

House of Wessex

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The **House of Wessex**, also known as the *House of Cerdic*, refers to the family that initially ruled a kingdom in southwest England known as Wessex, from the 6th century under Cerdic of Wessex until the unification of the Kingdoms of England.

The House became rulers of all England from Alfred the Great in 871 to Edmund Ironside in 1016. This period of the English monarchy is known as the Saxon period, though their rule was often contested, notably by the Danelaw and later by the Danish king Sweyn Forkbeard who claimed the throne from 1013 to 1014, during the reign of Æthelred the Unready. Sweyn and his successors ruled until 1042. After Harthacanute, there was a brief Saxon Restoration between 1042 and 1066 under Edward the Confessor and Harold Godwinson, who was a member of the House of Godwin. After the Battle of Hastings, a decisive point in English history, William of Normandy became king of England. Anglo-Saxon attempts to restore native rule in the person of Edgar the Ætheling, a grandson of Edmund Ironside who had originally been passed over in favour of Harold, were unsuccessful and William's descendants secured their rule. Edgar's niece Matilda of Scotland later married William's son Henry I, forming a link between the two dynasties.

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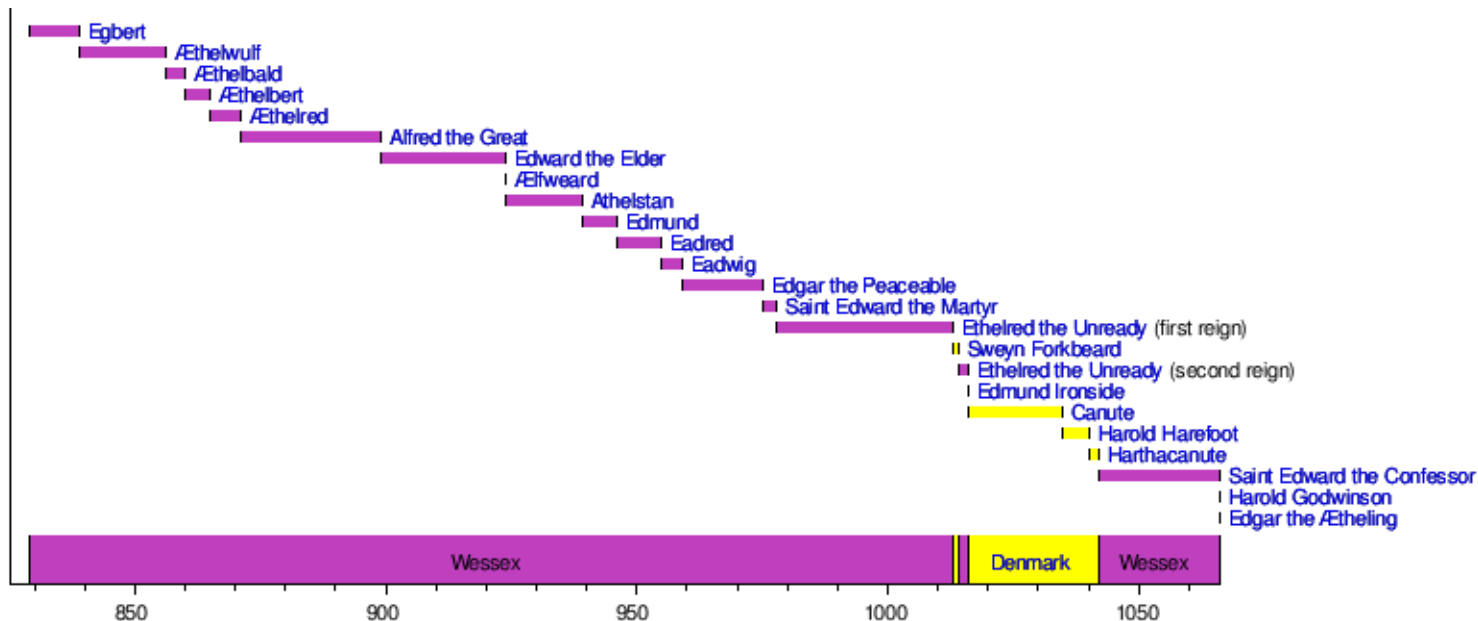
House of Wessex



Golden Wyvern of Wessex^[1]

Country	Kingdom of Wessex, Kingdom of England
Titles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">King of WessexKing of England
Founder	Cerdic of Wessex
Final sovereign	Edward the Confessor
Founding	519
Dissolution	1093

