

## History, memory, and community in Cistercian Normandy (12th-13th centuries)

### Abstract

While the textual production of Normandy's Cistercian abbeys has not lacked for scholarly attention, a detailed study of Cistercian historical writing in the duchy remains to be written. This article looks in small part to fill this historiographical gap by examining those historical works produced in and copied by the Cistercian abbeys of Normandy between the beginning of the 12th and the end of the 13th centuries. In doing so, it aims to shed new light on the sorts of historical texts copied or written by Normandy's White Monks. It contextualises these works within the historiographical culture of both the duchy itself and the wider Cistercian world, and shows how the Cistercians of Normandy played a distinctive role in the transmission of key historical texts, among them the universal chronicle of Sigebert of Gembloux (c. 1030–1112) and Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*.

### Keywords

Cistercians, Normandy, historiography, memory, Einhard, Sigebert of Gembloux, annals, *gesta*, 12th century, 13th century

The historiographical culture of the Cistercians during the central Middle Ages has received little scholarly attention in comparison with that of their Benedictine counterparts. This article looks in small part to fill this historiographical gap by

examining those historical works produced in and copied by the Cistercian abbeys of Normandy between the beginning of the 12th and the end of the 13th centuries. It is inspired, to some extent, by the pioneering work of Elizabeth Freeman, who, in examining the historical writing produced by the White Monks of England between 1150 and 1220, argued that Cistercian works of history, if not as influential as the Order's distinctive spiritual writings, nevertheless played an important role in shaping the memory both of individual institutions and of the wider Cistercian world.<sup>1</sup>

As for Cistercian Normandy itself, its historical writing remains little-studied,<sup>2</sup> especially when compared to that of the duchy's Benedictine houses, despite the fact that the production of certain important historiographical texts – the *Chronicon Valassense*, the Mortemer cartulary-chronicle, the so-called *Chronicon Savigniacense* – can be attributed to Norman institutions. This is not to suggest, of course, that such texts have been completely overlooked. Indeed, the important information they contain has been referenced in numerous studies, including those aimed at

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Freeman, 'The Many Functions of Cistercian Histories, Using Aelred of Rievaulx's *Relatio de Standardo* as a Case Study', in *The Medieval Chronicle: Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Enk Kooper (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), pp. 124–132; Elizabeth Freeman, *Narratives of a New Order: Cistercian Historical Writing in England, 1150–1220* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002); Elizabeth Freeman, 'Aelred as a Historian Among Historians', in *A Companion to Aelred of Rievaulx (1110–1167)*, ed. Marsha Dutton (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 113–146.

<sup>2</sup> Recent work on Cistercian Normandy has focused above all on its architecture and archaeology: Jean-Baptiste Vincent, *Les abbayes cisterciennes de Normandie (XII<sup>e</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle): conception, organisation et évolution*, unpublished PhD thesis, 3 vols. (Université de Rouen, 2014); A. Dubois and Jean-Baptiste Vincent, 'L'abbaye cistercienne de Barbery (Calvados): liste abbatiale et restitution du bâti', *Annales de Normandie*, vol. 65, no. 1 (2015), pp. 39–151.

understanding Cistercian writing in a Norman context.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, a systematic study of the duchy's Cistercian historiographical works remains to be written, and, while this article can in no way pretend to supply this desideratum, it aims to shed new light on the sorts of historical texts copied or written by Normandy's White Monks. In doing so, it will help contextualise these works within the historiographical culture of both the duchy itself and the wider Cistercian world, and will show how the Cistercians of Normandy played a distinctive role in the transmission of key historical texts, among them the universal chronicle of Sigebert of Gembloux (c. 1030–1112) and Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*.

### 1. Cistercian Normandy: a brief overview

The Cistercians were late in colonising Normandy, with only three abbeys founded before 1150: Mortemer (1137), L'Estrée (1144) and Val-Richer (1147), of which only L'Estrée was a direct foundation from one of the first five Cistercian monasteries (Pontigny). In fact, it was not until its merger with the congregation of Savigny, the eponymous motherhouse of which was located on the border of Normandy, Brittany and Maine, that the Cistercian Order could lay claim to a significant presence in the duchy. Founded in 1112 by St Vitalis († 1122), Savigny was one of a number of religious houses born of the intellectual and religious fervour that gripped the Latin West at the turn of the 12th century. Its early abbots, in particular Geoffrey of Bayeux (1122–1138/9) and Serlo of Vaubadon (1140–1153), played a key role in

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<sup>3</sup> For a recent example, see Thomas Roche, 'L'écrit cistercien en Normandie au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle: autour du cas de l'abbaye de Mortemer', in *Les pratiques de l'écrit dans les abbayes cisterciennes (XII<sup>e</sup>-milieu du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle)*. *Produire, échanger, contrôler, conserver*, ed. Arnaud Baudin and Laurent Morelle (Paris: Somogy, éditions d'art, 2016), pp. 55–74.

formalising the primitive monastic community and expanding its filiation, which, by the middle of the 12th century, counted more than thirty houses throughout northern France and the British Isles.<sup>4</sup>

Although impressive, such rapid growth was not without its complications, and Abbot Serlo soon found himself confronted with trying to manage restive daughter houses that, by the 1140s, were themselves struggling to negotiate the increasingly bitter conflict between King Stephen (1135–1154) and the Empress Mathilda (1102–1167).<sup>5</sup> The debate surrounding when and why Serlo decided to merge his congregation with that of Cîteaux has been both long and contentious, but it is now generally accepted that the incorporation itself took place in 1147, with Savigny becoming a daughter house of the abbey of Clairvaux.<sup>6</sup> As for subsequent Cistercian foundations in the duchy, these were few and far between, and, of the male houses, only two (Bonport and La Noë) were established directly from one of the five original Cistercian abbeys (Cîteaux and Pontigny, respectively). The result, by 1300, was a network of fourteen male houses and four

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<sup>4</sup> For further discussion of Geoffrey and Serlo, see Hugh Feiss, Ronald Pepin and Maureen O'Brien, *The Lives of Monastic Reformers 2: Abbot Vitalis of Savigny, Abbot Godfrey of Savigny, Peter of Avranches, and Blessed Hamo* (Collegeville, MN: Cistercian Publications, 2014), pp. 15–31.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Holdsworth, 'The Affiliation of Savigny', in Marsha Dutton, Daniel La Corte and Paul Lockey, eds., *Truth as Gift: Studies in Medieval Cistercian History in Honor of John R. Sommerfeldt* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2004), pp. 43–88 (esp. pp. 57–61).

<sup>6</sup> For the controversy, see in particular Constance Berman, *The Cistercian Evolution: The Invention of a Religious Order in Twelfth-Century Europe* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 142–148. As a corrective to Berman's views, see Francis Swietek and Terrence Deneen, 'The Date of the Merger of Savigny and Cîteaux Reconsidered', *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, vol. 101, no. 2 (2006), pp. 547–574.

female,<sup>7</sup> with the vast majority of these forming part of the filiation of Clairvaux, within which Savigny was able to maintain a degree of control and influence over its daughter houses.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Historical texts produced by Norman Cistercian abbeys

Any attempt to study a particular genre must, from the outset, establish some definitions. As far as this article is concerned, ‘historiography’ and ‘historiographical’ will be understood in the modern sense of these terms. As a result, it will focus on four types of texts: annals, chronicles, *gesta*, and foundation narratives.<sup>9</sup> The period in question was one in which the Cistercians set about engaging with these genres in earnest, the best-known result of which is the *Exordium magnum Cisterciense*, written by Conrad of Eberbach at the turn of the 13th century.<sup>10</sup> To impose such modern concepts upon the medieval is not without its problems, however. On the one hand, it leaves us in the context of Cistercian Normandy (as it did with Elizabeth Freeman in

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<sup>7</sup> For the purposes of this study, the female priories of Notre-Dame de Bondeville, Mortain, Saint-Aubin, Saint-Saens and Villers-Canivet are not included.

