

The Deeds of Count Roger of Calabria and Sicily and of Duke Robert Guiscard his brother.

By Geoffrey Malaterra

Translated by G.A. Loud

Here begins the letter of the monk Geoffrey to the venerable father the Bishop of Catania.

To Angerius, Bishop of the Catanians, most deserving of our reverence, I, brother Geoffrey, who derives his name Malaterra from his predecessors, after an unhappy life in the world in the company of Martha, am restored like her brother Lazarus to life and happiness in the peace of Mary. Since, most holy father, I recognise that I am joined to you by the religious habit which we wear, even if I am unworthy [of it], and thus by a special friendship, rather than to other bishops who are clad in the habit of a different sort, I have indeed the presumption to rest my hope in you rather than in these others, and I request you to act as my protector in all my affairs. I therefore entreat that through your favour, or at least with your presence, my book may be well received, and that with the backing of your authority it may be more acceptable to the prince, and because of reverence for you it may anticipate less harm from the envious - if any of these should rise up! However you, or anybody else who comes forward as reader, or assuredly as a critic of this book, ought to know that if you discover events noted down in the wrong order from the one in which they actually occurred, or indeed some things which have been accidentally omitted, the fault should not be ascribed to me, but rather to those who told me about these events, particularly since I was not present in person at the times when these matters took place. For you should know that I come from those regions beyond the Alps, and am only a very recent Apulian, and even more recently a Sicilian. But if however there should be complaint about my rather uncultivated style, it should be known that although the stream might be clearer or indeed I could have come forth in a more stately manner, the prince himself urged me to write in words which were clear and easy to understand, that the meaning of what was written should be apparent to everyone. Therefore whichever fault is ascribed to me, I seek refuge under the safety of your protection, that leaning upon your

great assistance, I may have less to fear from those who want to sink their teeth into me and do me harm, and that with this support I may be more acceptable to our prince.

To all those throughout Sicily to whom the name of bishop or cleric has been assigned, Brother Geoffrey Malaterra signifies himself with the signing of his name. Handed down from the ancient philosophers to the generations who have followed them, the custom has grown up that the deeds of brave men should be recorded in writing and transmitted to posterity. This prevents actions which ought to be remembered, and those who have performed them, being consigned to oblivion; and, even more, it enables those deeds which have been entrusted to writing and are read about and known by future generations, to make those who did them seem to live on through the memory of their lives. So Sallust argues - an author much admired by historians - when he writes at the beginning of his book, saying: 'Every man who wishes to rise superior to the animals should strive his hardest to avoid passing his life in obscurity, like the beasts of the field which go with their faces to the ground and are the slaves of their bellies'.

Roger, that most celebrated of princes, was taught by many authors who used to read out to him the histories of the ancients. On the advice of his followers he determined to record for later generations his victories, won in the face of great difficulties and dangers, namely his conquest through force of arms first of Calabria and then of Sicily, and he instructed me to prepare myself for the task of writing this down. In view of the benefits which he has already conferred upon me, I am not in a position to refuse to do anything which he has instructed me to perform. But I commence my task timidly, for my style lacks learning and my powers of expression are poor. It is as though I was in the middle of a very deep lake and knew not how to swim. I am also exceedingly afraid of you and your anger towards me, all the more so since it is you, who are steeped in the clearest fountain of the literary art, and not me - starved of the bread of such knowledge, who should be preparing for such a task.

But, realising that you are busy with labours of greater importance, at times toiling with Martha in the affairs of churches and at other times labouring with Mary in holy contemplation, the prince spares you, not wishing to take you away from more worthwhile

activity. However, he strives to render me, who seems less busy and not usefully employed, more active, with, as it were, a blow from his fist. I ask you therefore to remember Scripture, which says: 'Bear ye another's burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ' [*Galatians* vi.2], and elsewhere it says that, 'if brother helps brother, both are comforted' [after *Proverbs* xviii.19]. Stretch forth the foot of your favour to prop up my feeble recitation, so that I, protected by the shield of your authority, may be less afraid of the attacks of my detractors, and of those who seek to nibble away with their hostile teeth at the words and actions of others. For there are some people who, once they have achieved any sort of knowledge (by whatever means), and have thereby attracted favour and praise from other men, are swollen with pride and are so envious that they do not wish to have anybody near them who has learning equal to their own. If such a thing should happen then they attack the work of this person unceasingly, tearing at it with their sharp teeth, for they are afraid that their own work is devalued by praise of someone else's. To them one can rightly apply that passage from the Scripture which says that 'knowledge puffeth up', but not the phrase which follows, 'charity edifieth' [*I Corinthians* viii.1]. There are by contrast others whose knowledge and character enoble them to such an extent that, the more they are intoxicated by the wellspring of philosophy, the less they are carried away by pride. They always direct their mind along the path of humility, and do not criticise the words or actions of others, but rather when they hear something said inelegantly by another they gently correct it in private, so as to avoid public scandal. And they strive to praise them, and through their words to assist them to a more favourable reception among the powerful, regarding praise given to other people as though it were profit for themselves.

I beg that the kindly goodwill of this latter sort of person be granted to me. But I shall think that whatever I have said requires your corrections, and to be decorated by the flowers of your knowledge; so that the vine which you have cultivated and watered with application of your learning may render a more fruitful crop, and may attract greater praise and favour from the prince.

Book I

(1) The land of Normandy is in Gaul, but it was not always called Normandy. Once it, and everything that appertained to it, was a part of the royal fisc of the King of the Franks, which was called by the general name of Francia; up to the time when a very brave leader called Rollo sailed boldly from Norway with his fleet to the Christian coast, accompanied by a strong force of soldiers. He ravaged Frisia and other maritime areas to the west, and finally reached the port where the River Seine flows into the sea. His great fleet sailed up this river into the more inland areas of Francia, and seeing how fertile this area was, more so than the other regions which they had crossed, he conceived a desire to seize it and take it for his own. For it is a land with rivers full of fish and woods full of wild animals, fertile and suitable for corn and other crops, with rich meadows to feed cattle, and thus very likely to excite the greedy. For this reason they landed on each bank and began to make the inhabitants of the province subject to his rule.

(2) However, the king who was at that time ruling over Francia - I think it was Louis II - was at first furious when he learnt that enemies had invaded the frontiers of his empire. He raised an army, marched against the enemy and appointed a duke to expel them from his lands. But then he realised that this could not be done without great casualties among his men. Fearing the uncertain events of war and wishing to spare bloodshed among his followers, he took counsel and concluded a peace treaty. Accepting the service which they offered to him, he granted them the bulk of the land which they had invaded as a benefice.

The land which had been granted to them stretched [westwards] from the pagus of Ponthieu on its eastern border, and was next to the English Channel, which lay between it and Britain on its northern side and bounded its western extent also. On its south-west frontier there was the pagus of Maine, and then the border went as far as Chartres, from Chartres it went to Abbeville and Beauvais, up to Ponthieu [once again]. Duke Rollo received this land outlined above from the King of the Franks as a hereditary fief; he then distributed it among his followers [in varying amounts] depending on how close he was to them, reserving the most valuable land for his own use.

Since we have now given a brief description of the land which they held, it seems proper to say something about the character of this people.

(3) They are a most astute people, eager to avenge injuries, looking rather to enrich themselves from others than from their native fields. They are eager and [indeed] greedy for profit and power, hypocritical and deceitful about almost everything, but between generosity and avarice they take a middle course. Their leaders are however very generous since they wish to achieve a great reputation. They know how to flatter, and are much addicted to the cultivation of eloquence, to such an extent that one listens even to their young boys as though they were trained speakers. And unless they are held in thrall by the yoke of justice, they are a most unbridled people. When circumstances require they are prepared to put up with hard work, hunger and cold; they are much addicted to hunting and hawking, and they delight in fancy clothes and elaborate trappings for their horses and decorations on their other weapons. They derive the name of their land from their own name: *north* in the English language means 'the northern wind' [*aquilonis plaga*], and since they come from the north they are called Normans and their land Normandy.

In this province there is a city called Coutances, and in its territory there is a village named Hauteville; called thus not so much because of the height of any hill upon which it is situated, but rather, so we believe, as a an omen predicting the extraordinary fortune and great success of the future heirs of the this village. who with the help of God and their own dynamism [*strenuitas*] raised themselves step by step to the highest of ranks. We do not know whether divine providence saw what was pleasing to it in the preceding generations, or foresaw it in their heirs who came after, or even both, but it raised these heirs to great estate so that, as was promised to Abraham, they grew into a great people and spread their rule by force of arms, making the necks of many peoples subject to themselves, as we shall explain little by little in what follows.

(4) There was a certain knight of quite distinguished family who possessed this village by hereditary right from his ancestors. He was called Tancred, and he married a wife called Moriella, who was notable both for her birth and her good character, and as the years went by he received from her in lawful manner five sons, who were in the future to become counts: namely William, known as 'the Iron Arm', Drogo, Humphrey, Geoffrey and Serlo.

Their mother died while their father was still a young man and unsuited for celibacy, but this good man detested extra-marital unions and therefore married again, preferring to be contented with one legitimate union rather than soiling himself with the filthy embrace of concubines, mindful of the word of the apostle: 'to avoid fornication let every man have his own wife' [I *Corinthians* vii.2], and of what follows: 'whoremongers and adulterers God will judge' [*Hebrews* xiii.4]. So he married Fresenda, a lady who in birth and morals was by no means inferior to his first wife. In due time he had from this union seven sons, who were of no less worth or dignity than their brothers mentioned above. We shall list their names here. First there was Robert, called from his birth 'the cunning' [*Guiscardus*], afterwards prince of all Apulia and Duke of Calabria, a man of great wisdom, ingenuity, generosity and boldness. The second was called Mauger, the third William. the fourth Aubrey, the fifth Hubert, the sixth Tancred, the seventh and youngest Roger, later the conqueror and count of Sicily. Their mother raised her sons with most carefully and affectionately, and she demonstrated such love to the ones who were not hers but born of her husband and his first wife that unless one had learnt from some third party one would not have known which was her own son and which was not. As a result her husband loved her all the more, and she was greatly estimated by their neighbours. As the years were granted to them, the children grew from childhood and one by one reached the age of adolescence. They began to imbibe military skills, to practice the use of horses and weapons, learning how to guard themselves and strike down their enemies.

(5) They saw that their own neighbourhood would not be big enough for them, and that when their patrimony was divided not only would their heirs argue among themselves about the share-out, but the individual shares would simply not be big enough. So, to prevent the same thing happening in future as had happened to them, they discussed the matter among themselves. They decided that since the elders were at that time stronger than those younger to them, they should be the first to leave their homeland and go to other places seeking their fortune through arms, and finally God led them to the Italian province of Apulia.

(6) They learned that, as a result of various disputes, hostilities had broken out between two very famous princes, those of Capua and Salerno. Since they discovered that on the

road by which they came Capua was the nearer of these two places, they took themselves to its prince, ready to fight for hope of gain. They remained there for a short time, accepted his wages, and vigorously carried out their duties. But, realising how stingy the Prince of Capua was, they abandoned him and changed sides to enter the employ of the Prince of Salerno. He received them as was fitting, because their military reputation had already made them extremely well-known throughout Apulia, and particularly since they had deserted the prince his enemy and joined him. Their loyalty to him was encouraged with generous gifts and they wreaked havoc on the Capuans with all sorts of frequent raids, terrorising the whole province as though some dreadful epidemic had broken out. Revenging the injuries suffered by the Prince of Salerno far and wide, they continued to do this indefatigably and so curbed those in rebellion against the prince that all the districts round about were reduced to peace.

The race of the Lombards is indeed a most untrustworthy one, and always treating any honest man with suspicion. They secretly criticised those [Normans] in the prince's entourage, nibbling away at them, suggesting that he drive them from him lest some wicked person do him harm in future. With their innate malice they added to this calumny, suggesting that a people who combined such astuteness and valour [*strenuitas*] might by their cunning drive the prince out and seize possession of his hereditary property. As a result the prince's mind was swayed by these insinuations, and easily turned against them. But, although the prince was under the influence of the evil counsel of his men and he agreed to do what they urged, he was however afraid of their valour, and was careful not to show publically what in fact he intended.

(7) A Greek called Maniaces, whom the emperor at Constantinople had placed as governor of those parts in Calabria and Apulia which belonged to him, planned to lead an expedition to conquer Sicily and sought help from all sides. Thus on the emperor's behalf he requested the Prince of Salerno, who was well-disposed to the emperor, to send him the men through whom he was reputed to have conquered his enemies, that they might aid the holy empire. He promised to reward them generously. The prince seized the opportunity to get rid of them in an honourable way, and immediately agreed to this request. He urged them to do this, and to persuade them he promised them rewards. He made speeches to

them; he even promised them [the help] of his own men. They finally made the necessary preparations and went to join Maniaces, not however so much because of the prince's order but rather seduced by the hope of securing the rewards which they had been promised. Maniaces was extremely pleased by their arrival, for he relied very much on their assistance. He set sail with a huge force and landed in Sicily. He first attacked Messina, since it lay very close to the shore where he had landed, and forced [the inhabitants] to negotiate its surrender. For the the most valiant soldiers among the people of Messina had sallied forth and met the Greeks in a great battle, and the Greeks had retreated, leaving the battlefield to our men. The inhabitants of Messina had not yet experienced the valour [*strenuitas*] of our men, and to begin with they put up a fierce resistance. But when they saw that they were being attacked unusually fiercely, then, as though shrinking from the warlike nature of this new people, they turned their backs to our men and fled to the immediate neighbourhood of the city, yielding up the areas further away.

After our men had been responsible for his obtaining the city, Maniaces started to appreciate their worth and encouraged their ardour with gifts and promises. They then set off to invade and conquer the more distant parts of Sicily and came to Syracuse. Its citizens made a sortie and gave battle to Maniaces's men. Archadius [*the Caid*] who ruled over that city gave our men a tremendous fight and killed a number of them. William son of Tancred, who was known as 'the Iron Arm' became exceedingly angry, charged forward, rushed bravely upon him, and with a mighty blow cut him down dead. This deed was much praised and admired by both Greeks and Sicilians. The Sicilians raised an army of up to sixty thousand men, and tried to offer battle to Maniaces and his men in the neighbourhood of Troina. Then that mighty man of arms William son of Tancred, who was proud of his warlike reputation and led the vanguard of the Greek army, began the battle and engaged the enemy with the knights of his own people before the Greeks had even arrived at the battlefield. Through his brave action he killed many, forced the rest to flee and emerged as the victor. Our men pursued the enemy; meanwhile the Greeks arrived at the place where the battle had been and seized the booty. They divided it among themselves, and left nothing at all for our men since they were not present with the rest of the army.

(8) When our men returned from their pursuit of the enemy and realised this, they were extremely unhappy. They sent an Italian called Arduin, who was part of our contingent, to negotiate with Maniaces, since he was able to speak Greek. He was to request Maniaces for a division of the booty, either immediately or [at least] after he had made proper consideration of their efforts. However the general was furious, and interpreted this as an affront to his authority since it was his right to do as he liked with the booty. He ordered Arduin to be punished by being beaten with staves right the way through the camp, and by doing this to shame our men. When Arduin returned with this news our people took it exceedingly ill, and decided to attack the Greeks. Arduin was barely able to restrain them, but he suggested a better plan; namely that he should conceal his anger and approach Maniaces in a more humble manner. Once suspicion was dispelled, he would obtain a chryrograph from Maniaces's notary, with whom he was friendly, which would enable them, after the city was taken, to go back over the Straits. He contrived to do this; for Maniaces, who did not know what they planned, started to praise the knight's good nature and to promise him gifts, although with his own people he laughed at and mocked him. When Arduin, who pretended that he had business in Calabria, had got the document from the notary, our men set out secretly by night for Messina and crossed the Straits unscathed. They thus headed for Apulia, hastening through Calabria, plundering along the way all those places which they knew to be under Greek jurisdiction. They did this until they reached Apulia. But, knowing the untrustworthiness of Prince Guaimar, they did not go back to him, instead they planned to invade that province and make it entirely subject to themselves.

(9) Since they lacked a fortress [*castrum*] through which they could protect themselves from the inhabitants of that area, they built one, which was called Melfi. There were though only five hundred knights there when the Greeks who ruled that land raised a huge army from Calabria and Apulia, numbering nearly sixty thousand troops, and marched against them, intending to drive them right out of the country. They sent an envoy ahead of them to inform them that they should choose what they preferred, either a battle with them next day, or they would be granted a truce to cross back over the border unharmed. The envoy who had been sent on this mission rode a particularly handsome horse. One of the Normans, Hugh Tudebuis, started to pat this horse. He wanted the Greeks to be told

something amazing about him and his fellows which might terrify them, and so he struck the horse in the neck with his bare fist and with one blow knocked it down as though it was dead. The other Normans rushed forward and picked up the Greek, who had been thrown to the ground with his horse and was laying there as if dead, although he himself was not injured, but merely afraid. The horse however they dragged to a cliff and threw off. The Greek, who had only just been restored to his senses by the Normans' assistance, received a better horse from them and reported back to his compatriots that they were prepared for battle. But when he told the leaders of his people all that had happened to him, they were struck with fear and admiration. They kept this information to themselves, afraid that if it was spoken about openly the army might flee in terror. The next morning they were attacked at dawn by the Normans and resisted bravely. Both sides fought fiercely. Of the sons of Tancred, [only] William the Iron Arm and Count Drogo were present at this battle, for none of their other brothers had yet followed them. These two very valiant knights heartened their companions and themselves fought bravely, laying low many of their enemies, until they finally put the rest to flight. Once the victory had been secured they pursued them, killing the stragglers, and many of the enemy were drowned as they tried to swim across the River Olivento.

(10) The conquered enemy, exhausted as they were, roused each others' spirits, and gathering a much bigger army, and prepared for battle. They were joined by Doceanus, who had been sent out for this task by the emperor in Constantinople. The Normans rapidly marched to meet them and met them bravely in battle near Montepeloso. Far from showing their fear of combat, they sought it as if by choice. In this battle the Greeks, contrary to their usual custom, behaved bravely and the Normans started to be weakened by heavy casualties. William was suffering from the quartan fever, and because of the desperate illness under which he was labouring could not be present at the battle. He was laying nearby, close to death. But when he saw that his men were not behaving bravely and were all but defeated, his wrath and indignation made him forget the illness from which he suffered. He seized his arms and threw himself like a raging lion into the midst of the enemy. He rallied his men with words of encouragement and by his valiant conduct put the enemy to flight. Their general, the duke Doceanus, was a cowardly man who was slaughtered like an ox. His men were in despair and could not believe their ill-fortune. They

fortified their *castra*, and did not dare to fight the Normans any more without walls to shelter behind, but not even these walls could protect them, for the Normans launched frequent and damaging raids against them. Destroying their vineyards and olive groves, and seizing their herds, flocks and the other supplies which they needed, they left them nothing outside their *castra*. Indeed their army surrounded the *castra* in which the Greeks had taken refuge, and they attacked them with siege engines, for which there had both highly-skilled engineers and adequate supplies of the materials for their manufacture. A hail of blows damaged the walls and towers and undermined the foundations. With the walls broken down they were able to enter and storm them, and they seized them all for themselves. The Normans realised that they could take the other *castra* round about, and imposed their rule over these places too.

(11) The younger brothers, who had up to now been forced by their youth to remain at home, heard rumours of how their elder brothers, who had gone before them, had by their valiant behaviour raised themselves to the heights of honour and lordship, and as soon as age permitted they followed after them. Two only were left at home to prevent the hereditary possessions coming to them being lost to the family. Those leaving could scarcely persuade those remaining to stay, but managed to prevail upon them by promising that if their heirs were to follow after them, then they too would share in what was to be gained. But since this work would be tedious if everything which they did in Apulia was related, let us just say in summary that not only us but the facts themselves testify that they subjected the whole country to themselves by force of arms. A great multitude of their relatives and compatriots, and even people from the surrounding regions, followed them in the hope of gain, and they were extremely generous to them, giving them horses, arms, clothing and all sorts of gifts. To some of these men they granted extensive lands, preferring the assistance of brave warriors to worldly riches: as a result nothing they undertook ended in failure. They thus benefited from the Gospel, where it says, 'Give, and unto you it shall be given' [*Luke vi.38*]; for the more generous they were, the richer they became.

(12) Then Count William, the eldest of the brothers, fell ill and died, and all the Normans were prostrated with grief since they doubted whether they would in future ever have a man

of such wisdom and skill at arms [*armis strenuum*], and one who was so generous, kindly and accommodating to them. But after they had as was customary celebrated his funeral rites with the greatest care and with deep (and by no means unmerited) lamentation, his second brother Drogo undertook rule over all Apulia. Let us sum him up by saying that he was a man praiseworthy in every way. On the advice of the Apulians and Normans he appointed his brother Humphrey Abelard, a man of great wisdom, as count at a *castrum* called Lavello, and he sent Robert Guiscard to Calabria, granting him a *castrum* in the Crati valley called Scribla, from which to attack the people of Cosenza and all those who were still holding out in Calabria.

(13) The Apulian Lombards are always a most treacherous race, and they conceived a secret plot to murder all the Normans throughout Apulia on the same day. On the day chosen Count Drogo was staying at the *castrum* of Monte Oleo, which name the inhabitants have corrupted to Montillaro. At daybreak he went to church, as was his custom. As he entered the church a man called Riso, an intimate companion [*compater*] of the count who was bound to him by oath, lay in hiding behind the door and, breaking his faith, he stabbed the count. In this way he and many of his men were killed, and only a few got away. Many others throughout Apulia met their end in this conspiracy. Humphrey Abelard, who was greatly angered by his brother's murder, then laid claim to his lordship for himself, and took over the *castra* which his brother had held; those Normans who had escaped this dangerous conspiracy bound themselves to him. He set off to exact punishment for Drogo's death, and after a lengthy siege he finally captured the *castrum* in which his brother had been killed. He inflicted all sorts of tortures on his brother's murderer and his accomplices, and after a while the anger and grief he felt in his heart were quenched by their blood.

(14) The Apulians had not yet come to the end of their treacherous plots. They sent secret envoys to Pope Leo IX, inviting him to come to Apulia with an army, claiming that Apulia sought his rule and that at the time of his predecessors it had been under the jurisdiction of the Roman Church; they themselves would help him and the Normans were cowardly, their forces diminished and few in number. Although he was a most prudent man, he was (as is usually the case) seized by ambition. The emperor sent an army of Germans to help him, and he entered Apulia, trusting in the assistance of the Lombards. Count

Humphrey however behaved splendidly, preferring to die honourably rather than living on in shame. He raised an army and marched bravely against the enemy. Drawing up his battle line, he began the conflict and, as was his custom, led the first charge courageously. The terrified Lombards tried to save themselves by flight and left the battle to the Germans. The latter put their trust in their arms and fought bravely, but the Normans were victorious and nearly all of the Germans were killed. The pope sought to save his life by flight and took refuge in a city of the province of Capitanata called Civitate. His enemies pursued him and laid siege to it, throwing up earthworks and preparing siege engines to storm the city. Such threats were intended to make the inhabitants surrender the pope. These people, untrustworthy as ever, were not prepared to seek any agreement which might benefit the pope unless their own safety was guaranteed, and so they drove the pope out of their gates. His enemies met him and, because of their reverence for the Roman See, prostrated themselves with great devotion at his feet, asking for his pardon and blessing. They brought him, behaving in the most humble manner, to the spot where the army's camp and tents had been placed. The pope was grateful for their respect and kindness towards him, gave them pardon and blessing for their offences, and granted them all the land which they had seized, and of which they could possess themselves in future in Calabria and Sicily, to be held as an hereditary fief from St. Peter by themselves and their heirs. This was about the year 1053.

(15) On the pope's return to Rome Count Humphrey escorted him with all honour for as far as he wanted. On being granted leave to depart he returned to Apulia, where he found the whole country peaceful and obedient to him, and for a long time he ruled it in peace. There was virtually no robbery or plundering there, at any time, nor could one find anybody who dared to contest his rule. He made two of his brothers counts, Mauger of the Capitanata, and William in the Principate. Mauger however died and left the whole of his county to his brother William. The latter gave it to his brother Geoffrey, whom he loved.

(16) While Robert Guiscard was dwelling at Scribla, gallantly waging war against the Calabrians, he saw his men sicken because of the place's unhealthiness and bad air, and so he sought for a healthier spot. He did not however go further away, like a coward who retreats to avoid his enemies, but rather, as though advancing against his foe, he transferred

his base to a nearby castrum called S. Marco which he fortified. But, after the *castrum* had been established, he was unable to obtain supplies for it, for those who dwelt nearby had taken their property into the nearest castra, to prevent them being taken by his men. One evening the steward who oversaw the affairs of his household asked him what he and his knights were going to eat the next day; saying that he had neither food nor the money to buy food, and that, even if he had the money, he knew of no place where he could go in safety. Guiscard had with him some sixty men whom they called Slavs, who were well-acquainted with Calabria, and whom he had, through gifts and promises of greater ones, made so loyal to him that they might have been brothers. He asked them whether they knew of any suitable place from which he might obtain plunder. They replied that they knew where very great booty could be obtained, beyond some very high mountains and down a precipitous road into deep valleys, but it would be impossible to take it away without undergoing great risks. Robert is said to have given this reply: 'So my followers are very mindful of my safety! To avoid danger, both Guiscard and you yourselves shall have to face famine! We shall have to risk bad luck, and even danger of death, if we are to find food. Those who dare have often escaped triumphantly, but we have never heard of anyone being praised for having died of hunger. Let's go, night robbers!', he said. 'Drink will make the Calabrians less watchful, and since they treat today as a feast day, they will as usual be devoting themselves to eating and drinking. You go on ahead, and the armoured knights will follow'.

His bed was prepared, as had already been arranged, but in the night he rose, without anybody knowing, and dressed just like those who were making the sortie, putting on a ragged tunic and the sandals which they wore instead of shoes. The count then went into their midst, but did not talk to anyone, and in this way his identity remained undiscovered the whole night long. He did not wish to let them know who he was, in case he was then taken prisoner, for since they were of that same race [as the local inhabitants?], he did not wholly trust them. They finally arrived at the place to be plundered, and gathered up whatever they could find there. He then urged his fellows, with frequent gestures and waving his spear, to hasten their retreat. But before it grew light, those from whom the booty had been taken realised their loss, and they set out in pursuit with two hundred soldiers to recover the booty. Guiscard saw the pursuers drawing near, and heard his own

men encouraging each other in a spirited manner to behave bravely and not to be deprived of the plunder; and so he let them know who he was. He cried out, 'I am here sharing in your work! If you are in danger, I am here too! Be brave of heart and let us charge our enemies. For through God we shall have good fortune and shall easily prevail!' On saying this he rushed furiously against the enemy and fought them, killing many of them, capturing others and putting the rest to flight; and thus emerging the victor. With the booty so triumphantly won, he made his footsoldiers knights [*equites*]; and as everything was now safe, he went on ahead with the prisoners, leaving a few men behind to bring the plunder after him. Since it was now light and his knights could see armed men whom they thought to be enemies approaching the camp, and furthermore they had no idea where their lord was, they started a noisy search through the *castrum* for him. Not finding him, they were much upset - however they marched bravely out of the *castrum* and hastened to attack those whom they thought to be enemies. Guiscard then got the horse he was riding to move on ahead, urging it on with his heels and crying out 'Guiscard' in a loud voice. Once he was recognised, he made them all joyful by his presence and his good fortune. However, they sternly rebuked him for attempting such deeds, and warned him not to try something like that in future, lest the good fortune which now smiled upon him should, if he took such chances, change for the worse. Thus the *castrum* was enriched both with the booty and with the prisoners' ransoms, and he launched frequent and very damaging raids against the Calabrians.

(17) One ought not to pass over in silence how he captured Peter de Tira, who lived at Bisignano. This Peter was indeed the wealthiest citizen of Bisignano, and outshone the others too in wisdom and courage, and was therefore the leading man there. However he and Guiscard were in the habit of having frequent meetings, as though at a court [*quasi ad placitum*], to discuss the various disputes which occurred between their men. Since Guiscard knew that Peter was rolling in money and was the leader of the others in the *castrum*, he began to think how he might take the *castrum* and get his hands on the money that Peter possessed. He pondered this for a long time and finally, after he had discussed it with his men, they met one day in the plain outside the *castrum* of Bisignano, which is where they were accustomed to have their conferences. No formal truce had been agreed. Seeing the crowd of people with Peter, Guiscard sent a messenger to suggest that, beause

he was reluctant to get mixed up with this crowd in case an argument about some thing or other was started, they should rather both move away from their companions and meet together between the two parties to have their discussion. He had however warned his own men what he planned to do, so that when the necessity arose they could come to his help as fast as possible. Peter agreed to Guiscard's proposal, and being quite unsuspecting, sent his fellows some way away while he went to meet Guiscard in the middle of the plain. They stopped and talked to each other for a long time, but when they stood up to leave, Guiscard, having had a good look at the other's considerable size and weight but trusting in his own strength (for he was always super-confident and extraordinarily daring in attempting great deeds), seized Peter round the middle and began to carry him over his shoulder towards his men. Both sets of supporters rushed forwards, the men of Bisignano to rescue Peter, the Normans to aid their lord. Guiscard meanwhile hauled Peter towards his men - partly carrying him, partly rolling him over, partly dragging him - the latter's attempts at resistance proved futile. The Calabrians then despaired of Peter, and without attempting to fight the Normans on his behalf they fled back into the *castrum* of Bisignano.

