

HUMFREY WANLEY, BISHOP JOHN O'BRIEN, AND  
THE COLOPHONS OF MAEL BRIGTE'S GOSPELS

ABSTRACT

Mael Brigte's scribal colophons in BL MS Harley 1802 allow the writing to be dated to 1138 in Armagh. This was recognized in 1713 by Humfrey Wanley, whose study of the manuscript was remarkable in its time. It was also worked out by Bishop O'Brien, who saw the manuscript in the British Museum in 1767. Wanley relied on manuscripts from James Ware's collection, in his day owned by the Hon. James Brydges. O'Brien took his chronology from the annals compiled for him by Fr John Connery and known as the Dublin Annals of Inisfallen. His own copy is now TCD MS 1281, and a high proportion of the sources for the compilation is represented by MSS 1281 and 1292. The first colophon in particular is more than evidence of date, however: it is testimony to the view from the primatial see on the killing of the devout king of all Ireland, Cormac Mac Carthaig.

The Gospels of Mael Brigte, now BL MS Harley 1802, came to the notice of scholars at an early date. A small book, handsomely written in a fluent Insular hand of the twelfth century, it has commanded attention for its text of the gospels, its extensive Latin gloss, especially on St Matthew, its citing an Irish commentator Man(chanus), its interlace initials and evangelist symbols, and its colophons, marginalia, and poems in Irish.<sup>1</sup> In its old text and its irregular quiring, it is in many ways a throwback to earlier days of manuscript production, a reflection of conservatism in Ireland, and yet a product of its time. The scribe Mael Brigte was proud of his skill and, in particular, of the minute hand he used when seeking to fit copious commentary into the margins of a small page. If he was himself selecting passages for inclusion, we must regard him as the compiler as well as the scribe, and we may wonder why the commentary tails off as it does after the first gospel. His references to his teacher Mael Ísu, in Irish, in the same minute hand, raise questions about his school that we cannot answer. The occasional quatrains written in margins

\*Warm thanks to Pádraig de Brún and Diarmaid Ó Catháin for comments on a draft of this paper, and to Liam Breatnach, Ruairí Ó hUiginn, and Pádraig Ó Riain for answers to questions. I am grateful also to Damien Burke (Jesuit Archives), Andrew Dunning (BL), Sophie Evans (RIA), and Mary Lombard (UCC) for helpful responses to my requests.

<sup>1</sup>Several individual pages of the manuscript have been reproduced many times in print over the last two hundred years. The most visually interesting can be seen now at the website of the British Library. A bibliographical note at the end of this paper provides a round-up of earlier studies.

spring mostly from his scriptural study, though not invariably. A few longer poems likewise reflect religious studies, and he appears to have planned the space for their inclusion alongside the gospel text. Written in Armagh in 1138, the manuscript exemplifies the skilful penmanship of Latin books made and used in Ireland in that period, of which it is a rare survivor, and shows the interaction of Latin and the vernacular on the same page. One of its religious poems carries an internal signature by Ua Máil Chonaire, associated with a recent *senchaid* to the kings of Connacht, Néide Ua Máil Chonaire, who died in 1136, and whose only known poem is a versified king-list. The manuscript is rich in interest, and no published description adequately reflects this.

The manuscript was first described in print in a work published in 1708 by Père Richard Simon (1638–1712); the writer thought it was about eight hundred years old when he saw it.<sup>2</sup> John Toland (1670–1722), raised in Inishowen, was the first Irishman to write about the book; he sought to justify the same early date from one of its Irish colophons. He later translated these colophons into Latin for Humfrey Wanley (1672–1726), pioneer of palaeography. Wanley was the first to work out the date of the manuscript as 1139, using manuscripts that had once belonged to Sir James Ware (1594–1666), which he consulted in the hands of the Honourable Mr James Brydges (1673–1744). What has been generally overlooked is that Dr John O'Brien, *alias* Seán mac Thomáis Uí Bhriain (1701–1769), bishop of Cloyne and Ross, repeated the exercise, drawing on sources in his own possession. He dated the manuscript to 1138 and with good reason. These results show what could be achieved by scholars even without ready access to full texts of the more important Irish annals. Their success is all the more remarkable when one knows that those chronological mainstays, the Annals of Ulster and the Annals of Inisfallen, are defective at the critical years. The Revd Dr Charles O'Connor (1764–1828), who in 1814 was himself engaged in publishing a Latin edition of the annals, came to the same result as O'Brien, though it cannot be proven that he did so independently.<sup>3</sup> He also argued that the colophon served to vindicate the reliability of the annals themselves. When Robin Flower described the manuscript in the British Museum catalogue, he was well apprised of Wanley's impressive discussion but unaware of O'Brien's. Citing O'Donovan's edition of the Annals of the Four Masters, he drily dated the writing to 1138 with no hint at his predecessors' work.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>[Richard Simon], *Bibliothèque critique, ou Recueil de diverses pièces critiques, dont la plupart ne sont point imprimées, ou ne se trouvent que très-difficilement, publiées par Mr de Sainjore qui y a ajouté quelques notes*, 4 vols (Paris, 1708–10), i, 271–5.

<sup>3</sup>Charles O'Connor, *Rerum Hibernicarum scriptores veteres* (Buckingham, 1814–26), vol. i, *Prolegomena ad Annales*, cxli–cxlv (the last of three sequences of roman page-numbers). He itemized ten datable facts and asserted that they could all be dated from the annals, concluding that in 1138, and in no other year, all the entries find agreement. He had the fourth colophon engraved, but he makes no direct reference to the work of Wanley, which he must surely have used.

<sup>4</sup>S. H. O'Grady and Robin Flower, *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, [1889–92]–1926), ii, 431–2. O'Curry's description from 1849 had already provided the reference (BL MS Add. 43376, fol. 36).

## PARIS, THE HAGUE, AND LONDON

From Wanley, Flower knew that Père Simon had seen the manuscript in the Bibliothèque du Roi, in the Rue Vivienne, Paris, and that it was one of several books stolen from the library in 1707 by a renegade priest, Jean Aymon (1661–c. 1734). Despite his own position as a curator of manuscripts in the national library in London, Flower did not seek to discover anything about its history in the Bibliothèque du Roi, whose early catalogues were easily available. It had been catalogued there in 1682 as Regius 4583 by Nicolas Clément (1647–1712), keeper of the royal library, the very man whose confidence was won in 1706 by Aymon and who was so badly deceived. Clément described the manuscript in few words, ‘Euangelia IV characteribus Saxonice scripta’.<sup>5</sup> He listed it among the older manuscripts of the collection kept by the brothers Pierre Dupuy (1582–1652) and Jacques Dupuy (1591–1656), which was brought by them into the king’s library in 1645, then still housed at Rue de la Harpe in the Latin Quarter, and under their wills it became part of the royal collection in 1657.<sup>6</sup> In a catalogue made by Jacques Dupuy it was described as ‘Quatuor euangelistae; literis Saxonice, in 8°’.<sup>7</sup> How the book came into their hands is not known, but it does not appear among the manuscripts inherited from their father Claude Dupuy (1545–1594).<sup>8</sup> For the present we can say no more than that it reached the brothers’ hands in France no later than 1645, but closer investigation into the growth of their collection may yet allow a narrower dating. It may be mere coincidence that another manuscript made at Armagh in the twelfth century, now Bodl. MS Laud Misc. 460, had been in France for some time before it came into the hands of Archbishop William Laud, not later than 1633.<sup>9</sup> Their late medieval provenance can only be a matter for speculation.

In treating the manuscript as Saxon, Père Simon, if he wrote the description himself, followed the available catalogues. One of these described the manuscript in these terms: ‘Codex scriptura Saxonica exaratus, cum aliquot notulis Saxonica lingua editis, circiter annorum mille’.<sup>10</sup> Supposing that the passages written in Irish were ‘en langage Saxon’ – the writer knew nothing of either, as Wanley observed – he read the words in the four colophons, ‘Or(ait) do Mælbripte’ as (pray for) ‘dom Ælbrigte’, which he took

<sup>5</sup>H. Omont, *Anciens inventaires et catalogues de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (Paris, 1908–13), iii, 410.

<sup>6</sup>Suzanne Solente, ‘Les manuscrits des Dupuy à la Bibliothèque Nationale’, *Bibliothèque de l’École des chartes* 88 (1927), 177–250, at 190, 193. Manuscripts from this collection have long been referred to by editors as *codices Puteani*.

<sup>7</sup>Omont, *Anciens inventaires*, iv, 203 (MS Dupuy 174).

<sup>8</sup>It does not appear in the catalogue of his books from 1595 (J. Delatour, *Les livres de Claude Dupuy d’après l’inventaire dressé par le libraire Denis Duval, 1595. Une bibliothèque humaniste au temps des guerres de religion* (Paris, 1998)).

<sup>9</sup>R. W. Hunt, ‘Introduction’, *Laudian Manuscripts* (1858), reprinted with Additions and an Historical Introduction (Oxford, 1973), xvi–xvii.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted without context as a description given by the Benedictines, presumably colleagues of Mabillon from Saint-Germain-des-Prés, by Léopold Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits* (Paris, 1868–81), i, 331n.

for an Old English name. Wanley himself was aware that the writer was not necessarily Père Simon *lui-même*. A note at the end of the preceding essay in Simon's book tells us, 'Ce Discours & les deux autres qui suivent ont été trouvez parmi les papiers de Monsieur Justel en Angleterre'.<sup>11</sup> Ours is thus the middle one of three essays here associated with Henri Justel (1620–1693). He was a Huguenot who anticipated that the Edict of Nantes would be revoked and left France as early as 1681, seeking help from Henry Compton, bishop of London.<sup>12</sup> With his support, Justel became keeper of the royal library at St James's Palace. He corresponded with Dr Thomas Smith (1638–1710), keeper of the Cottonian Library, and with Dr Isaac Vossius (1618–1689), canon of St George's Chapel, Windsor, and Wanley knew him to be well acquainted with ancient manuscripts.<sup>13</sup> The note appears to me incompatible with the content of the three essays. The first of them concerns William Cave's *Scriptorium Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria* (1688), but it was written in Paris, where, it says, English imprints were very dear. The last refers to 'vos Anglois' (pp. 279, 280), in connexion with a Greek manuscript sent to the English king by Cyrillus Lucaris (1572–1638), which can be identified as the Codex Alexandrinus (BL MS Royal 1 D. v–viii), presented to King Charles I, yet it is dated 'A Paris 1692'. Our essay deals with a manuscript in Paris. Is one to suppose that Justel wrote it in England from notes or in Paris before leaving France? How did these papers come into Père Simon's hands? It makes no sense to attribute these essays to Justel, nor can we explain the note. The essays were published by Simon in 1708, but already the ancient manuscript had left the royal library.

The theft of manuscripts by Jean Aymon in May 1707 is a familiar part of the history of the library.<sup>14</sup> He was a Frenchman, a priest who had changed his religion, married, and was living in the Hague at this time. Here in 1709 he

<sup>11</sup>Simon, *Bibliothèque critique*, i, 270.

<sup>12</sup>H. Brown, 'Un cosmopolite du Grand Siècle: Henri Justel', *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français* 82 (1933), 187–201, at 198.

<sup>13</sup>Bodl. MS Smith 46 (SC 15653), pp. 251–424, comprises nearly seventy letters from Justel to Smith, 1677–86. Wanley wrote, 'I could hardly have believed that the Learned Father Simon has so little Experience in old MSS as to make so trivial Observations. Surely Mr Justel above mentioned must needs have known better: since he brought a good parcel of exceeding Antient & Valuable Manuscripts into the Bodleyan Library at Oxford, and others I have seen in private Hands' (sig. 11Q 2va). These manuscripts, presented in 1675, have the numbers 3685–91 in Wanley's catalogue, *Catalogi Manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae* (Oxford, 1697 [recte 1698]), numbers retained in the Summary Catalogue. The books include three volumes of ecclesiastical canons, *saec.* vi/vii (Bodl. MS e Musaeo 100–102) [CLA 2. 255], one ninth- and one tenth-century book, and two more recent manuscripts (*Summary Catalogue*, i, 119; ii, 729–32).

<sup>14</sup>Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits*, i, 329–32, or, at greater length, B. Hauréau, *Singularités historiques et littéraires* (Paris, 1861), 286–324. In 1766 the British Museum received among the books and manuscripts of Dr Thomas Birch 'Mémoire de quelques manuscrits très-importants qui sont dans le cabinet du sieur Aymon, ministre françois à la Haye' (BL MS Add. 4249, pt 4, now bound in MS Add. 4254). Birch's papers include a number of letters to Harley and Wanley containing offers for the disposal of manuscript collections.

lent our manuscript to the Irishman John Toland, who recognized it as coming from Ireland and carrying texts in Irish as well as the gospels in Latin:<sup>15</sup>

Be pleas'd to understand, that in the beginning of the same year, 1709, I discover'd at the Hague a manuscript of the four Gospels (then lately brought from France) all written in Irish characters, which were mistaken for Anglosaxon, but yet the whole text in the Latin tongue. Some little thing in Irish itself is here and there mixt among the notes, which are very numerous, and other passages in the Irish language occur also elsewhere.

Another visitor in the Hague was Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach (1683–1734), bibliophile and collector, who saw the book in Aymon's keeping on 29 January 1711. He took notes on the items he was shown, knowing that some had been stolen from the Bibliothèque du Roi, and in this case knowing also what Père Simon had published about it.<sup>16</sup> Aymon by now knew that the book was Irish, and Uffenbach went away with the impression that it contained 'die vier Evangelisten lateinisch mit einer Glossa interlineari Hibernica' as well as what he calls a *catena patrum* in the margins. He knew that the writer, whom he calls 'Donyel Brighte', had entered his name at the end of the book:

The Author says in the Irish text that he had written and compiled these Gospels by order of 7 Irish Kings or Princes, whose names he mentions. Mr Toland has deciphered and translated this, and delivered to M. Aymon, whom he assured, that considering the Chronology and time of the Reign of these Kings, this Codex must exceed the age of 900 years.

Seven living kings were indeed named in the final colophon, but Toland has imputed to them a role not implied by the Irish text.

In 1711 Toland returned to London, where he was a protégé of the queen's minister Robert Harley (1661–1724), by now earl of Oxford. Harley was by this date collecting manuscripts seriously, and Toland obviously spoke about this Irish manuscript with Harley and his librarian, Humfrey Wanley, on more than one occasion. Influenced no doubt by Toland, Wanley already wrote of our manuscript as, 'litteris, ut opinor, Hibernicis'. Purchase was immediately

<sup>15</sup>John Toland, *Nazareus: or Jewish, Gentile, and Mahometan Christianity* (London, 1718), p. x. Alan Harrison, 'John Toland and the discovery of an Irish manuscript in Holland', *Irish University Review* 22 (1992), 33–9, provides a fuller context for Toland.

<sup>16</sup>Z. C. von Uffenbach, *Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland, und Engelland*, ed. J. G. Schelhorn (Ulm, 1753–4), iii, 478–80. I quote from an English rendering made for the trustees of the British Museum by Mr Stegmann, Berlin, 1760, BL MS Add. 5338 (now annotated with Harleian numbers), whence it was printed in *Gentleman's Magazine* 102 (Jan.–June 1832), 30–32. The editor, C. N., drew attention to Wanley's daybook in BL MS Lansdowne 771 (published in 1966), and to two letters from Aymon, addressed to Mr Stubbs and to Dr Drummond, among Wanley's in-letters, BL MS Harley 3777, fols 38, 40 (nos 96, 97); these letters are dated 10 and 11 August 1716.

in his mind, and, under the impression from Toland that it was nine hundred years old, he thought to offer twenty guineas for it. Aymon also had a gospel-book in uncial letters, which was no doubt yet more attractive to Wanley.<sup>17</sup> With a view to acquiring these and other manuscripts from Aymon, Wanley wrote to Philip Stubbs (1665–1738), a London clergyman who was visiting The Hague, 2 July 1712, sending a list of the items desired and tips on how to persuade Aymon to sell cheaper than he might otherwise have done.<sup>18</sup> Further correspondence followed. The last letter to Stubbs bears the date 20 November 1712, ending, 'With hourly prayers for your safe return with the Cargo'.<sup>19</sup> On receiving the books, Wanley drew up brief descriptions: the first, undated, refers to 'books lately bought in Holland', the second, dated 10 January 1712/13, 'books lately brought from Holland'.<sup>20</sup> The books had reached London at the end of 1712 or the very beginning of 1713. Wanley's first description shows that he realised that the writer's name was 'often therein expressed' and further hoped to identify him as author of the commentary.

#### HUMFREY WANLEY'S DISCUSSION

It is likely that Wanley's further inquiries followed straightaway. His research must have taken some time, but it was undertaken to satisfy his curiosity and to understand his employer's manuscripts. Early in this process he had a Latin translation made by Toland of the Irish colophons, no doubt already aware through Toland that they provided a means to dating the writing of the book.<sup>21</sup> While Wanley had no concern to make his findings public, Toland went into print, referring to 'the Irish manuscript of the Gospels which I have happily discovered'. He appended a lengthy account of ancient Irish Christianity, 'unfettered by priestcraft', to his controversial religious essay, *Nazarenus*, in which (as S. H. Daniel puts it in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*) 'he proposed that the ancient Celtic beliefs revealed in an Irish manuscript of the four gospels captured the true spirit of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam'.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup>The former Regius 4582, now BL MS Harley 1775 (*saec.* vi<sup>24</sup>, Italy) [CLA 2. 197]. This manuscript had come from the collection of Cardinal Mazarin into the Royal Library.

<sup>18</sup>P. L. Heyworth, *Letters of Humfrey Wanley, Palaeographer, Anglo-Saxonist, Librarian* (Oxford, 1989), 265–8 (no. 123). Here our manuscript is said to be written 'Litteris, ut opinor, Hibernicis', though he had not yet seen it. The edition excluded letters addressed to Wanley, thereby missing much of interest and in some cases the means to understand the correspondence. There are, for example, eight letters from Stubbs to Wanley, the first of them dated 23 January 1712/13, the last 9 February 1721/2 (BL MS Harley 3781, fols 138–147, nos 88–95).

<sup>19</sup>Heyworth, *Letters of Humfrey Wanley*, 276–8 (no. 129).

