Marginal verses in medieval Irish manuscripts

Liam Breatnach

Celtica 38 (2026), 69–133

DOI: 10.58480/SCS-2kyug-cajbf

DIAS
Institiúid Ard-Léinn Bhaile Átha Cliath | Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies

© School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. This work is licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

MARGINAL VERSES IN MEDIEVAL IRISH MANUSCRIPTS

Abstract

In this paper I discuss some of the main features of marginal verses, as well as touching on other single-verse compositions, and the somewhat neglected genre of manuscript anthologies of single verses, and in the appendices I provide editions of four of these anthologies.[1]

One of the first poetic texts that the beginner in Old Irish will encounter is the well-known verse on the storm at sea written on the margin of a ninth-century manuscript copy of Priscian's Latin grammar, which has been in the monastery of St Gall in Switzerland since the early Middle Ages. The text and translation are taken from the edition in *Thes* ii, 290:[2]

> Is acher in gaíth innocht,
> fu-fúasna fairggæ findf̂olt:
> ní ágor réimm mora minn
> dond láechraid lainn óa Lothlind.
>
> 'Bitter is the wind to-night: it tosses the ocean's white hair: I fear not the coursing of a clear sea by the fierce heroes from Lothlend.'[3]

Unsurprisingly, marginal verses such as this, along with lyrical and nature poems form a significant part of the selections made of Early Irish verse in modern anthologies,[4] as any attempt to make an anthology representative of the wide variety of the subject matter of Early Irish verse[5] will have to be balanced against the interests of the general reader. On the other hand, one might expect a different approach in the case of the selection of poetic texts for Thurneysen's *Old Irish Reader* (1949), a work which is not an anthology in the conventional sense of the term. While restricting the selection to texts

[1]This paper is a revised and expanded version of the Statutory Lecture of the School of Celtic Studies delivered at UCD on the second of November 2018. My thanks are due to an anonymous reader for a number of improvements, while all remaining shortcomings are my responsibility.

[2]I add punctuation, and normalise word-division, capitalisation and placement of the length-mark. In the fourth line I restore the MS reading *óa*, which the editors of *Thes* replaced with *ua*.

[3]A good example of a freer translation is that by Carney (1967: 23): 'Bitter and wild is the wind to-night / tossing the tresses of the sea to white. / On such a night as this I feel at ease: / fierce Northmen only course the quiet seas.'

[4]For example, those edited by Murphy (1956) and Greene and O'Connor (1967). The anthology in Carney (1967) stands apart from these in including a number of Hiberno-Latin poems.

[5]Including 'genealogy, history and pseudo-history, prophecy, didactic verse, topography, law, metrics, satire, praise-poetry, lyrics, hymns, devotional poems, calendars, monastic rules, and translations of Scripture and apocrypha' (Breatnach, 1996: 65).

 © Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies
https://doi.org/10.58480/SCS-2kyug-cajbf

found in manuscripts written before 900 AD is entirely reasonable, confining the selection to the above-cited verse on the storm at sea, the marginal verses on the scribe out of doors and on the vanity of pilgrimage, a poem put into the mouth of Suibne Geilt, and the very well-known poem on the scholar and his cat, *Messe ocus Pangur bán*, fails to bring out the variety to be found even in this comparatively small corpus.[6] Thus, for example, the earliest surviving manuscript copy of a praise-poem in Irish, which appears in the same manuscript as *Messe ocus Pangur bán*, is not included.[7] Also passed over are the two substantial riddling poems in the Milan Codex,[8] and almost all the verses on religious themes. Indeed two of the latter verses were not even recognised as being in verse until comparatively recently.[9]

The question of how well selections made for anthologies represent, or can be expected to represent, the nature of early Irish verse as a whole is also relevant for the sub-category of marginal verses.[10] For example, the verse cited at the beginning of this paper is marked by the contrast with the Latin of the central text, and the edition in *Thes* could give the impression that it is a spontaneous composition. This, however, is not something that can be said for all marginal verses, as will be clear even from the survey undertaken here, which will of necessity be limited.

The corpus of marginal verses in medieval Irish manuscripts is very large, yet many verses remain unpublished or even uncatalogued. A comprehensive survey would require editions, translations and extensive explication beyond the scope of this paper; even as it is, roughly half of it is taken up with the editions, translations and notes on a total of 56 items in the four appendices.

In manuscript catalogues usually only the first lines of marginal verses are cited and these are registered in the indexes of initia, as for example, in the catalogues of manuscripts in the British Library,[11] the Franciscan Library now at UCD,[12] King's Inns Library Dublin,[13] and Oxford libraries.[14] In the catalogue of the Royal Irish Academy manuscripts,[15] however, the marginal verses are not consistently noted,[16] while in that for the manuscripts in Trinity

[6]Thurneysen (1949: 39–41). The verse selection is the same in the earlier German version (Thurneysen, 1909).

[7]In the Codex St Pauli (*Clavis* §812); it was most recently edited by Ó Cathasaigh (2014). See also Bronner (2014).

[8]Edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 291–2, and almost completely ignored until the recent edition and translation by Ahlqvist (2018).

[9]See p. 72 below.

[10]On this question see Boyle (2017).

[11]O'Grady (1926) and Flower (1926 and 1953); the first lines of the marginal verses are included in the index of initia in Flower (1953).

[12]Dillon et al. (1969), with the first lines of the marginal verses included in the index on pp. 137–56.

[13]de Brún (1972), with the first lines of the marginal verses included in the index on pp. 75–80.

[14]Ó Cuív (2001 and 2003); the first lines of the marginal verses are included in the index of initial lines of verse in the second volume.

[15]O'Rahilly et al. (1926–70).

[16]Nor are other marginal entries consistently registered. For example, the entry on pp. 2060–2 of the catalogue makes no reference to any of the marginalia in D v 2; these include a verse on the upper margin of fol. 4r.

College, Dublin,[17] they are hardly ever noted.

Complete editions of all the marginal verses in a particular manuscript are few in number. In the diplomatic edition of Lebor na hUidre, the marginal verses are edited (without translation) below the main text and above the footnotes,[18] and the same policy is for the most part followed in the diplomatic edition of the Book of Leinster.[19] In contrast to these, the earlier edition and translation of the Book of Fenagh by Hennessy and Kelly (1875) included amongst the footnotes editions and translations of marginal verses in a haphazard fashion.[20]

Otherwise, marginal notes and verses are edited separately and accompanied by translations, as for example, the editions of those in BL Harley 1802, a MS written in 1138, by Stokes (1887),[21] those in the late eleventh-century Codex Palatino-Vaticanus No. 830 by Ó Cuív (1990), those in the fifteenth-century H 2. 12 by Culverwell (1913), those in the fifteenth-century 3 B 23 by Gwynn and Purton (1911: 118–20), and those in the fifteenth-century Laud 610 by Dillon (1963). An edition without translation is that of the marginal verses in H 3. 18, vols 2–4, in Kobel (2020: 192–7).

To these can be added various selective editions,[22] and here probably the greatest contribution was made by Kuno Meyer, who published a large number of marginal verses either without a translation, for example in Meyer (1910c and 1913: 167), or with one, for example in Meyer (1889–94 and 1899b).

The focus of this paper will be on marginal verses found in manuscripts dating from the early to the late medieval period, and in particular on those verses which can be dated to the Old and Middle Irish periods. I will begin by setting out some of the principal characteristic features of these verses,[23] and follow on with a discussion of the EModIr term for a marginal verse, *rann marbháin*, and an account of manuscript anthologies. For later manuscripts, the standard anthology is O'Rahilly's *Dánfhocail* of 1921. While the verses are selected mostly from manuscripts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[24]

[17] Abbott and Gwynn (1921).

[18] Best and Bergin (1929). The marginal verses are as follows, noting the manuscript page followed by the page of the diplomatic edition in parentheses, the number of verses in each case and the hand (following Best and Bergin) in square brackets: 5a–b sup. (11) 1 v. [M], 11a sup. (28) 3 vv. [M], 21b inf. (56) 3 vv. [H], 38b sup. (92) 2 vv. [H], 50a sup. (124) 1 v. [M], 69a inf. (178) 1 v. [late (? sixteenth-century) hand], 83b inf. (208) 1 v. [sixteenth-century hand], 87–9 sup. (216) [H], 116a sup. (289) 2 vv. [H].

[19] Best et al. (1954–83). The differences are that later entries are excluded (for these see Manning, 2003) and that in volume 3 some of the marginal verses are printed with the main text and included in the line-numbering thereof (see pp. 718, 720, 723 and 728–9 of the edition).

[20] Viz. on pp. 14, 17, 22, 27, 33, 73, 100, and 106–7, amounting to 15 of the total of 32 marginal verses in this manuscript. The omitted verses are only occasionally noted in Hennessy and Kelly (1875), e.g. 47 n. 9 and 53 n. 6, but were subsequently registered by Macalister (1939: 92–112). Some are now very difficult to make out due to the use of re-agent, as Macalister (1939: 4) noted. The first lines of all the verses are given in *RIA Cat*, p. 1288.

[21] See also *Clavis* §648 and Sharpe (2017). Not all the verse in this MS is in the margins; see Flower (1926: 430–1).

[22] See n. 4 above.

[23] Prose marginalia are a different matter; for these see Plummer (1926).

[24] As for dates of composition, O'Rahilly (1921: 59) stated that 'the great majority of these

they are not confined to marginal verses, some of them being extracted from longer poems by the editor himself.[25]

I. EARLIEST ATTESTATIONS

The practice of writing verses in the margins of manuscripts is well established in the Old Irish period. Marginal verses are found in four manuscripts which survive from the period before 900 AD, and, as far as I know, all of these early marginal verses have by now been edited and translated.

Interestingly two verses, both in rare metres, and with religious and didactic themes, were overlooked for a long time. One is the verse cited in the notes on item 2 in Anthology B below, which was printed as prose in *Thes* ii, 235, among the glosses in the Berne MS of Servius and first identified as verse by Ó Cuív (1986). The other, in the rare metre *treöchair*,[26] was printed as prose in *Thes* ii, 7, among the glosses in the Carlsruhe MS of St. Augustine's *Soliloquia*, and was first identified as verse by James Carney (1964: xv n. 21). I cite here the edition and translation of the latter in Carney (1967: 10):[27]

> Is mebul
> élúd Ríg na fírinne
> ocus chairte fri demun.
>
> 'It's evil
> to shun the King of righteousness
> and make compact with demon.'

The other early marginal verses are those in the St Gall Priscian (*Clavis* §805), edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 290, and the two verses in the Codex Boernerianus (*Clavis* §487), edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 296. These last two are on the lower margin of the same page, and are an early instance of the practice common in later manuscripts of writing two unconnected verses in the same marginal space.[28] On the other hand, the two verses of the short poem beginning *Domfarcai fidbaidæ fál* are distributed over the lower margins of pp. 203 and 204 of the St Gall Priscian.[29] In later manuscripts all the verses of such short poems can also be written in the same marginal space.[30]

---

quatrains, one may safely say, belong to the period 1400–1700; but a few go back to the Early Middle Irish period, and, on the other hand, one or two may be as late as the 19th century'.

[25] See O'Rahilly (1921: 62–3). In some cases it is impossible to make out from O'Rahilly's notes exactly what his sources were. The recent edition by Doyle and Ó Donnchú (2026) contains the texts as in O'Rahilly accompanied by translations, but without O'Rahilly's notes.

[26] See Carney (1970: 99).

[27] In his translation Carney achieves a close imitation of the metrical pattern of the original.

[28] See, for example, the comments on the verses in the Leabhar Breac and the Book of Fenagh on p. 74 below.

[29] See *Thes* ii, 290. An instance in a later manuscript is the copy of the poem of two verses on Cú Chuimne of Iona in the Book of Fenagh, with the first verse on fol. 7v inf. and the second on fol. 8r inf. Other copies are in *AU* s.a. 747 and the *Liber Hymnorum*, ed. Bernard and Atkinson (1898: i, 32), and the poem is edited and translated by Kelleher (1979: 12).

[30] For example, the poem of three verses on the lower margin of p. 102 of the Leabhar Breac, beginning *In lá oc sinud suairc in mod*, and ending with a *dúnad*.

While the main text in three of these early manuscripts is in Latin, they also contain interlinear OIr glosses on the Latin texts. Most of the fourth manuscript, the Codex Boernerianus, consists of the Greek text of the epistles of St Paul with an interlinear Latin translation, and, apart from the marginal verses, the only Old Irish material it contains is a number of personal names in the margins.[31]

It is worth emphasising, however, that not all OIr verse in manuscripts written before 900 AD is placed in the margins. The rest of this corpus consists of the verse in the colophon to the copy of the Gospel of John in the Book of Dímma,[32] as well as a number of poems which occupy the centre of the page, namely those in the Milan codex and in the St Paul codex.[33]

The writing of marginal verses in Irish in manuscripts where the main text is in Latin continued into the MIr period, for example, in Harley 1802,[34] and Oxford Bodleian Auct. F. 3. 15,[35] both of which manuscripts also contain Irish glosses on the Latin text. Marginal verses (three in all) are also found in the twelfth-century Drummond Missal, where the main text is in Latin without Irish glosses.[36] On the other hand, there is no connection between the main hand and marginalia in BL MS Royal 6B. III, where the Latin text is from the early thirteenth century and the four verses and two *probationes pennae*, all in Irish, were added in the lower margins in more than one hand in the sixteenth century.[37]

By the eleventh century, at the latest, marginal verses had become a feature of manuscripts written entirely (or almost entirely) in the vernacular. They are found in two of the earliest such manuscripts which survive, the late eleventh-century Lebor na hUidre and the twelfth-century Book of Leinster,[38] and in subsequent centuries it is usually the case that manuscripts in the vernacular will have at least one or two marginal verses also in the vernacular. There is, however, a good deal of variation in the density of marginal verses. Thus, for example, the marginal verses in Lebor na hUidre are even less numerous when we exclude those two which were added much later (probably in the

[31]See *Thes* ii, xxxiv.

[32]A partial reading and translation was published in *Thes* ii, 257, where it was mistakenly assigned to the Book of Durrow (see the corrigenda on p. 422). For the full text and translation see Best (1926: 85–6).

[33]Edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 291–5.

[34]See above, p. 71 with n. 21.

[35]See Ó Cuív (2001: 308–11). The single marginal verse, together with the prose marginalia and glosses in this manuscript, was most recently edited and translated by Shaw (1956–7). See also Ó Néill (1997: 22–4).

[36]The only text in Irish in the centre of the page is the two verses on fol. 108r (the last leaf of the manuscript), but this may be have been added by a later scribe. See Oskamp (1977), who edited and translated all the verses and included plates of the relevant manuscript pages, and Ó Riain (2002: 10–12). For the first of the marginal verses see the notes on item 9 in Appendix 3 below.

[37]As Flower (1926: 24) notes in his description: 'The MS. is in a good English hand of the early 13th cent., and was probably written in Ireland […] it is probable that the *Irish* entries were made […] after the Dissolution'.

[38]See p. 71 above.

sixteenth century),[39] whereas the early fifteenth-century Leabhar Breac is richly adorned with marginal verses, the vast majority in the hand of the main scribe,[40] and in many cases a verse is entered in both the upper and the lower margins of the page,[41] or two verses are entered in the lower margin.[42]

The marginal verses concentrated in the lower margins of fols 2 to 10 of the Book of Fenagh are in a different hand to that of the main texts;[43] this set of verses, beginning with a single verse on fol. 2r, followed by two verses on the verso and recto of every folio from 2v to 10r, and ending with a single verse on fol. 10v, gives the impression of being a partially executed plan to embellish the whole of the manuscript with marginal verses. A similar concentration of marginal verses, this time in the hand of the main scribe, is the thirteen verses at the foot of fols 49 to 52 of BL MS Egerton 91.[44]

Occasionally a degree of planning for marginal verses is evident in other ways. Thus, for example, the very layout must have been carefully planned in the case of the four verses in the lower margin of fol. 24r of Harley 5280, which 'are interwoven into an intricate pattern', and the six verses in the lower margin of fol. 46v of the same MS, which 'are written in and out of one another in a curious intricate pattern'.[45] Compare also the verse in the lower margin of p. 6 of H 3. 18, written in a zig-zag frame.[46]

II. Circulation

Marginal verses tend to circulate. Some are found in the margins of just two manuscripts, for example the verse beginning *Fuil trí ní* in 23 Q 10, fol. 46r inf., and the Leabhar Breac, p. 238 inf.; the latter copy was edited and translated by Meyer (1906: ix) as:[47]

> Fuil trí ní
> ná dlegair do bocht Dé bí:
> dimmda da bethaid cipé,
> cesacht ocus aibéle.
>
> 'Three things there are which do not behove the poor of living God:
> ingratitude for his life whatever it be, grumbling, and flattery'.

[39] See n. 18.

[40] For a general survey of the marginal verses in this MS see Downey (2015: 128–9).

[41] For example, on pp. 77, 176 and 188.

[42] For example, on pp. 76 and 164. Note also p. 78 with one verse in the upper, and two in the lower margin.

[43] See above, p. 71 with n. 20. Apart from these are the single verse on fol. 31r inf. and the single verse on fol. 41v inf., each in a different hand.

[44] See Flower (1926: 446–7). For the scribe see Herbert (1988: 211).

[45] Flower (1926: 322). To mark the verses on fol. 46v as separate, each one is preceded by the abbreviation *.r.*, which I take to stand for *rann* 'quatrain, verse'.

[46] See Kobel (2020: 190), where 'p. 16' is a slip for 'p. 6'.

[47] The only variants of any significance in the copy in 23 Q 10 are *dlegur*, in the second line, and *dia bethuid cid be*, in the third.

Another instance is the verse in 3 B 23, p. 16 inf. and Add. 30512, fol. 19r inf.; the former copy was edited and translated by Gwynn and Purton (1911: 119) as:[48]

> Is maircc breichem beres gáoi
> ar an truadan ac nach bi ní,
> ar atchonnacsa a locc ruad
> anbad mór don tsluag dusgní.
>
> 'Woe to the judge who judges falsely against the wretch that has naught; for I have seen in the fiery place a great multitude of people that do the like.'

Other verses are more widely attested. The most frequently recurring verse I have so far noted is the verse in the lower margin of fol. 1r of Part 9 of H 2. 12, which was edited and translated by Culverwell (1913: 133) as:[49]

> An ba maiden, an ba fuin,
> an ba for tír nó for muir;
> acht ro-fetar rachat d'éc
> – mór an bét – ní fetar cuin.
>
> 'Be it morning, be it sunset, be it on land, be it on sea (I know not); but I know that I shall go to death – great the deed – I know not when.'

There are at least six further cases where this recurs as a marginal verse, namely, the Book of Uí Maine, fol. 77r (136) marg. inf.,[50] YBL (Part 6), cols 293–4 marg. inf., Harley 5280, fol. 46v marg. inf.,[51] Laud 610, fol. 115r marg. inf.,[52] the Leabhar Breac, p. 172 marg. inf.,[53] and H 3. 18 fol. [iv]v marg. inf.[54] There is also a copy on fol. 73v (lines 7–9) of the miniature MS G 1.[55] The most significant variant is in the copy in Harley 5280; where all the other copies have *rachat*, *raghad*, etc., in the third line, in this copy it is replaced by its Latin equivalent, *ibo*.

Another frequently recurring verse is that beginning *Mairg cuinges ní ara charait*. The version in the Book of Fenagh, fol. 4r inf., was edited and translated in Hennessy and Kelly (1875: 33) as:

[48]The following variants in Add. 30512 may be noted: *breithim* and *goi* in the first line, *ogna bí* in the second, *atconnarcsa* in the third, and *anba* and *dogní* in the fourth line.

[49]See Breatnach (2020: 83–6).

[50]In a different hand to that of the main scribe.

[51]This copy was edited and translated by Meyer (1889–94: 114).

[52]This copy was edited and translated by Dillon (1963: 150–1).

[53]In a different hand to that of the main scribe.

[54]The first two and a half lines are now missing due to physical damage; what remains is edited by Kobel (2020: 192).

[55]See p. 92 below.

Mairg cuinges ni ara charuid,
muna loinn leis a tabairt;
is e dede nos bia de,
miscais ocus oirbhire.

'Woe to him that asketh of a friend,
Unless that friend to giving be inclined.
Of all such asking two things are the end,
Bitter reproaches, and an hateful mind.'

It is found also in the lower margins of YBL, cols 343–4, the Leabhar Breac, p. 90, and Laud 610, fol. 3v,[56] as well as being entered into an empty space at the bottom of col. *a* of fol. 87v of D iv 2,[57] and included in the anthology in H 3. 18, p. 151.[58]

There are many more instances of recurring verses, some of which will be referred to in what follows below, and they serve to remind us that the presence of a verse in the margins of a manuscript is in itself no guarantee that it was composed by the scribe who entered it there.

