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Autor(en): **Butterfield, David**

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Unidentified and misattributed verses in the *Opus prosodiacum Miconis*

By David Butterfield, Cambridge

Abstract: The 9th-century prosodic *florilegium* compiled by Mico Centulensis presents numerous verse citations that are often assigned to incorrect authors and sometimes lack any authorial attribution. In his edition of the work, Traube succeeded in providing accurate references for most of the cited verses. Nonetheless, his work contained a number of errors and omissions. This article refers a further twelve verses to their original authors.

Around the middle of the ninth century,¹ Mico Centulensis († c. 853), a deacon of the monastery at Saint-Riquier, compiled a poetic florilegium to aid the learning of words of difficult prosody. This collection, which contains Latin authors dating from the late Republic (Cicero's *Aratea*, Lucretius) through to the period roughly coeval with Mico himself (Audradus Modicus, Walahfrid Strabo, Wandalbert of Prüm, Milo of St Amand), was first and last edited by Ludwig Traube in Dümmler's monumental *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini*.² The work survives in at least eight manuscripts, the most important (and oldest) of which is Bruxelles Bibl. roy. 10470–10473 (s. X, assigned the siglum B) 2^r–11^v, which Traube prudently took as the basis of his edition. This manuscript presents 407 verses,³ almost entirely of dactylic metres,⁴ and typically with the name of the cited author

- 1 For general discussion of the dating of Mico's works, including that of the florilegium's composition, see esp. A. Van de Vyver, "Dicuil et Micon de Saint-Riquier", *RBP* 14 (1935) 25–47, which develops in many respects the discussion of M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, I (München 1911) 469–476.
- 2 L. Traube (ed.), *Carmina Centulensia* in E. Dümmler (ed.), *Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini*, III (Berlin 1896) 265–368; the *Opus prosodiacum* itself covers pages 280–294. For further discussion of the work's transmission see V. Sivo, "Micon Centulensis Mon." in P. Chiesa & L. Castaldi (edd.), *La Trasmissione dei testi Latini del medioevo*, I (Florence 2004) 276–281. For treatment of the florilegium in its general context, see J. Leonhardt, *Dimensio Syllabarum* (Göttingen 1989), 81–86.
- 3 There are 413 lines in Traube's numeration but five verses (20, 240, 295, 342, 402) merely contain prose summaries of the metrical scheme of adjacent passages and one cited verse has been lost (411, after *uaporans*). There are thus 407 lines of poetry (or prose, see n. 5 below) recorded in the florilegium.
- 4 For detailed discussion of this florilegium and its primary mss, see the important catalogue of B. Munk Olsen, "Les Classiques Latins dans les florilèges médiévaux antérieurs au XIII^e siècle", *RHT* 9 (1979) 47–121, at 57–62.

entered in the right-hand margin.⁵ Nonetheless, Mico (or his source)⁶ is often mistaken in his attributions, sometimes remarkably,⁷ and in many cases records no author at all.⁸ Traube and his assistant Wilhelm Harster deserve much credit, therefore, in providing a largely complete and accurate repertory of the genuine poetic references, a task which required no mean labour. The purpose of this brief article is to correct the instances where Traube's attribution was mistaken, largely owing to his reliance upon the labour of a predecessor (see below), and to provide further references (as far as I have been able) where he and others drew a blank. To my knowledge, no systematic correction of Traube's apparatus has been offered previously.

I begin with mistaken attributions. In a number of instances, Traube followed in the footsteps of Rudolf Peiper, who, in his important edition of the Latin *Heptateuchus* attributed to Cyprian the Gaul (and of other lesser works), regarded a number of verses cited by Mico as fragments of lost parts of the *Heptateuchus*.⁹ As will be seen below, Mico attributes these verses to a variety of authors (Sidonius, Prosper, Alchimus, Alcuin) or sometimes to no one at all. Yet, as Ellis rightly objected,¹⁰ the passages of the Latin Vulgate that Peiper adduces as their basis are scanty in the extreme. Therefore, although it is possible that some of these unattributed lines are indeed fragments of this elusive work,¹¹ from extant parts