Rejoicing as though they had won a battle, the Normans took Peter back to the *castrum* of S. Marco. There he was held prisoner for quite a long time. After paying out an incredible sum of money, he finally managed to secure his freedom, but he was unable to hand over the *castrum*, for the citizens would not agree to this. Learning of the cunning Guiscard had displayed in this and similar enterprises, the Calabrians (a most timid people) were all absolutely terrified of him: indeed they said that there was nobody who could equal him, either with weapons, in strength, or in craft.

After receiving such a large sum of money, Guiscard generously rewarded his men and by doing so strengthened their loyalty to him. He attacked the Calabrians, and so weakened them by daily raids that he forced the men of Bisignano, Cosenza and Martirano and the province round about to make a treaty with him, whereby, while they retained their *castra*, they also paid service and tribute only to him. They pledged themselves to this agreement with oaths and hostages.

(18) Count Humphrey ruled over Apulia most gloriously and in a praiseworthy and peaceful manner. But he was taken ill, and - sad to say - died. Guiscard was at that time staying at S. Marco. On hearing of this he was extremely sad, and hastened to Apulia where he was received by all the leading men from his land who made him lord and count over them all in his brother's place. He arranged matters there and united all of Apulia in peace and obedience to himself, but he could not forget the project which he previously had in mind. Now that he had been endowed with rule over a wider area and gained greater strength, and in particular a strong force of knights, with which he could carry through what he had started, he set his plan in motion once again. He raised an army and after making all the necessary preparations for the expedition, he led his troops into Calabria. He crossed into the territory of Cosenza and Martirano, and then remained for two days near the hot springs close to the River Lamita, to allow his army to relax after a hard and tiring march and to reconnoitre the land ahead. Then he went on to the *castrum* called Squillace, and from there marched along the coast until he reached Reggio. He spent three days in a reconnaissance of this city, but when he realised that neither by threats nor by promises could he make its citizens surrender, and with a number of matters requiring his attention in Apulia, he prepared to withdraw. On his return journey, Neocastro, Maida and Canalea made peace and surrendered to him.

(19) His younger brother Roger, who had up to now been kept at home because of his youth and the affection felt for him by his family, now followed him and came to Apulia. Guiscard was extremely pleased by his arrival, and received him with the honour which was his due. For he was a most handsome young man, tall and well-made, a most fluent speaker, shrewd in counsel, far-sighted in the planning of things to be done, cheerful and pleasant to everyone, strong and valiant, fierce in battle: through these qualities, in a short time he achieved general admiration. Since he was ambitious for both power and praise, as is usual in one of his age, he attracted other ambitious young men to follow him, and whatever he could obtain was freely and generously shared with them.

Since he wanted to be absolutely sure of his brother's resolution and courage in military matters, Guiscard sent him to Calabria with sixty knights, there to fight against thousands of foes. He carried off the enterprise audaciously, pitching his camp on a high

peak in the mountains of Vibona which could be seen far and wide, and from where he could coerce the inhabitants of the surrounding area. News of this spread through all the towns and *castra* of that region and the valley of Saline and all the people were terrified. They sent envoys to beg for peace, gave him lots of gifts, and feebly handed over the strongest *castra* in service to him, binding themselves with oaths and hostages.

(20) Once this area had been made obedient to his and his brother's wishes, he sent messengers to his brother in Apulia to inform him of the news of what he had done and to hand over the large sum of money which he had acquired. Meanwhile he himself carefully fortified a *castrum* called Nicefolia with towers and ramparts, garrisoned it with heavily-armed knights, and furnished it with all the supplies it needed. On realising his brother's valour [*strenuitas*] and receiving the money which he had sent, Guiscard was extremely pleased. Wishing to talk with him, he sent instructions that he should hurry to meet him. Roger took only six knights with him and travelled to see his brother in Apulia; he left the rest of his troops to guard the *castrum* which he had built and hold down the region, in case any treachery should be attempted. His brother received him as was proper, and they rejoiced much in their talk, each telling the other in turn their news.

(21) He stayed with his brother while together they made the preparations needed for their expedition. Then they crossed the Calabrian mountains with a large force of both cavalry and infantry and marched on Reggio. On their arrival at the valley of Saline, Guiscard heard that the inhabitants of Reggio had collected all the available foodstuffs from the surrounding area and brought them into the city, leaving nothing for his army, intending thereby to drive the besieging force away through hunger. So he sent his brother Roger with three hundred knights to plunder the area round the *castrum* of Gerace, giving him strict instructions to bring whatever foodstuffs he could seize to the army at Reggio. He himself stuck to the direct route and hastened to besiege the city.

(22) Roger meanwhile, on behalf of his brother and the whole army, did his best to fulfill the orders he had been given. Climbing the highest mountains and descending into the deepest valleys, he returned to the army like a faithful and busy bee, laden down with plunder. Before his arrival everybody was almost destitute; he restored abundance.

Guiscard however saw that he was making little progress against the city, and his army would be delayed there until the cold of winter. He therefore raised the siege, allowed all his forces to go home and went himself with only a few men to spend the winter at Maida.

(23) Roger lacked anything with which he could reward his knights, and they were becoming importunate in asking him for reward, so he sought this from his brother. The latter acted in an ill-advised manner towards him, and while generous to others began to be stingier with him than was proper. For he saw that young knights from all over Apulia were adhering not to him but to Roger because of the latter's valour [*strenuitas*]; fearing that his brother rise up against him, he wanted to force him through poverty to be content to remain with only a small following under his wing. But Roger was great of heart, and he knew that his brother was treating him as though he was ignoble and unworthy, rather than as someone who was climbing step-by-step to the top, as he was doing. So in his anger he abandoned his brother and went to Apulia.

(24) When his [other] brother William, Count of the Principate, heard of this, he sent messengers to Roger inviting him to join him, promising him that he could share in all that he possessed, treating everything except his own wife and children as his own. On his arrival he was welcomed with the honour he deserved. Roger remained with him for some time, until finally he received the *castrum* of Scalea from him; from there he launched many raids against Guiscard and devastated the country round about. When this was announced to Guiscard he raised an army and went to besiege the *castrum*, destroying the olives and vines which lay around the town. William however fell on him with his mighty lance and depleted the ranks of his knights through frequent skirmishes. Seeing that he was accomplishing nothing against the town and that his forces were day by day diminishing, Guiscard took counsel and retreated before he suffered even more serious losses.

(25) Not long afterwards, and through the work of intermediaries, peace was for a time restored between them. On his brother's invitation Roger went to serve him with sixty knights faithful to himself; as a result he was reduced to such penury that he was largely sustained by the robberies committed by his squires. We do not say this to shame him but, on his own instructions, we shall write even more shocking and reprehensible things about

him, so that it shall be clear to everyone how much struggle and anguish was needed for him to raise himself from the depths of poverty to the heights of wealth and honour. Indeed he had a certain squire [*armiger*] called Blettin, in whose presence nothing was concealed, whom he told what to steal. During his poverty-stricken youth, the man who was later to be such a wealthy count coveted some horses which he had seen in someone's house in Amalfi. He persuaded Blettin to come with him and steal them away by night.

(26) He remained loyally in his brother's service while two months went by, in the course of which he and his men received nothing as reward except for one single horse. He knew as if by instinct, even though he had not read it, this proverb of Sallust: 'to struggle in vain and after wearisome exertion to gain nothing at the end except hatred', (when taken finally to extremes) 'is the height of folly' [*Bellum Iugurthinum*, III.3], thus good fortune is very necessary for those who serve, and he realised that fortune was indeed less favourable to him. So, after an argument with his brother, he repudiated the agreement which they had for a time had between them and returned to Scalea. He sent out his knights to plunder Guiscard's castra, sending them that very night to attack one called Narencio, and laid waste the province. While he waited at Scalea for those who had been sent out to plunder, a man called Bervenis, coming from Melfi, announced that some Amalfitan merchants, laden with precious commodities, would be travelling from Melfi to Amalfi and would pass not far from the castrum. Hearing this he was very happy, sprang on his horse and, accompanied by thirteen knights, he encountered the merchants between Gesualdo and Carbonara. He captured them and brought them to Scalea, deprived them of everything which they had with them, and even made them ransom themselves. Aided by this money, which he handed out generously, he bound one hundred knights to him, and with them he harried Apulia with frequent and wide-ranging raids, and put Guiscard to such trouble that, forgetting about the conquest of Calabria, he came near to losing what he had already acquired.

(27) In the year 1058 there was a great disaster and the flail of God's wrath, caused (so we believe) by our sins, was sent by heaven; it ravaged the province of Calabria for three months, namely March, April and May, to such an extent that people believed themselves to be menaced by a threefold plague. While one could be enough to put life in peril,

scarcely anyone at this time reckoned that they could escape three dangers raging so furiously at the same time. For on the one hand the swords of the Normans were wielded so savagely that hardly anybody was spared, on the other hand there was widespread famine, which sapped people's strength ; and thirdly there was the onset of disease, which spread horribly, far and wide, raging out of control like a fire in a dry reed bed, and allowing almost no one to escape alive. Those who had money could find nothing to buy. People sold their weeping children from freedom into slavery for paltry sums, but then could not find anything which they might purchase for food, and their grief was made worse by their loss through this profitless sale; it was as though they were afflicted by a fourth calamity. Eating fresh meat without bread caused dysentery, which killed many people, and made others mad. Fear destroyed the sacred observance of Lent laid down by the holy and religious catholic fathers, to such an extent that it was violated through eating, not merely milk and cheese, but also meat, even by those who had seemed previously to be of good character. Drought took from the earth the green sweet-smelling wheat which customarily nourished them; indeed when winter wheat was to be found at all and was cooked, it seemed, through some defect of the air, more harmful than nourishing. They tried to make bread with river sedges, tree bark, chestnuts, acorns and holm-oak nuts, which we call gleanings, dug up by pigs, as well as from the coarse meal left when wheat is dried mixed in with a little millet. Raw roots, eaten on their own with salt, blocked the vitals with a swelling of wind, and made countenances ashen. Mothers preferred, through pious affection, to indulge in open violence by snatching such food from the mouths of their children rather than giving it to them. So this three-fold disaster gave rise to other damaging consequences, and, with the intervention of these new factors, the famine became worse and the sword of death cut more sharply. For bodies weakened by hunger, want and unaccustomed food were as just as much endangered by over-eating in those rare cases when food was abundantly available.

(28) The Calabrians are always a most untrustworthy people. When they saw that the brothers were at loggerheads with each other and that neither of them therefore would visit their land, they began to throw off the Norman yoke, and refused to pay the tribute and service which they had sworn to give. An agreement was negotiated to surrender a fortress

called Neocastro, with the Calabrians simulating good faith, but that same day they slew the sixty Normans who had been left as its garrison.

(29) When this was announced to Guiscard, he realised that he was losing Calabria and that [meanwhile] Apulia was in total uproar. He sent envoys to his brother and made peace with him, granting him half of Calabria, from the saddle of Monte Nicefolo and Monte Squillace, an area which had already been gained, as far as Reggio, which still had to be conquered.

(30) Robert Guiscard had a wife of noble birth and virtuous descent called Alberada, by whom he had a son called Mark, who was known by the nickname Bohemond. They were however related by consanguinity, and being unwilling to go against canonical prohibition he now repudiated the marriage, and then entered into matrimony with Sichelgaita, the daughter of Prince Guaimar of Salerno.

(31) The betrothal was agreed at Salerno in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1058. Before they gathered there, he sent instructions to his brother Roger to act as his agent in fulfilling his promise to Gisulf, the girl's brother, to destroy two *castra* which his brother William, the Count of the Principate, had built within his hereditary lands, and by which Gisulf was much threatened. Then he returned to Melfi and the marriage was solemnly celebrated.

(32) After these events had taken place, Roger returned Scalea to his brother William with a semblance of goodwill, and on Guiscard's request went to Calabria. He took over of the castrum of Mileto, which his brother granted to him as a hereditary possession, and began to do battle with the rebellious Calabrians in the surrounding area. One day in the year 1059, when he was attacking the castrum of Oppido, the Bishop of Cassano and the *praesopus* (we would call him the provost) of Gerace raised a very large army and set out to attack the *castrum* of San Martino in the valley of Saline. When this was announced to Roger, he abandoned the siege and force marched to the place where he had heard that they were. He attacked and brought them to battle, trapped almost all of them and scarcely one escaped. He enriched all his men from the captured booty, horses and arms. As a result,

although Calabria was still not entirely reduced to obedience, it was so terrified by his presence that it posed less of a problem to him than it had hitherto.

(33) Meanwhile Robert Guiscard went, at the request of his brother Geoffrey, the Count of the Capitanata, to help him against those whom he was fighting in Chieti, a land which he had invaded in an attempt to increase his dominions. Since he had great confidence in the valour [*strenuitas*] of his brother Roger, he requested him to come as fast as possible and to accompany him on his expedition there. The latter received his message, and realised his brother Geoffrey's need, even though he was busy dealing with his own affairs. It was however always his custom to help his friends with their problems as though they were his own, and so he was at pains to hasten to help his brother. They both therefore raised an army and, leading their battle line to the aid of their brother, they took the *castrum* of Guillimaco by storm. They brought the man who had previously ruled over this *castrum*, Walter, a prisoner to Apulia and had his eyes gouged out, to prevent him causing their brother any further trouble as he might do if he still had his sight on his release from prison. This man had a sister who was led off into captivity with him. She was alleged to have been of such beauty that, if by any chance she went to bathe in the sea or went paddling for pleasure in a river, the fish were so attracted by her shapely white form that they would swim up and could even be caught by hand.

(34) After gaining the *castrum* of Guillimaco through his brothers' help, Count Geoffrey then began the conquest of the whole province of Chieti. Robert Guiscard returned to Calabria with his brother Roger, and there arranged affairs very much to his and his brother's advantage. He raided as far as Reggio, and then went back to Apulia for the winter while Roger remained in Calabria.

Once the winter was over, burning with the desire to capture Reggio, he gathered the provisions and other supplies which were needed with great care, raised a large army and went to Calabria. This was the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1059. Bringing his brother with him, he surprised Reggio at the time when they were beginning to harvest the crops and laid siege to it. The defenders fought bravely, as if for dear life, and both brothers eagerly encouraged their men, rousing them to attack the *castrum*. On the occasions when

they charged the enemy, both performed many brave deeds. Roger was indeed at the forefront of his men in every engagement lest it be said that he spurred on others to fight while hanging behind himself. He attacked a very brave man of enormous size who was reviling the Norman army with many insults and of whom everybody was terrified as though by a giant, overthrew him with his strong lance and killed him. His death in this manner so frightened the others in the *castrum* that, when they saw the machines being prepared for the capture of the city, they doubted their own forces and felt themselves to be lost. An agreement was concluded that two men who seemed to be the leaders of the others should be allowed to depart with all their own men while the rest surrendered the city and submitted to the Normans' rule. The men who left took refuge in a *castrum* called Squillace.

(35) After receiving the city, Robert Guiscard put into effect a long-standing desire of his and was gloriously and triumphally created duke. He profusely thanked his brother and the rest of the army with whose help he had attained such a high honour, and rewarded the deserving. He [then] directed his brother to take the army and make all the towns and *castra* throughout the whole province subject to his rule. Meanwhile he relaxed at Reggio after his labours.

(36) Roger was not indeed deceived by this excuse, but he led the army wisely, and in a very short space of time, partly by threats, and in part by diplomacy, he had gained eleven of the most important *castra*, in fact he was so successful that in the whole of Calabria only one *castrum* still dared to resist - this being Squillace, which was held by the people who had left Reggio.

(37) On besieging Squillace, Roger saw that it could not be captured quickly and that his army would become weary with the strain of the siege. So he fortified a castle [*castellum*] outside its main gate, furnished it with knights to attack the place, and the supplies which they needed, and disbanded the expedition. When the men who had gone to Squillace from Reggio found themselves under fierce assault from those whom Roger had stationed in the new castle, and after they had been unable to do anything for a considerable time, they took ship by night and fled to Constantinople. The people of Squillace then approached Roger, made peace with him and surrendered the *castrum*. This was in the year 1059. And thus the

whole of Calabria was at peace, remaining quietly under the rule of Duke Robert Guiscard and his brother Roger.

(38) However, lest anybody think that those who had not come to Apulia with the other brothers but had remained in Normandy were less worthy than their siblings, something ought to be said about Serlo. He was considered to be one of the more outstanding knights in Normandy, and so, when he was wronged by a certain powerful man, he sought revenge and killed him. Not wishing to suffer the resulting anger of Count Robert, the son of Richard II and father of the renowned William, King of the English, he fled into Brittany. He remained there for some time, where he was universally esteemed for his valour [*strenuitas*]. He sent envoys to secure peace from Count Robert, but when he could not obtain this he launched a number of damaging raids into Normandy.

(39) On one particular occasion this same Count Robert was besieging a castle called Tillières on the border between France and Normandy. A certain French knight left the castle every day seeking single combat with men from the Norman army, and vanquished many challengers. The count became afraid of the loss of men, and forbade anyone to go out to meet him. He told his men that although they were avoiding a dangerous task they could plead in mitigation that they were not doing this through fear but because of their prince's prohibition. Serlo, who was at this time living in Brittany, was told of this, and could not stomach the shame brought upon his people. So, accompanied by two squires, he went to Tillières, and outside its gate he offered a challenge to single combat, waiting on horseback with his lance at rest. The man who was used to cutting down others was roused to anger and, splendidly equipped, rode furiously out, shouting at him; he demanded to know who the challenger was, and urged him to retire and save his life. Serlo revealed his name, but refused to withdraw, and when they fought together the man who had cast down others was himself overthrown by his mighty spear. Many people from both sides were looking on, but none of them knew who Serlo was; however as the victor he was given a glorious reception by the Normans. He paraded through their camp with the severed head on his lance, but said not a word to his own people, and hurried back to Brittany. The count therefore sent an envoy with orders to find out who he was and summon him to come to see him. The announcement was made that he was Serlo, son of Tancred, and that he had gone

to Brittany because an order had been given to drive him forth from his own people and he wished to avoid the anger of the prince whom he had offended. He would willingly remain in exile, even as a pauper, in obedience to the prince's order, until the latter's anger had been appeased. The count was filled with remorse, and being unwilling to do without such a man any longer, told Serlo to come to him. He hastened to meet the count who received him back into his grace, and granted him the kiss of peace. The possessions which he had lost were restored to him; he was enriched with a wife who herself was well-endowed with property, and the count treated him as one of his *familiars*.

(40) It is by no means absurd to say something worthy of record about Tancred, the father of these great sons. During his youth he was dedicated to military endeavours and passed through a number of different regions and princely courts. He was anxious to secure praise through his exploits, and during the time when he was one of the household [*familia*] of the count of the Normans, Richard II (the fourth in line from Duke Rollo) he not only gained a great reputation but also made his fortune.

One day the prince went out hunting. He was much addicted to such a sport, as is the way with wealthy men. He flushed out an boar of extraordinary size, of the type known as a *sanglier*. It was however his custom, as it is with other powerful men, that when he himself had flushed out some game, it should be left to him, and nobody else should dare to kill it. The hounds were rushing after the boar and the count was following on behind more slowly, because the forest foliage was extremely thick. The boar was afraid of being attacked from behind, and so when it found a rock it used this as a bulwark to guard its rear, and then it put forward its head with its tusks to protect itself from the dogs. Since these hounds lacked the hunter's assistance, the boar had soon inflicted many wounds upon them with its sharp tusks when, quite by chance, Tancred arrived. Seeing the carnage among the hounds he rushed to help them, even though he was well-aware of the prince's custom. On seeing him, the boar ignored the dogs and charged towards him. Tancred was confident of his strength and waited for it, sword on high. He did not just inflict a wound upon it, but drove the sharp point right through his tough forehead down into its heart, and left the hilt sticking out next to the head - indeed out of the whole long length of his sword only the hilt was left outside the boar's body. So it was vanquished; but Tancred, leaving the sword in its

forehead, took himself a long way off, to ensure that the count would not find out who had done this.

Coming upon the dead boar, the count was amazed. He ordered his companions to find out whether anyone was wounded; the sword was discovered, stuck in the boar's forehead, and this blow caused amazement. The count asked whose sword it was and, to prevent whoever had done this concealing his exploit, he pardoned him. When it was discovered that Tancred was the culprit, he was much praised by the count and the others, and though already much-prized, he was thereafter even more highly honoured. From then on he served in the count's court with ten knights under him. Now that we have narrated, albeit in an unpolished style, not admittedly everything which ought to be commemorated, but those few things about which we have learned from common report among the many done by the brothers in Apulia and Calabria, we shall turn our attention to the incredible deeds which they performed in Sicily, a land which resisted them for a long time but which was eventually subjugated. However, when the opportunity arises the events which took place in Apulia, Rome or Greece will not be passed by and consigned to oblivion.

Book II

If one seeks to find out those things which occurred in Apulia and Calabria, these have in part, even if not completely, been set down. We shall now turn to describing what took place in Sicily, once again seeming to make a digression, but recording matters in the same style. For you should know that everything is written down in its right place, depending on when it happened, so that the proper sequence of events is recorded and something which occurred first is described before the events which then came subsequently.

For when Count Roger first left to wage war in Sicily he did not desert what he had in Calabria, but when circumstances there were unfavourable he left his army in Sicily and meanwhile returned to look after his affairs [on the mainland]. Indeed he brought help on many occasions to the duke his brother, or undoubtedly gave him advice on weighty and difficult matters when he went to Apulia, as a mighty knight [*strenuus miles*] and man of sound judgement should.

(1) While he was staying at Reggio with his brother the duke, that most distinguished young man Count Roger of Calabria heard that Sicily was in the hands of the unbelievers. Seeing it from close at hand with only a short stretch of sea lying in between, he was seized by the desire to capture it, for he was always eager for conquest. He perceived two means by which he would profit, one for his soul and the other for his material benefit, if he brought back to Divine worship a country given over to idolatry, and if he himself possessed the temporal fruits and income from this land, thus spending in the service of God things which had been unjustly stolen by a people who knew Him not.

Turning these matters over in his mind, he hurried to put his intentions into practice. With just sixty knights he took ship upon that short but most dangerous stretch of sea between Scylla and Charybdis, transported his force of troops across it and set off to reconnoitre Sicily. Near the harbour where they landed is a populous city, which takes its name from the word *messe*, because that portion of the crops [*messes*] of the whole region which was in antiquity paid to the Romans as tribute used to be collected there. The citizens of that town, of whom there were a huge number, were very angry when they realised that

their enemies had invaded their territory, and in particular because they saw how few they were. They hurried from the city gates as fast as they could and went out to engage them. The count, who was most cunning and experienced in battle, at first feigned fear. Then after he had led them some way from the city he attacked, charging them savagely, and put them to flight. Cutting down the stragglers, his fearsome and threatening gaze pursued the fugitives all the long way back to the city gate. Taking the equipment and horses which they had abandoned, he boarded his ships and returned to his brother the duke at Reggio.

(2) Duke Robert and his brother Count Roger returned to Apulia to winter in that region. He had been gone from there for quite some time, and as a result when he returned he found that nearly everyone had been plundering his property which was [in consequence] in great disorder. He spent the whole winter carefully restoring and refurnishing it back to its original state. The princes of Apulia rejoiced in his new ducal title. He gave gifts to many people, warning them that he would be launching an expedition against Sicily that next summer.

(3) Count Roger left the duke in Apulia and returned to Reggio in the week before Lent. There he was approached by Betumen [*Ibn-Thimna*], an emir of Sicily, who had fled to Reggio after he had been defeated in battle by a certain prince called Belcamed [*Ibn-Hawwas*] because he had killed his sister's husband, a distinguished young man of his people called Benneclerus. Betumen urged the count, with many arguments, to attack Sicily.

(4) The count rejoiced greatly in his arrival, received him honourably, and once the winter was over, followed his advice and invaded Sicily. He crossed the Straits and landed at Clibano with a hundred and sixty knights and Betumen himself, since the latter knew the country. He set off to raid Milazzo, with Betumen, the man who had fled to him, as his guide. Marching at night not far from the city of Messina, he encountered a certain Saracen, the brother of Benneclerus, for whose death Betumen had been driven from Sicily. This man was extremely well-known among his own people for his warlike exploits. Indeed, when he had learned, on the previous evening, that the count had landed in Sicily with his troops, he felt that his own forces were more than sufficient [to deal with them]. So he left

Messina by night, going to attack the enemy and by defeating them gain a name for himself through his prowess. Count Roger rode in the lead in front of his companions, eyes intently scanning all around him. He was unarmed except for his shield and the sword hanging from his belt - a squire [*armiger*] followed with his armour. When by the light of the moon he observed the enemy's arrival, he had gone too far in front of his squire to take his armour from him, indeed it was possible that the latter, if he had seen anything in the darkness, had fled. So he put on speed and charged his enemy, armed only with a sword. He killed him with a single blow, cutting him in half. The body lay in two pieces - the horse and personal effects he gave to one of his men. He marched as far as Milazzo and Rametta, gathering a great deal of booty, then he returned to make camp at the three lakes near the Straits which are called Praroli. The next day he went on to the coast where he transferred the plunder which he had gained to his ships. to be carried back to Reggio.

(5) The people of Messina thought that because some of his men had re-embarked on the ships they could easily defeat his divided forces. Cavalry and infantry left the city and marched out to attack him. Now in fact, because the wind was unfavourable, no armed men had boarded the ships. When Count Roger realised that they were advancing against him, he sent out ahead his nephew Serlo, the son of his brother Serlo (whom we mentioned above at the end of Book One), with instructions that if they wished to flee, as indeed they did, they should be allowed to do so. He himself pursued them at great speed while they attempted to flee, and intercepted them to such effect that scarcely one among the whole multitude escaped.

(6) While the people of Messina tearfully mourned their dead, the count marched past the city and went to set up camp at the Isola San Iacinto, which was only a short distance from Messina. He set off to attack the city at daybreak, knowing its forces to be much depleted. But although those who now survived in Messina were few in number, they and their women along with them defended their towers and ramparts as though for life itself. The count, worried that the whole of Sicily would be roused by this exploit and fall upon him, returned to his tents and began to consider his return to Reggio. The sea was very rough and made the return journey perilous, so the count took a wise decision and decided to give all the booty which he had captured to finance the rebuilding of the church of St.

Androni(c?)us near Reggio, which had recently been destroyed. It was, we believe, through the merits of this saint that the wind blew favourably and made the sea sufficiently calm for sailing, allowing them to cross safely.

(7) It may seem that by giving the booty to God they acted against canonical sanctions, for it is said that: 'Who sacrifices a victim which is stolen or from the property of the poor is as one who sacrifices the son in the sight of the father' [cf. *Ecclesiasticus*, xxxiv.24]. But since this statement is particularly applicable to the property of the poor of Christ, of whom it is elsewhere said: 'Blessed are the poor of spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven' [*Matthew*, v.3], we do not think it absurd [to take] from those who trust in God neither through their mouths nor in their hearts. Indeed it does not seem unreasonable to give what has been taken away from those who use things ungratefully, in that they do not recognise the Giver.

(8) Count Roger spent the whole of March and April in Calabria, arranging matters carefully and gathering ships and other supplies in preparation for another expedition to Sicily. At the beginning of May the duke arrived at Reggio with a large force of cavalry and had the fleet put to sea. Hearing that an expedition against the island was imminent, Belcamed, the Emir of Sicily, sent some ships (which they call *catti*) from Palermo to the Straits to hinder the enemy's crossing. They interrupted the passage for some days, for although our fleet was the more numerous, theirs was better furnished with more powerful ships. Our men had then only *germundi* and galleys, the Sicilians however had *catti*, *golafri*, dromonds and ships of various other types.

(9) The duke saw for himself that the crossing was being held up. Taking the advice of the count his brother and the wise men of the army, he invoked Divine aid. He ordered the army to trust in their priests, receive penance and all to take communion. He himself and his brother vowed that, if the land should with Divine assistance be made subject to them, they would henceforth be [even] more devoted to God, keeping unswervingly in mind what is written: 'in all your affairs take God as your helper, and you will have a favourable outcome'. And since no plan can succeed which is [directed] against the Lord and no difficulty cannot be overcome when the Holy Spirit is present as one's helper, they begged

God with tearful devotion to be their guide and strongest governor in all that they intend to do.

(10) Seeing their enemies facing their army on the other shore and no prospect of doing anything, Count Roger resorted as was his custom to cunning proposals, as if he had read, 'What is to be done? Success falls to the crafty weapons'. He gave this advice to the duke, that the latter should remain there with his army and show himself to the enemy; meanwhile he himself with a hundred and fifty knights would go to Reggio, there board their ships under the cover of darkness, cross the sea while the enemy was unaware [of their presence] and invade Sicily. The duke, who was afraid of losing his brother, refused to allow this, saying that had no wish to gain anything from his brother's death but rather placed his brother's life before all prospect of gain. Sending his ships on ahead to Reggio, the count followed with three hundred knights, and as a man most bold in military matters and always one to attempt great things, he crossed the sea safely while his enemies were off guard and reached a place called Tremestieri. Sending his ships back to prevent any of his men taking refuge in them, he marched to attack Messina. Finding it unguarded, for he had already destroyed the defenders, he captured the city and demolished its towers and ramparts. Those whom they found there were killed, though some fled to the Palermitan ships. [This occurred] in the year from the incarnation of the Lord 1061.