Timeline of Wessex and England rulers



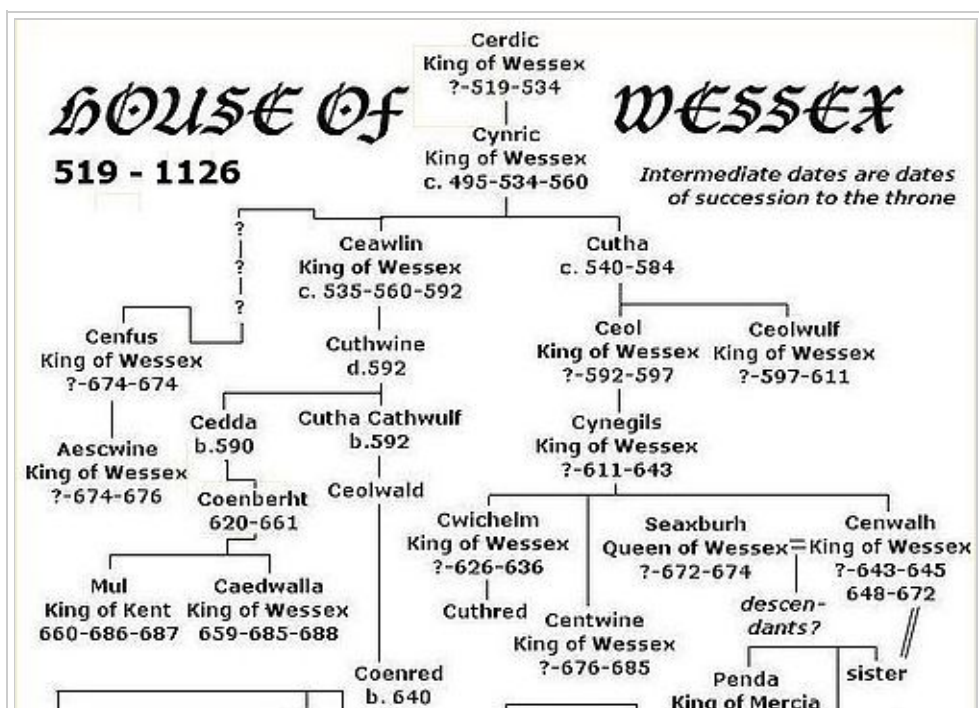
Genealogy

The following chart is a family tree of the kings of the House of Wessex, a dynasty whose members were Kings of Wessex, and then, from Athelstan onwards, Kings of England.

Many of the links shown are disputed. Egbert, who became King of Wessex in 802, was probably of Kentish origin, and his ancestry back to Cerdic may have been invented to legitimize his claim to the throne of Wessex.^[2] The links tracing the ancestry of the Godwins back to King Æthelred I are based on theories put forward by genealogists which are rejected by almost all historians.

In places the tree has been extended to show those kings of Wessex or England who were not actually of the house of Cerdic, although in every case these kings are related to the House of Wessex through marriage, and so can be included here. These include Canute the Great and his two sons.

For a continuation of this tree, please see English monarchs family tree.



- Aelfweard
- Aelgifu
- Aethelbald
- Æthelburg
- Aethelfrith
- Aethelheard
- Aethelhelm
- Æthelstan Ætheling
- Æthelweard (historian)
- Aethelwold
- Aethelwulf
- Alfred Aetheling
- Alfred the Great
- Athelstan of Kent
- Athelstan
- Caedwalla
- Canute the Great
- Ceawlin
- Cedda
- Centwine
- Cenwalh
- Ceol
- Ceolwald
- Ceolwulf
- Cerdic
- Coenberht
- Coenred
- Cutha Cathwulf
- Cuthburh
- Cuthred
- Cuthwine
- Cwihelm
- Cynegils
- Cynric
- Eadwig
- Ealhswith
- Earl Godwin
- Ecgberht Ætheling
- Edgar
- Edgar the Outlaw
- Edgar
- Edgiva
- Edith of Wessex
- Edmund I
- Edmund Ironside
- Edred Aetheling
- Edred
- Edward the Confessor
- Edward the Elder
- Edward the Exile
- Edward the Martyr
- Edwin
- Edwy
- Egbert
- Eoppa

- Ethelbert
- Ethelfleda
- Ethelred I
- Ethelred II
- Harold Harefoot
- Harold II
- Harthacanute
- Ine
- Ingild
- Mul
- Osburga
- Penda
- Redburga
- Seaxburh
- Sigebert of Wessex
- Sweyn Forkbeard
- Tostig Godwinson
- Wulfnoth Cild

Attributed coat of arms

A coat of arms was attributed by medieval heralds to the Kings of Wessex. These arms appear in a manuscript of the thirteenth century, and are blazoned as *Azure, a cross patonce between four martlets Or*.^[3] The assigning of arms to the West Saxon kings is prochronistic as heraldry did not develop until the twelfth century. These arms continued to be used to represent the kingdom for centuries after their invention.^[4]



See also

- List of monarchs of Wessex
- Wessex
- List of English monarchs

References

- ¹ ^ Friar, *Basic Heraldry*, 12.
 - ² ^ Heather Edwards, Egberht, Oxford Online Dictionary of National Biography, 2004 (<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8581?docPos=3>)
 - ³ ^ College of Arms MS L.14, dating from the reign of Henry III
 - ⁴ ^ For example in *Divi Britannici* by Winston Churchill, published in 1675, and *Britannia Saxona* by G W Collen, published in 1833.
- Stephen Friar and John Ferguson (1993), *Basic Heraldry* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=eZ8ZdOPxlukC>), W. W. Norton & Company, ISBN 978-0-393-03463-9
 - Naismith, Rory (2011). "The Origins of the Line of Egbert, King of the West Saxons, 802–839". *English Historical Review* **76** (518): 1–16. doi:10.1093/ehr/ceq377 (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093%2Fehr%2Fceq377>).

Royal house House of Wessex		
New title England united under Wessex	Ruling house of England 829–1013	Succeeded by House of Denmark
Preceded by House of Denmark	Ruling house of England 1014–16	
		Ruling house of England 1042–66

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