

THE RECONQUEST OF CATALUNA NUEVA, 1000-1170 A.D.



Important sites and major conquests

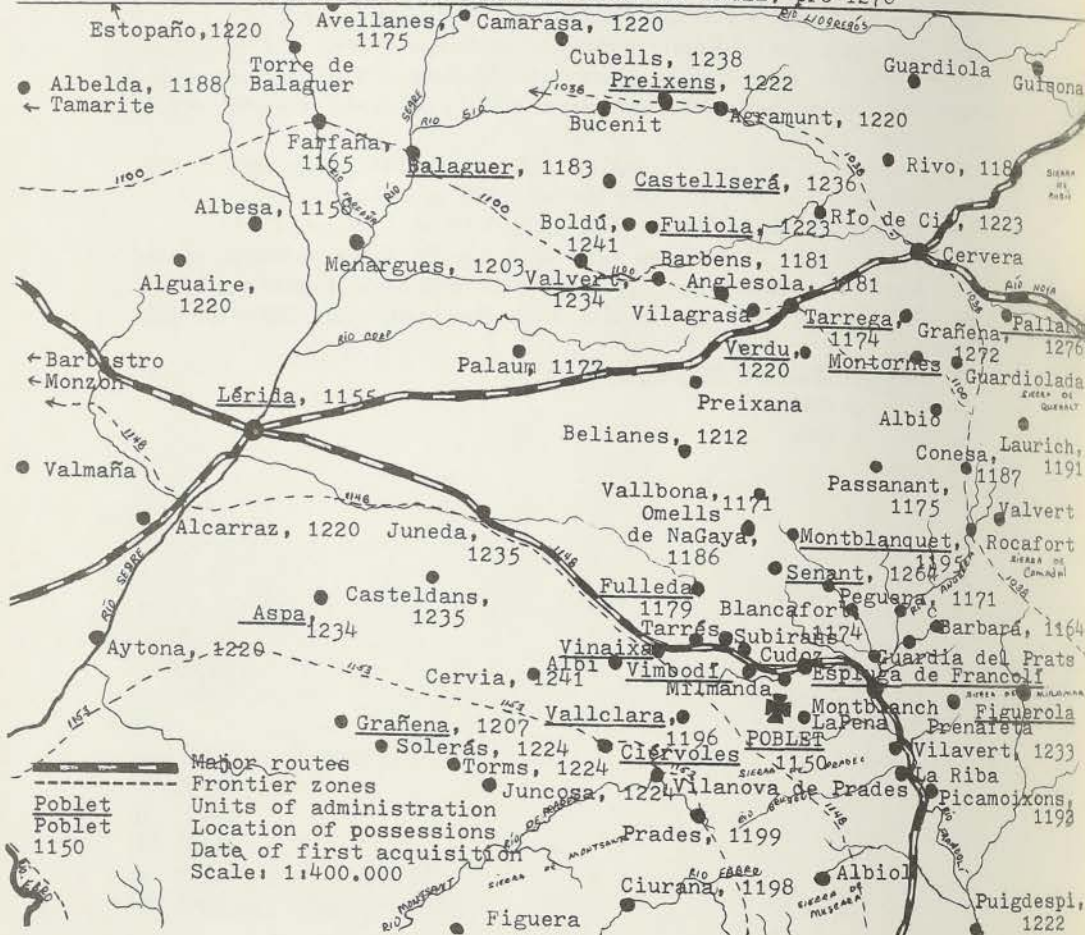
- 1) Seo de Urgel, 792 A.D.
- 2) Gerona, 785 A.D.
- 3) Vich, 792 A.D.
- 4) Lérida, 1148 A.D.
- 5) Fraga, 1149 A.D.
- 6) Poblet, 1150 A.D.
- 7) Montblanch, 1155 A.D.
- 8) Santes Creus, 1153 A.D.
- 9) Vilafrance de Panades, 1150 A.D.
- 10) Barcelona, 801 A.D.
- 11) Tarragona, 1118 A.D.
- 12) Tortosa, 1149 A.D.
- 13) Castellon de la Plana, 1222 A.D.
- 14) Valencia, 1238 A.D.

- A) Gaya River
- B) Francolí River
- C) Monstant River
- D) Segre River
- E) Ebro River

----- Approximate battle zones and dates for the frontier movement

..... Boundaries of the counties

THE ACQUISITION AND CONSOLIDATION OF POBLET'S HOLDINGS IN THE PROVINCE OF LERIDA AND THE SOUTHERN PLAIN OF URGEL, pre-1276



Poblet  
Poblet  
1150

Major routes  
Frontier zones  
Units of administration  
Location of possessions  
Date of first acquisition  
Scale: 1:400.000

## The Frontier of the Spanish Reconquest and the Land Acquisitions of the Cistercians of Poblet, 1150-1276

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The Cistercian Order played a crucial role in the development of Europe's medieval frontiers. While the contributions of these White Monks are well known, especially in the clearing of forests in France and Saxon Germany and for their sheep raising in Wales and England, little attention has been paid to the Order's influence in the development of the Iberian peninsula during the Reconquest. Only recently have historians sought to delineate the growth patterns of the Cistercian movement into Spain.<sup>1</sup> The greatest of all the Spanish Cistercian foundations was the Royal Monastery of Santa María de Poblet, located in the frontier of Catalonia which was created by the Reconquest of the House of Barcelona. Founded in 1150, Poblet reached its apogee of power and wealth in the fourteenth-century. The monastery was abandoned in 1835 before being sacked and partially destroyed during the popular revolution of 1836 by mobs from the neighboring villages. Revived in 1940 by a colony of Italian monks, today Poblet is a flourishing community.<sup>2</sup> The abbey itself is a national shrine of Spain, famous as the royal pantheon of Aragon-Catalonia, and is being restored by the monks and Friends of Poblet. During the past decade the monastery has become a favorite tourist attraction. Consequently, most recent literature concerning Poblet treats the monastery's magnificent artistic ruins; the economic activity of Poblet and the monastery's landed wealth have received little attention.<sup>3</sup>

The growth of Poblet's domain may be explained largely in terms of the close relation of her land acquisitions to the movement of the battle zones on the frontier. The monastery was founded next to a virtual "no-man's land," and was surrounded by lands which had belonged to the Moors only a few years before. The extreme limits of the frontier in 1150 were neither tangible nor stationary as on a border, but were merely

the most remote areas of Christian penetration.<sup>4</sup> Poblet prospered by exploiting its position as a frontier monastery. As the Christians drove the Moors southward, the Cistercians acquired lands on the shifting frontier. The monks aided the Christian cause by financing military campaigns to subdue Moorish rebels in the highlands, by rendering diplomatic service, and by redeeming captives.<sup>5</sup> Most important, the monastery contributed greatly to the development and settlement of the frontier. Poblet reclaimed land through irrigation; experimented in cattle breeding; attracted a labor supply through the Cistercian institution of the *conversi*, the lay brethren; opened up new fields around scattered granges which were worked by lay brothers under the direction of the abbey's cellarer; encouraged settlement through lend-lease contracts whereby laymen rented monastic lands and promised to improve the property in order to fulfill the terms of their leases; fostered short distance trade in wine, olive oil, and other products; furthered viniculture; and established such basic industries as milling, mining, pottery works, glass blowing, and blacksmiths.<sup>6</sup> These were methods of exploiting, thereby developing, land. The success of Poblet's growth thus depended upon the monastery's acquisitions. The relationship between Poblet's land acquisitions and the expansion of the frontier by military conquests is a primary aspect of Poblet's "frontier" character.

