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TWO POEMS ATTRIBUTED TO MUIREADHACH ALBANACH Ó DÁLAIGH*
MEIDHBHÍN NÍ ÚRDAIL

INTRODUCTION

Some forty years ago, Professor Brian Ó Cuív published a study on Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh, one of the first poets of the Early Modern Irish period.¹ Part of the discussion referred to four poems, attributed to Ó Dálaigh, which were composed for the Ó Briain family. Reference was made to *Aonar dhuit, a Bhriain Bhanbha*, a poem which mainly describes the exploits of Brian Bórainmhe, but which concludes with contemporary allusions to the Anglo-Norman invasion.² *Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh* is a panegyric addressed to Murchadh na nEach, son of Brian Dall, a descendant of Brian Bórainmhe through his son Donnchadh.³ The content of the latter poem implies that Muireadhach Albanach had returned from exile in search of patronage in Ireland.⁴ The two poems beginning *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh* and *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain*, edited below, praise Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain, king of Thomond (1210–42), and they are ascribed in all the manuscripts to Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh.

Neither poem offers any precise indication as to the date of composition, but they are of interest because they highlight tensions which existed among the Uí Bhriain in the early thirteenth century. It may be inferred from the opening quatrain of *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh* (1c), for example, that the poem was composed before Ó Dálaigh's supposed flight to Scotland. According to events recorded by the Four Masters under the year 1213, Muireadhach Albanach was forced to flee from Domhnall Mór Ó Domhnaill (*ob.* 1241) whose steward he had slain at Lios an Doill, Co. Sligo.⁵ The annalists' colourful description is of an angry Ó Domhnaill attacking Donnchadh Cairbreach for harbouring Muireadhach Albanach and subsequently pursuing the poet onwards to the gate of Limerick, forcing him eastwards to Dublin and eventually to Scotland.⁶

* I am particularly grateful to Professor Damian McManus, Director of the Bardic Poetry Project: Irish and Scottish Initiative, and to Professor Liam Breatnach for reading a draft of this article and making many invaluable suggestions and comments.

¹ Ó Cuív (1961, 56–69). For other accounts of Muireadhach Albanach, see Flower (1947, 85–8) and Murphy (1953, 74–5).

² The poem (51 qq in *ógláchas of deibhidhe*) and English translation are published by Goedheer (1938, 45–59). Much of the narrative is based on *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib*. According to Ó Cuív (1968, 287–8), it is an early example of *ógláchas* in the Modern Irish period. It may be noted here that references to poems in this article are generally to their number in printed editions rather than to pagination.

³ This poem is edited in IBP 24. The descendants of Donnchadh mac Briain down to Murchadh na nEach are given in the *Leabhar Muimhneach*; see Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 354–7). They are also published by O'Grady (1929, 182–3) from TCD MS 1292, ff. 9v–10r, as part of a supplement to *Caitheamh Thoiridhealbhaigh*; cf. *infra* n. 31.

⁴ The poet identifies himself as Muireadhach Albanach (IBP 24.6a) who comes *tar Muir dtaobhsholas dToirrian* 'from over the bright-surfaced Mediterranean' (IBP 24.5ab); cf. *infra* n. 9.

⁵ Both the annalistic account and subsequent exile of Muireadhach Albanach from Ireland are discussed by Ó Cuív (1961); cf. Ó Háinle (2000, 6–11).

⁶ A seventeenth-century Latin version of the Annals of Ulster (AD 1200–AD 1300) records these events under the year 1216; cf. Ó Cuív (1961, 57). This version is not mentioned by Eugene O'Curry, vol. 3

Although somewhat dramatic, this account provides a context for our first poem which begins with a direct request by the poet for protection. Indeed, *leaba* with the sense ‘protection’ is supported by *cádhas* (q. 1b) ‘protection, sanctuary’, thereby highlighting the central grievance of the poem.⁷ Muireadhach Albanach’s request is further reinforced by repetition: it is significant, for example, that *leaba* occurs four times in the opening quatrains of the poem (qq 1–3). This use of repetition strengthens Ó Dálaigh’s appeal and reminds Donnchadh Cairbreach of the right of an exiled poet to protection.⁸ There is also an implication that an attack of some kind has been launched, possibly in the absence of Ó Briain (qq 1–4). Ó Dálaigh’s *leaba chuanna*, the ‘fine bed’ entrusted to Donnchadh Cairbreach’s protection, has been destroyed (q. 2c), thus adding urgency to the poet’s plea not to be sent eastwards out of Ireland (q. 1c). Muireadhach Albanach’s intention in quatrains three and four, then, may be to insist on the mutual responsibility of poet and patron: as Ó Dálaigh is bound by a responsibility to defend his patron, so too must Ó Briain honour his obligation in protecting the poet from harm (q. 3) and ensure that the latter’s dwelling be rebuilt (q. 4).

The ambiguous nature of the poem beginning *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* makes it difficult to decide whether or not the poem was composed during the poet’s exile from Ireland. There is, on the one hand, an allusion by Muireadhach Albanach to a possible pilgrimage together with his fellow poet (qq 5, 8cd), but it is not clear whether this journey has already been completed, or has yet to be undertaken. Ó Dálaigh describes himself and his companion, for example, as *dá fhalmaire* ‘two palmers’ (q. 8c). He has styled himself palmer elsewhere where the term accords with the traditional belief that he travelled as a pilgrim during the 1220s from his Scottish exile to Monte Gargano in Italy and to the Holy Land or to Rome.⁹ On the other hand, the poem may have been composed before Ó Dálaigh’s exile from Ireland. Significant in this regard, for example, is the reference to a *laoidh mhillis mholta* in *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh* (q. 9a), which had originally been intended for one ‘Muircheartach’ (q. 9b). The latter is Muircheartach Fionn Ó Briain (ob. 1241), brother of Donnchadh Cairbreach, who was king of Thomond from 1194 to 1198, and again from *circa* 1203 to 1210.¹⁰ This ‘sweet eulogy’, however, became ‘the poem of Donnchadh’ (q. 9d). It is tempting to suggest that *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* is the eulogy in question, particularly as this

(1873, 282), although he suggested that *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh* ‘may be assigned to the year 1216, or thereabouts, a time when O’Brien, owing to family broils and English interference, was not in the best condition to shelter the fugitive from the vengeance of his pursuer’. Rather than suffer interference from the English, however, Donnchadh Cairbreach remained loyal to the Crown throughout his reign and was awarded privileges and responsibilities appropriate to an important feudal tenant; see Orpen, vol. 4 (1920, 54–9) and Empey (1981, 13–15). I owe the latter reference to Dr Katharine Simms.

⁷ *Infra* note 1ab to *Mo leaba féin dhamh*.

⁸ On the rights of the poet outside of his own *túath*, see Kelly (1988, 46).

⁹ In the poem beginning *Fada in chabair a Cruacain* (Murphy 1953, 74–9), written while Muireadhach Albanach was near Monte Gargano, the poet describes himself as *falmair maith re moladh* ‘a palmer good at praising’ (q. 18a). *Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh* (*supra* n. 3) refers twice to the poet as *falmair* (IBP 24.7a, 24.21d) who ‘comes from over the bright-surfaced Mediterranean’ (*supra* n. 4). In the poem beginning *A Mhuireadhaigh, meil do sgín*, Muireadhach Albanach’s intention to settle *san tír the* (MD II 69.8c) ‘in the hot land’ is interpreted by the editor as a reference to Rome or to the Holy Land.

¹⁰ Accounts of Muircheartach’s succession to power in the annals (Misc. Ir. Ann., AFM s.a. 1194) imply that he was not formally chosen by his tribesmen; cf. Orpen, vol. 2 (1911, 149).

poem conveys a marked shift in the poet's allegiance (qq 12–28) to become an overt encomium in honour of Donnchadh Cairbreach. A certain ambivalence remains, however, and it is equally conceivable that Muireadhach Albanach composed *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* as a pilgrim en route to Scotland.¹¹

In directing his praise at Donnchadh Cairbreach, the poet is mindful, to some extent also, of Muircheartach Fionn Ó Briain. This is of interest in the context of the political climate in Thomond, which was fraught with contention for some decades. On the death of Domhnall Mór in 1194, dynastic rivalry among the Uí Bhriain ensued and no successor to the kingship of Thomond was universally recognised.¹² Muircheartach disposed of his brother, Conchobhar Ruadh, *circa* 1203, but was himself imprisoned by the Crown some years later by order of Donnchadh Cairbreach.¹³ In 1210 King John recognised Donnchadh Cairbreach as king of Thomond by granting him a lordship in return for an annual rent, and he also secured the liberation of Muircheartach.¹⁴ Donnchadh Cairbreach, then, received the favour of the Crown, but his brother, too, persisted in striving to consolidate his position and pursued his efforts at territorial expansion.¹⁵ It is of interest in this connection, that Muircheartach is regarded as king in Dál gCais genealogies in the Books of Lecan and Ballymote.¹⁶ He also precedes Donnchadh Cairbreach in the order of Domhnall Mór's sons in these sources. It would seem that the genealogies suggest an inbuilt prejudice in favour of Muircheartach as elder kinsman, although it is equally likely that they reflect the order of succession, rather than the order of birth.¹⁷ In our poem beginning *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain*, however, the poet chooses Donnchadh Cairbreach because of his seniority (q. 13a): he is 'the eldest son' and 'head of the fair family' (q. 11cd). Ó Dálaigh affirms Donnchadh Cairbreach's main claim to the kingship of Thomond, therefore, by stressing the latter's seniority.

In the light of sibling conflict Muireadhach Albanach would, no doubt, exercise some caution in addressing each Ó Briain. In our poem *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain*, praise of Donnchadh Cairbreach seems, at least at times, to be measured by a number of approving allusions to Muircheartach. Even though other Uí Bhriain members are also cited — Brian, Donnchadh (q. 11a) — the poet, as has been noted already, is quite attentive to Muircheartach. The latter is hailed as a 'good king', 'daylight sun

¹¹ It may be noted also that *Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh* and *Fada in chabair a Cruacain* may have been composed during surreptitious visits by the poet to Ireland (O'Grady Cat., 338; MD II, 225).

¹² *Supra* n. 10.

¹³ Misc. Ir. Ann., AFM s.a. 1202; AI, ALC s.a. 1203. For Muircheartach's imprisonment, see AFM s.a. 1208; cf. ACLon. s.a. 1207.

¹⁴ AI, Misc. Ir. Ann. s.a.

¹⁵ 'Mariadac' king of Limerick is cited in an English Roll under the year 1210 (Orpen, vol. 2, 1911, 150, 254). Considerations were given by the Crown in 1215 to grant Muircheartach four cantreds in Thomond which were subsequently cancelled. In 1228 Muircheartach attempted once again to bid against his brother to have a moiety of Thomond leased to him, but this also proved unsuccessful; see Orpen, vol. 4 (1920, 55); cf. Empey (1981, 24 n. 100).

¹⁶ Of the eight sons of Domhnall Mór Ó Briain only Muircheartach is styled 'rí Mumhan' (Lec. f. 229vb46, BB p. 188a41–2), whereas Donnchadh Cairbreach is mentioned once as king of Thomond (Lec. f. 229vb47–8). Later genealogies in the *Leabhar Muimhneach* uphold this distinction (Ó Donnchadha [1940], 325, 342).

