Poems on Murchadh Ó Briain, sixth baron and first earl of Inchiquin

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POEMS ON MURCHADH Ó BRIAIN, SIXTH BARON AND FIRST EARL OF INCHIQUIN[1]

Abstract

Edited here are three seventeenth-century poems in accentual metre concerning the nobleman and soldier Murchadh Ó Briain, sixth Baron and first Earl of Inchiquin (1614–73). The Maynooth manuscript M 107 is the only source for these poems. The first is a short anonymous piece welcoming the Earl home from abroad around the year 1665. The second poem composed by Brian Ó Briain is a formal elegy on the death of Inchiquin in 1673. It recounts many of Murchadh's exploits during the Confederate wars in Ireland from 1642 onwards and some of his adventures abroad. The third poem composed by Seaghán Mac Riagáin in 1648 is one of counsel for Inchiquin at an important juncture in his political and military career as he was about to change his allegiance from the Parliamentarians to Royalists. The poems are an important native Irish source for the wars of the 1640s. Of significance is the fact that the hostile portrayal of Inchiquin in later sources as Murchadh na dTóiteán 'Murchadh of the Burnings' is not found in this verse. From a literary point of view, the poems demonstrate how vigorous and incisive an instrument the accentual verse form was for discussing contemporary military and political affairs.

Poems and source

The three poems in accentual metre edited in this article deal for the most part with the martial and political career and death of Murrough O'Brien or Murchadh Ó Briain, the sixth Baron and first Earl of Inchiquin (1616–73). They have been extracted from a series of accentual poems contained in manuscript M 107 in the Russell Library, Maynooth. This manuscript, designated *Duanaire Uí Bhriain* by its cataloguer,[2] was compiled in 1712 by the distinguished poet,

[1]This article is dedicated to the memory of Professor John A. Murphy (1927–2022). I am heavily indebted to the following for their help in preparing it: Seán Ó Coileáin, Neil Buttimer, Seán Ua Súilleabháin, Marian Ó Murchú, Ciarán Ó Gealbháin, Síle Ní Mhurchú, Tomás L. Ó Murchú and Tadhg Ó Dúshláine. I have benefited greatly from the work of the external reader, appointed by the editors of *Celtica*, who read this article thoroughly and offered many valuable suggestions and corrections. I also am deeply grateful to the editors for their many incisive suggestions for its improvement.

[2]Ó Fiannachta (1967: 23–7). Section A, pp. iii–227, the cataloguer correctly ascribes to Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín on the evidence of the handwriting. Sections B and C were written by anonymous scribes.

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historian, scribe and man of letters, Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín.[3] Mac Cruitín dedicated the compilation to Sir Donnchadh Ó Briain (Sir Donat O'Brien) of Léim an Eich, a Member of Parliament and well regarded by the Protestant Asendancy of the day.[4] Some twenty items from *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh* to which Thomond poets contributed heavily are included by Mac Cruitín in the first hundred pages of the manuscript; then ten items on the noble O'Brien ancestors of the dedicatee. Much of this material has appeared in various editions from the nineteenth century to modern times.[5]

The next sixteen items contained in the manuscript (pp. 176–226) are important material for the study of seventeenth-century Irish poetry, especially accentual verse. These are for the most part unique to M 107.[6] The poets, Brian Ó Briain and Seaghán Mac Riagáin, who composed two of the poems on the Earl of Inchiquin which are edited here have respectively in the manuscript a 96-line elegy on *Máire inghean Mhic Mhathghamhna Tuadhmhumhan ré a héag*[7] and an accentual elegy on the fourth Earl of Thomond, Donnchadh Ó Briain (*obit* 1624)[8] which complements the elegy in syllabic verse made for him by Tadhg Mac Dáire Mac Bruaideadha.[9] There follows in the manuscript a sequence of five remarkable elegies composed by the woman poet Caitilín Dubh for members of the O'Brien families of Thomond and for the MacMahon sept of Clonderlaw in south-west Clare.[10] This passage also contains a highly unusual poem of 126 lines attributed to Toirdhealbhach mac Murchaidh (Ó Briain) which mourns the going down of a ship under the captaincy of a 'Caiptín Stíbhin'.[11]

The similarity of compositional approach and the high linguistic register confer on these accentual poems a sense of unity. This reflects no doubt the aristocratic status of the subjects addressed in life and death. It is not improbable that the poets of this section of our manuscript were acquainted with each other. Some similarities in diction between Brian Ó Briain's elegy for Inchiquin and two of Caitilín Dubh's elegies would indicate he was familiar with her compositions (see notes on poem **2**, ll. 26, 51). These poems also demonstrate that accentual verse was acceptable in this period in south-west

[3]A comprehensive monograph on Mac Cruitín's career and literary output is available in Morley (1995).

[4]For Donat O'Brien and his times, see O'Brien (1986: 119–38).

[5]For two modern editions, see Nic Cárthaigh (2013) and Nic Cárthaigh (2016).

[6]NLI G 135 contains a copy of *A Mhurchaidh Ui Bhriain tá fiadhach ar Ghaodhaluibh*, but it is derived from the M 107 copy.

[7]M 107, pp. 201–3; Ó Fiannachta (1967: 26). This Máire Nic Mhathghamhna was also known as Máire Rua. The elegy is printed and translated in Mac Neill (1990: 93–7).

[8]M 107 pp. 221–5; Ó Fiannachta (1967: 26).

[9]Ó Cuív (1984). The fourth Earl's name is not cited in the heading over the accentual elegy in M 107, p. 221, but the name Donnchadh Ó Briain is cited internally and many other references to his martial career confirm that the earl was the subject of this piece.

[10]For the five elegies of Caitilín Dubh, see L. P. Ó Murchú (2026) and for two of them, see Ó Murchú (2002). A separate elegy by Caitilín Dubh for one of the Ó Lochlainn sept of the Burren in north county Clare is edited in Breatnach (2003: 55–7).

[11]A résumé of M 107 is given in Morley (1995: 28–9). For a transcript of the poem see Ó Murchú (2025: 427–31).

Clare and throughout Thomond and beyond, as a vehicle for poems of praise and memorialisation. The M 107 poems contrast to some extent with some of our seventeenth-century political poems also in accentual metre, but both types also share some similar features. As Cecile O'Rahilly, the editor of the latter poems has stated: 'The five (political) poems were written by men of the people and not by professional poets, and written for the people, not for the chosen few. Hence the language of the poems is the speech of the people, simple, vigorous, full of dialect forms and borrowed English words already current in that speech.'[12]

Murchadh Ó Briain

Murchadh Ó Briain, sixth Baron and first Earl of Inchiquin, could trace his ancestry back through the O'Brien nobility of Thomond to Brian Bóramha, High King of Ireland, who perished at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. He played a prominent part in the mid-seventeenth-century wars in Ireland. These wars began with the rising in Ulster on 23 October 1641 and finished with the end of the Cromellian conquest in 1653.[13]

Murrough O'Brien was the son of Dermod O'Brien, the fifth Baron of Inchiquin. The latter died a young man in 1624, and this event brought about profound changes in the life of the young Murrough, who would later inherit his father's title. The boy had been brought up in a devout Catholic household, but under the prevailing English common law he was made a ward of court, which entailed his being compelled to adopt the Reformed Protestant religion. This forced tergiversation and its concomitant changes in attitude to his former childhood religious culture must be referred to in assessing O'Brien's implacable hostility to all things Catholic for the greater part his adult life.

In 1632, Sir William St Leger was given a lease on Murrough O'Brien's entire estates until the young man should come of age. At that time St Leger was President of Munster and had been assembling and training an army for the service of King Charles I. He recruited the young Baron elect as his assistant. At this time, in October 1635, St Leger arranged the marriage of his daughter, Elizabeth, to Murrough O'Brien. The following year St Leger sent O'Brien to Lombardy that he might receive military training there in the Spanish army. He spent three years there during the middle years of that fierce conflagration we call the Thirty Years War (1618–48) and witnessed terrible military onslaughts and bloodletting. He returned to Ireland in 1639 and took his seat in the Irish House of Lords.

His first serious act of participation in the Confederate Wars was his relief of the City of Cork in 1642 and his subsequent skirmishes and encounters along

[12]O'Rahilly (1952: viii). A comprehensive interpretational study of the seventeenth-century political poems is found in O Riordan (2021).

[13]For biographical material in this article, I have drawn on Ivar O'Brien (1991) and on J. A. Murphy's series of articles (1964, 1965, 1967, 1971) and on Murphy's article in *DIB* s.n. *O'Brien, Murrough*. Ivar O'Brien (op. cit.) gives 1614 as Inchiquin's year of birth, J. A. Murphy in *DIB* cites 1616. O'Brien would seem to be right as Inchiquin in October 1636 received the livery of his lands from the Court of Wards and Liveries, having reached the age of twenty-one years; see O'Brien (1991: 4).

the valley of the River Bandon towards the south-west. He won outstanding victories at Liscarroll in September 1642 and at Knocknanuss in the autumn of 1647 and later sacked Cashel. He fought under the Royal standard in the beginning, changed to the Parliamentary side in 1644 and reverted to the King in 1648.

In 1650, when it was clear that Cromwell would soon gain complete control over Ireland, Inchiquin with many others departed for France and joined the Royal entourage there. In France he engaged in much intrigue; he commanded an army in Portugal fighting against Spanish dominion of that country; he was captured by Algerian pirates and had to be rescued through the offices of the Royal Court in London. In the Catholic atmosphere of France, he reverted to his ancestral religion. He returned to Ireland 1665 and gained full title to his ancestral lands and estates. He died in 1673.

The poems

The three poems edited here are found in the Russell Library Maynooth MS M 107, pp. 176–191.[14] The scribe was Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín who compiled this anthology of poems in 1712 on the Ó Briain dynasty and dedicated it to 'An Ridire Donnchadh Ó Briain' (pp. v–xii) or Sir Donough O'Brien (1642–1717). Poems one and two are unique to M 107. Another copy of poem 3, *A Mhurchaidh Uí Bhriain, tá fiadhach ar Ghaedhlaibh*, is found in the National Library MS G 135, p. 13.[15] The scribe of this MS was Tadhg Ó Neachtain, who compiled it in the years 1739–52. This copy of our poem on Inchiquin seems to have been taken directly from Aodh Buide's MS M 107. An edition and translation of this poem are given in a recent anthology.[16]

Poem 1: Triath na hInnse ag triall tar taoide

This poem of six verses or twenty-four lines is one of welcome (*fáilte*) composed around 1665. It is found on p. 176 of the manuscript and is not attributed to any poet. We know that Inchiquin returned from abroad at least four times: firstly, in 1639, having spent three years learning the trade of warfare in the Spanish army in Lombardy;[17] secondly, in March 1642, when he came from England with some supplies in order to assist St Leger, the President of Munster, who was besieged in Cork by Confederate forces;[18] thirdly, after a visit to the Royal Court at Oxford in 1644 during which time he met with disappointment in not being nominated by Charles I to the Presidency of Munster;[19] fourthly, in 1665 when, after many years of exile in France and Portugal and many more military exploits, he returned to settle in his hereditary lands and estates in Munster.[20] It could be argued that these lines were composed for

[14] Ó Fiannachta (1967: 23–7).
[15] Ní Shéaghdha (1977: 71).
[16] Fisher and Ó Conchúir (2022: 359–67).
[17] O'Brien (1991: 4–5).
[18] Warner (1768: 187).
[19] O'Brien (1991: 8–9).
[20] O'Brien (1991: 47).

Inchiquin on his return from Oxford in 1644, but *Cnoc Árd na Laighléiseach* in l. 16 would seem to be a reference to Lawlesstown, a townland in county Louth,[21] and would thus refer to some engagement in the vicinity of Drogheda where Inchiquin was campaigning in June 1649.[22] It is also significant that in the heading of the piece Inchiquin is called *Iarla Innse Uí Chuinn*. He was not granted the earldom by Charles II until October 1654.[23]

Poem 2: Ar bheith dhósan breoidhte cnaoidhte
This is a poem of 184 lines[24] and is found on pp. 177–86 of the manuscript. It is an elegy for Inchiquin, whose death occurred in 1673, the date being set down in the final lines:[25]

> Seacht ndeich, sé chéad, trí ar mhíle,
> aois ar dtiagharna i mbliadhantaibh suídhte
> go bás Mhurchaidh, cuirim i gcuímhne,
> an naomhadh lá do mhí September. (ll. 175–8)

The poet records in the exordium of his composition the intimations he got of his hero's death from the elements and from otherworld visitations and signs. He then records Murchadh's personal qualities, his martial prowess, his noble ancestry, and his military exploits. The latter is a valuable contemporary source for the wars of the 1640s and especially for the part played in them by Inchiquin.[26]

The poet Brian Ó Briain to whom this poem is attributed has, as noted above (p. 465), another poem in the manuscript for 'Máire inghean Mhic Mhathghamhna Tuadhmhumhan ré a héag'. There is a quatrain for a Brian Ó Briain in the seventeenth-century MS RIA A iv 3 (743) 633 *m.*[27] There is little other information on this poet.

Poem 3: A Mhurchaidh Uí Bhriain, tá fiadhach ar Ghaedhlaibh
The first line of this poem as it is in the manuscript – *A Mhurchaidh uí Bhriain tá fiadhach air Ghaodhaluibh* – is open to two interpretations: 1. *A Mhurchaidh Uí Bhriain (a)tá (ag) fiadhach* 'Murrough O'Brien, (you) who are hunting the Gaels'; 2. *A Mhurchaidh Uí Bhriain, tá fiadhach* 'Murrough O'Brien, the Gaels have been hunted'. The former, while historically correct, is accusatory and does not accord with the general tenor of the poem throughout which the poet, Seaghán Mac Riagáin, dispenses counsel to Inchiquin in a careful and sympathetic fashion. I elect for the second interpretation in the edition.

