The Church (828-900)

[136] No consideration of the decay of the Carolingian system in the Midi and Catalonia would be complete without special attention being paid to the Church, which was, as we have noted, an integral part of this system. Charlemagne and Louis the Pious had helped to make the Church of these regions a powerful force by placing most archbishoprics, bishoprics, and abbeys under special royal protection, endowing them with tracts of land belonging to the royal fisc, and giving them special privileges. The most important of such privileges were the immunities which freed important churchmen and their domains from interference from counts and their agents, which allowed them to maintain a court system separate from that of the secular authorities in many ways, and which in effect gave them authority over many laymen who were dependent upon them. As a result, archbishops, bishops, and abbots south of Poitou and Burgundy were, during this period, men possessing great power, in practice -- if not in theory -- often sharing authority over local regions with those counts and viscounts who nominally controlled them in the name of the monarch.

Recognizing the importance of such churchmen in the empire Louis the Pious like Charlemagne had followed the policy of tying them to him personally by having them take the special oath of fidelitas required of counts and vassi dominici, which in certain respects made the domains of important church officials honores and the churchmen themselves vassi or fideles of the monarch. In addition to their responsibilities and loyalty to a church organization, then, such churchmen had a special and personal tie which bound them to Carolingian rulers -- in some ways more important than that which linked them to a distant Pope in Rome.

From 828 on Carolingian rulers of the Midi and Catalonia continued to maintain, in effect, this same system and, as a matter of fact, seem to have found the Church a much more dependable basis of support than their secular officials and organization. Pepin II or Charles the Bald, Carloman, or even Eudes was always ready to give protection and support to the Church and could generally count upon its support in turn. Despite this fact, however, changes had taken place in the Southern French and Catalan Church by the year 900 -- changes not only in regard to the Church's organization and authority, but also in its relationship to the monarchs who lived north of the Loire. Civil wars, invasions, and the rise to authority of independent noble families affected the Church as they did the secular system of courts, administration, and military organization. The Church which emerged by the first years of the tenth century in many ways was not the same Church which we find in 828.

Until well into the reign of Charles the Bald, however, changes which took place in the Church seem less apparent than those in other parts of the Carolingian governing system or even in the society of the Midi and Catalonia. St. Benedict of Aniane and his successors among the important churchmen of the century continued to support the Carolingian rulers of the empire, and in return the Church's privileges and power were maintained by such monarchs to the best of their ability. In fact, down to the time of Hincmar of Rheims the Church was the strongest bulwark of support for the monarchy, and the
monarchy was fully cognizant of this fact.(3)

Nowhere do we see this more dearly revealed than in an examination of the monastic establishments of the period. As we have noted, the years between 778 and 828 saw a monastic revival in the Midi and Spanish March. With the full backing of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, older abbeys were reformed and reconstituted and new ones established south of the Loire and of Burgundy, especially in Aquitaine, Septimania, the Spanish March, and even in Gascony. In most parts of the Midi and Catalonia this continued to be true after 828 also. In Aquitaine, for instance, [138] not only were the privileges of older establishments renewed by Carolingian rulers, but new or reconstituted abbeys were set up with royal approval and privileges, like Saint-Chaffre du Monastier in Velay, Saint-Jean d'Angély in Saintonge or Saint-Cybard of Poitiers.(4)

Even more interesting is the continued founding of new abbeys in Catalonia. It was early in this period that Saint-Clement of Regulla in Roussillon, Saint-Medir in Gerona, Eixalada in Confluent, Saint-Martin des Escoules in Besalu, and Saint-Salvador in Urgell[5] were founded. A few years later, about 866, another, Santa-Julia del Mont was added. Charles the Bald bestowed on each of these new monasteries generous grants of land from the royal fisc and many other privileges. He was equally generous to the cathedral churches of this region and to other abbeys, old and new, further west in Pallars and Ribagorça.(7)

Soon after 840, however, in Gascony, in parts of Western Aquitaine and in Provence this monastic revival came to a halt and a decline set in. It seems clear that in the former two regions this was due to Viking invasions which bore particularly heavily upon monastic establishments which seem to have represented rich prizes and sources of booty for Norse raiders. Those monasteries which were destroyed during the years 844-852, or a Saint-Cybard of Angoulême sacked in 875, (8) illustrate the damage done during the course of Viking raids. No wonder the monks of Saint-Hilaire of Poitiers moved to the interior to escape the Vikings who ravaged their cloister.(9) Nor were abbeys alone disorganized by such attacks. Even Archbishop Frotaire thought it wiser to abandon his see of Bordeaux and, about 870, to seek refuge in the interior also. (10) As a result a number of abbeys like Saint-Jean d'Angély disappear from our records not to reappear until the next century.

It seems clear that the weak Gascon monastic movement was also adversely affected by Viking attacks and the disorders of the period. Not one Gascon abbey founded in Carolingian times appears to have survived [139] into the tenth century. They simply disappeared.(11) The secular church organization seems to have been disorganized by this period of disorders as well. Not only did the archbishopric of Bordeaux cease to function, but so did that of Auch, further in the interior, whose cathedral church was still in ruins early in the tenth century. (12) Whether other bishoprics continued in existence is uncertain. No wonder the relics of Sainte-Foi were brought to Conques about 878 for safekeeping. (13) There was no security for them in Gascony.

