

Celtica 35



Edited by Barry J. Lewis and Ruairí Ó hUiginn

Celtica 35 (2023), vi + 267 pages

DOI: 10.58480/SCS-3c84v-ab8vs

**DIAS**

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



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# CELTICA

VOLUME XXXV

EDITED BY

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WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

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SCHOOL OF CELTIC STUDIES  
DUBLIN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES  
2023

# DIAS

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

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ISSN 0069-1399

ISBN 978-1-85500-253-1

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Typeset in the School of Celtic Studies  
Printed by Naas Printing Ltd

#### PEER-REVIEW

The editors acknowledge with gratitude the contribution of those who provided confidential peer-reviews of the articles included in this volume.

#### PIARMHEASÚNÚ

Is mór ag na heagarthóirí an cúnamh a fuarthas uathu siúd a rinne piarmheasúnú faoi rún ar na hait atá san imleabhar seo.



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# ON SOME CELTIC TERMS FOR THE DIVISIONS OF THE YEAR<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the names of seasons and festivals in the Insular Celtic year, beginning with the winter cycle (winter and spring) and concluding with the summer cycle (summer and autumn). Etymologies are proposed or refined for OIr *fuin*, traditionally seen as the second element of *Samain* ‘November first’; OIr *Imbolg* ‘February first’; OW *guiannuin* ‘spring’; OIr *Beltine* ‘May-Day’; OIr *Fogamar* ‘autumn’; *Brón Trogain* ‘1 August; autumn’. These etymologies are supported by evidence from other old Indo-European languages. Next, it is argued that names for divisions of a later twelve-month cycle were originally derived from the older seasonal terms, e.g., ‘beginning of summer’, ‘midsummer’, ‘end of summer’, rather than from counting terms as in the second half of the Roman calendar. Finally, an internally consistent general model for the Proto-Indo-European year is presented, drawing on A. Nussbaum’s (1986, 1998) theory of decasuative (case-form based) nominal formations.

## INTRODUCTION: THE WHEEL

AT LEAST BY THE mid-fourth millennium BCE, the Indo-European<sup>2</sup> year was conceived as a wheel, with which speakers were familiar from their wagons (Anthony 1995; West 2007: 370–1). We know that wheeled wagons were in use

<sup>1</sup>It is a pleasure to thank Brian Drayton, José Luis García Ramón, Stephanie Jamison, H. Craig Melchert, Alan Nussbaum, David Stifter and Michael Weiss for valuable comments on some of these notes. Special thanks also to the anonymous reviewer for *Celtica* whose perceptive comments made this a much stronger paper. Remaining speculations and errors are of course mine. An abridged version of this paper was presented to the East Coast Indo-European Conference, Carrboro, NC on 23 June 2023.

<sup>2</sup>The last thing we need is a new set of terms to distinguish stages in the development of the Indo-European mother language, although such stages certainly existed. I will use Pre-Proto-Indo-European (PPIE) to refer to the language that included the ancestors of Anatolian and Tocharian. Indo-Anatolian would be preferable to the well-established Indo-Hittite as an alternative to PPIE. Proto-Indo-European (PIE), or more loosely, Indo-European, will refer to the later period in which Anatolian and the other dialects taken together were no longer mutually intelligible.

throughout the Indo-European world,<sup>3</sup> both from linguistic<sup>4</sup> and from archaeological<sup>5</sup> evidence. The development from literal wheel to metaphorical cycle (the ‘wheel of the year’) is based upon both specific texts and etymologies and typological comparanda. West has documented the metaphor in Vedic (RV+) and Greek (e.g., Hesiod: αὖτις δὲ περικλομένου ἐνιαυτοῦ | φαίνονται *WD* 386–7 ‘they [the Pleiades] appear again with the revolving of the year’ [identical genitive of time at Theogony 184]; Euripides: ἐπτὰ σχεδόν τι καρπίμους ἐτῶν κύκλους *Helen* 112 ‘Almost seven years have gone full circle, with their harvests’ [trans. E. P. Coleridge], ἐνιαυτοῦ κύκλον *Phoen.* 477 ‘for a full year’, lit. ‘for the circle of a year’). Aarne (1918–20: 74ff.) compiled a vast collection of traditional riddles that included questions about wheels and wheeled vehicles, the answer to which was ‘year’; let an early example from the *Mahābhārata* (3.133.21) stand for many: ‘The greatest sage is he who knows the meaning of that which has six naves, twelve axles, twenty-four joints, and three hundred and sixty spokes.’

Within Italo-Celtic, Stifter (2017) makes a strong case for deriving OIr *amm* ‘time’ and Gaul. *amman* (hapax, Coligny) from \*h<sub>2</sub>etmno- ‘year as a cycle; time’ = L. *annus* (Untermann 2000: 74–5, de Vaan 2008: 43–4, and Weiss 2020: 182, 501 all take \*akno- < \*atno- to be the immediate preform of the Sabellic cognates Osc. loc. *akenei* ‘in anno’, Umbr. acc. pl. *acnu* ‘annos’; cf. Goth. dat. pl. *aþnam* ‘for years’; *LIV*<sup>2</sup> 273 n. 1). De Vaan (2008: 43) in particular supports the interpretation of the year as a cycle: he glosses the root \*h<sub>2</sub>et- as ‘“to go, wander”, hence “going around” > “year”’. Typologically, Stifter compares OCS. *vrěmę* ‘time’ < \*uert-men- ‘turning’ = Ved. *vártman-* ‘track or rut of a wheel; course’ (224). Dočkalová and Blažek (2011: 436) cite an Egyptian parallel: Egypt. *rnp.t* ‘year’: Copt. *ranpi* ‘circle’.

<sup>3</sup>Except possibly in Anatolia (Anthony 2007: 64–5); what we have is Hitt. *hurki-* ‘wheel’, including a proverb, ‘the rear wheel does not overtake the front wheel’, *KBo* 11.14 ii 22–3, which would appear to imply a four-wheeled vehicle rather than, e.g., a two-wheeled chariot in which the wheels would have been side by side. The root is \*h<sub>2</sub>uerg- ‘turn around’ (Tichy 1983: 286–8; *LIV*<sup>2</sup> 290).

<sup>4</sup>\*k<sup>w</sup>ek<sup>w</sup>lo- ‘wheel’: Ved. *cakrá-*, Av. *čaxra-*; Gk. κύκλος Hom.+; Toch. *A kukäl*, B *kokale* ‘wagon’; OE. *hweol*, Oícel. *hvél* ‘wheel’. \*roteh<sub>2</sub> ‘wheel’, \*roth<sub>2</sub>o- ‘wagon’ (\*‘has wheels’): Ved. *rátha-*, Av. *raθa-* ‘wagon, chariot’; L. *rota*; OIr *roth*, W *rhod*; OHG. *rad*; Lith. *rātas*, Latv. *rats* ‘wheel’; Alb. *rreth* ‘hoop’ (*LIV*<sup>2</sup> 507); \*h<sub>2</sub>eks- ‘axle’: Ved. *ákṣa-*; Myc. *a-ko-so-ne*, ἄξων Hom.+; L. *axis*; W *echel*, MBr *ahel*; OE. *eax*; OHG. *ahsa*, Oícel. *qxull*; Lith. *ašis*, OPruss. *assis*; OCS. *osъ*. For additional evidence see Anthony (2007: 35, Table 2.2).

<sup>5</sup>Indirect, of course, since these early finds do not include written texts. They include the wagon image on the Bronocice (Poland) clay cup, c. 3400 BCE; and the ceramic wagon model from Baden grave 177, c. 3200 BCE (Milisauskas et al. 2002; Anthony 2007: 311ff.). Wagons and carts were buried with both horses and oxen. Chariot burials are first attested from 2800–2700 BCE in the oldest Sintashta fortified metal-working settlement: grave 30 includes chariot wheel impressions, horse bones, and cheek pieces for bits (Anthony: 371ff.). For representations of Bronze Age chariots with spoked wheels, see Kuzmina (2007: fig. 34).

On the spread of domestic horses from the Western Eurasian steppes, see most recently Librado et al. (2021). Thanks to David Stifter for this reference. The original situation in the Bronze Age may have been that oxen were used to pull wagons (Milisauskas et al. 2002: 312) and ploughs, while horses were herded for meat and milk. Horse riding and chariotry would thus have been secondary innovations.

My general model, which I hope is no longer controversial, is that the Celtic year had four divisions,<sup>6</sup> and that the later division into twelve months represents an innovation. It is beyond my competence to discuss lunar, lunisolar and solar calendars. My interest is solely in the terms that the Celts and the Indo-Europeans used to name the divisions of their year. I will begin by summarizing current views on the four Irish festivals that marked these four divisions,<sup>7</sup> Samain, Imbolg, Beltine and Lughnasad, and developing a few new ideas about the names of the first three: a new etymology of OIr *fuin* for Samain; clarification of the semantics of Imbolg; a new interpretation of Beltine; and I will discuss the various words which meant or may have meant ‘autumn’. Then I will show that in Insular Celtic at least, the four divisions of the year were subdivided into BEGINNING, MIDDLE and END + SEASON NAME, a nomenclature that survived as a relic in Middle Welsh and in Irish (into the Modern period), and was still the norm in Manx (in 10 out of 12 month names). Finally, I will bring together remarks on the morphology of individual season names into a proposed system of r-locatives going back to the proto-language.

#### I. OLD IRISH *SAMAIN* ‘NOVEMBER FIRST’

As is well known, the two halves of the Celtic year are expressed in OIr *gaimred* ‘winter cycle’ < \*gemi-rātos < \*gēm-i-,<sup>8</sup> MW *gaeafrawd* < \*gijem-i-, (Schrijver 1995: 108–10, 286) : OIr. *samrad* ‘summer cycle’ < \*samo-rātos (Olmsted 1992: 193); cf. OIr. *rāithe* ‘trimester’ < \*rātijā (*LEIA* R-5; root \*ret- ‘run’, *LIV*<sup>2</sup> 507; on the two halves of the year, see McCone 1980: 139–41). Zavaroni, in his discussion of the Coligny Calendar (2007), rightly rejects Olmsted’s claim that SAMONIOS originally referred to the period from July through December. He concludes (15), as I think we must, that the opposition SAMONI- : GIAMONI- proves that SAMONI- is based on the word for ‘summer’. However, that leaves us with the paradox that the *gaimred* starts with *Samain*.

The most ingenious solution that I am aware of is that of Carey (1988b: 70–2), which he proposes in his discussion of *Echtra Nerai* ‘The Adventures of Nera’. When he is about to return to Rath Crúachan, Nera asks his Otherworld wife how he will be able to prove that he has been in the *síd*. She tells him to take *toirthe samraid* ‘the fruits of summer’ with him, since it is winter in our world; as Carey (72) puts it, ‘winter “here” is summer “there”’. He then suggests that

<sup>6</sup>Specifically, the four-season year of a Bronze-Age temperate-zone culture, for which the Sredni Stog site on the Dnieper may be taken as typical (Anthony 2007: 90ff., 239ff. with lit.; Greenfield 2001). Anthony discusses in detail how linguistic evidence is used to delimit the potential range of the Indo-European homeland. For the use of tree names specifically, see Friedrich (1970), also with a discussion of methodology and with extensive older literature.

<sup>7</sup>As is completely in keeping with early Irish tradition: as Carey (1988b: 71 n. 19) has shown, *cetharlith* ‘four festivals’ is a way of expressing ‘year’ in the poem *Ba mol Midend midlaige*, ed. Meyer (1912: 308).

<sup>8</sup>The change to \*gami- had already taken place in Primitive Irish: Ogam 191 GAMICUNAS ‘of the winter wolf’ (McManus 1997: 105).

since a primary feature of the Otherworld is reversal, Samain is indeed the first day of summer, but summer on the other side:

That the Irish should have named one of their most important festivals with reference to supernatural rather than natural time is striking testimony to the central position which the paradoxes of the Otherworld occupied in their vision of reality. (*loc. cit.*)

The advantage of Carey's proposal is that it allows us to keep the common-sense connection between Samain and SAMONI-, a connection that has great face validity. Despite that, several eminent Celtic scholars, notably Pokorny (*IEW* 905) and Vendryes (*LEIA* S-22) have asserted that it is illusory, and this is accepted by Matasović (2009: 322), who does not discuss the implications of the pair SAMONI- : GIAMONI-. They propose instead that in its well-established meaning 'assembly and festival on the first day of winter' (cf. Kelly 1997: 461), Samain < \*samoni- < \*sm̥Honi- agrees instead with Ved. + *sāmana-* 'assembly, festival', old instr. *samanā́* 'together; at the same place or time'; Goth. *samana*, Oícel. *saman* 'together'. For this meaning in Irish, see *óenaig na samna* in *Serglige Con Culainn*, 3.<sup>9</sup> Jouet (1996: 272) made the bold proposal that the assembly was specifically a reunion with the dead/ancestors (which we call Hallowe'en). For a fuller discussion (with a possible Greek parallel) see Delamarre (2003: 267).<sup>10</sup> We are left with a situation where we have two homophonous formations: \*semH- 'summer' (\*sm̥H- in Celtic, Germanic and Armenian; Schrijver 1995: 460) and \*semH- 'unity' which we cannot distinguish on formal grounds, and which cannot be readily reduced to a common origin.

The traditional Irish etymology of *samuin* (so spelled) is *samuin* [.i.] *samfuin* .i. *bas in tsamraid* 'death of summer', *Fél.*<sup>2</sup> clxvi. While this is probably not correct linguistically,<sup>11</sup> it is certainly correct culturally ('étymologie populaire', Delamarre 2003: 267). It also finds an exact semantic comparison in Gk. φθιν-όπωρον, literally 'perishing of late summer' Hdt., Thuc.; φθιν-οπωρίδ- 'autumnal' Pind., so it may preserve a very old idea.

*Fuin* 'setting, sinking, end' itself has no agreed-upon etymology, but *VKG* 2.526 points us in the right direction: it is a compound of \*wo- and nes- 'return home' (*LIV*<sup>2</sup> 454). Let us be more precise: West (2007: 201ff.) has shown in

<sup>9</sup>I cannot agree with Zavaroni (2007: 13) that we should reject Le Roux's (1957: 338) comparison of Coligny TRINUX SAMONI with the description of Samain at the beginning of *Serglige Con Culainn*: *tri lá ria sam-fuin 7 tri laa íarma 7 lathe na samna feisne* 'three days before Samain and three days after it and the day of Samain itself'.

<sup>10</sup>Speaking of ghosts, the *bech-samain* 'swarms of bees' cited by Pokorny (*IEW* 905) is a ghost word based on the nom. pl. *ile bethamain* gl. *beich* 'many are the swarms, that is, bees', Stokes (1905: 34 l. 3, cited in *LEIA* B-45). Pokorny himself recognized this and gave up the connection (1963: 526). In fact, Ir. *betham*\* finds an exact cognate in MW *bydaf* 'colony of bees' < Common Insular Celtic \*bitamon (Charles-Edwards and Kelly 1983: 41) with the same \*bhi-t- that we see in Baltic: OPruss. *bitte*, Lith. *bitė*, Latv. *bite* 'bee' (*IEW* 116).

<sup>11</sup>I respectfully disagree with Minard (in Koch et al. 2006: 1558): 'In the Celtic languages the name *Samain* is clearly related to that of "summer".' Substitute 'traditionally' for 'clearly' and I would be in complete agreement.

detail that the Indo-European sun circles through the sky and returns under the sea (the ‘solar wheel’), via a chariot in the sky by day and a boat at night. The literal meaning of \*wo-nes- ‘returning under (the sea)’ fits that mythic paradigm perfectly. A neuter i-stem \*wo-nes-i would become \*wonē, yielding *fuin* directly, like conjunct 2 sg. -*bir* ‘you bring’ < \*beresi (thanks to David Stifter for this decisive comparandum). Michael Weiss kindly points out to me (personal communication, 29 September 2022) that this analysis is supported by Ved. *astam-áyana-* ŚBr. 13 ‘sunset’ < \*ṇs-tom-h<sub>1</sub>ej- (lit. ‘going home’). What I would propose is that ‘setting and returning’, which originally applied to the sun, was later attached to the ‘setting’ of the sunny half of the year. While I would not press this point, it is even possible that Carey was right, and that summer returned home to the Otherworld at the beginning of winter.

## II. OLD IRISH *IMBOLG* ‘FEBRUARY FIRST’

In this section, I will clarify the semantics of Imbolg, but that depends upon first reviewing the phonology. Ó Máille (1926–8:110) showed that *Imbolg*, with voiced -g supported by rhyme (*urd* : *imbulc*, Meyer 1894: 49) should be written as such, and is not *Imbolc*, as it appears in much of the literature. This focuses the etymological field on roots with the shape \*belg- rather than \*belk- in Celtic. Hamp (1979) connected *Imbolg* with the rare word *ommolg* in the phrase *bai occ omulc* ‘cows being milked’ (Kelly 1997: 522 §1, in the OIr tract on distraint), as if it were a compound of \*h<sub>2</sub>melǵ- ‘milk’ (Matasović 2009: 263).

There is another possibility. Carey (1988a) demonstrated that Celt. \*bolg- is likely to contain the root \*bhelǵh- ‘swell’ (*LIV*<sup>2</sup> 73), and he cited many examples of both heroes and monsters swelling up in battle-frenzy. Cf. OE. *bolginn* ‘swollen with anger’, *bolgenmód* ‘furious’; and the ModIr idiom *Shéid sé na boilg* ‘he flew into a rage’ (Ó Dónaill 1977: 123). This allows us to reconcile the family of words for ‘bag’ with the *furor heroicus* (Henry: 1982). Like Carey, I am agnostic on the question of whether Fir Bolg and Belgae refer to bags or to heroic inflation.

Craig Melchert kindly directs me to Goedebuure’s brilliant reassessment (2020) of the Hittite-Hurrian parable of the Disrespectful Deer and the mountain (*KBo* 32.14). Without going into the details of her analysis, she shows that in Anatolian, the root \**uerHǵ-* carries all three of the meanings ‘fat; strong; furious’, united by the basic meaning \*‘swell up’ (e.g., Hitt. *warka-* ‘fat’; Luw. \**warku-* ‘fat; angry’; Hitt. *warganu-* ‘fatten’, *warkešš-* ‘become furious’; Hitt. *warkant-* = Palaic *wakkant-* ‘fat’).

More familiar to readers will be the Greek cognates ὀργή ‘passion, anger, ferocity’, ὀργάω ‘swell with lust; swell with ripening’, ὀργασμός ‘orgasm’ : Skt. *úrj-* ‘strength; food’ (Frisk 1973: 2.411). Goedebuure (131) explicitly draws the semantic parallel between these forms and our \*bhelǵh-. It does not affect that comparison that OIr *ferg* ‘anger’ < Celt. \**wergā* does not show the laryngeal that we see in *úrj-* (laryngeal loss in ὀργή and its derivatives is regular by the ‘Saussure effect’: \*H > ø /oRHC-; Goedebuure: 133). Zair (2012:

186–7, 267) accepts the etymology (as does Matasović : 414); he proposes that laryngeals were lost in Celtic in this environment: \* $\text{uer.H}\hat{\text{e}}\text{-ch}_2$ .

I would suggest that Imbolg, the beginning of spring, means ‘around the swelling’, and refers both to the pregnancy of sheep (lambing season in Ireland begins in February – and has become a tourist destination!), and the swelling of buds.

### III. OLD WELSH *GUIANNUIN* ‘SPRING’

In their erudite and comprehensive 2011 paper on year and season words in Indo-European, Dočkalová and Blažek derive OW (Ox.) *o guiannuin* gl. vere ‘in spring’ = OCo *guaintoin* gl. ver ‘spring’ (VKG 1.74; Graves 1962: #461) from \*wes-nt-einV-, though technically, these continue \*wes-nt-ēnV- (Falileyev 2000: 67–8; *LHEB* 361; Schrijver 1995: 240; this will become important below). They compare Gaul. (Coligny) SIMUISSONNA < \*semi-wes-ont-ā (‘half spring’ or the like,<sup>12</sup> so also Delamarre 2003: 274).

Unfortunately, this otherwise attractive reconstruction cannot be correct, given the overwhelming evidence that \*-nt- was preserved as such in Gaulish. Most instances are -ant- (see footnote),<sup>13</sup> but there are also instances of -ont- which contradict SIMUISSONNA:

*contoutos* ‘compatriot’ (Delamarre 2003: 125; across a compound boundary);  
*dugiiontiio* (153)  
*tigontias* (296, Larzac); *toncsiōntiō* ‘who may swear (an oath)’ (298, Chamalières); *tricontis* ‘thirty’ (302)  
*Uocontii* (326, tribal name)  
*Vesontis* (divine name in VESONTIS MARS CIL 3.2038; Besançon < \*Vesontiū (Delamarre 2017: 43)

With -nd-, *Brigindoni* (Ellis Evans 1967: 314).

There are no unambiguous exceptions. Of course, geminate -nn- is attested in Gaulish, the clearest sources being Celtic \*dn, \*gn, \*sn, \*tn (reconstructed forms are Celtic, not PIE unless otherwise noted):

<sup>12</sup>If we retain this root etymology (as I do below), I would prefer ‘halfway to spring’ because I identify this month with December, the halfway point between Samain and Imbolg.

<sup>13</sup>*aganntobo* (Delamarre 2003: 34); ANAGANTIO- (44, month name, Coligny); *arganto-* ‘silver’ (58); *auantia* ‘river’ (61); *brigantion* ‘height’ (87); *cantalon* (103); *canti-icanto-* ‘together with’ (231); CANTLOS (104, month name, Coligny); *canto-* ‘100’, *cantedon* ‘area of 100 paces square’ (104); *conto-* ‘100’; *cantos* ‘circle’ (105); *carant-* ‘beloved’ (107); *carbanton* ‘chariot’ (105); *cintu-* ‘first’ (117); *craxanto-* ‘toad’ (129); δεκαντεμ ‘tithe’ (138); *diligentir* ‘they belong by right’? (144–5, Larzac); *elantia* ‘doe’ (161); *entar* ‘between’ (163; = Celtib. *entara*); *iantu-* ‘desire’ (32); *iouantu-* ‘youth’ (191); *mantalon* ‘road’ (216; Ital. *Mantua*); *manto-* ‘mouth’ (216; cf. L. *mandō* ‘chew’, de Vaan 2008: 361); *namanto-* ‘enemy’ (231); *nantu-*in*anto-* ‘valley’ (231); *nitixsintor* ‘they enchant’ (236, Larzac); *panto-* (246); *petidsiont* (249, Larzac); *Santones* (tribal name; Delamarre 2017: 93); *senant* (270); *sentice-* ‘companion, spouse’ (271); *sentu-* ‘route’ (271); *suante* ‘at the wish of’ (284)

*ando-unna* ‘spring’ < *udnā* = L. *unda* ‘wave’ (Delamarre 2003: 48)  
*banna* ‘summit’ < \**bandnā* (66)

*couinnos* ‘war chariot’ < \**wegno-*,<sup>14</sup> PIE root \**ueǵh-* ‘convey’ (Delamarre 2003: 127) : OE. *wægn* ‘wagon’ < Gmc. \**wagnaz* (*LIV*<sup>2</sup> 661)

*brunnio-* ‘breast’ < \**brusnio-* (Delamarre 2003: 92)

*dunno-* ‘brown, dark’ < \**dusno-* (154; only in personal names)

*onna* ‘ash’ < \**osnā* (242; only in toponyms)

*prenne* ‘arborescens’ (Endlicher), *prinni* (Coligny) < \**k<sup>w</sup>resno-* (or a neuter i-stem?; 252) = WCoBr *prenn* ‘tree’ : OIr *crann* for which the handbooks (*LEIA* C-223; *VKG* 1.44) reconstruct \**k<sup>w</sup>rsno-*. However, McManus (1992: 205–6) has argued convincingly that *crann* can also be derived from \**k<sup>w</sup>resno-*, and it is desirable to reconstruct a single preform for Celtic.<sup>15</sup>

*linna* ‘mantle’ < \**litnā* (Delamarre 2003: 203)

There are also forms which have no certain etymology beyond Celtic \*-nn-:

*donno-* ‘noble’ (Delamarre 2003: 147)

*penno-* ‘head’ < \**k<sup>w</sup>enno-* (249)

*tanno-* a kind of tree, in toponyms, e.g., Glatigny (Manche, Oise) < \**glasto-tanno-* (289).<sup>16</sup>

SONNO-CINGOS (Coligny) has been interpreted as ‘march of the sun = year’, but this is justly disputed (278): since the weak stem of the l/n-stem ‘sun’ was \**sHun-*, we would have to explain both the lowering of \**u* to *o* and the origin of the geminate (cf. Goth. *sunno*, OE. *sunne*?). *Ando-unna* ‘spring’, *brunnio-* ‘breast’ and *dunno-* ‘brown, dark’ show that there was no lowering in this environment: *sonno-* cannot continue \**sHuno-* (or \**sūno-* after laryngeal metathesis and lengthening).

The divine name *Vesontis* is especially important for our discussion because it shows -nt- preserved against the -nn- of SIMIUISSONNA. I believe that the correct solution was proposed by de Bernardo Stempel (2010: 75) in her work on posttonic gemination in Continental Celtic: she reconstructs \**sēmi-uēson-ā* (glossing \**uēson-ā* ‘spring’ without explaining the origin of the lengthened grade). Delamarre (2017: 43), in his analysis of *Vesontis*, derives the word for ‘spring’ from an r/n stem, for which he reconstructs nom. \**uēs-ŕ*, gen. \**uēs-en-* (I would prefer \**uēs-n-* at least for PPIE). Alan Nussbaum kindly informs me (personal communication, 10 January 2022) that he believes that

<sup>14</sup>If *couinnos* is lautgesetzlich, we should consider a lengthened grade Celt. \**ko(m)-wēg-no-*; lengthened grade is well attested in Indo-Iranian and Germanic. While Coligny *prinni* could point to a raising rule, there is no raising in *penno-* ‘head’.

<sup>15</sup>Thanks to the *Celtica* reviewer for this reference.

<sup>16</sup>The superficially similar Germ. *Tannenbaum* ‘fir-tree’ cannot be cognate because the Germanic forms presuppose a voiced dental (Kluge and Mitzka 1967: 769).

in Italic, or perhaps even just in Latin, the lengthened grade was generalized from the nominative, whence loc. \*vēr-i ‘in spring’ > delocalival \*vēri-no- > *vērnus* ‘of spring’.<sup>17</sup> I believe that a similar generalization of \*ē explains \*uēson- (though without the generalization of -r-, which is the product of Latin rhotacism). For Nussbaum’s larger theory of ‘decasuative’ (case-form based) nominal derivatives in Indo-European, see his 1986 book and 1998 paper.

*Vesontis*, Old Welsh *guiannuin* and Old Cornish *guaintoin* stand a good chance of being based on an inherited (though secondary) nt-stem. Compare:

Skt. *vasantá-* ‘spring’.

Arm. gen. sg. *garman* ‘of spring’ < \*wes-r-ont+/-nt+; (the old nominative \*wes-ŕ is directly preserved in Gk. ἔαρ; cf. Gk. εἰαρινός Hes.+ ‘of spring’).<sup>18</sup>

This gets us as far as \*wesant- as the source of British words for ‘spring’, but what is the suffix -ēnV(-)? I would tentatively suggest that it continues the familiar Celtic diminutive suffix \*-igno- (VKG 2.27). Schrijver (1995: 215) derives MW *colwyn* ‘whelp’ < Proto-Celt. \*koligno-. According to Schrijver, \*-iyn- > \*-iġn- merged with \*-ēn- > -wyn. Similarly, W *morwyn* ‘maiden’, OCo *moroin* gl. *virgo*, *puella* continue \*morignā (cf. Skt. *mārya-* ‘youth’; IEW 738–9). Curiously enough, Ogam 362 CUNIGNI ‘of a whelp’ contains the same suffix as *colwyn* (and is probably a British rather than an Irish name [McManus 1997: 63]). As for the semantics, I would propose that just as *colwyn* means ‘young dog’ and *morwyn* means ‘young girl’, so \*wesantigno-/ā meant ‘young spring’, that is, ‘early spring’. Whether or not that is correct, the preform \*wesantigno-/ā is at least consistent with British phonology and noun morphology.

<sup>17</sup>Nussbaum notes that an archaic locative \*uēs-en- could also be the source of *vērnus*. For a different account of the origin of L. *vēr*, see Frotscher (2012: 86), who acknowledges that his explanation is ad hoc.

<sup>18</sup>Armenian has mixed r- and nt-stems in some season words (Olsen 1999: 128; for the mixing of nom. -r and oblique -n-, cf. L. *iecur iocineris* ‘liver’):

gen. sg. *jmeran* ‘of winter’ < \*ġhim-er-ont+/-nt+

gen. sg. *amaran* ‘of summer’ < \*smH-r-ont+/-nt+

I do not know which of these was the model for the other, but the comparative evidence (following favors ‘winter’. The other candidate for inherited nt- enlargements in season words is ‘winter’:

Skt. (RV+) *hemantá-* ‘winter’. Nikolaev (2009: 474) breaks down the derivational chain as follows: loc. \*ġheim-en ‘in winter’ → \*ġhim-en-t- ‘that which is in winter’ (namely, winter itself) → \*ġheim-en-t-o- ‘wintry’ (but see his n. 39 and Nussbaum’s [1998] simpler \*ġheim-en-to- with adjectival \*-to-).

Gk. ἀχειμαντος ‘having no snowstorms’ (semantically = Osset. *saw-zy* ‘black winter’, when you can still see the black earth because no snow has fallen; Dočkalová and Blažek 2011: 425)

Arm. gen. sg. *jmeran* as above.

Of course, any of those could have been created in the daughter languages; still, the pattern is striking.

Turning to Old Irish, Matasović (2009: 417) reconstructs \*wesrako- for OIr<sup>19</sup> *errach* ‘spring’ (following Pedersen, VKG 1.82). This forces him to postulate \**ferrach* > *errach* in lenition environments (without citing any parallels). I would expect \*wesrako- to become \**féorach* in Old Irish (like *téoir* ‘three (fem.)’ = Gaul. *tidres*, MW *teir*; Cowgill 1957). David Stifter (personal communication, 31 December 2021) has an attractive alternative explanation for *errach* which I will leave it for him to publish.

Matasović goes on to suggest that his Ir. \*wes-r- : Gaul. \*wes-ont-, Brit. \*wes-nt- (presumably renewed from \*wes-n- in his view) may continue an archaic r/n-stem.<sup>20</sup> Compare Gaulish *Samaro-* in a place name and in dialectal French (Delamarre 2003: 266) : Coligny SAMONI-. This would be a different explanation for \*wes-r- from the one that I will advance below, but it should be considered seriously if the problems with the Irish can be resolved.

#### IV. OLD IRISH *BELTINE* ‘MAY-DAY’

There are two competing explanations for this word (and I will add a third), based on the ambiguity of Irish *b-*: it can continue \*bh-, the rare phoneme \*b-, or \*g<sup>w</sup>-. The traditional etymology derives \*bel-taine from Celt. \*belo-tanijon ‘bright fire’ or the like (we will see ‘propitious fire’ in *Tochmarc Emire* below), first member \*bhel- ‘bright’. We could also think of the root \*bel- ‘strong’ (L. *dēbilis* ‘weak’, etc.; de Vaan 2008: 162–3) if we were to credit the native tradition that the Beltine fires were intended to strengthen the cattle against disease.

Finally, D’Arbois de Jubainville (1882: 132; *LEIA* B-31) equated OIr *Beltine* with Lith. *Giltinė* ‘goddess of death’. The root may be \*g<sup>w</sup>elh<sub>1</sub>- ‘throw; die’ (*LIV*<sup>2</sup> 207; Joseph 1980: 99; Matasović 2009: 61; Zair 2012: 218); Lith *gėlti* ‘pierce, stab’ with acute is probably the best evidence for a laryngeal. It is easy to derive \*bel- from the nasal present \*balnati < \*g<sup>w</sup>l-na- (attested in both Irish and British), with full grade \*bel- e.g., from the subjunctive stem. Derivatives in \*-t+ are also attested in Germanic: OE. *cwield* ‘death’ < \*g<sup>w</sup>el-tī and OIcel. *kveld* ‘evening’ (\*‘death of day’) < \*g<sup>w</sup>el-to-.

The semantics would flow directly from the division of the year into two halves: *in samrad o beltine co samfuin* 7 *in gemred o samfuin co beltine*, Meyer (1901: 245.26–7). Taking the traditional etymology of *samfuin* literally for the moment, the halves of the year are marked by November 1 and May 1, ‘summer cycle (summer and autumn) from Beltine to ‘death of summer’ and winter cycle (winter and spring) from ‘death of summer’ to Beltine.’ Structurally in this system, *Beltine* can only mean ‘death [of winter]’, with ‘winter’ understood, and

<sup>19</sup>Matasović’s ‘Middle Irish’ is a slip: *errach* is attested in the Glosses at BCr 37a1 (= *Thes* ii, 26); in the Old Irish text on distraint edited by Binchy (1973: 80); in Cormac’s Glossary; and in the contemporary entry at *AU* s.a. 878.

<sup>20</sup>Michael Weiss kindly points out to me that r-forms are also attested in Lith. *vasarà*, which however means ‘summer’, and MPers. *vahār*.

the word divinized as ‘goddess of death’ in Lithuanian, as D’Arbois de Jubainville proposed. I prefer this etymology on semantic and structural grounds; the phonology is compatible with all three reconstructions.

## V. OLD IRISH WORDS FOR ‘AUTUMN’

### *Fogamar*

Stokes (1906) made the obvious connection *fo* + *gam* + and compared Czech *podzim* ‘autumn’, also < ‘under winter’.<sup>21</sup> This word is interesting because it presupposes a \*gemar- ‘winter’ which it would be attractive to equate with Toch. A *śārme*, a hapax which may mean ‘winter’ < \*gh̥iem-ro- (de Vaan 2008: 285; we would have to assume \*mr > rm metathesis). However, Michael Weiss kindly informs me (personal communication, 24 October 2021) that \*gh̥iem-ero-, as well as \*gh̥im-ro- and \*gh̥im-ero- with zero grade of the root, would also be possible for Tocharian, so a full word equation is not certain. The r-derivative is also present in L. *hibernus* ‘wintry’ < Italic \*geimrinos (with the secondary full grade, which is also attested in Greek χειμερινός ‘in winter’ Hdt.+; note the locative meaning). The similarities are close enough that we can postulate a pair \*gh̥iem-ro- ‘winter’ : \*samaro-/samero- ‘summer’ (attested in Gaulish, Germanic and Armenian). While an m-stem for ‘winter’ goes back to the earliest Pre-Proto-Indo-European, the ro-stem pair would appear to be also of Proto-Indo-European date.

Semantically, *fogamar* cannot be separated from OCo *kyniaf*, MW *kynhayaf*<sup>22</sup> ‘autumn’ < \*‘before winter’ (Graves 1962: #463; the word is not attested in Breton). As Graves points out, *kyniaf* ultimately continues Celt. \*kintu-g̃iamo-, so it does not quite match OCo *goyf* < Celt. \*gĩiamo-. Late Co *kidniaz* (Lhuyd) looks as if it continues \*kinnu- with regular preclusion before the nasal (thanks to David Stifter for clarifying this point).

I cannot yet explain why *fogamar* and not *sam* (or *gaim*) shows the \*r that appears to be old in the word for ‘summer’, given Arm. *amān* and the Germanic words for ‘summer’ (including *summer* itself), which continue \*sumera- < \*sm̥H-ero-. Gaulish must also have had a word \*samaro-, given the place name *Samaro-briva*, the ‘Bridge Over the Somme’ at Amiens (and the Somme itself < \*Samaro-; Sims-Williams 2006: 32–3; Matasović 2009: 321), dialectal French *samará* ‘June’, and OFr., Prov. *somart* ‘fallow’ (Loth 1923; Delamarre 2003: 266).

*Fogamar* < \*wo-g̃iem-ro- is completely regular, because an \*e that is retained in this environment does not palatalize, as in *calad* ‘hard’ < \*kaleto (Greene 1973). The introduction of an anaptyctic vowel in old \*-θr# post-dates syncope, as is shown by absol. *gainithir* ‘is born’ < \*gan’iθ’r’ < \*ganit̥-es : conj. -*gainethar* < \*gan’iθr < \*ganit̥ro, *arathar* ‘plough’ < \*araθr < \*aratron, etc. (Jasanoff 2003: 54). Similarly, \*wo-gem-ro- would give *fogamar* directly,

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Lith. *pa-vasaris* ‘spring’ : *vasara* ‘summer’ (but etymologically, spring). Once again, I thank Michael Weiss for calling my attention to these forms.

<sup>22</sup>Still well attested in ModW beside *hydref*, though the usual meaning is now ‘harvest’ rather than ‘autumn’.

without invoking the influence of \*samaro- (though these words clearly influenced each other; Weiss 2012: 152). That \*-μr# would have become *-mar* is strongly suggested by similar forms in \*-βr# such as *gabor* ‘goat; horse’ : Romano-Brit. *Gabrosentum* (Moresby Roman Fort, Cumbria; *LHEB* 278) lit. ‘the track of the goat/horse’ : OBr *gabr* ‘goat’.

In addition to clarifying the Tocharian phonology above, Michael Weiss also suggests to me that we could start from an r-locative for several season terms in \*(V)r(V). At least for Common Indo-Iranian, the locative ending was simply \*r̥: YAv. *zamarə-guz-* ‘hidden in the ground’,<sup>23</sup> Ved. *vasar-hān-* (of Vāyu) ‘striking at dawn’ RV 1.122.3,<sup>24</sup> *vanar-śād-* ‘sitting in the woods’ 2.30.1, *vanar-gú-* ‘going in the woods’ 1.145.5 (of Agni). For the best recent collection, see Lundquist (2014: 91). It is even possible that the \*gemar assumed above for *fogamar* continues \*ġiem-r̥ ‘in winter’. Even if it continues \*ġiem-ro- as proposed above, this could still reflect the thematization of an old r-locative.

Of course, *fogamar* does not continue the Indo-European word for ‘autumn’, which can be reconstructed as \*h<sub>1</sub>ós-r̥. Schindler (1975) preferred to reconstruct r/n-stems only if the forms were attested on the surface, but he recognized that more speculative reconstructions might be correct. His example was precisely ‘autumn’:

N. \*h<sub>1</sub>ós-r̥ (Dočkalová and Blažek: 419, reconstruct \*(h<sub>1</sub>)os(H)-r̥)

G. \*h<sub>1</sub>és-n-s.

The \*r is seen in Gk. ὀπώρα ‘end of summer’ < \*op-oharā < \*h<sub>1</sub>os-r̥-eh<sub>2</sub>. The \*n of the oblique stem \*h<sub>1</sub>és-n̥- is seen in Goth. *asans* ‘summer’ (the seasons may have been divided between ‘early summer’ and ‘late summer/autumn’), OIcel. *qnn* ‘agricultural labor’ (\*‘autumn work’), OCS. *jesenь*, OPruss. *assanis* ‘autumn’. The root, with different suffixes, appears in Arm. *ašown* ‘autumn’ < \*osjonto- (Dočkalová and Blažek: 429), with the same \*-nt- that appears in

<sup>23</sup> It would take an entire paper to justify why I accept the traditional view that the Vedic hapax *jāmaryeṇa* RV 4.3.9 modifying *páyasā* means ‘with milk on the ground’ (see Lundquist 2014: 92–3, for a discussion of the admittedly attractive alternative \**jām-ar-* ‘nourishing offspring’ to \**h<sub>2</sub>el-* ‘nourish, nurture’ as in *alma mater*). In the Old Irish legal tract on distraint discussed below (Watkins 2009: 229), we learn that during a raid, three milch cows escaped, and *flojacubsat a laegu: laith find for tellraig* ‘they left their calves: white milk on the ground’ (after Watkins). An even more remarkable comparison comes from the Middle Irish tale of King Suibne, who went mad at the Battle of Mag Rath. After Suibne had wandered in (partial) bird form for years, ‘St. Moling ordered a collation for him for that hour, for he told his cook to give him some of each day’s milking. Muirghil was her name; she was wife of Mongan, swineherd to Moling. This was the extent of the meal the woman used to give him: she used to thrust her heel up to her ankle in the cow dung nearest her and leave the full of it of new milk there for Suibhne. He used to come cautiously and carefully into the vacant portion of the milking yard to drink the milk’ (trans. O’Keeffe, §77; for the Irish, see his 1931 edition, 75). ‘The milk on the ground’ indeed! In cultures which use dung as fuel or manure (Kelly 1997: 229), they are not opposites: both dung and milk are seen as valued products of the cow. On cow dung as both polluting and purifying, see Douglas (1966: 9). Based on the strength of these parallels, I would cite Ved. \**jamar-* : YAv. *zamarə-* ‘on/in the ground’ as more evidence for a Common Indo-Iranian r-locative.

<sup>24</sup> Stephanie Jamison (personal communication, 9 November 2021) suggests reading *vasar-hās* ‘moving at dawn’, and takes *vasar-* as secondary to *uśar-*, modeled on *vanar-*, which seems plausible.

so many seasonal words (Hitt. *gimmant*-; *ham(m)eshant*- beside *ham(m)esha*- ‘spring’; OCo *guaintoin* as discussed above).

*Brón Trogain ‘August First; autumn’*

In *Tochmarc Emire* ‘The Wooing of Emer’ §55, when Emer is specifying what Cú Chulainn must do before he can ‘rest his weapon in her sweet country’, she includes going without sleep for a whole year, from Samain to Samain. She describes the course of the seasons, which gives the scribe an opportunity to display his word-lore.

... cen cotlud ó samuin .i. sam-fuin .i. fuin in tsamraidh and. Ar is de roind no bíd forsin mblíadain anall, .i. in samrad ó beltine co samain 7 in gemred ó samain co beltine. Nó samfuin .i. sam súain .i. is and sin feraid sam súana .i. sam-sōn.

‘[Going] without sleep from Samain, that is, summer’s death, that is, the death of summer then. For it is from a division that will be over the year from then on, that is, the summer half from Beltine to Samain and the winter half from Samain to Beltine. Or *samfuin*, that is, summer of sleep [understand “sleep of summer”], that is, it is then that summer yields to sleep, that is, summer’s sleep.’

Co h-oimolc .i. taite ind erraig .i. imbe a folc .i. folc in erraig 7 folc in gemrid. Nó oí-melc .i. oí isind écsi ainm na cóerach. Is de asberar oíba, ut dicitur conba, echba, duineba, amal is ainm do bás -ba. Oímelc dano is sí aimser andsin i tic ass cóerach 7 i mblegar cóirig, unde oisc .i. of sesc .i. cóera sesc.

This paragraph revolves around *oí* being the poetic/learned word for ‘sheep’. I have tried to capture that by rendering it with *ovis*:

‘Until Oimolc, that is, the beginning of spring, that is, its wet [weather] around it, that is, the wet of the spring and the wet of the winter. Or *ovis*-milking, that is, *ovis* in poetry is the name of the sheep. It is from that that *ovis*-death [murrain] is named, just as dog-death is said, [and] horse-death, [and] human-death, as if -ba is the word for ‘death’. Oimelc then is the time when sheep come out [give birth?] and when sheep are milked, whence *oisc* ‘ewe’, that is, dry *ovis*, that is, dry sheep.’

Co beltine .i. bil-tine .i. teine soínmech .i. dá tenid dognítis druídh co tinctlaib móraib 7 doléictis na cethrai etarru ar tedmannaib cacha blíadnae. Nó co bel-dine .i. Bel dano ainm dé ídail; is and doaiselbthea díne cacha cethrae fo selb Beil. Beil-díne íarom beltine.

‘Until Beltine, that is, *bil-tine*, that is, propitious fire, that is, the druids used to make two fires with great incantations and they used

to let the herds pass between them against pestilence every year.<sup>25</sup>  
Or until Bel-dine, that is, Bel was the name of an idol god;<sup>26</sup> then  
the young of every herd were exhibited under the protection of Bel.  
Bel-dine then [became] Beltine.’

Co brón trogain .i. lugnasad .i. taite fogamuir .i. is and dobróini  
trogan .i. talam fo thoirthib. Trogan ainm do thalmain.

‘Until Brón Trogain, that is, Lugnasad [August 1], that is, the  
beginning of autumn, that is, it is then that the earth sorrows, that  
is, earth under fruits. *Trogan* is a name for “earth”.’

As *LEIA* (T-147) poetically put it, ‘car la terre gémit sous les fruits.’ That is, the  
earth is not sorrowing because summer is over, ‘it is groaning under the weight  
of its fruits’. Two examples from early Irish:

mess for crannaib/craob do scīs/scīs do áss. (*Cath Maige Tuired*  
822)

‘mast on trees/branch to weariness [from the weight of the acorns]/  
weariness to fruitfulness.’

Trí bróin ata ferr fáilti: brón treóit oc ithe messa; brón guirt apaig;  
brón feda fo mess. (Triads 68; Kelly 2004: 6)

‘Three burdens which are better than joy: the burden of a herd that  
is eating mast; the burden of a ripe field; the burden of a wood  
under mast.’

Once we recognize that the common meaning of ‘sorrow’ and ‘fruitful burden’  
is ‘heaviness’, the etymology imposes itself: *brón* = W *brwyn* ‘sorrow’ < Celt.  
\**brugno-* is based on the \**g<sup>w</sup>r-u-* that we have in Skt. *gru-* ‘heavy’ (Ved. *agrū-*  
fem. ‘virgin’ < \*‘not gravid’; *gru-muṣṭí-* ‘having a heavy handful’), Sabellic  
*brūtus*, Latvian *grūts* ‘heavy’. The details of the laryngeal metathesis in \**g<sup>w</sup>rH-*  
*u-* : \**g<sup>w</sup>r-uH-* require further discussion,<sup>27</sup> but the Celtic stem is unambiguously  
\**bru-*. The complex suffix \**-gno-* is well attested (Lewis-Pedersen 1961: 32),  
including in the place name Beligna, a neighborhood of Aquileia, the site of the  
principal sanctuary of Belinos (as in Bel-tine; Birkhan in Koch [2006]: 195)!  
As for *trogan*, it surely refers to the earth as the fruitful one, given OIr *trog* ‘par-  
turation; offspring’, *trogaid* ‘gives birth’. Thus *brón trogain* means ‘heaviness  
of fruition’, a very apt term for autumn.

<sup>25</sup>Binchy (1958: 129) reported that at that time, native speakers still used the phrase, *idir dhá theine lá Bealtaine* ‘between two fires on the day of Beltine’.

<sup>26</sup>As indeed he was: Belos is attested as a variant of Belinos/Belenos. For a recent discussion of Belinos, including the possibility that his name refers to hallucinogenic henbane, see Birkhan in Koch (2006: 195); debunked by Prósper (2017). Note that henbane is toxic to cattle (though not to pigs), so a henbane god would be unlikely as a protector of the herds.

<sup>27</sup>Szemerényi (1976) also derived *brón* from a compound of this root: \**g<sup>w</sup>ru-g<sup>w</sup>hn-o-* ‘heavy wound’, but his etymology explains only the emotional meaning, not the fruitfulness.

*Autumn as ‘cutting, reaping’*

In Northern Hemisphere temperate zone cultures, autumn is the season of reaping. This is a commonplace, but even commonplaces have their place. In Celtic we have the following names for September: W *Medi* ‘reaping, harvest’ (= MBr *midiff* ‘reaping’, ModBr *med* ‘coupe d’herbe’ : L. *metō* ‘reap’ [see below]); and according to O’Davoren, September is *mí búana* ‘month of reaping’ (Kelly 1997: 237) to *bongid* ‘cuts, reaps’, cf. *bacc buana fínime* gl. ligo ‘a sickle for pruning vines’ Sg. 62b10, and one of the most famous phrases in early Irish, *cesu femmuin mbolgaig -mbung* ‘though I reap blistered seaweed’ Corm. Bodl. 34.26. It has long been recognized that *apaig* ‘ripe’ continues \*ad-bougi- (*GOI* 92) ‘ready for reaping’, and that this matches MW *aeduct*, Co *athves*, OBr *admet* gl. uvae passae (*LEIA* A-79; Fleuriot 1964: 54), with the root \*met- with which we started.

Further, in Italic, we have the Umbrian month name **Çersia-** ‘month of cutting’ Tab. Ig. Ila16 (Weiss 2010: 35; 2017: 273) < \*kersiḡo- : Gk. ἀκερσεκόμης ‘having untrimmed hair’, Hsch. κορσόω ‘shear’; Hitt. *karšzi* ‘cuts’.

Since words meaning ‘cut, reap’ are so well attested in autumn month names, I would tentatively reconstruct \*fo-com-beniḡo- for *fochmuine*. Let us start from past subj. passive *-fochmaide* in *Bretha Crólige* §53, a passage that explains that a son’s status is not reduced even if his father is dead or loses rank:

Cid marb dono int at[h]air no cia rotreth(n)athar a grad,  
direnar-som amal ni **fochmaide** miad a tuisteda, ar ni **fuben** ni  
imom nennac mignim ind anenaicc

‘Moreover, though the father should die, or though he should have been cast down from his rank, he [the son] is paid *dīre* as if the status of his progenitor had not been *f.*; for the misdeed of the guilty does not *f.* for the innocent.’ (following Binchy 1934: 43)

Binchy translates ‘had not been diminished’ and ‘does not entail any diminution’, which is certainly accurate, but the literal meaning ‘had not been undercut’ and ‘does not undercut’ fits just as well and opens up an interesting possibility for *fochmuine*. Note that *fo-ben* is one of those verbs in which the perfective is made with *com-* rather than *ro-* (*GOI* 344): perfective stem \*fo-com-ben-.

Now, the ‘official’ verbal abstract of *benaid* is of course *béimm*, but *bíth* is also well attested, as is *-be* in compounds such as *fubae*, Sg. 26a8 to *fo-ben* (*GOI* 448). There is also a *bine* ‘injury’ < \*beniḡo- derived from the present stem. While the basic meaning of *benaid* is ‘strikes, cuts down, slays’, like *bongid* it can also mean ‘reaps’: *benaid* (leg. *benait*) in *gort uile* ‘they reap the whole field’, Marstrander (1911: 116.14). So one possible meaning of *fo-ben* would be ‘undercut’ in the literal sense of ‘cut under, reap’.

While it is speculative to combine the perfective \*fo-com- with \*beniḡo-, \*fo-com-beniḡo- would become precisely *fochmuine*, which I suggest refers to the time of reaping, like *mí búana*. This makes for a poignant metaphor in ‘The Nun of Beare’: old age has reaped her.

## VI. DIVISIONS OF THE SEASONS

We can make two general statements about how the Celts thought about the seasons. First, several languages have more than one name for autumn, but in Irish (*fogamar*), Middle Welsh (*kynhayaſ*) and Cornish (OCo *kyniaſ*), autumn was ‘pre-winter’ as well as harvest-time. The languages looked ahead to winter, as it were. Similarly, W *gorffennaf* ‘July’, lit. ‘end of summer’ (which it is in the Celtic system) < \**gor-* + *penn* + *haf* looks back at summer for its name.

Second, two poles of the year, midwinter and midsummer, express this by using compounds of ‘half’ or ‘mid-’ (just as in English): Coligny SIMIUIS-ONNA (if my identification of this month with December is correct) and MÍr *mithem*, MW *meheuin*, MCo *metheven*, Br *mezheven*, Vann. *méhéven* ‘June’. For Germanic we can compare OE. *on middes winteres* (still inflected separately, later unverbated); OFris. *midwinter*, ON. *miðr vetr*; OE. *midsummer*, ON. *miðsumar*. This leads me to suggest that the original naming practice for subdivisions (months) was ‘beginning of season’, ‘middle of season’, and ‘end of season’, though some months also had other names, at least some of which referred to agricultural practices. This was still how the months were named in Manx: where the seasons were prefixed with *Toshiaght* ‘beginning’, *Mean* ‘middle’, and *Jerrey* ‘end’ (Minard 2006: 331). Only March and May no longer show this pattern.

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Fouyr</i> ‘autumn’  | <i>Toshiaght Fouyir</i> beside <i>Luanistyn</i> ‘August’<br><i>Mean Fouyir</i> ‘September’<br><i>Jerrey Fouyir</i> ‘October’                                                         |
| <i>Geurey</i> ‘winter’ | <i>Toshiaght Geurey</i> beside <i>Mee Houney</i> , <i>Sauin</i> ‘November’<br><i>Mee veanagh y gheuree</i> beside <i>Mee ny Nollick</i> ‘December’<br><i>Jerrey Geurey</i> ‘January’ |
| <i>Arree</i> ‘spring’  | <i>Toshiaght Arree</i> ‘February’<br><i>Mayrnt</i> ‘March’ (* <i>Mean Arree</i> does not appear to have survived)<br><i>Jerrey Arree</i> beside <i>Averil</i> ‘April’                |
| <i>Sourey</i> ‘summer’ | <i>Boaldyn</i> ‘May’ (I have not found * <i>Toshiaght Sourey</i> )<br><i>Mean Sourey</i> ‘June’<br><i>Jerrey Sourey</i> ‘July’                                                       |

While Welsh and Breton have adopted the Latin-derived *Mai*, *Mae* for May, and Irish uses the festival name *Bealtaine*,<sup>28</sup> as does Manx *Boaldyn*, both Welsh and Irish also preserve the original name for ‘May (-Day)’: MW *kintevin* = OIr *cétamain* < \**kintu-samīno-* ‘beginning of summer’ (LEIA C-58). MW *kintevin*, *mehefin*, *gorffennaf* make a complete set, and together with Manx constitute the strongest evidence for the hypothesized pattern. In addition, we see the same

<sup>28</sup> Although in OIr we find *mí Maí* at *Fél*. May 31 (restricted to poetry and religious literature, *eDIL* s.v. *Maí*).

pattern in the Modern Irish names for September and October: *Meán Fómhair* ‘middle of autumn’ (which September is in the Celtic system) and *Deireadh Fómhair* ‘end of autumn’. We can even see a trace of it in the traditional Irish etymology of *Samain* as *Sam-fuin*, ‘end of the summer (half)’. Although we no longer accept that etymology, it still shows how the Irish thought about the naming of seasonally related terms.

## VII. R-LOCATIVES IN INDO-EUROPEAN SEASON TERMS

While many details remain to be clarified,<sup>29</sup> we are now in position to postulate a total system of r-locatives:

\*ǵiem-ŕ ‘in winter’<sup>30</sup>

OIr *fogamar*

L. *hibernus*

Arm. gen. sg. *jmeran*

perhaps Toch. A *särme*

\*h<sub>1</sub>ós-ŕ ‘in autumn’

Gk. ὀπώρα

\*wes-ŕ ‘in spring’

Ved. *básri* = YAv. loc. sg. *vaŋri*

MPers. *vahār*, Dimlí<sup>31</sup> *wesār*

Gk. ἔαρ

L. *vērnus*

Toch. A *yusār*<sup>32</sup>

\*smH-ŕ ‘in summer’

Gaul. \*samaro-

Gmc. \*sumera-

Arm. *amain*

<sup>29</sup>For example, was the original root vocalism of the r-locative R(e) or R(z)? There has clearly been paradigm leveling. Also, are derivatives in \*-ro- and \*-ero- part of the same process? Were all four of the season terms originally r/n-stems? That is certainly likely for ‘spring’ and ‘autumn’, as discussed above.

<sup>30</sup>There is a parallel derivate with \*n: the Sanskrit ‘n-stem’ corresponding to Gk. χεῖμα is attested only in loc. sg. *héman* ‘in winter’ TS+. Dočkalová and Blažek recognize (421) that this can be endless locative \*ǵhéim-en with postposed \*-en ‘in’; cf. e.g., Paelignian *pritrōm-e* ‘in proximum’. I believe that this is correct, and that an endless loc. \*ǵhéim is even older than the locative \*ǵh(i)jém-i reconstructed by Oettinger (1982: 238), despite Hitt. *gimmi* ‘in winter’ < \*ǵh(i)jém-n-i. Friedman (2003) in his very thorough analysis also concludes that the r-locative of a root noun is probably the best explanation for the word for “winter”.

<sup>31</sup>Usually Zazakî, but this is a pejorative term like Eskimo (vs. Inuit), so the self-designation Dimlí is preferred. For the forms see Kümmel (2015).

<sup>32</sup>Toch. A *yusār* ‘spring’ < \*en Ʒesōr ‘in spring’ (Hilmarsson 1991: 190).

## ABBREVIATIONS

In addition to the standard abbreviations used in *Celtica*, I have used the following:

- Fél.* STOKES, WHITLEY 1905: *Féilire Óengusso Céili Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London).  
*Fél.*<sup>2</sup> STOKES, WHITLEY 1880: *On the Calendar of Oengus* (Dublin).  
*IEW* POKORNY, JULIUS 1959: *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (München).  
*KBo* *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi* (Leipzig/Berlin, 1915–).  
*LHEB* JACKSON, K. H. 1953. *Language and History in Early Britain*. Edinburgh.  
*LIV*<sup>2</sup> RIX, H., KÜMMEL, M., ZEHNDER, T., LIPP, R., and SCHIRMER, B. 2001. *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben*, 2nd ed. Wiesbaden.

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## CISALPINE CELTIC VARIA II

### ABSTRACT

The article comprises notes on different aspects – readings, analyses, etymologies and interpretations – of six Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions: VA·1.1 **kasikos**, MI·2 **atep**, TI·49 **inutu**, TI·13 **pirauixēs**, and the alphabetically Latin documents MI·15 SEUUONIS and MI·17 CALEDONOS.

THE PRESENT ARTICLE CONSTITUTES the second instalment in a series which is intended to draw attention to new readings, analyses and interpretations of Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions and the linguistic forms attested in them which have been implemented in the digital edition *Lexicon Leponticum* (*LexLep*). The text is, in essence, drawn from the respective *LexLep* entries, but was adapted to the format of a print publication. Data and details about aspects of the inscriptions which are not discussed here, as well as images and further references, can be found in the entries on the website. The inscription sigla used for Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions are those of *LexLep*; concordances of the *LexLep* sigla with the major print editions of the Cisalpine Celtic inscription corpus (Whatmough 1933; Tibiletti Bruno 1981; Solinas 1995; Motta 2000; Morandi 2004) are provided on <https://lexlep.univie.ac.at/wiki/Concordance>.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. VA·1.1 **kasikos** OR **kasiuos**

(ARDENA; FIRST HALF OF SECOND CENTURY BC)

The inscribed fiasca a trottole from a La Tène grave in Ardena on a plateau above Brusimpiano near Lago di Lugano was found in 1938 and published by Bertolone (1941). It bears two inscriptions, one two-character sequence VA·1.2 *ur* or *tu* vel sim. of unclear function on the shoulder, and the longer, clearly language-encoding sequence in question (VA·1.1) on the foot just inside the outer rim. The latter was read by Bertolone and later scholars<sup>2</sup> as **kasikos** – a linguistically plausible reading, *kassikos* being a well-attested Gaulish personal name (see *cassic(i)us/-a* in Delamarre 2007: 59) transparently formed

<sup>1</sup>The research for this article was conducted for the project Cisalpine Celtic Language and Literacy, funded by the Austrian Academy of Sciences (APART-GSK fellowship 2019) and conducted at the Department of Linguistics of the University of Vienna. The contents were presented at the conference ‘Cisalpine Celtic Literacy’ (Maynooth/online) in June 2022. I am grateful to David Stifter (Maynooth) for his feedback and advice on linguistic matters, to Laura Grestenberger, Alan J. Nussbaum and Michael Weiss for sharing their expertise, and to the participants of the abovementioned conference for their input and references.

<sup>2</sup>Tibiletti Bruno (1966: 15–21), Lejeune (1971: 50, 62), Tibiletti Bruno (1978: 148–9), Solinas (1995: 368–9, no. 113, 2), Morandi (1999: 173–4, no. 19), Morandi (2004: 544–5, no. 41 A), Rapi (2009: 214).

from the common base *kassi-* with a *k*-suffix. An examination of the object in January 2022, however, has revealed a problem with this reading: what looks in older photographs and drawings like secondary surface damage disrupting the inscription at the height of letters 5 and 6 is in fact a small pebble, which is baked into the clay and must have been there already when the letters were applied. The second-to-last letter omicron was, accordingly, applied half-size above the pebble because the latter could not be written on. The letter before omicron, of which only a chevron above the pebble is visible, was identified by Bertolone as kappa  $\chi$ ; the drawings by Tibiletti Bruno (1966: 16) and Morandi (2004: 548, fig. 11.41) show a hasta, slightly bent in the upper half, just before the pebble, and the trace of the tip of the lower bar below the pebble beneath omicron. Indeed, various small surface irregularities below the pebble, which show very prominently in all available photos, seem to suggest the lower tips of lines, but none of them hold up to examination. Furthermore, the surface just above the pebble is smooth, without traces of a hasta or lower bar to form kappa. The fifth letter looks more like a small upsilon  $\upsilon$  which was squeezed into the upper part of the line above the pebble, just like omicron.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, the resulting reading **kasiuos** is considerably less attractive from a linguistic perspective. The common, if etymologically opaque base *kassi-* could be the same as in *kassikos*, but the suffix would appear to be adjectival *-uo-*, which regularly forms derivatives from verbal roots (overview in De Bernardo Stempel 1999: 212–21) and is present in base morphemes of personal names such as *biu-* ‘alive’, but – unlike *-k-* – is not itself a productive suffix in Continental Celtic onomastics. A name *kassiuos* would have to contain an old, otherwise unattested secondary formation *\*kassi-uo-*.

To retain the linguistically preferable reading **kasikos**, we can consider the possibility that the writer of the inscription, when reaching the pebble and realising their strategic mistake, made an executive decision to omit the lower half of the letter kappa, because they considered the resulting form to be sufficiently clear – cf. the argument of Weiss (handout 2019), who emends *PACA* in the Duenos Inscription to *P<L>ACA*, suggesting that the writer did not correct the mistake because *PACA* would be a nonce formation and could be interpreted correctly by contemporary readers.

## 2. MI.2 atep

(PARABIAGO; LATE FIRST CENTURY BC)

The sequence inscribed dextroverse in a curve on the foot of a black-glazed cup found in unrecorded circumstances in the nineteenth century was originally read *AUIA* (in the Latin alphabet) by Tibiletti Bruno (1984: 123) (cf. the drawing by Frontini 1985: tav. 16.12, which shows non-retrograde alpha as the final letter). However, the impression of a lower bar in the last letter to form  $\beta$

<sup>3</sup>As pointed out by the reviewer of this paper, the obliqueness of the chevron’s right-hand side line also supports upsilon; the hasta of initial kappa is quite straight.

is due to one of the concentric circles on the foot (and a combination of non-retrograde with initial retrograde alpha  $\Lambda$  would be unlikely in any case). The last letter is either pi or inverted lambda  $\Gamma$ , as shown in Tizzoni's drawing (1984: tav. XLIV e); Morandi (2004: 611, no. 132), who also included the short bar crossing the vertical  $\dagger$  after initial alpha, accordingly read **atīl** or **atiip**, interpreting the form as an abbreviated personal name and comparing specifically TI-12 **atīlonei**. Double iota, however, is not otherwise attested in language-encoding Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions; it is preferable to read the two verticals as cursive Latin epsilon  $\Pi$  (as also attested in MI-17 and MI-15 below). That the alphabet of the inscription is Latinised Lepontic or even Latin with Lepontic relics is indicated by the form of alpha with two oblique hastae  $\Lambda$  rather than late Lepontic  $\text{B}$  and of tau with a straight hasta and only slightly tilted bar  $\dagger$  rather than Lepontic  $\text{X}$ ; it is also made plausible by the late dating of the object (based on typology, see Tizzoni 1984: 72, Frontini 1985: 113). The letter forms agree well with those attested in the Latin alphabetarium on Monte Aga (see Casini and Fossati 2016), which features the exact same form of alpha with the shortened left-hand side hasta, cursive epsilon, tau with a slightly tilted bar  $\text{T}$ , and Lepontic instead of Latin pi.

The resulting form **atep** can be interpreted as an abbreviation of a personal name in *ad-tepo*- 'run toward', as already attested three times in the Cisalpine Celtic corpus: VR-7 **ATEPORIX**, TI-8 **atepu**, VA-2 **atepa**; see Salomon (2022: 185) on the analysis of the names.

### 3. TI-49 **inutu**

(GIUBIASCO; SECOND HALF OF THIRD–FIRST CENTURY BC)

The most interesting among the eight graffiti which were detected in the course of the Nationalmuseum Zürich's review of the material from the Golasecca necropolis (TI-46, TI-47, TI-48, TI-49, TI-50, TI-51, TI-52, TI-53; see Pernet et al. 2006: 229) is a five-letter sequence on the foot of a bowl excavated in 1901. The reading of the tidily and deeply incised inscription is entirely unproblematic despite the find number having been painted right across it. Neither does the analysis pose any problems: **inutu** can be analysed as an *on*-stem personal name in the nominative *indutū* formed from the base *indut*-, with the (etymological) cluster /nd/ reflected as <n> in writing as typical for Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions.<sup>4</sup> *indut*- is well attested in Gaulish inscriptions: *CIL* XII 5884 *indutiomarus* (also in literary sources), *RIG* I G-70 (possibly sim. also G-111)  $\epsilon\iota\nu\delta\omicron\upsilon\tau\iota\omicron\rho\epsilon\iota\zeta$ ,  $\iota\nu\delta\omicron\upsilon\tau\iota\lambda\omicron$  (Mullen 2013: 182–9), *indut(i)usl-o*, *indutilli*, *indutissa* (see *AcS* II 41–5, *KGP* 226, *GPN* 96–8,

<sup>4</sup>This is generally assumed to reflect a phonetic reality, viz. a sound change [nd] > [nn] (see the detailed discussion in Uhlich 2007: 384–405; also Lejeune 1971: 24–5, Eska 1998: 5, Stifter 2020: 12). The fact that Celtic names are attested with etymological /nd/ intact in Latin inscriptions of Northern Italy casts doubt on whether this development was fully executed. While an outright orthographic rule for not spelling /d/ in this position is hardly feasible, we may be dealing with a reflection of allegro speech which was countenanced by Lepontic, but not Latin orthography.

Delamarre (2007: 110); probably also instances of *indus* as per *DLG* 190, but cf. Falileyev 2014: 128).

*indut-* itself, recently discussed by Falileyev (2014: 128–9), is of unclear etymology (see *GPN* 97–8 for older literature), conceivably a compound of *in-* ‘in’ and opaque *dut-*, which also appears as second element in *CIL* XII 4223 *menmandutis* (theonym, Lat. dat. pl.) and possibly lexically in obscure *duti* on the Chartres defixio (Lambert 2013), and may be the same element as in names like *duta*, *dutia*, *duttius* etc. (see *AcS* I 1388, Delamarre 2007: 92). It is doubtful, though, whether all these instances of *dut-* have the same meaning and etymology. PIE roots from which Celtic *dut-/dūt-* could be derived (with *t*-suffix) are collected by Repanšek (2013: 188–9) (discussing *duti*).<sup>5</sup> Of the eight candidates, only *\*deh<sub>2</sub>u-* ‘ignite’ is securely attested in the Celtic branch, but without metathesis. Repanšek suggests a derivation from *\*deh<sub>3</sub>u-* (enlarged from *\*deh<sub>3</sub>-* ‘give’), which is attested, metathetised, in Umbrian *-dito-* < *\*duh<sub>3</sub>-tó-* ‘given’ (cf. Lambert 2013: 152). A semantically plausible option for the personal names is *\*d<sup>h</sup>eu-* ‘run’ (cf. the common elements *rit-* ‘run, attack’ and *king-* ‘stride, attack’). Specifically for *indut-*, Delamarre (*DLG* 190–1), assuming a meaning related to juridical matters based on the comparison with Lat. *indūtiae* ‘armistice’ (also of uncertain etymology), proposes an etymology *\*én(i)-d<sup>h</sup>ō-t-s* from PIE *\*d<sup>h</sup>eh<sub>1</sub>-* ‘put, make’ → ‘who has the law within him’ (cf. Lambert 2013: 152 with the same etymology for the second element of *menmandutia* ‘qui applique son esprit’). Another possibility is again *\*deh<sub>3</sub>-* ‘give’ as in Lat. *sacerdōs* (*NIL* 63–4, n. 8 with literature). Cf. also Weiss (via Beekes 2010 s.v.), who suggests a derivation of Lat. *indūtiae* from the root *\*deu<sub>h</sub>2-* ‘to be able, arrange’. Whatever the etymology of *indut-*, Cisalpine Celtic *indutū* adds another example, with alternative stem formation (a hypocoristic of a compound or an individualising derivation directly from the hypothetical noun), to the list of Gaulish attestations.

#### 4. TI·13 **piraiuxēs**

(GIUBIASCO; LATE SECOND–FIRST CENTURY BC)

The damaged inscription TI·13 is written on the shoulder of a fiasco a trottola from Giubiasco. According to Herbig in the original publication (1906: 188–9, no. 1), the faintness of the scratches is the result of a cleaning of the object. Pi **1**, twice iota **l** and rho **Q** as well as chi **V**, epsilon **≡** and san **M** are clear. The fourth letter alpha is sometimes rendered as **Λ** (Herbig *ibid.*, Whatmough 1933: 78, no. 261, Morandi 2004: 527, no. 14), but the lower bar of **Λ** is faintly visible. The most problematic letter is no. 5, for which three different readings have been suggested. Since only a hasta and a bar in the upper area are visible and no trace of a second bar can be made out, the letter has most often been interpreted as upsilon **V** (Herbig *ibid.*, Whatmough *ibid.*, Crivelli 1943: 53, Solinas 1995: 324, no. 10, Morandi 1999: 163–4, no. 7, Morandi 2004 *ibid.*, De Marinis and

<sup>5</sup>Cf. also Repanšek (2015).

Biaggio Simona 2000: 462, no. 530), but also as kappa ϰ (Herbig *ibid.*, Rhÿs 1913: 26–7, no. 4) or nu Ν (Motta 2000: 213–4, no. 24, followed by Pernet *et al.* 2006: 229, tab. 6.2).

A re-examination of the inscription for *LexLep* in July 2021 has not shed any light on the issue. Upsilon does seem to be the best option epigraphically, as it requires only the assumption that the oblique hasta does not reach the bottom, while the addition of patently non-existent bars is necessary to form nu and kappa. **pirauixēs** lends itself to analysis as a dithematic personal name with first element *bira-* (connected with *birro-* ‘short’?)<sup>6</sup> and second element *uiko-* ‘fight’. In Motta’s **piranixēs**, the base of the second element might be *\*nig-* ‘wash’ (Stifter 2010: 370), but the semantics are questionable. As stressed, with good cause, by the reviewer of this paper, in both cases *a* in place of the expected stem vowel sheds some doubt on the segmentation. When assuming a segmentation **pir-aiuxēs** (with *ai-* ‘desire’?), however, the latter part of the form *-ixēs* is hard to explain. This also goes for Rhÿs’ **pirakixēs**, which would otherwise be attractive because of the commonness of Gaulish *birāk*-names, which are also attested in Cisalpine Celtic (NM-4 **pirakos**, NO-30 **piraki**).<sup>7</sup>

San in final position is unlikely to spell /d/ as in many younger Lepontic inscriptions (cf. Stifter 2010: 372–3), but appears to be used in its original Lepontic function for a dental-sibilant cluster (cf. the possible use of chi rather than kappa for /k/ in *uiko-* as more common in archaic Lepontic inscriptions).<sup>8</sup> Since the ending <ēs> also occurs in **sitēs** in the Prestino inscription (CO-48), where it is assumed to reflect an accusative plural ending *-e<sup>n</sup>ts* vel sim. (with epenthetic /t/ and subsequently weakened nasal, see Uhlich 1999: 295–9), **pirauixēs**, expected to be a personal name due to its context, was analysed as a participle in *-ent-* (*-uik-ent-s* ‘fighting’) by Solinas (1995: 324, no. 10) (see also Motta 2000: 213–14, no. 24, Stifter 2010: 370). If this should be the case, the form would provide another instance of (analogical?) *-enC-* rather than *-anC-* for *\*-n<sup>h</sup>C-* in Cisalpine Celtic (see the discussion in Uhlich 1999: 299). It may be preferable, however, to analyse <ēs> in the present inscription as the agentive suffix *-et-* plus *-s* – a derivation *uik-et-* ‘fighter’ would parallel formations such as *king-et-* ‘attacker’ (in PNN like *vercingetorix*, maybe also

<sup>6</sup>An onomastic element *birr-* appears in Ogam *CIIC* 131 LITUBIRI and in Gaulish in simplex names like *birr(i)us*, *birro* (see *DLG* 76, Delamarre 2007: 213 et passim), thought to be connected with OIr *berr*, MW *byrr*, etc. ‘short’, Gallo-Lat. *birrus* ‘capelet with hood’ (*FEW* A–B 376, Thurneysen 1916: 82) < PC *\*birro-* (Matasović 2009 s.v., *LEIA* B-42) without an IE etymology.

<sup>7</sup>Delamarre (*DLG* 76) lists names in *birāk-* (*biracos*, *biracillus*, *biracatus*, *RIG* I G-257 βιρακοτουτι, *biracideginus*, etc.; see also *KGP* 149, Delamarre 2007: 42, 213) under the head-word *birr-*; the association goes back to De Jubainville (in *AcS* I 423), who makes the connection via a variant (nomen) *birius*, but this is uncertain considering consistent simple /t/ in the *birāk*-names as well as the suffix *-āk-* itself, which usually forms derivations from substantives (cf. *GPN* 311–13, Lochner von Hüttenbach 1989: 31). Cf., however, De Bernardo Stempel (2010: 79), who explains simple /t/ through degemination before stressed vowels (*birrus* vs. *birākos*).

<sup>8</sup>In contrast to its late sporadic employment to denote /g/ or [ɣ] (e.g. PV-4 **eripoχios** *eribogios*), which may be due to influence from Venetic orthography, chi can be argued (with unequal confidence) to denote /k/ in four archaic inscriptions: VA-3 **jiunθanaya** (if Celtic and with a *k*-suffix), VA-4.1 **viχu uikū** (uncertain reading), NO-29 **χoθios** *kottios*, NO-1 **χosioiso** *kossioiso*. How this fits into the strategies of obstruent spelling in the early Lepontic alphabet will be the topic of a future publication.

in Cisalpine Celtic VB-23 **kiketu** = *king-et-ū* with individualising *on*-stem), *seg-et-* ‘victor’ (CIL XI, 1711 SEGETIUS, CO-57 **sekezos** = *seg-et-īos*, arguably also NM-6 **sexeθu** = *seg-et-ū*) and *org-et-* ‘killer’ (*orgetius*, *orgetorix* etc.; Delamarre 2007: 146), all with martial semantics.<sup>9</sup> For the use of the non-thematised nominative *uik-et-s* in a personal name cf. *cinges* = *king-et-s* (Delamarre 2007: 65, Irslinger 2002: 58).

## 5. MI-17 CALEDONOS

(SAN GIORGIO SU LEGNANO; LATE FIRST CENTURY BC)

The black-glazed patera from the late La Tène/Augustan necropolis in Via Vittorio Veneto was excavated already in 1952 and published by Sutermeister (1956: 20–2). The inscription CALEDONOS, applied in small but neat letters upside-down on the bottom of the patera between two decorative lines, is written in the Latin alphabet with little to no influence from North Italic writing. Sutermeister, an archaeologist, took the name *caledonos* to be Greek; the document thus did not make it into the Cisalpine Celtic editions and was only added to the corpus in 2021 by its inclusion in *LexLep*.

As already noted by Volonté (2012: 728) after consultation with Filippo Gambari, the form *caledonos* is the genitive of the Celtic personal name *kaledū*, which is attested in the Gaulish coin legends RIG IV M-88–90, M-257 CALEDU; cf. also CIL VIII 19745 CALEDIA, and repeated *caledō* (Delamarre 2007: 53). The name is certainly connected with the ethnonym *kaledones*, though the exact relationship – *kaledones* being simply the plural of *kaledū* without derivational suffix – is unclear (cf. the PN CALEDONIA, Delamarre 2007: 53). There is general agreement that the base is *kal-* ‘hard’ as in *\*kaletō-* ‘id.’ as attested in OIr *calad* etc., but – as asserted by Zimmer (2006: 165–6) (pace Luján 2003: 200) – *kaled-* cannot be directly compared with *kalet-*, which is formed with the ablauting *t*-suffix discussed above sub 4.; the second element/suffix *-ēd-* has not been convincingly explained. The Latin attestations of the ethnonym show long */ē/* (*calēdones*), which cannot be etymological in Gaulish (where */ē/* > */ī/*).<sup>10</sup> If */ē/* in Latin should be secondary in some way (though it is not evident how or why), the suffix may be the also otherwise attested, but enigmatic *-ed-*.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup>The comparison is not perfect, as the abovementioned Gaulish nomina agentis in *-et-* have generalised *e*-grade, not zero-grade of the root; see Irslinger (2002: 57–68) on the formation of nomina actionis and agentis with ablauting *t*-suffix in Irish.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. Zimmer (2006: 165–6), who suggests that the Romans may have encountered the ethnonym before */ē/* > */ī/* (and the coin legends also reflect that state, or show influence from Latin?). He proposes an analysis as a compound *\*kal-pēd-h<sub>3</sub>n-* ‘having hard feet’.

<sup>11</sup>Beside *caledonos*, a suffixed element *-ed-* appears in Cisalpine Celtic arguably in the names VR-14 **kelešu** and CO-48 **plialeθu**, possibly also VB-2 **oletu**, VB-23 **kiketu** and NM-6 **sexeθu** (though for the latter two *-et-* is more likely, see above sub 4.), so always as an *on*-stem *-edū* (on CO-57 **sekezos** see also sub 4.). Numerous potential Celtic attestations are collected in AcS I 1407 sub *-ēdon-/ēdū*. IE comparanda are elusive – cf. e.g. Neri 2003: 47, n. 105 on the possibility that a suffix *-ed-* underlies some Latin *-idus*-adjectives, specifically *calidus* ‘warm’ < PIE *\*k<sub>1</sub>l-ed-ó-* (see NIL 414, n. 1 on the root shape): OI. *śarād-* etc. ‘autumn’ < *\*k<sub>1</sub>el-éd-* ‘warmth’, where *-ed-* is also irregular (see NIL 415, n. 7 with literature). Schaffner 2014: 74 compares the derivation *\*meh<sub>2</sub>k-éd-* ‘height’ > Gk *\*mak-ed-ó-* ‘tall’ (as basis for Μακεδόν- ‘Macedonian’); cf. Nussbaum

## 6. MI·15 SEUUONIS

(PARABIAGO; SECOND HALF OF FIRST CENTURY BC–EARLY FIRST CENTURY AD)

The olpe was found in the La Tène/Roman Imperial age necropolis of San Lorenzo (Parabiago); the inscription is applied prominently on the shoulder. The sequence is written dextroverse in the Latin alphabet, with rounded sigmas, large omicron, nu with a full-length angle, and cursive epsilon. The document was included in the Cisalpine Celtic corpus by Morandi (2004: 709, no. 282), who, taking the two chevrons in the middle to represent inverted mu, read SEMONIS, genitive of a Latinised personal name *semō* from a largely hypothetical Celt. *semū*. This reading is hard to accept, as the only comparandum for such an inverted mu is found in the difficult, alphabetically Camunoid part of the Voltino inscription (BS.3.2); also, the two chevrons do not touch. The preferable reading SEUUONIS with double upsilon was already put forward by Volonté (1993: 42).

While the grammatical analysis remains the same (gen. *seuūōnis* of a Latinised *seuūō* ← Celt. *seuūū*), the base *seuū-* finds better Celtic comparanda than *sem-*. A Celtic element *seuū-* (or *seuū-?*), always spelled with double upsilon, is attested in a handful of Gaulish personal names: *seuūā* (SEUUAE gen.) in Geneva, *seuūō* (SEUUO, potter's name at Lezoux and at Strasbourg; more in AcS II 1530), and SEUUANTI[ at Trèves (Delamarre 2007: 167–8). For the latter, Delamarre (ibid. 168) suggests an etymology with first element *sego-* 'strength, victory' and second element in *uanti-* '?'; *seuūā* and Latinised *seuūō* could be hypocoristics of such compounds with any second element in *u-*, lenited /g/ and assimilated stem vowel. This can explain /e/ before /u/ (or /u/), since inherited /eu/ should have become /ou/. Despite the corrected reading, the inscription can thus retain its place in the corpus of Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions.<sup>12</sup>

1999: 407, n. 34, and further Nussbaum (handout 2004) on an ablauting suffix *-ed/ēd-* in Greek and Latin. With regard to the potential connection with Lat. *calidus* it may be considered whether the root present in *kaledū*, *kaledones* (and any of the unsuffixed bases *kalo-* in Gaulish PNN) is not the same as in the Insular Celtic 'hard'-words, but *\*kel-* 'warming', which is not lexically attested in Celtic.

In Cisalpine Celtic inscriptions, some of the PNN in (putative) *-edon-* appear in two-part names where a clear patronym is missing (**uvamokozis plialeθu**, **oletu amasīlu**), leading Markey to analyse the element as a suffix forming cognomina (Markey and Mees 2003: 140, 149, Markey 2006: 157). Markey compares Sabellic patronymic *-id-jo-*, Messapic patronymic *-id-*, and Greek *-ιδᾱ*, deriving *-ed-* from *\*id-* with lowering in Markey and Mees (2003: 149; cf. Villar and Prósper 2005: 286), but reconstructing Pre-Celtic *\*-edon-* in (2006: 157).

<sup>12</sup>This cannot be said of some other documents which have found their way into the corpus over time, prominently e.g. TI·4 POLIBI SPURIS from Giubiasco. In accordance with the dating of the terra sigillata plate to the second half of the first century AD based on the typology and stamp (see Pernet et al. 2006: 203, *OCK* 1765), the inscription is written in the Latin alphabet with possible Greek (lambda), but no Lepontic traces; the two personal names are Latinised Greek (πολυβιος → *polybius*; cf. the spelling of the Campanian fabricant Publius Cippius Polybius' cognomen POLIBI (gen.) on fabrication stamps; see Kunow 1985: 222–4) and Latin or Etruscan (*spuris* – cf. the Latin cognomen *spurius* and Etruscan names in *ET*<sup>2</sup> I, 281; Morandi (1999: 164–5) 'senza alcun dubbio un italico'), certainly not Celtic.

## ABBREVIATIONS

|                       |                                           |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <i>AcS</i>            | Holder 1896–1907.                         |
| <i>CIIC</i>           | Macalister 1945–49.                       |
| <i>CIL</i>            | Mommsen et al. 1862–.                     |
| <i>DLG</i>            | Delamarre 2003.                           |
| <i>ET<sup>2</sup></i> | Meiser 2014.                              |
| <i>FEW</i>            | Von Wartburg 1922–2002.                   |
| <i>GPN</i>            | Ellis Evans 1967.                         |
| <i>KGP</i>            | Schmidt 1957.                             |
| <i>LEIA</i>           | Vendryes, Bachallery and Lambert 1959–96. |
| <i>NIL</i>            | Wodtko, Irslinger and Schneider 2008.     |
| <i>OCK</i>            | Oxé, Comfort and Kenrick 2000.            |
| <i>RIG</i>            | Duval et al. 1985–2002.                   |

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## THE MORPHOLOGY OF PICTISH

### ABSTRACT

The linguistic affiliation of Pictish has long been disputed. Since the nineteenth century many investigators of Pictish have argued that it was a Celtic language. Yet the morphological behaviour recorded in the Ogam inscriptions associated with the Pictish kingdoms is not paralleled in Brythonic or in Old Irish, and much of the onomastic material recorded in ancient sources such as Ptolemy's *Geography* also appears to preserve characteristics that are not found in comparable Celtic forms. The morphology of Pictish indicates that it may be an Indo-European dialect influenced by Brythonic, but that it cannot be considered a regular member of the Celtic family of languages.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

IT HAS BECOME increasingly common in recent years for the language spoken in early medieval Pictland to be described as a Brythonic dialect. Guto Rhys observes that a 'new consensus' has arisen recently among Scottish medievalists regarding the Brythonic nature of Pictish,<sup>1</sup> but this view seems to be one that has emerged largely among scholars who have approached the main difficulties represented in the linguistic record in unorthodox manners. Many of the difficulties have been widely known since the publication of a key survey by Kenneth Jackson that is often still cited as a seminal contribution to understanding the nature of Pictish.<sup>2</sup> Others to have written on the topic have shown more reserve than Rhys, crediting Jackson as the leading expert on Brythonic in his day and considering his position better established than those promoted otherwise.<sup>3</sup> Most of the concerns raised regarding Jackson's approach have not proved as convincing from a linguistic perspective as the broader acceptance of the criticisms of Jackson's analysis, particularly among Scottish medievalists,

<sup>1</sup>Guto Rhys, 'Approaching the Pictish language: historiography, early evidence and the question of Pritenic', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2015, 118.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth H. Jackson, 'The Pictish language', in Frederick T. Wainwright (ed.), *The Problem of the Picts* (Edinburgh, 1955 [reprinted Perth, 1980]), 129–66. The 1980 reprint has Jackson's 'addenda and corrigenda' on 173–6.

<sup>3</sup>Damian McManus, review of Katherine Forsyth, *Language in Pictland: The Case against 'Non-Indo-European Pictish'*, *Studia Hameliana* 2 (Utrecht, 1997), *CMCS* 38 (1999), 108–10; Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Bronze- and Iron-Age Celtic-speakers: what don't we know, what can't we know, and what could we know? Language, genetics and archaeology in the twenty-first century', *The Antiquaries Journal* 92 (2012), 427–49, at 431; Simon Rodway, 'The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland and Brittonic Pictish', *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 21 (2020), 173–234.

would seem to warrant. The matter is a key concern of Scottish history, but despite the criticisms that have emerged of Jackson's claims, the matter remains unresolved from a linguistic perspective.

Before the appearance of Jackson's key study, many analyses of Pictish had assumed that it was a Brythonic language. Jackson's main evidence was the Ogam inscriptions that have largely still defied a transparent analysis. Alfred Smyth and Katherine Forsyth disputed Jackson's treatment of the onomastic and epigraphic evidence for Pictish,<sup>4</sup> but largely on grounds that would not be considered probative in contemporary linguistic discourse.<sup>5</sup> Smyth and Forsyth criticised Jackson's etymological understandings, dismissing his claim that there was significant evidence that a non-Celtic language was spoken in Pictland in the ancient and early medieval periods. The most extreme position is taken by Forsyth who attempts to demonstrate that some of the Ogam inscriptions of Scotland can be understood as Brythonic. Several of the Ogam inscriptions, dated by Forsyth to the sixth to tenth centuries,<sup>6</sup> have long been thought to feature Gaelic elements, and both Brythonic and Old Norse names have been claimed to appear in some of the finds. Simon Rodway has argued that Forsyth's analysis of several of the Ogam inscriptions as linguistically Brythonic is implausible,<sup>7</sup> however, reflecting a widely shared opinion that the Ogam inscriptions of Scotland remain significantly opaque. Many of the Ogam-inscribed stones were found in Shetland and Orkney, but the same recurrent linguistic features appear to be present in the inscriptions discovered in Aberdeenshire, as if only one language is represented by the epigraphic texts. In the eighth century Bede (*Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* 1, 1) also referred to Pictish as if it were a single language. Yet, as Jackson contended, the language of the Pictish inscriptions cannot readily be understood as Brythonic, and if the Ogam texts are not demonstrably Celtic, the logical conclusion would seem to be that Pictish was not a Brythonic language.

Yet considerable onomastic evidence has survived associated with Pictland and the Picts that does seem to be Brythonic. Names of early and pre-Pictish tribes, people and places are recorded in ancient as well as medieval and modern sources, and many of these have been plausibly assessed as linguistically Celtic. A long tradition of associating recurrent place-name elements found in north-eastern Scotland with items of Welsh, Cornish and Breton vocabulary arose over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and it was accepted by Jackson at face value.<sup>8</sup> Most of the place-names are first attested only quite

<sup>4</sup>Alfred P. Smyth, *Warlords and Holy Men: Scotland AD 80–1000* (London, 1984), 46–53; Forsyth, *Language in Pictland*.

<sup>5</sup>McManus, review of Forsyth.

<sup>6</sup>Katherine Forsyth, 'The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland: an edited corpus', unpublished PhD thesis, Harvard University, 1996, lxxv–lxxvi.

<sup>7</sup>Rodway, 'The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland'.

<sup>8</sup>William J. Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1926); W. F. H. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names* (London, 1976); Simon Taylor, 'Pictish place-names revisited', in Stephen T. Driscoll, Jane Geddes and Mark A. Hall (eds), *Pictish Progress: New Studies on Northern Britain in the Early Middle Ages*, *The Northern World* 50 (Leiden, 2011), 67–118.

recently, but they are widely accepted to preserve evidence that Pictish was a Brythonic language – or something very close to it. Since Jackson's time there has even been a tradition of attempting to explain how this 'Pritenic' form of Pictish (as Jackson called it) diverged from Brythonic – the linguistic ancestor of Cumbric, Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The approach taken by Forsyth to the epigraphic evidence stems from a conviction that the analyses of the onomastic material are more reliable than Jackson's assessment of the inscriptions, but this seems to be the reverse relationship that epigraphic evidence usually holds to onomastic material.

Forsyth's approach is to try to shoehorn Brythonic forms into some of the Ogam inscriptions and dismiss the other texts as too linguistically obscure to be considered as evidence for the nature of Pictish. But if the inscriptions preserve linguistic material that cannot be taken as Brythonic, this evidence is a primary, not a secondary consideration. Jackson suggested that the epigraphic remains of Pictish might represent an archaic pre-Celtic dialect, adopted by originally Brythonic-speaking elites, or that the language preserved in the Ogam inscriptions may have served as a learned dialect, much as Coptic is only employed today as a liturgical language.<sup>9</sup> The most obvious manner in which to approach epigraphic Pictish, however, is to take it as reflecting the regular, living language of a local speech community – an elite one, given the cost, effort, skill and erudition involved in raising stone monuments – and that it is the onomastic evidence that appears to be Brythonic which needs explaining. Rodway accepts that a Pictish form of Latin *crux* 'cross' may be preserved on the Burrian stone (as *c[e]rroccs*) and that an etymologically Celtic name *Nehhtons* (cf. the Old Irish god *Nechtán* and the Pictish king's name *Nechtán*) is preserved on the Lunnasting stone. In each case, the identified term is the last in the text, however, an indication that the untranslated portion is likely to preserve verbal or deictic forms such as indications of who made or raised the monument or a memorial formula such as 'here lies'. Neither the Burrian nor the Lunnasting inscription obviously lends itself to an interpretation comparable to the Irish Ogam memorials, which typically feature little more than the name of the deceased in the genitive case.<sup>10</sup> It seems rather more likely that some of the ostensibly Pictish Ogams preserve more complex expressions than just onomastic labels and hence are more diagnostically important representatives of Pictish than are personal and place-names preserved in otherwise non-Pictish sources, no matter how many of them are attested.

In order to assess claims that Pictish is a Brythonic language, the evidence called upon to justify the neo-Celtic nature of the language needs to be surveyed critically. A considerable amount of onomastic material is recorded in ancient sources such as the *Geography* of Ptolemy that has been asserted to prove that Scotland was predominately Celtic-speaking in Roman times. But the onomastic evidence has not been interpreted systematically – its morphology has never been directly addressed. The Ogam inscriptions have also

<sup>9</sup>Jackson, 'The Pictish language', 154.

<sup>10</sup>Damian McManus, *A Guide to Ogam*, Maynooth Monographs 4 (Maynooth, 1991), 51–2.

been subject to much piecemeal etymological speculation rather than through the application of approaches such as those employed in the decipherment of a non-Indo-European epigraphic language such as Etruscan. The evidence of place-names has been surveyed more regularly, but often in ways that presume that Pictish was a neo-Celtic language rather than accepting that onomastic evidence is an inherently limited yardstick of linguistic affinity. An analysis of epigraphic Pictish reveals that it attests fundamental characteristics that cannot be explained as neo-Celtic, but that do seem likely to be Indo-European, much as the early onomastic evidence recorded in sources such as Ptolemy suggests.

## 2. NON-CELTIC PICTISH VS BRYTHONIC

Attempts to determine the linguistic nature of Pictish informed by the development of comparative philology first emerged in the late nineteenth century, but prior to the appearance of Jackson's 1955 assessment, the linguistic affiliation of the language had been widely disputed. The declarations by Alexander Macbain and William Watson that Pictish was a *p*-Celtic dialect relied on analyses of the place-names of north-eastern Scotland,<sup>11</sup> but the Ogam inscriptions were largely considered untranslatable – an unexpected difficulty if Pictish was a Brythonic language. Jackson's two-language proposal seemed to best explain the linguistic evidence, but it was developed at a time when contact-induced linguistic change was not well understood and explanations of Indo-European and Celtic morphology had yet to develop much beyond the model assumed by comparativists in the late nineteenth century. If the language preserved in the Ogam inscriptions is not Celtic, the first scenario proposed by Jackson may apply – Jackson proposed that the aristocrats of early medieval Pictland may have been of Celtic descent, but that they had adopted an indigenous pre-Celtic language of northern Scotland and that this language is preserved in the Ogam inscriptions. The inscriptions remain largely obscure, but Jackson's conclusion that they were probably not Indo-European was reached at a time when understandings of Indo-European morphology were much less advanced than they are now and his supposition can be tested in a more regular manner than was previously possible.

The name *Nehhtons*, for example, appears most straightforwardly to be taken as preserving either the nominative singular masculine morpheme *-s* inherited from Indo-European or the genitive singular marker *\*-osjo* (cf. Sanskrit *-asya*, Homeric Greek *-οιο*, Old Latin *-osio* and Lepontic *-oiso*), as *Nechtan* appears to continue *\*Neptuh<sub>3</sub>nos* (cf. Latin *Neptūnus*). But *Nehhtons* appears to have lost its expected stem vowel *\*-o-* in a manner quite contrary to the way the loss of nominative and genitive endings is usually presumed to have occurred in Brythonic.<sup>12</sup> Such a loss is more expected of Germanic (cf. the Gothic nominative singular *dags* < *\*dagaz* 'day' and the Old Norse

<sup>11</sup>Alexander Macbain, 'The Picts', *The Celtic Magazine* 12 (1887), 385–91, 433–40, 481–6 and 529–41; Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 10–72.

