

The Chronicle of Richard of S. Germano, 1189-1199.

This chronicle, which in its final form covers the years from the death of King William II of Sicily in 1189 until 1243 is the most important narrative source for the history of southern Italy under the rule of the Staufen emperors.

Its author, Richard was active as a notary at S. Germano (renamed Cassino in 1863), the town at the foot of Montecassino subject to the abbey of that name, from February 1186 until March 1232. He appears to have been a trusted confidant of Stephen of Marsia, Abbot of Montecassino 1215-27, whom he accompanied to the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, and to whom the first redaction of his chronicle was dedicated. However, from the early 1220s onwards Richard was also active in the service of Frederick II, primarily as a financial official. He may have followed his brother John, who was a chancery notary, into imperial service. In the late 1230s, despite his advanced age – he must by then have been in his seventies, Richard was active as an imperial chamberlain. He was with the emperor at the siege of Milan in the autumn of 1239, and is last attested as a chamberlain in 1242.

He probably commenced writing the first version of his chronicle shortly before the death of Innocent III in 1216; this was intended as a continuation of the Annales Casinenses and covered the years from 1208, commencing with the visit of Innocent III to S. Germano in June of that year, until 1226, when it broke off abruptly, quite possibly because of the death of his patron Abbot Stephen (in July 1227). There a surviving manuscript of this version in the Biblioteca Comunale in Bologna. The second, revised, version was intended as a free-standing work, and began with an account of the conquest of the kingdom of Sicily by Henry VI, probably written in the 1230s. The last event mentioned in this version was the return of Pope Innocent IV to Rome in October 1243, and the author must have died soon after this. Although less parochial than early monastic writers from Montecassino, the focus of Richard's account, especially in the earlier part of his chronicle, is on events in the Terra Sancti Benedicti, the block of lands subject to Montecassino in the Liri and Rapido valleys in the immediate vicinity of the monastery.

The section of the chronicle translated here covers the conquest of the kingdom by Henry VI and the conflicts which broke out after his death, during the minority of his son Frederick, in which the central figure was the late emperor's senseschal Markward of Anweiler. They have been translated from Ryccardi di Sancto Germano Notarii Chronicon, ed. C.A. Garufi (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores, 2nd. Edition, Bologna 1938), pp. 3-22.

G.A. Loud 30.v.2002

Here begins the Chronicle of everything which happened in the Kingdom of Sicily or anywhere else in the world from the time of King William II up until the time of Frederick II, Emperor of the Romans and always Augustus, King of Jerusalem and Sicily, recorded by the notary Richard of S. Germano....

Since I am a native son of this kingdom, he who reads this should not hold me in contempt if I write at length about what happened in the kingdom, or about any of those things which I shall say relating to it, even if they do not appear useful; every single thing helps, and it is most valuable to God that the memory of man has everything [recorded]. Let us begin with the time when King William II of Sicily, of distinguished memory, died, in the second year of the pontificate of Pope Clement. I have included in this chronicle certain preparatory matter in praise of this king, and which deal with issues affecting the kingdom and which are worthy of record. In the name of Him who once opened the mouth of Zacharias, let Him open my mouth to speak, and break down the bond on my tongue, in the hope that every single event shall be put in its proper place.

Here ends the prologue.

At this time that most Christian king, to whom nobody in the world was equal, held the government of this kingdom. The prince was exalted among all other princes by his great power, his distinguished descent, his good fortune and mighty strength, notable for his

intelligence and for the extent of his riches. He was the flower of kings, the life and strength of his people, who relieved the poverty of miserable pilgrims, and protected those who toiled. During his lifetime he was a paragon upholding the ideals of law and justice; everyone in his kingdom was content with their lot, and everywhere was safe, for the traveller did not fear the robber's ambush, nor the sailor injury from pirates by sea. But, although He through whom kings reign and princes rule had enriched and endowed him with so many and great things and had made him glorious among all the kings on earth, He had however treated him ingloriously in one respect, in that He had punished him through lack of offspring. He had closed the womb of his consort, so that she could not conceive or give birth to a son, and thus he could leave no issue to survive him on this earth. Thinking on the good fortune which he had received from the Lord during his lifetime, but that his fate had been made miserable because he had no children, the king, as a wise man, therefore wisely decided to placate the Lord, that He make fruitful she who had been sterile, and thus decided to use his wealth to build a house in Monreale in honour of His glorious Virgin mother, which he enriched, adorned and augmented. He gave it properties, had it decorated with gold, enriched it with mosaics and precious stones of various colours, to such an extent that by the end of his life no king or prince anywhere on earth had built the like in our time.