At the close of the tenth century the lines which separated Christian from Moor in northeastern Spain were much the same as they had been in the days when Charlemagne established the Spanish March. Significant revival of the Christian cause came only after the year 1000 when Barcelona was recaptured and the Country's southern borders were pushed to the River Llobregat.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter the Counts of Barcelona and Urgel made slow but consistent progress in driving their boundaries further south by waging a series of border wars. By 1023 the frontier was situated along the River Gaià, and by 1038 Count Ramón Berenguer I of Barcelona made incursions as far as Conesa, Ollés, Rocafort, and Forès.<sup>8</sup> Below this area lay the no-man's land which stretched beyond the River Francolí toward Lérida and Tortosa, the two main

objectives of the Catalan Reconquest.<sup>9</sup> The Christian advance moved slowly until after 1079 when the two Counts of Barcelona, Ramón Berenguer II and his brother Berenguer Ramón II, took control of *Lardeta*, a district the Christians called the "Shell of Barberà". During the next half-century the frontier shifted westward, some two and one-half miles from the River Gaià, to the area around modern Montblanch. The whole *Conca de Barberà* was described by contemporaries as a "desolate place", and the upper Francolí basin was "the very outer edge of the March".<sup>10</sup> At this juncture the movement of the Christian forces down the coastline halted, but progress continued in the highlands where Moorish settlement was sparse. As a result of the combined efforts of the Counts of Urgel and Barcelona, the Christians erected by the turn of the twelfth century a fortification line extending southward from Tàrrrega.

The territory behind this defensive line was clearly in Christian hands, but it was not densely settled by the Christians. The Reconquerors, however, thought of the annexed lands as their own; they spoke of their war as an offensive action "in the defense of our country".<sup>11</sup> The frontier continually edged further southwest, but settlers did not move into the newly acquired land as rapidly as it was taken from the Moors. A vast stretch of land lay behind the Christian battle zone, unsettled and undeveloped, but not unwanted. This undeveloped frontier area served both to limit the confines of the older, repopulated counties of Barcelona, Urgel, Ampurias, Cerdagne, and Rousillon, and to contrast them with lands which awaited the Reconquest. The older Spanish March of the Carolingians later became known as *Cataluña Vieja* and the lands taken under the Berenguers constituted *Cataluña Nueva*. The latter extended from Tarragona to Monstant, south through the Sierra de Prades, and west beyond Cervera. The completion of the Reconquest in Catalonia was the work of Count Ramón Berenguer IV, who after 1137 was able to enlist Aragonese and Catalan as well as French forces for his expeditions.<sup>12</sup>

Seeking a catalyst to speed colonization and development in the lands secured by his military successes, the Count

found a ready-made, time-tested remedy in the Cistercian Order. During his campaigns against the Moorish stronghold of Ciurana in 1148, Ramón Berenguer, "the Saint", as the legend about the hermit named Poblet relates, witnessed a miracle involving three mysterious lights. The Count attributed his victory to divine intervention and this experience inspired him to invite the Cistercians of Fontfroide in southern France to establish a monastery in his domain.<sup>13</sup> In 1150 a colony of thirteen French monks arrived to found their daughter house upon the site of the miracle in the western confines of the recently retaken *Conca de Barberà*. Ramón Berenguer IV's grant of the *Huerto de Poblet*, a valley encompassing about 2800 acres in which the hermit's cave was located, and his continued support of the Cistercians at Poblet were more than pious deeds. The foundation of Poblet in the heartland of *Cataluña Nueva* was part of his strategy to consolidate the land behind the defense zone. Poblet was founded as a frontier monastery, and with her sister institution, the monastery of Santes Creus, signaled a new direction in the expansion of the old County of Barcelona.<sup>14</sup>

Poblet began to expand her holdings beyond the confines of the *Huerto de Poblet* within the first decade of her foundation. Her first acquisition, in 1153, led her toward Lérida where a vast expanse of land was made available by the conquests of the previous five years.<sup>15</sup> The major thrust of the Christian Reconquest moved south after the fall of Lérida in 1148, and the old line of fortifications near Tàrrrega, the well fortified *masos* or large farm houses, as well as some of the less strategically placed castles lost their original function.<sup>16</sup> Now they became focal points for repopulation and colonization. The nobility tended to concentrate their holdings around their largest estates, usually lands which they had carved out for themselves or which had been granted by the Crown. Their peripheral lands lost importance simply because land was plentiful and only partially developed. Land could be given away or sold, therefore, without any immediate loss to the owner.<sup>17</sup>

Two areas were especially attractive to the Cistercians of Poblet. The first lay along the southern Plain of Urgel, from

the River Llobregos in the north to the Sierra de Llena in the south, and from the Sierra de Rubio in the east to the Ebro River in the west. Poblet was located on the edge of these areas, and it was natural for her to look immediately north and west for possibilities of new land acquisitions. The main flow of settlers was along the coast from the counties in the northeast. Land to the east of the monastery soon became less readily available for acquisition than the plains and highlands in the opposite direction. For instance, the Campo de Tarragona, although still not entirely free from Moslem incursions, began to be colonized shortly after 1131, some twenty years before Poblet had made her first acquisition.<sup>18</sup> The areas directly east of the monastery were being colonized by settlers moving inland from the coast, northward along the valleys of the Gaià and Francolí Rivers. Moreover, after 1133 the Knights Templars of Barberà, and later those of Montblanch and Espluga de Francolí, sought lands in this direction, and after 1153 the Cistercians of Santes Creus joined the competition.<sup>19</sup> These lands had been in Christian hands since 1006, and the best land in the valleys had long since been claimed by other lords. By 1056 the old frontier had moved west of Tàrraga, allowing for a century of gradual occupation in the areas east of the Francolí.

The second area which offered fertile opportunities for land acquisitions was the newer frontier between Aragon and Valencia. The lower Ebro Valley was opened up when the Christian forces advanced south, past Tortosa, in 1149, the year following the capture of Lérida. However, the Count did not effectively control the southern road from Tarragona to Tortosa until May 1151, slowing the Christian movement into these newly acquired lands. Tortosa itself was subjugated by the Count by May 5 of that year, the date when the Church of Tortosa was restored.<sup>20</sup> However, the lands within the boundaries of Tortosa were not subdued until March, 1154, and the area south of Tortosa was not open to Christian occupation until 1172 when King Alfonso II of Aragon-Catalonia renewed the anti-Moslem offensive. The Crown's new objective, Valencia, did not fall until 1238. In spite of these delayed successes, the country north of Tortosa re-

mained hostile to Christian penetration; rebellions and brigandage were common. Moorish rebels, as late as 1243, shocked the Christians by their bold ambush of the warrior-Bishop of Valencia, Ferrer de Pallarés, on his way to a provincial council at Barcelona. Attempts to ransom the Bishop failed and he was murdered after three days of captivity.<sup>21</sup> Regardless of such turmoil in this frontier, Poblet benefited from the reconquest of northern Valencia. Poblet's acquisitions seldom went beyond the River Segre, and the bulk of her estates were acquired before June, 1222, when King Jaime I captured Castellon de la Plana. Although the monastery held scattered possessions throughout the newly reconquered territory, the majority of her southern acquisitions remained in the Ebro basin.

