

Chapter 76

My Ancestral Line(s) Going Back to Poland in the Middle Ages

[originally written 26 July 2021]

Introduction

I am using the Geni.com website to expand my knowledge of my family tree. A key feature of this website is its “World Family Tree”. Unlike Ancestry.com, where everyone has their own complete (or incomplete) family tree, Geni.com is having its users collaboratively build just a single family tree. On Ancestry.com, there can be one thousand or more duplicate entries for the same person – and these entries often have conflicting information. On Geni.com, there should only be one entry on the entire website for any given person. Individual users on Geni.com can add their ancestral lines until they connect with people already in the World Family Tree. And then their lines immediately become part of this enormous family tree. As of late July 2021, there are over 158 million individuals in the World Family Tree – see:

<https://www.geni.com/worldfamilytree>

A number of my ancestral lines in the World Family Tree on Geni.com go back twenty or thirty generations into the past. I realize that I am very far removed from my 24th-great grandparents (and I believe that I have something like 2^{26} of them, and 2^{26} is equal to 67,108,864), but it still is fun to trace ancestral lines back that far. And sometimes I find something totally unexpected. And this chapter is about one of those times.

Searching for Interesting Ancestors

Pick someone who would be cool to have as an ancestor. King Edward I? He was my ancestor:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/50-MyLines-to-KingEdward.pdf>

William de Tyson, Lord of Alnwick? He was my ancestor:

<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/70-William-de-Tyson-AlnwickCastle.pdf>

Sir Roger Pilkington II, Knight? He, too, was my ancestor:

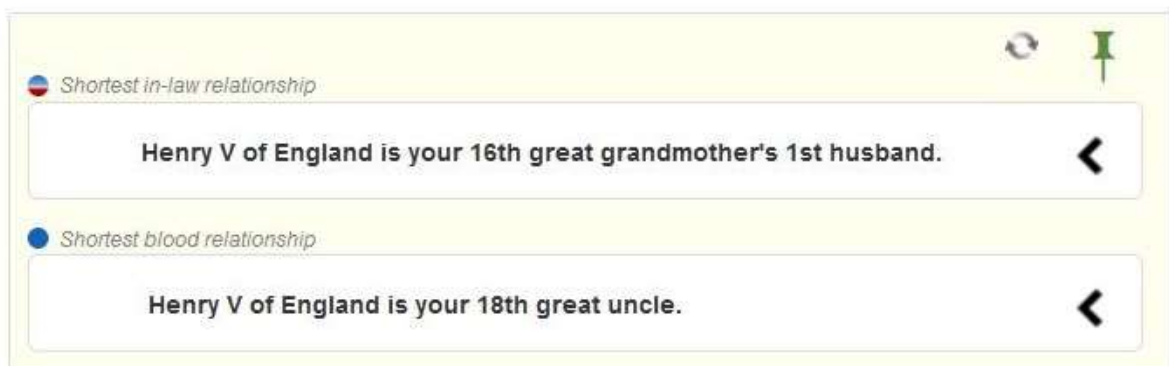
<http://www.burksoakley.com/QuincyOakleyGenealogy/62-SirRogerPilkington.pdf>

Just for fun, I’ve been looking at historic figures to learn if any of them were my ancestors. For example, I have a list of English kings, and I’ve been working my

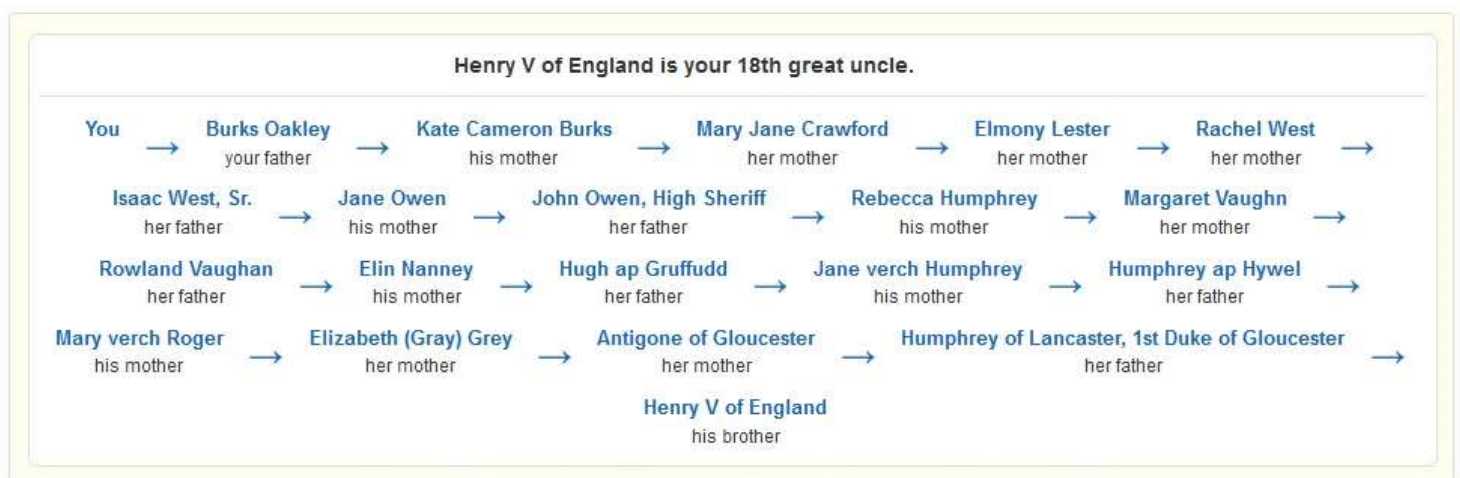
way through this list. The search feature on Geni.com isn't very good, and I've found that it is simply easier to use Google. Here is the result of my Google search for King Henry V's profile on the Geni.com website:



When I followed the link to the profile for King Henry V (1387-1422) on Geni.com, I found that I have two relationships with him:



On the ancestral line representing my “shortest blood relationship”, King Henry V of England is my 18th-great uncle:



This ancestral line is on the **Burks** side of my family and goes back through some Welsh ancestors (as you can tell by their names, such as Jane verch Humphrey and Humphrey ap Hywel).