<sup>12</sup>Kenneth H. Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, 1953), 618–33; John T. Koch, 'The loss of final syllables and loss of declension in Brittonic', *BBCS* 30 (1983),

genitive singular *dags* < \**dagas*) and the sigmatic ending has even led to attempts to read the inscriptions as if they were Norse, with the Bressay inscription *crrosc : nahhtvddadds : datr : ann . | bennises : meqqddroann*<sup>13</sup> being interpreted by Thomas Clancy as if it were the \**crosg Nahtudads dótr Ann[a] ben Nis(s)is ma(i)c Dróán* ‘(memorial) cross of Nahtudads’s daughter Anna, the wife of Nissi mac Dróán’, with the *-s* marking the genitive case.<sup>14</sup> The problem with such piecemeal interpretations is that they leave the impression that the inscriptions preserve syntactically irregular hotchpotches, when other finds, such as the Lunnasting inscription that Forsyth reads as *ettecuhetts : ahehhtannn : hccvvevv : nehhtons*,<sup>15</sup> appear to feature *s*-marking in texts that just remain ‘utterly baffling’.<sup>16</sup>

There are many forms preserved in the Pictish inscriptions that retain endings comparable to that of *Nehhtons* and *Nahhtvddadds* – at least ten seem apparent in Forsyth’s corpus. But if they are not all to be accorded intrusive Old Norse *s*-genitives and the texts will not readily yield to Celtic interpretations, then the ending *-s* seems likely to represent a morphological characteristic of epigraphic Pictish that is not Brythonic. The Brythonic languages lost their case system (and endings such as *-s*) at the end of antiquity and *Nehhtons* is accordingly not an expected early medieval Brythonic form. Forsyth suggests that the ending may reflect the Old Irish demonstrative *so* ‘this’<sup>17</sup> or, following a suggestion of John Koch’s, the Breton demonstrative determiner *-se* ‘there’.<sup>18</sup> But Rodway describes these identifications as ‘totally *ad hoc*’<sup>19</sup> – demonstratives are not expected to be cliticised to names and the identification does not reflect the outcome of a systematic study of the relevant forms. The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland seem to preserve some behaviour characteristic of Gaelic naming and some may even record Old Norse forms. The recurrent ending *-s* appears to be evidence that the epigraphs are significantly (and systematically) different from contemporary Gaelic and Brythonic texts, however, and the inability of previous investigators to offer anything other than partial or controversial interpretations of many of the Pictish Ogams gives the strong impression that the language of their inscriptions cannot reasonably be assessed as if it were Brythonic or a pastiche of Old Norse and neo-Celtic elements.

Rather than some sort of unprincipled mixture of Gaelic, Old Norse and Brythonic, with each inscription perhaps representing a different form of linguistic combination, Jackson proposed that a fourth language must be

201–33; Patrick Sims-Williams, *The Celtic Inscriptions of Britain: Phonology and Chronology*, c. 400–1200, Publications of the Philological Society 37 (Oxford, 2003), 109–15.

<sup>13</sup>Forsyth, ‘The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland’, 117–38.

<sup>14</sup>Thomas O. Clancy, review of Richard A. V. Cox., *The Language of the Ogam Inscriptions of Ireland* (Aberdeen, 1999), *Peritia* 13 (1999), 332–41, at 336. An Old Norse translation was originally proposed by Charles Graves, ‘On the Ogham inscriptions found on a monument at Bressay, in Shetland’, *PRIA* 6 (1853–7), 248–9, and it was accepted by Jackson, ‘The Pictish language’, 142.

<sup>15</sup>Forsyth, ‘The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland’, 402–19.

<sup>16</sup>Forsyth, *Language in Pictland*, 36.

<sup>17</sup>Forsyth, ‘The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland’, 114.

<sup>18</sup>See Forsyth, ‘The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland’, 218, 414 and 416.

<sup>19</sup>Rodway, ‘The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland’, 189.

represented in the inscriptions, a language that originally formed a substratum to the Brythonic of the early Pictish elites. Earlier linguists, from John Rhŷs to Julius Pokorny,<sup>20</sup> had come to similar conclusions, but Forsyth criticises Jackson's proposal that a non-Celtic substratum existed in Pictland in what she describes as a 'long-term linguistic apartheid'.<sup>21</sup> Since the 1970s, however, linguists have become much more interested in how language change occurs through contact as well as the traditional focus on internal development, and investigations of mixed languages, creoles and how language shift occurs are now available. The Ogam inscriptions and the onomastic evidence suggest that some kind of language mixture or assimilation transpired over the course of the first millennium in Pictland. The linguistic 'problem of the Picts' has tended to be seen in an exclusively binary manner – Celtic or pre-Celtic. But if there is some indication that the Ogam inscriptions preserve both Brythonic and non-Brythonic features, the binary approach adopted by many recent investigators may just have been mistaken. Just as it seems wrong to attempt to force Old Norse or Gaelic interpretations onto the inscriptions by emending readings to suit a given interpretation, so also hammering Brythonic terms into texts that otherwise seem interminably cranky or just claiming they are too obscure to be cited as evidence does not seem to represent a regular linguistic approach to explaining Pictish.

The main problem with assessing Pictish predominantly through onomastics is that the Brythonic approach to Pictish has failed to explain the epigraphic evidence. Explaining morphological features of Pictish such as the *s*-marking of *Nehhtons* and *Nahhtvddadds* is key to resolving the question of the linguistic affiliation of Pictish because morphology is less commonly borrowed than lexemes, and the *s*-marking in the Ogam inscriptions seems unlikely to be a neo-Celtic feature. Cross-linguistically, morphological evidence is a primary matter as far as linguistic affiliation is concerned, whereas lexemes usually are not. English toponymy is riddled with elements that do not have a Germanic origin, but English remains morphologically Germanic, preserving features such as *s*-genitives that were foreign to Latin, Brythonic and Anglo-Norman. But morphology is also often preserved in onomastic evidence, including the onomastic forms from northern Scotland preserved by ancient authors such as Ptolemy, and it can also be assessed to see if it is typically Celtic or Indo-European.

<sup>20</sup>John Rhŷs, 'The inscriptions and language of the northern Picts', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 26 (1892), 263–351; idem, 'A revised account of the inscriptions of the northern Picts', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 32 (1898), 324–98; Vittore Pisani and Julius Pokorny, *Allgemeine und vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft – Indogermanistik; Keltologie*, Wissenschaftliche Forschungsberichte, Geisteswissenschaftliche Reihe 2 (Bern, 1953), 157.

<sup>21</sup>Forsyth, *Language in Pictland*, 14.

## 3. THE ETHNONYMS OF PTOLEMY

Many of the characterisations of Pictish produced in reaction to Jackson's 1955 survey refuse to accept that Pictish may have been a mixed or hybrid language. The binary approach to Pictish that demands that it should have an exclusively neo-Celtic or non-Celtic identity is characteristic of the assessments proffered by Smyth, Forsyth and Guto Rhys of the names recorded in ancient sources for tribes, rivers and places in northern Scotland, especially those recorded by Ptolemy. These names presumably provide a linguistic background to Pictish – if some of the names recorded in ancient sources are not Brythonic, then they may throw some light on the linguistic nature of the Pictish Ogams. In accordance with the approach taken by Watson, however, many of the names recorded by Ptolemy are often still argued to be either Celtic or not Celtic based on (possible) etymological analyses of the roots they record, not assessments of the morphology they seem to preserve. Most recently, Rhys sets out the evidence of the ethnic names recorded by Ptolemy in a manner that reflects the kind of linguistic analyses employed in onomastic studies in Watson's day.<sup>22</sup> Comparative linguistics has developed significantly since the 1920s, particularly in terms of understandings of Indo-European morphology, and a better understanding of Celtic word formation has also emerged since the appearance of Watson's studies.

The best-evidenced forms of the ethnic names recorded by Ptolemy (*Geography*, 2, 3, 9–14) in the original Greek, along with the usual Romanised forms, are as follows:

|            |                   |
|------------|-------------------|
| Δαμνόνιοι  | <i>Damnonii</i>   |
| Ἐπίδιοι    | <i>Epidii</i>     |
| Κέρωνες    | <i>Cerones</i>    |
| Κρέωνες    | <i>Creones</i>    |
| Καρνονάκαι | <i>Carnonacae</i> |
| Καρινοὶ    | <i>Carini</i>     |
| Κορναύιοι  | <i>Cornavii</i>   |
| Καληδόνιοι | <i>Caledonii</i>  |
| Δεκάνται   | <i>Decantae</i>   |
| Λοῦγιοι    | <i>Lugi</i>       |
| Σμέρται    | <i>Smertae</i>    |
| Οὐακομάγοι | <i>Vacomagi</i>   |
| Οὐενίκωνες | <i>Venicones</i>  |
| Ταιξάλοι   | <i>Taexali</i>    |

Other peoples from ancient Scotland include the *Boresti* mentioned by Tacitus (*Agricola* 38), the *Maeatae* (Μαιάται) described by Cassius Dio (in Xiphilinus' epitome of Dio 77, 12) as a confederation of tribes near the northern border of the Roman province, and Ammianus Marcellinus (*Res gestae* 27, 8, 5) records a Pictish tribe called the *Verturiones*, a people separate from the *Dicalydones*

<sup>22</sup>Rhys, 'Approaching the Pictish language', 144–56.

(who appear just to have been the earlier *Caledonii* with their ethnonym prefixed by an element *di-*). The *Verturiones* seem to have a name related to that of the later Pictish kingdom *Fortriu*,<sup>23</sup> but the main early group north of the Antonine Wall in the second century appears to have been the *Caledonii*, the *Caledoniam incolentes* ('inhabitants of Caledonia') of Tacitus (*Agricola* 25).

Rigorous linguistic assessment of ethnonyms requires more sophistication than just etymological speculation. It entails explicit morphological and semantic analysis, even if understandings of Celtic word formation are not as well developed as they could be. Stefan Zimmer has produced a comprehensive survey of Welsh word-formation,<sup>24</sup> but there is no wider study available comparable to the overview for Germanic produced by Wolfgang Meid.<sup>25</sup> Robust models of Indo-European nominal morphology are now available, reconciling apophonic behaviour with accent, suffixation and nominal classes, and studies such as Paul Russell's analysis of the formation of Celtic words with velar suffixes and Karin Stüber's assessment of the Celtic *n*-stems are available.<sup>26</sup> It is not entirely clear how suffixation developed more generally in the Celtic languages, however. Karl Horst Schmidt provided a pioneering study of continental onomastic compounds,<sup>27</sup> demonstrating that Gaulish dithematic names are constructed in several different key ways, and other principles of onomastic formation can be derived from studies such as Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel's typological analysis of Celtic ethnonyms.<sup>28</sup> None of these works was available to Jackson when he produced his seminal study of Pictish, but none of them is employed by more recent investigators either.

The ethnonyms recorded by Ptolemy all appear to be derivationally Indo-European coinages: they mainly appear to feature one onomastic root enlarged by one or more morphologically common Indo-European suffixes. The largest number are ethnonyms that feature nasal suffixes of a type that is particularly common in Gaulish and Germanic onomastics. The *Damnonii*, *Caledonii*, *Cerones*, *Creones*, *Venicones* and *Verturiones* all seem likely to preserve the enlargement *-on-* also found in the Gaulish ethnonyms *Ceutrones*, *Lingones*, *Pictones*, *Redones*, *Santones*, *Senones*, *Suessiones* and *Turones*, and more commonly in Germanic ethnonyms such as *Aviones*, *Burgundiones*, *Frisiavones*, *Gutones*, *Helvecones*, *Herminones* and *Hilleviones*. There does

<sup>23</sup>John Rhŷs, *Celtic Britain* (London, 1904), 322; Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 68–9.

<sup>24</sup>Stefan Zimmer, *Studies in Welsh Word-Formation* (Dublin, 2000); cf., similarly, for Old Irish, Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel, *Nominale Wortbildung des älteren Irischen: Stammbildung und Derivation*, Buchreihe der Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie 15 (Tübingen, 1999).

<sup>25</sup>Hans Krahe and Wolfgang Meid, *Germanische Sprachwissenschaft III: Wortbildungslehre*, Sammlung Götschen 2234 (Berlin, 1969).

<sup>26</sup>Paul Russell, *Celtic Word-Formation: The Velar Suffixes* (Dublin, 1990); Karin Stüber, *The Historical Morphology of N-Stems in Celtic*, Maynooth Studies in Celtic Linguistics 3 (Maynooth, 1998).

<sup>27</sup>Karl Horst Schmidt, 'Die Komposition in gallischen Personennamen', *ZCP* 26 (1957), 33–301.

<sup>28</sup>Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel, 'Linguistically Celtic ethnonyms: towards a classification', in Juan Luis García Alonso (ed.), *Celtic and Other Languages in Ancient Europe* (Salamanca, 2008), 101–18.

not seem to be much cause to believe that the ethnonyms have been subject to significant Graecisation or Latinisation given that the ethnonyms recorded by Ptolemy for regions such as Africa (compare those from Mauretania such as *Metagonitae*, *Socossi*, *Verves*, *Mazices*, *Verbices*, *Salinsae*, *Cauni*, *Bacuatae*, *Macanitae*, *Volubiliani*, *Iangaucani* and *Nectiberes*) do not feature such clear evidence of preserving Indo-European derivational morphology. Stefan Schaffner argues that the Germanic ethnonymic nasal suffix had multiple origins – primary *n*-stem, individualising and possessive (Hoffmann) suffixes<sup>29</sup> – and the formant employed in Celtic appears to reflect similar diversity.<sup>30</sup> Comparable formations are rarer in other Indo-European languages (e.g. *Macedones*, *Paeones* and *Paphlagonēs*), but the relevant ethnonyms recorded by Ptolemy and Ammianus are most regularly segmented as *Damn-onii*, *Caled-onii*, *Cer-ones*, *Cre-ones*, *Venic-ones* and *Verturi-ones*.

Another suffix characteristic of Celtic ethnonyms is a dental enlargement similar to that attested in *Maeatae*. Most recently analysed by Luka Repanšek,<sup>31</sup> the Celtic dental suffix is reflected widely in Gaulish ethnonyms including *Abrincates*, *Carnuates*, *Cornacates*, *Nantuates* and *Tolsates*. It is an adjectival formant, but as Repanšek observes, Gaulish ethnonyms in *-at* are usually derived from place-names (such as *Tolsates* to *Tolosa*) or nominal roots (such as *Caeracates* to *\*kaerak-* ‘sheep’) and *Maia* was the name of the Roman fort at the western end of Hadrian’s Wall at Bowness-on-Solway in Cumbria.<sup>32</sup> Ethnonyms with velar suffixes are more problematic, however. The suffix *-ak-* is widely employed in Celtic personal names, but as an *ā*-stem the northern ethnonym *Carnonacae* appears to represent a type of formation atypical of Celtic ethnonyms. Russell could only cite one continental example of an ethnonym that features comparable enlargement, the Belgic *o*-stem *Levaci*,<sup>33</sup> although the name of the Brythonic *Bibroci* (cf. *\*bibrus* ‘beaver’) mentioned by Caesar (*Bellum Gallicum* 5, 21) clearly features a suffix *-ok-*, and the *Cantii* are also referred to as the *Cantiaci* (cf. the place-name *Durovernum Cantiacorum*), just as Caesar (*B.G.* 5, 21) mentions a tribe called the *Segontiaci*, both evidently featuring a suffix *-jak-*. Nonetheless Ptolemy’s *Carini* is morphologically similar to the Belgic ethnonym *Morini* (presumably a derivative of *\*mori-* ‘sea’) and the Irish form *Darini* (Δαρῖνοι; cf. *\*dāri-* ‘fertile, vigorous, violent’). Similarly, the *Cornavii* are usually linked with the Brythonic *Cornovii* (cf. *\*korno-* ‘horn’), while *Taexali* is most immediately comparable to the names of the Gaulish *Medulli* and *Venelli* (cf. *\*medu* ‘mead’ and *\*uēni-* ‘blood relative, kin’).

It is only after the suffixes of the ethnonyms of Ptolemy have been analysed that their roots and bases can then be assessed with any confidence. In two

<sup>29</sup>Stefan Schaffner, ‘Zu den Wortbildungstypen der altgermanischen Völkernamen mit *n*-Suffix’, *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 69 (2015), 145–89.

<sup>30</sup>Stüber, *The Historical Morphology of N-Stems*, 90–118.

<sup>31</sup>Luka Repanšek, ‘Two notes on Old Celtic morphology’, *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* 10 (2014), 239–54, at 240–5.

<sup>32</sup>A. L. F. Rivet and Colin Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London, 1979), 408.

<sup>33</sup>Paul Russell, ‘The suffix *-āko-* in Continental Celtic’, *EC* 25 (1988), 131–73, at 138; idem, *Celtic Word-Formation*, 13.

instances of forms apparently featuring *-on-*, however, the bases of the relevant ethnonyms were evidently considered problematic by Jackson. The ethnonym *Venicones*, which also appears to be attested epigraphically in the singular *Venico* in a dedication from Carrawburgh, can only be analysed as featuring a reflex of a nasal suffix if its base is accepted to be *\*uēnik-* (cf. Gaulish *ouēvikoi* ‘clansmen’).<sup>34</sup> But Watson assumed that the ethnonym is a dithematic compound featuring a reflex of *\*kones* ‘hounds’ (translating *Venicones* as ‘swamp hounds, alder hounds’)<sup>35</sup> and Koch compares the form to the *Gododdin*’s toponym *Maen Gwynngwn*, analysing *Venicones* as ‘kindred-hounds’.<sup>36</sup> The *Gododdin* appears to place Maen Gwynngwn beyond Bannauc (i.e. Bannockburn), putting it in Pictland, and Gaulish names featuring *Veni-* ‘blood relative, kin’<sup>37</sup> (as opposed to the collective *\*uēniā* ‘kindred’) as a first element are relatively common (e.g. *Venicarus* ‘kin-loving’ and *Veniclutio* ‘kin-famous’).

Yet Andrew Breeze criticises Koch’s etymology of *Venicones* as lacking a clear onomastic parallel.<sup>38</sup> De Bernardo Stempel’s survey of the usual manner in which Celtic ethnonyms are formed makes it obvious that they reflect an ‘onomastic dialect’<sup>39</sup> as Celtic ethnonyms are restricted to a limited set of semantic fields, and a dithematic ethnonym meaning ‘kin-hounds’ appears to be linguistically irregular. Breeze compares *Venicones* to martial personal names such as Brythonic *Cunobelinus* ‘hound-strong’, the Arthurian figure *Gwrgi* ‘manly hound’ and the *Goddodin*’s *Erthgi* ‘bear-hound’, but *Venicones* would have to be an otherwise unparalleled type of ethnonym for it to feature a second element *-cones* ‘hounds’. *Gwynngwn* is also most regularly understood to mean ‘white-hounds’ in Old Welsh (with *Gwynn-* ‘white’ < *\*uindo-*) and Koch suggests that the use of *Gwynn-* ‘white’ represents an early Welsh reanalysis of *Veni-* ‘kin’. An analysis as *\*Venicones*, however, seems superior to ‘kin-hounds’, given how Celtic ethnonyms are usually formed.

The other ethnonym that features a suffix *-on-* that Jackson considered etymologically difficult is *Caledonii*. It is most obviously analysed as featuring a first element *\*kaled-*, but no such base is attested in Celtic. Zimmer suggests that the ethnonym may continue a *bahuvrihi* with a Hoffmann suffix *\*kal-ēd-on-* ‘having hard feet’ (< *\*kalo-pēd-h<sub>3</sub>on-*) as the *-e-* is recorded

<sup>34</sup>Robin G. Collingwood and Richard P. Wright (eds), *The Roman Inscriptions of Britain, I: Inscriptions on Stone* (Oxford, 1965), no. 1543; Xavier Delamarre, *Dictionnaire de la langue gauloise. Une approche linguistique du vieux-celtique continental*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 2003), 313; Graham R. Isaac, ‘Scotland’, in Javier de Hoz, Eugenio R. Luján and Patrick Sims-Williams (eds), *New Approaches to Celtic Place-Names in Ptolemy’s Geography* (Madrid, 2005), 189–204, at 201.

<sup>35</sup>Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 23.

<sup>36</sup>John T. Koch, ‘The stone of the Weni-kones’, *BBCS* 31 (1980), 87–9.

<sup>37</sup>Jürgen Uhlich, ‘Verbal governing compounds (synthetics) in early Irish and other Celtic languages’, *Transactions of the Philological Society* 100 (2002), 403–33, at 413.

<sup>38</sup>Andrew Breeze, ‘Three Celtic names: Venicones, Tesis and Soutra’, *Scottish Language* 25 (2006), 71–9.

<sup>39</sup>De Bernardo-Stempel, ‘Linguistically Celtic ethnonyms’; on the term ‘onomastic dialects’, see John Insley, ‘Early Germanic personal names and onomastic dialects’, in Andrew James Johnston, Ferdinand von Mengden and Stefan Thim (eds), *Language and Text: Current Perspectives on English and Germanic Historical Linguistics*, *Anglistische Forschungen* 359 (Heidelberg, 2006), 113–32.

as long (-η-) in Ptolemy and it was clearly scanned long by Lucan (*unda Caledonius fallit turbata Britannos; Pharsalia* 6, 68).<sup>40</sup> But the Gaulish moneyer's name *Caletedu* (Καλετεδου)<sup>41</sup> demonstrates how a compound meaning 'having hard feet' (< \**kaletō-ped-*) would be expected to appear in a Celtic ethnonym, and inherited \**ē* is usually thought to have developed to *ī* in all of the Celtic languages well before the second century.<sup>42</sup> Instead, De Bernardo Stempel proposes to derive *Caledonii* from \**kaletō-γδόν-* 'the tough people', but similar contractions are not attested in comparable continental forms such as *Borbetomagus*.<sup>43</sup> Eric Hamp's comparison of *Caledones* to *Macedones* and a participial suffix \*-(*e*)*do-* would also render the ethnonym problematic from a Brythonic perspective as he had earlier argued that the Celtic languages replaced \*-(*e*)*do-* with \*-(*o*)*do-*.<sup>44</sup> Given the spelling *silvae Calidoniae* 'of the Caledonian Forest' recorded by Pliny (*Natural History* 4, 16), Lionel Rivet and Colin Smith maintained that the original form of the ethnonym was \**Calidones*,<sup>45</sup> and Rhys supposes that *Caledonii* may feature a suffix \*-(*e*)*do-*.<sup>46</sup> But there is no evidence for a suffix \*-(*e*)*do-* in Celtic otherwise – the Brythonic suffix \*-(*e*)*do-* is a reflex of \*-(*o*)*do-* after inherited \*-(*o*)*do-* > \*-(*o*)*do-* during the fourth or early fifth century.<sup>47</sup> Rhys points to the Gaulish moneyer's name *Caletu* and further continental names such as *Caledia*, *Caledonia*, *Caledo* and *Caledonnis*,<sup>48</sup> but personal names derived from ethnonyms (such as *Caletu* 'the Caledonian' and *Caledonia* 'of the family of the Caledonian') are common enough in provincial Roman epigraphy – compare names derived from Germanic ethnonyms such as *Tungro* 'the Tungrian' or *Batavinia* 'of the family of the Batavian'.<sup>49</sup> Rhys's analysis of *Caledonii* is morphologically unexpected, a recurrent problem with the Celtic etymologies often proposed for the ethnonyms recorded by Ptolemy for peoples dwelling north of the Antonine Wall.

Not all of the ethnonyms recorded by Ptolemy are as problematic. Five of the other forms cited by Rhys could well be regular Celtic formations.<sup>50</sup> The *Damnonii* appear to have been the 'subduers' or 'conquerors' (cf. Old Irish *damnaid* 'ties, binds, subdues, conquers'), but they evidently dwelt on both sides of the Antonine Wall. Further west, Watson proposed that the name of the

<sup>40</sup>Stefan Zimmer, 'Some names and epithets in *Culhwch ac Olwen*', *Studi Celtici* 3 (2006), 163–79, at 163–7.

<sup>41</sup>Paul-Marie Duval et al. (eds), *Recueil des inscriptions gauloises*, 4 vols (Paris, 1985–2004), M-91 and 92.

<sup>42</sup>Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain*, 304 (and n. 1).

<sup>43</sup>De Bernardo-Stempel, 'Linguistically Celtic ethnonyms', 111 n. 118; cf. Isaac, 'Scotland', 193–4.

<sup>44</sup>Eric P. Hamp, 'Traces of participial \*-(*e*)*do-* in Celtic', *Ériu* 40 (1989), 113–17; idem, 'Note on Continental Celtic and Indo-European', *EC* 38 (2008), 59–67, at 59.

<sup>45</sup>Rivet and Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain*, 289.

<sup>46</sup>Rhys, 'Approaching the Pictish language', 147–8.

<sup>47</sup>Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain*, 353–6; Zimmer, *Studies in Welsh Word-Formation*, 551.

<sup>48</sup>Xavier Delamarre, *Noms de personne celtiques dans l'épigraphie classique* (Paris, 2007), 53.

<sup>49</sup>*L'Année épigraphique* 1924, no. 21 and 1973, no. 351.

<sup>50</sup>Rhys, 'Approaching the Pictish language', 144–56.

*Epidii* of Kintyre is a *p*-Celtic coinage because of the root *ep-* ‘horse’ (< \**ēku-*) that is reflected in the Brythonic languages and Gaulish<sup>51</sup> (cf. Breton *eb* ‘horse’, Old Irish *ech* ‘horse’ and the name of the Gaulish horse goddess *Epona*) and *-id-* could well reflect \**ped-* ‘foot’ as if the ethnonym was a *bahuvrihi* ‘having horse feet’ or reflected a toponym; compare Middle Irish *ed* ‘space, distance, shelter’ < \**ped-* ‘foot (as a unit of measure)’.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, Rhys compares the *Cerones* of the west coast with the Germanic ethnonym *Caerosi*,<sup>53</sup> which has been explained most recently by Jozef van Loon as a derivative of \**hair-* ‘grey-haired, distinguished’ enlarged by the comparative suffix \*-*ōz-*,<sup>54</sup> and the Old Irish cognate *cíar* ‘brown’ (< \**kēr-* < \**keir-*) may explain *Cerones*. Moving closer to Pictland, Watson’s explanation of *Decantae* as meaning ‘those who are excellent, worthy’ based on an *-nt-* enlargement of the root of Old Irish *dech* ‘better’<sup>55</sup> can be considered regular given the Brythonic ethnonyms *Brigantes* and *Novantae*, but De Bernardo Stempel argues on typological grounds that *Dekantae* is better understood as a cognate of Gaulish *δεκάντεμ* and indicates ‘the ten’.<sup>56</sup> Further north were the *Smertae* whose ethnonym was connected rather idiosyncratically with a meaning ‘smeared ones’ by Watson, but it is more obviously to be linked with the Gaulish onomastic element *Smert-* ‘provider’.<sup>57</sup>

Yet Graham Isaac’s ‘tentative suggestion’<sup>58</sup> that *Creones* of the west coast may reflect a development (as ‘those characterised *par excellence* by body, shape; the shapely ones’) of a cognate of Middle Irish *crí* ‘body’ (< \**krip-*) seems semantically unlikely. De Bernardo Stempel interprets the name of the *Taexali* of Aberdeenshire as the ‘hatchet people’,<sup>59</sup> as if the expected form \**tāxslo-* ‘axe’<sup>60</sup> has had a palatal vowel irregularly inserted in its root, a back vowel added to its suffix and is unexpectedly missing an agentive suffix.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Rhys’s connection of the name of the *Carini* with \**karo-* ‘to love’<sup>62</sup> (supported by De Bernardo Stempel) does not explain the *-i-*, and the ethnonym seems unlikely to have had anything to do with \**kariā* ‘mistake, sin’<sup>63</sup> on semantic grounds.<sup>64</sup> *Cornaviii* is also problematic

<sup>51</sup>Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 23–4.

<sup>52</sup>Eric P. Hamp, ‘Old Irish *ed*, *id*’, *ZCP* 34 (1975), 20–9.

<sup>53</sup>Rhys, ‘Approaching the Pictish language’, 149.

<sup>54</sup>Jozef van Loon, ‘Een etymologie en haar historische implicaties: de stamnaam *Caerosi* (De Bello Gallico 2.4)’, *Verlagen en mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde* 2006, 375–400.

<sup>55</sup>Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 18.

<sup>56</sup>De Bernardo Stempel, ‘Linguistically Celtic ethnonyms’, 109.

<sup>57</sup>Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 17; Delamarre, *Dictionnaire de la langue gauloise*, 277.

<sup>58</sup>Isaac, ‘Scotland’, 196.

<sup>59</sup>De Bernardo Stempel, ‘Linguistically Celtic ethnonyms’, 108.

<sup>60</sup>Ranko Matasovic, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic*, Leiden Indo-European Etymological Dictionary Series 9 (Leiden, 2009), 374–5.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. Isaac, ‘Scotland’, 203.

<sup>62</sup>Rhys, ‘Approaching the Pictish language’, 148.

<sup>63</sup>Matasovic, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic*, 192.

<sup>64</sup>The alternate reading and etymology that links the ethnonym to the Gaulish *Caeracates* (Rivet and Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain*, 286–7) is even less acceptable given that Old Irish *caera* ‘sheep’ is a *k*-stem.

as it appears to preserve suffix vocalism of a type not expected in a Celtic ethnonym derived from *\*korno-* ‘horn’ – although Ptolemy also spells the British ethnonym *Cornovii* similarly, in contrast to the expected form that is attested epigraphically (as *Cornov[iorum]* and *Cornovia*).<sup>65</sup>

In contrast, the *Vacomagi* of Moray look to bear a dithematic construction, but Pokorny’s connection of the ethnonym with the Celtic *s*-stem *\*magos* ‘plain, field’<sup>66</sup> (cf. Old Welsh *maessid* ‘fields’) is morphologically unexpected as *Vacomagi* is an *o*-stem. The element *Vaco-* also lacks a clear etymology. The Gaulish ethnonym *Bellovaci* features an initial theme *Bello-* ‘strong, forceful’ and what appears to be a similar second element (presumably a noun), but Pokorny’s translation of *Vaco-* as ‘crooked’ is semantically improbable,<sup>67</sup> and produces an even less plausible meaning for *Bellovaci*. Many of the ethnonyms from northern Scotland recorded by Ptolemy can be taken as unproblematically Celtic. *Damnonii*, *Decantae*, *Epidii*, *Cerones*, *Cornavii*, *Smertae* and *Venicones* could be all Celtic ethnonyms, but many others attested for ancient Scotland north of the Antonine Wall can only be understood as Brythonic constructions if otherwise unparalleled phonological, morphological or semantic development is to be accepted in their derivations.

Sometimes the deviations from what would be expected of a Celtic ethnonym are small. Rhys considers the Celticity of the ethnonym *Lugi* to be ‘assured’ and suggests that it may be linked with the root *\*lug-* found in the name of the god *Lugh* (< *\*Lugus*) and Old Irish *luige* ‘oath’ (< *\*lugio*).<sup>68</sup> But a Celtic ethnonym derived from *\*lugus* or *\*lugio* would be expected to feature a plural ending such as that attested for the continental *Lugoves*,<sup>69</sup> or a form comparable to that attested in the Germanic ethnonym *Lugii* (Λουγίους) first recorded by Strabo (*Geography* 7, 1, 3). Anders Ahlqvist’s connection of the ancient Scottish ethnonym with Old Irish *loch* ‘dark, black’ is phonologically unexpected,<sup>70</sup> and Watson’s translation ‘the ravens’ is based on a folk etymology for *Lugdunum* recorded by Clitophon of Rhodes (*De Fluviiis* 6, 4),<sup>71</sup> despite the etymologies recorded in classical sources being renowned for being without any linguistic value. The problem with the spelling *Lugi* may have arisen because of how the term was transmitted originally – errors can sometimes be made out in forms recorded by Ptolemy. But the ethnonyms he recorded for regions such as Scandinavia do not feature as much irregularity as must be assumed for his description of Scotland if the forms he records are all to be understood as Brythonic coinages. Rather than reflecting widespread

<sup>65</sup> *Roman Inscriptions of Britain*, nos 288 and 639; Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain*, 377; Rivet and Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain*, 324–5.

<sup>66</sup> Julius Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, 2 vols (Bern, 1959–69), I, 1135.

<sup>67</sup> Pokorny, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, I, 1135.

<sup>68</sup> Rhys, ‘Approaching the Pictish language’, 149–50.

<sup>69</sup> Theodor Mommsen et al. (eds), *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, 17 vols (Berlin, 1863ff.), II, no. 2818 and XIII, no. 5078.

<sup>70</sup> Anders Ahlqvist, ‘Two ethnic names in Ptolemy’, *BBCS* 26 (1975), 143–6; Jacob King, ‘Lochy’ names and Adomnán’s *Nigra Dea*, *Nomina* 28 (2005), 69–91.

<sup>71</sup> Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 17.

textual irregularity, the morphology preserved in the ethnonyms recorded in the *Geography* suggests that many of the tribes that dwelt north of the Antonine Wall in Ptolemy's day may have spoken Indo-European, but not Brythonic dialects.

Only half of the ethnonyms attested by Ptolemy can be explained as regular Celtic formations – only seven from fourteen – and as Jackson observed, the most difficult forms (*Caledonii*, *Vacomagi* and *Taexali*) are those that Ptolemy places in the later Pictish heartland.<sup>72</sup> It may be that Pictish featured a lenition of *\*-t- > -d-* in *Caledonii* that did not also affect *Decantai*, *Maeatae*, *Smertae* and *Verturiones*, and semantic, textual or morphological developments could similarly excuse *Cornavii*, *Creones* and *Lugi*. But the *Verturiones*, held in the fourth century by Ammianus to be one of the two tribes of the Picts, also have an etymologically problematic ethnonym, as do Tacitus' *Boresti*. *Verturiones* was explained by Francis Diack as Celtic,<sup>73</sup> the prefix *Ver-* in *Verturiones* being commonly found in Gaulish onomastics and a root *\*tur-* is clearly preserved in the name of the Gaulish *Turones*. The Old English form *Wærteras* 'inhabitants of Fortriu', however, suggests that the ethnonym did not undergo the expected neo-Celtic development of *\*Ver- > Vor-* that dates to the end of the Roman period (cf. Bede's spellings *Vertigernus* and *Vurtigernus*).<sup>74</sup> More radically, the ethnonym *Boresti* is argued to reflect a textual corruption by Stan Wolfson,<sup>75</sup> but it seems to preserve superlative morphology not found in the neo-Celtic languages which is comparable to that attested in Ancient Greek *φῆριστος* 'best, bravest' and its Avestan cognate *bairišta* 'helping best' (< *\*b<sup>h</sup>eristos*). Many of the ethnonyms recorded in ancient sources for peoples from north of the Antonine Wall seem irregular from a Brythonic perspective – they vary morphologically, phonologically or semantically from what is expected of Celtic ethnonyms.

Forsyth claims that there are only a handful of early onomastic forms associated with ancient Scotland that cannot be explained as Brythonic,<sup>76</sup> but the evidence for Brythonic speakers living in Pictland in late antiquity is much weaker than is often asserted. Most of the names associated with peoples who lived in the region of the later Pictish kingdoms do not have acceptable Brythonic etymologies and those few names (such as *Decantae* and *Venicones*) that do can simply be taken as evidence that some Celtic was spoken in the area. Rather than try to uphold so many problematic etymologies, a better-justified conclusion would be to admit that Pictland does not seem to have been a majority Brythonic-speaking area in antiquity. Considerable evidence is preserved in ancient accounts that points to one or more non-Brythonic languages being spoken in northern Scotland in Roman

<sup>72</sup>Jackson, 'The Pictish language', 136.

<sup>73</sup>Francis C. Diack, 'Place-names of Pictland', *RC* 38 (1920–1), 109–32, at 121–2; Rivet and Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain*, 496–7.

<sup>74</sup>Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain*, 273.

<sup>75</sup>Stan Wolfson, *Tacitus, Thule and Caledonia: The Achievements of Agricola's Navy in Their True Perspective* (Oxford, 2008), 35–46.

<sup>76</sup>Forsyth, *Language in Pictland*, 19–26.

times, and given the lack of clear evidence for Brythonic morphosyntax in the Pictish inscriptions, a descendant of one of these languages may well be preserved in early medieval Pictish epigraphy.

If it is not Brythonic, however, Pictish still seems likely to have been an Indo-European language. The ethnonyms recorded by Ptolemy often seem to feature typically Indo-European derivational morphology, but not clear evidence that they are Celtic coinages. Jackson contended that the language of the Pictish inscriptions was probably non-Indo-European and Patrick Sims-Williams asserts that the non-Indo-European nature of Pictish is also apparent in river-names from the north-east of Scotland recorded by Ptolemy.<sup>77</sup> Yet Hans Krahe,<sup>78</sup> and his student W. F. H. Nicolaisen,<sup>79</sup> included northern Scotland in the area of Krahe's Old European hydronymy, a scheme of recurrent elements that appear in European river-names and that have Indo-European roots, and many of the less transparent onomastic formations associated with the Caledonians and the Picts can be explained as Indo-European. It has never been clear what to make of Krahe's theory – Nicolaisen long remained a promoter of it,<sup>80</sup> but Isaac rejects it.<sup>81</sup> Krahe saw the Old European hydronymy as reflecting an early developmental stage of the north-western Indo-European languages that preserved archaic morphophonology, and if Krahe's theory has any truth to it, Scotland should have been home to Indo-European speakers since the Bronze Age.<sup>82</sup>

Sims-Williams's contention reflects Isaac's finding of a significant number of early non-Celtic river-names in northern Scotland.<sup>83</sup> The river-names are Ptolemy's (2, 3, 1 and 5) *Boderia*, *Ila*, *Celnius*, *Nabarus* and *Tina* (Βοδερία, Ἰλα, Κελνίου, Ναβαρίου and Τίνα), and Isaac does not just find them all implausibly Celtic, he even argues that they may be non-Indo-European. Rhys rejects Isaac's analysis on the grounds that *Boderia* and *Celnius* may be corrupt spellings and that some of Isaac's criticisms of the Celtic etymologies proposed by figures such as Watson may be overblown.<sup>84</sup> But Rhys's assertion that Watson was correct to associate *Nabarus* (also recorded as Ναβαρίου and Ναυαρίου) with Greek νέφος 'cloud' (< Indo-European *\*nebʰos* 'cloud, mist'),<sup>85</sup> a form that appears to be cognate with Old Irish *nem*, Old Welsh *nem*, Old Breton *nem* and Old Cornish *nef* 'heaven, sky', presumes that the hydronym has unexpectedly retained *-b-* rather than the (otherwise) pan-Celtic

<sup>77</sup> Sims-Williams, 'Bronze- and Iron-Age Celtic-speakers', 431.

<sup>78</sup> Hans Krahe, *Unsere ältesten Flussnamen* (Wiesbaden, 1964). Old European etymologies for northern Scottish hydronyms are supplied by Krahe on 40, 49, 89, 92 and 104.

<sup>79</sup> W. F. H. Nicolaisen, 'Die alteuropäischen Gewässernamen der britischen Hauptinsel', *Beiträge zur Namenforschung* 8 (1957), 209–68.

<sup>80</sup> Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names*, 173–91; idem, '“Old European names” in Britain', *Nomina* 6 (1982), 37–42; idem, 'The functions of suffixes in early Scottish hydronymy', in Thorsten Andersson and Eva Nyman (eds), *Suffixbildungen in älteren Ortsnamen*, Acta Academiae Regiae Gustavi Adolphi 88 (Uppsala, 2004), 109–18.

<sup>81</sup> Isaac, 'Scotland', 189, n. 1.

<sup>82</sup> Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names*, 191.

<sup>83</sup> Isaac, 'Scotland', 208–13.

<sup>84</sup> Rhys, 'Approaching the Pictish language', 163–70.

<sup>85</sup> Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 47.

development *-m-*. It also assumes that *Nabarus* preserves a semantic strand ‘cloud, mist’ not surely attested (otherwise) in Celtic and that the *a*-vocalism of the root of *Nabarus* is morphophonemically irregular. A reflex of *\*neb<sup>h</sup>-* is accepted by Carolin Schneider to be preserved in Brythonic river-names such as *Amber* and *Amir* as evidence of a zero-grade development *\*ambr-* (< *\*nb<sup>h</sup>-r-*) comparable to Sanskrit *abhrá* ‘cloud’ and Latin *imber* ‘rain’.<sup>86</sup> But Nicolaisen took the similarity of *Nabarus* to *\*neb<sup>h</sup>-* as evidence that the hydronym could not be Celtic and was instead Old European (where the root vowel *-a-* is typical of Krahe’s river names).<sup>87</sup> Citing Hamp’s otherwise unsupported reconstruction of the hydronymic root as *\*h<sub>3</sub>neb<sup>h</sup>-*, Rhys asserts that the unexpected root vocalism in *Nabarus* could have arisen ‘due to assimilation to the suffix ... or regular anaptyxis from the zero-grade’,<sup>88</sup> but this claim merely underlines how irregular the discourse on Pictish often is.

Much of the analysis of the evidence found in classical sources such as Ptolemy is reliant on proposals that have long since been rendered otiose by more recent developments in comparative linguistics. Relatively few of the ethnonyms and river-names recorded by Ptolemy in areas later associated with the Picts can be considered possibly Celtic without some irregularity being acknowledged. Yet the ethnonyms and other onomastic forms recorded in ancient accounts can all be explained as reflecting some sort of Indo-European inheritance, even if a specifically Brythonic one often seems unlikely when the terms are considered from a morphological perspective. There is persistent, if unclear evidence that there were speakers of dialects other than Brythonic in Scotland in the ancient period, but these seem most plausibly taken as speakers of non-Celtic Indo-European dialects, not those of pre-Indo-European languages. The key question, however, remains – could any of these dialects have produced the consistently unexpected behaviour attested in the Pictish Ogam inscriptions?

#### 4. SIGMATIC MORPHOLOGY AND PLACE-NAMES

After the Roman legions were withdrawn from Britain and the Anglo-Saxons arrived, more sources for the linguistic nature of Pictish emerge in the form of the names recorded in medieval and modern sources. The earliest of these are contemporary with the Ogam inscriptions, but among the onomastic material, the place-name evidence is described by Simon Taylor as ‘provid[ing] the strongest indication’ that Pictish was a Brythonic language.<sup>89</sup> The evidence recorded in ancient accounts is not consistently and obviously Brythonic, and names recorded in sources such as Bede and the Pictish kings’ lists sometimes

<sup>86</sup>Dagmar Wodtko, Britta Irslinger and Carolin Schneider, *Nomina im indogermanischen Lexikon* (Heidelberg, 2008), 499–504.

<sup>87</sup>Nicolaisen, ‘Die alteuropäischen Gewässernamen der britischen Hauptinsel’, 250; idem, *Scottish Place-Names*, 188–9; idem, ‘“Old European names” in Britain’, 41; idem, ‘The functions of suffixes in early Scottish hydronymy’, 114.

<sup>88</sup>Eric P. Hamp, ‘On claims of pre-Celtic place-names’, *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 16 (1990), 191–2, at 192; Rhys, ‘Approaching the Pictish language’, 167.

<sup>89</sup>Taylor, ‘Pictish place-names revisited’, 68.

appear to preserve contradictory evidence.<sup>90</sup> Yet Taylor contends that the evidence of place-names, mostly recorded long after Pictish had become extinct, is the most important consideration for understanding the nature of the ancient and early medieval language. Taylor's approach is clearly a resumption of that of Watson, whose main evidence for the Brythonic nature of Pictish was the place-name evidence that he was the first to assess in such a comprehensive manner. But many of Watson's findings have been rejected by later specialists such as Taylor. Contemporary Scottish place-name analysts appear to have decided that Watson's approach to Pictish was sound, even if many of the key parts of his argument should now be rejected. But before considering this evidence and its re-evaluation by place-name specialists such as Taylor, a closer examination of the epigraphic evidence is required.

The key problem with Taylor's approach to understanding Pictish is that it appears to reverse the relationship of the place-name evidence to the epigraphic material that applies in most other regions from which there are records of fragmentarily attested languages or *Trümmersprachen*. Inscriptions that appear to preserve more than just names are key to determining linguistic affiliation because the core of a language is not generally held to be the onomastics, but rather the morphosyntax, the verbal system, the system of deixis and counting – the onomastic dialect may be only a surface feature from a structural perspective. In contact-induced linguistic change, significant lexical replacement or suppletion may occur without a corresponding change in the basic vocabulary or at the morphosyntactic level.<sup>91</sup> Many English place-name elements have parallels in Latin or French because of borrowing, not because English is an Italic or Romance language. The more significant the influence of loanwords becomes, however, the more a language will tend to be influenced phonologically and morphosyntactically, until in extreme instances either language shift or creolisation may occur.<sup>92</sup> The Ogam inscriptions are presumably so difficult to interpret because they record core linguistic features of Pictish – such as the sigmatic inflexional morpheme apparently recorded in the spelling *Nehhtons* on the Lunnasting stone – whereas the place-names assessed by Watson and Taylor may only preserve borrowed elements. Pictish could well simply have loaned the place-name elements set out by Watson and Taylor from Brythonic languages that speakers of Pictish were in contact with over an extended period of time. If the toponymic evidence is indeed the 'strongest indication' of the

<sup>90</sup>For example, Bede (*Historia Ecclesiastica* 5, 21) records a letter addressed to *Naiton rex Pictorum* whose name appears to have been recorded in the king-lists as *Nechtan* and on the Lunnasting stone as *Nehhtons* as if one form (*Naiton*) is Brythonic (cf. *Neithon* of Al Clut) but the other (*Nechtan*, *Nehhtons*) is Pictish or Gaelic. He also records a place-name *Peanfahel* (*Historia Ecclesiastica* 1, 12) that he says is Pictish (despite it lying south of the Firth of Forth and hence not being in Pictland), but which has usually been taken as if it were a Gaelicised Brythonic formation (Jackson, 'The Pictish language', 143).

<sup>91</sup>Sara Grey Thomason and Terrence Kaufman, *Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics* (Berkeley, 1988), 50.

<sup>92</sup>A different mix of feature transfer may occur in instances of linguistic 'imposition', however, for example in migrant languages when most speakers use a different dominant language; see Donald Winford, 'Theories of language contact', in Anthony P. Grant (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Change* (Oxford, 2020), 51–74, at 58–9.

Celtic nature of Pictish, the case supported by the place-names seems inherently weak given how readily loanwords can and do occur, and how heavily they may affect languages (including the associated toponymy).

The Ogam inscriptions have largely been addressed previously in an etymological manner, with putative terms and names being associated with similar-looking forms found in better-understood contexts. The usual practice in Etruscan studies, however, has been to employ ‘combinatory’ (collocation) and ‘bilingual’ (text-type) methods rather than to rely on an etymological approach – appeals to Indo-European etymologies have generally failed to advance the analysis of what is generally accepted to be the main non-Indo-European language of ancient Italy.<sup>93</sup> The bilingual approach to Etruscan entails comparing Etruscan inscriptions with similar Latin, Old Italic or Greek texts that are better understood, and a similar approach can be applied to the Pictish Ogams. Funerary inscriptions are the commonest type of monumental epigraph and they are normally formulaic, whether they appear on Irish memorials, Scandinavian rune-stones or Latin monuments, and it seems most principled to examine the Ogam inscriptions of Pictland from the perspective of their recurrent elements – how they are collocated and how the combinations recorded in the inscriptions compare to what is typically found in contemporary Old Irish, Old Norse, Latin and Old English memorials. Old Irish, Old Norse and Latin funerary texts are highly formulaic and Old English memorials seem largely to have followed fixed forms as well, making the bilingual or text-type approach very likely to be applicable to the analysis of Pictish.

One of the recurrent forms in the Pictish Ogam inscriptions has been proposed to be the Bressay stone’s *crrosc* ‘cross’ as it is similar to the spelling *c[e]rroccs* attested on the Burrian stone. But a clearer instance is *maqq*, an element that is preserved five times and which appears to be spelt twice more as *meqq*.<sup>94</sup> Others still include sequences such as *ette* and *datt-*, and recurrent endings such as *-s* and *-evv* are also evident. Marking the recurrent elements in bold and the endings with underlining, the inscriptions that feature some commonality are:<sup>95</sup>

|                    |                                                                                         |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Golspie            | <i>allhhallorredd<b>maqq</b>niavrrcerr</i>                                              |
| Latheron           | <i>dunnodnnat<b>maqq</b>net[u]</i>                                                      |
| Formaston          | <i><b>nehht</b>vrobaccenne<u>vv</u>   <b>maqq</b>otalluorrrh</i>                        |
| Altyre             | <i>jam<b>maqq</b>[.].[a].[m]vsmahhr[a]rassudds</i>                                      |
| Dyce 2             | <i>eottassarhetoddedd<b>maqq</b>rogoddadd</i>                                           |
| St Ninian’s Isle 1 | <i>[b]e<b>smeqq</b>nanammovves<sup>t</sup></i>                                          |
| Bressay            | <i><b>crrosc</b>:nahhtv<u>ddadd</u>s:<b>datt</b>r:ann. bennises:<b>meqq</b>ddrroann</i> |
| Burrian            | <i>i[.].irrannurractke<u>vv</u>c[e]rroccs</i>                                           |
| Lunnasting         | <i><b>ette</b>cuhetts:ahehhtannn:hccv<u>vevv</u>:<b>nehht</b>ons</i>                    |

<sup>93</sup>Rex E. Wallace, *Zikh Rasna: A Manual of the Etruscan Language and Inscriptions* (Ann Arbor, 2008), 10–13.

<sup>94</sup>Jackson, ‘The Pictish language’, 140.

<sup>95</sup>After Forsyth, *The Ogam Inscriptions of Scotland*, and Iain Fraser (ed.), *The Pictish Symbol Stones of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 2008), 13.

|                 |                                         |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Cunningsburgh 2 | <i>..ehteconmors_</i> ...               |
| Brandsbutt      | <i>irataddoarens_</i>                   |
| Cunningsburgh 3 | <i>etteco ... avvr ... av:datt[...]</i> |
| Brodie          | <i>eddarrnonn</i>                       |
| Scoonie         | <i>eddarrnonn</i>                       |

As Jackson noted, the variant *meqq* appears as if it may reflect the Gaelic genitive of *mac(c)* ‘son’,<sup>96</sup> but each time *meqq* appears (as *bennises* : *meqq* on the Bressay and [*b*]es *meqq* on the St Ninian’s Isle 1 stones) it follows a form ending in *-s*, which suggests that the *-s* is a case marker. Taking the ending as a genitive marker makes little sense from a neo-Celtic perspective, but as *Nechtán* appears to reflect a development of *\*Neptuh<sub>3</sub>nos*, the most obvious manner in which to interpret the marker is as a retained Indo-European nominative singular or genitive singular ending. Yet the ending *-s* is not found in conjunction with all likely names recorded in the inscriptions – the texts *allhhalloreddmaqqniavarrcerr* on the Golspie stone and *dunnodnnatmaqqnet[u]* from Latheron appear to feature names without such an ending before the indication *maqq*,<sup>97</sup> and *eddarrnonn* on the Brodie and Scoonie stones has plausibly been linked with the name of St Ethernan (which was presumably, like *Nechtán*, also an *o*-stem originally).<sup>98</sup> An *s*-genitive makes sense from an Old Norse or Old English perspective, but the Germanic ending is also inherited from Indo-European, being a reflex of the genitive singular thematic marker *\*-os̥io*, and the sigmatic marker could be an inherited possessive with *Nehhtons* ‘Nehhton’s’ < *\*Neptuh<sub>3</sub>nos̥io*.

Rather than a mishmash of Old Norse and Gaelic, the sequence on the Bressay stone is more regularly interpreted as a memorial featuring two Pictish names and several Pictish lexical modifiers. The recording of two names is characteristic of Roman, Old Norse and Old English memorials, with one name representing that of the commissioner and the other the memorialised. In Old Norse and Old English funerary texts, the name of the commissioner regularly comes first,<sup>99</sup> whereas Roman memorials often topicalise or raise the memorialised person’s name to initial position (particularly when the formula *Dis Manibus* ‘to the spirits of the departed’ is used). Many of the interpretations of the Pictish Ogam inscriptions have treated syntax as if it were secondary to etymological analysis, but an interpretation of the opening sequence on the Bressay stone as *\*Nahtudads dótr Ann[a]* represents the reverse of the syntax regularly found in Old Norse forms such as *Ingibjörg dótr Andréss* ‘Ingebjörg daughter of Andreas’. Instead, *nahhtvddadds* appears more regularly taken as the name of the person the stone was set up to commemorate,<sup>100</sup> with *nises:meqqddroann* (as Clancy segments the text) representing the name of a second person – that of the commissioner of the

<sup>96</sup>Jackson, ‘The Pictish language’, 140.

<sup>97</sup>Forsyth, ‘The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland’, 299–320 and 360–73.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., 139–59 and 480–94.

<sup>99</sup>Claiborne W. Thompson, *Studies in Upplandic Runography* (Austin, 1975), 9; Raymond I. Page, *An Introduction to Old English Runes*, 2nd ed. (Woodbridge, 1999), 140–2.

<sup>100</sup>Cf. Victor E. Nash-Williams, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales* (Cardiff, 1950), 7–10.

monument. A more regular syntactic approach to the Bressay inscription than to take it as a pastiche of Old Norse and Gaelic is to interpret it (following Clancy's segmentation) as '(memorial) cross of Nahtudad ... of Nissi mac Dróán', with the difficult text in the middle reflecting a memorial expression. In Old Norse memorials, the fixed phrase is usually *let ræisa stæin þennsa æftir* 'set up this stone in memory of' or a similar expression,<sup>101</sup> while Old English inscriptions often just have *sette æfter* 'set up in memory of'.<sup>102</sup> A verb phrase of this sort would not appear after its subject or object in a language that featured mandatory verb-initial word order, however, the key syntactic characteristic of the Insular Celtic languages.

If a similar interpretation is applied to the morphologically marked terms on the Lunnasting stone, a comparable syntax seems to be evident. If its first *s*-marked element is accepted to be a name, its inscription can also be understood as preserving two *s*-genitives, *Cuhetts* and *Nehhtons*, separated by a memorial expression. Where the middle sequence in the Bressay inscription (if Clancy's segmentation is followed) looks to have been *dattr : ann . | ben*, on the Lunnasting stone it appears to be *ahéhhtannn : hccvvevv*. Most recently, Forsyth interprets *ettecuhetts* as 'this is far' and a similarly *s*-marked sequence on a stone from Cunningsburgh, Shetland, as *eheteconmors* 'this is great'.<sup>103</sup> But Forsyth had earlier accepted that *conmors* was 'probably' a form of the Old Welsh name *Conmor* (< \**Kunomoros*)<sup>104</sup> – her more recent interpretation has evidently developed from her attempt to explain the element *-s* as a Celtic demonstrative. The key feature of the forms in *-s*, however, is that they often appear in connection with names in text-final position, and Forsyth suggests that *ira* in the sequence *irataddoarens* on the Brandsbutt stone could be interpreted as 'here lies' (comparable to the common Latin memorial expression *hic iacet* or Old Irish Ogam *koi*).<sup>105</sup> Given the Bressay stone's *crrosc:nahhtvvdadds*, the Cunningsburgh and Brandsbutt inscriptions seem more regularly interpreted on morphosyntactic grounds as featuring *s*-marked names in final position following expressions indicating 'memorial stone' or 'in memory of'.

More remarkably, the sequences that come between the two forms marked with *-s* in the Bressay and Lunnasting inscriptions share the recurrent sequence *ann* or *annn*. Given the segmentation proposed by Clancy, the Lunnasting inscription can also be taken to feature much the same syntax as the Bressay text, with forms marked with *-s* appearing in the same position relative to *ann*:

*crrosc nahhtvvdadds dattr ann ben nises meqq ddrroann*  
*ette cuhett ahéhht annn hccvvevv nehhtons*

<sup>101</sup>Thompson, *Studies in Upplandic Runography*, 9.

<sup>102</sup>Page, *An Introduction to Old English Runes*, 141–2.

<sup>103</sup>Katherine Forsyth, 'Pictish language and documents', in John T. Koch (ed.), *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, 2006), 1444–6, at 1444.

<sup>104</sup>Forsyth, 'The Ogam inscriptions of Scotland', 357.

<sup>105</sup>Forsyth, *Language in Pictland*, 36 n. 133.

The two inscriptions (both from Shetland) appear to represent much the same type of text, with *ette* (also found on the Cunningsburgh 3 stone and beginning the the Roman-letter text on the Newton stone)<sup>106</sup> presumably a comparable expression to *crrosc*. If the Bressay inscription is correctly interpreted as ‘(memorial) cross of Nahtudad ... of Nissi mac Dróán’, the similar Lunnasting text seems likely to have meant ‘(memorial) *ette* of Cuhett ... of Nehhton’.

In funerary memorials, the memorial elements are usually formulaic and fixed, and the variation is mainly confined to the onomastic elements. This cross-linguistically common distribution suggests that the sequences *ann* and *annn* are likely to be the formulaic memorial expression equivalent to ‘set up in memory of’ and a similar sequence *ann* also appears to be recorded on the stone from Burrian, Orkney, with the text before *cerroccs* presumably preserving a name. The form *urractkevv* cannot be immediately connected with a name attested in another source, although *hccvvevv* and the sequence *nehhtv-robaccennevv* on the Formaston stone (from Aberdeenshire) both have similar endings,<sup>107</sup> which suggests that the inscription may feature verb-second word order: *if .Jir ann urractkevv cerroccs*. The Lunnasting stone’s *dattr* may also be formulaic as it is apparently paralleled as *datt[...]* on the Cunningsburgh 3 stone, but determining a specific meaning for it (nominal, adverbial or otherwise) remains difficult.

Rather than being completely obscure, then, it is evident that names can be rescued from some of the Pictish Ogam inscriptions and that other recurrent elements such as *ette* and *ann* can also be discerned. But the key morphosyntactic feature appears to be the sigmatic marking of names attested in many of the inscriptions, a behaviour that does not seem likely to be Gaelic or Brythonic in origin. The sigmatic morpheme could have been retained from a form of Celtic that had preserved separate genitive inflexional morphology of a kind for which Koch found no later evidence in his scheme for the development of the early case system of Welsh.<sup>108</sup> But no sign of the inherited Indo-European genitive marker preserved in Lepontic as *-oiso* is continued in Old Irish, Celtiberian or Gaulish either, and the Pictish Ogam inscriptions are so difficult to make sense of otherwise that it seems more likely that they record a non-Celtic language. Nor is the sigmatic marker reasonably considered a sign that the inscriptions are Old Norse or have otherwise been influenced by Germanic (perhaps Old English) morphology given that morphological loaning is comparatively rare and is usually concomitant with heavy lexical borrowing. The idea that the morpheme may reflect influence from a non-Indo-European language (given that Etruscan, after all, also has an *s*-genitive) also seems to be ruled out by the Indo-European appearance of all the ethnonyms attested in

<sup>106</sup>Kelly Kilpatrick, ‘The Newton stone and writing in Pictland’, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 150 (2021), 7–22 and 407–34.

<sup>107</sup>Given it is so common, *-evv* is probably another Pictish morphological ending. It may represent the same ending as that found in Old Irish \**Fortriu* (genitive singular *Fortrenn*; cf., similarly, *Ériu* ‘Ireland’, genitive singular *Érenn*), which if the connection with *Verturiones* is to be upheld, could reflect a nominative singular *n*-stem ending (< Indo-European \**-iō(n)*).

<sup>108</sup>Koch, ‘The loss of final syllables’.

northern Scotland in classical sources. The most obvious conclusion is that the endings in *-s* represent a Pictish grammatical marker inherited from Indo-European that distinguishes the language of the inscriptions from Gaelic and Brythonic. The marker appears to represent an inherited genitive ending and it seems to represent the key diagnostic linguistic feature preserved in Pictish epigraphy.

The Ogam inscriptions suggest that any Celtic elements in Pictish are loaned. There is also evidence that some of the recurrent elements preserved in early Scottish place-names that are often connected with Brythonic are in fact Gaelic coinages. The main evidence cited by Jackson for 'Pritenic' Pictish was the element *pit-* preserved in over 300 northern Scottish place-names.<sup>109</sup> It had been linked with Welsh *peth* 'thing' and Old Irish *cuir* 'part, property' by Rudolf Thurneysen,<sup>110</sup> terms that never appear in Welsh and Irish place-names. It was later observed by Taylor, however, that *pit-* is always employed with a Gaelic second element and hence that it is a relatively recent place-name formant.<sup>111</sup> But if the element only became productive at a relatively late date, then it is not good evidence that Pictish was a Celtic language any more than the Gaelic place-names with *pit-* are evidence that Gaelic is a *p*-Celtic dialect. The main evidence for Pictish being a *p*-Celtic dialect was an illusion – *pit-* seems likely to have been a loan of Middle Latin *petia*, *petium* 'piece (of land)', a term that Thurneysen argued was a loanword from Gaulish,<sup>112</sup> but Charles Livingston took to reflect a Vulgar Latin verb *\*pettio*, *\*pettiare* < *\*peditio*, *\*peditiare* 'to measure in feet'.<sup>113</sup>

Other elements that recur in Scottish place-names were argued by Watson to reflect terms that are widely paralleled in Brythonic toponymy. What seems to be a cognate of the Welsh place-name element *aber-* 'river-mouth, confluence' (< *\*ad-ber-* 'carry to') is commonly attested in Scotland,<sup>114</sup> but it sometimes appears in an early variant *apor-* that Rhys argues reflects early Gaelic phonological development.<sup>115</sup> The frequency of the *aber-* (and *apor-*) names in Scotland and the lack of cognate forms in Old Irish suggest a connection with Brythonic, but like the toponymic element that apparently continues *pit-*, the Scottish names featuring *aber-* could just represent Gaelic formations. Some of the *aber*-names are not obviously connected with river-mouths or confluences (as if they instead reflect Gaelic *eabar* 'marsh, mud, puddle' < *\*ek-ber-*), and they include *Stagnum Aporum* (Lochaber) and *Aporcrossan* (Applecross) on the west coast. Like the *pit*-names, many of the recurrent elements attested in Scottish toponymy that have been linked with similar Welsh forms may reflect Gaelic coinages rather than be evidence that

<sup>109</sup>Jackson, 'The Pictish language', 146–8.

<sup>110</sup>R. Thurneysen, *Keltoromanisches: Die keltischen Etymologien im etymologischen Wörterbuch der romanischen Sprachen von F. Diez* (Halle a. S., 1884), 71.

<sup>111</sup>Taylor, 'Pictish place-names revisited', 78; cf. Nicolaisen, *Scottish Place-Names*, 151–9.

<sup>112</sup>Thurneysen, 70–2.

<sup>113</sup>Charles H. Livingston, 'Etymologie du mot français "pièce"', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 55 (1954), 178–88.

<sup>114</sup>Watson, *The History of the Celtic Place-Names of Scotland*, 458–67.

<sup>115</sup>Rhys, 'Approaching the Pictish language', 191–3.

Pictish was a Brythonic language. Some Gaelic terms may have been adopted from Cumbric or could just reflect inherited elements that became more popular in Scotland than they were in Ireland. When they are analysed closely, the place-names explained by Watson as Pictish often do not preserve clear evidence that they are Brythonic coinages, despite the acceptance of many of Watson's etymologies by figures such as Jackson.

## 5. CONCLUSION

There is undoubtedly some evidence that shows that Pictish onomastics was influenced by Brythonic, but there does not seem to be much cause to conclude more than that. The Pictish inscriptions, however, appear to preserve morphosyntactic evidence that a non-Celtic language was spoken in much of north-eastern Scotland during the early medieval period, one that would be expected to have long been in contact with Cumbric and presumably also to have been affected by language contact. If many members of the Pictish elite were descended from Brythonic speakers who had become linguistically acculturated to a non-Celtic idiom – or were descended from Pictish speakers who had adopted Brythonic – the evidence for some etymologically Brythonic names but inscriptions that appear to be resistant to an analysis as Celtic would be expected. English toponymy is riddled with loanwords from Latin and French as well as those of Celtic origin and no one would argue that place-names featuring *-caster*, *-don*, *-minster*, *-port*, *-street* or *-wick* are good evidence that English is a Romance or a Celtic language. But the Ogam inscriptions appear to be good evidence that Pictish was not a Brythonic language – the linguistic evidence points in the reverse direction to that argued by Taylor, Smyth and Forsyth.

Much of the analysis of the Pictish language has taken its direction from the attempts of early writers such as Macbain and Watson to demonstrate that the Picts were Brythonic-speakers. Often their etymologies have been rendered implausible by more recent developments in comparative linguistics, from the reconsideration of Indo-European apophony that arose after the decipherment of Hittite to more recent studies of Celtic word formation. Other etymologies promoted by Macbain, Watson and later authors are inconsistent with Brythonic phonological development or just appear to represent Gaelic coinages. Similarly inconclusive interpretations of the Pictish inscriptions have emerged that seek to gloss over evidence that cannot reasonably be explained as Brythonic, Gaelic or Old Norse. The conclusion must remain that Jackson was correct in his assessment that epigraphic Pictish was not a Celtic language and that some of the evidence for Celtic names in north-eastern Scotland reflects Brythonic influence. But only one language needs to be posited to explain the inscriptions commissioned by the early medieval Pictish elite, a morphosyntactically non-Celtic idiom that onomastic evidence suggests may have been significantly influenced by Brythonic.

BERNARD MEES

## THOUGHTS ON THE *UOTUM MALI*

### ABSTRACT

In Old Irish, the word *díberg* designated not only the activity of brigandage, and by extension an individual who performed such activity; but also a vow to kill undertaken by a brigand, and symbolic headgear representing this vow. It is proposed that the word *mind*, attested in the senses ‘diadem’ and ‘relic’, was originally also used of headgear of this kind. The discussion concludes with further observations on practices associated with oaths in pre-Christian Ireland, and on the changes undergone by these practices in the early Christian period.

THE TRACT HEADED *De disputatione Hibernensis sinodi et Grigori Nasaseni; sermo de innumerabilibus peccatis incipit*, conventionally designated ‘Irish Canons I’, includes the following ruling (citing the edition and translation by Ludwig Bieler):

Haec est poenitentia magi uel uotiui mali si<ue> crudelis, †iddem ergach, † uel praeconis uel cohabitatoris uel heretici uel adulteri, id est .vii. anni in pane et aqua.

‘This is the penance of a wizard, or of one who has vowed himself to evil, or a malefactor or of a hawker, or of a cohabiter, or of a heretic, or of an adulterer: seven years on bread and water.’<sup>1</sup>

In a note, Bieler observed that Whitley Stokes had proposed that the crux be interpreted as a corruption of *id est díbergach*, glossing the ‘one who has vowed himself to evil’ with an Old Irish word for ‘brigand’; but he gave it as his own view that ‘a scribal misreading such as assumed by Stokes is very difficult to explain’.<sup>2</sup> Subsequent scholarship has however followed Stokes rather than Bieler on this point. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) MS lat. 12021, the unique witness, is a Breton manuscript of the early tenth century; Bieler himself acknowledged that its text ‘is in a very bad condition’,<sup>3</sup> and two further Old Irish phrases are also garbled.<sup>4</sup> The correctness of Stokes’s emendation is confirmed by the presence of the statement in the ‘Old-Irish Table of Penitential Commutations’ that *diberggae 7 druithdechta 7 cantechda* (‘brigandage, druidism, and satirising’) are among the grievous sins for which no commutation is possible;<sup>5</sup> and in the legal tract *Bretha Crólige* the triad

<sup>1</sup>Ludwig Bieler (ed. and trans.), *The Irish Penitentials*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 5 (Dublin, 1963), 160–1, §4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 251; cf. *Thes* ii, 38.

<sup>3</sup>Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, 14, 26.

<sup>4</sup>*Coaid siir throscho* for *coaid siirthroscho*, *fordoborfiit* for *fordobor 7 ith* (*Thes* ii, 38).

<sup>5</sup>D. A. Binchy (ed. and trans.), ‘The Old-Irish table of penitential commutations’, *Ériu* 19 (1962), 47–72, at 58–9, §5.

*drúí, díbergach, cáinte* ('a druid, a reaver, a satirist') clearly corresponds to the *magus, uotiuus mali* and *praeco* of 'Irish Canons I'.<sup>6</sup> Closely similar is a passage in the Middle Irish *Betha Colmáin maic Lúacháin*, where an irredeemable sinner is characterised as *drú[i] nō díbergach nō mac mallachta* ('a druid or a marauder or a son of malediction').<sup>7</sup>

In a source that appears to belong to the seventh century, then, a *díbergach* or brigand is characterised as a *uotiuus mali*.<sup>8</sup> Commenting on Bieler's translation of 'Irish Canons I', the late Richard Sharpe stated that the rendering of *mali* as 'malefactor' is 'certainly wrong; *uotum mali* is a definite phrase [...], the *uotiuus mali* one who has taken the vow of evil'.<sup>9</sup> In support of this view he cited passages in the *uitae* of Irish saints for which he believed that 'a date earlier than A.D. 800 can be argued':<sup>10</sup> of these, the Life of Saint Cainnech speaks of 'twelve *laici* promising an evil vow, that is, *díbergaig*' (*.xii. laici uotum malum promittentes, silicet dibergich*);<sup>11</sup> while a young man in the Life of Ailbe 'vowed a most evil vow, that is, *díberg*' (*uotum pessimum uouit, silicet dibherc*).<sup>12</sup> From the context it is apparent that the substance of this vow is a commitment to taking human life: only after he has killed is the votary freed from the obligation undertaken.

Besides meaning 'brigandage', then – and, by a semantic extension found with several Irish nouns designating functions or activities, 'one who practices brigandage, a brigand'<sup>13</sup> – *díberg* was a term for the *uotum mali*, the vow to

<sup>6</sup>D. A. Binchy (ed. and trans.), 'Bretha Crólige', *Ériu* 12 (1938), 1–77, at 40–1, §51. The testimony of the vernacular texts is valuable in interpreting the sense in which 'Irish Canons I' uses the Latin word *praeco*, the more usual meaning of which is 'herald, crier'.

<sup>7</sup>Kuno Meyer (ed. and trans.), *Betha Colmáin maic Lúacháin: Life of Colmán son of Lúachan*, Todd Lecture Series 17 (Dublin, 1911), 106–7, §106. I have slightly adjusted Meyer's text and translation: he read *drú[th]*, which he translated as 'jester', but in a footnote acknowledged the possibility that the real reading might be *drúí*.

<sup>8</sup>Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, 9: 'None of the six texts [...] with the possible exception of *De arreis* (Text II), would seem to be later than the middle of the seventh century.'

<sup>9</sup>Richard Sharpe, 'Hiberno-Latin *laicus*, Irish *láech* and the devil's men', *Ériu* 30 (1979), 75–92, at 82 n. 36.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 79 and n. 21. Sharpe presented this argument in *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives: An Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* (Oxford, 1991), especially Chapters 7–9. While Sharpe's views on the dating of these *uitae* have been accepted by eminent scholars – e.g. Máire Herbert, 'Latin and vernacular hagiography of Ireland from the origins to the sixteenth century', in Guy Philippart (ed.), *Hagiographies 3* (Turnhout, 2001), 327–60, at 336–9 – some doubts have also been expressed. Thus I noted what seemed to me to be problems with Sharpe's position in my review of *Medieval Irish Saints' Lives* in *Speculum* 68 (1993), 260–2; for other critical discussions, see for instance Caoimhín Breatnach, 'The significance of the orthography of Irish proper names in the Codex Salmanticensis', *Ériu* 55 (2005), 85–101; Pádraig Ó Riain, 'The O'Donohue Lives of the Salamanca Codex: the earliest collection of Irish saints' lives?', in Sarah Sheehan, Joanne Findon and Westley Follett (eds), *Gablánach in Scélaigeacht: Celtic Studies in Honour of Ann Dooley* (Dublin, 2013), 38–52.

<sup>11</sup>W. W. Heist (ed.), *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae: ex codice olim Salmanticensi, nunc Bruxelensi*, Subsidia Hagiographica 28 (Brussels, 1965), 194. In the article cited in n. 9 above, Sharpe presents evidence that in Hiberno-Latin the word *laicus*, besides meaning 'layman', could mean 'warrior', 'pagan' and 'brigand'.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 126. In the same passage the vow is referred to as a *diabolicum... uotum*.

<sup>13</sup>For discussion of this usage see Liam Breatnach, 'On Old Irish collective and abstract nouns, the meaning of *cétmuinter*, and marriage in early Ireland', *Ériu* 66 (2016), 1–29, at 1–6.

perform evil; and the derivative form *díbergach* could refer not only to one who engaged in brigandage, but more specifically to one who had taken such a vow.

In further sources the *uotum mali* is said to have been represented, and to some extent indeed embodied, in signs or tokens worn by the votaries. Again, it is Sharpe who has assembled the relevant dossier.

The earliest attestation is in the *uita* of Patrick by Muirchú, from the late seventh century, where it is said of Macuil, the leader of a band of marauders, that he put on *signa [...] nequissima* preparatory to embarking on murderous raids; the word *signa* is glossed *diberca* in the copy of Muirchú's *uita* in the ninth-century Book of Armagh.<sup>14</sup>

The text designated *Vita prima Sanctae Brigidae* by the Bollandists, which has been variously dated to the seventh and the eighth centuries,<sup>15</sup> mentions such 'signs' in two episodes; in both cases they are called *stigmata*. In the first of these, a warrior named Conall came to Brigit with his followers, 'under evil signs' (*sub stigmatibus malignis*): he told her that 'we wish to go into distant regions, so that we may unfasten these our bonds (*ista uincula nostra*). For (their) unfastening is to kill and destroy enemies.' Brigit prayed that they would lay down these *signa diaboli*, and having witnessed her miraculous powers they eventually did so.<sup>16</sup> In the second episode, it is 'certain idle and vain men, having devilish signs on their heads' (*quidam uiri otiosi et uani, habentes stigmata diabolica in capitibus suis*), who came to Brigit while bound on a murderous errand. Rather cryptically, they told her: 'We are not able to put off our signs, unless someone takes them upon himself (?), lest they fall to the earth' (*Non possumus dimittere stigmata nostra, nisi aliquis sufferat ea ne cadant in terram*). Brigit took them from the warriors, and 'was greatly wondering at the forms of the signs' (*multum mirabatur signorum formas*).<sup>17</sup> As Sharpe comments: 'The vow must have been to kill someone, specified or unspecified. The *signa diabolica* were worn to indicate that one was bound by this vow and might not be removed until it was fulfilled.'<sup>18</sup>

That the 'signs' were worn on the head is also attested in the *Vita prior Sancti Lugidi*, another of the *uitae* dated by Sharpe to the eighth century.<sup>19</sup> Here the warriors in a marauding 'troop of the Devil' (*scola diaboli*) are described as 'having signs on (their) heads' (*uexilla in capitibus habentes*).<sup>20</sup> This usage may

<sup>14</sup>Ludwig Bieler (ed. and trans.), *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, Scriptores Latini Hiberniae 10 (Dublin, 1979), 102–3.

<sup>15</sup>Detailed arguments for differing datings are for instance set forth by Richard Sharpe, 'Vita S. Brigidae: the oldest texts', *Peritia* 1 (1982), 81–106; and by Kim McCone, 'Brigit in the seventh century: a saint with three lives?', *Peritia* 1 (1982), 107–45. Thomas Charles-Edwards has now given his support to a seventh-century date: 'Early Irish law, St Patrick and the date of the *Senchas Már*', *Ériu* 71 (2021), 19–59, at 32–3.

<sup>16</sup>John Colgan, *Triadis thaumaturgae seu divorum Patricii, Columbae et Brigidae trium veteris et maioris Scotiae, seu Hiberniae sanctorum insulae communium patronorum acta* (Leuven, 1647), 534–5.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 535.

<sup>18</sup>Sharpe, 'Hiberno-Latin *laicus*', 84.

<sup>19</sup>See n. 10 above.

<sup>20</sup>Heist, *Vitae*, 140–1.

indeed be already implicit in Muirchú's account of Macuil, in which the brigand with his *signa nequissima* confronts the contrasting figure of Patrick 'shining with [...] as it were, the wondrous diadem (*deademate*) of heavenly glory';<sup>21</sup> and in fact in the version of the same episode in the later *Vita tertia Sancti Patricii* it is said that Macuil and his followers placed 'devilish signs upon their heads, that is, *díberg*' (*signa diabolica super capita sua, id est díberch*).<sup>22</sup>

*Díberg*, then, can signify not only the actions of a brigand (and by extension the brigand himself), as well as a brigand's vow to kill; but also a token of some kind, worn on the head, that serves as the sign and physical representation of that vow. I propose that early Irish had a further word for such a token: the noun *mind*. In *DIL* two primary senses are offered for *mind*: '(a) a distinguishing badge or emblem of honour or rank, esp. one worn on the head, a crown, diadem, etc.'; and '(b) a halidom or venerated object, esp. something connected with a saint [...]. Such halidoms were frequently used for taking oaths on and making compacts'.<sup>23</sup> Two such divergent meanings – an ornament, specifically for the head; and a guarantee for oaths – can I think best be explained on the hypothesis that *mind* originally designated a special headgear on which vows were sworn – precisely such an object as we have seen called *díberg* in other sources.<sup>24</sup>

I am not the first to suggest this interpretation: in an extended discussion of traditional usages whereby an initiate's 'change of fate and state [...] appears [...] to have been embodied in the band or crown about his head', Richard Broxton Onians adduced Irish *mind* as an instance.<sup>25</sup> Onians noted the particular importance of the idea of binding in association with headgear of this kind,<sup>26</sup> recalling the use of the word *uincula* to designate the 'evil signs' in *Vita prima sanctae Brigitae*.

<sup>21</sup> Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, 102–3.

<sup>22</sup> Ludwig Bieler, *Four Latin Lives of St. Patrick: Colgan's Vita Secunda, Quarta, Tertia, and Quinta*, *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae* 8 (Dublin, 1971), 170.

<sup>23</sup> The further senses '(c) transf. of persons, commonly used of heroes, kings, saints', '(d) an oath, vow' are evidently derivative, based on senses (a) and (b) respectively. *DIL*, s.v. *I mind (minn)*: for this entry, I cite the 1939 fascicle arranged by Maud Joynt, to which *eDIL* at the time of writing has added nothing bearing upon the present discussion.

<sup>24</sup> In the Würzburg glosses on Paul's epistles, *mind* glosses *stigmata*, the word applied to the *signa diaboli* in the *Vita prima* (*Thes* i, 630, Wb 20d6). Besides the early references to *mind* as 'diadem' in specifically Irish sources, cf. the use of *minn*, plural *minnou* in the sense 'wreath' (*sertum*) in the ninth-century (?) Old Welsh glosses on Martianus Capella, where the Old Welsh word is generally supposed to be a loan from Old Irish: Whitley Stokes, 'The Old Welsh glosses on Martianus Capella with some notes on the Juvencus-glosses', *Beiträge zur vergleichenden Sprachforschung* 7 (1873), 385–416, at 392; cf. Alexander Falileyev, *Etymological Glossary of Old Welsh*, *Buchreihe der Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 18 (Tübingen, 2000), 113–14. On the question of the date of these glosses see Kenneth Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, 1953), 53.

<sup>25</sup> R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time, and Fate: New Interpretations of Greek, Roman, and Kindred Evidence, also of Some Basic Jewish and Christian Beliefs*, second ed. (Cambridge, 1951), 457 and n. 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 426–66; thus, speaking of the crown as a symbol of kingship, Onians argued that 'it was originally its embodiment, a band, the concrete form under which men believed that different kinds of fate were bound about them by the higher powers or might magically be bound about them by men themselves' (p. 458).

Most of the associations of *mind* in the literature are with sanctity and royal power: early instances are the phrases *mind súithe* ‘crown of knowledge’ in *Audacht Morainn*,<sup>27</sup> and *mind mainbthech* ‘rich diadem’ (applied to Labraid Loingsech) in the dynastic poetry of the Laigin.<sup>28</sup> Druids are however described as wearing *minna* in the tale *Táin Bó Fraích*.<sup>29</sup> Even more striking for our purposes is one of the poems celebrating the early kings of the Laigin, in which it is said of Echu mac Énnai Chennselaig that he led *fianna fo mindaib*.<sup>30</sup> Kuno Meyer translated this as ‘war-bands under crowns’ (‘Kriegerscharen unter Kronen’), and conjectured that the phrase was an allusion to Echu’s winning of the kingship. Even as an ‘Anspielung’, however, it is hard to see how these words would have conveyed such a meaning; nor need *fo* in this case be taken to mean ‘under’ in a concrete, spatial sense.<sup>31</sup> *DIL* s.v. *I mind (minn)* (a), noting that *fominnaibh* is glossed with *arraib* ‘payments’ in the copy of the poem in the sixteenth-century addition to the Book of Leinster, suggests that this might refer to ‘soldiers’ pay (? *sureties, oaths, cf. d*); but this too seems rather forced. Finally, Enrico Campanile has translated the phrase as ‘oath-bound war-bands’ (‘vereidigte Kriegerscharen’),<sup>32</sup> understanding this as a reference to ‘the custom [...] of preserving the relics of the saints in costly reliquaries, and swearing upon them’ (‘die Sitte [...] die Reliquien der Heiligen in kostbaren Reliquiaren aufzubewahren und auf sie zu schwören’); he goes on to state that the cult of relics is such an ancient part of Christianity that this reference does not rule out an early date for the poem.<sup>33</sup>

I think that Campanile’s rendering ‘oath-bound’ is to be preferred: thus the phrase *fo minnaib* is used in the sense ‘under oath’ in the legal literature.<sup>34</sup> But it does not follow that these oaths were sworn upon ecclesiastical relics; even if some early Irish warriors did make such vows (although I am not aware of any other evidence of their having done so), this would have been wholly out of character for the war-bands known as *fianna*, described for instance by Sharpe as ‘bands of roving warriors without the ties of settled community and hateful to the Church. There is nothing to distinguish them from the *latrunculi*

<sup>27</sup>Fergus Kelly (ed. and trans.), *Audacht Morainn* (Dublin, 1976), 8–9, §24; and cf. Kelly’s note, p. 36.

<sup>28</sup>M. A. O’Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* (Dublin, 1962), 3. *DIL* notes a few instances of soldiers wearing *minna*, but these occur in very late sources.

<sup>29</sup>Wolfgang Meid (ed.), *Táin Bó Fraích*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 22 (Dublin, 1967), 2, ll. 35–6. In the tale *Cath Cinn Abrad* there is mention of a *mind* belonging to a *druí*; but in all other sources (and indeed earlier in the same tale) this figure is said to be a *drúth* or jester: Máirín O’Daly (ed. and trans.), *Cath Maige Mucrama: The Battle of Mag Mucrama*, ITS 50 (Dublin, 1975), 92; cf. pp. 12, 152.

<sup>30</sup>Johan Corthals, ‘The rhymeless “Leinster Poems”: diplomatic texts’, *Celtica* 24 (2003), 79–100, at 97–8.

<sup>31</sup>Kuno Meyer, *Über die älteste irische Dichtung: II. Rhythmische alliterierende reimlose Strophen* (Berlin, 1913), 22.

<sup>32</sup>Enrico Campanile, *Die älteste Hofdichtung von Leinster: Alliterierende reimlose Strophen*, Veröffentlichungen der Keltischen Kommission Nr. 8 (Vienna, 1988), 34.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 8 n. 3.

<sup>34</sup>E.g. *CIH* i 132.13; iv 1384.1: two versions of a tract on false testimony.

or *laici* already discussed, except that we do not hear of *fianna* wearing *signa diabolica* or the like.<sup>35</sup> The passage under discussion, from a poem of probably seventh-century date, appears in fact to link *fianna* with just such signs.

This impression is supported by some passages in later sources which, while they do not involve the association with something worn on the head which we have seen to attach to the words *díberg* and *mind* elsewhere, do demonstrate that oaths sworn upon *minna* were not necessarily expressions of Christian piety. Thus a *rosc* in the Middle Irish tale *Aided Díarmata meic Fergus Cerrbéoil*, evoking violence and disaster, includes the phrase *éclaind fo mindaib* ‘warriors [literally “kinless men”] under oaths’.<sup>36</sup> Again, one entry in ‘O’Davoren’s Glossary’ gives *fo minna[ib]* as an equivalent for *fo deib*, indicating that (in the glossator’s mind, at least) *minna* could designate oaths in the name of pagan deities;<sup>37</sup> while in another entry, *minn* is equated with *ailt* ‘blade’, on the grounds that oaths could be sworn on the blades of knives.<sup>38</sup> Whatever its historicity or otherwise, this latter concept is further reflected in the tales *Cath Maige Tuired* and *Serglige Con Culainn*, both of which state that, through the agency of demons, weapons served as sureties (*commairgi*) for the pagan Irish.<sup>39</sup> Warriors are also portrayed in the sagas as swearing by their weapons and other equipment.<sup>40</sup>

There is a curious split between the associations that *mind* came to have – royal authority (‘diadem’) and ecclesiastical sanction (‘relic’) – and what that word seems originally to have designated – the sign of a vow, which came to be condemned for its links with bloodshed and evil spirits. What might have caused such a semantic fracture? I propose that the process of Christianisation was responsible. The swearing of an oath within a setting of pagan ritual, an institution which had in pre-Christian times been central to society as a whole, survived only among those who rejected the new religion, and who were themselves rejected by that religion’s adherents. The word *mind* retained its connotations of sovereignty and holiness, but – apart from such occasional

<sup>35</sup> Sharpe, ‘Hiberno-Latin *laicus*’, 86. Kim McCone similarly states that ‘[t]he picture to emerge so far from admittedly prejudiced sources is of an inherently violent and antisocial institution dangerous to the settled community, both lay and ecclesiastical, and typically professed by members of a *fian*’: ‘Werewolves, cyclopes, *díberga*, and *fianna*: juvenile delinquency in early Ireland’, *CMCS* 12 (Winter 1986), 1–22, at 6.

<sup>36</sup> Standish H. O’Grady (ed. and trans.), *Silva Gadelica (I.–XXXI.): A Collection of Tales in Irish*, 2 vols (London, 1892), i, 80, ll. 3–4. I am grateful to the anonymous reader of this article for calling this reference to my attention.

<sup>37</sup> *CIH* iv 1492.12.

<sup>38</sup> *CIH* iv 1472.26–7.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth A. Gray (ed. and trans.), *Cath Maige Tuired: The Second Battle of Mag Tuired*, ITS 52 (Naas, 1982), 68–9, §162; Myles Dillon (ed.), *Serglige Con Culainn*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 14 (Dublin, 1953), ll. 15–17.

<sup>40</sup> Ruairí Ó hUiginn, in the article cited in n. 50 below, gives examples from *Táin Bó Fraích* (e.g. Meid, *Táin Bó Fraích*, 7, ll. 168–9); *Aided Guill meic Carbada* (Whitley Stokes (ed. and trans.), ‘The Violent Deaths of Goll and Garb’, *RC* 14 (1893), 396–449, at 404, §10); and Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge* (Dublin, 1978), ll. 2731–2 (and cf. ll. 2701, 2705, 2709, 2712). His reference to *Caithréim Cellacháin Caisil* should in fact be to Patrick M. MacSweeney (ed. and trans.), *Caithréim Conghail Cláiringhnigh: Martial Career of Conghal Cláiringhneach*, ITS 5 (London, 1904), 26, ll. 7–8.

references as have been noted in the preceding paragraph – lost its connection with the cultic practices to which it had formerly been bound.

An intriguing analogy is afforded by the uses of the number twenty-seven, expressed as ‘three nines’, in medieval Irish literature: on the one hand, it marks the time required for the performance of certain rituals; on the other, it figures as the number of groups of men, for the most part wanderers, exiles, outlaws, or members of a *fian*.<sup>41</sup> The combined associations with supernatural practice and outsider status seem directly comparable with the evidence that has been discussed above. And again, our earliest reference associates three nines not with outlaws but with kings: Muirchú describes Lóegaire, king of Tara, going to challenge Saint Patrick ‘having yoked thrice nine chariots according to the tradition of the gods’ (*iunctis [...] ter nouem curribus secundum deorum traditionem*).<sup>42</sup> The basis in the old religion is here made explicit; but these are the chosen warriors of the high king, not raiders and brigands. That a mainstay of the pagan social order should come to seem sinister and disreputable under Christianity is, of course, in no way surprising.<sup>43</sup>

In connection specifically with the swearing of oaths, this transition may be reflected in the text *Synodus episcoporum*, sometimes referred to as ‘The First Synod of Patrick’. This brief tract has been variously dated, but is generally regarded as being very early: writing in 2000, Thomas Charles-Edwards did not see a basis for choosing between the later fifth century or the first half of the sixth, holding that the work was in any case ‘precious evidence for the Irish Church in the form in which the missionary efforts of Patrick and others had left it’.<sup>44</sup> A particularly striking indication of its antiquity is afforded by a handful of references to pagans living side by side with the Christians for whom the document legislates;<sup>45</sup> and there are also hints of pagan practices and beliefs that threaten to contaminate the lives of the faithful. One such hint is found in the following passage:

Christianus qui occiderit aut fornicationem fecerit aut more gentilium ad aruspice iurauerit, per singula cremina annum penitentiae agat; impleto cum testibus ueniat anno penitentiae et postea resoluetur a sacerdote.

‘A Christian who has killed or committed fornication or, in the manner of pagans, has sworn before a soothsayer shall spend a year

<sup>41</sup> I have provided an extended, if far from exhaustive, list of examples in John Carey, ‘Drie maal negen’ (trans. into Dutch by Desirée Govers), *Kelten* 50 (2011), 11–12.

<sup>42</sup> Bieler, *Patrician Texts*, 87 (my translation).

<sup>43</sup> The indications that what came to be called the *uotum mali* was not at first necessarily antisocial or condemned tell against Colmán Etchingham’s view, carefully argued within its own terms, that ‘[t]he ritualistic aspects of the warriors’ identity and behaviour – the distinctive headdress, the lupine symbolism, the pledge to kill and the triumphal incantation – all seem adequately explicable simply as the hallmarks of loutish gang-identity, for which [...] analogues in modern society are readily found’. Colmán Etchingham, *Church Organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Naas, 1999), 301.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, 2000), 245–7.

<sup>45</sup> Canons 8, 13, 20, in M. J. Faris (ed.), *The Bishops’ Synod* (‘The First Synod of St. Patrick’): *A Symposium with Text Translation and Commentary*, ARCA 1 (Liverpool, 1976), 1–4.

of penance for each offence. When the year of penance has been completed he shall come with witnesses and then he will be set free by the bishop.<sup>46</sup>

In his own treatment of this passage, Bieler translated *aruspex*, a word for an omen-reader or soothsayer, as ‘druid’.<sup>47</sup> Such a rendering is plausible: the interpretation of omens is represented as an important function of druids by both ancient and medieval sources.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, considering that *Synodus episcoporum* could be as much as two centuries older than our other earliest witnesses, it might well be the case that the standard Hiberno-Latin usage of *magus* as an equivalent for Irish *druí* had not yet been adopted at the time when it was composed. And even if the *aruspex* was assigned to some other category, so that he would not have been called a *druí* in the vernacular usage of the time, he would have been an analogous figure: a non-Christian supernatural practitioner, dealings with whom by Christians were strictly discouraged as they represented a ‘pagan custom’ (*mos gentilium*). In connection with all of these considerations, it may be noted that comparable functions were attributed to the druids of Gaul: Strabo states that they were ‘reckoned to be most just; and for this reason were trusted with both private and public judgements’; and Caesar similarly says that they ‘decide almost all disputes, public and private; and if a crime is confessed, or a killing perpetrated, or there is a dispute about inheritance or boundaries, it is they who give judgement and who decree rewards and penalties’.<sup>49</sup>

To return to *Synodus episcoporum*: its testimony to the continuing authority of such persons in early Christian Ireland is interesting, and significant. The text reflects a stage in the spread of the new religion at which some pagan practices still retained sufficient prestige that even Christians might be tempted to engage in them. For just this reason, however, such practices were stringently forbidden. A natural subsequent stage in the process would have been what we find in sources of the seventh century and later, when the vow is associated exclusively with violence (which is not, of course, to say that vows to kill had not existed earlier as well), and the votaries are persons at odds with Christian society.

One final suggestion can be made. The considerations discussed above could provide a context for the expressions *tongu do dúa toinges mo thúath* ‘I swear by the god by whom my people swear’, *tongu a toinges mo thúath* ‘I swear what my people swear’, etc., found in Irish sagas with a setting in the pagan period. In an important essay, Ruairí Ó hUiginn has taken the view that such formulae ‘can be regarded as the creation of archaizing christian

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 3–4 (Canon 14).

<sup>47</sup>Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, 56–7.

<sup>48</sup>E.g. Cicero, *De diuinatione* i.90 (citing C. F. W. Müller (ed.), *M. Tullius Cicero: De diuinatione* (Leipzig, 1915)); Cecile O’Rahilly (ed. and trans.), *Táin Bó Cúailnge: Recension I* (Dublin, 1976), II. 22–3.

<sup>49</sup>Strabo, *Geography* IV.iv.4: δικαιοτάτοι δὲ νομίζονται καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πιστεύονται τὰς τε ἰδιωτικὰς κρίσεις καὶ τὰς κοινὰς (citing A. Meineke (ed.), *Strabonis Geographica*, 3 vols (Leipzig, 1866–77)); Caesar, *De bello Gallico* VI.xiii.5: *fere de omnibus controuersiis publicis priuatisque constituunt, et si quod est admissum facinus, si caedes facta, si de hereditate, de finibus controuersia est, idem decernunt, praemia poenasque constituunt* (citing T. Rice Holmes (ed.), *C. Iuli Caesaris Commentarii rerum in Gallia gestarum VII* (Oxford, 1914)).

*literati*”; but his observation that invoking God ‘would be a perfectly normal thing for a christian to do’ does not seem to me to dispose of the matter conclusively.<sup>50</sup> His demonstration that some later texts, with an evidently archaising motivation, have ‘gods’ instead of ‘god’ in such expressions is, to be sure, interesting and significant. But this cannot logically be adduced as a reason for attributing the same motivation to texts that were written earlier and that do not use this wording; and Ó hUiginn does not furnish any instances of closely comparable phrasing with a Christian reference, or being attributed to Christians.<sup>51</sup> Calvert Watkins, by contrast, called attention to ‘semantically and syntactically parallel oaths in two other Indo-European traditions’ (Slavic and Greek), concluding that ‘[t]he resemblances are such that we must assume an Indo-European way of saying this that was not very different’.<sup>52</sup>

That the saga oath, whether or not it is said to be associated with a deity, is identified with the *túath*, the people to whom the speaker belongs, is also suggestive. One of the senses of *túath* is ‘laity’; and *túath* and *eclais* ‘church’ are often used as terms designating mutually exclusive categories.<sup>53</sup> An oath to the god by whom the *túath* swears would accordingly, if the word is here used in this sense, be by its very nature non-ecclesiastical; and we have seen other evidence that such oaths were in the early period not only separate from, but opposed to, the clerical establishment. This hypothetical scenario of pagan vows being rooted in a sense of community recalls Caesar’s statement, in the context of the juridical function of the druids of Gaul, that ‘if any individual or group does not abide by their decisions, they ban them from the sacrifices. This is regarded by them as the most grievous punishment’.<sup>54</sup>

All of the pieces of evidence discussed above are, no doubt, susceptible of alternative explanations. They can however easily be fitted into a single picture, the picture tentatively advocated in this essay. If I am correct, we can not only glimpse a druidic institution in Ireland comparable to what is attested of

<sup>50</sup>Ruairí Ó hUiginn, ‘*Tongu do dia toinges mo thuath* and related expressions’, in Donnchadh Ó Corráin, Liam Breatnach, and Kim R. McCone (eds), *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney* (Maynooth, 1989), 332–41, at 339–40.