III. Early Irish verses in later manuscripts

Marginal verses in manuscripts of the Old and Middle Irish periods can reappear in manuscripts of the post-Norman period. Among them are two verses written in manuscripts of the OIr period located on the Continent since the early Middle Ages, which reappear in manuscripts of the post-Norman period which were written in and remained in Ireland. One is the verse beginning *Mór baís mór baile* in Codex Boernerianus, fol. 145b (edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 296), which appears also as a marginal verse in H. 2. 12 [9], fol. 4v inf., and in the anthology in Add. 30512, fols 32v–33r.[59] The other is the verse in Codex Bernensis, fol. 117a sup. (edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 235), a copy of which appears as the second verse in the anthology from RIA MS B iv 2 edited in Appendix 2 below (see the notes thereon).

While it is virtually impossible that the two continental manuscripts are the immediate source of the later copies, the exact line of transmission between the earlier and later copies is not immediately obvious. If both the Codex Boernerianus and the Codex Bernensis were written in Ireland, two possibilities can be considered. If we assume that the scribes were the authors of the verses,

[56]The edition and translation in Dillon (1963: 136–7) is impaired by the misreading *tuinges* for MS *cuinges* in the first line.

[57]This copy was edited and translated by Meyer (1889–94b: 134).

[58]For the anthology in H 3. 18 see p. 91 below. The only notable variants are *minab laind*, YBL, *minab lainn*, D iv 2, *minap laind*, Leabhar Breac, *mainab lainn*, H 3. 18, *minbá lónd*, Laud 610, for *muna loinn* in the second line, *nos tá*, D iv 2, *nos ta*, Leabhar Breac, H 3. 18, *ro thá*, Laud 610, for *nos bia* in the third line, and the unique variants *is e ni bis do de* for the third line, and *ecraite* for the final word, in YBL.

[59]For the later copies see Breatnach (2020: 82, 84). The copy in Add. 30512 was printed by Meyer (1907: 215) with the comment 'Vgl. und verbessere Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus, S. 296', as noted in Stokes (1910: 78).

then in both cases the verse would have to have been copied from these manuscripts before they were moved to the Continent. If we do not make this assumption, the verses must have been copied from pre-existing manuscripts which remained in Ireland and became the ultimate source of the copies in the post-Norman manuscripts. It has, however, been argued that both manuscripts were written on the Continent,[60] and if this is the case, the marginal verses would have been taken from manuscripts which had come to the Continent from Ireland, and again the ultimate source of all the copies must have been (at least for some time) in Ireland. The question of transmission would become even more complicated if it could be shown that one of these manuscripts was written on the Continent and the other in Ireland, and the only thing that is virtually certain is that the verses were not composed on the Continent.[61]

As for the other verse in Codex Boernerianus, fol. 145b, there is a remarkable similarity between the first couplet *Téicht do Róim: / mór saído, becc torbai*, 'To go to Rome, much labour, little profit',[62] and an expression in an anecdote about Brigit in the commentary on Broccán's Hymn in the Liber Hymnorum. This relates how after she had sent seven men to Rome to learn the rule of Peter and Paul (*d'oglaim uird Petair 7 Pōil*), and they returned to her without remembering a single word of it, she said to them *nī mōr uar tarba, cid mór for sāethar*, 'your profit is not great, though your labour be great'.[63] If they are in fact connected, then it is almost certainly the case that the anecdote contains a direct echo of the poem, rather than that, as Bernard (1895) proposed, the verse refers to the anecdote.[64] This in turn would mean that this verse also was not composed on the Continent.

A comparable problem of transmission from the Middle Irish period is the verse in the late eleventh-century Codex Palatino-Vaticanus No. 830, fol. 39v marg. sin., which was edited and translated by Ó Cuív (1990: 57) as:

> Dech bliadna bae Eua
> d'és Ádaem i n-imneda
> ac coí dēr ro rīg nimi
> co ros-ruc serg sīrligi.
>
> 'For ten years after Adam [died] Eve was in tribulations lamenting tearfully to the king of heaven until a wasting of long illness took her off.'

[60] See Kenney (1929: 559–60) and *Clavis* §487 and §459.

[61] The possibility that the two verses were copied on two separate occasions by Irish scholars on the Continent, who then brought them back home to Ireland and into circulation there, is a very remote one.

[62] Edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 296.

[63] Edited and translated in *Thes* ii, 328.37, 329.15. There is another copy of the anecdote in MS 5100–04, fol. 43r, in scholia on *Félire Óengusso* for 1 February, where the phrase in question reads: *ní mór bar ttorba dúinn cidh mor bar saethar*, fol. 43r4. The versions corresponding to this in the Leabhar Breac, edited and translated by Stokes (1880: xlvii), Rawlinson B 512, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 64–7), A 7 (fol. 8v), G 10 (p. 28) and Laud 610 (fol. 62r) do not contain the relevant sentence.

[64] See also Mac Cana (2002: 74–5).

This manuscript was certainly written on the Continent, yet, as noted by Ó Cuív, the verse recurs on the lower margin of p. 90 of the Leabhar Breac,[65] written in Ireland in the early fifteenth century.[66]

In other cases, verses in Middle Irish manuscripts which remained in Ireland until the present day recur in manuscripts from the post-Norman period. The first of the two verses in the upper margin of p. 116 of the late eleventh-century Lebor na hUidre (Best and Bergin, 1929: 289) recurs as a marginal verse in the H 1. 18 copy of the Annals of Ulster s.a. 649;[67] in both cases there is a connection with the battle of Carn Conaill.[68]

The verse (preceded by the paragraph mark) on the lower margin of p. 31 of the twelfth-century Book of Leinster recurs on the upper margin of fol. 22v of G 3. It was edited on p. 131 of the diplomatic edition of *LL* as:

> ¶ Ro bíth oss la Tadc mac Céin.
> Tadc mac Céin la oss ro bith;
> la oss ro bíth Tadc mac Céin.
> Tadc mac Céin i rRoss na Ríg.
>
> 'A deer was slain by Tadg son of Cían, Tadg son of Cían was slain by a deer; by a deer was slain Tadg son of Cían, Tadg son of Cían at Ros na Ríg (Rosnaree).'[69]

Not only does the verse in the upper margin of p. 122 of the Book of Leinster reappear as a marginal verse in later MSS, but it is also cited in the main text of the seventeenth-century *Trí Biorghaoithe an Bháis*. I give the text from p. 451 of the diplomatic edition of *LL*, with the addition of macrons, along with my own translation:[70]

> Nī bīa a chland la nech i nnirt
> cipē bas gand breth ar bocht.
> na ndēnat na haithre d'ulc
> don lucht assa n-aithle is olc.
>
> 'Anyone who treats a poor person meanly will not have children that prosper; the evil that the fathers do is evil for those after them.'

[65]The only significant variants are *ro boi* (which gives the correct number of syllables) for *bae*, in the first line, and *corus marb* 'killed her' for *coros ruc*, in the fourth line.

[66]The two attestations can be accounted for by assuming that the verse was already in circulation in Ireland in the eleventh century, and was found in one of the books that Mael Brigte (Marianus Scottus) brought with him to the Continent.

[67]Edited in Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill (1983: 126–7) with a translation which is wide of the mark. For the marginal verses in the Annals of Ulster see Simms (2009: 106–7).

[68]The main text in this part of Lebor na hUidre is *Cath Cairn Chonaill*, and the verse in the Annals of Ulster is attached to the notice therein of that battle.

[69]I supply the translation. The copy in G 3 was edited by Ní Shéaghdha (1967: 25), and the only variant reading of any significance is *ag Ros* in the fourth line.

[70]I modify the translations of this copy by Meyer (1889–94b: 134) and Murphy (1957: 270). In the second line Meyer misread *cipé basgand*, and translated 'whoever breaks'; for the meaning of *bas gand breth* see Dillon (1963: 143 n. 2).

It appears again in two fifteenth-century manuscripts, namely in BL MS Egerton 91 (fol. 51r marg. inf.),[71] and Laud 610 (fol. 43r marg. inf.). The latter copy was edited by Dillon (1963: 142) as:

> Ni bi clann o nech a nirt
> cun ti as gann breth ar in mbocht;
> a nde[inid] na haithre d'ulc
> don lucht asa haithle as olc.
> Ni bi clann o nech a nirt.

A copy which is closer to that in the Book of Leinster is found in the lower margin of fol. 27r of BL MS Sloane 3567, a manuscript written in 1664–5:[72]

> Ni bhia clann in neich i niort,
> gibe bus gann breith ar bocht.
> i ndingnaid na haithre d'ulc,
> don lucht as < >aithle as olc.

Ascribed to *file éigin* 'a certain poet', in Keating's *Trí Biorghaoithe an Bháis* the verse has moved from the margins into a central text. It is edited by Bergin (1931: 168.5352) as:[73]

> Ní bhí a chlann ó neach i neart
> 'gon tí bhus gann breath ar bhocht;
> a ndéinid na haithre d'ulc,
> don lucht as a haithle is olc.

While this version shares some variants with Laud 610 (*ó neach*, line 1; *gon tí*, line 2; *asa haithle*, line 4), it shares others with *LL* (*a chlann*, line 1, *bhus* and *ar bhocht*, line 2). It would seem then that Keating took his text from yet another source.

These verifiable instances raise the possibility that quite a few more of the marginal verses in manuscripts written after 1200 AD are copies of verses composed in the Old and Middle Irish periods.

IV. Marginal verses and longer poems

Occasionally a marginal verse can be shown to have originated as a constituent element of a longer poem. Since such verses could have been extracted from the longer poems at any point in the course of transmission, it follows that marginal verses in later manuscripts which can be dated linguistically to the OIr period were not necessarily marginal verses already in the OIr period.

While the main focus of this paper is on Old and Middle Irish sources, I may note in passing two instances of marginal verses extracted from EModIr

[71] See Flower (1926: 447), who cites the first line only, *Ni bia clann la nach a nirt.*

[72] See Flower (1926: 27–32).

[73] The version in *Trí Biorghaoithe an Bháis* was also edited by O'Rahilly (1921: 22 no. 110), who refers in his notes (73–4) to the copy in the Book of Leinster.

sources, viz. v. 28 of *Mairg mheallas muirn an tsaoghail*, by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh,[74] cited in the upper margin of p. 196 of the Leabhar Breac (in the hand of the main scribe), and v. 1 of *Cionnas atá m'ēnghrādh-sa*, a poem of eight verses in *Eachtra Uilliam*,[75] cited in the upper margin of p. 140 of Laud 615.[76]

An instance of an extract from a late OIr or early MIr poem is the verse cited in the lower margin of p. 114 of the Leabhar Breac as:

In ri consníat a righi.
ge beth co méid mbrighi.
ni cuimhgead ní la mac nDe.
achd a cumud don íre.

This is a variant of a verse in the long poem beginning *Imma-rédind-sea márgraige* in *Síaburcharpat Con Culaind*,[77] which I edit and translate as:[78]

Ind ríg con-sniat a rríge
cía beit co mméit a mbrīgi
ní cumcat nī la mac nDé
acht a cubatt i nd-īre.

'The kings who strive for the kingship, however mighty they may be, at the hands of the son of God they can get no more than the length of their body in earth.'

This verse of four heptasyllabic lines is in a loose form of *rannaigecht*, while most of the rest of the poem is in a metre, found also in the *Irish Gospel of Thomas* and a number of other early OIr poems, which can be 'described as a mixture of *rannaigecht* and *lethrannaigecht*'.[79] While the total number of syllables per line is regular, viz. 7 + 5 + 7 + 5, the number of syllables in the endwords is not fixed, apart from the fact that the rhyming words at the end of lines *b* and *d* must, of course, be of the same length. A good deal of variation is found in early compositions in *rannaigecht*,[80] so that the minor difference in metre of the verse in question here can hardly be taken as an indication that it is an interpolation.[81]

On the other hand, the metre is somewhat problematic in the case of the verse cited in the upper margin of cols 70–1 of H 3. 17:[82]

[74]Edited in Mac Cionnaith (1938: 109–13), it has a total of 46 verses.

[75]Edited and translated by Cecile O'Rahilly (1949: 46–7, 165–6).

[76]The source was identified by Ó Cuív (1990: 92).

[77]According to Thurneysen (1921: 567), this text is hardly earlier than the tenth century.

[78]Adding macrons over long vowels, I follow the edition in Best and Bergin (1929: 284.9455–8), apart from re-dividing the last two words (*i ndire* in *LU*), and reading the preposition *i* followed by nasalisation of the OIr dat.sg. of *íriu* 'land, soil, earth' (for the spelling *nd-* see *SnaG* 238 §4.10).

[79]Carney (1964: xxxiv).

[80]See Murphy (1961: 52), and note that one of the early poems with the structure 7 + 5 + 7 + 5 that Carney (1964: xxxiv) refers to begins with a verse of four heptasyllabic lines (O Daly 1960: 187).

[81]Note that although the copy in British Library MS Egerton 88 varies somewhat from that in *LU*, it does also contain this verse (ed. Meyer 1910d: 55.26–7).

[82]The first word is illegible due to rubbing of the vellum.

< > ro genuir a mBethel
do-rad beth*aid* do marb*aib*
nicon relge gle no gó
Ued no No gein samhl*aid*

This is a variant of v. 4 of the poem of 8 verses, *Maire máthair in maic bic*, edited and translated by Carney (1964: 108–9) as:[83]

Gein ro-génair re mbethaib
do-rat bethaid do marbaib;
nícon réil, ced glé nád gó,
hi Fet ná Nó gein samlaid.

'A being who has been born before worlds, who has given life to the dead; there is not apparent – though it is clear that it is not falsehood – in the *Vetus* or the *Nouum* a being like him.'[84]

Noting that this verse is in a form of *rannaigecht*, while the rest of the poem is in *deibide*, Carney (1964: xxxiv) suggested that it is 'possibly an early interpolation', while in the notes on p. 164 he stated that he regarded it 'as an early marginal quatrain which had been accidentally incorporated in the poem'. Certainly, variation between *deibide* and *rannaigecht* is more difficult to account for than variation between different forms of *rannaigecht* in the same poem, and given that it is actually attested as a marginal verse, it may well be that Carney's assessment is correct. Nevertheless, as we do occasionally find variation between *deibide* and *rannaigecht*,[85] the different metre does not make it absolutely certain that this verse is an interpolation in the poem *Maire máthair in maic bic*.

Verse 25 of the MIr poem of 63 verses, *Aimirgein Glúngel tuir tend*,[86] is cited in the lower margin of cols 341–2 of YBL as:

Fithil m*ac* Fachtna ba fl*aith*.
fir naicenta leis ba lanmaith.
co mb*er*ead breith ba bechta.
lasin nintlecht naicenta.

An instance which has been noted elsewhere is verse 6 of the poem of ten verses, *A Chormaic coisc do maicni*,[87] which appears both in H 3. 18, p. 21

[83]The only known copy of the poem is on pp. 121–2 of MS G 50.

[84]The marginal verse invites us to reconsider the interpretation of the third line. As Carney pointed out in his notes (1964: 164), it differs from that in his first edition of the text (Carney, 1958: 26–7), where he edited and translated the line as *nícon reilced, glé nád gó* 'there has not been presented – it is clear that it is not falsehood'. The reading of the verse in H 3. 17, where *relge* is clearly written as a unit, suggests that Carney's first interpretation should in fact be reinstated.

[85]A small number of instances in the Metrical *Dindšenchas* are noted in Breatnach (2015: 59).

[86]Edited and translated in Smith (1994: 128, 136).

[87]Edited in *LL* 19124–63. There is another copy in col. 811 of YBL, which lacks v. 5 of the *LL* copy.

marg. sup., and in Harley 5280, fol. 46v marg. inf.[88]

Occasionally more than one verse is excerpted from a poem. I have noted two verses from the MIr poem of 27 verses, *A chuirp, not chaith fri crábud*,[89] appearing as marginal verses, namely, verse 5 in the upper margin of cols 148–9 of H 3. 17 as:

> Srian frid bruinn buaidh re mannaibh.
> srian frid cridhe cruaidh cungaibh.
> srian do tab*air*t fri teangaidh
> gen mennair is ciall cunnail,

and verse 14 in the upper margin of fol. 22r of Harley 5280 as:

> Ifernd dend doer in ditreb
> ro mell mor laech co luathcor
> carcair cruaid corr crom casrach
> na loc lom lasrach luachdub.

Similarly, two verses were excerpted from the MIr poem of 41 verses, *Cinnus atá do thinnrem*, edited in Breatnach (2008). Verse 8 appears as a marginal verse in H 3. 17, cols 150–1 marg. sup.,[90] and verse 12 appears in the lower margin of p. 47 of H 4. 22 as:[91]

> Foimne cloine ⁊ celga.
> foimne biasta belder*g*a.
> imgaib if*er*n dub drech.
> baile bithseng buiredach ⁊rl–

Occasionally lines from separate verses of a longer poem are combined to form a new verse. An example is the verse beginning *Colladh gairit gafidhe*, in Laud 610, fol. 6v.[92] This derives from two verses of the poem *M'óenurán im aireclán*;[93] the first line is taken from the first line of v. 6 and the rest from the last three lines of v. 8.[94]

When, however, a marginal verse can be identified with a verse cited in a learned treatise, such as a grammatical or metrical tract, a glossary or a commentary on another text,[95] or with a verse forming part of a prosimetric

[88]Kobel (2020: 195), who edited the text of the H 3. 18 copy. The only significant variants are in the last line, where the H 3. 18 copy (*ní main mogh gan mhittaine*) and the Harley 5280 copy (*ni main modh gan mitaine*) agree in the last word with YBL (*olc main mod cen mitaine*, 811.34) against *LL* (*olc moín mog cen bithdine*, 19147), but against both in the first word.

[89]Edited by Meyer (1908: 264–6).

[90]The text of this copy is supplied in the notes in Breatnach (2008: 24).

[91]The latter was identified subsequent to publication of the edition.

[92]Edited and translated by Dillon (1963: 136–7).

[93]Edited and translated by Murphy (1956: 18–23).

[94]As noted by Dillon (1963: 137 n. 1). For another example see pp. 90–1 below.

[95]In the case of the commentary on *Amrae Coluimb Chille*, the task of locating verses is greatly facilitated by the tables in Bisagni (2019: 446–70), which list the verses cited in all the manuscript copies of the text.

text, it is often impossible to determine whether it began as a marginal verse or as a verse composed for the longer text or whether both occurrences derive ultimately from another source (not necessarily a longer poem). An example is the verse in the lower margin of cols 116–17 of H 3. 17, which I edit and translate as:

> Mós g*ach* sobés sīdamhuil
> mōs tuili ⁊ mōs aithbhé
> mōs cach cīul caīn cīchamhuil
> nāch crīnann cumsccud– caithmhe.
>
> '*Mos* is used of every peaceful good conduct, *mos* means flood, *mos* means ebb; *mos* is used of every fair melodious (?) music which … of use does not wear out.'[96]

This is a variant of a verse cited in commentary on the Rawlinson B 502 copy of *Amrae Coluimb Chille*,[97] and it recurs also in a glossary in MS H 3. 18.[98]

A similar example is the verse in the lower margin of cols 106–7 of H 3. 17, which I edit and translate as:

> Doctus forche cach rachta
> isna leabhruibh lāncerta
> ⁊ dinn caín cach cnūasuigh
> dinn ainm cach fir ardūas*ail*.
>
> '*Doctus* learned in every law, in the fully correct books, and *dinn* the fair one of every cluster, *dinn* the name of every high noble man.'

This is a variant of another verse cited in commentary on the Rawlinson B 502 copy of *Amrae Coluimb Chille*,[99] and it recurs in the same glossary in H 3. 18 as the preceding example.[100]

A further instance of a verse moving between the margin of a manuscript and a glossary is that in 23 Q 10, fol. 37v inf., recurring in O'Mulconry's Glossary §857,[101] and for an example of a verse circulating between the manuscript margin, commentary on a law text, and a fabrication of disparate verses, see Breatnach (2020: 87).

[96] I normalise word-division and add macrons over long vowels. The only significant variants in the copy in H 3. 18 are *ciúin* (for *cain*) in line 3 and *cumscar* (for *cumsccud–*) in line 4, and the copy in Rawlinson B 502 agrees with H 3. 18 in both of these, with *ciuin* and *cumscor*, but differs from the other copies in the second line, with *dona bi tuili is taithbe* 'which has neither flood nor ebb'. I can make no sense of either of the variant readings for the penultimate word of the last line.

[97] Edited and translated by Stokes (1899: 174–5, §36).

[98] On p. 612a; it is cited in Stokes (1893: 3).

[99] Edited and translated by Stokes (1899: 168–9, §27); I follow word for word his translation of the first three lines.

[100] On p. 611b. The verse, where the final line corresponds to that in H 3. 17, as against *is dinn ainm cach ardhuasail* in Rawlinson B 502, is cited in Stokes (1893: 3).

[101] Edited and translated by Moran (2019: 242).

On the other hand, there is a little more certainty in the case of the following verse in 23 Q 10, fol. 37r inf.:

> Alla alla criaa criaa.
> benedig f*or* mo duana.
> carais Rechtabrad a dinge
> ar lar cille Cluana.

