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Robert de Ros (died 1227)

Sir **Robert de Ros** (died about 1227) was an Anglo-Norman feudal baron, soldier, and administrator, who was one of the Twenty-Five Barons appointed under clause 61 of the 1215 <u>Magna Carta</u> agreement to monitor its observance by King John of England.^{[1][2]}

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Origins

Born about 1182, he was the son and heir of Everard de Ros (died before 1184) and his wife Roese (died 1194), daughter of William Trussebut, of Warter.^{[1][2]} The Ros family, from the village of <u>Roos</u> in Yorkshire, had in 1158 acquired the barony of <u>Helmsley</u>, also in Yorkshire, and before 1189 by gift of King Henry II the barony of Wark on Tweed in Northumberland.^[3]

Career

Left fatherless, his lands were initially in the keeping of the Chief Justiciar of England, <u>Ranulf de Glanvill</u>.^[2] In 1191, though under age, he paid a 1000 mark fee to inherit his father's lands.^[1] In that year he also married a widow who was an illegitimate daughter of King <u>William I</u> of Scotland.^{[1][2]} Later he inherited from his mother one-third of the Trussebut estates, which included lands near the town of <u>Bonneville-sur-Touques</u> in <u>Normandy</u>, of which he became hereditary <u>bailiff</u> and <u>castellan</u>.^{[1][2]}

In 1196, during fighting between King <u>Richard I of England</u> and King <u>Philip II of France</u>, Richard captured a French knight worth a significant ransom and put him in the castle of Bonneville. When the keeper of the castle let the knight escape, an angry Richard had the man hanged and imprisoned Ros, fining him 1200 marks (though he was later let off 275 marks).^{[1][2]}

Like many magnates, he had an uneasy relationship with King John after 1199. He witnessed the King's charters, served in his armies, went on diplomatic missions for him (one in 1199 to Ros' father-in-law in Scotland), and on one occasion was reported gambling with him in Ireland. Tension arose in 1205, when John ordered his lands to be seized but later relented.^[1] It was possibly then that his younger son was taken as a hostage by the King.^{[1][2]}

-	Arms of Robert de Ros	
f v f v	Blazon: G	ules, three water bougets argent.
	Born	about 1182
	Died	about 1227
	Buried	Temple Church, London, England
	Spouse(s)	Isabella
	Issue William de Ros Robert de Ros	
e 1	Father	Everard de Ros
9	Mother	Roese Trussebut

Robert de Ros

In 1206 he was given permission to mortgage his lands if during the next three years he went to Jerusalem, as a crusading knight or as an individual pilgrim.^{[1][2]} The permission was renewed in 1207, but his record was marred by the escape that year of another prisoner under his supervision, for which he was fined 300 marks. Back in favour in 1209, he was sent again on a diplomatic mission to Scotland but does not seem to have gone to Palestine,^[1] for in 1210 he was serving with John in Ireland.^[2]

In 1212, on account of him entering a monastic order, John gave custody of his lands to Sir <u>Philip Oldcoates</u>. But he reentered secular life the next year, when the King made him <u>sheriff of Cumberland</u> and appointed him to a commission investigating grievances in <u>Lincolnshire</u> and <u>Yorkshire</u>. In the latter county, he worked for a reconciliation between John and William de Forz, heir to the extensive estates there of Hawise, Countess of Aumale.^[1]

In October 1213 he was one of the witnesses when John surrendered England to the authority of the Pope and he was one of the twelve guarantors appointed to ensure John kept his promises.^{[1][2]} Throughout the disturbances of 1214 and the first quarter of 1215 he remained loyal to John, being rewarded with royal manors in Cumberland and royal support for the election of his aunt as <u>abbess</u> of <u>Barking Abbey</u>. However he then joined the rebel barons as one of the 25 chosen to enforce observance of the Magna Carta agreement, being appointed by them to control Yorkshire and possibly Northumberland. For this he was excommunicated by the Pope, and John gave his lands to William de Forz.^[1]

Ordered by John to give up <u>Carlisle Castle</u>, he did so but remained on the rebel side after the death of John in October 1216, supporting <u>Prince Louis</u> even after his elder son was captured by the loyalist side in May 1217. He finally submitted later that year, and regained most of his lands. Intermittent unrest in Yorkshire continued, with fighting in 1220 between his men and those of the sheriff,^[1] followed in 1221 with him being summoned to help take and destroy <u>Skipsea Castle</u> during the rebellion of William de Forz.^{[1][2]}

In 1225 he was one of the witnesses to the reissue of Magna Carta and by the end of 1226 had re-entered a monastic order,^{[1][2]} possibly the <u>Knights Templar</u>. His Helmsley estates, where he had fortified the castle, then went to his elder son, while Wark, also fortified by him, went to the younger.^{[2][3]} He died that year, or in 1227, and was buried in the Temple Church in London.^[1]

Benefactions

He was a supporter of the Knights Templar, giving them lands in Yorkshire that included <u>Ribston</u>, where they set up a <u>commandery</u>. At <u>Bolton</u> in Northumberland, he founded a <u>leper hospital</u> dedicated to <u>St Thomas Becket</u>,^[1] endowing it with extensive lands. He was also a benefactor of Rievaulx Abbey, Newminster Abbey, and Kirkham Priory.^[2]

Family

Early in 1191, at <u>Haddington</u> near <u>Edinburgh</u>, he married <u>Isabella</u>, widow of <u>Robert III de Brus</u> and illegitimate daughter of King William I.^{[1][2]} Her mother was said to be a daughter of Robert Avenel.

Their children included:

William (died about 1265), of Helmsley, whose wife was named Lucy,^[2] and their son was Robert (died 1285).^[1]

Robert (died about 1270), of Wark, who married Christina,^[3] daughter of William Bertram, of <u>Mitford</u>, and their son Robert (died about 1274) was his heir.^[3]

References

- 1. Thomas, Hugh M. (22 September 2005), "Ros, Robert de (c. 1182–1226/7)", <u>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</u> <u>(Subscription or UK public library membership needed)</u> (https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24077), retrieved 7 May 2018
- 2. Geoffrey H. White, ed. (1949), "Ros", *The Complete Peerage* (https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?d ps_pid=IE3729993), XI, London: The St Catherine Press, p. 92, retrieved 7 May 2018
- 3. Vincent, Nicholas (25 May 2006), "Ros, Robert de (d. c. 1270)", Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Subscription or UK public library membership needed) (https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24078), retrieved 7 May 2018

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