

# ANN MOSS

Jennifer Ann Moss

21 February 1938 – 13 August 2018

elected Fellow of the British Academy 1998

by

INGRID A. R. DE SMET

*Fellow of the Academy*

Ann Moss (née Jennifer Ann Poole), PhD Cantab, was a world-leading specialist of Renaissance French and Neo-Latin literature, the Classical tradition and Early Modern intellectual culture. Having grown up in Solihull and Coventry, Ann read French and Latin at Newnham College, Cambridge. Most of her academic career is associated with the University of Durham, where she taught French Renaissance literature and played an important part in the establishment of Trevelyan College. Ann became a lay reader for the Anglican Church in retirement. She is remembered for her work on the reception of Ovid, on commonplace books and on the shifting significance of Latin vs. the vernacular in the Renaissance.



ANN MOSS

## Early years and youth

Jennifer Ann Poole, best known as Ann Moss, hailed from the British Midlands.<sup>1</sup> She was born in Solihull on 21 January 1938, the daughter of John Shakespeare Poole (b. 1906) and Dorothy Kathleen Sills (b. 1908), who married on 21 June 1934. Both her parents' families, however, originally came from Coventry. Ann's mother, the daughter of Herbert Frederick Sills (d. 1950), a tool dealer by trade, and Gertrude ('Gerte') Eleanor Booth, a cashier at the time of her marriage in 1901, worked for some time as a secretary and later as a local government clerk. Ann's father, John, son of Stephen George Poole (1861–1924) and Laura Louisa Poole (1869–1935), worked as an insurance clerk for the Prudential Insurance Company in Birmingham. Ann was told he had hoped to become a doctor, but that on the death of his father, John had had to leave school as soon as he could with reasonable qualifications in order to provide for his mother and younger siblings. A mention in a trade magazine of 'J. S. Poole F.C.I.I.' (Fellow of the Chartered Insurance Institute) addressing 'a very well attended meeting on the subject of "Life assurance"' in 1934 and dealing with the matter of industrial assurance 'in a very concise and able way' suggests that he was good at his job.<sup>2</sup>

The happiness which Ann remembered of her early childhood broke off abruptly when a pale-yellow telegram fell on the front door mat, reporting her father 'as missing believed drowned', in Italy. Having served in North Africa and Italy since 1943, Major John S. Poole of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps died on 3 May 1946, either in an accident or as the victim of sabotage of a pleasure boat on Lake Como by Italian partisans. His name features on the Brookwood Military Cemetery Memorial, Surrey, for Commonwealth men and women who died during the Second World War and have no known grave.

The family—Dorothy, Ann and Ann's two-and-a-half-year-old sister Mary—relocated to Coventry, where Ann first attended school in prefabricated huts, as much of Coventry had been destroyed in the Blitz. The children were sixty to a class, which was not to her mother's liking. Ann was sent to board at the Alice Ottley School in Worcester for two years. Founded in 1883, Alice Ottley was a strict but thriving school,

<sup>1</sup> Ann Moss, *Short Autobiography* (unpublished brochure, 2013), ed. by Imogen Moss and Abigail Moss, n.p. (Ann's autobiography and recollections are quoted at various points throughout this biography). Matthew Reisz and others, 'Ann Moss, 1938–2018: tributes paid to a wide-ranging and highly innovative scholar of Renaissance literature' (obituary), *Times Higher Educational Supplement* (20 September 2018).

<sup>2</sup> *The Post Magazine and Insurance Monitor*, 94:2 (1934), 1958.

with a high Anglican ethos, c.440 pupils and a waiting list.<sup>3</sup> Here, Ann proved good at learning Latin.

In 1948, Ann's mother Dorothy Poole married widower Clifford Donald ('Don') Beese (1908–1974), a journalist with the *Coventry Evening Telegraph*. Ann returned to Coventry for her schooling: she now attended Barr's Hill School, which had opened as a grammar school for girls in 1908 and where her mother too had been educated. The school, like so much of Coventry, had been devastated in the war, with seven pupils losing their lives in the Blitz.<sup>4</sup> Ann remembered 'walking at first to school through ruined buildings and wastelands, later witnessing the rebuilding of the city'. It was here that the foundations for Ann's future interests were laid. Eager to study Classics, Ann managed to get two years' individual teaching of Greek up to O level but could only take Latin to A level. Whilst the English teacher inspired Ann to read poetry, to think critically and to discover new intellectual territories, 'some instinct told [Ann] that [she] would thrive best by approaching all this at a cultural remove, through the prism of a foreign language. So French it was in the end...'.<sup>5</sup>

## Cambridge

Ann recollected being the first girl from Barr's Hill School to apply to Oxford or Cambridge. The school's pupils—numbering around 600 in the early 1950s—had apparently until then been advised that such places were out of their class. Ann, however, recalled that 'by the time [she] had reached the Sixth Form, [she] had grown out of [her] previous caution and was inclined to throw [her] weight about'. Whilst Ann's sense of purpose cannot be doubted, perhaps her throwing of weight was made a little easier by the fact that in 1953 an Oxford graduate, Miss Mildred Melhuish (1913–2007), had succeeded to Miss Winifred Barrow (1893–1957) as the school's headmistress. Melhuish's previous school, Redland High School (near Bristol), certainly prided itself in sending its girls to Oxbridge colleges such as St Anne's, St Hilda's or Newnham.<sup>5</sup> Barr's Hill itself, moreover, had shown a strong academic ethos in its founding years at least, preparing girls for the public examinations

<sup>3</sup>On the school, see Valentine Noake, *History of the Alice Ottley School, Worcester* (Worcester and London: Ebenezer Baylis & Son / The Trinity Press, 1952), p. 165.

<sup>4</sup>'History of Barr's Hill House and Barr's Hill School to 1975', <https://www.barrshill.coventry.sch.uk/about-us/history/> (accessed June 2019). On the school, see Kathleen Adams, *The Chronicles of Barr's Hill House 1850–1982* (Coventry: Barr's Hill Guild and Barr's Hill School and Community College, 1983).