<sup>51</sup>The one early source that Ó hUiginn does cite in this connection is the legal text *Berrad Airechta*, dated to ‘around 700’ by Robin Chapman Stacey, *Dark Speech: The Performance of Law in Early Ireland* (Philadelphia, 2007), 178. Here there is a string of statements beginning *Toing do dia* where the context makes it clear that the God of Christianity is meant; at one point, indeed, the deity invoked is called *dia neime* ‘God of heaven’: *CIH* ii 597.6–25.

<sup>52</sup>Calvert Watkins, ‘New parameters in historical linguistics, philology, and culture history’, *Language* 65.4 (1989), 783–99, at 792. John T. Koch has presented further arguments for a Common Celtic background for the Irish oath formula, citing comparanda in Gaulish and Middle Welsh: ‘Further to *tongu do dia toinges mo thúath* etc.’, *EC* 29 (1992), 249–61. This position has been challenged by Stefan Schumacher, ‘Old Irish \**tucaid*, *tocad* and Middle Welsh *tynghaf*, *tyngghet* re-examined’, *Ériu* 46 (1995), 49–57; but Koch’s case retains great interest.

<sup>53</sup>There is a good collection in *DIL*/*eDIL* s.v. *1 túath* III: ‘The state as opposed to the church; the laity; lay property, secular buildings’. In the law tract *Córus Bésgnai*, the expression *comúaimm n-ealso fri túaith*, literally ‘knitting together of *e.* and *t.*’ is used of the harmonising of ecclesiastical and native law: Liam Breatnach (ed. and trans.), *Córus Bésgnai: An Old Irish Law Tract on the Church and Society*, Early Irish Law Series 7 (Dublin, 2017), 34, §37.

<sup>54</sup>*De bello Gallico* VI.xiii.6: *Si quis aut priuatus aut populus eorum decreto non stetit, sacrificiis interdicunt. Haec poena apud eos est grauissima* (citing the edition of T. Rice Holmes; see note 49 above).

the druids of the Continent, but we can witness its transformation in face of the forces of Christianisation: tenaciously retaining a place in the lives of the population, despite the church's opposition, in the first generations of the new order; but increasingly pushed to, or beyond, the margins of society, and eventually associated only with the violent acts of those who rejected the church's authority.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>I am grateful to the anonymous reader for perceptive and penetrating criticism, which has resulted in this essay's substantial improvement. I bear sole responsibility for its remaining errors and inadequacies.

## VARIA

1. Proclitic *mis*. 2. *fírad*. 3. Further to *In Coire Érmae*, ‘The Caldron of Poesy’.

### 1. PROCLITIC MIS

WHILE THE PEJORATIVE prefix and preverb *mí-* is a very well attested form,<sup>1</sup> the existence of an alternative form *mis* has been disputed. Pedersen (VKG ii, 10, 298) derived *mí-* prefixed to nouns, as in *mígním* ‘misdeed’, and the preverbal form in *mit n-imret* ‘that they deceive him’, *MI*. 74b22, from *\*mis*, and cited *miscuis* ‘hatred, dislike’, as the sole form with the *-s* preserved.<sup>2</sup> Meyer (1912: 793–4, §9), referring to Pedersen, cited the example of *missimbert* in *Tochmarc Emire* (discussed below), which he had taken as a noun meaning ‘foul play’, as an instance of the preservation of *mis-* before a vowel; he subsequently (Meyer 1913: 182) noted Marstrander’s explanation of it as a later extension of the form before consonants, and added the form *misceird* from *O’Dav*. 392.<sup>3</sup> O’Rahilly (1942: 158–9) proposed as additional evidence for an original *\*mis* his derivation of *mifir* ‘dispirited, faint-hearted’ and *mifre* ‘dejection’ from *\*mis-viri-* ‘unmanly’ and *\*mis-viriā* ‘unmanliness’, respectively.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore the existence of a preverbal form *mis* was taken for granted by D. A. Binchy, as will be seen when we come to the final example in this paper.

On the other hand, Thurneysen, *GOI* §365.2, stated that ‘there is no by-form *mis-*, as has sometimes been assumed; *miscuis* “hate” is not a compound of *cais* ..., for the adjective *miscsech* presupposes an original palatal vowel in the second syllable’. The objection no longer stands. Thurneysen invoked the rule that the quality of the initial consonant determined the quality of a consonant group resulting from syncope, and while this still holds as the general rule, it has since been shown that when the final consonant was a palatalised *s* the group was palatalised, no matter what the quality of the initial consonant (or consonants) was.<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere in *GOI* (§§384 and 411), Thurneysen cited the example from *Tochmarc Emire* and analysed the form as *mí-ss-imbirt*, that is *mí-* with a 3 pl. Class A infixed pronoun and the 3 sg. preterite of *imm-beir*, and translated ‘he abused them’.

<sup>1</sup> See *DIL* s.v. *mí-*.

<sup>2</sup> The form *míerbartmar*, *MI*. 56b26, referred to in VKG ii, 298, is for *remi érbartmar* ‘whom we have mentioned’, as noted in the Addenda and Corrigenda to *Thes* i, and in the supplement thereto (Stokes 1910: 17).

<sup>3</sup> For the latter form see example (5) below.

<sup>4</sup> At the same time, he said of Meyers’s analysis of *missimbert*: ‘but this is a word of very doubtful authenticity and is known only from two of the MS. texts of *Tochmarc Emire* (RC xi, 446 b, ZCP iii, 248 z; a variant is *inis a mbātur*). O’Clerys *misimirt .i. droichimirt* is doubtless derived from one of these texts’. These are the two examples given in *DIL* s.v. *misimbert*, where, following O’Clery and Meyer, the form is classified as a noun.

<sup>5</sup> See Breatnach (2005: 146–9) and Griffith (2016: 44–6).

In his edition and translation of the earliest<sup>6</sup> version of *Tochmarc Emire* from Rawlinson B512 Meyer (1890: 446–7) had:

*Fochairt iarom allaili m-beasti n-vathmair amail leoman, dudfich  
 7 nad dingne erchoad do. 7 missimbert na maccrada conidtibset.  
 Die cetharmad lai scarais an beist fris.*

‘Then he encountered some dreadful beast like a lion, which fought with him, but did him no harm. And the foul play of the youths, who laughed at him. On the fourth day the beast parted from him.’

Meyer took *missimbert* to contain the verbal noun of *imm-beir*, but made no comment on why *maccrada*, which can only be a nom. or acc. pl., should be translated as a genitive singular.<sup>7</sup> There can be no doubt that Thurneysen was correct in taking *imbirt* as a 3 sg. preterite, and not a verbal noun.<sup>8</sup>

While Thurneysen took *miss* to be a combination of pejorative *mí-* and a proleptic 3 pl. Class A infixed pronoun, on the basis of the examples discussed in what follows, and since a pronoun is not needed here, *miss* can be taken as consisting solely of the preverb. I would then normalise and translate the relevant passage as:<sup>9</sup>

(1) *amail léoman, dud-fíd 7 nád digni airchót dó, 7 mis imbirt na  
 maccrada conid-tibset*

‘like a lion, which showed him the way and did him no harm, and it abused the youths who mocked him’.

Preverbal *mis* occurs twice in *Bretha Nemed Toísech*.<sup>10</sup> The first example is in the passage in *CIH* 2216.40–2217.7, concerned with offences committed by animals,<sup>11</sup> namely in the question and answer sequence *Co bemis mana bedis misbemis*, *CIH* 2217.5, which can be normalised and translated as:

<sup>6</sup>As convincingly demonstrated by Toner (1998).

<sup>7</sup>Furthermore, the combination with the verbal noun is well attested as *mímbert*, and in the examples listed in *DIL* M 122.54–62 the pejorative prefix always has the form *mí*, never *mis*.

<sup>8</sup>The passage in question is also found in four of the MS copies of the later, expanded, recension. In *RIA* MS 23 N 10, p. 124.4, the reading is *7 misimbirt na macrada ann*, not *inis imbirt na macrada* as in Edel (1980: 126), who translated the misreading as ‘die Spielinsel der Knaben’, thus treating two forms which cannot be genitives as though they were such. The version in *BL* MS Harley 5280 deviates somewhat, with *7 i missimbert na maucruide and*, Meyer (1901: 248 §63). The copies in *RIA* MS D iv 2 and *BL* MS Egerton 92 deviate significantly from the rest, the former having *7 inis i mbátar na macrada and*, Van Hamel (1933: 47 §63), and the latter the almost identical *7 inis i mbatur na macrada ann*, 25Rax; for an explanation of the origin of this reading see Ó Concheanainn (1996: 108 n. 80).

<sup>9</sup>Thurneysen (*GOI* §693) took *dudfich* as an error for the 3 sg. pret. of *do-fét* ‘leads’ (with a 3 sg. masc. Class C infixed pronoun). In the light of Carney’s demonstration (1964: 116 n. 69) of the existence of a separate verb *do-fét* ‘shows’, and Schumacher’s (2004: 667) arguments that the *ī*-preterite stem *fíd-* belongs with compounds of *-fét* rather than of *-fet*, I take it rather as an error for the 3 sg. preterite of *do-fét*, meaning ‘guided, directed, showed the way’. The last word in the cited text is the 3 pl. pret. of *con-tibi* ‘mocks’, etc., again with a 3 sg. masc. Class C infixed pronoun. It is not a form of *tibid* ‘laughs’ as maintained by Ó Concheanainn (1996: 110).

<sup>10</sup>For this text see *Companion*, 188–91.

<sup>11</sup>A background to this and the preceding passage (*CIH* 2216.25–39), on the same topic, is supplied by the first of the ‘stories from the law-tracts’, edited and translated by Dillon (1932: 43–4, 52).

(2) *Co bemis, mani betis? Mis bemis.*

‘How would we be if they [viz. animals] did not exist? We would be badly off’.

Here it precedes a 1 pl. form of the substantive verb, and it cannot be construed as containing an infixed pronoun.

The second example is found in the passage in *CIH* 2224.1–28 concerned with the moral integrity and learning of poets. The sentence in which it occurs presents one of several analogies for the idea of a contaminated part corrupting the whole. The reading in the sole complete copy of the text is *misimbeir searb somblas*, *CIH* 2224.12, and it is also cited in three digests,<sup>12</sup> viz. *misimbir serbh somblas*, *CIH* 1929.31 (Digest C 18), *miisimer searb somblasta*, *CIH* 1139.24 (Digest A 1), *misimber serb somblasta*, *CIH* 1379.20 (Digest B 52). Taking *somblasta* in the last two as a deviation from the original, I would normalise and translate as:

(3) *mis imbir serb somlas*

‘a bitter thing spoils pleasant taste’.

No infixed pronoun is required, and *mis* certainly does not contain a 3 sg. masc. pronoun, which would be required if a proleptic pronoun were to be used.

Two reasonably certain examples in *Bretha Nemed Dédenach* appear side by side in an extract from the fragmentarily preserved opening section of the text, which seems to have been mainly, if not exclusively, concerned with satire.<sup>13</sup> This is one of a number of entries in a glossary explaining passages from *Bretha Nemed Dédenach* headed *A Bretha Neime Dēidhinach sō*,<sup>14</sup> and is edited by Binchy as: *Tomhnadh .i. baramail, ut est .i. dian .t. cach i ndiaidh ar.ii.e, is do doronadh. 7 misdeine 7 mistomnathar. corp, CIH* 603.21, ‘*Tomhnadh*, i.e. “surmise”, as in *.i. dian ... mistomnathar* [in the] main text’. I would restore and translate as:

(4) *.i. diand tomnad cach i ndiad araili is dó do-rónad 7 mis déni 7 mis tomnatar.*

‘that is, if each person after the other thought that it is for him that it was composed, and he composes it wrongly and they surmise wrongly’.<sup>15</sup>

Given the broader context referred to, this probably refers to a satire which on the one hand has been badly composed by the author, and on the other hand is wrongly interpreted by a number of people as being aimed at them.

<sup>12</sup>For digests see *Companion*, Chapter 6.

<sup>13</sup>See *Companion*, 186–7.

<sup>14</sup>See *Companion*, 28.

<sup>15</sup>I take *dian* to be for *día* with a Class C neuter infixed pronoun, anticipating the clause beginning *is dó* ..., and emend *tomnathar* to plural *tomnatar*, as it refers back to *cach*.

Less certain is a series of possible examples towards the end of the passage beginning *Cia háithemh éó?* ‘What is the sharpest of points?’,<sup>16</sup> in *CIH* 1119.17–26:<sup>17</sup> *airde mór mófochal, mairg imis-seichither, mairg imis-dlomthar, mairg imis-cing ceird, ceird bhraith, mairg imis-dligh míosgaith. Cia háithemh, CIH* 1119.24–6. For the third of the phrases beginning with *mairg* we have the following entry in *O’Dav.* 392: *Ceird .i. cēimniugud nō cing. mairg mis ceird .i. mairg dīa cēimniter in ceird-sin, CIH* 1480.24, translated by Stokes (1904: 259) as ‘*ceird*, i.e. a stepping or walking, ut est “alas for the evil step”! i.e. alas if that step be stept!’.<sup>18</sup> While it does supply the reading *mis* instead of *imis*, the citation is obviously defective in omitting the word *cing*; nevertheless the fact that *cēimniter* in the gloss is only explicable as an echo of *cing* indicates that the form of the citation when it was originally glossed would have been *mairg mis cing ceird*. At the same time, the reading of the continuous copy of the text appears to contain an instance of dittography, and I tentatively suggest that the original reading was:

(5) *mairg mis cing ceird brait*

‘woe to anyone who wrongly progresses through art with plundering’.<sup>19</sup>

For *imis* being substituted for *mis*, one can compare the variant *imiss-* for *mis-* in example (1) from *Tochmarc Emire* discussed above. Furthermore, as no compounds *\*imm-seichethar*, *\*imm-dloma*, or *\*imm-dlig* are otherwise attested, it is possible that in the other three phrases beginning with *mairg* the text originally had *mis* followed by the respective simple verbs, but as I cannot offer a satisfactory interpretation of the passage as a whole, I leave them aside.

The next example is found in the OIr text on stolen horses edited by Meyer (1912b: 103–4), under the heading ‘Urteilsspruch wegen entwendeter und beschädigter Pferde’.<sup>20</sup> The relevant sentence is printed there (104.4) as *ancid sreba ar oircelaib mis glūaisit co lu athar*,<sup>21</sup> and I have edited and translated this as:

<sup>16</sup>This sentence is cited twice in O’Davoren’s Glossary, namely *cia aitheamh éó, CIH* 1495.18 (*O’Dav.* 770), and *cia aithem eo, CIH* 1467.22 (*O’Dav.* 40 (1)). I would normalise as *Cia háithemh éó?*, taking *éo* as gpl. For the use of a superlative followed by a genitive see *DIL* s.v. *dech* A3b. To the examples there cited can be added *Cid as dech ban, LL* 46414 (*Senbríathra Fíthail*), translated ‘What is the best of women?’, Smith (1928: 56).

<sup>17</sup>Corresponding to Gwynn (1942: 25.5–16); see also his note on p. 222.

<sup>18</sup>In his edition Stokes printed *misceird* as a single word.

<sup>19</sup>Lit. ‘who climbs art’. What is in question is the principle that a poet must be morally upright; see, for example, §6 of *Uraicecht na Ríar*, and the mention there of *idnae inracuis ar gait 7 brait 7 indligiud* ‘purity consisting of being innocent of theft and plunder and illegality’, Breatnach (1987: 104–5). A reader suggests the possibility of confusion with *mos-* ‘soon, quickly’, but I cannot see it as applying to this case.

<sup>20</sup>The sole copy is in RIA MS 23 N 10, pp. 54–5. It is re-edited with translation and notes in Breatnach (forthcoming).

<sup>21</sup>Note that for Meyer’s *ancid*, the MS has *arcid*.

(6) *ar cid sreba ar oircélaib mis glúaisét co luätar*

‘and even streams pouring from flumes, they badly move [the millwheel] until they are directed’.

What is in question here is the turning of the wheel of a horizontal watermill, and the point being made is that the flow of water from the flume or chute needs to be directed by a human in order to be effective.<sup>22</sup>

Numerous examples with verbs in Old, Middle and Early Modern Irish are cited in *DIL* s.v. *mí-* III, and in the later examples *mí-* appears to be mostly, if not always, in close composition with the verb, for example, *michóimétaid ar sabóti-ne* ‘he neglects our sabbaths’, Atkinson (1887: 113, 360 l. 2587), and *marbhaid 7 míochóirighid*, Bergin (1931: 37.1083), ‘they kill and maltreat’.

The examples cited from OIr sources include three preceded by the negative *ní*, viz. *ní mí-aipir*, *MI*. 56d16, ‘he does not speak badly’, *ní michlothaigfetar*, *MI*. 143c3, ‘they will not be dishonoured’, and, from *Apgitir Chrábaid*, *Cetharda nādcón tecmaing do neuch charas Dīa ... nī mīthomnadar ō neuch*, Hull (1968: 72 §21), ‘The four things that do not happen to anyone who loves God: ... he is not to think ill of anyone’.<sup>23</sup>

One example also contains a 3 sg. masc infixed pronoun, viz. *mit n-imret* ‘that they deceive him’, *MI*. 74b22. It is the only unambiguous such instance I know of, and the pronoun belongs to Class B.<sup>24</sup>

There are three examples in OIr sources of verbs in independent position where the form of the prefix is *mí-*, namely *ar cech duine mídúthrastar dam* ‘against every one who shall wish me ill’, *Thes* ii, 356.19, in Patrick’s Hymn, and *mithadbait*, *mitharfaid* ‘thou shewest badly, thou hast shewn badly’, Stokes (1905: 16 §16), from *Immacallam in dá Thúarad*.

The remaining OIr example of *mis* in *DIL* is one of two in the OIr recension of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, both of which occur in difficult passages. The first of these is edited and translated in O’Rahilly (1976: 124, 237, ll. 4123–4) as:

(7) *‘Is bésad,’ ol Fergus, ‘do cach graig remitét láir, rotgata rotbrata, rotfeither a moín hi tóin mná misrairleastair.’*

‘“That is what usually happens,” said Fergus, “to a herd of horses led by a mare. Their substance is taken and carried off and guarded as they follow a woman who has misled them.”’

The editor has made some changes to the MS readings without adequate discussion. No indication is given that the *rod* in *rodbrata rodfeither*, as in the MS and Strachan and O’Keeffe (1912: 122.3647), has been altered to *rot*, and while the

<sup>22</sup>See further Breatnach (forthcoming).

<sup>23</sup>Taking *nī mīthomnadar* as the deponent jussive subjunctive, rather than a 3 sg. passive indicative, as Hull did with ‘he is not thought ill of by anyone’. Otherwise the translation is that of Hull.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. *GOI* §411. Strachan (1903: 68n.) commented: ‘Isolated and peculiar is *mitnimret* ... if it be not an error for *mí-n-imret*’, and Stokes (1910: 21), with reference to Strachan’s note, suggested a further alternative *mí-dn-imret*, with a Class C infixed pronoun. I can see no compelling reason for not accepting the form as it stands with a Class B pronoun (cf. *GOI* §413).

alteration of *immoín* to a *moín* is signalled in a footnote,<sup>25</sup> no reason is given for doing so. The sequence of three verbal forms *rotgata rodbrata rodfeither* contains problems which, as far as I know, have never been addressed. Is the *-d-* / *-t-* a functioning infixed pronoun, and if so is a 3 sg. neut. or masc. Class C form *-d-* or a 2 sg. form *-t-* to be read? Another possibility would be the Class C form *-d-* with a different function; see, for example, *GOI* §§422, 886. The seemingly passive form *rodfeither* is not compatible with a third person object pronoun, whereas the seemingly active forms *rotgata rodbrata* would be, yet they are all translated as present tense passives, although, while this might be conceivable for *rodfeither*, *gata* and *brata* cannot be present tense passives, even if one is to ignore the infixes.<sup>26</sup>

The final phrase, however, is not so problematical, consisting of *hi tóin mná* ‘behind a woman’ and *mis* prefixed to *ro* + the conjunct 3 sg. pret. of *airlithir*.<sup>27</sup> O’Rahilly supplied a 3 pl. pronoun in the translation, but the same form recurs in example (8) below where it clearly cannot be read as containing an infixed pronoun, and the phrase can accordingly be rendered ‘following a woman who has given bad counsel’.

The second example from the *Táin*, not in *DIL*, is in a short *roscad*, in the form of a first-person utterance by Fergus. It was first edited from the three MS copies by Binchy (1972: 34–6):

(8) *manibed buaid mná mis-rairlestar*

‘had not a woman’s triumph misdirected (me)’.<sup>28</sup>

If a pronoun is to be supplied, it has to be a 1 sg. form, so that here no argument can be made for analysing what Binchy (1972: 37) refers to as ‘the old *pausa*-form *mis-*’ as consisting of *mí* + a 3 pl. Class A infixed pronoun.

This instance in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* is the only one discussed by Binchy, but taken together with the other examples discussed above, there can be no doubting the existence of a pretonic form *mis* ‘mis-, badly, not well’ used before verbs in OIr. Pending the discovery of further examples, the distribution of the two forms *mí-* and *mis-* can be set out as follows.

Before nouns the prefix is almost exclusively *mí-*. The one secure instance with *mis-* is *miscuis*, and *miscad* ‘curse’ could perhaps be added to this, but no convincing etymology has been proposed for it so far. As for *mifir*, if O’Rahilly’s etymology is correct (see above), it contained *mis-* at an earlier stage of the language.

For the OIr period there appears to have been a complementary distribution in the case of verbs, namely *mis* in independent position,<sup>29</sup> and *mí-* in dependent

<sup>25</sup>The statement therein ‘only *im-* at line end legible Y’ is inaccurate; all of *immoín*, as in Strachan and O’Keeffe (1912: 122.3648) without comment, can be read.

<sup>26</sup>There is no adequate treatment of these issues either in the most recent publication on the relevant passage (Meid 2021) or in any of the works he refers to.

<sup>27</sup>This can be normalised as *mis rairlestar* in OIr.

<sup>28</sup>Binchy (1972: 35). While O’Rahilly (1976: 33.1070) gave the text of *LU*, *manip ed búaid mná misralastar*, in her translation (p. 155) she followed Binchy, with due acknowledgement in a note on p. 257.

<sup>29</sup>That is, where the verb is not preceded by a conjunct particle.

position. The sole example with an infixed pronoun indicates that it followed the pattern of preverbs, such as *as*, which took Class B. This pattern can be illustrated with the 3 sg. present of *imm-beir* ‘plies, uses’ etc.:

*mis imbir, ní mûmbir; mit n-imbir.*

The vowel in *mis* was probably short, going by *miscuis*, and there can be no doubt about the long vowel in stressed *mí-*. As for the form with the infixed pronoun, I assume as with *mis* that it had a short vowel.

By the Middle Irish period this distribution had broken down, and *mí-* was generalised. The three forms *míúthrastar*, *míthadbait* and *míthārfaid*, noted above, point to this development as having already begun in the OIr period.

The distribution of *mis/mí* mapped out above for OIr, as well as of some of the prefixed forms mentioned in *GOI* §384, shows that the characterisation in *GOI* §37 of deuterotonic and prototonic alteration in finite verbal forms as applying only to verbs compounded with prepositions needs to be revised.

## 2. FÍRAD

In Breatnach (1981: 68–9), §12 of the ‘Caldron of Poesy’ was edited and translated as follows:

*Fáilte déodae, immurgu, tórumae ind raith déodai dochum in Choiri Éрмаí<sup>30</sup> conid n-impoí fōen, conid de biit fáidi déodai 7 dóendai 7 tráchtairi raith 7 frithgnamo imale, conid iarum labrait inna labarthu raith 7 do-gniat inna firtu, condait fásaige 7 bretha a mbríathar, condait desimrecht do cach cobrai. Acht is anechtair ata-tairberat inna hí-siu in coire cíasu medón fo-fertar.*

‘Divine joy, moreover, is the coming of divine grace to the Cauldron of Éрмаe, so that it converts it into the upright position, and as a result there are people who are both divine and secular prophets and commentators both on matters of grace and of (secular) learning, and they then utter godly utterances and perform miracles, and their words are maxims and judgements, and they are an example for all speech. But it is from outside that these make the cauldron upright, although they are produced internally.’

The reading of the MS is certainly *firta*, but while success in performing miracles might be conceived of as giving greater authority to what a person might say or write, I came to see it as more and more of a problem that a text on scholarly ability should have made any connection between scholarship and miracle-working, as this text seemed to do. Some years after the edition was

<sup>30</sup>Read Éрмаe, for which see section 3 below. Other changes which should now be made are *de* to *dé* and *imale* to *immalé* (see Breatnach 2003), and *inna hí-siu* to *inna hí síu* (see Breatnach 2020: 136–7).

published, the late Rolf Baumgarten suggested to me that by making a further slight emendation,<sup>31</sup> namely substituting a lenited *-th-* for the unlenited *-t-* of the MS, and reading *fírthu*, the text would make far better sense.

The meanings given in *DIL* s.v. for the finite verb *fíraid* are (a) ‘realizes, fulfils’, many of the examples referring to fulfilment of prophecies, and (b) ‘confirms, proves’. Similarly, for the verbal noun *fírad* the meanings given are (a) ‘realizing, fulfilling’, and (b) ‘confirming, corroborating’. Some additions can be made to the collections in *DIL*, such as the MÍr *guth Feideilmthe ro fírad*, ‘Feidilmid’s prophecy has been fulfilled’, O’Brien (1952: 163, 168 v. 28), and the OÍr *nīm thī bās for fecht ro fírthar mo thecht*, in the prayer for long life given as an example of *cētnad n-āisi* in MV II §98, and translated as ‘Death shall not come to me on an expedition, may my journey be carried to the end!’ in Meyer (1917: 20 §2).<sup>32</sup>

However, the closest parallel I have so far come across is in *Bretha Nemed Toísech*, namely in the passage *Caomtechtaid rurech do co rinntibh cana cert ara mor fodma dis dithach da folad firtar lamara mathclud co nedaid aru rigdelb rosc*, *CIH* 2213.14, which is normalised and translated in Breatnach (1989: 18, 19 §22) as:

*Coímtechtaid Ruirech do Chorinntib con-acert ara mór fodmaitis díthechtae folad.*

*Fírthair la Maram athchlúd co n-étade ara Ríg delbrosc.*

“‘The Companion of the Great King” had adjudicated to the Corinthians that they should greatly suffer unjust considerations.

It is confirmed by “the Mariner” that he had found a reversal of the precept of their King’.

This is part of a longer passage from Book 42 of the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis* which was rendered into the convoluted *roscad* style of OÍr,<sup>33</sup> so that the translation is markedly different from that of the original on which it is based:

*Paulus ad Corinthios*: Quare non magis injuriam accipitis? Quare non fraudem patimini? Sed vos injuriam facitis et fraudatis et hoc fratribus.

*Pelagius*: Ac si diceret, cum inlatam injuriam secundum praeceptum evangelii et Domini exemplo patienter sustinere debueratis, vos e contrario non solum non suffertis, sed etiam non facientibus inrogatis.

‘*Paul to the Corinthians*: Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not suffer being defrauded? But in fact you do wrong and defraud, and that to your brethren.

<sup>31</sup>In addition to normalising the final *-a* to *-u*.

<sup>32</sup>Note also the translations ‘may I not die on my journey, may my return be ensured to me’ in Greene and O’Connor (1967: 35), and ‘may death not come to me upon the road, may my journey be confirmed’ in Carey (1998: 137).

<sup>33</sup>See Breatnach (1984: 447–52).

*Pelagius*: It is as though he were saying, when you should have patiently borne wrong inflicted on you according to the precept of the Gospel and in keeping with the example of the Lord, you on the contrary not only do not suffer, but also you inflict (wrong) on those who do not do (wrong).<sup>34</sup>

These two sentences, a citation from Scripture followed by a piece of exegesis on it, supply an unambiguous context where a form of the verb *firaid* is used to describe the work of the commentator. While further examples would be welcome, this does provide good support for Baumgarten's interpretation. I would now implement it and suggest translating *7 do-gniat inna firthu* as 'and they produce the corroborations', that is, commentaries confirming the truth of Scripture.

### 3. FURTHER TO *IN COIRE ÉRMAE*, 'THE CALDRON OF POESY'

In the edition, I normalised the name of the second cauldron to *Coire Érmai*, since the form of the question in §14, *Cid inermái*, led me to conclude that the second element in the name, written *coire erma* in the MS (§4, etc., see note on p. 82), could not be the gsg. of *érimm*. When it subsequently became clear that the neuter article could be used to mark a cited form, no matter what its gender or case was, I revised my opinion (Breatnach 1990: 100–101), and would now restore *Coire Érmae*, with the gsg. of *érimm*. As noted in Breatnach (1981: 52), of the three cauldrons postulated in the text, this receives the most attention, and, although it is attested only once, the original title may well have been *In Coire Érmae*.

In a paper published some years ago, Mulligan (2009) looked beyond grammatical and metrical texts for the conceptual background to the idea of the three cauldrons which is central to the text,<sup>35</sup> and since it appeared in a journal dealing with matters at some remove from our field, I felt it is worth drawing attention to it here.<sup>36</sup> Drawing on discussions of human reproduction in early medieval medical texts, she argues that the underlying concept in *In Coire Érmae* is best explained by reference to what they have to say on the workings of the uterus. Thus, for example, on p. 497 she states:

Medieval anatomical texts provide a context in which the uterus is clearly linked to a cauldron or cooking vessel. The uterus (and sometimes the woman herself) was referred to as *vas*, denoting "jar" or "vessel," and the uterus was seen as a "receptacle for semen," shaped like an "upside-down vase." Conceptualization of the womb as a vat or cauldron is perhaps most clearly evident in visual representations. A series of images of the fetus-in-utero

<sup>34</sup>Wasserschleben (1885: 162 4b–c); the translation is as in Breatnach (1984: 449).

<sup>35</sup>Mention may also be made of the paper by Corthals (2013–14), where the text is examined in the light of 'assumptions about the structure of the human mind and the role of education, which ultimately reach back to the beginnings of Greek learning' (p. 74).

<sup>36</sup>I owe my knowledge of it to Dr Elizabeth Boyle of Maynooth University.

first appeared in the *Gynaecia*, a Latin translation of Soranus' Greek tract on gynecology made by Muscio (or Mustio) in about 500 C.E. In at least twenty manuscript versions of Muscio's widely circulated redaction of the text, the uterus is depicted as an upside-down, cauldron-like vessel completely dissociated from the body.

And on p. 503 she concludes her arguments with:

In summary CP [= The Caldron of Poesy] is a very early text in which the internalized corporeal cauldrons that shift about in the body and produce verbalized knowledge and verse can most clearly be understood in terms of the poetic womb ... when seen in the light of contemporary medieval medical discourse on reproduction that depicts and describes the womb as a cooking vessel that can wander and shift about, there is a certain reproductive logic that credits reading the poetic cauldron, which resides in the body, as a productive "poet's womb".

Mulligan has made a convincing case, and as a consequence I would now revise my edition of MS *saerbrud imberbthar bunad cach sofis* in lines 85–6 to:<sup>37</sup>

*sóerbrú i mberbthar*  
*bunad cach sofis*

'a noble womb in which is cooked  
the basis of all knowledge'.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

- Companion*      Liam Breatnach, *A Companion to the Corpus Iuris Hibernici*, Early Irish Law Series 5 (Dublin, 2005).  
*O'Dav.*            Stokes (1904).

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<sup>37</sup>My edition has *sóerbrud* 'a noble brew', whereas Henry (1979–80: 126.27) read *Saerbru(d)* 'the noble womb'. This instance can be added to the list of spellings with a redundant final spirant which I gave on p. 56. For the idea of cooking see Mulligan (2009: 495, 499–500).

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## RECENTLY DISCOVERED FRAGMENTS OF AN IRISH DOUBLE *GALLICANUM-HEBRAICUM* PSALTER, PROBABLY NINTH CENTURY

### ABSTRACT

The late medieval Gaelic manuscript National Library of Scotland (NLS) MS 72.1.40 once had a makeshift binding composed of a bifolium of an earlier Latin manuscript subsequently repaired with deerskin. The Latin manuscript has now been identified as part of an Irish double psalter probably of the ninth century, making it the oldest known specimen. The identification was made using enhanced photographs supplied by NLS.

### HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND, Advocates Library MS 72.1.40 is a fifteenth–sixteenth century vellum manuscript of ninety pages (215 × 165 mm and under), consisting of five distinct layers. The main manuscript was partly written in Scotland and partly perhaps in Co. Antrim. Ronald Black suggests that it was the MacMhuirich family of Stilligarry, South Uist, who assembled the parts into one manuscript, possibly in the seventeenth century. The binding was probably their handiwork also, for which a disassembled old manuscript was used and to which pieces of deerskin and sheepskin were later added. When MS 72.1.40 was rebound in 1913, the ragged former covers with the tattered remains of the old Latin manuscript were included and paginated (77–90) as part of the manuscript. It is this partly decipherable Latin work preserved – though not necessarily written – in Scotland that is discussed below.<sup>1</sup>

This preliminary examination of the manuscript followed communication from Dr Ulrike Hogg, Manuscripts Curator at the National Library of Scotland, who had deciphered verses from Psalm 49/50. The examination was based on new photographs of four pages provided by the library. These were pages 81 and 82 (208 × 164 mm) and 87 and 88 (210 × 164 mm), and from these it was possible to identify the vellum Latin manuscript. The pagination appears confusing due to the make-up of the former covers. It would appear from the text, however, that these four pages formed the centre bifolium of a quire. Pages 82

<sup>1</sup>For details of the contents of NLS Adv. 72.1.40 see Ronald Black's description in *Irish Script on Screen*, Adv. MS 72.1.40 (isos.dias.ie). NLS has a second MacMhuirich manuscript, from the seventeenth century, that was also bound in deerskin: *Irish Script on Screen*, Adv. MS 72.1.48 (isos.dias.ie).

and 87 were facing pages displaying matching verses from Psalm 49/50 which confirm that these pages are a fragment of what was once a double psalter.<sup>2</sup>

Double psalters were in Latin with the *Gallicanum* version (St Jerome's revision of the Old Latin Psalter in keeping with the Greek Septuagint) facing his *Hebraicum* (Jerome's Latin translation of the psalms from the Hebrew). They were used in monastic schools for study and teaching and were usually heavily glossed. Only two double psalters are known from Ireland before 1200.<sup>3</sup> These are the Double Psalter of St Ouen (Rouen: Bibliothèque Publique MS 24 [A.41])<sup>4</sup> and its sister codex, which comprises two folios only and is part of TCD MS H 3. 18 (1337).<sup>5</sup> Both have been dated to the tenth century. Each of these psalters uses two scripts to distinguish the translations. The *Gallicanum* on the verso page was always written in majuscule script as it was regarded by the Irish as the psalter par excellence. The *Hebraicum* on the recto pages was written in minuscule. In the St Ouen Psalter, the use and frequency of minuscule forms varies, becoming confined to the letter *s*.

The fragmentary Double Psalter in NLS 72.1.40 uses both script styles consistently but has the *Gallicanum* on the recto pages (81 and 87) and the *Hebraicum* on the verso (82 and 88). A scrap (folded and stitched vertically in the binding), measuring 48 × 208 mm approx., on pp. 83–86 is also in minuscule.

P. 81 is a worn and abraded recto page. It is ruled in dry point. Fragments of text are sufficient to identify verses 17 and 18 of Psalm 48 *Gallicanum*.

P. 82 is a verso page where sections of verses 3–13 of Psalm 50 *Hebraicum* are identifiable. See below for transliteration and notes.

P. 87 is a recto page where sections of verses 4–14 of Psalm 49 *Gallicanum* are identifiable. See below for transliteration and notes.

P. 88 is a very worn verso leaf where only some faint minuscule *a*'s identify it as *Hebraicum* text.

Pp. 83–6 is treated as one piece cut horizontally out of a leaf. The letters ... *ui ..ar.m suarum*, i.e. *divitiarum suarum*, suggest that this is a fragment of v. 7 of Psalm 49 *Hebraicum*.

<sup>2</sup>The Hebrew numbering of the psalms is one ahead of the Septuagint-Vulgate numeration from Ps 10 to Ps 147. Consequently, our *Hebraicum* fragment numbered as Ps 50 is the same psalm as the Septuagint-Vulgate fragment of Ps 49.

<sup>3</sup>Martin McNamara, 'Psalter text and psalter study in the Early Irish Church (A.D. 600–1200)', *PRIA* 73 C 7 (1973), 268, 239–41 (reproduced in M. McNamara, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield, 2000), 110–11, 69–71). Françoise Henry discusses the decoration of the St Ouen Psalter in 'Remarks on the decoration of three Irish psalters', *PRIA* 61 C 2 (1960), 37–9. For a more recent description of the St Ouen Psalter, see L. De Coninck (ed.), *Expositiones Psalmorum Duae sicut in Codice Rothomagensi 24 asservantur*, Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis 256 (Turnhout, 2012), vii ff.

<sup>4</sup>McNamara 'Psalter text', 239–40.

<sup>5</sup>L. Bieler and G. Mac Niocaill, 'Fragment of an Irish double psalter with glosses in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin', *Celtica* 5 (1960), 25–39. This fragment appears to have been reused as a binding for some of the later medieval Gaelic legal manuscripts which also form part of TCD MS 1337.

*Glosses*

On p. 82 there are interlinear Latin glosses on verses 4 and 10 of Psalm 50 and a trace of a gloss over what was once the top line of that page.

An extensive but illegible gloss may be observed in the inner margin of p. 87, and on the same page, there are interlinear glosses on Psalm 49, verses 6, 7, 8 and 10.

Pp. 83–6 is a worn scrap with parts of seven lines of *Hebraicum* text. There are traces of a gloss on what was once the inner margin of this page.

*Palaeography*

Insular majuscule, which is written with an edged pen held parallel to the ruled guidelines, would appear to have been the usual writing style of the scribe of the double psalter NLS 72.1.40. When copying the *Hebraicum* text the scribe however took care to use the minuscule forms of *a*, *r* and *s*, and when writing these letters held the pen at a sharper angle. The remaining letters however are indistinguishable from the fine flat-angled majuscule forms with which the *Gallicanum* text was written. Technically the script of the *Hebraicum* may be described as ‘hybrid minuscule’. The same pen was used for both scripts but the change to the sharper angle is particularly noticeable in the slightly awkward triangular *a* and in the Tironian 7-like form of the ampersand.

On page 81, although the text is very worn, the original ruling appears clearly in the photograph. This was the impress (furrow) side of the dry-point ruling and shows twenty-three lines within double vertical bounding lines.<sup>6</sup>

*Abbreviations*

The scribe uses forms typical of Irish usage, including in the *Gallicanum* text (p. 87): ‘cli’ *caeli* (v. 6), ‘pls’ *populus* (v. 7), ‘t’ with suprascript ‘i’ *tibi* (v. 7), the ‘2-form’ of *est* (v. 6) and the ‘hr’ form of *autem* (v. 8).

In the *Hebraicum* text (p. 82) written in the lower grade minuscule script; note the ‘7’ for *et* and the ‘o’ symbol for *eius* (v. 6) and (v. 12), the ‘q’ with suprascript ‘a’ for ‘qua’ of *loquar* (v. 7) the ‘p’ in *semper* (v. 8) and the ‘f’ for the final *-um* in *siluarum* (v. 10) and *taurorum* (v. 13).

*Punctuation*

Punctuation marks were not discernible in the photographs. In this manuscript there was less need for these as the text, in the usual manner of Irish psalters, was arranged *per cola et commata*, i.e. written in lines divided by clause and phrase.

A ninth-century date is proposed for this script of high quality. It may be compared to that of the Irish Gospel book, Oxford, Bodley Rawlinson G167.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup>We are grateful to John Gillis, Trinity College Dublin, for his observations on the ruling and other aspects of the structure of the manuscript.

<sup>7</sup>See illustration 256 in E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, part 2: *Great Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 1935), 36.

*Decoration*

Decoration is limited to the colour in-filling of the few remaining initials that mark the beginnings of the psalm verses of the *Gallicanum* text (p. 87). The enlarged black initials are filled with yellow, pinkish-red and what now appears as a brownish hue.

Along the left margin of the *Hebraicum* page, what appear as four yellowish blobs and one reddish blob are likely the remains of initials with colour infills.

As in many insular manuscripts of the ninth century, it is likely that yellow orpiment and red lead were the main pigments used.

## EDITION

( ) Round brackets indicate the expansion of abbreviated forms.

*Italics* signify the expansion of the special symbols used for 'et', 'eius', 'autem'.

[ ] Square brackets enclose readings that are unclear but reasonably certain.

< > Angled brackets enclose editorial additions.

/ Marks the end of a line.

... Ellipsis signifies a line or lines of text now obliterated.

References in the notes are to the standard editions of the *Gallicanum* and *Hebraicum* psalters:

*Gallicanum*

*Liber Psalmorum ex recensione Sancti Hieronymi cum praefationibus et epistola ad Sunniam et Fretelam (Biblia Sacra iuxta Latinam Vulgatam versionem ad codicum fidem iussu Pii PP. XII cura et studio monachorum Abbatiae Pontificiae Sancti Hieronymi in Urbe Ordinis Sancti Benedicti edita.)* (Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, MDCCCCLIII [=1953]).

*Hebraicum*

*Sancti Hieronymi Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos. Édition critique par Dom Henri de Saint Marie. Abbaye Saint-Jerôme* (Roma/Libreria Vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 1954).

NLS MS 72.1.40, p. 87

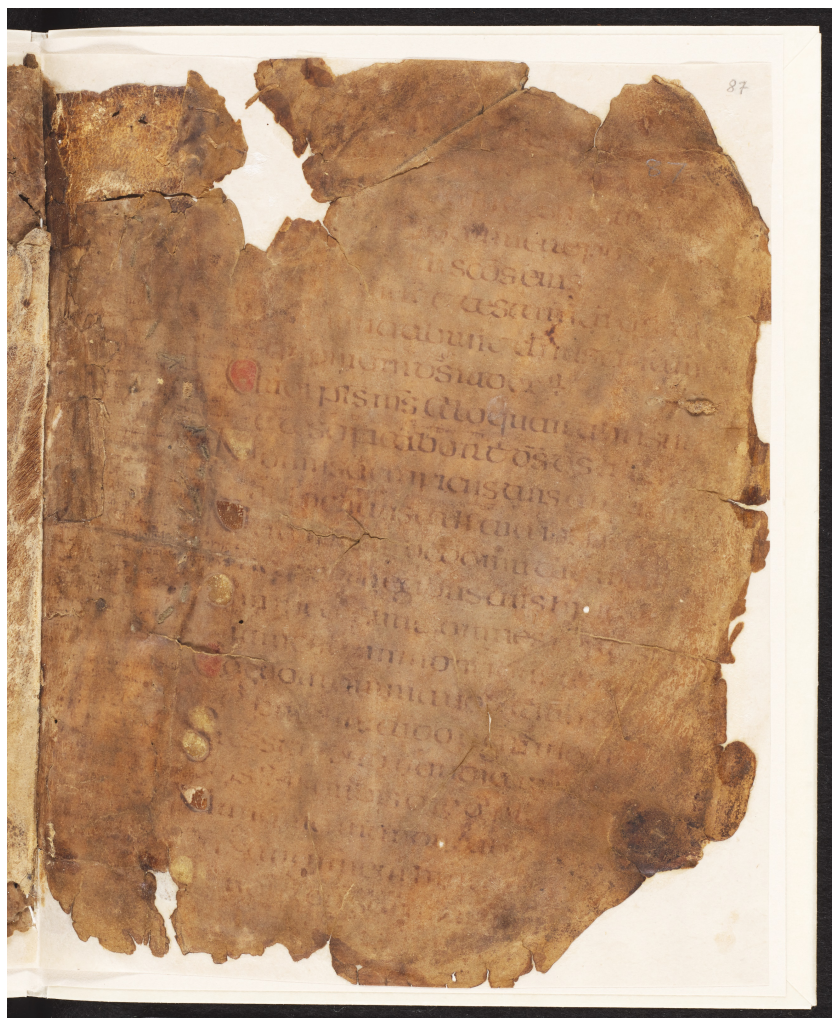
*GALLICANUM*

Ps 49:4–14

...

- <4> [discer]nere po[pulum]
- <5> [illi] s(an)c(t)os eius/  
[ordinan]t testament[tum]
- <6> [et adn]untiabunt c(ae)li iustitiam [eius]/  
quoniam d(eu)s iudex *est*/
- <7> Audi p(opu)l(u)s m(eu)s et loquar tibi is[rahel]/  
et testificabor ti(bi) d(eu)s d(eu)s tu(u)s sum [ego]/<sup>8</sup>
- <8> Non in sacrificiis tuis a[rguam te]/  
h[o]lochausta *autem* tua i[n] conspectu meo]
- <9> N[on accipiam de domu tu[a uitulos]/  
ne[que de gr]egibus tuis hi[rcos]/
- <10> Q(uonia)m m[ae] sunt omnes  
iume[nta] in mon[t]ibu[s]
- <11> Cognoui [o]mnia uo[lutilia]  
et pulch[ri]tudo agri me[cum est]/
- <12> Si essu[rier]o<sup>9</sup> [non] dica[m] t[ibi]/  
...[orb]is t(er)re *et* pl[enitudo eius]/
- <13> Num[qui]d mandu[c]ab[o carnes]  
[aut s]a[n]guinem h[ircorum]
- <14> i[m]mo[la] d[eo] sa[crificium]

<sup>8</sup>*Gallicanum*, ‘ego sum’.<sup>9</sup>*Gallicanum*, ‘si esuriero’.



NLS MS 72.1.40, p. 87

NLS MS 72.1.40, p. 82

*HEBRAICUM*

Ps 50: 3–13

...

&lt;3&gt; [eiu]s tempestas ualida/

<4> [uocabit cael]um desursum/  
[et terra]m <ut> delictet<sup>10</sup> populum suum/<5> [congre]g[ate] mihi s(an)c(t)os meos/  
[qui feriu]nt pactum mecum<sup>11</sup> sacrificio/<sup>12</sup><6> [adnunti]abunt c(ae)li iustitiam (*eius*)/  
quia d(eu)s iudex est/<7> [aud]i p(opu)le meus *et* loq(ua)r is[rael] /  
[et] contestificabor[ ]d(eu)s d(eu)s tu[ ] ego [s]u[m]/<sup>13</sup><8> [n]on propter uict[im]as tuas arguam te/  
[et] holocaustomata tua cora(m) me s(un)t se[m]p[er]/<9> [non] accipiam de domu<sup>14</sup> t[ua]  
[neque] de gregib[us] tuis hircos/<10> [mea] sunt o[mni]a animalia siluar(um)/  
[pecu]des in [mon]tibus milium/<11> [scio om]nes aues montium/  
[et uni]uer[si]tas agri me[cum] est/<12> [si esurie]ro [non] dicam  
... (*eius*)/

&lt;13&gt; [numquid comed]am [car]nem tauror(um)/

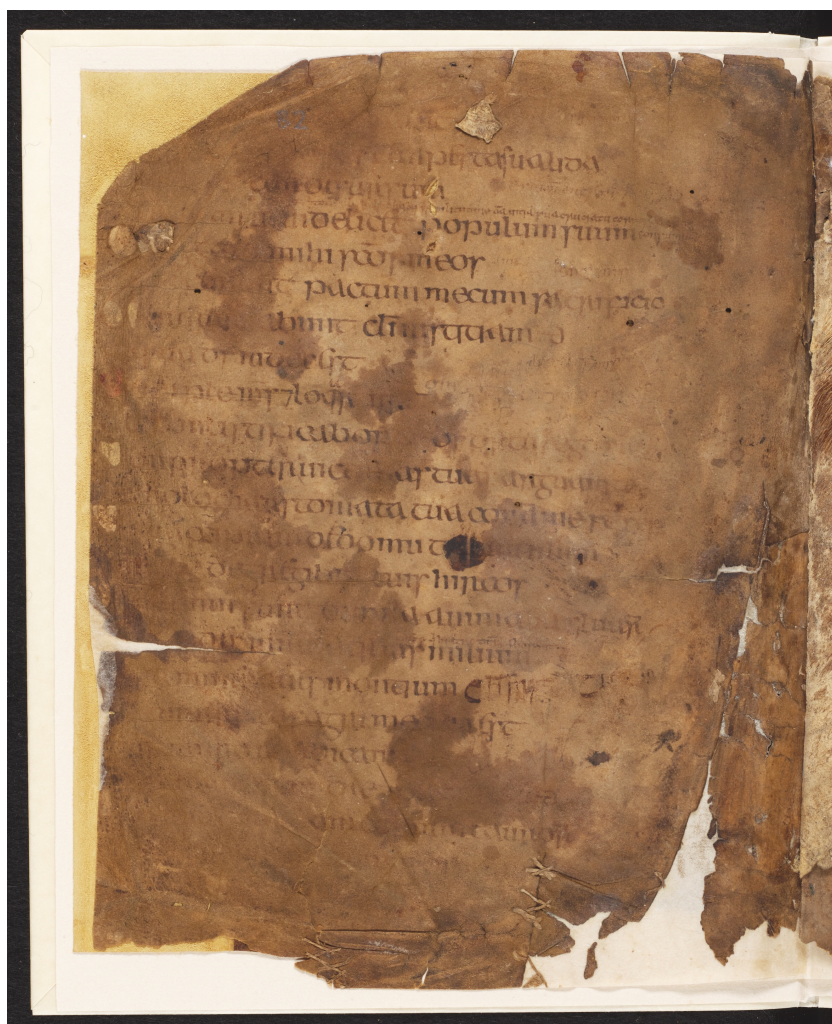
<sup>10</sup>‘ut’ om. as in AK of the Irish *Hebraicum* family (see *Sancti Hieronymi Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*, pp. xxii–xxvi); delictet], *Hebraicum*, ‘ut iudicet’; AK ‘uideret’, I ‘ut uideret’. Perhaps ‘delico’, Late Latin ‘reveal, clarify’; cf. *Gallicanum*, ‘discernere’.

<sup>11</sup>mecum] I (Rouen), A (Amiatinus); *Hebraicum*, ‘meum’.

<sup>12</sup>‘in’ om; *Hebraicum*, ‘in sacrificio’.

<sup>13</sup>‘contestificabor’], otherwise unattested; cf. *Gallicanum*, ‘testificabor’, *Hebraicum*, ‘contestabor’; variants ‘testabor; testificabor’, in *Romanum* and *Gallicanum*

<sup>14</sup>‘domu’] *Hebraicum*, ‘domo’; *Gallicanum*, ‘domo’, with variants ‘domu’ in Cathach (C) I\*Q\* and Φv (see *Liber Psalmorum ex recensione Sancti Hieronymi*, p. 45).



NLS MS 72.1.40, p. 82

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## PINE, YEW AND FIR IN MEDIEVAL WELSH SOURCES

### ABSTRACT

This paper examines the characterisation of three conifers: *yw* (yew), *pinus* (pine) and *ffynidwydd* ('fir' in the broadest sense) in Middle Welsh sources, as well as the status of these trees in medieval Wales. Pine was likely extremely rare in Wales during the medieval period, but there is some evidence possibly referring to its presence in medieval texts. Yew was declining but more common, both as a naturally occurring species and as individual trees planted in churchyards and abbeys and beside holy wells. Yew gained a reputation for holiness based on these holy trees, and pine gained a separate reputation for holiness based on its appearance in the legend of the rood. All the conifers also seem to have acquired reputations as disruptive, liminal species and may have been included in texts as a sign to the reader that the ordinary rules of the secondary world had been suspended.

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... ac a oed las o wisc y marchawc a'e uarch a oed kyn lasset a deil y ffenitwyd, ac a oed velyn ohonei a oed kyn uelynet a blodeu y banadyl. (Richards 1948: 4)

'And that which was green of the outfit of the knight and his horse was as green as the needles of fir trees, and that which was yellow of it was as yellow as the flowers of broom.' (my translation)

THE QUOTATION ABOVE IS TAKEN from the description of Iddog Cordd Prydain near the beginning of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* ('The Dream of Rhonabwy'). The mention of the fir trees here raises questions. Unlike broom, which is a native shrub, fir trees are not native to Britain, and were not commonly grown in Wales during the medieval period, so how did fir gain the cultural currency to be mentioned in a text like *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*? Would it make a difference if *ffenitwyd* was instead translated as 'pine'? What made the specific shade of green of the fir tree the most suitable comparison for a knight's green outfit? And why is this knight dressed in green at all, when no other character in any of the stories familiarly known nowadays as the *Mabinogion* seems to wear the colour?

There are three main conifers which are commonly mentioned in Middle Welsh sources. These are *yw* (singulative *ywen*), the yew tree; *pinus*, the pine tree; and *ffynidwydd* (singulative *ffynidwydden*), meaning either the fir or pine tree. The purpose of this paper is to explore how each of these three trees was

characterised in medieval Welsh sources. To begin, it is worth exploring the status that conifers in general had in medieval Wales.

#### MEDIEVAL STATUS OF CONIFERS IN WALES

There are three conifers which are native to Britain and Ireland, and these make a useful starting point for our discussion. Confusingly however, the three native species are not all the same as the three conifers most commonly mentioned in medieval Welsh sources. The native species are the Common Yew (*Taxus baccata* L.), the Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris* L.), but also the Common Juniper (*Juniperus communis* L.). Of these, the medieval Welsh sources have very little to say about juniper. It is almost absent from pre-1500 Welsh sources, except in the form of Savin Juniper (a Mediterranean species, *Juniperus sabina* L., imported as medicine), included in the list of plant names in BL Additional MS 14912 (Stokes 1900; Luft 2020: 240–1, 502).

Yw (Common Yews) were associated with churchyards, abbeys and holy wells in medieval Britain, Ireland, and northern France, where they appear to have been widely planted in the early medieval period (Bevan-Jones 2016: 28–30). This led to the yew having a prestigious reputation in medieval Wales. This can be judged fairly objectively by consulting the legal value of yew in the medieval Welsh law codes. An ordinary yew tree found in the woods (*ywen coet/taxus*) was valued at 15d. under the *Blegywryd*, *Cyfnerth*, and Latin C and D law codes and 30d. in *Iorwerth* C (Jenkins 1986: 188–9; Roberts 2011: 125; Wiliam 1960: 91; Owen 1841: 584–5, 724–7 (GC II.xviii.66–7; DC II.xxxv.86–7); Emanuel 1967: 290, 364). This places yew ordinarily at an intermediate legal value among trees. A yew tree was given a legal value which was less than that of the highest-valued timber and fruit trees (oak, beech and cultivated apple trees), and about the same as a fruiting crab apple or a hazel. It was valued above other trees which do not produce fruit, like ash or alder or willow (cf. Linnard 1976). This also fits with its appearance as a boundary marker alongside alder, apple, ash, broom and willow in the Book of Llandaff (NLW MS 17110E) (Linnard 2000: 120; Evans and Rhys 1893: 372). However, under the *Cyfnerth*, *Blegywryd* and Latin D law codes, a holy or saint's yew (*ywen sant/taxus sancta*) had a separate legal value. This was twenty shillings or one pound, which is double the value of an oak tree, otherwise the highest-valued of all the trees (Jenkins 1986: 188–9; Roberts 2011: 125; Owen 1841: 584–5, 724–7 (GC II.xviii.66–7; DC II.xxxv.86–7); Emanuel 1967: 364). Holy yew trees were highly valued and more strictly protected than ordinary woodland yews. This was fortunate because, outside of the holy sites, yews were extensively felled across medieval Europe to meet the demand for longbows. Yew was especially suitable for making longbows because the inner heartwood is stronger and the outer sapwood can flex, so a bow which incorporated both kinds of wood could be very powerful. These two types of wood were distinguished in the seventeenth century vocabulary of John Jones of Gellilyfdy as *gwnning uw* ('yew sapwood') and *rhudding uw* ('yew heartwood') (Parry Owen 2023: 121.195–9). By this point though, the supply of accessible, mature yew trees appears to

have been close to depleted (Hageneder 2013: 103–4, 107–113; Bevan-Jones 2016: 144). Signs of high demand for yew bows are seen in medieval Wales in the poems begging bows from rich patrons, like the fifteenth-century *I ofyn bwa gan Ddafydd Llwyd ap Gruffudd* ('To ask for a bow from Dafydd Llwyd ap Gruffudd'), a poem by Lewys Glyn Cothi that asks for a yew bow the colour of fire and snow with pine terminals (Johnston 1995: 211.35–42; Linnard 2000: 459–60). The decline of Europe's yew stocks may even have eventually inspired the movement to shotguns in the sixteenth century. Since the 1960s, cancer treatments have been developed from yew trees, including taxol (from the bark) and Taxotere (from the needle-like leaves). This has inspired further felling of yew trees across America, Asia and eastern Europe. The yew trees still protected in British churchyards now have a new significance as one of the main reservoirs of veteran and ancient yews remaining in the world (Hageneder 2013: Chapter 11).

*Pinus* (Scots Pine) is another native tree, but one which was almost extinct in Wales by the medieval period. Around 9,000 years ago, shortly after the end of the last glacial period, Scots Pine re-colonised Britain and it spread to its maximum extent over the next 4,500 years (Bennett 1984; Kinloch, Westfall and Forrest 1986; McGeever and Mitchell 2016). But around 4,000 years ago it began to decline, and was soon lost from most of its former range in Britain and Ireland outside of the Scottish Highlands. Small, isolated populations survived in some locations: a piece of carbonised (burnt) pine was found at Bryn Celli Ddu on Anglesey, dating from 1500 BCE, suggesting that pine might have been available locally then (Linnard 2000: 10). A supply seems to have still been available during the medieval period in some areas, as for example in Borth in Ceredigion, where fossilised pine wood in the nearby peat bog has been dated to the early medieval period (Harkness and Wilson 1979; Bennett 1984; Hyde 1961: 59). The most interesting survivals outside of Highland Scotland are at Rockforest in the Burren, co. Clare; at Kielder Forest in Northumberland, north England; and at Lin Can Moss in the Welsh Marches (McGeever and Mitchell 2016; Manning et al. 2010; Sassoon et al. 2021), where pine populations appear to have survived all the way through to the present day. Outside of these isolated locations, pine was likely extinct, and was only commonly imported and re-introduced onto estates and plantations in Wales after the end of the medieval period along with non-native species like Silver Fir (*Abies alba*), from the mid-seventeenth century onwards (Linnard 2000: 79, 131; Hyde 1961: 59). Pine trees in medieval Britain tended to grow in marginal soils in upland areas, and they do not grow well in the shadow of other pine trees (Mason 2013: 39). There are also a few tentative records of Welsh pine trees in historical sources. The reference by George Owen of Henllys in his *Description of Pembrokeshire* (1603) to 'divers rare timber, as the pineapple tree, the spruce and fir trees, the mulberry tree and others' (ed. Miles 1994: 146–7), growing around husbandmen's houses, seems to refer to very early planting of specimen trees. A more plausible record of native pine is from Nehemiah Grew's unpublished text of 1706–7, *England's Economic Development*, which recommended planting

pines more widely in Britain, since there were already successful pine plantations in some estates, and ‘the worst Land in Wales is said to bear large Pines’ (Hopplit 2012: 28). The term ‘the worst land’ suggests that these last pines were not planted on farms or stately homes, so this might indicate a relict population, although of course it could equally represent early plantation by an enterprising upland landowner. In medieval Welsh sources, the most plausible record is in the reciter’s prologue to *Y Gododdin*, which describes Aneirin in front of a fire *O lychwr i lychwr lluch bin* (Williams 1938: 55A), ‘The pine logs blazing from dusk to dawn’ (Jarman 1988: 3 (55A)). This is a strong piece of evidence because, whilst pine furniture and artwork might have been imported from Scotland or the Continent, where pine trees were more common, firewood would have been obtained locally. This means that if the idea of burning pine on fires was not poetic licence, there must have been a domestic source of pine-wood in the medieval period. There are, however, two possible criticisms of this source (Linnard 2000: 10). First, since *Y Gododdin* may possibly originate in what is now southern Scotland or northern England, this text might not be a suitable source for the existence of pine trees in medieval Wales. In answer to this first point, it is worth noting that this particular verse has two forms. The only form which mentions pine is the younger A-text of *Y Gododdin*, so its claim to medieval Welsh provenance is stronger than other parts of the text. Linnard’s second criticism is to point out that pine firewood might have been obtained from the fossilised remains of much older pine trees salvaged from peat bogs. Fossilised wood has been regularly found and recognised as pine in the modern period, so it is conceivable that it might have been known and used in the medieval period too. These two criticisms mean that the evidence of *Y Gododdin* does not necessarily reflect a relict population of pine in medieval Wales, but as we shall see, other records of Scots Pine might also be included under other Welsh terms.

The third main conifer term in medieval Welsh is *ffynidwydd* (singularive: *ffynidwydden*, meaning ‘fir’, but also sometimes ‘pine’). The medieval distinction between *ffynidwydd* and *pinus* has parallels in other neighbouring languages, as for example medieval Latin *abies* and *pinus*, Middle English *firre* and *pynus*, and Old French *sap* and *pin*. There is now a strict division between the terms *pine* (scientific genus: *Pinus*) and *fir* (scientific genus: *Abies*), but the medieval division between these terms was not scientific but cultural. It might be an appropriate analogue to think of the difference between these species as being like the difference between the medieval *Bestiary* ‘panther’ and ‘pard’. Both these terms appear to have been originally names for the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) but in practice they had acquired different cultural characterisations by the medieval period (Barber 2006: 30–5). In the past, the term *fir* was regularly used to describe the Scots Pine. John Parkinson, who was the first botanist to officially describe the native Scots Pine trees of Highland Scotland, called them *abies* and *fir* (Pearman 2017: 309; Parkinson 1640: 1540). Robert Sibbald (1684: 6 (II:1)), writing half a century later, used the same terms for the trees of Highland Scotland, and even attempted to distinguish these from the true *picea* (pine?) trees, which he believed should

have bigger cones. This confusion is also seen in Wales. In the eighteenth century, when conifers like Silver Fir began to be more widely planted, one of the most common kinds of ‘fir’ planted on estates in Wales was ‘Scotch fir’, again meaning *Pinus sylvestris*, the modern Scots Pine (Linnard 2000: 132–5). Some medieval texts also use the term *ffynidwydd* in a context which implies that they might be talking about Scots Pine. In *Cad Goddeu* (traditionally translated as ‘The Battle of the Trees’), one of the poems associated with the legendary Taliesin in the fourteenth-century Book of Taliesin (NLW Peniarth MS 2), Gwydion, at the instruction of God, calls a long list of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants to take part in a battle. Each tree is named and given a mock-heroic description (Haycock 1990; 2007: poem 5). *Pinus* and *yw* are not mentioned but *ffynidwydd* is one of the trees named in the text: *Ffenitwyd yg kynted / Kadeir gygrwyssed* (‘[Fir] in the place of honour / Contentment in the shape of branches’ (Haycock 2007: 5.98–9)). The translation here is obscure, but the inclusion of *ffynidwydd* at all is important because almost every identifiable plant mentioned in this poem is native and would have been found in Wales. There are five other exceptions which are not native, but all can be much more easily explained. Sweet Chestnut, Medlar, Woad and Pears are all archaeophytes: they are not native but had already been introduced to Wales as garden or wild plants (Preston, Pearman and Dines 2002: 130, 252, 371, 357). The fifth exception, Beech, had a limited native distribution in Britain. It was absent from much of medieval Wales, but it seems to be native to south-east England and south-east Wales, where it does seem to have been present in the medieval period (Linnard 2000: 9; Preston, Pearman and Dines 2002: 129). If the term *ffynidwydd* here was supposed to refer to what we now think of as a true fir tree like the Silver Fir (*Abies alba*), it would be the only species in the list which was not present in medieval Wales. For this reason, it makes more sense to translate the term here as ‘pine’, as Haycock (2007: 5.98) indeed does, since although Scots Pine trees had become exceptionally rare in medieval Wales, there do still seem to have been some growing here, as explained above.

There are also other terms which are used more rarely in Welsh literature, but which might also indicate conifers. The term *fyr* starts to appear in Welsh poetry in the second half of the fifteenth century, and is used in elegies and praise poetry by both northern and southern poets. It is glossed with the Latin *abies* (fir) in John Davies’ seventeenth-century *Dictionarium Duplex* (ed. Alston 1968) and it may be a borrowing from English *firre/vyrre* (fir). Almost all of the fifteenth century records of the term use it to refer to spears, lances and javelins (Foster Evans 2000: 3.4; Johnston 1995: 164.6; Lake 2015: 13.16; Roberts and Williams 1923: 8.58, 20.68; Williams and Rowlands 1976: 23.15). The existence of these weapons does not necessarily indicate a native population of conifers since they could have been imported along with the word used to describe their material. Further, even if the weapons were made of local wood, Roberts and Williams (1923: 171 n. 68) suggest that the form *prenfyr* could even

be taken as a plural form of \**prenfwrw* ('throwing wood').<sup>1</sup> This translation would remove any hint of conifers from the texts. However, in the fifteenth-century *Marwnad Tomas ap Trahaearn ap Gwilym* by Hywel Dafi, the term *fyr* seems to be attached to an actual living population of trees: 'Yn Llan-faes dan y llwyn fyr / Gwnaeth nef iddo dref a drig' (Lake 2015: 36.46–7 – 'In Llanfaes under the fir grove / Heaven made a homestead for him that will endure' – my translation). This does not refer to throwing weapons, either imported or local. It could refer to exceptionally early planting of specimen conifer trees on a private estate, as we saw from the later *Description of Pembrokeshire*, or conceivably to a late relict population of Scots Pine near Brecon. Similarly, *GPC* notes that the term *fer* is also attested in the placename *Pant-y-fer*. There were five places called *Pant-y-fer* in Carmarthenshire on the *GB1900 Ordnance Survey Map* (RCAHMW 2023). All but one of these are included on all Ordnance Survey Maps from the first map in the 1880s until the 1960s, before being no longer recorded from the 1970s onwards (the last disappears earlier). It seems likely that these places were named after eighteenth- or nineteenth-century forestry plantations, some of which are still present today, although the *Pant-y-fer* at National Grid Reference SN 54155 33334 lay within the Brechfa Forest, an area of ancient woodland, so might merit further investigation.

Another much earlier, dubious reference to pine is in *Eiry Mynydd* ('Mountain Snow'), one of the anonymous, possibly eleventh- or twelfth-century, quasi-gnomic poems included in the Red Book of Hergest (Oxford, Jesus College MS 111) as well as Oxford, Jesus College MS 20. In each *englyn*, the first line or the first two lines describe the setting of a winter's day in the mountains, presumably in Wales, whilst the last gives a truism about the human condition. Once again, all the species mentioned are those which would have been actually present within this setting, except perhaps that dock leaves are described here, which are not usually visible in winter. One of the *englynion* runs:

Eiry mynydd; coch blaen pyr;  
Llidiawc lluosawc ongyr;  
Och, rac hiraeth vy mrodyr!  
(Jacobs 2012: 2.21)

'Mountain snow, fir-top red.  
Spear-thrusts fierce, frequent  
Ah, my brothers, the yearning.'  
(Clancy 2003: 113)

The contents of this stanza have suggested to Jacobs (2012: 39) that it might belong to a saga and therefore be earlier than the rest of the poem. The word translated as 'fir' here is *pyr*, which normally means 'pear trees' (Jacobs 2012: 125). Clancy's translation 'fir' seems to be based on Pughe's (1803) dictionary

<sup>1</sup>Although in context, their translation seems unlikely since the previous line (20.67) refers to two other species of tree (beech and ash) that William Fychan can easily break.

which defines *pyr* as a fir tree, possibly as a result of taking *phyr* as an aspirated form and extrapolating a basic form *pyr*. A conifer might also fit better into the setting of the poem, and conifers do sometimes struggle and show signs of stress (like reddening) when exposed to cold dry winds and extreme cold and frost (Hageneder 2013: 21). If this reading is accepted it could represent another medieval Welsh depiction of the Scots Pine growing in a native setting, but this reference is dubious because the word *pyr* is not attested elsewhere in the literature with the meaning ‘fir’ rather than ‘pear’.

### HOLINESS

Pine trees had a reputation for holiness across Europe, because of the influence of the legend of the rood. In Wales, this legend was most famously transmitted in the Middle Welsh *Ystorya Adaf* (‘The History of Adam’), which is a translation of the Latin *Historia Adam*. The part of the story which deals with the pine starts with how an angel gave Seth the son of Adam three pips from an apple from Paradise. He was told to plant these pips under the tongue of Adam, after Adam had died. Three conifers grew from the pips, one of which was a pine tree:

Ac onadunt ykyuodant teir gŵialen. Vn onadunt avyd oryŵ cedrus yr eil a vyd o ryŵ cypressus. Ar tryded auyd oryŵ ypinus. Trwy ycedrus ydeallir ytat or nef. Kannys vchaf prenn ydyfiant yŵ. Drŵy cypressus y deallir ymab. Kanyŵ goreu prenn yŵ y arogleu amelyssaf yffrŵyth. Trŵy ypinus ydeallir yrysbryt glan herŵyd amylder yffrŵyth. (Jenkins 1921: 124)

‘And from these pips will arise three shoots. One of them will be of cedar kind, one of them will be of cypress kind, and the third will be of pine kind. Through the cedar is understood the Father of Heaven, because it is the highest-growing tree. Through cypress is understood the Son because it is the tree whose aroma is best and whose fruit is sweetest. Through the pine is understood the Holy Spirit because of the large amount of its fruit.’ (my translation)

The rods that grew from these three shoots were responsible for various miracles, before ultimately joining together to become the wood used to make the cross on which Jesus was crucified. The same story about the three holy conifers is told in various texts across medieval Europe, for example, a very closely related version of the story in the fourteenth-century Middle English *Cursor Mundi*: *þai sal be cedre, ciprese, and pine / O þam sal man haue medicen* (Morris 1874: ll. 1366–86) (‘They shall be cedar, cypress and pine / From them humans will have medicine’). Another allusion to this story is in the *Awdl i’r Grog o Gaer* written by the fourteenth-century poet Gruffudd ap Maredudd:

Rhadlawn ddawn a ddoeth, Rhi Tri trichyfoeth,  
 I loyw Gaer goeth o fro Loegr gain  
 Rhywogaeth cedrus, rhwydd swydd cypressus,  
 O geingiau pinus a rygyngain  
 (Lewis 2005a: ll. 163–6)

‘A gift full of grace has come, the threefold King of three kingdoms  
 To bright, fair Chester of the realm of fine England:  
 The species of cedar, cypress which performs its function smoothly,<sup>2</sup>  
 Of branches of pine which intertwine together.’  
 (Lewis, 2005b: 39 (ll. 163–6))

This poem combines imagery describing the Rood of Chester, the original True Cross, and Christ himself (Lewis 2005b: 8). The section quoted above appears to describe both the Rood of Chester and the construction of the True Cross from cedar, cypress and pine. Cedar and cypress are rarely found elsewhere in medieval Welsh literature, but there are also allusions just to pine as one of the materials of the cross, as for example in the fourteenth-century *Awdl i Iesu Grist* possibly written by Dafydd ap Gwilym, which explains how Jesus went *I brynu penyd ar bren pinus* (‘to buy redemption on a pine tree’) (Lake et al. 2007: 152.26). This reputation may also explain the fifteenth-century reference in Lewys Glyn Cothi’s *Marwnad dau fab Phylib ap Rhys* (‘Elegy for the two sons of Phylib ap Rhys’), where one of the two sons is described as being *haelaf, pennaf fal pren pinys* (Johnston 1995: 189.16–18) (‘the most generous, a chieftain like a pine tree’).

Yew trees also had a comparable reputation for holiness because, as previously explained, they were commonly planted in churchyards and abbeys and besides holy wells (Bevan-Jones 2016: 28–30). In these situations, holy yew trees have the highest legal values of all trees in the medieval Welsh law codes. Yew trees in churchyards have also traditionally had a ritual use. Branches and sprigs have traditionally been taken from yew trees for Palm Sunday and Ash Wednesday celebrations in Britain for use in lieu of palm leaves, as noted for example in the fourteenth-century *Festial* of John Mirk of Shropshire (Erbe 1905: 115). As well as in Britain, yew trees were clearly also important in Ireland (Mac Coitir 2016). Gerald of Wales, writing in a later addition to his *Topography of Ireland* of 1188, notes that yew trees were common in Ireland in ancient graveyards and holy places (Dimock 1867: 152). *The Annals of the Four Masters* records the burning of yews in churchyards at *Gleann-Uiscan* (Killeslin in Co. Laois) in 1077, and *Iubhar-Chinntrechta* (Newry) in 1162 (O’Donovan 1856: 1146–7), a name that contains the Irish word for yew, *iubhar*, see p. 100 below. The *Annals of Tigernach* add that the yew tree of St Ciarán at Clonmacnoise was hit by lightning in 1149, supposedly killing 113 sheep sheltering underneath it (Mac Niocaill 2010: 170). A similar sentiment to that of Gerald of Wales is even expressed by Suibne, hero of the Irish tale *Buile Shuibne: A iubhair, a iubhracháin / I*

<sup>2</sup>Alternatively, ‘a smooth cypress seat’(?), see Russell (2000: 282).

*rei[l]gibh bat reil* ('O yew-tree, little yew tree / in churchyards thou art conspicuous') (O'Keefe 1910: 66–7).

The yew tree's holy reputation in Britain and Ireland is consistent with the classical tradition of venerating groves at religious sites. However, the sacred groves associated with the druids of northern Europe were mistrusted by Roman authors like Lucan and Tacitus who often depicted them as ancient and bloody sites of sacrifice, which are felled by brave Roman heroes (Jackson 1937, XIV.30; Duff 1928, III.399ff.). In Christian writing this distrust was sometimes extended to all pagan trees so that for example in the *Life of St Martin of Tours*, initially recorded in the fourth- or early fifth-century *Vita S. Martini* of Sulpicius Severus, St Martin has to fell an unholy pine tree outside a pagan temple. This story was further transmitted across medieval Europe as part of the *Golden Legend* (it is in vol. 6 of William Caxton's English edition (ed. Ellis: 1900)). St Martin was commonly venerated in Wales (Day 2017), and his life was translated as the *Buchedd Sant Martin* in 1488. The version of the story there introduces the tree quite simply: *prenn pinivs oedd yn emyl y demyl* ('a pine tree was beside the temple') and says that St Martin had to fell it *kanis ef a gysegrwyd y'r Kythrel* ('because it was consecrated to the Devil') (Day 2020: §20). This may have been especially easy to conceptualise by Welsh readers because of the presence of so many holy yew trees in Wales.

The most famous holy yew in medieval Welsh sources is of course the tree addressed in Gruffudd Gryg's fourteenth-century poem *I'r ywen uwchben bedd Dafydd ap Gwilym* ('To the yew tree above Dafydd ap Gwilym's Grave'). This poem is directed to a yew tree at Strata Florida Abbey, in the churchyard of St Mary's Church, where Gruffudd tells us that Dafydd ap Gwilym has been buried. There were once many yew trees at the Abbey, and John Leland (Smith 1906: 118) recorded that 39 yews still grew there in the sixteenth century, two of which still stand today. The poem starts by situating the reader, greeting the yew, and telling its story:

Yr ywen i oreuwas  
 Ger mur Ystrad-fflur a'i phlas,  
 Da Duw wrthyd, gwynfyd gwŷdd  
 Dy dyfu yn dŷ Dafydd.  
 Dafydd Llwyd a'th broffwydawdd  
 Er cyn dy dyfu rhag cawdd;  
 Dafydd, gwedi dy dyfu,  
 A'th wnaeth, o'i fabolaeth fu  
 Dy urddo, yn dŷ irddail,  
 Tŷ a phob llwyn yn dwyn dail;  
 Castell cudd meirw rhag eirwynt  
 Cystal â'r pren gwial gynt;  
 Dy leau bu deuluaidd,  
 Dy wrysg, dy gangau, dy wraidd.  
 (Salisbury in Lewis and Salisbury 2010: 5.1–14)

‘Yew for the best of lads  
 Beside the wall of Ystrad-fflur [Strata Florida] and its palace.  
 God’s blessing to you, paradise of trees  
 For growing as Dafydd’s house.  
 Dafydd Llwyd prophesied you  
 Before you grew in the face of tribulation;  
 Dafydd, after you grew,  
 Honoured you – from his youth it was –  
 As a house of green leaves,  
 A house with every bough bearing leaves;  
 A hidden castle for the dead against the snowy wind  
 As good as the tree of rods of old;  
 Your parts were noble,  
 Your boughs your branches, your roots.’  
 (Bollard and Griffiths 2019: 106–7)

This text has provoked a great deal of debate (best summarised in Bromwich, Parry and Bowen 1984) about whether it is a genuine elegy of homage or was intended as a humorous mock-elegy as part of the long *ymryson* (bardic dispute) between Dafydd ap Gwilym and Gruffudd Gryg. Addressing the debate would be outside of the scope of this paper but it is worth noting here that the poem presents a sophisticated depiction of a yew tree, with several extratextual references to other trees. For example, the wish that Dafydd’s yew will become like the *pren gwial gynt* (‘tree of rods of old’) seems to be a reference to the pine-cedar-cypress tree from the legend of the rood, previously described from *Ystorya Adaf* (Bollard and Griffiths 2019: 137–9; Lewis and Salisbury 2010: 146–50). Likewise, the description of the yew as a *dŷ irddail*, (house of green leaves) seems to be a reference to Dafydd ap Gwilym’s other poetry, where he compares his work to carpentry and praises woodland spaces which provide him with shelter for his trysts (Bromwich 1986: 161; Bromwich, Parry and Bowen 1984; Davies 2005; Bevan-Jones 2016: 58–80). This is not simply a yew tree, but a vehicle for all the trees in the fourteenth-century Welsh cultural imagination. Ultimately, though, even with the sophisticated ideas conveyed by this famous yew tree, the foundational concept of the poem is still that of the holy yew growing in the graveyard. The disagreement can be reduced to one of authorial intention: whether or not the solemn effect provided by the presence of the holy yew is being humorously undercut by the tone and the extratextual comparisons with other trees.

There is less evidence that *ffynidwydd* (fir trees) were considered to be holy. One antisemitic miracle story included in the thirteenth-century text *Gwyrthyeu y Wynvyddedic Veir* (‘Miracles of the Blessed Mary’) in NLW MS Peniarth 14 does involve money being placed in a fir container with iron strips bound with pitch (Jones 1941: 28). However, the container is ultimately peripheral to the main miracle (Mary’s later intercession on behalf of the merchant), and the use of pitch was common in the past to waterproof containers and boats (Mason 2013: 72–4, 85–90). Perhaps a more convincing reference to fir being

holy is in the mystic text *Ymborth yr Enaid* ('Sustenance of the Soul'), a religious text from the Book of the Anchorite of Llanddewibrefi (Oxford, Jesus College MS 119), which was part of the *Cysegrlan Fuchedd* ('Holy Living'), most of which no longer survives (Daniel 1997). This text compares the love of Jesus to sweet kisses which shine like sparks arising from fir incense (Daniel 1995: 18–19). Interestingly, the *pinus* (pine) and *ywen* (yew) do not seem to have this same importance as aromatic woods in the medieval Welsh cultural imagination, but the reputation of *ffynidwydd* as an aromatic wood is also supported by Gerald of Wales, again in his *Topography of Ireland*. Alongside his remarks about yew trees, he also notes that, 'Item abundat et abiete silvositatis Hiberniae, thuris et incensi matre.' (Dimock 1867: 152) ('Fir, the mother of incense and perfume, is also common in the wooded parts of Ireland.' (my translation)). The record here could be allegorical, as many of Gerald's later additions were (Bartlett 2006: 121–7), but if it is not, it could possibly be one of the last records of Ireland's remnant population of Scots Pine. Pine also appears in Irish historical sources, including being listed alongside yew in the most prestigious category of trees (*airig fedo*, the 'nobles of the wood') in the eighth-century *Bretha Comaithchesa* ('Judgements of Neighbourhood') (Charles-Edwards 2022: 154–5; Kelly 1976: 111–13), although it is sometimes left out of the later medieval literary tree lists which draw on this law, perhaps because it had by then become rare (Joseph and Drayton 2021). It is still listed as present in *Conkeinia* (Glencokeyne) in Philip O'Sullivan Beare's *Natural History of Ireland* of 1626 (ed. 2009: 200–1). The Old Irish saga *Táin Bó Fraích* (c. 750) refers to a royal abode being made of pine: *de giús dognúth a tech*; cf. Meid (1967: 3, ll. 69–70).

Apart from its aromatic importance, *ffynidwydd* ('fir') appears to have been considered a low-quality wood. In the fourteenth-century *Cywydd yr Halaenwr* ('The Saltman'), a short fabliau by Madog Benfras, the main character swaps places with a travelling salt-seller in order to infiltrate a mansion to meet with a lover. The main character sarcastically describes what a good deal he received for his well-trained horse by exaggerating the poor quality of the salt-seller's outfit. One item that the salt-seller had was a salt basket: *y cawell halen cywair / I'w ddwyn, o'r hengrwyn a'r hair / Ac erwydd ffynidwydd ffyn* (Lewis and Morys 2007: 5.17) ('The basket full of salt / to carry it, made of hairy old hide / and rods, twigs of fir' – translation after Lewis and Morys 2007: 5.15–17). This implies that *ffynidwydd* was considered a low-quality material, despite its aromatic properties. This of course fits with what we know of fir today: conifers like fir and pine are softwoods and have a much lower strength than hardwoods like oak, beech and ash, although yew is strong despite being a softwood (Mason 2013: 102; Linnard 2000: 112–3).

It also appears that none of the three conifers, including *ffynidwydd* ('fir'), were particularly noted to have medicinal properties in medieval Welsh sources. This is surprising, because pine and yew were both used in traditional medicine practices elsewhere in the world, as we previously found in the fourteenth-century *Cursor Mundi* (Hageneder 2013: 99–100; Mason 2013: 153–7). Another Middle English example is John Trevisa's translation of

Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. Here both pinecones and pitch made from pine resin are assigned several medicinal properties (Trevisa and Anglicus 1975: 1018–19). There is only one possible example of medicinal use from medieval Wales: an ingredient named *iawn* is included in a recipe for contraception and abortion in the medieval Welsh medical texts, and this could be an unusual spelling of *ywen* (Luft 2020: 102–3 (4/13), 320 n. 113). Yew has occasionally been tried through history as a medicine for abortions, but this does not seem to have been common in Britain (Hageneder 2013: 158). Medical interest in the conifers increased after the end of the medieval period in Wales. In the nineteenth century, the aromatic reputation of pine forests made them important sites for tuberculosis sanatoria, and pine scent became widely used in disinfectants, as it still is today (Hickman 2022).

#### COLOUR AND DISRUPTIVENESS

The conifers do not always come into medieval Welsh texts as actual trees or even wooden items. Sometimes they can have an effect on a text just by being referenced. Perhaps the most popular aspect of conifers for modern gardeners is their colour. As evergreens, conifers maintain a dense shape and green colour in the garden through the winter, when most other plants die down or lose their leaves. This aspect of the conifers was noted and valued in the medieval period too. In the aforementioned Middle English translation of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, the text notes that pine *is grene boþe wynter and somer* ('is green both winter and summer') (Trevisa and Anglicus 1975: 1017–18). This is also commented on in Welsh literature. The clearest example of it is in *Ystorya Trystan*, a prosimetric Arthurian story combining a possibly early group of *englynion* with a later fabliau frame story, preserved in several manuscripts, the earliest of which is from the mid-sixteenth century (Rowland and Thomas 1982). In this story, Arthur is asked to judge whether Eryllt should be forced to stay with her husband March ap Meirchion, or be allowed to leave to pursue a relationship with Trystan. Arthur pronounces Persephone's fate: Eryllt should be with one of the men when there are leaves on the trees, and the other when the leaves are gone. March chooses to be with Eryllt when the leaves are gone, at which Eryllt triumphantly announces:

'Tri ffren sy dda i rryw  
Kelyn ag eiddew ag yw  
A ddeilan ddail yni byw  
Trystan pie fi yni fyw.'  
(Williams 1930)

'“Three trees are good in type  
Holly and Ivy and Yew  
Which bear leaves while alive  
I am Trystan's while he lives.”'  
(Rowland 2019: 60)

This rhyming quatrain is not one of the linguistically interesting early *englynion* (Rowland and Thomas 1982) but is interesting in that it presumes knowledge of the distinction between deciduous and evergreen plants. It is the disruptive nature of the evergreen plants here which allows Esyllt to circumvent Arthur's ruling and escape her loveless marriage. Interestingly, the other conifers sometimes also have a superficially similar disruptive function in medieval Welsh texts. This passage in particular makes a useful comparison to a much earlier Arthurian romance. In *Owein*, or *Iarlles y Ffynnon*, as well as *Yvain*, the Old French version of the story, one of the most important settings of the text is the titular fountain (sometimes also translated as a well or spring). This fountain is returned to regularly by various knights over the course of the tale because it can be used to produce storms and to summon each other into single combat. This seemingly disruptive act actually provides a structure to the text, and the fountain becomes a place for young men to test their masculinity and (theoretically) gain a knightly education and a sense of moderation (cf. Roberts 1987; Urban 2009; Scott 2009). The fountain does not stand alone in the landscape:

'Ac odyno ti a wely ystrat megys dyffryn mawr, ac ympherued yr ystrat y gwely pren mawr a glassach y vric no'r fenitwyd glassaf. Ac y dan y pren hwnnw y mae fynhawn, ac yn emhyl y fynhawn y mae llech wawr [Red Book: varmor], ac ar y llech y mae kawc aryant wrth kadwyn aryant mal na ellir y gwahanu.' (Thomson 1968: 7)

'“And from there you will see a broad river valley, like a wide vale, and in the middle of the valley you will see a great tree, its branches greener than the greenest fir trees. And under that tree there is a well, and near the well there is a marble slab, and on the slab there is a silver bowl fastened to a silver chain so that they cannot be separated.”' (Davies 2007: 119)

The idyllic scene being described here is a motif which also occurs in Old French and Middle English literature. In *Yvain*, the twelfth-century Old French version of the Arthurian legend by Chretien de Troyes, the tree at the fountain beside the basin and the slab is expressly called a *pin* ('pine') all the way through the text, and is said to be beautiful and evergreen: *An toz tans la fuelle li dure / Qu'il ne la pert por nul iver* (Reid and Foerster 1942: 384–5) ('Its leaves stay on in all seasons; it doesn't lose them in even the harshest winter' (Kibler and Carroll 1991: 299–300)). In the Old French and Middle English *Le Roman de la Rose/The Romaunt of the Rose*, a fountain is again described with a marble slab under an exceptionally tall and beautiful pine (Sutherland 1967: ll. 1425–32 and 1455–62). Based on beautiful scenes like this, Carole Hough (2003) argues that pine trees generally have a romantic significance in Middle English literature. There is also, however, something dangerous and disruptive about other examples of this motif. A good example of this is the appearance of the motif in the twelfth-century Anglo-Norman *Song of Roland*, although here the fountain is missing. In this virulently Islamophobic text the pine tree seems

to represent the French court and the forces of Christianity (Brault 1978: 68; Steinmeyer 1963). Charles, the Christian Emperor of France, regularly holds court under pine trees (Burgess 1990: 8, 11, 12)). The pine stands in contrast to the olive tree which represents Muslim Spain (Vos 1974). The space under pine was also seen as appropriate for last stands. When Ganelon of France is nearly attacked at the council of Marsile, the Muslim King of Spain, he draws his sword and puts his back to a pine tree (Burgess 1990: 37). When the Twelve Peers of France prepare for a rear-guard battle, they arm themselves under a grove of pines (78). And finally when Roland, the titular character, realises he is going to die he literally runs to be under a pine tree (*pin*) once again (174), before lying down to die underneath it (176). For this scene in particular, the pine tree may also be an allusion to the cross, with Roland sacrificing his life for his beliefs just like Jesus did (Brault 1978: 69). This particular pine tree is described earlier in the story:

Devers Espaigne een vait en un guarét  
Muntet sur un tertre desuz un arbre bel,  
Quatre perruns i ad de marbre faiz.

‘He goes over towards Spain, into a fallow field;  
He climbs on to a mound, beneath a beautiful tree.  
Four great marble blocks are there.’ (Burgess 1990: 168)

For medieval authors, the conifers were not just disruptive in that the dramatic moments of the texts happened underneath them; Welsh and English authors sometimes seem to have considered them so disruptive to texts that they needed to be removed. While in the Old French and Anglo Norman *Yvain*, *Le Roman de la Rose* and *The Song of Roland* there are literal pine trees, in *Owein* the species of this tree itself is never specified; we only know that its colour is like that of a fir tree. Where clarity is needed it is occasionally afterwards called *y prenn glas* (‘the green tree’), referring back to this passage (Thomson 1968: 11, 18). The Middle English *Yvain and Gawain* also changes the species, here making the tree a hawthorn rather than a conifer at all (Braswell 1995: 353; 627). Similarly, while the tree remains a pine in the Middle English *Romaunt of the Rose*, the author seems to draw some cultural distance from it in the comment: *Whiche tree in Fraunce men cal a pyne* (Sutherland 1967: 1457). In *Cân Rolant*, the Middle Welsh translation of the *Song of Roland*, the pine trees are again omitted. In one manuscript (NLW MS Peniarth 10, verse XXV), what was a pine tree is even turned into an *wmbyr* tree (a misunderstanding of the Anglo Norman word *umbre* meaning ‘shadow’ (Rejhon 1984: 65)), which might suggest that the translator had difficulty even understanding the word *pin* (‘pine’). These changes can be understood to be a product of a *translatio* from one culture to another (Roberts 1987; Poppe 2004; Reck 2019). The same process can be seen in the change of the camels and bears in the *Song of Roland* into the horses and roe deer of *Cân Rolant* and the omission of the Breton Forest of Brocéliande between *Yvain* and *Owein* (although it is contrary to the retention of Norman loanwords in descriptions of the outfits in *Owein*, and the retention

of the Olive trees in *Can Rolant* (Cordo Russo 2014a: 175, 206–7; Cordo Russo 2014b). The most probable explanation for the change in how the pine trees are depicted is that the inclusion of pine trees established a less familiar setting for Middle English and Middle Welsh authors and audiences. The very mention of the extinct Scots Pine might have disrupted the ability of readers to imagine the story, despite the apparently strong cultural currency of terms like *pinus* and *ffynidwydd*.

In some medieval stories, conifers are also disruptive in that they mark the borders of an Otherworldly realm. In the fourteenth-century Middle English *Confessio Amantis*, the edge of the domain of Pan is *enclosed with the tres of Pigne* (Macaulay 1901: V.1005–19). The association between Otherworldly figures and conifers is also seen in medieval Irish literature, so for example the final trysting place of Cuchulainn and Fand in *The Wasting Sickness of Cúchulainn* is *Ibor Cind Tráchtá* (Newry – literally ‘the Yew Tree at the Head of the Strand’) (Gantz 1981: 174); interestingly, this is the same place where yew trees were recorded as being burned in *The Annals of the Four Masters* in 1162. When Cuchulainn is seeking training from Scáthach and permission to marry her daughter in *The Wooing of Emer*, he is advised to ambush her under another yew tree (Meyer 1888: 300). A much later parallel in Welsh literature might be the fifteenth-century poetry of Dafydd ab Edmwnd, in the *Kowydd a wnaeth ef i’r ywen* (‘The *cywydd* he made to the yew tree’), where the poet explains how he set out on the feast of St John (on 24 June, close to the summer solstice) to Dafydd ap Gwilym’s yew tree. Here again the yew tree is a trysting spot, with perhaps some supernatural properties: *ir ywenn awn inau’r nos / yno vnawr yw nownos* (Roberts 1914: 11.13–14) (‘I went to the yew for the night / there one hour is nine nights’). This sense of liminality may also be intended by the comparison to fir in the thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Middle Welsh *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* (‘The Dream of Rhonabwy’). This scene, describing Iddog Cordd Prydain, comes immediately after Rhonabwy falls into the dream world of the text. In this context, the mention of the fir, along with the weird, unnatural colours and the giant size of the knights might function as a sign to the reader that the story is now continuing within a dream (Zhao 2021: 80; Davies 1997: 133):

Sef y gwelei gwraenc penngrych melyn a’e varyf yn newyd eillaw,  
y ar varch melyn. Ac o penn y dwygoes a thal y deulin y waeret yn  
las. A pheis o bali melyn am y marchawc, wedy ry wniaw ac adaued  
glas. A chledyf eurdwrn ar y glun, a gwein o gordwal newyd idaw,  
a charrei o ledyr ewic a gwaec erni o eur. Ac ar warthaf hynny llen  
o pali melyn wedy ry wniaw a sidan glas, a godreon y llenn [yn]  
las, ac a oed las o wisc y marchawc a’e uarch a oed kyn lasset a  
deil y ffenitwyd, ac a oed velyn ohonei a oed kyn uelynet a blodeu  
y banadyl. (Richards 1948: 4)

‘Here he saw a young man with curly blond hair and a newly  
trimmed beard. He was on a yellow horse, and from the top of its  
forelegs and the ends of its knees down was green. And the knight  
had a tunic of yellow brocaded silk which had been embroidered

with green thread. And there was gold-hilted sword on his thigh, and it had a sheath of new Cordovan leather, and a thong of hind's leather with a clasp of gold. And over that a mantle of yellow brocaded silk which had been embroidered with green silk, and the edges of the mantle were green, and that which was green of the outfit of the knight and his horse was as green as the needles of fir trees, and that which was yellow of it was as yellow as the flowers of broom.' (my translation)

In medieval Welsh literature, people are often described and characterised by the colour of their hair, so that blond women might be beautiful virgins or evil seductresses, and blond men might be strong warriors or handsome nobles (Hopwood 2016: 22–31; 210–18; Davies 1988). In more intricate descriptions, comparisons are often drawn between the colour of a person's hair and a plant, so that, for example, authors regularly highlighted women as beautiful by comparing their hair to the flowers of broom (Bromwich 2014: 488; Hopwood 2016: 39–41; Davies 1995: 148–58). At first glance, the description of Iddog Cordd Prydain provided in *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* fits with this theme – his hair, like that of other characters in *Rhonabwy*, is yellow as the broom, which might characterise him as beautiful, strong and noble. However, the striking green and yellow outfit that Iddog wears is not traditional. In the medieval period, the colour term *glas* (now normally 'blue') is not normally applied to human clothing, but it was commonly used to describe the colour of plants and leaves, so for example *glas kelyn* ('holly is green' – Haycock 2007: 3.135); *glas cunlleit* ('herbage is green' – Jacobs 2012: 1.35); *dail glas ar dâl y glyn* ('green leaves at the head of the valley' – Lake et al. 2007: 36.25). This is interesting because, in contrast, *gwyrdd* ('green') seems to be an especially attractive colour for human clothing in medieval poetry (Lake et al. 2007: 138.6; Edwards 2006: 3.88). The description of the knight in *Breudwyt Rhonabwy* is also much more intricate than is typical from other medieval Welsh prose literature (Davies 1995: 153–6; Davies 1997: 132–4; Davies 1988). The colophon at the end hints that the text has been purposefully made complicated in terms of the number of colours and the unusual choice of colours in order to make memorisation more difficult (Richards 1948: 21). This suggests that scholarship (Giffin 1958; Jones 2007: 99–100) attempting to explain the descriptions in *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* by drawing parallels with historical descriptions of outfits and battles might be misplaced. The colours in *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* were intended to be excessive rather than realistic in order to parody traditional storytelling conventions (Bollard 1981; Lloyd-Morgan 1991). The description of the colour of the fir tree in this text, just like in *Owein* and *Trystan and Esyllt*, has a disruptive purpose: Iddog Cord Prydain is described in excessive detail and seems to be wearing a colour only normally seen in plants.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to examine the three conifers which are regularly described in medieval Welsh sources. The term *yw* refers to the yew. Yew trees were, and are, commonly present outside churches, abbeys and at holy wells, and must have stood out in the later medieval period, when they became rarer as demand rose for yew bows. The term *pinus* refers to the pine tree. Scots Pines were almost extinct in the south of Britain at this time, but some populations are known to have survived into the medieval period, and the medieval references in *Y Gododdin* and possibly *Eiry Mynyd* and others might refer to remnant populations of pine trees. The term *ffynidwydd* can be translated as 'fir' in the broadest sense. It is likely that this term sometimes also referred to populations of Scots pine, as for example in *Cad Goddeu*. Each of the conifers had a particular reputation in medieval Welsh literature. Fir trees were especially known for their aromatic wood. Pine and yew trees had a reputation for being holy. Yew had this reputation because of the presence of holy yew trees, most famously including the one at Dafydd ap Gwilym's grave at Strata Florida described by Gruffudd Gryg. Pine had a comparable reputation for holiness because it was thought of as the wood of the cross, based on the legend of the rood, most famously told in *Ystoria Adaf*. In addition to this, references to conifers also sometimes act to disrupt medieval Welsh texts. This can be in terms of their evergreen colour as in the later reference to yew in *Trystan and Esyllt*, or the references to fir in *Breudwyt Rhonabwy* and *Owein*. The motif of the fountain under the green tree in *Owein* also appears in Middle English and Old French literature where it seems to function as a dramatic setting for the most important moments of the text. As part of this depiction, conifers sometimes seem to mark the boundaries of Otherworldly realms.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The seed for this paper was planted during encounters with the Ashbrittle, Llanedeyrn and Defynnog Yew trees. It germinated in the two years spent discussing *Epic and Romance* and *Narrative and Nation* with Cardiff University undergraduates, in classrooms opposite the John Percival Pine trees. It has been nurtured by feedback and resources provided by Morfydd E. Owen, Luciana Cordo Russo, Alastair Hotchkiss, Barry Lewis, and Ann Parry Owen as well as the anonymous reviewer and editors at *Celtica*. Finally, it was shaped by access to the research collections of Cardiff University, the Open University, the National Library of Wales and the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Boscastle.