- 5 All verses are dactylic hexameters save for 26 pentameters and fourteen citations of other metres: among these other metres we find iambs (trimeters: 241 Mart. 1.96.7; 406 Mart. Cap. 5.566; dimeters: 201 Prud. *Perist.* 2.274), Phalaecian hendecasyllables (60 Mart. 4.64.21; 296 Mart. 8.38.5; 343 Mart. 10.55.7; 403 Mart. 2.6.11; 404 Mart. 6.37.1; 405 Mart. 6.37.3), and Sapphic hendecasyllables (21 Prud. *Cath.* 8.15; 337 Prud. *Cath.* 8.50); in the remaining three instances (four lines) Mico cites passages of prose: 156 (Sall. *Cat.* 2.9, cited from Prisc. *Inst.* 18.69 (*GL* 3.236)), 190–191 (Prisc. *Inst.* 7.28 (*GL* 2.310), a passage that has not to my knowledge been explicitly identified by Traube or other commentators) and 219 (Claudius Quadrigarius *fr.* 96 P., cited from Prisc. *Inst.* 9.49 (*GL* 2.484)).
- 6 The view of Keil and Traube, that Mico had access to an earlier florilegium, the so-called *Exempla diuersorum auctorum* (for which see Munk Olsen, *op. cit.* (n. 4 above), 62–63), has won general acceptance. In the present article, however, no other florilegium is of use for attributing the verses under discussion.
- 7 E.g. Ovid is wrongly recorded for a passage from Cyprian's *Heptateuchus* (347), Martial for Ovid (171, 399), Juvenal for Martial (173, 322, 387), Prudentius for Virgil (209) and Aratus for Walafrid Strabo (248).
- 8 In 43 cases (excluding those where the cited author is the same as in the preceding instance(s)) an author's name is wanting.
- 9 R. Peiper, *Cypriani Galli poetae Heptateuchus: accedunt incertorum De Sodoma et Iona et Ad senatorem carmina et Hilarii quae feruntur in Genesin, de Maccabaeis atque de Evangelio* (Vienna 1891 [misprinted 1881 on the t.p.]). The fragments can be found on pages 209–211.
- 10 R. Ellis, "The Prosody of Mico the Levite", *JPh* 22 (1893) 9–21, at 12. It is a curious error that M.R. Petringa, "La fortuna del poema dell'«Heptateuchos» tra VII e IX secolo" in F. Stella (ed.), *La scrittura infinita. Bibbia e poesia in età medievale e umanistica* (Florence 2001) 511–536, attributes this article (at 526, n. 51) to W.M. Lindsay, the author of the previous item in the journal (also for her "1892" read "1893").
- 11 For the strange history of the publication of the *Heptateuchus*, an eye-opening survey can be found in J.E.B. Mayor, *The Latin Heptateuch* (London 1889).

of which Mico does cite fourteen verses elsewhere in the florilegium,¹² in reality the great majority of these verses have been drawn instead from other sources. It is therefore a shame that Peiper's hasty conclusion served as the basis not only for Traube's otherwise exemplary work but also for other scholars' contributions.¹³

The twelve verses in the florilegium that Peiper regards as fragments of the *Heptateuchus* appear in B as follows (I place in brackets Peiper's references to supposedly parallel vulgate passages or his numeration of *incerti loci*):

- 10 ATTAMEN. omnibus attamen his sat perstat quod uoluisti APOLLINAR[IS]
(*inc.* 12)
- 95 CLASSISONO.¹⁴ angelico monitu repetant sed regna Canopi (*inc.* 13)
- 213 INDICO. partitusque meis iustos indico labores PROSPER (*Paralip.* 1.9.23ff.)
- 263 OBRIZO. iussit ut obrizo non parui ponderis auro ALCHIM[VS]
(*Paralip.* 1.10.28.18ff.)
- 265 OBREPIT partemque secat de ueste fluenti (*Reg.* 1 3.24.5)
- 282 PRAECAVE nunc miser nec te dum nescis et audes (*Reg.* 1 2.20.30ff.)
- 311 QVAESITVS. denique quaesitos tetigit tamen ille penates (*Reg.* 1 1.19.10)
- 313 RODERET. nec lupus insidians Christi deroderet agnos ALC[HIMVS]
(*inc.* 14)
- 314 RE(PET)ITA. hinc repetita sacri gradiens per moenia templi SALL [VSTIVS?]
(*Reg.* 3 6.8.5)
- 335 SERVITVS. captiuamque manum deformis seruitus urget (*inc.* 15)
- 369 SAGINA. distento et plenam monstrantes uentre saginam (*Reg.* 3 7.8.64)
- 379 SVFFRAGOR. contulit atque senis suffragia sancta salutis ALCVINVS
(*inc.* 16)¹⁵

