



EDGAR

EVENTS

**Researching and sharing Edgar family
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DNA Update

by James Edgar (Editor) (jamesedgar@sasktel.net)



Last issue, I said I had contacted Edgars in Dundee, Arbroath, Brechin, and Kirriemuir, giving us a good start for our trip to Scotland this year.

Well, we came away with three sure tests, and a couple more are on the way. One of the people I had contacted ahead of time is Jim Edgar of Kirriemuir. It turns out he is a cousin of Don Edgar of Wolseley, Saskatchewan. Don's father and Jim's mother were siblings, so that was one test we didn't have to do! To add another piece to the story, Jim explained that he was illegitimate, and that he got the Edgar name from his mother. Getting a test from him would have really messed up our data – he isn't descended from a male Edgar at all!

Another that we found was Ron Edgar of Dundee – once we got his DNA and marked down some of his tree, we emailed the details to Jodie in Melville. She hit upon the name of Ron's great-grandmother, Euphemia Miln(e). Not many people have that name, and Jodie was sure she had seen it already on our database. Sure enough, we had a tree from David Edgar of Australia, whom we had tested last year. Same ancestor – his great-grandmother is Euphemia Miln(e)!! There was another test we didn't need to do. All our homework from previous years, and all our previous DNA tests, is paying off – we can now find matches to people for whom we already have details.

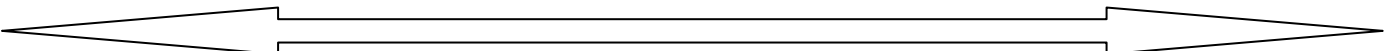
The tests we do have in the process are Colin Edgar of Arbroath, Bill Edgar of Dundee, and Chris Edgar of Dundee. Colin's family are from Kirriemuir; Bill has links to Wedderlie back to the 1700s; and we have yet to get details from Chris.

What is key to these tests is that they will help define where our roots are. If Colin is the same Haplogroup as me (I1), then we have direct links to Kirriemuir, as well as those of Don in Wolseley; if Bill (whom we've nicknamed "Bill The Pilot") is the same Haplogroup, again, that's a direct link to Wedderlie. If not, then we've been looking at this incorrectly. Perhaps both the Ribs and the I1s are the same family, with an illegitimate birth 'way back, or perhaps an adoption, fostering, or some such event. These are going to be very interesting results!

There are Edgars in Aberdeen who we have yet to contact to see if they'll do a test.

When I was in Toronto airport on my way home, I phoned SteveTO (in Oakville, Ontario), and he pointed me to Edgars in Massachusetts. He says these are Keithock Edgars who emigrated from Scotland to the US, first arriving in New Jersey, and settling in Edgartown, MA. This will be my next line of inquiry – to contact Edgars still living there to see if we can interest them in being part of our DNA research.

By the way, a big "Thank you" goes out to those people who helped replenish the DNA Trust Fund – your contributions are greatly appreciated. We promise we will spend the money wisely!



The early Scottish Monarchs 843–1097

At one time, Scotland was occupied by five different peoples. The Picts lived in the large area north of the rivers Forth and Clyde. The Scots, from Ireland, made their home in Argyll in the fifth and sixth centuries. The Angles held Lothian, the ancient Britons had retreated to Strathclyde, and, in the ninth century, the invading Norsemen settled in Orkney, Shetland, Caithness, Sutherland, and the Western Isles.

The unification of these different peoples began in the mid-ninth century, when Kenneth MacAlpin became king of both Picts and Scots. The Scots were to become dominant over the majority of the country, although alternative power bases existed until the end of the Middle Ages – for example, in the Norse Northern Isles of Orkney and Shetland.



Very little is known about many of the early kings up to the end of the 11th century, other than their accession dates (often because kings won their crowns by killing other kings) and their deaths (particularly if these were sudden and violent).

Unlike Anglo-Saxon England, there are few surviving literary chronicles of early rulers in Scotland. Two of the best-known kings – Macbeth and Malcolm Canmore – were immortalized by Shakespeare's *Macbeth* in a form that bears little resemblance to historical events.

Perhaps the most eloquent testament to the lives of the early Scottish kings is the island of Iona with its abbey and burial ground, resting place of many Scottish, Irish and Norwegian kings.



Kenneth I r. 843-858 Kenneth, son of Alpin, King of Scotia succeeded his father in 843.

He defeated the Picts about 843, uniting them with the Scots in the new kingdom of Alba, which comprised a large part of present day Scotland.

Sources for the period disagree about the exact date of his victory, but Kenneth features as a notable warrior who reputedly invaded Northumbria six times and fought off attacks by the Britons of Strathclyde, as well as by the Norsemen. Using dynastic marriage to solve the problem, Kenneth married his daughter to Rhun, the Strathclyde king.

Because of the Norse threat to Iona, the burial place of St. Columba (an Irish Scot who brought Christianity to Alba), he removed the saint's relics to a new church, which he founded in Pictland at Dunkeld, Perthshire. However, Iona continued to be the burial place of Scottish kings, even after St. Columba's relics were moved, until the 11th century. Kenneth died in 858 at Forteviot, near Perth, probably of a tumour.

Donald I r. 858-862 Donald I succeeded his brother Kenneth I in 858, but little is known about his brief reign.

Constantine I r. 862-877 Constantine was the son of Kenneth I. The Norse invaded his kingdom several times, and he was killed in battle against them at Forgan, Fife in 877.

Aed r. 877-878 Aed, another son of Kenneth I, succeeded his brother in 877. He was killed a year later by Giric, who seized the throne for himself.

Giric r. 878-879 The father of Giric is disputed; most historians claim that his father was a man called Dungal. He seems to have ruled jointly with Eochaid, who does not appear on the early lists of kings, but had some claim to the Pictish throne. Giric invaded Northumbria at least once. He died at Dundurn, in Perthshire, in 889



Donald II r. 889-900 Donald, son of Constantine I, struggled to repel the Norse invasions. He died at Forres, Moray, in 900.



Constantine II r. 900-943 Constantine II was the son of Aed. He ruled for over 40 years, repelling Norse raids and launching a series of invasions of Northumbria.

In an attempt to establish a more stable relationship with the Norsemen of Ireland, Constantine married his daughter to Olaf III Guthfrithsson in the 930s. This dynastic marriage may have also had the intention of checking the advance of Wessex in northern England – if so, it failed. Constantine was finally defeated in 937 by the Anglo-Saxon king Athelstan at the Battle of Brunanburh, where his eldest son was killed.

He abdicated in 943, entered a Culdee monastery in St. Andrews, Fife, and died in 952.



Malcolm I r. 943-954 Malcolm was the son of Donald II. He may have supported the establishment of a Danish kingdom of York in the 940s, and he harried the north of England.

He was killed in battle, possibly at Fetteresso, Kincardineshire, by rebels from Moray.



Indulf r. 954-962 The son of Constantine II, Indulf died fighting the Danes in 962. It is said that Edinburgh passed to the Scots during his reign.



Dubh or Duff r. 962-966 Dubh, whose Gaelic name means “black,” was the son of Malcolm I. He was twice challenged for the throne by Culen, and on the second occasion was killed in Moray in 966



Culen r. 966-971 Culen, son of Indulf, wrested the throne from Dubh, but was himself killed in Lothian in 971 by Riderch, King of Strathclyde, whose daughter he had seized.



Kenneth II r. 971-975 Kenneth was the brother of Dubh.

In 973, he acknowledged King Edgar of England as his lord in return for recognition that the Scots now held Lothian, which they had seized from the Angles. In about 994, however, he broke his promise to keep the peace and invaded England. He was defeated, and lost Lothian again.

He killed Culen’s brother in 977 and was himself killed in 995 in a blood feud at Fettercairn, Kincardineshire by Culen’s son, Constantine.



Constantine III r. 995-997 Having killed Kenneth II, Constantine, son of Culen, made himself king. His reign was brief, and he was killed in 997, probably by Kenneth III.



