



## Eleanor of Aquitaine

### Her Timeline...

...complements the POD paperback book and eBook editions

### POWER OF A WOMAN

### *MEMOIRS OF A TURBULENT LIFE. ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE*

Available, with reviews, excerpts, a readers' group guide, essays and a blog based on Eleanor's life and times, through <http://eleanor.robertfripp.ca/>

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This, the most comprehensive of timelines, logs almost 300 events in the life of Eleanor of Aquitaine. Years did not always start on the first of January in the medieval period. Scribes observed different local traditions. For that reason, although the day and month of an event may be precise, I sometimes suggest one year or the next. For example, Eleanor gave birth to John on 24 December at King's Manor House, Oxford. However, the year is variously recorded as 1166 or 1167. Similarly, Joanna was born at Angers in October of either 1164 or 1165.

The front cover illustration is Copyright © Duncan Long 2006. Duncan interpreted the limestone carving of Eleanor's and Henry's twinned heads at The Cloisters (of the Metropolitan Museum), in New York. A contemporary writer described the brightness and color of Eleanor's eyes. Forensic artist David Major added 50 years to the same carving to give us Eleanor at eighty (on the last page of the full timeline).

Numbers thus [21] refer to chapters in *POWER OF A WOMAN*.

1099		Crusaders capture Jerusalem
1099		Eleanor's father, Guilhem X, born
1099		Robert d'Arbrissel establishes Fontevrault
1100	Aug	King William Rufus killed. Henry I claims English throne
1100		Henry's Charter of Liberties binds future kings to the law
1103	c.	Eleanor's mother, Anor (Aenor), born
1115		Bernard (later Saint) founds abbey at Clairvaux
1118		Templars' Order founded, at Jerusalem
1120	Nov 26	King Henry I's only male heir, Wm. Atheling, lost at sea
1121		Eleanor's parents, Guilhem X and Anor, marry
1121		The Church makes Abelard burn his book, at Soissons
1122	c.	1/. <b>ELEANOR BORN</b> at Belin, near Bordeaux (local tradition) [1]
1122	or 23	2/. <b>ELEANOR BORN</b> at Nieul
1127		Eleanor's grandfather, Guilhem "the Troubadour" dies
1127		Geoffrey of Anjou marries Empress Matilda of Saxony
1129		Philip, son of Louis VI, crowned as future king of France
1130	c.	Eleanor's mother, Anor, and brother Guilhem Aigret (8), die [1]

"The many bends along the highroad of my life conceal the vistas between this fleeting moment of pure being and ancient recollections coursing like deerhounds through my head. In a life of fourscore years and more, who can look so far back? The very richness of experience crowds and clouds the brains." / Ch. 1

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- 1131 A fall kills Philip, the crowned heir to France [1]
- 1133 March 5 The future Henry II born, at Le Mans
- 1135 Dec 1 King Henry I of England dies, at Rouen
- 1135 Henry I's death starts 19 year war for crown of England
- 1136 Barons swear allegiance to Eleanor on her 14th birthday
- 1137 Gd Friday Eleanor's father, Guilhem X, dies, at Compostela [1]
- June Abbé Suger leads King Louis VI's embassy to Eleanor [1]

"I was certain to my very bones that I was born to rule. I would have achieved the rank of a queen without the whim of a pig!" / Chapter 1

- July 25 Eleanor marries King Louis' son, Louis, in Bordeaux [1]
- Aug 1 King Louis VI dies on the "kalends of August" in Paris [1]
- Aug 8 Louis VII and Eleanor assume titles, at Poitiers [1]
- Aug Eleanor enters Paris as Louis VII's queen [2]
- autumn Louis VII quells rebels in Eleanor's Poitou [2]
- Dec 25 Louis VII crowned, at Bourges
- 1140 Bernard of Clairvaux condemns Abelard, at Sens [2]
- 41/43 Trouble at Bourges. Louis sacks Champagne, burns Vitry [3]
- 1143 King Fulk of Jerusalem's death spurs Muslim advances
- 1144 June 11 Abbé Suger consecrates renovated Abbey of St. Denis [3]