Although it has been known for over a century¹⁶ that the verse cited at 314, oddly attributed to a Sall[ustius?], is in reality drawn from Sedulius (see below), I have found no active discussion of the true origin of the other verses. With the exception of four cases, I have been able to assign these verses as follows:

- 12 42, 82, 85, 87, 139, 165, 188, 193, 210, 279, 287, 323, 347, 407. Mico typically attributes these verses to Alchim[us], i.e. Avitus of Vienna, whom he cites at 71, 136, 140 and 195, but once he records no author (165) and elsewhere he attributes such verses to Prosper (42) and Ovid (347) (cf. n. 7 above).
- 13 Petringa, *op. cit.* (n. 10 above) 523ff. takes Peiper's attributions at face value and therefore concludes (at 526) that Mico "aveva avuto a disposizione ... un manoscritto dell'opera del nostro poeta [=Cyprian] più completa di quella che è possibile leggere oggi". The concordance of M. Wacht (*Concordantia in Cypriani Galli Heptateuchum* (Hildesheim 2004)) also had to take Peiper's edition (n. 9 above) as its basis, as did D. Schaller & E. Könsgen (edd.), *Initia carminum Latinorum saeculo undecimo antiquiorum* (Göttingen 1977).
- 14 The following verse (96) is CANOPOS. *ignoto Canopos sese infert fulgidus astro* (Mart. Cap. 8.808) but it is unclear to what CLASSISONO, an unknown verbal form, alludes. Since the preceding verse (94) also concerns the prosody of *Canopos* and is drawn from Lucan (8.181), could *classisono* be a corruption of *classis onus*, words which open Luc. 9.320?
- 15 In his *apparatus* Peiper tentatively suggests that the basis of this verse is the death of Samuel (at *Reg.* 1 1.25.1), a passage which bears little resemblance to the line.
- 16 See M. Bonnet, "L'«Opus prosodiacum» de Micon et le ms. de Paris 1928", *RPh* 18 (1894) 159.

- 10 The verse is from Sidonius Apollinaris (*Carm.* 16.83). It is therefore strange that Mico correctly records the author's appellation but that Peiper's attribution to the *Heptateuchus* has continued to stand unchallenged. Sidonius is cited by Mico elsewhere at 57 and 64, in both cases attributing the verse likewise to *Apollinar[is]*.
- 213 The verse, as Ellis, *op. cit.* (n. 10 above) 12 noted, although it is found in the tradition of Martial,¹⁷ is rather from the so-called *Prologus Auiani* (verse 3).
- 263 The verse comes not from Avitus but rather from Alcuin's *De pontificibus et sanctis Ecclesiae Eboracensis* (verse 1504);¹⁸ presumably Mico originally wrote *Alc[uius]*, which was mistakenly expanded as the more common *Alchim[us]*.
- 282 This unmetrical verse is evidently a corrupt citation of the fifth verse of the *Commonitio mortalitatis humanae* of Eugenius Toletanus (see *PL* 87.359C–360A): *praecaue non felix ne te dum nescis et audis*.¹⁹ The error could be one of banalisation by Mico (simplifying *non miser* to *felix* and adding a stopgap word beforehand) or a purposeful alteration of the inappropriate *miser* (after *non* had been corrupted to *nunc*). Traube's tentative emendation of the verse (*praecaueas nunc te miserum, dum nescis et audis*) therefore proves to be misguided.
- 311 Remarkably, though Classical in origin, this verse has remained unidentified. It is drawn without alteration from Ovid's *Tristia* (1.5.81 = 1.5b.37).²⁰ Incidentally, it is amusing that Ovid's depiction of Odysseus' return to his homeland was thought by Peiper to be based upon a passage from the Vulgate depicting David's escape from murder at the hands of Saul (Peiper cites *et Dauid fugit, et saluatus est nocte illa*).
- 313 This verse is also from Alcuin's *De pontificibus* (verse 673), whose manuscript tradition preserves the correct *ne* opening the verse. It is likely that the same misunderstanding of *ALC* as at 263 occurred.
- 314 As noted above, this verse is taken from Sedulius (*Carm. pasch.* 4.40), whom Mico also cites (with the correct authorial assignation) at 97, 104, 119, 254 and 348.
- 369 This verse is from Wandalbert's *De mensium XII nominibus* (verse 358); see *PLAC* 2.616.