Kenneth III r. 971-995 Kenneth was the son of Dubh. According to one account, he tried to ensure that his own son Giric would succeed him by making him joint king.

However, Kenneth was killed in battle in March 1005 at Monzievaird, Perthshire, by his kinsman Malcolm, who seized the throne. Malcolm may have subsequently arranged the murder of Kenneth III's grandson, to enable a clear succession for his own grandson, Duncan I.



Malcolm II r.1005-1034 Malcolm, son of Kenneth II, took advantage of the fact that the English were preoccupied with Danish raids and marched south, winning the Battle of Carham against the Angles in 1018 and thereby regaining Lothian.

Thirteen years later, however, King Canute invaded Scotland, probably because Malcolm had been making alliances with the Danes, and forced the Scottish king to submit to him (submission was a traditional expression of personal homage). However, Canute seems to have recognized Malcolm's possession of Lothian.

In the west, Malcolm had the alliance of Strathclyde, while the marriage of his daughter to Sigurd the Stout, Norse Earl of Orkney, extended Malcolm's influence to the far north. Malcolm died at Glamis, Angus, on 1034 November 25, aged at least 80.

After Malcolm II's reign, Scottish succession was based on the principle of direct descent. Previously, succession was determined by tanistry - during a king's lifetime an heir was chosen and known as tanaiste ig, or "second to the king."



Duncan I r. 1034-1040 Duncan was the son of Malcolm II's eldest daughter Bethoc and her husband Crinan, Lay Abbot of Dunkeld.

He was about 33 when he succeeded his grandfather. Married to a cousin of Siward, Earl of Northumberland, he may have favoured southern ways and this is perhaps why he became unpopular with his subjects.

In 1039, he did march south to besiege Durham but he was beaten off, with heavy losses. Duncan attempted to impose his overlordship over Moray (an independent dynasty) by military force.

He was then twice defeated by the Earl of Orkney's son, Thorfinn, before being killed in battle by Macbeth, one of his commanders, near Elgin, Morayshire on 1040 August 14.



Macbeth r.1040-1057 Macbeth's father was Finlay, Mormaer of Moray, and his mother may have been Donada, second daughter of Malcolm II. A Mormaer was literally a High Steward of one of the ancient Celtic provinces of Scotland, but in Latin documents, the word is usually translated as "Comes," which means Earl.

Shakespeare's famous tragedy *Macbeth* is based upon his life, but is not historically accurate. In the play, Macbeth and his wife murder the aged King Duncan when he comes to visit them in their castle. In reality, Macbeth killed Duncan, who was about 39, in battle, and made himself king instead.

Macbeth's marriage to Kenneth III's granddaughter Gruoch strengthened his claim to the throne. In 1045, Macbeth defeated and killed Duncan I's father Crinan at Dunkeld.

His reign was for the most part peaceful, and he was known for his generosity to the Church. He made a pilgrimage to Rome in 1050, "scattering money like seed."

Seven years later, on 1057 August 15, he was killed at the Battle of Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire by Duncan's eldest son, Malcolm Canmore. Macbeth was the last Scottish king to be buried on Iona.



Lulach r. **1057-1058** Lulach, Macbeth's stepson, was born about 1032, the son of Gruoch by her first husband, Gillacomgan, Mormaer of Moray.

He was briefly recognized as king but was killed by Malcolm Canmore at Essie, Aberdeenshire, on 1058 March 17.



Malcolm III r. **1058-1093** Malcolm Canmore ("great head" or "chief") was the eldest son of Duncan I. After his father's death, he found refuge in England with his uncle Siward of Northumbria, where he stayed for more than 14 years.

His first wife was Ingibjorg, widow of Earl Thorfinn of Orkney. She died, and in about 1070, he married Margaret, great-niece of King Edward the Confessor of England. She had sought refuge in Scotland with her brother, Edgar the Atheling (Anglo-Saxon heir to the English throne), when William I excluded him from the English succession.

Margaret had a strong influence over her husband, who revered her piety and secretly had jewel-encrusted bindings made for her religious books, which he himself was unable to read, never having learned to do so. He also substituted Saxon for Gaelic as the court language.

According to Margaret's biographer, she corresponded with Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, brought Benedictine monks to Dunfermline, and did away with local usages in the Scottish Church. Margaret also began building what was later to be known as St. Margaret's Chapel, situated on the highest part of Edinburgh Castle.

Malcolm was determined to extend his kingdom southwards and take advantage of the upheaval caused by the Norman Conquest. Making the excuse that he was supporting the claim to the English throne of his brother-in-law Edgar Atheling, Malcolm invaded England five times (he was a formidable warrior-king, having killed his two predecessor kings).

Three times defeated, Malcolm was forced under the treaty of Abernethy in 1072 to become "the man" of the English king and give up his son Duncan as a hostage. Malcolm and his eldest son were finally killed in battle at Alnwick, Northumberland, on 1093 November 13, aged about 62. His wife died when they brought her the news at Edinburgh Castle. She was canonised in 1249.

After Malcolm's death, the frontier between the kingdoms of Scotland and England was clearly defined for the first time. Anglo-Norman influence in Scotland was promoted by the subsequent marriages of Malcolm's sons to English brides.



Donald III r. **1093-1094 and 1094-1097** Donald "Bane" (Fair) was the younger brother of Malcolm III. He succeeded Malcolm III in 1093, at the age of 60, after driving out Malcolm's sons and claiming the crown on the basis of tanistry.

Donald was deposed by his nephew Duncan II in 1094, with the assistance of William II (Rufus) of England; Donald regained the throne soon afterwards when Duncan was killed in November that year. Donald then seems to have shared his rule with his nephew Edmund (Donald in Scotia, Edmund in Lothian and Strathclyde).

In 1097, Malcolm III's son Edgar invaded Scotland with help from William II of England, and Donald was defeated and deposed once more.

Accounts of his fate differ, but according to one version, he was blinded and kept prisoner until his death at Rescobie, Angus, in about 1100. Edmund was pardoned and became a monk.

Anglo Saxon Kings 757-1066



In the Dark Ages during the fifth and sixth centuries, communities of peoples in Britain inhabited homelands with ill-defined borders. Such communities were organized and led by chieftains or kings.

Following the final withdrawal of the Roman legions from the provinces of Britannia in around AD 408, these small kingdoms were left to preserve their own order and to deal with invaders and waves of migrant peoples, such as the Picts from beyond Hadrian's Wall, the Scots from Ireland, and Germanic tribes from the continent.

King Arthur, a larger-than-life figure, has often been cited as a leader of one or more of these kingdoms during this period, although his name now tends to be used as a symbol of British resistance against invasion.

The invading communities overwhelmed or adapted existing kingdoms and created new ones – for example, the Angles in Mercia and Northumbria. Some British kingdoms initially survived the onslaught, such as Strathclyde, which was wedged in the north between Pictland and the new Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria.

By AD 650, the British Isles were a patchwork of many kingdoms founded from native or immigrant communities and led by powerful chieftains or kings. In their personal feuds and struggles between communities for control and supremacy, a small number of kingdoms became dominant: Bernicia and Deira (which merged to form Northumbria in 651 AD), Lindsey, East Anglia, Mercia, Wessex and Kent.

Until the late seventh century, a series of warrior-kings in turn established their own personal authority over other kings, usually won by force or through alliances and often cemented by dynastic marriages.

According to the later chronicler Bede, the most famous of these kings was Ethelberht, king of Kent (reigned c. 560-616), who married Bertha, the Christian daughter of the king of Paris, and who became the first English king to be converted to Christianity (St. Augustine's mission from the Pope to Britain in 597 during Ethelberht's reign prompted thousands of such conversions).

Ethelberht's law code was the first to be written in any Germanic language and included 90 laws. His influence extended both north and south of the river Humber; his nephew became king of the East Saxons and his daughter married king Edwin of Northumbria (died 633).

