



400 Years for the town Roop and the Rosen family

Revised research findings by Julius Baron v. Rosen 16i

The research findings by Julius 16i regarding the “small town of Roop” have been published in the family newsletter no. 51. They consist primarily in a data collection from the first half of the second millennium, when “Roop” was mentioned in documents. Linked to that are individual descriptions, assumptions and interpretations. However, this is not a “history” of the town of Roop. Further data regarding the history of Roop have been included in the family history. Even though the collection of Julius is over a hundred years old, it serves as an important source for new research in the Latvia of today. (Edgars Plētiens: Die Burg und die Stadt im Livland im 13.-16. Jh.: Das Beispiel von Roop. [Castle and town in Livonia in the 13th to 16th centuries. Roop as an example.] Riga 2015). This work now paints a picture of the “town of Roop” starting from the Christianisation of old Livonia to the end of the 16th century, which has clearly been shaped by the “rule” of our families over Roop. This research may be supplemented by documentary material from our archive.

As part of the German eastern colonisation starting from the end of the first millennium, at the end of the 12th century the so called “Aufsegelung” [setting sail for] Old Livonia took place. Meinhard, the first bishop of Livonia, ran a “peaceful” mission in Livonia from 1180 to 1196. It was under his two successors that the missionary work was based on the sword. It based on the formation of its own see, of monasteries and towns as well as a chivalric power and an administrative structure for the country. Added to that, there was the commercial association of the Hanseatic “free” trade with its own legal system, the so called Lübeck Law. The first town foundation in the Baltic and at the same time see of the bishop was Üxküll on an island in the Düne. Probably the first monastery was Dünamünde, built prior to 1210, which, located on the northern shore of the Düna, secured the strategically important shipping route across the sea via Düna/Daugava and Jegel/Jugla into the country.

The ancestors of our family, from the families of the de Buxhoeveden as well as the de Luneborg, were among the first that arrived in the country alongside Albert von Buxhoeveden, the

third bishop of Livonia. Theoderich, the “bishop’s brother”, is mentioned for the first time in a document dating to 1203. And Helmold de Lunebord is mentioned alongside Theoderich and others for the first time in 1224 in a document referring to the enfeoffment in Odenpä with a government district in today’s northern Estonia.

Theoderich had already been invested with the district Idumäa or Rosula in 1211. In this area, the priest Daniel had founded a church in 1206 “supra raupam” (i. e. on the upper river Raupa”). This same name for the location was also used 1218 by Heinrich von Lettland, the Priest of the Latvians and Chronicler of the time, for the court of the priest. This refers to the place on the Baukaln, east of today’s Great Roop, where the then church of the Livonians in the area of Rosula stood until the end of the 18th century. Heinrich’s church of the Latvians still stands today in Papendorf/Rubene, a few kilometres further east. From the general area name “supra raupam” it can be concluded that at the time no town or castle of the same name existed - otherwise the church would have been built there or at least mentioned with the neighbouring village.

At this point, we have to ask ourselves first of all what the term “raupa” or “Roope” meant, as the river is called Brasle or Strajaupe, and there is a second river in Latvia with the same name.

The second river is mentioned in a document dated 1221. It got this name¹ when, in 1221, following the building of a bridge over the river then called Jegel, today Jugla, Bishop Albert appointed Theodericus “de Raupena” as the person responsible for the strategically extremely important bridge. It links the route from the South from Riga via Üxküll with the country to the north and northeast and leads on to the north and northeast to Incukalns/Hinzenberg with a crossing of the rivers Gauja/Livonian Aa in the direction of Ledurga/Loddiger or Straupe/Roop as well as Limbazi/Lemsal and Sigulda/Segewold with a crossing to Tureida/Threyden. After 1260, this corduroy road with bridge over the Jegel was called the “Lange Brücke [long bridge]” and later den Neuermühlensche Damm [Newer Mill Dam]. During military conflicts, it repeatedly played an important role. On 24 June 1298, Otto v. Rosen² was captured or killed there in a battle against the order. Since the early Twenties of the last century, the town and the castle ruin carried again the Latvian name Ropaži.

According to Bielenstein², the root of the word “ropaschi” means frontier in the languages then common in the Baltic area (Estonian, Livonian, Latvian and Russian). Due to its width consisting of water, lakes and moorland, the river Jegel forms a considerable barrier and therefore a clear border between South and North. (Near Rodenpois, the “long bridge” spanning six kilometres can

¹ S. A. v. Richter Theil I. Anhang 1. [Part I, Appendix 1.] Map: Livonia, Estonia and Kurland in baronial times also refer to the river Ropa.