When Poblet was founded in 1150, the Reconquest had already passed Lérida and Tortosa, and as a consequence, Poblet was always behind the main battle zone. However, as in the case of the badlands of Tortosa, there were many areas adjacent to the *Huerto de Poblet* which defied Christian occupation. Local skirmishes with the Moors who had retreated into the hill country were still common in 1150, and Poblet was situated very near to the stronghold of Ciurana, in Moorish hands until April, 1153. Although the *Conca de Barberà* was officially under the Count's control by 1148, its governor, Ramón de Cervera, faced continued rebellions on the part of the Moors.<sup>22</sup> Outbreaks of violence occurred near Prades until 1170, when King Alfonso II, with the financial aid of Poblet, quelled a final rebellion.<sup>23</sup> These small, isolated conflicts behind the war zone served only to make secure pockets of resistance to Christian occupation, and to instill into the new settlers a fear of another Moslem incursion. The settlers could still remember the serious threat which the Almohades posed to Christian Spain until after the death of Abdu-l-mumen in 1163. The strength of the Moors was not really broken until the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, and the Christians never realized the opportunity of their victory. Even after 1212 the Christians, plagued by the same kind of internecine warfare which had weakened the Almohades, failed to take advantage of the enemy's lack of unity.

The Reconquest progressed southward slowly, city by city.<sup>24</sup> A feeling of true security was possible in *Cataluña Nueva* only after the successes of Jaime I, long after Poblet first expanded her holdings. Many villages, like Rojals in 1151, Vinaixa in 1153, and Vilavert in 1155, had just received their charters: they, like Poblet, were frontier settlements.<sup>25</sup> The charter for the donation of the grange at Doldellops in 1154 indicates that the possession was "on the frontier in Frankland".<sup>26</sup> A century of border warfare had left the highlands around Poblet undeveloped and unpopulated. As an entrepreneurial foundation Poblet was to aid the establishment of a viable economy on the frontier, and this made land acquisitions all important.

Poblet quickly moved into areas where land had been freed by the Reconquest, acquiring her first possessions in the territory north of Tortosa, the most hostile frontier. The first donations in this region, of two *huertos* or parcels of partially developed land, were granted by separate patrons in March 1154, only one year after Ramón Berenguer IV subdued the Tortosan countryside.<sup>27</sup> In that same month, the Count himself granted Poblet an *honor*, a parcel of land of unspecified condition or area, at Cherta, within the northern limits of Tortosa, and in 1155 the monastery acquired the *mas* of Bas from the Count.<sup>28</sup> Also in that year the Count's lieutenants began to turn over some of their spoils of the Reconquest to the monastery. Guillén Aimeric had been given extensive holdings near Tortosa just two years prior to his donation of an orchard near Petrola in March 1155.<sup>29</sup> An undated charter, considered to predate the accession of Abbot Grimbaldo in 1155, listed Poblet's holdings near Cherta as including eleven olive groves, three vineyards, and two unspecified possessions, lands which had been partially developed and abandoned by the Moors.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, in that same year Poblet began to lease her new holdings and to arrange for their improvement.<sup>31</sup> Poblet had made over twenty acquisitions within the boundaries of Tortosa within two years of its subjugation, making clear the influence of the southward movement of the frontier on her monastic domain.

The initial frontier character of Poblet was not, however,



to endure. Because the southern marches of the Reconquest shifted so rapidly with the advances of Ramón Berenguer IV and, after 1172, his son, Alfonso II, the monastery's acquisitions began to come from donors who had held the land for a decade or more. Consequently, much of the land Poblet acquired in the 1170's had been partially developed by the Moors and improved by the new Christian landlords. More important, Poblet tried to avoid scattering her monastic domain over all of Valencia by consolidating her holdings north of the Ebro. When Aragon reached an accord with Castile in 1170, and Alfonso II, two years later, reopened the crusade, the battle zone moved further away from Poblet's holdings, the threat of the Almohades seemed less potent, and most of the border lands were subdued. Although marauders remained a problem, the hinterlands near Poblet were no longer plagued by localized warfare. The military front moved on, and the monastery, stationary as it was, chose to acquire and develop lands in the frontier nearer to the abbey. After 1232 Poblet founded a daughter house at Benifazá on the Valencian frontier and the new acquisitions of the Cistercians in this area did not constitute part of Poblet's domain.<sup>32</sup>

In short, the effect of the frontier on Poblet had been twofold: 1) the late reconquest of Lérida and Tortosa had made land available to the north and southwest of the monastery when Poblet was able to compete for and acquire possessions, and 2) because the reconquered lands, especially those of the most southern frontier, were already developed and were yielding harvests, they were used as spoils and payments to the knights who had supported the king, and were in turn given to the monastery as these knights formed a new land-owning class. Income from these donations allowed Poblet to invest and develop lands in the less productive frontier close to the abbey. The result was that for nearly a century Poblet was able to expand at will, and that a large percentage of her acquisitions were productive, having undergone twenty to thirty years of development before they came under the monastery's administration. A third, less direct influence of the frontier on Poblet's activities was that her position, strategically very important, coupled with her growing power

as a land owner, gave the monastery a privileged status. Frontier land holders were often excused from certain taxes, dues, and services in return for other, usually military, services.<sup>33</sup> Secular lords might actively engage in combat in the defense of the dominion's border lands, while a monastery might lend financial aid and diplomatic counsel. Poblet served her kings in both ways, and in return was accorded a privileged legal status which was obvious to anyone who opposed Poblet's expansion. Of fifty-three disputes, mostly over the control of land, between 1166 and 1275, thirty-five cases were resolved in the monastery's favor. Poblet reached compromise agreements to settle fifteen disputes, and the monastery acquiesced to unfavorable decisions in only three cases.<sup>34</sup> Poblet's enhanced prestige originated in the early years when Poblet served the primary function of a frontier monastery, and later it helped her in consolidating her domain by defeating rival claimants in law suits.

The widest stretches of unproductive land which the monastery acquired were those near the Sierra de Monstant, immediately southwest of Poblet, the last areas abandoned by the Moorish rebels. Consequently, land reclamation was an important part of Poblet's program. Poblet's abbots, "with their more consistent habit of thought and wider range of vision" than secular lords, actively sought lands which could be put to future rather than immediate use.<sup>35</sup> Some of the granges, the main centers of Cistercian agricultural exploitation, such as Cérvoles, were three decades in the making before they were profitable. A monastery because of its corporate nature could, more than a secular lord, afford long-term investments needed for land reclamation. The result was that some lands, such as those near Montagudell within the *Huerto de Poblet* itself, were left undeveloped for half a century before the monastery began their reclamation.<sup>36</sup> Possible land acquisitions were never overlooked merely because the land could not be worked immediately.