¹⁷ On succession in early medieval Ireland, see Jaski (2000, 113–70, 229–76), for which reference I wish to thank Katharine Simms.

without eclipse' and 'king of Ormond' (q. 7). An apparent difficulty exists for Ó Dálaigh and his companion in choosing one brother (qq 8–9), moreover, and this is further heightened in the poem by the opposition *liom-sa* / *leat-sa* (qq 10–11). This guarded stance begins to shift, however, and Muireadhach Albanach expresses his true loyalty to Donnchadh Cairbreach (qq 12–28). A similar expression of allegiance to Donnchadh Cairbreach also informs *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh* (e.g. qq 9, 10, 16) and this, in turn, may explain Muircheartach's 'aversion' (q. 8ab) towards the poet. That Muircheartach should feature in these poems, then, undoubtedly reflects the contentious nature of the political climate in Thomond in the first half of the thirteenth century, during which Muircheartach continued to wield his authority throughout Donnchadh Cairbreach's reign.¹⁸

TRANSMISSION

Of the poems ascribed to Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh which were composed in honour of members of the Ó Briain family, three of them, i.e. the poem beginning *Aonar dhuit, a Bhriain Bhanbha* and our two poems, have survived in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century manuscripts only. And while the earliest extant copy of *Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh* dates from the fifteenth century,¹⁹ the remaining extant copies of this poem belong also to the post-classical period. Indeed, it is significant that all four poems form a group of consecutive pieces in RIA MS 493 (23 C 18 = C), pp. 71–6, the earliest of the post-classical sources, which was transcribed by Mícheál mac Peadair Ó Longáin (*ob.* 1770).²⁰ A second copy of *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* in the hand of the same scribe forms part of RIA MS 490 (23 N 15 = N), pp. 168–9.²¹ Ó Longáin's transcripts were subsequently copied by his son, Mícheál Óg (*ob.* 1837), in the period *circa* 1800–20.²² Two volumes by the latter scribe contain all four poems attributed to Muireadhach Albanach: RIA MS 253 (F vi 2 = F), pp. 491–3, 506–9, 524–8 and Maynooth MS Murphy 1 (= M), pp. 276–89, while RIA MS 256 (23 G 23 = G), pp. 77–8 and RIA MS 263 (F i 2 = F1), pp. 320–5, contain transcripts of *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* only.²³ Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin received a copy of the latter poem, in fact, in 1798.²⁴ Some years later, in a collection of over three hundred first lines of poems, which Ó Longáin called 'An Corrdhuanair', the section relevant to Thomond

¹⁸ *Supra* n. 15.

¹⁹ i.e. BL MS Add. 19,995, f. 4r; the contents of this volume are described by O'Grady, Cat., 328.

²⁰ The scribe's contribution is neither signed nor dated. For a description of this composite volume and its contents, see RIA Cat., 1411–22. A biographical account of Ó Longáin and his scribal corpus is given by Ó Conchúir (1982, 88–91); cf. Ní Úrdail (2000, 35–43).

²¹ For a description of this volume, see RIA Cat., 1354–70. Mícheál mac Peadair's contribution encompasses the period from 1740 to *circa* 1766.

²² See the biographical account of Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin and an inventory of his manuscripts in Ó Conchúir (1982, 91–133); cf. Ní Úrdail (2000, 43–99).

²³ Descriptions of the above volumes are in RIA Cat., 655–67, Maynooth Cat., 1–7, RIA Cat., 675–87, 760–2, respectively. Goedheer (1938, 45) was not aware of M when editing *Aonar dhuit a Bhriain Bhanbha*.

²⁴ The title of the poem is included in a catalogue of verse received by the scribe from 'R.B. March 1st 1798', RIA MS 489 (23 N 14), p. 277, i.e. Roibeárd Breatnach (*ob.* 1810). The latter scribe acquired manuscripts by Mícheál mac Peadar Ó Longáin which subsequently came into the possession of Mícheál Óg; see Ó Conchúir (1982, 4–5); cf. Ní Úrdail (2000, 42 n. 37, n. 38).

includes the titles of both poems edited below, as well as *Aonar dhuit, a Bhriain Bhanbha* and *Tomhais cia mise, a Mhurchaidh*.²⁵

The transmission, then, of the four poems ascribed to Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh in the Ó Longáin manuscripts underlines the particular importance of post-classical sources for material from earlier periods.²⁶ These sources also point to the length of transmission of compositions by Ó Dálaigh, the earliest manuscript witness of which dates to the fourteenth-century Book of Uí Mhaine (RIA D ii 1).²⁷ This prompts the question of availability and accessibility of earlier manuscripts to scribes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the case of the poems edited below, it cannot be proved with certainty that Muireadhach Albanach composed them, but their medieval date is guaranteed by their being quoted in the bardic grammatical tracts.²⁸ The evidence from his manuscripts indicates that Mícheál mac Peadair Ó Longáin had access to medieval material which was relevant to the Uí Bhriain. According to a colophon added by his son to the contents of ‘Leabhar Breac Mhic Aodhagáin’, for example, Mícheál mac Peadair had the latter book in his possession in 1767.²⁹ Not only do the contents of this ‘speckled book’ correspond to those of the Book of Ballymote, but the manuscript was the exemplar for the Uí Bhriain genealogies which Ó Longáin transcribed in the early 1760s.³⁰ *Leabhar Iris Chloinne Uí Mhaolchonaire* was Mícheál mac Peadair’s authority for a second treatise on Brian Bórainmhe and his descendants down to 1694, three copies of which were written in the year 1759–60.³¹ Interestingly, the description in this material of Donnchadh Cairbreach’s mother, Órlaidh (see *infra* note 5cd), includes quatrain ten of *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh*. Both genealogical accounts comprise part of the Thomond history in the *Leabhar Muimhneach*.³²

These editions are based mainly on C. Punctuation and capital letters are editorial. Length-marks are inserted where they do not occur in the manuscripts, but these scribal omissions may be consulted in the manuscript readings. Length-marks which occur in the manuscripts, but which are omitted in these editions, are also reproduced in the manuscript readings. The following have been changed silently: the preposition aⁿ (‘in’)

²⁵ ‘Do Dháil cCais sonn’, RIA MS 1029 (23 E 15), p. 246. The date 1806 is marked on p. 243i of the manuscript. For ‘An Corrdhuanair’, see Ní Úrdail (2000, 170, 171 n. 2).

²⁶ A recent appraisal of these sources in the case of bardic poetry is given by Ó Macháin (1998, 15–6).

²⁷ *Déana mo theagosg, a Thríonóid*, edited with translation in AíD 70.

²⁸ IGT iii.443 and IGT iii.888–9; see *infra* note 3cd to *Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh* and notes 1a, 28cd to *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain*.

²⁹ The colophon was inserted into RIA MS 491 (23 E 16), p. 332; see Ní Úrdail (2000, 195–7), Ó Conchúir (1982, 242).

³⁰ TCD MS 1281, ff. 98r–104v (*circa* 1762); MS IL 1(e), pp. 36–50m (*circa* 1760); see Ní Úrdail (2000, 140 n. 31, 142 n. 35). For a description of the latter manuscript, see Ó Fiannachta Cat. II, 70–6.

³¹ MS IL 1(b), pp. 1–17 (1759); RIA MS 486 (23 G 22), pp. 57–78, p. 80 (3) (*circa* 1760); TCD MS 1281, ii, ff. 105r–112r (1760). The latter two are edited in Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 332–72). According to TCD MS 1281, ii, f. [108v], Ó Longáin’s exemplar was written by Dáibhidh Ó Bruadair in 1694 (although, the date 1690 is given by Ó Longáin at the beginning of his transcript, f. 105r). Ó Bruadair’s copy forms part of the contents of TCD MS 1292, ff. 4v–13r, and is reproduced as Appendix D in O’Grady (1929, 171–89). The original source entitled *Leabhar Iris Chloinne Uí Mhaolchonaire*, now lost, was apparently compiled in 1611; see Ní Úrdail (2000, 140 n. 30) and Ó Conchúir (1982, 238 n. 50).

³² Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 293–332, 332–72). For quatrain ten of *Mo leaba féin dhamh*, see Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 338); cf. O’Grady (1929, 173).

> iⁿ (13d, 14b, *Mo leaba féin dhamh*, and 2a, 4b, 12d, 25a/b, *Roinneam, a chompáin*); *cc-* > *gc-*; *tt-* > *dt-*; unstressed *-io-* > *-ea-*; unstressed *-ui-* > *-ai-*; *-é-* before broad consonants > *-éa-*; *-e-* before broad consonants > *-ea-*. In the manuscript readings, italics have not been used in the case of the contractions for *ar*, *air*, *cht*, *m*-stroke and *n*-stroke. Superscript vowels (i.e. *r* + vowel) are also silently expanded; the superscript contraction which represents stressed and unstressed (*e*)*ar*, *air*, *u(i)r*, however, is italicised. Finally, the contraction for a vowel + *dh* is also used by the Ó Longáin scribes to represent a vowel in unstressed syllables, e.g. *modh*, *dodh* and *godh*, for *mo*, *do* (preposition, preverb, possessive) and *go*, respectively. The contraction is not restored in the latter cases, but it is italicised elsewhere in the manuscript readings: e.g. copula forms ‘do *budh*’ ‘ní *budh*’, or *io*-stems where a dental plural ending may be intended (cf. *infra* ‘bile’, note 4b to *Roinneam, a chompáin*).

METRE

Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh is an example of *séadna* (8² 7¹) which in *dán díreach* form requires the following: perfect end-rhyme between *b* and *d*; alliteration in each line, alliteration in *d* being between the final two stressed words, and binding alliteration between the final of *a* and the first stressed word of *b*; *aicill* rhyme between the final stressed word of *c* and the penultimate stressed word in *d*, and perfect rhyme between the remaining stressed words in *d* and a word in *c*. It may be noted that there is no alliteration in quatrain eleven between the final of *a* and the first stressed word of *b*, an example of the metrical fault known by the bardic grammarians as *lorga bhriste* (IGT v §54). There is no proper *dúnadh* or closure in the poem. The conclusion as transmitted in the extant sources, however, incites Donnchadh Cairbreach in typical *caithréim*-style to assert his authority outside of Thomond (q. 16). This is reinforced in the concluding quatrains by the use of the metrical ornament known as *breacadh* ‘speckling’: *gléastar* (q. 13), *léigthear* (q. 14ab), *lionaídh*, *lionaídh* (q. 15a-c), the long vowel being repeated in *báinfhianaibh* (q. 15d), and *géabha* (q. 16a-c), the sound of which is echoed in *béara* (q. 16d).

The metre of *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* is *rannaigheacht mhór* (7¹ 7¹): there is alliteration in each line; perfect end-rhyme between *b* and *d*, and consonance between them and *a* and *c*; *aicill* rhyme between the final stressed word in *c* and a stressed word in *d*; the remaining stressed words in *d* (except the final word) rhyme perfectly with a word in *c*. Internal rhyme in the first couplet may be of a looser kind as, for example, in the case of our poem where the rhymes in the first couplet of the following are not perfect: *laoidh* : *láimh* (q. 3), *Donnchadh* : *onchoin* (q. 6), *Donnchadh* : *cosnaimh* (q. 12), *Briain* : *Cian* (q. 26). It may also be noted that *bhíos* (q. 20b) is the only example of a stressed word at the beginning of *b* which does not rhyme with a word in *a*. The poem ends with a syllable to echo that with which it began in accordance with the rules of *dúnadh*.³³

I

³³ According to the Middle Irish classification of closure, the *dúnadh* in this poem is an example of *comindsma*, i.e. the ‘riveting together’ of the first consonant and vowel of the first syllable of the poem; see Murphy (1961, 44).

1. Mo leaba féin dhamh, a Dhonnchaidh,
dlighim cádhas ód chúl tais;
ní léigir soir inn a hÉirinn
re linn an ghloin chéibhfhinn chais.
2. Do fhágbhas gat earla lúbach
leaba chuanna, [a] chuaille mhaoil,
do fríoth soin 'na bladhaibh beaga,
gad mhalaigh ghloin sheada shaoir.
3. Milleadh do leabtha a fhlaith Chaisil
cumaoín damh, da ndeachtá ar cuairt;
olc do haingheadh lat mo leaba,
a shlat bhairrgheal sheada shuairc.
4. Slat san slait, cuaille san gcuaille,
cuingim ort a abhra mall,
fear dá sgrios is fear dá bhfighe,
ar slíos ngeal do thighe tall.
5. Suairc h'athair, a earla dualach,
Domhnall Ó Briain bas mar aol;
suairc do bhainleath, a bharr chleachtach,
an Laighneach mhall shearcach shaor.
6. Dealbh h'athar ort is do mháthar,
mala dhubh is dath dod bhróig,
folt 'na dhruimnibh is 'na dhualaibh
ort a Mhuimhnigh uallaigh óig.
7. A Mhuimhnigh Laighnigh í Lorcáin,
a fhlaith Caisil as chlaon fuilt,
a fhir an chúil dhruimnigh dhrongaigh,
ó Shúir shuirghigh longaigh Luirc.
8. Diomdhach Muircheartach mac Domhnaill,
díom an tan-sa tarla a mhóid;
measa liom fa dheich a Dhonnchaidh,
bheith dom chionn don onchoin óig.
9. Do dhealbhas laoidh mhilis mholta
do Mhuircheartach — maith an ní;
dar leam, a ghille chaoimh chonchair,
do rinne laoidh Dhonnchaidh dhí.
10. Ní heol damh duine do mholadh

acht mac Órlaidhe an fhuilt chlaoin;
ní heol damh rann acht rann Dhonnchaidh,
a bharr cam mar chorrthair chaoimh.

