



THE POEMS OF
JOHN MILTON



EDITED BY
JOHN CARDY
AND
ALASTAIR FOWLER

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Preface

In preparing the text we have throughout this volume followed a somewhat unusual plan. We have modernized old spelling, but have reproduced old punctuation with diplomatic faithfulness. Usually a different, even an opposite, plan is followed. A modernized text is commonly modernized throughout; and it is even possible to find cases where an editor has retained old spelling but modernized the punctuation. But we believe that if the matter is considered in the light of linguistic theory the plan adopted in the present edition will normally appear preferable. Of course some readers need freely modernized texts, just as scholars for certain purposes need texts scrupulously diplomatic. In general, however, it is best to modernize only the spelling.

Spelling and punctuation present quite separate problems to an editor for the good reason that they have quite different functions linguistically. Punctuation, like word order, inflection and function words, is a class of grammatical symbols. It is an organic part of the grammatical system, and as such its mode of operation is subtle and complex. Not only does it obey conventions of logic but also others whereby it renders the pauses and junctures and tones of spoken language (see the emphasis laid in, e.g., D. W. Brown, W. C. Brown, and D. Bailey, *Form in Modern English* (1958) or H. Whitehall, *Structural Essentials of English* (New York 1956)). Consequently we ought to be almost as reluctant to alter the punctuation of an old text as we would be to alter, say, its word order. Moreover, punctuation is less standardized than the other types of grammatical symbol; which means that the gain from modernizing is reduced, while the difficulty of finding exactly equivalent modern conventions is increased. And unless he finds exact equivalents the modernizing editor must continually falsify the meaning (not to mention the rhythm) of the text. With subtle complex poetry such as Milton's, decisions will have to be made about tone, juncture and logical structure for which there is no basis in the punctuation of the early editions, and distinctions introduced that the poet himself may have taken care to exclude. Time and again ambiguities will have to be removed and enhancing suggestions lost. Yet even these are not all the problems with which the modernizing editor is faced. For he has next to maintain a sensible rank-ordering or relative frequency among the modern punctuation points he uses. He could make some sort of version of the meaning of *Paradise Lost*, for example, if he allowed himself a very high relative incidence of dashes or of commas. But this he may not do; since the

overall effect would be breathy and talkative in the one instance, unrhythmical and pedantic in the other.

Our aim, then, has been to provide a text that retains evidential value with respect to punctuation, equally with word order and the other grammatical symbols. The cost that has to be paid for this (and we regard it as a relatively low cost) is that the reader may at first experience an occasional temporary difficulty in making out Milton's syntax. But when he overcomes the difficulty it will at least be Milton's syntax he has understood, and not the editors'.

The linguistic function of spelling is by comparison much cruder and simpler. It is not a grammatical symbol but a vocabulary symbol. That is to say, all that can generally be expected of orthographic signals is that they should enable the reader to make the right vocabulary selection. Now modern spelling is perfectly well able to do this for a seventeenth-century text. It is usually easy to find exact modern equivalents for old spellings, because orthographic signals are essentially simple binary signals. True, spelling also conveys some information about how words sound. But in English the relation between orthography and the phonetic pattern it renders is remote. Certainly with our knowledge of the pronunciation of the seventeenth century in its present state there can be few instances where the old spelling indicates the sound to a modern reader better than the new. (We have drawn attention to some of these instances in the notes.) The typical case, on which editorial practice must be based, is instead exemplified by *eternity*, PL viii 406, where the early editions have *eternitie*. It is probable that Milton intended a pronunciation something like *etarnity*: or perhaps even *etarmity*, since (according to Aubrey) 'he pronounc'd the letter R very hard'. But how are we to tell this from the old spelling?