"Men and women fought to place themselves where sunbeams touched them after passing through the stained glass images of Jesus, Mary and the saints." / Chapter 2

- Dec 24 Edessa falls to Muslims. Christians killed, enslaved
- 1145 Eleanor's first living child by Louis, Marie, born [3]
- News reaches Paris of Muslim victories in Holy Land [4]
- Dec 25 Louis announces intention to take the cross, at Bourges [4]
- 1146 end Lent Bernard of Clairvaux calls for Crusade, at Vezelay [4]
- Dec 25 Emperor Conrad accepts Crusade, at Speyer [4]
- 1147 May 12 Louis and Eleanor march out of Paris [4]
- June 11 French and Angevin armies march on Crusade, from Metz [4]
- Oct 4 Louis and Eleanor enter Constantinople [4]
- Oct Armies waste time while leaders tarry in Constantinople [5]

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- mid-Oct French and Angevin armies cross into Asia Minor [5]
- mid-Oct Turkish cavalry routs Conrad's German army [5]
- Dec 25 Storms destroy French and Angevin stores, men, horses [5]
- 1148 Jan Laodiceans refuse supplies to Frankish army [5]
- Jan Turkish cavalry ambushes Franks. Recriminations [5]

"In that terrain the army could do nothing but form defensive clusters and beat off the Turks' attacks. Louis, at the rear, became the center of a group where the press was so thick that his bodyguards forced him into a tree." / Chapter 5

- late winter Leaders abandon infantry, take ship from Antalya [5]
- March 19 Bulk of army reaches Antioch after two weeks at sea [6]
- spring Arguments on strategy strain relations with Raymond [6]
- spring Rift between Louis and Eleanor. Army leaves Antioch [6]
- spring Jerusalem welcomes Frankish army [7]
- June 24 Grand council, at Acre, decides to attack Damascus [7]
- July 24 Damascenes repulse "three kings' attack" [7]
- From Aug Louis VII and Eleanor tarry in Palestine [7]
- Abbot Suger's many letters to Louis urge his return to Paris [7]
- 1149 post-Easter Louis and Eleanor take separate ships from Palestine [8]

"You can imagine our terrors: several vessels bristling with Greeks, unblinking lest they take their eyes off women. Beware of Greeks indeed! And the stench from a galley upwind is a fearsome thing." / Chapter 8

- late July Both come ashore separately in Roger of Sicily's lands [8]
- autumn Raymond of Antioch killed in battle
- Oct 9, 10 Pope Eugenius refuses Eleanor's divorce plea, at Tusculum [9]
- Nov 11 Abbot Suger escorts Louis and Eleanor to Paris [9]
- 49/50 mid-winter Eleanor's second daughter, Alix, born [11]
- 1151 Jan 13 Abbé Suger dies [11]
- Aug Count Geoffrey of Anjou and his son Henry visit Paris [11]

"The Franks unleashed scurrilous rumours, hounding me for years with the suggestion that I, a wife, encouraged Geoffrey's attentions and succumbed to his advances. Malice has me bedding both the father and the son..." / Chapter 11

- Sept 7 Count Geoffrey (Plantagenet) dies, at Chateau du Loir [11]
- autumn Louis and Eleanor tour the south to divorce their affairs [11]

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- 1152 March 21 Louis VII's & Eleanor's marriage annulled, at Beaugency [11]  
 late Mar Eleanor eludes two attempts to seize her for ransom [11]  
 late Mar Eleanor sets up her court at Poitiers [12]  
 spring Negotiations between Eleanor and Henry of Anjou [12]  
 May 18 Eleanor marries the future Henry II, at Poitiers [12]  
 spring Henry beats back punitive raids by Louis and allies [12]  
 summer Eleanor and Henry tour her lands [12]
- 1153 Jan Henry leaves for England. Eleanor based in Angers [13]  
 summer King Stephen's heir to England, Eustace, dies [13]  
 Aug 17 Guillaume, Eleanor's first child by Henry, born at Le Mans [13]  
 Aug 20 Bernard of Clairvaux (soon to be Saint Bernard) dies [13]  
 Dec Negotiations for peace in England succeed [13]
- 1154 Jan 13 Stephen accepts Henry as his heir [13]  
 April Henry returns from England after negotiating for throne [13]  
 Oct 25 King Stephen dies, at Dover [14]  
 Nov Storms prevent Henry and Eleanor crossing Channel [14]  
 Dec Henry II and Eleanor crowned, at Westminster [14]
- 1155 early Thomas à Becket named as Henry's chancellor [15]  
 Feb 28 Henry The Young King born at Bermondsey [15]