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## HOW THE WELSH CAUGHT THE YELLOW PLAGUE

### ABSTRACT

The ‘Yellow Plague’ (*pestis flava*, *buidechair*, *ball felen*, etc.) is a term used by Irish and Welsh authors working in the tenth century and later to describe several epidemics of the sixth and seventh centuries. This paper examines one particular set of stories about this illness found in Welsh sources written between 1100 and 1223, in which the Yellow Plague is responsible for a mass migration from Wales to Brittany. This legend, I argue, was likely created at Llancarfan in the late eleventh century from various older sources, including annals and saints’ Lives from Ireland and Brittany; I also provide an account of how this legend may have been transmitted to other Welsh centers, and suggest connections to other contemporary works of pseudo-history, such as Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *De gestis Britonum*.

IN THE SIXTH and seventh centuries, several major epidemics swept across Ireland and Britain.<sup>1</sup> Surviving contemporary, or near-contemporary, sources from Ireland and England make clear that these ‘mortalities’ (as they were called) were often catastrophic, at least in the short term.<sup>2</sup> Recent research has made clear that some, at least, of these mortalities were outbreaks of *Yersinia pestis*, the pathogen responsible for bubonic plague, a common scourge across Europe and the Near East at the time.<sup>3</sup>

Memory of these outbreaks faded swiftly in England; they are hardly mentioned in writings after the eighth century, except for translations or adaptations

<sup>1</sup>My gratitude is due to Ben Guy, Rachel Singer, Barry Lewis, and the anonymous reviewer for their thoughtful comments on advanced versions of this article, and to Michael McCormick, whose seminar on the Plague of Justinian in 2019 inspired me to pursue this topic.

<sup>2</sup>On the use of *mortalitas* to mean ‘(mass) death’ see Michael Herren, *The Hisperica Famina: Related Poems* (Toronto, 1987), at 113–14. For contemporary accounts of these epidemics, see Ann Dooley, ‘The plague and its consequences in Ireland’, in Lester Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750* (Cambridge, UK, 2002), 215–28; John Maddicott, ‘Plague in seventh-century England’, in Lester Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity*, 171–214; John Cule, ‘Y Fad Felen’, in John Cule (ed.), *Wales and Medicine: An Historical Survey from Papers Given at the Ninth British Congress on the History of Medicine at Swansea & Cardiff, 4–8th September, 1973* (London, 1975), 141–55; Stuart Piggott, ‘Pestilences in sixth-century Britain’, *Antiquity* 24 (1950), 143–5.

<sup>3</sup>DNA evidence of *Y. pestis* has been uncovered in Cambridgeshire: Marcel Keller et al., ‘Ancient *Yersinia pestis* genomes from across Western Europe reveal early diversification during the First Pandemic (541–750)’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116 (2019), 12363–72. For lists of possible bubonic plague outbreaks in the early Middle Ages, see Dionysios Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire: A Systematic Survey of Subsistence Crises and Epidemics* (Aldershot, 2004), at 113–24, and Kyle Harper, *The Fate of Rome: Climate, Disease, and the End of an Empire* (Princeton, 2017), at 304–15.

of earlier sources.<sup>4</sup> In Ireland and Wales, however, these early medieval epidemics were transformed, over the centuries, into a pestilence whose various names can usually be translated roughly as the ‘Yellow Plague’, and which came to play a major role in the later medieval historiography of both regions.<sup>5</sup> In Ireland, this plague was seen as a typical feature of the ‘Age of Saints’, and appears in numerous saints’ Lives and their associated literature; in Wales, it was believed to be the cause of the death of Maelgwn, the fearsome sixth-century king of Gwynedd, and of a mass migration from Britain to Brittany and Ireland.<sup>6</sup>

The origins and creation of this last legend – the story of a terrible epidemic that forced saints and many other Britons to flee the island for safety – is the focus of the present article. The ‘migration legend’, as I will refer to it, flourished for little more than a century; it first appears in the so-called ‘Vespasian Life’ of St Teilo, a text likely written for the community of Llandaf shortly after 1100, and essentially disappears from the textual record after the death of Gerald of Wales in 1223.

This legend has not attracted much comment over the past century. Recent histories of early medieval Wales and the British migration to Brittany have (rightly) ignored it;<sup>7</sup> literary studies of the texts that contain it are few, and it has rarely been examined in the context of other plague narratives from Britain and Ireland, let alone further afield.<sup>8</sup> For this reason, the peculiarity of this legend has passed unnoticed. We have many surviving contemporary, or near-contemporary, reports on outbreaks of bubonic plague from across Europe, Africa, and the Near East, often couched in apocalyptic tones.<sup>9</sup> None of these,

<sup>4</sup>Typical in this regard is William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta pontificum Anglorum*, which mentions a ‘mortality’ only once (II §73.8, ‘tempore mortalitatis’): Michael Winterbottom (ed. and trans., with the assistance of R. M. Thomson), *Gesta pontificum Anglorum: The History of the English Bishops*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 2007), at 226.

<sup>5</sup>What the term ‘Yellow Plague’ originally denoted has been much debated. See Pierce Grace, ‘From *blefed* to *scamach*: pestilence in early medieval Ireland’, *PRIA* 118C (2018), 67–93, at 82–4 (viral hepatitis); William MacArthur, ‘The identification of some pestilences recorded in the Irish annals’, *Irish Historical Studies* 6.23 (1949), 169–88, at 173–7 (relapsing fever); Dooley, ‘Plague and its consequences’, 218–9 (bubonic plague). J. F. D. Shrewsbury, ‘The Yellow Plague’, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 4 (1949), 5–47, at 35–6, even suggests smallpox. Some of these identifications have trickled into the scientific literature: e.g. David Warrell, ‘Louse-borne relapsing fever (*Borrellia recurrentis* infection)’, *Epidemiology and Infection* 147 (2018), 1–8, at 3 (relapsing fever).

<sup>6</sup>Dooley, ‘Plague and its consequences’; Cule, ‘Y Fad Felen’. One medieval Irish author explicitly claimed that the 664 outbreak of the plague marked the end of the Age of Saints: Paul Grosjean (ed.), *Catalogus sanctorum Hiberniae secundum diversa tempora de tribus ordinibus sanctorum Hiberniae*, *Analecta Bollandiana* 73 (1955), 197–213, 289–355, at 207 (§3d). For the historical migration from Britain to Brittany, see now Caroline Brett (contribb. Paul Russell and Fiona Edmonds), *Brittany and the Atlantic Archipelago, 450–1200: Contact, Myth, and History* (Cambridge, UK, 2021), at 68–99.

<sup>7</sup>E.g. Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons, 350–1064* (Oxford, 2013), at 216.

<sup>8</sup>Cule, ‘Y Fad Felen’, and Shrewsbury, ‘The Yellow Plague’ are notable exceptions.

<sup>9</sup>See Michael McCormick, ‘Gregory of Tours on sixth-century plague and other epidemics’, *Speculum* 96.1 (2021), 38–96, on a single author, but with copious bibliography. For a general overview, see Harper, *Fate of Rome*, 199–287.

to my knowledge, envision any sort of widescale, long-term population movement of the sort the Britons supposedly undertook.<sup>10</sup> What was the inspiration for this legend, and how did it take shape?

### I. THE SOURCES

Presented below is every text from Wales written before 1223 that mentions the Yellow Plague; all dates given are for the composition of the text.

1. The Life of St. Teilo in BL MS Vespasian A.xiv, fols 52r–55v (c. 1107 × 1119)<sup>11</sup>
2. Three texts in the Book of Llandaf (NLW MS 17110E: manuscript itself shortly before 1134; relevant portions likely 1120 × 29)<sup>12</sup>
  - (a) The revised Life of Teilo (pp. 97–117)
  - (b) The Life of Euddogwy (pp. 130–9)
  - (c) Charter 144 (pp. 144–5)
3. Three works by Gerald of Wales:<sup>13</sup>
  - (a) *Itinerarium Cambriae* (first recension c. 1191)<sup>14</sup>
  - (b) *Invectiones*<sup>15</sup> (1200 × 16), in which, besides Gerald's own writings on the Yellow Plague, he presents the text of two earlier letters from the clergy of St Davids to the Pope in which the Yellow Plague is mentioned:
    - i. A letter to Honorius II (pp. 143–6)
    - ii. A letter to Eugenius III (pp. 139–41)
  - (c) *De Iure et Statu Menevensis Ecclesiae* (c. 1218)<sup>16</sup>

<sup>10</sup>See n. 148 below.

<sup>11</sup>Ben Guy (ed. and trans.), 'Vita Sancti Teliaui (Vespasian A. xiv)', 2022, <<https://saints.wales/theedition/>> (accessed 11 August 2022). I thank Dr Guy for providing me with an advance copy of this Life, and of his article 'The Vespasian Life of St Teilo and the evolution of the *Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium*', in David Parsons and Paul Russell (eds), *Seintiau Cymru, Sancti Cambrenses: Astudiaethau ar Seintiau Cymru / Studies in the Saints of Wales* (Aberystwyth, 2022), 1–30. Date from Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 9.

<sup>12</sup>Page numbers given for texts published in J. Gwenogvryn Evans and John Rhys (eds), *The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv* (Oxford, 1893); see now Ben Guy (ed. and trans.) 'Vita Sancti Teliaui (Liber Landavensis)', 2022, <<https://saints.wales/theedition/>> (accessed 11 August 2022), and Guy (ed. and trans.), 'Vita Sancti Oudocei (Liber Landavensis)', 2022, <<https://saints.wales/theedition/>> (accessed 11 August 2022). Date of MS from J. R. Davies, 'Liber Landavensis: its date and the identity of its editor', *CMCS* 35 (1998), 1–11; for the date of the texts, see Wendy Davies, 'Liber Landavensis: its construction and credibility', *English Historical Review* 88 (1973), 335–51, at 338–9.

<sup>13</sup>Dates of Gerald's writings from Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: 1146–1223* (Oxford, 1982), at 203–21 (with further references there); for the dates of the letters, see J. Conway Davies, *Episcopal Acts and Cognate Documents Relating to Welsh Dioceses, 1066–1272* (Cardiff, 1946–8), at vol. 1, 190–9.

<sup>14</sup>James Dimock (ed.), *Itinerarium Kambriae*, Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, vol. 6 (London, 1868), 1–152.

<sup>15</sup>W. S. Davies (ed.), 'De invectionibus', *Y Cymmrodor* 30 (1920).

<sup>16</sup>J. S. Brewer (ed.), *De iure et statu Menevensis ecclesiae*, Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, vol. 3 (London, 1863), 98–373.

(1) and (2) above are closely related, and form what I call below the ‘Llandaf-Llancarfan’ group; the texts in (3) will be called the ‘St Davids’ group.

The B-text of the Welsh Latin annals, otherwise known as the Breviate Chronicle (*BC*), should, perhaps, be included above as well. In this text, the Yellow Plague is mentioned in association with the death of Maelgwn Gwynedd, alongside a saying about the ‘long sleep’ of Maelgwn.<sup>17</sup> While the surviving copy of the Breviate Chronicle dates to the end of the thirteenth century, its textual history is complicated, and the relevant notice of the Yellow Plague may well have been entered before 1223.<sup>18</sup> I have chosen not to discuss it here, however, as any thorough treatment of the entry in the Breviate Chronicle should include the copious late medieval stories about Maelgwn’s death (only some of which allude to the Yellow Plague): this, I believe, is best suited for a separate article.<sup>19</sup>

### *i. The Llandaf-Llancarfan Group*

The earliest of the four texts in the Llandaf-Llancarfan group is the Vespasian Life of Teilo; the remaining three survive in the Book of Llandaf, a compilation of saints’ Lives, charters, papal bulls, and other material that serves as a sort of case file for the partially successful attempt by the bishop of Llandaf, Urban (1107–34), to extend and solidify the bounds and holdings of his diocese.<sup>20</sup> Some of the texts in the Book appear to have been created for the sole purpose of pressing this case, such as the Life of Euddogwy; others have been only lightly edited from earlier versions, such as the Life of Teilo; still others are substantial rewritings of older material, such as the Life of Dyfrig and many of the charters.<sup>21</sup> The contents of this book came together in the years leading up to Urban’s death at Rome in 1134. Much of the Book of Llandaf, Wendy Davies suggests, was written 1120 × 1129, including the texts discussed below; J. R. Davies has also argued that these were the work of a single compiler-reviser,

<sup>17</sup>Henry Gough-Cooper (ed.), ‘*Annales Cambriae*: The B text, from London, National Archives MS E164.1, pp. 2–26’, 2015, <<http://croniclau.bangor.ac.uk/editions.php.en>> (accessed 12 May 2022), s.a. 575.1.

<sup>18</sup>Huw Pryce, ‘Chronicling and its contexts in medieval Wales’, in Ben Guy, Georgia Henley, Owain Wyn Jones, and Rebecca Thomas (eds), *The Chronicles of Medieval Wales and the March* (Turnhout, 2020), 1–32, at 7–8, with further references there.

<sup>19</sup>Certain copies of *Brut y Brenhinedd* also refer to the Yellow Plague. This appears to have happened relatively late in that text’s transmission, however; it is first found in the Cotton Cleopatra version: John Jay Parry (ed. and trans.), *Brut y Brenhinedd: Cotton Cleopatra Version* (Cambridge, MA, 1937), 95. See further n. 161 below.

<sup>20</sup>For in-depth studies of this work, see Patrick Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source* (Woodbridge, 2019); J. R. Davies, *The Book of Llandaf and the Norman Church in Wales* (Woodbridge, 2003); Wendy Davies, *An Early Welsh Microcosm: Studies in the Llandaff Charters* (London, 1978); and Wendy Davies, *The Llandaff Charters* (Aberystwyth, 1979). See also Daniel Huws, ‘The making of *Liber Landavensis*’, in Daniel Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts* (Cardiff, 2000), 123–57, and C. N. L. Brooke, *The Church and the Welsh Border in the Central Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1986), at 16–49.

<sup>21</sup>See J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 109–31; Ben Guy, ‘The Life of St Dyfrig and the lost charters of Moccas (Mochros), Herefordshire’, *CMCS* 75 (2018), 1–37.

possibly to be identified as Caradog of Lllancarfan, who was, perhaps, one of Urban's brothers.<sup>22</sup>

### *The Vespasian Life of Teilo*

Caradog may have been responsible for the Llandaf Life of Teilo, but the Vespasian Life was written by another brother of Bishop Urban, Stephen (or, perhaps, Geoffrey).<sup>23</sup> This work takes the form of a sermon addressed to a religious community, probably, but not certainly, that of Llandaf.<sup>24</sup> This Life is named after the sole manuscript that contains it, the late twelfth-century BL MS Cotton Vespasian A.xiv.<sup>25</sup> It is likely, as Ben Guy has argued, that the Vespasian Life was written after 1107, when Urban became bishop, and before 1119, when Urban began to promulgate the newly fabricated version of the history of his see.<sup>26</sup>

The Yellow Plague appears towards the end of the Life, after Teilo has returned from a voyage to Jerusalem with his fellow Welsh saints, David and Padarn. When the plague strikes, in the form of 'a column of mist', it nearly wipes out the entire population; the remainder are forced to flee:

Sancti Dei [...] reuersi sunt in regionem suam. In qua non diu commorari potuerunt propter pestilentiam que fere totam gentem deleuerat. Pestis autem illa 'flaua' uocabatur, eo quod flauos et exangues efficiebat uniuersos quos persequabatur. Que in columpna nubis apparebat hominibus, unum caput uerrens per terram, aliud sursum trahens per aerem, et discurrens per totam regionem ad modum imbris discurrentis per ima conuallium. Quecumque autem animantia suo pestifero afflatu attingeret aut ilico moriebantur aut egrotabant in mortem. Siquis uero medelam conaretur adhibere egrotanti, non tantum medicamina non habebant suum effectum, sed etiam medicamentum cum egroto atra lues trahebat ad interitum. Interea, dum ista pestis seuiret non tantum in hominibus sed etiam in feris et in reptilibus, sanctus Eliud, in ieiunio et planctu, clamabat ad Dominum, dicens,

<sup>22</sup>W. Davies, '*Liber Landavensis*', 338–9; also J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 132–42, and Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, 245–9.

<sup>23</sup>BL MS Vespasian A.xiv, fol. 52r: 'Incipit vita sancti Teliavi episcopi \v. idus feb./ a magistro Galfrido \i. stephano/ fratre vrbani Landavensis ecclesie episcopi dictata' ('The Life of St Teilo, bishop, begins [Feb. 9], composed by Master Geoffrey [that is, Stephen], the brother of Urban, bishop of Llandaf'). This attribution is very likely genuine (J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 119); scholars have differed, however, on whether to call the author Geoffrey or Stephen. Cf. G. H. Doble, in D. Simon Evans (ed.), *Lives of the Welsh Saints* (Cardiff, 1971), 161; Brooke, *Church and Border*, 31 n. 65; Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 8. Here the author is referred to as 'Stephen'.

<sup>24</sup>It seems very likely that the text was destined for reading aloud at Llandaf (where Teilo was the patron saint), but this is nowhere made explicit (Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 5–9, 16).

<sup>25</sup>Once dated to c. 1200, this manuscript has been redated to the last third of the twelfth century by Teresa Webber (cited in Guy, 'Life of St Dyfrig', 6 n. 17). See also Kathleen Hughes, 'British Museum MS. Cotton Vespasian A. xiv ("Vitae Sanctorum Wallensium")': its purpose and provenance', in Nora Chadwick et al., *Studies in the Early British Church* (Cambridge, 1958), 183–200; and Joshua Byron Smith, *Walter Map and the Matter of Britain* (Philadelphia, 2017), at 107–39.

<sup>26</sup>I follow here Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 8–9.

‘Parce, Domine, parce populo tuo, qui non uis mortem peccatoris, sed uitam, et ne des hereditatem tuam in perditionem.’ Deinde, ira Dei ad tempus pacata oratione eius aliorumque sanctorum, celitus admonitus, cum his qui residui fuerant de gente recessit in longinquas regiones, donec Deus eis innueret reditum in patriam. Et factum est ita.

‘The saints of God [Teilo, David, and Padarn] [...] returned to their own region. They were not able to dwell there for long on account of the pestilence which had almost destroyed the whole people. But this plague was called “yellow”, because it turned all those whom it struck down yellow and bloodless. It would appear to people as a column of mist, sweeping one end over the earth, and dragging the other above through the air, and it roamed throughout the whole region like a shower of rain roaming through the bottoms of the valleys. And whatever living things it touched with its pestilential breath would either die on the spot or become mortally sick. Moreover, if anyone tried to apply a cure to the sick person, not only would the medicine have no effect, but the black infection would even drag down the healer along with the sick person to death. Meanwhile, as that plague raged not only among people but even among wild beasts and reptiles, holy Eliud, through fasting and lamentation, cried out to the Lord, saying, “Spare, O Lord, spare your people, you who wish not the death of a sinner, but rather life, and give not your inheritance to destruction.” And for that reason, God’s wrath having been appeased for a time through his prayer and the prayers of other saints, he, warned from heaven, departed for faraway regions with those who remained from among the people, until God should indicate to them that they should return to their country.’<sup>27</sup>

Most of this *Life of Teilo* is based on the *Life of David* by Rhygyfarch; the above passage, however, has resisted all previous attempts to uncover its sources.<sup>28</sup> Where parallels can be found, the links are merely suggestive of Stephen’s education, rather than proving reliance on a particular text. For instance, Stephen appears to have had a fairly robust grounding in medical knowledge; when

<sup>27</sup>Guy, ‘*Vita Sancti Teliaui (V)*’, §§8–10. I have emended his translation slightly.

<sup>28</sup>Most scholars have focused on the *Llandaf* version, which is considerably more tractable. G. H. Doble, for instance (*Lives of Welsh Saints*, 179–88) only quotes the original, and pivots instantly to the additional material offered in the *Book of Llandaf*. J. R. Davies’s focus, understandably, is on the *Life* as it exists in the *Book of Llandaf*; I must admit to being mystified, however, by the claim that ‘The story of the flight of St Teilo from the plague is taken directly from *Vita I S. Samsonis*, and the author refers the reader to that work’ (*Book of Llandaf*, 129). This is supported neither in the rest of Davies’s argument nor by the *Life* in the *Book of Llandaf*, where the mention of Samson’s *Life* is in the context of his becoming archbishop, as Davies himself notes (*ibid.*, 116). Ben Guy remarks that the passage is one of two ‘that do not appear to have originated in the *Life of St David*’ (‘*Vespasian Life*’, 17).

claiming the Yellow Plague makes people ‘yellow and bloodless’, he follows the humoral theory’s view on the causes of jaundice.<sup>29</sup>

There are other hints that Stephen had read widely, though it is hard to prove connections to any given text. The description of the apparent tornado, for instance, bears close resemblance to the ‘disease-bearing cloud’ (*morbifera nube*) of Adomnán’s *Vita Columbae*, itself also ‘rainy’ (*pluiale*),<sup>30</sup> or the comments of Bede (and others) that plague could arise in the aftermath of too much rain.<sup>31</sup> This tornado may also invoke the column of cloud and fire of the Book of Exodus, which ‘slew the host’ of the Egyptians in Exodus 14:24.<sup>32</sup>

This list of suggestive parallels can be multiplied, but perhaps the best indication of the author’s skill in remaking his sources is Teilo’s prayer: *Parce domine parce populo tuo, qui non uis mortem peccatoris sed uitam, et ne des hereditatem tuam in perditionem* (‘Spare, O Lord, spare your people, you who wish not the death of a sinner, but rather life, and give not your inheritance to destruction’). This prayer appears to be a free creation, combining and adapting versions of Joel 2:17 (*Parce, Domine, parce populo tuo; et ne des haereditatem tuam in opprobrium*) and Ezekiel 33:11 (*Nolo mortem impii, sed ut convertatur impius a via sua, et vivat*). It is clear, moreover, that the author was working not with the Bible, but with versions of these passages drawn from liturgical materials.<sup>33</sup> In Joel 2:17, for instance, the Vulgate has *in opprobrium*, against the Life’s

<sup>29</sup>The notion that jaundice can be caused by the replacement of blood by yellow bile appears already in Galen: Carl Wolfram Brunschön (ed.), *De locis affectis V–VI: Über das Erkennen erkrankter Körperteile V–VI* (Berlin, 2021), 348 (Book V, §8.1). The oldest Latin version of this doctrine I have found is Constantinus Africanus’ *Viaticum*: ‘De presenti causa [ictericie] quando corpus patitur exterius: sicut reptilium terre venenosorum morsus: venenosa potio: consuetudo cibi ⁊ potus calidissimi sanguinem incendentis ⁊ cholicum facientis [...]’ (‘On the immediate cause [of jaundice], when the body suffers from without, as from the bite of the venomous reptiles of the earth, a poisonous drink, the custom of exceedingly hot food and drink **setting fire to the blood and making it cholic** [choler = yellow bile]’): Constantinus Africanus, ‘Viaticum’, *Omnia opera Ysaac* (Lyons, 1515), fols 144r–171v, at 161v (Book V, §12). Constantinus was active in the later eleventh century; it is just possible, therefore, this work would have been available in southeastern Wales in the early twelfth, though that would involve an improbably swift transmission (see Brian Long, ‘Arabic-Latin translations: transmission and transformation’, in Petros Bouras-Vallianatos and Barbara Zipser [eds], *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Galen* [Leiden, 2019], 343–58). It seems likely, therefore, that Stephen had some other source, perhaps with roots in Carolingian medical knowledge.

<sup>30</sup>Alan and Marjorie Anderson (eds and trans.), *Vita Columbae: Adomnán’s Life of Columba*, revised ed. (Oxford, 1991), at 98 (§2.4).

<sup>31</sup>‘Pestilentia nascitur aere uel siccitatis uel pluuiarum intemperantia pro meritis hominum corrupto, qui spirando uel edendo perceptus luem mortemque generat’ (‘Pestilence is born from air corrupted by a lack of moderation, whether of rains, or of drought; which, taken up by breathing or by eating, gives rise to plague and death’): C. W. Jones (ed.), ‘De natura rerum’, *Opera didascalica*, vol. 1, Corpus Christianorum series Latina 123A (Turnhout, 1975), 173–234, at 223 (§37). This derives from Isidore (as noted in the edition [223]), but the reference to an excess or lack of rain is not present there. Note also the connection made between rains and plague in an account of the outbreak of bubonic plague at Rome in 590: McCormick, ‘Gregory of Tours’, 86–8.

<sup>32</sup>My thanks to Barry Lewis on this point.

<sup>33</sup>The difference is noted in Louis Gray, ‘Biblical citations in Latin Lives of Welsh and Breton saints differing from the Vulgate’, *Traditio* 8 (1952), 389–97, at 393.

in perditionem; the latter reading, however, is found in the common responsory *In ieiunio et fletu orabant*, frequently used on the first Sunday of Lent.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the phrase modeled on Ezekiel 33:11 is, as it stands, far closer to various penitential prayers, or requests for relief from sickness, than the Vulgate text; both types of prayer, of course, suit the context of a devastating plague very well.<sup>35</sup>

### *The Llandaf Life of Teilo*

Some time after the Vespasian Life was written, it was revised to suit Bishop Urban's new vision of the history of Llandaf. Most of the Life received only minimal changes; this is not the case, however, for the section on the Yellow Plague, to which four separate passages were added. The first serves the overarching apologetic purpose of the Book of Llandaf, naming Llandaf as Teilo's see (this information being omitted in the Vespasian copy), and reaffirming Teilo's status as the successor of Archbishop Dyfrig.<sup>36</sup> The last and longest of these additions provides an account of how Teilo takes over Dol for Samson for a time (inspired, it seems, by the Life of Turiau, a Breton saint), and rescues King Budic of Brittany and his people from a monster ravaging the countryside.<sup>37</sup> The intervening second and third passages are what interest us here (in bold below):

[...] [M]edicantem cum egroto atra lues trahebat ad interitum.  
**Traxit enim Mailconvm, regem Guenedotię, deleuit et patriam suam, et in tantum incanduit p̄dicta clades et per totam illam gentem quod patriam pene reddidit desertam.**  
 [...] [C]um his qui residui fuerant de gente recessit [Teilo] in longinquas regiones. **Quorum quidam perrexerunt in Hiberniam, plures uero, ducente eo, in Franciam[.]**

[...] 'The black infection would even drag down the healer along with the sick person to death. **For it dragged down Maelgwn,**

<sup>34</sup> *Corpus Antiphonalium Officii* no. 6910. A list of appearances in early manuscripts is available at the Repertorium: <<https://gregorien.info/chant/id/4190/10/en>> (accessed 16 May 2022).

<sup>35</sup> The Sacramentary of Angoulême, for instance, uses a version of this statement in an *ordo* for the 'reconciliation of a penitent to death', *reconciliatio penitentis ad mortem*: 'Maiestatem tuam Domine quaesumus [...] Deus, qui non mortem sed peccatorum uitam sepm̄ inquiris, respice flentem famulum tuum [...]' ('Lord, we beseech your majesty [...] God, you who always seek not death for sinners but life, look upon your weeping servant [...]'). Patrick Saint-Roch (ed.), *Liber sacramentorum Engolismensis: Manuscript B.N. Lat. 816, le sacramentaire Gélasien d'Angoulême*, Corpus Christianorum 159C (Turnhout, 1987), at 85 (§620). This sacramentary was written in the late eighth century (ibid., ix–x). Compare, too, the prayer found in the Stowe Missal: George Warner (ed.), *The Stowe Missal: MS. D. II. 3 in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin*, vol. 2, Henry Bradshaw Society 32 (London, 1915), at 34 and the Book of Dimma (TCD MS 59 [A.4.23], p. 100, accessible at <<https://digitalcollections.tcd.ie/concern/works/9306t370s?locale=en>>, accessed 16 May 2022) for the recovery of a sick brother: 'Deus, qui non uis mortem peccatoris, sed ut conuertatur et uiuat [...]' ('God, you who want not death for a sinner, but that he should be turned and live [...]').

<sup>36</sup> Guy, 'Vita santi Teliaui (LL)', §8; Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 107.

<sup>37</sup> Guy, 'Vita santi Teliaui (LL)', §10–15; Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 108–14. See further Doble, *Lives of Welsh Saints*, 179–87; also Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 10–11.

king of Gwynedd, and destroyed his country, and to such an extent did the aforesaid destruction rage through all the people that it almost rendered the country a desert. [...] [Teilo] departed for faraway regions with those who remained from among the people. **Some of them travelled to Ireland, while others, led by him, travelled to Francia.**'<sup>38</sup>

These additions provide context to the vague description in the Vespasian Life: the mention of Maelgwn, the famous sixth-century king, anchors this plague firmly in the heroic Welsh past;<sup>39</sup> and we also learn where the fleeing Britons go (another detail omitted in the Vespasian Life).<sup>40</sup> This new material derives from two sources: 1) a version of the Welsh Latin annals, and 2) Wrdisten's Life of Winwaloe. The former supplied the notice of the death of Maelgwn; the latter, the details about the extent of the devastation, as well as the destination of Teilo and his followers.

That the reviser was reliant on the Welsh Latin annals has been clear since G. H. Doble's study of the Life of Teilo.<sup>41</sup> J. R. Davies further suggested that the version of the annals used was similar to the A-text of the Welsh Latin annals, otherwise known as the Harleian Chronicle (*HC*).<sup>42</sup> This text was completed at St Davids not long after 954, and records the death of Maelgwn Gwynedd from an unnamed 'great mortality' (*mortalitas magna*).<sup>43</sup>

The additional details about the course of the illness and its effects derive from Wrdisten's Life of Winwaloe, written at the monastery of Landévennec in western Brittany in the later ninth century.<sup>44</sup> In the opening paragraphs of that Life, Wrdisten describes how the Britons were forced by a terrible plague to flee their native land; the passages in bold correspond to the additions made by the Llandaf reviser:

Interea miserorum, qui paterna incolebant rura, peste foeda  
repente exorta, catervatim et absque numero et absque sepultura

<sup>38</sup>Guy, 'Vita sancti Teliaui (LL)', §9. His translation.

<sup>39</sup>On Maelgwn, see Juliette Wood, 'Maelgwn Gwynedd: a forgotten Welsh hero', *Trivium* 19 (1984), 103–17; Marged Haycock (ed. and trans.), *Legendary Poems from the Book of Taliesin* (Aberystwyth, 2007), at 285–6 contains other useful references.

<sup>40</sup>Doble, *Lives of Welsh Saints*, 179; Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 8–10.

<sup>41</sup>Doble, *Lives of Welsh Saints*, 180.

<sup>42</sup>J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 116.

<sup>43</sup>Ben Guy, 'The origins of the compilation of Welsh historical texts in Harley 3859', *SC* 49 (2015), 21–57, at 22–45; Pryce, 'Chronicling and its contexts', at 2–5. On the place of composition of the Harley MS, see Ben Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy: An Introduction and Textual Study* (Woodbridge, 2020), at 53–8. The entry is in Henry Gough-Cooper (ed.), *Annales Cambriae: the A text, from British Library, Harley MS 3859, ff. 190r–193r*, 2015, <<http://cronici.clu.bangor.ac.uk/editions.php.en>> (accessed 12 May 2022), s.a. 103. Whether Maelgwn actually died of this mortality is a separate issue, one unlikely to ever be resolved; for a sense of the problems involved, see David Dumville, 'Gildas and Maelgwn: problems of dating', in Michael Lapidge and David Dumville (eds), *Gildas: New Approaches* (Woodbridge, 1984), 51–9, at 53–4; Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The death of Urien', *CMCS* 32 (1996), 25–56, at 29–30.

<sup>44</sup>The text can be dated to 860 × 884 ('peut-être aux environs de 874'): Joseph-Claude Poulin, *L'hagiographie bretonne du haut moyen âge: Répertoire raisonné*, Beihefte der Francia 69 (Ostfildern, 2009), at 413–28.

miseranda sternuntur corpora. **Ex hac lue magna ex parte antiqua desolatur patria;** tandemque pauci et multo pauci, qui vix ancipitem effugissent gladium, **aut Scoticam quamvis inimicam, aut Belgicam,** natalem autem patriam linquentes, coacti acriter alienam petivere terram.<sup>45</sup>

‘In the meantime, a foul pestilence suddenly arose, and the wretched bodies of the wretches who remained tilling the ancestral fields were strewn in multitudes, unburied and uncountable. **From this plague the old fatherland was largely made a desert;** and at length a few – and a very few indeed – who had barely evaded the double-edged sword were driven, bitterly, to seek a strange land: **whether Ireland (however hostile), or Belgica,** leaving the country of their birth behind.’

The debt of the Llandaf reviser to the Life of Winwaloe is clear. The passages outlined above correspond precisely to the additions in the Book of Llandaf, albeit with most words switched out for a synonym. Both texts, for instance, report the ‘near-total’ ‘desolation’ of the ‘fatherland’ (*patriam pene reddidit desertam* in the Book of Llandaf, and *magna ex parte antiqua desolatur patria* above), while the reviser’s ‘Francia’ stands in for Wrdisten’s ‘Belgica terra’, as does ‘Hibernia’ for ‘Scotica terra’. It is likely, moreover, that the Life of Winwaloe was the ultimate, if perhaps indirect, source for Stephen’s account of the Yellow Plague; evidence for this will be discussed below.

### *Life of Euddogwy*

The historical Euddogwy appears to have been a bishop active in southeastern Wales in the early eighth century.<sup>46</sup> In his Life, however, which follows closely on the Life of Teilo in the Book of Llandaf, he is portrayed as Teilo’s nephew and eventual successor.<sup>47</sup> Euddogwy, in this telling, is living in Brittany when the Yellow Plague strikes, forcing Teilo to flee Britain with his followers. The bulk of this passage is taken verbatim from the Vespasian Life of Teilo, or a very close relative, as particular readings found in the Vespasian text (such as *sursum* for *rursum*) are also preserved in the Life of Euddogwy.<sup>48</sup> Only the beginning and end are much modified (the passage shared in common is underlined below):

<sup>45</sup>Charles de Smedt (ed.), ‘Vita s. Winwaloei primi abbatis Landevenecensis auctore Wurdestino nunc primum integre edita’, *Analecta Bollandiana* 7 (1888), 167–264, at 175. My translation, with assistance from Ben Guy on several difficult passages; see further Guy, ‘Explaining the origins of Brittany in the twelfth century: St Cadog’s solution’ in Caroline Brett, Fiona Edmonds, and Paul Russell (eds), *Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Medieval Brittany, 450–1200: Connections and Disconnections* (Turnhout, forthcoming). With *belgicam... terram*, Wrdisten is presumably referring to the region of northern France surrounding Calais (the coastline of the old Roman *Gallia Belgica*).

<sup>46</sup>Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 54–8, 165–7.

<sup>47</sup>Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 131.

<sup>48</sup>See further Guy, ‘Vespasian Life’, 14.

Et post immensum tempus, uenit flaua pestis per maiorem brittaniā. ‘Flaua’ quidem uocabatur eo quod flauos et exsanguēs efficiebat uniūrsos quos persequēbatur. Quē in columpnā aquosē nubis apparebat hominibus, unum caput uerrens per terram, aliud sursum trahens per aerem, et discurrens per totam regionem ad modum ymbris discurrentis per ima conuallium. Quēcunq̃ue autem animantia suo pestifero afflatu attingeret aut ilico moriebantur. aut egrotabantur in mortem. Siquis ero medelam conaretur adhibere egrotanti, non tantum medicamina non habebant suum effectum, sed etiam medicantem cum egroto atra lues trahebat ad interitum. Et post immensum tempus, sedata est oratione sancti Teliaui et sanctorum Brittannię. Et antequam omnino extirparetur, uenit diuina uox ad sanctum Teliaum ut cum suis clericis et populo iret Cornugalliam (quē postea uocata Cerniu Budic). Et ibi inuenit nepotem suum Oudoceum[.]

‘And after a very long time, the Yellow Plague came through greater Britain. Indeed, it was called “yellow” because it turned all those whom it struck down yellow and bloodless. It would appear to people as a column of watery mist, sweeping one end over the earth, and dragging the other above through the air, and it roamed throughout the whole region like a shower of rain roaming through the bottoms of the valleys. And whatever living things it touched with its pestilential breath would either die on the spot or become mortally sick. Moreover, if anyone tried to apply a cure to the sick person, not only would the medicine have no effect, but the dire infection would even drag down the healer along with the sick person to death. And after a very long time it was quelled by the prayers of holy Teilo and the saints of Britain. But before it was eradicated entirely, a divine voice came to holy Teilo to tell him to go with his clerics and people to Cornouaille (which was afterwards called *Cernyw Buddig* [“the Cornwall of Budic”]). And there he found his nephew Euddogwy.’<sup>49</sup>

There is no Breton source that relays this precise story, but it is clear that the author of the Life of Euddogwy had access to Breton legends, if perhaps at second hand. Lifris, the abbot of Llancarfan (closely tied to Llandaf, as discussed above), had access to texts or written reports from Brittany in the late eleventh century – in particular, the monastery of Sainte-Croix in Quimperlé.<sup>50</sup> Several different Budics are named as rulers of Cornouaille (the region of southwestern Brittany including Quimperlé) in the cartulary of Landévennec, a work composed in the later eleventh century and which, much like the Book of Llandaf, tells the history of its diocese through charters and saints’ Lives

<sup>49</sup>Guy, ‘Vita Sancti Oudocei’, §2. His translation, with slight modifications.

<sup>50</sup>Bernard Tanguy, ‘De la Vie de saint Cadoc à celle de saint Gurtiern’, *EC* 26 (1989), 159–185, at 164–5; Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 89–90 (expanded upon in Guy, ‘Explaining the origins’).

(including the Life of its purported founder, Winwaloe), and may even have inspired Llandaf's own compilation.<sup>51</sup> There are other scattered references to legends about a certain King Budic preserved in medieval Breton sources.<sup>52</sup> The church of Landeleau, 'Teilo's Enclosure', located some thirty miles upstream from Landévennec, provides, moreover, a potential reason for connecting Teilo with Budic and Cornouaille; the legend of Teilo's travels to that region would nicely explain the existence of the foundation there in his name.<sup>53</sup>

This line of reasoning does not function, however, for either version of the Life of Teilo: in the Vespasian Life, Teilo leaves 'his region' (*regionem suam*) for 'faraway regions' (*longinquas regiones*), and in the revised Llandaf Life, he travels to Dol, in northeastern Brittany, where Budic rules as 'king of the land' (*rex terre*).<sup>54</sup> I suspect, therefore, that these three different versions of Teilo's travels indicage different levels of access to Breton texts on the part of the various authors and revisers. There is no evidence for any direct impact of Breton material on the Vespasian Life of Teilo; this Life never mentions Brittany or any Breton saint.<sup>55</sup> To fill out the vague account of Teilo's subsequent travels, then, the author of the Life of Euddogwy drew on Breton source material for the figure of King Budic of Cornouaille; in so doing, he connected Teilo with that region and thus, by implication, to his foundation at Landeleau. Finally, when the reviser of the Life of Teilo encountered hagiographical texts from Dol, including a Life of Turiau which named Turiau as successor to St Samson, he leapt at the chance to associate Teilo with a much more important church, adapting parts of the *Vita s. Turiaui* into his revised *Vita s. Teliaui*.<sup>56</sup>

It is odd that the Breton materials in the Life of Euddogwy and in the Llandaf Life of Teilo have not been harmonised, especially given that Euddogwy's Life follows so closely on Teilo's in the Book of Llandaf. Euddogwy, despite his purported status as Teilo's nephew and successor, is not even mentioned in the Llandaf Life (or the Vespasian). Perhaps the author of the Life of Euddogwy and the reviser of the Life of Teilo were different people, each working with slightly different sources, or according to their separate tastes. I suspect, however, that they are, in fact, the same person (as J. R. Davies

<sup>51</sup> Arthur de la Borderie (ed.), *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Landevenec* (Rennes, 1888), at 172–3; J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 119–20; Brett, *Brittany*, 301, where a forthcoming publication is cited.

<sup>52</sup> Doble, *Lives of Welsh Saints*, 209–11.

<sup>53</sup> This placename is first attested in the thirteenth century, during the bishopric of Hervé of Landeleau (d. 1261) at Quimper: Paul Théophile Malo Peyron (ed.), *Cartulaire de l'église de Quimper* (Quimper, 1909), at 4. See further Joël Hascoët, *Les troménies bretonnes. Un mode d'anthropisation de l'espace à l'examen des processions giratoires françaises et belges*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 2 vols, Université de Bretagne occidentale, 2010, vol. 1, at 65, 73–4.

<sup>54</sup> Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 110.

<sup>55</sup> Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 16.

<sup>56</sup> Doble, *Lives of Welsh Saints*, 173–6. Another probable Dol source for the Llandaf Life is a Life of Samson: Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 10–11.

has suggested), one who incorporated new material into his work as he discovered it, and who was simply indifferent to how well his various writings hung together.<sup>57</sup>

### Charter 144

The final text in the Book of Llandaf to mention the Yellow Plague is Charter 144, which purports to tell of a transaction in which Euddogwy, by that point bishop of Llandaf, recovers a property, *Lann Cingualan* (Llangynwlan), in the Gower peninsula.<sup>58</sup> The narration to this charter presents this decision as the resolution of a dispute between Llandaf and Illtud's church (Llantwit Major), which is represented in the charter by its abbot, Bywon. The narration runs as follows:

Sciendum est sane quod Oudoceus episcopus suum proprium adquisiuit agrum, id est podum Cyngualan: agrum quidem sancti Dubricii in patria Guhyr, quem sanctus Oudoceus a tempore mortalitatis (id est y dylt melen) perdiderat usque ad tempus Athruis filii Mourici, post uero contentionem magnam inter Oudoceum episcopum et abbatem Ilduti Biuon, qui dicebat suum esse agrum. In fine uero iudicio iudicatus est ager predictus Oudoceo episcopo et altari Landauie in perpetua hereditate[.]

'It should be known truly that Bishop Euddogwy acquired his own land, that is the church of Cynwlan: namely, St Dyfrig's land in the country of Gower, which holy Euddogwy had lost from the time of the plague (that is, y dylt melen [the yellow ?death])<sup>59</sup> until the time of Athrwy's son of Meurig, following, indeed, a great dispute between Bishop Euddogwy and Bywan, abbot of Llanilltud, who said that the land was his. However, in the end the aforesaid land was adjudged to belong to Bishop Euddogwy and the altar of Llandaff in perpetual inheritance[.]'<sup>60</sup>

The charter continues from there, telling of the particular properties reclaimed by Euddogwy (accepted *de manu Athruis gurcanti magni nepotis*, 'from the

<sup>57</sup>J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 132–42. It may be worth noting that the prose style of the Life of Euddogwy is very stilted: even in the excerpt above, note the double use of *post immensum tempus*, and the constant repetition of *et... et... et...*. Perhaps, then, the Life of Euddogwy represents an early attempt at crafting a saint's Life, and the Llandaf Life of Teilo a later attempt by the same author, now with longer practice at writing in Latin, and in possession of new 'sources' for Teilo's biography.

<sup>58</sup>Guy, 'Vita Sancti Oudocei', §16 (= Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 144–5).

<sup>59</sup>GPC Online s.v. *dilaith*, *dylaith*<sup>2</sup> considers *dylt* here to be a form of that noun, meaning 'destruction, death, dissolution'; Ben Guy suggests it may be in error for *dilyw* ('flood') (Guy, 'Vita Sancti Oudocei', n. 111). Semantically, *dilaith* seems the better fit, though it remains to be explained how -y- could stand in for modern -ai-. The gender of *dilaith* is uncertain, moreover; it may be masculine, and hence the adjective ought, in modern Welsh, to be *melyn* instead of *melen*: Ben Guy, personal communication (June 2022). See further below.

<sup>60</sup>Guy, 'Vita Sancti Oudocei', §16. His translation, with slight modifications.

hand of Athrwys, grandson of Gwrgan Fawr'), along with a list of witnesses, followed by a short note on the boundaries of Llangynwlan.<sup>61</sup>

This charter has clearly been reworked to suit Llandaf's contemporary needs; Patrick Sims-Williams cites it as an archetypical example of a charter which may 'contain forgeries designed to appropriate monastic lands', though he grants that it may have 'some authentic basis'.<sup>62</sup> The basic reason for Sims-Williams' doubt is geography: the historical Euddogwy, as noted above, was most likely a bishop active near the River Wye in the early eighth century, where the sole foundation that now bears his name, Llandogo, lies – many miles away from Gower.<sup>63</sup> Conversely, as Sims-Williams notes, the losers in the judgment above – Bywon and the community of Llantwit – were long-established in the Gower peninsula.<sup>64</sup>

Despite these well-grounded concerns, it is possible, if perhaps unlikely, that Euddogwy was, in fact, in a position to receive those properties. The narration claims that this dispute happened in 'the time of' Athrwys, son of Meurig (fl. late 7th c.).<sup>65</sup> On the evidence of the sole other example of this phrase in the charters of the Book of Llandaf, 'the time of [x]' would suggest that *x* was in charge.<sup>66</sup> The witness list, however, claims that the king, Meurig, stood as a witness to this charter 'over his son' (*super filium suum*). This is the only use of such a formula in a charter-list in the Book of Llandaf; it is unclear what it means, precisely, in this context. It appears as though Meurig and his descendants held effective control over much of both Gwent and Glwysying (including, it seems, Euddogwy's home region of Ergyng): are we meant, then, to imagine Athrwys in charge in one region of the kingdom, under the watch of his father?<sup>67</sup> In any case, if the kingdoms of Gwent and Glywysing were in fact united within that family in the later seventh century, Meurig and Athrwys's authority could perhaps have stretched from Gower to Ergyng.<sup>68</sup> The long distance between Euddogwy's church at Llandogo and his purported properties in Gower may not, therefore, be an outright disqualification for the (partial) authenticity of the charter.

<sup>61</sup> Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 144–5.

<sup>62</sup> Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 66, 112.

<sup>63</sup> Doble, *Lives of Welsh Saints*, 215–16 views the Euddogwy of the charter and the Euddogwy of Llandogo as separate. But see now Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 166–7 and (for a detailed discussion on Athrwys ap Meurig's *floruit* and identity), Guy, 'Lost charters', 27–30.

<sup>64</sup> Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 66; see also Patrick Sims-Williams, '“Dark” and “clear” y in medieval Welsh orthography: Caligula versus Teilo', *Transactions of the Philological Society* 119.1 (2021), 9–47, at 11.

<sup>65</sup> Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 148–9.

<sup>66</sup> [U]sque ad tempus hergualdi episcopi: Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 278.

<sup>67</sup> See the comments of Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 167.

<sup>68</sup> Admittedly, the extent of these kingdoms – as envisioned in J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales: From the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest* (London, 1911), vol. 1, at 273–4 – is itself heavily reliant on the charters preserved in the Book of Llandaf, so there is a real risk of circularity here. Sims-Williams is more cautious, claiming that the 'credible grants are concentrated ... east of the Tywi—or more precisely east of the Neath valley'; Gower lies west of Neath (*The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 165).

I do not wish to push that case too far, however. More relevant here is that the *mortalitas*, ‘mortality’, glossed by *idest y dylyt melen* (‘that is, the *dylyt melen*’), may well reflect a real record of a seventh-century mortality. As discussed above, *mortalitas* was the standard contemporary term for the major epidemics of early medieval Ireland and Britain, copiously attested in English and Irish sources.<sup>69</sup> In all the texts of the Book of Llandaf, moreover, the word *mortalitas* only appears here. If this charter were a simple forgery, the lack of references to this ‘mortality’ in the other charters and saints’ Lives would be surprising. Finally, the scenario envisioned is at least plausible; comparative evidence from Ireland suggests that opportunistic shifts in land ownership did, in fact, happen in the wake of the *mortalitates* of the seventh century, as Tírechán – writing, most likely, shortly before 700 – complains:

[N]on quaerebant aliquid a familia Dumiche nissi amicitiam tantummodo, sed quaerit familia Clono, qui per uim tenent locos Patricii multos post mortalitates nouissimas.

‘They [Patrick’s successors] used not to demand anything of the community of Dumech save friendship alone, but the community of Clonmacnoise, which holds many of Patrick’s places by force since the most recent epidemics, does.’<sup>70</sup>

In short, though the reviser of the charters in the Book of Llandaf no doubt reworked this charter to some extent, he possibly relied on a charter first written centuries earlier.<sup>71</sup> When the explanatory note naming the illness as the *dylyt melen*, was added is unclear. This Welsh term for the epidemic later known as the ‘Yellow Plague’ appears only here: by the thirteenth century, the preferred term was, rather, *ball felen*, and the synonymous *bad felen* first appears in the fourteenth century.<sup>72</sup> *Dylyt melen* nevertheless continued to be understood; a late-medieval glossator of the Book of Llandaf (probably David Llywelyn, the treasurer of Llandaf in the late fifteenth century) wrote ‘y vall velen’ next to both *pestis flava* and *y dylyt melen*.<sup>73</sup>

*Dylyt melen* may, in origin, have been a gloss present on an earlier copy of the charter, and incorporated into the main body of the text by a later copier, perhaps the compiler of the Book of Llandaf. This hypothesis would explain the odd spelling of the word *dylyt*: a possible Old Welsh spelling of *dilraith*

<sup>69</sup>Some early examples: in England, Susan Irvine (ed.), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition. MS E* (Cambridge, UK, 2004), s.a. 664; Bertram Colgrave (ed. and trans.), *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge, UK, 1927), at 40–1; Michael Lapidge (ed.) and Paolo Chiesa (trans.), *Storia degli Inglesi* (Milan, 2010), vol. 2, at 142 (= Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica* §3.27). In Ireland: *AU* s.a. 664, 683 (among others); Anderson and Anderson, *Vita Columbae*, 46–7; Ludwig Bieler (ed. and trans.), ‘Collectanea de sancto Patricio’, in *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh* (Dublin, 1979), at 130, 142.

<sup>70</sup>Text and translation from Bieler, translation lightly modified (Bieler, ‘Collectanea’, 142). See further Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge, 2000), at 439–40.

<sup>71</sup>Sims-Williams, *The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 7–16, 86–92.

<sup>72</sup>*BC* s.a. 575.1; Parry, *Cotton Cleopatra*, 195.

<sup>73</sup>Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâw*, 339, n. 131, and 340, n. 144; see Huws, ‘*Liber Landavensis*’, 151–2.

(or *dylaith*) *melyn* would be \**dilet melen*, which the reviser of the Book of Llandaf, fitfully updating older forms with a new, y-heavy orthography, could have fashioned into *dylyt melen*.<sup>74</sup> The use of *-e-*, however, to represent Modern Welsh *-ai-*, Middle Welsh *-ei-*, appears to have largely fallen out of use by the early twelfth century, and would suggest that knowledge of the Yellow Plague was circulating in southern Wales before the date of compilation of the Book of Llandaf.<sup>75</sup>

It is worth pausing here for a moment and asking why, exactly, this plague came to play such a major role at Llancarfan-Llandaf: after all, as I mentioned in the introduction above, attributing major historical consequences to early medieval epidemics was not particularly common at the time.

This question is considerably easier to answer for the three works in the Book of Llandaf. There, the reviser was working with a given narrative, set out by the earlier Vespasian Life of Teilo, and was able to connect the ‘Yellow Plague’ of that text with ‘mortalities’ recorded in other available sources (the annals, a charter), helping to create a timeline for the collection as a whole: the plague that broke out at the start of Teilo’s episcopate marked the end of Maelgwn’s rule over Gwynedd, which also coincided with his nephew Euddogwy’s youth.<sup>76</sup>

As for the version preserved in the Vespasian Life of Teilo, I can only speculate. It is hard to justify Teilo’s flight from his diocese, though the text attempts to do so by claiming that angels commanded him to flee. I suspect, for this reason, that Stephen was working with a pre-existing story circulating at Llandaf-Llancarfan that he adapted for use in his sermon, which, in turn, was itself possibly based on Wrdesten’s Life of Winwaloe; this evidence will be discussed after the following section.

<sup>74</sup>Sims-Williams, ‘“Dark” and “clear” y’, 10, 12; Peter Schrijver, ‘Old British’, in Elmar Ternes (ed.), *Brythonic Celtic – Britannisches Keltisch: From Medieval British to Modern Breton* (Bremen, 2011), 1–84, at 37.

<sup>75</sup>Sims-Williams, ‘“Dark” and “clear” y’, 14; Schrijver, ‘Old British’, 27. Patrick Sims-Williams points out to me that examples of <e> for <ei> persist until the early thirteenth century (personal communication, Feb. 2023). These late usages appear, however, to happen only in monosyllables, or stressed syllables of polysyllabic words (e.g. *Brecheniauc*, in *BC* s.a. 1121.1 = 1099 AD, or *per* (*GPC* s.v. *pair* 2), found in the poem ‘Brenin gwrthfin gwyrrth uchaw y sydd’ from the copy in the Black Book of Carmarthen: Marged Haycock (ed.), *Blodeugerdd Barddas o Ganu Crefyddol Cynnar* (Swansea, 1994), at 121–35, l. 3. Use of <e> for <ei> in an unstressed final syllable (as in the hypothesized \**dilet*) is considerably less common; I have encountered only a handful of examples, all potentially dating to the Old Welsh period, e.g. ‘hewed’ (*Hyfaidd*), *BC* s.a. 961.1 (= c. 938 AD), and ‘priten’ (*Prydain*), found in the Harleian genealogies (before 954; likely mid-9th c.): text in Ben Guy (ed.), ‘The St Davids recension’, in Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 333–38, at 336 (§19); date in Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 79.

<sup>76</sup>Charter 144 fits less well into this timeline, given that Euddogwy is an established bishop at the time of its supposed creation. Since the charter refers to the ‘mortality’/dylyt melen as something that happened in the past, however, it does not necessarily clash with the statement that Euddogwy was still living with his family in Brittany when the Yellow Plague broke out (and, in any case, internal consistency was not the overriding goal of the Book of Llandaf’s reviser, as discussed above).

## ii. *The St Davids Group*

The Yellow Plague appears four times in records from Llandaf-Llancarfan; it appears twice as often in materials deriving from St Davids: all of these, however, are preserved in the writings of Gerald of Wales (d. 1223), archdeacon of Brecon, and sometime aspirant to the (arch-)bishopric of St Davids.<sup>77</sup> Most of these records were written in his own words; however, in his *Invectiones* he relates the text of two letters, purportedly sent from members of the community at St Davids to the papacy in the first half of the twelfth century. Regardless of the particular source, however, the basic story hardly varies: when the Yellow Plague threatened Wales, Samson, the archbishop of St Davids, took the pallium with him to Dol in Brittany; from that moment on, Dol enjoyed an honour that rightly belonged to St Davids and the Welsh.

This repetition means there is no need to discuss each work in detail. Instead, in what follows I will focus, first, on establishing the probable authenticity of earliest source, the letter to Pope Honorius II (r. 1124–30), which has not always been accepted as genuine; secondly, I will lay out the context of this story, and its potential relationship to the Llandaf version of the legend of the Yellow Plague, as discussed above.

Gerald of Wales' *Invectiones* was composed over a period of time in the early thirteenth century; it is primarily a defense of the doomed attempt to win the archepiscopal pallium for St Davids, as well as a defense of Gerald's own actions in pressing that case.<sup>78</sup> The second book lays out Gerald's own account of the history of Christianity in Wales, followed by a collection of letters largely relating to the first attempt to win St Davids' independence from Canterbury, prosecuted by Bernard, the bishop of St Davids from 1115–48.

Samson's flight from the Yellow Plague is reported three separate times in the second book: first, in Gerald's own words; and then once each in letters to Popes Honorius II (r. 1124–30) and Eugenius III (r. 1145–53); this story is nowhere reflected in Samson's surviving Lives.<sup>79</sup> In each case, Samson's flight from the Yellow Plague is the culmination of a tendentious history, meant to outline how St Davids won, and then (wrongly) lost, its archepiscopal status.

The letter to Honorius, if authentic, would be contemporary (or nearly so) with the production of the texts in the Book of Llandaf – and thus an important early witness for the Yellow Plague. This letter has largely been accepted as genuine on a variety of grounds, most of which are slight or impressionistic.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>77</sup>Georgia Henley and A. Joseph McMullen, 'Gerald of Wales: interpretation and innovation in medieval Britain', in Henley and McMullen (eds), *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives on a Medieval Writer and Critic* (Cardiff, 2018), at 2–3, with further references there.

<sup>78</sup>See the introduction to Davies, 'De invectionibus'; also Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 46–56 and J. Conway Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, vol. 1, 211–32.

<sup>79</sup>Davies, 'De invectionibus', 143–6 and 139–41, respectively. See also the discussion in Michael Richter, *Giraldus Cambrensis: The Growth of the Welsh Nation* (Aberystwyth, 1976), at 40–2.

<sup>80</sup>E.g. Brooke, *Church and Border*, 21–3, especially n. 26: the letter 'seem[s] to be genuine'; also J. Wyn Evans, 'Transition and survival: St David and St Davids cathedral', in J. Wyn Evans and Jonathan Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales: Cult, Church and Nation* (Woodbridge, 2007), at 35–6: there is independent evidence that letters from Honorius were in St Davids' archives; J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 110 n. 15: dismisses possible interference from Gerald, suggesting

Recently, Barry Lewis has suggested the letter to Honorius is actually the work of Gerald of Wales. Lewis argues that the letter appears to have been heavily influenced by Geoffrey of Monmouth's *De gestis Britonum*, a work not completed and made public until the late 1130s – years after the letter would have been written.<sup>81</sup> The similarities are unmistakable: both Geoffrey and the author of the letter to Honorius claim that Britain was evangelised by two missionaries sent to Lucius, the ruler of Britain at the time. Both accounts contradict, therefore, the earlier version of the foundation of St Davids as set out in Rhygyfarch's Life of St David; moreover, the names of the missionaries, Faganus and Duvianus, reflect the names of parishes near Llandaf (St Fagan's and Merthyr Dyfan). Lewis considers three possible explanations for this change. One is that both the letter-writer and Geoffrey worked from a lost third source compiled at Llandaf; the similarities between the letter and *De gestis Britonum* are so close, however, that, in Lewis's opinion, 'it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the author is citing Geoffrey's book'.<sup>82</sup> A second possibility is that the St Davids letter-writer worked from a version of Geoffrey's text circulating in draft form in the 1120s before its eventual wider dissemination a decade or so later. Lewis grants this could have happened, but prefers to consider this letter the work of an author working after the publication of *De gestis Britonum*, familiar with both Geoffrey of Monmouth and St Davids' own version of its history: and there is no better candidate, as Lewis points out, than Gerald himself.<sup>83</sup>

Stylistic evidence makes it clear, however, that Gerald cannot be the author of the letter. Gerald is a notorious self-plagiariser, repurposing fragments of his earlier works almost verbatim,<sup>84</sup> and the five versions of the story he presents as his own work are, in fact, very similar to one another. I have provided below the texts of both purported letters to the papacy; these are followed by three of Gerald's own making: his own history from the *Invectiones*, a similar account in his *Itinerarium Cambriae*, and, finally, the paraphrase of a conversation with Innocent III, as preserved in *De iure et statu Menevensis ecclesiae*.<sup>85</sup>

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instead independent derivation from Bede or Bede-derived texts; Huw Pryce, 'Gerald of Wales and the Welsh past', in Henley and McMullen, *Gerald of Wales*, 19–45, at 29–30: 'consistent with other evidence'; also Brett, *Britany*, 297–8; Davies, 'De invectionibus', 20. Sims-Williams (*The Book of Llandaf as a Historical Source*, 52 n. 21) registers his suspicion.

<sup>81</sup> Barry Lewis, 'Religion and the church in Geoffrey of Monmouth', in Joshua Byron Smith and Georgia Henley (eds), *A Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (Leiden, 2020), 397–424, at 405–9; for the date, see Jaakko Tahkokallio, 'Early manuscript dissemination', in Smith and Henley (eds), *Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 155–80, at 158–61. Text in Michael Reeve (ed.) and Neil Wright (trans.), *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain* (Woodbridge, 2007).

<sup>82</sup> Lewis, 'Religion and the church', 409.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Georgia Henley, 'Quotation, revision, and narrative structure in Giraldus Cambrensis's *Itinerarium Cambriae*', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 24 (2014), 1–52, at 46–50.

<sup>85</sup> For the background to Gerald's conversation, see J. Conway Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, vol. 1, 214–16. The other two versions of Gerald's Yellow Plague story in *De iure et statu* are verbatim repetitions of passages set out below: Brewer, 'De iure et statu', 151, 171.

## Letters

### 1. To Pope Honorius

[S]anctus Sanson nostre Demetice regionis partibus oriundus et in eadem ecclesia sicut in eius uita legitur archiepiscopus consecratus, imminente flauae pestis letali incommodo ad Dolense Armorice gentis cum pallii honore transmeauit monasterium.<sup>86</sup>

‘As the lethal illness of the Yellow Plague threatened, St Samson, a man born in the districts of our own region of Dyfed, and consecrated archbishop in the very same church [viz. St Davids] (as is read in his life), went over to the monastery of Dol, of the Armorican people, and with him the honor of the pallium.’

### 2. To Pope Eugenius

[P]allio decorata est ecclesia nostra a tempore beati Daud usque ad tempus beati Sansonis, qui nostre sedis aliquamdiu pontifex, tandem flauam pestem fugiens, et pallium cum ceteris pontificalibus ornamentis secum deferens, ad Armoricos applicuit, et in Dolensi monasterio honorifice susceptus permansit.<sup>87</sup>

‘Our church was adorned with the pallium from the time of blessed David to the time of blessed Samson, who, after serving as the pontiff of our see for some time, set out in flight from the Yellow Plague and landed among the Armoricans, bringing with him the pallium along with the other pontifical ornaments; and he remained in the monastery of Dol, where he had been honorably received.’

## Gerald

### 1. Invectiones

Habuimus autem apud Meneuiam archiepiscopos successiue xxv, quorum primus fuit Sanctus Daud, ultimus uero Sanctus Sanson, qui ingruente per Walliam ictericia clade in Armoricam Gallie Britanniam nauigio se transtulit, ibique in ecclesia Dolensi, tunc forte uacante, cum pallio nostro quod secum portauerat, in archiepiscopum assumptus est.<sup>88</sup>

‘Moreover, we at St Davids have had twenty-five archbishops in succession, of whom the first was St David, the last, then, St Samson, who brought himself over by a sea voyage to Gaul’s Armorican Brittany, as the icteric calamity cut its way through Wales, and there in the church of Dol, by chance vacant at that time, he was made an archbishop with our pallium, which he had brought with him.’

### 2. Itinerarium Cambriae

Ingruente per Kambriam, isto [Sansone] praesidente, peste

<sup>86</sup>Davies, ‘De invectionibus’, 145. Translation here and in the following passages my own.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., 140.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., 131–2; see also 165 for a nearly identical version.

quadam, qua cateruatim plebs occubuit, quam flauam pestem uocabant, quam et physici ictericiam dicunt passionem, praesul, quanquam sanctus et ad mortem intrepidus, tamen ad suorum instantiam nauem scandens, flante Circio, cum suis indemnem in Armorica Britannia se suscepit, ubi et uacante tunc forte sede Dolensi, statim ibidem in episcopum est assumptus.<sup>89</sup>

‘When he [Samson] was in charge, a certain pestilence, called the “Yellow Plague”, and which physicians call the “icteric passion”, cut its way through Wales; the people lay dead in heaps from it, and the prelate – though a saint, and fearless in the face of death – nonetheless boarded a boat at the request of his followers, and took himself, unharmed, with his followers in Armoric Brittany as a west-northwesterly wind blew; then and there he was made a bishop (as the see of Dol was, by chance, vacant at that time).’

### 3. *De iure et statu Menevensis ecclesiae*

Item quaerente iterum papa qualiter et ob quam causam dignitate pristina Meneuensis fuerat ecclesia priuata, respondit Giraldus, exponens ei quomodo per ultimum archiepiscopum Meneuensem Sampsonem nomine, fugientem cladem ictericiam et ob hoc in Armoricam Britanniam transfretantem, metropolitana dignitas euauit[.]<sup>90</sup>

‘When the pope asked, again, how and why the church of St Davids was deprived of its original dignity, Gerald responded, explaining to him how the metropolitan dignity disappeared through the last archbishop of St Davids, Samson by name, who fled the icteric calamity and for that reason crossed over into Armoric Brittany.’

Gerald’s stylistic tics are clear; he glosses the earlier accounts even as he recounts them. Every time the *flava pestis* is mentioned, he displays his grasp of medical knowledge and calls it jaundice, using the Greek-derived term *ictericius*. He tries to explain certain omissions in the original narratives, suggesting that Samson was able to set himself up as (arch-)bishop in Dol because the see was ‘by chance vacant at the time’ (*tunc forte vacante*), and also provides a number of learned flourishes (such as the Latin name, *circius*, for the west-northwesterly wind).<sup>91</sup> Moreover, he conceives of Brittany as a territory, always labeling it ‘Armoric Brittany’, where the letters talk of ‘the Armoric people’ or ‘the Armoricans’.<sup>92</sup> Such explanation and literary polishing of his sources is characteristic of Gerald’s style.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>89</sup>Dimock, ‘Itinerarium Cambriae’, 102.

<sup>90</sup>Brewer, ‘De iure et statu’, 166.

<sup>91</sup>Gerald’s earliest reference to this story – the *Itinerarium Cambriae*, written years before Gerald took up his crusade for St Davids’ independence – says that Samson was taken up *in episcopatum*; in his later works, Dol is invariably an archbishopric.

<sup>92</sup>Geoffrey of Monmouth, for his part, referred to the Bretons as *Armorici Britones* and *Armorici*, not simply *Armorici*: Ben Guy, ‘Geoffrey of Monmouth’s Welsh sources’, in Smith and Henley (eds), *Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 31–66, at 34.

<sup>93</sup>Henley, ‘Quotation, revision, and narrative structure’, 50.

The two letters, on the other hand, differ from each other as much as they do from Gerald's versions, and are both clearly their own works. The older letter to Honorius favors roundabout elocutions, such as *flaue pestis letali incommodo*, 'the lethal illness of the Yellow Plague', and wields a complicated syntax, with the subject and main verb separated by nearly the entire passage. The author of this letter tends to defend St Davids' claims on textual grounds, moreover, often referring to 'histories'; the purported reliance on Samson's Life (which, in fact, never mentions any such ordination at St Davids) fits this trend well.<sup>94</sup> The later letter to Eugenius, for its part, is much more direct in its prose: it calls the Yellow Plague simply *flava pestis*, and the ideas unfurl successively in a series of relative clauses.

In short, on a stylistic basis, neither letter can be the work of Gerald (at least not in the passages examined above). Bernard and Gerald were the two most vocal and determined supporters of the case for an archbishopric of St Davids; there would, therefore, have been little reason to write (or even forge) such a letter once Bernard had died, and before Gerald himself took up the cause of St Davids' archbishopric. Since Gerald is not the author, both of the letters Gerald reproduces most likely date, therefore, to Bernard's episcopacy.<sup>95</sup>

The contemporary political situation provides another reason to suspect that the letter to Honorius was, in fact, written during Honorius' papacy. Pope Gregory VII had granted Dol the pallium in 1075;<sup>96</sup> despite reversals in succeeding decades, Archbishop Baudri (r. 1107–30) successfully laid claim to the pallium and the archepiscopal title throughout his prelacy (though he rarely wielded much actual power).<sup>97</sup> The letter to Honorius trades on Dol's success: perhaps familiar with a Breton source that claimed that Samson was ordained in Britain,<sup>98</sup> the clergy at St Davids seized on the Yellow Plague as a convenient

<sup>94</sup>E.g. Davies, 'De invectionibus', 143: [*I*]n *textu historiarum reperitur* ('it is found in the text of the histories'); *ibid.*, 145: *Tradunt namque nostre prouincie aliarumque nationum historie* ('For the histories of our own province, and those of other nations report [...]'); *ibid.*, *historiarum contestante serie* ('as the series of histories testifies [...]'); *ibid.*, *quorum scripta adhuc retinet nomina* ('whose written names [St Davids] possesses to this day'), and so on. For a list of Samson's early Lives (i.e. pre-1000), see Poulin, *L'hagiographie bretonne*, 311–12. Pryce ('Gerald of Wales', 30) suggests that Geoffrey of Monmouth and the clergy at St Davids may have derived their notion of Samson being archbishop of Dol from the revised Life of Samson in the Book of Llandaf (Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâw*, 22, 24); however, the near-contemporary Life written by Baudri, archbishop of Dol 1107–30, likewise names Samson and his successors as archbishops: Baudri, *Vita sancti Sansonis*, in Armelle le Huërou (ed. and trans.), *Baudri de Bourgueil: Oeuvres en prose (textes hagiographiques)*, vol. 3 (Paris, 2013), 243–435, at 431 (§II.24).

<sup>95</sup>J. Conway Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, vol. 1, 208–10.

<sup>96</sup>Paula de Fougères, 'Pope Gregory VII, the archbishopric of Dol and the Normans', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 21 (1998), 47–66.

<sup>97</sup>Baudri's successor, Geoffrey (r. 1130–46), also had some success in winning papal recognition, though even less actual power in Brittany. De Fougères, 'Gregory VII', 63–4; Henri Pasquier, *Un poète latin du XIe siècle. Baudri, abbé de Bourgueil, archevêque de Dol, 1046–1130, d'après des documents inédits* (Paris, 1878), at 223–62; J. A. Everard, *Brittany and the Angevins: Province and Empire, 1158–1203* (Cambridge, UK, 2000), at 69–73. See also Edmond Martène and Ursin Durand, *Thesaurus novus anecdotorum* [...], vol. 3 (Paris, 1717), cols 878–91.

<sup>98</sup>Brett, *Brittany*, 298 notes the existence of Breton texts that assert that Samson was ordained archbishop in Britain, including the work *De dignitate Dolensis ecclesiae*, written 'probably before 1143' (*ibid.*), which reads 'prius in sua regione [Sançon] archiepiscopi dignitatem sortitus fuerat

way to show that Samson had not left Britain at the urging of angels, and with the full approval of Archbishop Dyfrig (as his Lives report),<sup>99</sup> but instead had fled it in its need – and thus St Davids should regain the archbishopric Samson had wrongly taken away with him to Dol.<sup>100</sup> Baudri's archepiscopacy provides a highly plausible context for the letter to Honorius, as well as the view of history underlying it. It is best, therefore, to view these two letters as authentic.

This conclusion, however, raises difficult questions of its own. So far in this discussion, I have sidestepped the role that Bernard himself played in the dispute over the history of the see of St Davids. Yet among the surviving documents recorded in Gerald's *Invectiones*, there is a startling divergence between letters sent anonymously from St Davids (nos. 5, 6, and 10), which invariably blame Samson for the missing pallium, and the letter from Bernard himself to the pope (no. 7), which makes the case for the archbishopric not on historical grounds, but on the more practical bases of sheer geographic distance, as well as linguistic and cultural differences.<sup>101</sup>

Furthermore, Bernard sought to promote the view of St Davids' history as set out by Rhygyfarch's *Life of the saint*, composed in the 1080s or 1090s.<sup>102</sup> This *Life* depicts the founding of the archbishopric of Wales as a two-step process. First, David is raised to the rank of archbishop by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Then, when he returns to Wales, he preaches against the Pelagian heresy at the Synod of Llanddewibrefi, and is proclaimed by all assembled to be the archbishop of the British people, an honour, the text claims, that all his successors will hold as well.<sup>103</sup>

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(‘[Samson] had previously in his own region obtained the dignity of an archbishop’): François Duine (ed.), ‘De dignitate Dolensis ecclesie’, in Duine, *La métropole de Bretagne* (Paris, 1916), 38–54, at 41. Gerald, moreover, relays a sequence that he claims was found in ‘Dol’s histories’ (*historie Dolenses*), to the effect that Samson was archbishop in St Davids before Dol (Davies, ‘De invectionibus’, 132; also cited in Brett, *Brittany*, 298). It is hard to shake the suspicion, however, that Gerald either concocted this sequence, or reported a sequence that some previous partisan of St Davids’ had concocted before him.

<sup>99</sup>As in Evans and Rhys, *Llan Dâv*, 18–19.

<sup>100</sup>This logic is laid out explicitly in a different letter from St Davids’ to the pope (which does not mention the Yellow Plague): *Unde cum omnia redire debeant ad sua initia, sicut ecclesia Dolensis ad suum initium iam rediit, scilicet simplicem episcopatum, sic etiam Meneuensis ecclesia ad suum initium, id est, sedem metropolitanam, Deo dante, diebus uestris redire debet* (‘Whence, as all things should return to their beginnings, just as the church of Dol has already returned to its beginning – to wit, a simple bishopric – so indeed should the church of St Davids, by the gift of God, return in your days to its beginning – that is, a metropolitan see’: Davies, ‘De invectionibus’, 139; my translation). This letter, likely to be dated to around the same time as the letter to Eugenius, is clearly attempting to turn Lucius’ dismissal of Dol’s metropolitan claims in 1144 in its favor (see Martène and Durand, *Thesaurus novum*, cols 887–90; J. Conway Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, vol. 1, 262–3).

<sup>101</sup>Davies, ‘De invectionibus’, 142.

<sup>102</sup>In particular, that found in the lightly revised Nero-Digby recension of the *Life*. See Richard Sharpe, ‘Which text is Rhygyfarch’s *Life of St David*?’ in Evans and Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales*, 90–105, at 104–5. For the date of the original text, see Guy, ‘Vespasian Life’, 16–17, especially n. 48.

<sup>103</sup>J. W. James (ed. and trans.), *Rhygyfarch’s Life of St. David* (Cardiff, 1967), at 20–4 (§§46–54).

As noted above, this story runs directly counter to that outlined by the letter to Honorius, which depicts David as just one in a series of archbishops of western Britain.<sup>104</sup> Like Geoffrey of Monmouth, the author of the letter portrays the founding of the archbishopric of St Davids as happening under the reign of Lucius, in the time of pope Eleutherius. The letter refers to an unnamed synod at which David's predecessor, Dyfrig, consecrated him as archbishop.<sup>105</sup> This synod appears to be a disguised version of the synod of Llanddewibrefi; no mention is made, however, of the Pelagian threat that Rhygyfarch stresses. For its part, the letter to Eugenius strains, it seems, to reconcile the two accounts: gone are the references to Eleutherius, Lucius, Dyfrig, Faganus, and Duvianus; and the Synod of Llanddewibrefi once again plays the crucial role, followed now with the story of Samson fleeing the Yellow Plague.<sup>106</sup>

It appears as though new written texts – the 'histories' the author of the letter to Honorius refers to time and again – provoked a thorough rewriting of St Davids' history in the late 1120s to provide, in concert with the contemporary political situation at Dol, a plausible basis, rooted in the supposed 'histories', for an ancient archepiscopate of St Davids – as well as an excuse for its eventual disappearance. Decades later, however, the author of the letter to Eugenius, while still incorporating details of the earlier letter (including the 'Yellow Plague'), reinstituted much of the earlier version of the history of St Davids, as found in the *Life* by Rhygyfarch.

The difficulty comes in interpreting the role of Bernard at this time. Did the left hand not know what the right hand was doing? Or did Bernard focus on the practical case for a separate archbishopric, delegating the task of devising a suitable historical basis for a renewed see of St Davids? Regardless of the precise answers to such questions, I believe the evidence offered above suffices to show that the passage in the letter to Honorius II about the Yellow Plague very probably was, in fact, composed between 1124 and 1130, and drew on materials derived ultimately, it seems, from Llandaf, and with an eye to the contemporary status of the supposed archbishopric of Dol.

## II. THE ORIGINS OF THE YELLOW PLAGUE

Above, I have run through the earliest surviving Welsh sources about the Yellow Plague, and discussed their likely contexts of composition, and, where evident, their immediate source material. It is possible, however, to follow the migration legend further back, to stories developed in the ninth and tenth centuries in Ireland and Brittany, and later brought over to Wales. Irish scholarship, I argue, was the point of origin for the name of the disease itself, and its approximate timeframe, while the Breton *Life* of Winwaloe supplied the basic narrative of a people forced to flee overseas.

<sup>104</sup>Davies, 'De invectionibus', 143. My thanks to Barry Lewis for useful suggestions on this point.

<sup>105</sup>Davies, 'De invectionibus', 143.

<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, 139–40.

### *Ireland and the Yellow Plague*

Medieval terms for the ‘Yellow Plague’ are preserved in three languages: Welsh, Latin, and Irish. Most often, these terms denote the mortalities attested in the Annals of Ulster (*AU*) under the years 545, 549, and 664–8 (Welsh sources for the Yellow Plague allude only to the second of the three);<sup>107</sup> in texts whose authors were less concerned with chronological accuracy, the ‘Yellow Plague’ is often simply a name for a particularly terrible disease that happened sometime during the ‘Age of Saints’.<sup>108</sup> Welsh and Latin terms (the latter found essentially only in Wales)<sup>109</sup> are, generally, straightforward: *flava pestis*, *ictericia clades*, *bad felen*, *ball felen*, and likely *dylyt melen*. Each of those terms can be understood as a ‘yellow plague’ – or, in the case of *ictericia clades*, as a learned extrapolation from that term. Such a translation is, however, at best only a very rough approximation for the three principal Irish names for the illness, each apparently wholly interchangeable with the others: *buidechair*, *buide chonnail*, and *crom chonnail*; *galar buide*, ‘yellow disease’, appears once as well, in a

<sup>107</sup>*AU* s.a. 545, 549, 664, 665, 668. All the various collections have various dates for these outbreaks (though 664 is well-attested). Moreover, *AU* explicitly mentions the Yellow Plague only at 556, 665, and 668. These are all *secunda manus*, however, and the first is likely a kalends error, as the day of January 1 was the same in 550 as in 556; the Annals of Tigernach (*AT*), a version of the Clonmacnois-group recension of the Irish annals (whence much of the second-hand material derived) has the notice of the Yellow Plague at 550: Whitley Stokes (ed. and trans.), ‘The Annals of Tigernach’, *RC* 17 (1896), 6–33, 116–263, 337–420, at 140, with date as reconstructed in Daniel McCarthy, ‘Irish chronicles and their chronology’, 2005, <<https://publications.scss.tcd.ie/kronos/chronology/synchronisms/>> (accessed 29 November 2023). For a discussion of the Clonmacnois-group recension, see Nicholas Evans, *The Present and the Past in Medieval Irish Chronicles* (Woodbridge, 2010).

<sup>108</sup>Setting aside late medieval medical texts, where *buidechair* sometimes appears as a learned term for jaundice (e.g. Micheál Ó Conchubhair (ed.), ‘Extracta de *Lile na heladhan leighis*’, in *An Irish Materia Medica*, 2019, <<https://celt.ucc.ie/published/G600003/>> [accessed 12 May 2022], §6.6), sources that mention the Yellow Plague make clear their authors viewed the Yellow Plague as a thing of the early medieval past, as in the Lives of Mochua Balla and Déclán: Whitley Stokes (ed. and trans.), ‘Betha Mochua Balla’, in Stokes (ed. and trans.), *Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore* (London, 1890), 137–46, at 143; Charles Plummer (ed.), ‘Vita sancti Declani episcopi de Ard Mor’, in Plummer (ed.), *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae* [...] (Oxford, 1910), vol. 2, 32–59, at 48. According to *Chronicon Scotorum* (*CS*), Mochua died in 638: Gearóid Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Chronicon Scotorum*, 2012, <<https://celt.ucc.ie/published/G100016/index.html>> (accessed 12 May 2022), s.a. 638, while Déclán was supposedly one of the ‘Pre-Patrician’ saints: Pádraig Ó Riain, *A Dictionary of Irish Saints* (Dublin, 2011), at 258–60. Other discrepancies are only apparent: in the Notes to the Martyrology of Oengus, Ultán of Ardraccan is said to have rescued many orphaned children in the aftermath of the plague of the 540s, yet the Annals of Ulster record his death in 657: Whitley Stokes, *The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*, Henry Bradshaw Society 29 (London, 1905), at 198–202; *AU* s.a.; see also Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Saints*, 580–2. However, the ‘Short Annals of Armagh’ (*Annála gearra as proibhinse Ard Macha*) report his death as occurring in the late sixth century, in c. 590: Patrick McCoy, Kathryn O’Neill, and Patrick Wadden (eds and trans), ‘The past and the present in twelfth-century Armagh’, *North American Journal of Celtic Studies* 4.1 (2020): 1–47, at 4.

<sup>109</sup>The two exceptions are the Life of Déclán (*pestis [...] que flauos primitus faciebat homines, et postea occidebat*: ‘a plague [...] that first made men yellow, and then killed them’: Plummer, ‘Vita sancti Declani’, 48), and the Life of Gerald of Mayo, which, after giving the Irish term *Budi Conayll*, translates it as *ictericia*: Charles Plummer, ‘Vita sancti Gerald abbatis de Magh Eo’, in Plummer (ed.), *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae*, vol. 2, 107–15, at 113.

poem about Éimíne Bán's bell.<sup>110</sup> For all three, the literal or etymological meanings – 'yellow rot', 'straw-yellow', and 'straw-crooked', respectively – are fairly opaque.<sup>111</sup> It is unlikely, for instance, that an Irish scholar of the eleventh century would understand that the *-chair* of *buidechair* is related to Latin *caries*, 'decay', especially when a productive suffix *-chair* 'loving, -philous' was to hand.<sup>112</sup> This evidence alone suggests derivation from Ireland to Wales is more likely than the converse route, as I doubt that *pestis flava* or *ball felen* could be rendered into Irish as *buide chonnaill*, let alone as *crom chonnaill* ('straw-crooked'); the terms found in Wales, however, could well be approximations of two of the Irish terms (*buide chonnaill* and *buidechair*).<sup>113</sup>

These terms are, moreover, highly unlikely to be the original names for the sixth- and seventh-century mortalities. In both Ireland and Wales, these terms first appear well after the events themselves. The two earliest sources to use any term for the Yellow Plague are the Clonmacnoise-group recension of the Irish annals, which came together in stages between c. 911 and c. 1060, and the *Liber hymnorum*, likely compiled at Armagh c. 1000.<sup>114</sup> Prior to that date, all references to those early-medieval epidemics use nondescript Latin terms like *mortalitas* or *pestilentia*, or the Irish equivalents *mortlaid* and *duineba*.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>110</sup>Erich Poppe, 'A Middle Irish poem on Éimíne's bell', *Celtica* 17 (1985), 59–72, at 65. The original form of the Irish words has been the subject of some debate. It has been suggested, for instance, that *crom chonnaill* should properly be *crón chonnaill*, as 'crón' appears to indicate a dark yellow/brown/ruddy color (*eDIL* s.v. *crón*): Grace, 'From *blefed* to *scamach*', 82–3. This is attested only once, however, in a *secunda manus* entry to the Annals of Ulster (*AU* s.a. 556). It is invariably *crom* elsewhere, both in other annals collections (*AI* s.a. 551; *AT* p. 140 [= 550 AD]; *CS* s.a. 551), and in the only other attestation, the Life of Mac Creiche: Charles Plummer (ed. and trans.), 'Betha Meic Creiche', *Miscellanea hagiographica Hibernica. Vitae adhuc ineditae* [...] (Brussels, 1925), 13–91, at 19: *na cruime connaill*.

<sup>111</sup>For the etymology of *buidechair*, see Karl Marstrander, 'Hibernica', *ZCP* 7 (1910), 357–418, at 408–9. Regarding *connaill*, it is likely that the original form of the word had *-nd-* (giving later *-nm-*) and not *-n-*: thus, 'of straw/stubble' (<Latin *cannula*) and not 'of Conall' (*eDIL* s.v. *condall*; *connaill* typically means something more like 'stalk', but the extended sense seems plausible here), *pace* Dooley, 'Plague and its consequences', 217. Two of the three earliest manuscripts to contain the word – Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawlinson B 503 (*AI*), and also Dublin, TCD MS 1441, and UCD MS Franciscan A 2 (the two copies of the *Liber Hymnorum*), all of the eleventh or early twelfth centuries – spell it with *-nm-* or *-nd-*: *AI* s.a. 551; *Thes* ii, 298 (for the dates of these manuscripts, see respectively *AI*, p. xxi; and Ludwig Bieler, 'The Irish Book of Hymns: a palaeographical study', *Scriptorium* 2.2 [1948], 177–94, at 177). Irish scholars of the early modern period also read *connaill* and not *Conall*, as in Mághnus Ó Domhnaill's sixteenth-century Life of Columba: Andrew O'Kelleher and Gertrude Schoepperle (eds and trans), *Betha Colaím Chille: Life of Columcille* (Urbana, IL, 1918), 62, ll. 9–10.

<sup>112</sup>*eDIL* s.v. *5 car* (often found, however, with palatal *-air*).

<sup>113</sup>They would, of course, be even closer matches to *galar buide*, 'yellow illness', though, again, that term is used only once to describe these medieval epidemics.

<sup>114</sup>For the creation of the Clonmacnoise-group texts, see Evans, *Present and Past*, 189–224; an alternative view is registered in Daniel Mc Carthy, 'The genesis and evolution of the Irish Annals to AD 1000', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 52 (2018), 119–55. For the *Liber hymnorum*, see J. H. Bernard and Richard Atkinson (eds and trans), *The Irish Liber Hymnorum*, 2 vols (London, 1898); and for its date and place of composition, see Máire Herbert, 'Crossing historical and literary boundaries: Irish written culture around the year 1000', *CMCS* 53–4 (2007), 87–101, at 89–91.

<sup>115</sup>Examples of *mortalitas* were listed above, n. 69. The Irish terms can be found in early medieval legal texts such as *Crith Gablach* – Daniel Binchy (ed.), *Crith Gablach* (Dublin, 1941), 20;

(There is one exception, ‘blefed’ or ‘belefeth’; it is found only in the annals, and is likely the original Irish word for the bubonic plague.)<sup>116</sup> In Wales, neither of the references to early medieval epidemics older than 1100 – namely, the Welsh annals and the *Historia Britonum* – names the disease; if the term *dylyt melen* truly does derive from a misinterpreted *\*dilet melen*, as tentatively suggested above, the existence of a term for the ‘Yellow Plague’ in Welsh could, perhaps, be pushed back some time earlier than the late eleventh century.<sup>117</sup>

Over time, these once nondescript ‘mortalities’ came, then, to be identified as the ‘Yellow Plague’, sometimes in the face of earlier evidence. For instance, two versions of the Life of Ruadán refer to a nameless epidemic; in one, this pestilence is identified by a later glossator as the ‘budi chonnaill’.<sup>118</sup> The Latin Life of Laisrén of Devenish (Molaise) likewise refers to an *ingens pestis* where the later Irish translation has *buide chonnaill*.<sup>119</sup> This process can be traced in Welsh texts, too, as when the *mortalitas* of the Harleian Chronicle (after 954) becomes the *ball felen* of the Breviate (c. 1300).<sup>120</sup>

Nor were vernacular texts immune to this process. The ninth-century *Cáin Éimíne Báin*, for instance, names the affliction only as a *duineba*; the poetic version of this story and the commentary to the Martyrology of Óengus – both centuries younger – call it the ‘Yellow Plague’.<sup>121</sup> The pattern is consistent enough that it can provide a check on attempts to date certain hagiographic

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or *Córus Bésgnai* – Liam Breatnach (ed. and trans.), *Córus Bésgnai: An Old Irish Law Tract on the Church and Society* (Dublin, 2017), 28; as well as other works of the first millennium, such as *Sanas Chormaic*: Paul Russell, Sharon Arbuthnot and Pádraic Moran (eds), *Early Irish Glossaries Database*, 2006, rev. 2009, 2017, <<https://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/>> (accessed 12 May 2022), Y.895, Y.1166, Y.1233; and also ‘Cáin Éimíne Báin’: Erich Poppe, ‘A new edition of *Cáin Éimíne Báin*’, *Celtica* 18 (1986), 35–52, at 40.

<sup>116</sup>AU s.a. 545; CS s.a. 541. The word is likely a compound of an unidentified element *\*bel-* and *\*swēd-*, which gave rise to Welsh *chwydd*, ‘swelling, pride’ (*GPC Online* s.v. *chwydd*) and Irish *siad*, ‘tumor’ (*eDIL* s.v. *siad*) – possibly a reference to the characteristic buboes of the bubonic plague. For more on *\*bel-*, see *IEW*, vol. 1, 118–24 and Peter Schrijver, ‘On henbane and early European narcotics’, *ZCP* 51 (1999), 17–45. I am grateful here for the assistance of Joe Eska. Cf. Shrewsbury, ‘The Yellow Plague’, 24; Dooley, ‘Plague and its consequences’, 218–19.

<sup>117</sup>HC s.a. 103; Theodor Mommsen (ed.), ‘Historia Brittonum cum additamentis Nennii’, *Chronica minora saec. IV, V, VI, VII*, vol. 3, MGH Scriptores, Auctores antiquissimi 13 (Berlin, 1898), 111–222, at 207–8. As Rachel Singer points out to me (pers. comm., July 2022), there is also an (unnamed) *famosa pestis* in Gildas’ *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae*: Theodor Mommsen (ed.), ‘Gildae Sapiensis: De excidio et conquestu Britanniae ac flebili castigatione in reges principes et sacerdotes’, in *Chronica minora saec. IV, V, VI, VII*, vol. 3, MGH Scriptores, Auctores antiquissimi 13 (Berlin, 1898), 25–85, at 28, 37–8 (§22).

<sup>118</sup>Charles Plummer (ed.), ‘Vita sancti Ruadani abbatis de Lothra’, in Plummer (ed.), *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae*, vol. 2, 240–52, at 242 n. 5. The references to the epidemic can be found in the so-called ‘O’ branch of transmission: see Richard Sharpe, *Medieval Irish Saints’ Lives: An Introduction to Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* (Oxford, 1991), at 247–73 (called ‘R’ in Plummer, *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae*, vol. 1, ix), and also in the Irish Life: Charles Plummer (ed. and trans.), ‘Betha Ruadhain’, *Bethada Náem nÉirenn: Lives of Irish Saints* (Oxford, 1922), vol. 1, 316–29, at 318. Only in Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawlinson B. 485 is the illness given a definite name (Plummer, ‘Vita sancti Ruadani’, 242 n. 5).

<sup>119</sup>Charles Plummer (ed.), ‘Vita sancti Lasriani seu Molaissi abbatis de Dam Inis’, in Plummer (ed.), *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae*, vol. 2, 131–40, at 138; Standish Hayes O’Grady (ed.), ‘Betha Mholaise Dhaimhinse’, in O’Grady (ed.), *Silva Gadelica* (London, 1892), 17–37, at 21.

<sup>120</sup>HC s.a. 103.1; BC s.a. 575.1.

<sup>121</sup>Poppe, ‘A new edition’, 40; Poppe, ‘Éimíne’s bell’, 65; Stokes, *Martyrology of Oengus*, 260.

texts. For instance, the first half of *Betha Meic Creiche*, it has been claimed, ‘may well have been written towards the end of that century [viz. the seventh] or in the eighth’<sup>122</sup> – despite the manifestly later date of the language.<sup>123</sup> Whatever the origins of the author’s source material, the appearance of the terrible *crom chonnaill* suits the context of the otherwise late Middle Irish language of that section of the text very well, and there is no reason to project the composition of the Life further back than the eleventh century.

Records of the death of Mobhí Cláirineach, Colmcille’s teacher, provide the clearest illustration of how the concept of the Yellow Plague spread.<sup>124</sup> In the Irish annals, he died of *blefed/belefeth*: as stated earlier, this is likely the original word for bubonic plague.<sup>125</sup> The commentary to the hymn *Noli pater* in the *Liber hymnorum* (composed c. 1000),<sup>126</sup> which claims that hymn was composed on the occasion of Mobhí’s death, does not specify how the saint died.<sup>127</sup> However, glosses in one manuscript, Dublin, Trinity College MS 1441 (E.4.2), written in the ‘second half of the eleventh century’,<sup>128</sup> speculates that Colmcille may have sought protection against the Yellow Plague (*buidechuir*), using that word (along with *erloscud*, ‘burning’) to gloss the Latin ablative *uridine*, ‘burning, burning itch’.<sup>129</sup> Finally, in Colmcille’s Irish Life, composed in Derry in the early twelfth century, Mobhí is explicitly stated to have been killed by the Yellow Plague (*in buide chonnaill*).<sup>130</sup> In these several stages, we can see a progression away from the historical reality of ‘blefed’ to learned speculation over what looming threat Columba faced as he left his master’s school, and ultimately to acceptance of Mobhí’s Yellow Plague-inflicted death as a historical fact.