On the line representing my “shortest in-law relationship”, King Henry V of England is my 16th-great grandmother’s first husband:



According to this chart, Catherine of Valois (1401-1437), Queen Consort of England, was my 16th-great grandmother. And she was the wife of King Henry V of England. [Catherine re-married after King Henry V died in 1422, and my ancestor (a Tudor) was her son from her second marriage.]

Here is a chart showing how Catherine of Valois and I are related:



Catherine of Valois is my 16th-great grandmother on the line from Lucy Lyon through Lucy Lyon’s father Joseph Oliver Lyon, and then continuing back through Gov. John Winthrop Sr., who served four times as Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony [I’m not sure I knew about the connection to Gov. Winthrop previously]. This ancestral line is on the **Oakley** side of my family.

Here is an excerpt from the Wikipedia article about Catherine of Valois:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catherine_of_Valois

Catherine of Valois (27 October 1401 - 3 January 1437) was the queen consort of England from 1420 until 1422. A daughter of Charles VI of France, she married Henry V of England, and gave birth to his heir Henry VI of England. Catherine’s marriage was part of a plan to eventually place Henry V on the throne of France, and perhaps end what is now known as the Hundred Years’ War, but although her son Henry VI was later crowned in Paris, this ultimately failed.

After Henry V’s death, Catherine’s later marriage with Owen Tudor proved the springboard of the Tudor family’s fortunes, eventually leading to their grandson’s elevation as Henry VII of England. Catherine’s older sister Isabella was queen of England from 1396 until 1399, as the child bride of Richard II.

Oh my! Did you catch that? Catherine of Valois was a daughter of King Charles VI of France. So while I'm not descended from King Henry V of England, I am descended from King Charles VI of France:



King Charles VI of France was my 17th-great grandfather. But I digress....

Back now to Catherine of Valois. In the past, I have found multiple ancestral lines going back to some of my ancestors who lived in England in the Middle Ages. Could I have other ancestral lines back to Catherine of Valois?

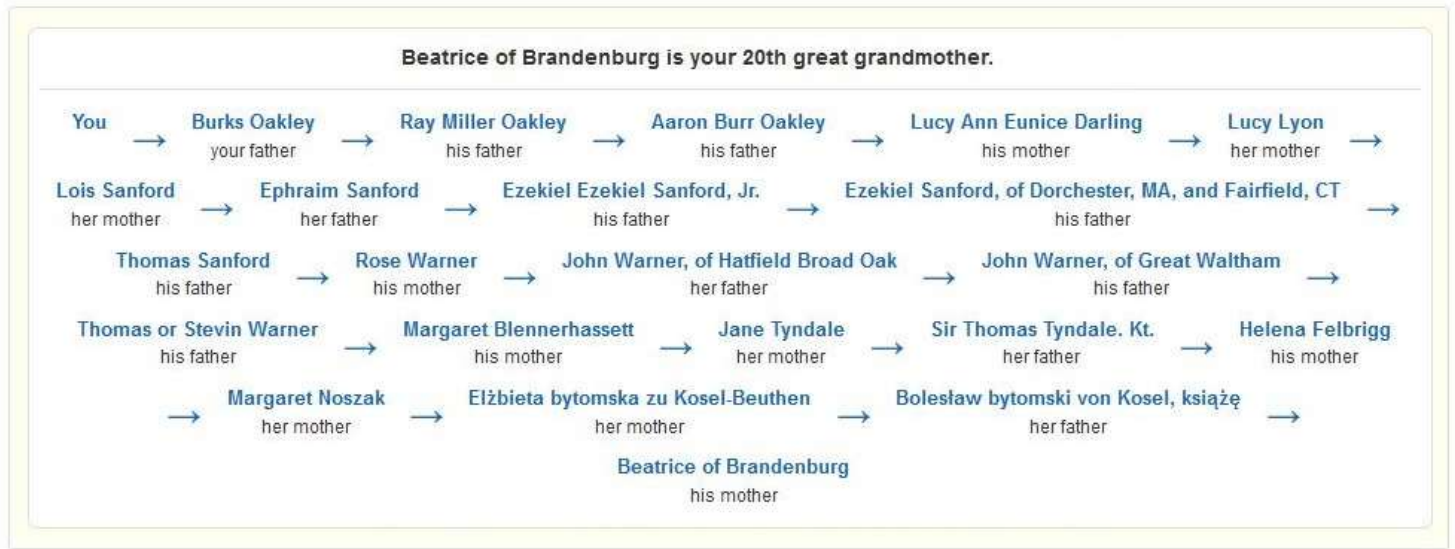
I looked at Lucy Lyon's mother, Lois Sanford, and found a totally separate line back to Catherine of Valois, Queen Consort of England. And that line went through Beatrice of Brandenburg:



[I had to construct this line in two parts, since it isn't the shortest blood relationship.]

Beatrice's son was named Bolesław bytomski von Kosel, książę – and this looks like he was Polish (in fact, the Polish word “książę” translates to “prince” in English). And Brandenburg – that looks like a famous German name. So my curiosity got the best of me, and I decided I would look more at these folks – Beatrice and her son Bolesław.

Here is my line to Beatrice (taken from the chart shown above):