[21] *Logainm.ie* s.n. Lawlesstown/Mullach an Laighléisigh, (viewed 26 June 2024).
[22] Bagwell (1909: 183).
[23] O'Brien (1991: 35–6).
[24] The catalogue (Ó Fiannachta 1967: 25) incorrectly states that there are 284 lines in this poem.
[25] O'Brien (1991: 47) incorrectly gives 1674 as the Earl's year of death.
[26] A seventy-line loose translation of this elegy into English, attributed to Michael Comyn, is found in Maynooth MS C 113 (j). I am grateful to the staff of the Russell Library in Maynooth University for providing me with a copy of this translation; see Ó Fiannachta (1969: 76, 81 (24)).
[27] Murphy and Wulff (1935: 2259).

The 'eight years' mentioned in the phrase *le hocht mbliadhna i ndiaidh a chéile*, if counted inclusive of the year 1641, would suggest that 1648 was the year of composition, but as Inchiquin did not take to the field until 1642,[28] the 'eight years' could point to 1650 as the point of address on the part of the poet. However, he unequivocally urges Inchiquin to support his king and warns him about 'falling between two stools' (l. 15) if he vacillates in his support between Parliament and King. By 1647 Inchiquin's political relations with the Parliamentary side were deteriorating, and he went over to the Royalists in April 1648.[29] In lauding Inchiquin's military exploits the poet, as he dispenses his political counsel, refers to the slaying of Alasdair Mac Colla Mac Domhnaill in the Battle of Knocknanus (Cnoc na nOs) in November 1647. Thus, it seems the poem was composed in the early months of 1648 when Inchiquin was contemplating his political and military options for the future.[30]

The poet Seaghán Mac Riagáin, to whom the poem is ascribed in the title, has another poem referred to above (p. 465) on p. 221 of the manuscript. He is to be identified with the *máighistir móreolach*, Seaghán Mac Criagáin, for whom Dáibhí Ó Bruadair wrote a poem of praise and gratitude in 1675 and an elegy soon afterwards.[31] Mac Criagáin had replied to Tadhg Rua Ó Conchubhair's poem on the vicissitudes of that poet's life in post-Cromwellian Ireland, the first line of which is *'S do chleasaibh an tsaoghail tslim.*[32] Ó Conchubhair was said to have lived near Castleisland in Kerry and as our poet hopes that Inchiquin might visit his people near *bruach na Féile* (ll. 93–6), it is probable that the two poets lived for some periods in their lives in geographical proximity to each other.[33]

Edition of poems

The MS as compiled by the careful and accomplished scribe, Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín, was to be regarded as a prestigious literary gift to his patron Donnchadh Ó Briain or Sir Donough O'Brien, and as such was and is a valuable literary and bibliographic artifact of contemporary Gaelic culture. In view of this, any editorial approach should not distort what the scribe intended the manuscript to look like. The approach of this edition was to adhere to the manuscript forms as much as possible. However, in consideration of younger readers of Irish and especially those unfamiliar with the phonology of Munster Irish the following features have been applied editorially: Silent changes: *tt* > *dt*; *a* > *adh* in verbal nouns; verbal ending 3 pl. *-uid* > *-aid*; *io* > *ea*, *ui* > *ai* in unstressed syllables; *-igh* > historical *-idh*; *a* > *i* (simple preposition). Much of the vocalic phonology is illustrated by internal and endline assonance in this type of verse, and it reflects the pronunciation of Thomond Irish in the seventeenth century. Where vowel lengthening arises in certain syllables due

[28] Bagwell (1909: 4).

[29] O'Brien (1991: 22).

[30] *DIB* s.n. O'Brien, Murrough.

[31] MacErlean (1913: 100–7).

[32] Ó Rathile (1927: 44–7, 81–2); de Brún et al (1971: 56–7, 122, 180).

[33] The present writer has posited a triangular literary connection between Ó Bruadair, Ó Conchubhair and Mac Criagáin (Ó Murchú 2001: 56).

to phonological change in Modern Irish, I have followed the scribe (1) in his use of the length mark e.g. *buídhneach* (< *buidhneach*) **1**, 2; *guídhe* (< *guidhe*) **3**, 103; *coímseacht* (< *coimseacht*) **2**, 153; *ceathrúmhadh* (< *ceathramhadh*) **3**, 95, and (2) when he writes the historical short form even when the need for assonance affirms the status of the vowel e.g. *innsin* : *bíodhga* : *chroídhe-se* **2**, 1–3; *Deirdre* : *Béarra* : *t'éagmais* **3**, 82–4; *binn leat* : *síneadh* **2**, 65–6.

The length mark in the digraph *-eó-* is retained and supplied when missing though the scribe is not consistent in this practice.

The apostrophe between words is used to indicate the scribe's omission of the preposition *a* < *do* before the verbal noun e.g. *meargánta ' dhéanamh* **2**, 97 or of the relative particle *a* < *do* e.g. *thu ' riaghlaidh* **2**, 114

The four-line verse division of poems **2** and **3** in the manuscript is retained in the edition, though it is likely that they were originally composed in a consecutive linear arrangement. It would seem that the scribes of accentual verse of the type in hand imitated the quatrain structure of syllabic verse in making their copies.[34]

Ordinary abbreviations have been silently expanded. Manuscript readings have been given but it should be noted that a thorough examination of the manuscript can be made through the Irish Script On Screen facility in the DIAS School of Celtic Studies (www.isos.dias.ie).

The language of the poems is mostly straightforward and reads like modern spoken Irish. However, some lines and passages are somewhat opaque and their translation must remain tentative.

1

Fáilte do Mhurchadh .i. Iarla Innse Uí Chuinn

Triath na hInnse ag triall tar taoide
go biadhmhar, buídhneach, bróichéadach;
gairm an Brianach flaitheamhail, fialmhar,
eachamhail, sriantach, móirshéadach. 4

TRANSLATION

A Welcome for Murchadh, Earl of Inchiquin

1 The Lord of Inchiquin comes over the sea, laden down with victuals, leading forces, clothed in brocade; hail the princely O'Brien, munificent, with his horses, bridles and valuable treasure.

MANUSCRIPT READINGS

2 biaghmhar; 3 flaitheamhal

[34] I have referred in an edition of another accentual poem to the four-line arrangement of accentual verse in Ó Murchú (1993: 74).

Mar Mhurchadh Bhóromha, thrupaitheach, hóstamhail,
ursgarach, reóltamhail, ró-aodharach;
mo thiagharna láidir, Dia in gach n-árd leis,
go dtriallaidh slán go fód Éibhir. 8

Cinnbheirt chogaidh, cú le cosnamh,
seabhac na fola is mór daonnacht;
fiach na feóla ag triall tar bóchna
ag iarraidh comhrac mbaillsgéithe. 12

Seabhac na síorghrádh, leóghan gan díoghbháil,
ar ngeall le síocháin fhóiréigneach;
's gur i gCionn tSáile do rinne tú an t-áitheas
nó i gCnoc Árd na Laighléiseach. 16

Do chuir tú an sgannradh siar chois Bhannda,
annsna gleannta ag bóighéimne;
buailfídhear trompa i nDún Dúrlais
ag tiacht don trúpsa ar aontaobh leis. 20

Tóigfídhear cíos duit chois na Laoi amuith
sa gcara chíordhuibh thóin Éireann;
measfuídhear foghail ort san Chúige Ollta,
do bhí do bhogha dá mbróntaosgadh. 24

2 He is like unto Murchadh Bóramha, with troops and hosts, bejewelled, radiant, lively; my powerful lord, may God be with him in every place, until he return to the land of Ireland.

3 A helmet for warfare, a hound of defence, blood-hunting hawk, he of great liberality; a flesh-hunting raven from over the sea, seeking out limb-spewing encounters.

4 The hero of the ever exalted, a lion though harmless, our guarantee of peace by force achieved; and it was in Kinsale that you enjoyed success and at the high mountain near Lawlesstown.

5 You have spread terror with the bellowing of cows in the glens west along the Bandon River; a trumpet will be sounded in Thurles as this body of troops draws up alongside it.

6 Rent will be collected for you down by the River Lee in that dark palisade in the bottom of Ireland; in the province of Ulster injury will be planned for you, because your bow was wont to cast them down.

5 murch*adh*; thrup*adh*each; 7 an*n* sgach nárd *punctum above* s, *light stroke between* s *and* g *indicating, perhaps, deletion of* s; 8 Éb*h*ir; 11 fiaghach; 12 comhraic; 15 agcin*n*tsáile, do rin*eadh*; 19 trómpa; 22 gcarr*adh*; 23 oll*tadh*

2

Brian Ó Briain cecinit iar n-éag Mhurchaidh Uí Bhriain eadhón Iarla Innse Uí Chuinn

Ar bheith dhó-san breóidhte cnaoidhte
níor shámh mo chodladh 's dob fhogus dom bíodhga;
táinig uch ó uch im chroídhe-se
is dubhart go mbobann an obair dhamh innsin,

go bhféachfainn im chéill is im chuimhne,
créad an tásg do chráidh an croídhe agam.
Do rádh an bhean dar leat gur Suibhne
nó Meadhbh Cruachan, a tuairisg innsim:

ag tarrang a gruaige 's ag luadh a díoghrais:
'éirgheó Tuadhmhain, tá an buaireamh suídhte,
d'éag Murchadh, urradh na críche,
d'éag an tIarla Brianach daoineach,

d'éag an Barún, flathamhail tíorthach.
Féach an fhairrge ag agairt an ghnímhse:
muca mara dá dtrasgairt is míolta,
raobadh cabhlach is foghail dá déanamh,

gáir na dtonn go lom fá líogaibh,
mullachaibh bánta ag trághadh 's ag líonadh,
mullachaibh cnoc 'na lochaibh linntreach
i meadhán an fhoghmhair 's an foghmhar 'na gheimhreadh.

Brian Ó Briain *cecinit* after the death of Murchadh Ó Briain, that is the Earl of Inchiquin

1 When he was sick and wasted away, my sleep wasn't peaceful and sudden starts assailed me; a fierce groan lodged in my heart; and I said that these matters move me to relate –

2 that I would look into my mind and my memory, what were these tidings that had vexed my heart. A woman declared – you would think she was Sweeney or Meadhbh of Cruachain, her description I tell:

3 (she was) tearing her hair and declaiming her zeal – 'Thomond will arise, perturbation is definite, Murchadh, the leader of the land, has died, the great-hosted O'Brien Earl has died,

4 the princely, land-ruling Baron has died. Behold the sea avenging this deed: porpoises and whales upturned, fleets are torn apart, destruction is rife;

5 the roar of waves hitting bare rocks, the surface of lea fields ebbing and filling, mountain tops have become lakes and pools of water in mid-autumn, and autumn itself has turned into winter.

Title eadhóin; Iarl*adh*; 2 fog*us*; dam; 3 tain (n *with lenited suspension stroke*); uch *repeated after* ó *with deleting subscript puncta*; 5 cheill; 9 ag*h bis*; 10 Tuadhm (*with suspension stroke*); 14 fh*air*ghe; ag*arc*; 16 cabhl (*with lenited suspension stroke*); déan (*with lenited suspension stroke*); 17 lóm; 18 agh *bis*; 20 meádhan; fhogh*air*; fogh*ar*; gheimhre

Do mheath an toradh 's níl sosadh ag na síonta,
sneachta agus tóirneach do ló is d'oídhche,
gaoth is fearthainn gan lagadh dá síorchur,
meas na gcrann gan planda thríotha. 24

Táinig tuile na tubuisde timcheall,
táid na spéarthaibh aordha ar aoinchrith,
níl deór 'na mballaibh nach fearfaid don taoisg-se;
sgreadach is gártha ag mnáibh na síodhbhrugh: 28

Úna, Gráinne, Sadhbha agus Síle,
Máire ar Chnoc Meádhbha na bhfaoileann,
Áine ar an gcnoc gnáthach aoibhinn,
níl bárr ar bioth sláinte ag Aoibheall 32

acht í 'na gealt ar feadh na bruídhne
ag caoineadh Uí Bhriain is triath na hInnse,
ag caoineadh Murchaidh an urra nár chinnte,
go rug an bás gan spás 'na gheimheal air. 36

Uch, monuar, 's mo thruagh le n-innsin
lionnán stóir na Fódla ' chlaoidheadh dho,
i Luimneach Luirc go grod fá aoinlic
crann pailme do ceapadh ó ríogha.' 40

6 Crops have failed, storms never cease, snow and thunder prevail day and night, wind (a-blowing), rain falling without respite, the acorns of the (oak)tree have no kernels breaking through.

7 The tide of disaster has come around, the aerial skies have become a quaking mass, they hold not a droplet that they will not shed in this downpour, screaming and shouts from the women of the fairy mounds:

8 Úna, Gráinne, Sadhbha and Síle, Máire on Cnoc Meádhbha of the fair women, Áine on her wonted hill, Aoibheall is poorly,

9 but like a mad woman within the fort crying for O'Brien, the lord of Inse Uí Chuinn, keening Murchadh the unstinting leader, (saying) that death took him as a prisoner without delay.