In short, whatever the original meaning(s) of the various terms for the Yellow Plague, their use as names for particular early medieval epidemics is first attested around 1000 AD (though these sources were doubtless reliant on earlier materials); in many cases, this is demonstrably the result of an ongoing scholarly rewriting of the past. While this process is easier to trace in Ireland, with its many surviving early medieval texts, it is clear that a similar process was also at work in Wales.

<sup>122</sup>Elva Johnston, ‘Munster, saints of (act. c. 450–c. 700)’, in David Cannadine (ed.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004, rev. 2008), <<https://www.oxforddnb.com>> (accessed 12 May 2022).

<sup>123</sup>For instance, independent object pronouns are used frequently; e.g. *Ro shaer Dia & urnaighthe an cleirigh naoimh e* (‘God and the prayers of the holy cleric freed **him**’) and *Tucc leis é don tigh, & ro gheir & ro chosgair é* (‘He brought **it** with him to the house, and cut **it** up, and prepared **it**’): Plummer, ‘Betha Meic Creiche’, 14, 16. This would suggest a date in the eleventh century or later: Liam Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, in *SnaG*, 221–333, at 271.

<sup>124</sup>See Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, 457–8.

<sup>125</sup>*AU* s.a. 545, *CS* s.a. 541. See n. 116.

<sup>126</sup>Herbert, ‘Crossing Boundaries’, 89–91.

<sup>127</sup>Bernard and Atkinson, *Liber hymnorum*, 87.

<sup>128</sup>Françoise Henry, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period: 1020–1170 A.D.* (Ithaca, 1970), at 57.

<sup>129</sup>Bernard and Atkinson, *Liber hymnorum*, 88 n. to *uridine*, line 2: *o erloscud no o buidechuir* (I have corrected their reading, *a buidechuir*, against the MS).

<sup>130</sup>Máire Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba* (Oxford, 1988), at 229.

The 'Yellow Plague', therefore, is largely the creation of Irish and Welsh historiography. For this reason, it is highly unlikely that Welsh and Irish scholars independently stumbled across similar terminology for the same early medieval epidemic; there must have been transmission of this name from one region to the other. Given the linguistic and textual evidence cited above, the direction should be from Ireland to Wales: *ball felen* is a respectable translation of *buidechair*, but *crom chonnaill* bears no resemblance to *pestis flava*; the breadth and variety of Irish stories about the Yellow Plague, moreover, far outstrips the handful of narratives, all attested after 1100, found in Wales.

When did this transmission happen? Intellectual exchange from one region to the next was fairly consistent throughout the earlier Middle Ages, so there is no pressing need to postulate a single moment of transmission as the source of all knowledge about the Yellow Plague in Wales.<sup>131</sup> There is circumstantial evidence, however, that points to the monastery of Clonard, in east-central Ireland, and Llancarfan as leading candidates for the main points of contact.

In Ireland, scholars at Clonard, Clonmacnoise, Inisfallen, and Armagh were familiar with the Yellow Plague by 1100, on the evidence of the Clonmacnoise-group annals and the *Liber hymnorum*, and there were no doubt other centers as well where one could learn of it.<sup>132</sup> Yet of all of these, Clonard shows the most sustained engagement with the illness. It is Finnian, after all – the supposed founder of the monastery – who was the leading Irish saint said to have died of the 'great mortality' of 549 (or 550, or 551) in all the principal Irish collections of annals.<sup>133</sup> This was, at some point – it is unclear when – a well-known fact at Clonard. Finnian's cause of death is not mentioned in the Latin Life, but in the Irish Life, his demise from the *buide chonnaill* is presented as a noble self-sacrifice, akin to Paul's death in Rome.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>131</sup> See e.g. Michael Lapidge, 'Latin learning in Dark Age Wales: some prolegomena', in D. Ellis Evans, John Griffith, and E. M. Jope (eds), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies, Oxford 1983* (Oxford, 1986), 91–107, at 91–2; Nora Chadwick, 'Early culture and learning in North Wales', and 'Intellectual life in west Wales in the last days of the Celtic church', in Nora Chadwick et al., *Studies in the Early British Church*, 29–120, 121–82; Paul Russell, 'An habes linguam Latinam? Non tam bene sapio: views of multilingualism from the early-medieval West', in Alex Mullen and Patrick James (eds), *Multilingualism in the Greco-Roman Worlds* (Cambridge, 2012), 193–224.

<sup>132</sup> Given the prominent placement of the Yellow Plague in Columba's Irish Life, itself composed 'around the middle of the [twelfth] century', Kells and/or Derry may be implicated as well: Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry*, 199; Yellow Plague at 229.

<sup>133</sup> This is the entry, discussed above (n. 43), that served as the source for the entry on Maelgwn's death in the Welsh Latin annals.

<sup>134</sup> W. W. Heist (ed.), 'Vita s. Finniani abbatis de Cluain Iraird', in Heist, *Vitae sanctorum Hiberniae. Ex codice olim Salmanticensi nunc Bruxellensi* (Brussels, 1965), at 96–107. Whitley Stokes (ed. and trans.), 'Betha Fhindein Clúana hÉraird', in Stokes, *Lismore Lives*, 74–83, at 82, ll. 2761–4. Unfortunately, it is difficult to say when this Life took shape; Kathleen Hughes' rough estimate of the ninth or tenth century seems far too early, even if some aspects of the narrative may truly date from that period (Hughes, 'Historical value', 372); Pádraig Ó Riain's brusque assertion, however, that it must postdate the Norman invasion cannot be sustained (Ó Riain, *Dictionary of Irish Saints*, 319–20). The claim that Finnian's familiarity with David, Cadog and Gildas was 'bound to impress the invading adventurers, most of whom had family links in that part of Britain' (ibid., 319) is hard to understand; by this logic, the association of David with Máedóg of Ferns and Patrick in Rhygyfarch's Life of David would suppose an Irish invasion of southwest Wales in the later eleventh

Llancarfan, as discussed above, is where textual evidence of the Yellow Plague first appears in Wales. Moreover, the abbot of Llancarfan in the later eleventh century, Lifris, wrote a Life of Cadog indebted to a Life of Finnian of Clonard; this Life testifies to what appears, at some point, to have been a close ongoing relationship between the two foundations.<sup>135</sup> It was not only Llancarfan that showed interest in Clonard; the transfer of information, it seems, was mutual, as Finnian's Lives – Irish and Latin – have their saint train at Llancarfan.<sup>136</sup> Such interaction between two centers that displayed early and sustained interest in the Yellow Plague is suggestive, to say the least.

Kathleen Hughes, in her study of the Lives of Finnian, suggested that the connection between Clonard and Llancarfan was no longer active by the late eleventh century, as the garbled passage in the Life of Cadog linking the two foundations 'seems to indicate that Lifris was reporting a tradition which he found recorded in documents at Llancarfan, but which he himself did not understand and which had passed out of current monastic practice before his day'.<sup>137</sup> It is unclear when, precisely, this may have been; an early connection would, however, provide a plausible context for the reconstructed spelling of *\*dilet melen* discussed above.

### *Brittany and the Migration Legend*

While Irish scholars may have provided the name of the Yellow Plague to their Welsh colleagues, there is no trace of any story similar to the Welsh migration to Brittany preserved in Irish sources. A plausible parallel is found, however, in the Life of Winwaloe by Wrdisten. While there is no trace of direct influence from Wrdisten's work on the earlier Vespasian Life of Teilo, as noted above, there is nonetheless reason to believe that the Life of Winwaloe was the ultimate source for that text, as it appears that Wrdisten was the first author to yoke together an early medieval plague and migration from Britain to Brittany.

Wrdisten asserted that he made use of an earlier Life of Winwaloe; this, if it existed, is now lost.<sup>138</sup> He did, however, use many works that we can still trace, including Gildas' blistering jeremiad *De excidio et conquestu Britanniae*.<sup>139</sup>

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century. Hughes' estimate of the language of the Life as being originally approximately twelfth-century in date (Hughes, 'Historical value', 357 n. 10) seems accurate enough – there are only two independent object pronouns (Stokes, 'Betha Fhindein', 76, l. 2545: *Dorat-sidhe iat*; and 81, l. 2722: *atconnaic [...] he*).

<sup>135</sup>Kathleen Hughes, 'The historical value of the Lives of St. Finnian of Clonard', *English Historical Review* 69.272 (1954), 353–72, at 364–7; Brooke, *Church and Border*, 76–9. The Life of Cadog is published in A. W. Wade-Evans (ed. and trans.), *Vitae sanctorum Britannie et genealogiae* (Cardiff, 1944), 24–141. The Life of Cadog as it survives in Vespasian A.xiv is an expanded version of Lifris' original work; see Hywel Emanuel, 'An analysis of the composition of the "Vita Cadoci"', *Cylchgrawn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru* 7.3 (1952), 217–28; also Brooke, *Church and Border*, 76–9, which provides an important re-interpretation of Emanuel's claims. Note, in particular, the Life of Cadog's citation of 'the learned men of Ireland' (*periti Hibernensium*) in residence at Clonard: Wade-Evans, *Vitae sanctorum Britanniae*, 114.

<sup>136</sup>Heist, 'Vita s. Finniani', 98–9; Stokes, 'Betha Fhindein', 76, ll. 2549–51.

<sup>137</sup>Hughes, 'Historical value', 367. The passage is in Wade-Evans, *Vitae sanctorum Britanniae*, 114.

<sup>138</sup>De Smedt, 'Vita s. Winwaloei', 172, l. 1.

<sup>139</sup>Poulin, *L'hagiographie bretonne*, 414–22 (in particular, 418).

In this work, written in the first half of the sixth century, Gildas describes the various disasters that afflicted the Britons on account of their sins and general waywardness, including a terrible plague; a while later, he claims that the Saxon onslaught forced many Britons to flee overseas.<sup>140</sup> Wrdisten uses this narrative to structure his opening passage, in which he lays out a brief description of Britain and a sketch of its history, before turning to his subject, and narrating how Winwaloe's parents come to settle in Brittany.<sup>141</sup> In so doing, he streamlines Gildas' text considerably, and makes the plague and migration appear to be contemporaneous. Here is the passage in full, including the portion cited earlier:

Haec autem quondam patria Cyclopum, nunc vero nutrix, ut fertur, tyrannorum, a divinis non inulta raro umquam diu quievit propter sua peccata flagellis. Aut enim crebris hostium irruptionibus, aut civium inter se invicem concussionibus, aut fame, peste, gladio morbisque insectata est acerrimis. Sed longe ab hujus quoque moribus parvam distasse sobolem suam non opinor, quae quondam ratibus ad istam devecta est citra mare Britannicum terram. Tempore non alio, quo gens barbara, dudum aspera in armis, moribus indiscreta, Saxonum maternum possedit cespitem, huic se cara soboles in istum conclusit sinum, quo se tuta loco magnis laboribus fessam, ad oram concessit sine bello quietam. Interea miserorum, qui paterna incolebant rura, peste foeda repente exorta, catervatim et absque numero et absque sepultura miseranda sternuntur corpora. Ex hac lue magna ex parte antiqua desolatur patria; tandemque pauci et multo pauci, qui vix ancipitem effugissent gladium, aut Scoticam quamvis inimicam, aut Belgicam, natalem autem patriam linquentes, coacti acriter alienam petivere terram.<sup>142</sup>

'Moreover, this fatherland, once home to Cyclopes, now rather the nourisher (as is said) of tyrants, has rarely ever received any respite for long from the divine lash on account of its sins, which did not go unavenged, for it was beset by frequent hostile invasions, or by strife between its citizens, or by hunger, pestilence, the sword, and the cruelest of illnesses – but I do not suppose that its little offshoot, borne a while ago on boats to this land on this side of the British Sea, to be far removed from its habits. At the same time as the barbaric Saxon race (until recently savage in arms, crude in habits) took possession of the maternal turf, the beloved offshoot confined itself here in this refuge, in which, secure, it withdrew itself (exhausted with great labors) to a peaceful shore without

<sup>140</sup>Mommsen, 'De excidio', 37–8, 40 (§§22, 25). For a discussion of the date of composition of *De excidio* see Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons*, 215–16.

<sup>141</sup>Brett, *Brittany*, 110.

<sup>142</sup>De Smedt, 'Vita s. Winwaloei', 175, with thanks to Ben Guy and Barry Lewis for helpful suggestions on the translation.

battle. In the meantime, a foul pestilence suddenly arose, and the wretched bodies of the wretches who remained tilling the ancestral fields were strewn in multitudes, unburied and uncountable. From this plague the old fatherland was largely made a desert; and at length a few – and a very few indeed – who had barely evaded the double-edged sword were driven, bitterly, to seek a strange land: either that of the Irish (however hostile), or of the Belgians, leaving the country of their birth behind.’

It is, admittedly, difficult to follow Wrdisten’s prose, which revels in hyperbaton and figurative language; still, it is tolerably clear that both plague and Saxon pressure are forcing the Britons to flee.

Learned speculation on the origins of Brittany was fairly common in what little survives from the period: Wrdisten’s account appears to be unique.<sup>143</sup> This is not, however, a case of ‘absence of evidence’; while textual survival from early medieval Brittany is, in general, poor,<sup>144</sup> there are two other early Lives that explicitly mention early medieval plagues; one, the Life of Brioc, describes a terrible epidemic in Ceredigion in Wales.<sup>145</sup> Neither plague has anything to do with a migration from Britain to Brittany. In short, this connection between plague and migration was not present in Wrdisten’s surviving sources, and it cannot be traced in contemporary Breton texts that touch on the same topics: it seems likely, therefore, that it was Wrdisten’s own invention.

This invention, moreover, does not seem to have been a popular one. No other Breton author picked it up, then or in the centuries following, save for the anonymous figure responsible for an abridgment known as the *Vita brevior* (datable only to the tenth to twelfth centuries),<sup>146</sup> it is even lost from the truncated versions that Wrdisten himself composed.<sup>147</sup> So far as I can tell, until Stephen

<sup>143</sup>For other accounts of Breton origins, see the discussion in Brett, *Brittany*, 105–13, 306–7, 312–13; especially 110–11; also Guy, ‘Explaining the origins’.

<sup>144</sup>Caroline Brett, ‘Breton-Latin literature as evidence for literature in the vernacular, A.D. 800–1300’, *CMCS* 18 (1989), 1–25, at 1–5.

<sup>145</sup>François Plaine (ed.), ‘Vita s. Brioci episcopi et confessoris ab anonymo suppari conscripta’, *Analecta Bollandiana* 2 (1883), 161–90, at 179–80 (§41). The Life of Maglorius also mentions pestilence (*pestis*), which was associated with a bad famine: ‘Vita s. Maglorii episcopi ex Mabillonii Actis Sanctorum s. Benedicti, auctore anonymo, collata cum ms. Rubræ Vallis’, *Acta sanctorum* [...], Oct. X, cols 782–91, at 788c (§18). For the dates of these texts, see discussion in Poulin, *L’hagiographie bretonne*, 80–3, 213–15, respectively.

<sup>146</sup>BHL 8956d: Robert Latouche (ed.), *Mélanges d’histoire de Cornouaille (v<sup>e</sup>–xi<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Paris, 1911), 97–112. This Life was once thought to be ‘la plus ancienne’ (ibid., 97), but see now Poulin, *L’hagiographie bretonne*, 437–40; Caroline Brett, ‘L’hagiographie de Saint Guénolé de Landévennec: Le témoignage du manuscrit de Cardiff’, in *Landévennec et le monachisme breton dans le haut moyen âge: Actes du colloque du 15<sup>ème</sup> centenaire de l’abbaye de Landévennec*, 25–26–27 Avril 1985 (Daoulas, 1986), 253–67, at 260–4. See also the early-modern revision of Wrdisten’s Life, BHL no. 8964: ‘Tertia vita auctore Gurdestino monacho ex MS. Armorico’, *Acta sanctorum* [...], Mar. 1, cols 256–61 (Poulin, *L’hagiographie bretonne*, 409).

<sup>147</sup>Wrdisten’s own abbreviations are published in De la Borderie, *Cartulaire de Landevenec*, 129–35 (BHL 8959); and Robert Fawtier, ‘Une rédaction inédite de la Vie de saint Guénolé’, *Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire* 32 (1912), 27–44 (BHL 8960). For discussion of other versions, and guides to the editions, see Brett, ‘L’hagiographie de Saint Guénolé’, 256–9; Poulin, *L’hagiographie bretonne*, 396–445.

wrote his *Life of Teilo*, there was no other account of large-scale migration caused by plague not only in Breton literature, but in literature from Ireland or Britain – or in any literature from the Latin West.<sup>148</sup> We are not, in other words, dealing with a common motif floating around in the intellectual ether, and so I find it hard to credit that the same basic story was invented twice over – especially given that *Wrdisten's Life* was demonstrably available at Llancarfan not long after Stephen wrote his *Life of Teilo*.<sup>149</sup>

The main obstacle to this conclusion remains, of course, that there is no good evidence that Stephen had consulted *Wrdisten's Life* – indeed, the general lack of any Breton material in the *Vespasian Life of Teilo* rather suggests that he did not.<sup>150</sup> Still, this does not rule out the possibility that Stephen had learned of this legend, or something like it, at second hand. *Lifris's Life of Cadog* shows some reliance on traditions from southwestern Brittany, as do a number of genealogies perhaps stemming from Llancarfan.<sup>151</sup> On that basis Ben Guy has recently shown that a member of the community of Llancarfan, Iuthael *filius* Aidan, a contemporary of *Lifris's*, had traveled to western Brittany in the later eleventh century (including, it seems, the abbey of Sainte-Croix at Quimperlé), and served as a conduit for texts and information between Brittany and Llancarfan.<sup>152</sup> Perhaps among this material was a copy of the *Cartulary of Landévennec* – which would contain much of the basic material on King Budic needed for the *Life of Euddogwy*, as well as a copy of the *Life of Winwaloe*.<sup>153</sup> Exposure to this source (and, perhaps, familiarity with nearby Landeleau) may have inspired the story of *Teilo's* flight and return; someone at Llancarfan with access to Irish materials derived, perhaps, from Clonard could then have connected the dots, and equated the plague that drove *Teilo* from Britain with the 'Yellow Plague' that slew Finnian, thereby creating the story which would later be adapted by Stephen for his sermon on the *Life of Teilo*.

This account, I freely admit, is speculative. But once the possibility is granted, other elements begin to fall into place. Llancarfan appears to have had, at some point, a close association with Clonard – whose patron saint was known to have died of the Yellow Plague. Given this connection, and assuming that Iuthael (or another member of the community of Llancarfan) had brought back a *Life of Winwaloe* from Brittany, then both of the principal ingredients of

<sup>148</sup> Small-scale or short-term movement of people in the aftermath the plague is narrated e.g. in Gregory of Tours: Bruno Krusch (ed.), *'Liber de virtutibus s. Iuliani'*, MGH SS. rer. Merov. 1.2 (Hannover, 1969), 112–24, at 131–2, with discussion by McCormick, 'Gregory of Tours', 77 – or, nearer to Wales, in Bede (Lapidge, *Storia degli Inglesi*, 142), or in the story of Colmán's founding of the monastery of Inishbofin: *Thes* ii, 298.

<sup>149</sup> See above.

<sup>150</sup> Guy, 'Vespasian Life', 16.

<sup>151</sup> Wade-Evans, *Vitae sanctorum Britannie*, 96–8; discussion in Tanguy, 'De la Vie', 160–7; for a discussion of the genealogies, see Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 81–5; Brett, *Brittany*, 304–5.

<sup>152</sup> This argument is laid out briefly in Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 86–90, and more thoroughly in Guy, 'Explaining the origins'.

<sup>153</sup> De la Borderie, *Cartulaire de Landevenec*. See above, n. 51; also Brett, 'L'hagiographie de Saint Guénolé', 264, who uses several telling connections between Landévennec and Wessex to conclude '[l]a date la plus probable de la première arrivée de textes sur saint Guénolé en Angleterre est peut-être la règne de Édouard de Wessex (899–924) ou de son fils Athelstan (924–939).'

the Welsh legend of the Yellow Plague could have been present in Llanccarfan by the late eleventh century, shortly before the earliest surviving Welsh text to mention the Yellow Plague, Stephen's Life of Teilo, was composed.

The case for Llanccarfan is strengthened by the lack of any compelling evidence for the migration legend elsewhere in southern Wales. St Davids is an unlikely candidate; Rhygyfarch's Life of David shows no interest in Brittany, and the letter to Honorius is the first sign of engagement with the legend.<sup>154</sup> Llanbadarn is a possibility – the Life of Padarn shows reliance on Breton sources, and, in the person of Sulien (d. 1091), twice bishop of St Davids, and head of an important school at Llanbadarn, it had connections to St Davids and Ireland, too – but there is no sign of the Yellow Plague in any surviving work from that community.<sup>155</sup> Lifris's Life of Cadog, however, shows copious interest in both Irish and Breton sources. Moreover, in the early twelfth century, Llanccarfan (along with Llandaf) became a fertile site for historical speculation: many important historical texts – including an influential collection of genealogies, and a considerable amount of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *De gestis Britonum* – had their roots in new histories developed at Llandaf-Llanccarfan.<sup>156</sup>

If my tentative interpretation of the evidence presented above is accepted, Llanccarfan had access to the relevant information at the right time; furthermore, it had a demonstrated ability to create history from very limited source material. It is not surprising, therefore, that the earliest source to mention the Yellow Plague was produced by someone closely affiliated with that community. Taken as a whole, the evidence suggests the conclusion that the Welsh legend of the Yellow Plague, in which many Britons flee a terrible pestilence, was created at Llanccarfan not long before Stephen wrote his Life of Teilo in the early twelfth century.

By the late 1120s, this legend had, it seems, become known at St Davids, where it was apparently given enough credence to serve as a central plank in a letter to the Pope arguing for the (re-)creation of an independent archbishopric of St Davids. What form that legend had when it arrived at St Davids remains unclear. Above, I laid out the three possibilities that Barry Lewis outlined for the source of the letter to Honorius: 1) a now-lost source shared with Geoffrey of Monmouth; 2) an early, pre-publication version of Geoffrey's *De gestis Britonum*; and 3) the published version of *De gestis Britonum* (assuming the letter to be a later forgery). As discussed above, I believe the weight of textual evidence, and considerations of historical context, rule out the third option. The second option is implausible; Geoffrey never directly refers to the Yellow

<sup>154</sup> As noted in Brett, *Brittany*, 297; for the text closest to Rhygyfarch's original, see Richard Sharpe and J. R. Davies (eds and trans), 'Rhygyfarch's Life of St David', in Evans and Wooding (eds), *St David of Wales*, 107–55.

<sup>155</sup> The Life of Padarn is in Wade-Evans, *Vitae sanctorum Britannie*, 252–69; see in particular §2 (p. 252). On Llanbadarn see further Chadwick, 'Intellectual life', 162–82; Brett, *Brittany*, 298–9; for Sulien, Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, vol. 2, 493–4.

<sup>156</sup> J. R. Davies, *Book of Llandaf*, 142; Brooke, *Church and Border*, 43–4; Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 91–2.

Plague (even though he very likely knew of it).<sup>157</sup> I suspect, therefore, that the first option is correct, and the author of the letter to Honorius adapted a Llandaf source on the founding of the British church for the purposes of St Davids; and furthermore, that this same source also served as the basis for Geoffrey's account.<sup>158</sup>

That St Davids knew something of the burgeoning collection of pseudo-history at Llandaf is plausible. In the late 1120s, Llandaf and St Davids were embroiled in a struggle over their diocesan boundaries, each presenting their respective cases before Pope Honorius.<sup>159</sup> They would likely, therefore, have had the opportunity to learn their opponents' competing accounts of British history well, and to prepare counter-arguments against them. Conclusive evidence is not forthcoming; still, I believe the most satisfactory explanation of the evidence is that the legend of the Yellow Plague, as found at St Davids, was derived from a Llandaf-Llancarfan source also used by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

### III. CONCLUSION

To summarise the above account: the legend of the Yellow Plague, in which some form of 'yellow' disease, often identified in medieval sources as jaundice, makes many Britons flee from Britain, is the product of the combination of two separate elements. First, there is the story itself, of the terrible plague that drives the Britons overseas. Before 1100, this story is only attested in a single work, the *Life of Winwaloe* by Wrdisten, and it is likely his own invention, brought about by his attempts to abbreviate the *De excidio* of Gildas and use it to explain Brittany's origins. This work was certainly available at Llandaf by the 1120s, and, as I argue above, it is possible it was present there earlier, and that it was the ultimate inspiration for all Welsh accounts of the migration.

The second element is the name of the disease, which almost certainly reflects Irish terminology. The Welsh names for the disease (and their Latin analogues) could be approximate translations of the Irish terms, but the converse could not be true; the Irish terms are attested, moreover, in a wider variety of genres and contexts. Finally, evidence of close cooperation between Clonard and Llancarfan – two early centers for the composition of materials that mention the Yellow Plague – provides a plausible route of transmission from Ireland to Wales.

These two elements first appear together in a work by one Stephen, the brother of Bishop Urban of Llandaf, whose family had close connections to

<sup>157</sup>It is likely that Geoffrey was inspired by Llandaf's stories about the Yellow Plague to end his *De gestis Britonum* with the flight of Cadwaladr from a plague: Reeve and Wright, *History of the Kings of Britain*, 277 (§203); Geoffrey identified this with the *mortalitas* found c. 682 in the Welsh annals: Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 52. It is possible, too, that Caesar's sword in Geoffrey's work, named the 'Yellow Death' (*crocea mors*) – Reeve and Wright, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, 73 (§57) – is a play on *pestis flavalball felen*, as Edmond Faral suggested: Edmond Faral, *La légende arthurienne: Études et documents. Première partie: Les plus anciens textes* (Paris, 1929), vol. 2, at 152.

<sup>158</sup>See also Pryce, 'Gerald of Wales', 30; Brooke, *Church and Border*, 22 n. 26.

<sup>159</sup>J. Conway Davies, *Episcopal Acts*, vol. 1, 172–80.

Llancarfan. Stephen's work was then developed further in the Book of Llandaf (perhaps by Caradog of Llancarfan), and the community of St Davids appears to have used materials derived from Llandaf to claim, in a letter to Pope Honorius, that the Yellow Plague caused St Davids to lose its archepiscopal pallium. This story lingered on at St Davids for some time; it was reused in a subsequent letter to Pope Eugenius, and Gerald of Wales adapted it near the turn of the twelfth century to buttress his own campaign for the archbishopric of St Davids. After Gerald's lifetime, however, this story all but disappears, appearing only in a late-medieval liturgical text from St Davids.<sup>160</sup> The Yellow Plague itself persisted, eventually merging with what appears to be a folktale from northern Wales about the death of Maelgwn Gwynedd; over the centuries, the Yellow Plague became more and more a monster, or some other sort of humanoid apparition, than a disease.<sup>161</sup>

How that happened is a story for another paper. What I would like to focus on here, by way of a conclusion, is what the foregoing account might tell us about the creation of knowledge in medieval Wales. This legend possesses relatively copious, well-dated sources, as well as clear analogues from neighbouring regions. While there are aspects of its creation and transmission that remain unclear, or at least uncertain, the outline can at least be sketched.<sup>162</sup>

What close analysis uncovers is, for once, a demonstrable example of literary borrowing from other Celtic literary traditions. Such borrowing has been the subject of much speculation over the years, but good detailed evidence on when and where it may have occurred remains frustratingly scarce. As Patrick Sims-Williams has written (in the context of the influence of Irish literature in the vernacular on Welsh texts):

<sup>160</sup>The single example, to my knowledge, is a list of St Davids' suffragans inserted into a 15th-century list of recent miracles wrought by St David: Michael Curley (ed.), 'The Miracles of Saint David: a new text and its context', *Traditio* 62 (2007), 135–205, at 190. Curley points out that this list bears strong resemblances to the revived claims for an independent Welsh archbishopric made by Owain Glyn Dŵr in the course of his rebellion, and argues that it was included in the collection because of its politically topical nature. However, as Curley claims, the list was most likely composed by Gerald of Wales himself (*ibid.*, 155–62).

<sup>161</sup>The legend about the death of Maelgwn Gwynedd is first attested (without mention of the Yellow Plague) in the various thirteenth-century copies of *Brut y Brenhinedd*, e.g. in the Dingestow version: Henry Lewis (ed.), *Brut Dingestow* (Cardiff, 1942), at 187. Most early versions, insofar as their provenance can be traced, appear to be closely related to Cistercian monasteries in northeastern Wales – in particular, Valle Crucis: see Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Welsh versions of Geoffrey of Monmouth's "History of the Kings of Britain"', in Axel Harlos and Neele Harlos (eds), *Adapting Texts and Styles in a Celtic Context: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Processes of Literary Transfer in the Middle Ages* (Münster, 2016), 53–74, at 55–65; also Brynley Roberts, 'Brut y Brenhinedd, ms. National Library of Wales, Llanstephan 1 Version', in Hélène Tétrel and Géraldine Veyseyre (eds), *L'Historia regum Britannie et les 'Bruts' en Europe: Traductions, adaptations, réappropriations (xii<sup>e</sup>–xvi<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Paris, 2015), 71–80, at 72. This legend is related to an Irish folktale – cf. Kathleen Mulchrone (ed.), *Bethu Phátraic: The Tripartite Life of Patrick* (Dublin, 1939), ll. 2165–77 – and has no necessary connection to the 'Yellow Plague'.

<sup>162</sup>Compare, for instance, attempts at discerning the origins of the legend of Taliesin: Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, 12–21; Patrick Ford (ed.), *Ystoria Taliesin* (Cardiff, 1992), at 1–55; Ifor Williams, *Chwedl Taliesin* (Cardiff, 1957).

It is impossible to decide what proportion of the story motifs and themes shared between Ireland and Wales is inherited from the period when the languages were merely dialects (or even earlier) and what is due to recent intercourse across the Irish Sea or independent contact with third parties such as mercenaries, traders, and itinerant scholars, not to mention Viking and other settlers.<sup>163</sup>

In the case of the legend of the Yellow Plague, however, we can demonstrate that it was the product of a particular educational and scholarly milieu that obtained in Ireland, Wales, and Brittany in the tenth through twelfth centuries, as each region, in contact with its neighbors, rediscovered – or recreated, rather – its early medieval past. This is clear even if we leave aside the more speculative connections that I made above: Wrdisten, working in the later ninth century, took the sixth-century text of Gildas and worked it into his vision of the settlement of Brittany, and this text then served as the basis for Landévennec's cartulary in the eleventh century; an anonymous tenth-century scholar at St Davids used a copy of the Irish annals – already centuries old, and having undergone several major revisions – to shape early Welsh history; Irish churchmen rewrote their records and the Lives of their patrons to include reference to *crom chonnaill*, *buide chonnaill* and *buidechair*. The creation of the Yellow Plague in Wales, probably at Llancarfan, was one of the fruits of this slow accumulation of historical knowledge.

Every supposed fact, and every story, from medieval Wales may well have a similar pedigree, the result of centuries of development, spurred on by individual and communal ingenuity. Most of the time, however, we simply do not have the sources to prove this was the case; and by the time we get to the twelfth century, it is usually too late: pseudo-historical texts spill out in their characteristic mixture of pedantry, literary aspiration, opportunism, and the occasional striking insight, as their authors take up many of the fragments and pieces of earlier legends, and seek to make them cohere into a fuller history, one national in its sweep – such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *De gestis Britonum* and its descendants, or, in Ireland, the various recensions of the *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*.<sup>164</sup> These summations tended to obliterate earlier versions of the past;<sup>165</sup> and so what the analysis above provides, I hope, is a picture, however dim, of the intellectual ferment of the period leading up to the increasing codification, and even calcification, of these histories, when new connections between old sources created a moment in which the past – and thus the future – was there for the taking.

<sup>163</sup>Patrick Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence on Medieval Welsh Literature* (Oxford, 2010), at 15.

<sup>164</sup>Reeve and Wright, *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain*; R. A. S. Macalister, *Lebor Gabála Éirenn: The Book of the Taking of Ireland*, 5 vols, ITS 34–5, 39, 41, 44 (London, 1938–56).

<sup>165</sup>Owain Wyn Jones, 'The most excellent princes: Geoffrey of Monmouth and medieval Welsh historical writing', in Smith and Henley (eds), *A Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 257–90; John Carey, *The Irish National Origin-Legend: Synthetic Pseudohistory*, Quiggin Memorial Lecture 1 (Cambridge, 1994).

## ABBREVIATIONS

- AT* Whitley Stokes (ed. and trans.), ‘The Annals of Tigernach’, *RC* 17 (1896), 6–33, 116–263, 337–420.
- BC* Breviate Chronicle = Henry Gough-Cooper (ed.), ‘*Annales Cambriae*: The B text, from London, National Archives MS E164.1, pp. 2–26’, 2015, <<http://croniclau.bangor.ac.uk/editions.php.en>>
- CS* Gearóid Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Chronicon Scotorum*, 2012, <<https://celt.ucc.ie/published/G100016/index.html>>
- HC* Harleian Chronicle = Henry Gough-Cooper (ed.), ‘*Annales Cambriae*: the A text, from British Library, Harley MS 3859, ff. 190r–193r’, 2015, <<http://croniclau.bangor.ac.uk/editions.php.en>>

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SCRIPT MODIFICATION IN LATE MEDIEVAL IRELAND:  
A CASE-STUDY OF TADHG UA RÍGHBHARDÁIN (FL. 1470S)

ABSTRACT<sup>1</sup>

This article presents a palaeographical and codicological examination of RIA MS 3 B 22 and RIA MS 3 B 23, two fifteenth-century volumes thought to have originally belonged together, written by Tadhg Ua Ríghbhardáin. RIA MS 3 B 23 contains a copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght* and an interpolated copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid*, both of which display certain palaeographical ‘peculiarities’ not found elsewhere in either manuscript volume. According to Gwynn and Purton (1911–12), these ‘peculiarities’ were probably copied from an exemplar. It is argued here, however, that these ‘peculiarities’ were introduced by Ua Ríghbhardáin himself and that he was assisted by another scribe who also employed unique palaeographical features. It is shown that Ua Ríghbhardáin deviated from his typical graphic repertoire and consciously modified his script when copying these texts. An overview of script modification in medieval Ireland is offered first, outlining the sources from which letterform variations were derived and the purpose for which scribes used them. This is followed by a palaeographical study of Ua Ríghbhardáin’s main scribal characteristics and, in turn, the ‘peculiarities’ employed by him and his assistant. Lastly, palaeographical and codicological features in the two manuscripts are reconsidered and it is suggested that they may not have been associated until much later in their history, contrary to previous suggestions that the two originally formed a single codex.

<sup>1</sup>I undertook the research for this article in 2020 at the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, during which time my colleague Dr Andrea Palandri was also working on Ua Ríghbhardáin’s manuscripts. This article has benefitted from our many enjoyable and constructive discussions about Ua Ríghbhardáin and his manuscripts. I am deeply grateful to Dr Palandri for his feedback on an earlier draft of this article, as well as his encouragement and support. A version of this paper was presented at the Tionól of the School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, in November 2021. I am grateful to Prof. Liam Breatnach, Prof. David Stifter and Dr Jürgen Uhlich for their valuable feedback. Finally, I am indebted to *Celtica*’s editors and the anonymous reader whose suggestions helped improve the overall structure and argument of the article. I alone take responsibility for any outstanding errors.

## INTRODUCTION

**T**ADHG UA RÍGHBHARDÁIN was a scribe who flourished in the 1470s and was responsible for compiling several manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> RIA MS 3 B 22 (cat. no. 1226; hereafter B) and RIA MS 3 B 23 (cat. no. 1227; hereafter T) are among those attributed to this scribe.<sup>3</sup> These two volumes are important sources for the study of the Early Irish language and the history of religion in medieval Ireland. B contains a range of devotional and homiletic texts as well as a copy of the Irish translation of *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, another copy of which is in TCD MS H 2.12, no. 2 (1303), also written by Ua Ríghbhardáin. T is frequently referred to as the Tallaght Codex (TC).<sup>4</sup> It contains a copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght*, which is a group of anecdotes that relates the teachings and customs of Máel Ruain, the first abbot of Tallaght, and his pupil Máel Díthruib, of Terryglass.<sup>5</sup> It also includes a copy of the *Old Irish Table of Penitential Commutations* (Binchy 1962), the sole surviving copy of the *Old Irish Penitential* (Gwynn 1914; with revised translation by D. A. Binchy in Bieler 1963: 258–77), and a copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid* (Hull 1968).

As well as being of literary and linguistic value, T's copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght* is noteworthy for its unusual palaeographical features, which Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) described as follows:

The script differs in certain respects from that employed in the rest of the volume. The chief peculiarities are (1) an unusual form of *d*, closely resembling *a*, with which it may easily be confused; (2) an unusual form of *m*, used mainly on p. 33, but occurring two or three times in later pages: it resembles a capital *H*, having the cross-bar depressed in the middle; (3) a contraction, consisting of *t* with a wavy stroke over it, which stands sometimes for *tir* (*ter*), sometimes for *irt* (*ert* ?); (4) the spelling, which is described below. For the reasons given above, however, we must assume that our document is written by the same scribe as the rest of the volume. The peculiarities just noted are probably copied by him from the archetype which he had before him.

The *RIA Cat.* draws attention to similar features in *Apgitir Chrábaid* (pp. 47a22–51a16, T), which is interpolated into T's copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght*.<sup>6</sup> Apart from these brief observations, these particular aspects of

<sup>2</sup>See Palandri (2021) for a detailed description of Ua Ríghbhardáin's manuscripts and a study of the scribe's linguistic and orthographical tendencies.

<sup>3</sup>For a full description of B and T and their contents, see *RIA Cat.* pp. 3357–60 and 3360–4, respectively. See also Palandri (2021: 135–6) for a discussion of the two manuscripts.

<sup>4</sup>See Follett (2006: 102); McLaughlin (2012: 113–14). Palandri (2021: 135), following Follett (2013–14: 222), refers to both B and T as TC for convenience.

<sup>5</sup>Ed. and trans. Gwynn and Purton (1911–1912). For a discussion of the other extant manuscript witnesses of *The Monastery of Tallaght* and their relationship to each other, see Follett (2006: 102–14).

<sup>6</sup>See *RIA Cat.* p. 3362.

Ua Ríghbhardáin's handwriting have not been discussed in any further detail elsewhere, to my knowledge.

The aim of this article, therefore, is to fully describe these 'peculiarities' and place them in the wider context of scribal writing practices in late medieval Ireland. I argue that these features were not copied from Ua Ríghbhardáin's exemplar, as previously suggested. Instead, I propose that they belonged to the scribe's own intentional modified script. To begin with, I examine the history of the unusual letterforms which form the basis of Ua Ríghbhardáin's altered script. I then give a palaeographical examination of the general graphic characteristics of Ua Ríghbhardáin's main hand followed by an analysis of the 'peculiarities' in his diversified script in his copies of *The Monastery of Tallaght* and *Apgitir Chrábaid*. The article concludes by reconsidering materialistic aspects of B and T to establish the manuscript context of the two copies and to understand Ua Ríghbhardáin's motivations for writing them in a different script.

#### SCRIPT MODIFICATION IN MEDIEVAL IRELAND

Gaelic National minuscule assumed its fully realised form by the end of the twelfth century.<sup>7</sup> Manuscripts dating from the middle of the fourteenth century, produced under the patronage of the nobility, show a continuity in the use of this minuscule script.<sup>8</sup> This remained the dominant script in Irish language manuscripts for centuries to come.<sup>9</sup> However, despite this script's apparent regularity in form and character, it will be seen in this article that a scribe could consciously alter his book hand by incorporating rare variant letterforms and/or switching letters based on the Latin alphabet for those of other alphabets.

Palaeographical studies on script modification have been published in adjacent fields. Scholars such as M. B. Parkes and Julia Crick, for example, have explored the phenomenon of scribes modifying their script in an archaising

<sup>7</sup>For the development of Gaelic National minuscule from the beginning of the eleventh to the end of the twelfth century, see Duncan (2010).

<sup>8</sup>The lack of manuscripts surviving from the thirteenth century hardly reflects a break in the Irish manuscript tradition nor does Gaelic National minuscule represent a revived script in the fourteenth century onwards (see for instance O'Sullivan 2005: 540). A substantial corpus of Irish literature dates to the thirteenth century, albeit surviving in later manuscripts, and must have been written down initially in manuscripts contemporary with that period (Ó Macháin 2018: 236 n. 46). For the pitfalls of positivistic approaches to book culture and palaeography, see Sharpe (2010: esp. 10–11).

<sup>9</sup>Bieler (1949: 283) described the development of Irish script between the thirteenth to the sixteenth century as a period of 'standardization' and that from the seventeenth century onwards as one of 'fossilization'. This statement gives the impression that there was no significant change or development to the script over the course of the centuries. But, as Sharpe (1986) pointed out, consideration has yet to be given to the variations and grades in minuscule from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century.

fashion in English manuscripts.<sup>10</sup> However, an examination of script modification in late medieval Ireland has not been undertaken.<sup>11</sup> Any discussion of this topic in an Irish context is not without its caveats. The most notable limitation is that a comprehensive study of Gaelic National minuscule and scribal practice from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century is still required. The scarcity of surviving material from the thirteenth century complicates any such study. Therefore, any attempt to identify script modification in an Irish context can be difficult because it is unclear whether the script that a scribe writes in reflects palaeographical continuity, scribal learned influence or an archaising tendency.

Irish scribes modified their script in the eleventh and twelfth centuries by incorporating variant letterforms and auxiliary components inherited from earlier models of script, such as Insular minuscule. For example, in the Book of Leinster (TCD MS H 2.18; 1339), hands T3 and F both write a rare half-uncial **d**.<sup>12</sup> This half-uncial **d** is also written in the twelfth- or thirteenth-century Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 460, which is written in 'a curiously artificial air'.<sup>13</sup> This letterform emulates the half-uncial **d**, with a rounded bowl, found in earlier gospel books or psalters written in Hybrid minuscule.<sup>14</sup> It consists of an angular bowl that bites a tall vertical ascender, making it very similar in appearance to a ligature **cl**, and is topped with an incomplete serif. The hands in the Book of Leinster do not use this half-uncial letterform consistently, however, and more frequently write the more commonly used rounded **d** with an angled and curved ascender or rounded and flat-topped **d**. By the time Gaelic National minuscule was fully developed by the end of the twelfth century, a round flat-topped **d** and a **d** with an angled curved ascender was the norm and this half-uncial **d** is rarely used. However, it reappears in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscripts, examples of which will be discussed below.

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, Parkes (1997); Crick (2011; 2015). According to Parkes (1997: 127; 1999: 141), an archaising hand aimed to imitate certain letterforms and auxiliary elements based on an earlier model of script, but quite often the ductus was not accurately executed, resulting in an artificial appearance of the written letter or text. In order to determine an archaising hand, letterforms which are no longer current in the contemporary script need to be identified and, in reverse, letter-shapes and abbreviations which would not be expected in an earlier script need to be found.

<sup>11</sup>The recent article by Duncan (2018) is an important contribution to our understanding of the differing formalities in Gaelic National minuscule in the fourteenth century.

<sup>12</sup>O'Sullivan (1966: 11–12); see also Duncan (2012: 32–3). Hand F writes the stylistic half-uncial **d** in the following instances: *rigdacht*, 163a13; *tholгда*, 163b19; *Dagda*, 164a9; *Dagdo*, 164a25; *Dagdai*, 164a38; *Moigda*, 164b5; *coigrád*, 164b19; *nDagdai*, 164b34; *Dagda*, 164b48; *Dagda*, 246a8; *Dagdai*, 249a31; *gradugud*, 271b18; *gradugud*, 271b19 (versus the more common Irish minuscule **d**, with a curved ascender, e.g. *Dagdai*, 164a8; *Dagda*, 164a28, *séгда*, 250a48, *rigdomna*, 273a30). Hand T3 writes this half-uncial **d** less frequently, viz. *aireгда*, 218b18; *rigda*, 217b15; *áes gráda*, 217b30; *aireгда*, 233a3; *degda*, 233a24; *argda*, 233a29.

<sup>13</sup>O'Sullivan (2005: 544). See also Byrne (1979: 5, 15 and 27), who drew attention to the apparent archaising hand in MS Laud Misc. 460. He also noted two similar instances in British Library, MS Harley 1023 and 1802, which show distinct reminiscences, both in script and decoration, of the 9th century Book of Armagh (TCD MS 52).

<sup>14</sup>See, for instance, in the script used for the *Hebraicum* text in 'The Rouen Psalter' (Duncan 2005: 27). For Insular Hybrid minuscule, which is a mixture of half-uncial and minuscule letterforms, see Brown (1993: 201–2, 209–11); cf. Dumville (1999: 7).

Medieval Irish scribes also diversified their writing by using mixed scripts. This was a practice whereby the occasional letter from an alphabet other than Latin was written.<sup>15</sup> This quite often involved the use of Greek letters.<sup>16</sup> One such letterform was an artificial Greek letter referred to as the ‘M-siglum’, which arose without direct contact with the Greek East and may have originated with Irish scribes.<sup>17</sup> This, along with other majuscule Greek letters such as Greek majuscule **H** (eta) for **e**, were used for iconographic, ornamental or cryptic purposes in early medieval manuscripts.<sup>18</sup> Greek characters could, for instance, have an iconographic value in *nomina sacra*, such as the use of the majuscule delta symbol in *Deus* and *Deum* in the Book of Durrow (TCD MS 57, fol. 193r).<sup>19</sup> Greek transliteration was also used to signify scribal erudition. For instance, Ferdomnach wrote Greek letterforms in numerous scribal colophons, marginal headings and words in the Book of Armagh (TCD MS 52).<sup>20</sup> The late eleventh- or early twelfth-century UCD-OFM MS A 2, which contains a copy of the *Liber Hymnorum*, has Greek  $\Psi$  for Latin *ps* in *Psalmo* (leg. *psalmo*), p. 15, l. 21.<sup>21</sup> In the Annals of Tigernach in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson B 502, Latin names are sometimes written in Greek letters (Best 1914: 116), for instance: fols 4vb25; 7rb19; 7rb30; 7va10, perhaps for ornamental emphasis.

The use of mixed scripts continued into the late medieval period. Alphabetic tables, including Greek, Hebrew and Egyptian alphabets, are often presented

<sup>15</sup>For a discussion of mixed scripts in early Irish manuscripts and its cultural significance, see Tilghman (2011).

<sup>16</sup>On the Greek language and alphabet in the early medieval Irish period, see Moran (2011: 174–8; 2012).

<sup>17</sup>See Berschin (1982; 1988; 2020). The earliest written example of this grapheme is found in the Latin *Paternoster*, transliterated in Greek, in Schaffhausen, Stadtbibliothek, MS Gen. 1, dated between 688 and 713. It is given as a variant of **m** in the Greek majuscule alphabetic table in *Formae Litterarum secundum graecos* associated with Alcuin (Vienna ONB, lat. 795, fol. 19r, dated to c. 799). The grapheme was also used as an abbreviation for *magister*. The earliest instance of this usage is found in Aldhelm’s *De metris et enigmatibus ac pedom regulis*. Aldhelm wrote that he used this grapheme as an abbreviation for *magister* in a dialogue between teacher and pupil. The pupil used the majuscule delta grapheme for *discipulus* (for the passage in question, see Ehwald (1961: 81–2); trans. Lapidge and Rosier (1985: 195)). This abbreviation for *magister* is found in several twelfth-century Irish manuscripts written in a school setting, e.g. British Library MS Eger-ton 3323 (see Bieler and Bischoff (1956: 213 n. 1); cf. Ó Néill (1997: 30)) and Bodleian MS Auct. F III.15. The siglum is used as a construe mark in the twelfth-century schoolbook, Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, sub Pluteus 78.19, fol. 2r (see Oskamp 1997: 191–7; cf. Ó Néill 1997: 30).

<sup>18</sup>Greek script could also be used for emphasis, as well as marking foreign words (Moran 2012: 175 n. 18).

<sup>19</sup>One might also consider in the same instance the borrowing of Greek letters for the Latin *nomina sacra*, especially *ihs* ‘Jesus’, where *h* (eta) is used instead of *e*, and the use of the chi-rho in *xps* ‘Christus’. Similarly, see for instance, the Stowe Missal (RIA MS D ii 3), fol. 67v7 *Alpha ocus omega*, with *omega* written with Greek minuscule  $\omega$  (Nooij 2021: 239).

<sup>20</sup>See, for example, the Latin subscription *amen* on fol. 52v (cf. Sharpe 1982: 13). See Moran (2011: 35 n. 37) for further examples in the manuscript. This manuscript also contains a copy of the Latin *Paternoster* transliterated in Greek script on fol. 36ra. Moran (2011: 36) has shown that this is a transliteration based on alphabetic tables rather than reflecting a knowledge of Greek as a spoken language in early medieval Ireland.

<sup>21</sup>See Bieler (1948: 188). This practice is also found in earlier manuscripts, for instance, the 8th- or 9th-century Stowe Missal (RIA MS D II 3; cat. no. 1238), fol. 26v.

alongside learned texts such as *Auraicept na nÉces*, *In Lebor Ogaim* and *Bríatharogaim* in the late medieval Irish manuscript tradition.<sup>22</sup> The inclusion of such alphabetic tables together with grammatical texts in late medieval Irish manuscripts attests to the learned professions’ engagement with such material.<sup>23</sup> These groups of texts likely formed part of the medieval Irish educational curriculum and would have provided medieval Irish scribes with a rich repertoire of different graphemes they could avail of in various circumstances.<sup>24</sup> Two graphemes that are noteworthy in the present context include those used to represent Greek *delta* and *mu*.

The Greek letter *delta* is represented in alphabetic tables in early medieval Latin manuscripts by majuscule Δ, rather than a minuscule δ. This continues to be the practice in the later medieval Irish copies of the alphabetic tables in the Book of Ballymote and the Book of Lecan, as seen in the table below.

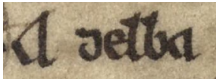
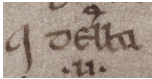
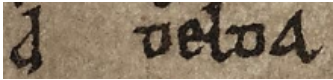
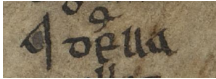
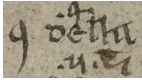
|                                                            |                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RIA MS 23 P 12 (Book of Ballymote),<br>fol. 175v           |    |
| RIA MS 23 P 2 (Book of Lecan),<br>fol. 158ra               |    |
| TCD MS H 2.16 (1318; Yellow Book of<br>Lecan), col. 535    |    |
| TCD MS H 3.18 (1337; ‘Máel Íosa’s<br>book’), vol. 3, p. 35 |   |
| British Library, MS Egerton 88, fol. 71r                   |   |
| TCD MS H 2.15B (1317), p. 199                              |  |

Table 1. Representation of *delta* in the late medieval Irish copies of the Greek alphabetic table.

The scribes in the Book of Ballymote and the Book of Lecan are conservative in their execution of the grapheme Δ. In three of the manuscripts, the angular aspect of Δ is retained and a descender extends below the triangular body, viz. in

<sup>22</sup>Such tables are found in early computistical manuscripts on the Continent during the Carolingian period and were derived from *De inventione linguarum* (or *litterarum*) (Moran 2012: 174–5). For a study of a manuscript from the earlier medieval period containing such alphabets, see Derolez (1951). For a discussion of the *De inventione* text and alphabetic tables in medieval Ireland, see Hayden (2016: 46–9).

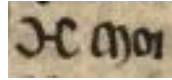
<sup>23</sup>See Hayden (2011).

<sup>24</sup>Alphabetic tables are found at the end of the longer recension of *Auraicept na nÉces*, namely, British Library, MS Egerton 88, fol. 71r; the Yellow Book of Lecan (TCD MS H 2.16; 1318), col. 535; and the Book of Lecan (RIA MS 23 P 2), fol. 158r. A copy is also found in the Book of Ballymote (RIA MS 23 P 12), fol. 175vb where it is interpolated into the copy of the *Auraicept*. Another copy of the alphabetic tables is preserved in TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), p. 35, following a copy of the *Lebor Ogaim* and the *Briatharogaim*.

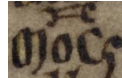
the Yellow Book of Lecan, Egerton and H 2.15B. The example in ‘Máel Íosa’s book’, however, is of particular interest.<sup>25</sup> In this instance, the scribe writes a half-uncial **d** rather than Δ. The scribe must have considered this a higher-grade variant letterform compared with the more common round flat-topped **d** or straight **d** with curved ascender.

The ‘M-siglum’, discussed previously, continues to be used in the later medieval Irish copies of the Greek alphabetic table:

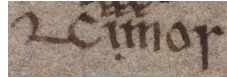
RIA MS 23 P 12 (Book of Ballymote),  
fol. 175v



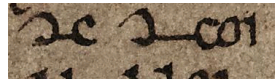
RIA MS 23 P 2 (Book of Lecan), fol. 158ra



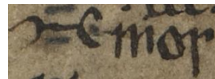
TCD MS H 2.16 (1318; Yellow Book of  
Lecan), col. 535



TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), p. 35



British Library, MS Egerton 88, fol. 71r



TCD MS H 2.15B (1317), p. 199

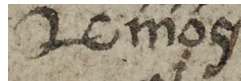


Table 2. Representation of *mu* in the late medieval  
Irish copies of the Greek alphabetic table.

Such variant letterforms are particularly noticeable in late medieval Irish medical and legal manuscripts. This half-uncial **d** is witnessed on occasion in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century legal manuscripts, where it is used for ornamental purposes or in more formal executions of minuscule script.<sup>26</sup> Further examples will be discussed below. The ‘M-siglum’ was also popular among the medical and legal scribes. NLI MS G 8 was compiled by Éumann Ó Bolgaoi, with the assistance of several others, in 1548. Ní Shéaghda (1967: 41–2) described this as a ‘pocket-size medical encyclopaedia’ intended as a teacher’s notebook and written by a whole school. Ó Bolgaoi intermittently wrote the Greek-style **m** in a text on the elements of human nature, e.g. *do mhuírach*,

<sup>25</sup>For a description of this particular legal miscellany known as ‘Máel Íosa’s book’, see Kobel (2020).

<sup>26</sup>I have noted the following examples, for instance, in ‘Máel Íosa’s book’ (TCD MS H 3.18 (1339), vols 2–4, pp. 1–87), e.g. *da-ruacht*, p. 47b37; *nibdar*, p. 40 marg. supr. and as a capital letter in *Do-luidh*, p. 38a2; in ‘Conla’s book’ (TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 13, pp. 353–98), which contains a copy of the first and part of the middle third of *Senchas Már* and is written in a neat and formal hand, e.g. *tuaid*, p. 385b1 (top-line), *Dia n-airbiatar*, p. 389a23 (rubricated capital letter), *Dia rotechtaitger*, p. 391b16 (rubricated capital letter); and in TCD MS H 4.22 (1363), vol. 4, e.g. *dano*, p. 42.10; *a delba*, p. 42.12; *Taidel*, p. 42.12.

p. 134v6; *domhain*, 134v10; *a anam*, 134v15; *mad*, 134v18. In the fifteenth-century medical manuscript Kings Inns MS 15, Maeleachlainn mac an Leagha uses the 'Greek' style **m** in his scribal notes, which are written in various cryptic styles.<sup>27</sup> In a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century legal miscellany, the scribe Donnchadh writes the Greek **m** as a *littera notabilior* in two instances.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the substitution of Latin for Greek letterforms, particularly the 'M-siglum', was employed either as a practice in a school setting, as a mark of erudition, in cryptic writing or for ornamental emphasis, following similar practices in earlier manuscripts.

#### A PALAEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE HANDWRITING IN B AND T

This section examines the handwriting of Ua Ríghbhardáin, beginning with a description of the characteristic features of his main hand in B and T. This is then followed by an analysis of Ua Ríghbhardáin's 'peculiarities', which were outlined by Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 118).<sup>29</sup>

Ua Ríghbhardáin's main hand consists of a generally compressed and angular script that is neat and upright in aspect. The closed allograph **a** has an angular bowl and a descender that frequently extends below the base-line and terminates with a foot serif, e.g., *an spirat*, 90a11 (B); *labrad*, 45b3 (B); *aidchi*, 18a2 (T), etc. The horizontal top of the round-backed **d** curves slightly upward at the left in *foighidi*, 7a10 (B); *dib*, 43b2 (B); *duine*, 79a5 (T), etc. A trailing **d** with a rounded bowl and a left-leaning ascender is used on occasion, for instance, in *lenad*, 43b25 (B); *cucad*, 41a8 (B); *snathaide*, 44b1 (B); *creid*, 66a4 (T), etc. The tall **e**, sometimes consisting of two pen-strokes, has an angular hat in *teind*, 55a18 (B); *denam*, 25a13 (B); *as-bert*, 33b1 (T); *nemda*, 65b4 (T); *n-aithneda*, 65b8 (T); *an ben*, 79a1 (T), etc. The tongue of **f** sits on the baseline and the hook usually extends above the height of the following letter in *fulang*, 25b1 (B); *fuil*, 65b16 (T); *fuilid*, 65b17 (T), etc. The letter **g** has typically a fully closed tail and the flat horizontal top sometimes curves slightly upwards to the right in *tigi*, 25a11 (B); *foigidech*, 45b12 (B); *gabala*, 18b20 (T); *in gini*, 33a11 (T), etc. The bowl of **p** is not fully closed in *peine*, 5a5 (B); *plaineid*, 40a17 (B); *pecad*, 42b12 (B); *corpaib*, 2a7 (T); *pecach*, 65a6 (T), etc. The **r** tends to have a rounded shoulder with an outward flick at the end of the down-stroke in *fiúair*, 14b3 (B); *greni*, 42b8 (B); *roibi*, 63b22 (B); *mair*, 4a15 (T);

<sup>27</sup>Walsh (1947: 211–13) transliterated these cryptic scribal notes, changing the graphemes from Ogham and other alphabets, into Latin script. Another example of this Greek **m** is found in a text written in cipher in the fifteenth-century NLS MS Adv. 72.1.5, fol. 7rb16–7va8. Bischoff (1990: 177 and n. 94) draws attention to the use of foreign alphabets, including 'the Greek M', in ciphers and secret writing, especially in German and English manuscripts, but does not refer to the practice in Irish language manuscripts.

<sup>28</sup>See TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 9, p. 204, ll. 13 and 16. A similar use of this Greek **m** as a *littera notabilior* is found in a copy of *Togail Troí* held in the sixteenth-century manuscript fragment, now bound with the Book of Leinster (TCD MS H 2.18; 1339), i.e. *IMtusa*, p. 398b27 fcs.; cf. the regular *littera notabilior* in *IMthusu*, p. 407a38 fcs. The Greek **m** is substituted for Latin minuscule **m** in a small legal miscellany, namely, TCD MS H 3.18 (1337), vol. 12, e.g. p. 324.10.

<sup>29</sup>See Palandri (2021: 143) for a general overview of Ua Ríghbhardáin's main hand.

*brathrib*, 23a34 (T); *co hiarmergi*, 40a11 (T), etc. The uncial **r** has an angular arch in *oritur*, 11b1 (B); *legthar*, 65b1 (T), etc. Wedged serifs are found on the ascenders of **b**, **h**, **l** and the tops of minims. The **t** normally has a flat horizontal top-stroke. The distinctive elongated *us*-compendium begins above the height of the preceding letter, e.g. *parrdus*, 25a4 (B) *flathamnus*, 41a1 (B); *parrdus*, 2a18 (T); *ocus*, 33a6 (T); *tusu*, 39b38 (T); *cindus*, 65b4 (T), etc. The horizontal stroke of the *et*-compendium points downwards to the left and flicks up at the tip in *ocus*, 20a5 (B); *ocus*, 4b10 (T), etc. The **æ** ligature consists of the e-component written as a ligature on the back stroke of the fully closed angular **a** in *sæthur*, 14a5 (B); *dænna*, 42a7 (B); *ro scaeil*, 1b18 (T); *an gæth*, 63a24 (T), etc. Biting frequently occurs between **d** and **o**,<sup>30</sup> e.g. *doib*, 81a8 (B), *do*, 82b1 (B), *do*, 33a3 (T),<sup>31</sup> and **d** and **e**, e.g. *de*, 90a1 (B).

On occasion, Ua Ríghbhardáin's main hand shows a change in aspect and variation in letterforms. For instance, he reverts to a less formal and cursive style in the marginal notes and quatrains.<sup>32</sup> Change in the appearance of script also occurs elsewhere as a result of writing on an uneven writing surface or a change in the nib of the pen, e.g. 45a7–21,<sup>33</sup> 81b7–35 and 82a1–3 (B). On occasion, a distinctive curved suprascript **i** (rounded to the point of resembling an **o**) is written, instead of the common straight suprascript **i** with a serif that Ua Ríghbhardáin uses elsewhere, for example, *crithnugud*, 18a1 (B); *fria*, 28a7 (T); *frisa*, 33a17 (T); *fri*, 51a2, 14 (×2), 15 (×2), etc. (T). A curved suprascript **i** of the *air*-compendium is also seen in Rennes Metropole MS 598, fol. 89ra10 (*tri*), another manuscript attributed to Ua Ríghbhardáin.<sup>34</sup> This feature is found in earlier manuscripts such as in the twelfth-century *Lebor na hUidre*, e.g. *fri*, 16a37.<sup>35</sup> Ua Ríghbhardáin also uses an angular horned **a** with a tall straight ascender, e.g. *fola*, 36a28, *anois*, 37a2, *móra*, 37a3, *anoraigh*, 37b5 (B). Some variations suggest an experimental style or perhaps embellishing tendency. For example, a curved capital **o**, 36a24, 37a5; 37a11; 37a15; 37a17; 37b4; 37b12; 37b17 (in B only); an unusual rounded **d** consisting of two pen-strokes, e.g. *umad*, 36a15, *gidhbhe*, 37b8 and *pennaid*, 37b8 (in B only); and the letter **g** with a curved top extending upwards to the left, *ceanglaigh*, 38b16 (B); *sluag*, 78 sup. (T).

Having examined the characteristics and variation displayed by Ua Ríghbhardáin's main hand, it is now possible to examine the 'peculiarities' in T's *The Monastery of Tallaght*, which were identified by Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120), and in *Apgitir Chrúbaid*, as was noted in the *RIA Cat.* p. 3362.

<sup>30</sup>For a description of the palaeographical feature of biting, see, for instance, Bischoff (1990: 130).

<sup>31</sup>This instance noted here is an exception. Biting of **d** and **o** is not generally found on pp. 33–44 and 46–52 in T because Ua Ríghbhardáin employs predominantly an angular-bowled **d** with a straight ascender. This variant letterform is discussed in more detail below.

<sup>32</sup>Note, for instance, the embellished ascenders of **d** in the marginal quatrains on pp. 16 inf., 17 inf., and the embellished left-leaning ascender of **d** and the elongated descender of the **g** in the marginal note on p. 78 sup. (T).

<sup>33</sup>The *RIA Cat.* suggests this is a different hand (*RIA Cat.* p. 3357).

<sup>34</sup>For a discussion of this Rennes manuscript and its scribe, see Palandri (2021: 139–42).

<sup>35</sup>For further examples, see Duncan (2015: 37).

(1) ‘an unusual form of *d*’

The first peculiarity that Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) highlighted was an unusual *d*. This letterform is in fact similar in morphology to the half-uncial *d* found in the Book of Leinster, discussed earlier. It consists of an angular bowl with a short straight ascender, topped with a wedged serif. However, sometimes the serif is forked or split, a contemporary feature influenced by continental script, e.g. *biaid*, p. 34a16 (seen in the first line in figure 1 below). The short ascender not only gives the letter an awkward appearance, but also makes it very similar in appearance to the letter *a*, to the modern reader at least. Ua Ríghbhardáin writes this letterform consistently throughout the copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght* as well as in the copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid*, rather than the prevalent round-backed uncial *d* or the trailing *d* with a curved and slanted ascender that he writes throughout the rest of B and T, as noted above, and which are the normal variants in contemporary Gaelic National minuscule. Ua Ríghbhardáin slips back to using the more common rounded *d* only on a rare occasion.<sup>36</sup>

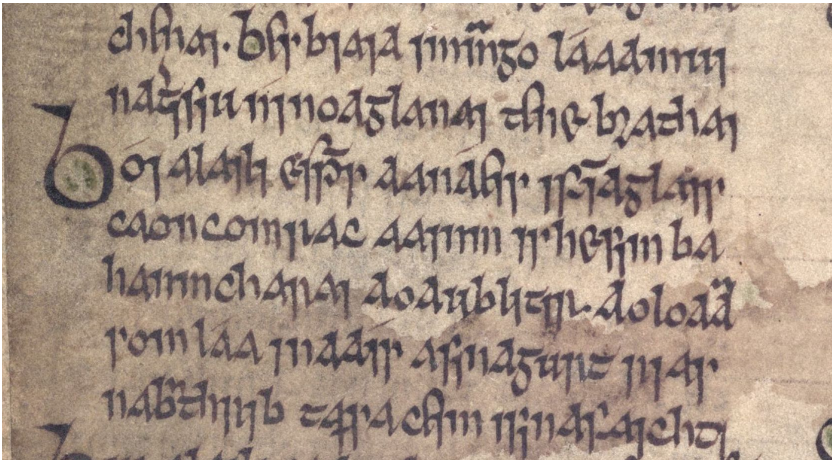


Fig. 1: RIA MS 3 B 23, p. 34a16–22.

Image courtesy of the Royal Irish Academy Library.

Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) suggested that Ua Ríghbhardáin probably copied this unusual *d* from the ‘archetype which he had before him’. If the suggestion is accepted that a scribe was influenced by the handwriting in his exemplar, such unusual letterforms might also be expected in the other copies transcribed from the same exemplar. Incomplete copies of *The Monastery of Tallaght* are found in three other manuscripts, viz., RIA MS 23 P 3 (cat. no. 1242; hereafter P), fol. 14v; London, British Library, MS Additional 30512

<sup>36</sup>For instance, *accaldim*, 33a15; *chuincid*, 33a28; *do-bered*, 40a24; *do*, 33a3 (as noted in n. 31), etc.

(hereafter A), fol. 33v and RIA MS C i 2 (cat. no. 1234; hereafter C), fol. 38r–v.<sup>37</sup> Uilliam Mac an Leagha compiled P and A in 1467. C is a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century composite manuscript possibly compiled at a bardic school.<sup>38</sup> The copies in A, C and P closely follow T, but also contain passages not found in T. Follett (2006: 106) argued that A, C and P are not likely copied from T and that all four copies derive from a shared exemplar.

The anecdote concerning the monk and the devil in *The Monastery of Tallaght* is found in T, pp. 43b27–44a32, and C, fol. 38ra2–38rb23, but not in P.<sup>39</sup> The half-uncial **d** is used predominantly throughout the entire copy in T, including the anecdote. In C, however, only one instance occurs, where it is used as the initial letter of a new sentence in *Da-choid*, fol. 38rb6. Otherwise, the rounded **d** variant is used. Interestingly, the anecdote in C is followed by an imperfect copy of a grammatical tract concerning the vowels and consonants of the Latin alphabet in which the scribe writes the half-uncial **d** more frequently.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, the use of this stylistic variant **d** in separate texts in C points to an idiosyncratic, and perhaps eclectic, scribal approach in using this letterform rather than the scribe having copied it from an exemplar.

The half-uncial **d** is also the preferred variant used by Ua Ríghbhardáin in his copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid*.<sup>41</sup> Another copy derived from the same exemplar is found in the composite manuscript Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 512, fols 37ra1–39ra12 (Ó Cuív 2001: 223–54). The Rawlinson scribe writes an angular half-uncial **d** but not with the same frequency as in Ua Ríghbhardáin's copy. These include, for instance, *discére*, 37rb24; *do-gni*, 37rb35; *daithfenn*, 37va17; *ced doda-ceil ced doda-faillsigader*, 37vb3 (see figure 2 below); *dond fírinde*, 37vb17; *do decmae*, 37vb17; *o duine*, 37vb37; *deuc*, 38ra1 (also in 3 B 23); *cride*, 38ra25 (but with round-backed **d** in *cride*, 38ra24); *ni benecndach*, 38rb34; *ding*, 38va16 (but with straight-backed **d** in *ding*, 38va15); *tiagdæ*, 38va31; *duine*, 38va36; *dendi*, 38va37; *dendi*, 38vb1; *do*, 38vb5 (here exceptionally executed with an open round bowl rather than an angular bowl elsewhere); *lind*, 38vb7 (but with round-backed **d** with a flat top in *lind*, 38vb6); *deid dus-ni*, 38vb9; *nad*, 38vb21; *isind í*, 39ra2; *dál*, 39ra9 (but with round-backed **d** with a flat top in *dal*, 39ra9; *dal*, 39ra10 (×2); *dal*, 39ra11. It is striking that the scribe conspicuously avoids the repeated use of the same letterform **d**. Instead he alternates variant letterforms when writing

<sup>37</sup>For a more detailed discussion of all the manuscript witnesses, see Follett (2006: 104–8). Copies are also found in UCD OFM MS A 31.10 and Rome, St. Isidore's College, MS W 21.4. However, these are later adaptations, dated to the seventeenth century, and are not relevant for the present discussion.

<sup>38</sup>RIA Cat. pp. 3414–18.

<sup>39</sup>Bergin (1905) edited and translated the anecdote in C. Bauer (2018) edited and translated both C and T. Bauer (2018: 9–15) argued that C and T are independent copies. C also contains an anecdote concerning the anchorite named Laisrén but this does not contain any instances of the stylistic half-uncial **d**.

<sup>40</sup>I have noted the following instances: *dia*, 39ra22; *Cred*, 39rb17; *Créd*, fol. 39va13 and *Cred*, fol. 39vb13 (written *plene*); *muid*, fol. 39vb24.

<sup>41</sup>Copies of *Apgitir Chrábaid* survive in eighteen manuscript witnesses, for which see Hull (1968: 45–8). According to Hull (1968: 55), the copies in T and British Library, MS Rawlinson B 512, fols 37r–39r, derive from the same exemplar.

this letter. The deliberate decision by the Rawlinson scribe to stylistically vary graphemes is perhaps indicative of a higher grade of minuscule.<sup>42</sup>

The instances in which half-uncial **d** correlate in the same position in both copies in T and Rawl. are minimal, with the most striking example shown in figures 2 and 3 below. This correlation might support the suggestion that these letterforms were transcribed directly from a shared exemplar. However, the Rawl. scribe also writes this stylistic angular straight-backed half-uncial **d** in other texts in this gathering, e.g. *bid*, 39ra19; *Co naemdetar*, 39rb11; *dilachtai*, 40rb4; *doennachta*, 40rb29.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, this half-uncial **d** is more likely due to this scribe's own graphic practice rather than being copied from the exemplar.

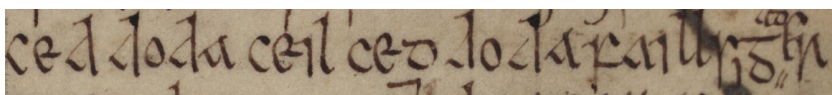


Fig. 2: Rawlinson B 512, fol. 37vb3.  
Image courtesy of the Bodleian Library.

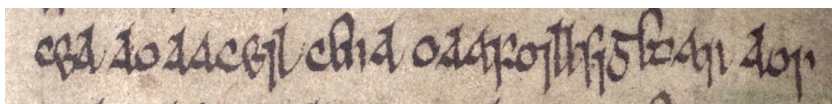


Fig. 3: RIA MS 3 B 23, p. 48b25.  
Image courtesy of the Royal Irish Academy Library.

Ua Ríghbhardáin writes this peculiar angular half-uncial **d** mostly in his copies of *The Monastery of Tallaght* and *Apgitir Chrábaid*, and rarely in any other main text in B and T. However, he writes this letterform (instead of the dominant round-backed **d** with a flat top which he uses widely elsewhere) in several marginalia in T.<sup>44</sup> He also uses this letterform in a scribal note in another of his manuscripts, namely, Rennes Metropole MS 598, fol. 69r inf.: *Dardáein*.<sup>45</sup> The fact that Ua Ríghbhardáin writes this letterform in his marginalia in T and elsewhere suggests that this variant belongs to his graphemic repertoire, rather than him having transcribed it from his 'archetype'.

## (2) 'an unusual form of m'

The second palaeographical 'peculiarity' that Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) identified in *The Monastery of Tallaght* was 'an unusual form of *m*' that resembles 'a capital H, having the cross-bar depressed in the middle'.

<sup>42</sup>The practice of using variant letterforms to denote a higher grade of minuscule is found in eleventh- and twelfth-century manuscripts (see discussion in Duncan 2010: 282–3).

<sup>43</sup>Best (1928: 397) also drew attention to a 'distinctive half-uncial d' in the copy *Betha Brigitte* (fols 31–5; esp. fols 31vb to 33vbz) which 'probably reflects the influence of an exemplar dating from the ninth century'. Cf. Ó Cuív (2001: 231). This letter is a cursive form and a crude, artificial imitation based on an earlier model of script, rather than copied from an exemplar.

<sup>44</sup>See, for instance, *ind*; *dixit*; *nabad*; *rád*; *nád*, *do*, p. 13 inf.; *dian*; *cid*; *níbad*; *do*, p. 15 inf.; *ernad cen fiadna*, 23a20; *cid*; *lebud*, p. 23 inf.

<sup>45</sup>I am grateful to Dr Palandri for bringing this example to my attention.

Ua Ríghbhardáin writes this character sporadically at the beginning of *The Monastery of Tallaght* and in two further instances later on in the text (I list all examples below). Ua Ríghbhardáin does not use this letterform in *Apgitir Chrábaid*. This letterform is in fact the artificial Greek character for **m** (discussed earlier in this article). Ua Ríghbhardáin writes this as a substitute for the regular Latin minuscule **m** in the following instances:<sup>46</sup>

- i) written plene in: *immo* saorad, 33a7; *immo* ar saorad, 33a9; *compert*, 33a11; *ammain*, 33a22 (but see *ammain*, 33a24, with minuscule **m** + *m*-stroke); *mada gnet*, 33a23; *mani*, 33a24; *canticim*, 38a25.
- ii) written as a suprascript **m** (analogous to an *m*-stroke) in *iarom*, 33a10; *accaldim*, 33a15 and in the emphasising particles *som*, 33a25; *som*, 33b7; *som*, 33b12; *som*, 33b28 and *som*, 33b34.
- iii) with subscript **i** and the *ur*-compendium in: *Muire*, 33a11; *Múiri*, 37b19 (but cf. *Múiri*, 37b15 written with a minuscule **m**).
- iv) with a *spiritus asper* in: *émh*, 33a4; *sessomh*, 33a5.
- v) with a *punctum delens* in: *láimh*, 46a29.

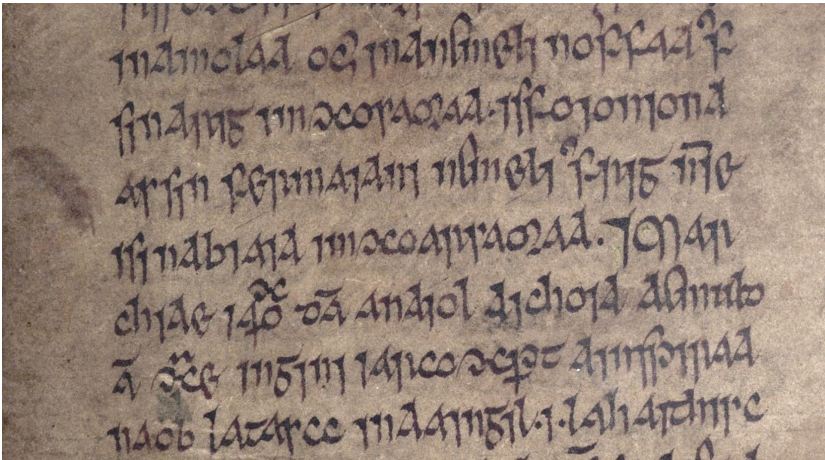


Fig. 4: RIA MS 3 B 23, p. 33a6–12.  
Image courtesy of the Royal Irish Academy Library.

(3) ‘a contraction, consisting of *t* with a wavy stroke over it ... for *tir* (*ter*) ... *irt* (*ert* ?)

Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) pointed out the peculiar use of ‘a contraction, consisting of a *t* with a wavy stroke over it’. Indeed, Ua Ríghbhardáin

<sup>46</sup>All instances of this ‘an unusual m’ are placed in bold when written in proximity to a minuscule **m**.

writes a flourished **t** and **g** which both have a distinctive curved or wavy top, with the cross-stroke ascending to the left at a 45-degree angle. This variant is written rather than the letterforms with a flat-topped horizontal stroke used elsewhere in B and T and typical of contemporary Gaelic National minuscule. Ua Ríghbhardáin begins writing these variant letterforms intermittently only on pp. 34 and 35 and with more frequency and confidence from p. 36 onwards, e.g. *trebi*, 34b26; *deisciurt*, 34b32; *ind tí*, 35b24; *abstanit*, 35b25. He employs them in *Apgitir Chrábaid* too, e.g. *homaldoit*, 47b2; *eirgi*, 48a12; *dochrait*, 50b2. This curve-topped **t** is also accompanied by a curved suspension-stroke, to accommodate the contour of the top-stroke of the letter, which can be expanded as *-er(-)*, *-ar(-)*, *-ir*, e.g. *at-bert*, 37a11; *espartain*, 38a5; *tara*, 39b28; *eitir*, 42b12, etc. Ua Ríghbhardáin also uses suprascript vowels above the curve-topped **t**, e.g., suprascript **a** in *trath*, 40a11; *atraig*, 44b12; suprascript **i** in *tri*, 44b14; suprascript **o** in *trossciud*, 44b28. An example of a wavy cross-stroke above a curve-topped **d** is found in *fercugud*, 39a13. These flourished variants seem to be influenced by the style similar to that in Lambeth Palace MS 1370 ('The Mac Durnan Gospels'), e.g. fols 2v, 3r and 9v. However, Ua Ríghbhardáin's deliberate use of this style in closely spaced lines gives this script a rather cramped aspect. Ua Ríghbhardáin reverts to writing the more common flat-topped **t** and **g** from p. 48 onwards again.

#### (4) 'Certain eccentricities of spelling'

Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) also noted the 'spelling' in *The Monastery of Tallaght*, which is written in a pseudo-archaising and hypercorrect orthography. Such deliberate orthographical policies are found in other late medieval Irish manuscripts such as British Library MS Egerton 88, British Library MS Harley 5280 and RIA MS 23 N 10.<sup>47</sup> In *The Monastery of Tallaght*, Ua Ríghbhardáin writes *ld* for *ll*, e.g. *muldach*, 33a10, *accaldim*, 33a15, *Maccaildecha*, 43b21, *to-lduid* (also with pseudo-archaic preverb *to* for *do-lluid*), 44b14; *nd* for *nn*, e.g. *muindtir*, 46b1, *andos*, 46a6 (for Lat. *annos*; the hypercorrect variant *anttos* is written in 46a8), *indní* (for *aní*), 37a10; *tt* for *d* in *fo-ceirtt*, 43b30; *p* for *b* in *as-pered*, 46a13. Internal vowels are also represented in a hypercorrect fashion, such as *úaoi* for the diphthong *úa* in *Cluaoin*, 44b4 and *Máol Ruaoin*, 38b34 and *áoe* for the diphthong *aí* or *oí* (or modernised *ao*) in *cáoectæ*, 44b14. Such spellings are also seen in the copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid*, for instance, *co ldéiri*, 47a24, *indna*, 47b9, etc. A particularly interesting feature in this copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght* is that Ua Ríghbhardáin sometimes employs the *et*-compendium to represent a **d** in hypercorrect spellings, e.g. *a lʔessai* (= *a ldessai*), 36b6 and *cailʔech* (= *caildech*), 34a23. This symbol typically stands for *et* (Ir. *ocus*) or for its Latin sound value *et* (later *e(al)idh*) and I am unaware of examples elsewhere of this compendium being used similarly to this instance.<sup>48</sup> This usage

<sup>47</sup>See the discussion by Liam Breatnach (2012).

<sup>48</sup>In the *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum* (RIA MS 23 O 48 a–b; cat. no. 476), dated to 1437–40, the *et*-compendium represents **e** and is written with a following **t/d** (Caoimhín Breatnach 2011: 132–3).

possibly reflects Ua Ríghbhardáin's own idiosyncratic use. Ua Ríghbhardáin's deliberate pseudo-archaising orthographical policy in *The Monastery of Tallaght* and *Apgitir Chrábaid* is not employed in other texts in B and T.

*An assistant scribe in T*

Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 120) suggested that pp. 33a1–47a21 and 51a24–53b2 were written by the same scribe as the rest of T, based on the colophon on p. 51. However, p. 45, which is also written in a calligraphic style, is worthy of attention. It has certain features that are similar to Ua Ríghbhardáin's main hand such as the angular **a**, the angular tall **e**, the *et*-compendium, the open bowl of the **p**, etc. However, some characteristics on this page are different and strongly suggest that this hand belongs to a different scribe. These characteristics include a fully closed eye of the **e** with the tongue extending beyond the letter to the right, e.g., *noeb*, 45a3; *cene*, 45a32; *duine*, 45b23; a rounded **d** with a flat horizontal top-stroke, e.g. *daine*, 45a2; *dano*, 45a16; *pende*, 45b12; the **g** is not fully closed and has an elongated tail, e.g. *riagail*, 45a11; *bargin*, 45b13; *go*, 45b20; an angular **r** with a pointed arch in *oenfer*, 45a25; *iarsin*, 45b6; the **æ** ligature consists of the **a**-component attached to the back of fully written out **e**, e.g. *caraed*, 45a20; *Fael*, 45b3. This hand also has two unique letterforms not employed by Ua Ríghbhardáin:

(a) a **t** with the top-stroke extending upwards at a straight angle to the left (thus resembling a **d** with a slanted ascender but without a fully closed bowl), e.g. *centai*, 45a10; *fitt*, 45a19; *tenid*, 45b7 (see figure 5 below) and *ro theiscset*, 45b14 (with an **e** ligatured to the slanting top-stroke analogous to the **de** ligature); with a *punctum delens* in *thri*, 45b2; with a *spiritus asper* in *thoirthib*, 45b23; with a suprascript **o** in *troscad*, 45b7; with a suspension-stroke extending out from the slanting top-stroke in *as-bert*, 45b16 (rather than the typical abbreviation of **b** + medial suspension-stroke).

(b) a unique **a** somewhat resembling the shape of **u** with a horizontal top, giving it a square appearance. The first stroke leans to the left and the descender frequently extends below the baseline, e.g. *riaglaib*, 45a18; *la*, 45b1 (see figure 5 below); *chomrac*, 45b10. This symbol also serves as the component for the *a(i)r*-compendium, e.g. *galair*, 45a28. This Square minuscule **a** is similar to that found, for instance, in the ninth-century Stowe Missal (RIA MS D ii 3), e.g. *anima*, fol. 48r7, *dignatus*, fol. 51r6.

The similarity in ductus and certain characteristic features, outlined above, led Gwynn and Purton (1911–20: 120) to believe that this page was also written by Ua Ríghbhardáin.<sup>49</sup> However, the distinctive stylistic features and different characteristics to Ua Ríghbhardáin also outlined above strongly suggest that

<sup>49</sup>Cf. Palandri's (2021: 143–6) suggestion that Ua Ríghbhardáin supposedly imitated relief hands.

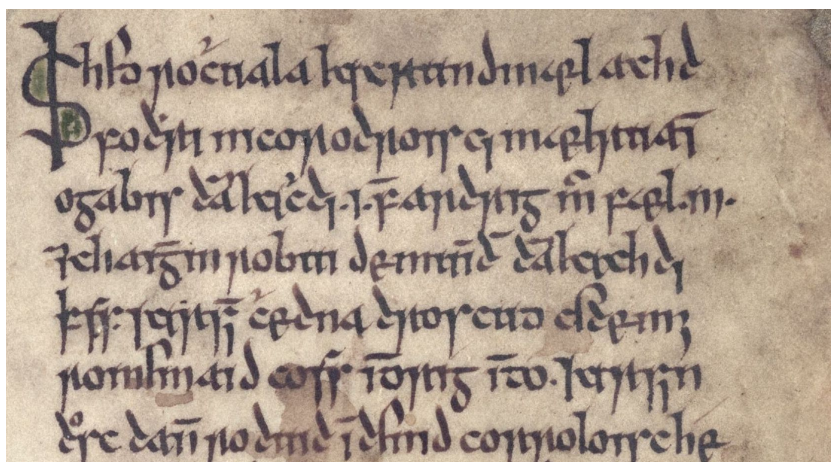


Fig. 5: RIA MS 3 B 23 p. 45b1–7.

*Image courtesy of the Royal Irish Academy Library.*

this hand belongs to a secondary scribe, who worked under the direction of Ua Ríghbhardáin.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP OF RIA MS 3 B 22 AND RIA MS 3 B 23

Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 110) suggested that B and T belonged originally to the same manuscript on account of the two volumes having been paginated concurrently from pp. 1–114 (B) to 115–96 (T).<sup>50</sup> Follett (2006: 102) noted several codicological similarities between B and T which suggested to him that these were originally two halves of one codex. Moreover, Palandri (2021: 136) remarked that since the two volumes are thematically similar and share no overlap of texts that ‘the two manuscripts were conceived as a single work’. Although this is a reasonable assumption, a re-evaluation of the evidence might point to another possibility.

A codicological examination (the details of which are provided in the appendix below) indicates that B and T consisted originally of loose gatherings. Differences in the varying quality of vellum, the ruling and pricking patterns as well as variation in ink across the gatherings suggest these were compiled at different times. The pagination in a modern hand runs across several lacunae in the two volumes. These gaps occurred when the volumes were bound and rebound, possibly more than once, causing the original quire tackets to be disturbed and some leaves to be loosened and lost.

T has six marginal quatrains and eight scribal notes written in the lower margins, viz. pp. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 81. The note on p. 81 is a citation of the first line from the poem *Marthain duit a chroch an Choimheadh*.<sup>51</sup> This is the only instance of Bardic verse written in Ua Ríghbhardáin’s hand in a

<sup>50</sup>See also *RIA Cat.* p. 3360.

<sup>51</sup>Ed. McKenna (1938: 124).

manuscript otherwise predominantly occupied with devotional texts. A scribal note on p. 27 alludes to Ua Ríghbhardáin using T for his own personal use: *ní tucais mo críde dam a libuir re cois caich ga breith uaim*, ‘thou hast not given me back my heart, O book, while everyone is being carried away from me’ (trs. Gwynn and Purton 1911–12: 119). Furthermore, Ua Ríghbhardáin writes on p. 44 that he copied the text for himself: *do scribus sin dom doig 7 inddí sceol so 7 ní hainfis acht dúa necar doniam indnos*, ‘I have written this on my own account, and these two tales; and it is not in ignorance, but to set them forth that we proceed in this way’.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, Ua Ríghbhardáin interpolates a copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid* into his copy of *The Monastery of Tallaght* in T.<sup>53</sup> He connects the two disparate sections of the latter text by means of a cross drawn at the end of the first section on p. 47 and another at the beginning of the second section on p. 51. At the end of *Apgitir Chrábaid*, Ua Ríghbhardáin writes the following colophon:

Is fó cech ní sluindess ind lebarsa dú tuicmis hé. 7 a comaldad  
Tadcc Ua Ríghbhardn qui scribsit 7 ní hanmfis tuc ind a.b.c.d. eider  
na riaglaib acht degla feccbalæ, p. 51a16–20 (T).

‘Good is everything that this book sets forth, if we understood it, and good it is to fulfil it: Tadg O’Riordan *qui scripsit*, and he placed the Alphabet among the Rules not in ignorance, but for fear of omitting it.’<sup>54</sup>

Ua Ríghbhardáin explains that he has copied the text knowingly in its unusual location for fear that he would omit it otherwise. Thus, he must have considered this text of significant importance to include it at this point. This note and that on p. 44, mentioned above, give the impression that Ua Ríghbhardáin compiled and organised material of interest for his own personal use.

B, on the other hand, has no scribal marginalia or marginal quatrains, apart from the two instructional notes in *Smaointe Beatha Chríost* and paratextual information in the Life of Mary to aid the reader.<sup>55</sup> This may suggest that B was intended for a patron rather than his own personal use.

B and T were possibly compiled at a Mac Aodhagáin school in lower Ormond, under the patronage of the Uí Chearbhaill (Follett 2006: 103). Little is known about the history or location of these two volumes following their compilation until several centuries later. At some point, B belonged to the Mac Aodhagáin family, with undated signatures bearing the Mac Aodhagáin surname found on pp. 6, 7, 40 and 68.<sup>56</sup> Signatures from this family are not found in T. The two volumes are only associated together for the first time in the late seventeenth century when they had fallen into the possession of the Uí

<sup>52</sup>Trans. Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 154).

<sup>53</sup>He expanded the writing area of a gathering when the length of the text(s) demanded it. For instance, in quire *iv* (T), Ua Ríghbhardáin inserted an additional bifolium to allow for the inclusion of the interpolated copy of *Apgitir Chrábaid*.

<sup>54</sup>Trans. Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 118).

<sup>55</sup>These notes are discussed in the appendix below.

<sup>56</sup>For these marginalia, see Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 115–16); *RIA Cat.* pp. 3357 and 3360.

Cheinnéidigh. The signatures from members of this family are found in both volumes, such as that of Philip Kennedy found on p. 47 (B), dated 1684, and on p. 58 (T), undated. In the eighteenth century, the two volumes belonged to the Uí Bhriain, after which they came into Charles Vallancey's possession. In 1813, the Royal Irish Academy Library bought B and T as part of Charles Vallancey's collection. According to a slip from the sale catalogue, they were sold as two volumes:

'1270 Two vols beautifully written on Vellum at least 600 years past. These are in excellent preservation and most elegant penmanship. Small folio.'<sup>57</sup>

The discrepancies outlined above suggest, I believe, that we should be more circumspect about the original relationship between the two volumes. The possibility that they were originally two separate manuscripts and only brought together in the late seventeenth century cannot be entirely ruled out.

#### CONCLUSION

There was a nascent historical awareness in the Irish manuscript tradition from the fifteenth century onwards, evidenced by pseudo-archaising language and orthography, as well as styles of decoration.<sup>58</sup> Such scribal practices reflect an underlying engagement with older manuscripts as well as a textual and visual appreciation of the past. This awareness is also witnessed calligraphically, whereby scribes could consciously step outside the contemporary conventions of writing to visually enhance the appearance of the text on the page for archaising, stylistic or ornamental purposes. Scribes modified their script by incorporating rare variant letterforms, based on those from earlier models of script or from alphabetic tables, into their contemporary repertoire. Such script modification displays a graphic self-consciousness as well as a scribal concern for the aesthetic appearance of the written medium.

This concern for the aesthetic of the page is found in two texts copied by Ua Ríghbhardáin, an industrious scribe who compiled numerous manuscripts in the late fifteenth century. Ua Ríghbhardáin wrote mostly in a regular low-grade minuscule script throughout B and T, the latter intended for his own personal use. However, his copies of *The Monastery of Tallaght* and *Apigitir Chrábaid*, written in a single gathering in T, are unique examples of his formal book hand, which consists of a consciously modified minuscule script. Ua Ríghbhardáin modified his script by incorporating rare letterforms, imitating those from earlier manuscripts, such as the half-uncial **d**, the letters **t** and **g** with pronounced curved top-strokes, and the unusual Greek 'M-siglum'. In modifying his script, he demonstrates an adept versatility and scribal agency

<sup>57</sup>RIA MS 3 B 22, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>See Palandri (2021: 156 n. 63) who draws attention to the use of pseudo-archaic language in the fifteenth-century *Irish Marco Polo*, *Stair Ercuil ocus a Bhás* and *Lorgaireacht an tSoidh-igh Naomhtha*. For references to discussions on the antiquarian decoration of late medieval Irish manuscripts, see n. 62 below.

over his own writing practice. Moreover, an assistant scribe wrote a single page of *The Monastery of Tallaght* under the guidance of Ua Ríghbhardáin. This scribe also wrote in a modified script, albeit employing different letterform variants such as a unique sloped **t** and a square-like **a** and *ar*-compendium. Such modification by both scribes points to a deliberate plan of writing these two copies in a higher-grade minuscule than the regular low-grade script used for the other texts throughout T. This calligraphic change in script as well as the different orthography might also suggest an archaising tendency. The instances of letterform variation in these copies, and other manuscripts mentioned in this article, also seem to point to a window of experimentation in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, this case-study has shown that late medieval Irish scribes had a nuanced approach to writing minuscule, which could be executed with degrees of variation and formality depending on the skill and training of the scribe.

#### APPENDIX I

This appendix includes a discussion of the codicology, decoration and scribal practice in B and T.<sup>60</sup> It also provides a tentative collation of the quire-structures and the textual arrangement in the two tables below.

The two volumes are comprised of vellum. The average dimension of B is 226 × 156 mm with 35 lines on average per page (57 leaves), whereas T is approximately 227 × 155 mm and has 33 lines per page (41 leaves). Hair and flesh sides cannot typically be distinguished because the vellum was rubbed extensively with pumice during the preparation of the material, leaving no trace of hair follicles. Although the vellum in both volumes is generally of good quality, certain leaves are quite thin, possibly due to excessive rubbing. This has led to subsequent deterioration of the material, such as that seen on pp. 29/30 (T). Original tears and holes in the vellum, however, were repaired with thread of varying colours prior to writing. For example, orange thread is used on p. 6 (T), red thread on pp. 17 and 23 (T) and overlapping blue and yellow threads on p. 109 (B).

The fact that the leaves in B and T are no longer conjoined complicates any attempt to reconstruct the quire-structures and their original arrangement. However, the discolouration or staining of certain leaves, the thickness of the vellum, as well as pricking and ruling patterns provides helpful codicological clues that can help establish the quire-structures. Moreover, the original arrangement of some of the gatherings can be ascertained when a text is written continuously across two gatherings.<sup>61</sup> The results of this examination are given in Tables A1

<sup>59</sup>Cf. n. 9 above.

<sup>60</sup>For cursory codicological observations on B, see *RIA Cat.* p. 3357, and on T, see *RIA Cat.* pp. 3360–1.