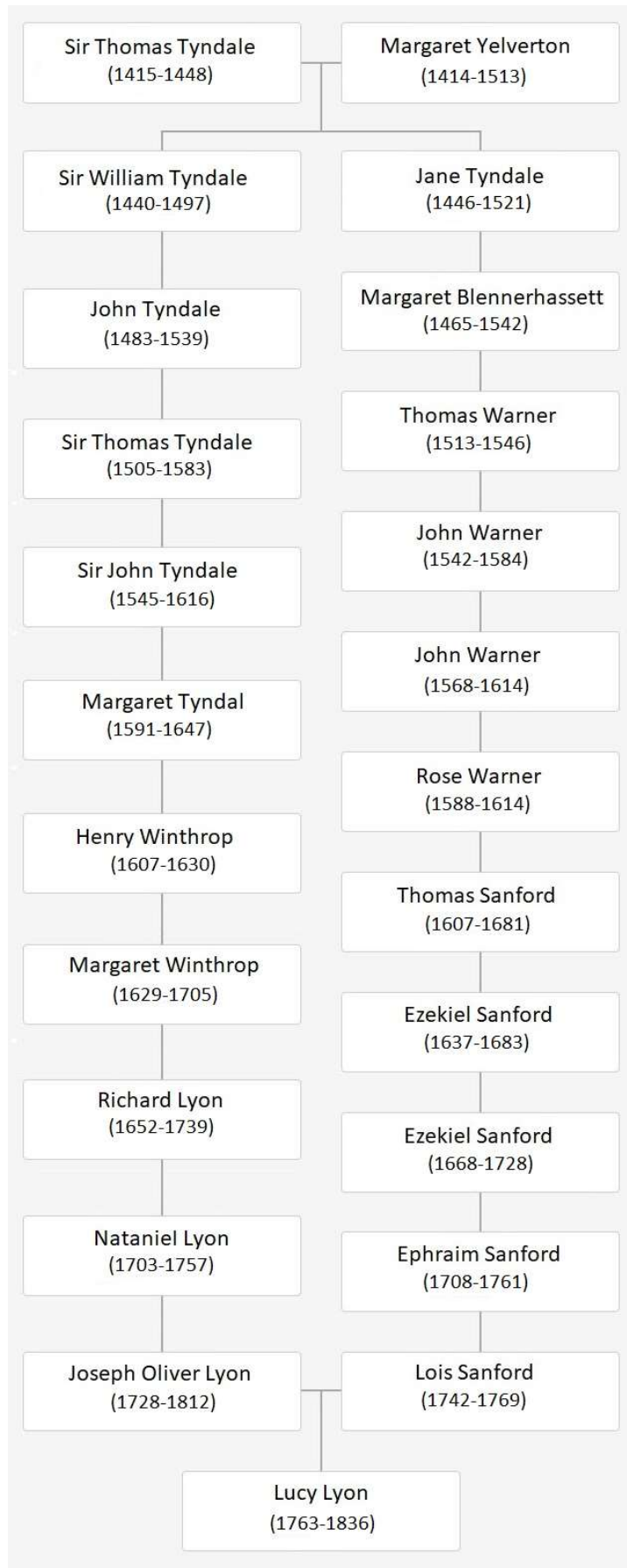
On this line, Beatrice of Brandenburg was my 20th-great grandmother.

I actually have a shorter blood relationship with Beatrice of Brandenburg:



On this line, Beatrice is my 19th-great grandmother.

Wow! The two ancestral lines on this page show that Joseph Oliver Lyon and his wife Lois Sanford are both descended from Beatrice of Brandenburg. What are the odds? In fact, Joseph and Lois both go back to Sir Thomas Tyndale, Knight (1415-1448). Here is a chart showing this relationship:



Lucy Lyon's parents, Joseph Oliver Lyon and Lois Sanford, were both descended from Sir Thomas Tyndale (1415-1448) and his wife Margaret Yelverton (1414-1513). In fact, Lucy's parents were ninth-cousins once-removed on these lines.

Sir Thomas Tyndale was a 2nd-great grandson of Bolesław and a 3rd-great grandson of Beatrice of Brandenburg. And Lucy Lyon was my 3rd-great grandmother.

Here is Beatrice of Brandenburg's profile from Geni.com:



Beatrix von Brandenburg

Gender: Female
Birth: between circa 1270 and 1272
Brandenburg, Germany
Death: circa 1315 (38-54)
(Schweidnitz), Swidnica, Poland
Immediate Family: Daughter of Otto V, Markgraf von Brandenburg and Jutta von Henneberg, Gräfin von Coburg und Schmalkalden
Wife of Duke Bolko I the Strict and Wladislaw II. Herzog zu Schlesien-Cosel-Beuthen
Mother of Judith von Schweidnitz; Bolko; Herzog Bernhard II. von Schweidnitz; Beatrix Świdnicka von Schlesien-Glogau; Henryk I jaworski von Schweidnitz, książę and 7 others
Sister of Hermann, Margrave of Brandenburg-Salzwedel; Judith Askanier, Herzogin zu Sachsen-Wittenberg; Otto von Brandenburg; Albrecht Brandenburg-Salzwedel, Duke; Kunigunde of Brandenburg-Salzwedel and 1 other

Here is an excerpt from her Wikipedia entry:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrice_of_Brandenburg

Beatrice of Brandenburg (Polish: *Beatrycze Brandenburska*, German: *Beatrix von Brandenburg*; c. 1270 – before 26 April 1316), was a German princess and a member of the House of Ascania in the Brandenburg branch. By her two marriages she was Duchess of Świdnica and Koźle-Bytom-Siewierz.

She was the second daughter of Otto V the Long, Margrave of Brandenburg-Salzwedel, by his wife Judith of Henneberg, daughter of Count Herman I of Henneberg and heiress of Coburg and Schmalkalden.

Impressive pedigree, for sure!

Then I looked up her second husband (my ancestor) – a man named Władysław II, Herzog zu Schlesien-Cosel-Beuthen [or Władysław II, Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen]:



He was a Polish duke and my 20th-great grandfather. And I never knew that I had Polish ancestors!!

