









HORTULUS  
WALAHFRID STRABO

*Translated by*

RAEF PAYNE

*Commentary by*

WILFRID BLUNT

THE HUNT BOTANICAL LIBRARY  
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

1966

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Carnegie Institute of Technology  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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Number 2 of The Hunt Facsimile Series  
*Editor: George H. M. Lawrence*  
*Director, The Hunt Botanical Library*

Printed in Holland



## FOREWORD

Of all the gardening literature of this and ages past, nothing has survived longer, and little has been extolled more, than has this poem, *Hortulus* – meaning in English, *The little garden*. It has survived this long, and should live for more than as long again, not because of gardening innovations, accounts of new plants, or pharmacological discoveries reported in it, but because it is beautiful poetry, because it is full of man's love for the earth and for the plants he grows in it. It is pure gardening literature, not an herbal nor an agricultural account.

The principal manuscript of this poem, written by a scribe in a clear Carolingian hand about a quarter of a century after the poet's death in the year 849, long lay fallow awaiting recognition as a ninth-century work of high literary merit. In fact, it lay among the documents at the Benedictine monastery in St. Gall for nearly six hundred years before it was discovered, recopied (with errors made in the copying) and first set in type. This was done at the instance of Joachim von Watt (born in St. Gall in 1484, and better known by the latinized form of his name, Vadianus). In August 1509 Vadianus sent the poem, copied hastily from the St. Gall manuscript, to his Viennese friend and teacher, Georg Tannstetter Collimitius – mathematician, astronomer, physician, and patron of the arts. Collimitius arranged for it to be printed in Vienna by Hieronymus Vietor, who dated the

volume 29 October 1510. The manuscript written by Walafrid Strabo about AD 840 thus became known in central Europe six centuries after its composition, and nearly sixty years after the appearance of the Gutenberg Bible. It stands today as one of the landmarks of gardening literature.

According to an account written by Gabathuler in 1942 the St. Gall manuscript passed, in 1600, into the hands of one Melchior Goldast, whose library was bought in 1635 by the mayor of Hansastadt. From him it was acquired by Queen Christina of Sweden, daughter of Gustav Adolf. After her conversion to catholicism and abdication of the throne, she delivered it to Cardinal Azzolini, who, in 1690, presented it to the Vatican library. There, it is a part (leaves 29r-39r) of *Codex Vaticanus Latinus bibliothecae reginae* no. 469. It is this same manuscript that is here reproduced in facsimile for what is believed to be the first time. Other manuscripts of the *Hortulus* include: one, of the 9th century but incomplete, in the Vatican library; another, of the 11th century, at the State Library of Munich (the basis of the Reuss edition of 1834). See also pp. 14-15.

Most of the printed editions of the *Hortulus* are from the Vadianus copy of 1510, and reflect orthographic changes from the original manuscript, not to mention typographical errors by the printer. Not until 1884, when Ernst Dümmler's classical study appeared, was the poem made the subject of thorough bibliographical investigation. At the same time all previous editions were collated and comparisons were made with the manuscript version in Vatican *Codex* no. 469.

The late Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt proposed that

this work be considered as a volume of the Hunt Facsimile Series. Not only was the significance of the poem well known to her, but she had collected all but the French edition of it – including the now excessively rare *editio princeps* of 1510. Her interest in the production of a facsimile edition was further stimulated by the appreciation that the only English translation ever published offered ample opportunity for improvement, both in accuracy of translation and excellence of style. The decision to produce this edition was reached in part by encouragement to do so from Dr. Harold W. Rickett, of the New York Botanical Garden and at that time (1962) a member of this library's Advisory Committee. He had given considerable study to the poem and had made a preliminary English translation.

No manuscript of the *Hortulus* in the hand of Walafrid Strabo is known to exist, only the two near-contemporary copies. Through generous assistance from Rev. P. Alfonso Raes, S.J., of La Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, the Hunt Botanical Library was provided with photographic negatives of the manuscript, on vellum, of the St. Gall draft of the *Hortulus* (the Vatican *Codex* no. 469 leaves 29-39), together with permission to reproduce it in facsimile and in English translation. Like most medieval Latin manuscripts this is replete with words in condensed or abbreviated form, and is most difficult for anyone but a specialist to read. The decision was made that this library should publish (1) the Vatican manuscript in facsimile, without reduction in size, (2) a transcription of that copy in classical Latin form, (3) an English translation in free verse (not in the hexameter of the

original), and (4) supporting accounts of the poet, the plants he wrote about, and the published editions.

The name of this poet is variously cited and spelled in the literature. As Wilfrid Blunt explains (p. 1), the name Walahfrid Strabo means "Walahfrid the Squint-eyed." Despite the use of the designator Strabo by itself in the first two printed editions of the *Hortulus*, it is considered incorrect to treat Strabo (or its variant, *Strabus*) as if it was his surname. It was no more than an identifying nickname. Citations such as "Strabo, Walahfrid" are inadmissible. The only family name he had, in the sense that it was given by his family, was Walahfrid. When it is desired to shorten his two-word name, one drops the Strabo. One will find in the literature about him every spelling variant, although in the oldest manuscript it is spelled Walahfrid (see *Encycl. Brit.*, ed. 11). These variants include Walafrid (Choulant 1832, and Reuss 1834), Walfred (Luxmoore 1922), and Walfried (Sierp 1924).

Mr. Raef Payne, of the Classical department of Eton College, Windsor, prepared the transcription and the English translation. To assist him with the latter, Dr. Rickett most generously made available his own notes and provisional translation. The penultimate draft of the transcription and translation were read critically by Mr. Ronald E. Latham, noted medieval latinist at the Public Records Office, London. Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, a leading authority on botanical art, and long a devotee of Walahfrid Strabo, consented to prepare the biographical account of this Benedictine monk (809-849). Mr. Blunt also contributed substantially to concepts for the design of this book, and it was on his recommendation that

Henry Evans, of San Francisco, prepared the linoleum cuts reproduced here in association with the Latin and English texts of the poem. I myself prepared the bibliographical studies.

The design of the binding's spine was commissioned of Mr. Arnold Bank, noted calligrapher and specialist with Carolingian scripts. His patient understanding of technical requirements and his success when capturing the spirit of the original manuscript, are gratefully acknowledged.

To all persons who contributed to the planning, preparation, and production of this book, I am pleased to express thanks and gratitude on behalf of the Hunt Botanical Library. In addition to those mentioned above, I include also Mr. John S. L. Gilmour, University Botanic Garden, Cambridge; Dr. Elizabeth McClintock, California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco; Dr. Rogers McVaugh, University of Michigan; Dr. William T. Stearn, British Museum (Natural History); and Professor Karl Morrison, University of Chicago. Special thanks are extended to Mr. Henry Evans, artist and printmaker of San Francisco, for his patience and understanding when bending his talents the better to reconcile his aesthetic expression and our design requirements. Miss Flavia Zortea of the Hunt Botanical Library staff, who assisted in the layout of the illustrations. I am also grateful to Mr. J. Peter Engel, and to Mr. H. Clewits of the firm of Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, of Haarlem, for their skillful assistance in the production and design of this volume.

GEORGE H. M. LAWRENCE, Director  
Hunt Botanical Library

10 November 1965



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# WALAHFRID STRABO

BY WILFRID BLUNT

Walahfrid Strabo – “Walahfrid the Squint-eyed” – was born about the year 809 in Alemannia, that part of south-west Germany that was later to become more generally known as Swabia.

There is little record of his parents. Probably they were pious or poor, or perhaps both; for when their son was about eight years old they placed him as an oblate in the Benedictine Abbey of Reichenau, on the Bodensee (Lake Constance)<sup>1</sup>. The Abbey, which stands on an island in the Untersee, the western arm of the Lake, had been founded in 724 and was closely associated with the yet older establishment of St. Gall, about twenty-five miles to the south-east. It was in touch, too, with the court of Aachen where, shortly before the boy's arrival at Reichenau, Louis the Pious had succeeded his father, Charlemagne, as Emperor; this connection with the court was later to have an important influence on Walahfrid's career.

The boy took kindly to monastic life. His tutor, Wettin, thought highly of the ability of this “young barbarian” (as Walahfrid later described his youthful self). There were profitable hours spent in the study of history and philology with Reginbert, the Librarian; and Grimald, the Head of the Abbey school, soon realised with pleasure that he had acquired an outstanding pupil.

Before long the boy's particular gift became apparent: he

had a remarkable talent for the writing of Latin verse, and by the time he was fifteen his compositions had begun to attract a good deal of attention. A monk named Tatto was now his tutor – a man who stood for reform, who mistrusted the “humanism” of Charlemagne and who deplored the cult and imitation of the pagan poets. It happened that Tatto wished to send to Ebbo, Archbishop of Rheims, one of those flattering addresses which high prelates expect to receive from any who seek their patronage; he therefore invited his talented pupil to compose for him suitable verses, and these were duly despatched. The boy also sent, on his own behalf, verses to Thegan, a bishop in the diocese of Trier, writing humbly “as a mouse to a giant.” There are other letters in verse and in prose; and to one of his correspondents he engagingly recalls his identity: “’Tis the boy, Father, with the squint who writes these words to you.”

It seems that it was three of Walahfrid’s friends who encouraged him to begin his first considerable composition – a life, in hexameters, of the monk and martyr, Mammes. There followed the biography of another martyr – the Irish saint, Blaithmaic – who had recently been murdered by the Danes; Walahfrid had no doubt heard the details from Irish pilgrims visiting Reichenau.

These were impressive performances for a boy; but they were still immature; perhaps it needed the personal experience of unhappiness to draw out what was finest in him. In 823 the Abbot of Reichenau, Haito, had retired, and Walahfrid found his successor, Erlebald, uncongenial. Then Grimald was appointed chaplain to the Emperor’s son,

Louis the German, King of Bavaria; and in 824 Wettin died. Walahfrid had been devoted to his first teachers; he felt lost and unhappy, and wrote of his misery to Grimald. It was at the suggestion of Adalgis, one of the senior monks, that the boy began, probably in the year 826, his first major work, *Visio Wettini*, the Vision of Wettin.

Wettin, shortly before his death, had experienced a Dantesque vision. One night his cell had been invaded by evil spirits dressed as monks and brandishing instruments of torture. They finally fled at the approach of his Guardian Angel, who played Virgil to his Dante and who now led him down to hell. Here in a river of flame were the damned, not a few of whom, he noticed, were members of the clergy, and some of these high dignatories of the church. Purgatory followed; and there, to his surprise, Wettin saw Charlemagne himself, expiating the lusts of his old age. Of heaven he was afforded but the briefest glimpse: "tomorrow," said his Angel, "you will depart from life on earth; while there is still time, let us pray the Lord for mercy on your soul." Then, as the Martyrs pleaded for him and the Holy Virgins drew near, the Glory of the Lord shone round about them. Such, in brief, was Wettin's vision, which next morning he described to Haito – now, since his retirement from high office, a simple monk at Reichenau. That evening, at the hour of Vespers, Wettin died.

Haito had written down in Latin prose what Wettin had told him; it was this account that Walahfrid, only too conscious of his unworthiness for such a task, now began to turn into verse. Erlebold had little sympathy for poetry,

and Tatto's attitude to it was old-fashioned. "Of course," Walahfrid wrote to Grimald, "Abbot Erlebald, who rules us, and my teacher Tatto, will have to be told; it's wrong for a monk to hide anything from his abbot. If they think my verses are full of foul lies, they will punish me. I'm afraid they won't take my youthfulness into consideration, and I shall get a sound beating. They are skilful in writing verse, as they are in other arts; but they care little for it. I beg you to come to my aid."

Adalgis and Grimald urged him on, and in due course the poem was completed. How it was generally received is not recorded; there survives, however, a generous letter of appreciation from Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons. For the subject matter Walahfrid was not, of course, responsible; but those references to corruption in high places in church and state may well have caused raised eyebrows at court. Wettin's vision foreshadowed, only too clearly, the approaching disruption of Charlemagne's empire.

It was in this same year, 826, that Walahfrid was sent from Reichenau to the sister establishment at Fulda. No doubt this move to a more important centre of learning was in part a recognition of his achievements; yet perhaps Erlebald and Tatto were not altogether sorry to see the young poet transferred elsewhere. The Abbot of Fulda at this time was Hrabanus Maurus, a pupil of Alcuin and one of the finest scholars of his day; under his sympathetic guidance Walahfrid continued work on a *glossa* of the scriptures that he had begun at Reichenau. It was Hrabanus, too, who developed in the youth that firm belief in the

sacredness and unity of the empire which was to influence his later career.

While at Fulda, Walahfrid formed a romantic friendship with a brilliant young man of about his own age – Gottschalk, the son of a Saxon noble. Together they studied Virgil, and as “Servius Honoratus” and “Fulgentius”<sup>2</sup> dedicated poems to one another. This friendship was later to cause Walahfrid much sorrow. Gottschalk had been brought as a child to Fulda, and as time passed he became increasingly aware that monastic life was not his vocation. Further, his Saxon background was a handicap. Denounced at last for the unorthodoxy of his views, he left the monastery in disgrace to lead a wandering and a troubled life. He preached what he had come to believe, and so persuasively that he began to make converts; in 849, therefore, he was brought before the Synod of Quierzy, proclaimed a heretic and forthwith flogged until he was on the point of death. What finally became of him is not known.<sup>3</sup>

Walahfrid's friendship with this dangerous young man does not seem to have damaged his prospects. At twenty he was a poet and a humanist of no little reputation. He was even better known, among churchmen of the stricter sort, as a learned commentator on the Bible. And Grimald, in Aachen, was keeping a fatherly eye on him. When, in 829, the Emperor was looking for a tutor for his six-year-old son, Charles, it was no doubt Grimald who played an important part in getting his protégé appointed.

Walahfrid arrived at court to find himself in a hotbed of intrigue; and the cause of it was Charles and his mother.

By his first wife Louis had had three sons: Lothar, Pippin, and Louis the German. In 817 he had made a division of his empire, to be fully operative after his death. Lothar was proclaimed King of the Franks and promised the succession to the imperial throne; to Pippin went Aquitaine; to Louis, Bavaria. The following year the Empress died, and in 819 Louis married Judith, daughter of Welf, Count of Bavaria. Their son, Charles, was born in 823, and his beautiful and accomplished mother set to work at once to assure his future.

Lothar at first co-operated with his stepmother. But he and his brothers soon realised that their inheritances were to be curtailed for the sake of this Benjamin; when Charles was promised Rhaetia, Alsace, part of Burgundy, and Alemannia, they immediately rose in revolt. The fluctuating fortunes of the civil war that followed are too complicated to describe in detail. In the spring of 830 the Emperor surrendered at Compiègne and Judith was imprisoned in Poitiers. Then the three brothers fell out among themselves; the same autumn the Emperor was reinstated, Judith released from prison, and Charles's inheritance confirmed and even enlarged. In 833 and 834 the story was repeated, with Lothar as the ring-leader of the revolt; but this time Louis not only recovered, but retained his throne.

What happened to Walahfrid during the first revolt is not known, but it can hardly be doubted, that he shared the fate of the Emperor and Empress. He had made no secret of his admiration of Judith, and as Charles's tutor he must inevitably have been considered by Lothar and his brothers as being in the enemy's camp. Soon after his arrival at

court he had written *Versus de imagine Tetrici*, a poem inspired by the golden equestrian statue of King Theodoric which Louis had brought from Ravenna and erected in front of the royal palace. In it he contrasted the tyrant Goth with the good Emperor Louis, portrayed as Moses leading his people out of the wilderness. Judith he compared to Rachel leading her little Benjamin by the hand, and the inference was obvious. Already in his description of the statue, where "the pigeons flew in and out of their nesting in the nostrils and wide-open mouth of his war horse, and, all around, trees, flowers, and sky were radiant in the sun of springtime,"<sup>4</sup> we see evidence of that love of nature that was later to find fuller expression in the *Hortulus*.

During the second revolt Walahfrid accompanied his pupil into exile, and brought him back to Aachen when the Emperor was reinstated in 834. Life at court now returned to normal. We do not know how exacting were Walahfrid's duties, but clearly he had plenty of leisure for his own work. Poems poured from his pen: verses in praise of Louis, Judith, and Charles, and of friends he had made at court. He gave a better shape to crudely written lives of Gall, and of Othmar – first abbot of St. Gall. He made an abridgement of Hrabanus' voluminous *Commentaries on the Pentateuch* – a work which earned an acid marginal comment from one medieval reader: "Hrabanus an excellent scholar, wrote the explanations; Strabo merely added the feeble captions."

Life at court continued to be delightful, and Walahfrid must have regretted the day when, in 838, his fifteen-year-

old pupil came of age and his services were no longer required. Walahfrid's work had been well done, though he did not live long enough to see the full fruits of it; as "Charles the Bald," King of the western Franks, his pupil was to give great stimulus and support to scholarship in France, and it was not wholly in vain that he was dubbed by his admirers "the second Charlemagne." As for Louis, he showed his gratitude by recommending the appointment of his son's tutor as Abbot of Reichenau, in place of Erlebald who had recently retired. Thus at thirty Walahfrid returned to rule over the monastery where he had once been a member of the community.

Now Louis had forgotten – or perhaps chosen to ignore – that the monks of Reichenau had the right to elect their abbot; their candidate was a monk named Ruadheim, who was probably a partisan of Louis the German. Walahfrid, dedicated to the idea of the indivisible empire with Lothar as its legitimate ruler, would not even have supported the cause of his own pupil Charles against that of the eldest son of the Emperor. He had considerable difficulty in establishing his authority, but it would seem that Louis exerted his influence and that within a year his position was recognized. All now seemed to be set fair for Walahfrid; but in those troubled times danger was always round every corner and men lived from day to day.