<sup>8</sup> On the position of Savigny within the order, see F. Swietek and T. Deneen, “*Et inter abbates de majoribus unus*”: The Abbot of Savigny in the Cistercian Constitution, 1147–1243’, in *Truth as Gift*, ed. Dutton, La Corte and Lockey, pp. 89–118.

<sup>9</sup> For a typology of these genres, see Bernard Guenée, ‘Histoires, annales, chroniques. Essai sur les genres historiques au Moyen Âge’, *Annales*, 28, p. 997–1016; Michael McCormick, *Les annales du haut Moyen Âge* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1975); Michel Sot, *Gesta episcoporum, gesta abbatum* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1981); Elisabeth van Houts, *Local and regional chronicles* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> *Exordium magnum cisterciense. Sive narratio de initio cisterciensis ordinis*, ed. Bruno Griesser (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997); *The Great Beginning of Cîteaux: A Narrative of the Beginning of the Cistercian Order: The Exordium magnum of Conrad of Eberbach*, ed. Elder Rozanne, trans. Benedicta Ward and Paul Savage (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012).

Cistercian England) with a fairly narrow range of texts to study. On the other, it risks greatly oversimplifying the complexity of the medieval historiographical landscape. As Paul Bertrand recently noted, medieval monks situated both their lives and their writings within what he called ‘a divine time zone’,<sup>11</sup> one which was so broad as to defy easy sub-categorisation according to modern norms. From a historiographical point of view, this means that monks who gave themselves over to writing texts dedicated to the recounting of contemporary events, which took place within a neatly defined space-time, would also routinely engage with (and sometimes produce and/or copy) works of a very different sort, the aim of which was to situate contemporary events in relation to those of the spiritual world and the holy texts that defined it. The Bible, therefore, was the history book ‘par excellence’ in relation to which all medieval historiography was written,<sup>12</sup> while hagiographical works used historical memory to promote their subjects within an established tradition of sanctity, thereby blurring boundaries that are today difficult to separate.<sup>13</sup> The result, as far as this article is concerned, is to isolate the texts it studies in a way that those responsible for their creation and dissemination would most likely not recognise, but one that is nevertheless necessary given the limitations of space here.

As for those genres mentioned above, only four Norman Cistercian abbeys (all male) have left us historical works: Mortemer, Saint-André-en-Gouffern, Savigny and Le

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Bertrand, *Documenting the Everyday in Medieval Europe: The Social Dimensions of a Writing Revolution, 1250–1350* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019), p. 49.

<sup>12</sup> Michel Sot, ‘Introduction’, in *L’historiographie médiévale normande et ses sources antiques (X–XII<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle, 8–11 octobre 2009), ed. Pierre Bauduin and Marie-Agnès Lucas-Avenel (Caen: Presses universitaires de Caen, 2014), p. 16.

<sup>13</sup> For discussion, see Samantha Kahn Herrick, ‘Introduction’, in *Hagiography and the History of Latin Christendom, 500–1500*, ed. Samantha Kahn Herrick (Leiden: Brill, 2019), pp. 1–10.

Valasse (Table 1). The first thing to note here is the important links between these institutions. The abbey of Savigny was the mother of Saint-André-en-Gouffern, while the abbey of Le Valasse, founded in 1154 as a daughter of the English abbey of Bordesley, was affiliated in 1157 to the abbey of Mortemer,<sup>14</sup> a daughter of the abbey of Ourscamp. These four houses were therefore all part of the filiation of Clairvaux, whose contribution to Cistercian writing at this time was of prime importance (on the historiographical front, it was at Clairvaux that Conrad of Eberbach sojourned between 1177 and 1193).<sup>15</sup>

As for the types of historical works produced by these abbeys, it is annalistic texts that survive in greatest quantity. There are five in total, all of varying sorts, the largest number of which come from the abbey of Savigny. First published in the 17th-century by Étienne Baluze (1630–1718) under the title *Chronicon Savigniacense*, a recent re-examination and critical edition of this text has shown that the so-called *Chronicon* is nothing but a confection of a number of different works, namely a short *gesta abbatum*, written in the middle of the 13th century, and three different sets of annals, the oldest of which dates to the second half of the 12th century, the texts of which Baluze abridged and combined in a manner that is entirely artificial.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> On the foundation of Le Valasse, see *Le Valasse. Tome I, L'abbaye cistercienne Notre-Dame du Vœu, XII<sup>e</sup>-XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Le château, XIX<sup>e</sup>-XX<sup>e</sup> siècles*, ed. Alain Avenel, Jean-Marie Cahagne, Éric Follain (Rouen: Éditions des Falaises, 2009), pp. 27–41.

<sup>15</sup> Dominique Stutzmann, 'Clairvaux et l'écrit', in *Clairvaux: l'aventure cistercienne*, ed. Arnaud Baudin, Nicolas Dohrmann and Laurent Veyssière (Paris: Somogy, 2015), pp. 200–204.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Allen, 'The Annals and History of the Abbots of Savigny: A New Edition of the So-Called *Chronicon Savigniacense* (12th–14th c.)', *Cîteaux – Commentarii cistercienses*, vol. 68 (2017), pp. 9–73.

At the other end of the duchy, a Mortemer manuscript now at the Bibliothèque nationale de France contains – at least according to an 18th-century catalogue and a subsequent analysis by Étienne Deville (1874–1944)<sup>17</sup> – two ‘anonymous chronicles’ (*anonymi chronicon*) written in the form of annalistic notes. Closer examination, however, reveals that one of these texts, which covers the period between 1188 and 1268, is not an original work but rather a partial copy, carried out at the end of the 13th century, of the *Universal chronicle* of Géraud de Frachet (1205–1271), in the dissemination of whose work the Cistercians played a significant role.<sup>18</sup> As for the second ‘anonymous chronicle’, this was published for the first time in the 18th century by the Maurists Edmond Martène (1654–1739) and Ursin Durand (1682–1771) under the title *Chronicon Monasterii Mortui-Maris*.<sup>19</sup> Formed of notes covering the period 1114 to 1234, this so-called *Chronicon* is once again not an original, independent work, but instead a series of notes, today known as the *Auctarium Mortui Maris*, intended as a continuation of the *Chronicle* of Sigebert of Gembloux.<sup>20</sup>

As for the fifth and final annalistic text of Cistercian Normandy, this survives only in fragmentary form. Written at the abbey of Saint-André-en-Gouffern, and known as the

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<sup>17</sup> Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4863. *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae regiae*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1739–1744), IV, p. 10; Étienne Deville, ‘Les manuscrits de l’abbaye de Mortemer à la Bibliothèque nationale’, *Revue catholique de Normandie*, vol. 24 (1915), pp. 45–65 (p. 51).

<sup>18</sup> Régis Reich, ‘La diffusion de la Chronique universelle de Géraud de Frachet’, in *Église et culture en France méridionale (XIF-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Toulouse: Privat, 2000), pp. 391–422 (p. 395).

<sup>19</sup> *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, ed. Edmond Martène et Ursin Durand, 5 vols. (Paris, 1717), III, col. 1437–1444.

<sup>20</sup> *Sigeberti Gemblacensis chronica cum continuationibus*, ed. Ludwig Conrad Bethmann, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores*, 6 (Hanover, 1844), pp. 463–469.



*Chronicon Gofferni*, its contents can be partially reconstructed thanks to the extracts printed from it by the antiquarian Arthur du Monstier (c. 1586–1662) and the editors of the *Gallia Christiana* (see Appendix).<sup>21</sup> Neither gives any indication of the date of the lost manuscript from which they worked.