This corresponds to the first of the two verses cited to illustrate the variety of satire designated *tár molta* 'outrage of praise', in the tract *Cis lir fodlai aíre*.[102] The two verses are complete in themselves,[103] so that there is no need to assume that they were taken from a longer poem.[104] The single marginal verse, then, must derive from the satire of two verses. What is not certain is whether it was taken from the tract *Cis lir fodlai aíre* or from some other source.

A good example of a prosimetrum where most of the poems consist of a single verse is the version of the Life of Colum Cille edited in Herbert (1988).[105] As is pointed out in the notes, the verse at lines 405–8, beginning *Cetrachai sacart a lín*, corresponds to the marginal verse in Lebor na hUidre, p. 5 sup. (ed. *LU* p. 11), and that at lines 264–7, beginning *Criss Mo Bíí*, corresponds to a marginal verse elsewhere in the Leabhar Breac itself.[106]

While the examples cited above of verses extracted from longer poems could probably be added to, it seems unlikely that they would ever amount to a significant proportion of the total. The majority of those compositions which have come down to us as a single verse in all likelihood began as such. As Ó Macháin (2010: 83–7) has shown, single-verse compositions are explicitly acknowledged in the later period by Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, and it is reasonable to assume that this form was practised from the Old Irish period in a variety of contexts and not confined to marginal verses.

V. Marginal verses and main text

In some cases there is an obvious connection between the subject-matter of the main text and that of the marginal verse. Following on from the preceding discussion we may note first an instance of a marginal verse which has been excerpted from a longer poem, namely verse 13 of the poem *A fhir, ná híad*

[102] Edited and translated by McLaughlin (2008: 56–7 §12).

[103] See Breatnach (2006: 66 n. 15).

[104] Certainly the line *taithaīrid āenrand airdrī* 'a single verse dishonours a high-king', in the probably MIr verse 9 of Anthology C (Appendix 3 below), acknowledges that an effective satire can be expressed in the shortest of poems.

[105] The edition is based on the copy in the Leabhar Breac, with variants from other copies. Only three poems have more than one verse, viz. the poems of two verses each in §§14, 59 and 63.

[106] In the copy of the Life of Colum Cille in the Leabhar Breac the verse is at p. 32a15, while the marginal verse is at p. 235 inf. As Herbert (1988: 279) notes, a version of this verse is found also in the preface to the hymn *Noli pater* in the Liber Hymnorum (Bernard and Atkinson, 1895, vol. i, 87), and another version is found in 'Brussels MS 5100–4, fol. 46 [leg. 4v], q. 5 of a collection of six quatrains headed "Itinerarium na fairrge ó Choluim in onóir chresa Mo Bhí" '.

dreich Temrach,[107] which is concerned with the *círmaire* 'combmaker'. A variant of this is cited in the lower margin of fol. 44v of G 3, under the section of the text of *Uraicecht Becc*, which mentions the *círmaire*.[108] At the same time this verse is not appended to any of the other manuscript copies of *Uraicecht Becc*, and so represents a particular engagement with the text on the part of this scribe alone.[109]

Indeed on occasion the connection is so close that one could envisage the marginal verse deriving directly from the main text of the manuscript page on which it is found, as in the case of my next example. The verse in the lower margin of p. 188 of the Leabhar Breac appears under a prose account of the passion of John the Baptist, which includes the following passage:

> Cuirset na man*aig* in cend ina téig libuir. ar dāig a br*eithe* lēo dīa tír fesin. Acherunda didiu .i. isin Arāip ainm in luicc inro díchenta Ēoin ⁊ Sebastēn ainm in fhícha inro adnacit a chorp. Ōro dígset na man*aig* fora sét do shaigid a n-ath*ar*da. ecmaic aroli fer chucca isin slig*id*, 188b51.[110]
>
> 'The monks placed the head in their book-satchel to bring it to their own land. Acherunda, then, i.e. in Arabia, is the name of the place where John was beheaded and Sebasten is the name of the village in which his body was buried. When the monks had set off for their native land, they happened to meet a certain man on the road.'

I edit and translate the marginal verse as:

> Dīchennad Ēoin **inmain āin**.
> **i n**Aicherundai i nArāip.
> Sebastēn **is scrībtha sel**.
> ainm in fīcha ar hadnaiced.
>
> 'The beheading of splendid dear John was in Acherunda in Arabia; Sebasten, it is written for some time, is the name of the village where he was buried.'

One could easily conclude that the verse derives from the prose, with the additional elements (marked in bold) completing heptasyllabic lines and supplying rhymes and alliteration, but a complicating factor is that the verse recurs in another context, without the corresponding prose. This is the commentary on the verse for 29 August, the Decollation of John the Baptist, in *Félire Óengusso*,

[107] Edited and translated in Breatnach (2023: 165, 170). The poem dates from some time between the late MIr and EModIr period.

[108] The relevant section of the main text is edited in *CIH* 2281.3, and the verse in *CIH* 2281.8–9, and the verse is edited and translated in Breatnach (2023: 180–1). For *Uraicecht Becc* see Breatnach (2005: 315–18).

[109] The scribe who wrote *Uraicecht Becc* in G 3 is unidentified; see Ní Shéaghdha (1967: 13).

[110] This corresponds to *PH* 925–9. I normalise word-division, capitalise proper nouns, and add macrons over long vowels, here and in the following verses.

where it appears in four of the manuscript copies. The earliest manuscript is the Leabhar Breac itself, where in its other appearance, on p. 94, it has two further verses attached to it:

> Dīchendad Ēoin inmain āin.
> i nAcirunda i nArāib;
> Sebastēn is scrībtha seal.
> ainm in fhīcha ar hadnaiced.
>
> Mā ro būailed mā ro bīth.
> mā ro tūagad tend in fāth;
> a mac samla sūairc in līa.
> nī bīa ar brūach Amra co brāth.
>
> Mnā domain acht mād bec dīb.
> i tenid brāth breoid;
> labra frīu noco tēchta.
> i ndegaid ēchta Eoin.

The additional verses can be translated as:[111]

> 'If he has been struck, if he has been slain, if he has been axed, harsh the matter; his like, pleasant the champion (?), will never be on the bank of Amra (?).
>
> The world's women, save a few of them, in the scorching fire of Doom [leg. *brátha*], to speak to them is unmeet after the murder of John.'

The same three verses are appended to the scholia on the verse for 29 August in the copy of *Félire Óengusso* in Rawlinson B 512, fol. 61rb27,[112] whereas in A 7, fol. 31r, and MS 5100–04, fol. 62v1, the first verse appears alone without the additional misogynistic verses.[113] As the first verse is in the *deibide* metre and the second and third are in *rannaigecht*,[114] the latter two are probably originally separate. These other attestations make it likely that the verse was in circulation before the writing of the Leabhar Breac, so that in the case of the copy on p. 188 we have in fact to do with a marginal verse influencing the wording of the main text. Looking again at the prose, the part which corresponds to the verse (*Acherunda didiu … a chorp*) certainly has the appearance of

[111]The translation by Stokes (1905: 191) of the almost identical second copy is superior to his earlier translation (1880: cxxxiii–cxxxiv), and I follow the later translation for the most part here.

[112]Edited and translated in Stokes (1905: 190–1). This copy has *Banba* for the problematic *Amra* in the last line of the second verse, and the superior reading *bratha* in the second line of the third verse. Stokes took *breoid* as a 3 pl. verbal form, but it is rather the gen.sg. (with *o*-stem inflexion) of the corresponding verbal noun (*bréoïd*), as fixed by the rhyme with *Éoïn*; see *DIL* s.v. *breóad*, where the line *a teinidh brātha breoïd* is cited from the early MIr poem edited in O'Keeffe (1907: 30 v. 11).

[113]In MS 5100–04 it is included among the verses for June.

[114]Verse 2 is in *rannaigecht mór* and verse 3 in a metre which, apart for the first line, conforms to *rannaigecht bec*.

a parenthetical comment interrupting the flow of the narrative, and may well be simply a précis of the verse, perhaps even introduced by the main scribe of the Leabhar Breac himself.[115]

A somewhat different case is the verse on the lower margin of p. 60 of the Leabhar Breac. This appears under a copy of the Middle Irish translation of the Life of Martin of Tours, and while it clearly relates to that text, there is nothing matching it in the prose.[116] I edit and translate as:

> Mārtain mīlid mod nāch dis.
> do Gallīa Lúgdanēsis.
> gormac grādshūairc de claind rīg.
> mac Mānūailt is Abrasín.
>
> 'Martin, a soldier, a function which is not paltry, from Gallia Lugdunensis, a noble pleasant dutiful son from a family of kings, son of Manualt and of Abrasin.'

This is yet another instance of a verse which circulates between margins and commentary, in this case again, even in the same manuscript, as it appears on p. 99 marg. sin. of the Leabhar Breac among the scholia on *Félire Óengusso*, specifically the scholia relating to Martinmas, the eleventh of November.[117] However, the fact that it is found in the commentary on most copies of the *Félire*, makes one disinclined to see any special connection between its two appearances in the Leabhar Breac.[118]

Among other instances of a definite connection between the subject-matter of a marginal verse and the main text on the same page are the two verses in the upper margin of p. 38 of Lebor na hUidre relating to *Aided Nath Í* (Best and Bergin, 1929: 92),[119] and the two verses in the upper margin of p. 117 of the Book of Leinster on the killing of Mes Gegrae by Conall Cernach, an incident also narrated in the main text, *Talland Étair*.[120] Indeed the majority of the marginal verses in Lebor na hUidre bear some relationship to the main text of the page on which they appear,[121] the exceptions being the two verses added in later hands.[122]

[115]Identified by Ó Concheanainn (1973) as Murchad Ó Cuindlis.

[116]For example, Martin's parents are nowhere named in the main text.

[117]This copy, where the only significant variant is *do síl rig* in the third line, was edited and translated by Stokes (1880: clxviii).

[118]Subsequently Stokes (1905: 240–1) edited and translated the variants in Rawlinson B 512 and B 505, and variants of the verse are also cited in the scholia for 11 November in the copies of the *Félire* in Laud 610 (fol. 69v), MS A 7 (fol. 40r), MS 5100–04 (fol. 63v) and MS 5057–59 (fol. 46r).

[119]See Ó hUiginn (2024: 28). See also p. 78 above on the two marginal verses in the same MS relating to an incident in the tale *Cath Cairn Chonaill*.

[120]The verses are edited in *LL* p. 432, and *Talland Étair* is edited and translated by Ó Domhnaill (2005).

[121]In this regard there is no significant difference between those in Hand M and those in Hand H. The verses are listed in n. 18 above.

[122]The glossed verse in the upper margin of p. 50, in the hand of M, is probably to be connected with the final paragraph of *Serglige Con Culainn* on the same page (see Findon 2007), although it recurs in a different context in the early sixteenth-century MS Egerton 1782 (see Flower 1926: 297–8, and 275).

Nevertheless, while practice may vary from one manuscript to another, there is by no means always a connection between marginal verses and the main text. As we have seen above many marginal verses recur in more than one manuscript, and the fact that the main text is not the same in each manuscript[123] serves to remind us that it is not necessary to look for a connection in all cases.[124]

VI. RANN MARBHÁIN

In the collection he made in MS 5100–04, fols 58r–65r, of verses connected with a copy of *Félire Óengusso*, Mícheál Ó Cléirigh ends the verses connected with the prologue with the note *Rainn marbhain an chédbrólaigh don Fheilire ind sin*, fol. 58r7, 'Those are the marginal verses of the prologue to the *Félire*'. At the end of the collection he introduces an important terminological distinction when he refers to what he has written as *na roinn marbhain 7 chnis sin bhenus le corp an feilire.*[125] Here we have *cnes* 'skin; surface' opposed to 'margin', and as none of the verses are taken from the main text of the *Félire*, the 'skin' or 'surface' must be the apparatus of gloss and commentary usually written all around the copy of the main text. Accordingly I would translate 'those verses in the margins and in the commentary which belong with the canonical text of the *Félire*'.[126] Ó Cléirigh makes this distinction once again when he marks the verses for April with *Cuid April dona rannaibh cnis, 7 marbhain*, on fol. 60v2.[127]

There is a brief note on *marbhán* as a form of the word for 'margin' in Breatnach (2007: 34 n. 9),[128] and the most important addition to be made to it relates to the following example, poem No. V of the poems on the Butlers, a poem which consists of one verse only, and is in fact in the margin of the manuscript.[129]

[123]See, for example, the verse mentioned in n. 122, as well as the verse *Mairg cuinges ní ara charait*, cited above p. 76, which appears under a king-list in the Book of Fenagh, under the *Félire Óengusso* in the Leabhar Breac, and under *Betha Senáin* in Laud 610.

[124]Here may be noted the ingenious connection made by Ford (1999) between the margin and the main text in the case of marginal verse in the St Gall Priscian. See also Melia (2005) and Toner (2009: 12 n. 37).

[125]Fol. 65r. This is the sole example of the term for marginal verse cited in *DIL* s.v. *margan*, but with *roinn* misprinted as *roinni*, and *7 chnis* omitted. See also the note by Ó Cléirigh cited in the introduction to Anthology B in Appendix 2 below.

[126]Previously translated 'those marginal and contiguous (?) verses which belong with the body of the *Félire*', in Breatnach (2007: 34).

[127]In the course of a discussion of the difficulties with an instance of *raind marghan* in *IGT* V, Ó Riain (2025: 38 n. 120) cites a further example of the term *rann cnis*, but I cannot agree with his suggestion that 'the terms *roinn marbhain agus chnis* … in a general way … [refer] to "scholia" or "commentary", perhaps not necessarily in verse' (p. 38), nor with the suggestion that 'the two may be roughly synonymous' (p. 38 n. 120).

[128]The headword *marbán* in *DIL* relates solely to the homonym meaning 'dead person', and there is no reference to the three instances of *marb*(*h*)*án* noted s.v. *margan* 'margin', where they are described as misspellings.

[129]In the lower margin of p. 5 of RIA MS 23 F 21. The manuscript belongs to the later sixteenth century; see Carney (1945: xiii–xv, 112).

Āit mo roinn gan rann oile
nī frīth feadh do dhuanaire –
a dhreach bhúidh fān barrlān coill –
dūinn, acht marbhān an mheamruim.

'There is no place in thy *duanaire* for my quatrain without other quatrains there – O thou of the loving countenance about whom is a wood rich in produce (*lit.* about whom a wood is heavy-topped) – there is but the margin of the parchment.'[130]

In his note on this verse, Carney (1945: 112) offers a convincing explanation of the form: 'RIA Contribb., fasc, M, gives examples of this word under *margan*, "a margin (of a book)", and describes it as a misspelling. It is rather to be taken as a new word meaning "margin", a contamination of *margan* and *bán* "white, blank".' An instance in a satirical verse in the Book of the O'Conor Don is *tainm ar imioll a marbháin* 'your name on the edge of its margin',[131] and a number of instances in the fifteenth-century MS now bound as two, King's Inns 12 and 13, are listed by de Brún (1972: 31). The earliest example I have so far come across, again in the genitive sg. qualifying *rann*, may be as early as the thirteenth century, but is certainly no later than 1309. It is in verse 14 of the poem *Gabh mo chomhairle a mheic mhín*, by Giolla na Naomh Mac Aodhagáin, which was edited and translated by Ní Dhonnchadha (1989: 166, 169) as:

Meabhraigh gach rann marbhdhán mín,
giodh camdhán é nó giodh cóir,
do-bheirim fan dTréidhe thuas
nach budh séimhe an buas ón Bhóinn.

'Memorise all stanzas of the well-wrought poems of the dead, whether it be a flawed poem or a faultless one; I swear by the Trinity on high that the knowledge from the Boyne would be no more benign.'

The edition follows the text of MS H 4. 22,[132] and the version in one other copy is cited in the apparatus (p. 168), namely, the single verse in the miniature MS G 1, fol. 72v7:

Meabhraig gac rann marbhain mín.
madh camdhán hé madh dán cóir.
s dobherr fan tréighe.
nac budh reidhe an buas on mbóind.

While adopting the variant *marbdan*, Ní Dhonnchadha (1989: 172) suggested that the variant *rann marbhain* might mean 'elegy'. In the light of the further versions discussed below, all of which point to *marbhá*(*i*)*n*,[133] as well as the

[130]Edited by Carney (1945: 19), with the translation on p. 112; *mo roinn gan rann oile*, lit. 'of my verse without another verse', means, of course, a single-verse composition.

[131]Edited in Ó Macháin (1998: 31 no. 48c).

[132]There is a diplomatic edition of this verse in *CIH* 1584.27.

[133]For the gsg. in either *-án* or *-áin*, see *GOI* §280 (with Translators' note 58) and *SnaG* 242, 370.

evidence presented above for *marbhán* 'margin', I propose that we revise the translation of the first line to 'Study every polished marginal verse'.[134] The author of the poem, who died in 1309, was a noted legal scholar,[135] and the poem is one of advice to a student of law which includes a list of both general topics and specific texts that should be studied. With the proposed reading of the first line of verse 14, it will have included marginal verses among the texts to be studied, and their inclusion is a relatively early confirmation of the importance attached to them in medieval Irish literary culture.

It is, then, entirely appropriate that this verse on marginal verses became in turn itself a marginal verse. What is essentially the text of verse 14 appears in 23 Q 10, fol. 45r inf., as:

> Mebraig cach rand marban min.
> cid quamdan he no cid coir
> do-beirim fan treide tuass
> conach seim< > on Boinn.

The copy in the miniature manuscript G 1 is cited just above, and the verse recurs with an interesting variant for the first word in Rawlinson B 485, fol. 91v inf. as:[136]

> Léigh gach rand marbháin mhín.
> ciodh camdhán é giodh dán cóir
> do bheirim ar mo thréidhe thúas.
> nach b*ud*h séimhe an búas ón mBóinn

In addition, I know of two copies of an alternative version, which combines the first couplet of v. 14 with the second couplet of v. 3 of *Gabh mo chomhairle a mheic mhín*. Verse 3 was edited and translated by Ní Dhonnchadha (1989: 164, 168) as:

> Lean dot fhoghlaim – béara bhuaidh!
> ná déana doghraing do dheoin,
> gach ní ná tuigfe, tuig féin
> agus bu léir duid fa dheoidh.
>
> 'Persevere in your study – victory will be yours! Do not create difficulty of your own design; pay attention to everything that you will not understand and it will be clear to you eventually'.

[134] *DIL* s.v. *mebair* (c) notes that in EModIr it can be used in the sense 'reason, intelligence', and I take it that the corresponding verb *mebraigid*, rather than meaning 'memorises', is used here in the sense 'fathoms the meaning of', that is 'studies', a meaning closer to that of the variant *léigh* 'read' in the version in Rawlinson B 485 cited below.

[135] For accounts of his work see Kelly (2001 and 2020).

[136] Cf. Ó Cuív (2001: 118).

The combination of the originally separate couplets appears as a marginal verse in Laud 615, p. 138 inf.:[137]

> Mepruicch gach rand marbhain mhín.
> madh quamdan hé mad dhán coir.
> gach ní nach tuicfir tuic fen.
> & bud ler duit fa dheoicch.

and on the upper margin of C ii 3 (a) p. 13:[138]

> < >uid gach rann marbhan min
> ma camdan no ma coir
> gach ní nach tuigfir tuig fein
> ⁊ b*ud* leir duit fa dheoidh

VII. Manuscript anthologies of verses

It is fair to say that the best known single-verse compositions in medieval Irish are marginal verses, and most readers will also be familiar with them in commentaries, learned treatises and prosimetrical texts. Probably the least familiar context in which single-verse poems are found is where they are brought together in manuscript anthologies. All the examples that I know of are in manuscripts which date from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. These anthologies are treated as the main text and placed in the centre of the manuscript page, and here also there is a degree of circulation between the margins and centre-page text. The most striking instance is the almost complete correspondence between an anthology of eight verses in Add. 30512 and the eleven verses in the margins of H 2. 12, for which see Breatnach (2020: 81–6).

Another instance of close correspondence is between the anthology of six verses in H 3. 18, p. 151, and four verses on the margins of the Leabhar Breac (all on pages where the main text is *Félire Óengusso*). The first (beg. *It finna ferta feil*) recurs in the Leabhar Breac, p. 77 inf.,[139] the third (*Tri bliadna <xxx>it tri mís*) and the fourth (*Inn aimsir-sin ail iar ngrein*) recur together in the Leabhar Breac, p. 78 inf., while the fifth (*Mairg cuinngis ni fora carait*) recurs in the Leabhar Breac, p. 90 inf., and elsewhere.[140] On the other hand, the second (*Acht co saethraib fri serc nDe*) recurs as a marginal verse in Laud 610, fol. 121r inf., as well as in the commentary on *Amrae Coluimb Chille*,[141] and the sixth verse (beg. *Is he in forus in forba*) recurs in both MS 5100–04, fol.

