

Adelaide-Blanche of Anjou

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Adelaide-Blanche of Anjou^[a] (c. 940 –1026) was the countess by marriage of Gévaudan and Forez, of Toulouse, of Provence, and of Burgundy; and queen consort of Aquitaine. She was the regent of Gevaudan during the minority of her sons in the 960s, and the regent of Provence during the minority of her stepson from 994 until 999.

Contents

- 1 Life
- 2 Marriages and children
- 3 Notes
- 4 References
- 5 External links

Adelaide-Blanche of Anjou

Spouse	Stephen, Count of Gévaudan <p>Raymond, Count of Toulouse</p> Louis V of France <p>William I of Provence</p> Otto-William, Count of Burgundy
House	House of Ingelger
Father	Fulk II, Count of Anjou
Mother	Gerberge
Born	c. 940
Died	1026 <p>Avignon</p>
Burial	Montmajour Abbey
Religion	Roman Catholicism

Life

She was the daughter of Fulk II, Count of Anjou and Gerberga and sister of Geoffrey Greymantle.^[1] She successfully increased Angevin fortunes being married a total of five times.^[2] Her family had become upwardly mobile to the point that, as a member of just the third generation from Ingelger, Adelaied-Blanche had married into the highest ranks of the older nobility of western Francia.^[2]

Her first marriage was to Stephen, the powerful Count of Gévaudan^[3] and Forez in eastern Aquitaine.^[4] She was no more than fifteen at the time^[5] and he was much older. Still, they had three children who survived to adulthood.^[4] Stephen died in the early 960s^[4] and after his death she ruled the lands as countess-regent for her sons William, Pons and Bertrand.^[6] She continued to govern Gevaudan and Forez while her remaining two sons learned to rule their father's counties.^[6] Additionally, after her oldest son William's death in 975 she raised his infant son Stephen.^[6] Her brother Guy (a.k.a. Guido II) was made Count-Bishop of le Puy in 975 amidst local opposition and at his request Adelaide, acting for her sons Guy and Bertrand, led an army to aid him in establishing the "Peace of God" in le Puy.^[6]

In 982, as the widow of her second husband, Raymond, count of Toulouse, she wed Louis V of France, son of Lothair of France.^[7] The two were crowned King and Queen of Aquitaine at Brioude by her brother Bishop Guy of le Puy.^[7] But the marriage lasted just over a year due to the couple being unable to peacefully live together.^[7] There was also a significant age difference—he being just fifteen and Adelaide-Blanche being over forty.^[7] Adelaide found herself in a precarious situation with king Lothair but was rescued by Count William I of Provence^{[b][8]} who she subsequently married in c. 984.^[9] Count William of Provence died in 994 shortly after becoming a monk at Avignon.^[10]

In 1010 king Robert II of France along with Odo II, Count of Blois went to Rome to secure an annulment from Robert's second wife, Constance of Arles, Adelaide-Blanche's daughter by William I. Pope Sergius IV, a friend to the Angevin counts, upheld the marriage and additionally upheld Adelaide's struggle to maintain control of lands at Montmajour Abbey.^[11] These lands, at Perth, had been donated by Count William I of Provence with his wife Adelaide-Blanche, as well as by a previous donation by William's father, Boson.^[12] A dispute over these lands arose by four brothers, sons of Nevolongus, who pope Sergius threatened with excommunication if they did not withdraw their claim.^[12] The claim was withdrawn and the lands remained under the control of Adelaide-Blanche acting as regent for her son William II of Provence.^[12]

Her fifth marriage was to Otto-William, Count of Burgundy,^[c] who subsequently died 21 September 1026.^[13] Adelaide-Blanche herself died in 1026, aged approximately eighty-six.^[3] The location of her death was probably at Avignon, since the year of her death is recorded by Arnoux, a monk of the abbey of Saint-André, near Avignon. She was buried in Montmajour Abbey, near Arles, considered at the time as the burial place of the family of counts of Provence.

Marriages and children

- She married first, c. 955, Stephen, Count of Gévaudan.^{[14][15]} Children of this marriage were:
 - William, (c. 955-975).^[6]
 - Pons, Count of Gévaudan and Forez. He died aft. 26 February 1011.^[16]
 - Bertrand, Count of Gévaudan.^[16]
 - Almodis of Gévaudan, she married Adalbert I de Charroux, Count de la Haute March.^[16]
- Her second marriage was to Raymond, Count of Toulouse and Prince of Gothia,^[2] in 975. He died in 978. She had by him at least one child:
 - William III, Count of Toulouse
- She married as her third husband Louis V of France and the two were crowned King and Queen of Aquitaine but the marriage ended in annulment.^{[7][15]}
- As her fourth husband she married, c. 994—996, William I of Provence^{[10][15]} Together they had:
 - Constance of Arles,^[15] who later married Robert II of France.^[10]
 - Ermengarde, she married Robert I, Count of Auvergne.^[10]
 - Tota-Adelaide, she married Bernard I, Count of Besalú.^[10]
- Her final marriage was to Otto-William, Count of Burgundy. He and Adelaide had no children.^[13]



The cloister of Montmajour Abbey her final resting place.

