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WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY

THE
MIRACLES
OF THE
BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY



Edited and translated by
R. M. Thomson and
M. Winterbottom

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Boydell Medieval Texts

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The editors of the series are Rodney Thomson and Michael Bennett, both Emeritus Professors of Medieval History at the University of Tasmania, and Dr Julie Barrau, Lecturer in Medieval British History at Cambridge University, and Fellow of Emmanuel College.

Preface and Acknowledgements

In 1985 MW and RMT began collaborating on the Oxford Medieval Texts edition and translation of William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, projected long before by Sir Richard Southern and Sir Roger Mynors. We had no plans, at the time, to do more than that, but in the event we have since then together produced editions and translations of all of William's historical, hagiographical and scriptural works (except for his *Historia Novella*, edited and translated with exemplary skill by Edmund King and K. R. Potter). This is the last, and with it we sign off, not without regret, on thirty years of collaboration, although our friendship continues. We believe that over the period we have come to know and understand William, with a degree of intimacy. That he was an impressive historian and classicist as well as a dedicated monk, though flawed just like us, we have no doubt. We hope that we have done him justice.

At an early stage in the present project we thought of producing a revised version of the Oxford DPhil thesis (1959) of Peter Carter, which consists of text, translation, and abundant introduction and commentary. We cannot speak with sufficient acclaim of Carter's work, which in certain respects ours does not seek to displace. Nonetheless, on closer inspection it seemed that the best course was to revisit the surviving manuscripts, to provide a more literal translation than Carter's, and to supply an introduction and commentary reflecting more than fifty years of scholarship since the completion of his thesis.

MW is entirely responsible for collating the MSS and establishing the text, and for the account of that process given in the Introduction. He is also primarily responsible for the translation. RMT is responsible for the Introduction down to and including the List of MSS, and for the account of the reception of MBVM later on. He is also primarily responsible for the notes which accompany the translation, though MW has made a major contribution to them also. Each editor has read and contributed to the work of the other. We hope that the result is an internally consistent whole.

For information on particular points we wish to thank Martin Brett, Roger Powell, Christopher Brooke, Nigel Morgan, Philip Shaw, and Laurel Broughton.

MW is grateful to all the libraries which have supplied reproductions of items in their collections, and in particular to Mohamed Graine (Lyon), Anna Sanders (Balliol College, Oxford), Edward Probert (Salisbury Cathedral) and Peter Thomas (Exeter Cathedral) for help well beyond the call of duty. We especially thank Kati Ihnat for her generosity in providing us with the text of her London DPhil thesis, and for reading drafts of our work and responding with helpful commentary and bibliographical references.

We have much pleasure in recording our debt to our publishers. Richard Barber encouraged the book from the start, and laid the foundation for its general appearance. Chris Reed set his meticulous mark on the format of the book; we owe a great deal to his taste and his eagle eye. It was a pleasure to work with Nick Bingham and Rohais Haughton. We thank them all, and others behind the scenes, most warmly. The errors that remain are not theirs but ours.

RMT

MW

Abbreviations

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i> (1st edn, Antwerp and Brussels, 1643–1894)
AB	<i>Analecta Bollandiana</i>
Barré 1953	H. Barré, 'Le "De quattuor uirtutibus Mariae" et son auteur', <i>Ephemerides Mariologicae</i> 3 (1953), 231–44
BHL	<i>Bibliotheca Hagiographia Latina</i> , ed. Bollandists (2 vols, Brussels, 1898–1901)
BHL Suppl.	<i>Novum Supplementum</i> , ed. H. Fros (1986)
BL	London, The British Library
BnF	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France
Bodl. Libr.	Oxford, The Bodleian Library
Canal	J. M. Canal, <i>El Libro De Laudibus et Miraculis Sanctae Mariae de Guillermo de Malmesbury</i> (Edizioni 'Ephem. Mariol.', Rome, 1968 ²)
Carter	P. N. Carter, 'An Edition of William of Malmesbury's Treatise on the Miracles of the Virgin', unpublished DPhil Diss., Oxford University, 2 vols (continuously paginated), 1959
Cat. Royal MSS	G. F. Warner and J. P. Gilson, <i>British Museum: Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the old Royal and King's Collections</i> (4 vols, London, 1921)
CCCC	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
CCCM	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis</i>
CCSL	<i>Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina</i>