11. Cuilt ar chuilt do shíoda fhairsing
ar shlios bhruidhne fad bharr thais;
cearcaill do chluimh dhruimnigh dhrongaigh
fad shúil suirghigh nglonnaigh nglais.
12. Ingne corcra ar chliathaibh tiompán,
trillse buidhe ós bhleidhibh óir,
coin ar bháiniallaibh ad bhruidhnibh,
a Gháilianaigh Mhuimhnigh mhóir.
13. Gléastar díbh bhur ndeimhse geala,
gléastar eich go dathta díbh,
gléastar stéad go héasga agaibh,
gléastar téad i madain mhín.
14. Léigthear agaibh eich re laoidhibh,
léigthear coin i gcomhdháil broc,
seinntear crotha áille a hiathaibh,
sgotha sáimhe ar chliathaibh crot.
15. Líonaidh cnoc do chonaibh luatha,
líonaidh magh do mhacaibh stéad,
líonaidh Gáilianaigh a nglaca
do bháinfhianaibh data déad.
16. Géabha Luimneach do leith Ghaoidheal,
géabha Áine, a chruth mar chrú;
Teamhair Mhidhe ad ghaisde géabha,
laisgfe a dtighe, béara bú.

II

1. Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain,
dá roinneam nárab roinn tnúidh;
roinneam chloinn n-álainn mbinn mBriain
ó Chliaigh fhinn go hÁrainn úir.
2. Teagam i Mumhain Mheic Con
gus an gcuraidh ós Creit Treabh,
go sluagh Sionna na slíos nglan
d'fhios a mban 'sa ngiolla ngeal.

3. Déana-sa leat gach re laoidh
is ná reac acht láimh do láimh;
roinn riom an Mhumhain go mín
ó bhrughaidh go rígh bhfionn bhFáil.
4. Roinnfead-sa cineadh Bhriain bhinn,
i ndiaidh na mbileadh do bheinn;
béarad mo rogha arna roinn,
don chloinn ghléabhog shona sheing.
5. Cuiream cor dínn ar ar ndeis
re ndol don tír 'na tír thais;
tógbham don droing chaoimh ar gerois
is laoidh re a cois do Chloinn Chais.
6. Léig damh-sa Donnchadh Ó Briain,
mo chrann-sa ar an onchoin áigh;
ní roinn chabharthaigh as chóir
ar chloinn mhóir thabharthaigh Tháil.
7. Beir-se Muircheartach, maith rí,
agas caith mar do chaith mé;
rí Urmhumhan do iar gnaoi,
grian laoi gan urdhubhadh é.
8. Beacht aislinge an duine dhíbh,
an cuire as chaisbhinne ó Chliaigh;
dá fhalmaire ag roinn a réir
um chloinn séimh mbarrbhuidhe mBriain.
9. Sinne compán do cheas ann
— a meas do budh meas dá mhionn —
ag moladh a gcorp saor seang,
a gceann gcaomh is a bhfolt bhfionn.
10. Liom-sa Donnchadh Cairbreach caomh,
gíodh airgtheach ní hairgtheach cliar;
leat-sa Muircheartach, mionn súl,
go gcúl ndruimchleachtach bhfionn bhfiar.
11. Leat-sa Brian is Donnchadh donn,
na ngormlann is na srian sliom;
an mac is sine is sé is leam,
an té is ceann don fhine fhionn.

12. Liom-sa Donnchadh Cairbreach caomh,
an t-airgtheach cosnaimh um Chliaigh;
eangnamh Conaill do ling léim
i gcolainn réidh mbinn í Bhriain.
13. Léig ar shine Donnchadh dúnn,
conchar a chridhe mun gceol,
an rí — ní ba haghadh uadh —
do-ní an buar anadh 'gan fheor.
14. Leanfad-sa an geal suirgheach seang,
an Muimhneach nachar mhear lionn;
rí Teamhra na ndabhach ndonn,
earla trom na bhfalach bhfionn.
15. Is toircheas bronn saoire súd,
caoimhe a bhonn agus a bhróg;
mac Órlaidhe a hInnsi Gréag,
trillsi géag n-órbhuidhe n-óg.
16. Donnchadh Mumhan, mala sheang,
mo chara 's as cumann liom;
Donnchadh Cairbreach ciabh na ngleann,
ní hairgneach ceall an fial fionn.
17. Ní mar gach mac mac Í Bhriain,
ní mar gach mbrat a bhrat sróil;
ní mar gach slí slí í Chéin,
ní mar gach n-éill a chríoch chróigh.
18. Ní mar gach ngríbh an ghríobh sheang,
ní mar gach bhfíon an fíon fionn;
ní mar bhiolar an criomh corr,
ní hiobhar donn an fíodh fionn.
19. Ní mar ghnúis Donnchaidh gach dúil,
ní mar gach gcorrthair dá chéibh;
ní mar gach mboin don bhoin laoiigh,
ní mar gach gcaoir ghloin don ghréin.
20. Ní mar gach ndéis don déis túir
bhíos eidir Chéis agus Chliaigh;
ní mar néimh cnámha an eadh óir,
cóir más eadh brágha í Bhriain.
21. Ní mar gach ngiolla an geal seang,

giolla na bhfleadh is na bhfonn;
ní mar ubhla oile ann
barr na ndoire gcumhra gcorr.

22. Is é Donnchadh, an ghrian gheal,
sorthan na gcliar is na gcon;
barr folláin úr ar an ar,
mongáir na mban, cúl na gcor.
23. Donnchadh Ó Briain, bruinne seang,
a bhuille biaidh i ngach Gall;
a chneas mar thuile na dtonn,
mar mheas na gcoll mbuidhe a bharr.
24. Is áille a fholt iná an t-ór,
is báine a chorp iná clúmh;
mian liom muine camán caomh,
ár nduine saor fallán úr.
25. Sguiridh i mbruidhin gcaoimh gcuirr
agas cuiridh i laoidh leinn,
go sloinninn go bíthe binn
an gcoinnill bhfinn síthe seing.
26. Dála Briain Luimnigh do lia,
ua do Chian 's do chuimhnigh dhó,
éasga comhlán an chraobh nua,
ua do Mhaol bhonnabhán na mBó.
27. Mac ríoghna Gáilian mo ghrádh,
go n-íorna cláirfhiar 'na chúl;
cóir do mhac Murchadha mhór,
ór ré brat ndrumthana n-úr.
28. Giolla seang ó Áine é,
a gháire do mheall gach mnaoi;
biaidh fad ghroigh Teamhair Dá Thí,
mar do bhí ag Coin reabhaigh Raoi.

MANSUCRIPT READINGS

I

Heading Muireadhach Alabanach *ceadna* .cctt. (C) Muireadhach Albanach *céadna* .cct. (F) An fear *céadna* cct (M)

1a. *féin* dom (F) dam (M) a dhonncha (C) a dhonnchaidh (F, M) **b.** dlíghim (C, F, M) ad (C) cas (C, F, M) **c.** leagair (C) léagair (M) sinn (F) **d.** re (*scored out* M) linn (F) chéibhfhinn tais (F) cheibhfhinn thais (M) thais (C)

2a. ga téarla (C) ga téarladh (F, M) **b.** chuan (F) cuaille (C, F) mháoil (F) **c.** do frioth na bhladhuibh (M) **d.** mholaigh (C, F) mhalaigh (M) ghloin (F) shéada (C) shéada (F) sheada (M) sháoir (F).

3a. Milleadh (C, M) Mille (F) leaptadh (M) fhlaith (F, M) **b.** comaóin (F) 2m (F, *m stroke lenited* C, *unlenited* M) dá (F) ndeacta (C) ndeacha (F) air (F, M) cuaird (C, F, M) **c.** haingheadh (C, M) haithnnidh leat (F) leabadh (M) **d.** bhairgheal (C) bhárgheal (F) bháirgheal (M) bairrgeal (IGT iii.443) seáda (C) shéada (F) shéada (M) suarc (F)

4a. chuaille (M) **b.** abhra (M) mhall (C, F, M) **c.** fear 2 (*with length mark on latter* M) gá (C) bhfighe (C, F) fear (F, M) fighe (M) **d.** air shlios geal (C) air shlios geal (F, M) thíghe (C, F) thall (F, M)

5a. Suarc (C, F) haithir (C, F, M) éarla (F) éarladh (M) dhualach (F) **b.** Dómhnall (F, M) Briain (F) bos (F, M) mar (F, M) aól (C, F) **c.** suarc (F) bháinleath (C, F, M) bhairr (C) abhár chleachtach (F) bhárchleachtach (M) **d.** ár (M) Láighneach (C) mallshearcach (C) mallshearcach (M) shaor (C) saór (F) shaór (M)

6a. mhathar (F) **b.** as (C) dod (F) **c.** dhruiminibh (C) folt druimnibh (M) is na dualuibh (M) **d.** mhuímhnicc (C, F) dhuailligh (C) dhualaigh (F) dhuaillaigh (M)

7a. mhuimnicc laíghnicc (C) mhuímhnicc laghnúicc (F) mhúimhnig laghnúicc (M) **b.** fhlaith (F, M) chaisil (F) is (F, M) claon (C, M) claón (F) **c.** an chúil druimnicc dhrongaicc (C) an chúil druimnicc (F, M) drongaicc (F, M) **d.** a shúil shuirghigh (C) a shúil shuirge (F, M) longa (C, F) loinge (M)

8a. muirchiortach (C) Muircheartach (F) Muircheartach (M) mac (F, M) Dómhnuill (F, M) **b.** diom (F) tanso (C, M) tamso (F) tárrla (C) tárladh (F, M) **c.** fá (C, M) dheith (C, M) a dhonnchaidh (C, F) a Dhonnchaidh (M) **d.** cheann (C) dom cheann (F, M) oinchoinn (C)

9a. laoi (F, M) **b.** Muirchiortach (C) Mhuircheartach (F) Mhuircheartach (M) nídh (C, F, M) **c.** dair (F, M) ghiolla (F) chaoin chonchair (M) **d.** rinneadh (F) laoi (F) laoi (M) donnchaidh (C) Dhonnchaidh (F) dhonnchaidh (M)

10a. héol (F, M) 2m (M) mholadh (C, M) mhola (F) **b.** mac (F, M) orlaidhe (C) órluighe (F) órlaidhe (M) **c.** héol (F) 2m (F, M) acht rann (F, M) donnchaidh (C) dhonnchaidh (F, M) **d.** bhár (F) bhárr (M) cáim (C) cham (F, M) mar (C, F, M) chorthar (C, M) chorcáir (F)

11a. air (C, F, M) chuile (M) shíoda fhairsing sagsan (C) shíod2 fhairsiong (M) **b.** air (C, F, M) shlios (F) bruighne (C) bruighne (F, M) fád (C, F, M) bhár (F, M) tais (C, F, M) **c.** chlúmh (C, F, M) ndruimnigh ndrongaigh (C) ndruimnicc ndronguicc (F) ndruimneach ndrongach (M) **d.** fá (C, F, M) shuirghe (M) shuirghigh nglonadhuigh (C) shuige ngluinigh (F)

12a. ingnibh (F) corchra (M) corcradh (F) air (F, M) chliaithibh (M) **b.** treillse bhuídhe (C) treidhillse bhaoi (F) treillsi bhuídhe (M) bleidhibh (C, M) bléidhibh (F) **c.** air (C, F, M) bhainiallaibh (C) bruignibh (C) bhruighnibh (F) bhruighnibh (M) **d.** a ghaillianaicc (C) a ghaillianaicc (F, M) a mhuimnicc (C) a Mhuimhnigh (F) a Mhuimhnice (M)

