

**The Chronicle of St. Clement, Casauria,
by John Berard**

The abbey of Casauria was founded by the Carolingian Emperor Louis II in 873 as a bastion of imperial power in the Abruzzi region on the border of the kingdom of Italy. It was endowed partly from property recently purchased in the region by the emperor and some of his courtiers, partly through confiscations from local aristocrats whose loyalty was suspect, and partly through a series of purchases undertaken by the first abbot, Romanus (873-884). The abbey was originally dedicated to the Holy Trinity, but the presence there of what were believed to be the relics of St. Clement, the second pope after St. Peter, led to him becoming the patron of the house, and eventually his name superseded that of the Trinity in the dedication. After a period of some difficulty around c. 1000, which was linked with the growth of *incastellamento* in the region, the abbey enjoyed a 'golden age' under Abbot Guido (1024-46), in which its property was protected by imperial support, notably in a series of land pleas held under the supervision of Duke Hugh of Tuscany (acting on the instructions of Conrad II) in 1028, and during which it became the major focus of religious benefactions by local landowners. The abbey received nearly 200 donations under Guido's rule. It was also at this period that the abbey began to develop its own *clientelia* among the local aristocracy. However, although to begin with the contemporary decline in the authority of the Attonid family, who held the counties of Chieti, Penne and Aprutium, benefited Casauria, by weakening its major territorial rival and potential overlord, this ultimately led to a breakdown in local authority, which was exacerbated by the incursions of the Normans from northern Apulia. For a generation after 1070 the abbey was in crisis, donations fell away almost to nothing, and for much of this period Casauria was under the control of Hugh Mamouzet, who was one of the great villains of the later chronicler's account. The eventual collapse of his lordship after his capture by a (presumably Lombard) rival was recounted with relish. Casauria experienced a considerable recovery after conditions in the Abruzzi stabilised in the early 1100s. However, its relations with the Norman Counts of Manopello remained volatile, and the chronicler greeted the extension of King Roger of Sicily's rule into the Abruzzi after 1140 with relief, even though the king in practice retrospectively sanctioned many previous alienations of abbatial property.

The chartulary-chronicle of Casauria was completed c. 1175-80. Properly speaking, this work is a chartulary rather than a chronicle, since the great bulk of the manuscript (now Paris, B.N., MS. Latin 5411) is composed of more than 2150 charters, dating from the ninth century until the time of writing. Proportionately more of these documents come from the earlier part of this period, many connected either directly with the foundation in 873, or the purchases of property by the early abbots. There are also almost 250 property leases made by the abbey between 960 and 1040, and the pious donations recorded reached a peak in the 1040s, and fell away thereafter. The chronicle was in fact written in the margins of the chartulary, and can thus be seen as subordinate to it in the mind of the author. The first two ‘books’ were indeed entirely composed of charters, and the chronicle properly speaking begins with Book III. Nonetheless, the continuous history of the monastery is our most important narrative source for the history of the early medieval Abruzzi.

The author, the monk John Berard, tells us that he was ‘raised in this monastery from boyhood’, and can be attested from May 1158 onwards. In the next year he was already a priest (and so presumably over the canonical age of thirty).¹ From 1161 until at least June 1169 he served as the provost of the monastery, that is as the abbot’s deputy in charge of its estates and economy, and so he was the natural choice to edit the chartulary, although the actual writing was entrusted to a certain ‘Master Rusticus’. In June 1179 he was the abbey’s sacristan (that is in charge of the vessels and furnishings of its church): this was the last time he was mentioned. (His manuscript would appear to have been taken to Naples during the late Middle Ages, and thence removed to France as part of the plunder secured by the invading army of Charles VIII in 1494).

The charters themselves were the major sources of the chronicle, and in particular an earlier chartulary compiled during the time of Abbot Guido. John also used a contemporary biography of this abbot, whose period of rule had seen, as we have noted, a notable growth in the monastery’s endowment and influence. But even

¹ E.g. BN Ms. Latin, 5411, fol. 254v (August 1159) and 255r (1159, October); both of which read *scripsi ego iohannes berardi presbiter et monachus*. Cf. an earlier charter of May 1158, *ibid.*, fol. 254r, in which he attested the document as the last person on the witness list as *Ego Iohannes Berardi humillimus monachus Sancti Clementi*. Cf. *Chronicon Casauriense*, col. 900: *quodam fratrem Iohannem Berardi, in ipso coenobio a pueritia nutritum*.

before the early eleventh century it is clear that there had been quite a sophisticated ordering of the abbey's documents, reflected in books I-II of the manuscript, although the topographical structure revealed therein had been made largely obsolete by the *incastellamento* of the region after c. 980. After c. 1050 oral traditions about the various abbots, and about the Norman invasion of the region, may well have been important. As a youth, John would have mingled with monks whose careers went back until the beginning of the century. It is, however, also possible that some brief earlier written narratives have been incorporated into the chronicle, and in particular one covering the years c. 960-1020. John's work was however much more ambitious than anything that had preceded it, and was an integral part of the revival and reorganisation of the abbey under Abbot Leonas (1152/5-82), who was responsible for, among other things, the rebuilding of the abbey church in the form in which it still survives, and the great sculpture over the main doors (after 1172) depicting St. Clement in majesty and the foundation of the house.

There is no modern edition of the manuscript, although Prof. Alessandro Pratesi of the University of Rome has been working on one for many years. The chronicle can however be read in L.A. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ii(2) (Milan 1726), cols. 775-916, and a selection of the charters in *ibid.*, 917-1018. However, Muratori printed only about one-tenth of the documents contained in the manuscript. The best modern discussion of the chronicle is by Laurent Feller in his important book on the medieval Abruzzi.² The extracts translated below form only a small fraction of the entire chronicle, but at least give the reader a flavour of the work as a whole, and of the history of the abbey, particularly in relations with the early eleventh-century emperors, its dealings with the Normans after 1060, and with the royal administration of the new kingdom of Sicily after 1140 when King Roger and his sons incorporated the Abruzzi into their realm. The dates in bold are those given at that place in the chronicle: those in italics are those given earlier on in the account, but which seem still to refer to the section translated.

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21.v.2002

² L. Feller, *Les Abruzzes Médiévales. Territoire, Économie et Société en Italie Centrale du IXe au XIIIe Siècle* (Rome 1998), pp. 63-83

Book III

Prologue

First of all, let it be known that at the time of the foundation of the monastery of Pescara there were scarcely any *castella* built within the circuit of the mountains that lie nearby and define its boundaries, but the whole of the territories both of Penne and Chieti were inhabited by many villages and *casales*, situated all over the area, and the men of the time dwelt as under the fig or the vine, or on their own sections of land [*praedia*]. As can be discovered in charters and chronicles, about forty years after its construction the monastery was burned by the Agarenes and pagan people and almost destroyed, and the whole region was laid waste. The barbarians were, as it is said, most victoriously put to flight by the Christians, but through fear of them the latter began to make fortresses out of villages and *castella* out of the *casales*. Some were built by the abbots who had received money from wealthy men for the restoration of the abbey. Indeed, at this time some fortifications were built through violence on the monastery's property by those who had intruded themselves into these same places. They were afterwards not only retained by those occupying them through various methods, but were then exempted from the monastery's lordship through force, and alienated irrevocably through the wretched sloth or carnal negligence shown by some of the abbots.

For the notice of those coming later we have tried truthfully to make known from which villages and *casales* these fortresses and *castella* were raised up, both by the account of those who know and by the evidence of the charters. This we have made clear partly in the chapters of this volume and partly by the headings [*tituli*] of the charters.³

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³ *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, ed. L.A. Muratori, ii(2) (Milan 1726), cols. 797-8.

In the time of this [Abbot] Adam the Emperor Henry came to Italy, and imperially [*augustaliter*] corrected some of the oppressions of the monastery of Pescara, about which he was informed by the monks. ...⁴

(c.18) Abbot Peparus

(1023) Abbot Stephen was in office for one full year, but during his second year he reached the end of his temporal life.⁵ He was succeeded by Peparus, of whose acts nothing is known, since neither in the charters nor by report is anything that he did to be found. His name indeed is placed after Stephen in the catalogue. This at least will be written down at the end of the first book.

The succession of the abbots of Pescara now came to Lord Guido, to whom the burden of [ruling] the monastery was given. Since we shall speak a great deal about him, we ought to pause for a little while and give our limbs a break from sitting down, so that we may be the more prepared to discuss this great man.

Book IV

(c. 19) The Holy Abbot Guido

Revived a little after our long work, we shall shake our lazy limbs out of their deep sleep, and shall take up our pen and start to discuss, as we have promised, the holy man Guido. Indeed, we have above made some small beginning to this, so that we shall properly arrive at that time where he was elected and received the care and leadership of the church.

The carelessness of some of the abbots, and the lack of religion of the brothers, had brought the monastery of St. Clement of Pescara to such great misery that hardly anyone could be found who wished to rule over them [*the monks*]. They

⁴ The last clearly datable charter of Abbot Adam II comes in July 1021, BN MS Latin 5411, fol. 178r.