This king had two particular *familiars*, who were powerful and influential in his government, Archbishop Walter of Palermo and Matthew, the chancellor of his kingdom, who directed his whole court by their advice and wisdom. All the magnates of the kingdom clung obediently to these two like the firmest columns, since through them they could more easily gain whatever they sought from the royal court. It was in fact on the chancellor's advice that the king had the said church of the Virgin built within the diocese of Palermo and secured an archbishop for it from the Roman church. The archbishop realised that this had been done on the chancellor's prompting, for the two hated each other and, while they appeared [to be] friendly in public, they freely criticised each other (through envy) in private. For some time he suffered this injury to him and the downgrading of his see patiently. Finally, after a long time had elapsed during which he was unable to change what had been done about the church, he craftily did the following. There was an aunt of the king

in the palace at Palermo whom the king, on the archbishop's advice, gave in marriage to King Henry of the Germans, the son of Frederick, Emperor of the Romans. And it was also on his urging that all the counts of the kingdom took an oath on the king's orders that if this same king should happen to die without children, then they would then become the subjects of this same aunt and her husband the said King of Germany.

(The year 1189) In due course it happened that this same king, who will be remembered down the ages, so pleasing was he to the Lord, died childless in the month of December.¹ His death was rightly lamented by all native sons of his kingdom, who wept for him with this verse lamentation.

Wail with this great sorrow, Sicily,
 Reggio Calabria, Apulia
 And Terra di Lavoro.
 The voice of sorrow sounds,
 And from our mouths resounds,
 The music of every mouth is raised on high.

Our sweet King William has passed away,
 Praiseworthy for his virtue,
 The wonder of his age,
 Cruel death presses down upon him.
 O unhappy kingdom without a king,
 You are now beyond the rule of law!

You bishops, counts and barons,
 Wail with sorrowful lament,
 I beg you to lead the lament
 For bloody quarrel.

¹ Actually 18th November 1189.

You noble matrons and praiseworthy virgins,
Once sweet and tuneful of voice,
You are now bloody in civil strife.

The kingdom lies desolate,
In ruins and disturbed,
And thus it must suffer
The arrival of all its enemies;
Because of this all should wail and lament.

All sons of the kingdom, weep,
A time of banishment has been given you.
The word 'rejoice' has been taken from you,
A welcome time of peace is at an end.

Now sound to east and west,
King William is no more.
He has not died,
This mighty and peacable king,
Whose life was pleasing to God and men,
His spirit has ascended to Heaven,
And lives there with God for ever.

After the death of this king, great dispute and violence arose and continued between the kingdom's counts, as the reader will discover from what follows in this book. For none of them was willing to be equal; they all started to fight among themselves to become the greatest and to aspire to the rule of the kingdom, and forgetting the oath they had sworn, some of them strove to set it aside.

It happened that the chancellor and his associates joined this group to prevent the archbishop's party prevailing. Count Tancred of Lecce was summoned to Palermo, and with the agreement of the Roman Curia was then crowned king by the chancellor.

(1190) This Tancred was the illegitimate son of Duke Roger.² The latter's father, Roger, was the first to have the name of king in the Kingdom of Sicily, and because of this, and since he had a claim to be descended from the royal kin, Tancred was chosen as king from the other counts of the kingdom. After his accession he worked manfully to guard the kingdom's frontiers in peace and to subject rebels and opponents to his rule. First of all he forced five Saracen kinglets, who had fled to the mountains from fear of the Christians, to return, albeit unwillingly, from these mountains to Palermo. Then he used the royal wealth and for a long time did not hesitate to break open the public treasury, so that he might convert the other counts and barons of the kingdom to fealty and obedience to him. He sent a large sum in gold to Count Richard of Acerra, to whose sister he was married and from whom he had a numerous progeny, which the latter could spend to force all the rebels from the Principate and the Terra di Lavoro to be obedient to the king's rule. Then Abbot Roffred of Cassino swore [obedience] to the king.