<sup>20</sup>These deal with fourteen manuscripts, among which ours is no. 12; they have been kept with the relevant drafts of Wanley's letters, BL MS Add. 70484 (formerly Loans 29/259), no. 37).

<sup>21</sup>Harrison, 'John Toland and the discovery of an Irish manuscript', 38, seems to involve himself in Toland's sense of exclusion, 'there is no record of any communication between Wanley and Toland', 'Wanley would likely have suppressed such evidence'. Yet Harrison knew (p. 39) that Wanley's description of the book refers openly and freely to his contact with Toland.

<sup>22</sup>John Toland, *Nazarenus: or Jewish, Gentile, and Mahometan Christianity* (London, 1718). *With an account of an Irish Manuscript of the Four Gospels* (London, 1718), Letter 2, p. 8. In a note at p. 15, Toland indicates that he wrote this essay in 1709, when he had the manuscript in his own keeping 'above half a year'. When publishing, in 1718, he added that 'the book is come into

The essay on Irish Christianity was composed, Toland indicates, in 1709, when he first saw the book and before he had discussed it with Wanley. It was not published until 1718, by which date the manuscript had been some years in the Harleian collection and Wanley's description lay in fair copy in the catalogue, which remained unpublished until 1759.

Wanley soon had the opportunity to take further advice, this time from someone he refers to as John Conry. William O'Sullivan identified him with John Conry, who would later own some manuscripts and at least one printed book from the library of Roderick O'Flaherty (1629–1716).<sup>23</sup> Some of his manuscripts were described by William Nicolson in Dublin in 1724, and in 1731 books were sold to Charles O'Connor and Dr John Fergus.<sup>24</sup> O'Sullivan acutely observed that Wanley's references to Mr Brydges' manuscripts dated his description no later than October 1714, when Brydges succeeded as Baron Chandos and immediately afterwards was made earl of Carnarvon.<sup>25</sup> He inferred that Wanley composed his description in 1713–14 and that Conry was in London in that year. This may well identify him also with 'Seón ó Mulchonri', who translated three protestant sermons into Irish for publication in London in 1711.<sup>26</sup> O'Sullivan further speculated that Conry sold an Irish manuscript to Wanley for his master's library, now BL MS Harley 432, twenty leaves from a sixteenth-century copy of *Senchas Már*.<sup>27</sup> Wanley certainly discussed that

---

England, being purchas'd by the Earl of Oxford' (p. 16n). The account is also sometimes catalogued as a separate publication, *An Account of an Irish manuscript of the Four Gospels; with a summary of the ancient Irish Christianity, [ . . . ] and the reality of the Keldees [ . . . ] against the two last Bishops of Worcester* (London, 1718) [ESTC (English Short Title Catalogue) N46645], but this represents the same printing, and its quire-signatures show that the sheets were printed for the book.

<sup>23</sup>William O'Sullivan, 'The Irish manuscripts in Case H in Trinity College', *Celtica* 11 (1976), 229–50, at 235, and with references, 'The Book of Domhnall Ó Dubhdábhoireann: provenance and codicology', *Celtica* 23 (1999), 276–99, at 278.

<sup>24</sup>William Nicolson, *Irish Historical Library* (Dublin, 1724), 243–6; Richard Sharpe, *Roderick O'Flaherty's Letters to William Molyneux, Edward Lhwyd, and Samuel Molyneux, 1696–1709* (Dublin, 2013), 170–78. Edward D'Alton, *King James's Irish Army List 1689* (Dublin, 1855, second ed. 1860), ii, 540–46, uses the person named by Nicolson as a link between John Conry (d. 1672) and the ancestors of Sir John Conroy (1786–1854), 1st baronet. This is erroneous. Sir John's grandfather, John Conry (1704–1769), was much too young, and his father was Fear Feasa Ó Maoil Chonaire (1661–1746) (E. Curtis, 'The O'Maalconaire family', *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society* 19 (1940–1), 118–46; and family papers now in Balliol College, K. Hudson and J. Jones, *The Conroy Papers* (Oxford, 1987), 23).

<sup>25</sup>William O'Sullivan, 'A finding-list of Sir James Ware's manuscripts', *PRIA* 97C (1997), 69–99, at 76.

<sup>26</sup>*Seanmora ar na priom phoncaibh chreideamh ar na ttaruing go Gaidhlig. Sermons on the principal points of religion, translated into Irish* (London, 1711) [ESTC T47236]. The first sermon was by John Richardson (1669–1747), rector of Annagh, who visited London in 1711; the second preached before William III (1689) by Archbishop John Tillotson (1630–1694), translated by Philip Mac Brádaigh (c. 1650–c. 1719); and three further sermons of William Beveridge (1637–1708), bishop of St Asaph, *ar na gcur i ngaidhlig le Seón ó Mulchonri* (N. J. A. Williams, *I bPrionta i Leabhar: Na Protastiún agus Prós na Gaeilge 1567–1724* (Dublin, 1986), 104–18, 173–5). The Irish text was printed in the Moxon fount by Eleanor Everingham (see below, n. 38).

<sup>27</sup>O'Sullivan, 'Book of Domhnall Ó Dubhdábhoireann', 278; no provenance was known to C. E. Wright, *Fontes Harleiani* (London, 1972). Thomas O'Sullivan spent many hours with Harley 432 at Harley's house in Dover Street during March–June 1720, citing it for what we

manuscript with Conry, referring to it as 'an antient Transcript of the Book of Cloin, in Munster, with a Collection of Laws, as Mr Conry told me'.

Conry provided Wanley with a second translation of Mael Brigte's colophons, again in Latin, which he set out side by side with Toland's. Wanley also had further conversation with Toland after meeting Conry, since at one point he tells us that, regarding the existence of a kingdom of Airgialla, 'Mr Toland told me that Mr Conry was utterly mistaken'. Of course, Conry was correct, but Toland was vigorously opinionated.

Wanley undertook extensive research among the manuscripts of Sir James Ware, which had been bought by Brydges in 1709.<sup>28</sup> Here he found primary manuscripts of Irish annals as well as voluminous notes and abstracts. Although the books had been catalogued, so that he could easily decide which books might help him, he mentions two major problems. He refers to 'my want of proper books, and the imperfectness of several that I saw, especially in the Library of the Honourable Mr Brydges, where four or five (principal Books for this occasion) were imperfect in the very places where I wanted their Help'. We know that Brydges II, the Annals of Ulster, now Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 489, has a lacuna after fol. 50v (AD 1131), resuming at fol. 51r (AD 1151), due to the loss of four leaves. And Brydges XXVI, the Annals of Inisfallen, now Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 503, has similarly lost leaves between fol. 36v (AD 1130) and fol. 37r (AD 1139). Wanley does not refer directly to either: they lacked the years he most wanted and had lost them already before the books were bound for Ware. He also complains about 'the indiscreet method used by divers of the Old Irish Annalists, of omitting the number of the Year, to signify the same by a k (standing I suppose for the kalends of January)'. He says he counted *ks* when seeking to derive a year from the Annals of Boyle, and he must have done the same in the so-called Continuation of Tigernach's Annals, Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 488, fols 19r–26v, which continue the work beyond the year 1088, when Tigernach stopped. Faced with such difficulties, he made

---

know as the Pseudo-Historical Prologue to *Senchas Már* in his *Dissertation* (1722), pp. clxxx–clxxxiv (n. 30 below), and he returned to it again in May–June 1723, his many visits being recorded in Wanley's daybook, where the manuscript is referred to by its shelfmark 39 B 17 or simply as 'the old Irish MS'. He drew up a description, presented on 18 June 1723, which caused Wanley to rewrite his own brief description (original at MS Add. 45702, fol. 128r; revised text on facing page and in the printed catalogue). Soon after this Wanley gave him 'a gratuity from my Lord' (C. E. Wright and R. C. Wright, *The Diary of Humfrey Wanley* (London, 1966), 68). Brief description by O'Grady, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, i, 146–7; L. Breatnach, *A Companion to the Corpus Iuris Hibernici* (Dublin, 2005), 24, situates its contents. A. J. Fletcher, *Drama and the Performing Arts in Pre-Cromwellian Ireland. A Repertory of Sources and Documents from the Earliest Times until c. 1642* (Woodbridge, 2000), 68, records the name of the scribe as Gilla na Naem Ó Deoráin (fol. 14r), the place of writing as Inch St Lawrence (Co. Limerick), and dates it from the note (fol. 19v) referring to the death of Seán Mac Fhlannchadha (*AFM* s.a. 1578).

<sup>28</sup>The private purchase from Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester, was known by June 1709 (C. H. Collins Baker, *The Life and Circumstances of James Brydges, First Duke of Chandos* (Oxford, 1949), 65). O'Sullivan, 'Finding-list', 76, incorrectly refers the undated Bateman catalogue to this occasion. That auction catalogue was drawn up for a sale intended to take place in January 1702/3; it was cancelled, because Clarendon's brother, the earl of Rochester, bought the library (Sharpe, *O'Flaherty's Letters*, 214n).

wider use of Ware's abstracts, and he concluded that Conry's interpretation was the more reliable and was decisively supported by the annalistic record.

Wanley refers to his own description as 'a First Draught, and even that for the most part, putt down in the midst of hurry & disturbance; and without my ever Reading over what I have at any time before written'. This is disingenuous. What we have is a fair copy in the fifth volume of his handwritten catalogue, now BL MS Add. 45705, fols 183r–212r. The extent of subsequent revision is very limited, so that the real drafting is no longer visible. It is worth observing that Wanley wrote a fair Irish hand, though he was unable to extend contractions.

At a later date, in the 1720s, Wanley would talk with others interested in Irish antiquities. Dermot O'Connor, translator of Keating, whom he met in 1721, did not earn his respect, and the daybook treats him more as a tourist than a student.<sup>29</sup> He considered Thomas O'Sullivan, a regular visitor to Harley's London house in Dover Street between 1720 and 1726, 'a very learned gentleman, & the best skilled in the Irish Antiquities of any man I ever knew'.<sup>30</sup> The daybook frequently records his studying in the library. On his second recorded visit, 13 February 1719/20, Wanley noted, 'Mr O'Sullivan came to assist me in interpreting some Irish sentences'. They may already have been discussing Mael Brigte's Gospels, here cited by shelfmark, since his daybook records, 29 February 1719/20, 'Mr O'Sullivan brought me the remarks he had made upon my Dissertation upon the MS 93 C 29, written in the fifth volume of the shorter catalogue'.<sup>31</sup> A few days later the remarks were withdrawn for correction and the addition of quotations, and on 15 March 'Mr O'Sullewane came and delivered his papers to me much augmented'.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup>On Dermot O'Connor, see D. Ó Catháin, 'Dermot O'Connor, translator of Keating', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 2 (1987), 67–87. 'Mr Jeremy [*Diarmaid*] O'Connor' first called at Lord Oxford's house on 3 January 1720/21, having heard that there were Irish manuscripts in his library, when he was shown MS Harley 1802 (*Diary of Humfrey Wanley*, 80). Visiting the next day, he was shown the fifteenth-century Register of St Saviour's Chantry, Waterford, BL MS Harley 3765, now edited by N. Byrne and M. Byrne (Dublin, 2013).

<sup>30</sup>*A Catalogue of the Harleian Collection of Manuscripts, purchased by authority of Parliament for the use of the Publick; and preserved in the British Museum* (London, 1759–62), under MS 432 (quoted by Flower, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, iii, 16). There are three letters from O'Sullivan to Wanley between 5 July 1722 and 26 March 1726, BL MS Harley 3781, fols 152–5. O'Sullivan published a *Dissertation* of some 16,000 words prefixed to *Memoirs of the Right Honourable the Marquis of Clanricarde* (London, 1722), pp. cxvii–clxxxiv, noted for its description of a bardic school at Cahir (B. Ó Cuív, *Éigse* 9 (1958–61), 263–9), and more than a year later a short pamphlet against O'Connor's translation of Keating. The disputes surrounding O'Connor's work are discussed by Alan Harrison, *Ag Cruinniú Meala: Anthony Raymond (1625–1726), Ministéir Protastúnach agus Léann na Gaeilge i mBaile Átha Cliath* (Dublin, 1988). Diarmuid Ó Murchadha has provided an alternative view of O'Sullivan as a forger of historic manuscripts, intended for sale to Wanley, 'Is the O'Neill–MacCarthy letter of 1317 a forgery?', *Irish Historical Studies* 23 (1982–3), 61–7, discussing items now bound as BL MS Add. 34727, fols. 159r–162v, 268r–269v (Flower, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, ii. 624–7).

<sup>31</sup>*Diary of Humfrey Wanley*, 31. The reference to the shorter catalogue leads to BL MS Add. 45705, fols 183–212. Wright and Wright note (p. 63n) that this volume was completed in summer 1717.

<sup>32</sup>*Diary of Humfrey Wanley*, 32–4.

O'Sullivan's notes have not been found, and only one significant change to the Irish is marked in the fair copy. It appears to have been the fair copy as corrected that was printed in 1759.

Wanley's elaborate description occupies four folio sheets in that first printed catalogue of the Harleian Library, thirty-one columns of text.<sup>33</sup> It is a dazzling example of his investigative skills, well worth re-reading. After quoting at length the description by Simon, he goes through it point by point, beginning by doubting Simon's dating which Toland had taken up with enthusiasm:

But as to its being at least 800 years old, I must beg his pardon. When Mr Toland first spoke of it to me (for I had the first Notice of this & the other MSS bought of Mr Aymon from him) he said it was 900 years old: and upon the large account he gave of its rarity, joined to 900 years Antiquity, I presently offered 20 guineas for it. As I remember, Mr Aymon's Catalogue (which was drawn up by Mr Toland) represented it as 800 or 900 years old: but when I saw the book it self, I knew well by the Character (having before seen much of the same sort) that it could not be near so antient. In some other Conversations I had with Mr Toland (concerning divers foreign Libraries, and the chief MSS in them) he told me that he could prove this MS to be 900 years old, by some Notes at the Ends of the Evangelists, which shew it to have been written AD 805, to which I could in no wise consent, because I saw the Hand was far newer than that time. Afterwards, when I saw Mr Toland again, he confessed that his Memory had failed him as to the Antiquity of the book, inasmuch as Cormac Mac Carthaig (or the Smith's son) was not killed AD 805 but AD 905, so that the Book was but 800 years old: but to this I could not assent, for the reason above mentioned.

Among the Reguli whose Names appear in the said Notes, I found (fol. 60) mention of Tairdelbach hua Briain (or Tirlough o Briain) but could not easily believe that this was that Prince, (mentioned by O Flaherty) who died AD 1086, because in my Eye the Hand seemed yet newer. I therefore resolved to satisfie myself about its Antiquity; because if I could ascertain the Date, it would be a Standard to judge other Books by. The Result of this Enquiry will appear lower, and the Proofs shall be brought forth, whereupon I ground my opinion, that this book was written in or about 1139.

<sup>33</sup>*A Catalogue of the Harleian Collection of Manuscripts*, sig. 11Q–11T, amounting to sixteen unnumbered pages. This is accessible (as images 1019–1034) by subscription through Eighteenth-Century Collections Online. The same text was reprinted in *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1808–12), ii, 229–43, which is freely available in Google Books. The centrality of this catalogue to subsequent discussion has meant that Wanley's dating has lingered, for example, in the work of H. H. Glunz or C. R. Dodwell.

Having enunciated the principle that a datable manuscript serves to inform other palaeographical judgements, he considers nineteen points arising from Simon's account before describing the contents of the manuscript itself, with some comments interspersed. He mistakes the first Irish poem for a Hebrew–Latin–Irish glossary (art. 5, fol. 5v).<sup>34</sup> The second he correctly describes as a poem concerning the twelve apostles (art. 12, fol. 9v).<sup>35</sup> Thomas O'Sullivan would transcribe and translate this poem in August 1720, though his copy remains untraced.<sup>36</sup> Neither observation required Wanley to understand the language. He noted what he took for an early feature in the commentary:

Before I dismiss this antient Irish Hand, I take Leave to observe that the writer of the Notes in fol. 7. lin. penult. calls St Luke *Lucanus*, according to the antient Custom of the Irish; and many of our antient English Saxons who derived their Learning from them. I have seen divers Copies of the Gospels, where the same name hath occurred: and spoken at large concerning it in my description of the Cottonian Gospels Nero D. 4. Printed in Dr Hickeys's Thesaurus.<sup>37</sup>

He goes on to pick out a few later notes in the margins, 'in the Newer & English Hand', some of which cite authorities later than 1139, and judges the writer: 'This man seemeth to have been a mere Grammarian'. Wanley also observed that he 'hath often rased off the old Notes, that he might put the numbers of the chapters in their place'. This stubby thirteenth-century hand, defiling too many pages, shows that the book was still used long after its maker's time. Wanley further wrote two columns on Manchanus, named in the commentary, drawing on James Ware, who gave him a date from the Annals of Ulster and the Annals of Tigernach, and adding an entry from a calendar of saints in Mr Brydges' manuscript XXXIX, abstracts made by Ware himself, now BL MS Add. 4788. After discussing Manchanus, he turns to the matter of the date and the colophons:

These being written for the greatest part in the Irish Tongue,  
I procured a Translation of them from Mr Toland, which he readily

<sup>34</sup>Misled, no doubt, by lines such as *malgalad nuntius nertgárg* (l. 2) or *galgalad deuotus dian* (l. 10). Whitley Stokes, 'The Irish verses, notes, and glosses in Harleian 1802', *RC* 8 (1887), 346–69, at 346, 348.

<sup>35</sup>Stokes, 'The Irish verses', 350, 352. Names such as *Pól apstal*, *Iacob Andreas*, and others would have been recognizable to Wanley, even if his interpreters had not read the poem for him.

<sup>36</sup>*Diary of Humfrey Wanley*, 63, under 10 August 1720, 'Mr O'Sullewane brought his copie of the old Irish Poem, about the 12 Apostles, extant in the MS 93 C 29, fol. 9b, with a double Latin version of the same, one in verse, being stricter to the Original, the other in Prose, being looser & more explanatory'.