Pippin, Louis' second son, had died in 838, and in the redistribution of lands which the Emperor therefore made in 840 Louis the German fared worst, his portion remaining what it had previously been – the Kingdom of Bavaria. In



that same year Louis also died, and Louis the German revenged himself on his father by plundering Alemannia. Walahfrid was driven from Reichenau, and it was not until two years later that he was able to return there.

Now civil war again broke out. Lothar and Pippin's young son, Pippin II, joined forces against Louis the German and Charles. Walahfrid, putting loyalty to the Empire before loyalty to his old pupil, sided with Lothar. The Truce of Orléans, signed in November of the same year, was only a respite, and on 25th June 841 was fought, near Auxerre, the bloody and indecisive Battle of Fontenoy.<sup>5</sup> "So great a slaughter was wrought on both sides," wrote a contemporary, "as never can our memory recall at any time before among the Franks." The following year the brothers met near Mâcon and agreed to keep the peace. Finally, in August 843, with the signing of the Treaty of Verdun, agreement was reached over the distribution of the disputed territories, and peace again reigned. It was in this year, too, that Judith died.

Meanwhile Walahfrid had been in Speyer. In a letter to Hrabanus at Fulda he speaks of his mental anguish and of his penury; he has not, he says, even sandals for his feet, and he begs Hrabanus to help him. To Lothar, too, he writes: "I have suffered much by your father's death. Forgotten are the fields of Alemannia. I have fled from lands ruined by division within the Empire. Put out your hand, hallowed Emperor, to help those who have followed you." But Reichenau was in Louis the German's territory, and it was probably Grimald, for many years in his service and

recently appointed Abbot of St. Gall, who brought about Walahfrid's return from exile. At all events, in 842, many months before the signing of the Treaty of Verdun, Walahfrid found himself once again at Reichenau.

Walahfrid was now about thirty-three years old, and in such leisure as administration of a large monastery afforded him he turned again energetically to literary pursuits. He completed an important prose work that very possibly he had begun while in exile in Speyer: *On the Beginnings and on the Growth of Observances in the Church*. He edited Einhard's life of Charlemagne and Thegan's life of Louis the Pious. And it was probably now, too, that he composed, in the calm of the monastic garden, his *De cultura hortorum* – the twenty-seven short poems, given by a later scribe the general title of *Hortulus* or "The Little Garden," by which he is best remembered today. Then, on 18th August 849, while on a mission from Louis the German to Charles, he met his death by drowning as he was crossing the river Loire.

In all likelihood this accident deprived history of another name to rank with Bede and Alcuin, from whom Walahfrid was intellectually descended. Short though his life was, he none the less found time to write several major poems, a number of lyrics, the verses on gardening which are our immediate concern, and at least a part of the monumental *Glossa ordinaria*<sup>6</sup> which became an indispensable work of reference for every reputable medieval library. Walahfrid seems to have been a man of strong character, who combined scholarship and the love of letters with considerable

administrative ability. His brief tenure of office at Reichenau was of sufficient importance to warrant the setting aside of the anniversary of his death as a *Jahrgedächtnis*.

#### SOURCES FOR THE LIFE OF WALAHFRID

Sources for the life of Walahfrid are numerous; indeed, of scarcely any other literary figure of the time is so much known. First come the records preserved at Reichenau, of which Beyerle has made full use in his *Die Kultur der Abtei Reichenau* (pp. 92-107). These include the *Verbrüderungsbuch*, or register of the brotherhood of monks, and a number of formularies, among the latter being a remarkable collection of letters preserved as *Formulae Augienses C*, a ninth-century manuscript. Copies of letters, though with the names of sender and recipient usually omitted, were commonly kept as models of correspondence.

These particular letters were examined by Dümmler, who believed some of them to be connected with Walahfrid; they are described in detail in a paper by Bayerle (*Hist. Aufs.* 1927: 82-98). The first is from a former pupil begging for readmission to the monastery. Bayerle ascribes it to Walahfrid, and conjures up from it, and from No. 16, an improbable episode of expulsion and foreign travel for which there is no other evidence stronger than the strained relations which are known to have existed between Walahfrid and Erlebold. The possibility that the errant brother might have been Walahfrid's friend Gottschalk does not seem to have been entertained by modern scholars. Other

letters are requests for various services – for prayers, for seeds of chive ("not to be bought in all France"), for Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, for the loan of a glass-worker, and for an account of the Trojan War. There are also letters of thanks for various gifts and favours received.

An elaborate production entitled *The school life of Walahfrid Strabo*, supposedly translated from the German by James Darre Butler and purporting to be from an autobiographical fragment, has been shown to be spurious. It is, however, done with such skill as to afford a plausible picture of the education of a boy in a convent school of the ninth century. It was not written by Walahfrid or by any monk of those times; but it might well have been.

#### THE HORTULUS

The bulk of Walahfrid's writings comprises commentaries, and the editing of the work of others; his *Hortulus* is his unique excursion into the realm of nature.

For its inspiration we must turn first to Virgil, with whose *Georgics* Walahfrid was very familiar. But the *Hortulus* is in no way a *réchauffé*, or a *pastiche*, of a classical poem which had caught a scholar's fancy; it is a down-to-earth practical but very artful manual by a man who had a garden of his own, who loved it and who himself cultivated it. No unprejudiced reader can doubt this. It has often been said of Virgil that he merely supervised the labour of slaves; whether or not this is true can never now be known. But Walahfrid unquestionably "hardened and

dirtied his hands with hard work;" it was he himself who "spread whole basketfuls of dung on the sun-parched soil;" he tells us so, and we believe him. The heart of every gardener will go out to him as he wrestles with his incorrigible nettles, as he wonders what he can possibly grow in that shady or that arid corner, as he destroys the mole-runs or waits impatiently for the germination of the seed that he has sown.

In Walahfrid's day a garden was, of course, principally a kitchen garden – a place to grow medicinal herbs and vegetables; most of the plants he discusses are not therefore those which would be acceptable in a modern flower garden. It was of fennel, mint, gourds, and other useful plants that he chiefly wrote. But the rose and the lily, symbols of faith and the Passion, are there too, and he makes them the excuse for a rapt mysticism very far removed from the practical advice which he gives on the "virtues" and culture of his herbs.

The *Hortulus* is dedicated to Grimald, and the question very naturally arises: when, exactly, was it written? Some scholars have attempted to show that it was an early work, composed when Walahfrid was a student at the Abbey school of Reichenau and Grimald its head. But it seems to me far more probable that it was written during that Indian summer of his brief life when he was Abbot of Reichenau. He appears to be addressing himself, in his dedication, to one who is absent – to one, therefore, who was at St. Gall, sitting in his orchard there and surrounded by his smiling pupils.

But it matters little. What is important is that this enchanting poem has been spared to us. Today, when Walahfrid's more laborious compilations are no more than unopened folios on dusty library shelves, its author still lives in our memory as the first man to write a book in praise of gardens. There is no need to say more; the poem will speak for itself.

#### MANUSCRIPTS OF THE *HORTULUS*

Four medieval manuscripts of the *Hortulus* exist, the most important being that which is here reproduced in facsimile. It is not the work of Walahfrid's own hand, but the fine Caroline minuscules suggest that it was written some time during the second half of the ninth century, and by a scribe who had learned his craft in Alemannia.

An inscription on the first leaf of the volume, "Hunc librum Ruodolf p(resbyter?) lucratus sancto Bonifacio," would seem to imply that a monk named Rudolf acquired it for St. Boniface (probably Fulda). It is listed in the catalogue, made in 1461, of the library of St. Gall.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the manuscript came into the possession of the humanist, Melchior Goldast, who had been studying medieval documents at St. Gall. (One may well wonder under what circumstances he managed to acquire this and other manuscripts belonging to the monastery). In 1624 Goldast, because of the disturbed state of the country during the Thirty Years' War, withdrew to Bremen, where he deposited his collection in

the town library. Some time after his death in 1635 the town purchased his books, but it was soon obliged to sell the most valuable of them. Many of the manuscripts, including the *Hortulus*, now passed into the hands of Queen Christina of Sweden, who carried them out of the country with her after her abdication in 1654. At her death in Rome in 1689 her library was inherited by Cardinal Azzolini, and the following year the *Hortulus*, along with other of her manuscripts, came finally to rest in the Vatican Library, where it is catalogued as *Codex Vaticanus Latinus bibliotheca reginae 469 (C)*.

A second and incomplete ninth-century manuscript of the *Hortulus*, containing only the first 340 lines of the poem, is also in the Vatican library (*Codex Romanus Palatinus 1519*), and an eleventh-century copy, with important annotations, is in the Stadtbibliothek, Leipzig (I 4° 53). In 1463 the Nuremberg humanist, Hartmann Schedel, made a copy of the poem, probably from the Leipzig manuscript; this is now in Munich in the Staatsbibliothek (*Codex latinus monacensis 666*).

#### PRINTED EDITIONS AND COMMENTARIES

In the year 1509 the Swiss humanist Joachim von Watt, better known as Vadianus, chanced upon the manuscript of the *Hortulus* in the St. Gall library and was immediately captivated by it. The following year he published the text in Vienna, and two years later a second edition was printed in Nuremberg. What called for this new edition is not

known: perhaps the first was exhausted; or possibly Vadianus was dissatisfied with what by modern standards would certainly be considered a rather slipshod production. At all events the Nuremberg edition was a marked improvement upon its predecessor.

Vadianus, in his dedications, makes it clear that he fully realised that he had stumbled upon something quite out of the ordinary – a little treasure that deserved to be rescued and endowed with such immortality as he could give it. He was successful: seven more “editions” of the *Hortulus* were called for in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and one in the eighteenth.

In the nineteenth century the poem attracted the attention of more critical scholars. The text was edited by Reuss in 1834 (*cf.* p. 72), and was included in Migne's *Patrologiae cursus completus*, series Latina, vol. 114 (1852), and in the *Monumenta Germaniae historica*, series Poetae latini aevi carolini, vol. II (1884). It was extensively analysed by Sierp in K. Bayerle's *Die Kultur der Abtei Reichenau* (1925). Sierp quotes a partial translation by Baumgartner in German hexameters; whether or not the latter made a full translation of the text does not seem to be known.

In England the *Hortulus* was “discovered” by H. E. Luxmoore, an Eton master whose garden has become almost as famous as Walahfrid's. Luxmoore published his findings in 1922 in the *Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society*. If one is sometimes irritated by the thoroughness of German scholarship, a glance at Luxmoore's article will serve as a corrective. Luxmoore writes of the *Hortulus* as



"a rare Latin poem by Walafrid Strabo, dated about 800 A.D., when the great Karl was at the height of his power" – unaware, apparently, that Charlemagne had died when Walafrid was a child of five. He speaks, too, of his concern for Walafrid's "aging back;" of the "cheerful old monk" whose "poor old teeth" were doubtless a source of worry to him. Luxmoore, when he wrote these absurdities, was many years older than this "gentle old churchman," who died at the age of forty.

Though Luxmoore translated – and pleasantly enough – one or two passages of the *Hortulus*, it would seem that there has been only one complete translation of the poem into English. This was the work of Richard Stanton Lambert, who in 1924 produced a pretty little book, "printed by hand" in a very small edition and decorated with woodcuts by Elinor Lambert. No doubt it was Luxmoore's article which drew his attention to the poem. Lambert turned Walafrid's hexameters into neat but rather jingling rhymed anapaests; the translation is very free, sometimes felicitous, not always accurate.

The French followed in 1933, when Henri Leclerc produced *Le petit jardin*; the Latin text is here accompanied by a translation and commentary.

In 1942 the *Hortulus* was translated into German hexameters by Werner Nāf and provided with annotations by Matthäus Gabathuler. The book was beautifully produced and, very appropriately, published in St. Gall. The hexameter, so unmanageable in English, is well adapted to the German language; praise could hardly be too high for this

fine and scholarly translation, which succeeds in preserving the rustic flavour of the original. The Latin text and the German version confront one another, and the book is illustrated with woodcuts taken from the sixteenth-century herbals of Brunfels, Fuchs, and Bock. A revised edition was published in 1957.

There are some very apt observations on Walahfrid and his *Hortulus* in M. L. W. Laistner, *Thought and letters in Western Europe, A.D. 500 to 900*, 2nd ed. (Cornell, 1957), and especially in M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (1 Teil, Munich, 1911), pp. 302-315. Eleanour S. Duckett, *Carolingian Portraits* (Michigan, 1962) is stimulating reading for anyone who wishes to get a fuller picture of the author of the *Hortulus* and the age in which he lived.

1 July 1965

- (1) The Abbey fell into decay in the fourteenth century as the result of mal-administration, and was secularised in 1799. The Church, which was consecrated in 805, serves today as the parish church of the island's chief village, Münster (Mittelzell). The tower and nave of the original building survive. Charles the Fat, Charlemagne's great-grandson, is buried there. The island is now joined to the German shore of the Lake by a causeway.
- (2) The names of two famous commentators on Virgil.
- (3) For a fuller account of Gottschalk's life see Duckett, *op. cit.*, pp. 130 and 153-58.
- (4) Duckett, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-34.
- (5) Not, of course, to be confused with the Fontenoy in Belgium, scene of a more famous battle in 1745.
- (6) Most modern scholars incline to the belief that the *Glossa* was a twelfth-century compilation probably incorporating some of Walahfrid's writings.

THE HORTULUS

*In Facsimile*

The following folded leaves present, in facsimile, the 9th century calligraphic manuscript of the *Hortulus*, comprising ff. 30-39 of the *Codex Latinus bibliotheca regia* no. 469.

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protegat feliciter. Salve  
Turba quod simul piorum  
Quidō sunt proximi.  
Accitā penes supnam  
poscimus clementiam. Salve  
Gloriam dignam triformi  
Pangimus potentiae  
Quaete sanum uexit istuc  
Francorum per regmina. Salve

Incipit liber de cultura hortorum  
strabis cultura bonis feliciter

- I Decultura hortorum
- II Difficultas assumpti laboris
- III Instantia cultoris & fructus operis
- IIII Salvia
- V Ruta
- VI Abrotanum
- VII cucurbita
- VIII pepones
- IIIIII Absinthium
- X Marrubium
- XI Feniculum
- XII gladiola
- XIII Lybisticum

- XIII cerfolium
- XV Liliū
- XVI papauer
- XVII sclarega
- XVIII menta
- XVIII puleium
- XX Apium
- XXI veronica
- XXII Agrimonia
- XXIII Ambrosia
- XXIII Nepeta
- XXV Rafanum
- XXVI Rosa
- XXVII commendatio opusculi

DE CULTURA HORTORUM

1 **P**lurima tranquille cum sint insignia uite  
 Non minimum est si quis pestane deditus ara  
 Nouerit obsceni curas tractare priapi  
 Ruris enim quecumq; datur possessio seu ste  
 putris harenoso quator p& glare tractu  
 Seupingui molita graues uligine fetus  
 Collibus erectis alte sita siue iacenti  
 plantie facilis cliuo seu uallibus horrenis  
 Non negat in genuos holerū p gignere fructus  
 Si modo non tua curagraui cōpressa u&erno







Multiplices holoris opes contempnere stultis  
Nusibus assuescit callosasque aere duro  
Detrectat fuscare manus & stercorea plenus  
Vixit in amenti disponere puluere qualis  
Haec non sola mihi patefecit opinio fame  
Vulgaris: quæ sita libris nec lectio priscis  
Sed labor & studium quibus otia longa dierum  
Post posui expertum rebus docuere potest  
11 Bruma senectutis uernacula totius anni  
Venter & amplifluis consumptoræ sacra laboris  
Veris ubi aduentu terrarum pulsa subimas  
Diluit latebras uestigiaque horrida auare  
Verhiemis reduci rerum delere parare  
Scemate & antiquo languentia rura nitore  
Reddere uer orbis primū caput & decus anni  
Purior aura diem cui iam reserare serenum  
Inciperet zephyrosque herbe floresque secuta  
Tenua porrigerent radicis acumina cæco  
Tecta diu gremio canasque exosa pruinas  
Cum silue foliis montes quoque gramine pingui  
Prataque conspicuis uernarent læta uirectis  
Atriolum quod proforibus mihi parua patenti  
Area uestibulo solis conuertit ad ortum  
Verticice implerunt capi que pecuora parui  
Inlita feruenti creuerunt tela ueneno

Quid facerē tam spissus erat radicibus infra  
 Ordo catenatis: uirides ut texere lentis  
 Viminibus crater stabulis sol & arte magister  
 Vngula cornipedum si quando humore nocetur  
 Collecto & putres imitatur marcida fungos  
 Ergo morēs rum penis saturni dente iacentes  
 Aggredior glebas torpentiaq; arua reuulsis  
 Sponte renascentum cōplexib; urticarum  
 E rigo & umbricolis habitata cubilia talpis  
 Diruo lumbricos reuocans in luminis oras  
 Indenota coquitur flabris solisque calore  
 Areola & lignis nediffluat obsta quadris  
 Altius a plano modicum resupina leuatur  
 Tota minutatim rastris contunditur uncis  
 Et pinguis fermenta fimi sup insinuantur  
 Seminibus quedam temptamus holuscula quedā  
 Sturpib; antiquis prisce reuocare iuuentē  
 Denique uernali interdū conspergitur umbre  
 parua segeti tenuesque foue & preblanda uicissim  
 Luna comas rursus si quando sicca negabant  
 Tempore roris opem culture impulsus amore  
 Quippe sti m&uens graciles torpescere fibras  
 Flumina pura cadis inferre capicibus acri  
 Curauit studio & proprius infundere palmis  
 Guttatum ne forte ferocior imp&us undas





