

Vikings Helped to Found the USA, Providentially Speaking, by George!

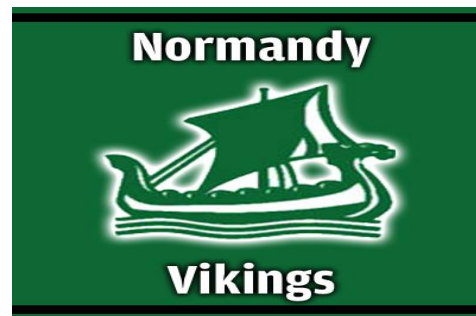
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How was God preparing to bless millions of Americans, as He providentially guided the lively life and colorful career of Hrolf “the Ganger” Ragnvaldsson, a Norse Viking who raided in France?

Europe’s **Viking Era** began, for the most part, at the beginning of AD800s – a turbulent century of tragic violence and demographic upheaval. **Would anything good follow from the Viking’s activities in the lands they raided and conquered?** (Two Bible verses provide a clue to some “good” outcomes, **Genesis 50:20** and **Romans 8:28**, but immediate and later outcomes would not be “good” news to everyone involved, of course.) One major hotbed of Viking activity was the new kingdom of Norway.

Norway (as we know it today) was formed by AD872 by the military exploits of a golden-tressed Viking king, **Harald “Fairhair” Halfdansson**. King Harald’s reliable right-hand man was **Ragnvald (“the wise”) Eysteinnsson**, jarl of Møre¹. Ragnvald the Wise sired several sons, two of whom (**Turf-Einar** and **Hrolf**) would recognizably change the world then and thereafter. Hrolf’s adventures, in the part of France to be renamed “Normandy”, would impact the founding of America, as we shall see below.

Hrolf Ragnvaldsson, a violent trouble-maker, was banished by King Harald “Fairhair” (on threat of death) from Norway. So where could Hrolf go? What should he do? Homeless Vikings were not known for begging. France “hosted” wintering Vikings as early as AD842. Hrolf, like many other young Viking men from Scandinavia, decided to “go a-viking”, and his fellow Vikings chose to invade France.



Hrolf’s most important adventures concern his activities in northwestern France, which led to Hrolf conquering and settling permanently in Rouen² (Normandy):

In 892, most of the Vikings on the Seine [i.e., the Seine River that connects France’s capital, Paris, to the English Channel] crossed the Channel to raid in England, and those who remained began to settle down. Their last raid—on Chartres [on the Eure River, a tributary of the Seine] in 911—was

¹ “Jarl” is the Norse title corresponding to the English “earl”, similar to France’s “duke”. “Møre” is the region today known as “Møre og Romsdal” on Norway’s western coast.

² Geographically **Rouen** (the historic capital of what became Normandy) is located on the **Seine River** between the France’s royal capital, **Paris**, and France’s coast by the **English Channel**. Rouen thus acted as a “firewall” on the Seine River, an obstacle against any river-rowing Vikings who would try to go upstream to attack Paris. France’s King Charles might also have appreciated that Rouen was closer to the English Channel than it was to Paris.

defeated, and their leader Rollo [note: “Rollo” was Hrolf’s nickname in France] made a peace agreement with the Frankish King Charles the Simple: In return for his homage and conversion to Christianity, Rollo was made count of Rouen (the rulers of Normandy did not use the title “duke” before 1006). Charles’ intention was that Rollo would prevent any other Vikings from sailing down [sic – should say “up”] the Seine to attack his kingdom. In this respect, the agreement was a great success and, apart from some border troubles, the Viking threat to the Seine valley was permanently ended. Rollo was granted further lands around Bayeux [in Brittany, France] in 924 and his successor [and son] William Longsword [i.e., “Long-Sword” -- Norse: Vilhjálmr Langaspjót] acquired the Cotentin peninsula [a/k/a Cherbourg Peninsula] in 933, but attempts to expand eastwards were defeated.³

Accordingly, France’s county of Rouen became known as “Normannia” (meaning “Northman’s Land”) and eventually as “Normandy”, the name it has today. Its people became known as “Normans”, and its local dialect (in time) became “Norman French”.

On the grounds of a late-medieval church in Rouen (called St. Ouen’s), as late as AD2002, stood a statue of Hrolf, identified by his French name (Rollo). Sometime later the statue lost an arm, but it is now restored (as shown below).



³ Quoting John Haywood’s “The Duchy of Normandy”, in his *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Vikings* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), page 80. As Viking history lecturer of the *Norwegian Dream*, the author (and his wife) visited Rouen, and saw the statue of Hrolf (Rollo) during the summer of AD2002.

The remains of Hrolf and several of his descendants are housed in Rouen, but the more permanent “remains” of the House of Normandy is its imprint on world history. Hrolf’s rule over Normandy became a dynasty that lasted several generations—as we shall see below—eventually leading to the duchy’s most famous ruler, William the Conqueror, the last man to successfully invade and conquer England.



