Over the years, a handful of scholars have flirted with implications that Marie de France, to whom we attribute the collections of Fables and Lais in London, British Library, Harley 978, and the Espurgatoire saint Patriz, may also have been the translator of the Vie seinte Audree found in the famous Campsey MS, BL, Add. 70513, fols 100v–134v. More recently, June Hall McCash has argued cogently and convincingly in favor of Marie’s authorship of the Audree. All four works appear to have been composed in the last third of the 12th century by a writer from the Ile-de-France residing in England, and all four are signed by a woman named Marie. They are all translations, or purport to be so, and they embody a poetics of translatio.
This chapter discusses the Latin source of the *Audree* and how Marie translates it.\(^4\) It focuses primarily on one section of Marie’s exemplar, its collection of miracles, brief narratives not unlike fables and *lais*, and explores some of its salient features, implicitly suggesting why it may have attracted a writer like Marie de France. Finally, it demonstrates how Marie takes possession of her exemplar and makes its text her own.

I. Marie’s exemplar

Marie’s Latin source, a text very close to that in a late 13th- or early 14th-century MS, BL, Cotton Domitian A xv, fols 9va–75ra (=Cotton),\(^5\) has much in common with the *Liber Eliensis* [Book of Ely] (=LE).\(^6\) They are both profoundly concerned with St Audrey (also Æthelthryth or Etheldreda), queen of Northumbria, who in 673 founded at Ely a double Benedictine monastery ruled by abbesses. Pillaged by Danes in 869, the abbey was reformed as a male house under King Edgar (ruled 959–75). In 1109 Hervey le Breton was named bishop of the new Diocese of Ely, carved out of the vast Diocese of Lincoln, and the abbey church became its cathedral. Both Marie’s exemplar and LE were compiled at Ely in the 12th century and served its community of monks,

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\(^{1993}\); and Rupert T. Pickens, “Translation and *Translatio* in the *Vie seinte Audree*,” paper presented at the 40th International Medieval Congress, University of Western Michigan, May 5–8, 2005.

\(^{4}\) The text used throughout is McCash and Barban, *Life of Saint Audrey*; translations are my own.

\(^{5}\) Östen Södergård, ed., *La Vie seinte Audree* (Uppsala, 1955), pp. 33–37, recognizes that Marie’s translation abbreviates a text close to the Latin *Life of St Audrey* edited by Daniel Papebroch (1628–1714), *De S. Etheldreda Regina, Virgine, Abbatissa Elyensi in Anglia*, in *Acta sanctorum*, June IV (Venice, 1743), cols 489–576, based on early modern copies of Cotton (Papebroch, col. 489a–c). Except for rubrics, which I have transcribed directly from Cotton, the Latin text used throughout is Papebroch’s (=AS); translations are my own. For contents of Cotton compared with *Audree*, see McCash and Barban, *Life of Saint Audrey*, pp. 262–70. Marie does not translate the history and geography of Ely or Bede’s accounts of St Audrey (fols 1–9r), which may not have introduced her exemplar.