There was at that time in Apulia a certain Count Roger of Andria who deemed himself not inferior to the king, for in the time of the above-mentioned King William he had been Master Justiciar of the whole realm, and had then been the actual ruler of Apulia. Tancred's elevation to the kingship had thrust a dart of envy into him, and he refused to become the former's subject, raised revolt against him, recruited those friendly to himself for his forces, and speedily sent to King Henry of Germany, that the latter come or send [troops] to recover the Kingdom of Sicily, which belonged to his wife but had been usurped by Count Tancred of Lecce. Henry sent the imperial marshal, Henry Testa, with a large force to the kingdom without delay. He marched into Apulia, meeting no resistance, to [join] the Count of Andria. First, he and the said count stormed a casale called Corneto, belonging to the Abbot of Venosa, since the abbot of this place had joined the king's party.

² Duke Roger of Apulia, the eldest son of King Roger, predeceased his father on 2nd May 1148.

[The marshal] gave it over to his men to plunder and destroy; then he attempted what harm he could to those who favoured the king's side. Finally he returned to Germany with his army much diminished.

The said Count of Andria remained in Apulia, strengthened the citadel [*rocca*] of Sant'Agata, which was at that time in his hands, and, trusting in his own forces, stationed himself in Ascoli to resist the king. The Count of Acerra besieged him there, and when he was unable to induce him to surrender through prayers and blandishments asked him one day to a meeting, there he treacherously seized him and condemned him to a shameful death.

In that year Frederick, Emperor of the Romans, set out for Jerusalem with a huge army of those signed with the cross, but by bad luck drowned in a river. Henry his son entered Italy. The Kings of France and England took the cross and set out for Jerusalem. Coming to Messina dispute arose between them, and they set part of the city alight. The said King Tancred honoured them with great presents and begged them repeatedly not to destroy the city. Finally they set out for Jerusalem, and trusting in the faith of Christ, and with His help, recovered by force the city of Acre, which had been in the hands of the infidels.

(1191) Pope Clement died in Rome in the month of May, and the Cardinal deacon Hyacinth was consecrated as Pope Celestine.

The said King Tancred came from Sicily to Apulia, [then] went into the Abruzzi and held a solemn court at Termoli. He besieged Count Rainald and forced him to return to his obedience. Then he moved to Brindisi, and married his elder son Roger to Urania, the daughter of the Emperor Isaac of Constantinople. After the marriage had been splendidly celebrated at Brindisi, and he had there crowned his son as king, the said king returned triumphantly and gloriously to Sicily. He then ordered Rocca Bantra and Roccaguglielmo to be assigned to Abbot Roffred of Cassino. One of these, Roccaguglielmo, the abbot gave to

a certain nobleman Robert de Apolita, to whose son Hervey he gave his sister in marriage. The other, namely Rocca Bantra, he retained for the use of the monastery of Cassino, placing in it as its custodian his cousin, a knight [called] Peter de Aymo.

King Henry came to Rome with his wife Constance, to whom the kingdom of Sicily belonged by hereditary right. Pope Celestine crowned him as emperor and his wife as empress at St. Peter's. Tusculano was given by the emperor to the Romans who raised it to the ground.

Then in the month of May the emperor entered the *regno*, despite the pope's prohibition, and came through Campania to Rocca d'Arce, which Matthew Borrellus held for the king; his soldiers attacked and stormed it. Because of this the men of S. Germano took refuge in Cassino with their goods, and sent envoys through whom they swore fealty to the emperor. At that time Abbot Roffred of Cassino lay seriously ill at the monastery. On the urging of the men of S. Germano he went to the emperor to swear [fealty]. Sora, Atina and Castrocielo surrendered in fear to the emperor, and in them he placed castellans. Then the Counts of Fondi and Molise did fealty to him, and marching into the Terra di Lavoro, Teano, Aversa and Capua surrendered to him. He welcomed Count William of Caserta, and after Aversa he went to Naples, to which he laid siege, joined by the said counts and barons of the principality, as well as the Abbot of Cassino with his troops. To oppose him the Count of Acerra took refuge within the city and energetically defended it for the king. Next the city of Salerno surrendered to the emperor, and he sent his wife the empress to stay there while he repeatedly attacked and harried the city of Naples. But when, with neither his men nor their efforts making any headway, he was stricken by illness, he retired from there, albeit unwillingly. He left the empress his wife at Salerno, and stationed Muscancervello [*Conrad of Lutzelnhard*] in the citadel of Capua.³ He came to S. Germano with his army much weakened, and the whole convent of Cassino swore fealty to him. He then took the abbot away with him to Germany. For greater security he left the latter's brother Gregory as a hostage with the Duke of Spoleto, and seized some of the leading men from the land of S.

