

Lord and the intercession of St. Peter, the blessed apostle, bringing his entire army through the valley without loss or disorder. He came as far as the city of Pavia, surrounded Desiderius, and besieged the city.<sup>3</sup>

The Lord Charles celebrated Christmas there in his camp, and he celebrated Easter in Rome.<sup>4</sup> While he went to Rome during this year to defend God's Holy Roman Church at the invitation of the supreme pontiff, the borderland against the Saxons was exposed and not secured by any treaty. The Saxons, however, fell upon the neighboring Frankish lands with a large army and advanced as far as the castle of Büraburg. The inhabitants of the borderland were terrified when they saw this and retreated into the castle. When the Saxons in their savagery began to burn the houses outside, they came upon a church at Fritzlar which Boniface of saintly memory, the most recent martyr, had consecrated and which he had said prophetically would never be burnt by fire. The Saxons began to attack this church with great determination, trying one way or another to burn it. While this was going on, there appeared to some Christians in the castle and also to some heathens in the army two young men on white horses who protected the church from fire. Because of them the pagans could not set the church on fire or damage it, either inside or outside. Terror-stricken by the intervention of divine might they turned to flight, although nobody pursued them. Afterward one of these Saxons was found dead beside the church. He was squatting on the ground and holding tinder and wood in his hands as if he had meant to blow on his fuel and set the church on fire.<sup>5</sup> And the date changed to

774

On his return from Rome the Lord King Charles came again to Pavia and captured the city and Desiderius, with his wife and daughter and the whole treasure of his palace besides. All the Lombards came from every city of Italy and submitted to the rule of the glorious Lord King Charles and of the Franks. Adalgis, the son of King Desiderius, fled, put to sea, and escaped to Constantinople.<sup>1</sup> After subduing Italy and setting it to rights, the glorious Lord King Charles left a Frankish garrison in the city of Pavia and by God's help returned triumphantly to Francia with his wife and the rest of the Franks.<sup>2</sup> When he arrived at Ingelheim, he sent four detachments to Saxony.<sup>3</sup> Three of them

fought the Saxons and with God's help had the victory; the fourth did not see battle but returned home with much booty and no losses. The glorious king celebrated Christmas at the villa of Quierzy and Easter, too. And the date changed to

775

R While the king spent the winter at the villa of Quierzy, he decided to attack the treacherous and treaty-breaking tribe of the Saxons and to persist in this war until they were either defeated and forced to accept the Christian religion or entirely exterminated.

The pious and noble Lord King Charles held an assembly at the villa of Düren. From here he launched a campaign into Saxony and captured<sup>1</sup> the castle of Syburg,<sup>2</sup> restored the castle of Eresburg, and came as far as the Weser at Braunsberg.<sup>3</sup> There the Saxons prepared for battle since they wished to defend the bank of the Weser. With the help of God and by their own vigorous efforts, the Franks put the Saxons to flight; the Franks occupied both banks of the river, and many Saxons were slain there.

Then the Lord King Charles divided his army, and taking along as many as he wanted, he proceeded to the River Oker. There all the Saxon Austreleudi under Hassi came before him, gave as many hostages as he desired, and swore oaths of fealty to the Lord King Charles.<sup>4</sup> When the most gracious king returned from there, the Angrarii<sup>5</sup> came to the Bückegau<sup>6</sup> with Bruno and the rest of their magnates and gave hostages<sup>7</sup> as the Austrasians had done. On his return the king joined with another part of his army which by his order held the bank of the River Weser. The Saxons took them on at Lübbecke;<sup>8</sup> the Franks by the will of God had the victory and many Saxons of this group were slain.

R In the meantime the part of the army which he had sent to the Weser pitched camp at the place called Lübbecke. But the men acted carelessly, and were tricked by Saxon guile. When the Frankish foragers returned to the camp about the ninth hour of the day, Saxons mixed with them as if they belonged to them and thus entered the camp of the Franks. They attacked the sleeping or half-awake soldiers<sup>9</sup> and are said to have caused quite a slaughter among the multitude who were off guard. But they



Saxony

were repulsed by the valor of those who were awake and resisted bravely. They left the Frankish camp after agreeing to the best terms they could get in their distress.<sup>10</sup>

Hearing this the Lord King Charles once more fell upon the Saxons with his army, inflicted on them an equally grave defeat, and carried away considerable booty from the Westphalians. They gave hostages as the other Saxons had done. When he had obtained the hostages, taken much booty, and three times caused much slaughter among the Saxons, the Lord King Charles with God's help returned home to Francia.

When he heard that the Lombard Hrodgaud was not keeping faith but breaking all oaths and planning to incite Italy to rebellion,<sup>11</sup> the Lord King Charles marched into Italy with a Frankish host.

He celebrated Christmas at the villa of Schlettstadt.<sup>12</sup> And the date changed to

776

The Lord King Charles entered Italy through Friuli. Hrodgaud was killed and the Lord King Charles celebrated Easter at the city of Treviso. He placed the cities he had captured under the command of Franks, that is, Cividale, Treviso, and the other places which had revolted, and returned again to Francia, successful and victorious.

Then a messenger came with the news that the Saxons had rebelled, deserted all their hostages, broken their oaths, and by tricks and false treaties prevailed on the Franks to give up the castle of Eresburg. With Eresburg thus deserted by the Franks, the Saxons demolished the buildings and walls. Passing on from Eresburg they wished to do the same thing to the castle of Syburg but made no headway since the Franks with the help of God put up a manly resistance. When they failed to talk the guards into surrender, as they had those in the other castle, they began to set up war machines to storm the castle. Since God willed it, the catapults which they had prepared did more damage to them than to those inside. When the Saxons saw that their constructions were useless to them, they prepared faggots to capture the fortress in one charge. But God's power, as is only just, overcame theirs. One day, while they prepared for battle against the Christians in the castle, God's glory was made manifest over the castle church in the sight of a great number outside as well as