<sup>61</sup>Unfortunately, there are no quire signatures in B and T which might help establish the arrangement further. Ua Ríghbhardáin employs quire signatures in some of his other manuscripts. In TCD MS H 2.12, no. 2 (1303), he writes ‘r’ at the bottom of fol. 1r, with the letter ‘s’ at the bottom of fol. 10v, marking the end of a gathering of five bifolia. This should have been followed by a

and A2 below. The codicological analysis shows that Ua Ríghbhardáin generally worked with gatherings of four or five bifolia, which he folded, pricked and ruled individually. The variation in ink colour, changing from black to brown across various gatherings, the different quality of vellum, and the varying dimensions of the text-blocks in certain gatherings (especially in T) suggests that they were compiled at different times. Discoloured outer leaves of gatherings point to the gatherings having been kept loose rather than bound together between boards.

B and T are decorated with ornately executed initials in the antiquarian artistic style popular in late medieval manuscripts produced in the post-Norman era.<sup>62</sup> Texts throughout the two volumes typically begin with ornate ‘wire-type’ initials (Henry 1960: 33; Henry and Marsh-Micheli 1962: 105; 1987: 783). These are executed with a single wire, which was the preferred style in later manuscripts (Ralph 2014: 10), e.g., the **P** on p. 25 (B). Some have a double-wire in imitation of those ‘wire-type’ initials found in eleventh- and twelfth-century manuscripts (Ralph 2014: 10–11), e.g., the **P** on p. 13 (T) and the **H** on p. 30 (T). An example of a knotted ‘wire-type’ initial is found on p. 75 (B), although most initials are unknotted. The remains of an ornate double ‘wire-type’ initial can be seen on p. 1 (B). This was erased at a later stage in the manuscript’s history, together with the main text on the page.

The ornate initials do not generally contain zoomorphic figures. A rudimentary zoomorphic head, serving as a design guide, is drawn in light ink in the upper margin on p. 53 (T), beside a large ornate **L**. The decoration in B and T is far less detailed in comparison to the more elaborate and accomplished zoomorphic ‘wire-type’ initials witnessed throughout Ua Ríghbhardáin’s other manuscripts.<sup>63</sup> This may suggest that the limner, possibly the scribe himself, was still a relatively young artist-scribe who had not yet fully grasped the skill of drawing zoomorphic figures when he compiled these two volumes.<sup>64</sup>

These initials and smaller *litterae notabiliores* are frequently coloured in green, red or yellow pigment. Some are decorated with a mosaic pattern. For instance, the fully decorated and striking initial **P** on p. 13 (T) marks the beginning of a new text as well as a new quire. The centre of the letter’s bowl is

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gathering marked ‘s’, but this is now missing. Following on from this, Ua Ríghbhardáin writes ‘t’ at the bottom of fol. 11r (TCD MS H 2.12, no. 9 (1309), the beginning of a new gathering. There is no signature at the end of that gathering. However, he writes ‘x’ on p. 29, a bifolium. These quire signatures demonstrate that the fragments in TCD MS H 2.12, no. 2 (1303) and TCD MS H 2.12, no. 9 (1309) formerly belonged together and were part of a much larger codex of which now only two gatherings and a bifolium survive.

<sup>62</sup>On antiquarian artistic practices in late medieval Irish manuscripts, see Hourihane (2007); Ralph (2014); O’Neill (2017: 294–301).

<sup>63</sup>Note, for instance, the **R** in Rennes Bibliothèque, MS 598, fol. 4r; the **D** in RIA MS 24 P 1, p. 17a; the **L** in RIA MS 24 P 1, p. 60b; the **f** in RIA MS 23 P 3, fol. 11v; the **s** in RIA MS 23 P 3, fol. 15v.

<sup>64</sup>See also Palandri (2020: 135) for a similar conclusion. Limners, or scribe-artists, rarely signed their work in medieval Irish manuscripts. But Palandri (2020: 148–9) was likely correct when he suggested that Ua Ríghbhardáin was the limner of all his manuscripts on account of the ‘consistent similarities between the illuminations’.

coloured in a mosaic pattern with green and red. But many initials are only partially coloured or left entirely without colour, e.g. **R** and **F** on pp. 9 and 11 (B), respectively, and **H** on p. 30 (T). The lightly drawn design in the bowls of these letters shows the intention was to colour them in a mosaic style at a later point but that this was not completed.

Ua Ríghbhardáin is generally a careful scribe. However, he does commit minor slips on occasion.<sup>65</sup> For example, he copies *fo* rather than the Latin abbreviation for *secundo* (which consists of an *s* with stroke through the descender + suprascript *o*) on p. 44a26 (B).<sup>66</sup> Despite such errors, the scribe is attentive and frequently goes back over his work to correct mechanical copying errors, adding omitted text interlineally or in the margins and using critical symbols to note the correct placement of the added text. Ua Ríghbhardáin uses marginal annotations and notes to connect portions of texts together. He draws a large cross in the margin of p. 97, the acephalous beginning of the copy of *Smaointe Beatha Chríost*. Another cross is placed beside the concluding section of the text, which is written on a slip of vellum, namely p. 53.<sup>67</sup> The scribe writes [*feuch*] in *cros ele* ‘Look at the other cross’ beside this cross, referring the reader to the main portion of text, and at the bottom of the page, he writes *Ar dered an caiderne ticc an beccán so tuas* ‘This little thing above comes at the end of the tract’.<sup>68</sup> A cross in the margin in B highlights the phrase *do-faidh a spirad an tan sin* ‘his spirit went then’ on p. 66b17–18. A large cross is also found in the margin in another copy in RIA MS 24 P 1, also compiled by Ua Ríghbhardáin, drawing attention to the same phrase *do-faidh a spirad an tan sin*, p. 4a13–14. Ua Ríghbhardáin writes the names of a number of biblical figures in the margins beside the copy of the Life of Mary in B, identifying the location of the names in the text.<sup>69</sup> These are also found in the margins of another copy of this text in RIA MS 24 P 1, p. 9. The shared similarities between the two manuscripts supports Palandri’s (2021: 151 n. 50) assertion that Ua Ríghbhardáin may have been influenced by the *mise-en-page* of his exemplar.

In the tables, I follow the textual arrangement provided by Palandri (2021: 150–1), who identified additional chasms in B and T that are not noted in the *RIA Cat*. Any digression from Palandri’s arrangement is indicated in the footnotes.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. the remarks by Binchy (1962: 48) who describes Ua Ríghbhardáin as a careless scribe who had ‘a very imperfect understanding of the text’, referring to the copy of the Old Irish table of penitential commutations on pp. 13a1–16a24.

<sup>66</sup>Cf. the correct manuscript reading preserved in RIA MS C I 2, fol. 38 (Bauer 2018: 7).

<sup>67</sup>For the correct arrangement of these leaves, see Table A1 below.

<sup>68</sup>For the meaning ‘tract, subject-matter’, rather than ‘quaternion’, see *eDIL* s.v. *caidirne*. *Smaointe Beatha Chríost* is written across two gatherings at least (see the collation below).

<sup>69</sup>For instance, in the margins on p. 73, Ua Ríghbhardáin wrote *Adam*, *Naei*, [A]praham; *Ysac*; *Iacob*; *Moysei*, etc. On p. 74, he wrote *trinitas*, *filius*, and *spiritus sanctus*. *Spiritus* is abbreviated as *sṗc* in the manuscript, rather than the more common *sṗs*. The former abbreviation is based in analogy with *xṗc* ‘Christus’ and *iḥc* ‘Iesus’ (see Traube 1907: 166; Bains 1936: 7).

| Gathering                         | Page                 | Text                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i <sup>3</sup> (lacking leaves)   | 1–12 <sup>70</sup>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homily on Passion and Death of Christ, pp. 1a1–5b12</li> <li>• Homily on the Virgin Mary, p. 5b13–6bz (defect.)</li> <li>• Homily on Mary, pp. 7a1–9b20 (aceph.)</li> <li>• Homily on Christian Government, pp. 9b21–11az</li> <li>• Homily on the Love of God, pp. 11b1–12bz (defect.)</li> </ul> |
| ii <sup>5</sup>                   | 13–32                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homily on Loving God, pp. 13a1–17a25</li> <li>• Homily on the Punishment due to Sin, pp. 17a26–25a22</li> <li>• Homily on Peace of Mind, pp. 30b23–32bz</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                 |
| iii <sup>3</sup> (lacking leaves) | 33–38 <sup>71</sup>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appeal to the Sinner, pp. 33a1–38a26 (aceph.)</li> <li>• Homily on Repentance, pp. 38a27–bz (defect.)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| iv <sup>4</sup>                   | 39–52 <sup>72</sup>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do Geineamain Muiri</i>, pp. 39a1–52a18 (aceph.)</li> <li>• Litany on Blessed Virgin, p. 52a19–bz.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| v <sup>5</sup>                    | 55–74 <sup>73</sup>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An extract from <i>Smaointe Beatha Chríost</i>, pp. 55a1–55az.<sup>74</sup></li> <li>• Life of Mary, pp. 55b1–74bz.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| vi <sup>5</sup> (chasm after 112) | 97–114 <sup>75</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Smaointe Beatha Chríost</i> (aceph.).</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

Table A1: tentative collation of B (continues)

<sup>70</sup>Pp. 1 and 12, the outer leaves of this gathering, are both discoloured. The text on p. 1 is entirely erased. At least one leaf is missing between pp. 6 and 7. The final text in the gathering ends incomplete on p. 12. Either the copy in the exemplar was incomplete or the text in this manuscript continued across onto a different gathering, leaves of which are now lost.

<sup>71</sup>This gathering is fragmentary. The first text begins acephalous and the last text ends incomplete. This suggests that the surviving leaves are the inner part of a gathering and that an outer bifolium has been lost. Page 38 is discoloured, and the leaves are ruled with plummet.

<sup>72</sup>This gathering consists of four bifolia (220 × 150 mm). Pp. 39 and 52, the outer leaves of the gathering, are discoloured. The gathering is ruled with plummet. There are no pricking marks in the margins for the horizontal lines. Bounding lines are drawn without guiding pricking marks in the upper and lower margins. The copy of *Do Geineamain Muiri* begins acephalous on p. 39, but the Litany ends complete on p. 52. This suggests that the first text probably began on a preceding gathering. The *litterae notabiliores* are coloured in yellow.

<sup>73</sup>This gathering consists of five bifolia (225 × 145 mm). Pp. 55 and 74, the outer leaves of the gathering, are discoloured. There are regularly spaced pricking marks in the inner and outer margins of each leaf. These pricking marks appear faint on p. 74, suggesting that the ruling occurred after the leaves were folded. The *litterae notabiliores* are also coloured in yellow.

<sup>74</sup>Palandri (2021: 151) placed this extract into the running sequence of *Smaointe Beatha Chríost*, but this misconstrues the collation of the manuscript. The text from *Smaointe Beatha Chríost* on p. 55a is an extract corresponding to ll. 5989–6011 of the edition (Ó Maonaigh 1944: 217–18). Ua Ríghbhardáin interpolated this extract here disrupting the sequence of the three texts concerning Mary, reasons for which are not immediately apparent to me.

<sup>75</sup>This is a gathering of 5 bifolia (225 × 147 mm). The text begins acephalous and ends defective and is now bound out of order in the manuscript. The correct order is pp. 97–112, 113–114, 77–96, 75, 76, 53 (Ó Maonaigh 1944: xxxi; *RIA Cat.* p. 3359–60). The first page in the gathering is

| Gathering        | Page                | Text                                                   |
|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| vii <sup>5</sup> | 77–96 <sup>76</sup> | • <i>Smaointe Beatha Chríost</i> , cont.               |
| singleton        | 75–6                | • <i>Smaointe Beatha Chríost</i> , cont.               |
| vellum slip      | 53                  | • <i>Smaointe Beatha Chríost</i> , cont., ends at 53z. |

Table A1: tentative collation of B.

| Gathering                                     | Page                | Text                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i <sup>3</sup> (*lacking bifolium after p. 6) | 1–12 <sup>77</sup>  | • Homily on the Eight Arrows of Sin, pp. 1–7a25 (a chasm foll. p. 6).<br>• Homily on Almsgiving, pp. 7a26–12bz. |
| ii <sup>4</sup>                               | 13–28 <sup>78</sup> | • Treatise on the penitential commutations, pp. 13a1–16a24.<br>• <i>De Luxoria</i> , pp. 16a25–28az.            |

Table A2: tentative collation of T (continues)

discoloured, i.e. p. 97. Page 114 is heavily stained. Each leaf has regular pricking patterns in the left and right margins. There are faint pricking marks in the outer margin of pp. 113/114 which follow the same pattern as those on pp. 97–112, thereby indicating that this singleton belonged to this gathering. Regular pricking marks for inner bounding lines are also found on the top and bottom margin of each leaf. Ruling is with plummet. The *litterae notabiliores* are coloured in red, with some in yellow.

<sup>76</sup>This is a gathering of 5 bifolia (215 × 150 mm). There is discolouration on pp. 77 and 96. Ruling is by ink and there are no visible pricking marks in margin. Although some *litterae notabiliores* and line dividers are coloured in red, most are left uncoloured.

<sup>77</sup>This gathering consists of six leaves. Pp. 1 and 12, the outer leaves of the gathering, are discoloured. The vellum in this gathering is thinner than that used in the rest of this volume. The leaves are highly polished making it difficult to differentiate hair from flesh side. The leaves were pricked with an awl and ruled after they were folded and placed together in a gathering. The same pricking pattern is found on the outer margin of pp. 1 through to 12. Two pricking marks at the top and bottom of each leaf were used to mark the inner bounding lines. The outer and inner bounding lines, drawn in a light brown ink are still visible, for instance, on p. 10. A chasm following p. 6 suggests the innermost bifolium of the gathering is missing. I suggest a bifolium is missing here rather than a singleton because the latter is usually inserted between the first and second bifolium or between the third and fourth bifolium in a quaternion to keep it in place. But the use of a singleton cannot be ruled out entirely either.

<sup>78</sup>The second gathering in T is a quaternion. Although there are no pricking marks in the outer margins, there are two regularly placed pricking marks at the top of each page used to guide the ruling of the inner bounding lines. This gathering was ruled with plummet (see, for example, the lines still visible on p. 15). The text block is slightly thinner in dimension in this gathering than in the other gatherings. The scribe leaves the second column blank on p. 28, perhaps with the intention of beginning the next text on a new gathering.

| Gathering                                         | Page                | Text                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| iii <sup>1</sup> (*lacking outer & inner bifolia) | 29–32 <sup>79</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homily on the Passion, p. 29a1–b21 (aceph.).</li><li>• <i>Bo beres buar o [rigai]b</i>, p. 29b22–bz.<sup>80</sup></li><li>• <i>Speculum Peccatoris</i>, pp. 30a1 (chasm foll. 30bz)–32bz (defect.).</li></ul> |
| iv <sup>5</sup>                                   | 33–52 <sup>81</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monastery of Tallaght, pp. 33a1–47a21; 51a24–53bz.</li><li>• <i>Apgitir Chrábaid</i>, pp. 47a22–51a20 (interpolated).</li></ul>                                                                               |
| v <sup>3+1</sup> (*lacking inner folio)           | 53–66 <sup>82</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homily on Poverty, pp. 53a1–57a23.</li><li>• Homily on Mercy, pp. 57a24–58bz (defect.).</li><li>• Homily on Sin, pp. 59a1–65az.</li><li>• Homily on the Ten Commandments, pp. 65b1–66bz.</li></ul>            |
| vi <sup>4</sup>                                   | 67–82 <sup>83</sup> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Ten Commandments, cont. pp. 67a1–80a14.</li><li>• Homily beg. with the story of the priest Mathias and his resistance to idolatry, pp. 80a15–82bz (defect.).</li></ul>                                    |

Table A2: tentative collation of T.

ABBREVIATION

*RIA Cat.* T. F. O’Rahilly, K. Mulchrone, M. E. Byrne, J. H. Delargy, E. FitzPatrick, L. Duncan, W. Wulf, G. Murphy, A. I. Pearson and T. Ó Concheanainn, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy* (Dublin, 1926–70).

<sup>79</sup>The third gathering consists of two bifolia only. Given that the first text begins acephalous and the second text ends imperfect, it is probable that an outer bifolium at the very least has been lost. A chasm following p. 30 indicates further loss. The texts in this gathering are written in a brownish ink, differing to the black ink used in the first two gatherings.

<sup>80</sup>This poem serves as filler material. According to Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 117), a different scribe writes this text. However, the angular **a** (e.g. *buar*) and the letter **g** (e.g. *failigh*) are similar in style to those in Ua Ríghbhardáin’s hand. A different hand repeats the initial line of the first quatrain beneath the text. The poem is noted in *RIA Cat.* p. 3362 and printed in Gwynn and Purton (1911–12: 117) but omitted in Palandri (2021: 151). Another poorly legible copy is found in King’s Inns, MS 12, fol. 8v *i*.

<sup>81</sup>The fourth gathering is a quinion. Texts are written in black ink and ruled with plummet, as seen for example, on p. 42.

<sup>82</sup>The fifth gathering is a quaternion. The slight discolouring on p. 66 marks the end of the gathering. There is a chasm following p. 58. Texts are written in brown ink and ruled with plummet (see pp. 54 and 55, for instance).

<sup>83</sup>The final gathering consists of pp. 67 to 82. Given that the text ends imperfectly at the end of the gathering on p. 82, it is possible that the text continued onto a following gathering, which is now lost. However, it cannot be ruled out either that Ua Ríghbhardáin was copying from an exemplar which lacked the ending.

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# WILLIAM WORCESTRE AND THE LEGENDARY HISTORY OF ARMORICA IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

The late fifteenth-century *Itineraries* of William Worcestre preserve a brief account of the legendary history of Brittany. Although the fragment goes back ultimately to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*, it differs from that in several respects. The exact match to the narrative is found in another fifteenth-century document, the so-called Canterbury Roll (previously known as the 'Maude Roll'). The paper shows that this particular variant of the history of the conquest of Armorica was in some circulation in late medieval England, and provides some suggestions regarding the interrelation of the texts containing it.

THE MIGRATION FROM the British mainland in the fifth to the seventh centuries that resulted in the Armorican peninsula of north-western Gaul being named "Brittany" is one of the most obscure and tantalizing phenomena of Late Antique or early medieval history'; so stated Caroline Brett in her fundamental article published in 2011 where she discussed various types of evidence and counter-evidence for this movement, or, rather, movements, across the Channel.<sup>2</sup> More discussions have followed it in the last decade,<sup>3</sup> and all of them, past and present, have paid due attention to fragments of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* that relate to the mythical conquest of Armorica by Maximian, king of the Britons. In this paper I would like to draw attention to the textual evidence found in a fifteenth century manuscript, no doubt based on Geoffrey's narrative, which in some respects deviates from it.

The fragment to be discussed here is found in the *Itineraries* of William Worcestre, which are based on the antiquary's own travels in 1477–80.<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup>The article is based on my paper delivered at the *Fifteenth Century Conference: Disruption* (University of Bristol, 2–4 September 2021) and I am grateful to Professor Helen Fulton for her invitation to share my views at this important event and the audience for the comments. The underlying research was carried out as part of RSF project No. 17-18-01624. I am grateful to Dr Ben Guy (Cambridge) for commenting on the earlier version of the paper and to the anonymous reviewer of it for helpful suggestions. The usual disclaimers apply.

<sup>2</sup>Caroline Brett, 'Soldiers, saints, and states? The Breton migrations revisited', *CMCS* 61 (2011), 1–56, at 1. See now her *Brittany and the Atlantic Archipelago, 450–1200* (Cambridge, 2021).

<sup>3</sup>See particularly Bernard Merdrignac, *D'une Bretagne à l'autre. Les migrations bretonnes entre histoire et légendes* (Rennes, 2012); Ben Guy, 'The Breton migration: a new synthesis', *ZCP* 61 (2014), 101–56; Barry Cunliffe, *Bretons and Britons: The Fight for Identity* (Oxford, 2021).

<sup>4</sup>For William Worcestre see T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London, 1950), 18–33 and K. B. McFarlane, 'William Worcester: a preliminary survey', in J. Conway Davies (ed.), *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson* (Oxford, 1957), 196–221, reprinted in K. B. McFarlane, *England*

text is found in Cambridge, Corpus Christi MS 210, and was edited for the first time as early as 1778 by James Nasmyth,<sup>5</sup> while the modern edition of the text with a parallel English translation was published by John H. Harvey in 1969.<sup>6</sup> The *Itineraries* contain entries of different genres, including personal observations that are of particular importance for the history of late mediaeval Bristol,<sup>7</sup> records of interviews with his co-travellers, copies of various texts that William made on his journey, and receipts that he received at that time. In the words of John Cramsie:

We know them as *Itineraries*, but Worcestre's notebooks are just that, eclectic and fragmentary aids to memory written on 'folded sheets of paper' carried with him on his travels: mileages and distances, lists of river crossings and castles, a day-by-day diary, the measurements and adornments of churches, lists of saints and noble genealogies, tomb epitaphs, 'information' from local denizens, and extracts from authorities like Gildas or Gerald of Wales.<sup>8</sup>

The language of the document is predominantly Latin, although Middle English and Medieval French insertions also occur, and linguistic code-switching in a sentence is regularly observed.<sup>9</sup> The passage on the legendary history of the conquest of Armorica is reproduced below from Harvey's edition and with his translation (*IWW* 212–13; sub-division of the text is mine):

*Britannia mynor*

Maximianus Rex Britonum  
Armoricum regnum que nunc  
Britannia minor dicitur

Maximian King of Britons conquered  
the realm of Armorica, which is now  
called Little Britain [Britany (sic! –  
A. F.)],

*in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1981), 199–224. More recently Worcestre's life and work have been discussed by a number of academics, cf. Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II: c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), 308–41 or Daniel Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading and English Literature* (Oxford, 2007), 93–125.

<sup>5</sup>James Nasmyth (ed.), *Itineraria Symonis Simeonis et Willelmi de Worcestre* (Cambridge, 1778), 77–378.

<sup>6</sup>J. H. Harvey, *William Worcestre: Itineraries* (Oxford, 1969), henceforward *IWW*. The manuscript is available at <https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/mp810zm2076>.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. J. Dallaway, *Antiquities of Bristow in the Middle Centuries; Including the Topography by William Wyrcestre, and the Life of William Canynges* (Bristol, 1834) or Frances Neale, *William Worcestre: The Topography of Medieval Bristol* (Bristol, 2000).

<sup>8</sup>John Cramsie, *British Travellers and the Encounter with Britain, 1450–1700* (Rochester, NY, 2015), 36.

<sup>9</sup>On that see Catherine Nall, Daniel Wakelin, 'Le déclin du multilinguisme dans *The Boke of Noblesse* et son Codicille de William Worcestre', *Médiévales* 68 (2015), 73–92 and most recently – regarding the *Itineraries* – Alexander Falileyev, 'In provincia Russlond: fragments on Novgorod in a XV c. manuscript', *Indoevropskojeazykoznaniye i klassičeskaja filologija* 24 (2020), 756–67 (in Russian, with English summary) and idem, 'Notes on the *Itineraries* by William Worcestre', *Philological Quarterly* 101 (2022), 189–210.

*Britannia mynor*


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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| conquisiuit ducem eius Imbaldum<br>cum .xv. milia armatorum interemit<br>quod quidem regnum Cornato nepoti<br>Octauij Regis donauit                                                                                                                                      | killed its duke Imbald with 15,000<br>armed men, and gave the kingdom to<br>Cornatus [Conan], nephew of King<br>Octavius.                                                                                                                                             |
| repleuitque jstam Britanniam<br>mynorem centum milibus plebanorum<br>triginta milites quos in Britannia<br>collegerat vndecim .xj. milia<br>puellarum nobilium et sexaginta milia<br>ex jnfima [repeated] gente natarum de<br>Britannia euectarum in mari<br>periclitata | He likewise sent into this Britain the<br>Less 100,000 commoners, thirty<br>[thousand] knights whom he had<br>brought together in Britain, 11,000<br>noble maidens, and 60,000 of the<br>lowest classes born in Britain and<br>shipped across the dangers of the sea. |
| sicut fuit filius Leonini auunculi<br>Constantini demum Rome interfectus.                                                                                                                                                                                                | He was the son of Leoninus uncle of<br>Constantine and was eventually killed<br>in Rome.                                                                                                                                                                              |

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J. Harvey aptly traced this section, which is entitled *Britannia mynor* in the *Itineraries* and glossed in the manuscript in Robert Talbot's hand as *Peti Britayn*, to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (henceforward *HRB*).<sup>10</sup> He referred to *HRB* V.xii as a correspondence to the first section of the text, and to *HRB* V.xiv as matching the second, admitting that the final part does not appear in Geoffrey's text at all (*IWW* 212, nn. 1–3).<sup>11</sup> It is noteworthy that the first part of Worcestre's *Britannia mynor*, in fact one sentence, corresponds to a score of lines in Michael D. Reeve's edition of *HRB*, which also contain direct speech.<sup>12</sup> The second section of Worcestre's narrative finds a distant match in *HRB* another twenty lines below. Moreover, this passage of *HRB* is continued by the phrase *Cumque omnia perpetrasset, distribuit eos per uniuersas*

<sup>10</sup>For this text, also labelled as *De Gestis Britonum*, see most recently various contributions to Joshua Byron Smith and Georgia Henley (eds), *A Companion to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (Leiden, 2020), with abundant references.

<sup>11</sup>On Geoffrey's narrative regarding the colonization of Brittany associated with Maximian (Maxim) in its various aspects see Brynley F. Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic* (Dublin, 2005), xliii–lxi; Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth* (Cardiff, 2010), 54–66; Brett, 'Soldiers, saints, and states', 15; Ben Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus: on the appropriation of Roman history in medieval Wales, 800–1250', *Journal of Medieval History* 44 (2018), 381–405, at 394–7; Jane Cartwright, *Hystoria Gweryddon yr Almaen: The Middle Welsh Life of St Ursula and the 11,000 virgins* (London, 2020), 25–6. The cited works contain abundant further references.

<sup>12</sup>For the sentence in various Vulgate manuscripts of *Historia* see Julia C. Crick, *The Historia regum Britannie of Geoffrey of Monmouth, IV. Dissemination and Reception in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1991), 104 and for a variant version cf. already Jacob Hammer, *Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia Regum Britanniae: A Variant Version Edited from Manuscripts* (Cambridge, 1951), 96–7. The First Variant Version has been re-edited recently: D. W. Burchmore, *The History of the Kings of Britain: The First Variant Version* (Cambridge, 2019). The quotations and translations below are from Michael D. Reeve (ed.) and Neil Wright (trans.), *Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain* (Woodbridge, 2007) (henceforward *GM*), 105–7.

*Armorici regni nationes fecitque alteram Britanniam et eam Conano Meriadoco donauit* ‘once all this was organised, he spread them throughout all the regions of Armorica, making it a second Britain, which he presented to Conanus Meriadocus’, the echo of which we find in the first sentence of the description of conquest of *Britannia mynor* by Worcestre. This will be examined in detail below alongside the last phrase in Worcestre’s narrative, *sicut fuit filius Leonini avunculi Constantini demum Rome interfectus* ‘he was the son of Leoninus uncle of Constantine and was eventually killed at Rome’, for which Harvey did not find correspondences in *Historia*. Worcestre’s account turns Geoffrey’s *Conanus* into *Cornatus*, and supplies Maximian with a different pedigree. At face value, we witness here a certain break with the traditional account of the legendary conquest of Brittany as depicted by Geoffrey of Monmouth: it is not only highly abridged and utterly schematic, but also shows certain deviations from the canonical texts of *HRB*.

Now, what are the possibilities for dealing with this account of the conquest of Armorica in Worcestre’s *Itinaries*? Several options offer themselves almost instantly. Firstly, one may suspect that this passage in the *Itinaries* is indeed based on Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *HRB*, but edited by Worcestre, who also himself composed some details and added to the text its final section. This scenario, however, is absolutely improbable as Worcestre is known to be a rather typical antiquary who provided reliable copies of documents that he saw in various places.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, J. Harvey observed (*IWW* xv) that Worcestre ‘developed to a high degree the faculty of automatic copying: i.e. copying of what he saw (or thought he saw), not what he understood’; therefore, that approach should be dismissed. Moreover, Worcestre’s text itself shows conspicuously that it is a copy: it repeats the word *jnfima* and obviously omits part of the numeral meaning ‘thousand’ from the number of knights whom Maximian sent to Armorica.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the antiquary himself testified that he copied his *Britannia mynor* from the chronicle(s) in the book of Master Brewster (*cronice de libro Magistri Brewster*, *IWW* 210) and mentions neither Geoffrey’s name nor the title of his by then classical text. Master Brewster, whose book Worcestre allegedly used, is known to be associated with Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, and this source of information has been noted in Worcestre scholarship.<sup>15</sup> While the life and exploits of the thirteenth earl of Warwick have been the subject of numerous academic articles,<sup>16</sup> Master

<sup>13</sup>On Worcestre as antiquary see Kendrick, *British antiquity*, 18–33, Stuart Piggott, *Ruins in a Landscape: Essays in Antiquarianism* (Edinburgh, 1976), 6 et passim, or Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II*, 308–41.

<sup>14</sup>On similar manipulations of numbers in copies of late medieval texts see most recently Alexander Falileyev, ‘The Columbinus prophecy: evidence from late medieval Wales’, *Welsh History Review* 30 (2020), 19–45, at 36–42, with further references.

<sup>15</sup>Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II*, pp. 339–40.

<sup>16</sup>See also a useful book by David Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp: Medieval England’s Greatest Knight* (Charleston, 2001). For manuscripts connected with the Beauchamps see Lynne McGoldrick, *The Literary Manuscripts and Literary Patronage of the Beauchamp and Neville Families in the Late Middle Ages, 1390–1500*, unpublished PhD thesis, Newcastle Polytechnic, 1985, 70–109.

Brewster still remains enigmatic. Thus, Worcestre himself refers to him as an esquire (*armiger*, *IWW* 208 and 210) and also calls him Richard's receiver-general (*IWW* 218). However, as K. B. McFarlane observes, '[t]he name of John Brewster, *valettus*, appears on the retinue-roll of Warwick as Captain of Calais, c. 1419 (B. M. Cotton Roll xiii. 7, m. 3). I have seen no evidence that he was ever the earl's receiver-general.'<sup>17</sup> References to the book of Master Brewster, to my knowledge, occur on several occasions in the *Itineraries* by Worcestre, but only there, and it has not been identified.

Therefore, secondly, one may suggest that William Worcestre faithfully copied his section *Britannia mynor* from the book of Master Brewster that preserved (perhaps partially) a lost version of *HRB*. This way of thinking may at least be taken into consideration, as Geoffrey's text was immensely popular in the Middle Ages, with various redactions available. Worcestre's evidence allows us to see that some other popular medieval texts were extant in augmented versions that have since been lost: for example, it has been shown by Andrew Breeze that on a visit to Exeter in 1478 Worcestre recorded passages from the *Itinerary of Wales* by Gerald of Wales which belonged to Dr Owen Lloyd ('de libro doctoris Ewen', d. 1478), a book now lost, and thus the fragments preserved by the antiquary constitute the only piece of evidence for this record.<sup>18</sup> However, the various redactions of *HRB* have been thoroughly studied, as have their reflections and borrowings in other medieval texts, and much attention has been given to the late manuscript copies of this medieval best-seller, to the effect that this scenario is also improbable. The third obvious possibility to explain the origins of Worcestre's *Britannia mynor* narrative appears most realistic. It is known that portions of *HRB* were incorporated in various forms into a variety of late chronicles and texts, which were also written in Latin. We find these passages or their paraphrases in scores of texts, such as *Flores Historiarum*, the *Polychronicon* by Ranulph Higden, *Annales Londonienses* and *Vita Edwardi Secundi*. Their authors could manipulate passages and offer their own views on their credibility, and this late dispersion of Geoffrey's text has been thoroughly studied.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, my search of the texts normally discussed in this connection for a section on the legendary history of Brittany similar to that preserved in the *Itineraries* was in vain.

However, we do find the identical passage elsewhere, as in the fifteenth-century genealogical roll of the kings of England (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, Canterbury MS 1).<sup>20</sup> This text, the so-called

<sup>17</sup> McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, 200.

<sup>18</sup> Andrew Breeze, 'Gerald of Wales's "Itinerary of Wales" in medieval Exeter', *Notes and Queries* 45.1 (1998), 31–3; for the text see *IWW* 116–21.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. the pioneering research by Laura Keeler, *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers, 1300–1500* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1946); cf. also Robert Huntington Fletcher, *The Arthurian Material in the Chronicles Especially Those of Great Britain and France* (Boston, 1906), 169–236.

<sup>20</sup> The text is digitised, with Latin transcript and English translation, in Chris Jones, Maree Shiota, Marie Johnson, Duncan Brown-Shaw and Eve Welch (eds), *The Canterbury Roll*, at <http://canterburyroll.canterbury.ac.nz/>; the quotations are given following this transcript and referred to according to the *sigla* of the edition and corresponding paragraphs in Arnold Wall, *Handbook to*

Canterbury Roll (previously known as the ‘Maude Roll’), preserves exactly the same lay-out and wording of the section on the mythological history of Armorica as in Worcestre’s copy. The whole passage may be presented in the following table (sub-division of the texts is mine):

| Worcestre’s <i>Britannia mynor</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Canterbury Roll, CRC062/§43                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maximianus Rex Britonum<br>Armoricum regnum que nunc<br>Britannia minor dicitur conquisiuit<br>ducem eius Imbaldum cum .xv. milia<br>armatorum interemit quod quidem<br>regnum Cornato nepoti Octauij Regis<br>donauit                                                         | Maximianus Romanus Armoricum<br>regnum que nunc Britannia Minor<br>dictitur conquisivit. Ducem eius<br>Inbaldum cum 15 milibus armatorum<br>interemit quod quid regnum eo nato<br>nepoti Octavii regis donavit.                         |
| replevitque jstam Britanniam<br>mynorem centum milibus plebanorum<br>triginta milites quos in Britannia<br>collegerat vndecim .xj. millia<br>puellarum nobilium et sexaginta milia<br>ex jnfima [repeated] gente natarum de<br>Britannia euectarum in mari<br>periclitata sunt | Replevit que istam Britanniam C<br>milibus plebanorum. 30 milibus<br>militum quos in Britannia collegerat.<br>XI milia puellarum nobilium et LX<br>milia ex infima gente natarum de<br>Britannia euectarum in mari<br>periclitata sunt. |
| sicut fuit filius Leonini avunculi<br>Constantini demum Rome interfectus.                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Fuit enim filius Leonini avunculi<br>Constantini demum Rome interfectus.                                                                                                                                                                |

The match between the texts presented in these two manuscripts is astounding: they follow one and the same pattern, both are very far from the original text of Geoffrey and they even share the same mistake or, rather deliberate substitution (*collegerat*, which is grammatical here, for *colligerentur*). They are in fact virtually identical, and differ only in minor details such as writing numbers in words or numerals; there is just one single non-trivial discrepancy between the texts which is of paramount importance for tracing their prehistory, and will be discussed below. It is also significant that both narratives style Maximian *filius Leonini*, while Geoffrey’s account names his father as *Loelinus*, and *Leoninus* is not attested in *variae lectiones* of *HRB*.<sup>21</sup> However, *filius Leonini* is found in a number of texts that adopted the story from *HRB*, as in the list of the British kings in the thirteenth century BL Cotton MS Julius A XI, fol. 26v, *Maximus filius Leonini auunculi Helene*, where we find Maximus instead of

*the Maude Roll* (Christchurch, 1919), no pagination. For the complete bibliography see the website of the on-going project.

<sup>21</sup> *GM*, 104–5. For a variant version see Hammer, *Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia Regum Britanniae: A Variant Version Edited from Manuscripts*, 91 and 93. For the genealogy of the character see now the excellent research by Ben Guy, ‘Constantine, Helena, Maximus’, with further references. The anonymous reviewer of this paper aptly explains the spelling of the name by a scribal mistake: the scribe, not familiar with the Welsh-based name *Loelinus*, substituted the more Latinate *Leoninus*.

Maximian as an innovation against *HRB*, and Helen in place of Constantinus in agreement with Geoffrey's text. Maxim instead of Maximian is also attested in John Leland's 'Collectanea', written several centuries later, where we find a more precise match, *Hoc tempore obiit Octavius, rex Brittonum, & regnavit Maximus gener ejus, filius Leonini, avunculi Constantini*.<sup>22</sup> This list may be continued, and it is important that the Canterbury Roll in the previous entry (CRC061/§42a) reports that 'Iste Octovius, dux Goweseorum, regni diadema adeptus, sed non linealitur. unicum filiam suam Maximiano, filio Leonini, fratris Elene, dedit in uxorem cum regno suo' ('This Octavius, duke of Gewisse, obtained the royal crown, but not by lineage. He gave his only daughter to Maximian son of Leoninus the brother of Helena in marriage, together with his kingdom.')<sup>23</sup>

The identity of the text recorded by William Worcestre with that preserved in the Canterbury Roll invites further research regarding their interrelationship and origins. Clearly, to carry out this task one should go beyond the section *Britannia mynor* copied by Worcestre from the book of Master Brewster and its match in the Canterbury Roll. The next five paragraphs in the latter correspond very loosely to the following nine lines in the *Itinerary*, but then we find another section which has been traced by the editor of Worcestre's text to several chapters of Geoffrey's *Historia* (cf. *GM*, 160–1, 180–1 and 192–3), where distinctively separate stories are related, and which again is nearly identical to that of the Canterbury Roll:

| Worcestre, <i>IWW</i> 212                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Canterbury Roll, CRC070/§49                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aurelius Rex Britonum combussit oppidum Genorem in Ergyn super flumen Vay in monte Cloart et Vortigernum in castro. Postea vero Hengisto in bello interfecto fecit choream gigantum de montibus Kyldar de Hibernia vsque ad montem Ambri ingeniose deportari ibique in | Iste Aurelius conbussit opidum [sic] Genorem in Ergni super flumium [sic] Waye in Monte Cloart et Vortigerum in castro. Postea vero Hengisto in bello interfecto, fecit Choream Gigantum de Montibus Kyldarne de Hibernia usque ad Montem Ambri ingeniose deportari ibi que in |

<sup>22</sup>Katherine Lee Hodges-Kluck, *The Matter of Jerusalem: The Holy Land in Angevin Court Culture and Identity*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Tennessee – Knoxville, 2015, 127; Thomas Hearne (ed.), *Joannis Lelandi antiquarii De rebus Britannicus Collectanea*, vol. 4 (London, 1774), 96. For Maximus/Maximian see the discussion in the references collected in n. 11 above.

<sup>23</sup>On Octavius (W. *Eudaf*) duke of *Gewissei* in south-east Wales see O. J. Padel, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall', *CMCS* 8 (1984), 1–28, at 7ff., and Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus', 395 with further references. Dr Ben Guy aptly reminds me (personal communication) that the text is wrong here: it should say that 'Leoninus' was the uncle of Helen. As the anonymous reviewer kindly reminds me, '[t]he statement that Leoninus was the uncle of Constantine [...] is only a slightly inexact presentation of Geoffrey's theory that Leoninus was a cousin of Helena, Constantine's mother'.

|                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| memoriale inter sancrorum Britonum<br>stabilire tandem apud Wyntoniam<br>veneno occubuit sepultus in chorea<br>gigantum. | memoriale interfectorum Britonum<br>stabilire tandem apud Wyntonie<br>veneno occubuit. Et sepultus in<br>Chorea Gigantum. <sup>24</sup> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The next passage preserved in the *Itineraries* again finds a perfect match in the Roll, where it is preceded by a paragraph absent in Worcestre's copy:

| Worcestre, <i>IWW</i> 212                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Canterbury Roll, CRC072/§51                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Arthurus nobilis bellator duodecies<br>dux belli fuit et duodecies victor<br>exstitit triumphatis Saxonibus Pictis et<br>Scotis, et Gwenweber in vxorem ex<br>genere Romanorum Editham<br>subjugatis postea Hibernsibus Island<br>Gothlond Orcades et australibus<br>universis Norwagia Dacia Gallia<br>Acquitania Vasconia redijt Britanniam<br>coronatus in vrbe Legionum in festo<br>Penticostes. | Tempore Cerdicis regis Westsexie,<br>surrexit apud Britones Arthurus. Qui<br>Arthurus nobilis bellator duodecies<br>dux belli fuit et duodecies victor<br>exstitit. Triumphatis Saxonibus, Pictis<br>et Scotis duxit Gwenweber in uxorem<br>ex genere Romanorum editam<br>subjugatis postea Hiberini Osland,<br>Goodland, Orcad et Australibus<br>universis, Norwagia, Dacia, Gallia<br>Acquitannia et Vasconia, rediit in<br>Britanniam coronatus in Urbe<br>Legionum, in festo Penticostes .... <sup>25</sup> |

Obviously, both fragments are related distantly to the narrative found in the *HRB* as their editors acknowledged, but the passages are very close in these two copies again. It may be noted that Wall in his edition of the Roll suggested that *Osland* stands for *Ostland*, that is Estonia,<sup>26</sup> and admitted that 'Geoffrey of Monmouth does not mention "Osland" in his list of Arthur's conquests, but he includes "Godland" and Iceland'. Elsewhere in his comment on the passage (§51) the scholar recognized that '[t]he scribe has expressed himself badly or misunderstood his authority'. The latter explanation is certainly most credible, and a different emendation of *Osland*, left unaffected in the digital edition of the Roll, is now obvious also in view of what we find in Worcestre's copy,

<sup>24</sup> 'This Aurelius burnt down the town of Genorem in Ergni on the river Wye in Mount Doartius, and Vortigern in his camp. After he killed Hengist in battle, he cleverly caused the Giants' Dance from the Mountain of Kildare in Ireland to be brought to Mount Ambri, where he set it up in memory of the slain Britons. Finally he died at Winchester by poison, and he is buried in the Giants' Dance.' (translations from the Canterbury Roll are cited from the website, above n. 20).

<sup>25</sup> 'In the time of Cerdic king of Wessex, Arthur rose among the Britons. Arthur, a noble warrior, was commander of war twelve times, and twelve times emerged the victor. Having conquered the Saxons, the Picts and the Scots he led Guinevere, born from the Roman lineage, into marriage. Afterwards, having conquered Ireland, Osland, Goodland, Orkney and the whole south, Norway, Dacia, Septentrional Gaul, and Gascony, he returned to Britain and was crowned in the City of the Legions on the feast of Pentecost.'

<sup>26</sup> 'for Ostland = Esthonia, called Estland (Eastland) by the Anglo-Saxons. Its people were formerly called Osti; "Ost" or "Oost" is the Low German form of East.'

where Iceland is given. Moreover, the *tertias comparationis* could be found in a ‘Feudal manual’, as its editor Thomas Wright labelled it, the prehistory of which is obscure and which contains a near identical phrase:

Iste Arthurus, nobilis bellator, duodecies dux belli fuit, et duodecies victor extitit triumphus Saxonibus, Pictis, et Scotis. Duxit Gwenwyber in uxorem, ex genere Romanorum editam, subjugatis postea Hibernis, Islondis, Goodlondis, Ortandis [sic! A.F.], in Australibus universis, Norwagia, Dacia, Gallia, Equitannia, Vasconnia, rediit in Britanum, coronatus in urbe Legionum a festo Pentecostes, ubi cedente Dubricio suo archiepiscopatui, David loco ipsius subrogatur, avunculus Roger.<sup>27</sup>

It should also be observed that not all passages copied by Worcestre from the books of Master Brewster are identical with those in the Canterbury Roll. Thus, the fragment immediately preceding the section *Britannia mynor* in the *Itineraries* of Worcestre was traced by Harvey to another fragment of *HRB* (V.iv), and indeed this short fragment finds a distant correspondence in a rather lengthy passage, *GM* 92–5, and the match to it in the Roll is rather loose, although at times becoming exact:

| Worcestre, <i>IWW</i> 210                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Canterbury Roll CRC057/§41                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Galli Collobrok id est Walbrok in<br>ciuitate London sortitur nomen a<br>bello comisso per Asclepiodotum<br>Brittannum qui interfecit ibi Allectum<br>Romanum et Luuam ( <i>Lunum</i> ,<br>Nasmith) Gallum cum tribus<br>legionibus infra vrbem Londoniarum<br>super torrentem que dicitur a nomine<br>Collobrok et quo passus est Sanctus<br>Albanus martyr | Asclepiodotus Britannus peremit<br>regem Allectum Romanum et Livium<br>( <i>Timum</i> , Wall) Gallum, cum tribus<br>legionibus infra urbem London super<br>torrentem qui dictum a nominem<br>Galli, Collebrok, sub quo passus est<br>Sanctus Albanus martir. <sup>28</sup> |

There is no doubt, therefore, that the sources used by Brewster (from whose book Worcester copied the passage) and by the compiler of the Canterbury

<sup>27</sup>Thomas Wright (ed.), *Feudal Manuals of English History: A Series of Popular Sketches of Our National History, Compiled at Different Periods, from the Thirteenth Century to the Fifteenth, for the Use of the Feudal Gentry and Nobility* (London, 1872), 125

<sup>28</sup>‘Asclepiodotus the Briton killed King Allectus the Roman and Luuius the Gaul [recte: Livius Gallus] with three legions below London on the rushing stream which is called by a Gallic name, Collebrok [recte: which is called Collebrok after Gallus’ name], beneath which [recte: under whom] St Alban the martyr suffered.’ Translation from website; corrections offered in square brackets. The anonymous reviewer of this paper aptly questioned *nominem* in this transcription instead of the expected *nomine*. The latter form indeed was used in the transcription of the text by Wall, and this could certainly be the case, see **fig. 1**.



Fig. 1

Roll are sometimes different. This list of parallels might be continued easily, cf. sections on (South)hampton and Gloucester in the *Itineraries* (IWW 210), with eleven lines in the edition of Harvey and a corresponding short paragraph (CRC050/§36) in the Roll.

It is notable also that the Canterbury Roll occasionally contains direct references to the sources of its passages, but those being discussed so far in conjunction with Geoffrey's *HRB* bear no witness to their sources. Nevertheless, a brief look at some of them may trigger further suggestions regarding their provenance. Thus, discussing one of these cases Maree Shiota maintains that 'it is likely that Ranulf Higden's fourteenth-century *Polychronicon*, which narrates a similar version of the tale, was consulted'.<sup>29</sup> As we have seen, the scribe of the Canterbury Roll in providing the story of Armorica (and also elsewhere) discussed above did not behave as a creative author: he copied faithfully the text which was later reproduced by William Worcestre as well. With this in mind, it is worth paying some attention, for example, to the following passage of the Canterbury Roll (CRC121/§94; the bold script is added): this depiction of the revolt in Wales of Madog ap Llywelyn (1294–5)<sup>30</sup> explicitly refers to Higden's *Polychronicon*:

Cuius etiam Edwardi primi tempore, quidam Madocus Wallensis suscitavit guerram in Wallia. Sed rex adveniens circa festam Sancti Nicolay, cepit insula Anglesyam, edificavit que de novo urbem et castrum de Bello Marisco. Quo tempore succisa sunt nemora in Wallia que prestabant indigenis latibula in tempora belli firmavitque castrum circa loca maritima et cito post captus est Madocus. Et ab illo tempore quieverunt Wallenses a proliis [*sic*]. Et principatum Wallie dedit Edwardo secundo filo suo et comiti Cestrie, **ut dicit Polichronicon. lib° 7, ca° 40°**.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Maree Shiota, *Unrolling History: Fifteenth-Century Political Culture and Perceptions on the Canterbury Roll*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 2015, 88.

<sup>30</sup>A. D. Carr, 'Madog ap Llywelyn: the revolt of 1294–5 in Caernarfonshire', *Transactions of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society* 58 (1997), 35–46, cf. Craig Owen Jones, *The Revolt of Madog ap Llywelyn* (Pwllheli, 2008).

<sup>31</sup>'Also in the time of Edward I, a certain Madocus of the Welsh stirred up war in Wales. But the king, arriving around the feast of St Nicholas, captured the island of Anglesea, and there built a new city and castle of Beaumaris. At this time the forests in Wales were cut down, which [had] supplied the natives with hiding places in times of war, and [Edward] strengthened the castles around coastal places, and shortly afterwards Madocus was captured. And he gave the principality of Wales to Edward II, his son, and the county of Chester, **says the Polychronicon Book 7 Chapter 40.**' Wall in his edition prints *Madocius* for *Madocus*.

Wall, in his comments on this passage of the Roll, notes the discrepancies between the texts in *Polychronicon* and the Canterbury Roll. The fragment in the Roll differs verbally from Higden's work in many respects, but not only are identical phrases attested in these two works, but we find them also in the corresponding narrative copied by William Worcestre from the books of Master Brewster, and also in the so-called '*Feudal Manual IV*'.<sup>32</sup> There are also comparable phrases where the wording is not exactly the same (cf. *in festo Sancti Nicholai* written by Worcestre while three other texts agree in giving *circa festum sancti Nicholai*), and also others showing minor variations. The identical (or very similar) phrases found in all four texts are indicated in the table by italic script:

| Polychronicon                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Canterbury Roll                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Eoque anno <i>Madocus</i> quidam <i>Walensis</i> suscitavit guerram in Wallia die sancti Micliaelis. Idcirco rex Edwardus <i>adveniens</i> Cestriam circa <i>festum sancti Nicholai cepit insulam Angleseyam, ædificavitque de novo urbem et castrum de Bello Marisco. Quo in tempore succisa sunt nemora in Wallia quæ tempore bellico præstabant indigenis latibula, firmataque sunt castra circa loca maritima, et cito post captus est Madocus prædictus et Londoniæ adductus.</i></p> | <p>Cuius etiam Edwardi primi tempore, quidam <i>Madocus Wallensis</i> suscitavit guerram in Wallia. Sed <i>rex adveniens</i> circa festam Sancti Nicolay, <i>cepit insula Anglesyam, edificavit que de novo urbem et castrum de Bello Marisco. Quo tempore succisa sunt nemora in Wallia que præstabant indigenis latibula in tempora belli firmavitque castrum circa loca maritima et cito post captus est Madocus. [...]</i></p> |
| Worcestre, <i>IWW</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | " <i>Feudal Manual</i> " IV                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p>In festo Sancti Nicholai, <i>Madocus Wallensis</i> suscitavit guerram contra Regem Edwardum primum in ultimus diebus dicti Regis Edwardi, sed <i>rex adueniens cepit insulam Angleseyam et edificavit de nouo castrum et villam de Bello Marisco quo tempora succisa sunt nemora in Wallia que præstabant indigenis labitula.</i></p>                                                                                                                                                      | <p>In ultimis diebus istius Edwardi quidam <i>Madocus Wallensis</i> suscitavit guerram in Wallia, sed <i>rex adveniens</i> circa <i>festum sancti Nicholai, cepit insulam Angleseyam, ædificavitque de novo urbem et castrum de Bello Marisco, quo tempore succisa sunt nemora in Wallia, quæ præstabant indigenis latibula tempore belli, firmavitque castra circa loca maritima, et cito post captus est Madocus.</i></p>        |

<sup>32</sup>Ranulf Higden, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis*, ed. by Churchill Babington and Joseph Rawson Lumby, vol. 8 (London, 1882), 280 and 282; *IWW* 208; Wright, *Feudal Manuals of English History*, 148.

From this table it is clear enough that the fragments preserved in the *Itineraries* and the Canterbury Roll (as well as in the 'Feudal manual IV') are quite close but not identical to the extent which might allow us to posit their common source. At the same time all of them show both similarities and verbal discrepancies with the description of the event in Higden's *Polychronicon*. The latter is referred to in the Roll, while Worcestre states that he copied this section, entitled in the *Itineraries* 'Rex Edwardi primi' (sic!), from the book of Master Brewster, and it is highly unlikely that it contained portions of Higden's original narrative, as the text of the antiquary is certainly different from it.

From the chronological standpoint we know certainly that Worcestre copied the section *Britannia mynor* and the other fragments quoted above that are based on Geoffrey's *HRB* in November 1479. The Canterbury Roll found its extant form by 1485, but as Maree Shiota has demonstrated and Jayson Boon formulated, 'the original scribe worked between 1429 and 1433 and is responsible for writing almost the entire Roll'.<sup>33</sup> This gives us the earliest available date for the proto-text, as any dating for the book of Master Brewster copied fragmentarily by Worcestre is conjectural. Thus, the Hundred Years' War passages that the copy contains are dated to 1418–19, but also there is a report of Richard Beauchamp travelling with Henry VI for his coronation in France, an event which took place in December 1431. Incidentally, it does not seem to have contained a mention of Richard's death on 30 April 1439 at Rouen castle, unless Worcestre merely did not copy the corresponding fragment. Since this information was available, Brewster's miscellany must have been written after 1431 at the earliest. Regarding this source of Worcestre's *informacio* Antonia Gransden suggested that 'Master Brewster allowed him to make extracts from a chronicle in his keeping',<sup>34</sup> but it is obvious from the text that we are dealing with extracts from chronicles collected in a single book that belonged to Brewster, and there is no indication that it was the Master who allowed William to copy from it, or even whether he was still alive at this time. What is apparent is that Worcestre consulted the book at St. Benet's, Holme (*[i]n monasterio Sancti Benedicti, IWW 208–9*). It has been noted that 'Worcester had a particular interest in Holme; in the fifteenth century it was popular with the East Anglian nobility, and one of its patrons was his own patron, Sir John Fastolf',<sup>35</sup> and we have some independent evidence that Worcestre made copies of extracts from the books at the abbey which in his *Itineraries* are not associated with Brewster's book. Thus, his entry on St. Margaret the Martyr (*Beata Margareta martir*) copied *in monasterio Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo* (*IWW 228*) has been associated with the note in the margin of fol. 10v. in BL Cotton MS Vitellius D. I, also traced to St. Benet's.<sup>36</sup> Importantly, Jayson Boon has recently connected one of the passages

<sup>33</sup>Jayson Boon, *An Exercise in the Obscure: How History is Constructed on the Canterbury Roll*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 2021, 11 building on Shiota, *Unrolling history*, 10–11.

<sup>34</sup>Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II*, 340.

<sup>35</sup>Antonia Gransden, *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England* (London and Rio Grande, 1992), 98, with further references. Cf. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, 200.

<sup>36</sup>Julian Marcus Luxford, 'Saint Margaret of Holm: new evidence concerning a Norfolk Benedictine cult', *Norfolk Archaeology* 44 (2002), 111–19.

in the Canterbury Roll with a thirteenth-century chronicle linked to the same institution, although admitting that ‘the exact source cannot be confirmed’.<sup>37</sup> Boon compares CRC066/§44a of the Roll with a ‘geographical’ fragment of the *Chronica Minor Sancti Benedicti de Hulmo* (BL MS Egerton 3142) that was moved from Holme to Hickling Priory sometime after the beginning of the fourteenth century.<sup>38</sup> Significantly, he stresses the fact that the latter was not the direct source for the former, but that they are likely to share the same origins.<sup>39</sup> This observation brings us back again to St. Benet’s, and very little is known about the library of this Benedictine abbey – Neil Ker enumerates six manuscripts that are attributable to it, and Julian Marcus Luxford has added a seventh to this list.<sup>40</sup> Notwithstanding the paucity of the extant records it is obvious that the library must have been rich in its holdings, and might have held a ‘geographical’ text copied into the *Chronica Minor* and independently into the Canterbury Roll. It may also be recalled that on the first page of the introduction to his edition of the text Arnold Wall admitted that the Roll could be of monastic origin.<sup>41</sup> Still, the prehistory of the sections based on Geoffrey’s *Historia* copied between 1429 and 1433 into the Canterbury Roll and also by William Worcestre in 1479 from Brewster’s book are difficult to trace: *librum Magistri Brewster* remains enigmatic and its sources as well as relation to St. Benet’s is mysterious. What remains certain is that the particular concise version of the mythological story of Armorica’s conquest preserved in these three known documents was identical, and the text of it may be restored even from just the two surviving manuscripts.

It should also be borne in mind that the exact origins of the corresponding passages in the Canterbury Roll have not yet been identified. As Arnold Wall stated in the introduction to his edition of the text a century ago, ‘[n]o attempt has here been made to identify all the sources from which the Marginal History has been drawn’.<sup>42</sup> The scholar noted that ‘[t]he compiler has used Geoffrey of Monmouth’s “Historia Britonum” for the story of Brutus and the legendary Kings who follow, especially King Arthur. He has used Higden’s “Polychronicon” and acknowledges this by direct reference.’ He enumerates major chronicles used as sources to the text, and this list, apart from the two historians already mentioned, refers to Gildas, Nennius, William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, Giraldus Cambrensis, William of Newburgh and Roger of Hoveden. The list has since been revised, and as Jayson Boon observes,

<sup>37</sup>Boon, *An Exercise in the Obscure*, 89 and with the analysis on 97–101.

<sup>38</sup>John of Oxnead, *Chronica Johannis de Oxnedes*, ed. Sir Henry Ellis (London, 1859), 412.

<sup>39</sup>Boon, *An Exercise in the Obscure*, 99

<sup>40</sup>Neil Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: A List of Surviving Books* (London, 1964), 102 and Julian Marcus Luxford, ‘A forgotten medieval Benedictine manuscript: the annals in British Library Cotton MS Vitellius D.IX.’, *Scriptorium* 55 (2001), 298–306. See also the chapter ‘The Cronica Buriensis and the Abbey of St Benet of Hulme’ in Gransden’s *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England*, 239–44 et passim.

<sup>41</sup>Wall, *Handbook to the Maude Roll*, no pagination; cf. Robert Allen Rouse, ‘Inscribing lineage: writing and rewriting the Maude Roll’, in Stephanie Hollis and Alexandra Barratt (eds), *Migrations, Medieval Manuscripts in New Zealand* (Newcastle, 2007), 108–22, at 109. Wall tentatively names one of the monasteries of Chester as a candidate for the Roll’s provenance.

<sup>42</sup>Wall, *Handbook to the Maude Roll*, no pagination.

‘the Roll-maker had access to a more varied and obscure corpus of primary sources than has been assumed since Wall published his first edition of the Roll in 1919’,<sup>43</sup> while Maree Shirota admitted that for many passages it ‘is very difficult to trace the immediate sources used by the roll’s compiler’.<sup>44</sup> Although this paper by no means aims at establishing the exact source of the story preserved independently in two records (the research on the prehistory of the Canterbury Roll is still in progress), some preliminary considerations may tentatively be offered here.

It is obviously important in this respect that both the Canterbury Roll and the ‘Feudal manual IV’ referred to above on a number of occasions are pedigree rolls, a type of genealogical writing particularly popular in the fifteenth century.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, they belong to the same group of historical documents of this type, the so-called ‘Noah’ version of the fifteenth-century English pedigree rolls. Extremely widespread at the time, they remain very much under-studied, but due to the academic research of Dr Ben Guy we have now at our disposal a concise and helpful survey of these texts.<sup>46</sup> Quite a few manuscripts fall into this category (e.g., Oxford, Bodley Rolls 10, Oxford, Bodley Marshall 135 and London, BL Add. 18002), and it is apparent that any research into the sources of the Canterbury roll should take into account the identical (or very close) data preserved in the other pedigree rolls belonging to the same ‘Noah’ group and the closely related ‘Roger of St Albans’ genealogies. It is known that in general these documents incorporated data from Geoffrey’s *HRB*,<sup>47</sup> and it is significant that many of the fifteenth-century pedigree rolls tend to copy exemplars faithfully even while laying out their diagrams and text in varying ways. The same passage relating to the legendary history of Britain is found in the three Noah pedigree rolls referred to above.

With this in mind, one should pay attention to the sole major discrepancy found in the narratives that is truly significant, and this is the sequence preserved in the Canterbury Roll as *regnum eo nato nepoti Octavii Regis*. Arnold Wall

<sup>43</sup>Boon, *An Exercise in the Obscure*, 85. Boon also (*ibid.*, 22) aptly notes: ‘Despite the scores of medieval English chronicles which have survived to today, there is an innumerable amount which have been lost.’

<sup>44</sup>Shirota, *Unrolling History*, 88.

<sup>45</sup>On it see Olivier de Laborderie, ‘A new pattern for English history: the first genealogical rolls of the kings of England’, in R. L. Radulescu and E. D. Kennedy (eds), *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Medieval Britain and France* (Turnhout, 2008), 45–61, and more recently various contributions to Stefan G. Holz, Jörg Peltzer and Maree Shirota (eds), *The Roll in England and France in the Late Middle Ages* (Berlin and Boston, 2019).

<sup>46</sup>See Ben Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy: An Introduction and Textual Study* (Woodbridge, 2020), 253–6; on the Canterbury roll in this context see 253 n. 118. The pioneering work on the subject was that by Alison Allan, ‘Yorkist propaganda: pedigree, prophecy and the “British History” in the reign of Edward IV’, in C. Ross (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979), 171–92, at 172–3 and 189. Cf. also M. P. Siddons, *Welsh Pedigree Rolls* (Aberystwyth, 1996).

<sup>47</sup>Cf. e.g. Alison Allan, ‘Yorkist propaganda’, 175–9 et passim or Olivier de Laborderie, ‘L’incorporation de l’Histoire des rois de Bretagne de Geoffroy de Monmouth dans les généalogies en rouleau des rois d’Angleterre (xiii<sup>e</sup>–xiv<sup>e</sup> siècles)’, in Hélène Tétrel and Géraldine Veyssière (eds), *L’Historia regum Britannie et les ‘Bruts’ en Europe*, vol. II (Paris, 2018), 255–80 for the thirteenth/fourteenth-century rolls.

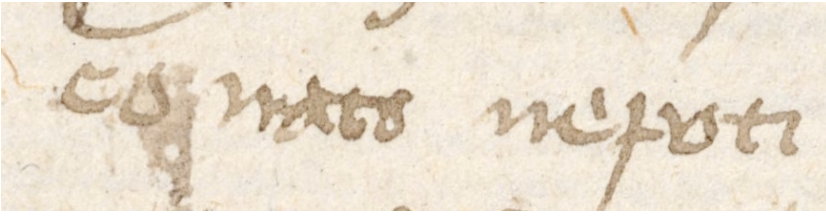


Fig. 2

reconstructed *eo nato* here as *Dianotus* (sic!) in view of Geoffrey's *Dionotus*, and explained this mistake as a misunderstanding by the scribe of the text as it was being dictated.<sup>48</sup> Certainly, as Jayson Boon reminds us, 'the Roll-maker added his own alterations where he saw fit',<sup>49</sup> but this is not the case here. Moreover, the reading *eo nato* looks like a feature of the 'Noah' group of pedigree rolls in general, and Dr Ben Guy kindly draws my attention (personal communication) to the same *eo nato* in the corresponding sections of Oxford, Bodley Rolls 10 as well as London, BL Add. 18002. The name corresponds to *Cornato* of Worcestre's text as edited by J. H. Harvey, and it is exceedingly remarkable that a reading of the form as *Conato* was printed by J. Nasmith in his edition, that is, *Conatus*.<sup>50</sup> It looks likely that Nasmith was correct, as the <rn> sequence in the name as *per* Harvey is very similar to the manuscript reading of the initial <n> of the next word, *nepoti*, see **fig. 2**. In the original, Geoffrey of Monmouth refers to *Conanus* (*Meriadocus*), and this passage is presented as direct speech of Maximian to Conan.<sup>51</sup> Importantly, *Conatus* instead of *Conanus* is found in a number of paraphrases of *HRB* in medieval chronicles, as, for example, in Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, there is no need to see in this fragment copied by Worcestre a break with the previous tradition – it still speaks of *Conanus* in its later guise *Conatus*, and, incidentally, it is obvious that Worcestre could not have copied it from the Canterbury Roll, or a similar document of the group. Moreover, the manuscript reading of the name in the *Itineraries* itself explains the difficult *eo nato* found in the Rolls. In the copy made by Worcestre the first two letters of the name are isolated from the rest of it by a gap, *regnum co nato nepoti* (**fig. 2**). A similar reading, as Dr Ben Guy advises me, probably is found in the corresponding fragment in Oxford, Bodley Marshall 135. The initial <c> – apparently in the exemplar – was read as <e> by the scribe of the Canterbury Roll as well as some other manuscripts of the group, who like Worcester left the gap after the first two letters, but took

<sup>48</sup> On Dionotus duke of Cornwall see Padel, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall', 7–8.

<sup>49</sup> Boon, *An Exercise in the Obscure*, 40.

<sup>50</sup> Nasmith, *Itineraria Symonis Simeonis et Willelmi de Worcestre*, 338.

<sup>51</sup> 'Promouebo etenim te in regem regni huius, et erit haec altera Britannia, et eam ex genere nostro expulsis indigenis repleamus': 'I shall make you the ruler of this kingdom; we shall drive out its inhabitants, and it will be another Britain, occupied by our people'; *GM* 106–7. On Conan (W. Cynan) see Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, 63–5 and Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus', 395–7.

<sup>52</sup> Ranulf Higden, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden Monachi Cestrensis; together with the English Translations of John Trevisa and of an unknown writer of the fifteenth century*, ed. by Churchill Babington and Joseph Rawson Lumby, vol. 5 (London, 1874), 202.

the name as two separate words. Therefore, it is most likely that Worcestre and the scribes of the rolls copied a document in which the name of the nephew of Octavius *Conatus* (< *Conanus*) was written with a gap after the first letters, perhaps thus separated due to standing at the end of a line in the manuscript, and in which the initial <c> resembled <e>. This common source also may explain the styling of Maximianus as *Rex Britonum* in the text preserved in the *Itineraries*, but as *Romanus* in the Canterbury Roll and elsewhere. The character ‘was of royal blood on both sides’ (*HRB* V.ix), that is, British on his father’s side and Roman on his mother’s, and both descriptions could have been in the underlying exemplar, from which our texts selected one each.

All that certainly poses the question of the nature of the book of Master Brewster, fragments of which were copied by William Worcestre. Although the antiquary used the word *cronice* to denote these historic narratives, it should be remembered that ‘the term “chronicle” has been used so loosely in medieval and modern times that it has lost any precise meaning’.<sup>53</sup> Some passages of the book, as Worcestre’s *Itineraries* testify, perfectly fitted the genre of pedigree rolls, such as stories derived from Geoffrey’s *HRB*, or accounts of the revolts in Wales of Madog ap Llywelyn and Owain Glyndŵr. The book, apparently, also contained fragments that may be reconcilable with this genre. Apart from the quoted passages, Worcestre also copied from the same source a number of miscellaneous notes on Henry V’s campaigns in France (*IWW* 214–19), importantly, ‘with particular references to his [i.e. Brewster’s – A. F.] employer, Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick’,<sup>54</sup> and it is noteworthy that this passage has been described as an echo of ‘Rous’s panegyric on Earl Richard’.<sup>55</sup> This is not inconsistent with an origin in a pedigree roll, as a certain focus on particular lords is known in this type of document just as in the slightly later Rous’s rolls; it has been noted that ‘fifteenth-century rolls and genealogical chronicles were produced not only as royal propaganda, [...], but also as objects of pride for their owner’.<sup>56</sup> Various stray notes on war activities in which the earl participated are followed by passages that list a number of castles and manors that ‘the most noble Richard Beauchamp earl of Warwick’ built or restored according to the account of Brewster (*secundum relacionum Brewster*, *IWW* 218–19). These entries are different from the previous set in that they do not provide dates and they definitely do not fit the genre of the roll. Nevertheless, it is important that the collection looks to be centred on the earl and the notes have a profound personal flavour. Indeed, Brewster’s patron is mentioned there by name on several occasions, some of the jousts he participated in are listed and even the name of his secretary is provided. Yet, this highly heterogeneous selection of

<sup>53</sup>A. Gransden, ‘The chronicles of medieval England and Scotland: Part I’, *Journal of Medieval History* 16 (1990), 129–50, at 129.

<sup>54</sup>Gransden, *Historical Writing in England II*, 340.

<sup>55</sup>Emma Mason, ‘Legends of the Beauchamps’ ancestors: the use of baronial propaganda in medieval England’, *Journal of Medieval History* 10 (1984), 25–40, at 38. For the latter text see Charles Ross, *The Rous Roll: With an Historical Introduction on John Rous and the Warwick Roll* (Gloucester, 1980).

<sup>56</sup>Raluca Radulescu, ‘Yorkist Propaganda and “The Chronicle from Rollo to Edward IV”’, *Studies in Philology* 100 (2003), 401–424 (p. 408). Cf. Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 256–8.

various notes also contains the complete text of ‘Vale et gaude glorioso ...’, addressed by the Emperor Sigismund to the King (*IIW* 214) and known from other fifteenth-century written texts.<sup>57</sup> That may point to varied sources used by the compiler, and it looks very likely, therefore, that *liber Magistri Brewster* was a miscellaneous collection of excerpts of various genres. Most probably it also contained extracts from a pedigree roll, and it is known that ‘[s]uch genealogies were usually written on pedigree rolls, though they sometimes appear in codices too’.<sup>58</sup>

The legendary history of *Britannia mynor* copied from Brewster by William Worcestre in 1479, although indeed based on the corresponding passages of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *HRB*, does not go back directly to this medieval best-seller. A precise parallel for the narrative should rather be sought in the pedigree rolls current in the fifteenth century (particularly the ‘Noah’ rolls and related ‘Roger of St Albans’ genealogies), such as the so-called Canterbury Roll. The *liber Magistri Brewster* is likely to have contained, perhaps, fragments of such a pedigree, which were copied faithfully by the antiquarian. With this new data at our disposal it becomes evident now that Worcester’s version of the British conquest of Armorica is not a sudden disruption of the Galfridian tradition. Indeed, his copy of *Britannia mynor* testifies to the fact that this distinctive description of the legendary events had some circulation in the fifteenth century. It is also evident that the list of direct sources used by William Worcestre should be emended: his *Britannia mynor* does not go back to Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *HRB* directly.

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<sup>57</sup>For it, see David Fallows, *Henry V and the Earliest English Carols 1413–1440* (Abingdon, Oxon. and New York, 2018), 183–4, with references to the texts in which it occurs.

<sup>58</sup>Guy, *Medieval Welsh Genealogy*, 253; for some examples see Raluca Rădulescu, ‘The political mentality of the English gentry at the end of the fifteenth century’, *New Europe College Yearbook* 8 (2000–1), 355–89, at 369–72.

*UAIGNEACH A-DEIRTHEAR DÚN BAOI:*  
MARBHNA AR EÓGHAN ÓG Ó SÚILLEABHÁIN (†1616)<sup>1</sup>

ACHOIMRE

Is éard atá san alt seo ná eagrán criticiúil den dán *Uaigneach a-deirthear Dún Baoi*, marbhna ar Eóghan Óg Ó Súilleabháin, a cumadh sa bhliain 1616. Tá an dán lán le híomhánna suimiúla den dúlra, agus tugtar léargas suimiúil dúinn ar an bport ag Dún Baoi ag an am sin agus an tábhacht a bhain leis mar ionad trádála agus láthair chruinnithe. Tá an t-eagrán bunaithe ar an dá leagan den dán a mhaireann i LSí in Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann. Foilsíodh tras-scríbhinn den dán seo in *ABM* sa bhliain 2010 le heagarthóireacht éadrom déanta air. Tá aistriúchán Béarla curtha ar fáil anseo taobh leis an eagrán, chomh maith le plé ar theanga, meadaracht agus ábhar an dáin.

ÁBHAR AN DÁIN

CUMADH AN MARBHNA SEO d'Eóghan Óg (mac Eóghain mhic Dhiarmada) Ó Súilleabháin tar éis a bháis sa bhliain 1616. Tugtar íomhánna suimiúla dúinn sa dán den phort ag Dún Baoi sa tréimhse a raibh Eóghan Óg ar an saol. Deir an file linn go mbíodh an port lán le longa trádála as tíortha éagsúla in iarthar na hEorpa; an Spáinn, an Fhrainc, Sasana, Albain agus críoch Lochlann (rainn 6–9). Ní hamháin gur phort tábhachtach trádála é, ach de réir an fhile b'ionad tábhachtach é do na filí chomh maith, a bhíodh ag teacht le chéile ansin as gach cearn den tír (rainn 3, 10, 14).

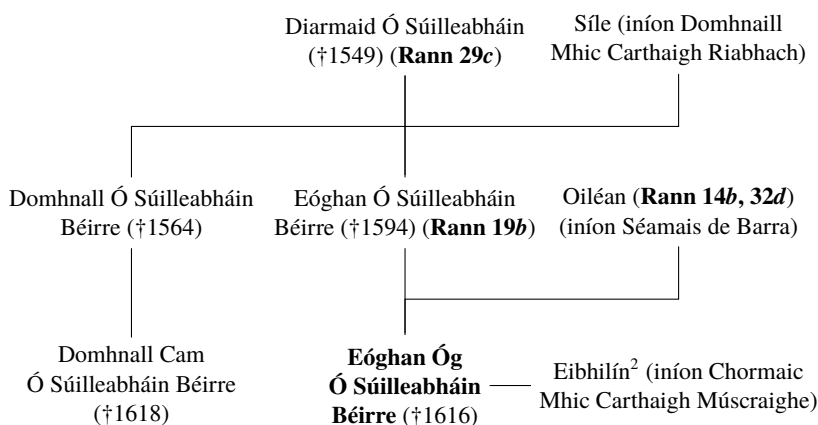
Tá an dán seo lán den saghas friotail agus íomhánna a mbeifí ag súil leis i marbhna ón tréimhse seo, go háirithe íomhánna den tír, de mhuintir na háite, agus den dúlra faoi rath agus suaimehneach a fhad is go raibh an ceannaire beo. Ar an taobh eile, áfach, tá íomhánna d'uaigneas, marbhántacht, míshuaimehneas agus éadairbhe mar go bhfuil an ceannaire anois marbh. Déantar cur síos ar an bpátrún mar cheannaire láidir, flaithiúil, agus tar éis a bháis caoineann an pobal agus an dúlra é in éineacht lena chéile (rainn 11–20). Cuireann an file Eóghan Óg i gcomparáid le Diarmaid Ruanaidh (†665), mac Aodha Sláine agus rí ar Theamhair, duine eile, de réir an fhile, a raibh gach bua agus rath aige le linn a ré (rainn 21–6).

<sup>1</sup>Tá an t-alt seo á fhoilsiú mar chuid de thionscadal MACMORRIS atá faoi stiúir an Ollaimh Pat Palmer in Ollscoil Mhá Nuad agus atá maoinithe ag an gComhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn. Tá mé buíoch de Dheirdre Nic Chárthaigh, Mícheál Hoyne, eagarthóirí *Celtica* agus an léitheoir a cheap siad as a gcuid moltaí le barr feabhais a chur ar an alt seo. Mé féin faoi deara gach botún agus dearmad.

Tugann an file ceithre rann le béim a leagan ar an tábhacht a thug Eóghan Óg dá chreideamh (rainn 27–30), agus maíonn an file gur mar gheall ar an gcreideamh daingean agus an díograis dhiaga sin a bhí Eóghan Óg chomh rathúil le linn a shaoil. Tagann an dán chun deiridh le iargcomharc don Mhaighdean Mhuire (rann 36).

AN PÁTRÚN AGUS AN TEIDEAL Ó SÚILLEABHÁIN BÉIRRE

Fear de mhuintir Shúilleabháin Béirre ab ea Eóghan Óg a raibh seilbh ag a theaghlach ar cheantar Bhéarra agus Bheanntaí in iarthar Chorcaí/deisceart Chiarraí.



De réir *AFM*, tháinig Eóghan Ó Súilleabháin (athair Eóghain Óig) i gcomharbas ar a dheartháir, Domhnall Ó Súilleabháin Béirre, sa bhliain 1563:

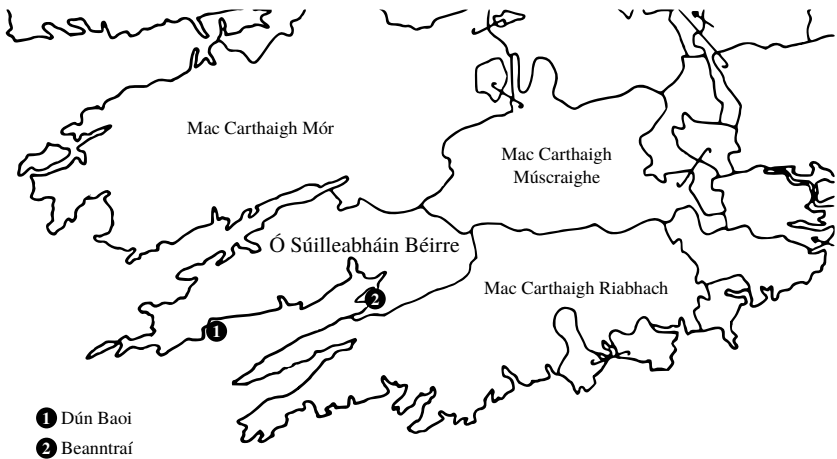
O Súillebhán Béirre Domhnall, mac Diarmata [...] do thuitim [...] agus a brathair Eoghan Ó Suillebhain do ghabháil a ionaidh.

‘O’Sullivan Beare (Donnell, the son of Dermot [...]) was slain [...]. His kinsman, Owen O’Sullivan, took his place.’ (*AFM* 1563.2)

Deir na Ceithre Máistrí linn go raibh an teideal Ó Súilleabháin Béirre ar an Eóghan seo fós sa bhliain 1585:

Do chuaidh ann dna Ó Suillebháin Berre, Eocchan mac Diarmatta  
‘Thither likewise went O’Sullivan Beare (Owen, son of Dermot [...])’ (*AFM* 1585.22)

<sup>2</sup>Tugtar ainm bhean Eóghain Óig sa dán *Cia so chaoineas críoch Bhanbha?* (O’Flatherty 1918) a chum an file céanna, Tadhg Ó Dálaigh, do mhac Eóghain Óig, Diarmaid, nuair a fuair seisean bás sa bhliain 1618: 10ab *Deas abuigh iothrach deighshíl / caomthach ocht[a] Eibhéilín*



Tiarnas Uí Shúilleabháin Bérre c. 1534  
bunaithe ar 'Map 1, LORDSHIPS, c. 1534'  
le K. W. Nicholls (Moody et al. 1976: 2–3)

Nuair a d'éag Eóghan sa bhliain 1594, áfach, ní dheachaigh an teideal go dtí a mhac, Eóghan Óg, ach go dtí a nia, Domhnall, agus tugtar le fios go raibh aighneas ann i dtaca leis an teideal ar feadh bliana (ar a laghad) roimh a bhás:

Ó Súillebháin Bérre, Eocchan, mac Diarmata, mic Domhnaill do écc. Ar a aoí ní bhó Ó Súillebháin Beirre é an tan sin gér bhó headh riamh, dóigh ro bean mac a dearbhrathar an bhliadhain ria na écc Dún Baoí, agus Bérre de .i. Domhnall mac Domhnaill mic Diarmata iar mbreith chomhairle Saxan agus comhairle na hEreann agus ro gaireadh Ó Súillebháin Bérre do Dhomhnall feissin.

'O'Sullivan Beare (Owen, the son of Dermot, son of Donnell) died. He was not, however, O'Sullivan Beare at that time, though he had once been ; for in the year previous to his death, his brother's son, Donnell, son of Donnell, son of Dermot, had, by the decision of the Council of England and the Council of Ireland, deprived him of Dunbaoi and Beare and Donnell himself was nominated O'Sullivan Beare.' (*AFM* 1594.2)

Ní thugtar an teideal Ó Súilleabháin Bérre ar Eóghan Óg in aon fhoinsé (go bhfios dom) a bhaineann le blianta an chogaidh a tháinig ina dhiaidh sin (1594–1603) agus is cosúil gur éirigh le Domhnall Cam an teideal a choinneáil gan mórán coimhlinte le linn an ama sin. Is léir, áfach, go raibh stádas ar leith ag Eóghan Óg agus tá tagairt déanta dó seo in *Pacata Hibernia*, áit a ndéantar cur síos ar achran agus ar chomhfhreagras idir é agus Fínghean Mac Carthaigh (†1640) i dtaca leis na hiarrachtaí in éadan na Sasanach le linn Chogadh na Naoi mBliana:

[Florence Mac Carty] wrote several letters to the gentlemen near adjoining, namely O'Sulevan, MacFinnin, the two O'Donoghs, and others, to assemble at a time and place appointed to create him Mac Carty More ; and whosoever he was that refused to come he persecuted as his mortal enemy ; and hereof Owen O'Sulevan (eldest son to Sir Owen O'Sulevan, deceased) had woeful experience ; for upon his absence from his meeting he caused the bonoghs (which he had now entertained) to prey and rob the said Owen and some of his tenants, taking one John Oge prisoner... (*Pacata Hibernia*, 234)

Florence [Mac Carty] sent Teg O'Holloghan and Donogh Offally to Owen O'Sulevan, using many strong motives and forcible persuasions to him that he should join with them in action against her Majesty, assuring him that all the O'Sulevans would presently show themselves publicly for the Catholic cause if they might perceive that he would partake with them [...] Also Owen O'Sulevan, being with Florence Mac Carty at the palace heard him say that he had almost as willingly die as come under the English Government, and persuaded all those he spoke with to be obstinate in action, telling him how long Ireland had been tyrannically governed by Englishmen. All which O'Sulevan aforesaid related to the President, and hereto took his corporal oath the one-and-twentieth of March, 1600. (*Pacata Hibernia*, 237–8)

Nuair a tháinig an t-ionsaí ar Dhún Baoi ó fhórsaí na Corónach sa bhliain 1602, chuidigh Eóghan Óg agus a dheartháireacha leis na hiarrachtaí in éadan Dhomhnaill Chaim:

Ro fhorchongair an Iustis for an Iarla dol go Bérré go ttribh mílibh saighdiúir a maille fris, dus an ccaomhsadh ammus do thabhairt ar Ua Suillebhán mBerre [...] Báttar clann Eocchain ag congnamh las an Iarla i nagaídh Uí Suillebháin dóigh do bhean Ó Suillebháin Dún Baoi agus Berre dia nathairsiomh do bhreith na comhairle toir agus bhus agus baoi aga rádha gur bhó dó ro badh dleacht cíós dfaghbháil i mBeanntraighe.

'The Lord Justice ordered the Earl to proceed to Beare, with three thousand soldiers, to see if he could [advantageously] make an attack upon O'Sullivan Beare [...] The sons of Owen [son of Dermot] were assisting the Earl against O'Sullivan, because the O'Sullivan had taken Dun-Baoi and Beare from their father by the decision of the Council beyond and here, and was accustomed to say that he should by right receive the rents of Bantry.' (*AFM* 1602.11)

Sna blianta i ndiaidh Chogadh na Naoi mBlíana, bhí Domhnall Cam ar díbirt sa Spáinn, agus sa bhliain 1612, d'athbhronn Séamas I caisleán Dhún Baoi agus an

talamh thart air ar Eóghan Óg. Faoin mbliain 1615, bhí na teidil Ó Súilleabháin Béirre agus Tiarna Bheanntaí air (Burke 1893, xii). D'éag sé ar 31ú Lúnasa 1616, agus tháinig a mhac, Diarmaid, i gcomharbas air. Fuair Diarmaid bás go gairid ina dhiaidh sin, agus tháinig a dheartháirsean, Domhnall, a raibh páirt aige san éirí amach i 1641, i gcomharbas air sa bhliain 1618.

#### AN FILE

De réir scríobhaí Leabhar an Athar Ó Gadhra (féach an plé ar LSí thíos), Tadhg (mac Dhiarmada Óig) Ó Dálaigh a chum an dán seo. File de mhuintir Uí Dhálaigh Chairbrigh ab ea é, a raibh cónaí orthu i gceantar Chill Chrócháin, Co. Chorcaí. Leagtar ar a laghad ceithre dhán air a mhaireann go dtí an lá inniu. Ina measc, tá na dánta grá *A shlat leabhar na gcíoch mbláith* (ABM 22) agus *A-tá grádh nach admhaim oirn* (DG, dán 31), an péire acu don bhean chéanna de réir scríobhaí RIA LS 23 G 23 (198–9). Chum sé an marbhna *Tarraidh tuiséal tír Luighdheach* (O'Donovan 1849, 340–51) ar Fhínghean Ó hEidirsgeóil (†1614), agus marbhna eile ar Dhiarmaid Ó Súilleabháin (†1618), mac Eoghain Óig, *Cia so chaoineas críoch Bhanbha?* (O'Flatherty 1918, 46–57). Ba é mac an Taidhg seo, Diarmaid, a chum an dán *Iomdha buaidh ar chrích Chairbreach* (ABM 282), marbhna ar Thadhg an Dúna Mac Carthaigh (†1649) agus an dán polaitiúil *Do-rinneadh comhuidhigh ar fhéagain d'Éireannchaibh* a cumadh do dhuine de mhuintir de Barra (AiD, dán 35).

#### LÁMHSCRÍBHINNÍ

Tá an t-eagrán thíos bunaithe ar an dá leagan den dán a mhaireann i LSí 23 F 16 agus 23 L 17, Leabharlann Acadamh Ríoga na hÉireann. Tá an chóip is luaithe den dán ar leathanaigh 162–3 de LS 23 F 16 (.i. Leabhar an Athar Ó Gadhra, LS A as seo amach), a scríobh Fearghal Dubh Ó Gadhra sa Bhruiséil sa bhliain 1657. Is ar leathanaigh 17a–18a de LS 23 L 17 (LS B as seo amach) atá an dara cóip den dán seo (féach O'Rahilly 1926: 6). Scríobh Seán Ó Murchadha na Ráithíneach (1700–62) an chuid is mó den LS seo, na leathanaigh ar a bhfuil cóip den dán thíos san áireamh, i gCarraig na bhFear, Co. Chorcaí, idir na blianta 1744 agus 1745 (féach O'Rahilly 1926: 19). Foilsíodh tras-scríbhinn den dán seo in *ABM* (dán 489) le heagarthóireacht éadrom déanta air bunaithe ar an leagan den dán LS A.

#### POLASÁI EAGARTHÓIREACHTA AGUS MALAIRTÍ

- Mé féin faoi deara ceannlitreacha, poncaíocht, áit an tsínidh fhada taobh istigh de shiolla, agus scaradh na bhfocal.
- Tá noda scaoilte agam i gcló iodálach.

- Tá comharthaí séimhithe scaoilte agam mar ‘h’ gan a bheith i gcló iodálach ach amháin nuair atá an comhartha séimhithe mar chuid de líne chrochta shéimhithe.
- Léiríonn líne trí fhoca(i)l sna léamha (m.sh. *teæ*, líne 36a) botún de chuid an scríobhaí a cheartaigh sé féin sa LS. Agus cuirim litreacha idir na lúibíní < ... > le doiléire sa LS a léiriú sna léamha.
- Tá síntí fada bainte agam os íseal de na défhoghair *ao*, *ia* agus *ua*, ach coinnítear síneadh fada ar an défhoghar *eó* agus cuirtear síneadh fada leis nuair atá sé ar iarraidh i leagan na LSe.
- Úsáidim macran le síneadh fada nach bhfuil sa LS a chur ar fáil, agus tá síntí fada neamhstairiúla bainte agam os íseal (m.sh. *bárr*, líne 31c).
- Déanaim normalú os íseal ar litriú roinnt focal coitianta neamhaiceanta: *a > i* (i. an réamhfocal *i<sup>m</sup>*), *as > is* (an chopail/an cónasc); agus athraím *cc-* > *gc-* agus *tt-* go *dt-*.
- Déanaim normalú os íseal ar ghutaí neamhaiceanta nach bhfuil fada (m.sh. *2b ndúnuídh > ndúnaídh*, *4d loingios > loingeas*, *6c loingsi > loingse*).
- Úsáidim lúibíní cearnacha chun litreacha nach bhfuil sa LS a chur ar fáil.

I gcás athruithe eile, gheofar léamha na LSe ag bun an leathanaigh. Ní chuirtear san áireamh sna léamha éagsúlachtaí idir na LSí i dtaca le comharthaí séimhithe ná síntí fada (m.sh. LS A bhfaoinfhíodh, LS B bhfaoinfhíodh) ach amháin nuair atá éiginnteacht ann faoi athrú tosaigh nó faoi bhrí an fhocail.

#### TEANGA AGUS MEADARACHT

Deibhí, dán díreach, meadaracht an dáin seo, agus is beag áit i leaganacha na LSí nach dtagann an téacs leis na rialacha a bhaineann leis an meadaracht sin. Déanaim plé ar dheacrachtaí a bhaineann leis an meadaracht sna nótaí.

##### *Athruithe tosaigh*

Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg ainmneach uatha baininsneach i línte 26c (*buaídh c[h]atha nō ciorrhadh corp*) agus 34b (*tír thoiceach s[h]íl Shúilleabháin*). Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar fhocal baininsneach ar lorg an ailt i líne 24d (*an g[h]éag aolghruaidh Uisnigh*).

Tá urú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg áinsíoch uatha i línte 12a (*Comhumhal re crích [m]Béirre*) agus 27a (*Séan d'éirghe le earla [n]glan*).

Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg tabharthach uatha i línte 11d (*claonchrom do Ghuaire G[h]aoidheal*), 12d (*ag díolf[h]iach an Eōghoin-se*), 19b (*ag deilbh m[h]aoithe mheic Eōghain*), 29cd (*lán d'fhírmhéin [...] m[h]ínréidh aobhdha urnaightheach*) agus faoi dhó i líne 33b (*d'iath B[h]éarra agus B[h]eantraighe*).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Féach IGT ii §15, 699 agus §42, 1186, áit a bhfuil sampla eile de shéimhiú i bhfeidhm ar dhá fhocal, roimh agus i ndiaidh an chónaisc.

Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg ginideach uatha a chríochnaíonn ar chonsan caol i línte 13c ([is] *fearg neartdhrong mhúir M[h]oghadh*), 29b (*do bhí mac mheic D[h]iarmada*), agus 34b (*tír thoiceach shíl S[h]úilleamháin*). Tá urú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg ginideach iolra i línte 15b (*is caoine bhan [m]Beanntraighe*), 19d (*ag foighreadh ardb[h]ruach [n]Éireann*) agus 24b (*do chlaon rath innbhear [n]Éirionn*), agus tá séimhiú bainte agam ar lorg ginideach iolra i líne 19c (*céim gargluath na ngoirmshreabh s(h)eang*).

Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam chomh maith tar éis an réamhfhocail shimplí tre i líne 20c (*ag caoi tre choghnach bheann mBreagh*).

### Dúnadh

Tá dúnadh cuí ag deireadh an dáin:

- 1a      *Uaigneach a-deirtheas Dún Baoi*  
 35d      *dháibh 'na easbhaidh is uaigneach.*

### TÉACS

1. Uaigneach a-deirtheas Dún Baoi,  
 ráth mhaordha an mhuighe fēarnaí,  
 múr meadhrach na bhfaoinfhíodh bhfionn,  
 teaghlach aoidhíodh na hÉirionn.
2. A-táid uaigneach re haimsir,  
 faighthe a ndúnaidh d[h]ioghain[n]-sin,  
 srotha ionmhalla a ngort nglan,  
 port dioghlama na ndeōradh.

### AISTRIÚCHÁN

1. Dún Baoi is said to be lonely, the stately fort of the grassy plain, the joyful castle of the fair, low-lying trees, the household of the guests of Ireland.
2. They are lonely for a while now, the green of their strong fort, the lazy streams of their clear fields, the port where peripatetic poets gather.

### MALAIRTÍ

1a adearthar B; 1b mhúighe fhearnaí B; 1d cis (?) na B in áit na  
 2b dhioghainnsin B; 2c ionnmhalla B

3. Gus an teach a-tá fa sgís  
cumhain liom lā go mbeirdís  
cuairt siar gus an bhfa[i]rge bhfinn  
cliar gacha hairde d'Éirinn.
4. An aith[bh]e, gidh uaigneach dhi,  
fa Dhún Baoi na mbárc n-uaine,  
gach sruth mín longbhān mun lios  
do-chínn lomlán do loingseas.
5. Bás a chodhnaigh – céim neamháigh –  
éag Eōghain Í Shúilleabháin,  
tug an fhaighthe, an tráigh, an teach,  
cláir na haithbhe go huaaigneach.
6. An baile robudh buidhneach  
dá maireadh flaith fianbhuidhneach  
caladh budh lán do loingse –  
raghar dá n-ádh attoirse.
7. Do budh luchtmar na linntea  
ag cabhlach chrann n-in[n]illte  
a Sag[h]saibh na síothbhárc bhfinn  
is d'amhsaibh fhíorthrácht nÉirionn.
3. I remember a day when the learned of every corner of Ireland would pay  
a visit west to the bright sea, to the house that is [now] grieving.
4. Though the ebb-tide is lonely [now] around Dún Baoi of the green-grey  
ships, I used to see every calm, ship-white inlet around the fort filled to  
capacity with ships.
5. The death of its leader, the death of Eóghan Ó Súilleabháin – a peaceful  
step – has made the green, the shore, the house [and] the plains of the  
ebb-tide lonely.
6. Had the prince of hunting bands survived, the town would be crowded  
[and] the harbour full of ships – great sadness was too close to their good  
fortune.
7. The waters would be filled by a fleet with masts arranged from England  
of the bright, peaceful ships and [full] of hired servicemen of the true  
trade (?) of Ireland.

3a tteach B; 3b mbeidís B; 3d háirde dhéirinn B

4a aithfe B; 4d dó chín lómlán A, do chin n lomnán B

5a chognuidh A coghnuidh B, neamháidh B; 5b shuillemháin A, shúilleamháin B; 5c  
trágh B; 5d clár B, haibhte A, haibhte B

6a buighneach A, búidhneach B; 6b flath B; fianbuighneach A, fianmhúimhneach B; 6c  
bá AB; 6d róghar A, roghar B, atoirse B

7a do bá AB, luchtmar A; 7b cobhlach B; 7c siodhbharc B

8. Do budh cumhang an cuan glan  
ag loingeas oirir Alban  
's na tonna fá línibh long  
a tíribh lonna Lochlonn.
  9. D'fhoirribh líomhtha long Sbáinneach  
do bhiadh an cuan conghāireach;  
do budh cuan líonm[h]ar an loch  
treasan sluagh bhfiorg[h]lan bhFrangcach.
  10. Do bhiadh folach na faighthe  
uirre d'ógaibh armghairthe;  
do budh aimhréidh thall as-tigh  
ainréim ann ag na héigsibh.
  11. Do bhiadh do bharr na toinne,  
a leith umhla is urroime,  
an bhuaile laochlong tar lear  
claonchrom do Ghuaire G[h]aoidheal.
  12. Comhumhal re crích [m]Béirre  
gan fhormad, gan aimhréidhe,  
do bhiath líon gacha loingse  
ag díol f[h]iach an Eōghoin-se.
8. The clear harbour would be tight[ly packed] by a fleet from the coast  
of Scotland, and the waves filled with ships from the fierce lands of  
Scandinavia.
  9. The harbour would be crowded with polished crews of Spanish ships; the  
inlet would be a full harbour with the truly bright French crowd.
  10. The green would be hidden under warriors with shining weapons; inside  
it would be quarrelsome [where] there is a huge company (?) of the  
learned.
  11. Across the sea, above the waves, in regards to humilty and respect, the  
enclosure (?) of warrior-ships would be laden [with goods] because of  
Guaire of the Gaels [.i. Eóghan Óg Ó Súilleabháin].
  12. As obedient as the land of Beara [was to him], the entirety of every fleet  
would be paying a debt to Eóghan without envy or trouble.