<sup>37</sup>Wanley refers to his 300-page catalogue of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, included with its own preface and title-page (1705) in George Hickeys's *Thesaurus linguarum ueterum Septentrionalium* (Oxford, 1703–5), at p. 251, commenting on the Lindisfarne Gospels.

gave me from the book itself. I afterward shewed this Translation to one Mr Conry, an Irish-man then in England, who had some knowledge of the Antient Irish, & having compared Mr Toland's Version with the MS did not altogether approve thereof, but at my Request gave me another Version of the same words: both which Versions follow.

Toland's notes were pasted into the fair copy (fol. 204) but not Conry's. The remaining ten columns of this description are devoted to interpreting the translations of the Irish colophons, which were printed using the Moxon Irish type, presumably now held by John Everingham.<sup>38</sup> Wanley's commentary seeks to test their facts against sources for dates in Irish history among Ware's collections, then held by Brydges, and among manuscripts in the Cottonian Library, at this date in Essex Street.

Wanley's procedure was to present the four colophons and then to test first Toland's and next Conry's interpretation against such sources as he could find. The first brief colophon follows the end of Matthew's Gospel (fol. 60v):

Or(áit) do Maelbrigte qui scripsit hunc librum. Is mór in gním  
Cormac mac Carthaig do marbad o Tairdelbach Ua Briain.

'Prayer for Mael Brigitte who wrote this book. It is a great crime  
that Cormac Mac Carthaig was killed by Toirdelbach Ua Briain.'

A Latin version has been added on the leaf: 'Est magna admiratio mea Cormachum mac Cairthe occisum esse a Tairdeluacho O'Brien', which J. T. Gilbert attributed to Bishop O'Brien. Toland's version was adrift: '[L]ismoriae, quando Cormacus Cardaigi occidebatur a Tirdelvaco filio Briani', but he perhaps knew that Cormac had lived in the monastery at Lismore. Conry had it correct: 'Cormacum Mac Cartheum interemptum Terdelvacho o Brian magnum est facinus'. Others did not take into account the usage of *gním* as a wicked act, a crime. O'Curry imputed disapproval to the adjective rather than the noun, 'Tis a terrible deed Cormac Mac Carthy to be killed by Torlogh O'Brien'.<sup>39</sup> Petrie took the words simply as, 'Great the deed, Cormac Mac Carthaig to be killed by Tairdelbhach O'Brien', while Stokes gave a more positive impression with an

<sup>38</sup>The punches were made by Joseph Moxon in 1680 (Dermot McGuinne, *Irish Type Design* (Dublin, 2010), 53–7). A fount of type was made for Robert Everingham and was in use in his printing-shop until 1712, when his widow Eleanor reprinted William Daniel's Irish version of the Book of Common Prayer. The printer to the British Museum was Dryden Leach, Crane Court, Fleet Street. One wonders whether he had taken his forme the short distance to Everingham's printing-shop in Dean Street, Fetter Lane, to set up the few lines of Irish. It is unlikely that an Irish fount was cast for this purpose, and there is no sign of other Irish printing in London at this date; this example escaped E. R. McC. Dix and S. Ua Casaide, *List of books, pamphlets, &c., printed wholly, or partly, in Irish from the earliest period to 1820* (Dublin, 1905).

<sup>39</sup>BL MS Add. 43376, fol. 35; W. Reeves and E. O'Curry, 'On an Irish manuscript of the four gospels in the British Museum', *PRIA* 5 (1850–3), 45–67, at 61.

exclamation mark: 'Great is the deed! Cormac son of Carthach to be killed by Toirdelbach descendant of Brian'.<sup>40</sup>

Toland's thesis set out to defend the idea that the manuscript was eight hundred years old. He argued away the name Cormac Mac Carthaig, turning him into Cormac mac Cuilennáin.<sup>41</sup> His reasons for this are nominally that the description of Cormac in the fourth colophon as *rigescop Muman* could only refer to Cormac, who died as king-bishop of Munster in 908, and substantively because this supported his wish to push the date of the manuscript as far back as he could. Wanley corroborated the dating of Cormac mac Cuilennáin but refused to allow Toland's argument. It is not clear that Conry constructed any thesis for the date of the manuscript, but, unlike Toland, he did not argue away anything that the colophons stated. Wanley therefore identified Cormac Mac Carthaig with 'Cormacus rex Momoniae', mentioned by Ware as the founder of a monastery at Cork in 1134.<sup>42</sup> He further found the entry in the Continuation of the Annals of Tigernach, in an old manuscript, Brydges MS III, fol. 23, which we can recognize as now Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 488: *Cormac mac Maic Carthaig do marbad do Toirdelbach O Briain .i. da cliamuin ⁊ da cairdes Crist ⁊ da altraind a fill .i. indsaigtheach Erenn uile ⁊ ri Leithe Moga co comlan*. He was able to transcribe this but could not extend the contractions, and he commented (without mention of Toland or Conry), 'I am sorry that I am not able to interpret this whole Note'. Even so, a near complete translation was printed, which in the fair copy is written as an addendum on the facing verso; I suspect the sentence may have been translated by Thomas O'Sullivan. The English reads: 'Cormac Mac-Carty was killed by Tirlough O Briain; that is, his Son in Law, & Gossip [*godfather*], & Foster-Child; [ *gap* ] a King of Leithe Moga (i.e. the Half of Ireland Southwards) intirely'. Wanley refers the entry to the year 1138, though the manuscript gives no actual dates. He also found the equivalent entry in the Annals of Boyle, a manuscript in the Cottonian Library: *Cormac mac Cartaich ri Desmuman occisus est a Tordelbuch u Briain*, 'the year, as I gess by counting the k, is 1138 or 1139'. The modern editor agreed with him.<sup>43</sup> The death of Cormac mac Muiredaig

<sup>40</sup>George Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland Anterior to the Anglo-Norman Invasion; Comprising an Essay on the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland*, TRIA 20 (1845), 308; Stokes, 'The Irish verses', 359.

<sup>41</sup>George Petrie refuted what he perceived as a similar desire among late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century antiquaries to reassign Cormac's Chapel at Cashel from Cormac Mac Carthaig in 1134 to Cormac mac Cuilennáin in the tenth century, and he quoted several texts of annals to prove his point (Petrie, *Round Towers*, 287–8).

<sup>42</sup>James Ware, *De Hibernia et antiquitatibus eius disquisitiones*, 2nd ed. (London, 1658), 228. This is the edition used by Wanley. Ware sources the founding of an Augustinian abbey of St John near Cork by Cormac c. 1134 to 'MS. Barri al. Finbarri'. He thought to equate this with the 'monasterium Ibricense' mentioned as Cormac's foundation by Bernard of Clairvaux, *Vita S. Malachiae*, §18.

<sup>43</sup>BL MS Cotton Titus A. xxv, fol. 22v. Edited by A. M. Freeman, 'The annals in Cotton MS Titus A. XXV', *RC* 41 (1924), 301–30; 42 (1925), 283–305; 43 (1926), 358–384; 44 (1927), 336–361. This entry appears in *RC* 42 (1925), 286.

Meic Carthaig in 1138 was and remains the key date for the writing of the manuscript.

The second colophon is entered at the end of Mark's Gospel (fol. 86r); Wanley had nothing to say about this one but quoted it none the less:

Or(áit) do Maelbrigte qui scripsit hunc librum.

'Prayer for Mael Brigitte who wrote this book.'

The third colophon is entered at the end of Luke's Gospel (fol. 127v), and in it the scribe records his age and makes a link with a recent event:

Or(áit) do Maelbrigte qui scripsit h(unc) l(ibrum). In xx<sup>o</sup>uiii<sup>o</sup> anno aetatis suae. In dara bliadain iarsin gothaig moir sein.

'Prayer for Mael Brigitte who wrote this book in the twenty-eighth year of his age. This was the second year after the great storm.'

Toland's version of the Irish phrase read: 'secundo anno ab aedificatione magnae domus'. Conry endorsed this.

Wanley's attempt to contextualize this false interpretation of the colophon relied on Ware's *Antiquitates*, referring to the rebuilding of the church of Down by Bishop Malachy in 1137.<sup>44</sup> Flower found the great storm entered by the Four Masters under 1137, while James Kenney independently noted the great storm in the underlying Annals of Lough Key under the same year.<sup>45</sup> The latter were probably following the Annals of Ulster.

The fourth and most elaborate colophon appears at the end of John's Gospel (fol. 156v):

Or(áit) do Maelbrigte hua Maelúanaig qui scripsit hunc librum .i. in nArd Macha. Ocus in naimsir Donnchatha hua Cerbaill adríg Airgiall roscribad .i. i mbliadain dano se side deac for Kalainn Enair .i. isin bliadain romarbad Cormac mac Cardaig rigescop Muman 7 hErenn archena inna aimsir. Ateat so immorro rígra[[d]] hErenn isinn amsir sein .i. Murcertach mac Nél Ua Lochlaind Ailiuch. Cú Ulad mac Conchobuir rí Uad. Murchath Ua Maelseachlaind rí Mide. Diarmait Mac Murchada rí Lagen. Conchobor Ua Briain rí Muman. Tairdelbach Ua Conchobair rí Connacht. + Gilla Meic Liac mac meic Ruadri \.i. mac ind <fh>ir dana do ib Birnn./ hi comarbas Patraic.

<sup>44</sup>Wanley cites Ware, *De Hibernia et eius antiquitatibus*, 195 [recte 295, a misprint in the edition].

<sup>45</sup>J. F. Kenney, *Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, i: *Ecclesiastical* (New York, 1929), 648n, referring to this entry: 'A tremendous storm of wind on the day before the festival of the Sprinkling of the Water' [Rogation Sunday] (W. M. Hennessy (ed.), *The Annals of Loch Cé*, Rolls Series 54, 2 vols (1871), i, 136–7).

Bennacht ar cach oen legfas frisin lebursa, gebed pater ar anmain in scribneda uair is mor ha hoether etir corp 7 tráctad ic [[*erased*]].

‘Prayer for Mael Brigitte Ua Maeluanaig, who wrote this book, i.e. in Armagh. And it was written in the time of Donnchad Ua Cerbaill high king of the Airgialla, i.e. the year when the Kalends of January fell on the sixteenth day of the moon, i.e. the year in which Cormac Mac Carthaig was killed, who was king-bishop of Munster and of Ireland generally in his time. These are the kings of Ireland in this time, i.e. Muirchertach mac Néill Ua Lochlainn of Ailech, Cú Ulad mac Conchobair king of Ulaid, Murchad Ua Maelseachlainn king of Mide, Diarmait Mac Murchada king of Laigin, Conchobor Ua Briain king of Munster, Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair king of Connacht. Gilla Meic Liac son of <Diarmait> son of Ruaidri, \i. son of the man of art to the Uí Birnn,/ in the coarbship of Patrick.

Blessing on each one who will read by means of this book, he shall recite Our Father for the soul of the scribe, for great is his labour both text and commentary in [[the writing]].’

The colophon is clear to read, but the syntax of the final blessing is not. Petrie translated it, ‘A blessing on everyone who shall let this book pass [*without censure*], let him repeat a *Pater* for the soul of the scribe, for it stands much in need of indulgence both in its text and commentaries’.<sup>46</sup> O’Curry was clearly influenced by this: ‘A blessing on every one who will pardon the faults of this book, let him say a *Pater* for the soul of the scribe; for it much requires indulgence both in text and commentaries’.<sup>47</sup> Stokes, however, translated it: ‘A blessing on every one who shall read from this book! Let him repeat a *Pater noster* for the soul of the scribe, for great is the labour [*othar*] in writing it, both text and commentary’.<sup>48</sup> The problem is the word *frisín*. Petrie and O’Curry took the verb as *legaid*, which can be transitive or intransitive, ‘melts, dissolves’, imputing to it a sense not otherwise attested and a construction not found elsewhere. Stokes more plausibly took it for *légaíd* (the scribe is not scrupulous with marks of length), ‘reads’, but again the construction with *fri* is not attested elsewhere.

Wanley devoted some space to Airgialla, the territory in which Armagh lies, and he found the death of Donnchad Ua Cerbaill, king of Airgialla, in the Annals of Boyle about AD 1167.<sup>49</sup> King Cormac he had already found, but he did not know that in the Annals of Lough Key, followed by the Four Masters, he was called *espuic rígh nÉrenn*, which would have answered Toland.<sup>50</sup> Both Toland and Conry misunderstood the reference to the state of the moon on the first of January, leaving Wanley with no reason to test

<sup>46</sup>Petrie, *Round Towers*, 308.

<sup>47</sup>O’Curry, ‘On an Irish manuscript of the four gospels’, 63.

<sup>48</sup>Stokes, ‘The Irish verses’, 359.

<sup>49</sup>Freeman, ‘The annals in Cotton MS Titus A. XXV’, *RC* 42 (1925), 289, s.a. 1168.

<sup>50</sup>See below, n. 116.

this point. Years were identified in Ireland by the ferial and the lunar epact of 1 January, and the sixteenth of the moon corresponds to the year 1138, as spelt out in the Annals of Lough Key, according to the practice regularly seen at this period in the Annals of Ulster, the underlying source. Wanley was unable to trace Cú Ulad mac Conchobair, though Cú Ulad mac Conchobair Chisénaig meic Duinn Sléibe was indeed king of Ulster between 1131 and his death in 1157.<sup>51</sup> Murchad Ua Maelseachlainn he found in the Annals of Boyle, when he was murdered in 1143.<sup>52</sup> Diarmait Mac Murchada he found in the same annals 'about AD 1141' and in a range of other sources. He found Conchobar Ua Briain as king of Munster in the Continuation of the Annals of Tigernach in, as he counted it, 1138.<sup>53</sup> For Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair there was, as he put it, 'more evidence', citing Ware's translation of the Annals of Ulster, Brydges XLIX, at the years 1127 and 1128, and on more than one occasion what he treats as the Irish text of the Annals of Ulster, Brydges XXIX, and provides a copious note. Finally his note on Gilla Meic Liac draws on the Annals of Boyle, the Annals of Ulster, and other sources, and includes a discussion of Mael Brigte's word *comarbas*, 'coarbship', which Wanley understood correctly, drawing both on Ware and on Spelman's *Glossarium* (where the entry under *corba* relied on information provided by Ussher). In all this Wanley drew on the following unprinted sources from Ireland:

In the Cottonian Library:

Titus A. xxv, the Annals of Boyle, quoted in Irish on several points.

Domitian A. xviii, art. 10, Irish annals from 948 to 1407, cited as 'Annal. Hibern.', and quoted in Latin for entry under 1167.

In Mr Brydges' library:

MS III, 'in Continuacione Annalium Tigernachi', now Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 488, quoted in Irish.

MS XV, now Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 504, cited as 'Annals of Ireland', is a copy of the Register of Tristernagh.

MS XXIX, now untraced, cited as 'collections from the Ulster Annals', in which AD 837 appears at fol. 1v, quoted in Irish.

MS XXXVI, now BL MS Add. 4787, cited as *Annales Inisfallenses*.

<sup>51</sup>'Cú Uladh Ua hEochadha, king of Ulster, died in Downpatrick' (*AT* s.a. 1157. 5). He had succeeded Ragnall Ua hEochada, who fell in battle in 1131 (*ALC* s.a.).

<sup>52</sup>Freeman, 'The annals in Cotton MS Titus A. XXV', *RC* 42 (1925), 286.

<sup>53</sup>Whitley Stokes (ed.), 'The Annals of Tigernach: the continuation, AD 1088–AD 1178', *RC* 18 (1897), 150–97, at 161.

- MS XXXIX, now BL MS Add. 4788, cited for a catalogue of Irish saints (fol. 83), and for the collection of Thady Dowling (fol. 157r).
- MS XLIV, now BL MS Add. 4791, cited for excerpts from a manuscript of the abbey of Boyle, and again, fol. 164v, 'which seemed here to cite the Cottonian MS Titus A. xxv' (i.e. the Annals of Boyle), 167v (again shared with Titus A. xxv); cited for list of archbishops of Armagh (fol. 79v).
- MS XLVII, now BL MS Lansdowne 418, transcripts made for Ware, 1638, cited for *Annales Lagenienses*, fol. 19.
- MS XLIX, cited as a recent transcript or translation of the Ulster Annals or simply as Ulster Annals, in English, with years (fols. 63v, 68v, &c.); also for the poem, *Caiseal cathair Cland Modha*, 'Ex libro Balinrotens. fol. 39' [*sic*, Book of Ballymote, fol. 38v] (though noting, 'This same place is cited in another of Mr Brydges's MSS. Vol. XV. Fol. 65'). English translation of the Annals of Ulster, ends in 1131; Ware leaves five leaves blank and starts again in 1156. The translation was attributed to Tuileagna Ó Maoil Chonaire by John O'Donovan (*AFM*, i, p. xxxiv).

What stands out here is, in reference to Cormac Mac Carthaig, that 'his death is also remembered to have been at AD 1139 in a copy of the Ulster Annals, with Mr Brydges'. The Annals of Ulster in Brydges II, now Rawlinson B. 489, have and had a lacuna here. Wanley, however, quotes the Annals of Ulster in Irish, s.a. 1153, 1162, from Brydges XXIX, and he paraphrases in Latin an entry from 1174. The passage from 1162, allowing for Wanley's mistranscription, is found in the authoritative manuscripts, *AU* s.a. 1162. 5, *Argain Gall Athacliaith la Diarmait mac Murchada ⁊ nert mór do ghabail forro, amail na rogabad reime o cein móir* 'Pillaging of the Foreigners of Áth Cliath by Diarmait Mac Murchada and great sway was obtained over them, such as was not obtained before for a long time'. It is therefore significant that he has quoted an entry from 1153, a year missing from both extant manuscripts of the Annals of Ulster, 'Terdelbach ua Concub(air) Airdri Connacht &c.', though one could have wished for a more revealing quotation.<sup>54</sup> Ware's own description of MS XXIX reads, 'Rerum Hibernicarum Annales, ab anno salutis 431. usque ad initium anni 1172. sub quo tempore Hibernia Anglici Juris facta est, Henrico nostro secundo Regnante. Per Iacobum Waraeum equit. aur. Accessit continuatio usque ad finem regni Henrici 2 (*sic*). Per eundem authorem, in fol(io)'. In other words, it was Ware's own compilation.<sup>55</sup> The later description

<sup>54</sup>The Annals of Lough Key, which might otherwise have provided a control at this point, are missing between 1138 and 1170 (Hennessy, *The Annals of Loch Cé*, i, 140). Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair features in *AFM* s.a. 1153 but not the title *ardri Connacht*.