Ingereret nimias & semina iacta moueret  
 Nec mora germi nibus uestitur tota tenellis  
 A teola & quamquã illius pars ista sub atto  
 Arescat tecto pluuiarũ & muneris ex pers  
 S qua leat aeru pars illa perennibus umbris  
 Diffugiat solem paries cui celsior ignei  
 S ideris accessum lateris negat obice duri  
 Non tamen ulla sibi fuerant que credita pridem  
 S pesine crementi pigro sub cespite clausit  
 Quin potius que sicca fere & translata sub actis  
 S usceperit serobibus redi uiuo plena uirore  
 Restituit reparans numeroso semina fructu  
 Nunc opus ingenis docili nunc pectore & ore  
 Nomina quo possim uiresq; attingere tante  
 Messis ue ingenti res parue ornentur honore  
 1111 Lelyfagus prima p̄fulgẽ fronte locorum  
 Dulcis odore grauis uirtute atq; utilis haustu  
 pluribus hec hominũ morbis prodesse repta  
 per pauo uiridi meruit gaudere iuuenta  
 Sed tolerat ciuile malum nã seua parentem  
 Progenies florũ fuerit nudempta parte  
 Et facit antiquos defungier in uida ramos  
 V Hoc nemus umbriferum pingit uiridissima ruge  
 S iluula cerulee folius que predicta paruis  
 Umbellas iaculata breues spiramina uenti

- Et radios phoebe caules transmittit ad imos  
 Nec talis quae graues leni disspgit odores  
 Haec cum multiplici uigeat uirtute medellae  
 Dicitur occultis ad prime obstare uenenis  
 Oxicaque in uasis in comoda pellere febris  
 vi Nec minus abrotani promptum est mirari et alte  
 pubentis frutices & quas inspicat aristas  
 Ramorum ubi tenues imitata capillos  
 Huius odoratum lento cum uimine crinem  
 poeonis carptum prodest miscere medellis  
 febris obstat enim telum fugat adiuuat artus  
 Quos incerta pmit furtae in iuria gutte  
 praeterita tot habet uires quot fila comarum  
 vii Haud secus alti petax se mense cucurbita uili  
 Assurgens paruis foliorum suscitatur umbras  
 In gentes crebrisque iacet racinacula ramis  
 Ne uelut ulmum hederam implicuit cum frondibus; alta  
 Ruris ab usque sinu totis sua brachia circum  
 Laxa dedit ligno sumumque secuta cacumen  
 Corticis occultit uiridi tutamine rugas  
 Aut arbutiuum uitae genus arbore cum se  
 Explicuit quauis ramorumque alta corimbis  
 Vestit & propria sursum se sponte leuauit  
 Visitur ergo rubens aliena in sede racemus  
 Dependere pmit tabulata uirentia bacchus







pampinus & frondes discernit latior altas  
Sic mea sic fragili stirpe cucurbita surgens  
Diligit appositas sua sustentacula furcas  
Atq; amplexa suas uncis tenet & unguibus alnos  
Ne uero in sano diuelli turbine possit  
Quot generat nodos tota an resinacula trudit  
Et quo duplicem producunt singula funem  
Vndiq; futuram dextra leuaq; prehendant  
Et uelut infusum nentes cum pœna puellae  
Molli traiciunt spirisq; ingentibus omnem  
Filorum seriem pulchros in & antur in orbes  
Sic uaga tortilibus stringunt ammenta cœtus  
S calarum teretes in uoluunq; ilico uirgas  
Viribus & discunt alienis tecta cauarum  
Ardua porticuum uolucris superare natatu  
Lanquis poma queat ramis pendentia passim  
Mirari digne que non minus undique certis  
Sunt formata uis quam si tornatile lignum  
Inspectas mediora sum qd̄ manfure constat  
Illa quidem gracili primū demissa flagello  
Oblongo tenuiq; ferunt ingentia collo  
Corpora tum uastum laxatur in ilia pondus  
Totum uenter habet & totū aluus & intus aluntur  
Multa cauernoso se iunctim carcere grana  
Que tibi consimilem possint pmittere messem

33  
I psos quin etiam tenero subtempore fructus  
Aut humor quam clausa latens puriscera sero  
Autumni aduentu rarescat & arida circum  
Res titerit cutis inter opes transire ciborum  
Sæpe uidemus & ardenti sartagine pinguem  
Combibere aruinã & placidũ sementa sapore  
Ebria multoties mensis prestare secundis  
Si uero aestiui sinitur spiramina solis  
Cum genũ rice pati & matura falce recidi  
I dem fetus in assiduos formarierusus  
Vasorum potere uasto dũ uiscera uentre  
Egerimus facili radentes. Liatorno  
Non nũquã hac ingens sextarius abdit aluo  
Clauditur aut potior mensure portio plene  
Amphora que piceo linte dũ glutine seruat  
In corrupta diu generosi dona Lyæi

vii) Hoc simul in spatio cãpi quo figitur unis  
Hæc tam læa seges uili quã carmine pinxi  
Visitur alterius uitis genus ac rep equor  
Serpere puluereũ & fructus nutrire rotundos  
Pomorum hæc species terre sup arida uulgo  
Terga iacent clementa capite pulcherrima donec  
Solibus aestiuis flauos intincta colores  
Messoris calathos matura frugere plente  
Cũ uideas alius teretem satis esse figuram





Vndiq; porro alius oblongo scemate uentrem  
Demissum. nucis aut ouis uersatilis In star  
Vel qualis manib; quondam suspensa supinis  
Luc& agens circū lomenti bulla saluam  
Ante recens maceratur aquis quā spumare fusis  
Dum lentescit adhuc digitis luctantibus & se  
Alter nis uicib; studio que fricantibus uno  
Inter utramq; manum paruofit paruus hiatus  
Exitus huc stricto lenis meat ore nocti uis  
Distenditq; cauum utrea sub imagine pondus  
Et centrum medio confingit labile fundo  
Vndiq; conueniat camyri quo inflexio tecti  
Ergo calybs huius penetrat dū uiscera pomu  
E licet umoris largo cum semine riuos  
Multiplici tū deinde cauum p plurima tergus  
Frustra manu spargens hortorū l&us opimas  
Delicias conuiuia capte candorq; saporq;  
oblectant fauces. nec duros illa molares  
Esca stupere facit facili sed mansa uoratu  
Vinaturali frigus per uiscera nutrit

Viii) proximus absinthii frutices locus erigit acris  
Herbarum matrem simulantes uimine lento  
In foliis color est alius ramusq; odor alter  
puberibus Longeq; saporis amarior haustus  
Feruentem domuis sitam depellere febres

Hoc sol & auxilium clara uirtute pbatum  
 S tibi preterea caput acris forte dolore  
 Puls&ur subito uel si uestigo fatig&  
 Huusopē rimare coquens frondentis amara  
 Absinthii siluam tumiura lebe&e capaci  
 Effunde & captis pfunde cacumina summi  
 Quo post quā ablueris graules umore capillos  
 De uictas frondes supimposuisse memento  
 Cum mollis fotos constringat fascia crines  
 Et post non multas elapsi temporis horas  
 Hoc inter reliquas eius mirabere uires

- X
- Quid referam iuxta posita numiūq; potentis  
 Marrubii non uile genus lic& acruis ora  
 Mordet & longe gustum disiungat odore  
 Dulce enī ol& n̄ dulce sapit sed pectoris egros  
 Comprimit angores tristi dū sumit haustu  
 Precipue talis calet si potus ab igni  
 Et cenam cratis cogat claudere crebris  
 Si quando infense questita uenena nouerit  
 Potib; inmiscet dapibus ue aconita dolosis  
 Tristia confundunt ex templo sumpta salubris  
 Potio marrubii suspecta pericula pressat
- XI
- Nec maracri taceatur honor qd stipite forti  
 Tollitur & late ramorū brachia tendit  
 Dulce satis gustu dulcem satis addit odorem







Hoc oculis quos umbra premit prodesse locuntur  
Huius item semen fœc cum lacte capelle  
Absumptum uentris fertur mollire tumorem  
Cunctantisq; moras dissoluere protinus alui  
Preterea radix mantri comixta liquori  
Leneo tussim percepta repellit anhelam.

XII) Teneque transferim Latie cui libera lingue  
Nomine degladi nomen facundia finxit  
Tumhi purpurei progignis floris honorem  
Prima estate gerens uiole iucunda nigelle  
Munera uel qualis mensa sub apollinis alta  
Inuestis pueri pro morte recens yacincthus  
Exit & floyis signauit uertice nomen  
Radici ramenta tue sicca fluenti  
Deluimus contusa mero seuumq; dolorem  
Vesice preminimus tali non setius arte  
Pignore fullo tuoli ni candenti a dextra  
Efficit utrigeant dulcesq; imitentur odores

XIII) Inter odoratam memorare Lybistica siluam  
Fortia suadet amor parui diffusior horti  
Hoc germen suco quam uis & odore gemellis  
Orbis officere & tenebras inferre putetur  
Semina sepe tamen quaesitis addere curis  
Parua sola & famamq; aliena laude mereri

XIIII) Quot bellorum tot famosissima rerum

Magnarum monumenta sacro pia conficis ore  
 Exiles erato non de dignare meorum  
 Diuitias holerum uerſu pſtringere mecum  
 ¶ Infirmis diuiſa licet macedonia ramis  
 Spargitur & crebris ignobile ſemen aris  
 Sufficit illa tamen toto reparabilis anno  
 Pauperem largo ſolatur manere plebis  
 Indigne nec non reſtringere ſanguinis undas  
 Corpore diſfuſas facili ſola obuia guſtu  
 Illa quoq; infero uenter dum forte dolore  
 Turbatur ſomenta ſup non irrita ducit  
 puleium ſibi & frondesq; papaueris addens;  
 XV. Lilia quouer ſu cãdencia carmine quoue  
 Ieiunã macies ſatis efferat arida muſc  
 Quorum candor habet & niuei ſimulacra nitoris  
 Dulcis odor ſiluas imitatur flore ſabeas  
 Non parius candore lapis non nardus odore  
 Lilia nã premit nec non ſiperfidus anguis  
 In genitis collecta dolis ſerit ore uenena  
 Peſtifero cecum peruulnus ad uita ma mortem  
 Corda feram mittens: piſtillo lilia preſtat  
 Commacerare graui ſucosque haurire falerno  
 Si quod contuſum eſt ſummo liuentis in ore  
 Ponatur puncti tum iam diuoſcere uires  
 Manificas huius cedatur medicaminis ultro





Haec & iam luxis prodest contusio membris

XVI Et cereale quidem nugarum in parte papauer

Hac memorare placet quod raptu mesta puella

Mater ut immensis optata obliuia mentem

Exuerent curis feruir Latona uorasse

Hoc simul auxilio carbunculus ater ab imo

Pectore qui rultus nimium conuoluit amaro

Oris ad usque fores reprimi p sepe uidetur

Huius ad alta caput granorum semine fœdum

Pro cento fragiliq; sola set tollere collo

Inque modum mali regi cui punica nomen

Indidit unius patulo sub pellis amictu

Crana celebrande uirtutis plurima claudit

Deque sonomandentis habet formabile nomen

XVII Hic umbrosa nouos inter scilarega uirores

Stipite preualido assurgens ramosq; comasque

Altius extollit que quamuis rarius ulli

Quaesta auxilio medicorum pene putetur

Effugisse manus dulcitamen indita calde

Et uires & odorati fermenta saporis

prestare tam iuxta hortensis non extima costi

Silua late stomachiq; moras uentremq; salubri

proouocat auxilio radicis munere coctae

XVIII Nec mihi defuerit uulgaris copia mentis

Multa per genera & species diuersa coloresque

Et tuires huius quoddam genus utile uocem  
 Rauisonam clarioris redhibere canori  
 posse putant eius sucos si fauce uorant  
 l'eiunte quemerebra prementis raucedo fatigat  
 Est aliud pre pingue genus huiusce frutecti  
 Quod iam non parui diffundat germenis umbras  
 Celsa ebuli sed more potens astipite foris  
 Vndique maiores filiorum prorogat alas  
 Quis odor alter inest pauloque imitior haustus  
 Sed si quis uires speciesque & nomina mente  
 Ad plenum memorare potest sciat ille necesse est  
 Aut quot erit reo uolentem in gurgite pisces  
 Lemnius aut altum quot in aera mulcifer ire  
 Scintillas uastis uideat fornacibus aetne

xviii) Non patitur cunctas angustia carminis huius  
 pulei uirtutes celeri comprehendere uersu  
 Hoc apud in odorum tantum constare peritof  
 Fertur apud gallos quanto ualida & indica nigri  
 Congeries pipenis quis iam dubitare sinetur  
 Haec herba plures leniri posse labores  
 Quam pretius inhiante emittididissimaturis  
 Cens hebenoque auroque fluens & mira uolenti  
 Quaeque ferens mundo omagnis laudanda tonantis  
 Virtus & ratio nullis quaemunera terris  
 Larga suae non pandit opisquetara subisto







Naxe uidere soles alius in partibus horum  
Copia tanta iac& quantam uilissima tecum  
Efficunt: rur sus qu&dam quaespreta uidentur  
Fortē tibi magno mercantur ditia regna  
Altera ut alterius potiatur foenore tellus  
Orbis & intoto per partes una domussit  
Puleium quoque decoctum curabit amice  
Et potu & foci stomachum mihi crede morantem  
Dum canimus que certa graui ratione tenemus  
Quaedam audita & iam uero misere coturno  
Fas ususq; sinit ramum coniungito pulei  
Auricule ne forte caput turbauerit aestus  
Solus in aërio ste perflante aperto  
Quod nisi me currens deponere uela thalia  
Coger& actandem portus intrare moner&  
Hic tibi multiplices poteram decerpere flores  
XX Quamuis in nostris apium uilescent hortas  
Et solo id multo prodesse sapore putarint  
Plura tamen propriis medicamina uirib; acm  
Exhib& auxilio cuius sterita capeissas  
Semina torquentes urine frangere tricas  
Dicitur ipsum & iam tenero cūgermine mansum  
Concoquit errantes stomachi penetralib; escas  
Corporis hunc regem turbans sine austria uexet  
Mox apium lympham tristique libatur acc&o

passio tum celeri ced & deuicta medellae  
 XXI Montibus & siluis praetis & uallibus inuis  
 V & tomice pretiosa licet collectio cunctis  
 pene locus super & passim tamen hanc quoque nr  
 Hortus habet cultaque docet mansuescere terra  
 Hec tantum meruit generali nomine laudis  
 Vt siquid mea musa uelit sup addere tandem  
 Mole operis deuicta sui iam sentiat illa  
 Vtilitate minus quicquid de promptu esse  
 Hanc uiridem si forte tuos conaris in usus  
 Carpere siccatam uel nemi deponere pigre  
 Turbida seu tuas oblectant pocula fauces  
 Seu potius longo tibi defaetata labore  
 Dona placent huius uirtus mirabilis herbe  
 Omnia sufficiat quam quosdam pendere tanta  
 Nouimus ut contra totam que iniuria corpus  
 Impetit interius muniri uiribus eius  
 Se se posse rati solent haurire diebus  
 Continuis hoc acre genus medicaminis almi  
 Praeterea caput infesto si uulnere fractum  
 Tabuerit tum crebra terens imposito sacre  
 Tegmina uettonice statim mirabere uires  
 Illius in solidum fuerit dum clausa cicatrix  
 XXII Hic quoque sarco colam caposque plurima passim  
 Vescit & effus siluarum in uenta sub umbris





Nascitur ordinibus facile est discernere pulchris  
Hæc præter uarium lacte uirtutis honorem  
Tuta domat uentris prædurum & pota dolorem  
Sique forte calibis infensus uulnera membris  
Indidert nr̄is huius temptare iubemur  
Auxilium parti que imponere tansa patienti  
Cermine maturum nacturi hac arte uigorem  
Sita men addatur mordens cata plasmati ac&um  
xxiiij) Haud procul ambrosiam uulgo quam dicere mos est  
Erigitur laudata quidem sed an ista sit illa  
Cuius in antiquis celeberrima mentio libris  
Fit dubium est multis medici tamen arte suapte  
Hanc ut cumq; colunt tantum que sanguinis hausta  
Absumit quantum potus ingesserit almi  
xxiiij) Herbarum in numero quas hortulus ille recenti  
Semp prole creat nepos non segnior exit  
Surgulus urticam foliis simulanti bus alto  
Vertice prægratum lacte largitus odorem  
Hæc uariis olim morborum accommoda curis  
Non extrema alias inter decernitur herbas  
Huius enim sucus rosco commixtus oliuo  
Efficit unguentum læse quod uulnera carnis  
Atque cicatricum deformia signa nouarum  
Posse abolere aiunt prisco & reparare nitore  
Et reuocare pilos plage quos forte recentis

pestis huiuscaulis saniae taboque perisios  
 xxv Hic raffinum radice potens latoque comarum  
 Tegmine sublatum extremus facit ordo uideri  
 Cuius amara satis quatiens uisceratus sim  
 Mansa premit radix tri quoque seminis haustus  
 Eiusdem uiti pestis per sepe uidetur  
 xxvi Iam nunc me fessum uia longior indu pedire  
 S crupeus atq; noui terrere carminis ordo  
 Debueram uiburna rose pretiosa metallo  
 pactoli & niuei sarabum circumdare gemmis  
 Haec quia non terro germana tinguit ostro  
 Lata nec ardenti segallia murice iactat  
 Lutea purpurei reparat clementia quot annis  
 v bota floris tantum qui protinus omnes



