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VIRGIL  
AENEID  
BOOK VIII

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## PREFACE

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It is perhaps surprising that *Aeneid* VIII should have received comparatively little individual critical attention. Klingner called book VIII the most Virgilian book of the poem. It can certainly claim to be the most varied and attractive, containing as it does the magnificently told story of Hercules and Cacus, and the incomparable 'walk round the site of Rome'; while in the great closing ecphrasis Virgil reveals the purpose and intention of the *Aeneid* more fully than he does in any other book except perhaps the sixth and twelfth. The literary influence of book VIII has been considerable (though less than that of book IV). Nowhere else in the poem does Virgil range so freely through history, religion, mythology and topography. This will be evident from the pages which follow, as also will be the size of my general debt to my predecessors.

Warde Fowler's *Aeneas at the site of Rome* discussed only selected passages, though with a humane learning and insight which remain exemplary. A text with brief notes by Mlle Guillemin appeared in 1935; more recently, Bertha Tilly's *The story of Pallas* took selected passages from books VIII to XII. Binder's *Aeneas und Augustus* is not an edition but an exhaustive purely historical commentary on certain sections of book VIII. My own work has been greatly helped by the recent editions of individual books by Professors Austin and Williams. Norden on VI remains indispensable: I have also used Conway on I. Among complete commentaries the most recent, that of Williams, appeared only when my work was virtually complete. Henry provided (as usual) a few brilliant insights amid much which seems dull and irrelevant. Only one translation is referred to, and that is Dryden's. It has grave faults: Dryden was the first to admit that his was not *anima naturaliter Virgiliana* (Wordsworth in a letter to Scott, 7 November 1805, truly observed that Dryden 'has neither a tender heart nor a lofty sense of moral dignity'). Nevertheless, it remains, with its post-Miltonic energy and drive, the only English version which can lay claim to classic status – the full flowering of renaissance England's cultivation of Virgil through nearly two centuries.

Among the many essays and books on Virgil, I would single out

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F. W. H. Myers's 'Virgil', Norden's 'Vergils Aeneis im Lichte ihrer Zeit', Drew's pioneering study *The allegory of the Aeneid*, Camps's *Introduction* and the work, important in such different ways, of Knauer and Pöschl. On the topography, Lugli's monumental *Itinerario di Roma Antica* proved valuable, while Ogilvie's *Commentary on Livy 1-5* gave me much-needed help with early Roman history. The books mentioned here constitute only a beginning, but no one who is acquainted with them can be quite ignorant of what is involved in working on Virgil. *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores...*

It remains to acknowledge debts of a more personal kind. Professor R. D. Williams read through the draft of my Introduction and made a number of valuable suggestions and corrected many errors, thereby compounding the debt I already owe him for his edition of book III. Dr N. M. Horsfall read through the manuscript of the Commentary and of the Introduction, made many corrections and gave me much scholarly and bibliographical information which I would otherwise have missed. Help on particular problems came from Professor A. A. Long and the editors of the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. The Director and Secretary of the British School at Rome made the resources of the Rome room freely available to me. In this connection I should like to express my thanks to the Faculty Board of Classics of the University of Cambridge for a grant towards that visit to Rome which also enabled me to refresh my memories of the topography. I must also thank the Delegates of the Clarendon Press and Sir Roger Mynors for permission to reprint the latter's text of *Aeneid VIII* and to depart from that text in a few places listed in the Note on the Text. Finally, I owe a special debt of gratitude to Professor Kenney, both for the example of his own edition of Lucretius III in this series, and also for his unstinting advice, help and encouragement at every stage of this edition. Without his support, it would never have been undertaken, let alone finished. He and Mrs P. E. Easterling have saved me from more errors than I care to remember.

*University of Warwick*  
*August 1975*

K. W. G.

NOTE. This preface was written, and my work completed, before the appearance of P. T. Eden's edition of book VIII (Leiden 1975).

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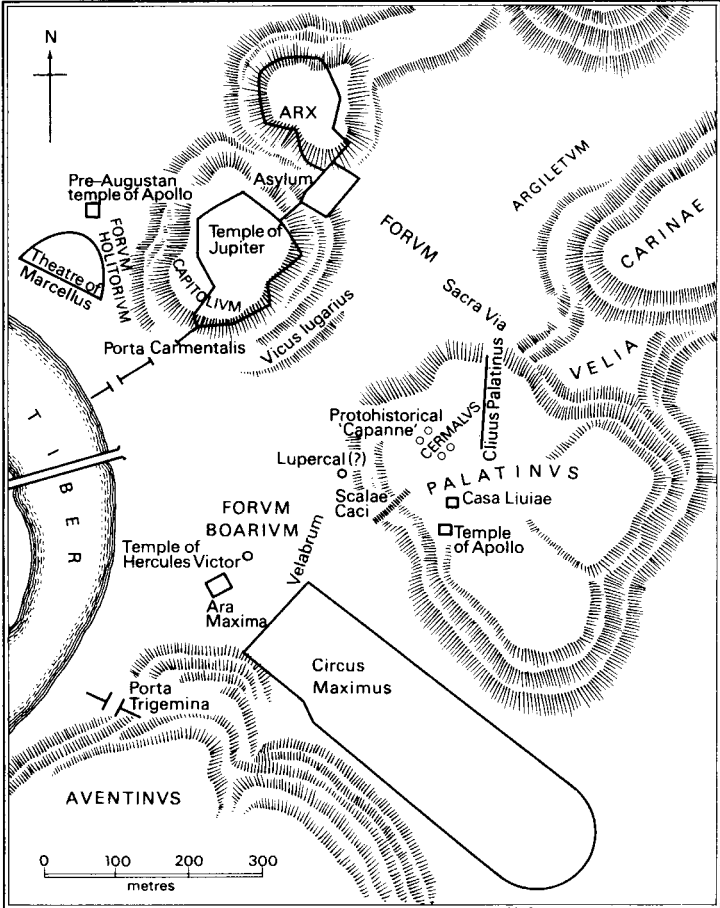
Our destiny, our nature, and our home  
Is with infinitude, and only there;  
With hope it is, hope that can never die,  
Effort, and expectation, and desire,  
And something evermore about to be.

WORDSWORTH, *Prelude* 6.538–42

History... is a looking both before and after; as,  
indeed, the coming Time already waits, unseen,  
yet definitely shaped, predetermined and inevitable,  
in the Time come; and only by the combination  
of both is the meaning of either completed.

CARLYLE, *On History*

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The site of Rome.