"I say this to you now, not from the folly of vanities past, but as the earthly embodiment, long ago, of that essence which is the power of a woman." / Chapter 15

- 1156 April Guillaume (2) dies, at Wallingford Castle [15]  
 June Matilda born, at London [15]
- 1157 Sep 8 or 13 Richard the Lionheart born, Beaumont Palace, Oxford [15]
- 1158 post-haying Becket's diplomacy-by-splendor mission to Paris [16]  
 at harvest Henry and Louis affiance Marguerite to Young Henry [16]  
 Sept 23 Geoffrey Prince of England born [16]
- 1159 summer Henry II's expensive, foiled, attempt to take Toulouse [17]
- 1160 c. Philip of England born to Eleanor. Dies in infancy [17]  
 Oct 4 Queen Constance gives Louis a daughter, and dies [17]  
 Oct Eleanor summoned to bring Young Henry to Normandy [17]  
 Oct Louis marries Adele of Champagne, strengthening ties [17]  
 Nov 5 Strategic marriage of Young Henry (5) to Marguerite (2) [17]

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- Nov Henry seizes the Vexin, Marguerite's dowry [17]
- 1161 April 18 Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury dies [18]
- 1162 post-Easter Henry appoints Becket to See of Canterbury, at Falaise [18]
- post-Easter Becket to England, taking Young Henry, Marguerite [18]
- Oct 13 Eleanor of England born, at Domfront, Normandy [18]
- 1163 Jan 25 Henry, Eleanor return to England after long absence [18]
- July 1 Welsh and Scots rulers do homage to Henry, Young Henry [18]
- Oct Becket objects to Henry forcing common law on Church [19]

"I never could tread the gold-brown tiles at Clarendon without thinking of Henry hurling invective at Thomas, and the archbishop turning his back on the king and walking away. In that instant Young Henry watched the love between his father and his mentor rend like the veil of the Temple." / Chapter 28

- 1164 Jan Second argument over common law, at Clarendon [19]
- Oct 12 Henry tries, and fines, Becket, at Northampton [20]
- Oct Becket flees, via Sandwich, to Louis and the pope [20]
- Dec 26 Henry exiles four hundred of Becket's kin from England [21]
- 1165 summer Henry, at war in Wales, meets "Fair Rosamond" Clifford [22]
- Aug 22 Philip, the future Philip II Augustus, born, at Paris [21]
- Oct (or 1164) Joanna born, at Angers [23]
- 65/66 winter Henry divides time between law-making and Rosamond

What is it about a woman's state that we are bound to hide desires behind a mask of purity? Pah! Within ourselves we are as free as men to lust; but to the world we must appear as saintly as the Virgin. / Chapter 23

- 1166 Easter Pope Alexander names Becket papal legal for England [24]
- Pentecost Becket excommunicates Henry's officers, at Vezelay [24]
- Dec 24 (or 1167) John born, at King's Manor House, Oxford
- 1167 Henry's mother, the Empress Matilda, dies
- Young Matilda betrothed to Henry the Lion of Saxony
- Eleanor decides to separate from Henry [23]
- Eleanor leaves England, establishes Court of Ladies at Poitiers [26]
- 1168 Feb 1 Young Matilda marries Henry the Lion of Saxony
- 1169 Jan 6 Henry II and sons meet Louis VII at Montmirail [25]
- April Eleanor proclaims Richard duke of Aquitaine [26]
- Young Eleanor betrothed to Alfonso, heir to Castille