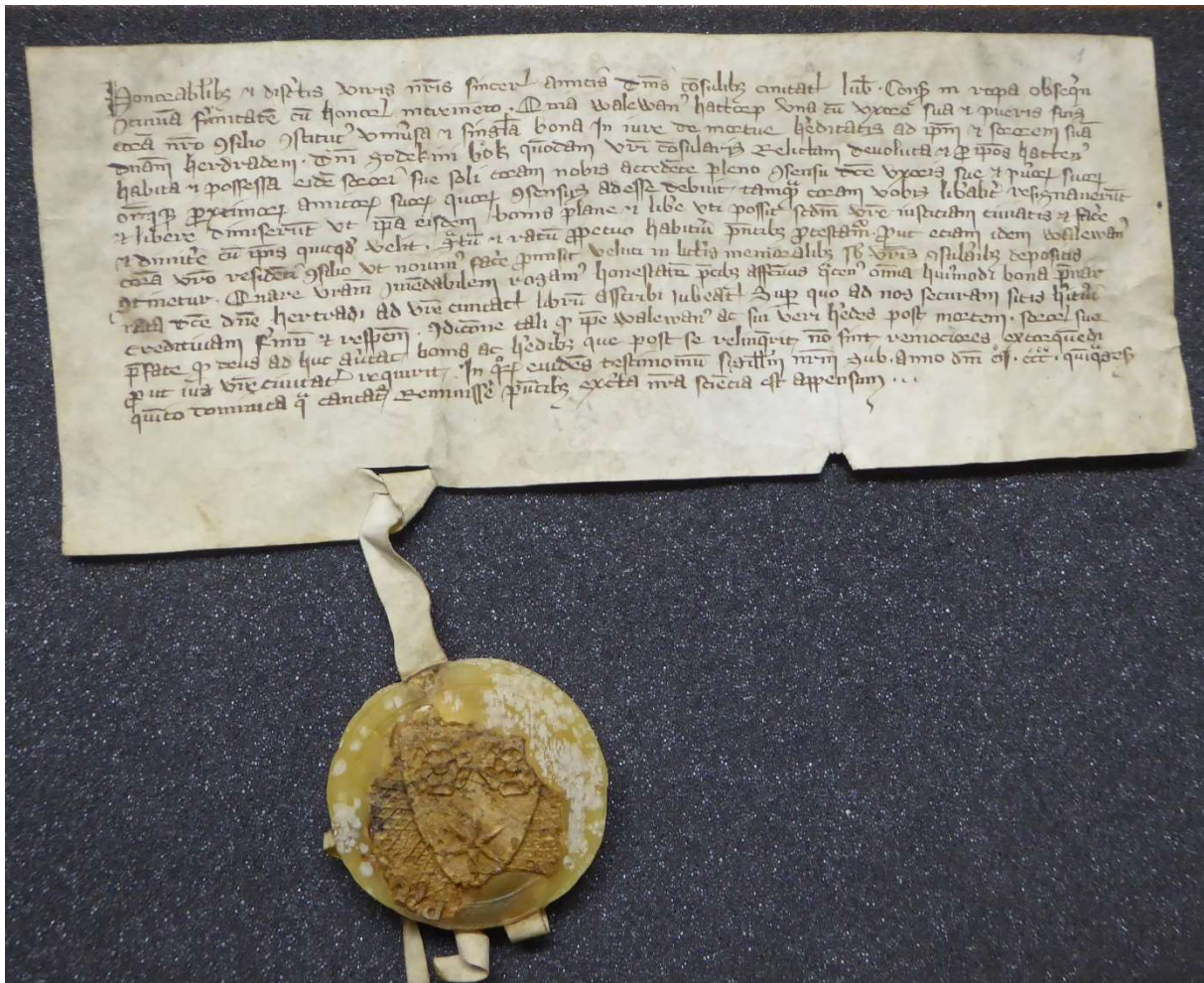
² Bielenstein a.a.O., p. 151f, Ann 1.

still be seen clearly in the moorland as a causeway. What does this look like for the river Raupa in the district Rosula? In the upper reaches, the river is called Brasle (Latvian = ford), in the lower reaches Straupe (Latvian = torrential river). The transition from one to the other was probably located near the later village called Straupe. At least in the upper reaches, the river was not as divisive as the Jegel. However, the river separated clearly the Latvian peoples in the east from the Livonian peoples on the west, which were included in the region Rosula. As no "fortified" border existed, yet the tribes had amassed to the left and right shores of the Brasle, the border demarcation was of such importance that the other two river names were comparatively insignificant. Therefore we can assume that the location of the church "supra raupam" was meant to mean the upper reaches of the river and the town of Roop had been regarded as a "border location" by the then inhabitants.

From 1282/1286 onwards, the two brothers Otto 2, the supreme judge/minister of the interior and marshal of the arch bishop as well as Woldemar, the emissary of the arch bishop and later foreign minister, refer to themselves for the first time as "dicti de Rosen". They are reeves in the administrative districts which has already been the fief of their ancestor Theoderich. The geographical centre of the district Rosula is the castle Hochrosen, ideally suited to be the administrative centre. In that time, on 19 July 1292 a German with the name of Johannes, a scholar, appears, whose origin is given as "de ropa". Further, a trader named Tiderihs Azgalis from Roop is mentioned in shops in Riga (see Plētiens). And ten years later, a certain Johannes of Bremen pledges his inheritance in Roop to Leutphard of Wenden. This makes it clear that Ropa is an own name for a town which came into existence during the 13th century. Based on the foundation of towns as an essential element of the colonisation program, the question arises where in Rosula it would have made sense to found a new town. Locations with political and strategic importance were in particular located where waterways and roads crossed. In Rosula, this occurred at the location of today's Straupe/Roop, however, this was certainly not the case a few kilometres upriver of the Brasle at the Baukaln: The river Brasle was navigable until Roop, i. e. Roop could be reached from the sea via the Livonian Aa/Gauja by boat. There, roads between Wenden/Cesis and Lemsal/Limbazi crossed, and further on to Reval/Tallinn and Treiden/Turaida and Wolmar/Valmiera and on to Dorpat/Tartu. These were important connections for the administration in the land of the archbishop. At the same time, goods for the Hanseatic trade could be shipped to the counting houses on the other side of Lake Peipus. Though apart from wool and fleeces, there were hardly any goods from the own region.

In 1352, Roop is mentioned for the first time as a Hanseatic town in a letter of the councillor Jorden König von Wisby. It refers to an agreed meeting, a small "Hanseatic Convention on the 15 August 1352 in Fellin, following his visit to Riga, Wenden, Wolmar, Root and Dorpat and with the bishop of Ösel. Topic of the convention was "justice for the common German trader in Flanders." In

1355, the citizen Walewarus Hattorp leaves the jointly inherited house to his sister Herdratis Codekinus and asks that this be entered in the annals of the city of Lübeck.