(11) Among those [who fled] from Messina was a certain young man from among the more noble citizens of the town who had a most beautiful sister. He tried to take her with him as he fled, but the girl was a dainty and delicate young thing, lacking in energy, and what with fear and the unaccustomed pace began to flag. Her brother tried gently to encourage her to [continue] her flight but with no success. So, seeing her strength failing and not wishing to leave her to the Normans for one of them to rape, he drew his sword and killed her. Although he shed tears for his beloved sister (for she was his only one), he preferred to be his sister's slayer and to mourn her death rather than that she should involuntarily contravene her own law and be defiled against her will by someone from another law.

(12) After Messina had been captured the Palermitans realised that they had been tricked by the enemy. Fearing that if they remained there much longer the sea might grow rougher and force them aground to be annihilated by their enemies, and in some confusion, they set sail back whence they had come. Count Roger sent the keys of the captured city to the duke, telling him to hurry to him now the seaway was secure. So, with the sea cleansed of their enemies and the crossing now feasible and no longer dangerous, the duke came with his whole army to Messina after an uneventful journey. Finding his brother safe, they were [both] overjoyed.

(13) The two brothers spent eight days carefully arranging matters there. Once the city had been organized to their satisfaction and a garrison installed, they left their ships there and set off for Rametta with their mounted troops. The Ramettans were already well aware that this little band of their enemies had slain the mighty host of warriors from Messina, and were terrified that should they go out to meet their enemies advancing upon them the same thing would happen to them. They therefore sent envoys asking for peace, surrendering themselves and their city and swearing fealty with oaths taken on their books of superstitious law.

(14) The brothers left, rejoicing greatly at this happy ending and, realising how feeble these people were, became bolder and chose to bivouac near Tripi. The next day they came to Frazzano, and then from there to the plain of Maniace. The Christians who had stayed in the Val Demone had paid tribute to the Saracens. They were overjoyed at the arrival of [other] Christians and rushed out to meet them, bringing them many offerings and gifts. They claimed as an excuse [for their previous conduct] with regard to the Saracens that they had done this not for love of them but to protect themselves and what was theirs, and now they would serve the brothers with unbreakable fealty. Both brothers treated them with the utmost kindness, promising to confer many benefits upon them if God should grant the country to them. Leaving them thus in peace, they themselves directed their march towards Centuripe.

(15) But though they were well aware of their valour [*strenuitas*] the inhabitants of Centuripe were not deterred by the prospect of death and, since they had no wish at all to

serve them, manned their ramparts in defence of their city. Our men attacked the city bravely, but when they saw the their men were being harassed by slingers and archers, and would be unable to achieve anything against the town without heavy casualties, the brothers called off the assault, particularly since they had heard that the Saracens were nearby and threatening battle. They wanted to keep our men unwounded and their numbers undiminished to face them.

(16) So they left Centuripe and set up their tents elsewhere, pitching camp in the plain of Paternò, which was wide and suitable for a battle. They waited there for eight days, hoping that the encounter offered by the Saracens would take place there. But when they learned from the scouts of Betumen, who had fled to the count at Reggio and now accompanied them as their faithful lieutenant and guide, that the battle was not going to take place immediately, they marched on further to S. Felice and camped near the underground caves. These they attacked, beginning with the largest, killing many of the inhabitants. Then they went on to the mills on the bank of the river below Castrogiovanni which is called in their language *Guedetani* [*Wadi-et-tin*], which in Latin translation means 'marshy river', and there they pitched camp.

(17) Finally Belcamed, accompanied by a great multitude of Africans and Sicilians, offered battle to his enemies, as he had intended to do for a long time, in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1061. The duke then divided his army in half - he had only seven hundred men - and he drew them up in two divisions. He entrusted one of these to his brother, to lead on ahead as he usually did and attack the enemy. He himself followed close behind with the other, encouraging his men with fiery words. Belcamed, who had fifteen thousand armed men, similarly divided them, into three divisions. The first of these charged boldly at the enemy and started the battle. Our men, as was their custom, fought valiantly in this opening clash and killed many of the enemy, the rest of whom turned and fled. They pursued the defeated towards Castrogiovanni and killed up to ten thousand of them. So victory was gained and they secured such great spoils that a man who had lost one horse in the battle received ten for one; undoubtedly the army as a whole similarly enriched itself. The next day they moved camp to a place between Castrogiovanni and Naurcio, but they stayed there only one night and then on the following day pitched their tents on Monte

Caliscibetta. However since the mountain was narrow and not really enough to hold the army, they then marched on to Campo di Fonti. Disliking a quiet time and anxious for action, Count Roger led three hundred *juvenes* on a combined raid and reconnaissance mission towards Agrigento, spreading fire and destruction throughout the province. On his return he resupplied the whole army from his spoils and plunder. They remained there for a month and devastated the entire province with a series of raids, but they could not overcome Castrogiovanni. In that year the duke founded the *castrum* of S. Marco.

(18) Aware of the approach of winter, they abandoned the expedition. They left Betumen to hold Catania as their loyal subject (for this was rightfully his anyway), and he could do damage in Sicily in the intervening period. They themselves returned to Messina, which they furnished with a garrison of knights along with the supplies which they would need, and then they crossed the Straits. The duke went to winter in Apulia while the count remained in Calabria. In the middle of winter, in fact before Christmas, he crossed the sea once more with two hundred and fifty knights and raided as far as Agrigento, frightening the whole country. However the Christians of these provinces were very happy to flock to him and joined him in many of his operations. He then went to Troina, to be joyfully welcomed by the Christians who dwelt there. He entered the town and made it subject to him, and there he celebrated the birth of the Lord.

(19) A messenger arrived from Calabria to inform him that Abbot Robert of St. Euphemia had brought his sister Judith back from Normandy. (She was a descendant [*neptis*] of the Count of the Normans). The abbot had sent this messenger to Roger to tell him to hasten back for their marriage. Hearing this the Count was overjoyed, for she was beautiful and of distinguished birth, and he had wanted her for a long time. He returned to Calabria as fast as he possibly could, hastening to see the the girl he had for so long desired. He came to the Valle delle Saline, was formally betrothed to the girl at San Martino and then took her, along with a great crowd of musicians, to Mileto where their marriage was celebrated.

(20) Once it was consummated, he remained there for a little while with his wife, but he had no intention of abandoning his purpose. Once his army was ready he was not a bit deterred by his wife's tearful pleas, but, leaving the young woman in Calabria, invaded

Sicily once again, taking with him the squire Roger as the duke's representative. Betumen the Saracen was summoned by messenger from Catania, and, with him in his company, he went to besiege Petralia. Its citizens, both Christians and Saracens, discussed the matter together and made peace with the count, surrendering their *castrum* and themselves to his rule. The count arranged matters in the *castrum* as he wanted, stationing both knights and paid troops [*stipendiarii*] there, and then went to Troina which he also garrisoned. Instructing Betumen to act on his behalf and to put pressure on the Sicilians, he hastened back to Calabria and to his wife who was eagerly awaiting him. Anxious as she was for his safety, she greatly rejoiced at his arrival.

(21) Since he had only the one *castrum* over which to rule, Mileto - for he had received nothing else from his brother - he now sought what the latter had promised him when, at the latter's request, they had been reconciled to each other at Scalea, namely half of Calabria. He did this in particular since he needed to provide a fitting marriage portion for his young wife, since the girl was of such distinguished birth. But the duke, while generous with money, was stingy in giving out the smallest portion of land, and made use of all sorts of roundabout ways to drag matters out. The count knew how clever his brother was, and did not want to be fed lies for ever and ever, and so he sought the opinion of leading men throughout Apulia, to obtain what had been promised to him. When this too got him nowhere he became enraged and abandoned his brother, breaking the treaty which they had between them. He went to Mileto and manfully garrisoned the *castrum*, recruiting the best knights from every part to oppose his brother. But, even though it was widely acknowledged that his brother had acted unjustly towards him, he observed proper legal norms and refrained from any injury to his brother for forty days. This was in case the latter should come to his senses within this period and then complain that he [Roger] had injured him. The count preferred to be considered the injured party, and that his brother should be blamed for the harm caused by this dispute, rather than it should be twisted back against himself.

(22) Betumen travelled through Sicily and, as he had been asked by the count, did what he could to draw men into fealty to our race. He launched raids to harm those whom he was unable to persuade. While he was marching to attack the *castrum* of Entella, which had

formerly been his, a certain Nichel, a powerful man who had once been one of Betumen's knights in this *castrum*, deceitfully sent him a peace offer. He proposed that Betumen should come with only a few men to a predetermined spot to talk to the people of Entella, implying that the latter wished to be reconciled to him. Since, when in former times relations between them had been good, they had received many benefits from him, Betumen did not suspect treachery and was therefore willing to come to the rendezvous in the manner in which he had been instructed. However the people of Entella, under Nichel's leadership, conceived a treacherous and poisonous plan. First, they speared his horse with a javelin, since otherwise, if its rider received the initial wound and thus discovered their deceit, an unharmed horse might enable him to escape even though he was wounded. Once they had unhorsed him, they then stabbed him as he lay on the ground, forcing him to breathe his last in a pool of blood. The Normans who had been sent by the count to the *castra* of Troina and Petralia were mightily upset to hear of this, since they had been very much under the protection of his name. They abandoned the fortresses which had been entrusted to them and returned to Messina.

(23) The duke was furious that his brother had left him, gathered an army and went to besiege him in Mileto, in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1062. Although he was at the time suffering from some sort of fever, the count was at Gerace where he had been called to deal with various matters. There not only was he ill but, through some unknown contagion in the air, he lost some of his men. However when his brother arrived as though he was an enemy, he rushed furiously to Monte Sant'Angelo and attacked and cast down with his mighty lance many of his brother's army. After this attack he prevented them for a long time from making camp, as they had intended, on this mountain, and indeed on the next one too, which was called Monte Verde. The city was however besieged, and on both sides youth and a desire for praise led many to attempt warlike exploits. While so many were in consequence charging into the fight a young man on the count's side called Arnold, who was his young wife's brother, a man well-suited to the profession of arms, was cast down while he attempted to strike down another and, sad to say, was killed. As a result there arose the most appalling grief and lamentation, not just among those whom he was helping but even amongst those outsiders who were attacking them. While his sister was celebrating his funeral, and he was then buried with appropriate ceremony, the count, who grieved for

him no less than did the young man's sister, sought vengeance for him. He attacked the enemy and struck down and killed many of them. Seeing his men suffering every day from such encounters and gaining little advantage, the duke built two siege castles [*castella*] in front of the town, reckoning that hunger and exhaustion could more easily weaken the defenders. The count however harassed these *castella* daily. When he knew the duke to be in one, he attacked the other. When he saw him go to aid the first one he abandoned that and went straight through the city to the other, and so was continually changing his position.

(24) One night he left Mileto with a hundred knights and went to Gerace. Entering the city which was surrendered to him by the inhabitants, he prepared it for the use of his men. Hearing this the duke was suffused with rage and, after garrisoning the *castella* which he had built next to Mileto, he led his entire army to Gerace and set up his tents around the city. Some of the inhabitants of Gerace had sworn fealty to him. They did not however surrender the city for him to do with it as he wished, lest perhaps he should construct a citadel in it which would make them all henceforth entirely subject to his wishes. Now the duke was friendly with one of the leading men of the city, whose name was Basil, and was invited by him to dinner. He covered his head with a hood to prevent anybody seeing who he was, entered the city and went to the latter's house [*palatium*] to eat. He went in, and while the meal was being prepared chatted with his host's wife, Melita, quite unaware that anything was amiss. The citizens had however been informed by one of the servants from the house that the duke was inside the city and, suspecting treason, were very much disturbed. The whole city was in an uproar, with everyone running about all over the place. They [then] rushed fully armed to the house in which he was, intending to attack it and drag him out. The man who had invited the duke knew the lawlessness of his fellow citizens, and knew also that he would be unable to resist them. But as he fled to a church, trying to save his life, he was struck down and killed by the sword of one of his fellow townsmen. His wife was treated so vilely by the citizens that she was impaled with a stake from the anus through to the breast and forced to end her life with a shameful death.

Seeing this the duke despaired of his life, which is not to be wondered at; especially since he saw citizens perishing in such a savage way from the cruel swords of their fellow

citizens, friends at the hands of friends, upper-class at those of the lower, forgetful of any benefits that they had previously received. He who had once been the destroyer of many thousands stood like a soldier who was unprotected and without his weapons amid the threats of his furious enemies, and the leonine ferocity which had been to some extent part of his nature was transformed into a lamb-like gentleness. But when he saw that all the more sensible people, insofar as they foresaw the outcome of the situation, were doing their best to to restrain the extraordinary fury of the ignorant mob (which had little foresight about what advantage or disadvantage might accrue to them if he were killed), the duke's spirits were considerably restored. He spoke to them with these words. 'Do not', he said, 'be falsely overjoyed, lest the wheel of fortune, which at the moment favours you and is against me, turns in future so that its shows its adverse face to you, since nobody enjoys any advantage without divine favour. You should discuss among yourselves the circumstances through which you have me in your power, for I was not brought to be present here through your own strength, nor did I enter the city to plot some harm against you. Some of you have done fealty to me; and I have made an agreement with you, which I do not believe that I have in any way violated. Perhaps your fealty is to your advantage and provides you with an opportunity, since its strength is known to us, and makes you acceptable to us and more deserving of reward. There is no merit in so many thousands of men depriving a single and defenceless person of his life, [especially] when this has come about not through military prowess but by chance, and by dishonestly breaking a treaty. Nor, I think, will it profit you any more than it will me, for my death will not remove my people's yoke, but rather to revenge me they will become an even greater and more burning menace to you. There are indeed knights who are most loyal to me, there are my brothers and my kinsmen, and if you should perjure yourselves and pollute your hands with my blood, there will be no way that you will be able to make your peace with them. Furthermore what you have done will become common knowledge through every land, and not just you but all your descendants will incur eternal shame for your perjury, particularly if you were to strike me down without hearing or proper judgement!' After this speech the wiser men of the town were better disposed towards him, and quelling the rioting mob they placed the duke in custody until they could decide what was to be done with him.

(25) Meanwhile the duke's army, camped outside the gates, heard that he had been so unluckily taken prisoner and were extremely disturbed. They were arguing among themselves, not at all sure what should be done, but finally wiser counsel prevailed and they hastily sent envoys to his brother the count to inform him what had happened. They knew him to be strictly law-abiding, and even though he was in dispute with his brother for breaking their agreement, he would however think on their blood relationship and love his brother as a brother. Putting this before his own advantage and forgetting all injury done to him, he would go to save him when he was placed in such danger. So they asked his brother to come and bring help as a brother should to the man in this perilous position; and they promised that once the duke was rescued they would help him to secure his rights in the dispute between the two of them.

(26) Disturbed by the dark rumours of his brother's misfortune, and indeed quite moved to tears by thought of their blood relationship, the count humbly begged his men to hurry and rescue his brother. He took up arms and rushed as fast as he could to Gerace. There he asked the inhabitants to come outside the walls and talk to him, and gave them safe-conduct to do so. There he spoke as follows. 'Well, my friends and *fideles*', he said, 'I do indeed begin to realise your loyalty, and I am most grateful to you for recognising my brother when he came into your besieged town, capturing him, and for staying loyal to me. Your loyalty towards me has been shown in this important matter, but I do not want to be revenged upon him through your hands or weapons, as you suggest. He has so roused my anger that I shall not be satisfied if he meets death from any other arms than my own. If you think that by doing this killing you are serving me, and ingratiating yourselves with me, you should know that I entirely forbid it. So hurry and hand my enemy over to me. It should be enough that you will be the first to know of his suffering. I shall do as you advise and make him finish his life in agony. Let's have no delay in handing him over, for I shall gain no advantage from the siege of this city until I avenge the injuries that I have received from him. Indeed his whole army will abandon him, unable to bear his crimes any more, transfer their fealty to me and choose me as duke. I was judged unworthy to hold even a little land under him, but once he is dead I shall, with luck, take over all the rights which were formerly his! I am not the sort of man whom you can delay with tricks. If you try to put things off any longer then your vineyards and olive groves will be destroyed. We shall

besiege your city, and when our siege engines appear no defence will avail you and it will fall. If you resist us and are captured then you will be treated as enemies, and will be tortured like him'.

After hearing this speech the inhabitants of Gerace were terrified. With his permission they went back to the town to inform their fellow citizens and discuss with them what to do. Once they had taken counsel, and being uncertain whether what they had been told by the count was derived from his concern to rescue his brother or really was the result of hatred, they sought an oath from the duke that if they released him, and he should escape his brother's threats, then never while life was granted to him would he have a citadel built within their town. Little realising the duke's cunning, they were deceived by this oath and left lamenting, for not long afterwards the count, who had not sworn, did what the duke had sworn not to do. After receiving the oath they led the duke outside the town and returned him to the Normans, many of whom were crying tears of joy. They promised, affirming many times over, that they would in future be faithful subjects to both of them.

(27) When the duke and count saw each other - as once Joseph and Benjamin - a sight they had hoped for but not expected, until fortune had turned to the better, they burst into tears and eagerly embraced each other. The duke swore to the count that he would no longer retain what he had previously promised him. Following the duke as far as San Marco, the count then went to Mileto. When the count's knights who were at Mileto heard that the duke was being held prisoner, they attacked and captured the siege-castles that he had established next to the town. Holding the knights whom they found there as prisoners, they garrisoned the castle which he had built at Sant'Angelo; the other, which was less strong, they destroyed. Thinking that she was a widow, the duke's wife fled to Tropea.

(28) Hearing of this the duke, mindful of this ill rather than of the benefits [he had received], was extremely angry and refused to fulfil the agreement as he had promised to his brother, until the *castellum* of Sant'Angelo and the knights who were being held prisoner were restored to him and he received justice for the injury done to him. The count wished to deprive his brother of any excuse for doing as he [actually] wished, and so he returned the knights and restored the *castellum* and everything contained therein. But, when

this seemed to have no effect in softening his brother's heart so that he himself should have justice, he gained entry to the *castrum* of Mesiano through the treachery of the inhabitants and sent his defiance to the duke. As a result, seeing the best *castrum* which he had in that region taken away from him and knowing that the whole of Calabria could easily be destabilised through this, the duke came to an agreement with his brother in the Val di Crati and shared Calabria with him. He then went to Apulia and the count returned to that part of Calabria which he had received. Since he saw that, because of the trouble which had previously occurred between him and his brother, he was ill-supplied with horses, clothing and arms, he went through the whole of Calabria to seek tribute from all the inhabitants. Coming to Gerace, he decided to establish a castle [*castellum*] outside but near the city, that he might extort more from its inhabitants since he felt them to be traitors and thus hated them more than other people. The people of Gerace objected on the grounds of the oath sworn to them by the duke. The count replied, 'Since half of Gerace is mine, the duke can observe the terms of his oath in his part, and not break them, but I am not constrained by any oath or promise which I have made in my part'. Realising that they had been deceived by the duke's cunning, the inhabitants of Gerace then abandoned their foolishness. They made an agreement with the count, and stopped him building the *castellum* which he had begun through money rather than arms.

(29) Now abundantly supplied with arms, horses and the other things he needed, and the land which fell to his share, the count made careful arrangements with his *fideles* and once again set off to attack Sicily with three hundred men. He took with him his young wife, although she was fearful and, insofar as she dared, reluctant. He came to Troina and was once again welcomed there by the Greek Christians who had received him previously, though not with such enthusiasm as the first time. Although the city was already a strong defended because of the mountain on which it is sited, for his own purposes he made it even stronger, and then leaving his wife there with a few men, he set off to attack the other *castra* round about. The Greeks are indeed the most treacherous of people. So one day, for the sole reason that the count had billeted his knights in their houses and they were thus fearful for their wives and daughters, and when the count had gone to assault Nicosia, they launched an attack on the few people who remained with the countess, reckoning that they could easily overcome them, and either drive them out or kill them, and thus lift their yoke

from their necks. But our men, although few, were very much on the alert and ready for action. When they knew there was trouble they sprang to arms, eagerly defending their lady and fighting for their own lives. They resisted fiercely until night brought the battle to a halt. The count was informed of what had happened by a messenger, rushed there as fast as he could and attacked the Greeks, though for a while he made little progress. With the city now cut in two, the Greeks built a barricade for their protection between themselves and the Normans. The Saracens from the neighbouring *castra*, who were about five thousand in number, were overjoyed to hear that the Greeks were fighting with our troops and moved rapidly to help them. Their assistance greatly benefited the Greeks.

Our men fought on the defensive for a long time, cooped up on the hilltop by their attack. They were unable to seek provisions through plundering raids as was their custom, and as a result they were seriously affected by hunger and by the heat of constant fighting and guard duty, which was not at all to their taste. Everybody was placed in a very dangerous position, for even the count had scarcely anything which might serve him, let alone his wife and soldiers [*armigeriis*], for food. For the time being they were kept within the city defending the hilltop, for if they went outside to forage they were visible to every eye. If he went out with a few men to try to plunder they would be captured; and so he was discouraged from doing anything by the danger threatening. As a result there was such poverty among them that nobody could get anything from anyone else, either by stealing or, in the event that feelings of kindness prompted generosity, by begging, or as a loan. All, from the count to the lowliest follower, were equally weighed down with want. They were so short of clothes that the count and countess only had one cloak between them, and they used it alternately, depending on which of them needed it more. However the Greeks and Saracens, with the whole country supporting them and furnishing what they wanted, were fed in abundance. They had no need to search for food or to roam around anywhere, since all Sicily provided the supplies which they needed, which were eagerly brought in from other areas. Although our men were in great want, and were becoming weaker with hunger, the strain of guard duty and the heat, they kept up their spirits and pretended to be cheerful, both in appearance and in speech, hiding their weakness in case they discouraged each other. But the young countess, although she could quench her thirst with water, did not know how to cure her hunger, except with tears and by sleep, for she had nothing else! The

enemy's attack prevented them from remedying their ever-present problem of lack of food (except in this way). But from time to time, weak as they were, they rushed to arms, even when they were not under attack, for their inborn fierceness sensibly manifested itself to prevent the enemy destroying them.

(30) Battle was joined one day, and to assist his men the count rode on his horse into the midst of his enemies. The latter recognised him, attacked him fiercely and transfixed his horse with their spears; both he and the horse fell to ground. They seized him with their hands, trying to drag him to a safer place in which they could wreak their vengeance on him, like a bull being dragged to be a reluctant sacrificial victim. In this perilous situation the count, mindful of the strength he once had, wielded the sword which he carried in his belt as though he was cutting a grassy meadow with a scythe, swinging it vigorously all around him. He killed a number of men, and was saved by the help of God and his own right arm. He made such a slaughter of his enemies that the bodies of the men he had slain lay round about him like trees in a thick forest uprooted by the wind. The remaining enemy retreated to their fortress. He himself did not wish to be seen hurrying away as if he was afraid, and so, with his horse dead, he walked back towards his men carrying the saddle.

Our men remained in this difficult position for four months. However the very harsh winter which that year struck this region proved to be the opportunity for their liberation and for their enemies' downfall. For because of the proximity of Mount Etna, which lies not far away in the same area, there is at some times a fierce heat from the burning of hot sulphur in the mountain, and occasionally at other times there can occur torrential storms, with high winds, snow, and hail. For this reason, when the cold wind was blowing our enemies, accustomed to warm themselves up with hot baths, tried to keep up their body temperature by drinking wine. Because of the wine, which usually sent them to sleep, their sentries watching the city started to become careless. When our men realised this, they themselves deliberately began to appear slack, and although they were [actually] keeping a very sharp watch, they omitted the usual sentry-calls, so that by this trick - pretending that they were not keeping guard - they could give their enemies a greater feeling of security. One night the count, who never avoided any duty, was keeping watch with his troops. The enemy forces were deep in sleep among their fortifications and in all that great multitude

there was no one at all bothering to keep watch. Under cover of a freezing fog which was ideally designed for his purpose, he [and his men] stole silently into their camp. Falling on the unprotected men sword in hand, they seized their fortress. Many of the enemy were killed and many others captured; the rest sought refuge from the invaders in flight. Porinus, who had been at the head of this treasonable conspiracy, was hanged along with his principal accomplices. His life was forfeited as an example to others. Many other people were punished in various ways. Our men secured great booty through this victory, and after being in such want they now had a surfeit of corn, wine, oil and everything else that they needed, so that this could rightly have been described with words similar to those of Elisha at Samaria, who after suddenly being granted abundance was inspired by God to say: 'tomorrow about this time shall a measure of corn be sold for a shekel in the gate of Samaria' [*II Kings*, vii.1], since the day before nothing could be got even for a great price.

(31) With matters arranged to his satisfaction, and the city of Troina now securely under his control, the count left his wife and troops there, and set off for Calabria and Apulia to secure replacements for the horses which they had lost. Although she was still a very young woman, his wife took charge of the *castrum* with great energy and care, going round it daily to see what needed to be done and ensuring that they remained on their guard. She encouraged the others whom her lord had left behind when he went away, and to ensure that they served her properly she spoke kindly to them, promising them many rewards when her lord returned. But she reminded them not to act carelessly now that the danger was over, in case something similar happened again.

(32) The count returned from Calabria and Apulia, laden like the busiest of bees with the supplies that were needed for his troops. and all his men rejoiced at his arrival. He brought them horses and all the other things which their duties required. A few days later, once the horses which he had brought were fully fit, he learned that some five hundred Arabs and Africans who had come from their homelands to aid the Sicilians as mercenaries were stationed at Castrogiovanni. Wanting to know how effective their forces were, he led his army out against them. He sent his nephew Serlo out ahead with thirty knights to make a demonstration in front of the *castrum* to encourage the enemy to sally forth to battle. He and the rest of his men lay hidden elsewhere in ambush. His men were deliberately to feign

terror and flee, to get the enemy to launch a fierce pursuit. He then hoped to charge them from ambush and secure an easy victory since they would be a long way from their camp. The Arabs who were in the *castrum* saw them coming from a long way off and stormed out to attack them, meeting them and driving them back in flight, inflicting such injury upon the knights that by the time that they had arrived at the place of ambush only two of them were still unwounded. When the count saw that some of the men he had sent out ahead had been captured and others laid low, he charged forth from ambush like a lion and rushed down upon his foes. Battle commenced; and both sides fought bravely. Finally, after a long and fierce encounter, God favoured the count and he gained the victory, putting the pagans to flight. He pursued the enemy for more than a mile as they fled. He returned to Troina laden with spoil, and the city was filled with rejoicing.

Wishing to do the Sicilians as much harm as possible he set out to plunder Calavuturo. Returning from there past the battlements of Castrogiovanni, he did his best to lure the Arabs out from the *castrum*, and brought back a great deal of booty. Desiring to find out about the more distant parts of Sicily, he went further afield, as far as Butera where he captured a many cattle, and then, bringing many prisoners with him, he made camp at Anator. The next day however, since because of the length of the march, the summer heat and the shortage of water he had lost a lot of horses, he retreated to S. Felice where he spent the night, and then went on to Troina.

(33) In the year from the incarnation of the Word 1063 it was announced that the Africans and Arabs, along with the Sicilians, had gathered a large army and arrived to wage war on the count. The count eagerly marched out against them with his men, and climbed to the summit of the mountain above the River Cerami in order to observe them better. He saw them across the river on another mountain top, looking at him in their turn. His men did not cross towards them, nor they towards his troops, and it was the Saracens who were the first to change their position, withdrawing to the camp where they were based. The count meanwhile withdrew to Troina.

So for three days, with the river in between them, they stared at each other, with neither daring to cross the river towards the other. On the fourth day the Saracens, not

wishing to seem to be withdrawing to the rear any longer, moved their camp and set it up on the mountain on which they had for the previous three been drawn up. Our men were in turn reluctant to allow the enemy to remain any longer so close to them without being attacked. They confessed to God with great devotion, in the presence of the priests, received penance, and then, commending themselves to God's mercy and trusting in His aid, marched out to attack the enemy. But when they had got halfway a message arrived that their enemies had attacked Cerami. The count directed his forces there, sending his nephew Serlo on ahead with thirty-six knights to enter the camp and [then] continue to defend it until he himself should arrive. He followed with one hundred knights - for he had no more. Serlo entered the camp, not waiting for his uncle's arrival within the walls, bursting through the gates like a raging lion and inflicting great casualties on them. Even though they numbered three thousand, in addition to the infantry - of whom there were an infinite number - wonderful to say, he put them to flight with his thirty-six knights.

From this fact we can see clearly that God was the protector of our side. For human agency would not have been able to accomplish so great a feat and one unheard of in our time, nor indeed even dare to try. If however we are amazed at this we should consider the words of the prophet, 'How may one man defeat a thousand?' [*Deuteronomy*, xxxii.30], for this we understand once occurred with the children of Israel, and we can, without lying, reply for us (as for them) with the words of this same prophet: 'Since their God punished them, and because of their sins the Lord shut them into a dungeon with the keys of his anger'. Their God, I say, not because they recognised him by worshipping him, but since, although they were unworthy by denying the existence of their Creator, they were however his creatures. Their God, I say, following that which we are taught by the Apostle, where he says: 'For the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him' [*Romans*, x.12] It may be that someone, analysing this sentence, tries to develop and adapt it, saying, 'If God is rich in those who invoke him, then it must follow that He is poor in those who do not invoke him'. But one must reply that, 'because God suffers neither increase nor decrease, now does His nature become greater or smaller, but He remains always in the same condition and can be equal in everything'. If however we talk about poverty, we must [therefore] conclude that it does not apply to Him but rather to those who show themselves unworthy, on whom however God will bestow the riches of His mercy.