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- 1170 Jan The pope demands Henry give Becket the kiss of peace [25]  
 March Henry crosses to England to evade papal deadline [25]  
 May 29 Becket's agent stops mass at St. Paul's, and in York [25]  
 June 14 Young Henry crowned, in Westminster Abbey [25]  
 July 20 Henry and Becket attempt reconciliation, at Freteval [25]  
 Dec 1 Becket returns to England, lands at Sandwich [25]  
 Dec 29 Four knights murder Becket in Canterbury Cathedral [25]
- 1171 Aug 8 Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, dies  
 Oct Henry takes ship to Ireland, returns to England in spring
- 1172 spring Henry brings Young Henry, Marguerite to Normandy  
 spring Papal legates meet Henry in Avranches [27]  
 spring Thomas Becket canonized  
 Aug 27 Young Henry crowned again, with Marguerite, Winchester  
 autumn Henry's penance for Becket's death, at Avranches [27]
- 1173 Peter of Blois joins Henry's service
- 1173 spring Rift between Henry II and sons, abetted by Eleanor [27]  
 March 24 Young Henry flees his father, finds refuge in Paris [27]  
 late Mar Richard and Geoffrey also flee to Paris [27]  
 autumn Henry and three sons attempt reconciliation, at Gisors
- 1174 spring Henry ransacks Eleanor's allies, and court, at Poitiers [28]

"A vassal of Philip's, returning to his hall from mine, made the mistake of addressing flatteries to Philip's countess, Isabel, in the fashion of *l'amour courtois*. Whereupon Philip ordered him beaten by butchers and hung upside-down to die with his head in a drain. He lacks restraint who treats his people so."

- June Henry exiles royal women, including Eleanor, to England [28]  
 summer Henry's penance for Becket's death, at Canterbury [28]  
 July Louis, Young Henry and Philip of Flanders besiege Rouen [28]  
 Aug 11 Henry II beats off the allies' attack on Rouen [28]
- 1175 Oct Eleanor refuses Henry's demand for a divorce [28]
- 1176 Rosamond Clifford dies, buried in Godstow Abbey [28]  
 Feb 13 Joanna marries William II of Sicily, at St. Egidius, Palermo
- 1177 The curia denies Henry's plea to divorce Eleanor [30]  
 Richard shows cruelty against rebels, in Limousin [30]  
 Sept 22 Eleanor of England "Leonor" marries Alfonso, at Burgos

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“Granted Rosamond was three-and-thirty. I was forty-four, old enough that I no longer roused passion in the husband whose children I bore. To Henry, my body was as well rehearsed as a hasty Mass before breakfast. But kill her? No, I would not dignify his harlot in that way. No plot of mine would stoop to canonise her beauty by sealing it in death. Unless perhaps my prayers condemned her.” / Chapter 28

- |       |             |  |
|-------|-------------|--|
| 1179  |             | Henry compels Eleanor to cede lands to Richard               |
|       | May         | Richard wars rebellious vassals, razes Taillebourg [30]      |
|       | summer      | King Louis visits Becket’s shrine, at Canterbury [31]        |
|       | Nov 1       | Philip Augustus crowned on All Saints Day, at Reims [31]     |
| 1180  | c.          | Alfonso VIII founds Las Huelgas de Burgos for Leonor         |
|       | c.          | Joanna’s child by William, Boemond, dies in infancy          |
|       | Feb         | King Philip assumes his father’s regal powers [31]           |
|       | March       | Philip levies heavy taxes on Jews to replenish treasury      |
|       | April 28    | King Philip’s first marriage, to Isabelle of Hainault        |
|       | May 29      | Philip and Isabelle crowned, in St. Denis                    |
|       | Sept 18     | King Louis VII dies, at the abbey of Saint-Port [31]         |
| 1182  | summer      | Henry II and Richard crush rebels in Aquitaine               |
|       | autumn      | Henry the Lion, Matilda and family exiled. Flee to Rouen     |
| 1183  | spring      | Strife between Henry II and two sons, at Limoges [33]        |
|       | June 11     | Henry The Young King dies, at Martel [33]                    |
|       | Dec         | Henry II and King Philip confer, at Gisors [34]              |
| 1186  |             | Henry the Lion and Matilda return to Saxony                  |
|       | summer      | Henry, Eleanor and sons confer, at Windsor [34]              |
|       | Aug 18      | Geoffrey dies, at Paris [34]                                 |
| 1187  | Sept 17     | Saladin’s forces capture Jerusalem                           |
| ’87/8 |             | Blanca “Blanche” born, to Leonor, in Valencia                |
| 1188  | Jan 21, 22  | Henry and Philip make peace, take the cross, at Gisors [35]  |
|       | Jan 22      | Archbishop of Tyre warns kings of Muslim victories [35]      |
|       | Feb         | Henry prepares English and Welsh barons for Crusade [35]     |
|       | Mar 27      | Barbarossa and German barons take the cross, at Mainz        |
|       | summer      | Armed for Crusade, crusaders fight each other [35]           |
|       | Aug 16      | French soldiers fell the parlay tree, the elm of Gisors [35] |
|       | Aug 16      | The kings learn that Saladin has taken Jerusalem [35]        |
| 1189  |             | Henry II names Henry de Sully abbot of Glastonbury           |
|       | to end Lent | Henry lies ill in his native city, Le Mans [36]              |
|       | June 28     | Matilda dies, at Brunswick                                   |

