

The Deeds Done by King Roger of Sicily

Alexander of Telese

(Translation and introduction by Graham A. Loud)¹

Introduction

Nothing is known about Abbot Alexander of Telese, the author of this biography of King Roger, except from the pages of his own work. Telese itself is a small town some thirty kilometres west of Benevento, which in the Middle Ages was the seat of a bishopric in the province of Benevento. In the eleventh century there was a Lombard count based at Telese, but after the Norman conquest of the Principality of Capua it became one of a number of towns subject to a line of Norman counts descended from Rainulf (d. 1088), the younger brother of Richard I, the first Norman Prince of Capua. They called themselves either the Counts of Sant'Agata, or more usually Counts of Caiazzo.

The monastery of the Holy Saviour, just outside the town of Telese, was founded before 1075, when its abbot, Lebbaldus, attended a synod held by Archbishop Milo of Benevento. Some years later Urban II appointed a Roman called John, who had previously been a monk at Bec under Abbot Anselm (1077-93), to be abbot of the monastery. It may be that the monastery was already directly subject to the Roman See - certainly it was listed as such in the *Liber Censuum* in the later twelfth century. In 1098 John entertained the exiled Anselm, by now Archbishop of Canterbury, first at the abbey and then at one of its properties, a hilltop village called Sclavia some 15km north of Telese. It was there that Anselm completed his theological masterpiece the *Cur Deus Homo*. John however did not long remain as abbot, for by October 1100 he had been promoted to become Cardinal Bishop of Tusculum. (He died in the summer of 1119).

It seems probable, to judge by Book IV of his *libellus*, as he describes it, about King Roger, that Alexander was already abbot in 1127. He had left office, or more probably died, before November 1143, when his successor Stephen attended the royal court at Capua. Stephen is probably to be identified with the abbey's prior of that name mentioned at the end of Book III. Nothing more is known about the abbey until 1198, when the then abbot resigned his office after a dispute with his monks, and Innocent III ordered the Bishop of Ariano to investigate the election of the prior to replace him. The abbey seems by now to have been in a parlous state, riven by dispute and in financial difficulties.

'The Deeds of King Roger' was, we are told, commissioned by Matilda, the king's sister, the estranged wife of Count Rainulf II of Caiazzo (d.1139), who was the king's most redoubtable opponent on the south Italian mainland, and who in 1137 was appointed Duke of Apulia by Pope Innocent II and the Emperor Lothar III. Its purpose was clearly propaganda, as is made clear both by the preface and introductory chapters, and by the sequence of prophetic dreams recounted at the end of the work. It would appear to have been written in 1136, soon after the last events mentioned, in December 1135. It is clear that the author considered the king to be victorious on the south Italian mainland, and he shows no awareness of any subsequent events such as the German invasion of 1137. Thus, along with the Chronicle of Falco of

¹ This unpublished translation was first posted at the following URL:
<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/history/weblearning/MedievalHistoryTextCentre/medievalTexts.htm> [last accessed 5 January 2010]

Benevento, it provides immediate and strictly contemporary evidence for the unification of southern Italy under the rule of King Roger.

However, despite its obviously propagandist intent, the work never achieved any sort of distribution. Only one manuscript now survives, Barcelona Biblioteca Central 996, written in the fourteenth century (probably soon after c. 1330). This was presumably taken from the monastery to Spain in the period when southern Italy was under Aragonese rule in the fifteenth or early sixteenth centuries. It was first published in 1578 by the Spanish antiquarian Girolamo Zurita. Subsequent editions by Muratori in the eighteenth century and Giuseppe Del Re in 1845 were based on the *editio princeps*. This was unfortunate, for Zurita had omitted the final chapters of Book IV, retelling the prophetic dreams, and moved the final *alloquium* to the front to form a second preface, thus very much obscuring the character of the work. Book IV chapters 6-10 were only finally published in the 1960's, in two separate articles by Reichenmiller and Clementi. However, a modern edition is now available, *Alexandri Telesini Abbatis Ystoria Rogerii Regis Sicilie, Calabrie atque Apulie*, ed. L. de Nava (Fonti per la storia d'Italia, Roma 1991). This work also contains an historical commentary (in English) by Dione Clementi, which is particularly useful on the chronology of the events described. This translation was originally prepared from the Del Re edition, and Clementi's publication (1965) of the last chapters, in 1989. It is in the process of being revised against the modern expedition, but should be regarded as only a provisional attempt, not a definitive English version.

G.A. Loud

Abbot Alexander of Telese

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Preface

Alexander, unworthy Abbot of the monastery of Telese, greets all those believing in Christ. I think that it is not unsuitable if things once done are recorded in writing for posterity. For it is acknowledged that there is much in them that it is desirable either to imitate or to avoid. Even acts of war, although they are recognised not to be good things will nevertheless be written down since these acts in some ways suggest, indeed order, that they should [in future] be avoided. and that the bond of peace be strong in us, because it is much more desirable and should not easily be dissolved. I ought not to be blamed if I, a monk, have brought to the notice of posterity by my pen warlike deeds which have happened in modern times, since even in old and holy histories many similar stories are told of Saul and David and other kings. These are allowed to be read in every Church throughout the world for the profit of those listening. I have therefore preferred from time to time to turn away from the cares of monks without any sin rather than that these deeds be suppressed in pointless silence and remain utterly without fruit. Indeed, it was the continued request of Countess Matilda, sister of King Roger and wife of Count Rainulf that led me to finish this little work. Even though at first I wanted to escape her petition because of the rules of my order, afterwards I regretted not having accepted her request. For I thought that what had been asked by her would undoubtedly not lack advantage for future centuries. Now therefore the deeds of the said king are taken up to be written down to be remembered for ever; first of all the deeds he did as a child, then those that followed his status as Count of Sicily. Through these acts he reached the high title of Duke, and then the dignity of King. [I shall describe] the extent to which his power was outstanding in the days of our own century, and with how much

terror he controlled all the provinces from Sicily as far as Rome, grinding them down in a short time. Only a select summary of this can be put forward in this volume. This man's virtue was outstanding, even if it was shown in bringing so many territories under his control. Nevertheless, in order that the iniquity which greatly overflowed in many people might be brought to an end, it had to be ground down by the whip of this man according to the secret judgement of God. For just as the great sin of the Lombards was once overcome by the violence of the Normans when they came, according to God's plan or at least with God's permission, in the same way today it is also certain that it was given, or at least permitted, to Roger by Heaven to coerce the immense malice of these regions by means of his sword. For what sin was not exercised among these people? Having thrown away all fear [of God] they did not hesitate to slaughter men, steal, commit sacrilege, adultery, perjury, even the oppression of churches and monasteries, contempt for men of God and many things similar to these. Some pilgrims travelling on God's behalf were robbed, others indeed, instead of having their property stolen, were assassinated in distant places. God, greatly offended by these crimes, drew Roger from the sheath of the province of Sicily, so that holding him in His hand as though a sharp sword He might repress those who had committed these crimes, stabbing them by means of Roger, that those whom He had long considered incorrigible should be frightened by fear of Roger and brought back to the path of justice. Having said these few things in my preface now we shall go to the beginning of my story.

Book I

(1) Duke William of Apulia, taken by death, passed from human affairs. He had been the grandson of the mighty Duke Robert Guiscard, the son of the latter's son Roger who had succeeded him and been the second to undertake the ducal office. After this, however, the above-mentioned province and the other regions round about were in the grip of great travail since they were left without the guidance of ducal rule. For since the duke had no legitimate child he did not on his death leave any heir lawfully to succeed him. Hence it happened that of the ducal cities such as Salerno, Troia, Melfi, Venosa and the rest, which were left without duke or lord, some were seized by someone's tyrannical ambition. Some persons who were pleasing to their eyes were able to do as they liked without hindrance. Nobody any longer feared bodily punishment, therefore everyone was more and more inclined to do evil, so that not only were travellers oppressed by fear, but that even peasants who wanted to cultivate their fields lacked peace and security. What more is there to be said? If God had not preserved a scion of the Guiscard's lineage through whom the ducal power might quickly be revived, almost the whole country, burdened with unbelievably horrible crimes, would have rushed headlong to destruction. Who this scion was shall now be made manifest. This descendant was Roger, son of Roger Count of Sicily, brother of the above-mentioned Guiscard, who at the time that these events were taking place was ruling the county of the Sicilians. I have thought it suitable to relate here, albeit briefly, who he was and what his deeds were when a boy.

(2) He had an older brother called Simon, who on their father's death succeeded him in the lordship of this province. As the way of children, they were playing at 'coin' (*nummus*) which was their favourite game, and this degenerated into fighting. When they fought, each with a group of other boys whom they had gathered together, the younger, Roger, was the conqueror. As a result he mocked his brother Simon, saying; 'it would be far better that I should have the honour of ruling triumphantly after our father's death than you. However, when I shall be able to do this I shall make you a bishop or even Pope at Rome - to which you're

far better suited'. And hence I believe that through these insulting words he foretold that he already intended to be truly the ruler after his father, and, as will be shown below, to extend his lands far and wide, as he was to do following his victories.

(3) It happened that, after both Simon and their father Roger had died, Roger the younger succeeded as heir to the county. But, since he was still of tender age and unable to rule personally, his mother Adelicia, a most prudent woman, exercised the cares of government and ruled over the county until he came of proper age. While he was still a boy living under his mother's tutelage, he was so greatly and frequently moved by piety that hardly ever did a poor man or pilgrim leave his presence without reward. When he had nothing more to give he would go in search of his mother, asking that she give to him what he would then give to the poor, and he would entreat her that whatever he himself had done, she should do more.

(4) When he had become a young man and been made a knight, and was thus in a position to exercise his rights as lord, he showed such activity and demonstrated such admirable firmness, ruling the whole province of Sicily so well and strongly, and exercising such terrible authority over all that no robber, thief, plunderer or other malefactor dared to stir out of his lair. He was most richly endowed with gold, silver and other goods, and this led all to hold him in the greatest awe. Not only his own people but foreigners from faraway lands feared him greatly. He conquered other islands, one of which was called Malta. It was his firm intention to occupy other islands and lands. Suddenly he was informed that Duke William had departed this life at Salerno. He greatly lamented that he had died without his [Roger's] knowledge and without, as he had promised in his lifetime he would if he had no son, making him his heir. Hence he would brook no delay, and prepared to travel by ship, to reach Salerno as fast as possible.

(5) When he was not far from Salerno he ordered his ships to anchor, and sent messengers to the citizens of Salerno ordering them to surrender to him; for lordship over the city belonged to him rather than to any other both by right of relationship, and because in his lifetime Duke William had conceded it to him if there should be no heir born of his wife. But to these messengers the citizens replied thus, saying that, 'we shall in no way and for no reason whatsoever submit to him, since we have suffered many ills from Duke William and his predecessors, and we fear that we should receive the same from him if he should undertake rule over us'. After these and other similar and important things had been expounded with impertinent pride, one of those who had been sent as ambassadors from the Count's side, called Sarolus, argued back fiercely against them. Soon they stirred up an attack on him, and though the unlucky man attempted to take refuge in flight he was struck down and died by the sword.

(6) When these events were related to Roger, although he was greatly annoyed, he concealed his feelings because of the serious situation, and sent further messages requesting the citizens not to deny him that which he was justly entitled to have. After a long series of discussions amongst themselves about this, finally they replied in this vein: 'let the fortified citadel be conceded to us to guard, and after this we shall submit to your rule'. On hearing this, although he was much annoyed by the proposal, he agreed that they might keep the said castle for their protection, that [by doing so] he might receive the citizens' submission.

(7) Meanwhile Count Rainulf, who had previously married his sister Matilda, hearing that he had arrived in Salerno, and travelling fast, met him at sea at the place where he had first of all anchored. There, after long discussion, Roger requested him to render him homage. He however refused unless he should be given something by Roger for which this ought to be done. Roger then asked him what he wanted to have

given to him in return for this. He then said: 'if you seek to augment your honour by receiving my homage, then in a similar way the honours of Count Roger of Ariano should be submitted to me'. On hearing this Roger received it badly, being unwilling that one equal should make submission to another. As a consequence they had a long and acrimonious dispute between them. Then Count Rainulf, filled with indignation, wanted to depart. Roger however did not want him to leave, and finally, because of his marriage to Matilda, of whom he was very fond, and because Rainulf had the reputation of great prowess, which Roger hoped would be very useful to him in the conquest of Apulia, he received his homage and in turn made the other count subordinate to him, as he had requested. Then, receiving the oath of fealty, he entered Salerno. The Amalfitans, seeing that the Salernitans had submitted to the Count's yoke, submitted similarly, retaining their fortifications [in their own hands].

(8) At this time Pope Honorius II ruled as Pontiff of the Roman Church. When he heard at Rome of the death of Duke William, and knowing of the intention of the Count of Sicily to take on the rule of the duchy, he lamented greatly, and left the city without delay. He travelled to Benevento and there, during the solemn celebration of the Mass, he publicly threatened him with the javelin of anathema if he should make any further effort to obtain rule over the duchy; and he extended this punishment to anyone who might join, help or advise him in this. After this had been done Count Rainulf, being badly advised, deserted him completely, and did everything in his power to hinder him and prevent him gaining the ducal throne.

(9) Roger was still at Salerno when he heard that the Pope was at Benevento and had launched the javelin of excommunication against him. He sent to him requesting that the Church should not hinder him from seeking to rule the duchy, an honour which was his by hereditary right; and that, as was right, he would as duke willingly be obedient to him. But hearing this, the Pope was quite unwilling to agree and no argument nor condition could move him, and once again he launched a further excommunication against him. Roger however suffered his anger patiently, and sent again and again, requesting that he be received, and not denied that which he ought to have by right. But by contrast the Pope's mind remained fixed most obstinately against him, and he absolutely refused to accede to his wish.

(10) After this the Pope was invited by the citizens of Troia and on their request received their homage. There all the magnates of Apulia came to him, and on his suggestion joined together with him in an alliance against Roger, not only in order to drive him from the land, but, if they could, to kill him in battle. Among them were numbered Prince Grimoald of Bari, Count Godfrey of Andria, Tancred of Conversano and Count Roger of Ariano, as well as others all of the same mind; and with them, by the Pope's encouragement and the plotting of Count Rainulf, was associated Robert, Prince of the Capuans. Without delay the Pope returned to Benevento, and after a short stay there he came back once more to Troia where he held a council of bishops. Here he once again excommunicated Roger and cast him forth from the Church, along with anybody who might consent to or assist him in the acquisition of the duchy. After doing this he withdrew to Benevento once again. Roger once more directed an embassy to him, begging him humbly to remove the sentence of anathema, to concede him the ducal dignity and to receive his service. But just as before the Pope remained fixed and unmovable, and refused to accede to the request.