It seems probable that in Provence and the lower Rhone Valley Moslem pirate attacks had a similar bad effect on monasteries and upon the Church in general. Soon after 850 such attacks seem to have caused the monks of Psalmodi to leave their abbey and take refuge farther west in Septimania.(14) Lérins ceased for a period after 830 to keep charters,(15) and Saint-Victor of Marseille entered a period which can only be described as one of decadence. (16) Whether all of the above, however, was due to Moslem pirate activities is very questionable. As some historians have pointed out, some of it was the result of a general insecurity found in these regions after 828, particularly in the countryside far from the protective walls of the castra and civitates of the region. Monastic establishments in rural areas were adversely affected by such disorders, whatever their origin. (17) Any monastic revival which had
occurred stopped in Provence and in many cases abbeys which were in existence simply disappeared.

[140] It would be wise, however, not to generalize from such areas about the Midi as a whole. For in regions not affected by such conditions there is ample evidence that older monasteries continued to grow after 840 and that new ones were founded. This seems true of Aniane, Gellone, Conques, Lagrasse, Saint-Hilaire, Montolieu, Arles, Brioude, Saint-Chaffre, Savigny, Moissac, and Saint-Sernin of Toulouse[18] -- to name only [141] a few of the established ones which have left records for us. As for new ones, the best examples of this development are Tulle and Beaulieu in the Limousin, Aurillac in Auvergne and Vabres in the Albigeois,[19] which were all the result of pious foundations by the leading magnates and churchmen of Aquitaine during this period. A reconstituted Saint-Barnard de Romans in Dauphiny and Saint-André-le-Bas outside Vienne[20] represent the same tendency in the Middle Rhone Valley region. Toward the end of the century in Catalonia when Counts Miró and Guifred had reestablished control over this region, we find new abbeys being founded, like Cuxa to which the abbey of Eixalada was transferred in 879, and nearby Ripoll and Saint-Joan de les Abadesses, as well as Saint-Paul de Fontclara in Gerona and Santa-Cecilia de Elms in Urgell.[21] The decline of Carolingian authority which took place, then, did not result in an end of the monastic revival in many parts of the Midi and of Catalonia. Rather the movement seems to have kept an amazing vitality and ability to spread into certain regions.

[142] Newly founded abbeys, like old ones, continued to seek and to receive charters assuring them of royal privileges and royal protection even when the actual authority of the Carolingians had become rather nominal in many parts of the Midi and Catalonia. Witness Charles the Bald's charters given to Vabres in 863, to Brioude in 874, to Caunes (Aude) in 875, Lagrasse and Saint-Chaffre in 876, and Dovera in 877;[22] or Louis le Bègue's to Arles-sur-Teche in Vallespir in 878;[23] or Carloman's charters given Arles (Auch), Santa-Cecilia de Elms, and Saint-Polycarpe in Razes in 881 and to Beaulieu in 882.[24] Nor did this end with a new Capetian line, for we have Eudes' diploma for Montolieu dating from 888 and ones for Saint-Polycarpe in Razes, Saint-Paul de Fontclara, and Beaulieu[25] in 889 as well as Charles the Simple's charters given Saint-Joan de les Abadesses in 899 and Saint-Jacques-de-Joucan in 900.[26]

Royal charters, those given late in the period and earlier ones too, did more than assure the recipients of immunities and royal privileges. They represent a continuing policy of distributing land belonging to the royal fisc to such establishments and to the churches of these regions -- especially vacant and uncultivated land which needed settlement. This policy, of course, antedates the reign of Charles the Bald. In 828, for instance, we find Pepin I of Aquitaine giving two villas to the abbey of Montolieu and in 835 adding another on the plea of Count Oliba I of Carcassonne.[27] Three years later he gave to Conques a villa called Fiscellum, a significant name, as well as an important tract of forest land and four other villas.[28] Meanwhile in 834 the Emperor Lothaire also bestowed property on the church of Elne in Roussillon, consisting of certain "villas ex heremo."[29] At the same time his father Louis the Pious was giving the same type of land to the abbey of San-Salvador in Urgell.[30]

These earlier gifts of royal fiscal land to abbeys, however, seem rather insignificant in comparison with the bounty which began to be distributed by Charles the Bald soon after his accession. Probably Charles' gifts of [143] land from the royal fisc were due to the fact that he was competing for Church support in the Midi and Catalonia with his rival, Pepin II of Aquitaine. Whatever the causes, however, it was in the year 844 that his activities in this respect were most noticeable. In this year he gave royal property to the abbey of Psalmodi in the Camargue, to the church of Narbonne, to Caunes, Saint-Hilaire, and Saint-Polycarpe in the Carcassonne region and to Saint-Clainian on the borders of the Toulousain.[31] Nor were church establishments in Catalonia neglected. Saint-Clement of Regulla in
Besalú and San-Senterada in Urgell received similar royal gifts, as did Saint-André de Sureda, Saint-Peter of Albaniya and the church of Gerona. In answer to Charles' generosity, in 845 Pepin II gave land from the royal fisc to Saint-Chaffre du Monastier (Haute-Loire) and gave to Bishop Stodile and the canons of the church of Saint-Etienne of Limoges two villas belonging to the royal fisc.