[137]It is followed by another copy in a different hand. See O'Sullivan and Herbert (1973: 182), where the third line is mistranscribed as *gach ní tuicfiter tuic fen*. The first copy actually has *gach ní nach tuicfit tuic fen*, with the correction *nó r* above the final *-t* of *tuicfit*, and this correction was adopted in the second copy, which reads *gac ni nac tuicfer tuic fén*.

[138]This second example was brought to my attention by Dr Gordon Ó Riain.

[139]The latter copy was edited and translated by Meyer (1889–94c: 193).

[140]See pp. 75–6 above.

[141]The former copy was edited and translated by Dillon (1963: 154–5), and the Rawlinson B 502 copy of the latter by Stokes (1899: 268–9); for other copies see Bisagni (2019: 463).

58r, and MS 5057–59, fol. 44r, among verses appended to the prologue to *Félire Óengusso*.[142] One other anthology containing early material which may be noted here is that of three prose triads and four verses (all marked as separate) in H 3. 17, col. 855.

A special case is the sixteenth-century MS G 1, a miscellany of prose and verse items. Its dimensions are so small (6.8 by 5.4 cms) that the difference between centre and margin becomes irrelevant for the single verse items included in it, most of which are concentrated in fols 71v to 74v.[143] Mention may also be made here of a substantial anthology of single-verse compositions from the Early Modern Irish period, the collection of 79 verses in the Book of O'Conor Don, fol. 22, edited in Ó Macháin (1998: 25–25).[144]

To draw further attention to what I consider to be an important variety of text, and to illustrate in more detail the nature of anthologies, I edit a sample of four of them in Appendices 1–4 below. Anthology A exemplifies an anthology with a high degree of overlap with verses cited in the commentary on a single text. The vast majority of the verses in Anthology B are unique to that text. Anthologies C and D exhibit a large degree of overlap with marginal verses and with other anthologies, and both are in hands other than that of the main scribe of the relevant manuscript. Anthologies A, with a total of 22 verses, and B, with 20 verses, are quite substantial, as opposed to Anthologies C, with 9 verses, and D, with 7 verses. In all cases the individual verses can be distinguished on the basis of subject-matter and metre, while additional markers serve to distinguish more clearly the verses in Anthologies A and D, and most of those in C.[145] Even where the verses in anthologies are not clearly marked as separate, we can take it that they were not intended to be read as the component verses of a single poem. Nevertheless, in at least two cases, both works of the fifteenth-century scribe Uilliam Mac an Leagha, we have to do with a deliberate attempt to pass off a string of disparate verses as a unitary poem, in one case by arranging the verses in such a way as to contrive a *dúnad*, and in the other by inventing a title for the verses, *Ríagail na Manach Líath* 'The Rule of the Grey Monks'.[146]

Conclusion

Marginal verses are first attested in manuscripts of the Old Irish period and are a characteristic feature of manuscripts of the Middle Irish and later periods. In

[142]This set of verses in H 3. 18, p. 151, is followed by a legal fragment, edited in *CIH* 678.16–20, and then by three verses on almsgiving, apparently in a different hand, all three of which occur together among verses appended to *Félire Óengusso* in the Leabhar Breac, p. 85 (under 15 April, omitted in Stokes, 1880), in MS 5100–04, fol. 60v, and in MS 5057–59, fol. 45r. The first two of the latter three verses are adaptations of verses 6 and 9 of the dialogue between Cummaine Fota and Comgan edited and translated by O'Keeffe (1911: 22–3).

[143]For this manuscript see Ní Shéaghdha (1967: 1–12), and for a general account and thematic analysis of the contents see Cunningham (2004).

[144]Ó Macháin suggested (pp. 8–10) that Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn was the author of all these verses, but subsequently (2010: 83–7) revised his views.

[145]For details see the introductory notes to Appendices 1, 3 and 4.

[146]See Breatnach (2020: 87–8 and 89–97), for editions and translations of both of these works.

the context of medieval Europe in general, it is only in Early Welsh manuscripts that anything comparable can be found, but even there the practice of writing verses in the margins was abandoned quite early.[147] In most cases we have to do with a single verse.[148] They vary widely in subject-matter, ranging from epigrams to mnemonic verses and prayers. Occasionally more than one single-verse poem can appear in the same marginal space.

Single-verse compositions are not confined to the margins of manuscripts. They can be cited in works such as glossaries and the scholia on major texts, or form elements of prosimetric texts. They can be brought together to form anthologies of varying length. They can then be moved from one of these locations to another.

Many of the verses can be shown to be earlier than the manuscript source in which they are found, so that the study of marginal verses and anthologies in manuscripts of the Early Modern period is also of relevance for the earlier medieval period. Not all marginal verses are originally single-verse compositions, and the fact that some are extracted from longer poems[149] raises the possibility that, conversely, single-verse compositions could occasionally be incorporated into longer poems.[150]

Some manuscripts, for example, Add. 30512, contain both marginal verses and anthologies.[151] In other cases single verses are concentrated in every margin of a sequence of a few MS pages,[152] so that the distinction between marginal verses and anthologies can be blurred.[153]

Although first attested in manuscripts of the EModIr period, it is quite possible that anthologies of single-verse compositions were being compiled at an earlier date.[154] The question of when anthologies began to be put together is relevant to the wider question of how single-verse poems were transmitted. They certainly were being transmitted from quite early on,[155] and while they may have simply been copied from one margin to another, other possibilities at least deserve consideration.

[147]It has been suggested that the Welsh practice derived from the Irish; for the arguments and counter-arguments see Sims-Williams (2011: 31–3).

[148]For the rare instances of two-verse poems and one instance of a poem of three verses see p. 72 above.

[149]It is remarkable that even in more recent times O'Rahilly took some of the verses of his collection in *Dánfhocail* (1921) from longer poems; see pp. 71–2 above.

[150]See, for example, the discussion of v. 4 of the poem *Maire máthair in maic bic* on p. 81 above, and the note by Eleanor Knott (1958: 79) on v. 18 of the poem *Trēdhe nach fuilngeand rīgh rēil*: 'This stanza breaks the continuity of the discourse. It looks like a marginale included through accident from the exemplar'.

[151]For the marginal verses see Flower (1926: 504–5), and for the anthology see Breatnach (2020: 81–3).

[152]See p. 74 above on the Book of Fenagh and Egerton 91.

[153]Even in the case of the anthology just mentioned, in Add. 30512, the first five-and-a-half verses are in col. b of fol. 32v, but the remaining three-and-a-half verses are written in the lower margin of fol. 32v and the upper margin of fol. 33r.

[154]These might have been on centre page, as in the case of the anthologies edited in the Appendices here, or in miniature MSS like G 1.

[155]See section III above.

A great deal remains to be done in the work of identifying and editing marginal verses and anthologies, but I hope at least to have shown in this paper that they were a central element of medieval Irish literary culture. Not all marginal verses are as fine examples of poetry as the verse with this paper opens. Given the mobility of marginal verses, it is of course difficult, if not impossible, to prove that it is the work of the scribe of the manuscript in which it is found. Furthermore, this verse appears in the MS with two corrections,[156] which according to Stifter (2018: 224), 'give it the hallmarks of a copy'.[157] If the verse was copied from another manuscript, it can at least, as Stifter noted, be dated within a fairly narrow range, between 795, the date of the first recorded Viking raid on Ireland,[158] and 850–1, the date of writing of the manuscript.[159] Nevertheless, it is quite possible that, if one has to do with a copy, the exemplar was simply a draft or a fair copy made, for example, on a wax-tablet, and that the verse was indeed composed by the scribe who wrote it into the St Gall Priscian.

APPENDIX 1: ANTHOLOGY A

This anthology of 22 verses takes up most of col. 675,[160] and all of col. 676 of section 4 of TCD MS H 3. 17.[161] Six of the verses, viz. 14, 15, 20, 7, 8 and 11, in that order, were edited (without translation) in Meyer (1910: 297). It exemplifies two, by no means universal, features of verse anthologies; firstly, most of the items are clearly marked as separate, and secondly, almost all the items are taken from a single text with its scholia and marginalia. It is, however, a selection and is thus entirely different from a comprehensive collection of all the marginal and commentary verses connected with a single text, such as that by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh in MS 5100–04, referred to above, p. 88.

Twelve of the twenty items are marked as separate by placing the 'paragraph or distinguishing mark',[162] printed here as ¶, beside them.[163] Two of these also have an ascription of authorship,[164] while three are marked by an ascription alone.[165] In addition, a number of short prose passages relating to

[156]One of these is a correction of an omission: *minn* in the third line is a supralinear addition preceded by two dots (:) which are also placed at the point where *minn* is to be inserted. The second is a substitution of one spelling for another: *fairggæ* in the second line was first written *faircæ*, then a dot was placed under the *c* and a suprascript *gg* (now partly cut away) added. Given the variation in the spelling of the voiced stops in word-internal position in OIr in general, and particularly in the same manuscript (contrast *foirrce*, *Sg.* 67b9, with *foirrgae*, *Sg.* 124a1), it is difficult to see why it was felt necessary to make this correction. Yet it was still made.

[157]Similarly Etchingham (2025: 228), without reference to Stifter.

[158]*AU* s.a. 795; see Etchingham (2025: 87).

[159]See Ó Néill (2000).

[160]Items 9 and 12 each have two verses, and the rest have a single verse. The first 14 lines are taken up by a note on the canonical hours, edited and translated by Best (1907).

[161]It is dated to the sixteenth century. For the make-up of this composite manuscript see Breatnach (2005: 7).

[162]It is so described by Anne O'Sullivan in *LL* vi, p. xii.

[163]Items 1, 2, 6, 9, and 13–20.

[164]Items 1 and 16.

[165]Items 4, 10 and 11.

the subject matter of the verse which they accompany are included in items 2, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 19.

Most of the items appear to have been taken from a copy of *Félire Óengusso* which was fairly close to that in the Leabhar Breac, both in its apparatus of scholia as well as in its marginal verses. The verse in no. 5 derives from the main text of *Félire Óengusso*, and most of the rest have a connection with the *Félire*, either as verses cited in the scholia (a total of 9) or as verses on the margins of pages containing the *Félire* (a total of 5).[166] Six items recur in the scholia in the Leabhar Breac (usually in other copies also), namely 1, 2, 10, 12, 16 and 19.[167] Three recur in the scholia on the *Félire* as found in other manuscripts only, namely, 6, 9 and 18. Five recur on the margins of the pages of the Leabhar Breac which contain a copy of *Félire Óengusso*, namely 3, 4, 11, 15 and 17. Two recur among the verses extracted from scholia and marginal verses on the text of the *Félire* in MS 5100–04, namely, 7 and 13.[168]

This leaves only four items which cannot be connected with the *Félire*, namely 8, 14 and 20, and the genealogy in no. 5; while the verses in 14 and 20 recur elsewhere, and some parallels can be adduced for the genealogy, I have found no other copy of the verse in 8.

In the edition below unambiguous abbreviations are expanded silently and expansions of suspension-strokes are italicised. I reproduce the punctuation of the manuscript, but divide words according to current standards and capitalise proper names. A few items are accompanied by interlinear glosses, which are printed separately and cross-referenced by suprascript letters.

1. ¶ Mael Gemr*id* cecinit

   Bendchor idan.
   lochan dilguda chinad
   biaid uair do brig na n-apud
   bid adba matad mbirach

2. ¶ O gabais mac u Elta
   Brenaind gu lin a ferta
   acht mas ferr ni mesaiti
   o sin ile Cluain F*er*ta.

   Braen find m*a*c Findloga m*a*c u Alta do Chiarraige Luachra

3. Teora saeba sanasa
   Lethe Cuind ro charusa
   Mu Cutu cona clamraid
   d'indarbu a Raithin raglain
   dichur Col*uim* Cille caid
   timdibe saegail Ciarain

[166] Four of these (items 3, 11, 12 and 13) can be shown to have had a wider distribution; for details see the notes.

[167] As does the first prose passage in no. 5.

[168] Whether these two verses appeared among the scholia or in the margin in Ó Cléirigh's exemplar cannot be determined.

4. Comgall d*ix*i*t*

   Ainmne aine figell airc.
   narup saithech narup goirt.
   foss is fethamla gen bais
   mesrug*ud* crais comet cuirp

5. Lasar grene ane.
   apstal Erend uaige
   Patraic co met mile
   rop ditiu diar truage

   Ocus Nesan Corcaige c*u*m P*at*ricio in h̄ die

   Patraic m*ac* Calpuirn m*ei*c Fotaidhe m*ei*c Odisi m*ei*c Lebuirn m*ei*c Mercuid m*ei*c Ota m*ei*c Murich m*ei*c Oric m*ei*c Maxim m*ei*c Encreti m*ei*c Fresa m*ei*c Fereni m*ei*c Brita m*ei*c Hisicon m*ei*c Eloi m*ei*c Doi m*ei*c Baath m*ei*c Ibath m*ei*c Gomer m*ei*c Iafeth m*ei*c Nae

6. ¶ Finan Cam tuc cruithnecht[a] les i nErind ar dus ⁊ Declan tuc secal[b] ⁊ Mo Domnoc[c] tuc beochu ⁊ i n-aenluing tucad iat
   [a] .i. lan a asai [b] .i. lan a cluic [c] .i. lan a cluic

   Dligid Finan fircuarta
   med do tuirn cach trebi[a]
   lan a asa umaidi
   cis na ruc ranaem remi
   [a] .i. i nErind

7. IS bes do m*ac* De tacu
   ni sraiglend a lesm*a*cu
   meic neich aile nocha n-airg
   acht a meic fen ros timairg

8. Imad fesa finnad nech.
   mor a maith don aes craidbech
   tuilled digla is *ed* ros ta
   don lucht nachat comaillfea

9. ¶ Cach naem ro bui fuil bias
   co brath brigach bobhaid
   i caemtech Crist credail
   ro beat acum cobair

   ro bet acar cobair
   for nim ⁊ talmain
   gu tisat na mbudnib
   do chungnam ler n-anmain
   A Isucan inmain
   ro comailt*er* amlaid

10. Ang*e*lus dx ⁊ gibe gabus in rand-sa i n-uair a bais niba ifernach

Berach[a] is Mo Chaem
romellach a gnais
gibe nus gude ri beolu bais
ni*con* raga bas
[a] .i. o Cluain Cairpthi i ndithrub Cenel Lobta ⁊ caectigis d'errach a feil

11. Caemgen d*ix*i*t*
Sonus f*or* cach n-esair ara ngebtair in rand-sa sis

IS maith main mesrugud
in trath ric co longud
ferr aruda imud
at-cota bith bronnud

12. Pet*ar* Andrias is Matha
Partol*on* Tomas Tatha
Simon Madian Pil*ip* Pol
Eoin ⁊ na da Iacob

Da apstal dec tire Herend

Da Findean da Col*um* caid
Ciaran Caindech Comgall cain.
da Brenaind Ruadan co li
Ninded Mo Bi M*a*c Nad Fraich[a]
[a] .i. Mo Laisi Daminse

13. ¶ Osraige o Gabran go Gren
tuctha i n-eric Etirsceil[a]
ra Mumain togaide tair
is Conairi ros cengail
[a] . athair Conair Moir

14. ¶ IS fo lim-sa mu laiget
do talmain tairnes cach cland
ce no beith nech ni bud isliu
do thoillfed serc Isa ann

15. ¶ Collud ⁊ sadaili.
longud gibe tan tairi
if*er*n cona ilpianaib
is s*ed* do-b*er*ar airi

16. ¶ Findcua adubairt
IS í itge guidim-sea
armo scarud risin sas
narop ifernach cach dune
acht curum gude ri bas

17. ¶ Crabud cen uaill cen secda
cen somataid cen bochta
ol cen itaid cen mesca
proind seim gen saith gen gorta

18. ¶ Feil Coluim[a] feil Giric[b] gil.
⁊ k*al*a*nd* Septimper
feil Partoloin[c] baig co mbrig
ge*m*ín Muiri ⁊ feil Michil
[a] .i. Cilli [b] . macaim [c] .i. for aenlaithi bit

19. ¶ Lupaid ⁊ Tigris tend
feib do-ruirmius is Ricell
Dar Erca is Liamain na lend
gabsat diamair cen dichell
anmann sin re srethaib sell
sethar Patraic na primcell

Secht n-espoic dec im espoc M*a*c Cairtind ro genair o Dar Erca ⁊ da naeboig .i. Aice ⁊ Lalloc

20. ¶ Lepaid uar
⁊ clerchin tana truag
smacht ar col*ainn* snige der
ac rig nell bid mor a luag

Notes

1. The metre is *rannaigecht bec*, with a shortened first line. A variant of this, with the same ascription, appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 10 May, and was edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 130–1) from MS A 7 as:

Mael-geimridh dixit:
Bennchor alaind idhan
loc dilgudha na cinadh:
biaidh uair do brigh na n-apadh
bid adhba madagh mbirach

'Mael-geimrid dixit: Bangor delightful pure, place of forgiveness of crimes: a time will be for the power of the abbots: it will be a dwelling of sharp-nosed dogs.'

For the similar copy in the Leabhar Breac see Stokes (1880: lxxxv); this also has *alaind* in the first line, and for the second line reads *loc dílguda cinad*, and the copy in MS 5100–04, fol. 61r, agrees with the Leabhar Breac in both cases.

The version here in Anthology A has the superior *Bendchor idan* in the first line, with the final of the shortened line rhyming with the finals of the second and fourth lines (see Murphy, 1961: 55 no. 24), whereas the addition of *ālaind* in the other copies still does not manage to convert it into a heptasyllabic line. In the second line, *lochan* (written *plene*) is clearly an error for *locán*, the diminutive of *loc*. The substitution of *loc* for *locán* gives a hexasyllabic line in the Leabhar Breac and Brussels copies, while the missing syllable is supplied

in the copy in A 7 by the addition of the gen.pl. article *na*. The last two lines are better translated as 'there will be a time because of the abbots that it will be a dwelling place of sharp-nosed dogs'.

2. The metre is a variety of *rannaigecht*, conforming to the pattern of *rannaigecht bec* except in the third line. A variant of this appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 16 May, and was edited and translated by Stokes (1880: lxxxvi) from the Leabhar Breac as:

> O gabais mac .h. alltai
> brenaind colín aeltai
> acht mas ferr nis mesaide
> ósin cose cluain fertai.
>
> 'Since the son of Hua Alltai took it, Brenann with the multitude of his flocks, if it is not better, it is not the worse, Clonfert, from that to this.'

The copy in MS 5100–04, fol. 61r19, does not differ significantly from that in the Leabhar Breac, except for the end of the third line, where it has *ni mesa de*, with spaces between the words. This provides strong support for restoring OIr *ní mesa dé*, with *dé* making *aicill* rhyme with *sé* (or *lé*, as in the version here in Anthology A).

The prose also appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 16 May, and was edited by Stokes (1880: lxxxvi) from the Leabhar Breac as: *do chiarraige luachra .i. braen find mc findlogai mic .h. allta.*

3. 'The three perverse counsels of Conn's Half (of Ireland), which I have loved: the expulsion of Mo Chutu with his lepers from bright Rahen, the sending away of holy Colum Cille, the shortening of the life of Ciarán.'

The metre is *deibide*, with an additional couplet. A variant of this, differing in the fifth line ('sending Colum Cille across the sea') is found on the lower margin of p. 87 of the Leabhar Breac, the first of the two pages containing the text of the *Félire* for May, but it is not included in Stokes' edition of 1880:

> Teora saebu sanusa.
> Lethi Cúind ro charusa;
> Mo Chuda cona chlamr*aid*
> d'indarba a Rathin raglain.
> cur Chol*uim* Cil*le* tar sál.
> timdibe saegail Chiaran.

The copies in MS 5100–04, fol. 61v3, edited by Meyer (1906: ix n. 1), and in MS 5057–59, fol. 45r25, edited by Grosjean (1951: 104 n. 2), agree with that in the Leabhar Breac.

In the story of the expulsion of Mo Chutu from Rahen, this extended six-line verse was modified to give a pair of quatrains, edited in Plummer (1922: i, 302) as:

Teora saobha sanasa
Clainni Cuind imraga sa
cur Colum Cille tar sal,
timdibhi sáogail Ciarain.

Mochutta cona chlamhraidh
d'innarbadh a Rathain roglain;
forbais doibh ar clannaib Cuinn
tarraid do siol Muoluim.

4. The metre is *rannaigecht mór*. Another copy of the verse, with the same ascription, appears on the upper margin of p. 88 of the Leabhar Breac, the second of the two pages containing the text of the *Félire* for May, and it is included in Stokes' edition and translation (1880: lxxxv) as:

Comgall cecinit
Ainmne aine figell airc
narub saithech narub goirt
foss is fethamla cenbáis.
mesrugud cráis coimet cuirp.

'Patience of fasting, watching the ark, let him not be sated; let him not be sour, rest and stillness without folly, moderation of appetite, protection of the body.'

