

# Wigeric of Lotharingia

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**Wigeric** or **Wideric** (French: *Wigéric* or *Wéderic*) (died before 923) was the count of the Bidgau (*pagus Bedensis*) and held the rights of a count within the city of Trier. He received also the advocacy of the Abbey of Saint Rumbold<sup>[note 1]</sup> at Mechelen from Charles III of France. From 915 or 916, he was the count palatine of Lotharingia. He was the founder of the House of Ardennes.

Medieval historians have been unable to precisely pin down Wigeric's origins or rise to power. He possessed lands in the region of Bitburg, in the middle Moselle valley, in the Gutland, the western Eifel, and the Meuse region.<sup>[1]:16</sup>

At the death of Louis the Child, the Lotharingians rejected the suzerainty of Conrad I and elected Charles of France as their king. At the time, the military authority in Lotharingia was assigned to Count Reginar I of Hainaut (died 915), but at his death it fell to Wigeric, who became count palatine, exercising as such the military authority in Lotharingia.

Wigeric founded the monastery of Hastière (French: *L'abbaye d'Hastière*) now in Hastière-par-delà(fr),<sup>[2]</sup> of which he also assumed the advocacy.

There is no historical trace of Wigeric after 919: he probably died between 916 and 919, and was buried in the monastery of Hastière.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Contents

- 1 Family and descendants
- 2 Primary sources
- 3 Footnotes
- 4 References
- 5 Further reading

## Family and descendants

Wigeric's first wife Eva died, leaving him a widower. He then married Cunigunda, daughter of Ermentrude, granddaughter of Louis II of France, and therefore a descendant of Charlemagne.<sup>[1]</sup> Their children were:

- Frederick (died 978), count of Bar, the duke of Upper Lorraine from 959
- Adalberon (died 962), bishop of Metz
- Gilbert (died 964), count in the Ardennes
- Sigebert (fl. c. 942)
- Gozlin (died 942), count of Bidgau, married Uda of Metz, father of:
  - Godfrey the Prisoner
  - Adalberon, Archbishop of Reims
- Siegfried, count of Luxembourg

Some genealogies record two other children, Henry and Liutgard, who were in fact son and daughter of another Wigeric, son of Roric, a contemporary living in the shire of Bidgau-Trier.

Wigeric and Cunigunda were the founders of the dynasty of the House of Ardennes. Its three branches—Ardennes-Verdun, Ardennes-Bar and Ardennes-Luxembourg—dominated Lorraine for a century and a half. The Ardennes family extended from Laon and Reims to Trier and Cologne, from Metz and Verdun to Liège and Anvers. Its descendants were to appear in the following positions:

- Dukes of Upper and Lower Lorraine (959-1046 and 1012-1100 respectively)
- Bishops of Metz (929-1072)
- Bishops of Laon (977-1031)
- Bishops of Reims (969-989)
- Bishops of Verdun (984-988)
- Bishops of Trier (1004-1015)<sup>[1]</sup>

## Primary sources

- Cawley, Charles, *Medieval Lands Project on Wigerich III*, Medieval Lands database, Foundation for Medieval Genealogy,
- He is first attested in 899 as count *Widiacus* in a charter of King Zwentibold in Trier [1] (<http://www.rlb.de/cgi-bin/jump.pl?page=212&book=91-3152-som&thisPage=230>).
- A *Wigericus*, with comital rights in Trier, appears in a diploma of Louis IV dated 19 September 902: MGH Diplomata (<http://www.dmgh.de/>).
- He is usually identified with *Widricus*, count of the Bidgau, of a charter of Saint-Maximin dated 1 January 909 [2] (<http://www.rlb.de/mrHist/91-3152-som/2.216.html>).
- He appears in a diploma of Charles III (between 911-915) as *Windricus* and his son Adalberon and he received the fiefs and the advocacy of the abbeys of Saint Rumbolds at Mechelen and Hastière. The margrave of Neustria, Robert, and Reginar, margrave in Lotharingia, gave their consent.
- He appears for the first time with the title "count palatine" in a diploma of Charles as well, this time as *Widricus*, dated 19 January 916 at Herstal [3] (<http://www.rlb.de/mrHist/91-3152-som/2.222.html>).

## Footnotes

1. The abbey founded by St. Rumbold in the 6th, 7th or 8th century and a 9th century St. Rumbold's abbey church subordinate to the bishops of Liège are assumed to have been located in the *Holm*, higher grounds a little outside the later city walls of Mechelen. A 9th century St. Rumbold's Chapel in the city centre stood until 1580, was rebuilt in 1597 and demolished in 1798. After Prince-Bishop Notger's founding of the St. Rumbold's Chapter around 1000, an adjacent collegiate church was built and its parish title was handed to the chapter in 1134. Most likely on its spot, already from around the start of the 13th century onwards, the well known Saint Rumbold's Church was built, consecrated in 1312, and functions as metropolitan cathedral since 1559. This edifice never belonged to the abbey. Source: Sint-Romboutskerk (ID: 74569) (<http://inventaris.vioe.be/dibe/relict/74569>), VIOE (<http://www.vioe.be/>) (Retrieved 29 July 2011)

## References

1. Kreins, Jean-Marie. *Histoire du Luxembourg*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2010. 5th edition.
2. Dinant Tourism: Abbatiale Romane d'Hastiere (<http://www.dinant-tourisme.com/dinant/produits/listing/i162/Abbatiale-Romane-d-Hastiere.html>)

## Further reading

- Van Droogenbroeck, F. J., 'Paltsgraaf Wigerik van Lotharingen, inspiratiebron voor de legendarische graaf Witger in de Vita Gudilae', *Eigen Schoon en De Brabander* 93 (2010) 113-136. (<https://www.academia.edu/4610345/>)

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