³ The nickname means 'Fly brain'.

Germano as hostages, whom he left with a German called Diepold in Rocca d'Arce. He left the latter and Conrad of Marlenheim at Sora as castellans, and then retired from the *regno* through the land of Count Peter of Celano, who was loyal to him, and returned to Germany in September.

Then the Count of Acerra, whom I have mentioned, sortied from Naples with the Neapolitans and other troops, recruited from many other places, came to Capua and besieged the citadel which Muscancervello held for the emperor. Since the latter was not sufficiently supplied with food he came to an agreement with the count, surrendered himself and the castle, and departed with a safe conduct for wherever he wished to go. The count then recovered Aversa, Teano and S. Germano for the king's authority, and coming to Cassino entered the monastery's walls without opposition. He had a friendly enough discussion with Atenulf of Caserta, Dean of Cassino, to persuade him to join in fealty to the king. But when he was unable to obtain this from him, either through entreaties or promises, he descended from that place and departed. Then he was joined by the Count of Molise, placed as large a garrison as he could in S. Germano and S. Angelo in Theodice, and set off [once again] in the service of the king his brother-in-law. Count Richard of Fondi was afraid because he had bought Suessa and Teano from the emperor. He abandoned his county and retreated into the Campania, and the County of Fondi was granted by the king to a certain brother of Aligern Cotrone of Naples. Atenulf of Caserta, the Dean of Cassino, was excommunicated by Pope Celestine for not joining the king's party, and the monastery placed under an interdict. The Salernitans detained the empress and sent her to the king in Sicily so that they might secure King Tancred's favour. The king received her honourably, loaded her with presents and sent her back to the emperor in Germany. In that year Paganus lord of Casalvieri treacherously killed the German who had been left by the emperor in Atina, and a certain Roger de Foresta was sent by the king to Atina.

(1192) Dean Atenulf of Cassino made an agreement with Diepold, the castellan of Rocca d'Arce, who was upholding the imperial cause, raised an army of horse and foot in the Campania whom he recruited by entreaty and bribery, and coming down from Cassino

stormed the *castrum* of S. Pietro in Monasterio in the month of January, and plundered its property. He occupied the area from the city of S. Germano to the church of Ognisanti, not however without the Campanians suffering heavy losses. Peace there was eventually proclaimed and the whole area surrendered to the dean. Some of the men of S. Germano who favoured the king's party went over to the other side after all their property had been plundered by the Germans.

The dean and Diepold then launched a foray through the monastery's land, occupying the abandoned *castrum* of Piumarola and storming the *castrum* of Pignetaro. [However] S. Angelo, Pontecorvo, Castelnuovo, Fratte and some other *castra* were held for the king. At this time Count Richard of Carinola, who was of King Tancred's party, marched on S. Germano with Roger the castellan of Atina with the intention of plundering it. In the same year Godfrey of Caserta was captured by the men of S. Angelo and put into prison, later he was handed over by Malgerius Sorella to custody of the aforementioned castellan of Atina.

Diepold fought a pitched battle at Aquino with a certain royal logothete and put him to flight. Many of the latter's men were captured and many others drowned in the lake, and as a result Diepold's power increased. He came to an agreement with Conrad the castellan of Sora and raided into the territory of Suessa, capturing sheep and oxen and some unfortunate men whom he forced after much torture to ransom themselves. At this time Diepold was summoned by Count William of Caserta, an imperial supporter. He and his men crossed the Capuan river into the Terra di Lavoro, and rode on Capua [itself]. He captured Count Richard of Carinola who had marched out against him and brought him prisoner to Rocca d'Arce.

(1193) Abbot Roffred of Cassino returned from Germany, leaving his brother Gregory there as a hostage. He entered Comino with some picked knights whom he had brought with him, ravaged the area around Atina, occupied the village of S. Maria di Atina, had the walls of Cancellio destroyed, stormed the gate of Galinaro and plundered property [there]. Returning to the monastery he, along with Conrad the castellan of Sora and his people,

launched a fierce attack on the *castrum* of S. Angelo in Theodice, which was hostile to him since it favoured King Tancred's party. But he achieved nothing by this, although he did what damage he could to the surrounding area.