Some will object that while in general it may be all very well to treat punctuation and spelling differently, it will not do for Milton. What about his special orthographic rules and his preferences for certain current forms rather than others? A great deal of attention was focused on these matters by Helen Darbishire's and Bernard Wright's editions, in which the spelling purported to be normalized in accordance with Milton's wishes. Each text was based upon an ingenious system of idiosyncratic spellings; and between the two systems there was an impressive area of agreement. If either could be mastered, it seemed reasonable to hope for a better grasp of the intentions of the author of the spellings. The special rules of spelling and capitalization fell into five main groups (1) those distinguishing homophones; (2) those making grammatical distinctions, especially between the preterites (ending in *-d*) and past participles (in *-t*) of certain weak verbs; (3) those indicating prosodic stress; (4) those

preferred for their phonetic value, etymological value, modernity, or cultural flavour; and (5) those distinguishing emphatic forms of the personal pronouns—*mee*, *hee*, *wee*, *yee* or *you*, *their*—from unemphatic *me*, *he*, *we*, *ye*, *this*. Much of the information that could be gleaned from the special rules was, it is true, redundant; and almost all of it was complicated by doubts as to whether one was dealing with a blunder on the printer's part or a finesse on Milton's. But there were a good many places where the special rules had some bearing, even a bearing on interpretation of the meaning.

Miss Darbishire's edition, of which the first volume appeared in 1953, provoked controversy. Uneasiness was expressed at the readiness with which she attributed to Milton's printer or amanuenses only the many exceptions to the spelling rules, and not the rules themselves. Then in 1955 Robert Martin Adams's *Ikon: John Milton and the Modern Critics* questioned the whole theory of special orthography. Arguing closely on the basis of internal evidence, he seemed to many to demolish the theory, particularly with respect to the distinction between emphatic and unemphatic pronoun spellings (Adams 61–76). However, the Preface to Professor Wright's edition in 1956 set out a modified, and in some ways even more complex, system of idiosyncratic spellings. The *coup de grâce* to the special orthography theory was not delivered until 1963, by John T. Shawcross's modestly titled 'One aspect of Milton's spelling: idle final "E"', *PMLA* lxxviii (1963) 501–10. Neither Miss Darbishire nor Professor Wright had cared to test the statistical bases of their theories. But Shawcross's statistical comparison of Milton's own holograph spellings and the spellings of the printed editions showed that the latter could only reasonably be attributed to amanuenses or compositors, since they were completely at variance with Milton's own practice. The same applies to the spelling corrections at the press, including the notorious alteration of *we* to *wee* at *Paradise Lost* ii 414. The issue seems as settled now as any in literary criticism.

Accordingly we have paid no attention in the present edition to spelling variants in the early editions. The early punctuation, on the other hand, for reasons explained above, is reproduced with diplomatic faithfulness; though this should not be taken to imply that it is necessarily Milton's punctuation. In the few instances where a clear misprint in the early editions has had to be corrected, a note calls attention to the emendation.

For the rest, we have retained the early spelling of proper names, as well as of other words that have changed their form in a way that might have a bearing on sound or sense (e.g. *ammiral*; *highth*), even if the obsolete form is probably only a spelling variant. A very few obsolete words and words intended by Milton as archaisms are also inevitably given in

old spelling; but the forms are those selected as commonest in *OED*, and have no evidential value. Similarly with obsolete verb terminals, which for uniformity and intelligibility are given in standard spelling, regardless of contractions and elisions, unless the modern spelling is likely to confuse the reader by suggesting an extra-metrical syllable: thus *diest* is printed for 'di'st' (*PL* vii 544) *winged* for 'wing'd' (*Comus* 729); but *Bless'd* (*Psalms* i 1) and *sat'st* (*PL* i 21). Similarly 'the' is printed for 'th'. Old hyphenated words now amalgamated are given their new form. Where old spelling indicates two words and modern spelling one, however, the old word division is kept for its potential prosodic or other interest (e.g. *mean while*). Italicization of proper names is not retained: it is a typographical accidental not found in the MSS. But a note is given where its presence or absence may have a bearing on, for example, personification.

(The above refers only to the text, and to quotations from M.'s poems. In the notes generally, the spelling and italicization of the edition cited are retained, with *v*, *u*, *i*, *j*, *s*, and *f* normalized in the usual way.)

Our textual policy may seem an oversimplification. But editorial policy is bound to be decided in terms of broad simple issues; even though it is a different matter with editorial practice in individual cases. And if the policy seems a compromise, this too is inevitable. For no text is completely modern unless the editor is prepared to change word order and vocabulary; and none is completely diplomatic unless he resorts to photographic facsimile (perhaps not even then). We have tried to arrive at the best practicable compromise between the demand for evidential value and the demand for readability.