<sup>55</sup>James Ware, *Librorum manuscriptorum in bibliotheca Iacobi Waræi catalogus* (Dublin, 1648), 9. Reprinted by O'Sullivan, 'Finding-list', 79, where his n. 56 mentions Wanley's citing this as collections from the Annals of Ulster and that copies of the continuation still exist,

by Edmund Gibson uses the same title, adding that the language was Latin.<sup>56</sup> Why Wanley associated this manuscript with the Annals of Ulster is not apparent. His mentioning the entry regarding the death of King Cormac was directed at saying that it appeared under the year 1139 where his counting of *ks* had led to 1138. Its wording, we may presume, revealed no more than what he had already found in other sources, and its assignment to the wrong year reflects upon Ware's compiling. This must reassure us that he did not have access to a source that would have closed the lacuna in our text of the Annals of Ulster. Its AD-heading, however, probably explains why Wanley took 1139 as the year of writing rather than 1138.

In his final column he makes some fun of Toland's theory, now proven to be wrong, and sums up:

I must believe that the book was written AD 1139. I had indeed much rather to have found it 800 years old, which would undoubtedly have raised its value; but as it is, it is a standard for the Irish hand of that age; as also one of the most authentic copies of the Latin gospels, which they have sent forth from that Island.

The result was an outstanding achievement, given the resources available to Wanley, the lack of any prior work regarding the relationship of different Irish annals, and his very limited previous experience with either Irish manuscripts or Irish history.<sup>57</sup>

#### BISHOP O'BRIEN'S DISCUSSION

The same colophons were discussed with the same aim by Dr John O'Brien, Seán mac Thomáis Uí Bhriain (1701–1769), bishop of Cloyne and Ross, in his *Focalóir Gaoidhilge-Sax-Bhéarla, or An Irish–English Dictionary* (Paris, 1768). This discussion seems to have passed largely unnoticed by those who have written about Mael Brigte's Gospels.<sup>58</sup> What he brought to the task in hand was different copies of what he suggests were different annals, though we shall see that his source goes back to the same key evidence supporting Wanley's dating. O'Brien arrived at 1138 as the year of writing, and, though he makes no reference to Wanley, it seems likely that he reached this result more as a correction than entirely independently. His discussion is important

---

extending from 1169 to 1272, i.e. the last year of Henry III's reign. Ware's MS XXIX, however, remains untraced and its first part unrecognized elsewhere.

<sup>56</sup>*Catalogi manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae* (Oxford, 1697 [1698]), ii, pt 2, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup>As long ago as 1698, however, he had no hesitation in saying, 'I have been to Gresham College Library, where the books in the Picts Language prove to be Irish' (Heyworth, *Letters of Humfrey Wanley*, 93, no. 47; R. Sharpe, 'In quest of Pictish manuscripts', *Innes Review* 59 (2008), 145–67). When he was first acquainted with the Irish language is not known.

<sup>58</sup>The passage in the dictionary was quoted, however, by Petrie, *Round Towers*, 305, and by J. T. Gilbert, *Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland* (1874–84), p. xxi. It was more recently cited by Cormac Ó Cuileanáin (see n. 83), 148n, as providing a reading from 'the Annals of Inisfallen'.

evidence for his ability to use the books available to him to a good antiquarian purpose. It is also, and perhaps more surprisingly, *prima facie* evidence that he had visited the British Museum in its first few years' existence. His *Focalóir* was printed in Paris, after he had left Ireland for the last time in 1767. In seeking funds to pay for printing, as early as 1764, he mentions that he had arranged

for the composition of an Irish dictionary under my supervision by persons learned in the language and antiquities of Ireland. The work has been completed for two years but has remained unpublished for lack of funds.<sup>59</sup>

Two men have been identified as O'Brien's learned assistants in this work: Micheál mac Peadair Uí Longáin and Seán Ó Conaire, Father John Connery.<sup>60</sup> Despite this statement, however, we cannot regard O'Brien's contribution as merely one of supervision, for there are many first-person references, and the essays at the head of each letter of the alphabet display a governing mind as well as an authorial voice.<sup>61</sup> That voice was surely O'Brien's own. We should also not allow this statement, made in applying for funds to print the book, to limit our understanding of the final stages of the work. The rich introduction was evidently written in 1768, since a work there referred to as 'published last year at London', James Parsons's *The Remains of Japhet*, appeared in October 1767.<sup>62</sup> Revision was still going on as the sheets were being worked off by the printer, something we can infer from the extended entry on several families, inserted by association with the word *mac* but added at the end of the letter M.<sup>63</sup> This is one

<sup>59</sup>Memorial on the verso of a letter to Cardinal Giuseppe Maria Castelli (1704–1780), dated at Cloyne, 20 November 1764, composed in French but published only in English by F. M. Jones, 'The Congregation of Propaganda and the publication of Dr O'Brien's Irish Dictionary, 1768', *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 5th ser. 77 (1952), 29–37, at 32.

<sup>60</sup>Proinsias Mac Cana, *Collège des irlandais Paris and Irish Studies* (Dublin, 2001), 99.

<sup>61</sup>A lively picture of the bishop is provided by Diarmaid Ó Catháin, 'An Irish scholar abroad: Bishop John O'Brien of Cloyne and the Macpherson controversy', in P. O'Flanagan and C. G. Buttimer (eds), *Cork History and Society* (Dublin, 1993), 499–533. My colleague David Cram has on hands a discussion of ideas about the letters of the alphabet in Ireland at this time, in which O'Brien's views will be considered. It is an unusual lexicographer who will say, 'I know no language that can express in one word the full meaning of either of these Irish words, *leas*, *ainleas*' (O'Brien, *Focalóir*, 13a). The references to Hebrew, sometimes specifically citing Buxtorf or Opius, to Arabic, and to Greek suggest linguistic study far beyond skill in Irish.

<sup>62</sup>O'Brien, *Focalóir*, p. xxxi. K. I. D. Maslen and J. Lancaster, *The Bowyer Ledgers. The Printing Accounts of William Bowyer Father and Son* (London, 1991), 364 (§4682), show that the job was filed as complete in the first half of October. The author James Parsons (1705–1770), who paid for the printing, says he grew up in Ireland, 'and there attained to a tolerable knowledge in the very ancient tongue of that country, which enabled me to consult some of their manuscripts, and become instructed in their grammatical institutes' (*Remains of Japhet*, p. vii).

<sup>63</sup>O'Brien, *Focalóir*, 359–60 (sig. Yy4–Yy4v): 'Note. Having not had time to insert at the word *mac* in this letter some family-names which begin with that monosyllable, [. . .] we shall therefore observe in this place [. . .]'. The passage gives prominence to the Mac Carthy family, 'the most illustrious of all those families whose names begin with *mac*'; 'kings of south-Munster, whose capital was Cork'. The lemma *mac* has a brief entry at p. 335 (sig. Tt4), three sheets before. The printer is likely to have been setting up and working off one quarto

of many long historical entries, and we may well deduce from it that they were added in the last stage of O'Brien's drafting. Reference to Mael Brigte's Gospels comes in just such an entry under the lemma *Curmac*, where O'Brien writes:

In an old valuable manuscript of the four Gospels in Latin written in Irish Characters, first belonging to the Kings Library at Paris (where Père Simon ignorantly judged it written in the Saxon Character) but now to be seen in the British Musaeum at London, the following marginal remark in old Irish is found at the end of the Gospel of S. Mathew, p. 60: is mòr in gnim Cormac mac Cárthaig do mharbhad o Thordealbach O Briain; i. e. 'the Killing of Cormac Mac Carthy by Turlogh O Brien is a very surprizing act'.<sup>64</sup>

If O'Brien had seen the manuscript, it would appear he had seen it in the British Museum, which first opened its doors to the public at Montagu House in London in January 1759. There is no secure evidence that he was in London between then and the notional completion of the dictionary, two years before the date of his memorandum written late in 1764. The only time when we know the bishop was in London was in August and September 1767.<sup>65</sup> Visits before 1759 are irrelevant.<sup>66</sup> It is not unlikely that he passed through London in 1764, when he visited the Continent, but his route is not actually known.<sup>67</sup> Records kept by the Museum show that on 11 September 1767 'Mr Obryan, a Gentleman of Ireland known to Dr Morton', requested leave to use the reading

---

sheet in a week. Under the word *ua* (p. 500), O'Brien referred ahead to his note on various illustrious families, which occupies pp. 512–16, at the end of the last letter of the dictionary.

<sup>64</sup>O'Brien, *Focalóir*, 154–5, under the lemma, 'Curmac, or Cormac, surnamed *Muigh-theamhna*', that is Cormac Mac Carthaig.

<sup>65</sup>A letter from Dr John Curry (d. 1780) to Charles O'Connor (1710–1791), of Belanagare, dated 11 August 1767, mentions that 'Dr O'Brien was in town [*Dublin*] but is gone to London' (quoted by B. Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhainne Chorcaí 1700–1850* (Cork, 1982), 219, from RIA MS Stowe B. i. 1–2, cat. 1159–60); it was probably on the strength of this that O'Connor in turn wrote to the Chevalier Thomas O'Gorman (1732–1809), about to depart for London and then Paris, that 'he is now in London, and it would be happy if some third person could be found to bring you and him together and lay the foundation of historical friendship between you' (R. E. Ward et al. (eds), *Letters of Charles O'Connor* (Washington, DC, 1988), 199–201, no. 166, dated 1 September 1767). They had in fact been genealogical advisors to contending branches of the O'Brien dynasty, who from about 1758 sought to recover the attainted title earl of Thomond: O'Gorman was advisor to Charles O'Brien (1699–1761), 6th viscount Clare (on whom GEC, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct, or Dormant*, 13 vols (London, 1910–59), iii, 253–4), and his infant heir Charles, while Bishop O'Brien was adviser to Daniel O'Brien (1683–1759), earl of Lismore, his widow Margaret, and their heir James Daniel O'Brien (1736–1780).

<sup>66</sup>O'Brien must have travelled between Ireland and France many times. He could no doubt have got a sea-passage from Cork to a French port, but it is clear that in 1767 he chose to go through London, and he may have done so on earlier occasions. Before the opening of the museum, however, the Harleian manuscripts had been inaccessible for more than thirty years.

<sup>67</sup>He wrote letters from Brussels in June and August 1764 (J. Coombes, *A Bishop of Penal Times: The Life and Times of John O'Brien, Bishop of Cloyne and Ross* (Cork, 1981), 75, 82).

room and two weeks later on 25 September leave was given.<sup>68</sup> Charles Morton was the keeper of manuscripts, and we may guess that Mr O'Brien did not go out of his way to identify himself as a Catholic bishop in London. His knowledge of Père Simon's comments need not surprise us: he had lived many years in France and had studied in Paris. None the less, we should have to suppose that he had himself made the join between Simon's discussion and the Harleian manuscript, and it may be easier to believe that he had come to Simon's observations by reading Wanley's description, printed in 1759 and distributed in 1763. His rendering of this first colophon, however, bears more relation to the version written on fol. 60r, 'est magna admiratio mea', than to either of the versions printed by Wanley, which gives us some assurance that he had actually seen the manuscript.<sup>69</sup> The bishop goes on:

At the end of the book appears the following Irish note,

'O'ràid do Mael-brigte O Mael-uaign qui scripsit hunc librum in Ardmach is an bliain ro marbad Cormac mac Cárthaig Ri-Eascop Muman, a taid seo siòs na Riogra an Éreann san aimsir so; i.e. Muirheartach mac Néil an Aliuch; Cuullad mac Concúbhair Ri Ullad; Murcha ua Maeleachluind Ri Midhe; Diarmaid mac Murcha Ri Laigean; Concúbhar O Briain Rig Muman; Tordealbac O Conubar Rig Conact; Giolla mac Liag mac Rugrigh a ccomorbus Patraig', i.e. Pray for Mael-brigte Ua Mael-uaign who wrote this book at Armagh in the year that Cormac Mac Carty the Royal Bishop of Munster hath been killed, the following personages are Kings in Ireland at this same time, i.e. Mortogh mac Néil King of Ailiuch or Ulidia; Cú Ulladh mac Concubhair King of Ulster; Morrigh ua Maeleachlain King of Meath; Diarmuid mac Murcha King of Leinster; Conchúbhar O Brien King of Munster; Torlogh O Concubhair King of Connaught; & Giolla mac Liag mac Rugrigh, successor of St Patrick at Ardmagh.

It is to be noted, that this writer had no other foundation for stiling Cormac Royal Bishop of Munster than because he had repaired the Cathedral Church of Cashel & two Churches at Lismore, & was otherwise reputed a man of a pious & holy life which is the Character S. Bernard gives of him in his book *De uita Malachiae*, according to Malachy's reports to him concerning Cormac, to whom he was Doctor & Director during his retreat at Lismore after his dethronement by the faction of his brother Donogh. By virtue

<sup>68</sup>Morton's official diary has 'Mr O'Brien a gentleman of Ireland known to C. Morton requests admission to the reading room for six months. Sept. 11, 1767. C.M.' (BL MS Add. 45871, fol. 64v); Committee Minutes, 25 September 1767, show that leave was granted to four readers on this occasion, and such permissions lasted six months. The name O'Brien does not appear under earlier years. My thanks to Peter Williams, British Museum Central Archive, for searching the records.

<sup>69</sup>Gilbert, *Facsimiles*, p. xxi, went so far as to associate this addition with Bishop O'Brien himself.

of these marginal remarks of the writer of that inestimable manuscript, I have been able to furnish the Keepers & Overseers of the British Museum with a note, whereby the antiquity of that manuscript is ascertained and fixed at the year 1138. This Cormac mac Carthaig was deposed by his younger brother Donogh assisted by Turlogh O Connor K. of Connaught an. 1127, & shut up in a Monastery at Lismore. But before the end of the same year, he was restored to the crown of Desmond by Concúbhar O'Brien, & Donogh was exiled to Connaught. Vid. Annal. Innisfallen. ad an. 1127. This fact of Cormac's being restored by Concubhar O'Brien is mentioned by S. Bernard in *vita Malachiae* chap. 3. But the particular reason of Maelbrihte's surprise at the act of Turlough O'Brien towards Cormac mac Carty, was because he was Cormac's son in law, & his Gossip, besides his having been bred up from his earliest days at Cormac's Court, according to the friendly custom of the Irish Princes who often educated each others children for riveting mutual confidence & good harmony. The fact of these severall ties of friendship between Turlough & Cormac, is attested in the Annals of Innisfallen at the year 1138, where it is said, that Turlough was Cliamhain, Cairdios Christ, & Altrom of Cormac mac Carthy, i.e. his son in law, his gossip, & his foster-child. The Chronicon Scotorum & the continuator of Tigernach attribute the fact to Turlough alone, without any mention of O Connor Kerry; but the authors of the Annals of Innisfallen are more to be credited as they wrote in the very Center of Kerry.

Unlike Wanley, the bishop has an overview of King Cormac's career, having read his annals more continuously and knowing also what Bernard of Clairvaux's *Vita S. Malachiae* has to say.<sup>70</sup> He has interpreted the colophon less fully than Wanley, resting his case entirely on the dates discoverable for Cormac, for which he has drawn on entries under the years 1127 and 1138 in what he calls the Annals of Innisfallen.<sup>71</sup> The facts under 1127 may indeed be read in the Annals of Innisfallen, but that source is missing for 1138.<sup>72</sup> The original manuscript of these annals is now Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 503, which was available to Wanley, being MS XXVI in Mr Brydges' collection. If Wanley had handled this, he does not cite it, but in any case the loss of leaves means that there is a lacuna in this manuscript between 1130 and 1159. Since the

<sup>70</sup>Bernard of Clairvaux, *Vita S. Malachiae*, §9, which begins, 'Inter regem australis Mumunie, que est Hibernie pars, et germanum eius orta similtate, et fratre facto superiori, rex pulsus regno confugit ad episcopum Malchum' (J. Leclercq (ed.), *Sancti Bernardi Opera* (Rome, 1957–77), iii, 317); older editions, such as *PL*, lack the word *australis*.

<sup>71</sup>Fr James Coombes, *John O'Brien*, 79, says that the compilers gave the work no title whatsoever and were therefore not responsible for the confusion with the medieval Annals of Innisfallen. This is not strictly correct. O'Brien several times refers to the Annals of Innisfallen alongside those of Tigernach and Chronicon Scotorum, e.g. *Focalóir*, pp. xl–xli, 256, and he sometimes cites those of Innisfallen alone (pp. 122, 192 (AD 1155, in the lacuna of *AI*), 193, 194, 360, 463).

<sup>72</sup>S. Mac Airt (ed.), *The Annals of Innisfallen* (Dublin, 1951), 294.

manuscript is still in Sir James Ware's crested binding, we can be certain that these leaves were already missing.<sup>73</sup> The manuscript had passed from Brydges' estate by auction in 1747 to Dr Richard Rawlinson (1690–1755), before going into the Bodleian library under his will in 1756.<sup>74</sup> It should not be supposed that O'Brien had seen it there.<sup>75</sup> None the less it appears that a copy derived from it was available in his immediate circle.

This brings us to the complicated business of the so-called Dublin Annals of Inisfallen, a work much copied.<sup>76</sup> The bishop certainly owned what is now TCD MS H. 1. 7 (1281), part 1, the archetype in the handwriting of Father John Connery, Seán Ó Conaire, with added inscriptions in the handwriting of his near kinsman Séamus Ó Conaire, 'Ségan Ó Conaire scripsit san blighan 1765', 'Sgriobhtha le Ségan Ó Conaire san bhFrainc'. Neither date nor place of writing is secure.<sup>77</sup> Another, much abridged, version in Connery's own hand is now part of RIA MS 23 C 11 (cat. 764), pp. 57–64 (which opens with the heading, 'Here Inisfallen begins'), and continued, pp. 109–234. This is one of several books that have Connery's name in Latin stencilled in them as a mark of ownership.<sup>78</sup> A third, incomplete, copy, Maynooth, MS Renehan 64,

<sup>73</sup>B. Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish-Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Dublin, 2001), 204, 206; R. I. Best and Eóin Mac Neill, *The Annals of Inisfallen, reproduced in facsimile from the original manuscript with a descriptive introduction* (Dublin, 1933). In this manuscript the original hand reaches the year 1092; eighteen different contemporary hands continue, each adding a few entries down to 1120. The twentieth had entered ten years' annals from 1121 to 1130, where the chasm intervenes. The years from 1159 to 1174 were entered by a different hand, and seven further hands appear in the later twelfth century. All this would have been of great interest to Wanley, but his ignorance of Irish may have prevented his studying the book.