In the eighth century, smaller kingdoms in the British Isles continued to fall to more powerful kingdoms, which claimed rights over whole areas and established temporary primacies: Dalriada in Scotland, Munster and Ulster in Ireland. In England, Mercia and later Wessex came to dominate, giving rise to the start of the monarchy.

Throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, the succession was frequently contested, by both the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy and leaders of the settling Scandinavian communities. The Scandinavian influence was to prove strong in the early years.

It was the threat of invading Vikings that galvanized English leaders into unifying their forces, and, centuries later, the Normans who successfully invaded in 1066 were themselves the descendants of Scandinavia.



OFFA reigned 757 -796

Offa, King of Mercia seized the throne after a civil war, and established supremacy over many lesser kings.

He consolidated his position by marrying his daughters to the kings of Wessex and Northumbria, and was the first ruler to be called “king of the English.”

Offa ruthlessly overcame strong opposition in southern England. By the end of his reign, Offa was master of all England south of the Humber. He had a frontier barrier (Offa’s Dyke) built; this continuous ditch and bank ran 149 miles along the boundary between the Mercian and Welsh kingdoms – “from sea to sea.”

Offa had dealings with the emperor Charlemagne (a proposed dynastic marriage between their children came to nothing), and he visited Rome in 792 to strengthen his links with the papacy.

The English penny (silver currency) was introduced during Offa’s reign.

In the first recorded coronation in England, Offa’s son Ecgrith was consecrated in 787 in Offa’s lifetime in an attempt to secure the succession. However, Ecgrith died childless, months after Offa. Offa’s success in building a strong unified kingdom caused resistance in other kingdoms.

The Mercians’ defeat at the hands of Egbert of Wessex at the battle of Ellendun in 825 meant that supremacy passed to Wessex.



Egbert King of Wessex Reigned 802-839

As King of Wessex, after the decline of Mercian power under Offa, Egbert inherited the mantle of “bretwalda” – an Anglo-Saxon term meaning a ruler with overall superiority to other rulers. He came to power in 802 and died in 839, but little else is known about his reign.



Ethelwulf reigned 839-856

Ethelwulf was the son of Egbert. He succeeded his father in 839. At Ethelwulf’s request, his four sons each became king in turn rather than risk weakness in the kingdom by allowing young children to inherit the mantle of leadership.



Ethelbald reigned 856-860

Ethelbald was the eldest son of Ethelwulf. He took over his father’s authority in 855 and married Judith, daughter of Charles the Bald, king of the Franks, who was also his stepmother. He died in 860.



Ethelred reigned 866-871

Ethelred was another brother of Ethelbald, ruling from 866 to 871. He was the third son of Ethelwulf to wear the mantle of kingship.



Alfred “the Great” reigned 871-899

Born at Wantage, Berkshire, in 849, Alfred was the fifth son of Aethelwulf, king of the West Saxons. At their father’s behest and by mutual agreement, Alfred’s elder brothers succeeded to the kingship in turn, rather than endanger the kingdom by passing it to under-age children at a time when the country was threatened by worsening Viking raids from Denmark.

Since the 790s, the Vikings had been using fast mobile armies, numbering thousands of men embarked in shallow-draught longships, to raid the coasts and inland waters of England for plunder.

Such raids were evolving into permanent Danish settlements; in 867, the Vikings seized York and established their own kingdom in the southern part of Northumbria. The Vikings overcame two other major Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, East Anglia and Mercia, and their kings were either tortured to death or fled.

Finally, in 870, the Danes attacked the only remaining independent Anglo-Saxon kingdom, Wessex, whose forces were commanded by King Aethelred and his younger brother Alfred. At the battle of Ashdown in 871, Alfred routed the Viking army in a fiercely fought uphill assault. However, further defeats followed for Wessex, and Alfred's brother died.

As King of Wessex at the age of 21, Alfred (reigned 871-99) was a strongminded but highly strung battle veteran at the head of remaining resistance to the Vikings in southern England.

In early 878, the Danes led by King Guthrum seized Chippenham in Wiltshire in a lightning strike, and used it as a secure base from which to devastate Wessex. Local people either surrendered or escaped (Hampshire people fled to the Isle of Wight), and the West Saxons were reduced to hit-and-run attacks, seizing provisions when they could.

With only his royal bodyguard, a small army of thegns (the king's followers) and Aethelnoth ealdorman of Somerset as his ally, Alfred withdrew to the Somerset tidal marshes, in which he had probably hunted as a youth. (It was during this time that Alfred, in his preoccupation with the defence of his kingdom, allegedly burned some cakes that he had been asked to look after; the incident was a legend dating from early 12th-century chroniclers.)

A resourceful fighter, Alfred reassessed his strategy and adopted the Danes' tactics by building a fortified base at Athelney in the Somerset marshes and summoning a mobile army of men from Wiltshire, Somerset, and part of Hampshire to pursue guerrilla warfare against the Danes. In May 878, Alfred's army defeated the Danes at the battle of Edington.

According to his contemporary biographer, Bishop Asser, "Alfred attacked the whole pagan army fighting ferociously in dense order, and by divine will eventually won the victory, made great slaughter among them, and pursued them to their fortress (Chippenham) ... After fourteen days the pagans were brought to the extreme depths of despair by hunger, cold and fear, and they sought peace." This unexpected victory proved to be the turning point in Wessex's battle for survival.

Realising that he could not drive the Danes out of the rest of England, Alfred concluded peace with them in the treaty of Wedmore. King Guthrum was converted to Christianity with Alfred as godfather, and many of the Danes returned to East Anglia, where they settled as farmers. In 886, Alfred negotiated a partition treaty with the Danes, in which a frontier was demarcated along the Roman Watling Street, and northern and eastern England came under the jurisdiction of the Danes – an area known as "Danelaw." Alfred therefore gained control of areas of West Mercia and Kent, which had been beyond the boundaries of Wessex.

To consolidate alliances against the Danes, Alfred married one of his daughters, Aethelflaed, to the ealdorman of Mercia. Alfred himself had married Eahlswith, a Mercian noblewoman, and another daughter, Aelfthryth, to the Count of Flanders, a strong naval power at a time when the Vikings were settling in eastern England.

The Danish threat remained, and Alfred reorganized the Wessex defences in recognition that efficient defence and economic prosperity were interdependent. First, he organized his army (the thegns, and the existing militia known as the fyrd) on a rota basis, so he could raise a "rapid reaction force" to deal with raiders, while still enabling his thegns and peasants to tend their farms.

Second, Alfred started a building programme of well-defended settlements across southern England. These were fortified market places ("borough" comes from the Old English burh, meaning fortress); by deliberate royal planning, settlers received plots and in return manned the defences in times of war. (Such plots in London under Alfred's rule in the 880s shaped the street plan that still exists today between Cheapside and the Thames.)

This obligation required careful recording in what became known as "the Burghal Hidage," which gave details of the building and manning of Wessex and Mercian burhs according to their size, the length of their ramparts, and the number of men needed to garrison them.

Centred round Alfred's royal palace in Winchester, this network of burhs, with strongpoints on the main river routes, was such that no part of Wessex was more than 20 miles from the refuge of one of these settlements. Together with

a navy of new fast ships built on Alfred's orders, southern England now had a defence in depth against Danish raiders.

Alfred's concept of kingship extended beyond the administration of the tribal kingdom of Wessex into a broader context. A religiously devout and pragmatic man who learnt Latin in his late 30s, he recognized that the general deterioration in learning and religion caused by the Vikings' destruction of monasteries (the centres of the rudimentary education network) had serious implications for rulership. For example, the poor standards in Latin had led to a decline in the use of the charter as an instrument of royal government to disseminate the king's instructions and legislation.

In one of his prefaces, Alfred wrote "so general was its [Latin] decay in England that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their rituals in English or translate a letter from Latin into English ... so few that I cannot remember a single one south of the Thames when I came to the throne."