<sup>5</sup>*Telegraph*, Deaths Announcements (2007), internet access; Wills and Probate Notices, <https://www.the-gazette.co.uk/notice/L-58779-575562> (accessed 6 August 2020). *Redland High School Magazine* (Summer 1953), *passim*.

organised by Cambridge and ‘send[ing] many students annually to colleges and universities’.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, until the 1960s Oxford and Cambridge very much remained male universities, where the college-based admissions system meant that a woman had a one in ten chance of being admitted compared with a man.<sup>7</sup>

Thanks to a Major Scholarship, Ann enrolled at Newnham College in 1956, reading French as her major subject, and first Classical Latin, then Medieval Latin, as a minor.<sup>8</sup> Her Director of Studies at Newnham was Dr May Wallas (1898–1972). Wallas was herself—like her mother, the writer Ada Radford—a former Newnham student, with a University of London PhD, who returned to Cambridge as a university lecturer in French from 1945 to 1962.<sup>9</sup> Ann considered that Wallas ‘was not a shining light in the Cambridge firmament, did almost no research, I suspect, but she was an absolutely superb teacher’. (May did indeed devote any spare energy not to her own research but to publishing the work of her father, the political scientist Graham Wallas.) With her friend Beverley Noakes (née Evans), a Jamaican student of Modern Languages at Newnham, Ann shared Monique Fluchère, a Lectrice at Newnham from 1956 to 1960, as a supervisor for nineteenth- and twentieth-century French literature.<sup>10</sup>

Ann also attended lectures in Classics by Robert Ralph Bolgar (1913–1985), author of *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries* (1954), and by (Lancelot) Patrick Wilkinson (1907–1985), author of *Ovid Recalled* (1955) and a Fellow of King’s College, who we now know served as a cryptanalyst at Bletchley Park during the Second World War. Ann further recalled going to lectures by the curmudgeonly literary critic F. R. Leavis (1895–1978), a veteran of the First World War and University Lecturer in English and Fellow of Downing College, and by C. S. Lewis (1898–1963),

<sup>6</sup> Cathy Hunt, *A History of Women’s Lives in Coventry* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2018), pp. 20–9 (p. 20).

<sup>7</sup> Christopher N. L. Brooke, *A History of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 4: 1870–1990 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, repr. 2004), p. 527.

<sup>8</sup> Scholarship announcement in the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* (Friday 16 December 1955), p. 29; *Newnham College Register, 1871–1971*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Newnham College, 1979–90), vol. 3, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> ‘May Graham Wallas, 1898–1972’, Wallas Family Papers, 1841–1972, Newnham College Archives, University of Cambridge, GB 2911 PP WALLA, <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/data/gb2911-ppwallas> (accessed 8 June 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Written communication from Beverley Noakes to Abigail Moss, 13 October 2018. Monique Barber (née Fluchère) later became a Fellow and Tutor in French at St Hugh’s College, Oxford (1961–9), and died, aged 41, in a street accident on 17 November 1969: ‘Monique Barber’ (obituary), *St Hugh’s College Chronicle*, 42 (1969–70), 23–4. Noakes pursued, like Ann, a PhD in French at Cambridge; she subsequently taught at the University of the West Indies (1962–70) and at the University of Western Australia (1970–2002), specialising in Renaissance and francophone literature: ‘Beverley Noakes interview, 30 January and 5 February 2013’, UWA Historical Society: UWA Histories [MP3-files; oral history], <http://oralhistories.arts.uwa.edu.au/items/show/41> (accessed 21 April 2020).

who had recently been offered the chair of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at Magdalene College (1954)—without applying—and moved to Cambridge in January 1955.<sup>11</sup> Ann’s supervisor for Medieval Latin literature was Frederic (‘Fred’) Raby (1888–1966, FBA 1941), ‘whose idea of teaching the female undergraduates who would arrive at his rooms in Jesus College for supervision was to invite them to sprawl on the floor with him and look at books from his library’. Raby’s major publications, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry: from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages* (1927) and *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* (in two volumes, 1934), pre-dated his Fellowship at Jesus. Nonetheless, he instilled in Ann ‘a life-long love of intellectual endeavour and a passionate curiosity’.<sup>12</sup>

Peopled by generations of tutors and students whose lives had been marked by the war, Cambridge was colourful and stimulating: Ann achieved a First Class in both Part I (1957) and Part II (1959) of the Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos. ‘What I acquired most profitably as an undergraduate’, confided Ann in 2013, ‘was intellectual discipline.’ But she added with characteristic laconic wit: ‘My immersion in the social life at Cambridge was neither disciplined nor, by and large, entirely profitable.’

### What next?

As a graduate, Ann first considered working in the media but abandoned the idea after the Careers Adviser for Women Students asked her ‘who she knew’. Instead, she started a PhD under the supervision of Ian Dalrymple McFarlane (1915–2002, FBA 1978), referred to as ‘Mac’ by his students. McFarlane had honed his formidable linguistic skills by acting as an interpreter during his five years as a prisoner of war and had been appointed University Lecturer in French and Fellow of Gonville & Caius College in 1947.<sup>13</sup> It was precisely in the late 1950s and early 1960s that McFarlane’s interests in the French Renaissance began to bear fruit with articles on

<sup>11</sup>On Leavis, see John Ezard, ‘Obituary: Frank Raymond Leavis’, *Guardian* (18 April 1978); Ian MacKillop, *F.R. Leavis: a Life in Criticism* (London: Allen Lane, 1995); Brooke, *A History of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 4: 1870–1990, pp. 336, 347, 448–51; and Steven Cranfield, *F. R. Leavis: the Creative University* (Cham, Heidelberg, New York, Dordrecht and London: Springer, 2016). On Lewis, see Alister E. McGrath, *C. S. Lewis: a Life: Eccentric Genius, Reluctant Prophet* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2013), here particularly chapter 13, and idem, *The Intellectual World of C. S. Lewis* (Malden, MA and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), here pp. 14, 130.

<sup>12</sup>On Raby, see Michael Lapidge, ‘Frederic James Edward Raby, 1888–1996’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 94 (1997), pp. 687–704.

<sup>13</sup>On McFarlane, see Terence Cave, ‘Ian Dalrymple McFarlane, 1915–2002’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 124 (2004), pp. 183–203.

Jean-Salmon Macrin (1959–60) and that he started preparing materials for his edition of Maurice Scève's *Délie* (1966). Ann found that supervisions with the erudite McFarlane were 'a rare and daunting experience [...], not least because they often took place in a pub'. She very much acquired the ability to read early printed books on her own. Nevertheless, McFarlane imparted to her a belief in the importance of her project and a sense that she was part of an international band of scholars.

On 1 July 1960, Ann, aged 22, married John Michael Barry Moss (known as Michael, 1931–1985), a Trinity College Cambridge graduate (MA 1956).<sup>14</sup> As a philosopher of science (mathematics), Michael lectured at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and subsequently at Leicester, Manchester and King's College London. Ann followed her husband to Wales. She taught for a year (1963–4) in the French department at University College of North Wales (now the University of Bangor), commuting by train from Aberystwyth. At the end of the year, however, maternity meant she had to give up the post. Early in 1966, a mother of two children under three, she took the difficult step of petitioning for a divorce. Later that year, she moved to Durham, where she knew no one. The marriage was dissolved on 13 November 1967, with a 'joint custody' arrangement in place for the couple's daughters, essentially covering holidays and parental visits. Ann never remarried.