1355 Document with the oldest city seal of Roop, Hansa-Archiv in Lübeck.

Where exactly this inheritance was located is unclear. However, this document was written in the Hanseatic city of Roop and sealed with the oldest town seal known to us (following the crest of the Rosen family: 2 artistic roses and 1 six-sided star as well a largely destroyed circumscription). 3 years later, on 14 March 1356 (sometimes also on 2 January), Woldemar 4 in his role a fief judge of the arch bishop sealed a sale of goods that took place "in der stat to Rope" [in the town Rope], i. e. not in a castle or his "Castle Roop", as the administrative centre of Rosula. 1374 it is written "cives de Ropa emerunt a Woldemar de Rosis [10], domino suo, ius Rigense pro 100 marcis, singulis annio 5 solvendo usque ad persolutionem summae totius", i. e. that the citizens bought the right to appeal to their rulers locally in Riga, in addition to the Lübeck Hansa law generally accepted in the Baltic area. This meant that the arch diocese, where the Rosen family held high positions as judges almost as an inherited right, was not their only recourse to the law. This made the citizens less dependent on the

rule of the Rosen family - comparable to the efforts on Riga, which until the middle of the 16th century had two rulers, the archbishop and the master of the order. Riga always attempted to free itself of their influence on the city politics. - In 1378, when the archbishop Wainsel swapped properties with Henneke 12 near Kokenhusen, there is reference to Wainsel being "near to the town of Roop". "near to the town of Roop". An 1385, Henneke 12 is finally named as "residens in ropa" - Roop has turned to a residence. All this proves that the town of Roop had not been considered an insignificant hansa town during its first 100 to 150 years of existence. It also shows that 1420, the mayor of Roop had visited Riga and been gifted with honorary wine by the Riga Council. And in 1420 and 1421, the city treasurer of the city of Riga is issuing invoices: „item 5 Schillinge an wiine gesant deme borgermeistern van der Rope". [Ditto 5 shillings wine sent to the mayor of Roop].

This raises the question if at that time there had been a separate castle area in or near the town and if so, if the castle had been used specifically by the Rosen family as rulers. According to the Latvian historian Plētiens in 1310 Viten, King of Lithuania „obsedit Ropam", which might mean enclose, lay siege to or capture. This shows at least that at that time, Roop was already an important place that could be defended, otherwise it could be taken effortlessly without laying siege to it. From investigations in the construction history of the castle Great Roop conducted 1992, we learned that the oldest stone foundations on the northern wing and the tower date back to the beginning of the 14th century. At the same time, Roop became a hansa town. One suspects that the town might have been surrounded by embankments, palisades and moat, but did not have walls, defensive towers or gate systems. This made a fortified part of town, where citizens could withdraw during raids, even more important. Exactly such a spot was offered by the high embankment of the little stream, which can still be seen today as a dammed lake on the western side of Straube, and which is amongst also present in the drawings by Broze.



Roop, Broze 1778

Within this fortified area, the tower with walls that were up to 2 metres thick, could, in extremis, offer protection for a longer period of time. With the outer estate on the lake/bottom of the stream, still visible today, this system formed a western barbican for the town. The basic structure can be seen in a drawing based on a Swedish map dating from 1688.



Drawing by Julius 16i

Drawing by Julius 16i

On the other side of the road, about 1 km to the east, there was another outer estate, following the Brasle and off the country road, where today's Pastorat is located. Around 1900, this was called a Latvian farmers' castle. It is kind of hidden behind the Baukaln and provided a vantage point to observe incoming enemies. And once they had arrived at the town, they could be attacked from behind.

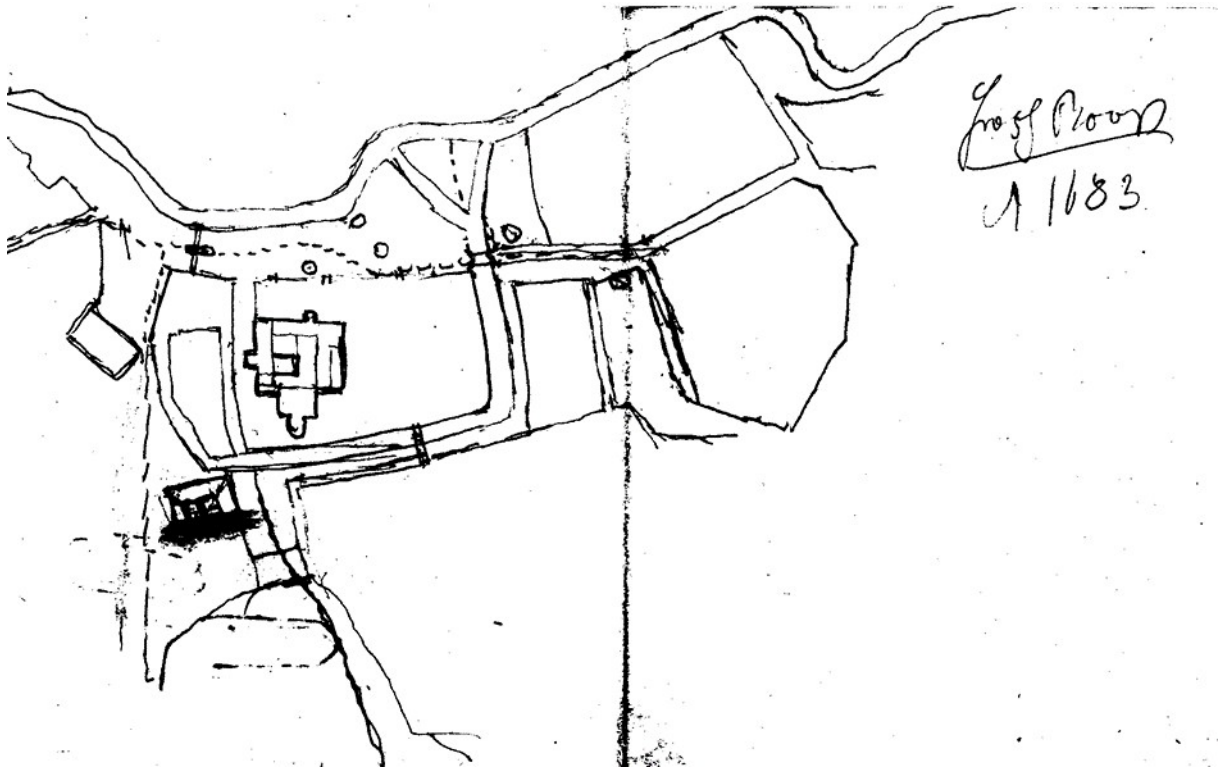
In, 1408, as far as our documents show prior to today's castle Groß Roop being named as fortification (castrum) in documents, Kersten 16 confirms the dowry of his wife "in dem lüttiken hove bi Rope" (in the little hamlet by Rope), After that, in 1354, the first references to today's Maz Straupe, Klein Roop, appear. In 1545, Johann 3b refers to himself as "the Rope" [of Rope]