At first glance, these texts, which lack the literary character of the chronicle or foundation narrative, would seem to have little value outside the summary historical facts they contain. And yet annals, which were written for reasons at once historiographical and pedagogical, not only allow us to identify the historical events important to a monastic community, but also to shed light on the various networks (intellectual, personal) by which such information was communicated from one house to another. What is more, it is no coincidence that the writing of monastic annals often coincided with a period of expansion, be it in an abbey's buildings or temporal possessions, led by an abbot with a reputation for building or reform. Thus, in Benedictine Normandy, the abbots William of Volpiano (1001–1028), Henry of Sully (1140–1187), Robert of Torigni (1154–1186), and Alexander of Jumièges (1198–1213), to name but a few, are all known to have played an important role in the writing of annals at their respective abbeys.<sup>22</sup> From what we can tell, circumstances

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<sup>21</sup> Arthur du Monstier, *Neustria pia, seu de omnibus et singulis abbatiis, et prioratibus totius Normaniae* (Rouen: J. Berthelin, 1663); *Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distributa*, 16 vols. (Paris: Victor Palmé, 1865–1870), XI.

<sup>22</sup> Alison Alexander, *Annalistic writing in Normandy, c. 1050–1225*, unpublished doctoral thesis (University of Cambridge, 2011), pp. 47, 97–100, 183–185; Stéphane Lecouteux, 'Écrire l'histoire des abbés du Mont Saint-Michel. 1. Les auteurs du *De abbatibus*', *Tabularia « Documents »*, « Sources en ligne », 2017, pp. 1–21; Stéphane Lecouteux, 'Écrire l'histoire des abbés du Mont Saint-Michel 2. Robert de Torigni, ses outils, ses sources et sa méthode de travail', *Tabularia « Documents »*, « Sources en ligne », 2018, pp. 1–68.

were much the same in Normandy's Cistercian houses. At Savigny, analysis of the so-called *Chronicon Savigniacense* has shown how Abbot Geoffrey of Bayeux played a key role in securing for the abbey library not only its earliest set of annals, but also a computistical text, which the early community would have used to help them situate events chronologically.<sup>23</sup> At Mortemer, on the other hand, it was during the reign of Abbot Stephen (1154–1163) that the abbey enjoyed a marked period of expansion, including in its library, which was enriched by a two-volume Old Testament, sent from England by Froger, archdeacon of Derby, and the abovementioned copy of Sigebert of Gembloux.<sup>24</sup>

And yet, if the context in which the annals of Cistercian Normandy were written shared certain things in common (compared as much with each other as with the duchy's Benedictine annals), the information they contain varies significantly from one text to the next. The Mortemer annals, for example, recount 125 events, which can be assigned to the following broad categories:

- Rulers (emperors, kings, princes): 23 mentions
- International politics: 20 events
- Natural phenomena: 16 events
- Crusades: 14 mentions
- Popes: 13 mentions
- Internal history: 11 events
- Various: 11 mentions

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<sup>23</sup> Allen, 'Annals and History', p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> Mireille Chazan, *L'Empire et l'histoire universelle: de Sigebert de Gembloux à Jean de Saint-Victor (XII-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Paris: H. Champion, 1999), p. 326.

- Archbishops of Rouen: 7 mentions
- Cistercian history: 5 events
- Councils: 3 events
- Notable deaths: 2 events

In contrast, analysis of the Savigny annals, which combined contain 192 events, presents us with the following list:

- Sovereigns (emperors, kings, princes): 46 mentions
- Internal history: 30 events
- Notable deaths: 27 events
- International politics: 20 events
- Crusades: 15 mentions
- Popes: 12 mentions
- Various: 10 mentions
- Bishops of Avranches: 9 mentions
- Natural phenomena: 8 events
- Notable births: 5 events
- Cistercian history: 4 events
- Archbishops of Rouen: 3 mentions
- Councils: 3 events

There are too many differences between these two lists to compare them in detail. Two things stand out, however. In the first instance, Norman Cistercian annals were used primarily to record events concerning rulers (emperors, kings of France, etc.),

popes, and local bishops (the archbishops of Rouen for Mortemer, and the bishops of Avranches for Savigny), something which is hardly surprising. What is more remarkable, when set in the context of Elizabeth Freeman's work on the relationship between historical writing and the construction of Cistercian identity in England during this period, is the almost total absence of events concerning Cistercian history, not just with regards to Normandy itself but also the wider Cistercian world. Thus, the oldest set of Savigny annals contain only one record of a Cistercian event (the foundation of Cîteaux), and this was added by a later hand.<sup>25</sup> As for the Mortemer annals, these contain three notices concerning the history of Clairvaux (years 1115, 1133, 1153), a note on the foundation of the abbey of Ourscamp (1129), and another on the canonisation of William of Bourges (1222). (The fragmentary *Chronicon* of Saint-André-en-Gouffern, on the other hand, contains nothing not related to the Savigny-Clairvaux network.)

The question that arises is whether these annals differ on this point from those produced in wider Cistercian France. Any attempt to respond, however, immediately runs into two difficulties. First, only a handful of annalistic texts produced by the houses of Cistercian France have survived. Besides the so-called *Chronicon Clarevallense*,<sup>26</sup> which contains far more than just a short annalistic chronicle of the

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<sup>25</sup> For discussion, see Allen, 'Annals and History', p. 22.

<sup>26</sup> Stefano Mula, 'Le *Chronicon Clarevallense*, la littérature exemplaire et l'ancienne bibliothèque de Clairvaux au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Les cisterciens et la transmission des textes (XII-XVIII siècles)*, ed. Thomas Falmagne, Dominique Stutzmann, and Anne-Marie Turcan-Verkerk (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), pp. 37–52.

abbey of Clairvaux, there are five:<sup>27</sup> the Annals of Bonnevaux (Vienne), the Chronicle of Berdoues, the Short Chronicle of Clairmarais, and the continuations of Sigebert of Gembloux at Vaucelles and Ourscamp.<sup>28</sup>

Second, these five texts are all defined by their brevity. The Annals of Bonnevaux, for example, contain only around fifty notices, the overwhelming majority of which deal with papal succession. Notes concerning Cistercian history are therefore few and far between: three out of 49 for Bonnevaux, four out of 18 for Berdoues, and seven out of 28 for Clairmarais.<sup>29</sup> The Sigebert continuation from Vaucelles offers

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<sup>27</sup> This number is based on an analysis of the notices ‘Activité littéraire’ in Anne Bondéelle-Souchier, *Bibliothèques cisterciennes dans la France médiévale: répertoire des Abbayes d’hommes* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1991).

<sup>28</sup> ‘Annales Bonavallenses’, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, dans *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Scriptores*, 26 (Hanover, 1882), p. 824; ‘Chronique tirée d’un ancien manuscrit de l’abbaye de Berdoüez au diocèse d’Auch’, in Claude de Vic and Joseph Vaissète, *Histoire générale de Languedoc: avec des notes et les pièces justificatives*, 5 vols. (Paris: Jacques Vincent, 1737), III, preuves, col. 112-114; ‘Breve Chronicon Clarimarisci’, in Edmond Martene and Ursin Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1717), III, col. 1385-1386; ‘Continuatio Valcellensis’ and ‘Auctarium Ursicampinum’, in *Sigeberti Gemblacensis chronica*, ed. Bethmann, pp. 459-460, 469-473.