10 Oh, alas! It is a pity for me to tell that death should bring down the darling of Ireland, hastily interred under a tombstone in Limerick, the scion derived from royalty.'

24 thriotha; 25 Tain (*followed by lenited suspension stroke*); timchioll; 29 gr*á*ine; sadhbha *inserted in heavy ink and in another hand over line between* gr*á*ine *and contraction for* agus; 33 geilt; bruíghne; 34 caoine; 35 caoine; Murch*adh*; urr*adh*; 36 ghemhiol; 38 Fódhla

Crann tagartha eagailse do dhídean,
crann balsaim a parrathas Íosa;
gaisgeadhach Banba ' sheasamh dá phrionnsa,
lann do lannadh chum machaire ' shníomh thú,

lann chum sgathaimh badh tapaidh is badh díopa,
buinne borb chum cogaidh do shuídheadh thu,
buinne cúmhra i gcúirt an dlíghe thú,
a liagh lóghmhair na córa ' dhídean.

A choím an mhisnigh bhein urraim do laochraidh,
a leóghain chatha lér cailleadh na mílte;
a gheinearáil na harmála badh díopa,
is leat nár sheasaimh fear th'anma ar maoilinn

ná i gcorp airm, dá ngealladh go ndéanfadh.
An Barrach is Táf do dháil 'na maidhm ort
i Lios Cearbhúill do bhreathnúghadh na tíre;
is ann do cailleadh leat Oilibhéar Stíbhinn,

is do rinne tú greallach dá n-eachraidh 's dá ndaoine.
Geinearál Barrach chum reatha do dhíbris,
Íbh Coirín, ní cheilmíd ' innsin,
tiagharna Mhóta Gairéad 's a Bhíocont;

11 Powerful advocate for the protection of church buildings, tree of balm from the paradise of Jesus; the warrior of Banba to stand fast by his Prince, you were a sword fashioned to shape the battlefield,

12 a sword to cut swiftly and severely, you were a tough scion to settle warfare, you were a pure champion in the court of law, a jewel for the protection of justice.

13 Heart of courage who won the respect of warriors, lion in battle through whom thousands fell, unyielding army general, the man who would take your life did not face you on a mountain slope,

14 or in the midst of an army, were he to promise that. Barry and Taaffe burst forth upon you at Liscarroll, to decide the fate of the country. It was there that Oliver Stephenson was slain by you;

15 and you pulverized their horses and their people. You set General Barry to flight, (similarly) Ikerrin, we do not neglect to tell, Lord Mountgarret and the Viscount;

43 gaisgh*adh*ach; 48 dhidean; 50 ler; 57 is] s; do rinne] do *rineadh*; neachradh; 58 genearál; ratha; 60 Mhúta

is an tan do bhein tú Eilís bhuídhe amach,
’s a raibh aca don arm badh líomhtha;
i gCnoc na nDos cidh bocht le n-innsin
méad an áir ’s an láthair líonta.

Marbhadh Alasdrainn measaim nár bhinn leat
Connachtaigh is Olltaigh ar a bhonn do síneadh,
Albanaigh cidh gur dheacair a n-ísbeirt
is fearbóga ag buain bhlasbóg thríotha.

Do bhrisis do Tháf lá na bruídhne;
i gCill Bhuláin do choimeádais an oídhche;
’s i mBaile an Rosbhaird do ro-chrádhais Muímhnigh,
do thuit Caiptín Súgán ’s a bhuídhean leat.

Sruth an Bhaile Aeird do raobais thríotha;
’s i Ráith Gogáin ar cheartlár na tíre;
do rúsgais Donnchadh an Chúil gan aimhris
i Múscraíghe ’s níor chúrsaídhe grinn do.

I nDún Garbháin níorbh fhuarlán do thionnsgain
bualadh cladaigh do thabhairt ar naimhdibh,
tan do bhí Eóchaill ar scór bheith claoidhte,
síge go docht le a doirsibh suídhte.

16 and when you gained sallow-skinned Elizabeth and all they had of the sharpest armaments; at Knocknanuss, though painful to recount, the battle-site was full with the amount of slaughter.

17 The killing of Alexander (MacDonnell) was not pleasing to you, Connaughtmen and Ulstermen alongside him were stretched, and Scotsmen, hard though their killing was; there were fawns chomping at mouthfuls of grass around them (the dead bodies).

18 You defeated Taaffe on the day of the fight; you kept watch by night in Kilbolaine; at Rochfordstown you tormented Munstermen, Caiptín Súgán and his company fell by your hand.

19 At Hightown stream you tore through them; and at Goggan’s castle from the centre of the countryside; without doubt you rent Donnchadh an Chúil in Muskerry, it was no matter of mirth for him.

20 In Dungarvan your approach was not half-hearted in giving the enemy a beating on the shore. When Youghal was almost beaten down, there was a tough siege against its tested doors

61 Elís; 73 Sruith; aérd; 76 a Múscroídhe; 77 In dún; níor bhfu*ar*lán; 78 clad- *with lenited suspension stroke*; 79 bhi; 80 suíghte

Baile Uí Ghormáin do ghabháil 'na timcheall,
Cuan an Chaisleáin do choimeád fá dhaorbhruid,
do chuiris do scóid i gcóir na taoide,
na chúig longa tug sucar is díon dóibh.

D'aimhdheóin gliocais is cumais na saoithe
do chuiris an Mhumhain ó út go fínit
fád chúmhachta agus umhal chum cíosa;
do choingbhis Gaill i meadhair 's i ndíomus.

Is in Áth an Choite badh gorthach saoithe,
tugais an ruaig fá Thuamhain led sgíomhaltaibh;
is ag tiaghacht do Gheinearál Néill aníos ort,
do chuiris do hóst i gcóir bheith fíochmhar,

do dhrumaídhe ag sgreadaigh is caismearta ag píobaibh
do bhratachaibh sróill ag góil na gaoithe,
do ghunnaídhibh machaire i gcartachaibh taoibh riot
ag trúip is coisighthe i gcopaibh dá ngríosadh

chum teagmhála meargánta ' dhéanamh,
láimh le Beannchair th'fhearg do dhíoghailt air;
níor ghabh mac Airt a chead san oídhche,
ag dol tar ' ais do mheas nár bhaois do

21 Lord Gormanstown (you kept) simply surrounding it (Youghal) and (you) keeping Lord Castlehaven in distress; you set your sails on the tide and the five ships gave them (in Youghal) succour and protection.

22 Despite the wiliness and capacity of all the pre-eminent leaders you brought Munster from one end to the other under your power and made it willing to render you rent; you maintained the English joyous and proud.

23 In Annacotty you brought blushes to the leadership; with skirmishing parties you attacked the land of Thomond; and when General O'Neill approached you from the north you prepared your force to be ferocious,

24 your drums were sounding with the din of the pipes, your satin standards flying in the wind, your field-guns in carts near you (maintained) by troops of men, while foot-soldiers wearing poleyns were urging them on

25 to quick and fearless engagement, near Banagher, in order to vent your anger on him; Art's son did not take his leave of you, and going back by night he thought it wasn't foolish of him to

84 long *with lenited suspension stroke*; 85 *comma after* gliocais; 87 chúmha*cht*a; 89 gort*adh*ach; 90 thuain *m contraction over* u *and* a; sgíoltaibh *m contraction over* o; 91 is ag] sag; ghene*ar*ál; 92 *between* hóst *and* i gcóir ip *with deletion marks*; 94 góil *m contraction over* ó; 95 igcartaibh c (*with lenited stroke over* t); 97 meardhánta; dhéanā (*with lenited stroke*)

madradh ruadh gan bualadh id líonta;
maith do fuair tan fuarais sgríob air:
i nDún Dealgan do ghearrais a dhaoine
's do chuiris retréat na hÉirne síos air.

Féachtar an mhéad so do laoidheadh leat
gidh bé éin-neach fuair céim claoidhte ort,
a réalthan dob éifeachtach gníomhartha
dob fhéinix i d'aonar dot rígh thu.

A phéarla don tréanfhuil dob aoirde,
a Ghréagaigh is a Éibhir mhic Míleadh,
do phréimhsmior na Haustriá do ghaolta,
ó Ghaedhal Ghlas go teacht i ríghe dhuit;

ón Easpáin go ceannárd do shíolrais,
's as Brianach thu ' riaghlaidh a dlíghe amach,
do cheap sloinntibh 's do roinn tíortha,
do rinne chúig cúige ar dtús don ríoghacht so,

tug bailtibh, forus is socracht dá dtaoisigh,
do sgrios Lochlannaigh fá dhochma dá gcríochaibh.
Bíodh gur ghearras go hachamair slíghe leat
's gan do reacht ' thabhairt i gceart ód dhísle,

26 throw a fox into your nets; he paid for that when you made a swoop on him: in Dundalk you cut his men to pieces and forced him to retreat towards the River Erne.

27 Consider this greatness that has been narrated concerning you: whosoever enjoyed a victory over you, you, o star so effective in your actions, have been one-handedly, a paragon for your king.

28 You pearl of the highest blue blood, you, a Greek and an Éibhear son of Míleadh, your kinsmen are of the root-marrow of Austria, from Gaedhal Glas you are up to your coming into authority;

29 you are proudly descended from Spain, and you are from Brian (Bóroimhe) who promulgated the law, who composed surnames and who distributed territories and who first made five provinces for this kingdom,

30 who gave towns, legal enforcement and stability for their lords; who expelled Norsemen downcast from their lands. Though I have delineated but briefly your career, without deriving your authority from what was (legally) your due,

102 fu*air* ~~n~~ tan; 106 énneach; 107 raolthan*n*; éfe*acht*ach; 108 fhénix *punctum over* f *weak*; ríogh; 110 Ébhir; mc; 112 Ghaodhal; a ríghe; 114 thu riagl*adh* a dlíg*h*e; 120 ra*cht*

fágthar soin le cur id laoidhibh
san tseanchus ó fearadh an díle
do réir mur d'fhág Mac Dáire suídheadh air.
A phreabaire na n-arrad-bheart nárbh íseall,

a ghuais-tseabhaic na seabhac do stríocadh,
a charbuncail na Teamhra ríoghdha,
do rugais an bárr ó chlár na sinnsear
abhus is thall in am na gcoímheasgar

i mbeódhacht, i gcródhacht, i líomhthacht,
i ngasdacht, i gcalmacht, 's i gcríonnacht,
in uaisle gan uabhar, gan iongnadh
acht buadh ' bhreith ar chruaidh-leathaibh Cuinn duit.

Rígh Saxan do cailleadh badh sgím leat,
Rígh na Spáinne do bhráthair gaolmhar,
An tÍmpire Almáinneach gan aimhreas,
na prionnsuídhe Gearmáineacha id thimcheall;

biaidh An Poirtingéalach go léanmhar tríotsa,
beag mur iongnadh, dob é a rann gaoil tu;
an tan do bhí an Spáinneach táidhte in inntreast
badh gádh in am ruaige do chuaird don ríoghacht soin

31 let that be put in your elegies (as it is) in the history from the time of the Deluge, as Mac Dáire has set it down. O hearty fellow of high deeds, never low-born,

32 you danger-loving hawk who made hawk-like warriors submit, o precious jewel of royal Tara, you excelled in the land of the ancestors, here and there when conflicts arose

33 in liveliness, in valour, in sharpness, in smartness, in bravery, and in wisdom, in nobility without haughtiness, that is no wonder, but that you would triumph over the harsh northern regions of Ireland.

34 Tragic for you was the death of the King of England; the King of Spain was a fraternal relation; the Holy Roman Emperor, of course, and the German princes were in your company.

35 The Portuguese Sovereign will be sad after you, that is no surprise, you were his blood-related adherent. When the Spaniard was inextricably involved, your visit to that kingdom (of Portugal) in the time of hostilities was needed

124 narrdbheart d *is a superscript over* rr; ísioll; 126 Teamhr*adh* ríoghadh; 128 ám; 139 in*n*treast

id gheinearál ar armáil do phrionnsa,
fuarais fossadh chum socracht ód naímhdibh,
ar feadh do bhóit níor dhóigh grinn tu
ag Liosbóin is trioblóid do thionnsgna.

Ó rígh Franc níor ghann do phinnsean,
badh tú a bhráthair, sás a thuillte,
i ngleódh na n-arm níor mheatacht dob fheidhm dhuit
acht gearradh cnámh i lár na madhmann;

is ag teacht chum baile fá mhaise is fá mheadhair dhuit
badh leat an machaire is ceangal na mbraighdeadh,
gan dál 's a libh-ghárda i radharc ort,
gnaoi do phearsan ní facas ar aoin-neach,

cáil do ghaisce badh deacair do choímseacht,
ar feadh na hEórpa go lór gníomh ort,
annsa Turca go hurrdhairc sgríobhthar,
is annsa Róimh i gclódh 's i bprionnta.

Níor lúgha th'éifeacht san rann íochtair,
annsa Néigipt do léaghadh go maoidhteach
gurb ó Niúl do shiubhail an Brianach,
gan dath bréige i réim ná i ngníomh air.

36 as a general leading the army of your prince; you got a comfortable abode from your enemies; as your desire went you gave no pleasure to anyone at Lisbon, initiating trouble there.

37 From the King of France your pension was not paltry, you deserved that being his kinsman; in armed conflict cowardice wasn't your aim, but cutting through bone in the thick of the engagements;

38 and on returning home successfully and joyously, the whole field and the fettering of the prisoners belonged to you, unaccompanied the uniformed guard was in your vision, the delight on your person was seen on no one else.

