



ALBINIA DE LA MARE

*Giles de la Mare*

## Albinia Catherine de la Mare 1932–2001

ALBINIA DE LA MARE was one of the outstanding palaeographers of the twentieth century. Just as E. A. Lowe in his *Codices Latini Antiquiores* mapped the earliest surviving Latin manuscripts, and Bernhard Bischoff classified by date and origin the Carolingian manuscripts, she undertook the task of tracing the careers of the hundreds of scribes writing the newly introduced humanistic script in Italy in the fifteenth century. The tasks were different in many specific ways, but the methodological principles were largely the same. They consisted in training the memory to recognise the characteristics of script, what palaeographers call the *ductus*, and combining that expertise with a thorough knowledge of the texts which were being transcribed, of the patrons for whom the manuscripts were written, and of the broader cultural and historical context. Since the Italian scribes were more numerous, and since their works survive in greater number and are better documented, individual characteristics make the identification of a body of work by an individual scribe possible. These individual scribes have often left a considerable quantity of surviving identifiable manuscripts. It was de la Mare's achievement to demonstrate just how numerous these scribes were and how productive.

Tilly, as I shall call her from now on, since it was the name by which she was known, not only by family, close friends, and the wider circle of colleagues, but even by strangers who only knew her through her work, was born on 2 June 1932. Her father, Richard de la Mare (1901–86), was an influential publisher who joined the firm of Faber and Gwyer in 1925, and ended his career as Chairman of Faber and Faber, as it had become, from 1960 to 1971. The firm was known in particular for its poetry list. Under Berthold Wolpe's direction Faber books maintained a high

standard of typography and design, and distinguished creative artists were employed on the book jackets and illustrations. Tilly was thus surrounded by beautifully produced books and introduced to the processes of their making from an early age. Her mother, Amy Catherine Donaldson (d. 1968), had trained and was active as an artist. Tilly's grandfather was the poet Walter de la Mare (1873–1956, OM, CH), who additionally wrote adult novels and stories, and verse and stories for children.<sup>1</sup> Tilly and the older two of her three younger brothers, Giles, Richard, and Benedick, were born in London where the family lived initially in Gower Street in Bloomsbury. Richard de la Mare later bought a large George I house in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, in 1937, where he was able to display the Japanese porcelain of which he was a pioneer collector and create a beautiful garden.

Tilly was educated as a boarder at Queen's College, Harley Street (1947–51), and then went up to Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, where she read Modern History. She was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College in 1989. She worked on her thesis from 1954 to 1961 at the Warburg Institute, London, being a Junior Research Fellow from 1957 to 1959, and completing her Ph.D. for London University in 1966. It was entitled 'Vespasiano da Bisticci, Historian and Bookseller'. The then Director of the Warburg Institute, Ernst Gombrich, suggested the subject and acted as her supervisor. Tilly took her dissertation in the direction of Vespasiano the *cartolaio*—who made an extremely successful business out of providing manuscripts, especially classical and humanistic manuscripts, for the libraries of the rich and famous—rather than of Vespasiano the historian, who wrote *Vite* of those same rich and famous. As a palaeographer she was largely self-taught, learning by looking, though B. L. Ullman's *The origin and development of humanistic script* appeared in 1960 while she was still writing her dissertation.

In 1962 she moved back to Oxford, where she had an initial appointment for two years to catalogue the bequest of manuscripts made by James P. R. Lyell (1871–1949) to the Bodleian Library. This is where we first overlapped. Tilly was appointed to the permanent staff as an Assistant in the Department of Western Manuscripts a year after me in 1964, and she remained in the library until 1988. We worked under Richard Hunt (1908–79), who was Keeper of Western Manuscripts from

<sup>1</sup> His poem 'A Lifetime. Epitaph for William Blake' was printed on the service sheet for her memorial service in the Chapel of King's College, 28 May 2002. It contains the line 'endless labour, shafts of bliss' which seems perfect for his granddaughter too.

1945 to 1975. Dr Hunt would appear each morning in Duke Humfrey's library and visit each member of the staff there to give advice, answer questions, and generally see what we were up to. The Lyell manuscripts were a miscellaneous collection, acquired by an intelligent but not exceptionally wealthy man between 1936 and 1944. He had been a London solicitor by profession, and lived at the end of his life in Abingdon near Oxford. The bequest consisted of a choice of one hundred manuscripts from a total collection of a little over two hundred and fifty medieval and postmedieval manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> The Bodleian acquired a further eleven manuscripts from the executors (classified as 'Lyell empt.'). These are also included in Tilly's catalogue. The residue of the estate was left to Oxford University for the foundation of the Lyell Readership in Bibliography. Lyell was able to buy with discrimination and for prices which now seem minuscule, manuscripts with historical importance because of their known provenance, or their textual interest, or because they were documented in some way. Lyell was also interested in their bindings. None of the manuscripts had extensive or high-quality illumination, few were Italian, and fewer still were in humanistic script. They were acquired from five London dealers, Quaritch, Maggs, Goldschmidt, Rosenthal, and Davis and Orioli, never at auction. In cataloguing them, therefore, Tilly had to start almost from scratch, both as regards her own knowledge and as regards any previous study of them other than what had been contained in the booksellers' catalogues.