<sup>29</sup> **Annals of Bonnevaux (1044-1180)**: 1098 - foundation of Cîteaux; 1101 - foundation of Chaalis; 1125 - foundation of Le Tamié. (According to Pertz, the notes for 1158 and 1167 concern the abbots of Clairvaux (*Clarevallis*), Peter and Hugh, who are otherwise unknown. The name of the abbey, which has been worn away in the manuscript, is not ‘*Clarevallis*’, but rather ‘*Bonevall(is)*’); **Chronicle of Berdoues (1226-1285)**: 1231 - death of Folquet of Marseille, bishop of Toulouse, former Cistercian monk; 1263 - burial of Roger, count of Foix, in the abbey of Boulbonne; 1272 - visit by Philip, king of France, to the abbey of Boulbonne; 1285 - burial of Peter III of Aragon in the abbey of Santes Creus (Spain); **Short Chronicle of Clairmarais (1098-1286)**: 1098 - beginning of the Cistercian Order; 1114 - construction of Clairvaux; 1148 - death of St Malachy at Clairvaux; 1153 -

the sole exception to this rule: here one finds notes on 65 events for the period 1114 to 1163, of which nineteen relate to Cistercian history and five others to the history of Vaucelles itself (a combined 37% of the total). The conclusions that one can draw from such things are limited, however.

It is nevertheless interesting to note three things. In the first instance, of the abbeys of Cistercian France those of Normandy were responsible for producing half of the surviving annalistic texts. It would seem, therefore, that the duchy's White Monks had a particular predilection for this historiographical genre. This is hardly surprising, however, when one remembers Normandy's wider annalistic tradition, the recent study of which has shown how such texts circulated at scale and at speed among the region's religious houses.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, the oldest set of Savigny annals, like the majority of Norman annalistic texts, derive from those produced at the cathedral of Rouen, and are themselves closely related to the annals of Saint-Évroult, which were copied at the end of the 11th century.<sup>31</sup>

This observation leads to two others. First, unlike the annals of Benedictine Normandy, there is no evidence of textual links between those produced by the Cistercians. Of course, we only have five texts to compare, one of which is fragmentary, but even a cursory analysis shows that each was written for its own

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death of Bernard of Clairvaux; 1174 - foundation of Ter Doest; 1252 - death of Nicholas, abbot of Les Dunes; 1277 - death of Arnulf, abbot of Villers.

<sup>30</sup> On the annals of Benedictine Normandy, see the work of Alison Alexander cited above (n. 000) and Stéphane Lecouteux, *Réseaux de confraternité et histoire des bibliothèques. L'exemple de l'abbaye bénédictine de la Trinité de Fécamp*, unpublished doctoral thesis, 2 vols. (Université de Caen Normandie, 2015), II, pp. 147–336.

<sup>31</sup> Allen, 'Annals and History', pp. 25–27.

sake, without any reference to the others, and for very different reasons (the annals of Savigny focus above all on the memory of benefactors; those of Mortemer look to incorporate the abbey in a universal history; the *Chronicon Gofferni* focuses on the inner life of the abbey, but also on that of neighbouring houses, above all the Benedictine abbey of Troarn).

That said, any analysis of the annals of Cistercian Normandy reveals interesting textual links that allow us to situate them within a wider compositional context, and to reflect on the transmission of historiographical texts, as well as the facts they relate, within the Cistercian world. Study of the *Chronicon Savigniacense* has therefore shown how news recording the collapse of a wall at the abbey of Saint-Denis on 3 January 1259 was transmitted to the southwest corner of Normandy thanks to the intellectual links between the abbey of Savigny and the college of Saint-Bernard in Paris.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, analysis of the Mortemer annals shows how these were influenced in part by the historiography of Flanders and its neighbours. The transmission of Flemish history to Mortemer was no doubt facilitated by the wider network of which Ourscamp, its motherhouse, was a part, and can be found not just in individual notes – the murder of Charles the Good in 1127; the participation of the count of Flanders in the siege of Rouen in 1174; the death of Crivelina, wife of Geoffrey of Strépy (*Strepi*), near Mons, in 1184<sup>33</sup> –, but also in those notices copied from the Mortemer annals in

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<sup>32</sup> Allen, 'Annals and History', p. 67.

<sup>33</sup> *Sigeberti Gemblacensis chronica*, ed. Bethmann, pp. 465–466. It has not been possible to identify Geoffrey, whose toponym refers to what is today Strépy-Bracquengnies (Hainut, Belgium), but other members of the Strépy clan can be found among the charters of the Cistercian abbey of Aulne, daughter of Clairvaux (Leopold Devillers, 'Mémoire sur un cartulaire et sur les archives de l'abbaye d'Alne', *Annales du Cercle archéologique de Mons*, vol. 5 (1864), pp. 195, 216, 231–234, 309, 312–313, 323, 329, 332, 376, 380, 392).

the 13th century by the Cistercian historian Helinand of Froidmont, himself of Flemish origin.<sup>34</sup>

Such intertextuality was not limited, of course, to the annals of Cistercian Normandy. As with annalistic texts, the duchy's White Monks were responsible for producing the lion's share of the surviving foundation narratives of 12th-century Cistercian France. (Again, such things are not surprising when one remembers the rich Anglo-Norman tradition of longer chronicles and foundation narratives, copies of which, as will be seen below, we know were to be found in Norman Cistercian libraries.<sup>35</sup>) As for the two foundation chronicles of Cistercian Normandy, namely the chronicle of Mortemer and the *Chronicon Valassense*, these have already attracted a fair amount of scholarly attention.<sup>36</sup> As such, and as a result of the limitations of space here, they shall not detain us for too long. Suffice it to say that their authors did not hesitate to make use of existing texts, some of them historiographical in nature, which they often copied *in extenso*, thereby helping to illustrate not just the history of their particular house, but also their mastery and knowledge of their past as illustrated in sources deemed to be authoritative.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Sigfrid Hirsch, *De vita e scriptis Sigiberti Monachi Gemblacensis: commentatio historico-litteraria* (Berlin, 1841), p. 369; Chazan, *L'Empire et l'histoire universelle*, pp. 356–357.

<sup>35</sup> Benoît-Michel Tock, 'Les Cisterciens et l'écrit au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle: considérations générales', in *Les pratiques de l'écrit*, ed. Baudin and Morelle, pp. 16–17.

<sup>36</sup> For bibliographical references in relation to the chronicle of Mortemer, see Roche, 'L'écrit cistercien en Normandie', pp. 55–74; for Le Valasse, see *Le Valasse. Tome I*, ed. Avenel, Cahagne and Follain, pp. 27–41.

<sup>37</sup> Olivia Burgard, 'La chronique de l'abbaye cistercienne de Mortemer, Normandie, XII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Édition, traduction, commentaire', unpublished Mémoire de Master 2 (Université de Strasbourg, 2019), pp. 81–86.



### 3. Historiographical texts copied or acquired by Norman Cistercian abbeys

Of course, these examples of textual transmission represent no more than the echo of a much larger circulation of manuscripts that irrigated the medieval intellectual landscape. Historiographical texts were no exception to this circulation, as the famous work of Sigebert of Gembloux makes clear. Besides the Mortemer continuation, scholars have identified 65 manuscripts of Sigebert's *Chronicle*, ranging in date from the 12th to 16th centuries. In terms of the Cistercians, the *Chronicle* was first copied around 1150 at the abbey of Signy, in the Ardennes, at around the same time that a Beauvais manuscript, which had probably been copied for Bishop Henry of France (1149–1162), who had been trained at Clairvaux, was recopied, interpolated and continued at Mortemer. From here it passed to Ourscamp, Mortemer's motherhouse, and then, via a copy produced by Robert of Torigni, to numerous Norman abbeys, among them the Cistercian houses of Savigny and Le Valasse. It was the manuscript from Le Valasse, now lost, which served as the basis for the first edition of the *Chronicle*, published in 1515.<sup>38</sup>

This Cistercian network of exchange, which underpinned the transmission of Sigebert's work, and in which the Norman houses played a key role, naturally leads us to consider the nature of those other historiographical texts held by the libraries of the duchy's Cistercian houses. Outside Normandy, Régis Reich carried out a brief survey some twenty years ago of the manuscripts and library catalogues of a handful of French Cistercian abbeys, the results of which showed that the average Cistercian house possessed a handful of historiographical works, which typically dealt with the same subjects: ecclesiastical history, as epitomised by Eusebius-Rufinus, Jerome,

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<sup>38</sup> Chazan, *L'Empire et l'histoire universelle*, pp. 314–331.