The count meanwhile followed after his nephew with a hundred knights. Arriving at Cerami he realised that his nephew had already defeated the enemy. While he considered whether to press on to inflict an even greater defeat upon them some of his men became fearful. They urged that the victory which God had accomplished through his nephew was sufficient, and if they were to continue the pursuit then their luck might change and disaster might ensue. But when asked by the count [for his opinion] Roussel de Bailleul replied fiercely that he would never again help him, either here or anywhere else, unless he brought the enemy to battle. When the count heard this he was angry and sternly reprimanded the faint-hearted. He marched in haste towards the enemy's camp (where they had taken refuge) to offer battle to them. The latter took heart once more and, dividing their forces into two, charged forth bravely against our men. The count also split his forces, entrusting one division, the advanced force, to his nephew, Roussel and Arisgotus of Pucheil.¹ He himself followed with the other division, and, asking God for His aid, he marched thus into battle. However their first line, who wanted to seize a hill overlooking our men, avoided Serlo and our advance guard and instead charged our rear division which the count commanded. The Count and Roussel of Bailleul saw that their men were more scared than usual because of the truly terrifying numbers of the enemy, and so they sought to allay their fears with these words of encouragement: 'Keep up your spirits, you brave Christian knights. We all carry the emblem of Christ, and He will not, unless He is wronged, desert this symbol. Our God, the God of gods, is all-powerful; the man who does not trust in him relies entirely on his human power and the strength of his arm. [But] all the kingdoms of the world are subject to our God, and He will deal with them as he wishes. These people are rebels against God, and whatever power which [they have] does not come from God and will speedily be exhausted. They rejoice in their own courage, we however are safe under God's protection. Nor is it right to have doubts, for it is certain that with God going before us we shall be irresistible: hence Gideon defeated many thousands of enemies with only a few men, since he never doubted in God's help'.

They were hastening towards the battle when there appeared a knight, splendidly armed and mounted on a white horse, carrying a white banner surmounted by a brilliant

¹ Or possibly 'of Pozzuoli'.

cross fixed to the top of his lance. He rode in front of our line as if trying to make our men more eager for battle, and then he made a mighty attack upon the enemy just where their ranks were thickest. When our men saw this they were overjoyed, and cried out repeatedly to God and St. George. They were overcome with emotion and burst into tears at such a sight, enthusiastically following the figure in front of them. Many of them saw the banner with the cross hanging from the top of the count's lance [too], which could not have been placed there except through Divine power. Urging on his front line, the count fought with *Arcadius* of Palermo, who, fully-armed and clad in a magnificent mailed hauberk, was riding gallantly in front of his own troops to challenge our men. The count charged furiously down upon him, overthrew him with his lance and killed him, thereby terrifying the rest of his men. Among his own men *Arcadius's* military prowess was quite outstanding, and they believed both that nobody could resist him in battle nor that any weapon could penetrate the hauberk in which he was clad, unless perhaps a sneaky thrust could slide between two of the iron plates which were linked together over the joints - thus overcoming him by cunning rather than strength. Both sides now fought bravely, and our men, whose numbers were few, were so hampered by the huge enemy force with whom they were intermingled that scarcely any of them could break out of the melee, or not without hacking their way free with their weapons. But finally the enemy saw that our men were scattering the dense formation of pagans and Sicilians by whom they were at one and the same time both confronted and surrounded - just as thick clouds are broken up by a furious wind and the swiftest hawks scatter a helpless flock of birds, Exhausted by the long battle, they were unable to withstand our men's attack any longer and strove to flee rather than fight. Our men pursued them boldly and slew them as they retreated, and, now victorious, they killed some fifteen thousand of the enemy.

Laden with the spoils of victory our men now retired to the enemy's camp. There they made their quarters in their tents and took for themselves the camels and everything else which they found there. The following day they attacked the twenty thousand infantry who had fled to the rocks and crags of the mountain, killing most of them and selling the defeated survivors for a huge sum of money. But after remaining there for a while they were overcome by the smell of the decomposing bodies of their dead enemies, and recoiling from the stench they returned to Troina.

The count knew that the protection of God and St. Peter had granted him this great victory, and in token of his gratitude for the benefits which he had received from them he sent one of his men called Meledius to Rome, to present to Pope Alexander (who at this time was acting in a wise and catholic manner as St. Peter's representative) four camels which were among the booty he had seized from the enemy during his triumph, as a mark of his victory. The pope rejoiced, more from the victory granted by God over the pagans than from the gifts brought to him. He sent his apostolic blessing and, by the power which he exercised, absolution for their sins - provided that they were in the future repentant - to the count and to all those aided him in taking Sicily from the heathen and keeping what had been conquered for the Christian faith in perpetuity. By his apostolic authority he sent from the Roman see a banner; with this reward, and trusting in St. Peter's protection, they would in future be able to attack the Saracens in greater safety.

(34) The merchants of Pisa had been accustomed to make frequent visits in their ships to Palermo for the sake of trade. Wishing to avenge certain injuries which they had suffered from the Palermitans, they gathered a fleet from far and wide and set sail across the sea to Sicily. They reached a port in the Val Demone and sent an envoy to the count, who was staying at Troina. His message asked that the count ride with his army to join them at Palermo where they would assist him to capture the city, seeking no reward for themselves except revenge for the injury which had been done to them. The count was busy with a number of matters and was reluctant to go forth immediately. He sent instructions to them to wait for a little while until he had dealt with those matters with which he was at present engaged. The Pisans were however customarily more given to commercial matters rather than warlike campaigns, and were reluctant to wait in case they should thereby be deprived for some time to come of their accustomed profits. They decided therefore to make a vain attack upon Palermo and set sail for that place. They were however terrified by the huge number of the enemy and were reluctant to disembark from their ships, so all they did was to cut down the chain which closed off the port from one shore to the other, and thinking, in the way that their people usually did, that this was a great deed, they returned to Pisa.

(35) Seeing that summer was approaching, when the heat from the burning sun would prevent most of his cavalry from making plundering raids, the count planned to use this

unfavourable summer period to go across to visit his brother, the duke, in Apulia. But, to ensure that his wife and the knights remaining with her were not left without some means of support [*absque stipendiis*], he led his army to raid Golisano one day, Brucato another, and Cefalù on a third, and in this way filled Troina with a plentiful supply of good things. He repeatedly warned his knights to keep the most vigilant guard on the city, to take stringent precautions against an enemy attack, and, should they for some reason make a sortie, not to go very far outside the town. He then went to Apulia to plan with his brother what their next step would be. After a lengthy discussion between the two of them the count received a reinforcement of a hundred knights from him and returned to Sicily. He then set off with two hundred knights to raid into the province of Agrigento. On their return he ordered the bulk of his knights to go on ahead with the plunder, while he divided the remainder into two covering forces in case of any enemy attack on them, either from the front or, in particular, from the rear.

The Africans and Arabs wanted revenge for the defeat at Cerami and, if fortune should favour them, to recover something of the reputation that they had lost there. Learning from messengers that the count and two hundred picked knights had gone to raid them, they secretly placed men in ambush on the road by which they had to return. When our advanced force came to this place they charged forth from hiding, and our men, forgetting the manly bravery which they had in the past usually displayed, acted in a craven manner, hoping to escape from their deadly plight by flight rather than fighting back. They climbed up a mountain which was surrounded on every side by precipitous drops, braving the narrow and lonely path up in their quest for safety. The enemy meanwhile killed some of the knights who were guarding the booty and carried it off. The count, who was following behind, heard the uproar and flew to the scene. When he found out what had happened he was highly indignant and filled with rage. He did his best, yelling at the top of his voice, to summon his men back from the mountain which they had climbed, so that they might join him in exacting revenge from the enemy, but in vain. Finally he himself climbed up Monte Turone and addressed his men individually, each by his own name, to prevent them from making excuses for themselves at a later date. He attacked them in the following words: 'O you most brave men', he said, 'have you so exhausted your strength that having failed to accomplish any noteworthy feat of arms and sunk to the depths by deserting in the

most rotten manner, you cannot now pull yourselves together! Let us remember your ancestors, and the courage [*strenuitas*] which our race once used to have and [indeed] for which it was renowned, and avoid the scorn of those in the future. Remember how many thousand enemies you defeated at Cerami with fewer men than there are here now. Fortune favoured you then, it will act in the same way here and now as it did formerly. Get back to your former valour - by acting bravely and [gaining] the victory after your flight your reputation will be restored'.

He addressed them at length, saying these and many other things as well, and, as soon as he had rallied them with this sort of encouragement, he hastened to battle and engaged the enemy. Through this brave action the people in rebellion against God were defeated, and the stolen booty was recovered. After securing this triumph our men were [indeed] laden with the spoils of victory. They returned to Troina, joyful except for the death of Walter de Similia, a man highly-regard for his military exploits and, sad to say, in the flower of his youth. Fighting bravely, he had been struck down by the enemy and killed, and was greatly mourned.

(36) Duke Robert was in Apulia when he found out that his brother was being harassed by numerous enemy attacks in Sicily. He was not unwilling to take his share in the profits [there], but also wanted to play a part in the work, and so he raised a large army from Apulia and Calabria, and marched towards Sicily. Hearing of his brother's arrival, the count went swiftly and most joyfully to meet him at the Calabrian city of Cosenza. They then marched on [together], and in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1064 crossed the Straits of Messina with five hundred knights. They travelled unscathed right through Sicily, with nobody daring to do anything to stop them, until they came to Palermo. On the duke's instructions, which he afterwards regretted, they pitched their tents on a mountain which later became known as Monte Tarantino because of the number of tarantulas there. The mountain was covered with them, and they were a sore trial to the army. These tarantulas have a disgusting effect on both men and women, although to those who have escaped this it seems a source of humour. The tarantula is an insect, related to the spider, but whose sting is poisonous; all those whom it does sting it fills with a great and deadly wind. They cannot get rid of this wind, which bursts noisily and disgustingly from their behinds, and

unless a heated vessel or something else boiling hot is speedily applied, they are said to be in deadly danger. Some of our men suffered from this disgusting affliction, and finally they decided to change their campsite to somewhere which was still near the city but safer. There they stayed for three months, but the inhabitants of Palermo fought back bravely and they achieved very little against it, although they harassed it by plundering many of the neighbouring places round about it. Once they realised that they would be unable to conquer the city, at least at that time, they moved their camp [again] and went to attack Bugamo. The citizens of that *castrum* put up only a feeble resistance, and they razed it to the ground, bringing back all the inhabitants, including the women and children, as captives, along with their property. They then wanted to return to Calabria, and so they pitched their tents not far from the city of Agrigento, for this was their most direct route. The inhabitants of that city were far too confident in their own strength, and shouting noisily they burst forth from the gates and attacked them. But their rash assault was beaten off by their enemies, who as they fled pursued them right up to the gates of their city. The duke then left, and after his arrival in Calabria he brought the expedition to an end. He had the people of Bugamo, whom he had taken prisoner, brought to Scribla, the place which he had previously abandoned, and restored it by settling them there.

(37) In the year from the Incarnation of our Lord 1065 he destroyed the *castrum* of Policastro, and settled all its inhabitants at Nicotera, which he founded in that same year. Before Duke Robert went to Palermo and set his tents on Monte Tarantino next to that city, he and count Roger had previously stormed the *castrum* of Rogel [Rogliano?] in the province of Cosenza and imposed their rule over it. In that same year the duke went to attack a *castrum* called Ajello, [also] in the province of Cosenza, and besieged it for four months. However, since their enemies had pitched their tents very near the *castrum*, the inhabitants of Ajello made a sortie, in an attempt to hurl their slingshots and arrows further [into it], and both sides fought bravely, with each suffering casualties. Our men became extremely angry, and while they were attacking the enemy where their ranks were thickest and striving to break through them, Roger, son of Scolcandus, was hit by a javelin and thrown from his horse. When his nephew Gilbert tried to rescue him he too was unhorsed, and both were killed. The duke and his whole army were saddened by their deaths, for they were among the *familiares* who were most dear to him. He ordered that their bodies be

buried at St. Euphemia, where he had recently founded an abbey in honour of the Holy Mary, Mother of God; he gave their horses and other property to this same church for their salvation.

(38) Determined to conquer Sicily, Count Roger was anxious not to remain inactive, but travelled everywhere, spreading terror with frequent raids. As was his custom, he was always busy, so much so that neither strong winds nor the darkness of night could discourage him, for he moved from one place to another, taking charge of everything himself. His presence more than anything else terrified the enemy. They were so scared by his frequent and rapid movements that they thought him always to be there. But since, when the enemy did realise that he was absent, our men were gravely threatened by hostile incursions, he founded a *castrum* at Petralia, in the year 1066 from the Lord's Incarnation, building towers and carefully establishing bastions outside the gate. There he could, if circumstances forced him to, easily take refuge, and from there the places round about could be laid waste and more effectively and quickly brought under his rule. Indeed from there he could dominate the greater part of Sicily and impose his yoke and lordship over it. For the natural and customary inclination of the sons of Tancred was always to be greedy for rule, to the very utmost of their powers. They were unable to put up with anybody in their vicinity holding lands and possessions without being envious and immediately seizing these by force and rendering everything subject to their authority.

(39) Duke Robert possessed this characteristic even more than the others. Thus he attempted to make his nephew, Geoffrey of Conversano (his sister's son) render service to him for Montepeloso, as for the many other *castra* which he held from him; even though Geoffrey had not received either it or the others from him, but had gained them from his enemies through his own energy [*sua strenuitate*], and without help from the duke. When he refused to do this the duke set off with his army and went to besiege the *castrum*. Many warlike deeds were performed on each side, but finally the duke forced him to promise to do service from this *castrum* as for the others.

(40) In the year 1068, seeing that fortune favoured him in all that he attempted, the duke marched to besiege the renowned city of Bari both by land and sea. He was already close at

hand for it was not far from Montepeloso. Bari had formerly been in rebellion against the Emperor of Constantinople and allied with the duke, but the emperor had recovered its loyalty by making various concessions, and it was this which had led Robert to besiege the city. Since a corner of that city projects out into the sea, he placed himself with his cavalry on its landward side, blockading it from one shore to the other, with his ships spread across the sea and securely bound together with iron chains and so making a barrier [there]. Thus he had the city surrounded and prevented any escape from it on either side. He had two bridges built, placing one on the shore on each side [of the city], projecting way out into the sea and attached to the ships on each flank by ropes, so that, if the Bariots should direct any attack against the ships, then his soldiers could bring them help speedily and by a direct route. However the Bariots wanted to show that they were not intimidated by what the duke had done and that they held his siegeworks in contempt. They hung out their most valuable treasures on display and shouted insults at Guiscard. They trusted in [the strength of] their bastions and had no fear of losing their property. However such things did not discourage Guiscard from what he intended, but rather heightened his ambition and greed. The more they boasted of the riches within the walls, the fiercer his hope of gain became. His mind remained staunchly fixed on what he had begun, and he replied to them by laughing. 'Those things which you have shown me', he said, 'are mine, and, since you have presented them to me of your own free will, I thank you. Keep them safe for the time being. You will certainly lament their loss, for in the future I shall give them away generously'.

It was in this way that he encouraged his men to storm the city, and he inflamed them with his promises - the reward for their hard work and privations had been shown to them from inside the walls! He did his best to strike fear into his enemies by, at one and the same time, marching round the walls, throwing up ramparts, surrounding the city with earthworks, building battering rams and other machines which would be needed for the city's capture, marshalling his own men and harassing the enemy.

The people of Bari realised that the duke remained absolutely firm in his purpose (far more so than they thought he would) and that, surrounded as they were by enemies, there was no way that they could bring food into the city, which was burdened with a large number of non-combatants, namely women and children. Unable to do anything by force,

they resorted to treachery, and prepared a plot against the duke's life. They came to an agreement with a dubious character whom they paid to sneak out of the city and try to kill him with a javelin. This man, Amerinus, was seized by covetousness and, deceived by avarice. He hurried to carry out this wicked deed, which to him then seemed noble, for he had been misled by the great cunning of learned men. He took a javelin which had been dipped in poison and left the city. Throwing stones over the walls at the enemy with a slingshot, as if he was one of our own men, he avoided the pickets and approached our camp. In the evening, as the sun was fast setting, the duke was sitting at dinner in his bivouac, which had been built from branches and leaves. The assassin approached from the rear and made a hole between the branches of the wall. Believing that he had a clear idea of the duke's position, both by looking and by the sound of his voice, he hurled the javelin which he carried, but, although it tore the duke's clothing, God protected him and he was unhurt, while the javelin buried itself in the ground. The assassin's attack had been in vain, but believing the duke to have been hit (and now without his javelin) he realised that there was nothing left to him but to flee, which he did as fast as he could, racing back into the city. Once the duke's officers [*ministri*] were aware of this treachery, they rushed outside, appalled by what had happened. They posted guards and pickets round the duke with more than usual care, and, on his order, brought masons who at dawn immediately built a stone house for him.

(41) Count Roger had meanwhile remained in Sicily, and distinguished himself in frequent and warlike raids. Striving to make the land subject to himself, he cared little for any exertion, which for the most part caused harm to the other side [rather than to him]. He could not tolerate peace, and as a result he inflicted such damage that the enemy were terrified, and scarcely felt safe anywhere, even in their fortresses. They were afraid all the time, night and day, morning and evening, in cold weather or hot. Because of this the Sicilians took counsel among themselves, and decided to put an end to this rather than remaining any longer leading such an unhappy and fear-filled life. So they prepared to try the fortunes of war against the count, and while he was raiding near Palermo they suddenly attacked him at Misilmeri with a vast army recruited from every possible place. This was in the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1068. The count saw them from afar, and roared [his defiance]. He gathered all his men together in a body, and laughing the while said to

them: 'you noble men, born of noble ancestors! Fortune favours you, for the booty which you have long been seeking is now put in front of you, saving you further labour and tiresome travel to secure it. Behold the booty given to us by God! Take it from those who are unworthy of it. Let us use it, dividing it up as the Apostles did, to each according to his labour. There is no need to be afraid of those whom you have defeated on many previous occasions. If they have changed their leader they are still the same people, of the same quality and the same religion as the others. Our God however also remains immutable, and, if our trust in our Faith does not waver, then neither will He change His decision to help us to victory'. After saying this he carefully drew up the battle line and our men fought with the enemy. Our people behaved bravely, and the enemy were so comprehensively defeated that there were hardly any survivors from that great multitude to carry back the news of the disaster to Palermo, and our men were indeed richly endowed with the spoils of victory.

(42) It was the Saracens' custom to bring with them, when they went on a journey of any length, pigeons, which at home were fed on corn mixed with honey. The male birds were kept in cages, and when there was some change of fortune which they wished to make known at home, they wrote the news down on pieces of parchment [*chartulis*] which they hung round the birds' necks, or under their wings. They then let the birds loose, and the latter would hurry home bringing the news of what had happened to their absent friends and whether they were successful. The little birds could not read, but would hurry home, bringing the parchments with their messages, in search of the sweet honeyed grains on which they were so often fed. The count captured the cages with these birds along with the rest of the spoils. Dipping the parchments in blood, he released the birds, and thus informed the Palermitans of the misfortune which had occurred. The whole city was thunderstruck; the tearful voices of women and children rent the air and rose to the heavens. Our people rejoiced, theirs brought forth sadness.

(43) At this time a certain Greek called Argerizzus governed the city of Bari for the emperor. After discussing the place's situation with the other citizens, he set down its and their parlous position under enemy attack in writing and ordered a man to leave the city secretly by night and go to Diogenes in Constantinople. He was to let the emperor know that the city, which alone remained faithful to him, was harassed on every side by enemy

attacks and, unless help was brought speedily, would be lost. It had already been under siege for three years, and the citizens had finally become disheartened and were prepared to surrender. If he did not retain it there would be no further hope of recovering the province which had been seized by the enemy.

The envoy faithfully fulfilled his instructions, speedily accomplished his long journey and came to Constantinople. He went to show the emperor the letter he carried, and backed up the letter by exhorting him verbally to send help. The emperor read the letter he had received, and then had a fleet prepared which he sent to Durazzo. In command of it he placed Joscelin of Corinth, a man of the Norman race who held senior rank in the imperial palace, since he was both a mighty warrior and a cunning diplomat. He gave him a substantial force with which to bring help to the Bariots.

On the emperor's order the envoy then returned to Bari, and passing through the enemy entered the city secretly, just as he had left it. He revealed what had taken place and the signal by which they would know when the relief was getting close. He instructed them to make a similar signal to those who were approaching, namely that they should light a fire on one of the bastions, to ensure that the relieving force came to the right harbour. The Bariots were overjoyed by this message, and anticipated what needed to be done (for to someone who wants something nothing can ever be done too fast). They lit the fire the next night and noisily rejoiced, singing and shouting, more than they were accustomed to do. Our men wondered what this portended; a number of possibilities were canvased and there was widespread discussion, but the more experienced men realised the truth, that they were expecting a relief force by sea.

Count Roger of Sicily had however arrived with a large number of galleys [*plurimo remige*] to assist the duke his brother, at the latter's request. He was fierce as a lion in battle, but was also ruled by prudence and was [thus] granted fortune's favour. He arranged this matter cunningly - ordering a patrol boat to go out every night to see if the expected ships were approaching. Lo and behold, on one of these occasions, in the middle of the night, lights were seen, shining like stars on the topmast of every vessel. When this was reported to the count he hurried out to meet the enemy with his squadron as fast as possible,

reckoning that he himself had enough ships [to do this]. Seeing the enemy closing in, the Bariots, who had been rushing around with joy, realised that they could do little to counter this. The count saw that he was close to the ship of Joscelin, the enemy leader, which was distinguished from the rest by having two lanterns, and ordered his men to attack it. A fierce battle was joined, and during it some of our men rashly boarded their ship. Such was their weight (with their armour), all on one side of the ship, that they fell overboard and a hundred and fifty men in armour were drowned. The count still fought and defeated Joscelin, the latter was taken a prisoner on board his ship, and he returned gloriously and triumphantly to his brother.

The duke meanwhile was extremely anxious, fearful that he might lose his brother in this battle, for he himself was unable to help him, and he was the only brother left to him, the others being now dead. When it was announced that the count was returning safe and victorious, the duke alleged that he would not believe this until he had made certain with his own eyes. Once he had seen that he was safe, he burst into tears. The Count sent Joscelin, who was splendidly garbed in the Greek fashion, a captive to the duke, as a present.

So the Bariots, whose hopes had been dashed and were unable to withstand their enemies any longer, surrendered and made a treaty with the duke, in the year of the lord 1071. The duke, whose wish had now been achieved, thanked his brother and his whole army; then, arranging matters in the city to his satisfaction, he sent his brother ahead to Sicily and a little while afterwards set off with his main army for Palermo. He stayed at Otranto for the whole of the months of June and July. There he had a hill levelled, to make access to the sea easier, and loaded the horses on board ship. His activities quite terrified the people of Durazzo who were afraid that he and his army would cross the sea and attack them. So they sent a mule and a horse as presents to him, using this as a pretext to do some spying.

(44) At about that time Costa Condomicita, who had previously obtained Stilo from the duke through trickery, was reconciled with him and returned the *castrum* to him, for he was afraid that the duke was only pretending to sail to Sicily and would actually turn aside to

besiege Stilo. He explained that what he had done had been the result of provocation and the injuries which he had received. For the duke had appointed a certain Costa Peloga as governor [*stratigotus*]. The latter grew very proud and inflicted many injuries on noble men and women, not even sparing his own relations. Among other things he had a noblewoman called Regina, who was Costa Condomicita's grandmother, arrested and savagely beaten, because he wished to extort from her a golden hen and chicks which she was alleged to possess. Costa Condomicita was detained in the duke's service at Isola, near Crotone. When he was informed of what had happened, he thought over the injury done to his grandmother and then, feigning illness, he requested the duke's permission to return home to be cured. He arrived back in Stilo on Christmas Eve. Hearing of his arrival, the governor sent a servant to him with a gift of fish, and asked how matters stood with the duke. Costa Condomicita, as if he had no evil intent, concealed his anger and sent back his thanks. But he had not forgotten what he was plotting, and after he had dined he went round in secret to the leading men of the town, outlining his grievance about the injuries done to him and his grandmother. They replied that what had happened to him had been his own fault - for they knew that the duke [relied] on his support and ability. He did not make any excuses, but said that he was sorry for what he had done, and promised that just as he had previously given it [Stilo?/his loyalty? to the duke - *the text is defective here*] so he would now, if only he could obtain their assistance, he would retract it. As a result many people pledged themselves to him, and he passed a sleepless night, binding everyone he could to his cause. At daybreak all those who did not know of this plot were busy in church praising God, as they should have been on that particular day. But Costa Condomicita and some thirteen men who had been watching from the windows, carrying swords beneath their cloaks, went on his signal to the gate of the citadel [*castellum*]. The doorkeeper, who suspected nothing, opened the gate to them as though they were friends. He and his allies went in and entered the governor's lodgings, seizing any weapons they found there. They rushed in as fast as they could, intending to seize the governor as he went to church. However, hearing yelling all around him, the governor realised that he was being ambushed and jumped through a window. Falling headlong, he tried to run away and escape but was seized by the citizens, all of whom loathed him, and brought back. Costa Condomicita wanted to spare his life since he was one of his blood relations, but the people condemned him and put him to

death, and thus he expiated by his sufferings the cruel punishments which he had [previously] inflicted on others. Those whom he had imprisoned were set free, and the inhabitants openly abandoned their fealty to the duke. The result was that rebels caused a great deal of trouble in a number of places in Calabria for nearly six years.

We have set down this story so that those in authority may be warned not to allow the loyalty of their subjects to be alienated by unworthy servants.

(45) After gathering supplies and preparing everything which was needed for the expedition, the duke followed his brother, whom he had sent on ahead, and came to Catania where the count then was, on the pretence of attacking Malta and of not being concerned with Palermo. But instead, urged on by his brother, he went from there with a large force of cavalry, infantry and ships, and came to Palermo. His ships blockaded the city from the ocean; he placed his brother the count and those who served in his train on one side while he himself threatened the walls from the other flank with the Calabrians and Apulians.

For five months the enemy kept up a keen and vigilant defence of the city. He and his brother were nonetheless determined to attack it, and he watched eagerly for an opportunity to storm it. Both were inflamed with equal enthusiasm; they went everywhere, drawing up their men, organising everything, threatening the enemy, providing their own men with a great many things and promising them more, usually in the lead, and never abandoning what they had started. After most skilfully constructing siege engines and ladders to scale the walls, the duke stealthily entered the gardens on the sea side where the fleet was, along with three hundred knights, intending to storm the city. He instructed his brother to do the same thing on the other side where he was. On his signal the men he led acted speedily and forced their way in with a great cheer. The whole city rushed to arms and rushed to their defence posts, even though they were terrified by the assailants' noise. A section of the wall which they had not been worried about had been foolishly left unmanned; Guiscard's men placed their ladders there and scaled it. The outer city was captured, and the iron gates were opened for their comrades to enter. The duke and count, with their whole army, took up position inside the walls.

The inhabitants of Palermo were thus outmanoeuvred, and realising that the enemy was now inside the walls and to their rear they fled back into the inner city. Night put an end to the battle. Next morning a truce was agreed and their leaders came to talk to the two brothers. They told them that they refused absolutely to abandon or to act in breach of their own faith. But provided that they were sure that they would not be forced to do this, and that they would not be oppressed with new and unjust laws, then, since their present situation left them with no choice, they would surrender the city, serve them faithfully and pay tribute. They promised to ratify this on oath in accordance with their law.

The duke and count rejoiced and gladly accepted the terms which were offered, in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1071. After securing this they first, as faithful observers of Scripture, which says: 'But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and all shall be added unto you' [*Luke*, xii.31], restored to the catholic faith the church of the most holy Mother of God, Mary, which had in the past been the cathedral but had been later profaned by the impious Saracens and turned into a temple of their superstitious belief. They enriched it with an endowment and church ornaments. They recalled and restored the archbishop, who had been expelled by the infidels and who, although he was a Greek and a timid man, had been celebrating the Christian religion as best he could in the poor church of St. Cyriacus. Then, after strengthening the citadel and arranging matters in the city as he wished, retaining it in his own hands, he conceded to his brother in return for his help the Val Demone and all the other parts of Sicily which they had conquered, to hold from him, as he had promised he would, nor did he seek to be false to his promise.

(46) While these things were going on Serlo, son of Serlo and nephew of these two leaders - of whom we made mention previously - remained at Cerami on the orders of the duke and the count to protect the region against raids from the Arabs who were at that time still garrisoning Castrogiovanni. For, with the consent of the duke and the count, half of all Sicily had fallen to his share and that of Arisgot of Pozzuoli, and had been divided between them. The latter was their blood-relation, and they were both men equally distinguished by their skill at arms and in counsel. However the Arabs stationed at Castrogiovanni were greatly threatened by Serlo's energy [*strenuitas*] since he launched many attacks against them, and they strove to encompass his ruin, both by force of arms and by treachery.