⁵ Charters naming Stephen as abbot are dated from March 1023 until May 1024, BN MS Latin 5411, fols. 179v-180v, *I Placiti del Regnum Italiae*, ed. C. Manaresi, ii (FSI, Rome 1957-8), 664-5 no. 321. Abbot Guido cannot therefore have been appointed during Henry II's expedition to southern Italy, which took place from February to June 1022.

were so oppressed that their house had almost lost the name of an abbey. What should they do? Enemies were at their head, by whom they were surrounded on every side, nor did they even have the ability to leave the island, if they so wished, since [these enemies] had demolished the bridge, and placed ambushes for them in suitable places. They held the *castella* of the church which they had invaded, and showed themselves to be enemies of God. For the court of the emperor knew nothing of them, since many years had now passed since it had been visited by any abbot or the envoys of that abbot. Whence it happened that the invaders of these places held securely what the church had for a long time possessed, from the gift of Louis of holy memory, purchase by Abbot Romanus, and through the great expenditure of the venerable Adam, who fostered this abbey.⁶ Finally, they discussed the matter and chose some of the brothers who were to break through their enemies and go to the court of the Emperor Henry, who had succeeded Otto III, and who should raise tearful voices, revealing to him in detail the misery of the church, the poverty [*nuditas*] of the brothers, the sorrow of the convent from the lack of an abbot. They left carrying a letter, which is still possessed by this church, and they read it out to the aforesaid emperor. All those who were present and heard this were reduced to tears by this account of the brothers' misery. The letter ran thus [*the text follows*] ...⁷

The lord emperor was at that time staying with a great army in the vicinity of the church of Farfa, before going to attack the Apulians and the people of Troia, who with the encouragement of certain Normans who had tricked them and made them subject to themselves, not by courage but through the treachery of that race, were attempting to rebel against the Romans. Hearing that the brothers lacked an abbot, and were in consequence facing disaster, with the possessions of the church being ravaged, took counsel with his barons and summoned the abbot of Farfa. He asked him if there was any monk in that monastery who was a lover of religion, well-read and distinguished by his noble descent, who might be appointed as the guardian of the monastery. When he was told of the notable reputation of Guido, not just among the monks but also spread among the peasants and people round about, he sought that he might be given to him to be elected as pastor of the church of Pescara, which had been

⁶ Louis II, Emperor and King of Italy (d. 875), the founder of the abbey, Romanus, the first abbot (873-884), and Adam I (abbot 967-87).

⁷ Feller, *Abruzzes Médiévales*, p. 82, suggests that this letter was actually a later forgery.

deprived of a shepherd. As is the way with men of sanctity, Guido declared that he was unworthy and unsuitable, and he begged with abundant tears at the abbot's feet that they leave him alone to lead a peaceful life; [however] he was handed over to the brothers, to be elected for the good of the monastery, and although unwilling was appointed as abbot of St. Clement of Pescara. The book which was written about his life, and which is kept in the monastery, does not fail to give a true account, albeit in a simple style, of how hard he worked for the church, once its abbacy had been entrusted to his charge, and of the great abstinence with which he ruled his body, of how gentle he was in encouragement but severe in correction.

He was therefore given to the brothers, and on the emperor's order was brought to the monastery with great honour. When Guido saw the ruin of the walls, the damage to the houses, and that it was almost devoid of bread and wine, the brothers naked, the monastery destroyed, he dwelt there for a few days, collected its privileges and charters, and set off once more to the emperor. But before he could come to him, he learned of his death.⁸

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(1028) Then the emperor [*Conrad II*] sent one of his dukes, Count Hugh, to the lord Abbot Guido. He ordered him to exercise his imperial power and restore to the church whatever it had possessed, both *castella* and villages, and not to leave until it held everything in peace. On his arrival, and before he had entered the monastery, the [abbot] made a complaint [*querimoniam*] concerning the bridge which had been broken down. In the presence of the aforesaid duke, in the monastery, and in front of Bishop Dodo of Nocera [*Umbra*] and Bishop Adelbert of Senigallia, as well as the barons of Penne and Chieti, of whom a great number were present, on the appointed day, namely in January in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1028, it was decreed and confirmed, in a document [given] into the hand of Abbot Guido, that from that time until the end of the world the abbots of St. Clement would be allowed to build bridges wherever they liked. Anybody who tried to prevent them from doing this should pay a thousand pounds of gold into the treasuries of the lord emperor.

⁸ Cols. 840-3. Henry II died in July 1024.

Once this had been accomplished and confirmed in writing, as we have described above, Abbot Guido laid a charge and plea before the duke, whom (as we have said) had been sent by the emperor, concerning the properties around the island and not far from the monastery. For many people had invaded these possessions, and were holding them neither from God nor man. ...

.... They [*the monastery's enemies*] fearing rather the emperor than God, and knowing the vigour of the abbot and his invincible will, fell on their knees, [admitted] how they had evilly invaded and acknowledged that they were at his mercy, and they swore that neither they nor their successors would usurp any of those properties which the aforesaid Abbot Guido had kept for himself, and he granted to them to hold enough to keep them content, out of his mercy and not through fear of their relatives. The abbot took care to have a document drawn listing what he had retained for himself and what he had granted to them, to prevent there being any further dispute. He retained for himself lordship over all the land and the fortresses within it, in which he also placed his guards. He kept the pastures, mills, woods, the best farms, tithes, the churches, burial right, and everything else which seemed to belong to the prerogatives [*officia*] of lordship. He left to them the other things, not with right of lordship [*ius dominationis*] but rather as if they had sought to have them in servile tenure [*servili conditione*].⁹

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[1038] It happened that at this time the Margrave Transmund was marching through the frontiers of St. Clement with a great army, [acting] as is the custom with the young, while many of the ordinary people and the peasants who lived in his county rushed into the villages and *casalia* so as to plunder them. They came to Alano, and sought food for themselves and supplies for the army, and unless they gave in haste what was sought from them, they atrociously threatened that they would destroy the

⁹ Cols. 845 and 847. For the records of these legal cases, *I Placiti del Regnum Italiae*, ed. C. Manaresi, iii(1) (FSI, Rome 1960), 15-22 nos. 327-9.

castellum or set fire to it.¹⁰ However, since the townspeople had received no orders [about this] from the abbot, nor did they dare to introduce new customs to the land of St. Clement, they rushed to the gates, fortified the *castellum*, and prepared to defend themselves therein. They killed one of the horses of the enemy army. As a result the margrave was filled with anger. He ordered his soldiers to arm themselves and lay siege to the *castellum*. He demanded a hundred gold *solidi* as compensation for this horse, which was barely worth ten. He stood out in front with his armed infantry, threatening death, fire destruction and [other] dangers, unless they immediately give him the sum that he demanded. Hearing about this the venerable Guido left the cloister, came to the army, and humbly did his best to calm the enraged margrave. When he saw that he was getting nowhere, he asked where the horse that had been killed was. He saw that its appearance was terrible, and its body was shockingly wasted. If it had not been struck down by the sword, it would soon have died of natural causes. In front of the whole crowd, he first prayed, speaking to the Lord thus:

‘Lord Jesus Christ, to whom nothing is impossible, who said to your disciples, that “whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive”,¹¹ show now your power in this most wretched animal. Give it back the life which you have taken away from it, for without you not even a sparrow can fall to ground, in order to still the anger of these people, who are threatening and, it seems to me, are prepared to inflict fire and destruction on a possession of your most Blessed Martyr Clement’.

On saying this, he went to the horse and touched it lightly with the staff which he held in his hand, saying to it: ‘Arise! Our Lord Jesus Christ lifts you up. Go away unharmed and serve your master, as you have done up to now’. The horse immediately rose up unharmed. After seeing this, the anger of the margrave was calmed, and the whole army, which had been plundering the property of the monastery, fell prone at the feet of the holy man, begging him to pray to God for them, that what they had been doing unjustly should not rightly rebound upon them. However, the holy man graciously blessed them, and ordered them to cease from their

¹⁰ Alano is 8 km. NE of the monastery. Transmund III, Count of Chieti, can be attested from 1032 until 1086, Feller, *Abruzzes Médiévales*, pp. 618-19.

¹¹ *Matthew*, xxi.22.

evil ways. So it occurred that they returned to their homes without doing him any harm, and the land that they had threatened to burn remained intact through the protection of St. Clement.¹²

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(1064) At this time, indeed, the brothers began to forget the court of the emperor, and being unable to resist the Normans who were depopulating the whole land were first made subject to Count Robert of Loritello, and after his death to Hugh Mamouzet. We shall speak at the appropriate place about the persecutions which the latter inflicted upon the monastery of St. Clement. The men who, as we described above, had in the presence of Duke Hugh and in the time of the Emperor Conrad been overcome, and had received the *castella* from the hand of the most holy lord Abbot Guido in servile tenure, forgetful of their oaths and fealty, invaded [its] property, garrisoned the *castella* against the church, and as they were more safely able to oppress it, they took for themselves other lords, with whose help and strength they held what they had wickedly seized, to the diminution of the place [in question] and to the detriment of the whole abbey. Berard, as it turned out, was through Divine [judgement?] unable to resist them, since God had sent against them [*the monks?*] the Normans, a race most greedy for rule, to the confusion of the land.