and in a letter about the takeover of the goods in Klein-Roop in to the “grace of the arch diocese” on 26, November 1554, the see of Johann is given as “the court of Roop”. 1558 and 1564, Klein Roop is called the “new house Roop”, showing that it had been extended, perhaps even fortified and restored. - All this shows that Roop up to that time referred to the baronial seat in today’s Klein Roop.

However, in 1475, castle Groß Roop is mentioned as “de castro Rop” in the context of Nikolaus v. R. „de castro Rop” registering at the University of Rostock. (Thus far, the bearer of this name is unknown to us, perhaps a son of Otto 21.) The testament of Otto 1a, dating to 1518, names the town of Roop and in addition the “castle and mansion Roop”. And in 1548, in “Castle Roop”, today’s Liel Straupe, the conflict between Jürgen 10d and the town is finally settled. It is unlikely that in the document dating to 6 April 1596, in which the citizen Johannes paid his “field interests” in „in oppido maioris Roopi existentes” would be the first mention of the castle as Groß Roop, as this document refers to field interest. Instead, „in oppido maioris Roopi existentes” is likely to refer to the entire region of Roop.

This shows that other location terms were used in the context of the name Roop. Apart from Stadt [town] and oppidum, Plētiens also discovered Stedeken or Städtlein (small town) and Hakelwerk (palisade), Vickbleck (municipal area) and Flecke (hamlet). Whereas Stadt and oppidum were used in the period from 1356 to 1555, Stedeken and Städtlein weren't used until 1535 to 1555. From 1532 to 1569, there is reference to the Flecken Roop. The term Weichbild (municipal area) is first mentioned in 1495, and Hakelwerk (palisade) in 1531. However, it must be remembered that the documents in our archive predominantly originated in Klein Roop. Julius 16i saw the timeline for the terms as an indication for the economic and political decline of the town of Roop, which may have led to the term "small town of Roop." Certainly, Roop as a hansa town lost importance in comparison to the other Hansa towns like Riga, Wolmar, Wenden or even Lemsal in the approximately 300 years since its foundation, as Roop was only centrally located to the region of Rosula. The great movement of goods also occurred along other routes. Whether Roop was called town or just small town during the last 30 years of independence in Old Livonia is perhaps just a matter of taste, whether one was prepared to accept the reality or not.

Let's look at the other three terms: 1495, Kersten 1b assigns a male fief "in the municipal area of the town of Roop". This refers to the suburb of Roop. By 1495, the town may have become too small.



The drawing by Julius after a plan dated to 1683 shows the inner town with the embankment and the municipal area to the right.