In the headnotes and footnotes, the titles of works that we have had to cite fairly frequently have been abbreviated to the author's or editor's surname. Where similar abbreviation has been needed for a second, third or fourth work by the same author or editor, we have used the surname followed by the appropriate arabic numeral above the line. A list of these abbreviations will be found at pp. 1168-75.

Reference-books that we have used include: D. H. Stevens, *A Reference Guide to Milton* (Chicago, Ill. 1930); Harris F. Fletcher, *Contributions to a Milton Bibliography 1800-1930*, University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature xvi (1931); Calvin Huckabay, *John Milton. A Bibliographical Supplement 1929-1957*, Duquesne Studies Philological Series i (1960); John Bradshaw, *A Concordance to the Poetical Works of John Milton* (1894); Lane Cooper, *A Concordance of the Latin, Greek, and Italian Poems of Milton* (Halle 1923); A. H. Gilbert, *A Geographical Dictionary of Milton* (New Haven, Conn. 1919); E. S. Le Comte, *A Milton Dictionary* (1961); J.

Milton French, *The Life Records of John Milton* (New Brunswick, N. J. 1949-58); and Harris F. Fletcher, *The Intellectual Development of John Milton*, Vols. i and ii (Urbana, Ill. 1956-61).

In preparing our edition we have greatly profited from the pertinent observations of Mr F. W. Bateson, general editor of the series of Annotated English Poets. We have received generous assistance from Professor Richard Beck of the Royal University of Malta, who placed his unpublished edition of *Paradise Regained* at our disposal. Learned advice as well as kindly interest was offered by Mrs E. E. Duncan-Jones of Birmingham University; Mr George Merton; Mr B. D. H. Miller, the Revd L. M. Styler, Mr D. L. Stockton and Mr J. V. Peach of Brasenose College; and Mr J. C. Maxwell of Balliol College. For instruction on some points in Milton's Greek and Italian poems and translations from Hebrew we applied to Mr W. S. Barrett of Keble College, Professor C. Grayson of Magdalen and the Revd L. H. Brockington of Wolfson. We should like to express our gratitude to each. The remaining errors, needless to say, are ours.

St. John's College
Brasenose College
Oxford
August 1966

J. C.
A. D. S. F.

In the present edition we have had an opportunity to make a number of corrections, some of them affecting the text. We owe many of these improvements to the vigilance and kindness of scholars who have communicated information: particularly Masahiko Agari, Gordon Campbell and Jasper Griffin.

Oxford
Edinburgh
August 1979

J. C.
A. D. S. F.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations will be found, in addition to standard abbreviations for books of the Bible, classical works and literary periodicals.

1637 = *A Maske Presented at Ludlow Castle* (1637).

1645 = *Poems of Mr John Milton* (1645).

Ed I = *Paradise Lost*. First edition (1667).

1671 = *Paradise Regain'd. A Poem in IV Books. To which is added Samson Agonistes* (1671).

1673 = *Poems, &c. Upon Several Occasions* (1673).

Ed II = *Paradise Lost*. Second edition (1674).

Trin. MS = The Trinity Manuscript.

MS = The Manuscript of *Paradise Lost* i.

Ad Pat = *Ad Patrem*.

Dam = *Epitaphium Damonis*

Id Plat = *De Idea Platonica quemadmodum Aristoteles intellexit*.

Leon = *Ad Leonoram Romae canentem*.

Natur = *Naturam non pati senium*.

PL = *Paradise Lost*.

PR = *Paradise Regained*.

Prae E = *In obitum Praesulis Eliensis*.

Proc Med = *In obitum Procancellarii medici*.

Prod Bomb = *In Proditionem Bombardicam*.

Prol = *Prolusion*.

Q Nov = *In quintum Novembris*.

SA = *Samson Agonistes*.

Salsill = *Ad Salsillum poetam Romanum aegrotantem. Scazontes*.

Columbia = *The Works of John Milton*, ed. F. A. Patterson *et al.* (New York 1931-8).