## Durham

Ann Moss arrived in Durham in 1966, in the same year as her colleague Jennifer Britnell (1943–2011), who became a very close friend.<sup>15</sup> If Ann and Jenny were the only women among the staff in the French department, run by the Enlightenment specialist John Lough (1913–2000, FBA 1975), who 'kept himself a little aloof from the fray', they found a fellow enthusiast for the sixteenth century and early printed books in Dudley Wilson (1923–1995).<sup>16</sup> Ann later wrote of Wilson that 'he gave [her] back [her] intellectual self-confidence and self-respect': 'he was my mentor before

<sup>14</sup> *Cambridge University Reporter*, 87:1 (1956–7), 320.

<sup>15</sup> Jennifer Britnell, 'Introduction', in Gary Ferguson and Catherine Hampton (eds.), *(Re)Inventing the Past: Essays in Honour of Ann Moss* (Durham: Durham Modern Languages Series, 2003), pp. 7–11 (p. 7). On Britnell, see A[nn] M[oss], 'Jennifer Britnell (1943–2011)' (obituary), *French Studies*, 66:3 (2011), 442–3. Britnell is consistently named in the Acknowledgements to Ann's books.

<sup>16</sup> Lough was Professor of French at the University of Durham from 1952–1978. See Ann Moss, 'Professor John Lough' (obituary), *Independent* (5 July 2000), and Ann Moss, 'John Lough, 1913–2000', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 124 (2005), pp. 165–80 (p. 171). On Wilson, see Jennifer Britnell, 'Obituary: Professor Dudley Wilson', *Independent* (12 July 1995); Stephen Bamforth, 'Dudley Wilson (1913–1995)' (obituary), *Renaissance Studies*, 10:2 (1996), 314–17, and A[nn] M[oss], 'Dudley Wilson (1923–1995)' (obituary), *French Studies*, 50:1 (1996), 119.

mentors were invented and a lasting influence'.<sup>17</sup> The *dix-septième* Richard Maber, who had been interviewed on the same day as Ann in Old Shire Hall, likewise became a good colleague and lifelong friend.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to her work as a half-time Lecturer in French, Ann was also employed from 12 September 1966 as a resident tutor at Durham's newly founded Trevelyan College. The College was still under construction and only open to women. Its Governing Body had initially foreseen two resident and three non-resident tutors, but the second resident tutor would not be appointed until July 1967. Ann's experience of Trevelyan is remarkable, not just because each of her two jobs, as Britnell recalled in 2003, 'demand[ed] considerably more than half a working week'.<sup>19</sup> According to Ann, both the College and she took a gamble with her appointment at Trevelyan, as she had no administrative experience yet. Her two young daughters, Imogen and Abigail, were fostered nearby as they could not be with Ann in her small flat in the College's temporary accommodation in Parson's Field House. By the summer of 1967, however, the three of them were offered more suitable accommodation in St Mary's College, until they and a resident nanny, fondly referred to as 'Scottie', moved to House 5 on the Trevelyan College site.<sup>20</sup>

Trevelyan's founding Principal, Miss Joan Bernard (1918–2012, FRSA 1984), was known to be 'a pretty hard task-master, tough on standards, but often surprisingly calm underneath'—perhaps unsurprisingly so, given Bernard's formidable career, which included wartime work with the Auxiliary Territorial Service, two university degrees—in *Literae Humaniores* (Oxford, 1940) and Theology (King's College London, 1961)—and the Wardenship of the University of London's Canterbury Hall.<sup>21</sup> Ann quickly learnt to multi-task, as an administrator and pastoral advisor to the students, and starting up the College library from scratch. Within six months of the launch for an appeal for books or money, Ann and two of the college Tutors had spent almost half of the £1,000 grant Council had allotted for the purchase of books. To put it in perspective: £3–£5 for a book was thought to be expensive, whilst Trinity College, Cambridge, had donated £20 for the Trevelyan Library, apologising that they

<sup>17</sup> Moss, 'Autobiographical notes', n.p.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Maber, 'Tribute to Ann Moss' (unpublished), Requiem Eucharist for Ann Moss, Durham.

<sup>19</sup> Britnell, 'Introduction', in *(Re)Inventing the Past*, p. 7.

<sup>20</sup> Susan Martin, *Treves: a Celebration of 40 Years* (Durham: The Trevelyan Trust and Roundtuit, 2006), p. 36; information communicated by Abigail Moss.

<sup>21</sup> H. M[artyn] E[vans], 'Miss Joan Bernard' (obituary), *Trevelyan News* (August 2012); Martin, *Treves*, pp. 33–4, 122, 124–5 and *passim*. Remarkably there is no formal biography of Bernard. The Imperial War Museum holds six reels of oral history on her family background in Britain and Australia, her studies at St Anne's and above all her wartime experience, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80017148> (accessed 5 August 2010).



were faced with the need of spending some £100,000 on the renovation of their own library.<sup>22</sup>

The students at Trevelyan also provided a babysitting service for Ann's girls. Two particularly noteworthy babysitters were the future Labour politicians Dianne Hayter (b. 1949), now Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town, and Marjorie 'Mo' Mowlam (1949–2005), who as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1997–9) led the negotiations of the Good Friday Agreement, signed in April 1998.<sup>23</sup>

Ann returned to work on her thesis, encouraged by her Durham colleagues Wilson, Britnell and Dr Ian Doyle (1925–2018, FBA 1992), Durham University Library's Keeper of Rare Books (1959–82) and Reader in Bibliography (1972–85).<sup>24</sup> Grants from the Durham University Research Fund allowed her to visit research libraries in France. Nevertheless, Ann received nowhere near the level of guidance and support that today's doctoral students in the United Kingdom would expect. McFarlane was already a hands-off supervisor; he also moved from Cambridge to the Buchanan chair in French at St Andrews in 1961 and from there to Oxford to take up a newly created chair in French in January 1971. When Ann sent McFarlane the typescript of what she thought of as the first chapter, he wrote back to her astonishment to say he was pleased this was now 'out of the tunnel' and that she could submit straight away. Thirteen years in the making, Jennifer Ann Moss's doctoral thesis 'A Study of the Latin Editions of Ovid and Commentaries Printed in France, 1487–1600' (Cambridge, French Department) was finally approved on 28 October 1975.<sup>25</sup>

If Ann's interest in Renaissance attitudes to Classical literature had originally been awakened by Bolgar's undergraduate lectures on the Classical tradition and Raby's supervisions on Medieval Latin, McFarlane's influence is discernible in Ann's clarity of expression, her close attention to biographical and bibliographical detail and an openness to secondary literature written not just in English or French, but also in Italian and German. The subsequent publication, in 1982, of a revised version of her thesis, under the title *Ovid in Renaissance France*, part of the Warburg Institute Surveys series, marked a step-change in Ann's career, as she truly became (to use an anachronistic term) 'research-active'. Four more books would follow, as well as a host of conference papers, articles and book chapters, with research grants such as a Sir Derman Christophersen Fellowship (University of Durham) in 1991–2, a one-year

<sup>22</sup> Martin, *Treves*, pp. 40–1, 65.