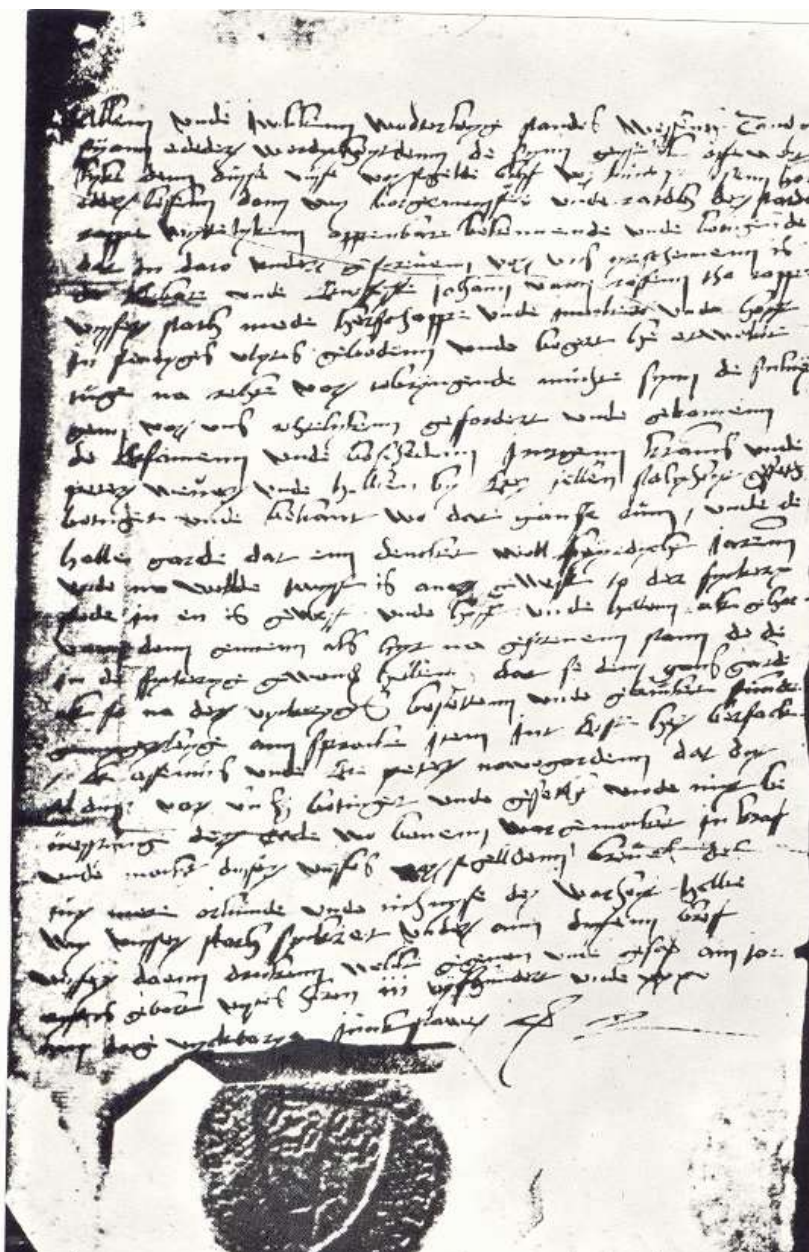
In 1531, the fact that a house belonged to the “palisade Roop near the tall bridge” is witnessed by Johann Albedyll. Hakelwerk or palisade refers to agricultural land in the areas of Roop. The tall, or later long bridge is probably referring to the crossing over the Brasle down river from Klein Roop. This too might be a sign that space is becoming tight in the town itself. From 1533, the term Flecken (hamlet) appears, z. B. any time the Rosen family from Klein Roop assigned fiefs to the citizens of Roop in form of houses, farms or farmland. The term Flecken (area) therefore refers to the farmland belonging to Klein Roop, which began at the eastern city wall of Roop and in the municipal area was regarded as part of the town area. This was already the case in 1495, when Kersten 1b assigned a male fief to Mathias Lindenbeck. The clear difference between town and Flecken becomes obvious in the Swedish revision files from 1638. They record that Klein Roop in the Flecken Roop had nine houses and two inns. The town, which used to be inhabited by more than 30 citizens, would only have two citizens in the aftermath of the Polish-Swedish War.

This raises the question of the relationship between the rules and the citizen-vassals of Roop.

In the first 150 years since the setting sail, the region of Rosula had been assigned to the descendants of Theoderich Buxhoevenden und Helmold Rosen, the dicit de Rosen, as an entire

fiefdom. The cousins Rosen might have split tasks among them. So in 1374, Woldemar 10 would have been responsible for the “town of Roop” and is referred to as “dominus suus” when he grants the citizens the Law of Riga against a payment of 100 mark. With the next generation, towards the end of the 14th century, the fiefdom begins to be split into the three houses, later Hochrosen, Groß Roop and Klein Roop. First, the part of Groß Roop alongside of the southwestern part of the overall fiefdom became independent. In how far this was linked to a claim to power in the town of Roop is unclear. Some 50 years later, on 7 May 1458, the area of the initial overall fiefdom was separated into an independent part Hochrosen with the northern part, and an independent part Klein Rosen with the South-eastern part of the former overall fiefdom. For this second separation, the “justice of the town of Roop” remained with Klein Roop. Therefore Kersten 1b was entitled to assign a male fief in the municipal area of the town of Roop in 1495. And prior to his departure to Germany and Rome, Otto 1a ordered his estate in such a manner that his wife would receive “castle and manor Roop” - without any reference to the “justice” of the town. (LGU. Vol II No. 295)

Two generations later, the rule over the city seems to have been turned on its head. In 1512, Otto 1a is found guilty in a verdict by the archbishop in Groß Roop, during his time as guardian for the young Johann 3b to have “impinged” on the citizens of Roop. On 17 July 1527, “Hans der Junge zu Roop [Hans the young of Roop]” (i. e. Johann 3b) came of age and accepted his inheritance. He had great difficulty in accepting his entire inheritance, as his guardians had settled themselves over the past 10 years. Further, two years later, on 1 June 1529, the four brothers Wolter 3a, Dietrich 4a, Johann 5a and Otto v. R. 6a, sons of the Knight Otto 1a, sold their inheritance: the castle Rope, several villages and the rule over the town, to Anna, the widow of the Knight Hans v. R. 3d of Hochrosen and Mojan and her son Jürgen 10d. This was the starting point for a 20 year dispute between the two cousins Johann 3b and Jürgen 10d concerning the property and justice in the town Roop. On 23 December 1535 (possibly already on 24 April), the council and the Mayor for Roop confirmed that Johann v. Rosen 3b was “unsrer stath medeherschoppe unde juncker” [the ruler and squire of our town]. (LGU Vol II, No. 637)



Mayor and Council of the town of Roop 1535

On 4 November 1535 the arch bishop finds that Johann 3b is entitled to own several houses in the town and may assign them as fief. On 10 August 1547, the dispute between Jürgen 10d and the citizens of the town of Roop on the one hand and his cousin Johann 3b on the other hand is ended. The properties in the town, the payments by the citizens as well as the assignment of the hospital by the citizens is contractually agreed and with that, all old disputes are settled. In the meantime, the dispute between Jürgen 10d and the town of Roop continued. On 13 May 1548, this dispute too is mediated "at the castle Groß Roop" between the three parties. And on 19 June 1548, Johann Baptist as the mayor of the town Roop and its council seals a special contract with Jürgen 10d concerning the fief.