(11) Seeing such great insolence, and realising how inflexible his mind was, Roger set sail back to Sicily; what he could not obtain by humble words he would now wrest by force of arms. When the Pope knew of his absence he returned to Rome as fast as he could so that he, along with the princes mentioned above, could raise an army against him if he should return and invade the duchy in force. I have here

omitted much since, as I said in my introduction, it is my intention to narrate above all the most important and significant matters.

(12) Roger remained in Sicily until the usual campaigning season, and then, having gathered together a huge army, crossed the Straits of Messina. Moving from there he started to besiege Torre Unfredo, quickly captured and demolished it. Then he came to Taranto, and rapidly gained possession of this through the surrender of its citizens. After this siege the terrified citizens of Otranto surrendered their city and themselves. These cities had formerly belonged to Bohemond, who had committed them and all his lands to papal tutelage when he had set out across the sea to obtain the Principality of Antioch. However, after he had been crowned Prince of that city, only a brief time had passed before he and his men fell victim to a surprise attack by the Turks in a place where they had thought themselves safe, and he and many others were cut down and killed. Then Roger came to Brindisi, a city belonging to Tancred, and besieged it closely for so long that the townsmen were unwilling to endure it and rendered up the city and themselves. Having done this he hastened to besiege the town of Castro, which he captured without delay. After this he went to another town called Oria, and immediately attacked it. Furthermore he also captured other *castra* whose names I do not recall, and must therefore be ignored.

(13) Meanwhile Pope Honorius, knowing that the Count of the Sicilians had crossed the sea and occupied the lands of Bohemond and some of those of Tancred, returned with some three hundred knights, ordering Prince Robert, Count Rainulf and the other above-mentioned princes of Apulia to gather together as many troops as they could and to march with him against their enemy Roger who was fast approaching. Therefore Count Roger, discovering that this army was advancing to fight him, moved to the River Bradano and ordered camp to be pitched at a place called Guazzo Petrose. On the other side the Pope and his men approached so closely that only the river flowed between them. However, when Roger found out that the Pope himself was a part of this force, he showed proper reverence to him and tried to avoid being seen to fight against God or even his Vicar. Therefore he sent another embassy to him, once again requesting that he be absolved from the bond of anathema and be allowed to receive the duchy which belonged to him by hereditary right.

(14) While both sides remained there for a long time without accomplishing anything, Prince Robert's magnates, with their wages in arrears (*deficientibus sumptuum stipendiis*), began to be in such distress that many of them were compelled to remove their surcoats and sell them for food. And it happened that some of them could bear this lack of provision no longer and speedily deserted. The Pope realised that the barons and knights were complaining because they had had to sustain themselves under arms for such a long time that they were suffering want, and that they wished to be dismissed and leave. Thus he took advice and sent to Roger, quickly and secretly, promising to grant the duchy to him; however he requested him first to come to Benevento and render his homage to him, and afterwards he would receive the duchy as was customary (*sicque postea ipsum a se ducatum ex more acciperet*). Once this grant had been made, and agreed by both sides, and the Apulian lords had discovered it, they soon dismissed their forces and returned home in disgust, blaming the untrustworthy Pope who had, without their consent, made an agreement with their enemy Roger.

(15) Thus when the Pope had returned to Benevento, lo Roger came to Monte S. Felice (not far from Benevento), climbed up it and deployed his army on the slopes of that mountain. On the third day the Pope, on his invitation, went out a little way from the city and, as is customary, received his homage and then

invested him with the ducal rule by banner (*cum vexillo ducale eidem tradidit regimen*). Roger was constituted Duke by Apostolic confirmation, as had previously been agreed, and made the oath of fealty to him to serve him in everything (*sacramentum ei fidelitatis per omnia servandum exhibuit*). After this had been done the Pope returned to his palace, the duke marched rapidly to Troia to start the siege. However, although the city was very closely besieged by him, so much the more stoutly was he resisted by the citizens. For the Troians had anticipated that he would besiege them and had carefully fortified their city, hence they were audacious enough not to be intimidated by his siege. When the Duke had been there for some considerable time he realised that the city was very strongly fortified, and he saw that he could do nothing to capture it - and winter was approaching. He raised the siege and then moved rapidly to recapture Melfi and the other ducal towns, to which he had already sent messages ordering them to submit to him. Their surrender being received, he commanded his expeditionary force to return home, and so returned to Salerno, remained there for a brief period, and then went back to Sicily - ready to return again with a great army. While he was staying in that province and was absent from Apulia, Tancred by his intrigues recovered the city of Brindisi and the [other] towns which he had lost in Roger's invasion.

(16) However it happened that when the campaigning season came round once again, Duke Roger gathered his army together and crossed the Straits of Messina once again. His army began to occupy all these lands by brute force. He recovered most of the towns that Tancred had occupied in his absence, and at length once again besieged Brindisi, intent on its recovery. The siege dragged on however, and he could see that he was managing to do nothing to capture it. He left it for the time being, and moved on to attack other towns.

(17) Coming to the *castrum* already mentioned above which had deserted him and supported Tancred, he quickly destroyed it. Then, while he was besieging Montalto, Robert de Grantmesnil approached him and requested that he be given permission to return home immediately. Roger said, 'why do you ask this?' To which he [Robert] replied: 'I seek to leave because I am hampered by this army's lack of supplies and I am unable to bear this burden any more. The fief which I have is not very large and cannot sustain my troops for very long. Let us be clear therefore that if it is not in some way increased, I shall be unable to sustain the burden of military service to you any more; and instead I shall travel across the Alps to the land of my kinsmen. There I shall certainly be able to stay without this poverty'. To which the Duke replied, 'I am unwilling to agree to this request. But remain for a little while until all of Apulia has been subjugated to me, but after this what you seek will undoubtedly be fulfilled'. But he, seeing that what he sought was being postponed, as was his habit rapidly became very angry and said: 'if you do not now grant me what I seek, I shall not wait until some later time for you to give it to me, nor do I desire to hold any longer that land which I now hold, since it is so little'. After saying this and other similar things he left, and soon without permission he ill-advisedly deserted the host. This greatly displeased the Duke, as will be apparent from what follows.

(18) After the capture of Montalto he hurried to attack Ruvo, a city belonging to the afore-mentioned Tancred. When this was captured Count Alexander, Tancred, Prince Grimoald of Bari and Count Godfrey of Andria, having experienced his formidable power, had more sensible discussions with each other, and soon they surrendered to him. The Duke's anger against Tancred was appeased and he returned to him those of his lands that he had seized. Then he ordered them to join him at the siege of Troia as fast as was feasible. The Troians, seeing that these magnates had surrendered themselves to the Duke's rule, were thrown into confusion, and since they found themselves without a protector sent to Robert, Prince of the Capuans,

asking him to come speedily, undertake lordship over them and protect them from the Duke, who was already near at hand. The Prince was however unwilling to go to [aid] them - fearing to exchange a secure position for a decidedly insecure one. To this the infuriated Count Rainulf responded: 'if you don't go', he said, 'I will not follow your example but rather will hurry to bring help to them'. When he entered Troia he spoke to the citizens, they swore mutual fealty to each other, and he promised that he would be their most stalwart protector against King Roger.

(19)The approaching Duke came to Salerno and soon gained possession of it. Hearing that Count Rainulf wished to defend the Troians against him he was extremely annoyed, saying: 'if Count Rainulf takes my land then I shall leave Troia for the moment and go and take his from him'. Therefore he bypassed Troia and came to the *castrum* of Grenzio. Count Rainulf thought that the Duke wanted to invade his own lands as he had said he would. Fearing to lose them, he sent messengers after him, requesting that peace be speedily be made between them. And when the Duke promised that there would be peace between them if he [*the Count*] was willing to hold Troia from him. He immediately abandoned the Troians and went to his camp which had remained in the same place mentioned above. They then had talks there and a peace treaty was concluded between them, after which the Count returned home. The Duke returned to besiege Troia, and, as they had been ordered, the above-mentioned barons (*proceres*) marched to join the siege. What more is there to say? The city was so closely besieged that within a few days, like it or not, the inhabitants submitted to the Duke. Once Troia had been captured the other ducal cities, by now very afraid, humbly surrendered to him, and all Apulia was without exception subject to him.

(20)After this Roger brought his army to the town which is popularly called Lagopesole, where Robert de Grantmesnil was to be found. He charged him before all with deserting the army without permission at the siege of Montalto - an action which had been very damaging to him. The latter replied, 'let me be free from this charge and I shall go away, across the mountains to the land of my relatives'. The Duke said: 'you want to hurry across the Alps. Now, in front of all, renounce those lands which you now hold and which you have claimed that you don't want to hold any more'. To this he replied, 'you can have them back now provided that I can depart in safety'. What more need be said? The Duke recovered his lands on the spot, and then gave him permission for immediate departure.

(21)Once this had been done the Duke went to Melfi, and ordered all the great men (*optimates*) of Apulia to gather there in his presence. He then laid down for them this edict (amongst others); that they should be permanently at peace and not fight among themselves. At the same time he ordered them to swear that from this time and henceforth they would keep the peace and maintain justice, and assist in its maintenance. They would not maintain on their lands men who would rob or plunder, nor would they allow this to happen. And if any malefactor of this type was found there, they would, without any sort of trickery, produce him at his (Roger's) court at a place designated by him to receive justice. They should keep and observe the peace for all ecclesiastical persons, namely archbishops, bishops, abbots, monks and all clerics and their property, and for all peasants, villeins and all the people of the land under his rule and their property, as well as pilgrims, travellers and merchants, nor should they molest them, nor permit them to be molested on their land. Therefore it is no wonder that he was able with the aid of God to bring all these lands under his power, since everywhere he ruled he promulgated such mighty and thorough justice that continuous peace was seen to endure. As the Psalmist says, 'His place is made in peace' [*Psalm lxxvi.2*]. For how could the benefit of peace be absent when no malefactor dared to misbehave due to fear of his vigour? When the Duke had stayed here for some considerable time and made these and other similar dispositions

for the common good, the barons returned home, and he marched to Taranto. Fearing that the above-mentioned Robert might not observe his word and plot something against him, he compelled him before his departure to swear that when he went beyond the mountains he would remain there in perpetuity and never seek to live in Apulia again. Since he confirmed this by his oath he was in consequence allowed to depart freely. After this the Duke returned to Sicily.

(22) Here he remained until the season was suitable. He heard that the said Robert had returned, violating his oath, had recovered the towns of Oriolo and Castrovillari and was ready to fight against him. Annoyed, he sailed with an army of Sicilians across the Straits of Messina. Then, gathering also troops of Calabrians and Apulians, he advanced against him with fury in his heart, besieged him most fiercely and within a few days forced him, willing or not, to submit and to hand back these towns. After this he [Roger] went to Salerno, blockaded it with a stringent siege until the citizens returned their citadel, which at their request he had given them most unwillingly to hold, to his custody. For he realised that he would [only] control the town for as long as the citadel was not subject to them. Seeing that there was no way that they could resist him, they acceded to his demand without delay.

(23) Having finished with this, not long afterwards he moved his army, bringing it into the land of Count Roger of Ariano and pitched camp at a town called Apice; here he remained for a long time of set purpose. The Count's land was almost entirely plundered by his foragers. The Duke had a very great hatred for the Count, for he had learnt by report that the latter had not behaved towards him in a properly faithful manner. He made inquiry about this in the presence of all, and since the Count was unable to clear himself judicially he was forced to surrender two important *castra*, Paduli and Montefusco. Once this had been done then the Duke's hostility was appeased

(24) From here he marched on Troia and once again closely besieged it, for the citizens had acted just as those of Salerno had done, and his response was also exactly the same. They agreed to rebuild the citadel (*castrum*) which they had destroyed at the death of Duke William. After achieving such great and numerous successes the Duke promptly left Troia, rejoicing, and went to Melfi. Here he ordered that the fortress which the citizens on the order of the former Duke had demolished be restored. And at this time Robert, Prince of the Capuans, constrained solely by the terror of his name, submitted to his lordship. Not long afterwards he returned to Salerno and from there sailed back to Sicily. And now at this point Book One, about his time as duke, ends. The pen will turn to record what he did after becoming king.

Book II

(1) With so many successes achieved, all the lands of Bohemond and the whole duchy seemingly in his power, the Prince of the Capuans, the *Magister Militum* of Naples and all the land up to the borders of the city of Ancona subject to him, and his opponents in war subdued, those close to Duke Roger, and particularly his uncle Count Henry by whom he was loved more than anyone, began very frequently to suggest to him the plan that he, who with the help of God ruled so many provinces, Sicily, Calabria, Apulia and other regions stretching almost to Rome, ought not to have just the ducal title but ought to be distinguished by the honour of kingship. They added that the centre and capital of this kingdom ought to be Palermo, the chief city of Sicily, which once, in ancient times, was believed to have had kings [who ruled] over this province; but now, many years later, was by God's secret judgement without them.

(2) After turning over in his own mind their well-intentioned and praiseworthy suggestion, he wanted to have sure and certain counsel. He journeyed back to Salerno, and just outside it he convoked some learned Churchmen and most competent persons, as well as certain princes, counts, barons and others whom he thought trustworthy to examine this secret and unlooked for matter. Examining the issue carefully they unanimously, as if with one voice, praised [this proposal] and conceded, decided and insisted with mighty prayers that Duke Roger ought to be promoted at Palermo, the chief city of Sicily, to the royal dignity since he held not only Sicily, his hereditary patrimony, but also Calabria, Apulia and other lands - not just obtained by military prowess, but which had devolved to him by right of his close relationship to the preceding dukes. For it was certain that kingship had once existed in that city, governing all Sicily; it seemed to have been in abeyance for a long time, but now it was right and proper that the crown should be placed on Roger's head and that this kingdom should not only be restored but should be spread wide to include those other regions where he was now recognised as ruler.