<sup>23</sup> Unpublished notes towards Ann's biography for the Chancellor's Medal award. On Dr Mo Mowlam, see *Hansard 1803–2005*; Martin, *Treves*, pp. 179–80. On Dianne Hayter at Trevelyan (1967–70), Martin, *Treves*, pp. 62, 65–6, 77.

<sup>24</sup> On Doyle, see A. S. G. Edwards and Pamela Robinson, 'Ian Doyle, F.B.A.' (obituary), *Library*, 19:3 (2018), 376–81.

<sup>25</sup> Cambridge University Library, shelfmark PhD.9403. The thesis was submitted in June 1975.

Leverhulme Trust Fellowship awarded in 1997 and a Visiting Fellowship at the Herzog August Bibliothek at Wolfenbüttel enabling the in situ consultation of rare books.

Meanwhile, Ann had left her position at Trevelyan to become a full-time lecturer in French in 1979.<sup>26</sup> She rose to the ranks of Senior Lecturer in 1985 and that of Reader in 1988. In 1994, the University honoured Moss with a Loyal Service Award for staff with more than twenty-five years of service.<sup>27</sup> Finally, with effect from 1 October 1996, thirty years after she first joined the University, Dr Ann Moss was promoted to professor, at a time when a professorial chair was a much rarer accolade than it is now.<sup>28</sup>

Ann was an enthusiastic, natural teacher, covering a broad range of subjects, both in language and in literature. Even as staff–student ratios changed, she continued, in the words of Britnell, ‘to give that close attention to the intellectual development of her students that characterised the Cambridge tutorial system which she had herself experienced’.<sup>29</sup> There is no evidence, however, that Ann ever taught while sprawled on the floor with her tutees. She did nail her colours to the mast, so to speak, by displaying poetry on her office door. In her specialist subject of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French literature, she favoured the Pléiade poet Pierre de Ronsard and the essayist Michel de Montaigne. ‘Ronsard found his place in the study of that most Ovidian of activities, story-telling’, Britnell recalled in 2003, whilst ‘Montaigne was taught in association with Descartes and Pascal, revealing to her students, sometimes to their own surprise, that they were rivetingly fascinated by philosophical and theological arguments.’<sup>30</sup>

Unlike many of her academic peers, Ann did not abhor administration: on the contrary, she was good at it and liked strategising. At Durham, Ann served as head of French and, in the final three years of her full-time employment, as Head of the then School of Modern European Languages, negotiating important changes as the language departments became an integrated School—a development that also took place at many other universities. Among her achievements as Head of School, Ann was proud of having re-established the Department of Russian, when it was under threat, of securing the future of the Italian department and of beginning the process by which Arabic was incorporated into the School. With her rising seniority came other, university-related duties, such as sitting on Senate or serving on the Governing Body of St Chad’s, a ‘recognised college’ associated with Durham University. At a

<sup>26</sup> Martin, *Treves*, p. 121.

<sup>27</sup> Durham University Archives, UND/CK1/BD/1994/108-160 (8 December 1994).

<sup>28</sup> ‘University News’, *The Times* (16 September 1996); Peter Rhodes, personal communication to the author, 10 June 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Britnell, ‘Introduction’, in *(Re)Inventing the Past*, p. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Britnell, ‘Introduction’, in *(Re)Inventing the Past*, p. 8.

national level, Moss volunteered to become a Subject Specialist Assessor in French—an inspector of teaching at other universities, in the framework of the 1996 Teaching Quality Assurance exercise, an unprecedented national survey of pedagogic practices in higher education: ever pragmatic, she made sure to share her experience to produce an excellent result for French at Durham.<sup>31</sup>

Ann Moss was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1998. Women were still a distinct minority among the Fellowship: only five women joined the Academy that year, out of thirty-one Fellows admitted. Ann Moss, it was reported in the local press, was Durham University's second woman scholar to become an FBA, following Dr Avril Sokolov (née Pyman), Reader in Russian, who entered the Academy in 1996.<sup>32</sup> Moss served on the Academy's Publications Committee from 1999 to 2004 and on Council from 2003 to 2006. She was Chair of the Early Modern Languages and Literatures Section (H5) from 2007 to 2010.

### Retirement and life beyond the university

As their mother balanced family life and a university career, Ann's daughters flourished at their local school, Durham Johnston Comprehensive. Imogen eventually read History at Oxford and Abigail English at Cambridge. Once her girls had left home and her elderly mother, who had lived with them since the 1970s, passed away (1989), Ann gladly moved from their utterly practical house at 4 Castle View to 7 Mountjoy Crescent, a pleasant, mid-terrace home in close proximity to many university buildings. There, significantly, the window of Ann's study in the loft looked out on the beckoning silhouette of Durham Cathedral. Seven grandchildren came along—Emily, Sam, Ellie, Megan, Tabby, Ben and Freddy—in whose company Ann delighted and with whom (as she confided to one of her colleagues) she enjoyed reading *Harry Potter*.

Ann retired from the University of Durham in 2003, at the mandatory age of 65. A Festschrift entitled (*Re*)*Inventing the Past*, edited by two of her former research students, Gary Ferguson and Catherine Hampton, commemorated the occasion.<sup>33</sup> Typically, however, Ann continued her association with the University as an Honorary Research Fellow of the School of Modern Languages, still gave lectures and wrote articles. On 28 January 2013 she was awarded the Chancellor's Medal for her

<sup>31</sup> Across the six categories to be judged, French at Durham received four top scores of '4' and two marks of '3', [https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/3929/1/qo02\\_96.htm#1](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/3929/1/qo02_96.htm#1) (accessed 21 June 2019).

<sup>32</sup> *Evening Chronicle* (Newcastle upon Tyne), 16 July 1998 and 17 July 1998, Local News.