It was a wonderful process of training on the job, supplemented by Richard Hunt's extraordinarily wide knowledge of all aspects of the medieval book. The Bodleian, and Duke Humfrey's Library in particular, was at that time a gathering place for a number of outstanding specialists in the university, who used it regularly. There was also a tradition of generous give-and-take between readers and staff at all times. If you wanted illegible script read, to decipher an erased monastic *ex libris* or to date an English hand, you asked Neil Ker or Malcolm Parkes. If it was a matter of the history of the university or a name in a pledge note you could apply to A. B. Emden. For bindings, collections, and the sale room there was Graham Pollard. For art-historical problems there were Otto Pächt and later Leon Delaissé. Other notable medieval scholars often in the library were Walter Oakeshott, Beryl Smalley, and Roger Mynors, the

<sup>2</sup> See N. R. Ker's first Lyell lecture printed as an Introduction to *Catalogue of the collection of medieval manuscripts bequeathed to the Bodleian Library, Oxford by James P. R. Lyell*, compiled by A. C. de la Mare (Oxford, 1971), pp. xv–xxix.

latter at that time engaged on his catalogue of the Balliol College manuscripts, which included the manuscripts purchased by William Gray, bishop of Ely, from Vespasiano da Bisticci. The Reading Room, transferred for a time to the New Library while Duke Humfrey's Library was restored from the ravages of the Death Watch beetle, could be a noisy place, sometimes to the dismay of readers not involved in the loud conversations which took place there. Hunt, moreover, always encouraged his staff to get to know the readers so that they could learn from them as well as help them. Duke Humfrey's library was in short an academy such as its humanist founder might have approved. Hunt himself was a scholar with an encyclopedic knowledge and a prodigious memory.<sup>3</sup> He gave lectures in the History School on palaeography, which he understood to be the wider study of the manuscript book. It included not only the study of script, but also codicology — such physical details of the manuscript as parchment, collation, and ruling patterns. The study of texts and their transmission was a central preoccupation, including such matters as spelling, word division, punctuation, and *mise-en-page*. Hunt gave a series of lectures specifically on the textual transmission of the Latin classics. He himself could recognise particular types of handwriting, both generically, assigning date and origin, and also individually, identifying for example marginal notes made by Petrarch in a fourteenth-century copy of Suetonius in the library of Exeter College, Oxford.<sup>4</sup> He knew the handwriting of each of his predecessors in the library, and insisted we should too. At one point the Oxford police even consulted him in the matter of some anonymous threatening letters.

So much for the days before word processors and email. One technological innovation of enormous importance for palaeographers, however, had already made its appearance, the photocopying machine. From then on Tilly was able to amass the huge collection of photocopies of humanistic script, which provided a foundation for much of her later scholarship. The Music School, where the first photocopier was installed, was presided over by W. O. Hassall, who, using almost entirely volunteer help, pioneered the making of the Bodleian Library's colour film-strips of

<sup>3</sup> See the Introduction by D. G. Vaisey to A. C. de la Mare and B. Barker-Benfield (eds.), *Manuscripts at Oxford: an exhibition in memory of Richard William Hunt (1908–1979)*, Bodleian Library (Oxford, 1980), pp. vii–ix. See also R. W. Southern in J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (eds.), *Medieval learning and literature: essays presented to Richard William Hunt*, (Oxford, 1976), pp. v–vii; and R. W. Southern, 'Richard William Hunt, 1908–1979' in *PBA*, 67 (1981), 371–97.

<sup>4</sup> R. W. Hunt, 'The Exeter College Suetonius', in *Manuscripts at Oxford*, pp. 141–3. Reprinted from *Times Literary Supplement*, 22 Sept. 1960, p. 619.

manuscripts. This was far in advance of anything achieved by any other manuscript library and remains even now unique. Tilly selected the folios to be reproduced and wrote descriptions, important for their original scholarship, for a number of film-strips of Italian humanistic manuscripts in the Bodleian and also in the College Libraries.

Since the nineteenth century there had been a debate in the Bodleian over methods of cataloguing manuscripts. On the one side was the scholar librarian E. W. B. Nicholson, who wanted a full description of all aspects of a manuscript. On the other was the pragmatist Falconer Madan, who in the end won the battle and wrote the early volumes of the *Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts*, published from 1895 onwards. Though the *Summary Catalogue* had been completed in 1937, Hunt was still engaged in writing volume 1, *Historical Introduction and conspectus of shelf-marks*. This and the index finally appeared in 1953, and Lyell had apparently been incensed by the delay in its appearance. It was therefore perhaps ironical that Tilly, who was definitely on the Nicholson side, should have been set to catalogue the Lyell manuscripts. Her catalogue eventually appeared in 1971. It remains a model of its kind not just for thoroughness but also for what I can only term its sympathetic insight. By that I mean a type of learning which leaves no stone unturned in order to contextualise a particular book in such a way that other scholars wishing to use it not only have all the guidance they need but also can find hints of further directions for research. An example is the description of Lyell MS 33, a genealogical Chronicle of the Kings of England written c.1469–70, which also includes material from Peter of Poitiers' thirteenth-century abbreviated sacred history, the *Compendium sacrae scripturae*. In under four pages she manages to compress all the information necessary to write a much longer scholarly article.

The Bodleian Assistants in the 1960s worked a thirty-five hour week, which included Saturday mornings when the library was open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Evening duty once a week from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. was obligatory and time sheets were filled in on an honour system. Tilly was able to do her own research in her 'own time', either after work or in one free afternoon a week. There was not then the almost insane degree of pressure to publish, which young scholars have to deal with nowadays. Nevertheless, the discovery of new material was an important task, and this inevitably meant an eagerness to make something known by quickly publishing it before someone else did. Tilly's early papers combined the subject matter of her dissertation with new discoveries concerning the manuscripts brought back from Italy by the early English humanists. Her first two

papers dealt in this way with the bequests of William Gray and Robert Flemmying to Balliol and Lincoln Colleges.<sup>5</sup> It is important to stress that until she transferred to the University of London in 1989, Tilly did not have academic vacations or regular sabbatical leave (very occasionally short-term leave was granted in exceptional circumstances) to pursue her research. She was a night owl, and much of her research and writing was done after midnight, I suspect.