Judging from extant charters a slackening of royal distribution of property then ensued, for down to 864 we learn of only two gifts of royal lands to abbeys, one to Saint-Clement of Regulla in 850, and a large number of villas in the Narbonne region and in Confluent, Gerona, Ampurias, and Besalú added to the patrimony of the abbey of Lagrasse in 855. Later in Charles' reign, however, he continued to endow abbeys with land belonging to the royal fisc. In 864 he gave a villa to Beaulieu in the Limousin and two years later the Catalan abbey of Santa-Julia del Mont was the recipient of similar generosity. In 876 Beaulieu again received royal land as did Saint-Velesius of Albi; and in this year and 877 so did Lagrasse and the abbey of Dovera in the Vivarais.

Charles' death in 877 did not halt this policy, for his immediate successors continued to follow it. In 878 King Louis le Bègue gave fiscal land to the abbey of Arles in Vallespir and to the churches of Gerona and Barcelona, while in 881 Carloman did the same for the church of Narbonne, and the abbeys of Arles (Auch), Saint-Polycarpe in Razès and Santa-Cecilia in Urgell. The next year in 882 he conferred a grant of royal villas on the abbey of Beaulieu. The accession of Eudes did not change matters either. Though Eudes had little authority over the Midi and Catalonia, he did not hesitate to give royal property to Montolieu in 888 or to add new gifts to the patrimony of Saint-Polycarpe in Razès and to newly founded Saint-Paul de Fontclara in 889. In the Valley of the Rhone his rivals and contemporaries adopted a similar policy, for we find King Boson in 887 giving the bishop of Maurienne a castle and surrounding territory, and his son, King Louis, endowing the church of Saint-Etienne of Lyon in 892 with a number of villas. When Charles the Simple's accession to power brought the Carolingians back into authority, he, too, continued such distribution of property to ecclesiastical establishments. In 898, he gave three villas and a piece of woodland to the church of Roussillon and a year later gave other royal rights and fiscal land to the churches of Gerona and Narbonne. If the royal fisc south of Poitou and Burgundy was exhausted by 900, it was in no small measure due to the lavish endowments given the Church by monarchs between the year 828 and the end of the century.

In the light of the above it seems almost paradoxical to insist that the last years of the ninth century saw actual royal authority over many of the monasteries and churches of the Midi and Catalonia in a state of eclipse. By this time it was the important families of their regions rather than the monarchs who had become the principal patrons and proprietors of such monasteries and churches. Not that either refused to accept royal bounty. They did not. But the situation had definitely changed. It seems clear, for instance, that Vabres, despite its royal charter, was controlled and protected by the house of Toulouse-Rouergue, and that Brioude, except for a brief period, was under the control of that of Auvergne, just as the counts of Turenne at first occupied a similar position in regard to Beaulieu. In Catalonia San-Cugat, Saint-Joan de les Abadesses, Cuxa, and Ripoll were all under the protection of the family of Count Guifred. Like the honores, which they came to control as hereditary counts, the abbeys, too, came under the control of the leading families of the Midi and the Spanish March who by 900 had replaced the monarchs in their role as protectors and patrons of such establishments. What is important to emphasize, however, is that this change did not stop monastic growth in most parts of these regions. Rather, it continued.
Despite the continued existence and growth of a number of older monastic establishments and the founding of new ones after 828, though, it would not be exact to assume that all was well with abbeys and churches which were located in regions not subject to Viking attack or raids by Moslem pirates. Nothing could be further from the truth. Growth did exist and so did new foundations which were the result of the piety of prominent laymen. But at the same time, our records reveal that during these years Church lands presented a temptation to avaricious rulers, officials, and magnates who often encroached upon them and usurped such land for their own use and that of their supporters.

We have many examples of this. For instance, in Provence we hear of the usurpation of a teloneum belonging to the abbey of Saint-Victor of Marseille by Count Adalbert about 845 and of the loss of lands near Fréjus by the same abbey several decades later. We hear of a villa taken unjustly from Psalmodi by Count Bernard of Septimania in 844 and of another at Bizago belonging to the church of Nîmes twice taken by avaricious magnates, once in 876 and again in 892. This same church was victimized by a certain Rostagnus in 898, who seems to have seized one of its churches. Further north in the Valley of the Rhone in the 860's Count Gerald of Vienne seems to have seized domains belonging to the church of Viviers, and at about the same period Lothaire II of Lorraine usurped four villas belonging to the church of Saint-Etienne of Lyon.

About 840 our documents reveal to us the loss of land belonging to Aniane as the result of its seizure by a neighboring landowner and the usurpation by a count of property near Béziers belonging to the archbishop of Narbonne. Such usurpations seem to have been so extensive that about 881 the archbishopric of Narbonne is reported reduced to penury. Other nearby church property at Béziers was taken by Viscount Rainald a little before 897. To the east around Carcassonne the abbey of Caunes was forced to institute lawsuits in 855 and 875 before it was able to regain land taken from it by local landowners, as was Montolieu in 862 and 898 and Saint-Hilaire in 883. In the case of Montolieu's suit in 898 the guilty party seems to have been Count Oliba II of Carcassonne. To the south we learn that Lagrasse was victimized in a similar fashion by a landowner of Confluent in 865, Eixalada in Roussillon in 868, and the abbey of Arles (Auch) about 875 when its land was usurped in Vallespir. In the latter year the church of Emé seems to have lost some of its property in the same way. So did the church of Barcelona according to a complaint made to Charles the Bald in 874.