39 It would be difficult to enumerate the fame of your feats of arms, around Europe many deeds concerning you are cited, in Turkey you are celebrated in writing, and in Rome in printed books.

40 Your effect in the southern hemisphere was no less: in Egypt it was read with pride that from Niúl the O'Brien is sprung, with no trace of dissimulation in his career or deeds.

141 ghenearál; 142 fos*adh*; 144 tionsgn*adh*; 145 Fránc; 146 thuillt*eadh*; 151 libh=ghárda; 152 aoineach; 153 choím*seacht*; 154 heorp*adh*; 155 Turc *with lenited suspension stroke*; horrdc *suspension stroke above* dc; 157 héfea*cht*

Munab dhe theasda do theastas ghlan díreach
id reacórd 's id ghriantsómpla ag ríoghaibh
gur shiocais an cluimhthe d'fhuirinn tar tíghthibh
thall 's abhus a ghuin le haoinfhear. 164

An tan táinig grása ó Íosa ort
chum teacht tar th'ais 's do leas gur smaoinis,
a mhic na ndeór 's na hóird ag guídhe leat
an saoghal do mheallais 's do mharbhnadh déanta: 168

aithríghe fhoilightheach chumais id chroídhe istigh
na peacuídhibh marbhtha d'fheartadh 's do dhiansgrios;
mur bhárr grása a ghrádha ina ndéanadh
feóil is fuil do chuirp dhil d'íodhbairt, 172

le neart psalm, Aifreann is fíorghuil
is Flaitheas d'fhagháil do t'anam mur chríochnadh.
Seacht ndeich, sé chéad, trí ar mhíle,
aois ar dtiagharna i mbliadhantaibh suídhte 176

go bás Mhurchaidh, cuirim i gcuímhne,
an naomhadh lá do mhí September.
A lóchrainn ghlain gan snas ó dhíomus
do rugais an chraobh ón saoghal le t'inntleacht, 180

41 If it were that something was wanting from a clear, direct attestation in your record, in your shining example that kings have (of you), (we can state) that you hardened the game for a fighting band over the drawn-up lines, here and abroad, the battle being won by a single man.

42 When grace from Jesus came to you to revise your course and when you considered your (spiritual) good, o tear-filled son, even as the orders of churchmen prayed for you, after your meditations, you confounded the world (thus):

43 within your heart a hidden, powerful repentance to bury and extirpate your mortal sins; there was a crowning grace of His love in all that the flesh and blood of your priceless body would offer up (in repentance),

44 with copious psalms, masses and true contrition of heart attaining as an end heaven for your soul. One thousand six hundred and seventy-three years, the established age of the Lord,

45 to the death of Murchadh, I commit to memory, the ninth day of the month of September. O bright beacon of light without stain of pride, you surpassed all with your intellect,

161 theast*adh*; 162 ghriantsómpl*adh*; 163 cluimhthe *comma between* cluimhthe *and* dfuirin; 165 ^tan^; 166 hais; 168 déant*adh*; 171 a ghrádh *bracketed*; iona; 173 Aithfrion*n*; 174 tan*m*; 176 imbliaghantaibh; 177 cuir*m*; 179 dhíomas

ag triall go Cathair na nApstal 's na Naomh dhuit,
ag feitheamh glóire ógh agus aoibhnis
do bhias dá caitheamh gan lagadh go fínit,
cuirim mo bheannacht gcéin mhairfead 's mo ghuidhe leat. 184

Ar mbeith dó san breóidhte cnaoidhte

46 as you go the City of the Apostles and Saints, awaiting the glory of virgins and of joy, that will last until the end of time, I'll send my blessing and prayer with you for as long as I live.

181 Napstol; 184 gen

3

Seaghán Mac Riagáin cct

A Mhurchaidh Uí Bhriain, tá fiadhach ar Ghaedhlaibh
le hocht mbliadhna i ndiaidh a chéile;
is mithid duit stad is teacht chum réightigh
is léigheadh id chairt do cheart ar Éirinn. 4

A láin beóil, a leóghain léidmhigh,
a ghríbh bhuirb, a churaidh chum éachta,
a chrainn bagair na Saxan le chéile,
is teann an seasamh so agad ghá dhéanamh. 8

Féach id dheóigh is romhat in éinfheacht
is déana an chomhairle is cóir do dhéanamh,
lean do rígh ann gach slíghe 'na ngéabha
is tréig an aicme nach tabhair dho géilleadh. 12

1 Murrough O'Brien, the Gaels have been hunted for eight years in succession; it is time for you to stop and come to an agreement, and to read in your charter your right to Ireland.

2 Spoken about by everyone, you are an eager lion, an abrasive fighter, a champion of mighty deeds, protector of all the English, this is a firm stand you are taking now.

3 Look back and forward and take the advice that is proper; follow your king whatever his course and avoid that band that does not yield to him.

1 tá fiadhach; ar ghaodhaluibh; 3 réight *with lenited suspension stroke*; 4 léigh *with lenited suspension stroke*; Erin*n*; 5 beoil; leoghain; 6 éachtadh; 7 cheile; 9 romhatt; néinfe*acht*; 10 déana] déan*adh*; 11 ríogh; ngéabh*adh*; 12 geille

Ná bí meallta, th'am ná tréig-se,
ná creid feasda do mhalairt an tsaoghail,
idear dhá stól do thón dá léigir,
d'éis do leagtha badh deacair dhuit éirghe.

Do chuiris brothall ó Chorcaigh i d'aonar,
do chuaidh go Lonndain chúm soin sgéal ort
go nach bia an Stát id láimh ná Séarlus
's biair mur Ghóidriosg sa chlódh chéadna.

Ba mór an tubaist is tusa don taobhsoin
thall 's abhus do bhuin in éinfheacht;
léd bhíodhbha ar eacht do cheart dá léigir
uch, alas, *you are far dereived.*

Is féach an madara i gcroiceann na caorach:
tá grádh ag Gallaibh dá n-eagala féin duit,
tar ' éis súd ní thiubhraid taobh riot,
they will make use of you this season.

Is tar éis an sgathaimh más agad bhias géilleadh
do cheann chum cláir go bráth ní léigfid
do réir mur d'imthigh go meinic ar shaoraibh
tar éis a n-oibire uile do dhéanamh.

4 Don't be deceived, don't miss your chance, don't be caught by the fickleness of the world; if you place yourself between two stools, after being knocked down it might be difficult for you to get up.

5 You dispersed a rabble from Cork on your own, (tidings) that reached London and made you known, so that neither the Parliament nor the King will help you and you'll appear to be just like Góidriosg.

6 It would be a disaster if you, while on that side, were defeated simultaneously by both sides; if you were to allow your enemy but once to have what is your due, alas! I'm afraid that you are much confused.

7 And behold the wolf in sheep's clothing, fearing for themselves the English show you love, but even so they will not trust you, *they will make use of you this season.*

8 After a while, even if you are the one yielded to, they won't allow you to visit their table, as often has happened to tradesmen having done all their work for them.

13 meállta; hám; 15 id*er*; 18 do ch *with lenited suspension stroke*; 22 néinfea*cht*; 23 léad; bhíodhb*adh*; 24 dereived *the third letter is unclear*; *the three examples of the letter* ɐ *are upturned and resemble the symbol used for the unclear schwa-vowel* ə; 27 tar éis; 29 géille; 31 dim *with unlenited suspension stroke*

Ní beag súd 's a ndubhart riot d'fhéachain,
amhairc id thimcheall, moill ná déan-sa,
in aghaidh do ríogh má bhír i gcéideal,
all your deeds believe are treason.

Badh dual sleachta dhuit ceannus na hÉireann
do bheith agad is Teamhair in éinfheacht;
' fhiadhain súd ar Lúghaidh Ó Chléirigh
is ar Thadhg Mac Dáire bláth na héigse.

Fágbhaim sin mur sin re féachain
is fiafraíghim dhaoibh, a dhaoine aosta,
an gcualabhair riamh in iath na hÉireann
fear mar Mhurchadh in iorghail éachtaigh?

Dar bríogh mo mhionn, dar liom níorbh fhéidir
do dhuine dár geineadh, dá rugadh, dá mbéarthar
ar feadh an domhain ón gcúl go chéile
bárr an Bharúin ar dheagh-chlú féile,

ó d'éag Eochaidh, Corc is Féidhlim,
ó d'éag Niall 's an Fhian badh tréine,
ó d'éag Brian do stiall gach daorchath
is Murchadh a mhac rug neart tar laochaibh,

9 This is sufficient and all of what I have told you to watch out for; be circumspect and don't delay; if you are in conflict against your King, *all your deeds believe are treason.*

10 By right of descent, you should have the leadership of Ireland and Tara together; evidence for this is with Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh and Tadhg Mac Dáire, the flower of poets.

11 I leave the matter thus to be examined, and older men, I ask you whether you have ever heard of a man like Murchadh for heroic conflict in the land of Ireland?

12 By my oath, the man has not been conceived or born or ever will be born in the whole world from end to end who could outdo the Baron in great fame for munificence,

13 since Eochaidh, Corc and Féidhlim died, since Niall died and that Fian band so strong, since Brian who lacerated every low-based battalion died, and his son Murchadh who showed strength over warriors,

33 dféachuin*n*; 37 hÉrion*n*; 38 néinfea*cht*; 39 Chléire; 40 bláith; 42 fiadhfruídhim; 43 hérin*n*; 45 lióm; níor bhfeidir; 46 dhuine] *stroke over* dhe; 50 an fhian*n*

ó d'éag Eóghan Mór na mbéimeann
is Lughaidh Lágha tug ár ar chéadaibh,
Cú na gCleas nár stad ó éirleach
's an laoch toghtha rinne codladh i mBinn Éadair.

Mar do rug *Achilles* barra na nGréagach,
mar do rug *Hector* breis ón dTrae leis
mar do rug Osgur mír borra na Féinne,
do rug Murchadh an urruim ó Ghaedhlaibh;

ó iathaibh Breatan, ó Ghallaibh an Bhéarla,
ó iath Alban, Alastrunn féachaidh
's a raibh farrais gur mharbh in éinfheacht
ní leis féin fós nár mhór an sgéal-soin.

Atá Lios Cearbhúill ag dearbhúdh an sgéil-sin
maitheamh a gclódh i ló an chéadail
ar feadh na Mumhan i gcúirt 's a gcléirceacht
's an lá crosda bhí ag Corcaigh le féachain.

Níor eól ceann baile ná cathrach ná aoiltigh
ó Phort Láirge slán go Béarra
is ó Shionainn na mbárc go tráigh Chinn Chléire
nach tabhair íoc dho cíos is géilleadh.

14 since Eoghan Mór who inflicted blows died and Lughaidh Lágha who slaughtered hundreds, Cú Chulainn of the feats, who never ceased from carnage, and the outstanding warrior who slept in Beann Éadair.

15 As Achilles outdid the Greeks, as Hector won yet more (glory) from Troy, as Oscar won the champion's portion of the Fianna, thus did Murchadh win respect from the Irish;

16 from the regions of Britain, from the English-speaking foreigners, from the land of Scotland – see how he slew Alasdair and all who were with him – he wasn't alone in thinking that this matter was not of great importance,

17 for Lios Cearbhaill confirms it, (snatching) respite from defeat on the day of conflict, in manor and in monastery throughout Munster; and it was a wicked day that Cork had to behold.

18 There is not known a town leader, or city governor, or head of limestone house from Waterford all the way to Beare Island or from the bark-filled Shannon to the strand at Cape Clare who does not yield to him rent and obeyance.

54 lúghadh lághadh; 57 barr*adh*; 58 ttraodh; 59 borr*adh*; fein*ne*; 60 Ghaodhaluibh; 61 bhéarl*adh*; 62 Alban *punctum on* n; 63 néinfea*cht*; 67 ccúirt *with punctum over* t; gcléirc*each*; 68 crosd*adh*; féachuin *stroke over* n; 69 Niól *with superscript for* er/ir *compendium over* ío; 71 cléir*igh*; 72 géille

Is gach aon acu nár admhaigh bheith réidh leis
do rinne a gcreachadh is táid marbh tar a éis-sion,
a fhiadhain súd ar Chúirt Mhic Séafraigh
's a bhfuil 'na sheasamh do Halla na nDéiseach. 76

An lá bhí campa teann san Léithchloich
ní raibh Murchadh in ionad a saortha,
bhí a shliocht orra, bhí an donas le chéile
ar gach nduine dár chruinnigh Sir Séarlus. 80

Ní hiongnadh dhaoibh – gach ní dá ndéinir,
bídh dod dhíon an tsídhbhean Béarra,
bídh Clíodhna an ríghbhean is Deirdre,
's ní bhí Aoibhioll dá oídhche id t'éagmais. 84

Do fuair sé arm dob fhearra dá mb'fhéidir
do rinne le foghluim gabha na nDée,
do fuair sgiath do sgiathuibh Shéasair
's do fuair clogad nach tolgann aongha. 88

Do fuair colg 'na dhorn ó *Venus*,
do bhronn Mars dho each is éideadh
dob fhearr gaisgeadh dár shealbhaigh éinfhear
's do thug sé srian is diallait fao dhó. 92

19 And as for those who did not show him conciliation, he destroyed them, and they are dead in his wake; evidence for this is Courtmacsherry and what's left standing of the Hall of the Déise.

20 On that day when a stout camp had been set up at Cloghleagh Castle, Murchadh was not present to save them; as a result, affliction was the lot of all those that Sir Charles had assembled.