The vast majority of the lands acquired by Poblet had undergone some development. Three-fourths of Poblet's land acquisitions had belonged to someone other than the king or

to one of his Moorish vassals. Land recovered from the Moors became the property of the Crown. The bulk of this land was parceled out as estates to those who best served the Reconquest. Poblet had her share of these royal donations. For example, the monastery obtained her seigneurial rights to Vimbodí in 1172 because Poblet had rendered financial aid to Alfonso II during his campaigns against the Moorish insurrections in the Sierra de Prades.<sup>37</sup> Although some of the royal donations were valuable, land grants were less common than privileges, and Jaime I preferred to patronize his beloved monastery with cash gifts. Most of Poblet's land donations were given by nobles who had received royal grants immediately after the Christians had made sizeable territorial gains.

Poblet could acquire land in two ways: it could be given to the monastery or it could be purchased. The monastery first received most of her land through donations. The Cistercians had a special arrangement by which laymen could become quasi-members of the community without taking vows. These laymen, and sometimes women, were called *donados* because they usually "donated" some possession to Poblet and in turn were allowed to partake of the "benefits" of the monastery. If they desired, the *donados* were able to take vows and become choir monks at some future, unspecified date. Usually the *donado*, when his wife died and his family was grown, would enter the Order. The *donado* arrangement thus appears to be an early case of retirement planning. In some cases Poblet promised to care for the *donado's* wife and family if the *donado* died first.<sup>38</sup> The *donados* were welcome to stay at the monastery in a special dormitory and they may also have had access to the monastery's shops or some privileges such as discounts in using the monastery's mills. No charter in Poblet's cartulary enumerates all of these "benefits".

A second source of donations was from novitiates. Poblet's choir monks came predominantly from the nobility, and every noble who entered the Order vowed to observe strict poverty. The novices made out their wills during their novitiate, and when a candidate entered the community as a full-fledged member his will went into effect. This was especially convenient for Poblet if relatives of a monk chose to contest his

will. Poblet often received a generous donation, especially if the monk did not have to provide for a family.

A third incentive for donations was also religious, but some donors differed slightly from the *donados* and novices in their motivation. Many nobles sought burial in "hallowed ground" within the monastery's precinct. The abbey had a special cemetery for them, not far from that of the monks. The greater nobility, such as the Counts of Urgel, had their own chapels and family crypts.<sup>39</sup> The monastery thrived from her reputation as the royal pantheon of Aragon-Catalonia, just as San Juan de la Peña had before her. Count Ramón Berenguer IV was buried there in 1162, Alfonso II in 1196, and Jaime I in 1276.<sup>40</sup>

Most of the donors did not stipulate special reasons for their donations, other than the formulaic "for the good of my soul". Only one donation specified that in return for several fiefs the monks should offer daily Mass for the donor's intention.<sup>41</sup> When the gift was made immediately before the benefactor left on a pilgrimage or a crusade, his intention was obvious to everyone. As late as 1234 it was fashionable to donate something to a religious house before leaving to fight on the Valencian frontier. The knight sought the monks' prayers, usually through the traditional Cistercian intercession of the Virgin, for success and a triumphant return.<sup>42</sup>

Poblet's donations came from all ranks of society from small landlords, records of parishes, small tenant farmers, to the great nobles, the archbishops, and the kings. Her largest patronage, however, came from the greater nobility. Nearly forty per cent of Poblet's donations came from the royal house and the established families of northeastern Spain. About six per cent specify that the donation was made to secure burial at Poblet. Sixteen per cent were donations made by monks and *conversi*: in one instance, the monk who made a donation to Poblet took his profession of faith at Santes Creus.<sup>43</sup> Two-thirds of the charters which donate possessions to Poblet do not tell why the donation was made. The main reason for donations, the quest for salvation, was, for medieval men, self-evident.

Purchase of land became more common after the turn of the thirteenth century, and even then, most charters which record payments for a "donation" did not openly admit that the transaction was a sale.<sup>44</sup>

Formerly, sales of landed property had been somewhat rare; their very legality seemed doubtful, in public opinion, unless there was the excuse of 'great poverty'. Thus when a purchaser was a church (or abbey), the sale was apt to be disguised under the name of a pious donation. Actually the vendor expected from his pretence, which was only half deception, a double gain. In this world he would receive the purchase-price (though lower perhaps than it would have been in the absence of any other remuneration) : in the next, the salvation of his soul, obtained through the prayers of the servants of God.

About half of the purchases Poblet made were disguised in this way. An illustrative case is a transaction which took place on June 27, 1176. Ramón de Moncada, who held a lion's share of the spoils from the Tortosan and Valencian frontiers, sold several houses in Remolins and his share in a granary at Tortosa for a mere sixty *morabatines*, plus a bid for an eternal award.<sup>45</sup> The monastery bought not only land, but also titles to land, especially when those claims contested Poblet's complete ownership. To avoid putting her own tenures in jeopardy, the monastery would "pay off" rival claimants. Whereas the monastery had little effective control over which donations were offered to her, Poblet was meticulous in her buying. Most investments were made to consolidate holdings, to obtain water sources near already held lands, to gain enough pasturage, or to "corner" water rights. In fewer cases, purchases were made almost solely because the real estate itself was income producing. Whereas most of her negotiations were for small *honors*, usually worth from forty to one hundred and twenty *sueldos*, some of them were for large sums, from 600 to 3000 *sueldos*. The larger transactions were for pre-existing administrative units, *señoríos* and *dominicaturas*, usually castles and their lands, and sometimes for the seig-

neurial rights to villages. In 1259 Poblet paid 3100 *sueldos* to Guillén de Jorba for a castle and its lands at Montblanquet, and in 1264 the monastery paid the abbey of Montserrat 25,000 *sueldos* for the rights to Senant.<sup>46</sup> These large transactions were, however, exceptions to the rule.

The trend from relying on donations as the major source of acquisitions to an increased use of purchasing in order to consolidate her holdings is most significant. This tendency first hints that the frontier was closing in Catalonia in the thirteenth century (by 1200 in the areas most proximate to Poblet), and that the best land had already been claimed or settled. Secondly, it demonstrates that the second and third generations were not as free with their family estates as their fathers had been immediately after they were enriched by the spoils of the Reconquest. Whereas before 1200 the leading patrons of Poblet were well-known names like Geraldo de Jorba, Pedro and Berenguer de Puigvert, Ramón and Guillén de Cervera, Archbishop Guillén de Torroja, Guillén de Anglesola, Viscount Ponce de Cabrera, Count Armengol VIII of Urgel, Pedro de Avellanes, Pedro, Guillén, and Ramón de Segura, Ramón de Moncada, and others, new names appear in Poblet's donations once the monastery was firmly established. The first donors were those men who had profited after taking an active part in the Reconquest. Some had been lieutenants of Ramón Berenguer IV, others had performed most of their service under Alfonso II. The same family names reappear in the donations made between 1200 and 1250, but toward the 1230's there is a notable increase in new benefactors with names not so traditionally established, who were enjoying the benefits of the renewed campaigns against Mallorca and Valencia. Women donors also became more numerous. Whereas before the thirteenth century the Countess of Tarragona was the main patroness of Poblet, in later years women such as Hermesinda de Zaguardia and Doña Elvira, the Countess of Subirats, became generous donors. They had been enriched by the estates left to them by their deceased husbands, knights who had served in the southern wars. After 1244, there was a notable decline in both the number and size of donations. The donors' names, except for the families of

Anglesola and Cabrera, are new. Their fathers and grandfathers had not been patrons of Poblet.