There are records which show similar incidents taking place in Aquitaine. In the Albigeois we hear of a certain Leopardo, a vassus dominicus who attempted to take over the domains of the abbey of Velesius about 870 and of a certain Teutbert who usurped a villa belonging to the church of Angoulême in 868 and of a similar loss suffered by Karissima, abbess of Saint-Sernin of Albi in 878. In the Limousin it was a vassus of the bishop of Limoges, Stodile, who in 851 appears to have been illegally in possession of land belonging to the opus of Saint-Etienne of Limoges, just as in 870 it seems that the newly founded Beaulieu has lost a church by usurpation to a certain Adon or Aton. Between 882 and 886 it was the family of the counts of Toulouse who seem to have taken from this abbey the important villa of Orbaciaco, which was given to the monastery by Charles the Bald in 876 and confirmed as its possession by Carloman in 882. Such examples tell the story clearly. Everywhere in Southern France and Catalonia during these years usurpation of church lands continued and represented a constant threat to religious establishments.

Important as it is to note such usurpations, it is equally important to emphasize something else -- the fact that few succeeded permanently. Again and again we find churches and abbeys in our regions able
to recover land they had lost to rapacious magnates, officials, and rulers. This, for instance, seems to have been true in almost every case mentioned above. How was this managed? Often it was the result of action taken by the monarchs of the period, a Charles the Bald, a Charles of Provence, a Carloman, a Louis of Provence or a Charles the Simple,\(^{(78)}\) who intervened \(\Box 148\) and by specific charter forced the return of lands which had been usurped. Sometimes we find an important nobleman, like the count of Toulouse or count of Rouergue helping to institute legal proceedings which resulted in the return of such property.\(^{(79)}\) Such seems to have been the case with property belonging to Montolieu in 898\(^{(80)}\) or Notre Dame of Nîmes in 892.\(^{(81)}\) Sometimes property was returned as the result of the activities and influence of an important churchman like Archbishop Frotaire of Bourges or Archbishop Arnulf of Narbonne.

At this point it might be worthwhile to examine in some detail the activities of certain of these churchmen in attempting to protect the patrimony of the churches and abbeys of the Midi and Catalonia. These may reveal something of the forces at work in our regions and reactions to such forces on the part of the Church. In 874 we suddenly learn from our documents that the abbey of Brioude, which had long been under the control of the counts of Auvergne and which had been exploited by them, is now controlled by Archbishop Frotaire of Bourges.\(^{(82)}\) Almost immediately we find the abbey given a most interesting charter by Charles the Bald in which he takes this monastery under his royal protection and specifically allows it to elect its own abbot.\(^{(83)}\) Frotaire must have been the choice of the monks of Brioude, for charters down to 893 speak of him as abbot, until in that year Duke William the Pious of Aquitaine regained control as lay abbot.\(^{(84)}\) For two decades, then, Archbishop Frotaire and his successors were able to protect Brioude from one of the most powerful noble families of the Midi. Nor was Archbishop Frotaire active only in protecting Brioude. We find him doing the same for the abbey of Beaulieu in the Limousin. We have already noted how some time between 882 and 886 the family of Toulouse usurped a royal villa given Beaulieu by Charles the Bald. Yet in 886 we find Frotaire intervening in the \(\Box 149\) matter. He does so by purchasing this villa for some thirty pounds of silver from those who had taken it,\(^{(85)}\) and then makes certain that both Bernard and Raymond of Toulouse attest to a charter of 887 in which he returns it to Beaulieu.\(^{(86)}\) In 884 he is even active in protecting church establishments in distant Provence. For in this year a charter given by King Carloman, in which he orders the return of lands in Fréjus taken from Saint-Victor of Marseille, mentions that he does so on the plea of Archbishop Frotaire.\(^{(87)}\)

Equally instructive is evidence of similar activities by Arnulf, archbishop of Narbonne a little later in the century. It would probably not be in error to consider that Archbishop Arnulf's influence was responsible for the return of land usurped from his opus in Béziers and for the efforts which resulted in the recovery of lands which Viscount Rainald gave back to the church of Béziers in 897.\(^{(88)}\) We might well consider him also as in no small measure responsible for Montolieu's successful suit against Count Oliba II of Carcassonne in 898.\(^{(89)}\) Whatever the facts concerning the above, however, we do know he made a serious effort to protect not only his own church's possessions but also those of his province. He did so by procuring from Charles the Simple, a charter in 899 which not only forbade laymen, counts, and others to interfere with the church of Narbonne but which also put all bishops and abbots of the region under this monarch's direct protection. And, interesting to note, Charles states that he does so on the plea of Archbishop Arnulf.\(^{(90)}\) Like Archbishop Frotaire, Archbishop Arnulf was enlisting the aid of the monarch and others to protect his Church from lay usurpation.

Still a third interesting example from this later period concerns the church and bishop of Nîmes. In 876 our records inform us that a certain local magnate had usurped a villa, called Bizago, belonging to the church of Nîmes. Bishop Gislebert regained it, after a lawsuit.\(^{(91)}\) Yet in 892 it seems that another
magnate, a certain Genesius, had taken it illegally, claiming that King Eudes had given it to him. According to our sources, Bishop Gislebert went to see King Eudes, found him hunting and poured out his complaints against Genesius’ usurpation. He ascertained that Eudes had made no such gift to Genesius and got Eudes to send a letter to Count Raymond of Rouergue, the overlord of Nîmes, who in turn sent letters to this effect to his viscount, Allidaf. Allidaf held a court which considered the case, and the testimony of Bishop Gislebert and the letters of King Eudes and Count Raymond proved conclusive. Genesius was forced to return Bizago to the church of Nîmes. 

