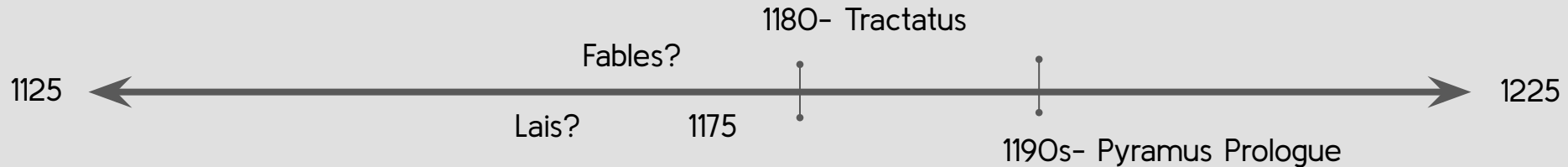


Which Marie is Marie?

A study of the history of Marie de France

Basics of Marie

- Wrote the *Lais*, *Fables*, and *L'espurgatoire de saint Patrice*, likely in that order
- *L'Espurgatoire* was based off of an earlier work, the *Tractatus de Purgatorio Sancti*, made in the early 1180s
- Was well known by the 1190s, when Denis Pyramus referred to her as Dame Marie
- Wrote courtly love *lais*, which features passionate, jealous extramarital lovers

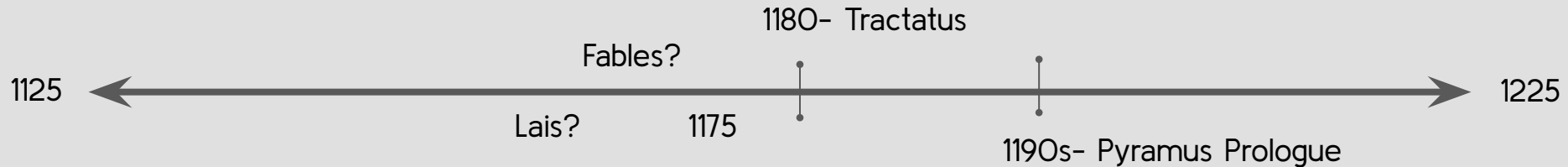


“Dame Marie is another such, who wrote and composed in rhyme, and planned out the verses of her lays, which are not at all true. And she is greatly praised for this and her poetry loved by all, for counts barons, and knights love it dearly and cherish it greatly. They love it in its written form, and they have the lays read and are delighted, and they have them read over and over again. The lays please the ladies, who hear them joyfully and willingly, because they express their desires”

-Denis Pyramus, *La vie de Seint Edmund*, 1190s

Basics of Marie

- Must have been very well educated in Latin, English, and French, and very familiar with courtly social norms and circles
- Dedicated her *Lais* to a “Noble King” and her *Fables* to a “Count William”
- Known only as *Marie* until the 16th century



Marie de France, Countess of Champagne

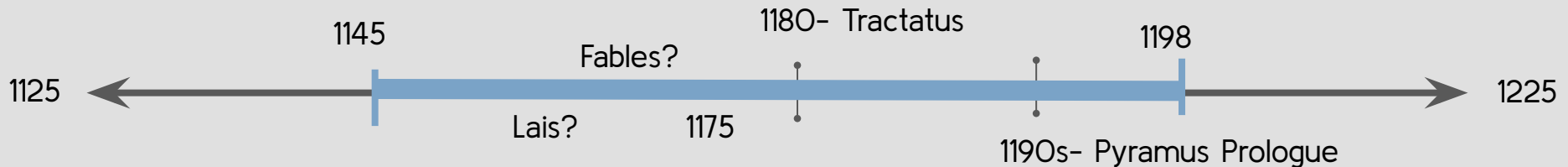
- Developed in 1835 by Sharon Turner, built on by Emil Winkler in 1918
- Daughter of King Louis VII and Eleanor of Aquitaine, Married to Henry “the Liberal,” Count of Champagne
- Simplistic, interpretation of courtly love lacks nuance



Bibliothèque nationale de France.
Département des Manuscrits. Français 794



Noble King: Half brother Richard I
Count William: Half brother William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury

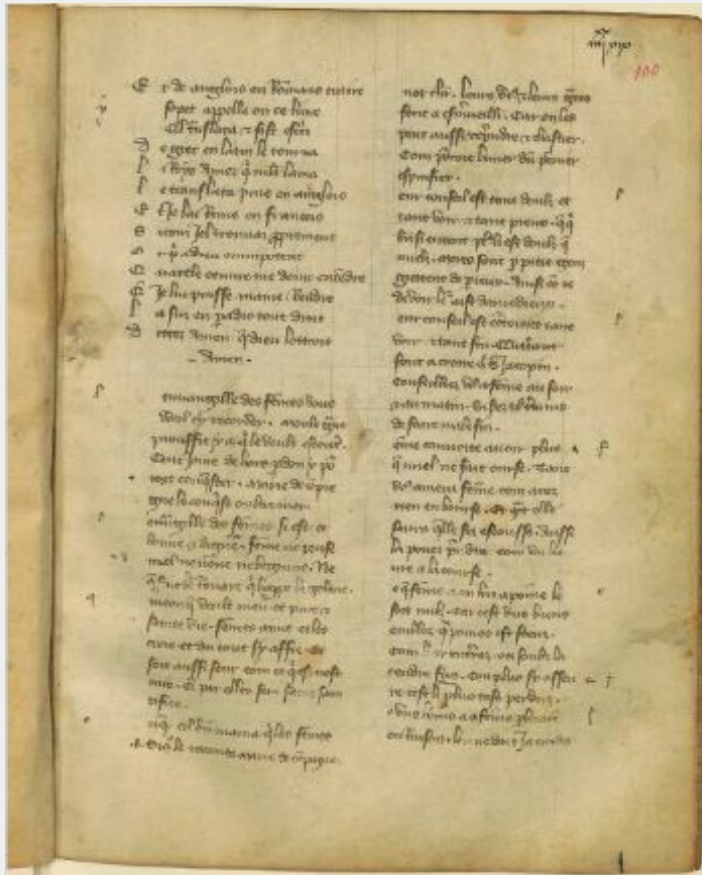


L'Evangile as James.

* L'EUVANGILLE des femmes vous weil' cy recorder,
Moult grant prouffit y a qui le veult escouter.
Cent jors de hors pardon s'y porroit conquerter :
Marie de Compiegne * le conquist oultre mer.

* L'euvangille des femmes si est et bonne et digne ;
Femme ne pense mal ne nonne, ne héguine,
Ne que fait le renart qui happe la geline,
Si com le raconte Marie de Compiegne.

Jubinal, Achille. 1835. *Jongleurs et Trouvères Ou Choix de Saluts, Épîtres, Rêveries et Autres Pièces Légères Des XIIIe et XIVe Siècles.* Paris: J.A. Merklein.



Marie of Compiegne

- Created by Eduard Mall in 1867, supplemented by Leopold Constans in 1877, and repeatedly refuted and disproved by Mall
- Never names a specific Marie, also believes that Marie de France is the only relevant medieval French female poet



No Noble King or Count William

1180- Tractatus

Fables?

Lais?

1175

1190s- Pyramus Prologue

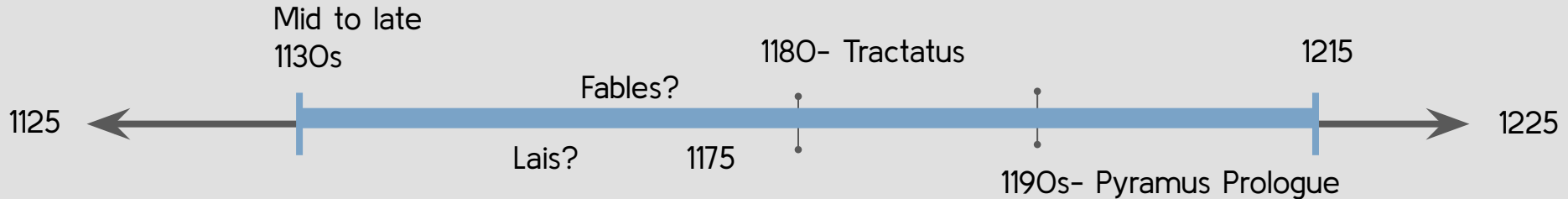
1225

1125

Marie, Abbess of Shaftesbury

- Developed by J.C. Fox in 1910 based on Edith Rickert's analysis
- Alleges that the Abbess was the illegitimate child of Geoffrey Plantagenet with a "Woman of Maine"

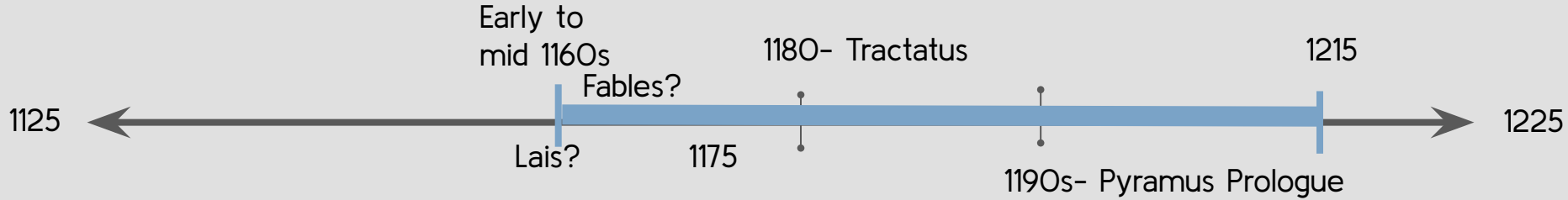
Noble King: Half brother Henry II
Count William: William Longsword,
made a donation to the Abbey