21 This is no surprise for you – in everything you do the fairy woman from Beare Island protects you as does the royal fairy woman, Clíodhna, and Deirdre, and Aoibheall is never two nights away from you.

22 He got the best possible armoury that the smith of the gods had made with skill; he got one of the shields of Caesar and he got a helmet that no spear can pierce.

23 Venus placed a sword in his fist, Mars bestowed on him a steed and and body armour, the best for valorous deeds that any man ever got and he gave him a set of reins and a saddle.

73 aca *with punctum over initial* a; 74 rin (*stroke with punctum over* n); agcreacha; tar éis; 77 cámpa; 78 saorth*aigh*; 79 bhí shliocht; orr*adh*; 82 bí; dot; béarr*adh*; 83 bí; 85 do bfeárr; dá mféidir; 86 rin (*with lenited suspension stroke*); ndéé; 87 sgeathibh *changed to* sgiathibh *in later hand?*; 89 *after* colg *is* co *and the upper part of the letter* l *as if the scribe halted from repeating* colg; dhorn*n*; 90 éidigh; 91 gaisge; 92 diallaitt; faoi

Dá dtí an Barún deaghchlúdhach déarcach
chugainn ar cuairt go bruach na Féile,
do-gheabhainn ceathrúmhadh admhúim féin sin
dá mbí agam san mbaile le chéile.

A Mhurchaidh, a mhílidh, guídhim Mac Dé leat,
cuirim do dhíon ar Rígh na Gréine,
míle bean 's a gcneas gan éadach
fágbhaim agud gion mhairfead do tsaoradh.

Bíodh go dtiobhraim súil ina éiric
cuirim an Phaidear, an tPsailm 's a' Chréidh leat,
guídhe na nApstal 's na nAithreach Naomhtha
dot dhíon ar Ghalluibh 's a maireann do Ghaedhlaibh.

24 If the munificent Baron came to visit us on the banks of the River Feale, I might get a lease of land from him I declare, for all those I have here at home.

25 Murchadh, my warrior, I pray the Son of God be with you, I place your protection on the King of the Sun, I bestow on you a thousand blessings to save you as long as I live (though I may not live to save you).

26 Even though I shall give an eye in return for it, I send a *pater*, a psalm and the creed with you, the prayer of the apostles and of the holy patriarchs to protect you from the English and all that survive of the Gaels.

93 ttígh; 101 ina] an; 102 chrédh; 104 ghaodhaluibh

NOTES

1

Metre. The accentual metre is of the *Ochtfhoclach* type. In each couple of lines three half lines have the same assonantal pattern, the fourth differing e.g. ll. 1–2: [(_)ia _í_] × 3, [ó é _] × 1; ll. 3–4: [a _ _ ia _] × 3, [ó é _] × 1. All the four half-lines are not fully consistent.

2. *bróichéadach*: from English *brocade*. The lenited *c* does not occur in similar loan-words, e.g. *coicéad*, *piocóid*, *píce*, *póca*, *seiceadúir*.

5–6. *Bhóromha hóstamhail reóltamhail*: The assonantal pattern here is either óəə / óəə / óəə or óú / óú / óú; *hóstamhail*: derived from *hósta* (*Corpas*), an English borrowing; *trupaitheach* 'having troops'. The noun *trúp* (*eDIL*) has long -ú-. *Corpas* gives a form with a short vowel.

6. *usgarach reóltamhail ró-aodharach*: 'bejewelled, radiant, lively'. *Reóltamhail* corresponds to an earlier *rétlannach* < *rétlu* and more modern *réaltach*. The vowel *-eó-* may have been influenced by the doublet *néal*/*neól*.

8. *go Fód Éibhir*: 'to Ireland' in general or in particular 'to Thomond', the O'Briens were considered traditionally to have descended from Éibhear, son of Mílidh Easpáinne.

9. *cinnbheart, cú, seabhac*: *cinn* may stand for the dative case *cionn*, pronounced with long *-ú-* or diphthong *-au-*. The assonance need not be phonetically precise; *-ú-* and *-au-* can interchange.

11. *fiach*: (fiaghach MS) 'raven' here used metaphorically echoing *seabhac* 'hawk' above.

12. *Ag iarraidh comhrac mbaillsgéithe*: From *ball* + genitive of vn. *sceith* < *sceïd* (*eDIL* s.v.) 'seeking limb-spewing combats/encounters'. In Munster Irish the vowel is normally long, cf. *scéig*, *scéachtaint* etc. The MS form has been emended: *comhraic* > *comhrac*, a genitive plural, to accord with the eclipsis of *mbaillsgéithe*. The diphthong /ai/ in *mbaill-* provides the assonance for the first syllable in *Laighléiseach* l. 16.

13. *leóghan*: The diphthong /au/ is required here. The forms of the words for 'lion' and 'moth' (*eDIL* s.v. *lémann* and *léo*) are sometimes confused.

16. *Cnoc Árd na Laighléiseach*: Perhaps in the vicinity of Lawlesstown, Co. Louth; see n. 21 above.

18. *bóighéimne*: from *bó* + *géimneach* (f.). 'You spread terror with the bellowing of cows in the glens west along the River Bandon.' The capture and driving-off of cattle for victuals was a feature of the skirmishing warfare of the period; see Lenihan (2001: 61–2). The historical ending in the dative case of *géimneach* (i.e. *géimnigh*) is omitted by the scribe reflecting a dialect pronunciation.

19. *Dún Dúrlais*: The two castles and towns of Cahir (Cathair Dhún Iascaigh) and Thurles (Durlas) may be conflated here. But the form *Dún Dúrlais* is not found referring to either of them; see *Logainm.ie* s.nn. *Durlas* and *An Chathair*. Since the word *dún* is in lower case in the MS could a more general meaning be intended – 'the fort near Thurles'?

Caher Castle, which was of highly strategic importance, was taken by Inchiquin in the autumn of 1647 along with some ten or eleven other castles possibly including Thurles; see Warner (1768: 124) and Bagwell (1909: 152); *trómpa* in the MS has long *-ú-* to assonate with *Dúrlais*.

20. *cara* (carr*adh* MS): This is a form of *cora*/*cara*; see *eDIL* s.v. *cora*. 'Palisade' here could signify the fortified city of Cork.

23. *Cúige Ollta*: This clearly refers to the province of Ulster. Ó Bruadair uses this designation: *Do ghní ró fhoghla san gcóige Olltaigh* in Mac Erlean (1917: 150–1) and see the description of an Ulster harpist – *ollamh le ceól ón ccúige Olltaig* in Ó Rathile (1927: 65). For some of Inchiquin's involvement with the fighting in Ulster, see poem **2** n. 98–104.

24. *do bhogha dá mbróntaosgadh*: From *bró* (genitive case *brón*) and *taosgadh* 'your bow was casting them out in the fashion of crushed corn from a quern

stone', that is 'your bow was mowing them down in droves'. *Bró* and *bogha* seem to be associated, cf. 'bró do bhoghaibh' from the Book of Magauran; see *eDIL* s.v. *boga*. The phrase here is meant to convey the idea of Inchiquin annihilating the enemy on the field of battle, but the phraseology may be anachronistic or partly fossilised in that the use of the bow was well obsolete by the time of the wars of the 1640s; see Hayes-McCoy (1990: 94): 'The traditional English weapons which were still in use at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, bills and bows, soon disappeared; bows were no longer used in in O'Neill's time'.

2

Metre. In poems **2** and **3** the metre is accentual and generally known as *caoine*/*caoineadh*. It is used widely in the political poetry of the seventeenth century. For illustrative purposes and description of metre, see O'Rahilly (1952: viii).

While we speak of two internal assonances it should be noted that the first of the pair is often found at the beginning of the line, e.g.

Féachtar an mhéad so do laoidheadh leat l. 105.
gidh bé éin-neach fuair céim claoidhte ort l. 106.

2. *bíodhga*: pl. of *bíodhg* 'sudden starts were not far from me'.

3. *uch ó uch*: these exclamations echo the actual ululations of keening women.

4. *go mbobann an obair*: 'the events move me to tell'. I have no other instance of *bob* as a verb. It is possible to derive the form from the verb *as-boind*, *-opaind* 'refuses'; see *eDIL* s.v. *as-boind*, but semantically *ad-boind* 'proclaims, gives notice' suits better; see *eDIL* s.v. *ad-boind*. The verbs are often confused, according to *eDIL*.

7. *do rádh*: this form as preterite, is found in earlier sources. See *eDIL* s.v. *ráidid*.

9. *díoghrais*: the genitive ending is avoided *metri gratia* 'showing her fervour'.

10. *éirgheó*: the form reflects the future of *éirghidh* i.e. *éireóchaidh* and a doublet *éireóghaidh* with the final *-idh* silent (see O'Rahilly 1932 [1972]: 220). The length mark over and to the right of the digraph *éi* may indicate the historical long vowel *é* or the modern diphthongal pronunciation /*ai*/.

12–13. Murchadh was sixth Baron and first Earl of Inchiquin; *flathamhail*: pronounced *flahúil* to assonate with *Barún*.

14. *agairt*: the final *c* of the MS form *agarc* seems to be a slip of the pen for *agart*, a later form of the verbal noun *acra(e)* < *ad-gair*, modelled, probably, on *bagairt*: 'Behold the sea avenging the deed'.

16. *cabhlach*: 'the destruction of fleets'. The MS form *cabhla* (with lenited suspension stroke) could stand for the genitive singular *cabhlaigh*.

déanamh: the MS form *déanā* (with lenited suspension stroke) is an example of the modern Co. Clare pronunciation of this verbal noun with the final *-mh*

silent (Holmer 1962: 141); (Mac Clúin 1940 (1973): s.v. *déanadh*). The form *déanadh*, reflecting this pronunciation, is common in Robert Kane's version of the New Testament in 'Munster', that is Thomond, Irish (Kane 1858: *Matha VI 24*).

In this poem the final foot is [í-] e.g. *cnaoidhte*, *síonta*, *linntreach*. In certain lines (16, 97, 168, 171), however, forms of the verb *do-ním*/*déinim* are written with long *é* as if the poet or scribe were satisfied that this was an acceptable assonantal rhyme with the majority of the final feet in [í-]. See also de Brún et al. (1971: foclóir, s.v. *ríteach*, *tríonas*). See also textual note on ll. 147–51.

17. *fá líogaibh*: the preposition *fá* has here the force of *imm*, meaning 'around, over boulders'; see *eDIL* s.v. *fo, fa, fá* 1 (f) and cf. modern usage *chuireadar cóta péinte fén dtigh.*

20. The MS forms *fhoghair* and *foghar* may point to a diphthongal pronuciation /au/ here.

24. The idea here is that the oak acorns or mast have become desiccated as part of the general collapse of natural fecundity; *planda* refers to the kernel from which a new plant would grow.

26. Compare this line to *táid spéarthaibh an aedhair ar aoinchrith* in Caitilín Dubh's *Seal dá rabhas gan fhonn gan aoibhneas*, her elegy for Diarmuid Ó Briain, An Barún (Ó Murchú 2026: 32, l. 60).

28 ff. The appearance of the *sídhmhná* as keening women is common in accentual lament poetry. While Aoibheall, Áine and Úna are well-documented otherworld *sídhmhná*, associated respectively with Craig Liath, or Craiglea, near Killaloe in Co. Clare, with Cnoc Áine, or Knockainey, in Co. Limerick and with Ormond (for Úna, see O'Rahilly 1952: 125, n. 142). In an elegy for Seaghán Óg Mac Gearailt, Lord of the Decies, Séathrún Céitinn has the *sídhbhean* Clíodhna visit the sídh at Cnoc Meádhbha (Knockmaa) near Tuam, Co. Galway; see Mac Giolla Eáin (1900: 39, 205). The poet, in citing such commonplace names as Gráinne, Sadhbha, Síle and Máire, may wish to indicate that many ordinary keening women also wept for Inchiquin (Ó Murchú 2025: 413–33).

29. *Sadhbha*: the first vowel here is long -á- assonating with *Gráinne*.

33. The MS reading *geilt* has been emended to *gealt* (: *feadh*) as the -a- vowel supplies the requisite internal assonance.

35. *urra* (MS urr*adh*), see *eDIL* s.v. *aurrae/aurrad*: the masculine noun can be taken here as a genitive in apposition.

38. 'that he (death) should conquer the darling of Ireland'. The form *lionnán* reflects the modern Munster pronunciation of *leannán* with the accent on the second syllable and the vowel of the first obscured.

40. 'the palm tree shaped out of kings'. A dative plural *ríghthibh* or *ríoghaibh* could be expected here; but the abstract *ríghe* may have been intended – 'shaped from, derived from kingship, sovereignty'.

The passage from l. 10 to l. 40, understood as uttered by the un-named otherworld woman, ends here and henceforth the poet addresses the deceased directly.

41. *crann tagartha eagailse do dhídean*: 'one to appeal to for the protection of a church commumity'. The exact meaning of *eaglais* is here difficult to determine. *eDIL* s.v. *eclais, eclas* suggests (1) 'the Christian Church as an institution whether regarded as a visible organization or a spiritual community of believers' (in the context of seventeenth century Ireland the dichotomy between the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland must be borne in mind); (2) 'a local church or community of believers; a unit of ecclesiastic organization'; (3) 'clergy'; (4) 'a cleric'; (5) 'a church, a building for worship'. The introduction to this edition discusses Inchiquin's changes of denominational allegiance during the course of his life. The second meaning the preferred interpretation here as throughout his military campaigns, especially in Munster, he showed an unfailing determination to protect the Protestant communities of English origin in that province.