Władysław II, Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen

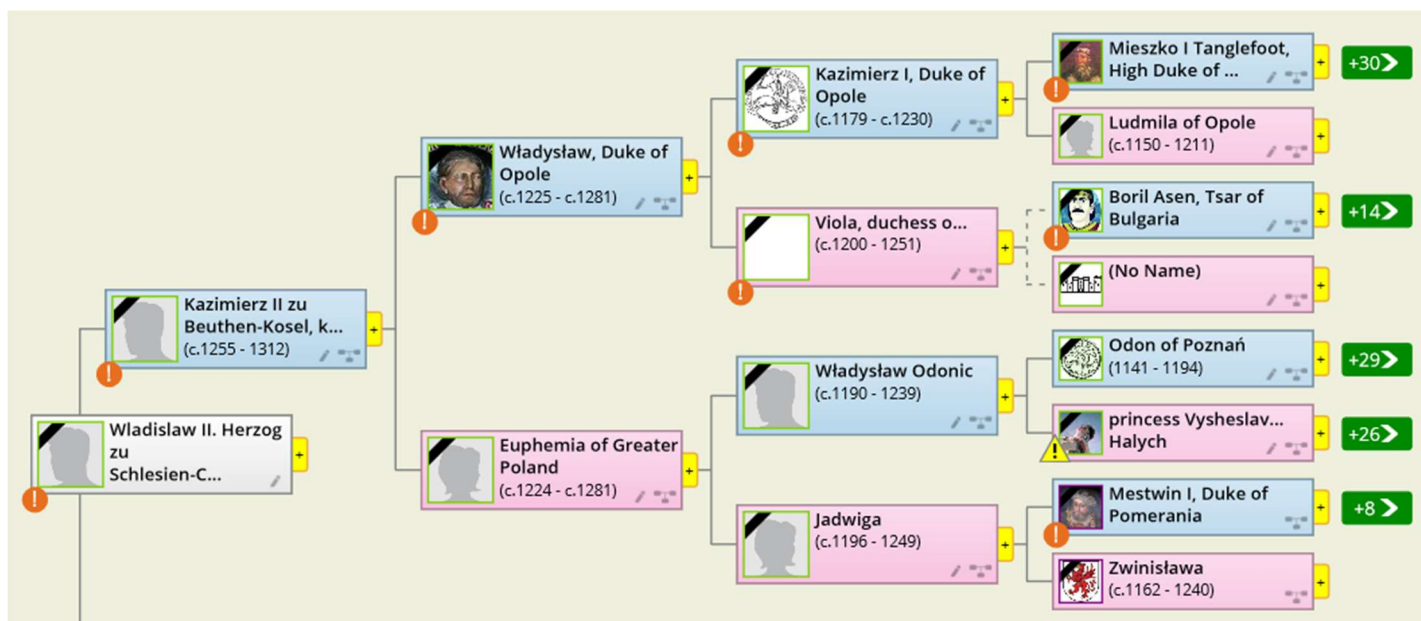
After all of this meandering through my family tree, I finally got to Władysław II, Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen, who according to Geni.com was the husband of Beatrice of Brandenburg. Here is his profile:

Wladislaw II. Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen
Herzog zu Schlesien-Cosel-Beuthen
German: Wladislaw II. Herzog zu Schlesien-Cosel-Beuthen, Polish: Wladislaw II. Cosel-Beuthen, książę

Gender: Male
Birth: 1278
Kozielno, Opolskiego, Upper Silesia, Poland
Death: between 1354 and September 16, 1355 (75-77)
Immediate Family: Son of Kazimierz II zu Beuthen-Kosel, książę and Helene N/A, Mrs. zu Beuthen-Kosel
Husband of Beatrice of Brandenburg and princess Lukardis
Father of Kazimierz kozielski, książę; Eufemia; Bolesław bytomski von Kosel, książę; Agnieszka; Katarzyna and 2 others
Brother of Bolesław toszecki, książę; Siemowit bytomski, książę; Jerzy bytomski, książę; Mieszko bytomski, książę and Piast Mária Maria bytomska

Added by: Erik Paul Rijnhart on May 10, 2009
Managed by: Leszek Miła and 4 others

Here is his pedigree:




More of my Polish ancestors! Note that Mieszko I Tanglefoot, High Duke of Poland, has a +30 to the right of his name, meaning that all of his ancestors are known through his sixteen 2nd-great grandparents.

Mieszko I Tanglefoot was my 23rd-great grandfather:



Here is the profile for Mieszko I Tanglefoot from Geni.com:



Mieszko
 Polish: Mieszko I Piłtonogi, książę, German: Mieszko I., Herzog

Gender: Male

Birth: circa 1132
 Of, Wrocław, Wrocław, Poland

Death: May 16, 1211 (74-83)
 (Oppeln), Opole, Poland

Place of Burial: Krakow, Kraków, Lesser Poland, Poland

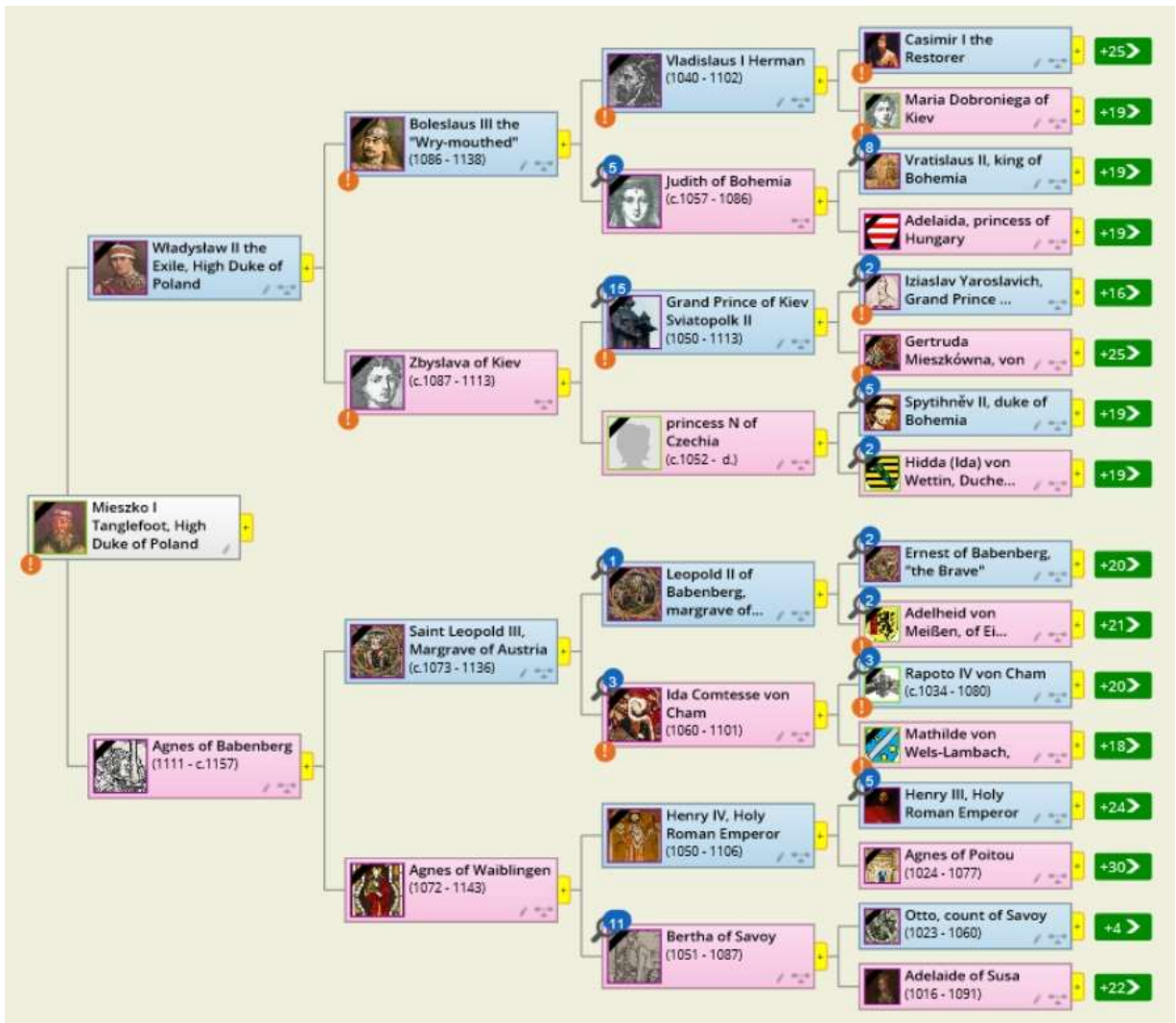
Immediate Family: Son of Władysław II the Exile, High Duke of Poland and Agnes of Babenberg
 Husband of Ludmila of Opole
 Father of Kazimierz I, Duke of Opole; Ludmiła Mieszkówna; Agnieszka Mieszkówna;
 Eufrozyna Mieszkówna and Ryksa Mieszkówna
 Brother of Duke Bolesław I the Tall Boleslav I "the Tall"; Richeza of Poland, Queen of Castile and León; Konrad Spindleshanks, Duke of Głogów and Albert