Herbarum uicisse comas uirtute & odore  
 Dicitur ut merito florum flos esse feratur  
 In ficit hic oleum proprio denomine dictum  
 Quod quam sepe fuerit mortalibus utile curis  
 Nec meminisse potest hominum nec dicere quisquam  
 Hic uic famosa suos opponunt lilia flores  
 Longius horum & iam spirans odor imbuat auras  
 Sed si quis niuei candentia germina fructus







T riuerte aspersi mirabitur ilicet omnem  
N ectaris ille fidem celeri peruisse meo  
H oc quia uirginitas fama subnixabesta  
F lore nitet quam si nullus labor exagitate  
S ordis & inliciti non fregerit ardor amoris  
F lagrat odore suo porro si gloria pessum  
I ntegritatis eat foetor mutabit odorem  
H aec duo namq; probabiliu genere in dya florū  
E cclesie summas signant p̄ secula palmas  
S anguine martyri carpit quaedona rosarum  
L iliaque infidei gestat candore nitentis  
O mater uirgo fecundo germine mater  
V irgo fide intacta sponsi denomine sponsa  
S ponsa coluba domus regina fide lus amica

B ello carperosas lilia arripe lilia pace  
F los tibi sceptrigero uenit generamine iesse  
V nicus antiquereparator stirpis & auctor  
L ilia qui uerbis uitaeque dicauit amoena  
Morte rosas tingens pacemq; & proelia membris  
L iquit in orbe suis uirtute amplexus utranq;  
P rimaq; ambobus seruans aeterna triumphis  
xxvii Haec tibi seruati munuscula uilia parui

S trabo tuus grimalde pater doctissime seruus  
 pectore deuoto nullius ponderis offert  
 vt cum consepto uilis consideris horti  
 subter opacatas frondenti uertice malos  
 persicus imparib; crines ubi diuidit umbris  
 Dum tibi cana legunt tenera lanugine poma  
 Ludentes pueri scola laxabunda tuorum  
 Atq; uolis ingentia mala capacibus induunt  
 Et randa conantes includere corpora palmis  
 Quomoneare habeas nostri pater alme laboris  
 Dum relegis quaede do uolens interq; legendu  
 vt uirtiosa seces de posco placentia firmes  
 Tedi a xerna faciat uirtute uirentem  
 In marcescibilis palmiam cōprehendere utaq;  
 Hoc pater hoc natus hoc spiritus annuat almus

EXPLICIT

HABET VERSUS

cccc xl iiii

AD MODO INUM

Si qua uiam faceret nostris fiducia uotis  
 optabam dudum scribere sepe tibi  
 Suscipe nunc tandem presul carissime nobis  
 que simplex humilifert ratione animus



THE HORTULUS

*In Transcription and English Translation*

BY RAEF PAYNE

*With Illustrations from Linoleum Cuts*

BY HENRY EVANS

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Walahfrid Strabo wrote his *Hortulus* in Latin hexameters, no doubt taking Virgil's *Georgics* as his model. There are indeed many Virgilian echoes in his poem and his Latin is, in general, the classical Latin of the first century B.C.

It was difficult to know how best to translate this poem. I have not tried to produce a "period flavor:" such attempts so often end in disaster and there is, anyway, no period of English that matches Walahfrid's Latin. It seemed better to use the language of our time, except in a few passages where the original prompted a more formal poetic diction. I was anxious to keep as close to the exact sense and structure as I reasonably could, but in some passages where Walahfrid, owing to the demands of meter or the conventions of Roman poetry, has indulged in elaborate periphrasis, I have allowed myself a fair measure of freedom to avoid awkwardness and obscurity.

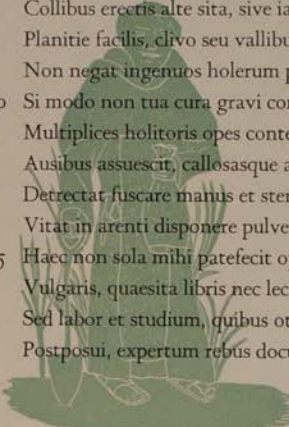
I felt that a rhyming or regularly metrical form would involve me in either some very unnatural language or a much greater divergence from the original than could be justified. So I have adopted a free verse form which I hope may enable the modern reader to understand and enjoy the poem without letting him forget that it is a poem.

I am pleased to record my sincere gratitude to several friends and helpers: to Mr. Wilfrid Blunt who first suggested the undertaking and whose advice and encouragement at every stage have been invaluable; to Dr. H. W. Rickett who

was kind enough to put at my disposal his own scholarly work on the *Hortulus*; to Mr. John S. L. Gilmour, Mr. John Holmstrom, Dr. George H. M. Lawrence, Dr. R. E. Latham, Mr. R. C. Martineau, and Dr. F. A. Stafleu, all of whom read my script and made many helpful suggestions; and to Miss Kathleen Gow who has patiently and expertly typed and retyped the various drafts. The faults that remain I must, reluctantly but in all honesty, admit to being entirely my own.

*Incipit liber de cultura hortorum  
Strabi seu Strabonis feliciter*

I. DE CVLTVRA HORTORVM

- Plurima tranquillae cum sint insignia vitae,  
Non minimum est, si quis Paestanae deditus arti  
Noverit obsceni curas tractare Priapi.  
Ruris enim quaecunq̄ datur possessio, seu sit
- 5 Putris harenoso qua torpet glarea tractu,  
Seu pingui molita graves uligine fetus,  
Collibus erectis alte sita, sive iacenti  
Planitie facilis, clivo seu vallibus horrens;  
Non negat ingenuos holerum progignere fructus,
- 10 Si modo non tua cura gravi compressa veterno  
Multiplices holitoris opes contemnere stultis  
Ausibus assuescit, callosasque aëre duro  
Detrectat fuscare manus et stercora plenis  
Vitat in arenti disponere pulvere qualis.
- 15 Haec non sola mihi patefecit opinio famae  
Vulgaris, quaesita libris nec lectio priscis;  
Sed labor et studium, quibus otia longa dierum  
Postposui, expertum rebus docuere probatis.
- 



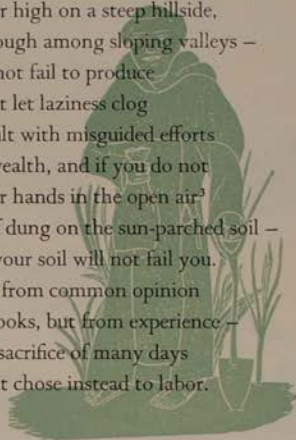
*Here begins the Book  
on the Cultivation of Gardens by Strabus (or Strabo)  
May it find favor*

ON THE CULTIVATION OF GARDENS

A quiet life has many rewards: not least of these  
Is the joy that comes to him who devotes himself to the art  
They knew at Paestum,<sup>1</sup> and learns the ancient skill of obscene  
Priapus<sup>2</sup> – the joy that comes of devoting himself to a garden.

For whatever the land you possess, whether it be where sand  
And gravel lie barren and dead, or where fruits grow heavy  
In rich moist ground; whether high on a steep hillside,  
Easy ground in the plain or rough among sloping valleys –  
Wherever it is, your land cannot fail to produce  
Its native plants. If you do not let laziness clog  
Your labor, if you do not insult with misguided efforts  
The gardener's multifarious wealth, and if you do not  
Refuse to harden or dirty your hands in the open air<sup>3</sup>  
Or to spread whole baskets of dung on the sun-parched soil –  
Then, you may rest assured, your soil will not fail you.

This I have learnt not only from common opinion  
And searching about in old books, but from experience –  
Experience of hard work and sacrifice of many days  
When I might have rested, but chose instead to labor.



II. DIFFICULTAS ASSUMPTI LABORIS

- Bruma senectutis vernacula, totius anni  
20 Venter et ampliflui consumptrix saeva laboris,  
Veris ubi adventu terrarum pulsa sub imas  
Delituit latebras, vestigiaque horrida avarae  
Ver hiemis reduci rerum delere pararet  
Schemate, et antiquo languentia rura nitore  
25 Reddere – ver orbis primum caput et decus anni –  
Purior aura diem cum iam reserare serenum  
Inciperet, Zephyrosque herbae floresque secuti  
Tenuia porrigerent radices acumina, caeco  
Tecta diu gremio canasque exosa pruinas;  
30 Cum silvae foliis, montes quoque gramine pingui,  
Prataque conspicuis vernarent laeta virentis:  
Atriolum, quod pro foribus mihi parva patenti  
Area vestibulo solis convertit ad ortum,  
Urticae impleverunt campique per aequora parvi  
35 Inlita ferventi creverunt tela veneno.  
    Quid facerem? Tam spissus erat radicibus infra  
Ordo catenatis, virides ut texere lentis  
Viminibus crates stabuli solet arte magister,  
Ungula cornipedum si quando humore nocetur  
40 Collecto et putres imitatur marcida fungos.  
Ergo moras rumpens Saturni dente iacentes  
Aggredior glebas, torpentiaque arva revulsis  
Sponte renascentum complexibus urticarum  
Erigo et umbricolis habitata cubilia talpis

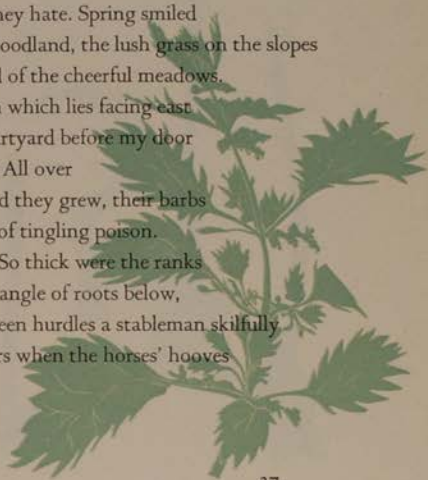
THE DIFFICULTY OF THE UNDERTAKING

Winter, image of age, who like a great belly  
Eats up the whole year's substance and heartlessly  
Swallows the fruits of our unstinted labor,  
Had gone into hiding deep below the earth.  
For Spring had arrived and driven him under. Spring,  
Source of the world's life and glory of the year,  
Had returned, and was wiping away the ugly traces  
Of greedy winter and restoring to ailing fields  
Their former loveliness.

A purer air was now beginning to herald  
Fine weather. Plants stirred in the zephyr's path  
Thrusting out from their roots the slender tips  
Which had long lain hidden in the earth's blind womb,  
Shunning the frost they hate. Spring smiled  
In the leaves of the woodland, the lush grass on the slopes  
And the bright sward of the cheerful meadows.

But this little patch which lies facing east  
In the small open courtyard before my door  
Was full – of nettles! All over  
My small piece of land they grew, their barbs  
Tipped with a smear of tingling poison.

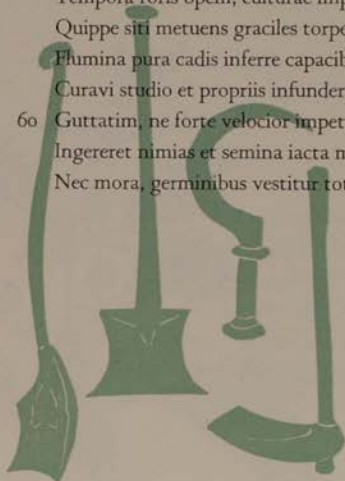
What should I do? So thick were the ranks  
That grew from the tangle of roots below,  
They were like the green hurdles a stableman skillfully  
Weaves of pliant osiers when the horses' hooves



- 45 Diruo, lumbricos revocans in luminis oras.  
Inde Noti coquitur flabris solisque calore  
Areola et lignis, ne diffluat, obsita quadris  
Altius a plano modicum resupina levatur.  
Tota minutatim rastris contunditur uncis,  
50 Et pinguis fermenta fimi super insinuantur.  
Seminibus quaedam tentamus holuscula, quaedam  
Stirpibus antiquis priscae revocare iuventae.

### III. INSTANTIA CVLTORIS ET FRVCTVS OPERIS

- Denique vernali interdum conspergitur imbre  
Parva seges, tenuesque foveat praeblanda vicissim  
55 Luna comas; rursus si quando sicca negabant  
Tempora roris opem, culturae impulsus amore,  
Quippe siti metuens graciles torpescere fibras,  
Flumina pura cadis inferre capacibus acri  
Curavi studio et propriis infundere palmis  
60 Guttatim, ne forte velocior impetus undas  
Ingereret nimias et semina iacta moveret.  
Nec mora, germinibus vestitur tota tenellis



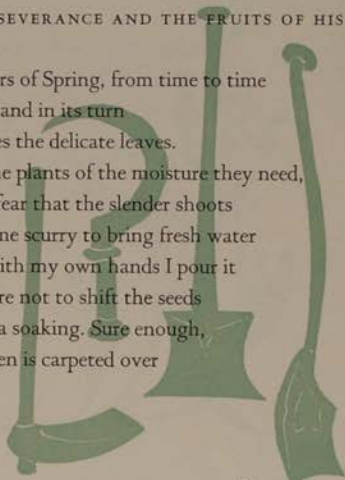
Rot in the standing puddles and go soft as fungus.

So I put it off no longer. I set to with my mattock  
And dug up the sluggish ground. From their embraces  
I tore those nettles though they grew and grew again.  
I destroyed the tunnels of the moles that haunt dark places,  
And back to the realms of light I summoned the worms.

Then my small patch was warmed by winds from the south  
And the sun's heat. That it should not be washed away,  
We faced it with planks and raised it in oblong beds  
A little above the level ground. With a rake  
I broke the soil up bit by bit, and then  
Worked in from on top the leaven of rich manure.  
Some plants we grow from seed, some from old stocks  
We try to bring back to the youth they knew before.

#### THE GARDENER'S PERSEVERANCE AND THE FRUITS OF HIS LABOR

Then come the showers of Spring, from time to time  
Watering our tiny crop, and in its turn  
The gentle moon caresses the delicate leaves.  
Should a dry spell rob the plants of the moisture they need,  
My gardening zeal and fear that the slender shoots  
May die of thirst make me scurry to bring fresh water  
In brimming buckets. With my own hands I pour it  
Drop by drop, taking care not to shift the seeds  
By too sudden or lavish a soaking. Sure enough,  
In a little while the garden is carpeted over



- Areola et quamquam illius pars ista sub alto  
Arescat tecto, pluviarum et muneris expers  
65 Squaleat aërii, pars illa perennibus umbris  
Diffugiat solem, paries cui celsior ignei  
Sideris accessum lateris negat obice duri:  
Non tamen ulla, sibi fuerant quae credita pridem,  
Spe sine crementi pigro sub caespite clausit.  
70 Quin potius, quae sicca fere et translata subactis  
Suscepit scrobibus, redivivo plena virore  
Restituit reparans numero semina fructu.  
Nunc opus ingeniis, docili nunc pectore et ore,  
Nomina quo possim viresque attingere tantae  
75 Messis, ut ingenti res parvae ornetur honore.

IV. SALVIA

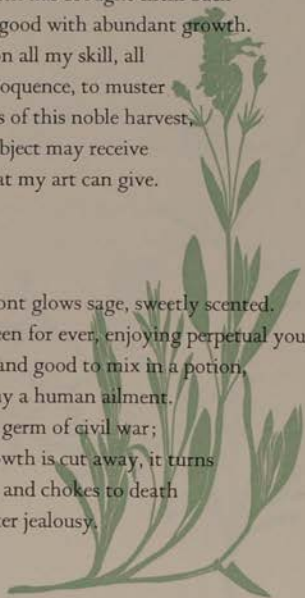
- Lelifagus prima prae fulget fronte locorum,  
Dulcis odore, gravis virtute atque utilis haustu.  
Pluribus haec hominum morbis prodesse reperta,  
Perpetuo viridi meruit gaudere iuventa.  
80 Sed tolerat civile malum; nam saeva parentem  
Progenies florum, fuerit ni dempta, perurit,  
Et facit antiquos defungier invida ramos.

With tiny young shoots. True, that part there  
Below the high roof is dry and rough from the lack  
Of rain and the heaven's benison; true, this  
Part here is always in shade, for the high wall's  
Solid rampart forbids the sun to enter.  
Yet of all that was lately entrusted to it, the garden  
Has held nothing enclosed in its sluggish soil  
Without hope of growth. What is more, those plants that were moved,  
More dead than alive, to the newly dug furrows are now  
Green again; our garden has brought them back  
To life, making them good with abundant growth.

Now I must summon all my skill, all  
My learning, all my eloquence, to muster  
The names and virtues of this noble harvest,  
That this my lowly subject may receive  
The highest honor that my art can give.

### Sage

There in the very front glows sage, sweetly scented.  
It deserves to grow green for ever, enjoying perpetual youth;  
For it is rich in virtue and good to mix in a potion,  
Of proven use for many a human ailment.  
But within itself is the germ of civil war;  
For unless the new growth is cut away, it turns  
Savagely on its parent and chokes to death  
The older stems in bitter jealousy.

