his son Godwin remained in England.

Wulfnoth's brother [Aethelnoth](#) became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1020.

Controversy over Ancestry

The theory has been advanced by Alfred Anscombe in 1913 and more recently by D.H. Kelley that [Harold Godwinson](#) was descended through Godwin and Wulfnoth from King Aethelred via Aethelmaer the Stout and [Aethelweard the Historian](#) (see link below). The controversy is over whether Wulfnoth was the son of Aethelmaer the Stout. There were at least two prominent men called Aethelmaer at the time and it is often difficult to establish which one did which. Aethelmaer the Stout was also known as "Cild of Sussex" and this line of ancestry is mentioned in the chronicle of [John of Worcester](#). However this is not mentioned in context of Harold's claim to the throne, nor did [Godwin](#) ever claim it for himself. However had he done so he might have been executed by [Cnut](#) instead of promoted — as was Aethelmaer and his son Aethelweard II and various sons of [Aethelred the Unready](#). The *Dictionary of National Biography* however, describe Godwin and Wulfnoth as parvenus of obscure origin. John of Worcester also describes Godwin as the son of a shepherd or swineherd,^[4] perhaps contradictarily due to dual authorship. Godwin and Wulfnoth's alleged obscure origins have become part of accepted myth after 1066.

In 1014, the will of King Aethelred's son the [Aetheling Aethelstan](#) states that Godwin was to receive "the estate at [Compton](#) which his father possessed." This land was willed by [Alfred the Great](#) for the descendants of his elder brother Aethelred I and has been used by Professor David Hurmiston Kelley amongst others as evidence of Wulfnoth's descent from Aethelred.

Aethelmaer the Stout's other son was [Aethelnoth](#), who became Cnut's chaplain and later Archbishop of Canterbury (even though Cnut executed his brother). The circumstances of Wulfnoth's death are rather obscure, but occurred in 1015 at the same time as Cnut's takeover.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godwin,_Earl_of_Wessex

Godwin, Earl of Wessex

Godwin of Wessex (*Old English*: *Gōdwine*; 990 – 15 April 1053), also known as **Goodwin**, was one of the most powerful lords in [England](#) under the [Danish](#) king [Canute the Great](#) and his successors. Canute made him the first [Earl of Wessex](#). Godwin was the father of King [Harold Godwinson](#) and [Edith of Wessex](#), wife of King [Edward the Confessor](#).

Rise: support of Edmund, then Canute

Godwin's father was possibly [Wulfnoth Cild](#) who was a [thegn](#) of [Sussex](#), although later documents describe his father as a [churl](#). Wulfnoth led a section of the royal fleet into [piracy](#) and as a consequence had his lands forfeited, and was exiled. In his day, Earl Godwin was seen as very much of a new man, who had been "made" by two advantageous marriages to Danish noblewomen.

Godwin was a major supporter of [Edmund Ironside](#), the son of King [Ethelred the Unready](#). While Edmund was in rebellion against his father, Canute and his army invaded England. Edmund was killed, along with many of his supporters, but Godwin survived and pledged his loyalty to Canute. He befriended Canute's brother-in-law, [Earl Ulf](#), and became one of Canute's advisers, accompanying him to Denmark to suppress a rebellion there. By 1018 he was an earl, becoming Earl of Wessex in about 1019.

Height of power: support of Harold

On 12 November 1035, Canute died. His kingdoms were divided among three rival rulers. [Harold Harefoot](#), Canute's illegitimate son with [Aelgifu of Northampton](#), seized the throne of England. [Harthacanute](#), Canute's legitimate son with [Emma of Normandy](#), reigned in Denmark. Norway rebelled under [Magnus the Noble](#). In 1035, the throne of England was reportedly claimed by [Alfred Aetheling](#), younger son of [Emma of Normandy](#) and [Ethelred the Unready](#), and half-brother of Harthacanute. Godwin is reported to have either captured Alfred himself or to have deceived him by pretending to be his ally and then surrendering him to the forces of Harold Harefoot. Either way Alfred was [blinded](#) and soon died at [Ely](#).

In 1040, Harold Harefoot died and Godwin supported the accession of his half-brother Harthacanute to the throne of England. When Harthacanute himself died in 1042 Godwin finally supported the claim of his half-brother [Edward the Confessor](#) to the throne. Edward was another son of Emma and Ethelred, having spent most of the previous thirty years in [Normandy](#). His reign restored the native royal house of Wessex to the throne of England.

In 1066 Edward was succeeded by his brother in law, Godwin's son [Harold](#).

Progeny

Godwin married a woman named Gytha who some¹ speculating that she was a daughter of Thorgil has called [Gytha Thorkelsdóttir](#)¹ If she was a daughter of Thorgil than she may also have been the granddaughter of the legendary Viking [Styrbjörn Starke](#) and great-granddaughter to [Harold Bluetooth](#), king of Denmark and thus also ancestor to King Canute. Whomever she was, the marriage resulted in the birth of many children:

1. [Sweyn Godwinson](#), [Earl](#) of [Herefordshire](#) (c. 1023-1052). At some point he declared himself an illegitimate son of Canute the Great but this is considered to be a false claim.
2. [Harold II of England](#) (c. 1022-14 October 1066)
3. [Tostig Godwinson](#), [Earl](#) of [Northumbria](#) (c. 1026-25 September 1066)
4. [Edith of Wessex](#), (c. 1030-19 December 1075), queen consort of [Edward the Confessor](#)
5. [Gyrth Godwinson](#) (c. 1030-14 October 1066)
6. [Gunhilda of Wessex](#), a nun (c. 1035-1080)
7. [Aelfgifu of Wessex](#) (c. 1035)
8. [Leofwine Godwinson](#), [Earl](#) of [Kent](#) (c. 1035-14 October 1066)
9. [Wulfnoth Godwinson](#) (c. 1040)
10. [Marigard of Wessex](#) (6 February 1033 – 6 August 1083)

Family Trees

- [House of Wessex family tree](#)
- [Godwin family tree](#)
- [Canute's family tree](#)

In popular culture

Godwin has been portrayed by [Torin Thatcher](#) in the film *[Lady Godiva of Coventry](#)* (1955) and by [Bill Wallis](#) in an episode of the British educational TV series *[Historyonics](#)* entitled "1066" (2004).

[Lewis Collins](#) is set to portray him in upcoming movie 1066 (2010)
<http://www.1066themovie.biz/intro.htm>

Harold Godwinson

Harold Godwinson or **Harold II** (c. 1022 – 14 October 1066) was the last [Anglo-Saxon](#) King of [England](#) before the [Norman Conquest](#). Harold reigned from 5 January 1066, until his [regicide](#) at the [Battle of Hastings](#) on 14 October of that same year, fighting the [Norman](#) invaders led by [William the Conqueror](#). Harold is one of only three Kings of England to have died as a result of battle, alongside [Richard the Lionheart](#) and [Richard III](#).

Traditionally accepted depiction of the death of Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings, as shown on the Bayeux Tapestry.



Harold was a son of [Godwin](#), the powerful [Earl of Wessex](#), and his wife [Gytha Thorkelsdottir](#), whose supposed brother [Ulf Jarl](#) was the son-in-law of Sweyn I and the father of [Sweyn II of Denmark](#).

Godwin and Gytha had several children, notably sons [Sweyn](#), Harold, [Tostig](#), [Gyrth](#) and [Leofwine](#) and a daughter, [Edith of Wessex](#) (1029–75), who became [Queen consort](#) of [Edward the Confessor](#).

Movie coming in 2010