These examples show how important churchmen used their influence and that of rulers and courts to prevent a spoilation of the Church. But they do not mean that other methods were not also used to protect Church lands. Whenever possible this sort of assistance was solicited by hard-pressed bishops and abbots, particularly late in this period. More normal, however, was another procedure. This was to get land which had been usurped given back by a local tribunal, presided over by a count or his representative. Most of the restitutions of Church lands came in this fashion. There were certain reasons for this fact. In the first place, a local tribunal would be more cognizant of the pertinent facts in a case and have a greater interest in the outcome than some more distant authority far from the scene. Even more important, such a court containing, as it always did during these years, the important landowners of the region as judices or boni homines, provided a forum which represented local public opinion. Such public opinion, in a period when government was breaking down, was probably the most important weapon which a church or abbey could enlist to force avaricious laymen to disgorge the Church property which they were occupying. Already, especially in a case we find in Angoulême in 868, the Church in the Midi and Catalonia was making use of procedures which were to lead to the guirpitos that in the next century were a major protection of their property and their rights.

We might sum up the question of usurpation of Church lands in this period, then, as follows. As government broke down we have ample evidence that usurpation of Church property took place in every part of the Midi and Catalonia with counts, viscounts, rulers, and simple landowners as the guilty parties. At the same time, except in Gascony, Western Aquitaine, and Provence, there is evidence that the Church in general was able to protect itself against such loss of property with some degree of success. Using local tribunals, influential churchmen, sympathetic officials, and Carolingian and other rulers in various ways, down to 900 at least, the Church was able more often than not to secure the return of such property and to grow and expand its patrimony and influence in most of the regions which lay south of Poitou and Burgundy. Yet when all this has been said it still remains true that it was a very different Church which emerged into the tenth century from that which we find several decades earlier. That of 900, in contrast to the Church of 828, was already well on the way to being an institution taken over and becoming a part of the family system which controlled the machinery of secular government also. This, rather than outright usurpation, was the fate of abbey and bishopric in every part of the Midi and Catalonia.

Why was this so? Why did the Church avoid loss of its land by outright usurpation only to succumb to a different and more subtle sort of pressure by the end of this period? We must begin by reiterating the fact which was noted earlier, that the initial revival of Church power and monastic institutions in our regions was not solely the result of Carolingian interest. Local officials and important families played an important role in Church revival even before 828, witness St. Benedict of Aniane, Duke William of Toulouse, and the Gothic counts of Carcassonne and Catalonia and their relations. After 828, as real Carolingian authority over Southern France and the Spanish March declined, local participation in and control of the Church increased in importance. By the second half of the reign of Charles the Bald we can see a good deal of evidence of this. As we have noted, the counts of Toulouse not only founded Vabres. They became the custodes and defensores of this abbey, just as the Bernards of...
Auvergne did in the case of Brioude.\(^{(98)}\) Aurillac was identified with the counts of this region by its founder, St. Gerald.\(^{(99)}\) Not only did the counts of Turenne in the person of Rodulf, archbishop of Bourges assist Bishop Stodile of Limoges in founding Beaulieu. It remained almost a family affair for this line of counts throughout the century, even after they lost their exalted \(^{(100)}\) position. They also built a convent at Cahors whose first abbess was Irmena of their family.\(^{(101)}\) In 873 we find a church being consecrated in Capçir by the counts of Carcassonne and Cerdanya and by the archbishop of Narbonne -- all of whom seem to be members of the same family group.\(^{(102)}\) We have noted the independent course of Archbishop Frotaire, but we need also to emphasize that he was a kinsman of Counts Bernard and Raymond of the House of Toulouse.\(^{(103)}\)

By the last years of the century abbeys and churches had become completely entwined in the families of importance who dominated these regions. Sunifred, brother of Acfred I of Razés and Oliba II, was abbot of Lagrasse\(^{(104)}\) and another Sunifred, the brother of Counts Guifred and Miró, was abbot of Arles in Vallespir.\(^{(105)}\) When Count Guifred and his wife founded the nunnery of Saint-Joan de les Abadesses, they gave it to their daughter Emma who became the first abbess.\(^{(106)}\) By 899 we find that the bishopric of Maguelonne is held by one relative of Countess Guillaumette of Melgueil, while the other succeeds her as count.\(^{(107)}\) We hear of a Centulle as abbot of Saint-Polycarpe of Razès in 844 who seems obviously a member of a local Gascon noble family.\(^{(108)}\) and of a Rostagnus somewhat later, who served as abbot of Saint-Chaffre and who obviously comes from a family of importance in this part of the Rhone Valley.\(^{(109)}\) Gombard, bishop of Angoulême from 897 to 941, was a member of the comital family who controlled Angoulême and Périgord.\(^{(110)}\) The important lay prepositi of abbeys similarly tend more and more to represent important families in the regions where such monasteries are located. Witness the role of the viscounts of Limoges and Turenne as prepositi of [153] Tulle, Solignac, and other abbeys and of similar families who seem to be connected with the abbey of Brioude in Auvergne.\(^{(111)}\)