13a. Gléastar (M) bhúr (C, F, M) ndeimhse (C) ndéimhse (F) ndeimhsi gealadh (M) **b.** gléastar (F, M) dathtá (C) ndathtá (F) ndathta (M) dhíbh (M) **c.** gléastar (F, M) sdéid (C) stéid (F) stéad (M) **d.** gléastar (M) téad (F, M) maidin (F, M)

14a. Léigtheair (F, M) ré (C) laoidhibh (F) haoídh (M) **b.** léigtheair (F, M) ccómhdháil (C, F, M) **c.** seinntear (F, M) crota (C, M) **d.** air (F, M) chliathaibh (M)

15a. Lionúidh (F) lionadh (M) **b.** líonaid (C) líonuidh (F) líonuid (M) mágh (F, M) mhacaibh (C) mhacuibh (F, M) sdéd (C) stéad (F, M) **c.** líonaidh (C) lionúidh (F) líonuid (M) gaillianaigh (C, M) gailliánaigh (F) **d.** bháinfhianaibh (C) bháinfhiana (F) bháinfhiana (M) dathta (C, M) déad (F)

16a. geabha (C) geabhaidh (F) geabhaidh (M) leith (F, M) gaoidhil (C, M) gaoidhiol (F) **b.** gebha (C) geabhaidh (F, M) aine (C, F, M) chruith (F, M) mar (F, M) **c.** Teabhair (F) Teamair (M) míde (C, F, M) gebha (C) geabhaidh (F) omitted (M) **d.** ttighi (C) ttightibh (F) ttigh (M) beara (C, F) beara (M)

II

Heading An Muireadhach Alabanach *céadna* cctt (C) Muireadhach Albanach (F) Muireadhach Albanach cct (F1) Muireadhach Alabanch cct (G) Muireadhach Albanach cct (M) Muireadhach Alabanach cctt (N)

1a. Rainneam (IGT iii.888) cloinn (G, M, N, IGT iii.888) clann (F) cloinn (F1) bhriain (C, F, F1, M) briain (G, N) **b.** roiniom narab (N) tnúith (F, F1, G, M, N) **c.** roiniom (N) clann (C, F, N) cloinn (F1, G, M) aluinn (G) mbínn mbriain (F) bhínn bhriain (M) **d.** chliath (C, F, F1, G, M, N) Fhíonn (F, F1) Fhíon (G) Fhíonn (N) Fhínn (M) náruinn ur (N) úr (M)

2a. Tagam (F, F1, G, N) múmhain (C, G) Múmhain (F1) Múmhuin (F) Mumhain (M) mumain (N) mhic (F) Mhic (F1) meic (C, N) mheic (G, M) **b.** gus (C, F1, M, N) na curaidh (C) na curradha (F) na curaidhe (F1) na curadha (G) an curaidh (M) curudha (N) os (C, N) treibh (N) **c.** slógh (F, F1, G, N) sluagh (M) nglan (M) **d.** dfios (C, F, F1, G, M, N) 'sa (C, F1) ngiolladh (F, F1, G, M, N)

3a. Déansa (C) Deansa (F) Déansa (F1, G, M) Deansa (N) leath (C) leath (M) leat (G, N) gac le (N) gach (F, F1, G, M) laoi (F, F1, G, N) **b.** reic (C, F, F1, G, M, N) lámh (C, M) lámh am lámh (F, F1, N) lámh am lámh (G) **c.** liom (F1, G, N) lióm (F) an mhúmhuin go minn (C) an Mhúmhuin go míde (G) an Mhúmhuin go Mídhe (F) an mhúmhuin go Mídhe (F1) an mhúmhuin go mín (M) an mhúmhuin go míde (N) **d.** ó brughaidh (C) ó Ó Briain (F) o Bhrian (F1) ó Bhrian (G) ó brughaid (C) ó brugh (N) go ríge (G) bhíonn (F) bhínn (M)

4a. Roinnfeadsa (C, F, F1, G, M, N) cinne (C, F, F1, G, M, N) Briain (N) Bhriain (G) bhineadh (C) Bhínn (F, G) bhínn (M) **b.** ndiaigh na mbileadh (C) ndhiadh na bille (F, F1, G, N) ndhiadh na mbile (M) bheín (F1, G, N) **c.** bearad (C) bhearsa (F) bhéarsa (F1) bhéarsa (G) bearad (M) bhéarsadh (N) morógha (N) air na (C, G, F, F1, N) air an (M) **d.** chloinn (G) ghlébhog sonna seing (C) ghléabhog so sheing (F) ghlébhogsi a sheing (F1) ghléabhogso a sheing (G) ghle bhog sonna seing (M) ghléabhogso a sheing (N)

5a. cóir (F, F1, G, N) dín (F, F1, G) dinn (C, N) air ár (C, M) air an (F, F1, G, N) ndéis (F, G, N) **b.** ndul (F1, M) don (G) ná (N) thír (F) dháimh (F) daimh (F1, G) dháimh (N) tais (M) **c.** togham (F, F1) tógam (G, N) don (G) druing (M) chaómh (F) chaomh (G, M) caomh (F1, N) ar ccros (F, F1, G, N) air chrois (M) **d.** laoi (F, F1, G, N) ré (N) chois (C, F, F1, G, M, N) chlainn (F1) chloinn (F, G, M, vertical N)

6a. Leig (F, G, M) leig (F1) dómhsa (F, N) domhsa (G) dámhsa (F1, M) donnchadh (C, F, F1, G, M) donchadh (N) Briain (G, N) **b.** chrannso (C) chrannsa (G) chrannso (M) air on choin (C) air an onnchoin (F) air an onchon (F1) air an onnchon (G) air an coin (M) air an onn choin (N) áig (F, F1, G, N) **c.** cabhartha (C, F, F1) chabhartaigh (G, M) cábhartha (N) is (F, F1, G, M) cóir (C, F1) coir (F, G, M, N) **d.** air (C, M) mhór (C, M) thabharthach (C, superscript ch M) air chloinn thabharthuig tígh (F) air chlainn tabhartha (F1) air chloinn thabhartaigh (G) thabhartha (N) táil (F1, M)

7a. Muircheartach (F, F1, M) muirciortach (G, N) maithrígh (F1, G, N) mar rígh (F) **b.** 7 (F, F1, G, M, N) mar (F, F1, G, M, N) **c.** Rígh (F1) rígh (F, G, M, N) urmhumhan (C) úrmhumhan (F) úrmhumhan (F1) úrmhumhan (M) úrmhuman (N) ghnaoi (N) **d.** grian laoi (F1) gan (F, F1, G, M, N) urdhúbhadh (C) úrdhubha (F) úrdhúbhadh (G) urdhubha (M) urdhúbhad (N) dhé (F1, G) dhe (N)

8a. aislingi (C) aislingthe (F, F1, N) aislingte (G) duine (G, M, N) díbh (C) **b.** chuire (C) cuireadh (F1) caisbinne (C) caisbinn é (F, F1) cáisbinn é (G) caisbinn é (N) is caisbinne (M) ó chliadh (C) ó chliath (F, N) ó Chliath (F1, G) a cliath (M) **c.** da (F1, G) fthalmare (F) roinn (F1) aréir (C, F, F1, G, M, N) **d.** chlann (C) chloinn (G) chloinn (M) chloinn neill [erased] shéim (N) shéimh (C, F, F1, M) sheimh (G) mbarrbhuidhi (C) mbar mbaoi (F) mbár mbaoi (F1) mbarr mbaoi (G, N) bhárbhuidhe (M) mbriain (F) bhriain (M) mbrain (vertical N)

9a. Sin a chompáin (F) Sine chompáin (F1, G) Sine chompan (N) do cheasainn (F1, G) do chesainn (N) do cheas inn (F) **b.** amas (C, F, F1, G, M, N) do ba (C) do budh (F, F1, G, M, N) mionn (C) measda mionn (F) meas2 mionn (F1, G, M, N) liom mionn (*first word erased*) **c.** moladh (F1, M, N) mola (C, F, G) a ccorpso (N) **d.** a cceann (F, F1, G, M) caomh (C, M) cáomh (G) sa (F, F1) bhfionn (G) bhfionn (M)

10a. Leamsa (C, M) Liómsa (G, N) donnchadh (C, G, M) Donnchadh (F, F1) donchadh (N) cairbreach (F1) cáomh (F) **b.** cé hargtheach (F) ce hairgtheach (F1) cé hairgtheach (G) gé airgtheach (M) ce hairigtheach (N) ní airgtheach (F) ní airgtheach (F1) ní airigtheach (G, N) ní hairgtheach (M) **c.** Muircheartach (F, M) Muircheartach (F1) muirceartach (G) muirchiortach (N) **d.** go ccúltruim bhfa2 (F) druimchleachtach (F1) ccúldruim cleachtacha (G, N) ndruimchleachtach (M) bhfionn (F)

11a. Brian (F, F1) domhnall (C, M) Donnchadh (F, F1) donnchadh (G) donchadh (N) **b.** sna (F1) sriann (F) sliom (C) slióm (F1) slím (M) **c.** mac (F, F1, G, M) sinne (C, G, N) asé (C, F, F1, M) isé (G, N) as (C) liom (F, F1, G, N) **d.** ceann (F, F1, G, M, N) fhinne (C, F, F1, G, M, N) fhíonn (M)

12a. Leamsa (C, M) cáomh (F, G) donnchadh (C, M, G) Donnchadh (F, F1) donchadh (N) cairbreach (F1) **b.** tairgthach (C) targtheach (F) tairgtheach (F1, G) tairgtheach (M) tairigtheach (N) chosnas (C) chosnas (M) cosnaim (N) uim chliath (F, F1, G) a (M) chliaidh (C, M) chliath (N) **c.** eangnam (C, M) eagnuimh (F) eagnamh (F1) eagnam (G, N) connuill (C) Conuill (F, F1, G, M, N) líng (F, M) leim (C, F, F1, N) **d.** ccoluin (F1) ccolluinn (G, N) réig (F, G, M) réigh (F1, N) mbínn (F, M)

13a. leíg (F, G) Leig (F1, M) air (M) sine (F1) ár sine (F, G, N) Donnchadh (C, F) Donchadh (F1, N) Dhonnchaidh (G, M) dhuinn (C) duinn (F, F1, G, N) dhuínn (M) **b.** conchair (C, M) concair (F, F1, G, N) chridhe (C) chróidhe (F) chroíde (F1, G, N) ccéol (F, F1, G, M) **c.** rígh (F, F1, G) rígh (N) ní budh (F, F1, M) ní badh (G, N) haghadh (C) aigheadh (F, F1, G) haigheadh (M, N) uaidh (F, F1, M) uaig (G, N) **d.** do ghnídh (F, F1, G, M) do ghnidh (N) an buair (C, F, G, N) an bhuaire (M) ana (C, F, F1, G, N) ána (M) gan (C) gan fheór (F1, G, M) gan fhéor (F) gan fheorr (N)

14a. suirgeach (C) suirgheach (F1) suirioghach (N, *superscript* ch G) suirgheach saor (F) **b.** muímhneach (F, F1, G) muimhneach (M) nochair (F) nochar (F1, G, N) mear (C, G, N) mear (F, F1, M) líonn (M) **c.** rígh (F, G) Rígh (F1) teámhra (C) teamhrach (F, F1, M) teamurach (G, N) **d.** eárla (F, G, N) throm na bhfolach (F1) bhfionn (G)

15a. As (C) An (F, F1, G, N) broinne (C, M) broine (C) broinn (F, F1, G, N) saoire (G) shúd (C) suidh (F, F1, G, N) sút (M) **b.** caoimhe (F, G) 7 (C, F, F1, G, M, N) **c.** mac (F, F1, M) orlaide (C, M) órlaidh é ó (F, F1, G, N) innse gréag (F) innse gréig (F1, G) innse gréig (N) grég (C, M) **d.** trillsi (M) treillse (F, G, N) treillsi (F1) gég (C) geag nóg bhaoi (M) nórbhúidhe (C, F, F1, G, N)