<i>Comm. Lam.</i>	<i>Willelmi Meldunensis Monachi Liber super Explanationem Lamentationum Ieremiae Prophetiae</i> , ed. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (CCCM 244, 2011), cited by book and line-number
Cottineau	L. H. Cottineau, <i>Répertoire topo-bibliographique des abbayes et prieurés</i> (2 vols, Maçon, 1935)
CPL	E. Dekkers and A. Gaar, <i>Clavis Patrum Latinorum</i> (Turnhout, 1995 ³)
Crane	T. F. Crane, <i>Liber de Miraculis Sanctae Dei Genitricis Mariae</i> (Ithaca, NY, 1925)
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
Dexter	E. F. Dexter, <i>Miracula Sanctae Virginis Mariae</i> (Univ. of Wisconsin Studies in the Social Sciences and History, vol. 12, 1927)
Dominic	Dominic of Evesham, <i>De Miraculis Sanctae Mariae</i> , ed. J. M. Canal (Studium Legionense no. 39, León, 1998)
<i>Early Lives</i>	<i>Early Lives of St Dunstan</i> , ed. and tr. M. Winterbottom and M. Lapidge (Oxford, 2012)
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
GP	William of Malmesbury, <i>Gesta Pontificum Anglorum</i> , ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom, commentary by R. M. Thomson (2 vols, Oxford, 2007)
GR	William of Malmesbury, <i>Gesta Regum Anglorum</i> , ed. and trans. R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, commentary by R. M. Thomson (2 vols, Oxford, 1998–99)
HE	Bede, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum</i> , ed. C. H. Plummer, <i>Venerabilis Baedae Opera Historica</i> (2 vols, Oxford, 1896), I, pp. 5–360
<i>Heads</i>	D. Knowles, C. N. L. Brooke, and V. C. M. London, <i>Heads of Religious Houses, England and Wales, 940–1216</i> (Cambridge, 2001 ²)
Hesbert	R.-J. Hesbert, <i>Corpus Antiphonarium Officii</i> (6 vols, Rome, 1963–79)

ABBREVIATIONS

HM-TS	The collection of miracles of the Virgin described below, p. xvii and n. 16
HN	William of Malmesbury, <i>Historia nouella</i> , ed. and trans. E. King and K. R. Potter (Oxford, 1998)
Ihnat, <i>Mary and the Jews</i>	K. Ihnat, 'Mary and the Jews in Anglo-Norman Monastic Culture', unpubl. PhD Diss., University of London, 2011
Jennings, 'Origins'	J. C. Jennings, 'The origins of the "Elements Series" of the Miracles of the Virgin', <i>Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies</i> 6 (1968), 84–93
Jennings, 'Writings'	J. C. Jennings, 'The writings of Prior Dominic of Evesham', <i>EHR</i> 77 (1962), 298–304
Knowles, <i>Monastic Order</i>	D. Knowles, <i>The Monastic Order in England</i> (Cambridge, 1963 ²)
MB	The collection of miracles of the Virgin described below at p. xviii n. 17
MBVM	William of Malmesbury, <i>De miraculis beatae uirginis Mariae</i>
<i>Memorials of St Anselm</i>	<i>Memorials of St Anselm</i> , ed. F. S. Schmitt and R. W. Southern (Oxford, 1969)
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
Mussafia, 'Studien', I–V	A. Mussafia, 'Studien zu den mittelalterlichen Marienlegenden', <i>Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien (Phil.-Hist. Klasse)</i> 113 (1886), 917–94; 115 (1888), 5–92; 119 (1889) Abh. ix, 1–66; 123 (1891) Abh. viii, 1–85; 139 (1898) Abh. viii, 1–74
ODML	<i>Oxford Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources</i> , ed. R. E. Latham, D. Howlett <i>et al.</i> (1975–2013)
<i>Oxford Dictionary of Saints</i>	D. Farmer, <i>The Oxford Dictionary of Saints</i> (Oxford, 2004 ⁵)
PG	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i>
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>