In that year the King of England was arrested and held as a prisoner by the Duke of Austria while he was returning from Jerusalem, and then handed over to the emperor, who eventually released him. not however without being paid a huge sum of money.

Count Berthold was sent as envoy from the emperor to the kingdom. He arrived with some picked knights and soldiers from Florence, summoned to him those who favoured the emperor's side, and after being joined by them he stormed Venafro on the feast of St. Martin [*11th November*], and gave it to his men to plunder and sack. Count Roger of Molise then became very fearful, since he had gone over to the king's side, and took refuge in the Rocca Magenuffi.

Count Berthold was joined by Muscancervello, Diepold and Conrad, along with the Abbot of Cassino and the Counts of Fondi and Caserta. He and his forces stormed the *castrum* of Sesto where Lando of Montelongo was constable, holding it for King Tancred with some Campanian knights. The *castrum* was despoiled of its property and Berthold took Lando and his companions away as prisoners. Eventually, after many pleas, he set them at liberty, not however because of the goodness of his heart but because he had received a ransom. He then had his troops attack Rocca Ravenula [*Rocca Ianula?*] which was taken by storm. He launched a fierce attack on Vairano where a certain Roger of Chieti had been stationed for the king, but had no success. With his forces now increasing and those who hated the king's side flocking to him from every side, he strove to subject the kingdom to imperial rule.

King Tancred arrived in Apulia from Sicily and gathered a large army, wishing to oppose Berthold's forces with his own. Berthold, as a man of spirit, opposed him manfully both with his own men and others recruited from the pro-imperial party within the

kingdom. The king and his army took up station near Montefusco, and Berthold marched out against him, pitching his camp at Batticano, desiring to have an encounter with the king. The king's party, to whom men were flooding in from all sides, wanted that as well. But the king perceived, and was so advised, that he would derive no profit from having a battle with Berthold, and with the latter realising that his side was becoming weaker, both wisely declined to fight. Berthold retreated and billeted at Lacedonia, the king moved his camp to Montefusco. Then Berthold returned through the Capitanata to the County of Molise and laid siege to the *castrum* of Monteroduni which was holding out for the king. One day when he was leading his troops in an attack against it, he was struck by a stone from a mangonel and killed. Muscancervello succeeded him as the army's leader, and, tightening the siege, he finally captured the fortress, through thirst rather than force. He put those within it to death through various torments without giving them any chance of pardon.

King Tancred then stormed the *castrum* of Savignano, and there he captured its lord, Sarolus, who had much slandered the king. He ordered him to be hanged. He [also] stormed the citadel [*rocca*] of Sant'Agata, which was held against him by Robert of Caiazzo [?*Calagio*], a son of the Count of Andria. At La Riccia he captured Robert son of Richard, whom he punished as a traitor. Then he went from there to the Terra di Lavoro and recovered Aversa and the County of Caserta. The city of Sant'Agata and Telese (which was afterwards completely burnt down) surrendered to his authority. He then summoned Robert de Apolita to him, took Roccaguglielmo away from him and installed Andrew of Teano there as castellan, and thus, leaving the frontiers of Apulia and the Terra di Lavoro in peace, the king returned to Sicily. There, through natural causes, his elder son Roger, who had been crowned as king, went the way of all flesh. His brother William succeeded him as king. However the king [Tancred] was struck down by grief, and died after a short illness.⁴

(1194) After preparing his fleet and land army the Emperor Henry entered the kingdom. Abbot Roffred of Cassino gave him a magnificent reception. The Count of Fondi and all the other Germans and Italians were waiting for his arrival; with them he invaded the Terra di

⁴ Roger died on 24th December 1193, and Tancred on 20th February 1194.

Lavoro, took Naples, captured Salerno, which resisted him, by storm and gave it to his men to plunder and sack. Atenulf the Dean of Cassino received the government of the abbey of Venosa from the emperor. Crossing the Apulian frontier without resistance the emperor received the surrender of the cities of Apulia, all of which went over to his obedience. The Abbot of Cassino, whose unspotted loyalty was well-known to the emperor, went ahead of him. The latter had been entrusted with his commission and authority to grant pardon to those who wished to do fealty to him and redeem their offences by their support. He then granted the *castrum* of Malvito to the abbot on behalf of the monastery of Cassino, and crossing the Straits by ship he came to Messina and received the surrender of the whole of Sicily. Hurrying to Palermo he took the city and seized all the palace regalia. The king's widow, the sister of the Count of Acerra, had fled Palermo in fear of the emperor with her little son William, taking refuge in a safer place. Since the emperor could not capture the place where she was by force an agreement was reached. He granted her safe-conduct and she and her son surrendered into his hands. He placed them in the custody of Muscancervello and treated them kindly. The abbot of Cassino then received the grant of Atina and Roccaguglielmo from the emperor, Roger de Foresta's son being removed as castellan of Atina by the said emperor, who sent instructions by letter to Andrew of Teano, castellan of Roccaguglielmo, that he should assign that *rocca* to the abbot, who then returned home.

