The sculptures described in this article have recently been brought together in the Gothic Chapel at The Cloisters. The tomb of Armengol VII was presented by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in 1928; the other sculptures were acquired by the Museum in 1947 and 1948 with funds made available by Mr. Rockefeller.

In the troubled thirteenth century, before the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella (1469) united the crowns of Aragon and Castile and made possible the political unit we now refer to as Spain, the rulers of the Iberian peninsula were continually at war. The kings of Castile, León, and Aragon and the various independent counts were jockeying for position and power through local and international wars, through marriage and intrigue. There were wars with the French and with the English, and struggles for supremacy in Sicily and in Naples. Though the Moors had gradually been driven from northern Spain, their presence in Seville and the south was as unwelcome as the far-reaching empire of the Infidel in the Near East. The contributions to the Crusades and the wars nearer home were a constant drain on the treasuries and on manpower. In 1295 the Spaniard James II, who had been living in his kingdom of Sicily since 1285, returned home to be crowned king of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia. By the Treaty of Anagni in 1295 he renounced his claims to Sicily. In return the Pope raised all sentences of excommunication from the Aragonese sovereigns.

Urgel, a small buffer state situated between Catalonia and Aragon, had long vacillated under the influence of her powerful neighbors. In the ninth century it was one of the counties of the Spanish March, a district in northeastern Spain ruled by the Frankish kings. At various times Urgel was combined through inheritance with the county of Barcelona. Before his death in the war against the Mussulmans of Cordova Armengol I (993-1010), the son of a count of Barcelona, established the principal hereditary dynasty of Urgel. At the end of the thirteenth century the counts of Urgel were still asserting their independence, but eventually Armengol X was compelled to will his county to Aragon. He was able, however, to stipulate as a condition of the settlement that the crown prince marry his niece. Following this marriage on August 20, 1314, the year in which Armengol X died, Urgel was annexed to Aragon. In 1327 the prince became King Alfonso IV of Aragon.

It is not surprising that in such troubled times the nobles of Europe sought quiet resting places for their remains within the sanctuary of the Church. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries burials within churches were few in number, this privilege for the laity being reserved for the bodies of founders and benefactors. At first the tombs were simple sarcophagi, usually plain coffins hewn from wood or stone. They were covered with slabs generally decorated with a cross, often supplemented by a crosier, a chalice, a sword, a key, or some other mark to denote rank or position. Soon the slabs were incised with a figure or figures representing the deceased; these developed into the three-dimensional effigy. The best known of the great historical burying places of the Middle Ages are Westminster Abbey in England and the royal Abbey of St. Denis near Paris. In

**Above:** Attendant figure supporting the pillow under the head of Alvaro de Cabrera’s effigy.
King Louis IX (Saint Louis) had the remains of his Capetian predecessors and also those of the Carolingian kings who had been buried at St. Denis placed in eight commemorative tombs in the reconstructed abbey church.

The four tombs now placed in the Gothic Chapel at The Cloisters were erected at the end of the thirteenth century or early in the fourteenth century by Armengol X, Count of Urgel, in the Gothic church of the monastery which two of his ancestors had founded as a burying place for themselves and their family. These ancestors of Armengol's, Count Armengol VII and his wife, Doña Dulcia, daughter of Count Roger III of Foix, established the Premonstratensian monastery of Santa María de Bellpuig de las Avellanas, north of Lérida in Spain, in 1146 or 1166. The site chosen for it, a beautiful hill (Bellpuig), was the place of hermitage of Juan de Orgafia, a man of great sanctity who with his followers later joined the monastic community. Before the twelfth century the counts of Urgel were interred in the church of Santa María at Ripoll; in the thirteenth century Armengol VIII and Alvaró de Cabrera the elder were buried in the royal monastery at Poblet. In a will of 1282 Armengol X likewise indicated his desire to be buried at Poblet, but in accordance with his later wishes he was buried at Las Avellanas. There, in the Gothic church of the monastery, he had had a monumental tomb erected for the remains of Armengol VII in the presbyterium on the epistle side of the altar. Opposite, in a niche of similar proportions to the one constructed for his forbear's tomb, he placed the sarcophagus of Doña Dulcia and provided for his own eventual burial in a sarcophagus above. The fourth tomb, that of his brother, Don Alvaró de Cabrera the younger (died 1299), was placed in a niche in a small side chapel of the church.