<sup>33</sup> See n. 15.

distinguished service to Durham University. In the autumn of that same year, she was co-opted Vice-Chairman of the Durham University Retired Staff Association.<sup>34</sup>

Whilst working at Durham University, Ann had been very supportive of the Durham-Birzeit Studentship Fund, set up in 1984 to allow a Palestinian undergraduate to study for a year at Durham and Durham students to participate in the Birzeit International Summer Camp. In 2000 the Fund transformed itself into a registered charity with a broader scope, the Durham Palestine Educational Trust (DPET), which offers Masters'-level scholarships open to applicants from all Palestine universities. Ann became a Patron of the new charity, which she remained until her death. From 2004 to 2010, she also took on the role of Trustee, which carried more serious responsibilities. Overall, she helped to establish the DPET, brokered support for it from Durham University's senior officers and helped it gain credibility and financial support from broad sections of the university community.<sup>35</sup> In 2015, when she moved to London, Ann donated the whole of her considerable library to the Trust to aid its fund-raising through a well-established used-book selling business.

Ann's work for a charity such as the DPET aligned with her broad-minded religious beliefs. Her Anglican faith was important to her, albeit in an ecumenical spirit. At Durham, she worshipped regularly at the Cathedral and at her parish church of St Oswald's. Around 2001, towards the end of her working life and 'always ready to do something new', she was instrumental in bringing the Anglican Cursillo to Durham, a movement in the Church encouraging Christians 'to grow through prayer, study and action'.<sup>36</sup> After retirement, Ann trained as a non-stipendiary Church of England Reader (2005). First appointed at St Oswald's, she also served for some years in that capacity at St Paul's Church in Spennymoor. She travelled by bus to the former mining town, which lies approximately 7 miles south of Durham but represents a very different world from the university city. Yet Ann was welcomed there 'with amazing generosity'. Conversely, Ann liked to think—no doubt rightly—that she 'was able to be an effective ambassador for the University in an environment where it is not always well understood'.

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.dunelm.org.uk/file/AGM-Minutes-2014.pdf> (accessed 13 February 2020).

<sup>35</sup> Vin McIntyre, with Justin Willis and Penelope Wilson, communication to the author, on behalf of the Durham Palestine Educational Trust, 9 June 2019.

<sup>36</sup> Letter from Jeffrey Hewitt, Treasurer of Durham Anglican Cursillo, to Abigail and Imogen [Moss], 28 August 2018, and <http://www.durhamcursillo.org.uk> (accessed 8 June 2019).

### Travelling and the final journey

As a university student, Ann had enjoyed travelling abroad with her friends; she later fondly remembered sleeping on the beach in Greece. During her early academic years, and with young children to care for, her travels centred on family excursions and holidays (by public transport) at Hope Cove (South Devon) or on library visits and conference participation. It was only in the late 1990s that she first journeyed to the United States. In retirement, however, Ann turned into a veritable explorer, travelling to Eastern Europe, the Middle East (including Palestine) and Central Asia, retracing in various trips the northerly branch of the Silk Road. These journeys appealed to Ann's appreciation of art and architecture as well as to her long-standing interest in the encounters, past and present, between Christendom and Islam. Tellingly, she made quite risky, off-track visits to mosques in Iran, in search of understanding, and attended an Easter service at a Russian Orthodox church in Riga. Mindful of her daughters' Jewish heritage on their father's side, she organised a trip to Kraków and Auschwitz for the three of them and her eldest granddaughter.

In 2015 Ann moved to a retirement flat in Blackheath, in south-east London, to be closer to her daughters and their families. She decorated the flat in colours inspired by her fascination with the East. But the leukaemia, from which she was already suffering, increasingly took its toll. Fortified by the last rites, Ann passed away on 13 August 2018 at Morden College, Blackheath, a charity founded in 1695 to provide care for the elderly in south-east London.

A Requiem Eucharist for Ann Moss took place in Durham Cathedral on Wednesday 19 September 2018, with tributes by Professor Emeritus Richard Maber and Ann's daughters, Abigail Moss and Imogen Moss. She was laid to rest at the Elvet Hill Road Cemetery, the burial place of several former Durham University lecturers and professors.

### Ann Moss's intellectual legacy: from Ovidian tales to commonplaces

As a *seiziémiste*, that is, as a student of sixteenth-century vernacular French literature, Ann is remembered for her contributions to the study of Ronsard and, to an extent, Montaigne.<sup>37</sup> Her second monograph, *Poetry and Fable: Studies in Mythological*

<sup>37</sup>On Ronsard, see Ann Moss, 'New myths for old', in Philip Ford and Dorothy Gabe Coleman (eds.), *Ronsard in Cambridge: Proceedings of the Cambridge Ronsard Colloquium* (Cambridge: Cambridge French Colloquia, 1986), pp. 73–82; 'Ronsard and the Hermaphrodite poet', in Dennis J. Fletcher (ed.), *The Monstrous* (Durham: Durham Modern Languages Series, 1987), pp. 112–37; 'Ronsard et la poétique des lieux communs', in Yvonne Bellenger, Jean Cécard and Daniel Ménager (eds.), *Ronsard en son IVE*

*Narrative in Sixteenth-Century France*, published with Cambridge University Press in 1984 (with a paperback reprint in 2009), formed a perfect bridge between her doctoral research on Ovid and her interests in French literature by investigating the way in which sixteenth-century French writers, poets and translators adapted mythological tales about love and the pagan gods.<sup>38</sup> The book concentrates on Jean Lemaire de Belges, François Habert, Jean-Antoine de Baïf and Ronsard, and their treatment of two Ovidian tales, 'The Judgment of Paris' and 'Salmacis and Hermaphroditus'. Authors such as Erasmus, Joachim Du Bellay, Barthélemy Aneau (rarely studied at the time) and Jean Dorat likewise come into play. The study ends with a brief discussion of minor Ovidian adaptations of the first decade of the seventeenth century, by Nicolas Renouard and Siméon de La Roque.