The Leabhar Breac copy actually has *guirt* at the end of the second line, whereas the almost identical copy in MS 5100–04, fol. 61v6 has *goirt*; for rhyme we must read *goirt* and *coirp* in the second and fourth lines, respectively. I would translate the first two lines as 'Patience, fasting, vigil, hardship; let him not be sated, let him not be hungry'.

The verse is also included in Anthology C (Appendix 3, no. 4).

5. The verse is a variant of that for 17 March in the main text of *Félire Óengusso*, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 82–3) as:

Lassar gréne áne,
apstal Hérenn hóge,
Pátraic co méit míle,
rop dítiu ar tróge!

'The flame of a splendid sun, the apostle of virginal Erin, may Patrick, with many thousands, be the shelter of our wretchedness.'

The first prose item appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 17 March, and was edited by Stokes (1905: 98) from Rawlinson B 512 as: ⁊ *Nesan Corcaige cum Patricio in hoc die*; similarly Stokes (1880: lxiv), from the Leabhar Breac. The MS here has the abbreviation $\bar{h}$ for *hec* (Classical *haec*), instead of that for *hoc*.

I know of no exact parallel to the genealogy. Usually the medieval Irish genealogies of Patrick trace him only as far back as Britt, as for example those in the Homily on Patrick in the Leabhar Breac (Stokes, 1887b: 432) or in the scholia on Fíacc's Hymn (*Thes* ii, 308), and the first part of the genealogy here

(as far as *meic Brita*) is close to these. As for the second part, four separate genealogies of Britt are given in item 689 of the corpus of medieval Irish Saints' genealogies (ed. Ó Riain, 1985: 125), and only the second of these is in any way comparable to the second part of the genealogy here in Anthology A.

The only other genealogy I know of which traces Patrick all the way back to Noah is that edited as item 1 by Ó Riain (1985: 1), and while it mostly agrees with that here in Anthology A as far as Britt, the second part is entirely different. For the genealogies of Patrick see also Anscombe (1912).

6. A variant of the prose appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 7 April, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 112–13), from Rawlinson B 512 as:

> Finan Cam tuc cruithnecht i nErinn .i. lan a assa tug. Deglan tug in segal .i. lan a assa. Modomnóg tug beocha .i. lan a cluic, ⁊ a n-aen luing tucaid.
>
> 'Fínán Camm brought wheat into Ireland, i.e. the full of his shoe he brought. Declán brought the rye, i.e. the full of his shoe. Modomnóc brought bees, i.e. the full of his bell; and in one ship they were brought.'

The verse also appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 7 April, and was edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 112–13), from Rawlinson B 512 as:

> Dligid Finan fírchuarta,
> med do tuirind cech treibe
> lan a assa umaide,
> císs nach ruc ronaem reime.
>
> 'Fínán is entitled to true circuits, a measure of wheat for every household, the full of his brazen shoe: a tribute that no great saint had taken.'

The metre is *aí ḟreisligi*.

7. There is another copy of this, with only minor variants, among the verses associated with *Félire Óengusso* for March in MS 5100–04, fol. 59v19:

> Is bes do mac De taccu.
> ní sraighlend a lesmacu.
> meic neich oile nocho n-oirg.
> acht a mheic féin nos timaircc.

This was translated by Meyer (1899: 120 n. 1) as 'It is the custom of the Son of God, I declare, that He does not scourge His stepsons: the sons of anyone else He does not strike, but His own sons He chastises'. In all three cases one might better translate as 'children' rather than 'sons'. The metre is *deibide*.

8. 'Abundance of knowledge, as everyone knows, is of great benefit to those who are devout; increased punishment is what it has for those who will not act accordingly.'

That is, with greater knowledge comes a greater responsibility to act correctly. The metre is *deibide*. In the first line *finnad nech* is lit. 'let anyone discover', and in the fourth line I take *nachat comaillfea* to be for *náchid chomaillfea*, lit. 'will not fulfil it', with the 3 sg. pronoun referring to what one has learnt. I know of no other copy of this verse.

9. This derives ultimately from lines 289–96 of the Epilogue of the main text of *Félire Óengusso*, edited by Stokes (1905: 277) as:

> Cech nóeb bói, fil, bías
> co bráth, brígach fodail,
> i coimthecht Críst credail,
> ro bet ocom chobair.
>
> Ro bet ocom chobair
> for nim ocus talmain,
> co tísat i ṁbuidnib
> do chuṅgnam frimm anmain.

A copy of these two verses appears at the end of the scholia for December in the copy of *Félire Óengusso* in MS A 7, fol. 46ra (with *ro bui* instead of *boí* in the first line), and a further adaptation of them, with the addition of a couplet to the second verse, appears at the end of the scholia for December in the copy of *Félire Óengusso* in Rawlinson B 512, fol. 64rb, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 262–3) as:

> Cech noem ro bói fil bias
> co brath mbuadach fodail
> i coemthecht Críst credail
> ro bet ocum cobair.
>
> Ro bet ocum cobair
> for nim ocus talmain
> co tisad 'na mbuidnib
> do chongnum frimm anmain,
> a Isucan inmain
> ro comalltar amlaid!
>
> 'May every saint who has been, is, and will be till doom – victorious division – in Christ's pious company, may they be helping me!
>
> May they be helping me in heaven and on earth, and come in their bands to work along with my soul. O dear little Jesus, may it thus be fulfilled!'

The additional couplet conforms to the rhyming scheme of the second verse (*amlaid* rhymes with *talmain* and *anmain*, and *inmain* consonates with these).

The copy here in Anthology A is a variant of this adaptation, but which, in replacing singular with plural in the second verse (*acar cobair* in line 1, and *ler n-anmain* in line 4) is at a further remove from the original text of the Epilogue to *Félire Óengusso*.

10. The marginal and interlinear prose together with the verse are a variant of part of the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 15 February, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 74–5) from Rawlinson B 512 as:

> Berach [...] Caicidis d'erreach a feil, ⁊ a ndithraib Cineil Dobtha i Connachtaib ata .i. i Cluain Coirpthi. Angelus dixit in rannsa, ⁊ cipe nos-gaba fri uair mbais ni ba ifernach:
>
> > Berach is Mo-choem
> > ropa mellach a ngnais,
> > cipe nos-guide fri beolu báis
> > ni con raga bás .i. iffern.
>
> 'Berach [...] A fortnight before spring is his festival, and in the desert (hermitage?) of Cenél Dobtha in Connaught he is, i.e. in Clúain Coirpthi. An angel said this stave, and whoever recites it at the hour of death will not be a dweller in hell:
>
> > Berach and Mo-chóem, pleasant was their society: whoever entreats them at death's lips will not go to death, i.e. hell.'

The copies in the Leabhar Breac (see Stokes, 1880: li–lii) and MS 5100–04, fol. 59r21, have *rop* for *ropa* in the second line, and *ragba* for *raga* in the fourth line, while that in G 10, p. 31, agrees with Anthology A in reading *romell*ach in the second line. All however agree in reading a plural possessive in the second line against *a gnais* here in Anthology A.

While end-rhyme is achieved by reading *gnás* in the second line, against the manuscript reading with *-is* in all copies, and lines 1, 2 (reading either *rop mellach* or *romellach*) and 4 each have five syllables, the third line has nine syllables in all the copies. If, however, the last three words (*ri beolu bais*, etc.) were dropped, we would have a quatrain which, apart from the disyllabic ending of line 3, would conform to the pattern of *lethrannaigecht mór*. With regard to Stokes' translation of *Caicidis d'erreach* in the prose, since *de* (or *do*) cannot mean 'before', and as the feast of Berach is on 15 February, we have rather to do with an instance of dating by forward counting as opposed to the Roman method usually followed in medieval Ireland, so that the translation should be revised to 'The fifteenth day of spring is his festival'.

11. 'Cáemgen uttered [this]. Good fortune on every meal at which this verse below will be recited.
A good gift is moderation, when it comes to eating; restraint is better than abundance, existence begets consumption.'

I take *aruda* in the third line as a figurative use of *aradu* 'rein'; see *DIL* s.v. *aradu* (b). Apart from the trisyllabic ending of line 1, the metre conforms to the pattern of *rannaigecht bec*.

A copy of this verse (not included in Stokes' edition of 1880) is found in the lower margin of p. 90 of the Leabhar Breac, the second of the two pages containing the text of the *Félire* for June, as follows:

Coemgin cecinit

IS maith main mesrugud.
in trath ric co longad.

Berach cecinit

Ferr aruda immad.
at-coda bith brondad.

Further copies are found among the verses relating to the *Félire* in MS 5100–04, fol. 62r6, and in G 10, p. 31, where it is also presented as a dialogue between Cóemgin and Berach. The only significant variant reading is in line 2, where the Brussels MS has *ticc* and G 10 has *thic*, for *ric* of the other two.

A modified version appears in the Life of Berach, where, as here in Anthology A, the whole verse is put into the mouth of Cóemgin. It was edited and translated by Plummer (1922: i, 29; ii, 28) as:

Gonadh dó sin ro raidh Caoimhghin:–

As ferr gach proinn mesruccadh
in úair tig go longadh;
As ferr áradhu immat
atcota bith-bronnadh.

'So that it was of this that Coemgen said:

"Better than any refection is moderation, when one comes to eat; better is pain than the abundance which obtains eternal destruction." '

12. The metre of the first verse is *deibide*, and that of the second is *rannaigecht mór*. A variant of these verses appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 15 July, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 168–9) from MS A 7 as:

Simon, Madian is Matha
Partalon, Tomas, Tatha,
Petur, Andrias, Pilib, Pol,
in da Iacob ocus Eoin.

.xii. apostoli Hibernie:
Da Ḟinnian, da Colum caidh,
Ciaran, Cainnech, Comghall cain,
da Brenainn, Ruadan co lli
Ninnidh, Mobi, Mac Natfraich .i. Molaisi.

'Simon, Madián and Matthew, Bartholomew, Thomas, Thaddaeus, Peter, Andrew, Philip, Paul, John and the two Jameses.

Ireland's twelve apostles:
Two Finniáns, two chaste Columbs, Cíarán, Cainnech, fair Comgall, two Brénainns, Rúadán with beauty, Ninnid, Mo-bí, son of Natfraech, i.e. Molaise.'

For the similar copy in the Leabhar Breac see Stokes (1880: cxviii).

Both verses are also found in RIA MS 23 N 10, p. 56, where they occupy space left before the beginning of *Immram Brain* on p. 57, and these were edited by Meyer (1910: 299). A variant of the first verse is also found, as a later addition, on fol. 31b of the TCD Liber Hymnorum, and was edited in Bernard and Atkinson (1898: i 159). All of these other copies agree in reading *Simon, Madian* in v. 1a, and *Petur, Andrias* in v. 1c, whereas these are transposed in the version here in Anthology A.

13. The metre is *deibide*. There is another copy of this among the verses associated with *Félire Óengusso* for March in MS 5100–04, fol. 63r20:

> Ossraighe ó Ghabran go Grein.
> tuccta i nd-éraic Etirsceil.
> ra Mumain togaidhe tair.
> is Conaire ro cengail

The only notable differences are the lack of the gloss in the second line ('the father of Conaire Mór'), and *ro* for *ros* in the final line.

The verse was also cited by Keating in his *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, replacing *tair* 'in the east' with *thoigh* in the third line, and modernising *tuctha* to *tugadh* and *ra* to *lé* in the second and third lines, respectively. This was edited and translated by Dinneen (1908: 230–1) as:

> amhail adeir an seancha san rann-so:
>
> > Osruighe ó Ghabhrán go Gréin
> > tugadh d'éiric Eidirscéil,
> > lé Mumhain toghuidhe thoigh,
> > is Conaire ros ceangoil
>
> 'as the seancha says in this stanza:
>
> > Osruighe from Gabhran to Grian was joined, on account of Eidirsceol's eiric, with Munster, select her choice, it was Conaire who made the agreement.'

14. 'I am happy with my lowliness; to the earth every family sinks; however lower a person might be, the love of Jesus would find room in him.'

No matter how noble one's family is, death and burial reduce all to the same level, and in any case all are equal in the eyes of God. This verse also appears in the scholia on *Amrae Coluimb Chille*; the copy in the TCD MS of the Liber Hymnorum is edited and translated in Bernard and Atkinson (1898: i, 166; ii, 59) as:

> Is fó lemm-sa mo lagat
> do thalmain thairnes cach cland
> cía no beth nech ní bad isliu
> do aillfed sercc Ísu and.
>
> 'Good I deem my smallness; to earth descends each race, though any one were placed somewhat lower, the love of Jesus he would merit there.'

It is found in most other copies of the *Amrae*, in some cases twice. Thus, for example, the copy on p. 58 of G 50 is introduced (line 13) with *ar ata fo .i. cuma ut dixit As fo …* , while that on p. 89 is introduced (line 6) with *amail asbert Brighid As fó …* For details see the tables in Bisagni (2019: 457, 467).

The third line in the copy here in Anthology A (as well in the Liber Hymnorum and in YBL, col. 697) has a syllable too many, whereas both copies in G 50 have *cia beith neach nib*ad*h isli.* Adopting the latter reading gives a metre mixing two lines of *rannaigecht mór* (2 and 4) with two lines of *rannaigecht bec.*

The first couplet is also cited in a glossary as: *Is fó lium-sa mo laighet* / *do thalmain toirnis cach clann .i. tślechtus*, *CIH* 1096.20, where *toirnis* is glossed with the 3 sg. rel. pres. of *sléchtaid* 'prostrates'.

15. 'Sleep and repose, eating whenever the opportunity arises, Hell with its many tortures is what is given in return.'

The metre is *aí ḟreisligi.* This verse is also found on the upper margin of p. 102 of the Leabhar Breac, the second of the two pages containing the text of the *Félire* for December:

> Codlud ocus sadaile.
> longad cipe tan tair.
> if*er*n cona ilphianaib
> is s*ed* do-b*er*air aire.

In Stokes' edition (1880: clxxxvi) the final of the second line is silently corrected to *taire*, the form required for syllable-count and rhyme. Another variant appears among the verses associated with *Félire Óengusso* in MS 5100–04, fol. 64r1; this has *Suanaige is sadaile* for the first line, and *taire* for the final of the second line.

16. A variant of this verse appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 25 November, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 246–7) from MS A 7 as:

> Inde dixit Finnchu:
>
> > Is i so ittghe chonaigim
> > ar mḟuaslucud as in sas
> > na rob iffernach nach duine
> > beas agam guide fri bas.
>
> 'Then said Findchú: "This is the one prayer that I pray on my parting from the engine (of torture), that no one be a dweller in hell, who shall beseech me at (his) death".'

The variant in the Leabhar Breac, edited in Stokes (1880: clxxii), is closer to that here in Anthology A:

> Inde dixit findcu
> IShi oenitge notguidim
> armoscarad frissin sás
> narub ifernach cechduine
> acht coramguide fribás.

As for the metre, however, both of the above copies mix two lines of *rannaigecht mór* (2 and 4) with two lines of *rannaigecht bec*, whereas the version here in Anthology A departs from these in having an irregular trisyllabic ending in the first line.

17. The metre is *rannaigecht bec*. This verse is also found in the lower margin of p. 100 of the Leabhar Breac, the second of the two pages containing the text of the *Félire* for November, and is not included in Stokes' edition of 1880. It was edited and translated by Meyer (1889–94b: 133) as:

> Crábud cen úaill, cen shecdai,
> cen sommatu, cen bochtai,
> ól cen ítu, cen mescai,
> proind shéim cen sáith, cen gortai.
>
> 'Devotion without pride, without harshness, without richness, without poverty, drinking without thirst, without drunkenness, a slender meal without surfeit, without hunger.'

The copies which appear among the verses associated with *Félire Óengusso* in MS 5100–04, fol. 64r, and MS 5057–59, fol. 46r, contain no significant variants.

18. The metre is *deibide*. This is an abbreviated version of a verse found in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 30 September, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 212–13) from Rawlinson B 512 as:

> Feil Coluim feil Giric gil,
> ocus kalaind Septimpir,
> feil Partolain, baig co mbrig,
> gein Muire, feil Michil,
> oirches a rim in cach tig
> for oen la na feli sin.
>
> 'Columb's feast (June 9), the feast of bright Quiriacus (June 16), and the calends of September (Sep. 1), Bartholomew's feast (Aug. 25), say vigorously, Mary's nativity (Sep. 8), Michael's feast (Sep. 29), 'tis meet to reckon those feasts in every house on the same (week-) day.'

The omission of the final two lines here in Anthology A is compensated for by the gloss *for āenlaithi bīt* 'they are on the same day of the week'. For the first word of the last line the manuscript has *geín* with an erroneous *m*-stroke over the *e*.

19. The metre is *deibide n-imrinn*, extending over the additional couplet. This verse appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 6 February, edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 68–9), from Laud 610 as:

> Lupait ocus Ticris tend
> feib ro rimis is Richell,
> Darercca is Liamair na lend
> gabsat diamair gan dichell.

anmand sin re srethaib seall
sethar Patraic na primchell.

'Lupait and Tigris the severe, as thou hast recounted, and Richell, Darerca and Liamain of the mantles, took a secret place without neglect: those (are the) names at ranges of … (?), of the sisters of Patrick of the chief churches.'

The version here in Anthology A has the earlier form *do-ruirmius* 'I have recounted' in the second line (similarly *doruirmess* in the Leabhar Breac copy), and in the fifth line *re srethaib sell* is probably to be translated 'see in sequence', taking *sell* as the 2 sg. imperative of *sellaid*.

In the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* in Laud 610 this verse is followed by two other verses, and the prose here in Anthology A corresponds to parts of the two sentences introducing them; they were edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 68–9) as:

Secht n-espoic déc ro geinetar ó Darercca .i. im espoc Mac Cartaind ó Chlochur ⁊ im espoc Meal ⁊ di oig, ut dixit […] Is iat na hogha, Aiche ⁊ Lallóc, ut dictum.

'Seventeen bishops were born of Darerca, including bishop Mac carthinn of Clochar and bishop Mel, and two virgins, as (the poet) said […] These are the virgins: Aiche and Lallóc, as hath been said.'

For the similar copy in the Leabhar Breac see Stokes (1880: xlviii–xlix).

20. 'A cold bed, and a thin wretched little cleric; restraint of the body, shedding of tears, the reward for it from the King of the Clouds will be great.'

The metre is *rannaigecht gairit dialtach*. Another copy of this appears as a marginal verse in Add. 30512, fol. 45r inf., as:

Leabaidh fúar.
⁊ clerchín tana trúagh.
smacht ar choluind snidhe dér
ag rí nél is mór a lúag.

Yet another appears as a marginal verse in King's Inns MS 17, fol. 2v sup., as:

Eaglas fúar
⁊ cléircín tana trúagh
maith don colainn sníghe dér
ag rídh na nel budh mor a lúagh

Further copies are found in Anthology C below (verse 8) and in Anthology D (verse 4). As in the copy in King's Inns MS 17, these latter two copies have *Eclus*/*Eglus* as the first word instead of *Lepaid*.

Appendix 2: Anthology B

This anthology of twenty verses takes up all of fol. 130r and 12 of the 22 lines of fol. 130v of RIA MS B iv 2. The verses were edited by Meyer (1910b), with the exception of 8, which, as he makes no reference to it, he appears to

have overlooked. Although he did not supply a translation, Meyer proposed a number of emendations to the text, and noted the other versions of nos. 2 and 20, as well as a parallel for the ideas expressed in nos. 3 and 4.

It is clear from Meyer's title ('Altirische Reimsprüche') and introductory comments that he understood that this is an anthology of verses, not a single poem, whereas in *RIA Cat*, p. 3027, they are described as '*In rannán do gniath samh.* 17 + 3 qq.', with no mention of Meyer's edition, although with an accurate count of the verses. There is a gap before the last three verses on fol. 130v, but otherwise there is no indication given in the MS that the verses are separate. Nevertheless, with the exception of numbers 9 and 10 (see notes), the variety both of subject matter and metre makes it quite clear that this is a collection of separate verses.[169]

Apart from the work of another scribe on fols 92v–93v, B iv 2 was written by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh in the years 1627 and 1628 (see *RIA Cat*, p. 3022), and he has two shorter collections elsewhere in this MS. The four verses at the beginning of fol. 151r, with a gap between the third and fourth verse, were edited by Meyer (1913: 167) as two items, and similarly are described separately in *RIA Cat*, p. 3028, as 'Tolcc do tolccaib simenn. 3 qq.' and 'Flann gac air gac narad núarteid. 1 q.'. All four are in fact separate, and a variant of the first recurs in *De Origine Scoticae Linguae* §815, edited and translated by Moran (2019: 235). The two verses on fol. 147r13–14 have a space before and after them, but none between them. The first, beginning *Fuarus lus*, is a variant of the verse in the Leabhar Breac, p. 91 marg. inf., edited and translated by Meyer (1889–94b: 133), in H 2. 12, 2r inf., edited and translated by Culverwell (1913: 134), and in Laud 615, p. 135. The second, beginning *Gid maith mellca no reba*, is a variant of the verse in the Leabhar Breac, p. 93 marg. inf. There are also three isolated verses included in the MS, viz. *Diamad meisi an truagan truagh*, fol. 128v16–17, *Ba muca eich caoirigh gabair*, fol. 147v8–9, and *Bad e an tinad oirdnide*, at the end of fol. 155r.