Hence, in order to deceive him more easily, a certain Saracen called Brachiem [*Ibrahim*] made an agreement with Serlo, and each verbally took the other as his adopted brother, as was the custom of their people. Then he arranged with his own people to betray him, and to deceive him [further] sent Serlo suitable gifts and friendly messages, among which he told him this: 'let my adopted brother know that, on such and such a day, in a deliberate act of vainglory, a group of only seven Arabs will probably be making a foray into your land to plunder'. When Serlo heard this he thought it was ridiculous, and took no precautions at all, not bothering to summon anybody from the neighbouring *castra* to help him, while he himself rashly went out to hunt.

But the Arabs who had prepared this treacherous scheme left Castrogiovanni with seven hundred cavalry and two thousand footmen, and placed them in ambush in places of concealment not far from Cerami. They sent a group of only seven knights, as Brachiem had told Serlo, out to plunder to draw Serlo out of Cerami. Serlo heard the uproar coming from the cries of the inhabitants of the district as he was out hunting. Since he was unarmed he sent a messenger to Cerami to bring back his armour and to summon his men, meanwhile, spurred on by the noise of the attack, he went to see what was going on. When it was reported to him that seven horsemen were out plundering, he trusted his adopted brother's information more than he should have done. Seizing the armour which had been brought out to him, he pursued them rashly and rode into the ambush. Seeing his enemies charging from ambush and hearing the horrid clash of arms at his rear, Serlo refused to rely on flight, even though he had only a minimal force with him, but he and his few companions made their way to a rock, which from that day onwards was known as 'Serlo's rock'. He climbed up it, placed his back to it like a wall and, with no help in prospect from any direction, stood at bay. Finally he was struck down and killed, and of all those who were with him only two, who lay hidden among the bodies of the dead, survived. Serlo was disembowelled and the Saracens tore out his heart and are alleged to have eaten it, so that they might share in the bravery for which he had been famed. They sent the severed heads of those who had been slain as a present to their king in Africa, but Serlo's head was placed on a pike and carried through the city squares, with a herald announcing that the man who

more than anybody else had threatened Sicily had been conquered by his enemies; with nobody else like him surviving, Sicily could certainly rejoice at his death.

But when this news was announced to our leaders at Palermo, the whole army was devastated. The count was stricken with grief at the loss of his nephew. The duke wanted to put an end to his brother's lament and urged the count to hide his sorrow and behave like a man: 'Women are allowed to be sorrowful', he said, 'we however should put on our armour and take revenge'.

Thereafter both brothers acted separately and strove to forward their own individual interests, except that when it was really necessary and one was asked by the other, each of them went to bring help to the other. We shall now put an end to this book and commence another, and we shall change our style as the subject matter dictates, as we follow each of them, sometimes separately and at others acting together.

Book III

We have indeed promised to write about the difficult tasks undertaken and the famous victories won by the two brothers, Duke [Robert] Guiscard and Count Roger of Sicily - sometimes acting together, sometimes separately, depending on what they did. If I possessed a flow of clear poetic talent then it would be an exciting project, with the pen of a distinguished philosopher writing of matters which are in themselves celebrated and clearly remembered. This would avoid the crystal-clear stream being shunned, even by those who are thirsty, when they reach out to draw from it, because of the rank smell of a homely vessel. But not all of us use golden pipes to provide drinking water, for we are prevented by poverty, and sometimes lead pipes are quite adequate to let one taste sweet water. Thus the reader who tries to examine the sequence of past events should give his attention, not to elaborate literary embellishments, but rather to the splendid victories of men who deserve to be remembered. For those things which are included are discussed below, not for my own or for your glorification, but for that of the men who have earned this praise by their deeds.

By the prince's command the time for writing is at hand. I have previously failed to drink of this stream through my neglect. Now the pressing haste of this same prince prevents me from returning to the spring from which I may draw the clear water that there flows forth.

(1) Thus Roger, that most celebrated prince of Sicily remained on the island when, after the capture of Palermo, the army was disbanded by his brother the duke, who left Sicily to tend to his own affairs in Calabria and Apulia. On his brother's departure Roger retained a small section of the army which he persuaded to stay, partly with money and partly through promises, and the duke agreed to this. He pressed forward the conquest of Sicily by attacks on every side, and his perpetual raids caused a lot of damage. Although previously, when he had shared his conquests with his brother, he had acted with the utmost valour; now that he knew that everything which he gained fell to his share alone, he was like a raging lion, eager for plunder, impatient of peace, appearing everywhere, the first to be present when some especially dangerous mission was undertaken, and refusing to abandon any operation

once it was set in motion. In the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1072 he established two castles [*castella*], one at Paterno to threaten Catania, the other at Mazzara to ravage the district round about.

Meanwhile the duke went from Sicily to Calabria, and there he set up a citadel in Rossano, a city in that province, much to the anguish of the citizens.

(2) Gisulf, the Prince of Salerno, the brother of Sichelgaita, Duke Guiscard's wife, wanted to subject all the coastline from Salerno right down to the port called *Fici*, Areco and S. Euphemia to his rule. Hearing that part of this area was daily being invaded by Guiscard, he began to behave in a most unfriendly manner towards the duke. He treated those of his men whom he could capture with brutality, and did not conceal his hostility to our people. At first Duke Guiscard, who had promised friendship to him, bore this patiently. He sent envoys to arrange a meeting, to persuade Gisulf to adopt a more prudent course than the one he had adopted. But when he realised the evil that was lodged in the prince's heart, and that the more he tried to be conciliatory the worse the prince's behaviour became, then he renounced the treaty between them and prepared for inexorable hostilities towards the man who had proved to be hostile to him. Since trouble had [also] arisen between him and Richard, Prince of Aversa and he feared that Gisulf might go to the latter's aid against him, he concluded a peace treaty with him; and among its provisions was that Richard would aid *him*. He then set off with a large army to besiege Salerno.

(3) The Amalfitans loathed Gisulf - for indeed they feared that they would be punished by him, because they had murdered his father, and they resisted his attempts to subjugate them by force. They were asked by the duke to render naval assistance to him while he besieged the city. The leading men, with the agreement of the other citizens, hastened to talk with the duke. He did his best to secure an alliance, through cunning deals with those who were prepared to agree, and with terrifying threats to those who were not, and finally he forced them into it. If they were protected by the duke against Gisulf, it was agreed that Amalfi would become subject to him by hereditary right. The duke promised them everything which they sought. Then, leaving part of his army to besiege the city, he took the rest along with him, as well as the men who had previously come to [talk to] him, and

went to Amalfi. The city was handed over by its citizens, and on receiving it he had four citadels [*castella*] built there and garrisoned by his soldiers. He then returned to Salerno with a strong force of Amalfitans.

(4) The duke blockaded Salerno with his ships and infantry, and had a cavalry force on hand as well. He launched frequent and terrifying attacks upon the city from every side. He sapped its strength - he and his men prevented anybody from bringing in food; and indeed he induced such a famine that those trapped within were eating cats or mice, or so we have gathered from those who were present there.

Abelard, the son of Count Humphrey, the duke's nephew, had gone to Salerno to help Gisulf, for he hated the duke because the latter had deprived him of his birthright. But under pressure of hunger he secretly left Salerno by night and went to the city of Santa Severina in Calabria, to make attacks on the duke from there. However the duke sent a message to his brother in Sicily, instructing him to go to besiege their nephew Abelard at Santa Severina, which he did.

He himself relentlessly continued the attack upon Salerno, and in the end he forced it to surrender. He allowed Gisulf, who was his brother-in-law and the uncle of his children, to leave and go wherever he wished. The city however he retained in his power, furnishing with citadels and defences as he thought fit.

(5) Unable to bear inactivity, Guiscard neglected no task when there was hope of some advantage, and he went to besiege his nephew Abelard at Santa Severina, where he had sent his brother on before him. Finding that his brother had on his instructions besieged the city from one side, he established himself on the other. Abelard made daily sorties from the city, challenging our men to battle, and with fierce and frequent battles between each side many warlike exploits took place.

Seeing that he was not accomplishing much against the city, the duke discussed the matter with his men and established three [siege] castles [*castella*]: he entrusted one to Hugh Falloc, another to Rainald de Simula and the third to Herbert, Hugh's brother, and to Custinobardus, brother to Rainald. Then he disbanded the army and retired to Apulia,

where not long afterwards he captured Count Herman, Abelard's brother, in a battle at Canne. He sent him to his brother Roger to be imprisoned in the tower at Mileto.

(6) While Herman was being made to suffer in chains in a dark dungeon, Abelard was moved by pity for his brother and came to an agreement with the duke, surrendering the city to him in return for his brother. The duke gave his word that when they came to Gargano, for so the *castrum* was called, his brother would be set free and returned to him, but in fact he intended a piece of cunning trickery. Heedlessly, and paying no attention to his deceitful words, Abelard abandoned the city and surrendered it to the duke. He stayed with him for a quite a long time, but waited in vain for his brother's release.

When he arrived at Rossano he spoke sharply with the duke because the affair had been so protracted, and urged him to hasten on to Gargano. Then indeed the duke revealed his trick: for he said that he would not be going to the place which he had specified for at least seven years! After denouncing the cunning proposal which had deceived him and having long arguments with the duke, Abelard went angrily to Apulia, and he and his men took over the *castrum* of Sant'Agata, intending to foment rebellion. The duke knew that he would try this, and that he would do his best to rouse the whole of Apulia against him, so he raised an army, followed him, and laid siege to it. But the *castrum* was very strongly defended both by nature and man-made fortifications, and after persisting with the attack for a considerable time he became worried that his men were suffering more losses from the brave resistance of the garrison than was justified by the progress made against the *castrum*.

However, Abelard's distress at the loss of his brother was growing by the day; for the chains which bound his brother pressed just as much on him, at least in his mind. As a result he repeatedly tried to improve his brother's lot through negotiation, but the only way he could obtain his brother's release was by the surrender of the *castrum*, and he would then be allowed to leave. This was [indeed] how he recovered his brother, and they both of them took their leave. They put to sea and sailed to the Emperor of Constantinople, and there they ended their days.

(7) Roger, the renowned prince and conqueror of Sicily, remained on the island, and in every enterprise he behaved valiantly, for no pleasure could hold him back, nor make him avoid the enemy. Indeed neither want, hard work, enemy threats, the prospect of battle at any moment, the need to be on one's guard nor bad weather discouraged him from his task. The greater the difficulties which faced him, the more his resolution hardened. This resolve was, as is the way with men, fixed in his heart by desire for rule, and he strove to conquer rather than be conquered. Although he wanted success everywhere, he was particularly anxious to gain possession of Castrogiovanni, for he knew that if he could secure this place he could then use it as a flail to thrash all Sicily into obedience to him. With this aim firmly in mind, in the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1074 he established a castle on Monte Calascibetta and furnished it with knights and all the other things it needed, which placed Castrogiovanni very much under threat.

(8) Saracens from Africa, from the household of King Temin and acting on his instructions, prepared their ships and letting the wind fill their sails, set off on a piratical attack against the coasts of Sicily and Calabria. Hence on St. Peter's eve in June [28th June] they landed by night at Nicotera. They caught the citizens unsuspecting, because they were heavy with wine and sleep after joyfully celebrating that festival, as was their custom. They slew some while they were half-asleep and captured others. They dragged the women and children, and everything else that could be taken away, as plunder to their ships, and they burned down the entire *castrum*. Then they rowed off hurriedly out to deep water. The next day they returned to the seashore and threw from their ships some boys and people of the feebler sort in return for a ransom from friends who wished to redeem them. Some of the people were therefore freed; the others (all those who seemed to have some use) they took away. Thus, letting the wind fill their sails, they set out joyfully to see once again the homeland from which they had come.

(9) In the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1075 they boarded their ships and set off to try their fortune [once again] in Sicily. Since the previous year at Nicotera everything had gone just as they wanted and greed and avarice made them extraordinarily insolent, they thought (in vain) that things would turn out the same way. They sailed round the island and eventually landed at Mazzara. They left their ships and, making a fierce

attack, broke into the city - however there was a castle within, which they attacked bravely and laid siege to for some eight days.

The count was informed by a messenger that the castle was being threatened by his enemies. He secretly entered this castle at night with an armed escort and, charging forth from the gates without delay, encountered the enemy in the city square in front of the citadel. Acting with his customary bravery he emerged the victor, slew many of them, put the others to flight and chased those who were left right down to the sea. Mazzara was thus snatched from the enemy by the count's valour. The few who escaped took the dreadful tidings back to Africa. Hence fickle fortune, by first tricking men with a lucky success, mocks the unwary by deceiving them with the hope of repeating earlier events.

(10) The count then left Sicily to go to Calabria where he was called for urgent reasons. He appointed Hugh of Gercé, to whom, because of his valour and because he was from a distinguished family from the province of Maine, he had given Catania, along with his daughter by his first wife, to look after Sicily. The count ordered him not to leave the city and pursue the enemy, even if Bernavert [*Ibn-el-Werd*] who was staying nearby at Syracuse should launch a raid against him, for he feared the latter's cunning stratagems. But the mind of the young man was burning with warlike ambition and he was anxious for praise. Ignoring the fact that this had been forbidden him, he started thinking that he might perform some noble deed to enhance his military reputation before the count returned. So he went to Troina, and from there brought the latter's son Jordan along with the count's military household to Catania.

Benarvert then gathered together a huge army of picked soldiers and, moving by night to a place of concealment not far from Catania, lay hidden in ambush. Thirty knights were sent on ahead to Catania who challenged the men there to battle and then drew them away from the city by flight. Hugh and Jordan were keen to fight and, to encourage their men for battle, made a vigorous sortie from the city. They sent out thirty picked knights to scout in case of ambush and they themselves hurried carelessly on behind. The scouts out in front passed the ambush place but, when those who followed behind had reached that spot, the ambushers sprang out and charged down on their enemies like a whirlwind. The

people who had gone on ahead saw the ambush in their rear and realised that they would be unable to rejoin their comrades since the enemy was in the way, so they fled to Paterno and thus escaped. Our men endeavoured to fight bravely, but Hugh, the count's son-in-law, was killed while Jordan, unable to hold the enemy back, escaped with a few men to Catania. Benervert returned joyfully to Syracuse with his booty.

The count meanwhile heard news of this from a messenger and hastened to return. In the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1076 he raised an army against Bernavert, attacked a *castrum* called Zotica [*Judica*], razed it to the ground, killing the men and sending the women to be sold in Calabria. But the prince sought a fuller revenge than this, for he was extremely upset and depressed by the killing of his son-in-law, and this could be cured only by exacting full retribution. So he marched into the district of Noto destroying everything in his path and burning all the corn (for it was harvest time and it could not be carried off). He had this done far and wide all over Sicily and as a result there was in this year a great shortage in the island:

So famine arises, since his revenge took away the bread.¹

- (11) When a thousand years from the Incarnation had passed,
 And to this thousand another seven times eleven had been added,
 The count led an expedition in the month of May.
 The ships set sail on the deep, with the breeze blowing them on,
 The trumpets sound, the deep resounds with joyful brass:
 Alexander the Great's fleet was not more beautiful.
 The wind laughs with fortune; warlike youth rejoices;
 Learned men sing of this; the drums resound.
 They journey to attack Trapani; there is no swell at sea.
 Now the count, with warlike expression, crosses with his cavalry
 Both foothills and the steep sides of rocky mountains,
 Escorted by a large force of brave young men.
 When the sun touches their shields, shining with gold,

¹ In the original this line of verse is a dactylic hexameter.

And their gleaming helmets, it dazzles the sight of those who watch.
 Every mountain becomes brighter than the shining stars
 The horses chafe, and as they neigh the mountains echo back.
 The wind blows softly and a thousand banners flap.
 A fearsome sight, they hasten on to Trapani;
 Their enemies see them and tremble at the press of weapons.
 By land and sea the trumpets ring out, inspiring fear,
 And the noise rises up to Heaven. The enemy below shakes in fear.
 They gird the city round about, both by land and sea.
 The sailors, concealed by their sails, drop anchor;
 Some of the cavalry cut down branches, others pitch their tents
 Often they run to battle where they fight bravely.
 The enemy is determined to defeat them but is decisively beaten.
 There is lamentation in the town after the conflict,
 And our men cause the lyre to sound.
 The enemy doubt their strength and finally seek peace,
 The count agrees. They surrender the town and submit to his authority.
 They agree to a treaty in their traditional way, but they also lament.²

From this same city a peninsula jutted out a long way into the sea, from a narrow neck with sea on each side, and on it were rich pastures. The cattle and other animals of the city customarily grazed there in time of war. Our men could thus see them across the neck of the peninsula as they went out there every day, in the traditional manner when enemies were around, and with the greed ingrained in their people they began to think whether they could find an opportunity to get their hands on them.

The count's son Jordan set out to fulfil this plan, for he was certain that by doing so he would gain a greater military reputation than anyone else. So finally, as he was the rashest of men and greedy for praise, he took counsel with those of his household but failed to inform his father, and selecting one hundred knights he embarked one evening on board ship. During the night he invaded the peninsula. They landed from the ships and went

² In the original these verses are in the metre known as trochaic tetrameter catalectic.

ashore, and before it grew light he concealed himself in ambush in a hollow on the peninsula. As night ended and the land became bathed in bright sunlight, everyone in the city went out as was customary and spread out through the peninsula in search of pasture. From where he was hiding in ambush Jordan watched his prey going further and further from the city, and then he sprang like a lion from his lair and attacked. He went right up to the city gate gathering his prizes, and hastened to threaten the town itself by landing men from his ships. However the citizens, seeing the peninsula unexpectedly invaded by the enemy, rushed to arms: they launched a tremendous attack, and rashly followed their enemies at least ten miles from the city in their attempt to rescue the captured beasts. When he saw how far they had gone from the city, Jordan abandoned his prizes and charged like a savage lion at the enemy. Battle was engaged and both sides fought with the utmost ferocity, but Jordan, who was a most successful general, raised the morale of his men with rousing words of encouragement and through his bravery killed many of the enemy, put the rest to flight and emerged the victor. He pursued the fugitives, spreading death among them, right up to the city gate. He thus returned to his ships taking all the booty he wanted, and returned unharmed and in triumph to his father. It was the terror caused by this exploit that forced the city to surrender, as indeed we mentioned above.

After taking the city, the count enforced his rule by the construction of a citadel and other defences, surrounding them on all sides by towers and bastions, and furnishing them with soldiers and all the supplies that were needed. But the surrounding district was filled with strong fortifications and very well defended, so it continued to resist him and the war continued. The count remained indefatigable, and launched numerous raids in his attempt to extend his rule over the whole area. In a brief space of time he besieged a dozen of the principal *castra* and forced them to surrender to him. He distributed these, and everything which pertained to them, to be held by his knights from him. Then he thanked his army for the service which it had rendered him and disbanded it, while he himself took a short break from his labours at Vicari.

(12) At that time a Saracen called Bechus [*Abu-Bekr*] possessed Castronovo and was dwelling there. He was a man of great, indeed overwhelming, arrogance; and this and his unpredictability, as well as various insults he had inflicted upon them, had rendered his

subjects unfaithful. One day he lost his temper with a certain miller, summoned him to his presence and had him shamefully flogged. The latter pretended that this was a matter of little importance to him, but in fact he was determined to have revenge for such a dreadful dishonour, and he quietly mulled over various schemes to pay him back for the ill-treatment which he had received, either with some damage to his property or, even better, some physical injury. And so it turned out, for he secured accomplices from among his fellow-subjects and one evening he rushed up and seized the rock which overlooked and commanded the whole *castrum*. Sending an envoy to the count at Vicari, he informed him that he had done this through loyalty to him and asked that he hasten to his assistance. On receiving the messenger the count was overjoyed and immediately set off there with all the men that he had. Meanwhile Bechus tried to persuade the miller with all sorts of bribes and promises to desist from his endeavour and be reconciled with him, but when this did not work he then attempted to storm the position, but also in vain.

The count arrived nearby and confirmed the miller's loyalty to him with promises of very generous treatment. Since there was no direct route from where our men were by which they could reach him, the miller let down a rope from on high and hauled some of them up to him. Seeing our troops joining the miller on the rock, Bechus lost all hope of keeping the *castrum*. Indeed in his terror he simply abandoned it, and fled away, taking with him everything which could be carried. The citizens made peace with the count and received him inside the *castrum*. Once he had obtained the *castrum* the count put it in a state of defence and organised it as he wanted. He granted the miller his freedom and furnished him with all sorts of rewards, to provide a good example for others who might attempt similar schemes.

(13) In that same year a Greek came to the duke in Apulia, claiming to be Michael, the Emperor of Constantinople, and seeking his help to recover the palace from which, so he said, he had been driven out on Good Friday through the disloyalty of his men and forced by violence to become a monk. The only reason for this had been because he had agreed to the marriage of the duke's daughter to his son. To prevent his son from having any hope either of regaining the palace or of begetting offspring from the wife he had married, the boy had shamefully been made a eunuch and sent into lifelong exile. Another man had been

installed in the palace in his place, but he had not been selected from one or other of the families descended from the ancient emperors, to whom the dignity belonged by hereditary right. The Greeks however were afraid that if heirs who were born from a wife from our race were to grow up in the palace, then an opportunity would be created for our people to come there freely; and a people who were customarily devoted to luxuries and self-indulgence rather than to warlike exercises would be trampled under foot by the valour [*strenuitas*] of our men and made their subjects. They were careful to keep the duke's daughter shut up under strict guard to prevent her marrying any powerful man. Since she had once been married to the hereditary emperor and had worn a crown in the palace, some hereditary right to that palace might be claimed by the person to whom she was married.

Michael however had, or so he claimed, left the monastery in which he had been forced to become a monk, abandoned his habit and fled to Apulia. On his arrival there he was received by the duke with imperial honours, and on the duke's order was meticulously greeted with the imperial processions and ceremonies throughout all the towns of Apulia and Calabria. The duke was doing all this quite deliberately, but not because it was his intention to restore him to the palace. He had undoubtedly heard that his son-in-law had been made a eunuch; hence the chance of having children by his daughter, to whom the palace would belong by hereditary right, had been lost. He was in fact making this effort with the secret intention that when, acting in Michael's name and with the help of the latter's supporters, the Greeks had easily been defeated and he had reached the imperial palace, he would seize the crown, sceptre and imperial regalia and make himself emperor. However he promised that he would aid Michael, and kept the latter with him for two years and more, giving him the honours which he had first received, until everything which was needed for such a great undertaking had been made ready. There were also a number of people with the duke who had served in the palace in the time of the Emperor Michael and who had known the latter by sight, and who knew that this man was very little like him. However they alleged, although untruthfully, that the two were identical, in the hope that the duke would rewarded them for this. The duke was unsure whether or not he was genuine, but when mutterings arose among his men about this matter, the project was continued without diminution . He always finished what he had started, and so since he made no public doubts that this was true, he claimed that there was nothing to be doubtful

about. His support of this view was quite calculated, and he won over his men, since he had no wish for them to urge him against the enterprise.

- (14) Arranging matters as follows, but keeping his plans secret,
 He sweats over the preparations to win Byzantium for himself
 From lands all about he seeks raw materials:
 Nothing is overlooked, no matter, however humble, ignored,
 Things which were formerly despised now seek to play a useful part.
 The most skilful woodcutters are summoned;
 The carpenters' art is brought together from lands all around.
 Trees are cut down and fall: they are cut up and the woodworkers
 Plane the planks. The smith brings iron to the fire.
 The anchor is forged, a mould for nails is prepared.
 The hull of the ship is built, fastened together by the nails.
 Some men fill the gaps in the lower part with down,
 And then others hasten to cover this over with liquid pitch.
 Some stitch the sails, others devote their attention to the ropes.
 A whole fleet is made ready, not just the one ship is prepared.
 Our hero is eager and determined to make its numbers grow.
 With everything ready and the ships equipped with care,
 The fleet sails over the liquid sea to Otranto. ³

(15) Meanwhile, as these matters were being dealt with, in the year from the Lord's coming 1078 the Count was besieging Taormina. He constructed twenty-two little castles, connected one to another with ditches and ramparts, and blockading it from the sea with his naval forces, preventing access to the *castrum* from any quarter, should the enemy wish to bring anything in or take it out. One day the count was seen going from one camp to another along a rocky mountain slope with only a small escort. A group of Slavs [*Sclavi*] concealed among the myrtle thickets charged out while he was traversing a narrow defile, and had not a man called Eviscardus, a Breton, heard the clash of arms and placed himself between the count and his enemies, then the count's enemies would, so they say, have

³ Leonine dactylic hexameters.

vanquished him. But God, who alone sees into men's hearts, knowing the prince's virtuous purpose and the good deeds he had already accomplished and those which he would perform in the future, brought him another fate than that which seemed probable. For indeed it is written: 'There is no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel, against the Lord' [*Proverbs*, xxi.30].

(16) However in rendering his lord such loyal service, Eviscardus was killed, and while our men were rushing to arms the enemy escaped across the slopes of the rocky mountain. So the death of Eviscardus helped God to save the life of the Count. The count however rewarded his loyalty in the proper manner; his body was buried honourably and (not undeservedly) the count gave many gifts to the poor and to holy places for the redemption of his soul.

Marching with a force of infantry over both hills and valleys, the count allowed nobody of that superstition between the mountain which is called *Gibel* by the inhabitants (but which we call Etna) and Troina to remain unpunished.

At his burial there was great lamentation by the soldiers,
 For by his merit the Breton was dear to everyone.
 May the reward for his faithfulness be to obtain peace
 Since by his death the count was granted life!
 In showing himself so loyal how different he is from Judas:
 The latter, by selling God, and afterwards hanging himself,
 Purchases death and is branded with his treason:
 Eviscardus gave himself to the enemy's knife for another
 His hope was to save his lord and gain reward for himself.
 These two ought not to be considered equals in virtue.
 One was a traitor; the other strives to save,
 He will receive an angel's wing, the other will go to hell. ⁴

(17) Fourteen of the ships which they call *golofri* which had been sent from Africa by King Thimin to range the sea as pirates, came to Taormina. They were spotted there by our

⁴ Leonine dactylic hexameters again, cf. c. 14.

men at dawn, anchored some way out to sea. However, our ships were not ready to go to sea, for their tackle [*armamenta*] had been disembarked. So the count sent out a scout [*latro*] to inquire who they were, the reason why they had come, and whether they had done so as enemies or in peace. He warned them that if they had committed any harm within his jurisdiction, be it great or little, or if they should [in future] dare to attempt any such thing, then they would not escape him unscathed.

They denied, under solemn plea and oath of their law, that they had plotted anything evil against those places under his rule, but claimed that they had been sent on the order of King Thimin to practise piracy at sea against those whom they might meet; and if it should be necessary, they were ready to enter his service. They were told, at a friendly meeting on the first of their ships, that if they were lacking food or other supplies, these would be supplied through the count's generosity. They agreed to this suggestion, and a treaty was agreed. They prepared to come nearer shore, but then the wind changed, blowing their ships (with them on board) out to sea, and they were quickly driven out of sight of our men.

So the wind prevents the approach of those whom he invited;
And the breeze stops him from giving what he promised to give.

(18) But the count was determined on those plans hitherto denied:

He lays siege and fights, the fortress resists as best it can.
Battle is given: the count strives to continue his action:
Although he is bound by care, yet nothing tires him out.
He urges and encourages, courageously threatening his enemies;
He gives [rewards], promises to give them, and forgoes no effort.
In encouraging his fellows, he is shown to be the first,
And he is a consolation to his brothers when there is a battle,
He leads from the front and is the last to return home.
Otto [goes out] to scout ahead, then Elias,
Arisgot is third, Jordan refused to be
Far behind: the count's conduct has given heart to his fellows.
He has issued an order to stop the enemy seeking food;

Thus are they defeated. Our men rejoice in guard duty.
 The enemy are denied the water which is abundant on the mountain,
 From nowhere do they gain supplies; and then their stocks diminish,
 Thus the enemy's hunger grew, and he did not offer battle,
 His courage shrinks. The enemy, already almost defeated, does nothing.
 He feels safe where a wall surrounds him,
 But is scared to take a step outside to give battle.
 When bread runs out, the starving populace is overcome.
 So the count is summoned, he gains the *castrum* for his own;
 The walls of Taormina are humbled beneath the laurel tree.
 A treaty is drawn up, the enemy laments in receiving their enemy;
 But although they lament, they dissimulate and do not reveal
 Why they lament to our men, which is because their enemy was joyful.
 If fortune is thus different, it is however one and the same:
 Sadness is the lot of one side, rejoicing is seen among the other.
 It was the sixth month, in which the fiery sword is visible.
 He began the siege in Pisces, and ended it as Leo rises. ⁵

- (19) Having received such assistance from the Divinity
 Roger had no wish to appear ungrateful.
 He began to ponder how he might make suitable recompense.
 Gathering masons from wherever he could find them
 He laid the foundations of a church in the city of Troina.
 He concentrates his efforts on this, and so he soon completes it.
 Sections of roof were placed over the church;
 The walls were painted in various colours,
 And it was consecrated in honour of the Virgin Mother.
 It was endowed with many gifts, lands and tithes:
 It abounded in ornaments and all sorts of rich things.
 The bishop's throne is raised up with its symbols.

⁵ Again, leonine dactylic hexameters.

