

# Pepin of Italy

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**Pepin** or **Pippin** (or *Pepin Carloman*, *Pepinno*, April 773 – 8 July 810), born **Carloman**, was the son of Charlemagne and King of the Lombards (781–810) under the authority of his father.

Pepin was the second son of Charlemagne by his then-wife Hildgard.<sup>[1]</sup> He was born Carloman, but was rechristened with the royal name Pepin (also the name of his older half-brother Pepin the Hunchback, and his grandfather Pepin the Short) when he was a young child. He was made "king of Italy"<sup>[2]</sup> after his father's conquest of the Lombards, in 781, and crowned by Pope Hadrian I with the Iron Crown of Lombardy.

He was active as ruler of Lombardy and worked to expand the Frankish empire. In 791, he marched a Lombard army into the Drava valley and ravaged Pannonia, while his father marched along the Danube into Avar territory. Charlemagne left the campaigning to deal with a Saxon revolt in 792. Pepin and Duke Eric of Friuli continued, however, to assault the Avars' ring-shaped strongholds. The great Ring of the Avars, their capital fortress, was taken twice. The booty was sent to Charlemagne in Aachen and redistributed to all his followers and even to foreign rulers, including King Offa of Mercia. A celebratory poem, *De Pippini regis Victoria Avarica*, was composed after Pepin forced the Avar khagan to submit in 796.<sup>[3]</sup> This poem was composed at Verona, Pepin's capital after 799 and the centre of Carolingian Renaissance literature in Italy. The *Versus de Verona* (c. 800), an urban encomium of the city, likewise praises king Pepin.<sup>[4]</sup> The "Codex Gothanus" *History of the Lombards* hails Pepin's campaign against Benevento and his liberation of Corsica "from the oppression of the Moors."<sup>[5]</sup>

His activities included a long, but unsuccessful siege of Venice in 810. The siege lasted six months and Pepin's army was ravaged by the diseases of the local swamps and was forced to withdraw. A few months later Pepin died.

He had one or more mistresses, whose names are not known for certain, and whose ancestry is not given from any reliable source although one has been conjectured to have been called Bertha, and she is believed to be the daughter of William of Gellone, count of Toulouse. Pepin had one son and five daughters (they were: Adelaide, married Lambert I of Nantes; Atala; Gundrada; Bertha; and Tetrada), all of whom but the eldest were born between 800 and Pepin's death and died before their grandfather's death in 814. Pepin's son was Bernard. Pepin was expected to inherit a third of his father's empire, but he predeceased him. The Lombard crown passed on to his illegitimate son Bernard, but the empire went to Pepin's younger brother Louis the Pious.

## Notes

- Kingship and Royal Government*, Janet L. Nelson, **The New Cambridge Medieval History**, Vol. 2, ed. Rosamond McKitterick, (Cambridge University Press, 1991), 400.
- However exaggerated the title "king of Italy" may seem, it was the one used by his subjects: "...[Charlemagne] transferred all the kingdom of Italy to his great and glorious son lord Pippin, the great king"... (*Historia Langobardorum codicis Gothani*, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI-IX*, p.11.)
- Peter Godman (1985), *Latin Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press), 186–191.

### Pepin of Italy

#### King of the Lombards

<b>Coronation</b>	781
<b>Predecessor</b>	Charlemagne
<b>Successor</b>	Charlemagne and Bernard of Italy
<b>Born</b>	Carolman Apr 773
<b>Died</b>	8 Jul 810
<b>Issue</b>	Adelaide Atala Gundrada Bertha Tetrada Bernard

4. Godman, 180–187.

5. *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum et Italicarum saec. VI-IX*, p. 11.

<b>Pepin Carloman</b> <b>Carolingian dynasty</b> <b>Born:</b> April 777 <b>Died:</b> 8 July 810		
<b>Regnal titles</b>		
Preceded by <b>Charlemagne</b>	<b>King of the Lombards</b> 15 April 781 – 8 July 810 <i>with Emperor Charlemagne (774–814)</i>	Succeeded by <b>Emperor Charlemagne &amp; King Bernard</b>

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