It is likely that the contents of B iv 2 derive from a number of exemplars, although only one, the Book of Leinster, has been identified so far. It is of particular interest that Ó Cléirigh included the two verses which are the only marginal verses on the pages of the Book of Leinster from which the nine long poems on fols 101r–123v were copied.[170] On fol. 108v he added a note on the source of both verses to the second marginal verse: *aran marbhán chuires an seinliub*ar *an rann-sin* 7 *an rann ele thuas* 7 *ni faicim* < > 'it is in the margin that the old book places that stanza and the other stanza above, and I do not see …'.[171] Unfortunately, Ó Cléirigh gives no indication of the source of any of the other verses noted above, but it is quite likely that some at least were

[169] I number all the verses separately; Meyer numbered 3 and 4 as one item, and also 9 and 10.

[170] See *LL*, i, pp. xii–xiii. The poems were taken from three sections of the Book of Leinster, viz. pp. 127a–135a, 31a, and 146b–147a. In the Book of Leinster the verses are on the lower margins of pp. 129 and 130 (edited in *LL* p. 490), and in B iv 2 on the lower margins of fols 107v and 108v, respectively.

[171] The remainder of the note has been trimmed, leaving only the tops of letters visible. The note is not included in the account of B iv 2 in *RIA Cat*, pp. 3021–9.

marginal verses in the exemplar or exemplars.

As for the verses edited below, a number of possibilities can be considered. First, the anthology could have been put together by Ó Cléirigh himself from a single source or, given the space before the final three verses, two sources. It is worth noting, however, that there appears to be no significant linguistic difference between the final three and the rest. Second, it could have been put together from marginal verses in a plurality of sources. These would not necessarily be the same as the sources of the main texts in B iv 2, and some indeed could have been copied from mainly Latin manuscripts. Third, it may have been copied wholesale from a pre-existing anthology.

While all of these possibilities must remain in the realm of speculation, the idea of anthologies of short compositions of no more than one or two verses not necessarily connected with marginal verses is one that in my view deserves particular consideration. Certainly, Anthology B contrasts with Anthology A in that only a small proportion of the verses are attested elsewhere.[172]

Almost all of the verses contain linguistic features which allow us to date them to the Old or Early Middle Irish period, and of these five at least are OIr.[173] Words and inflexional forms not attested elsewhere are *tablanna*, 3d, *domuīn*, 17a, *eser*, 18a, and *ro féis*, 19b, while *manuc*, 5b, as interpreted here, is otherwise attested only in glossaries; see the notes for details. The orthography usually conforms to the norms of Old and Middle Irish, but with a few peculiarities. Meyer (1910b: 268 n. 2) commented on the scribe's predilection for writing *o* for *a* in unstressed syllables, some examples being *slemoin*, 2b, *ālcho*, 6b, *thúaro*, 18b, and *bfágoibh*, 19d. In five instances either *u* (*do-uéradh*, 5a, *do-uéra*, 15c) or *u* with a suprascript spiritus asper (*n-íathoiuh*, 1b, *garuh*, 2b, *iuhidh*, 10d) is written for a lenited *b* (otherwise written here as *b* or *bh*).

In the edition below I retain the length-marks of the MS even when irregular (e.g. *nó*, 5c, *dot-mél*, 19c),[174] and otherwise mark long vowels with macrons. Punctuation and capitalisation are introduced, and emendations necessary for the syllable count are placed in square brackets.

1. In rannán do-gníat-samh
   sán cán a n-íathoiuh Íli,
   is form-sa dus-líat-somh:
   for coin līter cech ndíbhe.

2. Īssiol fri hard, ní bec búaidh;
   slemoin fri garuh cáich ar n-úair;
   in tí di-róindi saml*aid*,
   bidh réidh riëm cech n-aimhreidh.

[172] Namely, nos. 1, 2, 14, 20; for details see the notes.

[173] See the notes on 1, 2, 4, 14 and 19. When Meyer (1910b: 268) described them as 'Die folgenden fast alle noch der altirischen Periode entstammenden Reimereien', he would have had in mind the earlier periodisation which set the boundary between Old and Middle Irish at 1100 (see *SnaG* 221).

[174] For the special case of *tablanná*, 3d, see the notes.

3. Cīall do duine *ocus* cruth,
mo génor dían suidhiughadh;
madh an cruth ālainn namá,
is corrthoir gan tablanná.

4. Duine teimhen co cēill ngl*ain*,
mo gēnor fris tibhe gen;
madh in roálainn cen céill,
ni mad aicci grēin dia len.

5. Diamad mē do-uéradh fuiriocc,
robadh mēth cech manuc,
nó betis [a] dēra geiredh
dar eneach gach caratt.

6. A duine trūaigh, dirsan duit,
it olc[a] ālcho do c*hoir*p:
tan it sāithech not geb ūaill,
it toirsich trūag [tan] it g*oir*t.

7. Is gnāth do neoch iar tōchall
toidecht ina athbōthar;
sūaill in ní as buide le bocht
cen co n-aro acht athgort

8. Fo-fūair muic mairb māir.
hi faitche Cille Bēcāin
muinter Pātraic tar muir sīar.
denat do laígh a Rōdāin

9. Ní cóir.
indus berdar in coidh.
nī rop cōra dech in rí.
isin tír ataat in bí

10. Is coir
indus berdar in coidh.
sellaidh [intiu] in tí nāt ibh.
iuhidh in tī dīan cóir

11. Co ndig ind anim for coí
coro scara frisin crí.
coro deglat immalē
nocha dernat bith gan ní.

12. Is mo rí.
is mo tigerna do-gnī.
is ferr guth in gobair mairbh
inā gairm in ghobair bī.

13. Bidh Buccaiti ainm do mheic.
bidh Minsech mad ingen dit.
bid Gobairsich t'ainm fadēin

14. Ní dot choiriucchadh, a Dé.
trúagh an sainiugh*ud*h do-gní
marbaí in rī fo-loing in sl*ūag*.
aingi in trūagh nāt tūarteit ní.

15. Tēid[i] mo menma don mīr.
fil i lláimh rígh Temra tréin
madh maith lais do-uéra im láim.
mad ferr lais do-méla fēin.

16. Dīa mo ruire Dīa mo rī.
Dīa mo duine Dīa mo día
nī nom sainmescca ō m*a*c Dē.
di-rairmescca m*a*c Dé, Dia.

17. Domuīn gach sētach is rí.
dāigh fo-gnī in bréccach bith cé
ecmaing is dó nach terc ní.
cech rí día tecmoing serc Dē.

18. Eser ní rē ndol ar fecht.
do thúaro nīrob imterc
acht ma tresoide do nert.
níba mesoitti t'imthecht.

19. Treab*ar* do-berar do grés.
is ē a bés cīa ro féis
beiridh a buidhe dot-mél.
f*or*-beir a bfágoibh día éis.

20. A Cath*ail* m*a*i*c* Finngoine.
fō lim cacha ērbara
ceat olca na hairchinnig.
it maithe na hērlamha.

Notes

1. This was translated by Carney (1964: 155) as: 'The verses they make all over the lands of Íle, they attribute them to me: every bad thing is put down to the dog'.

The metre is *aí ḟreisligi*, with rhyme between the disyllabic end-words of lines *b* and *d*, as well as between the trisyllabic end-words of lines *a* and *c*.

The rhyming hiatus forms (normalised *do-gniät* and *dus-liät*) indicate an OIr date.

Another copy is found on the lower margin of folio 3v of King's Inns MS 13:

An rannán dogníadsan.
sán cán a niath*aib* ile.
is ormsa roslíadsan.
ar coin líter g*ac*h nd< >

Note that this copy, which appears to be in a different hand from that of the main text, also has length-marks over both vowels in *sán cán*.

2. 'Lowly towards the high, it is no small accomplishment; gentle towards a rough person, to every one his turn; the one who has behaved thus, every rough will be smooth before him.'

A version of this verse appears on the upper margin of fol. 117 of the ninth-century Codex Bernensis (Clavis §459) as:

> Brigit dixit.
>
> > Isel friart
> > tailciud. frigargg. cáich a uuair.
> > cachóin dodgéna samlid
> > bid reid riam cach. namreid

It was printed as prose in *Thes* ii, 235, and translated as:

> 'Lowly towards the high, a yielding to the fierce, every man's in turn: whosoever shall do thus, every rough will be smooth before him.'

The second couplet of the version in *Thes* is regular *deibide guilbnech* with seven syllables in both lines (note OIr hiatus in *riäm*), but the first couplet is somewhat loose metrically. Normally one would expect the final word of the first line, whether or not it is shortened, to rhyme with the final of the second line, but *art* would appear to rhyme with a word in the middle of the second line, *gargg*. The version here in Anthology B, with the additional *ní bec búaidh* in the first line, has none of these irregularities, so that either a half line is missing in the earlier copy, or the later copy represents the regularisation of a looser earlier metrical form. For discussion see Ó Cuív (1986: 111–12), who comments on the striking spelling of the final word with *-ei-* in the final syllable, even in the ninth-century copy, where the rhyme with *samlaid* fixes the earlier form *n-amraid*. Ó Cuív would translate *cáich a uuair* as 'to every one his turn'.

The verse as a whole finds an echo in v. 13 of the Rule of Ailbe, edited and translated by O Neill (1907: 98–9) as:

> Ná rrucca Satán for lurg
> gníad ísel fri hard,
> is ed as olc la demon
> mad slemon fri garg.
>
> 'Lest Satan carry him off on his track let him act lowly against loftiness – that is what the devil hates if one is gentle towards a rough person.'

The last line is closer to the variant *slemoin fri garuh* here in Anthology B than to *tailciud fri garg* in the Codex Bernensis. The other major divergence between the two copies is in the third line, where *cach oín dod-géna* of the earlier MS has been modernised in the later MS.

3. 'A person having sense and physique, fortunate is anyone for whom it is the case; as for the beautiful physique on its own, it is a fringe without a garment (?).'

The metre is *deibide*. The theme of this verse is similar to that of the next verse, and they were numbered as a single item in Meyer's edition. However, as they differ in metre, I take them to be independent. A more extended treatment of these themes is found in the Old Irish poem of 14 verses, *Nīm geib format fri fer find*, edited by Meyer (1908: 267–8) under the heading 'Verstand geht über Schönheit', and referred to in Meyer (1910b: 268 n. 2).

My translation of *tablanná* is, to say the least, tentative; I know of no other examples, nor can I suggest an emendation. The spelling with a final *-á* is to highlight the rhyme (see *SnaG* 230 §2.11), and the form might be singular or plural. If the word with which it is linked, *corrthoir*, has its usual meaning of the fringe of a garment, then *tablanna* would mean some kind of a garment or some part (or parts, if plural) of a garment. It can, however, be used of the edge or border of other things (see *DIL* s.v. *cor*(*r*)*thar*). The manuscript form here, *corrthoir*, is an instance of the acc./dat.sg. of an *ā*-stem replacing the earlier nom.sg.

4. 'A swarthy person with pure sense, fortunate is the one at whom such a person smiles; as for the exceedingly beautiful person without any sense, the one to whom such a person attaches themselves is unfortunate to have ever seen the sun.'

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*, with *aicill*-rhyme in the second couplet. The headless relative clauses *fris tibhe gen*, 4b, and *dia len*, 4d, point to an OIr date of composition. For the syntax of these see Ó Cathasaigh (1990).

5. 'If I were the one who provided refection, every meat dish would be full of fat; his tears of lard would be [streaming] across the face of every friend.'

The metre is *dechnad mór*. As it stands, the verse is a syllable short in the third line, and this is most easily rectified by supplying a 3 sg. possessive adjective before *dēra*. I translate the text as so emended.

The only other problem in this verse is the meaning of the word *manuc* at the end of the second line. This can be normalised as *manac*, the final voiced stop being fixed by rhyme with *carat* (MS *caratt*), as well as by consonance with *fuirec* (MS *fuiriocc*). *DIL* s.v. cites *manuc* as the sole example, referring to Meyer's (1912: §33) explanation of it as a hypocoristic form of *manach*. However, the small number of examples of a diminutive suffix *-uc* cited by Meyer include some doubtful instances, and no comparable instance of the replacement of final *-ach* by *-uc*; in any case, if this verse is Old Irish, the ending should be *-ac*. Furthermore, a meaning 'every little monk (or 'church vassal') would be fat' is somewhat unsatisfactory in the context of what is said in the second couplet. Accordingly I propose a different interpretation of *manac*, namely that it is an actual attestation of a word otherwise known only from glossaries. The sole example cited in *DIL* s.v. *mandac* is *Mandac quando manducatur*, *CormY* 261. This entry in *Sanas Chormaic* begins with an etymology of the headword *carnae*, and goes on to distinguish between *carnae*,

féoil and the word in question here. The latter is spelled *mandac* in the copy in YBL, Franciscan MS A 12, p. 8, and TCD MS H 2. 15B, p. 158, but *mandach* in H 2. 15B, p. 94. The only copy where it is spelled with a single *-n-* is that in the Book of Uí Maine, which has *manac* (Meyer, 1919: 300). The entry in *Sanas Chormaic* ends by introducing a further distinction, viz. *Manic in tan is lāmaind is ainm ab eo quod est manica* '*Manic* when it is a name for a glove, from the word *manica*'. The related entry in *Dúil Dromma Ceta*, *Manach .i. feoil bruithe .i. a manuucando .i. o tomailt*, *CIH* 1075.16, sim. *CIH* 617.19 (with *manducando*), '*M.* i.e. cooked meat, i.e. from *manducando*, i.e. consuming', also has a single *-n-*, although the final syllable has been assimilated to the common adjectival suffix *-ach*. The spellings with *-nd-* may be simply taken from the Latin etymology, or may represent a variant form, but here in Anthology B the form with a single *-n-* is confirmed by rhyme. While more examples would be welcome, the fact that the word is explained in the glossaries is an indication that it actually existed in OIr. Furthermore, the proposed interpretation gives a smoother progression of cause and effect from the first to the second couplets of the verse, and eliminates the somewhat jarring equivalence of 'monk' (or 'church vassal') and 'friend' implied by Meyer's interpretation. The presence of this rare word could in itself point to an early date, and another early form is the 3 pl. conditional *nó betis*, 5c (with erroneous accent).

6. 'O wretched mankind, it is a pity for you; the ways of your body are dreadful: when you are sated, pride takes hold of you, you are sorrowful and wretched when you are hungry.'

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*. The manuscript copy is a syllable short in both the second and third lines, and I adopt the emendations proposed by Meyer. Also, as Meyer noted, we should read *úall* at the end of the third line for *aicill* rhyme with *trúag* in the fourth.

The 3 pl. present copula form *it*, 6b, and the 2 sg. *it*, 6c, 6d, point to an Early Irish date.

7. 'It is usual for anyone after a journey to return by a second road; the poor man is thankful for little, even if he only ploughs a second field.'

The metre is *deibide*. For the third word in the last line Meyer read *n-ap*ar, but neither the (MIr) passive sg. present, or any other form of *as-beir* 'says' would make good sense here. The manuscript reading is in fact *naro*, written as *n* + the *ar*-compendium (that is, a *q* with a horizontal stroke through the descender) + *o*. However, as the *o* touches the *ar*-compendium, this sequence can easily be misread as consisting of *n* + ligatured *ap* + stroke through the descender of *p*.

As I understand the verse, it amounts to saying that not only are the wealthy free to travel about but they have the luxury of returning by a different route, whereas the most by way of variety that the poor man can hope for is to plough a different field. I take the prefix in both *athbóthar* and *athgort* to have the literal meaning 'second, a further', given in *DIL* s.v. *aith-*, *ath-*, although the other examples in *DIL* s.vv. *athbóthar* and *athgort* appear to have more specific meanings, which I cannot go into here.

A MIr date is indicated by the conjunction *cen co* (see *SnaG* 281 §11.9) in the last line.

8. 'Patrick's clergy coming back across the sea found a large dead pig on the green of Cell Bécáin; let your calves suck, o Ródán.'

The first three lines seem to be nonsense verse, although the mention of *muinter Pátraic* is significant (see below); the import of the quatrain is in the fourth line. There are two metrical problems: the first line has only five syllables as against seven in the others, and the end-rhymes are not perfect. Although the first couplet appears to conform to the pattern of *deibide*, the second does not. The best I can suggest is that it is a looser form of *rannaigecht* with the rhyming words *Bēcāin* and *Rōdāin* matching in the second syllable and the medial consonant, but in the first vowel only in quantity, and would compare the OIr rhymes *benar* : *-canar*, and *celar* : *galar*, noted in Carney (1964: 159 n. 25b). For this reason I take the name of the church to contain the name *Bécán*, rather than *Becán*; the spellings with *-t-* and *-dd-* in the passage cited below show that the medial consonant in *Rótán* was a voiced stop.

The final line is almost identical to the first line of a couplet found in the *Vita Tripartita* of St Patrick, which I cite along with the preceding prose from the edition in Mulchrone (1939: 87.1641), and my own translation:

> Epscop Rótán, búachaill [Pátraic], forácaib Pátraic hi Muirisc [Aigli] hi cill epscoip Róddán. Ní déndais a loíg acht aní conarléiced-som dóib. Is dó sein atberat in chruitire ⁊ int ṡenmaire i ríaraib:
>
> Denait do laíg, a Róddán,
> ra léic dóib dinetán.
>
> 'Bishop Rótán, the herdsman of Patrick, Patrick left him in Muiresc Aigli, in Cell Epscuip Róddán. His calves used only suck what he allowed them. It is with reference to that that the harpers and musicians say when their needs are being attended to:
>
> "Your calves are sucking, o Róddán, who has allowed a little to them".'

I take *i ríaraib* to be an instance of the meaning 'supplying physical needs, attendance, hospitality, maintenance' given in *DIL* s.v. 1 *ríar* (d); for an alternative suggestion to translate as 'in songs', see *DIL* s.v. 2 *ríar*. I take the second line of the couplet as a relative clause qualifying *a Róddán*; reading *doïb* will give a heptasyllabic line.

The context in the *Vita Tripartita* indicates that the musicians are identifying themselves with Rótán's calves. There the common line has the 3 pl. indicative of the verb *denaid* (registered under the headword *dinid* (*denid*) in *DIL*, improved to *denaid, dinid* in *eDIL*) whereas the verse here in Anthology B has the 3 pl. imperative, and I suggest that, whatever the point of the preceding lines is, the verse as a whole amounts to a request by musicians for food and drink.

9. 'The way that the mugs are brought is not proper; it would not be more proper that the king should go into the land in which the living are.'

Although the metres are different, the complementary first lines and identical second lines indicate that 9 and 10 probably belong together. The metre in verse 9 is a somewhat irregular variant of *deibide guilbnech*, with a shortened first line. The various spellings and case-forms listed in *DIL* s.v. *cúad* show that it must have been a hiatus word in OIr; the final word in line 9b can then be read as *coïd* to give a heptasyllabic line, and as a consequence the final of the first line will have to be read as *coïr*, giving a trisyllabic line. The forms with hiatus point to an early date, as does the npl. masc. article *in* (*SnaG* 258 §7.4) in *in coidh* (OIr/MIr *in choïd*) and *in bí*. On the other hand, in the third line the use of *dech* as a relative form is a MIr feature (*SnaG* 286 §11.31), while in the fourth line as it stands, *ataat* has to be read without hiatus, unless *isin tír* is emended to *is' tír*.

While the final line probably refers to Heaven, the full import of this and the following verse would be clearer if we knew the context in which they were set.

10. 'The way that the mugs are carried is proper; the one who does not drink gazes into them, the one for whom it is proper to do so drinks.'

The metre appears to be a variant of *rannaigecht*, with a shortened first line making end-rhyme with the second and fourth lines. The finals of the second and fourth lines can be read with hiatus to give heptasyllabic lines, and the final of the first line will then have to be read as *coïr*, giving a trisyllabic line. At the same time, it could be taken as a form of *deibide*, with full rhyme in the first couplet and *rinn ocus airdrinn* rhyme between *ib* and *coïr* in the second couplet. It is only in the third line that an addition is necessary in order to get the required seven syllables. Meyer solved the problem of the missing syllable by supplying *ind* 'into it' after *sellaidh*, but as *coïd* is plural, I supply instead *intiu* (allowing for elision of the vowel of the following *in*); the MS reading would then have arisen through haplography (*intiu inti* > *inti*).

11. 'Until the soul goes away, until it parts from the body, until they both separate, they cannot make do with nothing.'