To improve literacy, Alfred arranged, and took part in, the translation (by scholars from Mercia) from Latin into Anglo-Saxon of a handful of books he thought it "most needful for men to know, and to bring it to pass ... if we have the peace, that all the youth now in England ... may be devoted to learning."

These books covered history, philosophy, and Gregory the Great's "Pastoral Care" (a handbook for bishops), and copies of these books were sent to all the bishops of the kingdom. Alfred was patron of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (which was copied and supplemented up to 1154), a patriotic history of the English from the Wessex viewpoint designed to inspire its readers and celebrate Alfred and his monarchy.

Like other West Saxon kings, Alfred established a legal code; he assembled the laws of Offa and other predecessors, and of the kingdoms of Mercia and Kent, adding his own administrative regulations to form a definitive body of Anglo-Saxon law.

"I ... collected these together and ordered to be written many of them which our forefathers observed, those which I liked; and many of those which I did not like I rejected with the advice of my councillors ... For I dared not presume to set in writing at all many of my own, because it was unknown to me what would please those who should come after us ... Then I ... showed those to all my councillors, and they then said that they were all pleased to observe them" (Laws of Alfred, c. 885-99).

By the 890s, Alfred's charters and coinage (which he had also reformed, extending its minting to the burhs he had founded) referred to him as "king of the English," and Welsh kings sought alliances with him. Alfred died in 899, aged 50, and was buried in Winchester, the burial place of the West Saxon royal family.

By stopping the Viking advance and consolidating his territorial gains, Alfred had started the process by which his successors eventually extended their power over the other Anglo-Saxon kings; the ultimate unification of Anglo-Saxon England was to be led by Wessex.

It is for his valiant defence of his kingdom against a stronger enemy, for securing peace with the Vikings and for his farsighted reforms in the reconstruction of Wessex and beyond, that Alfred – alone of all the English kings and queens – is known as "the Great."



Edward the Elder reigned 899-924

Well-trained by Alfred, his son Edward "the Elder" was a bold soldier who defeated the Danes in Northumbria at Tettenhall in 910 and was acknowledged by the Viking kingdom of York.

The kings of Strathclyde and the Scots submitted to Edward in 921. By military success and patient planning, Edward spread English influence and control.

Much of this was due to his alliance with his formidable sister Aethelflaed, who was married to the ruler of Mercia and seems to have governed that kingdom after her husband's death.

Edward was able to establish an administration for the kingdom of England, while obtaining the allegiance of Danes, Scots, and Britons.

Edward died in 924, and he was buried in the New Minster, which he had had completed at Winchester.

Edward was twice married, but it is possible that his eldest son Athelstan was the son of a mistress.



Athelstan r. 924-939

Edward's heir Athelstan (reigned 924–939) was also a distinguished and audacious soldier who pushed the boundaries of the kingdom to their furthest extent yet. In 927-8, Athelstan took York from the Danes; he forced the submission of king Constantine of Scotland and of the northern kings; all five Welsh kings agreed to pay a huge annual tribute (reportedly including 25,000 oxen), and Athelstan eliminated opposition in Cornwall.

The battle of Brunanburh in 937, in which Athelstan led a force drawn from Britain and defeated an invasion by the king of Scotland in alliance with the Welsh and Danes from Dublin, earned him recognition by lesser kings in Britain.

Athelstan's law codes strengthened royal control over his large kingdom; currency was regulated to control silver's weight and to penalize fraudsters. Buying and selling was mostly confined to the burhs, encouraging town life; areas of settlement in the midlands, and Danish towns were consolidated into shires. Overseas, Athelstan built alliances by marrying four of his half-sisters to various rulers in western Europe.

He also had extensive cultural and religious contacts; as an enthusiastic and discriminating collector of works of art and religious relics, he gave away much of his collection to his followers and to churches and bishops in order to retain their support.

Athelstan died at the height of his power and was buried at Malmesbury; a church charter of 934 described him as "King of the English, elevated by the right hand of the Almighty ... to the Throne of the whole Kingdom of Britain." Athelstan died childless.



Edmund I r. 939-946

When Athelstan died without immediate successors, his half brother Edmund successfully suppressed rebellions by the Mercian Danes. Edmund I was murdered at a feast in his own hall, at the age of 25 in 946, after only seven years on the throne, and his brother Edred succeeded him.



Edred r. 946-955

Like his successor, his brother Edmund I, Edred also dealt with trouble from Danes in the north. Edred brought up Edmund's sons, Edwy and Edgar, as his heirs, and they both became king in turn.



Edwy r. 955-959

Edmund I's elder son Edwy was crowned by Oda, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 956 at Kingston-on-Thames (sited on the Wessex/Mercia border, and on the frontier between Alfred's kingdom and the Danelaw, this was where most recorded West Saxon consecrations took place).

Aged 13 on his succession, Edwy became entangled in court factions, and Mercia and Northumbria broke away in rebellion. He died before he was 20.



Edgar r. 959-975

Edgar, king in Mercia and the Danelaw from 957, succeeded his brother as king of the English on Edwy's death in 959. His death probably prevented civil war breaking out between the two brothers.

Edgar was a firm and capable ruler whose power was acknowledged by other rulers in Britain, as well as by Welsh and Scottish kings.

Edgar's late coronation in 973 at Bath was the first to be recorded in some detail; his queen Aelfthryth was the first consort to be crowned queen of England.

Edgar was the patron of a great monastic revival, which owed much to his association with Archbishop Dunstan. New bishoprics were created, Benedictine monasteries were reformed, and old monastic sites were re-endowed with royal grants, some of which were of land recovered from the Vikings.

In the 970s and in the absence of Viking attacks, Edgar – a stern judge – issued laws, which for the first time dealt with Northumbria (parts of which were in the Danelaw) as well as Wessex and Mercia. Edgar's coinage was uniform throughout the kingdom. A more united kingdom based on royal justice and order was emerging.

The Monastic Agreement (c.970) praised Edgar as “the glorious, by the grace of Christ illustrious king of the English and of the other peoples dwelling within the bounds of the island of Britain.”

After his death on 975 July 8, Edgar was buried at Glastonbury Abbey, Somerset



Edward II “the Martyr” r. 975-979

The sudden death of Edgar at the age of 33 led to a succession dispute between rival factions supporting his sons Edward and Ethelred. The elder son Edward was murdered in 979 at Corfe, Dorset, by his seven-year-old half-brother's supporters.



Ethelred II “the Unready” r. 979-1013 and 1014-1016 Ethelred, the younger son of Edgar, became king at the age of seven, following the murder of his half-brother Edward II in 978 at Corfe Castle, Dorset, by Edward's own supporters.

For the rest of Ethelred's rule (reigned 979-1016), his brother became a posthumous rallying point for political unrest; a hostile Church transformed Edward into a royal martyr. Known as the Un-raed or “Unready” (meaning “no counsel,” or that he was unwise), Ethelred failed to win or retain the allegiance of many of his subjects. In 1002, he ordered the massacre of all Danes in England to eliminate potential treachery.

Not being an able soldier, Ethelred defended the country against increasingly rapacious Viking raids from the 980s onwards by diplomatic alliance with the duke of Normandy in 991 (he later married the duke's daughter Emma) and by buying off renewed attacks by the Danes with money levied through a tax called the Danegeld. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 1006 was dismissive: “in spite of it all, the Danish army went about as it pleased.” By 1012, 48,000 pounds of silver was being paid in Danegeld to Danes camped in London.

In 1013, Ethelred fled to Normandy when the powerful Viking Sweyn of Denmark dispossessed him. Ethelred returned to rule after Sweyn's death in 1014, but died himself in 1016.



Sweyn r. 1013-1014 The son of a Danish king, Sweyn “Forkbeard” began conquering territory in England in 1003, effectively devastating much of southern and midland England. The English nobility became so disillusioned with their existing king, Ethelred “The Unready,” that they acknowledged Sweyn as king in 1013. Sweyn's reign was short, as he died in 1014, but his son Canute the Great soon returned and reclaimed control of England.