8a do bá chumhang A, do ba cumhang B; 8b oirer B; 8d tiribh B

9a liomhtha B; 9c do ba hōn A, do bá B; 9d bfrangach A, bhfranncoch B

10c dó bá haimhreidh hall A, do ba haimhréidh thall B

11a tuinne B; 11b urruime B; 11d ghaidheal B

12a Comhumhail A, bheirre A bheirre B; 12c bhiadh AB

13. Tiocfadh d'aonghuth Eōghain Óig,  
an tan budh ai[dh]bhle an urchóid  
[is] fearg neartdhrong mhúir M[h]oghadh,  
tnúidh na n-eachtronn d'ísleaghadh.
  14. Éigse Banbha na mbreath dtréan,  
ón lō nach mair mac Oiléan,  
ní d'fhéin an iathair fhéachaid  
'gā dtriathaibh féin fuirēachaid.
  15. Tug treathan na dtonn muire  
is caoine bhan mBeanntraighe  
's tug feartha fhearchon Eanaigh  
neamhthol eachtra ar f[h]ileadhaibh.
  16. Ní sheólaid a longa a-le  
ón uair teasda fear Faoide;  
cúis na ndeōradh is liach leam  
ag seōladh tar iath nĒireann.
  17. Rath an mhara, measaid soin,  
d'imtheacht uile d'éag Eōghain;  
snuadh aighthe an chaomhchuain do chlódh,  
gaothbhuidh na haithbhe d'iompódh.
13. Whenever the malice and the wrath of the powerful hosts of Mogh's castle (?) was at its greatest, a single utterance from Eóghan Óg could abate the fury of the foreigners.
  14. Since the day Oiléan's son died, the learned of Ireland of strong judgments do not look to the warband of the west, they will remain with their own lords.
  15. The storminess of the sea's waves, the keening of the women of Bantry, and the graves of the fierce warriors of Eanach have left poets unwilling to journey [there].
  16. Since the man of Whiddy died, they do not sail their ships here; I am saddened by the reason the wanderers are sailing past the land of Ireland.
  17. They reckon the prosperity of the sea has completely gone as a result of Eóghan's death; the colour of the surface of the pleasant harbour has turned, as have the favourable winds of the ebb-tide.

13a Tiocfaidh B; 13d tnúith B, dísligadh A, díslighadh B

14b lá B; 14c dféinn B, fheachuidh B

15a mara B; 15b bean beanntraighe A, bhan beanntradha B; 15c fhearchoin A, fearchon B; 15d neamhthoil A

16a seoluid B; 16b theasda B

17a in A; 17c cáomhchúan A; 17d haibhthe A, háibhthe B

18. Do thréig an tan-so a toradh  
fearg na mara ag méadaghadh  
ní[o]r *nocht*, trá, a nimh gus a-níodh –  
a-tá sin mar do saoilleadh.
  19. A-tá mar an muir a-moigh  
ag deilbh m[h]aoithe mheic Eōghain;  
céim *gargluath* na ngoirmshreabh seang  
ag foighreadh ardb[h]ruach nÉireann.
  20. A-táid ag caoi uma chéibh ngloin,  
an tsíon, an úir, an fhiodhbhaidh,  
ag caoi tre c[h]oghnach bheann mBreagh;  
fordhath na reann ag ruaimneadh.
  21. Mar sin dóibh athaigh oile  
dúile Banbha braonaighe –  
fa hainmhín a gcor 'ma ceann –  
ar ndol d' *airmrígh* na hÉireann.
  22. Is é an rí-sin reacas mē  
mac ordhraic Aodha Sláine,  
nathair chrōdha baothchlann mBreagh,  
saorchrann far chōra caoineadh.
18. At this time, [with] the wrath of the sea growing, it has abandoned its fruitfulness; indeed, it never exposed its venom until today – that is as was predicted.
  19. It is as though the incoming tide is shaping the sorrow regarding Eóghan's son; the quick, rough manner of the dark, slender streams burnishing the high banks of Ireland.
  20. The weather, the earth and the woods keen over his bright hair, keening for the leader of the peaks of Ireland; the colour of the spears becoming red.
  21. The people of Ireland were tearful in the same way at another time – harsh was their plight in this regard (?) – when the armed king of Ireland was gone.
  22. That king of whom I speak is the famous son of Aodh Sláine, the fierce serpent of the wild (?) families of Ireland, the noble tree for whom it was most fitting to keen.

18*b* meadugadh A, méadoghadh B; 18*c* aniudh A, aniogh B; 18*d* mur A

19*a* mur A, amuigh B; 19*b* mhic B; 19*c* sheang A; 19*d* eireann A

20*a* má B; 20*b* fhiodhbuigh A, fhiodhbhoigh B; 20*c* mbreadh AB; 20*d* ruaimhneadh A

21*a* mur A; 21*d* ndul A

22*a* ríghsin AB; 22*b* ordhuire B; 22*c* mbreadh AB

23. Do bhí Éire an fhochain ghloin  
go dul do Dhiarmaid Ruanaidh  
lán d'fhorghrán mhuighe, do mheas,  
comhlán don uile aoibhneas.
24. Do shearg cnuas a coillteadh bhfionn  
do chlaon rath innbhear [n]Éirionn  
táir gach aonbhuidh dā ēag sin,  
an g[h]éag aolghruaidh Uisnigh.
25. A hadhra[dh] Airdríogh nimhe  
a los umhla is aithrighe  
do bhí gach lānbhuidh re a linn  
an rí do árluaidh Éirinn.
26. A dhóchas i nDia Athar  
fuair sin cách do cheannsachadh,  
buaidh c[h]atha nō ciorrbhadh corp,  
ionnramh ratha agus ríoghacht.
27. Séan d'éirghe le earla nglan,  
amhlaidh sin do f[h]uair Eóghan:  
ráinig sé síothchladh na sean  
a fíorthal Dē do dhéineamh.
23. Ireland of bright corn was to go to Diarmaid Ruanaidh filled with a great amount of grain of the plain, [full] of tree-fruit, completely filled with every delight.
24. The fruits of her bright woods withered, the prosperity of the estuaries of Ireland declined, every victory expired because of the death of the white-cheeked branch of Uisneach.
25. From worshipping the Highking of heaven [and] as a result of obedience and penance, every complete victory came to pass during his reign, the king who incited Ireland to battle.
26. Through his faith in God the Father, victory in battle, or maiming bodies, he managed to pacify everyone, guiding prosperity and kingdoms.
27. The bright-haired one prospered, this is how Eóghan achieved it: he reached the peaceful rampart (?) of the ancestors by acting in accordance with the true will of God.

23b ruanoigh AB

24c tar A; 24d uisnidh B

25a airdrí A airdrígh B; 25b aithridhe B; 25c re linn B; 25d árdluaidh A

26a dhóthchus AB; 26c ccatha A, catha B

27a le éarla glan AB; 27b amhluigh AB; 27c sídhchladh A; 27d déneamh A

28. Ní[o]r dhearmad a dhreach iodhan  
eagla dhíochra an Dúileamhan;  
teasda sé 'na síorlár sin  
i bhfíorghrádh Dé do dhaingnigh.
29. Fa haointeach aimsear fhada  
do bhí mac mheic D[h]iarmada  
lán d'fhírmhéin mhaord[h]a mhaithmheach  
m[h]ínréidh aobhdha urnaightheach.
30. Do lean de diadhacht chroidhe;  
fuair airsídh fhoinn Bheanntraighe  
gach aonbhuidh ar aba sin;  
gaolbhuaín aga re hainglibh.
31. Do bhí méidhe na muire,  
do bhí an talamh toghaidhe,  
barr na sgath, donnghrán na ndreas,  
comhlán do rath 'na reimheas.
32. Do budh suaimhneach na sreabha,  
fa hálainn na háirgheadha,  
fa corcra ceannbhrat na néall  
do d[h]eaghmhac ochta Oiléan.
28. His pure face did not forget the intense fear of the Creator; he died in the eternal midst (?) of that [fear] and in the strengthening of true love for God.
29. He was ascetic for a long period; the grandson of Diarmaid was full of truly noble, forgiving, gentle, pleasant, beautiful, prayerful nature.
30. Piety of heart stayed with him, because of that the veteran of the land of Bantry received every victory; he is linked to angels.
31. The neck of the sea, the choice land, the produce of the flowers, the golden fruit of the thorn-bushes were [all] completely full of prosperity during his lifetime.
32. The streams were peaceful, the herds were splendid, the covering cloak of the clouds was crimson for the good son of Oiléan's bosom.

28a Ní dhearmuid B, iogh<a>in A; 28b dúiliomain A; 28d dhaingnidh AB  
29a Ba A, Bá B, aimsior bhfada A, aimsir bhfada B; 29c dfírmhéinn B  
30a diaghacht A; 30b airsigh A; 30c áonbhúaigh A aonbhuaín B  
31a mara B; 31b toghadha B; 31d réimheas AB  
32a Robudh A, Róbudh B; 32b hairgeadh A, hairgheadha B; 32c néal B

33. An ionbhaidh fa fear faire  
d'iath Bhéarra agus Bheanntraighe,  
ar feadh na gcríoch bhfonnbhláth b[h]fionn  
fa comhghnáth síoth is soinionn.

34. An uair-sin fa trom dtionáil  
tír thoiceach s[h]íl S[h]úilleabháin;  
tír gan aonrath 'na heasbhaidh  
an tír aobhdhath áilghean-sain.

35. A-niogh i n-éagmais Eōghain  
ní sáimh do[n] eing ilcheólaigh,  
tír an chneasghloin gan bháidh mbreath  
dháibh 'na easbhaidh is uaigneach.

36. Ar dteach turaidh treabh nimhe  
an Óg[h] iochtmhar ainglidhe  
tiocfa dhī ar dtadhall san teach  
nach bí ar n-anam go huaigheach.

33. The period that he was watchman of the land of Beara and Bantry,  
peace and cheerfulness were commonplace across the territory white  
with flowers.

34. At that time the prosperous land of the Uí Shúilleabháin had a great  
assembly, a land not lacking in any success, that pleasant, beautifully  
coloured land.

35. Now that Eóghan is gone, the musical land is no longer peaceful, the land  
of the bright-skinned one who had no partiality in his judgements; they  
are lonely without him.

36. Our house of pleasant weather of heaven's dwellings, it is thanks to the  
kind angelic Virgin, that my soul will not be lonely when I reach that  
house.

33a ionbhuigh A, nionmhuidh B; bá A, budh B; 33b diath bearra 7 beanntraighe A, dia  
béarra 7 beanntraidhe B; 33c fheadh B, bfionnbhláth A; 33d bá A, budh B

34a ba A, bá B; 34b súilleamhain A, suilleamháin B

35b sáimh don B; 35d easbhoigh A, easboigh B

36a tea treabh B; 36b ainglidhe B; 36c taghall AB; 36d gan in áit go A

## NÓTAÍ

**1d.** Is féidir le *ráth* a bheith firinsneach nó baininsneach (*IGT* ii §38, §39). Tá sé baininsneach sa chás seo agus séimhiú ar an aidiacht ina dhiaidh dá réir.

**3b.** Tagann na LSí salach ar a chéile i dtaca leis an mbriathar sa líne seo (A *go mbeirdís*, B *go mbeidís*), agus is fearr a thagann léamh A le brí an rainn ina iomláine. Tá samplaí i ndánta eile ón tréimhse Chlasaiceach de bhriathra éagsúla á n-úsáid leis an bhfocal *cuairt* leis an mbrí ‘visits’ a thabhairt; *do-ní cuairt* (féach, mar shampla, *AiD* 10.37), *cuiridh cuairt* (m.sh. *AiD* 7.19), *beiridh cuairt* (m.sh. *AiD* 40.37).

**4d.** Bheadh léamh B (*lomnán* in áit *lomlán*) go breá anseo chomh maith agus ní chuirfeadh sé isteach ar bhrí an rainn.

**5a.** De réir mo thuisceana, tá an forainm sealbhach *a* ag tagairt don ainmfhocal firinsneach *Dún* sa rann roimhe. D’fhéadfaí glacadh le léamh B anseo chomh maith (.i. *a codhnaigh* in áit *a chodhnaigh*) agus an forainm sealbhach a bheith baininsneach, ag tagairt do *aithbhe* (4a) nó *an fhaighthe* (5c).

**5cd.** Bheadh léamh B (*trágh* : *clár* in áit *tráigh* : *cláir*) go breá anseo chomh maith, agus ní chuirfeadh sé isteach ar an aistriúchán ach amháin go gcaithfí ‘plains’ a athrú go ‘plain’.

**5d.** Tá *haibhte* na LSe (LS B *haibhte*) athraithe agam go *haithbhe* i bhfianaise an fhocail chéanna a bheith i líne 4a. Féach go bhfuil an litriú céanna seo le feiceáil arís i líne 17d i leaganacha na LSí (.i. A *haibhte*, B *háibhte*) agus tá sé athraithe agam go *haithbhe* sa chás sin chomh maith.

**6b.** D’fhéadfaí glacadh le léamh B anseo chomh maith (.i. *flaith fianMhuimhneach* ‘prince of Munster warriors’ in áit *fianbhuighneach* ‘prince of hunting bands’).

**6c.** Tá *bá* na LSí á thuiscint agam mar an chopail sa mhodh coinníollach i bhfianaise an bhriathair sa mhodh foshuiteach i líne 6b (.i. *dá maireadh*) agus an chopail sa mhodh coinníollach i líne 6a (.i. *robudh*). Tá *bá* athraithe agam go *budh* dá réir sin. Tá foirmeacha na copail leasaithe agam i roinnt mhaith línte síos tríd an dáin:

- 7a. *do bá* > *do budh* (modh coinníollach)
- 8a. *do bá* > *do budh* (modh coinníollach)
- 29a. *ba haointeach* > *fa haointeach* (aimsir chaite)
- 33a. *bá* > *fa* (aimsir chaite)
- 34a. *ba* > *fa* (aimsir chaite)

Is cosúil gur léiriú luath é seo ar fhoirmeacha na copaire san aimsir chaite agus sa mhodh coinníollach ag titim le chéile ag an am a raibh na LSí á scríobh (.i. *ba* foirm an mhodha coinníollaigh agus foirm na haimsire caite, mar atá i nGaeilge an lae inniu). Féach freisin nóta 32a thíos.

**7a.** Is fearr a thagann léamh B *luchtmhar* ‘well-filled’ le ciall an rainn ná léamh A *lachtmhar* ‘milky’, agus mar sin tá léamh B curtha ar fáil agam san eagrán.

Maidir le *bá* a athrú go *budh*, féach nóta 6c thuas.

**7d.** Maidir le ‘trade’ mar aistriúchán ar *trácht*, féach *DIL* s.v. 5 *trácht*. Níl mé cinnte faoin aistriúchán seo mar is féidir *trácht* a thuiscint ar go leor bealaí éagsúla: ‘strand, shore; strength, vigour; movement, travelling’, agus d’fhéadfadh ceachtar de na bríonna seo a bheith i gceist leis sa líne seo.

**8a.** Maidir le *bá* a athrú go *budh*, féach nóta 6c thuas.

**8b.** D’fhéadfaí glacadh le léamh B anseo chomh maith (*oirear* in áit *oirir*) agus é a léamh mar thuiséal ginideach iolra: *loingeas oirear Alban* ‘fleet of the coastal borders of Scotland’.

**9.** Tá sampla den ghléas ornáideach *breacadh* sa rann seo (9b *cuan*, 9c *cuan*, 9d *sluagh*). Féach Ní Dhomhnaill (1975, 45–54).

**10d.** Níl mé cinnte faoi bhrí na líne seo, go háirithe an focal *ainréim*. Tá *réim* á aistriú agam mar ‘company’, ag tarraingt ó *DIL* s.v. 1 *réim(m)* (c), áit a gcuirtear *réim* i gcomparáid leis an bhfocal *buidhean*, agus mar aon leis an réimír *an-* tá mé á thuiscint mar ‘a huge company/group’.

**11a.** Ba litriúla ‘above the **wave/surface**’ anseo, mar go bhfuil *tonn* san uimhir uatha.

**11d.** Tugtar *Guaire Gaoidheal* ar an bpátrún anseo. Féach *DIL* s.v. 3 *Gúaire*: ‘Applied eulogistically to a generous, open-handed prince or chief from Guaire Aidne k. of Connacht c. 620–662, famous for his hospitality.’

**13c.** Tá *múr Moghadh* aistrithe agam mar ‘Mogh’s castle’, ach níl mé cinnte faoi seo. D’fhéadfaí *mogh* a léamh mar ‘servant, slave’ (*DIL* s.v. *mug, mog*) freisin, a thabharfadh an bhrí ‘the wall/castle of the servants/slaves’.

Tá siolla ar iarraidh sa dá leagan LSe sa líne seo, agus tá an cónasc *is* curtha ar fáil agam ag tús na líne leis seo a leasú.

**13d.** Tá cuibheas deiridh ar iarraidh sa leathrann seo idir *Mhoghadh* agus *d’isleaghadh*. Ní léir dom aon bhealach simplí leis seo a leasú agus mar sin tá sé fágtha gan athrú.

**14c.** Faightear an dhá litriú *iathar* agus *iarthar* ‘the back part, western part’ i bhfilíocht ón tréimhse seo (féach *DIL* s.v. *íathar*; *íarthar*).

**15ab.** Glactar le *muire* (léamh A) agus le *mara* (léamh B) mar fhoirm an ghinidigh uatha de *muir* (féach *IGT* ii §41, §42), ach mar nach léir dom aon sampla de *\*Beanntragha* mar fhoirm an ghinidigh uatha den logainm seo i bhfilíocht ón tréimhse seo, tá leagan A curtha ar fáil agam san eagrán.

Ní mór glacadh le léamh B anseo (*bhan* in áit *bean*). D’fhéadfaí *ban* a fhágáil gan séimhiú anseo chomh maith agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh (féach *SnaG*, 357–8).

**15c.** D’fhéadfaí *fhearchon* a fhágáil le séimhiú nó an séimhiú a bhaint agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh, agus ní chuirfeadh sé isteach ar uaim na líne.

**17d.** Maidir le *haibhthe* a athrú go *haithbhe*, féach nóta 5*d* thuas.

**19b.** Níl an séimhiú bainte agam de *mheic* ar lorg ginideach uatha baininsneach agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh.

**20c.** Mar go bhfuil na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh (féach *SnaG* 357–8), níl an séimhiú bainte agam de *bheann* anseo. Mar go leanann an tuiseal áinsíoch an réamhfhocail *tre* de ghnáth, bheifí ag súil le hurú i ndiaidh *tre choghnach* sa líne seo.

**21c.** Níl mé cinnte faoi bhrí na líne seo, go háirithe cad dó a dtagraíonn an forainm sealbhach *a* anseo, nó ar chóir dó a bheith firinsneach (mar atá in LS B) nó baininsneach (mar atá in LS A).

**22a.** Tá an cuibheas deiridh seo idir *mé* agus *Sláine* ceart go leor ó thaobh na meadarachta de. Tá tuilleadh plé ar an saghas seo cuibhis ag Ní Dhomhnaill (1975, 28–9).

**22c.** Níl séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar *baothchlann* ar lorg ainmneach uatha baininsneach agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh.

**24d.** Tá siolla ar iarraidh sa líne seo, agus ní léir dom aon bhealach simplí leis seo a chur i gceart.

**25c.** D’fhéadfaí glacadh le léamh A (foirm scartha den aidiacht shealbhach agus an réamhfhocail .i. *re a*) nó le léamh B anseo (an fhoirm nasctha .i. *re*, *ré*). Is féidir teacht ar thuilleadh plé air seo in *SnaG* 431.

**25d.** Maidir le ‘incited’ mar aistriúchán ar *árluaidh* féach *DIL* s.v. luaidid (c) (d).

**27a.** Níl mé cinnte faoi bhrí na líne seo. Ba litriúla ‘Prosperity from his bright hair prospering’.

**28ab.** D’fhéadfaí glacadh le léamh A (*Níor dhearmad*) nó le léamh B (*Níor dhearmaid*) anseo. Féach *DIL* s.v. *dermataid*, *dermaitid*.

Ní mór glacadh le léamh B i dtaca le *iodhan* : *Dúileamhan* (seachas léamh A *iodhain* : *Dúileamhain*).

**28c.** De réir mo thuisceana, tagraíonn an forainm sealbhach *a* don ainmfhocal baininsneach *eagla* sa líne roimhe.

**29a.** Maidir le *ba* a athrú go *fa*, féach nóta 6c thuas.

**30a.** De réir mo thuisceana, is forainm réamhfhoclach é *de* sa líne seo. Tá an réamhfhocal á úsáid leis an mbriathar *leanaidh* leis an mbrí ‘adheres to, stays with, follows’ (*DIL* s.v. *lenaid* I) agus is é *diadhacht chroidhe* ainmní an bhriathair.

**30b.** Níl an séimhiú bainte agam de *fhoinn* ar lorg ainmneach uatha firinsneach sa líne seo agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh. Tá an séimhiú seo deimhnithe ag uaim na líne.

**30c.** Maidir le *ar aba sin*, féach Mac Cárthaigh (2002: 117) nóta 33a.

**31c.** Tá sé deacair ciall a bhaint as an dara cuid den líne seo sa mhéid is nach bhfásann grán ‘grain’ ar dhriseacha, agus tá sé á thuiscint agam go scaoilte mar ‘fruit’. Féach freisin *granna finemnach* ‘grapes’ (*ACL* 331.20).

Maidir le ‘crop, produce’ mar aistriúchán ar *barr*, féach *DIL* s.v. 1 *barr* (f).

**32a.** Tá *robudh* (modh coinníollach) na LSí athraithe agam go *do budh* (aimsir chaite) ionas go dtagann sé leis na línte eile sa rann (.i. an chopail i líne 32b *fa hálainn*, 32c *fa corcra*). Féach freisin nóta 6c thuas.

**33a.** Maidir le *bá* a athrú go *fa*, féach nóta 6c thuas.

**34a.** Maidir le *bá* a athrú go *fa*, féach nóta 6c thuas.

**35c.** Is sampla é an comhfhocal *cneasghloin* d’aidiacht shubstainteach agus tá sé aistrithe agam mar ‘bright-skinned one’.

**36a.** Cé go mbeifí ag súil le séimhiú ar lorg *turaidh* (ginideach uatha firinsneach a chríochnaíonn ar chonsan caol), níl séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh.

**36d.** Tá léamh B (*go huaigneach*) curtha ar fáil agam san eagrán seachas léamh A (*gan huaigneach*).

## GIORRÚCHÁIN

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| <i>Pacata Hibernia</i> | Sir Thomas Stafford, Sir George Carew, <i>Pacata Hibernia, or A History of the Wars of Ireland during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth</i> , Vol. 1, Standish O'Grady (ed.) (London 1896). |

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## A LEGAL DEED IN IRISH, 1622

### ABSTRACT

This paper presents an annotated transcription and translation of a legal deed in Irish, dated 1622, recording an agreement between Cairbre Ó Conchobhair and Richard Lane, pertaining to lands in Co. Roscommon. Historical background is provided as an introduction.

THE DOCUMENT PRESENTED HERE – a deed of conveyance from Cairbre Ó Conchobhair to Richard Lane – forms part of a large collection of deeds and papers relating to the family of Lane of Tulsk, Co. Roscommon, and Rathcline, Co. Longford, ultimately (1676–1724) Viscounts Lanesborough, deposited among the Masters' Exhibits of the English Court of Chancery.<sup>1</sup> A document in the collection refers to their deposit, 'pursuant to an order of the Court of Chancery', by Mary, Dowager Viscountess Lanesborough, in 1729.<sup>2</sup>

### THE LANE FAMILY

The founder of the Lane family in Ireland was an Elizabethan soldier, Captain George Lane, who, like many of his kind, acquired an Irish wife, Áine, daughter of Cormac Ó Fearghail,<sup>3</sup> and who acquired some lands in Co. Roscommon, some of it at third hand from other settlers. By 1607 he was in possession of 13 quarters of land in 'Quyren [*Cuibhreann*] Sleight Felim Clery of Tulsk and Quyren O Flanagan of Bealawoghter' and was refusing to pay the 6<sup>s</sup> 8<sup>d</sup> per quarter which had been decreed to Hugh O Conner Roe by an amending indenture to the Composition of Connacht.<sup>4</sup> He died (according to an inquisition *post mortem* taken on 6 September following) on 22 February 1613/14, leaving a widow, called in the inquisition, 'Ammalyn Lane *alias* Ny Farell' and a 22-year-old son and heir, Richard.<sup>5</sup> On 13 May following, his widow, calling herself Aney Lane of Tulsk, obtained a quitclaim to certain lands from one of the O Flanagans.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>London, TNA, 106/104–6, 153. This collection was discovered by KWN, more or less by chance, many years ago, while waiting for a document in the old Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, London.

<sup>2</sup>TNA C.106/153, box 2.

<sup>3</sup>NLI G.O. MS 155 (*Linea Antiqua*), p. 66a. Her mother was a Burke of Benmore, Co. Galway, a collateral and dispossessed branch of Clann Riocaird.

<sup>4</sup>NAI, R.C. 5/29, pp 186–91.

<sup>5</sup>NAI, R.C. 9/15 (Inquisitions in Exchequer series, Co. Roscommon, no. 44 of James I) George and Áine also had a least one daughter, Anne, wife of John O'Ferrall of Tirlickeen, Co. Longford, and mother of Sir Connel Farrell.

<sup>6</sup>TNA C.106/153, box 1.

The son, Richard Lane, one of the parties to the deed edited here, continued the process of land-acquisition, residing first in the old O Flanagan castle of Bealahoghter, and later at Tulsk. As the son of a Gaelic mother, he seems to have been on close terms with some of the Irish neighbours, especially with Maoileachlainn Modartha Ó Maoil Chonaire, for whom he acted as a trustee, and several legal documents relating to whom are present in the collection.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, he was also a member of the privileged New-English community, and served as High Sheriff of County Roscommon in 1629, an office which has led to the presence in the collection of that very rare survival, the roll of a sheriff's tourn court held in Athlone Barony in that year.<sup>8</sup> Another important part of the collection is a group of deeds relating to Hugh (Aodh mac Toirdhealbhaigh Ruaidh) O Conor Roe and his sons, from whom Lane acquired lands, and the involved history of his confiscated 'lordship' of Cloonybeirne, Co. Roscommon.<sup>9</sup>

Richard Lane had married Mabel, the daughter of Garret FitzGerald, a younger son of the family of Donore, Co. Kildare, by his English wife Grace Mainwaring, by whom he had a son, Sir George Lane, afterwards Viscount Lanesborough, and four daughters, of whom the eldest Mabel, became the first wife of Roger O Ferrall, the compiler of the genealogical collection *Linea Antiqua* to which we owe most of these details.<sup>10</sup> Although he seems to have been a Protestant, as a strong Royalist he suffered the confiscation of two-thirds of his lands by the Commonwealth,<sup>11</sup> the remainder being distributed to transplanted, and some of which, including those that are the subject of the deed edited here, he never recovered.<sup>12</sup> The Restoration, however, brought about a recovery of his fortunes, and the honour of a baronetcy, granted in January 1661, by which he became Sir Richard. He died in 1668.

The great majority of the collection, however, concerns the affairs of Richard's son, Sir George Lane, and his acquisitions and land speculations in the chaotic title situation created by the 'Cromwellian' confiscation and the Restoration settlement. They include, besides the records of legal proceedings, title deeds (some, relating to Dublin, going back to the Middle Ages) and many documents relating to the transplantation, including petitions to the Commissions sitting at Athlone and Loughrea, and claims submitted to the Restoration Court of Claims. They relate to many parts of Ireland, and deserve a full catalogue. Since there is already an excellent, though necessarily short, biography of George Lane by Dr Toby Barnard,<sup>13</sup> we will not attempt one here.

<sup>7</sup>KWN furnished abstracts of these to Benjamin Hazard, who has cited them in Hazard (2010: 25 n. 124) and (2015).

<sup>8</sup>TNA C.106/153, box 2 (unfortunately a small portion is at present illegible due to dirt).

<sup>9</sup>TNA 106/105, Box 2, 106/153, Box 2.

<sup>10</sup>NLI G.O. MS 155 (*Linea Antiqua*), pp. 60a, 201.

<sup>11</sup>Decree of the Transplantation Commissioners sitting at Loughrea, C.106/104 Box 1.

<sup>12</sup>'Schedule of the lands claimed by Sir George and Sir Richard Lane', in C.106/104 Box 1, compared with *Books of Survey and Distribution, Co. Roscommon* (Simington 1949).

<sup>13</sup>Toby Barnard, 'Lane, George', in *ODNB*.

His land acquisitions seem to have begun as early as 1650, when he acquired the manor of Rathcline, Co. Longford, from the Dutton family who had obtained it in the Jacobean Plantation of that county.<sup>14</sup> After the Restoration he founded there the town of Lanesborough, for which he obtained a charter of incorporation, with the right to send two members to the Irish parliament and from which, when ennobled in 1676, he took his title of Viscount Lanesborough. He died in 1683. Mention must be made here of another large collection of his papers, including his political correspondence, which must have remained at Rathcline when the present collection was taken to England, and have passed with the Rathcline estate to its later owners, who took it with them to Gowran, Co. Kilkenny. There it was surreptitiously rescued from imminent incineration on the orders of a land agent, and is now in the National Library of Ireland.<sup>15</sup>

A further small section of the Masters' Exhibits collection consists of legal papers relating to George's son, James Lane, the Second Viscount Lanesborough, who died without lawful issue in 1724, his heirs being his sister's sons, the Lane-Fox family. Their descendants remained as the absentee owners of parts of the Lanesborough estate, in Counties Leitrim and Waterford, down to modern times. The second Viscount, however, must have had illegitimate offspring, as in his will he refers to his grandson, John Bell Lane, probably the John Lane of Rathcline who died in 1757. Finally, the collection includes a few non-Irish items relating to Cheshire; a small group of sixteenth-century deeds; and an interesting deed of 1331, by which Hugh de Venables sells the marriage of his son William to Maud de Vernon for a large sum.<sup>16</sup>

#### SLIOCHT FEIDHLIMIDH / FÉILIM CHLÉIRIGH

Feidhlimidh Cléireach, ancestor of the sept, was the fourth son of Aodh mac Feidhlimidh Uí Chonchobhair (died 1362), king of Connacht, and a younger brother of Toirdhealbhach Ruadh (died 1426), who was contender for the kingship with his kinsman Toirdhealbhach Óg (or Donn, died 1407). This rivalry led to the emergence of the two rival Ó Conchobhair lines of Ó Conchobhair Ruadh (Roe) and Ó Conchobhair Donn (Don), each forming part of the two great factional allegiances headed respectively by the two rival De Burgo headships of Mac Uilliam Íochtair (in the modern county Mayo), and Mac Uilliam Uachtair of Clann Riocaird (Clanrickard) in the present County Galway. In addition to this division, the *Ruadh* line was subject to recurrent and violent internecine dissensions between brothers as well as more distant relations, and even between father and son.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Bodleian Library, MS Carte 177, p. 199.

<sup>15</sup>NLI MSS 8631–6. There is a brief note of its rescue in MacLysaght (1978: 177–8).

<sup>16</sup>TNA C.106/104, box 1.

<sup>17</sup>The Ó Conchobhair Donn line does not seem to have been so often subject to internal dissension.

Feidhlimidh Cléireach died in January 1410/11.<sup>18</sup> In 1420 his two eldest sons, Maghnus and Domhnall, had gone to Ogulla Church to remove some armour which had been stored there, apparently unaware that Toirdhealbhach Óg's son Ruaidhrí and his followers were present in Ballybeg close by, when they were set upon and killed, Maghnus at Tulsk in his flight, and Domhnall, who had taken refuge in the church itself, being burned to death when it was fired over his head.<sup>19</sup> Tulsk castle, in subsequent times the centre of the Sliocht Feidhlimidh, did not come into their possession until later. It had been built in 1406 by Toirdhealbhach Ruadh<sup>20</sup> and, although destroyed next year by the *Donn* faction on their way to inaugurate their candidate, Cathal mac Ruaidhrí, at Carnfree, must have been rebuilt, as on Toirdhealbhach Ruadh's death in 1426 it passed to his son Cathal Dubh, from whom it was taken next year by Cathal mac Ruaidhrí.<sup>21</sup> In 1430 it was recovered by Cathal Dubh from the sons of Toirdhealbhach Óg, to whom it had passed.<sup>22</sup>

Feidhlimidh Cléireach's sons, however, must have acquired some interest in the immediate area, as in 1448 one of them, another Feidhlimidh, gave land in Tulsk for the foundation of a Dominican Friary, soon after which he was mortally wounded at nearby Kilcoola in a brawl with the sons of Cathal Dubh (one of whom, Brian, was likewise mortally wounded by Feidhlimidh's nephew Cormac Cam, son of Maghnus mac Feidhlimidh Chléirigh) and was buried in the still incompleated and unconsecrated friary.<sup>23</sup> Thereafter Sliocht Cathail Dhuibh fell into rapid decay. The last mention of them in the annals is in 1482,<sup>24</sup> and in 1585 their *cuibhreann* amounted to only a quarter-land and a half, compared with the twenty-six and a half of 'Cowryn Slight Phelime Clery'.<sup>25</sup>

Thereafter the Sliocht Feidhlimidh figure in the recurrent internal dissensions which befell the *Ruadh* faction. In 1449, when many of the faction (including his own brothers) turned against Tadhg (mac Toirdhealbhaigh Ruaidh) Ó Concubhair Ruadh, a grandson of Feidlimidh Cléireach, Domhnall mac Rosa, was wounded.<sup>26</sup> A similar situation arose in 1465, after Tadhg's death in the preceding year, when his sons and his brothers fought each other and the Sliocht Feidhlimidh, after being plundered, took the side of Tadhg's sons.<sup>27</sup> In 1468 they were again victims in the campaign of plunder conducted

<sup>18</sup> *A.Conn.* s.aa. 1410.3, 1411.3.

<sup>19</sup> *A.Conn.* s.a. 1420.15.

<sup>20</sup> Ó hInnse (1947), s.a. 1406.12.

<sup>21</sup> *A.Conn.* s.aa. 1407.8–9, 1427.7.

<sup>22</sup> *AFM* IV, 880 (s.a. 1430).

<sup>23</sup> Mac Fhirbhisigh Annals in *Misc.IAS*, 220–1, where Cormac Cam is called 'Son of Machon', but see his genealogy in RIA MS 23 Q 10.

<sup>24</sup> *AFM* IV, 1120 (s.a. 1482).

<sup>25</sup> Freeman (1936: 153 and 157).

<sup>26</sup> *Misc.IAS*, 223.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 256–7. In this, as in later references, 'O Connor Roe's sons' ('Clann', later 'Sliocht Uí Chonchobhair Ruaidh') denotes the surviving sons of Toirdhealbhach Ruadh and their descendants, who constituted a single sept as late as 1585, although in one reference the descendants of Cairbre (died 1482, *A.Conn.* (misidentified in index), *AFM* (omitted by a printer's error in the English translation and consequently from the index)) are distinguished as 'Sleight Carbery O Connor of Annagh'.

by Tadhg's son, Feidhlimidh Fionn, in his attempt to establish dominance, which only came to an end when he was defeated near Oran by MacDavid Burke and stripped of his spoils.<sup>28</sup> In 1478 they were again at war against Feidhlimidh Fionn, who was supported by Ó Conchobhair Donn and opposed by his own brothers and uncles, and in this Toirdhealbhach Ruadh, son of the then clan-head, Feidhlimidh Cléireach's youngest son Ruaidhrí, was killed.<sup>29</sup>

In 1485 the newly acceded Mac Uilliam of Clann Riocaird, Uilleag Ruadh, in a destructive raid broke down and burned the castle of Tulsk and the nearby settlement of Corker.<sup>30</sup> In 1488 Feidhlimidh Fionn finally achieved his ambition, and was inaugurated as Ó Conchobhair Ruadh on the death of his uncle Donnchadh, but he was opposed by Ruaidhrí mac Feidhlimidh Cléirigh and forced next year to retreat into Uí Mhaine, where he died on Easter Monday 1490.<sup>31</sup> Ruaidhrí mac Feidhlimidh Chléirigh, although a man in his eighties, was installed as his successor; his enemies, the descendants of Tadhg Ó Conchobhair, brought Ó Domhnaill to support them, but the latter failed to take Tulsk castle.<sup>32</sup> Ruaidhrí died two years later and was buried in Tulsk.<sup>33</sup>

We have no information on the sept in the immediate aftermath of Ruaidhrí's death, but it would seem that they continued the feud with the sons of Feidhlimidh Fionn, and they might even have put forward one of Ruaidhrí's sons as Ó Conchobhair Ruadh. In 1499 the Earl of Kildare, in the course of an expedition to Connacht, took the castle of Tulsk from Sliocht Feidhlimidh and handed it over, along with their hostages, to Aodh Ó Conchobhair, who is described as 'the second lord' (*an dara Tighearna*), a paraphrase for Ó Conchobhair Ruadh. This Aodh can be identified with the Aodh mac Feidhlimidh Fionn who heads the Ó Conchobhair genealogy in a tract which can be dated to this period.<sup>34</sup> After Kildare's departure, Aodh was driven from his lordship by Mac Diarmada and forced to flee across the Shannon, where he summoned Mac Uilliam Íochtair to his rescue. The latter took Tulsk castle which must have been recaptured by the Sliocht Feidhlimidh, and it and the hostages were once more delivered to Aodh Ó Conchobhair.<sup>35</sup> The Sliocht Feidhlimidh seem to have been feuding not only with the sons of Feidhlimidh Fionn but also with the other descendants of his father Tadhg, as in 1511 the sons of Ruaidhrí's son Cathal were slaughtered at Tulsk by the sons of Tadhg

<sup>28</sup>*AFM* IV, 1056 (s.a. 1468).

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 1108 (s.a. 1478).

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, s.a. O'Donovan mistakenly took the placename 'Carcair' as a common noun, and translated it as 'prison'. In the late sixteenth century Corker belonged to the Sliocht Feidhlimidh Finn.

<sup>31</sup>*AFM*, s.aa. 1488–9.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 1180 (s.a. 1490).

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 1188 (s.a. 1492). Reference to his old age shows that the editorial footnote in *A. Conn.*, p. 594, is misconceived.

<sup>34</sup>The older of the two genealogical tracts in TCD MS 1372 (H.4.31).

<sup>35</sup>These events only figure in *AFM* (were the Mac Fhirbhisigh Annals their source?). The Earl's capture of Tulsk is referred to briefly in *AU*. 'The son of Cairbre mac Briain', who was killed by a gunshot in its capture by Mac Uilliam, was presumably a member of the Sliocht Feidhlimidh.

Buidhe, a nephew of Feidhlimidh Fionn.<sup>36</sup> This is the last annalistic reference to the sept for a long time. The genealogical collections, which figure a number of the fifteenth-century members of the sept, have only two that come briefly into the sixteenth, two grandsons of Ruaidhrí: Conchubhar son of Cathal and Tuathal son of Brian Ruadh. We can carry on the pedigree for a further generation; in 1563 Feidhlimidh and Aodh, two sons of Cairbre son of Brian Ruadh, were killed by the descendants of Tadhg and the O Flanagans on an expedition of the Sliocht Feidhlimidh.<sup>37</sup> This is, we think, the last annalistic reference to the sept.

In the following period the Sliocht Feidhlimidh, like many of their neighbours, fell victim to the process of land-acquisition of outsiders, not only the English settlers like George Lane, but also, and especially, frontiersmen from the western borders of the Pale. In the case of the Sliocht Feidhlimidh, this was Christopher Nugent, Baron of Delvin (died 1602), head of the most powerful clan of frontiersmen.<sup>38</sup> An inquisition taken in March 1627/8, apparently to provide evidence in a lawsuit, found that 'Terence' (Toirdhealbhach) and John O Connor, by their deed dated 10 June in the tenth year of Elizabeth (1568), had granted the lands of Carrowgarve, Cloonagh [Clooneigh], Clooncorra [Cloon-corr] and Diriquirk [Derryquirk] to Christopher, Lord Baron of Delvin, who in turn had granted them to his second son Christopher Nugent.<sup>39</sup>

This Toirdhealbhach is perhaps the grandfather of the grantor of the deed edited here, while John O Connor is probably the Shane O Connor of Tulske pardoned in 1587,<sup>40</sup> and Christopher Nugent the younger<sup>41</sup> is more usually styled 'of Corbetstown' (Co. Offaly). Among the Lane Manuscripts<sup>42</sup> is a paper deed of 2 May 1611, endorsed 'a conveyance of the Slegt Phelimes to Mr. Christopher Nugent' by which Shane O Conhour, Rorie Duffe O Conhour, Rorie Grane O Conhour, and Hugh mcCarburie O Conhour, all of Cloneath, grant the quarters of Cloneyta and Clancore, the two quarters of Cargarrave and the two quarters of Leskoyrke to Christopher Nugent of Tulske, Esq., his heirs and assigns.

The last named of these grantors (all of whom make their marks to the deed) is the grantor of our deed. In the mass surrender and regrant of Connacht in

<sup>36</sup>ALC II, 212 (s.a. 1511). Tadhg Buidhe subsequently became Ó Conchobhair Ruadh in 1519, and was the ancestor of all the subsequent holders of the title. The names (Ruaidhrí Ruadh, Brian, Tadhg and Cathal) which follow the entry were taken by the indexer to be those of the killers: they were perhaps rather those of the victims.

<sup>37</sup>ALC II, 385 (s.a. 1563). Diarmaid son of Cairbre Ciotach, killed along with them, was also probably a member of the sept.

<sup>38</sup>The loss of the Nugent/Delvin archives, which probably occurred when their heirs, the Greville-Nugents, ceased to reside at Clonyn Castle in the 1920s, must count as a historical disaster, analogous to that of the loss of the Clanrickard archives.

<sup>39</sup>NAI, R.C. 4/15 (Chancery Series, Roscommon, no. 28 of Charles I). KWN has corrected obvious errors in the placenames.

<sup>40</sup>*Fiants of Elizabeth*, §4022.

<sup>41</sup>He must not be confused with his namesake, the son and heir of Sir Thomas Nugent of Moyrath Co. Meath, who had acquired the lands of the Sliocht Briain Bhallaigh Uí Chonchobhair; see NAI, *Salved Chancery Pleadings*, H.115.

<sup>42</sup>TNA C. 106/106.

1617–20 all the Nugent lands in Tulske commencing with the castle, like those in Co. Sligo, were surrendered by and regranted to another Palesmen settler, Christopher Delahoyde of Derron,<sup>43</sup> who cannot have been acting except as a trustee for Nugent, who was certainly in possession of them at his death in 1626. As he was childless, his heir was his elder brother, Richard, who by then had a rise in the peerage to Earl of Westmeath.<sup>44</sup>

The Inquisition *post-mortem* on George Lane states that he held Lishquirk (Lissacurkia) in mortgage from some of the sept of ‘Sleight Phelim’,<sup>45</sup> and in the general surrender and regrant of 1617–20 Richard Lane held Derricurk quarter, a quarter of Ardkeenagh, a third of Corregow, amounting to half a quarter, and half a quarter of each of the quarters of Liskurke and Lisnatwoy.<sup>46</sup> None of these belonged to him in 1638, nor are they included in the mortgage of his entire estate which he made in October and November 1631 to three Galway merchants.<sup>47</sup> This mortgage for £700, at the very high interest of £100 *per annum* (much more than the 10% usual at this period) suggests that he was in financial difficulties, possibly explained by the loss of much of his estate to Christopher Nugent’s brother and heir, the Earl of Westmeath, through legal proceedings. Although there appears to be no record of a formal decree of the Court of Chancery in such a case at this period,<sup>48</sup> many cases were settled before reaching such a conclusion. The loss of a suit would explain the absence from the Lane collection of any deeds of title relating to the lands in question, since they would have been surrendered along with the lands themselves. Presumably the document edited here, and that of 1611 quoted above (which would appear to have belonged to the other side in such a suit) had been overlooked.

The deed edited here is referred to in the ‘schedule’ of lands claimed after the Restoration by Sir George and Sir Richard Lane, which includes ‘half a quarter of land in Lissquirk and Lisnetwoye, and half a quarter of land in Lissenoyde in Corrigarve, purchased by the claimant 12 November 1622 from Hugh and Owen mcCarbery O Connor.’<sup>49</sup> There is no surviving deed from this brother of Aodh in the collection.

Although none of the Sliocht Feidhlimidh appears as a landowner in the surrender and regrant of 1617–20, the *Books of Survey and Distribution*, which took its details of ownership from the Strafford survey carried out in 1637–8 for the projected Plantation of Connacht, names three members of the sept as landowners.<sup>50</sup> Connor mcShaen O Connor and Callaca [Calbhach]

<sup>43</sup> *Cal. Ir. Patent Rolls James I*, 351. There has been no modern study of the mass surrender and regrant by the Connacht landowners of 1617–20, so shamefully overturned to make way for a projected plantation of Charles I; see however, Butler (1917: 101–5).

<sup>44</sup> NAI, R.C. 4/15 (Inquisition *post-mortem* in Chancery Series, Roscommon, no. 20 of Charles I).

<sup>45</sup> As n. 5, above.

<sup>46</sup> *Cal. Ir. Pat. Rolls James I*, 353. The other halves of these quarters were included in the Delahoyd (Nugent) regrant.

<sup>47</sup> TNA C.106/106.

<sup>48</sup> KWN is very grateful to Ms Therese Hicks who checked the relevant years in the repertory of Chancery Decrees (NAI, R.C.6).

<sup>49</sup> As n. 12, above.

<sup>50</sup> Simmington (1949: 76–7).

mcRory Duff O Connor, sons of two of those named in 1611, held respectively four and two cartrons of the three quarters (i.e. twenty cartrons) of Clooneath and Clooncor. Carbery mcTeig Boy O Connor held three cartrons in the same denominations, and also the isolated cartron of Lisnaheath. All these had been included in the Delahoyd/Nugent surrender and regrant. Had the O Connors, in a reversal of the more usual process, recovered them in the meantime?

The wording of the deed edited here, although in Irish, follows the usual form of conveyances in Latin or in English at this period. The only original feature that one can perceive is the inclusion in the recital of ‘nest of hawks [i.e., goshawks] and merlins’, and of honey, another forest product. It is very unlikely that the goshawk, a bird of deep forest, and much in demand by falconers, ever nested in these lands, although we know that they did in the woods of O Hanly’s Country, near the Shannon.<sup>51</sup> The lands which figure in the deed lay in the modern townlands of Lissacurkia, Corrareagh and Corragarve, in Kilcooley Parish and in the Barony of Roscommon, County Roscommon.<sup>52</sup>

#### TEXT

The following is the text of a conveyance of two half-quarters (99 Irish acres) of land in the parish of Kilcooley, Co. Roscommon, from Aodh mac Cairbre mheic Thoirdealbhaigh Uí Chonchobhair of Tuillsce to Richard Lane of Béal Átha Uachtair, dated 12 November 1622. It occurs as an unnumbered document in The National Archives (Masters’ Exhibits) C. 106/153 (box 2). The text is written on a leaf of folio paper that was subsequently folded three times along its short edge. As with similar Irish deeds of the early seventeenth century,<sup>53</sup> words and letters have been lost from its periphery due to folding and to general wearing.

In the reproduction of the text below proper nouns are capitalized, scribal contractions are expanded in italics, and lost words and letters are supplied within square brackets. The arrangement of lines adheres to that of the original document, line-numbering being editorial; the equal-sign represents the scribe’s horizontal double-hyphen where words are broken at the end of lines (lines 3, 10 and 16).

The language is Early-Modern Irish, of a standard to be expected of Maoileachlainn Modartha Ó Maoil Chonaire, signatory (line 23) and – based on his signature – also the scribe. A brother of Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire, Maoileachlainn was named by Míchéal Ó Cléirigh as one of four contemporary scholars ‘most expert and learned in the knowledge of difficult Irish’.<sup>54</sup> Borrowings of legal expressions and vocabulary, remarked on in the notes, reflect the indebtedness of the document to English common law.

<sup>51</sup>D’Arcy (1999: 85–90); Nicholls (2001: 183–4).

<sup>52</sup>The authors are indebted to Luke O’Donoghue for his help in preparing the typescript of this paper.

<sup>53</sup>E.g. Mac Niocaill (1970: nos IV–VI); Ó Macháin (2004: Deed II).

<sup>54</sup>‘ona maighistreibh do ba foirtille 7 dobadh foghlamtha an eolas chrúais na gaoídhilge inar laithibh féin’, Ó Cléirigh (1643: 3).

Noteworthy orthographic features are few, with the exception perhaps of *u* (lines 1, 18, 19) and *hs* (lines 2, 6, 12, 16, 18) representing initial *bh* (eclipsis) and *sh* respectively.

### Transcription

1. Bódh a fhios ag gach áon léighfius et éistfeas an sgríbhheann go ufuilimsi  
Ao[dh]
2. mac Cairbre Uí *Conchobhair* o Thuillsce duine uasal do hSlíocht Feilim  
Chleirigh
3. ag tabhoirt leithcheathramhan Leasa an Nid *dar* ab ainm oile  
leithcheathramha na Corr=
4. rátha is an Chorraidh Gairbh et leithcheathramhan a leathbhaili Leasa an  
Choirce 7 Lis na
5. Túaidhe úaim féin 7 óm oidhridhibh go bráth do Risdeard Láne ó Bhel  
Átha Úachtair
6. duine úasal. et dá oidhridhibh et dá hsidginoidhridibh go bráth itir mhín et  
aimhrei[dh]
7. et sraith feoir thirim 7 inbhear éisc et ceann muilinn et mil 7 nead  
seabhui[c]
8. et meirillíúin et gach uili ní as gnáth do bheith ar fhearann fa thalamh et ós
9. cionn talmhan don mheid bhías a leanmhoin an fhearoinnsi díobh an  
fearann go
10. síorraidhi et na sochoirsi go brath do beith ag Risdeard Láne et agá oidh=
11. ridhibh et do dhéna misi Aodh mac Cairbri meic Toirrdhealbaigh mo  
thiotal féi[n]
12. et tiotal 7 tabhortas mathor et mo hseanathor do dhíon et do hseasamh 7 do
13. bharántas go bráth do Risdeard Láne et dá oidhridhibh an aghoidh gach
14. uile dhuine do aigeóradh ar dtiotal nó ar dtabhortas et dá bhríogh
15. sin ataim ag déanamh turnoidhe am ainm et am ionad féin do Bhrían mac
16. Seamois Uí Fhearghoil ré fódaibh seilbhe an dá leithcheathramhansa do  
hseach=
17. adadh go sóthóilte do Risdeard Láne et do dhaingniughadh an sgríbhinn
18. atáimsi Aodh mac Cairbri ag cor mo láimhe et mo hséla air a ufiadhnoisi  
na
19. ufiadhan chuirfius a lámha ar an dinntiúr .12. Nouimbér .1622.
20. Beinge present at           Aodh mac Cairbri Uí *Choncobhair* [a lámh]
21. the sealeinge &           et a hséla
22. deliveringe hereof
23. Maoile[ach]lainn modartha Ó M[aoil] *Conairi testis*
24. Diarmuid mhac
25. Mhaoiltuile *testis*
26. John Conry  
[in dorso:] Hugh mc Carbery o  
conors conveyance to  
mee

*Translation*

Let all who shall read and hear the document know that I, Aodh son of Cairbre Ó Conchobhair from Tuillsce, gentleman, of the *sliocht* of Féilim Cléireach, am giving the half-quarter of Lios an Nid, which is otherwise known as the half-quarter of An Chorr-ráith and of An Corrach Garbh, and a half-quarter in the half-townland of Lios an Choirce and Lios na Tuaidhe, from myself and my heirs forever, to Richard Lane from Béal Átha Uachtair, gentleman, and to his heirs and assigns forever: both level and uneven land, and meadow of hay, and fish-inlet, and mill-site, and honey, and nest of hawk and merlin, and every single thing commonly found on land, below ground and above ground, however many of them shall pertain to this holding; the land in perpetuity and these benefits forever to be possessed by Richard Lane and his heirs.

And I myself, Aodh son of Cairbre son of Toirdhealbhaich, shall protect and safeguard and warrant my own title and the title and power of alienation of my father and grandfather for Richard Lane and for his heirs forever against every single person who would contest our title or our power of alienation.

And therefore I am appointing Brian son of Séamus Ó Fearghail as attorney in my own name and in my stead in order to deliver the ‘sods of possession’ of these two half-quarters peaceably to Richard Lane.

And to confirm the document I myself, Aodh son of Cairbre, am putting my hand and seal on it, in the presence of the witnesses who shall sign the indenture. 12 November 1622.

|                            |                                          |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Beinge present at          | Aodh mac Cairbri Uí Choncobhair his hand |
| the sealing and            | and his seal                             |
| delivering hereof          |                                          |
| Maoileachlainn Modartha    | Ó Maoil Chonairi witness                 |
| Diarmuid Mhac Mhaoil Tuile | witness                                  |
| John Conry                 |                                          |

## NOTES

1. *gach áon léighfius et éistfeas*: This opening formula reflects the language of charters (cf. Flanagan 2005: §§12–15) and occurs in a number of Irish legal documents, e.g. *LMLDI* D16 and D22; Hardiman (1828: nos XXII, XXVII (*éisdfeas* only), XXX (*léighfeas* only), XXXIV, XXXVIII (*éisdfeas*, *léighfeas agus tuicfeas*)); Mac Niocaill (1970: nos IV, VI, VII (*éisdfeas* only)).

1–2. *Aodh mac Cairbre Uí Chonchobhair*: Hugh McCarbery/mcCarburie O’Connor, whose ancestry is set out in the introduction.

2. *Thuillsce*: Tulsk, par. Ogulla, bar. Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.

2 and 6. *duine uasal*: In the Irish deeds this term conveys the meaning of ‘gentleman’, a broad, undefined title of social status (‘nobleman’ in English usage was restricted to members of the peerage) sometimes indicating that the person referred to, or members of his family, were or had been landowners.

*hSliocht Feilim Chleirigh*: The sept – a term developed in English specifically to translate *sliocht* (KWN) – descended from Feidhlimidh Cléireach Ó Conchobhair, who died in 1410/11, as explained above. A *sliocht* (the equivalent of earlier *fine*) comprised the descendants of a common ancestor who shared a corporate identity (KWN).

**3. *leithcheathramha***: The acreage of the *ceathramha*, one quarter of a *baile* (*fearainn*), varied considerably throughout Ireland, and even within counties (Simmington 1949: xxxvii–xxxviii). In the present case we are fortunate in that the extent of the *leathbhaile* (two *ceathramhna*) mentioned in this text (note to line 4 below) is given in the *Books of survey and distribution* for Roscommon as 198 plantation (or Irish) acres (Simmington 1949: 76). Thus the conveyance of two *leithcheathramhna* or half-quarters in this deed is the equivalent of 99 Irish acres. In Roscommon the Irish acre was 7,840 square yards, 3,000 square yards in excess of the statute acre (KWN).

*Leasa an Nid*: Lios An Nid (referred to as ‘Lissenoyde’ above) appears not to have survived as a placename, but the text tells us that it was an alternative name for the half-quarters of *An Chorr-ráith* (possibly Correagh, par. Kilcooley, bar. Roscommon) and *An Corrach Garbh* (Corragarve, par. Kilcooley), which bounds Correagh on the west.

**4–5. *leathbhaili Leasa an Choirce 7 Lis na Túaidhe***: In the *Books of survey and distribution* (Simmington 1949: 76) ‘Lisnorkey *alias* Lisneatoiy’ is cited as containing two quarters: a *leathbhaile* in other words. Lios an Choirce is Lissacurkia (par. Kilcooley, bar. Roscommon, Co. Roscommon), approximately two miles south-west of Corragarve; its alternative name (referred to in the inquisition on George Lane above as ‘Lisnatwoy’) may not have survived into modern times.

**5. *Risdeard Láne***: Richard Lane of Tulsk (c. 1591–1688), father of George, the founder of Lanesborough, Co. Longford. Details of his life are given above.

*Bhel Átha Úachtair*: Ballyoughter (referred to in the Lane Papers as Bealawoghte and Bealahoghter (see above)) in the townland of Lurgan, par. Shankill, Co. Roscommon (Ó Riain et al. 2005: 96); cf. Pender (1939: 573); to be distinguished from Ballyoughter in Ballaghaderreen, par. Kilcolman.

**6. *hsidginoidhridibh***: *sighineighre*, *sighinoighre* ‘an assign’ does not appear in *DIL*, yet, with variant spellings, it occurs frequently in the legal deeds, e.g.: *LMLDI* D22; Hardiman (1828: nos XXI, XXII, XXX, XXXIV, XXXVIII, XXXIX); Mac Niocaill (1970: no. VII). The variant form (plural only) *signibh* occurs in Hardiman (1828: no. XXI) and Mac Niocaill (1970: nos II and V), while *signaidhe* is also found in Mac Niocaill (1970: no. V).

**6–8.** The listing of the appurtenances and benefits (*sochair* line 10) of the land being conveyed is a feature of some deeds, where the lists have a formulaic, all-encompassing aspect, not necessarily reflective of actual features of the property. That in *LMLDI* D22 is representative: ‘ideir fhér agus ithir, ideir chré agus choill, idir riasg agus mhóin agus mílleach, idir muilend agus abhallghort, idir áitiughadh agus fhoirgneamh’. Other formulas also include water and fishing: see Hardiman (1828: nos XXII, XXX, XXXIV, XXXVIII). As remarked already, in the present instance the inclusion of *nead seabhui[c] et meirilliúin* is unusual, as is that of honey. (Honey as a means of payment is recorded in a Latin indenture of 5 May 1520 between the Earl of Kildare and Edmund Duff of Í Chinnseallaigh, at a rate of 16d per gallon: TCD MS 9827/1 (KWN)).

**7. *sraith*:** generally denotes a meadow located near to a river (*DIL* s.v.), which aligns it with the two items that follow: *inbhear éisc et ceann muilinn*.

*feoir thirim*: Apart from the present instance, the earliest known attestations for this term for hay appear to be those in the near-contemporary *Trí Bior-Ghaoithe an Bháis* (Bergin 1931: ll. 3798–3808, 5381–2). Kelly (1997: 46–7) refers to the absence in Irish of a term for hay in the pre-Norman period.

*ceann muilinn*: Literally ‘the head of a mill’, the term occurs in a gloss to the legal text on millraces, *Coibnes Uisci Thairidne* (Binchy 1955: 70, §12); Binchy (p. 57) suggested it is to be equated with *cennáit muilind* ‘the head (site) of a mill’ (p. 77, §IV), followed by Gearóid Mac Eoin (1982: 17).

**8–9. *fa thalamh et ós cionn talmhan*:** This expression also occurs in Hardiman (1828: nos XXXVII and XXXVIII), reflecting the principle referred to in the maxim ‘cuius est solum, eius est usque ad coelum et ad inferos’ (Wylie 1975: 152).

**12. *tabhortas*:** Gift of freehold, power of alienation; cf. *LMLDI* D7, D20, D24.

**12–13. *do bharántas*:** For the quasi-verb-noun function of *barántas* here, compare ‘do sheasamh, do bharantas, do chothughadh agus do chosaint’ (Hardiman 1828: no. XXXVIII). Aodh undertakes to defend his ancestral title to and power of alienation of the lands being conveyed against anyone who might subsequently challenge that title and power by, it is implied, asserting a prior claim against the lands.

**15. *turnoidhe*:** (cf. *aturnae LMLDI* D22, *tonaeiri* D11, *turnibh* D20) This is not a trained legal official but merely someone appointed to act as an agent or representative, in this case for Aodh mac Cairbre in the specific matter of formally handing over the property. The agent for such a task was otherwise known as the *báille seilbhe* ‘bailiff of seisin’ (*LMLDI* D22, Hardiman (1828: nos XXVIII, XXX) and Mac Niocaill (1970: nos IV and VI)). It is noteworthy

that no mention is made of Aodh mac Cairbre receiving consideration (*díolaidheacht LMLDI D24*, Hardiman (1828: no. XXXIX)) for the property.

**15–16.** *Brian mac Seamois Uí Fhearghoil* has not been identified.

**16.** *fódaibh seilbhe*: The phrase ‘fód seilbhe/sealbha’ occurs a number of times in bardic poetry in contexts that suggest, as here, outright ownership or freehold: McKenna (1939, 1940: 71.13, 32); Ó Donnchadha (1931: XXIII.33–4; Mhág Craith (1967, 1980: 16.2); Ó Raghallaigh (1938: 153, q. XXVI); cf. also Plummer (1968: I, 272.11) (translated ‘sod of possession’ in Plummer (1968: II, 264)) and ‘Gheobhainn léighse is fód sealbha air na mílte acra talaimh’, cited from Séamus Dall Mac Cuarta in *Corpas*. The term may derive from the medieval practice of Feoffment with Livery of Seisin: ‘This form [of conveyance] involved ceremonial action by the parties to the conveyance; they had to enter physically upon the land to be conveyed and the grantor (feoffor) had to deliver (hence ‘livery’) the seisin to the grantee by some symbolic act, such as handing over to him a sod of earth’ (Wylie 1975: 80–81).

**18.** *mo hséla*: The document shows no sign of having had a seal attached to it.

**19.** *dinntiúr*: Formal, chirographic indentures are rare among the corpus of Irish deeds: *LMLDI* 19 (NLI MS 18,997) and Mac Niocaill (1970: no II) (NLI MS G 983/3) are examples. Three citations of the word are given in *DIL* (s.vv. *dintiúr*, *deinntiúr*) and others will be found in Hardiman (1828: nos III, XII, XXVII), Mac Niocaill (1970: nos II, IV), and *LMLDI* D11, D19, D22.

**23.** *Maoileachlainn Modartha*: Scribe of the deed, and brother of Flaithrí Ó Maoil Chonaire (Walsh 1947: 61–2; Hazard 2010, 2015); ‘John Conry’ (l. 26) may also have been a relation.

**24–5.** *Diarmuid Mhac Mhaoil Tuile*: Probably a member of the Roscommon family of medical scholars (Nic Dhonnchadha 2016: 120; Ó Muraíle 2016: 102); possibly to be identified with the ‘Dermot M’Moeltwly of [Cloyfenlagh = Cloonfinlough, bar. Roscommon] surgeon’ recorded in July 1585 (*Fiants of Elizabeth*, §4741). As the signatures on this document suggest, the participation of members of the learned families – as scribes, agents or witnesses – in these legal records was commonplace; the documents from the Inchiquin Archive are representative: Mac Niocaill (1970: nos II and V (Mac Bruaidealha), III (Mac Cruitín), VI (Ó Maoil Chonaire), VII (Ó Maoil Chonaire and Mac Fhlannchadha)).

#### ABBREVIATIONS

*A.Conn.*

A. Martin Freeman, *Annála Connacht: the Annals of Connacht (A.D. 1224–1544)* (Dublin, 1944).

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ALC                              | William M. Hennessy, <i>The Annals of Loch Cé. A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590</i> , 2 vols (London, 1871).                          |
| Cal. Ir. Patent<br>Rolls James I | <i>Irish patent rolls of James I: facsimile of the Record Commissioners' calendar prepared prior to 1830</i> (Dublin, 1966).                                  |
| Corpas                           | Corpas Stairiúil na Gaeilge 1600–1926 ( <a href="http://corpas.ria.ie/">http://corpas.ria.ie/</a> ).                                                          |
| Fiants of<br>Elizabeth           | <i>The Irish fiants of the Tudor sovereigns during the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Philip &amp; Mary and Elizabeth I</i> , 4 vols (Dublin, 1994) II–III. |
| KWN                              | Kenneth W. Nicholls                                                                                                                                           |
| LMLDI                            | <i>Late Medieval Legal Deeds in Irish</i> ( <a href="https://sites.google.com/site/irishlegaldeeds/">https://sites.google.com/site/irishlegaldeeds/</a> ).    |
| Misc.IAS                         | <i>The Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society</i> , vol. 1 (Dublin, 1846).                                                                            |
| NAI                              | National Archives of Ireland.                                                                                                                                 |
| NLI                              | National Library of Ireland.                                                                                                                                  |
| ODNB                             | Oxford Dictionary of National Biography ( <a href="https://www.oxforddnb.com/">https://www.oxforddnb.com/</a> ).                                              |
| TNA                              | The National Archives (Kew, London).                                                                                                                          |

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KENNETH W. NICHOLLS  
PÁDRAIG Ó MACHÁIN

TUGADH AN T-ÁR-SO AR ÉIRINN:  
DÁN POLAITIÚIL Ó THÚS AN SEACHTÚ HAOIS DÉAG

ABSTRACT<sup>1</sup>

This paper provides a discussion and edition of *Tugadh an t-ár-so ar Éirinn*, an early seventeenth-century political poem attributed to Eóghan Mac Craith. The poem, which is a lament on the state of Ireland, abounds in imagery and motifs that are typically associated with the accentual political poetry of the middle of the century, and contains what is, perhaps, one of the earliest examples of the gendered depiction of Ireland as a neglectful mother who has abandoned her children. The poem also contains interesting supplementary quatrains, or *iargcomhairc*, to Donnchadh Ó Briain, the fourth Earl of Thomond. It will be suggested here that these stanzas, in which the Virgin Mary is invoked, may, in fact, be a cloaked rebuke of the earl's staunch Protestantism. The question of the poem's date of composition, which has hitherto caused some confusion, will also be addressed.

RÉAMHRÁ

IS ÉARD ATÁ san alt seo ná eagrán de dhán polaitiúil dar tús *Tugadh an t-ár-so ar Éirinn* a leagtar ar an bhfile Eóghan Mac Craith. Dán teibí polaitiúil atá i gcorp an tsaothair (rainn 1–13), ina ndéantar cur síos ar chruachas na hÉireann i bhfriotail aighneasach teagascach, agus ina ndéantar cur síos ar Éirinn mar mháthair mhídhílis mhínádúrtha, a thréig a clann féin agus a bhfuil clann choimhthíoch á tógáil aici (rainn 4–11). Déantar tráchttaireacht sa dán ar mhórchlaohlú sóisialta an seachtú haois déag, agus ar ísliú stádas na n-uaisle go háirithe (rann 10). Cuirtear *iargcomhairc* ar Dhonnchadh Ó Briain, ceathrú hIarla Thuamhan, ar fáil ag deireadh an dáin (rainn 14–17). Tá an dán in eagar agam thíos as LS ARÉ 24 L 13 (7), agus tugaim léamha as LS Leabharlann na Breataine Harley 1921 agus as LS Choláiste na Tríonóide 1281.<sup>2</sup> Déanaim plé ar chúlra agus ar chomhthéacs an dáin, mar aon lena sheachadadh lámhscríbhíne.

<sup>1</sup>Tugadh leagan den pháipéar seo ag an gcomhdháil *Dánta Cogaidh agus Dánta Síochána ó lár an 17ú haois*, a reáchtáladh i gColáiste na Tríonóide i mí na Bealtaine 2022. Táim buíoch de Philip Mac a' Ghoill, de Mhícheál Hoynes agus d'Eoin Mac Cárthaigh as a gcuid moltaí le barr feabhais a chur ar ghnéithe den eagrán seo. Táim buíoch, leis, d'eagarthóirí *Celtica* agus don léitheoir a cheap siad. Mé féin faoi deara gach botún agus dearmad.

<sup>2</sup>Tá eagrán dioplómaíúil den chóip den dán atá ar caomhnú in ARÉ 24 L 13 ar fáil in *ABM* (dán 486).

## DÁTA CEAPTHA AN DÁIN

Léirítear mearbhall áirithe maidir le dáta ceaptha an dáin seo sna finnétithe lámhscríbhinne agus sa tráchttaireacht a rinneadh ar an dán go dtí seo. Insíonn foinsí áirithe dúinn gur sa bhliain 1620 a cumadh an dán, ach leagtar an dáta 1640 air i bhfoinsí eile.<sup>3</sup> Luaitear dáta ceaptha an dáin sa téacs féin: *sé chēad déag agus dōchad* (13*d*). Is cosúil gur ón bhfocal *dochad* / *dōchad* (: *fad*) (°*déag*) a eascraíonn an mhíthuiscint. Is léir gur léadh an focal seo mar fhoirm den ghiorrúchán ar ‘dá fhichead’, ‘daichead’, giorrúchán a fhaightear san fhilíocht aiceanta ón seachtú haois déag i leith: ‘*Dá fhichead* (trisyllabic, with main stress on second syllable) has given disyllabic *daichead* in spoken Irish ... This is attested in stress-verse from the first half of the seventeenth century’ (O’Rahilly 1950: 354, ag fonóta 2). Tá léirithe ag Ó Cuív, áfach, gur foirm ar leith den uimhir ‘fiche’ é *dōchad/dáchad*, a múnlaíodh ar leithéidí *tríocha*, *ceathrachad* srl. (1970: 110), agus dar leis go mb’fhéidir go bhfuil foinse ársa ag an bhfoirm seo.<sup>4</sup> Níl fad an chéad ghuta deimhnithe ag an meadaracht anseo, agus mar sin tá *dochad* na lámhscríbhinne coigeartaithe agam go *dōchad*.<sup>5</sup> Is fearr a thagann an dáta seo, 1620, mar a raibh Donnchadh Ó Briain fós ina bheatha, le comhthéacs an dáin.

## FILE

Leagtar *Tugadh an t-ár-so ar Éirinn* ar Eóghan Mac Craith i ngach ceann de na finnétithe lámhscríbhinne; file a bhain, ní foláir, leis an teaghlach oidhreachtúil filíochta-staire a raibh brainsí de lonnaithe i dTiobraid Árann agus i Luimneach faoin séú haois déag. Is é an tuairim a bhí ag T. F. O’Rahilly gurbh fhéidir gurb ionann údar ár ndáin-ne agus Eóghan mac Donnchaidh Mhaoil Mheic Craith, a chum raidhse dánta reiligiúnacha:

The *floruit* of Eoghan mac Donnchadha Mhaoil, who is known as the author of some religious pieces, has not yet been satisfactorily determined. If an inference may be drawn from the way in which the names are interchanged in some mss., he would be identical with the Eoghan Mac Craith who, besides taking part in the ‘Contention of the Bards’ was author of *Tugadh an t-ár-so ar Éirinn* (written in 1620), and a couple of poems on the O’Briens of Clare and Tipperary. (O’Rahilly 1921–4: 103)

<sup>3</sup>Luaitear an dáta 1620 leis an dán sna lámhscríbhinní Má Nuad M1, ARÉ E v 2 (200) agus Leabharlann na Breataine Harley 1921. 1620 nó 1640 atá in ARÉ 23 G 24 (257). Is mar seo a leanas a dhéantar cur síos ar an dán i gcuide de na cuntais chatalóige: ‘On the illness (?) of Donnchad O Briain, Earl of Thomond, 1620’ (ARÉ 24 L 13 (7); *Cat. ARÉ*. fasc. 1, 44); ‘On the death of Donnchadh O Briain in 1640 (acc. to this poem)’ (ARÉ 24 C 21; *Cat. ARÉ* fasc. 22, 2732). 1620 an dáta a leagtar ar an dán i mBunachar Fhilíocht na Scol (<https://bardic.celt.dias.ie/rochtainMárta2023>), agus 1640 a luaitear leis in *ABM* (dán 486).

<sup>4</sup>Mar a luann Ó Cuív, ‘twenty’ a thugtar mar aistriúchán ar *dōchad* in *DIL*, ach féach go bhfuil sé sin athraithe (go hearráideach) go ‘forty’ in *eDIL* (s.v. †*dachad*).

<sup>5</sup>Guta fada atá i bpéire de na trí chóip lámhscríbhinne is sine, mar atá TCD H 1. 7 (1281) agus Harley 1921.

Dar le Pádraig Breatnach gurb ionann údar ár ndáin-ne agus Eóghan Mac Craith ar leith a chum an dán dar tús *Slán le sinnsearaibh Síl dTáil* agus a rinne athchóiriú ar dhán fada ginealaigh ar na Brianaigh dar tús *Tug damh h'aire a Inse an Laoigh*, a leagtar a bhunleagan ar an bhfile Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaideadha:

There are good grounds for believing that the redactor responsible for reworking the original [of *Tug damh h'aire*] was none other than Eoghan Mac Craith, a poet of Clare, who flourished in the first half of the century and who is known as the author of a poorly transmitted lament for Ireland, *Tugadh an t-ár so ar Éirinn*. (Breatnach 2008: 133)

Tá dealramh na fírinne ar an tuairim sin. Is léir go raibh baint ag ár bhfile leis na Brianaigh, óir tiomnaíonn sé cúpla rann ag deireadh an dáin do Dhonnchadh Ó Briain, ceathrú hIarla Thuamhan. Déanann Breatnach amach go bhfuil dearcadh diúltach i leith Dhonnchaidh Uí Bhriain agus i leith Bhrianaigh an seachtú haois déag go ginearálta á léiriú ag an bhfile sa leagan athchóirithe de *Tug damh h'aire* agus in *Slán le sinnsearaibh Síl dTáil* faoi seach. San athscríobh a rinneadh ar *Tug damh h'aire*, mar shampla, is amhlaidh a fágadh na tagairtí moltacha do Dhonnchadh Ó Briain ar lár:

The most remarkable feature of the revised version is its extrusion (except for a passing reference) of Donnchadh Ó Briain, fourth Earl of Thomond, the patron during whose tenure (1581–1624) the original poem was composed and with a record of whom (three quatrains) its chronicle of the royal line concludes. It is certain that this extrusion was effected out of revulsion against the earl's actions in siding with the English during the Nine Years' War, and the egregious cruelty against his own people that characterised his pursuit of the English cause thereafter. (Breatnach 2008: 132–3)

Sa dán *Slán le sinnsearaibh Síl dTáil*, déantar comparáid idir na seanBhrianaigh agus na Brianaigh chomhaimseartha a thréig na filí nuair a ghlac siad le téarmaí na Sasanach:

Do súigheadh dinn diaidh ar ndiaidh  
laoich óga sleachta Síl mBriain,  
tréad fromtha nár fhógair síoth  
do thógaibh comhtha coigcríoch.

'They were sucked from us one by one, those young champions of *Síol mBriain*; the tried company that never declared peace has accepted the foreigners' terms.' (Breatnach 2008: 135)

Tá an rann thuas lochtach sna finnéithe lámhscríbhíne ar fad, agus déanann Breatnach amach go ndearnadh doiléiriú ar theachtaireacht an fhile d'aon ghnó:

It is curious that so forthright a cry of betrayal should be transmitted in so indecipherable a form; each copy adds a slight alteration of its own to the corruption that must have been present in the archetype that lies behind them... It is fair to wonder whether the distortion may have originated, not a result of some late accident of transmission, but rather as a device with which to hide from those turned servants of the English crown a view of them that might bring retribution upon those who held it. (Breatnach 2008: 133–4).

Ní féidir an méid sin a chruthú go cinnte, ar ndóigh, ach déanaimse amach go mb'fhéidir go bhfuil a leithéid de mhasla ceille i gceist sna rainn a thiomnaítear do Dhonnchadh Ó Briain inar ndán-na chomh maith (féach thíos). Chuirfeadh an léamh sin ar an dán taca faoin tuairim gurb é an file céanna a chum na trí dhán seo, agus go raibh sé de nós aige dánta molta a chumadh ar na Brianaigh, ach fogha caolchúiseach a thabhairt faoin gceathrú hIarla sna dánta céanna. Lena chois sin, tá fianaise laistigh dár ndán-na go raibh filíocht Mhaoilín Óig Mheic Bhruaidealha (a chum bunleagan *Tug damh h'aire*) léite ag ár bhfile, agus go mb'fhéidir go raibh sé faoina hanáil.<sup>6</sup>

#### IARGCOMHAIRC AR DHONNCHADH Ó BRIAIN

Tiomnaítear ceithre rann ag deireadh an dáin seo do *Donnchadh ó Briain Bōroimhe* (16*b*), *Iarla ó cCais* (15*a*); rainn nach mbaineann a bheag nó a mhór, shílfeá, le hábhar an dáin féin. Ós rud é go bhfaightear na rainn seo sna finnéithe lámhscríbhinne is luaithe, agus ós rud é go gcuireann siad *dúnadh* leis an dán, glacaim leis gur cuid den bhunsaothar a cumadh in 1620 iad.<sup>7</sup> Is dócha, mar sin, gurb é Donnchadh Ó Briain, ceathrú hIarla Thuamhan a bhásaigh sa bhliain 1624, atá i gceist.<sup>8</sup> Moltar an tIarla i dtéarmaí ginearálta i rainn 14–15; déantar cur síos air mar *tréanshlát don fhiodhbhuídh as f[h]earr*, ‘a powerful branch from the best wood’ (14*c*), agus mar *bas bhleigheadhtrom nár bhāigh mionn*, ‘the hand with the heavy goblet who has not broken an oath’ (16*c*). Tá blas láidir paidre ar na rainn seo chomh maith. Iarrtar ar Dhia an Brianach a chosaint: *An t-aonmhac-so as dílse dhi / comhduigh, a chodhnuigh nimhe*, ‘O lord of heaven, protect this only son who is most

<sup>6</sup>Féach nóta 11*b* sna nótaí téacsúla.

<sup>7</sup>Tá na rainn seo ar iarraidh i bhfinné lámhscríbhinne amháin, mar atá TCD H 1.7 (1281). Déanaim amach gur cóip neamhchríochnaithe den dán atá inti, áfach.

<sup>8</sup>Cumadh neart dánta eile ar Dhonnchadh Ó Briain a léiríonn go raibh sé ina phátrún ag filí clas-aiceacha, in ainneoin gur ghlac sé go fonnmhar le nósanna agus le cultúr Shasana. Is iad na dánta a cumadh ar an gceathrú hIarla Aoibhinn an Lása i *Lonnainn* (TD 36.7–8); *Mór a-tá ar theagasg fíatha* (Nic Chárthaigh 2013), *Mo chúig [nó cheithre] rainn duit a Dhonnchaidh* (Macbain agus Kennedy 1894: 143–4), *Mall an deithbhirse ar Dhonnchadh* (Minahane 2000: 58–64), *Fagham ceart ar chlann Éibhir* (*Iomarbháigh* 29.28–30), *Tairgidh mo sheachna a shíol mBriain* (McLaughlin 2005), *Eascar Gaoideal éag aoinfhr* (Ó Cuív 1984), *Aoidhe Ó gCais 'na chrích féin* (ABM 242), agus *An ngeabhtá, a Dhonnchaidh, mo dhán?* (Ní Úrdail 2004). Maireann rann amháin i meadaracht an amhráin a cumadh ar an Iarla, más fíor, i lámhscríbhinn Uí Ghadhra (ARÉ 23 F 16 (2), lch. 214 [117]).

loyal to her' (14ab); *Iarla ó cCais, a Chrīosd neamhdha / ar th'iocht at-ā, a thighearna* (15ab), 'The earl of Dál gCais, o heavenly Christ, is under your protection' (15ab). Tá seans ann gur cuireadh an phaidir seo le hanam an Iarla agus é ag druidim le deireadh a shaoil. (Ní fios cathain a rugadh an tIarla, ach ba sa bhliain 1550 a phós a thuismitheoirí (Cunningham 2009). D'fhéadfadh, mar sin, go raibh sé ag druidim leis an seachtó bliain d'aois nuair a cumadh an dán seo).

Is díol spéise go háirithe, dar liom, rann deireanach an dáin seo, ina ndéantar tagairt don Mhaighdean Mhuire:

Baránta bhaincheann nimhe,  
togham an oigh ainglidhe;  
fada ó tugadh [a] lāmh linn;  
tugadh an t-ár ar Ēirinn. finit.

'Let us choose the angelic virgin, the guarantor of the leading women in Heaven; it is a long time since her help has been given to us, destruction has been wrought upon Ireland.'

Is ait liom go ndéantar tagairt don Mhaighdean Mhuire ag deireadh na *n-iargcomharc* seo, ós rud gur Phrotastúnach cruthanta ab ea Donnchadh Ó Briain.<sup>9</sup> Déanaim amach go mb'fhéidir gur cheart an rann seo a léamh mar thagairt do thréigean Mhuire, agus an file ag tabhairt le tuiscint nach ndearna an Mhaighdean idirghabháil ar son na hÉireann mar gheall ar an tréigean sin.<sup>10</sup> An bhfuil an file ag impí ar Ó Briain glacadh arís leis an gcreideamh Caitliceach, agus é ag druidim le deireadh a shaoil? Ní féidir a bheith cinnte faoin léamh sin, ar ndóigh, ach thiocfadh sé leis an tuairim gurbh ionann údar ár ndáin-ne agus údar an leagain athchóirithe de *Tug damh h'aire* agus *Slán le sinnsearaibh*, dhá dhán ina ndéantar an tIarla a mhaslú ar bhealach caolchúiseach doiléir. B'aisteach, go deimhin, an tIarla a bheith á mholadh go neamhbhalbh i ndán a chaoineann na hathruithe sóisialta ar ghlac an Brianach féin go fonnmhar leo, agus ar chuir sé luas leo, le linn a réime.

#### FOINSÍ LÁMHSCRÍBHINNÍ

Tá naoi bhfinné lámhscríbhinne den dán seo ar m'eolas:

**H (= Harley 1921, 78–9):** Is i láimh an cheathrú Randel Holme a breacadh an chuid is mó d'ábhar na lámhscríbhinne seo uair éigin sa dara leath den seachtú haois déag. Ba as Chester na Breataine Holme, agus mhair sé idir 1659 agus 1707. Bailiúchán de leathanaigh aonair atá sa lámhscríbhinn. Baineann an chuid is mó den ábhar inti le cúrsaí peannaireachta agus scríbhneoireachta. Is

<sup>9</sup>Táim buíoch de Brendan Kane as m'aírd a thabhairt ar an bpointe seo.

<sup>10</sup>Ní hionann an leathrann seo sna lámhscríbhinní ar fad (féach na nótaí téacsúla). An bhrí chéanna, go bunúsach, atá leis na léamha éagsúla, áfach. Tréigean na Maighdine Muire is ábhar do dhánta eile a cumadh le linn na tréimhe seo. Féach, mar shampla, *Mairg dhiúltas d'inghin Anna* le hAonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh (McKenna 1919: dán 50).

beag ábhar Gaeilge atá inti. Déantar cur síos ar litreacha clóbhualte na Gaeilge ar leathanach 77, rud a thagann leis an gcuid eile den lámhscríbhinn ó thaobh ábhair de. Breacadh ár ndán-na ar leathanaigh 78 agus 79. Níl a fhios agam cé a bhreac an chóip seo den dán, ná cén chaoi ar chríochnaigh sé i seilbh Holme. Thabharfadh an nóta seo a leanas a breacadh i ndiaidh an dáin go raibh an scríobhaí ag scríobh do shéiplíneach éigin:

*Acc sin duit a Chaibhiolláin [leg. Chaipealláin] Maigheór 7 leasaigh féin 7 lucht na deaghaithe oile a ffuil a ffeidhm a cheartaighthi ann 7 bean gan tshúainearradh úaimsi, leis díbh, etc., acht ní maith sagart gan chléireach no dán gan abhrán.*

‘That is for you, o chaplain major, and let you, and the other people of good knowledge, correct all that must be corrected in it, and a woman without nightclothes [i.e. a blessing] from me to you, etc., and there is no use in a priest without a cleric, or in a poem without an *amhrán*.’<sup>11</sup>

Breacadh rann i meadaracht an amhráin ar lorg an nóta sin:<sup>12</sup>

An t-ár-san *dar* ngnáthlo(i)t, lér cuireadh ar lé[a]n,  
dí[o]th fáithbheart a rádh do dhuine san tsháel  
acht grása na hárdfhilath’ go guineadh le hÉ[a]bh  
go ttáirfeim-ne a shárchur d’fhoirinn na nGael.

‘That slaughter constantly wounding us, by which our sorrow was caused,  
it would be a folly for anyone in the world to try to relate it,  
but [by] the grace of the high lord who was (?) wounded by Eve,  
that we might avenge their slaughter for the Irish.’

**L (= ARÉ 24 L 13 (7), 52–3):** Ba é an scríobhaí Uilliam Ruadh Mac Coitir (c. 1675–1738) a scríobh an chuid den lámhscríbhinn seo ina bhfuil *Tugadh an t-ár-so* ar caomhnú. Bhí sé ag scríobh don athair Seán mac Diarmada Ó Briain (*Cat. ARÉ* fasc. 1, 43).

**E (= ARÉ E v 2 (200), 337–41):** Scríobh Pól Ó Longáin an lámhscríbhinn seo do Shéamus de Róiste sa naoú haois déag (*Cat. ARÉ* fasc. 5, 529). Scéalta rómánsaíochta is mó atá ar caomhnú inti.

**G (= ARÉ 23 G 24 (257), 409; 438):** Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin a scríobh an lámhscríbhinn seo. Lámhscríbhinn chumaisc thoirtiúil atá inti, ina bhfuil

<sup>11</sup>Bhí an méid seo a leanas le rá ag Flower maidir leis an imeartas focal ‘*bean gan tsúainearradh* = bean nocht = beannacht’: ‘This is, perhaps, the earliest instance in the Museum collections of the equivocation between *ben nocht* or some equivalent and *beannocht* = *beannacht*, a quip repeated with wearisome iteration by all the following generations of poets’ (Flower 1926: 13).

<sup>12</sup>Tugann an nóta thuas le tuiscint, dar liom, nár bhain an rann seo leis an mbundán ó thúis, agus níl sé in eagar agam mar chuid den dán féin dá bharr sin.

blúirí de lámhscríbhinní éagsúla a breacadh idir na blianta 1795 agus 1821 (*Cat. ARÉ* fasc. 6, 687; Sharpe 2018: 348). Breacadh an chéad chuid dár ndán-na ar leathanach 409, agus tá an chuid eile ar fáil ar leathanach 438.

**M (= ARÉ 23 M 24 (341), 27–9):** Ní fios cé a scríobh an lámhscríbhinn seo a breacadh sa naoú haois déag. Dar le hÓ Comhraí gurb é Éadbhard Ó Raghallaigh, nó duine dá chlann, a scríobh (*Cat. ARÉ* fasc. 8, 948). Bhí an lámhscríbhinn i seilbh Uí Raghallaigh (uimhir 99 ina bhailiúchán).

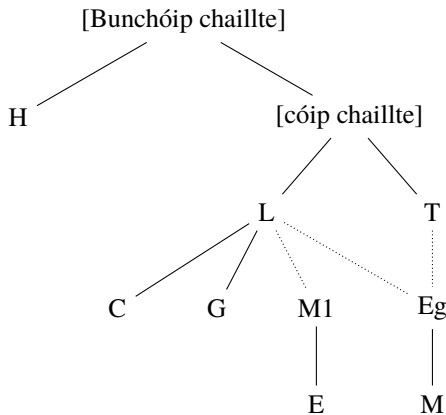
**C (= ARÉ 24 C 21 (943), 89–93):** Ba é W. S. O'Brien a scríobh an lámhscríbhinn seo i mBaile Átha Cliath sa bhliain 1862 (*Cat. ARÉ* fasc. 22, 2732). Insíonn sé féin dúinn (ar an gcéad leathanach) go raibh sé ag cóipeáil as lámhscríbhinn a scríobh Uilliam Ruadh McCoitir (= L): 'The following poems have been copied by me from a manuscript which has been lent to me by Mr John O'Daly. This manuscript is in the handwriting of William Ruadh Mac Coitir a celebrated Munster poet who flourished about A.D. 1728–37 and who lived at Castle Lyons in the County of Cork.'

**Eg (= Eg. 113, 98–9 [209–10]):** Lámhscríbhinn chumaisc í seo a bhreac lámha éagsúla sa naoú haois déag. Bhí Éadbhard Ó Raghallaigh i measc na scríobhaithe (Flower 1926: 608). Is cosúil gur cóip de TCD H 1. 7 (1281) (= T) atá sa lámhscríbhinn (Abbott and Gwynn 1921: 16).

**T (= TCD H 1.7 (1281), 174r/v–5):** Ba é *Seagan Ó Connaire* a scríobh an lámhscríbhinn seo sa bhliain 1765 agus é sa Fhrainc (Abbott and Gwynn 1921: 16). Ábhar annálaíoch atá sa lámhscríbhinn; tá an chuma air nach mbaineann leathanaigh 144–76, a bhfuil bailiúchán dánta ar caomhnú iontu, leis an mbunlámhscríbhinn ó thúis. Insítear dúinn sa chatalóg gur cóip den lámhscríbhinn seo iad lámhscríbhinní Eg. 98–99 i leabharlann na Breataine: 'There is a copy from this MS. in the B. M. Egerton, 98, 99' (Abbott and Gwynn 1921: 16). Níl san fhinné lámhscríbhinne seo ach cuid den dán (rainn 1–13), áfach.

**M1 (= Má Nuad, M1, 201–3):** Bhreac Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin an lámhscríbhinn seo sa bhliain 1818 'do chum úsáide a cheart onóra, dochtúir Seaghan Ó Murchadha, easbog Chorcúidhe' (Walsh 1943: 1).

An tuiscint atá agam ar sheachadadh an téacs ná go bhfuil trí chóip neamhspleácha tagtha anuas chugainn, mar atá H, L agus T (ach go síolraíonn L agus T ó eiseamláir choitinn atá cailte anois), agus go síolraíonn C, G, M1 agus E go díreach nó go hindíreach ó L. Déanaim amach go síolraíonn dhá lámhscríbhinn dheireanacha, mar atá M agus Eg, ó níos mó ná lámhscríbhinn amháin.



#### FIANAISE MAIDIR LE GAOL NA LÁMHSCRÍBHINNÍ LENA CHÉILE

Tá roinnt éagsúlachtaí suntasacha idir H agus na lámhscríbhinní eile a thugann le tuiscint go bhfuil sí neamhspleách orthu. Tugtar na rainn in ord ar leith in H, mar shampla. (Cloím le hord na rann in H san eagrán agus san uimhriú thíos):<sup>13</sup>

H: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17

L: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, **10, 6, 9, 8, 7, 13, 11, 12**, 14, 15, 16, 17

T: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, **10, 6, 9, 8, 7, 13, 11, 12**.

Lena chois sin, tá léamha ag H nach bhfuil ag L ná ag T. Féach, mar shampla, *1b budh* (H); *bhus* (L, T); *3a acc fhuireach* (H), *sa tiolach* (L) *so tiollaicc* (T); *5a mire* (H); *mearbhall* (L, T); *6a dháil* (H), *tháil* (L, T); *10d dáil is dall do* (H); *dál dall da gach* (L), *dál dall do gach* (T). Tá roinnt difríochtaí idir L agus T chomh maith, áfach, a thugann le tuiscint go bhfuil siad neamhspleách ar a chéile. Féach, mar shampla, *1a Tugadh* (L), *Tugach* (T); *1b saoirchreidhim* (L); *saoirchréidimh* (T); *6c a-táid* (L); *ó táid* (T); *6d ndanardha* (L), *nathardha* (T); *10d danarchoin* (L); *danardha* (T); *12c neamhthruaighe* (L); *neart truaighe* (T). Is cosúil go síolraíonn C, G, M1 agus E ó L. Is ionann ord na rann sna lámhscríbhinní sin agus ord na rann in L, agus tá an dán iomlán ar caomhnú iontu, a thugann le tuiscint nach ó T a shíolraigh siad (ach féach an plé a dhéantar ar M agus Eg thíos). Chomh maith leis sin, tagann léamha na lámhscríbhinní seo le L sna háiteanna a dtagann sí salach ar H agus ar T. Féach, mar shampla: *1b saoirchreidhim* (L, C, G, M1, E), *saoibhchréidhim* (H), *saoirchréidimh* (T); *12c bíth* (L, C, G, M1, E), *bíodh* (H), *bíoth* (T). Tá a fhios againn gur shíolraigh LS C go díreach ó L (féach an plé ar an lámhscríbhinn thuas), agus déanaim amach gur shíolraigh G go díreach ó L chomh maith, ós rud é go bhfaightear

<sup>13</sup>Is loighciúla ord na rann in H, mar a leagtar an dán amach go soiléir ina chodanna éagsúla: réamhrá (rainn 1–3); meafar na máthar (4–11); dáta ceaptha an dáin (12–13); iargcomhaire (14–17). Níl an leagan amach chomh néata céanna sna finnéithe eile: réamhrá (1–3); meafar na máthar (4–10; 13); dáta ceaptha an dáin (11–12); iargcomhaire (14–17).

gluais leis an bhfocal ‘iolach’ (3a) sa dá fhinné sin. Tá an chuma air gur cóip é E (a scríobh Pól Ó Longáin) de M1 (a scríobh Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin), agus tá an cheannscríbhinn chéanna leis an dán sa dá lámhscríbhinn sin.

Is dóigh liom go raibh níos mó ná eiseamláir amháin ag Eg. Tá a fhios againn gur cóip de T í lámhscríbhinn Eg (féach thuas), ach tá an dán iomlán ar caomhnú in Eg, agus gan ach cuid den dán ar marthain in T. Chomh maith leis sin, tagann léamha Eg le L in áiteanna áirithe. Féach, mar shampla: 1b *saoithchreidhim* (L, Eg) *saoirchreidimh* (T), *saoibhchreidhim* (H). Rinneadh leasú ar léamha lochtacha T agus L in Eg in áiteanna áirithe. Tagann na leasuithe seo le léamha H, ach déanaim amach gur leasuithe de chuid an scríobhaí iad, seachas fianaise go raibh baint acu le traidisiún H. Féach, mar shampla: 9a *Tuigthe ar an mnaoi Néill-si* (Eg, H), *Tuigthe ar mhnaoi Neill* (L), *Tuig air mhnaoi Neill* (T); 12a *Caogad céd* (Eg), *Cáogad ced* (H), (?) *aogad bliaghan* (L), *Caogad bliaghain* (T). Déanaim amach gur cóip de Eg í M: tá a fhios againn go raibh baint ag Éadbhard Ó Raghallaigh leis an dá lámhscríbhinn agus tagann léamha na gcóipeanna lena chéile tríd síos.

#### MEADARACHT

Is i ndeibhí, dán díreach, a cumadh an dán seo agus cloíonn sé le rialacha na meadarachta sin den chuid is mó.<sup>14</sup>

Tá samplaí de bhreacadh i rann 7 (*clann* : *s[h]íothGhall* : *fíorchlann*) agus i rann 8 (*Bhreagh* : *M[h]íleadh* : *bean*). Faightear cuibheas breise in 13cd chomh maith (*bréag* : *féag* : *chēad* : *déag*). Tá sampla den locht mheadarachta *caoiche* i leathrann deireanach an dáin, agus *tugadh* ag déanamh comhardaidh leis féin (17cd).