The form of the genitive singular *eagailse* is heard in the West Kerry placename *Bail(e) Eagailse* and in *pears(a) eagailse* 'a churchman'.

43. 'the warrior of Banba to make a stand for his Prince'. The Prince is King Charles I to whom Inchiquin was loyal until 1644 when he defected to the Parliament, but he returned to the royal fold in the spring of 1648.

44. '(you were) a sword fashioned to bring (the men of) the battlefield together'. This would seem to refer to Inchiquin's widely acknowledged acumen on the field of battle. It may refer to keeping the ranks together when soldiers were inclined, in the face of enemy cannon and horse, to break up and flee. Something of this nature seems to have taken place in the Battle of Liscarrol 3 September 1642, when the Royalist cause seemed lost, but Inchiquin succeeded in rallying his foot-soldiers who at first had fled and he won the day.

45. 'a sword to cut swiftly and severely'. *Sgathamh* is a variant of *sgothadh* (see *eDIL* s.v. *scothad*) 'act of cutting off, lopping'. *Díopa* or *díobtha/díobaithe* (also l. 51) can be added to T. F. O'Rahilly's examples (1942: 205–6) where he translates it as 'very great', 'unyielding, harsh, severe' and derives the word from **dí-obadh* 'non-refusing'.

46. *shuígheadh* from historical *suidhiughadh*. For this verbal noun in *CMO* (1780) Merriman writes *shuígheamh*/*shuídheamh*. (Ó Murchú 1982: ll. 116, 421, 822).

thu (MS): The shortened form of the personal pronoun, in contrast to the historical long form (ll. 44, 47) may indicate some instability in the usage of the scribe (1712) and point to the modern distinction of (1) *tú*, subject pronoun and (2) *tu*/*thu* object pronoun and in copula sentences.

49. *bhein*: this form corresponds to modern *bhuin*/*bhain* and functions as preterite of *bongaid*/*benaid*, retaining the older vocalism of the latter. *Bhein*

does not take the stress here, but the first syllables of *mhisnigh* and *urraim* do; the assonance of the line is: - *í* – *i* - - *u* - - *í* -.

51. This line recalls a line from Caitilín Dubh's elegy for Donnchadh Ó Briain, fourth Earl of Thomond: *geinearál na harmála badh tréine*; see Ó Murchú (2026: 26, l. 11).

52. *fear th'anma*: *anam* here means 'life' as in Modern *ná téir i gcontúirt t'anma* 'don't endanger your life'; see *eDIL* s.v. *ainim(m)* and *Ó Dónaill* s.v. *anam*: *beidh d'anam agam* – 'I'll have your life'. The phrase *fear th'anma* means 'the man of (who would take) your life'.

54. Ll. 54–104 comprise a *caithréim* of sorts of Inchiquin's military exploits with references to various events that took place during the war years. The chronology and some details are not precise.

An Barrach refers to Garrett Barry a professional soldier who, having left Ireland at the time of Kinsale, had gained wide military experience on the Continent. In Ireland at the time of the 1641 insurrection, he was appointed general of the confederate supporters in Munster by the Supreme Council in Kilkenny, but he was heavily defeated by Inchiquin in the Battle of Liscarroll, County Cork, in September 1642; see *DIB* s.n. Barry, Garret (Gerat).

Táf refers to Theobald Taaffe, (*c.* 1603–1677), first Earl of Carlingford. He played a central role in Irish affairs in the middle decades of the seventeenth century. He was appointed commander of the Confederate army in Munster in 1647. Inchiquin won a stunning victory over him and his forces at Knocknanuss near Mallow County Cork 13 November 1647; see ll. 63–70.

55. *Lios Cearbhúill do bhreathnúghadh*: the MS forms with long *ú* indicate that the assonance here is [a ú] – [a ú].

do bhreathnughadh na tíre: 'considering the country'. The idea here is that Garret Barry, in making a move against Inchiquin at Liscarroll, was thinking that the outcome would have consequences for the whole of Ireland. It does not appear that Taaffe was present at the Battle of Liscarroll.

56. *Oilibhéar Stíbhinn*: In the battle Oliver Stephenson was the leader of the Confederate cavalry. The phrase *do cailleadh leat* would seem to attribute agency to Inchiquin. Bagwell states that Inchiquin 'killed Oliver Stephenson, the Irish cavalry leader, with his own hand, and had himself more than one narrow escape, being wounded in the head and hand' (Bagwell 1909: 23). In the *Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction* (*c.* 1652) as printed in Gilbert (1879: vol. i, Part I, 38), it is stated that Stephenson and Inchiquin were related, the latter being a nephew of Stephenson's mother. She had implored her son before the battle to spare Inchiquin's life 'in case he had the upper hand on him'. The *Discovery* narrates that Stephenson, in an encounter during the battle, had captured Inchiquin, but the latter's foster-brother who was his bodyguard placed his pistol to Stephenson's eyelight and shot him in the head. James Buckley (1898: 83–100) reprints from the *Discovery* this account

of the slaying of Stephenson. Pádraig Lenihan states that the bodyguard was Inchiquin's brother (Lenihan 2001: 63).

59. *Íbh Coirín*: Ikerrin (Uí Chairín), Co. Tipperary. The reference is to Piers Butler, first Viscount Ikerron; see *DIB* s.n. Butler, Piers. Bagwell (1909: 23) in relation to the Battle of Liscarroll cites ('by an eye-witness') a London-printed 1642 publication, *A Journal of the most memorable passage in Ireland*, in which it is noted that 'almost all the Lords of Munster were present' – Roche, Muskerry, Ikerrin, Dunboyne, Brittas, Castleconnell, and one of Ormande's brothers'; *cheilmíd*: *-e-* is the assonating vowel here, the first syllable in *Coirín* being fronted to *-e-*; cf. *obair*, gen. *oibre* pronounced 'eibire'.

60. *tiagharna Mhóta Gairéad*: Richard Butler, third Viscount Mountgarret. He was a loyalist when the rebellion broke out in Ulster, but he went over to the Confederate side because of the anti-Catholic violence of Willian St Leger. He was elected President of the Confederation in Kilkenny. His most grievous military defeat was in the Battle of Kilrush, Co. Kilkenny, in April 1642.

An Bhíocont: General Thomas Preston, second son of fourth Viscount Gormanstown, later Viscount Tara. A professional soldier, on his arrival from the Continent in 1642 he was appointed general of the Leinster Confederate forces. He was successful in many encounters in Leinster but suffered serious defeats in March 1643 by the Royalist commander James Butler, twelfth Earl of Ormond at Ross, Co. Wexford and by the Parliamentarian commander, General Michael Jones at Dungan's Hill, near Trim Co. Meath 8 August 1647. It does not appear that Inchiquin clashed with either Richard Butler or Thomas Preston in any military encounter; see ll. 79–84.

The non-final assonance is irregular here. *Tiagharna* and *Gairéad* may be intended to assonate roughly. A similar type of irregularity is met with in l. 91.

61. *Eilís bhuidhe*: Elizabeth St Leger whom Inchiquin had married in 1635. She was the daughter of Sir William St Leger, President of Munster, who had taken the young Baron Inchiquin as his protégé; see Ivar O'Brien (1991: 4). It seems that the poet regards Inchiquin's marriage to the daughter of the Lord President of Munster with its concomitant acquisition of military equipment (*an t-arm badh líomhtha*) as another of his achievements. The epithet *buidhe* was intended to disparage her complexion.

65. *Alasdrann*: At the Battle of Knocknanoss, fought 13 November 1647, Alasdair Mac Colla Mac Donald, a distinguished soldier in the Scottish wars, had initial success on the confederate right wing, but Inchiquin still scored a stunning victory, scattering the Confederate forces (Hayes McCoy 1969: 204). Alasdair Mac Colla was slain in this encounter.

68. *fearbóga*: 'fawns chomping at mouthfuls of grass around them' (the dead bodies); *blasbóg*: this word which I have not seen elsewhere may be some imitative word, a distorted form of *bloscóg* or some such for the chomping noise of the young deer.

70. *i gCill Bhuláin do choimeádais an oídhche*: After the Battle of Liscarroll, Bagwell (1909: 23), drawing on Bellings, Carte, Smith and others, writes 'the Irish were routed and recovered Sir William Pore's bog near Kilbolaine, where they were out of reach. Inchiquin then fell back to Mallow'. It can be inferred from this line of our poem that Inchiquin on the night after the battle kept the Confederate army under observation.

71–2. *Baile an Rosbhaird*: Rochfordstown, near present-day Ballincollig, Co. Cork. The official version in Irish is given as Baile an Rosfortaigh in *Logainm.ie* where historical forms Ballirosdiwardie/Ballirosdiwardig (1586), reflecting those of our text, are cited.

These lines refer to Inchiquin's first exploits in the war in Co. Cork in 1642. The English loyalists had been besieged in Cork by Lord Muskerry assisted by Colonel Garrett Barry and others. Bagwell writes: 'On April 13 … Inchiquin who was married to St Leger's daughter … persuaded his father-in-law to let him make a sally. With only 300 foot and two troops of horse he surprised the Irish camp at Rochfordstown, routed the ill-disciplined host completely, and pursued them for some miles towards Ballincollig and Kilcrea … The only serious fighting was in the attack of a small enclosure desperately defended by Florence McDonnell, called Captain Sougane. Inchiquin's loss was little or nothing, and he was soon able to ship guns and take castles which obstructed the navigation of Cork Harbour' (Bagwell 1909: 3–4).

Caiptín Súgán: Finghín Mac Domhnaill Mhic Cárthaigh known as 'Seabhac na Ruachtaighe' (O'Rahilly 1952: 154, n. 412–13); see n. on l. 74.

73. *Sruth an Bhaile Aeird*: possibly Hightown in the barony of Barrymore, some miles northeast of Cork City; see *Logainm.ie* s.n. *Hightown/An Baile Ard*. It can be assumed that Inchiquin reconnoitred this area as part of his relief of the siege of the city.

74. In Smith's *The Ancient and Present State of the County and City of Cork* (1893 edn, vol. ii, 313) is printed a letter from the Earl of Cork, Richard Boyle (1566–1643) about events in Cork in 1642. It is worthwhile to quote it at length as it contains some interesting parallels with these lines of our poem:

> A letter of the Earl of Cork to the State, at Dublin, &c., wherein is showed the barbarous cruelty the Rebels have lately used to twenty of the Lord Barrimore's men at Coole, killing all the English there, and how Lord B. burned their country; also, the taking of Rochford's castle, and Barnehely. London, 1642: —
>
> 'The Earl of Barrymore, making a visit here to me to see his lady and children, had ten horse and foot, all English, surprised in the night-time at Coole by the Condons, who set Mr. Baynard's house on fire, which they defended till it began to fall down. The rebels offered quarter, but when they came forth, disarmed and stripped them. The principal leaders were Richard and John Condon, sons of David, who is now in custody in Dublin. The news being brought

to the Earl of Barrymore, he presently posted home and burned their whole country.

Sir Robert Travers, his castles of Rochfordstown, near Cork, was the rendezvous of the Lord Muskerry, and for all the prime gentlemen that were rebels in the western parts, which they termed the Catholic Camp, and fortified it by the direction of old Colonel Garret Barry, who, with the Lord of Muskerry, was a little before retired to Kinsale, which unhappy town is revolted, and given up to them. So we have no town in Munster holds good for the crown, but Cork, Youghal, and Bandonbridge.

The eleventh of the month Muskerry employed a strong party of men to take the prey that was under the walls of Cork whereof they being possessed, the lord pres[ident] being sick within the walls. The Lord of Inchiquin and Sir Charles Vavasour, the one with the horse the other with the foot, sallied out, but the nimble foot kerns got such a start of them, as our foot were not able to overtake them, whereupon the horse galloped after them and set upon them, recovered the prey; and on their return resolved to attempt their best upon the fortification and castle of Rochfordstown, where upon they gave a fierce assault, and Captain Seagrave, Master Finunis [= Caiptín Súgán, i.e. Finghín (Florence) mac (Domhnaill)], bothe having chief command there, made a strong defence as long as his powder lasted, (for thanks be to God with that commodity they are sparingly furnished). In the end our courage overcame all opposition, so as they entered they gave them Condons quarter at Coole, for they killed their captain and all the rest that were in it, being about 400, except their pipers, whom they caused to play before their captain's head, which they brought on a pole to Cork, and there they were put out of tune and their music ended, for they were hanged up. They found in the castle very good booty of provisions, and among the rest choice armour of the Lord of Muskerry, McCarthy Reagh, and Swallivant [Sullivan].

The day following, my castle of Rathgoggan, wherein Sir Pierce Smith's father-in law, Mr. Robert Mead, is my constable, being besieged and distressed for want of fuel, only was relieved by Capt. Will[iam] Jephson and Lieut. Downing, etc. Goggin's castle of Barnahely, which stands upon the sea in the barony of Kerry-wherry [= Kerrycurrihy/Ciarraí Cuirche], was the magazine of store for the Rebels in that barony. On Friday last Sir Chas. Vavasour boated from Cork two pieces of ordnance, with a party of Musqueteers and sailed thither, and landed one of his pieces of ordnance; the Lord Inchiquin with his horse went by land and met him there; and, upon discharging the first piece, they now desired quarter, which was given to depart with their swords and skeins only. In the castle was 1,000 barrels of wheat, wherein they placed a ward of 40 men

and returned to Cork. (Signed), Cork.'