Notes

- ^ Bernard Bachrach refers to her as Adelaide-Blanch throughout his book *Fulk Nerra* (1993), and in his article 'Henry II and the Angevin Tradition', *Albion*, 16, 2, (1984), p. 117 n. 35 in writing of Ermengarde-Gerberga of Anjou states that Angevins were known to give daughters two names, giving her aunt Adelaide-Blanche (the subject of this article) as an example. Constance Bouchard, in *Those of My Blood* (2001) consistently refers to her as Adelaide-Blanche. In *Europäische Stammtafeln* (citations below) she is called either Adelaide or Adelaide (Blanche). At least two chronicles, the *Chronicle S. Albin* and the *Chronicle S. Maxent*. call her Blanche, See: Norgate, *Eng. Under the Angevin Kings*, Vol. 1 (1887), p. 191. In the work *Rodulfi Glabri Historiarum libri quinque*, Ed. & Trans. John France (2002), on pp. 16-17 n. 5 she is referred to as "Adelaide, also called Blanche" while on pp. 106-7 n. 5 she is called "Adelaide-Blanche." Also see the reference to the letter by pope Benedict VIII addressing her as Countess Adelaide, "cognomento Blanche" in the note below. The name Adelaide-Blanche has clearly become the preferred version of her name among leading modern historians and has historial precedents.
- ^ Rodulfus Glaber had a somewhat different version. That Lothar's son Louis was wed to a woman from Aquitaine (Adelaide also called Blanche), and she wanting a separation and being a clever woman lured her young husband to Aquitaine where she deserted him and returned to her own family; that it was Lewis who was rescued by his father king Lothar. See: *Rodulfi Glabri Historiarum libri quinque*, Ed. & Trans. John France (2002), on pp. 16-17 & n. 5.
- ^ The last of Adelaide-Blanche's marriages has been doubted by some, but it is clear from other sources that Adelaide was the name of his second wife and she was addressed as Countess Adelaide, "cogomento Blanche" in a letter addressed to her husband, herself, and his son Raynald by the pope. See: Bouchard, *Those of My Blood* (2001), pp. 24-5. The 1016 letter was from Pope Benedict VIII and addressed her specifically as "Adelaidis comitissa, cognomento Blancha"; Letter 16, *Patrologia Latina*, 139: 1603. See: Constance B. Bouchard, 'The Origins of the French Nobility: A Reassessment', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 86, No. 3 (Jun., 1981), p. 516 n. 42; Bouchard, *Sword, Miter, and Cloister: Nobility and the Church in Burgundy, 980-1198*, (1987), p. 270.

References

1. ^ Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band III Teilband 1 (Verlag von J. A. Stargardt, Marburg, Germany, 1984), Tafel 116
2. ^ **a b c** Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Those of My Blood: Constructing Noble Families in Medieval Francia* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2001), p. 23
3. ^ **a b** Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band II (Verlag von J. A. Stargardt, Marburg, Germany, 1984), Tafel 1
4. ^ **a b c** Bernard S. Bachrach, 'The Idea of the Angevin Empire', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Winter,1978), p. 296
5. ^ Bernard S. Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra the Neo-Roman Consul, 987-1040* (University of California Press, 1993), p. 9
6. ^ **a b c d e** Jerome Kroll, Bernard S. Bachrach, Medieval Dynastic Decisions: Evolutionary Biology and Historical Explanation, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Summer, 1990), p. 9
7. ^ **a b c d e** Bernard S. Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra the Neo-Roman Consul, 987-1040* (University of California Press, 1993), p. 15
8. ^ Bernard S. Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra the Neo-Roman Consul, 987-1040* (University of California Press, 1993), p. 51
9. ^ Kate Norgate, *England under the Angevin Kings*, Volume 1 (Macmillan & Co., London & New York, 1887), p. 191
10. ^ **a b c d e** Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band II (Verlag von J. A. Stargardt, Marburg, Germany, 1984), Tafel 187
11. ^ Bernard S. Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra the Neo-Roman Consul, 987-1040* (University of California Press, 1993), p. 115
12. ^ **a b c** F de Marin de Carranrais, *L'Abbaye de Montmajour. E'tude historique, etc. (Marseille,, 1877)*, pp.33-4
13. ^ **a b** Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band II (Verlag von J. A. Stargardt, Marburg, Germany, 1984), Tafel 59
14. ^ Bernard S. Bachrach, *Fulk Nerra the Neo-Roman Consul, 987-1040* (University of California Press, 1993), pp. 8,9
15. ^ **a b c d** Rodulfus Glaber, *The Five Books of the Histories*, ed. & trans. John France (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 107 n. 5
16. ^ **a b c** Detlev Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der Europäischen Staaten*, Neue Folge, Band III Teilband 4 (Verlag von J. A. Stargardt, Marburg, Germany, 1989), Tafel 819

External links

- Medieval Lands Project on Adelaide of Anjou (<http://fmg.ac/Projects/MedLands/ANJOU,%20MAINE.htm#AdelaisM1M2LouisVFranksdied987M3M4>)

Adelaide-Blanche of Anjou House of Anjou Born: circa 947 Died: 29 May 1026		
Preceded by Anne	Countess of Gévaudan bef. 960–975	Succeeded by Theutberg
Preceded by Gundinildis	Countess of Toulouse 975–978	Succeeded by Arsende
Preceded by Emma of Italy	Queen of Aquitaine, junior Queen of the West Franks 982–984 Served alongside: Emma of Italy	Succeeded by Emma of Italy
Preceded by Arsenda	Countess and Margravine of Provence 984–993 Served alongside: Emilde of Gévaudan	Succeeded by Gerberga of Mâcon
Preceded by Ermentrude de Roucy	Countess of Burgundy 1016–1026	Succeeded by Alice of Normandy

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