In addition to examples of the direct participation and interest of such families in the abbeys and churches of these regions we have still another type of evidence. This is provided by grants of land given by such establishments as precaria and benefices to important neighboring landowners. These also go back to earlier Carolingian times, but seem much more numerous after 828. Such grants were generally for a lifetime only and required only a nominal payment of a cens to the abbey or church in question. They do not seem to have represented the establishment of any military relationship or obligation between the recipient and the ecclesiastical grantor, but only a certain more general dependence on a client-patron basis. Perhaps, it is true, some precaria masked usurpation of church land. This seems particularly true of certain land given out in this manner by the abbey of Brioude in 846 and 864.\(^{(113)}\) Perhaps the precarium or benefice which the abbey of Lagrasse gave Countess Richelde for a twenty-year period in 837 represents the same thing.\(^{(114)}\)

But most other precaria of which we have a record seem quite different in character. Those granted by Savigny in 857, 858, 888, and 889,\(^{(115)}\) or those which Brioude gave out in 874, 888, and about 890\(^{(116)}\) are examples. So also are those in which individuals gave land to abbeys and churches but reserved the usufruct for the donor and his family upon the payment of an annual cens, which, in effect, established the same kind of client-patron relationship between the possessor of this property and the church establishment concerned.\(^{(117)}\) All mark the growth of abbeys and churches which protected or even controlled segments of the lay population and which in turn were protected by them. A beginning was being made toward the development of the powerful lord abbots and lord bishops of the next century who, through their family relationships and use of Church lands, were to dominate.
important portions of the Midi and Catalonia.

By 900, then, the Church in Southern France and the Spanish March had escaped from the danger of a crude usurpation of the land which belonged to it, only to succumb to what was to prove a more subtle form of control. Its abbeys and churches, like secular honores, had been absorbed in various ways into the system of family control of these regions, either through the institution of lay abbots, defensores, or custodes or because the bishops, archbishops, abbots, and prepositi were chosen from members of the dominant families in each region. The precatia given to representatives of the same families reinforced such bonds of interest and control. An independent Church in one sense of the word still existed, opposed to crude use of its lands by the laity and depending upon monarchs, important churchmen, and nobles friendly to it to protect it from such a fate.

But the battle, for all practical purposes, was actually already lost. For as local bishoprics and abbatia became filled with members of the local ruling families or their supporters, these families began to consider such positions as family property. Church honores, like secular ones, became a matter of family possession and family control. The Church in the Midi and Catalonia might and did continue to grow in the late ninth century, but it grew in a society which was subject to and part of the family control of regions in which its establishments were located. After 900, despite its struggles, the Church, like the governmental machinery of the Carolingian monarchy, had changed from an independent power exercised under the direction of a distant ruler, to one exercised by important families of these regions. It is this kind of Church which we will be examining in later chapters.

Notes for Chapter 8


3. On Church support for the Carolingians in this period see especially F. Lot and L. Halphen, Le règne de Charles le Chauve (842-877).


6. Ibid., pp. 219-221.

7. On privileges given to the church of Gerona see ibid., pp. 127-130. On those given churches of Pallars and Ribagorça see Abadal, Els Comtats de Pallars i Ribagorça and "Els precepts comtals carolingis per al Pallars," in Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona, XXVI (1954-1958).


9. Ibid., III, 19, p. 137.

10. Johannis VIII, Papae Epistolae, in Migne, Patrologia latina, CXXVI, no. 36.

11. See references to abbeys in Gascony by the Council of Aix in 815 or 816, in P. Labbé, Sacrosancta Concilia, IX, 603. None of these seem to have survived into the tenth century.


15. The last charters in this period from the Cartulaire de Lérins date from 824 (see Cart. de Lérins, nos. 247, 248). Then all is silence for more than a century and a half.

16. For Saint-Victor's cartulary we find only one charter (dating from 884) after 845. Then all is silence for decades. We know that in 923 the canons of Marseille settled in the abbey of Saint-Gervais near Pos (L. Albanes-Chevalier, Gallia Christiana Novissima, nos. 62, 76). This may account for this silence. See Cart. de Saint-Victor, no. 9, on the charter of 884.


18. On the land which Aniane possessed and its cellas which stretched through Septimania see the privileges of the abbey confirmed by Louis the Pious in 837 (Cart. d'Aniane, nos. 7, 13), and a charter of Charles the Bald (ibid., no. 41); for additional private gifts of land see ibid., nos. 55, 59, 61, 113, 123, 150, 306, 311, 313, 319, 412. Most of Gellone's charters which date from this period are of doubtful validity. On the problem of that abbey's lost charters see P. Tisset, L'abbaye de Gellone art diocese de Lodève, pp. 61 ff. See Cart. de Gellone, no. 113, on land given the abbey. The growth of Conques was slow until, in 838, Pepin I gave the abbey land which belonged to the royal fisc (Cart. de Conques, no. 581). Its next important gifts came from Bernard Plantavelee in 882 and 883 (ibid., nos. 4, 153); for other gifts see ibid., nos. 108, 212, 409. For Lagrasse see privileges and grants of land given it by Pepin I of Aquitaine in 838 in Cros-Meyrévielle, Documents, no. 12, and other royal bounty from Charles the Bald in 854 (Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, no. 140); in 855 and 876 (Cart. de Carcassonne, II, 264-266). For private gifts see ibid., pp. 214, 216, 217. Lagrasse in this period seems to be the most important abbey in Septimania, except perhaps for Aniane. Concerning property owned by Saint-Hilaire see privileges and land given this abbey in 844 (Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, no. 124) and in 855 (Cart. de Carcassonne, V, 59-60). See Pepin I's gifts of land to Montolieu in 828 (Cart. de Carcassonne, 1, 70-71) and those of Eudes in 888 (ibid., p. 75). On the growth of Arles see P. Ponsch, "Les origines de l'abbaye d'Arles," in Études Roussillonnaises, IV (1954-1955), 69-99. Brioude grew to become the most important abbey of Central France during this period, judging from its cartulary, which shows an accumulation of many small pieces of property as gifts (see Cart. de Brioude, nos. 13, 17, 19, 24, 26, 29, 43, 56, 60, 62, 77, 82, 85, 86, 95, 98, 102, 110, 116, 119, 126, 131, 144, 165, 168, 173, 182, 197, 199, 200, 207, 208, 210, 212, 215, 219, 225, 226, 227, 231, 240, 245, 254, 263, 269, 277, 278, 282, 283, 289, 297, 304, 309, 311; and Grand Cart. de Brioude, nos. CCLXXV, CCLXXXIV, CCCXII, CCCXLVII, CCCLIX, CCCLXXII, CCCXXXVII, CCC). For the privileges given Saint-Chaffre by Pepin II in 845 see Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, no. 128; for those given by Charles the Bald in 876 and 877 see Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Chaffre du Monastier, ed. U. Chevalier, nos. 33, 196, 430; for extensive private gifts of land to the abbey, some large, some small, see ibid., nos. 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 339, 386. Savigny's records for this period are incomplete due to their destruction early in the tenth century. See a partial record of property accumulation in Cart. de Savigny nos. 18, 19, 24, 26, 27. We know little about gifts of land to Moissac after the bishop of Cahors' extensive gift in 783 (Hist. Gén. de Lang., U, no. 7), except for a second large addition to the abbey's lands in 847 (ibid., II, no. 13). On the privileges which Charles the Bald gave to Saint-Sernin in 844 see Cart. de Saint-Sernin, no. 3.