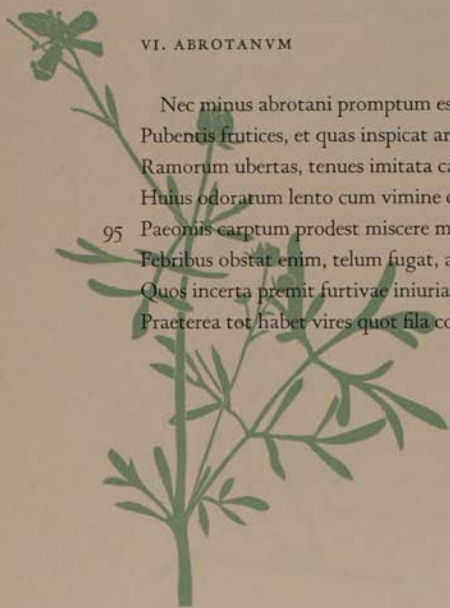


V. RVTA

- Hoc nemus umbriferum pingit viridissima rutae  
Silvula caeruleae, foliis quae praedita parvis  
85 Umbellas iaculata breves, spiramina venti  
Et radios Phoebi caules transmittit ad imos,  
Attactuque graves leni dispergit odores.  
Haec cum multiplici vigeat virtute medellae,  
Dicitur occultis adprime obstare venenis,  
90 Toxicaque invasis incommoda pellere fibris.

VI. ABROTANVM

- Nec minus abrotani promptum est mirarier altae  
Pubentis frutices, et quas inspicat aristas  
Ramorum ubertas, tenues imitata capillos.  
Huius odoratum lento cum vimine crinem  
95 Paemis captum prodest miscere medellis.  
Febribus obstat enim, telum fugat, adiuvat artus  
Quos incerta premit furtivae iniuria guttae.  
Praeterea tot habet vires quot fila comarum.



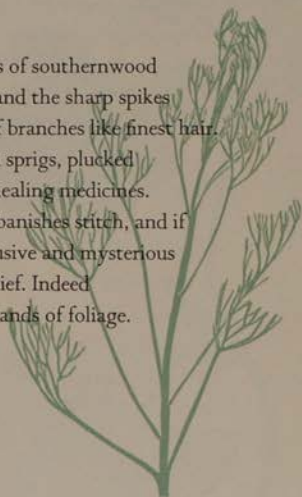


### *Rue*

Here is a shadowed grove which takes its color  
From the miniature forest of glaucous rue.  
Through its small leaves and the short umbels which rise  
Like clusters of spears it sends the wind's breath  
And the sun's rays down to its roots below.  
Touch it but gently and it yields a heavy  
Fragrance. Many a healing power it has –  
Especially, they say, to combat  
Hidden toxin and to expel from the bowels  
The invading forces of noxious poison.

### *Southernwood*

Admire too the tall bushes of southernwood  
With their bloom of down, and the sharp spikes  
Which grow on its wealth of branches like finest hair.  
It is good to mix the scented sprigs, plucked  
With the supple stem, into healing medicines.  
It has power against fevers, banishes stitch, and if  
Your limbs ache with the elusive and mysterious  
Pain of gout, it will bring relief. Indeed  
As many virtues it has as strands of foliage.



VII. CUCURBITA

- Haud secus altipetax semente cucurbita vili  
 100 Assurgens, parmis foliorum suscitatur umbras  
 Ingentes, crebrisque iacit retinacula ramis.  
 Ac velut ulmum hedera implicuit cum frondibus altam,  
 Ruris abusque sinu toti sua brachia circum  
 Laxa dedit ligno, summumque secuta cacumen  
 105 Corticis occuluit viridi tutamine rugas;  
 Aut arbustivum vitis genus, arbore cum se  
 Explicuit quavis, ramorumque alta corymbis  
 Vestiit et propria sursum se sponte levavit,  
 Visitur ergo rubens aliena in sede recemus  
 110 Dependere, premit tabulata virentia Bacchus,  
 Pampinus et frondes discernit latior altas:  
 Sic mea sic fragili cum stirpe cucurbita surgens  
 Diligit appositas sua sustentacula furcas,  
 Atque amplexa suas uncis tenet unguibus alnos.  
 115 Ne vero insano divelli turbine possit,  
 Quot generat nodos, tot iam retinacula trudit,  
 Et quoniam duplicem producunt singula funem,  
 Undique fulturam dextra laevaueprehendunt.  
 Et velut in fusum nentes cum pensa puellae  
 120 Mollia traiciunt, spirisque ingentibus omnem  
 Filorum seriem pulchros metantur in orbes:  
 Sic vaga tortilibus stringunt amenta catenis  
 Sclarum teretes involvuntque ilico virgas,  
 Viribus et discutunt alienis tecta cavarum

## Gourd

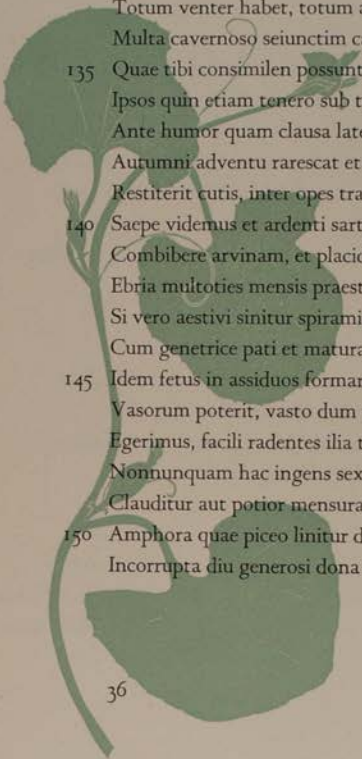
The gourd too aspires to grow high from a humble beginning.  
Like shields are the leaves that cast those great shadows; like cables  
The stems it puts out so thickly. You have seen how ivy twines  
Its leaves round a lofty elm, from the earth's bosom  
Lapping its supple arms around the whole tree till it finds  
A way to the very top, and hides all the wrinkled bark  
With a mantle of green –

You have seen how a vine, trained to a tree,  
Scrambles over it, festooning the topmost branches  
With clusters of grapes, and pulls itself of its own accord  
Up and up: the bunches hang there for all to see,  
Blushing in the place they have made their own; the green storeys  
Sag with Bacchus, whose broad leaves part the lofty foliage –

Even so my gourd, rising on brittle stem,  
Welcomes the props that are put there for it, hugging the alder  
In the grip of its curly tentacles. It's so determined  
Not to be wrenched away by even the wildest storm  
That it thrusts out a cable at every joint and, each  
Extending two strands, seizes support on this side and that.

It reminds me too of girls spinning, when they draw  
The soft heaps of wool to their spindles, and in great twists  
Measure off the endless thread into trim balls –

Just so  
The wandering thongs of my gourd twist and cling; quick  
To wrap their coils round the smooth sticks set as ladders for them,  
They learn to use borrowed strength and, with a swimmer's thrust,

- 
- 125 Ardua porticum volucris superare natatu.  
Iam quis poma queat ramis pendentia passim  
Mirari digne! quae non minus undique certis  
Sunt formata viis, quam si tornatile lignum  
Inspicias medio rasum quod mamfure constat.
- 130 Illa quidem gracili primum demissa flagello  
Oblongo tenuique ferunt ingentia collo  
Corpora, tum vastum laxatur in ilia pondus,  
Totum venter habet, totum alvus, et intus aluntur  
Multa cavernoso seiunctim carcere grana,
- 135 Quae tibi consimilen possunt promittere messem.  
Ipsos quin etiam tenero sub tempore fructus,  
Ante humor quam clausa latens per viscera sero  
Autumni adventu rarescat et arida circum  
Restiterit cutis, inter opes transire ciborum
- 140 Saepe videmus et ardenti sartagine pinguem  
Combibere arvinam, et placidum segmenta saporem  
Ebria multoties mensis praestare secundis.  
Si vero aestivi sinitur spiramina solis  
Cum genetrice pati et matura falce recidi,
- 145 Idem fetus in assiduos formarier usus  
Vasorum poterit, vasto dum viscera ventre  
Egerimus, facili radentes ilia torno.  
Nonnunquam hac ingens sextarius abditur alvo,  
Clauditur aut potior mensurae portio plenae,
- 150 Amphora quae piceo linitur dum glutine, servat  
Incorrupta diu generosi dona Lyaei.

Climb the steep roofs of the covered cloister.

Oh, who now

Can praise as he ought the fruits that hang from its branches  
Everywhere? They are as perfectly formed from every angle  
As a piece of wood that is turned and shaved on a lathe.

They hang on a slender stalk and swell from a long, thin neck  
Into huge bodies, their great mass broadening at the flanks.

They are all belly, all paunch. Inside

That cavernous prison are nourished, each in its place, the many  
Seeds that promise another harvest as good as this one.

At the approach of tardy autumn, while yet they are tender  
And before the hidden moisture that is sealed inside them dries  
To leave but the withered shells, we often see the fruit  
Handed round among the good things of the dinner-table  
And soaking up the rich fat in a piping dish;  
For often these juicy slices, served as dessert,  
Delight the palate.

But if you let the gourd stay

Enjoying the summer sun on its parent tree and only  
Set your blade to it late in the year, then after scooping  
The flesh from its ponderous belly and shaving the sides  
On a nimble lathe, you can put it to practical use as a vessel.  
A pint this mighty paunch will sometimes hold, sometimes  
Half a gallon or more; and if you seal your jar  
With gummy pitch it will keep wine good for many a day.

VIII. PEPONES

- Hoc simul in spatio campi quo figitur imis  
 Haec tam laeta seges, vili quam carmine pinxi,  
 Visitur alterius vitis genus acre per aequor  
 155 Serpere pulvereum et fructus nutrire rotundos  
 Pomorum. Haec species terrae super arida vulgo  
 Terga iacens crementa capit pulcherrima, donec  
 Solibus aestivis flavos intincta colores  
 Messoris calathos matura fruge replevit.  
 160 Tum videas aliis teretem satis esse figuram  
 Undique, porro aliis oblongo schemate ventrem  
 Demissum, nucis aut ovi versatilis instar;  
 Vel qualis manibus quondam suspensa supinis  
 Lucet agens circum lomenti bulla salivam,  
 165 Ante recens maceretur aquis quam spuma refusis,  
 Dum lentescit adhuc digitis luctantibus et se  
 Alternis vicibus studioque fricantibus uno,  
 Inter utramque manum parvo fit parvus hiatu  
 Exitus, huc stricto lenis meat ore Noti vis,  
 170 Distenditque cavum vitrea sub imagine pondus  
 Et centrum medio confingit labile fundo,  
 Undique conveniat camuri quo inflexio tecti.  
 Ergo chalybs huius penetrat dum viscera pomi,  
 Elicit humoris largos cum semine rivos  
 175 Multiplici: tum deinde cavum per plurima tergus  
 Frusta manu spargens hortorum laetus opimas  
 Delicias conviva capit, candorque saporque  
 Oblectat fauces; nec duros illa molares

## Melon

In the same patch at the bottom of the garden where this fine crop  
My humble lines have just described is planted,  
You will see something else which looks like an eager vine creeping  
Over the dusty ground and nursing a rounded fruit.  
This one commonly lies on the dry ridges of earth  
And the growth it makes is beautiful – until the time when,  
Yellow and ripe with summer sun, it fills the gardener's basket.

Some you will see are completely round and even;  
Others you'll find with a drooping oblong belly, the shape  
Of a nut or an egg –

Or like a soap bubble. You know how it is  
When you hold up a cake of soap: it gleams in your upraised hands  
As the slippery wetness runs over its surface, until by pouring  
More water on it you wash the fresh froth off.  
But when the fingers work on it, kneading and rubbing purposefully  
This way and that, it softens; and then, with your hands together  
And only a crack between, if you blow through narrowed lips  
Gently, gently, your breath will make the hollow suds  
Swell like blown glass, and the curve of the vaulted skin  
Meets to form a slippery center at the bubble's base.

When a knife-blade finds the guts of a melon a gush  
Of juice comes out, and many seeds with it. Then  
Your lucky guest can divide by hand the hollow body  
Into several pieces and thus enjoy the luscious delicacy.  
Its freshness and savour delight the palate; nor can this food

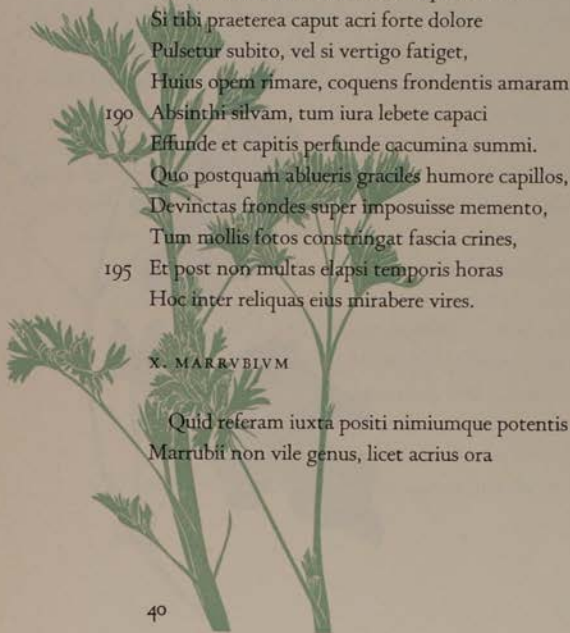
Esca stupere facit, facili sed mansa voratu  
180 Vi naturali frigus per viscera nutrit.

IX. ABSINTHIUM

Proximus absinthi frutices locus erigit acris,  
Herbarum matrem simulantes vimine lento.  
In foliis color est alius ramisque odor alter  
Pubericus, longaeque saporis amarior haustus.  
185 Ferventem domuisse sitim, depellere febres  
Hoc solet auxilium clara virtute probatum.  
Si tibi praeterea caput acri forte dolore  
Pulsetur subito, vel si vertigo fatiget,  
Huius opem rimare, coquens frondentis amaram  
190 Absinthi silvam, tum iura lebete capaci  
Effunde et capitis perfunde cacumina summi.  
Quo postquam ablueris graciles humore capillos,  
Devinctas frondes super imposuisse memento,  
Tum mollis fotos constringat fascia crines,  
195 Et post non multas elapsi temporis horas  
Hoc inter reliquas eius mirabere vires.

X. MARRUBIUM

Quid referam iuxta positi nimiumque potentis  
Marrubii non vile genus, licet acrius ora





Defeat a man's teeth, for it's easy to eat and its natural  
Properties cool and refresh his whole inner body.

### *Wormwood*

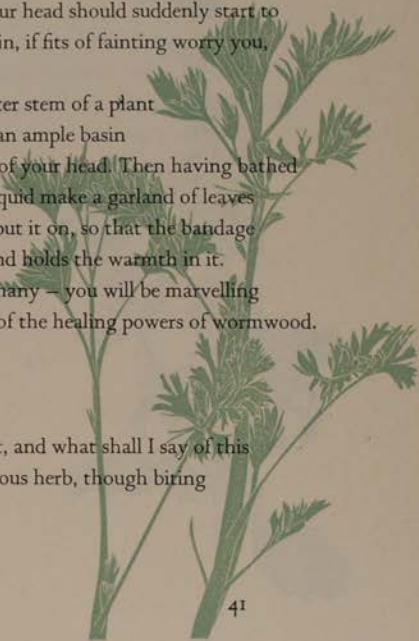
The next bed grows bushes of bitter wormwood. Its supple stem  
Resembles the Mother of Herbs,<sup>4</sup> but the leaves have a different color.  
The smell of its downy branches is different too, and the brew  
It makes has a bitterer taste by far.

Its powers are famous,  
Its effectiveness proven. It tames a raging thirst; fever  
It banishes. If, besides, your head should suddenly start to  
Throb and throb with pain, if fits of fainting worry you,  
Seek its help:

Boil the bitter stem of a plant  
In leaf, tip the brew into an ample basin  
And pour it over the top of your head. Then having bathed  
Your soft hair with the liquid make a garland of leaves  
(Do not forget this) and put it on, so that the bandage  
Gently binds your hair and holds the warmth in it.  
A few hours later – not many – you will be marvelling  
At this yet further proof of the healing powers of wormwood.

### *Horehound*

Horehound comes next, and what shall I say of this  
Powerful worker? A precious herb, though biring



- Mordeat et longe gustum disiungat odore.  
200 Dulce enim olet, non dulce sapit; sed pectoris aegros  
Conprimit angores, tristi dum sumitur haustu,  
Praecipue talis caleat si potus ab igni,  
Et caenam cyathis cogatur claudere crebris.  
Si quando infensae quaesita venena novercae  
205 Potibus immiscent, dapibusve aconita dolosis  
Tristia confundunt, extemplo sumpta salubris  
Potio marrubii suspecta pericula pressat.

XI. FENICVLVM

- Nec marathri taceatur honor, quod stipite forti  
Tollitur et late ramorum brachia tendit,  
210 Dulce satis gustu, dulcem satis addit odorem,  
Hoc oculis quos umbra premit prodesse loquuntur.  
Huius item semen fetae cum lacte capellae  
Absumptum ventris fertur mollire tumorem,  
Cunctantisque moras dissolvere protinus alvi.  
215 Praeterea radix marathri commixta liquori  
Lenaco tussim percepta repellit anhelam.