Tilly has left her own account of her career and her intellectual training and development.<sup>6</sup> In it she describes as a revelation the moment 'after a year or two of study' when she first realised that she could recognise the handwriting of a particular scribe in a manuscript now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. The manuscript's text was a Life of Charlemagne written by Donato Acciaiuoli. Vespasiano was 'almost certainly' the *cartolaio* responsible for the manuscript's production and binding. The scribe whose handwriting Tilly was able to recognise was Piero Strozzi, and the illuminator was Francesco d'Antonio del Chierico. The manuscript was presented as a gift of the Florentine Republic to Louis XI of France in 1461 by the Florentine ambassadors of whom Acciaiuoli was one.<sup>7</sup> Tilly published a study of Piero Strozzi in a Festschrift for the distinguished calligrapher Alfred Fairbank, which came out in 1965.<sup>8</sup> At that time she had identified thirty-six manuscripts in Piero's hand. By 1994 the total had risen to seventy-one.

Fairbank had collaborated with Richard Hunt on the Bodleian Picture Book on humanistic script first issued in 1960.<sup>9</sup> Fairbank continued to visit the Bodleian and his letters, instantly recognisable from his beautiful calligraphic hand on the envelopes, used to arrive regularly on Tilly's desk. His own publications on humanist script appeared in the

<sup>5</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Vespasiano da Bisticci and Gray', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 20 (1957), 174–6. A. C. de la Mare, 'Vespasiano da Bisticci and the Florentine Manuscripts of Lincoln College', *Lincoln College Record* (1962–3), pp. 7–17.

<sup>6</sup> 'A palaeographer's odyssey', in J. Onians (ed.), *Sight and Insight. Essays on Art and Culture in honour of E. H. Gombrich at 85* (London, 1994), pp. 88–107.

<sup>7</sup> Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 180. Exhibited, *The Cambridge Illuminations*, P. Binski and S. Panayotova (eds.) (Cambridge, 2005), cat. 161.

<sup>8</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Messer Piero Strozzi, a Florentine priest and scribe', in A. S. Osley (ed.), *Calligraphy and Palaeography. Essays presented to Alfred Fairbank on his seventieth birthday* (London, 1965), pp. 55–68. Tilly's work was always of interest to practising scribes and *vice versa*. She was elected an Honorary Member of the Society of Scribes and Illuminators.

<sup>9</sup> *Humanistic script of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries* (Bodleian Library Picture Book, no. 12). Introduction and notes by A. J. Fairbank and R. W. Hunt (Oxford, 1960; corrected reprint 1993).

*Journal for Italic Handwriting*, and in 1961 he had published a short note there on the Paduan scribe Bartolomeo Sanvito. James Wardrop's posthumous book based on lectures given in 1952, in which he identified Sanvito and provided a first list of his manuscripts, appeared in 1963.<sup>10</sup> Laura Nuvoloni has written a detailed account of Tilly's 'Sanvito adventure', as she calls the major project on which Tilly was working in the last ten years of her life.<sup>11</sup> As with Piero Strozzi, the list of Sanvito manuscripts was to grow and grow, as we shall see later.

The project to catalogue Major J. R. Abbey's Italian manuscripts originated at about the same time in the mid-1960s. Abbey had published as his Roxburghe Club volume in 1953 a catalogue by A. R. A. Hobson of a selection of his fine bindings. Anthony Hobson suggested that he follow this with a volume on his collection of illuminated manuscripts. Abbey's initial idea may have been to publish a selection of manuscripts from all periods and countries.<sup>12</sup> Richard Hunt was consulted and suggested instead that a catalogue of the Italian manuscripts would make a more coherent volume and that Tilly and I should be asked to write it. Most of the manuscripts written in humanistic script came from the library of St John Hornby, the founder of the Ashendene Press, who no doubt admired them as much for their calligraphy as for their illumination.<sup>13</sup> The resulting catalogue appeared in 1969.<sup>14</sup> It was the variety of Abbey's manuscripts which gave the collection its interest, since they came from all parts of Italy. Again it was a learning experience for both of us. Tilly's part of the Introduction still stands as an excellent overview of humanist script of the fifteenth century, in which she was able to point to

<sup>10</sup> J. Wardrop, *The Script of Humanism* (Oxford, 1963).

<sup>11</sup> L. Nuvoloni, 'The scribe and the scholar: Bartolomeo Sanvito and Prof. Albinia de la Mare', *Bulletin du bibliophile*, 2005/2, 247–70. She proposes to date the beginning of the 'adventure' specifically to 30 Dec. 1965, on the grounds that it was on that day that Tilly made notes on three Sanvito manuscripts bought for the Victoria and Albert Museum by James Wardrop. These must have been the first manuscripts written by Sanvito that she had seen in any library other than the Bodleian.

<sup>12</sup> My recollections differ somewhat from Tilly's in her 'Palaeographer's odyssey', p. 97. She says that Abbey met Hunt at the meetings of the Association Internationale de Bibliophilie in Oxford in 1965 and initially asked Hunt to catalogue his Italian manuscripts.

<sup>13</sup> Abbey acquired Hornby's manuscripts en bloc after his death through the offices of Sydney Cockerell, who was the executor. Cockerell had given him a couple of hours to make up his mind, and Abbey acknowledged it was the best investment he ever made. The manuscripts were kept in Abbey's flat in London, and we used to bring them down to Oxford, two or three at a time in a suitcase on the train!

