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Adela of France

Adela of France,[a] known also as **Adela the Holy** or **Adela of Messines**; (1009 – 8 January 1079, Messines), was, by marriage, the Duchess of Normandy (January 1027 – August 1027), Countess of Flanders (1035–1067).

Contents

Life

Adela was the second daughter of Robert II (the Pious), and Constance of Arles.[1] She is usually identified with the noble Adèle who in January 1027 married Richard III, Duke of Normandy.[2] The marriage was short-lived for on 6 August of that same year Richard III suddenly died.[2] This identification, however, is incorrect, as Adèle of France was sent in infancy to be raised in the Flanders court.[3] Adèle of France married Baldwin V, Count of Flanders in 1028.[4]

Adela's influence lay mainly through her family connections. On the death of her brother, Henry I of France, the guardianship of his seven-year-old son Philip I fell jointly on his widow, Anne of Kiev, and on his brother-in-law, Adela's husband, so that from 1060 to 1067, they were regents of France.[5]

In 1071, Adela's third son, Robert the Frisian, planned to invade Flanders even though at that time the Count of Flanders was Adela's grandson, Arnulf III. When she heard about Robert's plans, she asked Philip I to stop him. Philip sent soldiers to support Arnulf including a contingent of ten Norman knights led by William FitzOsborn. Robert's forces attacked Arnulf's numerically superior army at Cassel before it could organize, and Arnulf was killed along with William FitzOsborn. Robert's overwhelming victory led to Philip making peace with Robert and investing him as Count of Flanders. A year later, Philip married Robert's stepdaughter, Bertha of Holland, and in 1074, Philip restored the seigneurie of Corbie to the crown.

Adela had a strong interest in Baldwin V's church reforms and was behind her husband's founding of several collegiate churches. Directly or indirectly, she was responsible for establishing the Colleges of Aire (1049), Lille (1050) and Harelbeke (1064) as well as the abbeys of Messines (1057) and Ename (1063). After Baldwin's death in 1067, she went to Rome, took the nun's veil from the hands of Pope Alexander II and retired to the Benedictine convent of Messines, near Ypres. There she later died and was buried at the convent. Honoured as a saint in the Roman Catholic Church, her commemoration day is 8 September.[6]

Family

Her possible first marriage was in 1027 to Richard III, Duke of Normandy (died 1027). They had no children.

Her marriage in 1028 was to Baldwin V, Count of Flanders (died 1067).[4] Their children were:

Adela of France	
Countess of Flanders	

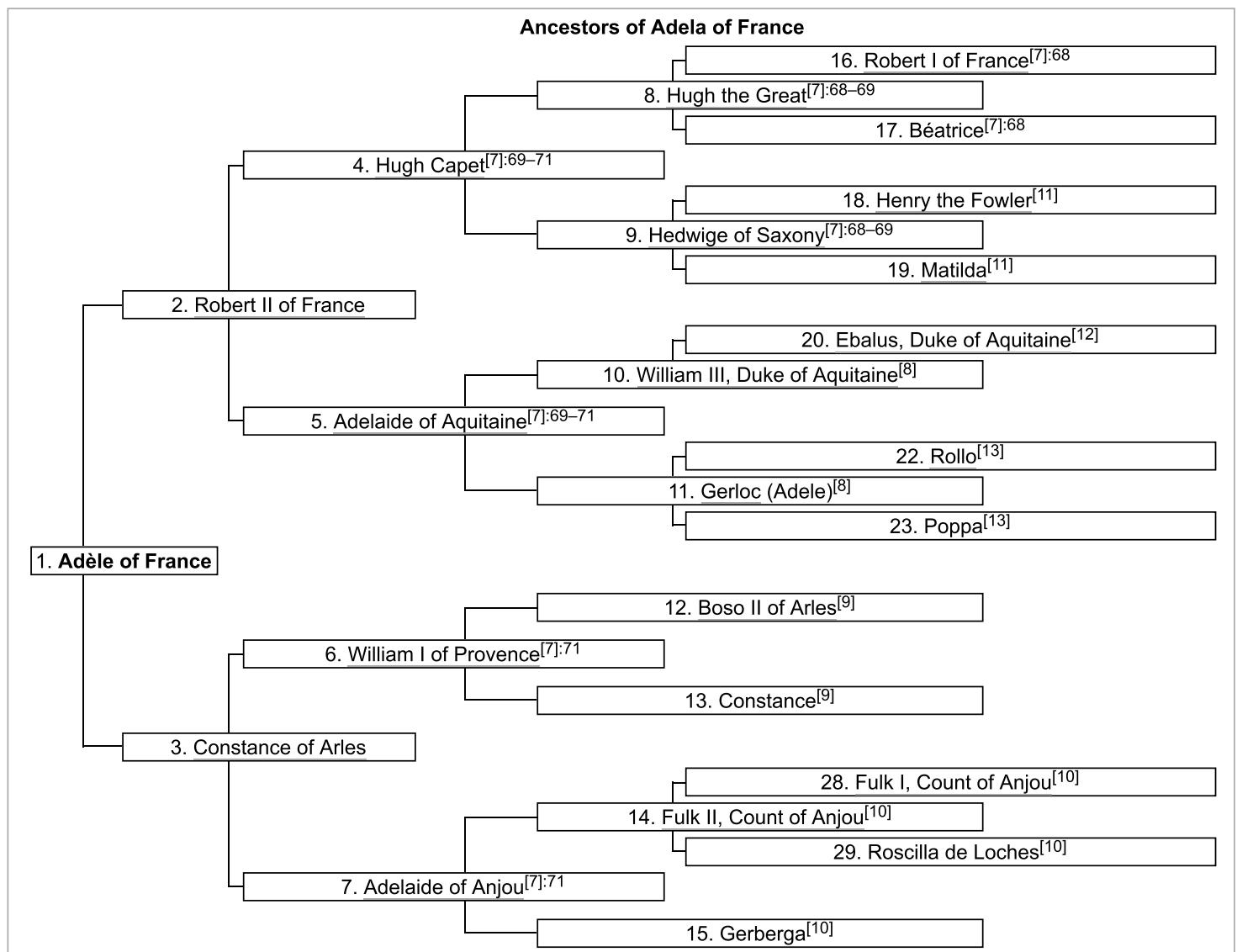|	
Born	1009
Died	8 January 1079 Messines
Burial	Benedictine Convent of Messines
Spouse	Richard III, Duke of Normandy Baldwin V, Count of Flanders
Issue	Baldwin VI Matilda, Queen of England Robert I, Count of Flanders

- Baldwin VI, Count of Flanders (c. 1030–1070).[4]
- Matilda of Flanders (c. 1032–1083). In c. 1053 she married William, Duke of Normandy, the future King of England and had issue.[4]
- Robert I, Count of Flanders (c. 1035–1093).[4]

House	Capet
Father	Robert II of France
Mother	Constance of Arles

Ancestry

Ancestors of Adela of France

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                                                               16. Robert I of France[7]:68
                                         8. Hugh the Great[7]:68–69
                                                               17. Béatrice[7]:68
                    4. Hugh Capet[7]:69–71
                                                               18. Henry the Fowler[11]
                                         9. Hedwige of Saxony[7]:68–69
                                                               19. Matilda[11]
         2. Robert II of France
                                                               20. Ebalus, Duke of Aquitaine[12]
                                         10. William III, Duke of Aquitaine[8]
                    5. Adelaide of Aquitaine[7]:69–71
                                                               22. Rollo[13]
                                         11. Gerloc (Adele)[8]
                                                               23. Poppa[13]
1. Adèle of France
                                                               12. Boso II of Arles[9]
                                         6. William I of Provence[7]:71
                                                               13. Constance[9]
         3. Constance of Arles
                                                               28. Fulk I, Count of Anjou[10]
                                         14. Fulk II, Count of Anjou[10]
                                                               29. Roscilla de Loches[10]
                    7. Adelaide of Anjou[7]:71
                                                               15. Gerberga[10]
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Notes

a. Other forms of her name are **Adèle**, **Adélaïde**, **Adelheid**, **Aelis** and **Alix**.

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Adela of France **House of Capet**		
Born: 1009		**Died:** 8 January 1079
Preceded by **Papia of Envermeu**	**Duchess consort of Normandy** 1027	Succeeded by **Matilda of Flanders**
Preceded by **Eleanor of Normandy**	**Countess consort of Flanders** 1036–1067	Succeeded by **Richilde of Hainaut**

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This page was last edited on 17 May 2019, at 01:24 (UTC).