

Giovanni Battista Mazza di Canobio

(Canobi, Cannobio)

(1533-1596)

He was born on February 2, 1533 in Bologna and in this city he completed his studies obtaining a doctorate *in utroque iure*. Grandson of Giovanni Francesco Canobi, referendarius *utriusque signaturae*, bishop of Forlì and apostolic nuncio, Canobio soon went to Rome where, probably thanks to the kinship of his family with that of Gregory XIII, he held numerous curial offices until he became apostolic protonotary. During the pontificate of Gregorio XIII, Canobio was part, together with another Bolognese, Aurelio Savignano, of the secretariat of state, holding the office of home secretary, with the task of drafting the short *sub anulo piscatorio*. Canobio exercised this office until 1587, when it was abolished by Sixtus V as part of the reorganization and restructuring of the apostolic secretariat. There is no news of the positions held by Canobio in the period between 1587 and 1591, but he probably maintained the office of apostolic protonotary. In 1592 the new pontiff Clemente VIII, entrusting the secretariat of state to his nephews Cinzio and Pietro Aldobrandini, in the division of their respective competences had assigned the latter to take care of the affairs of France, Spain and Piedmont; but, being Pietro just twenty years old, he wanted to put a man of proven competence next to him and chose Canobio for this role, who took care of the affairs of the secretariat of state.

Canobio was deeply involved in the negotiations that occupied Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini on the delicate problem of the rehabilitation of Henry IV, so much so that Cardinal d'Ossat called him "principal Secrétaire du pape".

Canobio carried out this curial activity until his death on June 17, 1596.

He was buried in Rome in the church of S. Maria in Via, which he had enlarged at his own expense and of which in 1595, with the help of the architect Martino Lunghi the Elder, he had the facade erected. He left the Confraternity of the SS. Sacramento, with the aim of providing single women in the parish of S. Maria in Via.

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