

## A Totally Unexpected Discovery in My Genealogical Research

Last year, while attempting once more to extend some of the family tree, I found some web-based sources that yielded quite unanticipated breakthroughs. The family involved was Estep – our grandmother Cline’s family. Since they were Mennonites, I had fallaciously assumed this was a German family and they had arrived in Pennsylvania in the 1730-1770 period – the first wave of German immigration. I was wrong on three fronts: the family was English, had arrived much earlier, and came to Maryland. As of last summer, I had pushed things back ten generations to a Richard Estep and noticed that his first wife was Mary Calvert, daughter of the third Lord Baltimore. We are descended from the second wife, but I have spent the months since then continuing to drive things back into England. The key was Richard’s mother, Elizabeth Lucy Eaton, who turned out to be descended from famous people all across Europe. I am still progressing on this but I have already entered more than 6500 names of our ancestors. In the process, I found Vikings and Visigoths, Popes and peasants, people who were sainted and people who were skinned alive. At right, I present the descent from William “the Conqueror” to our grand-mother.

I learned history, geography, language, and culture. It became far more fascinating than I had ever imagined. I consider this a preliminary report – something of a teaser. Here are some highlights.

**1. *How far does this go back?*** There are six individuals in the tree with pre-Christian era birthdates. The earliest is a Welsh King Bran ap Bran with an estimated birthdate between 43 BC and 17 BC. He is our 59<sup>th</sup> great grandfather<sup>1</sup>.

**2. *First Virginia Immigrant:*** Francis Mauldin (b. 1600 in London) was given 400 acres on November 26, 1636 on Dumplin(g) Island in the Nansemond River. This is within the current city limits of Suffolk and about eight miles north of the center. Francis died in 1644, whereupon his daughter Margaret went with step-mother and step-sisters to Maryland for religious freedom. (Perhaps, that means they were Catholics.) Francis is our 10<sup>th</sup> great grandfather. Daughter Margaret is a great grandmother of William Estep. This branch of the family stayed in Maryland for five generations before returning to Virginia.

**3. *Signers of the Magna Carta:*** We have heard a good deal about the 25 barons elected by their colleagues to confront King John at Runnymede in 1215. Four of those barons, Baron Robert FitzWalter, and Earls Henry of Bohun, Hugh Bigod, and Roger Bigod, are our 26<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> great grandfathers, respectively. Also, the Magna Carta has the names of 27 counselors of King John. Among those are Alan Basset, Alan of Galloway, Piers FitzHerbert and William Marshal: 26<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> great grandfathers, respectively. And, we should not omit the man of the day, King John himself, our 25<sup>th</sup> great grandfather.

**4. *Robin Hood, Lady Godiva, and El Cid?*** Robin Hood is a fictitious person but the legend may have been partially based upon fact. Wikipedia says “David [8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Huntingdon, our 26<sup>th</sup> great grandfather] is a possible inspiration figure for the Robin Hood legend...”. On the other hand, Lady Godiva apparently was a real person. We do have a 29<sup>th</sup> great grandmother Lady Godiva of Bristol who lived in the correct era but this may not be the same person. El Cid (a.k.a. Prince Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar) certainly did exist and is our 30<sup>th</sup> great grand-father.

King William I (*the Conqueror*)  
1028 – 1087  
King Henry I (*Henry Beauclerc*)  
1068 – 1135  
Empress Matilda  
1102 – 1167  
King Henry II (*Curtmantle*)  
1133 – 1189  
King John (*John Lackland*)  
1166 – 1216  
King Henry III (*Henry of Winchester*)  
1207 – 1272  
King Edward I (*Longshanks*)  
1239 – 1307  
Countess Elizabeth of Hereford  
1282 – 1316  
Countess Elizabeth de Bohun  
1304 – 1363  
Baroness Petronilla Butler  
1332 – 1368  
Baron Richard Talbot  
1361 – 1396  
Earl John Talbot  
1392 – 1453  
Katherine (Talbot) Eaton  
1418 – 1500  
Louis Eaton  
1447 – 1531  
Henry Eaton  
1485 – 1580  
Thomas Eaton  
1520 – 1538  
Robert Eaton  
1539 – 1600  
Richard Eaton  
1565 – 1616  
Richard Eaton  
c. 1596 – ?  
Richard Eaton  
? – ?  
Elizabeth (Eaton) Estep  
1645 – 1670  
Richard Estep  
1668 – 1720  
Thomas Estep  
1708 – 1772  
William Estep  
1734 – 1815  
Thomas Estep  
1755 – c. 1830  
John Estep  
c. 1778 – c. 1845  
James M. Estep  
1817 – 1814  
James M. Estep, Jr.  
1851 – 1922  
William Howard Estep  
1781 – 1837  
Edith Virginia (Estep) Cline  
1903 – 1984

<sup>1</sup> Throughout, “our” refers to those in the generation of Warren, Alan, Diane, and Paul.