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- July King Philip and Richard dictate terms to the dying Henry  
 July 6 Henry II dies, at Chinon [36]
- “Some years before I arrived [at Fontevrault] to live among the quick, Henry’s remains arrived, to rest among the dead. We make a fine complement, he and I: together we command two kingdoms, the quick and the dead.” / Chapter 36
- July Richard confirms father’s gift, a bride for Wm. Marshall [36]  
 July Eleanor freed, assumes the regency of England [37]  
 July 20 Richard invested as duke of Normandy  
 Sept 3 King Richard crowned [37]  
 Nov 11 William II of Sicily dies, leaving Joanna a widow  
 Dec 11 King Richard takes the cross [38]
- 1190 Glastonbury monks find “Arthur’s” grave  
 Peter of Blois serves as Eleanor’s secretary until 1195
- June 10 Emperor Frederick Barbarossa drowns on Crusade  
 July 4 Richard, Philip agree Crusade strategy, leave Vezelay  
 Aug 7 Richard sails, ahead of army, from Marseilles [38]  
 Sept. 24 Richard lands at Messina, Sicily, ahead of troops [38]  
 autumn Philip joins Richard at Messina [38]
- ’90/1 winter Richard rescues sister Joanna & property from Tancred [38]
- 1191 Feb 2 Richard and Philip quarrel, over Joanna and Alix [38]  
 March 30 Philip sails from Messina, bound for Acre [38]  
 March 30 Eleanor brings Richard’s bride, Berengaria, to Messina [38]  
 April 10 Richard’s army sails from Messina, bound for Acre  
 Easter Day Eleanor reaches Rome, lobbies Pope Celestine III [38]  
 May 12 Richard marries Berengaria, at Limassol, Cyprus [39]  
 early June Richard’s fleet reaches Acre [39]  
 July 12, 13 Acre falls to Christian forces after two-year siege [39]  
 July 28 King Philip leaves Acre [39]  
 Aug 20 Richard executes two thousand prisoners of war [39]  
 Sep Richard offers Joanna to Saladin’s brother. She refuses [39]  
 Sep 2 Leaders agree to Treaty of Haifa [39]
- 1192 Aug 1 Richard, with a small force, relieves Jaffa [39]  
 Aug 9 Christians and Muslims reach a “three-year truce” [39]  
 Oct 9 Richard leaves Palestine [40]

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- Dec 20 Leopold captures Richard, near Vienna [40]
- Dec Richard described as “emperor’s enemy” [40]
- 1193 March 23 Duke Leopold relinquishes captive to Hohenstaufen [40]
- April Richard described as emperor’s “dearest” [40]
- ’92/4 Eleanor works to collect Richard’s ransom [40]

“Richard, the only Christian commander apart from Flanders to acquit himself honourably in the war for the holy places, set his face for home. This was a full year after the oath-breaker, Philip of France, abandoned Richard in Palestine and returned to piss on the Truce of God and plot with John.” / Chapter 40