He has an extensive bio on Wikipedia – here is a short excerpt:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mieszko_IV_Tanglefoot

Mieszko IV Tanglefoot (c. 1130 - 16 May 1211) was Duke of Kraków and High Duke of Poland from 9 June 1210 until his death one year later. He was also Duke of Silesia from 1163 to 1173 (with his brother as co-ruler), Duke of Racibórz from 1173, and Duke of Opole from 1202.

I mentioned above that Mieszko IV Tanglefoot has an extensive pedigree – here it is for the first four generations:

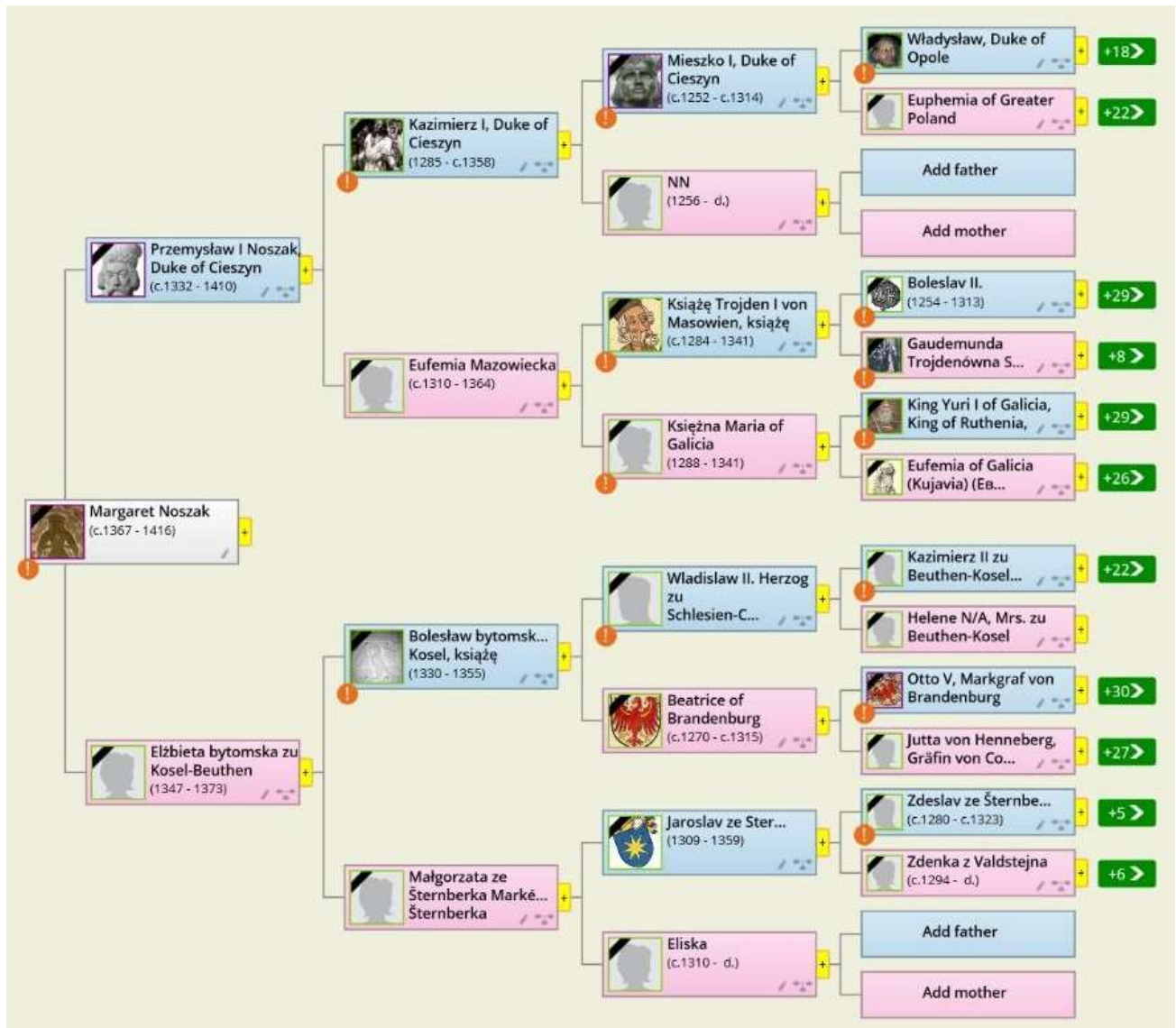


Oh my! This pedigree chart has more of my Polish ancestors, but it also includes Saint Leopold III, Margrave of Austria (my 24th-great grandfather), Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor (my 25th-great grandfather), and Vratislaus II, King of Bohemia (my 26th-great grandfather). What a find!