5. *Kings*: The number of kings is more than 500. However, since in ancient times very few people's ancestries were recorded, it figures that unless one were very important, no one recorded the genealogy. Also, many of the kingdoms were pretty small. For example, Ireland had dozens of kingdoms (but a single "High King"). Wales had many as well.

The tree has twelve kings of England (the six below plus the six on the previous page), thirteen kings of France, three high kings of Ireland, and ten kings of Scotland. There are two emperors of the Byzantine Empire (the continuation of the Roman Empire in its eastern provinces during Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, when its capital city was Constantinople, which had been founded as Byzantium), one Roman emperor, and twelve emperors of the Holy Roman Empire. From Wikipedia: "The Holy Roman Empire was a multi-ethnic complex of territories in central Europe that developed during the Early Middle Ages and continued until its dissolution in 1806 during the Napoleonic Wars. The largest territory of the empire after 962 was the Kingdom of Germany, though it also came to include the neighboring Kingdom of Bohemia, the Kingdom of Burgundy, the Kingdom of Italy, and numerous other territories."

Pre-Norman Kings of England		Kings of Scotland		Holy Roman Emperors	
Alfred "the Great"	(849- 899)	Kenneth MacAlpin "the Conqueror"	(c. 810 - 859)	Charlemagne "the Great"	(742 - 814)
Edward "the Elder"	(c. 874 - 924)	Constantine I "the Wine-Bountiful"	(c. 836 - 877)	Louis I "the Pious"	(778 - 840)
Edmund I	(c. 921 - 946)	Donald II "the Madman"	(c. 862 - 900)	Lothair I	(795 - 855)
Edgar "the Peaceful"	(c. 940 - 959)	Malcolm I "the Dangerous Red"	(900 - 954)	Charles II "the Bald"	(823 - 877)
Æthelred "the Unready"	(c. 968 - 1016)	Kenneth II "the Conqueror"	(932 - 995)	Louis II "the Younger"	(825 - 875)
Edmund "Ironside"	(c. 990 - 1016)	Malcolm II "the Destroyer"	(c. 954 - 1034)	Berengar I	(c. 845 - 924)
		Duncan I "the Diseased"	(1001 - 1040)	Louis III "the Blind"	(880 - 928)
		Malcolm III "Canmore"	(1031 - 1093)	Otto I "the Great"	(912 - 973)
		Donald III "the Fair"	(1032 - 1099)	Otto II "the Red"	(955 - 983)
		David I "the Saint"	(1083 - 1153)	Conrad II "the Elder"	(990 - 1039)
				Henry III "the Black"	(1017 - 1056)
		High Kings of Ireland		Henry IV	(1050 - 1106)
		Máel Sechnaill mac Máele Ruanaid	(c. 810 - 962)		
		Flann Sinna mac Mael Sechnall	(c. 847 - 916)	Byzantine Emperors	
		Brian Bóru mac Cennétig	(c. 941 - 1014)	Nikephoros I	(? - 811)
				Michael I Rhangabe	(c. 770 - 844)
		Roman Emperor			
		Flavius Magnus Maximus Augustus	(c. 335 - 388)		

6. *Two Popes and Some Saints*: Most popes did not claim offspring, but we have ancestors who are parents of popes. Count Hugo von Egisheim VIII and Countess Matilda (32<sup>nd</sup> great grandparents) were the parents of Pope Leo IX – the one on whose watch came the final separation between the Eastern and Roman churches. Count William I of Burgandy and Countess Etiennette (29<sup>th</sup> great grandparents) were the parents of Pope Callistus II, who issued various orders protecting Jews. Margrave Leopold III (a 30<sup>th</sup> great grandfather) of Austria is a patron saint of Austria. It seems that one might easily attain sainthood by endowing an abbey. As a result, there are many other saints in the tree.

7. *Some Wonderful Nicknames*: Quite a few of these people had nicknames. Sure, there are many, many Greats, Goods, Piouises, and such. The interesting ones, however, sound like characters out of Snow White. We have The Haughty, Bald, Ragged, Fanged, Freckled, Lamé, Noisy, Blind, Hardy, Rich, Cruel, Hairy, Surly, One-eyed, Bastard, Devil, In-competent, and far too many Fats. Finally, White Tooth, Madman, Trickster, and Iron Arm.

8. *Do I believe all of this?* I believe a good deal of it. For sources I used the Web resource "Geni" and Wikipedia. I have included nothing that I considered questionable. Both of these sources try to document their entries. Nevertheless, when going back 60 generations, there are bound to be difficulties.

Should anyone like to explore my tree, I am happy to share it.