Edmund II “Ironside” 1016 Edmund Ironside was the son of Ethelred “The Unready” and his first wife, Elfgifu. He made himself ruler in the Danelaw, independent of his father. Canute later defeated him at Ashingdon in Essex, striking a treaty of peace that allowed Edmund to rule in Wessex and Canute to take the rest. Edmund died in 1016.



Canute r. 1016-1035 Son of Sweyn, Canute became undisputed King of England in 1016, and his rivals (Ethelred’s surviving sons and Edmund’s son) fled abroad. In 1018, the last Danegeld of 82,500 pounds was paid to Canute. Ruthless but capable, Canute consolidated his position by marrying Ethelred’s widow Emma (Canute’s first English partner – the Church did not recognize her as his wife – was set aside, later appointed regent of Norway). During his reign, Canute also became King of Denmark and Norway; his inheritance and formidable personality

combined to make him overlord of a huge northern empire.

During his inevitable absences in Scandinavia, Canute used powerful English and Danish earls to assist in England’s government – English law and methods of government remained unchanged.

A second-generation Christian for reasons of politics as well as faith, Canute went on pilgrimage to Rome in 1027-8. (It was allegedly Christian humility that made him reject his courtiers’ flattery by demonstrating that even he could not stop the waves; later hostile chroniclers were to claim it showed madness.)

Canute was buried at Winchester. Given that there was no political or governmental unity within his empire, it failed to survive owing to discord between his sons by two different queens – Harold Harefoot (reigned 1035-40) and Harthacnut (reigned 1040-42) – and the factions led by the semi-independent Earls of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex.



Harold “Harefoot” r. 1035-1040 Harold Harefoot was the son of Canute and his first wife, Elfgifu. The brothers began by sharing the kingdom of England after their father’s death – Harold Harefoot becoming king in Mercia and Northumbria, and Harthacanute king of Wessex. During the absence of Hardicanute in Denmark, his other kingdom, Harold Harefoot became effective sole ruler. On his death in 1040, the kingdom of England fell to Hardicanute alone.

Hardicanute r.1035-1042 Harthacnut was the son of Canute and his second wife, Emma, the widow of Ethelred II. His father intended Hardicanute to become king of the English in preference to his elder brother Harold Harefoot, but he nearly lost his chance of this when he became preoccupied with affairs in Denmark, of which he was also king. Instead, Canute’s eldest son, Harold Harefoot, became king of England as a whole. In 1039, Hardicanute eventually set sail for England, arriving to find his brother dead and himself king.



Edward III “the Confessor” r. 1042-1066

In 1042, Edward “the Confessor” became King. As the surviving son of Ethelred and his second wife, Emma, he was a half-brother of Hardicanute. With few rivals (Canute’s line was extinct and Edward’s only male relatives were two nephews in exile), Edward was undisputed king; the threat of usurpation by the King of Norway rallied the English and Danes in allegiance to Edward.

Brought up in exile in Normandy, Edward lacked military ability or reputation. His Norman sympathies caused tensions with one of Canute's most powerful earls, Godwin of Wessex, whose daughter, Edith, Edward married in 1045 (the marriage was childless).

These tensions resulted in the crisis of 1050-52, when Godwin assembled an army to defy Edward. With reinforcements from the earls of Mercia and Northumberland, Edward banished Godwin from the country and sent Queen Edith from court. Edward used the opportunity to appoint Normans to places at court, and as sheriffs at local level.

William, Duke of Normandy, may have been designated heir. However, the hostile reaction to this increased Norman influence brought Godwin back. Edward subsequently formed a closer alliance with Godwin's son Harold, who led the army as the king's deputy (he defeated a Welsh incursion in 1055) and whom Edward may have named as heir on his deathbed.

Warding off political threats, England during the last 15 years of Edward's reign was relatively peaceful. Prosperity was rising as agricultural techniques improved and the population rose to around one million. Taxation was comparatively light, as Edward was not an extravagant king and lived off the revenues of his own lands (approximately £5,500 a year) – nor did he have to pay for expensive military campaigns. Deeply religious, Edward was responsible for building Westminster Abbey (in the Norman style), and he was buried there after his death in 1066.



Harold II r. Jan-Oct 1066 On Edward's death, the King's Council (the Witenagemot) confirmed Edward's brother-in-law Harold, Earl of Wessex, as King. With no royal blood, and fearing rival claims from William Duke of Normandy and the King of Norway, Harold had himself crowned in Westminster Abbey on 1066 January 6, the day after Edward's death. During his brief reign, Harold showed he was an outstanding commander.

In September, Harald Hardrada of Norway (aided by Harold's alienated brother Tostig, Earl of Northumbria) invaded England and was defeated by Harold at the Battle of Stamford Bridge near York. Hardrada's army had invaded using over 300 ships; so many were killed that only 25 ships were needed to transport the survivors home.

Meanwhile, William, Duke of Normandy (who claimed that Harold had acknowledged him in 1064 as Edward's successor) had landed in Sussex. Harold rushed south and, on 1066 October 14, his army of some 7,000 infantry was defeated on the field of Senlac near Hastings. Harold was hit in the eye by an arrow and cut down by Norman swords.

An abbey was later built, in 1070, to fulfil a vow made by William I, and its high altar was placed on the spot where Harold fell. The ruins of Battle Abbey still remain with a stone slab marking where Harold died.



Edgar Atheling r. Oct-Dec 1066

Edgar the Atheling was a grandson of Edmund II Ironside and a great-grandson of Ethelred "The Unready." After the Norman invasion, he mounted a brief rebellion, wresting control for a short period at the end of 1066, but was later put down by William I.

The Norman Kings 1066-



The Normans came to govern England following one of the most famous battles in English history: the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Four Norman kings presided over a period of great change and development for the country.

The Domesday Book, a great record of English land-holding, was published; the forests were extended; the Exchequer was founded; and a start was made on the Tower of London.

In religious affairs, the Gregorian reform movement gathered pace and forced concessions, while the machinery of government developed to support the country while Henry was fighting abroad.

Meanwhile, the social landscape altered dramatically as the Norman aristocracy came to prominence. Many of the nobles struggled to keep a hold on their interests in both Normandy and England, as divided rule meant the threat of conflict.

This was the case when William the Conqueror died. His eldest son, Robert, became Duke of Normandy, while the next youngest, William, became king of England. Their younger brother Henry would become king on William II's death. The uneasy divide continued until Henry captured and imprisoned his elder brother.

The question of the succession continued to weigh heavily over the remainder of the period. Henry's son died, and his nominated heir Matilda was denied the throne by her cousin, Henry's nephew, Stephen.

There then followed a period of civil war. Matilda married Geoffrey Plantagenet of Anjou, who took control of Normandy. The duchy was therefore separated from England once again.

A compromise was eventually reached whereby the son of Matilda and Geoffrey would be heir to the English crown, while Stephen's son would inherit his baronial lands.

It meant that in 1154 Henry II would ascend to the throne as the first undisputed king in over 100 years – evidence of the dynastic uncertainty of the Norman period.



William I “the Conqueror” r. 1066-1087

Born around 1028, William was the illegitimate son of Duke Robert I of Normandy, and Herleve (also known as Arlette), daughter of a tanner in Falaise. Known as “William the Bastard” to his contemporaries, his illegitimacy shaped his career when he was young.

On his father's death in 1035, William was recognized by his family as the heir – an exception to the general rule that illegitimacy barred succession. His great uncle looked after the Duchy during William's minority, and his overlord, King Henry I of France, knighted him at the age of 15.

From 1047 onwards, William successfully dealt with rebellion inside Normandy involving his kinsmen and threats from neighbouring nobles, including attempted invasions by his former ally King Henry I of France in 1054 (the French forces were defeated at the Battle of Mortemer) and 1057.