It sure is interesting to trace my roots back to central Europe around the year 1000. And note that one person in the pedigree shown above has a +30 next to her name, meaning that all her ancestors are known for another four generations, taking this ancestral line back into the 800's.

Several More Polish Ancestors

In looking at my ancestral line back to Władysław II, I learned that it went through a Polish woman named Margaret Noszak (1367-1416), who was my 16th-great grandmother on a line back through Joseph Oliver Lyon. Here is her pedigree:



One of Margaret's 2nd-great grandfathers was Władysław, Duke of Opole (1225-1281):



Władysław, Duke of Opole

Polish: książę Władysław opolski, Duke of Opole, Czech: kníže Vladislav I. Opolský, Duke of Opole, German: Herzog Lladislaus I. von Oppeln, Duke of Opole

Gender: Male

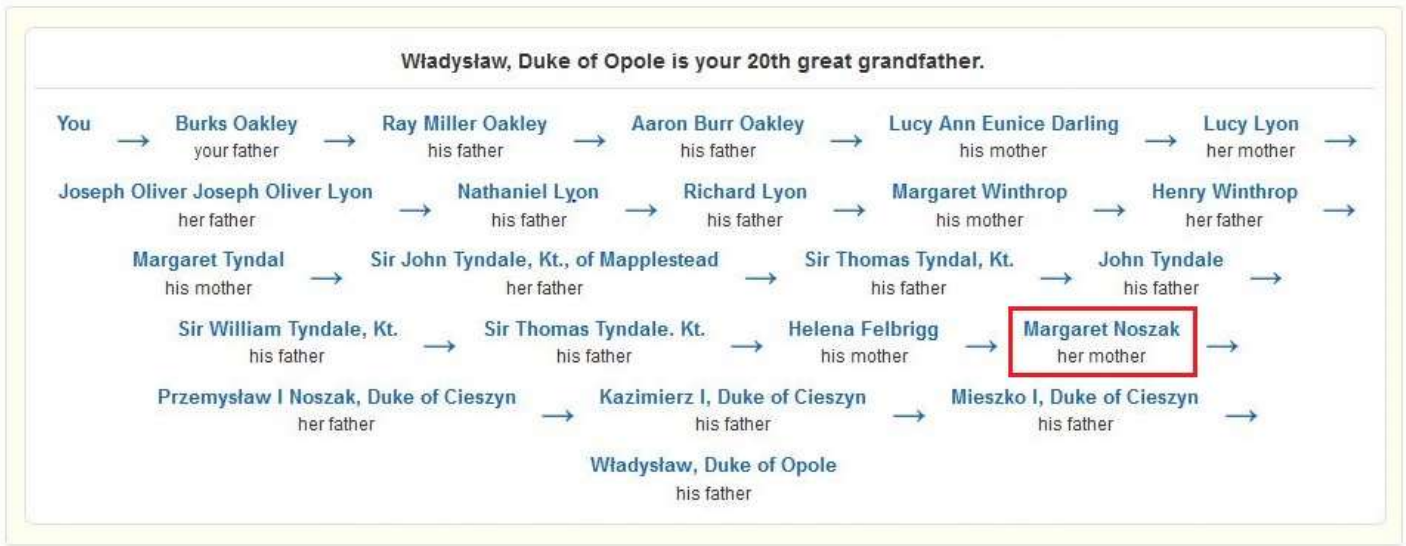
Birth: circa 1225
Opole, Opole,, Poland

Death: between circa May 14, 1281 and circa 1282 (47-65)

Place of Burial: kościół św. Jakuba, Racibórz, Śląskie, Poland

Immediate Family: Son of Kazimierz I, Duke of Opole and Viola, duchess of Opole
Husband of Euphemia of Greater Poland
Father of Mieszko I, Duke of Cieszyn;
Kazimierz II zu Beuthen-Kosel, książę; Duke Bolko I of Opole; Przemysław raciborski and Konstancja wodzisławska
Brother of Mieszko II Otyły, książę; Euphrosyne of Opole; Ludmiła; Agnieszka; Ryksa and 1 other

Władysław was my 20th-great grandfather:



Władysław's wife was Euphemia of Greater Poland, and one of her great-grandfathers was Mieszko III the Old, High Duke of Poland:



Prince Mieszko the Old Bolesławowic, High Duke of Poland

Polish: Książę Mieszko, Stary, German: Mieszko der Alte, High Duke of Poland, Lithuanian: Kunigaikštis Mieško III, Senasis

Gender: Male

Birth: April 10, 1126
Kraków, Małopolskie, Poland

Death: March 13, 1202 (75)
Kalisz, Wielkopolska, Poland

Place of Burial: Kalisz, Greater Poland, Poland

Immediate Family: Son of Boleslaus III the "Wry-mouthed" and Salomea of Berg
Husband of Elisabeth, Princess of Hungary and Eudoxia Iziaslavna, of Kiev
Father of Odon of Poznań; Stefan Mieszkowic, książę; Ludmilla of Poland; Judyta Mieszkówna; Elżbieta Piasten and 5 others
Brother of Leszek Bolesławowic; NN Bolesławówna; Bolesław IV the Curly, High Duke of Poland; Gertruda Bolesławówna; Prince Henryk of Sandomierz and 7 others
Half brother of Duchess Ryksa of Poland; Władysław II the Exile, High Duke of Poland and Judith? of Poland

Mieszko III was my 24th-great grandfather:




Again, all the lines to my Polish ancestors go through Margaret Noszak.

I'm Descended from Polish Kings!