(The seal on the left hand side belongs to Jürgen 10d, next to it is the Lithuanian Polish Seal of state by the governor with parts of the circumscription: SIGISMUND ...REX POLO ... LIT.RUS.PRUS ..., the third seal is the seal of the town of Roop (Circumscription: S. CIVITATIS DE ROPAM . DATVOS . ADOMIS) and the fourth seal belonged Johann 3b. – This document can be found in the archive of the Rosen family. It has not yet been included in the L. G. U. and has not been transcribed yet.)

It would take another generation until on Trinity Sunday 1589, Johann 4b of Klein-Roop (Son of Johann 3b) was called the “lord of the small town of Roop” in a fief letter. In this context, it should be noted that in the meantime and for more than 20 years, the Hochrosen family had not been resident in Groß Roop and not been granted it back until 1582 (see below). But from 1616 to 1620, Fabian 14b of Klein Roop and Raiskum, the son of Jürgen 7b, again entered a legal dispute with the Hochrosen family about the rule over the Hamlet Roop, this time with the widow of Fabian v. R. 17d, Elisabeth v.d. Recke. - These disputes between the two houses of the family show that the rule had been lamentable. In fact, it should be responsible for law and order, as well as protecting the citizen-vassals legally against the rulers, for contractual security also extending to the citizens, for the property and fief laws as well as taxes and duties to be paid to the archbishop. Yet without the active part of the citizens led by their mayor, who would have taken up a confident and legally strong position, this could have led to insurrection as had happened in other parts of the Holy Roman Empire.

This was also the period when another event occurred that had importance for the town of Roop. After the battle near Ermes on 2nd August 1560, Jürgen 10d leaves Groß Roop “with wife, kith and kin”, ahead of the incoming Russians, without taking any precautions for the town or the castle. Subsequently, town and castle were destroyed and the inhabitants tortured to death. Following this event, the Coadjutor Christopf von Mecklenburg auf Treiden occupied Groß Roop and was not prepared to return it to Rosen. Jürgen 10d turned to the archbishop for help. The settlement offer to the Coadjutor dated 1 June 1561, to use in this instance “mercy rather than the cutting edge of the law”, i. e. that Jürgen would submit to court and take on the costs of the Coadjutor, was not accepted by Mecklenburg “and Roop remained in his power”. (According to A. Bergengrün: Herzog Christof von Mecklenburg, letzter Koadjutor des Erzbistums Riga - Duke Christof of Mecklenburg, the last Coadjutor of the archdiocese Riga). Only after 1582, Fabian 17d, Jürgen’s son, is given back Groß Roop. Bergengrün’s descriptions have been embellished in favour of Rosen. The archbishop is unable to decide between his representative, the Coadjutor, and the vassal Rosen and does not have a “final say”. After all, Rosen had clearly not fulfilled his duty as vassal to provide protection and exterior security. One can imagine what all this might have meant for the citizens of Roop - to be exposed to the Russians without protection, the public legal dispute about the rule, and by now reduced to be used as political pawns in the hands of the duke in his striving for power in Livonia.

These two events illustrate clearly that the rulers themselves not only had duties as vassals towards the arch bishop, but also duties towards their own vassals, such as to guarantee interior and exterior protection, to apply law and order, to pay taxes/duties to the ruler of the country, and, in case of extraordinary damages, to provide social and economic protection and security as well as assistance to the vassals. (see below 1531).

As previously stated, the citizens of the town of Roop were vassals of the Rosen. This relationship as vassals can be seen from the files in our archives dating back to the court proceedings between Jürgen 10d and Johann 3b.

In 1495, Kersten 1b von Klein Roop (see above) had awarded a fief to Matthias Lindenbeck and his descendants in the municipal area of the town of Roop for “loyal services”. Lindenbeck was required to act as cobbler to the Rosen family. At the same time, Otto 1a of Groß Roop, gave a fief to Peter Yeger, his landsknecht at court, the house and farm of the late Peter Mewe, as the witness statement of Johann Albedyll in 1531 confirm. Further it is stated that Johann 2b, son of Kersten, had help rebuild the farm with borrowed barley, after the house and farm of Peter Mewe had burned down. On 19 August 1533, the grandson of Kersten, Johann 3b, assigned a fief to six citizens in the Hamlet, each with a house, barn and garden as well as a piece of land, in exchange for various services, e. g. as Smith, wood carver and the provision of beer for baptisms. For the citizens, the document is sealed with the town seal. On 1 October 1536, Johann 3b awards Otto Riezen a fief consisting of a house and garden in the hamlet Roop “for loyal services”. In exchange, he must provide military service (for which he is issued with a horse and armour) and step in during other emergencies. In 1537, he awards a tailor with a fief consisting of a house in Roop. In 1546, he awards several citizens with fiefs in the hamlet Roop. And on 23 March 1556, Johann 3b awards the tailor Peter Kawll a fief in form of a house on the tall bridge with land as well as the house of the father of Peter Kawll. In return, he is required to make the clothes for the Rosen family and provide military service (for which he is issued armour). 1561, Johann 3b withdraws the fief of Otto Riezen awarded in 1536 due to a dispute among the descendants of Otto Riezen, and summons Otto’s son, Kersten Riezen, to parish day/court day.

In 1564, on the Monday following Invocavit, Johann 3b writes his testament and two weeks later, he hands his property over to his son Johann 4b. According to that testament, he owned 8 houses in Roop, of which he left his four sons from his first marriage and his 4 sons from his second marriage a house each. In addition, the citizen-vassals “in his fief houses in Roop” Hermann Weichmann, Bartholomäus Jeger the tailor and [Peter] Weber “with everything they own” (see above) are mentioned specifically by name and as wards.

During the same period, Jürgen 10d had negotiated a kind of “sample fief contract” with the citizens of the town (see above on 19. June 1548). Accordingly, Jürgen Rosen grants the citizens and inhabitants of Roop the land up to the borders of the church leader, as thus far had been the norm, which could be inherited by male and female descendants. Should a citizen die without heirs, the land will fall to Jürgen regardless whether the fief had been granted by Jürgen 10d or Johann 3b. He in turn commits to grant the vacant places to good German citizens. The infirmary is ceded to Jürgen. In addition, Jürgen grants the citizens free pasture and free trade with the farmers. In addition, the farmers are permitted to sell fire wood to the citizens. In return, the citizens must follow “the saddle” of Jürgen during all wars, supply food and beer for baptism and generally show due obedience. They may only sell or mortgage their houses with the permission of Jürgen.

On 21. December 1566 (The day of St Thomas), Johann 4b, now owner of Klein Roop, grants Hermann Weichmann und his wife Anna Feldberg a house and inheritance in the hamlet Roop. As early as 1569, this fief is rescinded. In 1569, Johann 4b finally cancels the earlier fief contract dating to 1536 with the late Otto Riezen and doesn't pass it on to Riezen's son Ambrosius. In this year, the widow of the late Peter Kallw returns the fief dating to 1556 to Johann 4b, as she is insolvent and unable to pay the interest. This is witnessed by the pastor Albanus Fresius.

Document regarding the return of the fief by the widow of Peter Kallw, 1569

This part was cut from a double document and rests in our archive - whether the half for the widow Kallw still remains with descendants in Straupe is unknown.

When on 30 April 1585 Johann 4b calls the citizen and tailor Melchior Backhausen, son in law of Otto Riezen, to serve his military service on horseback, Melchior refuses. Accordingly, Johann seizes the house. Because of this, he is sued with the royal representative Georg Radziwill to return the house. Initially, Johann 4b doesn't accept this verdict. However, four years later, he renews the male fief in a 3 page fief letter with house on the market of Roof, farm barn, garden and land, limited to 12 years. In return, Backhouse must act as tailor to the Rosen family And in 1596, Johann 4b issues a receipt for 23 groats, 5 shillings for house and field interest of a Johannes, citizen „in oppido majoris Roopi existentes“.

Toward the end of the 16th century, houses were traded and part of business trades among peers. In 1577, Jürgen 16d bought a house from Johann 4b. On 28 March 1582, Conrad 9b sells his brother Jürgen's 7b a house in the hamlet Roop by the long bridge. Two years later, he sells his brother Johann 4b to parcels of land by the hamlet Roop. Around the same time, Siegmund Rogosinki, who

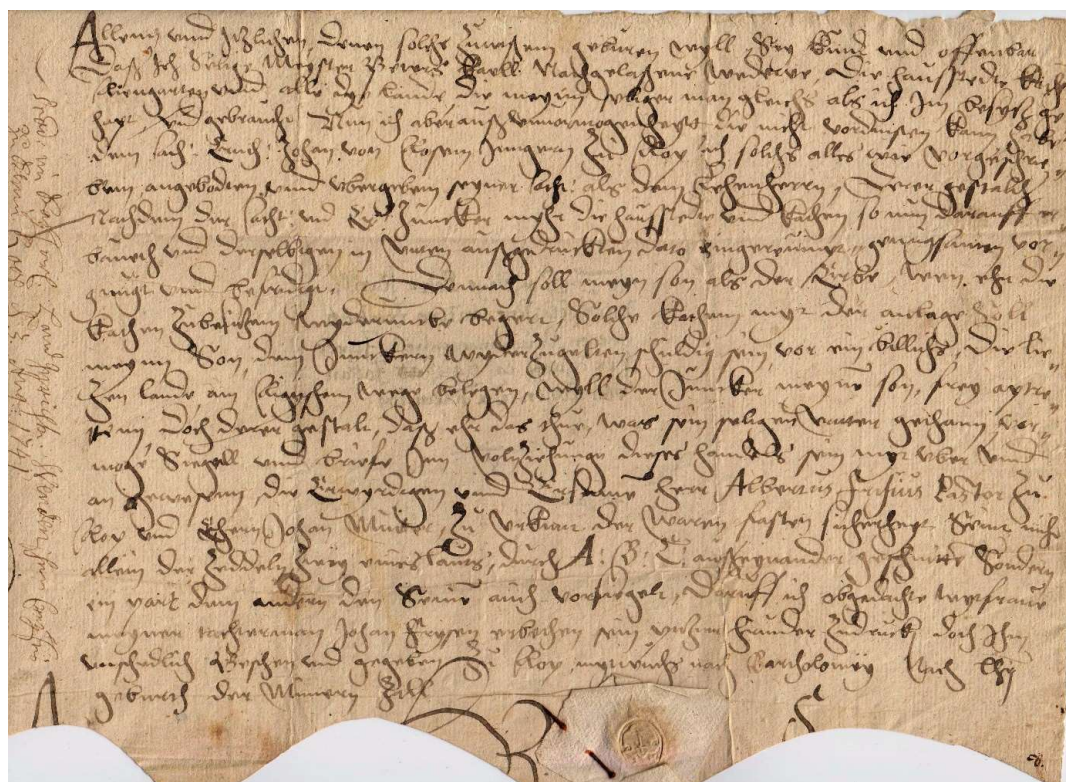
had been given the mansion Kudum in Poland, is compensated by Fabian v. R. 14 b with a piece of land and a house in Roop instead of claims against rooms in Klein Roop. In 1592, Conrad 9b mortgages house and land in the hamlet Roop with Peter Srader. In December of the same year, he sells his brother Johann 4b a further house in the hamlet Roop. In 1599, Conrad 9b sells his brother Johann 4b a further house in the hamlet Roop "in the street of the great bridge between Hans Marvitz and the little timber house, next to the cabbage garden behind the small alley leading to the moat." And in 1600, Jochum Zador hands Johann 4b his house in the hamlet Roop by the old stone gate as security for borrowed money.