On Christmas Day the emperor held a general court in Palermo, where he had the aforementioned queen and her son arrested on the advice of Count Peter of Celano, along with many other prelates and counts from the kingdom whom he charged with treason. Some of these he killed by fire or hanging, and others he sent into exile in Germany.

In the month of December, on the feast of St. Stephen [*26th December*], in the city of Jesi in the Marches the empress gave birth to a son called Frederick.

(1195) Abbot Roffred of Cassino entered Atina by night with the aid of some of the inhabitants and regained possession of it. He trapped the said Roger de Foresta, the

castellan, within it and besieged him. Since the latter lacked supplies, he received the abbot's safe-conduct and came to an agreement with him by which he received the *castrum* of S. Pietro in Fine, and swearing fealty to him, resigned the *castrum* of Atina into his hands. The abbot recovered Roccaguglielmo from Andrew of Teano, and after receiving his fealty granted him the *castrum* of Cocuruzzu. However, some time afterwards he entrusted it [Roccaguglielmo] to a certain Tancred of Venafro on imperial orders, after receiving an oath of fealty from him [too].

In this year the said Abbot of Cassino took the *castrum* of Terelle by force and burned it.

(1196) The emperor returned from Germany and granted Muscancervello the County of Molise. Muscancervello then besieged Count Roger of Molise, who in fear of the emperor had taken refuge in Rocca Magenulfi. They came to an agreement; Muscancervello granted Roger and his men safe-conduct, received the *rocca*, and allowed him to retire outside the kingdom, where after some while he died. The Abbot of Cassino recovered the *castrum* of Fratte, and also those of Castronuovo and S. Angelo in Theodice. The latter's inhabitants had committed innumerable outrages on the land of St. Benedict, and using sergeants whom they hired for money, burned the *castrum* of Pignetaro. The abbot gained control of this place by treachery, and restored it to fealty to him and the monastery of Cassino. He imposed well-merited punishments on the inhabitants as they deserved, and using the pretext of certain verses which he discovered within, and which it would not in my opinion be wrong to repeat here, he had the walls razed to the ground and the ditches filled in. The verses were such as these:

'That most wicked Alboynus, Landulf of Aquino the serf,
Peter Roger, Philip the cruel,
Simon and Andrew, Adenulf like another Egeas the beggar,
These are the rectors through whom official posts [*honores*] are served.
They give the order for wars, murders, and terrible punishments,

When they give such rule, should we not respect [St.] Benedict?'

At that time Count Richard of Acerra wanted to flee from the emperor and leave the kingdom in secret. He abandoned Campania and Burgentia, the fortresses which he was [still] holding, but was betrayed by a certain white monk in whom he trusted, captured by Diepold and thrown into prison, to await the emperor. The latter sent the Bishop of Worms from Germany to be his representative in the kingdom, who, coming to Naples with the Abbot of Cassino and other Italians and Germans, and fulfilling imperial orders, had the walls of Naples and Capua razed to the ground.

(1197) The emperor returned from Germany and the Count of Acerra was handed over to him by Diepold, the castellan of Rocca d'Arce. He held a general court in Capua, at which he ordered that the count first be drawn behind a horse through the squares of Capua, and then hanged alive head downwards. The latter was still alive after two days when a certain German jester called Leather-Bag [*Follis*], hoping to please the emperor, tied a large stone to his neck and [thus] shamefully put him to death. The emperor then imposed a general tax [*collecta*] on the whole kingdom. Diepold was made Count of Acerra by the emperor. After that his brother Otto was ordered by the emperor to attack Roccasecca, in which the brothers Rainald and Landulf of Aquino were holding out against him. The emperor himself went to Sicily, to which he instructed the empress to be conducted. After she had been installed in the palace at Palermo a certain William the Monk, who was the castellan of Castrogiovanni, rebelled against the emperor. The emperor went in person to besiege this place but was then taken ill. He departed a sick man, and it so pleased the Lord that he ended his days.⁵ With famine spreading throughout the kingdom Count Diepold's brother Otto abandoned the siege, retreated from Roccasecca and went back to Rocca d'Arce.