<sup>74</sup>*A Catalogue of the large and valuable library of James duke of Chandos, which will be sold by auction by Mr Cock [ . . . ] 12th of March 1746–7* [ESTC T97566], lot 268. Dr Rawlinson's annotated copy of the sale catalogue is also in the Bodleian, Mus. Bibl. III 8° 44.

<sup>75</sup>The Bodleian Library has records that show when outside readers were admitted to the library (Library Records e. 534, Admissions Register for External Readers, 1683–1833) and what manuscripts were delivered to readers (Library Records e. 559–60, Entry Books, 1752–8, 1758–69). During the period between the arrival of the Rawlinson manuscripts in the library in 1756 and O'Brien's death, the only Irish reader admitted was Richard Kirwan (1733–1812), who signed the admissions book 15 October 1761, and nothing about his career or his interests connects him to Bishop O'Brien. Although Rawlinson manuscripts were not catalogued by the library for many years after they arrived, the Entry Books show that they were produced for readers on occasions in the period we are concerned with, but nothing in the Entry Books sheds light on our inquiry.

<sup>76</sup>These manuscripts, and many descendants, are listed by Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail, *Cath Cluana Tarbh. The Battle of Clontarf*, ITS 64 (London, 2011), 267–72. For an important discussion see also M. Ní Úrdail, 'Annála Inse Faithleann an ochtú céad déag agus Cath Chluain Tarbh', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* 20 (2005), 104–19, and 'Some observations on the "Dublin Annals of Inisfallen"', *Ériu* 57 (2007), 133–53.

<sup>77</sup>These notes at the beginning and end of the copy were added by his kinsman, Séamus Ó Conaire (Ó Conchúir, *Scriobhathie Chorcaí*, 50, 323 n. 85). The likely circumstance is during 1773–4, after Seán's death and before Séamus sold MSS 1281 and 1292. The stated date of writing may very well be an approximation; whether the writer and his materials were even in France in 1765 may be doubted. The note at the end was then elaborated by Charles O'Connor, who dates his own note 1775.

<sup>78</sup>'Joannes Connery', appearing at the top of what was the front page of MS 23 C 11; it appears also at the end of MS 23 C 12, p. 109, and MS 23 C 23, p. 223.

pp. 143–93, is in the hand of Séamus Ó Conaire. The purpose of these abridged copies is not clear. This work has no title in the bishop's copy, but it long went under the misleading name of the Annals of Inisfallen. It was once supposed that it was transcribed from the medieval manuscript.<sup>79</sup> Connery's Annals (as they might be more perspicuously titled) are no straightforward copy but a much-interpolated compilation, which leans more heavily on the Annals of Tigernach and its Continuation than on the Annals of Inisfallen. In 1845 John O'Donovan denounced the work as a literary forgery, 'manufactured by the Rt Reverend John O'Brien, employing Conry, or Mulconry, to arrange the language for him'.<sup>80</sup> He had the bishop's copy in front of him in Trinity College and for comparison Dr Charles O'Connor's printed text from the Rawlinson manuscript and a copy of part of that manuscript provided to him by Eugene O'Curry. Father Connery was obviously close to the bishop, chaplain or secretary as well as literary collaborator, and someone who merits more attention than he has received.<sup>81</sup> His compilation was first studied by Cormac Ó Cuileanáin, who preferred to see it as 'a short history of Ireland in simple language fully supplied with dates'.<sup>82</sup> He identified many of Connery's sources, though what he printed does not allow one to see from what the entry under 1138 was put together. Nine unpublished works were identified in addition to several printed sources, and the copies Connery used are in some cases still extant:<sup>83</sup>

<sup>79</sup>Theophilus O'Flanagan, in a letter to Dr Thomas Wright, MD, dated 15 January 1803, refers to the Dublin text as 'a copy perfected under the direction of the Rev. Dr O'Brien, Roman Catholic bishop of Cloyne and Ross, from the original MS on vellum in the Bodleian Library' (pasted at the front of RIA MS 23 F 9 (cat. 1194); Mac Airt, p. viii).

<sup>80</sup>O'Donovan, in a letter to J. H. Todd, 23 December 1845, now bound in TCD MS H. 1. 7 (1281); summarized in the catalogue of Irish manuscripts and quoted by Ó Cuileanáin (see n. 83), 184–5. O'Connor's text was not reliable in detail, but O'Curry had copied 'the first stave of the original book of/ the Annals of Inisfallen' (interlined for precision). Coombes, *John O'Brien*, 79, reproached O'Donovan for his criticism, which was already muted in the form there quoted; O'Donovan actually wrote, 'both Dr O'Brien and Mr Conry were *very very* bad Irish scholars, and men of very little honesty'.

<sup>81</sup>He was treated along with Séamus Ó Conaire by Ó Conchúir, *Scríobhathie Chorcaí*, 50–53; Roibeard Ó hÉanna fills out detail and prints a sermon in Irish, written in Connery's own hand in Maynooth, MS Renahan 76 ('Alumnus de chuid Choláiste na nGael, Páras', *Irisleabhar Mhá Nua* 1989, 103–149). The website aim.ie gives his dates as c. 1739–1773. Ó Conchúir found a notice of his death at the beginning of July 1773, but his date of birth needs clarification. The date 1739 is counted back from his signing the *lost* exemplar of an item in RIA MS 23 K 34 (cat. 622), p. 107, at Ballinterry, the bishop's house, in 1761, aged twenty-two, which is now unverifiable. Coombes, *John O'Brien*, 79, identified him with the Revd John Conry, who graduated DD in Paris in 1732. His nearness to episcopal business is illustrated by RIA MS 23 C 12 (cat. 375), written by John Connery, 1757, with contributions by Séamus Ó Conaire, 'a cLuan Colmaon' [Cloyne]; tipped in at the front is a letter concerning a marriage dispensation, evidently sent to the bishop ('any of your Lordship's vicars'), from Edmund Dwyer, Churchtown, 22 February 1762, because Connery used the back of the letter for his notes.

<sup>82</sup>C. Ó Cuileanáin, 'Bishop Seán Ó Briain', in Tadhg Ó Murchú, *Faiche na bhFíli, Carraig na bhFear. Cuimhneachán* ([Tralee], 1962), 41–8, at p. 43.

<sup>83</sup>C. Ó Cuileanáin, 'The Dublin Annals of Inisfallen, i. Na hAnnála i MS H. 1. 7, TCD', in Séamus Pender (ed.), *Féilscribhinn Torna* (Cork, 1947), 183–202. Ó Cuileanáin had counted the number of entries derived from different sources, claiming to have sourced 95 per cent of Connery's 'pieces' (*giota*). For the detail behind this one must consult his *Annála Inse*

420 pieces	Annals of Tigernach with Continuation	TCD MS 1292, pt 3
200	Annals of Inisfallen	<i>not known to survive</i>
170	<i>Chronicum Scotorum</i>	TCD MS 1292, pt 4
85	<i>Caithréim Thoirdhealbhaigh</i>	TCD MS 1292, pt 2
60	<i>Leabhar Oiris</i>	<i>not identified</i>
45	<i>Leabhar Muimhneach</i>	TCD MS 1281, pt 2
30	<i>Foras Feasa ar Éirinn</i>	<i>not identified</i>
15	<i>Cogad Gaedel re Gallaib</i>	<i>not known to survive</i>
10	<i>Cath Chuana Tarbh</i>	<i>not identified</i>

To these can be added:<sup>84</sup>

*Leabhar Iris Chloinne Uí Mhaoil Chonaire*      TCD MS 1292, pt 1

Among these sources are the two other sets of annals, to which the bishop himself refers here, both in his own library, namely the Continuation of the Annals of Tigernach and *Chronicum Scotorum*. His referring to their briefer entries under 1138 and his praising his Inisfallen annalist suggests a critical awareness of their relative strengths and weaknesses.

What O'Brien called 'Chronicon Scotorum', then in his own library, is now TCD MS H. 1. 18 (1292), fols 162r–216v, a facsimile copy made by Dubhaltach Mac Fhir Bhisigh a little before 1650.<sup>85</sup> It is the more surprising to find that in the manuscript of *Chronicum Scotorum* there is again a lacuna, this time between 1135 and 1141, though in this case not due to loss of leaves.<sup>86</sup> The words quoted from his supposed Inisfallen text by O'Brien derive from the Continuation of Tigernach in Bodl. MS Rawlinson B. 488, fols 22r–26v, which does not provide AD dates:

Cormac mac Maic Cairrthaig do marbad do Tairrdelbach O Briain  
 .i. da cliamuin 7 da cairdes Crist 7 da altraind a fill .i. indsaigtheach  
 Erenn uile 7 rí Leithe Moga co comlan.

*Fáithleann i mBaile Átha Cliath: Díoglaím annála, AD 250–1320, as H. 1. 7, Coláiste na Tríonóide, Áth Cliath, unpublished PhD thesis, UCC, 1944. Where the manuscript used by Connery is unknown, 'not known to survive' indicates that extant copies can be eliminated from consideration, while 'not identified' allows the possibility that the copy exists among the surviving copies.*

<sup>84</sup>Ní Úrdail, 'Some observations', 140–1.

<sup>85</sup>Nollaig Ó Muraíle, 'Chronicum Scotorum: some problems relating to its later transmission' (forthcoming). My thanks for sight of a draft.

<sup>86</sup>In this case there is no physical chasm. The text stops in the middle of the column, leaving the verso blank; a different scribe has begun on the next recto in 1141 (W. M. Hennessy (ed.), *Chronicum Scotorum*, Rolls Series 46 (London, 1866), 336, 338). It is to be noted that the years entered in the margin of the translation do not correspond to those in the text; Hennessy's 1131 = CS 1135, 1130 = CS 1134, and so on.

[Stokes translates:] 'Cormac son of Mac Carthaigh was treacherously killed by Toirdelbach Ó Briain, his father-in-law [or son-in-law], gossip, and fosterer. He was the attacker of the whole of Ireland and king of Leth Moga completely.'<sup>87</sup>

The bishop owned a seventeenth-century copy of this, now TCD MS H. 1. 18 (1292), fols 113r–161v, which was made from the original, most likely for Sir James Ware himself. Already in the seventeenth century it was bound with *Chronicum Scotorum*, and both works were annotated with Anno Domini dates and other notes by Roderick O'Flaherty.<sup>88</sup> O'Brien was proud to mention his owning O'Flaherty's copy of these works as well as what he called 'a perfect and authentic copy' of the Annals of Inisfallen.<sup>89</sup> Connery also kept his own notes from Tigernach.<sup>90</sup> These crucial words had already been read by Humfrey Wanley in the original manuscript, cited as Brydges III. The bishop's English translation uses the same words for Toirdelbach's relationships to Cormac as we have quoted from Wanley's description as printed, though we have supposed that the translator was Thomas O'Sullivan. One may suspect, therefore, that O'Brien had followed the catalogue.<sup>91</sup> It is worth emphasising how far MS H. 1. 18 (1292) speaks directly about Connery's work, not only because it contains two of the main sources, Tigernach and

<sup>87</sup>Stokes, 'The Annals of Tigernach', *RC* 18 (1897), 157. The passage can be found at fol. 146r in O'Brien's copy of the text, TCD MS H. 1. 18 (1292). Stokes translated *cliainain* as father-in-law and added a note, 'for father read son'; the word is not specific, meaning a male relative by marriage. This annal is presumably the source behind Keating's words in *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: Da éis sin do marbhadh Cormac Mac Carrthaigh rí Mumhan i bhfeill lé Toirdhealbhach Ó mBriain, i. a chliamhain féin is a cháirdeas Criost* 'After that Cormac Mac Carthaigh king of Munster was treacherously slain by Toirdhealbhach O Briain, that is his own son-in-law [sic] and gossip'; ed. D. Comyn and P. S. Dinneen, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn. The History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating DD*, ITS 4, 8, 9, 15 (London, 1902–14), ii, 310–11.

<sup>88</sup>Sharpe, *O'Flaherty's Letters*, 400–1. The copy of Tigernach carried the old pagination 40–137, *Chronicum Scotorum* 234–334. In both cases the page-numbers are at the centre of the top margin, written in brackets, and with even numbers on the recto, sufficient similarity to think that they were at that time bound together with other texts similarly paginated.

<sup>89</sup>'M. de C.' (*Monseigneur de Cloyne*) [J. O'Brien], 'Mémoire au sujet des Poèmes de M. Macpherson', *Journal des scavans* (May–December 1764), 277–92, 353–417, 537–55, 604–617, and 845–57, at 607; Ó Catháin, 'An Irish scholar abroad', 528 n. 61. Eugene O'Curry, who cited the passage in his *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History* (Dublin, 1861), 65–6, preferred to attribute the article to 'the Abbé Connery'.

<sup>90</sup>RIA MS 23 C 11 (cat. 764), pp. 77–108, is part of Tigernach's Annals in Connery's hand; at p. 77, he noted, 'The copy of Tighernach began at page 40 & ended at page 131', and these are the old page-numbers at the top of the pages in TCD MS H. 1. 18 (1292) (n. 88 above). Also RIA MS 24 K 22 (cat. 1056) is a copy of Tigernach made by Connery; notes here show that 'Monsieur l'Abbé Connery' was in Paris in February 1771. This copy passed through Betham's hands (p. 2), but I suspect that it had belonged to the Chevalier O'Gorman, who may have acquired it in Paris, and was bought with others of his manuscripts by Betham, who sold them to the RIA in 1831. Another copy of both Tigernach and *Chronicum Scotorum*, made by Séamus Ó Conaire, and now RIA MS 23 P 5 (cat. 686), certainly came to the Academy by this route.

<sup>91</sup>His *Focalóir* provides a limited means of testing. He defined 'cliabhuin' as 'son-in-law' (p. 104), *cairdeas* as 'a Gossip' [*godfather, baptismal sponsor*], adding the phrase, 'càirdios Criost, a sponsor to one's child at baptism' (p. 77), and *altra* only as foster-father (p. 21). He included the noun *ionnsaightheach* 'an aggressor' (p. 307), which had baffled Wanley's translator.

*Chronicum Scotorum*, but also because Connery's hand is to be seen here and there in the two other texts in the manuscript. The first, *Leabhar Iris Chloinne Uí Mhaoil Chonaire*, is a seventeenth-century genealogical compilation (now fols 3r–13v), in the handwriting of Dáibhidh Ó Bruadair (1625–1698).<sup>92</sup> The second is a copy of *Caithréim Thoirdhealbhaigh*, made in 1721 by Aindrias Mac Cruitín for Tadhg mac Seáin Meic Mhathghamhna, in which the text has been corrected by Connery in several places. All four works were used in the compilation of Connery's Annals. The two key manuscripts, H. 1. 7 (1281) and H. 1. 18 (1292), evidently remained in Connery's hands after the bishop's death in Paris in 1769. And after Connery's death in 1773, Charles Vallancey bought them in May 1774 from 'Mr Connery', very likely Séamus Ó Conaire.<sup>93</sup> They were sold to Trinity College two years later.<sup>94</sup> Meanwhile they were on loan to Charles O'Connor, of Belanagare, from November 1774 through 1775.<sup>95</sup> It is a measure of their perceived usefulness that the first English translation was made from MS 1281 by O'Connor's scribe Brennan, apparently within this period; within a few years this had been plagiarized by Theophilus O'Flanagan at the college in 1783.<sup>96</sup> Muiris Ó Gormáin also made an English version, which can hardly be much later than Brennan's.<sup>97</sup>

The essential point for Bishop O'Brien was that the Continuation of Tigernach and, supposedly, *Chronicum Scotorum*, bound with it, lacked 'any mention of O Connor Kerry; but the authors of the Annals of Inisfallen are more to be credited as they wrote in the very Center of Kerry'. He quoted too little for his point to be clear. Another collection of Munster-centred annals, now known as Mac Carthaigh's Book, provides the additional detail under the year 1138:

Cormac mac Muireadaigh Mic Carrthaigh ri an da cuigeadh don  
Muman ⁊ imcosnuideac Leithe Modha uile, duine is craibhtighi  
⁊ is calmu ⁊ dob fear um biadh ⁊ um edac, iar cumdac tempuill

<sup>92</sup>Ó Conchúir, *Scriobhaithe Chorcaí*, 51, listing Connery's notes on Ó Bruadair's text. Although Ó Bruadair was a Cork scribe, he has no entry in Ó Conchúir's catalogue because he died before 1700.

<sup>93</sup>John Connery was elected honorary member of the Dublin Society's antiquarian committee on 4 January 1773, six months before his death. A note in their minute-book, RIA MS 24 E 7 (cat. 1260), shows that on 3 May 1774 Vallancey paid 'Mr Connery' £9 2s. 0d. for manuscripts from Bishop Ó Briain. Ó Conchúir, *Scriobhaithe Chorcaí*, 266 n. 356, noted that Seán Ó Conaire was dead at the time, but we may conjecture that the vendor was Séamus Ó Conaire, who certainly handled these books (Ó Conchúir, *Scriobhaithe Chorcaí*, 50). On 3 September 1774 Vallancey wrote to Charles O'Connor, mentioning that texts in these two books had come into his hands (RIA MS Stowe B. i. 2, in a confused sequence by date; quoted by O'Sullivan (n. 94), 242).

<sup>94</sup>William O'Sullivan, 'The Irish manuscripts in Case H in Trinity College Dublin catalogued by Matthew Young in 1781', *Celtica* 11 (1976), 229–50, at 243, notes that the college paid £5 16s. 6d. for two Irish manuscripts in the June quarter of 1776 and thinks this 'most likely' refers to MSS 1281 and 1292.