In looking at some of the ancestral lines in the pedigree for Władysław II, Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen, I learned that I am descended from Mieszko II Lambert, King of Poland:



Mieszko II Lambert was my 27th-great grandfather. Here is his profile from Geni.com:



Mieszko II Lambert Piast

English (default): Mieszko II Lambert, Polish: książę Mieszko II Lambert II Lambert Piast, German: Herzog Mieszko II. Lambert, Czech: kníže Měšek II. Lambert, Russian: король Мешко II Ламберт

Gender: Male

Birth: 990
Poznań, Poznań, Wielkopolskie, Poland

Death: October 05, 1034 (43-44)
Poznań, Poznań, Wielkopolskie, Poland (Polish chronicles state natural causes. Historians believe he was murdered in a plot by the aristocracy.)

Place of Burial: Bazylika archikatedralna Świętych Apostołów Piotra i Pawła, Poznań, Poznań, Wielkopolskie, Poland

Immediate Family: Son of Bolesław I "The Brave" Piast, Duke and King of Poland and Emnilda Słowiańska
Husband of Richeza (Ryksa) Ezon of Lotharingia Queen Consort of Poland
Father of Richeza of Poland; Bolesław the Forgotten, Duke of Poland; Casimir I the Restorer and Gertruda Mieszkwówna, von Polen
Brother of N.N. Bolesławówna; Regelinda; ?
Bolesławówna and Otto Bolesławowic
Half brother of duke Bezprym; N.N.
Bolesławówna and Matylda Bolesławówna

Here is an excerpt from his Wikipedia entry:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mieszko_II_Lambert

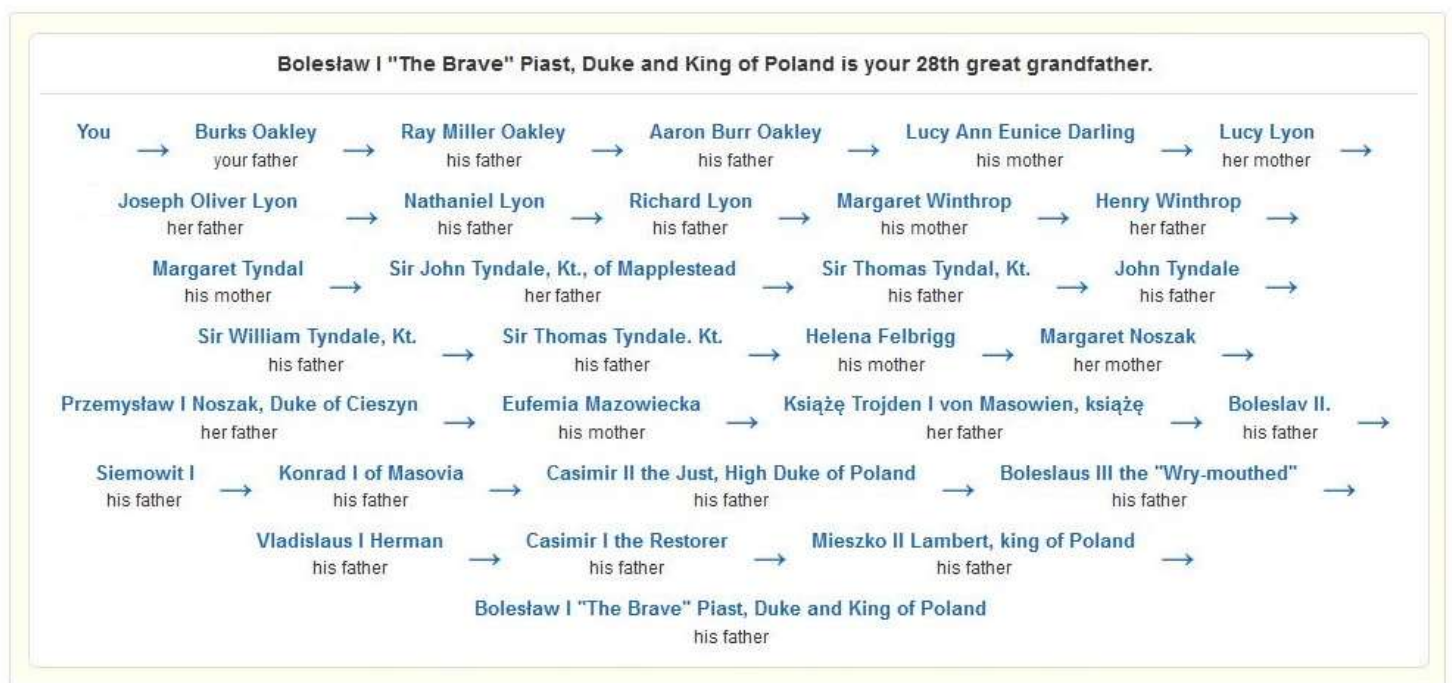
Mieszko II Lambert (c. 990 - 10/11 May 1034) was King of Poland from 1025 to 1031, and Duke from 1032 until his death.

He was the second son of Bolesław I the Brave, but the eldest born from his third wife Emnilda of Lusatia. He was probably named after his paternal grandfather, Mieszko I. His second name, Lambert was given to him as a reference to Saint Lambert. Also, it is probable that this name Lambert was chosen after Bolesław's half-brother Lambert.

He organized two devastating invasions of Saxony in 1028 and 1030. Then, Mieszko II ran a defensive war against Germany, Bohemia and the Kievan princes. Mieszko II was forced to escape from the country in 1031 after an attack by Yaroslav I the Wise, who installed Mieszko's older half-brother Bezprym onto the Polish throne. Mieszko II took refuge in Bohemia, where he was imprisoned by the Duke Oldrich. In 1032 he regained power in one of the three districts, then united the country, making good use of the remaining power structures. At this time, several Polish territorial acquisitions of his father were lost: Upper Lusatia (also known as Milsko), part of Lower Lusatia, Red Ruthenia, the western and central parts of Upper Hungary (now Slovakia), and probably Moravia.

Mieszko II was very well educated for the period. He was able to read and write, and knew both Greek and Latin.

