Preface

Georgia Irby  
College of William and Mary, glirby@wm.edu

Mary English  
Montclair State University, englishm@montclair.edu

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A LITTLE LATIN READER
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

With the second edition of *A Little Latin Reader*, we remain committed to a simple, elegant presentation of lively and interesting passages to encourage students to read as much authentic Latin as possible at the very beginning of their language study. While retaining the original structure and all the original passages, we have added eighty-one new passages (284 total) in order to ensure a more even presentation of grammatical forms. Throughout the volume, the notes and contextualizing sentences have been improved; we have streamlined the vocabulary notes by working closely with the Dickinson College Latin Core Vocabulary List (http://dcc.dickinson.edu/latin-vocabulary-list), which distills Latin vocabulary into a manageable “core vocabulary” of the one thousand words that appear most frequently in standard Latin texts. We assume increasing knowledge of vocabulary as the student progresses through the *Reader*. These core vocabulary words are fully cited in the Glossary.

We have also augmented the supplementary materials. We have updated the *Basic Guide to Latin Meter and Scansion* with the four additional meters that are represented in the new passages. In the *Basic Guide to Epigraphy*, we have added a discussion of epigraphic conventions. We have also included a *Basic Guide to Paleography*, complete with calligraphic sketches by Georgia Irby, to introduce the reader to the exciting world of textual transmission and manuscripts (through which most works of Latin literature survive at all). In this same appendix, we also discuss the Vindolanda Tablets from northern Britain from which come five of our new passages. Furthermore, we have incorporated an *Onomastic Appendix* to introduce the reader to the conventions of Roman names and to elucidate...
the meanings of the names of people cited in the readings. Finally, we have provided an appendix on the Roman calendar. All the indices have been updated accordingly, and we hope that instructors will find them useful should they wish to incorporate aspects of Roman culture into their language classrooms or to find passages that provide more practice with challenging syntax (such as subjective and objective uses of the genitive case). Like the first edition of *A Little Latin Reader* and *A New Latin Primer*, this second edition is the product of our combined vision, and all aspects of this book result from our joint and equal contributions.

Finally, we wish to thank friends, students, colleagues, and readers who have brought corrigenda to our attention as well as the outside reviewers from Oxford University Press: Amanda J. Woods, Mary Pendergraft, Jennifer Sheridan Moss, Adelheid Rundholz Eubanks, and Anthony Corbeill. We have tried to incorporate all of this feedback into this edition of *A Little Latin Reader*. We are also grateful for the support of our editor, Charles Cavaliere, who has helped us time and again bring our love of Latin literature and Roman culture to an audience outside of our classrooms. Most of all, we would like to thank our families: Patricia Irby, Georgia Irby's mother, for her unceasing support and faith, and John Robinson, her nautical mentor and best friend; and Aditya and Theodore Arjuna Adarkar, loving husband and son of Mary English, and Howard and Mary English, her parents, who continue to support this project day after day.

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Our goal for *A Little Latin Reader* is simple: we want students to read as much authentic Latin as possible in their first few years of study. Unfortunately, many of the Latin textbooks on the market do not emphasize reading extended passages of unadapted Latin at the earliest stages of Latin instruction. As a result, students become experts at “textbook Latin” but find the transition to classical authors difficult and frustrating. In direct response to seeing even our best students struggle at this stage of learning Latin, we have collected over 200 lively passages, 2 to 10 lines in length, suitable for elementary and intermediate students who are still solidifying their knowledge of Latin grammar and syntax. Students who work their way through the entire reader (or at least a good portion of it) can become acquainted with major Roman authors—Catullus, Caesar, Cicero, Horace, Livy, Martial, Ovid—and wonderful Latin inscriptions that record the firsthand testimony of everyday life in the Roman world, from Pompeii to Roman Britain.

We have arranged the selections in this reader to emphasize the points of Latin grammar and syntax that the individual texts highlight. In very general terms, the passages unfold in order of increasing difficulty; we present sentences that emphasize simple infinitives long before ones that feature subjunctive clauses and gerundives. That said, we do believe that students should be challenged to confront the realities of “authentic Latin” early in their study of the language, and they should be encouraged to tackle unadapted Latin passages even before they have met every form or vocabulary word as part of their formal instruction. We have provided brief introductions for all the passages to give students some narrative context as well as
extensive running vocabulary notes so that students can read the entries without needing to look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary. We have also identified the meter for all of the poetry selections, and we hope that students and instructors consult Appendix B on Latin meter and scansion so as to appreciate the beauty and intricacy of Latin verse.