<sup>95</sup>Note signed by O'Connor at the front of MS 1281. The book remained in O'Connor's hands in 1775, the date on his note under the ostensibly scribal note at the end of Connery's Annals.

<sup>96</sup>The first is now RIA MS 23 F 9 (cat. 1194), Irish and English facing in Brennan's hand. The second, represented first by BL MS Egerton 98–99 (O'Grady, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, i. 15), is a parallel text, written in 1783, with the same translation claimed by the young Theophilus O'Flanagan, who over the years made or offered to make copies for various patrons.

<sup>97</sup>RIA MS 24 D 11 (cat. 1050). I have not made extensive comparisons between the two versions.

Cormaic a Caisil 7 da teampoll deag a Lis Mor, do marbhadh do Diarmaid tSugac mac Mathghamhna I Concubuir Ciarraighi 7 do ua Tailcin a feall ar furalimh Toirrdéalbhaigh mic Diarmada ua Briain ana tigh fein a Muigh Tamnac.<sup>98</sup>

‘Cormac son of Muiredach Mac Carthaig, king of the two provinces of Munster, and defender of all Leth Moga, the most pious and valorous of men, the best for food and for clothing, was, after building the church of Cormac at Cashel and twelve churches at Lismore, treacherously killed by Diarmait Súgach, son of Mathgamain Ua Conchobair Ciarraige, and Ua Tailcín, at the instigation of Toirdelbach son of Diarmait Ua Briain, in his own house at Mahoonagh.’

Tomás Ó Fiaich long ago showed that Mac Carthaigh’s Book should be counted among the sources of Connery’s Annals, albeit it was not among those identified by Ó Cuileanáin.<sup>99</sup> Here, however, there is no mention of Toirdelbach’s triple relationship to Cormac. In MS 1281, under 1138, we find that Connery has merged the accounts from the Continuation of Tigernach and from Mac Carthaigh’s Book. It must be said that he botched the merger, breaking the sentence at the wrong point and attaching Toirdelbach’s description as ‘ind-saigtheach Erenn uile 7 rí Leithe Moga co comlan’ to Conchobair Ua Briain, named in the next entry in the Continuation of Tigernach:

Cormac mac Muiredaigh mic Cairthigh mic Saorbhreithigh mic Doncha mic Ceallachain Caisil, Rígh Deasmhumhan & iomchosnamhach Mumhan uile, & an duine ba craibhthidhe & ba calama, & ba fearr fá bhiadh & fá eadach, iar cumhdach teampuill Choramaic a cCaisiol, & da theampul [*sic*]<sup>a</sup> a Lios mór, do mharbhadh le Diarmaid Sugach ua Conchubhair Chiaruidhe air fhaosaimh Thoirdealbhaigh ua Bhriain a chliamhain, & a cháirdios Chríost, & a altrom a bhfeall.

Conchubhar ua Briain airdrigh Leithe Mogha, go hiomshlán & ionnsaigtheach Éiríonn uile an tan san.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The source leads one to expect *dá theampul deag* here; the omission is reflected in O’Brien’s use of this text.

<sup>98</sup>Mac Carthaigh’s Book, ed. S. Ó hInnse, *Miscellaneous Irish Annals* (Dublin, 1947), 26–7. This edition appeared too late to be used by Ó Cuileanáin. The manuscript is now NLI MS G 6, fols 1–12 + MS G 5, fols 9–24 (*saec.* xv/xvi). The two volumes in which it is now bound were bought by Sir Thomas Phillipps from a London dealer, Thomas Thorpe, in 1836. Where it had been before then is not apparent. There are, however, no notes or alterations in Connery’s hand to prove that he had used this manuscript.

<sup>99</sup>Tomás Ó Fiaich, ‘The contents of Mac Carthaigh’s Book’, *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* 5th ser. 74 (1950), 30–9. He considered the possibility that Connery had used the extant manuscript (p. 39) but preferred to allow that he had used a different copy rather than conclude that his copying was as inaccurate as a comparison suggested. None the less he acknowledged Connery’s ‘most glaring corruptions’ (p. 35). Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail has recently discussed Mac Carthaigh’s Book as bearing a close relation to Connery’s Annals (Ní Úrdail, ‘Some observations’, 148–9).

<sup>100</sup>TCD MS H. 1. 7 (1281), fol. 35r. The non-scribal note in Latin in the outer margin here is in the same hand as a note against the death of Diarmaid O Briain, s.a. 1120 (fol. 32r).

[*Translated by Brennan*, RIA MS 23 F 9 (cat. 1194) [1843 Hodges & Smith 133], fol. 121r] ‘Cormac son of Muireadhach son of Carthach son of Saorbhreithach \Justinus<sup>a</sup> son of Donogh son of Ceallachan Cashil King of Desmond, & a Man who had continual contention for the sovereignty of the entire province of Munster as his right, & the most pious, most brave, & most liberal<sup>b</sup> of victuals & cloathing, of all the Momonian princes, after having built or repaired the Church called from him Teampall Chormaic in Cashel & two churches in Lismore, was treacherously murdered by Diarmaid Sugach<sup>c</sup> O’Conor Kerry at the instigation of Turlough O’Brien, who was his own son-in-law, gossip, and fosterchild.

Conor O’Brien was supreme monarch of Leath Mogha, & also invaded, reduced, & required hostages and obedience from all the other princes of Ireland as sovereign of the whole kingdom at this period.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>a</sup> *om. BL MS Egerton 99, p. 33*

<sup>b</sup> generous or liberal *Eg.*

<sup>c</sup> \merry/ added in *Eg.*

[*Translated by Muiris Ó Gormáin*, RIA MS 24 D 11 (cat. 1050), p. 93] ‘Cormuck mac Muiredy ma Carthy, son of Saorbrethach, son of Donough, son of Ceallaghan Cashell, K. of [–Munster] /Desmond\, protector of all Munster, the most devout, and valiant, and the most free and liberal, of victuals, of cloaths, having erected a church in Cashel, and two at Lismore, was killed by Dermot Sugach O’Connor Kerry, he being instigated thereto by Terlag O’Brien his son in law, and his Gossop.

Connor O’Brien chief K. of \all/ Leath-mogha at that time.

Shortened text in Connery’s hand:

Cormac mac Muireadhaigh mic Cairthigh mic Saorbhreithigh mic Doncha mic Ceall(achain) Caisil do marbhadh air oideas & air fhaosam Thoirdealbhaigh ua Bhriain & a cháirdios Christ, & altrom a bhfeall. Conchubhar ua Briain airdrigh Leithe Mogha & ionnsaightheach Eirionn uile an tan san.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>101</sup>The hand was identified as Brennan’s by John O’Donovan in a note at the front of the manuscript, and the dating to the time of O’Conor’s borrowing the Irish manuscript was inferred by Ní Úrdail, *Cath Cluana Tarbh*, 268, 271. Other copies of this translation are BL MS Egerton 99 (ad 1783), pp. 33–4 (with trivial variations), and later, RIA MS 12 O 8 (cat. 1049) [1856 Hardiman 547], pp. 127–8, and NLI MS G 166 [1869 Todd 1434].

<sup>102</sup>RIA MS 23 C 11, pp. 152–3.

Connery's reading here explains Bishop O'Brien's saying 'two churches at Lismore', where Mac Carthaigh's Book had 'twelve churches'. To complicate matters, however, *da theampull* is the reading in another set of annals, edited around this date, which survives in a manuscript written by another assistant of O'Brien, Mícheál mac Peadair Uí Longáin; here Mac Carthaigh's Book was followed more closely, but the extended line of ascent was already included:

Coramac mhéic Cáirthe mc Muiréadh(aigh) mc Cáirtheic mc Saoirbhreithicc mc Doncha mc Ceallacháin Caisil, rígh dá chóige Múmhan 7 iomchosnamhach leatha Modha uile agas an duine badh cráibhthídhe 7 badh callmha 7 b(adh) fearr fá bhia 7 fá eadach iar ccúmhdach teampull Choramaicc a cCaisiol, 7 da theampull a Liosmór do mharbh(adh) do Dhiarmaid Súgach Ó Connchubhair ionna thigh féin [a Magtamnach] \a Muighetheamnach/ ar oideas Toirdealbhaigh mhic Diarmada uí Bhriain.<sup>103</sup>

[*Translated by Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin*, NLI MS G 305 (once owned by Sir William Betham), p. 90] 'Charles mc Murry mc Carthy, king of Munster & the most devout valiant generous & hospitable man of his contemporaries, built a church in Cashel & 12 [*sic*] in Lismore killed by Dermot O'Connor in his own house at Mathavnach at the instigation of Terence O'Brian.'<sup>104</sup>

It is possible that Ó Longáin's text was the intermediary between Mac Carthaigh's Book and Connery, but it was Connery who merged this with the entry from Tigernach. The words quoted by O'Brien and the mention of Ua Conchobair Ciarraige are found *together* only in Connery's Annals. This, then, despite its untitled status in the prime manuscript, is what the bishop meant by the Annals of Inisfallen.<sup>105</sup> Whether it is the same as the bishop's 'perfect and authentic copy' may be debated: although the medieval Annals

<sup>103</sup>These annals have been referred to as MacCurtin's Annals of Inisfallen, and copies are listed by Ní Úrdail, *Cath Cluana Tarbh*, 87–8, 272–5, but the name goes back no further than a note by Seosamh Ó Longáin in reaction to what O'Curry had said in his description of a later Ó Longáin copy, RIA MS 23 N 3. The earliest witness, in the hand of Mícheál mac Peadair Uí Longáin (d. 1770), is now in the Jesuit Archives, Leeson Street, Dublin, MS IL 1 (*Leabharlanna na Cléire*, ii, 70–76), part (c); this entry at p. 30 has the year 1138 in the margin. This book was evidently bound for Bishop O'Brien, whose episcopal arms were embossed on the original leather cover. It comprises six parts, most of them in Mícheál mac Peadair's hand, mostly in Irish but also with passages in Latin and in English, with his signature and the date 1759 in part (b), p. 18; part (d), however, a mere two leaves of genealogical matter, and a page in part (f) too, are in the handwriting of John Connery himself.

<sup>104</sup>Another copy of the same translation, made by John Windele, in RIA MS 12 I 5 (cat. 1110) [1855 Windele 21], p. 299. The reading '12' suggests that there was a better copy available to Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin.

<sup>105</sup>This goes against Ó Cuileanáin's observation, 'The Dublin Annals of Inisfallen', 190–1, that references to the Annals of Inisfallen in O'Brien's *Focalóir* generally point to the text as found in Rawlinson B. 503.

of Inisfallen have been identified as contributing many entries to Connery's compilation, no trace has emerged of any working transcript from the original.<sup>106</sup> The paragraph under discussion may offer a clue as to why O'Brien was keen to transfer the name of Inisfallen to Connery's *Annals*: it offered a local authority in support of his own interest in Munster.

Connery has taken his main information in this entry from his usual source at this period, the Continuation of Tigernach, merging it with Ó Longáin's text. Cormac's line of descent was derived from *Leabhar Muimhneach*, as noted by Cormac Ó Cuileanáin.<sup>107</sup> Cormac's title, king of Desmond and defender of all Munster, against which Ó Cuileanáin noted 'gan foinnse', surely came from Mac Carthaigh's book, as did the following words, attributed by Ó Cuileanáin to the compiler himself, 'is dócha', on the basis of the entry for 1127. But the editing of these sources was a two-stage process, in which Ó Longáin used *Leabhar Muimhneach* and Mac Carthaigh's Book, and Connery used Ó Longáin. A study of Connery's work cannot avoid analysing Ó Longáin's sources in parallel with his.

These considerations open a small window on Bishop O'Brien's remarks. First, when and where had he become aware of MS Harley 1802 and its colophons? He appears to have made the acquaintance of Dr Morton and been admitted to the reading room in 1767. His saying, 'I have been able to furnish the Keepers & Overseers of the British Musaeum with a note', suggests that he had provided the note while he was in London. If he knew Wanley's essay – and it is surely likely that Morton showed him the Harleian catalogue printed under his oversight – he was providing a correction of one year, arrived at by using annals in his own collection to control those used by Wanley. Inquiries in the British Library have not discovered the note itself.<sup>108</sup> His discussion of the colophons cannot have been framed without access to Connery's *Annals*, which we may suppose he had with him in London and Paris. Father Connery's work provided a convenient means to discover the year of Cormac Mac Carthaigh's death. The extended entry under the name *Curmac* in the *Focalóir*, therefore, is one of several historical entries that O'Brien himself was adding to the dictionary as he prepared it for the press in Paris in 1768.

<sup>106</sup>It must surely be supposed that there was a seventeenth-century copy, comparable with those in MS 1292, made before Ware's books had left Ireland. If so, however, it is curious that Roderick O'Flaherty, who had access to Ware's working manuscripts, nowhere shows any knowledge of the *Annals* of Inisfallen.

<sup>107</sup>*Annála Inse Fáithleann i mBaile Átha Cliath*, 148n, citing simply *LM*. For reference to Diarmaid Súgach, however, he adds a page-number citation to Tadhg Ó Donnchadha, *An Leabhar Muimhneach* (Dublin, [1941]), 408. The difficulty of relating this edition to the manuscript that Connery used is not small (P. Walsh, 'An Leabhar Muimhneach', *Irish Historical Studies* 3 (1942–3), 135–42). The simple line of ascent from Cormac is found in near-contemporary form in the Book of Leinster, LL 320 b 1 (M. A. O'Brien, *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae* (Dublin, 1962), 362).

<sup>108</sup>My thanks to Dr Andrew Dunning (BL) for his help in searching the department's internal copies of the catalogue.

## MAEL BRIGTE'S PERSPECTIVE FROM ARMAGH

Wanley had worked hard to date Mael Brigte's Gospels, undertaking extensive reading in print and manuscript, including the investigation of texts he could not understand. The effort he went to reflects the curiosity that Mael Brigte's colophons had aroused in him, but his aim was solely to date the manuscript and thereby to set a yardstick for dating other manuscripts from Ireland. He was not interested in early-twelfth-century Irish history. If he had spent an extra hour with Bernard of Clairvaux's *Life of St Malachy*, he might have realised that Bernard says a good deal about the career of Cormac Mac Carthaig, though Bernard was so sparing in his use of names that Wanley would have found it difficult to interpret.<sup>109</sup> It would still have been impossible for him to appreciate just how unusual that career was. Bishop O'Brien was much better versed in Irish history, and as bishop of Cloyne he took a close interest in the history of Desmond. We may wonder a little at his version of the first colophon, 'the Killing of Cormac Mac Carthy by Turlogh O'Brien is a very surprizing act'. He builds on it, saying that 'the particular reason of Maelbrigte's surprise at the act of Turlough O'Brien towards Cormac mac Carty' was their complex relationship by marriage, baptismal sponsorship, and fosterage. Now, Mael Brigte very likely did know about these relationships, but his colophon registers more than surprise, more even than revulsion at such domestic treachery.

The fact that Mael Brigte at Armagh memorialized Cormac's death is very significant. We know little enough about him. F. J. Byrne has wondered whether he were the same Mael Brigte named many times in the margins of Bodl. MS Laud Misc. 460, a late-twelfth-century copy of Gregory's *Moralia* on Job from Armagh.<sup>110</sup> His teacher Mael Ísu was perhaps that Mael Ísu who kept the calendar as well as the library at Armagh and who died on the eve of Good Friday, 19 March 1136.<sup>111</sup> Was Mael Ísu perhaps also an annalist? Donnchadh Ó

<sup>109</sup>Cormac is named only once in the *Vita* at §18, *Ibi occurrit ei Cormarcus rex*; for the rest one must understand who is referred to as *rex*. Wanley cited this work from *Sancti Bernardi Claraevallensis abbatis* [ . . . ] *opera omnia* (Paris, 1632), col. 1937, but he drew on it only with reference to the hereditary coarbship of Armagh (§19 in our editions), for which the same source was referred to briefly in Spelman's *Glossarium Archaiologicum* (London, 1626, 1687). The same passage would be cited by Toland, *Nazarenus*, 30, in his argument against clerical celibacy.

<sup>110</sup>F. J. Byrne, *1000 Years of Irish Script. An Exhibition of Irish Manuscripts in Oxford Libraries* (Oxford, 1979), 15. Bodl. MS Laud Misc. 460 has the words *Emanuel a Maelbrigte* in the upper margin of three pages and the name as *Mael* on many other pages. Its Armagh origin is indicated by a note referring to parchment, *ar roloisced dia rolosced Ard Macha* ('for it was burnt when Armagh was burnt'). Episodes of burning are too frequent at Armagh for this to date the book, but its script is more than a generation later than that of Harley 1802; Byrne dated it only as twelfth-century. The identification appears implausible.