Gennadius and Cassiodorus; Biblical history, such as that written by Petrus Comestor and Flavius Josephus; the history of Troy, written by the likes of Dares Phrygius and Dictys of Crete; the history of the Britons and King Arthur, especially as told in the work of Geoffrey of Monmouth; the history of Alexander the Great; and, finally, the history of the Crusades.<sup>39</sup>

The question that arises in light of these findings is whether the abbeys of Cistercian Normandy conformed to this rule. The response, which pretends to be neither definitive nor exhaustive, given the destruction of many of the duchy's Cistercian libraries,<sup>40</sup> is yes – and no. Thus, a fragmentary 13th-century catalogue of the library of Mortemer reveals that the abbey possessed the works of Flavius Josephus, the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartite* of Cassiodorus, the *Historia ecclesiastica* of Eusebius-Rufinus, and the *Historia scholastica* of Petrus Comestor (Table 2).<sup>41</sup> Copies of Comestor's work were also found at the abbeys of Bonport and La Noë, which, like Mortemer, seemed to have owned two examples of it. Elsewhere in Normandy, one can find all those classic texts identified by Régis Reich: Flavius Josephus (Bonport), Eusebius-Rufinus (Savigny); the *De viris illustribus* of Jerome, Gennadius and Isidore of Seville (Foucarmont, Mortemer, and La Noë); the *De Excidio Troiae Historia* of Pseudo-Dares (La Noë); Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (Savigny); the history of the Crusades via Baldric of Dol's *Historiae Hierosolymitanae* (Foucarmont);

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<sup>39</sup> Reich, 'La diffusion', pp. 403–404.

<sup>40</sup> Nothing (or almost nothing) is known about the libraries of the abbeys of Aunay, Barbery, Beaubec, Le Breuil-Benoît, L'Éstrée, Saint-André-en-Gouffern, Torigny, Le Valasse, and Le Val-Richer: Bondéelle-Souchier, *Bibliothèques cisterciennes*, pp. 7, 12, 17, 52, 182, 274, 297.

<sup>41</sup> Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 3922A, fol. 246r. On this catalogue, see François Dolbeau, 'Trois catalogues de bibliothèques médiévales restitués à des abbayes cisterciennes: Cheminon, Haute-Fontaine, Mortemer', *Revue d'histoire des textes*, vol. 18 (1988), pp. 81–108, at pp. 95–107.

and the history of King Arthur through the *Historia Brittonum* of Pseudo-Gildas (Savigny). The presence of this last work at Savigny is of particular interest, as it bears witness to the networks of exchange between Durham Cathedral and the Cistercian houses of northern England,<sup>42</sup> above all Fountains and Rievaulx, into which networks Savigny seems to have tapped, most likely via its daughters at Jervaulx and Byland.<sup>43</sup>

But, if the 12th- and 13th-century libraries of Cistercian Normandy contained many of the same historiographical works as those found in their French counterparts, they can be said to stand out in relation to certain texts. It has therefore already been noted how three libraries of Cistercian Normandy were home to the universal chronicle of Sigebert of Gembloux (Mortemer, Savigny, Le Valasse), with these manuscripts representing half of the known Cistercian copies of this work. It is also worth noting that the Ourscamp version, which is derived from its Mortemer exemplar, was the most widely diffused copy of all.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> On these links, see Bernard Meehan, 'Durham Twelfth-Century Manuscripts in Cistercian Houses', in *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093–1193*, ed. David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), pp. 439–450.

<sup>43</sup> The Savigny manuscript now Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5232, which contains a copy of the *Historia Brittonum*, is part of a family of manuscripts that also includes two manuscripts from the north of England, one of which belonged to Durham (Durham Cathedral Library, MS. B.II.35, fol. 129v–136r); the other is London, BL, MS. Cotton Caligula A VIII, fol. 44–58v, which comes from northern England. Byland Abbey was less than 7 km as the crow flies from Rievaulx; the abbey of Jervaulx less than 20 km from Fountains.

<sup>44</sup> Mireille Schmidt-Chazan, 'La chronique de Sigebert de Gembloux: succès français d'une œuvre lotharingienne. À propos d'un exemplaire de l'édition princeps conservé à la bibliothèque municipale de Metz', *Les Cahiers Lorrains*, vol. 1 (1990), pp. 1–26 (pp. 16, 20).

We can observe something similar, to a certain extent, with Einhard's *Vita Karoli Magni*. Scholars have to date identified 105 medieval copies of this work.<sup>45</sup> Admittedly, analysis shows that the Cistercians did not play an outsized role in the text's diffusion. It is nevertheless interesting to note that of the six copies from Cistercian France half come from Norman abbeys (Table 2). Two of these date from the 12th century, thereby representing some of the earliest copies in the non-Carolingian transmission of the *Vita Karoli*,<sup>46</sup> and were to be found at the abbey of Savigny and at a Norman Cistercian house that remains to be identified. As for the third, this is only known thanks to an inventory of the manuscripts of the abbey of Mortemer, carried out in 1677. Outside of these three Norman houses, only the major Cistercian houses of Cîteaux, Clairvaux, and Morimond are known to have possessed a copy of Einhard's work.<sup>47</sup>

However, if the existence of these manuscripts allows us to attribute an unambiguous role to the abbeys of Cistercian Normandy in the diffusion of these texts, above all when compared to their French counterparts, it was by no means a central one. As

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<sup>45</sup> On the *Vita Karoli* and his diffusion, see Matthias Tischler, *Einhard's Vita Karoli: Studien zur Entstehung, Überlieferung und Rezeption*, 2 vols. (Hanover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2001). The Norman diffusion of the work is analysed, without any mention in the Cistercian manuscripts, in Rosamond McKitterick, 'Postérité et transmission des œuvres historiographiques carolingiennes dans les manuscrits des mondes normands', in *L'historiographie médiévale normande*, ed. Bauduin and Lucas-Avenel, pp. 25–40 (pp. 27–28).

<sup>46</sup> Tischler classes these manuscripts among 'Die ältere normannische Überlieferung' (Tischler, *Einhard's Vita Karoli*, II, pp. 963–994).

<sup>47</sup> **Morimond**: Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 15425, fol. 106v–113v (12th c.) (sigla Tischler = Pa 22); **Clairvaux**: Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. 294bis, fol. 120r–128r (12th c.) (sigla Tischler = Tr 2); **Cîteaux**: lost MS, from which sigla Tischler Ox was copied 1206.

with the annalistic texts discussed above, the decision by Normandy's White Monks to undertake the copying of a work such as the *Vita Karoli Magni* needs to be situated within the historiographical activity of the duchy's Benedictine houses. It was therefore via the abbeys of Le Mont Saint-Michel and Fécamp that the universal chronicle of Sigebert de Gembloux was transmitted to their respective neighbours of Savigny and Le Valasse.<sup>48</sup> As for the *Vita Karoli*, there are around fifteen known copies of this work of Norman provenance, the vast majority of which are associated with Benedictine houses, among them manuscripts once found in the libraries of the abbeys of Jumièges and Fécamp, and from which derive the two 12th-century Cistercian copies noted above.<sup>49</sup>

The influence of Benedictine historiography also helps explain the presence in the Savigny and Mortemer libraries of chronicles or texts associated with the great Anglo-Norman chroniclers. Of these works, only the Savigny copy of Robert of Torigni's chronicle stands out. Bound in the same manuscript as the chronicles of Eusebius, Jerome, Prosper, and Sigebert of Gembloux, as well as a set of annals and a short mid-13th century *gesta abbatum*, Léopold Delisle believed that the Savigny monk responsible for copying Torigni's work 'abridged a lot of passages and modified many others', to the extent that he did not submit the Savigny manuscript to a detailed collation in his edition.<sup>50</sup> According to its most recent editor, however, the Savigny manuscript contains the earliest extant version of

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<sup>48</sup> Chazan, *L'Empire et l'histoire universelle*, p. 328; Schmidt-Chazan, 'La chronique de Sigebert', p. 17.