Marie, Abbess of Shaftesbury

- Developed by J.C. Fox in 1910 based on Edith Rickert's analysis
- Alleges that the Abbess was the illegitimate child of Geoffrey Plantagenet with a "Woman of Maine"
- Daughter of Guy d'Ostieilli

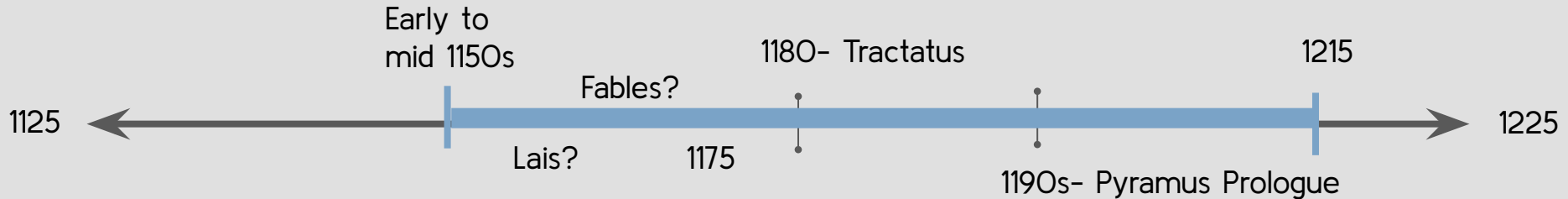
Noble King: Alleged half brother Henry II
Count William: William Longsword, made a donation to the Abbey



Marie de Meulan

- Urban T Holmes proposed idea in 1932 based on a Marie in the Ile de France with similar life path
- Environmental influence on her *Lais*
 - Except she was dead by the 12th century

Noble King: Henry II, ally with relatives
Count William: William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, ally of relatives



“Can we move on from the conclusion that [Countess de Champagne] encouraged authors of the new genres in both secular and religious literature, to the assertion that she was the propagator of doctrines which, to use the words of Amy Kelly, ‘undermine all primary sanctions and are subversive of the social order,’”

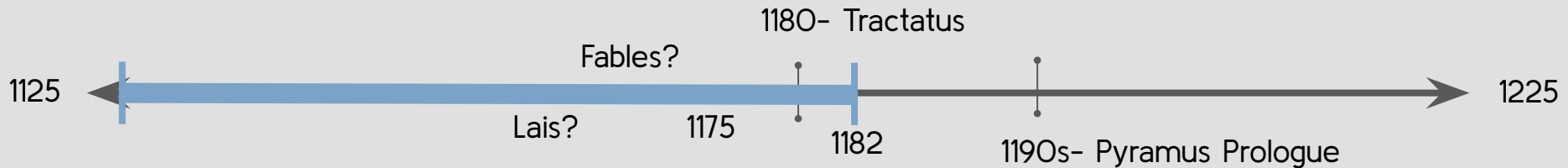
-John Benson, *Court of Champagne as a Literary Center*,

1968

Marie de Blois, Abbess of Romsey and Countess of Boulogne

- Created by Antoinette Knapton in 1978
- Daughter of King Stephen, committed to the Abbey of Romsey very young, forcibly married, then divorced and returned to an abbey

Noble King: Maybe Henry II?
Count William: Guillaume, Count of Bolougne, brother



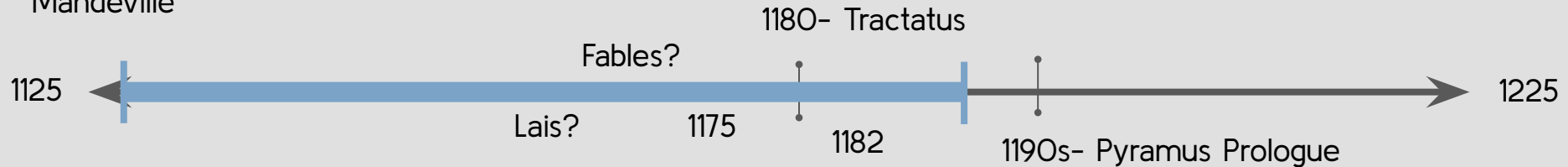
Marie Becket, Abbess of Barking

- Created by Carla Rossi in 2009
- Sister of Thomas Becket, “de France” refers to being in exile
- However, “de France” is Normandy



Noble King: Likely Louis VII (who did not kill her brother), maybe Henry II (killed her brother)

Count William: Count William de Mandeville



“It is impossible to psychoanalyze medieval subjects, but it is perfectly possible to search out, and treat as rigorously as possible, the kind of material psychoanalysts work with...none of those things can be detached from the times in which the subject lived...weighing up these elements and accidents is never easy; and it is all too easy for the biographer-investigator to construct the subject as to make him or her ‘say’ what he or she wants to hear. But there is more to historical biography than illusion, or authorial self-delusion...provided the canons of disinterested interrogation of textual and material sources are applied”

**-Jinty Nelson, “Why Reinventing Medieval History is a Good Idea,” in
The Making of Medieval History, 2017**

What does any of this have to do with her work?
Should we even be looking for Marie?