A third very important facet of Poblet's increased acquisitions by purchases illustrates a change in Poblet's character as an economic institution. Before the thirteenth century the monastery was a religious house which relied on her reputation for sanctity to secure outside patronage. In the 1200's Poblet became self-sufficient, politically capable of competing with the strongest rivals, and financially able to acquire whatever the monastery wanted. Her acquisition policy became more aggressive, and the monastery, as a purchasing agent, maneuvered with astonishing zeal. This is apparent in two of her policies: 1) her acquisition of adequate pasturage near the abbey, and 2) her attempt to secure a milling monopoly near Espluga de Francolí.<sup>47</sup> In several cases Poblet purchased her land by redeeming mortgages, or by moving against debtors. For example, Pedro de Bageries had fallen into debt and the monastery extended to him a moderate loan of sixty *morabatines*. He was able to pay back only half of the sum, but was allowed to cancel the entire debt by "donating" some vineyards of his to Poblet.<sup>48</sup> In other cases, when the debtors owed as much as eight hundred *sueldos*, the "donations" were larger. At the same time Poblet was protected by royal decree against creditors who tried to force the monastery to pay debts which her members had incurred before entering the Order. On March 3, 1166, Pedro de Queralt became a novice at Poblet and he signed the customary will which all Cistercians wrote before leaving the secular world. He bequeathed a mill in Espluga de Francolí and some vineyards to the monastery, but the mill was not entirely his to give.<sup>49</sup> Pedro had contracted a debt of two hundred *sueldos* and his creditors were eager for its payment. When Poblet claimed ownership of the mill, Pedro's creditors sought payment from the monastery. Although the abbot refused, they persisted in their demands. King Alfonso II intervened, restated his policy that Poblet was under his protection, and warned that none of his vassals should dare exact anything from the monastery.<sup>50</sup> Poblet retained the mill and Pedro de Queralt's creditors sought payment from his heirs. Apparently they were not

very successful because in March 1256, King Jaime I had to issue a similar mandate when Pedro de Queralt II became a monk at Poblet. There are several examples which show that the monastery was very lenient with both plaintiffs and debtors, but her abbots were shrewd businessmen protected by royal patronage, and Poblet could be a cold, calculating rival when competing in land acquisition. This image, of course, adversely affected her relations with the neighboring landlords and may have been a contributing factor to the decrease in donations after the mid-century.

Although Poblet continued to acquire land, a sharp decline in the number of donations occurred after 1244.<sup>51</sup> The greatest donor after then was Jaime I: his barons made only sporadic donations to Poblet. New gifts consisted of rents, tithes, portions of harvests, and cash more than of land. Although there were few purchases made by the monastery between 1245 and 1259, within five years thereafter Poblet bought property worth a total of 1470 gold *morabatines*, fifty *mazmudinas* of gold, and 33,850 *sueldos*, a great amount of money in the thirteenth century. Purchases after 1260 outnumbered donations two to one. Before 1185 donations had outnumbered purchases four to one. The change is striking.

An overall statistical breakdown of Poblet's landed acquisitions between 1150 and 1276 reveals that donations were by far the main source of landed wealth for the monastery. Purchases were a supplementary method of acquiring land and consolidation. Of course, the character of individual abbots may have been decisive in any aggressive acquisition by the monastery. But usually, according to the precepts of the Benedictine Rule, a house's *consuetudines*, its customal, allowed the entire community a voice in land acquisition, especially in cases involving a considerable expenditure.

The monastery's first purchase occurred in 1166.<sup>52</sup> No more were made until 1171, but sixteen transactions had been concluded by 1186. These contracts were the work of Abbots Hugón (1166-1181) and Esteban III Droc (1181-1185). There was systematic buying until the end of the century, most of which involved inexpensive peripheral lands for pasturage. The first large business venture came in 1190 with the pur-



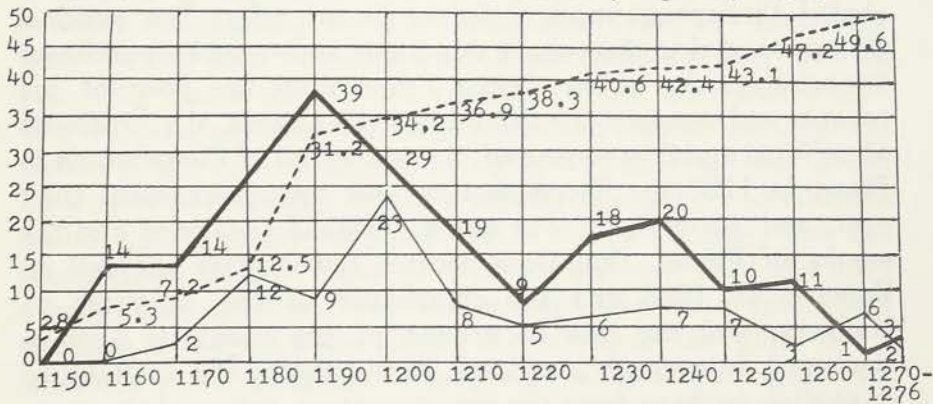
chase of the castle and lands of Monsuar for 15,000 *morabatines*, the greatest sum ever spent by Poblet in a single transaction.<sup>53</sup> No buying occurred between 1199 and 1204, but in the following years Abbots Pedro III de Concabella (1198-1204) and Pedro IV de Curtacans (1204-1215) made increased efforts to complete Poblet's control over several mills by making eight purchases.

The monastery became very conservative after 1204 until the end of Pedro IV's supervision. Torn over the issue of the Albigensian Crusade and the ambivalent position of King Pedro II, the community had split into pro-Catalan and pro-French factions. Once the French question was resolved in 1213, the monastery, having achieved a greater solidarity, resumed purchasing. Poblet fortunately had three very capable abbots in succession: Arnaldo II de Filella (1215-1221), Ramón de Ostralich (1221-1224), and Ramón II de Cervera (1224-1229). They added greatly to the monastic domain by making eleven purchases in fourteen years. Then another pause in Poblet's buying activities occurred, possibly in expectation of the outcome of Jaime I's launching of new forces against Mallorca and Valencia. From 1236 to 1245, encouraged by the king's military victories, Poblet made another fourteen purchases, most of which were contracted by Abbot Ramón IV Donato (1238-1241). The greatest series of transactions was initiated by Abbot Arnaldo IV de Prexens (1254-1268), whose long rule allowed him to consolidate Poblet's holdings, increase her revenues, and arrange for new acquisitions. Abbot Arnaldo spent more during his abbacy than was spent in any of the four series of purchases discussed so far. In all Poblet had made more than ninety-one purchases, totalling more than 44,000 *sueldos*, 24,000 *morabatines*, and 3,600 gold *mazmudinas*. Of these transactions, twenty-seven, or nearly one-third, were made to guarantee the tenure of previous acquisitions. They included renewals of confirmations, concessions of rights, and payments for favorable settlements in disputes. They were not transacted to acquire more land, but were designed to allow the monastery to keep the peaceful possession of lands which Poblet already claimed.