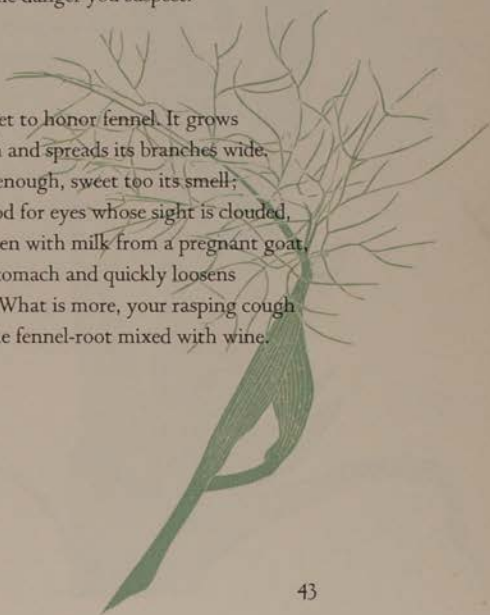
And sharp on the tongue where it tastes so unlike  
Its scent: for whereas the scent is sweet, the taste  
Is not sweet at all. Yet taken in a draught,  
For all its nastiness it assuages pain  
In the chest, and most when drunk still warm from the fire  
And ladled out quickly to close the meal.

If ever

A vicious stepmother mixes in your drink  
Subtle poisons, or makes a treacherous dish  
Of lethal aconite for you, don't waste a moment –  
Take a dose of wholesome horehound; that  
Will counteract the danger you suspect.

### *Fennel*

Let us not forget to honor fennel. It grows  
On a strong stem and spreads its branches wide.  
Its taste is sweet enough, sweet too its smell;  
They say it is good for eyes whose sight is clouded,  
That its seed, taken with milk from a pregnant goat,  
Eases a swollen stomach and quickly loosens  
Sluggish bowels. What is more, your rasping cough  
Will go if you take fennel-root mixed with wine.



XII. GLADIOLA

- Te neque transierim Latiae cui libera linguae  
Nomine de gladii nomen facundia finxit.  
Tu mihi purpurei progignis floris honorem  
220 Prima aestate gerens violae iucunda nigellae  
Munera, vel qualis mensa sub Apollinis alta  
Investis pueri pro morte recens hyacinthus  
Exiit et floris signavit vertice nomen.  
Radicis ramenta tuae siccata fluenti  
225 Diluimus contusa mero, saevumque dolorem  
Vesicae preminus tali non secius arte.  
Pignore fullo tuo lini candentia texta  
Efficit ut rigeant dulcesque imitentur odores.

XIII. LYBISTICVM

- Inter odoratam memorare lybistica silvam  
230 Fortia suadet amor parvi diffusior horti.  
Hoc germen suco quamvis et odore gemellis  
Orbibus officere et tenebras inferre putetur,  
Semina saepe tamen quaesitis addere curis  
Parva solet, famamque aliena laude mereri.

*Iris*

And I must not pass you by, my iris, in silence.  
Latin, that rich and eloquent tongue, has given you  
The name *Gladiola*, made from its word for a sword.<sup>5</sup>  
For me at the start of summer you put forth  
The beauty of your purple flower, which serves  
(A charming office!) for the violet dark and small,  
Or for the fresh hyacinth which, in memory  
Of the fresh-faced boy<sup>6</sup> who died, springs up under  
Apollo's high altar, and signs the boy's name  
On the tip of its flower.

We dry the shavings  
Of your root, crush them and then dissolve them in wine.  
With this preparation (none else is so good) we relieve  
Griping pains in the bladder. With your help too  
The laundryman can stiffen his shining linen  
And scent it sweetly.

*Lovage*

Here in this fragrant thicket is sturdy lovage.  
So deep is my love for this little garden of mine,  
I have to mention it. Although its juice and smell  
Are thought to injure the eyes and bring the shadows of blindness,  
Yet its tiny seeds are often added to cunningly blended  
Cures, winning fame from praise that is due to others.

XIV. CEREFOLIUM

235 Quae tot bellorum tot famosissima rerum  
Magnarum monimenta sacro pia conficis ore,  
Exiles Erato non dedignare meorum  
Divitias holerum versu perstringere mecum.  
Infirmis divisa licet macedonia ramis

240 Spargitur et crebris ignobile semen aristis  
Sufficit, illa tamen toto reparabilis anno  
Pauperiem largo solatur munere plebis  
Indiguae, nec non restringere sanguinis undas  
Corpore diffusas facili solet obvia gustu.

245 Illa quoque, infesto venter dum forte dolore  
Turbatur, fementa super non irrita ducit,  
Puleium sibimet frondesque papaveris addens.

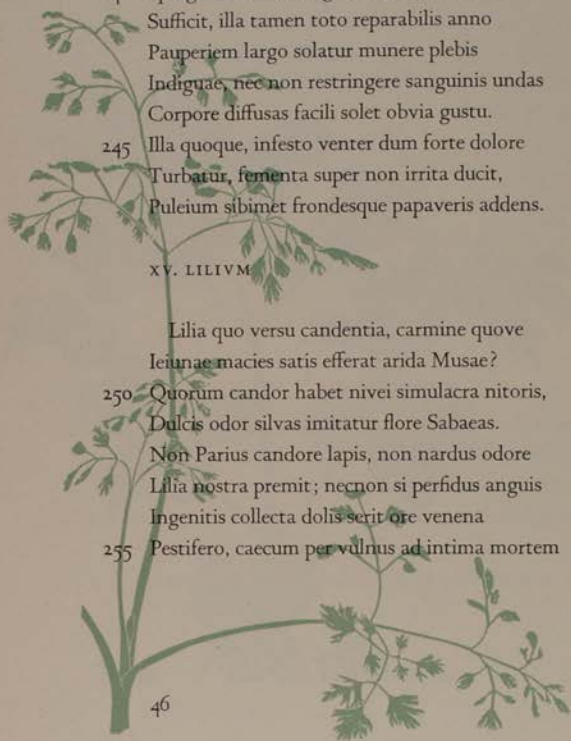
XV. LILIVM

Lilia quo versu candentia, carmine quove  
Ieiunae macies satis efferat arida Musae?

250 Quorum candor habet nivei simulacra nitoris,  
Dulcis odor silvas imitatur flore Sabaeas.

Non Parius candore lapis, non nardus odore  
Lilia nostra premit; necnon si perfidus anguis  
Ingenitis collecta dolis serit ore venena

255 Pestifero, caecum per vulnus ad intima mortem



### *Chervil*

Come, holy Muse, thou who in sacred song  
Canst stablish monuments of mighty wars  
And mighty deeds – come, scorn not to touch with me  
The humble riches that my garden yields.

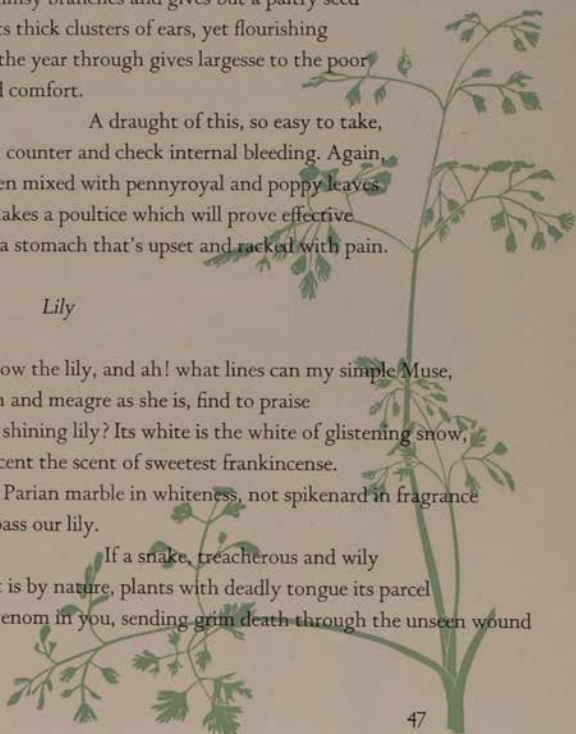
Now chervil, though it splits and divides itself  
In flimsy branches and gives but a paltry seed  
In its thick clusters of ears, yet flourishing  
All the year through gives largesse to the poor  
And comfort.

A draught of this, so easy to take,  
Will counter and check internal bleeding. Again,  
When mixed with pennyroyal and poppy leaves  
It makes a poultice which will prove effective  
For a stomach that's upset and racked with pain.

### *Lily*

Now the lily, and ah! what lines can my simple Muse,  
Lean and meagre as she is, find to praise  
The shining lily? Its white is the white of glistening snow,  
Its scent the scent of sweetest frankincense.  
Not Parian marble in whiteness, not spikenard in fragrance  
Surpass our lily.

If a snake, treacherous and wily  
As it is by nature, plants with deadly tongue its parcel  
Of venom in you, sending grim death through the unseen wound



Corda feram mittens, pistillo lilia praestat  
Commacerare gravi, sucosque haurire Falerno.  
Si quod contusum est summo liventis in ore  
Ponatur puncti, tum iam dinoscere vires  
260 Magnificas huiusce datur medicaminis ultro.  
Haec etiam luxis prodest contusio membrs.

XVI. PAPAVER

Et Cereale quidem nugarum in parte papaver  
Hac memorare placet, quod raptu maesta puellae  
Mater, ut immensis optata oblivia mentem  
265 Exuerent curis, fertur Latona vorasse.  
Hoc simul auxilio carbunculus ater ab imo  
Pectore qui ructus nimium convolvit amarus  
Oris adusque fores reprimi persaepe videtur.  
Huius ad alta caput granorum semine fetum  
270 Protento fragilique solet se tollere collo,  
Inque modum mali, regio cui punica nomen  
Indidit, unius patulo sub pellis amictu  
Grana celebrandae virtutis plurima claudit,  
Deque sono mandentis habet formabile nomen.

XVII. SCLAREGA

275 Hic umbrosa novos inter sclarega viroses  
Stipite praevalido assurgens, ramosque comasque  
Altius extollit, quae quamvis rarius ulli  
Quaesita auxilio medicorum paene putetur



To the inmost vaults of the heart – then crush lilies with a weighty  
Pestle and drink the juice in wine. Now place the pulp  
On the top of the livid spot where the snake's tongue jabbed;  
Then indeed you will learn for yourself the wonderful power  
This antidote has. Nor is that all: this same pulp  
Of crushed lily is good for limbs that are twisted awry.

### *Poppy*

Here in this tale of trifles let me speak of Ceres' poppy –  
Hers it is because, mourning the loss of her stolen daughter,<sup>7</sup>  
She is said to have eaten poppy to drown her sorrow, deep  
Beyond measure – to forget, as she longed to forget, her grief of mind.

The poppy will often help to check that dark ulcer,  
Deep in the chest, which sends to the mouth the foul and acid  
Belch. Its head, loaded with tiny grains, is held high  
On a long delicate neck and, like the Phoenician pomegranate,<sup>8</sup>  
Under the broad mantle of a single skin it holds  
A mass of seeds of remarkable power. The sound of chewing  
(From a Latin word) gave it the name we know it by now.<sup>9</sup>

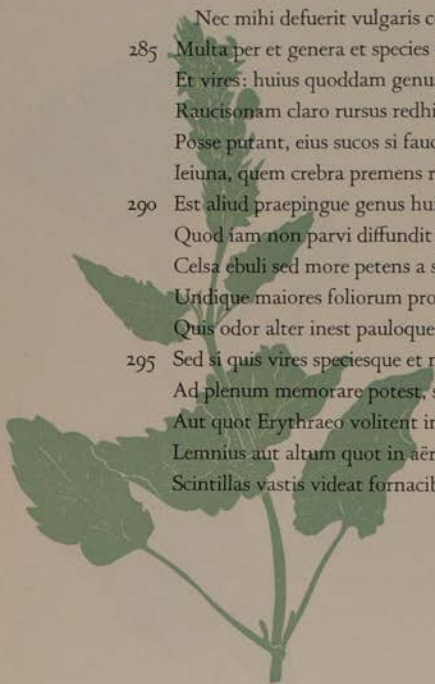
### *Clary*

Here, casting its shadow among the fresh verdure,  
Grows clary, rising on sturdy stalk  
And sending high and higher still  
Its branch and leaf. Its help is rarely  
Sought for cures; the doctor's hand,

Effugisse manus, dulci tamen indita caldae  
280 Et vires et odorati fermenta saporis  
Praestat; eam iuxta hortensis non extima costi  
Silva latet, stomachique moras ventremque salubri  
Provocat auxilio, radice munere coctae.

XVIII. MENTA

Nec mihi defuerit vulgaris copia mentae  
285 Multa per et genera et species diversa coloresque  
Et vires: huius quoddam genus utile vocem  
Raucisonam claro rursus redhibere canori  
Posse putant, eius sucos si fauce vorarit  
Ieiuna, quem crebra premens raucedo fatigat.  
290 Est aliud praepingue genus huiusce fructecti,  
Quod iam non parvi diffundit germinis umbras,  
Celsa ebuli sed more petens a stipite forti  
Undique maiores foliorum prorogat alas,  
Quis odor alter inest pauloque immitior haustus.  
295 Sed si quis vires speciesque et nomina mentae  
Ad plenum memorare potest, sciat ille necesse est  
Aut quot Erythraeo volitent in gurgite pisces,  
Lemnius aut altum quot in aëra Mulciber ire  
Scintillas vastis videat fornacibus Aetnae.



You might almost think, had missed it.  
But when it is put in soft warm water  
It yields a goodness, makes a brew  
Which is sweetly scented.

Near it lurks

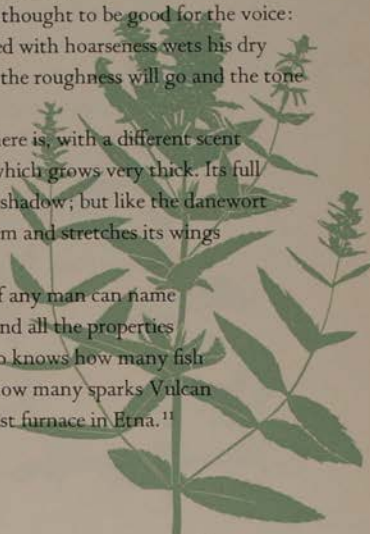
(But not forgotten) a bush of garden  
Costus,<sup>10</sup> whose root when cooked will move  
With its wholesome aid the sluggish stomach.

### *Mint*

I shall never lack a good supply of common mint,  
In all its many varieties, all its colors, all  
Its virtues. One of its kind is thought to be good for the voice:  
If a man who is often troubled with hoarseness wets his dry  
Throat with a julep of mint, the roughness will go and the tone  
Come clear.

Another kind there is, with a different scent  
And a rather harsher taste, which grows very thick. Its full  
Spread of leaf casts no mean shadow; but like the danewort  
It aims high on its strong stem and stretches its wings  
Of leaf on every side . . .

But if any man can name  
The full list of all the kinds and all the properties  
Of mint, he must be one who knows how many fish  
Swim in the Indian Ocean, how many sparks Vulcan  
Sees fly in the air from his vast furnace in Etna.<sup>11</sup>



- 300 Non patitur cunctas angustia carminis huius  
 Pulei virtutes celeri comprehendere versu.  
 Hoc apud Indorum tanti constare peritos  
 Fertur, apud Gallos quanti valet Indica nigri  
 Congeries piperis. Quis iam dubitare sinetur  
 305 Hac herba plures leniri posse labores,  
 Quam pretiis inhianter emit ditissima tantis  
 Gens hebenoque auroque fluens et mira volenti  
 Quaeque ferens mundo? O magni laudanda Tonantis  
 Virtus et ratio, nullis quae munera terris  
 310 Larga suae non pandit opis: quae rara sub isto  
 Axe videre soles, aliis in partibus horum  
 Copia tanta jacet, quantam vilissima tecum  
 Efficunt; rursus quaedam quae spreta videntur  
 Forte tibi, magno mercantur ditia regna,  
 315 Altera ut alterius potiatur foenore tellus,  
 Orbis et in toto per partes una domus sit.  
 Puleium quoque decoctum curabit, amice,  
 Et potu et fotu stomachum, mihi crede, morantem.  
 Dum canimus quae certa gravi ratione tenemus,  
 320 Quaedam audita etiam vero miscere cothurno  
 Fas ususque sinit: ramum coniungito pulei



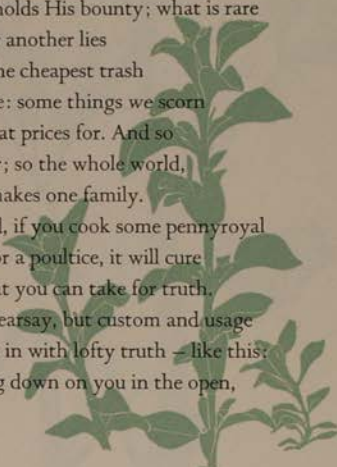
## *Pennyroyal*

The humble scale of my song will not allow me  
To embrace in fleeting verse the many virtues  
Of pennyroyal. They say that Eastern doctors  
Will pay as much for it as we pay here  
For a load of Indian pepper. Since such a people,  
Rich as they are, blessed with gold and ebony,  
Who give to an eager world a wealth of marvels –  
Since they will buy at such a price, so greedily,  
Our pennyroyal, who can doubt its power  
To allay a host of troubles?

Oh, how wise,

How good is God! Let us praise Him as we ought.  
From no land He withholds His bounty; what is rare  
Beneath this sky, under another lies  
In such abundance as the cheapest trash  
We have among us here: some things we scorn  
Rich kingdoms pay great prices for. And so  
One land helps another; so the whole world,  
Through all its parts, makes one family.