Blending precise, historical scholarship with reader-response criticism, *Poetry and Fable* charts a shift in sixteenth-century poetic language, from an emphasis on moralising allegory to a supreme aesthetic experience. Ann believed that her sort of close reading, inspired by an avowedly eclectic engagement with contemporary critics, could

not only be illuminating about particular passages of writing, but is perhaps most exciting when it can bring into focus significant changes in the perspective of literature, and indeed of man's view of himself and his context for thinking, reflected in the highly self-conscious mode of literary expression. (p. 2)

Whilst acknowledging new trends in French Studies, as evinced, for example, by Terence Cave's (FBA 1991) *The Cornucopian Text* of 1979, Moss purposely built on the accomplishments in the field of the Classical tradition and mythography by the likes of Bolgar, Ernst Robert Curtius (1886–1956), the celebrated author of *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, and Jean Seznec (1905–1983),

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*centenaire* (Geneva: Droz, 1989), pp. 121–6; 'Ronsard et son Narcisse', in F. Marotin and J. P. Saint-Gérand (eds.), *Poétique et narration: mélanges offerts à Guy Demerson* (Paris: Champion, 1993), pp. 215–23; "'Me vienne lire": Reading Ronsard', in John O'Brien (ed.), *(Ré)interprétations: études sur le seizième siècle*, special issue of *Michigan Romance Studies*, 15 (1995), 113–32; 'Ronsard the poet: Ronsard the hermaphrodite', in Colette Winn (ed.), *Ronsard, figure de la variété: en mémoire d'Isidore Silver* (Geneva: Droz, 2002), pp. 115–23. On Montaigne, see Ann Moss, "'Des coches": une rhétorique transportable?', in John O'Brien, Malcolm Quainton and James Supple (eds.), *Montaigne et la rhétorique* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, *Studies on Montaigne* 22, 1995), pp. 77–87; 'Montaigne, *De l'amitié*: "Luy" et "Moi"', in John O'Brien and Malcolm Quainton (eds.), *Contemporary Readings of French Renaissance Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), pp. 185–201; 'Montaigne et Shakespeare: rencontres au féminin', in Jean-Marie Maguin and Pierre Kapitaniak (eds.), *Shakespeare et Montaigne: vers un nouvel humanisme* (Paris, *Actes des congrès de la Société française Shakespeare* 21, 2004), pp. 209–19, DOI: 10.4000/shakespeare.673; 'Michel de Montaigne 1533–1592', in Joy A. Palmer Cooper and David E. Cooper (eds.), *Key Thinkers on the Environment* (London: Routledge, 2001, repr. 2017), pp. 37–42.

<sup>38</sup> See, among others, the complimentary appraisals of *Poetry and Fable* by Guy Demerson in *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 47:2 (1985), 508, Harry R. Secor in *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 56:1 (1986), 132–4 and Joan Brumlik in *Romance Quarterly*, 34:2 (1987), 240–2.

Marshal Foch Professor of French at Oxford from 1950 to 1972 and best known for *La Survivance des dieux antiques* (1940). Ann also proved an early admirer of Elizabeth Eisenstein's (1923–2016) seminal study *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979), though she would not quote it often in later works. Combined, such studies led to Ann's fundamental conviction that 'the [Renaissance] printing industry [...] sometimes has an important role in promoting reading habits and is always crucial in reinforcing them' (p. 64). Typically, then, the first chapter of Moss's slender but deceptively rich book opens with a reference to an incunable, Antoine Vérard's 1493 edition of the *Bible des poètes*, a French version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* compiled by the Flemish scribe and printer Colard Mansion, still a very obscure figure at the time.

This return *ad fontes* is further evidenced in *Poetry and Fable*'s array of quotations—and illustrations—culled from primary texts, which were then only accessible in major research libraries. They evoke, in turn, various reflections on reading itself, as a moral choice or as an invitation to discover coded meanings, patterns and relationships, sometimes blurring the distinction between humanist and modern readers. For Moss, the reader's response also applies to the many illustrated editions of Ovid that appeared in the second half of the sixteenth century. The observation allows Ann's newly developed, more complex style of writing to run its ebullient course: 'Advances in the engraving techniques to which we owe these exquisite miniature works of art obviously quickened a sense of delight in the beguiling kaleidoscope of scenes and figures which Ovid's stories set before the reader's eyes before ever he starts to make an intellectual response to them' (p. 86). This stress on the study of reading practice, which Moss considered just as important as the study of writing, remained a recurrent theme in subsequent publications.<sup>39</sup>

### The lure of the Latin muse

Whilst Ann, like McFarlane, was officially a lecturer and later a professor of French, texts written in Latin drew her attention time and again. Ann's investigations thus also focused on religious writing, notably the printing history of Latin hymns, from the late fifteenth century to the second quarter of the sixteenth century.<sup>40</sup> This interest led,

<sup>39</sup> E.g. Moss's contribution to Hans Helander, 'SO debate: Neo-Latin studies: significance and prospects', *Symbolae Osloenses*, 76 (2001), 72–4.

<sup>40</sup> 'Latin liturgical hymns and their early printing history, 1470–1520', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 36 (1987), 112–37, and 'Latin liturgical hymns of the Reformation crisis 1520–1568', *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 40 (1991), 73–111. See also the references in nn. 47 and 53.

subsequently, to a couple of investigations into the hymns of the early sixteenth-century Polish bishop, poet and diplomat Johannes Dantiscus.<sup>41</sup>

In the fullness of her academic career, moreover, Ann became the leading authority on commonplace-books, handwritten—or later, printed—notebooks listing memorable passages for future reference, usually under various headings. These collections of quotations flourished particularly in the Latin culture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The seed for this research is already discernible in a short section on ‘References and commonplaces’ in Moss’s discussion of Habert in *Poetry and Fable* (pp. 62–4), identifying ‘the commonplace book [as] probably the most important instrument in the humanist programme of education which so profoundly influenced the intellectual formation of writers in France from the 1530s on’. Ann explored the topic in various papers delivered at seminars and conferences, and above all, in her landmark monograph *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, first published by Oxford’s Clarendon Press in 1996.

In this book, Moss deftly retraced the development of the genre from its roots in Antiquity through Medieval precursors, Italian relations and Northern progenitors, to its heyday in print in the sixteenth century and its decline in the final decades of seventeenth century. An astonishing array of authors from Italy, Germany, France, the Low Countries and England, both famous and obscure, passes the review. Far from dismissing the genre as ancillary or ephemeral, Ann conceived of ‘the commonplace book as an artefact symptomatic of the educated Western Europeans’, shaping their way of thinking and their use of language. Commonplace-books, so Ann demonstrated, were closely linked to the classroom but not restricted to that context: they also manifested themselves in fields such as theology, medicine and law (though the latter two are consciously excluded from Moss’s survey). The 1999, 2002 and 2010 reprints of *Printed Commonplace-Books* and the publication of a French translation in 2002 testify to the study’s international success.<sup>42</sup> Kindred articles and book chapters brought further insights into the relation between commonplaces and emblem books (another popular Renaissance genre), the organisation of knowledge and the power of quotations, be it in novels or political thought.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> ‘Johannes Dantiscus, Hymn Writer’, in Krzysztof A. Kuczynski, Z. J. Nowak and H. Tadeusiewicz (eds.), *Munera philologica. Georgio Starnawski amicis collegis oblata* (Łódź: Lod-Art, 1992), pp. 156–62, and ‘Johannes Dantiscus (1485–1548): Hymns in context’, in Piotr Urbanski (ed.), *Pietas Humanistica: Neo-Latin Religious Poetry in Poland in European Context* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 71–82.