The nature of the donations to Poblet is as revealing as the

monastery's purchases. In all 211 donations were made between 1150 and 1276. Of these, 121 or nearly sixty per cent were made within fifty years after Poblet's foundation. The other forty per cent were spread out over a period of seventy-six years. Only sixteen donations date between 1250 and 1276, a notable decline considering that from 1225 to 1250 over thirty-seven donations had been granted. The following graph illustrates the fluctuation in the number of both donations and purchases by decades; it also indicates the estimated growth in the area of Poblet's domain, not counting areas under the monastery's administration such as *señoríos* and *dominicaturas* which are impossible to assess.<sup>54</sup>

THE GROWTH OF POBLET'S DOMAIN BY DECADES, 1150-1276 A.D.



Donations: ————— Purchases: - - - - -  
 Estimated acreage in units of 1000 acres: . . . . .

Note that while the Reconquest moved southward, toward Tortosa, donations to Poblet remained about the same, but when Alfonso II, with renewed vigor, began to push the southern frontier toward Valencia in 1172 and to consolidate the frontier behind the crusaders, donations to Poblet rose sharply. It was during this surge of military conquest that Poblet was the indirect beneficiary of many spoils of war. The leadership of Pedro II took Aragonese-Catalan forces further south to victory at Las Navas in 1212, and north to disaster at Muret in 1213. Both donations and purchases declined while he reigned. The Reconquest made little territorial gain and the political situation was very tense after King Pedro II's reign when northern Aragon and Catalonia awaited possible invasion by the forces of Simon de Montfort. The young King, Jaime I, had an all-pervasive guard in the vigilant Papacy of Innocent III, but the crisis continued unabated throughout most of Jaime I's minority. The political climate tended to discourage donations and to make purchases financially risky. After Jaime I threw off the yoke of his regents and renewed the drive toward Valencia, the prospects of political stability improved. After the fall of Castellon de la Plana in 1222 the Reconquest became more successful than ever, and the spoils of war again enriched Catalonia and the monks of Poblet. Donations became fewer after the fall of Valencia in 1238 and the completion of the conquest of Mallorca, and the rate of growth of the monastic domain slackened. In general, purchases, stimulated by the availability of capital, perhaps from the new donations, followed the same trend as the donations. Only twice, in the 1190's and in the 1260's, did the monastery increase her buying when her donations waned.

The result of the donations to and purchases by Poblet was the formation of a large monastic domain which the monastery tried to weld into a tightly-knit financial empire. All medieval monasteries developed domains in an attempt to become self-sufficient. Not every monastery developed its domain in the same way, nor did every monastery become and stay financially solvent by tapping the same resources for her income. Not all achieved their goal. They were founded as

permanent institutions, but not all survived. Preservation depended upon economic stability, which in turn depended upon an operational program for converting potentials into realities, that is, for transforming monastic lands into an income producing unit. How a monastery was to accomplish this was not prescribed by any Rule. St. Benedict was more concerned with how to persevere and to lead an austere life, to perfect humility, and to trust in the Lord, and although St. Stephen Harding's *Carta charitatis* elaborated the theme of Christian charity and love, the famous Cistercian treatise did little more than reiterate St. Benedict's few basic economic directives. The real dictates for achieving self-sufficiency were prescribed by the environment in which the community had to live. In Poblet's case, that environment was initially a hostile frontier.

Poblet never really enjoyed the ideal solitude which was so acclaimed by the primitive observance, an ideal given wholehearted endorsement by the Cistercians. True, the monastery was founded in a wilderness, but Poblet was not long isolated from the many and varied conflicts which surrounded her. Her wilderness, only partially tamed, offered an inimical resistance to further development, and Poblet had the added burden of adjustment within a rapidly changing and complex social and economic environment. Poblet's security was not guaranteed, despite royal protection, and not even her food supply was assured. The monastery faced the immediate problem of turning the simple directives of her Rule into a sound economic program of land acquisition and development. If the monastery could build a productive domain, Poblet could achieve self-sufficiency and survive. This "if" was intimately bound up with the many possibilities for expansion created by the Reconquest.

The development of a large monastic domain was the key to Poblet's success. From her foundation until the death of King Jaime I in 1276, Poblet grew into her adulthood, her fourteenth-century "Era of Splendor".<sup>55</sup> Her domain was one of the largest on the continent, and the abbey was the wealthiest of all in Spain. Within the century of her growth stage, the monastery of Poblet had established claims to and controlled eleven *dominicaturas* and twelve and a half *seño-*

*ríos*; held the seigneurial rights to twenty-nine villages, operated three irrigation systems, twenty-seven granges and over thirty mills; administered more than a half-dozen churches and five smaller religious houses; and owned thirty-eight castles, eight towers, over sixty-five *masos*, more than 125 *honors*, eight *puertos* or mountain valleys, eighteen different stretches of pasture lands, seventeen *solars* or building sites, nine fields, six *alodes*, fifteen *huertos* or intensely cultivated plots, over sixty orchards and olive groves, three quarries, a dense forest, more than one hundred houses, and over 120 unspecified kinds of property which included granaries, corrals, wine cellars, forges, wool and grain shops, and craft shops which produced wood, metal, glass, and pottery products. Poblet directly administered over 20,000 acres of land and had indirect control, through ownership rights and leases, over another 35,000 acres. Thus a conservative estimate of the size of Poblet's domain by 1276 is a minimum 55,000 acres.

Poblet controlled her holdings through a highly centralized and efficient administration system in order to exploit their resources, develop them, and convert them into a private, productive domain. The bulk of these possessions came to Poblet in over 221 donations and ninety-two cash transactions. In total, Poblet had acquired more than nine hundred separate possessions in 260 different sites. They formed the nucleus of a domain which was later divided into five baronies and lasted well into the nineteenth century.

The earliest record which illustrates in detail the wealth produced by this domain is an accounting, both of the monastery's treasury and liquid assets, dating forty years after Jaime I's death. In 1316 Ponce de Copons, the abbot of Benifazá, was elected Poblet's new abbot. An inventory of Poblet's financial status was presented to him.<sup>56</sup> The community then numbered ninety-two choir monks and thirty-five *conversi*. The monastery's warehouses stored forty measures of wheat, five hundred measures of "corn", and another twelve thousand *septenarios* of wheat. The latter figure alone represents a reserve worth more than 10,000 *sueldos*. There was more than enough wine and oil on hand to last until the next harvest.

Poblet's livestock included 53 mules and asses, 40 horses, 111 rams, 2215 sheep, 1500 goats, and 172 pigs. Included in the livestock tabulation were 63 slaves. Poblet's account books showed that the monastery owed 36,414 *sueldos* to various creditors, but her accounts receivable far outweighed this debt. Old and new credit extended by the monastery totaled 20,826 *sueldos* and eight *denarii*: of this outstanding revenue, 8,806 *sueldos* and the eight *denarii* were for unpaid rents for the past year. The treasury guarded 87,667 *sueldos* and nine *denarii* altogether, a cash hoard which contained nine kinds of currency, each of which were accounted for in terms of the current exchange value in *sueldos barceloneses*. In all, Poblet's cash assets amounted to 147,341 *sueldos*. Assets minus debts left 131,753 *sueldos*. The realization of the affluence of Poblet and her monastic bonanza is less elusive when one remembers that several houses or an average size *honor* could be purchased for forty *sueldos* and that the largest estates seldom sold for more than six hundred *sueldos*. The average landlord could be put into dire financial straits by a loss of one thousand *sueldos*. Moreover, in comparison, Poblet had bought castles, their lands, and seignorial rights to their villages for less than three thousand *sueldos*.