EB = *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Eleventh edition (1910-11).

F.Q. = *The Faerie Queene*.

Migne = *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris 1844-55).

Migne P. G. = *Patrologia Graeca*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris 1857-66).

Yale = *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. Douglas Bush *et al.* (New Haven 1953-).

Selected Journal Abbreviations

AR	<i>American Review</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
E & S	<i>Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association</i>
EC	<i>Essays in Criticism</i>
ELH	<i>A Journal of English Literary History</i>
EM	<i>English Miscellany</i>
HLQ	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
JEGP	<i>Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
JHI	<i>Journal of the History of Ideas</i>
JWI	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
KR	<i>Kenyon Review</i>
MLN	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MLQ	<i>Modern Language Quarterly</i>
MLR	<i>Modern Language Review</i>
N & Q	<i>Notes and Queries</i>
PMLA	<i>PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
PQ	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
RES	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
SP	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
TLS	<i>The Times Literary Supplement</i>
TRSL	<i>Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature</i>
UTQ	<i>University of Toronto Quarterly</i>
UTSE	<i>University of Texas Studies in English</i>

Chronological Table of Milton's Life and Chief Publications

- 1608 (9 December) Born at his father's house, The Spreading Eagle, Bread St, London.
- 1615 (24 November) Brother Christopher born.
- 1618 Portrait painted by Cornelius Janssen.
- 1620 Enters St Paul's School, under Alexander Gill. The date is uncertain: some would put it as early as 1615, but see *Defensio Secunda* 'after I was 12 years old I rarely retired to bed from my studies till midnight' (Columbia viii 119). Friendship with Charles Diodati begins. Either now, or earlier, begins to receive tuition at home from, among others, Thomas Young.
- 1625 (12 February) Admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge, under tutorship of Chappell.
- 1626 Perhaps rusticated temporarily. Removed to tutorship of Tovey.
- 1627 Unpopular with fellow-students: dissatisfied with Cambridge syllabus (see *Prolusions* i, iii and iv, Columbia xii 118-49, 158-99 Yale i 218-33, 240-56).
(11 June) Lends future father-in-law, Richard Powell, £500.
- 1628 (June) Writes verses for one of his College fellows (*Id Plat?*).
- 1629 So-called Onslow-portrait painted, also portrait painted by unknown artist (now in Christ's College).
(26 March) Takes B.A.
- 1630 Portrait, said to be M., painted by Daniel Mytens (now in St Paul's School: the date is uncertain).
(16 April) Charles Diodati matriculates at Geneva.
(10 June) Edward King given a fellowship which it has been assumed (without evidence) M. expected or desired.
- 1631 (November) Brother Christopher admitted to Inner Temple.
- 1632 *On Shakespeare* published.
(3 July) Takes M.A.
Retires to Horton for life of study; see *Defensio Secunda* 'I left with most of the fellows of the College, by whom I had been cultivated with more than indifference, a regretful desire for my presence. At my father's house in the country, to which he had gone to pass his old age, I gave myself up with the most complete leisure to reading through the Greek and Latin writers; with this proviso, however, that I occasionally exchanged the country for the town,

