readings in the texts, but the suggested alternatives show how each word has been weighed and measured before being slotted into place in the edition. The edition maintains this balance between respect for the manuscripts and careful emendation throughout.

The translation clarifies William's sometimes convoluted language and finds a good balance between serving as a guide to the Latin and being a readable and enjoyable text in its own right. Sometimes the translation borders on serving as a clarification as well, untying the knots of William's ambitious Latin in clear and accessible English.

It is impossible to cover all imaginable aspects of a text such as this within this format, and while there are some aspects this reviewer would like to have seen treated more carefully, such as the theological and philosophical arguments in the prologue, or the question of how the text was meant to be read and used, such questions show that this volume is not the final word on the text presented. It is a marvelous starting point for further exploration, in the same way as Thomson and Winterbottom's previous work on William of Malmesbury has been. Both the text and translation and the material accompanying them offer a wealth of meticulously researched and carefully considered detail that will be invaluable to all who study the rise of Marian devotion, and will complete the picture of William of Malmesbury's variegated literary output. William politely asked his friendly readers to embrace him in gratitude for his labors in bringing new and old texts to an audience eager for learning. Over the last two decades, Rod Thomson and Michael Winterbottom have done just that in editing and translating William's collected oeuvre. With this book they have left a legacy of careful and impressive scholarship that will continue to provide future scholars and students with source material to explore and inspiration as to how to explore it. The gratitude that William asked his readers to bestow on himself should also be extended to his present-day promulgators.

SIGBJØRN SØNNESYN, Durham University

WILLIAM OF SAINT-THIERRY, ARNOLD OF BONNEVAL, and GEOFFREY OF AUXERRE, *The First Life of Bernard of Clairvaux*, trans. and ed. HILARY COSTELLO, OSCO. (Cistercian Fathers Series 76.) Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015. Pp. xlii, 286. \$37.49. ISBN: 978-0-87907-176-9. doi:10.1086/695856

This book presents the first English translation of the revised version of Bernard of Clairvaux's *First Life*. As is well known, this *Life* has three different authors: the first book was composed by Bernard's friend William of Saint-Thierry, the second by the Benedictine abbot Arnold of Bonneval, while the last three books were written by Geoffrey of Auxerre, former secretary of Bernard, and later—albeit shortly—abbot of Clairvaux himself. All these men knew Bernard personally and wrote down their memories of him before or shortly after his death in 1153, which makes the *Vita Prima*—as it is often called—an invaluable document for anyone interested in the life and impact of this towering figure of twelfth-century religious life. However, it is perhaps not widely known that two different versions of the *Vita prima* exist and are attested by distinct manuscript traditions, as was demonstrated by Adriaan Bredero in 1960 (*Études sur la "Vita Prima" de Saint Bernard*). Earlier editions and translations of this *Life* did not distinguish between the two versions and often offered a hybrid text.

The first version of this *Life* (now known as *Recensio A*) had been expected to lead to Bernard's quick canonization; when this did not come to pass, Geoffrey of Auxerre worked on a revision of the text (*Recensio B*), which was submitted to Pope Alexander III in 1173. While *Recensio A* has recently been the object of a critical edition (*Vita prima Sancti Bernardi Claraevallis abbatis*, ed. Paul Verdeyen, CCCM 89B [Turnhout, 2011]) and of a translation (*Bernard of Clairvaux: Early Biographies, Volume 1 by William of St. Thierry*, trans. Martinus Cawley

[Lafayette, OR, 2000]), *Recensio B*, attested by an equivalent number of manuscripts, has not yet been critically edited and had never been translated until now.

Hilary Costello, coeditor of the sermons of John of Forde for the *Corpus Christianorum* and author of several articles on medieval Cistercian authors, offers us a translation of *Recensio B* as it is attested in one specific manuscript, which is now possessed by Costello's own abbey, Mount Saint Bernard (Leicestershire). To his knowledge, this manuscript is the only copy of the *Recensio B* of Bernard's *Vita Prima* currently belonging to a library of the Cistercian order: its provenance has not yet been established with certainty, but it was probably produced around 1200 in a Cistercian monastery in Flanders.

The introduction of the book incorporates excerpts of John Morson's description of the manuscript in question and information about how it came to Mount Saint Bernard Abbey. The genesis and scope of *Recensio B* are presented in a very concise way by referring to Bredero's work on the matter. Subsequently, the three medieval authors are briefly presented, and one paragraph is consecrated to the role played by the *Fragmenta Gaufridi* (the most ancient biographical notes on Bernard of Clairvaux collected by Geoffrey of Auxerre) in the development of the work. This is followed by a useful summary and commentary on the *Life*, book by book. Overall, the introduction does not take up more than 30 pages, whereas the translation runs to about 250. The volume is completed by a scriptural index and index of names and a short bibliography.

The translation of the *Vita* flows in an engaging fashion, both thanks to the lively source material and to the free style of translation (some concepts are even conveyed through modern terms, such as "upper-class"). The scholar will appreciate the fact that for some potentially problematic translations the Latin term is given in the footnotes. The many section titles added by the translator make the text easy to browse, and the footnotes, most of which were written by the Cistercian specialist James France, offer invaluable help in identifying people, places, and events mentioned in the text. Particular attention has been granted to the identification of quotations (for the most part biblical), which are clearly pointed out in the text and explained in the margins rather than in the footnotes. Lastly, the translator went to considerable lengths to facilitate the comparison of the two versions of the *Vita Prima*, using the section numbers of the critical edition of *Recensio A* and mentioning, at the beginning of each book or section, which passages from *A* are omitted in *B* and which have been added. These latter sections are, obviously, of particular interest: they include, for example, Geoffrey of Auxerre's *Prologue* to the last three books, where he reflected upon his relationship with Bernard, presented the reasons that prompted him to write, and explained the organization of his contribution to the *Life*.

The style of translation, the light and yet useful critical apparatus, and the measures undertaken to facilitate browsing and comparing the text will ensure that the book can be profitably used in classrooms. On a scholarly level, this book will draw attention to the differences between the two versions of the *Vita Prima* and their implications: the analysis of the changes introduced in *Recensio B* (such as the omission of the names of witnesses of Bernard's miracles and the softening of the tone of the accusations against Abelard and the Jews in Rome) and of the elements that he added (such as the above-mentioned prologue, a short conclusive paragraph in the third book, and the description of miraculous events that occurred after the saint's death) offer interesting insights into Geoffrey of Auxerre's fashioning and refashioning of Bernard's portrait. The comparison between the two versions will allow for a better understanding of the evolution not only in the perception of Bernard's character and impact but even of high medieval conceptions of sainthood in general.

MICOL LONG, Ghent University