Ráith Gogáin: Rathgoggan, the area around Charleville, Co. Cork. I cannot pinpoint any engagement here in which Inchiquin was involved. Ó Murchadha (1985: 80–1 s.n. (*de*) *Cogan*) writes: '… another William (de Cogan) was fated to be the last Cogan owner of Barnahely. It was in the year 1642 …' and quotes from the letter of the Earl of Cork as above.

75. *Donnchadh an Chúil*: Donogh MacCarthy (1594–1665), second Viscount Muskerry, first Earl of Clancarty (1658). Ó Murchadha (1985: 60) states: 'Donogh became one of the principal leaders of the Confederate cause in Munster and a member of the Council of the Confederation of Kilkenny. His castle at Blarney was captured in 1646 and the other castles in Muskerry in 1650. Finally, Lord Muskerry surrendered himself at Ross castle, Killarney, in 1652'. The idea of his being stripped of his properties may be conveyed by the verb *rúscaim*/*rúiscim* here. It seems that it was only at Liscarroll that Inchiquin and Muskerry met in battle; see also *DIB* s.n. MacCarthy, Donogh (contributed by Micheál Ó Siochrú) and Ó Donnchadha (1916: 1–10). The soubriquet 'Donnchadh an Chúil' was based on his long ringleted hair, other references to which are found in a poem by Aodhagán Ó Rathaille *is tighearna Mhúscraighe an chúil bhuidhe phéarlaigh* ('and the lord of Muskerry of the yellow plaited locks') (Dinneen and O'Donoghue 1911: 218–9; Ó Buachalla 2007: 18–9) and in an elegy by Diarmuid Óg Ó Murchadha (Gerard Murphy 1933: 488 (124*m*)). Cecile O'Rahilly (1952: 149) prints an interpolated passage from *Tuireamh na hÉireann* calling it 'what seems to be a defence of Donnchadh Mac Cárthaigh, Lord Muskerry, against the charge of treachery or conspiracy'.

aimhris: with long vowel -*í*-, current *aimhreas* and *amhras* 'doubt'.

77. *Dún Garbháin*: Dungarvan was taken by Inchiquin in April 1647 (Lenihan 2001: 104; Bagwell II 1909: 150).

80. *síge*: If taken as an Irish word the pronunciation would have to be [sʲiːgʲɪ] but this cannot be derived from early modern English or French *siege*/*siège*. It is possible that one of those latter forms was written in the first MS copy of our poems, that the first letter *e* was subsequently dropped and that it was copied as an Irish word with long *í*. T. F. O'Rahilly (1912–13: 292) regards *siege* as a late borrowing.

doirsibh: short -*o*- gives assonance with -*o*- in *docht*.

79–84. These lines treat of how Murchadh helped in raising the siege at Youghal in 1645. The town was relieved in September when Lord Broghill, that is Roger Boyle, arrived with ships from England. Inchiquin sent supplies by sea from Cork and Kinsale, *na chúig longa* no doubt referring to this succour (Bagwell 1909: 90–94).

81–2. *Baile Uí Ghormáin* and *Cuan an Chaisleáin* refer after the English fashion to the men who held these titles. The former was General Thomas Preston; see note on l. 60 above. The latter was James Touchet, the third Earl of Castlehaven;

see also **3**, note on ll. 77–80. Both men participated in the siege of Youghal but relations between them were uneasy.

84. *Sucar*: the form given in *eDIL* for this borrowing is *succara*.

86. *út go fínit*: 'from first to last'; see *SOED* s.v. *ut*: 'In medieval music, the first note in Guido d'Arezzo's hexachords. Now = doh'. The phrase 'ó úd go fínit' occurs in *Stair Éamuinn Uí Chléire* composed in 1700. See *Corpas* s.v. *fínit*.

89–90. In August 1647, Inchiquin 'with an army of 6,000 men invaded east Limerick, brushed aside a Munster army, by now reduced to less than 2,000 men, crossed into Clare, and threatened Limerick before withdrawing to Cork' (Lenihan 2001: 105). Áth an Choite/Annacotty lies roughly seven kilometres to the northeast of Limerick City.

gorthach saoithe: (*gort*adh*ach* MS). I posit *gortha*, as a participial form of the verb *guiridh* with the adjectival ending *-ach* suffixed; for the verbal noun, see *eDIL* s.v. *gorad* 'blushing, causing to blush', thus 'wise ones i.e. experienced soldiers, were blushing'.

*sgío*mh*altaibh*: see *eDIL* s.v. 2 *sceimled* (b) 'skirmishing party'. The word *sceimhle* with long -í- in first syllable as in this instance is common in West Munster meaning 'a terrible fright, a trauma', this meaning derived no doubt from the terror caused by bloody raids in former times.

91. The internal assonance here is irregular. There may be an attempt at assonance between *tiaghacht* with diphthong /iə/ and *Néill*; cf. l. 60.

93. *caismearta ag píobaibh*: 'notes of battle/signals emitted from war-pipes'.

94. *ag góil na gaoithe*: this may be a traditional phrase in Thomond Irish for 'fluttering in the wind'; cf. *is ciarsúir póca ag góil na gaoithe ort* (*CMO*: 29 l. 388).

96. *i gcopaibh*: the word *cop* is a variant of the second element in *kneecap* 'a cap or protective covering for the knee; *spec.* a flexible piece of armour covering the knee' (*SOED* s.v. *kneecap*).

98–104. General Eóghan Ruadh Ó Néill, the son of Art Ó Néill, had advanced from the north by July 1648 and was in the vicinity of Offaly and Tipperary. Banagher was held by the Confederates but was besieged by the Royalists under Inchiquin, Clanricarde and Lord Taaffe. Ó Néill failed to raise the siege and retreated north to Cavan. This passage refers to the Banagher episode. It seems that the throwing of a fox into Murchadh's net on the part of Eoghan Ruadh would indicate that he took some cattle for victuals and killed animals from the herds that Murchadh had captured. The metaphor is that of the fox raiding the hen-coop and indiscriminately killing all the fowl it finds there. Inchiquin in the following year exacts revenge in Dundalk; see Bagwell (1909: 169, 183) and Coffey (1914: 207, 212).

100. *tar ais* for *tar a ais* 'on his way back'.

101. *gan*: 'he thought it would not be stupid of him to avoid throwing a fox into your net'. This is an idiomatic use of *gan*; see *eDIL* s.v. *cen* II (f): 'the prep. merely reinforces the meaning of the main verb'. Cf. Modern Irish: *ná dearúd gan an solas a mhúchadh.*

104. *retréat*: *eDIL* s.v. *ratrét.*

107. *gníomhartha*: the pronunciation is disyllabic – *gníortha* – as in present day West Munster Irish.

111. Internal assonance seems to be lacking in this line.

112. *go teacht i* (*a* MS) *righe dhuit*: 'until your coming into power/authority'.

114–18. *Brianach*: 'you are an O'Brien, (like Brian (Bóramha)) who promulgated the law; who composed surnames and divided out territories; who first arranged five provinces for this kingdom'. The achievements of Brian Bóramha here enumerated may derive from Céitinn's *Forus Feasa* or may be based on some seventeenth-century Thomond written or oral sources. The giving of surnames by Brian to the men of Ireland is alluded to by Céitinn (*FFÉ* III, 262), but the attribution to Brian of the division of the five provinces is fanciful.

114. *a dlíghe* (MS *a dlíghe*): the article is always written *an* before consonants in the MS; *a* here is the feminine possessive pronoun, its force being proleptic referring to *ríoghdhacht* l. 116.

116. *chúig cúige*: the lenited form of the numeral is the norm in spoken Modern Irish. See *eDIL* s.v. *cóic. Cúige* here stands for *cúigidh*/*cóigidh* the plural of *cúigeadh*/*cóigeadh.* See *eDIL* s.v. *cóiced* II. Lenition is the rule after *cúig*/*chúig*, but is prevented here due to the conjunction of homorganic consonants.

119–123. The reference may be to Inchiquin's nobility and its concomitant political and military power. Tadhg mac Dáire Mac Bruaideadha of *Iomarbhágh* fame would seem to be the one referred to here, though Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha composed a long poem on the ancestry of the O'Briens (O'Grady 1926: 393–4) and a now lost book of annals that The Four Masters used; see *DIB* s.n. *Mac Bruaideadha, Maoilín Óg* and s.n. *Mac Bruaideadha, Tadhg mac Dáire*; and McKenna (1918: vii–xiii).

For *recht,* see *eDIL* s.vv. *recht* (e) and *dílse* (a) and (d).

The phrase *gearraim slighe go hachamair* means that the poet took a short cut in enumerating Inchiquin's achievements.

123. The MS form *suígh*eadh of the verbal noun might stand for a colloquial pronunciation *suíomh.* Cf. *suidem* = *suidiugad eDIL.*

124. *arrad*: this disyllabic form of *ard* is occasionally found *metri gratia*; see *eDIL* s.v. *ard.* Cf. *cearad* to be read for *ceard* (MacErlean 1913: 42 v. i). A similar phonetic development is seen in modern doublets such as *barr*/*barra* and *gearr*/*gearra.*

125. *guais-tseabhac*: *eDIL* s.v. *guas*: *secht nguaisshebhaic in ghlenna* 'the glen's seven danger-loving falcons' from a poem by Fearghal mac Luighdeach mhic Eochadha (O'Grady 1926: 502; Mac Airt 1944: 116, l. 3047). Tadhg Dall Ó Huiginn wrote of *guais-sheabhaic Bheann Moghaine* 'danger-braving hawks'; see Knott (1922: 34, l. 170).

126. *carbuncail*: 'precious stone of royal Tara'.

128. *coímheasgar*: disyllabic /ki:sgər/.

131. *gan iongnadh*: 'without wonder, unsurprisingly'

133. *ba sgím leat*: the word *scim*/*scím* is ambiguous having a positive or negative emotional force; see T. L. Ó Murchú (forthcoming: **4**, l. 15): *creill, fóraoir, tug scím na Quakers* 'a death-knell, alas, which brought delight to the Quakers'; and Ní Ógáin (1921: 87, l. 8) *gur fhulaing sé – mo scíos! géar-bhás fé phéin fé scím, ar chrann na croise aoird ar ár son* 'a terrible death under pain and anxiety'. Thus, this line could be taken as 'the King of England who died was dear to you' or 'the King of England who was killed was a cause of distress to you'. In an act of regicide, Charles I was executed by the Parliamentary government of England in January 1649. While Inchiquin was at heart a Royalist, he fought under the Parliamentary flag from 1644 to 1648 when he reverted to the Royalist side.

135. The Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand III (1608–57) is meant by *An tÍmpire Almáinneach*, the epitaph being used to contrast with the many German princes (*Gearmáineacha*) who were practically independent of the Emperor. There is no internal assonance in this line.

139. *inntreast*: this is a variant with long *í* in the initial syllable of *eDIL* s.v. *ionntrust* from Ó Bruadair with long *ú* in assonance with *rúin* (MacErlean 1913: 32, st. xxi and de Brún, Ó Buachalla, Ó Concheanainn (1971: 52, l. 84 / 153). It is a borrowing from English *interest* (*SOED*) 'a right to something esp. by law; participation in doing or causing something m(id) 17–m(id)18 century'. The reference is to the Portuguese Restoration War 1640–1668 when Portugal under João II of Braganza was fighting to re-establish its independence from Spain. *Inntreast* conveys the King of Spain's involvement. Inchiquin at this time was in the employ of the King of France who was assisting the Portuguese in their struggle. As he approached Lisbon in November 1659, Inchiquin's ship was attacked by Algerian corsairs who took him and his party as prisoners. The captives, being men of standing and therefore seen as being valuable, were not badly treated (*fuarais fossadh chum socracht ód naimhdibh*). Charles II, having been restored as king in May 1660, arranged that a ransom be paid and the triumphant return of Inchiquin alone (*gan dál*), as he was the first of his company to be released, is here alluded to (O'Brien 1991: 44–7).

142. *fossadh*: 'a halting place, an abode'.

143. *do bhóit*: 'your desire' from English *vote*; see *eDIL* s.v. *bóit*, where an equation with *móit*, modern *móid* is suggested.

147–51. The assonance in the end-line foot in this sequence seems to be [əi – ə]: *fheidhm duit* etc … *radharc ort* with diphthong /əi/. In l. 54 the assonating vowel in *maidhm* is *-í-*.

151. *libh-ghárda*: 'the uniformed guard in your vision'. I take *libh-* as a shortened form of *libhré* 'livery, uniform' (*eDIL* s.v. *libré*).

153. *choimse*acht (MS): = *eDIL* s.v. *coimsiugad* < *coimsigid* 'estimates', 'the fame of your heroic deeds cannot be estimated'.

155. *prionnta*: *-í-* is the requisite vowel here.

159. *Niúl*: an early ancestor of the Gaedhail, much associated with Egypt in ancient times; see *FFÉ* IV s.v. *Niúl*.

161–4. *cluimhthe*: = *cluiche*. The use of this word along with *fuirinn*, *tíghthibh*, *guin* (*Ó Dónaill* s.v. *goin*[4] *'guint'* 'to win the game outright', here 'to clear the field of battle') reflects an extended metaphor based on a bord game for Inchiquin's military exploits; see *eDIL* s.v. *guin*: 'of taking pieces in a game'.

tíghthibh: *eDIL* s.v. 2 *tí* (a): 'of the lines on a chess-board'.