William's military successes and reputation helped him to negotiate his marriage to Mathilda, daughter of Count Baldwin V of Flanders. At the time of his invasion of England, William was a very experienced and ruthless military commander, ruler, and administrator, who had unified Normandy and inspired fear and respect outside his duchy.

William's claim to the English throne was based on his assertion that, in 1051, Edward the Confessor had promised him the throne (he was a distant cousin) and that Harold II – having sworn in 1064 to uphold William's right to succeed to that throne – was therefore a usurper.

Furthermore, William had the support of Emperor Henry IV and papal approval. William took 7 months to prepare his invasion force, using some 600 transport ships to carry around 7,000 men (including 2,000-3,000 cavalry) across the Channel.

On 1066 September 28, with a favourable wind, William landed unopposed at Pevensey and, within a few days, raised fortifications at Hastings. Having defeated an earlier invasion by the King of Norway at the Battle of Stamford Bridge near York in late September, Harold undertook a forced march south, covering 250 miles in some nine days to meet the new threat, gathering inexperienced reinforcements to replenish his exhausted veterans as he marched.

At the Battle of Senlac (near Hastings) on October 14, Harold's weary and under-strength army faced William's cavalry (part of the forces brought across the Channel) supported by archers. Despite their exhaustion, Harold's troops were equal in number (they included the best infantry in Europe equipped with their terrible two-handed battle axes) and they had the battlefield advantage of being based on a ridge above the Norman positions.

The first uphill assaults by the Normans failed and a rumour spread that William had been killed; William rode among the ranks raising his helmet to show he was still alive. The battle was close-fought: a chronicler described the Norman counter-attacks and the Saxon defence as "one side attacking with all mobility, the other withstanding as though rooted to the soil." Three of William's horses were killed under him.

William skilfully co-ordinated his archers and cavalry, both of which the English forces lacked. During a Norman assault, Harold was killed – hit by an arrow and then mowed down by the sword of a mounted knight. Two of his brothers were also killed. The demoralized English forces fled. (In 1070, as penance, William had an abbey built on the site of the battle, with the high altar occupying the spot where Harold fell. The ruins of Battle Abbey, and the town of Battle, which grew up around it, remain.)

William was crowned on Christmas Day 1066 in Westminster Abbey. Three months later, he was confident enough to return to Normandy leaving two joint regents (one of whom was his half-brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who was later to commission the Bayeux Tapestry) behind to administer the kingdom. However, it took William six years to consolidate his conquest, and even then, he had to face constant plotting and fighting on both sides of the Channel.

In 1068, Harold's sons raided the south-west coast of England (dealt with by William's local commanders), and there were uprisings in the Welsh Marches, Devon, and Cornwall. William appointed earls who, in Wales and in all parts of the kingdom, undertook to guard the threatened frontiers and maintain internal security in return for land.

In 1069, the Danes, in alliance with Prince Edgar the Aetheling (Ethelred's great-grandson) and other English nobles, invaded the north and took York. Taking personal charge, and pausing only to deal with the rising at Stafford, William drove the Danes back to their ships on the Humber.

In a harsh campaign lasting into 1070, William systematically devastated Mercia and Northumbria to deprive the Danes of their supplies and prevent recovery of English resistance. Churches and monasteries were burnt, and agricultural land was laid to waste, creating a famine for the unarmed and mostly peasant population which lasted at least nine years.

Although the Danes were bribed to leave the north, King Sweyn of Denmark and his ships threatened the east coast (in alliance with various English, including Hereward the Wake) until a treaty of peace was concluded in June 1070.

Further north, where the boundary with Scotland was unclear, King Malcolm III was encroaching into England. Yet again, William moved swiftly and moved land and sea forces north to invade Scotland. The Treaty of Abernethy in 1072 marked a truce, which was reinforced by Malcolm's eldest son being accepted as a hostage.

William consolidated his conquest by starting a castle-building campaign in strategic areas. Originally these castles were wooden towers on earthen "mottes" (mounds) with a bailey (defensive area) surrounded by earth ramparts, but

many were later rebuilt in stone. By the end of William's reign, over 80 castles had been built throughout his kingdom, as a permanent reminder of the new Norman feudal order.

William's wholesale confiscation of land from English nobles and their heirs (many nobles had died at the battles of Stamford Bridge and Senlac) enabled him to recruit and retain an army, by demanding military duties in exchange for land tenancy granted to Norman, French, and Flemish allies.

He created up to 180 "honours" (lands scattered through shires, with a castle as the governing centre), and in return had some 5,000 knights at his disposal to repress rebellions and pursue campaigns; the knights were augmented by mercenaries and English infantry from the Anglo-Saxon militia, raised from local levies. William also used the fyrd, the royal army – a military arrangement that had survived the Conquest.

The King's tenants-in-chief in turn created knights under obligation to them and for royal duties (this was called subinfeudation), with the result that private armies centred around private castles were created – these were to cause future problems of anarchy for unfortunate or weak kings. By the end of William's reign, a small group of the King's tenants had acquired about half of England's landed wealth. Only two Englishmen still held large estates directly from the King. A foreign aristocracy had been imposed as the new governing class.

The expenses of numerous campaigns, together with an economic slump (caused by the shifts in landed wealth, and the devastation of northern England for military and political reasons), prompted William to order a full-scale investigation into the actual and potential wealth of the kingdom to maximise tax revenues.

The Domesday survey was prompted by ignorance of the state of land holding in England, as well as the result of the costs of defence measures in England and renewed war in France. The scope, speed, efficiency, and completion of this survey was remarkable for its time, and resulted in the two-volume Domesday Book of 1086, which still exists today. William needed to ensure the direct loyalty of his feudal tenants. The 1086 Oath of Salisbury was a gathering of William's 170 tenants-in-chief and other important landowners, who took an oath of fealty to William.

William's reach extended elsewhere into the Church and the legal system. French superseded the vernacular (Anglo-Saxon). Personally devout, William used his bishops to carry out administrative duties. Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1070, was a first-class administrator who assisted in government when William was absent in France, and who reorganized the Church in England.

Having established the primacy of his archbishopric over that of York, and with William's approval, Lanfranc excommunicated rebels, and set up Church or spiritual courts to deal with ecclesiastical matters. Lanfranc also replaced English bishops and abbots (some of whom had already been removed by the Council of Winchester under papal authority) with Norman or French clergy to reduce potential political resistance. In addition, Canterbury and Durham Cathedrals were rebuilt and some of the bishops' sees were moved to urban centres.

At his coronation, William promised to uphold existing laws and customs. The Anglo-Saxon shire courts and "hundred" courts (which administered defence and tax, as well as justice matters) remained intact, as did regional variations and private Anglo-Saxon jurisdictions.

To strengthen royal justice, William relied on sheriffs [originally "shire reeves"] (previously smaller landowners, but replaced by influential nobles) to supervise the administration of justice in existing county courts, and sent members of his own court to conduct important trials. However, the introduction of Church courts, the mix of Norman/Roman law, and the differing customs led to a continuing complex legal framework.

More severe forest laws reinforced William's conversion of the New Forest into a vast Royal deer reserve. These laws caused great resentment, and to English chroniclers, the New Forest became a symbol of William's greed. Nevertheless the King maintained peace and order. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 1087 declared "he was a very stern and violent man, so no one dared do anything contrary to his will ... Amongst other things the good security he made in this country is not to be forgotten."

William spent the last months of his reign in Normandy, fighting a counter-offensive in the French Vexin territory against King Philip's annexation of outlying Normandy territory. Before his death on 1087 September 9, William divided his "Anglo-Norman" state between his sons. The scene was set for centuries of expensive commitments by successive English monarchs to defend their inherited territories in France.

William bequeathed Normandy, as he had promised, to his eldest son Robert, despite their bitter differences (Robert had sided with his father's enemies in Normandy, and even wounded and defeated his father in a battle there in

1079). His son, William Rufus, was to succeed William as King of England, and the third remaining son, Henry, was left 5,000 pounds in silver.