Indeed, when one comprehends the means of Poblet, in real estate, capital, and liquid assets, it is understandable why some scholars have called the fourteenth-century Poblet's "Era of Splendor". Nor is it too bewildering why Poblet's chronicler, Fr. Jaime Finestres y de Monsalvo, writing in 1746, continually implies that Poblet's great landed wealth can be taken as an indication of the monastery's religious piety and God's favor. Perhaps the chronicler was only remembering the precaution and prophecy St. Benedict of Nursia directed to the abbots who followed his Rule: <sup>57</sup>

. . . let him (the abbot) not have too great a concern about fleeting, earthly, and perishable things. . . . And that he may not perhaps complain of earthly means, let him remember what is written: 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His Justice, and all these things shall be given to you'.

## NOTES

1. Maur Cocheril, "L'implantation des Abbayes Cisterciens dans la Peninsule Iberique," *Anuario de estudios medievales* (1964), pp. 217-287.

2. See the publications of the monks of Poblet: *Monjes del Cister, La vida Monástica en Poblet* (Talleres monásticos, Poblet, 1963); *Monjes de Cister, Poblet* (Talleres monásticos, Poblet, 1967).

3. For example, Felio A. Vilarrubias, *Poblet, arte, mística, historia* (Editorial Casulleras: Barcelona, 1965), is the most recent treatment of Poblet, but is mainly concerned with Poblet's artistic importance.

4. The term "frontier" comes from the Latin "frons", meaning a forehead, an exterior, or a front, and has the romantic inference that what lies beyond the "frontier" is unknown and challenging. It means something more than "border"; to be on a border is to be contiguous or proximate to something else. Late Latin used the word *frontaria* more technically: in the second century it was a surveyor's term to describe the boundary of a section of surveyed land. The term "frontier" was not used in the modern sense until 1413 in English. See the *Thesaurus linguae latinae* (B. G. Teubner: Leipzig, 1926), VI, col. 1360, 1363, and 1365.

For a brief description of Catalonia as a military frontier, see A. R. Lewis, "Cataluña como frontera militar (870-1050)," *Anuario de estudios medievales*, V (1968), pp. 15-29.

5. J. Pans i Marques, ed., *Cartulari de Poblet: Edició del manuscrit de Tarragona* (Institut d'Estudis Catalans: Barcelona, 1938), Cart. 264, pp. 159-161.

6. I argue this more extensively in Chapter I, "The Foundation of Poblet", and Chapter IV, "Poblet's Revenues from the Exploitation of her Monastic Domain," in my *The Development of a Monastic Domain on the Spanish Frontier by the Cistercians of Poblet, 1150-1276* (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1970).

7. Federico Udina Martorell, ed., *El "Llibre Blanch" de Santas Creus: Cartulario del siglo XII* (Casa Provincial de Caridad: Barcelona, 1947), p. iv, doc. 3.

8. Martorell, "Marco histórico del 'Llibre Blanch'," *Llibre Blanch*, pp. xxiv-xxix. The expansion of the Spanish March is treated by Petrus de Marca, *Marca Hispanica sive limes Hispanicus*, tr. into Catalan by Joaquim Icart (Lliberia Josep Sala i Badal: Barcelona, 1965); Ramón Abadal i Vinyals, *Els primers comtes Catalans* (Barcelona, 1958), and his *Dels Visigots als Catalans*, Vol. II, *La formació de la Catalunya Independent* (Edició de Jaume Sobrequés i Callicó: Barcelona, 1970); José Balari y Jovany, *Origenes históricos de Cataluña* (Barcelona, 1899, repr. 1964); and Ferran Soldevila, *Historia de Catalunya* (Barcelona, 1964).

9. Martorell, p. xxvi.

10. "locu solitudinis" and "ipsa Marcha extrema," *Llibre Blanch*, doc. 16, p. xxvii.

11. *Llibre Blanch*, doc. 22, p. xxviii.

12. In 1137 Ramón Berenguer IV's marriage was arranged with Queen Petronila of Aragon, and their son, Ramón Berenguer V, took the Aragonese name of Alfonso II upon his succession in 1162. After Jaime I's conquest of Valencia in 1238, the House of Barcelona ruled Aragon proper, Valencia, and the Principality of C atalonia under one Crown, and the descendants of Ram on Berenguer IV remained on the throne of the Corona de Arag on until 1410.

13. Jaime Finestres y de Monsalvo, *Historia del real monasterio de Poblet* (Barcelona, 1746, repr. ed. 1947-1955), II, pp. 43-45; an abbreviated form the legend is found in Joaquim Guitert y Fontser , *Real monasterio de Poblet* (Barcelona, 1929), pp. 107-109; and one of the most elaborate versions of the "Leyenda de Poblet" is told by Victor Balaguer, *Las Ruinas de Poblet* (Madrid, 1885), pp. 55-93.

14. Martorell, p. xxx.

15. Finestres, II, p. 56.

16. The Catalan *mas* is treated by Joaquim de Campo i Arboix, *La Masia Catalana* (Barcelona, 1959), and in his "El mas feudal," *Hist ria de l'agricultura Catalana* (Ed. Taber: Barcelona, 1969), pp. 50-54. The older standard work on the *mas* is Josep Puig i Cadafalch, *La casa Catalana* (Primer Congr s d'Hist ria de la Corona d'Arag  de 1908: Barcelona, 1913). The early *mas* was merely a forerunner of the famous fourteenth century *mas*, but was a farm layout large enough to support an extended family. The term is derived from *mansum*, meaning the land needed to feed a family, and usually referred to a farm on the open range, a "casa de campo de descanso". See Antoni Mar a Alcover, et al. ed., *Diccionari Catal -Valenci -Balear* (Barcelona, 1969), VII, p. 276.

17. For a treatment of the nobility's landed wealth and policy see Eduardo de Hinojosa, *El r gimen se orial y la cuesti n agraria en Catalu a durante la Edad Media* (Madrid, 1905). For an introduction to the study of the leading families of the Catalan nobility, see S. Sobrequ s i Vidal, *Els barons de Catalunya* (ed. Vicens Vives: Barcelona, 1957).

18. Proceedings of the Cortes in 1131, Fidel Fita, ed., *Cortes de los Antiguos Reinos de Arag n y de Valencia y Principado de Catalu a* (Real Academia de la Historia: Madrid, 1896-), I; Johannes Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (H. Wutter, fac. ed.: Paris, 1930), XXI, col. 311; Enriques Florez et al., *España Sagrada* (Madrid, 1746-), XXIX, p. 277; and Emilio Morera y Llaurad , *Tarragona Cristiana, Historia del Tarragona y del territorio de su Provincia* (Tarragona, 1897), I, pp. 562-563.

19. There is no adequate treatment of the economic role played by Santes Creus in the development of the Gai  River Valley. See Hern ndez Sanahuja, *El Monasterio de Santes Creus* (Tarragona, 1886); the best survey is Joaqu n Guitert y Fontser , *Real monasterio de Santes*



*Creus* (Tarragona, 1927), supplemented by his *L'esglesia de Santa Llúcia de Santes Creus, Noticias historiquas del "vere nullius" i de la Parroquia* (Santas Creus, 1954).