Believe me, my friend, if you cook some pennyroyal  
And use it as a potion or a poultice, it will cure  
A heavy stomach – that you can take for truth.  
Some things are only hearsay, but custom and usage  
Allow us to blend them in with lofty truth – like this:  
When the sun is blazing down on you in the open,



Auriculae, ne forte caput turbaverit aestus  
Solis, in aërio si te perflarit aperto.  
Quod nisi me currens deponere vela Thalia  
325 Cogeret ac tandem portus intrare moneret,  
Hic tibi multiplices poteram decerpere flores.

XX. APIVM

Quamvis in nostris apium vilesceret hortis,  
Et solo id multi prodesse sapore putarint,  
Plurā tamen propriis medicamina viribus acri  
330 Exhibet auxilio, cuius si trita capessas  
Semina, torquentes urinae frangere tricas  
Dicitur, ipsum etiam tenero cum germine mansum  
Concoquit errantes stomachi penetralibus escas.  
Corporis hunc regem turbans si nausea vexet,  
335 Mox apium lymphā tristique bibatur aceto,  
Passio tum celeri cedit devicta medellae.

XXI. VETTONICA

Montibus et silvis pratis et vallibus imis  
Vettonicae pretiosa licet collectio cunctis  
Paene locis superet passim, tamen hanc quoque noster  
340 Hortus habet cultaque docet mansuescere terra.  
Haec tantum meruit generali nomine laudis,  
Ut si quid mea Musa velit supperaddere, tandem

To prevent the heat from harming your head, put a sprig  
Of pennyroyal behind your ear . . .<sup>12</sup>

Ah me!

If my impatient Muse were not now forcing me  
To take in sail and make at last for harbor,  
Many another flower could I gather for you.

### *Celery*

Celery is now held cheap in our gardens and many think  
Taste is its only merit. But it has its virtues  
And offers quick help in many remedies. If you grind  
The seeds and take them, they are said to banish the racking pains  
Of a troubled bladder. If you chew them together with the tender buds  
It helps digest the food as it moves through the inmost parts  
Of the system. And if the stomach, that king of the body, is sick,  
Hurry to take a draught of water and sour vinegar  
With celery: the discomfort will pass, routed and quickly cured.

### *Betony*

In the mountains and woods, in the meadows and depths of the valleys –  
Almost everywhere, far and wide, grows the precious abundance  
Of betony. Yet I have it too in my garden, and there  
It learns a softer way of life in the tended soil.  
So great is the honor this genus has won for its name  
That if my Muse wished to add to it she would find herself

Mole operis devicta sui, iam sentiat illa  
Utilitate minus quicquid deprompserit esse.  
345 Hanc viridem si forte tuos conaris in usus  
Carpere, siccata mve hiemi deponere pigrae,  
Turbida sive tuas oblectant pocula fauces,  
Seu potius longo tibi defaecata labore  
Dona placent, huius virtus mirabilis herbae  
350 Omnia sufficiet; quam quosdam pendere tanti  
Novimus ut contra, totam quae iniuria corpus  
Impetit interius, muniri viribus eius  
Sese posse rati, soleant haurire diebus  
Continuis hoc acre genus medicaminis almi.  
355 Praeterea caput infesto si vulnere fractum  
Tabuerit, tum crebra terens imposito sacrae  
Tegmina vettonicae, statim mirabere vires  
Illius, in solidum fuerit dum clausa cicatrix.

XXII. AGRIMONIA

Hic quoque sarcocolam campos quae plurima passim  
360 Vestit et effetis silvarum inventa sub umbris  
Nascitur, ordinibus facile est discernere pulchris.  
Haec praeter varium latae virtutis honorem,  
Trita domat ventris praedirum et pota dolorem.  
Si quae forte chalybs infensus vulnera membris  
365 Indiderit nostris, huius temptare iubemur  
Auxilium partique imponere tunsae patenti



Defeated at last, overwhelmed; and soon she would see  
She could add nothing more to the value it has already.

Perhaps you pick it to use it green, perhaps  
To dry and store away for the sluggish winter.  
Do you like to drink it from cloudy goblets? Or do you  
Prefer to enjoy what it gives after long and careful  
Refining? Whatever your fancy, the wonderful powers  
Which this herb has will supply all your needs.  
Indeed some men I know rate it so highly  
That, hoping to find protection from every harm  
Which assaults the inner body, day after day  
They drink a dose of this harsh but soothing tonic.

Again, if your head is cut and the wound turns septic,  
Crush some sacred betony, make of it dressings  
And apply them frequently: you will be amazed  
How quickly its powerful influence closes the wound.

### *Agrimony*

And here in handsome rows you can see my agrimony.  
It clothes all the fields with its profusion; it grows  
Wild in the woodland shade. Much honor it has and many  
Virtues – among them this: if it's crushed and drunk  
The draught will check the most violent stomach-ache.

And if an enemy blade happens to wound us  
We are recommended to try its aid, pounding  
The shoots and putting them on the open place.

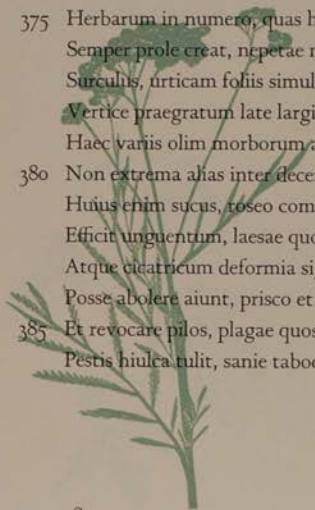
Germina, maturum nacturi hac arte vigorem,  
Si tamen addatur mordens cataplasmati acetum.

XXIII. AMBROSIA

Haud procul ambrosiam vulgo quam dicere mos est  
370 Erigitur, laudata quidem, sed an ista sit illa,  
Cuius in antiquis celeberrima mentio libris  
Fit, dubium est multis. Medici tamen arte suapte  
Hanc utcunque colunt, tantum quae sanguinis hausta  
Absumit, quantum potus ingesserit almi.

XXIV. NEPETA

375 Herbarum in numero, quas hortulus ille recenti  
Semper prole creat, nepetae non segnior exit  
Surculus, urticam foliis simulantibus, alto  
Vertice praegratum late largitus odorem.  
Haec variis olim morborum accommoda curis,  
380 Non extrema alias inter decernitur herbas;  
Huius enim succus, roseo commixtus olivo,  
Efficit unguentum, laesae quod vulnera carnis  
Atque cicatricum deformia signa novarum  
Posse abolere aiunt, prisco et reparare nitore  
385 Et revocare pilos, plagae quos forte recentis  
Pestis hiulca tulit, sanie taboque peresos.



If we remember to add to the dressing some sharp  
Vinegar, our full strength will soon be restored.

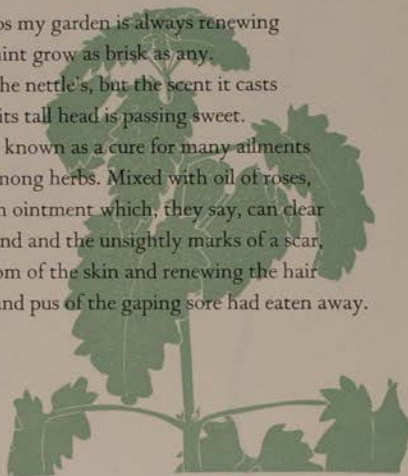
### *Tansy*

Not far away grows tansy, commonly called  
Ambrosia. Famous it certainly is, but whether  
This is that same ambrosia so often mentioned  
In ancient writings many would doubt.<sup>13</sup> However,  
The doctors use it for the powers it has.  
A draught of it clears away as much blood inside  
As the size of the dose you take of this nourishing brew.

### *Catmint*

Among the herbs my garden is always renewing  
The sprigs of catmint grow as brisk as any.  
Its leaves are like the nettle's, but the scent it casts  
So lavishly round its tall head is passing sweet.

It has long been known as a cure for many ailments  
And ranks high among herbs. Mixed with oil of roses,  
The juice makes an ointment which, they say, can clear  
The hurt of a wound and the unsightly marks of a scar,  
Restoring the bloom of the skin and renewing the hair  
Which the blood and pus of the gaping sore had eaten away.



XXV. RAFANUM

Hic rafanum radice potens latoque comarum  
Tegmine sublatum extremus facit ordo videri  
Cuius amara satis quatientem viscera tussim  
390 Mansa premit radix, triti quoque seminis haustus  
Eiusdem vitio pestis persaepe medetur.

XXVI. ROSA

Jam nisi me fessum via longior indupediret,  
Scrupus atque novi terreret carminis ordo,  
Debueram viburna rosae pretiosa metallo  
395 Pactoh et niveis Arabum circumdare gemmis.  
Haec quia non Tyrio Germania tingitur ostro,  
Lata nec ardenti se Gallia murice iactat,  
Lutea purpurei reparat crementa quotannis  
Ubertim floris, tantum qui protinus omnes  
400 Herbarum vicisse comas virtute et odore  
Dicitur, ut merito florum flos esse feratur.  
Inficit hic oleum proprio de nomime dictum,  
Quod quam saepe fuit mortalibus utile curis,  
Nec meminisse potest hominum nec dicere quisquam.  
405 Huic famosa suos opponunt lilia flores,

### Radish

Here, in the last row of all, the radish  
Roots itself strongly and raises its leaves in a broad  
Canopy. Chew the root – though it's rather hot –  
To check a spasm of coughing; the troublesomeness  
Of that same complaint can also often be cured  
If you grind the seed in a potion and swallow it down.

### Rose

I am tired. To travel further this road would exhaust  
My failing strength; the rough path of untried song  
Frightens me. Else, as I ought, I should  
Crown my precious roses with gold from the Pactolus<sup>14</sup>  
And the sparkling jewels of Araby.

Since Germany  
Yields no tint of Tyrian purple and the wide realm  
Of France cannot boast the proud glow of murex,<sup>15</sup>  
For us the rose from year to year renews in abundance  
The yellow stamens of its crimson flower.  
Far and away the best of all in power and fragrance,  
It well deserves its name "the Flower of Flowers".  
It colors the oil which bears its name. No man can say,  
No man remember, how many uses there are  
For Oil of Roses as a cure for mankind's ailments.

Over against it grows the famous lily;  
Its flowers breathe a scent which hangs

Longius horum etiam spirans odor imbuit auras;  
Sed si quis nivei candentia germina fructus  
Triverit, aspersi mirabitur ilicet omnem  
Nectaris ille fidem celeri periisse meatu.

410 Hoc quia virginitas fama subnixa beata  
Flore nitet, quam si nullus labor exagitarit  
Sordis et illiciti non fregerit ardor amoris,  
Fragrat odore suo: porro si gloria pessum  
Integritatis eat, foetor mutabit odorem.

415 Haec duo namque probabiliū genera inelyta florum  
Ecclesiae summas signant per saecula palmas,  
Sanguine Martyrii carpit quae dona rosarum  
Liliaque in fidei gestat candore nitentis.

O Mater Virgo, fecundo germine Mater,

420 Virgo fide intacta, sponsi de nomine sponsa,  
Sponsa, columba, domus, regina, fidelis amica,  
Bello carpe rosas, laeta arripe lilia pace.  
Flos Tibi sceptrigero venit generamine lesse,  
Unicus antiquae reparator stirpis et auctor,

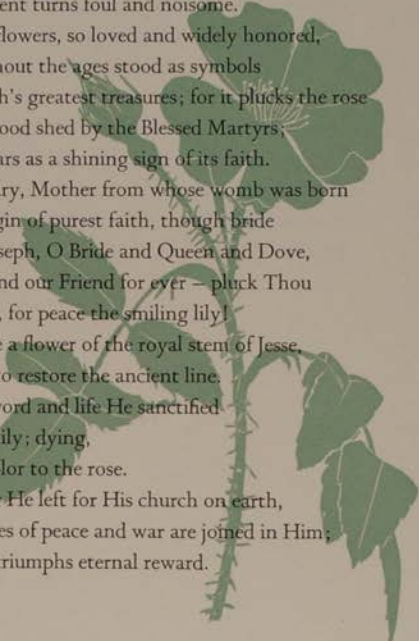
425 Lilia qui verbis vitaque dicavit amoena,  
Morte rosas tinguens, pacemque et proelia ~~membris~~  
Liquit in orbe suis, virtutem amplexus utramque,  
Praemiaque ambobus servans aeterna triumphis.

Long in the air; but he who crushes the gleaming buds  
Of its snow-white flowers will find to his amazement  
That the heavenly perfume, sweet as a scattering of nectar,  
Vanishes in a moment.

For in this flower  
Shines Chastity, strong in her sacred honor.  
If no unclean hand disturbs her, if  
No illicit passion does violence to her,  
The flower smells sweetly. But should her pride of innocence  
Be lost, the scent turns foul and noisome.

These two flowers, so loved and widely honored,  
Have throughout the ages stood as symbols  
Of the Church's greatest treasures; for it plucks the rose  
In token of blood shed by the Blessed Martyrs;  
The lily it wears as a shining sign of its faith.

O Holy Mary, Mother from whose womb was born  
The Son, Virgin of purest faith, though bride  
In name of Joseph, O Bride and Queen and Dove,  
Our Refuge and our Friend for ever – pluck Thou  
Roses for war, for peace the smiling lily!  
To Thee came a flower of the royal stem of Jesse,  
A single Son to restore the ancient line.  
By His holy word and life He sanctified  
The pleasant lily; dying,  
He gave its color to the rose.  
Peace and war He left for His church on earth,  
And the virtues of peace and war are joined in Him;  
In Him their triumphs eternal reward.



XXVII. COMMENDATIO OPVSCVLI

- Haec tibi servitii munuscula vilia parvi  
 430 Strabo tuus, Grimalde pater doctissime, servus  
 Pectore devoto, nullius ponderis offert:  
 Ut – cum consepito viridis consederis horti,  
 Subter opacatas frondenti vertice malos,  
 Persicus imparibus crines ubi dividit umbris,  
 435 Dum tibi cana legunt tenera lanugine poma  
 Ludentes pueri, schola laetabunda tuorum,  
 Atque volis ingentia mala capacibus indunt,  
 Grandia conantes includere corpora palmis –  
 Quo moneare habeas nostri, pater alme, laboris,  
 440 Dum relegis quae dedo volens; interque legendum  
 Ut vitiosa secas deposco, placentia firmes.  
 Te Deus aeterna faciat virtute virentem  
 Immarcescibilis palmam comprehendere vitae.  
 Hoc Pater, hoc Natus, hoc Spiritus annuat almus!



DEDICATION

This small gift, the worthless labor of an easy service,  
Is offered to you, most learned Father Grimald,  
By your humble servant, Strabo. A thing of no weight,  
But the heart that gives is sincere . . .

I can picture you  
Sitting there in the green enclosure of your garden<sup>16</sup>  
Under apples which hang in the shade of lofty foliage,  
Where the peach-tree turns its leaves this way and that  
In and out of the sun, and the boys at play,  
Your happy band of pupils, gather for you  
Fruits white with tender down and stretch  
Their hands to grasp the huge apples . . .

So I see you,  
And I offer you this, that as you read what I gladly  
Dedicate to you you may know of my labors. And, please,  
As you read, prune the faults and approve what is good.

God give you the crown of eternal life, the palm  
That is green for ever. To this my prayer may the Father,  
The Son, and the Holy Ghost grant Their

Amen.

- (1) A town in Lucania (South Italy), famous for its roses which flowered twice a year. Cf. Virgil *Georgic IV*, 119.
- (2) A son of Dionysus and Aphrodite, and god of fertility. His ithyphallic statues were often placed in Greek and Roman gardens.
- (3) Or, reading *aere diurno*, "by daily use of tools."
- (4) Common Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*).
- (5) *Gladius*: a sword. *Gladiolus*: a little sword.
- (6) Hyacinthos was a beautiful boy with whom Apollo fell in love. He was killed by a discus while Apollo and he were practising throws, and to immortalise his name Apollo created the flower out of his blood. The flower's petals bear the boy's initial Y, or – according to another version of the story – the first two letters of Apollo's cry of grief AI (*αἰαῖ*). Exactly what the ancient "hyacinth" was is uncertain: it was not, of course, the same as our modern flower of that name.
- (7) I.e., Proserpina (or Persephone) who was carried off by Hades, god of Death, to be his bride in the underworld. Eventually she was restored to her mother Ceres (or Demeter; not, as Walahfrid mistakenly calls her, Latona) – but only on condition that she spent a third of the year with Hades below the earth.
- (8) The pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) seems to have reached the Romans via the Phoenician colony of Carthage in North Africa. Hence its Latin name.
- (9) Latin *pappare* or *pappare*, to eat or chew. This derivation is almost certainly false.
- (10) We cannot be certain what Walahfrid meant by this – perhaps Alecost (or Costmary), *Tanacetum balsamita*.
- (11) Vulcan, blacksmith of the Gods, was supposed to have his forge in Etna, the Sicilian volcano. Walahfrid here calls him "Lemnian Mulciber". Mulciber was his other Roman name; the adjective Lemnian refers to a story in which his Greek equivalent, Hephaistos, son of Zeus and Hera, being hurled down from heaven by his father who was angered at his son's support of Hera in a family quarrel, fell on the isle of Lemnos.
- (12) *Auricula*, a little ear, is also used for *Primula vulgaris*. So this passage could mean "Join a sprig of pennyroyal with *Primula vulgaris*." But this does not seem likely because (a) we are not told what to do with this curious combination, and (b) the other sense accords better with Walahfrid's suggestion that this is merely an old wives' tale.
- (13) *Ambrosia* (the word means "immortality") was the food of the Olympian gods, sometimes described as if it were a plant. Our word

"tansy" is derived from the Greek ἀθανασία (athanasia) which also means immortality.