- for the sake of buying books or of learning something new in mathematics or music, in which I then delighted' (Columbia viii 120).
- 1634 (29 September) *Comus* acted.
- 1637 *Comus* published.
(3 April) Mother dies.
(September) Thinking of entering an Inn of Court (see letter to Diodati dated 29 September, Columbia xii 28, Yale i 327).
- 1638 *Lycidas* printed in *Iusta Edouardo King Naufrago*.
(1 February) Lends Sir John Cope and others £150 at 8 per cent.
(April) Meets Sir Henry Wotton; is kindly treated (see Wotton's letter to M., Columbia i 476-7, Yale i 339-43).
(May) Sails for France; meets John, Viscount Scudamore, in Paris; calls on Hugo Grotius.
(June-July) To Nice, Genoa, Leghorn, Pisa.
(27 August) Charles Diodati buried.
(August-September) Arrives in Florence; makes friends (see *Defensio Secunda* 'There I quickly contracted intimacy with many truly noble and learned men. I also assiduously attended their private academies, an institution which is most highly to be praised there . . . Time shall never efface the memory of you, James Gaddi, Charles Dati, Frescobaldi, Cultellino, Bonmatthei, Clementillo, Francini, and numerous others', Columbia viii 122). Visits Galileo (see *Areopagitica*, Columbia iv 329-30).
(October) To Siena, Rome. Meets Lucas Holstein, one of the Vatican librarians. Attends Barberini concert. Entertained in English College.
(December) To Naples. Meets Manso.
- 1639 Receives news of Diodati's death. Gives up plan of crossing to Sicily and Greece (see *Defensio Secunda* 'The sad news of the English civil war recalled me; for I thought it shameful, while my countrymen were fighting for their liberty at home, that I should be peacefully travelling for culture', Columbia viii 124).
(January-February) Revisits Rome.
(March) Returns to Florence. Again reads poems at Svogliati academy.
(April) Excursion to Lucca (home of Diodati family). To Bologna, Ferrara, Venice (stays a month, and ships parcel of books home).
(May) To Verona and Milan. Travels through Lombardy.
(June) Visits theologian John Diodati in Geneva (uncle of Charles)
(July) Returns home.

- 1640 Moves to St Bride's churchyard: begins tutoring nephews. Takes 'a large house' to contain self, books and pupils, who include 'the Earl of Barrimore . . . Sir Thomas Gardiner of Essex, and others' (Darbishire 24-5).
Occasionally leaves this secluded 'pretty Garden-House . . . in Aldersgate-Street, at the end of an Entry' and drops 'into the society of some young sparks of his acquaintance, the chief whereof were Mr Alphry, and Mr Miller, two Gentlemen of Gray's-Inn, the Beaus of those times,' with whom he likes to 'keep a Gawdy-day' (Darbishire 62).
Poem on Hobson printed in *A Banquet of Jests*.
Epitaphium Damonis printed? The first edition is undated but probably belongs to 1640.
(30 June) Takes Powell's lands in Wheatley by mortgage.
- 1641 (May) *Of Reformation* published.
Of Prelatical Episcopacy published.
(July) *Animadversions* published.
- 1642 (February) *The Reason of Church Government* published.
(May?) *Apology For Smectymnuus* published. Marries Mary Powell ('At Whitsuntide it was, or a little after, that he took a Journey into the Country; no body about him certainly knowing the Reason: . . . after a Month's stay, home he returns a Married-man, that went out a Batchelor', Darbishire 63).
(July?) Mary returns home.
(October?) M. sends for her without success.
(21 October) Brother Christopher's name on Reading muster-roll: supporting Royal cause.
- 1643 Brother-in-law Richard Powell doing intelligence work for Royalists.
(1 August) *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* published.
- 1644 (2 February) *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* (second edition) published.
(5 June) *Tract Of Education* published. About this time M.'s attempts to seize the Powell property for debt begin: they continue till 16 July 1647, when he obtains the writ he requires.
(6 August) *Judgment of Martin Bucer Concerning Divorce* published.
(13 August) Divorce books attacked by Herbert Palmer in sermon before Parliament.
(24-26 August) Stationers petition against his divorce books.
(September) Begins to notice failure of sight (cp. letter to Philaras, 28 September 1654, Columbia xii 66).
(23 November) *Areopagitica* published.