<sup>111</sup>At fol. 13r, *Line moite* [for *m'aite*] *hi tus ind lethinig, i. mic intacairt Tuignetha. Rob cennais Dia for anmain Maelissu pater* 'a line of my teacher is at the beginning of this page, i.e. Mac an tSacairt of Tynan. God be gentle to Mael Ísu's soul. *Pater noster*'; at fol. 24v, *Maelissu roben in line tossaigh súnd, ó ó ó mihi et sibi* 'Mael Ísu cut off the line at the beginning here, o o o for me and for him'. *AFM* s.a. 1136. 8, *Maol Iosa mac Maol Cholaim, primh-challadóir Arda Macha, a primh-crióchaire ⁊ a leabhar-coimhedaigh, d' écc iar n-aithrige thoghaidhe aidhche aeini an chésta* 'Mael Ísu mac Maíl Choluim, chief keeper of the calendar of Armagh, its chief

Corráin has observed that annalists, ‘who rarely moralize, uniformly express shock at his death, and this Armagh gospel-book, written in 1138, bears the contemporary comment, *Is mór in gním Cormac mac Carthaig do marbad ó Toirdelbach Hua Briain*’.<sup>112</sup> Shock perhaps goes too far: they use the phrase a *bhfeall* ‘treacherously’. Now, it is extremely rare to find a political colophon.<sup>113</sup> Marie Therese Flanagan has seen the Armagh scribe’s interest as a reflection of the strong understanding between King Cormac and Bishop Malachy, Mael Maedóc Ua Morgair.<sup>114</sup> The young Malachy had spent time in the church at Lismore before being made bishop of Connor, and it was to Lismore and to King Cormac that he later withdrew. Cormac himself spent some time in the church at Lismore in 1127 when driven from his throne, but within a matter of months he was restored as king of Desmond by Toirdelbach Ua Briain and his brother Conchobar. It was at Lismore in 1129 that Malachy’s patron from Armagh, Archbishop Celsus, Cellach mac Aeda meic Mail Ísu, died and was buried under the auspices of King Cormac. Malachy was elected to succeed him, but within five years he withdrew to the church of Down in 1137, to be succeeded by Archbishop Gelasius, Gilla Meic Liac mac Diarmata, who was Mael Brigte’s archbishop at the time of writing. The colophon mentions him at the end, but Mael Brigte’s attention is on the rulers of Ireland, not the head of his own church. In the years between 1127 and his untimely death in 1138 Cormac had achieved something quite remarkable.<sup>115</sup> Descended from the Eoghanachta, former rulers of Cashel and all of Munster, his brother Tadhg was the first of his lineage to become king in more than a century and it was he who established Desmond as a kingdom. After a turbulent succession, Cormac defeated all his rivals, raising himself to be king of Munster and eventually and briefly recognized as king of Ireland, so that Mael Brigte could truthfully

---

antiquary (?) and librarian, died, after good penance, on the night of Good Friday’. The connexion was made by Gilbert, *Facsimiles*, p. xx. The note in the lower margin at fol. 13r may indicate that Mael Ísu was part of the family of Mac an tSairt, of Tynan (Co. Armagh), rather than ‘son of the priest of Tynan’. Brief comment by H. Pettiau, ‘The officials of the church of Armagh in the early and central middle ages to AD 1200’, in A. J. Hughes and W. Nolan (eds), *Armagh History and Society* (Dublin, 2001), 121–86, at 133–4, 172. The titles are unique (as also was this in *AU* s.a. 1042. 6: *Mael Petair Ua hAilecan, fer leighinn ⁊ toisech mac leighinn Aird Macha* ‘Mael Petair Ua hAilecáin, lector and master of the students of Armagh’).

<sup>112</sup>D. Ó Corráin, ‘*Caithréim Chellacháin Chaisil*, history or propaganda?’, *Ériu* 25 (1974), 1–69, at 59.

<sup>113</sup>The classic work on free-ranging colophons and marginalia, Charles Plummer’s ‘On the colophons and marginalia of Irish scribes’, *PBA* 12 (1926), 11–44 (also separately, 1–34), using Stokes’s texts, cites our colophon 2 (p. 11 n. 2), and colophon 1 (p. 39 n. 2), referring there to two other ‘public events’, which in fact bear no real comparison, nor do examples of public events in marginalia (pp. 24–5). Plummer also quotes one of the marginal notes referring to Mael Brigte’s teacher Mael Ísu (p. 18 and n. 3).

<sup>114</sup>M. T. Flanagan, *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Woodbridge, 2010), 209–10.

<sup>115</sup>The most thorough survey of the evidence for his rise to power is Henry A. Jefferies, ‘Desmond: the early years, and the career of Cormac Mac Carthy’, *JCHAS* 88 (1983), 81–99. Cormac finds an appropriate place in a longer narrative in M. T. Flanagan, ‘High-kings with opposition, 1072–1166’, in D. Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, i: *Prehistoric and Early Ireland* (Oxford, 2005), 899–933, at 918–29.

say of him, 'who was king-bishop of Munster and of Ireland generally in his time'. The compound *rigescop* is not recorded in *DIL*. Later annals used the phrase *espucc righ nÉrenn*, 'bishop of the kings of Ireland' (with eclipsis after genitive plural), which is not perspicuous.<sup>116</sup> O'Brien explained 'royal bishop' as a king who established churches. The phrase caused Petrie to ask whether Cormac was really a bishop, and he went so far as to associate him with a crosier from Cashel.<sup>117</sup> Cormac was the builder of Cormac's Chapel at Cashel, the first major romanesque church in Ireland.<sup>118</sup> He forged links with Germany.<sup>119</sup> He was the patron of an ancestral history that provided a model for his perception of his rule.<sup>120</sup> In framing a constitutional agenda for future kings of Cashel, he envisaged a coronation, following election after the manner of the German emperor by the electoral nobles of Munster.<sup>121</sup> From the

<sup>116</sup>Hennessy, *Annals of Loch Cé*, i, 138–9, *Cormac mac Mhég Carrthaigh aird righ Des Muman*  $\gamma$  *espucc righ nÉrenn ina réimhes, ar crabadh, ar thidhnacul séd*  $\gamma$  *maoine do chléircibh*  $\gamma$  *chellaibh,  $\gamma$  ar iarmart negludagda a lebhruibh, & a naidhmibh, do Dia*  $\gamma$  [. . .] *do thuitim a meabhuil la tuadh Mumain; & bennacht le anmuin* 'Cormac, son of Mac Carthaigh, chief king of Des-Mumha, and bishop-king of Erin in his time as regards piety, and the presentation of jewels and valuables to clerics and churches, and ecclesiastical riches, in books and utensils, to God, and [. . .] fell in treachery by the people of Tuadh-Mumha; and a blessing be with his soul'. These annals break off two lines later, where several leaves are lost from the manuscript. The Four Masters' entry reads: [AFM s.a. 1138. 5] *Corbmac mac Muireadhaigh meic Carthaigh, righ Deasmhumhan,  $\gamma$  espucc righ Ereann ina réimheas ar thiodhnacal séd,  $\gamma$  maoine do chléircibh*  $\gamma$  *ceallaibh, fear leasaighthe tuath  $\gamma$  ecclas, do mharbhadh ina thigh féin i f-fioll lá Toirrdhealbhach mac Diarmada Uí Bhriain,  $\gamma$  lá dá mhac Uí Conchobhair Ciarraighe*, translated by O'Donovan: 'Cormac son of Muireadhach son of Carthach, king of Desmond, and bishop of the kings of Ireland for bestowal of jewels and wealth upon the clergy and the churches, an improver of territories and churches, was killed in his own house by treachery by Toirdhealbhach son of Diarmaid Ua Briain and by the two sons of O'Conchobhar Ciarraighe'.

<sup>117</sup>Petrie, *Round Towers*, 306–9, starting from O'Brien's phrase 'royal bishop', which was supported by John Lanigan. He further discussed the annal-entries with *espucc righ* (referring to Lough Key as Kilonan) and concluded that Cormac took an episcopal staff. Petrie himself had bought the head of a crosier, found at Cashel, and referred to it as Cormac's Crosier. It is now dated considerably later: discussed by John Bradley, 'The sarcophagus at Cormac's Chapel, Cashel, co. Tipperary', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal* 26 (1984), 14–35, and Monica Nevin, 'The finding of the Cashel crosier', *JRSAI* 125 (1995), 131–4.

<sup>118</sup>Discussion of the annalistic sources for the consecration of Cormac's Chapel in 1134 starts with George Petrie, and the architectural literature is extensive. Modern statements with references to older discussion are Tadhg O'Keefe, 'Lismore and Cashel: reflections on the beginnings of romanesque architecture in Munster', *JRSAI* 124 (1994), 118–52, and Roger Stalley, 'Design and function: the construction and decoration of Cormac's Chapel at Cashel', in D. Bracken and D. Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century. Reform and Renewal* (Dublin, 2006), 162–75. There is a plea for more history with the architecture by Tadhg O'Keefe, 'Romanesque scholarship and Cormac's Chapel', *ibid.* 257–69.

<sup>119</sup>Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel, 'Cashel and Germany: the documentary evidence', in Bracken and Ó Riain-Raedel, *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century*, 176–217. Other contributors to this volume have much to say on the wider context in Irish church-history.

<sup>120</sup>Ó Corráin, 'Caithréim Chellacháin Chaisil', dates the writing of this account of tenth-century history to a time when Cormac was secure as king of Munster, 1129  $\times$  1132. The work refers to the coronation of the king of Munster with a royal diadem (§7, ed. A. Bugge (Christiania, 1905), pp. 4, 61).

<sup>121</sup>Attention was drawn to this fragment of evidence by F. J. Byrne, *Irish Kings and High-Kings* (London, 1973), 191, with no source reference. The text was printed by T. Ó Raithbheartaigh, *Genealogical Tracts* (Dublin, 1932), 182 (§172), citing Book of

point of view of Armagh, Cormac in the 1130s appeared to represent a perfect settlement of the Irish church, now taking a national view, and an Irish monarchy that looked to follow Continental ways and break away from the constant infighting that was the usual run of events in Irish politics.<sup>122</sup> Cormac had overtaken Toirdelbach Ua Briain who had brought him out of monastic exclusion to rule Desmond. In 1137 Toirdelbach and his brother Conchobar had invaded Leinster in support of Diarmait Mac Murchada, but they were turned homewards after a meeting with King Cormac at Waterford. Resentful of his high power, Toirdelbach plotted Cormac's murder, and normality returned. The close relationships between Cormac and Toirdelbach are stated only in the Continuation of Tigernach and from there in Connery's Annals. *Cliamain* is ambiguous between father-in-law, son-in-law, or other relationship by marriage, but *cairdes Críst* I find only as gossip, godfather or -mother, not as godson, and *altra* or *altrom* 'foster-father' is not interchangeable with *dalta* 'foster-son' or *comalta* 'foster-brother'. Toirdelbach was the senior in this complex of family bonds, so translators Thomas O'Sullivan and John O'Brien, Brennan and Ó Gormáin, have erred in making him the junior, with only Stokes on the right track. It is surely unusual to find two people connected by the triple links of marriage, gossiped, and fosterage—links named together in the Statute of Kilkenny in 1366.<sup>123</sup> Over a period of twenty or thirty years Toirdelbach stood sponsor at Cormac's baptism, fostered him as a child, gave

---

Lecan, [p.] 458d [now facs fol. 181Vd21; D. Ó Corráin, [Review of Byrne], *Celtica* 13 (1980), 150–68, at 162, compares RIA MS Stowe C. i. 2 (cat. 1234), 44Vb5. Byrne thought a date before the building of Cormac's Chapel inconceivable and a date after Cormac's death unlikely, providing the narrow date-range, 1134 × 1138; comment by Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel, 'German influence on Munster church and kings in the twelfth century', in Alfred P. Smyth (ed.), *Seanchas. Studies in Honour of Francis John Byrne* (Dublin, 2000), 323–30, at 328–9.

<sup>122</sup>Comparison may be made with the idea that the church, perhaps specifically the primatial church at Armagh, had equally seen in Brian Bórainhe the hope of a unified, imperial monarchy. Although the statement describing him as *imperator Scotorum*, entered in 1005 in the Book of Armagh, was written by his own *anamchara* Mael Suthain (*AI* s.a. 1031), none the less it represents an alignment of primatial and imperial interests. More tangible is the fact that his body was taken to Armagh for an imperial burial after his death at Clontarf (*AU* s.a. 1014).

<sup>123</sup>H. F. Berry, *Statutes and Ordinances, and Acts of the Parliament of Ireland: King John to Henry V* (Dublin, 1907), 430–69 (§2, p. 430): *Item ordiné est et estabilé que nul alliaunce par mariage comaternité nurtur de enfantz concubinaunce ou de çaise [v.l. caif] ne de altre manere desormes soit fait parentre Engloyes et Irroies de un partie ne de altre parte* 'Also, it is ordained and established, that no alliance by marriage, gossiped, fostering of children, concubinage or by amour, nor in any other manner, be henceforth made between the English and Irish on the one side or on the other side'. The preferred text follows the two Carew manuscripts, Lambeth Palace, MS 603, fol. 165v, and MS 608, pt 2, fol. 1v (both *saec.* xvii); the older copy in BL MS Cotton Titus B. xi (*saec.* xvi<sup>2</sup>), fol. 129v, has modernized the French much more but has preserved the Irish-derived *caif*, not for *caomh* as Berry suggested, but from *coibche* 'bride price', clearly used of an informal relationship, as noted by E. J. Gwynn, *The Metrical Dindshenchas* (Dublin, 1903–35), iv, 433–4, who compares a passage of Latin from the early 15th century, *nullus . . . clericus uel laycus teneat mulieres aut concubinas sub nomine cayfalias choghie* (W. Reeves, *Acts of Archbishop Colton* (Dublin, 1850, p. xvi; D. A. Chart, *The Register of John Swayne, Archbishop of Armagh* (Belfast, 1935), 11; K. Simms, 'The legal position of Irishwomen in the later middle ages', *Irish Jurist* 10 (1975) 96–111, at 101).

him his daughter in marriage. In war and politics, he played his part in raising up Cormac, and then he treacherously destroyed him and the prelates' hope of a peaceful and godly monarchy in Ireland.

Our sources for these events are difficult. The framework is provided by the annals, but for the vital years the reliable Annals of Ulster and of Inisfallen are wanting; we have to trust that the Annals of Lough Key and after them the Annals of the Four Masters have repeated the Annals of Ulster from a complete copy. In another sequence of twelfth-century annals in what has been called Mac Carthaigh's Book, we have seen a local account of Cormac's killing, in which Toirdelbach had instigated the crime but it was carried out by Diarmait Súgach Ua Conchobhair and the obscure Ua Tailcín in what we can take to mean Cormac's own house at Mahoonagh (Co. Limerick). Cormac, indeed, was named as Cormac Muighe Thamnach in later entries.<sup>124</sup> Diarmait was a son of Mathgamain Ua Conchubair, king of Ciarraige, who had died in the same year; his own career may be followed until his death in 1154.<sup>125</sup> Early sources from the Continent are still more difficult. St Bernard's *Life of St Malachy* has no clear chronology and very few names. It must be read in the light of the annals, and what it adds may be more hagiographical overlay than narrative. It was in any case written only after Malachy's own death at Clairvaux in 1148. Cormac Mac Carthaigh appears in another source of a similar date, *Visio Tnugdali*, a traditional otherworld vision, composed by an Irish expatriate at Regensburg in 1149, in which the writer sees Cormac in paradise: the king enjoyed his throne, his courtiers, and the liturgy, but he was still in purgatorial punishment for a few hours each day because of his adultery and *quia iussit comitem interficere iuxta Sanctum Patricium et preuaricatus est iusiurandum* 'because he ordered that the count (*comes*) be killed next to Saint Patrick and transgressed against his oath'.<sup>126</sup> The site of the killing is a matter of guesswork and the implied perjury unexplained. On the supposition that these facts were known to the expected audience, we may guess that *iuxta Sanctum Patricium* refers to a site in Cashel, perhaps the famous *Lecc Pátraic*, 'Patrick's Stone', rather than to the archiepiscopal church at Armagh,

<sup>124</sup>Mac Carthaigh's Book, s.a. 1151. 3, and on many subsequent occasions until his grandson's death, s.a. 1206, ed. Ó hInnse, 32, 84. Bishop O'Brien names him so (above, n. 64). Mahoonagh was in the cantred of Killeedy, which was reckoned as part of Desmond (P. MacCotter, 'The cantreds of Desmond', *JCHAS* 105 (2000), 49–69 (at p. 61). My thanks to Kenneth Nicholls for his advice on this point. MacCotter, 'The rise of Meic Carthaigh and the political geography of Desmond', *JCHAS* 111 (2006), 59–77, provides valuable contextual discussion.

<sup>125</sup>Mathgamain's death is the first event under 1138 in the Annals of Lough Key, Cormac's the fifth (Hennessy, *Annals of Loch Cé*, i, 138). Both rulers were distinguished, in the same words, for their bestowing treasure and gifts (*sét ocus maini*). Diarmait Súgach's death, after much tribulation, MacCarthaigh's Book, s.a. 1154. 2, ed. Ó hInnse, 36.

<sup>126</sup>B. Pfeil, *Die Vision des Tnugdalu Albers von Windberg mit einer Edition der lateinischen Visio Tnugdali aus Clm 22254* (Frankfurt, 1999), 44–6. A visionary text cannot be read in the same way as an annal. If this were a significant political killing, however, the annalists did not record it. Cormac's brother Donnchad Mac Carthaigh and Conchobar Ua Briain were also in paradise; Tnugdali recognized them, *Isti duo uiri erant in uita sua multum crudeles, et inter se inuicem inimici*, but his angelic guide explained how they had repented before death (ibid. 43–4).

where Mael Brigte studied and wrote.<sup>127</sup> The identity of the *comes* has not been recovered. What high rank below the king of Munster might have been meant by *comes* ‘count’ is not apparent; this is its only occurrence in the *Visio*.

Scholars have not gone to the colophons in Mael Brigte’s Gospels as a historical source, but they are a contemporary record, and they reflect the perspective of someone in Armagh in 1138. At the end of Matthew’s Gospel, Mael Brigte wrote, ‘It is a great crime that Cormac Mac Carthaig was killed by Toirdelbach Ua Briain’, but with no explicit indication that he has chronology in his mind. This was the latest grave news, entered as such in his colophon. At the end of St Luke’s Gospel, he was minded to date his work but by reference to the great storm, remembered all over Ireland. Perhaps he reached this point in his copying around the first anniversary of the memorable event. When he came to add his final colophon, he set out to provide a year, doing so by reference to the king in that part of Ireland where he wrote, Diarmait Ua Cerbaill, king of Airgialla, and the usual chronological data for the year AD 1138. After that he mentions again the killing of Cormac as marking the year and goes on to give a survey of the rulers of Ireland now, starting in the north with Muirchertach mac Néill Uí Lochlainn of Ailech and Cú Ulad mac Conchobair, king of Ulaid; continuing southwards along the eastern side of Ireland with Murchad Ua Maelseachlainn, king of Mide, and Diarmait Mac Murchada, king of Laigin, till he reached the south, Conchobar Ua Briain, king of Munster, and returns up the western side of the country with Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair, king of Connacht. None was now king of Ireland. Written at least ten years earlier than the *Life of St Malachy* and very likely earlier than any of our annals, Mael Brigte’s colophon does not merely date his manuscript. It records a reaction in the primatial see to an event more than three hundred kilometres to the south, when inter-dynastic politics in Munster had removed the king-bishop, the man on whom the church had fixed its hopes for a new politics.

