



## The origins

Located on the Saône, the abbey of Île Barbe was probably the oldest of the Gauls. If it is historical that it dates from the Roman domination, it is not possible to specify the date. Tradition says that the island's history began with hermits, then reunited in community on the initiative of a certain Longinus (according to the book "Les Mesures de l'Île Barbe"). It is also possible that the first inhabitants of the island were refugees, driven out of Lyon by the persecution of Marc Aurèle in 177; Or, says another author, fleeing the massacres carried out by Septimius Severus in 197, after the defeat of his rival Albin (these refugees would have been called Etienne and Pérégrin). According to French author Le Laboureur, the island would have been a place of Druidic worship.

## From the 3rd to the 8th century

The first leader of the community is said to have been Dorothea, who lived in the time of Aclius, fourth bishop of Lyons (240-255). At the fall of the Roman Empire (around 476), the Burgundians occupied Lyon and the Rhone country, with their capital in Vienna. Loup, disciple of Ambroise (not to be confused with Saint Loup of Troyes), was from Lyons, from a family in the entourage of King Sigismund; he was a monk of the island, perhaps an abbot, but certainly elected bishop of Lyon in 528, a situation in which he kept the monastic simplicity. He saw, before dying in 542, the battle of Vézeronce, near Morestel, in 524, and the invasion of the kingdom of Burgundy by the Franks in 532-534. The country suffered greatly and the religious even left the island. Saint Loup was buried on the island where his body was long venerated: his name was given, with that of Saint Martin of Tours, to the main church of the island, where stand today the Suites de l'Île Barbe. Before the fifteenth abbot, Licinius (middle of the 7th century), the monastery had adopted the rule of Saint Benedict. Life there was miserable: in 707, Saint Bonnet, bishop of Auvergne, stayed there on his way to Rome and had difficulty feed his companions. In the 8th century, around 725, the Saracens devastated Lyon, destroyed Île Barbe and raided as far as Autun. Charles Martel, after the arrested at Poitiers (732), drove them back from Lyon to Avignon (733-737), aided by his Brother Childebrand.

# From Charlemagne to the 13th century: Apogee of the Abbey

Leidrade (or Leydrade), born in Nuremberg in 736, had been librarian of Charlemagne in Aix-la-Chapelle, then his "missus dominicus", and bishop of Lyons from 796 to 813; he eventually retired to the Abbey of Saint-Médard in Soissons, where he died. In one of his letters, he reports to Charlemagne on the work done for the raising of the churches of Lyon and the monasteries of Saint-Pierre, Ainay and the island Beard. He put the abbey of Ile Barbe, which then had ninety monks, under the patronage of Saint Martin and Saint Loup and the former monastery at the tip of the island became the Saint-André priory. Île Barbe was to become the most important abbey in the region, and its library said to have been very rich. But in 937, it was the turn of the Hungarians to devastate Barbe Island. Abbot Eldebert (thirty-fourth abbot, 971-994) raised the monastery, and confirmed the privileges of the island by Conrad the Pacific, king of Burgundy, who had just conquered the Hungarians; it was then peace for the abbey until 1562. He rebuilt in 985 Saint-Martin-Saint-Loup church.



## The Abbey in the 13th century

The domain and the fiefdoms of the island developed until the middle of the 13th century: valley of the Saône, Dombes, Bresse, Jarez, Monts du Lyonnais, Forez (Saint-Rambert), Dauphiné and Provence. The abbey was independent of the civil justice and had jurisdiction over its domains, justice exercised by the abbot or one of his provosts or by the priors. The island had as vassals the counts of Forez, the lords of Beaujeu, the lords of Villars, of Monteliman. She had many priories: Saint-Rambert-sur-Loire, Cleppé sur the Loire, Mogneux, Hauterive, Sury-leComtal, Firminy, Saint-Paul-en-Cornillon, eighteen in the current Rhône department, Bollène, Notre-Dame-du-Plan (Ardèche), Aleirac (Drôme), Salon-de-Provence - also churches, whose priest was appointed by the abbot.