<sup>14</sup> J. J. G. Alexander and A. C. de la Mare, *The Italian Manuscripts in the Library of Major J. R. Abbey* (London, 1969). The book was published by Faber and Faber.



characteristics of regional schools and make other important observations, such as the role of notaries in Italy in the development of humanistic cursive, especially in Florence. During the time we were writing the catalogue Abbey was able to buy a manuscript of Petrarch's *Rime e Trionfi* written, and perhaps also illuminated, by Sanvito, and in the relevant entry the manuscripts attributed to Sanvito up to that time were discussed.<sup>15</sup>

My own research for the second volume of Otto Pächt's catalogue of illuminated manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, which contained the Italian manuscripts, began in 1966. Owing above all to the purchase by Oxford University of the library of the Venetian Jesuit, Matteo L. Canonici, in 1817, the Italian manuscripts in the Bodleian are highly important in both quantity and quality.<sup>16</sup> Richard Hunt and Tilly looked at all the manuscripts which were included that were in humanistic script and their comments contributed enormously to the value of the ensuing catalogue published in 1970. Already by this time Tilly could confidently attribute script to a particular region of Italy and give a date for it.

The opportunity to see and handle so many manuscripts at first hand in the Bodleian, especially as the majority were not Florentine, was of great value to Tilly in broadening her knowledge, and, since photographs were taken for publication in the catalogue, she could photocopy them for her own use. James Wardrop's collection of photographs had been given to the Bodleian by his widow and photocopies were duly incorporated by Tilly, who was also adding to her database photocopies from her own purchases and from published sources. This material, and her own papers which she bequeathed to the Bodleian, now form an invaluable source for the study of humanistic script.<sup>17</sup>

Tilly's desk in Arts End and later in one of the Duke Humfrey cubicles was famous among regular visitors to Duke Humfrey. It was, I think,

<sup>15</sup> J.A. 7368, acquired at Sotheby's, 11 July 1966, lot 265. Alexander and de la Mare, 1969, cat. 39, pp. 104–10.

<sup>16</sup> O. Pächt and J. J. G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, 1, German, Dutch, Flemish, French and Spanish Schools. 2, Italian School. 3, British, Irish, and Icelandic Schools*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1966, 1970, 1973). I left the Bodleian for the University of Manchester, History of Art Department, in Autumn, 1971, and inevitably my contacts with Tilly were less frequent after that time.

<sup>17</sup> The papers are being put in order and catalogued by Xavier van Binnebeke, who acted as Tilly's assistant during her last illness. Tilly also bequeathed her small collection of manuscripts and fragments, some of them gifts from Alfred Fairbank, to the Bodleian. Her reference books and offprints were divided between the Warburg Institute in London, the Palaeography Room in Senate House, London, and Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

a symbol of her scholarship and her way of working. Piled high upon it, beside it, and around it were books, files, articles, photographs and photocopies, index cards, letters, handwritten notes, and pieces of paper of every description. It was a dizzying and sometimes unstable conglomeration, untidy certainly, but not chaotic, for she could find there whatever she or anyone else was looking for. It symbolised a kind of scholarship, which is cumulative and also sedimented, for many of her projects went on for years and indeed were still in progress at her death. Her dedication to her profession of scholar librarian serving the public should also be emphasised. She created and maintained an index of new books in the fields covered by the open-shelf library in Selden End. The books themselves were exhibited before being returned to the book stacks. She annotated the catalogue of the library of Sir Thomas Phillipps to keep it up to date as manuscripts appeared in the auction and booksellers' catalogues or found permanent homes in public collections. And she answered enquiries about Bodleian manuscripts from scholars worldwide.

In 1970 an exhibition on the library's founder, Duke Humfrey of Gloucester, and on the early English humanists, was held at the Bodleian. This was another of Richard Hunt's interests and the catalogue of the exhibition was written by Tilly in collaboration with him.<sup>18</sup> The exhibition was organised as a tribute to Roger Mynors on his retirement from the chair of Latin at Oxford University. Here it was the scholarship of Roberto Weiss on humanism in England which was fundamental, but once again the exhibition made its original contribution by concentrating on the identification of script, both of the professional scribes like the anonymous 'Thomas S', later identified by Tilly as Thomas Candour, a friend of Poggio, and of the English humanists, men like Andrew Holes and Robert Flemmyng. They were identified whether they were scribes writing whole texts or owners and readers inserting short marginal notes. The result was to reveal how humanism as a movement was carried outside Italy not only by the patrons, but also by itinerant scribes. Humanism and humanistic script in particular could thus be seen in a different light, as an international movement and a two-way process with individuals both coming from and going to Italy. Many of the scribes working in Italy itself were born in the north.

<sup>18</sup> A. C. de la Mare and R. W. Hunt, *Duke Humfrey and English Humanism in the fifteenth century*, Bodleian Library (Oxford, 1970). See also A. C. de la Mare, 'Humanistic hands in England', *Manuscripts at Oxford* (see above, n. 3), pp. 93–101.

