

Rotrude of Hesbaye

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Rotrude (Chrodtrudis) (died 724) was the first wife of Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace and de facto ruler of Francia from 718 to 741. She was the mother of Pepin the Short, King of the Franks, and therefore the grandmother of Charlemagne. Rotrude is believed to be the daughter of Lambert, Count of Hesbaye, although this designation is not without controversy, as discussed below. She is also referred to as Rotrude of Treves.

Traditionally, the information available about the family background of Rotrude was the indication that Wido (Guy), Count of Hornbach and Lay Abbot of Fontenelle, was a *propinquus* of Martel. This kinship term, vague enough, means a close relationship with women: a brother, a cousin by women or a cousin by marriage. Wido is the brother of Milo, Bishop of Trier, and son of Saint Leudwinus, Bishop of Trier.

Christian Settipani, in his seminal work on the ancestors of Charlemagne, details an analysis by Anton Halbedel, first issued in 1915, and echoed by historians Jean Depoin, Maurice Chaume and Szabolcs Vajay. According to this analysis, the word *propinquus* implies "brother", so that Wido was Rotrude's brother. Rotrude has therefore often been identified as the daughter of Saint Leudwinus.

However, in Settipani's Addendum to the Ancestors of Charlemagne,^[1] he returns to this problem, reflecting thinking that of medieval history professor Richard Gerberding, who believed that Rotrude's background was related directly to the Robertians. He noted that Charles Martel had three wives and that Wido may be a relative of the other two.

Settipani concludes that Rotrude was the daughter of Lambert, Count of Hesbaye, and so sister of Robert I, Duke of Neustria. In addition, Rotrude's sister was named Landrada and was married to Sigrarnus, Count of Hesbaye. Landrada and Sigrarnus were parents of Saint Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz. Note that Rotrude and Charles had daughter also named Landrade, who is often erroneously identified as the wife of Sigrarnus.^[2]

Rotrude and Charles had five children:

- Carloman, Mayor of the Palace
- Pepin the Short, King of the Franks and father of Charlemagne
- Hiltrude, Duchess Consort of Bavaria, married to Odilo, Duke of Bavaria
- Landrade
- Auda of France, married to Thierry IV, Count of Autun.

After Rotrude's death in 724, Charles married Swanachild and had one child Grifo. Charles also had a mistress Ruodhaid with whom he had numerous children.

References

1. Christian, Settipani. "Addendum to the Ancestors of Charlemagne" (PDF).
2. Claussen, M. A. (2004). *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula Canonicorum in the Eighth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 21.

	Rotrude of Hesbaye
Spouse(s)	Charles Martel
Issue	<div> <div>Carloman</div> <div>Pepin</div> <div>Hiltrude</div> <div>Landrade</div> <div>Auda</div> </div>
Died	724

Sources

- Settipani, Christian, *Les Ancêtres de Charlemagne*, Paris, 1989
- Gerberding, Richard A., *The Rise of the Carolingians and the Liber Historiae Francorum*, Oxford University Press, 1987
- Claussen, M. A., *The Reform of the Frankish Church: Chrodegang of Metz and the Regula Canonorum in the Eighth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 2004

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