<sup>127</sup>It was Aubrey Gwynn who first proposed that context demanded a location at Cashel and who further guessed that the words designated an otherwise unknown altar of St Patrick in the cathedral church. The name of Patrick was attached to a recognized stone at Cashel, *Lecc Pátraicc*, from at least as early as the writing of the early Middle Irish *Bethu Phátraic* (ed. K. Mulchrone (Dublin, 1939), 118; P. Ó Riain, ‘When and why *Cothraige* was first equated with *Patricius*’, *ZCP* 49/50 (1997), 698–711, at 704–5. On the subject of Patrick and Cashel, E. O’Curry, *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History* (Dublin, 1861), 623, recalled the repeated oath of the Munster king, Feidlimid mac Crimthainn, ‘by Patrick’s Stone that is in Cashel’, *dar a Lic Pátraic atá a cCaisil* (C. Breatnach (ed.), *Ceasacht inghine Ghuile* (Maynooth, 1996), §§ 1, 6, 7, 9: *Dar in Leic Phádraig fil i gCaiseal*), and a prophetic poem from TCD H. 3. 17 (1337), col. 835. The modern Irish name for the Rock of Cashel, *Carrig Phádraig*, is not attested before Keating.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY CONCERNING MAEL BRIGTE'S GOSPELS

DESCRIPTION, SCRIPT, DISCUSSION: *Bibliothèque critique, ou Recueil de diverses pièces critiques, dont la plûpart ne sont point imprimées, ou ne se trouvent que très-difficilement, publiées par Mr de Sainjore* [P. Richard Simon] *qui y a ajouté quelques notes*, 4 vols (Paris, 1708–10), i, 271–5. — [Humfrey Wanley and others], *A Catalogue of the Harleian Collection of Manuscripts, purchased by authority of Parliament for the use of the Publick; and preserved in the British Museum* (London, 1759–62), sig. 11Q–11T, repr. as *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1808–12), ii, 229–43. — Charles O'Connor, *Rerum Hibernicarum scriptores veteres* (Buckingham, 1814–26), vol. i, *Prolegomena ad Annales*, pp. cxli–cxlv. — William Reeves (1815–1892), then librarian of Armagh, published an account of the Latin texts together with the Irish texts transcribed and translated by Eugene O'Curry, 'On an Irish manuscript of the four gospels in the British Museum', *PRIA* 5 (1850–3), 45–67. — P. F. Moran, 'Biblical manuscripts of the early Irish church', *The Atlantis* 5 (No. 9, 1870), 69–121 (at 113–14). — E. A. Bond and E. M. Thompson, *Facsimiles of Manuscripts and Inscriptions*, Palaeographical Society (London, 1873–94), pt 1, pl. 212 [codicology, insular contractions]. — S. Berger, *Histoire de la Vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du moyen âge* (Paris, 1893), 387 [brief bibliography back to Toland]. — W. M. Lindsay, *Early Welsh Script* (Oxford, 1921), 40 ['late symptoms' in the abbreviations]. — S. H. O'Grady and Robin Flower, *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, [1889–92]–1926), ii, 428–32. — J. F. Kenney, *Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, i: *Ecclesiastical* (New York, 1929), 648 (§483). — A. G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 700–1600 in The Department of Manuscripts: The British Library* (London, 1979), §644 [brief notice]. — D. N. Dumville, 'Corpus of Gaelic manuscripts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Celtic Essays* (Aberdeen, 2007), ii, 83–90 (§35) [brief notice]. — D. Ó Corráin, *Clavis litterarum Hibernensium. Medieval Irish Books and Texts (c. 400–c. 1600)* (Turnhout, 2017), ii, 833–5.

FACSIMILES: L. Gougaud, 'Répertoire des fac-similés des manuscrits irlandais', *RC* 35 (1914), 415–430, at 425–6, gives a folio-by-folio list of earlier reproductions. — O'Connor, *Rerum Hibernicarum scriptores*, vol. i, p. cxliv, pl. vi [fol. 156v]. — C. P. Cooper, [Appendices to a Report on Rymer's *Foedera*] (London, [1837, 1869]), App. A, pl. xvi [fols. 128r, 156v]. — J. O. Westwood, *Palaeographia sacra pictoria* (London, 1843–5), 'no. 18' [nos. 4, 5, 6, three details]. — J. O. Westwood, *Fac-similes of the Miniatures and Ornaments of Anglo-Saxon and Irish Manuscripts* (London, 1868), 93–4. — J. T. Gilbert, *Facsimiles of the National Manuscripts of Ireland* (1874–84), pp. xx–xxi, and pl. 40–42 [fols 9v, 50r (scribal slip); 10r, 60r, 127v, 128r; 13r, 156v, with transcriptions; follows Reeves and O'Curry]. — E. A. Bond and E. M. Thompson, *Facsimiles of Manuscripts and Inscriptions*, Palaeographical Society (London, 1873–94), pt 1, pl. 212 [fol. 87r, with transcription]. — E. M. Thompson, *Handbook of Greek and Latin Palaeography* (London, 1893), 243 [fol. 127v, from Gilbert.] — E. H. J. Reusens, *Éléments de paléographie* (Louvain, 1897–9), 51–2 [from

Thompson]. — *Recueil de fac-similes à l'usage de l'École des chartes* (Paris, 1890–1901), pt 2, no. 351 [fol. 87r]. — F. G. Kenyon, *Facsimiles of Biblical Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1900), no. 18 [fol. 128r]. — F. Steffens, *Lateinische Paläographie: 100 Tafeln in Lichtdruck* (Freiburg, 1903–7), pl. 83a [fol. 128r]. — Flower, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, iii, pl. 1 [fol. 9v]. — F. Henry and G. Marsh-Micheli, 'A century of Irish illumination (1070–1170)', *PRIA* 62C (1962), 101–64, at 148–52, and pl. 26–7, 43. — F. Henry, *L'Art irlandais*, 3 vols (Paris, 1963–4), iii, 65–7, and pl. p. 78, no. 10, pp. 86–9, and English edition, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period 1020–1170 AD* (London, 1970), 47–8, 63–4, 68, 96, 120–21.

TEXT OF THE GOSPELS: Kenney, *Sources*, 648, tells us that Bentley used the siglum *W* for the text of Harley 1802. This arcane fact was surely repeated from Frederick Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Text of the New Testament*, 4th ed. (London, 1894), ii, 77, where it appears in his list of Latin manuscripts. Scrivener, however, provides an explanation, *ibid.* 204–210, discussing the work of the famous Richard Bentley (1662–1742) towards a Greek and Latin New Testament, which was never finished; at p. 208 he cites a note by B. F. Westcott in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 17. 14, Bentley's copy of the Maurist Vulgate, *S. Hieronymi opera*, i (Paris, 1693), which identified a dozen Latin manuscripts collated by Bentley and the sigla by which they are cited in his extensive collations. The shelfmark is now Adv. bb. 2. 1, and Bentley's own notes there describe *W* as 'codex 4 Euang. 700 annorum 4to scriptura Hibernica. Biblioth. Harleiana; sed facto subreptus ex Biblioth. Regis Galliarum'. Bentley was for some years keeper of the Royal and Cotton manuscripts and knew Wanley well. One may wonder whether *W* referred to Wanley, albeit Bentley chose not to follow his dating but something nearer to Toland's. Bentley's use of Harley 1802 represents its accessibility more than his appraisal of its critical value or textual interest. — Two centuries later, Hans Glunz observed, 'the original text of the book is typically Irish', *History of the Vulgate in England* [see below], 212. — Theodor Klauser, *Das römische Capitulare Evangeliorum. Texte und Untersuchungen zu seiner ältesten Geschichte*, Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen 28 (Munster, 1935), p. xxxvi, no. 6 [listed as 'mit römischen Perikopennotizen am Rande']. — Bonifatius Fischer, *Die lateinischen Evangelien bis zum 10. Jahrhundert*, Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel 13 (Freiburg, 1988–91), i, 17\* [Hz, latest in a class of twenty-two Irish or British witnesses to the gospel text]. The next most recent witnesses date from the tenth century.

LATIN GLOSS: John Toland, *An Account of an Irish manuscript of the Four Gospels; with a summary of the ancient Irish Christianity* (London, 1718) [written 1709; see above, n. 22], with contextual discussion by A. Harrison, 'John Toland and the discovery of an Irish manuscript in Holland', *Irish University Review* 22 (1992), 33–9. — Flower, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, ii, 429. — M. R. James, *Latin Infancy Gospels* (Cambridge, 1927), 99–100 [further citations from *Liber de infantia*]. — A. Bludau, 'Namen der

Namenlosen in den Evangelien', *Theologie und Glaube. Zeitschrift für den katholischen Klerus* 21 (1929), 273–93, p. 276 [not seen]. — H. H. Glunz, *History of the Vulgate in England from Alcuin to Roger Bacon* (Cambridge, 1933), 211–13, 221, 328–41 (§23) ['a copy of the notes an Irishman had taken in one of the French schools', proposing that the scribal gloss reflected the new learning of the Paris Schools in the 1130s; 'Euangelia iiii ideo sunt', fol. 9r]. — Bernhard Bischoff, 'Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter', *Sacris erudiri* 6 (1954), 189–281 at 274–9 (appendix, 'Die "Man"-Glossen (Manchianus?) des Evangeliars London BM 1802'); repr. in his *Mittelalterliche Studien. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1966–81), ii, 205–273, at 270–73 [dated the Man glosses to the ninth or tenth century]. — J. F. Kelly, 'A catalogue of early medieval Hiberno-Latin biblical commentaries 2', *Traditio* 45 (1989–90), 393–434, at 403–4 [§63]. — Jean Rittmueller, 'The Hiberno-Latin background of the Matthew commentary on Mael-Brigte Ua Maeluanaig', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 1 (1981), 1–8. — Jean Rittmueller, 'The gospel commentary of Mael Brigte Ua Maeluanaig and its Hiberno-Latin background', *Peritia* 2 (1983), 185–214 [argued that the scribal gloss drew largely on Hiberno-Latin scriptural work from the seventh century]. — Jean Rittmueller, 'Postscript to the Gospels of Mael Brigte', *Peritia* 3 (1984), 215–18. — C. D. Wright, 'Hiberno-Latin and Irish-influenced commentaries, florilegia, and homily collections', *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture. A Trial Version* (Binghamton, NY, 1990), 87–123 (§20). — Patrick McGurk, 'An edition of the abbreviated and selective set of Hebrew names found in the Book of Kells', in F. O'Mahony (ed.), *The Book of Kells. Proceedings of a conference* (Aldershot, 1994), 102–132 [fols. 4v–5v, Mt only, cited as Hz; just two out of eleven copies from Ireland date from after AD 800] — Olivier Szerwiniack, 'Des recueils d'interprétations de noms hébreux chez les irlandais et le wisigoth Theodulf', *Scriptorium* 48 (1994), 187–258, at 193, and McGurk and Szerwiniack, *Scriptorium* 50 (1996), 117–22. — Jennifer O'Reilly, 'The Hiberno-Latin tradition of the evangelists and the Gospels of Mael Brigte', *Peritia* 9 (1995), 290–309 ['Euangelia iiii ideo sunt', fol. 9r, with no mention of Glunz's text]. — Jean Rittmueller (ed.), *Liber questionum in euangeliis*, CCSL 108F (Turnhout, 2003) [a source used in the scribal gloss]. — Jean Rittmueller, 'Matt. 10:1–4: the calling of the twelve Apostles: the commentary and glosses of Máel Brigte úa Máeluaanaig (Armagh, 1138) (London, British Library, Harley 1802, f. 25v–26v). Introduction, Edition, Translation', in G. Guldentops, C. Laes, G. Partoens (eds.), *Felici curiositate. Studies in honour of Rita Beyers* (Turnhout, 2017), 55–69.

MANCHANUS: The 'Man' glosses represented citations from an earlier authority in the marginal gloss on this manuscript. Identification of 'Man' lacks secure confirmation and has been swayed by views of the dating of the glosses themselves by comparison with other biblical comment. James Ussher, *Britannicarum ecclesiarum antiquitates* (Dublin, 1639), 969, referred to *uir sanctus et sapiens nomine Manchenus*, adding that Archbishop Richard

Fitz Ralph was said to have written a Life of St Manchan, patron of seven churches of Augustinian canons. James Ware, *De scriptoribus Hiberniae* (Dublin, 1639), 26, noted that Henry FitzSimon had attributed to Manchianus the *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae* that was printed among the works of St Augustine, and Ware identified him with Mainchéne, abbot of Min Droichit, Co. Offaly, who died in *AU* s.a. 652, and whose death was also recorded by Tigernach; Wanley cited this passage with reference to Harley 1802. Toland, *Irish Christianity*, 14, asked, ‘Who is Manchanus? a writer illustrious in this collection, concerning whom, though there may be many of this name, I have my own conjectures’, which he kept to himself. William Nicolson, *Irish Historical Library* (Dublin, 1724), 100, cites Ussher, Ware, and Toland, but adds that Wanley had revealed to him Toland’s conjecture, ‘that Manchanus was a corruption of Monachanus, and that the Man whose praises are in his four Gospels was a Canon Regular of Monaghan’. — Reeves, ‘On an Irish manuscript of the four gospels in the British Museum’, *PRIA* 5 (1850–53), 60. — W. Stokes, ‘The glosses in Harleian MS 1802’, *The Academy* 31 (1887), 345–6 [fol. 49r, Mt 24:20–21], 398 [correction]. — M. Esposito, ‘On the pseudo-Augustinian treatise *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*’, *PRIA* 35C (1919), 189–207, pp. 196–8, 202 [author of *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae* refers to Manchanus]. — M. Esposito, ‘A seventh-century commentary on the Catholic Epistles’, *Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (1919–20), 316–18 [commentator refers to ‘Manchianus’ as teacher]. — Flower, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, ii. 429 [favours St Manchán of Lemanaghan, Co. Offaly, d. 665]. — M. Esposito, ‘Notes on Latin learning and literature in mediaeval Ireland 1’, *Hermathena* 20, no. 45 (1929), 225–60, at 250–51. — Bischoff, ‘Wendepunkte’ (as above) [dated the work of Manchanus to the ninth or tenth centuries]; Aidan Breen s.n. ‘Manchán’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge, 2009), treats both persons under one entry.

INTERLACE INITIALS AND EVANGELIST SYMBOLS: Indexed under Evangelists by W. de G. Birch and H. Jenner, *Early Drawings and Illuminations. An introduction to the Study of Illustrated Manuscripts* (London, 1879), 121. — E. H. Zimmermann, *Vorkarolingische Miniaturen* (Berlin, 1916), 255–6, pl. 215–16 [fols. 86v, 60v, 10r]. — J. A. Herbert, *Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, 1911), 82 [‘especially feeble and ugly’]. — Françoise Henry and Geneviève Marsh-Micheli, ‘A century of Irish illumination (1070–1170)’, *PRIA* 62C (1962), 101–64, at 148–52, and plates 26–7, 43; Françoise Henry, *L’Art irlandais*, 3 vols (Paris, 1963–4), iii, 65–7, and pl. p. 78, no. 10, pp. 86–9, and English edition, *Irish Art in the Romanesque Period 1020–1170 AD* (London, 1970), 47–8, 63–4, 68, 96, 120–21. — J. J. G. Alexander, *Insular Manuscripts 6th to the 9th Century*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 1 (London, 1978), 89–90 (§77). — C. R. Dodwell, *The Pictorial Arts of the West 800–1200* (New Haven, CT, 1993), 92–3, 414 [endnotes].

COLOPHONS, MARGINALIA, AND POEMS IN IRISH: Wanley [as above]. — *Focalóir Goidhilge-Sax-Bhéarla, or An Irish–English Dictionary* (Paris, 1768),

154–5. — O'Connor [as above]. — George Petrie, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Ireland Anterior to the Anglo-Norman Invasion; Comprising an Essay on the Origin and Uses of the Round Towers of Ireland*, *TRIA* 20 (1845), 290–91, 308–312. — The Irish poems and colophons were catalogued by Eugene O'Curry in 1849 (BL MS Add. 43376, fols 34–36). O'Curry may have provided the Irish texts to the scribe Joseph Ó Longáin, who included a copy of them in a manuscript made 1848–50 for John Windele in Cork, RIA MS 24 B 27 (cat. 645), pp. 407–428. — Relying on O'Curry for the Irish texts and translations, William Reeves published the Irish poems and sundry scribal quatrains entered in the margins, 'On an Irish manuscript of the four gospels in the British Museum', *PRIA* 5 (1850–53), 45–67. — W. Stokes, *Irish Glosses. A Medieval Tract on Latin Declension* (Dublin, 1860), 40, 60, 68n, 131. — W. Stokes, 'The glosses in Harleian MS 1802', *The Academy* 31 (1887), 345–6, 398. — W. Stokes, 'The Irish verses, notes, and glosses in Harleian 1802', *RC* 8 (1887), 346–69. The poems are *Aurilius humilis ard* (fol. 5v), *Becca na delba* (fol. 9v), *Eól dam aided Crist na cét* (9v), two quatrains of *Ben romarbsat fir gaba* (fol. 11v), beginning *Coic mile mar incath*. Brian Ó Cuív has edited *Becca na delba acht delb Dé* and *Eól dam aided Crist na cét* as a single poem with double *dúnad* in M. Mac Conmara and E. Ní Thiarnaigh (eds), *Cothú an Dúchais. Aistí in Ómós don Athair Diarmuid Ó Laoghaire* (Dublin, 1997), 136–48. No other copy is known of this poem on the Apostles composed in early Middle Irish. The poet names himself, *anmain húa máelconaire*. Nearest of the family in date is Néide Ua Maíl Chonaire (Flower, *Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum*, ii, 430), whose chief poem is a catalogue of names, tracing the ancestry of Toirdelbach Ua Conchobair (1088–1156), *Eól dam seisir* (NLI G 131) (ed. D. Ó Cróinín, 'Eól dam seisir cloinne Cuinn: the fortunes of a twelfth-century Irish syncretistic poem', in Sarah Sheehan, Joanne Findon and Westley Follett (eds), *Gablánach in Scélaigeacht. Celtic Studies in Honour of Ann Dooley* (Dublin, 2013), 198–219). The common formula *Eól dam* occurs at the transition point in our Ua Maoil Chonaire's poem, moving from the apostles' hair and beards to their martyrdoms.

RICHARD SHARPE

*Faculty of History, Oxford*