<sup>42</sup> *Les Recueils de lieux communs: Méthode pour apprendre à penser à la Renaissance*, trans. Patricia Eichel-Lojkine, Monique Lojkine-Morelec, Marie-Christine Munoz and Georges-Louis Tin (Geneva: Droz, 2002).

<sup>43</sup> ‘The *Politica* of Justus Lipsius and the common-place book’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 59 (1998), 421–36; ‘Emblems into commonplaces: the anthologies of Josephus Langius’, in Karl Emenkel and Arnoud Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus: Studies in Neo-Latin Emblem Books* (Turnhout: Brepols,



Meanwhile, Philip B. Rollinson (1939–2019), Professor of English at the University of South Carolina and General Editor of *The Library of Renaissance Humanism* series, ‘cajoled’ Ann into producing a 260-page anthology of Renaissance commentaries on Ovid’s tales of ‘Apollo and Daphne’, ‘Actaeon’ and ‘Echo and Narcissus’, from the Italian Quattrocento to mid-seventeenth-century England. Published in 1998, Moss’s florilegium highlights the importance of Latin printed editions of the *Metamorphoses* as school texts.<sup>44</sup> If the collection ties in with notions of Renaissance habits of reading and writing that Ann had analysed in both *Poetry and Fable* and in *Printed Commonplace-Books*, it was also at the forefront of the study of commentaries, which at the time was proceeding briskly for the Middle Ages but remained much less thoroughly investigated for the period covered in the book.

### A proponent of Neo-Latin Studies

Ann’s close attention to early printed books would now fall under the History of the Book, which only emerged as a field in its own right in the 1980s and which has burgeoned in recent years. But it was this, combined with Ann’s mastery of Latin, which gave her a handle on aspects of Renaissance literature that in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s—and later—lay simply unexplored, were snubbed even, in many academic quarters, as students of modern European languages and literatures eagerly turned to critical theory, and when, in Britain at least, few Classics students showed an interest in the Classical tradition. Not for Ann the siren call of Sartre, Derrida or de Beauvoir, though she fully appreciated the way in which contemporary discourse theory had validated rhetoric and energised enquiry into all its aspects, or how feminist, deconstructionist and psychoanalytical theories widened the interpretations available to investigators of Renaissance and Early Modern texts.<sup>45</sup>

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2003), pp. 1–17; ‘Locating knowledge’, in Karl Enekel and Wolfgang Neuber (eds.), *Cognition and the Book: Typologies of Formal Organisation of Knowledge in the Printed Book of the Early Modern Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 35–49; ‘Entre guillemets: citations à prendre ou à laisser’, in Delphine Denis (ed.), *Lire ‘L’Astrée’* (Paris: Presses de l’Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2008), pp. 141–50; ‘Otho Vaenius: commonplaces into emblems’, in Alison Adams and Philip Ford (eds.), *‘Le Livre demeure’: Studies in Book History in Honour of Alison Saunders* (Geneva: Droz, 2011), pp. 112–45; ‘Monita et exempla politica as Example of a Genre’, in Erik De Bom, Marijke Janssens and Toon Van Houdt (eds.), *(Un)masking the Realities of Power: Justus Lipsius and the Dynamics of Political Writing in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 97–114.

<sup>44</sup> *Latin Commentaries on Ovid from the Renaissance*, selected, intro. and trans. Ann Moss (Signal Mountain, TN: Summertown, for the Library of Renaissance Humanism, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> ‘New ways of looking at texts’, in Max Engammare, Marie-Madeleine Fragonard, Augustin Redondo and Saverio Ricci (eds.), *L’Étude de la Renaissance, ‘nunc et cras’: Actes du colloque de la Fédération Internationale des Sociétés et Instituts d’Étude de la Renaissance (FISIER): Genève septembre 2001* (Geneva: Droz, 2003), pp. 143–58 (pp. 144, 150).

Along with McFarlane and her fellow PhD student of McFarlane's, Philip Ford, Ann Moss may be considered one of Britain's national and international spear-headers of Neo-Latin Studies, a discipline concerned with the study of post-Medieval Latin writings, that are often transnational in character.<sup>46</sup> Ann was indeed a regular speaker in the congresses of the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies (IANLS), which McFarlane co-founded when the study of Renaissance Latin texts was still, as we have seen, viewed as an eccentricity. The IANLS meetings took her to Tours (1976), St Andrews (1982) and Toronto (1988).<sup>47</sup> At Bari (1994), apart from contributing a paper on 'Humanists and the Invention of Literary History', Ann avoided, unlike many other delegates, being robbed, despite being left to her own devices in what was then an unsafe part of the city for tourists.<sup>48</sup> At a more local level, Ann proved a regular supporter of the Cambridge Society for Neo-Latin Studies, founded in 1991, which organised a symposium in honour of her retirement at Clare College, Cambridge, in September 2004. In that same year, Ann was clearly the right person to be elected Founding President of the (British and Irish) Society for Neo-Latin Studies (SNLS). In 2018, the SNLS dedicated its annual Essay Prize for junior scholars to her memory.

Importantly, at the IANLS congress in Copenhagen (1991), Ann delivered one of the Association's five plenary lectures (each in a different language), 'Being in Two Minds: the Bilingual Factor in Renaissance Writing'.<sup>49</sup> The constant linguistic choices made by Early Modern authors constituted a theme that had admittedly occupied Ann much earlier in her career, for instance in the chapter on 'Portents, Prophecy and Poetry in Dorat's *Androgyn* Poem of 1570', relating to French and Latin texts

<sup>46</sup> On Ford, see Neil Kenny, 'Philip John Ford, 1949–2013', *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the British Academy*, 13 (2014), pp. 217–48.

<sup>47</sup> 'The "Metamorphoses" transformed: a survey of changes in Latin commentaries on the "Metamorphoses" printed in France up to 1600', in Jean-Claude Margolin (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Turonensis*, 2 vols (Paris: Vrin, 1980), vol. 1, pp. 187–96; 'The Counter-Reformation Latin hymn', in Ian D. McFarlane (ed.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Sanctandream: Proceedings of the Fifth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, St Andrews, 25 August to 1 September 1982* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1986), pp. 371–8; 'Printed commonplace books in the Renaissance', in Alexander Dalzell, Charles Fantazzi and Richard J. Schoeck (eds.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Torontonensis: Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies: Toronto, 8 August to 13 August, 1988* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1991), pp. 509–18.

<sup>48</sup> In Rhoda Schnur and Juan Alcina Rovira (eds.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bariensis: Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bari, 29 August to 3 September 1994* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1998), pp. 411–17.