- (14) A river in Lydia, the modern Sarabat, famous for the grains of gold it carried in its sand.
- (15) References to the purple dye obtained by the ancients from the molluscs *Murex trunculus* and *Murex brandaris*.
- (16) The Vatican *codex* no. 469 reads *vilis* ("mean", "humble") instead of *viridis* ("green"), which makes sense, albeit not a very complimentary one! This is the only point, except for corrections of obvious errors and minor changes of orthography, where I have departed in my transliteration from the Vatican *codex* (see pages viii, ix and 15).

1811  
STRABI, GALLI POETAE ET THEO,  
LOGI DOCTISSIMI: AD GRIMAL,  
DVM COENOBII. S. GALLI  
ABBATEM HORTV,  
LVS.

AD LECTOREM. IOACH. VAD:

Amande lector: hic nouus Poeta te  
Salutat: & petit suum carmen uelis  
Non floccipendere: nec rigidis oculis  
Quicq̄ notare: nec malum subscribere:  
Cum sit malignorum piis non parcere/  
Et omne naso succulentum persequi.  
Quod si nolis uatem lepidum relinquere:  
Lacese iugis & Theoninum foue  
Virus: Tibi nocet: Nec optimis minus  
Laudis paratur conscientia duce.  
Nec est q̄ angat hocce uulgu insolens:  
Nec est quod ipse laudis expetat foris.

A

EDITIONS OF THE  
*HORTULUS*  
BY GEORGE H. M. LAWRENCE

This reports the known editions of the *Hortulus* as an independent work, or in a volume devoted solely to the work.

1510

1. HORTULUS. Wien, H. [Vietor] (Philovalus, *pseud.*), 1510.

Strabi/Galli poetae et theo- | logi doctissimi: ad  
grimal- | dum Coenobii. S. Galli | Abbatem Hortv- | lvs.  
[Leaf A1 recto.]

4° A-C<sup>4</sup>. Leaves: 12 [unnumbered]. Type: Roman.

Two states of this edition are known, a and b. Their differences comprise eight typographical corrections in 1b, reported by Quinby (1958). Both were published in 1510. The first (uncorrected) state [reproduced in facsimile in no. 5 (1926)] was published in 29 October 1510. The colophon of the second state (reproduced below) is identical with that of the first and it may be presumed that no appreciable time difference separates the two. For an ac-

**Imposita est extrema manus Strabi Hortulo Vien-  
nae Austriae: pridie Kalen. Nouēbris per Hier-  
onymum Philouallē. Anno. M. D. X.**

# Strabi fuldensis mo

nachi poete suauissimi. quondā Rabani  
Mauri auditoris Hortulus nuper apud Meluetios in S. Balli monasterio  
reptus. qui Carminis elegantia tam est delectabilis. q̄ doctrine cognoscenti-  
darum quarūsdam barbararum varietate utilis. Ad Symaldū Abbatem.



¶ Item Psalmus. 41. Sicut cervus desiderat r̄. et Psalmus. 112. Lau-  
date pueri r̄. per Venerabilem Bedam. sono Heroico decātanti-

899

count of the printer, Vietor, alias Philovalus, see Denis, Michael *Wien's Buchdruckergeschichte bis 1560*. Wien, 1780, Pp. 32-34. The Hunt copy is 1b, the corrected state.

1512

2. HORTULUS. Norinberge, Officinas Dñi. Joannis Weysenburger, 1512.

Strabi Fuldensis mo | nachí, poete suavissimi, quandam Rabani | Mauri auditoris Hortulus nuper apud Heluetios in S. Galli monasterio | repertus, qui carminis elegántia tam est delectabilis quam doctrinae cognescen | darum quarundam herbarum varietate vtilis. Ad Grymaldum Abbatem. | [full bordered woodcut 9.7 × 12.7 cm, genre gardening scene, four nuns within fenced enclosure, gardener standing outside covered gate] | † Jean Psalmus, 41, Sicut ceruus desiderat &c. et Psalmus 11 Lau- | date pueri &c. per Venerabilem Bedam, sono Heroico decãtanti- [Leaf A1 recto].

4° A-C<sup>4</sup>. Leaves 12 [unnumbered]. Type: Gothic black letter.

The colophon (see top of p. 72) identifies the work to have been published the 19th day of July 1512. It is followed by a woodcut (5.3 × 9.3 cm) of two winged cherubs holding a black shield bearing the printer's device (see p. 71). Copy at Hunt Botanical Library (cased, in modern vellum binding by T. W. Patterson).

Impressum Mozinberge. in oppido Imperiali. officina  
anaq; dñi Joannis Weyßenburger. Die nono.  
Aventis Julij. Anno salutis. 1512.



1527

HORTULUS. Basileae, 1527.

Not seen, and not counted here as an edition. Reported by Preuss (1834) and so repeated by others, as an independent 8° work. However, as cited by Choulant (1841, p. 231) and emphasized by Weil (1926, p. xxiv), this and the so-called 1530 Freiburg edition by Johannes Atrocianus (or Acronius) of Basel, are inclusions of the poem in editions of the *Macer Floridus* collections of poetry, often identified also as *De Herbarum virtutibus*. See Note at end of this treatment for other intermediate publication sources for the *Hortulus*.

1834

3. HORTULUS. Wirceburg, J. Stahel, 1834.



Walafrid Strabi | Hortulus. | Carmen, ad cod. ms.  
 veterumque | editionum fide recensitum, lectionis |  
 varietate notisque instructum | [Swollen long rule] Acce-  
 dunt | Analecta ad antiquitatis | florae Germanicae | et |  
 capita aliquot Macri nondum edita. | [short thin rule] |  
 Auctore | F. A. Reuss | M.D. | [long swollen rule] |  
 Wirceburgi. | Apud J. Stahel. | [short thin rule] | 1834.  
 8° π² 1-6<sup>s</sup> 7<sup>s</sup> Pages [i-iv] 1-5 [6] 7-8 [9] 10-11 [12] 13-31  
 [32-33] 34-40 [End of *Hortulus*. 41-43] 44-89 [90-93]  
 94-105 [106-107 (Corrigenda)]. Text, praefatio, foot-  
 notes, and corrigenda in Latin.

This edition is the first critical and scholarly study of the *Hortulus*, and although rare today it was reprinted, as Mr. Blunt has noted, in 1852 and 1884, and was the basis of Sierp's analysis of 1925 (see p. 16). Reuss is high in his praise of Walahfrid, noting "I cannot get over it [my amazement], how in this century which Baronius calls iron-like in barrenness, lead-like in evil, and dark in literary productivity, such a poet emerged."

Gabathuler (1941) considered this edition to have been based on the 1463 mss. now in Munich, written by or for Hartmann Schedel (Bayrische Staatsbibliothek *Codex Latinus Monacensis 666*), and itself derived from the 11th century Leipzig manuscript (Stadtbibliothek Leipzig, I, 4°, 53). Copy at Hunt Botanical Library in contemporary plain wrappers. Boxed.

4. HORTULUS or the Little Garden. [Wembley Hill], The Stanton Press, 1924.

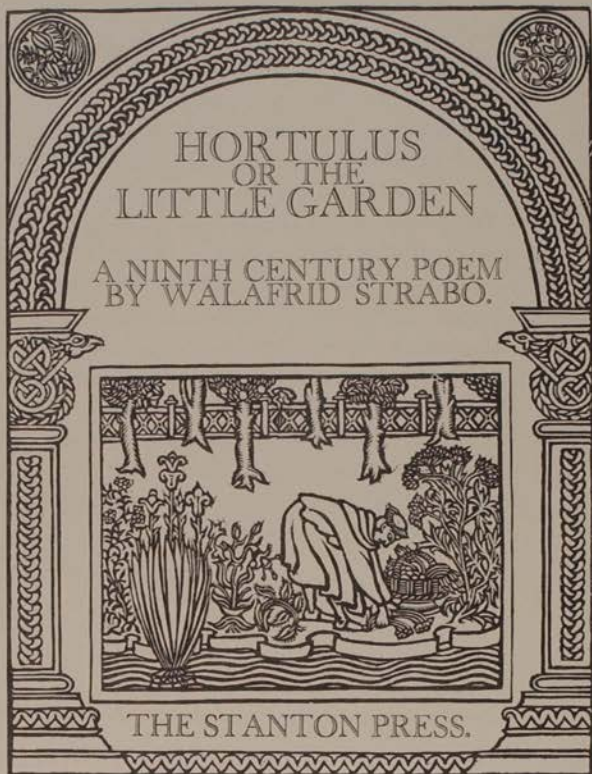
Hortulus | or the | Little Garden. | A ninth century poem | by Walafrid Strabo. | The Stanton Press.

F° a<sup>1</sup>-k<sup>2</sup> Pages (25.5 × 19.5 cm) [1-4] 5-6 [7-8 (*blank*) 9 10 (*blank*) 11-12] 13-38 [39-40 (*blank*) 41 42 (*blank*)].

The subtitle page opens with "Hortulus is here for the first time done into English verse from the Latin by Richard Stanton Lambert and decorated with cuts on wood by Elinor Lambert MCMXXIII." This is a limited edition of 132 copies, printed by hand in red and black by Richard and Elinor Lambert, Wembley Hill, Middlesex, England. The colophon reports "Finished January 5th, 1924." Lambert, in his Introduction, notes that his translation is "from the text of Duemmler published in the Monumenta Germaniae Historia in 1884." Thus, the Lambert translation, which is very free and not wholly accurate, is based on the Reuss edition (1834). Blunt (p. 77) postulates its production may have been prompted by Luxmoore's account of 1922.

Copy at Hunt Botanical Library, in original cloth and paper binding. Boxed.

5. HORTULUS. München, Verlag der Münchner Drucke, 1926.



Title page, wood engraving, of the Lambert edition (no. 4), 1924  
Hunt Botanical Library

Pages [I-IV] v-xii [12 lvs. facsimile] xiii-xxi [xxii (facsimile title-page 1512 ed., reduced)] xxiii-xiv.

Des Walahfrid von der Reichenau | Hortulus | Gedichte über die Kräuter | seines Klostergartens | vom Jahre 827 | Wiedergabe des ersten Wiener Druckes | vom Jahre 1510 | Eingeleitet und medizinisch, botanisch und | druckgeschichtlich gewürdigt von Karl | Sudhoff, H. Marzell, E. Weil. München, Verlag der Münchner Drucke, 1926.

8° [I-IV], v-xii, [12 lvs. facs. 1510 ed.], xii-xxiv.

This facsimile is that believed to be the first (uncorrected) state of the first (1510) edition of the *Hortulus*, taken from the copy in the Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. The Foreword by Heinrich Marzell provides a biographical account of Walahfrid Strabo, a brief history of the poem, and an account of the plants described by Walahfrid together with modern identifications. It is followed by a brief history, by Ernst Weil, of the publication of the 1510 and 1512 editions.

Copy at Hunt Botanical Library, in original wrappers, modern binding in green buckram.

1933

6. LE PETIT JARDINIER. Paris, A. Legrand, 1933.

Le petit jardinier (*Hortulus*) de Walahfrid Strabus... Texte latin et traduction française, précédés d'une étude sur la vie et sur les oeuvres pratiques de l'auteur et accompagnés de commentaires. By Henri Leclerc, M.D. Paris, A. Legrand. 1933.

8° (?) [3] 110 pp. frontispiece, 2 plates

This, the first French edition, has not been seen by me.  
Data are from the Library of Congress catalogue.

1942

7. HORTULUS. St. Gallen, H. Tschudy & Co., 1942.

Walahfrid Strabo | Hortulus | Vom Gartenbau | Erstmals veröffentlicht vom Joachim von Watt (Vadianus) | Herausgegeben, übersetzt und eingeleitet von | Werner Näf und Matthäus Gabathuler | Verlag H. Tschudy & Co. St. Gallen 1942.

4° Pages [2] 3-7 [8-115] 116-128 [129-130] 131-146 [147-148] 25 plates

This typographically beautiful and scholarly volume embodies the first new German translation of the *Hortulus* to be published in more than a century, made by Werner Näf, and based on the Vatican Codex 469. The German text is on recto pages, with the Latin transcription on the facing versos. Each of the 25 plants is represented by a redrawing of woodcuts from the herbals of Brunfels (1539), Fuchs (1534), or Bock (1551). Matthäus Gabathuler provided an account of the St. Gall manuscript discovered by Vadianus and, although he did not report the two states of the 1510 edition, he did explain the shortcomings of both the 1510 and 1512 editions.

8. HORTULUS. St. Gallen, H. Tschudy & Co., 1957.  
 4° [A reprint of no. 7, the type reset but collation unchanged. A new colophon is provided.]

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Note: In addition to its appearance as an independent monograph, the *Hortulus* was published without translation (taken usually from the 1510 edition) in various compilations of poetry, of works on medicinal plants, and in collected works of medieval or ecclesiastical writings. The earliest of these works are mentioned above under the date of 1527. Later collected works appeared from 1530 onward. The first of these is in Eobanus Hessus *Collectio diaetetica* Argentiori, 1530 (and in editions of 1533, Paris; 1533, Francofurt). This was reprinted by Christian Egenolph of Frankfurt in 1564 and 1571. In 1547 it was issued from Venice in the *Collectio Aldina*. Andreas Rivinus included it in his *Ars veterum nonnullorum ...* Leipzig 1655. In the period of 1677 to 1725 it was included in at least two published collections of Walahfrid Strabo's ecclesiastical writings.

## THE PLANTS OF THE *HORTULUS*

Twenty-nine garden plants (mostly medicinal herbs) are mentioned by name in this poem, including the two commonest fruit trees of that day – the apple and the peach. Certainly these are not all of the kinds grown by Walahfrid, nor by any means the only ones available at the Reichenau monastery. A few are only of plants that were known to him and are mentioned in passing (such as the Indian pepper and pomegranate). Surely the kinds treated in detail are those that provided greatest personal appeal to him and often, as for the nettle, for reasons given by him in detail. Few of the ornamentals then grown in gardens are reported by Walahfrid, but his poem is not intended to be an inventory, nor did he purport to provide his reader with new insights into the composition of monastery gardens in general. His is a work of literary art, and in its accuracy of report it corroborates what is known from other contemporary writings on the subject.

Numerous scholarly studies have been made of the plants of this poem, and of medieval monastery gardens in general. References to them are given in the accounts cited under References (pp. 83-85), for Berendes (1908), Christ (1923), Fischer-Benzon (1894), Kerner (1855), Lauenstein (1900), Marzell (1926), Meyer (1856), and Stearn (1965).

The following list is an alphabetic enumeration of the common names as given in Mr. Payne's English translation. Each is equated with its modern Latin equivalent.

absinthe (*Artemesia absinthium* L.) Wormwood  
 agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria* L.)  
 ambrosia (?*Tanacetum vulgare*)  
 apple (*Malus pumila* Mill.)  
 betony (*Stachys officinalis* (L.) Franchet; *Betonica officinalis* L. a synonym)  
 catmint (*Nepeta cataria* L.) Catnip  
 celery (*Apium graveolens* L.)  
 chervil (*Anthriscus cerefolium* (L.) Hoffmann)  
 clary (*Salvia sclarea* L.)  
 costus hortensis (probably *Chrysanthemum balsamitum* (L.) L.; *Tanacetum balsamita* L. a synonym)  
 fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*, Mill)  
 frankincense (*Boswellia carteri* Birdw.)  
 gourd (*Lagenaria siceraria* (Molina) Standley; *L. vulgaris* Ser. a synonym)  
 grape (*Vitis vinifera* L.)  
 horehound (*Marrubium vulgare* L.)  
 Indian pepper (*Piper nigrum* L.)  
 iris (*Iris germanica* L.)  
 lily (*Lilium candidum* L.) Madonna lily  
 lovage (*Levisticum officinale* Koch)  
 marrubium (*Marrubium vulgare* L.) Horehound  
 melon (*Cucumis melo* L.) Muskmelon  
 mint (*Mentha viridis* L. or *M. piperita* L.)  
 mother of herbs (*Artemesia vulgaris*) Mugwort  
 nettle (*Urtica dioica* L.)  
 peach (*Prunus persica* L.)  
 pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium* L.)



poppy (*Papaver somniferum* L.) Opium poppy  
pomegranate (*Punica granatum* L.)  
radish (*Raphanus sativus* L.)  
rose (*Rosa gallica* L.) French rose  
rue (*Ruta graveolens* L.)  
sage (*Salvia officinalis* L.)  
southernwood (*Artemesia abrotanum* L.)  
tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare* L.)  
wormwood (*Artemesia absinthium* L.)

G. H. M. LAWRENCE



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## COLOPHON

Printed by Joh. Enschedé en Zonen, Haarlem.  
Typefaces: Romulus and Cancelleresca Bastarda.  
Bound by Proost en Brandt, Amsterdam.  
Paper used for book: Superior quality woodfree offset.  
Paper used for cover: Linson vellum.  
Cover designed by Arnold Bank.  
Typography H. Clewits.

Edition limited to 1500 copies.