Abbot Berard did not appear to have done much, nor to have performed any great action, but did [only] a few things, and before he was able to accomplish much, the Lord placed an end to his life. He ruled the monastery for six years, and then died and was buried. He is listed among the abbots after the Lord Dominic, and his name has been written in the catalogue after the latter's. After his death the lord Dominic, as before, held the abbot's charge for as long as he lived.¹³

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¹² Col. 852.

¹³ Col. 863. Dominic had previously been elected as Bishop of Valva, and although he had for a time ruled the abbey in plurality, the monks had eventually elected Berard as his successor.

(c.23)

Abbot Transmund

(1073) After the death of the *lord* Dominic, Bishop of Valva and Abbot of Pescara, the brothers were reluctant to remain for long without a shepherd, lest the property of the church be diminished. Along with the clergy of St. Pelinus, who similarly had lost their pastor, they took counsel and went to Rome, journeying to the seat of the Apostolic See. They were unable to go to the emperor on account of the disagreement and discord that had arisen between the Roman Church and the emperor of the Germans. The cases of both churches were raised before the Roman Curia, and with both the monks of St. Clement agreeing and consenting to his election as abbot, and the clergy of St. Pelinus to his election as bishop, the monk Transmund, a nobleman who was the brother of Oderisius, the abbot of St. Benedict after the lord Desiderius,¹⁴ was honourably given to them both by Pope Gregory, in the year 1073 from the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The venerable Pope Gregory celebrated a general council at Rome, where he pronounced a special sentence, and thus one greatly to be feared, against the Normans and other invaders of the estates and possessions of the monastery of St. Clement.

‘If any Norman, or any other man, invades the property of the monastery of St. Clement, or unjustly takes away any goods of that same monastery, and after receiving two or three warnings has not mended his ways, let him be subject to excommunication until he repents and makes satisfaction to the church. If anyone shall usurp the property of St. Clement, wherever it may be situated, as though it were his own, or knowingly shall sell it in secret, or shall fail to provide the service owed to St. Clement, he will incur the wrath of God and St. Clement as a man guilty of sacrilege. Whoever shall be apprehended in this crime shall restore that property to St. Clement, and shall pay a quadruple penalty from his own goods. Any knight or other person or professed person who has received or shall receive church property from any king or secular prince, or [even] from a bishop, or who invades it, without the consent of the abbots or rectors of a church, or who holds it without the formal

¹⁴ Oderisius I, Abbot of Montecassino 1087-1105. They were sons of Count Oderisius II of Marsia. For Transmund’s earlier career as Abbot of the monastery of St. Mary of Tremiti, *Chronica Monasterii Casinensis*, ed. H. Hoffmann (*MGH SS xxxiv*, Hanover 1980), III.25, pp. 392-3.

consent of those same rectors, shall be subject to excommunication, unless he restores it to the church in question. Promulgated at Rome in the universal synod presided over by this same blessed Pope Gregory, and approved by the whole council.’

This letter which he had had compiled was sent by Pope Gregory to the convent of the church of St. Clement with the same lord Transmund, who he had appointed both abbot and bishop, with instructions that it should be kept in perpetuity among the privileges of the monastery of Pescara, so that it might be put into effect. Thus lord Transmund was ordained both as bishop and abbot, and he ruled both churches. He conducted the business of each separately, and lived sometimes at St. Pelinus, and sometimes in the monastery.

(1074) At this time, in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1074, twelfth in the indiction, a certain noble and illustrious man called Obertus, son of the late Guido, gave to the monastery of St. Clement for the redemption of his soul whatever [share] belonged to him of the *castellum* called Petrace di S. Valentino, entrusting to the hands of the abbot and having a charter of confirmation drawn up.¹⁵ Moreover Abbot Transmund, as a wise man who was more concerned with the present than to foresee what might happen in the future, therefore built a *castellum* on the island, blocking the way in, and furnishing it with walls and a tower. He brought in men and women to live in this *castellum*. He made a common causeway both for himself and for the inhabitants before the gates of this *castellum*. The reason that he did this was because the men of Tocco were harrying those inhabitants who lived outside the *castellum*.¹⁶

(1075) Moreover, in the following year, namely the 1075th from the Incarnation of the Lord, Rainardus, son of the aforementioned Obertus, in a similar manner and for the same reason as his father, gave with devoted heart the fourth part which belonged to him of the *castellum* of S. Valentino, and making a charter of confirmation, legally handed it over to the lord Abbot Transmund.

(1076) When this same abbot became a bishop, he rebuilt the church of St. Pelinus with wonderful workmanship, and also began the rebuilding of the church of St.

¹⁵ S. Valentino is 5 km. east of the monastery.

Pamphilius at Sulmona, even though, as we noted above, its possessions were by no means extensive and it suffered as a result. However, he was not content with the humility of the first church, which had been built by the Emperor Louis. He built a new church, in a place which has on this account been known up to today as ‘At the New Saints’, where he forced the congregation to live, and where he intended, if he had time, and God approved, to transfer the [body of] Most Blessed Clement.

Nevertheless God frustrated his efforts, and what he had planned, as a man, could not be fulfilled, as we shall describe in what follows. ...

(1079) ... Seeing the new fortifications that had been built, and fearing that they would be a hindrance to him, Hugh Mamouzet invaded many *castella* and fortresses, and [indeed] a great part of the region. He feigned friendship and said that he wanted to have a discussion with the abbot. He then set an ambush, and captured the abbot, who came imprudently and incautiously, and threw him into prison. He held him bound for a long time, until he had destroyed all the new buildings and deprived the inhabitants of their goods and utensils. He released the abbot and allowed him to go free only after everything that he wanted to destroy had been demolished. The latter returned to the abbey, but when he saw its barrenness and that its goods had been plundered, and he was unable to find even the means of life there, he was sad and depressed. Partly because he saw that what he had built had been destroyed, and partly because of the shame which he had brought on himself, after ruling the abbey for eight years he retired to his bishopric at St. Pelinus. There he lived on for a few days, and then rendered up the debt of [all] flesh and died on 27th November, where he was worthy of burial in the church of St. Pelinus. At the destruction of their church, which was done as we have said before in the time of Transmund, Abbot of St. Clement and Bishop of St. Pelinus, by Hugh Mamouzet, the monks were dispersed in different places. When they were able to return to the monastery, only that part of the church which was over the body of St. Clement remained intact. This had been left in the keeping of four veteran monks, who according to our elders had remained living in the monastery throughout this crisis. Hence we have never abandoned that place which the Lord chose, and in which our lord St. Clement wishes to rest, for it

¹⁶ Tocco, 3 km. south of Casauria,

was not without the help of God that the Emperor Louis built this temple of the Lord here, and thus anybody who wishes to transfer us somewhere else can be nothing else than a body without a soul, for we would prefer to die than to leave this place. However, everywhere else except for the spot where the four monks kept watch before [the tomb of] St. Clement was covered with briars and nettles, these brothers were huddled there lamenting the desolation of the church and the depopulation of the monastery, and spent their time in sorrow and hardship.

(c. 24)

Abbot Adam

(1080) Finally, since they were unwilling to be without an abbot, they placed one of their own number, called Adam, the provost of this monastery, on the [abbatial] throne. They expected that with his help there might be the long-awaited restoration of the monastery, if he should have the opportunity. This took place in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1080, third in the indiction. ...¹⁷

... But indeed, since evil had not yet been purged, nor had the time yet arrived when God should take pity upon his church, although he knew it to be appallingly oppressed. Abbot Adam and the monks were scarcely able to raise their head, dwelling among their enemies as if they were guests, and scratching a miserable living from their property as though it was not really theirs. And since there is nobody who is blessed in every particular, the Lord God, who is always hard upon the saints, allowed Abbot Adam to be overcome to some small extent by carnal enjoyment, in that, so it is said, he allowed the whole abbey to suffer great damage, and because of his weakness he irretrievably lost those lands which the church of St. Clement possessed in the appurtenances of Tocco. He lived for six years as abbot, and then left this bodily life.¹⁸

¹⁷ Even by his own calculations, the chronicler's chronology seems awry, since he claims that Transmund, appointed in 1073, was abbot for eight years. However, the last charter to mention Transmund as abbot was in November 1079, and the first of Abbot Adam [III] came in January 1080, BN Ms. Lat. 5411, fols. 234r and 235r, while Transmund was still alive on 12th December 1080, although by that time Gregory VII was attempting to remove him as Bishop of Valva, and there was no mention of his abbacy, Gregory, *Registrum*, VIII.15. It is therefore clear that Adam was elected while Transmund was still alive, but after he had abandoned the abbey. Adam can be found as provost in August 1078, *Additamenta ad Chronicon Casuariense*, RIS ii(2).1002.

¹⁸ The last charter to mention Abbot Adam was in July 1086, BN Ms. Lat. 5411, fol. 236r.

Abbot Adenulf the Intruder

After his death, the aforesaid Mamouzet held the abbey as though it was one of his chapels and he would not permit the monks to choose an abbot, rather he placed over them the man he wanted, for as long as it pleased him. This was a certain Adenulf, who was not a monk of this congregation. Because the brothers were unable to put up with him, they went to Mamouzet and asked him to remove this man from the oversight [*praepositura*] of the monastery and to give them permission to elect an abbot for themselves. Popular opinion [*rumor insanientis vulgi*] gave them some help in this matter, for everyone was calling out against him as a plunderer of the church and an enemy of God and St. Clement.

(c. 25)

Abbot John

What more? They were granted the right to make an election, and with Divine assistance they elected and chose for themselves John, a monk of this monastery, a man of noteworthy life and religion.¹⁹ In his time the great cross [which stands] in the choir of the church of St. Clement was erected, carved and painted with wonderful skill, which is held in great veneration both by the brothers and by many others because it was greatly famed among those devoted to the honour of the precious wood of the Cross of Christ. The lord Abbot John [also] had a beam, painted most skilfully with icons of the Saviour and images of the Prophets and Apostles, the Passion of the Lord and the Lamb of God, raised up on high and placed over the gate of this same choir.

In the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1093 a nobleman called Rainerius son of *quondam* Tribunus gave to the monastery of St. Clement, in a charter which he had drawn up, the *castellum* of S. Gregorio and the churches of St. Martin, St. Mary de Melano and St. Flavianus, along with 1000 *modii* of land in Aprutium.²⁰

¹⁹ However, it seems that in fact John had been Abbot of St. Bartholomew of Carpineto, in the diocese of Penne, for more than a decade, before being elected as Abbot of Casauria, and that he came originally from the Montecassino priory of Sette Fratelli, *Il Chronicon di S. Bartolomeo di Carpineto*, ed. E. Fuselli (L'Aquila 1996), pp. 105-6

The year from the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ 1094 unfolded, and about this time the lord Abbot John of Pescara, who was distinguished for his virtuous character and wisdom, was deservedly raised to the see of St. Pelinus and made Bishop of Valva, and when he saw the persecution of Mamouzet growing worse, he thought it best to pay less attention to the abbey and to devote more time to his bishopric.

(c. 26)

Abbot Gilbert

Mamouzet, striving to get what he wanted rather than to please God, sent a certain chaplain of his, by name of Gilbert, to the monastery of St. Clement, seemingly as an act of mercy although in fact, as it turned out later, in the hope of plundering it. He sent him here, ordering him in public to take responsibility for the abbey so that he might augment it, but telling him in secret to despoil it of its ornaments and its gold and silver vessels just as fast as he could. Mamouzet suspected that the monks of St. Clement were plotting against him, for he feared that if the Emperor Henry, who at this time was thought to hold the upper hand in Italy and Rome, should come to these parts then he would, because of its abundance of treasures, build up the monastery of Pescara once again and restore it to its full liberty. Thus it happened that, unless it was for fear of this tyrant and of the other Normans who ruled over and terrorized both them and the whole region through violence, and also since this same King Henry was seen to be hostile to the Roman Church, this Gilbert took over the monastery and undertook its rule with this plan in his mind. He entered it like a wolf in sheep's clothing, ready to kill, ruin and plunder, and in a few days he returned to his lord with a great load of gold and silver, for he tore out crosses, broke up thuribles and chalices, nor did he spare the gold and silver sheets which acted as covers for the Word of the Saviour. The church of St. Clement had once been abundantly endowed with these treasures from the time of the holy abbots Guido and Dominic, and of the others who were numbered among the good abbots. However, he found here simple-minded sheep, ready rather to be killed than to seek revenge, whom he filled with fear, and (as we have said) under the guise of a shepherd, he plundered the church. What should they do? They had no pastor, they

²⁰ The relevant charter, the first to mention Abbot John, is dated January 1093, BN MS Latin 5411, fol.

had lost the treasures, and they saw all around them their powerful enemies plundering the possessions of the church. Nor could they find anyone who pitied them and who could bring them help.

Thus, afflicted and distressed, they hastened to the tyrant, and told him tearfully what had happened to them, as though he did not know! He indeed pretended to be sorry for them, although in fact he rejoiced in doing evil and exulted in wicked deeds. He gave them permission to elect whom they wished, but he did not return the treasures through which they might repair the church. They then first went to the lord Bishop John, and asked him to undertake rule over the abbey as before. But he would not agree to their request; he abandoned the abbey and held the bishopric.

(c. 27)

Abbot Grimoald

There was a certain monk of the monastery of St. Vincent, who was reputed to be good at agriculture and experienced in secular affairs, even if not well-educated. He ruled over the *praepositura* of St. Peter of Trita. This man was called Grimoald, and by the advice and with the permission of the aforesaid Bishop John, the brothers, few [now] in number and poor in goods, sought him as abbot, for they were most anxious to restore the houses and repair the church. After he had been given to them, he found the place deserted and stripped bare of inhabitants and means. He wanted to return to the church, the burden of [ruling] which he had, if he could, although he did not see how, nor could he find a way, to repair the ruins of the monastery. However, he did what he could, trusting that God would visit the church through the merits and intercession of St. Clement.

We have already noted the pride, greed and perversity of Hugh Mamouzet. What he had in his hands would never satisfy him, even if he had the whole world. So he later disinherited the barons, expelled them and put them to flight, and usurped for himself their *castella* and possessions.

236v. There were no charters at all recorded in the chartulary between 1086 and 1093.

He tried to do more, and planned to seize by any means that he could muster a certain heavily-defended *castellum* called Prezza.²¹ He had already taken certain other fortresses from the lord of that *castellum*, and he now tried to seize what he had left and to deprive him of everything. However, the lord of that *castellum* had a most beautiful and very clever sister, who had heard rumours about Mamouzet's lecherous habits. She secretly sent a message to him that if he wanted he could come to her, and she would have a private meeting with him on the outer rampart of the *castellum*. If he would give her one of his barons in marriage, she would do what she could to let him have the *castellum*. Hearing this, Mamouzet eagerly accepted, and came to the place which she had chosen with only a few men with him. The girl had however told her brother of his promise to come. He armed himself and followed her, at some distance, accompanied by his knights and a crowd of infantry, and concealed his men in secret among the bushes. The girl came to Mamouzet, and lulling him with sweet words and kisses, she persuaded him to lie down on her breast. The servant whom she had brought with her held his feet in her lap, and while the girl kept him busy with caresses and pretty speeches the maid wrapped the long dress which she was wearing round his spurs, so that when the time came and he wanted to jump up, he would be so hampered that he would be unable to do so. When the girl's brother saw him laying in his sister's arms, he rushed to that place with the crowd of heavily-armed cavalry and infantry, seized him as he lay there unable to rise, tied him up, and placed him under guard in the strongest spot in the *castellum*, before his men could come to his aid. When the barons heard that this enemy of God and man had been captured, everyone rushed to the place which Mamouzet had violently and treacherously seized from him, laid siege to it and took it back. He remained shut up in prison for a long time, until he had restored freedom to all the land which he had seized. Then, as was right, he led a miserable life, naked and poor, not in his own land but as a stranger. He had by his wife seven sons, all of whom (to give a brief account) he placed as counts and dukes in land which did not belong to him. What deeds might have been expected of him if he had lived longer is easy to imagine. However, God whom he had offended and St. Clement overthrew his house, despoiled it of silver and gold, and did not permit him to fulfil his desires. For He made him suffer with a most serious illness, which brought him to his grave, and in the year in which he died five of his

²¹ In the county of Valva, 20 km. SSW of Casauria and 10 km. W of Sulmona. The lords of Prezza

sons followed him in death. Thus it happened that he received burial in the monastery which he had despoiled, in that place where once a picture of St. Clement had been placed, namely in the crypt that the lord Abbot Grimoald had built in the saint's honour and had painted, before the door on the south side of that church.

At this same time a certain Lieto, a priest of Tocco, made a charter granting and confirming to the monastery of Pescara the church of St. Domitius, which he gave into the hands of Abbot Grimoald in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1097.

We have toiled enough recounting the miseries and the desolation of the church, as a result of its persecution by Hugh Mamouzet, and his overthrow, and how the Lord granted a good abbot to his church, who worked mightily for its restoration. Even though we have only said a little about the death of our adversary, we are somewhat tired and will pause for a little while, so that after resting we may begin the following book with greater enthusiasm.²²

Book Five

Grimoald was still abbot-elect and had not yet received consecration, when after the death of the most wicked Hugh, about whom we have noted down a few things among many, there arose another even worse than him. This man was called William Tassio, and he was a treacherous man, whose nickname came from a rapacious beast, and he was – as his name implies – a lover of earthly things.²³ If the name is discussed in the strictest etymological sense, William is known to be a lover of secular wisdom. For *Wi* in Greek means 'land' in Latin, *erma* is the name of Mercury the God of Wisdom and of dreams. Thus 'William' is formed by joining these two semi-vowels, and means 'the wise land' or 'wise in the land', that is 'wise in temporal things'. From the first he used all his wisdom to acquire secular possessions, and he began to plunder so widely that he was deemed [to be] the hammer of the whole land, and not only by those whom he made subject to himself

came from a family called the Sansoneschi.

²² Cols. 864-70

²³ *Tassio* means 'the badger'. William was a member of the Hauteville family, and a nephew of Count Robert I of Loritello. His brother Roger was the ancestor of the later Counts of Loreto.

through violence, but indeed also by those who lived a long way away and only feared his cruelty.

He held the *castellum* of Loreto in Penne, and the *castellum* of Popoli in Valva,²⁴ and often waged war against his neighbours and those living round about. With a lot of persuasion and promises of poisonous sweetness he tricked lord Bishop John of Valva and fraudulently deceived him. The latter gave him, at a moment of weakness, the *castellum* of Popoli, and he [then] swore to him, on his hand, that if the bishop grant him custody of the tower of Bectorrita,²⁵ of St. Pelinus, and of the tower on the island of St. Clement, so that he and his army could march in safety through the land of both of these saints, leaving them in peace while had made war on his neighbours, then once this war with his neighbours, and especially with the people of Marsia, was over (and he thought that the fortunes of war and his accustomed victories would allow him to finish it off in a short time), then he would not only return these fortresses, but he would also give the entire *castellum* of Popoli with its fortifications and appurtenances to St. Pelinus and St. Clement, to be held by them as of right. Abbot Grimoald was at that time governing the abbey as the vicar of the aforesaid bishop, until such time as he himself received consecration. Bishop John trusted in William's promise, and in the oath which he swore with his right hand, for he was of simple mind and like an innocent who believed every word [he was told], and so he granted him [these things], and in this he was afterwards deceived. For not very long after he had entered into possession of them, William Tassio began to treat the lands both of St. Clement and of St. Pelinus as though they were his own, and supplied himself from everything that he could place under his power from the aforesaid fortresses. Grimoald was for a time much upset by this grievance, since he was neither able to go to the emperor, nor was he able to let the emperor know what was happening – for the Normans, who had invaded the whole land, refused to hear the name of emperor, nor would they permit anybody to go to him. The abbot did not know what to do, seeing every day the overthrow and destruction of his church, and being unable to rebuild what had been destroyed. He gave himself over to lamentation rather than to bodily refreshment; however, he placed his entire trust in God, making

²⁴ Loreto Aprutino, 7 km. SE of Penne; Popoli, also on the Pescara river, 11 km. upstream from Casauria.

²⁵ Modern Torre de'Passeri, on the other side of the river from the abbey.

humble prayers to Him that He grant peace to his church and humble the enemies who were raising up their heads in pride.

At that time the Roman Church had through Divine mercy a good shepherd, a lover of Christianity and a defender of the Faith, in Saint Urban. He lamented that the Saracens had occupied the holy city of Jerusalem and the Sepulchre of the Lord, and wishing to snatch it from the hands of the unbelievers and to restore its pristine liberty, he preached the remission of sins which was given by God, acting through him, and which he conferred on all those who went to Jerusalem and freed the city and the land beyond the sea that was held by the Saracens. He also added this; if anyone should die for Christ, whether along the way or in battle, they should be considered to be numbered among the martyrs and absolved from all their sins. And while the whole world ran after him, anxious to receive the remission of sins and to be numbered among the holy martyrs, it happened that the aforesaid supreme pontiff came to preach this message in Chieti and stayed there for a few days while he had a meeting with the bishops and barons concerning the way to Jerusalem. Hearing of this, Grimoald went to him, and told him of the disasters and destruction which had befallen his church. Pope Urban heard this with the greatest reverence, and he decided to place it under the protection of the Roman Church, of which previously the abbey of St. Clement had known little since it had been governed by the emperors.

Grimoald was first consecrated by him as abbot, receiving the pastoral staff in place of the royal sceptre which his ancestors and he himself had, as a gift from the emperor, carried in their right hand. From that time onwards his whole purpose was the restoration of the church and the buildings, and the recovery of the lost possessions. He had the brushwood which had been growing amid the ruins of the monastery cleared away, new walls built, and in a brief space of time, with the help of the Saviour's grace, he repaired the church and the offices of the monastery. They were not restored to that state in which they had formerly been, but to the best of his ability and as he thought feasible. These events took place during the passing of the years from the Incarnation of the Lord 1098 through to 1101.²⁶

²⁶ Cols. 871-2.

* * * * *

[1103] William Tassio, who undertook with great violence the second persecution, after that of Mamouzet, against the possessions of St. Clement and of its neighbours, decided (I do not know what spirit led him to this) to go to the regions beyond the sea,²⁷ and because he was infected with evil he did not leave those whom he had robbed in peace but rather sought to injure them, [thus] he sold to lord Richard, Count of Manopello, the abbey of St. Clement, Popoli and the bishopric of St. Pelinus, for 1000 *bizantei*. Count Richard was desirous of rule, and after he had bought jurisdiction over the monastery from this man, who had no right to sell it, he came with a great company to the island in the Pescara, set up his tabernacle there, and stayed for as long as he pleased. After consuming the goods of the monastery in extravagant feasting, when he wished to depart he said to the abbot:

‘I do not want to conceal from you, abbot, that we give gold to merchants, in order to receive double back; hence we have paid out our money so that we might receive it back with threefold interest from those whom we have bought. You should know that I have bought this abbey, which you rule with a few others, for 1000 *bizantei*. I want you now to restore to me what seems to be your share of the aforesaid sum, [and] I don’t want you to make me angry with you by any little delay, so pay me what I have told you right now, for I can’t and won’t wait for you for a moment’.

When the abbot replied that he did not have the money, and showed him the ruined walls and the damaged church, the count was furious. He was beside himself, and showing neither respect to God nor honour to the venerable martyr, threw out these words:

‘If you do not bring the whole sum of money on the day I set for you, then I shall finish off these ruins which you have showed me, and after everything which you have made has been destroyed, I shall expel the island’s inhabitants and rule over it and all of its appurtenances.’

²⁷ i.e. to the Holy Land.

After saying this, he went on his way, and there is no doubt that he would have done what he had promised, if he had been given the chance.

What should you do, Father Grimoald? The rage of this madman will never be stilled unless you give him the gold that he has demanded? What grief, what misery! The abbey which formerly belonged to the chamber of the emperor is now given for a price, as though it had been sold by merchants like a paltry maidservant. Where is royal justice? Where is the might of the sceptre? All has fallen from you, [and] you are placed under the yoke. You are not free; the man who will free you treats you as his own land [*gleba*]. What more? The abbot took counsel with the brothers who lived there and on the appointed day, since he could not raise the sum of gold demanded from him, he collected all the cattle and other animals from wherever they could be found on the abbey's property, and gathering up mothers and their wailing little ones he brought them to the house of the tyrant. He said to him:

‘These are the things from which these poor mothers and their children ought to live. Spare them and God will spare you. I do not wish to reduce the land of St. Clement to a desert, nor to drive the inhabitants from the place. But you should know for certain that since we have what you demand, there will be no delay in surrendering it, for we do not wish to provoke you to anger by our action.’

The count's mind burned with the fire of avarice, and he did not even judge the abbot worthy of a reply; rather he extended his hand to the gifts and to the oxen and cattle, nor did he leave anything to the children or their mothers from which they could be fed for a single day.

Abbot Grimoald returned to the monastery, plundered of his wealth. He lamented rather for those who cultivated the fields rather than for himself or the brothers, and he turned his prayers to the Lord, pouring them out before the tomb of St. Clement. He said:

‘O Lord, take note of us, for we have waited. Put your hand on our arm, be our help in time of tribulation. Your enemy shall not enjoy for long the booty that he has treacherously taken from your servants. Show your strength for your church, lest anybody say to him “Where is your God?”’²⁸

After saying this, he was silent, and what he awaited came to pass, for having faith in the Lord he believed that God would fight for his place. There came a day when Count Richard ordered a great feast to be prepared. He sat in his palace, which was filled to bursting with many dishes that he had ordered to be made from the plunder from St. Clement’s. He was sitting at table with his barons when he felt Divine vengeance strike him. For a terrifying person appeared to him alone, clad in a priest’s robe, and gave him a great blow on the head with the key which he held in his hand. This blow immediately deprived him of sight and hearing. He was carried to his bed by the servants, crying out in a loud voice. When the women asked him what was the matter, he suddenly recovered his hearing and exclaimed:

‘Didn’t you see what I saw? That priest who stood there, and ended my time with one blow of his key, and [said?] ‘this blow will seem light if you strike me again’. I shall soon leave this life. Clement, don’t persecute me, I don’t want this Clement!’

With these words, he died. He realised that the One who guards his people, always and everywhere, does not sleep nor will not sleep. Although an attempt was made to keep quiet about it, news of this event could not be hidden, and the hearts of the virtuous grew most joyful in that God had not cast into oblivion the tears of his servants, so that those who endured a life of sadness, being plundered of their property, received consolation with this vengeance and the death of their enemy. His wife, who was now a widow, returned part of those things which her husband had stolen to Abbot Grimoald, and she restrained her son, warning him not to do any harm towards the abbey of Pescara island, which he did not while his mother lived. After her death he forgot her admonitions, and following in his father’s footsteps, he surpassed him in evil.

²⁸ *Ubi est Deus tuus?: Psalm, xlii.3, 10 .*

On the death of Pope Urban of holy memory, Paschal was placed on the pontifical throne and deemed worthy to wear the priestly stole. He sent one of his cardinals, called Augustine as a legate, and ordered him to excommunicate Count Atto, who had abandoned his own legitimate wife and brought another woman to live with him, namely Rogata, the widow of Mamouzet.²⁹ He was to keep him outside the Church until he gave up the woman whom he clung to in this evil fashion and made satisfaction for the crime for which he was accused. Those whom he harmed by his evil example, he should bring to make amends by his penitence. The legate came to the island on the Pescara where the monastery of St. Clement lies, and there he was received with great honour. Following the pope's instructions, he encouraged the excommunicate Atto to make satisfaction, received the penitent and restored him to the Church. And to prevent him returning once again to his sin, he had him swear that he would accept sentence of excommunication for this.

While the cardinal was enjoying the hospitality of the abbot and brothers in the monastery, he asked them about the church and the relics that were kept there. But when he heard that the body of St. Clement lay buried there, nothing would induce him to believe this, until the abbot promised to show him this most sacred body so that he who had doubted would then believe what he had been told. The feast day of St. Clement came round and was solemnly celebrated, as was customary, in the presence of this same cardinal. Night then fell, and after Compline the brothers retired to their bedchambers, as was usual. The abbot ordered two of the brothers and two of his servants, in whose trustworthiness and religious virtue he had the utmost confidence, secretly to remain behind in the church, until in the middle of the night and with the doors firmly fastened they should break into the tomb which was behind the altar, using the crowbars with which they had been furnished. They should then examine it carefully until they had found enough to put the cardinal's scepticism and the doubts of many other people to rest. They obeyed their instructions and broke into

²⁹ Atto VII can be found as Count of Teramo (Aprutium) 1101-16. Augustine was Cardinal deacon of SS. Quatro Coronati, from 1100, and subsequently legate to Dalmatia and Hungary. However, there is one very puzzling feature of this account: a charter of Hugh Mamouzet of November 1093 suggests that Rogata was already dead: *pro anima Rogate Comitissa qui [sic] fuit coniuge predicti ugoni*, *Chronicon di S. Bartolomeo*, p. 297.

the tomb, and finding it empty they were afraid that their labour had been in vain and that the claims of the monks were unfounded.

Finally they bravely broke through the pavement, and finding nothing there they broke through a second slab. As soon as they had made a hole through that, they were overwhelmed by such a sweet smell that they thought that they were before the altar of God in paradise, and a great sound was heard, which seemed to those who were present there like the Second Coming and which resounded round the whole monastery and cracked all the walls. They were stupefied, but then began working again, anxious to see the container that held the Divine treasure. Suddenly they found what they wanted, the precious body of the venerable martyr of Christ and Roman pontiff St. Clement, in an alabaster jar, in which it had been placed through the care and foresight of the Emperor Louis of venerable memory. They saw this, but did not dare actually to touch the vase; rather they immediately announced to the abbot what they had seen, heard and found, and what had happened to them. The abbot was roused from his sleep, immediately arose from his bed and summoned the brothers and the cardinal. They went with fear and reverence to that place. First they prayed, then with tears and sobbing they opened the treasure container and there they found this inscription, written in letters of gold.

‘Here lies St. Clement, the disciple of St. Peter and the second pope after Peter, who on the orders of the Emperor Trajan had his neck tied to an anchor and was sunk in the sea’.³⁰

When the cardinal read this inscription a great wave of tears immediately flowed down his face, and once he realised for sure that St. Clement did indeed lay here, he burst into the chant beginning *Te Deum laudamus*, which the brothers sang with joy, right through to the end, with the Angels exulting and in the presence of the martyred Saints, and they prolonged that *Te Deum* by singing it in different keys. Nor could what had happened be hidden from those round about. Both men and women rushed to see this, and such was the multitude of people that they were as many as the sands of the sea.

³⁰ This legend about St. Clement seems to have been widespread from the fourth-century onwards.

Indeed, when the limbs of the Holy Man were inspected one by one in front of everyone, they saw that not a single bone was missing, and they also found there some of the flesh of St. Peter and one of the teeth of St. Paul, for there was an inscription written in similar letters to confirm the truth of this: ‘This tooth is one of the teeth of St. Paul, who was taken up to the third level of Heaven and heard strange words there, which it is not permitted for me to speak’. The flesh of St. Peter was found to be as soft as wool; when the cardinal clenched it in his right hand it appeared to him as though it was as nothing in his palm, but when he opened his hand the flesh reverted to the size which it had had before. When the cardinal saw this great miracle of God, he believed what he had previously doubted, namely that St. Clement was here both bodily and in the strength of the spirit, and when he returned he informed the supreme pontiff, the lord Pope Paschal, and his fellow cardinals of what he had seen. They all rendered thanks to the Saviour, who had not denied to Italy the Roman pontiff and reverend martyr St. Clement.

This discovery of the most precious body of the glorious pontiff and martyr Clement took place on the day after his feast, that is on 30th November, in the year from the Lord’s Incarnation 1104, thirteenth in the indiction.³¹

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(c. 30)

Abbot Oldrius

To him [*Giso*] succeeded Oldrius, a monk of this church, a man of great simplicity and wonderful charity, both towards God and his brothers, a guardian of his flock and a lover of regular discipline, about whom, as his work proclaims, we cannot (even if we wanted) say only a little. We shall begin with his election, which was divinely inspired.

³¹ Cols. 873-6.

(1127)

The Election of this Same Abbot

Some among the many brothers of Pescara believed that they could attain to rule as abbot because of their fleshly nobility, others through earthly power, some indeed through seniority and the religious life. This was the intention of those among them who were so ambitious, both monks and [also] laymen. But Almighty God frustrated their dubious intent and rendered their plans useless, in this way. On the day after the passing of the lord Abbot Giso, no small number of powerful noblemen gathered at the monastery of Pescara, for the appointment of an abbot. All the brothers assembled in the chapter house, and when they discussed the election of an abbot they unanimously decided, with one voice, and with everyone in agreement, that twelve of the brothers should emerge, sensible and sound of mind, who should retire in private, and the person whom they agreed upon and approved ought to be elected, with no disagreement from anyone. This was therefore ordered by the senior monks [*a prioribus*] and twelve were named, who would leave the chapter house, and it was agreed that six would retire to the dormitory and six to the oratory. They decided among themselves that the person who should be thought the best by each group should be named at a common meeting of all of them, and if it should happen that there was one person who was chosen by everybody in both groups, that would be excellent. Alternatively, if there was one person thought to be the best by most of them, and a majority of these twelve were agreed on him, then he would be chosen and his name would be announced by all of them to the chapter. So they left and did as was planned. It was said in the chapter that the common life and the government of the brothers ought to be better ordered than had previously been the case. In this discussion the lord Oldrius burned with such special fervour for the common good that he showed how the vestments, which he held intrinsically to be of little account, might be improved for the general benefit of the brothers. He acted in this like a man who suspects nothing about himself, for he led a life of simplicity, and by displaying these worthless garments he rendered all the brothers more fervent and enthusiastic.

While they were discussing these matters, as described above, suddenly the voice of one of the simple folk was heard in the temple, saying ‘lord Abbot Oldrius’, ‘lord Abbot Oldrius’. These words resounded through the church and all over the

cloister, and both the sets of brothers to whom the naming of an individual had been committed thought that the voice came from the other group. They were both moved to hurry to the cloister, one saying to the other, ‘if it should please you to choose lord Oldrius, we would not be displeased’. So they agreed on this decision, and entered the chapter. One of them, called John, spoke for all of them, saying: ‘Arise, O Lord, and judge thine own cause’.³² Making the sign of the cross, he added: ‘In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we declare that we shall have the lord Oldrius as our father, since he is good and worthy’. Meanwhile, when the voice of that [first] man, who was named Benedict, was put forth and was heard by the people outside, such an acclamation swelled up from everyone, eagerly shouting out, that its sound was heard all round the monastery, ‘lord Abbot Oldrius’, ‘lord Abbot Oldrius’. They opened the doors and all of them came into the chapter house shouting this. There they found the lord Oldrius resisting the brothers who had chosen him, saying, ‘Why do you put a sheep in such a place? Why me? You will make a laughing-stock of this throne!’ But at last they forced him to sit on the throne and undertake rule over the abbey. This election took place on 15th April in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1127, and in truth the man who was made the father of the monks was like a bronze wall against the enemies of the holy Church of God, humble and gentle with the humble, firm in his justice against the proud, and generous in charity. Pope Honorius consecrated him as abbot, and when he returned to the monastery after receiving this blessing he did not change his behaviour because of the honour he had received, rather he showed himself more humble and more kind in his actions, and an example of humility and grace, so it could really be believed that he was filled with the Divine Spirit.³³

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[*after 1136*] Meanwhile, King Roger had been crowned with a royal diadem, and undertaken rule over the kingdom of Sicily, the duchy of Apulia and the principality of Capua. He sent his son Anfusius, whom he had appointed as Prince of Capua, to the county of Chieti with a great army, and secretly ordered him diligently to seek out the Counts of Manopello, who were the enemies of St. Clement, and send them alive to

³² *Psalm*, lxxiv.22.

him. When the counts found out what the aforesaid prince had been ordered to do by his father, they fled in secret, for they were able to resist him neither in one place nor another. When they fled, they lost both their own land and what they had acquired, and they ended their lives in foreign lands, as they deserved. From now on the church of St. Clement could concentrate on the religious life in [a time of] abundant peace, its temporal property was increased by the care of a good shepherd, who watched out every day to advantage the flock which had been committed to him.

At that time, the lord God decreed that that the most serene and victorious King Roger, whom Divine Grace had endowed with wisdom and courage much greater than that of all other mortal men, would visit the abbey of Pescara. Certain persons attacked the lord Abbot Oldrius, denouncing him, and saying that he had acted against the king in receiving the *castellum* of Bolognano³⁴ from the Counts of Manopello who had fled and their representatives, even though this legally belonged to St. Clement, and the land of the fugitive counts ought not to be denied to the king. But the abbot placed his trust in God and St. Clement, and was in no way afraid. He resolutely held on to the *castellum* until the king came to the lands of the monastery. The latter pitched camp on the plain below Tocco and next to the Pescara river, and there he and his army remained for three days. The abbot took counsel and went to the king the very next day, to placate him with prayers and gifts, even intending to offer him money for the aforesaid *castrum*. He and all the brothers spent the night in the church, reciting the psalter with genuflections, litanies and prayers before the most holy body of St. Clement. When day broke, they sang the morning hymns, and then he set off on horseback with some of the brothers to travel to the king. One of these brothers set off with the others, but was left behind on the way. He was hurrying after the abbot when an old man with the grey hair of age but of beautiful aspect appeared before him, standing on the bridge before the island gate, and clad as a pilgrim with the shell and staff, saying:

‘Tell the abbot that he may safely go to the king, and he should take care not to offer him any money, for he will freely give you what you seek, and more than that’.

³³ Cols. 883-4.

The monk said: ‘how do you know that?’ He replied: ‘because I was this night at the king’s council, when he was discussing how to benefit your monastery’. The monk rejoiced in these words, and said to him: ‘you shall be blessed for bringing good news. Go into the monastery and receive its charity’. He replied: ‘I shall do so, for I am accustomed to dwell there and to have its charity. Go with my blessing’. The monk now hurried off to rejoin the abbot and tell him about these events, but he wondered to himself how that man could know the king’s secrets, since he appeared to be a pilgrim and a poor man, and men of this type were not accustomed to be admitted to the counsels, nor even into the halls, of kings. He turned round, and seeking to know the truth about his words, went all around the monastery, but was quite unable to find him, or even to catch sight of him. Hence those who had that night been praying with him were of the opinion that the messenger of this good fortune had been St. Clement.

The lord Abbot Oldrius went to the king, and exercising his humility, he found such grace from him, a man who was so terrifying that he could even force mountains to tremble before his face, that the latter spoke to him with great kindness, not so much as a lord but rather as though a servant, and as a son to a father. Without delay he gave him what he sought, not for money but out of good will. The king was humble with the humble, and meek with the meek. He showed more respect to the serenity of his face, which seemed angelic in appearance, than to the silk garments of the wealthy and noble. He adjudged others to be vile and of no price compared with his merits, heaped praises upon him, holding him to be above all the other church pastors of his kingdom, and saying that he was solely devoted to the service of God’s religion, not to amassing a host of friends. The king would receive nothing from him apart from the gift of prayers; he was instead generous to the church of St. Clement from his own property, giving it three *castella*, whose names are Bolognano, Casale Plano and Colle Odoni, and a privilege of liberty and protection against its enemies, and of grace, reverence and honour against them. He promised to guard and augment the abbey and its property as though it was one of his special possessions.

³⁴ 4 km. SE of the monastery.

[The text of Roger's privilege then follows, dated August 1140].³⁵

On the following day, namely 28th August 1140, this same glorious king devotedly visited the monastery. Standing in prayer before the venerable cross of the choir, he heard the mass of St. Clement. He was very complimentary about this picture.³⁶ He had his privilege read out to them in the cloister, and then he was given, at his most earnest request, a small piece of the shoulder-bone of St. Clement. He inspected the island, and left even more devotedly than he had arrived. He gave orders to the abbot that if any adversary should molest the church in any way, and if and when it was necessary to ask for the church to ask for help, he should send one of his men, not a monk but a servant, to avoid burdening the church with [unnecessary] expense. This would be security enough, for whatever the abbot requested he would grant, since King Roger did not wish Abbot Oldrius to be harassed. Indeed, he instructed him to make the most of his old age inside the monastery, where he might pray night and day for the state of the realm and for his safety and that of his sons.

After this Bohemond, who had been recently appointed by the lord king to the county of Manopello, succumbed (as is customary) to the chattering of certain flatterers of new men. He wanted the monastery of St. Clement to be made subject to him, and sought as best he could a means to accomplish this. So that he might have allies for his plans, he wooed the chancellor Robert with prayers and promises, to bring this about by offering dishonest testimony.³⁷ It happened that the count and Robert the chancellor were talking with the abbot. The latter restrained their demands with a humble response, saying to Robert:

‘My lord, we have you as [our] guide and defender in this land, and we shall have no other mediator between ourselves and the lord King Roger than you, [so] we ask and beg you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose

³⁵ *Rogarii II Regis Diplomata Latina*, ed. C-R. Brühl (Codex Diplomaticus Regni Siciliae, I.ii (1), Cologne 1987), pp. 139-40 no. 49. The privilege in fact confirmed the abbey in the possession of only a part of the territory which it claimed, or had once owned, and the two latter places named in the account were subsequently not listed among the abbey's *castella* in the *Catalogus Baronum*, Feller, *Abruzzes Médiévales*, pp. 65-6.

³⁶ i.e. the painting of St. Clement on the cross.

³⁷ Robert of Selby, chancellor 1140-51. Bohemond was originally from Tarsia in Calabria, and held the County of Manopello 1140-57.

servants we are, that you do not allow the freedom and justice of this Church, which it has up to now possessed, to disappear and to be destroyed. You should remember with what care and what sincere intent the lord king freed our church from every evil custom and exaction. He did not wish the servants of God who dwell there to be kept busy with outside business but that they should day and night be watchful in the Divine service and pour out perpetual prayers for himself and his sons and for the safety of his kingdom. Now however this Count Bohemond (I do not wish to conceal [the name of] one whose actions gravely injure our soul) is hindering us from the contemplation of God. He is encouraging us to take up secular arms and demanding that we provide cavalry and infantry and large sums of money, which you should certainly understand that we are unable to supply. We are appointed for the service of the Lord; it is quite improper that we should desert this and follow worldly matters’.

To this the count replied:

‘Lord abbot, you say this because you do not know the changing ways of kings and the various problems of this land. Through Divine grace the lord king has many people who pray in his kingdom, but he does not have many to defend it. It is necessary for those who do defend it to take up their shields and protect those who pray, and we who can bear arms will not be able to fight for the kingdom if we do not have the means of subsistence [*subsidium vitae*]. The lord king realises this, and has in the full understanding [of this] given the abbey of St. Clement to me, as my predecessors held it, and he did this in the presence of the chancellor Robert, who heard and saw [what happened] when it was given to me. You ought, please, to believe the testimony of one who is not accustomed to lie about such matters.

Robert, as we have said above, supported these words of the count, and he agreed so as to terrify the holy man, and so he started to claim that he had heard and seen when the lord king granted the abbey [to the count]. The abbot remained as silent as possible and waited for what God would do about this although he did not know what that might be, since they spoke these treacherous words to him so as to

force from him by fear what they were unable to obtain by right. God however was watching out for his servant, and not many days later all this was revealed to King Roger, who immediately wrote to the count in these words.

‘I am greatly displeased that you, whom I placed as the protector and defender of my kingdom, should dare to disturb and worry the peace of my head, my own chamber, my charitable institution, and you may well be rendered the due reward for your presumption. You have acted foolishly towards the abbey and brothers of St. Clement, whose prayers are my shield and helmet against all the strength of the enemy. Desist from this wickedness, or the appropriate punishment which has been prepared for you for your presumption will fall upon you. I say this to you, by my faith as a king, and my hope in my sons, that God grant me what I desire from them, that unless you desist, and do not presume to harass the monks any further as you have done, then I shall destroy you, and your name will vanish from among the sons of men from this present generation until the Last Judgement! I wish you to take this same letter which I have sent to you and have it read in the chapter, that it be heard by everyone, that they shall all know what my wishes were concerning the church of St. Clement and those who live there’.³⁸

The count did as the king ordered. He brought the royal letter and heard it read out in the presence of the abbot and brothers, and thereafter, for as long as Abbot Oldrius lived, he did not dare to molest either the abbot or the inhabitants of this place.³⁹

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The Death of Abbot Oldrius in the Year 1152

... He commended himself at his passing to his brothers and sons, and the church which he had undertaken to rule, to God and St. Clement. So, saying nothing

³⁸ *Rogeri II Regis Diplomata Latina*, p. 144 no. †51, the text itself is an invention, probably by the chronicler. Brühl describes it as ‘the product of monastic wishful thinking’.

³⁹ Cols. 888-92.

of his bodily discomforts and in the fullness of his days, and perfectly observing all spiritual exercises, he rendered up his soul to God on 12th December in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1152. He ruled the monastery on the island in the Pescara, built in honour of the Holy Trinity and St. Clement, pope and martyr, for twenty-five years and eight months. He was buried in the chapter house of this same church, as was proper, before the majesty of our Saviour, whom he had devotedly served all the days of his life, and whom he had taught all his sons and brothers to serve under the teaching and rule of St. Benedict.

After the death of Abbot Oldrius of holy memory, the abbey of St. Clement on Pescara island remained for many days without a ruler, since the firm choice of those brothers who believed themselves to be the wiser in counsel was the lord Leonas, because he had been received and clad in the monastic habit of this monastery by the lord Abbot Oldrius, and raised in the life of the monastery of Pescara from his boyhood, and [because] he was absolutely upright, of distinguished descent and high intelligence. He had then held the office of subdeacon in the Roman church, and this alone would have sufficed to preserve the church in its pristine freedom. However, Count Bohemond of Tarsia, who at that time held the county of Manopello, possessed the land of the blood-relations of lord Leonas, which he had been granted by King Roger. He hindered every effort of the brothers to make him abbot, for he feared that Leonas might be led by his love for his relations of the house of Manopello, whom the lord King Roger had disinherited and expelled from his kingdom, to use the power of the abbey to harm him, and even perhaps to drive him from the county. He therefore did his best to make the brothers elect somebody else from among their ranks. They were unable to resist him, and he was finally successful, both because of the influence he had at the royal court and through the support of some of the brothers whom he had treacherously suborned. The choice of Leonas was quashed by King Roger, a man named Constantine was chosen as abbot from among the congregation. However, what had happened, and the election and character of Constantine, was made known to the Roman Curia, to the judgement of which an appeal was made. And when Pope Eugenius of holy memory heard how he had been elected with the encouragement of the aforesaid count and against his own subdeacon, for he himself had promoted Leonas to that rank, he ordered him [*Constantine*] to remain silent concerning this election, and to beware lest through this he disturb the monastery. He

then allowed the brothers to make a free election of whom they wanted, acting in fear of God. Thus the church remained without a shepherd while Eugenius lived, for the brothers were prevented [from this new election] not only because of the count's persecution but also through the veto and prohibition of the lord King Roger.

On the death of Pope Eugenius, he was succeeded by Anastasius of blessed memory. Since Count Bohemond was friendly with him, he presumed upon his love, ignored the [previous] sentence, and forced him [*Constantine*] once again to act as abbot. This man occupied the monastery against the brothers' will, sat on the abbot's throne, invaded his palace, and believed himself to be safe because of the count's promises. However, immediately this had been done, those brothers who had opposed his election set off for the Curia, avoiding the ambushes of the count, and told the pope all about this; how the decision of his predecessor lord Eugenius had been set aside, and that this man was occupying the throne and seeking to make himself abbot not by the election of the brothers but through a further interference by a layman's hand. On hearing this, the lord Pope Anastasius sent a letter of reproof, condemning his insolence and ordering him under pain of anathema not to seek to harass the brothers any further in the matter of this election.

After this had occurred, King Roger ordered the brothers who had travelled to him in Sicily that since they could not choose one of their own people, as they wanted, they should elect somebody from another monastery, and he gave them a shortlist of three, who were by habit and life not at all to their liking. However, because the brothers did not wish to refuse his order, nor should they have done, they requested one of the brothers of Monte Sacro, a monastery in Apulia, called Roger.⁴⁰ They were granted him, and were obedient to him for as long as it was permissible. Since he wanted to be consecrated by the lord Anastasius, he sent some of the brothers of the monastery who told the pope how he had been elected and requested a day be set for him to obtain consecration. But when the pope heard about this sudden change, he sent him orders that were absolutely to be obeyed that he should return to his own monastery and not to involve himself with a position which he was unable to fill since the colour of his habit and his way of life was different from that of the

⁴⁰ Holy Trinity of Monte Sacro, on Monte Gargano, in the diocese of Siponto.

brothers whom he had agreed to rule. The count saw that he was getting nowhere and was afraid that they would choose as their pastor the man whom he could not abide nor contemplate, and so he began to be openly hostile to the monastery and those of its possessions which were in his county. He invaded its churches, took away its forests, and to set his hand against the monks contrary to law and right. He spread many lies among the people to the detriment and disgrace of God and his servant St. Clement, saying: 'the monks of St. Clement are striving for the impossible, and want to place two swords in one scabbard, but let it be known for certain that while I am count that man for whom they long will not be able to be abbot'.

While all this was going on, King Roger died and his son William succeeded him in the kingdom. He was a man of extraordinary wisdom and great courage, who wishing to benefit his relatives made Robert de Bassonville Count of Loritello and placed both the whole of that county and the neighbouring lands under his rule, for he believed him to be loyal to himself and that he would be even more devoted if well-rewarded. He wanted however to rule over even those things which had not been granted to him, and he occupied the monastery of St. Clement, and forced its men and some of the brothers to swear [fealty] to himself. What had happened did not please King William, who became very angry, and filled with indignation he sent a new mandate to Count Robert, telling him to refrain from this presumption, leave the abbey of St. Clement in peace, for it pertained to his own chamber, had benefited from the generosity of his father, and that it was his intention to keep it in his own royal hands, under the privilege of his own protection and defence, above all the other abbeys which lay round about. On hearing this Robert abandoned his infractions, and absolved its men and monks from the oath that they had sworn to him. Not long afterwards this Robert, to whom King William had granted so many good things, acted treacherously against his lord and seized a great part of his kingdom. He lured many of the counts into becoming accomplices in his evil, and being more ambitious than one could imagine for a time he disturbed the whole country. In this uprising *castella* were overthrown, villages left deserted, and many abbeys were harmed, and I am not just talking about those which were without rulers, although they were indeed almost annihilated, but even those which were under pastors and were well-governed. Count Bohemond resisted this attack for a while, but finally gave way, for the men who had been driven out of the county of Manopello, and who thought that it

rightfully belonged to them, came back and invaded it. They expelled the count, and rendered his prophecy (or rather pseudo-prophecy) vain. For he had said: ‘for as long as I am count, the monks of St. Clement shall not have the man whom they want.’ Now behold he was no longer count, and the brothers worked to secure for the church the pastor who had been predestined for it by God: the man who as a strong lion [*Leo*] in the midst of the enemies of God and the Church had let out a roar as a sign of his fortitude.

(c. 31)

Abbot Leonas

(1155) Anastasius had already been called by God and gone to Heaven, and the Roman see was held by Pope Adrian IV, to [see] whom the brothers of the abbey of St. Clement travelled to Viterbo. They asked him humbly to grant and concede to them the pastor whom they had for a long time seen as the right man, and for whom they hoped for the future of their church, and for the love of God and reverence for St. Clement, [that is] Leonas, a son of the Roman Church and a professed monk of their monastery. Adrian had no wish to oppose this, rather he immediately summoned a crowd of cardinals, and granted them [*the monks*] Leonas, the man they sought. Since he was not actually present there, the lord pope sent to him, and in a way he forced him to undertake the burden [of that office] through his letter. He was told to go to the monastery, receive the throne which had been prepared for him by God, care for the flock which had been entrusted to him, manfully resist the enemies of God and the church, and to do this because his position [*honor*] was derived from the Roman Church which desired to exalt and raise up one who had been brought up there from his boyhood. What more? The man who had been summoned came, and received the office which had been enjoined upon him, albeit unwillingly. And so it happened that the brothers who for so long had been worn out by their desire for him now by Divine oversight received what they had so eagerly wanted. His election was celebrated in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1155, in the third year in the indiction.⁴¹

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⁴¹ Cols. 893-6.

The lord Pope Alexander celebrated a synod at Rome, where the lord Leonas, Abbot of Pescara, took a prominent place among the cardinal deacons.⁴² On his journey he purchased textiles to beautify the church of St. Clement which had been entrusted to him, and from these he had precious capes and tunics made. He also purchased and acquired high-quality chasubles, silk hangings [*dorsalia*] and carpets, with which the walls of the church and the choir were decorated on the principal feast days. Through these, among many other things, his memory could be perpetuated for a long time to come. He had many books written, and most devotedly placed them in the library of the church of Casauria. Among these, in particular, he had a book of decretals written, with *summae* composed by [various] teachers. We completed this book of documents and chronicles, which I, brother John Berard, have composed and drawn up and Master Rusticus has written, with his [*the abbot's*] permission, or rather at his order and with his support. He began the rebuilding of the old abbatial palace, which was so old that it collapsed during his rule, but other matters got in the way, and that work was left incomplete. He then assigned the house which he had built as the first stage of that palace as a granary for the church. He also built a wooden house in front of the vestibule of this same church for the reception of guests.⁴³

⁴² According to the chronicle, Leonas was named as a cardinal on Easter Saturday, 21st March, 1170, *Chronicon Casauriense*, col. 907, but the chronicler may be a year in arrears, for he was already called cardinal in a charter of June 1169, BN MS Latin 5411, fol. 267v. The 'synod' was the Third Lateran Council of 1179.

⁴³ Col. 914.