The abbey of Savigny was located around 40 km to the southeast of Le Mont Saint-Michel, while that of Le Valasse was around 20 km to the south of Fécamp.

<sup>49</sup> Tischler, *Einharts Vita Karoli*, II, p. 1101.

<sup>50</sup> Robert of Torigni, *Chronique* (suivie de divers opuscules historiques de cet auteur), ed. Léopold Delisle, 2 vols. (Rouen: A. Le Brument, 1872–1873), I, p. vii.

Robert's chronicle in its extended form, and is therefore a precious witness to the initial drafting process.<sup>51</sup> We do not know the precise point at which this manuscript entered Savigny's library, but the probable date of its creation coincides with the abbacy of Alexander of Cologne (1158–1161), a man with a reputation for learning.<sup>52</sup> We might even wonder whether the chronicle came to Savigny through the intermediary of the monk Hamo of Landécot († 1173), who, like Robert of Torigni himself, was close to Henry II Plantagenet.<sup>53</sup> Whatever the case may be, this manuscript seems to bear witness to important links between the early Savigny community and the Benedictine monks of Le Mont, whose library is known to have been an important centre of manuscript production for other institutions at this time.<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusions

What conclusions, if any, can be drawn from this necessarily brief overview? The first thing to note is that analysis of the historiography of Cistercian Normandy reveals circumstances that can be best described as somewhat contradictory. As far as the

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<sup>51</sup> *The Chronography of Robert of Torigni*, ed. Thomas Bisson, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), I, p. lx.

<sup>52</sup> *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques. Tome deuxième. fasc. 7-12, Alcaini-Aneurin*, ed. Alfred Baudrillart, Pierre Richard, Urbain Rouziès, Albert Vogt (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1914), col. 200–201.

<sup>53</sup> According to his *vita*, Hamo was Henry II's confessor, and the two men met on a number of occasions (Eugene-Paul Sauvage, 'Vitae B. Petri Abrincensis et B. Hamonis monachorum coenobii Saviniacensis in Normannia', *Analecta bollandiana*, vol. 2 (1883), p. 534).

<sup>54</sup> Jonathan James Graham Alexander, *Norman Illumination at Mont St Michel, 966–1100* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), p. 28.

historical texts produced and copied by the duchy's White Monks are concerned, it has hopefully been shown how the Cistercian abbeys played a particular role in the creation and diffusion of certain texts. Thus, it was the houses of Cistercian Normandy that in part assured the success of Sigebert of Gembloux's chronicle, the annalistic form of which lent itself not just to continuation but to individualisation within the historically universal.

And yet, if the duchy's White Monks understood and took advantage of the malleable nature of Sigebert's work, detailed analysis shows they used it to advance a fairly limited range of historiographical aims, making almost no attempt to promote such things as the history of the wider Order of which they were a part. Admittedly, the Mortemer version contains two lengthy extracts on the origins of the Cistercians, taken from the text known as *Exordium Cistercii* and inserted at the years 1056 and 1107,<sup>55</sup> but, as noted above, the continuations of the 12th and 13th centuries rarely focus on Cistercian events. As we have seen, the same is true for the annals of Savigny and Saint-André-en-Gouffern. If such texts therefore bear witness to a desire by the Cistercians of Normandy to engage in what Bernard Guenée called 'the conquest of time' through the writing of history,<sup>56</sup> they can hardly be said to have played a significant role in the construction of Cistercian identity, even if we must admit that the surviving corpus of works on which to base such conclusions is fairly limited.

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<sup>55</sup> *Sigeberti Gemblacensis chronica*, ed. Bethmann, pp. 463–464.

<sup>56</sup> Bernard Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l'Occident médiéval* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1980), p. 147.

Moreover, if these annals constitute today an important part of Cistercian Normandy's surviving historiographical landscape, they can appear somewhat isolated within it, both in relation to each other (as has already been noted above) and to other historical texts produced by the duchy's White Monks. Thus, if we know that the mid-13th-century author of the short Savigny *gesta abbatum* relied on other written sources to compose his work, including those of an historiographical nature,<sup>57</sup> it is almost certain that the annals, which, in their surviving form, contain only a handful of notices concerning Savigny's abbots, were not among them. The contrast is striking when one looks at a text such as the *De abbatibus*, a short history of the abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel written in the 12th century, in whose composition the abbey's annals played a determining part.<sup>58</sup>

That said, the historians of Cistercian Normandy can hardly be accused of working in splendid isolation. Analysis of the historiographical texts produced or copied by Normandy's White Monks not only reveals the Cistercian networks of transmission underpinning the diffusion of works like Sigebert's universal chronicle, but also the texts upon which the historians of Cistercian Normandy relied. Thus, the author of the Mortemer foundation chronicle used diplomatic sources, which are themselves sometimes historiographical in form,<sup>59</sup> in order to compose his abbey's *exordium*,<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Swietek and Deneen, “*Et inter abbates*”, pp. 113–118.

<sup>58</sup> Lecouteux, ‘Écrire l’histoire 2’, pp. 28–42.

<sup>59</sup> For discussion in a Cistercian context, see Coraline Rey, ‘Cartularisation et inventarisation: les registres de copies d’actes à Cîteaux (XII<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)’, in *L’enquête en questions. De la réalité à la « vérité » dans les modes de gouvernement (Moyen-Âge/Temps modernes)*, ed. Anne Mailloux and Laure Verdon (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2014), pp. 141–146; Nathalie Verpeaux, ‘Les cisterciens et la cartularisation au Moyen Âge. Les cartulaires des abbayes cisterciennes de Wallonie jusqu’au début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle’, *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique*, vol. 113, nos. 3–4 (2018), pp. 576–610.



while the author of the Savigny *gesta abbatum* made use of a wide range of historical texts, among them the chronicles of Robert of Torigni and Orderic Vitalis, and the history of the abbey of Fontaine-les-Blanches, written by Abbot Peregrin (c. 1188–1211) in around 1200.<sup>61</sup>

In a similar vein, it is also important to remember that historiographical texts were themselves frequently born in response to external stimuli, either local or much wider in form, something which was as true for Normandy's Cistercian works of history as it was for those of its other religious houses. At Savigny, therefore, it seems that the short *gesta abbatum* was written, in part, with the abbey's wider hagiographical ambitions in mind,<sup>62</sup> a useful reminder of the point raised above concerning the difficulties of separating the blurred boundaries between hagiography and historiography. At Mortemer, on the other hand, it is possible that Abbot William (1180–1200), during whose reign the abbey's foundation chronicle was written, was inspired to commemorate Mortemer's past using a medium he had already encountered in the cartulary-chronicle of the abbey of Le Valasse, where he had previously been abbot (1174–1180).<sup>63</sup> Alternatively (or maybe even concurrently), it is perhaps no coincidence that the Mortemer chronicle was created during a period in which the Vexin region in which the abbey was located became a

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<sup>60</sup> Roche, 'L'écrit cistercien en Normandie', pp. 59–62.

<sup>61</sup> Swietek and Deneen, "*Et inter abbates*", p. 117.

<sup>62</sup> Jaap van Moolenbroek, *Vital l'ermite, prédicateur itinérant, fondateur de l'abbaye normande de Savigny* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990), p. 79.

