

Richard Fitz Gilbert de Clare

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Richard fitz Gilbert de Clare (died 15 April 1136) Lord of Clare, was an Anglo-Norman nobleman. A marcher lord in Wales, he was also the founder of Tonbridge Priory in Kent.

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Life

Richard was the eldest son of Gilbert Fitz Richard de Clare and Adeliza de Claremont.^[1] At his father's death he inherited his lands in England and Wales. He is commonly said to have been created Earl of Hertford by either Henry I or Stephen, but no contemporary reference to him, including the record of his death, calls him by any title, while a cartulary states that a tenant had held “*de Gilleberto, filio Richardi, et de Ricardo, filio ejus, et postea, de Comite Gilleberto, filio Richardi*“ (of Gilbert Fitz Richard, and his son Richard, and then of Earl Gilbert Fitz Richard), again failing to call Richard ‘Earl’ while giving that title to his son. Thus his supposed creation as Earl is without merit.^[1]

Directly following the death of Henry I hostilities increased significantly in Wales and a rebellion broke out.^[2] Robert was a strong supporter of King Stephen and in the first two years of his reign Robert attested a total of twenty-nine of that king's charters^[3] He was with king Stephen when he formalized a treaty with king David I of Scotland and was a royal steward at Stephen's great Easter court in 1136.^[3] He was also with Stephen at the siege of Exeter that summer and was in attendance on the king on his return from Normandy. At this point Richard apparently demanded more land in Wales which Stephen was not willing to give him.^[3] In 1136 Richard had been away from his lordship in the early part of the year. He returned to the borders of Wales via Hereford in the company of Brian Fitz Count, but on their separating, Richard ignored warnings of the danger and pressed on toward Ceredigion with only a small force.^[4] He had not gone far when on 15 April he was ambushed and killed by the men of Gwent under Iorwerth ab Owain and his brother Morgan, grandsons of Caradog ap Gruffydd, in a woody tract called “the ill-way of Coed Grano”, near Llanthony Abbey, north of Abergavenny.^[5] Today the spot is marked by the ‘garreg dial’ (the stone of revenge).^[6] He was buried in Tonbridge Priory,^[7] which he founded.^[1]

Aftermath

Richard Fitz Gilbert de Clare

Born	Clare, Suffolk, England
Died	15 April 1136 <div>Abergavenny, Monmouthshire</div>
Resting place	Tonbridge Priory
Title	Lord of Clare
Tenure	c. 1114/17 – 1136
Other titles	Lord of Tonbridge <div>Lord of Cardigan</div>
Predecessor	Gilbert Fitz Richard de Clare
Successor	Gilbert de Clare, 1st Earl of Hertford
Spouse(s)	Alice de Gernon
Parents	Gilbert Fitz Richard de Clare <div>Adeliza de Claremont</div>

The news of Richard's death induced Owain Gwynedd, son of Gruffydd ap Cynan, king of Gwynedd to invade his Lordship. In alliance with Gruffydd ap Rhys of Deheubarth, he won a crushing victory over the Normans at the Battle of Crug Mawr, just outside Cardigan. The town of Cardigan was taken and burnt, and Richard's widow, Adelize, took refuge in Cardigan Castle, which was successfully defended by Robert fitz Martin. She was rescued by Miles of Gloucester who led an expedition to bring her to safety in England.^[1]

Family

Richard married Adeliz, sister of Ranulf de Gernon, 4th Earl of Chester,^[1] by her having:

- Gilbert Fitz Richard de Clare, d. 1153 (without issue), 1st Earl of Hertford.^[8]
- Roger de Clare, d. 1173, 2nd Earl of Hertford.^[8]
- Alice de Clare (Adelize de Tonbridge), m. (1) about 1133, Sir William de Percy, Lord of Topcliffe, son of Alan de Percy and Emma de Gant; (2) Cadwaladr ap Gruffydd, brother of Owain Gwynedd
- Robert Fitz Richard de Clare, perhaps died in childhood
- Rohese de Clare, m. Gilbert de Gant, Earl of Lincoln.^[9]

References

- ↑ ***^a*** ***^b*** ***^c*** ***^d*** ***^e*** George Cokayne,*The Complete Peerage of England Scotland Ireland Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant Extinct or Dormant*, Vol. III, Ed. Vicary Gibbs (London: St Catherine Press, 1913), p. 243
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- ↑ Anna Tucker, *Gwent* (Princes Risborough: Shire, 1987), p. 40
- ↑ James Foster Wadmore, *The priory of s. Mary Magdalene at Tonbridge* (London: Michell & Hughes, 1881), p. 8
- ↑ ***^a*** ***^b*** George Cokayne,*The Complete Peerage of England Scotland Ireland Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant Extinct or Dormant*, Vol. III, Ed. Vicary Gibbs (London: St Catherine Press, 1913), p. 244
- ↑ George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage; or, a History of the House of Lords and all its Members from the Earliest Times*, Vol. VI, Eds. H. A. Doubleday & Howard de Walden (London: The St. Catherine Press, Ltd., 1926), p. 645

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