16a. Donnchadh múmhan (C) Donnchadh muímhneach (F, F1, G) Donnchadh mumhan (M) Donchadh muimhneach (N) maladh (M) malla sheang (N) mala seang (F1) **b.** charadh (F, G, N) is (G, F, F1) sis (M) as (N) cumhan liom (C) cumtha liom (F, G, N) cumhthach (F1) cumhan liom (M) **c.** donnchadh (C, F, F1, G, M) donchadh (N) ngleann (F, F1, G, M) **d.** hargneach (F) hairgneach (M) fionn (F1, M, N)

17a. mar mhac oile mór mhac bhriain (F) mar mhac oile mac bhriain (F1) mar mhac oile mór mhac bhriain (G) mar mhac oile mór mhac briain (N) mar gach mac (M) **b.** mar (F, F1, G, M, N) gach (F, F1, G, M) gach (*superscript* N) brat (F, F1, G, M, N) gach neill [*erased*] mbrat (C) sróill (F, F1, M) **c.** mar gach (F, F1, G, M) uí (F, F1, G, N) **d.** mar (F, F1, G, M, N) gach (G, M) neill (C, N) néill (F, F1, G) néal (M) crógh (F1, G, N) cróigh (M) cróig (F)

18a. mar gach (F, F1, G, M) gríobh (C, M) ngríb (F, G, N) **b.** mar (F, F1, G, M, N) gach bhfionn (C) gach fíon (F, F1) gach fionn (G) gach fion (M) gach fionn (N) an fionn fionn (C, G, N) an fíon (F) fionn (M) **c.** mar (F, F1, G, M) bhiorar (F, F1, G, N) cniomh (F, F1)

cniom (G, N) an chreamh (M) coirre (C) cóir (F, G, N) chorr (M) **d.** fíodh (F1, G, N) fíonn (F, M)

19a. mar (F, F1, G, M) donnchaidh (C) Dhonnchaidh gach (F, F1, M) dhonnchaidh (G) donchaidh (N) **b.** *this line is the last line, while d is the second line of the quatrain* (C) mar gach (M) corthair (C, M,) corcair (N) mar gach ciabh (F, F1) dá (F1, M) mar gach dá chéibh (G) **c.** mar gach (F, F1, G, M) don (G) boin (F, F1, G, N) laoidh (C, M) laoi (F, F1, G, N) **d.** mar ghach (C) mar gach (F, F1, G, M) caoir (F, G) caoir ghloin (F1) caoirghloin (M) chaoirghloin (N) don (F, F1, G, M)

20a. mar gach (F, F1, G) déas (F1) tuir (C) tuir (M) an déas úr (F, F1) an déas úir (G) an déas úir (N) **b.** bhiós (F1, M) idir (F, F1) eidir (G, N) fidir (M) chéibh (M) γ (C, F, F1, M, N) chliaidh (C) chliath (F, G, N) chliath (F1) chiabh (M) **c.** mar (M) neimh cnámha an eigh oir (C, M) **d.** masa eadh (C, M) bhriain (M)

21a. mar gach (F, F1, G, M) ngiolladh (C) giolladh (M) giolladh an giolla seang (F, G) giolla an giolladh seang (F1) giolladh an giolladh seang (N) **b.** giolladh (C, F, F1, G, M, N) bhfleadh (F, F1, G, M, N) bhfial (F1, G, N) γ na bhfial (F) bfonn (M) **c.** mar (F, F1, G, M) úbhalla oile (F) abhalladh oile (F1) abhalladh oile (G, N) úbhalla oile (M) **d.** bárr (F, G) bár (F1, M) ndaire ccabhra (C, M) déise ccabhradh cciúin (F, F1) déise ccabhradh cciúin (G, N)

22a. Asé (C, M) asé (F, F1, G, M, N) donnchadh (C, F, F1, G, M) donchadh (N) **b.** sorthain (C, F, F1, G, N) sorthan (M) sna (F1) γ na (M) na cciúl (F, F1, G) na cceol (N) **c.** bárr (F1, G) bár (M) fulláin (C, F, F1, G, M, N) air nár (C, F, F1, G, M, N) **d.** mongár (C, M) mongán na mbrian geal (F, F1, G, N) na ccorr (C, F, F1, M) na ccór (G, N)

23a. Donnchadh (C, F, F1, G, M) Donchadh (N) Briain (F1, G, M, N) bruighne (F, F1, G) bruighne (N) **b.** ingach (C) ann gach (F, F1, G, M) ann gach (N) **c.** mar (C, F, F1, G, M, N) thuille (C, G, N) **d.** mar (C, F, F1, G, M) mbuidhe á (C) mbuidhe (M) mbaoi mbuidh (F) mbaoi mbárr (F1) mbaoi mbarr (G, N) bhárr (M)

24a. As (C) aile (N) ná an (F, G, M, N) nán (F1) an tóran (C) **b.** as (C) chneas (G, N, F, F1) chorp (M) nán (G, N, F, F1) nán (F, M) chúbhar (F) chúmhar (M) **c.** lióm (C) cumán (C) cumán (M) cáomh (M) **d.** nduine (M) falláin (C) fulláin (M)

25a. Sguiridh (C) mbrúighin (C) mbrúighin (M) léinn (C, M) **b.** γ (M) cuiridh (C) **c.** sloininn (C) sloiniom (M) bithe (C) bínn (M) **d.** an choinnioll (C, M) bhfinn (M) sithe sheing (C) séing (M)

26a. Ila dó bhriain (C) Dó Briain luimnígh (M) **b.** isdo chuimnigh (C) **c.** chráobh (M) cómhlán (M) **d.** bhonn bhán (C) bhonn bhan (M)

27a. Mac (M) riogna (C, M) gaillian (C, M) **b.** go niorla cláir fhiar (C) go niorla clar fiar (M) **c.** coir (C) mhac (M) murchaidh mhoir (C) Murchaidh mhoir (M) **d.** ndruimthana (C) ndruimthana (M) ndonn (C) ndunn (M)

28. vertical C **28a.** giolladh (C, M) Aíne (M) **b.** gáire (M) domheall gach m9 (C) gach (M) **c.** Biaid fad groigh (IGT iii.889) fá aghroidh (C) fa ghroidh (M) teamuir (C, M) 2 thí (C) 2íthi (M) **d.** mar (C, M) coin reabha (C, M)

TRANSLATIONS

I

1. My own protection [give] to me, o Donnchadh,
I am entitled to sanctuary from you;
I should not be allowed eastwards out of Ireland
during the lifetime of the bright, fair-haired, curly-headed one.
2. To your curly lock of hair,

to your pure, slender, noble brow,
I entrusted a fine bed, o youthful scion:
that was found in little pieces.

3. The destruction of your bed, o prince of Caiseal,
is my responsibility, if you were to go on a journey;
my bed was defended badly by you,
o fair-haired, slender, noble scion.
4. I demand of you, o stately-browed one,
[that] rod into rod, pole into pole [be placed]
along the fair side of your house yonder,
one man scraping them [clean] and another twisting them together.
5. Pleasant your father, o curly-haired one,
Domhnall Ó Briain, a hand white as lime;
pleasant your female side, o wavy-haired one,
the dignified, loving, noble Leinsterwoman.
6. Like your father and mother in appearance,
a black brow and an embroidered shoe,
you have wavy, plaited hair,
o proud, young Munsterman.
7. O Leinster-Munsterman, descendant of Lorcán,
o prince of Caiseal whose locks are flowing,
o hero of the wavy, thick head of hair,
from the pleasant ship-laden Suir of Lorc.
8. Muirheartach mac Domhnaill is displeased with me,
his aversion is now aroused;
I consider it ten times worse, o Donnchadh,
for the young warrior to be [displeased] because of me.
9. I composed a sweet eulogy
for Muirheartach — a good deed;
I think, o gentle, hound-loving lad,
it became the poem of Donnchadh.
10. I do not know anyone to praise
except the son of Órlaidh of the flowing hair;
I do not know a verse except that of Donnchadh,
his head of curly hair like a beautiful border.
11. Coverlet upon coverlet of copious silk
on a hostel-wall around your soft head of hair;

rings of your wavy thick hair
around your loving, deep-set, green eye.

12. Crimson nails on strings of harps,
yellow tresses over golden bowls,
hounds on bright leashes in your hostels,
o great Munster-Leinsterman.
13. Let your bright shears be prepared for you,
let horses be colourfully attired for you,
let your stallion be nimbly harnessed,
let a rope be prepared on a calm morning.
14. Horses are exchanged by you for poems,
hounds are let loose on badgers,
soothing words are played on strings of harps;
fine conditions from [your] territories.
15. A mountain fills with swift hounds,
a plain fills with foals,
the Gáiliain fill their grasp
with pleasant-toothed fair warrior-bands.
16. You will take Limerick on the side of the Gaoidhil,
you will take Áine, o ruddy form;
Teamhair of Midhe you will ensnare,
you will burn their dwellings, you will take cattle.

II

1. Let us divide [between us], o companion, the family of Brian;
if we divide, let it not be a division of contention;
let us divide the lovely, pleasant family of Brian,
from fair Cliú to noble Ára.
2. Let us come into Mac Con's Mumha,
to the warrior over Creat Treabh,
to the people of the pure-bordered Shannon,
to find tidings of their women and their fair youths.
3. Compose every second poem
and only recite them together;
share Mumha evenly with me,
from a farmer to a fair king of Fál.
4. I will divide the descendants of excellent Brian,

I would seek the heroes;
having divided them, I will take my choice
from the very tender family, prosperous and graceful.

5. Let us make a move to our right
before the country becomes a spiritless one;
let us take our cross to the noble multitude,
and a poem along with it to the family of Cas.
6. Entrust Donnchadh Ó Briain to me,
let my lot be on the warrior of valour;
amongst the great generous family of Tál,
there should not be a dividing up of support.
7. You take Muirheartach, good king,
and enjoy, as I enjoyed;
the king of Urmhumha who sought distinction,
he is the daylight sun without eclipse.
8. Each one of them is a dream come true,
the most skilled and pleasant troop from Cliú;
two palmers sharing their authority
over the smooth fairheaded descendants of Brian.
9. I share your difficulties in the matter
— appraising them would be the appraisal of two heroes —
praising their noble lean bodies,
their fair heads and their blond hair.
10. Donnchadh Cairbreach belongs to me,
though given to plundering, he is not a plunderer of [poet-]retinues;
Muirheartach belongs to you, treasure of eyes,
with wavy, blond, curly hair.
11. Brian belongs to you, and noble Donnchadh
of the burnished blades and the sleek bridles;
the eldest son is mine,
he who is head of the fair family.
12. Gentle Donnchadh Cairbreach belongs to me,
the defending plunderer about Cliú;
the valour of Conall leapt
into the smooth fine body of Brian's descendant.
13. Entrust Donnchadh to me because of seniority,
the king — there will not be a turning away from him —

his heart is favourable towards music,
the cattle stay at the grass.

14. I will follow the loving slender bright one,
the Munsterman who was not demented by ale;
king of Teamhair of the brown vats,
thick-haired one of the blond covering.
15. That one is the offspring of a noble womb,
the son of Órlaidh from the isle of the Greeks;
the beauty of his feet and his shoes,
wavy, golden, youthful tresses.
16. Donnchadh of Mumha, shapely brow,
my friend and my love;
wavy-haired Donnchadh Cairbreach,
the fair-headed generous one is not a plunderer of churches.
17. The son of Ó Briain is not like every son,
nor his cloak of satin like every cloak;
the side of the scion of Cian is not like every side,
nor his red belt like every thong.
18. The graceful hero is not like every hero,
nor sparkling wine like every wine;
swelling garlic is not like watercress,
the fair wood is not a brown yew-wood.
19. Every created thing is not comparable with the face of Donnchadh,
every border not comparable with his hair;
the cow in calf is not like every cow,
nor the sun like every bright berry.
20. The cultivated ear of corn is not like every ear of corn
which is between Céis and Cliú;
the chain of gold is not like the lustre of bone,
the neck of the descendant of Brian, then, is well-proportioned.
21. The fair slender one, is not like every youth,
the youth of feasts and songs;
the fruit of the fragrant, tapering apple-trees
is not like other apples.
22. It is Donnchadh, the bright sun,
who is the prosperity of hunting-bands and hounds;
wholesome, fresh crops on the cultivated land,

the shout of women, enforcer of contracts.