In 1973 the first volume of a projected series on the handwriting of Italian humanists was published.<sup>19</sup> This magisterial volume described as Volume 1, fascicule 1, was meant to be the first of a series, but unfortunately the project proved too ambitious and no further ‘fascicules’ were completed. It included the early humanists, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Salutati, Niccoli, Poggio, and the less well-known figures of Bartolomeo Aragazzi of Montepulciano, Sozomeno of Pistoia, and Giorgio Antonio Vespucci. It was subsidised by the Association internationale de bibliophilie through the good offices of Anthony Hobson and the volume was finely printed by the University Press, Oxford. As Tilly outlines the contents, ‘each entry consists of a short biographical sketch, followed by notes on the handwriting and books of the humanist concerned and a bibliography’. The entries were accompanied by numerous fine-quality plates reproducing the script as nearly as possible in actual size, something which both she and Richard Hunt were very insistent on. All Bodleian photographs have an accompanying scale, a highly desirable practice followed by few other libraries. Tilly explained that the volume was intended to produce ‘a body of generally accepted material which can be used for reference’. However, she also admitted that she had ‘departed from my brief’. The entries on Sozomeno of Pistoia and on Vespucci were original contributions of great importance, especially the former, since Sozomeno is shown to have been an important pioneer of the new script. Her work on Niccoli’s formal and cursive hands was also an original and pathbreaking contribution, especially the identification of his formal hand. The volume is a large folio and the index of manuscripts cited is in two columns and fills four and a half pages. One of Tilly’s most spectacular discoveries came too late for the volume, when she later serendipitously found notes in Petrarch’s hand in a fragmentary twelfth-century copy of St Ambrose’s Letters. This discovery was published appropriately in the memorial exhibition catalogue for Richard Hunt of 1980.<sup>20</sup>

In the 1970s Tilly also published a series of important papers on the origins of Florentine humanist script, on the Florentine book trade, and on the libraries of particular collectors. She also wrote a detailed study of the earliest manuscripts connected with the humanist reform of script

<sup>19</sup> A. C. de la Mare, *The Handwriting of Italian Humanists*, Vol. I, fascicule 1, Oxford University Press for Association internationale de bibliophilie (Oxford, 1973).

<sup>20</sup> A. C. de la Mare, “‘Sapiens ubique est civis’: Petrarch’s copy of Ambrose’s Letters’, *Manuscripts at Oxford* (see above, n. 3), pp. 144–6. The fragments are bound in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Canon. Pat. Lat. 210, 229. See also ‘Palaeographer’s odyssey’ (see above, n. 6), pp. 99–100.

and its three foundational figures, Coluccio Salutati, Niccolò Niccoli, and Poggio.<sup>21</sup> This was an area of study which had been handled already by Berthold Ullman in various articles, in his book of 1960 on humanistic script, and in his monograph on Coluccio Salutati of 1963. In these papers as in her book, she was building on his and other scholars' work, but also providing a new synthesis and adding much newly identified material.<sup>22</sup> Ullman, a student of the great palaeographer Ludwig Traube, had come to palaeography from his interests in the transmission of classical texts and in humanist culture, and he had relied primarily on the evidence of colophons and documented manuscripts, as opposed to the examination of the style of the script itself and the identification of unsigned manuscripts. In relation to Tilly's own broader interest in the actual physical production of manuscripts under the direction of the *cartolai*, she discovered and published a document of great significance, the will in which the contents of a *cartolaio*'s shop were listed in fascinating detail.<sup>23</sup> She also discussed the libraries of two very important collectors and patrons, Francesco Sasseti and Cardinal Giovanni d'Aragona.<sup>24</sup> For both she contributed lists of manuscripts, many identified for the first time. The article on Cardinal Giovanni is typical in the richness of its footnotes, which are a mine of information not just on the patron but on the scribes for each of whom she provides long lists of manuscripts. She

<sup>21</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Humanist script: the first ten years', in F. Krafft and D. Wuttke (eds.), *Das Verhältnis der Humanisten zum Buch* (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Kommission für Humanismusforschung, Mitteilung 4) (Boppard, 1977), pp. 89–110.

<sup>22</sup> B. L. Ullman, *The origin and development of humanistic script* (Rome, 1960). B. L. Ullman, *The humanism of Coluccio Salutati* (Padua, 1963). Other important scholars on whose work Tilly built include Augusto Campana, Giuseppe Billanovich, Armando Petrucci, Elisabeth Pellegrin, and Vittore Branca.

<sup>23</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'The shop of a Florentine "cartolaio" in 1426', in B. Maracchi Biagiarelli and D. Rhodes (eds.), *Studi offerti a Roberto Ridolfi*, (Biblioteca di bibliografia italiana, LXXI) (Florence, 1973), pp. 237–48. See also A. M. Brown and A. C. de la Mare, 'Bartolomeo Scala's dealings with booksellers, scribes and illuminators 1459–63', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 39 (1976), 237–45.

<sup>24</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'The library of Francesco Sasseti (1421–90)', in C. Clough (ed.), *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance. Essays in honour of P. O. Kristeller* (Manchester, 1976), pp. 160–201. A. C. de la Mare, 'The Florentine Scribes of Cardinal Giovanni of Aragon', in C. Questa and R. Raffaelli (eds.), *Il Libro e il Testo* (Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Urbino, 20–23 settembre 1982) (Urbino, 1984), pp. 245–93. Tilly mentions the remarkable *Memoriale* of 1482 from the Cardinal listing the six principal scribes working for him in Florence. This together with two other letters written by the Cardinal to Antonio Sinibaldi was sold at Christie's in 1997. At the instance of Laura Nuvoloni and Christopher de Hamel they were bought by a group of Tilly's friends and given in her honour to the Bodleian Library, and are now Ms. Ital. d.31.

had identified the manuscripts in libraries all over Europe and in America, and careful first-hand examination of the originals showed that the cardinal's hat was sometimes overpainted with the crown of the King Ferdinand I of Naples, his father. In these and many of her other publications she also makes important observations on the illumination, for example on the origin and development of white-vine initials and borders, and the use of title pages.