19. We have only a few late ninth-century charters showing gifts of land to Tulle (Cart. de Tulle, nos. 45, 53, 457, 658). Beaulieu, which seems to have been the most important abbey in Central Aquitaine, has extremely full records. For royal charters giving privileges and land to the abbey see those of Charles the Bald in 859 (Cart. de Beaulieu, no. 5), in 864 (ibid., no. 4), in 876 (ibid., no. 19). See also
charters of Carloman in 882 (ibid., no. 8); and Eudes in 889 (ibid., no. 12). For the record of extensive private gifts to Beaulieu between 859 and 900 see ibid., nos. 1, 3, 4, 13, 17, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 33, 43, 45, 51, 52, 54, 55, 63, 68, 79, 81, 87, 112, 115, 127, 130, 131, 133, 140, 142, 152, 153, 155, 156, 157, 158, 161, 162, 165, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 175, 176, 177, 179, 183, 186. No charters survive from Aurillac, but we have an account of the founding of this abbey late in the century in Odo, Vita Sancti Geraldi Aurilacensis, in Migne, Patrologia latina, CXXXIII. Charters given Vabres in 863 and 870 by Charles the Bald are found in Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, nos. 159, 175. For other gifts of land to this abbey see ibid., nos. 160, 164, 186, 203.

20. Though Saint-Barnard de Romans was founded in 817 (Cart. de Saint-Barnard de Romans, no. 1), it is not until late in the century that we see any evidence of growth (ibid., nos. 3, 4). For Saint-André-le-Bas and its slow growth during this period see Cart. de Saint-André-le-bas, nos. 86, 137.


22. Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, no. 159 (Vabres), 197 (Dovera); Cart. de Brioude, no. 334 (Brioude); Cart. de Carcassonne, II, 216 (Lagrasse); IV, 72 (Caunes); Cart. de Saint-Chaffre, nos. 33, 196, 430, (Saint-Chaifre).


24. Cart. Roussillonais, no. 2; Catalunya Carolingia, II, 250-252; Hist. Gén. de Lang., V, no. 2; Cart. de Beaulieu, no. 8.


26. Catalunya Carolingia, II, 216-217; Cart. roussillonais, no. 3.


30. Ibid., pp. 246-248.

31. Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, nos. 122 (Psalmodi), 114 and 115 (Narbonne), 125 (Caunes), 124 (Saint-Hilaire), 172 (Saint-Polycarpe), 113 (Saint-Clinian).

32. Catalunya Carolingia, II, 180-182 (Saint-Clement), 263-265 (San.Senter. ada), 271-272 (Saint-André de Sureda), 5-8 (Saint-Peter), 127-130 (Geronia).


34. Cart. de Saint-Etienne de Limoges, no. 80.


37. Cart. de Beaulieu, no. 4.
38. *Hist. Gén. de Lang.*, II, nos. 219-221. See in this same year a charter referring to a gift of a *villa* to the *cella* of Saint-Vincent (*ibid.*, no. 167).

39. *Cart. de Beaulieu*, no. 9.

40. This grant of land *ex fiscos* to Saint-Velesius probably took place earlier than 870. In this year, however, it is mentioned in a case before a court presided over by Bernard, count and marquis (*Hist. Gén. de Lang.*, II, no. 174).


43. *Catalunya Carolingia*, II, 33-36; 131-134.

44. *Hist. Gén. de Lang.*, V, nos. 3 (Narbonne), 2 (Saint-Polycarpe); *Cart. roussillonnais*, no. 2 (Arles); *Catalunya Carolingia*, II, 250-252 (Santa-Cecilia).

45. *Cart. de Beaulieu*, no. 8.

