Juhel de Totnes

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Juhel de Totnes (died 1123/30) (*alias* Juhel fitz Alfred, Juhel de Mayenne,[1] Judel, Judhel, Judael, Judhael, Joel, Judhel de Totenais), Latinised to Judhellus filius Aluredi, "Juhel son of Alured") was a soldier and supporter of William the Conqueror (1066-1087). He was the first Anglo-Norman feudal baron of Totnes and feudal baron of Barnstaple, both in Devon.

Origins

He originated either in Brittany or in Mayenne, in the Pays de la Loire/Maine, as his surname of *de Mayenne* given in an early charter suggests. He was the son of a certain Alfred, Latinised to *Aluredus*,[2] expressed in Anglo-Norman French as *fitz Alfred* (i.e. Latin *filius*, modern French *fils de*, "son of"). He had a brother named Robert (Latin: *Rotbertus*) named in the foundation charter of Totnes Priory, c. 1087.

Career

In 1069 Juhel was one of the leaders of the Breton forces on the Norman side, fighting against the remaining forces that had been loyal to King Harold.[3] He had been granted by William the Conqueror the feudal barony of Totnes, Devon, and held many manors in south-west England, at the time of the Domesday Book of 1086, including Clawton, Broadwood Kelly, Bridford and Cornworthy.[4][5][6][7] In about 1087, he founded Totnes Priory. He was expelled from the barony of Totnes shortly after the death of King William I in 1087. According to the historian Frank Barlow (1983), King William II "replaced the Breton Judhel, whom he expelled from Totnes at the beginning of his reign for an unknown reason, with his favourite, Roger I of Nonant".[8] However at some time before 1100 Juhel was granted the large feudal barony of Barnstaple, Devon.[9]

Progeny

Juhel had two daughters and a son named Alfred, the latter who died without progeny before 1139.[10] Alfred's two sisters, one of whose name is unknown and Aenor, were his co-heiresses, each inheriting a moiety of the barony of Barnstaple. The unnamed sister married Henry de Tracy[11] whilst Aenor married Philip de Braose (d. 1134/55), feudal baron of Bramber, Sussex and a Marcher Lord.,[12] son of William I de Braose (d. 1093/6). In 1206 Juhel's great-grandson William III de Braose (1140/50-1211) regained control of 1/2 the barony of Totnes.[13]

Death

Juhel was still living in 1123 but had died before 1130.[14]

References

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2. Aluredus (nominative case), Aluredi (genitive)
3. E. M. R. Ditmas, "Reappraisal of Geoffrey of Monmouth's Allusions to Cornwall", *Speculum*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Jul., 1973), pp. 510-524.
4. "British History Online : Parishes : Parishes : Cadbury - Clawton". British-history.ac.uk. Retrieved 21 January 2016.
5. "British History Online : Parishes : Bridestowe - Butterleigh". British-history.ac.uk. Retrieved 25 November 2014.
6. "British History Online : Parishes : Parishes : Bickton - Bridford". British-history.ac.uk. Retrieved 25 November 2014.
7. "British History Online : Parishes : Parishes : Colyton - Culmstock". British-history.ac.uk. Retrieved 21 January 2016.
8. Barlow, F., *William Rufus* (1983), p. 171.
9. Sanders, I. J., *English Baronies*, Oxford, 1960, p. 104, Barnstaple
10. Sanders, I. J., *English Baronies*, Oxford, 1960, p. 104, Barnstaple
11. https://www.archive.org/stream/conquerorhiscomp02planuoft/conquerorhiscomp02planuoft_djvu.txt Excerpt: TRACIE, "Sire de," 1. 13,605. The Norman family of Tracy does not appear to have been of much importance in England before the reign of Stephen, who bestowed upon Henry de Tracy the honour of Benstable (Barnstaple) in Devonshire ; but the first of the name we hear of is Turgis, or Turgisins de Tracy, who with William de la Ferte was defeated and driven out of Maine by Fulk le Rechin, Count of Anjou, in 1073, and who was therefore in all probability the Sire de Tracy in the army at Hastings. Tracy is in the neighbourhood of Vire, arrondissement of Caen, and the ruins of a magnificent castle of the middle ages were and may still be seen there. In 1082 a charter was subscribed at Tracy by a William de Traci and his nephew Gilbert (Gallia Christina, xi. Instrum. p. 107), one or the other being most likely the son of Turgis, and the father of Henry of Barnstaple. The name of Tracy- is principally known to the readers of English history from the unenviable notoriety of a William de Tracy, one of the cowardly murderers of Thomas & Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1170 ; but his connection with the inain line is obscure, as in his charter granting to the Canons of Torre, in the county of Devon, all his lands at North Chillingford, he writes himself William de Traci, son of Gervase de Courtenay, whose name I do not find in the pedigree of that house. Publication: THE CONQUEROR AND HIS COMPANIONS. Author: James Robinson Planché, Somerset Herald. Publisher: Tinsley Brothers, 8, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND, LONDON. Year: 1874.
12. Cokayne, George E (1910), *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct or Dormant*, **I**, London: St Catherine Press, p. 21
13. Sanders, I. J., *English Baronies*, Oxford, 1960, pp. 89-90, Totnes
14. Sanders, p.104

Further reading

- John Bryan Williams, "Judhael of Totnes: The Life and Times of a Post-Conquest Baron", *Anglo-Norman Studies*; 16 (1993) pp. 271–289

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