The arrangement of topics and the length of the passages are intended to provide the highest degree of flexibility in the classroom: a single selection can provide additional practice in syntax and translation during the first or last few minutes of a class session; a series of selections can provide the foundation of an entire class meeting; selections can be used for practice and/or testing in translating at sight; or the entire reader can be used as the core text of a comprehensive review of Latin grammar. The final sections of the reader feature twelve extended passages (six prose and six poetry) from authors that are typically categorized as “intermediate Latin” (Livy, Petronius, Pliny, Vergil, Sulpicia, and Ovid) and “advanced Latin” (Sallust, Tacitus, Suetonius, Horace, Germanicus, and Statius). These selections can be used as “sneak peaks” or “previews” of work to be done at the next level of Latin, or they can function as an extra challenge for especially talented Latin classes. We have also included an Index of Latin Grammar and Syntax as well as an Index of Roman Culture (Appendices D and E) so that instructors and students can use this book as a resource for whatever classes and assignments they envision (e.g., some instructors may want to use Appendix D to find extra passages that feature ablative constructions; others may want to use Appendix E to create lessons on the Roman family or ancient science).

In formatting the reader, we have used the Oxford Classical Texts (OCTs) for the Latin text. To aid students in pronunciation and the identification of forms, we have included macrons for almost all of the passages in the text (Sections 1–46) and in the glossary, which features words appearing in more than one selection. We have followed the governing principle of the Oxford Latin Dictionary and marked all of the vowels that are long by nature. For the intermediate and advanced passages (Sections 47–50), we have omitted the macrons because students at this level should be confident enough in their pronunciation and identification of forms to proceed without them. For the inscriptions, we have retained the texts as they have come down to us. We have expanded all abbreviations, indicated by parentheses (e.g., 6.1), we have supplied text that eroded or has been chiseled off, indicated by square brackets (e.g., 7.1), and we have provided notes for words rendered according to local pronunciation (e.g., anc for hanc, 34.4) as well as for all scribal errors in grammar and syntax. The major collections of
inscriptions used in the Reader include *CIL* (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*), *ILS* (*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*), and *RIB* (*Roman Inscriptions of Britain*). We hope that students and instructors consult Appendix C on Latin Epigraphy for further information.

Finally, we would like to thank Charles Cavaliere, Shelby Peak, and Marie Flaherty-Jones, our editors at Oxford University Press, who provided many wonderful suggestions for this book. We would also like to thank Adam Hindin, William Hutton, and John Oakley for their advice and support. We owe a debt to our Latin students over the years who inspired us to undertake this project and who field-tested the selections in the reader (a special thanks to Georgia Irby’s Intermediate Latin class at William and Mary, Fall 2010, who used an earlier draft of the reader as their primary text and provided us with crucial feedback, especially Tejas Aralere, Reese Kim, Tara Martin, Melissa McCue, Rebecca Obniski, Nicholas Reck, Michael Scuzzarellia, Joshua Smith, Jessica Stayton, and Russel Walker). We would also like to thank the following people who reviewed the manuscript in various stages of development and provided invaluable feedback: Peter Anderson, Grand Valley State University; David Christensen, University of Arizona; Jane Crawford, University of Virginia; Victor A. Leuci, Westminster College; and Robert Luginbill, University of Louisville. Most of all, we would like to thank our families: Richard and Patricia Irby, Georgia Irby’s parents, for their unceasing support and faith, and John Robinson, her nautical mentor and best friend; and Aditya and Theodore Arjuna Adarkar, loving husband and son of Mary English, and Howard and Mary English, her parents, who supported this project day after day and cheered it on to completion.

*A Little Latin Reader* provides a wonderful introduction to Latin literature and Roman history and culture. Enjoy these passages, read them aloud, and learn about ancient Rome from the Romans themselves!

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*Williamsburg, VA and Montclair, NJ*