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Royal Roots Run Deep for Meghan Markle

Researchers at New England Historic Genealogical Society have announced that Meghan Markle is descended from King Edward III

Markle is a cousin of her future husband, Prince Harry, more than 240 times over

She is related to Prince Harry through lines shared with both HM The Queen and the late Diana, Princess of Wales

She is related to eight American presidents, three first ladies, and a cast of other notable Americans, including actors James Dean and Roy Rogers

The Royal Ancestry of Meghan Markle

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November 29, 2017—*Boston, Massachusetts*—World renowned genealogist Gary Boyd Roberts, Senior Research Scholar Emeritus at the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) has, together with collaborators, revealed that England's future American Royal Bride is descended from royalty herself. She is a 24th generation descendant of King Edward III, a medieval monarch of England who died in 1377. This newly discovered lineage for Ms. Markle comes through an early immigrant to Boston, Massachusetts, the royally-descended Rev. William Skipper, who arrived in New England in 1639, an ancestor of the future royal's father, Thomas Wayne Markle.

"Meghan Markle is related to Prince Harry hundreds of times over, and therefore also to millions of Americans and Britons," says Gary Boyd Roberts. "Much of American and English history is reflected in her diverse ancestry." Her distant kinships also include most modern

European royal families, Roberts states, through a late medieval English kinswoman, Margaret Kerdeston (ca. 1426–after 1485), wife of a French nobleman and grandmother of a queen of Hungary and Bohemia.

Among Markle's distant cousins are her future grandmother-in-law, HM The Queen, and the late Diana, Princess of Wales. Her American cousins include U.S. presidents George W. Bush, George H.W. Bush, Gerald Ford, Richard Nixon, Herbert Hoover, Calvin Coolidge, Chester Alan Arthur, and James A. Garfield. Roberts, author of *Ancestors of American Presidents*, also states that she is distantly related to First Ladies Mamie Eisenhower, Ellen Wilson, and Frances Cleveland, as well as former Secretary of State John F. Kerry, actors James Dean and Roy Rogers, and authors O. Henry and John Greenleaf Whittier.

"In addition to representing many important firsts, the Royal bride-to-be also has unexpected roots to traditional royal history," says D. Brenton Simons, President and CEO of the New England Historic Genealogical Society. "Through these facts, taken together, she may be a solidifying and positive figure in Anglo-American kinship and American-British relations."

This new research on Ms. Markle's ancestry was conducted by Gary Boyd Roberts with assistance from Alex Bannerman of Charleston, West Virginia, and some data sourced from the websites famechain.com and AmericanAncestors.org.

Roberts states that Markle is also descended from American immigrant Christopher Hussey, of Nantucket, as has been correctly reported in the press, but he is skeptical of any noble ancestry through that line. "What is clear now," Roberts says, "is that she has a well-documented lineage from medieval kings through the Skipper family of Boston and that Prince Harry is her 17th cousin."

NEHGS, with its national headquarters located in Boston's Back Bay, is the oldest and largest genealogical society in America. NEHGS serves more than 250,000 members and millions of online users engaged in family history nationally and around the world. It is home to a world-class research library and archive, and an expert staff. NEHGS offers an award-winning genealogical research website at AmericanAncestors.org with 1.4 billion records and maintains a publishing division which produces original genealogical research, scholarship, and educational materials, including the *Mayflower Descendant*, a quarterly journal of Pilgrim genealogy and history.

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