<sup>63</sup> The *Chronicon Valassense* was written shortly after the foundation of Le Valasse, and certainly no later than 1181 (*Le Valasse. Tome I*, ed. Avenel, Cahagne and Follain, p. 14 n. 1). It, and the cartulary which it opens, are known today thanks to a 16th-century copy, but it is possible that this is based on a medieval exemplar.

focal point of increased hostilities between Richard I (1189–1199) and Philip Augustus (1180–1223).<sup>64</sup> This fighting, which centred on Richard's stronghold of Château-Gaillard, just 15 kilometres from Mortemer, had a profound impact upon the estates of local ecclesiastical institutions, in particular the cathedral church of Rouen,<sup>65</sup> to the extent that it is not unreasonable to suggest that Abbot William may have seen the abbey's chronicle (and accompanying cartulary) not just as a means by which to celebrate Mortemer's past in imitation of what he had seen at Le Valasse, but also, as Paul Bertrand has observed in relation to the writing of history more generally, as something that used the past materially to defend his abbey's future.<sup>66</sup>

Whatever the case may be, while the Mortemer chronicle is seemingly local in focus, its rhetorical devices, as Olivia Burgard has shown, are such as to situate it squarely within the wider trends and tropes of Cistercian historiography.<sup>67</sup> As the above has sought to highlight, this was a historiography to which the Norman houses contributed in their own way, in some instances much earlier and more significantly than many of their French counterparts. Their contribution was nevertheless one that not only proved to have its limitations, but was also in many ways derivative and entirely anonymous. This last point is of particular interest, for while 13th-century Cistercian houses in both England and France nurtured historians of renown (Ralph of Coggeshall, Helinand of Froidmont, Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay, Aubry of Trois-

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<sup>64</sup> The chronicle must have been written at some point between 6 January 1198 and 6 April 1199: Burgard, 'La chronique de Mortemer', p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> J. Gillingham, *Richard I* (London: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 344.

<sup>66</sup> Bertrand, *Documenting the Everyday*, p. 93.

<sup>67</sup> Burgard, 'La chronique de Mortemer', pp. 95–102.

Fontaines), their Norman counterparts seem gradually to have retreated from the historiographical arena almost entirely. Why this should have been the case is the subject of another article entirely.

## Appendix – ‘Reconstruction’ of the so-called *Chronicon Gofferni*

This reconstruction is based on the notes and extracts printed from the so-called *Chronicon Gofferni* by Arthur du Monstier and the editors of the *Gallia Christiana*.

Year	Subject	Source
1059	Hoc anno accepit abbas Durandus, abbatiam Troarni	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 558
1060	[Note on the election in September of John of Ivry, bishop of Avranches]	<i>Gallia Christiana</i> , XI, col. 475
1081	Anno 1081. Dedicata est ecclesia S. Stephani Cadoni	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 625
1084	[Note on the dedication of the abbey of La Trinité de Caen]	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 657
1088	Anno 1088 obiit piæ memoriæ Durandus, abbas Troarnensis	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 559
1093	Anno 1093. Rogerius comes obiit 6. calend. augusti, pius ac benignissimus fundator Troarnensis cœnobii	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 561
1112	Anno 1112. Obiit piæ memoriæ D. Arnulphus abbas Troarnensis	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 562 <sup>68</sup>
1130	[Note on the foundation of the abbey of Saint-André-en-Gouffern]	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 737
1134	Ann. 1134 instituta est ecclesia S. Joannis Baptistæ, in Falesia	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 751
1141	Hoc anno venerunt primum canonici regulares de Falesia, ad S. Laudum Burgi-Achardi	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 751
1143	Anno 1143. Obiit Joannes, Sagiensis episcopus	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 738
1144	[Note on the consecration of Gerard, bishop of Sées]	<i>Gallia Christiana</i> , XI, col. 687 <sup>69</sup>

<sup>68</sup> See also *Gallia Christiana*, XI, col. 417.

<sup>69</sup> See also, Alençon, Archives départementales de l'Orne, 31 J 43, p. 120.

1151	[Note on the filiation between Savigny and Saint-André-en-Gouffern]	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 685
1157	Anno 1157 obiit Girardus II episcopus Sagii, IV calen. aprilis	<i>Gallia Christiana</i> , XI, col. 688-689
1162	Ann. 1162. Recessit piæ memoriæ D. Radulfus, primus abbas S. Andrææ, calendis februarii: cui successit D. Rogerius 2 abbas	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 738
1171	Anno 1171, tertio calend. julii obiit Guillelmus, comes Pontivii: cui successit Joannes, filius ejus	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 737
1171	Obiit [Rogerius abbas] ann. 1171 calendis august.	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 738
1173	Ann. 1173. 17 calend. novemb. obiit piæ memoriæ D. Radulfus, qui fuit primus abbas S. Andrææ	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 738
1178	[Note on the death of Abbot Simon and the election of Abbot William]	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 738
1201	Anno MCCI obiit piæ memoriæ Lisiardus Sagiensis episcopus, VIII calendas octobris	<i>Gallia Christiana</i> , XI, col. 691
1207	Anno 1207, quarto idus octob., obiit Guillelmus de Douvra, abbas de Savigneio, cujus memoria in benedictione est, amator ordinis et servens in disciplina	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 686 <sup>70</sup>
1221	[Note on the death of Abbot Robert]	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 738
1241	Hoc anno cœpit [Renaudus abbas] reædificari a fundamentis ecclesia huius cœnobii	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 739
1247	Hoc anno intravit primo conventus in ecclesiam hanc, die scilicet S. Joannis Baptistæ, præsentē D. Gaufrido, Sagiensi episcopo, et aliis multis: quæ ecclesia incœpta et perfecta fuit tempore D. Renaudi abbatis: cui successit D. Joannes abbas de <i>Tyronnel</i> : item obiit Renaudus, vir sanctitate mirificus, abbas S. Andrææ de <i>Gouffers</i> , 4 scilicet calend. septemb.	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 739 <sup>71</sup>

<sup>70</sup> See also *Gallia Christiana*, XI, col. 547.

<sup>71</sup> See also *Gallia Christiana*, XI, col. 744.

1252	Ann. 1252. Dedicata est [ecclesia Sancti Andræ] a D. Gaufrido, Sagiensi episcopo, præsente D. Joanne, vicecomite Castri-Erardi, et multis aliis religiosis et nobilibus viris	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 739
1253	Anno 1253 obiit Gaufridus Sagiensis episcopus, IV calend. febr., cujus corpus jacet ante magnum altare hujus ecclesiæ sub tumulo æneo	<i>Gallia Christiana</i> , XI, col. 694 <sup>72</sup>
1256	[Note on the death of Hugh, abbot of Tiron]	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 689
1278	Anno 1278 obiit Thomas de Aunoto episcopus Sagiensis, 17 junii, qui multa dedit et multum dilexit nos	<i>Gallia Christiana</i> , XI, col. 695 <sup>73</sup>
1284	Anno 1284, die sabbathi ante festum S. Marci Evangelista apud Allodium, in præsencia R. P. Joannis, Dei gratia Sagiensis episcopi, fecit homagium Radulphus de Calvo-monte, miles, domino Petro abbati S. Andrææ de <i>Gouffers</i>	Du Monstier, <i>Neustria pia</i> , p. 739

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<sup>72</sup> See also Du Monstier, *Neustria pia*, p. 739.

<sup>73</sup> See also Du Monstier, *Neustria pia*, p. 739: ‘Anno 1278, 17 calend. julii, obitt bonæ memoriæ D. Tomas de Alnou, quondam episcopus Sagiensis, qui habet sepulturam in majori ecclesia hujus cœnobii, videlicet ante majus altare, ad introitum chori’.