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*; the finals of both *a* and *c* make *úaitne* with the end-rhyme, and *deglat* (OIr/MIr *dedlat*) in *c* rhymes with *dernat* in *d*. Features which point to a date in the early MIr period are the negative *nocha*, 11d, *coro* (rather than *cor*) fixed by syllable count in 11b and 11c, and the nom.sg. fem. article in *ind anim*, 11a (cf. Uhlich, 2022).

12. 'It is my king, it is my lord who brings it about; better is the sound of the dead goat than the cry of the live goat.'

The metre is *rannaigecht gairit dialtach*, with rhyme between the finals of lines *a*, *b* and *d*, and *aicill*-rhyme in the second couplet. In the third line the *o* in *gobair* appears to have been altered from an *a*; Meyer has *gabair*.

13. 'Your son's name will be Buccaite, it will be Minsech, if a daughter of yours, your own name will be Gobairsech.'

It is safe to assume that these three heptasyllabic lines with monosyllabic endings are a defective copy of a quatrain. On the assumption that the metre

of the quatrain was *deibide*, Meyer read *d*[*e*]*it* for the final of the second line to rhyme with *mheic*, although the full quatrain could well have been in *rannaigecht mór*.

The suggestion in *DIL* s.v. *Buccaite* that it is a comic male name is doubtless correct, and the same applies to the other two names. They are all derived from terms for goats: the second and third have the feminine suffix *-sech* added to *3 menn* 'kid' and *2 gobar* 'goat', respectively, while the first syllable of *Buccaite* contains a variant of *2 boc* 'he-goat'. Murphy (1956: 176 n. 3) pointed out that the latter name represents an earlier form of Modern Connacht Irish *pocaide* 'he-goat', and sees the same suffix in the personal name *Líathaite*, and in the Modern Donegal Irish *sreamaide* (*coileáin*) 'an abusive term for a pup'.

14. 'It is not to find fault with you, o God [that I say this], the distinction which you make is a pity; you kill the king who supports the host; you save the wretch who has nothing to spare.'

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*; the final of line *a* makes *úaitne* with the end-rhyme, the final of line *c* makes *aicill*-rhyme with *trūagh*, and there is an internal rhyme in the first couplet (reading Old or Middle Irish *chairigud* : *sainigud*). I take the relative clause *nāt tūarteit ní* in the last line as having a dative function, lit. 'to whom nothing remains over'. or in other words 'who has nothing to give to others'.

There is another copy of this among the verses extracted from scholia and marginal verses on the text of the *Félire* for March in MS 5100–04, fol. 60r23:

> Ní dot cairiucch*ud*h a Dé.
> truagh in sainiug*ud*h do-ngní
> marbha in rí foloing in sl*ua*gh.
> aince an trúagh ná cobrand ní

The most significant variant is *ná cobrand ní* in the last line; this can be translated 'who is of no help to anyone' (lit. 'who helps nothing'). Note also the nasalising relative *do-ngní* in the second line; this and the deuterotonic *fo-loing* in the third line (in both copies) point to an OIr date.

15. 'My mind wanders off to the piece of food which is in the hand of the king of Tara; if he wishes, he will put it in my hand; if he prefers, he will eat it himself.'

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*; the finals of both *a* and *c* make *úaitne* with the end-rhyme, and there is internal rhyme in both couplets.

The first line is a syllable short in the MS, and Meyer (1910b: 269 n. 2) suggested reading *menma-sa* with a *nota augens*, while noting the consequences for rhyme. The internal rhyme with *Temra* can however be retained if the missing syllable is supplied by taking *téid* to be an error for *téiti*, the 3 sg. present with a neuter suffixed pronoun, and I translate the text as so emended. This emended form and the verbal form in the fourth line (= OIr *da-méla*) point to a relatively early date.

16. 'God my overking, God my king, God my man, God my sufficiency; may God, the son of God, prevent anything which sets me apart from the son of God.'

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*. The deuterotonic 3 sg. perfective present subjunctive form *di-rairmescca* in the fourth line points to an early date, although the *di-* is a pseudo-archaism; the prototonic stem *tairmesc-* (see *DIL* s.v. *do-airmesca*) shows that the first preverb was *to-*. The verb with which it rhymes is a compound of *sain* 'distinct, separate' and *mescaid* in the sense 'mixes', and the instance here is the only example in *DIL* s.v. of *sain* compounded with a verb.

17. 'Anyone devoted to wealth who is a king is poorly off, since he serves the false present world; it happens that he who wants for nothing is every king who encounters love of God'.

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*; the finals of *a* and *c* make *úaitne* with the end-rhyme as well as making *aicill*-rhymes, the first couplet has one internal rhyme (*sētach* : *bréccach*), and the second has two (*ecmaing* : *tecmoing* and *terc* : *serc*).

I can see no alternative to taking the first word of this verse as an adjective, as suggested in *DIL* s.v. *domaín*. The abstract noun *domaíne* and its antonym *somaíne*, are well attested, and going by the other compound of *maín*, *dímaín* 'vain' beside *dímaíne* 'vanity', the corresponding adjectives should have been *domaín* and *somaín*, but apart from the example here, I know of no examples of either of them used as adjectives. The fact however that the analogical nom.sg. forms *domaín* and *somaín* (see Breatnach, 2017: 96) came to be used for *domaíne* and *somaíne* probably led to the replacement of the earlier adjectival forms by *domaínech* and *somaínech*.

While *DIL* s.v. 1 *sétach* gives 'having treasures, rich' as the meaning, it cites one early example (from the marginalia on the Martyrology of Tallaght) where it means 'treasure-loving', and a meaning along these lines best suits the context here.

In the second line as it stands *bréccach* is a preposed adjective, but the word order could be emended to read *in bith bréccach cé*, without affecting the metre.

The prototonic form *ecmaing* (see *DIL* s.v. 1 *ad-cumaing*) in line *c* and the deuterotonic *fo-gní* in *b* point to an early MIr date.

18. 'You are to eat something before going on a journey, your food should not be too meagre; if indeed your strength is not all the greater, your progress will not be any worse for it.'

Eating before setting out on a journey will certainly not do you any harm.

The metre is *deibide*. A more literal translation of the third line is 'unless your strength is more powerful as a result of it'. Hull (1964: 104–5) identified *eser* as the OIr 2 sg. present subjunctive of *ithid* 'eats'; it is the only attestation so far known of this form and can be added to the paradigms in *GOI* §621 and §766 and in *DIL* s.v. *ithid*. This early form does not sit well with the MIr forms *tresoide* and *mesoitti* (*SnaG* 257 §6.13) in lines *c* and *d*, but I can see no

objections on metrical grounds to emending to the OIr forms *tresa dé* and *mesa dé*, respectively.

19. 'A careful person who is assigned to [manufacture] an article, this is what usually happens, if you observe: the person who makes use of it gives thanks for it; when he leaves [it] behind him, it (viz. giving thanks) multiplies.'

The well-made article will be appreciated by its owner, and if it is really well made it will last and be appreciated by subsequent generations.

The metre is *rannaigecht mór*, with *aicill*-rhyme in both couplets. I take *a bfágoibh* in line 4 to be for OIr *i fácaib*. For *dotmél* in the third line read *dod-meil*, a headless relative with a 3 sg. Class C infixed pronoun; *aicill* rhyme with the *-beir* of *for-beir* in the fourth line shows that the accent in *-mél* is erroneous. A further pointer to an OIr date is *ro féis*, 2 sg. perfective present subjunctive of *1 fethid*.

20. 'O Cathal son of Finguine, I am happy with whatever you say: although the (church) superiors may be bad, the patrons are good.'

The metre is *casbairdne*. Another version, with significant differences in the first couplet, appears in an anecdote in H 3. 17, col. 678, which was edited by Meyer (1910: 299) and Plummer (1910: 40 n. 3). Plummer edited and translated the verse as:

> A Chormaic mic Cuilennáin,
> ad fíra na hebertha:
> gid olca na hairchinnig
> is maithe na herlumha.
>
> 'O Cormac son of Cuilennán, true are the sayings: "though erenaghs be evil, patron saints are good".'

Here we have another (and later) Munster king as the addressee, but also a problematic second line, in that keeping to Plummer's translation will entail reading *eperta*, which will not rhyme with *hērlumha*. I have no alternative to suggest, but it may be noted that there are no such difficulties with the version here in Anthology B, where *érbara*, 2 sg. perf. present subjunctive of *as-beir*, makes perfect rhyme with *hērlamha*. The version here in Anthology B also has the earlier 3 pl. copula forms *ceat* and *it*, in the third and fourth lines, respectively, and, taking into account *na* for the masc.nom.pl. article in lines 3 and 4, could be dated to the MIr period.

Appendix 3: Anthology C

This anthology of nine verses takes up lines 13 to 30 of fol. 10 (46) vb of the Book of Uí Maine, and is one of four texts on the lower part of col. *a* and all of col. *b* written in three hands differing from that of the main scribe. Much of it is worn and difficult to read. While the verses are written as a block, the ascriptions appended to nos. 3 to 8 serve to clearly mark all except the first two as separate.

Six of the verses recur at least once elsewhere. Nos. 1, 4, 8 and 9 are attested as marginal verses, and no. 4 is also in Anthology A. Nos. 5 and 8 are found also in Anthology D, and nos. 1 and 2 correspond to the first two verses of a fabrication by Uilliam Mac an Leagha; for details see the notes.

1. ISāeth lim an āes lēigind
   do dol a n-if*ern* pīanuch.
   is an tī n< >d lēig eagnaid
   do dul a parrthas ngrīanuch

2. Is *ed* as deac do senōir.
   ēirgi romoc ōn degōil.
   cētal na salm dīa irāil
   ēgnaircc na marb do gabāil.

3. Cu cuiri romut anund.
   fāicfi indmas cu hobund.
   nī ticfa anall gidh āil duid
   f*or* do cūla cod caruid.
   Findēn c*ecinit*

4. Ainmni aīne fighill aircc
   nīrbo sāithic nīrbo goirt.
   fos is fēthamla cen baīs.
   measrug*ud* craaīs coimēd cuirp
   Comgall .c*ecinit*

5. Mairc nāc < >e< >i fo guth cluic
   mairc nāc codail um cāelcu< >
   maircc īadas lāim um c< >d faind.
   mairc do-ber < > ar sāercloind.
   C*olum* C*ille* c*ecinit*

6. Nā tarda tarcaisin trēin.
   ar doinib do comceinēl.
   bēs as sē bīas a nirt slūaig.
   saīfid an bith re āenūair.
   Comgall .c*ecinit*

7. An tī renas altōir nDē
   ⁊ eclus f*or* maīne.
   do-b*eir* la comaidh ngr < >
   Findēn .c*ecinit*

8. Eclus fūar
   ⁊ clēir < >
   < > f*or* colaind teistiu dēr dēr
   la rīg na nēl rod bē a lūag
   Senān d*ixit*

9. Salcuid āencāeb anart līn
taithaīrid āenrand airdrī.
tic mill*iud* rīagla do rup.
do-fāeth < > āencluc.
Fineid. sin

Notes

1. The metre is *rannaigecht bec*. Nos. 1 and 2 here in Anthology C correspond to the first two verses of the four-verse fabrication by Uilliam Mac an Leagha in Add. 30512, fol. 34vb1, edited and translated in Breatnach (2020: 87–8). There the first verse appears as:

ISaoth lem int aos lēighind
do dul i nd-ifern phīanach,
is ind tī nāt lēg ecna
do dhul hi parrthus ngrīanach.

'I find it distressing that learned people should go to torment-filled Hell, and that the person who never studied learned works should go into sunny Paradise.'

It also appears as a marginal verse in the Book of Fenagh, fol. 4r inf., as:

Is saoth lem int áos leigind
do dul a n-ifern pianach
is in ti nach legh egna
do dul a parthus grianach.

2. 'What is best for an elder is to rise very early at daybreak, to chant the psalms to commend him, and to recite the intercessory prayer for the dead'.

The metre is *deibide nguilbnech*, but with an incomplete rhyme *irāil* (v.l. *erāil*) : *gabāil* in the second couplet. The second verse of the fabrication by Mac an Leagha, where the fourth line is defective, is edited in Breatnach (2020: 87–8) as:

IS ed is dech do senōir
ērge romoch ōn degdōil,
cētul na salm dīa erāil,
ecc na marbh do gabāil.

3. 'Along with a host [of others] before you, [when going] yonder, you will leave behind wealth suddenly; you will not return from there back to your friend, however much you wish.'

After you die, you will never again see the wealth which you so love. The metre is *deibide*.

4. This, in all cases ascribed to Comgall, recurs as a marginal verse in the Leabhar Breac, and in Anthology A, no. 4; see the note on the latter.

5. This appears also in Anthology D, no. 1, but without the ascription to Colum Cille. Both copies are in part illegible, but it is only at the end of the second

line that they are both illegible. There the requirements of rhyme (the metre is *deibide*) make the restoration of *caelcuit* (or better *cáelchuit*) virtually certain, and with the help of the second copy most of the gaps in the copy here in Anthology C can be filled in, macrons added over long vowels, and the result translated as:

> Mairc nāc … fo guth cluic
> mairc nāc codail um cāelcuit
> maircc īadas lāim um crod faind.
> mairc dober sār ar sāercloind.
>
> 'Woe is he who does not … the call of a bell; woe is he who does not sleep on short rations; woe is he who seizes the property of a powerless person; woe is he who insults a noble family.'

The outstanding problem is the third word in the first line. The reading *tēid* in Anthology D gives good sense ('who does not respond to the call of a bell'), but if it were to be retained, an emendation elsewhere in the line would necessary to get a heptasyllabic line. All I can suggest is altering *cluic* to *a chluic* 'of his bell'. In the Book of Uí Maine copy this word is badly rubbed and difficult to read, although *RIA Cat*, p. 3328, gives *Mairc nac teiti fo guth cluic* as the first line, without comment. If *tēiti* were to be retained, it would have the same sense, and would fulfil the metrical requirement for seven syllables, but, as a conjunct form of *téit* 'goes', instead of OIr *tét*, MIr *téit*, it would require some explanation. The only parallel I can adduce for a vocalic conjunct ending is the compound *dotháeti* 'who comes', *TBC 1* 55.1810, cited in *DIL* s.v. *do-tét*. The MS reading here may well be *teiti*; the second and final letters are fairly certain, but the first letter could be either a *t* or a *d*, and the third and fourth letters either *it* or *rg*. It is perhaps then possible that the first line should be read as *Mairc nāc dērgi fo guth cluic* 'Woe is he who does not make his bed within reach of the call of a bell'.

The verse shares its final line with *mairg dobeir sar for saerchlaind*, *LL* 37893, the final line of a verse in a poem in the *Bórama*, every other line of which, while also beginning with *mairg*, is quite different.

6. 'You are not to treat with severe scorn the misfortune of your equal; he may well be in power over a host, the world will turn around in a single moment.'

The metre is *deibide*. I take *doinib* in the second line to be a variant, or perhaps a corruption, of *dainim*, for the meaning of which see O'Rahilly (1942: 201–3). Rhyme with *trēin* confirms that *comceinēl* is to be read as a gen. sg. form, and the rhyming words could be normalised as *tréin* and *chomcheinéil* or earlier *tréoin* and *chomcheinéoil*.

7. 'He who sells the altar of God and the church for treasures …'.

The rest is badly stained, and I know of no other copy.

8. This recurs twice as a marginal verse and is included in Anthologies A and D, all of which copies are fully legible. See the note on item 20 in Appendix 1. The version here in Anthology C has the unique variants *teistiu* 'shedding' as against *snige* in the third line, and *rod bē a lūag* 'may you have a reward

for it', as against *bid mór a lúag* (vel sim.) in the fourth line. The instance of dittography at the end of the third line is perfectly legible.

9. A variant of this appears as one of the marginal verses in the Drummond Missal (see above p. 73), and was edited and translated by Oskamp (1977: 88) as:

> Salcaid aenchaep anart lín
> t<h>athaeir[id] aenrand ardríg
> tic millud riagla do rut
> dothoet escone don cluc.
>
> 'A single clod soils a sheet of linen;
> a single verse dishonours a highking;
> violation of a rule comes by a strong man;
> from the bell comes malediction.'

The metre is *deibide*. The full end-rhyme in the second couplet in the copy in the Drummond Missal is somewhat irregular, whereas the copy in Anthology C has *rind ocus airdrind* rhyme in both couplets. The end of the fourth line should probably be restored as *d'āencluc* 'from a single bell'. On the other hand *do rup* 'by an animal' is inferior to the reading *do rut* of the Drummond Missal.

Appendix 4: Anthology D

This anthology of seven verses takes up all of the second col. of p. 28 of National Library of Scotland MS 72. 1. 40. There is a brief account of it in Grosjean (1927: 169–71), where the text of nos. 4, 5 and 6 is printed.

Each verse is separated from the next by an empty line. Much of it is worn and difficult to read, but, apart from nos. 2 and 3, what is illegible here can be supplied from copies elsewhere of the verses.

Nos. 1 and 4 recur in Anthology C, and no. 4 also in Anthology A, while no. 6 recurs in yet another anthology. Nos. 4 and 6 are also attested as marginal verses, and nos. 5, 6 and 7 appear among verses in the scholia and marginal verses on the text of the *Félire*. For details see the notes.

1. Mairg n*ā*c*h* tēid fo g< >
   mairg nāch coduil < >
   mairg īadus lām im crod< >
   m*airg* do-b*eir* sār ar sāer< >
2. Gebē techtus i negluis
   < > techt ō cill do chill.
   < >nība crīn.
   bid hē a dīl < > rind.
3. Bīaidh a c*or*p s*er* < >uasach si< >
   iard– i< >asach ūar.
   bīadh a hanim dubach dīan.
   ag fulang p< > tre bi< >

4. Eglus fūar.
   ⁊ clēirech tana trūagh
   smacht for coluinn snighi dēr.
   ag rīgh nēl mōr a lūagh
5. Fuil trēighi.
   dīana buighech Rī grēine
   āentha brāitrech fodhail cert.
   altōir Dē do timthirecht.
6. Fuil trēighi.
   dānāch buighech Rī grēine
   crābadh ūall*ach* coised serb.
   eg< > duine mādh inderb.
7. Mīrīn arāin ēorna āin
   fa hē mo cuitigh ar < >
   gas biruir is < >
   fa h< > mo cuit< > noid< >

Notes

1. There is another copy of this verse in Anthology C, no. 5; see the note thereon.

2. I can make no useful suggestion regarding the interpretation of what can be read of this verse.

3. 'His body will be … his vehement gloomy soul will be suffering torments throughout everlasting existence (?).'

Apart from the opening words, I can make nothing of the first couplet. What I expand as *ser* is written as *s* with the suprascript compendium which can stand for *er* or *ir*, and so could also be expanded as *sir*.

My translation of the second couplet is based on the conjectural reading of the defective line 4 as *p<hían> tre b<ith búan>*, a reading that at least supplies an end-rhyme with *ūar* at the end of line 2, and an *aicill* rhyme with *dīan* at the end of line 3.

4. This recurs twice as a marginal verse and is included in Anthologies A and C; see the note on no. 20 in Appendix 1.

5. A variant of this verse appears in the scholia on the prologue of *Félire Óengusso* in MS 5100–04, fol. 58r6 as:

> Fail a tri.
> danab buidhech mac Dé bí.
> oenta brathar comrad cert.
> altoir Dé do timthireacht

Meyer (1906: ix n. 3) gave a variorum edition of the verse, following the copy here in Anthology D for lines 1, 2 and 4, and the Brussels MS for line 3, and

translated: 'Three things for which the King of the sun is grateful: union of brethren, upright conversation, serving at the altar of God'.

The variant *fodhail cert* here in Anthology D can be translated 'correct sharing'.

6. 'There are three things with which the King of the sun is not pleased; vainglorious piety, bitter rebuking, slandering of a person if it be uncertain.'

The verse recurs as v. 5 of the anthology in Add. 30512, edited in Breatnach (2020: 82), as a marginal verse in H 2. 12, edited and translated in Culverwell (1913: 135), as a marginal verse in the Leabhar Breac, p. 225 marg. inf., and among the verses relating to the *Félire* in MS 5100–04, fol. 58r7 (see Meyer, 1906: ix n. 2), immediately after the copy of no. 5 above. The copy in the Leabhar Breac reads:

> Fuil .iii. ní.
> donach buidech M*a*c Dé bíí.
> crabud uallach coisced serb.
> ecnach duine mad inderb.

The other three copies agree with the Leabhar Breac against Anthology D in the reading *Mac Dé bíí* in the second line. For *tréide* 'triad', the Brussels copy has the synonymous *a trī* in the first line, while the other copies again agree with the Leabhar Breac. The only other significant variant amongst all five copies is *maídhmech* in the third line in Add. 30512, against *úallach* in all the rest.

7. A variant of this verse appears in the commentary on *Félire Óengusso* for 4 April, and was edited and translated by Stokes (1905: 110–11) from Rawlinson B 512 as:

> Mírín aráin eorna án
> ba sí mo chuitid for clár,
> gass birair is usci té
> ba si mo chuit cach n-aidchi.
>
> 'A bittock of a cake of bright barley, this is my portion on the board:
> a sprig of watercress and warm water, this is my share every night.'