(3) Once the Duke had taken counsel with them and been strengthened by their sincere approval he went back to Sicily, ordering that all the men of dignity, power and honour from his lands and provinces should gather together at Palermo for his coronation, which would take place on Christmas Day. At the constituted day all they and a numberless populace both great and small flocked together. All were once again solemnly asked the same question and answered in the same way as above; to the glory of God and the advantage of his Church all in the royal city of Palermo approved the promotion to the Kingship for him to whom so much power had been given by God and who had already greatly extended the lands of his family, that he might exercise it to punish the evil and to preserve justice.

(4) When therefore the Duke had been led to the archiepiscopal church in royal manner and had there through unction with the Holy Oil assumed the royal dignity, one cannot write down nor indeed even imagine quite how glorious he was, how regal in his dignity, how splendid in his richly-adorned apparel. For it seemed to the onlookers that all the riches and honours of this world were present. The whole city was decorated in a stupendous manner, and nowhere was there anything but rejoicing and light.

(5) The royal palace was on its interior walls gloriously draped throughout. The pavement was bestrewed with multi-coloured carpets and showed a flowing softness to the feet of those who trod there. When the King went to the church for the ceremony he was surrounded by dignitaries, and the huge number of horses which accompanied them had saddles and bridles decorated with gold and silver.

(6) Large amounts of the choicest food and drink were served to the diners at the royal table, and nothing was served except in dishes or cups of gold or silver. There was no servant there who did not wear a silk tunic - the very waiters were clad in silk clothes! What more is there to say? The glory and wealth of the royal abode was so spectacular that it caused great wonder and deep stupefaction - so great indeed that it instilled not a little fear in all those who had come from so far away. For many saw there more things even than they had heard rumoured of previously.

(7) When the King's coronation celebrations had finished everybody returned to their homes. The king began to consider carefully the problem of how he might strengthen his kingdom in that perpetual peace which he greatly desired, and how to prevent anybody having the opportunity to resist him. Thus he began to demand urgently and peremptorily from the Amalfitans that they hand over to him all those fortifications which had been left in their hands to guard, for he would in no way consent to nor allow any

further agreement by which they might hold these while serving him. The Amalfitans unanimously refused this demand and remained most obstinate in this matter. The King was furious and refused to accept their fealty to him (*a fidei suae consortio dissociavit*).

(8) He called to him the Emir (*Ammiratus*) John, a man most prudent and active in warlike matters, and placed under his command all those who were to go to besiege rebel Amalfi, and to these forces he intended to unite all the warriors of Calabria and Apulia once John had crossed the Straits of Messina. Meanwhile the Grand Emir George, a man most faithful to the King and most accomplished in secular matters, in obedience to the King's orders blockaded Amalfi from the sea, so that he could capture any Amalfitan who might be at sea and prevent aid from anywhere coming by that same route.

(9) While he was patrolling the Gulf he happened to capture by storm a little island base of the Amalfitans called Li Galli. Then his ships surrounded another island base called Capri, attacked it in strength and captured it. And then on royal orders he moved with his forces to besiege the Amalfitan town of Trivento which was already being closely blockaded by the John mentioned above with the royal army which had arrived.

(10) Against them John called Sclavus who governed this *castrum* devoted all his attention and forces to oppose them. But the royal soldiers, seeing that the *castrum* was very strong, built a siege tower (*molimenum*), intending to attack the place with stone throwers (*tormenta*). Last, with a very large battering ram topped with a metal head, used with the utmost power, they levelled the antemural fortification, popularly called the barbican. While those outside were labouring actively at its demolition, the above-named John, seeing this, was struck with fear. Thinking that he would be able to find no way of escape, he surrendered himself and his *castrum* to the King. Once Trivento was captured the royal formations began to besiege another town of the Amalfitans called Ravello. While this was being attacked by a wooden siege tower which had been prepared by them, not long afterwards the King himself arrived by sea. With not just this [Ravello] but all the other towns of the Amalfitans besieged by detachments of the army, they were terribly threatened.

(11) It happened that the tower of Ravello, on which above all the other towns the hope of the Amalfitans lay, was struck by a large number of stone missiles and much of it was as a result knocked down. The inhabitants of Ravello and the Amalfitans themselves, seeing this, rapidly lost heart and with their strength ebbing through fear soon requested peace terms from the King. King Roger, as he wanted, was offered and accepted the [right] hands of the men of Ravello, Scala, Gerula, Poggerola and the other Amalfitan towns; and having subjected Amalfi to his will returned the victor to Salerno.

(12) While he was staying there the *Magister Militum* of the city of Naples, by name Sergius, realising that in Roger there was such mighty strength and valour, went to him, constrained not by warlike means but by fear alone, and surrendered to him lordship over this city which, amazing to say, after the Roman Empire has never been subjected by the sword. Now he surrendered it to Roger, constrained by word alone.

(13) King Roger then took seriously and very ill that Richard, the brother of Count Rainulf, was led astray by pride into claiming to possess for himself the city of Avellino and the *castrum* of Mercogliano, with neither the king nor any other lord above him and rendering no service for them. He sent an embassy to

him ordering him to subject himself to his lordship. Such was his reputation for valour that his word alone directed to almost any *castrum* or city was enough to ensure its surrender without delay. When however this was made known to Richard 'his anger burned in him' [*Esther*, i.12] and he madly resolved on war. He hurled the messenger to the ground, cut off his nose, and then ordered him to be blinded.

(14) Meanwhile Countess Matilda, of whom mention was made a long time previously, hearing that her brother king Roger was at Salerno, came there from Alife. She left and journeyed to him without the knowledge of her husband Count Rainulf, saying that she would on no account and by no agreement return to his bed unless all her dower lands were restored to her, namely the whole of the Caudine Valley with all the towns within it. When the King realised the just cause for her arrival, desiring to spend his patrimony for her, he permitted her to stay with him as she wished. For he saw what she asked as by no means unjust, and he realised that there was no other means for her to obtain justice unless she was given the opportunity to remain with him for some time.

(15) When the Count returned from Rome where he had gone and found that his wife had left, and that Avellino and Mercogliano had been taken away from him, he was very much upset, not so much because he had lost the aforesaid lands but that he appeared to have been abandoned by his wife. Because of this he sent to Montefusco where the King was, requesting most fervently that his wife, together with Avellino and Mercogliano, should be restored to him. But he [*the King*] replied to those who had been sent saying : 'I do not hold the Count's wife, nor shall I force her to return since I did not take her. Thus her consent is required. If she wants to return then I shall not stop her. However, what she seeks seems to be just, nor should she be denied this when it was, as she says, by reason of this dower that he, with my agreement, married her. Nor is there any reason on this account for me to return Avellino and Mercogliano since his brother Richard, in his hearing and with him being silent, claimed that these were his own property, that he acknowledged no lord over him nor did he owe any service for them. If they are therefore rightfully his, as he alleges, how is it that Richard testified in his hearing that he had no lord? Has he not shown with his own mouth that they are not of his right? And there is another reason why what he seeks ought not to be returned to him, since when I was in Palermo and in his presence complained about his brother's pride in that he was unwilling to be subject either to me or to anyone else with respect to the lands he appeared to hold, he himself was completely silent. By this he seemed to be agreeing with the words of his absent brother rather than with what was said by me. Nonetheless, let him come to me at Salerno with any of his leading men he shall choose, and whatever he shall rightfully ask of me, I am ready freely to grant - however on condition that he shall do justice to me with regard to those matters on which I rightly charge him'.

(16) The Count's messengers returned and recounted what they had heard. He however ill-advisedly, as was his custom, failed to go to the King as he had been ordered, but rather chose to send to him those (who had returned) requesting that what seemed to have been taken away be given back. The King was extremely annoyed that he had been so contemptuously unwilling to come, and he took his sister Matilda and her son Robert whom she had with her back to Sicily by ship with him.

(17) Hearing that his wife and son had gone so far away, the Count became very sorrowful: he thought it certain that, because the King's heart was so totally turned against him, when summer came around again, he would undoubtedly mount an armed attack against him. For this reason he acted in the

meanwhile to strengthen the defences of all his fortresses and made every preparation to oppose the royal attack if it should happen to be directed against him.

(18) After returning to Sicily King Roger stayed there for some time until the start of the [next] campaigning season. Then he crossed the Straits of Messina and came with a powerful army to Taranto. There Count Godfrey of Andria came, as was customary, to his court, and the King there accused him of certain misdeeds and insisted that justice be done regarding them. He [*the count*] realised that he would be unable to excuse himself judicially for clearly-established crimes, but felt that he would secure pardon by handing-over to him a great part of his lands.

(19) After this, because Prince Grimoald of the Bariots, breaking his fealty, had made an agreement with his enemies, the king came to Bari and besieged it by land and sea. But Count Rainulf, as he knew that the King was besieging Bari, was led by his zeal to collect a multitude of cavalry, desiring to assist the afore-mentioned Grimoald. However soon afterwards his lord the Prince [of Capua] summoned him and with difficulty persuaded him that he should abstain from warlike action and should not invade the King's lands for this reason intent on battle: unless first of all he had summoned him by messenger to restore what had been taken away from him. Thus, while this message was being sent to the King, the Count ordered the knights whom he had mustered to return home and remain quiet in the meanwhile.

(20) Grimoald in the meantime devoted all his care and warlike endeavours to protect the besieged city from the King, but in vain; for the latter obtained justice so quickly that it was captured very speedily - no more than three weeks were taken up in the siege of a city that Robert Guiscard, the most mighty Duke, had scarcely been able to attack during a siege of three solid years. Once captured Grimoald was sent in chains to Sicily.

(21) Tancred of Conversano, one of the most important magnates of Apulia, knowing that Grimoald had been defeated and that Godfrey had already lost most of his lands, began to be greatly afraid, thinking that he had been most unwise to have joined with them against the King. Before he was investigated over this and judged in the royal court, he preferred rather to go abroad by sea and use this as an excuse freely to hand over to the King Brindisi and the other cities and towns of which he was lord, fearing that otherwise they would be judicially confiscated. What more need be said? Tancred received 20,000 *schifati* from the King and renounced his lands with the intention of hastening to Jerusalem within a fixed time.

(22) The envoys of the Prince to the King, who have already been mentioned, arrived after the attack on Bari. The Prince had ordered them to convey his request that the King restore to his baron Count Rainulf Avellino and Mercogliano, and his wife and son. In the event [of this not being granted] he would undoubtedly withdraw his service. The King having heard this was greatly indignant and said to them, 'I am very much amazed that the Prince dares to importune me about matters which are none of his business. He sends such a message so that he might find an excuse not to serve me. Return then to him with this announcement first of all, that I shall send envoys to him without delay who shall bring my exact reply to his message. The one thing that we wish you to convey to him is this: he is to know for certain that if for this or for any other reason he withdraws his service from me, he shall be instantly charged with the crime of perjury'.

(23) Without delay they returned and the King sent [envoys] to the said Prince, who was collecting an army that he might go to Rome to aid the Roman Church against its enemies. To these men he gave the following response. 'I shall in no way submit to the King's orders unless my vassal (*homo*) Count Rainulf has his property returned to him. After hearing this answer the envoys quickly returned to the King to inform him of all that they had been told.

(24) Meanwhile the Prince and Count Rainulf, fearing that the message despatched back to him would displease the King, rushed into arms against him and occupied the Caudine Valley with a large force of cavalry. Here they decided to remain, that the King should not find them unready for battle if he should move against them. On receiving the Prince's reply the King was far from being left in an even frame of mind. Knowing that the Count was recruiting a large number of infantry and knights and preparing for war against him, he was extremely annoyed, and moved his army to a town called Crepacore, where he ordered camp to be pitched. Knowing that he was very close to them and thinking that he was indeed about to hasten against them, the Prince and Count Rainulf devoted all their attention and efforts to preparations to defend themselves.

(25) However the King moved camp again and placed it below the town of Montecalvo. He then sent to the Prince who had abandoned the aforementioned valley and was with the Count staying at a place called Cressanta; [requesting] that he be permitted to march through his land to go to Rome against the enemy, and also that the Prince come with him. To this the latter is said to have made this reply: 'I will not allow him to go through my land to Rome, nor will I come with him, unless my baron has his property returned to him'. The envoys of the King returned and reported what they had seen and heard. The King listened to this and took it badly. Moving his camp he placed it on the hillside below the town of Paduli. Then he sent to the Prince once more, requesting him to consent as before to his crossing his territory to go to Rome against the enemy. After fifteen days, when reply had been made as to what he might do, he made an appearance at Ponte S. Valentino. But the other, filled with anger and disgusted at what the King had done to him, renounced the oath of fealty which he had made to him, saying that 'Unless first he return to Count Rainulf Avellino and Mercogliano, and also his wife and son to him, by no reason or agreement shall I be loyal to him, nor shall I obey his orders, nor suffer him to traverse my land to go to Rome as he wishes'.

(26) King Roger, realising that the Prince's mind was most obstinately set against him, sent to the Rector of Benevento, named Crescentius, and the Archbishop, who was called Landulf, [ordering] that all the populace of the city, saving their fealty to the Pope, should pledge their fealty to him by oath. They, with other agents of the King, began to force the people to swear, and because of this great dissension arose in the city - to the extent that almost the whole people were roused against them, since they were unwilling to render their oath of fealty to the King. Indeed the Archbishop and the Rector, fearing the revolt of the people, were forced to flee from the city.

(27) Then the citizens, since they were all firmly opposed to taking the oath to the King, sent an embassy to the Prince and the Count, who had remained with their army in the place mentioned above. Meanwhile the King, realising that the Beneventans were wholly unwilling to adhere to him and that the mind of the Prince was, as said, set most obstinately against him, sent to the Prince, maintaining to him most forcefully that he should not take up arms against his lord who had done nothing to injure him. But he ordered his defiance to be sent to Count Rainulf, whom he believed had stirred up the Prince against him.

(28) Then the Prince and the Count, ignoring these threats, took counsel as to where they should move their army and approached the city of Benevento so that, being stationed more closely to it, what had been promised by the citizens might more easily come to pass. Thus leaving where they had been they came to pitch camp at Castelpoto not far from the River Calore, so that each army was able to see the other, with the city in between them. Then the Prince and Count entered Benevento, harangued the citizens, and a pact was concluded between them. They agreed under oath that each would be faithful to the other against the King.

(29) On the other side, when the King had found out about this agreement between them and that the Prince had already absolutely repudiated his service, moved by anger he ordered that at a given signal his camp be struck, and marching to Nocera, a most important town of the Prince, he started to besiege it. But the Prince and Count, not knowing that the King had moved off, intended to remain where they were for as long as possible; until however they realised that he had departed. The next day they learned that the King was besieging the *castrum* and already launching fierce assaults upon it. They immediately marched off with their army, that they might rapidly bring help to those besieged. When though they came to the River Sarno at a place called Scafati, thinking to cross the river quickly since there was no other feasible place to traverse it, they found that the wooden bridge there had already been destroyed the previous day by the royal scouts, the timbers flung into the stream and swept away by the waters. Lamenting that they were unable to cross they were forced to remain there for some time until the bridge had been rebuilt with other timbers and they were thus given the opportunity to cross. Once the bridge had been repaired, and when the King had discovered that his enemies were preparing to cross, the siege was abandoned and he ordered his men to arm themselves, that they might commence battle by charging down upon them.

(30) The Prince and the Count heard that the King was gathering his forces to make a charge against them. Thus they began to cross the river as quickly as possible for they saw the battle fast approaching. When they had donned their armour, crossing [the river] they drew each unit up in its appointed place as is done in war and were ready for battle. When each side had slowly approached the other the King's first battleline, lowering their lances and spurring their horses, charged the front line of their adversaries and crashed fiercely into them with such a mighty charge that their formation immediately turned tail. Seeing this the second rank took fright and because of this also turned about and fled. On seeing this the infantry placed in formation to the rear were struck by the same fear and also retreated. While those who had first turned tail were pursued by the royal knights, a part of them, seeking their means of escape by flight, rushed into the waters of the river and perished in them. Another part fled cross-country, avoiding the river, others were hurled from their saddles by the lances of their pursuers. A great part of the infantry who had taken flight, while in their fear seeking a place of safety, were pushed with many others over the the river bank and fell into the river to drown.

(31) Count Rainulf, as a most doughty warrior, was placed on the right wing, and when he saw his men driven back first threw himself spear in hand into the royal battle line opposite him. Seeing this his men, who had been entrusted with the right and left flanks, were spurred into valour, and followed him in resisting their adversaries. When they had broken their spearpoints upon one another they drew their swords and struck out with them. When the Count had shattered his spear by the force of his charge, soon, putting his blade in his hand, he inflicted a terrible blow on the helmet of the horseman opposing him, so that the knight, reeling from his wound, turned tail from the melee. When the others who were positioned round about saw him running away, they quickly one after another followed him in flight. Then others who were

stationed to guard the right and left flanks, seeing their men turn tail, soon became afraid, and immediately turned their backs also.

(32) Let the prudent reader therefore at this point consider by what judgement of God it happened that King Roger, who previously had been the victor in everything, should now not have been granted the victory. Indeed it seems to me that, even if it appears unfair to the King, it was however for his correction - I say this by choice - since he was not permitted in this instance to secure the fulfillment of his wishes; for he had always been able to achieve success, and his mind was as a result exalted, though it should rather have been humbled. The Bible urges this when it says, 'Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased' [*Luke*, xviii.14]. For now, as was related later, the King did as was written and accused himself with his own mouth, and confessed with humble voice that what had happened had done so deservedly. However he remained at Salerno with a joyful face, showing himself to be resolute in mind, knowing for certain that this setback would be replaced by God's gift by some happier outcome.

(33) Tancred, who has already been discussed, heard that the King had fought a battle with Prince Robert and Count Rainulf on the plain of Nocera, and that there the fortune of war had not granted him success. He regretted that he had sought to travel across the sea and had alienated and abjured his lands. Thus he dared to raise soldiers at Montepeloso, where he was received by the inhabitants (who opposed the King), in order to recover his property. With these men he made sorties hither and thither and savagely raided the lands of the King. There was a city called Gilentia [*Acerenza?*] which was strongly fortified not just by human hand but by nature itself, whose citizens, expelling their lord, a man named Polutinus whom the King had placed over them without their consent, received Tancred as their lord, to rule over them and defend them against the King. After this, feeling that an opportune time was coming for him to recover his lands, he journeyed to Count Godfrey of Andria and Alexander. These, committing open perjury against the King, bound themselves in a wicked treaty of alliance to fight against him, and they sent to Robert, Prince of the Capuans, and Count Rainulf [to ask] that they make no pact or agreement with the King without them, for they themselves would make no treaty or peace with him without their agreement.

(34) It was announced among other things to the King, who was at Salerno, that the citizens of Bari were about to desert him because they had in their anger killed some Saracens whom he had sent there to build a fortress. They had done this because the son of a certain nobleman had been murdered by these same Saracens. And on this account the hostility of the citizens had already stopped work on the royal castle which was being constructed just outside the city. The King took warning from this worrying news and, having garrisoned his towns round Benevento, travelled to Bari. Since this was threatened by Tancred and other enemies, he was unwilling for the moment further to annoy the people of Bari and took the prudent path, consented to their petitions and left them for the time being in peace.

(35) After this the King deployed his knights to combat Tancred and the latter's accomplices in his plot, and having garrisoned all his cities and towns in Apulia returned once more to Salerno. Then, having sent particularly large forces of troops to the towns of Montefusco and Paduli, he ordered that they ravage the countryside round about to blockade the citizens of Benevento, who had preferred to side with the Prince and Count rather than himself, to prevent anyone bringing anything from Apulia to Benevento to be sold there. Not long afterwards he returned to Sicily, without a doubt to return with his army at a suitable later season to attack and subdue the rebels.

(36) While he tarried in that province he meditated carefully and unceasingly on the means by which he might destroy his enemies. And on the other side Prince Robert of the Capuans, and especially Count Rainulf, sought continually and assiduously how and by what means they might act against him, for they desired that, having defeated him, they might deprive him of the rank of King, and even, if they could, drive him from the land. Thus it came about that the Count, on the Prince's advice, travelled into Apulia and had a meeting with Tancred, Count Godfrey, Alexander and the other magnates who had now openly betrayed the King (*Regis scilicet iam manifeste periuriis*), that they all might be wickedly united in an alliance against him. And when they had confirmed this conspiracy among them with an oath, he heard that the King of the Germans, Lothar, had come to Rome. This news made him very joyful, and he returned in haste to his own lands. Then he had consulted with the Prince, they both hurried to join him, that they might seek help from him against King Roger. However, although they were honorably received by him, they were unable to secure his help, for which they were hoping, against the King.

(37) While they stayed in Rome with the King they heard that King Roger, with a huge army of both cavalry and footmen, had already crossed the Straits of Messina, and they sought and received from the King [*Lothar*], even if not freely, his permission to return to their homes. For King Roger, because he had discovered that the Prince had perjurally made a conspiracy with the others named above against him, was filled with such great indignation against them and was so greatly angered that he was hardly willing to spare any Count, magnate or even knight who had raised his head in perjury against him. Indeed Count Alexander was so exceedingly afraid because of his perjury committed against the King that he fled to Count Rainulf, leaving the heavily-fortified town of Matera to his son, whose name was Godfrey. Meanwhile Prince Robert, realising that he would be unable to obtain German help, sailed swiftly to Pisa so that he might raise a force of soldiers and bring them back to help him against the King.

(38) After the King had occupied the lands of the perjured pair, Count Godfrey of Andria and of the above-named Tancred, namely Acquabella, Corato, Barletta, Minervino, Grottole and other places, then he set out to besiege the already mentioned *castrum* where Godfrey, Count Alexander's son, was. He closely besieged it for a long time, captured the town and forced Godfrey to surrender to him. On hearing this Count Alexander, who had previously fled in fright, was for a long while prostrate in his great grief, and then fled [again] to Dalmatia, not only deprived of his patrimony but forced to remain in exile from his native land. Not long afterwards he set out to journey to the Emperor, and passing through a forest he fell among thieves, who plundered him and his men of all they had. Then, left in Avlona, he was seen there, according to those who told of these things in our hearing, living in a very poor and hungry fashion.

(39) Having captured Matera the King came to Armento, a heavily-fortified town in which was Robert, brother of the above-mentioned Godfrey. This was quickly reduced by siege, and Robert surrendered both himself and the *castrum* to the King. Then, since he was unwilling to give a hostage for himself, as the King demanded, he was sent to Sicily in chains.

(40) After this the King struck his camp and marched to a certain strong and powerfully fortified *castrum* called Auso held by Count Godfrey, and besieged it fiercely for a long time. When the Count was captured he was despatched into exile in Sicily as a punishment for his perjury.

(41) Once this had been done they hurried to the siege of Montepeloso. However Tancred, hearing that the King was marching swiftly against him, soon abandoned a fortress (*municipium*) called Orso which

he was then besieging, and returned as fast as possible to safeguard the said city. Count Rainulf had already directed forty or more knights to go to its aid under the command of a valiant knight called Roger de Plenco who was a great enemy of the King. With siege works set up around Montepeloso Tancred prepared to defend it with all his forces. Now in front of the barbican of the city was a place called Catuvella which had been provided with substantial earthworks, and in which nearly all the city stood gathered to repel attack. When the royal army launched a violent attack on this place they were driven back, and Tancred counter-attacking hard with his men forced them to abandon the earthwork and turn tail. But then the King's warriors took heart once again. They launched another attack on Tancred and his men, drove them back and regained the earthwork. Tancred and his men retreated from there and took refuge in the barbican.

(42) However the King, realising that the city was strongly fortified and possessed a warlike garrison, turned to artifice; namely to attack with siegecraft a city which could not be stormed. Thus a tower was constructed and the King ordered it to be brought by slow stages to a place where the city seemed to be less strongly defended. By this means those outside could fight face to face with the citizens, with each side throwing missiles at the other. Meanwhile however, while they were fighting each other, by means of this machine the Saracens rapidly threw down wood to fill the ditch, and others with great energy dragged the earth from the rampart by using iron rakes and tried to level its stockade by pulling it over.

(43) When Tancred saw the ditch being filled in, he had a fire kindled so that it [the machine] might be burned down, and hastened to send out [men] to set fire to the wooden structure. But to counter this water was poured down a wooden pipe and the fire was extinguished. Once it had been put out those who were in the machine began with the utmost deliberation to level the barbican with a huge iron hook which was in the tower. Those who were defending the barbican, seeing the long pole destroying their barbican, cut the ropes holding it. And when other hooks were for a third time extended to level it, then for a third time they were cut by the defenders, but when the attackers pushed them out again they destroyed quite a large part of the barbican.

(44) When they saw this the citizens were terrified; they all turned tail and going through the gate took refuge in another part of the city which was better defended. The royal army immediately carried the gate and followed them, putting anybody they met to the sword. When the citizens who had taken refuge in the aforementioned part of the city saw that they could find no means of escape they offered a very poor resistance and allowed the enemy to enter that part of the city.

(45) After the royal troops had entered the city they sacked it furiously. Roger of Plenco, who was mentioned above, was captured with others and led to the King to be put to death. Tancred meanwhile was hiding, and a search was made for him on the King's express order. At length someone betrayed him, and he was led before the King for his inspection. On his discovery the King was exceedingly glad.

(46) Then the wretched Roger, who had for a long time been most bitter in his opposition to the King, was, despite his pleading, horribly put to death by hanging. And Tancred, though worthy of the death sentence, was however sent to Sicily in chains. Of the knights one part left behind their arms and horses and changed into humbler garb, lest anyone should guess their rank, and escaped by fleeing along the byways. This group came in their flight to the city of Acerenza which adhered to Tancred, and thus evaded capture. Others however who were in one place or another captured were ordered to be held in chains. Then the city itself was plundered and given over to the flames, and finally demolished. So let the wise reader now reflect

how great a crime it is to commit the sin of perjury, and particularly when someone guarantees on oath the life, limbs and honour of his lord, and that capture will not afflict him, and then does not keep to what he swears. Hence Grimoald, Godfrey, Tancred, Count Alexander and others who accepted Roger's lordship over them and then did not observe their oath of fealty, were rightly exposed to the vengeance of divine justice and suffered appropriate retribution for their crimes. For the same thing happened to them as it did to King Zedekiah. For he swore to a certain pact with King Nebuchadnezzar, and then perjured himself by breaking that pact. Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem, which belonged to Zedekiah, and besieged it. Seeing that there was no way that he could stop the siege, the latter left the city and sought to escape by flight. but was followed by soldiers of the former's army and was captured along with his sons who accompanied him. And when father and sons were brought to King Nebuchadnezzar he immediately ordered the sons to be killed in front of their father, and then the father had his eyes put out and was led bound with many other captives to Babylon.² This most wretched of stories makes clear the total ruin that perjurers ought to fear, because whosoever thinks as nothing this practice which should be shunned, shall be though equally little of by God, so that he shall receive a worthy punishment, as happened to these people. Now therefore we shall return to the course of our narration, from which we have strayed a little.

(47) Having burned and destroyed Montepeloso King Roger hastened to besiege Acerenza. But then, thinking that he might not be able to capture it, he promised a peace treaty to the citizens, provided that Polutinus, whom as was mentioned before they had expelled, was restored to lordship over them and they submitted themselves to his rule.

(48) When indeed Count Rainulf heard of the capture of Tancred and of the shameful hanging of Roger he was afflicted with great grief, not so much for their ill fortune as for the great assistance from them which would be lacking. He also considered that after having overcome them the King would certainly be about to launch an attack on him. At length he overcame his sadness, and turned all his attention to defending himself. Journeying to Benevento, he there renewed the alliance with the citizens which had formerly been agreed between them, and then returned without delay. Then he collected no small force of foot and horse in the Caudine Valley, expecting battle with the King whom he thought would be advancing upon him. The *Magister Militum* Sergius and Count Hugh of Boiano consented to his arrangements.

(49) The King however came to the coastal town of Bisceglie, immediately attacked it and destroyed the walls which surrounded it. Moving off he pitched camp at Trani; that city was so struck with terror that it immediately surrendered to him. All its towers were on his order demolished. Coming from there to Bari, to whose citizens, as has been told above, he had left (at their wish) all their towers in ruins, he had the citadel there, the construction of which had been previously interrupted, rebuilt. Then he went with his army to Troia, a city which, because it was so well-fortified, had often rebelled against him. He strengthened it [further] while dividing the great part of the populace among several *casales*.

(50) Count Rainulf, hearing of the King's approach so near to him, and suspecting that he would indeed be moving against him, devoted himself even more energetically to his defences. On this account he went to Naples where he harangued the *Magister Militum* and citizens, begging them all to help him; then he went on to Aversa where he encouraged all those who were capable of bearing arms to join him against

² *II Kings* xxv.1-7.

the enemy. After that he returned to the Caudine Valley where he had left his army, waiting there for the *Magister Militum* and all those as yet absent.

(51) Meanwhile during the King's stay in Troia Richard son of Hoel handed over the town of S. Agata to be held by whomever the King wished, receiving another similar one in exchange. For the King very much desired this *castrum* which was placed on a steep hill and overlooked

almost all Apulia, and could play a crucial role in guarding it for him.

(52) With Troia overthrown the King left there and journeyed to Melfi, and while on his way there toppled the pride of the city of Ascoli, for completely demolishing it he established its populace in three separate *casales* on the plain. When the Count thus realised that the King was not intending to march against him but was remaining at Melfi, he and his army returned to their homes.

(53) The King however left Melfi and went to the city of Gravina where he remained for a little while; afterwards he returned to Salerno, happy and rejoicing that all Apulia had been conquered, and that only Benevento, Prince Robert, Count Rainulf and Naples remained for him to overcome in battle. To this end the King ordered his knights who had been carefully stationed around Benevento and Capua that until he should return from Sicily with his army they should continually plunder the areas round about these places. After this however, before the inclement winter should prevent it, he took ship and returned to Sicily.

(54) And when the customary campaigning season had once more arrived, he once again arrived at Salerno by ship, and ordered a host of troops gathered from all parts to join him at the town of Apice. Then, when it was thought that he was about to besiege Benevento, suddenly he moved his army to attack a *castellum* called Prato, set it ablaze and more or less completely destroyed it. Then he captured three other *castella* one after another, all of which the terrified inhabitants surrendered to him; these however he spared because they had submitted to him. These *castella* had been ruled by Radulf de Frameto under the lordship of Count Rainulf - one was called Grotta, the second Summonte and the third Altacauda.

(55) Meanwhile Count Rainulf remained with a few men with him at a place called Cressanta; he was in great agony of spirit, for he was unable with only a small number of warriors to march out against him [*the King*] as he wished. Thus he sent urgent messages to all his princes and barons encouraging them to hurry to him that they might do battle. And while he waited astonished at their successes, lo the King, when it was once again thought that he would return to besiege Benevento, attacked with great speed a town called Palma, belonging to one of the Prince's magnates called Annonius. After this he quickly began to besiege another called Sarno, whose lord was one of the Prince's magnates called Henry. When the Count realised this he stoutly concealed his sadness at heart. He soon moved with the men who were with him to Marigliano, a town belonging to Robert de Medania. Here he started to wait impatiently for Prince Robert, who had just returned from Pisa and was expecting help from the Pisans, the *Magister Militum* Sergius, all the magnates of the Prince, and for his own men. He intended that he and they together move to the River Sarno and by capturing that *castrum* provoke the King to battle.

(56) Thus when most of them had mustered there they waited impatiently for the others because they were still too few in numbers; but lo it was announced that the above-mentioned town had been captured by

the King. Then the tower in the said river which was called Scafati was captured when its garrison were seized with fear and surrendered. The wooden bridge which was there was totally destroyed and its timbers thrown into the waters. By doing this it was ensured that nobody could cross the river to attack the King since the bridge was the only means of finding a way over, and the army of the Terra di Lavoro had, as was explained above, thought to cross it and oppose itself to the King. As a result they were not a little downcast with grief, not just for the capture of the town but even more because they by losing the tower to the king they had lost the opportunity to cross the river. When the Prince discovered that the tower had been taken, and realising that the help of the Pisans, for the speedy arrival of which he was hoping, had been for a long time delayed, he put to sea once again and returned in haste to Pisa, that he might bring to his aid as fast as possible those whom he had already recruited with wages of many thousands of marks of silver which he had promised to them.

(57) After taking Sarno and garrisoning the tower to prevent the river being crossed the King suddenly flung his siege lines round Nocera, a very large town belonging to the Prince, whose defences were strengthened not only by its site but was also marvellously sustained by the spirit and strength of its fighting men. Thus when a fierce assault was made by those outside those inside made a most spirited defence, aided also by the natural strength of the site.

(58) Meanwhile the army of the Terra di Lavoro, remaining in the place mentioned above, had sought for some means or other to cross the river and foil the King by provoking him to battle and making him lift the siege. To this end Count Rainulf gathered together no small number of galleys and moving to Scafati sought there for some opportunity for he and all the others to cross over safely. But since all the ways across were heavily guarded by the King's men there was no chance for them to traverse the river, and he soon returned to his fellow soldiers and all of them were very downcast since they were forced to remain there with no opportunity of putting up a fight.

(59) Meanwhile King Roger, realising how very difficult attacking the town was, carefully furnished himself with siege-engines, that he might acquire by cunning use of machines what he could not gain by force alone. He ordered a wooden machine to be prepared and stationed it at a suitable place situated not far away [from the town]. When it had been moved close enough for rocks hurled from it to start to strike the walls of the town, the townsmen soon lost heart and were filled with fear, and wanted peace from the King. To gain this some of the most important among them, all with the same intention, went outside to the King, requesting that he promise quarter to both townspeople and garrison and to leave the town unscathed, and then they would willingly surrender themselves and the town to him.

(60) The King's agreement to this promise was secured, and they returned inside, and they quickly consulted the commander of the knights, a man called Roger of Sorrento, and the other members of the garrison about the surrender of the town, and particularly with regard to the Count, who was seen not to have come to relieve them. Surely it would be better for them, they said, to surrender to the King than that they run the risk of the town being attacked and destroyed. Having heard this all at first opposed this being done, but afterwards, constrained by fear of the King, they consented to the place's surrender. The King thus received the town in the manner specified. Roger (mentioned above) and the others who had gathered there for its defence were captured, but, as the King had promised were granted quarter and after they had been bound by oath were allowed to leave.

(61) After Nocera had been captured and a garrison left to guard it, the King turned his full attention to the invasion of Count Rainulf's land. So having concentrated his army he marched to Paduli, and from there hastened to secure a town called Ponte which was held by a baron called Baldwin under the lordship of Count Rainulf. When its inhabitants saw from afar the immense army they were immediately struck with terror, and offering no resistance they allowed it entry. On the same day as its capture the King went on to attack a *castrum* called Limata which was quickly taken and sacked, and then given over to the flames and destroyed, for it belonged to another of the Count's leading barons called Radulf de Bernia.

(62) Meanwhile Count Rainulf remained at Marigliano. When he discovered from the messages which he received that he had lost so many of his lands he marched out with his troops in haste and with a heavy heart to recover his property. While he was near the fortress (*municipium*) of Ducenta he decided on the plan □ and his own men advised him to do this with all haste □ of trying to come to a peace with the King before he was stripped of all that he had. Therefore an embassy was speedily sent to the King and he asked for peace terms, promising to submit himself completely to the royal will. On hearing this the King put a brake on his anger, stopped any further occupation of his lands, and then set out a peace agreement. He sent to him [to say] that, following his offer, he would in consequence receive him in peace and restore his wife and son to him; on this condition however, that the dower lands, on account of which they had left him, should be restored to her, and that he must leave him [*Roger*] in peace in possession of all the lands which he had obtained from him by force. Although he found these terms very burdensome, the Count decided to submit to the King as the latter had ordered, lest otherwise he incur the loss of all his property.

(63) Thus coming to him on bended knee, he wanted to kiss the King's feet. When the King had raised him with his own hands from kissing his feet, he wished to give him the kiss [of peace] on the mouth. The Count first prayed him to cast all anger out of his heart. The King replied to him that he did indeed cast it out. Then he said: 'I would also wish that, as I shall be thenceforth a servant to you, you shall therefore cherish me'. To this the King said, 'and this too I concede'. Again he said, 'of these promises which we have made to each other, I wish God to be a witness between you and I'. The other then said, 'so be it'. When this had been said the King immediately gave him the kiss [of peace] and was seen to embrace him for a long time. In consequence joyful tears were seen to flow from the eyes of all who were round about them.

(64) The King proposed also to receive the Prince in his peace on the following conditions: that if he should return before the middle of the month of August he should not be deprived of his honour. However, according to the terms written into the agreement, if he wished to yield himself to be his subject, the King would retain under his direct rule whatsoever he had obtained by force in the war. If however his mind was dead set against returning, the King would concede the principality to his little son Robert, though with the proviso that he himself would exercise authority therein until the boy had reached the age of majority and could undertake knighthood (*exercere militiam posset*). If he allowed the said deadline to lapse by remaining absent then the King would take the Principality under his direct lordship and would quite properly receive the homage of all its barons. Then Count Hugh of Boiano, seeing the King moving on him in his wrath because he had joined the Prince and Count against him, came to him begging for his pardon with many prayers. But he was unable to secure this until he had surrendered to him all his lands to the east of the Biferno River and also the Castello Maris situated at the mouth of the River Volturno. However Sergius, the *Magister Militum* refused what the King demanded, which was that he recognise the King's lordship over him and do him service. Afterwards he was joined by Ranipotus, commander of the knights of

Benevento, who hearing of the Count's peace treaty, fled fearfully from the city accompanied by a hundred or more men-at-arms.

(65) Meanwhile the King, finding himself to be near the monastery of Telese, desired to visit it and to commend himself to the prayers of the brothers. And when he had come to the monastery he was honourably received, as was proper, by the brothers who went out to meet him with hymns and *laudes*. After the prayer at the altar was completed he entered the chapterhouse and kissed the brothers. Afterwards he humbly and reverently received the holy grant of their confraternity from the hand of Alexander, abbot of the congregation. He promised that he would increase the property of the monastery, and then, with the good wishes of the brothers, left them joyfully to return to the army from which he had come.

(66) Three days later, he arrived very early in the morning at the most illustrious city of Capua and received the surrender of its citizens and of all the magnates of the Terra di Lavoro. This city is indeed a real metropolis, and as is recorded from ancient times was called by this name either because it is the capital of Campania or because it is surrounded by a long and wide plain (*campus*) or, so it seems to some people, is called Capua from its founder Capy. It is a most extensive city, fortified by a circuit of walls and towers, and the River Volturno flows through the middle of these walls. On this river there are many water mills tied together with hempen ropes. A bridge of great size and wonderful workmanship has been built across it, which allows people to go in and out from one part of the city to the other where there is an extensive suburb. And it is a city overflowing with grain, wine and meat as well as with all sorts of other merchandise, nonetheless a great many people frequent it. What is more, it is above all distinguished by its dignity as the princely capital.

(67) When the city had submitted to him and the King was about to enter, he was honourably received, as was proper, by a procession organised in advance of the clerics and all the townspeople, and was led to the archiepiscopal church with hymns and *laudes*. Then immediately afterwards he marched out with his army, and commanded Sergius the *Magister Militum* to come and surrender to him immediately, otherwise he should know that his city would undoubtedly be placed under siege. And indeed he was afraid that if he declined to do this the King would march upon him and attack his city. Thus he decided to yield, came to the King and on bended knee placed his hands between his, rendered homage to him and swore fealty. This was indeed an amazing thing, for as we have already said in book two Naples had after the time of the Roman Empire never been subjected by the sword, and now it seemed to be constrained by word alone.

(68) After this Roger collected his army without delay and pitched camp between Morcone and Ponte Landolfo, so that he might give all the lands which the Count of Boiano had surrendered to him (as was described above) to Robert son of Richard. For, while he was at war with the Count and the others, he had promised these lands to him if, victory being secured, he should acquire them, and provided that, while he was at war, he should not find him unfaithful.

(69) While the King remained here, the lords of the Borell family, fearing that he might soon march against them, hurried before him to secure his favour by doing homage to him without delay. Then the King returned to Benevento and pitched his tents outside the city. The citizens rendered fealty to him, saving their fealty to the Pope.

(70) Meanwhile Ranipotus realised that the *Magister Militum* of Naples was about come to an agreement with the King. He quickly took ship, intending to take flight to Pisa, but [his ship] was overwhelmed by a storm, and he and his son drowned in the waves. Then the King, realising that everything was prospering as he would wish and that all his subjects were as he desired obedient to his authority, therefore dismissed his army and allowed all his men to return to their homes, retaining with him only those knights to whom he was paying wages. Then he went back to Salerno, remained there for a little while, and then returned to Sicily, joyfully crowned with the glory of his triumph. Here the second book is completed, and after a brief pause the powers of speech will be restored to start and to bring to a conclusion the third book.

Book III

(1) It happened in the same year not long after King Roger returned to Sicily that he was afflicted with a serious illness. But while with God's aid he rapidly recovered, his wife Queen Alberia soon became very ill indeed and died. This woman was during her lifetime distinguished by the grace of religion and by the generosity of her almsgiving. On her death the King was afflicted by such bitter grief that for many days he shut himself away in his chamber, and was only seen by a few of his personal attendants. Hence little by little the rumour spread, not just to those who were far away but even to those who were close by, that he himself had died. As a consequence of this rumour Prince Robert (who had fled to Pisa) travelled by sea with a very large force of Pisan troops and was welcomed in Naples with the agreement of Sergius, the *Magister Militum* of the city, who had already been conspiring with him against the King - for these two had been sending messengers to each other.

(2) Count Rainulf was deceived by this rumour and believed that the King had really died. When he found out that the Prince had returned with a huge armed force he took heart and rejoiced greatly. For it seemed that, with the King dead, an opportune time had arrived for the Prince to recover Capua and his lost Principality and for him to get back those of his lands of which he had been deprived. Thus, not fearing to commit perjury against King Roger, without a moment's delay he used his money to collect about four hundred knights and with these he marched close to the walls of Capua, expecting perhaps that the city would be surrendered to him by the inhabitants since they ought to restore it to the Prince for whom they seemed to have a very considerable affection. However, when he discovered that his treason had had no effect, he was very heavy at heart. When the next day dawned he ranged through the fields, seized a host of animals and plundered all sorts of property in the outskirts of the city, and so returned in low spirits to Caiazzo, the heavily-fortified town of his from which he had set out. It was in this manner that war against the King was started, and some of his barons secretly joined the Count in his manifest perjury against the King, for they had sworn to him that if and when the Count should wish to revolt against him [*the King*] a forty days breathing space should be granted during which they should persuade him to return to his obedience to the King. On the expiry of this period they should instantly declare war against him until such time as he should be forced to surrender.

(3) At this time the royal chancellor Guarin, a man most erudite in learned matters and most prudent in secular business, and the Emir (*Ammiratus*) John, whose formidable character has already been mentioned, had been left in charge of all the Terra di Lavoro. When they found out about the Prince's return and the Count's immediate rebellion they immediately and with the utmost diligence began to furnish the

city of Capua, the *castra* of Maddaloni, Cicala, Nocera and other places, and the Terra di Lavoro itself, with armed garrisons.

(4) There was in that same Terra di Lavoro a city called Aversa which had been founded by the Normans at the time when they had attacked Apulia and which was distinguished by a population comprising twelve barons (*magnates*), knights and an immense number of other people. Furthermore the city was surrounded by a wall circuit from which they could, if necessary, resist their enemies. When the Emir John and Guarin the chancellor arrived there, they began emphatically to warn the barons, knights and all those who dwelt there that they should never relinquish their fealty to the King whether from love or fear, and that they should not allow the exigencies of the moment to cast any blemish on their good name which up to now they had distinguished by their careful observation of law and the rigorous purity of their faith. And when they had addressed them at sufficient length with these and other speeches of encouragement, John sent [messages] to Apulia in the King's name begging everyone to hurry to the defence of the Terra di Lavoro as fast as they could.

(5) Prince Robert was still uncertain about the King's death, but he did not desist from formulating plans through which he could recover his lost Principality. Thus he sent to Count Rainulf [asking] that he hurry to him since he would be quite unable to do what had to be done without his strength (*strenuitas*). The latter indeed, as has already been said, had never had any doubts about the King's death, and with those forces he had collected hastened enthusiastically to him in Naples. With his arrival the Prince and Sergius the *Magister Militum* regained greater boldness and were imbued with greater vigour, thinking that through him, because he was a man of the most warlike mettle, they would achieve a happy result in what they desired. Their mutual conspiracy was therefore confirmed, and thus it was at length decided that the Prince and Count should restore to themselves all their lost possessions and the *Magister Militum* should retain Naples and all his other property which legally belonged to him in security. The King was still, as before, believed to be dead, and many even of his faithful supporters despaired of his life, especially since he delayed his arrival more than usual in the face of declared enemies. Indeed if anyone should appear claiming that he was alive or about to arrive, then he was heard with disbelief since many who had come before and asserted the same thing had been believed in vain, and the month of May had already reached half its course.

(6) The leaders and people of Aversa, though they had been informed by various persons that the King was really alive and was about to put in an appearance, were however driven to such insanity that, forgetting the warnings that they had had from John and Guarin, threw off their obedience to the King and, despising his lordship, submitted to the Prince without making any previous resistance. However, the Chancellor Guarin and the Emir John, being forewarned that they might do this, had already retired to Capua to avoid being made prisoner by them and handed over to their enemies. The Chancellor remained there with a large number of knights to defend the city. John moved swiftly to garrison Maddaloni, Cicala and other towns. A large army from Apulia of both horse and foot joined him at Cicala as he had ordered. They remained there under John's command to defend the Terra di Lavoro until the arrival of the King, and among those present were Robert *filius Ricardi*, a man most faithful to the King (as was described above in the previous book), and Count Roger of Oria, as well as many others. After this the army, when combined with the knights who were in Capua but excluding the footsoldiers, numbered nearly two thousand.

(7) After the city of Aversa had been recovered by the Prince, the Pisan army which had come with him and which was said to number around eight thousand, followed at full strength to join the Prince, Count Rainulf and the *Magister Militum* Sergius so that they might hasten on to attack Capua. They asserted that it should undoubtedly be occupied as fast as possible. But recognising that the city was defended by a very large garrison, more prudent counsel led them to refrain from attacking it and they pitched camp near the River Lagno at a place called Ponte di Selce. There they waited a little while to see whether the city might in some way be betrayed by those who more than others loved the Prince. But the Chancellor, who was cautious and careful, found out who favoured the Prince more than the others before his army could be admitted to the town and ordered that those who were most suspected of trying to betray it be arrested and held under guard at Salerno.

(8) The Prince remained at that place until he lost hope of the city being betrayed to him, then he moved once again to another spot and pitched his tents next to the waters of the river. On the other bank was the royal army commanded by the afore-mentioned John. Count Rainulf indeed was very heated in spirit because, with the river in between, there was no possibility of destroying them by launching a secret and sudden attack. The Emir John, a most sagacious man who guarded against unlucky encounters, led the army cautiously, and prevented them from undertaking an unnecessarily reckless attack. And when both sides had remained there for some time the Prince's began to be worried by a scarcity of bread and were unable to maintain themselves there. For such was the shortage in that place that one small loaf could scarcely be bought with a coin of Rouen, and on this account the Prince and the *Magister Militum* of Naples retreated. However Count Rainulf was despatched to guard Aversa.

(9) While all this was going on King Roger, whom his own men had been ardently expecting and whose enemies believed no longer to be alive, crossed the sea and sailed into Salerno on 5th June. When he left the ship the whole city population rushed out together, all filled with joy and rendering thanks to God for him. Hearing of his arrival the inhabitants of Benevento were overwhelmed with joy, and, while I was present and listening, sounded the bells of the city's churches and the body of the clergy processed from the cathedral right up to the monastery of St. Sophia with hymns and *laudes*. The King meanwhile ascertained the state of affairs from all those present individually and, once informed, rapidly sent messages through all those lands under his authority, ordering every man who could bear arms that they might hurry to be prepared for battle.

(10) When he joined the army which had been gathered together from all sides, the King much lamented that the inhabitants of Aversa, whom formerly he had praised for their law-abiding nature and the sincerity of their faith, had in time of need been found wanting in those things for which he had once commended them. He was also particularly upset about Count Rainulf, and complained about him saying: 'How can Count Rainulf in future be received or believed by me, for he has always done me harm, and neither blood relationship nor, after I received his homage, the oath of fealty has restrained him? How can his good faith be trusted any more after he has violated his oath? That love by which I was united and bound to him as a relation, because of his marriage to my sister, shall be wholly sundered. But even now, if he should return to my fealty and seek my glory and honour, I shall forget all those injuries which he has done me and he need not doubt that in consequence he will be greatly honoured by me. The *Magister Militum*, who has abandoned my fealty to adhere to my enemies, is absolutely unworthy of pardon and will surely lose the Neapolitan principate. However the Prince, who has fled from my wrath more for escape [than anything else], since he has not in this transgressed very seriously, ought to be shown mercy and will not be

deprived of his whole *honor* provided however he is willing to disassociate himself from my enemies, namely the *Magister Militum* and Count Rainulf. In consequence let him be sent to immediately and let us prove whether my words are pleasing to him - namely whether he abandons them'. But when the Prince and Count realised that he had arrived they were thrown into such depths of despair that they would have preferred death to life, seeing that they had been deluded by an untrue rumour.

(11) When therefore the Prince decided to disdain the message sent to him, the King mustered in one place the huge force of knights and footmen which he had recruited. He decided as a matter of first priority to attack Aversa which Count Rainulf had remained behind to defend. He devoted his whole attention to this, and the Aversans, fearing the fierceness of his attack, all began as best they could to seek flight and to hasten to Naples to save themselves. The Count realised that he was being abandoned by everyone in this timorous flight, that the King would undoubtedly immediately commence operations against him, and at length he too fled with scarcely a handful of men. He retired in confusion to the walls of Naples, where the Prince and the *Magister Militum* had joined forces, and once shut up there he did not dare to stir forth, and in the depths of his mind was cruelly tortured with regret by the thought that he had been ill-advised to have begun the war and never to have given credence to those who had advised him towards peace. What then should he do? He realised that he would be the next one to lose his lands which he had left his brother Richard to defend. But the latter was similarly terrified by the King's advance, and abandoning also his son whom he had given to the King as a hostage; since he was unable to return to his brother the Count he immediately fled by secret routes.

(12) While the King was advancing on Aversa he learned that the Count had escaped by flight and greatly lamented that the latter, by escaping his net, had not met with the punishment that he deserved. The King was then so furious that the whole city, having first had its people driven forth, was then given over to the flames. This city, not only within in it but also outside, had had a most abundant population and was envied by all for its fertility; indeed it had no reason to be jealous even of its neighbours Capua and Naples. It was more fruitful in foodstuffs such as corn, wine and meat, so that nobody living within it lacked sustenance; and in consequence almost all its inhabitants gave way to a shameful pride, and failed to restrain this vice, which was, I feel, so offensive to God that he decreed that Roger should destroy the city.

(13) When Aversa had thus been destroyed the King afterwards ordered its suburban area to be burned. Then approaching Naples between the town called Cuculo and the Lago di Patria he pitched camp and remained here for some time, from whence he had all this part of the suburban area of Naples consumed by fire and all the fields were laid bare by his army's foragers. Prince Robert, Count Rainulf and the *Magister Militum* Sergius were kept by their fear of him inside the city and did not dare to make a sortie outside the gate. And when all had been consumed the King once again had Aversa laid waste, and he ordered that matters be conducted so diligently that if there was anything between Aversa and Naples that might be burned which had [so far] remained unburned then it was to be consumed. After thus staying for a long time, until the crops which had been abundant had been totally destroyed, the whole region was left a desert.

(14) After this had taken place the King took counsel and sent his chancellor Guarin with a large force of troops to secure the surrender of those cities which Count Rainulf had held under his own rule, failing which he was to fall on them without mercy, drive out the populace and then burn them to the ground. Thus when the Chancellor came to the city called Alife the whole populace surrendered without

hesitation to the King on the day of his arrival. The next day he went to capture the town of S. Angelo, called Rabicano, of which Richard, the Count's brother, was the lord. But he, terrified by the King's arrival which has already been described, abandoned that *castrum* and fled off into Campania.

(15) Then the Chancellor retraced his steps to Caiazzo, remaining however three miles away along the River Volturno. The inhabitants, and particularly those who were most important in the *castrum*, were ordered to accept the King's rule over them without delay. However, thinking that they were defended by an impregnable fortress they rashly refused to do this; rather they declared that, if it was necessary, they would resist him. In consequence the Chancellor moved and pitched his camp near the city of S. Agata, urging the citizens to surrender of their own accord to the King. But they, like those of Caiazzo, were unwilling to do this and made preparations to resist him. All this was reported to the King, who was then at Aversa, and since both cities were well fortified the king himself was required to march out and capture them.

(16) Hearing of their pride, the King was gravely displeased, and leaving a large part of his army to guard Capua and the other towns of the Terra di Lavoro, hastened angrily to besiege the afore-mentioned towns. Coming to S. Agata he surrounded it closely on all sides and ordered engines to be made so that it could more quickly be taken. Seeing this the city's inhabitants were seized with fear. Some of them immediately went outside and with the intention of forestalling the King flung themselves at his feet begging him now to deign to receive their surrender. That they, with their wives, children and property, not be exposed to the horrors of a sack, they humiliated themselves in the hearing of everyone. The King scarcely heeded their prayers and thus received the city unconditionally. On the third day he marched to take Caiazzo. This city is known to be situated as follows: on the east there is a powerful citadel (*castrum*), fortified not merely by human hand but indeed by the natural excellence of its mountain site. Because this citadel lies at some distance from the city the citizens can scarcely prevail in any way against it. Indeed his siege scarcely seemed to be a threat to it, and if the food supplies to sustain its defenders had not been lacking he would probably never have been able to capture it.

(17) Thus when Roger came to it, wonderful to say, the garrison were struck by terror in the first assault, and could think of nothing except making their peace and desired to surrender. Indeed they had received so many missile wounds in that assault that scarcely any of the garrison dared to raise a hand to resist the enemy. For if some hapless man placed as a guard stretched out his arm he immediately received a wound in it from a dart launched from outside. Thus the citadel was attacked once and then the King received its surrender; and he, once having entered to view it, confessed himself much struck by its size and strength, and very pleased that it had been handed over for the defence of his crown.

(18) Afterwards he disinherited by due process a nobleman called Nicholas for committing perjury by making common cause with his enemies. Then, wishing to secure in perpetuity the benefit of peace, he decreed that [the defences of?] all the towns in the Count's lands should be demolished except for the the most well-defended fortresses which it pleased him to keep under his own control for the preservation of peace. After this he came to Alife to inspect it and having done so he was greatly pleased with the amenities of the place and with the abundant waters flowing there. Such was the availability of these waters that whosoever should wish it could divert a rivulet from them into his garden where it would serve his desire to irrigate the plants.

(19) Following this he rejoined his army which he had left at the River Volturno, and set off to besiege Naples where those enemies who had rebelled against him had taken refuge. It was a most ancient city which Aeneas was said to have founded when he had landed there on his voyage: it was of great size and was defended on its southern flank not only by the height of its walls but by the Tyrrhenian Sea. On its other sides it was protected by very high walls. Because of this it was considered to be unstormable, and indeed impregnable except for the danger of famine. Once upon a time the ruler of the city, by the order of Octavianus Augustus, had been Virgil, the greatest of poets, and in it he had composed a huge volume of verses in hexameters.

(20) Thus when King Roger besieged this city from the eastern side he foresaw that its capture would be very time-consuming. He decided to recruit a vast number of workmen and to build a large [siege] castle, protected by surrounding ramparts, next to it. by means of which, provided that it was sufficiently garrisoned, Naples could (even in his absence) be closely blockaded. Thus when Naples was put under siege the ground was dug to raise the rampart for the siege castle; but due to the crumbling of the parched earth the rampart started to collapse. Because of this the work seemed to be in vain, and it was impossible to finish the castle which had been begun while the rampart kept on collapsing. On seeing this the magnates quickly came to the King and began muted complaints. 'This work to build the castle is', they said, 'in vain, since every day the ground is dug to throw up the rampart, but the castle comes no nearer completion. The earth dug is unsuitable for building the rampart and it is so unstable that it keeps on collapsing. Let's therefore abandon this operation and find another plan which will give us a better chance to abase the pride of this rebel city'.

(21) 'And' [they said] 'there is also another thing which we must greatly lament, since many among the army find the heat of the summer here too much for them and begin to sicken, while others cannot endure the ghastly smell of the corpses of the horses which have died because there is such a lack of water. Furthermore the land on which we are situated, because it is so dry, gives forth an impure heat. On this account we greatly fear the harmful consequences, and indeed that the whole army might fall sick and at the worst be entirely wiped out. Hence, if it is not displeasing to your piety, we ought immediately to move, for by not remaining here and thus recovering our health we could not only blockade Naples in the summer but if it was necessary in the winter as well'. On hearing this the King was moved by compassion for them and ordered the siege to be raised. He decided on another way to put pressure on his enemies without endangering his own men, for dispersing the greater part of his army among the various towns closest to Naples he ordered it to blockade the city closely even in his absence, and if the rebels should ever happen to make a sortie they could be driven back by those nearest to them.

(22) After making these dispositions he went to Cuculo which had, while he had delayed his return from Sicily, been in part destroyed by the Pisans whom the Prince had brought with him to so little effect. [They had done this] because his order [to do so] had been opposed by the Neapolitans. Since this town was so very close to Naples he ordered that work be started to rebuild it as fast as possible and stronger than it had been before as part of his blockade. Then, seeing that the rebuilding of Aversa could restrain the pride of rebel Naples, he went there and ordered that it be rebuilt on the same site as before, and permitted all those who had lived there before to return and settle there once again.

(23) Meanwhile, with this city being energetically rebuilt in the presence of the King and his army, the Prince, Count and the *Magister Militum* Sergius, trapped within the walls of Naples, had no idea what to

do, realising that they were very close to disaster unless help was to be very quickly forthcoming from somewhere or other. For they were all the time menaced by their shortage of supplies, since nothing could be brought in from outside by land to sustain them and their men. Of their knights, who had apparently enlisted for wages, some very much feared capture by the King, and fled from the city whenever they had the opportunity, others were unwilling to lose their property and were prepared to change sides if they were able to gain the King's sanction for its recovery.

(24) Finding themselves blockaded in the city, the princes finally decided, after exhaustive discussion, immediately to send messengers to Pisa to deafen the ears of the citizens with their prayers, and beg their compassion upon them that they might send a mighty army by sea by which speedy help might be brought to those who were at their last gasp. When the immense force which they had sent had crossed the sea and arrived with its ships at Naples the decision was taken to make a sudden dawn attack on the city of Amalfi, with the intention either of plundering it or of seizing it from the King, assuming that ill-fortune did not prevent this.

(25) For at this time Amalfi's warriors were almost all absent; on the King's orders some, with four light vessels filled with men, had gone to raid in coastal waters, and part had gone with the King in his army, while others, seeing the Pisan fleet, thought that it was going to attack Salerno, hurried to defend it and remained there. So when the Pisans arrived at dawn and stormed the city they found no resistance and cruelly sacked it. And when the city had been completely ravaged and all the booty carried down to the fleet they then seized the town of Scala and the other fortresses of Amalfi, and lastly launched an assault on the fortress called Fratta.

(26) Meanwhile King Roger, with a large army, was (as has already been described) intent on the reconstruction of Aversa. He was informed that a Pisan naval squadron had of a certainty seized Amalfi. Galvanised by this news he temporarily abandoned the rebuilding of Aversa, raised camp and marched in force on Amalfi. What more [need be said]? While the fortress mentioned above was under attack [by the Pisans] as described above the royal army charged down upon them; part of their force were killed, others surrendered to the violent assault. The dead and the prisoners between them numbered some fifteen hundred. Of their Consuls two were captured and a third was killed. Those who had remained on the ships or who had returned to them terrified and weighed down by innumerable spoils sought safety by flight. Some alleged that the number of vessels was forty-three, others more. The King dispersed the crowd of captives in various places and ordered them to be held in chains.

(27) These pirates returned to Naples with the Pisans whom the Prince had brought with him. Then, leaving some of their number there as a garrison, they went back to Pisa with the Prince himself, [intending] to return to aid the Neapolitans in the spring. Sergius the *Magister Militum* and Count Rainulf with his son Robert remained in the city to defend it. Robert had been made a knight (*miles constitutus*) in his earliest adolescence, at a time when despite his youth he was already beginning to attract praise for his great courage and daring.

(28) Then the King, re-uniting his forces in one huge army, returned to cut down all the vines belonging to the Neapolitans which he could get his hands on. Having accomplished this destruction far and wide he returned to Aversa to finish the rebuilding which, as we have said, had for a time been left incomplete. Afterwards, seeing winter fast approaching, and that [therefore] he would not be able to keep

his army with him for very long and would himself have very soon to return to Sicily, he thus rapidly made his arrangements for the reconstruction which had to be done and placed infantry and cavalry in every town for their defence. He [then] returned to Benevento and pitched his camp below the town of Paduli not far from the river Calore. There he was approached by some of the chief men of Benevento with the archbishop on behalf of all the citizens, whom he welcomed in a kindly and friendly manner, that they should not doubt the genuineness of his love for them, [telling them] that they should make every effort to be bound by the bond of peace so that, by avoiding civil dissension they should also avoid rightful censure, and that they should guard their fealty to him devotedly against all others, saving their fealty to the Pope. For his intention was firm always to be ready to love, benefit and protect them; provided that they persevered in the fealty to him which they had undertaken. Having heard these and other things along the same lines from him they joyfully responded as follows: 'we, lord King', they said, shall willingly do all that you command and shall adhere to you with all our hearts, nor shall we attempt anything which shall be in breach of our fealty to you, and we shall always be wholehearted and unceasing in your service, after the lord Pope, and will never fail in our obedience in such a way that your love and regard will be withdrawn from us'. After saying this they withdrew. The next day King Roger, with the agreement of his leading men and of all the knights, granted the Principality of Capua by banner to his son Anfusius, a boy of high promise. Then on the same day he raised to the comital title which had once graced Count Alexander, whom I discussed earlier, his brother-in-law (*gener*) Adam, a man in the flower of his youth, both affable and most active in knightly deeds. The King had two other older sons, distinguished by their good looks and also by their good conduct, and who had both already come to the age when they had received the belt of knighthood. One of them, Roger, who was the eldest of all the brothers, had already received the ducal title, the other was promoted to the Principality of Bari. He also had two other younger sons, who were boys still of tender years and who remained in the royal household (*in regia aula*).

(29) At length the King, keeping with him his closest councillors, allowed all the others with him to return to their homes. After this he returned to inspect a fortress which was called Guardia and a citadel (*arx*) named Dragoni, situated on the summit of a steep mountain, that he might know how and how strongly both were defended. However, while he was on his journey and before he had reached the citadel, he turned aside to the monastery of the Holy Saviour of Telese to pray to the Lord. The aforesaid Abbot Alexander and the whole congregation of the brothers processed out to meet him and he was honourably received by them as was proper. [Then] he was led into the Church amid the chants of the *laudes* to God. The King prayed on his knees before the altar and then went to their chapter house and delivered a short and friendly speech to the Abbot and all the brothers. Afterwards, in the King's presence, his son Anfusius, mentioned above, received their confraternity from the Abbot's hand, the King having already received this on a previous occasion as was described above.

(30) When the King had gone to his chamber after dining he promised to restore to the Abbot, on the latter's request, the mountain overlooking the monastery which had been lost for the space of many years, and [to give] as much silver as would make a chalice and two thuribles, for which the brothers appeared to have a particular need for the service of God. The fulfillment of these promises should be sought from him in due course when he was in Salerno. How this need had arisen shall be briefly mentioned here. Count Rainulf pressurised this monastery by every means that he might be able to continue his war with the King, and after many gifts of various of its property did not fear to lay bare its altar of every one of its ornaments. By doing this he offended God, and hindered by his sin was unable to prevail over Roger. He acted most ill-advisedly if he thought that he would receive divine help against Roger by stealing Divine utensils.

(31) The King inspected with great interest Guardia and the citadel of Dragoni, and then leaving instructions how and where their defences should be strengthened he returned to Caiazzo. Climbing the *castellum* and inspecting its entire circuit very carefully he saw how it too might be strengthened on all sides and had work started without delay. He also arranged that all the barons (*proceres*) who lived in the vicinity, with all the knights subject to them who were natives of that area, should build houses in the neighbourhood of Caiazzo and have perpetual residences there that this *castrum* which was known to be most strongly fortified both by nature and man should be strengthened too by the number of soldiers living there. Some of the clergy and laity of Capua came there and with the advice of the King elected a cleric named William, a man well-endowed with both divine and secular knowledge, to the office of archbishop; his predecessor had been guilty of the sin of simony and had been sentenced to deposition.

(32) After this the King returned to Capua and the clergy and people of the city processed out and introduced into the city first the archbishop-elect and then, separately, Anfusus the King's son (see above). Then all the barons (*proceres*) of the Principality of Capua who were gathered there made submission to the new Prince and swore fealty and [did] homage to him, saving however their fealty to the King and to his son Roger who was to succeed him in the Kingdom. Then, that justice should be given to all who had suffered injustice, the King appointed the afore-mentioned archbishop-elect and a certain magnate called Haymon de Argentia. And he constituted as his *procurator* over all the land which was under his own lordship a very energetic man whose name was Jocelin, extremely accomplished in all secular matters. He had already, when he was at Aversa, entrusted the knights who had been chosen for the defence of the Terra di Lavoro while he was in Sicily to several Counts in whom he had particular confidence who were to succeed each other for set terms of office.

(33) The King's brother-in-law Adam was appointed to the first of these periods in command. After him the second was given to Count Robert son of Richard, and after that the third to Count Simon of Sant'Angelo on Monte Gargano, and so on in order. This Simon was the first cousin of the King, the son of the King's uncle Henry and a most worthy knight. And Henry, distinguished by proof of all the virtues and his sweetness and affability, wise in counsel and most active in matters warlike, was a man most highly esteemed. In particular it was said of him that it was by his wise counsel and action, ahead of all others, that the King received first the ducal title and then the royal crown.

(34) When these and other matters had been arranged the King set off for Sicily as quickly as he could. But while his journey took him near to Arienzo he decided to have a look at it because he felt that it was not wholly suitable for defence. After this he directed his journey through the Caudine Valley with a view to inspecting the towns of Arpeia and Montesarchio, for the others [of the area] had been demolished on his orders. On good advice he had despatched his sister Matilda from here to far-away Sicily, in case her husband might in some way seduce her to secure her consent for some future action against him.

(34) Thus, having inspected these towns and ordered what needed to be done there, he hastened to see the *castrum* which was called Coteo [Tocco?], and after inspecting this he ordered its fortifications to be strengthened. He then went to inspect the town of Ceppaloni, and leaving instructions as to how it [too] should be more strongly defended finally came to Salerno.

(35) The afore-mentioned Abbot Alexander of Telese, hearing that the King had reached Salerno and not unmindful of his promise, immediately sent the Prior of the monastery, named Stephen, with some of the other brothers, to remind him of what he had promised to him. And as soon as they had come to him he joyfully gave them enough silver to make a chalice and two thuribles, and sent a letter directing Jocelin his *Vicedominus* to assign the mountain to the said monastery of Telese since it rightfully belonged to it. Thus when Jocelin received this mandate he sent a letter to Minanus the viscount telling him to have the mountain handed over to the Abbot. The Abbot and his congregation were overjoyed by this acquisition and rendered thanks to God who had arranged the recovery of this mountain, which had been for so long lost, through Roger's agency. In consequence the Abbot immediately ordained that every day at the morning mass in the convent there should be a solemn prayer for the life and safety of the King and his sons. Since it is always right to record good deeds we have in consequence thought it proper to write down this benefaction of the King, both that this King by remembering it should be spurred on to even better actions and so that others should be encouraged to similar actions. Afterwards the King took ship for Sicily, to return in the spring with an immense army for a new assault on Naples. At this point the third book ends, that in a little while with restored mind, as men say, we shall resume to start the fourth.

Book IV

(1) After the King's departure for Sicily, according to the periods of office which he had arranged (as was discussed above), Count Adam entered Aversa to take command of its knights and conducting himself bravely and well gathered a great reputation by his vigorous military activity. For he launched continuous sorties all round the outskirts of the city [of Naples] and was not afraid to penetrate right up to the city gate. The city was already vexed with such a shortage of bread that a penny of Rouen would scarcely buy two little loaves of millet. The knights whom Adam commanded numbered about a thousand; some of these blockaded Naples, others were placed in the town of Somma and at Acerra, some in the fortress of Cuculo, but the majority were ordered to garrison Aversa.

(2) After a large number of knights had deserted from Naples, either from fear of the King or from shortage of food, barely three hundred remained who were unable because of their lack of numbers to wage open resistance, although sortying in the silence of the night without the besiegers knowing they managed to burn and rob. While they were busy with this raiding and the besiegers with fighting them Count Adam came to the end of his term of office and returned home. To him succeeded Count Robert son of Richard, a man most faithful to the King and most warlike, and who had been richly rewarded for his great loyalty by the King who had raised him to the honour of the County of Boiano. For the King had this praiseworthy custom that not only did he hold in high regard anyone who seemed to him to have strong and true loyalty but they were not disappointed in his gratitude. By contrast if once he found someone unfaithful, as a consequence of this fault it was scarcely if ever possible for them to secure the sweetness of his love.

(3) Since opportunity is afforded here, his good qualities, and how they showed themselves in him, should not be omitted from record and praise. He was a lover and defender of justice, and a most stern judge of evildoers. He had above all a great dislike for liars, and if somebody who ought to have spoken the truth instead produced a lie, then ever after he could scarcely if ever bring himself to believe them. He was a generous benefactor and protector to churches and monasteries. He hardly ever gave way to idleness or recreation, so much so that if and when it should happen that he was not involved with some more profitable occupation, then either he supervised the public exactions or checked what had been or ought to

have been given, or ought to be received, with the result that he always understood better in the accounts of his scribes the revenues which had to be paid to him, or from where they ought to be drawn. To sum up there was nothing which was his that was not recorded in written account, neither did he squander anything in empty generosity; hence he never lacked means for any enterprise, for he looked after his property with much care and diligence, fearing to fall into that state which is commonly called thus, 'he who does not live within his means (*ad numerum*) shall live to shame'.

(4) He paid on time military salaries or whatever it had been agreed or promised should be paid. He was never willing to promise what he would not or ought not to pay. In doing things he was not headlong, but before he did anything he was careful always to study it with the eye of prudence. Nor did he seek to punish anybody or to exact any due without proper hearing. If he promised anyone any benefit or threatened them with any ill, according to their merits, that was settled and ratified. But, and this was most admirable in him, when he was campaigning against an enemy he laid his military plans with such foresight that wherever possible he overcame him without bloodshed and thus always tried to avoid risk to his army. In speaking he was quick, in prudence mighty, endowed with gravity of counsel, clear of speech and always prepared to reply wisely and with ready answers. But, since familiarity generally breeds contempt, he himself was both in public and in private restrained in familiarity, affability and mirth, so that he never ceased to be feared. For fear of him grew so much that with the help of God evildoing was almost entirely eliminated from every part of his kingdom and only justice and peace prevailed, thus the words of the Psalmist seemed to be fulfilled in him, 'justice and peace shall be kissed' [*Psalm lxxxiv.11*].

(5) Since we have digressed to picture the admirable character of the King for quite long enough, let us once more turn our pen to the events of our story. When the aforementioned Count Robert took command of the royal troops at Aversa in succession to Adam, he instantly blockaded the borders of Naples with such military prowess and energy that its defenders never dared to sortie to inflict injury on their enemies, except occasionally at night when they could not be seen. After the King had left for Sicily the *Magister Militum* Sergius had sailed to Pisa in an attempt to gain assistance for himself and his accomplices for the moment when the King himself returned to besiege Naples. The King himself, on Christmas Day, promoted his two sons, Duke Roger and Tancred Prince of Bari, to knighthood, and that they might be praised and honoured more also decorated forty others with the belt of knighthood. Meanwhile Count Robert, who has been mentioned so many times above, completed his two-month term of duty at Aversa, namely November and December, and returned home. He was succeeded by Simon, Count of [Monte] Sant'Angelo who has already been mentioned, a man, as said, mighty in arms and adroit in stratagem.

(6) It seems suitable at this point, even if apparently it interrupts the order of the narrative, not to omit what was revealed in a dream to a certain priest of the valley of Telese long before Roger's victory and the placing of the crown upon his head. For a long time he kept this dream secret, until Count Rainulf fled to Naples and all his land was made subject to King Roger. Not long after this he revealed it without fear to all. And after the King's departure to Sicily, hearing of this in the monastery where I then was, I had the priest come [to me] and made earnest entreaty to him that he satisfy my wish by narrating his dream about the King.

(7) He told us that just before the death of Duke William, when the King still held [only] the comital title, he was asleep one night when he saw in a dream the said Duke William, Robert prince of the Capuans, Count Rainulf and all the barons (*proceres*) of Apulia, Calabria, the Capitanata and many other provinces

gather together in Apulia to fight against Roger, Count of the Sicilians. Hearing this Roger himself gathered a multitude of soldiers and crossed the sea to fight them. Thus forces of knights and footmen were drawn up here and there in great numbers and battle was joined on each side. Soon the terrified Count Roger took refuge in flight with all his men. When the Duke and the rest pursued him as he fled he tried to escape by throwing himself in the sea. And when he had fled before them through the sea itself for nearly a mile, at length because of the great thirst he was suffering he suddenly drank all the sea. When he had thus drunk his strength returned and soon he charged bravely against those who were following him and immediately made them take flight. Duke William fled and completely disappeared. Prince Robert, Count Rainulf and all the others fell on their faces before him in fear. However, when Count Roger saw that he would be able to kill them all, then restrained by his piety he immediately spared them. After he had done this, behold suddenly two men clad in white robes appeared, and rising from the ground said, 'You can for the moment live, although if he had so wished Count Roger could have killed you all. But since he has spared you and allowed all of you your lives, now approach and with necks bent low adore him. For you all know that the Divine Will has disposed that whomsoever shall try to resist him shall be struck dead by his sword'. On hearing this all came forward without delay and putting down their weapons adored him and submitted to him by doing homage. Roger was thus shown as the victor and then immediately climbed up a hillock and planted his spear on the top. The spear promptly grew into a most beautiful tree whose topmost part seemed to extend right up to the clouds. It was filled with beautiful foliage and flowers and innumerable wonderful fruit and had a most elegant and excellent appearance on its hillock. Then a broad ladder was placed against the tree which led up to a marvellous throne. The two men, those who had appeared in their robes, approached and held him by the hand, one on the right and the other on the left, and they led him with them up the tree by the ladder and placed him on the throne. They crowned him and had him sit there as a King. And then the priest woke up and the vision disappeared.

(8) Another dream about him was told to us which was seen by a certain woman living in the same valley. For she told how one night as she was sleeping the Blessed Mother of God Mary appeared to her in a dream. The woman said asking her, 'How is it, Lady, that you do not pray for us and liberate us from the oppression of this King'. The Blessed Virgin Mary responded carefully to her, 'Woman, I cannot do this, since two guards have been sent to him by my son the Lord Jesus Christ, who, the one leading him by the right hand and the other by the left, unceasingly guard and protect him. Hence nobody opposing him will be able to resist for very long. He will prevail against all and trample them under his feet until they be fully contrite and shall be completely exorcised of the sins which have grown up within them'. So she asked again, saying: 'and who are they, Lady, who lead and guard him?' The Blessed Virgin Mary replied, 'They are the Apostles of my son Jesus Christ, Peter and Paul'. At this the old woman woke up and the vision disappeared.

(9) Thus these two visions undoubtedly show that Roger has triumphed by divine disposition and received the royal crown by divine influence, so that he will never be deprived of it, [hence] let wars be put to sleep and all opposition to him cease. Nor shall anything be accomplished either by someone striving against him or by he who plots since according to the visions, which indeed are apposite, Roger shall be served by the guidance of the Apostles and those who attempt to rebel against him shall undoubtedly be struck down by his sword. Let it be recalled what the saying is of the Apostle, 'Who resists authority resists the ordinance of God' [*Romans*, xiii.2]. If therefore it is a sin to resist the ordinance of God it is equally one to fight against him. Indeed if Roger had not received his power from above he could not have done

anything. Whosoever is afraid to oppose divine disposition, let him therefore protect himself from Roger's sword, let him not fight against him, nay let him submit to him.

(10) We set forth another dream which this priest told to us while staying in a property of our monastery. By writing this down we shall try to teach that everything shows how Roger did not obtain the Kingdom's throne by chance but by the workings of divine providence. For he said that in the same year that Duke William died he was asleep one night when he saw a revelation in a dream; namely that he seemed to be in a field outside the town of Paduli and there were a large number of other people there with him. Lo suddenly a most beautiful vine sprang out of the ground and was seen to grow with such speed that it appeared to stretch up into the sky. And when at last it appeared to stand there so sublimely erect, then suddenly a tremendous wind gusted against it and smashed it to the ground so that it was reduced to nothing and completely disappeared. At this immediately, from the spot on the ground where the vine had sprung, a hillock little by little arose. and it began thereafter to raise itself from the surface of the earth until it had reached the height of a full-grown man. Then the mound changed into stone and afterwards grew [once again] up to the height of a lance - finally it appeared to stand still. Indeed all the people who were there, seeing the vine developing from nothing and the hillock rising from the same spot where the vine had emerged, were struck with amazement, saying 'this vine was certainly destroyed by the wind so that from where it fell the hillock could rise up'. At this the priest woke up from his dream, and wondered greatly at it, not then knowing what was foretold by it. However, after Roger had obtained his victory and crown the priest remembered his dream and asserted that its contents had been fulfilled without any ambiguity, namely that the vine so quickly appearing and so quickly overthrown was Duke William who had finished his life soon afterwards. The hillock appearing in the vine's place and changing into stone was Roger, substituted in his place and attaining the summit of the kingdom, and signifying fortitude.

We ourselves approving his interpretation (*coniectura*) as the truest one, we think it best that this vision should be described, so that, as already said, it should be known by all that Roger undertook the royal dignity not by chance but by grace of divine election. If however anyone is indeed doubtful about anything from these three dreams, let him turn his mind away from any such doubts since if I was in doubt about anything in connection with these [dreams] then I would not have recorded these letters so accurately and carefully.

Alloquium to King Roger.

Lo, my lord King Roger, we have thought to dedicate this book to nobody else but to you to whose glory and honour it stands devoted. Because we wish therefore something to be made, so that while you read and re-read the story of your most famous victory, you may remember the Lord and Saviour your Eternal King and study to please him fortified by whose benevolence (*beneficii*) we do not doubt you have triumphed and obtained your kingdom. On account of this you should not cease to give thanks; and chanting with the Psalmist, say 'Not to us, but to your name give glory' [*Psalm*, cxiii.9]. For we do not doubt that you will rule so much the more perseveringly and firmly in proportion to how much you have received the grace of success and the high dignity of your kingdom from Him, and how much you consciously submit yourself to His orders. Furthermore we pray your magnificence that the work which we have expended on this book should be granted the recompense of suitable reward, namely that you allow us who live perpetually in the service of God permanent support, quiet, peace and liberty, so that by following the divine service more freely and securely, we may pray more safely and devotedly for your safety and that of your sons. For if

Virgil, the greatest of poets was esteemed so much at the court of the Emperor Octavian that for two verses which he had written in his praise he received as an earthly reward rule over the city of Naples and at the same time the province of Calabria, we believe it much better that we should be rewarded by you with those things for which we ask for following the divine observance, not however so much for this little work as for the safety of your soul and for the Lord our Saviour, in whose name we are here gathered together, and by Whom you yourself have up to now been preserved safely and have achieved your kingdom. For let us pray our Saviour that you who at present reign will perform such deeds that both at present and in the future you will deserve to possess this kingdom and, if you rule well and justly, I do not doubt that you will gain also that other kingdom which is that to come. For what did it profit Saul to possess the Israelite kingdom according to the Divine Will when afterwards by his Contempt for His commands he lost both kingdoms? And what did it profit the Roman Emperors Octavian called Augustus, Domitian and Maximian and others to rule over the whole world when as soon as they were buried they would be suffering in hell for all eternity? As these universal torments ought to be feared, therefore from the royal honour with which you are now adorned, you should study to magnify God, to serve Him and to please him, who gave it to you. For just as it is right that he who owes the debt of service to you for those things which he is seen to hold from you, so also is it right that you should display that service pleasing to the Lord God for those things which He has brought to you or committed to your charge. If perhaps it is asked how the kingdom which God has conceded ought now to be well and justly administered, we shall briefly set this out. The kingdom is rightly and justly administered, when it is ruled justly in both peace and wartime, when by means of laws you drive out iniquity and when you are triumphant after conquering your enemies by force of arms. Remember therefore that you are called by the name of king that all placed under your authority are ruled by the sanction of justice and the bond of peace. That the boon of this peace and justice may be perpetuated in your kingdom, it is greatly to your advantage if you subjugate to your own rule fortifications, impregnable cities and the stronger and impregnable towns. Therefore let the prudence be recalled to your mind of the praiseworthy Emperor of Constantinople, who for the conservation of this same peace and justice retained for himself the stronger lands and by contrast granted to others, who were inferior in rank to him, the poorer lands to be subject to him and to follow him. While therefore you aim with similar foresight to achieve this precaution, you will be, as Solomon said, as 'a lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any' [*Proverbs*, xxx.30]: since as the innocents you will sleep securely, you will rest in the day before the night watches and will pass through those night watches without trepidation. Prudent counsel of this sort will lead to all that you desire, and beware lest you ever forget and fail to follow this, for I know that it is in every way pleasing to God, and do not depart from His will. Furthermore let us sway your Serenity with all our entreaties to be mindful of your condition, that you acknowledge as your king He who is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, in Whose hands are all the ends of the earth and the hearts of kings, Who has the sole right to dispose of the seasons, distribute kingdoms, and also to confiscate what he wishes, Whom alone is worthy to be honoured, feared and adored, and without Whose grace we would doubtless not exist, live, think or move. Whence the Apostle says: 'For what hast thou that thou did not receive' and 'why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it' [*I Corinthians*, iv.7]. Beware then when the thought surfaces in your mind to make you think that you can do anything without Him, for it is He who gives body and life and without him you can neither do nor know anything. He gives you everything that you have; even if you seem to be working in these things. Hence in the Gospel the Truthsayer says to his disciples; 'for without me ye can do nothing' [*John*, xv.5]. If therefore the disciples Peter, Paul and Andrew and the other Apostles are believed to have been able to do nothing without Him, how much more must this apply to all of us who compared to them are as almost nothing. How many are there who at God's wish or at least with his consent

prosper in what they desire in this secular world, who then allow their minds to become forgetful and rush to ascribe this not to God but to themselves. Among these there was Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. He was walking in the royal palace when his heart was filled with pride, and he said 'Is this not Great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, the might of my power and the honour of my Majesty?' [*Daniel*, iv.30]. With these words he showed that he was sinning by pride against God, when he asserted that Babylon was built not by His strength and fortitude but by his own power. Because of this he quickly (and justly) fell into folly, was expelled from his kingdom, and for seven years dwelt with the beasts of the field and lived as they did. Afterwards, according to God's will he returned to his senses, acknowledged that he had erred by his pride and at length was restored to his former honour, and praised, glorified and magnified the King of Heaven, since just are His works and just his judgements, and he can humiliate all who walk in pride. Therefore that a descent into pride can be avoided, do not doubt that you have received all glory, honour, rule (*regnum*), courage, wealth, wisdom, prudence and all other things from him. To sum up therefore, there is no angel in Heaven nor man on the earth who without His consent could either have anything nor have any existence. For God alone has what He has by Himself, since His existence comes from Himself and from nothing else. The holy King David comes to mind. Study to be like him, who while he held the realm of the Israelites without opposition, still despised himself in everything, humbled himself in his own eyes, and while chanting before the altar of the Lord said, 'I will play ... and I will yet be more vile than thus, and I will be base in mine own sight' [*II Samuel*, vi.21-2]. Thus it happened that because King David first esteemed himself humbly, he was therefore greatly esteemed by God, and was more deserving of being confirmed in his kingdom which was greatly exalted. So also the Emperor Constantine, who ruled after he had received baptism over the whole world, and showed to God such subjection that He did not abandon his kingdom, and thus like David from his kingdom was brought to the Kingdom, and from his empire merited transfer to the Celestial Empire. In God's time you will be brought to this Kingdom and Empire to reign with them, to stand before Our Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns for eternity. Amen.