

basis for comparison³⁰. From this, it is clear that HB shares a number of forms with the notary of our charter: the looped bowl on **g**, the **t** with an inward flick on the left side of the horizontal crossbar, and the straight-backed **d** (Plate 3). Yet there are also a number of significant differences: whereas HB typically employs a straight or wavy line on the descender of **p** to form the *per* abbreviation, our scribe uses his ampersand-shaped abbreviation sign here; where HB's second stroke on **h** never travels far (if at all) below the script line, our notary's consistently does (as already noted); while the second stroke on HB's **x** often travels below the line, ending in an upwards flick, our scribe's never does so; and whereas HB's **ε** takes the form of a distinctive lightning bolt, our notary employs a simple loop. There are other potentially significant variations. HB only uses a recognition sign in his first charter (D O I 330 of 21 August 966), and this takes a form very different from that seen in D O I 161: it is introduced by *et* in elongated letters after the recognition clause (as older convention had dictated) and includes pseudo-Tironian notes. Finally, HB normally employs a squiggly flourish on the final **n** of *amen* in the *apprecatio*, only rarely using the wide majuscule forms seen here (which are more reminiscent of BA). There are, therefore, grounds to doubt that HB produced D O I 161.

This is hardly surprising. HB is last attested in 994, which would be most surprising had he been active in the early 950s. Moreover, there is good reason to believe that HB began his career in the mid- to late 960s. For HB's first securely attested diploma is a grant of 966 in favour of a layman called Gumbert; and as Harry Bresslau noted, this is such a poorly executed performance that it must be considered one of HB's first efforts at charter production³¹. If this is what HB's handiwork looked like in 966, there is little space for the more assured forms of D O I 161 over a decade earlier. Of course, it is conceivable that the latter was yet another of HB's notorious forgeries, a possibility Hoffmann flagged up when he first suggested the identification. But since

30) For these purposes, I have used the following as my primary examples of HB's script (spanning his career): D O I 392, Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2, 251/1; D O II 46, Speyer, Landesarchiv, F 7, 2; D O II 189, Bückeberg, Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv, L 0, c Bd. 1, 3; D O II 279, Karlsruhe, Generallandesarchiv, A 47; D O III 12, Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2, 255/5; D O III 114, Duisburg, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Essen, Stift, Urkunden AA 0248, 6.

31) D O I 330, Darmstadt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, A 2, 255/4, with Harry BRESSLAU, Rezension von Lechner, Königsurkunden, NA 27 (1902) p. 545–547, at p. 546.