

ABU JIRJAH, the archdeacon

A noted seventh-century compiler of certain [biographies](#) of the Coptic patriarchs. He was a close friend and contemporary of SIMON I (689-701), forty-second in the line of succession to Saint Mark. He came originally from the town of Sakha. His list comprises the [lives](#) of CYRIL I (412-444) to ALEXANDER II (705-730), that is, from the twenty-fourth to the forty-third patriarchs. His work was accomplished partly in the Monastery of Saint Macarius (see DAYR ANBA MAQAR) in Wadi Habib (Sawirus, 1907, Vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 91). Probably he was once nominated to succeed the fortieth patriarch, JOHN III (677-686), but his position was never upgraded beyond the rank of HEGUMENOS. Instead, Isaac of the Monastery of Saint [Macarius](#) was consecrated as the forty-first patriarch. Abu Jirjah was a contemporary of the Umayyad caliphs from 'Abd al-Malik (685-705) to Hisham (724- 743). The period he covered included the sensitive ecumenical age of CHALCEDON (451) and the upheaval caused by the [ARAB CONQUEST OF EGYPT](#) (641). As may be expected, the essential biographies in his list were those of his own contemporaries, that is, Simon I (Sawirus, 1907, Vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 27-49) and Alexander II (pp. 50-83), as he was an eyewitness of the events of their reigns.

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