The empress remained in Palermo in mourning for the death of her husband the emperor. Thinking that this would be for the peace and quiet of the kingdom, she exiled from it the imperial seneschal Markward and all the Germans, forcing him to swear that he

⁵ Henry VI died at Messina on 28th September 1197.

would neither presume to enter the kingdom nor remain within it unless he had her permission. After receiving the letters and instructions of the empress he went to the County of Molise, which was then called the March and favoured him, since the emperor had granted it to him after the death of Muscancervello. With a safe conduct from the cardinals and a guarantee from the aforesaid Count Peter of Celano, to whom he afterwards handed over Vairano, and leaving his own men as castellans and bailiffs in the County of Molise, he travelled into the March of Ancona, which he subjected to his own rule and where he and his followers committed numerous crimes.

Pope Celestine died, and Cardinal Lothar replaced him as Pope Innocent.

The empress had left her son at the city of Jesi in the Marches. She ordered him to be brought to her in the kingdom under the guard of Count Peter of Celano and Berard, Count of Loreto and Conversano, and [then] sent from Apulia to Sicily. In Calabria a certain German called Frederick who was not a supporter of the empress then shut himself up in the *castrum* of Malvito, which he had seized by a trick from Maurus de Mira, the castellan appointed there on behalf of the monastery of Cassino. On the orders of the empress he was blockaded and besieged there by Count Anfusus de Rota and the rest of the Calabrian nobles. When the man who was besieged saw no other means of escape, he thought up a strategem to capture those who besieged him. One day he summoned their leaders, and separated them from the others by giving them his word that he wanted to return to the service of the empress. He then made them prisoners and inflicted what punishments he pleased on their persons.

(1198) In the course of time the empress died, leaving an only son, Frederick, and in her will appointing Pope Innocent as regent [*ballius*] of the kingdom.⁶ Hearing of the empress's death, Markward gathered an army of evildoers, whom he recruited through persuasion and bribery, and entered the kingdom, not without the help and encouragement of some of its inhabitants. Coming to the County of Molise, where he was served by men loyal to him, he

⁶ Constance died on 28th November 1198.

sent envoys to the Abbot of Cassino proposing peace. Through them, however, he demanded that the abbot swear [fealty] to him as regent of the kingdom, which post he claimed the emperor had left to him. He was though unable to get the abbot to do this, for the latter had already sworn [fealty] to Pope Innocent as regent. To counter Markward the pope sent the abbot help from his lands, [namely] two cardinals with a force of Campanian knights, and he bound Markward and his followers with the chain of excommunication. The latter became very angry and began, in the German manner, to commit atrocities in the land of the abbey.

(1199) This accursed man with his accursed followers came from Venafro and entered the land of St. Benedict. He first of all occupied the *castrum* of S. Pietro in Fine, meeting no resistance since it had been abandoned by its fearful inhabitants, and burned it. He stormed the *castrum* of S. Vittore and plundered it. He then moved on to the *castra* of Cervaro and Trocchio, both of which had been abandoned by their inhabitants, and burned them, and on 7th January he pitched camp in the fields outside S. Germano. He launched frequent attacks to try to capture that place, but was however unable to storm it, since it was defended both by the inhabitants and by the knights from the Campania who had joined them there.

Then the aforesaid Diepold, who had come [to join] Markward occupied the mountain called Monte Maio with his men, and set up his tents on it. As a consequence all the men of this land were very fearful, since the mountain overlooked the city which could easily be occupied by the enemy from the hills above. Thus, once night fell the abbot strengthened the rampart of monastery and some of the citizens took themselves and their household possessions to this rampart, while on the following morning the cardinals, who were [also] afraid, fled to the monastery. So it was that on that day, 8th January, Markward entered the city, which had been abandoned by its inhabitants, plundered it of its goods and inflicted various tortures on those he found there, for whom a righteous cause brought no benefit unless they were able to be ransomed. Nor was that man content with occupying the land of the monastery, for he wished to climb [the mountain] to besiege and capture it, since the cardinals had shut themselves up there with many knights from the Campania and the