The holy clergy are increased in number, so far as revenue allows.
 Vessels for the altar, and more than enough vestments for the clergy:
 Candlesticks, crosses, books, caskets, thuribles;
 Bells to call the people are fashioned from metal:
 They give out a sweet melody, ringing beautifully together,
 The holy clergy sing hymns of divine praise.
 The bishop sows the Word of holy law among the people:
 Divine worship is increased by more believers.
 To whom should these matters be attributed except so great a prince?
 Who has restored the holy law where it was formerly in ruins;
 Whose power did all this and set this law in place?
 We shall continue the course of our book; for now this is enough,
 To labour matters further would be tedious.
 Another pen shall describe it, if anything is left to tell.
 Rejoice, O happy city of Troina! Give to that name proper praise!
 In you divine religion was first restored!
 Messina has been linked [with you] and serves the same saint.⁶

(20) In the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1079 the people of Jato, as obstinate as the mountain on which they lived and detesting the yoke imposed by our people, refused to pay the service and tax [*census*] which had been agreed. There was quite a multitude of them settled there, for there were some thirteen thousand families. The count sent envoys to them, first soothing them with honeyed words, then concentrating their minds with threats, to stop them rebelling against him. When this accomplished nothing he brought up his troops and attacked those whom he was unable to subdue through bribes or menaces, to make them submit through the use of force. But the mountain on which they lived was guarded on every side by a sheer drop and the climb up was impossible except for one narrow path which had been artificially carved out to allow the citizens to enter and leave. This entrance was protected by a gate placed at the top of the path and by a wall which extended for some distance on either side. Since the considerable size of the mountain

⁶ Trochaic tetrameter catalectic.

prevented him from a very tight blockade, he set up bases in those places which he felt to be the most suitable for launching raids against the enemy.

Now the people of Jato, as if they were fighting for dear life, made thorough and energetic efforts in everything they could, leaving nothing undone. They went the rounds of their fortifications, strengthening those positions in which they had less confidence, and thereafter staying tirelessly at their posts. Since they kept their herds and flocks with them in secret places and caves on their mountain, safe from hostile incursions, and hence they were not afraid of them being captured by their enemies, they remained even more stubborn. But the more that the count saw them remain vigilant in their own defence (and as a result he realised that he could do them no real harm), the more fiercely his anger burned. Far from being deterred by the task, he immediately strove to use every possible means to secure success. He left the Sicilian knights, on whom he had previously bestowed properties in those parts of the island which he had conquered, at Partinico and Corleone, ordering them to keep up the pressure on the people of Jato. He himself went with the Calabrians to besiege Cinisi, which had also rebelled against him. And so at one and the same time he conducted two separate sieges in the same area, and maintained them both most effectively. He moved very shrewdly from one to the other, eagerly pursuing and encouraging them, dealing with every matter himself, leading attacks on the enemy, frightening them sometimes through feints and sometimes by raids, cheering up his own men by generous gifts and even more generous promises to enhance their loyalty to him, and he continued to do the enemy damage.

(21) It was the sixth month; summer marks the campaigning season:

One looks for ways to do damage, the other seeks to make him retreat.

They inflict injuries and receive them. So they pursue each other;

The enemies remain at each others' throats, both equally determined.

It was harvest time; this proves a problem for their weary troops.

The crops are burned: this event perturbs the people of Jato.

He now attacks the men of Cinisi, and their situation becomes grave .

They take counsel, preparing to save the harvest;

But when force fails, they seek to secure this through diplomacy.

They meet the count and try to appease him,
 They make a treaty; they abandon trickery as their defence,
 Their crops are saved and they are reconciled to the count.⁷

(22) Meanwhile, news of the reputation for valour [*strenuitas*] of Count Roger of the Sicilians came to the celebrated Count Raymond of Provence. Hearing of this, he sent envoys of a rank suitable for such an important matter to this great prince, asking that he might be joined in marriage to Matilda, the count's daughter by his first wife, a young but very beautiful girl. The count acceded to this request, and the agreement was subsequently confirmed by oaths from both parties. Once the nuptial day was decided, the count rewarded the envoys who had come with many gifts, as was the custom. They then made a speedy return to their lord and informed him that his request had been granted. He was extremely pleased by this, for the tidings of her beauty which he had heard from them left him burning with love and desire for her - and when he was informed of the date for their marriage he was at pains to bring forward the day of his departure for Sicily.

On his arrival the count received him with proper ceremony. The agreements were renewed and the girl's dowry was recorded in a chirograph document. The betrothal [*sponsalia*] was celebrated in the presence of bishops from both parties, with prayers by the bishops and holy and catholic rites. The bond between the young man and woman developed little by little, and then (as is customary) grew immeasurably after their first night together.

The marriage was celebrated with elaborate and costly ceremonies, and afterwards the bride's father kept his son-in-law with him for quite some time. But eventually he showed his affection with generous gifts, as the occasion demanded, both to him and to those who accompanied him, one for each of them according to what he knew of their rank, and with the ships now ready and the sea calm, he took leave of him and his daughter. With sails very carefully set and a following wind, they quickly returned to whence they had come, taking the bride with them.

(23) The daughter forsook her father, and was not ashamed to leave her mother;

⁷ Leonine dactylic hexameters.

She delights in her union with a foreign count.
 She leaves the land where she was raised and somewhere else gains her,
 Many mothers suffer this fate when their daughters grow up,
 Nor is the one who has been brought up gone into the possession of a friendly
 relative.
 She is now under the authority of a foreigner rather than her father.
 Neither do I condemn this overmuch, although I portray such things;
 Nor do I avoid it by omission, since she does this joined to a husband
 [Whom] she loves and by entering into a fair and charming agreement.
 For those whom the law has joined, no sentence can put asunder:
 That issue should grow, because by not doing this the race would perish.
 A virgin is given forth and joined to her first man,
 By such an event two may become as one flesh.
 Divine law orders this, not anything strange.
 Scripture shows us those things which the future brings:
 She who is joined as a wife in a stronger love
 Thinks less of her father - she even thinks less of her mother,
 Hence the lineage is preserved by this law of marriage.

(24) Meanwhile Robert, the most celebrated Duke of the Apulians and of Calabria was daily encouraged by Michael, the man who had fled to him, to turn his attention to the enterprise which he had begun against Romania, and in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1081 he came to Otranto. Money had been allocated for the expedition on the scale necessary for such an undertaking. He sent fifteen ships on ahead across the sea to capture a town so that, when he and the rest of the army followed, possession of this would, in the event of enemy attack, protect the ordinary people who made up the bulk of the expeditionary force. The advance party set sail and reached Corfu during the night. The island was reconnoitred from some distance away at sea but, not liking the look of the considerable number of the enemy whom they saw there, they did not dare to disembark from the ships. Instead they hastened back to the duke and announced that things looked favourable provided that there was a larger army available.

The duke was very pleased by this news, led his troops on board the ships and hastened to cross over with his whole fleet as fast as possible. Many of his friends who were staying behind, to whom he had consigned the duty of guarding Apulia and Calabria, were much upset by the fear that he and those whom he had with him might be lost, and indeed their feelings moved them to open tears. Meanwhile some of those knights who were travelling with him were so dreadfully beset by apprehension of what the enterprise might bring that they trembled abjectly, as though they were afflicted with some sort of fever. For the duke was extraordinarily bold and determined in military matters, and this was abundantly clear to many of the army, even if all the rest kept it quiet. It could in particular undoubtedly be realised from this fact; that he dared to undertake a war with only a small force against so populous an empire and an emperor so well provided with troops, against so many thousands of enemies, and he expected to defeat them. (Those who were present during this affair have testified that he had with him no more than 1300 fully armed knights). However, while to the observer's eye the forces which now assisted him in this affair were, in terms of numbers, by no means sufficient; in his opinion ingrained warlike spirit seemed to provide sufficient strength, even though the forces of the enemy were more numerous. He maintained an air of confidence which raised the spirits of his men, whom fear had rendered downcast. He encouraged them through gifts and by making promises that they would in the future gain both property and treasure if he did successfully conquer that land - provided that they chose to act boldly with him. By doing this he made them keener to take part in his expedition and to brave the dangers which had seemed so terrible as to discourage them.

Thus, once appropriate forces to give hope of success in such a great enterprise had been prepared, the ships were carefully rowed out to sea, where a gentle wind blew and filled the sails, taking them to a port suitable for disembarkation. Part of the fleet then landed at a port called Herico. After this it went on to a suitable part of the coast, where the River Vojutza flows into the sea. The duke took possession of this stretch of coast and disembarked. As soon as his feet touched dry land and he had looked around this pleasant area, he is alleged to have said to his men: 'Bravest of knights, and not unworthy heirs of the reputation of your predecessors; for this is an inheritance equal to you, though to acquire it you will have to resort to arms! Don't be frightened by a vile and feeble mob,

however numerous it may be, or the noise of a horde of enemies; but take encouragement from the appearance and fertility of the enemy's land, which you will acquire as your own hereditary possessions. This beautiful and fertile region will belong to you after the battle, provided that you act bravely'.

Saying this, he captured by storm a fortress called Casopoli on the island of Corfu, and another fortress [*castrum*] which took its name, Corfu, from the island itself, and he made them and the whole island subject to him. Then he set out and immediately went to besiege a city called Avlona, near the Campi Emazi, since it lay very close to the coast where he had landed. Hearing of the duke's arrival, the citizens were absolutely terrified by his presence, and having little confidence in their own strength they surrendered both themselves and their city to his rule. A fortress called Canna, which was very close to the city, surrendered shortly afterwards. Its garrison were also unnerved by the duke's presence, and particularly because Avlona, which was a better provided with troops, had already capitulated.

(25) Acknowledging that fortune is being very good to him,
The duke directs his attentions to many other places.
He besieges the walls of Durazzo from every side,
With a well-equipped army.

So, the city trembled; besieged by its enemies,
Its strong walls have lost faith in themselves;
Fearsome missiles land on the citizens:
Bringing death to them, one after another.

But though terrified by their enemies,
The Greek people are worn down even more by hardship,
Nor do they take revenge for severe wounds,
For fear has sapped their strength.

A message is sent to Constantinople,

Saying that the enemy is outside in battle array
 They entreat them to come to the rescue
 Or they will be conquered by their enemies.⁸

(26) After receiving the unwelcome news of the presence of these enemies, the emperor summoned his army by written messages [*chartulis*], despatched throughout his empire, and prepared to march with thousands of men against an enemy who were less numerous, though better furnished with valour [*strenuitas*]. He believed that the huge number of his men would enable him easily to overcome our troops, and so he sent a message to the Venetians to join him at Durazzo with a powerful fleet. His plan was that if, after he had defeated them, our men tried to get away by sea, the Venetians would engage them in a naval battle, and once they had been intercepted they would speedily perish. The Venetians fulfilled his orders faithfully, and three days before the target date the emperor had set for them they were spotted by our men as they approached some distance away out to sea. At the sight of them our troops rushed to arms, and they immediately hastened out to begin the battle at sea with their enemies. A bitter encounter continued throughout the whole day.

In the cool of evening, as the sun was setting and seeming to sink into the ocean waves, our men's valour was prevailing over the enemy. With their strength exhausted, the Venetians promised to give in and asked for a truce until dawn, when they would make a treaty with the duke on his terms. Our men rashly agreed to what they sought, and as a result the battle was broken off by both sides. Our men returned to their port.

Tricked by this false promise, our men spent the night exulting, as though they had really won a victory over the enemy, while the Venetians, left unmolested until the morning, brought ample supplies to their ships, and protected by the silence of the night made repairs. The worst of their deception was that they cunningly took two or three men from each ship and furnished them with stones and javelins to hurl, preparing themselves for further combat rather than surrender.

At first light, quite oblivious to this deceit, the duke sent some leading men from his

⁸ The verse form of the original is called the Second Asclepiad: used by Horace in part of his *Odes*. The first three lines of each stanza are in Asclepiad form, the fourth line is a glyconic.

army to receive the surrender which they had promised to make (saving all their personal property), and ordered that they be brought to him. But, far from surrendering, the Venetians met those who came to them with weapons. When they launched a serious attack against them our men declined battle, for they had come unprepared, and the Venetians reached the port of Durazzo safe from our forces and with virtually no damage. Since they had now had free entry to the city, the sailors consulted together with the citizens and the citizens with the sailors, and they spent the whole day in discussion. More or less in the middle of the night, they donned their arms by moonlight. The ships moved rapidly away from the shore, and at the trumpets' sound they set out to offer battle to our men. Our men rushed to engage them and both sides fought fiercely. But the Venetians, using hidden pipes, spread artificial fire, the sort called 'Greek fire' which water cannot extinguish, onto the sea, and they treacherously set fire to one of our ships, of the type called a 'catt', as it floated on the waves. But once our men had realised this trick they launched an attack, and despatched a ship of theirs, a very expensive one, to the bottom. So, with one loss set off against another and each side easily gaining some revenge, both sought to break off the battle, for our men were scared of their stratagems and theirs were afraid of our valour. The Venetians returned to the city's port, from whence they had come, our men remained where they had first lain.

(27) It was now early October. The next day at dawn, while part of our army was preparing to go out in search of food, they saw some distance away banners waving from the tops of spears, and realised that this was the emperor advancing upon them with a vast army. There was confusion and clamour in the camp. Some people were terrified, but others, stouter of heart, encouraged the less valiant and gave them strength. The duke saw that battle was imminent, and decided to force his army to fight more fiercely for him by removing all hope of flight. So he burned all his ships which lay safely at sea, to prevent the cowardly avoiding the savage battle with which our men were threatened by fleeing to them in the hope of being carried home. Approaching very close to the camp of our men - indeed only about four furlongs [*stadii*] lay between them - the emperor pitched camp. His army established itself all around, but that day nobody from their side tried anything against our men or anybody from our men against them.

The following night the duke took the first watch and his son Bohemond the second, from midnight until it grew light. In the dawn twilight next morning the duke and all our men rose up and heard the celebration of the Mass and hymns to God with great devotion, humbly confessing their sins to the the priests, and being strengthened with the mysteries of Holy Communion. Then, with the battle lines drawn up, they advanced slowly and in tight formation to battle. The emperor came to meet them, and such was the multitude crowding around him that it seemed that there was no hill high enough to allow the more distant parts of his army to be visible from it. The English whom they call Varangians had requested the emperor that they form the vanguard, for these men enjoy being in the forefront. They started the battle by making a fierce attack in two columns, and at first the situation was very unfavourable for our men. But one of our squadrons attacked them on their unprotected flank and this gallant attack forced them, wounded and terrified by the assault, to flee towards the church of St. Nicholas which was nearby. Looking to save their lives, some of them, indeed as many as could fit in, entered the church, while others from this great multitude clambered onto the roof which then collapsed under their weight, thus hurling them on top of those down below. In the crush both groups were suffocated. Seeing the Varangians, in whom his chief hope of victory lay, totally defeated and our pursuing forces resolutely advancing against him, the emperor was terrified and chose flight rather than battle. The entire Greek army, abandoning its tents and all its other equipment, fled, with every man trying to outdo the other in their haste to run away. Our men were thus victorious, but the duke restrained them and they did not pursue the fugitives very far. They returned to the enemy's camp and the duke took up residence in the emperor's tents; those of the others who got there first seized the best quarters and booty.

Seeing that winter was threatening - for this was the month of October - the duke then marched to the River Daemoni and built his winter-quarters there: these took their name from him and the place was called Monte Guiscard. From there however he marched out daily towards Durazzo with armed parties, and frequently caused a lot of damage with his raids. Unable to resist his pressure, a number of castra in this province concluded agreements with him, surrendered, and joined his side.

(28) There was at that time in Durazzo a Venetian of noble birth named Dominic, to

whom had been entrusted the guard of an important tower. Through idle conversation with him, the duke realised something of his disposition, and then cautiously began to explore various deals through which the city would be betrayed. He was careful to do this through intermediaries, and only very occasionally in person, to prevent the treachery that they were concocting being discovered by other people. The Venetian's mind was riddled with greed and easily corrupted by those making promises which played on both his avarice and lust; thus he took the slippery path from good and honest intentions down to much worse ones. Finally, in answer to his request, the duke promised to give him the hand in marriage of his shapely and beautiful niece, the daughter of his brother Count William of the Principate, along with her hereditary property. The duke used this bribe to get what he wanted, and both parties swore oaths, Dominic to betray the city, the duke swearing to give him his niece. The deal was to be concluded in the very near future by the betrayal of the city to those outside.

Now certain of obtaining the city, the duke made wooden ladders to climb the walls, while to assist him the Venetian placed rope ladders on the wall for the enemy scaling party. And since as is written in Scripture: 'No enemy is more dangerous to the wicked than the enemy within', ⁹ the opportunity to break into the city was given to the enemy by the man who ought to have been its defender. The whole city was roused by the fearful din of frequent shouts in the name of 'Guiscard' and trumpets blowing. The citizens rushed to arms, unaware that their enemies were already within the walls and had taken station in the highest tower, and all their efforts to expel them were in vain. They made three attempts at this but their resistance was unsuccessful, and finally they were forced to come to an agreement and surrender, bowing their necks to the duke's rule.

(29) After gaining the city and making the arrangements he wanted, the duke entrusted rule over it to Fortimundus de Rosana; he himself set out with his army to conquer the entire province and make it subject to him. Hence, coming to a city called Castoria which refused to submit to his authority, he laid siege to it, enclosing it from every side, and

⁹ This does not in fact seem to be a Biblical quotation.

remained there attacking it for some time, uttering frightening threats and also trying to win it over with bribes, and he inflicted a lot of damage. Three hundred Varangians were stationed in that city, sent there to guard it by the emperor, and their work and vigilance contributed not a little to the defence. But when they saw our men persisting in the attack, and fearing that siege engines would appear which would hasten the city's fall (after which they foresaw that any treaty they might obtain for themselves would be on much worse terms), they made an agreement to surrender. As a result of the city's capture the whole province round about, with all the nearby fortresses within its jurisdiction, were conquered. The duke received all those who came over to his side with the utmost ceremony and rewarded them with presents, and he paid a great deal of attention to their advice in everything which was done. He did this as a quite deliberate policy, with the intention that when others heard about it they might the more easily brought over to his side. Meanwhile fear of him made the whole empire including its capital city, tremble.

(30) While the duke was thus engaged in Romania, and Count Roger of Sicily was busy looking after his brother's affairs as though they were his own in Calabria and Apulia, that foe to the Christian name Benarvert was causing a lot of problems in Sicily. For this prince of Syracuse and Noto was a cunning man, experienced in military matters, brave and crafty, saying one thing but keeping his plans to himself and doing another, and all the Saracens who were still putting up a fight in Sicily relied on his leadership. He used all sorts of cunning ploys against a certain pagan called Benthumen whom the count had appointed as the governor of the city of Catania, seeking to persuade him to betray the city through many offers of bribes and property. Now this pagan met his co-religionist and, blinded by avarice and forgetful of the oaths of fealty which he had made to the count, agreed a date, and treacherously allowed Benarvert and a host of his men into the city at night, thus earning for himself for ever the name of traitor. What had happened here resounded through the whole island. The Christians were greatly embarrassed because such a wicked and treacherous deed had been perpetrated among them; however the Saracens rejoiced far and wide at the mockery such ignominy had brought to the Christian name.

The count's son Jordan, Robert de Sourdeville and Elias Cartomensis then raised an army and set out for Catania. Elias was a convert from the Saracens to the Christian faith,

and was afterwards brutally slain by his own people at Castrogiovanni. Since he refused to deny that faith and become an apostate, he thus ended his life most admirably as a martyr. Hearing of their approach from the scouts whom he had sent out everywhere to keep an eye on matters, Benarvert drew up his forces for battle and hastened to meet the enemy outside the city. He placed his infantry, nearly twenty thousand strong, on his right flank a little way in front of the enemy, while he himself with his mounted troops remained on the left wing awaiting them. Our men, who had only a hundred and sixty knights, did not hesitate but marched into battle, calling on God to assist them. When the infantry still stood fast and refused to give way, even on their third attack upon them, they turned away from them and charged the cavalry. After a fierce battle and suffering many casualties, the latter turned and fled. Our men pursued them, killing the stragglers, and driving them right back to the city gate. Benarvert barely escaped during this flight, and there was huge slaughter among the infantry. Our men then pitched their tents outside the city and besieged it closely. Benarvert fled the city secretly at night, along with the pagan traitor, and took refuge at Syracuse. But when this pagan traitor demanded the reward he had been promised, Benarvert had him beheaded, in case he betray Syracuse as he had Catania.

(31) A certain ordinary knight [*gregarius miles*] called Ingelmarius had served the count for a long time. The count wished to reward this service properly, for such was his custom, and he saw in him a man of great and warlike valour [*militaris strenuitas*]. For this reason, and despite the latter's low birth, he gave him in marriage the widow of his nephew Serlo, who had been killed in Sicily by the Saracens, along with all the dower which belonged to her. She was extremely reluctant, for she was a woman of most distinguished ancestry, the daughter of Count Rodulf of Boiano, but the count did this precisely so the social status of the knight among his companions might be, at least to some extent, enhanced. The marriage was solemnly celebrated at Geraci, a quarter of which came to him from his wife's dowry. But now Ingelmarius abandoned the good conduct of his previous lowly career and forgot his humble birth. He thought that the nobility of his wife rubbed off on him and that he was now the equal in birth and status of her former husband, and so he boastfully sought for himself more than was proper.

The count had begun to make Geraci defensible by building a keep [*turris*] there.

Ingelmarius carried this work on for a time, while concealing what he was doing, and he made this keep exceedingly strong. He curried favour with the people of Geraci through bribes and flattery, and made a treaty of friendship with them, confirmed by oaths on each side. When this was announced to the count, the latter realised his presumption, and was afraid that in the future his confidence in the [strength of the] tower might make his behaviour even worse. So he ordered him to cut down the keep to the level of a simple private house, and rebuked him for daring to act as he had without asking his permission. But Ingelmarius had been plotting with the men of Geraci who had promised openly to assist him, and forgetful of the benefice granted to him, as is the way with low-born people, he shamefully chose not to obey the count but to rebel against him. When the count discovered this, he ordered the men of Geraci to destroy the keep and hand Ingelmarius over to him as a prisoner. They refused to do this, not through loyalty to Ingelmarius but because their people all hate those of our race and prefer there to be discord among us rather than peace. The count observed legal forms and sent his disavowal from that time forth [*diffidentia in posterum*] to his former vassal [*homo*]. He then raised an army and went to besiege Geraci.

Ingelmarius retained the inhabitants of Geraci as accomplices in his folly for quite a while through the adroitness of his flattery. But, when they saw that they were being pressed closely both without and within by the count, they began to tire of this rash scheme and grow mutinous. Ingelmarius realised this, and was terrified that they make an agreement with the count and hand him over to him. So he left the town and made his escape. His wife was abandoned to the count's mercy, but because of the latter's regard for his nephew, whose wife she had been, she was allowed to keep all the property which her [first] husband had brought to her. The count was reconciled with the Greeks and regained Geraci.

(32) In this same year, after stockpiling large sums of money, the count recruited skilled masons from all over his lands and started building operations at Messina. He laid the foundations of a citadel [*castellum*] and towers there, and appointed competent officials to supervise the workmen in this undertaking. Furthermore he himself went to inspect matters, and through his personal encouragement got them working faster; thus in a short time he

completed a keep [turre] and an immensely high rampart, both of admirable workmanship. Since he reckoned that this was, more than all the other cities which he held, the key to Sicily, he was careful to keep it strictly guarded under trustworthy officers. He also built, on a lavish scale, a church in that city dedicated to St. Nicholas, which he generously endowed with towers and other properties, appointing clerics to serve there, and making it suitable to be the seat of a bishop; however he united it with the cathedral of Troina.

(33) Meanwhile, in the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1082, that most famous of princes Robert Guiscard, Duke of Calabria and the Apulians, who had by his gallant conduct conquered all the land of the Bulgarians, received anxious letters from Gregory, Bishop of the Roman See, which begged and prayed that he would come to the help of the Holy Roman Church. For, as a result of certain disputes between them, Henry, the Emperor of the Germans had come to Rome with an army. After a long siege, fortune aided him and he broke into the city, made an alliance which won over the leading men of Rome, and closely besieged the Pontiff who had taken refuge in a certain tower called the Tower of Crescentius. What is quite shocking to say, he installed another man in his place in the see of St. Peter, namely the Archbishop of Ravenna, named Humbert [*sic*], ¹⁰ an unheard of thing and quite against the Sacred Canons! Gregory was so closely blockaded that nobody was able to gain access to him.

The duke would have preferred to devote all his energies to the enterprise which he had begun. But when he heard of the disastrous situation of our Holy Mother Church, and that the lord to whom he had given his fealty, whom he legally served, and from whom he acknowledged that he held everything that he possessed, was in such a parlous position, he chose to postpone his own concerns, dear as they were to him, and to use his resources for the service of Holy Mother Church and his lord. Thus he entrusted the task of finishing what he had begun to his son Bohemond, that most valiant of knights, whom he left in overall charge of his troops, while he himself with only a few men set off for Apulia, sailing across a calm sea to Otranto.

(34) At that time a number of people in Apulia, grown arrogant through the duke's

¹⁰ Guibert of Ravenna, the anti-pope Clement III (1080-1100).

absence, had conspired against him, hoping to seize those things which were rightfully his. They thought that, because he was busy with other matters, he would not bother once more to return there. Thus Geoffrey of Conversano had laid siege to the city of Oria, not far from the Taranto district, and had caused a great deal of harm by his extremely troublesome behaviour.

Landing at Otranto and hearing that this city was menaced by siege, the duke hurried to reach there with his tiny force. A messenger informed those who were directing the siege of the duke's approach and, terrified by his presence, they abandoned their undertaking and raised the siege, even though their forces were numerous. They all fled in haste and escaped to their homes. Meanwhile the citizens, who had thus been rescued from the siege which had threatened them, rushed out to meet the duke, and joyfully welcomed him with every mark of respect. Throughout Apulia and Calabria the revolts which disloyalty had stirred up were quelled by his presence, and under his gaze things were so quiet that it was as if these rebellions had never happened.

(35) Having summoned his brother from Sicily and raised a large army, the duke marched on his nephew Jordan, the Prince of Aversa, and ravaged the harvest. There had previously been a number of disputes between them which had caused this hostility, and the prince's anger had become so heated that he had recently, to the detriment of the pope, dared to become the vassal of the emperor and undertaken to do him service for his land. The duke came with his army to the city of Capua and the *castrum* called Aversa and remained there for eight or more days, inflicting a great deal of damage on the whole district. The prince fought back but was unable to drive him away. But since Jordan was a most skilled knight, and had equally skilful men with him, there was heavy fighting between the two of them. The duke then returned home, but sent out written instructions throughout Apulia and Calabria to gather money and supplies for an army which would march with him against the emperor in Rome next summer.

(36) The count had been asked by his brother, when the latter had just returned from Bulgaria, to march with him. He went to Apulia, leaving the guardianship of Sicily to his

son Jordan, forbidding anyone to dare to disobey his orders.¹¹

Jordan was his son by a mistress. He was however strong both in body and mind, and greedy for rule and for the glory gained by mighty deeds. The young man had previously, by the advice of his wicked followers, kept such thoughts quiet within his own breast while he hatched a plot to rebel, but now, with his father absent, there seemed to him to have arisen an opportunity for his evil plan. He cunningly gathered a number of people round about him and, while not yet revealing his intentions, estranged their loyalty through devious means, with the result that they were prepared to act as his accomplices in carrying out whatever project he had first initiated. At last he revealed the long-planned plot to those whom he had deluded by such methods, and while some of them were unhappy with this, it was welcomed by many. He wickedly urged anybody who was unwilling to join in with them and their plans not to break the sworn agreement [*fides*] that they had pledged. This was in accord with the oath made to his father, by the terms of which the latter had ordered everyone to obey Jordan's wishes and instructions. Jordan made generous promises and secured the agreement of many to his evil plan to take control of more of his father's possessions than had been granted to him by the latter, or indeed was proper. For he seized for himself the castrum of S. Marco and Mistretta, and, openly showing his disloyalty, launched plundering raids throughout the region from these places. He marched in battle array on Troina, intending to carry off his father's treasures which were kept there, but his plan was thwarted and he returned empty-handed, for when his disaffection was revealed those loyal to the count [*fideles comitis*] gathered there and fought him off, driving him away from that district.

When this was announced to his father, he returned in haste. Wise man that he was, he took great care to prevent his terrified son defecting to the Saracens, who were still resisting him. He concealed his anger towards him, ascribing what his son had done to his youth, and that it was therefore worthy of forgiveness. When it was announced to the son that his father was taking what he had done lightly, he had little thought for those who were with him, but tearfully agreed a truce and went to meet his father.

¹¹ The text reads *audierat* which is nonsensical. I have assumed that this is a misreading for *audebat* or *ausus erat*.

Disguising his anger for the time being, his father greeted his son on his arrival with a friendly face. But after a few days his father looked to the future, seeing that if those who had been accomplices in giving such advice to his son should survive unscathed then others would be persuaded to try something similar. Unknown to his son, he had the twelve principal figures in this conspiracy brought to him one after another, and then deprived of their eyes. Once he had done this, he also had his son arrested, threatening to treat him in the same way, as justice dictated. This was in fact a pretence, with the intention of frightening him into avoiding any such action in future, and the count was duly restrained by his fideles, whom he had deliberately forewarned to act in this manner. His son was petrified, as indeed was necessary to instill in him the proper obedience: for discipline and the rigour of justice have communion with peace, as is attested by the Psalmist, who says: 'Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other' [*Psalm*, lxxxiv.11]. For mercy should be so exercised that justice is not more lax than is proper, lest crimes grow too numerous. Hence the careful father acted as a wise doctor by such severity, for by inducing terror in this his son he guided him away from evil.