- (28 December) Summoned before the House of Lords for examination: 'soon dismissed' (Darbishire 24).
- 1645 Plans to marry 'one of Dr Davis's Daughters, a very Handsome and Witty Gentlewoman' (Darbishire 66). Wife returns.
(4 March) *Tetrachordon* and *Colasterion* published.
(September?) Moves to larger house at Barbican.
(6 October) *Poems of Mr John Milton, Both English and Latin* . . . 1645 registered for publication.
- 1646 (2 January) *Poems* . . . 1645 published.
(29 July) Daughter Anne born.
- 1647 (1 January) Father-in-law Richard Powell dies.
(13 March) Father dies, leaving M. the Bread St house and a 'moderate Estate' (Darbishire 32-3).
(16 July) Obtains extent on Powell's property in Oxfordshire.
(September-October) Moves from Barbican to a smaller house in High Holborn 'among those that open backward into Lincolns-Inn Fields, here he liv'd a private and quiet Life, still prosecuting his Studies and curious Search into Knowledge' (Darbishire 68).
(20 November) Takes possession of Powell property at Wheatley.
- 1648 (25 October) Daughter Mary born.
- 1649 (13 February) *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* published.
(13 March) Invited to be Secretary for the Foreign Tongues by the Council of State.
(15 March) Appointed Secretary (at £288 p.a.). Ordered to answer *Eikon Basilike*.
(11 May) Salmasius's *Defensio Regia* appears in England.
(16 May) *Observations on the Articles of Peace* published.
(6 October) *Eikonoklastes* published.
(19 November) Given lodgings for official work in Scotland Yard.
- 1650 (8 January) Ordered by Council of State to reply to Salmasius.
- 1651 (24 February) *Defensio pro populo Anglicano* published.
(16 March) Son John born.
(17 December) Moves, for the sake of health, to 'a pretty Garden-house in Petty-France in Westminster . . . opening into St James's Park' (Darbishire 71).
- 1652 (28 February) Becomes totally blind at about this date.
(2 May) Daughter Deborah born.
(5 May) Wife dies.
(16 June) Son John dies on or about this date.
(August) Pierre du Moulin's *Regii Sanguinis Clamor* published, in reply to M.'s *Defensio*. M. ordered to reply by Council of State.

- 1653 (21 February) Writes letter recommending Andrew Marvell to John Bradshaw (this is the first evidence of M.'s acquaintance with Marvell).
(3 September) Salmasius dies.
- 1654 (30 May) *Defensio Secunda* published.
- 1655 Allowed substitute in Secretaryship (Darbshire 28). Takes up private studies again. Starts compiling Latin dictionary and Greek lexicon; works on *De Doctrina*, and possibly on *Paradise Lost* (Darbshire 29).
(17 April) Salary reduced from £288 to £150, but made pension for life.
(8 August) *Defensio Pro Se* published.
- 1656 (12 November) Marries Katherine Woodcock.
- 1657 (19 October) Daughter Katherine born.
- 1658 (14 January) Lends Thomas Maundy £500 and takes mortgage on property in Kensington as security.
(3 February) Wife dies.
(17 March) Daughter Katherine dies.
(May?) Edits and publishes his MS of Sir Walter Raleigh's *Cabinet Council*.
- 1659 (16 February?) *A Treatise of Civil Power* published.
(August) *The Likeliest Means to Remove Hirelings out of the Church* published.
(20 October) Writes *Letter to a Friend, Concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth* (not published until 1698).
- 1660 (3 March) *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* published.
(April) Publishes *Brief Notes Upon a late Sermon* in reply to Matthew Griffith's *Fear of God and the King*.
(May) Goes into hiding in friend's house in Bartholomew Close to escape retaliation (Darbshire 74).
(16 June) Parliament takes steps to have M. arrested and *Defensio pro populo Anglicano* and *Eikonoklastes* burned.
(27 August) Copies of M.'s books burned by hangman in London.
(29 August) Act of Indemnity does not exclude M.
(September) Takes house in Holborn, near Red Lion Fields. Moves from there to Jewin St (Darbshire 74-5).
(October?) Arrested, and imprisoned.
(15 December) Parliament orders that M. should be released.
(17 December) Andrew Marvell protests in Parliament about M.'s excessive jail fees (£150).
- 1662 Becomes acquainted with Thomas Ellwood: begins tutoring him

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THE MINOR POEMS AND SAMSON AGONISTES

Edited by John Carey

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presented at Ludlow
Castle, 1634</p> <p>51 Psalm cxiv</p> <p>52 Haec ego mente . . . [A post-
script to his love poems]</p> <p>53 Lycidas</p> <p>54 Fix here</p> <p>55 Ad Leonoram Romae
canentem [To Leonora
singing at Rome]</p> <p>56 Ad Eandem [To the Same]</p> <p>57 Ad Eandem [To the Same]</p> <p>58 Ad Salsillum poetam
Romanum . . . [To
Salzilli, a Roman poet . . .]</p> |
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