I have not yet succeeded in identifying the origin of verses 95, 265, 335 and 379 but offer the following brief observations:

- 17 It is in numerous instances transmitted before Book 5 of Martial's epigrams with the title *De rustico*. In this and other manuscript traditions, it has variously been attributed to Ovid, Horace and Cato.
- 18 The most useful edition of the work is that of P. Godman, *Alcuin: The Bishops, Kings and Saints of York* (Oxford 1982).
- 19 The inferior ms *b* (Brux. Bibl. Roy. 10066–10077 (s. XI, 158^a–160^b) corrected *nec* to *ne* and *audes* to *audis* but wrongly replaced *te* with *tu*.
- 20 Mico's citation further supports the transmitted *tamen* of the Ovidian manuscripts against Wasenbergh's *tandem*.

- 95 The phrase *angelico monitu* is found in the prose writings of Usuard of Saint-Germain-des-Prés (fl. 850) and is also attested in the ninth-century poetry of Florus of Lyons (*Gesta Christi Domini* 52 *angelico monitu Aegyptum transfertur Iesus*), for which see *PLAC* 2.517. The collocation *regna Canopi* can be found in a short poem attributed to Petronius (*AL* 467.4 SB *te Boreas gelidus, securaque regna Canopi*); in a Christian context (as is evidently the case here) we can compare, Cypr. *Gen.* 818 (*adeat ne regna Canopi*, cited by Peiper) and Theodul. *Ecl.* 132 (*et subduntur ei totius regna Canopi*).²¹
- 265 As a potential basis for this verse, Peiper adduced the following passage from the Vulgate (*Reg.* 1 3.24.5): *surrexit ergo Daud, et praecidit oram chlamydis Saul silenter*. Although the resemblance seems too slight to offer any confidence, the verse could well be drawn from that vast work. Among Classical poets, *ueste fluente* is found at Prop. 3.17.32 and *uestes fluentes* at Luc. 6.536.
- 335 *captiuamque manum* opens Sil. 6.349 and *deformis seruitus* is found in the sixth-century exposition of *Psalms* 99 by M. Aurelius Cassiodorus (see *PL* 70.697B–699D, at 699D). Nonetheless, Peiper rightly observed that similar phraseology can be seen at Cypr. *Iud.* 88 (*omnia uictor habet, subiectum seruitus urget*), which makes attribution to the *Hepta-teuchus* a genuine possibility.
- 379 Peiper's correction of the transmitted *senis* to *seni* is no doubt correct. His tentative suggestion, however, that the verse concerns the death of Samuel, comparing from the Vulgate *Reg.* 1.25.1, is distinctly less likely. Rather, since Mico attributed the verse explicitly to Alcuin, and since Alcuin employs *suffragia sancta* twice in his poetic corpus (108.1.3 and 110.16.3; see *PLAC* 1.334 and 342), it is possible that Mico found the verse in a passage of Alcuin's poetry that is as yet untraced.

I now turn to the seven verses that Traube left without any identification. These verses were highlighted by Ellis, and partially by at least one other reviewer of the work,²² but (with two exceptions) they appear not to have been attributed since to their true authors. They are presented as follows in our primary manuscript (B):

- 41 ANATIS. mox anatis profuge quo sibi praedo foret PRVD NOV
 120 DIRIVO. contra particulam quae diriuata uidetur
 286 PERFORAT hasta uirumque et confinia dorsi
 310 PERSIDEM. Symon Persidem dulci comitatus Iuda
 360 SVBREPAT. nec tibi fallacis subrepat imago decoris PAVLINVS

- 21 It is interesting that this verse is also used to depict the prosody of *Canopus* in a later metrical collection, the *Florilegium Florentino-Erlangense* (see S.A. Hurlbut, *Florilegium Prosodiacum Florentino-Erlangense* (Washington D.C. 1932) 12 and Munk Olsen, *op. cit.* (n. 4 above) 64–65).
- 22 J.H. Lupton, *CR* 7 (1893) 470–481, at 470, although he only cites 41, 120, 367 and 370 as being “unappropriated”.