46. *Cart. de Carcassonne*, I, 73 (Montolieu); *Hist. Gén. de Lang.*, V, no. 9 (Saint-Polycarpe); *Catalunya Carolingia*, II, 13-15 (Saint-Paul de Fontclara).

47. *Chartes de Maurienne*, no. 1.


50. In a charter of 862 referring to a gift he is giving to the abbey of Vabres, Count Raymond of Toulouse forbids a *king* or any other man to exchange this property he is giving to the abbey or grant it out as a benefice. This implies a certain control over this abbey by the Toulousain house. Indeed in this same charter Raymond says he and his son are the *defensores* of the abbey (*Hist. Gén. de Lang.*, II, no. 160). By 883 a charter refers to Count Bernard of Toulouse as its *custos* (*ibid.*, no. 203).

51. Between 846 and 869 charters of Brioude refer to Counts Bernard and Warm as lay abbots. In 893 lay control over the abbey by this same family of counts seems to have been re-established with Duke William as lay abbot (see *Cart. de Brioude*, nos. 98, 165, 208).

52. The case of Beaulieu is less clear than Brioude or Vabres, yet charters dating from 859, 860, 866, and 878 seem to show control over this abbey by the counts of Turenne and their family (see *Cart. de Beaulieu*, nos. 1, 3, 4, 19, 21, 33).


56. *Cart. de Nîmes*, no. 1, 5.


60. *Cart. d'Aniane*, no. 55.

62. Ibid.
63. Hist. Gén. de Lang., V. no. 18.
64. Cart. de Carcassonne, IV, 70-71, 192-193.
65. Ibid., I, 71-72, 73-74.
67. Ibid., II, no. 63, 165, 169.
68. Ibid., no. 189.
71. Cart. d'Angoulême, no. 37.
73. Cart. de Saint-Etienne de Limoges, no. 3.
74. Cart. de Beaulieu, no. 27.
75. On the villa of Orbiac now in the possession of the counts of Toulouse see ibid., nos. 2, 10.
76. Ibid., no. 9.
77. Ibid., no. 8.
78. For the example of a villa returned by Charles the Bald to Psalmodi in 844 see Hist. Gén. de Lang., II, no. 122. For those returned to the church of Viviers see ibid., no. 162. For others near Fréjus which in 884 were restored to the abbey of Saint-Victor see Cart. de Saint-Victor, no. 9. For still others returned by Charles of Provence see Cart. de Grenoble, no. 31. For a charter showing Charles the Simple's efforts to protect the domains of the archbishop of Narbonne see Catalunya Carolingia, II, 438-439.
79. For a charter showing the intervention of Count Bernard of Toulouse in the Limousin in 870 to help Beaulieu recover land which had been usurped see Cart. de Beaulieu, no. 27.
81. Cart. de Nîmes, no. 5.
82. Cart. de Brioude, no. 132.
83. Ibid., no. 334.
84. Ibid., no. 98.
85. Cart. de Beaulieu, no. 10.
86. Ibid., no. 11.
87. Cart. de Saint-Victor, no. 9.
88. See reference to fiscos usurped by a count in 881 in Hist. Gén. de Lang., V. no. 3, and to the return of land to the church of Béziers by the viscount in ibid., no. 18.
89. Cart. de Carcassonne, I, 73-74.
90. Catalunya Carolingia, II, 438-439. On other privileges given the archbishop by this monarch see ibid., pp. 109-111, 373-374.
91. *Cart. de Nîmes*, no. 1.
95. See *Vita Sancti Guilelmi ducis ac monarchi*, in *Acta Sanctorum*, May VI, cols. 811-820, and this work, Chapter III, Sec. II.
98. See note 51.
99. See *Odo, Vita S. Geraldi*.
100. *Cart. de Beaulieu*, nos. 17, 29, 46, 169, refers to later gifts of this family to this abbey.
103. *Cart. de Beaulieu*, no. 11.
105. See Abadal, *Els Primers Comtes Catalans*, pp. 13-24, for the ramifications of this family.
106. *El Archivo Condal de Barcelona*, no. 38. On Emma's relationship with Count Sunifred see *ibid.*, no. 10.
107. *Cart. de Maguelonne*, I, no. 3.
112. According to the *Cartulaire de Brioude* Adalgisius was *prepositus* in 846, in 859, and in 868, thus holding office for more than twenty years (*Cart. de Brioude*, nos. 56, 161, 172. In 874 we find a certain lctor called *custos* and *castellanus* (*ibid.*, nos. 132, 263). Then from 892 to 896 when control of Brioude was again in the hands of the counts of Auvergne we find a certain Eldefredus as *prepositus* (*ibid.*, nos. 82, 144, 181, 207).
113. See the gift of a large piece of the abbey's land by Count Bernard and the *prepositus* Adalgisius to a certain Eldefredus (who was probably the same man who had served as *preposirus* from 892-896) in return for one mansus (*Cart. de Brioude*, no. 172), and a similar exchange of property between Count Bernard and the abbot of Mozat in (*ibid.*, no. 176).
115. *Cart. de Savigny*, nos. 23 (857), 20 and 28 (858), 21 (888), 1 and 3 (889). See one also referred to in a charter of 883 in *ibid.*, no. 2.
116. *Cart. de Brioude*, nos. 132 (874) and 38 (888). For land given a certain Aton in 890 which
transformed this vassal into a man occupying a *precarium* which paid a *cens* to this abbey see *ibid.*, no. 60.

117. These are particularly numerous, as shown by charters, at Aniane, Beaulieu, and Brioude.