But **William the Conqueror** did more than extend the House of Normandy’s holdings to England and its Channel Islands. The Norman lineage stretched – in time – to America’s shores, with a huge impact.

I. FROM NORSE VIKING HROLF RAGNAVALDSSON TO WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

The biogenetic lineage from Hrolf Ragnvaldsson, the Norwegian Viking who became the first Count of Rouen (a title retroactively labeled as “duke of Normandy”), stretches to William the Conqueror as follows:

F1 Hrolf (“Rollo”, a/k/a “the Ganger”, baptized as “Robert”) Ragnvaldsson, in AD886 married Poppa de Valois of Normandy; they begat **F1** William later nicknamed “Long-sword”);

F1 William “Long-sword” Hrolfsson (2nd Count of Rouen, acceding AD932, on the death of his father), became an illegitimate father, through Sprota (“Adela”) of Senlis, begetting **F2** Richard;

F2 Richard “the Fearless” (3rd count of Rouen, acceding AD942, on the death of his father), married Gunnor of Crêpon, and begat **F3** Richard (a son named after his father);

F3 Richard II “the Good” (4th count of Rouen, acceding AD996, and later retitled “4th duke of Normandy”), married ~AD1000 to Judith of Brittany, through whom he begat (among others, including Normandy’s 5th duke, Richard III, who died without male issue) **F4** Robert;

F4 Robert II “the Devil” (a/k/a “Robert the Magnificent”; 6th duke of Normandy, acceding AD1028, on the death of his brother Richard), became an illegitimate father, through “household officer” Herleva (“Arlette”), begetting **F5** William;

F5 William II “the Bastard” (becoming 7th duke of Normandy at his father’s post-Crusade death in AD1035, and later—after defeating England’s incumbent Saxon king, Harold Godwinson at the Battle of Hastings in AD1066—adopted the titles “**William the Conqueror**” and “William I” as England’s king, establishing England’s “House of Normandy” dynasty); in AD1053 he married Matilda of Flanders.

The Battle of Hastings was actually an example of Viking warfare, occurring less than 3 weeks after defending English king Harold Godwinson defeated an invasion (at Stamford Bridge) by Norwegian Vikings led by Norway’s king Harald Hardrada. England’s back-to-back battles in late AD1066—at Stamford Bridge and at Hastings—are often considered as marking the sunset of the Viking Era. However, Viking battles would continue in the AD1100s and would even occur as late as October 2nd of AD1263 (the Battle of Largs, where Scotland repelled an invasion attempt by Norwegian Vikings).

But what biogenetic lineage descends from William the Conqueror, to impact America’s founding?

To answer this question, one of his descent lineages will be reviewed in two parts: first, the “royal” line segment; then, a later lineage segment that branched off to non-monarchical descendants.

II. FROM KING WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR TO CRUSADER EDMUND CROUCHBACK

F5 William II “the Conqueror” (7th duke of Normandy, and later also king of England), as noted above, married Matilda of Flanders in AD1053, through whom he begat **F6** Henry;

F6 Henry I “Beauclerc” (king of England, acceding AD1100 on the death of his brother William Rufus [who had succeeded their father in AD1087], and also 8th duke of Normandy, acceding AD1106), on 11th November 1100 married Edith (a/k/a “Matilda”⁴) of Scotland, through whom he begat **F7** Matilda;

F7 Matilda “the Empress” (in her first marriage she was queen of Germany and “empress” of the “Holy Roman Empire”; during her second marriage she claimed England’s throne when her royal father [Henry Beauclerc] died in AD1135, but civil war and a negotiated peace followed with Stephen [a usurping grandson of William the Conqueror], who reigned until his death in AD1154); meanwhile, Matilda’s second marriage on 22nd May AD1128 to Geoffrey Plantagenet, a French count, produced **F8** Henry;

F8 Henry II “Curtmantle” FitzEmpress (king of England, acceding AD1154 on the death of usurper Stephen, and otherwise ruler of much of France) on 18th May AD1152 married Eleanor of Aquitaine, through whom he begat **F9** John;

F9 John I “Lackland”, king of England (Norman French “*Johan sanz Terre*”, because he lost continental Normandy to France’s King Philip II, retaining only the Channel Isles, which have belonged to England ever since), acceding to England’s throne in AD1199 upon the death of his Crusader brother Richard “the Lion-heart”⁵) on 24th August AD1200 married Isabella Taillefer of Angoulême, through whom he begat **F10** Henry;

⁴ The name “**Matilda**” (and its shortened form “Maud”) proved popular among royals during King Henry Beauclerc’s lifetime. Matilda was the name of his mother (*Matilda of Flanders*), and also the nickname of his wife (*Matilda of Scotland*), and also the name of his daughter (*Matilda of England, a/k/a Maude*).

⁵ King John is best remembered for losing dynastic lands and even moreso for signing the MAGNA CARTA at Runnymede on 15th June AD1215.