- 367 SATAGO.intulerat satagens propriis licet illa cibando PAVLINVS
 370 SAT ERIT.iam sat erit nobis uano sermone narrare SEDVL[IVS]

All but the first of these seven verses can be referred to their authors. Their origins are as follows:

- 120 This verse, curiously enough, derives from the preface to a work often attributed to Mico himself: *De syllaba prima* (*Prol.* 41).²³ Nonetheless, Van de Vyver, *op. cit.* (n. 1 above) 39ff. has shown that this preface, as well as the general composition of the work, is rather to be attributed to the Irish monk and geographer Dicuil (fl. c.825).²⁴ Ellis, *op. cit.* (n. 10 above) 14 is therefore wrong to suggest that Mico thought that the author given for the previous verse, *SED[VLI]VS* “was sufficient indication of 120 also”.
- 286 This verse, unmetrical as presented in Mico’s manuscripts, derives from Sidon. *Carm.* 7.291,²⁵ whose manuscript tradition offers *perforat hasta uirum post[que] et confinia dorsi*. This attribution to Sidonius was seemingly first made by Sivo twenty years ago.²⁶ Once again, Traube’s conjectural supplement to the line (*uirum <trans> et*) proves to be unwarranted.
- 310 Traube conjectured in his apparatus *ad loc.* that the verse derives “ex martyrologio quodam ad a.d. V. Kal. Nov.,” owing to the fact that Oct. 28 is the Holy Day for the martyr Saint Simon (and Saint Jude). In fact the verse can be securely assigned to the hexametric *Sancti Amandi uita metrica* (1.71, followed by *bellica quae fuerat, uerbi mucrone subegit*) first composed by Milo († 871–872) around 850 A.D. At a late stage in my research, I found that this identification was made in passing, without discussion, by Corinna Bottiglieri in a piece of 2004.²⁷ The presence of this verse (if this is its first appearance) presents a noteworthy *terminus post quem* for the composition of Mico’s florilegium. It is worth observing that in ms b, among the six verses added after 91 is a citation from Milo’s *De sobrietate* (2.794).²⁸

23 This preface of 52 hexameters survives in Rouen Bibl. Mun. 1470 (98ff.), having been lost by damage in B, and has been published by M. Manitius (*Neues Archiv* 36 (1910) 52ff. and *Münchener Museum* 1 (1912) 124–126) and K. Strecker (*PLAC* 4.932–933).

24 The particularly late date of this verse may be linked with its omission from other manuscripts of the *Opus prosodiacum* (mss 2, 3, 4 and 6 in Munk Olsen’s list (*op. cit.* (n. 4 above) 60–62)).

25 For Mico’s citation of Sidonius, see the discussion of 10 above.

26 V. Sivo, “Appunti sull’ «Opus prosodiacum» di Micone di Saint-Riquier. Gli estratti del codice Parigino Bibl. Nat. 8499”, *AFLB* 20 (1987) 217–236, at 232. Sivo nonetheless follows Peiper’s attribution of 265, 313 and 369 to the *Heptateuchus*, and states that both 360 and 370 are “incerti auctoris”.

27 “Milo Elnonensis Mon.” in P. Chiesa & L. Castaldi (edd.), *op. cit.* (n.2 above), 289. For further discussion of Milo, see the introduction to the major edition of C. Bottiglieri, *Milone di Saint-Amand: Vita Sancti Amandi Metrica* (Florence 2006). Much to my surprise, however, I cannot find any mention of Mico’s citation of the verse in this critical edition.