(37) In the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1084, after everything had been prepared with great care, the duke marched on Rome with a large army of mounted troops and huge forces of infantry. He aimed to free Pope Gregory (who was called Hildebrand before he received the papacy) from the siege mounted by the emperor and the treacherous Romans, and, if necessary, to fight with lion-like ferocity against that Caesar, should he not retreat.

When he had come close to his goal, and [not] wishing to march recklessly onwards, he sent out a thousand picked knights with the same number of banners, and ordered a further force of three thousand men to follow on foot. He himself followed cautiously with the rest of his army, placing the infantry, the weaker section, at his front. He had indeed heard that the emperor's knights had marched out to attack him from the direction of the aquaduct. But in fact this information was false, for the emperor had not expected anything like this and had previously sent many of his army away. He himself had remained in Rome, keeping with him only a minority of his troops. When he realised that his enemies were approaching, he abandoned the city, for his own forces by no means strong and he feared the treachery of the Romans, even though they promised that they would stand with

him and not let him down. Thus within three days he ceded the place to his enemies, albeit very unhappily, and retreated. The duke meanwhile enjoyed a free passage to the city, meeting none of the resistance that he had expected, and pitched camp next to the aquaduct, before the gate which lies on the Via Tusculana. He remained there for three days, making a reconnaissance of the city from every side. He then marched at dawn with thirteen hundred knights to the gate which is called S. Lorenzo, under the aquaduct next to the Tiber. He had noticed that this was poorly guarded, for nobody expected an attack on that side. Ladders were put silently in place, and he scaled the walls. Using steel to open the gates and then bringing his men in, he marched through the city squares to the bridge where his [main] army was waiting, with his men shouting their war cry 'Guiscard' and terrifying the citizens. The gates were not simply opened but battered down by main force, and his men entered and stormed into the city. His attack moved directly on to the Tower of Crescentius and rescued the pope, who was brought out from there with the respect which was proper, and restored to the Lateran Palace. There first the duke and thereafter the whole army accorded him the traditional honours, prostrating themselves at his feet with gifts, and they brought a large amount of treasure there.

The Romans then regrouped their forces and conspired together. Three days later they gathered in the city squares and tried to attack our men. The city was filled with noise and shouting. Our men hastened from the tables where they were sitting and rushed to arms. One enemy charged upon the other, and battle line clashed with battle line. The duke's son Roger with a thousand knights was, unknown to his father, beset by the Romans outside the city, and immediately flew to the attack. However the Romans put up a brave resistance and none of the assaults were successful until the duke cried 'fire', set light to the city and subjected it to both flame and sword. Unable to stem the blaze, the Romans at last turned and fled. The duke pursued the fugitives to the bridge, killing the stragglers, and with the wind fanning the flames, the greater part of the city was burned down. Our men returned victorious to the Lateran.

With their enemies threatening them from within the walls and harassed by their forays, the Romans were unable to muster further resistance. So the more prudent men of the city discussed the matter among themselves and wisely chose to make a treaty of

reconciliation with the pope, for they saw no advantage in prolonging the disaster further or in provoking the enemy's sword. So they sought peace and went to a parlay, there made a number of excuses to mitigate their deceit and, having sought pardon, were reconciled. They pledged themselves on oath to obey the pope and the duke. Our men then retired and the city was freed from the disastrous presence of its enemies. Realising the perfidiousness of the Romans and afraid that he might once again be hemmed about by siege, the pope took the advice of those faithful to him, which was to leave the city for a time. He preferred to avoid the treachery of the Romans rather than remaining there. He gave them a free choice of what to do in this time of danger, whether or not they faithfully observed the terms which they had promised to keep, but he himself left for Apulia with the duke and went to Benevento. As a result he remained in the Apulian region for the rest of his life, and never saw Rome again.

- (38) Rome, you were once warlike, and powerful throughout the whole world,
 Making the necks of the proud bend, you spread over every region!
 You issued laws and controlled everything with your reins.
 Dukes, princes and empires trembled before you.
 The necks of kings were bent, tamed by your thongs:
 Proud as they were, they could not resist, terrified by your sword.
 You disposed as you wanted. You deposed
 Proud dukes and princes, making them humble slaves.
 You ruled through these means, having honest judges,
 And while you pursued justice, you enjoyed the fruits of prosperity.
 All the kings on earth sought laws from you:
 The judgements which you gave remained unchallenged.
 But now, not long ago after abandoning this behaviour,
 You are entangled through your wickedness in disgraceful activities;
 As this wickedness becomes known you are unhappy and despised.
 Now nobody fears you and your people show their backs to everyone:
 Your weapons are blunted and lack an edge.
 Your laws are depraved and full of falsehoods!
 In you every vice flourishes: self-indulgence, avarice,

Bad faith, disorder and the disease of simony
 Increase by leaps and bounds. Everything is for sale.
 Through you holy order collapses, and first the flood bursts forth.
 One pope is not enough, you rejoice in two men so clad.
 Your loyalty is made more secure by the giving of bribes.
 While a man hands them out, you fight his enemy,
 But, if these payments cease, then you withdraw your forces.
 You threaten one man with another, thus you fill your money bags.
 You spread error throughout the world by fomenting this schism.
 If your earlier enthusiasm for righteous behaviour had not ceased,
 Then no king could have secured a victory over you.
 Now indeed it is a Norman knight who defeats and masters you.
 Does not the sacred presence of the Apostles terrify you?
 Do not the relics of the saints recall you from what you have begun?
 Once you were a fountain of all praise, now you are a pit of deceit:
 Your good character has disappeared and your morality is corrupted,
 You are devoted to evil practices, and there is no shame on your brow.
 Peter, supreme shepherd, rise up and put an end to such things!

(39) While the duke was busy at Rome on the pope's behalf, his son Bohemond was behaving valiantly [strenue] in Bulgaria, where he had been left by his father, and was efficiently fulfilling his role as his father's representative. He besieged a city called Artá, made determined assaults upon it, and strove with every possible means to capture it. When the emperor heard that this city under his rule was menaced by his enemies and that the duke, whom he greatly feared, had gone away, he restored his forces in the latter's absence and raised and equipped a large army for the relief of that city. On his arrival Bohemond began the encounter by launching an attack, and battle was joined. At the first engagement those in the vanguard were struck down and killed and, terrified by this sight, those behind fled. As soon as the first men fled, the emperor found it expedient to do so as well, and on his flight Bohemond was left victorious.

(40) The news of this was given to the duke on his glorious and triumphant return from

Rome, and he rejoiced greatly in the knowledge that his son was in no way inferior to himself, and in particular he was pleased because he and his men had secured such tremendous and glorious renown by putting both emperors to flight at one and the same time. On his arrival in Apulia he summoned his officials from all over that region, and made the most careful dispositions among his men, with the intention of hastening to Greece with a powerful army to complete the task which he had begun there.

In the month of September ships from throughout Apulia, Calabria and Sicily gathered at Otranto. Troops and supplies were embarked, a favourable wind blew, and he landed at the port he had chosen where he rejoined his son and the men whom he had left in these far-away parts anxiously looking for his return. He himself appeared very glad to be back. He then put into practice what he had come for. His return threw the whole land into turmoil, with his attacks on its cities, his energy in sieges and untiring determination. He was the first in battle, always on the lookout, now instilling terror through his threats, and then offering honeyed inducements, devoting all his energy to making the empire tremble before him.

(41) It seems to us proper to insert into this work a miraculous sign which was seen throughout the whole of Apulia, Calabria and Sicily, particularly because we think that we on our part are not in ignorance of what such a sign portended. In the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1084, on 6th February, between the sixth and the ninth hour, the sun was hidden for the space of three hours, to such an extent that people who were hard at work inside their houses were unable to finish during that period what they had begun without lamps being lit, and those who wanted to go from house to house used lanterns or torches. This event terrified many people.

But before a year had gone by, the significance of this eclipse, at least in our opinion, declared itself to the majority of people with absolute clarity. For in that same year the venerable Pope Gregory (whom we discussed above) sought a cure from the doctors for his illness, but such medicines were in vain, and he died. In July the duke, and on 9th September the most renowned King of the English and Normans, Duke William, also died.

The duke's widow Sichelgaita and his son Roger, who was at that time also present

among the Bulgarians, and the other barons carried out his funeral ceremonies with the proper honours, not undeservedly. They brought his body back across the sea and buried it at Venosa. Freed by the departure of its enemies, Greece rejoiced in peace. [However] the whole of Apulia and Calabria were in confusion.

(42) For the brothers Roger and Bohemond quarrelled among themselves, both seeking the ducal office, and many people sought their own advantage, looking to profit first from one and then from the other. The loyalty of many Apulians, insofar as they had any, became clear with this trial. Roger was eventually made duke with the help of his uncle Count Roger of the Sicilians who, while his brother was still alive, had promised that he would do this. All the *castella* of Calabria in which up to now Count Roger held only a half share were granted to him by his nephew in full ownership, and handed over to him.

Now the last day of the great a prince whom I have been discussing makes a suitable end to a book, or so it seems to me. I ought therefore to finish this book here, so that a new book may follow in which I shall discuss both the new duke and the count.

Book IV

If it was the case that a new and more elegant poetic style ought to be employed for a new duke: that the account of recent events be made more fluent, as is the custom in this age, and thus rendered more attractive to a young man, then by this new style one would obtain new favours as a reward. But lest, by changing the style one was alleged to be changing the account into a sort of panegyric, we shall keep the original poetic style and follow the course of our narrative.

(1) Count Roger was preoccupied with the affairs of his nephew, with the intention of placing him firmly and fully in control of the Duchy of Calabria, and also of the Principality and as ruler of Apulia, despite the opposition of his jealous opponents. Because of this, Benarvet prepared ships at Syracuse and sailed with his fleet to Nicotera, which he sacked and reduced to rubble. He took away everything which he possibly could and carried off all the men and women as prisoners. He then went to Reggio, destroyed the church built not far from there in honour of St. Nicholas and also one at another site in honour of St. George, trampling the holy images under foot and defiling them, and carrying away the vestments and sacred vessels to use as his own. He then went further and attacked a nunnery which had been dedicated in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, at a place called Rocca Asini near Squillace. He ravished the kidnapped nuns and wickedly defiled them.

(2) When the count heard about this, he was more than usually angry, and took the most energetic measures to avenge such an injury done to God. He began preparation of the fleet through which he might more easily do this (by going around the enemy) on 1st October, he finished it on 20th May. When he was ready to strike, he went in procession to a number of churches, barefoot and with the utmost devotion, to the sound of litanies, and gave many generous gifts to the poor; he then entrusted himself to the perils of the deep and set sail towards Syracuse. He ordered his son Jordan to make his way to meet him there with a mounted force. He saw that the ships were fulfilling the will of God, for they sailed over the fast-moving waves of the sea on a direct course without help from the wind or use of the oars, so that one could easily discern that this expedition had been granted God's

approval and ought to prevail over its enemies. Thus the count, even more certain of obtaining victory because of this sign, landed at Taormina on the first night, Lognina on the second, and *Rasesalix* [*Rat-es-Saliba*] on the third.

His son Jordan met him there with the mounted troops, and they had a long discussion between them as what ought to be done. After taking counsel, they ordered Philip, son of Gregory the *patricius*, to set out for Syracuse as fast as possible to reconnoitre the whole area. He carried out their instructions faithfully, and sailed at night into the Saracen fleet as though he was one of them, for both he and all the sailors who were with him were skilled in their language as well as Greek. Carefully inspecting everything there, he returned and announced that battle was imminent. He encouraged them to advance bravely on the enemy, for with God's favour they were not in danger. It was then Saturday.

Encouraging his men in this way, at dawn on Sunday the count heard the morning hymns and the holy celebration of Mass. Trusting in their priests, they were initiated into the holy mysteries. For the whole day they remained there. In the middle of the next night they weighed anchor and sailed silently by moonlight to Syracuse where Benarvet and his fleet were waiting resolutely for them. Battle was joined and both sides engaged. On the promptings of the Devil, who wished him now to end his life with a shameful death, Benarvet spotted the count's ship from some way off and launched an immediate and fierce attack upon it. He fought fiercely but the defence was ferocious too. Benarvet was first hit by a javelin thrown by a certain Lupinus, and was then faced with the threat of the count's sword as the latter boarded his ship, but as he sought to save himself by leaping onto the nearest of his other ships he fell into the sea and, weighed down by his armour, sank. Thus Divine justice meted out condign vengeance, and he suffered the penalty due for the injury he had so arrogantly inflicted upon God. The rest of his men tried to flee, but our forces rowed quickly in pursuit and slaughtered them, so securing the victory. If Jordan had in the meanwhile attacked the city, he would easily have conquered it. But his father had unwisely forbidden him to do this.

The city was besieged from May through to September, and resisted stoutly and both sides suffered heavy losses. The citizens held many Christian prisoners captive within the town whom they freed and sent out, thinking that by doing this they would naturally get our men to withdraw. But when they saw them nonetheless persist, Benarvet's wife and son, along with the chief citizens, boarded two ships, escaped through the midst of our ships at night by some fast rowing, and went to Noto. Those left behind made a treaty and surrendered themselves and their city. [This happened] in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1085.

(3) While this was occurring, the Pisans who had travelled to Africa for trade suffered a number of injuries. Gathering an army they attacked the capital of King Temin and captured all of it except the main citadel which the king himself was defending. Since, because of his courage, they were not numerous enough to hold the city they had stormed as their own, they sent envoys to the Count of Sicily, whom they knew to be very powerful and well-supplied for such enterprises, asking if he wished to receive it. However, since he had previously made peace with King Temin and pledged to stick to this agreement, he observed the treaty and declined this proposal which would have been to Temin's detriment.

King Temin was eventually unable to continue his resistance, and so, when recourse to arms was unavailing, he purchased a peace. His money made the fleet leave his lands. However he promised, in accordance with his law, that he would in future not send his fleet to attack any Christian land, and he was also forced to release the captives of that faith whom he held.

(4) Duke Roger meanwhile made wise dispositions in Apulia and Calabria, behaving both vigorously and sensibly in all matters; and although he was young in age, if you were to judge him by his actions, they seemed to be not those of a youth but of a man of experience. He was active in military matters, enjoyed knightly company, was affable in speech, generous with gifts, untiring in his endeavours and his watchfulness, a protector of churches, the consolation of the the poor and needy, a shield to his men and a spear against the enemy, judging all cases justly, except insofar as the influence of his piety made him a

little remiss in the rigour of his justice. As these qualities developed in him, so in very brief time he won the esteem of all good men.

His brother Bohemond was led by his ambition for the ducal honour to rebel against him, and he gained the city of Oria through the treachery of the citizens. From here he secured accomplices from all sides and launched plundering expeditions into the province of Taranto and Otranto. Roger saw that he could do little to stop him, not because he was not an accomplished knight but rather because his finances were insufficient to resolve the matter, and so, moved by his brotherly love, he went to him and they were reconciled. Roger gave him part of the hereditary portion he had received from his father, granting him the city of Oria which he had seized, and in addition Taranto, Otranto and Gallipoli, with all that pertained to them, and what Geoffrey of Conversano held from him, along with the latter's service. Anybody else who opposed him, he most valiantly defeated. When his courage alone was insufficient, he used the Count of Sicily as a rod to subjugate them, and since many were terrified of the count's power, they did not dare to resist him further.

(5) Count Roger rejoiced in the defeat of all the more powerful men of Sicily, for nobody except Hamûd continued to resist him. The count prepared his plans with great care, with the intention of outflanking and defeating him, and thus obtaining all the rest of Sicily for himself. Hence, while Hamûd was at Castrogiovanni, he set his army on the march and went to besiege Agrigento where the former's wife and children were. His forces surrounded it on 1st April 1086, and thereafter launched daily attacks upon it. Through his energy and because of the machines prepared for its capture, finally on 25th July, with its forces exhausted and its enemies ever more menacing, the city surrendered. Hamûd's wife and children were captured by the count. With the city in his power, the count decided to have Hamûd's wife carefully guarded by his men, and forbade anyone to molest her, for he knew that Hamûd would be more easily reconciled with him if he knew that she had been well-treated by our men and not dishonoured.

Meanwhile he arranged matters in the city as he chose, furnished it with a very strong citadel [*castellum*], and surrounded it with a rampart which he strengthened with towers and bastions. He launched raids against the neighbouring *castra* and forced them to

surrender [too]. Thus in a brief space of time he obtained for himself by conquest some eleven places, whose names are Platani, Muxaro, Guastanella, Sutura, Raselbifar, Micolusa, Naro, Caltanissetta (which name can be translated in our language as 'the castle of women', Licata and Ravanusa.

(6) The count realised that all this success had happened through the mercy of God. He now directed his attention towards the capture of Castrogiovanni, either by force or at least through cunning, by making some sort of agreement. To this end he rode out at dawn one day towards Castrogiovanni with one hundred knights and, having arranged a truce, asked Hamût to speak with him. Approaching the issue in a roundabout way, he urged him to surrender the fortress and to convert through the regeneration of Christian baptism. Hamût knew from what had happened to other people that when the count intended to do something he never attempted it in vain, for fortune favoured him, and he was even a little bit inwardly and quietly moved by the thought of conversion to our faith. Keeping his plans a secret from his own people, he arranged that on a particular day the count and his army would arrive before the *castrum* and that he himself would then desert to him, bringing with him all his personal possessions. He feared however that if he let it be known openly that he intended to surrender the *castrum* and convert to the Catholic faith then he would be slain by his own men.

The count returned to Agrigento, very pleased by this promise. On the agreed day he quietly gathered his troops and secretly laid an ambush at a place not far from Castrogiovanni, upon which the two of them had previously agreed. Hamût mounted all his men on mules or horses as though they were going on a journey somewhere and left the city. He then quite deliberately ran into our men's ambush and was captured by them. Once this had happened, Castrogiovanni was attacked by our troops. With their forces gravely weakened by this deed, the citizens were terrified, and as a result of what had happened and their situation, they took counsel amongst themselves. They then made a treaty, were reconciled with the count, and the fortress had to surrender. On gaining this *castrum* the count was overjoyed, and he assigned the guard over the strongest towers to our people.

Hamût became a Christian, as did his wife and children, though he did so on one condition: that his wife, to whom he was related by a degree of consanguinity, would not in future be forbidden to him. He was however reluctant, and even fearful, to dwell any longer among his own people, in case the count might be misled into thinking him suspect and not trust him, and so he asked the count for land in Calabria in the Mileto district that would be sufficient for his maintenance. The count willingly granted this and he moved there. And thereafter, during the course of a long lifetime, he showed irreproachable conduct, free from any treachery towards our people.

(7) The count saw that through God's favour the whole of Sicily, except for Butera and Noto, had yielded and placed itself under his rule, and lest he show himself ungrateful for all the benefits which God had granted him, he began to show his devotion to God: to cherish just judgements and to follow [the way of] justice, to embrace the truth, devotedly to frequent churches, to be present at the services, granting tithes from all his revenues to the holy churches, and acting with discretion to relieve widows, orphans and the needy. He ordered churches to be built all over Sicily; and he himself assigned funds from his own property to many of them, to assist in their construction.

He erected a cathedral for a bishop in the city of Agrigento: and he endowed it in perpetuity by a chirograph document with lands, tithes and various riches which were suitably calculated to be enough for the bishop and clergy, granting it also vessels sufficient for the holy altar. He appointed to this church to be ordained as bishop Gerlandus, from the nation of the Allobroges [*i.e. Savoy*], who was, so they say, a man of great charity and very learned in ecclesiastical matters. He did the same thing at Mazzara, providing absolutely everything which was customarily needed for a bishop and clergy, and there he appointed as bishop a man of most virtuous life from Rouen, called Stephen. Similarly, for Syracuse he chose Roger, the dean of Troina, a man well-versed in clerical affairs, of good conduct and fluent of speech, who had been born in Provence; and he granted him the rank of bishop. The people of Troina were not a little sad at losing him, since he had always set them a shining example both through his teaching and his life, and they had [also] leaned upon his advice and eloquence in secular matters, as though he was a staff to support them.

Since they lacked a bishop they had relied upon him for such duties, for he behaved with great wisdom and good sense.

Meanwhile, when the count heard that there was a Breton monk at Sant'Euphemia who had fulfilled the post of abbot in this great church with prudence and moderation, he decided that, if he could manage this, he would appoint him bishop over the church of Catania. To accomplish this plan he himself went there, and he finally obtained his wish - albeit with some difficulty since the monks did not want to lose their abbot, and the man himself was the most reluctant of them all. So it was that the count solemnly granted the cathedral to him, and assigned to his see, in a chirograph document and before witnesses, the whole city and all its appurtenances to hold in perpetuity, something which is believed had never been done for any other bishop. He received this church which had just been planted in, or as it were forced down the throats of, a populace of unbelievers. At first the bishop cleaved firmly to the study of the law of Martha and thus in a brief space of time he provided the church with all the practical things which it needed. Then he changed his policy and adopted the office of Mary along with that of Martha. Gathering around him a by no means small band of monks, by word and example he made them subject to the precepts of the Rule, as a good pastor should.

(8) At that time Philip, the king of the French, had a legitimate wife of distinguished family called Bertha, from whom he had sired a son named Louis. He had even designated the latter as his successor to the kingdom, right from the time when he was a small child. But, contrary to the true law of marriage, he grew to hate her, and in order to rid himself of her, he tried to draw up a case to justify her repudiation, although he could find no criminal charges against her except for a false accusation of consanguinity. He sent envoys to Sicily, to seek the count's daughter Emma, a very pretty girl whom he had had by his first wife Judith, to be joined to him in marriage. The count knew nothing of his treacherous conduct towards his legitimate wife and allowed her to be betrothed to him, accompanied by much ceremony. Ships were prepared, and at the agreed time he despatched her, along with many valuable treasures as a dowry, on the voyage to St. Gilles where the king had said that he would meet her. He entrusted her to Raymond, the Count of Provence, to hand her over in

the proper manner to the king, for Raymond had previously married the count's other daughter.

But the king was misled by evil advice, and strove to trick the count by receiving the treasure and not marrying his daughter. Count Raymond however discovered the scheme, and began to consider a no less deceitful trick of his own. He gave the girl an honourable welcome, and concealed his treachery while he sought to give her in a marriage to another, trustworthy, man, but all the while he intended to seize all the money for himself. However, the experienced men whom the count had sent to accompany his daughter discovered this treacherous plan and, on the girl's own request took the money away. Leaving the young woman with her sister's husband, they raised anchor and set sail, and with a favourable wind blowing they returned to Sicily, bringing the treasures back to the count. With the deceitful scheme which he had been preparing totally foiled, Count Raymond now joined the young woman in lawful marriage to the Count of Clermont. So only through God's disposition was she honourably married, and her father was spared the shameful insult which the king had planned, while she was rescued from an irregular and illegal, even if royal, marriage.

(9) On the death of Duke Robert, Mihera, the son of Hugh Falloc, an accomplished knight but a very untrustworthy man, took the leftward path of evil rather than that of righteousness,¹ and started to launch plundering expeditions against his neighbours and sought to harm them in other ways. For at that time he held the *castra* which had been left to him as an inheritance from his father, namely Catanzaro and Rocca [Falluca]; but seeking to gain more through force of arms, he dared to unleash an attack against the duke. Through the treachery of its citizens he seized a *castrum* called Maida. Then, wishing to secure assistance to augment his own forces, he became the vassal [*homo*] of Bohemond, the duke's brother who had previously broken the treaty and plotted against his brother. He renounced his obedience to the duke, made a sworn alliance with Bohemond, and received from him Maida, which he had seized, and all the land which he had inherited from his father and held from the duke.

¹ Literally 'using the left hand for the right'.

(10) Bohemond was ambitious to obtain other towns - by seizing them from the duke - and had secret discussions with the people of Cosenza, promising that, if they helped him to take the city, then he would have the citadel, which the duke had built in their town against their will, razed to the ground. Bohemond's promise persuaded them to this treason and they came to an agreement with him, received him and his forces within the city, and joined themselves to him by oaths. They blockaded the citadel and went to attack it.

When this news was announced to the duke, who was then staying in Apulia, he raised an army and marched there, and he asked his uncle to come to his aid, instructing him to be sure to meet him at Cosenza. For, as we have said, he used him like a whip to terrify all those who opposed him.

The count prepared his troops, both horse and foot, and marched to meet his nephew as he had been asked. But before either of the two armies, the duke's or the count's, could arrive there, the castle which was under attack, and which had fought back as best it could against the siege engines ranged there, came to the end of its strength and surrendered to the enemy. It was then razed to the ground, as Bohemond had promised that it would be. The duke had the count join him and stormed Rossano, which had assisted the men of Cozenza in their treason, putting everything there to the flames. Bohemond left Cosenza, not wishing to be trapped in the town by a siege, and went to Rocca [Falluca], leaving Hugh of Clermont at Cosenza who kept its inhabitants loyal to him. The duke and count thought that he had gone to Maida, and marched there hoping to occupy it first. But when they failed to find him there, they marched towards Rocca and pitched their tents at a place called *lucus Calupnii*. There intermediaries arranged a fifteen day truce between the two sides, during which time they could meet at Sant'Euphemia and be fully reconciled.

Mihera agreed to these terms, but not Bohemond. Unwilling to make peace, he had already retired to Taranto. On the appointed day Mihera sought a safe-conduct which would allow him to go there and then leave unmolested. It was granted. He agreed, and without consulting Bohemond was reconciled with the duke. He surrendered Maida which was restored to the duke to whom it rightfully belonged.

Finally, after two years the brothers were reconciled. The duke, always a most generous man, conceded Cosenza and Maida to Bohemond. But in a very short time, since Bohemond had sworn to the people of Cosenza that he would not build a castle there, and the duke had done the same to the Bariots, an exchange was made between them. The duke received Cosenza, and in its stead granted Bari to his brother, so that while keeping their oaths, each would be free to do as they wished within their own jurisdiction. They thus confirmed their friendly relationship in a charter and before witnesses, and they each held their independent portion.

(11) Mihera made a thorough nuisance of himself to Count Roger and to Rodulf of Loritello, and remained for a long time in rebellion. Seeing that his offences were too grave to secure pardon, and not wanting to carry on further, he handed all his land over to his son Adam, thinking that the latter, with the help of his mother's relatives, would find it easier to resist his enemies and indeed to be reconciled with them. He himself went to Benevento, took the habit and was tonsured as a monk.

Now neither the duke nor Bohemond remained on good terms with each other, since the truce had been broken and each was doing the other down: because of this the count and Robert of Loritello sought and easily obtained from the duke the land which had previously been given to Adam. The count sent his knights, led by Rodulf of Loritello, against Adam, and although he resisted their frequent attacks for quite some time, in the end he was reduced to penury. He saw that he could not resist them any more, and so, when one night there was another attack, he burned down his palace and all the best houses, abandoned the *castrum* and fled, in the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1088. The count and Rodulf of Loritello divided his land, which had been granted them by the duke, between them, each of them in future holding his own share.

(12) Meanwhile peace had been made, and all of Sicily was quiet and no longer opposed Count Roger, with the exception of the people of Noto, where Benervet's wife and son had fled, and also the people of Butera, who still (as best they could) put up a useless resistance. The count raised an army and went to besiege Butera at the beginning of April in the year

from the Lord's Incarnation 1088. He carefully surrounded it on all sides with his forces, and in a little while he caused all sorts of problems for the besieged.

(13) However, while siege engines were being prepared to bombard the *castrum*, an envoy of Pope Urban appeared with a sealed letter from him in which the pope announced that he had landed in Sicily, and instructing him to go to Troina for a conference with him. The pope had arrived very tired from his long journey, for he had travelled from Terracina, and because of his bodily weakness, and the high mountains which lay between them, he did not wish to go any further. The count was anxious to do what was best, for on the one hand he held it damnable to desert the field of battle, but as a good Catholic he thought it wrong not to journey the short distance between them to meet the pope who had travelled from so far away to see him. Finally, like a sensible man, he took advice, and he decided neither to desert the field of battle nor to show himself disobedient to the pope by not meeting him. Thus he delegated command of his army to trustworthy men who were wise and experienced in such matters and he ordered them to harass the enemy; he himself travelled to Troina with a small escort to meet the pope as he had been asked. Both were overjoyed, and they greeted each other with great respect. He received Apostolic Blessing from the pope, who followed the way of Mary, and the latter received from him, serving as Martha did, what was necessary for his bodily sustenance. Early next day they met to talk about the business which had made the pope come there.

For the same pope had a few months earlier, through Abbot Nicholas of Grottaferrata and the deacon Roger, gently and with fatherly rebuke warned Alexius, the Emperor of Constantinople, because he had forbidden to the Latin Christians who dwelt in his dominions to make sacrifice with unleavened bread, and ordered them to use leavened bread in the Greek manner, which is something not done by our religion. The emperor had indeed received this rebuke humbly, and had requested him, in a parchment written in letters of gold sent back with these same legates, that he and [other] learned Catholic men should come to Constantinople where a council would be held at which there would be a discussion between the Greeks and Latins to secure a common definition in the Church of God, which had up to that time been torn apart by schism because the Greeks sacrificed with leavened and the Latins with unleavened bread. He said that he would freely assent to

a general discussion, and that it should be defined and agreed by a proper verdict, in the presence of both Greeks and Latins, whether sacrifice should be made with unleavened or leavened bread. He himself would in future observe the decision. He laid down a time limit within which the pope ought to come, namely a year and a half.