F10 Henry III, king of England (acceding in AD1216, on the death of his father), on 14th January AD1236 married Eleanor Berenger of Provence, through whom he begat **F11** William Edmund (better known as “Edmund Crouchback” -- with “Crouchback” meaning “Cross-back”, because his Crusader service entitled him to wear a cross on the back of his military clothing).

Edmund Crouchback (whose seal appears below, showing the still-popular Norman-Viking military mail and conical helmet) was Earl of both Leicester and Lancaster, but he did not become a king of England, so this concludes the “royal” segment of this lineage descending from Hrolf Ragnvaldsson to Crouchback.



III. FROM CRUSADER EDMUND CROUCHBACK TO THE FOUNDING OF AMERICA

F11 Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Leicester and of Lancaster, on 3rd February AD1276 married Blanche of Artois (widow of Navarre’s King Henry I “the Fat”), through whom he begat **F12** Henry Plantagenet;

F12 Henry Plantagenet, 3rd Earl of Lancaster, sometime before 2nd March AD1297 married Maud Chaworth (Countess of Lincoln), through whom he begat **F13** Eleanor Plantagenet;

F13 Eleanor Plantagenet on 5th February AD1345 married Richard FitzAlan, 11th Earl of Arundel, with whom she begat **F14** Alice FitzAlan of Arundel;

F14 Lady Alice FitzAlan of Arundel on 10th April AD1364 married Thomas de Holland, 2nd Earl of Kent, with whom she begat **F15** Alianore de Holland (a/k/a “Eleanor”, which is confusing because Alianore also had a younger sister named “Eleanor”);

F15 Alianore de Holland sometime after 19th June AD1399 married Edward Cherleton (also spelled “Charleton”), Lord of Powis, with whom she begat **F16** Joyce Cherleton;

F16 Joyce Cherleton married Sir John Tiptoft, with whom she begat **F17** Joyce Tiptoft (who was obviously named after her mother);

F17 Joyce Tiptoft married Sir Edmund “Dudley” Sutton, with whom she begat **F18** John Sutton;

F18 Sir John Sutton married Margaret Charoll, through whom he begat **F19** Margaret Sutton;

F19 Margaret Sutton married John Sutton, with whom she begat **F20** William Butler;

F20 Sir William Butler (who was a sheriff of London and later mayor of London⁶) married Margaret Greeke, through whom he begat **F21** Margaret Butler (a 3rd generation “Margaret”);

F21 Margaret Butler married Sir Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave, with whom she begat **F22** Lawrence Washington the younger;

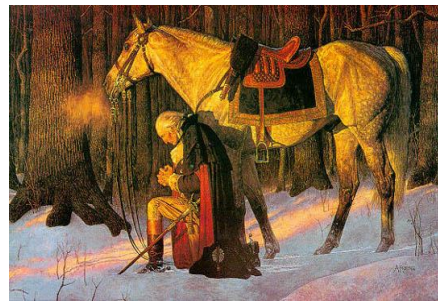
F22 Lawrence Washington (a Christian minister: Rector of Purleigh) married Amphyllis Twigden, through whom he begat **F23** John Washington;

F23 Col. John Washington married Anne Pope, through whom he begat **F24** Lawrence Washington;

F24 Lawrence Washington married Mildred Warner, by whom he begat **F25** Augustine Washington;

F25 Augustine Washington married Mary Ball (of Huguenot ancestry, i.e., Mary Ball was descended from *Nicolas Martiau* who immigrated to Virginia), and they parented **F26** George Washington;

F26 George Washington, although he left no biogenetic issue, led in “birthing” the United States of America, --- as Commander-in-chief of America’s army, and as President of the Constitutional Convention of AD1787, and as **1st President of the United States** under the new U.S. Constitution.



As shown above, President George Washington is a direct descendant of many Vikings. Who would guess that a **F26** descendant of Norwegian Viking **Hrolf (“Rollo”) Ragnvaldsson**, who began the Norse-Norman dynasty in Normandy, France, would become “the father of America”? Consider this simple yet unexpected chronicle of our Creator-God’s procreative providence, which (eventually) blessed America, providing opportunities for many to live for Him (**Jeremiah 29:11; Psalm 102:18**).

This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created (וְנִבְרָא) shall praise the LORD. (Psalm 102:18, versified as 102:19 in the Hebrew Bible)

In AD870 baby **Hrolf** was born in Norway. God foreknew Hrolf’s adventurous life as a Viking; Hrolf would found the “House of Normandy”. God also foreknew His plans (**Jeremiah 29:11**) for Hrolf’s many descendants, including one **F26** who would providentially “father” America, a new nation that would often honor the Lord Jesus Christ. **So God used Vikings to bless America, by George!** ><> JJSJ

⁶ Sir William Butler’s name appears, according to authoritative British historian **Dr. Bill Cooper**, on the newly discovered inquest report on the jail-cell murder of Protestant-Lollard martyr Richard Hunne.