23. Donnchadh Ó Briain, graceful bosom,
his blow will be in every foreigner;
his skin like the wavy sea,
his head of hair like the mast of golden hazel-trees.
24. His hair is more beautiful than gold,
his body whiter than down;
I desire a cluster of beautiful curls,
our noble, robust, generous one.
25. Stop in a beautiful, arched banquet-hall
and compile with me a poem,
that I may praise modestly and sweetly
the white wondrous, slender candle.
26. Like Brian from Luimneach of [the] flood,
a descendant of Cian and he reminded of him,
the new branch is a perfect moon,
a descendant of white-footed Maol na mBó.
27. The son of the queen of the Gáiliain is my love,
with a winding tress at his neck;
gold on a thin-surfaced, bright cloak
is fitting for the great male descendant of Murchadh.
28. He is a slender youth from Áine,
his laugh lured every woman;
Dá Thí's Teamhair will be under your stud of horses,
as featful Cú Raoi had it.

NOTES

I

1ab. *Lepaid* in Early Irish legal sources refers to 'harbourage, protection' (DIL L 108.3ff). It is often found associated with *apaid*, a term of similar meaning. Both are discussed by Gwynn (1942) in his notes to *Bretha Nemed déidenach*, an Old Irish tract which mainly concerns the law relating to poets. Gwynn (1942, 230) suggests that '*leptha* and *aptha* denote degrees of responsibility for sheltering or otherwise aiding and abetting a tribeless man who has committed some offence, and that *leptha* denotes the graver and *aptha* the lighter responsibility'. The semantics of *lepaid* are discussed by Greene (1954, 337–9); cf. Breatnach (1955) who questions the latter's etymology.

1b. *tais*: The word occurs in *d* in the manuscripts (*cas* occurring in *b*; cf. manuscript readings), thereby disrupting the metre. In exchanging *cais* for *tais*, however, alliteration

is restored between the final two stressed words in *d*. This quatrain is also quoted by Ó Cuív (1961, 63) with this revised word order. The delenited initial *tais* is found in F only, where it occurs in *d* after the preceding *n* of *chéibhfhinn*. According to IGT i §50, lenition of initial *t* after final *l* or *n* is disallowed in speech (*gáoidhealg*), although it is permissible in the written language — ‘gíodh cóir d’ogham’. While lenition is generally observed in such cases by the poets, confusion between the rule for the written and spoken language is evident e.g.: *A thruaill taisgeadha* (PB 18.19a) / *a thruaill thaisgeadha* (DiD 6.33d), *mo thruaill thaisgeadha* (PB 6.36d) / *mo thruaill taisgeadha* (AiD 89.36d), *dul thar fairrge* (AiD 29.15b) / *dul tar fairrge* (DiD 107.37c).

1c. ní léigir: An example of a passive form without *-th-*, here in the subjunctive. Passive forms without *-th-*, historically confined to certain strong verbs in Old Irish, began to spread to weak verbs in the Middle Irish period (Breatnach 1994, 297). The stems *leag-* and *léag-*, evident in the variant manuscript forms *leagair* (C) and *léagair* (M), also occur in Classical Irish (Greene 1958, 45).

inn: The form of the pronoun given in F is *sinn* which may be used in the nominative or accusative. Indeed, examples occur in which the first and second plural forms *inn* / *sinn* and *ibh* / *sibh* are used indiscriminately in the nominative or accusative; see Magauran, 410, note to l. 1012; TD I, lxx.

2a. gat: The voiced stop of the possessive becomes voiceless when followed by a vowel or *fh-*, whereas the voiced stop is retained in *gad* (2d) as it precedes a consonant; other examples include *ad/at*, *dod/dot* ‘no a leithéid eile’ in IGT i §20.

2b. [a] chuaille mhaoil: Metaphoric use of *cuaille* ‘scion’, ‘hero’ finds parallels in *craobh*, *fleasg*, *géag*, *slat*, for example (TD I, liii–iv), while *maol* (when applied to people) seems to imply youth (DIL M 18.34). The absence of the vocative particle in the manuscripts may be a result of elision with the final unstressed vowel of the preceding word (*cuanna*). The added absence of lenition of *cuaille* in C and F, however, suggests *cuaille Mhaoil* ‘pole / scion, hero of Maol’ as a possible reading. The identification of Maol in the context of this poem, however, is not clear.

3cd. Olc do haingeadh lat mo leaba a shlat bairrgeal sheada shuairc, as quoted in IGT iii.443.

4a. The preposition *i* may be followed by accusative or dative according as it conveys a sense of motion (*ciall shiobhail*) or rest (*ciall chomhnaidhe*), respectively (IGT i §73.20–2; BST 194.3–4; cf. BST 189.13–15). All three manuscripts have *san slait* i.e. accusative singular form, shown by the absence of nasalisation. Examples of feminine singular nouns in *s-* which are not nasalised in the accusative are given by McManus (1994, 360). Even though *cuaille* in M is lenited, thereby showing the dative singular form, the remaining manuscripts have an accusative nasalised form. The accusative is retained here as a sense of motion rather than rest is implied.

4b. *a abhra mall*: As *abhra* may be nominative or vocative i.e. vocative singular is the same as the nominative singular form, both *a abhra mhaill* and *a abhra mall* are permissible in Classical Irish (cf. ‘a dhuine ghil agus a dhuine geal .c.’, BST 220.29). Further examples are given by McManus (1994, 383).

4d. As in the case of the preposition *i* (*supra* note 4a), bardic grammarians also distinguish between accusative of motion and dative of rest after *ar*. According to the syntactical tracts, nouns whose dative or accusative differs from the nominative singular (i.e. nouns which have *réim*) are always lenited after *ar*, lenition being optional in the remaining cases (BST 188.6–27, 192.3). The unlenited *s* in *ar slíos* is more common, it seems, as for example, in: GB 2.14c; IBP 11.45c, 56X.9d; IGT ii.1423 (= IGT iii.784); O’Hara 34.8d; TD 8.1c, 25.4b, all of which are not necessary for alliteration. Lenited *s* in *ar shlíos Bearbha an fhóid fhionnfhuair* (LBrán 51.24b), is a rare example; see also *infra* q. 11b. Our manuscripts do not give a clear indication as to what case *slíos* is in because the adjective *geal* shows neither nasalisation (indicating the accusative) nor lenition (indicating the dative). The accusative form has been restored here.

5a. *a earla dualach*: C and M observe this classical vocative form. The alternative *a earla dhualaigh* would also be grammatically acceptable (cf. *supra* note 4b) and it would not disrupt the metre.

5b. Domhnall Mór Ó Briain, king of Thomond, 1168–94.

5cd. *bainleath*: It may be noted that the reading in the manuscripts is *báinleath*, i.e. ‘fairsided one’ < ‘bán’ + ‘leath’, but only C provides a rhyming partner in *d* with the form *Láighneach*. The compound has been emended here to *bainleath* < ‘bean’ + ‘leath’ (: *Laighneach*) i.e. Donnchadh Cairbreach’s mother, the noble Leinsterwoman in *d*: Órlaidh, daughter of Sadhbh and Diarmaid Mac Murchadha *al.* Diarmaid na nGall, king of Leinster (*ob.* 1171). References to this Leinsterwoman occur in a number of sources. She is mentioned, for example, in genealogical matter concerning the Uí Fháeláin, which forms part of the Laighin pedigrees: ‘Sadb dano ingen Cherbaill máthair Dondchada meic Diarmata meic Murchada ... Int Shadb chétna máthair Órlaithi ingini Diarmata mnaa Domnaill Húi Briain ríge Muman’ (Corp. Gen., 13; cf. LL II 44278–81). Órlaidh, daughter of Diarmaid, is recorded in the prose version of the *Banshenchus* where she is described as ‘mathair Domnaill m. Domnaill (*ob.* 1194) m. Tairrdealbaig hUí Briáin ríge Muman’ (Dobbs 1931, 233). The treatise, noted already here (*supra* n. 31), on Brian Bórainmhe and his descendants down to the year 1694 which derives from *Leabhar Iris Chloinne Uí Mhaolchonaire*, refers to Donnchadh Cairbreach and to ‘Órlaith Chaín, inghean ríogh Laighean .i. Diarmaid, mac Murchadha, a mháthair amhail adeir an rann’ (Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 338; cf. O’Grady (1929, 173). The *rann* or quatrain quoted to illustrate this description is, in fact, quatrain ten of our poem.

5d. *Laighneach* meaning Leinsterwoman is somewhat unusual. In the *Leabhar Branach*, for example, *banLaighneach* is the normal usage: LBrán 7.42d, 9.30c, 23.25b, 23.45b, 60.9c. Similarly, in the case of *Muimhneach* ‘Munsterwoman’, one example occurs: *Muimhneach bhionnráidh shaor shoirbhréidh* (Butler 12.7d) i.e. Eibhlín daughter of

Gearóid Iarla, fourteenth earl of Desmond; cf. *banMhuimhnioch* (IBP 52.6c), *bean mé Laidhghneach Mhidheach* (IBP 56V.6a).

6b. *bróg*: It may be noted that this word seems to have had a wider meaning than Modern Irish ‘shoe’. Other possible translations are ‘greaves’, ‘leg-clothing’, and the etymology of *bróg* also connects it with English ‘breeches’ (Bergin 1942).

dath: For the translation ‘embroidered’, see DIL D 115.33.

6d. *uallaigh*: This emendation to the vocative of *uallach* ensures alliteration between the two final stressed words in *d* which is a necessary requirement of *séadna*. The vocative *dualaigh* (from *dualach*), variants of which are found in the three manuscripts, does not give alliteration in *d*, however, but illustrates the metrical fault *eguaim* / *éaguaim* (IGT v §7).

7a. *A Mhuimhnigh Laighnigh*: A similar construction which incorporates Ó Briain’s paternal and maternal forebears occurs in 12d.

Lorcán: Probably Lorcán mac Lachtnai of the Clann Toirdhealbhaigh, king of Dál gCais and grandfather of Brian Bórainhe. In the Dál gCais genealogies the name of Lorcán’s grandfather is given as Lorc (LL II 44678–80), but other manuscripts (i.e. Rawlinson B 502, Book of Lecan) have Corc; a similar confusion occurs also in the *Leabhar Muimhneach*.³⁴ References to events relating to the Uí Thoirdhealbhaigh in the annals suggest that Lorcán flourished *circa* 940.³⁵

7b. *as chlaon fuil*: Lenition is restored here after the relative form of the copula. This is in accordance with bardic teaching which requires lenition after *as* (IGT i §90 and BST 199.11). It may be noted, however, that nonlenition after relative *as* became a feature of later bardic poems: Eochaidh Ó hEódhasa, in his grammar, for example, considers lenition to be optional; see McManus (1994, 358); cf. Mac Cárthaigh (1997, 75).

7cd. These lines as they stand in the manuscripts are metrically problematic. C preserves *aicill* rhyme (*dhrongaigh* : *longaigh*), but none of the manuscripts observes perfect rhyme between every other stressed word in *d* (excluding the final word) and a word in *c*. ‘A shúil shuirgheach’ for ‘a shúil shuirghidh’ (C), though grammatically correct, is metrically faulty, while ‘a shúil shuirge’ (F, M) is grammatically correct, but this too disrupts the metre. The vocative in the manuscripts has been emended here to dative *Súir* from *Súir* with broad initial (cf. TD II, 348), the Suir.³⁶

³⁴ Corp. Gen., 237, 250, 427; Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 112; cf. 97, 100).

³⁵ Órlaidh, daughter of Cennétig mac Lorcáin, was put to death by Donnchad, king of Ireland, for sleeping with his son Óengus (CS s.a. 940); Cellachán Caisil defeated Cennétig mac Lorcáin at Magh Dúine (CS s.a. 943; AFM s.a. 942) / Gort Rottacháin (AU s.a. 943).