The variant in MS 5100–04, fol. 60v8, differs from the other two in having present tense forms:

> Mirin arain eorna áin.
> is hí mo chuitigh for clar
> gass biruir is us*ce* te.
> is hí mo chuitt cech n-oidche

Abbreviations

CormY Kuno Meyer, 'Sanas Cormaic', *Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts* 4 (1912), 1–128.
PH Robert Atkinson, *The Passions and Homilies from Leabhar Breac*, Todd Lecture Series 2 (Dublin, 1887).
RIA Cat T. F. O'Rahilly et al. (1926–70).

MS references

A 7	UCD Franciscan MS A 7.
Add. 30512	BL MS Additional 30512.
Book of Fenagh	RIA MS 23 P 26 (479).
Book of Leinster	TCD MS H 2. 18 (1339).
Book of Uí Maine	RIA MS D ii 1 (1225).
B iv 2	RIA MS B iv 2 (1080).
C ii 3	RIA MS C ii 3 (a).
D iv 2	RIA MS D iv 2 (1223).
D v 2	RIA MS D v 2 (670).
G 1	NLI MS G 1.
G 3	NLI MS G 3.
G 10	NLI MS G 10.
G 50	NLI MS G 50.
H 1. 18	TCD MS H 1. 18 (1282).
H 2. 12	TCD MS H 2. 12 (1309).
H 3. 17	TCD MS H 3. 17 (1336).
H 3. 18	TCD MS H 3. 18 (1337).
H 4. 22	TCD MS H 4. 22 (1363).
Harley 5280	BL MS Harley 5280.
Laud 610	Oxford Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 610.
Laud 615	Oxford Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 615.
Leabhar Breac	RIA MS 23 P 16 (1230).
Lebor na hUidre	RIA MS 23 E 25 (1229).
MS 5057–59	Brussels KBR, MS 5057–59.
MS 5100–04	Brussels KBR, MS 5100–04.
Rawlinson B 485	Oxford Bodleian MS Rawlinson B 485.
Rawlinson B 502	Oxford Bodleian MS Rawlinson B 502.
Rawlinson B 505	Oxford Bodleian MS Rawlinson B 505.
Rawlinson B 512	Oxford Bodleian MS Rawlinson B 512.
YBL	TCD MS H 2. 16 (1318), the Yellow Book of Lecan.
3 B 23	RIA MS 3 B 23 (1227).
23 Q 10	RIA MS 23 Q 10 (1233), an Leabhar Donn.

References

Abbott, T. K. and Gwynn, E. J. 1921: *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin).

AHLQVIST, ANDERS 2018: 'The Milan poem' in Anders Ahlqvist and Pamela O'Neill (eds), *Fír Fesso: A Festschrift for Neil McLeod*, Sydney Series in Celtic Studies 17 (Sydney), 13–29.

ANSCOMBE, ALFRED 1912: 'The pedigree of Patrick', *Ériu* 6, 117–20.

BERGIN, OSBORN 1931: *Trí Bior-Ghaoithe an Bháis* (Dublin).

BERNARD, J. H. 1895: 'The Irish verses in the Codex Boernerianus', *The Academy* 47, 172.

BERNARD, J. H. and ATKINSON, R. 1898: *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*, Henry Bradshaw Society 13, 2 vols (London).

BEST, R. I. 1907: 'The canonical hours', *Ériu* 3, 116.

—— 1926: 'On the *subscriptiones* in the "Book of Dimma" ', *Hermathena* 44, 84–100.

BEST, R. I. and BERGIN, O. 1929: *Lebor na hUidre/Book of the Dun Cow* (Dublin).

BEST, R. I., BERGIN, OSBORN, O'BRIEN, M. A. and O'SULLIVAN, ANNE 1954–83: *The Book of Leinster*, 6 vols (Dublin).

BISAGNI, JACOPO 2019: Amrae Coluimb Chille: *A Critical Edition*, Early Irish Texts Series 1 (Dublin).

BOYLE, ELIZABETH 2017: 'The forms and functions of medieval Irish poetry and the limitations of modern aesthetics', in Tom Birkett and Kirsty March-Lyons (eds) *Translating Early Medieval Poetry: Transformation, Reception, Interpretation* (Woodbridge), 92–108.

BREATNACH, LIAM 1996: 'Poets and poetry', in Kim McCone and Katharine Simms (eds), *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies* (Maynooth), 65–77.

—— 2005: *A Companion to the Corpus Iuris Hibernici*, Early Irish Law Series 5 (Dublin).

—— 2006: 'Satire, praise and the Early Irish poet', *Ériu* 56, 63–84.

—— 2007: 'A verse on succession to ecclesiastical office', in Pádraig A. Breatnach, Caoimhín Breatnach and Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail (eds), *Léann Lámhscríbhinní Lobháin: The Louvain Manuscript Heritage*, Éigse Publications 1 (Dublin), 32–41.

—— 2008: '*Cinnus atá do thinnrem*: a poem to Máel Brigte on his coming of age', *Ériu* 58, 1–35.

—— 2015: '*Sluindfet dúib dagaisti in dána*: a Middle Irish poem on metres', in Caoimhín Breatnach and Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail (eds) *Aon don Éigse: Essays Marking Osborn Bergin's Centenary Lecture on Bardic Poetry* (*1912*) (Dublin), 51–90.

—— 2017: *Córus Bésgnai: An Old Irish Law Tract on the Church and Society*, Early Irish Law Series 7 (Dublin).

—— 2020: '*Ríagail na Manach Líath* "The Rule of the Grey Monks": A late mediaeval fabrication', *Celtica* 32, 77–100.

—— 2021: 'Varia Hibernica', *Celtica* 33, 349–72.

—— 2023: '*A fhir, ná híad dreich Temrach*: a poem on medieval Irish society', in Elizabeth Boyle and Ruairí Ó hUiginn (eds), *Book of Uí Mhaine*, Codices Hibernenses Eximii 3 (Dublin 2023), 151–90.

BRONNER, DAGMAR 2014: 'Drei Lesarten im Text von *Āed oll fri andud n-āne*', *ZCP* 61, 1–6.

Carney, James 1940: 'A miscellany of Irish verse', *Éigse* 1, 239–48.
—— 1945: *Poems on the Butlers of Ormond, Cahir, and Dunboyne* (*A.D. 1400–1650*) (Dublin).
—— 1958: 'Two Old Irish poems', *Ériu* 18, 1–43.
—— 1964: *The Poems of Blathmac Son of Cú Brettan together with the Irish Gospel of Thomas and A Poem on the Virgin Mary*, ITS 47 (Dublin).
—— 1967: *Medieval Irish Lyrics*. Reprinted with *The Irish Bardic Poet* (Portlaoise, 1985).
—— 1970: 'Gas lossa', *Éigse* 13, 99–103.
Culverwell, A. Beatrice 1913: 'Quatrains from H. 2. 12', *Hermathena* 17, 133–6.
Cunningham, Bernadette 2004: 'A scholar's notebook: NLI MS G 1 and the cultural world of a sixteenth-century Irish chronicler', in David Edwards (ed.) *Regions and Rulers in Ireland, 1100–1650: Essays for Kenneth Nicholls* (Dublin), 160–73.
de Brún, Pádraig 1972: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in King's Inns Library Dublin* (Dublin).
Dillon, Myles 1963: 'Laud Misc. 610 (cont.)', *Celtica* 6, 135–55.
Dillon, Myles, Mooney, Canice, and de Brún, Pádraig 1969: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Franciscan Library, Killiney* (Dublin).
Dinneen, Patrick S. 1908: *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn le Seathrún Céitinn, D.D.: The History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating, D.D.*, vol. ii, ITS 8 (London).
Downey, Clodagh 2015: 'Murchadh Ó Cuindlis and *Aided Muirchertaig Meic Erca*', in John Carey, Kevin Murray and Caitríona Ó Dochartaigh (eds), *Sacred Histories: A Festschrift for Máire Herbert* (Dublin), 125–38.
Doyle, Aidan and Ó Donnchú, Ken 2026: *Dánfhocail: Irish Epigrams in Verse. Edited by Thomas F. O'Rahilly* (Cork).
Etchingham, Colmán 2025: *Vikings in Early Medieval Ireland. Church-raiding, Politics and Kingship*, Studies in Celtic History 48 (Woodbridge).
Findon, Joanne 2007: 'Dangerous siren or abandoned wife? Gloss versus text on an Early Irish manuscript page', in Sarah Larratt Keefer and Rolf H. Bremmer Jr (eds), *Signs on the Edge: Space, Text and Margin in Medieval Manuscripts* (Leuven), 187–202.
Flower, Robin 1926: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. ii (London).
—— 1953: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. iii (London).
Ford, Patrick K. 1999: 'Blackbirds, cuckoos and infixed pronouns: another context for Early Irish nature poetry', in Ronald Black, William Gillies and Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh (eds), *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, i (East Linton), 162–70.
Greene, David and O'Connor, Frank (1967): *A Golden Treasury of Irish Poetry, A.D. 600 to 1200* (London).
Grosjean, Paul 1927: 'The Life of St. Columba from the Edinburgh MS.', *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 2, 111–71.

—— 1951: 'Notes d'hagiographie celtique, 15–18', *Analecta Bollandiana* 69, 77–106.

Gwynn, E. J. and Purton, W. J. 1911: *The Monastery of Tallaght*, *PRIA* 29 C, 115–79.

Hennessy, W. M. and Kelly, D. H. 1875: *The Book of Fenagh* (Dublin).

Herbert, Máire 1988: *Iona, Kells, and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic* Familia *of Columba* (Oxford).

Hull, Vernam 1964: 'Some Early Irish verbs', *ZCP* 29, 102–5.

Kelleher, John 1979: *Too Small for Stove Wood too Big for Kindling: Collected Verse and Translations* (Dublin). Reprinted in Charles Fanning (ed.) *Selected Writings of John V. Kelleher on Ireland and Irish America* (Carbondale/Edwardsville, 2002), 249–77.

Kelly, Fergus 2001: 'Giolla na Naomh Mac Aodhagáin: a thirteenth-century legal innovator', in D. S. Greer and N. M. Dawson (eds), *Mysteries and Solutions in Irish Legal History: Irish Legal History Society Discourses and Other Papers, 1996–1999* (Dublin), 1–14.

—— 2020: *The MacEgan Legal Treatise: An Early Modern Irish Law-tract by Giolla na Naomh Mac Aodhagáin* (†*1309*), Early Irish Law Series 8 (Dublin).

Kenney, James F. 1929: *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical* (New York).

Knott, Eleanor 1958: 'A poem of prophecies', *Ériu* 18, 55–84.

Kobel, Chantal 2020: 'A descriptive catalogue of TCD MS H 3. 18 (1337), vols 2–4, pp. 1–87: 'Máel Íosa's book', *Celtica* 32, 187–215.

Mac Airt, Seán and Mac Niocaill, Gearóid 1983: *The Annals of Ulster* (*to A.D. 1131*) (Dublin).

Macalister, R. A. S. 1939: Book of Fenagh: Supplementary Volume (Dublin).

Mac Cana, Proinsias 2002: 'Teicht do Róim', in Máirtín Ó Briain and Pádraig Ó Héalaí (eds), *Téada Dúchais: Aistí in Ómós don Ollamh Breandán Ó Madagáin* (Indreabhán), 73–89.

Mac Cionnaith, Láimhbheartach 1938: *Dioghluim Dána* (Dublin).

Manning, Gerald 2003: 'The later marginalia in the Book of Leinster', *Celtica* 24, 213–22.

Melia, Daniel F. 2005: 'On the form and function of the "Old-Irish verse" in the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*: how Patrick Ford opened my eyes to an important aspect of early Irish poetry and some conclusions that I have come to as a result', in Joseph Falaky Nagy and Leslie Ellen Jones (eds), *Heroic Poets and Poetic Heroes in Celtic Tradition: A Festschrift for Patrick K. Ford*, CSANA Yearbook 3–4 (Dublin), 283–90.

Meyer, Kuno 1889–94: 'Anecdota from Irish MSS. V', *The Gaelic Journal* 4, 113–15.

—— 1889–94b: 'Anecdota from Irish MSS. VI', *The Gaelic Journal* 4, 133–4.

—— 1889–94c: 'Anecdota from Irish MSS. VIII', *The Gaelic Journal* 4, 193–4.

—— 1899: 'Stories and songs from Irish manuscripts. II. 'The Song of the Old Woman of Beare', *Otia Merseiana* 1, 119–28.

—— 1899b, 'Irish quatrains', *ZCP* 2, 225.

—— 1906: *The Triads of Ireland*, Todd Lecture Series 13 (Dublin).

—— 1907: 'Neue Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften', *ACL* 3, 215–46.
—— 1908: 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften (*Fortsetzung*)', *ZCP* 6, 257–72.
—— 1910: 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften (*Fortsetzung*)', *ZCP* 7, 297–312.
—— 1910b: 'Altirische Reimsprüche', *ZCP* 7, 268–9.
—— 1910c: 'Altirische Reimsprüche', *ZCP* 7, 498.
—— 1910d: 'Síaburcharpat Conculaind', *Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts* 3, 48–56.
—— 1912: 'Zur keltischen Wortkunde II, *Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 1144–57.
—— 1913: 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften', *ZCP* 9, 166–77.
—— 1919: 'Cormacs Glossar nach der Handschrift des Buches der Ui Maine', *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-historische Klasse* 1919, 290–319.
Moran, Pádraic 2019: *De Origine Scoticae Linguae* (*O'Mulconry's Glossary*): *An Early Irish Linguistic Tract, with a Related Glossary*, Irsan, Corpus Christianorum, Lexica Latina Medii Aevi 7 (Turnhout).
Mulchrone, Kathleen 1939: *Bethu Phátraic: The Tripartite Life of Patrick* (Dublin).
Murphy, Gerard 1956: *Early Irish Lyrics. Eighth to Twelfth Century* (Oxford). Reprinted Dublin (1998), with a new foreword by Tomás Ó Cathasaigh.
—— 1957: Review of vol. ii (1956) of *LL*. *Éigse* 8, 269–70.
—— 1961: *Early Irish Metrics* (Dublin).
Ní Dhonnchadha, Máirín (1989): 'An address to a student of law' in Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Liam Breatnach and Kim McCone (eds), *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney* (Maynooth), 159–77.
Ní Shéaghdha, Nessa 1967: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland*. Fasciculus i (Dublin).
Ó Cathasaigh, Tomás 1990: 'On the Early-Irish prepositional relative without antecedent', *Celtica* 21, 418–26.
—— 2014: 'The making of a prince: *Áed oll fri andud n-áne*', in Georgia Henley, Paul Russell and Joseph Eska (eds), *Rhetoric and Reality in Medieval Celtic Literature: Studies in Honor of Daniel F. Melia*, CSANA Yearbook 11–12 (Hamilton, NY), 137–54.
Ó Concheanainn, Tomás 1973: 'The scribe of the Leabhar Breac', *Ériu* 24, 64–79.
Ó Cuív, Brian 1986: 'Deascán filíochta' in Seosamh Watson (ed.) *Féilscríbhinn Thomáis de Bhaldraithe* (Dublin), 111–18.
—— 1990: 'The Irish marginalia in Codex Palatino-Vaticanus No. 830', *Éigse* 24, 45–67.
—— 2001: *Catalogue of Irish Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries. Part 1: Descriptions* (Dublin).
—— 2003: *Catalogue of Irish Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries. Part 2: Plates and Indexes* (Dublin).

O DALY, MÁIRÍN 1960: 'On the origin of Tara', *Celtica* 5, 186–91.
Ó DOMHNAILL, CAOIMHÍN 2005: *Talland Étair: A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Textual Notes, Bibliography and Vocabulary*. Maynooth Medieval Irish Texts 4 (Maynooth).
O'GRADY, STANDISH HAYES 1926: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, volume I (London).
Ó HUIGINN, RUAIRÍ 2024: 'Lebor na hUidre and *Dindṡenchas Érenn*', in Marie-Luise Theuerkauf (ed.) *Dublaídi Dindshenchais* (Dublin), 25–47.
O'KEEFFE, J. G. 1907: 'A poem on the Day of Judgment', *Ériu* 3, 29–33.
—— 1911: 'Mac Dá Cherda and Cummaine Foda', *Ériu* 5, 18–44.
Ó MACHÁIN, PÁDRAIG 1998: *Téacs agus Udar i bhFilíocht na Scol* (Dublin).
—— 2010: 'The poetry of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn: themes and sources', in Pádraigín Riggs (ed.), *Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn: His Historical and Literary Context*, ITS Subsidiary Series 21 (Dublin), 55–87.
O NEILL, JOSEPH 1907: 'The Rule of Ailbe of Emly', *Ériu* 3, 92–115.
Ó NÉILL, PÁDRAIG P. 1997: 'An Irishman at Chartres in the twelfth century: the evidence of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. F.III.15', *Ériu* 48, 1–35.
—— 2000: 'Irish observance of the three lents and the date of the St. Gall Priscian (MS 904)', *Ériu* 51, 159–80.
O'RAHILLY, CECILE 1949: *Eachtra Uilliam: An Irish Version of William of Palerne* (Dublin).
O'RAHILLY, T. F. 1921: *Dánfhocail: Irish Epigrams in Verse* (Dublin).
—— 1942: 'Notes, mainly etymological', *Ériu* 13, 144–219.
O'RAHILLY, T. F., MULCHRONE, K., BYRNE, M. E., DELARGY, J. H., FITZPATRICK, E., DUNCAN, L., WULF, W., MURPHY, G., PEARSON, A. I. and Ó CONCHEANAINN, T. 1926–70: *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy* (Dublin).
Ó RIAIN, GORDON 2025: *On the Faults of Poetry. An Edition of* Irish Grammatical Tracts *V*, ITS 69 (Dublin).
Ó RIAIN, PÁDRAIG 1985: *Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae* (Dublin).
—— 2002: *Four Irish Martyrologies: Drummond, Turin, Cashel, York*, Henry Bradshaw Society 65 (London).
O'SULLIVAN, ANNE and HERBERT, MÁIRE 1973: 'The provenance of Laud Misc. 615', *Celtica* 10, 174–92.
OSKAMP, HANS 1977: 'The Irish quatrains and salutation in the Drummond Missal', *Ériu* 28, 82–91.
PLUMMER, CHARLES 1910: 'Cáin Eimíne Báin', *Ériu* 4, 39–46.
—— 1922: *Bethada Náem nÉrenn: Lives of Irish Saints*, 2 vols (Oxford).
—— 1926: *On the Colophons and Marginalia of Irish Scribes* (London).
SHARPE, RICHARD 2017: 'Humfrey Wanley, Bishop John O'Brien, and the colophons of Mael Brigte's Gospels', *Celtica* 29, 251–92.
SHAW, FRANCIS 1956–7: 'The Irish glosses and marginalia in Bodl. MS. Auct, F. 3. 15', *PRIA* 58C, 17–20.
SIMMS, KATHARINE 2009: *Medieval Gaelic Sources*, Maynooth Research Guides for Irish Local History 14 (Dublin).

Sims-Williams, Patrick 2011: *Irish Influence on Medieval Welsh Literature* (Oxford).
Smith, Peter 1994: 'Aimirgein Glúngel tuir tend: a Middle-Irish poem on the authors and laws of Ireland', *Peritia* 8, 120–50.
Stifter, David 2018: 'An Early Irish poetic formula', in Anders Ahlqvist and Pamela O'Neill (eds), *Fír Fesso. A Festschrift for Neil McLeod*, Sydney Series in Celtic Studies 17 (Sydney), 223–32.
Stokes, Whitley 1880: *On the Calendar of Oengus*, Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. Irish Manuscript Series 1 (Dublin).
—— 1887: 'The Irish verses, notes and glosses in Harl. 1802', *RC* 8, 346–69.
—— 1887b: *The Tripartite Life of Patrick, with Other Documents Relating to that Saint*. London.
—— 1893: 'On the metrical glossaries of the mediaeval Irish', *Beiträge zur Kunde der indogermanischen Sprachen* 29, 1–120.
—— 1899: 'The Bodleian Amra Choluimb Chille', *RC* 20, 30–55; 132–183; 248–287; 400–437.
—— 1905: *Félire Óengusso Céli Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*, Henry Bradshaw Society 29 (London).
—— 1910: *A Supplement to Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* (Halle).
Strachan, John 1905: 'Two monastic rules', *Ériu* 2, 227–9.
Thurneysen, Rudolf 1909: *Handbuch des Alt-Irischen. II. Teil: Texte mit Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg).
—— 1921: *Die irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle).
—— 1949: *Old Irish Reader* (Dublin).
Toner, Gregory 2009: ' "Messe ocus Pangur Bán": structure and cosmology', *CMCS* 57, 1–22.
Uhlich, Jürgen 2022: 'When did *nd* become *nn* in which Early Irish environments?', *Ériu* 72, 1–32.

Liam Breatnach

Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies