

Roger de Montgomerie, 1st Earl of Shrewsbury

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Roger de Montgomerie (died 1094), also known as **Roger the Great de Montgomery**, was the first Earl of Shrewsbury, and Earl of Arundel, Sussex. His father was Roger de Montgomery, seigneur of Montgomery, and was a relative, probably a grandnephew, of the Duchess Gunnor, wife of Duke Richard I of Normandy. The elder Roger had large holdings in central Normandy, chiefly in the valley of the Dives, which the younger Roger inherited.

Contents

- 1 Life
- 2 Notes
- 3 References
- 4 External links

Life

Roger was one of William the Conqueror's principal counsellors, playing a major role in the Council of Lillebonne. He may not have fought in the initial invasion of England in 1066, instead staying behind to help govern Normandy. According to Wace's *Roman de Rou*, however, he commanded the Norman right flank at Hastings, returning to Normandy with King William in 1067.^[1] Afterwards he was entrusted with land in two places critical for the defence of England, receiving the Rape of Arundel at the end of 1067 (or in early 1068), and in November 1071 he was created Earl of Shrewsbury; a few historians believe that while he received the Shropshire territories in 1071 he was not created Earl until a few years later.

Roger was thus one of the half dozen greatest magnates in England during William the Conqueror's reign. William gave Earl Roger nearly all of what is now the county of West Sussex, which at the time of the Domesday Survey was the Rape of Arundel.^[2] The Rape of Arundel was eventually split into two rapes, one continuing with the name Rape of Arundel and the other became the Rape of Chichester.^[2] Besides the 83 manors in Sussex, his possessions also included seven-eighths of Shropshire which was associated with the earldom of Shrewsbury, he had estates in Surrey (4 manors), Hampshire (9 manors), Wiltshire (3 manors), Middlesex (8 manors), Gloucestershire (1 manor), Worcestershire (2 manors), Cambridgeshire (8 manors), Warwickshire (11 manors) and Staffordshire (30 manors).^[3] The income from Roger's estates would amount to about £2000 per year, in 1086 the landed wealth for England was around £72,000, so it would have represented almost 3% of the nation's GDP.^{[4][5]}

After William I's death in 1087, Roger joined with other rebels to overthrow the newly crowned King William II in the Rebellion of 1088. However, William was able to convince Roger to abandon the rebellion and side with him. This worked out favourably for Roger, as the rebels were beaten and lost their land holdings in England.

Roger first married Mabel de Bellême, who was heiress to a large territory straddling the border between Normandy and Maine. The medieval chronicler Orderic Vitalis paints a picture of Mabel of Bellême being a scheming and cruel woman.^[6] She was murdered by Hugh Bunel and his brothers, who in December 1077? rode into her castle of Bures-sur-Dive and cut off her head as she lay in bed.^{[6][7]} Their motive for the murder was that Mabel had deprived them of their paternal inheritance.^[8] Roger and Mabel had 10 children:

- Robert de Bellême, Count of Alençon in 1082, he succeeded his younger brother Hugh as 3rd Earl of Shrewsbury. He married Agnes, Countess of Ponthieu and died in 1131.^[9]
- Hugh of Montgomery, 2nd Earl of Shrewsbury, died without issue 1098.^[10]
- Roger the Poitevin, Vicomte d'Hiemois, married Adelmode de la Marche.^[11]
- Philip of Montgomery.^[12]
- Arnulf of Montgomery,^[12] married Lafracota daughter of Muirchertach Ua Briain.^[13]
- Sibyl of Montgomery, she married Robert Fitzhamon, Lord of Creully.^[14]
- Emma, abbess of Almenêches.^[15]
- Matilda (Maud) of Montgomery, she married Robert, Count of Mortain and died c. 1085.^[16]
- Mabel of Montgomery, she married Hugh de Châteauneuf.^[12]
- Roger of Montgomery, died young.

Roger then married Adelaide du Puiset, by whom he had one son, Everard, who entered the Church.

After his death, Roger's estates were divided.^[17] The eldest surviving son, Robert of Bellême, received the bulk of the Norman estates (as well as his mother's estates); the next son, Hugh, received the bulk of the English estates and the Earldom of Shrewsbury.^[17] After Hugh's death the elder son Robert inherited the earldom.^[17]

Notes

1. Lee, S., ed. (1897). *Dictionary of National Biography* vol. 49. London: Smith, Elder & Co. p. 101.
2. Salzman.'The rape of Chichester: Introduction', A History of the County of Sussex: Volume 4: The Rape of Chichester (1953), pp. 1-2. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=41682> Date accessed: 8 August 2010
3. Horsfield. History of Sussex. pp.76 - 77
4. Domesday Pase (http://domesday.pase.ac.uk/?tab=stat&pag=38&Text_1=roger&Text_2=earl&q=1&SearchField_2=englishDescriptor&sizeGroup=TRW)
5. Britnel, R.H.; Campbell, Bruce M. S., eds. (1995). "Appendix 2". *A Commercialising Economy: England, 1086 to c1300*. Manchester University Press; 1st edition. ISBN 0-7190-3994-0.
6. Vitalis.The ecclesiastical history of Orderic Vitalis, Volume 2 Book 3. pp.49-55
7. Vitalis. The ecclesiastical history of Orderic Vitalis, Volume 2 Book 3. Footnote pp.54-55. Discussion on date of death of Mabel of Bellême, 1077 and 1079 being the most likely.
8. Allen Brown. Proceedings of the Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman studies: 1978. p.41.
9. George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage; or, A History of the House of Lords and all its Members from the Earliest Times*, Volume XI, Ed. Geoffrey H. White (The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., London, 1949), p. 695
10. George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England Scotland Ireland Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant Extinct or Dormant*, Vol. I, Ed. Vicary Gibbs (The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., London, 1910), p. 233
11. George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England Scotland Ireland Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant Extinct or Dormant*, Vol. IV, Ed. Vicary Gibbs (The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., London, 1916), p. Appendix I, p. 762
12. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, *Domesday People, Vol. I Domesday Book* (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, UK, 1999), p. 399
13. W.H. Turton, *The Plantagenet Ancestry; Being Tables Showing Over 7,000 of the Ancestors of Elizabeth (daughter of Edward IV, and wife of Henry VII) the Heiress of the Plantagenets* (Genealogical Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1968), p. 144
14. George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England Scotland Ireland Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant Extinct or Dormant*, Vol. V, Ed. H. A. Doubleday & Howard de Walden (The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., London, 1926), p. 683
15. J.R. Planché, *The Conqueror and His Companions*, Vol. I (Tinsley Brothers, London, 1874), p. 202
16. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, *Domesday People, Vol. I Domesday Book* (The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, UK, 1999), p. 372
17. George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage; or, A History of the House of Lords and all its Members from the Earliest Times*, Vol XI, Ed. Geoffrey H. White (London: The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., 1949), pp. 688, 689-92

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External links

- Roger 4 (<http://www.pase.ac.uk/jsp/ASC/person.jsp?personKey=19576>) at Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England
- VIMOUTIERS Heart of the Pays d'Auge in Normandy
 - OLD PICTURES - VINTAGE CARDS (http://vimoutiers.net/Pictures_surroundings.htm) (scroll down to **On Roger de Mont Gommeri's lands** section)
 - More about Mont Gommeri (<http://vimoutiers.net/montg/montgeng.htm>)
- The Castles of Wales: Roger of Montgomery (http://www.castlewales.com/roger_m.html)

Peerage of England		
Preceded by New Creation	Earl of Shrewsbury 1074–1094	Succeeded by Hugh of Montgomery

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