The tomb of Armengol VII is fully described in The Cloisters: the Building and the Collection of Mediaeval Art and elsewhere in Museum publications; in “A Fourteenth-Century Tomb at The Cloisters and Related Monuments,” The Art Bulletin, vol. XIII (1931), pp. 409 ff., I described all four of these tombs from Las Avellanas at length. The conclusion stated in the Art Bulletin (p. 422) that “the architecture and sculpture of the church of the Monastery of Santa María de Bellpuig de las Avellanas [were completed] . . . about 1300, or at least before 1314,” can now be substantiated by a manuscript, recently located and consulted at Vilanova de la Sal, which mentions the date 1299 in connection with the tomb of Alvaró de Cabrera. This manuscript, “De rebus ecclesiae sanctae Mariae Bellipodiensis Avellanarum in Catalonia,” gives a history of the monastery from its founding until the year 1320. It is based on original documents, many of which are in the National Archives in Madrid, and was written by Jaime (Jacobus) Caresmar, abbot of Las Avellanas, from 1766 until 1769 and resident at the monastery from 1740 until his death in 1791. In Book II, pp. 686-689, Caresmar writes of Cabrera's tomb; the following translation by Marjorie J. Milne, of the Department of Greek and Roman Art in this Museum, is based on José Llopis Pérez's transcription of the original text:

“It has no inscription on the outside. But when at the instance of Daniel Antonius Dog at the feet of Alvaró de Cabrera
Tomb of Armengol VII, Count of Urgel (died 1184). Spanish, 1299-1314. This tomb was ordered by Armengol X, whose tomb is opposite. From Santa Maria de Bellpuig de las Avellanas
Tomb of Armengol x, Count of Urgel (died 1314), and of Doña Dulcia (died 1208), wife of Armengol vii, Count of Urgel. Spanish, 1299-1314. These tombs were ordered by Armengol x.
Finestresius, one of our canons, a very learned and inquiring man, the tomb was opened in the year 1739, there was found inside an old parchment, sewn to the linen cloth covering the bones, which declared that these were the bones of Alvarus, Viscount of Ager. Therefore, that the origin of this mausoleum may be clear to all, it seemed best to me to publish the document, which follows:

‘To Alvarus, Viscount of Ager, son of Alvarus, Count of Urgel, and Cecilia of Foix, on account of his valor and the military glory which, from the age of nine up to his death, he gained for himself everywhere—in Spain often, in Africa once, in Sicily twice—under the Kings of Aragon James, Peter, Alfonso, and James II. When once Fortune, lest she seem always to favor one man among mortals—one who mastered Neptune with ships, the earth

by his tread, the stars by his mind—had taught him that he could be vanquished and captured, he, not knowing how to submit, mocked at her, until, putting off mortality, his spirit sought the stars, in the year 1299. Ermengaudus (Armengol) X, Count of Urgel, set up this monument to his very dear and deserving brother.’

If the identification of the individual tombs had not been established by careful documentation, we would find it strange that Armengol X should have given such great prominence to the tombs of his ancestors and have been satisfied to occupy a berth above Dulcia. Some of the actual dimensions of the other tombs are greater than those of his tomb; moreover, his was confined within the niche—as it is at The Cloisters—while those of the founders of the monastery protruded beyond the wall line into the chapel. The double tomb is supported by
Head of the effigy from the tomb of Don Alvaró de Cabrera, Viscount of Ager

Head of the effigy from the tomb of Armengol VII, Count of Urgel
Head of the effigy from the tomb of Armengol x, Count of Urgel

Head of the effigy from the tomb of Doña Dulcia, wife of Armengol vii

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two simple blocks (modern restorations after photographs of the originals, which have disappeared). The sarcophagus of Armengol X bears the arms of Urgel; Doña Dulcia's displays the arms of Foix and Urgel. On the slanting lids of the sarcophagi are effigies, the heads reposing on tasseled cushions incised with the arms of the departed; an angel holds the pillow under Doña Dulcia's head. Armengol's feet are placed on the back of a dog, symbol of fidelity and domesticity. Doña Dulcia's feet are placed as if she were standing; they are supported by a corbel which has a protecting griffin carved on its underside.

The tomb of Armengol VII rests on three lions. It is elaborately decorated with figures of Christ Enthroned in Majesty and the twelve apostles, each shown within a pointed arch. A little cross-legged angel supports the head of Armengol's effigy. His feet rest on a lion, symbol of strength and courage. The lay and professional mourners represented on a wall plaque behind the effigy of Armengol VII are in striking contrast to the undecorated wall behind the effigies of Dulcia and Armengol X.