William was buried in his abbey foundation of St. Stephen at Caen. Desecrated by Huguenots (1562) and Revolutionaries (1793), the burial place of the first Norman king of England is marked by a simple stone slab.



William II “Rufus” r. 1087-1100

Strong, outspoken and ruddy (hence his nickname “Rufus”), William II (reigned 1087-1100) extended his father’s policies, taking royal power to the far north of England. Ruthless in his relations with his brother Robert, William extended his grip on the duchy of Normandy under an agreement between the brothers in 1091. (Robert went on crusade in 1096.)

William’s relations with the Church were not easy; he took over Archbishop Lanfranc’s revenues after the latter’s death in 1089, kept other bishoprics vacant to make use of their revenues, and had numerous arguments with Lanfranc’s popular successor, Anselm. William died on 1100 August 2, after being shot by an arrow while hunting in the New Forest.



Henry I “Beauclerc” r.1100-1135

William II was followed on the throne by his younger brother, Henry. He was crowned three days after his brother’s death, against the possibility that his eldest brother Robert might claim the English throne.

After the decisive battle of Tinchebrai in 1106 in France, Henry completed his conquest of Normandy from Robert, who then (unusually even for that time) spent the last 28 years of his life as his brother’s prisoner.

An energetic, decisive and occasionally cruel ruler, Henry centralized the administration of England and Normandy in the royal court, using “viceroys” in Normandy and a group of advisers in England to act on his behalf when he was absent across the Channel.

Henry successfully sought to increase royal revenues, as shown by the official records of his exchequer (the Pipe Roll of 1130, the first exchequer account to survive). He established peaceful relations with Scotland, through his marriage to Mathilda of Scotland.

Henry’s name “Beauclerc” denoted his good education (as the youngest son, his parents possibly expected that he would become a bishop); Henry was probably the first Norman king to be fluent in English.

In 1120, his legitimate sons William and Richard drowned in the White Ship that sank in the English Channel. This posed a succession problem, as Henry never allowed any of his illegitimate children to expect succession to either England or Normandy.

Henry had a legitimate daughter Matilda (widow of Emperor Henry V, subsequently married to the Count of Anjou). However, it was his nephew Stephen (reigned 1135-54), son of William the Conqueror’s daughter Adela, who succeeded Henry after his death (allegedly caused by eating too many lampreys [eels] in 1135) as the barons mostly opposed the idea of a female ruler.



Stephen and Matilda r. 1135-1154

Though charming, attractive and (when required) a brave warrior, Stephen (reigned 1135-54) lacked ruthlessness and failed to inspire loyalty. He could neither control his

friends nor subdue his enemies, despite the support of his brother Henry of Blois (Bishop of Winchester) and his able wife Matilda of Boulogne.

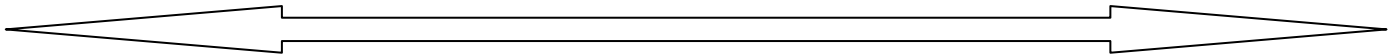
Henry I's daughter Matilda invaded England in 1139 to claim the throne, and the country was plunged into civil war. Although anarchy never spread over the whole country, local feuds were pursued under the cover of the civil war; the bond between the King and the nobles broke down, and senior figures (including Stephen's brother Henry) freely changed allegiances as it suited them.

In 1141, Stephen was captured at Lincoln and his defeat seemed certain. However, Matilda's arrogant behaviour antagonized even her own supporters (Angevins), and Stephen was released in exchange for her captured ally and illegitimate half-brother, Earl Robert of Gloucester. After the latter's death in 1147, Matilda retired to Normandy (which her husband, the Count of Anjou had conquered) in 1148.

Stephen's throne was still disputed. Matilda's eldest son, Henry, who had been given Normandy by his father in 1150, and who had married the heiress Eleanor Duchess of Aquitaine, invaded England in 1149 and again in 1153.

Stephen fought stubbornly against Henry; Stephen even attempted to ensure his son Eustace's succession by having him crowned in Stephen's own lifetime.

The Church refused (having quarrelled with the king some years previously); Eustace's death later in 1153 helped lead to a negotiated peace (the treaty of Wallingford) under which Henry would inherit the throne after Stephen's death.



Glorious sunshine ahead on the road in Wales

Lough Henny update...

by Steven Edgar (steven-edgar@sky.com)



It's a well-known fact that the Rev. Doctor Samuel Edgar was born in the Boardmills area and was buried in Killaney Boardmills cemetery. If you start to check the references, they also state that the cemetery is on a headland overlooking Lough Henny. The Rev. Samuels' family is one of the most famous in Northern Ireland, but to my knowledge, one of the least verified and researched. Lots of claims – but no proof, certainly no DNA proof.

This family are certainly the family that came over with the McKees in 1690 to fight at the Battle of the Boyne. The argument as to whether it was four Edgars and one McKee, or four McKees and one Edgar, still goes on (I favour the latter). They were certainly at the battle and they settled together and intermarried in Killaney. Killaney, incidentally, is a townland, it does not have a principal town – Boardmills is the nearest town.

The location of the cemetery has caused some confusion and it was high on my “wish list” of things to do – that is, locate the cemetery. After some adventures (see James's journal) we found the cemetery. It does not over look Lough Henny – it overlooks Bow Lough!



Directions from the main road are:- take the Bressagh Road to the crossroads, turn left onto Lough Road, climb the hill, and, as the road turns hard right, there is a steel gate on the left-hand side. Park at the gate and climb up the track to the top of the hill.

As you climb the hill, another steel gate and a stone stile come into view along with the tops of headstones and yew trees.





In the centre is Samuel Edgar's crypt, just to the right is the railed gate and stile where we gained access.

James and I have visited numerous Irish cemeteries Ireland; this one must score 5 stars in the catalogue.

It is a wonderful location, high on a hill, overlooking the lake – in the middle of nowhere! It is small and has

a mish-mash of headstone styles. Its content relates wonderfully to its geographical location, buried in the cemetery are Robinsons, McKees, and Edgars. On the map is Lough McKee, Robinson's Bridge, etc.

Penninghame

On to Scotland! In the historical records of the McKee family, it is stated that they came from Penninghame, Scotland, before they fought at the battle of the Boyne in 1690 – four bothers McKee and one Edgar, or four Edgars and one McKee (take your pick). It seemed logical that the Edgar must also come from Penninghame. This was number two on my "wish list" to sort out. I set "Penninghame" into my GPS receiver (sat-nav), and we arrived at a field in the middle of nowhere – odd! A mile up the road was an Episcopalian church; "This must be it," we thought. We checked the burials and, other than a few Earls and Sirs, had no burials of any interest – again, odd!

We drove on and eventually spoke to a man walking his dog in what seemed to be a park. He told us, in fact, that we were in Penninghame; it is a district, much like a townland in Ireland, the principal town being Newton Stewart. This meant that it would take an awful lot of time to research to locate a single farm, too much for us on that day.



Minnigaff cemetery

We then moved onto Newton Stewart and visited Minnigaff cemetery, on the east side of the burn (river), and which dates back to the time of Robert the Bruce. To a connoisseur, this is a cemetery to behold – headstones, crypts, mausoleums, derelict churches – this place has them all! Significantly, the names were McKee, Graham, Sloan, Hannah, Annett, Phillips, Bell, etc.; all the names that you would find in any cemetery in Northern Ireland, and certainly a catalogue of names married into the Edgar family. BUT, there are no Edgars buried there!!



The McKee (McKie) burials at Minnigaff

This lack of Edgars does not fit what we thought. There are so many other names being repeated, I would have thought at least one Edgar burial would have been present. But, alas, not one.

So, the likelihood of the Edgars and the McKees going to the battle together from Penninghame diminishes. They could have met and became friends *en route* in Scotland or in Ireland. They certainly were friends afterward, and their families intermarried over the years.