³⁶ I am grateful to Damian McManus for his considered view on this matter.

7d. Lorc: Lorc mac Anluain meic Mathgamhna according to Dál gCais genealogy (LL II 44680–2).³⁷ He is also alluded to elsewhere in bardic poetry e.g.: *Caiseal ceannphort chloinne Luirc* (AiD 26.10b); *fine Luirc na lann dtana / timcheall mheic Bhriain Bhóramha* (DiD 85.35ab); *clann Luirc 's a dteachta dá thaigh* (DiD 86.8c); *feidhm na mBrian, laomhdhacht na Lorc* (DiD 91.30c); *Luimneach Luirc* (O'Hara 22.6a).

8a. Muircheartach Fionn Ó Briain (ob. 1241).

8d. dom chionn: 'for me, for my sake, because of me'; cf. AiD 62.11d; DD 9.16b, 9.18a, 19.16c, 26.13c for other examples.

don onchoin óig: The referent here is unclear. The poet shifts occasionally from addressing Donnchadh Cairbreach directly to speaking of him in the third person (cf. q. 9cd, note 10d), and a similar stylistic feature may also be intended here. Our second poem, however, styles Donnchadh Cairbreach *an mac is sine* in q. 11c (see note 11c to *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain*), thereby suggesting that 'the young warrior' mentioned here is Muircheartach. The dative feminine form of the adjective *óg* qualifies *cú* here, a noun which may be either masculine or feminine (IGT ii §21, IGT v §131).

9a. laoidh mhilis mholta: This is in accordance with all three manuscripts. Where the accusative and nominative singular forms are the same (*ainm a n-anann a réim*), a noun, when governed by a verb, may be lenited — it is treated as an accusative, an accompanying adjective being nasalised; alternatively, the noun may remain unlenited i.e. it is treated as a nominative, an accompanying adjective being lenited if the noun is feminine: e.g. *bris shúil ngil, bris súil gheal* (IGT i §81); cf. McKenna 1941, 55–7; Magauran, xx, xxi–xxii. Classical Irish *laoidh milis molta* (unlenited in the accusative), therefore, would be equally permissible here.

9c. conchar, conchair: 'hound-loving'; cf. *aigneadh conchar*, 'love of hounds' (Magauran 11.40a), *fear conchar* 'a hero who loves his hounds' (Magauran 14.32c), *a chonchair* 'o prince who loveth hounds' (Magauran 21.31b), for other examples. It is also used as a vague laudatory adjective meaning in Early Modern Irish: 'fond of sport, sportive', (TD II, 240 §16), 'strong, vigorous' (Dánfhocail, s.v. *conchair*³⁸), 'noble, excellent' (Duanairé Finn II, XLVII.39b). See also *infra* *Roinneam, a chompáin, chloinn mBriain* q. 13b, and the accompanying note.

10. This quatrain is quoted in genealogical matter concerning the Uí Bhriain which derives from *Leabhar Iris Chloinne Uí Mhaolchonaire* and which circulated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (*supra* n. 31, n. 32). The variant readings are: 'Ní heol dom duine do mholadh / acht mac Órlaithe an fhuilt chlaoin; / ní heol dom rann ach rann Donnchaidh / dá bharr cham mar chorthair chaoin'. (Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 338);

³⁷ Corp. Gen., 250, 427; Corc rather than Lorc, however, in the Rawlinson and Lecan genealogies (*supra* n. 34).

³⁸ In his additional notes (p. 115) the editor refers to the use of *conachair* by the seventeenth-century poet Pádraigín Haicéad: *do bhí sé conachair cothaightheach críochach* (= Ní Cheallacháin 1962, 25, l. 147).

‘Ní heol damh duine do mholadh / acht mac Orlaithe an fhuilt chlaoín / ní heol dom rann acht rann Donnchaidh / da bharr cham mar chorrthair chaoimh’, TCD MS 1292, f. 5v (*pace* O’Grady (1929, 173)); ‘ní heol dom duinne domhola acht mac orthlaithe an fhuilt Chlaoín / ní heol dom rann acht rann Donnchaidh dá bharr cáim mar chorthairr chaoimh’ (IL MS 1(b), p. 3).

10b. *Órlaidh*: *Supra* note 5cd.

10d. This line could also be translated ‘o curly-haired one like a beautiful border’, i.e. the poet addressing Donnchadh Cairbreach in the vocative, having talked about him in the third person in 10c; a similar technique is used in q. 9cd, and possibly also in q. 8cd. As *barr* is one of a number of *o*-stems used metaphorically (*focail bharamhla*), the nominative form is used in the vocative (BST 221.13–19; Bergin 1921–3, 94).

11ab. In commenting on the metre of this poem, reference was made to the example here of *lorga bhriste*. Indeed, the final word of the variant reading ‘do shíoda fhairsing sagsan’ (C) not only prevents *lorga* or alliteration with the first stressed word in *b* (as *shl*-alliterates only with itself), but it also increases the number of syllables in *a*.

11a. *cuilt*: < Anglo-Norman *quilt* as discussed by Risk 1968–71, 620, §86; 1974, 77; cf. Ó Máille 1961, 16 n. 31, for further examples from verse.

11b. *ar shlios*: *Supra* note 4d. Only F has unlenited *s* here.

slíos: ‘Side, vertical surface, side-wall of a room’, or ‘seat, bench’. Eleanor Knott (TD II, 241 §24) draws attention to seating according to rank in the banquet hall. Terms such as *slíos ríogh* ‘king’s bench’ (AiD 5.18d), *slíos meadhóin* ‘central bench’ (TD 25.4b) and *sleasa taoibh* ‘side walls’ (TD 11.17b) highlight distinctions made with regard to seating arrangements. Muireadhach Albanach, therefore, may be referring here to the seat occupied by Donnchadh Cairbreach, which was conspicuous for the silk cloth which was draped around it.

12b. *trillse*: *Trillis* ‘tress or plait of hair’; ‘cluster’; cf. Mod. Irish *triopall* which is used with much the same meaning, or is extended, like *trillis*, to mean cluster (Breatnach 1954, 156–7).

bleidhibh: *Bleide* masc. (DIL B 118.21), fem. (Meyer 1906, s.v. *bléde*; cf. DiD, 522 s.v. *bleidhe*), ‘drinking-cup, goblet; bowl’. The earliest attested example of genitive plural, ‘l. bléide buabail belfhairsiung’ (LL l. 7292), shows *bleide*, *bléide* to be an *io*- or *ia*-stem in Middle Irish. In order to distinguish singular from plural, *bleide*, *bléide* may adopt dental endings in the plural.³⁹ Other plural inflected forms (cited in DIL) are: nom./acc. pl. *bleda*, *blededha*, *bleidhidha* and dat. pl. *bleidedaib*, listed by Stokes (1900, s.v. *bleide*). Examples from bardic poetry include: n.pl (i) *bleidheadha* (AiD 80.18a), (ii)

³⁹ Flexional shift of *io*- and *ia*-stems was already established in the twelfth century (Greene 1974, 195–6). Numerous Middle Irish examples are given by Liam Breatnach who states that this process was more common in nominative and accusative plural (1994, 246, 251).

bleidhe (BST 226.21, 21b.28);⁴⁰ gen. pl. (i) *bleidheadh* (AiD 17.23a; DiD 70.16d; IBP 7.3c, 31.15c; O'Hara 33.22b; O'Reilly 39.3b; TD 10.18a, 11.19a), (ii) *bleidhe* (AiD 14.23a; DiD 77.23a; O'Hara 5.24c = TD 29.24c);⁴¹ in compound *bleidheadhuinn* (TD 26.3c). Dative plural *bleidhibh* is required *metri causa* here, and one such example, the compound *coirnbhleidhibh*, is attested in the bardic corpus (O'Reilly 1.58c). Both dative plural forms are attested in *Acallamh na Senórach*: *bleidedaib* occurs in the fifteenth-century Laud 610 transcript (Stokes 1900, 139, l. 5096) while *bleidib* occurs in the corresponding passage in the *Book of Lismore* (O'Grady 1892, 198, l. 22).

12d. *a Gháilianaigh*: From *Gáiliain* (*Gailiain*), a pre-Goidelic tribe of North Leinster (O'Rahilly 1946, 22–4, 92–5); *Gáilian* / *Gailian* (gen. pl.), when occurring together with *cóigeadh*, *gort*, *magh*, *fóir*, *gasraidh*, refers to Leinster (LBrann, 421 s.v. *Gailian*; TD 27.3b). The vowel in the first syllable of *Gáilianaigh* is not marked long in the manuscripts, but the internal rhymes in F, M (: *bháiniallaibh*) and in C (: *bhainiallaibh*) show that it may be long or short; cf. examples by O'Rahilly (1946, 22 n. 3) where the length of the first vowel is determined by metre. Long *a* is fixed by rhyme in q. 15cd of the poem (: *bháinfhianaibh*), and in q. 27ab of our second poem *Gáilian* (: *cláirfhiar*).

15b. *do mhacaibh stéad*: Cf. *ar sdéadmhacaibh each n-áluinn* (DiD 105.2d), translated as 'for equine-progeny of handsome horses' (O'Grady Cat., 358).

16. *géabha*: The short initial vowel in the manuscripts has been lengthened here in accordance with the assonance pattern in the quatrain: *géabha* occurs twice in the first couplet, it is repeated in the first line of the second couplet and the long vowel is echoed in *béara* in *d*. This example of *breacadh* has been referred to already in the metrical description of the poem.

II

1a. *Rainneam a chompáin Cloinn mBriain* as quoted in IGT iii.888 where the first word, in the form *Rainneam*, is deemed 'lochtach'; cf. de Brún (1998, 176).

chloinn mBriain: Lenition is restored as *clann*, governed here by a verb, differs in the accusative singular from its nominative singular form (*focal asa dtéid a réim*); see IGT i §77–80. According to the grammarians an accompanying adjective should be nasalised in this case (IGT i §80; cf. Magauran, xxii), although it may be noted that examples by McKenna (1941, 58) with lenition of the adjective contradict this rule; cf. McManus (1994, 359).

⁴⁰ *bleidhe móra* (BST 226.21) *recte* *bleidhe mhóra* (or *bleidheadha móra* without lenition of the adjective) according to IGT i §84, §85).

⁴¹ It should be noted, however, that in the case of the final example *beiridh geall bleidhe do bhrodha, / ceand do shleighe ar gcora a croinn* 'the head of thy spear, when its shaft is removed, excels the goblets of thy dwelling', *bleidhe* could also be singular; similarly in *ní mhairfeadh bleidhe ná brat* (O'Hara 4.6a = TD 31.6a), *bleidhe* is translated as 'goblets' (nom. pl.), although the context also suggests a singular form.

1d. *ó Chliaigh fhinn go hÁrainn*: Cliu, Clíu, Cliú (TD II, 342) included the eastern part of Co. Limerick, and the barony of Owney and Arra, Co Tipperary. The connection made between the Uí Bhriain and Cliú is found elsewhere in bardic poetry e.g.: DiD 85.30a, 97.20d, GB 6.11d, IBP 24.28b, TD 21.22c, 21.23b. While five of the manuscripts have capitalised *fionn*, i.e. ‘Fionn’s Cliú’, C’s reading has been retained here. *Ára*, Aran in Galway Bay, rather than *Ara* (or *Ara Cliach*), Co. Tipperary, is intended here as is evident from rhyme (: *álainn*).

2a. *Mumha Meic Con*: Cf. LBrán 12.5a, Magauran 19.45a and TD 3.9a for other examples.

2b. *an cur / an curaidh*: i.e. Donnchadh Cairbreach Ó Briain.

ós Creit Treabh: Unidentifiable. A similar place name occurs in a poem beginning *A sháith d’oighre i n-ionadh Bhriain* (Magauran 29). The addressee, Tomás Mág Shamhradháin, is described as the lion *ó Chreit Rabh* ‘of Creat Rabh’ (6a), a place which is not identified by the editor.