- 1193 Easter Richard refutes Hohenstaufen’s charges, at Speyer [40]
- Aug 14, 15 King Philip marries, repudiates Ingeborg of Denmark [40]
- Dec Eleanor escorts Richard’s ransom to Mainz [40]
- 1194 Feb 3 Eleanor appears before Hohenstaufen with ransom [40]
- Feb 3 Richard is released [40]
- Mar 13 Richard and Eleanor land in England, at Sandwich [41]
- spring Richard retakes English towns, including Nottingham [41]
- Richard’s only, brief, visit to Sherwood Forest [41]
- 1195 c. Death of Alix, Eleanor’s second daughter by Louis [41]
- Henry the Lion of Saxony, Matilda’s widower, dies [41]
- 1196 Oct Joanna marries again; Count Raymond VI of Toulouse [41]
- 1196 June 11 King Philip’s bigamous marriage to Agnes of Meranie [41]
- 1198 March 11 Death of Marie, Eleanor’s firstborn [41]
- 1198 July 10 Aachen opens its gates to Otto’s troops
- 1198 July 12 Eleanor’s grandson Otto crowned emperor, in Cologne
- 1199 Jan 13 Innocent III imposes a truce on Richard and Philip
- April 6 Richard dies, at Chalus [42]
- April 25 John becomes duke of Normandy [42]
- May 27 John crowned king of England, at Westminster [42]
- Aug-Sept Joanna escapes rebellious troops. Reaches Rouen [42]
- Sep 4 Joanna delivers a son at Rouen. Both die. [42]
- Sep John escorts Joanna’s bier to Fontevrault [42]

“We had better surgeons during my Crusade than we have enjoyed these past forty years... Pope Alexander—whom Henry and Louis were fools to support!—proclaimed a great folly: “The Church abhors the shedding of blood.” Overnight, physicians stopped practising surgery, for the best of our surgeons were priests. So we endure pig-gelders, barbers and lumpen hangmen styling themselves surgeons.” / Ch. 42

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- 1200 New Year Eleanor travels “after Christmas” to Castile [43]  
mid-Jan Eleanor reaches court of Alfonso and Leonor, Burgos [43]  
Feb Eleanor selects Blanca/Blanche to marry French heir [43]  
Easter Eleanor reaches Bordeaux with Blanche [43]  
Mercadier stabbed and killed, at Bordeaux [43]  
May 23 Blanche marries future Louis VIII, at Pont Audemer [43]  
Aug 26 John marries Isabella, fiancée of Hughes le Brun [44]  
Oct 8 Isabella crowned, at Westminster [44]  
Dec 1 Bishop (later Saint) Hugh of Lincoln dies, at London [44]  
Dec John attends Bishop Hugh’s funeral, at Lincoln [44]
- 1201 summer John and Isabella return to Normandy [44]  
July Amicable relations between Kings John and Philip [44]  
July Philip takes back Ingeborg; Agnes dies of shock [44]
- 1202 April Philip summons John to Paris. John does not attend [44]  
spring Philip, Arthur and Lusignans attack Normandy [44]  
July Eleanor flees Fontevrault for greater safety in Poitiers [44]  
July 30 Arthur of Brittany besieges Eleanor, at Mirebeau [44]  
Aug 1 John’s force breaks the siege, captures Arthur [44]  
autumn John’s alienated allies capture Angers [44]
- 1203 Gd Fri Eve Probable death of Arthur in John’s custody [44]  
Angevin fortunes continue to decline [44]
- 1204 March 31 **ELEANOR DIES**, at Poitiers or Fontevrault [45]  
1204 April 1 **ELEANOR DIES** (the more commonly accepted date)

“How fortunate I was in my husbands: the monk, and the young bull in spring. Whether they would or not, they placed me on a promontory against which tides of time have crashed and fallen back. They left me worn, these men and their tides, but they did not level me.” / Chapter 45

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Eleanor of Aquitaine in old age, Copyright © by David Major

I commissioned two likenesses of Eleanor of Aquitaine, both interpreting the limestone bust at the Metropolitan Museum's Cloisters, in New York. Duncan Long gave us the front cover likeness of Eleanor at thirty. Forensic artist David Major added fifty years to the same carving to reveal Eleanor at eighty.

Robert Fripp, 2010

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