If the comma in the MS between *cluimhthe* and *d'fhuirinn* is heeded, the sense might be 'you hardened the game, your team/battalion of men over-running the (enemy) lines'.

168. *marbhnadh*: the meanings 'contemplation,' 'reflection,' 'thinking' given in *Ó Dónaill* s.v. *marana* and 'reflection', 'meditating' in *Dinneen* s.v. *marbhna* accord better with the context here, rather than 'elegy, lament'.

169. *chumais*: 'of power'.

foilightheach: see *eDIL* s.v. *folaigthech* 'hidden, secret'; cf. *CMO*: *Is fáthaibh foilitheach uireaspach éigin/d'fhág an doirfeach foirfe in aonta* (Ó Murchú 1982: 979–80.)

170. *dhiansgrios*, *ndéanadh*: the assonance here is imperfect.

175. Internal assonance is lacking in this line.

178. *September*: the second vowel here is long *-í-*. Cf. the second syllable in *December* in l. 212 of the devotional verses of Murchadh Riabhach Mac Namara, a Thomond poet, composed in 1688 (Ó Murchú 2005: 128, 144.)

3

1–2. For discussion of these lines, see Introduction pp. 468–9.

4. *do cheart ar Éirinn*: Inchiquin's *ceart ar Éirinn* is more explicitly expressed in ll. 37–40.

5. *lán beóil*: 'a much talked about person'; see *eDIL* s.v. *bél* I (d) and *Corpas* s.v. *lán beoil*. This phrase is also found in our MS M 107, p. 199, 'lán beoil do

chuir brón ar dhaoine', in an elegy by Caitilín Dubh on Diarmuid Ó Briain, fifth Baron Inchiquin (*obit* 1624), our subject's father; see Ó Murchú (2002: 403–5) and Ó Murchú (2026: 25–43).

13. *ná bí meallta*: 'do not be deceived'. This usage corresponds to the more traditional 'ná mealltar thú'.

15. Since the proverb 'tháinig a tón chun talamh eadar dhá sdól' may inform this line the bathetic note in the use of *tón* is tempered to some extent. The use of what may be perceived in our day as a vulgar usage may also reflect that type of familiarity between poet and patron that we see, for instance in the poems of Caitilín Dubh; see Ó Murchú (2026: 25); Mac Adam (1858: item 45).

17. *brothall*: 'the rabble (of rebels)' The reference is to Inchiquin's sally forth against the Confederate armies that were besieging Cork in April 1642; see poem **2**, note on l. 71–2.

18. *do chuaidh*: *(do* chuadh MS*)*: this is a relative clause, the antecedent being the phrase *do chuiris brothall …* with an implied subject such as 'rud do chuaidh go Londain'.

19–20. *Góidrisc*: 'so that you'll be helped by neither State nor King and be in the same position as Góidriosc'. In the first half of the seventeenth century a travelling friar or *bráthair bocht* designates a fruitless journey he undertook seeking succour as *turas Ghóidrisc*; see de Brún et al. (1971: 8, l. 32, 95, 168 s.v. *Góidrisc*); Góidriosc is a legendary figure in literary and folk tradition who was cut off from society after vainly crossing St Patrick. See O'Rahilly (1912: 172–6, 303); MacNeill (1962: 691 s.v. *Deódruisg*).

The poet warns Inchiquin not to end up like Góidrisc, rejected by all. After the Cork engagement in April 1642 (n. 2, above) Inchiquin won a decisive battle over the Confederate Army in September at Liscarroll (see poem **2** n. 52) but subsequently he showed much equivocation regarding his loyalties up to the point when he declared for Parliament in the summer of 1644.

sa chlódh chéadna: *clódh* could refer to the 'print (of a book)' *eDIL* s.v. *cló* (c) meaning that Inchiquin could be portrayed in pamphlet form as an equivocator in his loyalties. The production of polemical pamphlets on the wars was a feature of seventeenth-century life in London.

21–4. The import of these lines is that if Inchiquin were to suffer a defeat while on the side of the Parliament, he would undermine his credibility in the eyes of the Royal party and find it hard to bring about a rapprochement with them.

22. *do bhuin*: = *do bhuain* 'that you be brought down in one go'.

24. The use of English phrases here and in ll. 28, 36 reflect no doubt contemporary discussion in English of Inchiquin's political situation. Short passages in English are seen in some of the seventeenth-century political poems; see O'Rahilly (1952: 49, 90).

The form in the MS *dereived* (pronounced with long *-é-* in second syllable) is puzzling and it seems that the scribe Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín or the scribe of his exemplar had difficulties with it. In the context it is clearly meant to be taken as an English word although it is written in a quasi-Gaelic script. The letter *-e-* is written thrice in the upturned form resembling the modern phonetic schwa-vowel ə. The final *-ed* indicates a past participle passive. I surmise that the archaic verb *deray* (see *OED* s.v. *deray* v.) was intended in a passive sense meaning 'having been thrown into confusion' or 'confused'. The original participial form *derayed* could easily have been changed to *deraved*/*dereived* in manuscript transmission and semantically confused with *deceived*. The phrase in English means 'you are much confused'.

27. *tar éis*: (MS): possessive *a* to be understood as in *' fhiadhain* l. 39.

30. *chum cláir*: 'they will never allow you to be at the table, i.e. to take part in negotiations, discussions etc.'.

35. *i gcéideal*: see *eDIL* s.v. *céidiol* 'strife', 'war-strife', 'battle', all examples taken from Ó Bruadair; *Corpas* s.v. *céadal* from Eoghan an Mhéirín Mac Carrthaigh (1756) with meaning 'strife'.

40. *Lughaidh Ó Cléire, Tadhg Mac Dáire*: Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh and Tadhg mac Dáire Mac Bruaideadha contributed poems to *Iomarbhágh na bhFileadh* (McKenna 1918: vii–xiii) and the former was author of *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill* (Walsh 1957: 1–4). It may be of some significance that the poet cites a Northern man of learning along with one from Thomond to establish Inchiquin's nobility.

That the poet should put forward Inchiquin's right to *ceannas na hÉireann* 'the leadership of Ireland' or *do cheart ar Éirinn* 'your right to Ireland' (l. 4) is not as bizarre as it may seem: 'In the late 1640s it was widely rumoured that the Pope intended sending the "crown" (of Ireland) to the Ulster leader Owen Rua Ó Néill' (Ó Buachalla 2006: 51 n. 17); see also Bagwell (1909: 167–8).

45. *mhionn* and *liom* have long *-ú-* for assonance.

47. *domhain*: the vowel *-ú-* is intended here and provides assonance with *gcúl*.

54. *Lughaidh Laighdhe* (lúghadh lághadh MS): 'Lugaid Lágae is remembered in literature as having been one of the great warriors of his time' (O'Daly 1975: 11–12); see also *FFÉ* IV s.n. *Lughaidh Laighdhe* or *Lughaidh Lamha* and Ó hÓgáin (2006: 315).

56. The *laoch toghtha* is Conall Gulban the hero of the sixteenth-century romantic tale who, while sleeping on Binn Éadair or the Hill of Howth, lost his beloved Eithne to the marauding Macaomh Mór (Ó hÓgáin 2006: s.n. *Conall Gulban*).

59. *mír borra* (borr*adh* MS): *borra* seems to be a doublet of *murra*, possibly a genitive singular form of *muire*; see *eDIL* s.v. 1 *muire* and *DuanF* III, 300 s.v. *? murra*. The phrase corresponds to the well-known *mír churaidh* 'champion's portion'.

62–4. Alasdrunn is Alasdair (Alexander) Mac Colla Mac Domhnaill, who fell in the Battle of Knocknanoss, November 1647; see poem **2**, l. 65, where the elegist states that Inchiquin took no joy in Mac Colla's demise. The basic construction of l. 64 *is níor mhór leis an scéal-soin* meaning 'he (Murchadh) did not consider that matter (Mac Colla's death) a thing of importance, and even others (ní leis féin fós) shared his opinion'. The statement is made in the context of all the bloody events that occurred during the course of the wars, some of which the poet goes on to refer to.

The fortuitousness of the outcome in some of Inchiquin's victories, in the Battles of Liscarroll (1642) and of Knocknanoss (1647), for instance, may be implied in this passage which anticipates the supernatural help which the poet believes (ll. 81ff) protected the hero in his endeavours.

65. *Lios Cearbhúill*: the Battle of Liscarroll took place 3 September, 1642; see poem **2**, note on ll. 44ff.

66. *maitheamh i gclódh i ló an chéaduil*: 'respite from defeat on the day of conflict'.

77–80. *Léithchloich*: Bagwell states: 'In March 1642/3 he (Inchiquin) sent … another (part of his force) under Sir Charles Vavasour to the borders of Tipperary, while he himself sat down before Kilmallock … Vavasour took Cloghleagh Castle, near Mitchelstown, and after the surrender some of his followers slaughtered the defenders, and apparently some women and chin with them'. Vavasour subsequently suffered a defeat at the hands of Lord Castlehaven and was taken prisoner. Bagwell goes on: 'Cox, with all his prejudices, says it was a just judgement on Vavasour and his followers for suffering some inferior officers to violate the quarter they had given to the garrison of Cloghleagh,' and he cites as sources here a letter dated 25 May 1643 from Inchiquin to Lord Cork (Bagwell 1909: 48).

81–2. Brian Ó Briain also alludes to the *sídhmhná* in poem **2**, 8ff, 28ff. *Sídhbhean Béarra* may refer to An Chailleach Bhéarra traditions of whom survived into the twentieth century; see Verling (2010: 213–4; 388).

85. *do b'fhearra*: this form with medial short *-a-* is preferrable to that of the MS *bfeárr* to assonate with *arm*.

86. *gabha na nDée*: 'he received the best possible battle-equipment which was fashioned by the smith (i.e. Vulcan) of the Gods'. Doubtless *Dée* (*ndéé* MS) was pronounced *déithe* several examples of which are found in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources (*Corpas*).

92. *fao dhó* (*faoi* MS): The last foot here must be /é -/. The pronunciation of this prepositional pronoun was fao **[fe:]** with broad *-f-* in the Irish of Co. Clare up to our own time (Holmer 1962: 155–6).

95. *do-gheabhainn*: a short vowel in the future and conditional of *do-gheibh* is allowed in classical verse; see McKenna (1940: 289) s.v. *do-ghabhaim*.

95. *ceathramhadh*: see *eDIL* s.v. *cethramthu*. Based on *eDIL*, we can assign the meanings (1) a four-quarter/hind quarter of beef; (2) a division of land one fourth of a baile biataigh (480 Irish acres) to the word *ceathramhadh*. A third sense, that of a promise to go free from a conflict without injury and that promise being reneged on is seen in Éamonn an Dúna's poem *Mo lá leóin go deó go n-éagad* 'do gheibhid ceathrú 's an cheathrú séantar'. See O'Rahilly (1952: 87, l. 38; 163). The poet, Seaghán Mac Riagáin, seems, at this time, to have been residing somewhere along the banks of the River Feale ('go bruach na Féile') which runs from Ballybunion in north-west Kerry eastwards through Abbeyfeale in Co. Limerick. As the poet mentions the munificence of Inchiquin the second meaning may be the best interpretation but in times of scarcity in a war-torn country the first suggested meaning should not be discounted. Thus 'I would receive a hindquarter (or fore-quarter) (of beef)'.

admhúim: 'I declare'. An unusual form of *admhaim*, but if the pronunciation was [adu:m'] assonating with *ceathrúmhadh* it can be derived from a form with epenthesis *adamhaim* as in *dathamhail* > *dahúil*.

99. *míle bean … gan éadach*: this stands for *bean nocht* = *beannacht*. This wordplay is found in other seventeenth- and eighteenth-century poems.

100. *gion mhairfead* (MS): this clearly means 'though I will not live'. The well-known phrase *gcéin mhairfead* 'for as long as I'll live' makes better sense. A contraction such as *g¯n* in the original manuscript of the poem could have been misinterpreted; see also Poem **2** l. 184 where the scribe wrote *gen* (= *(g)céin*) in his MS.

101. *go dtiobhraim* (MS *ttióbhraim*): the form corresponds to the classical *do-bhéar*, dep. *-tiobhar* with the more modern 1st singular ending *-aim* attached (McKenna 1940: 287 s.v. *do-bheirim*). The assonating vowel is clearly *-ú-* : *súil*. The import of 'giving an eye' is that the poet would make any sacrifice to obtain the benefit of the prayers he offers up for Inchiquin.

Abbreviations

CMO	Liam P. Ó Murchú (eag.), *Cúirt an Mheon-Oíche le Brian Merríman* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1982).
Corpas	*Corpas Stairiúil na Gaeilge 1600–1926* (https://corpas.ria.ie/. Royal Irish Academy).
DIB	*Dictionary of Irish Biography* (https://www.dib.ie/).
DuanF	Gerard Murphy, *Duanaire Finn: The Book of the Lays of Fionn*, Part III, ITS 43 (London, 1953).
Duinnín	*Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla: An Irish-English Dictionary* (Dublin 1927).
eDIL	*Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language* (www.dil.ie)
FFÉ	David Comyn and Patrick S. Dinneen (eds), *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn le Seathrún Céitinn*, vols i–iv, ITS 4, 8, 9, 15 (London, 1902–14).

Ó Dónaill Niall Ó Dónaill (eag.), *Foclóir Gaeilge–Béarla* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1977).
OED *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford 1971).
SOED *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 5th ed. (Oxford, 2002).

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