townspeople. He held the monastery under siege for some days, with his siege camp in its orchard, and made frequent assaults on its rampart but was unable to capture it owing to the resistance of the Campanian and other knights who were stationed on the rampart. Once the siege began he was determined to capture the monastery, and although he was unable to storm it, he believed that he would easily take possession of it through hunger and thirst. However, on the feast day of St. Maurus [15th January] the weather, hitherto calm, became inclement, and there was such a great rain storm, interspersed with lots of hail, that the enemy's tents were blown to the ground. While those who were besieged, who were already beginning to become parched because the water level in the cisterns was low, now rendered proper thanks to God and St. Maurus, the besiegers were forced to abandon their blockade. On his descent from the mountain, Markward now burned the *castrum* of Piumarola, and when he returned to S. Germano he was filled with rage and ordered the destruction of houses and cottages, both inside and outside the town. He burned the nearby *castrum* of Sant'Elia, and had the gates of S. Germano destroyed and its walls levelled in a number of places. During these days the wicked men who were with Markward made their lodging in some of the churches as they did in the other houses of this land and did evil within them, for they were not afraid of inflicting injuries on God and his saints. While they were taking relics from some of the altars, one of these men tried to rob the shrine of the Blessed Virgin; but although he immediately drew back his hand it was shrivelled up. Another inflicted terrible insults on the cross in the church of St. Germanus, first by throwing a stone at it and then by relieving himself on it. First this wretched man's tongue and teeth dried up, and he then promptly gave up his life to death. This event made Markward so afraid that he made an agreement with the abbot, and he left the land of the abbey on 9th February, having taken this as a warning of future ill-fortune.

At this time Richard of Aquila, Count of Fondi, gave his daughter as wife to Sifred, the brother of Count Diepold, in order to ensure the safety of his lands. Markward then entrusted the *castra* of Pontecorvo, Interamna, Sant'Angelo and Castronuovo to Count Diepold and his men in return for his service.

However Diepold, who was going before Markward and commanding everyone in the kingdom to join the latter's party and swear [obedience] to him as regent [*ballius*] of the kingdom, was captured by Count William of Caserta who for a long time held him in chains. But after the count's death his son William took Diepold's daughter as his wife and allowed him to go free.⁷ Markward moved off towards the province of Apulia. He laid siege to Avellino but came to an agreement with the inhabitants of that town and abandoned the siege. He then went to Vallata, a *casale* in Apulia, stormed it and gave it to his men to ravage and plunder.⁸ Count Peter of Celano then came from Marsia into the Terra di Lavoro. Markward now came back from Apulia. Since he was unable to support his army he plundered the town of Isernia in the county of Molise of its goods and then marched into the Terra di Lavoro where he attacked Teano, although he was unable to storm it. From there he went to Salerno which was at that time loyal to Count Diepold, and after preparing a ship sailed to Sicily. Hastening to Palermo he came to an agreement with Count Gentile of Pagliara whom Walter, the chancellor of the kingdom of Sicily had left as the guardian of the king and the palace.⁹ Markward took the palace at Palermo into his own hands and so attempted thereafter to make the whole of Sicily subject to his forces. Abbot Roffred of Cassino recovered the *castrum* of Sant' Angelo.

Pope Innocent sent a certain cousin of his, James, subsequently Count of Andria, with an army to oppose Markward and bring help to the king, who was at that time his ward. With him he sent one of his cardinals, whom he set over his cousin James and his army of knights.¹⁰ The latter defeated Markward in open battle and put him to flight, and having thus obtained the whole kingdom the said cardinal crossed to Sicily.

⁷ There is no other evidence for Count William having a son of the same name, and while it is possible that this 'William' was an otherwise unidentified younger son, there may have been a scribal error here, substituting 'William' for 'Robert'; the latter was the eldest son of Count William, attested in his father's lifetime from 1185 and as count 1201-12.

⁸ On the border of Apulia, about 40 km. NE of Avellino.

⁹ Walter of Pagliara, Bishop of Troia (1189-1208), and subsequently Bishop of Catania (d. 1229/31), was the brother of Count Gentile of Manopello, whom Innocent III accused of having been bribed by Markward into handing over the fortifications of Palermo, cf. the *Gesta Innocentii Papae Tertii*, cc. 34-5, MPL ccxiv.

¹⁰ Cencius, Cardinal deacon of S. Lorenzo in Lucina.