In 1971 Tilly had written an article for a multi-author volume on Livy, which signalled another and increasingly important direction in her scholarship.<sup>25</sup> The later copies of classical texts had tended to be ignored by editors, except in the case of a few of the spectacular discoveries of the humanists. These later manuscripts are often lumped together in editions under the title *dett.* (the inferior manuscripts, *deteriores*). New interest in reception theory meant that greater attention was now being paid to the question of readership and the later annotation of texts. Tilly's paper listed known Florentine sets of Livy, dated them, identified their scribes and patrons, and in many cases reunited copies of the various Decades, which had got separated by time.

Other authors and texts in whose transmission she became especially interested were Eusebius's *Chronicon*, Horace, Petronius, Seneca, and Aulus Gellius. When a multi-author volume devoted to the problems of the textual transmission of Latin authors, appeared in 1983, Tilly's constant help and advice was acknowledged in the Preface.<sup>26</sup> A major contributor to the volume was Michael Reeve, now Kennedy Professor of Latin at Cambridge University. He and Tilly continued a fruitful interchange of mutual benefit to them both. These years were notable for an increasing interdisciplinary interest in the history of the book. Tilly was a founder member and zealous supporter of the Oxford Seminar in the History of the Book to 1500, which met quarterly and organised biennial conferences from 1985 to 2002 under the leadership of Linda Brownrigg

<sup>25</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Florentine manuscripts of Livy in the fifteenth century', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Livy* (London, 1971), pp. 177-99.

<sup>26</sup> L. D. Reynolds (ed.), *Texts and Transmission. A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford, 1982). The contributors are listed as: P. K. Marshall, M. D. Reeve, L. D. Reynolds, R. H. Rouse, R. J. Tarant, M. Winterbottom and others. The volume was planned as an eightieth birthday tribute to Roger Mynors. Tilly had already collaborated with Richard Rouse on two publications of 1976 and 1977 on texts by Aulus Gellius and Seneca respectively. Another classical philologist who sought Tilly's advice on Renaissance manuscripts of classical texts is Stephen Oakley, Professor of Latin at Reading University.

and Margaret Smith.<sup>27</sup> The seminar held a two-day ‘Tillyfest’ in her honor in 1997, and a photograph shows her on the steps of the Law School in Oxford surrounded by a multitude of smiling colleagues.

In the early 1980s Professor Annarosa Garzelli had invited Tilly to contribute an account of Florentine scribes in the lengthy two-volume work on Florentine renaissance illuminated manuscripts she was preparing. The results of their collaboration appeared in 1985.<sup>28</sup> Professor Garzelli wrote a comprehensive and authoritative account of the illuminators active in Florence from 1440 to 1525 in Part 1 of the book, which is in Italian. Tilly wrote on the scribes in Part II, which is in English. Her text consists of a narrative account of the development of humanist script in this period, followed by lists of scribes with biographical information and *oeuvre* lists. In effect she was able to publish a large part of her thesis, though rewritten and greatly enlarged. Tilly continued to annotate her copy of this book to the end of her life, and so the plan by Professor Vincenzo Fera at the University of Messina to produce an Italian version of Tilly’s text with these *addenda* incorporated and with a proper index is extremely welcome. Xavier van Binnebeke has been editing the revised text for the press.

In 1987 Tilly was elected a Fellow of the British Academy. She gave the E. A. Lowe Lectures in Palaeography at Corpus Christi College, Oxford in the same year. In 1990 she was elected a Fellow of the London Society of Antiquaries. By this point she had achieved an established international reputation leading to invitations to teach and to give papers at conferences in Europe and America. She had been invited to teach a course at Oxford University in Latin palaeography from 1100 to 1500 already in 1968–9. In 1974 she was a visiting lecturer in a Palaeography Summer Seminar at the Catholic University in Washington DC.<sup>29</sup> She later gave courses on Italian Humanistic Manuscripts at the Rare Book School in New York in 1986, 1987, and 1991. She was a Visiting Research Fellow at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, in 1992. She was elected a member of the Comité international de paléographie latine in 1986 and attended their conferences. She was also a visiting professor at the Istituto

<sup>27</sup> An important paper on Vespasiano given at the conference held in Leiden in 1993 was published in 1996. A. C. de la Mare, ‘Vespasiano da Bisticci as Producer of Classical Manuscripts in Fifteenth-century Florence’, in C. A. Chavannes Mazel, and M. M. Smith (eds.), *Medieval Manuscripts of the Latin Classics: Production and Use* (Los Altos Hills, 1996), pp. 166–207.

<sup>28</sup> A. Garzelli and A. C. de la Mare, *Miniatura fiorentina del rinascimento 1440–1525: un primo censimento* (Inventari e cataloghi toscani, 18, 19), 2 vols. (Florence, 1985).

<sup>29</sup> I am not sure if this was her first visit to the United States or not.

di Filologia Classica, University of Padua, 1987, at the University of Messina in 1991 and 1993 at the invitation of Vincenzo Fera, at the Scuola di Paleografia Musicale, Cremona (University of Pavia) in 1992, at the Scuola Normale in Pisa in 1998 and 1999, and at the University of Rome also in 1998 and 1999.<sup>30</sup>

In 1989 Tilly was invited to occupy the chair of Palaeography at King's College, London, following the death of Julian Brown.<sup>31</sup> It was a wrench for her to leave the Bodleian after nearly thirty years. Her father had moved to Cumnor outside Oxford where Tilly looked after him and continued to live after his death in 1986. The change meant a full-time commitment to teaching and the preparation of lectures and seminars.<sup>32</sup> As an academic she was much freer to travel, however, and an idea of the extent of the difficulties produced by understaffing and cuts in finance at the Bodleian at this period can be got from a paper she published in 1988.<sup>33</sup> There was also some danger that the chair would disappear in a time of financial cuts, and her friends urged her to accept for the sake of the discipline.