The count gave his advice that the pope should go there, in order to rid the Church of God of this great schism. But his journey was prevented through the obstacles created by the enemies of Holy Church who were still attacking him at Rome.

The count then sent the pope away, burdened with many gifts. He himself returned to Butera, attacked his enemies and finally forced them to surrender. So he gained the *castrum* and disposed of it as he wished. He sent its leading men to dwell in future in Calabria, for if they remained there they might plot some treason against him and cause a rising.

(14) Count Roger's wife, Eremburga, the daughter of Count William of Mortain, had died. In the year from the Saviour's Incarnation 1089 he married another, named Adelaide, the niece of the celebrated Marquis of the [North] Italians, Boniface - his brother's daughter - a quite beautiful young woman; the girl's two sisters he joined in matrimony to his two sons, namely Geoffrey and Jordan. But Geoffrey never knew her, for he died before she reached marriageable age, sad to say. Jordan was however solemnly married.

(15) Then the people of Noto, seeing the whole of Sicily obedient to the count, and that for them to resist any further was useless, knowing that 'to struggle in vain, and after wearisome exertion to gain nothing at the end except hatred, is the height of folly', ² took counsel amongst themselves and thought it best to be reconciled with the count. Thus they chose envoys from their ranks and sent them to him. They met the count at Mileto, where he was then staying, and in the month of February in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1090 they made peace. The count remitted two years census from them, and sent back with them his son Jordan, to whom he had given both land and a wife, to receive the town which they were surrendering. Jordan had been well-taught by his father: he received the city, built a citadel there, and arranged matters as he wished in fealty to his father. Benarvet's wife and son fled to Africa.

² Sallust, *Bellum Jugurthinum*, III.3, cf. lib. I, c. 26 (above p. 20).

Hence all Sicily was at peace. Count Roger showed himself not ungrateful for the benefits which God had conferred upon him. Insofar as the worldly matters with which he was occupied permitted, he began to show himself in every way devoted to God, and while he knew how high the earthly honour God had granted him was, so he made his efforts more determined to concentrate on remaining perfectly humble. He thanked his knights with whose help he had been raised to this high estate very kindly and rewarded them for their exertions, some with lands and wide possessions, and some with other sorts of recompense.

(16) So therefore the count wisely arranged all of Sicily as he wished. But, accustomed to military operations, impatient in times of peace, anxious for work and eager for gain, and not allowing his body to grow lazy from lack of its usual exercise, he considered most carefully which overseas kingdom he might first be able to conquer for himself. Because he knew that the island of Malta was closer at hand than others he might recover, he ordered his fleet to sail there and attack it: he instructed his knights to take part in the same operation.

While these matters were underway, Mainerius of Acerenza, who had been ordered by the count to come to speak with him, refused to do this. His reply to the summons, delivered in the presence of the count's messenger, was that he never wished to see him again, unless [by doing so] he could do him some harm. The envoy who had been sent to him returned and reported this, and on hearing the news the count was absolutely furious. He immediately crossed from Sicily into Calabria. He sent Peter of Mortain, to whom he had delegated a number of duties, to raise an army from Sicily and to march after him. The latter fulfilled his instructions to the letter: within eight days he had raised a very large force from all over Sicily, and in the month of May he brought this to the count. The count then marched to Acerenza, and laid fearsome siege to the *castrum*.

Mainerius was terrified by this, and realised that he had spoken and acted foolishly. He came humbly to entreat the count's mercy, seeking pardon and placing at his disposition horses, mules, treasure and all that he had. The count saw that he was sorry for what he had done, and being always a kind-hearted man, forgave him everything, except that - as a

matter of discipline rather than because he wanted it - he took one thousand gold *solidi* from him, to deter him from any further such presumption.

He then travelled through the high mountains around there and came to Cosenza. Since the inhabitants of that district were disobedient to the duke, for three days he ravaged their vines and olive tree, and then went to Arata. There, after consulting his advisers, he released his army for a brief period, ordering that everyone should return home and prepare for the expedition to Malta. In fifteen days time they should meet up with him at Capo Scalambri, where he had ordered his fleet to gather. Nature has made this port different from others, so that if someone experiments by taking a reed or other such hollow vessel one cubit into the sea from the shore, and fixes it into the seabed, to the depth only of a palm, but high enough so that its top is above the waves (indeed as far as one likes), then, although the sea is very salty, you will see absolutely fresh and drinkable water boiling up on high from the vessel. On the appointed day, in the month of July, a great army from all over Sicily and Calabria gathered, and that evening the count hastened to board the ships.

While the fleet was being prepared, the count's son Jordan had thought that his father would not really go to Malta, but would delegate the task of leading the fleet there to him. However when he boarded ship the count summoned him, and ordered that he remain to guard Sicily, along with certain men he had personally chosen. Jordan was not to enter any town or *castrum* until he himself had returned from Malta, but was to live in tented accommodation somewhere in Sicily, and support the invasion by being ready to go to his assistance should this be necessary. Hearing his father telling him to do something very different from what he had thought, he was quite astonished, and tried to dissuade his father from the course of action he had outlined. He proclaimed tearfully that it would rather be better - if it was pleasing to his father - that he, being young, should be given this task, while his father should enjoy the benefits of rest and relax after his many labours like a man receiving the rewards of old age; it would be less harmful if he, a young man of little worth, perished in this very hazardous enterprise than a man of such authority and wisdom. The count was furious at his son's words. He replied that nobody, whether a son or anyone else over whom he ruled, should dare in future to inflict upon him so many public insults, and as

he wished to be first in owning and granting property so it was only right that he should be the foremost in acquiring it.

So, while many remained behind and were then moved to tears by their pious affection, the count took ship. With trumpets sounding on his order and many other sorts of musical instrument playing, depending on the skills of the player, the anchors were raised and after careful preparation they set sail: on the second day, with the help of a favourable wind, they reached Malta. The count's ship had sailed faster than the others and was the first to reach land. He and thirteen knights disembarked, mounted their horses and attacked the great host of the local inhabitants which had come to the shore to meet them and bar their way. The count killed a number of them, the rest fled, and he pursued them for a considerable distance, cutting down the stragglers. Returning from the pursuit in the evening, he lodged that night on the sea shore with the rest of his army.

At daybreak the next morning he marched to the town and laid siege to it, sending out foraging parties all over the island. Neither the Caid who ruled over the town and the island, nor his fellow citizens, were accustomed to military activities, and they were terrified by the presence of their enemies. They requested, of their own free will, a safe conduct so that they might come and discuss matters with the count: he agreed and they came to his tent to ask him for peace terms. [To begin with] they talked around the subject, but finally they realised that they could not deceive this shrewd prince. At the count's request they first of all released the large number of Christian prisoners whom they held within the town, and they offered the count horses and mules, all the weapons they had, and a huge sum of money. They specified what annual payment they would make, promised that the town would be obedient to the count, made oaths according to their law, and bound themselves to him. The Christian prisoners left the city, shedding tears of joy and moved to the depths of their hearts by their freedom, holding crosses in their right hands made of wood or reeds, whatever each of them found first, singing the *Kyrie Eleyson*, and [then] flung themselves at the count's feet. Seeing this, our men were bathed in floods of tears by such a pious sight. Having thus bound the city to himself, the count took the prisoners away and embarking them on the ships made a speedy, if very anxious, return, for the weight of the captives was such that he was afraid of sinking. But the right hand of God, so we

believe, was revealed in this event, supporting the ships on the waves and bearing them a cubit higher in the ocean, as if they weighed less than on the outward journey.

As he hurried home across the sea, he saw away in the distance an island called Gozo, and he turned his sails in that direction with the intention of conquering it. Landing there, he attacked and ravaged it: knowing that by this means he would secure its surrender and place it under his lordship. From there he sailed safely on to Sicily, bringing back with him a huge haul of booty for his faithful subjects who awaited him. He also brought back the prisoners whom he had rescued from their captivity. Gathering them all together, he set them free, and offered those who wished to remain with him in Sicily a village which he would have built at his own expense at a place of their choosing, and for which he would provide everything necessary for its endowment, also at his own expense: it would be called 'Villafranca', that is a free village, which would be exempted from all tribute or servile exaction in perpetuity. Those who wanted to see their own fields and friends once more he gave permission to go where they pleased, allowing them supplies throughout his lands and free passage across the Straits of Messina. The latter joyfully rendered thanks to God and the count for their freedom, and then they all returned home through a number of different countries, depending on where their native lands were, enhancing the count's reputation far and wide.

(17) In the year 1091, enraged with the prolonged rebellion of the inhabitants of Cosenza, Duke Roger raised an army from all over Apulia, and brought his brother Bohemond with him, intending to go there to besiege the town in the month of May. He requested his uncle the Count of Sicily to come there, without fail, to bring him help. Because of his affection for his nephew, the count raised many thousand Saracens from every part of Sicily and, bringing with him a strong force of knights, at once journeyed to the place where he had been asked to go.

Hearing that their enemies were marching against them, the people of Cosenza fortified themselves with a rampart and wall, prepared their weapons and the equipment they needed for its defence, carried foodstuffs into the town, and encouraged each other to resist rather than to surrender. The duke and count met each other at Cosenza and

blockaded the town on every side. The duke set up his siege operations on the plain; the count climbed the mountains, taking the sector where the task was greater and the enemy more threatening, and ordered his men to ring the town with their siege-castles. On the prince's instructions, the people of Cosenza were encircled and cut off by a rampart and palisades, which entirely prevented them from entering or leaving and denied them the chance of bringing anything in. So there was unceasing conflict and a fierce struggle. But the defenders of Cosenza relied principally on slingshots and arrows: they thought it dangerous to get to close quarters and exchange sword thrusts with our men.

The count meanwhile made every conceivable effort both to persuade the enemy to surrender and (more often) to discourage them by force of arms; he devoted himself to his men, encouraged them, went everywhere, left nothing undone that could be done, was at the head of his men in battle and the last to retreat, and by his example and attention to duty he made everyone more zealous. Seeing the count's unslackening determination and losing hope of driving their enemies from their territory, the people of Cosenza discussed the matter among themselves and made plans for the surrender of the town, provided that they could secure pardon from the duke and count for the offence which they had caused by their rebellion. Because they knew the count to be the wiser and more sensible man, on whose instructions everything was organised, they first ventured a humble request to him for his advice, for they knew that nothing would be done without him. They then promised that they would be ruled by that advice, without fraud or doing him any harm where it could be avoided. He heard their petition and, being always a pious man and a lover of peace, he then arranged matters wisely, so that the duke obtained the city to rule as he wished and the people of Cosenza were genuinely reconciled to the duke's grace.

Having acquired the city through the advice and valour [*strenuitas*] of his uncle, and before releasing his army, the duke established a stone citadel within the upper town, to discourage the citizens from any such presumption in future. He also assigned half the town of Cosenza to the count, as a reward for the service which he had rendered to him. So in the month of July the expedition was dissolved, and the duke went to Apulia while the count left for Sicily.

The count built a citadel in his part too; and so arranged matters that since the city was now held in common, more than half came to the duke, although to begin with he had possessed the revenues from the whole town without sharing them.

(18) After these events, since we promised that we would write down in chronological order everything that was done or happened as it really occurred, the course of events forbids us to omit a dreadful cause of sorrow to Sicily and Calabria; although to many in the present time recalling this same event to their memory might seem burdensome, as though renewing the sorrow. Indeed there are some who were so affected by the fact that we mention, that were what happened to be recounted in their presence they could not refrain from tears, as if what we describe had just occurred.

The count's son Jordan was popular with everyone because of his valour [*strenuitas*] - and many people conjectured that he was the count's heir, since Geoffrey had been afflicted by leprosy [*morbis elephantinus*], and the count had no other male child. But he was struck down by a fever at Syracuse, a city under his jurisdiction. When his father was told about this, he hastened to get there before he died, but the disease grew worse, and Jordan's last moment arrived faster than did his father.

The count entered the city, and as he saw his son's funeral rites he was seized with unbearable sadness. All those who were with him shared his grief and broke into tearful lamentation. Many were moved to tears much more by the father's grief than by Jordan's death. The whole city resounded to tearful wailing, to such an extent that it caused tears even among the Saracens, the enemies of our race, not indeed out of real love, but rather because of kindly emotions stirred when they saw the sadness afflicting our people. The count ordered the proper funeral ceremonies and brought his son's body to Troina, there to be solemnly buried in the portico of the church of St. Nicholas. He conferred many gifts on this church, and on others as well, for the redemption of his soul. This was in the year from the Lord's Incarnation 1092.

However, the citizens of Pantalica, a town which had formerly been under Jordan's rule, were vainly filled with joy when they heard the news of his death, for they had feared him greatly, and they insolently rose up in rebellion, trying in vain to throw off the yoke of

our race. After burying his son, the count delayed no further and, accompanied only by his household, went to lay siege to them, ordering an army from the whole of Sicily to follow him there. He overcame them by force, hanged the ringleaders of this ridiculous enterprise, imposed various punishments on the others and quelled the mad folly of this town.

- (19) Deprived of his son by mortal illness, the bereaved father,
 Lest he lament, lacking the joy of parenthood,
 Is blessed with an offspring. As if blooming by heavenly provision,
 The mother's joyful womb is made fruitful, swells and becomes heavy:
 The child grows as the birth approaches.
 Father and mother both pray to God that it will be a boy.
 While his seed is growing, he makes all sorts of vows.
 Let the foetus now be safe within the mother's belly!
 After nine months of expectancy, the womb hastens to give fruit.
 A child is plucked forth: nobody is sad, all are joyful.
 The nurses are happy at the breaking of the waters.
 The announcement that a boy is born brings forth new joy!
 The mother hears it and rejoices, there is no need for sorrow;
 They hasten and announce the joyful news to the happy father!
 Who claps his hands, rejoicing that his prayers are answered.
 He grants requests, and rewards the messenger with rich presents,
 He orders more such gifts, and is pleased to be generous to the poor.
 Let the pain of death, once heavy and strong, from the loss of a son
 Be softened and forgotten by hope with this joyful birth.
 At the font, as his brow is anointed with chrism, he is named Simon,
 The count has an heir: a future duke is furnished for Sicily.
 The Calabrians choose for themselves to be subject to his sword.
 And since it is given to him to be a father, he fulfils his every vow.

- (20) Duke Roger, meanwhile, had a wife named Adela, of outstandingly noble birth, the niece of King Philip of the French and the daughter of Robert, marquis of the Flemings, whom they called 'the Frisian'. By her he was the father of two children. In the year from

the Incarnation of the Word 1093 he was stricken by fever at Melfi, a town in Apulia, and lay gravely ill. His sickness grew worse, and now his life hung by a thread. The most learned doctors in those parts were present, but he was so far out of his senses, and the case was so unusual, that there was no symptom, neither pulse nor urine nor any other indication, which allowed the doctors to diagnose his illness. Since even the doctors appeared to despair of him, the news of this event, implying that he was already dead, caused mayhem throughout Apulia and Calabria.

At that time Bohemond was dwelling in Calabria. When he heard, and all too easily believed, the rumour that his brother had just died, he seized the *castra* which were under his brother's rule, and persuaded them to join in sworn alliance with him. He realised that if his brother was really dead, something he professed himself reluctant to accept, they would remain faithful subjects to him, saving their fealty to his brother's legal heirs, and until the latter came of age they would acknowledge him as the land's legitimate ruler as the 'faithful' uncle of these heirs. But, hearing that he had done this, Count Roger was moved to anger that he had dared to do such a thing without consulting him, fearing that although he had apparently received this fealty honestly, in fact he was concealing falsehood behind his fancy words and that in the future, driven by ambition, he would try some sort of deceitful scheme against his nephews. Telling his men to pursue him, he drove him right out of Calabria.

(21) Many who heard the rumour of the duke's death brazenly rose up and tried to snatch for themselves property which belonged to the duke. Among these was William de Grantmesnil, who was consumed by greed and fell headlong into insolence by seizing Rossano, a Calabrian town which he said belonged to him, because he had married the duke's sister, Guiscard's daughter Mabilia, and thus ought to have a share in the inheritance. So because of the powerlessness of his heirs, everybody showed how great their loyalty was to those heirs by taking away and usurping for themselves what was rightfully the property of the duke.

But after being delirious and out of his senses for a long time, the duke recovered consciousness and, quite against the expectation of his doctors, began to get better. He grew

stronger every day, and eventually made a full recovery. Bohemond heard of this and with great presence of mind hurried to Melfi, where he knew his brother to be, to congratulate him on the restoration of his health. He returned the *castra* which he had bound to himself, and showed that what he had formerly done had not been done with any evil intentions.

However William de Grantmesnil, shamefully led astray by his greed, made no effort to come, either to congratulate his lord on his recovery or to return the town which he had seized; instead he made a brazen display of his treachery, fortifying the town as best he could and arming himself against the duke, in case the latter tried to attack him. Count Roger was very annoyed about this. However, as a wise man - and since William was married to his niece - he encouraged him, through an envoy he sent, to seek reconciliation with his lord by surrendering the city. But when soft words had no effect his anger knew no bounds, and he swore that not only would he take from him the city which he had so wickedly seized, but he would also confiscate everything which he had up to that time held from the duke, and disinherit him.

(22) So as a result he urged the duke to launch an expedition against William, to take revenge for the injury which had been done to him. An army was raised, and in the year from the Saviour's Incarnation 1094 they both went to besiege Castrovillari. William however claimed against them this excuse for his treachery, that, when he had first been received within the town by its inhabitants, he had undertaken on oath to them, without foreseeing the consequences, that he would never surrender the city to anyone except the duke's son Louis, and since the latter was only a little boy, this [was to be done] in ten years' time. This implied that his breach of the fealty which he had sworn to the duke was a matter of less consequence and shame than the oath which he had sworn to perjured and treacherous men! So greed and ambition, and the evil counsels of his wife, had blinded the young man's mind, and seduced him away from the true and honest path.

The duke raised a large force of cavalry and infantry from all over Apulia, and his brother Bohemund came to help him with the people of Taranto, Otranto and the other places belonging to him, and he then moved into the Val di Crati, towards Castrovillari.

The count brought many thousand Saracens from Sicily, together with a large force of Christian cavalry and infantry from Calabria, and made haste to meet his nephew there.

Realising that these men of authority had joined together against him and were threatening to besiege him, William de Grandmesnil prepared to defend himself as best he could. But while he strove to secure help from every side, and although it is usual for young men willingly to involve themselves in, and indeed actively to seek out, such activity through a desire to gain a military reputation, they were so afraid of the anger of the count and duke that they were reluctant to join him, despite promises of great rewards. This was especially the case since they very much feared that fortune would be against him because he was at fault, and this would rebound against him to his disgrace.

When the count arrived in the Val di Crati, the duke supported him. He went to the *castrum* called S. Marco and received its surrender, making an agreement with the citizens that they would never, while the count lived, return it to William. Then he went on to Rossano, for since William had caused offence there by taking the sons of the leading citizens as hostages, the inhabitants were by means his supporters. However a year earlier, on the death of the Greek archbishop, the duke had caused a Latin successor to be elected, against the wish of the Greeks who were in the majority in that town. Since the election of the Latin had not yet been confirmed by consecration, it was now quashed, and the duke conceded that they might freely elect an archbishop from their own Greek race; hence he obtained their support and they surrendered the town to him. But William's supporters defended the citadel against his attacks, and he was unable to capture it.

The count and his army arrived, and the duke, who had already made significant gains, was overjoyed. The count set up his camp next to the *castrum* of Tarsia, above the river which flows on to S. Marco, where the duke had already pitched his tents. William came here on the count's invitation, after being promised a safe conduct to the meeting. He used all sorts of excuses to justify his treacherous conduct and his retention of what he had seized, but once again was unable to get his own way, faced with the counter-arguments of men of good sense. He was persuaded, on the count's advice, to offer restitution to the duke. The duke however demanded his legal rights, maintaining that before William was

reconciled to him he should acknowledge the duke's jurisdiction, which he had for a long time defied, as defined by his oath and promise of fealty, and be judged by the count and the other prudent men who were present. William was aware of his guilt, and afraid that the judgement would weigh heavily upon him. When he refused, he was given permission to leave and returned safely to Castrovillari.

The next morning the duke and count, along with their whole army, followed him and laid siege to the *castrum*, blockading it on every side with their troops and a palisade. By preventing any access or anything being brought in, they made Castrovillari's inhabitants, who had very little food within the walls, suffer. After three weeks of enemy pressure they were in a bad way, having exhausted what they had to eat. William then promised to do what he had been previously asked and acknowledge the duke's jurisdiction, requesting that he might be allowed to do this. In fulfillment of this, since he did not have guarantors for a plea in the duke's court, he placed in pledge the *castra* he held from him, which would remain in the duke's power until the appointed day when the legal case was heard. The count guaranteed that, should he win the case, his *castra* would be returned to him. On the day when the case was to be heard, they foregathered at the chosen place, and the duke outlined his charges against William. The latter was clearly in the wrong, and after a few speeches it was judged by those there that what he held from the duke should be confiscated. While he tried to dispute the verdict, he had very little chance, or law on his side. His lands were confiscated, and he and his wife travelled to the Emperor of Constantinople; there he remained for a while, before finally returning with a large sum of money, and being reconciled with the duke - a gentle and merciful man. He then recovered the land he had lost, except for the *castrum* of S. Marco.

(23) After quarrels had raged between Pope Urban and Henry, the Emperor of the Germans, various disputes arose between Henry's son Conrad and his father, which are too long to discuss in full here. Conrad angrily abandoned his father and went to the pope and to the Marchioness Matilda, who was the latter's faithful supporter, urgently seeking their assistance for the rebels in Italy. Since he was young and unmarried, and he lacked the financial resources needed for the project he had begun, on the advice of the pope and the said Marchioness Matilda he sent Count Conrad to act as his envoy in asking that a

daughter of the Count of Sicily and Calabria be given to him in marriage. The pope also sent a letter to the count, as his *familiaris* and friend, to secure this, urging him to grant the request and saying that it would be to his great honour and future profit if his daughter was to be united in marriage to the king's son; that the young man was a faithful servant of the Roman Church, but lacked the finances to oppose the father who was unjustly fighting against him. Endowed with the resources that a father ought to give to a son, he would be strong enough to defeat the enemies of the Holy Church of God.

On receiving this embassy and having read through the pope's letter in its support, the count consulted his trusted advisers [*fideles*], and particularly Bishop Robert of Troina, from whom he sought all his information about Conrad, for the bishop was an Italian and well-informed about that area. Then he granted what was requested, and had what was to occur confirmed by oaths from both sides. Once the day of the marriage was decided, Count Conrad hurried back whence he had come, weighed down with many gifts from Count Roger; and rushed to announce the results of his embassy to his eager lord, who rejoiced greatly that the marriage had been agreed. After everything had been prepared which was needed for this ceremony, Count Roger then had his daughter, richly endowed with valuable treasures, brought to Pisa by the Bishop of Troina and other barons, accompanied by a substantial fleet; there the king's son met her and gave her a most honourable reception, the dowry was handed over and the marriage celebrated, in the year from the Incarnation of the Word 1095.

(24) Duke Roger was still young and had no suspicions against anybody, but judged the minds of others by the honesty of his own heart. So he treated Lombards equally with Normans, since he himself was from the former people on his mother's side, and believing them faithful to him did not notice their dislike of our race, thus he entrusted castles to them to guard just as he did to Normans. Hence it happened that without thought for himself he did this at Amalfi, and so the inhabitants did as they liked with the town, and with the castle which Guiscard had built there to restrain their treacherous behaviour. Given every opportunity to exercise their deceit, they threw off the yoke of our race and of the duke, since he was the principal agent of our rule, paid neither the tribute nor the service agreed,

and when the duke himself went to their city they expelled all those faithful to him and arrogantly denied him entry.

Seeing what harm this had brought upon him, Duke Roger now regretted his former trust in them, and sought the advice of the count and of his other advisers as to how to subjugate them. Thus he granted his uncle the count a half share of the city in return for his very substantial help, if they were able to conquer it. An army of knights and a fleet was raised from all over Apulia and Calabria, and he hastened there most eagerly with a large force of infantry, in the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1096. They laid siege to the city on every side, blockading it from the sea with their ships, and carefully arranging the cavalry and infantry along the steep mountains which surrounded it, doing this on the instructions and through the work of the count. The city was so closely pressed that they would, so we think, have certainly captured it had there not occurred an unfortunate event, details of which we shall outline below.

Bohemond had been summoned by the duke, and gave the appearance of coming to his assistance, although in fact he did him more harm than good. However we do not think that this was on purpose. For in that same year, on the instructions of Pope Urban, an expedition to Jerusalem was recruited on a massive scale from every land. Bohemond had previously, along with his father Guiscard, invaded Romania, and had always wanted to conquer it for himself. Seeing a great multitude of people travelling through Apulia but lacking a leader, he hastened there, and wishing to be the army's leader and to make them his followers, he placed the badge of this expedition, namely the cross, on his garments.

The warlike young men of the whole army, both from the duke's part and the count's, were keen on anything new as is the custom nowadays, and when they saw Bohemond's cross and were summoned by him to follow his example, they eagerly flocked to do so. Hence they assumed the cross, and immediately bound themselves by a vow to make no further attack on any Christian land until they had reached the land of the pagans. Seeing the greater part of their army desert them in this way, the duke and the count sadly disbanded the expedition; and so the city which had been so weakened as to be close to surrender was saved by this unfortunate occurrence. Bohemond crossed the sea, the duke

retired to Apulia, the count returned to Sicily, and the Amalfitans rejoiced at the lifting of the siege.

(25) Meanwhile King Coleman of the Hungarians had heard of the reputation of Roger, the glorious count of the Sicilians, and sent envoys requesting that he might be granted his daughter in marriage. Although the men who had come on this mission were respectable enough, the count sent them politely away. But lest the matter miscarry entirely, he sent with them some of his own men with a message that, if the king wished to complete what he had set in motion, he should send to confirm the proposal other men of greater rank and authority, whose words would carry greater conviction. The king was very keen to carry out this project, and so he [now] sent Bishop Arduin of Győr and Count Thomas to negotiate on this issue. The count gave them an honourable reception, keeping them with him while he despatched trustworthy and experienced men from among those at Palermo, to secure sworn confirmation from the most important men of that country that what had been requested would be fulfilled. The king willingly agreed to this, and confirmed through oaths by his duke, Alivus, and all the other men of high rank that all the terms that he had suggested would be fulfilled. He then rewarded the count's envoys and sent them back to announce that the agreement was confirmed. On receiving his men's report, the count detained the king's envoys no further and after rewarding them generously sent them away, informing the king of the date when he would despatch his daughter to him.

So in May of the year from the Incarnation of the Lord 1097, when all the preparations needed had been made, he sent Bishop Henry of Nicastro and some of his *fideles*, along with three hundred knights, to Termini, to accompany the girl from there by sea to Palermo. There she and the large wedding party boarded the ships which had been made ready and set sail. A favourable wind blew and they were borne across the sea until they arrived safely at the port of Zara, which is under the rule of the King of Hungary. There Vincurius, the Count of Belgrade, who had been sent with five thousand armed men, met them. He received the girl and those who accompanied her in the proper manner and escorted them to the king.

The king's marriage was proclaimed throughout Hungary [*Pannonia*], and men flocked in from every region with tribute. It was the king's custom always to be accompanied by a large and numerous following, but the news of the marriage and a wish to see the new queen brought together an even greater crowd than usual. On the chosen day the girl's dowry was publically exhibited, as was the royal custom, and in the presence of archbishops, bishops and persons of every rank the king and queen were betrothed to each other in the catholic manner. The marriage ceremonies were celebrated in tents and huts made from green boughs, for no building was large enough to contain such a multitude. After the nuptials had been performed according to royal custom, the king had the Bishop of Nicastro and those who had come with him remain at his court for some time before they journeyed home, but when he saw that they were anxious to return he generously rewarded them and allowed them to leave. They went to the port and made haste to go home by sea.

They were already close to our people's shores and could see the coast in the distance when the bishop's ship, on which there were virtually no armed men, was attacked by two pirate ships, of the type called galleys. The sailor who steered the ship was hit by a javelin and killed, and with the steering oar unmanned the ship was in danger of sinking. The bishop lacked warriors to protect him but had no intention of surrendering to the enemy, so he prayed for the help of God and encouraged his companions. While he was doing this, he said, among other things, 'God, if because of my sins I do not really deserve a favourable hearing, at least grant me this through the grace which you have so many times in the past shown to Tancred's descendants! For I am in this dangerous situation in the service of his son!' As soon as he had said this, the wind blew, his ship was carried away from the enemy and they were saved, seeing their ship, even though it lacked a helmsman, carried by the speeding waves over the water at high speed on a direct path to a nearby island, going faster than the enemy ships which were following it using their sails and oars. Thus they were guided, so we believe, by the direct intervention of the Almighty, to gain a quiet harbour safely, even though this harbour has a narrow and dangerous entrance, thick with sandbanks, and allows access to the island only when a ship is guided in by experienced sailors. The disappointed enemy retired, and they sailed on over a favourable sea in the direction they wanted until they came to the count, to whom they recounted what had happened to them.