Fulvio Delle Donne, “Boncompagno da Signa”,
*Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*,
R.G. Dunphy ed.
(Brill, Leiden and Boston 2010), 188–189
Boncompagno da Signa

ca 1170–ante 1243. Italy. Author of a chronicle of the siege of Ancona. Born in Signa, near Florence, Boncompagno taught grammar and rhetoric in Bologna until 1215, and he was author of numerous treaties of *Ars dictaminis*: the most important is the *Boncompagnus*, which in 1215 was publicly read, and for which Boncompagno was awarded the Laurel Crown. He was in Venice 1215–20, Padua 1222–7, and Reggio Emilia 1229–34; in 1235 he was once again in Bologna, and around 1240 he was in Rome, where he tried to join the papal Curia. He died in Florence shortly after.

His only historical work is the *Liber de obsidione Ancone* (Book about the siege of Ancona), in Latin prose: the work minutely relates the siege that Frederick I of Swabia (Barbarossa) and the Venetians laid against the town of Ancona in 1173. Boncompagno wrote the book between 1198 and 1200, but only in 1201 did Ugolino Gosia, teacher of civil law and Podestà of Ancona, offer Boncompagno the opportunity of revising the text and publishing it. During the journey, Boncompagno’s ship sank, but he managed to save the work that he was carrying. The *Liber* contains some speeches, important also for their history of political eloquence. It is preserved in four manuscripts: Paris, BnF, lat. 4963B; Cleveland, Public Library, Wq. 789.0921 M-C37; Vatican, BAV, ottob. lat. 1353; and Vatican, BAV, vat. lat. 3630.

Bibliography


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