<i>Polyhist.</i>	William of Malmesbury, <i>Polyhistor Deflorationum</i> , ed. H. Testroet Ouelette (Binghamton, NY, 1982)
Poncelet	A. Poncelet, 'Miraculorum B. V. Mariae quae saec. VI–XV latine sunt conscripta index postea perficiendus', <i>AB</i> 21 (1902), 241–360
RB	<i>Revue Bénédictine</i>
RS	Rolls Series
RTAM	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale</i>
<i>Saints' Lives</i>	William of Malmesbury, <i>Saints' Lives</i> , ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (Oxford, 2002)
SAO	<i>Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia</i> , ed. F. S. Schmitt (rev. edn, 6 vols in 2, Stuttgart and Bad Cannstadt, 1968)
Sharpe, <i>Handlist</i>	R. W. Sharpe, <i>A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540</i> (Turnhout, 1997)
SK	D. Schaller and E. Könsgen, <i>Initia Carminum Latinorum Saeculo Undecimo Antiquiorum</i> (Göttingen, 1977)
Southern, 'The English origins'	R. W. Southern, 'The English origins of the miracles of the Virgin Mary', <i>Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies</i> 4 (1958), 176–216
Stubbs, <i>Memorials</i>	W. Stubbs, <i>Memorials of St Dunstan</i> (RS, 1874)
Thomson, <i>William of Malmesbury</i>	R. M. Thomson, <i>William of Malmesbury</i> (Woodbridge, 2003 ²)
VD	William of Malmesbury, <i>Vita Dunstani</i> , in <i>Saints' Lives</i> , pp. 166–303
VW	William of Malmesbury, <i>Vita Wulfstani</i> , in <i>Saints' Lives</i> , pp. 8–155
Walther, <i>Sprichwörter</i>	H. Walther, <i>Proverbia Sententiaeque Latinitatis Medii Aeui</i> (9 vols, Göttingen, 1963–86)

INTRODUCTION

The Making of the Miracula

Ascription and Date

William of Malmesbury's *Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (MBVM) belongs to that group of predominantly hagiographical works written by the Benedictine monk (c.1090–c.1143) late in his life.¹ By now, as he passed his fortieth year, he was professing regret for the time and effort spent on researching and writing his great historical works (prior to the end of 1125), and expressed the intention of composing works more in keeping with his profession as a monk and more conducive to the salvation of his soul.² The attribution to him of the work edited below is secure. First of all, there is no doubt that he wrote a work of this kind. It is mentioned admiringly by the Augustinian canon Robert of Cricklade, in his *De connubio Iacob*.³ This reference also provides a good *terminus ante quem* for its composition. In the same work Robert says that he has just heard of the death of Godfrey abbot of Winchcombe, which occurred on 5 March 1137.⁴ At the time Robert was at the abbey of Cirencester (12.5 miles/20 km from Malmesbury), so the *De connubio* was certainly written earlier than 1138/9, by which time he had become prior of St Frideswide, Oxford.⁵

That the work referred to by Robert is the one edited below is proved beyond doubt by two lines of evidence. First of all, it is attributed to William in two places. One is in Salisbury Cathedral MS 97, one of the two surviving copies. The prologue alone is quoted and attributed to him in an anonymous commentary

¹ On William's life and works, see Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, with full bibliography of earlier literature. Relevant subsequent publications include GP (including addenda and corrigenda to GR, and additional bibliography) and *Comm. Lam.*

² Regret and intention are expressed in *Comm. Lam.*, prol. 7–18.

³ R. W. Hunt, 'English learning in the late twelfth century', in *Essays in Medieval History*, ed. R. W. Southern (London, 1968), pp. 110–24, at 117–18. Robert's work is unprinted.

⁴ Hunt, p. 117 n. 3, slightly corrected in *Heads*, p. 79. Hunt does not print Robert's actual words (Bodl. Libr., Laud. misc. 725, f. 152r): 'Ecce ille amator clericorum, honor monachorum, abbatum gloria, quem in praefatiuncula opusculi huius salutaueram, uix prima parte perarata, et secunda ad medium usque perducta, dum uiuum speramus, nuntiatur defunctus.' In other words, Robert had dedicated his work to Abbot Godfrey, when in the course of writing bk. 2 he heard of his death. In the event, the work was dedicated to the Winchcombe monks Laurence, Gervase (abbot from 1156) and Achard.

