

Millenary Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma

(<http://www.unesco.hu/kultura/vilagorokseg/millenary-benedictine>)



Benedictines were invited by Prince Geza (972-997) into Hungary in 996. King St. Stephan (997-1038) donated estates and privilege to the monastery calling upon them to pray daily “pro stabilitate regni nostri”.

The monastic community that lives within the Abbey of Pannonhalma is as old as the Hungarian state. Abbot Uros (adm 1207-1241), fought against the Tartars to protect the abbey. However, after 1240 the discipline of the monks loosened, fewer and fewer people left their possessions to the monastery.

The monastic community was forced to flee several times for various durations during the time of the Turkish Occupation in the 16th century after 1526. Abbot Mátyás Pálffy (1638-1646) commenced the monastery's new life with just ten monks. The next blow that hit Pannonhalma came during the period of the Enlightenment; King Joseph II suspended the operation of all Benedictine monasteries in 1786. However in 1802 - again according to royal command - the order was reorganized, with the proviso that they take part in education. This institutionalized an activity that the monks had always seen as their duty and had been performing for centuries.

The letter of foundation of Pannonhalma, 1002



King Coloman's signet on the letter of foundation

The letter of privilege of St Stephen:

<http://mek.niif.hu/01900/01955/html/index279.html>

- assured the Pannonhalma monastery of the same rights as Montecassino
- independent from the legitimacy of the county bishop
- the free election of the abbot, the consecrating and the abbot-benedictating bishops
- liturgic privileges to the abbot to do the service in sandals as a bishop,
- the chapel (portable altar) marched in front of him.
- immune privilege declaring that secular officials could not make judgements in matters belonging to the monastery without the permission of the abbot.

The Charter of Tihany Benedictine Monastery, 1055.

Shortly after his coronation, King Coloman (1070-1116) had to face the problems the Crusader armies caused while passing through Hungary. Although the armies led by Walter the Penniless passed peacefully through the country in May 1096, the next hordes led by Peter the Hermit occupied the fortress of Zimony withdrawing only when Coloman's armies were approaching them. King Coloman received in the monastery of Pannonhalma the ministers of Gottfried Bouillon, the leader of the crusaders marching through Hungary.

The troops of a German knight named Folkmar pillaged the territories of the Hungarian County of Nyitra, while the German priest Gottschalk's hordes were ravaging the Transdanubian region of the kingdom. Coloman managed to rout both of the armies and he denied the entrance of the new armies led by Emicho of Leiningen and Guillaume de Melun, but the Crusaders laid siege to the fortress of Moson defended by Coloman. Coloman could only break out and win over the Crusaders just after a six-week-long defence.

On 20 September 1096, Coloman made an agreement with Duke Godfrey V of Lower Lorraine, the leader of the next army. Under their agreement, Coloman took hostages (including Godfrey's brother, Baldwin, who would become the first king of Jerusalem) and he mustered his own army to guard the progress; therefore the Crusader armies passed through the kingdom peacefully.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloman_of_Hungary)

Godfrey of Bouillon

(布永的戈弗雷 c. 1060, – 18 July 1100)



Godfrey was the second son of Count Eustace II of Boulogne and Ida of Lorraine. As second son, he seemed destined to become just one more minor knight in service to a rich landed nobleman. However, his uncle, Duke of Lower of Lorraine, died childless and named him as heir and next in line to his duchy of Lower Lorraine. This duchy was an important one at the time, serving as a buffer between the kingdom of France and the German lands.

The German king, Henry IV (1050-1109, ruled 1084-1105), decided in 1076 that he would give Godfrey

only Bouillon and the Mark of Antwerp, as a test of Godfrey's abilities and loyalty. Godfrey served Henry IV loyally, supporting him even when Pope Gregory VII was battling the German king in the Investiture Controversy. Following long struggles, and after proving that he was a loyal subject to Henry IV, Godfrey finally won back his duchy of Lower Lorraine in 1087.

In 1095 Pope Urban II called for a Crusade to conquer Jerusalem from Muslim forces and also to aid the Byzantine Empire. Godfrey took out loans on most of his lands, or sold them. With this money he gathered thousands of knights. There were many major noblemen to gather such an army. Each of these armies traveled separately, some sailing by water across the Adriatic Sea from southern Italy, while Godfrey, along with his two brothers (some say with an army of 40,000 strong) going southeast across Europe through Hungary. After some difficulties in Hungary, where he was unable to stop his men from pillaging fellow Christians, he arrived in Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, in November.

Peter the Hermit (died 1115)



He was a priest of Amiens who had attempted to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem before 1096, but was prevented by the Seljuk Turks from reaching his goal and was tortured. He was one of the preachers of the crusade in France. He soon leapt into fame as an emotional revivalist; and thousands of peasants eagerly took the cross at his bidding. Peter organized and guided the paupers as a spiritually purified and holy group of pilgrims who would be protected by the Heavenly Host.

Leading one of the five sections of the People's Crusade (民衆十字軍) to the destination of their pilgrimage, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, he started (with 40,000 men & women) from Cologne in April, 1096, and arrived (with 30,000 men & women) at Constantinople at the end of July.

The Eastern Roman Emperor was less than pleased with their arrival, for he was now required to provide for the care and sustenance of the vast host of paupers for the remainder of their journey.

Most of the paupers were incapable of being provided for by the various lordships and dioceses along the way and either starved, returned home or were put into servitude, while a substantial number were captured and sold into slavery by the various Slavic robber barons in the Balkans. Peter joined the only other section which had succeeded in reaching Constantinople, that of Walter the Penniless, into a single group and encamped the still numerous pilgrims around Constantinople while he negotiated the shipping of the People's Crusade to the Holy Land less the hungry paupers would turn to pilfering the imperial stores.