3a. *Déana-sa*: This form is restored from ‘denasa’ in C. The alternative second singular imperative form, ‘déansa’ i.e. *déan-sa*, variants of which are in the remaining manuscripts, reduces the required number of syllables in the line.

3b. *ná reac*: Alternatively, ‘do not sell’.

4b. *na mbileadh*: According to IGT i §18 *bile* (nom. sg.) may be *d’uathadh* 7 *d’iollradh* ‘singular and plural’, i.e. it has both a homophonous plural form *bile* and a dental plural ending *bileadha*, respectively; cf. *supra* the discussion of *bleide*, note 12b to *Mo leaba féin dhamh*. The second syllable of *bile* is represented in C by a suspension stroke which, in unstressed syllables, may represent a vowel, in the Ó Longáin manuscripts. C’s version, then, may be restored to genitive plural ‘bile’ or ‘bileadh’, the latter representing an *io*-stem with a dental plural ending. The form *bileadh*, however, is fixed by rhyme (: *cineadh*) in *a*.

4c. *arna roinn*: The reading in M is *air an roinn* which is taken syntactically together with *don chloinn* in *d*, ‘from/among the part of the family’.

6b. *onchú ágh*: i.e. Donnchadh Cairbreach. F, F1, G and N have the form *áig* (= dat. *óig*) ‘young’; cf. *Mo leaba féin dhamh*, 8d, where Donnchadh Cairbreach is also described as ‘the young warrior’. Dative *áig*, however, does not rhyme perfectly here with *Táil* in *d*.

6c. *as chóir*: Lenition after the relative form of the copula is restored here; cf. *supra* note 7b to our first poem.

8a. *beacht aislinge*: Literally ‘a vision’s truth’, which I take to mean ‘a dream come true’.

8b. *as chaisbhinne*: *Supra* 6c.

9a. *Sinne compán do cheas ann*: Literally ‘we [are] a companion of your afflictions therein’, the translation of the reading given in C and M. The variant in F, however, is *Sin a chompáin do cheas inn* ‘that tormented me, o companion’. The metrical problem here may be resolved by emending *inn* to *ann*, thus translating the line ‘that is your difficulty in the matter, o companion’. The sense of the remaining variants, ‘Sine chompáin do cheasainn’ (F1, G) and ‘Sine chompan do chesainn’ (N), i.e. *Sinne a chompáin do chéasainn* ‘I used to torment / I might torment myself, o companion’, is not clear in the context. Besides, the final word is metrically problematic because it is dissyllabic and it does not rhyme with any word in *b*.

11a. *Brian is Donnchadh donn*: Turning to former illustrious members of the Ó Briain family, the poet begins with their eponymous ancestor, Brian Bórimhe (*ob.* 1014), and his son, Donnchadh, king of Munster, who was forced to abdicate in 1063. He went on pilgrimage to Rome (AFM, AI, AU s.a. 1064, ATig. s.a. 1063, CS s.a. 1061 [= 1063], AClon. s.a. 1063) and died there in 1087 [= 1065] according to Marianus Scotus in the third book of his Chronicle; cf. Gwynn (1952-3, 196-7). There is, however, a reference to Donnchadh Donn in the annals and genealogies i.e. Donnchadh mac Flainn of Clann Cholmáin, king of Tara (*ob.* 944). A member of Dál gCais is more likely in this context, however, and *donn* is translated as ‘noble’ here.

11c. *an mac is sine*: According to this poem, Donnchadh Cairbreach was the eldest son of Domhnall Mór Ó Briain. Although Muircheartach precedes Donnchadh Cairbreach in the Uí Bhriain genealogies, this would not necessarily follow their order of birth, but rather the order of their succession on the death of Domhnall Mór (*supra* introduction, n. 17).

is sé: This is restored from ‘asé’ (C, F, F1, M), ‘is é’ (G, N), thus ensuring alliteration with *sine*.

12c. *Conall*: Probably Conall Eachluath, son of Lughaidh Meann, who is referred to as ancestor of the Uí Bhriain in Dál gCais genealogies (Corp. Gen., 170, 207, 235, 242, 244, 250, 427). His assumption of power in Munster is described in Book I of *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (ll 5731-68); cf. *An Leabhar Muimhneach* (Ó Donnchadha ([1940], 82-4, 93).

13b. *conchar a chridhe*: An adjective which conveys approval (see *supra* *Mo leaba féin dhamh*, note 9c), used here to describe the attitude of Donnchadh Cairbreach’s heart to music; see Duanaire Finn III, 245, where this line is quoted in the glossary. This description recalls Donnchadh Cairbreach’s gift for music, which is expressed in a poem on Ó Briain’s harp, beginning *Tabhraidh chugam cruit mo ríogh* (Walsh 1918, 113) and attributed to Giolla Brighde Albanach.

15c. *Órlaidh*: *Supra* note 5cd, *Mo leaba féin dhamh*.

a hInnsi: The noun *inis* is inflected here as an Old Irish *ī*-stem, rather than as an *a*-stem (IGT ii §150), *metri causa* (: *trillsi*). A similar example is *san taobh ar-aill don innsi* (: *feithimh-si*) (LBran 50.20c).

15d. *trillsi*: See *supra* note 12b, *Mo leaba féin dhamh*.

16c. *ciabh na ngleann*: This is also the description of Brian Bórainmhe in a poem beginning *A toigh bheag tiaghar a tteagh mór* (q. 53) by Gofraidh Fionn Ó Dálaigh, dedicated to Diarmuid ‘na gCaisleán’ Ó Briain (*ob.* 1364); see MacKenna (1952, 132–9).

19a. *mar ghnúis Donnchaidh*: Non-eclipsis of the proper name as in C and N. Although nasalisation of the epithet of a feminine noun in the accusative singular, coming immediately after the preposition, is more usual (Magauran, xxi–xxii), examples of non-nasalisation also occur (McKenna 1941, 59). The proper-name *Donnchadh* is lenited in the four remaining manuscripts, where *gnúis Dhonnchaidh* may be taken as a syntactic unit; cf. the following: *mar ghréin gheimhridh* (O’Hara 32.23a), *mar Chill Mhantáin* (LBrann 18.80b), and the masculine accusative *mar theagasc Thórna* (LBrann 40.7a).

20b. *Céis*: Céis Chorainn (Keshcorran), Co. Sligo.

20cd. This couplet is omitted in F, F1, G, N and is replaced instead by the first couplet of quatrain twenty-one. As a result, lines cd of qq 21–4 (as in C, M) are lines ab in these transcripts, and the poem breaks off in F, F1, G, N at 24b.

20c. *mar néimh cnámha an eadh óir*: The accusative singular of *niamh* has a short vowel in the manuscripts while ‘eigh’ has been restored here to *eadh* ‘chain, bracelet, collar’, an a-stem (IGT ii §165); cf. O’Hara, 390 n. 2298.

24b. The poem breaks off at this point in F, F1, G, N.

24c. *muine camán*: In the poem beginning *Éistidh riomsa, a Mhuire mhór* by Muireadhach Albanach, the hair of the Blessed Virgin is similarly described (IBP 21.31b). It is of interest that *camán* in the latter poem also rhymes with *fallán* as in the case of our poem here. As *camán* may refer figuratively to a crooked person (DIL C 64.18), it is not unlikely that it may also connote a notion of being ‘bent, curved or twisted’ and by extension ‘curly, wavy’ (as in the case of *cam*, for example) when qualifying hair. Examples of *muine* to describe the hair of Gormlaidh, daughter of Brian Mág Shamhradháin, occur in the poem beginning *Folt Eimhire ar inghin mBriain* (Magauran 9): *niamhchlodhach is buidhe an barr / muine chlann bhfiarchorach bhfionn* (6cd) and *folt buidhe mar fhalaigh n-óir / n-a mhuine ós a malaigh gcaoil* (9ab); compounds to describe Gormlaidh’s hair in the same poem include *corrnmhuine* (35b), *clannmhuine* (35c), *fannmhuine* (21c), *ollmhuine* (15b), *sgathfhannmhuine* (8b).

26b. *Cian*: Cian son of Oilill Ólom.

26d. *Maol na mBó*: i.e. Donnchadh (mac Diarmada) Maol na mBó who is listed in the genealogy of the Uí Cheinnsealaigh (Corp. Gen., 10). His descendant, Diarmaid Mac Murchadha, was Donnchadh Cairbreach’s maternal grandfather (*supra* note 5cd to *Mo leaba féin dhamh*).

27a. *Gáilian*: See *supra* note 12d to *Mo leaba féin dhamh*.

27b. *go n-íorna*: This is restored from ‘go niorla’ (C, M) to observe internal rhyme (: *ríoghna*).

27c. *do mhac Murchadha mhór*: This is a description of Donnchadh Cairbreach based on his maternal ancestry. The adjective *mór* qualifies dat. sg. *mac* here, i.e. ‘do mhac mhór Murchadha’. The following may also be noted: *Ó Dálaigh Fiond*, *d’Ú Dhálaigh Fhiond*, *mac Í Dhálaigh Fhind* etc. (IGT ii §168), where *fiond* qualifies *Ó* (cf. *Ó Dálaigh Fhind*, *d’Ú Dálaigh Fhind*, *mac Í Dhálaigh Fhinn* etc. (IGT ii §169), where *fiond* qualifies gen. sg. *Dálaigh*); *Gairid le cloinn Meadhbha móir* (IGT ii.2052), where *mór* qualifies dat. sg. *cloinn*; *Iomdha ó shluagh ó n-Eachach n-óg*, where gen. pl. *ó* is qualified by *óg* which is also metrically fixed (: *ród*).⁴² The reading ‘do mhac Murchaidh mhóir’ (C, M), where *mór* qualifies gen. sg. *Murchaidh*, is metrically problematic: *aicill* rhyme with a stressed word in *d* is not observed, and the alternative genitive form of the personal name reduces the number of syllables in *c*.

27d. *n-úr*: This is restored from ‘ndonn’ (C), ‘ndunn’ (M) which do not observe rhyme with the final in *b*.

28cd. *Biaid fad groigh Temair Dá Thí mar do bí ag Coin reabaig Raei*, as quoted in IGT iii.889 (cf. de Brún 1998, 176), where it is described as the poem’s ‘dúnadh’.

28c. *fad ghroigh*: The second singular possessive is given in IGT (*supra* note 28cd). The poet, then, shifts from referring to Donnchadh Cairbreach in the third person to addressing him directly in this couplet. This technique, as we have seen, was also used by the poet in our first poem; cf. *supra* note 10d to *Mo leaba féin dhamh*. The variant readings may be noted here i.e. *fã a ghroidh* (C) and *fa ghroidh* (M) ‘under his stud of horses’.

Teamhair Dá Thí: Tara.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	J. O’Donovan, <i>Annála rioghachta Éireann : Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616 I–VII</i> (Dublin 1848–51).
AI	S. Mac Airt, <i>The annals of Inisfallen</i> (Dublin 1944).
AClon.	D. Murphy, <i>The annals of Clonmacnoise</i> (Dublin 1896).
AiD	L. McKenna, <i>Aithdioghluim dána</i> (Dublin 1939, 1940).
ALC	W.M. Hennessy, <i>Annals of Loch Cé</i> (London 1871).
AU	W.M. Hennessy, <i>Annála Uladh : Annals of Ulster I–IV</i> (Dublin 1887–1901).
ATig.	W. Stokes, ‘The annals of Tigernach. The fourth fragment’, <i>RC</i> 17 (1896), 337–420.

⁴² I am grateful to Damian McManus for discussing the above examples with me and for providing the final reference from a poem beginning *Ní triall corrach as cóir dh’Aodh* (q. 15) in the Book of O’Conor Don (f. 136v).

BB	<i>The book of Ballymote: with introduction, analysis of contents, and index, by Robert Atkinson</i> (Dublin 1887).
BST	L. McKenna, <i>Bardic syntactical tracts</i> (Dublin 1944).
Butler	J. Carney, <i>Poems on the Butlers</i> (Dublin 1945).
CS	W.M. Hennessy, <i>Chronicum Scotorum</i> (London 1866).
Corp.Gen.	M.A. O'Brien, <i>Corpus genealogiarum Hiberniae</i> I (Dublin 1962).
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