## Configuration of the Abbey at 13th century

The enclosure of the abbey, on the downstream side, followed the wall which limits currently the promenade planted with trees, then called "Meadow". At the end of this wall, on the Saint-Rambert side, was the port Saint-Rambert, and on the opposite side, on the Bake side, port Notre-Dame, then the church of Notre-Dame, open to pilgrims. The Notre-Dame gate, which opened next to the port, was similar to the Porte Sainte-Anne (which still exists); she gave access to the Place Notre-Dame. The path joining Place Notre-Dame to Porte Sainte-Anne must have been almost identical, perhaps following the the very walls of the castle. This contained the rich so-called Charlemagne library. Built on a rock, it served as a retreat in the event of an invasion. beyond the door Sainte-Anne was the port of Sainte-Anne, the third access to the island. At the tip of the island, the Saint-André priory formed a distinct tenement, with its ramparts, separated from the monastery by a large deserted expanse. From Place Notre-Dame, leaving the dixmerie on the left, warehouse where the royalties were deposited, we met in the background the abbot's house, including the chapel dedicated to Saint Denys is included in the current house. The entrance of convent was here. Taking the so-called alley of the tombs, which formed one side of the great cloister, we had, on the right, the provost's house and to the left and behind the cloister, the church Saint-Martin-et-Saint-Loup Abbey. The abbey church, where are located today the Suites de l'Ile Barbe, was a Romanesque building with three naves, the apse and apsidioles cul-de-four, the aisles surmounted by a gallery. All that remains today that a corner of the main porch and the back of the south transept; at the end of the alley, on the left, as well as the chapter house.



## From the 14th century to the Revolution

Around 1430-1450, the vaults of the Notre-Dame cloister were redone in their current appearance. Antoine d'Albon de Saint-André (1514) made repairs and rebuilt the refectories. His second successor, Antoine d'Albon de Saint-Forgeux, consented in 1548 to the secularization demanded by the monks who, by the bull of Paul III of April 12, 1549, became canons of Lyon; the abbot became "abbot dean". In 1562, the Calvinists, after seizing Lyon on April 30, ransacked the monastery, removed three bells and threw the fourth into the Saône. Ornaments, sacred vessels, library were dispersed or destroyed. The canons fled to Montluel. They did not return until the following year to La Rochette, then to Saint Rambert, finally to the Abbot's house; we used the Notre-Dame church, less damaged, with an altar for pilgrims in the sacristy. Chaplain Floris Blanchery endeavored to collect the remains of the library. His coat of arms is now embedded in the wall of the dixmerie with "three spurred lilies, to the chief charged with a cross accompanied by two roses in quintefeuille" and the motto "Candore et odore". In 1630, Claude Le Laboureur was elected provost and remained so for thirty years. He was the author of the history of the island: "Les Masures de l'Île Barbe"; he tried in vain to restore order and discipline among the canons and ends up "resigning his functions, full of bitterness". Camille de Neuville de Villeroy, 5th or 7th secular abbot, appointed in 1618, made repair in 1620, one last time, the abbey church, and return Notre-Dame to the pilgrims. In the following century, Pierre Guérin, cardinal archbishop of Tencin, suppressed the chapter, unites the abbey manse (1742) with the primatial, then the chapter manse (1743). the last dean, Monsieur de Vallorges, who died in 1741, was not replaced, and the canons dispersed, except three who remained. The seminary was transferred to the island Saint-Pothin for elderly or infirm priests. The priests gathered to say a part of the office and served both churches. In 1783, Monseigneur de Montazet suppressed the establishment, wishing to demolish the abbey while keeping Notre-Dame. During the Revolution, everything was sold or dispersed, relics and portraits transported to the archdiocese.

*Les Suites de l'Île Barbe*

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