⁵ *Heads*, p. 284.

on the early chapters of John's Gospel, found in a fifteenth-century MS from south-west England.⁶ Secondly, William's authorship is supported by the work's elaborate latinity, by the array of sources for its stories, and by the writings used for historical context and embellishment, including material lifted from his own earlier historical and hagiographical works.⁷ A *terminus post quem* is provided by William's miracle no. 12, recounting a series of events which took place in 1134, but which probably only became known to him in or after 1135–36. *MBVM*, then, was completed 1136–39, probably by early 1137.

Of course, it is one thing to establish the date by which the work was finished, another to ascertain when it was begun. Philip Shaw⁸ has argued that some of the miracle stories must have been at least drafted much earlier than the 1130s, perhaps before 1125. We shall return to this point after a discussion of William's sources.

Inspiration and Purpose

William participated in a new wave of Marian devotion in England⁹ which included the compilation of her miracles, but he was not its leader. However, given the imprecision of the dates that can be established for both his and the other collections of *miracula* known to him, it is hard to locate William's exact position in the movement, or indeed to map the development of the movement itself. The new expression of devotion, focusing on the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception and Assumption, though it may have owed something to pre-Conquest tradition, seems to have originated in writings of Anselm of Canterbury and rapidly spread through the Benedictine network in southern England.¹⁰ It was expressed much more overtly in writings of Anselm's disciple Eadmer, of the German monk Honorius Augustodunensis, who spent time at Canterbury and Worcester, of Dominic prior of Evesham, of or commissioned by Anselm abbot of Bury, of Osbert of Clare, prior of Westminster, and of Nicholas,

⁶ BL Royal 8 F. II, ff. 10–142v. The commentary (beg. 'Carissimi auctores et sanctorum literarum scriptores quilibet libro suo') consists of a series of sermons and extracts, of which those from *MBVM* prol. are attrib. to 'Will. Meldunensis de 4 uirtutibus cardinalibus beate Marie': *Cat. Royal MSS*, I, p. 261. For the circulation of the prol. alone, see below, pp. xlv–xlvii. The commentary also quotes Aquinas, so must be a product of the late thirteenth century or later still.

⁷ Stories also told in his earlier works are nos 7 (in *GP* and *VD*), 8 (in *GR*), 23 (in *GP*), 31 (in *GR*), 33 (in *GR*), 45 (in *VD*). In addition, there are hundreds of instances of shorter passages, locutions and quotations shared by *MBVM* and William's other works, signalled in the notes to our translation.

⁸ P. Shaw, 'The dating of William of Malmesbury's *Miracles of the Virgin*', *Leeds Studies in English*, n. s. 37 (2006), 391–405.

⁹ For the phenomenon, see now Ilnat, *Mary and the Jews*, ch. 3. French collections dating from as early as the second half of the eleventh century, but not used by William, were all local, not general collections.

¹⁰ The story is outlined by Knowles, *Monastic Order*, pp. 510–14.

monk of St Albans and perhaps abbot of Malmesbury.¹¹ Other important sponsors of Marian devotion, named in contemporary sources but not themselves writers, were Warin prior of Worcester and Benedict, prior then abbot of Tewkesbury (1125–37).¹² An important landmark in the development of this devotion, for once precisely datable, was the legatine council held at London in 1129, at which the doctrine and feast of the Immaculate Conception were proclaimed.¹³

Sources for the Stories

Of the individuals named above, William seems to have known in person Anselm of Canterbury, Eadmer, Warin and Dominic; he may also have known Honorius and Anselm of Bury.¹⁴ This network of contacts presumably influenced him in his own devotion to Mary and his promotion of her cult. By the time he wrote *MBVM* he was able to make use of several pre-existing collections and other relevant writings by some of these same people. None of these writings could have been much more than a decade old by the time *MBVM* was finished. Eadmer of Canterbury wrote his *De conceptione sanctae Mariae* c.1125, the *De excellentia Virginis Mariae* earlier. Dominic of Evesham's *Miracula beatae Virginis Mariae*¹⁵ is not closely datable, but was apparently influenced by the HM-TS collection, probably written or at least commissioned by Anselm, abbot of Bury 1121–48.¹⁶ The English career of Honorius Augustodunensis, whose *Sigillum S. Mariae* and probably *Speculum Ecclesiae* were known to William, is now dated to the first two