Abbey	Filiation	Text	Manuscript	Date
Mortemer	Clairvaux	Foundation chronicle	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 18369, p. 1–23	12th–13th c.
		Annals from 1114 to 1234 ( <i>Auctarium Mortui Maris</i> )	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4863, fol. 98r–100v	12th–13th c.
Saint-André-en-Gouffern	Savigny/ Clairvaux	<i>Chronicon Gofferni</i>	See Appendix	
Savigny	Savigny/ Clairvaux	Annals [S1] Annals [S2]	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 7596A, fol. 1v–3v, 4r–5v	12th–13th c.
		Annals [S3] <i>Gesta</i> of the abbots of Savigny (1112–1243)	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4862, fol. fol. 132r– 133v	12th–14th c.
Le Valasse	Clairvaux	<i>Chronicon Valassense</i>	Rouen, Arch. dép. Seine-Maritime, 18 HP 28, fol. 1–11v	[12th c.] <sup>74</sup>

Table 1. Historiographical texts produced by the abbeys of Cistercian Normandy

<sup>74</sup> The *Chronicon* is known only by a 16th-century copy.

Abbey	Filiation	Text	Manuscript/catalogue mention	Date
Bonport	Cîteaux	Flavius Josephus, <i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5053 <sup>75</sup>	13th c.
		Petrus Comestor, <i>Historia Scholastica</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5097	13th c.
		Petrus Comestor, <i>Historia Scholastica</i>	Louviers, Bibl. mun., MS. 4	14th c.
Foucarmont	Savigny/ Clairvaux	Jerome, <i>De viris illustribus</i> , c. LXXV	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 1641, fol. 77v	12th c.
		Jerome, <i>De viris illustribus</i> Isidore of Seville, <i>De viris illustribus</i> (abbreviated)	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 2351, fol. 75–91, 100v– 103v <sup>76</sup>	12th–13th c.
		Baldric of Dol, <i>Historia Jerosolimitana</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 2588, fol. 136–179v	13th c.
Mortemer	Clairvaux	Gennadius, <i>De viris illustribus</i> (extract)	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 1885, fol. 1	12th c.
		Eusebius, <i>Chronicon</i> Sigebert of Gembloux, <i>Chronicon</i> Géraud de Frachet, <i>Chronicon</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4863	12th–13th c.
		Eusebius, <i>Chronicon</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5073	12th c.
		Eusebius, <i>Chronicon</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5080	13th c.
		Petrus Comestor, <i>Historia Scholastica</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5118	13th c.
		William of Jumièges, [ <i>Historia</i>	Lost: catalogue of 1677	Unknown

<sup>75</sup> Provenance placed in doubt by Bondéelle-Souchier, *Bibliothèques cisterciennes*, p. 46; accepted by Marie-Pierre Laffitte, 'Inventaires de bibliothèques normandes: l'intérêt des listes tardives', *Tabularia « Études »*, vol. 14 (2014), pp. 89–150 (p. 144).

<sup>76</sup> Provenance placed in doubt by Bondéelle-Souchier, *Bibliothèques cisterciennes*, p. 117; accepted by Laffitte, 'Inventaires de bibliothèques', p. 133.



		<i>Normannorum Ducum</i> ] [Einhard], <i>Vita Karoli Magni</i> <i>Abbreviatio gestorum Regum Francorum</i>	‘[27] Willelmus Gemeticensis. Vita Karoli magni. Abbreviatio gestorum regum francorum. Fol.’ Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 9363, fol. 208v <sup>77</sup>	
		Henry of Huntingdon, [Historia]	Lost: catalogue of 1677 ‘[28] Henricus Huntindoniensis. Fol.’ Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 9363, fol. 208v <sup>78</sup>	Unknown
		Orderic Vitalis, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>	Lost: catalogue of 1677 ‘[29-30] Ordericus Vitali. Fol. 2 voll.’ Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 9363, fol. 208v <sup>79</sup>	Unknown
		Cassiodorus, <i>Historia tripartita</i>	Lost: 13th-c. catalogue ‘Post hunc tripartita historia’ Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 3922A, fol. 246	Unknown

<sup>77</sup> It is possible that this manuscript served as the basis for the 16th-century copy made by Jean Franchet for Simon le Mutrel (today Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5999; incorrectly dated to the 13th c. by Laffitte, ‘Inventaires de bibliothèques’, p. 106).

<sup>78</sup> According to Marie-Pierre Laffitte, this is Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 6042 (Laffitte, ‘Inventaires de bibliothèques’, p. 106), but this manuscript comes from Le Mont Saint-Michel (Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. Diana Greenway (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. cxxiii). The manuscript cited in 1677 catalogue is perhaps Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 6043, which dates to the 16th century.

<sup>79</sup> This is perhaps Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5123<sup>1</sup> and 5123<sup>2</sup>, a 16th-century copy on paper. This manuscript is mistakenly dated to the 13th century by Laffitte, ‘Inventaires de bibliothèques’, p. 106.

		Flavius Josephus, [Unidentified historical work]	Lost: 13th-c. catalogue 'Post hunc Josephus cum histor...' Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 3922A, fol. 246	Unknown
		Petrus Comestor, <i>Historia Scholastica</i>	Lost: 13th-c. catalogue 'Item historie magistri Petri Manducatoris' Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 3922A, fol. 246	Unknown
		<i>Exordium Cistercii</i>	Lost: existence presumed based on extracts in Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4863, fol. 97r-v	Unknown
La Noë	Pontigny	Jerome, <i>De viris illustribus</i> Gennadius, <i>De viris illustribus</i> Isidore of Séville, <i>De viris illustribus</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 1906, fol. 83v–99, 100v–115v	12th c.
		Pseudo-Dares, <i>De Excidio Troiae historia</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 3359, fol. 83–88	11th c.
		Petrus Comestor, <i>Historia Scholastica</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5107	13th–14th c.
		Petrus Comestor, <i>Historia Scholastica</i>	Rouen, Bibl. mun., MS. 181 <sup>80</sup>	13th c.
[Unidentified]	[Unidentified]	Paul the Deacon, <i>Historia Langobardorum</i> Einhard, <i>Vita Karoli Magni</i>	Vienna, Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 182 <sup>81</sup>	12th c.
Savigny	Savigny/ Clairvaux	Eusebius, <i>Chronicon</i> (with continuations of Jerome and Pseudo-Prosper) Sigebert of Gembloux, <i>Chronicon</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4862	12th c.

<sup>80</sup> Provenance placed in doubt by Bondéelle-Souchier, *Bibliothèques cisterciennes*, p. 164.

<sup>81</sup> On the Norman and Cistercian provenance of this manuscript, see Tischler, *Einhard's Vita Karoli*, II, pp. 988–989.

		Robert of Torigni, <i>Chronicon</i> Hugh of Saint-Victor, <i>Chronicon</i>		
		Paul Orose, <i>Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri VII</i> Paul the Deacon, <i>Historia Langobardorum</i> Einhard, <i>Vita Karoli Magni</i> Pseudo-Callisthenes, <i>Vita Alexandri Magni</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 4877	12th-13th c.
		Bede, <i>Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum</i> Pseudo-Gildas, <i>Historia Brittonum</i> Henry of Huntingdon, <i>Epistola ad Warinum</i> (ou <i>De gestis Britonum</i> ) Robert of Torigni, <i>Chronicon</i> (fragmentary) Robert de Torigni, <i>De immutatione ordinis monachorum</i>	Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 5232 <sup>82</sup>	13th c.
		<i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> [unidentified]	Lost: catalogue of 1678 ‘[48] Historia ecclesiastica. Imparfaict.’ Paris, BnF, MS. lat. 9363, fol. 281v	Unknown
Le Valasse	Clairvaux	Sigebert of Gembloux, <i>Chronicon</i>	Lost: known by the first edition of 1515	Unknown

Table 2 Historical texts copied or acquired by the abbeys of Cistercian Normandy (12th-14th c.)

<sup>82</sup> Provenance placed in doubt by Bondéelle-Souchier, *Bibliothèques cisterciennes*, p. 282; accepted by Laffitte, ‘Inventaires de bibliothèques’, p. 116.