Mieszko II's father was Bolesław I "The Brave" Piast, Duke and King of Poland. Here is my ancestral line back to Bolesław I:



Bolesław I was my 28th-great grandfather. Here is his entry from Geni.com:



Bolesław I "The Brave" of Poland Piast, Duke and King of Poland

Polish: król Bolesław I Chrobry, Duke and King of Poland, Czech: král Boleslav I. Chrabrý, Duke and King of Poland, German: König Bolesław I. der Tapfere, Duke and King of Poland

Gender: Male

Birth: 967
Poznań, Poznań, Wielkopolskie, Poland

Death: June 17, 1025 (57-58)
Gniezno, Gniezno, Wielkopolskie, Poland

Place of Burial: Bazylika archikatedralna Świętych Apostołów Piotra i Pawła, Poznań, Poznań, Wielkopolskie, Poland

Immediate Family: Son of [Mieszko I](#) and [Doubravka of Bohemia](#)
Husband of [Judith of Hungary](#); [Emnilda Słowiańska](#) and [Oda of Meissen](#)
Father of [duke Bezprym](#); [N.N. Bolesławówna](#); [N.N. Bolesławówna](#); [Regelinda](#); [Mieszko II Lambert](#), king of Poland and 3 others
Brother of [Świętosława «Gunhilda» Mieszkówna](#)
Half brother of [NN Piast](#); [Mieszko Mieszkowic](#) and prince [Lambert Mieszkowic Piast](#)

Here is an excerpt from his Wikipedia entry:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolesław_I_the_Brave

Bolesław the Brave (967 - 17 June 1025), less often known as Bolesław the Great, was Duke of Poland from 992 to 1025, and the first King of Poland in 1025. He was also Duke of Bohemia between 1003 and 1004 as Boleslaus IV.

Bolesław I was a remarkable politician, strategist, and statesman. He not only turned Poland into a country comparable to older western monarchies, but he raised it to the front rank of European states. Bolesław conducted successful military campaigns in the west, south and east. He consolidated Polish lands and conquered territories outside the borders of modern-day Poland, including Slovakia, Moravia, Red Ruthenia, Meissen, Lusatia, and Bohemia. He was a powerful mediator in Central European affairs. Finally, as the culmination of his reign, in 1025 he had himself crowned King of Poland. He was the first Polish ruler to receive the title of rex (Latin: "king").

He was an able administrator who established the "Prince's Law" and built many forts, churches, monasteries and bridges. He introduced the first Polish monetary unit, the grzywna, divided into 240 denarii, and minted his own coinage. Bolesław I is widely considered one of Poland's most capable and accomplished Piast rulers.

How Did My Polish Ancestors Get to England?

In this chapter, I have documented that I have numerous Polish ancestors. All of the ancestors I have discussed go back on ancestral lines through Joseph Oliver Lyon and his wife Lois Sanford.

The English immigrants on these two lines were Thomas Sanford (1607-1681) and Margaret Tyndal (1591-1647).

So how did Thomas Sanford and Margaret Tyndal, who lived in England, come to have Polish ancestors? Well, if you have been paying attention, you will recall that they both were descended from Sir Thomas Tyndal, Knight. And Sir Thomas was a 2nd-great grandson of Bolesław.

Here is the line from Sir Thomas back to Bolesław:



The key person in this line is Margaret Noszak (1367-1416), who was born in the Duchy of Cieszyn (Polish: Księstwo Cieszyńskie), one of the Duchies of Silesia centered on Cieszyn in Upper Silesia (the present-day Cieszyn, Poland). It was split off the Silesian Duchy of Opole and Racibórz in 1281 during the feudal division of Poland and was ruled by Silesian dukes of the Piast dynasty from 1290 until the line became extinct with the death of Duchess Elizabeth Lucretia in 1653.



Google Map showing the location of Cieszyn, in far-southern Poland.

Somehow, Margaret married Sir Simon Felbrigg, KG (my 16th-great grandfather). Sir Simon was the son of Sir Roger Le Bigod (and the Le Bigod family was a notable family in England over centuries).

Margaret died in 1416 in Erpingham, Norfolk, England.

My initial thought was that this must have been an arranged marriage between noble families in England and Poland.

The profile for Sir Simon Felbrigge, KG, on Geni.com shed more light on this:

<https://www.geni.com/people/Sir-Simon-Felbrigge-KG/321757252720006344>

He married first, Margaret, daughter and heir (as our historians say) to the Duke of Silesia, and Theise in Germany (nephew to the King of Bohemia), cousin to Anne, Queen-Consort of Richard II, King of England (daughter of Charles IV and sister to Wencislaus, Emperor of Germany), who came into England with that Queen, on her marriage, in 1381, and was one of her maids of honor. [excuse the poor grammar here...]

More about Anne of Bohemia, Queen Consort of England (1366-1394), at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_of_Bohemia

Margaret was indeed a cousin of Anne, Queen Consort of England:



Margaret was born in 1367, and Anne was born in 1366, so they were contemporaries. Margaret went from Poland to England, accompanying her cousin Anne of Bohemia, who was to marry Richard II, King of England. It would seem that Margaret stayed in England and married Sir Simon Felbrigge, KG.

And that, my friends, is how Thomas Sanford and Margaret Tyndal ended up with Polish ancestors. Of course, this also explains how I have Polish ancestors. This single connection to Poland, which is through Margaret Noszak, who immigrated to England, very well might explain why I haven't ever seen other ancestral lines going back to Poland. But now that I have found so many Polish ancestors, I guess I'll have to look for additional ancestral lines. Stay tuned!

Summary

In this chapter, I took a circuitous route to get to Władysław II, Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen. He was a Polish prince who lived from 1278 to 1354. Along the way, I found a number of interesting ancestors, including King Charles VI of France, Beatrice of Brandenburg, and Catherine of Valois, Queen Consort of England.

I then presented details about a number of my Polish ancestors who were nobility, including: Władysław II, Duke of Silesia-Cosel-Beuthen; Władysław, Duke of Opole; Mieszko I Tanglefoot, High Duke of Poland; and Mieszko III the Old, High Duke of Poland.

Finally, I discussed my ancestral lines back to two Polish kings – Mieszko II Lambert, King of Poland, and Bolesław I “The Brave” Piast, Duke and King of Poland.

I can trace my Polish ancestors discussed in this chapter through a single ancestral line, which goes through Margaret Noszak, who immigrated from Poland to England and married an English knight.

By some strange quirk, my 4th-great grandparents Joseph Oliver Lyon and his wife Lois Sanford were both descended from this Polish immigrant.