¹¹ For Eadmer, Honorius, Dominic and Anselm, see below, pp. xvii–xviii, 97 n. 1. Osbert: J. A. Robinson in *The Letters of Osbert of Clare*, ed. E. W. Williamson (Oxford, 1929), pp. 11–14. Nicholas of St Albans: Knowles, *Monastic Order*, pp. 513–14; C. H. Talbot, 'Nicholas of St Albans and Saint Bernard', *RB* 64 (1954), 83–117; R. M. Thomson, *Manuscripts from St Albans Abbey 1066–1235* (2 vols, Woodbridge, 1985²), I, pp. 66–7. He may have been the same man who was abbot of Malmesbury 1183–87 (*Heads*, pp. 55–6).

¹² Their devotion is mentioned in *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ed. and trans. R. R. Darlington, P. McGurk and J. Bray (Oxford, 1995–), III, pp. 223–7.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 186–9.

¹⁴ Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, pp. 5, 46–7, 72–3, 207–8; VW (*Saints' Lives*, pp. 8–11) was dedicated to Warin; cf. *GP* II, p. 15, for evidence that William may have recorded words of Anselm that he had heard directly.

¹⁵ Ed. Canal, without reference to the earlier unprinted edition of J. C. Jennings, *Prior Dominic of Evesham and the Survival of English Tradition after the Conquest*, B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University 1958.

¹⁶ This collection consists of a stable core of seventeen stories (HM), to which another seventeen additions were made, probably over time and by the original compiler (called in toto TS). The clearest exposition of this is Southern, 'English Origins', pp. 183–8, who also advanced plausible reasons for its compilation or commissioning by Anselm of Bury (*ibid.*, pp. 198–200). Slight modifications to Southern's account were made by Carter, pp. 37–42, and Ihnat, *Mary and the Jews*, pp. 120–2. See also below, Appendix A. However, little has changed since Southern wrote (p. 187 n., after listing the HM-TS MSS known to him) 'I have been dependent on descriptions in which many details are left unclear, and almost all these manuscripts have puzzling features which I cannot pretend fully to understand. A more exact analysis of the manuscripts is badly needed ...'.

decades of the century. Another of William's sources, Carter's MB Collection, six stories in rhythmic Latin, is found in at least eight MSS, the earliest from the first half of the twelfth century; it cannot be associated with any particular person or locality.¹⁷ The sum of the evidence, such as it is, suggests that the impulse to compile miracles of the Virgin began in the 1120s. *MBVM* marks the culmination of this first creative impulse, before its spread to the Continent and incorporation in much larger collections, from the late twelfth century onward.

If we consider these writers and promoters together, it seems significant that they were all Benedictine monks, most of them senior officeholders (abbots, priors, precentors), and that all the writers of *miracula* were involved in other hagiographical works, mainly of their local saints. Dominic wrote the Life and Miracles of abbots of Evesham, Egwine, Odulf and perhaps Wigstan, Eadmer of Archbishops Oda, Dunstan and Brecgwine.¹⁸ Anselm of Bury probably commissioned a Life and Miracles of St Edmund.¹⁹ William wrote, on commission, Lives of Wulfstan of Worcester, and of a series of Glastonbury saints (including Dunstan again), as well as of the patron of his own abbey, St Aldhelm.²⁰ In addition, his *Gesta Pontificum* includes Lives, extracted or digested, of most of the saints of England down to his own time.