20. Finestres, II, pp. 47-48.

21. Robert I. Burns, *The Crusader Kingdom of Valencia, Reconstruction on a Thirteenth-century Frontier* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass., 1967), I, pp. 23-24.

22. Finestres, II, p. 45.

23. Finestres, II, p. 84.

24. The disunity of the Moors is discussed by Francisco Codera, *Decadencia y desaparicion de los Almoravides en España* (Zaragoza, 1899); the major conflicts are treated by Ambrosio Huici Miranda, *Crónicas latinas de la Reconquista* (Valencia, 1913), *Las Grandes Batallas de la Reconquista durante las invasiones Africanas* (Madrid, 1956), and his *Historia política del imperio Almohade* (Tetuan, 1956-57).

25. Antonio Palau y Dulcet, *La Conca de Barbará* (Imp. Romana: Barcelona, 1932), pp. 145-147; Morera y Llauradó, xxi.

26. "in Franculino in sua frontera", Cart. 246, p. 149; Finestres, II, p. 60.

27. Finestres, II, p. 61; Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 124.

28. Finestres, II, p. 60; Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 123; Cart. 170, p. 101.

29. Cart. 210, p. 125.

30. Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 123; Finestres dates the accession of Abbot Grimbaldo in 1154; Cart. 215, pp. 127-128.

31. Cart. 202, p. 121.

32. Finestres, "Apéndice á la Disertación XI: Real Monasterio de Santa María de Benifazá, II, pp. 250-288.

33. Henry J. Chaytor, *A History of Aragon and Catalonia* (Methuen: London, 1933), p. 29.

34. In all three cases in which negative decisions are recorded, there was a utilitarian reason for preserving the charters. The dispute in 1200 resulted in the awarding of the quarries of Pontonal and Canemars to Aviñon del Panades, a village which was bequeathed to Poblet in 1209 by Guillén de Zagrañada. See Finestres, II, p. 200; Cart. 274, p. 166: 358, p. 220: 264, pp. 159-160. The dispute of 1235 over the church at Verdú likewise was important in latter dealings, in 1236, with Santes Creus. See Finestres, II, p. 244; Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 142. The third case, settled in 1238 in favor of the convent of Vallbona, had to be preserved because the convent owed Poblet 400 *morabatines* in relation to the case. See Finestres, II, pp. 314-315. Consequently one might suspect that Poblet had trouble with more than these three suits. However, such conjectures do not refute the conclusion that Poblet was most successful in dealing with her rivals.

35. Marc Bloch, *French Rural History*, tr. J. Sondheimer (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1966), pp. 14-15. Note that Catalan society and feudalism followed French norms, as pointed out by Bloch,

*Feudal Society*, tr. L. A. Manyon (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1966), I, p. 186. For general background see Archibald R. Lewis, *The Developments of Southern France and Catalan Society, 718-1050* (University of Texas Press: Austin, 1965).

36. Palau y Dulcet, p. 136; Finestres, II, pp. 185-186; Cart. 98, pp. 54-55.

37. Finestres, II, pp. 85-86.

38. Cart. 138, p. 80.

39. After Count Armengol VIII's death on January 28, 1209, he was buried in the Chapel of the Holy Evangelists, thereafter known as the Chapel of the Counts of Urgel. Finestres, II, p. 188, p. 195; Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 76, p. 135.

40. Pedro II intended to be buried at Poblet, but after his sudden demise at Muret he was laid to rest next to his mother at Sigena. Finestres, II, p. 132, p. 199; Cart. 144, pp. 84-85.

41. The will of Guillén de Granada, June 21, 1198; Cart. 264, pp. 159-161.

42. Berenguer de Aguilón gave Poblet the "Mas des Vives" near Valvert before setting out to Valencia in 1234. He stipulated that the income from the *mas* was to be used to further the construction of the hospital. Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 13.

43. *Llibre Blanch*, Cart. 255, pp. 157-159.

44. Bloch, *Feudal Society*, I, pp. 132-133.

45. Cart. 179, pp. 107-108.

46. Finestres, III, p. 50.

47. Cart. 220, p. 137; 224, pp. 133-134; 228, p. 137; 230, p. 138; 248, p. 150; 226, p. 135; 39, p. 18; 225, pp. 136-137; Finestres, II, p. 83, p. 193, p. 213; Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 127.

48. Cart. 245, p. 148. The various currencies are listed in Joaquín Botet i Siso, *Les monedes catalanes*, I-III (Institut d'Estudis Catalans: Barcelona, 1908), and Aloiss Heiss, *Descripción general de las monedas hispano-cristianas* (Zaragoza, 1865-1869, repr. 1963), supplemented by O. Gil Farrés, *Historia de la moneda española* (Madrid, 1959). The most common coin was the *sueldo de Barcelona*, a silver coin in use since circa 1050, valued against the gold standard, the *onzas de Barcelona*. The second most common currency was the *morabatine*, a gold coin roughly parallel to the Almoravide *dinare*. Its use was complicated because there were seven different kinds of *morabatines* in circulation. The most common *morabatine*, in 1157, was worth six *sueldos*. The *mazmudina* was a gold coin of various value. Balari y Jovany, II, p. 700, p. 702.

49. Finestres, II, p. 82; Cart. 234, pp. 140-143.

50. Finestres, II, p. 82; III, p. 44; Cart. 39, p. 18.

51. Poblet's cartulary does not contain any documents dating later than 1208, and the chronicle is not complete. However, the chronicler does make a conspicuous effort to list all the donations, more so than the transactions.

52. Finestres, II, p. 82.

53. Finestres, II, p. 128: the purchase was made by Abbot Pedro de Massanet (1190-1196).

54. This estimate is based on the number of granges, *honors*, and *masos* owned by Poblet, but not the *domincaturas* or *señoríos*, because it is impossible to assess these units in terms of area. The monastery's *masos* averaged more than five hundred acres and were convertible into granges. The estimate of five hundred acres per grange was arrived at first by Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe* (London, 1947), pp. 68-70, and is acceptable to Louis J. Lekai, *The White Monks* (Okauchee, Wisconsin, 1953), pp. 222-223. Each *honor* was conservatively estimated at ten acres, although judging from the varied monetary values assigned to many of them, they differed in size considerably. Whenever the exact number of certain possessions was not given by a charter and the plural was used, the entry into the estimate was a minimal two. All mapwork for the boundaries and area calculations were done from plate 25, *Mapa Oficial de Carreteras* (Madrid, 1968). The real area of Poblet's monastic domain may have been considerably larger than estimated, but the figures on the graph depict the general trend.

55. Fontseré, *Poblet*, p. 156; Manuael de Montoliu, *Llibre de Poblet* (Barcelona, 1955), p. 27; Fr. Justo Pérez de Urbel, *Las Grandes Abadias Benedictinas, su vida, su arte, y su historia* (Ancla: Madrid, 1928), p. 216.

56. Fontseré, *Poblet*, pp. 156-158.

57. Benedict of Nursia, *The Holy Rule*, tr. and ed. B. Verheyen (St. Benedict's Abbey Press: Atchison, Kansas, 1935), chapter II, p. 13.