28 Not 2.795 as reported in the apparatus by Traube (n.2 above) *ad loc.* and Bottiglieri (n.27 above) 298.

- 360 By adding *Paulinus* in the margin, Mico almost certainly meant Paulinus Nolensis.²⁹ In truth, however, the verse is drawn from Prosper's *Carmen de ingratis* (3.774), for which see *PL* 51.91A–148B, at 134B.
- 367 This verse, by contrast, does derive from one of the *Natalicia* of Paulinus Nolensis (16.169).
- 370 Notwithstanding its attribution to Sedulius,³⁰ this line is almost certainly a corruption of a verse from the *Poema ultimum* of Pseudo-Paulinus (numbered 32.151 in the Pauline corpus):³¹ *iam sat erit nobis uanos narrare timores*.³² The works of Paulinus Nolensis are cited often elsewhere in the florilegium (cf. n. 28 above) and, if such a work was transmitted with the Pauline corpus from an early stage, this verse could have easily been incorporated into his canon by the time of Mico. The corruption, though at first sight significant, is simple: *narrare* and *timores* were accidentally transposed, then, granting *narrare* amphibrachic scansion (as if = **narare*), a reader attempted to correct the prosody of *uanostimores*, and introduced a more obvious ablative phrase *uano sermone*, thus taking adverbial *sat* as a nominal object. Corruption, of course, could have begun with Mico's transcribing the verse wrongly into his florilegium.

I have not succeeded in tracing the origin of 41, the curious verse attributed to a *Prud. Nou.* Since I cannot relate NOV to any known work of Aulus Prudentius Clemens, it is possible that we are faced with an abbreviation of an epithet (*Nouomagensis? nouus?*) modifying a wholly different figure. Alternatively, the true author may bear no resemblance to this abbreviation. It is difficult to make sense of the pentameter, one of the few pieces of Latin poetry to contain *anas* in an oblique case.³³ *mox* may be a corruption by anticipation (for *mox* opens the

29 Excluding 367, Mico writes *PAVLIN[VS]* eleven times, of which all refer to Paulinus Nolensis (although 79 is a misattribution of a verse from Theodulfus' Prologue to Genesis); of the two instances of *PAVL[VS/INVS]* one (224) refers to Paulus Diaconus, one (337) to Paulinus Nolensis. Both citations of Paulinus of Perigeux (111, 383) are instead denoted by *P* with a suprascript virgula (as is commonly used for Prudentius).

30 For Mico's citation of this author see on 314 above.

31 For the difficult question of the authorship of this poem (also transmitted as *Antoni Carmen aduersus gentes*; see *PL* 5.261Bff.), particularly useful are C. Morelli, "L'autore del cosiddetto *poema ultimum* attribuito a Paolino di Nola", *Didaskalion* 1 (1912) 481–498, and F.G. Sirna, "Sul cosiddetto '*poema ultimum*' ps-Paoliniano", *Aevum* 35 (1961) 87–106.

32 Sivo *op. cit.* (n. 26 above) 232–233 also discusses this verse (which he regards as "di autore incerto") and proceeds to argue his case that the reading of Paris Bibl. Nat. 8499 (P), namely *uano sermone referre*, should be preferred to *uano sermone narrare* (the last verb, it is alleged, being a gloss) as transmitted by B. This argument, repeated in Sivo *op. cit.* (n. 2 above), 280 n.20, does not convince me.

33 Other instances that could have been cited include Mart. 3.93.12 (*et anatis habeas orthopygium macrae*, presumably not cited because of the comparative metrical difficulty of a scazon with resolution throughout the first metron), Avienus *Arat.* 1684 (*Latipedemque anatem cernes excedere ponto*) and Theodulfus *Carm.* 39.11 (*colla superba teras, anates ut turba caporum*).

following entry in the florilegium) of *uox*.³⁴ If the preceding hexameter contained a verb of motion, the sense of the passage could be *uox anatis profugae quo [adv.] sibi [=ei] praedo foret*. Although trochaic scansion of *praedo* is found as early as Lucan (10.21), Statius (*Silv.* 2.3.35), Valerius Flaccus (7.50) and Martial (14.217.1), the verse probably derives from the early mediaeval period.

To conclude this short survey, I repeat those verses that remain unidentified (and my suspicions that 265 and 335 may indeed derive from the *Heptateuchus* and 379 from Alcuin). Assuming that the works from which these verses are cited still survive, I look forward to other scholars' successfully referring them to their true source.

- 41 *mox anatis profugae quo sibi praedo foret* PRVD NOV
 95 *angelico monitu repetant sed regna Canopi*
 265 *obrepit partemque secat de ueste fluenti*
 335 *captiuamque manum deformis seruitus urget*
 379 *contulit atque seni suffragia sancta salutis* ALCVINVS.

Correspondence:
 David Butterfield
 Christ's College
 Cambridge CB2 3BU
 UK
 djb89@cam.ac.uk

34 This idea was suggested to me by Miss Lyndsay Coo.