It is possible that William found some of his sources already combined in the same manuscript. Oxford, Balliol Coll. 240 (English, s. xii ex.), contains, apart from a reworked version of *MBVM* itself, a selection of its sources: Dominic of Evesham, HM 15–16, TS 1–2, and Fulbert's sermon 4 on the Nativity *Approbatæ consuetudinis*, used by William in *MBVM*'s Prologue and elsewhere. Even more interesting is BL Cotton Cleo. C. X (Glastonbury, s. xii med.), containing (as Book One) Dominic miracles 1–6, (as Book Two) HM 1–17 (i.e. the complete series), and (as Book Three) TS 1, 5–17 (a large part of that dossier), breaking off in the middle of the second of two independent miracles. The second manuscript in particular is just the kind of compilation that would have been of great convenience to William in writing *MBVM*; indeed, he might himself have originally assembled it.²¹

¹⁷ Carter, pp. 44–5. The MSS known to him were CCCC 42, Chicago Univ. Libr. 147, BL Arundel 346 and Egerton 2947, Bodl. Libr. Laud. misc. 359 (a prose adaptation of four stories), and BnF lat. 2672, 13336, and 14463. Of these, CCCC 42 (see below, n. 21), which contains all of the stories preceded by a brief prologue, seems to be the most authentic witness. See also below, Appendix A.

¹⁸ Sharpe, *Handlist*, pp. 104–5.

¹⁹ *Letters of Osbert of Clare*, pp. 26–32; R. M. Thomson, 'Two versions of a saint's Life from St. Edmund's Abbey', *RB* 84 (1974), 383–408, at pp. 392–3.

²⁰ VW, VD, and, for Aldhelm, the fifth book of *GP*.

²¹ Another example is CCCC 42 (s. xii, from Dover Priory), containing a collection of *miracula* drawn from Dominic, HM, TS and MB, mixed up together.

Other Sources

William reworked a few stories supplied in toto by other earlier writers: the ninth-century *Visio Wettini* (very little known in medieval England), the poem *Spiris locus est famosus*, and Cassiodorus' *Historia tripartita*. He mined many other sources to supply historical background (Jerome, Ferrandus, Bede, Paul the Deacon, Hugh of Fleury, a collection of decretals, Gregory's letters, Isidore), theological doctrine (Ambrose, Paschasius, ?Alcuin, Ildefonsus, Anselm, Fulbert of Chartres, Eadmer), or stylistic adornment (Lucan, Virgil, Ovid, Juvenal, Persius, Cicero, Horace, Seneca, Statius, Claudian, Sedulius, Sidonius, Ausonius, Hildebert). We draw particular attention to the remarkable use of Ausonius' *Ephemeris* 3, a passage from which was expanded by William and interlarded with his own prose, to supply part of the extended prayer that makes up *MBVM*'s Epilogue. William recalls short passages and recycles longer ones from some of his own historical and hagiographical works (*GR*, *GP*, *VD*).²² A certain amount of information seems to have come to him by word of mouth, for instance the stories, or parts of stories, concerning foreign places: Clermont, Pavia, Fraga, and Constantinople.²³

At this point we return to the question of when William actually began compiling the stories that went into the making of *MBVM*. The evidence for an early date, advanced by Philip Shaw, consists of the cases in which it can be shown that William used the sources already mined by Dominic of Evesham in particular.²⁴ These cases are undeniable; however, in every instance William seems to have used both Dominic's sources and Dominic himself. *Prima facie* then, it cannot be determined whether William used Dominic's source in the first instance, then Dominic himself at a later date, or Dominic in the first instance, having later recourse to Dominic's source when he became aware of or managed to locate it. To us, a procedure of recycling Dominic, then expanding the resulting account from Dominic's more detailed source, would seem more likely than one in which the thinner Dominic was grafted on to a fuller account which William already knew. The same is true of the two or three miracles for which William used both *HM-TS* and its sources. Such a procedure – adding details from an earlier source to a more recent one – would be entirely characteristic of William, who thought highly of ancient texts in general and liked to refer to them if he could.²⁵ But let us admit that we do not know how long he was engaged in the compilation of *MBVM*. Some individual stories may have been known to, and

²² See above, n. 7, and the footnotes accompanying the translation below.

²³ 6, 11, 11a–b, 12, 51.

²⁴ *MBVM* 1–2, 19, 33, 40, used Dominic and his sources, 3, 31 and perhaps 41 *HM* and its sources.

²⁵ Thomson, *William of Malmesbury*, pp. 16–24.