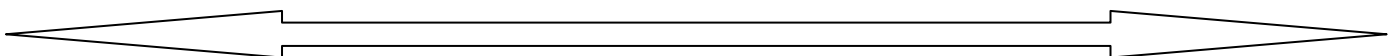
We are back to square one. Where did the ancestors of the Edgar Ministers come from? (Send answers on a postcard to steven-edgar@sky.com, thank you.)

Our next “wish list” item is DNA from a confirmed male Edgar descendant from this family, any ideas?

To finish, as a connoisseur of cemeteries, I want to share a couple of wonderful examples of the stonemason’s art:-



And finally, proof that we were in McKee country!



More on DNA

by James Edgar (Editor) (jamesedgar@sasktel.net)



Continuing the excerpt from the eBook, “I Have the Results of My Genetic Genealogy Test, Now What?” by Blaine Bettinger, Section 2 is “How Do I Interpret My Y-DNA Results?” The article goes on...

A. How do I FIND a DNA Project?

Finding a DNA Project that you might be interested in joining is usually very simple. Here are three places to begin your search:

1. [World Families](#) – You can use the search box to search entire site.
2. [DNA Heritage](#) – The page has information about surname projects, and the box in the sidebar allows you to search by surname.
3. [Family Tree DNA](#) – The search box in the sidebar lets you search by surname or by location or country. For example, typing in “Belize” leads you to two geographic DNA projects.

Using traditional search engines is yet a fourth way to search for projects, with search strings such as “Smith DNA Project”. For this method, as well as the methods listed above, be sure to search for variants of your surname if you are unable to find an exact match.

B. How do I *JOIN* a DNA Project? Now that you’ve discovered an interesting DNA project, you’re probably wondering how to become a member. Here’s how to join through DNA Heritage:

After finding a Project, you will see a contact form at the bottom of the Project’s introduction page. Use that form, or contact [DNA Heritage](#) directly and they will forward the message to the appropriate Administrator. For more information, see the [FAQ page](#).

Joining through Family Tree DNA:

After finding a project, you will see a contact form at the bottom of the project’s introduction page. Use that form to join the project and order a test. If you’ve already been tested, you’ll find the following button on your personal myFTDNA page:



Click that button and you’ll be brought to a search page to find an appropriate Surname, Geographic, or Haplogroup Project. For more information, see the [FTDNA FAQ page](#) or the World Families [“Join a Project”](#).

5. What if There is no DNA Project to Join?

The answer to this one is simple – start a new project! There is information at [DNA Heritage](#), [Family Tree DNA](#) >, and [World Families](#) about starting a new DNA Project. [Ed. Don’t forget to go to [Ancestry.com](#) for their FAQ page, as well.]

B. SNP Testing – Haplogroup Determination

Single Nucleotide Polymorphism (SNP) testing examines single nucleotides at specific locations on the Y chromosome (compared to STR marker testing, which sequences short regions of DNA). SNP testing can be offered before or after STR testing. Since a mutation at a single base is very rare compared to changes in STRs, males who share a SNP usually share an ancestor who lived many generations ago. For this reason, SNPs have been used to identify the branches in the Y-chromosome family tree and define Haplogroups. For example, males who test positive for the SNP M207 belong to Haplogroup R. You can see a chart of some of the most commonly tested SNPs at [DNA Heritage](#) or at [ISOGG](#).

So why would an individual order a SNP test? Here are a few of the major reasons:

1. To determine deep ancestry – some individuals might be more interested in learning about the “deep ancestry” of their Y-DNA, rather than finding close genetic relatives. For them, the results of SNP test will typically tell them about their ancient ancestry, and an STR test would be unnecessary.
2. To confirm an estimated Haplogroup – as we saw in previous sections, the results of an STR test can be used to predict or estimate an individual’s Haplogroup. Since SNPs define Haplogroups, SNP testing can confirm the estimate or re-define the Haplogroup based upon the results.
3. To determine a subhaplogroup designation – some Haplogroups have multiple branches, called subhaplogroups or sub-clades. For example, Haplogroup R has branches such as R1b, which itself branches into groups like R1b1a and R1b1c (see the Y-DNA Haplogroup Tree from [ISOGG](#)). The results can often (but not always, depending on how many SNPs are tested) place an individual into one of these downstream branches.

1. How Do I Interpret My SNP Test Results?

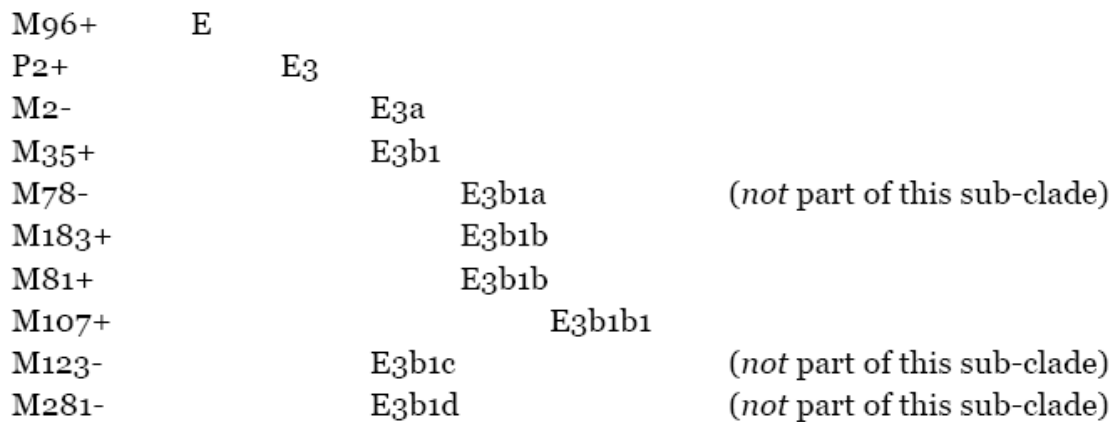
To interpret results of a SNP test (other than the Haplogroup designation, which is almost always part of the results returned to the customer), it is helpful to have the following references: (1) the Y-DNA SNP Trees from [ISOGG](#), which we will use to “trace” the journey of our ancient ancestor; and (2) the [Y-DNA SNP index](#), which will help us interpret the numbers and letters that make up the results.

Let’s use the following sample results as an example, which tell us that we belong to Haplogroup sub-clade E3b1b1. What exactly does that mean?

Table 2. Sample Y-DNA SNP Results

Your Y-DNA Belongs to Haplogroup E
Your SNP results are: M96+ P2+ M2- M35+ M78- M183+ M81+ M107+ M123- M281-

Since the results report that our sample Y-DNA belongs to Haplogroup E, we can go directly to the Haplogroup E Tree at [ISOGG](#). Let's use our results, starting with the first SNP, M96. We tested positive for M96, meaning that we have that mutation. Looking at the chart, we see that M96 is characteristic of Haplogroup E. Thousands of years ago, members of Haplogroup E developed characteristic SNP mutations over time to form different branches or sub-clades such as E1, E2, and E3. Our next SNP, P2+, is characteristic of sub-clade E3. Comparing our sample SNP results to the tree, we get something like this (and it definitely helps to diagram the tree), keeping in mind that the “-” after the test indicates that we are *not* part of this sub-clade:



Thus, our sample Y-DNA belongs to Haplogroup E, sub-clade E3b1b1, because we tested positive for the M107 SNP. The negative results also help refine our placement by showing that we do not belong to E3a (M2-) or E3b1a (M78-), for example.

Don't be discouraged if your results are presented as clearly or in the perfect order – you can always put them in order to help make the results more clear. Also, sometimes SNPs will have different names or companies will use different SNPs to test the same thing – with a little research at the sites listed above, you'll be able to figure out what each SNP means. And lastly, now that you know your Y-DNA Haplogroup and sub-clade, you can use the steps outlined above to gather more information.

Coming next issue **“How Do I Interpret My mtDNA Results?”**



Picture time...

That's the city centre of London in the background, with the River Thames running from left to right above the airplane's wing.