Her university classes were given in the Palaeography Room of the University of London Library in Senate House. This is a specialist library containing a fine open-shelf collection of catalogues, facsimiles and other publications devoted to the medieval and renaissance manuscript book, as well as to Diplomatic and Archives, and it formed a counterpart to the similarly focused open-shelf collections in the Arts End in Duke Humfrey. Tilly was a superb teacher and her enthusiasm and love of the subject together with her sense of humour proved irresistible to her students. Palaeography is not an easy subject to teach, but numbers in her classes increased and she began to have her own graduate students.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The latest *curriculum vitae* which I have had access to is dated 2000, and lists lectures given at Cesena, Cortona, Erice, Florence, Leiden, Madrid, Mainz, Milan, Montepulciano, Munich, Paris (École des Hautes Études), Pistoia, San Gimignano, Trieste, Urbino, Venice, and Verona in addition to those already mentioned.

<sup>31</sup> A typescript of her unpublished inaugural lecture, which was given on 18 June 1990 and entitled 'Close encounters of a manuscript kind', is among her papers.

<sup>32</sup> Her annual reports to the Wolfson Foundation, which supported her Chair, amply demonstrate how conscientious she was in performing her duties.

<sup>33</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Education, formation and conditions of work of manuscript librarians in England', *Bollettino dell'Istituto Centrale per la Patologia del Libro*, 42 (1988), 213–21.

<sup>34</sup> Laura Nuvoloni is now working in the Department of Manuscripts, the British Library. Cristina Dondi's London University doctoral dissertation has been published, *The Liturgy of the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem: a Study and a Catalogue of the Manuscript Sources* (Turnhout, 2004).

In the 1990s another major project began to take shape, a proposed book on Bartolomeo Sanvito, in which Tilly would collaborate with Dr Ellen Erdreich, who had completed her Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University in 1993 on an illuminated manuscript of Petrarch written by Sanvito.<sup>35</sup> Tilly had a three-month fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts in 1998 during which she worked intensively with Dr Erdreich on the book, which, however, remained incomplete at her death on 19 December 2001. This project is being brought to fruition through the good offices of Anthony Hobson. Laura Nuvoloni is currently editing and completing her text, Ellen Erdreich will contribute a chapter on Sanvito as illuminator, and Scott Dickerson will compile the bibliography.

Since space does not permit and since Vincenzo Fera has included a fuller bibliography together with a very perceptive eulogy published in 2002, all Tilly's extensive publications cannot be mentioned here.<sup>36</sup> In the 1990s she continued to work in the various directions listed above. She had already extended her published studies of humanistic script into other regions of Italy, for example to Lombardy, with a paper of 1983 on Milanese humanistic script.<sup>37</sup> This was followed in 1985 by a paper on humanist script in the Veneto.<sup>38</sup> In 1995 she collaborated with other authors on a volume on the library formed by Malatesta Novello at Cesena, with its series of dated manuscripts written by scribes documented both from payments and in their colophons.<sup>39</sup> Here she was following in the footsteps of one of the great Italian philologists and palaeographers, Augusto Campana. She was also drawn into a number of exhibition catalogues and other publications, which originated in Italy.

<sup>35</sup> E. C. Erdreich, '*Qui hos cultus . . . pinxerit?*: Illumination associated with Bartolomeo Sanvito (c.1435–c.1512)', Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1993. The Petrarch is in the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, W. 755.

<sup>36</sup> V. Fera, 'La trama interrotta. Per Albinia C. de la Mare', *Studi medievali e umanistici*, 1 (2003), 223–7. Other tributes are by D. E. Rhodes, 'Albinia de la Mare, maestra dei manoscritti. In memoriam', *La Bibliofilia*, 104/2 (2002), 209–18 (also includes a bibliography) and by M. Feo, *Il Ponte*, 58.1 (2002), 151–2. For a shorter notice see *Bodleian Library Record*, 17 (2002), 279. Obituaries appeared in *The Times*, 1 Jan. 2002 (by Christopher de Hamel), and *The Independent*, 3 Jan. 2002 (by Nicolas Barker).

<sup>37</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Script and manuscripts in Milan under the Sforza', in *Milano nell'età di Lodovico il Moro (Atti del Convegno internazionale, 1983)* (Milan, 1983), pp. 398–408.

<sup>38</sup> A. C. de la Mare, C. Griggio, 'Il copista Michele Salvatico collaboratore di Francesco Barbaro e Guarnerio d'Artegna', *Lettere italiane*, 37 (1985), 351–4.

<sup>39</sup> A. C. de la Mare, in *Libreria Domini. I manoscritti della Biblioteca Malatestiana: testi e decorazioni*, a cura di F. Lollini, P. Lucchi (Bologna, 1995), pp. 35–93.