The basic fief rules were: Property and land were given in exchange for certain artisanal services, occasional services and/or one-off or regular payments, also military service. In an extended sense, this would correspond to a rental or lease contract. This referred to so called "Mannlehen", male fiefs, which could also passed on as inheritance within the family. However, we also see that the fiefs could be rescinded or cancelled and returned. How the fief law was treated under the different rules may have been influenced by the times and also by each person. Kersten 1b granted fiefs "for special" services already rendered. Occasionally, this expression recurs in later fief letters. Particularly striking is the difference between Johann 3b on the one hand, who in his testament seems to care for his vassals, and Jürgen 10d on the other hand, who uses a far more legal approach, i. e. with the sample fief contract. This also includes a general duty to "due obedience", a precursor to the later serfdom.

This leads to the conclusion that three types of inhabitants lived in the town Roop:

1. The citizen-vassals: They were Germans. They did not own their houses and property, but were granted it by an individual fief letter, making them after vassals of the family v. Rosen.
2. Inhabitants with property in the town: Probably members of the nobility. They were able to sell, inherit or even mortgage their houses without limitation. It is unknown whether they war also citizens with the rights of citizens.

3. The rulers: They had tasks and duties towards the town, the church, the citizen-vassals and the state/arch bishop. They could lose their property and their state fiefdom, and could, on the base of the Hansa law of Riga and Lübeck, be sued by their citizen vassals.



An overview over the relationship between Church, State, citizen and rulers.

On 31 July 1515, Paulus de Capisachis, papal capellan and auditor cites the grand marshal as wanting to take the goods “a loco ubi Naba influit in flumen Semigallorum” (at the place where the river Naba flows into the Windau north of Golding) away from the town (which one?). This indubitably important announcement is to be fixed to the doors of the metropolitan church in Riga and the parochial church of the town Roop. (City archive of Riga). The term “parochial church” refers to the main church, there is no other mention of Roop. Therefore, we should take a closer look at the churches of Roop, and which one might have been the “main church in town”:

The St. Anne’s Church of Roop stood on the Baukaln. Without a doubt, it had been the oldest church in the region and had been built for the original inhabitants of Livonia. It survived until the 18th century. This location can be gleaned from a document dated to 23 December 1535 (or 24 April) (L. G. U. II, 637 - s.o.) According to this document, St. Anne’s had a vicar in the second half of the 15th century. In this context, it is said “that the whole place is a garden, on which St. Anne, the vicarage of Roop stands is the property of the new house and court of Roop (Klein-Roop).

From around the 15th century, the town of Roop also owned a St. Jürgen chapel. As the churches dedicated to St. Jürgen in that time usually had a connection with the alms-houses, infirmaries and hospitals, this chapel might have belonged to the infirmary (s. o. 1548). In order to prevent the spread of diseases, St Jürgen churches were usually located outside of towns. This was also the case in Roop, where St. Jürgen was located on a small stream running to the Brasle “between the court of Roop and the municipal area”. (see LGU Vol. 1 No. 636 dating to 1495). In any case, it would not have been the “main church”.

Finally there was the so-called castle church located in the walled castle, whose entrance originally lead to the castle courtyard. The document regarding the separation of the inheritance dating to 1458 (s. o. LGU no. 387) clearly distinguished between the “Church in Rope” and “the sacred body in Roop”. As the castle church existed during that time it can be assumed that this was the castle church which is mentioned in 1458 as having been consecrated to the “sacred body”. In 1512, the archbishop visited the church with Otto 1a, Kersten 2d and Conrad 4d in order to discuss its reconstruction and gave clear instructions what was to be done. Apparently, only the representatives for the house Klein-Roop were missing at the building board, but they were represented by their guardians Kersten and Conrad. Accordingly, the care for the church was still a matter for the entire Rosen family. Each house also maintained a burial site in the church. The citizens in the town Roop were Germans. Therefore, they would not have attended the St Anne’s church for the Livonian-Latvian inhabitants outside of town, but the castle church in town. This means that the castle church was most likely the parochial church. Only towards the end of the 18th century, with the deconstruction of the St Anne’s church, the castle church became accessible for the Livonian-Latvian population.

With the reformation, the way the church was run and the law applied changed. A parish turned into an administrative unit, which in turn had repercussions for the fief system. A layperson was appointed administrative leader, the so-called “Guardian”. 1556 Johann 3b held this office, when he launched a complaint with the archbishop because Pastor Wörner had grossly neglected his duties and also committed other transgressions. Further, in 1561 Johann 3b summoned Kersten Riezen, son of Otto, to court in Roop because of a dispute between Joachim Selling and his step children Riezen (see above 1536). And the pastor also acted as official intermediary between the rules and the citizens (s. above widow Kallw, 1569).

In the 16th century at the latest, with a slump in the Hansa trade, the town Roop was affected. It lost its importance. While other towns in Livonia continued to flourish, Roop did not survive the decades of war lasting approximately until 1625. In 1622/23, Gustav Adolf II of Sweden dispossessed the Hohenrosen family, owners of Groß Roop. Finally, in 1638 the Swedish revision files state that the

town of Roop had only to citizens left. And in the letter of queen Christine of Sweden dating to 10th of August 1650 addressed to Fabian 17b, only the hamlet Roop is mentioned.

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