#### TEANGA

Is sa Nua-Ghaeilge Chlasaiceach a cumadh an dán, agus glacaim leis gur botúin sheachadta faoi deara deacrachtaí áirithe sa lámhscríbhinn. Plé ginearálta ar ghnéithe de theanga an dáin atá sa mhéid seo a leanas:

**Athrú tosaigh ar lorg ainmfhocal:** Faightear urú an áinsígh mar a bheimis ag súil leis in *le pláigh bpeacaidh* (3c); *fa [a]* (sa chiall ‘um’) *cloinn ndearbhtha* (7a); *fa* (sa chiall ‘um’) *chnámh cclann cCobhthuigh* (10c); *le farrán ndrong ndanardha* (6d). Tá ag tógbháil *cclann ccomhoidheach* (4d) coigeartaithe agam go ag tógbháil *chlann ccomhoidheach* (ag teacht le léamh H), ós rud é gur cinn-te nach mbeimis ag súil le hurú ar lorg tabharthach, agus tá go leor samplaí eile dá leithéid sa dán (*aga cloinn chíogh* (11c); *do mhíc[h]inéal mhnā Cuinn* (11a); *do mhearchuaine mhac Míliodh* (12c)). (D’fhéadfaí *clann* a fhágáil lom chomh

<sup>14</sup> Ach coigeartaithe beaga áirithe a chur i bhfeidhm: 6d *forrán* > *farrán* (: *clannál*); 9c *greidhim* > *g[c]rēidim* (° *cceann*); 9d *fearr* > *f[h]earr* (° *d’Éirinn*); 11c *claimn* > *cloinn* (: *thoill*); 13c *féagh* > *féag* (: *déag*); 14c *fearr* > *f[h]earr* (° *fhiodhbhuidh*); 16c *bleigheathrom* > *bhleigheadh-trom* (: *eineaclonn*). Tá cuid de na coigeartaithe seo deimhnithe ag meadaracht agus ag brí na rann chomh maith. Maidir le coigeartaithe níos suntasaí, féach na nótaí téacsúla.

maith, agus na riachtanais do *shléagar* arna gcomhlíonadh). Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg ginideach firinsneach a shéimhíonn sa teanga chlasaiceach (agus i bhfianaise léamh H) in *m[e]ic M[h]íleadh* (8*b*). Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg an ainmfhocail bhaininscní *clann* in *clann s[h]íothGhall* (7*c*) (i bhfianaise *pláigh fhíochmhar* (°ionnsa) (2*c*); *an ógnáir fhuileach* (4*c*); srl.). D'fhéadfaí glacadh le léamh H agus séimhiú a chur ar fáil ar *cloinne* in *cumhdach cloinne soláthair* (5*b*), agus na coinníollacha do *shléagar* arna gcomhlíonadh, ach gur dócha go mbeadh *cadad* i gceist.

**Ainmfhocail:** Tá *mic* coigeartaithe agam go *m[e]ic* (8*b*) (= léamh H), an fhoirm chlasaiceach de ghinideach an ainmfhocail *mac*. Tá an cinneadh *cla(i)nn* a choigeartú go *cloinn* san ánsíoch / tabharthach (7*a*; 8*a* agus 11*c*) deimhnithe ag an meadaracht in 11*c* (: *thoill*). Teastaíonn an fhoirm *farrán* (: *clannál*) in áit *forrán* L (6*d*). Tá an fhoirm seo ceartaithe ag scríobhaí lámhscríbhinn L. Féach, áfach, go dtugann cuid d'fhinnéithe lámhscríbhinnne *IGT* ii §13 an fhoirm *farrán* mar fhoirm lochtach *forrán forráin forraín .c.* (*farrán farráin farráein .l.*). Is í foirm an ánsígh a leanann *fiú* in *Fíu a cumhuidh* (7*a*); féach *ABP* 1134*n*. Faightear an ginideach *caogad* mar ainmneach (in áit *caoga*) sna finnéithe lámhscríbhinnne ar fad in *Caogad* ['s] *céad* (12*a*).

**Réamhfhocail:** Séimhítear ainmfhocail ar lorg *gan*: *gan chloinn* (8*a*); *gan mháthair* (8*b*). An ánsíoch a leanann an réamhfhocail *fa* (sa chiall 'um'): *fa [a] cloinn ndearbhtha* (7*a*); *fa chnámh cclann cCobhthuigh* (10*c*).

**Briathair:** Tá an uimhir iolra den bhriathar in úsáid le cnuasainm in *a-táid clannál* (6*c*), rud nach sáraíonn rialacha na teanga clasaicí (*BST* 192.13–14). D'fhéadfaí léamh H, *bíodh*, a léamh in áit *bíoth* in *bí[o]th gur ghlac neamh-thruaighe a-níogh* (12*c*). Tá an fhoirm *féagh* (13*c*) coigeartaithe agam go *féag*, foirm a cheadaítear in *IGT* ii §93, ar mhaithe leis an meadaracht (: *déag*). Tá an cinneadh a rinneadh séimhiú a chur ar fáil i ndiaidh na copail coibhneasta (9*d*; 14*c*) deimhnithe ag an meadaracht in 14*c* as *f[h]earr* (°*fhiodhbhuidh*).

#### MODH EAGARTHÓIREACHTA

Tá an dán in eagar agam thíos as LS L, ós rud é gur fearr, ar an iomlán, léamha L ná H, agus ós rud é nach maireann ach cuid den dán in T. Tugaim léamha as H agus T.<sup>15</sup> Cloím le hord na rann in H chomh maith (féach fonóta 12 thuas).

Is liomsa scaradh na bhfocal agus an phoncaíocht san eagrán. Scaoilim noda i gcló iodálach. Nuair a léiríonn consan forscripte sa lámhscríbhinn guta + an consan forscripte sin, is é an guta atá ar iarraidh amháin a thugtar i gcló iodálach. Tá 'e' ard curtha in iúl go ciúin agam mar 'ea'. Is liomsa suíomh na sínte fada laistigh de shiollaí, agus tá macraim curtha ar fáil agam nuair atá sínte fada

<sup>15</sup>Ní chuirim na mionéagsúlachtaí seo in áireamh sna léamha: gutaí neamhaiceanta deiridh (-sa/-so, srl.); síneadh fada a bheith ann nó as sna hionaid sin a mbeadh súil againn leo; noda a bheith in úsáid nó gan a bheith in úsáid; malartaithe coitianta ortagrafaíocht (*cc/gc; nm/nd; gh/dh*; sleamhnóga a bheith ann nó as).

in easnamh. Tá litreacha breise curtha ar fáil agam idir lúbíní cearnacha. Cloím le hortagrafaíocht na lámhscríbhíne i gcás gutaí gearra neamhaiceanta (mar shampla *faicionn* (: [c]cionn) (7cd)). Ar an gcaoi chéanna, níl aon choigeartú déanta agam ar *cc* in áit *gc*.

### TÉACS

1. Tugadh an t-ár-so ar Ēirinn,  
maidhm bhus sine saoirchréidhim,  
fuair clár mionchuirmtne Meadhbha  
ár críochnuighthe ar ccinneamhna.
2. Tāinig an tuile thairsi,  
long bhrisde an chríoch Chobhthaigh-se;  
do las pláigh fhíochmhar ionnsa  
d'fhíorchur áir na hĒirionn-sa.
3. Dursan an t-ár 's a[n] t-iolach;  
do chaill críoch na bhfuineadhach,  
le pláigh bpeacaidh an uabhair,  
gleacoin áigh is anualaigh.

### AISTRIÚCHÁN

1. This destruction has been wrought upon Ireland, a defeat whose damage will be most enduring, Meadhbh's smooth, ale-warm plain has suffered the slaughter that has completed our misfortune.
2. This land of Ireland is a broken ship, the flood has swept through her; a vicious, troubling plague has flared up, truly inflicting the destruction of Ireland.
3. Woeful is the slaughter and the cry of lamentation; through the plague of the sin of pride the land of the westerners has lost attack-hounds of battle and burden.

### MALAIRTÍ

- 1a.** T Tugach, T air; **1b.** L maoidhm, T maoidhimh, H budh, T sinne, H saoirbhchréidhim, T saoirchréidimh; **1d.** H áir, T air, T ~~ceinneamhuinn~~ cinneamhna  
**2a.** T tuille, T táirse, L tháirsi (leis an síneadh fada scriosta amach); **2b.** H chrích, T chobhthaigse; **2c.** H dfhíorchur, d'fhíorchur] T dfíor  
**3a.** T Dursain, T an társo tiollaice, H an társa acc fhuireach; **3b.** L bhfuinioghach, T bhfuiníoghach, H bhfunuidheach; **3c.** le pláigh bpeacaidh] H re pláigh s peacaidh, T peaca; **3d.** T gleachuinn, H gleacchoin, T áig, is] H dob, H ionúalaigh, T anualladh

4. Truag[h]án máthair na macámh,  
críoch Logha as lia iomlatár;  
bean dall an ógnáir fhuileach  
ag tógbháil chlann ccomhoidheach.
5. Créad *acht* mearbhall don mháthair  
cumhdach cloinne soláthair,  
's a clann chíogh dhar chleacht colbha  
fa neart na síol sósordha.
6. Clann dar tháil céadnús a cíogh,  
'na ndílleachtaibh fa dhimbríogh,  
a-táid clannál bhronn Banbha,  
le farrán ndrong ndanardha.
7. Fiū a cumhuidh fa [a] cloinn ndearbhtha,  
an Bhanbha as bean bhuidheartha;  
clann s[h]íothGhall cēim ós a [c]cionn,  
's a fíorchlann fēin nach faicionn.

4. Ireland, the mother of the youths, whose transformative defeats are most numerous, is a wretch; the young and modest blood-stained one is [now] a blind woman, raising the children of foreigners.
5. The protection of supplied children is but an aberration for the mother, when the children of her own breast, who were used to [her] protection, are under the control of the junior lines.
6. The litter of Banbha's womb, the children to whom she yielded the first milk of her breasts are powerless orphans, because of the destruction wrought by bands of foreigners.
7. Ireland is a troubled woman: that she does not see her own true children and that the descendants of peaceful foreigners enjoy higher status than them is enough to explain her sorrow.

**4a.** H Trúaghán, L máithir; **4b.** H is, T iomlot áir; **4c.** T ógnár, H oileach; **4d.** L cclann, T clann, T ccoimhaoidheach

**5a.** mearbhall] H mire, T mháithir; **5b.** T cúmhach, H chloinne, T soláithir; **5c.** T cíogh, T dár, H dar; **5d.** T fá

**6a.** dar] T tár, H dháil, H céadnús **6b.** T ndílleachthaibh, T fá, T dhimbrígh; **6c.** a-táid] T ó táid, T bron, T banba, L Bhanbha; **6d.** L forrán [agus farrán ar imeall an leathanaigh, sa lámh chéanna], T forán; **6d.** H dhrong, H ndanarrdha, T nathardha

**7a.** T cuimheadh, H cumha, T fá, fa] H ma a, L clainn, H dearbhtha; **7b.** T bhanba, as] H is, T buairdha; **7c.** H tshíodhghall, cionn] H gceann; **7d.** T ná, H ffaiceand

8. Máthair *gan* chloinn Banbha Bhreagh,  
clann *gan* mháthair m[e]ic M[h]íleadh;  
bean Chuinn a ccor na truaighe  
mar bhuing chon dā céadchuaine.
9. Tuigthe ar [an] mhnaoi Nēill[-se] a-nos  
– clann chothuigheas, clann leagos,  
fiū a g[c]rēidhim 'ma cceann a-nocht –  
gurbh f[h]earr d'Ēirinn a hóghocht.
10. Ní thuigid teangtha ar-oile  
críoch ilbhéarlach Iūghoine;  
ag gleic fa chnámh cclann cCobhthuigh,  
dál dall dā gach danarchoin.
11. Taom do mhíc[h]inéal mhnā Cuinn;  
trī glūine ó rīgh go rámhunn  
aga cloinn chíogh is ochta  
do thoill a díol dúthrochta.

8. Breagha's Banbha is a mother without children, the sons of Míl are children without a mother; the wife of Conn is in a miserable condition, [it is] like the separation of a bitch from her first litter.
9. It should now be understood from the state of this wife of Niall that it was better for Ireland to be a virgin; there are children whom she nurtures and children whom she tears down, great is the diminution they currently face.
10. [The people of] Ireland's multilingual land do not understand each other's tongues; an unfair portion [is given] to every English hound [who] competes over the bone of the children of Cobhthach.
11. It is a sin from the inhumanity of Conn's wife; the children of her own breast and bosom, who deserved her devotion, [going] from king to labourer in three generations.

- 8a.** T Máithir, T clann, L chlann, T banba, T breag; **8b.** T máithir, H meic Mhíleadh, T meic Míleadh; **8d.** T do, T chéadchuaine, H céudchuaine
- 9a.** T tuig air mhnaoi neill, H ar an mnáoi Néillsi; **9b.** T chothuighios, **9c.** H créidhim, T gréidhim, 'ma] H ma a, T má, T ccionn; **9d.** d'Ēirinn a hóghocht] H éirinn na hóghasus
- 10b.** H ilbhéurlach, H Ughoine, T Iugoine; **10c.** ag] T a, T fá, T ccnámh, H chnámh, H chlann, T cobhthaicc, H ccóbhthaigh; **10d.** T do, dál dall dā gach] H dail is dall do, T danardha, H dhanorthaibh
- 11a.** L (?)aom, T mhíchineall, H mhíchínél, T mná; **11c.** aga] H da, L clainn, T cíogh; **11d.** thoill] H choill, T thuill, T duchrochta

12. Caogad [’s] céad, ceithre mhíle  
do bhliadhnaibh na buainríghe,  
bí[o]th gur ghlac neamhthruaighe a-niogh,  
do mhearchuaine mhac Míliodh.
13. Aois Chríost ar cceapa[dh] na rann  
ní fhuil ’na aincheas oram;  
nocha bréag é, is féag ar fad,  
sé chéad déag agus dōchad.
14. An t-aonmhac-so as dīlse dhi  
comhduigh, a chodhnuigh nimhe,  
tréanshlát don fhíodhbhuidh as f[h]earr  
éanmhac ionmhuin na hÉireann.
15. Iarla ó cCais, a Chríost neamhdha,  
ar th’iocht a-tā, a thighearna;  
tuile nā tráigh it innse,  
nā báigh uile [an] Éirinn-se.

12. Though she has developed an antipathy towards the brave brood of the sons of Míl, [they previously enjoyed] 4150 (?) years of unbroken kingship.
13. The age of Christ having composed the [above] verses is not difficult for me [to tell]; it is not a lie and look at length: 1620 years.
14. O lord of heaven, protect this only son who is most loyal to her, a powerful branch from the best wood, Ireland’s only dear son.
15. The earl of Dál gCais, o heavenly Christ, is under your protection, o lord; do not allow the tide to ebb in your isle, do not destroy Ireland completely.

**12a.** L (?)aogad, céad] L bliaghan, T bliaghain, LT cheithre; **12c.** H bíodh, T bíoth, T neart truaighe, T a-niudh; **12d.** T mac, TH Míleadh  
**13a.** L (?)ois, T Críost, T iar, H cceapadh; **13b.** T bhfuil, T an, H ainchíos; **13c.** L féagh, H féug, T féith, T air, H arr; **13d.** déag] T déaghadh, agus] L is  
**14a.** L An] (?)n, H téunmhacsa, is, H dhí; **14b.** H cumhduigh; **14c.** H tréunshlat, H fhíodhbaidh, H as] is, H fhearr; **14d.** H eunmhac  
**15a.** L Iarla] (?)arla; **15c.** nā] H no, it innse] L at innse, H na hinnsi; **15d.** H uile an

16. Gabham 'nar n-easb[h]uidh oile  
 Donnchadh ó Briain Bóroimhe,  
 bas bhleigheadhtrom nár bhāigh mionn,  
 eineaclonn áir na hÉirionn.
17. Baránta bhaincheann nimhe,  
 togham an ōigh ainglidhe;  
 fada ó tugadh [a] lámh linn  
 tugadh an t-ár ar Éirinn. finit.

16. Let us receive in our hour of need Donnchadh, the descendant of Brian Bóroimhe, the hand with the heavy goblet who has not broken an oath, the compensation of the destruction of Ireland.

17. Let us choose the angelic virgin, the guarantor of the leading women in Heaven; it is a long time since her help has been given to us, destruction has been wrought upon Ireland.

**16a.** Gabham] L (?)uim, L nár, H uile; **16b.** L bhriain, H bóruimhe; **16c.** bas] L (?)as, L bleigheathrom, h nar; **16d.** L eineachlonn

**17a.** L (?)ánt(?), H baincheann, H neimhe; **17b.** L toghuim, H ógh, H aingleighe; **17c.** fada ó] L (?)ach, H tugadh a lámh

#### NÓTAÍ AR AN TÉACS

**1b.** *saoithchrēidhim*: Níl *saoith* (*eDIL* s.v. *saeth*) thar a bheith coitianta mar bhall i gcomhfhocail. Ní heol dom ach sampla amháin san fhilíocht atá deimhnithe ag an meadaracht: *mór an bēad 's a saothbhrón sin / a claochlódh tré éag éinfhir* (*ABM* dán 62.9cd), 'her transformation because of the death of a single man is a great sorrow and sadness'. Bheadh léamh H, *saoibhchrēidhim* 'bad damage', go breá anseo chomh maith. Ní thagann léamh T (*saoirchrēidimh*) go rómhaith le brí an rainn, dar liom.

**1c.** *clár mīonchuirmthe Meadhbha*: Tugtar *clár Meadhbha* ar Éirinn go minic san fhilíocht chlasaiceach. Is díol suntais líon na n-ainmneacha éagsúla ar Éirinn sa dán seo: *Éire* (1a, srl.); *críoch Chobhthaigh* (2b); *Críoch na bhFuineadhach* (3b); *críoch Logha* (4b); *Banbha* (6c); *críoch Iúghoine* (10b); srl.

**2b.** Samhlaítear Éire le long bhriste go minic i bhfilíocht pholaitiúil an seachtú haois déag (idir fhilíocht chlasaiceach agus fhilíocht aiceanta). Féach na samplaí seo: *Do léig Éire an tonn trithe / d'iomchar fhoirne coigcríche; / arthrach Dhá Thí do tolladh / sí i n-anchruth do fheadamar* (*Measgra Dánta II* 54.13), 'Ireland, carrying a foreign band, has let the wave wash through her, the vessel

of Dá Thí has been pierced, we have [now] known her disformed shape'; *Do chaill do nóchar pósta ort, a Éire / Mar báitear long tré chiontaibh aenfhir* (O'Rahilly 1952: dán 5, línte 323–3), 'Your wedded spouse failed you, Ireland. As a ship is sunk through the faults of one man' (O Riordan 2001: 651).

**2c.** Meafar eile a fhaightear go minic i bhfilíocht an seachtú haois déag é meafar an phlá. Féach, mar shampla: *Fóirne Dubh-ghall, ní díth dhamh / ón dtroid seo atáid i mbaoghal / gráin ghéir-reann ós gach aoine-ing / Pláigh na hÉireann éagcaoinim* (Mac Giolla Eáin 1900: 64); 'The bands of the black foreigners are in danger from this fight, – it is no loss to me; – the fear of sharp spears is upon everyone; I lament the plague of Ireland.'

**3.** B'fhéidir gurbh fhearr *críoch* i líne b a choigeartú go *crích* agus an rann a léamh ar an gcaoi seo: 'Woeful is the slaughter and the cry of lamentation that has violated the land of the westerners; attack-hounds of battle and burden [suffer from] the plague of the sin of pride.' Is minic a thugann filí na tréimhse seo le tuiscint gur i ngeall ar dhíoltas Dé as peacaí na nGael atá drochbhail ar an tír. Féach O'Rahilly (1952: dán 1 líne 149 n.).

**3a.** *a[n] t-iolach*: Cuirtear an ghluais seo ar fáil i láimh níos deireanaí i lámhscríbhinní L agus G: *iolach .i. diobháil nó cailleamhuin*, '*iolach .i. damage or loss*'. Níl foinse na gluaise seo aimsithe agam.

**3b.** *críoch na bhfuineadhach*: Féach *eDIL* s.v. *fuinedach*. Tugann an Céitinneach 'Críoch na bhfuineadhach' ar Éirinn: *An dara hainm, Críoch na bhfuineadhach o bheith i bhfuineadh no i gcrích na dtrí rann don domhan do bhí ar faghbháil an tan soin; ionann, iomorro, 'fuin' agus críoch, ó'n bhfocal so Laidne 'finis', 'The second name was Críoch na bhfuineadhach from its being at the limit or end of the three divisions of the world which had then been discovered; fuin indeed, from the Latin word finis being equivalent to 'end' ' (FFÉ 98–99).*

**4.** Tá an íomhá dhiúltach seo d'Éirinn ina bean mhímhorálta coitianta i bhfilíocht an seachtú haois déag: 'Éire, the potential spouse of kings, degenerates in seventeenth-century texts into a shameless whore or an unfaithful wife. Alternatively, she is depicted as a bad mother who rejects her own offspring and suckles the foreign horde' (Nic Eoin 1996: 7). Is minic ina máthair mhídhílis í san fhilíocht aiceanta a cumadh i lár na haoise. Féach, mar shampla *A Fhódla phráis, is náir nach follas díbhse / gur córa tál ar sháirshliocht mhodhail sár Mhíle; / deór níl fágtha i gclár do bhrollaigh mhíngíhl / nár dheólsad ál gach cránach coigeríche* (Nua-Dhuanair 1: dán 15, línte 5–8), 'Brazen Ireland, it is an embarrassment that it is not clear to you that it is better to yield [your milk] to the mighty descendants of the band of Míl; there is not a drop left in the surface of your bright, smooth breast, that the litter of every foreign sow has not sucked' agus *Ábhar deargtha leacan do mhnaoi Chuinn é / táir is tarcaisne 'thabhairt dá saoirchlainn féin, / grá a hanma 's altram a cíoch cruinn caomh / do thál ar bhasard nach feadair cé díobh puinn é.* (Nua-Dhuanair 1: dán 10,

línte 1–4), ‘It is a cause of shame for the wife of Conn to show contempt and indifference to her own noble children and to yield the love of her soul and the nourishment of her round, sweet breasts to a bastard who does not know from whom he descends.’ Faightear na híomhánna seo i ndánta clasaiceacha eile a cumadh ag tús an seachtú haois déag chomh maith, áfach, arbh fhéidir gurbh fhoinsé ag ár bhfile iad. Féach, mar shampla, na rainn seo a leanas as an dán *Iomdha éagnach ag Éirinn*, a leagtar ar Aonghus Fionn Ó Dálaigh, ina gcuirtear clann na hÉireann os ár gcomhair mar íobartaigh: *Truagh mar do thréig a náire / an bhean nar chleacht [corp-tháidhe] / Éire gan chleith re [corbadh] / dá céile ag breith basdar[dadh]. // Gidh bé clann admhas Éire / ní beag do bharr toibhéime / a léidmhighe a ngairm ’s a [ngoil] / ’s ainm méirdrighe ar a máthair*, ‘Alas, she has lost shame, she who used not to indulge in foul wantonness. Éire now defenseless against lust bears bastards. As for the children she acknowledges, their bravery, fame and gallantry serve only to heighten her shame, now that their mother is a harlot!’ (McKenna 1919: 53.89, pp. 74–5).

**5a.** Tá *mire* ag H in áit *mearbhall*. Bheadh an léamh seo go breá chomh maith: ‘but a madness for the mother.’

**5b.** B’fhéidir go bhféadfaí ‘supplied’ a thuiscint mar ‘adopted’ anseo.

**5c.** Maidir leis an aistriúchán seo féach *eDIL* s.v. *colba* (b).

**7a.** Bheadh léamh H (*’ma cloinn*) go breá anseo chomh maith.

**7b.** Tá an t-alt thar a bheith comónta roimh an ainm *Banbha*. Féach na samplaí seo, atá deimhnithe ag an meadaracht: *An Bhanbha mar do-bhearair d’fhior / Teamhair a theagh* (15c), ‘when Banbha is given to a man, Teamhair becomes his castle’ (McKenna 1952: 133; 136); *Do thogh an Bhanbha ar mBriain-ne / ge tharla a gcol re chéile* (LCAB 7.3), ‘Ireland has chosen our Brian, although they were resentful of each other’.

**7c.** *síothGhall*: Nílím cinnte cén chaoi leis an gcomhfhocal *síothGhall* a thuiscint. Seans go dtugann *síoth-* anseo le tuiscint go bhfuil saol bog ag na Gaill, a fhad is atá na Gaeil ag fulaingt. B’fhéidir gur cheart *díothGhall* ‘destructive foreigners’ a léamh in áit *síothGhall*, ach cloím le fianaise na lámhscríbhinní.

D’fhéadfaí *cēim ós a cionn* á léamh anseo chomh maith: ‘that she does not see her own true children and that the descendants of peaceful foreigners enjoy higher status than her’.

**9a.** Tá líon na siollaí as riocht in L agus sna lámhscríbhinní a bhaineann leis an traidisiún céanna. Is fearr léamh H. D’fhéadfaí [*Is*] *tuigthe ar mhnaoi Néill a-nos* a léamh chomh maith.

**9c.** Nílím cinnte faoi bhrí na ceathrún seo.

**10b.** Ní heol dom sampla ar bith eile den aidiacht *ilbhéarlach* i bhfilíocht na scol. Féach, áfach, na samplaí seo as *Eachtra Mhacaoimh an Iolair* (1651): *Agus ba diadha cráibhtheach eagnaidhe eolach ilbhéarlach i dteangthaibh críoch agus cineadhach an rí sin* ‘And pious, godly, skilled, learned, accomplished in many languages of countries and of tribes, was that king’ (Macalister 1908: 74–5).

**11a.** Maidir leis an aistriúchán seo ar *míchineál* féach Ó Súilleabháin (1969: 28): ‘Tá míchineál ar aon chiall le neamhdhuineatacht agus seasann sé do ‘inhumanitas’ ’.

**11b.** Faightear an frása céanna i ndánta polaitiúla eile ón tréimhse seo. Féach, mar shampla, an rann seo as dán le Pádraigín Haicéid a cumadh ar Chearbhall Óg Ó Dálaigh sa bhliain 1630: *An Cearbhall ba clos damhsa / le ríoghnaibh ba ró-annsa; / a shamhail i dTír fá Thuinn / faghaibh ó rígh go rámhainn!* (Ní Cheallacháin 1962: dán 9.3b), ‘I heard that O’Carroll was liked by noble women, find his like, from king to spade, in *Tír fá Thuinn*’. Is díol spéise go bhfuil an sampla is luaithe ar m’eolas den fhrása sin sa chorpas filíochta i ndán a leagtar ar Mhaoilín Mac Bruaideadha, *Bráthair don bhás an daibhreas: Minic bhíos damhna flatha / saidhbhir rathmar óg álainn / A mhac i bhfeidhm na súiste / trí glúine ó rígh go rámhainn* (*Measgra Dánta* 26.3), ‘Many a time though, there is [i.e. has been] a chief’s heir apparent – opulent, fortunate, young, handsome – and his son [after him] wielding the flail: ‘three generations from king to spade’ (O’Grady 1926: 532). Dar le McInerney gur bhain ár bhfile úsáid as an bhfrása seo le cur síos a dhéanamh ar chúinsí a bhain le polaitíocht cheantar Thuamhain go háirithe: ‘This phrase, used to describe the social upheaval associated with the end of the Gaelic order which the poet was lamenting, described the outcome of a long process that started with the series of grants that the earls of Thomond received which made them landowners with English title to their estates. The process described here regarding the withering and displacement of lesser lineages did not abate, and an important consequence of the ‘Surrender and Regrant’ policy under Henry VIII was that native lordship was fundamentally re-ordered, creating inroads for the introduction of new feudalised structures and widespread anglicisation’ (McInerney 2021: 60). Is díol suntais gur trí ghlúin a luaitear sa nath seo; féach an plé a dhéanann Breatnach ar ‘The three generation requirement’ (1987: 94–6).

**12a.** Tá an cheathrú seo lochtach in L, mar a bhfuil líon na siollaí as riocht agus uaim ar iarraidh. Comhlíonann léamh H (*Caogad céad ceithre mhíle*) na riachtanais mheadarachta, ach tá deacracht ann leis an léamh seo mar sin féin. D’fhéadfaimis *Caogad ’s céad, ceithre mhíle* (= 4150) a léamh. Insíonn Céitinn dúinn go raibh 1261 nó 1318 bliain idir gabháil chloinne Míleadh agus aois Chríost (Ó Cuív 1956–7). D’fhágfadh na dátaí sin go raibh 2881 nó 2938 bliain ann idir an ngabháltas agus cumadh ár ndáin-ne. Tagann 4150 salach ar na meastacháin sin. Níl a fhios agam cén chaoi leis an neamhréir seo a chur ina cheart.

**13d.** Féach an plé a dhéantar ar dháta ceaptha an dáin sa réamhrá thuas.

**16c.** *bhleigheadhtrom*: Caifear *bhleigheadhtrom* a léamh in áit *bhleigheadhtrom* (°*eineaclonn*). Comhfhocal é seo le *bleidhe* (*eDIL* s.v. *bleide* ‘drinking-cup; goblet’) agus leis an aidiacht *trom*. Tá sampla amháin eile den chomhfhocal seo ar m’eolas: *bleidheadhtuim* : *eineachlainn* (*DBM* I 4.4). Tá plé ar an bhfocal *bleidhe* in Ní Úrdail (2003: 35–6), mar a luann sí sampla amháin eile den fhocal mar bhall de chomhfhocal: *mín Moighe bleidheadhuinn* (: *seinfhearainn*) *Bhreagh*, ‘the level of Bregia’s ruddy-beakered Plain’ (*TD* 26.3c).

**17b.** Bheadh léamh L, *toghaim*, ‘I choose’ go breá anseo chomh maith, ach sílim gurbh fhearr a thagann *togham* leis an gcomhthéacs.

**17c.** Tá tús na líne seo in easnamh in L (...*ach tugadh lámh linn*), ach *Fada nach tugadh lámh linn* atá ag cuid de na finnétithe deireanacha (Eg; M1; G; M1; E) ‘It is a long time since we have been helped’. Is éard atá in H ná *fada ó tugadh a lámh linn*. Féach *eDIL* s.v. *lám* III (h) ‘do-beir láim la **helps**’, agus na samplaí seo a leanas: *nach áil cur lámha lat*, ‘they will not help thee’ (McKenna 1922: dán 19.25); *Acht triath na Cathrach caoimhe / caidhe a nÉirinn fhérnaoidhe / duine do-bhéradh lámh linn / dán do dhénamh dá ndlighinn?* (*Butlers* 10.3), ‘Save for the prince of sweet Cahir, where in Ireland of the fresh grass is there somebody who would help us compose a poem, if we were obliged [to do so].’

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DEIRDRE NÍ CHÁRTHAIGH

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

DÁN AICEANTA ÓN OCHTÚ HAOIS DÉAG LUATH  
TIOMNAITHE DO DHOCHTÚIR LEIGHIS

*A fhortail fhir don bhorbhuil na bhféinniodh mear*  
(Muircheartach Ua Gríofa)

ABSTRACT

An early eighteenth-century greeting in accentual verse by Muircheartach Ua Gríofa to a medical doctor, Muircheartach Ó Dubhagáin, wishing him success and resilience as he embarks on an unspecified mission abroad.

DHÁ CHÓIP DEN NDÁN SO atá ar marthain chomh fada le m'eolas.<sup>1</sup> Tá an chóip is luaithe le fáil in Cambridge Add. 6559, a scríobh Mártan Ó Gríofa ó Chill Rois, Co. an Chláir tuairim na bliana 1845 (A feasta). Tá an chóip eile i lámhscríbhinn a scríobh Tomás Mac Muircheartaigh, nó Tomás Mhicil Ó Muirchearta', i mBaile an Fheirtéaraigh Thiar, Co. Chiarraí sa bhliain 1857 (C feasta). Tá an dá chóip gaolmhar le chéile, pé acu an cóip indíreach é C de A, nó gur eascraíodar as an bhfoinse chéanna. Is beag atá eatarthu agus is léiriú í an fhoirm 'artha' sa dá lámhscríbhinn seachas an fhoirm 'ortha' a éilíonn an mheadaracht an cóngas gaoil.<sup>2</sup> Ní tugtar mar réamhrá leothu ach 'Muircheartuigh (*sic*) Ua Gríobhtha cct do Dhochtúir Dúbhagáin' (A), agus 'Muircheartach Ó Ghriobtha cct do Dochtúir Dubhagáin' (C). Molann láimh dhéanach (Standish H. Ó Grádaigh is dóichíde) leasú go 'don Dochtúir Ó Dubhagáin', i LS Cambridge. Ní móide gur moladh gan fuaimint an moladh so, dá bhrí nach foláir dúinn glacadh leis gur don nDochtúir Muircheartach Ó Dubhagáin a ceapadh an dán so, óir luaitear ainm dílis an dochtúra ar líne 16.

Is féidir linn insint an dána a thabhairt mar leanas: v. 1 Seolann an file Muircheartach Ua Gríofa a dhea-ghuí go dtína pháirtí an Dochtúir Muircheartach Ó Dubhagáin i bhfoirm fhileata ar a dtugtar 'beannacht', 'bean-nocht'; v. 2 Iarrtar ar Íosa Críost an dochtúir a chosaint ar dhochar-bhroid agus ar chlaonadh beart; v. 3 Iarrtar cosaint don ndochtúir ar easláinte agus ar thinneasáí éagsúla; v. 4 Guítear go dtiocfaidh an dochtúir slán ó aistear farraige atá roimis amach; v. 5 Guítear rath ar an mborb-bhile go bhfuil an dochtúir ag dul faoina dhéin; v. 6 Tugann an file foláireamh don nDochtúir gan

<sup>1</sup>Tá mo bhaochas ar na daoine seo a leanas: an Dr Liam P. Ó Murchú as an ndán a phlé liom agus as dréacht den bpáipéar a léamh; an Dr Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha a mhol dom an dán a ullmhú don gcló agus a chomhairligh mé ar chuid de na téarmaí leighis atá luaite ann; Seán Mac an tSíthigh a chuir lámhscríbhinn C, agus dá bhrí sin an dán féin, faoi mo bhráid an chéad lá.

<sup>2</sup>Féach nótaí téacsúil, líne 16 *m'ortha*.

ceann a thógaint de mhaslaí shaighdiúirí Éireannacha a bhuaifidh leis agus é i gcéin.

Ní heol dom aon duain eile ar marthain a cheap Muircheartach Ua Gríofa an dána so cé gur léir ar chumas a chuid filíochta agus ar údarás a chuid cainte go raibh a cheard go maith aige.<sup>3</sup> Is é is dóichíde ná gur Mhuimhneach ab ea é ar an gcúis go mbíodh Gríofaigh líonmhar i dTuamhain agus i gCill Orglan.<sup>4</sup> Cá bhfios dúinn ná raibh gaol nó cóngas de shaghas éigin ag scríobhaí A, Muiris Ó Gríofa, leis an bhfile agus eolas aige ar an ndán. Chomh maith leis sin, chleacht an Gríofach stíl filíochta a shamhlaíonn an scríbhneoir seo le Cúige Mumhan. Tabharfar faoi ndeara an t-amas { \*o \*o } a bhíonn an-choitianta i bhfilíocht Mhuimhneach i dtreo dheireadh na 17ú haoise. D'fhéadfaí an rann so a cheap Dónall na Buile Mac Cárthaigh timpeall na bliana 1694 a thabhairt mar shampla amháin don amas agus sórt friotail atá i gceist:

Ní hé an coga so is doilig liom ná táinig fós,  
Ná torchra na mborbchón do b'ábhrach sgóp,  
Ach toircheas mná brolla-ghil ó árdChloich Reó  
Id dhóras-sa, agat a bhodaig, agad chráin dá dheó.<sup>5</sup>

Má táimid meathshásta gur Muimhneach ár bhfile níor chás dúinn a thuairimiú, leis, gur Muimhneach é fear tiomnaithe an dána, an Dochtúir Muircheartach Ó Dubhagáin. Is mó a shamhlaimid an teideal 'dochtúir' le dochtúir le diagacht sa tréimhse seo; na dochtúirí Séathrún Céitinn agus Dónall Ó Colmáin cuir i gcás, agus scata Éireann dochtúirí eile nach iad. Tá an teideal dochtúir (leighis) á úsáid sa Ghaeilge le fada an lá, áfach, agus is léir ar thagairt Thaidhg Uí Chianáin go raibh an téarma coitianta go maith i dtosach na 17ú haoise féin.<sup>6</sup> Agus ár bhfile ag guí cosaint ar aicfidí éagsúla a d'fhéadfadh bualadh leis an nDubhgánach agus é i gcéin ní miste dúinn glacadh leis gur dochtúir leighis atá i gceist anso. Ina theannta san bheadh súil againn go molfá a thréithe deabhóideacha luath nó mall dá mba dhochtúir le diagacht ab ea é, moladh ná tugtar sa dán so.

Is ar an Mór-Roinn a cuirte oiliúint ar abhar dochtúirí leighis na hÉireann tar éis Chogadh an Dá Rí (1688–91). Théidís 'on Fhrainc go dtí Ollscoil chlúiteach Montpellier, ach ó thosach na 18ú haoise théidís, leis, go dtí scoil leighis Leyden.<sup>7</sup> Cé go raibh cosc ar Chaitlicigh áit a thógaint san

<sup>3</sup>Ní móide gurb é seo an Muircheartach Ua Gríofa céanna ar dhein Aogán Ó Rathaille aoir air: Patrick S. Dinneen agus Tadhg O'Donoghue (eag.), *Dánta Aodhagáin Uí Rathaille*, ITS 3, second ed. (London, 1911), *A bháis, do rugaís Muircheartach uainn*, 96 (uimh. XVII).

<sup>4</sup>Féach Edward MacLysaght, *The Surnames of Ireland*, fifth ed. (Dublin, 1980), s.n. 'Griffin, Griffey', 137.

<sup>5</sup>Tomás Ó Rathille (eag.), *Búrdúin Bheaga. Pithy Irish Quatrains* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1925), 40 (uimh. 190).

<sup>6</sup>Paul Walsh (eag.), *The Flight of the Earls by Tadhg Ó Cianáin* (Maynooth/Dublin, 1916), 144: 'Doreglamadh uile dochtúiridhe 7 fisice na cathrach dia innsaighidh'.

<sup>7</sup>Ghnóthaigh 122 mac léinn leighis an máithreánach in Leyden idir 1701 agus 1738, féach Eamon O'Flaherty, 'Medical men and learned societies in Ireland', in Judith Devlin agus Howard B. Clarke (eag.), *European Encounters: Essays in Memory of Albert Lovett* (Dublin, 2003), 253–69, ar lch 256.

Irish College of Physicians tar éis 1692 níor cuireadh bac orthu leigheas a chleachtadh faoi mar cuireadh bac ar ghairmeacha eile a chleachtadh in aimsir na bPéindlíthe.<sup>8</sup> Fágann san go raibh ar chumas dochtúirí Caitliceacha dul i mbun a gcuid oibre sa tréimhse seo agus iad ar an dtuiscint ná cuirfí isteach ná amach orthu. Mar sin féin is ar an Mór-Roinn a chaitheadh cuid mhaith acu tamallacha agus iad ag tindeáil ar bhuíonta d'fhearaibh Éireann a bhí ag troid i gCogadh Chomharbas na Spáinne (1701–15); agus go háirithe sna *tercios* Éireannacha in arm na Spáinne i bhFlóndras.<sup>9</sup> Agus na nithe sin sa mheá againn, braithim ná beimis i bhfad ón gceart dá dtuairimeois gur dhochtúir leighis ab ea an Dubhghánach a bhí ar tí aghaidh a thabhairt ar an Mór-Roinn chun tréimhse a chaitheamh i *tercio* Éireannach nó a leithéid; go raibh an file ag seoladh a dheaghuí chuige ach san am chéanna go raibh sé ag tabhairt foláirimh dó gan ceann a thógaint do dhreamanna áirithe dá chuid féin a bheadh ag cáinseoireacht air agus é thall. Caithfidh go raibh a chúis go maith ag an nGríofach an chomhairle seo a chur ar a pháirtí, cúinsí go bhfuilimidne dall orthu inniu.

Éinne amháin leis an ainm Dochtúir (Ó) Dubhagáin a bhuail liom i gcatalóga lámhscríbhinní na Gaeilge agus is é sin an té a chum an dán aiceanta 6 véarsa *Ní claoine fealla ná meatacht do leag ár mbuighean riamh*. As an trí chóip atá i mbailiúchán an Acadaimh<sup>10</sup> is í an chóip a dhein Uileag a Búrc timpeall na bliana 1750 an ceann is luaithe. ‘Dochtuir Dubhgan cct anso’, an t-aon eolas a thugann an Búrcach. I gcóip a dhein Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin timpeall na bliana 1833 faighimid faisnéis bhreise: ‘Dochtúir Dúbhgán cct. 1709’. Is é Peadar Ó Longáin a dhein an chóip is déanaí agus ní deir sé ach ‘Dochtuir Dubhgan cct.’, gan aon trácht ar bhliain cumtha an dána. Tá difríochtaí, agus ní gan tábhacht iad, idir an trí chóip agus is trí léamh cumaisc a dhéanamh orthu is fearr a bhainfí cothrom céille astu.<sup>11</sup> Is léir mar sin nach ó na foinsí céanna a thagann an trí leagan anuas chugainn agus go bhfuil an dóchúlacht ann go raibh cur amach ag daoine ar an ndán so tráth dá raibh.

Dán is ea *Ní claoine fealla* ... a dheineann contrárthacht ghéar idir ghaisce agus ghníomhartha na dtriath anallód, go háirithe Brian Bóramha, agus an claonadh chun fill agus meatachta a bhí sa dream a bhí suas le linn an fhile féin; dream nár shantaigh gníomh gaile ‘ach bruíon na gearad sa mbaile agus gearradh dlí Dia’ (líne 23).<sup>12</sup> Cáineadh is ea é seo, ní foláir, ar an easaontas a bhí idir dhreamanna i bhfórsaí an Rí Séamas ó thús deireadh Chogadh an Dá Rí, agus go háirithe, ba dhóigh le duine, ar na ropairí a bhí ag creachadh is

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 254–5.

<sup>9</sup>Féach Michael White, ‘The role of Irish doctors in eighteenth century Spanish medicine’, in Declan Downey agus Julio Crespo MacLennan (eag.), *Spanish-Irish Relations through the Ages* (Dublin, 2008), 149–174, ar lch 149.

<sup>10</sup>Uileag a Búrc, ARÉ 12 F 7, lch 128; Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, ARÉ 23 C 8, lch 86; Peadar Ó Longáin, ARÉ 23 O 27, lch 185.

<sup>11</sup>Mar shampla, tá an líne dheireanach chéanna (24) ag Uileag agus ag Peadar ‘nóch dfíoruig bearach do leacach is calam cill niamh’, ach í difriúil ar fad ag Mícheál Óg ‘nach claoidhig a sleachta fe ghalluibh gan bail gan brian is ciach’. Ach tá ‘sgur sgríobhach amhuil re danair’ ag an dá Longánach ar líne 22 agus ‘sgur griobhach amhail le danair’ ag Uileag.

<sup>12</sup>Féach san aguisín mar le téacs.

ag marú ó thosach an chogaidh ach a chuaigh thar cailc ar fad i dtreo deiridh nuair a thugadar faoi ghnáthdhaoine ná raibh baint ar bith acu leis an gcoimhlint mhíleata a ionsaí agus a mharú.<sup>13</sup> Is féidir linn a thuairimiú ar chine an fhile gur Mhuimhneach ab ea é. Corcaíoch b'fhéidir, óir is i lámhscríbhinní ó Chorcaigh a tháinig an dán chugainn. Nod beag eile, b'fhéidir, go luann sé na gaiscígh ó Fhearaibh Maí Chorcaí a chuaigh síos go sleasaibh Átha Cliath in aimsir Chluain Tairbh (línte 5–6).

Gan dabht, ní féidir a dheimhniú le haon tsíuráil gurb é Dochtúir Dubhagán an dána so an Dochtúir Ó Dubhgáin céanna ar sheol Muircheartach Ua Gríofa a bheannacht chuige. Ba dhóigh le duine, áfach, ar an gcur i láthair gonta a tugtar don mbeirt go rabhthas ag súil go mbeadh cur amach éigin ag lucht léite na lámhscríbhinní ar cérbh é an Dochtúir Ó Dubhagáin agus nár ghá a thuilleadh a rá ina thaobh. De ghnáth is go dtí file eile a cuirtí 'beannacht' nó 'bean-nocht'<sup>14</sup> agus tá a fhios againn go raibh fear ann leis an ainm Dochtúir Dubhagán a chum ar laghad dán amháin, agus a lán eile ná fuil againn ar shlacht an aondána san.

Ar mhaithe leis an bplé mar sin, táthar chun glacadh leis, cé go trialach cáiréiseach é, gurb ionann an dá dhochtúir atá faoi chaibidil againn anso agus gur cumadh an dá dhán uair éigin sa chéad chúig bliana déag den 18ú haois. B'fhéidir go raibh *Ní claoine fealla* ... dírithe ar dhream áirithe, gur tuigeadh go maith cérbh iad ag an am; dream a bhí imithe ar an Mór-Roinn ag troid i reisimint Éireannach éigin, agus, go bhfuair an dochtúir tuairisc go mbeadh sé ina bhfochair sara fada agus glaoite air chun na reisiminte céanna. Níl anso i ndáiríre ach hipitéis a chuireann dán an Ghríofaigh i gcás agus an véarsa deireanach go háirithe. Fágfar faoina léitheoirí a dtuairim féin a bhunú nó fianaise a chuirfeadh sinn ar mhalairt tuisceana a aimsiú.

#### FOINSÍ

Cambridge Add. 6559 (A) Mártan Ó Gríofa a scríobh i gCill Rois, Co. an Chláir idir 1844 agus 1845:

'Muircheartuigh Ua Gríobhtha cct do Dhochtuir Dúbhagáin'.

Músaem Chorca Dhuibhne LS 1 (C) Tomás Mac Muircheartaigh a scríobh i mBaile an Fheirtéaraigh Thiar, Co. Chiarraí i 1857:

'Muircheartach Ó Ghriobhtha cct do Dochtuir Dubhagáin'.

<sup>13</sup>Cáineann Dáibhí Ó Bruadair na ropairí céanna in *An Longbhriseadh*. Mar le plé air seo, féach Liam P. Ó Murchú, 'Duanaireacht Dháibhí Uí Bhruadair 1685–1691', in Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha (eag.), *Nua-Léamha: Gnéithe de Chultúr, Stair agus Polaitíocht na hÉireann c. 1600–c. 1900* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1996), 118–39, agus John G. Simms, *Jacobite Ireland 1685–91* (Dublin, 1969), 298–300.

<sup>14</sup>Féach nóta téacsúil 4.

## TÉACS

A fhortail fhir don bhorbfhuil na bhFéinníodh mear,  
 i ngoraghuil badh togartha 'sa gcéimibh treas,  
 ad fhochairse ós donas dam nách féadaim teacht  
 4 go follas leat chum sonais sin mo bhé gan bheart.

Cruinnitheach na cruinne uile is mac Dé na bhfeart  
 is toircheas na brolla-ghile gan géilleadh d'fhear,  
 do tollachadh i mullach croise do shaoradh ár gcean,  
 8 dod chosnamh ar dhochar-bhroid 's ar chlaonadh beart.

Gan coilice ort badh docharach ná ad thaobhsa cnead,  
 gan othras ar oscailt ort ná créachta ar scairt,  
 gan scoraibh ort, gan bolgach, gan baol asma,  
 12 gan boirbeacht, gan doighearacht, gan péin in alt;

## AISTRIÚCHÁN

- 1–4 O powerful man of the proud blood of swift-moving warriors,  
 who were willing in blistering frays and in combat manoeuvres,  
 since it troubles me that I cannot come along with you  
 I openly send for your comfort my unclad maiden.
- 5–8 May the creator of the entire world and may the son of the almighty  
 God,  
 the offspring of the bright-bosomed one who gave herself to no  
 man,  
 he who was pierced on the top of a cross to cleanse our sins,  
 protect you from harsh difficulty and from impulse to evil.
- 9–12 May you not suffer harmful colic or shooting pain in your side,  
 or open skin ulcers or lacerations to your body,  
 or scurvy, smallpox, or the threat of asthma,  
 or bloating, pangs, or pain in your joints;

## FOIRMEACHA SNA LÁMHSCRÍBHINNÍ

1 4 mo bheidh A, mo beith C; 2 5 Croineatheach AC; 6 toirritheas AC; na brolla gil[I]e  
 AC; 7 tollachuidh AC; ár gceann AC; 3 9 coileach AC; 11 *astma* AC; 12 dogaireacht  
 AC.

gan urchair do ghoinfeadh tú ná gaoth ad ghar,  
 gan stoirm ort do loiscfeadh tú ná caora i neart,  
 gan doilghios i bhfogas duit ná taom ad chreath  
 16 sin m'ortha duit, a Mhuircheartaigh, dod shaol i bhfad.

Is ortha Mhuire, coscadh nimhe, is traochadh cleas,  
 is toradh guibhe Choluim Chille 's na naomh ar fad,  
 osna a' briseadh, coscadh broide, is éigheamh na lag,  
 20 dod bhorb-bhile d'fhortaigh laige i réim 'sa reacht.

Ná corraighse fá rothaireacht dá ndéinge spreas  
 do Scotaireamh is morgaithe as béal a teacht  
 nách cosmhaltar gur toradh file acht réimeas lag  
 24 's i roscaibh buile más docharach gach aos is ceart –  
 Finith

13–16 (may you not) suffer wounds from cannon fire, or encounter high  
 winds (at sea),  
 or a storm (whose lightning) would char you, or raging powerful  
 seas;  
 (may you not) encounter hardship or suffer convulsions in your  
 body,  
 that is my prayer for you, o Murty, may you live long.

17–20 I pray for Mary's blessing, protection from evil, and subjugation  
 of tricks,  
 the favour of Colm Cille's prayer and that of all the saints,  
 a sigh arising, prevention of oppression, and the plaintive prayers  
 of the frail  
 for your steadfast leader who aided the weak in deed and in law.

21–24 Don't be perturbed by any vile verbal attack that may come from  
 the mouth of a wretch of a common Irishman, which is nothing but  
 a pathetic attempt in frantic verse, that can't be likened to the work  
 of a poet, even if disparaging to every proper learned class.

4 13 orchuir AC; 14 caora neart AC; 16 m'airtha AC; shaolúgha AC; 5 18 Culluim Chille  
 A, cholluim Cille C; 19 éigeadh AC; 6 21 roithaireacht AC; ndeingid AC; 22 moruighthe  
 AC; 24 ná gachaois AC.

## MEADARACHT

*Amhrán*: { (-) \*o - - - \*o - - - (-) é - a }

Tá an t-amas { o - \*i - o - \*i - } mar mhaisiú breise ar línte 17–20.

## NÓTAÍ TÉACSÚLA

**4. *bé gan bheart***: Imeartas focal ar ‘bean nocht’ agus ‘beannacht’ leis an gciall ‘cuirim mo bheannacht’. Ba nós coiteann ag filí na ré iarchlasaici ‘beannachtaí’ den tsaghas so a sheoladh, eatarthu féin go mórmhór, nó go dtí taoiseach nó pátrún go mbeadh greann na filíochta ann. Is sampla luath é an ceann a sheol Pádraigín Haicéad go dtí Séamas Buitléir c. 1632: Máire Ní Cheallacháin (eag.), *Filíocht Phádraigín Haicéad* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1962), 61 (uimh. LI). As san i leith fachtar samplaí ó fhilí clúiteacha na Mumhan, Dáibhí Ó Bruadair, Uilliam Mac Cartáin an Dúna agus Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin ina measc.

**6. *na brolla-ghile***: An Mhaighdean Mhuire.

**7. *tollachadh***: (LSÍ tollachuidh) Tá an trí shiolla sa bhfoirm seo riachtanach ar mhaithe leis an gcomhfhuaime. Tugann an briathar *tollaim*, (*do*) *tolladh* dúinn mar bhriathar saor aimsir chaite. Ní foláir nó tá an fhoirm bhriathartha anso bunaithe ar aidiacht *tollach* = *tolltach* agus gur tuaipis an deiriúchán sna lámhscríbhinní *-uidh* in ionad *-adh*. Cf. sampla den ngnáthfhoirm in Éamonn Ó hÓgáin (eag.), *Seán Clárach Mac Dónail: Filí 3* (Baile Átha Cliath, 2011), 23 (uimh. 4), líne 1 ‘Do tolladh me trém aeibhse is do goineadh me im scairt’.

**7. *ár gcean***: Ár gcionta, Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge Béarla* s.v. *cean*, ‘al. a crime. See cion’.

**9. *coilice***: (LSÍ coileach) Truailliú í foirm na LSÍ ar *coilice*, ‘intestinal colic’, ní foláir.

**9. *cnead***: Glór doimhin a thagann ó dhuine go mbeadh breoiteacht scamhóg air nó goirtiú bainte dá chuid easnaíocha. Is ag tagairt do bhreoiteacht atáthar anso. Cf. Seán Óg Caomhánach, *Croidhe Cainte Ciarraighe: Ag an gCóta* (An Roinn Oideachais, 1935–42), s.v. *cnead* mar le húsáidí. Féach Tracey Ní Mhaonaigh (eag.), <http://www.forasnagaeilge.ie/angum/croidhe-cainte-ciarraighe/> mar le téacs iomlán an fhoclóra.

**10. *othras ar oscailt***: ‘An open festering wound; skin ulcer/abscess’.

**11. *scoraibh***: ‘scorbach’, ‘scurvy’. Nó ‘button scurvy; endemic syphilis’? Ceaptar gur tháinig an galar so go hÉirinn le lucht Chromaill sna 1650í, R. S.

Morton 'The button scurvy of Ireland' in *British Medical Journal of Venereal Diseases* 40 (Dec. 1964), 271–2. Ní galar gnéas-tarchurtha é.

**11. asma:** Asthma. Béim ar an dara siolla. Féach an tráchtas leighis *Almúsor* a scríobhadh síos c. 1400 ar dtúis, LNÉ LS G 11, 176a 15: 'is e is ainm diles don gne sin asma'.

**12. boirbeacht:** Bloating, indigestion. Féach Caomhánach, *Croidhe Cainte Ciarraighe* s.v. *borbacht*, 'Do ghoill borbacht an bhídh orthu: do bhí an biadh róshaidhbhir agus rinne sé breóidhte iad'. 'An féidir leat a dhochtúir borbacht an tinnis do mhaolughadh? An pian mór do lagughadh'.

**12. doighearacht:** (LSÍ dogaireacht) Le rá le trí shiolla. Cf. *eDIL* s.v. *daiger* > *daighear* / *doighear*, 'a shooting pain, a pang'. Nó *eDIL* s.v. *dogar*, 'sad, gloomy, mournful', 'dogaireacht', ach leis an gciall 'affliction', cf. Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge Béarla* s.v. *doghrainn*.

**14. caora:** Toinn mhóra nó farraige ard, féach Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge Béarla* s.v. *caor*, 'a huge wave'.

**15. doilghios:** Le rá le trí shiolla.

**15. creath:** Creat, 'frame', cf. Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* s.v. *creat* agus *creat*.

**16. m'ortha:** (LSÍ m'airtha) 'Artha' i gCorca Dhuibhne agus in áiteanna eile sa Mhumhain, leis, ní foláir. Ach 'ortha' a lorgaíonn an mheadaracht, cf. líne 17.

**16. dod shaol:** (LSÍ shaoghlúgha A, shaoghlúgha C) Leasaithe ar mhaithe le ciall loighciúil a bhaint as an líne, cf. 'ar feadh i bhfad', 'go maire tú i bhfad'.

**17. Ortha Mhuire:** 'Mar rug Anna Muire agus mar rug Muire Críost, mar rug Eilís Eoin Baiste, gan díth coise ná láimh, fóir ar an mbean, a Mhic. Fóir féin, a mháthair, ós tú rug an Mac, tabhair an ghein ón gcnámh, agus go mba slán a bhéas an bhean', Pádraig Ó Siochfhradha (eag.), *An Seanchaidhe Muimhneach* (Baile Átha Cliath, 1932), 369 (uimh. 200). Deirtí é ach a mbítí ag gabháil timpeall leis an gcrois Bhríde.

**21. rothaireacht:** Ruathaireacht, 'verbal assaults', cf. *eDIL* s.v. *rothach*, 'an attack'.

**21. dá ndéinge:** (LSÍ n-deingid) Cf. Cecile O'Rahilly (ed.), *Trompa na bhFlaitheas* (Dublin, 1955) s.v. *do-ním*, present subjunctive, 'Muna ndéinge sibh', lch 334.

**22. *Scotaireamh*:** (LSÍ sgotairuim) An Irishman. (Scot + aireamh), ‘Aireamh’, *eDIL* s.v. *airem*, ‘ploughman, ordinary man’. Cf. ‘scoturra’ in John C. Mac Erlean (eag.) *Duanaire Dháibhidh Uí Bhruadair III*, ITS 18 (London, 1917), 194 agus *eDIL* s.v. *Scot*.

**22. *morgaithe*:** (LSÍ moruighthe) Ráite le trí shiolla neamhaiceanta le bá idir *-the* agus *as* { o - - - } Aidiacht bhriathartha de ‘morgadh’ ag tagairt siar do ‘rothaireacht’: ‘Ná corraighse faoi rothaireacht is morgaithe as béal a teacht’. Cf. Brian Ó Cuív (ed.), *Párlament na mBan* (Dublin, 1952) ‘Mar an ccéadna as déisdiníoch lé Dia na húrnaighthe thig ó chroídhe et ó bhéal mórgaithe ...’ (i.e. morgaithe), línte 2820–1. Nó *eDIL* s.v. *murchuirthe*, ‘one come overseas, a foreigner’, leis an gciall ‘castaway’.

**24. *roscaibh buile*:** Ba nós coiteann tráth den saol asacháin i bhfoirm véarsaíochta a chaitheamh dá mbeadh achran nó easaontas i gceist. Bhíodh feidhm chinnte nó áiteamh machnaithe sa teachtaireacht agus é fite fuaite i gclisteacht na filíochta féin agus i dtarcaisne na gearrachainte.

**24. *gach aos is ceart*:** (LSÍ ná gachaois) Agus é deacair ciall loighciúil a bhaint as ‘ná’ na lámhscríbhinní fágadh ar lár é chun an léamh ‘más dochrach do gach aos (dána) agus atá ceart’ a dhéanamh.

#### AGUISÍN

Measadh nár mhiste téacs de *Ní claoine fealla* ... a sholáthar do léitheoirí toisc go dtagraítear go sonrach dó sa réamhrá. Tras-scríobh dioplómaitiúil den gcóip a dhein Uileag a Búrc a tugtar anso, gan aon chur isteach ná amach ar leagan an scríobhaí. I bhfo-chás tugtar malairt as ARÉ 23 C 8, a scríobh Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, nuair a measadh téacs an Bhúrcaigh a bheith pas beag achranach.

ARÉ 12 F 7, lch 128

Uileag a Búrc 1749–50  
An tEanach, Co. Chorcaí

## DOCHTUIR DUBHGAIN CCT ANNSO

Ní claoine fealla ná meatacht do leag ár mbuighean riamh  
 ná fuigheallach easguin<sup>15</sup> as ceallaibh ní feas gur thuil síad  
 acht bruighean is spairaing is calmacht arm níghe a ngliadh  
 4 ag díbert danar a ccathaibh as banba í bhráin.  
 Bo fíor gan chealg as geala-bhrog armíghe<sup>16</sup> a ttriall  
 síos go sleasaibh an aird-phuirt<sup>17</sup> ainmníghidh cliath (*Dublin*)<sup>18</sup>  
 go fíochmhar fearradha feargach frasach fíor dhían  
 8 chum bruíghne seasamh<sup>19</sup> le danair go leagadís íad.

Da mhíle pearsa aco an arm sa cceannas faoi an ttriath  
 go maoinéach meanamnach mearradha maiseach faoi mhiann  
 chum tírre abhaile go dearbh níor mheas anníocht tíacht<sup>20</sup>  
 12 a bhfiorguil catha, a ccluain tarbh go leagad<sup>21</sup> díobh tríar.

Mo dhíth dá maireadh a acfuinn aneart sa bhuighean bríán  
 iar stríoca banba meata do ghallaibh faoi riaghail  
 is naoideach aiteach dar peadair do ghreadfaidís íad  
 16 gan fuigheall tar chalaith no as breatainn amach a dígh<sup>22</sup> diabhuil.

Nách fíor gur masla do shleachtaibh cuirc caisil rígh aniaith  
 is dfhíor fhuil gaisge do chleacht a ngul seasamh buill dían  
 do siol conmháicne do shlíocht fearguis, is aruid cuinn fial  
 20 le dríodar brasguir bhíg breataine a leaga síos ríamh.

Ní haoirde calmacht namhad na gaisge rínn ríamh  
 sgur griobhach amhuil le danair nár sheasaimh inn cian  
 acht bruighean na ccarad sa mbaile is gearra dlígh díá  
 24 noch dfíoruig bearach do leacach is calam cill niamh.

TOMÁS L. Ó MURCHÚ

*Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh*<sup>15</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘easguine’.<sup>16</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘fhearmuighe’, Fhear Maí.<sup>17</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘airuid-phuirt’.<sup>18</sup>Gluais an scríobhaí.<sup>19</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘sheasamh’.<sup>20</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘aníos triall’.<sup>21</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘gur leagadh’.<sup>22</sup>ARÉ 23 C 8 ‘a ttí’.

## REVIEWS

*History and Identity in Early Medieval Wales*. Rebecca Thomas. Studies in Celtic History [XLIV]. D. S. Brewer, Cambridge, 2022. xii + 202 pp. £75. ISBN 9781843846277.

This relatively short but stimulating book is a study of national identity in Wales in the ninth and tenth centuries, as perceived in and shaped by three texts: the Latin *Historia Brittonum* of 829/830 (henceforth *HB*), the *Life of King Alfred* by Asser (c. 893), and the Welsh poem *Armes Prydein*, whose dating is less certain though it is assigned by most commentators to the tenth century. As such, the book's subject is rather narrower than its title might suggest. 'Identity' is national or ethnic identity: other kinds of identity, such as gender, social class or religious affiliation, are not so much in focus. Furthermore, the time frame amounts to a century or somewhat more, and only three sources are investigated. That said, the lack of comprehensiveness is amply compensated for by the insights afforded through the close study of these three texts. Thomas has given herself a sensible remit, and the result is a well-structured, very readable book that offers genuinely new perspectives.

The introduction sets the topic of early medieval identity in context, covering both the biblical framework of the *gens* or nation as a group descended from a single ancestor and the copious modern scholarship on ethnogenesis as a cultural process; the work of Walther Pohl is especially cited here. While a view of ethnicity as constructed and performative, rather than innate, is now widespread in academic historical writing, the early medieval Welsh have remained on the edges of the ethnogenesis debate, so Thomas is innovative in putting them in the centre.

It quickly emerges, however, that early medieval Welshness is not an easy concept to grasp. Welsh writers in Latin consistently describe themselves as *Brittones* – Britons – and seldom give a clear view of Wales as a defined and recognized territory. Their British inheritance brought a host of literary and intellectual problems. Britishness did not fit comfortably into the literary models, and the problems only became more intractable with time. There was a disjunct between the name and historical origin of the Britons, which implied a claim to the whole island of Britain, and the contemporary reality that the Welsh and other Brittonic-speaking peoples actually inhabited only small areas of it. The longer this situation endured, the less realistic such a claim might appear, and the greater would be the pressure to adopt an alternative historical myth. A second, related problem was the fragmentation of the Britons into regions that were far apart and faced different neighbours, and thus developed along different historical trajectories. For how long after the seventh century could Cumbrians, Welsh, Cornish and Bretons continue to use the same name for

themselves and to regard themselves as one people? A third difficulty was 'regal solidarity', or the lack of it. In most, though not all, early medieval historical writing, the concept of the *gens* is closely bound to having a single ruler or ruling dynasty, yet even within Wales there was no single king to provide a focus for historical narrative. Finally, history was understood as the unfolding of the will of God, and that did not allow much space for losers. A people who had lost their ancestral, eponymous territory must have been punished for a good reason, because they were deficient in faith, morality and adherence to Christian teaching. From Gildas onwards this was a perception with which British authors had to wrestle.

Thomas examines these issues (and others) in five chapters. The influence of Rees Davies's classic lectures on high and late medieval national identities is apparent here but Thomas changes his emphases to reflect her narrower focus on specifically historical writing. Thus, she does not cover law or custom, for example, the subjects of Davies's third lecture. Her Chapter 1, 'Names, territories and kingdoms', closely matches Davies's second lecture, but she gives 'Language' a whole chapter (Ch. 2) where Davies allotted it only half a lecture. And the other half of Davies's lecture, on historical mythology, is matched here by two whole chapters on origin legends. There is a final chapter that is not thematic, but focused entirely on 'Asser and the origins of Alfred's kingdom', and this provides a most interesting reading of the *Life of Alfred* through the lens of origin legends, showing how Asser treated Alfred's reign as a historical moment in which a new Christian kingdom was founded.

Chapter 1, on 'Names, territories, and kingdoms' addresses the geographical intricacies. Thomas shows how these texts waver between competing visions. Britishness was attached to a view of the whole island of Britain, yet the northernmost part of the island, the home of the Scots and Picts, was often occluded. Wales itself, as Thomas makes clear, is a very ambiguous concept in this period. 'Welsh' writers in Latin did not call themselves anything other than *Brittones*, but Asser reveals that the country itself now had a name too. The term used was *Britannia*, which made good sense as a name for a land inhabited by Britons, but its ambiguities are obvious. An interesting discussion of *Armes Prydein* focuses on similar difficulties attached to the vernacular name *Kymry*.

Chapter 2 deals with language. The importance of the languages that people spoke has been questioned by some commentators on medieval ethnicities, especially those working on 'core' Europe, the Romance- and Germanic-speaking areas, who have noted that differences of language are not very prominent in medieval accounts from those regions (and many people moved comfortably between Germanic and Romance anyway). Thomas is undoubtedly right to insist that the situation in Britain and Ireland was different, and that language was very important to ethnicity. This is not to say that early medieval people here were not multilingual like their Continental counterparts – many clearly were – but there was a closer tie between language groups and political units here, as well as some very eloquent elites who used the vernacular for literature and law (especially, but

not exclusively, in Gaelic-speaking regions). Thomas's discussion focuses on her writers' manipulation of languages other than the main one that they were using: Brittonic/Welsh and English names in Asser and *HB*, and English words in *Armes Prydein*. By definition, we would expect all such names to be linguistically marked in comparison with the matrix in which they are embedded, and they invite the question why they appear where they do. Asser's names are geographical and consist of Brittonic names for places in Wessex and Mercia. These have intrigued many people in the past: are they evidence for the survival of Brittonic speech in ninth-century England? Were the names genuinely in use or invented by Asser? If the former, where and how were they in use, and where did Asser get them from? Finally, why did Asser include them? To each of these questions, Thomas argues that the answers are not uniform and that each case needs to be assessed separately. This is a valuable discussion that acknowledges the likelihood that Asser has more than one motive, including 'demonstrating his scholarly credentials' (p. 74).

Two chapters follow devoted to 'origin legends'. The first deals with the Britons themselves and focuses on the rich material in *HB*. There is a useful discussion of the competing origin legends of the Britons and their sources, biblical and classical. Thomas argues that, 'At the heart of the origin legends of the Britons in *Historia Brittonum* is their relationship with the Romans' (p. 91). Thus, she sees the Trojan origin of the Britons as an implicit claim to equality with the Romans as much as with the Franks. This leads her to devote a considerable amount of space to a part of *HB* – the account of Roman Britain – that is not really part of the British origin legend but a long episode within the history of a people who were already established. In *HB*'s own terms, the Britons originated as a separate *gens* long before the Roman conquest. Nevertheless, the question of how Romans and Britons interacted is obviously relevant to 'history and identity' and fully deserves the extended treatment that it receives. Thomas surveys the sources of the Roman chapters in *HB*, making a strong case that the author consciously sought to elevate the role of the Britons in comparison with his sources (chiefly Gildas and Orosius). The Britons appear as powerful warriors who are subdued only with great difficulty and prove even harder to govern. Roman control is thus insubstantial: 'their visits to Britain are fleeting and their connection to the island superficial' (p. 116). Thomas's argument that the *HB* author reacted against Gildas's negative, moralizing view of the Roman-British relationship is convincing. Nevertheless, there is another reason that might account for why *HB* depicts the Romans as 'fleeting' and 'superficial' conquerors. By the ninth century, any memory of the vast bureaucratic edifice of the Roman empire must have faded, and it would have been hard, arguably impossible, for the author of *HB* to conceive of a political unit that could govern Britain from a distant Continental capital for several centuries. For the *HB* author, 'ruling' Britain meant turning up with an army, raiding and plundering till the local rulers had had enough, and then accepting tribute, and once the emperors had gone away again, the locals would continue to pay the tribute only as long as they felt sufficiently threatened. Those were the rules of politics

in the small-scale world of the ninth century Isles, and that is how the author of *HB* envisaged the Roman emperors operating. Thus, if the author did wish to stress the warlike resistance of the Britons, as Thomas suggests (and I am sure that she is right), the classical sources would have helped him along, for they would naturally have given him the impression that Roman emperors came only occasionally to Britain and then invariably to fight; by implication, the Britons must have thrown off Roman overlordship between these visits. That swathes of Britain remained peacefully integrated into a bureaucratic state during these centuries was unlikely to be a concept within the author's capacity to imagine.

Chapter 4, the second to deal with origin legends, moves to Welsh views of the origin of the presence of Pictish, Irish and English peoples in Britain. The title, 'legitimate and illegitimate migration', perhaps hints that ninth-century texts can have direct resonances in our own times, though this is left unspoken. The Britons, in the view of the *HB* author and the *Armes Prydein* poet, derived their legitimacy from being the first-comers to Britain. Thomas (p. 125) adopts the term 'primary acquisition' from Patrick Geary to describe the concept of a first and thereby legitimate seizure of territory, which confers unique rights on the new possessors. Interestingly, it seems that both of the medieval authors were unfazed by the subsequent arrival in Britain of Gaels and Picts: the seizure of the far north of the island does not seem to have been seen as an encroachment from a distant Welsh perspective and these migrations to Britain could be taken as compatible with Britons' dominance of the rest of the island. These peoples thus had their own moments of 'primary acquisition' on the legitimate side of the divide, though the Irish settlements in Wales were not accepted in the same manner, and the *HB* author gives an account of their destruction that restores the Britons to rightful ownership. All of this is in contrast to the English, whose arrival is treated as quite illegitimate in both *HB* and *Armes Prydein*. Although it is generally agreed that *HB*'s account of Hengest and Horsa drew on an origin legend of English, and probably Kentish, origin, Thomas focuses on *HB*'s consistent presentation of the English side as treacherous, pagan and undeserving, and argues that the story was as much relevant to British identity as to English: 'It is as important as the Trojan origin legend in constructing an identity for the Britons in these texts' (p. 139). Such a move was necessary because of the painful disjunct between the ethnic identity of the Britons and their much-reduced territory in one corner of their own island. The *HB* author emphasizes the moral superiority and military prowess of the Britons at every turn and contradicts Bede's statement that the Britons played no part in converting the English to Christianity. *Armes Prydein*, on the other hand, suppresses the burden of the Britons' failure through moral indignation against the enemy and by presenting a vision of a better future in which the 'primary acquisition' is revindicated and the usurpers are driven out.

The final chapter takes a different route from the previous ones. It discusses only one work, Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, and analyses it as a contemporary origin legend which takes elements of the genre and makes them serve the purpose of arguing that Alfred's kingdom was a quasi-new foundation that embraced all the Christians of (southern) Britain in opposition to the pagan

Scandinavian intruders. Reading Asser with an eye on older Welsh texts, especially *HB*, allows Thomas to argue that Asser deliberately repurposed topoi previously used to castigate the English; in effect, the anti-English rhetoric of *HB* was turned against the Vikings. Equally new, and perhaps revolutionary, was Asser's conception of Wales as a country – *Britannia* – next to the English country of *Saxonia*. Asser turned away from distant British origins and embraced the geographical reality of his own present; yet paradoxically, the Britain-centred viewpoint remained, but attached now to Alfred's kingdom of English and Welsh *Christiani*.

In conclusion, it might be felt that the problems of Welshness and Britishness were not solved by any of the authors whom Thomas discusses in this book. Indeed, one could argue that they remain to trouble Welsh commentators down to the present day. *HB* looks backwards towards a British past but does not offer much in the way of a vision of the future. *Armes Prydein* attempts to turn *HB*'s rhetoric into just such a vision, but the clash with the real political geography of the poet's own world is severe – and his vision failed. The same is not true of Asser, for views that are recognizably descendants of his position are still observable and widespread in Wales today. Yet his hope for a multi-national community in which Welsh rulers could find an honourable place under English overlordship was not destined to be realized in the long term either. Rebecca Thomas's book is an excellent discussion of all these ninth-century visions of Wales-in-Britain, and reading it has reminded me that they remain relevant even today.

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*North American Gaels: Speech, Story, and Song in the Diaspora*. Edited by Natasha Sumner and Aidan Doyle. McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal & Kingston, London and Chicago, 2020. 511 pp. \$55. ISBN 9780228003793.

About an hour's drive from where I sit is a community first established in North America in the eighteenth century and in which the language of the old country continues to be transmitted from generation to generation. The speech of the Amish, however, is probably the only variety of German likely to persist in the American diaspora. This endogamous religious community deliberately isolates itself from the wider society in order to preserve its cultural identity. All other European languages in the Americas, however, other than those of the original colonial powers, are disappearing through the integration of their speakers into the wider national societies. Scottish Gaelic is a good example. It has had a continuous presence in Nova Scotia for as long as the Amish in the US, but intergenerational transmission has now largely ceased, though its significance to local heritage and identity remains.

*North American Gaels* is a collection of scholarly papers on the diasporic linguistic communities that spoke Scottish Gaelic and Irish. It is dedicated to

the memory of Kenneth E. Nilsen (1947–2012) whose voluminous research on Celtic languages in North America inspired much subsequent work, including this volume. The editors are to be congratulated for their lucid introduction which does more than just introduce the essays: it also gives an overview of the history of both diaspora groups in North America, establishes the state of research and points to future exploration. The book highlights the differences between the two diasporic groups as well as the similarities. As the editors point out, ‘in terms of national and ethnic identity, Irish and Scottish Gaels diverged considerably after the turn of the seventeenth century and into the present day’ (6). Natasha Sumner’s tribute to Nielsen chronicles his pioneering work on Irish and Scottish Gaelic speakers in North America through extensive interviews, folklore collection and finding manuscripts. He was also a major teacher and promotor of Scottish Gaelic in Nova Scotia from his position as first chair in Gaelic Studies at St Francis Xavier University. The remainder of the book is divided into two sections, devoted to ‘Irish Gaels’, with eight chapters, and ‘Scottish Gaels’, with seven, as well as a concluding list of Nilsen’s publications.

The book’s editors note the neglect by historians of the Gaels in North America. The neglect is all the more surprising considering that Scottish Gaelic was the third most widely spoken language in Canada at Confederation in 1867, while Irish at the same time was among the most important immigrant languages in the US (since the Irish were first in number of the foreign-born population at the time, Irish speakers were possibly second in number only to German speakers among immigrants). While there has been a large increase in publication on the North American Gaels since the 1970s, the subject still receives little interest outside of the specialist fields of Irish, Scottish and Celtic Studies – even within the fields of Irish and Scottish studies few scholars know the Gaelic languages.

Scottish Gaels in the Maritimes established cohesive, culturally rich and deeply rooted rural communities, maintained their language over many generations and left a considerable documentary record in Gaelic. There is less evidence of intergenerational transmission of Irish, the persistence of which was mostly due to continued immigration. In the US Irish speakers, like Irish immigrants in general, settled by and large in urban areas. In Canada, though there was significant Irish rural settlement in Newfoundland and New Brunswick and some evidence of intergenerational transmission of Irish, the language left few traces. Literacy in Irish among immigrants was very rare. Scottish Gaels, on the other hand, benefited from the attitude of the Protestant churches to use of the vernacular and, before emigrating, were familiar with a print culture in their own language, a situation almost nonexistent for Irish speakers until the period of the Revival. Probably most Irish speakers who came to North America had already internalized a sense of the Irish language’s superfluosity to an Irish Catholic identity forged in adversity, were aware of and acquiesced in the on-going language shift and had no real sense of difference of identity between themselves and English-speaking Irish Catholics (which is not to say that all Irish-speaking immigrants were

Catholic). Scottish Gaels seem to have maintained their distinctiveness within overarching identities, their Britishness accommodating their Scottishness, which accommodated in turn a Gaelic and Highland (and island) identity distinct from that of the Lowlands.

There are abundant Scottish Gaelic written records in North America. Presbyterian religious works in the language appeared in print in the US in the late eighteenth century and became much commoner in the nineteenth century, especially in the Maritimes, with Catholic works also appearing. Secular literature appeared in print from the 1830s, mostly in bilingual periodicals, and included the Gaelic-language weekly *Mac-Talla*, published in Cape Breton from 1892 to 1904. Nearly 200 Gaelic Nova Scotian poets have been identified, born on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, 'who composed on themes including emigration and longing for home, criticism and praise for the landscape, and aspects of community life' (16).

One such poet was John MacLean (1787–1848), the subject of Robert Dunbar's essay. MacLean was a native of Tiree and emigrated to Nova Scotia in 1819. He collected songs before emigrating, transcribed works of his own composed in Scotland and in Nova Scotia – as well as those of others – in two manuscripts that he brought with him, and he published them in two books. His songs appeared in print in his lifetime and, most influentially, in a later edition by his grandson, and they have been recorded from oral tradition on both sides of the Atlantic.

Michael Linkletter makes another interesting contribution to the study of Gaelic print culture in Canada. Alexander 'The Ridge' MacDonald (1823–1904), a poet knowledgeable about his native Cape Breton Gaelic traditions, in 1898 submitted a song composed by his father to *Mac-Talla*. The editor published it with some changes, at which MacDonald protested, whereby the editor re-published it, but with a sardonic comment added. MacDonald's response was a satire – unpublished – in twelve stanzas, attacking *Mac-Talla*, not least for the editor's constant reminder to its subscribers to pay (since Gaelic publishing was financially precarious). Ironically, a song by MacDonald mildly satirizing *Mac-Talla* for not publishing submitted songs already appeared in its pages in 1893, along with a song in its praise by the same writer once the omission was rectified.

Canadian Gaelic-speaking Presbyterians moved to the Boston area from the first half of the nineteenth century, among them members of a Presbyterian sect from Prince Edward Island known as the 'MacDonaldites', followers of the charismatic Perthshire-born Rev. Donald MacDonald (1783–1867) who established his ministry on the island in 1827. Rev. Murdoch Lamont (1865–1927), an islander, was an important chronicler of the life of MacDonald, a composer of Gaelic hymns and a collector and publisher of Gaelic songs. His collection, printed privately in Massachusetts in 1917, gives 'one of the most complete records afforded of vernacular verse composed in Scottish Gaelic during the nineteenth century in Prince Edward Island' (348) according to Tiber Falzett who tells the story. 'Murchadh Cam' (1822–1902), a cousin and namesake from an earlier generation who emigrated from Skye to Prince Edward

Island in 1840, was a frequent contributor to *Mac-Talla* and probably inspired the Rev. Murdoch to write letters to the journal after the latter's death, which elicited responses from a wider area and 'allowed for the retrieval of local Prince Edward Island poetic output through the collective memory maintained by Scottish Gaels in the North American diaspora' (355).

Like Rev. Lamont, Alexander Fraser (1860–1936) held a strong loyalty to the British Empire. A Highlander, he worked for many years as a journalist in Toronto, notably for *The Toronto Mail*, and became the first provincial archivist for Ontario in 1903. He edited Scottish Canadian periodicals, collected oral traditions, and taught Gaelic at Knox College (a theological school) and at McMaster University. Michael Newton in his essay finds that Fraser's English-language writings 'often resort to clichés about Scottish traits and virtues, and reinforce contemporary forms of racialism' while his Gaelic texts 'affirm the value of the Gaelic language and tradition and the central role played by both in transmitting and embodying identity' (373). He authored four works in Gaelic in which 'language loyalty is a pervasive theme' (376), in one of which he promoted Canada in preference to the Scottish Lowlands as a destination for Gaelic migrants. Another gave biographical accounts of key Canadian Gaels and richly detailed descriptions of a *céilidh* in Canada and sabbath traditions in the Highlands.

The story of Irish writing in North America is more fragmented. In the mid-eighteenth century Donncha Rua Mac Conmara (1715?–1810) is believed to have lived in Newfoundland, which is referred to in three of his poems. Pádraig Ó Liatháin's essay makes the case convincingly that the Clare-born poet did live there and was well informed on life on the island. Pádraig Phiarais Cúndún (1777–1857), who settled with his family in Utica in upstate New York in 1826, composed poetry and wrote letters in Irish to friends and neighbours at home in his native Ballymacoda, Co. Cork. Tony Ó Floinn's essay on Cúndún is an interesting exploration of his 'publics', with more evidence for those in Ireland and less for those in the US, but brings the evidence together in a convincing way.

Cúndún, of course, is *sui generis* with his extensive American writings from the pre-Famine period, but his uniqueness is probably because evidence for other such individuals did not survive. Irish-language manuscripts are known to have circulated in North America. Two by Connacht immigrants who, unlike Mac Conmara and Cúndún were not familiar with the Gaelic literary tradition, were written in an improvised spelling based on English. The orthography of these two manuscripts, a previously published 'farcical tale of high jinks among migrant laborers in mid-nineteenth-century Connemara' (93) probably written by Patrick Lyden early in the twentieth century and an unpublished diary by the Famine immigrant William Gormley, is the subject of Nancy Stenson's study.

Very little in Irish appeared in print in North America until the late nineteenth century. Matthew Knight gives an account of the promotion of the language in the US by dedicated societies. After 1873, when the Philo-Celtic Society was founded in Boston, a number of societies appeared with the aim

of maintaining and promoting Irish, and several newspapers published Irish-language columns. The *Irish Echo* was established in 1886 as the organ of the Boston society, pledging to ‘assist in the vindication of the character of the Irish race from the foul slanders of centuries by English writers – that their ancestors were barbarians, their language a jargon, and their literature unworthy of notice’ (168). It was slow to publish in Irish, though it eventually acquired a Gaelic font. There was acerbic debate when it printed Irish texts in Roman type. Eventually it was to publish Irish-language poetry, prose, proverbs and Irish lessons. Knight looks at this material and provides an index to the first lines of the some one hundred and twenty Irish-language poems and songs that appeared in its pages between 1887 and 1894.

The most significant periodical was *An Gaodhal*, founded in 1881 as the journal of the Brooklyn Philo-Celtic Society. Prose in the journal included stories from manuscripts brought to America, material copied from other publications, original contributions, and folklore, the subject of Tomás Ó hÍde’s essay. Folklore – ‘Fenian tales, folk stories, local legends, fables, songs, proverbs, toasts, prayers, and riddles’ (139) – was contributed by individuals both in Ireland and America, though provenance was not always indicated. A tale about the eighteenth-century Munster poet Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin, collected from an informant in Portlaw, Co. Waterford, by a pseudonymous contributor who may have been the scholar and language activist Fr Richard Henebry (1863–1916), is included by Ó hÍde in a normalized form (with some grammatical changes) along with a translation.

Ciara Ryan’s chapter is devoted to Seán ‘Irish’ Ó Súilleabháin (1882–1957), a Corkman from Beara who immigrated to Butte, Montana and militated for his native language, for Irish independence and for the cause of labour, a burning question in that mining town. Ó Súilleabháin was active in the local branch of the Gaelic League. He left a large and important collection of books and manuscripts, the latter including his transcriptions of traditional Irish songs from memory and from printed sources, Irish-language poetry by American-based poets and his own compositions, political and personal. The collection is now housed in the Butte-Silver Bow Archives. Ryan argues for ‘the importance of further investigation of Gaelic manuscript repositories in North America’ (243).

Irish-language novels from the 1920s and 1930s set in Canada are the subject of Pádraig Ó Siadhail’s essay. They include works by well-known figures such as the teacher and lexicographer Seán Óg Ó Caomhánaigh (‘Seán an Chóta’, 1885–1947) and the historian and genealogist Éamonn Mac Giolla Iasachta (Edward MacLysaght, 1887–1986). Ó Siadhail also considers Irish translations of works set in Canada, from Jack London’s *The Call of the Wild* (1903, translated by Niall Ó Domhnaill as *Scairt an Dúthchais*, 1932) to Louis Hémon’s *Maria Chapdelaine* (1914, Risteárd Ó Foghludha’s translation from the French with the same title, 1933). In the Irish novels he finds racist references to characters of indigenous and other non-European heritage, noting that ‘[t]his negative portrayal of the Métis conforms to the portrayal of characters of mixed European and Native descent as *homo criminalis* in American popular literature of the time – and, indeed, in Irish-language

texts from the early twentieth century' (260). Contrasting the Irish-language novels with Irish Canadian novels in English, he finds that in them the main characters return to Ireland, which he explains by the influence of the negative attitude to emigration in contemporary nationalist ideology.

Little folklore was recorded in Irish in North America compared to Scottish Gaelic. Three of the Scottish contributions are devoted to the topic. Kathleen Reddy's essay, on Gaelic animal apocryphal tales, focuses more on Scottish than on Canadian examples. She gives an interesting discussion on Catholic versus Presbyterian attitudes to such traditions showing that the assumed hostility of Presbyterians to folklore is not necessarily true, and she also comments on the mostly Catholic Gaelic community of Cape Breton. Lorrie MacKinnon's essay is about the relationship between the Barra teacher, storyteller and singer Annie Johnston (c. 1889–1963), whose love for and knowledge of her native Gaelic tradition was great, and Nova Scotia. She met Gaelic visitors from Nova Scotia in Scotland, maintained a correspondence in Gaelic with several of them and contributed to *Mosgladh*, the Scottish Catholic Society's journal published (mostly in English) in Cape Breton. Her visit to Nova Scotia and Boston was facilitated by relatives in the US and brought her into contact with scholars, singers and storytellers from whom she recorded traditional material with a borrowed tape recorder. Catrìona NicIomhair Parsons' contribution is a selection of folklore items Nielsen collected from Danny Cameron of Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and published in the *Casket* between 1987 and 1996. From this period, the *Casket* Gaelic columns have provided, in Nielsen's words, 'the most extensive collection of mainland Nova Scotia Gaelic in print' (459). The items are translated by the author with folklore notes added by Gregory Darwin. The pieces included family history, a fairy narrative, tall tales, an account of a meeting with a mermaid and a children's rhyme.

William Mahon's piece is a fascinating essay on the use of phonographic recordings on wax cylinders for instruction in Irish. Edison's first phonograph, from 1877, was gradually perfected and found new applications, one of which was, from 1899, language learning, and there were three such phonograph correspondence courses for Irish offered to the public in 1909 and 1910 at a period when wax cylinders were being superseded by recordings on disk. The essay identifies the courses and those who developed them and discusses the materials and recordings used in them.

A fitting tribute to Ken Nielsen, this book is a landmark that will encourage further research on a long-neglected subject. *North American Gaels* is an outstanding collection of essays that provides a superb introduction to the story of Gaelic culture in North America and is highly recommended.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are accepted for general use in *Celtica*, along with such universally known ones as p., ibid., etc. Any other abbreviations should be defined on first use and a list of them should be provided at the end of the article.

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>ABM</i>             | D. McManus and E. Ó Raghallaigh (eds), <i>A Bardic Miscellany: Five Hundred Bardic Poems from Manuscripts in Irish and British Libraries</i> , Léann na Tríonóide/Trinity Irish Studies 2 (Dublin, 2010). |
| <i>ACL</i>             | Whitley Stokes and Kuno Meyer (eds), <i>Archiv für celtische Lexikographie</i> , 3 vols (Halle a.S., 1898–1907).                                                                                          |
| <i>AFM</i>             | John O'Donovan (ed.), <i>Annála Ríogachta Éireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters</i> , 7 vols (Dublin, 1848–51).                                                                   |
| <i>AI</i>              | Seán Mac Airt (ed.), <i>The Annals of Inisfallen</i> (Dublin, 1951).                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>AL</i>              | R. Atkinson, W. N. Hancock, W. M. Hennessy, T. O'Mahony and A. G. Richey (eds), <i>Ancient Laws of Ireland</i> , 6 vols (Dublin, 1865–1901).                                                              |
| <i>Anecdota</i>        | O. J. Bergin, R. I. Best, Kuno Meyer and J. G. O'Keeffe (eds), <i>Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts</i> , 5 vols (Halle a.S., 1907–13).                                                                     |
| <i>AU</i>              | Seán Mac Airt and Gearóid Mac Niocaill (eds), <i>The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)</i> (Dublin, 1983).                                                                                                  |
| <i>BBCS</i>            | <i>Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies</i> .                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>BL</i>              | British Library.                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Br</i>              | Breton.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>CIH</i>             | D. A. Binchy (ed.), <i>Corpus Iuris Hibernici</i> , 6 vols (Dublin, 1978).                                                                                                                                |
| <i>CMCS</i>            | <i>Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies</i> ; from number 25 onwards <i>Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies</i> .                                                                                               |
| <i>CModIr</i>          | Classical Modern Irish.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Co</i>              | Cornish.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <i>CSANA</i>           | Celtic Studies Association of North America.                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>DIAS</i>            | Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <i>DIL</i>             | <i>Dictionary of the Irish Language and Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language</i> (Dublin, 1913–76; compact edition 1983).                                                                  |
| <i>EC</i>              | <i>Études Celtiques</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <i>eDIL</i>            | <i>Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language</i> ( <a href="http://www.dil.ie">www.dil.ie</a> ).                                                                                                        |
| <i>EMod</i>            | Early Modern (in combinations EModIr etc.).                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>GPC</i>             | <i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> (Cardiff, 1950–2002).                                                                                                                                                    |
| <i>GPC<sup>2</sup></i> | <i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> , second ed. (Cardiff, 2003–).                                                                                                                                           |
| <i>GPC Online</i>      | <i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> , online ed. ( <a href="http://www.geiriadur.ac.uk">www.geiriadur.ac.uk</a> ).                                                                                           |

|        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GMW    | D. Simon Evans, <i>A Grammar of Middle Welsh</i> (Dublin, 1964).                                                                                                                                                  |
| GOI    | Rudolf Thurneysen, <i>A Grammar of Old Irish</i> (Dublin, 1946).                                                                                                                                                  |
| IEW    | Julius Pokorny, <i>Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> , 2 vols (Bern, 1959–69).                                                                                                                       |
| IGT    | Osborn Bergin (ed.), ‘Irish Grammatical Tracts’, supplements to <i>Ériu</i> 8 (1916), 9 (1921–3), 10 (1926–8), 14 (1946) and 17 (1955).                                                                           |
| Ir     | Irish.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| ISOS   | <i>Irish Script on Screen</i> (www.isos.dias.ie).                                                                                                                                                                 |
| ITS    | Irish Texts Society.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| JCHAS  | <i>Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society</i> (1892–).                                                                                                                                         |
| JCS    | <i>Journal of Celtic Studies</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                |
| JRSAI  | <i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i> .                                                                                                                                                   |
| LEIA   | <i>Lexique étymologique de l’irlandais ancien</i> (Dublin and Paris, 1959–).                                                                                                                                      |
| LL     | R. I. Best, O. Bergin, M. A. O’Brien and A. O’Sullivan (eds), <i>The Book of Leinster</i> , 6 vols (Dublin, 1954–83).                                                                                             |
| LModIr | Late Modern Irish.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| LU     | R. I. Best and O. Bergin (eds), <i>Lebor na hUidre/Book of the Dun Cow</i> (Dublin, 1929). Where necessary, the hands of the three scribes may be distinguished as <i>LU(A)</i> , <i>LU(M)</i> and <i>LU(H)</i> . |
| M      | Middle (in combinations M <sub>Ir</sub> , M <sub>W</sub> , M <sub>Br</sub> , M <sub>Co</sub> etc.).                                                                                                               |
| MD     | Edward Gwynn (ed.), <i>The Metrical Dindshenchas</i> , Todd Lecture Series 8–12 (Dublin, 1903–35).                                                                                                                |
| ML     | The Milan Glosses on the Psalms, Bibl. Ambr. C. 301, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), i, 7–483.                 |
| Mod    | Modern (in combinations Mod <sub>Ir</sub> , Mod <sub>W</sub> , Mod <sub>Br</sub> , Mod <sub>Co</sub> etc.).                                                                                                       |
| MV     | Rudolf Thurneysen (ed.), ‘Mittelirische Verlehen’, <i>Irische Texte</i> III.1 (1891), 1–182.                                                                                                                      |
| NLI    | National Library of Ireland.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| NLS    | National Library of Scotland.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| NLW    | National Library of Wales.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| O      | Old (in combinations O <sub>Ir</sub> , O <sub>W</sub> , O <sub>Br</sub> , O <sub>Co</sub> etc.).                                                                                                                  |
| PBA    | <i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i> .                                                                                                                                                                       |
| PRIA   | <i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</i> .                                                                                                                                                                   |
| QUB    | Queen’s University Belfast.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| RC     | <i>Revue Celtique</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| RIA    | Royal Irish Academy.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| SC     | <i>Studia Celtica</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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| <i>Sg.</i>     | Glosses on Priscian, Codex Sangallensis no. 904, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), ii, 49–224.                |
| <i>SGc</i>     | Scottish Gaelic.                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>SGS</i>     | <i>Scottish Gaelic Studies</i> .                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <i>SnaG</i>    | Kim McCone, Damian McManus, Cathal Ó hÁinle, Nicholas Williams and Liam Breatnach (eds), <i>Stair na Gaeilge in Ómós do Phádraig Ó Fiannachta</i> (Maynooth, 1994).                                            |
| <i>TBC I</i>   | Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), <i>Táin Bó Cúailnge: Recension I</i> (Dublin, 1976).                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>TBC LL</i>  | Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), <i>Táin Bó Cúailnge from the Book of Leinster</i> (Dublin, 1967).                                                                                                                      |
| <i>TBC St.</i> | Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), <i>The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge</i> (Dublin, 1961).                                                                                                                           |
| <i>TCD</i>     | Trinity College Dublin.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <i>Thes</i>    | Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975).                                                                                |
| <i>THSC</i>    | <i>Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion</i> .                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Tur.</i>    | The Turin Glosses on St Mark, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), i, 484–94.                                    |
| <i>UCD</i>     | University College Dublin.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>VKG</i>     | Holger Pedersen, <i>Vergleichende Grammatik der keltischen Sprachen</i> , 2 vols (Göttingen, 1909–13).                                                                                                         |
| <i>W</i>       | Welsh.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Wb.</i>     | Glosses on the Pauline Epistles, Codex Paulinus Wirziburgensis, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), i, 499–712. |
| <i>ZCP</i>     | <i>Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie</i> .                                                                                                                                                                  |