For example she wrote entries on humanistic manuscripts in the Biblioteca Classense Ravenna, in the series *Grandi Biblioteche d'Italia*.<sup>40</sup> She contributed a paper setting out the chronology of Bartolomeo Sanvito's manuscripts to the exhibition catalogue of a magnificent showing of Paduan illumination at Padua in 1999.<sup>41</sup> By this time the total of manuscripts wholly or in part written by Sanvito known to her had risen to one hundred and sixteen, and of those rubricated but not written by him to sixty-four. It is now generally accepted that he was also active as an illuminator, though the extent of his involvement remains under discussion. Tilly's last published article was also concerned with Sanvito. She had observed that the manuscripts of Horace written by Sanvito form a family. She concluded that he kept by him an exemplar, which he updated with textual revisions and glosses. These were then incorporated in later copies he made of the text. This shows that Sanvito was not only a scribe but also a humanist who was actively involved in the editing and annotation of the manuscripts he copied. On the last occasion I saw her, in the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford, she asked me to check the text of the Horace written by Sanvito and now in the New York Public Library, for a particular interpolation in the text. The resulting article, on which she continued to work to the end, appeared posthumously in 2002.<sup>42</sup>

Ludwig Traube called his discipline a 'Hilfswissenschaft'. Tilly de la Mare took the scholarly duty of helping others very seriously indeed. Whilst she was at the Bodleian it was an established part of her duties and as she writes in her paper on manuscript librarians in England: 'one can sometimes spend days or even weeks on some queries'. The thoroughness implied in the 'weeks' was of course one of the outstanding qualities of

<sup>40</sup> Entries by A. C. de la Mare in A. Dillon Bussi and C. Giuliani (eds.), *La Biblioteca Classense di Ravenna (Grandi Biblioteche d'Italia)* (Fiesole, 1996), pp. 66–7, 70, 88, 94, 110–11, 152.

<sup>41</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Bartolomeo Sanvito da Padova, copista e miniatore', in G. Baldassin Molli, G. Mariani Canova, *et al.* (eds.), exhibition catalogue, *La Miniatura a Padova dal medioevo al settecento* (Modena, 1999), pp. 495–511. While lecturing on Sanvito at the Scuola Normale at Pisa in 1998 she discovered an important early manuscript of Sanvito. It was made for John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. It thus combines her interest in Sanvito with her interest in early humanism in England. Tilly's entry for the manuscript is no. 97 in the catalogue.

<sup>42</sup> A. C. de la Mare, 'Marginalia and glosses in the Manuscripts of Bartolomeo Sanvito of Padua', in V. Fera, G. Ferrau and S. Rizzo (eds.), *Talking to the Text: Marginalia from Papyrus to Print (Proceedings of a Conference held at Erice, 26 September–3 October 1998 as the 12th Course of International School for the Study of Written Records)* (Messina, 2002), pp. 459–555. An article in press 'The manuscripts of Braccio Martelli' will appear in G. Guest and S. L'Engle (eds.), *Illuminations: Medieval and Renaissance Studies for Jonathan J. G. Alexander*, to be published by Harvey Miller, Brepols.

her scholarship. It was also a duty, perhaps even a moral duty in her terms, to be thorough. So she continued with a demanding international correspondence after she had left Bodley, and even after she retired from her chair in 1997. The OBE which she was awarded in 1993 for 'Services to the study of Renaissance manuscripts' recognised not only her scholarship but also her sense of scholarly and civic obligation.<sup>43</sup> In summarising her achievement it might be said that, like Ciriaco d'Ancona the pioneer fifteenth-century collector of classical inscriptions, her aim was 'to awaken the dead'. The discovery of a map of Florence in which Vespasiano's house and garden were marked is a particularly vivid example of her success in bringing the past to life.<sup>44</sup> Her life's work went further than identifying and chronicling the careers of a multitude of scribes active in the Renaissance, enormous achievement though that was in itself. As Vincenzo Fera has observed, Tilly was able to demonstrate the central role of script and scribes in Renaissance culture. By so doing she showed that palaeography is more than just an aid to study, a 'Hilfswissenschaft'. It is a vital 'Wissenschaft' in its own right for a fuller understanding of the past.

In concluding this memoir I would like to stress what was perhaps the outstanding characteristic of this charismatic scholar, her *joie de vivre*. Those who knew her in Oxford in the 1960s recall her energetic Country Dancing, her ability to sing the lyrics of Gilbert and Sullivan, and her outstanding skill as a cook. As a girl she had been a keen horsewoman. She loved classical music and was an early devotee of the operas of Monteverdi. Her laughter was infectious and she gave a lift to any gathering of friends, whether at informal parties or learned conferences. She was a great traveller and eagerly accepted an invitation from Margaret Manion to visit Australia in 1999. A photo taken then shows her with Janet Backhouse and Lucy Freeman Sandler, all three wreathed in smiles and very evidently enjoying themselves. Those who crowded the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Professor Albinia Catherine de la Mare held in the Chapel of King's College, London, on 28 May 2002, and the

<sup>43</sup> Tilly was a member of the volunteer organisation for the protection of the citizenry in emergencies known as Civil Defence.

<sup>44</sup> The map is in a Ptolemy, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, latin 4802. 'A palaeographer's odyssey' (see above, n. 6), p. 94, pl. 33.

many who could not be there on that day all mourned a greatly loved person of special importance in their lives.<sup>45</sup>

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*Note.* Linda Brownrigg, Giles de la Mare, Martin Kauffmann, Laura Nuvoloni, Michael Reeve and Richard Rouse have kindly read this text and made numerous valuable additions, corrections and improvements, for which I am most grateful.

<sup>45</sup> The addresses given on that occasion showed the same deep affection. The speakers were Martin Kauffmann, Bodleian Library, Nicholas Mann, Warburg Institute, Jonathan Alexander, Laura Nuvoloni and David Ganz, Professor of Palaeography, King's College London. The address by her brother, the Reverend Benedick de la Mare, given at her funeral at St Michael and All Angels, Cumnor, where she is buried, stressed the more personal aspects of Tilly's life in a moving and eloquent way. He kindly provided me with a typescript of his text. Though I have concentrated here on her achievement as a scholar, her life was one, emphatically not two.