<sup>49</sup> Ann Moss, 'Being in Two minds: the bilingual factor in Renaissance writing', in Philip Dust, Rhoda Schnur, Ann Moss and Paul Gerhard Schmidt (eds.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Hafniensis. Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Copenhagen 12 August to 17 August 1991* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies 120, 1994), pp. 61–74.

surrounding the birth of conjoined twins, that she co-wrote with Wilson for *Neo-Latin and the Vernacular in Renaissance France*, a Festschrift for McFarlane, edited by Terence Cave and Grahame Castor.<sup>50</sup> She also returned to it in her inaugural lecture at Durham, ‘Languages of the Renaissance’, delivered on Ash Wednesday 1999, and, with an emphasis on religion, in the paper ‘Christian Piety and Humanist Latin’, which she read at the 2003 IANLS congress in Bonn.<sup>51</sup>

Ann’s fascination with ‘the language question’ led to her final monograph, which she herself considered her best. *Renaissance Truth and the Latin Language Turn* appeared with Oxford University Press in 2003, with a dedication to McFarlane’s memory.<sup>52</sup> It is a broad-ranging and complex study that points out the difference in Latin educational communities hovering between late Medieval and humanist Latin—‘warring idioms’ (p. 10) that co-existed in the early sixteenth century but shifted towards the latter by the end of the century. Moss focuses on the earlier period, 1490–1540, discussing the development of Latin dictionaries and phrasebooks, changes in religious debate and sensibility, as well as early ventures in literary criticism and the emergence of personal subjectivity, with reference to France, Germany, the Low Countries and Italy. The book’s principal structure, based on ‘Words’, ‘Arguments’ and ‘Narration’, is cleverly—and not without some onomastic self-irony—interwoven with the vicissitudes of the story of Saint Ann, a prominent, if controversial, figure of popular piety in the Renaissance.<sup>53</sup>

Retirement allowed Ann to explore some new directions in research. For the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, for instance, she wrote an entry on the Sheffield Professor of French Harold Lawton (1899–2005), who was, before his death, one of the last surviving First World War veterans and prisoners of war in Britain.<sup>54</sup> In 2011, moreover, Ann joined the editorial team of an Oxford-based collaborative

<sup>50</sup> Graham Castor and Terence Cave (eds.), *Neo-Latin and the Vernacular in Renaissance France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 156–73.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Languages of the Renaissance: An Inaugural Lecture delivered on Ash Wednesday 17 February 1999’, in Ferguson and Hampton (eds.), *(Re)Inventing the Past*, pp. 19–33; ‘Christian piety and Humanist Latin’, in Rhoda Schnur and Perrine Galand-Hallyn (eds.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bonnensis: Proceedings of the Twelfth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bonn, 3–9 August, 2003* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), pp. 577–86.

<sup>52</sup> See the book reviews by Dominic Baker-Smith, *Renaissance Studies*, 19:1 (2005), 119–23; Martine Furno, *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance*, 66:3 (2004), 683–4; and Arnoud Visser, *Nederlands archief voor kerkgeschiedenis / Dutch Review of Church History*, 85 (2005), 474–6. The online version of the book dates from 2011.

<sup>53</sup> See also Ann Moss, ‘Saint Ann in crisis’, in Alasdair A. MacDonald and Michael W. Twomey (eds.), *Schooling and Society: the Ordering and Reordering of Knowledge in the Western Middle Ages* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 187–96.

<sup>54</sup> ‘Lawton, Harold Walter (1899–2005)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, published online 2009; published in print 2013.

project to edit the works of the seventeenth-century poet Thomas Traherne as a Latin consultant. Tired of writing commissioned papers or giving talks on topics she felt she had covered, Ann became so interested in the project that she committed to editing one of Traherne's two Latin manuscripts, the Ficino Notebook held in the British Library: at the time of writing it is still due to be published together with Traherne's Early Notebook, preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, in volume 4 of the edition.<sup>55</sup> Ann last worked on the material in September 2017, after which problems with her eyesight and her declining health made it difficult for her to continue.

### Get a grip, girl!

Colleagues, family and friends remember Ann fondly for her kindness and sensible, brave and determined personality. She was 'always very cheerful and calm' and 'quite tolerant of other scholars' follies...', noted one colleague, whilst others have evoked her wise counsel, her collegiality and delightful friendship, her acuteness and energy of mind or her ability to inspire. In times of noticeable gender inequality, Moss showed encouragement and understanding towards women entering academia or trying to combine their jobs with raising young children. A devoted mother and warm friend, Ann was not always sympathetic, however: she could be quite brusque, when she felt it was called for. Her final illness proved taxing too, notwithstanding her strength of character and deep faith.

Above all, Ann had a healthy sense of humour and a taste for fun and adventure, which she shared with her friend Jenny Britnell. This translated, for instance, in Jenny and Ann skiving from the rare books collection in the Vatican Library to enjoy an ice-cream in Rome on a sunny spring day or going off on a jaunt to explore the—then dilapidated—Turkish Baths in Newcastle.<sup>56</sup> Ann's generally positive, no-nonsense approach to life is encapsulated in one colleague's memory of Ann and Jenny rolling up to a conference in Cambridge, with Ann laughingly exhorting Jenny: 'Get a grip, girl!' Ann loved flowers and birds, was passionate about religious art, whilst in music her taste veered towards that of the period she loved to study, the Renaissance. But nothing sums up Ann better than the standard reply she gave to the undergraduate and PhD students who asked what kind of preparatory reading they should undertake: 'a translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the Bible'.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>55</sup> This Early Notebook is being edited by Angus Vine (Stirling). Ann and Angus had intended to collaborate on writing the introduction to the volume. Valery Rees has taken over work on the Ficino Notebook.

<sup>56</sup> Maber, 'Tribute to Ann Moss' (see n. 18).

<sup>57</sup> Valerie Worth, written communication to the author, 14 August 2019.

*Acknowledgements*

Ann Moss and I first crossed paths at the IANLS congress in Copenhagen in 1991. She was the external examiner for my Cambridge PhD thesis in 1993 and very supportive of my early career. We shared mutual friends and colleagues and met at conferences, workshops and committees and from 2014 at Section meetings in the British Academy. I contributed to the 2003 Festschrift published in her honour. I owe thanks to those who generously shared documents, facts and their intellectual appreciation and personal memories of Ann with me in preparation of this memoir: Abigail Moss, Imogen Moss, James Binns, Neil Kenny, Sarah Knight, Peter Mack, Margaret Masson, Vin McIntyre, Peter J. Rhodes, Julia Smith, Karen Syrett, Anne Thomson, Angus Vine, Valerie Worth.

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