(The weapons and armor represented on the tombs from Las Avellanas will be described in a later issue of the Bulletin.)

We still do not know who carved the Avellanas tombs. The effigy and sarcophagus of the tomb of Armengol VII are of slightly different limestone than that of the other pieces. They are also somewhat different in style. As has been shown in the Art Bulletin article, the sarcophagus of Armengol VII's tomb is related to the retable from Anglesola, now in the Boston Museum, and to some sculptures at the not too distant Cathedral of Tarragona. Various French sculptors, including at least one from Tournai, are mentioned in contemporary texts as working in Catalonia. They have been suggested as the link between the art of the North and these Spanish monuments which show strong Northern influence. However, the quality of the Avellanas tombs is superior to that of any of the somewhat later Catalan monuments inspired by the Northern style.

The Spanish laws of 1835-1837 decreeing the sequestration of church properties resulted in the abolition of monasteries and convents in Spain during the nineteenth century. Such property had to be sold by the State and the proceeds used to diminish the public debt. Thus the monastery of Las Avellanas became private property. The tombs were sold in 1906; the remains of the bodies were transferred to the not distant parochial church of Vilanova de la Sal, a town, founded by Armengol VII, belonging to the monastery of Las Avellanas.

We were able to acquire the tomb of the founder of Las Avellanas in 1928. The recent acquisition of the remaining three tombs concludes a long effort to reunite in a single chapel the famous tombs of the counts of Urgel. With the addition of these tombs and the sculptures shown on the following pages the Gothic Chapel at The Cloisters takes on a unique importance for Gothic sculpture in America.
The two over life-size saints with their original canopies illustrated on the opposite page are among the most grandiose and well-preserved of monumental Gothic stone statues. They are carved in limestone. Now that the heavy coats of the later repaint that protected these figures have been removed their original polychromy has been revealed. The extraordinary state of preservation of the colors—for example, the greens and reds, formerly enriched with gold, only traces of which remain—give an unusual impression of the original condition of medieval sculptures. Even the necklace of the smaller figure was delicately painted and gilded. The ridged eyebrows are accented with dark paint which contrasts with the tawny flesh color.

The provenance of these sculptures appears to have been known only to a Madrid antiquarian who kept them secreted in his barn for years before his death in the Spanish Civil War in the thirties. These statues have no close parallels in any of the sculptures adorning the exterior and interior portals and the naves of the great Spanish Gothic cathedrals. Their attribution to the Catalan school in the third decade of the fourteenth century is based on their relationship to the recumbent figure of Teresa de Moncada Cervera in the Provincial Museum of Lerida. This effigy is from one of the tombs of the early fourteenth-century chapel of Saint Peter in the Old Cathedral of Lerida, now largely destroyed. The treatment of the hair, the folds of the Gothic draperies, the incised ornamentation of the borders of the garments, the modeling of the hands, the flat planes of the faces, and in particular the ridges of the eyebrows are characteristics common to the Moncada effigy and these two statues at The Cloisters. In some respects they recall the Avellanas tomb figures. While there is no evidence that the statues come from Lerida, the proximity of Las Avellanas to Lerida, some thirty miles, would alone explain the similarities of all the Catalan sculptures in the Gothic Chapel.

Recumbent figure of Teresa de Moncada Cervera (died 1331) in the Provincial Museum, Lerida
Painted limestone statues of Saint Margaret and another saint. Spanish, about 1330
Head of Saint Margaret. Spanish, about 1330
Head of an unidentified saint. Spanish, about 1330
ON THIS PAGE: At the right, a limestone statue of a young bishop. Burgundian, early XIV century. At the upper left, the figure of Saint Thibault on the trumeau of the north portal of the Burgundian church of St. Thibault. (Photograph courtesy of Mrs. A. Kingsley Porter.)

OPPOSITE: Detail from the statue of the bishop

Notwithstanding its weathered surface, this monumental figure of a bishop has lost none of the dignity and solemnity originally portrayed by the sculptor. Statues of this quality are rarely seen except in their original architectural settings in well-known buildings. This sculpture, discovered before the war in a garden near Chablis, is said to have been removed from the façade of the Cathedral of Vézelay during Viollet-le-Duc's restorations, but there appears to be no valid evidence for the statement.

The statue of the bishop resembles in many respects the figure of Saint Thibault shown here, to which the date 1305-1310 has been assigned. The bishop also may have been placed on a trumeau at an entrance to a church.